

# **TWO PERSPECTIVES ON GLOBALIZATION: THE NATIONAL BEEF INDUSTRY AND LOCAL LIVESTOCK FARMING IN NAMIBIA**

FUJIOKA Yuichiro

Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies, Kyoto University, Kyoto 606-8501, Japan

E-mail: fujioka@jambo.africa.kyoto-u.ac.jp

This study examines two crucial properties of globalization, homogenization and differentiation, by means of a comparison of changes in Namibia's beef industrial sector with those in local livestock farming among the Ovambo agro-pastoralists who live in north-central Namibia.

Following independence from South Africa, Namibia's beef industry has promoted competition in international markets. Before independence, it was controlled by South African rules, and almost all of the beef was produced for domestic and South African markets. Under the apartheid regime, "white" commercial farms, located in the central and southern parts of the country (then South West Africa) participated heavily in commercial markets, while the livestock farming by "black people" in the northern areas was largely ignored.

Nevertheless, in northern South West Africa, a local market formed, which may be characterized as a barter trade and informal livestock market. However, after independence, the abolition of apartheid coincided with the liberalization of the economy, and issues associated with an increased need for beef supplies and quality assurance emerged. Therefore, the Meat Board of Namibia decided to establish the Meat Corporation to promote the cattle trade in northern Namibia, while the government initiated projects aimed at improving the quality of the beef.

At the same time, during the past two decades, there have also been rapid changes in the local livestock farming of northern Namibia. In north-central Namibia, Ovambo agro-pastoralists engage in agriculture and livestock farming, which is mainly cattle grazing. In recent years, some Ovambo households have begun to own "cattle posts," or fenced grazing land, a practice that has changed their grazing system.

This does not mean, however, that the penetration of the national beef industrial sector has, directly, caused changes in the local livestock market. The penetration of the beef industry in the north of the country is only one aspect of the development of the beef industry in Namibia under the conditions of globalization. In this paper, I will also consider globalization from the perspective of the Ovambo, and I will examine the complex relations between both perspectives.

**Keywords:** Beef industry, Globalization, Livestock farming, Namibia, Ovambo