

VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT

# **Fighting over Fences**

**Organisational Co-operation and Reciprocal  
Exchange between the Savé Valley Conservancy  
and its Neighbouring Communities in Zimbabwe**

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## Executive Summary

This study is about organisational co-operation, a joint venture, between two partners with different social identities related to land (and hunting) in Zimbabwe. The one is commercial, mainly white, farmers; the other black communal farmers. Twenty-four commercial farmers have pooled their land into a single private wildlife conservancy, comprising some 3300 km<sup>2</sup> in the southeast of the Zimbabwean Lowveld, the Savé Valley Conservancy (SVC). The SVC is located in two provinces, two Districts and surrounded by another three Districts. The commercial land of the SVC is surrounded by communal land on which some 119,000 communal farmers (try to) make a living. They co-operate with the SVC through a representative body and joint venture partner, the Savé Valley Conservancy Trust (SVCT), which was initiated by the SVC in 1995. Private wildlife conservancies have no statutory definition in Zimbabwe. In answer to questions in Parliament, the Minister has said that conservancies would only be allowed in Zimbabwe if they were able to generate and create a 'formal and meaningful relationship' with neighbouring communities.

The structure of organisational co-operation under study is about reciprocal exchange between commercial and communal farmers. The theoretical framework is built around the concept of reciprocity and the related concepts of trust and imagery. The SVC 'offered' the SVCT to the neighbouring communities and argued that this particular joint venture would offer an economic win-win situation to both partners: the SVC would be politically legitimised and thus be able to exploit their wildlife utilisation scheme economically, mainly through sports hunting, concentrating on the buffalo. The communities would earn money through the joint venture by attracting donor money for restocking the SVC with wildlife. The wildlife the SVCT would bring in the SVC with the help of donor money would be paid for by the SVC, through which a development fund would be created which would then be redistributed to the communities so that they could start different kinds of development projects in the villages surrounding the SVC.

In the **Introduction** the general theme of the thesis is described and the central research question is formulated: *How did the initiative taken by the Savé Valley Conservancy to establish organisational co-operation and benefit neighbouring communities through a Trust develop in terms of reciprocity and related trust, whereas the two partners belong to groups with rival social identities with respect to land (and hunting) in Zimbabwe, in the period 1991-1998, and how can these developments be explained?* Following the research question the structure of the thesis is given.

In **Chapter 1** a theoretical perspective for interpreting the context and case study is constructed and presented on the basis of organisational and anthropological literature on the relevant concepts of reciprocity and trust. Furthermore, the notion of a reciprocal win-win situation is explored theoretically. The argument basically boils down to four

main lines of argumentation. First of all, it is stated that reciprocal relations are a mixture of affective and effective considerations. This implies that reciprocity contains strategic economic calculation and negotiation as well as morally based and altruistic considerations. In its ideal types it comprises both forms of economic exchanges and strictly personal gift exchange. In daily life, the boundary between these two extremes is often blurred. Therefore reciprocal relations are highly ambiguous and ambivalent. This gives rise to uncertainty which is (at least partly) dealt with by trust. Reciprocity and trust are two sides of the same coin. Without trust a reciprocal relation cannot develop. In turn, reciprocal relations are instrumental in generating trust. Secondly, reciprocity is governed by time and timing. Time sequences and time lapses are essential in estimating the nature of a specific reciprocal relation. If a return is expected immediately, there is obviously not much trust involved, strategy and calculation prevail. If no time frame for a return is stipulated at all, the gift presents itself as disinterested; as not being a political or economic instrument for gaining any form of direct advantages. In the third place, any reciprocal relation cannot be analysed properly without considering it in its extensive context. Two forms of context are indicated here. In the first place a historical context in which images and reputations which play a crucial role in the beginning and continuation of a reciprocal relationship are constructed. Images and reputations form an important basis for inclusion, but also, often overlooked, exclusion in reciprocal relations. The second context is the present one, which can take the more specific local socio-political, and socio-economic constellation into account. The description and analysis of context in this double sense may absorb a great deal of space and attention, as in this thesis, but the reward is a better understanding of the particular local configuration of organisational co-operation in terms of reciprocity and trust between the SVC and its neighbouring communities. Fourthly and finally, reciprocity is not only about giving, receiving and returning, in short about exchange, but also about what is *not* given, which has to be kept at all times. Most often these things, both material and immaterial, are intimately related to social identities of people and groups and therefore seem more fundamental to their sense of self than the things circulating in reciprocal exchange. Things that are kept have enormous meaning attached to them, which is related to the social identity of the group. It seems that they can be considered the sacred core of their social identity, which is not to be exchanged. It is inalienably theirs; it is part of their Being.

**Chapter 2** is used not only to reveal my methodological approach to my type of research (i.e. descriptive, explorative and explanatory) and its relation to my theoretical point of view, but also to describe extensively how aspects of the actual fieldwork took place, in order to substantiate and illustrate my conceptual approach to methodological issues. The main concepts I use in this chapter are methodological transparency (i.e. trying to analyse and analyse, as transparently as possible, the influences which shaped my construction of reality), coincidence (i.e. not everything works out as planned and as a researcher you are sometimes 'taken by surprise') and 'enforced coincidence' (i.e. coincidence can to a certain extent be enforced by meticulous methodological preparations before entering the field and strategic reflection on participation and anticipation of opportunities while in the field).

The underlying question of the thesis is whether the prospect of an economic win-win situation is a sustainable base for this joint venture. It is here that the importance of context, both historically and socio-culturally, of processes of social identity construction by both white commercial and black communal farmers is considered in **Chapter 3**. Both relate to the land for their social identity, only for very different reasons. The white people in southern Africa relate to landscape on the basis of an aesthetic and primarily Romantic criteria and heritage. This white heritage and its base in Romanticism is extensively described in relation to land and hunting in southern Africa, starting from the very first day Jan van Riebeeck set foot at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652. In contrast to white perceptions of land, the black people relate to the soil of the land. They relate to the land as a child to its mother, (often) in a spiritual way, while the whites relate to the land as people to an object of desire. In terms of the theoretical perspective on reciprocal exchange it is crystal clear that a mother is kept strictly out of reciprocal circulation, while the object of desire can be commodified as a product for tourists with whom the white people can share their aesthetic preference for the landscape and appetite for Big Game hunting. Here a basic and crucial paradox can be discerned: black and white share their relation to the land, although for different reasons. For these different reasons they relate to each other in an antagonistic way in relation to land (and hunting). But, although the attachment to the land of both black and white creates antagonism in southern Africa, it can at the same time serve as a basis for organisational co-operation, because of the unanimous love for the land. This basic paradox is taken as the starting point for a future scenario of organisational co-operation between black and white in Zimbabwe. The scenario is described in the concluding chapter of this thesis and it is operationalised in the appendix entitled **Recommendations**.

The antagonism between black and white in southern Africa, both with their distinctive social identities related to land and hunting, has a strong historical dimension going back to the very first day that white people entered present-day Zimbabwe in the Pioneer Column in 1890, which is the starting point in **Chapter 4** of a description of The Land Question in Zimbabwe. Ever since the advent of the white people in this part of Africa, they have claimed and taken land by using superior firepower. This continued right into the twentieth century under white rule when the nation was named Southern Rhodesia. The black Africans have protested about this state of affairs right from the start, but did not have the direct military means or organisation to combat the whites. Their protests were expressed mainly through poaching and trespassing across the boundaries, demarcated by fences, between communal (black) land and commercial (primarily white) land. Their relatedness to the land has proved to be a sustainable force in the struggle between black and white in southern Africa. The Land Question was what primarily inspired the Struggle for Independence in Southern Rhodesia causing it to shed white minority rule. However, also after Independence in 1980 The Land Question continued to be the Great Divide between black and white in Zimbabwe. The unequal land distribution could not be (easily) readjusted after Independence, partly because of the Lancaster House Agreements between Zimbabwe and Great Britain, which made a radical approach towards land redistribution impossible. But the situation also remained largely unchanged because of the incapacity of the new Zimbabwean Government to deal

with the issue in a satisfactory way. Over the years The Land Question invariably provoked strong political rhetoric, which perpetuated the antagonistic attitudes between black and white in the country. In 1997 the Zimbabwean Government announced a radical programme of land designation, based on the controversial Land Acquisition Law of 1992. 1998 would be the year of its implementation, putting into action the plan to designate 1471 commercial farms for resettlement. The political rhetoric surrounding the programme caused old sentiments to (re)surface and black Zimbabweans began to invade private land so as to put pressure on the (speed of the) designation process. It ran into difficulties because the international community was not willing to support the programme financially because of an assumed lack of transparency in the procedures and processes. The situation then gave rise to the question what, in relation to private wildlife conservancies, would be given priority by the Zimbabwean government: political opportunism and populism about land despite the international community's criticism, or economic considerations linked to raising the living standards of black communal farmers in this poor part of the country and at the same time appeasing the international community? The case study of the SVC in relation to its neighbouring communities could provide (the beginnings of) an answer to this question.

**Chapter 5** deals with the genesis and main themes of the development of the SVC. These are described in relation to the continuation and reproduction of a white social (hunting) identity and struggle over land distribution. The issue of hunting focuses on the introduction of the African Buffalo as a favourite trophy animal into the SVC. Its introduction necessitates the erection and maintenance of a buffalo fence in order to contain the danger of the contagion of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) to domestic cattle in the surrounding areas. The issue of land is dealt with by describing and analysing the market mechanism which directs and attracts (white) buyers and sellers to the SVC. It is shown that the overwhelming intricacies and the complexity of its interactions between the SVC and various stakeholders in different arenas, namely government departments in Harare, brothers-in-arms in the SVC, or neighbouring communities, can be signified by interpreting them as particles in an ongoing process of reciprocal exchanges, both positive and negative. Together these arenas can be characterised as a 'system of (often interrelated) reciprocities'. The major theme around which the exchange is focused and which is relevant to my subject, is the issue of land symbolised by the buffalo fence as the protested signature of the current (white) landowner. Time and timing in this exchange are not stipulated, but depend on strategic opportunity. Effect rules over affect. With fences the (white) landowners write their African identity on the land and at the same time relate that identity to their wish to hunt. Therefore, the related issues of fence and buffalo are the dominant themes within the life world of the SVC. The idea and establishment of the Trust (SVCT, i.e. the vehicle of organisational co-operation between SVC and its neighbouring communities) by the SVC is considered its gift to the communities. At the same time the Trust seems to objectify the SVC's image of the communities: the communities are seen as in need of (white) help. Theoretically the point has now been reached at which it is relevant to ask if the gift from the SVC has been accepted by the communities, and should that be the case, what is their return gift and does this match the expected return gift.

In **Chapter 6**, by describing and analysing several cases of reciprocal exchange between SVC and SVCT or neighbouring communities in relation to land and hunting, it inexorably emerges clear that the reciprocal exchange relationship between the two is a mixture of strategic considerations and affective relations, although the strategic relations dominate the present scene, strengthened by the national political context on land, which has revived many old sentiments about the unequal distribution of land in Zimbabwe. It can already be observed that the straightforward win-win situation and implicated evolutionary (economic) development towards a balanced reciprocal exchange, which the SVC presented to the communities as the basic rationale for its initiative in setting up the SVCT, is far more complicated and is wrapped up in many layers of constraints in the context of their social identities, related to land and hunting. Constraints which can certainly not be reduced to economic calculations or pecuniary motives, but have to do with their basic Being of people in relation to land. If economic calculation and rational choice do not tip the scale, but social and socio-cultural aspects do, the question of where this scenario is leading and how to cope with it in terms of organisational co-operation and management, both from the communities and the SVC, becomes relevant. It is the fence surrounding the SVC which more than anything else symbolises some of the paradoxes facing community relations for the SVC. In the first place the paradox of economic profit and neighbour relations. In order to maximise the scheme of wildlife utilisation, the SVC has to offer safari hunting. In order to offer safari hunting it needs to stock the Big Five, in particular the buffalo as the most important and lucrative trophy animal. In order to keep these animals, it needs a buffalo fence for veterinary reasons. So, in order to maximise the conservancy operation economically, it cannot escape the erection of a huge fence. Economic profitability is a *sine qua non* for economic neighbour relations. Only then will the SVC be able to invest in and undertake something with and for the communities. But, in terms of social neighbour relations, the fence is an insurmountable physical and symbolic obstacle, because it puts the disputed signature of the white owner and its social identity on the land. In this sense, the fence is a symbol of the paradox of economic rationality and social consciousness. Another paradox the fence signifies is that of the economic power yet political powerlessness of the white landowners. It was erected on the basis of economic power. It is disputed and vandalised by politically powerful, but economically poor, communities and economic power does not seem to constitute a sufficient deterrent to prevent or fight it. A broken fence becomes a symbol of economic power coupled with political powerlessness.

Finally in **Chapter 7** the general conclusions to the central research question are formulated. The SVC proposed an economic win-win situation to the neighbouring communities, based on a balanced reciprocal exchange. From a theoretical point of view (Chapter 1) it was already clear that such a straightforward and linear development is not to be expected because of the inherently ambivalent nature of reciprocal processes in terms of being a mix of affective and effective elements; of normative and strategic aspects. The chapters on the historical and social context of processes of (white) social identity construction in southern Africa began to substantiate this theoretical doubt more firmly (Chapters 3 and 4). Finally, the empirical case study itself showed loud and

clear that this doubt seems fully justified and demonstrated that although the economic win-win rhetoric did produce an undersigning of a joint venture agreement between the SVC and the neighbouring communities, it did not result in the expected and suggested (reciprocal) return gift from the communities (Chapters 5 and 6). Quite the contrary in fact, poaching did not decrease and the attacks on the boundaries of the SVC (i.e. the fence) intensified in the course of 1998, mainly because of developments and the strategic opportunities offered to communities in the national political context concerning land designation. The final sections of Chapter 7 are devoted to deliberating and elaborating possible future scenarios for the policy of the SVC in relation to its neighbouring communities. Continuing in the suggested economic win-win scenario would eventually lead to a lose-lose situation in which the communities will not receive the economic benefits from the SVC, because the SVC will not be politically legitimised by the communities, which would eventually undermine the basis for the existence and economic exploitation of the SVC. Therefore the basis for future co-operation should be strategically and affectively sought in their shared attachment to the land(scape), although for different reasons and with a different emphasis. 'Fighting over fences' will than become 'fusion despite fences'.

## Introduction and Central Research Question

*In which the theme and the central research question of the thesis is presented followed by the structure of the thesis*

'11.15 a.m. and the white landowner, the district administrator, the ward councillor and three representatives of Chief Gudo gather under a tree on the extensive property of the landowner. Although he has invited them to come to his newly developed safari camp bordering a beautiful natural pan and discuss matters while having a drink, they insisted on discussing the issue under a tree with a clear view of the new clearing on the property, intended for future irrigation to grow paprika for the export market. After some mutual introductory remarks, the Gudo people tell the landowner that the traditional burial sites of their chiefs, vaguely indicated to be some of the nearby kopjes, and their ceremonial natural pools are located on his property, more specifically bordering his new safari camp, and they claim the land to be theirs. The landowner explains that he can show his title deeds to anybody interested to prove legally which land is exactly his and that he knows nothing of burial sites on his property. But, he insists that access to the burial sites and the ritual pools can always be negotiated and arranged. But the ward councillor refuses and says in an aggressive tone that he cannot face his people bearing a compromise. He says he cannot come back to them with a message that he has negotiated a deal whereby so many people are allowed access to their burial and ritual sites for so many minutes. Without coming either to any solution, or a mutual understanding the two parties part'.<sup>1</sup>

When white landowners in the largest private wildlife conservancy in Africa, the Savé Valley Conservancy (SVC) in Zimbabwe, of which the above-mentioned property also forms part, offer wildlife to be shot commercially by (overseas) clients, it is called sport hunting. It proves to them that wildlife can be utilised in a sustainable way and pay for its own conservation at the same time. When neighbouring black communal farmers 'hunt for the pot' on the same property, it is called poaching. It proves to landowners that the latter do not have a proper conservation ethic and are causing major problems to conservation programmes and are a prime source of environmental degradation. What is neutrally called 'private landownership' by the minority whites is referred to as 'alienated land', a heritage of colonial times, by the black majority. The white settler colonists fought the black terrorists during the Liberation Struggle. The black Freedom Fighters wanted their sacred land back from the white imperialists. Both groups relate to different histories and remember different, often antagonistic highlights in it. What is a victory for one group is a defeat for the other; what are heroes for one group are terrorists for the other; what are successful makers of careers in one group are villains and

<sup>1</sup> Fieldnotes, 27 May 1998.

oppressors to the other group.<sup>2</sup> These collective memories of black and white in Zimbabwe are not value neutral. They are part and parcel of their social identity. It is the social group 'which provides him or her with a framework for each process of recalling the past and secures the legibility of the present. (Their) memories are structured by (their) group identities'.<sup>3</sup>

Social identity is reproduced, conserved and polished in these collective memories. There are black Zimbabweans who want to remove the remains of Cecil John Rhodes, the name-giver of former Southern Rhodesia, from his grave in the Matopos exactly because he symbolises white identity and domination.<sup>4</sup> For that same reason the remains of Great Zimbabwe are cherished<sup>5</sup> and that Zimbabwe was adopted as the name of the state after Independence in 1980.<sup>6</sup> The Zimbabwe Bird, which is found only in Zimbabwe save one in modern Botswana,<sup>7</sup> was taken as the national symbol of Zimbabwe.<sup>8</sup> Black and white in Zimbabwe have constructed and developed sharply distinct and sometimes even antagonistic social identities. Both social identities have historic roots. Africans identify with the land, which is, they claim, owned by the ancestral spirit guardians mediated by the chiefs. They did not recognise individual ownership but considered cultivation rights, and in its wake hunting rights inalienable.<sup>9</sup> Whites identify with the British and Boer tradition in southern Africa in which agriculture and hunting are the dominant features<sup>10</sup> and in which the land is perceived in terms of land-

2 White people who resisted this polarisation were stigmatised. 'For years, the Rhodesian state kept files on 'undesirable Europeans', individuals who lived too closely with Africans and shared their material culture'. pp. 99-100, Burke, T. (1996), *Lifebuoy men, Lux women. Commodification, consumption, & cleanliness in modern Zimbabwe*, London: Leicester University Press.

3 pp. 140, Misztal, B.A. (1996), *Trust in modern societies*, Cambridge: Polity Press. In the previous note I already indicated that the white population was not a homogeneous group. The same holds true for the black population. The two main ethnic groups in Zimbabwe, the Shona (70.8%) and Ndebele (15.8%) certainly did not regard themselves as one group, which can be deduced from the fact that 'Shona speakers sometimes referred to Ndebele as mapswiti, 'small stinging ants'; but the Ndebele and their allies returned the favor by using the Shona word tsvina (dirt) to describe the antagonists as chiTsvina, 'dirty people.' Burke 1996: 25-26. And also within the different ethnic groups there was no homogeneity (pp. 20, 39, Alexander, J. & McGregor, J. (1999), 'Our sons didn't die for animals'. Attitudes to wildlife and the politics of development: CAMPFIRE in Nkayi and Lupane Districts, Zimbabwe, paper presented at the conference *African environments: past and present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford). Figures based on *Britannica Yearbook 1996*: 755.

4 *The Herald*, 19 August 1998, Rhodes' remains must be removed from Matopos: AAG. In the article the chairman of the AAG is reported to have said that 'we cannot tolerate the permanent residence of Rhodes' remains at Matopos because he deceived people and took their wealth'.

5 In 'A trail guide to the Great Zimbabwe National Monument', it says in the first sentence: '(a)s long ago as the 16th century the Great Zimbabwe was recognized as one of the world's premier capitals'.

6 note 52, pp. 214, Beach, D. (1994), *The Shona and their neighbours*, Oxford: Blackwell. "Zimbabwe" as in the modern state derives from *imba*, house, a Class 9 noun in Shona that thus has the plural *dzimba*, Class 10. The full word *dzimbabwe* or *dzimbahwe* has been interpreted to be a contraction from *dzimbadzembabwe*, houses of stone, or *dzimbawoye*, venerated houses...

7 Ibid: 92.

8 Ibid: 92, although '(t)he plain fact is that we do not know what they symbolized'.

9 pp. 86, Bourdillon, M.F.C. (1976), *The Shona peoples*, Gwelo: Mambo Press. See also pp. 103-109 Mutambara, J.G. (1982), *Africans and land policies: British colonial policy in Zimbabwe, 1890-1965*, University of Cincinnati, Ph.D. Thesis.

10 pp. 266-269, Thomas, A. (1996), *Rhodes. The race for Africa*, Harare: African Publishing Group; pp. 49-58, MacKenzie, J.M. (1987), Chivalry, social Darwinism and ritualised killing: the hunting ethos in Central Africa up to 1914, in: Anderson, D. & Grove, R., (eds.) (1987), *Conservation in Africa. People, policies and practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

scape.<sup>11</sup> Socially they seem to resemble the social type that Simmel describes as 'the stranger': '(t)he stranger is by his very nature no owner of land – land not only in the physical sense but also metaphorically as a vital substance which is fixed, if not in space, then at least in an ideal position within the social environment. Although in the sphere of intimate personal relations the stranger may be attractive and meaningful in many ways, so long as he is regarded as a stranger he is no 'landowner' in the eyes of the other'.<sup>12</sup> But in order to be able to mine, farm commercially and hunt the whites needed land and that is what they took during the colonial regime through the often forced exclusion of Africans. But they did not identify *with* the soil itself but with the produce *from* the soil and with the landscape. In the process of appropriation they constructed a social identity related to the land (i.e. added meaning to it), but a distinctively different one from that of the original African owners. Land became an exploitable commodity and also, and at the same time, a root of white social identity. This resulted into two strikingly different social identities, mutually defined in contrasts related to land and hunting; their relation to each other 'highlighted through the boundary'<sup>13</sup> between them. An a priori mutual distrust was the result, which also seemed to preclude both groups beginning and establishing a relation based on positive reciprocal exchange. Distrust seemed to prevent a mutual sense of reciprocal obligation.

Private wildlife conservancies have no statutory definition in Zimbabwe, but at the same time there are several of them throughout the country and they are becoming a more popular land use option all the time. This led to questions in parliament in 1996 by Mr. Mudariki who asked the Minister of Environment and Tourism for clarification on the general policy and regulations of the government towards conservancies, how many communal farmers were benefiting from conservancies and how the conservancies acquired the wildlife. These questions came after an exposé in which Mr. Mudariki emphasised a context in which the 'mushrooming' conservancies in the country were said to be disadvantaging Zimbabwe's farming industry by using prime farmland for wildlife. And they were also inconveniencing the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management (DNPWLM) by stealing wildlife from National Parks. The Minister answered that although rules and regulations are not yet in place, proposals were being considered by which conservancies should be restricted to some of the drier parts of the country, so that they would not hinder the pursuit of conventional agricul-

11 The concept of 'landscape' has two distinct but related usages. In the first place it denotes 'an artistic and literary representation of the visible world, a way of experiencing and expressing feelings towards the external world, natural and man-made, an articulation of a human relationship with it'. The second usage is in current geography and environmental studies. 'Here it denotes the integration of natural and human phenomena which can be empirically verified and analysed by the methods of scientific enquiry over a delimited portion of the earth's surface'. These two usages are 'intimately connected both historically and in terms of a common way of appropriating the world through the objectivity accorded to the faculty of sight and its related technique of pictorial representation'. (Both quotations taken from pp. 9, Cosgrove, D.E. (1984), *Social formation and symbolic landscape*, London, Sydney: Croom Helm, italics added). From this perspective it is important to understand that 'the concept of landscape is a controlling composition of the land rather than its mirror'. (Ibid: 270, italics added).

12 pp. 144-145, Simmel, G. (1971), *On individuality and social forms*, Levine, D.N. (ed.), Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press.

13 pp. 38, Eriksen, T.H. (1993), *Ethnicity and nationalism*, London, Boulder (Colorado): Pluto Press.

ture. With regard to the second question he answered that conservancies would only be given government approval and a licence if 'there is a formal and meaningful relationship between the particular conservancy and the surrounding communities'. The answer to the last question about the acquisition of wildlife by conservancies read, and this is specifically interesting for the choice of words and the image it evokes, that there have been 'several cases of illegal dealings and thefts, especially from National Parks estate' and that the government was doing the utmost to curb 'these sinister activities'.<sup>14</sup> These answers gave the SVC to understand that its particular land-use in the Lowveld would not create an immediate problem, the Lowveld is one of the driest regions in Zimbabwe.<sup>15</sup> Quite apart from ecological concerns its government approval and licence would also depend on its relationship with the neighbouring communities. In response the SVC proposed to start an organisational co-operation with the neighbouring communities in a joint venture-like structure, in which the communities would be represented by a Trust, the Savé Valley Conservancy Trust (SVCT), which the SVC set up for this purpose.<sup>16</sup> But, as described above, many aspects of their relationship already indicate that co-operation in terms of creating a reciprocal win-win situation based on mutual trust seemed difficult or even impossible to achieve. Their social identities, with their historical burden for both potential partners and more recent incidents, which only 'proved' the mutual stereotypes, seemed to be too disparate to be able to come together and join hands in a form of organisational co-operation. However, in November 1998 the two did join hands in a joint venture, in a formal and ceremonial meeting and a starting capital was supplied. A Memorandum of Understanding would be signed in a later and separate ceremony. Despite enormous (historical) differences in almost all fields, be there socio-economic, socio-political or socio-cultural and related to land and hunting, a form of organisational co-operation had been established, seemingly based on presuppositions of mutual synergy and creating a(n) (economic) reciprocal win-win situation for both partners: political legitimacy for the SVC, i.e. a basis for economic exploitation, and economic benefits for the neighbouring communities. The concepts with which seem to 'fit' (organisational) co-operative structures best, and especially in (private) wildlife conservation as I shall argue later, and which also follow from the description above, are reciprocity, trust and imagery in relationship to social identities.

Having set the stage the central research question can be formulated:

*How did the initiative taken by the Savé Valley Conservancy to establish organisational co-operation and benefit neighbouring communities through a Trust develop in terms of reciprocity and related trust, whereas the two partners belong to groups with rival social identities with respect to land (and hunting) in Zimbabwe, in the period 1991-1998, and how can these developments be explained?*

14 Hansard 14th February 1996, Written answer to questions, pp. 3967-3971.

15 pp. 14 & 25, Moyo, S., Robinson, P., Katerere, Y., Stevenson, S. & Davison, G., (1991), *Zimbabwe's environmental dilemma. Balancing resource inequities*, Harare: Natprint.

16 Savé Valley Conservancy Trust (1996), *Proposal to create and interdependence between the surrounding communities and the Savé Valley Conservancy in the south east Lowveld of Zimbabwe*, Harare: SVC Trust.

The central research question contains descriptive (i.e. describing the initiative in context) as well as explorative (i.e. within a particular theoretical perspective) and explanatory (i.e. how developments can be explained in the current situation, which might give an indication of what could be expected in future developments) elements, which will characterise and structure this thesis. The time frame 1991-1998 has been chosen, because the SVC was officially launched in 1991 and 1998 was the year of my fieldwork. The research question is basically meant to be able to explore how the underlying question of the supposed economic win-win situation as presented by the SVC can be theoretically and empirically substantiated. What does social scientific literature on reciprocal exchange in co-operative structures say about the possibilities of creating economic win-win-situations between sharply distinct partners in terms of social identity? What happens empirically in terms of exchange between the SVC and neighbouring communities? Do both theory and empirical observation and analysis confirm the proposed economic win-win-situation? The study is primarily ethnographic in orientation. Following Richards, I mean by that that 'it is mainly an attempt to contextualize some of the data (...) via description and analysis of concrete situations, events and discourses. But no ethnographic account is ever 'pure fact'. It may help readers to point out some of the main theoretical assumptions and influences that have shaped my own understanding of the materials at my disposal'.<sup>17</sup> Also in this study, a fair amount of attention is paid to an extensive description and analysis of the specific context of this initiative in organisational co-operation by the SVC. The ethnographic orientation is focused on the SVC and the route and process of their initiative in setting up this structure of organisational co-operation. Although I pay extensive attention to the neighbouring communities, this will be mainly directed through the formal organisational setting of the SVC. To formulate an answer to my main question, many 'smaller' questions have to be answered first, like how can the identities of communal (i.e. neighbouring communities) and commercial farmers (i.e. SVC), especially those related to land, hunting and seen from a historical perspective on Zimbabwe in general and the Lowveld in particular, be described focusing on their mutual images of each other? What is, in relation to reciprocity perceived as a win-win situation, usually exchanged for what between communal and commercial farmers? Do communal and commercial farmers feel themselves morally obliged towards each other? Do they trust the other in exchange relations? How are boundaries between 'us' and 'them' perceived, maintained, guarded, and crossed? What is the historical context of the development of the SVC? Are the prospects of a(n) (economic and implicitly political) win-win situation enough to stimulate organisations to co-operate and people to feel committed to each other, despite political, cultural and social constraints, especially at a time in which organisation studies have turned their attention to the question of what really binds people to organisations in a time of increasing individualisation, fragmentation and atomisation and in the same fashion organisations to organisations?<sup>18</sup> That is not to say that all these indicated processes also

17 pp. xx-xxi, Richards, P. (1996), *Fighting for the rainforest. War, youth and resources in Sierra Leone*, The International African Institute, in association with Oxford: James Currey; Portsmouth (N.H.): Heinemann.

18 See Clegg, S.R. (1990), *Modern organizations: organization studies in the postmodern world*, London: Sage Publications; Martin, J. (1992), *Cultures in organizations, Three perspectives*, Oxford: Oxford University Press; Parker, M. (1992), Postmodern organizations or postmodern organization theory?, *Organization Studies*, 13 (1):

take place in a similar way and pace in Zimbabwe as in the Western world, but it poses the general theoretical question how organisational co-operation, trust and positive reciprocal exchange can be achieved between groups or people or organisations with rival social identities. That is what makes this case study fascinating from a broader theoretical point of view. Especially in a case like this where there is so much historical antagonism between the social identities of these two groups in the context of land and hunting, these theoretical explorations can be studied in more detail because they seem to magnify the processes under study; the theoretical framework is stretched to its limits, which adds to the orderliness of observation, just like a typology or the extremes on a continuum do. But it certainly has also, maybe above all, practical relevance by suggesting answers to questions like how are former bitter enemies and nowadays antagonistic and rival parties still able to construct an organisational partnership and co-operate in a more or less peaceful manner. What can be learned from this case for similar cases with a mix of nature conservation and sustainable development elsewhere in southern Africa in which other countries struggle with the same types of antagonisms, in for instance Namibia and South Africa?

### Structure of the Thesis

The structure of the thesis is quite straightforward, and (maybe) even predictable. Following the central research question there are four empirical aspects, which have to be covered in the subsequent chapters embedded in a theoretical and methodological outline with which I start in Chapters 1 and 2, respectively entitled *Theoretical explorations and questions* and *Methodological considerations and issues*. The main aim of the first chapter is to introduce the concepts of reciprocity and related trust to the main themes of this thesis in relation to organisational co-operation to be achieved between two groups with rival social identities. It is especially the relationship between processes of (white) identity construction and reciprocal processes which 'fits' this theoretical framework on the case study of the SVC. This exposé ends with theoretical questions related to my case study in Zimbabwe in which I want to reach a first tentative conclusion about what social scientific literature has to say about creating synergy and an economic win-win situation between partners in an organisational co-operative structure in terms of reciprocal exchange and trust. In the second chapter along which methodological lines and strategies the empirical research has been planned, organised and executed takes centre stage. It is not without reason that I commence my thesis with these two chapters. It enables me to continue from Chapter 3 to let the theory develop mainly through the presentation of my empirical material. The empirical material presented in this thesis is certainly not at random as I make clear in Chapter 2 on my methodology of fieldwork and is strictly related to my conceptual framework I present in Chapter 1. This implies that the empirical data are constructed and gathered within the set and

strict contours of my theoretical and methodological approach. As that is the case I can then proceed to present the empirical data to substantiate my theoretical and methodological claims and statements, without constantly having to reiterate there. Following the presentation of the empirical material in a particular Chapter, I finish structurally with a section on the theoretical implications of the material and how it fits in to the overall structure of the thesis.

After the presentation of the theoretical and methodological 'skeleton' of this study, I begin to add 'flesh and blood' to it, first by paying extensive attention to context. I divide context into two parts, historical and social, of which the latter is actually also historical in orientation, but with a different emphasis. The first is focuses primarily on the development of a white *identity* related to land and hunting in southern Africa. This identity is heavily intertwined with the industry of wildlife utilisation, in which traditional private wildlife conservancies developed. So, in describing the context and process of identity construction of whites in southern Africa, I also describe the genesis of private wildlife conservancies in South Africa and their subsequent spread to other countries in the region, mainly Namibia and Zimbabwe. It will become clear that private wildlife conservancies were only a logical next step in (white) conservation practices in southern Africa, including the same tendency betraying increasing separation and alienation between conservancy and community. The emergence of commercial hunting as a prime income earner for (white) conservancies can be traced historically to the importance of hunters and hunting in the construction of social identity of whites in southern Africa. I shall treat this subject in Chapter 3, *White identity construction in a context of wildlife utilisation in southern Africa and the origin and spread of private wildlife conservancies in South Africa (with reference to Namibia)*. The second aspect of context is the specific social context of land and hunting in Zimbabwe. In this context the contours of the arena of antagonism between black and white rival identities are explored. The Land Question has always dominated the relationship between black and white in Zimbabwe. The subject is described in Chapter 4, *The Land Question and private wildlife conservancies in Zimbabwe*. In Chapters 3 and 4 the emphasis lies on historical and social context and white identity construction in southern Africa as very nearly deterministic forces in the development of conservancies and their specific social relations with their neighbouring communities. Of course, things could have turned out quite differently. But, with the advantage of hindsight, it is very well possible to describe a fairly uninterrupted and continuing route from the first white hunters, who roamed southern Africa in the nineteenth century, to the establishment of private wildlife conservancies in South Africa in the late seventies of the twentieth century. With this necessary 'flesh and blood' in mind, I can now introduce the 'nerve centre and brains' of the study, being the Savé Valley Conservancy, in Chapter 5: *The Savé Valley Conservancy: genesis and main themes*. I shall describe its development according to the, then, already familiar lines of land and sport hunting, mainly on the basis of the minutes of the Conservancy Committee Meetings from the official start in 1991, up till 1998. This chapter describes the third important aspect of the central research question, after the historical and social context, namely the arena in which the two groups with rival identities meet and argue around the issues of land and hunting, translated at this local level into fighting over fences and bullying over buffalo. This controversy is set within the contours of the devel-

pp. 1-17; pp. 20-24, Koot, W.C.J. (1995), *De complexiteit van het alledaagse. Een antropologisch perspectief op organisaties* (translation: The complexity of every day life. An anthropological perspective on organisations), Bussum: Coutinho.



oping joint venture between SVC and communities through the creation by the SVC of the SVCT to represent the communities. Finally in Chapter 6, I focus attention on describing the actual reciprocal exchange taking place between the two joint venture partners, mostly indirectly expressed in reciprocal exchanges taking place between individual members of the SVC and neighbouring communities, which have their direct bearing on the position in the reciprocal exchange of the two joint venture partners. The issues of land and hunting have been brought back and are symbolised by the buffalo fence around the SVC, which seems simultaneously precondition and barrier to a smooth process of co-operation between SVC and SVCT, i.e. between SVC and neighbouring communities: *The Savé Valley Conservancy and the buffalo fence: a paradox of economic profit and neighbour relations*. The thesis is brought to an end with *General Conclusions* in Chapter 7 and an annex with Recommendations for the SVC on the basis of my analysis. (This latter I consider my reciprocal obligation towards the SVC for their support of my research and fieldwork.)

# 1 Theoretical Explorations and Questions

*In which a theoretical perspective for interpreting the context and case study is constructed and presented on the basis of organisational and anthropological literature on the relevant concepts of reciprocity and trust and in which the notion of a reciprocal win-win situation is theoretically explored.*

## Introduction

In literature on organisations, organisational structures of co-operation are usually perceived as and based on assumptions of creating an economic and reciprocal win-win situation in which mutual benefits are exchanged.<sup>1</sup> As exchange teaches us reciprocity<sup>2</sup> in so far that every exchange involves 'a sacrifice in return for a gain'<sup>3</sup>, it is assumed that in organisational co-operation the 'potential for reciprocity' is crucial to co-operative stability.<sup>4</sup> In particular it is the moral implications of reciprocity, i.e. 'thou shall return', which is thought to be responsible for the longer term stability in organisational co-operation, because it creates mutual forbearance.<sup>5</sup> Reciprocity can be defined, following Van Baal, as 'doing or rendering something in return for a good received, an act committed, or an evil inflicted. Involved is an exchange in which the term has connotations of approximate equivalence and equality'.<sup>6</sup> Reciprocal relations should be seen as a 'sys-

1 Blau, P.M. (1964), *Exchange and power in social life*, New York, London: John Wiley & Sons; pp. 3, Evirgen, C. & Yaprak, A. (1992), Social exchange theory as a framework for collaborative ventures in international business, Paper presented at the 1992 *Conference of the Academy of International Business*, Brussels, Belgium. When I use or refer to the concept of organisational co-operation I primarily refer to inter-organisational co-operation and not to processes which are related, but markedly different in character, of intra-organisational co-operation, like team-building, incentive programmes and the like. For a good introduction to the role and function of the gift and reciprocal processes within commercial organisations see: Van de Giessen, A. (July 1997), *Wie goed is krijgt lekkers. Een beschouwing van belonen in bedrijven* (translation: Be good and get something sweet. A contemplation on rewarding in business), Unpublished MA Thesis, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

2 Misztal 1996: 50.

3 pp. 51, Simmel, G. (1971), *Georg Simmel on individuality and social forms* (ed. Levine, D.N.), Chicago: University of Chicago Press. This also makes clear that although the concepts of exchange and reciprocity overlap to a large extent in social scientific discourse, they could be distinguished according to their moral content. In their ideal typical form reciprocal processes are sustained by moral considerations, while exchange relations are sustained by calculative considerations. (In my further discussion of the concept of reciprocity I propose in fact to leave this narrow interpretation of reciprocity and merge the concepts and recognise calculation and according strategies, i.e. aspects from the domain of exchange, as belonging to the sphere of reciprocity as well. I shall call this reciprocal exchange).

4 pp. 184, 185, Kogut, B. (December 1989), The stability of joint ventures: reciprocity and competitive rivalry, *The Journal of Industrial Economics*, XXXVIII: 182-198. Gouldner also refers to the stability factor of reciprocity in social systems, pp. 172, Gouldner, A.W. (April 1960), The norm of reciprocity: a preliminary statement, *American Sociological Review*, 25 (2): 161-178.

5 pp. 227, Parkhe, A. (1993), 'Messy' research, methodological predispositions, and theory development in international joint ventures, *Academy of Management Review*, 18 (2): 227-268.

6 pp. 11, Van Baal, J. (1975), *Reciprocity and the position of women*, Assen: Van Gorcum.

term of social exchange rather than a series of unilateral and discontinuous acts'. Subjects 'are caught in a crossfire of rights and obligations, debts and claims, that punctuate their existence'.<sup>7</sup> Writers usually introduce the theme of reciprocity by giving examples of various material gifts which are exchanged in a particular situation. But we must realise, certainly within the context of (co-operating) organisations, that 'it is words [and text!] first and foremost, sentences and arguments, that humans produce and exchange with others'.<sup>8</sup> It makes clear right from the start that the reciprocal process between organisations is about material, but also, and in the first stages of reaching a form of co-operation, probably even more about immaterial exchange<sup>9</sup> and furthermore that the 'rules'<sup>10</sup> are largely implicit.<sup>11</sup> Taken together, the researcher studying processes of inter-organisational co-operation is 'pushed' almost naturally and automatically into the theoretical realm of reciprocity and related concepts, like exchange and trust.<sup>12</sup> But reciprocity is an inherently ambivalent concept in which affective and effective aspects are intertwined. The ratio has to be judged by the actors involved in every transaction. But even a final judgement can never be based on complete knowledge and will therefore always carry a certain amount of uncertainty with it. Trust is needed to handle this uncertainty, although at the same time it can never eliminate the uncertainty because the concept suffers from the same ambivalence as reciprocity. Trust can be given or might be kept for reasons of perceived images of the Other. Trust is given easily and almost without hesitation to people who have a trustworthy reputation. But if that identity is not perceived as trustworthy, trust will be kept. Without any trust a reciprocal relation is difficult, if not impossible to start. But contexts may change over time. Images can alter, trust can be build and a reciprocal relation can be started in which time and timing is crucial. When to give and when to hold? When to repay a reciprocal obligation and when to judge otherwise? To whom will be given and who is excluded? All questions that are related to time and context. In this chapter I first want to present a theoretical perspective on the concept of reciprocity and conditional trust in relation to a context of rival social identities. Then I want to reach a tentative answer to the question of what current theoretical literature is suggesting us on the possibilities of creating synergetic and economic win-win situations in organisational co-operation. Following the central research question the theoretical perspective should be able 'to serve' a piece of research that can be characterised as being descriptive, explorative and explanatory with regards to the historical and social context and present-day operations of the SVC in relation to the organisational co-operation with its neighbouring communities represented in the SVCT, but also with a view to future scenarios for the SVC concerning this issue. My theoretical framework will thus be primarily used as an heuristic instrument

7 pp. 16, 137-138, Godbout, J.T., in collaboration with Caillé, A. (1998), *The world of the gift*, London, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

8 Ibid: 12.

9 Haas, D.H. & Deseran, F.A. (1981), Trust and symbolic exchange, *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 44 (1): 3-13.

10 Rules is consciously put between brackets because I definitely do not want to suggest that reciprocal processes are governed by rigid, mechanical and law-like rules, like a predictable mechanism (although I shall also use the word mechanism sometimes to refer to reciprocal processes) or machinery.

11 Godbout 1998: 186-190.

12 Although there are also more theoretical considerations at play as I will argue in the section on 'Reciprocity and Trust'.

in the description of the empirical part of this study and secondly as an initial indication of the possibilities of creating win-win-situations in organisational structures of co-operation between groups with rival social identities.

1 My theoretical framework is built around four main lines of argument. First of all, it is stated that reciprocal relations are a mixture of affective and effective considerations. This implies that reciprocity contains strategic economic calculation and negotiation as well as moral-based and altruistic considerations. It comprises in its ideal types both forms of economic exchanges and strictly personal gift exchange. In daily life the boundary between these two extremes is often blurred. Therefore reciprocal relations are highly ambiguous and ambivalent. This gives rise to uncertainty which is (at least partly) dealt with through trust. Reciprocity and trust are two sides of the same coin. Without trust a reciprocal relation can not develop. In turn, reciprocal relations are instrumental in generating trust.

2 Secondly, reciprocity is governed by time and timing. Time sequences and time lapses are essential in estimating the nature of a specific reciprocal relation. If a return is expected immediately, there is obviously not much trust involved, strategy and calculation prevail. If no time frame for a return is stipulated at all, the gift presents itself as disinterested; as not being a political or economic instrument for gaining any form of direct advantages.

3 In the third place, any reciprocal relation cannot be properly analysed without considering it in its extensive context. Two forms of context are indicated here. In the first place a historical context in which images and reputations which play a crucial role in the start and continuation of a reciprocal relationship are constructed. Images and reputations form an important basis for inclusion, but also, a point often overlooked, exclusion, in reciprocal relations. The second context is the present one, which can take the more specific local socio-political, and socio-economic constellation into account. The description and analysis of context in this double sense may take up a great deal of space and attention, as in this thesis, but the reward is a better understanding of the particular local configuration of organisational co-operation in terms of reciprocity and trust between the SVC and its neighbouring communities.

4 Finally, reciprocity is not only about giving, receiving and returning, in short about exchange, but also about what is not given, which has to be kept at all times. Often these things, both material and immaterial, are intimately related to social identities of people and groups and therefore seem more fundamental to their sense of self than the things circulating in reciprocal exchange. Things that are kept have enormous meaning attached to them, which is related to the social identity of the group. It seems that they can be considered the sacred core of their social identity, which is not to be exchanged. It is inalienably theirs; it is part of their Being.

On the basis of the history of the relationship between commercial and communal farmers in Zimbabwe in general and in the SVC in particular one might not expect much, if any mutual trust to exist between the two. There has been so much rivalry and outright antagonism between the two groups in the past in relation to land and hunting, which is still potent and often manifest in poaching and mutual images, that mistrust dominates the relationship. The perceptions of their mutual reputations are not of a nature of unconditional trustworthiness. Yet the Minister of Environment and Tour-

ism has set the criterion of neighbourly relationship mandatory if conservancies are to receive government approval. So, despite the mistrust and the inclination to withhold trust instead of giving it, there is a strategic need to get a reciprocal relationship started in a formal structure of organisational co-operation. This creates a situation in which there is an imposed need for the SVC to structure and formalise an interdependency. Antagonistic parties are condemned to become each other's partners. But it is certainly not a completely one-sided dependency of white on black, because the black communities in their turn are to a large extent economically dependent on the role of economic catalyst the SVC can play in this economically poor part of Zimbabwe, by attracting and generating tourism, one of the few economic potentials in the region. So the general theoretical question becomes whether the enforced partnership, i.e. socio-political and socio-economic considerations, will in the end override the socio-historical and socio-cultural differences. Knorringa argued in a similar case of extreme socio-historical and socio-cultural differences between castes in India that the two could never meet in organisational co-operation or organisational compatibility because trust was not allowed to develop. Economic considerations and imposition were not able to overcome deep-felt historic antagonisms.<sup>13</sup> Knorringa makes a distinction between earned and ascribed trust. Earned trust is based on 'trust in the behaviour of the transaction partner based on past or expected similar transactions, in short his or her business reputation'. Ascribed trust is 'tied to the transaction partners' characteristics such as family background or ethnicity'. For his case of the shoe-industry in India, Knorringa comes to the conclusion that '(a)scribed trust is so high that it does not allow earned trust to come up'.<sup>14</sup> Could it be different in Zimbabwe? Organisational theory though is remarkably silent on the subject of reciprocity between co-operating parties. Therefore I have to elaborate on the concept mainly on the basis of classical anthropological and recent social scientific literature.

### Reciprocity and Organisational Co-operation

Organisations can be considered to be open social groups.<sup>15</sup> A group can be conceptualised 'as a collection of individuals who perceive themselves to be members of the same social category [i.e. organisation HW], share some emotional involvement in this common definition of themselves, and achieve some degree of social consensus about the

13 Knorringa, P. (1996), *Economics of collaboration; Indian shoemakers between market and hierarchy*, New Delhi, London: Sage Publications.

14 Knorringa, P. (1999), Trust and distrust in artisan-trader relations in the Agra-footwear industry, India, in: Smets, P., Wels, H. & Van Loon, J., *Trust and co-operation. Symbolic exchange and moral economies in an age of cultural differentiation*, Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis.

15 The open characteristic of groups and organisations means that the exact boundary between formal organisation and 'outside world' is difficult to draw, see Chapter 6, Van der Krogt, Th.W.P.M. & Vroom, C.W. (1991), *Organisatie is beweging* (translation: Organisation is movement), Utrecht: Uitgeverij Lemma BV, Third edition; pp. 96, 389, 415, Lammers, C.J. (1983), *Organisaties vergelijkenderwijs* (translation: Organisations compared), Utrecht, Antwerpen: Uitgeverij Het Spectrum. For that reason the adjective 'open' should be interpreted to mean that the organisation and its members are part of broader and more encompassing networks. This also explains why attention paid to the broader contexts, historical, economic, political and cultural, in which the organisation and its people operate is crucial to understand the processes within the organisation.

evaluation of their group and of their membership of it'.<sup>16</sup> In other words, they 'provide their members with an identification of themselves in social terms'.<sup>17</sup> The process of identification is to a 'very large extent relational and comparative: they define the individual as similar to or different from, as 'better' or 'worse' than, members of other groups'<sup>18</sup> and organisations. It is relevant to note also that '(t)he evaluation of one's own group [or organisation HW] is determined with reference to specific other groups through social comparisons in terms of value-laden attributes and characteristics'.<sup>19</sup> It goes without saying that people are more inclined to trust, start reciprocal relations, and co-operate with groups and/or individuals who have a positive and trustworthy reputation, in other words belong to certain social groups and organisations which have a particular social identity.<sup>20</sup> The role of leadership and management is important in this respect. Several recent studies in organisations suggest that the relationships between people in organisations and their leadership in relation to processes of identity construction is important in either generating or blocking trust. The same literature also suggests a direct link between trust and a time factor: 'The relational, identity-based character of trust suggests that it is difficult to build trust in the short-term. Both identification with an organization and feelings of trust in organizational authorities build over time'.<sup>21</sup>

Trust is seen as a necessary precondition for exchange<sup>22</sup> and thus is essential to processes of organisational co-operation<sup>23</sup> and trade.<sup>24</sup> Organisation and management studies

16 Van Baal 1975: II.

17 pp. 40, Tajfel, H. & Turner, J. (1979), An integrative theory of intergroup conflict, in: Austin, W.G. & Worchel, S. (eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations*, Monterey (California): Brooks/Cole.

18 Ibid.

19 Tajfel & Turner 1979: 40.

20 pp. 70, Ridley, M. (1996), *The origins of virtue*, Viking.

21 pp. 338, 345, Tyler, T.R. & DeGoeij, P. (1996), Trust in organizational authorities. The influence of motive attributions on willingness to accept decisions, in: Kramer, R.M. & Tyler, T.R. (eds), *Trust in organizations. Frontiers of theory and research*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications.

22 pp. 178-179, Simmel, G. (1978), *The philosophy of money*, London: Routledge. Recently the concept of trust is often emphasised as an important integrating force in studies of organisational networks and managing organisations, particularly in Southeast Asia. See for instance Jia, X. (1993), *Creating Sino-Foreign equity joint ventures*, Ph.D. Thesis, Enschede: 2000; Redding, S.G. (1993), *The spirit of Chinese capitalism*, Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter. Because of the attention paid to the concept of trust in the context of organisational co-operation in and with Southeast Asian organisations, in particular Japanese and Chinese organisations, authors elaborate theoretically on the concept of trust and related issues, which makes it worthwhile to have a closer look at them. I shall return to that specific body of literature later on in this chapter.

23 pp. 16-17, Alter, C., & Hage, J. (1993), *Organizations working together*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications; trust is called the 'golden rule' in organisational co-operation, pp. 137, in: Huyzer, S.E. & Luimes, W. c.s. (1992), *Strategische samenwerking. Oriëntatie en implementatie* (translation: Strategic co-operation. Orientation and implementation), Alphen aan de Rijn, Zaventem: Samsom BedrijfsInformatie in co-operation with Coopers & Lybrand Dijkster Van Dien; pp. 37 & 49-51, in: Contractor, F.J. & Lorange, P. (1988), *Cooperative strategies in international business*, Massachusetts/Toronto: Lexington Books; pp. 17, Ying, H. & Korneliusen, T. (1992), Governance mechanisms in strategic alliances between competing firms: a relational perspective, Paper presented at the 1992 *Conference of the Academy of International Business*, Brussels, Belgium; Jia 1993; Cray, D. & Mallory, G. (1998), *Making sense of managing culture*, London, New York: International Thomson Business Press; Levine, S. & White, P.E. (1961) Exchange as a conceptual framework for the study of organizational relationships, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 5: 583-601.

24 See for example Chinese trade networks, Redding 1993; Menkhoff, Th. (1994), Trade routes, trust and tactics. Chinese traders in Singapore, in: Evers, H.D. & Schrader, H. (eds), *The moral economy of trade. Ethnicity*

often refer to game theory<sup>25</sup> or transaction cost theory<sup>26</sup>, in which latter case they often criticise its strictly rational approach, as an introduction to their discussion of the importance of the 'non-rational' element of trust in exchange. The proposal made by the SVC to the communities to inaugurate a joint venture can be considered a win-win situation from the perspective of rational choice theory: the SVC gains political legitimacy and the communities the much needed economic benefits. And as the offer was accepted in the ceremonial meeting in November 1998, rational choice theory seems to be an appropriate and adequate explanation. A theoretical milestone in this respect came with the study of Axelrod who set up a computer tournament to study the critical factor which could shed light upon the 'evolution of co-operation'.<sup>27</sup> The central question Axelrod wanted to answer was 'under what conditions will co-operation emerge in a world of egoists without central authority?'<sup>28</sup> He considers people selfish by nature so why should they co-operate if there is no central authority which says 'thou shall co-operate' nor forces someone to co-operate. He found the representation for this question in the Prisoner's Dilemma (PD).<sup>29</sup> This game was first developed in 1950 by Flood and Dresher of the RAND Corporation in California. The anecdote was formulated a few months later by A.W. Tucker of Princeton University.<sup>30</sup> Rapoport wrote an extensive book about the mathematical underpinning of the PD in 1965.<sup>31</sup> The PD is based upon a simple but thought-provoking story: Two men, caught with stolen goods, are suspected of burglary, but there is not enough evidence to convict either of them of that crime,

*and developing markets*, London, New York: Routledge. But also in Africa, see for instance, Bagachwa, M.S.D. (1997), Trust building in Tanzania's informal credit transactions, in: Van Dijk, M.P. & Rabellotti (eds), *Enterprise clusters and networks in developing countries*, London: Frank Cass. In this latter article it is interesting to note how exchange and trust relations facilitate processes of exclusion, which I shall describe further on: pp. 161, '(...) the extended family, friendship, kinship institutions and other social relations such as either village members, school ties and networks of contact persons are instrumental in shaping personal ties that (...) enhance trust between transacting parties (...)'

25 See 'Pionier-project' Raub, W. & Weesie J. (1993), *The management of matches. Decentralized mechanisms for cooperative relations with applications to organizations and households*, Utrecht: ISCORE, ISCORE Paper no. 1, pp. 26. 'We should note that most current studies of trust revolve around rational-actor analysis of iterated Prisoner's Dilemma games', Seligman, A.B. (1997), *The problem of trust*, Princeton: Princeton University Press; Nalebuff, B.J. & Brandenburger, A.M. (1996), *Co-opetition*, London: Harper Collins Business

26 Transaction cost theory based on the work of Williamson, O.E. (October 1979), Transaction cost economics: the governance of contractual relations, *Journal of Law and Economics*, 22; specifically around the theme of trust: Williamson, O.E. (1993), Calculativeness, trust, and economic organization, *Journal of Law and Economics*, 34: 453-502; the transaction cost theory is criticised by (amongst others) Granovetter, M. (1985), Economic action and social structure: the problem of embeddedness, *American Journal of Sociology*, 91: 481-510, pp. 487, Economic actors '(...) do not behave or decide as atoms outside a social context, nor do they adhere slavishly to a script written for them by a particular intersection of social categories that they happen to occupy'; Young, L.C. & Wilkinson, I.F. (1989), The role of trust and cooperation in marketing channels: a preliminary study, *European Journal of Marketing*, 23 (2).

27 Axelrod, R. (1984), *The evolution of co-operation*, London: Penguin Books. In this book he continued in the footsteps of earlier research in the field of evolutionary biology started by Hamilton in 1964 with an article entitled: The genetical evolution of social behaviour, *Journal of Theoretical Biology*, and followed up by Trivers, R.L. (1971), The evolution of reciprocal altruism, *Quarterly Review of Biology*, 46: 35-57 and Edward O. Wilson's major work in 1975, *Sociobiology, the new synthesis*, Cambridge Mass., London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

28 Axelrod 1984: 3.

29 Ibid: 7.

30 Ridley 1996: 55.

31 Rapoport, A & Chamman, A.M. (1965), *Prisoner's Dilemma. A study in conflict and co-operation*, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press

unless one or both confess. They could, however, be convicted of possession of stolen goods, a lesser offence. The prisoners are not permitted to communicate. The situation is explained to each suspect separately. If both confess, both will be convicted of burglary and sentenced to two years in prison. If neither confesses, both will be convicted of possession of stolen goods and given a six-month prison sentence. If only one confesses, he will go scot-free, while the other, convicted on the strength of his partner's testimony, will get the maximum sentence of five years.<sup>32</sup> In terms of the reward, freedom, one would predict that parties will not co-operate.<sup>33</sup> But Axelrod proved otherwise in a reiterated PD. According to Axelrod, the game boils down to a simple choice: either you co-operate or you defect. In 1979 he set up a computer tournament in which people could submit a computer programme in which they tried to earn as many points as possible in a game repeated 200 times. He gave rewards and punishment to both players accordingly and came up with the diagram as shown in figure 1.<sup>34</sup>

		Column Player	
		Co-operate	Defect
Row Player	Co-operate	R=3, R=3 Reward for mutual co-operation	S=0, T=5 Sucker's payoff, and temptation to defect
	Defect	T=5, S=0 Temptation to defect and sucker's payoff	P=-1, P=-1 Punishment for mutual defection

Figure 1

If both people co-operate they both get three-point reward. If only one co-operates, the one who *does* not co-operate is awarded the maximum of five points. The nice guy gets nothing. He is considered a sucker, who receives the 'sucker's payoff'. If neither co-operates, they will both be punished with only one point. In the first round fourteen people submitted a programme. Surprisingly the 'nice' programmes turned out on top. The programmes, which were most inclined to co-operate, scored more points than the sneaky defectors going for the maximum of five points.<sup>35</sup> The programmes, which initiated defection at some stage, were not among the top eight. The winner was the strate-

32 pp. 18, Rapoport, A. (1974), Prisoner's Dilemma - recollections and observations, in: Rapoport, A. (ed.), *Game theory as a theory of conflict resolution*, Dordrecht, Boston: D. Reidel Publishing Company.

33 pp. 7, Kleinnijenhuis, J. (1998), *Strategische communicatie* (translation: Strategic communication), Inaugural address, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

34 Axelrod 1984: 8.

35 Of course the nice strategies didn't win with the maximum possible score, which can only be reached if one player sacrifices him or herself completely (i.e. ironically co-operates) for the sake of someone else (i.e. who constantly defects).

gy called 'Tit-for-tat' by Rapoport. Its strategy was as simple as it was effective. It starts with co-operating and then just follows every move of the other player. If that player defected, next time Tit-for-tat defected also. But co-operation was repaid with co-operation. Axelrod invited people for a second round. By way of introduction he sent them the results and analysis of the first round. Sixty-two programmes entered the competition and again Tit-for-tat came out number one. In a third round he entered all the strategies in the computer and repeated the simulated game many times. Gradually the 'nasty' programmes lost out and the 'nice' strategies started to dominate the field. Hence an evolution of co-operation in a strictly controlled experiment, out of context.

Axelrod's explanation for Tit-for-tat's success was the strategy's 'combination of being nice, retaliatory, forgiving and clear. Its niceness prevents it from getting into unnecessary trouble. Its retaliation discourages the other side from persisting whenever defection is tried. Its forgiveness helps restore mutual co-operation. And its clarity makes it intelligible to the other player, thereby eliciting long-term co-operation'.<sup>36</sup> In other words, Tit-for-tat can be trusted as has been proven through strictly repaying reciprocal obligations. Reciprocity in the PD seems to generate trust. Reciprocity and trust are two sides of the same coin. Axelrod comes to the conclusion that the heart of the success of Tit-for-tat is reciprocity.<sup>37</sup> Tit-for-tat reciprocates both co-operation and defection.

At 200  
with  
measures  
Axelrod could now also answer his central question: people co-operate, not despite their selfishness, but because of their selfishness: the physical reward (i.e. number of points collected during the game) is highest when co-operating. Despite its centrality in explaining the success of Tit-for-tat, Axelrod does not elaborate on the concept of reciprocity at all nor does he relate it explicitly to processes of trust formation. He stayed within the sphere of evolutionary biology in which reciprocity is recognised as an important principle and is mainly studied in the field of animal behaviour. But conceptually reciprocity was not developed any further. The same holds true for the field of organisation studies, where reciprocity is considered important in strategic alliances as I described earlier; reciprocal processes are generally one-dimensionally considered to be leading to an ultimate and mutual economic win-win-situations. This latter is an interesting and important observation in itself because organisation and management studies did borrow widely from anthropology, especially from symbolic anthropologists like Geertz and Turner, in the development of the field of organisational culture and symbolism in the eighties and nineties. But obviously they did not look any further in the 'treasure trove' of anthropological theory and conceptualisation and therefore 'missed' the concept of reciprocity.<sup>38</sup> If they had done so they would perhaps or probably have nuanced their one-dimensional perspective on reciprocal processes as evolving only towards and implying only economic win-win-situations earlier on. So, although the mechanism and principle of reciprocity and related trust is considered a crucial concept in explaining strategic co-operation in organisations, in evolutionary biology and in general, the concept itself has scarcely been developed in these spheres. For that I had to turn to the social sciences, and more in particular to anthropology.

36 Ibid: 54.

37 Ibid: 118.

38 pp. vii, Jeffcutt, P. (1999), Editorial, *Organization Studies*, Special issue: *From the industrial to the post-industrial subculture*, Jeffcutt, P. (ed.), 20, issue 4.

## The Secularisation of Reciprocity

Simmel sees social exchange as the dominant social relation in society.<sup>39</sup> He saw men as *Homo reciprocus*.<sup>40</sup> Simmel argues that there are two conditions, constitutive factors, which are important in relation to social exchange: reciprocity and trust.<sup>41</sup> Trust, to which I shall turn in the next section, is considered to be the integrative force behind social relations and makes the wider context in which they are embedded tolerable and bearable in terms of complexity and uncertainty. Exchange teaches us reciprocity in as far as every exchange involves 'a sacrifice in return for a gain'.<sup>42</sup>

Reciprocity is a theme with a long tradition within the social sciences in general as my reference to Simmel indicates, and within the anthropological discipline in particular. Malinowski used and explored the concept in his ethnographic account of the Kula ring of the Trobrianders as early as 1922.<sup>43</sup> Latter-day interpretations of the concept of reciprocity are already recognisable in this study. Let me introduce the Kula ring briefly in Malinowski's own words. 'The Kula is a form of exchange, of extensive, inter-tribal character; it is carried on by communities inhabiting a wide ring of islands, which form a closed circuit (...) Along this route, articles of two kinds (...) are constantly travelling in opposite directions. In the direction of the hands of the clock, moves constantly one of these kinds - long necklaces of red shell, called *soulava* (...) In the opposite direction moves the other kind - bracelets of white shell, called *mwali* (...) Each of these articles, as it travels in its own direction on the closed circuit, meets on its way articles of the other class, and is constantly being exchanged for them. Every movement of the Kula articles, every detail of the transactions is fixed and regulated by a set of traditional rules and conventions, and some acts of the Kula are accompanied by an elaborate magic ritual and public ceremonies'.<sup>44</sup> This form of exchange was purely non-utilitarian. But the people who exchanged the ceremonial shells traded alongside this ritual exchange in

39 pp. 50, Msztal, B.A. (1996), *Trust in modern societies*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

40 This latter term I derive from Godbout 1998: 206. The problem with presenting man like that though is that if every human relation is an exchange relation with morally reciprocal sentiments, the term loses its distinguishing, and thus analytical, power in social interaction. This can be considered a general problem with what in anthropology is called 'human universals' (pp. 107-108, Brown, D.E. (1991), *Human universals*, New York, London: McGraw-Hill). An answer to this problem, at least in this thesis, is that I do not try to distinguish reciprocal from non-reciprocal behaviour. I try to differentiate types of reciprocal exchange in organisational co-operation in relation to processes of (white) identity construction. This differentiation is based finally on the historical and social context and situationality. The analytical power of the concept of reciprocity as universal is 'restored' by paying extensive attention to context. Contexts differ and therefore reciprocal exchange relations vary.

41 Simmel, G. (1971), *Georg Simmel on individuality and social forms*, Edited and with an introduction by D.N. Levine, Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press.

42 Ibid: 48-51.

43 Malinowski, B. (1922), *Argonauts of the western Pacific; an account of native enterprises and adventure in the archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea*, New York: E.P. Dutton. In actual fact the concept had a 'try out' in an earlier article he wrote in 1920 in *Man*, entitled 'Kula. The circulating exchange of valuables in the archipelagoes of Eastern New Guinea' as Malinowski indicates on pp. 94. According to Polanyi quoted in Kayongo (1987), 'the founding father of modern reciprocity theory was the German anthropologist, Richard Thunwald, in an empirical study on the marriage system of the Banaro of New Guinea (1915)', pp. 35, in: Kayongo, K. (1987), *Reciprocity and interdependence: the rise and fall of the Kololo empire in southern Africa in the 19th century*, Lund: Almqvist & Wiksell International.

44 Malinowski 1922: 81.

many utilitarian goods, like food, canoes and utensils.<sup>45</sup> The ceremonial exchange of the Kula obviously facilitated an atmosphere in which politically independent groups could do the actual trading without fear of conflict. In other words the ceremonial exchange of gifts created trust between the partners. 'As to the economic mechanism of the transactions, this is based on a specific form of credit, which implies a high degree of mutual trust and commercial honour – and this refers also to the subsidiary, minor trade, which accompanies the Kula proper'.<sup>46</sup> The Kula consisted of transactions within a community, with neighbouring villages and with villages on other island, separated by sea.<sup>47</sup> The mutual duties, obligations and privileges differed according to the distance (i.e. geographical and at the same time social) between the respective villages of the Kula partners.<sup>48</sup> The two types of exchange, ceremonial and trade, were kept strictly apart at all times. Although Malinowski's work is regarded as classical within the anthropological discipline and he is seen as the father of the anthropological method of fieldwork, called participant observation, he is hardly ever recognised as the father of reciprocity. That honour is given to Marcel Mauss. His *Essay sur le Don*, written in 1925, but only published in the year of his death in 1950, marked a major theoretical breakthrough of the concept.<sup>49</sup>

In his essay Mauss asks himself a central question '(i)n primitive or archaic types of society what is the principle whereby the gift has to be repaid? What force is there in the thing given which compels the recipient to make a return.'<sup>50</sup> In order to answer this question, he makes a distinction between three obligations: giving, receiving and repaying.<sup>51</sup> He answers his central question with reference to the rather vague and mystic power of the *hau*, which is a Maori concept of a power which 'travels with' the gift and always wants to return to its initial giver, in the form of and mediated by a return gift. This *hau* motivates and presses the recipient to feel a moral obligation towards the giver to make a return. The *hau*, then, can be interpreted as the 'spirit of the gift'<sup>52</sup> and would essentially function as 'an instrument used to cement inter-community relationships'.<sup>53</sup> This latter seems an obvious, though functionalist, explanation of the Kula, because it was politically independent groups (i.e. potential rivals) which engaged in reciprocal exchange. But if a spirit may be an explanation for creating a moral obligation to repay, it does not answer the question of why anything is given in the first place. What obligates people to give? In relation to the *potlatch*<sup>54</sup> Mauss explains that a chief has an obli-

gation to give in an excessive way, in order to keep his subjects 'in the shadow of his name'.<sup>55</sup> If not, he loses his rank. In essence the obligation to give stems from the obligations it creates in others. This seems a rather unvarnished strategic consideration for giving and far removed from the mythical *hau*. Especially the fact that the giving should be excessive suggests strategic considerations. Giving seems to serve two goals at once. It is a way of decreasing social distance, in the sense of sharing. On the other hand it creates, or even invests in, social distance because the recipient is now indebted to the giver. When on top of this the giving is excessive, the ambivalence of gifts and giving becomes crystal clear: gifts might be interpreted as generosity but can at the same time be interpreted as an act of violence and humiliation to the recipient who might not be able to repay his debt.<sup>56</sup> In the same fashion the obligation to receive is saturated with strategic considerations. To accept a gift in a *potlatch* is to accept a challenge, the challenge to be able to repay. Not taking up that challenge marks an early defeat. But refusing from a political powerful position is perceived as a political act of strength and counter challenge.<sup>57</sup> In the context of the American *potlatch*, the obligation to return a gift is mandatory. If not, face is lost forever and the disgrace is immense. The same loss of face also applies to the Maori who are not able to repay a gift, and among whom gift giving, according to Mauss, also has overtones of competitiveness.<sup>58</sup> But, in the context of the Maori, the strict political interpretation of reciprocal exchange in the *potlatch* is abandoned for introducing the *hau* as the seemingly ultimate explanation of the obligation to repay.

The definition of *hau* is derived from a Maori sage. "I shall tell you about *hau*. *Hau* is not the wind. Not at all. Suppose you have some particular object, *taonga*, and you give it to me; you give it to me without a price. We do not bargain over it. Now I give this thing to a third person who after a time decides to give me something in repayment for it (*utu*), and he makes me a present of something (*taonga*). Now this *taonga* I received from him is the spirit (*hau*) of the *taonga* I received from you and which I passed on to him. The *taonga* which I receive on account of the *taonga* that came from you, I must return to you. It would not be right on my part to keep this *taonga* whether they were desirable or not. I must give them to you since they are the *hau* of the *taonga* which you gave me. If I were to keep this second *taonga* for myself I might become ill or even die".<sup>59</sup> Actually this description of the *hau* was meant for the spirit of the forest before the start of bird hunting. But Mauss took it out of its context and made it applicable to all gifts.<sup>60</sup> All gifts were possessed by the *hau*, which pushed the recipient into repaying his debt. 'Such a return will give its donor authority and power over the original donor, who now becomes the latest recipient. That seems to be the motivating force behind the obligatory circulation of wealth, tribute and gifts (...)'.<sup>61</sup> And so a spiritual force came to

45 Ibid: 83.

46 Ibid: 85-86.

47 Ibid: 103.

48 Ibid: 91.

49 Mauss, M. (1966)[1950], *The Gift*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

50 Ibid: 1.

51 Ibid: 37.

52 Ibid: 8-9.

53 Kayongo 1987: 36.

54 The *potlatch* of the Kwakiutl of the Northwest coast of America (i.e. northern Vancouver Island and the adjacent British Columbia coast) is described in an introductory book to anthropology as '(...) ceremonial feasts featuring displays of wealth, ostentatious destruction of personal property, and lavish gift giving - all of these designed to enhance the host's fame and social standing and to challenge the invited guests to reciprocity that might bring them to economic ruin and social disgrace' (pp. 118, Pi-Sunyer, O. & Salzmann, Z. (1978), *Humanity and culture. An introduction to anthropology*, London, Dallas: Houghton Mifflin Company).

55 Mauss 1966: 38.

56 pp. 12, Godelier, M. (1999), *The enigma of the gift*, Cambridge: Polity Press (Translation from French, *L'Énigme du don*, 1996).

57 Mauss 1966: 39-40.

58 Ibid: 6, especially notes 8 and 9.

59 Ibid: 9.

60 Godelier 1999: 16.

61 Mauss 1966: 10.

be seen as responsible for creating a moral obligation for any recipient to repay a gift. Gone is the specific political and down-to-earth interpretation of giving, receiving and repaying. Oddly enough, it is mainly this mystical interpretation which has survived as the legacy of Mauss over the years and his socio-strategic considerations about giving and receiving within the context of the potlatch were left out of the collective memory of Mauss' contribution to science.

This mystification of reciprocal processes by Mauss has been criticised from many sides.<sup>62</sup> Firth for instance criticised Mauss for reifying the concept of the *hau* as having active potential.<sup>63</sup> Lévi Strauss went further in his criticism and accused Mauss of 'going native' without recognising that such culturally specific explanation cannot be generalised as such. He did that in strong words: 'Are we not dealing with a mystification, an effect quite often produced in the minds of ethnographers by indigenous people? (...) In the case in point, instead of applying his principles consistently from start to finish, Mauss discards them in favour of a New Zealand theory – one which is immensely valuable as an ethnographical document; yet it is nothing other than a theory. The fact that Maori sages were the first people to pose certain problems and to resolve them in an infinitely interesting but strikingly unsatisfactory manner does not oblige us to bow to their interpretation. *Hau* is not the ultimate explanation for exchange; it is the conscious form whereby men of a given society, in which the problem had particular importance, apprehended an unconscious necessity whose explanation lies elsewhere'.<sup>64</sup> Lévi Strauss' solution was to propose looking for the fundamental structure underlying all three aspects of the exchange relation, being giving-receiving-returning, instead of focusing on its parts as Mauss had done. '(...) Mauss seems – rightly – to have been controlled by a logical certainty, namely, that *exchange* is the common denominator of a large number of apparently heterogeneous social activities. But exchange is not something he can perceive at the level of the facts. Empirical observation finds not exchange, but only, as Mauss himself says, 'three obligations: giving, receiving, returning'. So the whole theory calls for the existence of a structure, only fragments of which are delivered by experience (...) But instead (...) Mauss strives to reconstruct a whole out of parts'.<sup>65</sup>

Finally the demystification and secularisation were complete when Sahlins criticised Mauss for not mentioning the relevance of the principle of reciprocity in economic life

62 Jenkins argues though that Mauss had not so much mystified the reciprocal mechanism by introducing the *hau*, it was his particular style of reasoning which is misread by its critics: 'He (...) describes ethnographic examples which enable our thinking to develop along certain lines (...) and identifies a number of indigenous concepts that appear to name and discuss aspects of the problem being defined. (...) This approach may undermine a positivist account of the possibility of disinterested sociological description, but at the same time, it frees what we may call sociology's vocation, which becomes that of recasting the possibilities of human orderings, through gaining an understanding of the compulsions at work and the resources available', pp. 91, Jenkins, T. (1998), Derrida's reading of Mauss, in: James, W. & Allen, N.J. (eds), Marcel Mauss. *A centenary tribute*, New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, pp. 83-94. In general Mauss 'refused to theorise', which also holds for that other famous concept in his treatise on the gift, the 'total social fact', pp. 65, Gofmann, A. (1998), A vague but suggestive concept: the 'total social fact', in: James, W. & Allen, N.J. (eds), *Marcel Mauss. A centenary tribute*, New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, pp. 63-70.

63 pp. 419-420, Firth, R. (1959), *Economics of the Zealand Maori*, Wellington: Government Printer.

64 pp. 47-48, Lévi Strauss, C. (1987), *Introduction to the work of Marcel Mauss*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, italics added.

65 Ibid: 45-47.

and confining it to kinship relations and related societies (i.e. non-Western lineage economies) alone.<sup>66</sup> Sahlins also begged our attention for that often-forgotten and neglected 'third person' who was also part of the original sage. He stated that that third person was necessary to make clear that the initial recipient of the gift had made a profit with the gift via a third person and that he was now obliged to share that profit with the initial giver.<sup>67</sup> With this line of reasoning Sahlins introduced an almost 'bookkeeping' approach to reciprocity, conceptualised in his typology of three types of reciprocal relations<sup>68</sup>: *generalised reciprocity* which refers to transactions which are altruistic in nature, in which 'the counter is not stipulated by time, quantity, or quality: the expectation of reciprocity is indefinite'. Examples of this type of reciprocity are found in socially tight groups like families and near kinsmen. It refers to a solidary community. *Balanced reciprocity* as the term indicates has to do with direct exchange of things material or immaterial of approximately the same value, in which reciprocation is direct and without delay. This type of reciprocity is less personal and tends to be more economic in nature, although the social aspect of the mechanism remains important. The main examples of this type are trade and buying-selling relations. Finally *negative reciprocity* is characterised by 'an attempt to get something for nothing'; by whatever means available... The pursuit of self interest in its purest anti-social form. Examples can be found in theft, chicanery and haggling.<sup>69</sup> The distinction between the three types runs parallel with the increase in social distance between actors involved in the reciprocal mechanism.

A similar approach is taken by Van Baal<sup>70</sup> who discerns four types of reciprocal relations, although he indicates the increasing strategic and instrumental aspects of a reciprocal relation in relation to increasing social distance more explicitly than Sahlins. The first two types, gift exchange and the give-and-take that typifies interaction between the members of small groups are the most personal of the four. Exchange takes place between people who are socially close and know each other in an informal way and who show a willingness to co-operate as partners. In the third type, trade, and the fourth, negative reciprocity, people see each other not as partners as such but increasingly as parties in exchange. The reciprocal relation is constantly tending towards balance as the parties perceive each other as equals and negotiate, implicitly as in negative reciprocity, or explicitly as in trade, for a balanced account for both 'without any soft-heartedness'<sup>71</sup> on either side, although the word 'balance' has a particular meaning in the case of negative reciprocity. When, for instance, someone is murdered, the injured party will never

66 pp. 186, Sahlins, M.D. (1972), *Stone age economics*, New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

67 pp. 998-1012, Sahlins, M.D. (1970), The spirit of the gift, in: Pouillon, J. & Miranda, P. (eds), *Echanges et communications, Part II*, The Hague, Paris: Mouton. See also p. 201, Raatgever, H.J. (1988), *De verwantschappelijke economie. Essays in de historisch-materialistische antropologie* (translation: The lineage economy. Essays in historic-materialistic anthropology), Brugge: Walleyndruk NV.

68 pp. 31-33, Sahlins, M.D. (1996), On the sociology of primitive exchange, in: Komter, A.E. (ed.), *The gift. An interdisciplinary approach*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. This is the same text as in Sahlins' *Stone age economics*. I refer to this revised publication especially to indicate and illustrate the increasing academic attention being paid to reciprocity and related concepts in the nineteen nineties. In this book edited by Komter other 'classics' on reciprocity are also included like Malinowski, Simmel and others.

69 Sahlins 1972: 195.

70 pp. 94-107, Van Baal, J. (1981), *Man's quest for partnership: the anthropological foundations of ethics and religion*, Assen: Van Gorcum.

71 Ibid: 95.

get that person back, no matter what punishment is meted out to the murderer or how much compensation is asked. Nevertheless a sense of balance is reached through the atonement of the wrongdoer(s).<sup>72</sup> So from the perspective of (re)payment, the relationship is not at all balanced in the sense of an equilibrium. But it is in the perception of the parties through atonement on one side, but also through the 'feeling' of the injured party that the other 'has paid' for its crime that a balance is reached; they feel compensated. This typology in effect implies, like Sahlins, that the reciprocal process is increasingly seen and used instrumentally and strategically as we follow the types from gift-exchange to negative reciprocity. Strategy and instrumentality are implemented through, often implicit and indirect, bargaining and negotiations. The stranger the exchange partner becomes, as in negative reciprocity, the more calculation is allowed and even openly revealed (i.e. the greater the social distance).<sup>73</sup>

In a later publication by Godbout, this point of view is shaded in the sense that not all reciprocal relations between strangers can be considered using the characteristics of negative reciprocity.<sup>74</sup> He gives the example of volunteer organisations which provide services to the community without expectations of reciprocity, i.e. charity. The volunteers working within the context of this type of organisations like the Salvation Army or Third World groups have to deal with people who are complete strangers to them and far removed from them socially. Despite this they provide them services. Godbout presents, amongst other studies, a case study of blood donor organisations to illustrate his point of people presenting a gift, i.e. their blood, to complete strangers who they do not know and will never meet. And the characteristics of negative reciprocity as described above do not apply, or in the words of Godbout, 'there is no correlation between the proximity of the protagonists and the elasticity of equivalence'.<sup>75</sup> The examples given by Godbout share the common denominator that all the people involved in this type of organisations do so of their own free will and the organisations themselves are born of free will. The organisations are not officially or formally forced or asked to be created, although their founders may feel a moral compulsion. The volunteers participate because they choose to do so. My case-study is interesting because the initiative taken by the SVC to co-operate with their neighbouring communities was not completely taken out of free will, but 'suggested' or 'enforced' by a Government which said that conservancies had the right to exist if they nurtured a formal and meaningful relationship with their neighbours. Will the voluntary aspect between strangers alone count completely for the absence of aspects of negative reciprocity? Or are there also other factors at play? Could strategy be a mediating factor in this? Strategic considerations which prevent the escalation of a spiral of negative reciprocity? The introduction of strategies and strategic considerations in the conceptualisation of reciprocity has had a major impact on many 'established truths' about it.

72 Ibid: 105. Compare also Caplan, P. (ed.), (1995), *Understanding disputes. The politics of argument*, Oxford Providence: Berg.

73 pp. 207. Bourdieu, P. (1997), Selections from *The logic of practice*, in: Schrif, A.D. (ed.), *The logic of the gift. Towards an ethic of generosity*, London, New York, Routledge; see also Cronk, L. (1994), Reciprocity and the power of giving, in: Spradley, J.P. & McCurdy, D.W. (eds), *Conformity and conflict. Readings in cultural anthropology*, Harper Collins, (8th Edition), pp. 161-167.

74 Godbout 1998: 65-78.

75 Ibid: 77.

One of them is that by incorporating calculation, strategies, and social distance into reciprocal processes also meant that the strict division between 'gift' and 'commodity', introduced by Mauss and accepted in his wake, had to be abandoned. For Mauss, gifts were supposed to be personal and affective and to fit within the framework of reciprocity. Commodities were considered impersonal, clinical and to belong to the unsocial sphere of trade. Gregory, for instance, notes that 'commodity exchange establishes objective quantitative relationships between the objects transacted, while gift exchange establishes personal qualitative relationships between the subjects transacting'<sup>76</sup>, although he considers '(t)he theory of gifts and the theory of commodities (...) compatible'.<sup>77</sup> Just like Mauss he sees them operating in separate circuits. As we have seen, Sahlins and Van Baal do not present gifts and commodities as a binary opposition but as the extremes on a continuum of ideal-types. By definition this implies that in everyday reality many forms and hybrids will exist in between the ideal-types in which the boundary between pure gift and commodity is blurred.<sup>78</sup> They fitted gifts and commodities in the ideal-typical framework of reciprocal relations.<sup>79</sup> Other recent research indicates that on top of the blurred boundaries between commodities and gifts, the two categories are also mutually converted into each other. A commodity can be converted into to possession or gift through appropriation, which basically means that the owner adds his or her identity to it. A clear example is buying a house or flat, which can be clearly considered a commodity at the time of exchange. But by decorating and modifying it, the new owner gives meaning to the space, adds a personal identity to it, and hence appropriates the commodity as possession, as something personal. Similar transformations can take place between commodities and gifts.<sup>80</sup>

This wider interpretation of reciprocal processes leaning more towards its strategic and instrumental implications is reinforced and made even more plausible by another line of criticism on the more classical approach of reciprocity which developed in the

76 pp. 41, Gregory, C.A. (1982), *Gifts and commodities*, London, New York: Academic Press.

77 Ibid: 8.

78 Ethnographic evidence from Melanesia itself (where also the Trobriand Islands are located) to support the blurred boundary between gift and commodity is presented in: pp. 192, Carrier, J.G. (April 1992), *The gift in theory and practice in Melanesia: a note on the centrality of gift exchange*, *Ethnology. An International Journal of Cultural and Social Anthropology*, xxi (2): 'My objection to the essentialization of Melanesian societies as gift systems is that it makes it more difficult for us to see how gift relations and identities co-exist with and are modified by other, more Western sorts of relations and identities - a co-existence that exists both at the level of economic processes and at the level of people's understanding of those processes'.

79 pp. 9, Parry J. & Bloch. M. (eds) (1989), *Money and the morality of exchange*, Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press) argue that '(t)he radical opposition which so many anthropologists have discovered between the principles on which gift and commodity exchange are founded, derives in part, we believe, from the fact that our ideology of the gift has been contrasted in antithesis to market exchange. The idea of the purely altruistic gift is the other side of the coin from the idea of the purely interested utilitarian exchange'. In his own contribution Parry continues to draw our attention to the fact that the sharp division between gifts and commodities also meant a sharp division between our moral evaluation of the two: 'Gift exchange is safe and good; commodity exchange is threatening and bad'. (pp. 65, Parry, J. (1989), *On the moral perils of exchange*, in: Parry J. & Bloch. M. (eds) (1989), *Money and the morality of exchange*, Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 65-93). His argument is then, made plausible with ethnographic examples, that how a gift and a commodity are perceived depends entirely on the specific context. Both can be evaluated as good or bad.

80 pp. 693-694, Carrier, J.G. (1990), *The symbolism of possession in commodity advertising*, *Man. The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* (new series), 25: 693-706.



eighties. In this, the strict moral catalyst for reciprocal exchange as suggested by Mauss in the *hau* subjected to more questions. They ask themselves the question of to what degree the receiver is only morally obliged to return a gift? Is it only the 'shadow of indebtedness'<sup>81</sup> which presses the receiver to reciprocate? Is reciprocation only 'pushed' through moralism and a feeling of guilt on the part of the recipient? Or are there also 'pull factors' from the giver, which do not depend on the willingness of the receiver to repay his or her debt? To answer these questions Weiner<sup>82</sup> argues that the motivation to begin a reciprocal relation is not the desire to come socially closer to one another by creating mutual reciprocal obligations, but rather to confirm the difference between 'us' and 'them'. She argues that what is given signifies and is an expression of the individual or group identity which is, she claims, inalienable. Because of the inalienability of what is given, the giver has the right to get it back. In that sense the heart of reciprocity becomes 'keeping-while-giving'. So it is the *right* of the giver which triggers the return, rather than the receiver's *norm* of reciprocity.

Weiner's argument opened the way for a renewed interest in the concept of reciprocity. Stripped of its strictly moral base as built purely and simply on the moral guilt of the receiver, Yan<sup>83</sup> is able to interpret reciprocity in Chinese society in a far more instrumental and strategic way than would be possible on the basis of the conceptualisation in which the *hau* is considered essential. Without neglecting the social and affective aspects of a reciprocal relation though, he introduces strategies and negotiations as part and parcel of reciprocal networks. Following Walder he agrees that 'an exchange relationship (...) mingles instrumental intentions with personal feeling'.<sup>84</sup> In any reciprocal relationship the actors are both parties and partners simultaneously in varying degrees, following the typologies described above in terms of social distance. In generalised reciprocity, the participants start more as partners than as parties. In negative reciprocity, only parties remain and the reciprocal process can certainly not be described in terms of being anything near an economic win-win-situation only. It is not always clear to the participants what the exact mixture is in a particular setting and context which adds a strong element of taxation and estimation to the reciprocal process. Introducing or allowing strategic aspects into the conceptualisation of reciprocity results in ascribing more uncertainty to the individual actors and consequently more uncertainty about interpreting and estimating winning or losing in the process. Win-win is certainly no longer the only option available in reciprocal exchange.

In Chinese society specific attention paid to reciprocal rights and obligations, the verb *p(b)ao*, often in relation to trust, is considered a *sine qua non* for being able to survive in the social and cultural environment. It is seen as a continuous thread running

81 Van Baal 1975: 37.

82 Weiner, A. (1992), *Inalienable possessions: the paradox of keeping-while-giving*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Weiner's analysis triggered Godelier to radicalise Weiner's position and argue things with the greatest imaginary power and thus the greatest symbolic value are kept and will even never be given or exchanged, or enter the stage of circulation and belong to the sacred, pp. 33 & 200 a.f., Godelier 1999.

83 Yan, Y. (1996), *The flow of gifts. Reciprocity and social networks in a Chinese village*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

84 Ibid: 17.

from ancient to late imperial times.<sup>85</sup> If reciprocal obligations are not met, face is lost<sup>86</sup> which results in a feeling of intense shame, both for the person involved and the family. This context gives rise to a highly socially interrelated environment in which everybody is sensitive to social cont(r)act. The end result is that everybody is engaged in a web of reciprocal relations 'in which one finds oneself, defines oneself. Apart from this one can have no real identity'.<sup>87</sup> Such a network is called *guanxi*.<sup>88</sup> The concept of *xinyong*, or trust<sup>89</sup> that a person will live up to his or her reciprocal rights and obligations is paramount in these networks. Reciprocity and trust are seamlessly intertwined in Chinese society.<sup>90</sup> In business this means that a personal relationship along the lines of reciprocity is of prime importance to doing business later; 'pure economic rationality is not the sole determinant of the structure of economic relations'. But he who can combine the affective requirements of a business relationship with the effective ways of turning a situation to his own advantage is called successful and succeeds businesswise.<sup>91</sup> The mixed character and importance of reciprocity in organisational studies in China is summarised and at the same time emphasised in the contribution by Liu to a book on management and cultural values in Asia in which he presents the following figure to indicate the mixed nature of *p(b)ao* and the related concepts of *mianzi* and *renqing* in Chinese culture as mentioned and explained in note 86.

85 pp. 291, Yang, L.S. (1957), The concept of pao as a basis for social relations in China, in: Fairbanks, J.K. (ed.), *Chinese thought and institutions*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

86 Compare with the description of the potlatch of the Kwakiutl above. 'Face' describes the proper relationship with one's social environment', pp. 61, Hofstede, G. (1991), *Cultures and organisations. Software of the mind*, London: McGraw-Hill Book Company. Hu Hsien Chin (in Yang 1994) distinguishes between two types of face: *lian*, which 'violation or loss (...) results in social ostracism and the collapse of the ego as a whole'. *Mianzi* 'is gained or lost in the jockeying for social prestige and social advantage'. It is the latter which takes center stage in the 'art of *guanxi*', which I describe a little further on in the main text, pp. 140, Yang, M.M. (1994), *Gifts, favors, banquets: the art of social relationship in China*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press. See also Ho, D.Y. (1976), On the concept of face, *American Journal of Sociology*, 81 (4): 876-884; Hwang, K. (1987), Face and favor: the Chinese power game, *American Journal of Sociology*, 92 (4): 944-974. Related to face is the concept of *renqing* (favour): 'Upon receiving *renqing*, the receiver must, on the first appearance of an opportunity, try to repay the favour', pp. 156, Hwang in Liu, C. (1999), The concept of *bao* in organizational research, in: Kao, H.S.R., Sinha, D. & Wilpert, B., *Management and cultural values. The indigenization of organizations in Asia*, London, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

87 pp. 3, De Bary, W.T. (1991), *Learning for one's self: essays on the individual in neo-Confucian thought*, New York, London: Colombia University Press.

88 King, A.Y., (1991), *Kuan-shi and network building. A sociological interpretation*, *Daedalus, Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 120 (2).

89 *Xinyong* not only refers to trust in the moral sense but also to a person's (economic and monetary) credit standing in business (pp. 105, Cheng, L.K. (1985), *Social change and the Chinese in Singapore*, Singapore: Singapore University Press). In this respect Bourdieu's concept of trust as 'symbolic capital' (see below) is very appropriate.

90 pp. 135, Wels, H. (1996), Strategy as paradox and paradox as strategy. Images of and paradoxes in Chinese culture: expatriate managers in Sino-Western joint ventures, in: Koot, W.C.J., Sabelis, I. & Ybema, S. (eds), *Contradictions in context. Puzzling over paradoxes in contemporary organizations*, Amsterdam: VU University Press; pp. 57-58, Li, E. (1998), Building trust for successful partnership in China, in: Selmer, J. (ed.), *International management in China. Cross-cultural issues*, London, New York: Routledge.

91 pp. 297 & 318, De Gloppe, D.R. (1978), Doing business in Lukang, in: Wolf, A.P. (ed.), *Studies in Chinese society*, Stanford, Stanford University Press. See also Menkhoff, Th. (1993), Business on trust - Chinese social structure and non-contractual business relations in Singapore, Paper, presented at the Conference: *Chinese business houses in southeast Asia since 1870*, 22-24 March.

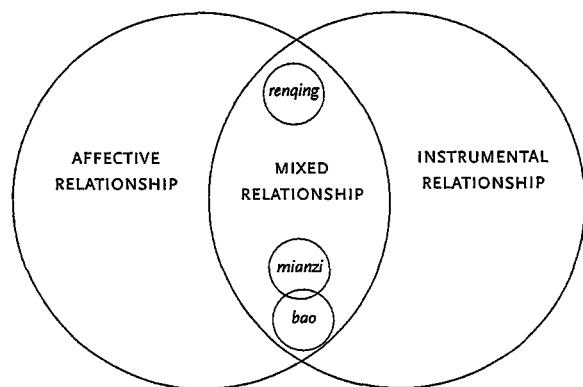


Figure 2 Mixed nature of *p(b)ao* and related concepts of *mianzi* and *renqing*<sup>92</sup>

The more strategic aspects of reciprocal relations are highly developed in China<sup>93</sup>, in a tradition that can be traced back to the era of the Warring States (approx. 403-221 BC), the Chinese hold philosophical military strategists in high esteem. A very well known strategist, not the only one but probably the most renowned one, was Sun-Tzu who wrote 'The Art of War'<sup>94</sup>. In the period that followed these strategies were translated to everyday life and business practices.<sup>95</sup> Countless others – often nameless – Chinese strategists have made their contribution to this cultural tradition. This eventually led to a list of thirty-six (which should be interpreted as 'many') strategies with which most Chinese are very familiar. No wonder that intimate relationships of trust and friendship are at the same time part and parcel of 'sneaky' strategies and visa versa. A final example in this tradition is the book of Yang in which the managing of this balancing act and coping with the interrelation between affective and effective aspects of reciprocity is described as a subtle art<sup>96</sup> in the tradition of The Art of War. In her own words, '(...) in *guanxixue* [*guanxi*] can be found the elements of the 'obligation to give, to receive, and

to repay', a mixture of disinterested and instrumental generosity, of voluntary and coerced reciprocity'.<sup>97</sup> What is of further interest in her analysis of reciprocity in Chinese social networks, especially in relation to processes of organisational co-operation, is that she observes that the ambiguous nature of reciprocity, being both strategic and moral at the same time, can also be seen as 'a safeguard against (...) abuses'. The moral aspect of reciprocity can be seen as a constraint on abuse through its more self-ish and instrumental aspects. In that respect it seems a self-regulating system.<sup>98</sup>

The empirical and scientific explanation of reciprocal relations started with Malinowski who suggested that, although gift giving and trade were distinct circuits, they were highly related. Without gift-giving there would be no possibility for trade. Already from this perspective, reciprocity was perceived as a mixture between strategic and moral behaviour. People obligate others to gift-giving and honour the institution in a moral sense. But people are also motivated by a hidden agenda because it is a necessary precondition to be able to trade worldly goods. In the argument postulated by Mauss this mixture of intentions was continued, especially around the description of the *potlatch* there is an emphasis on the socio-political aspects of reciprocal relations. But his answer to the central question (i.e. 'in primitive or archaic types of society what is the principle whereby the gift has to be repaid?'), which has stood the test of time, portrayed reciprocity as a process floating with the intangible spirits of the *hau*. It was in criticising Mauss that authors like Firth and Lévi Strauss brought the process to earth again and paved the way for other authors to further reflect on the ambivalent nature of the concept of reciprocity. In the nineties a temporal consensus seemed to have been reached in that reciprocity is considered an ambivalent and ambiguous concept in which affective and effective elements are intertwined. On the one hand, this seems quite a conceptual development route to follow, but on the other the state-of-the-art in the nineties is not far away, perhaps slightly more nuanced, from the original meaning of gift as presented by Benveniste in his analysis of the origin of gift and exchange in Indo-European vocabulary. In the English language it can be best explained by looking at the verb 'to take' which permits two opposing meanings. One is 'to take something from someone', in the meaning to take away. The opposite one is 'to take something to someone', in the meaning of giving something to someone. "To give" and 'to take' thus proclaim themselves here, in a very ancient phase of the development of Indo-European languages, as notions that were organically linked by their polarity and which were susceptible of the same expression'.<sup>99</sup> It is actually the same ambivalence noted by Mauss himself in an article in 1924. Here he illustrates the ambivalence of the gift, being gift-present or gift-poison, with a short exposé on the ultimate gift for ancient Germans and Scandinavians, drink. Not for nothing is the word for gift in German *Geschenk*. *Schenken* is to pour and is the same word as in Dutch, *geschenk/ schenken*. But a drink especially can be a gift-present or a gift-poison.<sup>100</sup> And if it is a gift-present it can very easily be

92 Liu 1999: 157.

93 Chiao, C. (1977), The use of history as a political strategy by the Gang of Four, in: Chin, S.S.K., *The Gang of Four, first essays after the fall*, Centre of Asian Papers and Monographs, no. 23, University of Hong Kong; Chiao, C. (1986), Games are forever: a preliminary discussion on continuity and change in manipulative behaviour of the Chinese, in: Hån, S. (ed.), *Asian peoples and their cultures: continuity and change*, Seoul: National University Press; Chu, C. (1991), *The Asian mind game*, New York: Rawson Associates.

94 Ames, R.T. (translator) (1994) *Sun-Tzu, de kunst van het oorlogvoeren* (translation: Sun-Tzu: the art of war), Uitgeverij Areopagus.

95 pp. 438-449, Von Senger, H. (1988), *Strategemen, listen om te overleven* (translation: Stratagemms, tricks to survive), Rotterdam: Lemniscaat.

96 Yang 1994.

97 Ibid: 8.

98 Ibid: 142.

99 pp. 34, Benveniste, E. (1996) [1948-1949], *Gift and exchange in the Indo-European vocabulary* [Original from *Problems of general linguistics*], in: Schrift, A.D. (ed.), *The logic of the gift. Towards an ethic of generosity*, London, New York, Routledge.

100 Compare with title: Bailey, F.G. (1971), *Gifts and poison. The politics of reputation*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

come a gift-poison. 'It is always a charm anyway (...) which permanently link those who partake and is always liable to turn against one of them if he would fail to honor the law. The kinship of meaning linking gift-present to gift-poison is therefore easy to explain and natural'.<sup>101</sup> Godbout adds that when someone receives a gift from someone, he or she almost automatically says 'thank you', which in French is *merci*, which is the same word for saying that you are 'at the mercy' (*merci* in French again) of the giver to be gifted or poisoned.<sup>102</sup> It can be concluded that the particular ambivalences in the processes of reciprocity find their origin in the ambivalence in the notion of the gift itself (i.e. things exchanged), which form the heart of the reciprocal process. Although this ambivalence was recognised at an early stage, starting empirically with Malinowski, but also theoretically by Mauss himself, it was lost to the extent that 'the spirit of the *hau*' has haunted the intellectual legacy of Mauss for many years. In the nineties this ambivalence has come to the fore once again. This might be an interesting intellectual observation, but for people involved in it in day-to-day practice the ambivalence contributes a wealth of uncertainty and complexity to exchange relationships. Trust, as I suggested earlier, might be a partial and temporary answer to that uncertainty.

### Reciprocity and Trust

Trust has become a hot topic in the nineties. An influential sociological author like Giddens considers trust, not in persons but in abstract expert systems, an important precondition for survival in the (late)modern society.<sup>103</sup> Such trust, he argues is an almost inevitable answer to the potential enormity of threats to humanity, ranging from nuclear disaster to the greenhouse effect. Trust is a surviving mechanism to escape the Juggernaut, as he describes the weight of global developments and local action.<sup>104</sup> Misztal, like Giddens, argues that renewed scientific interest in trust has to do with the (transitional) phase world development is postulated to be currently, in terms of rapid development and symbolically emphasised by the approach of the third millennium.<sup>105</sup> Although it is not this macro, global or universal approach that I want to explore here, these recent publications are worth considering because they pinpoint for us the con-

101 pp. 30, Mauss, M. (1996) [1924], *Gift, gift* [First published in *Mélanges offerts à M. Charles Andler par ses amis et ses élèves*], in: Schrift, A.D. (ed.), *The logic of the gift. Towards an ethic of generosity*, London, New York, Routledge.

102 Godbout 1998: 8.

103 pp. 79-111, Giddens, A. (1990), *The consequences of modernity*, Cambridge: Polity Press; Tyler & Kramer argue along similar lines that 'in this evolving world, people increasingly cannot count on loyalty to others as a basis for reciprocity (...) In a world without such reciprocal obligations, it is hardly surprising that people are interested in learning how to negotiate effectively to protect their self-interest', pp. 3, T.R. & Kramer, R.M. (1996), *Whither trust?*, in: Kramer, R.M. & Tyler, T.R. (eds), *Trust in organizations. Frontiers of theory and research*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications.

104 Ibid: 151-154. From Giddens' interpretation it becomes clear that trust has to do with 'assessing the risk involved in putting trust in someone [or expert system HW]', pp. 37, Knorringa, P. (1995), *Economics of collaboration in producer-trader relations. Transaction regimes between market and hierarchy in the Agra footwear cluster*, India, Ph.D Thesis Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

105 Misztal 1996: 3; Seligman 1997: 173-174: 'Our increasing inability to negotiate the boundaries of interaction without involving hard and vast rules and regulations is but another manifestation of the replacement of the open-ended negotiation of trust with the rule-bound behavior of system confidence'.

cern in current academic discourse in the social sciences, about what still binds people in a (post-modern) age of differentiation, fragmentation, creolisation and compartmentalisation and what constitutes cohesion and commitment.<sup>106</sup> Although these theorists are concerned with developing meta-narratives by which to understand these global processes, the central question of what binds people (still) is one that supersedes levels and is relevant at the micro-level as well, especially in a context of a case study concerning groups with rival identities.<sup>107</sup>

It is Simmel (1858-1918) who is of particular interest again as he sees exchange relationships as a dominating form of human interaction and in this line of reasoning connects the concept of reciprocity with the concept of trust, often through a tangible token, like a gift. A gift functions as a 'relationship signal'. The gift is a vehicle to express trust.<sup>108</sup> It is a material expression 'of our self-image and our image of others (...)', an 'objectification of the other-image' through which it 'casts a revealing light upon both giver and receiver'. For that reason, 'gift-giving is never entirely free of strategic implications'.<sup>109</sup> Simmel perceives individuals as being hampered by countless threats to other individuals, which taken together form a badly, and to a certain extent coincidentally, arranged figuration or interacting network.<sup>110</sup> There is no preconceived outcome of the configuration. It does not work towards a planned goal or objective. Everybody who participates in it is directly or indirectly interdependent. On the basis of this presupposition, Simmel then argues that reciprocity is a constitutive factor of all social relations and that one of its most important conditions is trust.<sup>111</sup> This means that he defines trust just as Elias defines power<sup>112</sup>, namely as a relational concept and not as an attribute, which some people can have, and others cannot. Trust can only exist in relation to someone else. Reciprocity and trust go hand in hand in Simmel's conceptualisation. The unpredictability and complexity of the social network, dominated by exchange, in which everybody participates, explains the conditionality of trust. Without trust the 'unman-

106 pp. 34, Hannerz, U. (1992), *Cultural complexity. Studies in the social organization of meaning*, New York: Columbia University Press, 'When you have heard and seen everything and registered the contradictions, irony and skepticism make up a more likely stance than commitment and piety'. This process leads to a 'network of perspectives', depending on where people are in the social structure (65).

107 I would like to radicalise Latour's perception of the distinction between local and global (Latour, B. (1993) [1991], *We have never been modern*, New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf). 'Is a railroad local or global? Neither. It is local at all points (...). Yet it is global, since it takes you from Madrid to Berlin or from Brest to Vladivostok.' (117) He comes to the conclusion that the extremities of local and global are therefore not interesting, they are both 'exaggerating the universality of their sciences' (120), but the 'intermediary arrangements' between the two are (122). I would like to interpret his metaphor of the railway line slightly differently and suggest that if you take the train from Brest to Vladivostok, it might be local at every point and global at the same time, but in the end it is the situationality at every stage and point en route which determines the temporary outcome of a social configuration. The concept of situationality allows for far more temporality and variance than the rather static concept 'local' or 'global' for that matter. I shall come back to the issue of situationality in the next chapter on methodology.

108 pp. 424, Cheal, D. (1986), *The social dimensions of gift behavior*, *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 3: 423-439.

109 pp. 5 & 6, Berking, H. (1999), *Sociology of giving*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications. Italics added.

110 In this perspective, Simmel can be regarded as the ultimate predecessor of Elias' configuration theory (Elias 1971), to which I shall turn later on the section on 'Reciprocity and Social Identity Construction'.

111 Simmel in Misztal 1996: 50.

112 Elias 1971: 81.

ageable complexity' of the day-to-day world would crush individuals.<sup>113</sup> Of course, trust does not reduce the complexity as such, but it increases people's tolerance of uncertainty.<sup>114</sup>

*o % learned*  
*and trust*  
Simmel describes trust as a combination, a mixture, of knowledge and ignorance. People who have complete knowledge about a subject obviously do not need trust: they know. If people do not know anything and still trust, this could be described as blind trust. This is a dangerous situation because it may provoke easy exploitation by others.<sup>115</sup> Trust is somewhere in between total ignorance and complete knowledge. It has a bit of both, although not somewhere in the middle. Trust has more to do with ignorance than with knowledge. '(...)(T)rust (...) involves one in a relation where the acts, character or intentions of the other cannot be confirmed. In this reading one trusts or is forced to trust - perhaps led to trust would be better - when one cannot know, when one has not the capabilities to apprehend or check on the other and so has no choice but to trust'.<sup>116</sup> In other words, trusting people always involves a 'leap of faith'. The knowledge about the Other can be based on actual experiences with the subject during previous interactions. But it can also be based on hearsay by others, in other terms, based on reputation. If a reputation is trustworthy it is a form of credit on which basis a reciprocal relationship could be started. Once a reputation is based, for better or for worse, it forms a fairly solid form of (dis)trust. It could be described as a form of 'frozen' trust or, like Knorringa does, as 'process trust'.<sup>117</sup> This solidity is derived from the process that a reputation is not kept so much because it proves itself all the time in interaction, but of the lack of contrary evidence.<sup>118</sup> This makes a reputation 'open to manipulation and stereotyping'.<sup>119</sup> Once a trustworthy reputation is established it can be strategically used as a smokescreen behind which less trustworthy activities take place. A beautiful empirical example comes from Chinese traders in Singapore. A customer and a seller have met and the buyer wants to deal with this particular businessman. 'In order to win the customer's trust and confidence, top-quality goods at special discounts are offered until such time when the patronage is secured. In the meantime, the cautious customer also shops at other places as a means of checking prices. Once the patronage is secured, then the margin of profit will be raised accordingly at appropriate occasions by various means, such as slight adulteration and underweighing of goods, or alternatively charging a higher price on a few items at a time'.<sup>120</sup> Despite the politicking in the process, the trader was only able to do this after he and his client were well acquainted with each other's names. 'All trust in the world begins with names, in connection with which stories can be told'.<sup>121</sup> Only on the basis of a name, right and duties can be attributed. Names are part of the political arena, as a name will 'incorporate ancestors [which] also

113 pp. 105, Luhmann, N. (1979), *Trust and power*, Chichester: Wiley.

114 Ibid: 150.

115 pp. 213-235, Gambetta, D. (ed.) (1988), *Trust, making and breaking co-operative relations*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

116 Seligman 1997: 21.

117 Knorringa 1995: 38.

118 Gambetta 1988: 234.

119 Misztal 1996: 121; compare also with note 58.

120 Cheng 1985: 118.

121 pp. 77, Blumenberg (1985) in: Berking: 1999.

means to feel entitled (and to assume the right) to claim certain things [like land] that are traditionally associated with them (...).<sup>122</sup>

From the above argument trust might be seen as a coping strategy for uncertainty, but it is at the same time ambivalent in much the same way as reciprocity is. Trust can be seen as the 'crux and paradox of the social condition itself'.<sup>123</sup> Recent research into the subject of trust in organisations seems to confirm this paradox, '(...) trust has both instrumental and non-instrumental components'.<sup>124</sup> Despite its own ambivalence, it is a real force in making or breaking co-operative relationships. It makes co-operative relations through trusting people with the 'same characteristics such as family background or ethnicity'.<sup>125</sup> Simultaneously this 'common way of life' generates trust.<sup>126</sup> This already indicates that trust not only implies a process of inclusion but at the same time, just like reciprocity as I shall argue later on, also a process of exclusion, of breaking co-operative relations or not making them possible, i.e. not allowing them to develop, in the first place. Reciprocity and trust, as related to reputation and social identity, are two sides of the same coin.<sup>127</sup> The ambiguity both concepts contain breaks down the one-dimensional view on reciprocal processes as only being, leading or evolving towards a mutual economic win-win situation.

## Reciprocity and Time

To give, to receive and to return a gift involves sequential time and timing. Also the uncertainty about the intentions in a reciprocal relationship and in a gift has to do with time. Uncertainty has to do with calculations and expectations over time. It has been French social scientists in particular who have drawn our attention to this often neglected aspect of reciprocal relations and its theoretical implications. In his first essay Derrida, for instance, argues the very possibility of the gift by concentrating on the exact

122 Berking 1999: 79.

123 pp. 417, Callan, H. (1984), The imagery of choice in socio-biology?, *Man. The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 19: 408-420.

124 Tyler & Kramer 1996: 12.

125 Knorringa 1995: 38.

126 pp. 15, Cheal, D. (1988), *The gift economy*, London, New York: Routledge.

127 Seligman 1997: 81; Kramer et al., recognise four identity-based types of trust, in the introductory chapter of the book explicitly linked to the tradition of Tajfel and Turner, on the basis of the criteria of motives for engaging in trust. For my argument it is important to note that one of them is 'reciprocity-based trust'. They do not emphasise the ambiguity of the reciprocal process in the anthropological tradition, but describe it in the economic tradition as a 'form of calculative trust not unlike those encountered in a number of recent economic and game-theoretic treatments'. (The other types are 'elicitive trust behavior', 'compensatory trust' and 'moralistic trust'.) Pp. 373-376, Kramer, R.M., Brewer, M.B. & Hanna, B.A. (1996), Collective trust and collective action. The decision to trust as a social decision, in: Kramer, R.M. & Tyler, T.R. (eds), *Trust in organizations. Frontiers of theory and research*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications. The whole range of papers in this book is in the tradition of studying trust in the economic, game-theoretic discipline. For instance, although they recognise risk as an important aspect of understanding processes of trust, there is not even one author who refers to important sociological work by Giddens or Beck on this particular subject! Axelrod, on the other hand, is mentioned in nearly all chapters.

difference between gifts and exchange.<sup>128</sup> If a gift is recognised as such it should not initiate a counter-gift. Otherwise it would not be a gift but the start of an exchange. Gifts cannot be exchanged as gifts. So every return by definition would annihilate the gift. Gifts are given and not exchanged. A pure gift can thus only be 'out of time'. This would mean that in everyday life gifts would not (or at least hardly) exist in their pure form. With this abstract but balanced argument he challenges the more conventional interpretations of Mauss and many in his footsteps in which gift-giving and exchange are considered (more or less) synonymous. The ultimate consequence though would seem to be to put the concept in the museum of sociological concepts denuded of any particular meaning for any longer describing social reality. But in daily life people are convinced of the ultimate 'giftness' of some of their forms of exchange. Maybe not in its pure form. But one can ask oneself, pure for whom? If it is not considered pure by intellectual standards, but it is by socio-cultural standards? In social life, gifts are in actual fact present. And Derrida seems to realise this and continues on another line of argument in his second essay but his point about the importance of time in reciprocal processes is beautifully made.<sup>129</sup>

The specificity of gift as present, he argues, implies that when a gift is given it cannot be returned at the same time. If a direct tit-for-tat is required, the thing given should be regarded as a commodity.<sup>130</sup> To make a gift a gift is to return it over time. So what goes with a gift is not so much a spirit, as Mauss suggested, but time. Time seems to mark the credit the receiver has. The more time is 'allowed', or if time for a return is not stipulated at all, the more credit the receiver has. Godbout calls this the 'bonding value'. It is 'the symbolic value that relates to the gift, to whatever circulates in the guise of a gift'.<sup>131</sup> The credit can be interpreted as the trust of the giver that the receiver will live up to his or her reciprocal obligations in time. The level of trust is related to the length of the time interval between gift and counter gift. The longer that period is allowed to extend without creating uncertainty about its outcome, the more trust is involved. But this should not be interpreted as chilly and objective calculation or a safe measurement of the 'amount of trust' simply because the extent of the 'term' also indicates a level of social bonding and solidarity between the giver and receiver. 'Time is marked by the gift in terms of credit and thus not a universal precondition but instead specifically constituted in the particularity of social relationships'.<sup>132</sup> Reciprocal relations must always be

128 Derrida, J. (1992), *Given time: I. Counterfeit money* (translation from *Donner le temps*, 1991), Chicago: Chicago University Press. It contains a collection of four essays, The time of the king; The madness of economic reason: a gift without present; 'Counterfeit money' I: poetics of tobacco; 'Counterfeit money' II: gift and counter-gift, excuse and forgiveness; see also pp. 97, 'For if to exchange is always to let someone have something against a corresponding return, to give can never consist in yielding one thing against another: it would no longer be a gift'. He argues that the only possibility to distinguish gift-giving from exchange is to state that, in exchange, the seller or creditor has a jural right to a return, which is not the case in gift-giving (pp. 104), Testart, A. (1998), Uncertainties of the 'obligation to reciprocate'. A critique of Mauss, in: James, W. & Allen, N.J. (eds), *Marcel Mauss. A centenary tribute*, New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, pp. 97-110.

129 Without making his switch explicit though.

130 Compare with section above on the fiction of a sharp and absolute distinction between gift and commodity.

131 Godbout 1998: 174-175.

132 Van Loon, J. (1995), Book review - Jacques Derrida - *Given time: I. Counterfeit money*, TCS.

placed in their particular context and the situationality of a relationship, in order to be understood properly.

Bourdieu also considers time essential in the sense that only 'time gives it [i.e. 'practices' including gift-exchange HW] its form, as the order of a succession, and therefore its direction and meaning'.<sup>133</sup> Time marks the intervals between giving, receiving and returning. But Bourdieu, in contrast to Derrida, continues by concentrating on the socio-political implications of the time element in reciprocal relations by arguing that '(t)o abolish the interval is also to abolish strategy'.<sup>134</sup> If a gift were only to be a present in its temporal connotation, i.e. without a past or a future, it would outlaw calculation. Time within a reciprocal relation allows for 'positions that are infinitely reversible and interchangeable'.<sup>135</sup> Time in reciprocal relations draws our attention once again to the varying degrees of the socio-political nature of reciprocal processes, which has already emerged in my description and interpretation of the typologies of Sahlins and Van Baal above. Bourdieu again emphasises the almost extreme situationality of reciprocal relations by saying that '(i)t is all a matter of style, which means in this case timing and choice of occasions; the same act - giving, giving in return, offering one's services, paying a visit, etc. - can have completely different meanings at different times, coming as it may at the right or wrong moment, opportunely or inopportunely'.<sup>136</sup> What he is actually referring to is the role of ritual within the context of reciprocity. Berking discerns three types and stages of rituals within a reciprocal relation: approach rituals, confirmation rituals and togetherness rituals. The first 'illustrate an interest and a readiness to invest'. The second are intended to signal 'that things are intended to stay as they are'. The last type of ritual is meant to 'no longer leave any doubt or any room for imagination and misunderstanding'.<sup>137</sup> If performed correctly they not only confirm the status quo between the partners, are able to cure the relationship between the partners as it were, but they also are a cultural strategy for the avoidance of conflict. They are affirmative, sometimes curative and often preventive in the sense of Turner's concept of creating, being able to create 'communitas'. Rituals in reciprocal relationships can be considered as anti-structure, to be able to return to the structure of society.<sup>138</sup>

But Bourdieu also adds something else to the discussion, which must be noted here specifically in relation to the discussion above about the difference between gift and commodity, between the intimate, personal sphere and the calculative, impersonal sphere. Bourdieu writes about the blurred frontier between the economic and symbolic spheres in life. The one is so 'inextricably intertwined' with the other that the dichotomy between economic and non-economic should be abandoned.<sup>139</sup> Bourdieu recognises, apart of economic capital, the importance of symbolic capital, which he defines as

133 pp. 190, Bourdieu, P. (1997a), Selections from The logic of practice, in: Schrif, A.D. (ed.), *The logic of the gift. Towards an ethic of generosity*, London, New York, Routledge.

134 Ibid: 199.

135 Godbout 1998: 132.

136 Bourdieu 1997a: 198.

137 Berking 1999: 12.

138 Ibid: 74. See for elaboration on the concept of 'communitas' and 'anti-structure', Turner, V. (1969), *The ritual process: structure and anti-structure*, Chicago: Chicago University Press.

139 Bourdieu 1997a: 212 & 214.

the capital of trust that stems from a reputation'.<sup>140</sup> Paradoxically, it is this symbolic capital that constitutes the best and maybe even only economic guarantee. Without it, economic capital would come to a stand still.<sup>141</sup> So it is with sound economic considerations that people invest heavily in terms of time and money in this symbolic capital, because they know that it produces and reproduces trust, which will, in time, be economically rewarded.<sup>142</sup> But it requires constant attention and must be nurtured, because this form of capital is far less easily measured and counted and therefore suspicions are always 'just around the corner'. In other words, people have to devote considerable economic capital to build up symbolic capital because they will always be uncertain (to a certain extent) about the exact status, there and then, of their symbolic capital. The conversion from economic to symbolic capital produces 'relations of dependence that have an economic basis but are disguised under a veil of moral obligations'.<sup>143</sup> Related to the earlier formulated typologies of Sahlins and Van Baal, it is now possible to conclude that they are indeed ideal typical and will never be found, in a pure form in social reality. In daily life, the different types will always be mingled and intertwined. The question of how they might be mingled and intertwined can only be answered temporarily by placing the practice of the reciprocal process in its particular time and context.

From what has been said above, it can be deduced that time is simultaneously a marker of trust and uncertainty. Uncertainty always has to do with a lack of knowledge about how it 'really' is. In his two essays on counterfeit money Derrida gives a beautiful example about how difficult trust and uncertainty can be perceived as two different things. Counterfeit money can, in fact, be understood as a metaphor for the blurred frontiers between uncertainty and trust. The crucial aspect about counterfeit money is the impossibility of rendering an account. Counterfeit money is not 'real' money. Even so, when it is given and accepted it ceases to be counterfeit money in the interpretation of the recipient and is (becomes) real. The difference between genuine and counterfeit has been eliminated. The difference is broken through trust (or a lack of mistrust). It is this trust which at the same time, paradoxically, marks the insecurity of the future and presents the future social configuration with uncertainty. Trust and uncertainty are related in time frames in which images and reputations are checked and double-checked in social interactions. It is this latter practice which always has to be the final and sole locus of attention for research on the subject. Only by studying actual practices of interaction in their specific time and context can the intricacies of reciprocal processes be understood. This becomes especially clear when we look at how things are (e)valuated in a reciprocal exchange.

Reciprocity, as we have seen, is based partly on rational economic 'bookkeeping' prompted by material self-interest. But, at the same time, it refers to 'softer' issues like social bonding, partnership, friendship, mutual obligations and the like. Reciprocal processes form an 'essentially paradoxical, circle'.<sup>144</sup> This implies that there is a complex

140 Ibid: 212.

141 Compare with Chinese examples above.

142 pp. 232, Bourdieu, P. (1997b), *Marginalia*, in: Schrift, A.D. (ed.), *The logic of the gift. Towards an ethic of generosity*, London, New York, Routledge.

143 Bourdieu 1997a: 216.

144 Godbout 1998: 197.

of considerations at stake<sup>145</sup>, like: What constitutes a fitting return?; How is a return valued?; What is the correct timing for giving?; What can be exchanged for what and in which contexts?; When is the exchange considered balanced and why?<sup>146</sup> To answer these questions Bennett, for instance, in the specific context of his research among agricultural operators in Saskatchewan, Canada, included a section on the specific values attached to different matters exchanged. He constructed a 'table of approximate equivalents'.<sup>147</sup> In other words, a context-specific list of reciprocal valuation. But for the actors involved in this specific context even this preponderant economic valuation of goods and services might not be as neat and clear-cut as it is suggested. Simmel makes clear why. He argues that on top of being contextual value in any reciprocal relationship is also relative and situational.<sup>148</sup> 'Thus if someone at the point of death from hunger gives away a jewel for a piece of bread, he does so because the latter is worth more to him under the circumstances than the former'.<sup>149</sup> The value is relative because in another situation, let say in the bakery, this particular person would almost certainly not offer a jewel in exchange for a piece of bread. The value is situational, because the story is valid only in these particular circumstances. The higher the sacrifice necessary and that one is prepared to make, the more value is attached to the desired object. This does not mean though that someone else would offer the same value under the same circumstances, which makes implicit or explicit negotiations about the reciprocal deal inevitable.<sup>150</sup> Thus, value is created in the relationship and is not an autonomous property of the thing involved. There is no fixed price tag on goods and services in a reciprocal relation. So even the utilitarian and economic approach of reciprocity does not imply square answers. Any reciprocal relation remains a matter of mutual estimation, valuation and appraisal, which constitutes a high level of complexity and inevitable uncertainty for the participants involved. The notion of sacrifice also brings in the concept of gratitude.<sup>151</sup> The higher the sacrifice, the more one expects gratitude. The level of gratitude manifestly shown at the reception of a gift can be seen as the upbeat for the political process in reciprocal processes. If one, in one's own perception, has sacrificed much, and is not repaid with significant gratitude, again in one's own perception, the creditor feels he or she has 'a right to cruelty, which he executes by making the other suffer (...)'.<sup>152</sup>

145 The outcome of these considerations may explain the enormous variety of the practices of reciprocity worldwide.

146 Compare pp. 350, Becker, L.C. (1986), *Reciprocity*, London, New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

147 pp. 293, Bennett, J.W. (1968), Reciprocal economic exchanges among North American agricultural operators, *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, 24: 276-309.

148 Simmel 1971: 50-55.

149 Ibid: 52. Italics added.

150 Ibid: 51-53.

151 Berking 1999: 28.

152 Nietzsche in ibid: 51.

## Excluding from Reciprocity through Keeping

The dominant image of a reciprocal process is that it is about giving and exchanging. Attention is obviously directed towards the objects (material and immaterial), which seem to form the heart of the process. It is again Weiner's book which is of interest. I already introduced her work earlier. She considers gifts as representing and expressing one's own identity or that of the group and for that reason are inalienable (i.e. keeping-while-giving). She also pays attention to objects, which are not given in any reciprocal relationship but are kept, because they are considered the existential heart of the individual's or group identity. 'What makes a possession inalienable is its exclusive and cumulative identity with a particular series of owners through time. Its history is authenticated by fictive or true genealogies, origin myths, sacred ancestors, and gods. In this way, inalienable possessions are transcendent treasures to be guarded against all the exigencies that might force their loss'.<sup>153</sup> In the words of Godelier, '(t)hese things that are kept – valuables, talismans, knowledge, rites – affirm deep-seated identities and their continuity over time. Furthermore they affirm the existence of differences of identity between individual, between the groups which make up a society (...)'.<sup>154</sup> So what is kept, is in essence representing, symbolising and is existential to one's identity. Weiner argues, in order to 'produce' (and obviously also reproduce) social identities, it creates a 'political dependency on inalienable possessions'.<sup>155</sup> In order to preserve that identity and continue to differentiate it from others, its representations and expressions are kept out of reciprocal circulation. This implies that in essence the objects withheld from reciprocal circulation retain their value only as a consequence of the identity of the exchanger as Strathern argues.<sup>156</sup> Things that are not given but kept are thus as important to the description of social relations as are the things that are exchanged. Representations can be material and immaterial as I already indicated in the introduction of this chapter. The Ark of the Covenant, as described in the Old Testament, is a good example of the former. It was not allowed to be given or exchanged and it had to be guarded at all times and with all means available. Were it to be stolen nonetheless, God himself would curse the thieves and send terrible punishments upon them. Oral traditions and knowledge are examples of the latter. It will already be emerging that things that are kept for reasons of identity conservation often have sacred meanings and connotations. Sacredness is always related to power 'insofar as the sacred is a certain kind of relationship with the origin, and insofar as the origin of individuals and of groups has a bearing on the places they occupy in a social and cosmic order. It is with reference to the origin of each person and each group that the actual relations between the individuals and the groups which compose a society are compared with the order that should be reigning in the universe and

153 Weiner 1992: 33.

154 Godelier 1999: 33. Italics in the original.

155 Weiner 1992: 39.

156 Strathern, M. (1988), *The gender of the gift*, London, Berkeley: University of California Press. Strathern further argues that by focusing their attention on the ritual process of exchange, researchers overlook the deeper layers of production of the things exchanged. It is often the women who produce the things that are exchanged by men. Through the process of reciprocity men thus expropriate wealth from women. 'Production is appropriated in the interest of men' (pp. 150).

in the society. The actual state is then judged to be legitimate or illegitimate, by right, and therefore acceptable or unacceptable'.<sup>157</sup> In order to keep the powers satisfied, there are also obligations towards these powers. Humans always have the feeling that they owe these powers something, which they pay in the form of prayers, offerings and sacrifices. The sacred object symbolising the social identity of individuals and groups is inalienable, (often) spiritual in nature and is not supposed, at any point in time, to enter the circuit of gift or market exchange. The precious and valuable objects, tangible or intangible, bearing its identity have to be kept at all times.

• What happens if inalienable goods, which will never be exchanged out of free will, are forcefully taken by a more powerful party? What will happen to the identity-laden meaning which is attached to it? Will it be 'taken over' by the new 'owner'? Will it be contested or altered? These are relevant questions in relation to what happened with land in Zimbabwe. It is considered inalienable by the Africans. It was often usurped by force by the more (military) powerful invading Europeans.<sup>158</sup> The unequal land distribution in Zimbabwe has been a stumbling block in relations between black and white ever since. In the light of the earlier description of the conversion of commodities into possession and gifts and vice versa, the land issue and struggle in Zimbabwe can now be described in the words of my theoretical framework. Land was in possession of Africans and Africans were possessed by the land (i.e. literally as spirit mediums for their ancestors who own the land). European colonisers came in around 1890 and appropriated the land, most of the time forcefully, and commoditised it. The whites added their own special meaning and personal identity to its landscape<sup>159</sup> and thus converted a commodity into a possession. It was an identity deriving from and related to the landscape and its produce (i.e. economic exploitation), instead of a spiritual bond with the soil which the Africans have. For this reason, the confrontation between black and white has a sharp edge because both derive a social identity from the land, although by adding different meaning to it. For both, land is or has become inalienable. For the whites because of its being private property and a constitutive aspect of their social identity. For Africans because their soul belongs to the land. For my empirical research this is a crucial context to understand, explain and describe the local political arena in the Lowveld in which the SVC operates in the process of establishing a structure of organisational cooperation with its neighbours.

Without going to elaborate on the issue philosophically, Arendt described the relationship between men and land very appropriate in this context. She starts by distinguishing property from wealth on the criteria of sacredness. Property has always been

157 Godelier 1999: 169. Italics in the original.

158 Mutambara 1981: 10.

159 It is worth noting here that different kinds of 'scapes' have become popular in certain texts in the social sciences in the nineties. Authors speak of mediascapes, townscapes, ethnoscapes (Lash, S. & and Urry, J. (1994), *Economies of sign & space*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications) and timescapes (Adam, B. (1998), *Timescapes*, London: Routledge). Without elaborating on this occurrence theoretically, it is noteworthy to observe that scapes have a few characteristics in common, of which one is of particular interest to the way I use landscape. The common characteristic is that they are usually presented as volatile and highly controlled images and of particular interest to us, its temporality. Scapes do not ask for a strong commitments or ties. Their temporality is symbolised by their consumption. This is exactly how whites are attached to the land in the context of my case. (My gratitude to Professor Koot for making me aware of this trend.)

sacred, while wealth has not. 'Originally, property meant no more or less than to have one's location in a particular part of the world and therefore to belong to the body politic (...):<sup>160</sup> Wealth could never be a substitute for this 'place under the sun'. That location also secured your citizenship, if property was lost so usually was citizenship, and defined you as being human. '(T)o have no private place of one's own (like a slave) meant to be no longer human'.<sup>161</sup> Arendt also connects this observation to the process of the accumulation of wealth (as opposed to property) which was only made possible when groups of people were expropriated 'of their place in the world' and could be used as labour, which capital could be used again for further expropriation. This stage of expropriation 'was marked by its cruelty, the misery and material wretchedness it meant for a steadily increasing group of "labouring poor" (...)' and led to a process of 'world alienation'.<sup>162</sup> Arendt assumes that expropriation is the end of story. In the light of the Zimbabwean context this does not seem true, if we are to believe the literature on the subject of land in Zimbabwe and note the political importance of The Land Issue, which I describe in detail in Chapter 4. Although the land of the black Africans was appropriated by the whites, they still consider it as inalienably theirs. Inalienability implies that it cannot be taken or negotiated. A deal between parties must always contain a compromise. Inalienability does not match compromise. Inalienability is axiomatic and the ultimate Truth. Inalienability means that it cannot be 'taken'. The people and the land cannot be separated permanently. Time is always on their side, which leads the discussion straight into the arena of political contests over land. A political struggle over belonging. Who belongs where and why? To answer the question on why, implies that we have to look into the subject of remembering: '(b)elonging may (...) be seen as a way of remembering (...) instrumental in the construction of collective memory surrounding place'.<sup>163</sup> In such a political arena it might be difficult to establish positive reciprocal relations and trust.

Things are excluded from the reciprocal process for reasons of social identity. The choice of a particular reciprocal partner also implies a process of discrimination and the exclusion of others. With whom is a reciprocal relation undertaken, for what reasons and who is thus excluded in the process? As trust and a trustworthy reputation is an

160 pp. 61, Arendt, H. (1958), *The human condition*, Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press.

161 Ibid: 64.

162 Ibid 256. Arendt continues her very insightful exposé by describing the further process and subsequent stages of world alienation in which the society in which this expropriated labour was living became associated with a collectively owned property, the territory of the nation-state. Society and 'blood and soil' became the substitute for family property. The next stage she describes is the one of globalisation in which 'the earth' has taken the place of the nation-state. But she is very critical of this development as she concludes that 'men cannot become citizens of the world as they are citizens of their countries, and social men cannot own collectively as family and household men own their private property' (257).

163 pp. 1, Lovell, N. (1998), Introduction. Belonging in need of emplacement?, in Lovell, N. (ed.), *Locality and belonging*, London, New York: Routledge. In the book different cases dealing with the context of this theme are presented. Interesting to note for my discussion is the contribution on Cape Town, South Africa, by Bohlin, A., The politics of locality: memories of District Six in Cape Town. In the context of nature conservation, an interesting comparison between South Africa and Australia and a description of the political arena concerning the inalienability of land is given in a paper by Carruthers, J. (1999), Past and future landscape ideology: the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park and Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park compared, Paper presented at the conference: *African environments, past and present*, Oxford, 5-8 July.

important factor in determining with whom a relationship should be started, the subject could be approached from this angle. Who do we trust and who do we not trust and why?

## Reciprocity and Social Identity Construction

Nobody acts in any reciprocal relation as a *tabula rasa*. Everybody is balancing between his knowledge and ignorance of the Other in anticipating the behaviour of the counterpart. In the wish to gain knowledge in order to be better able to judge, calculate and anticipate the Other's behaviour, people have a tendency to label them in terms of 'us' and 'them'<sup>164</sup>; our identity versus their identity. 'Social identity is our understanding of who we are and of who other people are, and, reciprocally, other's people understanding of themselves and of others (which includes us)'.<sup>165</sup> Identity is about attaching meaning, and therefor is not a stable 'is'. Social identity can in fact only be understood as process. As 'being' or 'becoming'. One's social identity (...) is never a final or settled matter'.<sup>166</sup> The us-them configuration creates an opposition and social distance between people belonging to the different groups or communities, thus creating symbolic and emotional but real boundaries between them.<sup>167</sup> This means that reciprocal processes and the choices people make for the type of reciprocal exchange in which they will engage with the other are heavily intertwined with and influenced by processes of social identity construction. The social distance is expressed in a mutual imagery in which the Other is most of the time seen as 'less' in many aspects in comparison with one's own group.<sup>168</sup> Specifically in relation to Africans it is often mentioned that they could become like us, ... in time. Fabian describes this as Typological Time, which is often used as a 'distancing device'.<sup>169</sup> No labelling process is ever a value neutral description or characterisation of the Other. It very soon becomes a stereotypical way of looking at the Other. The implication of this observation is that it is not so much a lack of information about the Other which generates stereotypes, but the way the information about them is inter-

164 Elias, N. & Scotson, J.L. (1976), *Gevestigden en de buitenstaanders* (translation: The established and the outsiders), Utrecht, Antwerpen: Het Spectrum. It must be noted though that the 'egalitarian inclusiveness of 'us' does not imply that the group is not hierarchically differentiated in itself. Many internal rituals are specifically aimed at confirming this status quo or marking transformations and initiations', pp. 145, Jenkins, R. (1996), *Social identity*, London, New York: Routledge. Jenkins bases himself here on the work of Victor Turner, more specifically (1974), *The ritual process: structure and anti-structure*, Harmondsworth: Pelican.

165 Ibid: 5. In a later book he links the idea of social identity to that of ethnicity (Jenkins, R. (1997), *Rethinking ethnicity. Arguments and explorations*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications). I shall leave that theoretical discussion for what it is, in order not to complicate theoretical and conceptual matters any further. For my argument it is enough to note and specify the position and role of social identity (construction) within reciprocal processes.

166 Ibid: 4.

167 Cohen, A.P. (1985), *The symbolic construction of community*, Chichester, London: Allis Horwood/ Tavistock Publications.

168 Hinkle, S. & Brown, R.J. (1990), Intergroup comparisons and social identity: some links and lacunae, in: Abrams, D. & Hogg, M.A. (eds.), *Social identity theory. Constructive and critical advances*, New York, Berlin: Springer Verlag.

169 pp. 30, Fabian, J. (1983), *Time and the Other. How anthropology makes its object*, New York: Columbia University Press.



preted on the basis of preconceptions and which aspects in the information are considered important. Information is then often 'ordered' according to the preconceptions, which are in turn reinforced by the additional information and 'proof'.<sup>170</sup> Conversely and simultaneously this 'proof' about the outsiders is used to trivialise internal differences within one's own group, which seem to present the group as more united. It will not come as any surprise that this labelling process 'lowers the likelihood of mutual trust'.<sup>171</sup> In fact, the labelling process paves the way for indifference towards the Other.<sup>172</sup> As the reputation of the Other is not considered particularly trustworthy, it will hardly lead to a reciprocal exchange in which the Other is allowed to take his or her time to repay. On the contrary again: immediacy is the norm. The Other is not even allowed opportunities to demonstrate his or her trustworthiness and hence to build up a favourable reputation.<sup>173</sup> When the Other is effectively barred from any access to the other communities the stereotype is 'kept in place'.<sup>174</sup> This means that the latter must have a sufficient power base to control access routes in terms of inter-community relations. In other words, the borders between the communities must be 'patrolled' in order to keep them separated. Elias and Scotson describe several mechanisms which are helpful in this respect: gossip<sup>175</sup>, the fear of 'contamination' through contacts with members of the other community which could also have harmful consequences for the status and position in one's own group, social control and the like.<sup>176</sup> So we might end up in a vicious circle which preserves the social distance intact: because the Other is not trusted people do not initiate a reciprocal relationship with them; because there is no reciprocal relationship there are no opportunities to change the image of untrustworthiness; this again leads to a reinforcement of the existing image and a self-fulfilling prophecy concerning the Other as not trustworthy; and we have come full circle.<sup>177</sup> It is therefore of the utmost importance that reciprocal relations are always presented in a historical and social context. Without context, reciprocal relations can be perceived as a static mechanism; in

170 pp. 41, Good, D. (1988), *Individuals, interpersonal relations and trust*, in: Gambetta, D. (ed.), *Trust: making and breaking cooperative relations*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

171 Misztal 1996: 137.

172 Herzfeld, M. (1992), *The social production of indifference*, Chicago: Chicago University Press.

173 Misztal 1996: 138.

174 Elias & Scotson, 1976: 13.

175 See for the role of gossip for reputations in organisations in a game-theoretic approach, Burt, R.S. & Knez, M. (1996), *Trust and third-party gossip*, in: Kramer, R.M. & Tyler, T.R. (eds), *Trust in organizations. Frontiers of theory and research*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications, pp. 68-89.

176 *Ibid.*: 7-47.

177 Although we should be careful not follow too easily and apply the 'us-them'-divide on every occasion and configuration, which is made clear in an analysis about gifts and strangers in rural Greece by De Boulay: 'It is as one moves (...) to strangers from outside the region, that uncalculating, even sacrificial, hospitality, is likely to be both enacted in practice and most powerfully endorsed in myth'. She explains this paradox by referring to religious convictions as ' (...) the family who turns its back on the stranger, turning its back on one of the rare chances to give freely and without reserve, in a sense turns its back on the kingdom of heaven, and finds the sources of its prosperity withered at the root. In this sense the stranger, receiving so much and giving, in visible terms, so little, is a person who calls forth in the household an awareness of its essential and sacred nature, and in that sense is an aspect of the divinity', pp. 49 & 52, De Boulay, J. (1991), *Strangers and gifts: hostility and hospitality in rural Greece*, *Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, 1 (1): 37-53. It makes clear that not every Other is considered inferior with the resulting 'full circle' I described in the text. The strangers I talk about in my case study are not the strangers De Boulay refers to, but are strangers in the meaning Simmel has given to that concept (see Introduction), which explains much of the rivalry with the local population.

context reciprocal relations become dynamic and socio-political interaction between groups of people with different social identities which are (un)related to each other in a specific historical and social context.

This thesis is based on fieldwork in Zimbabwe. The primary focus is on two groups with rival identities, white commercial farmers and black communal farmers, in their struggle to arrive at a form of organisational co-operation. White commercial farmers like to represent themselves as First World-oriented and even actually belonging to the (European) First World, although they 'unfortunately' live in a Third World country. That it is a Third World country which has nothing to do with them but with the Other, especially since the latter took over the government at Independence. In this respect it is well worth going into more detail about the general image of Africa and Africans which has been developed in Europe in the course of time. The importance of imagery in understanding reciprocal processes has drawn our attention once more, and inevitably to the essentialising role of context. It is context which elucidates the often paradoxical nature of phenomenon in social reality.<sup>178</sup> The elucidating role of context is essentially the basic assumption of the 'ethnographic orientation'<sup>179</sup> I put forward as characterisation of my work in this thesis. Within my theoretical framework, context is translated into the crucial role imagery plays in the establishment, or obviation, of reciprocal relations.

The European image of Africa has always been ambivalent. On the one hand, Africa has been romanticised as the last remaining Eden, on the other hand it looms as a Dark Continent inhabited by savages. The first and positive image has to do with the wildlife, natural scenery and habitat of Africa, in short, with landscape. The African people are important in as far as they live in harmony with this natural habitat as Rousseau's stereotyped 'noble savage'.<sup>180</sup> The second, more negative image is related to the people living in that context. Both are stereotypes. Africa is in no way an unspoiled Eden, but to a large extent a created, constructed and managed natural environment. The famous National Parks, the icons of unspoiled Africa, are highly managed ecosystems with artificial water developments, species control etceteras. Africans are not savages or cannibals, but humans with specific cultural traits. But, as I argued above, the labelling and

178 The most famous example of the relation between paradox and context is given by Wittgenstein: 'I always lie'. This is not a riddle to keep philosophers occupied, but placed in its proper social context a shriek of someone who is disgusted with himself at that particular moment in time. This does not solve the paradox, but provokes the reader to put it in its proper context and thus add meaning to it. Chapter 1, Ybema, S. (forthcoming), *Individuele en collectieve identiteitsprocessen: een gevalstudie van twee landelijke dagbladen*, (translation: Individual and collective identity processes: a case study on two national newspapers), Ph.D. Thesis.

179 *Ibid.*, sometimes this is also called 'the anthropological approach'. Wittgenstein suggests that we look at ourselves as an anthropologist visiting his own tribe, with the same curiosity for the unexpected, paradoxical and preposterous social reality and emphasises the importance of context in this way of 'looking'. It is the same curiosity that Tennekes describes in one of the earliest organisation anthropological articles ever to appear in the Netherlands, Tennekes, J. (1985), *De verwonderde blik van de antropoloog* (translation: The curiosity of an anthropologist), in: Van der Valk, R.W. (ed.), *Organisatieverandering in de Rijksdienst; praktijken en perspectieven* (translation: Organisational change in the public sector; practices and perspectives), 's Gravenhage: Staats Uitgeverij, pp. 424-440. The same 'anthropological curiosity', now in relation to paradoxes, is again mentioned in Koot, W.C.J., Sabelis, I. & Ybema, S. (1996), *Global identity - local oddity? Paradoxical processes in contemporary organizations*, in: Koot, W.C.J., Sabelis, I. & Ybema, S. (eds), *Contradictions in context. Puzzling over paradoxes in contemporary organizations*, Amsterdam: VU University Press.

180 pp. 24, Miles, R. (1989), *Racism*, London, New York: Routledge.

thus stereotyping process is a universal one and as Africa's contacts with Europe started with the farmer being in a subordinate role of supplier of raw materials like ivory and slaves, so did the image of African followed a parallel route. Corbey<sup>181</sup> makes the observation, quoting Fabian, that it was especially the early days of the anthropological discipline which helped to create a huge social distance between 'us' and 'them' by offering countless descriptions of the Other and by visualising them in a cognitive style through which the Other was presented as visibly different and through this same mechanism kept at a social distance from 'us'. '(T)his meant above all, the exhibition of the exotic in illustrated travelogues, museums, fairs and expositions. These early ethnological practices established seldom articulated, but firm convictions that the presentation of knowledge through visual and spatial images, maps, diagrams, trees and tables is particularly well suited to the description of primitive cultures'.<sup>182</sup> These descriptions of Africans in first instance came mainly from missionaries. It was only later that scholars used their letters, monographs and reports to construct their ethnographies. For most people therefore '(t)he discovery of Africa (...) was a discovery on paper'.<sup>183</sup> They were totally dependent on what was written or sent to Europe from Africa by missionaries, travellers and traders. For that reason the 'existence' or identity of African peoples depended, for most European readers, on the existence or non-existence of something written about them'.<sup>184</sup> Corbey describes this process of imagery of 'us' Europeans about 'them' Africans beautifully on the basis of a collection of postcards which Europeans sent to the European home front and which can be seen as their literal and symbolic image of the African Other.<sup>185</sup> The heyday of European colonialism coincided with the reign of the postcard around the latter part of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. In France for instance, some 50 million cards were bought and sent, in the year 1889 alone. In the first year in the United States of America, in 1873, during the first two months, 30 million postcards went sent by post. Coinciding with the easier reproduction of photos around the turn of the century, the colonial postcard could start its march. With vivid illustration Corbey argues convincingly in the tradition of Said<sup>186</sup> that the European image of the African Other was a construction based on creating socio-cultural distance between 'us' and 'them'; between the uncivilised, violent, voluptuous, indecently dressed and cannibalistic Africans and superior Western civilisation.<sup>187</sup> This distinction was made explicit for the home public through postcards, but also through the eighty great world exhibitions which were held in the second half of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth century. During this exhibi-

181 pp. 154-155, Corbey, R. (1989), *Wildheid en beschaving. De Europese verbeelding van Afrika* (translation: Savagery and civilisation. The European image of Africa), Baarn: Ambo.

182 Fabian 1983: 121.

183 pp. 505, Thornton, R. (1983), Narrative ethnography in Africa, 1850-1920: the creation and capture of an appropriate domain for anthropology, *Man*, 18: 502-520.

184 Ibid: 507.

185 The photographs for the postcards were made by Europeans for Europeans to suit their taste for the exotic.

186 Said's study focused on the distorted Western image of the Orient. Said, E.W. (1978), *Orientalism. Western conceptions of the Orient*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

187 Corbey 1989: 16-18. I shall come back to the role of photography in representing the image of hunting in Africa in Chapter 3.

tions the public could observe these differences visually, but the exposition was also arranged and set up according to the theoretical lines of social Darwinism so that the spectators could not possibly miss the development towards civilisation which we in Europe had made in comparison to 'them'.<sup>188</sup> Africans were not only different, they were also 'less' than 'us', which could justify the colonial practice of the day. This extreme form of ethnocentric thinking was product and producer of European images of the African Other<sup>189</sup>, but at the same time served as a contrast to construct their own identity as European.<sup>190</sup> Once again it is interesting to note in this respect that these images were mainly constructed in Europe on the basis of stories and representations with which the Western travellers and traders and especially big game hunters came home. Indubitably these people recounted their most extraordinary experiences and observations of differences and did not emphasise the ordinary or any similarities. 'In this sense, the image of Africa was far more European than African'.<sup>191</sup> This resulted in essence in an image of Africans that was indirect and literally second hand, not to mention highly exaggerated and out of proportion. But the constructed imagery, not only about its people, but also, and sometimes foremost, about its wildlife and hunting possibilities lured many Europeans to Africa.

Price argues that most of the old images of the people of Africa actually still haunt us today, and still serve us in our own identity reproduction as being superior, in our perception of the Other, for example, in our perception of what we call 'primitive art'. She argues that the way we look at and interpret primitive art is a seamless continuity of the European discourse on the Other during the European imperial expansion in the nineteenth century: '(...) This book is about the plight of object from around the world that - in some ways like the Africans who were captured and transported to unknown lands during the slave trade - have been discovered, seized, commoditized, stripped of their social ties, redefined in new settings, and reconceptualized to fit into economic, cultural, political, and ideological needs of people in distant societies. Although the devastation wrought by this twentieth century brand of cultural imperials is of an entirely different order from that of its slave trade precedent, it, too, diminishes the communities that are its suppliers'.<sup>192</sup> And she is not the only one who comes to this conclusion. Mudimbe also recognises that old images and ideas about Africa surface nowadays in new disguises, of which perceptions of primitive art is one important vehicle. He argues that primitive art can be seen as 'loci of memory' which perpetuates certain ideas of Africa.<sup>193</sup> On the basis of many examples from reviews on primitive art in modern advertising, Price formulates the European idea of Africa in her conclusion that '(t)he

188 Ibid: 136.

189 Compare also for the same kind of process towards the Americas: Lemaire, T. (1986), *De indiaan in ons bewustzijn. De ontmoeting van de Oude met de Nieuwe Wereld* (translation: The Indian in our consciousness. The encounter of the Old and New World), Baarn: Ambo.

190 pp. 4, Jaffé in Rigby, P. (1996), *African images. Racism and the end of anthropology*, Oxford, Washington D.C.: Berg.

191 pp. 479, Curtin, P.D. (1965), *The image of Africa. British ideas and action, 1780-1850*, London: MacMillan & Co Ltd.

192 pp. 5, Price, S. (1989), *Primitive art in civilized places*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

193 pp. 61, Mudimbe, V.Y. (1994), *The idea of Africa*, Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, London: James Currey.

imagery used to convey Primitive Artists' otherness employs a standard rhetoric of fear, darkness, pagan spirits, and eroticism'.<sup>194</sup> These are the same catchwords, or concepts with similar connotations and conclusions, which Corbey and Fabian draw on the basis of their studies.<sup>195</sup> It is highly ironic that current Post-Modernism, which is so intensely debated in scientific circles nowadays, 'emerged from western critical movements in art and architecture. (...) Postmodernism grew as a rebellion against the Enlightenment, the eighteenth-century European movement that grounded all human behaviour in a specific notion of Reason and sought to represent European civilisation, culture and society as the universal yardstick against which all other civilisations, societies, cultures and modes of thought and behaviour were to be measured. Postmodernism stands against totalising Reason, against the racist European notion of culture and civilisation, and seeks to represent all classes and races'.<sup>196</sup> The new disguises of old images of the Other and Africans are the breeding ground of a new paradigm! It is no wonder that Sardar comes to the conclusion that Post-Modernism is 'far from being a new theory of liberation, postmodernism, particularly from the perspective of the Other, the non-western cultures, is simply a new wave of domination riding on the crest of colonisation and modernity'.<sup>197</sup> The mode of representation with which Western culture has always been obsessed and which is also a central notion in Post-Modernism, is, according to Sardar, crucial to this domination.<sup>198</sup>

Ironic, again, is that in the wake of the critical attention paid by Post-Modernism to representation that more 'thorough and persistent consideration has been given to the (arbitrary) constructions of (Western) selves and (non-western) others in the context of modernity, not simply as a system of political-economic domination, but as involving the materiality of cultural differentiation. One consequence of this broadening of 'explorations' of race-related issues is a more articulated appraisal of the cultural factor. (...) In the wake of this recognition, there has been resurgence of interest in cultural difference'.<sup>199</sup> If we combine Sardar's perception of Post-Modernism and this latter quotation we understand how Rigby, in a highly controversial book, comes to the conclusion, on the basis of a critical evaluation of several texts by Western, mainly American, Africanists and reports in the media about Africa, that many cloak racist ideas about Africans in a currently highly politically correct egalitarian discourse.<sup>200</sup> Wieviorka argues that it was in the United States of America that two ideas developed in which further analysis of processes of racism expressed itself. In the first place there was a gradual shift from talking about race towards talking about culture. Secondly a shift from describing specific features characterising a particular group to writing about inter-cul-

194 Ibid: 37.

195 See for current stereotypes and similar uses in, for example, literature, Schipper, M. (1995) *De boomstam en de krokodil. Kwesties van ras, cultuur en wetenschap* (translation: The tree-trunk and the crocodile. Matters of race, culture and science), Amsterdam: Van Genneep.

196 pp. 6-7, Sardar, Z. (1998), *Postmodernism and the Other. The new imperialism of Western culture*, London, Chicago: Pluto Press.

197 Ibid: 13.

198 Ibid: 17-33.

199 pp. 158. Van Loon, J. (1997), Racism, culture and modernity, *Theory Culture & Society*, 14 (3): 157-164.

200 Rigby 1996: 83-84.

tural relations between groups.<sup>201</sup> This trend in articulating cultural differences is currently particularly strong in the field of organisation and management literature.<sup>202</sup> Literature on inter- or cross-cultural communication in organisations and business is abundant.<sup>203</sup> We, the readers, are warned by these authors not to stereotype the cultural Other, because that is not only morally wrong ('we are all human') but also not good for smooth international business ('intercultural mistakes cost money'). While warning us, the authors implicitly claim at the same time their moral superiority in this respect. Caught in this ideological rhetoric ('who can be against inter cultural communication') it is 'easy' for the reader to agree with the presuppositions on which their solutions for intercultural communication are built.

Hofstede's<sup>204</sup> approach is representative for this type of thinking. He suggests three stages in learning intercultural communication. The first stage is creating an awareness of cultural differences. On that basis knowledge can be gathered and processed about the specific cultural differences between ones own and Other's culture in stage two. This will lead automatically to skills in inter-cultural communication in stage three. The transition between the three stages never seems to be a problem. The process seems to follow this route by some kind of natural law, based on the presupposition (firmly based on modernity and Enlightenment) that awareness and knowledge will automatically lead to control over the situation.<sup>205</sup> What is important to my argument is that they present us with static descriptions of other cultures, which contribute to a large extent to, and foremost continue, the Otherness of other people, measured from a Western perspective. With it they formalise, strengthen, legitimise, objectivise and institutionalise differences between 'us' and 'them'. In the terms of Geertz, they not only present us with a model of the Other, but at the same time with a model for the other.<sup>206</sup> In other words, the Other is modelled according to the mould of description chosen and constructed by the (Western) author. This paves the way for stereotyping the Other in much the same fashion as during earlier times as described above, now only under a veil of egalitarianism. We Europeans (Westerners) obviously need the reiterated contrast of the

201 pp. 11, Wieviorka, M. (1995), *The Arena of racism*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications. Compare these developments described by Wieviorka with the central observation described above by Rigby.

202 Wieviorka continues mainly to describe the developments in this respect since the 1920s. I shall leave that part of the description to Wieviorka and focus more on the current state-of-the-art in organisation and management literature with regard to the two developments formulated by him. This is important because my case study focuses on organisational co-operation, where this type of literature plays an important function in terms of creating 'awareness' and suggesting remedies to overcome or 'cope with' cultural differences.

203 See for instance: Adler, N.J. (1991), *International dimension of organizational behavior*, Boston: PWS-Kent Publishing Company, Second edition; Gudykunst, W.B. & Kim, Y.Y. (1992), *Communicating with strangers. An approach to intercultural communication*, New York, London: McGraw-Hill, Second edition; Harris, P.R. & Moran, R.T. (1988), *Managing cultural differences. High-performance strategies for today's global manager*, Houston, London: Gulf Publishing Company, Second edition; Hofstede, G. (1991), *Cultures and organizations. Software of the mind. Intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival*, New York, London: McGraw-Hill; Trompenaars, F. (1993), *Riding the waves of culture. Understanding cultural diversity in business*, London: The Economists Books.

204 It was Hofstede's *Cultures consequences: international differences in work related values* (1980, Beverly CA: Sage Publications), which was an important milestone which put the concept of culture definitely on the international management agenda.

205 Hofstede 1991: 230-234.

206 pp. 93, Geertz, C. (1973), *The interpretation of cultures*, New York: Basic Books.

(black) Other in the construction process of our (white) social identity. A similar process takes place in Zimbabwe between 'First World' whites and 'Third World' blacks.

Many examples from many angles and spheres of life illustrate the point that sharp divisions between 'us' and 'them', in terms of superior versus inferior, are part and parcel of human interaction and are intertwined with notions of culture and identity. What does this mean for reciprocal relations? Any reciprocal relationship is charged with ambiguity, i.e. an uncertainty about the balance between morality and instrumentality, between affect and effect with which the Other perceives this particular reciprocal relation, and therefore a certain amount of mutual trust is necessary to get the relationship started or going. Trust though is also prone to ambiguity for two reasons. In the first place because trust can only prove itself in an unknown future; it requires a 'leap of faith'. Secondly, because, as I have already argued above following Simmel, trust rests on the fragile balance between knowledge and ignorance. Our knowledge about the Other is a mixture of facts and constructed and moulded images with no clear boundary between the two. Fact and image come together and form one perception of the Other. The complexity of everyday interaction and exchange becomes evident. People look at and judge each other with a value-laden perception. The shadow of the past, the context of the present and the hopes for the future all come together in that one moment of interaction with the Other. Therefore although any reciprocal act might seem just a snapshot between a past and a future, an insignificant particle in time, it is at the same time a condensed knot, rich in detail, of historically (re)constructed meaning, a situational present and, often implicit, expectations of an unknown future. In the case of a strong division between two identities, in terms of 'us' and 'them' as in my study, will the boundary be crossed in the start or continuation of a reciprocal interaction or not? Reciprocity separates but at the same time is a strong medium by which to cross the boundary in co-operation. Reciprocal processes create, continue and cross borders. Borders imply exclusion. Affective reciprocal relations are confined within the boundaries. The Other will be excluded. Sole effective and instrumental reciprocal relations are reserved for people across the border. In its ideal typical extreme that would mean negative reciprocity without any affective element. Will the border ever be crossed in order to establish and start a reciprocal relationship based on a mixture of the affective and effective elements inherent in the concept? Is the present context conducive to initiating this type of reciprocal relationship? Are the perceptions or images of the Other, inherited from the past, but also modified in the present, conducive to embarking upon a reciprocal relationship? Reciprocity is the perfect metaphor for organisational co-operation: it presupposes parties and partners at the same time. Instrumentality to reach individual goals and morality in order to strive for those goals in a joint operation.

### Theoretical Questions and Linking Pin

Perceived from a theoretical analysis the Prisoner's Dilemma and the crucial role of reciprocal processes related to trust seems far more complex than Axelrod suggested in his study. This already sheds light on the theoretical question of the proposed economic win-win-situation put forward by the SVC to the communities: the theoretical per-

spective presented in this chapter already gives rise to serious doubts about the possibilities of creating straight-forward economic win-win-situations between co-operating parties in a structure of organisational co-operation. Reciprocal processes and trust do not automatically lead to an economic win-win situation in which both parties prosper as partners. Context, time, situationality and the inherent ambivalence of the reciprocal process, seems to make all the difference. The context relevant in this case is based on the criteria of in how far it has contributed to the process of identity construction of primarily whites and, as contrast, blacks in southern Africa in general and in Zimbabwe in particular. Only when we understand the interrelated processes of identity construction of white and black in Zimbabwe, are we able to understand the processes taking place within the context of the organisational co-operation between the SVC and its neighbouring communities. For that reason the related issues of land and hunting have been selected as relevant historical and social context. In the Chapters 3 and 4, I shall show in detail that this selection is a very plausible one. The case of the SVC is an extreme example of historic, economic, political and cultural antagonism by which to explore the socio-cultural dynamics of organisational co-operation. An extreme case works like a magnifying glass by enlarging the processes beyond their usual proportions. It stretches the processes to their limits. It works like an extreme of a continuum or ideal type: it makes processes more readily observable on the basis of adequate and relevant questions. What is the specific mixture of affective and effective elements in the organisational relations between the SVC and the neighbouring communities? How is this mixture related to the historical context of relations in terms of land and hunting between black and white in southern Africa, more specifically in Zimbabwe? How did the socio-political and socio-economic constellation in Zimbabwe and the south-east Lowveld develop, in which this structure of organisational co-operation is meant to prosper? Will the rational choice for a win/win situation in organisational co-operation prevail in the end? What is the particular time cycle in which the exchange takes place? How do mutual perceptions of identities and reputations of black communal and white commercial farmers establish themselves as stereotypes? What is in actual fact reciprocated between the two, and is land really kept strictly out of circulation? Who is excluded from exchange by whom, and why and under what circumstances? How is that related to the respective identities? What is expected as returns and within what timeframe? What does the specific development of the trust relation between commercial and communal farmers tell us about the nature of their reciprocal relationship? How are the goods and services circulating in the reciprocal relationship valued? How is that valuation related to context and situationality?

The theoretical approach taken to explore this case draws our attention to the constructionist disposition of reality in the tradition of Berger and Luckmann.<sup>207</sup> This constructionist perspective implies that the reciprocal process, i.e. the actors who constitute the network, will construct, produce and reproduce<sup>208</sup> its own social reality. Or in the words of Schiefelin: 'It [reciprocity HW] has much to do with the symbolic basis for the

207 Berger, P.L. & Luckmann, T. (1967), *The social construction of reality*, Garden City: Anchor.

208 pp. 64-90, Tennekes, J. (1990), *De onbekende dimensie. Over cultuur, cultuurverschillen en macht* (translation: The unknown dimension. About culture, cultural differences and power), Leuven, Apeldoorn: Garant.

formation of identities and differences and the adjustment of social distance and tension as it does with the distribution of material objects and the fulfilment of social obligations'.<sup>209</sup> From a constructionist perspective, it is quite obvious that I do not pretend in any degree that the concept of reciprocity, in relation to trust and within the context of two groups with rival identities, can adequately cover the social complexity of everyday life in textual form. The same point though could be made for any other choice or combination of concepts, no matter how encompassing they would seem. The concepts do not lead to any form of 'solution' or completeness or finality about the interaction process described. To come to grips with the complexity of social life, every social scientist must place, in the words of Deleuze and Guattari, their own 'mode of composition' on the researched reality. This particular composition forms his or her line of consistency, 'not in the sense of homogeneity, but as a holding together of disparate elements'.<sup>210</sup> Social relations do not lead to a certain outcome, or live up to a certain goal, but add to a 'rhizome'<sup>211</sup> which can only be described in all its temporality, through the mode of composition chosen by the author. A mode of composition forms '(...) a fuzzy aggregate, a synthesis of disparate elements (...) defined only by a degree of consistency that makes it possible to distinguish the disparate elements constituting the aggregate'.<sup>212</sup> In other words, concepts highlight certain aspects of social reality and leave other aspects of it in the dark.

After this presentation of my theoretical framework, it will have become clear that this research has social as well as theoretical relevance. The social relevance is in the first place to shed (more) light on and come up with subsequent recommendations for the problematic relations between commercial and communal farmers in this particular part of Zimbabwe, especially these related to land and hunting. Secondly, the analysis of this case study adds to our knowledge of community relations in the sphere of private conservation as a complement to what we already know in this respect from the public sector, i.e. National Parks. To understand and be able to cope with the relationship between wildlife area and its surrounding communities in terms of land and hunting (i.e. respect its boundaries and wildlife) will be crucial to the social acceptability and political legitimacy of large conservation areas. Theoretically this study is relevant in the first place because it suggests that reciprocal processes of co-operation are inherently paradoxical and ambiguous. Reciprocity is about sharing *and* creating and about keeping social distance at the same time. This observation directs us to the notion that in general processes of meaning attribution and identity construction are fundamentally a Janus-head (i.e. not either-or, but both contradictory aspects at the same time), which in

turn is dependent on context and situationality.<sup>213</sup> To express the paradoxical nature of the reciprocal process and indicate both affective and effective elements inherent in it, I shall use the tautological combination of words, 'reciprocal exchange', in which the latter stands for the more strategic aspects of the process and the first for the moral. Reciprocal processes basically contain mixed signals, which have to be constantly evaluated by the interacting parties in order to be able to decide upon their own stance and action within the interaction. The uncertainty resulting from this paradox makes processes of trust and imagery highly and undeniably intertwined with a constructionist perspective on meaning and 'reality'. Secondly, the outcome of this research is theoretically relevant because it will come up with empirical data about how people and parties in a joint venture in actual fact cope with the ambiguity in reciprocal relations, which could lead to a further understanding of reciprocal processes and contribute to the ongoing, renewed and revived academic discussion and debate on the subject. In order to achieve these objectives and related to my central research question, the theoretical framework is primarily used as a heuristic model in order to be able to present the empirical data in an explorative, descriptive and explanatory design.

But before any answer or interpretation could be formulated, fieldwork had to be done in order to collect and construct the data on which answers could be based. So, before entering the field in text, the next chapter will be devoted to methodological issues related to this research. Together with this first chapter, it will provide the utensils with which I can present the empirical data in the subsequent chapters.

209 pp. 515, Schiefelin, E.L. (1980), Reciprocity and the construction of reality, *Man*, 15: 502-517. One has to be careful about affiliating oneself too easily and uncritically with this constructionist camp. The way in which construction of social reality is usually presented is as if some raw material is constructed by the actor into some kind of finished product. 'An imposition of form onto substance', as if the construction has only to be 'revealed in the material' (pp. 114, Ingold, T. (ed.) (1996), *Key debates in anthropology*, London: Routledge). The concept of construction implies too much that there is something like a preconceived plan, which is not the case (ibid: 123).

210 pp. xiv, Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. (1987), *A thousand plateaus. Capitalism and schizophrenia*, The Athlone Press.

211 Ibid: 3.

212 Ibid: 344.

213 Compare Bauman, Z. (1999), *Culture as praxis*, New York, London: Sage Publications.

## 2 Methodological Considerations and Issues: a Commitment to Methodological Transparency

*In which not only my methodological approach is revealed in relation to my type of research (i.e. descriptive, explorative and explanatory) and my theoretical viewpoint, but also where I describe how aspects of the actual fieldwork took place to substantiate and illustrate my more conceptual approach to methodological issues with which I start this chapter. Together with the first chapter on theoretical issues, this chapter constitutes the 'skeleton' of this thesis.*

### Introduction

Fieldwork in anthropology is considered one of its major contributions to the social sciences.<sup>1</sup> Fieldwork is considered by many the epitome of the discipline, the 'rite de passage' for every serious professional anthropologist and a major contribution to our professional (and social) identity. '(T)he ethnographer's trials in the field, which ethnography dramatizes, finally figure the ethnographer as the heroic subject of knowledge (...)'<sup>2</sup> With fieldwork goes a methodological approach of how a researcher ought to go about the systematics and consistencies of data construction in the complexities of everyday life in the field.<sup>3</sup> But time and again fieldwork proves to be a road strewn with many pitfalls for the researcher and much has been written about the influences of 'human-ness' of the researcher in fieldwork, about how difficult it is to keep a strict professional, intellectual and scientific attitude all the time, and about the confusion of social reality(ies) in the field and that it is impossible to cover the activity of fieldwork in terms of control, and thus planning, in a methodological preparation.<sup>4</sup> This brought Lévi-Strauss to the

<sup>1</sup> 'no fieldwork, no anthropology', pp. 1151, Bate, S.P. (1997), Whatever happened to organizational anthropology? A review of the field of organizational ethnography and anthropological studies, *Human Relations*, 50 (9): 1147-1175.

<sup>2</sup> pp. 19, Clough, P.T. (1998), *The end(s) of ethnography. From realism to social criticism*, New York, Berlin: Peter Lang (second edition). Rosaldo formulated fieldwork also as 'rite de passage' in which the ethnographer 'underwent (...) the ultimate ordeal of fieldwork', pp. 7, Rosaldo (1994), Introduction. Entering the field of qualitative research, in: Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (eds), *Handbook of qualitative research*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications, pp. 1-17.

<sup>3</sup> Ranging from a series of studies in anthropological methodology, Langness, L.L. (1965), *The life history in anthropological science*, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, to Bernard, H.R. (1988), *Research methods in cultural anthropology*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications to the recent *Handbook of methods in cultural anthropology*, Bernard, H.R. (1998) (ed.), Altamira Press. Sometimes this has even led to a situation which is described by Janesick as 'methodolatry', 'a combination of method and idolatry, to describe a preoccupation with selecting and defending methods to the exclusion of the actual substance of the story being told', pp. 215, Janesick, V.J. (1994) The dance of qualitative research design. Metaphor, methodolatry, and meaning, in: Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (eds), *Handbook of qualitative research*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications, pp. 209-219.

<sup>4</sup> Starting with the revealing publication, after his death and without them ever being written with an eye to publication, of the diary notes of the 'Father of Fieldwork', Bronislaw Malinowski. *A diary in the strict sense of*

conclusion that every qualitative researcher is a *bricoleur*, and consequently his or her scientific results, bricolage.<sup>5</sup> What all these authors are actually saying is that the more traditional approach to anthropological research has a problem with credibility in terms of validity and reliability of data construction, and consequently with theoretical generalisation.<sup>6</sup> Geertz in his classic *The interpretation of cultures* made clear that anthropologists always interpret other cultures 'second and third order'.<sup>7</sup> And second and third order interpretations can hardly be considered as prime evidence proving or substantiating your representation.

A 'solution' to this problem is thought to be thorough reflection on the data construction process in the field<sup>8</sup>, culminating in highly scrutinised, reflexive attention paid to the textualisation of field data in anthropological publications.<sup>9</sup> Although we should not fool ourselves about this reflexive 'solution', which is the reason I put the word between brackets. 'The idea of self-reflection in the self-conscious scientist has been exhausted in the growing awareness of the violence of making the other nothing but a reflexive apparatus for the scientist. But even the more recent autobiographic turn, made in order to leave the field of the other to the other, is writing its own illusions. The writer always is haunted by unconscious desire, which self-reflection can never fully

the term, New York: Harcourt, Brace and World. Another good example is Rabinow, P. (1977), *Reflections on fieldwork in Morocco*, California: University of California Press, pp. 38, '(...) one cannot engage in questioning and redefining 24 hours a day. The scientific perspective on the world is hard to sustain'. Van Maanen's work is also a good case in point: Van Maanen, J. (1988), *Tales of the field. On writing ethnography*, Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, pp. 2, 'Accident and happenstance shapes fieldworkers' studies as much as planning and foresight (...)'. For a rather funny account of anthropological fieldwork experiences in Africa see, Barley, N. (1983), *The innocent anthropologist. Notes from a mud hut*, Harmondsworth: Penguin; by the same author (1986), *A plague of caterpillars. A return to the African bush*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

5 pp. 17, Lévi-Strauss, C. (1966), *The savage mind*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, second edition. The, so far merely unconscious reason for my theoretical inspiration from Georg Simmel as presented in the previous chapter becomes clearer now, as he is described as a bricoleur, par excellence, pp. 164, Weinstein, D. & Weinstein, M.A. (1991), Georg Simmel: sociological flaneur bricoleur, *Theory, Culture & Society*, 8: 151-168.

6 pp. 41, Pelto, P.J. (1970), *Anthropological research. The structure of inquiry*, London, New York: Harper & Row Publishers. Kuznar has his own solution to the validity and reliability of data and states, quite bluntly, that if anthropology wants to be taken seriously as being a scientific discipline it 'must be able to deduce specific hypotheses from theories that predict specific states of nature so that they can then do further research to test the hypotheses and in turn the theories. This testing is absolutely crucial and represents, more than anything else, the hall mark of scientific research', pp. 214, Kuznar, L.A. (1997), *Reclaiming a scientific anthropology*, London, New Delhi: Altamira Press.

7 pp. 15, Geertz, C. (1973), *The interpretation of cultures*, New York: Basic Books.

8 Reflexivity in social thought can be traced to the rise of cognitive relativism and the inspiration from social philosophers in the hermeneutic tradition like Dewey, Dilthey and Gadamer. See Geertz 1973: 45, 58 and Turner, V.W and Bruner, E.M. (1986), *The anthropology of experience*, Urbana, Chicago: University of Illinois Press. See especially Chapter 2, Turner, V.W., Dewey, Dilthey, and drama: an essay in the anthropology of experience. In it Turner argues, following Dewey and Dilthey, that it is only through expressions in words, in images, in actions of all kinds, that social scientists / anthropologists can reconstruct reality. See also note 24, chapter 2, Van Maanen 1988. I shall not go into the philosophical or theoretical origins and development of this 'interpretive, linguistic and rhetorical turn' or into its intellectual influences, but will pursue a practical exercise in reflecting on my own construction and representation of the social reality under research to remain within the realm of my research question.

9 Brettell, C.B. (ed.) (1993), *When they read what we write. The politics of ethnography*, London, Westport (Connecticut): Bergin & Garvey; Clifford, J. & Marcus, G.E. (eds) (1986), *Writing culture. The poetics and politics of ethnography*, London, Berkeley: University of California Press; Czarniawska, B. (1998), *A narrative approach to organization studies*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications; Denzin, N.K. (1997), *Interpretive ethnography. Ethnographic practices for the 21st century*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications.

neutralize'.<sup>10</sup> A little later Clough adds that it is the systematic analysis of the unconscious especially which is lacking in science in general, which she interprets as 'symptomatic of its will to scientificity'.<sup>11</sup> For ethnographic research and science this will to strive towards scientificity implies that the final ethnographic text 'correlates to the subject's own desired wholeness' and which, at the same time, establishes the ethnographer's authority as 'the authorized subject of a complete or empirically adequate knowledge'. This means that in essence the textualisation of research findings is a 'struggle of authorial desire'.<sup>12</sup> From this perspective the fieldwork should be presented as something 'complete', including the methodological preparations and implementation. Reflections in this tradition can only be meant to contribute to the positive outcome to be called authorial in the particular field. This is not the way I see my attempt. I do want to convince the reader that the outcome of my research is a plausible one, but at the same time that it is one outcome amongst (literally) countless other possible outcomes. I want to convince the reader that my outcome of the research might even be called a coincidence, in the particular meaning of being one possibility amongst many others, even within the demarcated boundaries of chosen concepts and methodology. My reflection then is, of course, a (re)construction itself (with all the narrative pitfalls included<sup>13</sup>), but at the same time meant as a function of making clear to the reader what (according to me) 'shaped my coincidence'. It will also make clear that coincidence is certainly not only shaped behind the word processor as is often suggested by Geertzian anthropologists<sup>14</sup>, but certainly as much in the field and before entering the field. In a way one could say that a whole series of coincidences finds its culmination in the description and analysis of the fieldwork as I shall show below.<sup>15</sup>

The central issue at stake in my perception of methodological reflection is a series of questions about the selection process of the anthropologist before he decides on fieldwork, when he has decided about a particular location for fieldwork, while in the field and behind the word processor. For example, for what intellectual, practical and personal reasons has the researcher chosen for this particular subject, region and theoretical approach? Why is the fieldwork planned in that particular year? How does a researcher select or 'find' his or her place of fieldwork? How does he get approval for doing the research, both in the field, but also from his own institution? Is the researcher alone in the field or with partner and family? What happened and what were the circumstances in the field? Were there for example illnesses or accidents? What data are considered fit to be put into the final publication and for what reason? What is left out and why? What is the intellectual climate in which the anthropologist operates? Answers to these types of questions are crucial to understanding the construction of reality, the representation, as it will finally emerge in the publication on the fieldwork. The politics of social scientific construction take place in an extended arena of inter-

10 Clough 1998: xxiv-xxv.

11 Ibid: xxv.

12 Ibid: 3, 19.

13 Ibid: 17.

14 Ibid: 136.

15 I present my case as an extreme form of coincidence to excite or provoke the reader to continue reading. Later in this chapter, I shall correct this one-sided image of coincidence in fieldwork.

twined and interrelated contexts like biographical elements, personal circumstances, institutional influences, fieldwork conditions and writing process.

Reflexivity should be a systematic account of the various aspects of this arena. This is problematic, as reflexivity is a selection and (re)construction as well. If we take, for example, autobiographical influences on the construction process: to document a systematic account of biographical elements in research and representation would make it necessary to go into detail about lifelong developments leading to this particular fieldwork based on that particular research question. Such an account would take far too much space in a publication as it is only one aspect of reflexivity. And the reflexive part of the publication does not yet even answer the research question with which the anthropologist went into the field in the first place. (Unless, of course, the research question or publication, is specifically aimed to clarify that aspect of the research process.) But even if this kind of systematic exposé is not feasible in most publications, still some shortened version of it should be able to shed (some) light on what information the researcher attracts and which he misses; what the researcher finds important and worth emphasising (i.e. biases); what is his professional network; what are his personal circumstances in which the fieldwork takes place, *etcetera*. In short it should make the selective mould of the researcher (more) explicit. It is clear that such reflexivity greatly extend the time and context boundaries of the fieldwork and writing process alone. And it makes the researcher highly vulnerable to facile critique about the things he did not see, hear, do or think of. Or critique from a more prescriptive angle. If you compare how fieldwork and 'the scientific process' should be done ideally and how it actually worked out, anybody will find a host of discrepancies. But both forms of critique miss the obvious advantages of the reflective approach, namely that it gives information to the reader about the social construction of reality by the researcher, which is crucial to understanding why the researcher brought home these kind of data and his or her interpretation of them in the publication.<sup>16</sup> In short, reflexivity is all about becoming (methodologically) transparent.<sup>17</sup> I should add, although with much hesitation and restraint so as not to sound like a *mores* preacher, that 'honesty' and 'sincerity' are crucial to my understanding of methodological transparency, however difficult these concepts might be to cope with for social scientists who have any affinity with the constructionist perspective within social sciences, like myself. For me, the concepts of honesty and sincerity basically have something to do with auto-criticism and modesty (which should definitely not be confused with low self-esteem!) which implies that I realise that things could have easily turned out differently, even within the same setting in which I was research-

16 Bakker, J.W. (1992), How useful is anthropological self-reflection, in: Raven, D. et al. (eds.), *Cognitive relativism in the social sciences*, New York: New Brunswick, London: Transaction Publishers, pp. 35-50.

17 What Kunda calls 'methods confessional' which 'serves to establish a kind of ethnographic credibility; here self-criticism not only exposes weaknesses and qualifies assertions, but allows a demonstration and breadth, depth, indeed the relentlessness, of an ethnographic incisiveness seemingly so powerful that it is applied most scathingly to oneself. Thus, although it reads like a confessional, it is in fact a self-application of one's scientific tools, a "realist ethnography" of the research process.' pp. 230, Kunda, G. (1992), *Engineering culture: control and commitment in a high-tech corporation*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press. See also what Maso describes under 'openness to oneself' as being a form of 'radical subjectivity' which '... implies that not only "the empirical reality" but all the preceding, accompanying and resulting thoughts, feelings, inspirations, intuitions, fantasies, images, etc. must be scrutinized. After all, the subjectivity of the researcher reflects the outcome of the meeting of his or her perspective on the research situation reveals within and because of this

ing now.<sup>18</sup> In short, as a researcher you are not strictly speaking in control of what is happening, but many things just occur to you, however meticulously you are looking for and chasing after 'facts'. This lack of control is considered characteristic of case studies and one of its main advantages, because it gives maximum freedom to the researcher to be surprised by what is encountered and pops up during fieldwork. For that reason, methodological procedures should also not be too firmly fixed beforehand so as to allow for the flexibility this approach requires.<sup>19</sup>

'Methodological transparency' then in itself offers nothing brand new of course, as all scientific research must always be controllable and (re)traceable. But reflexivity focuses less on the research question as such. Basically methodological transparency is about the related issues of context and coincidence 'surrounding' the research and writing effort, in the strict sense that the way things finally turn out is only one possibility amongst many others. De Mul distinguishes between three meanings of coincidence. The first, being coincidence as incident or circumstance in the sense of being not the core issue. Secondly coincidence as contingency in the sense of a possibility; a possible, but not necessary nor inevitable, outcome; an outcome amongst other possibilities. Coincidence in the sense that for the same reason, things could have turned out differently. Finally, coincidence as fate, which seems to me a *contradictio in termini* because of its deterministic overtones. In relation to the description of my research process I specifically refer to the second interpretation of coincidence.<sup>20</sup> Within this context my perspective on the role and function of the methodology within social scientific research can be formulated: from my specific constructionist disposition as described in Chapter 1, which also impregnates my thinking about methodology, I consider social reality to be highly complex and without boundaries, a rhizome and universe of complexities. As scientist you scrape yourself a slice of social reality out of that universe and combine it

perspective', pp. 17, Maso, I (1995) Trifurcate openness, in: Maso, I. et al. (eds.), *Openness in research. The tension between Self and Other*, Assen: Van Gorcum.

18 It falls way beyond the scope of this chapter and thesis to elaborate on the concepts of honesty and sincerity in more detail. These touch, amongst other things, upon complicated moral issues, but their introduction in the text does indicate my presupposition in this field.

19 pp. 47-48, Swanborn, P.G. (1996), *Case-study's. Wat, wanneer en hoe?* (Translation: Case studies. What, when and how?), Amsterdam, Meppel: Boom. Although this does not mean that methodological preparation is not necessary or relevant when doing a case study. The contrary is certainly true. Because of its exploratory character, the researcher must be very decisive about what is to be explored exactly, so as not to chase after everything at once, because everything seems relevant. Which makes an a priori methodological protocol also inevitable for case study research. I come back to this kind of planning later on in this chapter.

20 pp. 8-13, Mul, de, J. (1994), *Toeval* (translation: Coincidence), Rotterdam: Erasmus Universiteit. If I take the notion of (social) complexity within organisational processes seriously (Koot, W.C.J. (1995), *De complexiteit van het alledaagse. Een antropologisch perspectief op organisaties* (translation: The complexity of everyday life. An anthropological perspective on organisations), Bussum: Coutinho), I cannot take any other stance than this one. It would be a fundamental error, and rather presumptuous, to think that what you write down, or what occurs to you during fieldwork is the essence of a process, instead of it only being a description and fragment of an aspect of the enormous complexity of social reality within organisational processes. Gould convincingly argues that the essence of complexity and variance is not reducible to an average, a typical representation, or an extreme example. The variance is reality and any generalisation a mental abstraction, Gould, S.J. (1996), *De gok van de evolutie. Misvattingen over evolutie, vooruitgang en honkbal*, Amsterdam, Antwerpen: Uitgeverij Contact. Original title: Full house. The spread of excellence from Plato to Darwin. With this specific interpretation I do not have to participate or get involved now in the discussion about the particular meaning of coincidence in social reality like Maso (1997) is: "... de vraag of we te maken hebben met een met zijn doordrenkte werkelijkheid, die mij ertoe heeft gebracht ... soorten toeval te bestuderen" (13) (translation: ... the



with your theoretical composition; you glue social reality to a conceptual framework through the process of operationalisation of theoretical concepts. The niche is presented within a relevant context. But even within contexts social complexity remains immense as a result of the inherent dynamism and fluidity of the perpetual social constructionist process. Every perspective on or description or representation of this social reality, in whatever theoretical conceptualisation or combination is therefore necessarily a highly reductionist selection. The selection can be made consistent through a thorough theoretical conceptualisation by the author.<sup>21</sup> In my case a commitment to methodological transparency is a condition *sine qua non* to be able to cope with the ambiguous and turbid nature of the concept of reciprocity and related concepts. Methodological transparency can be considered the connective link between my theoretical framework and the empirical life world I describe later on. This seems basically what the advocates of grounded theory say about the advantages of the constant comparative method in the field.<sup>22</sup> But there are also some basic differences between their approach and mine. The constant comparative method is specifically aimed at generating or elaborating theory.<sup>23</sup> This goal is reached through a constant process of interplay between theory and empirical data, hence the name *constant comparative* method. The generation of theory can also be achieved through verification<sup>24</sup> of hypotheses which suggest relationships between concepts. The main difference between their approach and a much-advocated anthropological one can now be indicated. Whereas scientists who are inspired by the tradition of the constant comparative method and grounded theory strive for the ultimate goal of 'conceptual density', this should in no way be confused with the 'thick description' which Geertz proclaims for anthropologists. In the first the emphasis is on conceptualisation, while in the latter description of processes is the main aim.<sup>25</sup> Of course, this description is facilitated by theoretical considerations and the processes being studied will be interpreted or explained from that perspective, but reproduction, or production as Clifford and Marcus would say, of a chosen social reality comes first.<sup>26</sup>

question if we have to deal with a reality soaked in meaning, which has lured me into ... studying types of coincidence") Maso, J. 1997, *De zin van het toeval* (translation: The meaning of coincidence), Baarn: Ambo.

21 pp. 125, 127, 'Constructionists are deeply committed to the contrary view that what we take to be objective knowledge and truth are created, not discovered by mind' and that the world as it is understood is the product of contexts of 'historically situated interchanges', as Gergen puts it in, Schwandt, T.A. (1994), *Constructivists, interpretivist approaches to human inquiry*, in: Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (eds), *Handbook of qualitative research*, London, New Delhi: Sage, pp. 118-137.

22 See pp. vii and chapter V, Glaser, B.G. & Strauss, A.L. (1967), *The discovery of grounded theory: strategies for qualitative research*, Chicago: Aldine; Swanborn 1996: 115; pp. 273, Strauss, A.L. & Corbin, J. (1994), *Grounded theory methodology*, in: Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (eds), *Handbook of qualitative research*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications, pp. 273-285; Wester, F. (1995), *Strategieën voor kwalitatief onderzoek* (translation: Strategies for qualitative research), Muiderberg: Coutinho.

23 Strauss & Corbin 1994: 273, 274; Glaser & Strauss 1967: chapter VIII.

24 Or falsification for that matter, although the authors only mention verification which does seem to hold the danger of (always) finding what the researcher is looking for, which would imply a serious, although not uncommon failing in the field of social sciences, bias. Ibid: 274.

25 Ibid.

26 Of course this leads to a discussion on a 'square millimetre' where anthropologists start arguing about the question of the relation between theoretical perspectives and the way one sees reality. That is not the point I want to make though, nor do I want to join in that discussion. What I want to say is that in (re)producing a chosen aspect of social reality 'thick description' stands for reliability that the researcher has gone to some lengths to use methodological triangulation and has gone through the famous 'empirical cycle' (pp. 114-117,

In this thesis the main emphasis is on a combination of description and explanation of processes of organisational co-operation being studied from the perspective of the initiator, the SVC, and thus following in the main anthropological tradition. The theoretical framework is used more in the sense of a heuristic tool than that the research is specifically aimed at verifying or falsifying certain theoretical hypotheses (see next section on the difference between hypotheses and presuppositions). This becomes clear straight away with the introduction of my research question, which highlights description and explanation, and not theory development. This is not to say that theory plays only a peripheral and marginal role in this research. Certainly not: it focuses my attention and it gives direction to my observations and interview questions. Without theory I could not do scientific fieldwork. Nothing is as practical as a good theory. And if my field data prompt me to question certain aspects of my theoretical framework, I shall certainly do so. But again, it is not the main aim of this thesis, or the methodological approach.

Despite the heuristic and demarcating role of a theoretical framework, the social reality encountered and registered in fieldwork, which is at the base of the intellectual exercise, will per definition still be a coincidental one in the sense of being one possibility among countless others, even within that framework. My perspective on transparency therefore implies not only that I want to show the reader how well I did my research, but also give the reader an opportunity to see how coincidences basically steered the research process. Coincidences of network, coincidences of meeting people, coincidences of finding documents, coincidences of context and coincidences of timing all had as much (and maybe sometimes even more) influence on my entry strategy and data construction as did methodological planning and preparation. Methodological transparency is my answer to and coping strategy for this 'reality of coincidence'. My theoretical framework is the pattern and structure I laid upon this reality to make (a certain plausible) sense out of it. My extensive account of the constructionist process is structuring my coincidences and is bridging theory and empirical data. As I already indicated above, this makes me highly vulnerable to critique, because the aspect of coincidence, even if I was actively searching for it<sup>27</sup>, shows loud and clear not only what information is gathered and constructed but also implies that piles of potentially valuable information probably 'passed by my door' because I was not there by accident, did not meet that particular person, did not notice that particular document on the desk or on the shelf when I was there, that particular person was not in an immediate or 'neighbouring' network and so on. But still, as a researcher, I construct a line of interpretation based on the data I did get and was able to gather. It is merely self evident that this perspective on methodology also implies that data collection and construction are never considered finished, or ready, or completed, or filled to capacity, or satiated. Nor will I be able to blatantly prove my point. My only resort is to try to persuade the reader to think that my interpretation is a (very) plausible one.<sup>28</sup> Constructing a database as a

Swanborn, P.G. (1981), *Methoden van sociaal-wetenschappelijk onderzoek. Inleiding in ontwerpstrategieën* (translation: Methods of social scientific research. Introduction to design strategies), Meppel, Amsterdam: Boom) several times, to check on the reliability of the empirical data.

27 This is called 'serendipity'.

28 pp. 2, Atkinson, P. (1990), *The ethnographic imagination: textual constructions of reality*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications; see also Watson, T.J. (1995), *Shaping the story; rhetoric, persuasion and creative writing in organisational ethnography*, *Studies in Cultures, Organisations and Societies*, 1: 301-311.

researcher is like jumping on an already moving train during fieldwork, and at a certain point of time jumping off the train, initiated mostly by the planning of the organisational setting from which the research is done, while the train continues its meandering journey without a known destination.<sup>29</sup>

In this chapter I want to be as open (i.e. 'honest and sincere') as is discretely possible to describe the methodological route planned and how it in actual fact worked out. This transparency certainly does not start from the moment I stepped into the plane to head in the direction of southern Africa. No, it starts in 1996 when my supervisor decided that I could 'follow my heart' in doing this research project for my Ph.D. It starts, without becoming exhibitionist or overtly psychological, with biographical elements which made this type of research topic the 'one and only' for me. In the first section I shall reflect extensively and critically on the broader context of the research process without limiting myself to the fieldwork period alone. I shall try to convince the reader that coincidence is a common incident in anthropological fieldwork. For the sake of the argument and extreme position I present the fieldworker as a pinball in a social pinball machine, i.e. fieldwork, to add a strong image and metaphor to the issue. In this metaphor the researcher can be seen as a ball in a pinball machine, knowing his static and fixed departure (from where the ball is launched, i.e. in my case, going to do fieldwork in Zimbabwe as a permanent staff member of the Department Culture, Organisation and Management, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam) and the ultimate static and fixed end (to where the ball will eventually disappear, i.e. return to the Vrije Universiteit and write a thesis), but with lots of 'planned coincidence' in between (i.e. fieldwork in Zimbabwe), in the hope of gathering as many points as possible (i.e. collect and construct as much relevant data during the fieldwork period) on the way. In the second part of this chapter I shall correct this one-sided emphasis on coincidence by extensively describing the various ways and strategies I used to force coincidences to take place. In the first place through thorough planning before entering the field and secondly a continuous process of strategic reflection on my opportunities as a researcher during the fieldwork. The stark contrast between the two arguments is meant to stimulate further discussion between present-day methodological writers, many obviously influenced by the atmosphere of Post-Modernism which has entered the social sciences debate, and the more traditional approach to methodological issues in fieldwork. My approach might offer the best of both worlds. The systematics of the reflection in the first section of this chapter consist of using four categories for reflection, which I consider to be fundamental to understanding my data-selection process in the field and in representation: autobiographical influences, personal circumstances, institutional setting and conceptual development which all come together and influence the data selection process in the context of fieldwork itself. The second session is built around the more classical methodological themes in fieldwork like legitimisation of approach, interview techniques, why I have chosen for a case study and these type of subjects.

<sup>29</sup> It is interesting to note in this respect that in one of the last emails I got in Zimbabwe from my supervisor he asked me if the 'finishing touch' (Dutch 'rond krijgen') of the data collection went well. The Dutch wording of the email also has the connotation of something neat, symmetrical and polished: 'de dataverzamelning rond krijgen'. (Of course in my reply I answered that that was the case!)

I have confessed my theoretical and methodological colours in this introduction by referring to a specific body of literature in the field of social scientific research and methodology. Now the time has come to fulfil the obligation of methodological transparency in actually applying it to my own situation which can not be found in any book or article. This will mean many reflective questions and rather few answers. Of course I could give (some) answers as I see them. But the questions are not primarily posed for rhetorical purposes, after which the questions will be answered by myself. Such an approach could only feed the suspicion that I only ask those questions to which I already know the answers and leave the more difficult ones aside. I formulate reflexive questions more as a beacon for the reader to read this thesis and come up with some answers for him or herself after finishing the reading. Many (hints of) answers to these questions will only become clear in reading and interpreting in between my formal formulations, a text I can barely read myself, if at all.

## How I (finally) got in Zimbabwe: a Quest for Methodological Transparency

### *Autobiographical Influences*

At the base of every research lies the question why you are interested in the particular research matter in the first place. If you have the freedom to follow your own interest in choosing a research subject and destination, why did you choose as you did? Autobiographical elements can undeniably be recognised in this choice. Although one has to be careful with the use of the term 'autobiographical'. What I shall be doing here is not, of course, an in-depth presentation of my biography at all. In order to do that I should present a wealth of personal material and describe in great detail everything that has happened during the course of my life. Probably a book in itself. But that is not necessary for my perspective on the need for methodological transparency. For this particular treatment of biography, it will suffice if I can give a selection of biographical elements which, according to me, shaped and influenced my choice of this subject and its treatment during fieldwork. At the same time, I realise the dangers such a treatment implies. Dangers of self-legitimisation, a distorted image as a result of the selectivity inherent in the presentation, and egocentric exhibitionism. How can most readers doubt what I write about myself and argue against it on the basis of knowledge of my life? What then is the relevance of presenting it in a scientific publication? It 'deserves' its place in this thesis because it reflects on its possible influence on my interpretation of data. Through presenting my own reflection, it is up to the reader to judge my conscious and unconscious presuppositions in this research.

My interest in wildlife in Africa dates back to the very first picture book I was given by my grandmother, entitled 'Big Game in Africa', a series by Walt Disney. He was one of the earliest nature documentalists, and the fact that she gave it to me already indicates that I was interested in wildlife, in particular in Big Game, only to be found in Africa. This interest in animals was further nourished by my spending nearly all my pocket money on comparable books and periodicals on wildlife. My birthdays were traditional-

ly spent in the zoo in Amsterdam and I followed the spectacular documentaries and series about wildlife on television as much as possible. My boyhood heroes were always guys who travelled to far away places and had to survive in hostile but pristine wildernesses and met with 'natives'<sup>30</sup> and 'locals'.<sup>31</sup> I had to concentrate largely on this form of animal-loving, because I was highly allergic to everything coated with a fur or feather of any sort. Although we tried cats, dogs, mice, and other small rodents, it did not work out because of highly allergic reactions and I ended up with tropical fish and a tortoise. My sincere, youthful dream of becoming a veterinary surgeon could not be fulfilled because of this. But taken together and through the way in which nature was generally presented in popular books and series on the subject, it probably imbued me strongly with the idea that nature is one big, balanced and harmonious system.<sup>32</sup> A natural world which has the 'ability to stir the soul. (...) (N)ature as escapism'.<sup>33</sup> A perspective which is firmly based in the Romantic period. Romantics searched for a 'holistic and integrated perception, an emphasis on interdependence and relatedness in nature, and an intense desire to restore man to a place of intimate intercourse with the vast organism that constitutes the earth. (...) A key word in the Romantic vocabulary was 'community'.<sup>34</sup> This applied not only to nature but also to 'his fellow men'.<sup>35</sup> Could it be that this perspective also steered my interest in organisational co-operation which, in its ideal form, is also often presented as a homeostatic, synergetic and above all integrated whole? Could it be that because of this I shall probably stress and look for aspects of harmony more than aspects of conflict? Shall I see conflicts merely as a temporary distortion of the harmonious situation which should prevail and towards which the system will automatically tend? Or will my romantic love for wildlife mean that my analysis will be biased towards a positive interpretation of the people (i.e. white commercial farmers) who say and pretend that they do everything within their power in the SVC to protect the wildlife from evil influences from 'outside' (i.e. black communal farmers and black government)? What influence does a romantic vision on wildlife have on my perspective of the important theme of poaching in the context of African wildlife? And what will this prejudice mean for the type of informants I attract or repel? Will it mean, for instance, that I am better able to build a good informative relationship with like-minded people and discriminate or take other or contrary opinions less seriously? Can this kind of identity-driven prejudice be compensated during fieldwork? Is awareness enough to counter the bias? Does the attention paid to and highlight on this part of my biography neglect other and maybe more important aspects of my life-story? Am I trying to put certain aspects of my biography unconsciously to the fore, so as not to mention others? Many questions and few answers: it is up to the reader to read through the thesis and then return to

30 Children's books I inherited from my father.

31 More recent titles.

32 Probably, if not undoubtedly, also inspired by my Christian background and conviction.

33 pp. 30, Budiansky, S. (1995), *Nature's keepers. The new science of nature management*, London: Phoenix Giant.

34 pp. 82-83, Worster, D. (1977), *Nature's economy. A history of ecological ideas*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

35 pp. 14, Abrams, M.H. (1971), *Natural supernaturalism. Tradition and revolution in Romantic literature*, New York W.W. Norton & Company Inc.

these questions and provide them with (some) possible answers. But why choose Zimbabwe and not somewhere else in Africa? The answer is related to another biographical aspect which is important to understanding what route my research followed and especially which possible routes it pertinently excluded, the fact that I am married and have four little children, ranging, then, from nine years old to five months.

### *Personal Circumstances*

A family like this gives opportunities, but in terms of fieldwork it certainly also implies certain constraints. It is not easy to go anywhere in the world and to just set up camp. At least that is our idea of being responsible parents. Furthermore we carry nasty memories of our experience in former Zaire in 1991, where we were working in a rural hospital and where we were repatriated after major political turbulence erupted. This had major financial and professional consequences and made us aware about being cautious in deciding where to go in Africa, if ever another opportunity were to arise. The opportunity came in deciding where to locate my fieldwork for my Ph.D. thesis. We were looking for an African country with a sufficient medical and other infrastructure and with a more or less stable economic and political climate. We were looking for circumstances in which the children would not feel too much alienated, in order to make their transition from Holland to an African country not too much to handle. This consideration was important to us for the sake of the children but also for the fieldwork, because if the children demanded a great deal of attention in terms of coaching and counseling in their process of adaptation, it would mean that I could not concentrate my full attention to the fieldwork. When we were considering all this at the beginning of 1996, we thought that Central Africa and parts of East Africa would not be suitable in this respect. Zimbabwe in 1996 looked like a good option. On the basis of the same considerations we decided already then not to go and live in a black community during the fieldwork period, but to look for accommodation in a white community. Together with the choice of my particular subject, a private wildlife conservancy in organisational co-operation with its neighbouring communities, we had already built in a certain, other may say 'considerable' or even 'insurmountable', research bias. My access to and rapport with the black communities would become far more difficult to establish coming from the white community. For the black communities, I would automatically and naturally be labelled 'one of them', maybe not even primarily only because I am white but more so because I chose to live among them. This would be, I thought, certainly the case in Zimbabwe because the relationship between black and white in general is rather sensitive because of historical and more recent socio-economic and socio-political developments.<sup>36</sup> So the context of my family was crucial in deciding to which part of Africa we would go and

36 For that same reason one could argue that living within the surrounding black communities would have meant that I would not have been able to achieve the research objective of an ethnographic orientation on a, primarily white-owned, private wildlife conservancy. So, in the end, the location of one's accommodation and one's entry into the field is a matter of a conscious choice which should be consistent with one's priorities formulated in the central research question.

where to look for accommodation.<sup>37</sup> Before I describe the process of finding accommodation and how it influences the researcher in his entry strategy into the field, let me first pay some attention to the institutional setting of my research project.

### *Institutional Influences*

How did it happen that I, despite my biographical roots, did not pick up 'my' subject any earlier in my career at the university. In 1996, I had already worked at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam full time for seven years. To find the answer to that question has got nothing to do with biographical influences but with the institutional setting in which I worked. Let me explain briefly. I work for the Department Culture, Organisation and Management (COM), which is an offshoot of Social Anthropology and Development Sociology.<sup>38</sup> COM was created, for which I was asked to help and assist, in 1989 to attract more students to anthropology. The anthropology staff was not very much in favour of the initiative. Deep down, they thought anthropology was being put out for sale. But because they did not have enough students to sustain the department, they went along with it, although sometimes grudgingly. We succeeded in our primary objective beyond all expectations.<sup>39</sup> But the specific reason for creating COM and its institutional ties to anthropology also implied that the time the COM staff was allowed to devote to research was minimal in the first place. And some influential colleagues put up many ideological constraints as to which research subject we were allowed to explore. So, because we brought in so many students the anthropology staff had to tolerate the COM curriculum which contained various anthropological subjects, but at least the research part of COM had to be distinctively different from the Department's research activities in order that they would not be associated with this type of anthropology. Because I did my studies at that same Department, with a regional specialisation and passion for southern Africa on the topic of organisational processes of co-operation in relation to local populations in health care, and was thus 'moulded' in their fashion it took some effort, emotionally as well as intellectually<sup>40</sup>, to define a topic sufficiently distinct to be acceptable to them. In my specific case this meant that I focused on the subject of organisational co-operation, but not in my favourite African or wildlife context, but in prestigious commercial Sino-Western joint ventures in Hong Kong and Shanghai

37 The fact that my wife has always been very supportive in my African adventures, and is adventurous herself, means that I can speak without hesitation in the plural about 'we'.

38 In fact, COM is a marketing name for Organisation Anthropology/Business Anthropology.

39 Within 5 years we had more than a 1000 students!

40 This overlapped to a certain extent with the process of appointing a professor at COM, and the new professor thought about and advised me in that process. I still remember where he told me that because we were on our way back to Amsterdam from a joint appointment at Philips Eindhoven, it would be necessary, despite the constraints, to start doing formal research within the department. So I wanted to pick up a subject and say that it would be my Ph.D. project as to set an example and carve out and push for more research opportunities in time and money for the COM staff. At the same time, I realised deep down, although I never made it explicit at the time (except to one older colleague), that it was a strategic move for the sake of the department only, not specifically related to my own special wishes and interests in this field.

in terms of cultural differences.<sup>41</sup> It was a study at the heart of the private and commercial sector and that was far enough away to be at a safe distance from the more classical anthropological research activities of the department and far enough removed from my initial regional interest (and mentor). I had to find the time for 'fieldwork' and research in between heavy lecturing and management responsibilities.

After some six years of formal existence it became clear that administratively COM needed a status aparte from Anthropology prompted by its enormous growth in terms of number of students and its own organisational development and identity. COM had become a cuckoo in the nest of a hummingbird. This coincided with the appointment of a full-time professor, which meant that we not only sought administrative autonomy but were also able to formulate our own research programme and negotiate opportunities in terms of allocated time and money for Ph.D. candidates for the first time. The outcome was, among other things, that we were granted a full year of fieldwork. The COM became more independent and as member of the management team I was heavily and directly involved in all these developments. In January 1996, or actually during reflective moments during Christmas 1995, I (we) decided that if I was ever to 'return' to my original preferences, it had to be now. After a highly open and personal discussion and conversation with my supervisor (our new full-time professor) along the shores of the Bosbaan in Amsterdam, he said 'yes' and I got the opportunity to combine my interest in the subject of organisational co-operation with the desired context of wildlife in Africa. Only at that stage of our institutional development as a department could we create sufficient power to fight for our own priorities with a professor who was able and willing to defend them within the broader context of the faculty. This description makes clear that it is certainly not only biographical elements which are crucial to explaining a certain research focus. The institutional context is also of great importance in this respect.

My institutional and professional context and network is also crucial to explaining why I came in Zimbabwe and not somewhere else. Contacts, relations and suggestions of colleagues are always a good starting point to find a quick(er) (i.e. informal) way to get introduced to a field than through official (i.e. formal) procedures and letters. This does not have to mean that you arrive exactly at the location you envisioned at first but somewhere 'nearby'. If you want to go to southern Africa you will probably not end up in Tunisia or another North African country. But the range of possibilities within southern Africa is astonishing, especially in terms of physical distances with an according range of local contexts. One of my first contacts was someone at the University of Leyden who supervised fieldwork in National Parks in Cameroon. Although he was interested in my research topic, we did not make much progress because in that year he was just busy with finishing his own Ph.D. thesis and simply did not have the time to work on something other than that. If the timing of my contacts with him had been different, I might have ended up in Cameroon. What he did do, was to introduce me to some people in Holland who were one way or the other involved in research on CAMP-FIRE (Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources) in Zim-

41 That is also the reason why the section on reciprocity and trust in a Chinese (organisational) context in the first chapter is so well documented for a study on organisational co-operation in an African context.

babwe. This programme is about wildlife utilisation in communal areas in Zimbabwe in order to allow the people to benefit economically from it, in the hope that, in return, they will take care of the wildlife.<sup>42</sup> Many CAMPFIRE operations are about joint ventures between local communities and commercial tour and safari operators. It seemed like an ideal research subject: in southern Africa and it could easily be focused on organisational co-operation. With high hopes I set out along this road. But after a few conversations with the recommended people in Holland, it became clear to me that CAMPFIRE was officially full in terms of research capacity. Of course, I could try to get a research application off the ground, but the risk of being rejected after much time spent in writing and following procedures was calculated by my contact persons as considerable. And I could not take that risk, because I had already changed my research area from Asia to Africa which was defended by my supervisor but which nonetheless did not create much enthusiasm within the faculty (i.e. time and money spent in Asia and no thesis). The only 'risk' I could take was a project which could not go wrong, or at least was beset by few risks, in which 'no' was not considered an answer. I had chosen a region, a subject, and a context but seemed to end up in a cul de sac.

I asked my supervisor for advice and he came up with one of his old study friends in anthropology who was then, 1996, Co-ordinator for Southern Africa at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague. They still have regular contact. At that time they ran together and also played bridge every Thursday evening, in which my supervisor's wife also participates. My supervisor told his friend about my research plans, which were up till then more 'research hopes' the following Thursday. His friend told him that it would be best if I were to contact a development expert at the Dutch Embassy in Harare, who also happened to be a joint study friend, and who had also 'something to do with wildlife'. In that period that particular person was just about to be transferred back to home base at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague. He would have up-to-date information on the situation in Zimbabwe. Because I had to wait a few weeks before he arrived in The Hague, I wrote an extensive research proposal focusing on processes of co-operation and competition in joint ventures under CAMPFIRE. 'You-never-know' despite earlier negative recommendations. In September 1996 I met 'our man from Harare'. Right from the start also he made it perfectly clear that CAMPFIRE was not a suitable option for research (certainly not 'for a white guy'): full and 'over-researched'. But he suggested another initiative in which (white) commercial farmers and (black) communal farmers had tried to establish a form of organisational co-operation, the Savé Valley Conservancy. The programme was not being run in the public sector, but in the private sector. In my search on co-operative structures in wildlife management till then, I had not come across a title of any book or article relating to or describing the private sector, only to the public sector, i.e. national parks or CAMPFIRE-like programmes. His idea sounded exiting, especially because it would give much more continuity with my former research in Asia, which was also carried out in the private sector. Although we met for the first time, there was a definite sparkle in the communication between us and he opened his address book and suggested names (and corresponding addresses) to whom I might write in Zimbabwe and to whom I could use his name by way of intro-

duction. The reason of this sparkle can only be guessed. Was it my meticulous preparation for this particular meeting? Was it chemistry between two matching personalities? Was it the nostalgia for his old study friend that made him do this? Was it his own recent part-time appointment at a university which made him willing to help a colleague? Many questions with no definite answers. But it opened finally the way to Zimbabwe, as I could start corresponding with 'the field out there' for the first time. I decided to write to all the persons suggested and to do a quick follow-up in October 1996 by traveling to Zimbabwe in order to try to make the deal for fieldwork. In Zimbabwe in October, or more specifically in Harare, I had to achieve two things. One, I had to find a department at the University of Zimbabwe which would be willing to give me an institutional backing, i.e. offer me a Research Fellowship, during my research period, a requirement for doing official fieldwork in Zimbabwe. Secondly I had to convince the people in the SVC to let me do my fieldwork in their programme and business. The fieldwork period was planned for 1998, so that seemed sufficient time to go through all the necessary procedures and paperwork. I wrote letters to all the suggested names and got a fairly positive reaction from all of them. Two letters were not answered immediately. So far my wanderings had been an 'all white' affair, directed solely by personal connections and hardly or not at all by any systematic search profile.

In October I flew to Zimbabwe with high hopes, based on the positive replies I received on my letters. But, despite the promising correspondence, my suggested contacts in Harare were not very helpful, especially not in connecting me to other relevant people, but also not in terms of open communication. Most of the contacts explained to me the political sensitivity of the commercial conservancies in general and the SVC in particular, because it is the largest privately owned conservancy in Africa and because of this it has a high profile. They see the SVC as a pilot in conservation and wildlife management in the context of the private sector. In that respect it is followed and monitored with close scrutiny at all levels of interaction, in particular by the Zimbabwean government. I had to learn my lesson quickly. After visiting all but one person on my list in Harare, I had to come to the sobering conclusion that as far as research in the SVC was concerned, I had only come physically closer to the SVC, but not one inch nearer in terms of research prospects since my departure from Holland. That one person I still had to meet was one of the people who had worked very hard to make the CAMPFIRE Programme a success in the early nineties and who had been involved in the SVC as a consultant. He had just returned from a conference in Canada and I spoke to him while he was still fagged out by jet lag. And he did not seem very eager to talk to me. Only after some (blunt) persistence from my side during our telephone conversation in which I said that he could at least spend a quarter of an hour listening to my proposal and decide after that whether to continue a further conversation or not, he agreed to see me the following morning in the garden of my hotel at 8.15 a.m. I prepared the meeting in detail and got out of bed at 6.00 o'clock the following morning so as to be as alert as possible. It became a much longer conversation than planned. It resulted in the willingness on his part, in the first place, to introduce me to the people of the Centre for Applied Social Sciences (CASS) of the University of Zimbabwe in order to convince them to allow me to apply for a Research Fellowship in 1997. We did that straight away the same morning and within half an hour the deal was done through a conversation with the acting

42 This aspect of the route to fieldwork is responsible for the extensive section on CAMPFIRE in Chapter 3.

president of CASS, who was willing to speak to us because of the introduction by my gatekeeper. After this meeting he also introduced me straightaway to another consultant to the SVC who lives and works in Harare and had planned to go to the SVC the following weekend. Again my gatekeeper arranged things for me. The consultant would pick me up at my hotel on Saturday and would later on introduce me to the Chairman of the SVC. Because I could coincidentally join this trip by car of approximately 500 km car trip to the SVC, I was able to talk extensively with the consultant and use the traveling time to 'win' (i.e. convince) him for my research. I thought that to convince him, as I had my initial gatekeeper, would mean that it would be more difficult for the Chairman of the SVC to say a direct 'no' to my research. This proved to be true. Maybe only some ten minutes of conversation with the Chairman were enough to have him open the door of the SVC for my research (or at least he did not close the door). From there on I could start the official procedure to obtain a Research Fellowship at CASS and begin the extensive paperwork for a 'Temporary Employment Permit' (TEP). This type of outcome was intended in the first place, so one could come to the conclusion that in the end everything worked out fine. But as I described above, it could have gone quite differently, and that quite easily. I could have ended up in Cameroon for instance. In Holland one man saved the day. The same holds true for Zimbabwe. It was not a gradual process of coming closer to the field all the time. It was not a step by step process. It was a process in which either the door was not opened for further research or it was opened widely. In the process of the different conversations, my initial research plan was moulded according to emphasises put forward by my different counterparts. Not necessarily moulded on the basis of scientific content or argument, but more according to political acceptability with which decision makers can be persuaded to go along with the research project.

### *Conceptual development*

A similar moulding process takes place in relation to the development of the theoretical framework from which the researcher operates. Most of these influences are usually mentioned in the foreword of a publication as if it is not central nor crucial to the intellectual exercise: an afterthought put in front. It is presented at the same level as a thank you for typing a manuscript. I think that this is a straight forward misconception. Depending on to whom you speak and hear in your professional ambience and how you reflect on the things presented to you, your theoretical framework develops in a certain direction, thus discriminating against countless other possibilities. It is important to describe this process because a theoretical composition and perspective forms the crucial ingredient, the pulsating heart, of the interpretative enterprise, i.e. description and explanation of the social reality being studied, in the thesis. For reasons of the transparency of my research process, I therefore want to describe several aspects of my odyssey, which I think in retrospect contributed and shaped my theoretical composition. In retrospect 'the road' on which I travelled towards my theoretical framework is probably much clearer and much more reasonable than had I described it when I was just dropped into the intellectual landscape and swamp of socio-cultural sciences to find my

way any-which-way-I-can towards a thesis. My description now will probably suggest far more consistency, linearity, reason, clear judgment and causality than has actually been the case. Also it will probably give the impression that the aspects described are highlights, or decisive (turning)points in the developmental process. Of course, this is not at all what actually happened. Much more happened, in a completely non-dramatic fashion, in between these moments, by way of all the small and seemingly insignificant details of everyday professional and personal life ranging from reading a newspaper and doing the dishes while your imagination browses through and associates all kind of 'unrelated' things. Or seeing and reading a one liner in a split second on a wall of a colleague who has his or her door open and which you happen to pass on your way to your own office. This makes you think of a certain theoretical implication which you have not thought of yet. This means that the aspects which I shall mention in this text only form the anchors from which I construct this reflection. Why I have chosen to define certain aspects as anchors and not others has to do with the observation of Goffman that not all realities have the same 'weight' and do belong to different 'frameworks'.<sup>43</sup> My anchors are my heavy realities, or at least I perceive them in my memory as 'heavier' than others. My dishwashing example is not a heavy reality in my perception, although it could well be that it is a crucial linking pin between several heavier experiences. Like a figure which only assumes its final form when you connect the dots and point with a pen(cil). Without the lines the heavier points have no meaning and only evoke a suggestion of the final form. Only when seen together do the lines and dots show a clear picture. But that would require too much space within this thesis which must be kept within the boundaries of my research question. For that reason, I shall describe some of the dots in the hope that it will give the reader enough suggestion of the final form. Apart from my supervisor, three (former) colleagues especially had a significant influence on my intellectual path finding.

As already described above I began doing research on Sino-Western joint ventures in Hong Kong and Shanghai steered onto that path by institutional machinations. Literature on Chinese business cultures suggested that 'face', trust, harmony and reciprocity were important aspects. But (some probably will say 'not surprisingly'), already early during my fieldwork, I came to understand that the romantic notions of reciprocity and trust in organisational co-operation were permeated with the excrement of hard-core organisational politics in which the realisation of self interests was a prime objective of the co-operating parties. It also occurred to me that every informant seemed to have his or her own image of the Other as a joint venture partner, built on a combination of collective ideas (stereotypes) of and individual experiences 'coached' by the collective ideas with the Western or Chinese Other. This made me realise that, if I wanted to describe these findings, I had to combine the beauty and aesthetics of harmony with the contaminating dirt of tricks and manoeuvring. In the process both would lose their mutually exclusive character and would become mutually contaminating; their being intertwined would lead to a less black-and-white conception of the co-operative process.

43 pp. 21, '(...) a primary framework is one that is seen as rendering what would otherwise be a meaningless aspect of the scene into something that is meaningful'. Most of these primary frameworks 'appear to have no apparent articulated shape, providing only a lore of understanding, an approach, a perspective.' Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame analysis: an essay on the organization of experience*, New York, Harper & Row.

Tricks and manoeuvring would not only be 'dirty' and harmony not its only exact opposite. Their use and abuse, constituting the ambiguity of human interaction and exchange, would be part and parcel of one organisational reality. The mutual imagery (and stereotyping and stigmatisation) which I encountered during my fieldwork in China reassured me of my theoretical choice for a constructionist perspective on reality in the tradition of Berger and Luckmann.<sup>44</sup> When I changed 'territory' from Asia to Africa, one of my arguments was that, although I had to start a new research project, I could keep my abstract theoretical framework mainly intact, because in Africa I would again focus on structures of organisational co-operation, implying the same basic processes of reciprocity, trust, imagery and strategic behaviour. For that reason, the time spent in Asia would not be lost (completely), nor my investments in time and money (i.e. buying books) in developing a theoretical framework.

Apart from the experiences in the field, the development of my conceptual framework was also heavily influenced by close colleagues in the department. The first is a former KNAW<sup>45</sup> researcher with a specific interest in Japanese economic influence and expansion in Indonesia, related to (Indonesian) Chinese networks, focusing on the period just after the Second World War. Because of his extensive knowledge of Chinese business networks, he suggested many books and articles on the subject to me. He and I met when he was stationed as a KNAW researcher at the Department of Cultural Anthropology (VU) and I intended to do research in China. We discussed my research plan many times and established a constructive and stimulating working relationship resulting in quite a number of 'joint ventures' in lecturing and in accompanying students in their traineeships in Southeast Asia. When he was working on a proposal for an extension of his contract with the KNAW, which required a promise of a future permanent staff appointment at a university, the Department of Cultural Anthropology and COM joined hands and we offered him a dual post. He introduced himself at a COM meeting in which, in around twenty minutes, he would tell us something about his research in Indonesia and Japan. Nearly one hour later the chairman had to ask him if he could come to a conclusion of his presentation so that the listeners would still have some time left to ask questions and discuss certain points with him. Although he had prepared himself for this presentation, after some minutes he departed completely loose of his prepared text and began to describe all kind of minuscule, but highly relevant, empirical details without losing sight of the broader points he wanted to make. It turned into an hour of highly 'thick description' in which people of flesh and blood enlivened the broader historical scene. His message made a lasting impression on me. Social reality is about people with whom readers can identify or not, and who are recognisable as normal human beings in their everyday life; persons to love and to hate at the same time; taking their place in history not because they are so special but because they coincidentally happened to be alive when things were taking place and because they were part and parcel of a broader configuration.

Another colleague who has definitely left his mark in my memory in relation to my theoretical composition, for other reasons than the first, is a younger colleague who

joined COM as an alternative to his military service. He especially stimulated me to see the beauty and aesthetics of theory (form) not necessarily related to or evolving from empirical findings but for the intrinsic beauty and symmetry of a theoretical framework. This latter does not necessarily have anything to do with empirical reality. On the contrary, I would even argue. The beauty of a, per definition, static theoretical framework can never be a mediated reflection of a highly dynamic and fluid social reality as they relate to each other in a completely antagonistic way as form to flow. Forms, by definition again, can give at best a suggestion of flow; create a virtual reality of flow, but never represent it. Words always 'freeze' contents. But, because social reality and experiences people have in it can only be communicated by way of mediation, we must strive to and do our utmost to find words and theoretical perspectives (form), to suit and fit social reality and complexity (flow) as closely as possible.<sup>46</sup> This particular colleague taught me by his example to appreciate a conceptual framework as art, as a sculpture with appealing form, a painting with matching and blending colours. Probably because of him my theoretical framework in Chapter 1 could be described as if I am presenting a model.

A third 'heavy' reality is my memories of inspirational discussions with a colleague who stayed with us for (only) one year but who familiarised me with Post-Modern thinking, but more importantly taught me to what I would call radicalise my points of view. He inspired me not only to go on in following Berger and Luckmann in their constructionist approach to social reality, but to radicalise its implications. This means, for instance, not only to assume that social reality is constructed, but constructed by literally billions of individuals and in various relationships to each other. Of course, with a certain overlap, but also and always with significant differences, creating a staggering and incommensurate social complexity; a level of complexity, fluidity and dynamism which can never be grasped only approximated by (static) form in any form of representation or researched by any comprehensive methodology. This has led, amongst other things, to a radicalisation in the reflection on the methodological consequences of combining being human and at the same time studying other humans. What are the methodological implications of this double role? Radically speaking it can mean that methodology is not at all, or at least not primarily a matter of clinical consistency and logic but much more broadly a matter of creating transparency in the research process leading to the chosen form of representation and reproduction; reflection on the dynamic and ever-changing relationship between researcher and researched, between Self and Others, between being an insider and an outsider. To sketch and evaluate what is, or seems to be, happening in this domain has hardly anything to do with the rather old-fashioned,

46 This is also the reason that several anthropologists experiment with other forms of representation. Some try to represent in fiction, see for an early example: Smith-Bowen, E. (1964), *Return to laughter. An anthropological novel*, New York: Anchor Books; present day examples are: Spradley, J.P. & McDonough, G.E. (eds) (1973), *Anthropology through literature. Cross-cultural perspectives*, Boston: Little, Brown and Company; Kloos, P. (ed.) (1990), *True fiction. Artistic and scientific representations of reality*, VU University Press; Bruner, E.W. (1986), *Ethnography as narrative*, in: Turner, V.W. & Bruner, E.M. (eds), *The anthropology of experience*, Urbana, Chicago: University of Illinois Press; Rosaldo, R. (1986), *Hongot hunting as story and experience*, in: Turner, V.W. & Bruner, E.M. (eds), *The anthropology of experience*, Urbana, Chicago: University of Illinois Press; Taussig, M. (1997), *The magic of the state*, New York, London: Routledge. Most experiments in this field though are to be found in literature. The most famous example in world literature being James Joyce's (1968), *Ulysses*, New York: Viking (original work published in 1922).

44 Berger, P. & Luckmann, T. (1966), *The social construction of reality*, Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

45 Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen (translation: Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences).

artificially constructed and prearranged set of steps leading to a manipulated consistency which covers only what is written about it in the final thesis but does not say anything about the actual research process of the years before, its ups and downs, its sometimes rather arbitrary choices, its dead ends and glorious horizons. It is partly through seriously discussing certain Post-Modern authors with this colleague, but more often through constantly, rather jokingly, taking arguments to their limits during lunch breaks and early morning coffees that I come to see the advantages of a (degree of) radicalisation of lines of reasoning and reflecting on its implications for the possibilities of representation and the actual research process.

The opportunity to do my Ph.D. research on the subject of organisational co-operation in relation to wildlife conservation started with my supervisor's assumption that every Ph.D. candidate should 'follow his or her heart' in choosing a subject. Even if this implied that someone had already started on a subject but later on develops second thoughts about it. But what is 'following your heart'? As I understand my supervisor it has something to do with taking a subject and conceptualisation which is related to and 'fits' your biographical and personal character. But how does one know something so delicate and in a sense so 'soft'? How well does one know one's own heart and how does my supervisor know it? When does he know that what you present as your heart is authentic? In this respect, we had a marvellous opportunity to learn to know each other quite well during the few years in which we managed COM through turbulent times. Together we drank beer and smoked cigars to figure out COM's future (which we sometimes doubted); we walked in the forest, nearly devastated by the bureaucratic pressures which we faced and we communicated, by phone or by any other means, virtually on a daily base. As a result we recognise and respect each other's strengths, weaknesses and personalities, which has generated a high level of mutual loyalty. Within that context we can go to great lengths to discuss and argue freely about what we want without the immediate threat that I begin to stage a play or start window-dressing in front of him or visa versa.

Two series of discussion in particular stand out in my memory as heavy realities. The first was at his home when we were discussing my theoretical framework, which consisted of the related concepts of reciprocity and trust, for one of the first times. I had written a text in which I argued how useful these concepts could be in studying structures of organisational co-operation. After a while my text was set aside and my supervisor started to tell me that he was rather surprised that I had chosen only these two concepts to construct a framework because, he said, he could only partly recognise and relate these concepts to my personality and character. When I asked him what he meant, he told me that in general he saw me operating, according to nature, in a far more strategic and political fashion than that suggested by the 'romantic' concepts of trust and reciprocity. In his opinion my choice of concepts did not relate to or reflect my character and 'strategic operating' personality. In his opinion this political 'being' of mine was lost in my conceptualisation. Given utterance explicitly and aloud that evening it was an eye-opener for me and pushed me with a great sense of purpose into a search for literature on reciprocity and trust, but this time integrated into strategic behaviour. The second (ongoing) discussion I remember can hardly be pinned down to one or two discussions in particular. It had more the character of a drip of water which hollows a stone after

years of repeated and persistent dripping. My supervisor is a methodologist at heart, born and bred in the tradition of clear-cut methodological orthodoxy (without himself becoming orthodox in turn), who has been responsible for ingraining qualitative research methods and symbolic interactionism into generations of students for many years. This results in him being a constant reminder of the methodological implications of any theoretical choice. When he walks by, even without saying anything, he reminds me of my methodological responsibilities. In first instance this bothered me because I always tended to neglect methodological issues. Partly because during my own studies none of my tutors ever raised a methodological issue or asked for serious methodological underpinning of my field activities. Besides this, during my early years at COM, methodology was always an 'afterthought'. Not so much in the development of the COM curriculum, where it has a statutory place, but at the level of my own plans for starting research it played a minor to non-existent role. This all changed with our new professor. He repeated again and again how important methodological questions are for the success of any research. Most of the time shrewdly not by mentioning the word 'methodology' at all, but through questions about the practical implications for fieldwork when I presented a research plan. Because my knowledge of methodological literature was certainly not up to date, I had to keep my answers to his questions rather vague. But that did not stop the questioning. Only in the second half of 1997 was I seriously pressed and simultaneously triggered to plunge myself into this aspect of fieldwork. Pressed because of report responsibilities towards the Faculty and triggered because I knew where I would go for my fieldwork and what to expect in terms of political sensitivity, organisational context and the people themselves, black and white farmers and local politicians. This made questions of methodology practically relevant and realistically imaginable. But I did not go into the more orthodox literature on methodology but followed my more theoretical line of radicalisation and arrived in the sphere of interpretive ethnography. This niche in methodological literature gave me the opportunity to stay in tune with my theoretical composition. This is not to say that this thesis is such an *avant gardist*, Post-Modern or even modern piece of work. The thesis is built up in a fairly classical form. I do not experiment with forms of representation. In a rather old-fashioned way I reduce social reality to the boundaries of my central research question and my theoretical framework. I shall come to conclusions which will finalise and polish the thesis as an intellectual building. So why bother about reflecting on influences and subtleties of scientific construction? The end result is fairly orthodox anyway. So far, the only justification and answer I can give is that the more radical theoretical and methodological reflection has made me 'modest to the marrow' about what I see, write and (re)present. My interpretation is one way of seeing things among countless other possibilities. I constructed a 'one in a million' theoretical composition. Social reality and complexity cannot be captured in any combination of concepts. Of course, I want to convince the reader that what I write and how I interpret the scene is a fairly plausible one.<sup>47</sup> But that is where my pretensions end. It has also made me rather allergic to the pomp

47 So my modesty should not be seen as insecurity or uncertainty about my representation and interpretation. Nor should it be seen as a form of identity crises of an anthropologist. It is a modesty which allows for much room for other perspectives and interpretations of a researched social reality.



and circumstance and stupid certainty with which some scientific writing, especially in the field of management and organisation, is often presented to the reader.

What remains to be mentioned in this context of influences on my conceptual development are the different institutionalised COM meetings to monitor and stimulate a Ph.D. candidate and other stages of scientific debate.<sup>48</sup> Because of my primary involvement in management activities at the university I was under-experienced in the phenomenon of scientific meetings. This meant, among other things, that I perceived our own meetings as a playground to learn the tricks of the trade: the game of scientific presentation and debate. The lessons I think I learned are not for this type of publication, it is more important that successive participations convinced me of my theoretical composition and methodological choices, because I had to defend them in front of knowledgeable colleagues. Although, maybe strangely enough, in terms of the subtle and substantial inspiration and motivation of the informal circuit described above, these gatherings did not add much to my intellectual development as I see it now, they taught me 'how to survive' in academic discourse, a kind of 'training on the job', but no more than this.

### Midterm Conclusion

So far my route to try and do fieldwork in Zimbabwe had been mainly via white relations (of relations). Except for the University of Zimbabwe I had officially hardly ever met with or spoken to a black Zimbabwean. And although the case study is on the SVC, the research still involved a co-operative structure between white and black. Because the SVC is the initiating party for the co-operation, I had to be specifically granted their official approval, not that of their black counterparts. The fact that I finally could realise the chance to do fieldwork in Zimbabwe has had more to do with convincing and persuading last chances like a salesman in scientific research than anything else. Of course, part of the persuasion was through explaining the relevancy of the content of the research. But I have the impression that my last chances did not win out in the end because of the content of the proposed research, but because of my social skills. In the course of interaction in Zimbabwe, but also with that from Holland through correspondence it is possible to get a picture of what the decision makers find important and what they find worthwhile and not. It goes without saying that not all of this should be followed in a solely opportunistic way but an attempt should be made to incorporate certain aspects of it in your proposals and writing. Although no one wants to be an opportunistic chameleon, there is certainly a degree of exchange and a willingness on the part of the

researcher to do a certain justice to the wishes of the organisation he or she want to study. Call it a price which has to be paid for access as a researcher of organisations for access. In my case it meant that I formulated a much more consultancy-like approach than initially intended. All of this is nothing new or surprising for the experienced social scientist reading this. Everybody can tell these stories. But the stories hardly, if ever, enter scientific discourse or publications, while I think that they are essential ingredients to reconstruct the construction process of the researcher. Only through a detailed, although still limited account of the route of the pinball can one come to conclusions in which the score is based and built on. In my case it is important to note that my route nearly only passed white persons for several reasons. This had already begun before the actual fieldwork period, put me in a certain position and with it with a certain angle from which to interpret the co-operative structure and biased me already towards a perspective dominated by accounts of the white partner.

### The Fieldwork Period

Waiting for things to happen we approached Christmas 1997. All the paperwork was done and sent to Zimbabwe and now I was waiting for my TEP. They said that things would work out before 1998. But nothing happened. 1998 would be my fieldwork period, with no lecturing responsibilities or any other formal function in the Department. By mid-February still nothing had happened, despite soothing answers from Zimbabwe to my regular inquiries. Every time I entered the Department everybody was interested to know if there was any positive news. Old Africa hands reassured me that given time, things would work out, but in Zimbabwe something dramatic had happened which worried me. In November 1997 the Zimbabwean Government had published a list of 1471 farms which would be designated in 1998 without any financial compensation for the land. This had created a storm of political and economic uproar in the country. In January 1998 there were violent riots in the capital, Harare. The proposed designation of farms would mainly affect the (predominantly white) commercial farmers. The same type of farmers who together form the SVC. And indeed it transpired that landowners in the SVC also were on the Government's list of 1471 farms, threatening the very existence of the SVC. Of course, these political and economic developments were important for my research. In the first place it meant that the already highly politically and ethnically sensitive land issue would be dominating the discourse during 1998, spicing it with fresh and heightened antagonism. Secondly it placed the proposed organisational co-operation between SVC and neighbouring communities in a very different perspective. The political weight of the neighbouring communities would be very much enhanced and they could enter a strategy of waiting for things to happen. Perhaps they might become resettled residents on properties which now constitute the SVC. Finally, the decision-making process for the release of my TEP could be put in jeopardy, because the research focused in a sense on the heart of the problem, the unequal distribution of land between black and white. In this case made even more sour because the whites had created an enormous coalition by establishing a private wildlife conservancy. I seriously began to doubt if they would ever grant me my TEP, although people in Zimbabwe,

48 • COM Onderzoeksmiddagen (translation: COM Research Afternoons, including Ph.D. Afternoons); • Writing and presenting my Research Proposal for the Centre for Applied Social Sciences (CASS), University of Zimbabwe, in order to be able to apply for a Temporary Employment Permit; • Yearly Report to VCW/SCW (internal monitoring institution of the Faculty); • Conference entitled Trust and Co-operation (7 November 1997) which I organised together with a colleague from the Department of Cultural Anthropology; a collection of the papers presented at the conference is published in a book, Smets, P.G.S.M., Wels, H. & Van Loon, J. (eds) (1999), *Trust & co-operation. Symbolic exchange and moral economies in an age of cultural differentiation*, Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis; • Participation in an international conference entitled Managing the dry African Savannah: options for conservation and sustainable use, September 1997.

especially at the Dutch Embassy, assured me that I had nothing to worry about. Nonetheless I cautiously started to look for other opportunities in southern Africa, ... just in case. I knew that the conservancy concept is also well-known in Namibia and South Africa. So that is where I started my search. During my preparations for Zimbabwe I had already made contact with people in Namibia and South Africa. South Africa especially seemed important in this respect, so I had already envisioned a visit to South Africa during my stay in Zimbabwe to find out more about the influences of conservancy developments in South Africa on Zimbabwe. I sent four messages by fax and e-mail, one to Namibia and three to South Africa asking, if I could do research there in case things did not materialise in Zimbabwe with my TEP. In South Africa one went to the east coast, Pietermaritzburg, and one to the west coast, Cape Town, and one in the middle, south of Gaborone. In Namibia the message went to the capital, Windhoek.

The four messages were sent on a Wednesday morning in the second week of February. I prepared myself to wait on tenterhooks. But only two hours later a reply came from South Africa, the east side, stating that I could come and that he could offer me a room and computer facilities for the time being. Before sending him an enthusiastic reply I first went to check with a travel agency when there would be a flight available to Pietermaritzburg. One and a half weeks later, they said. I called my supervisor for a final consultation. We decided that it would be wise to take this opportunity, because if the TEP from Zimbabwe were granted I could travel northwards to Zimbabwe and conduct the research as planned. Were the TEP not granted I could look for alternatives in the region which might be more easy to conduct from South Africa than from The Netherlands. Two hours later again I wrote to South Africa that I had booked a flight and if he could suggest cheap accommodation and pick me up at the airport. In my preparations, as I already indicated, I had noticed that the conservancy concept was well entrenched in South Africa, but I did not have any serious material on this, because I had focused only on Zimbabwe and had compared its situation with Namibia. My contact in Namibia had given me a name and telephone number in South Africa in case I wanted to know more about conservancies in South Africa. The telephone number happened to be one in Pietermaritzburg. When I finally arrived in South Africa I found out that the conservancy concept had actually been 'invented' there and more specifically in the province of Natal (now Kwa-Zulu Natal) and in the city of ... Pietermaritzburg by the Natal Parks Board! The first ever conservancy, the Balgowan Conservancy in 1978, was established in the hills around Pietermaritzburg. Most conservancies in southern Africa are still found in this province. What started as a more or less 'escape route' turned out to be a highly relevant and even crucial detour to gather historical information on conservancies. Most of the people involved in conservancies since the seventies were still there and I could interview them. It was sheer coincidence that I ended up there and not on the opposite side of South Africa or in Namibia. I arrived in South Africa at the University of Natal and once again I went around in a white-dominated network of informants. No wonder to a certain extent because conservancies in South Africa are, just as in Zimbabwe, a mainly white affair. But the pinball machine had given me a jackpot, unplanned and unpredicted.

For one and a half months I plunged myself into the historical development of the conservancy movement in South Africa interviewing people, visiting libraries and trav-

elling around. In the meantime I kept in contact with Zimbabwe about my TEP. By the beginning of April I thought that it was ready and I could organise for the approval for my research to be sent to me in South Africa. Actually it was the approval of the Research Council of Zimbabwe. I was told that that was the final 'stamp' needed for a TEP and that I could go and collect my TEP in Harare, which I did. It turned out differently. Immigration did not have any file on me. It turned out that the University of Zimbabwe had not sent the necessary paperwork. I 'did not exist' for Immigration because they did not have a file on me. I collected the necessary paperwork at the university and took it to Immigration personally. Why is it necessary to recount this bureaucratic delay? Because you are not allowed into the country while the TEP-procedure is still in progress. So I was told to leave the country. After much talking, they were prepared to give me a visa for 30 days, but I was not yet allowed to do any formal research. To cut a long story short, I finally got my TEP in August. In between April and August I had to go to a local Immigration office every 30 days and plead for another 30 days. And that is the reason why it is important to relate this story, because I had originally intended to go and interview local authorities in the vicinity of the SVC right from the start. Without a proper TEP I was cautious about being exposed doing formal research interviews and the like, especially at the level of local government. A bureaucratic delay which forced me to concentrate even more on the SVC, where I could go around freely and speak to anybody who was willing to answer my questions. After I finally got my TEP in August, I nearly rushed out to speak to as many government officials I could get hold of to balance my perspective. But could I not stay any longer to balance this situation even more? Could I not extend my fieldwork period because of the delay? No, because of a very practical reason: to do research in a conservancy of some 3300 km<sup>2</sup> and in the surrounding communities, you need a car to visit the landlords or their managers and people from the communities. The infrastructure in the SVC consists of dirt roads, some better than others. I had a car but not a four-wheel drive (4X4) which was way above the budget. By the end of October the rainy season starts in Zimbabwe and the dirt roads in the SVC are transformed into quagmires through which you can only travel with a 4X4. So for me, it was no use of staying longer because during the wet season I would not be mobile and would have to stick to our house. By the end of October we already received some impression of roads in the SVC during the rainy season which substantiated the warnings.<sup>49</sup>

Had I not been naive about my TEP and stayed in South Africa waiting for things to happen, the delay could have been much worse. Now things happened because I could personally collect the necessary paperwork from the university and take it to Immigration. Naïvity as a blessing in disguise. But at the same time the whole affair in a way strengthened my already existing bias towards white perspectives on the co-operative structure of the SVC with the surrounding communities. On the other hand I was granted a very good opportunity to go deep into SVC matters and relate the material to my historical material from South Africa. This latter material, especially the written doc-

49 The rainy season 1998-1999 proved to be the wettest since 1939, which even caused the crops to rot in the fields (*NRC Handelsblad* 24 February 1999, 'Alles is mis in Zimbabwe, zelfs het weer' (translation: Everything is wrong in Zimbabwe, even the weather).

uments and publications, was nearly an all white affair because conservancies in southern Africa are white-dominated. In that respect material from South Africa and Zimbabwe became an integrated whole. This is not to say that I did not or could not pay any attention to a black perspective on conservancy development in South Africa or Zimbabwe. During my 'TEP-less' period I followed three strategies in this respect. Local newspapers, especially the 'government newspaper' *The Herald*, often offered a reflection of the black (government's) perspectives on developments in Zimbabwe, as do reports from critical NGOs and other grassroots organisations. In the next chapter there are many examples of information from this type of article and document. I put in extra effort to try and locate these types of documentation. Secondly, and this holds specifically for Zimbabwe, my main informant in the SVC was their black Liaison Officer. He is responsible for liaising between the SVC and the surrounding communities. He is a former government official from the region and a highly critical but at the same time diplomatic and knowledgeable character. He has nearly spent his whole life in the region and has a phenomenal memory of the history of black and white relations in this particular part of Zimbabwe. During my fieldwork he has become one of my main sources of reflection concerning the white perspectives which were presented to me in interviews with members of the SVC, its chairman and Conservator. Especially because we spent many, many hours in the car going for interviews and visits to particular sites we had ample opportunities to discuss matters freely. He was also willing to introduce me into his network of relations, former colleagues in government included, which gave me an opportunity to develop a feeling on conservancies from the black perspective in general and the proposed organisational co-operation of the SVC in particular during the period that I refrained from officially researching local government. Finally, the person who introduced me to CASS and the SVC on that particular day in 1996 I described earlier on is an outspoken representative of critical whites with respect to black and white relations in Zimbabwe. He stood at the inception of CAMPFIRE which I shall describe extensively in the next chapter. He was also one of my regular sparring partners for developing a critical awareness of the situation on the ground. But this description makes clear that my fieldwork situation (or any other fieldwork for that matter) can hardly be called controlled and that the social reality I was trying to unravel was presented to me rather one-sided, although I tried to balance the situation in several ways, and in incomplete fragments.<sup>50</sup> Although I was of course actually looking for and chasing after these fragments, the ones I finally managed to get hold of or construct, often came to me rather by coincidence.<sup>51</sup> Keeping loyal to the metaphor I introduced earlier, the pinball sometimes scored a jackpot, like in South Africa, and sometimes I expected a lot more points and got zero or close to zero because of coincidence.

50 These conclusions are actually close following Geertz' (1973) observations concerning anthropological fieldwork, pp. 13-29.

51 For the sake of clarity, I refer here again to coincidence in the meaning of being a possibility amongst many others. In other words, as an anthropologist you not only bring home bits and pieces of 'data', but on top of that also fairly coincidental ones.

### *What a Coincidence!*

Most of the time anthropologists are willing to admit in private, following in the slipstream of an authority like Geertz, that their fieldwork has indeed followed the line of Geertz' conclusions. But, in general, they are less willing to appreciate their data collection as coincidental, or to write that down explicitly. In order to pretend more scientific control over processes in the field, one could 'hide' behind a grounded theory approach I introduced earlier. But the constant comparative method, especially when seen strictly as a means towards theoretical and conceptual development, suggests far more systematic, repetitiveness, plus the gradual and even development of the data construction in relation to the theoretical framework, than actually takes place in the field.<sup>52</sup> One particular day in the field seems sometimes worth more in terms of data construction and collection than whole weeks following or preceding that day. How can that experience be explained? Has it got to do with painstaking preparations and sowing in advance, and as might be expected the rich data-harvest can be collected on that particular day? Maybe sometimes that can be the case. But often it 'just' seems to happen. Was it your lucky day: you were by sheer accident at the right place at the right time? Were you more alert as a researcher on that day? And why was that? What did you miss on all those other days, which were obviously not your lucky ones and maybe you were less assertive? Are the data you collected on that particular day more special and relevant to your research question than the data you missed on those other days? And how do you know? In conclusion, I can not say for myself that I used the constant comparative method or that I strictly followed the route of grounded theory. It was certainly not constant, and even not always comparative, but more contributory, competitive or simply because the particular data 'felt right'. The method seems to be best described as being a route of 'planned coincidence'. This notion highlights exactly the ambiguity I felt and experienced as a researcher between being in control and actively searching and finding relevant information and being in deep water and reaching deeper and deeper down to find any solid ground to rest on, which I did not reach until nearly drowned.<sup>53</sup> The concept of coincidence, finding and constructing one set of data, amongst many other possible outcomes, contains and describes this ambiguity most directly and openly. But coincidence is obviously associated with something that does not belong to the status of a serious scientist. Coincidence seems to suggest too much of a scientist limping behind the social reality being studied. Coincidence seems to suggest too much 'at random'. But despite the fact that I consider myself a serious scientist, I still want to argue that a

52 I realise here that I use the word 'the field' as if it is a demarcated area with clear boundaries, 'out there'. This is not a true reflection of the situation as I already indicated before. The field must be considered the total subject under study, including the work you do on it at your home university, the correspondence you produce, the reading, the try-out papers at conferences and the like. But it is difficult to escape the common discourse within the discipline, unless your specific goal in a thesis is to enter into that discussion. For me, an escape, i.e. introducing new terminology, would put far too much emphasis on this aspect of my study, while my primary intention is to write about the SVC and its initiative for organisational co-operation with neighbouring communities.

53 But this latter experience was maybe only a reflex of self-protection, pretending to myself that I had solid ground under my feet again! I shall come back to this issue of 'planned coincidence' more extensively later on in this chapter.

considerable part of my data were gathered 'at random' and that because of the scale of social complexity as a researcher you cannot do anything else other than to construct a set of focused but still random data. Let me give a few (random but focused) examples from my fieldwork. The telephone network in the part of Zimbabwe where the SVC is located, the southeast, is terrible by Western standards. The network does not work at all, the voice at the other end of the line is barely audible; or the network is overloaded, which brings you time and again in contact with a soft-voiced but resolute answering machine telling you that 'all lines are occupied, please try later'; you are connected with another number than the one you dialled; two connections on one line and other varieties on the same theme. In a huge area as the SVC this is a straightforward handicap. To overcome this handicap, they have installed a radio-system to which all the farms are connected and the central management of the SVC also has a radio installed in its cars. But because everybody is connected to the same system on the same frequency, everybody can hear and follow all conversations. Needless to say, some conversations are not for everybody's ears. So alternative means of communication which offer more privacy have been developed, like 'car-window communication'. There are only a few main roads through the SVC and if people are traveling through the SVC they will almost certainly pass each other somewhere. Approaching cars are readily recognisable and drivers always watch closely, even when the car has already passed they usually keep an eye on their rear mirror to check, if the other wants to stop and tell or ask you something. Sometimes they raise their hand slightly in greeting but sometimes they stop with their two open windows facing each other and leaning out discuss the latest news, gossip, hearsay, questions and messages. If something is considered really important they step out of the car, with their engines still running, and discuss the issue briefly. These exchanges are an important medium to find out what the latest news is, what is considered important, what is about to happen and who relates in what way to who. I quite often drove through the SVC this fashion, either alone or with the Liaison Officer, and got important hints and fragments of information by stopping and briefly exchanging this type of information. Who I would pass on my way was absolutely unpredictable and could hardly be made systematic. Driving the main roads just in the hope of meeting somebody who has maybe something important to say to you does not seem very efficient. So I can describe with a wealth of accuracy what information I picked up through this type of communication and why it was valuable. In Chapter 5 you will find several examples of it. But I have no clue about what possibly important information I missed and did not pick up somewhere else because I was not driving through the SVC at that particular time. Maybe someone passed who could have given me important information through the window. But I shall never know. Something similar applies to the radio. When I was somewhere in the SVC, at the office or on an estate where the radio was switched on, which always was the case, I automatically followed the communication going on over its frequency. I made regular notes of conversations over the radio because I thought it was important. But I cannot tell what information I missed on days I was not near a radio. Maybe there were days some crucial information was exchanged over it, and I was not aware of it. Again I shall never know. A final example is about what kind of written documents I could get hold of. I knew I could ask for some of them. Most of the time I was allowed to copy them. In some instances they would not let me

have a closer look into them. Sometimes I came across written documents through sheer 'bad manners'. I looked over someone's shoulder to look at what he was reading and, if I thought it was interesting, I asked bluntly but politely if I could make a copy. But what documents did I miss because I was not there to look over a shoulder? Coincidence in terms of what information I gathered amidst the countless other possibilities has directed my data gathering.

Of some sources I expected (much) more, and this turned out differently through sheer coincidence. I estimated for instance that the chairman of the SVC would prove a rich source of information for me. But he caught cerebral malaria during my stay and was out of commission for months on end. After that he had to catch up with so much work that we could hardly find an opportunity for an interview or to discuss matters. Much information during fieldwork is gathered or missed in this rather random fashion. Sometimes it is just additional data, confirming or duplicated information. Sometimes it seems crucial to a better understanding of what is happening. Other information is constructed through formal appointments for interviews with people. But, taken as a whole, it is difficult to judge what 'percentage' of vital information I accumulated through formal interviews or through informal bits and pieces. Sometimes I got more information after a meeting while we were having a Coke, than during a pre-arranged interview. Even when sharing a Coke or something else, I was always consciously aware of questions I wanted to ask if the occasion would arise. Strictly speaking it was not an interview setting. As I already formulated earlier, what then is the use of, for example, counting the interviews and present that figure as something worthwhile to 'prove' the representativeness of your data? What then is the use of making a distinction between interviews and other forms of communication? The only distinction which seems to be worthwhile in this respect is to ask oneself what information is, in the words of Goffman again, 'heavier' than others. Sometimes snippets picked up from the radio proved to be heavy, as did certain conversations through the car-window, as well as certain informal talks after a meeting, or when socialising. Sometimes information from interviews turned out to be heavy. But the dots of the emerging figures were connected by the countless other bits and pieces of information I piled up in my computer and on the shelf in my study, less heavy, but as crucial to achieve a recognisable final picture. Of course, there is the subtle inclination among social scientists to portray the information they gathered as more crucial and heavier than the information they did not manage to get hold of and of which they maybe not even know the existence. The modesty I proclaimed earlier on, also implies that I do not want to judge my material from that angle. Again, not because of a perceived uncertainty, but because of a per definition lack of knowledge of the total amount of possible information on the subject. My account of the organisational co-operation between the SVC and surrounding communities then is a subtle balance between knowledge and ignorance, and I trust in my own capabilities as a scientist and social skills as a cunning relation builder to have gathered enough relevant information to make a plausible attempt at interpretation. But it makes clear once again that a commitment to methodological transparency is an absolute condition *sine qua non* in any scientific publication of this nature, to enable readers to make up their own minds about the specifics of the perspective of the author.

### *Time and Timing in Research and Representation*

1998 was a tough year for Zimbabwe. It started with severe food riots; the Zimbabwean economy crashed and so did its currency, the Zimbabwe Dollar; they, Mugabe and allies, decided to interfere in the war in Congo, formerly Zaire; the announced land reform in 1997 in which 1471 farms were listed to be designated for resettlement had encouraged in high expectations under the majority of the population. These expectations turned to frustration, expressed in land invasions, when things did not work out fast enough according to the majority of black people; there was fear that El Niño would cause another devastating drought; the rainy season turned out to be the wettest in thirty-nine years and resulted in crops rotting in the fields.<sup>54</sup> An average year, or something special? Whatever the answer, this particular timing of my research did have a significant effect on the subject being studied. An economy crashing about one's ears with a strongly devaluating currency, a major land reform and climatic coincidences do influence the development of an organisational co-operation between two rival identities. A strained relationship under 'normal' circumstances is stretched to its limits in this particular context. My case became an extreme case, the more so because of its specific context.

Why was I in Zimbabwe doing fieldwork in 1998? Was that for a particular reason or mere coincidence? I would argue the latter. Because of a changing institutional context at my university in 1995-1996 I was able to change my research area from China to Africa. From that point on we said we would strive for completing the research and thesis within a period of four years and planned accordingly: two years to get things done and arrange a location for fieldwork, including all the procedures necessary to round up the relevant paperwork; one year of fieldwork and one year for writing the thesis. Planning which had to be made institutionally possible. Budget and allocation was needed for my preparatory trips and fieldwork and an interim lecturer for the time I would be in the field: Western planning for African fieldwork. The planning nearly came to naught when my TEP was not issued and I arranged an *ad hoc* escape via South Africa, which turned out to be a jackpot. Finally I thought I could go to Zimbabwe and collect my TEP which proved not to be the case. But I remained in Zimbabwe anyway with the constant threat that I would have to leave the country after my thirty-day visa had expired. This state of affairs stimulated, or rather forced, me to go ahead more than full speed all the time, because every month could be my last opportunity to collect and construct data and information from the field. Is this information on context obsolete and not worth mentioning? Is it too much nitty-gritty in the light of abstract scientific questions and interest? Or is it relevant and even crucial for interpreting and judging my final representation and interpretation of my central research question? The coincidence of context seems to be only the outcome of timing. Timing places a researcher in a certain context which cannot be anything else but coincidental. The particular context I arrived in was a very exciting one in relation to my central research question. Already typified as an extreme case and for that reason a good example by which to explore my

theoretical notions of reciprocity and related concepts, this particular context made the case even more exciting because the relations between the two rival identities were stretched to the limit under these circumstances and in this context. The pin-ball machine seemed to bless me with many points along the route; not only purely in relation to my research question, but also in terms of private context. Doing fieldwork in Africa with four small children is taking a certain risk. If they do not feel comfortable in this new context, or become seriously ill, it can have a severe effect on your effectivity as a fieldworker (actually this also holds for the adults involved). If your wife is not happy under the circumstances it can distort the fieldwork considerably. It would be far too pretentious to say that 'everything went according to plan'. On most, if not all, issues of context I do not have direct control or influence. You hope for the best of course, but coincidence determines your fate as researcher. Coincidence of timing in the sense, again, that it could have turned out very differently. My route through this Ph.D. process (so far) and the fieldwork went well (I think), which I consider a 'bloody coincidence'.

Time is also important in another sense than sheer timing. Time is important in relation to what you think and how you interpret your fieldwork data. What affect does it have on my construction of representation that I write this thesis straight after I have completed my fieldwork? What does it mean that I am given the opportunity to work almost full time on it? What does it mean that I am writing this thesis in my study at home and not at the university? Would I write the same thesis if I had written it in Zimbabwe while still in the field? If I read through my fieldwork diary today, I can still feel and recognise many of the things I write about. But these are definitely not the same feeling when I wrote it down while 'in the middle'. Sitting behind my desk and computer screen I feel rather detached. Is that a good thing for producing scientific text? What does time do to you as a researcher? I put these questions to a little test. While I was in Zimbabwe I wrote a paper for a conference which would take place just after my return to Holland.<sup>55</sup> I decided to write a paper on methodological issues of fieldwork. I did not have any books or libraries at my disposal, or intellectuals surrounding me, I was alone with my own experiences in fieldwork and theoretical luggage. It was in that particular paper that I first introduced the metaphor of research as a pin-ball machine and the researcher being the ball going around at random collecting points along the route, although it does not exactly know its own score. The metaphor reflected perfectly my feeling at the time. The social complexity of the processes of organisational co-operation being studied was such that I felt as if I was floating in a boundless universe and all the time trying to absorb as many details as possible along the route I was following rather coincidentally. That is to say, I could have followed a million other routes instead. When I thought that I had come to grips with a case in a certain corner of the SVC, the next thing I heard was that on the other side of the SVC an incident had occurred which could also have been highly relevant to my research. Or when I had an interview with one person in or around the SVC, I heard that on that particular day another interesting contact had passed by the office. I heard of interesting meetings

<sup>55</sup> '100 jaar antropologie in Nederland' (translation: 100 years of anthropology in The Netherlands), 18-19 December 1998, Panel: De invloed van onderzochten op onderzoek (translation: The influence of the researched on research).

<sup>54</sup> More detailed information on these issues will be presented in the Chapters 4 to 6.

which I could not attend because they were too far away or to which I was not invited/allowed, or about which I heard only afterwards. Every little detail of social reality indicates that other information and data could have been picked up had I followed another route. It merely goes without saying again that this perspective on methodology also implies that data collection and construction is never finished, or ready, or completed, or filled to capacity, or satiated.

After my fieldwork, I started nearly straightaway drafting a chapter outline for my thesis. In it the social complexity seemed to condense into a mere jigsaw. Was it because of a loss of detail? Was it because of being out of the field? Was it because of conceptual clarity? Was it because of time playing tricks? Fact is, that as you are reading I try to (re)present the reader with a fairly consistent picture of conservancy development in southern Africa and a case study of the SVC and its initiative to undertake a joint venture with its neighbouring communities. The consistency is not a reflection of the social reality I try to picture but of my conceptual framework in which I try to capture it. Time is the single most crucial element in creating consistency in a theoretical framework. Consistency is like polishing, the more time is spent on it, the shinier the result. An important aspect of the polishing process is describing the context. Context is to questions what light is to a photograph, it creates a picture.

### *Sensitivity and Privacy*

When it became clear to the people involved in the management and running of the SVC that I was really determined to come, they made me aware of the precarious situation of the SVC in relation to its neighbouring communities. The WWF co-ordinator responsible for the rhino project in the SVC, who had been at the inception of the SVC wrote me a letter in which he had 'no hesitation' in stating to me that my research 'would not be appropriate to the current situation at Save Valley'.<sup>56</sup> When CASS had decided to grant me a Research Fellowship, their former Director and important Trustee of the SVC Trust told his successor that this specific research issue was 'very sensitive'. When I later saw him myself, he took me to his office and explained to me the ultimate sensitivity of the whole issue of neighbour relations in the SVC and suggested that I take the utmost care not to disrupt a slowly developing, but still very fragile relationship.<sup>57</sup> At the Annual General Meeting of the SVC in May 1998 where I gave a presentation about my research, it was the WWF co-ordinator again who stood up and asked me how I would go along with and handle the 'embryonic stage' of the organisational co-operation between SVC and neighbouring communities and what I thought the influence of my research activities would be on the further development of that relationship.<sup>58</sup> Obviously I had an interesting but at the same time highly sensitive subject to study. And research on sensitive topics presents the researcher with specific problems. From this perspective, this research not only presents itself as a scientific endeavour, it is also as a diplomatic one: not only during the fieldwork to stimulate a certain degree of openness from

<sup>56</sup> Personal communication, 31 December 1996.

<sup>57</sup> Diary entry, 22 September 1997.

<sup>58</sup> Diary entry, 15 May 1998.

all parties to provide me with (bits and pieces of) information, but also, and maybe even primarily in representing the data in this thesis. Because of the sensitive nature of the subject it is necessary to take precautions to protect and assure the informants' anonymity. But the 'use of pseudonyms has not always been effective and disguises have frequently been penetrated (and furthermore t)he variety of information produced, particularly by qualitative research, often means that identities can be deduced from descriptions of people's role, their relations to others, and even, simply, from the overall 'texture' of the data'.<sup>59</sup> Barnes has argued that if the researcher uses other names only, the 'real' identities will probably still be transparent to those within the research setting, which means that pseudonyms merely have a symbolic function and can be applied as long as the informants seem to think it is enough for their protection.<sup>60</sup> In order to check this I sent my draft texts to influential insiders in the SVC and those about the South African context to people in the Natal Conservancy Association in Pietermaritzburg to see how they would react to my representation. I have never received any comments from South Africa. From Zimbabwe it only came at a later stage.

It is exactly here that I bump into the constraints of my proposed commitment to methodological transparency. At all levels of transparency, be this your own institutional level, the route along different persons and networks before you settle on a research site, intellectual influences or the scene of the fieldwork itself, there is always the matter of privacy. It is fairly easy to make decisions about the openness of your own activities and thinking on the matter. Although the question remains what you tell your audience and what you withhold, for reasons that it is hard to judge with how little self-justification and how much self-criticism a scientific community can cope. When are you labelled a 'loser' or a 'bad scientist' if you 'really' expose how things were constructed? In other words, what is the strategic effect on your professional career of being 'honest' about your own perspective? But it is even more difficult, not to say impossible, to make those decisions for others. A solution would be that you present them with your text and ask if they have problems with it. What if they have? Do you then leave it out of your final text? If so, in the end you will give quite a selective form of transparency. So what is still the advantage of my 'commitment to methodological transparency'? Much 'pomp and circumstance' and little effect? Suggestive and politically correct terminology as a facade and shop window but with little content behind the window-dressing? Considerations of privacy and discretion will probably finally be the ultimate boundaries of a commitment to 'methodological transparency'.

### **Enforcing coincidence through preparation and anticipation**

So far in this chapter, I have given the impression that coincidence in terms of one possibility among many has played an important role in my fieldwork. Agreeing with

<sup>59</sup> pp. 186: Lee, R.M. (1993), *Doing research on sensitive topics*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications.

<sup>60</sup> Barnes, J.A. (1979), *Who should know what?: social science, privacy and ethics*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Simpson, we cannot leave a coincident to coincidence.<sup>61</sup> Paradoxically, coincidences do not occur coincidentally, but because of strategic and thorough methodological planning before entering the field and constant strategic reflection on possible opportunities while in the field. This is where my plea to admit the role of coincidence to anthropological fieldwork abruptly ends. As a researcher you want to influence coincidence. You want 'planned coincidence'. Methodological preparations are part of the standard repertoire of a social scientist, strategic reflection less so. With this latter I refer to what in soccer and other sports is called 'anticipation' of things to come; 'an ability, seemingly an uncanny one, to anticipate the play of the opponent'.<sup>62</sup> Participation in organisations is often the result of anticipation.<sup>63</sup> These two concepts also reinforce each other. The more the researcher participates, the better he or she can develop 'antennae' to anticipate. Conversely, the better you anticipate, the more efficient and effective is your participation in terms of gathering and constructing cumulative data for answering your research question. Fieldwork in organisational anthropology<sup>64</sup> could methodologically be summarised as 'the art of anticipation'.<sup>65</sup> Art, any art for that matter, according to a well-tried adage, is only to a small extent a matter of inspiration and talent, and for the rest it is perspiration and hard work. This also holds true for training oneself as a researcher in this particular art form. As anticipation is not so much a matter of speed

than of 'readiness'<sup>66</sup> it implies that the preparations for proper anticipation in the field start while still at home and continues in the field.<sup>67</sup>

The first thing I had to do was to bring my theoretical concepts of reciprocity and related trust, in a context of two groups with rival identities, 'to the ground'. During fieldwork you (usually) do not have to lecture about the concepts in an intellectual way, but you have to work with them in interviews, observations and analysis of documents. This cannot be done when the concepts remain in the cerebral sphere. So the first thing I did was to operationalise the concepts with which I had composed my theoretical framework as presented in Chapter 1. The operationalisation would give me the necessary grip to be able to formulate questions to ask to people and to guide me in reading through and analysing documents and other written material in the field. Although to a certain extent this is quite a misleading thing to say. The composition of a theoretical framework, and the operationalisation of concepts and fieldwork evolve rather than that they follow each other up in a neat time sequence. My theoretical framework for instance was already 'tested' in fieldwork in China and my fieldwork in Zimbabwe actually already began with my first trip to Zimbabwe in 1996, and even before that through correspondence, 'pursuing' documents, and the like. Periodisation of a research process always confronts one with the arbitrariness, and thus violence and discrimination, of creating boundaries. Nevertheless, we can agree that a periodisation in this way functions as a fixation-for-the-time-being of a moment in the ongoing intellectual process which surrounds the fieldwork. The operationalisation was preceded by an explication of my presuppositions regarding the relatedness of the concepts, based on my theoretical framework. First I thought of them as hypotheses but later on I realised that it would give the wrong impression about this research: my research is a case study and has mainly an exploratory and explanatory character (see below), and is not a piece of research to primarily test or check any prediction about a course of events in which these type of hypotheses are most commonly used.<sup>68</sup> So I adjusted my formulation and presented it as presuppositions about the common sensical relatedness between the concepts of reciprocity, trust and social identity. They are formulated at a general and an abstract level, which implies that the ambiguity the concept of reciprocity contains in an actual interaction and exchange process, as I described in the previous chapter, is filtered out. The ambivalence implied in the concept of reciprocity will only shortly surface in the operationalisation of the concept and in extenso in the actual descriptions of

61 pp. 23, N.F. Simpson quoted in Hughes, P. & Brecht, G. (1985) [1975 in English, *Vicious circles and infinity*], *Vieuzue cirkels. Een verzameling paradoxen* (translation: *Vicious circles. A collection of paradoxes*), Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker.

62 pp. 36, Miller, D. (1998), *Anticipation*, *Australian Book Review*, February/March. A striking example from soccer is described in the following quote: 'Die Fähigkeit zum genialen Paß aus höchster Bedrängnis in den berühmten freien Raum zum noch freieren Mitspieler wurde von manchen schon als eine besondere Gabe Gottes empfunden', pp. 95, Born, A. (1996), *Entscheidungsfähigkeit im Sportspiel*, in: Nitsch, J.R., & Allmer, H. (eds), *Handeln im Sport. Zwischen Rationalität und Intuition*, Köln: BPS-Verlag. This type of anticipation is also referred to in distinguishing between good and striking photo journalism: 'Met foto's die op het beslissende moment zijn gemaakt valt niet te sjoemelen, dat is eigen aan het moment. Vorm is in dit soort foto's deels een kwestie van geluk (...). Maar voor een groter deel is het anticiperen, wachten op het juiste moment' (free translation: 'With photographs taken at the decisive moment one cannot fiddle, it is all in that particular moment. Form is in this kind of photos partly a matter of luck (...). But to a larger degree it is anticipation, waiting for the right moment'), *NRC Handelsblad*, 10 January 2000, Fotograaf Tom Stoddart is geen wereldverbeteraar, 'Ik wil waarnemer zijn', (translation: *Photographer Tom Stoddart is not a worldreformer, 'I want to be an observer'*).

63 There is not much written about these specific aspects of fieldwork in the methodological literature. The closest you come is when authors try to describe the method of participant observation. Bernard (1988: 150) for instance, describes participant observation not so much as a method but more as a strategy, which comes close to what I imply with 'anticipation' and 'strategic reflection'. Bernard links this strategy to another concept, which links in with this methodological approach, 'intuition'. He writes (ibid: 151) that participant observation 'gives you an intuitive understanding of what's going on in a culture' [i.e. also in an organisation]. (see also 3.2 'The role of the participant observer', pp. 29-38, in: Friedrichs, J., & Lüdtke, H. (1975), *Participant observation. Theory and practice*, Farnborough: Saxon House, jointly with Lexington (Mass.): Lexington Books.

64 And probably in all other fieldwork situations in the social sciences!

65 The art is described as 'an imaginative synthesis between what is known and what is unknown, between what is (relatively) certain and what is indefinite. This is properly described as an art (...)', pp. 18, Encel, S., Marstrand, P.K. & Page, W. (eds), (1975), *The art of anticipation. Values and methods in forecasting*, London: Martin Robertson. Note the similarity of this definition with my description of trust in chapter 1. Obviously anticipation has also got to do something with trusting oneself!

66 Miller 1998: 40, 'To anticipate is not to 'go off half-cocked', but to know something in advance and accordingly, to be appropriately prepared. (...) (P)repared that one 'meets' what is coming'.

67 For this matter it is interesting to note, although I shall not pursue the matter conceptually any further here, is the parallel of anticipation to the concept of intuition. Although opinions differ about its exact definition 'the different caches of literature tend to converge around the theme that intuition represents a way of direct knowing that seeps into conscious awareness without the conscious mediation of logic and the rational process'. But intuition has to be contextualised as well, as research has shown that 'interpersonal relations and listening' play an important role in 'the intuitive moment' also in research processes. That is why participation and intuition / participation reinforce each other, pp. 7 & 11, Boucouvalas, M. (1997), *Intuition. The concept and the experience*, in: Davis-Floyd, R. & Arvidson, P.S. (eds), *Intuition. The inside story. Inter-disciplinary perspectives*, London: Routledge.

68 Swanborn 1996: 48.

cases of interactions between communal and commercial farmers in the field in Chapters 5 and 6.

In the introductory chapter I have already formulated my presuppositions as I defined and described the concepts of reciprocity, trust and imagery in the first chapter in conjunction with the theoretical questions which guide this research in the 'linking pin' section of that chapter. What is necessary in this chapter on methodological issues is to present my operationalisation of the concepts.

- *Reciprocity*: the material and immaterial (symbolic) exchange of goods, services, oral and written texts, goodwill and its opposite, between commercial and communal farmers on the level of the structure of organisational co-operation;
- *Trust*: positive expectations of a return from the other translated in a willingness of the co-operating partners to exchange goods, services, texts and goodwill;
- *Social identity*: the mutual and self-images / reputations of the co-operating partners.

It was in the territory around these issues that I wanted to ask people in the SVC and representatives from the neighbouring communities questions. Questions not only posed in formal interview settings but also to be kept in mind when socialising or in other social contexts in which I would participate, ranging from a coincidental meeting in town while doing the weekly shopping to a drink at the bar or at a social gathering around a 'braai'. From previous fieldwork experiences and literature on the subject I know that the boundary between interviews and other forms of oral communication in terms of relevant information is ranging from very thin to non-existent. Sometimes an interview turns into a conversation and vice versa, or both at the same time. All possible permutations and combinations can yield highly relevant content to your research question. Much also depends on how the fieldworker presents him or herself in the research situation. In my case in Zimbabwe I was obviously and un-disguisably white. I could not 'hide' that in my dealings with black members of black communities. For the black communities I was undoubtedly one of 'them white landowners'. For the white conservancy members that was also the case, although in the beginning they were afraid that I was 'spying' on them as they let slip in various jocular asides and remarks. The image of the Dutch among the conservancy members is that they are usually highly critical about how whites should treat black people and they repeatedly reminded me of the stance of the Dutch against Apartheid in South Africa in the seventies and eighties. Gradually it was possible to erase this idea, not by being uncritical, but through extreme caution not to be a moralist preacher about these type of issues. This led to a situation of mutual familiarity, in which I partly dressed like them, shorts and bare feet in shoes or sandals, but also distinguished myself by my shirts, which were never the safari-like shirts they usually wear, but business-like striped ones. It is difficult to judge though in how far this nuance was consciously picked up by either my white or black informants. I do think it had the effect that I was considered a *relative outsider* by both of them, which is the ideal position for a researcher to be in a situation in which you

study processes along the lines of rival identities.<sup>69</sup> One of the consequences of the blurred boundaries between several types of oral communication is that it is not useful or possible to give, for example, the exact number of interviews I did, or any other rigid quantification of sources of data. The topic lists are the only suitable indication for the contents of the various encounters. To complement the topic lists for interviews I added an extensive topic list to structure my observations. This included observations about the physical context as well as observations about the material expressions of the social identity of the partners.

Included in the planning was that I would always take a small cassette recorder with me, besides a writing pad and pen, for making recordings of my interviews. Not so much for transcribing the complete interview text, but more as a 'just-in-case' audio archive. The interviews would be written down and put into the computer straight after the interview. There would be no accumulation of handwritten notes and other bits and pieces of information preserved on little scraps of paper. The text written down in short during the interview, would be written out as extensively as possible when transcribed into the computer, complete with physical context observations and describing the trip to and from the meeting place and possibly other incidents. I planned to speak and interview as many stake-holders in the process as possible. This would mean all the members of the SVC as they were the initiating and financing organisation for this organisational co-operation. Besides this I would interview key figures from the surrounding communities involved in the process. As some 119,000 people live in the neighbouring areas I did not intend to interview any representative part of them but to concentrate on those people who were either somehow and directly involved in the organisational co-operation with the SVC. In both the SVC and the communities I was preparing myself to speak to (key)informants, to use the proper methodological concept.<sup>70</sup> Printed and other material would be stored and stock-piled under relevant catch-words. I would reserve some shelves somewhere to start this part of the data collection.

### The SVC as case study

The SVC forms the *case study* on the basis of which I want to find answers to my research question. I have chosen a case study approach mainly for theoretical reasons, but there was also a practical reason to it. Let me first describe the theoretical considerations. In the *first* place because there is as yet not even one social scientific study at Ph.D. level, on a private wildlife conservancy in its organisational relation to neighbouring communities. There is a little bit of general literature on conservancies, but no case studies. This means that I can fill up a lacuna in this respect. *Secondly*, a case study is the most appropriate approach to deal with an *ethnographic* orientation and *theoretical* exploration. In order to be able to describe and contextualise and to explore the rela-

69 pp. 366-367, Fontana, A. & Frey, J.H. (1994), Interviewing. The art of science, in: Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (eds), *Handbook of qualitative research*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications, pp. 361-376; Spradley, J.P., (1979), *The ethnographic interview*, New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

70 Informants can be distinguished from respondents, which latter concept is reserved for indicating a group of selected people who all answer the same standardised questionnaire (Swanborn 1996: 79).



relationship between reciprocity and trust in an organisation and its co-operative organisational structure, a case study allows the opportunity to go into the subtleties of the process, which would not be possible using a survey or similar methodological approach. Especially with moral, but also politically, sensitive concepts like reciprocity and trust one has to be careful not to depend too much on official interviewing and documents as primary research methods in which it is possible to receive and find socially and politically acceptable or avoiding answers only. As a researcher one has to interview and read documents, but certainly also observe what and be there when it is happening. For that reason, one has to be on the spot of the interaction as much as possible, not least to interpret the situational aspects of the relationship. In the third place a case study approach is appropriate because the nature of the case study fits the subject perfectly. In other words, the subject simply 'demanded' a case study approach. In a general fashion it can be stated that a case study approach is suitable when 'a 'how' or 'why' question is being asked about a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control'.<sup>71</sup> A more detailed definition of a case study discerns several aspects which all apply seamlessly to the situation with which I was confronted in choosing a methodological approach for my research question. 'A case study is an empirical inquiry that (...) investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when (...) the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. (...) It copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result (...) relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result (...) benefits from the major development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis'.<sup>72</sup> It would be, for instance, only in a case study that I could stay for a longer period of time, that I would be able to penetrate deep enough into the SVC and its organisational relationship with surrounding communities and interpret the nature and extent of their relation in terms of the three core concepts of my theoretical framework: reciprocity, trust and social identity. The extensive fieldwork on one case allowed me not only to find the formal aspects of the SVC and its organisational relation, but also to ferret out the more hidden and informal relations which are crucial to a good interpretation of the three key concepts. Another consideration, which is not explicitly mentioned by Yin, but which can be a compelling reason to use the case study as a research strategy and method is that the subject under research, especially in this particular part of the world, is a very sensitive one with a long historical and an often bitter socio-economic, socio-cultural and socio-political shadow hanging over it, caused mainly by imperial practices earlier in its history. This implies that, as a researcher, one has to be scientist and diplomat rolled into one to be able to achieve and stay on speaking terms with the different participants and parties in the process you want to describe. This line of reasoning could, of course, lead to the suggested opposite of a case study, namely that a 'hit and run' research strategy would be the best choice, in order not to become entangled in local complexities, faction fighting, subtleties and antagonisms. But then the danger would be unacceptably high that the researcher, especially from the

71 pp. 9, Yin, R. K. (1994), *Case study research. Design and methods*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications, Second Edition.

72 Ibid: 13.

perspective of my theoretical framework, would receive get social desirable answers and information which could give a certain image of the subject which is not even close to the complete processes happening in actual fact. Only by staying in the field for a longer period of time can the researcher come to grips (to a certain extent at least) with the mixture of things he or she wants you to know and things they would rather keep away from you, which you have to find out through other means.

There were also some practical reasons for choosing the SVC as a case study. The first reason being that I knew beforehand that the SVC had already invested heavily in terms of time, money and energy in trying to establish some kind of organisational co-operation with its neighbours and was far ahead of other conservancies in southern Africa in this respect. And because conservancies have no official or formal programme on neighbour relations such as that which exists for national parks, the SVC was too good an opportunity to let slip. A second but certainly not less important practical reason was that I had a personal introduction into the SVC project, which made my entry far easier than if I had to do it the formal way by approaching conservancies with my research idea and try to convince them that they should co-operate in it 'for their own benefit'. So it is a mixture of formal and informal considerations, planning and chance which made this case study desirable and within reach.

The descriptive and explorative character of the research, both in terms of concepts and field of study, i.e. a formal organisation and its co-operative organisational structure, is probably the most important theoretical reason for choosing a case study approach. The most important practical reason was the fact that I had a good introduction to the field. What I did not mention, but which is probably, deep down, the most decisive consideration for choosing a case study approach is a personal reason of 'style and preference'<sup>73</sup> for a qualitative approach in anthropological fieldwork. Within the framework of a case study, the core of the research process is formed by the basic ingredients of (m)any qualitative fieldwork.<sup>74</sup> These are structured or less structured interviewing of and speaking to people involved in the SVC and in the process of the proposed organisational co-operation, topic lists on several subjects, participant observation to see the material context of the process and to observe<sup>75</sup> what people do, not only hear what they think they do or did or want(ed) to do and finding relevant documents and other written sources on the subject and its context.<sup>76</sup> It merely goes without saying that

73 Swanborn 1981: 256.

74 The case study approach is associated with the concept of 'naturalistic inquiry' (Lincoln, Y.S. & Guba, E.G. (1985), *Naturalistic inquiry*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications). Actually Lincoln and Guba suggest that there is a whole ranch of concepts covered by naturalistic inquiry, 'for example: the postpositivistic, ethnographic, phenomenological, subjective, case study [italics added HWJ] qualitative, hermeneutic, humanistic. It has so many names because the persons who profess to practice it tend to take different views of what it implies, in the same way that persons who profess to be Christians may nevertheless prefer to be known as Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran, Episcopalian (...) and so on' (pp. 7-8). Most of the concepts I used to describe my research methodology, like case study, qualitative, hermeneutic and the like, seem to be one of a kind, referring and reinforcing each other.

75 What Denzin calls 'persistent observation', Denzin, N.K. (1994), *The art and politics of interpretation*, in: Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (eds), *Handbook of qualitative research*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications, pp. 500-515.

76 pp. 145-317, Bernard, H.R. (1988), *Research methods in cultural anthropology*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications.

with participant observation for a longer period of time a wealth of the data and information are not constructed only on the basis of the formal techniques mentioned above, but are also, maybe sometimes even primarily, formed on the basis of circumstantiality, informal hearsay and through combining images, impressions, gossip and personal intuition, as result of being part and non-part of the people being studied.<sup>77</sup> It is probably these kind of sources which are unpredictable and have a random character (i.e. they 'happen' to you instead of them being 'discovered' by the social scientist) which gave rise to the critique that the qualitative approach, the case study in particular, implies so much freedom for the researcher that it is 'extremely susceptible to methodological non-chalance'.<sup>78</sup> Recognising both the value of these types of sources for the data construction process as well as the critique is exactly the reason why it is of great importance that considerable attention be paid to self reflection and methodological transparency: Why am I finding what I find?; Why are certain people (more) willing to talk to me openly than others?; What is my own position in the political arena of the proposed organisational co-operation?; Or maybe even more importantly what do the parties think my position is?; How am I affecting the scene with my research?; Where do personal sympathy and antipathy end and does scientific analysis take over?; Where do autobio-

77 pp. 15-17, Ten Have, P. (1977), *Sociologisch veldonderzoek* (translation: Sociological fieldwork), Amsterdam, Meppel: Boom; Whyte, W.F. (1984), *Learning from the field. A guide from experience*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications. From these references it can be deduced that it has long been recognised that the construction and production of data from fieldwork is not merely a matter of formal and professional techniques. A host of information is actually constructed and produced through personal social skills and in an informal, unplanned, unforeseen and unstructured way during fieldwork. But in these older works it is always assumed, most of the time implicitly, that in the end the researcher, through sheer professionalism, experience and intellectual capacities collects at least all the necessary and relevant information on the subject to answer the research question unequivocally. But especially the notion of circumstantiality introduces the perspective that what is finally collected may be only one version of social reality. And it may be even more likely an incomplete version if we agree that a complete presentation of social reality by a respondent is unlikely because of its infinite complexities and subtleties. (Let alone that the representation of it by the researcher would be anything near a complete version. That would be a rather pretentious, bombastic and immodest suggestion of the scope of social research.) But apart from that aspect, 'at a different time from a different position another or various renditions could have been collected' (Nencel, L. (1998), Particular femininities on a particular street: three narratives of an inner-city slum in Lima, Peru, Paper presented at the Conference *100 jaar antropologie in Nederland* (translation: 100 years of anthropology in The Netherlands), 18 December 1998, Amsterdam). As a researcher you are never allowed to think that any information or data, not even combined or enumerated, is final or complete, no matter how much time is spent on the research. This not only holds on the level of individual informants, but also, and probably in a even more vehement way, for levels of social interaction.

78 pp. 36, translation from the Dutch: 'extrem vatbaar is voor methodologische nonchalance', Van der Zwaan in Van der Meer-Kooistra, J. (1993), *Coördineren, motiveren en verrekenen: wisselwerking tussen omgeving, onderneming en mensen* (translation: Co-ordinating, motivating and settling: exchange between environment, enterprise and people) Groningen: RijksUniversiteit Groningen, Ph.D. Thesis. See also Swanborn 1996: 91-94. Swanborn discusses the problem through citing Campbell who speaks about 'degrees of freedom', which means that the more points of data we have, i.e. more cases, the more degrees of freedom it will accumulate. The more degrees of freedom, the less chance that a general theory fits them all. More degrees of freedom make a theory much more informative and that is what a social scientist should strive for. Related to the case study it would mean that I should try and add more points of data to my single case, to 'earn' more degrees of freedom. In the chapters about the historical and political context of conservancies in southern Africa and The Land Question in Zimbabwe this is exactly what I do, through finding additional points of data in the literature.

graphical elements influence the research and its outcomes?<sup>79</sup> I have asked and re-asked myself these and many similar questions again and again from the very beginning of the research period. That is why the first extensive section of this chapter is devoted to the reflexive exercise of my fieldwork.<sup>80</sup> But I could not have participated as intensively in the SVC and be accorded so much trust<sup>81</sup>, if I had not prepared myself in anticipation before entering the field and if I had not reflected strategically on my opportunities while in the field. In that sense, I participated in strategic purposes in the organisation. This chapter indicates that, despite the fact that a certain level of coincidence is inescapable in fieldwork, strategic anticipation can enforce certain coincidences. To paraphrase George Orwell's *Animal Farm* (rather) freely: all coincidences are equal, but some coincidences are more equal than others. Finally, a qualitative approach to fieldwork also carries implications for the role of theory in research as Collinson makes clear: 'qualitative methodologies explicitly articulate both their predispositions and the analytical framework which informs their research methods and interpretation of findings. (...) The plausibility of the empirically-based argument thereby rests, in part, upon the coherence of the analytical framework which is its condition and consequence'.<sup>82</sup> My choice to commence this thesis with a theoretical and a methodological chapter is based on this consideration.

### Linking Pin

A theoretical framework like that presented in the first chapter allows the writer to give a neat and polished exposé of his or her intellectual capabilities in constructing a theoretical composition. The concept of methodology suggests a similar approach. But that proved to be misleading in the sense of describing the actual fieldwork. It is easy enough to present the methodological approach with which you went into the field as I did at

79 In short, a reflection on the 'politics of fieldwork' as Punch describes: 'By politics I mean everything from the micropolitics of personal relations to the culture and resources of research units of universities, the powers and policies of government research departments, and ultimately even the hand (heavy or otherwise) of the central state itself (...) All of these contexts and constraints crucially influence the design, implementation, and the outcomes of research', pp. 84, Punch, M. (1994), *Politics and ethics in qualitative research*, in: Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (eds), *Handbook of qualitative research*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications, pp. 83-97, italics added.

80 Although not everybody agrees about this. Some see reflexivity as just another strategy to legitimise 'to go with the flow' of relativism in the social sciences as Graham Watson explains: '(t)he interpretive muddle consists, in the first place, in paying lip service to relativism while stubbornly clinging to realism and, in the second place, in claiming to confront reflexivity while merely managing it' (pp. 29, Make me reflexive - but not yet: strategies for managing essential reflexivity in ethnographic discourse, in: *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 1987, 43: 29-41).

81 It is for the reader to judge later on, but in the chapters on the SVC, I think it will become clear, that I was given enormous opportunities to learn about the organisation in terms of access to minutes, meetings, documents and correspondence. These opportunities are not granted 'just for nothing', but are a combination of proper anticipation and acceptance from the side of the SVC in allowing me to participate.

82 pp. 233, Collinson, D.L. (1992), *Managing the shopfloor. Subjectivity, masculinity and workplace culture*, Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter. This book is an ethnographic account of organisational life. It has only a minor section in an appendix on the methodology used. There seems no need for any further reflection on the research process.

the end of this chapter. It is pretty impossible to be as polished in describing what happened before entering the field, in the field and while writing. In other words, it is difficult to describe your methodological route through the research process. I have tried to present a commitment to methodological transparency for obvious reasons drawn from my particular constructionist approach I presented earlier on in my theoretical framework. I have divided my descriptions on the various influences on my own approach into autobiographical influences, personal circumstances, institutional setting and the coincidences of context. I focused on the importance of coincidence, in the sense of 'it could also have worked out differently' and gave examples of this by describing the access route to the research site as well as the actual fieldwork period. But no matter how extensively, I try to describe them, they remain only selected fragments of experience, suggestions of reality. At the same time, I have argued in the final section of this chapter that coincidence does not come 'out of the blue'. Even coincidence must also be placed in its proper context of methodological preparation before entering the field and strategic reflection on participation and opportunities while in the field. As a result, and to a certain extent, coincidence can then be enforced and made to happen. It is paying attention to context (again) which elucidates the contradiction in termini of an 'enforced coincidence'. So although I introduced the metaphor of the researcher as a social pin-ball, some pin-ball players are more skilled than others, because of training.

Furthermore, it is simply impossible to separate methodology from the actual construction of my case study, just as is the case with a theoretical composition. Both have moulded my view and interpretation of the things that occurred to me in the field, but at the same time made me unaware of other things, which might have occurred to me if I had taken another approach. This also holds true for the distinction between description and explanation of the social processes being studied. Both originate from the same theoretical and methodological perspective described in these chapters. Therefore there will be explanation in the description and description in the explanation. So although I have presented a methodology and a theoretical composition in separate chapters, the following chapters will probably reveal implicitly and between the lines as much about them, in the disguise of data, field material, literature, observations, interpretations, selection, emphasis and explanation, as the separate chapters on the subjects have already betrayed. Only the explicit theoretical plot, i.e. explanation, is mine!

My specific constructionist approach puts the emphasis on (enforced) coincidence in methodology and strongly underlines the importance of context in explaining local level processes. It is a combination of the intertwined and innumerable influences and intricacies from a context which give a constructionist approach its dynamism, fluidity, and ongoing character. A process in context has neither an allotted beginning nor a finish. It is without a plot. The plot, i.e. explanation, and development, i.e. description, which seem to emerge from it are derived from the theoretical composition and methodological approach of the author. The next chapter will present the broader regional and historic context of wildlife conservation and wildlife utilisation, i.e. land and hunting, in southern Africa, followed by a chapter on the specific Zimbabwean context as related to land and hunting. Only after those extensive descriptions of different levels of context, the first 'flesh and blood' to fill up the 'skeleton' of conceptual framework and methodological approach, will I be able to present and interpret the actual case study in Chap-

ters 5 and 6. Although, this should not be read as if the context is not already part of the case study. The distinction between context and case study seems to suggest a per definition distinction of the issues. This is misleading. The separation between context and case study is an analytical tool only, introduced for the sake of clarity and structure. The different levels of context that I present in Chapters 3 and 4 are as much part and parcel of the case study on the SVC as if I were to label them case study. A case study and context are what I would call a 'trinity'.<sup>83</sup>

83 A variety on 'trinity'.

### 3 White Identity Construction in a Context of Wildlife Utilisation in Southern Africa and the Origin and Spread of Private Wildlife Conservancies in South Africa (with reference to Namibia)

*In which the development of private wildlife conservancies in South Africa is described against a historical background of wildlife utilisation in the region, especially hunting as related to processes of (white) identity construction, and local (black) perceptions towards wildlife areas; the spread of the conservancy concept to Namibia, and the gradual shift to involve local communities in wildlife management.*

#### Introduction

The conservancy concept on private land was initiated in the province of Natal in South Africa in the seventies. The basic idea was to curb and prevent poaching on co-operating commercial farms, called a conservancy, through the installation of game guards. By employing game guards commercial farmers, predominantly white, took a further step towards securing the border between the combined private properties and the neighbouring communities.<sup>1</sup> In the eighties the conservancy concept evolved under the influence of the advisory status of the Natal Parks Board (NPB), towards more wildlife utilisation, in particular commercial hunting, in an attempt to let the conservancy pay for itself. That it was hunting particularly which was deemed most suitable to utilise the wildlife has to do with the tradition and social identity of whites in southern Africa in which hunting always played an important and dominant role. But most hunting areas require fencing for safety reasons and for keeping the valuable trophies on the property. Added to the already existing system of game guards, the border between conservancies and neighbouring communities was becoming even more rigid and sealed. This ongoing process created, on top of a history in which segregation between black and white was already a prominent feature, more mutual distrust, stereotyped ideas about each other's identities and 'normal' behaviour, which in conjunction with each other prevented the two groups from initiating or even considering any form of positive reciprocal exchange.

<sup>1</sup> The first step was, of course, to take, make and divide land into private property and other forms of land tenure, which was an alien concept in most of Africa. Most of the time the earliest settler land claims in South Africa were requests for hunting and grazing permits. A permit did not imply legal ownership of the land 'but in practice it was *de facto* land ownership' (pp. 3, Mitchell, L.J. (1999), Land and social construction of the Cedarberg frontier. Contested resource use in colonial South Africa, c. 1725-1795, paper presented at the conference *African environments: past and present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford (see for elaboration Chapter 4).

In the nineties, in spite of the gap between conservancies and communities, the call for community relations and the exchange of benefits between formally protected areas and surrounding communities was heard loud and clear all over the world. This message, originating from government-related conservation efforts in national parks and other protected areas, also had its effects on the informal conservation efforts on private land, i.e. private wildlife conservancies, although to date it has never been as institutionalised or outspoken as in the formal conservation sector. Up till 1994, the year of the first general democratic elections, in South Africa the government has always been dominated by white people and was based on the ideology of apartheid. And also after 1994 'all the bureaucrats in central government responsible for biodiversity protection [remained at first] members of the old guard, with transformation occurring only from 1998 onwards. Within the SANP [South African National Parks], key officials, whether in the parks or in head office, were from the former white-ruled establishment, and continued to reflect similar values after democratisation'.<sup>2</sup> For this reason conservation policies in South Africa cannot be seen in isolation from the broader political context of (post-)apartheid with a corresponding negative attitude of the majority of the black people towards them. When (white) private wildlife conservancies emerged on the conservation scene in the second half of the seventies, it was only to be expected that in first instance they would choose for a 'splendid isolation' from the neighbouring (black) communities in line with the apartheid thinking at the time. Inevitably the attitudes of communities towards conservancies has to a large extent been shaped by this political context. In the nineties conservancies had to begin to fight the shadows of a history of increasing segregation and related perceptions of communities towards it. Not only in 'their own' history, but also in the broader context of wildlife utilisation, in hunting particular, and the role played in it by whites in the history of southern Africa. The broader historical perspective will make clear that this particular form of wildlife utilisation, i.e. hunting, has always played an important economic role in southern Africa and also had a major impact on the identity construction of the white men<sup>3</sup> ever since the first Europeans arrived on the Cape of Good Hope in search of fresh water, vegetables and meat to be able to continue their journey to find a route to the spices of the East. The emergence of private wildlife conservancies, generously advised and supported by the (white) government related NPB, can be historically interpreted as a 'logical' next step in the tradition of wildlife utilisation in southern Africa in general and South Africa in particular, in which wildlife management has often been handled in a public-private partnership. For a clear picture on the emergence of conservancies and the role played by commercial hunting in their further development it is necessary to begin by describing the broader historical picture of wildlife utilisation and hunting in southern Africa.

2 pp. 3, Cock, J. & Fig. D. (1999), From colonial to community-based conservation: environmental justice and the National Parks of South Africa, paper presented at the conference *African environments: past and present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford.

3 Of course, wildlife has always been used in Africa by the original people living on the continent to make a living. For their subsistence they depended on the wildlife. This is not the wildlife utilisation to which I am referring. When I speak of wildlife utilisation I mean the commercial, capitalistic and systematic utilisation and exploitation of wildlife, which was only introduced by non-Africans: Arabs in the first place on the east coast and later the Europeans.

It will become clear that, in contrast to the black Africans, the white people derived their identity not so much *from* the land, which they acquired but more from the life as they thought it should be lived *on* the land. The white hunter was the role model for such a life. The resulting conservation ethos, consequently, also has more to do with the life on the land than with an intimate and spiritual relationship with it. Therefore, by sketching the historical context of whites in southern Africa, I describe a process of social identity construction related to land and hunting which is still potent today and is necessary to depict in order to understand the developments of and in conservancies and the SVC later on.

## Wildlife Utilisation in Southern Africa: A Short Historical Overview

### *The Beginnings of an Industry*

Although I focus in this study on *private* wildlife conservancies, it is not possible to confine the discussion of wildlife utilisation strictly to that sector and leave the *public* sector out of it. This is because the concept of wildlife utilisation in southern Africa is and has always been connected with and related to wildlife conservation which is a state responsibility by way of conceptualising, implementing and enforcing it.<sup>4</sup> In many cases even the most purely economic and commercial perspective on wildlife is heavily intertwined with and legitimized by linking it to official and political conservation goals and objectives. In a book specifically devoted to 'economics for the wild', for instance, right from the start it is made clear that '(a)t the broadest level this is a book about the conservation of biological diversity, which is one of the most fundamentally important international environmental problems facing the world community today'.<sup>5</sup> National conservation strategies, laws and measures are a state responsibility, which it delegates to its conservation departments which have to deal with the issue on state land, i.e. National Parks and other protected areas, and in communication with the private sector where it concerns private land. Public-private partnership for conservation in southern Africa has its roots in the early history of the Transvaal and the Cape.

MacKenzie argues that it was especially the excessive hunting in the second half of the nineteenth century which, as a unexpected side effect, caused or had a definite impact on the emergence and spread of a protectionist ethos of nature in Britain. It was the very same men that hunted which also sounded the alarm about declining numbers of wildlife and asked for protectionist measures from the government.<sup>6</sup> The most famous and well-known white hunter, Selous, was already making remarks about the

4 Throughout Africa the colonial state was extremely influential in people's relations with the environment. (...) 'in Africa conservation originated with the state', pp. 1, Jacobs, N. (1999), The colonial state and African environmental history: British Bechuanaland through Bophuthatswana in continental perspective, paper presented at the conference *African environments: past and present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford.

5 pp. 1-2, Swanson, T.M. & Barbier, E.B. (eds.) (1992), *Economics for the wilds. Wildlife, wildlands, diversity and development*, London: Earthscan Publications Ltd.

6 MacKenzie, J.M. (1988), *The empire of nature: hunting, conservation and British imperialism*, Manchester: Manchester University Press. Absolutely one of the best books on the subject.

decline of the elephants in 1887 and stated that they needed formal protection. The Boers in the Transvaal also saw their economic bases being depleted. They did not hunt for sport or fun, like the likes of Selous, but to make a living and when that basis began to shrink at an alarming rate, they started to worry about their future, not only economically, but certainly also politically. If they could not stay economically independent because the wildlife on which their economic survival was based was depleted, they would also not be able to stay politically independent from the British Cape Colony.<sup>7</sup> Any dependency on the British would also imply a loss of their much cherished social identity as Afrikaners. Their identity could only be saved by taking severe conservation measures. Conservation in this context therefore has the double meaning of simultaneously conserving wildlife and a social identity. Carruthers argues convincingly that it was to strengthen this bonding element in the identity of the Afrikaners that, most of the time unconsciously, the myth of the interest of Paul Kruger in conservation in general and the Kruger Park in particular was shaped.<sup>8</sup>

The Boers were not alone in their concern. In the British Cape Colony similar developments of public-private partnership concerning the environment and wildlife were emerging and were again strongly related to processes of social identity construction. Here the main advocates were immigrant Scotsmen, in particular the Reverend John Croumbie Brown (1808-1894) who was employed by the Cape Government from 1862-1866 to examine the biological impact of settlement at the Cape. 'He became the single most influential voice in the formation of a colonial and North American discourse on forestry, irrigation, range management and on the environmental impact of settlement'.<sup>9</sup> He is of particular interest to me because Grove interprets the impact of this Scotsman in particular in the evolving tide of conservationism, environmentalism and protectionism as deriving from his Scottish cultural background. He argues that the Scottish landscape and environmental sensibilities were the 'major vehicle' for the expression of their national identity in opposition to the English and English rule. The Scots' perspective was a highly aesthetic one, based on Romanticism<sup>10</sup> which was firmly wrapped in and strengthened by a mythology about their specific Scottish history, which separated and distinguished them sharply from the English. They translated their love for their own Scottish aesthetic landscapes to Africa in general and (virtually) followed, for instance, the Scotsman Mungo Park on his travels through the African interior around the River Niger, bemoaning his tragic death which made him a martyr whose example should be followed. Africa even became a 'national obsession' in Scotland

7 pp. 10, Carruthers, J. (1995), *The Kruger National Park. A social and political history*, Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press. 'The Boers had travelled northwards in order to get away from the British and their desire was to have their own farms and live without British interference in their affairs', pp. 7, Paton, E.M. (1999), Population pressure and land degradation: historical perspectives on population and resources in Kwandabele, paper presented at the conference *African environments: past and present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford.

8 Carruthers 1995: 47-88.

9 pp. 140, Grove, R. (1997), Scotland in South Africa: John Croumbie Brown and the roots of settler environmentalism, pp. 139-154, in: Griffiths, T. & Robin, L. (eds.), *Ecology and empire. Environmental history of settler societies*, Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, Keele University Press.

10 pp. 29, Grove, R. (1987), Early themes in African conservation: the Cape in the nineteenth century, pp. 21-41, in: Anderson, D. & Grove, R. (eds.), *Conservation in Africa. People, policies and practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

according to Grove. Southern Africa was given a starring role because a particular journal, *Penny Magazine*, paid especially generous attention to southern Africa through the efforts of the poet Thomas Pringle who wrote numerous articles about this region in which he compared the Scottish landscape, so important to his and their sense of social and national identity<sup>11</sup>, with that of South Africa and from there it was only a small step to romanticise and sacralise the landscape in South Africa in the same fashion and derive a new and strong identity from it.<sup>12</sup> 'Common attachment to landscape has been enormously important in generating the ideology of group cohesion and nationality'.<sup>13</sup>

So by the second half of the nineteenth century there was already an increasing interest on the part of the government in conservation, which expressed itself in a series of measurements to preserve the natural heritage.<sup>14</sup> In the Boer republic, the Transvaal, the Kruger Park was established. Or, to cast it in the phraseology of the identity myth Carruthers describes, from a tourist guidebook in which that myth is reproduced and kept alive, '(a)lready in 1884 (Paul Kruger) the president of the Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek had recognized the beauty and value of this much-maligned bushveld and had urged in the Volksraad the need to preserve some of this land. In 1898 (26 March) after much opposition, he succeeded in officially proclaiming the establishment of a 'Government Reserve' in the Transvaal's eastern Lowveld. Seen from today's perspective it was not much. The Sabie Game Reserve as it was to be called, comprised only a strip of land between the Sabie and Crocodile rivers, very small in comparison with the vast Kruger National Park we know today. But more important, it was the beginning of a trend. For the first time an area of worthwhile size had been set aside expressly for conservation, at least on the continent of Africa'.<sup>15</sup> In the Cape, the relentless efforts of Brown to cause attention to be paid to conservation was given an extra and definitive impetus by the drought of 1862, which resulted in measures to protect the semi-arid pasturages of the Cape. These were of crucial importance to the agrarian economy.<sup>16</sup> And just as I began this chapter by describing the emergence of private wildlife conservancies in South Africa as a coming together of Government wishes and private sector developments, the same happened a good hundred years earlier.<sup>17</sup>

11 '(...) to ignore the formative, specifically 'Scottish', influences of his childhood and education, and to take no account of his literary activities in Edinburgh over some ten years, is to have a very imperfect understanding of the man and to place ourselves at a decided disadvantage in trying to assess the works produced during his stay in South Africa', pp. xiv, Pereira, E. & Chapman, M. (eds) (1989), *African poems of Thomas Pringle*, Durban: Killie Campbell African Library; Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press.

12 Grove 1997: 142-143.

13 pp. 5, Carruthers, J. (1999), Past and future landscape ideology. The Kalahari Gemsbok National Park and Uluru - Kata Tjuta National Park compared, paper presented at the conference *African environments: past and present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford.

14 Although it is said that the 'first Colonial awareness of conservation in South Africa had more to do with preserving hunting opportunities as an attraction to Colonial Administrators than with higher ideals' (pp. 5, James, B. (1999), Umfolozi Game Reserve. History and changing attitudes towards conservation in a royal hunting ground, paper presented at the conference *African environments: past and present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford.

15 pp. 11-12, Braack, L.E.O. (1983), *A Struik all-colour guide to the Kruger National Park*, Cape Town: C. Struik.

16 Grove 1987: 29-30.

17 Again it must be noted that far less published material is to be found on historical developments in the private sector, because of its informal and unofficial character. Most of the time developments from Government perspectives and regulations can be traced in official and state-owned archives. This is not the

The government thought it necessary to take conservationist measures because of the abundant, even excessive use of wildlife by the white immigrants. These measures implied creating firm boundaries between people and wildlife areas, which often meant the removal of black African communities. To look for solutions by applying segregation can be traced back to the very first days after Jan van Riebeeck set foot on the soil of the Cape of Good Hope in 1652<sup>18</sup> and literally planted the first barrier between white and black co-operation and integration in the form of a hedge of *Brabejum Stellatifolium*, or wild almond, 'to seal off his little community from the indigenous inhabitants of Africa'.<sup>19</sup> It almost seems prophetic symbolism that the nuts which grow from this tree taste 'dry and bitter'.<sup>20</sup> In the early days of nature conservation in Africa the relationship between national parks authorities and local communities was characterised by a high level of distrust and outright disrespect for social identities. Neither felt any moral obligation towards the other to try and launch a reciprocal relationship based on a win-win situation. In fact, the reverse was true. Communities and wildlife authorities were opposed, antagonistic parties in a war about land and its resources. The historical image of the African continent in relation to the sphere of wildlife management in national parks and protected areas is extremely illustrative in this respect: 'Much of the emotional as distinct from the economic investment which Europe made in Africa has manifested itself in a wish to protect the natural environment as a special kind of 'Eden', for the purposes of the European psyche rather than as a complex and changing environment in which people have actually had to live...(thus) Africa has been portrayed as offering the opportunity to experience a wild and natural environment which was no longer available in the domesticated landscapes of Europe... Much of conservation thinking in Africa, as defined and exercised by Europeans, has therefore been directed to sustaining an image of Africa which forms a part of European mythology'<sup>21</sup> and '(s)uch images still retain their power, and remain a central feature of Western perceptions of Africa'.<sup>22</sup> One of the results of this line of reasoning has been that colonial governments set aside large tracks of land and declared them 'national parks' in which they

could preserve their 'Eden'.<sup>23</sup> This often meant 'the simple exclusion of rural people from national parks and forest reserves, in the interests of the protection of large animal species and preservation of habitats'.<sup>24</sup> The exclusion of local people and communities was then 'secured' through a militaristic approach of implementing controls through what has been called the 'fences and fines' approach.<sup>25</sup> The protected areas seemed like a heavily guarded prison island. Inside and outside were kept separated by every means available, concentrating all the security on the often rather arbitrarily drawn boundary between the two. It should not then come as a surprise to learn that national parks aroused vociferous protests among the local people, which they, amongst other expedients, expressed through 'poaching' and other 'non-co-operative behavior'.<sup>26</sup> There was a well-known case, for example, in 1977 in the Amboseli National Park in Kenya, in which almost all rhino were exterminated by the Masai 'to show their political dissatisfaction with their prospects' in the park.<sup>27</sup> Because most of these protected areas were created by colonial state authorities, behaviour which used to be common, everyday practice among the people living in the area, like subsistence hunting and harvesting natural resources (for instance firewood and thatching grass)<sup>28</sup>, were instantly stigmatised as prosecutable offences because they were abruptly labelled 'illegal' within the boundaries of the park. As populations have grown these tensions have swelled. No wonder that 'in many localities park guards and wardens are among the most detested government officials'.<sup>29</sup> In South Africa, for instance, to give some idea of the serious and severe connotations of hostility and focus on secured boundaries between the two, this segregation between wildlife reserves and local people was labelled 'ecological apartheid'.<sup>30</sup> This form of apartheid is reinforced and symbolised by the fences enclosing the park. These are meant to keep the wildlife in, but at the same time function to keep people out. 'Armed police forces or the army are frequently mobilized. Heavy penalties have been imposed on those who break conservation laws and regulations'.<sup>31</sup> This separation and exclusion from land is such a specific supplanting wound for local communities in most of southern Africa (but also elsewhere) because their relations, in whatever form of tenure or ownership are so intertwined with their identity as people,

case in the private sector, where documents and other interesting material is often dispersed over the many actors involved in the configuration.

18 On the East African coast Arab traders were already active since 1300, pp. 108, Hourani, A. (1992), *Een geschiedenis van de Arabische volken* (translation: A history of the Arab peoples), Amsterdam, Antwerpen: Uitgeverij Contact.

19 pp. xv, Sparks, A. (1990), *The mind of South Africa. The story of the rise and fall of Apartheid*, London: Mandarin. It should be noted here, preceding Chapter 4 on the subject, that right from the start, the original inhabitants of the Cape area, the Khoikhoen, complained about the Dutch encroachment on their land: '... every day [the Dutch] took away land which had belonged to them since time immemorial and on which they were accustomed to depasture their cattle. They also asked whether if they were to come to Holland they would be permitted to act in the same manner' (pp. 40, Marks cited in: February, V. (1991), *The Afrikaners of South Africa*, London, New York: Kegan Paul International).

20 Ibid: xv.

21 pp. 4, Anderson, D. & Grove, R. (1987), The scramble for Eden: past, present and future in African Conservation, in: Anderson, D. & Grove, R. (eds.) *Conservation in Africa. People, policies and practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

22 pp. 5, Adams, W.M. & Hulme, D. (1999), Conservation and community: changing narratives, policies and practices in African conservation, paper presented at the conference *African environments: past and present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford.

23 See for an example in southern Africa, Carruthers, J. (1989), Creating a national park, 1910 to 1926, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15 (2) January.

24 Anderson & Grove 1987: 7.

25 pp. 1, Wells, M. & Brandon, K. (with Hannah, L.) (1992), *People and Parks. Linking protected area management with local communities*, Washington D.C.: The World Bank, The World Wildlife Fund, U.S. Agency for International Development; see also pp. 48 Cliffe, L. (1988), The conservation issue in Zimbabwe, *Review of African Political Economy*, 42: 48-58.

26 pp. 160, Southern African Research & Documentation Centre (SARDC), IUCN & Southern African Development Community (SADC) (1994), *State of the environment in southern Africa*, Harare: SARDC

27 pp. 118, MacKinnon, J., MacKinnon, K., Child, G. & Thorsell, J. (1986), *Managing protected areas in the tropics*, Gland: IUCN.

28 See for several examples: Van den Breemer, J.P.M., Drijver, C. & Venema, B. (eds.), (1995) *Local resource management in Africa*, West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

29 Krishna, B. G. & Pimbert, M.P. (1997), Social change and conservation: an overview of issues and concepts, in: Krishna, B.G. & Pimbert, M.P. (1997), *Social change and conservation. Environmental politics and impacts of national parks and protected areas*, London: Earthscan Publications Limited.

30 pp. 20, Chadwick, D.H. (1996), A place for parks in the new South Africa, *National Geographic*, 190 (1), July: 2-41.

31 Krishna & Pimbert 1997: 7.

of what they are, of how they image themselves and others. Or as Strang describes it for the Aboriginal social identity in Australia, which could have been written in similar fashion for the Africans in Zimbabwe, '(t)he attachment of specific groups to specific places is an immensely powerful basis for identity, because it is both immortal and unique, based on reproducing an ancestral past. The communal nature of identification with land creates an unparalleled collective sense of belonging'.<sup>32</sup> Within the context of a traditional approach to protected wildlife areas, local communities and parks were seen as two parties on either side of the fence, which is summarized in the following quote which tells it all, '(t)he dilemma of how to conserve wildlands in a sea of hostile local interests is a serious one'.<sup>33</sup>

But let me return to those early days of white settlement in southern Africa. The first travelers to 'cross the hedge' were, besides missionaries and traders, ivory hunters.<sup>34</sup> Their principal trade was ivory but they also dealt in other animal products like manes, ostrich feathers, hides and skins and, still a South African specialty, biltong<sup>35</sup>, to make money and, in many cases, to finance their safari way of life. They utilised the wildlife in order to be able to live the bush life they loved and romanticised and which played a major role in shaping their identity. They were in fact hunter-traders and more and more Dutch hunting parties left the Cape for hunting grounds in the Eastern Cape in the early eighteenth century.<sup>36</sup> They traveled with ox-wagons which were for generations 'the backbone of every safari'<sup>37</sup>, in fact the 4X4 of former times, even with 'independent suspension'.<sup>38</sup> European history in Africa has produced several famous ivory hunters. To name just a few, Selous whom we shall meet again in Chapter 5 in the description of the origins of the SVC, Sutherland who boasted that his bag of 447 elephants was the largest in history<sup>39</sup>, and Karamojo Bell of whom is told that he shot more than a thousand bull elephants during his twenty years of hunting.<sup>40</sup> He earned his nick name after opening up the Karamojoan hunting grounds in northeastern Uganda.<sup>41</sup> He traveled extensively through Africa in pursuit of elephants. 'Always it was ivory. On his most profitable day, shooting in the Sudan, he collected 1,463 lb<sup>42</sup> of ivory from nine elephant slain in the seven-foot swamp grass near the Pibor River. That earned him £ 900 at

32 pp. 159-160, Strang, V. (1997). *Uncommon ground. Cultural landscapes and environmental values*, Oxford, New York Berg.

33 pp. 240, Verwey, W.D. (ed.) (1989), *Nature management and sustainable development*, Amsterdam: IOS.

34 pp. 17, Bull, B. (1988), *Safari. A chronicle of adventure*, London: Penguin Books.

35 This is meat, usually meat from wildlife, but it can also be made from domesticated livestock, which is cut into long strips and then hung to dry for some three days. Depending on taste salt and pepper can be added beforehand.

36 MacKenzie 1988: 87.

37 Bull 1988: 19.

38 Ibid: 20. These ox-wagons were also the mode of transport for Boer-trekkers who used them, when necessary to protect themselves from attacks from Africans, by placing them in a circle or 'laager', chained to each other, and stuffed underneath with acacia thorns to prevent people from slipping under the wagon. From behind the wagons they could shoot at the attackers. This method of defence has become a metaphor for many white people in Zimbabwe as we shall see in Chapter 4, who feel themselves 'drawn back in the laager' because of the current political developments in the country.

39 Ibid: 149.

40 Ibid: 151.41 Ibid: 149.

42 1 lb = 433.592 grammes.

Hale's auction rooms in London'.<sup>43</sup> To give an impression of how much ivory hunting was the hype of the day in Africa during that period, I want to give an extensive quote from the author who tried to recapture some of its splendour and grandeur at the time in a well-researched and beautiful book about safaris, Bartle Bull: 'The return of a Karamojo Bell safari, among the last of their kind, was a spectacle even in the ivory centres of east Africa. Sparkling in brightly beaded robes, a hundred men paraded to the ivory market, proudly bearing the teeth of 180 elephants. Escorted by Bell's six armed askari's, the donkey men kept 180 donkeys in order. Each of the great 100 lb. tusks, so hot that it blistered the shoulders, its empty nerve hole filled with the bearer's belongings, was carried by one of the thirty-one picked Karamojoan porters. Blood-red ostrich feathers and the manes of giraffes, lions and baboons bedecked each man's head. Averaging one elephant per day over the six months of hunting on a fourteen-month safari to Uganda and the Lado Enclave, Bell returned with a hoard of treasure. The magnificent Karamajo tusks averaged 53 lb. each, the Lado tusks 23 lb. The total cost of one safari was £ 3,000 (about £ 90,600 today), of which the wages were £ 600. The ivory sold for £ 9,000. In today's money, the safari realized a profit of £ 181,000'.<sup>44</sup>

Ivory from Africa began coming to Europe for the first time in the seventeenth century, mainly from West Africa.<sup>45</sup> It is estimated that in the period between 1608 and 1612, 23,000 kg of ivory was imported to Holland annually.<sup>46</sup> Towards the end of the nineteenth century, large quantities of ivory were coming from the interior rainforests of the then Belgian Congo where the forest subspecies of the elephant was hunted.<sup>47</sup> Ivory was one of two main strategic materials exported from the Congo, the other was rubber. The production of both depended to a large extent on force.<sup>48</sup> The ivory went from the Congo to Amsterdam<sup>49</sup>, which remained an important centre of the ivory trade. The large amounts of ivory from the Congo were made possible because King Leopold II expropriated land from the native people of the Congo and, in 1891, decreed that all ivory belonged to the Crown.<sup>50</sup> By the end of the nineteenth century an estimated average of 214,180 kg of ivory was shipped from the Congo.<sup>51</sup> Between 1937 and 1959 these authors estimate that another 200,000 elephants were killed in the Belgian Congo for their ivory.<sup>52</sup> In southern Africa around 1650, there was a large population of elephants and in South Africa alone they estimate they numbered at least 100,000. Between 1650 and 1790 white habitation in southern Africa increased and more white hunters entered the region. Selous was already concerned about the decline of elephants

43 Ibid: 153.

44 Ibid: 155.

45 pp. 137, Eltringham, S.K. (1984), *Wildlife resources and economic development*, Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.

46 Ibid.

47 Ibid.

48 pp. 120, Depelchin, J. (1992), *From the Congo Free State to Zaire (1885-1974). Towards a demystification of economic and political history*, Dakar: CODESRIA

49 Eltringham 1984: 137.

50 pp. 23, Sugg, I.C. & Kreuter, U.P. (1994), *Elephants and ivory: lessons from the trade ban*, London: Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA).

51 Eltringham 1984: 137.

52 Sugg & Kreuter 1994: 24.



in what is now Zimbabwe in 1887<sup>53</sup>, which is no wonder because 'the slaughter of elephants by white hunters, particularly in southern Africa, was staggering'.<sup>54</sup> Despite the fact that they decimated the wildlife in Africa in the course of only a few decades, white hunters were highly popular in Europe. This is inextricably linked to the books some of them wrote about their adventures in Africa. Selous was probably the most famous one of such authors.<sup>55</sup> These books deftly blew the trumpet of their writers and left out the more critical aspects of the hunting ethos, but most importantly contributed immensely to the still potent image and romance of Africa as an unspoiled Eden and wilderness, which could be experienced in the African bush.<sup>56</sup> Many Europeans were thrilled by their adventures and wanted to follow in 'their footsteps' as settler, or as a hunting tourist going on safari.

### Safari Times

These pioneer hunters and adventurers set the pace for a safari industry which is said to have had its peak between 1836 and 1939. 'Within nineteenth-century southern Africa, big trade, big guns, and big animals had developed a symbiotic relationship'.<sup>57</sup> Several ivory hunters became the first safari operators. In the film 'Out of Africa', Denys Finch Hatton starts as an ivory hunter, and Karin Blixen (Isac Dinesen) meets him for the first time on the plains of Kenya while he is putting some large tusks on the train on which she is also traveling. Nearly at the end of the film he crashes in his small aeroplane and dies while he was on his way to Blixen's farm. He had bought the plane for

53 Ibid: 23. Actually Selous shot his first elephant in Zimbabwe, or 'Lobengula's country (...) in September 1872 (...) That evening (...) Selous tasted elephant heart for the first time "which I thought then, and still consider, to be one of the greatest delicacies that an African hunter is likely to enjoy" (Capstick, F. (March 1999), Frederick Courtney Selous D.S.O. (1851-1917): Dean of Africa's big game hunting, *Safari Times Africa*).

54 pp. 61, Adams, J.S. & McShane, T.O. (1992), *The myth of wild Africa. Conservation without illusion*, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.

55 These books experienced a rebirth when they were reprinted in 1995 under the name of 'African Hunting Reprint Series', by a Zimbabwean publisher in Bulawayo, Book of Zimbabwe. They are, for instance, sold under the heading of 'Rhodesiana' at the curioshop of the Wildlife Society of Zimbabwe at the Mukuvisi Environmental Centre in Harare. There are eleven volumes in the series: vol. 1 & 2, R.G. Cumming, *A hunter's life in South Africa*; vol. 3 W. Finaughty, *The recollections of an elephant hunter, 1864-1875*; vol. 4, W.C. Baldwin, *African hunting*; vol. 5, F.C. Selous, *A hunter's wanderings in Africa*; vol. 6, (could not find author), *Elephant hunting in East Quatorial Africa*; vol. 7, A.W. Hodson, *Trekking the great thirst. Sport and travel in the Kalahari Desert*; vol. 8, Capt. C.M. Stigand, *Hunting the elephant in Africa and other recollections of thirteen years' wanderings*; vol. 9, Capt. W.C. Harris, *The wild sports of Southern Africa*; vol. 10, D.D. Lyell, *The African elephant and its hunters*; vol. 11, J. Sutherland, *The adventures of an elephant hunter*.

56 Selous wrote the most famous one 'A hunter's wandering in Africa' (1881). It is said that Selous' mind in turn was 'set alight' by the writings of another famous writer on early days of white settlement in Africa, David Livingstone, and that 'at fourteen, he stated: "I mean to be like Livingstone"' (Capstick March 1999); Sutherland wrote 'The adventures of an elephant hunter' (1912) and Bell wrote 'The wanderings of an elephant hunter' (?).

57 pp. 1, Skidmore-Hess, C. (1999), Flora and flood-plains: technology, gender and ethnicity in northern Botswana - 1900-1990, paper presented at the conference *African environments: past and present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford.

safari tourists whom he would fly around to see the marvels of natural Africa from the air.<sup>58</sup>

The word 'safari' is a Swahili word originating from the Arabic verb *safara*, meaning 'to unveil' or 'to enter upon a journey and the noun *safariya* in Arabic refers to a voyage or expedition'. In its particular context, the present-day use of the word was only introduced by the Europeans who started to hunt extensively near areas of East Africa that had been under Arab influence.<sup>59</sup> In Kenya the beginnings of the professional safari hunting is usually credited to the cousins Clifford and Harold Hill, who started with ostrich farming in South Africa in 1904 to sell the feathers to Europe where they were used in *haute couture* as decorations on hats and heads. But ostriches in South Africa were so rare that this drove the prices up tremendously. In Kenya there was still an abundance of these birds. So they went up to Kenya, only to find out that lions were especially very fond of ostriches (but not for their feathers!) and were a constant threat to them. As the ostrich business grew, so did the lion population. In the process, taking measures to protect their ostriches, they became excellent lion hunters and took friends with them to join in the sport. This eventually evolved into a safari business. Another name which is often mentioned with the advent of a professional safari business is a Scotsman by the appropriate name of Hunter (J.A.), who was an admirer of Selous' books, and who took his first American hunting clients into the Ngorogoro Crater in German East Africa. They mainly hunted lion, which were so plentiful at the time that the clients shot 'until their guns were too hot to hold'.<sup>60</sup>

To go on safari was very much the done thing among the powerful and well-to-do, and between 1908 and 1914 'princes, peers and American magnates poured out in one continual stream'.<sup>61</sup> One of the most famous American clients was undoubtedly President Theodore Roosevelt who went on an extensive safari in Kenya in 1909. And 'extensive' is the right word for the scope of his safari. He asked the most famous of outfitters in Nairobi, Newland & Tarlton (N&T for insiders), to organise his safari and outfit, under the guidance and supervision of R.J. Cunningham.<sup>62</sup> To give you some impression of the magnitude of the trade: N & T had some 300 clients in its peak year just before the First World War.<sup>63</sup> Roosevelt was one of them. When Roosevelt's train arrived at a little bush station named Kapiti Plains, there could be no doubt what an enormous expedition this was (and what a tremendous task the outfitter had to undertake for only one client). Waiting at the station was a large group of people gathered, who had been hired to take care of and carry all the luggage into the bush. '(S)aises, gun-bearers, tentmen, fifteen uniformed askaris [guards HW], and 265 Swahili porters in khaki shorts, blue puttees and blue jerseys. Behind the men were eight large tents for the hunting party, a mess tent, a skinning tent and fifty small tents for the Africans, all ranked behind a large American flag. It was not enough. In time the safari grew to 500

58 See for a recent description and overview of the 'Golden Age' of safaris in East Africa: Herne, B. (1999), *White hunters. The golden age of African safaris*, New York: Henry Holt & Company.

59 Bull 1988: 17-18.

60 Ibid: 203-207.

61 Cranworth in Bull 1988: 207.

62 Ibid: 163.

63 Ibid: 207.

porters'.<sup>64</sup> Safaris were highly romanticised and played a crucial role in the construction of a masculine<sup>65</sup> and 'being-in-power' identity of white people in Africa.

Not only the safari, but the hunting experience itself was soaked with romance and identity construction in terms of hardship, being-in-charge and authenticity. This inspired in a whole range of thrilling stories of men as they should be: the hunter as role model with a self-image of physical and mental superiority.<sup>66</sup> 'The colonial hunter was one of the most striking figures of the Victorian and Edwardian imperial landscape. [It became] the archetypal colonial figure'.<sup>67</sup> The physical aspect of the identity was greatly propagated at British public schools through games like rugby where this image of masculinity was 'mercilessly inculcated in middle-class men' and where masculinity was 'explicitly structured around the absence of the feminine'.<sup>68</sup> One of the great exponents of this manliness was Dr Thomas Arnold, who was headmaster of Rugby School. These public schools became to be known as the 'nurseries of the empire' where 'a collective practice of asceticism intent on transforming the feminine bodies of young boys into the hardened musculature of imperial warriors' was implemented.<sup>69</sup> Hunting seems to be the ideal expression of this masculinity and thus 'played a highly significant role within colonial expatriate culture (...) represented as an integral part of pioneering'.<sup>70</sup> Many years later, this British idea of mental superiority is wittily described by a biographer of George Adamson, the famous 'lion man' from Kenya and his wife Joy<sup>71</sup>, who wrote: 'A white hunter had to match his prowess as a sportsman with the skill of a

64 Ibid: 169. Roosevelt wrote a classic text on African hunting, based on this safari, Roosevelt, T. (1986) [1910], *African game trails*, Alberton: Galago Publishing Ltd. Writing about British East Africa: 'Most of the tribes were of pure savages (...) Over this people - for its good fortune - Great Britain established a protectorate; and ultimately, in order to get easy access to this new outpost of civilization in the heart of the Dark Continent, the British Government built a railroad from the old Arab coast town of Mombasa westward to Victoria Nyanza' (pp. 2). Kapiti Plains is on this railroad.

65 '(T)he development of safari tourism did not have to become a gendered enterprise, but it grew out of the testosterone laden nineteenth-century wildlife industry and elitist concepts of sport' (Skidmore-Hess 1999: 20).

66 Hathaway Chapstick introduces Selous, for instance, with the modest formulation that he was 'probably the most shining example of English manhood that the Victorian Empire could field in the Britain of those days' (pp. 10, Hathaway Capstick, P. (1992), *The African adventurers. A return to the silent places*, New York: St. Martin's Press). Compare also with what Dahles writes about the importance of being a hunter for the identity of men hunting in The Netherlands. She says that to be a hunter is an aspect of the identity of the hunter. This identity is symbolised by the colour green, which is the dominant colour in hunting garment and hunting outfit. The colour is not chosen for symbolic reasons of expression alone, but also for its practical reason of camouflage in a landscape dominated by green pastures. For the same reasons, the symbolic colour for hunters in Africa is khaki, ranging from beige, via a more greyish tint, to a dusty green. See pp. 21-22 and 290, Dahles, H. (1990), *Mannen in het groen. De wereld van de jacht in Nederland*, Nijmegen: SUN, (translation: Men in green. The world of the hunt in The Netherlands).

67 pp. 99, Ryan, J.R. (1997), *Picturing empire. Photography and the visualization of the British empire*, London: Reaktion Books.

68 pp. 6, Brooks, S., (1997), Blood, power and the negotiations of masculinities in Zululand Game Reserves, Paper presented for the *Colloquium on Masculinities in Southern Africa*, University of Natal, Durban, 2-4 July

69 pp. 13-16, Rutherford, J. (1997), *Forever England. Reflections on masculinity and empire*, London: Lawrence & Wishart.

70 Ryan 1998: 100 & 108.

71 Joy Adamson advocated and popularised the cause of wildlife conservation in Africa through here world famous books about the lion cub Elsa: *Born Free* (1960), *Living Free* (1961) and *Forever Free* (1962), all three published by London: Collins Harvill.

diplomat. On safari his shower water in camp had to be piping hot and his cocktails ice-cold. He could never be short of a blanket, a steak or a suitable anecdote'.<sup>72</sup> This seems a playful paraphrase of the formulation Arnold chose already at the turn of the century where he stated that 'what we must look for here is, 1st religious and moral principles [i.e. physical courage and self-reliance]; 2ndly gentlemanly conduct; thirdly intellectual ability'.<sup>73</sup> The clothing the hunters wear is another expression of this masculine identity. The clothing was not only selected for its functionality and convenience in the bush, it was also as a way of expressing an image of masculinity and manliness in the broader context of imperial power relations. If you compare, for instance, pictures of Selous, who, it was no coincidence, attended the famous Rugby School in Britain<sup>74</sup>, as a young hunter<sup>75</sup>, a picture just before his death<sup>76</sup>, a picture of a hunting party in Kenya in 1986<sup>77</sup>, the picture of a hunter / writer on the sleeve of one of his books in the early nineties<sup>78</sup>, and even the picture of a game warden in South Africa in a local newspaper in the late nineties<sup>79</sup>, it is remarkable to observe that this part of the hunting and bush outfit has not changed dramatically over the years. The pictures show almost the same outfits over decades of time: shorts, often with a belt to which a knife is attached (hunting knife like Buck, Swiss army knife or, in a modern day outfit, a multi functional Leatherman) and in which, if there is an actual hunt, the bullets can be put; high leather hunting boots which protect the ankles; high socks which are hardly ever rise up to their knee-high potential or even bare feet; a shirt with short or rolled up sleeves, epaulettes and two breast pockets with an overhanging flap which can close the pocket with a small button (which hardly ever is the case); a hat to complete the outfit and all in shades of khaki. That hat is one of the things that has maybe changed most over time. In the English colonial heydays the Shikar<sup>80</sup> was thought appropriate for men to wear in the tropical sun and for that reason belonged to the standard equipment, especially of officials, going to Africa. It became part of the white male uniform and was also much used in ceremonial contexts. With that it became a symbol of white supremacy in Africa. After the various African countries became independent, the Shikar was obviously no longer in vogue, nor was it still appreciated by most Africans and was replaced by caps or floppy hats.

The legends of the great hunts and the identity of the hunters were also kept alive and reproduced through the telling and retelling the stories and myths of great hunts. This was first done by the great white hunters themselves who wrote about their adventures. Nowadays it is done by people who (try to) live in that same tradition. Just by way

72 pp. 123, House, A. (1993), *The great safari. The lives of George and Joy Adamson*, London: Harper Collins Publishers.

73 Arnold in Rutherford 1997: 13.

74 Bull 1988: 96. There is a story that Selous always slept on the floor of the dormitory instead of in his bed. When asked for the reason he replied "Well, you see, one day I am going to be a hunter in Africa and I am just hardening myself to sleep on the ground" (Capstick March 1999).

75 Ibid: 101.

76 Ibid: 120.

77 Ibid: 363.

78 Hathaway Capstick, 1992.

79 *The Natal Witness*, 24 February 1998, Paid to do what he loves doing.

80 Bull: 1988: 135.

of illustration I take a long quote from a book by Hathaway Chapstick, who in this book recounts the story of famous white hunters.<sup>81</sup> This story is about a wounded lion to whom they want to give the *coup de grâce*. 'As the hunting party drew near to give the lion his quietus, it roared in an hollow vortex that rattled the bushveld. Selous was likely scared – or stupid not to be – but he walked in on the spot where the grunting roars were emanating from. It charged. It rushed, as lions usually do, in a low, khaki streak rather than bounding like those who have not been charged by lions would have you to believe. Let Fred [Selous HW] tell it: As it was, however, I was peering about in the bush to try and get sight of him, holding my rifle advanced in front of me, and full cock, when I became that he was coming at me through the bush. The next instant out he burst. I was so close that I had not even time to take a sight, but, stepping a pace backwards, got the rifle to my shoulder, and, when his head was close upon the muzzle, pulled the trigger, and jumped to one side. The lion fell almost at my very feet, certainly not six feet from the muzzle of the rifle. (...) Seeing him on the ground, I thought I must have shattered his skull and killed him, when, as we were advancing towards him, he stood up again. (...) Dorehill [his partner HW] at once fired with a Martini-Henry rifle and shot him through the thigh. On this he fell down again, and, rolling over onto his side, lay gasping. We now went up to him, but as he still continued to open his mouth, Horner [a hunter from Britain HW] gave him a shot in the head... He was an averaged size lion, his pegged out skin (...) measuring 10 ft. 3 in. from nose to tip of tail, sleek, and in fine condition, and his teeth long and perfect'.<sup>82</sup>

This description hints directly at another way of reproducing the identity of these (early) hunters and that is by measuring and then keeping meticulous records of the measurements of big game. Through these records, the hunting identity is reproduced and kept alive, especially because every record has its own story to tell. The most famous in this respect is Rowland Ward, who published his first big-game trophy records in 1892 in *Records of Big Game*<sup>83</sup>, a series which continues to be published today. In an edition of 1984, the book is dedicated to, who else, Selous, 'who showed us the way'.<sup>84</sup> Another famous name, but only recent competitor of Rowland Ward in this respect is the American Safari Club International (SCI), founded (as late as) in 1971<sup>85</sup>, which also publishes hunting record books. Maybe because much of the hunting in southern

81 In more recent popular books (i.e. apart from hunting books which specifically aim at hunters), sole hunting is often replaced or placed in a broader context by introducing the concept of conservation, which is less controversial in public opinion than hunting (who can be against conservation?), but can be dished up with the same marketable ingredients as the old hunting stories. Plain hunting stories do no longer sell to a large market, especially not in Europe where there is a general and strong anti-hunting bias. So the old-fashioned hunting stories are adapted to the modern day wishes of 'the market'. Modern day hunting stories are, for instance, ones in which a former hunter or poacher is turned conservationist and has to deal with preventing his former colleagues from poaching. All the romance of bush life, exhilarating wildlife and perilous escapes from wild animals are still very much the same ingredients on which the hunting books of the great white hunters once flourished. See for a good Zimbabwean example of this genre: Meadows, K. (1996), *Sand in the wind*, Harare: Thorntree Press.

82 Hathaway Chapstick 1992: 26-27.

83 Bull 1988: 205, 246. Rowland Ward (1848-1912) was a famous taxidermist and publisher of sporting books. In 1882 he published his popular *Sportman's Handbook on hunting* (Ryan 1997: 115).

84 Rowland Ward's *African Records of big game*, XIX Edition, San Antonio, Texas: Rowland Ward Publications.

85 Text in information brochure of SCI Africa.

Africa is done by Americans nowadays, according to several safari-operators, it is the SCI scoring entry form for game animals which is now most commonly used by hunters.<sup>86</sup> If we take, for instance, the measurement of a trophy like the African Buffalo, SCI prescribes that the hunter measures 'the lengths of the horns 'around the basket' from horn tip to horn tip, bridging the forehead, and to that is added the width of each of the two bosses, following the full actual surface of the boss'<sup>87</sup> (see Figure 3<sup>88</sup>).

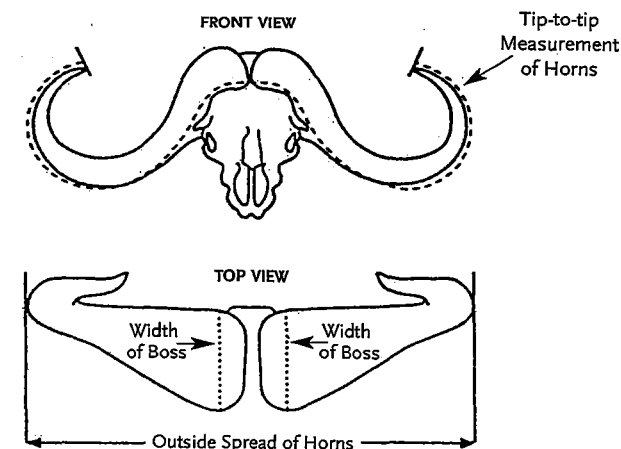


Figure 3 The African Buffalo

The record book contains all record trophies on a particular species. The sections on favourite trophy animals like the African Buffalo especially are preceded by a proud picture of the hunter, often accompanied by his local professional hunter, and his trophy. In a good picture the record trophy dominates, clean as a whistle and without any blood being shown. There is a broad and satisfied grin on the face of the hunter who often also displays his rifle, like a tennis player or athlete showing the brand of his racket or running shoes when he has won a prize.<sup>89</sup> As I described the role of postcards in picturing the Other in Africa in Chapter 1, so photography also played an important role in constructing and reproducing a mythical European image of Africa's wildlife, landscapes and hunting men. 'Photographers represented the imaginative geographies of Empire'. And through looking at and familiarising themselves with it the Europeans began to

86 Interview with Managing Director of Hunters & Guides Africa, 12 March 1998.

87 pp. 433, *The SCI record book of trophy animals* (1982), Tucson, Arizona: Safari Club International, Edition III.

88 Taken from Safari Club International, Method 4 Entry Form for African Buffalo. I shall go into more detail about the buffalo hunt in Chapter 5, where I shall explain why the African Buffalo is so crucially important to the economic viability of private wildlife conservancies.

89 See for example pp. 85 & 86, Robertson, K. (Doctari) (1996), *Nyati, a guide to hunting Zimbabwe's most dangerous big game: the Southern Buffalo*, Harare: Mag-Set Publications.

'possess those spaces'.<sup>90</sup> As a combination the objectivation and imagery of Africa, its people and its wildlife, were a powerful tool in turning commodities into possessions. Many brochures for the marketing of wildlife and people in Africa are heavily influenced by the myths and social identity constructed during these heydays of safari.<sup>91</sup>

### More Recent Developments in Private Wildlife Utilisation

The epoch of safari declined steadily after the Second World War, especially as the different African states headed for Independence. Certainly the business continued, but on a much more modest scale than before. Hunting in Africa has always been a privileged sport for whites and Africans themselves were excluded, part of the motivation being to 'keep firearms out of African hands'. This has created an image in which hunting is portrayed as a 'white man's game' only and has overtones of racism and racial segregation. For that reason, hunting has never been popular with post-independence politicians in Africa.<sup>92</sup> Parallel to this socio-cultural aspect of the hunting industry, which goes back to its inception, there is a more recent development which condemns hunting as ethically wrong because its advocates insist that 'all life is sacred' and who 'condemn as immoral the killing of nature's finest specimens for fun'.<sup>93</sup> These arguments are mainly put forward by animal rights' organisations from the West. The modern animal rights movement in the United States of America can be quite easily traced back to the publication of 'Animal Liberation' by Peter Singer in 1975.<sup>94</sup> Indubitably, the idea of preventing cruelty to animals already has a longer history going back to the founding in America of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) in 1866. SPCAs are now found in many English-speaking countries around the world, including Zimbabwe. But the present-day animal rights' movement is a far more powerful publicity force, even if perceived only from the perspective of its membership which was more than ten million in 1988. Their financial condition then was also financially very sound and was estimated at US\$ 50 million. The animal rights' movement gained enormous momentum after 1975<sup>95</sup>, even more so with the battle for the ban on the ivory trade in 1989 in which they pressed the WWF-US to plead for a total ban on the ivory trade, which they did.<sup>96</sup> The ban on the ivory trade was decided at the 1989 CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and

Flora) meeting in Lausanne, Switzerland<sup>97</sup> and was, in fact, a victory for the animal welfare movement.

Dickson makes a distinction between three types of arguments which are used under this banner. The first is 'killing is wrong' which is, for instance, used by the Animal Legal Defense Fund and which says that killing animals in itself is ethically wrong. It is a difficult argument to sustain in any debate, because it encompasses much more than consumptive use of wildlife only. It would also mean that the slaughter of any animal, domestic or wild, to provide food for humans has to be banned. So it is not used too often in the debates around wildlife utilisation. The second type of argument is that 'killing hurts' and for that reason is wrong. It suffers more or less from the same difficulties as the 'killing is wrong'-argument in that it does not only apply to wildlife but as much to our treatment of domestic animals. So, in a specific debate about wildlife utilisation in the sense of hunting it is often only assumed but seldom uttered aloud. These first two arguments are firmly based on ethical considerations. The last one is based on the instrumentality of wildlife utilisation in the preservation of species and is called the 'incompatibility argument'. This view is certainly less radical than the first two and often comes down to the conclusion that if we do not really know what effects wildlife utilisation has on the preservation of species, then it is better to be cautious about it and not to engage in wildlife utilisation out of the precaution that it might have detrimental effects. The Humane Society of the United States formulated this argument as follows: 'all uses of wild species are considered unsustainable until sustainability is demonstrated'.<sup>98</sup> Although it is the least radical of the three, it is nonetheless the most powerful and sustainable one. Wildlife utilisation in relation to species preservation is such a complex issue, one in which cause and effect are so muddled in many other influences, direct and indirect, that it might well be impossible to prove any definite effect, positive or negative at any stage in time. This means that its protagonists can sustain the argument for ages just because nothing is or is considered proven. But it is clear from these types of discussions that the issue of wildlife utilisation is so value-laden that the distinction between analysis and wishful ideological thinking is often blurred. In other words, the 'objective' analysis always seems to prove the ideological assumptions of the analyst and writer and hardly ever 'proves' any other ideological stance. This means that reports from both animal welfare groups and from advocates of wildlife utilisation have to be read critically. As a group the proponents from the animal welfare scene form a formidable force and have an enormous authority to create a bad image of the hunting industry in particular, and of the whole concept of sustainable wildlife utilisation in general. With such a negative public attitude towards hunting and the constant reiteration of conservation bodies that wildlife is threatened all over the globe, it is no wonder that the safari business has suffered and with it the broader concept of wildlife utilisation. But history has repeated itself, and private sector hunting and government once again joined hands and initiated conservation and with the same strong romantic undertone, they started to make a joint come back.

90 Ryan 1997: 214. Photographs were not only instrumental though in the creation of Empire, they were crucial to protesting about it, as was done by photographing the atrocities of the regime in the Belgium Congo Free State by King Leopold (pp. 222-224).

91 See for a very interesting paper on the role of wildlife photography and landscape semiotics in the construction of a white social identity in South Africa, Bunn, D. (1999) An unnatural state: tourism, water, and wildlife photography in the early Kruger National Park, paper presented at the conference *African environments: past and present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford University.

92 pp. 18, Johnstone, R. (1998), Eternal questions, *Swara. East African Wild Life Society*, 20: 6 & 21: 1.

93 pp. 25, Georgiadis, N. (1998), The hunt to save the game, *Swara. East African Wild Life Society*, 20: 6 & 21: 1.

94 Singer, P. (1975), *Animal liberation*, New York: New York Review.

95 Bonner 1993: 109-111.

96 Ibid: 112-113.

97 Ibid: 153-157.

98 Dickson, B. (not dated), *What's wrong with consumptive use? An analysis and assessment of the arguments against consumptive use*, Africa Resources Trust. Taken from the Internet: [http://www.art.org.uk/articles/art\\_what'swrong.html](http://www.art.org.uk/articles/art_what'swrong.html)

On private land wildlife declined steadily in the first half of the twentieth century, because it had hardly any economic value and it competed with domestic cattle for grazing or with conventional agriculture. But in the fifties there was an increasing number of expatriate biologists who began to point out that much of the soil which was used for cattle or more conventional methods of agriculture was actually not suited to that purpose. And, they argued, keeping wildlife for meat production could very well be an answer to this problem. Not everybody was enthusiastic, mainly because of fear of the diseases wildlife is thought to carry and transfer to domestic cattle. Foot and mouth disease (FMD) is especially dreaded and is believed to be endemic in many populations of African buffalo.<sup>99</sup> Despite these critical aspects of the trade, the concept of wildlife utilisation in this form began to take hold in southern Africa. In the sixties there were experiments with wildlife utilisation schemes on the Doddieburn Ranch in Zimbabwe, based on a study by Dasmann and Mossman, and the example was followed in other parts of Zimbabwe. Between 1974 and 1986 the area devoted to game increased from 59,700 to 97,000 hectares, an increase of 62%. A similar development could be observed in South Africa as well, but this is more difficult to quantify because game ranching is often integrated into other forms of land use (as is in most conservancies), but they estimated that there were some 8200 game ranches with an average size of 2531 hectares in 1986.<sup>100</sup>

There are different categories of wildlife utilisation, to be discerned in southern Africa. An early study on the feasibility of commercial wildlife use on private land in Zambia distinguishes three categories in this respect, private game parks, commercial game ranches, and farm game.<sup>101</sup> In all these categories the wildlife is utilised primarily for economic and developmental concerns. To be able to make a distinction between the different forms of private wildlife utilisation and to appreciate the specific position private wildlife conservancies take in this spectrum, I shall introduce the definitions of the categories mentioned above.<sup>102</sup>

- 'Private game parks (sometimes called 'safari parks') are game fenced areas on private farmland where free ranging rather than caged wildlife species are displayed to the public (normally confined to motor vehicles), and where the primary source of revenue is obtained from entrance gate fees'. In a sense they are a zoo without cages. Because they need a high through-put of visitors in order to earn a profit, they must be suitably located close to a large concentration of people, a city or a tourist resort.
- 'Commercial game ranching refers to situations where game animals are maintained as the sole or major crop on the land and where these animals are harvested

99 pp. 287-288, Skinner, J.D. (1989), Game ranching in southern Africa, in: Hudson, R.J., Drew, K.R. & Baskin, L.M. (eds.), *Wildlife production systems*, Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.

100 Ibid: 289.

101 pp. 23, Collinson, R.F.H. (ed.) (1983), *Feasibility study on utilisation of wildlife resources in Zambia*, Lusaka: Motshwari Game (Pty) Ltd, vol. 1. Domesticated game is seen as a fourth option but not considered commercially viable in Zambia.

102 All definitions taken from the study mentioned in previous note, pp. 23-26. In the original text the quotations I use are underlined.

on a sustained yield basis for financial gain'. A variety of possibilities falls under this category. Wildlife can be culled and its meat sold as venison, live animals can be bred and sold or animals can be hunted by sport hunters for trophies. Non-consumptive game viewing is also possible in this category, for which usually the construction of overnight accommodation is necessary.

- '(F)arm game, which must not be confused with domesticated game, refers to game species that occur in their wild state on ordinary farmland and as a by-product or sideline to the primary forms of land-use such as maize and cattle production'. Here conventional agriculture is the primary process and harmless game which inhabits the farmland anyway is made productive. A much mentioned example is the guinea-fowl 'which feeds on insects in the summer and weed seeds and maize gleanings on harvested lands in the winter'. Guineafowl can be sold for bird shooting or for their meat.<sup>103</sup>

Conservancies do not yet rate a mention in the main text of this study, but are noted in an appendix as another possible option.<sup>104</sup> A conservancy is defined as 'any area managed to conserve indigenous plants and animals (wildlife) occurring in privately-owned agricultural, pastoral or silvicultural land. It supports the idea of employing private game guards for the protection of wildlife on private land'. The *a priori* assumed mingle between private conservancies and public conservation bodies is made clear right from the start in a choice of words which leaves the reader with the idea that conservancies are the only alternative to a wildlife apocalypse on private land: '(i)t may be said that there is as yet no viable alternative for the *salvation* of wildlife on private land other than by the conservancy plan. Failure to provide security and management for wildlife on private land must, inevitably, lead to its demise in these areas. Whether this happens or not depends as much on the land-owner as it does on professional conservationists'. What becomes clear from the remainder of the text is that conservancies are primarily motivated by the idea of protecting the land from poaching through the installation and use of game guards. How conservancies can be made economically profitable is not yet

103 A recent study completed in Cameroon suggests that the guinea-fowl can be utilised in a very constructive way for community relations as the harvesting of this bird can contribute substantially (42.2%, according to this study in the Waza region in north Cameroon) to the animal protein needs of local communities. The study adds to this optimistic perspective in the first place that they do not know if this percentage of 42.2% is enough for the communities to see the harvesting of guinea-fowl as an attractive alternative for land use in the region. Secondly, the government and traditional institutions own and control all use of natural resources in the Waza region, and they must be willing to delegate some of their authority to the communities, to allow them harvest the guinea-fowl. Pointedly he adds that '(i)t might thus take some time for mutual trust to be developed between local communities and these institutions, a prerequisite for the success (...)', pp. 130. Njiforti, H.L. (1997), *The biology and management of wild helmeted guinea-fowl (Numida meleagris galeata Pallas) in the Waza region of north Cameroon*, Ph.D. Thesis, Agricultural University Wageningen. In the light of the history of private wildlife conservancies in South Africa it is rather ironic that it is the guinea-fowl especially which is considered appropriate to launch community relations. The guinea-fowl is the symbol of conservancies in South Africa. At the same time, the Natal Conservancy Association, representing most conservancies in southern Africa, (so far) does not have any official community relations programme as we shall see later in this chapter.

104 Appendix 4, pp. 167-169, Collinson 1983. The quotations in this section of my text are taken from that appendix, pp. 167, italics added.

mentioned at all. In other words, how the wildlife can be utilised in an economically viable way is not explained yet, or even hinted at.

### The Recent Hunting Debate and Wildlife Utilisation

For my discussion about a general history of wildlife utilisation in southern (and East) Africa with an emphasis on sport hunting tradition as a historical context for the construction of a white social identity in southern Africa and for the development of conservancies, it is especially interesting to see how hunting has been perceived in different East and southern African countries in the last thirty to forty years, i.e. after the safari peak years and thus after most African countries became independent. In Kenya, always portrayed as safari country *par excellence*, hunting was banned in 1977. It is estimated that before that date, 6.5% of the total tourist revenues came from hunting.<sup>105</sup> The ban was not decided on the basis of ethical considerations, but because there was so much corruption involved in the process of hunting. If a professional hunter, for instance, took out a permit to shoot a leopard or a lion, the client would shoot more than the permit allowed for and 'bribed the others away', through paying rangers not to report them, thereby falsifying details in reporting the hunt. And shooting was also done from the back of a car, which is considered very unethical in hunting, as the wildlife develops a fear for the sound of engines and runs off as soon as it hears a car approaching. As a result you can never see wildlife again when driving around for hunting or viewing purposes.<sup>106</sup> But sport hunting is a much more lucrative way of land use than non-consumptive tourism. In 1989 Robin Hurt, one of the most well-known professional hunters in Kenya with his own hunting company and a stern conservationist, calculated, in a study he did for Richard Leakey, Director of the Kenya Wildlife Service, that hunters would generate close to US\$ 20 million annually for Kenya. US\$ 4 million would go to the Kenyan wildlife department in licence fees. This amount is four times as much as it ever received in a top year from park entrance fees. And the department is always in need of money. Although they know this, the tour operators in Kenya fear the negative impact of hunting on Kenya's image.<sup>107</sup> In 1998 the debate on hunting in Kenya is still raging on, and in Swara, the periodical of the East African Wildlife Society, it is portrayed as 'The Great Sport Hunting Debate'.<sup>108</sup>

In Tanzania hunting was banned in 1973, for precisely the same reasons, abuse and corruption, as in Kenya a few years later, but the ban was lifted in 1984.<sup>109</sup> The number of hunting blocks has increased from forty-seven in 1965 to more than 140 blocks in 1997. If the hunting industry is compared with the mass wildlife tourism in Tanzania, an interesting financial picture emerges. In 1992, for instance, there were more than 500,000 visitors days spent in national parks in Tanzania. There were 'only' 10,000 vis-

itors days spent on hunting. The game viewing of the 500,000 visitor days resulted in a revenue of US\$ 7.2 million, while the 10,000 visitor days spent on hunting resulted in a revenue of US\$ 3.6 million. Simple calculation shows that fifty times more people only result in twice as much income. This picture is even more glaring if it is applied to a single national park in Tanzania, Ruaha National Park, the second largest after Serengeti National Park. In 1992 there were 585 visitor days spent in the park by international tourists and 1947 by local tourists. That year Ruaha earned US\$ 36,000 from those game viewing tourists. Surrounding Ruaha are unprotected areas and reserves which earned US\$ 400,000 from roughly 1322 days of hunting days spent in the area.<sup>110</sup>

The discussion becomes more complicated and emotional if the debate on hunting turns from financial considerations and calculations to which species should be hunted (if hunting is considered feasible). Should, for instance, the elephant and rhino be included? Zimbabwe is home to some 1700 of the estimated 3800 remaining black rhino. Rhinos have been heavily poached and most conservationists think that is because of the fact that their horns command high prices in Arab countries where they are used as handles for ceremonial daggers. These horns are also valued in East Asia where crushed rhino horn is said to have medicinal qualities for a whole range of illnesses. But it is very expensive to protect them and in the end for a department which is in charge of the operations for their protection, it boils down to a matter of simple economics of who pays the bill?<sup>111</sup> In Zimbabwe they have protected the black rhino, amongst other measures, by removing them from the danger areas in the Zambezi Valley near the Zambian border to private land in the Lowveld in the southeast of the country. It was this rhino translocation which was the start of conservancies, hence of the SVC, in this part of the country.<sup>112</sup> When this operation started, at the end of the eighties, the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management was still managed by the director Willie Nduku and his deputy-director, Rowan Martin.<sup>113</sup> Rowan Martin, as deputy-director of DNPWLM, was a blunt advocate of hunting, even of rhino and elephant, because of the enormous sum of money it would raise for conservation purposes. He calculated that in order to protect rhino, you need one ranger for every twenty square kms. This would cost approximately US\$ 190 per square kilometre, whereas they are only putting in some US\$ 85. 'With the expected results' Martin adds wryly. The same story holds for the elephant. In order to protect all the elephant in Africa living on state land (i.e. National Parks and other state protected reserves), he calculated that some ten thousand men are needed, which would cost around US\$ 100 million. All over the continent, excluding South Africa, less than US\$ 50 million is spent on wildlife conservation. And we are now only talking of the price for protecting the elephant. Even if they did no more than protect the elephant, the costs would be phenomenal and beyond

105 pp. 14, Swanson, T.M. (1991), *Wildlife utilisation as an instrument for natural habitat conservation: a survey of the literature and of the issues*, IIED Discussion Paper, May 1991.

106 Bonner 1993: 242.

107 Ibid: 243.

108 Swara. *East African Wild Life Society*, 20: 6 & 21: 1.

109 Bonner 1993: 245.

110 pp. 23, Overton, G. (1998), The good, the bad and the ugly, *Swara. East African Wild Life Society*, 20: 6 & 21: 1.

111 pp. 168, Adams, J.S. & McShane T.O. (1992), *The myth of wild Africa. Conservation without illusion*, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.

112 See for more details Chapter 5.

113 This lasted until July 1995, when they were both suspended and later dismissed on allegations of illegal export of wildlife. *The Herald*, 4 August 1998, National parks director to be appointed soon. There is much more to say about this issue, but I save that till Chapter 5 where it can be directly integrated into the case study in the SVC, where their dismissal had a very severe effect on the further development of the SVC.

any reach.<sup>114</sup> Hunting revenues also cannot live up to this kind of expectations, but as a start it is at least making far more money from the land than any other form of land use, especially if we are talking about the semi-arid areas. Sport hunting can earn US\$ 10 per hectare, while cattle, one of the long-preferred land uses in semi-arid regions, are estimated as costing US\$ 5 per hectare.<sup>115</sup>

To add one final aspect to the emerging picture of context, in the light of the recent consensus in the nineties on the basic idea that conservation should be based on exchange with local populations rather than on isolation and separation, the question, of what (increased) sport hunting can mean for communities, both in public and private conservation initiatives should be posed. I want to give examples of both. The increasing level of conflict between conservation officials and local communities grew more and more socially and politically unacceptable, especially when most former African colonies, became independent and were governed by black governments. So far, park-community relations 'lacked reciprocity'.<sup>116</sup> Local communities are now seen and have become a 'stakeholder' in the process of conservation, instead of antagonistic parties.<sup>117</sup> A 'small investment in 'reciprocity' through the C[ommunity] C[onservation] programme produce[s] high return in improved relations (...)'.<sup>118</sup> The proceedings of the Third World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas in Bali (Indonesia) in 1982 already, show signs of changing tides. In there it is said that '(l)inking nature protection with social and economic requirements is a positive step to ensure the necessary public support for conservation activities, and does not necessarily compromise conservation values'.<sup>119</sup> In relation to the formulation above that the title to this introduction to the congress which speaks of protected areas 'adapting' to new realities this is pregnant with meaning. Conservation methods obviously had to be changed to remain socially and politically acceptable. It was for that reason that they had to be adapted, not because their commitment to the primary objective of conservation had changed. Above all it is proceedings of the fourth World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas held in 1992 in Caracas (Venezuela), that can be read and interpreted as a 'confession' with regard to the relations between national park authorities and local communities. In it McNeely, again, states that '(t)he relationship between people and land have too often been ignored and even destroyed well-intentioned but insensitive resource conservation and management initiatives. The Congress called for community participation and equality in decision making processes, together with mutual respect among cultures to be achieved urgently'.<sup>120</sup>

114 Adams & McShane 1992: 170-171.

115 Ibid: 172.

116 pp. 213, Hulze, D. & Infield, M. (1999), Community conservation in practice: a case study of Lake Mburo National Park, Uganda, paper presented at the conference *African environments: past and present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford.

117 pp. 4, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) (July 1994), *Whose Eden? An overview of community approaches to wildlife management*, London: IIED.

118 Hulme & Infield 1999: 221.

119 pp. 2, McNeely, J.A. (1984), Introduction: protected areas are adapting to new realities, in: McNeely, J.A. & Miller, K.R., (eds.), *National parks, conservation and development: the role of protected areas in sustaining society*, Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press.

120 pp. 7, McNeely, J.A. (ed.) (1992), *Parks for life. Report of the IVth World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas*, Gland: IUCN.

Nowadays the use of organisational structures of co-operation between wildlife areas, being government-related or private sector, and their neighbouring communities have become a new tool, maybe even hype, in wildlife management around the world, especially in southern Africa since the second half of the eighties continuing to the nineties as a prelude to form the core of wildlife conservation practices for the twenty-first century.<sup>121</sup> This development has not emerged out of a straight love affair between the two, but from a mutually reinforcing combination of strategic and maybe even opportunistic realisation on the part of conservation officials in international conservation bodies like the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) and the Environment Department of the World Bank, that it is a necessary and inescapable route to preserve biodiversity and prevent too much (political) pressure from the surrounding communities on the borders of wildlife areas. In order to preserve and conserve biological diversity, attention must (also) be paid to the socio-economic development of the often poor and growing communities which surround the wildlife areas and form the context and embeddedness of conservation. They often see the natural habitat of the wildlife area as a land of milk and honey in which they are denied access to the advantage of animals. In other words, animals seem to be given priority above people.<sup>122</sup> In order to keep the wildlife area socially and politically acceptable and foremost to relieve it of the pressures on its boundaries and its 'illegal'<sup>123</sup> exploitation by villagers as much as possible, they have to offer the surrounding communities something, often tangible, in exchange for respecting the boundaries, the area and the wildlife. The implicit assumption seems to be that such a mutual beneficial exchange could lead to some kind of a reciprocal win-win situation for both, implying moral obligations of give and take, a process which in turn would nurture mutual trust relations based on mutually recognized and respected identities. They realise that to conserve biological diversity in protected areas they must somehow integrate conservation with socio-economic development pursuing, as so many others, the same integrative approach taken and proposed by the popularly known Brundtland Report, 'Our common future', in 1987.<sup>124</sup> In other words, wildlife manage-

121 Wells et al 1992; Western, D. & Pearl, M.C. (eds.) (1989), *Conservation for the twenty-first century*, New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

122 Interview with the District Administrator of Chiredzi, Zimbabwe, 30 June 1998.

123 I refer here to different forms of 'poaching', for instance for meat, firewood and other natural resources. These activities were once just normal, everyday practices and completely legal in order to sustain a livelihood on their land. It was only made 'illegal' with the advent of taking *their* land and pronouncing certain areas to 'wildlife' or 'protected areas'. I shall come back on the subject of poaching later on in this chapter.

124 *Our common future*, Report of the Brundtland Commission, World Commission on Environment and Development, 27 April 1987. In conservation circles this integrative approach is called ICDPs: Integrated Conservation-Development Projects (ibid: vii). Later this (maybe too) obvious priority accorded to conservation was more or less hidden by the use of a terminology which seems to put communities first instead of the conservation effort, like for example 'Community Based Natural Resource Management' (Rihoy, E (ed.) (1995) *The commons without the tragedy. Strategies for Community Based Natural Resources Management in southern Africa*. Proceedings of the regional Natural Resources Management Programme Annual Conference. SADC Wildlife Coordination Unit, Lilongwe, Malawi; IIED 1994), or 'Neighbour Relations' and 'People-park interaction' (Davion, R., (1995), Reserve-neighbour interaction in Natal Parks Board and Kwa Zulu Department of Nature Conservation. Giant Castle and Kosi Bay studies, Investigational Report 126, Pietermaritzburg: Institute of Natural Resources; Natal Parks Board, not dated, The Natal Parks Board's Official Neighbour Relations Policy (NRP), or 'Community Conservation' (Natal Parks Board (3 June 1997, Draft 6), Community conservation programmes. Towards the development of a new policy and strategic plan).

ment has increasingly turned into people management<sup>125</sup> in which notions of reciprocity, and related concepts of trust and respect for the Other, are considered as crucial in order to be able to conserve wildlife.

The 'call to action' issued at the Fourth World Congress in 1992 in Caracas resulted in many innovative programmes worldwide<sup>126</sup>, in southern Africa in particular. Projects which were already ahead of their ideological time were now able to continue with more financial and ideological backing from international conservation organisations than before.<sup>127</sup> Particular examples of these kinds of newly developed or already established projects in Africa are the well-known CAMPFIRE project in Zimbabwe<sup>128</sup>, the communal conservancies in Namibia<sup>129</sup>, the ADMADE project in Zambia and similar projects in Tanzania.<sup>130</sup> In the CAMPFIRE project especially much attention is paid to the possibilities of organisational structures of co-operation between local communities and private sector businesses in the form of joint ventures between local communities and tour or safari operators.<sup>131</sup> The others are private sector initiatives designed to involve local communities in wildlife utilisation. There is a wealth of literature on CAMPFIRE and subjects associated with it, but far less on similar private sector developments. Therefore the CAMPFIRE section will be more extensive than the one on the private sector.<sup>132</sup> CAMPFIRE is of special interest to my study because conservancies in Zimbabwe tend and like to portray themselves often as a private sector copy, an addition or

complement to the CAMPFIRE programme based on the same principles as CAMPFIRE regarding prioritising the economic development of the poor communal farmers.

### CAMPFIRE in Zimbabwe

CAMPFIRE (Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources) is probably one of the best known examples of involving local communities in wildlife utilisation in Africa. The basic principles of CAMPFIRE are that it is focused on communal lands, which represent 42% of the country of Zimbabwe and it tries to give local communities control over the management and utilisation of natural resources, focusing mostly on wildlife. In practice it means that most communities sell photographic or hunting concessions to tour operators. Some choose to hunt and crop for themselves. The money which is earned in this manner is redistributed through the RDC which is the formal body with the Appropriate Authority to utilise the wildlife. The money can then be used and adds in itself to local economic development. Finally, a principle of hope buoys up the above, namely that local communities will protect the natural resources because they can make money out of them and thus see wildlife as an economic valuable land use option.<sup>133</sup>

Leaving aside ideological and strategic considerations, the legal origins of CAMPFIRE can be traced back to several changes in the legislative context of Zimbabwe after Independence. The first change was the 1982 amendments of the 1975 Parks and Wildlife Act which implied that landowners were given Appropriate Authority or the right to utilise wildlife on their land.<sup>134</sup> This allowed the Ministry of Environment and Tourism to be able to designate District Councils as the Appropriate Authority for the land falling under their jurisdiction, which were the communal areas. The power of these District Councils was given an extra boost in the Communal Land Act of 1982 and the Communal Land Amendment Act of 1985, in which successively the legal authority to allocate land was transferred from the traditional leadership to the District Council and the 1985 Amendment gave the District Councils the authority to levy charges or rates for services or facilities provided by the state. So now the District Council had the power to utilise wildlife on communal lands, which it was able to allocate as it wished and they could levy and charge people. The Natural Resources Act of 1941 provided for the constitution of voluntary conservation committees for areas of land which were designated 'intensive conservation areas' (ICA). Amongst other responsibilities the committee's function was 'to preserve, protect and improve the natural resources in its area'.

125 Richard Leakey of the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), formulates it as follows: 'I don't think it is possible to look at wildlife and habitat conservation in isolation from the issues of people conservation' (pp. 4, *Swara, East African Wildlife Society*, 21: 3, October-December 1998). In describing this turn-around I certainly do not want to suggest that everything is peaceful, quiet and settled now between the two parties. But there is certainly an awareness on the part of park authorities that a different approach towards local communities is needed and intentions and initiatives are being formulated. Many of these initiatives are (still) met with outright suspicion in the local communities because of the historical reputation of wildlife managers for not having an open ear and eye for the basic needs of local communities, or the consequences for them of wildlife management policies and practices in which they had no say at all. Maybe they feel or suspect that wildlife authorities only turn their attention to them because of opportunistic and strategic reasons in order to reach their Ultimate Conservation Goal.

126 See for examples in Asia: Kothari, A., Pathak, N., Anuradha, R.V. & Taneja, B. (eds) (1998), *Communities and conservation: natural resource management in south and central Asia*, New Delhi: UNESCO and Sage Publications; see for examples in South America: Pansters, W. (ed.), (1992), *Amazonia: ecology and sustainable development*, Utrecht: ISOR; for a country specific and highly critical example see Munt, I. & Higinio, E. (1993), *Eco-tourism waves in Belize*, *SPEARreports* 9: 61-72: 'For the foreign eco-missionaries the local appears to extend little beyond pristine isolated communities (...)' (pp. 69).

127 Kemf, E. (ed.) (1993), *The law of the mother. Protecting indigenous people in protected areas*, San Francisco: Sierra Club Books; Bonner 1993.

128 Environmental Consultants (1990), *People, wildlife and natural resources - the CAMPFIRE approach to rural development in Zimbabwe*, Harare: Environmental Consultants (Pvt) Ltd.

129 Jones, B.T.B. (1995), *Wildlife management, utilization and tourism in communal areas: benefits to communities and improved resource management*, Windhoek: Directorate of Environmental Affairs, Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Research Discussion Paper, no. 5.

130 Wells et al. 1992: pp. 25-31, 42-48; MacGreggor, J. (1989), *The paradoxes of wildlife conservation in Africa*, *Africa Insight*, 19 (4): 201-212.

131 Jansen, D.J. (not dated), *What is a joint venture: guidelines for District Councils with Appropriate Authority*, Harare: WWF, Project Paper no. 16, WWF Project No. 3749; Jansen, D.J. (November 1989), *Joint venture options for wildlife utilization in Zimbabwe*, Harare: WWF, Project Paper no. 3, WWF Project No. 3749.

132 It has to be borne in mind that the specific subject of this thesis is a private sector initiative to involve local communities in wildlife utilisation through organisational co-operation. The description of the SVC particularly is one long example of a private sector initiative in this field.

133 'The assumption that local communities' hostility to wildlife - historically and at present - lies principally in their exclusion from its economic benefits underlies much writing on CAMPFIRE', pp. 8-9, Alexander, J. & McGreggor, J. (1999), 'Our sons didn't die for animals'. Attitudes to wildlife and the politics of development: CAMPFIRE in Nkayi and Lupane Districts, Zimbabwe, paper presented at the conference *African environments: past and present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford.

134 In Zimbabwe wildlife has the status of *res nullius*, i.e. owned by no-one. Consequently legislation focuses on granting rights, Appropriate Authority, for wildlife on different categories of land. pp. 7, Martin, R.B. (1994), *The influence of governance on conservation and wildlife utilisation*, paper presented at the Conference *Conservation through sustainable use of wildlife*, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia, 8-11 February.



As this legislation was formulated during the colonial era, it meant in actual practice that only 'alienated land' or white commercial land was designated as ICA. This changed with the amendment to the District Council Act of 1980 in which it was formulated that every District Council had the statutory duty to install a Natural Resources Committee, which would then be responsible for questions related to wildlife utilisation, referring to hunting permits and the like. The final piece of legislation which is relevant to mention as a context for CAMPFIRE is the Rural District Council Act of 1988 in which the rural councils, responsible for commercial farming areas and their service towns, and the district councils, responsible for communal areas, were amalgamated into the powerful Rural District Council (RDC). The RDC was also empowered to function as a Natural Resources Conservation Committee.<sup>135</sup>

CAMPFIRE could build on this legal framework through obtaining Appropriate Authority from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism. But a legal framework alone is never sufficient to get anything off the ground. For that to happen, groundlevel commitment and legal framework must meet and be matched, especially in the case of CAMPFIRE which 'aimed to attract communities in the programme voluntary'.<sup>136</sup> In November 1988, after much trial and error<sup>137</sup>, two district councils, Nyaminyami and Guruve, both in the north of Zimbabwe, in the Zambezi Valley, were granted Appropriate Authority.<sup>138</sup> In its first year of operation Nyaminyami earned a profit of US\$ 30,000, from hunting concessions, cropping operations, and the sale of meat and skins. With additional funding from the Zimbabwe Trust, they earned more than US\$ 125,000 to redistribute among the local communities. Although there was some major arguments, the RDC wanted to use the money for its own development projects, every family received some US\$ 50, which is roughly 25% of their annual income.<sup>139</sup> Between 1989 and 1993 it is said that the CAMPFIRE concept was gradually finding more acceptance in the districts around Zimbabwe and by 1993 there were already seventy wards in twelve districts with Appropriate Authority. In 1998 the number had increased to thirty-five CAMPFIRE Districts.<sup>140</sup> Not only did the CAMPFIRE ideal spread rapidly, the revenues for communities also fulfilled the positive projections (see Figure 4<sup>141</sup>).

135 pp. 12-13, Thomas, S. (1995), *The legacy of dualism in decision-making within CAMPFIRE*, London: International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), Wildlife and Development Series, no. 4. This legal framework is important to bear in mind because, logically, it also plays an important role in my case study about the interaction between the SVC and its surrounding communities.

136 pp. 160, Child, G. (1995), *Wildlife and people: the Zimbabwean success. How the conflict between animals and people became progress for both*, Harare: Wisdom Institute.

137 In actual fact, CAMPFIRE was first tried and applied in Gokwe District, but did not get off the ground because of a lack of continued commitment by the people. See Child 1995: 167.

138 Adams & McShane 1996: 179.

139 Ibid.

140 *Resource Africa*, Official Newsletter of the SADC Natural Resource Management Programme, Vol. 1, no. 5, August 1998, SADC NRMP countries - Zimbabwe.

141 Child 1995: 172. In December 1994 (indicative): 1US\$= 8,3640 Z\$.

Figure 4 Wildlife Income and Expenditure in the twelve main CAMPFIRE Districts 1989-1993 in Z\$

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
<b>Income</b>	628.294	1.742.451	2.871.997	7.166.795	9.741.426
<b>Expenditure</b>	728.604	1.488.501	2.940.232	7.194.883	10.080.036
Councils	279.447	656.100	962.141	2.413.111	2.004.595
CAMPFIRE Management	26.472	182.820	554.626	1.023.006	1.971.543
Communities	422.685	649.581	1.423.465	3.758.765	6.103.898
Projects in communities	378.805	417.898	326.500	167.247	521.562
Income devolved to communities	43.880	231.683	1.096.965	3.591.518	5.582.336
<b>% Allocation</b>					
Councils	44%	38%	34%	34%	21%
CAMPFIRE Management	4%	10%	19%	14%	20%
Communities	67%	37%	50%	52%	63%
<b>TOTAL %</b>	116%	85%	102%	100%	103%
Projects in communities	60%	24%	11%	2%	5%
Income devolved to communities	7%	13%	38%	50%	57%

It should be added that in the main text accompanying this table in the book it is stated that '(t)hese data would have been even more impressive but for two districts that have been slow to conform with the national trend'.<sup>142</sup> In 1998 it was stated that about 90% of the revenues came from sport hunting, which between 1989 and 1995 totalled US\$ 7,098,241.<sup>143</sup>

The fact that CAMPFIRE is so well-known certainly has something to do with their worldwide marketing of the concept.<sup>144</sup> When a group of black and white advocates of the concept of community-based conservation related to development in Africa from southern Africa visited the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands in May 1997 at, they began by offering all participants a glossy CAMPFIRE folder. It contained papers and fact sheets with a professionally edited, written presentation of the programme. The

142 Ibid.

143 *Resource Africa*, Official Newsletter of the SADC Natural Resource Management Programme, Vol. 1, no. 5, August 1998, SADC NRMP countries - Zimbabwe.

144 In its own newspaper an article by the chairman of the Zambezi Society of Zimbabwe formulated it as follows that CAMPFIRE 'has become a public relations vehicle for Zimbabwe. It has been blown up, trumpeted, paraded and swollen (...) Pitman, D. (1996), CITES, CAMPFIRE, and the media demons, *CAMPFIRE News*, 3, August.

folder itself was beautifully decorated with African motifs, executed in a classy shade of purple. The folder itself was coated in such a way that it could be touched without sullying it with any fingerprints (which is one of the more expensive coatings as insiders of the printing business will know). Inside were several brochure-type documents. The inside of the cover is used for introducing CAMPFIRE in text between African motifs in general. It says among other things, that '(f)rom the air, the most striking sight [of Africa HW] is the land itself. (...) Curiously, however, the land fades into the background when people think about Africa. Conservationists worry about the animals, rural development specialists worry about the people, politicians worry about empowerment and democracy. No one, until now, focused on the land, literally common ground for both humans and animals (...) In rural Africa, conservation, development, and political empowerment are inseparable. CAMPFIRE recognises that (...)'. The key to that 'recognition' seems to be formulated on the first 'fact sheet' presented in the folder after a brochure in the same glossy paper which is artistically printed on A4, diagonally cut over half its length, leaving the title of that first fact sheet clearly visible: 'Hunting: Funding Rural Development & Wildlife Conservation in CAMPFIRE'. No doubt, hunting is a crucial and, as can be understood from my earlier text, at the same time most controversial part of the CAMPFIRE programme. Controversial because of the theme itself. Hunting has a bad reputation, despite its financial advantages, or maybe even because of its money-making overtones and association with only rich (and mostly white) capitalists. But perhaps also symbolically, ironically and paradoxically because what disadvantaged and excluded black people and separated black and white in its colonial origin is now presented as the panacea for that same black peoples' development, at the same time saving the white men's hunting grounds. The exchange on which the programme is based is also made unequivocal right from the start on the back of that same glossy folder and reiterated when going through a much-used introduction to CAMPFIRE decorated with its fitting logo of a campfire, three logs burning<sup>145</sup>, where the views of several local people are quoted about the programme on the back. The first two quotations are indicative of the reciprocal repayment CAMPFIRE expects of its participants. Onias Mpofo from Nyenyunga Village is quoted as saying 'CAMPFIRE is a good program, and illegal hunting has gone down in our district'. The second quote is taken from Champion Machaya, chairman of the Dete Wildlife Committee, who is reported to have said that '(l)ocal poaching is a menace. We have people from other areas coming in and taking our animals. But our people have stopped poaching'. What they propose is a completely financial exchange which assumes that people base their actions solely on economic considerations and calculations. Man as *homo economicus*.

Another powerful aspect of CAMPFIRE's international marketing is their Collaborative Group, which is a network of institutions and organisations which spread and proliferates the message of CAMPFIRE from different but complementary angles. This Collaborative Group consists of two government departments: DNPWLM as the

145 Africa Resources Trust & CAMPFIRE Association (1996), *Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE. Empowering rural communities for conservation and development*, Harare: Africa Resources Trust. The three logs symbolically represent the three concepts which CAMPFIRE tries to combine, being conservation, development and local empowerment.

department responsible for Zimbabwe's wildlife and for supplying technical advice to the RDCs. The second is the Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development, which functions as an administrative body for the RDCs. For the worldwide distribution of CAMPFIRE's intentions and goals other members of the Collaborative Group, like the WWF and Africa Resources Trust (ART), are probably more important. Finally, the programme is given scientific legitimacy, as the Centre for Applied Social Sciences (CASS) from the University of Zimbabwe is involved in socio-economic research and the monitoring and evaluation of CAMPFIRE communities.<sup>146</sup> Through this network and the networks in which they themselves operate again, CAMPFIRE is widely known, and generally appreciated as a progressive initiative to involve communities in wildlife management and to combine and integrate conservation with economic development, in line with the joint call to action from the Third and Fourth World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas, in 1982 and 1992.

This certainly does not mean that the programme has gone undisputed. Especially '(t)he distribution of communal wildlife revenues has been a hotly disputed issue, throughout the CAMPFIRE programme'.<sup>147</sup> Because the RDC is the actual actor because it has the Appropriate Authority, it is also the institution which redistributes the revenues and funds of the programme and that is a difficult task in terms of priorities, especially because money is a (very) scarce resource in this context. In March 1998 a fairly devastating critical report was published by Heena Patel for the Indigenous Environmental Policy Center, 'a small, non-profit organization focusing environmental and natural resource policy issues that critically impact the lives of indigenous people'.<sup>148</sup> The report presents a rather radical and one-sided<sup>149</sup>, but well-documented, perspective of the local communities involved.<sup>150</sup> The perspective of the latter on CAMPFIRE can probably also be applied as a rough guide to their ideas about and attitude towards the wildlife business in general, including the establishment and economic exploitation of private wildlife conservancies. So the developments in the CAMPFIRE programme and their evaluations are worth noting because they represent an initiative which is not only within the sphere of wildlife utilisation, but which is also explicitly aimed at benefiting the local communities in conjunction and co-operation with the private sector. It is not for nothing that private wildlife conservancies often try to present their initiatives as additional to or even as complementing the CAMPFIRE initiative<sup>151</sup>

146 Ibid: 7.

147 pp. 13, Bird, C. & Metcalfe, S. (1995), *Two views from CAMPFIRE in Zimbabwe's Hurungwe District. Training and motivation. Who benefits and who doesn't?* London: IIED, Wildlife and Development Series, no. 5; see also pp. 8, Madzudzo, E. (1999), *Community based natural resource management in Zimbabwe. Opportunities and constraints*, paper presented at the conference *African environments: past and present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford.

148 Back cover, Patel, H. (March 1998), *Sustainable utilization and African wildlife policy. The case of Zimbabwe's Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE). Rhetoric or reality?*, Cambridge (USA): Indigenous Environmental Policy Center.

149 In order to live up to its name and mission and represent the perspective of the indigenous people.

150 The report did not pass unnoticed in the Zimbabwe media, *The Herald*, 21 May 1998, 'CAMPFIRE under attack from Western sceptics', in which it said that a report was released 'alleging that CAMPFIRE was merely using the 'for sustainable development' rhetoric, and was in fact not benefitting grass roots people'.

151 See for instance DNPWLM Workshop, 4 September 1997, *Zimbabwe National CAMPFIRE and Conservancies Management Policy Review*.

because at the national level it is politically accepted, although not undisputed, by DNPWLM and internationally popular in the Western donor community.<sup>152</sup> In other words, if conservancies manage to create an image by which they would be seen by the government as private sector variety of or substantially contributing to the (success of the) CAMPFIRE programme, then this would give an enormous political legitimisation to conservancies and maybe more local level forbearance of their activities. For that reason I shall draw quite extensively on this report on CAMPFIRE.

According to the report 'the most serious finding was the presence of forcible evictions and coerced resettlement of rural communities to make room for the CAMPFIRE program'.<sup>153</sup> This was done in order to create more space for wildlife (restocking), thereby expanding possibilities of trophy hunting. In 1980, some 12% of Zimbabwe was a formally protected area, devoted to wildlife. In 1997, this percentage has risen to 33% of the total land of Zimbabwe, an increase which can only be attributed to the increase of wildlife utilisation and informal conservation on communal and commercial land<sup>154</sup>, because there have been no additional areas declared formally protected areas during that time. As a result, but also in a more general sense, the report formulates that the local people do not really feel involved in the programme and for that reason do not participate in it to a large extent. They actually feel that the whole programme is aimed at conserving biological diversity and, in order to achieve that goal, the official institutions apply a strategy of 'reducing local hostility and this is achieved through revenue generating schemes as an alternative source of income to compensate communities for loss of access to wildlife resources'.<sup>155</sup> The notion of compensation also implies that they do not feel in charge of the operation, but that they are just 'beneficiaries of a council operation'.<sup>156</sup> In other words, this is the same critique that Olthof formulated earlier in 1995 when he stated that 'the link between CAMPFIRE benefits and involvement in resource management is very indirect. Many decisions on wildlife utilization, hunting contracts, disbursements of funds, etc. are taken by the District Council or the District Wildlife Committee. To many people these institutions are remote and regarded with skepticism'.<sup>157</sup> And this is put even more strongly by some villagers, going far beyond the bounds of mere compensation. Some say that when they did receive compensation, this

152 One example of its political acceptance is the fact that the politically important Land Tenure Commission, which was sworn in by President Mugabe in November 1993 and which was to inquire into appropriate agricultural land-tenure systems in Zimbabwe, reported that '(t)he Commission concluded that the CAMPFIRE Programme is a qualified success and demonstrates probably the most important recommendation of the Commission'. In pp. 3, *CAMPFIRE News*, no. 11, 11 December 1995. If it is politically accepted it is easier for the international donorworld to sponsor the project, which it did, especially USAID.

153 Patel 1998: 13.

154 *Ibid.*: 14.

155 *Ibid.*: 18.

156 *Ibid.*: 21.

157 pp. 125, Olthof, W. (1995), Wildlife resources and local development: experiences from Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE programme, in: Van den Breemer, J.P.M., Drijver, C.A. & Venema, L.B. (eds.) (1995), *Local resource management in Africa*, Chichester: John Wiley & Sons Ltd. Recognising this threat to the further development of CAMPFIRE, some promoters of the programme are now pressing for an even greater decentralisation of the appropriate authority status to the ward and/or village level (pp. 266, McIntvor, C. (1997), Management of wildlife, tourism and local communities in Zimbabwe, in: Ghimire, K.B. & Pimbert, M.P. (eds.) (1997), *Social change and conservation. Environmental politics and impacts of National Parks and protected areas*, London: Earthscan Publications.

never amounted to the loss of crops or family members. 'They felt that the money given is not for actual compensation but simply to 'apologize' to the affected person'.<sup>158</sup> Furthermore it is the observation of many villagers, that the wildlife sector, despite what seems to be achieved with CAMPFIRE, is still white-dominated<sup>159</sup>, which they perceive as a key barrier to their participation in the sense that they are not able to control it. On the basis of this observation they conclude that the wildlife enterprise is (still) 'a distant 'white' force'<sup>160</sup>, in which the safari operator and his clients yield the ultimate power. This brings Patel to the (almost bitter, and certainly ironic) conclusion that the large sums of money with which USAID sponsored CAMPFIRE in order to empower local communities and the local poor, has in effect 'bolstered the economic and political power of minority whites in Zimbabwe'.<sup>161</sup>

The DNPWLM is responsible for the wildlife management component of CAMPFIRE and has always been a very enthusiastic supporter of the forms of public - private co-operation being achieved under the umbrella of CAMPFIRE, for instance between RDCs and private safari operators. CAMPFIRE and its wholehearted support by the DNPWLM was one of the main catalysts which stimulated the private sector to invest in wildlife and many white farmers turned their land into private game parks and conservancies as a result. They hoped and reckoned on that they could also work together with the DNPWLM in their wildlife enterprise. But in 1995 the Director and his deputy, who had set the tone for the enthusiasm for wildlife utilisation, were suspended after allegations they were illegally selling 206 elephants to South Africa and depositing the money on their own Swiss bank accounts. Wildlife utilisation was tarnished by association with illegal activities. As a result the Minister of Environment and Tourism decided to place a 'temporary' ban on all translocation of animals<sup>162</sup> from public to private property. In the wake of the scandal, government enthusiasm for CAMPFIRE in general weaned and for the (white dominated) private sector involvement in wildlife utilisation in particular. The ban which was imposed in 1995 is still on. It was introduced just after the SVC had erected its buffalo fence in order to prepare its area for the restocking of the conservancy with trophy animals, especially the buffalo. That was what they had agreed to do with the (former) top of the DNPWLM. But, just when they had finished their part of the deal, 345 km of buffalo fence<sup>163</sup>, and expected the DNPWLM to live up to its part of the deal, the leadership changed. The new leadership stated that the SVC had only a personal and informal agreement with the former leadership and that the new leadership did not feel obliged to honour this. Disgruntled the SVC had invested heavily in the fence and then had to face up to the fact that it could not translocate a single trophy animal. The general situation led to many angry reactions from the sector. One of them, expressed in a letter to the Zimbabwe Independent, wrote: '(...) [DNPWLM] (a)llowing buffalo and other animals to die from starvation on the Matusadona lake shore in the

158 Patel: 1998: 29.

159 *Ibid.*: 39.

160 *Ibid.*: 22.

161 *Ibid.*: 41.

162 *Ibid.*: 38.

163 Z\$ 4.2 million (interview with Conservator SVC, 23 April 1998). I shall come back to this fence issue extensively in chapter 5.

1995 drought rather than sell them to private landowners (SVC bid for them). Thereafter they have continued a policy of frustrating all sales and movement of game in order to paralyse the development of the private land tourism industry'.<sup>164</sup> Every move the SVC made was regarded with suspicion by the new leadership of the DNPWLM, because it had worked very closely with the suspended Director and Deputy when the latter were still in office. In co-operation with the DNPWLM, for instance, the SVC translocated some 500 elephants from Gonarezhou National Park to the SVC during the 1991/1992 drought for Z\$ 1000.- per animal.<sup>165</sup> The rupture in the relations with the DNPWLM put the economic prospects for the SVC in jeopardy. Commercial sport hunting, which forms the economic heart of CAMPFIRE, as well as private wildlife conservancies came under pressure from reports on alleged abuses. In an interview the Chairman of the Wildlife Producers Association (WPA) in Zimbabwe, Mr. Oosthuizen, is quoted as having said that 'there had been politically, mistrust and suspicion of the wildlife industry resulting in the suspension of top Parks personnel, centralisation of all permits and the assasination of wildlife exports'.<sup>166</sup> CAMPFIRE through its own association, and the private sector, represented through the WPA, joined their voices in their criticism of the DNPWLM. They both stated that too much power was given to the Department, mainly in relation to the control of the hunting industry.<sup>167</sup>

Two final aspects of developments within the CAMPFIRE programme or related to CAMPFIRE are of interest because they have similar effects on the private sector initiatives in the field of wildlife utilisation. The first which should be mentioned in this context is the wish of many safari operators to fence hunting areas to keep wildlife out of areas with human habitation. Secondly it is important to note the role Zimbabwe, and other southern African nations, played at the CITES conference in Harare in 1997, in propagating a cautious lifting of the ban on the ivory trade. Let me begin with the first point.<sup>168</sup> Hunting in communal lands is not without danger, because people live there together with wildlife and a sport hunter has to be careful not to hit a human in any attempt to shoot an animal. Highly conscious of the problem, safari operators are keen to erect electric fences around certain hunting blocks within which their clients can hunt freely and safely without having to worry about human habitation. Operators also put forward the argument that fences prevent animals from damaging property and crops and humans themselves outside the hunting area. That is a relevant point to both the villagers and the operator, because animals which destroy human property or crops, or menace the people themselves, are labelled 'problem animals' and the operator must shoot them at the request of the villagers. But if there are many problem animals which he has to shoot, then fewer animals remain to be sold as trophy animals. So operators are loathe to shoot too many 'problem animals'. Feeling threatened, villagers develop a

fierce desire to see animals eliminated when they destroy their livelihood.<sup>169</sup> So there seem to be good reasons for fences in communal CAMPFIRE areas. The operator and the CAMPFIRE representative in this particular example, in the Zambezi Valley in the north of Zimbabwe, went to the village and proposed the idea of an electric fence. But there were many objections raised by the villagers, most of them fed by suspicion and distrust of the operators' intentions. 'They pointed out that the (s)afari operator wanted to create a private farm out of their land, and within their midst. (...) Villagers argued that the (s)afari operator wanted to prevent people from accessing these resources (and) (t)hey saw in the proposal an attempt to reintroduce white colonialism. There was the feeling that the 'white man' wanted to deprive the villagers of their land and eventually make them his servants working for him'.<sup>170</sup> The operator tried to soothe these age-old feelings of resentment and suspicions by assuring them that it would be a village project and that they themselves could decide on the exact location of the fence and of a new waterhole, which would never be final, depending on the agricultural needs of the community. So the village decided upon a boundary, but according to the operator, this excluded some of his best hunting spots and if he were to accept their boundary it would mean that they would earn less than could be made if those hunting spots were included in the fence. And he erected the fence on another location of his own choice without their approval and made clear that nothing and no one was allowed to pass the fence without his knowledge. In the process he shot one of their dogs on the assumption that it was a hunting dog. After that incident the people began to say openly that the operator 'proved to be a man who should not be trusted'<sup>171</sup> and that he was 'creating his own farm, his own 'national park' in which even dogs would not be allowed to pass'.<sup>172</sup> But the operator carried on and the people started to link his behaviour to CAMPFIRE and said openly that they no longer wanted to have anything to do with CAMPFIRE and their protest was symbolically expressed by mysteriously disappearing or uprooted (fence) poles. The operator played it along official lines and reported the disturbance to the RDC and the police who sent a small team to the villagers to tell them that they had to stop. At least that was the intention but they had no time to do so because they were beaten up before they could even start talking. By the end of that same month the local people had stormed the operator's temporary camp and burned it to the ground, after which the operator dropped the project altogether. The villagers were convinced that their objections, which they had expressed in the first place about the white man had come true and that 'They' could never be trusted. It is interesting to note that in this case the general perception of fences in the local community is one in which the fence is seen as a symbol of former white domination and separation. The fence is also linked to former practices of nature conservation in national parks, where the creation of such areas always meant exclusion through boundaries, often marked by fences. So firstly, fences

164 *Zimbabwe Independent*, 24 January 1997, Letters to the Editor, National Parks resumé.

165 pp. 15, Puterill, G. (1993), Elephant translocation - Gonarezhou, in: *The Hartbeest*. The Magazine of the Lowveld Natural History Branch of the Wildlife Society of Zimbabwe, 25th edition.

166 *Zimbabwe Independent*, 25 July 1997, Producers clash with Parks over procedures.

167 *The Standard*, 12-18 April, 1998, Shaky period for tourism.

168 Entirely based on Dzingirai, V. (July 1995), 'Take back your CAMPFIRE'. A study of local level perceptions to electric fencing in the framework of Binga's CAMPFIRE programme, CASS Occasional Paper, Harare: CASS.

169 See for in extensive and recent study of this problem related to elephants in Cameroon, Tchamba, M.N. (1996), *Elephants and their interactions with people and vegetation in the Waza-Logone region, Cameroon*, Ph.D. Thesis, Wageningen Agricultural University. An extra motivation for their fierceness might be that they are allowed to keep and distribute the meat of the problem animal.

170 Dzingirai 1995: 4.

171 Ibid: 6.

172 Ibid: 7.

are a hated symbol of white domination and for that reason will always cause utter resentment among local black communities, no matter how functional, useful or necessary they are for safety and conservation reasons. Secondly, fences and hunting seem to go together, which aggravates the first point. This has a detrimental effect on the development of trust between the private sector dominated by whites and the black communities, which in turn prevents the development of an exchange relation based on reciprocal rights and obligations. The end result will be a greater separation of identities on either side of the fence, shared up by concomitant stereotypes and prejudices. Although this is a single case it seems to fit into a broader picture of attitudes of black people towards practices of white conservationists.<sup>173</sup>

The second aspect is the operations of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) which are of particular relevance to the debate on wildlife utilisation in general and hunting in particular. CITES' decision can be seen as a reflection of world opinion and the global image of conservation. It is dominated by Western perspectives because these can generate the money to work with a large body of highly motivated pressure groups in order to influence decision making. It is also a rather elitist institution with very little attention for the consequences of their decisions at a local level as we shall see from the example on the ban on ivory. No other animal has so dominated the debate and has become the symbol of the clash between utilisation and preservation<sup>174</sup> than the African elephant and the ban on the ivory trade in 1989 and its partial lifting again in 1997. Proponents of CAMPFIRE and other wildlife utilisation programmes are not much in favour of the way CITES operates. One of their icons, Marshall Murphree<sup>175</sup>, formulates it as follows: 'Free trade is propounded by the developed world as an engine for economic productivity. But when it comes to trade in commodities where Africa enjoys a comparative advantage, such as wildlife, the same proponents become highly restrictive. The operations of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species [CITES] reflect this anomaly.'<sup>176</sup> This is not to say that nothing had to be done about the African elephant. There were certainly reasons to taking action and deciding about how to prevent the ongoing trade in ivory as the elephant population was being decimated by poaching, especially in East Africa. In only ten years, their numbers dropped from 1.3 million in 1979, to 625,000 in 1989. In 1950 200 metric tons of ivory left Africa each year, in the eighties this had risen to some 900 metric tons, no longer made up of large tusks, because these were already gone. So a larger

number of elephants had to be shot to keep the same amount of ivory.<sup>177</sup> Much of the increase in the demand for ivory came from Japan, which enjoyed its golden economic years in the eighties, a prosperity, amongst many other things, translated in a high demand for ivory.<sup>178</sup>

The discussion on the ivory ban concentrated on two appendices of CITES, which are basically two lists of endangered species, with Appendix I listing the flora and fauna facing the greatest threat of extinction. The countries which are parties to the CITES convention, which came into effect in 1975, agree that they ban all commercial trade in anything that is put on the list under Appendix I.<sup>179</sup> Appendix II allows for limited and controlled trade. Before 1989, the African elephant was placed in Appendix II, but with its decline in numbers in the eighties, they were considering putting it in Appendix I at the 1989 CITES Conference. Not all of them, but in particular the East, West and Central African elephant populations, as they were the ones whose numbers dropped at an alarming rate. There was no reason though to curtail the trade in ivory from southern Africa, especially South Africa and Zimbabwe, because they seemed to be able to manage their population very well. At the turn of the nineteenth century Zimbabwe had less than 2000 elephants. Nowadays they have more than 50,000. Why curtail the trade then? But Western conservationists were only able to see Africa in one package deal, without regional differences, probably because of the massive public support for a total trade ban, which made it not easy to differentiate.<sup>180</sup> Public opinion is usually starkly measured either in favour or against, but with nothing in between. Many readers will maybe have vivid recollections of how President Daniel arap Moi of Kenya, professionally orchestrated with much decorum and ceremony, set fire to a huge pile of tusks, worth approximately US\$ 3 million, to make a dramatic and symbolic appeal to the world, despite his country's own track record, to sacrifice the monetary value of ivory in support of the ideological convictions of conservation.<sup>181</sup> At the 1989 CITES meeting in Lausanne, Switzerland, the ivory ban was effectuated.

The decision taken at that CITES meeting was unfavourable to the CAMPFIRE programme, although trophy hunting of elephants was still allowed, albeit under severe restrictions and control. The ivory, for instance, that comes from the shooting of problem animals and trophies is 'frozen' by CITES 1989. This means that countries in southern Africa where elephants are still present in sufficiently large numbers are stockpiling ivory. In 1996 in Zimbabwe it was estimated that around US\$ 4 million worth of

173 Madzudzo (1999: 3) makes the point in general that '(s)afari operators dislike the presence of humans and domestic animals. They dislike the negative effects this has on their imagination of a serene jungle life they would like to instill in their clients. Cattle with bells and herders' dogs allegedly drive the wildlife away. Women who when collecting thatching grass stay in overnight camps with fire, noise and dogs. These activities make it difficult for locals and safari operators to jointly use the resource base'.

174 pp. 12-13, Sugg, I.C. & Kreuter, U.P. (1994), *Elephants and ivory: lessons from the trade ban*, London: Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) Environmental Unit.

175 Adams & McShane 1996: 175-176. Elsewhere he is called 'the gentle giant of CBNRM' (Community Based Natural Resource Management) and where it is said that this anthropologist by training is 'a gentleman to the core and a giant of intellect', pp. 7, *Resource Africa*, 1 (2), January 1997.

176 pp. 4, Murphree, M. (1995), *The lesson from Mahenye: rural poverty, democracy and wildlife conservation*, London: International Institute for Environment and Development, Wildlife and Development Series, no. 1.

177 Adams & McShane 1996: 63, see also Sugg & Kreuter 1994: 14-17.

178 Ibid: 62.

179 In 1975 the rhino horn trade was banned for similar reasons, but that did not halt the decline, which brings some to the conclusion that '(t)he continuing demise of Africa's black rhino shows that trade bans do not always work' (Sugg & Kreuter 1994: 15). But this example was not taken into account in the ivory debate. As we shall see in Chapter 5 in which I analyse the genesis of the SVC, the translocation of black rhino from Zimbabwe's Zambezi Valley to large-scale commercial farmers in the Lowveld to prevent them being poached, marked, amongst other things, the beginning of the SVC.

180 Even the specialists, gathered in the Ivory Trade Review Group, who released their critical report five months before the CITES meeting, did not explicitly endorse the idea of a complete trade ban (Adams & McShane 1996: 63).

181 It is said that Kenya hired an expensive Washington D.C.-based public relations firm, Black, Manafort & Stone, to organise the event. They did their job perfectly, because journalists from all over the world attended the ceremony and spread the gospel afterwards (Bonner 1993: 150).

ivory was 'in stock', of which 'half belongs to rural communities'.<sup>182</sup> But CAMPFIRE feared even more the possibility that the next CITES meeting, in 1997, hosted by Zimbabwe, would decide to put a complete ban on elephant trophies as well, especially the United States of America where many hunting clients come from.<sup>183</sup> There are CAMPFIRE districts, like Bulilimamangwe and Muzarabani, which are solely dependent on the sale of elephant hunts. For all the districts taken together the sport hunting of elephant contributed some 64% of the total income. But many animal rights groups were heading in the direction of a elephant trophy ban and were mobilising support, and CAMPFIRE officials knew from the previous CITES meetings how effective such a campaign could be and how few nuances could be added to that discussion. But this time, much to the relief of CAMPFIRE officials, the co-operating and lobbying countries of southern Africa succeeded and got the elephant downlisted from Appendix I to II. Zimbabwe would be allowed to sell (some) ivory to Japan in 1999, 'provided strict controls are provided'.<sup>184</sup> President Robert Mugabe mentioned this favourable outcome of the CITES meeting in his State of the Nation Address in 1997: 'Special mention must be made of the CITES Conference which was indeed a milestone for Zimbabwe. In that conference we succeeded in having the African elephant downlisted from Appendix I to II. This development will enable the country to benefit from utilising products of its natural resources, in particular proceeds from ivory exports. The decision by the CITES Conference was not only a diplomatic triumph for our country but was also an international endorsement of our national conservation policies'.<sup>185</sup> This battle was won, but the war rages on.<sup>186</sup> To get wildlife utilisation politically accepted at the international and national level is a relentless struggle, invariably accompanied by the debate on one of its most outspoken and stereotyped components, hunting. This holds true for state-controlled conservation programmes related to hunting, but maybe even more for private sector initiatives in this field, which have to work without the automatic power and political legitimacy of any state authority. It is important to note in this context that a study on the participatory approach in relation to protected areas came to the conclusion that '(l)ocal participation depends strongly on government. Governments should provide the legal framework which enables people to have an effective voice in decisions that effect them, and ensure people secure access to resources and property rights'.<sup>187</sup> In other words, a strong government legitimisation is necessary to get local communities involved.

182 pp. 7, Hutton, J. (1996), CITES freezes southern assets, *Resource Africa*, 1, September.

183 Maveneke, T. (1996). The sustainable use of elephants and its importance to CAMPFIRE, *CAMPFIRE News*, 12, April. Also the rest of the text in this section is based on this article of the deceased Executive Director of the CAMPFIRE Association. He died in a car accident in August 1998 (Obituary. Farewell Maveneke, *Resource Africa*, 1 (6), June 1999).

184 *Zimbabwe Independent*, 7 November 1997, Elephant poaching in parks on the increase. Animal welfare groups were the first to present figures which were said to show that elephant poaching was again on the increase as a result of this removal of the African elephant from Appendix I to II. Mr. Barritt of the International Fund for Animal Welfare is reported to have said that '(i)t is crystalclear that the proposed resumption of ivory trading has resulted in an increase in poaching, ever now more than a year before the trade is due to begin again'.

185 *The Herald*, 10 December 1997, President's State of the Nation address.

186 The next CITES-meeting is in 2000 in Nairobi.

187 pp. 5, Kamstra, J. (1994), *Protected areas: towards a participatory approach*, Amsterdam: Netherlands Committee for IUCN.

Although the private sector lacks this direct government backing, it also tries to involve local communities in wildlife utilisation and conservation.

#### *Private sector initiatives to involve local communities in wildlife utilisation in Kenya and South Africa*

Robin Hurt is probably one of the best known professional hunters in East Africa today. He started his career as a hunter when he was only sixteen. His father, Lt.-Colonel Roger Hurt served with the King's African Rifles in North Africa, and after that became a game warden near the Kenyan coast. Robin followed his father as much as he could on his long trips through the African bush and took a keen interest in hunting light antelopes on their farm in the Rift Valley when he was ten. He was also inspired by the books of famous hunters who had roamed Africa earlier. At sixteen his official career as a hunter commenced when he was asked by a neighbouring farmer to eliminate some buffalo who were damaging his coffee plantation. After that he continued to gain more experience in doing all kinds of hunting jobs. In 1962 he was hired as a trainee hunter by the firm Ker, Downey & Selby where in the first year he learned mainly about the logistical and organisational aspects of the safari industry. Only the next year was he allowed to actually hunt in Tanzania. He has never stopped hunting since, despite hunting bans, civil wars and changing government policies in that part of Africa.<sup>188</sup> He has become 'a big one' in his trade. He holds eight hunting blocks in Tanzania, and employs fourteen professional hunters. Most hunting operators have between four to ten hunting blocks. When Tanzania reinstated hunting in 1984, after a ban for eleven years, Hurt also returned to his hunting block in the Msaswa Game Reserve and found an unprecedented level of poaching employing a method called, 'long line cable snaring'.<sup>189</sup> A snare is a piece of wire, the thickness depending on the kind of animal you want to catch, which is twisted into a loop with a slip knot. When ready the snares are laid on game trails along which the wildlife regularly passes, often on its way to a water hole. Hurt found one which extended for two miles and which had twenty lion skulls in it.<sup>190</sup> These lines are known for their indiscriminate killing of animals, of which around 90% is wasted. The other side of the coin is that this 'poaching' is the only way to be able to create a living. It is 'poaching for the pot', because there is no other source of income readily available. Seen from the villagers perspective it is the (only) logical thing to do to survive physically under the circumstances and for that reason can hardly be labelled 'illegal'. But, according to the law, it is illegal and in terms of conservation and in the hunting business it is unacceptable because if the wildlife population is declining, which is a negative development from a conservation perspective, the smaller the absolute quota of trophy animals become, which is to the detriment of the professional

188 Bull 1988: 346-350.

189 pp. 215, Benden, S. (1997), Community-based wildlife conservation in Tanzania; the Cullman Wildlife Project: objectives and local constraints, in: Venema, B. & Van den Breemer, H. (eds), (1999), *Towards negotiated co-management of natural resources in Africa*, Münster, Hamburg, London: Lit Verlag.

190 Bonner 1993: 235. The rest of this section is based on Benden 1997 and Bonner 1993: 235-239; 245-250.

hunter. Aware of all the ins and outs Hurt decided that something had to be done about this state of affairs. He began by launching his own informal anti-poaching programme by picking up snares and destroying poachers' camps. His people picked between five hundred and a thousand snares per hunting season. Poaching dropped, but not significantly. Realistically, it would be an impossible task to fight poaching like this every season. He started with another, more community-oriented approach in which he paid surrounding villagers for bringing in snares and poachers, in other words a reward programme. The programme started in 1990 in the Maswa-Makao area. By then the major conservation organisations like the African Wildlife Federation (AWF) and the WWF were not interested in funding Hurt's programme because they considered it not institutionalised enough. The first person to undertake to sponsor the project was a fellow big-game hunter from the private sector, who was also a stern conservationist, Joseph Cullman III, a retired chairman of Philip Morris. Hurt met him when he was invited at a dinner party at Bartle Bull's place, (yes, the writer of that beautiful book on safaris) in New York. He was interested in Hurt's project and prepared to put US\$ 10,000 into it and to look for more money.<sup>191</sup> This came from other wealthy American businessmen, who also happened to be Hurt's hunting clients, like Herbert Allen, an investment banker, and Lyn Foster, a financial analyst and institutional broker, who also donated US\$ 10,000 each. At a fundraising dinner party which was organised later, another US\$ 80,000 of private money came up. Hurt decided that, in order to sustain the project, hunting clients would be asked to pay an additional fee on top of their game fees to support the benefit scheme. This started in 1993 on a voluntary base and has now become mandatory. With this money Hurt has been able to launch and continue his operation.

Hurt went into the village and put forward his proposal in which he invited villagers to work for him in an anti-poaching unit to the people. The rangers were paid 500 Tanzanian shillings a day which is a lot of money if compared with a government ranger's salary of 2500 a month. Over and above this they could earn extra money for the results of their patrols be these snares, poachers or anything else related to such practices. Alongside this core business, the scheme also finances a cropping programme in which animals are culled according to quota and are brought to the villages where the meat is distributed and the additional wildlife products like the skins, for instance, are sold, often to hunting clients of Hurt, who also often happened to be interested in buying other recovered poaching material. A zebra skin, for instance, is sold for US\$ 300-500. According to Bonner, the project was an immediate success in terms of the snares which were brought in, poachers caught and poacher camps destroyed. In the first six months there were seven poachers' camps discovered and destroyed, five of them within the borders of Serengeti National Park, 2000 snares brought in and sixty-eight poachers were caught and convicted.<sup>192</sup> Despite its numerical success, it seems to

191 This is the reason why this project goes under the name of Cullman Wildlife Project.

192 This last aspect of the success seems doubtful to me because for convictions you need the willing co-operation of the police and district authorities, which is not always given. Especially not if '(t)he staff regularly encounters district officials on illegal hunting operations when they are conducting anti-hunting patrols. Hence, there is the danger of catching or killing a 'government poacher' in which case the team member might be in trouble. As a response, the project-co-ordinators stimulate anti-poaching team members to focus on snare patrols instead of catching poachers', Benden 1997: 15.

arouse similar complaints at the village level as in the CAMPFIRE programme with which it shares the basic principles, largely to do with the redistribution of incoming money from the project, which is said to be mismanaged and mis-used to individual's advantages only. Despite these problems villages nearby are said to be anxious to participate in a similar scheme and have invited Hurt to include them in his project. When Hurt responded to one of these invitations in Saka Saka, a village on the northern edge of Waswa, some 400 people came up to listen to his exchange offer. Reassured by his trustworthy reputation based on the pilot they were willing to start this reciprocal relation.

At the third annual meeting of the Safari Club International African Advisory Board in Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe in November 1998 it was decided that, 'community development in African rural areas linked to wildlife [is] accepted as a concept'.<sup>193</sup> In 1999, their periodical, 'Safari Times Africa', devoted a fair number of articles to the subject, in which their commitment to community involvement is unequivocally proclaimed. In the January 1999 issue the President of the Bowhunters Chapter of SCI Africa states that '(n)ow is the time to join hands with rural communities' (...) SCI must as far as humanly possible participate in the process to help ensure that such projects [i.e. to help the rural people to develop their land as hunting and tourism destinations] are not only community benefit programmes in name, but programmes that truly benefit communities as a whole and that they are not exploited by ruthless opportunists. That is the only way to build trust and reciprocally beneficial long-term relationships with these communities'.<sup>194</sup> In February 1999 there was an extensive article on community benefits in Zambia, by a concession holder from a safari operator in South Africa. In the article he makes the reciprocal nature of their relation with the community quite clear: if the community takes care of the wildlife and does not poach, they will receive benefits in return. 'We stressed: No game, no money, no jobs, no doctor, no development'.<sup>195</sup> In the April issue of the magazine a full-page story is printed on community-based resource management in Botswana, entitled: 'Community-based resource management

193 DeGeorges, A. (March 1999), Advisory Board met at Vic Falls, *Safari Times Africa*.

194 Meyer, H. (January 1999), Now is the time to join hands with rural communities, *Safari Times Africa*. In the February 1999 issue the same author makes clear what he actually means by 'joining hands'. In the article he mentions an agreement in principle between SCI and the Northern Province in South Africa. The agreement (in principle) was reached after he and a colleague had 'persuade[d] the Northern Province officials as well as the rural communities and their leaders that SCI, and the African Bowhunters Chapter in particular, is the correct vehicle to assist them to develop and manage their land and natural resources on a sustainable basis' (Meyer, H. (February 1999), SCI African Bowhunters intend to partner with landowners, *Safari Times Africa*). In the April 1999 issue the same author, again, reports on the growing number of interested inquiries by game farmers in South Africa about the possibilities of attracting bowhunters to their property. He reports that 'in the near future the game farmer is going to run into economic difficulties if he cannot ensure a steadier supply of hunters'. He expresses his hope that SCI is able 'to help the game farmers (...) and to make sure the facilities are of high standard for all SCI bow hunters' (Meyer, H. (April 1999) SCI Africa Bowhunters working with game farmers, bow hunters, *Safari Times Africa*). In their Code of Sport Hunting Ethics both communities and private landowners are mentioned: 'Recognition of communities, cultures and needs relating to sustainable utilisation of wildlife and the environment' and 'Bowhunters accept the reality to economic factors more and more cattle farmers are switching over to game farming'.

195 Van Staden, D. (February 1999), Community benefits in Zambia help curb poaching, *Safari Times Africa*.

works in Botswana'.<sup>196</sup> It is clear that communities play an important role in the present thinking on policy of SCI Africa.<sup>197</sup> Of course, and I write it without being judgmental about it, they do it not so much for the communities as they do it for the SCI hunting members they represent. The same holds true for the relations they establish with commercial farmers. They do it for their members who want to continue to hunt.<sup>198</sup> The difference between the two categories is the type of exchange they are after. With the commercial farmers they have to agree on the professional requirements for hunters which have to be established on the farm, before SCI Africa will advertise them. The exchange is professionalism for advertisements. With the communities it is another type of exchange. It is clear from the examples above that it is an exchange, an investment in a reciprocal relationship between hunters and communities in which communities receive economic benefits and in return for stopping poaching. The land and wildlife management can be taken care of by SCI. The exchange is basically about economic handouts for ending poaching. This type of deals is characterised as the 'meat and money approach'.<sup>199</sup> Although SCI wants to go further than that<sup>200</sup>, their reports so far do not suggest that much progress has been made in that field. So far it seems more in the line that they assist communities by taking over their management responsibilities for the natural resources than that they give the communities a direct voice or say in the policy and management of the area.

Other examples of private sector initiatives to relate to the surrounding communities can be found in South Africa where there has been an enormous increase in private sector wildlife utilisation in different forms, mainly game ranching as I indicated earlier. Here wildlife is explicitly utilised and this is propagated as an economically sound form of land use. It is estimated that to protect the surrounding areas from the wildlife and to keep them on the ranch, about 4000 ranches in the country have erected game fences.<sup>201</sup> In 1995 taken together, they covered an area of some 80,000 km<sup>2</sup>. In 1979 this was only 10,000 km<sup>2</sup>.<sup>202</sup> Trophy hunting is considered 'the pinnacle' of this wildlife industry although diversification of wildlife utilisation, like for instance meat and skins, on these ranches is advised.<sup>203</sup> Although the figures about land acreage might suggest an impressive victory from a conservation perspective, the political and economic sus-

196 Peake, D. (April 1999), Community-based resource management works in Botswana, *Safari Times Africa*.

197 'Community programmes have become a priority for Safari Club International' (DeGeorges, A. (March 1999) Africa's sport hunting may be at a crossroads, *Safari Times Africa*).

198 'Without support from the landholder (e.g. commercial farmers on private game ranches, and rural communities in communal areas), the rest of the issues will be unimportant' (ibid).

199 DeGeorges, A. (March 1999), Sustainable use concept has won ideological war, *Safari Times Africa*.

200 In the same article the author states that this approach will not change the 'negative attitudes' of the communities, unless they are allowed to decide for themselves how to utilise the resources on their land. This is of course a tricky aspect of the deal, because what happens if they want something other than wildlife utilisation...?

201 On a total of an estimated more than 10,000 game ranches in South Africa alone, pp. 609, Els, H. (1996), Game ranching and rural development, in: Bothma, J.P. (ed.), *Game ranch management* (completely revised and expanded), Pretoria: J.L. van Schaik.

202 pp. 1, Hearne, J. & McKenzie, M. (forthcoming), Compelling reasons for game ranching in Maputland, Chapter 13, in: Prins, H.H.T. & Grootenhuys, J.G. (eds), *Valuation of benefits and costs of wildlife in Africa*, London: Chapman and Hall.

203 Bothma 1996: 69-70.

tainability of this situation is extremely dubious if game ranchers do not invest in mutually beneficial relations with their neighbours. And this difficult as this is certainly not something that comes naturally to game ranchers as it is observed that '(a)lthough game ranchers are usually aware of adjacent or nearby communal rural communities, few of them know who they are, who their traditional leaders are, or have first-hand contact with such communities other than in anti-poaching activities, or in resolving conflict situation where cattle or goats graze inside the boundaries of their game ranches'.<sup>204</sup> In order for the communities to develop economically, these relations should be improved. If the relationship between the game ranches and communities is established to their mutual satisfaction, it will in exchange legitimise this particular land use practice and villagers will respect the boundaries and the natural resources of the ranch. As an important aspect of modern-day game ranch management, suggestions about what is needed to create such a win-win situation are given. The 'top three' of the eight suggestions<sup>205</sup> are formed by the core aspects of every reciprocal relationship. The first recommendation is that in order to relate to someone you must show '(i)nvolve-ment outside your own fence'.<sup>206</sup> Second on the list of recommendations is 'good communication', which is operationalised as a specification of the first item, namely, 'go and see and speak to them'. If this is done in setting up meetings, one should not forget to 'buy small gifts as an indication of your respect and good intentions'. This will also help to 'nurture' the contact in the future. There are even suggestions of what to give and what certainly not to give. Ties and pens are OK, but liquor and the like are taboo. Finally, it is advised to show respect for and trust in the people. It is noted that it will probably take some time for trust and respect to be built up between game ranchers and neighbouring communities, as 'both parties have only been subjected to the negative aspects of each other for a long time'.<sup>207</sup>

On paper at least, these recommendations seem to have been taken to heart by many of the new private sector wildlife utilisation initiatives. As there has not yet been much, if any social-scientific and systematic evaluation of the successes and failures in these relations, I cannot judge the initiatives from any angle other than from the intentions which the actors involved put on paper. Without going into detail I want to mention just a few other examples where this new trend in neighbour relations is proclaimed in private wildlife utilisation. It should be borne in mind that in South Africa especially, this kind of private sector initiative is hardly ever taken without consultation with and the involvement of governmental conservation bodies, in this case the different Parks Boards in the different provinces in South Africa. A recent good, well-documented example of this type is Madikwe Game Reserve<sup>208</sup>, twenty-five km east of Gaborone, the

204 Ibid: 609.

205 Ibid: 612-616.

206 It is interesting, although not surprising to note, how the word 'fence' here is used metaphorically to indicate the boundary between 'us' and 'them'.

207 The other pieces of advice in this section of the book are: job creation, promoting sustainable utilisation, environmental education, facilitating funding and acquiring expertise and finally acquiring and establishing appropriate technologies.

208 Information in this section is based on three brochures, little booklets, published by the North-West Parks Board, entitled 'Madikwe Development Series'. Davies, R. (August 1997), *A description and history of Madikwe Game Reserve*, Rustenburg: North West Parks Board; Davies, R. (October 1997), *Madikwe Game*



capital of Botswana, but in South Africa. Madikwe was created in 1991 on land of degraded cattle farms. The Reserve is managed by the North West Parks Board, but economically exploited by the private sector in agreement with the Board. These two play a key role in what they call a 'partnership in conservation'. But this public-private co-operation is also extended to the surrounding communities, because the management realises that 'the continued existence of Madikwe is directly and, probably more important, indirectly dependent on the communities living around the reserve'. In order to involve them in the Reserve, they have created a double structure to accommodate them. The first is a Community Liaison Forum, in which all stakeholders in and around the project come together 'to discuss matters of common concern and interest'. The second structure is a set of community institutions which can take care of the redistribution of the dividends which the community will get out of the economic profits of the Reserve. In their management plan they also mention other structures which are needed in relation to the communities. These are the Madikwe Community Development Association and the Madikwe Trust, which are also both meant to structure and canalise the incoming money and its redistribution to the communities or its translation in developmental projects.

A similar approach is taken in the Weenen Biosphere, in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. This is also a public-private co-operative structure between a conservation body, in this case the Natal Parks Board (now KwaZulu-Natal Nature Conservation Services), and private farmers, who pool formally protected land and private land into a so called biosphere reserve. In principle, all types of land tenure, for example commercial forestry land but also communal lands, can be included in the biosphere concept on a voluntary basis. The Weenen Biosphere was originally initiated to create a wildlife resource to attract eco-tourism, but, in a formulation which laid bare the political roots and motives of much of the initiatives nowadays to involve local communities into wildlife utilisation, '(s)uch an objective [to create a wildlife resource HW] could stand alone in the past, however, given the changing political situation in South Africa, this is no longer the case. Other recent development of this nature support this fact, namely the Phinda reserve and policy developments within the Natal Parks Board<sup>209</sup> and National Parks

*Reserve: A partnership in conservation*, Rustenburg: North West Parks Board; Madikwe Development Task Team (August 1997), *The Madikwe Game Reserve management plan*, Rustenburg: North West Parks Board. So far three more titles in this series have appeared of which two are about specific wildlife issues, restocking and African wild dogs, and one about the financial and economic objectives of the reserve.

<sup>209</sup> The author is referring to a document by the Natal Parks Board, *Neighbour relations policy and supporting actions*, September 1992. In 1996 a Community Conservation Reference Group was established to develop guidelines and policy principles for community conservation, and also to come up with recommendations 'regarding co-ordination, capacity building and the allocation of resources to this function' (Natal Parks Board, Compiled by Trevor Sandwith in conjunction with Louise Toucher and the Community Conservation Reference Group and Task Team: Community conservation programmes. Towards the development of a new policy and strategic plan, Draft 6: 3 June 1997). As from 1 February 1998, the Natal Parks Board introduced a Community Levy which visitors are required to pay when entering certain protected areas under the auspices of the Board. Visitors are required to pay R10,- per person per camp for hatted accommodation, R5,- per person per camp for camping and R1,- per person per entrance gate for gate entry.

Board.<sup>210</sup> In all three cases the organisations concerned have made a concerted effort to involve local communities and to undertake seemingly irrelevant social development programmes as part of their conservation/eco-tourism mandate'.<sup>211</sup> He is obviously longing for the '(g)olden days' in conservation in (South) Africa!

A final example can be given presenting the Thukela Biosphere Reserve, which is again a public-private co-operation and where the involvement of the surrounding communities also plays an important role in the discussion about the exact policy the Reserve has to follow in this respect. I quote the minutes of a preparatory meeting at some length to give the reader the possibility to sense the wheeling and dealing between different interest groups, the specific wording used in this conservation effort and how community involvement plays a key role in that arena. 'White farmers appear more interested in the economic viability of game farming, linked to eco-tourism, whereas the NPB seems to emphasise the conservation aspect. Furthermore, some farmers appear not so much interested in game farming or eco-tourism as in securing their farms against poaching of livestock, illegal grazing, etc. by neighbouring black communities. At present there seems to be an alliance of interests between more right wing and more progressive farmers around the reserve, with the more progressive groups holding sway. This grouping seems to have some commitment to consulting black communities, recognising that their support is important for the success of the reserve. Mr. Chris Wilkinson, who is employed by funds raised by farmers to manage their interests in the initiative, seems to represent this more progressive grouping. (...) So far we have assisted in setting up contact between Mr. Wilkinson and Cornfields and Tembahlhle people, who regard the initiative with a high level of mistrust. They see it as another attempt to get them off their land and to reduce their cattle and do not see any immediate benefit'.<sup>212</sup> In a local newspaper the author of the minutes is quoted on this last issue, in which he formulates it far more diplomatically saying that '(p)articularly sensitive issues are whether this will lead to any evictions and whether the communities will see real benefits'.<sup>213</sup> The suspicion emanating from communities was not ungrounded as there was already a game reserve in Weenen run by the NPB. The reserve was established on old labour farms from which people were evicted in 1969. Although the NPB had nothing to do with the actual evictions, the establishment of the game reserve prevented people from returning to their old homes. In April 1994 the Weenen communities went on strike to protest about the inception of the biosphere park and related issues like evic-

<sup>210</sup> In the annual reports of the National Parks Board the importance of local communities to conservation is first mentioned in 1993-1994, when it is said (pp. 49) that '(d)uring the past year co-operation with neighbouring communities has increased to cover a number of fields'. In the 1994-1995 annual report it is mentioned that in August 1994 they initiated a 'Social Ecology Section'. The activities of this Section (pp. 31) 'include the establishment and restructuring of local community and park forums, and the development and implementation of action plans. (...) Planned projects would include joint eco-tourism ventures, environmental education and awareness programmes and community undertakings'. The problem though with this section seemed to be (pp. 49) that the '(p)rogress with appointing social ecology staff in most parks has been slow'.

<sup>211</sup> pp. 1, Laws, G.D. (undated), *Communities in the Weenen Biosphere*, Natal Parks Board.

<sup>212</sup> pp. 2, Liversage, H., AFRA [Association for Rural Advancement HW] report on the Thukela Biosphere Reserve initiative for Midnet [Midlands Rural Development Network HW] meeting on 29 May 1993.

<sup>213</sup> *Natal Witness*, 9 April 1993, 'Reserve will affect the locals'.

tions and farm wages. A few days after the strike, white farmers approached the communities to set up a liaison committee in which grievances could be discussed openly. Farmers attending promised there and then that they would rescind eviction notices already served on tenant families.<sup>214</sup>

We can see that the political necessity to move to involve local communities more in the management of wildlife utilisation schemes and to let them share in their benefits is broadly recognized but that the relation between wildlife management authorities and communities is not an unvanishing love affair. Years of separation and mutual mistrust between people on the ground can obviously not be bridged easily by transpositions of political contexts at a national nor international level, nor by the ideological rhetoric of international conservation bodies alone. Why this is the case can only be understood properly if we take a closer look at the image of local communities as seen from commercial farmers. In that image the aspect of illegal hunting, i.e. 'poaching', by the communities on commercial land is paramount. It is actually that image which gave the final push towards starting private wildlife conservancies in the second half of the seventies in the first place. That was a time when community involvement and participation was not yet in vogue or on the official agenda. That only came in the nineties. So this means that conservancies were first and foremost launched in the seventies as a joint effort by commercial farmers to curb poaching and to oppose instead of appease local communities, and that in the nineties they had to turn around some 180° degrees to remain politically acceptable and safeguard their continued existence. This is not only difficult for the commercial farmers who all of a sudden find they have to talk to people they have consistently distrust(ed) as potential poachers, but also, and probably even more so, from the perspective of the local communities who undoubtedly will also be aware that conservancies were a reaction to their hunting activities. Now, in the twinkling of an eye as it were, these same commercial farmers offer them a part of the cake and 'hug them to their bosoms' as partner in conservation. This partnership is hard to cope with for both parties. The central issue is again about hunting, but this time it is not about commercial sport hunting by whites to utilise the wildlife, but about traditional hunting which is called 'poaching' in the existing legal framework. Because the first conservancy in 1978 was basically started to structure the collaboration of commercial farmers to curb poaching on their land, it is worthwhile having a closer look at the phenomenon of poaching in Africa as the dominant image of whites about black communities.

## Poaching

Poaching is seen and propagated by much of the international media as one of the great threats to wildlife and measures to try to control it in protected areas are part of the stan-

<sup>214</sup> pp. 129-137, Alcock, R. (1994), Evictions and land hunger in the Msinga/Weenen districts, in: Minnaar, A. (1994), The dynamics of land in rural areas: 1990 and onwards, In Appendix B: Case Studies: Minnaar, A., (ed.), *Access to and affordability of land in South Africa: the challenge of land reform in the 1990s*, Pretoria: HSRC Co-operative Programme.

dard repertoire of wildlife managers.<sup>215</sup> A temporary climax in this discussion came in 1989 when President Moi of Kenya appointed Richard Leakey, a very outspoken and firm conservationist, as Director of Wildlife in Kenya who, only after a few days on his new post, made his new anti-poaching measure known: '(p)oaching became a capital offense and a shoot-to-kill directive was sent to the rangers in the park'.<sup>216</sup> Rangers were at 'war' with poachers and it was literally a war of life and death. This 'war scene', complete with imitation militaristic style operations and outfit was extensively reported in the international media and sent the world over. Therefore these became the general and accepted image of African poaching and poachers in the West. In the magazine *New African*<sup>217</sup>, for example, a cover story tells the readers the story of the *Endangered Species Protection Unit* (ESPU), which is portrayed as 'the tough, macho organisation whose task is to crack down on the crime syndicates which are targeting Africa's wildlife'. The ESPU falls under the *South African Police Service* (SAPS) and many of the predominantly, (or only?), white officers are said to be 'combat veterans of South Africa's elite military units universally acknowledged as some of the toughest, best trained, combat experienced soldiers in the world'. It will be no surprise that the ESPU is headed by a former Captain of the South African Police Service turned 'conservationist', Colonel Pieter Lategan. The ESPU is portrayed as fighting the Big Evil. But is this an adequate or complete picture, and was this the kind of poaching for which the 'Farm Patrol Plan' which formed the start of the first private wildlife conservancy in South Africa was meant? Contrary to popular belief perpetrated by both black and white, there are basically four forms of poaching. I shall give a brief description of each of them.

The first form is commercial poaching<sup>218</sup>, which comes closest to the spectacular image the media make out of it. This form of poaching is focused on the most valuable species from a commercial point of view, which are for Africa the rhinoceros and the elephant. I shall use the example of the rhino here, because I have already introduced the trade in ivory in relation to CITES and CAMPFIRE earlier, and because the measures against the poaching of rhino lay at the inception of the SVC at the end of the eighties. To start with, one has to be careful to state prices paid for rhino horns because one has to indicate clearly to whom exactly these prices are paid. A local poacher in Zambia in 1987 could earn the equivalent of US\$ 30,- for a pair of black rhino horns. A pair of black rhino horns weigh approximately three kg. If he was paid in his village, this amount was often translated into goods, like mealmeal or other foodstuffs. US\$ 30,- amounted to three months' salary of a black labourer, if jobs were available. These local poachers often do not even know the real world market value of the raw material they are supplying. Even if they did know, they would probably not get a higher price because the trade to the middlemen was organised in a cartel which kept a strict control on local prices. Such cartels were often covered, controlled and headed by senior politicians. In

<sup>215</sup> MacKinnon c.s. 1986: 232-233.

<sup>216</sup> House 1993: 417.

<sup>217</sup> pp. 8-13, Krott, R. (1998), *Catching the ivory poachers*, *New African*, December 1998. See also: Guara, S. (1998), The elephant war rages on, *Safari Time*, February, 2 (1).

<sup>218</sup> The information in this section is based on Chapter 6, 'About poachers and commercial poaching in Africa: a mirror of the world', pp. 26-43, Thomson, R. (1992), *The wildlife game*, The Nyalala Wildlife Publications Trust.

Zimbabwe, the wildlife authorities claim that by the end of the eighties probably at least five Zambian government ministers were involved in the poaching racket.<sup>219</sup> All this despite the fact that CITES already put a ban on trade in rhino horn in 1975. The same horns that were sold by a local poacher for US\$ 30,- to the middlemen in 1987, were sold at a wholesale world price per kilogram ranging from US\$ 600,- in the Far Eastern market, where they are primarily used for medicinal purposes (and hardly ever, contrary to popular believe and marketing in Western media, as an aphrodisiac<sup>220</sup>), to US\$ 900,- per kg in Yemen where they are used for making ceremonial daggers. In 1988 the price became even more exaggerated because rich Asian speculators tried to buy all the available rhino horn in the expectation that the two species of African rhino<sup>221</sup> becoming extinct, which would skyrocket the price even more. In a few peak days in the month July in 1988, Taiwanese traders were willing to pay US\$ 2,486 per kg for a large bulk of horns. The retail prices for African rhino horns were of course higher again than the wholesale prices and amounted in 1988 to US\$ 12,000,- for a pair of rhino horns.<sup>222</sup> The biggest threat to the African rhino was thus not so much that it was traded as such, but that distant financial speculators, who probably not even have the slightest interest in the rhino itself, but only in its representation in commercial value and figures, speculated on their extinction by buying remaining stocks. By doing that they virtually made the speculation a self-fulfilling prophecy. And this continues to happen despite the total ban in 1975. That a trade ban is no automatic or ultimate solution to the poaching of certain species has been known to the concerned wildlife authorities ever since, but they still advocate trade bans as a solution to poaching, as happened again with the ban on ivory trade in 1989. To me this says more about the pressure and effects of public opinion and funding agencies, than of the seeming lack of professionalism of conservationists. But who has to be blamed as the 'real' poacher in this case? Conservancies in South Africa in general do not have much to do with this kind of poaching. It is different in Zimbabwe where the first conservancies owe their existence to this type of commercial poaching, in particular rhino, in the sense that private land was considered a safe haven for them. This meant that rhinos were translocated from national parks to private property. The whole operation was funded by WWF-Zimbabwe and its team supervised and monitored the rhinos afterwards. But, in general it is not the Western image type of poaching which triggered the conservancy movement in South Africa.

A fairly new form of (white) poaching surfaced in the nineties, as part of a broader case of illegal hunting which is, just as the first form of poaching, carried out for commercial reasons only. It is called 'canned hunting'. It surfaced after British television broadcast a documentary in May 1997, *The Cook Report*, which showed a hunter who shot a lioness in front of her cubs in a private game reserve bordering Kruger National

Park, after she had been lured out of the park with bait. She had been poached alive.<sup>223</sup> The showing of *The Cook Report* on South Africa's M-Net, in the programme *Carte Blanche* on 18 May 1997, resulted in a general and public outcry of horror and disgust.<sup>224</sup> One particular scene horrified people the most and is described with much dramatic and emotional appeal by Patterson<sup>225</sup>: 'The bullet slammed into the lioness and she spun in the air, falling against the electric fence behind which she was confined. Standing on the other side of the fence were her three young cubs – she had been separated from them an hour earlier. Another shot was fired by the overseas hunter. She slumped to the ground in a crumpled heap. Both times, the hunter shot from a vehicle. He then posed with the dead lioness and pulled at her mouth to show her teeth. Later, in the skinning shed, as the lioness's coat was removed from her body to become a 'trophy' for the hunter, milk from her teats mingled with her blood on the ground. I have documentary evidence of the horror and brutality of this hunt'.<sup>226</sup> There are many private reserves bordering Kruger National Park, separated by fairly simple fences and luring out lions is not a particularly difficult thing to do and seems to make easy money. In general, a lion hunt costs between US\$ 12,500 to US\$ 20,000,- excluding travel expenses, taxidermy, the shipping of trophies and the daily tariff of people accompanying the hunter.<sup>227</sup> Of course, the outrage about canned hunting was essentially not about the poaching of that particular lioness from Kruger but about the unethical, unfair and cruel way of conducting a hunt, without giving the animal any chance to escape. But it suggested strongly that behind the noble creed of private conservation and 'hunting as a tool for conservation', these kind of excesses take place because private sector people are not (really) in the business for the purpose of nature conservation but solely because of the profits that can be made, regardless of anything else. This particular game reserve it was suggested was representative of the general ways of operation in the private wildlife business. The image became even worse and more threatened after it became known that the investigators going into the issue received threatening telephone calls, witnesses were intimidated and relations were discovered which suggested connections between practices of canned hunting and members of the *Professional Hunters Association of South Africa* (PHASA) and *Safari Club International* (SCI).<sup>228</sup> 'Because of

219 Rhinos in Zimbabwe were said to be mainly poached by Zambians crossing the border in the north. See for an extensive analysis of the political economy of the relations between politicians and poachers in Kenya, Zambia and Zimbabwe, pp. 49-79, Gibson, C.C. (1999), *Politicians and poachers. The political economy of wildlife policy in Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

220 pp. 417, Bradley Martin, E. (March 1984), 'They're killing of the rhino', *National Geographic*, 165 (3).

221 Black and white rhino.

222 The retail price for Asian rhino horn was even more and in 1984 was estimated at US\$ 20,000 a kilo, (ibid).

223 *Bushcraft Mag-e-Zine Archive News Article*, Courtesy of The Star, Luring lions out of Kruger Park for hunting comes under fire, 30 April 1997, taken from Internet: <http://www.wildnetafrica.co.za/bushcraft>.

224 African Wildlife, 'Canned lion' controversy, July/August 1997, vol. 51, no. 4, taken from Internet: <http://www.wildnetafrica.co.za/wildlife>.

225 Gareth Patterson is heir to the legacy of the famous lion-man and wife in Kenya, George and Joy Adamson.

226 *Electronic Mail @ Guardian*, Patterson, G., Hunting fenced lions for fun, 2 May 1997, taken from the Internet: <http://www.mg.co.za/mg/news/97may>. He later wrote a book about this canned hunting scandal, Patterson, G. (1998), *Dying to be free. The canned hunting scandal*, New York: Viking. In the SCI Africa magazine the book was ferociously criticised. 'Patterson's high handedness is rather colonial (...) and he defends in part the colonial aspect of a national park, i.e. 'leave it untouched and unmanaged and without people'. Africa does not need self-proclaimed prophets of a Utopian Garden of Eden. This continent is not and will never be the 'Disneyland' of Paterson's dreams!' (Damm, G.R. (April 1999), Hunter reviews Patterson's 'Dying to be free', *Safari Times Africa*).

227 Ibid: 5.

228 *Bushcraft Mag-e-Zine Archive News Article*, Courtesy of The Star, Threats hold up canned hunting probe, 24 July 1997, taken from the Internet: <http://www.wildnetafrica.co.za/bushcraft>. See also *Electronic Mail @*

these issues, at the 1997 SCI African Advisory Board meeting, a Code of Sport Hunting Conduct for Africa was adopted. As a result of this year's meeting it was decided to add the word "Ethical" to this title, thus: "Code of Ethical Sport Hunting For Africa".<sup>229</sup> Nonetheless, the canned hunting scandal did seriously harm the image of private conservation in general and sport hunting in particular (and the image of the latter is already far from positive). After I had given a presentation on private wildlife conservancies in southern Africa at a one day-conference at Leyden University in 1997, one man from the audience began straight after the presentation posing rhetorical questions about possible connections between private wildlife conservancies and practices of canned hunting.<sup>230</sup> The poaching part of canned hunting is confined to private reserves bordering national parks, and that is only a minority. So it was not this type of poaching which gave a definite impetus to the creation of conservancies, although it obviously and directly damaged its image.

The third form of poaching, poaching by the (white) military, is less recognized and hardly ever mentioned in popular reports or in the media but is (or was) a substantial form nonetheless, in southern Africa at least. It is also important in relation to the development of private wildlife conservancies as I shall show below. Poaching for military purposes is a form of anti-conservation by a part of the same government that advocates it so strongly in other contexts and departments. It is difficult to be sure about what is true or not about this form of poaching with any degree of certainty, because it is inherently veiled and secretive and the validity of sources of information is sometimes hard to judge. One thing is clear, that poaching and trading in ivory by the military happened in South Africa during the Apartheidregime. In how much it stopped after the 1994 elections is not clear. Nor is it indeed clear that it has stopped. A revealing scientific article about the relation between poaching and military activities was written by Stephen Ellis<sup>231</sup>, in which he convincingly shows that South Africa's policy of the political destabilisation of neighbouring countries was closely related to and intertwined with its role as middleman in the international ivory trade. Poaching and trading in ivory was at one and the same time a technique of destabilisation and a source of income and way of funding operations. The first aspect implies that poaching and trade in ivory and horns was not only carried out, or maybe not even primarily espoused, for financial reasons but for sheer political and power purposes. Maybe stock exchange speculators in Asia and political apartheid activists in Africa, probably unconsciously joined hands in this business. Placed in this politicised context the trade in ivory and horns can only be regarded as revealing a tip of an iceberg of the involvement of the military in conservation practices in South Africa. Who knows what other aspects of conservation were infiltrated in this way? Let me try to explore one more possibility in this respect in relation

Guardian, Beresford, D., Illegal hunting cases reach 130, 15 August 1997, taken from the Internet: <http://www.mg.co.za/mg/news/97aug>.

229 DeGeorges 1999.

230 *Managing the dry African savannah; options for conservation and sustainable use*, 19 September 1997 Leiden.

231 Ellis, S. (1994), Of elephants and men: politics and nature conservation in South Africa, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 20 (1), March: 53-69. See for more popular accounts of the involvement of the military in poaching in southern Africa: Breytenbach, J. (1997), *Eden's exiles. One soldier's fight for paradise*, Cape Town: Queillerie Publishers; Potgieter, D.W. (1995), *Contraband. South Africa and the international trade in ivory and rhino horn*, Cape Town: Queillerie Publishers.

to private wildlife conservancies by returning to the ESPU I introduced earlier. In the same article in the *New African* it is mentioned that some of these 'best trained soldiers' who were part of the ESPU, got their training and experience with *koevoet*, which was one of the sinister and secretive white counter-insurgency units serving the apartheid-regime and which was created by officers from the Security Branch of the police who had worked in Rhodesia and, following their experiences there, established a 'special counter-insurgency unit in Namibia'.<sup>232</sup> This particular man described in the *New African* article built up his experience with counter terrorist operations in former South-West Africa, now known as Namibia. In their role as ESPU employees such soldiers could actually continue to patrol the Namibian bush, but now in search of poachers for the noble cause of conservation instead of chasing terrorists for the deplorable cause of apartheid, which in the end seems only a 'minor' adaptation in mindset. Anti-apartheid fighters were the Big Evil for the apartheid system, poachers are the Big Evil for conservation. It seems highly likely that the very people who at one stage in their professional career were involved in poaching in the name of a destabilisation policy, were now chasing poachers. The specific wording of the article seems to connote a straightforward appreciation of all this, despite the fact that *koevoet* has a known 'reputation for intimidation and brutality'.<sup>233</sup> Is it because conservation is the 'Ultimate Good', which allows all types of measures to serve its cause, even when these would be morally or politically unacceptable in other contexts?

A related example can be borrowed from the private sector. South African *Executive Outcomes* (EO) presents itself in words of its Managing Director, Eeben Barlow, as 'military advisers', but in effect are said to sell themselves as mercenaries on the African continent in exchange for mineral rights.<sup>234</sup> The EO and the ESPU both work with a supply of human personnel from the same sources: former, predominantly white, members of the SAPF and SADF. It is worth linking these organisations. In December 1998 the EO announced that it would stop its military advice to foreign governments as of the first of January 1999. To 'contribute to peace in Africa' was the explanation given.<sup>235</sup> But, it was added and this directly relates to private wildlife conservancies in South Africa, they will continue their patrols in agricultural areas in the East Cape. Here *Executive*

232 pp. 56, Ellis, S. (1999), The new frontiers of crime in South Africa, in: Bayart, J.F., Ellis, S. & Hibou, B. (1999), *The criminalization of the state in Africa*, Oxford: James Currey; Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

233 Ellis 1994: 65. 'The main function of *koevoet* was the identification and elimination of suspected insurgents (...) Its officers were preoccupied with kill-ratios and body-counts', Bayart et al 1999: 56.

234 See Grill, B. & Dumay, C. (1997), Honden van de oorlog, met wetten van de winst. Het nieuwe kolonialisme van huurlingenfirma Executive Outcomes, *NRC Handelsblad*, 22 February 1997 (Translation: Dogs of war, with the laws of profit. The new colonialism of mercenary firm Executive Outcomes). Although one has to be careful to portray them just like mercenaries. 'Executive Outcomes is much more than a group of mercenaries. A legitimate company, it employs intelligence analysts and technical staff, and by 1995 had generated over thirty subsidiary companies throughout sub-Saharan Africa specializing in activities including air transport, video production and mining. It has contracts in East Africa, the Indian Ocean and the Middle East', Ellis 1999: 63.

235 This patrolling work in agricultural areas can be continued because it is done from a 'business unit' other than the 'military advisers'. Commentators suspect that Executive Outcomes closed their military advice unit in South Africa primarily because of the announcement of more rigorous laws which would curb their activities. *NRC Handelsblad*, 11 December 1998, Leverancier huurlingen 'sluit deuren', (Translation: Deliverer of mercenaries 'closes doors').

*Outcomes* employees are hired by commercial farmers to patrol their land against 'cattle thieves and burglars'.<sup>236</sup> This part of South Africa forms the heartland of private wildlife conservancies. Most of South Africa's conservancies are found in the East Cape. Although conservancies are not explicitly mentioned in this article, a connection between Farm Patrol Plan and patrolling employees from *Executive Outcomes* does not seem an unreasonable assumption. What lends this supposition extra credibility is the fact that in a document entitled *Nature conservation and the military*<sup>237</sup>, it is mentioned that co-operating farmers who constituted the first conservancies in South Africa 'preferred to have their property patrolled by guards with some type of paramilitary training, rather than guards with environmental training. This desire to have armed men guarding private property has increased since the 1994 democratic elections, possibly because of insecurity relating to the high crime rate. This once again provides opportunities for paramilitary activity under the guise of game guard or security related training. This usually only provides people with some military skills but very little else'. If this assumption bears any truth in it, it goes without saying that communities were experiencing and observing a continuation of an apartheid mentality, but now under the guise of a conservation ethic raised as the main pillar of private wildlife conservancies. Poaching by the military was not the type of poaching which pushed the development of conservancies, but its interrelation with 'security' may probably have brought it on to the conservancy scene. In the Newsletter of the Natal Conservancy Association it is stated 'that a number of conservancies are no longer employing conservancy guards trained in game and general environmental conservation, but are employing security companies that have names that suggest that they are environmentally aware, but who, in fact, supply a pure security service, and are indifferent at best to environmental conservation'.<sup>238</sup> Taken in conjunction with the suspicions about practices of canned hunting this did further damage to its image as a new strategy in conservation. Apart from the damage to the image, more important may have been the effect on the social distance between conservancy and communities. If communities do indeed relate anti-poaching and security activities in conservancies with former practices of SAPF and SADF personnel under the Apartheids regime, they will almost certainly perceive conservancies as the continuations of the Big Evil in disguise. Co-operative relationships are hard to achieve in such a context. Seen from this perspective the distinction between 'good' conservation<sup>239</sup> and 'bad' poachers is already blurring. In the last form of poaching which I describe this generally accepted picture is even more opaque.

236 Ibid.

237 Section 6.3, May 1997, *Nature conservation and the military*, Network of Independent Monitors. The exact status of this document is not clear, so I cite it here with due caution. But I feel confident particularly about citing this part because similar signals about security firms 'taking over' conservancies from environmentally oriented protection agencies surfaced at the Annual General Meeting of the Natal Conservancy Association in May 1999.

238 pp. 6, Rumbles from the Drakensberg, *The Guineafowl*, December 1998, no. 4.

239 Which always seems to imply 'politically neutral' and for the 'common good of mankind'. To a certain extent it is strange that 'good' and 'noble' are always associated with the absence of power and politics. Especially in relation to conservation in Africa, it probably interferes too much with our cherished image of the unspoiled Eden where not only man and nature are in harmony with each other, but also men are at peace among themselves.

The fourth form of poaching could be called subsistence poaching and is the most widespread of the four in Africa. Within this category two, often overlapping types of poaching can be discerned. The first type is where people hunt because hunting wildlife is an integral part of their culture, of their way of life and the root of their self esteem.<sup>240</sup> When this way of life was rudely interrupted by the laws and regulations imposed by colonial governments which forbade them to hunt and classified them not as hunters but as poachers when they followed the normal course of their life, continued poaching was often used as a strategy to protest about this state of affairs.<sup>241</sup> The other type is where ordinary people live in such poverty that they need 'poaching' to supplement their meagre diet.<sup>242</sup> In their wish to conserve wildlife colonial and African governments alike have gone so far into rules and regulations that Bell, following Marks, comes to the conclusion that '(u)nder existing wildlife legislation in many African countries, normal rural existence is nearly impossible without breaking the law'.<sup>243</sup> Every African becomes a 'poacher' sooner or later. Although many Africans have lived together with wildlife and hunted it for meat for many generations throughout the ages, without causing crises of possible extinction<sup>244</sup>, the image among whites colonizers has always been that they were a root cause in the depletion of wildlife. Colonel James Stevenson-Hamilton, the first warden of Kruger National Park, for instance, went to his job in the Lowveld, but already '(b)efore leaving Pretoria it had been impressed on (him) that the first difficulty would probably be with natives, since these and the game could not be expected to exist together'.<sup>245</sup> Throughout his memoirs he continues to portray them as the premier menace which he and his rangers had to battle constantly. One of the more radical tactics used in this respect was to 'clear' the reserves of 'natives'.<sup>246</sup> At an early state of its development this already created an atmosphere of mutual distrust between the park and its surrounding communities. A distrust which was constantly fed by the stamina and ruthlessness with which park authorities tried to curb subsistence poaching. The mutual images were accordingly had and Stevenson-Hamilton, who in his time did not have to worry about 'our' present-day political correctness, wrote openly that '(t)he kraal natives were surly and disobliging, especially when they understood my mission, and would tell me nothing of the country. From their hang-dog look I judged them capable of murdering any number of traders, but no doubt I was prejudiced. Afterwards we had considerable trouble with them, and a few years later I had the kraal moved out of the reserve'.<sup>247</sup> No wonder local Africans in their turn portrayed the white park authorities

240 pp. 161, Lindsay, W.K. (1987), Integrating parks and pastoralists: some lessons from Amboseli, in: Anderson, D. & Grove, R. (eds.) (1987), *Conservation in Africa. People, policies and practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

241 Ibid: 155.

242 Thomson 1992: 39.

243 pp. 88, Bell, R.H.V. (1987), Conservation with a human face, in: Anderson, D. & Grove, R. (eds.), *Conservation in Africa. People, policies and practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

244 pp. 6, Stiles, D. (September-October 1997), Poachers or gamekeepers?, *Swara, East African Wildlife Society*, 20: 5.

245 pp. 48, Stevenson-Hamilton, J. (1985) [1937], *South African Eden. The Kruger National Park, 1902-1946*, Cape Town: Struik Publishers.

246 Ibid: 58.

247 Ibid: 98. With such an attitude towards local Africans it is no wonder that pictures of black gamewardens in the book never mention their names or any other personal detail.

as brutal law enforcers who abused their power on occasions where both had to prove before a police officer what had really happened in an encounter between the two about poaching. Stevenson-Hamilton tells the story that '(a) gang of natives would, for instance, be arrested while poaching, and such of them as succeeded in escaping, would then make straight for their appointed native commissioner, carrying a piteous tale of how they had been sitting harmlessly in their villages, when the brutal emissaries of 'Skukuza' had suddenly pounced upon them, beaten them, maltreated their women, and pilfered their goods'.<sup>248</sup> Local people thought of wildlife authorities as brutes abusing their power and used poaching as an extra way to make their protest heard. 'They began to poach in defiance of the law and when they could, assisted commercial poachers in exchange for small gifts'.<sup>249</sup> No wonder wildlife authorities see every African as a (potential) poacher, because the latter have a whole gamut of grievances about which they can protest.

The local poachers described above seem to be far removed from the image of them with which the West is usually presented via the media 'as being avaricious, heavily armed gangs of thugs – employed by black marketeers – who race around the African bush in four-wheel-drive vehicles mowing down rhinos and elephants with machine-guns. And to add a bit of emotive colour to the stories, their 'greed' and their 'lust' (...) always seems to creep into the scripts as being complimentary 'causes' of the poaching rackets'.<sup>250</sup> Most 'poachers' are rural Africans who have to work hard to make a living out of their natural environment, including killing wildlife for meat and other resources. Added to this is the fact that generally speaking they think of land as an inalienable good. It cannot be given and it cannot be taken. It will always return to its spiritual owner. Land cannot be exchanged for anything. So, even when it becomes and is labelled private property or National Park, it is still considered land which will provide them with natural resources for their livelihood. Think of how it is perceived by these people, not the commercial and military poachers, that they are constantly criminalised and that the park rangers got a 'shoot-to-kill' order if they see any poaching afoot. And if one takes a closer look at the statistics of these policies, one cannot escape the suspicion that most of the poachers who were shot under these laws, were not actually the 'big guys' of military or commercial poaching, but rather the subsistence hunters. In Zimbabwe they shot 145 poachers between 1984 and 1991 and only four rangers were killed. If these dead poachers had belonged to the type of poachers with whom we are presented in the media and in the commercial and military poaching scene, being well-organised, well-armed, well-trained in organised poaching and the like, the figures would probably have been far more evenly balanced than the huge disparity they display now, i.e. fewer poachers killed and more dead rangers.<sup>251</sup> Who knows if one, or even more, of the four rangers shot were just unlucky to be a black African, just as the black ranger in Gounda-St. Floris National Park, in the north of the Central African Republic,

248 Ibid: 114.

249 pp. 2, Matenga, C.R. (1999), Community-based wildlife management schemes in Zambia: empowering or disempowering local communities?, paper presented at the conference *African environments: past and present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford.

250 Thomson 1992: 27.

251 Bonner 1993: 18.

who was on patrol in the park and was 'coincidentally' shot by a white-led anti-poaching patrol, because '(a)ny African in a park, so the story goes, must be a poacher'.<sup>252</sup> Apart from this ironic example, most profiles of the poachers who are shot are in fact average poor farmers who try to make a living.<sup>253</sup> If one looks at general pictures of 'poachers' who are caught in the action, it seems that most of the time they look like and are ordinary African farmers and not criminals with sophisticated weaponry or other utensils at their disposal.<sup>254</sup>

As widespread as poverty is in sub-Saharan Africa, is the belief of the Africans that land is inalienably theirs, poaching, if it still may bear that name, is there to stay, unless solutions can be found to prevent it. One of these solutions has already been described above and was launched in the eighties and continued in the nineties in formally and informally protected wildlife areas, and that is to involve the local communities in the wildlife utilisation schemes and organise a way in which they will benefit economically from the wildlife. This was certainly not yet common practice in the seventies, especially not on private land. The solution then was sought in forming a private wildlife conservancy in co-operation with the neighbouring landowner(s) and to patrol the united area against poachers. In the seventies communities surrounding wildlife areas or commercial land were still only perceived by wildlife authorities and private landowners as threats which had to be stopped one way or the other. In the seventies and first half of the eighties conservancies and communities were driven even further apart by different measures taken by conservancies in order to protect and utilise their wildlife. First by defining a strictly distinctive border through the installation of game guards (maybe in later instance related to former Apartheid warriors from the SAPF and SADF), followed by the erection of fences, advocating sport hunting and embarking on preservationist conservation ideology. It was only in the nineties that the developments of local involvement in wildlife utilisation and private conservancies finally met, among other areas in the Savé Valley Conservancy in Zimbabwe. In South Africa in the seventies the scene was still very much different as was mainstream conservation thinking.

### Private Wildlife Conservancies in South Africa: Early Days and Main Themes

In South Africa as a whole around 80%<sup>255</sup> of the land is privately owned by (mainly white) farmers and in the province of Natal (now KwaZulu-Natal) that figure is 60%, whereas the whites only constitute 12.8% of the population.<sup>256</sup> These figures indicate a

252 Adams & McShane 1992: 227-229.

253 Bonner 1993: 19.

254 See top picture of a 'poacher', Thomson 1992: 22.

255 pp. 1, Markham, R.W. (1988), *Nature conservation on private land: the conservancy concept*, unpublished paper, Natal Parks Board. Minnaar indicates that '(i)n 1990 about 77,000 white farmers (inclusive of absentee landlords) owned approximately 77 million hectares or 63 per cent of a total of 122 million hectares. (...) In contrast the total area of the ten homelands is 17 million hectares or just under 14 per cent of the total' pp. 28-29, Minnaar, A. (1994), *The dynamics of land in rural areas: 1990 and onwards*, In: Minnaar 1994.

256 pp. 1, Bourquin, O., Markham, R.W., Mathias, I., Steele, N.A. and Wright, C.W. (1985), *A new approach to conservation – wildlife conservancies in Natal*, unpublished paper, Natal Parks Board. Population figure (1994) taken from *Britannica Book of the Year 1996*.

huge imbalance in land distribution between black and white in South Africa. This goes back to the very beginning of white occupancy and colonisation in southern Africa, but the present Government recognises the Natives Land Act of 1913 in which rights to own or to rent land were made dependent on a person's racial classification as a formal starting point for their current restructuring and reform of the land policy.<sup>257</sup> Be that as it may, 'past legislation indicates that the South African government had a marked disregard for the land rights of indigenous people dating back to the first settlements'.<sup>258</sup> Between 1960 and 1980 some 3.5 million people were removed from rural and urban areas. 'It was only in 1978, with the introduction of the 99-year leasehold system and in the mid-1980s with the abolition of influx control, that the state acknowledged that black people should have permanent land rights in urban areas. Yet land rights in rural areas have remained tenuous'.<sup>259</sup> Land in South Africa is considered the cornerstone of its reconstruction and development and recognized as the basis of their social identity.<sup>260</sup> This implies amongst other matters that the Government is willing to recognise long-term historical ownership to land, even if it is not formally recognised by law.<sup>261</sup> There is also recognition that especially in the predominantly white commercial farming areas a crisis is severe in that '(e)vications have reached endemic proportions' which are still mainly based on a bias in the law system towards right of owners.<sup>262</sup> Some of the evictions can be specifically attributed to 'white farmers switching from crop and cattle farming to game farming or forestry'.<sup>263</sup> The laws governing land-use planning also tend to favour commercial farmers to the detriment of blacks.<sup>264</sup> After the 1994 elections especially, everybody began to claim to own the land. 'One group may claim ownership because they have traditionally owned the land for generations, another because Pretoria awarded the land to them and gave them documents to this effect. In other situations, there are people who were accepted within tenure systems as 'refugees' 60 years ago who now claim independent rights to stay there, while the 'host' owners want to use the land for agricultural purposes to which they have always aspired'.<sup>265</sup> Even before the 1994 elections there were struggles over land in South Africa, but these have mostly been ignored by the mainstream historians. The active role of blacks in the struggle over land was put 'away in the locations', escaping official notice by government and scholarship. A study in the Transkeian Territories from around the turn of the century shows that '(p)eople clung tenaciously to their rural identities and productive

resources, and questions of land and livestock continued to dominate their political responses'.<sup>266</sup> This should not come as a surprise because 'African people claim land as their birthright which extends to ancestral rights'.<sup>267</sup> If an individual was an accepted member of the community, he or she could always claim and was entitled to share in the land of the community and its natural resources, but strict individual tenure was not an option. This is where African and European perspectives on land are diametrically opposed. In European capitalist development land had increasingly been designated absolute property, a form of capital, and with that transition had become part of a market and thus exchangeable. 'Purchase of a commodity on the market confers absolute right of property over that commodity to the individual. The right of property is enshrined in law and the value of property determined in the process of exchange without reference to its actual or potential use'.<sup>268</sup> Originating from the Romantic ideas of landscape as being in control of the land, it now became just another dimension of control over capital and with it came a sense of being in control of the 'very processes of nature'<sup>269</sup> and of taming the wilderness.<sup>270</sup>

Amidst the abundance of private land ownership in South Africa, the Natal Parks Board (NPB), part of South African Government, falling under the Ministry of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, has carried out its conservation work since its official inception in 1947, in the formally protected areas which comprised only some 6% of the land surface of Natal.<sup>271</sup> The only times it ever ventured beyond these confines was when it had to deal with 'problem animals', wildlife which had strayed from the protected area and was causing problems in areas with human habitation, and for fisheries. The division between NPB and private landowners was substantial. The two parties were virtually at war with each other because to most farmers wildlife represented more of a threat to their operations than that it was something to conserve. The NPB was the controlling body which came with the law in its hand to tell them what to do or not to do with wildlife on their own property. The nickname in Afrikaans of the *Nasionale Parkeraad* was the *Nasionale Varkeraad*.<sup>272</sup> A game ranger in Natal was seen as a 'social pariah'.<sup>273</sup> Farmers were not the only ones who did not like the game rangers. The latter were in equal odium with the black communities. 'The apartheid system in many cases fostered animosity and bitterness between conservation organisations and the black communi-

257 pp. 9 and 54, Department of Land Affairs (1997), *White paper on South African land policy*. Jacobs (1999: 8 & 9) adds that the '(a)dmistration segregation came with the passage of the Natives Administration Act of 1927' and '(b)y 1936, then, racial segregation had created a separate administration for Africans and determined a broad division of territory'. Minnaar also recognises the Native Trust and Land Act, no. 18 of 1936 as a crucial act explaining current imbalances in access to land, Minnaar 1994: 27.

258 pp. 21, Torres, S. (1994), Land, a question of historical inheritance or legal right, In: Minnaar 1994.

259 Department of Land Affairs 1997: II.

260 Ibid: 7 'Land does not only form the basis of our wealth, but also our security, pride and history'.

261 Ibid: 61.

262 Ibid: 31 and 64.

263 Minnaar 1994: 49.

264 Department of Land Affairs 1997: 77.

265 Ibid: 31. 266 pp. 1 and 3, Beinart, W. & Bundy, C. (eds) (1987), *Hidden struggles in rural South Africa. Politics and popular movements in the Transkei & Eastern Cape 1890-1930*, London: James Currey; Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press; Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

266 pp. 1 and 3, Beinart, W. & Bundy, C. (eds) (1987), *Hidden struggles in rural South Africa. Politics and popular movements in the Transkei & Eastern Cape 1890-1930*, London: James Currey; Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press; Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

267 Torres 1994: 23. Or in the words of Toren about the similar Fijian notion of land, 'people are the land's very substance (which) does not allow one to alienate it'. Land contains their personal identity, pp. 164 & 171-173, Toren, T (1995), Seeing the ancestral sites: transformations in Fijian notions of the land, in: Hirsch, E. & O'Hanlon, M. (eds), *The anthropology of landscape. Perspectives on place and space*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

268 pp. 63, 199 & quotation 43-44, Cosgrove, D.E. (1984), *Social formation and symbolic landscape*, London, Sydney: Croom Helm.

269 Ibid: 236.

270 Ibid: 170.

271 Bourquin a.o. 1985: 1.

272 Interview with Conservancy Officer of the NPB, 23 March 1998.

273 pp. 4, Player in Draper, M. (December 1998), Zen and the art of garden province maintenance - the soft intimacy of hard men in the wilderness of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa (1952-1997), *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 24 (4).

ty'.<sup>274</sup> With respect to private land the NPB suspected that there was still a wealth of wildlife and flora outside their protected areas, but they could not even make a soundly based estimate.<sup>275</sup> There were some changes at the beginning of the sixties, more requests were made to the NPB to assist private landowners in matters related to wildlife on their properties, ranging from problem animals to advice about game-birds and in 1965 the NPB started an advisory section involving a farm game biologist and a technician.<sup>276</sup> Over the years requests for advice mounted and in 1971 the NPB decided to 'zone' the province in to nine zones of an average of 5 220 km<sup>2</sup>, each zone having its own two conservation officers.<sup>277</sup> In their zones the conservation officers were still confronted with many individual private landowners, whom they had to try to reach with their campaigns for environmental awareness and the like. However, these two officers did not have the time, the resources or the physical possibilities to visit, control or patrol all these farmers separately on a regular basis. If they could persuade farmers to work together or pool their resources, it was possible for them to visit combined farmers which would make life more easy for the NPB.<sup>278</sup> Many of the problems of individual farmers were the same everywhere. Control of poaching on their property was the number one problem. For that reason, to stimulate co-operation between farmers the first activity of the NPB, in the person of Nick Steele, was to draw up a 'Farm Patrol Plan' in 1975, in which landowners were advised 'of ways of combating poaching and conserving wildlife in a co-operative manner with their neighbours'.<sup>279</sup> The plan did not meet with the unanimous enthusiasm of the private landowners straightaway. The turning point only came in 1978 when farmers in the Balgowan area in Natal did join hands to curb poaching as 'snaring had become common and local labourers often hunted with packs of dogs'<sup>280</sup> and formed the first conservancy, the Balgowan Conservancy on the 14 August 1978, by jointly applying the recommendations formulated in the Farm Patrol Plan. Since then the conservancy idea has caught on like a house on fire all over Natal, and has also spread to other provinces in South Africa and other countries in southern Africa. In 1994 there were a recorded 168 conservancies in Natal, comprising 1.4 million hectares of land.<sup>281</sup> In an interview with the Conservancy Officer of the Natal Parks Board in 1998, he mentioned that there were approximately 380 conservancies around the country, most of them, 220, still in KwaZulu-Natal.<sup>282</sup> The concept is also applied in Namibia and Zimbabwe, but not to the extent it has caught on in South Africa.

274 pp. 68, Pretorius, S. (1994), Conservation and resource allocation: parks and people, In: Minnaar 1994.

275 Ibid.

276 Bourquin i.a. 1985: 2.

277 Ibid.

278 Interview with Conservancy Officer of the NPB, 23 March 1998.

279 pp. 1, Markham, R.W. (November 1986), Establishing a wildlife conservancy, in: *Wildlife Management. Technical Guides for Farmers*, no. 18. Pietermaritzburg, Natal Parks Board. 'Neighbours' in this quotation, to make it perfectly plain, are neighbouring commercial farmers and it does certainly not refer to neighbouring communities of communal farmers.

280 pp. 22, Kotzé, S. (1993), Conservancies in Natal. The origins and application of a component in informal wildlife conservation, unpublished BA Thesis, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg. Because this is, so far, the most in-depth study of the origins of the conservancy concept in Natal, I shall make quite extensive use of this thesis.

281 Davies, G. (1994), Editorial, *The Guineafowl: Natal Conservancies Association*, no. 2.

282 Interview with Conservancy Officer of the NPB, 4 March 1998.

A private wildlife conservancy (from now on called 'conservancy') may be defined as 'a voluntary, co-operative environmental management of an area by that community and its users group'.<sup>283</sup> This rather abstract and academic definition is brought down to earth for farmers in a brochure issued by the Natal Parks Board in which it gives recommendations on wildlife management to farmers and in which the conservancy concept is described as 'a group of farms on which neighbouring landowners have pooled some of their resources for the purpose of conserving wildlife on their combined property'.<sup>284</sup> After this definition launched in the brochure, it is unequivocal that employing game guards by the co-operating farmers to try and stop poaching activities is very central to the conservancy concept.<sup>285</sup> Landowners actually link up in a conservancy only to be able to hire and pay for the services of game guards together. This was the reason for the founding of the first conservancy, the Balgowan Conservancy in 1978, based on the recommendations of the Farm Patrol Plan by the Natal Parks Board. The agricultural activities on the different properties, and not wildlife utilisation as such, had in first instance to pay for the conservation effort.

The Balgowan Conservancy owes its existence mainly to one particular landowner, Tony Kerr<sup>286</sup>, who tried to motivate and convince his neighbour landowners to join him in his effort to curb poaching on their land.<sup>287</sup> This took him quite some time, from 1975 to the official inauguration of the Balgowan Conservancy on 14 August 1978. It was when one of his neighbours, a professional lawyer, Colonel Francis, took a keen interest in Kerr's proposal and contacted the NPB, in December 1977, to see if it would support the idea, that it started to gain momentum. The NPB reacted favourably and suggested they have a look at the Farm Patrol Plan, written by Nick Steele in 1975 and was the first document to suggest conservation on private land in South Africa. The attractiveness of the plan to farmers was that it did not interrupt their normal farming activities or take up much of their time, while it could bring them the advantage of 'reduced poaching, stock theft, arson, trespassing, vandalism, and theft of crops, timber and fencing (...)'. At the same time flora and fauna would be protected, 'and that's what 'in it' for the conservation authorities'.<sup>288</sup> By introducing his Farm Patrol Plan to Kerr and Francis, Steele is

283 pp. 1, Natal Parks Board (1993), *Guide lines for the formation of a conservancy*, Pietermaritzburg: Natal Parks Board. This definition does not confine conservancies to rural areas alone. Nowadays there are also urban and even industrial conservancies based on the concept of co-operative environmental management by a community. When I speak of conservancies in this thesis though, I confine myself to the rural ones.

284 Markham, November 1986: 1.

285 At the Annual General Meeting of the Natal Conservancy Association, 18 May 1999, it became clear that crime is still considered the paramount problem facing farmers and reason number one for joining hands in a conservancy. There are conservancies, and I already suggested this development in the section on poaching earlier in this chapter, which have replaced game-guards by security firms. These latter are not environmentally oriented, but are oriented on policing people. Again wildlife management increasingly turning into people management.

286 Tony Kerr received the *Conservationist of the Year* award from the Natal Branch of the *Wildlife Society of South Africa* in 1986, 'because of his insight and hard work in assisting to get conservancies off the ground in Natal', *The Natal Wildlife Conservancies Association Newsletter*, 1986, no. 4. It was named *The Guineafowl* in 1994.

287 This section is based on Kotzé 1993: 18-28.

288 pp. 23, Gosling, M. (1984), Self-help conservation, *Farmer's Weekly*, 28 September 1984.



rightly seen as one of the main architects of the conservancy concept.<sup>289</sup> At the inauguration of the Balgovan Conservancy Steele represented the NPB and was asked to give a presentation about how the Conservancy would proceed from there on. He basically put forward his ideas, formulated in his Farm Patrol Plan with which the Balgovan Conservancy carried on, and this marked the beginning of the rapid spread of conservancies first in Natal and later in other provinces in South Africa, and then in other countries in southern Africa.

In 1978 conservancies began to flourish in Natal and in 1982 the NPB initiated and launched a representative and facilitating body: the Natal Wildlife Conservancy Association, which right from the outset produced a Newsletter. The Newsletter began with some eight to ten A4 pages held together by one staple in the top left corner. It has grown more luxurious over time. A bit later, a second staple was added and now the Newsletter was held together by two staples in the left side of the pages. In the first issue of 1985 a gracious duiker featured on the front page. Since 1988 every newsletter has been decorated with the special South African conservancy logo, the guinea fowl. In 1986 the NCA started a logo competition. The Roads Department in Natal was approached and they were willing to place standard conservancy road signs at the entrances of all conservancies in Natal. The word 'conservancy' would not appear on the signboard, but only the logo with perhaps the name of the conservancy (this latter did not come to pass). The winning logo design would earn R200,-. One of the requirements was that the design should be 'simple and clear' and the use of colour was not necessary. They gave a few examples on the page, all of them silhouettes of animals, like a rhino head, a kudu head (looks too much like the kudu logo of Kruger National Park) and a guinea fowl which later on wins the competition (see figure 5).

Obviously there has been no better entries than the ones they showed as an example.<sup>290</sup> In 1988 road signs with the logo are put in place at the various location around Natal and one conservancy member relates in a newsletter how it went with their conservancy. 'I want to share a small discussion I had with the local (...) Roads Department foreman. This department is, at the moment, straightening and widening our district road. The discussion went something like this. Foreman to me, while waiting for a roadside meeting with engineers, surveyors etc. right down to the roads superintendent. 'You know Mr. Green, these guinea fowl warning signs have arrived at the depot and my boss says he can't remember where the complaints came from to put them up. He suggests we drive around the district and where we see a lot of guinea fowl near the road,

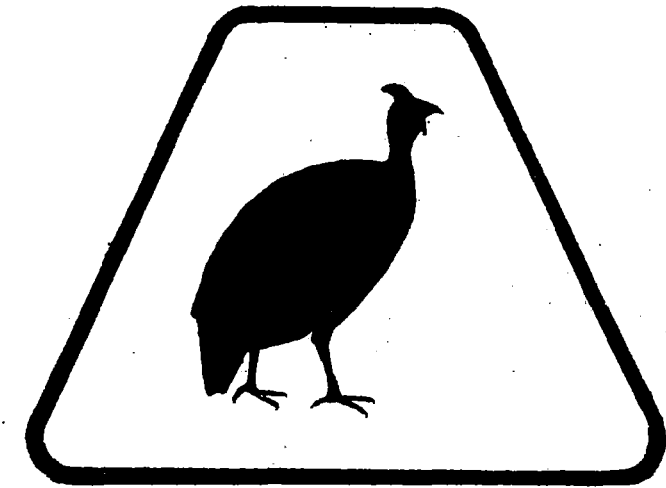


Figure 5 Conservancy road sign in South Africa

we erect the signboards. If they are not in the correct position the public will soon complain again'. (...) I replied 'Aren't they conservancy signs?' 'What is a conservancy?'<sup>291</sup>

In April 1989 the NCA registered the 100th conservancy, after which the editorial at the beginning of the newsletter noted that, 'My gut feeling is that conservancies have started off in a rather humble way – but will become a real force in nature conservation'.<sup>292</sup> In 1993 the newsletter became a more professional looking A5 size. From the third issue in 1997 the newsletter was sponsored by a commercial forestry firm, Sappi, which made it possible to improve on the quality of the paper drastically and to work with a colour. The professionalisation of the newsletter can be used as a metaphor of the professionalisation of conservancies itself. It started as an initiative to curb poaching and protect wildlife by joining hands to hire game guards. The operation was paid for by the core agricultural activities of the landowner. Gradually the idea shifted towards letting the wildlife pay for itself, mainly through hunting. Texts about promoting hunting activities in conservancies began to appear in the newsletter from 1985 onwards. In the first issue of the newsletter in 1985 the editorial on the first page starts with stating that '(t)he hunting season is with us once again. Many hunters will be out shooting the various species of game animals available to them. Now is the time for conservancies to utilise their resource in a wise manner, for instance, by putting some monetary value to game. The money so earned can help pay for an individual's conservancy fees or it can be pooled in the conservancy central fund. By doing the latter the conservancy will start

289 pp. 3, Astrup, M. (1997), A tribute to Malamba, *News from the Natal Parks Board*, no. 42. Nick Steele died, age 63, on 3 June 1997. In the obituary he is mentioned not only for his role in the development of conservancies but also for his strong belief in the role of field rangers 'who worked at the coal face of conservation (...)'. In the obituary in the Guinea fowl (pp. 12-13), the newsletter of the Natal Conservancy Association, he is also remembered for his 'policy of sharing' which he wrote when he was director of the Bureau of Natural Resources (now Department of Nature Conservation) 'which allows local communities access to proclaimed conservation areas to harvest natural resources' (*The Guinea fowl, Newsletter of the Natal Conservancies Association*, no. 3 of 1997). This was obviously at a later stage in his career, because when he advocated the establishment of conservancies, he argued that farmers should primarily start working together to keep local communities at bay.

290 Information in this section based on *NCA Newsletter*, no. 5, 1986.

291 Information in this section based on *NCA Newsletter*, no. 5, 1988.

292 *NCA Newsletter*, no. 1, 1989.

paying for itself rather than having agriculture pay for conservation. Hunting should be viewed as a management tool aiding the aims of conservation.<sup>293</sup>

Only part of the battle had been won. To become a sustainable force in nature conservation in the socio-political context of South Africa it is important that the conservancy idea, which is almost exclusively a white men's affair<sup>294</sup>, should also become politically acceptable to and appreciated by the black majority living around these conservancies. But the two core elements and developments in conservancies in South Africa in the seventies and the eighties are actually not conducive at all to realising this potential. The first core issue in the development of conservancies in South Africa is their emphasis on the role of game guards as suggested in the Farm Patrol Plan, which obviously matched with a need felt among private landowners at the time that they had to do something about poaching on their land. The second is the later development of hunting as a form to make conservancies economically feasible and sustainable. Both developments in the first instance only detached conservancies further from the surrounding communities. They exacerbated to a general and persistent image of conservancies as bastions of white power, based on segregation and splendid isolation.

### Game guards and Poaching: Relations Between Conservancies and Neighbouring Communities

Journalist Clarke Gittens wrote an article in the *Farmers Weekly* in 1987, extolling the benefits to farmers of starting conservancies which opens by reiterating what is considered the *raison d'être* of conservancies: 'Do you fancy a marked drop in your crop and/or stock theft? Continuous control over fencing and water troughs? A way of discouraging vagrants on seldom-used sections of the farm?'<sup>295</sup> The answer seems to be to set up a conservancy which makes game guards the 'framework or skeleton for conservancy life' as the NCA Newsletter puts it.<sup>296</sup> The early years of conservancies are marked by an almost obsessive attention for game guards, their numbers, their training, their activities and their effectiveness in curbing poaching on the properties. The poaching to which they refer falls under the category of what I have called earlier subsistence poaching which is basically related to poverty. In other words, a form of poaching which will only stop with increasing levels of economic development or otherwise 'has to be stopped' or rather forcefully prevented by securing borders. It is the latter option which was chosen by the early conservancies. The first NCA Newsletter is almost completely devoted to game guards.<sup>297</sup> When the number of conservancies began to be mentioned on page 3 in 1978, the following details are given: number of conservancies, number of landowners involved and, even before the size in hectares is given, *the number of guards*. In 1978 the Balgowan Conservancy started with one game guard. In 1981, there were

already sixty-three conservancies in Natal, which employed some 172 game guards. The rest of the newsletter is devoted to subjects related to game guards like their work contracts, training by the NPB on page 4, progress report on their training on page 6, and an article by Nick Steele about game guard administration on pages 7 and 8. The remainder of the Newsletter is occupied by reports from different conservancies which all talk about game guard activities. Mr. Barry Raw, for instance, reports on the Kamberg Conservancy in which he writes about their satisfaction with the game guards who are doing such an excellent job. The conservancy has been in operation for eighteen months and he summarises what the guards have already achieved during that period. They have arrested several people in relation to thefts of maize, potato, cabbage, and fertilizer. In addition they have reported on broken fences on thirty occasions and removed 242 snares, some of them with decomposing animals still in them. Now that they have proved themselves worthy of such a step, the conservancy has decided to arm the two game guards. One with a single barrel shotgun and the other with an assegai (traditional short Zulu spear). These weapons are more than simply a reward for their achievement as guards, they are also 'to prove their status and hopefully stop the threats against them when patrolling near the black farms at Tendele and also to control the number of predators (...)'. This quotation pinpoints two things. In the first place, the surrounding communities are not happy with the game guards and that the relation between the landowner and the surrounding communities is tense, certainly not one dominated by mutual trust or positive reciprocal give-and-take. Secondly that the game guards seem to be first of all 'people guards' and only after that do they also have something to do with wildlife. The argument about the predators seems almost only a kind of afterthought by way of legitimising that the gun is not only meant as a deterrent towards the communities.

The communities do not seem to be hostile towards the game guards only in this particular conservancy, but in general. In Steele's article about game guard administration he warns the Conservancy Warden in charge of the game guards not to take corrective measures against game guards too easily after complaints made by the communities. 'There are always people who are prepared to fabricate stories to cause trouble. Their aim being to get rid of an irritating source of trouble to their own illegal acts like snaring and shebeens'.<sup>298</sup> This makes crystal clear why his Farm Patrol Plan hit the nail on the head in relation to experiences and perceptions of the landowners. It also betrays at least as clearly that the relations between landowners gathered in a conservancy and surrounding communities is (already) seriously distorted and that game guards may be a solution in one respect but there was a strong possibility they would aggravate the grievances and put the relation under extra strain. But this interpretation is never mentioned or even considered in any Newsletter. The opposite is true. In the fourth newsletter, one and a half page is devoted to the 'Conservancy record relating to anti-poaching work for 1982'. In general four categories are used to present the records: arrests made, convictions, hunting dogs shot, and snares removed. Dewdrop Conservancy, for instance, is recorded to have arrested four people, shot eleven dogs and removed 200

293 NCA Newsletter, no. 1, 1985.

294 It was only in the last issue of the *Guineafowl* in 1998 that the 'establishment of the first all black managed' conservancy could be announced.

295 pp. 22, Gittens, C. (1987), The benefits of conservancies, *Farmer's Weekly*, 23 January 1987.

296 NCA Newsletter, no. 3, 1987.

297 NCA Newsletter, no. 1, 1982. All the information in this section is taken from that first newsletter.

298 Compare with the story of Stevenson-Hamilton I quoted on page 145-146.

snare. Similar figures can be found for other conservancies.<sup>299</sup> All these figures and records seem to indicate that the game guards were being put under severe pressure by the communities through their normal activities and search for natural resources on private farmland. Not only the outside communities but also the farm labourers on the properties themselves were 'suspicious of the guards'. The latter maybe for the same reasons as the communities. As a solution some conservancies launched an educational programme for their farm labourers to inform them about and make them aware of nature conservation. On days specifically organised for the 'labour-gang supervisors' or *indunas*, farm labourers were especially invited to attend, first and foremost to receive The Message, but also because after the meeting they were offered a well-prepared bushbuck and were admonished by the speaker told them that 'the bushbuck would not have been there for them to eat, had it not been for their co-operation in the conservancy system'.<sup>300</sup> Concealed behind this last formulation seems to be the vested threat that the farmworkers themselves are also suspected of and known for their taking part in the illegal activities which the game guards are hired to stop them from pursuing such an ill-advised course. In the Warden's Annual Report of 1983-1984 of the Seaview Conservancy<sup>301</sup> it is said without any hesitation that '(t)he guards proved most unpopular amongst the farm labourers, who had had the run of the area for years'. It is mentioned that the guards caught 170 labourers for trespass on the farms, that they 'confiscated seventeen dangerous weapons' from them and that they 'minimised labour fighting over weekends and at nights'. Although the report says that things have changed for the better through a public relations offensive of 'talking and explaining', the relations between game guards and farm labourers remained sensitive. In a nutshell, game guards were and are put under pressure from the inside by farm labourers and from the outside by neighbouring communities.

Seen from this perspective, it is no wonder that many conservancies reported that a high proportion of their newly posted game guards, after having being trained at NPB, were absconding. This amounted to 17% and the main reasons were said to be a 'lack of job satisfaction and working conditions'. In the next newsletter it was mentioned that the 'wastage of trained game guards' was even as high as 25%.<sup>302</sup> Instead of putting the problem in a broader context and relating this percentage to the social pressures and the bad relationship with the surrounding communities, or even suggesting that there might be a correlation, they state with conviction that they 'feel that with a standardised wage, improved uniform and better accommodation conditions (...) this figure will drop'.<sup>303</sup> If not, than conservancies will 'run the risk of acquiring a reputation as bad employers and the Natal parks Board cannot incur the cost of training for a 25% wastage'.<sup>304</sup> As a solution to the problem they offer all tangible incentives, perhaps

because of lack of insight, without placing the problem in a broader context of relations between communal and commercial farmers. And at a later stage, in the nineties, as I already mentioned earlier when discussing the issue of poaching, several conservancies exchanged game guards for security firms, a move which further hardened the positions and relations between conservancies and neighbouring communities. This wider context of the development of conservancies in relation to their neighbours is never made explicit. In the second newsletter the then director of the NPB, Geddes Page, also writes nothing about the broader context in which conservancies seem to operate in South Africa but only mentions that the growth in the number of conservancies indicates that 'the need for better wildlife management on private land was overdue'. Furthermore, he notes that the understanding between the private sector and the NPB has improved which has not always been the case, as I already mentioned in the introduction of this section, and which he thinks is worthwhile. A complete inner-circle perspective only; a policy in the best tradition of the fines and fences approach in nature conservation.

### Towards Wildlife Utilisation in Conservancies

The trend towards devoting large sections of the NCA Newsletter to issues related to game guards gradually declines after 1983 and attention begins to turn towards other subjects related to running a successful conservancy. Two main subjects which make their debut in the Newsletter and which are important to my argument are the series of the NPB of Wildlife Management Technical Guides for farmers and the attention paid to possibilities of commercial hunting in conservancies.<sup>305</sup> In the Technical Guides we can see the gradual shift from strictly agricultural land use with game guards who are employed as a sideline to curb illegal activities on the property, towards a more wildlife-oriented land use.<sup>306</sup> In the years between 1982 and 1985 sixteen of these approximately sixty-two pages documents were prepared, fourteen of them between July 1984 and November 1985. The first was written for the Balgowan Conservancy in 1982 and the second for the Mooi River West Conservancy in July 1983, both by Price and Collinson.<sup>307</sup> The fourteen Guides produced between July 1984 and November 1985 were all the work Markham who was Conservancy Officer of the NPB at the time.<sup>308</sup> This rapid

305 Ibid: 2.

306 From a historical perspective it is a rather funny and meaningful coincidence that the first title in the series is *Management of Guineafowl on Farms*. In 1983, they didn't know yet that the guineafowl would become the symbol of conservancies in Natal in 1986.

307 Written by Price, M.A. and published Pietermaritzburg: NPB, Game and Fish Preservation Board, *The Eston-Beaumont Conservancy Management Guidelines* (October 1982); written by Price, M.A. & Collinson, R.H.F. and published Pietermaritzburg: NPB, Game and Fish Preservation Board, *The Balgowan Conservancy Management Guidelines* (October 1982); *Mooi River West Conservancy Management Guidelines* (July 1983).

308 Written by Markham, R.W. and published Pietermaritzburg: NPB, Game and Fish Preservation Board *Lowland East Conservancy Management Guidelines* (October 1983); *Upper Umvoti Conservancy Management Guidelines* (May 1984); *Caversham Conservancy Management Guidelines* (July 1984); *Mid Illova Conservancy Management Guidelines* (August 1984); *Mooi River Valley Conservancy Game Mammal Management Guidelines* (January 1985); *Seaview Conservancy Management Guidelines* (February 1985); *Dargle Conservancy Management Guidelines* (May 1985); *Baynesfield Wildlife Conservancy Management Guidelines* (vol. 1) (October 1985); *Besters Conservancy Management Guidelines* (vol. 1) (October 1985); *Ripplemead Conservancy Management Guidelines*

299 pp. 4-5, *NCA Newsletter*, no. 2, 1983. See also records of the Mooi River Valley Conservancy which indicates arrests being made between April and August 1983, mainly for hunting with dogs on the private property, pp. 5-6, *NCA Newsletter*, no. 3, 1983.

300 pp. 43, Wait, A. (1986), Farm workers given conservation message, *Farmers's Weekly*, 28 March 1986.

301 Included in *NCA Newsletter*, no. 2, 1984, pp. 8-9.

302 pp. 6, *NCA Newsletter*, no. 1, 1983.

303 pp. 3, *NCA Newsletter*, no. 2, 1982.

304 pp. 6, *NCA Newsletter*, no. 1, 1983.

production was made possible because the Guides were all written in the same format with minor variations depending on the particular conservancy. All of them contain chapters on the management of wildlife categories, like game mammals, game birds, problem animals and carnivores. Attention is also paid to categories of flora and how to manage, for instance, grasslands, forests and even in some instances how to cope with alien species of vegetation as in the Guidelines of the Bester Conservancy. The variation appears when the book describes a conservancy in a different habitat type like a coastal conservancy, i.e. Seaview Conservancy, or when attention has to be paid to certain historical aspects of the region in which the conservancy is situated. In the Guidelines for the Upper Umvoti Conservancy for instance, attention is drawn to stone tools found in the area from the Late Stone Age and in the Guidelines for the Lowland East Conservancy to stone tools and remains of settlements dating from the Early Stone Age up to the Late Iron Age. More recent history is also to be found in the latter conservancy and the history of the Voortrekkers in the Bushman's Valley and their fight with the Zulu impis in February 1838 is mentioned and described, emphasising the brave role played by Martinus Oosthuizen. The bronze plate which was erected at the battle site in 1967 is located in the conservancy. Finally, in one Guide the variation consists of being specifically devoted to game mammal management in the Mooi River Valley Conservancy.

In eight of the Guidelines, a separate leaflet about the possibility of commercial hunting in the conservancy is included.<sup>309</sup> This is not surprising considering the history of white men hunting in South Africa. Farmers live in that tradition and '(f)or thousands of farmers, hunting is a favourite pastime, even a part of their traditional and cultural way of life'.<sup>310</sup> As early as the third newsletter in 1983 there is cautious mention of the possibilities of commercial hunting in conservancies. In the minutes of a Conservancy Liaison Committee Meeting of 5 October 1984, held at NPB Headquarters at Queen Elizabeth Park in Pietermaritzburg, Markham writes cautiously: 'What are your views on hunting by recreational hunters on private land in Natal, especially within conservancies? Do you agree with having paying hunters being given the chance of taking off surplus game?'<sup>311</sup> Hunting at that time was mostly taking place on commercial game ranches and attracted mainly overseas clients. It was recognised that some trophies clients want to shoot either not occur on game ranches (grey rheebuck and oribi) or were not abundant enough to be harvested by hunting (common reedbuck and mountain reedbuck). These particular animals do occur in some conservancies in sufficiently large numbers to be harvested, and because they were highly sought-after, overseas clients were prepared to pay high prices to be able to hunt them. This could lead to significant financial gains for the conservancy. The less well-heeled local hunter could also be seen as a potential client whose wishes could be accommodated in conservan-

cies. Therefore it is advised that conservancies who want to harvest their wildlife in this way register their game with the co-ordinating body for these activities which is the NPB again.<sup>312</sup>

The leaflet in the Guidelines also gives an indication of prices for trophies and accommodation. It is interesting to note the differences in prices paid for trophies by local hunters and overseas clients. For the same blesbok, a local hunter pays R150,- while an overseas client pays R600,- for a male. For a grey duiker a local hunter pays R45,- while an overseas client is expected to pay R200,-. On average a overseas client is expected to pay three to four times as much for the same trophy. This indicated that developing commercial hunting in conservancies for overseas clients could be a lucrative activity. In the Newsletters of the NCA after 1984, hunting is increasingly advocated. In the second Newsletter of the NCA in 1984 Ian Goss, of the Goss Estates in the Magudu area suggests conservancies seriously consider hunting on their property, based on his own seven years' experiences with commercially hunting bushbuck, grey duiker and impala. Although these are nothing more than simply plains game, there is already indication in the text of suggesting more specialised packages of animals with real trophy value. At first he had just offered the wildlife which happened to roam his property, but now he seemed as if he was considering managing a more specific wildlife population with a nicely balanced mixture that people come and hunt for specific trophies and not just for the sport of hunting down any kind of animal. 'Bushbuck are of course the most-sought after game in the area, as the hunter's patience and skill are really put to the test. The bushbuck in the hunting area are very acceptable as trophy animals, having on average 355 mm (...) horns'. He suggests that 'some conservancies could follow the example'.<sup>313</sup> It might be interpreted symbolically in this respect that the first Newsletter in 1985 is decorated with a grey duiker. Not surprisingly the logical consequence is that it is precisely in this Newsletter as well that the Editorial on the first page is completely devoted to advocating commercial hunting in conservancies. Hunting is legitimised in the last sentence which says that '(h)unting should be viewed as a management tool aiding the aims of conservation'.<sup>314</sup> What they mean is that commercial hunting earns money hand over first which could be devoted to conservation. Since then hunting has become a regular and obviously accepted topic in the Newsletter. In a Newsletter in 1986, again symbolically, on the same page that Tony Kerr, who was behind the inception of the Balgowan Conservancy, is honoured for having received the *Conservationist of the Year Award* from the Wildlife Society of South Africa, there is an advertisement for 'A hunter's handbook' which is said to be 'a must for conservancies that need information on hunting'.<sup>315</sup> The hunting business is becoming ever more serious and not something which is done at random, but which is well-managed and demands large investments of money and time in terms of (re)stocking the conservancy with huntable wildlife. The focal point of further conservancy development seems to have become to integrate commercial hunting into the operation. In 1989 it is said in

(vol. 1) (October 1985); *Paddock Plains Conservancy Management Guidelines* (vol. 1) (November 1985); *Umgenyane Conservancy Management Guidelines* (vol. 1) (November 1985); *Boston Conservancy Management Guidelines* (Not Dated).

309 Besters Conservancy, Baynesfield Wildlife Conservancy, Boston Conservancy, Mid Illova Conservancy, Umgenyane Conservancy, Ripplemead Conservancy, Paddock Plains Conservancy, Dargle Conservancy and Mooi River Valley Conservancy.

310 pp. 10, *NCA Newsletter*, no. 5, 1987.

311 Included in *NCA Newsletter*, no. 5, 1984, pp. 2-3.

312 pp. 3, *NCA Newsletter*, no. 1, 1983.

313 pp. 10, *NCA Newsletter*, no. 2, 1984.

314 pp. 1, *NCA Newsletter*, no. 1, 1985.

315 pp. 5, *NCA Newsletter*, no. 4, 1986.

the Newsletter that '(g)ame auctions have recently become a part of farmers life (judging by the increased frequency of these events), just as supermarkets are part of modern shoppers' life. Both game auctions and supermarkets make it easier for buyers and sellers in that the wares are viewed choices are made (...). Farmers have counted their domestic stock, but not their game for over a century in South Africa. Domestic stock has always had an economic value attached to it whereas game has not! For instance, if a farmer knew that he could get R50,- for every daisy shot on his farm – the farmer would sooner, rather than later, want to know how many R50,-s were running on his property and whether or not the population was viable (...) remember it (game HW) now has an aesthetic as well as an economic value attached to it'.<sup>316</sup> The hunting frenzy continues in a Newsletter in 1994, which is now called the *Guineafowl*, where the Editorial tells that the Conservancy Officer has been to two international hunting conventions, Safari Club International and Dallas Safari Club, which are portrayed as probably the biggest in the United States of America.<sup>317</sup>

The *Professional Hunters Association of South Africa* (PHASA) has been keeping records of average trophy fees since 1995. This is quite a difficult task to accomplish because not all of the hunting businesses are willing to say what prices they ask for trophies. Some will only give them for some common species, but not for the rarer species because those prices are more subject to negotiation between hunting operator and client than are the general trophies. For that reason, prices can vary and since 1996 they simply indicate the range in between which the prices fall. Some animals are included in one list and not in the other. For instance lion trophy prices are included in the figures for 1995 but not for 1996 or 1997. The caracal is included in 1995 and 1996, but not in 1997. See figure 6 for comparative details.<sup>318</sup>

Figure 6 Average trophy fees 1995-1997 in South Africa (PHASA)

Species (amounts in USD)	Avg. Trophy Fee 1995	Avg. Trophy Fee 1996 (low)	Avg. Trophy Fee 1996 (high)	Range Trophy Fee 1996	Avg. Trophy Fee 1997 (low)	Avg. Trophy Fee 1997 (high)	Range Trophy Fee 1997
Baboon	80	55	105	50-125	65	100	50-115
Blesbok	285	230	330	150-400	25	420	200-450
Blesbok White	550	565	750	400-950	595	670	580-700
Bontebok	1250	1185	1575	1000-1700	870	1400	750-1600
Buffalo	4500	3250	5400	3000-6000	3000	6450	2500-6995
Bushbuck	485	480	600	380-750	505	665	450-750
Bushpig	290	220	320	110-400	250	395	180-500
Caracal	225	150	240	150-280			
Cheetah	2750						
Civit	210	145	375	140-400			

Species (amounts in USD)	Avg. Trophy Fee 1995	Avg. Trophy Fee 1996 (low)	Avg. Trophy Fee 1996 (high)	Range Trophy Fee 1996	Avg. Trophy Fee 1997 (low)	Avg. Trophy Fee 1997 (high)	Range Trophy Fee 1997
Deer, Fallow	385	365	600	250-795	345	500	300-500
Duiker, Blue	550	625	730	475-800	575	800	480-850
Duiker, Grey	165	120	220	100-275	150	220	100-275
Duiker, Red	660	600	775	400-800	515	785	450-800
Eland	1465	1260	1650	1150-2000	1400	1750	1200-1995
Gemsbok	840	780	1025	600-1300	785	950	700-1300
Genet		75	175	50-200			
Giraffe	2500	2425	3115	2500-3400	1595	3150	1200-4000
Grysbok, Cape	610	545	935	400-1000	565	740	470-850
Grysbok, Sharps	565	350	500	350-500	485	700	470-700
Hartebeest, Red	740	695	1075	550-1250	725	880	645-1100
Hyena	430						
Impala	210	210	310	135-350	215	315	135-350
Jackal	60	50	105	50-150	50	105	50-150
Klipspringer	500	515	650	350-700	490	650	400-700
Kudu, Eastern Cape	815	715	950	695-1100	825	980	800-1200
Kudu, Greater	880	875	985	600-1250	905	1150	875-1250
Lechwe, Red	1380	1210	1565	1000-1600	1215	1450	1200-1600
Leopard	2880	1450	3075	2000-3500	2250	3300	2000-3800
Lion		3750	6000	3000-6000			
Nyala (male)	1270	1265	1585	1050-1700	1265	1585	1100-1700
Oribi	725	825	1000	750-1000	645	1285	570-1500
Ostrich	700	600	1375	350-1700	485	1050	300-1250
Reedbuck, Common	480	490	645	400-745	450	625	350-700
Reedbuck, Mountain	360	375	515	300-570	340	485	250-600
Rhebok, Vaal	645	590	790	500-850	635	800	570-850
Roan	6825						
Sable	5385	3500	5165	3500-5500	3250	4500	3000-5500
Springbok	225	230	325	200-375	210	325	150-375
Springbok, Black	435	340	580	250-700	420	535	350-600
Springbok, White	475	355	585	350-650	450	600	400-650
Steinbok	175	200	285	125-375	185	250	100-275
Suni, Livingstones	790	725	1050	675-1200	730	950	600-1000
Tsessebe	1720						
Warthog	200	150	225	110-275	200	260	150-350
Waterbuck, Common	1235	1210	1450	1000-1650	1250	1545	1000-1800
Wildebeest, Black	695	635	865	500-1050	710	845	600-950
Wildebeest, Blue	725	675	875	550-1050	700	875	570-1100
Zebra, Burchell's	820	775	1100	600-1250	795	940	700-1000
Zebra, Hartmann's	1050						

316 pp. 1, *NCA Newsletter*, no. 3, 1989.

317 pp. 2, *The Guineafowl*, no. 1, 1994.

318 *Professional Hunters Association of South Africa* (PHASA).

Brenda Crook, an American biologist from Colorado State University, in a paper in 1995, comes to the conclusion that 'recreational hunting and culling' are the 'most obvious' ways of earning revenues in conservancies and which is encouraged and facilitated by the NPB.<sup>319</sup> In 1997 the Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, also explicitly supported the role of hunting in South Africa by saying that 'hunting in SA was making a real contribution to the protection of ecosystems and wildlife' and that the draft policy on conservation contained a sentence which read '(g)overnment ... will continue to support programmes that utilise indigenous wildlife sustainably for subsistence purposes and commercial gain'.<sup>320</sup> One of the ways the NPB stimulates conservancies to develop hunting activities, apart from advice and the like, is giving discounts, of about 15-20% at wildlife auctions.<sup>321</sup> In figure 7 what the prices for the several species were in South Africa in 1997 are shown.<sup>322</sup>

Figure 7 Average prices for wildlife at wildlife auctions in South Africa, 1997

Species	Average price in Rand*	Highest price in Rand*	Lowest price in Rand*
Blesbok	613	1.020	380
Blesbok (yellow)	1.556	1.600	1.520
Blesbok (white)	793	1.250	550
Bontebok	2.450	2.450	2.450
Buffalo (FMD free)	73.854	150.000	26.000
Bushpig	1.250	1.250	1.250
Duiker (grey)	724	1.100	400
Eland	4.025	7.800	2.400
Gemsbok	2.635	4.600	1.800
Giraffe	9.323	13.000	6.000
Impala	627	1.850	425
Klipspringer	4.363	6.000	3.200
Kudu	1.889	4.400	1.400
Lechwe	3.500	3.600	3.450
Nyala	3.129	6.300	3.100
Ostrich	913	3.000	180
Red Hartebeest	2.485	3.750	1.500
Reedbuck	2.315	3.100	2.000
Reedbuck	1.301	3.000	375
Rhinoceros (white)	74.309	160.000	41.000
Roan	26.400	38.000	15.000

319 pp. 5, Crook, B. (May 1995), The conservancy concept, with special emphasis on Natal, South Africa, unpublished paper, Department of Wildlife Biology, Colorado State University.

320 *Bushcraft Mag-e-Zine Archive News Article*, courtesy of the Business Day, Government support for role of hunting in SA, 16 April 1997, taken from Internet: <http://www.wildnetfrica.co.za/bushcraft>.

321 Interview with Conservancy Officer of the NPB, 4 March 1998.

322 Based on *Game & Hunt*, January - February 1997, vol. 4/1, pp. 11.

Species	Average price in Rand*	Highest price in Rand*	Lowest price in Rand*
Sable	24.892	36.000	13.000
Springbok	403	700	220
Springbok (black)	629	1.500	500
Springbok (white)	1.371	1.875	770
Steinbok	1.107	1.700	657
Warthog	500	500	500
Waterbuck	3.358	5.700	2.000
Wildebeest (black)	2.219	3.200	2.000
Wildebeest (blue)	2.226	5.800	1.800
Zebra (hartman)	2.388	3.500	2.000

\* 1 Rand average 1997= 0,217 US\$

Through this close co-operation between the NPB and conservancies, the latter have been, able to develop at a much higher pace than would otherwise have been possible. The first has been able to extend its influence on wildlife management in the province outside the sphere of formally protected areas considerably. Both could be happy with this outcome.

One message which came across loud and clear was that local communities surrounding these conservancies were not 'part of the deal'. In fact, the widening of the gap between conservancy and neighbouring communities seems to form the baseline of conservancy development. In the first place by the employment of game guards who tried to prevent the communities from poaching and in the process, sealed the borders between the two. Later, in the eighties, when hunting was being increasingly promoted and considered a lucrative economic activity for conservancies to pay their way, the separation became even more visible and rigorous through the erection of fences around hunting areas to prevent wildlife causing trouble in neighbouring communities, but also to prevent people from coming in. Commercial hunting and the involvement of communities seemed fairly antithetical developments. According to a NPB officer working on the programme of Community Conservation 'a fence is the bottomline for conservationists and for the communities'. In the particular context of KwaZulu-Natal there is an interesting connotation to fences in relation to the Zulu language. In Zulu the word for fence is *icingo*, which means the material the fence is made of. *Shaya icingo* means 'hitting the wire' and is their word for communication. A conservancy fence is thus a very potent way of communicating to the neighbouring communities in this context. And communities talk back through fences. This officer told the story of how the NPB had created Forums to be used as a platform to talk about problems and other issues of communities. In the Forums NPB Officers as well as community representatives participate. The NPB thought that the community was setting the agenda for a particular meeting. So the NPB was satisfied about the progress these Platforms made and also thought that the communities were happy. All the while these communities were damaging fences and fence material was stolen. In the end it came out that this was

their way of indicating that they wanted a more senior NPB representative to attend the Forum to speak with.<sup>323</sup> In the domain of formal conservation there was an increasingly louder, international call during the second half of the eighties urging local communities in wildlife management directly, or at least grant them some of the economic benefits from the activities of wildlife utilisation by way of indirect involvement. The underlying assumption was that if they were involved in this way they would sense the monetary value of wildlife and as a result feel the necessity to protect this valuable asset. In the process they would develop a more positive conservation ethos. In the formally protected areas this knowledge has resulted in all kinds of formal and structural programmes to involve neighbouring communities, one way or the other, in the process of wildlife management. In August 1994 the National Parks Board of South Africa inaugurated a Social Ecology Section.<sup>324</sup> The Board said it recognise(s) that poverty is the greatest threat to bio-diversity and environmental integrity. *For that reason* a policy has been formulated which will integrate the human needs and aspirations of national parks' neighbours in its conservation mandate'.<sup>325</sup> Obviously not the people as such who are the prime reason but their being a threat to the Board's conservation principles. No such or any other programme has been developed so far in the context of private wildlife conservancies. There are individual conservancies which embark on similar programmes, but there is no official policy regarding neighbouring communities at the level of the NCA for instance. The subject is also never writ large in the newsletter. One conservancy in KwaZulu-Natal thought it wise to engage someone to start a community relations programme so they attracted an employee for that job and sent him to all kinds of courses to learn the 'tricks of the trade'. After he had finished all that and had been working only three weeks, he was found dead, shot, with his two assistants in his brand new 4X4. They never found out who exactly did it or for what reason, but the fact remains that a community relations officer was murdered.<sup>326</sup>

The conservancy concept was taken over from South Africa by Namibia and Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe will be dealt with in the next chapter. Namibia is of interest to us because conservancies there are not only or even primarily developed on private land, but are specifically stimulated by the government on communal land. It is this latter development especially which is supported by the Namibian Government. So the local communities are involved as prime actor themselves instead of being granted certain privileges in the hope that they will be converted to conservation ideals.

### Communal Conservancies in Namibia

Although the issue in this section is communal conservancies, the discussion has to start with private ones. Namibia's wildlife legislation allows commercial farmers a great deal of freedom to use and benefit from the wildlife on their land. If farmers are willing

323 Interview with NPB Officer, 18 March 1998.

324 pp. 31, *National Parks Board of South Africa, Annual Report 1993-1994*.

325 pp. 49, *National Parks Board of South Africa, Annual Report 1994-1995*, italics added.

326 Personal communication with Gary Davies (NPB), 2 November 1998.

to meet certain conditions, mainly related, how appropriate in the context of this thesis!, to fencing, they then obtain the right to derive an income from game on their land. The income in the conservancy is derived mainly, some 65%, from commercial hunting.<sup>327</sup> The required fences are again adding to and symbolically marking the social differentiation between the parties on either side of the fence, i.e. private landowners, mainly white, and black communities. They are a central cause of mistrust and the generation of mutually negative images, which in turn hamper the growth of a positive relationship based on reciprocal exchange.<sup>328</sup>

Most hunting clients are drawn from German-speaking countries, mainly because Namibia used to be a colony of Germany, known as German South West Africa, until after the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. It then came under the mandate of South Africa until Independence in 1990. The legislative privileges on private property are mainly the result of that period. This meant that investing in wildlife utilisation on private land was economically viable in Namibia. This has now resulted in the fact that more than 70% of Namibia's wildlife is concentrated on private land. The state also benefited from this because much of the money earned in wildlife utilisation was in foreign currency, in 1992 an estimated N\$ 41 million.<sup>329</sup> The industry is almost totally independent of government funding. One of the latest development in this industry is the emergence of private wildlife conservancies.<sup>330</sup> At the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), Directorate of Environmental Affairs (DEA) Mick de Jager is responsible for investigating 'the potential of wildlife management and utilisation on commercial farms throughout the country'. In 1996 there were three<sup>331</sup> formally recognised private wildlife conservancies in Namibia.<sup>332</sup> In 1997 this has risen to eight; in 1999 twelve.<sup>333</sup> The MET developed a conservancy policy. This policy was simultaneously meant to form the basis of communal conservancies as a form of Community Based National Resource Management (CBNRM).<sup>334</sup> In the policy document of the MET this is formulated as follows '(a) conservancy is a group of farms on which neighbouring landowners have pooled their resources for the purpose of conserving and utilising wildlife on their combined prop-

327 Interview with Chairman of CANAM, 8 October 1997.

328 Compare what were the results of fencing of communal range lands in northern Namibia. The erecting of a fence as such can already be seen as a statement of power, because it indicates that you have got the money to pay for it. Straightaway people are economically and socially differentiated which inhibits the relationship in terms of trust and reciprocity, Tapscott, C. & Hangula, L. (1994), *Fencing of communal range land in northern Namibia: social and ecological implications*, Social Sciences Division Discussion Paper, no. 6, November 1994, Windhoek: University of Namibia.

329 No average for 1992, but in March 1999, 1N\$= 0.162 US\$.

330 pp. 3-6, Jones, B.T.B. (1995), *Wildlife management, utilization and tourism in communal areas: benefits to communities and improved resource management*, Research Discussion Paper, no. 5, Windhoek: Directorate of Environmental Affairs, Ministry of Environment and Tourism.

331 Ngarangombe Conservancy, Khomas Hochland Conservancy and the Waterberg Conservancy.

332 pp. 104-105, Jager, de, M., (1996), The establishment and operation of conservancies in Namibia, *Namibia Environment*, vol. 1, Windhoek: Directorate of Environmental Affairs, Ministry of Environment and Tourism.

333 pp. 4, Jones in Sullivan, S. (1999), How sustainable is the communalising discourse of 'new' conservation? The masking of difference, inequality and aspiration in the fledgling 'conservancies' of Namibia, Paper presented for the conference on 'displacement, forced settlement and conservation', St. Anne's College, University of Oxford, 9-11 September 1999.

334 Jones 1995: 5.

erties. The conservancy concept does not have to be restricted to the commercial farming areas, but can be extended to communal land as well'.<sup>335</sup> With this form of CBNRM the MET wants to go one step further than give only certain privileges to neighbouring communities. Then it would be transposed into a strategy 'in order to legitimise the park in the eyes of the local community'. Only if communities have real responsibilities in wildlife management is it considered a 'true' form of CBNRM.<sup>336</sup> In March 1995, the Namibian Cabinet approved the policy developed by the MET, in which people in communal areas gain rights over wildlife in the same way as private landowners on the condition that they organise themselves in a 'geographically based management unit called a conservancy'. This development was in line with the intentions of the Namibian Government to try and provide 'a unitary land system for Namibia, in which all citizens have equal rights, opportunities and security across a range of tenure and management systems'.<sup>337</sup> The legislation to give effect to this policy was promulgated on 17 June 1996.<sup>338</sup> The sources of income to be expected in communal conservancies are comprised of a range of activities, in which trophy hunting is mentioned as the second option after harvesting according to quotas set by the MET. It is said that '(r)egistered conservancies will be given ownership over huntable game and game birds, being bush-pig, buffalo, oryx, kudu, springbok and warthog. Applications can be made for permits to use protected and specially protected game. A conservancy which also registers as a hunting farm will be able to allow trophy hunting on its land'. As the MET has and retains the legal responsibility and rights over wildlife, the MET will assist the communities for instance with the drafting of a conservancy constitution, the negotiations with the private sector and with setting up wildlife management plans.<sup>339</sup>

These developments in Namibia took place mainly in the nineties, in the decade in which the call for community participation and involvement had already become loud and clear, which also affected the further development of conservancies. But there is a strict division between commercial and communal conservancies in Namibia. Private and communal conservancies were still very much separate in 1997 and I do not have any indication that this situation has altered yet. Communication between the two types

335 pp. 2, Annex 1, Jones 1995.

336 pp. 3, Jones, B.T.B. (1996), *Institutional relationships, capacity and sustainability. Lessons learned from a community-based conservation project, eastern Tsumkwe District, Namibia, 1991-96*, Research Discussion Paper, no. 11, August 1996, Windhoek: Directorate of Environmental Affairs, Ministry of Environment and Tourism.

337 pp. 6, Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation, National Land Policy, White Paper, September 1997.

338 Jones 1996: 20.

339 The Ministry of Environment and Tourism, The Republic of Namibia, *Communal area conservancies in Namibia. A simple guide*. For a (very) critical overview of the development of communal conservancies in Namibia see Sullivan 1999, in which he concludes his paper with the rhetoric question: 'Is it really reasonable to expect that a structurally entrenched rural poor should continue to service the fantasies of African wilderness projected by predominantly expatriate environmentalists, conservationists, tourists and trophy hunters?' (pp. 19) The answer is of course 'no'. Unless, and his solution is businesslike in a way that is tried by the SVC in Zimbabwe as I shall describe in Chapters 5 and 6, the 'wealthy of the world' would be prepared 'through unconditional payment for the service of maintaining wildlife to the African people who might otherwise prefer to convert the land and wildlife to alternative uses' to pay the price (pp. 19). Which in a way is, of course, being done right now through community conservation. What Sullivan implicitly means is that he thinks the wealthy do not pay the right price. It is too much of a bargain. But that might well be the downside of the wish to follow the capitalistic market principle.

of conservancies is fairly limited, despite the definite intention and wishes of private conservancies to co-operate. In the constitution of the CANAM, provision is made for both private and communal conservancies, but up to October 1997, only private conservancies participated in the Association. Although some private conservancies would welcome co-operation with communal conservancies, the communication between the two types is not (yet) such that negotiations can be get underway. When I introduced the distinction of private versus communal conservancies, the Chairman of the CANAM corrected me instantly saying that the difference should be labelled 'landowners' versus 'land occupiers'. It seemed to be an obviously politically laden concept and discussion.<sup>340</sup> From the side of the MET, it said that it was not yet time for private and communal conservancies would talk and co-operate, because communal conservancies first had to be brought up to the level at which they could discuss business matters with private conservancies on the basis of equality in terms of knowledge and power. It was plain that the message was the MET was the institution to teach them this and that they would also be the one to decide when they will be ready for it. In the mean time commercial and communal conservancies go their own way. Commercial conservancies are now looking for other opportunities to relate to neighbouring communities.<sup>341</sup> Another fly in the ointment is that it seemed that private conservancies reminded the MET too much of a painful colonial past which seemed to justify concentrating on communal conservancies instead of also taking the private conservancies on board.<sup>342</sup>

The colonial past of Namibia, as in other countries in southern Africa, is casting heavy shadows on this particular relationship between private and communal conservancies but also on relations between private conservancies, mainly owned by whites and surrounding black communities. President Sam Nujoma launched an 'uncharacteristic' attack on whites in relation to a proposed hydro-electric power scheme in the Kunene region. He was particularly angered by some white pressure groups opposing the idea. He is quoted to have said that the government accepts genuine friends, but 'if you come here with white superiority, we will get rid of you. We are warning you, do not disturb the peace in Namibia. And I am warning you for the last time. White friends who want to create tribal divisions, we will get rid of you'. The leader of the official opposition said in reaction to the President's words that Nujoma's accusations 'can only qualify as racial discrimination'.<sup>343</sup> This atmosphere is not conducive to creating any positive relationship and puts the relationship between private and communal conservancies in further jeopardy, also endangering relationships between private conservancies and neighbouring communities. A situation, which seems to be quite similar to developments in the field in Zimbabwe as will be described as from the next chapter.

340 Interview with Chairman of CANAM, 8 October 1997.

341 There are already white-owned conservancies which adopt a policy of letting surrounding communities benefit from their activities and stimulate them to follow suit. Etendeka Conservancy is reported to collect revenues for the communities by asking a voluntary bed night levy from tourists and adding a levy for themselves. *The Namibian*, 27 November 1996, Tourism spin-off for communities. The first ever joint venture in Namibia between a private conservancy and a community was celebrated in 1997 between Wilderness Safaris and the Bergsig-De Riet community. *The Namibian*, 3 March 1997. Joint venture marks 'a rural first'.

342 Interview with Officer at MET, 9 October 1997.

343 pp. 25, Shigweda, A. (1998), Nujoma ignites a race row, *New African*, October.



## Linking Pin

Without summarising this one chapter in great detail, I want to relate it to the main line of argument I develop in this thesis and the structure of the theoretical framework I presented in chapter one.

- It has become clear that land and hunting have been the dominating themes in the relationship between black and white in southern Africa right from the start and a major force in the process of social identity construction of the whites. By the reason of their influence on white social identity construction, they have been selected as a relevant context which should be described in this thesis. Not that the whites so much identify *with* the land, but more with things *on* the land; not so much identity with the *soil*, but deriving identity from the aesthetics of *landscape* and the flora and fauna which are part and parcel of it. A consumer-like approach to the land fits in very well with this identity and paves the way for a flourishing industry of wildlife utilisation in its various forms. Exuberant safaris until the Second World War and the creation of National Parks still dominate our romantic image of African wildlife and wildlife utilisation. Nature conservation created an enormous social distance between black and white in southern Africa. Hunting and the exclusion of black people can be interpreted as a way of expressing the white social identity of power and masculinity in Africa. After the Second World War other forms of wildlife utilisation developed with private wildlife conservancies naturally entering the stage in the late seventies, with bringing them their same mixture of economic and political realism and sheer Romanticism. The broader historical context of wildlife utilisation in relation to processes of white identity construction in southern Africa has now become clear.
- Black people have always protested about the approach to land taken the whites. They protested about the unequal distribution of land which they regarded inalienably theirs and in which latter-day boundaries were strictly coincidental and of no effect. They continued hunting the produce of the land, but because of the white ownership of the majority of the land, this was now called poaching and illegal. Hunting became a way of making a living and protesting at the same time. Alongside this form of hunting, commercial poaching posed a growing threat to wildlife. This latter form of poaching played a significant role in the creation and distortion of the Western image of African poaching. It reinforced the image of the whites as the saviours of African wildlife protecting it against the villainous blacks who were in the process of destroying and degrading their own heritage to mankind. Again, the stance taken by conservancies as the Guardians of Eden, is only a natural follow-up to these tendencies and developments.
- The extensive description of the historical context and its dynamism also serves to illustrate the current social distance between black communities and white conservancies. This distance and the concomitant exclusion is even partly responsible for the emergence of conservancies as the farmers co-operated in first instance prima-

rily to curb poaching through the installation of game guards. Later they have increasingly exchanged game guards for security guards, some of them with historical relations with the defence forces of the Apartheid-system, like SADF and SAPF. In the later development of conservancies the social distance was exacerbated to a greater degree through the promotion of commercial hunting in conservancies in order to make the wildlife pay for itself, which made fencing, and thus further segregation, necessary.

- Related to my four main lines of argument in Chapter 1, I conclude that there has been indeed continuous reciprocal exchange between black and white in southern Africa. This reciprocal exchange covers the balanced and negative reciprocity types of Sahlins' typology. There has been material exchange in trade; there has been material exchange in warfare. But most importantly, there has been a continuous flow of immaterial reciprocal exchange in words, (implicit) statements of identity, texts and policy regarding nature conservation in relation to land and hunting; the policy and its implementation and control by the whites and the different ways of expressing protests by the black Africans. The historical context illustrates that there is no real basis for a wide variety of generalised reciprocal relations between black communities and white conservationists, as the historically the relationship lacks trust; the social and cultural difference and resulting distance being obviously too wide to bridge. The mutual images and reputations have become institutionalised in stereotypes. This has led to an institutionalised form of exclusion. What remains are mainly forms of negative reciprocal exchange in which poaching (and later land claims as I shall describe more in detail in the next chapter) is exchanged with direct or indirect retaliation. Effect rules over affect. Nor is either side prepared to give the Other any time to prove themselves or to deviate one jot from the preconceived reputations. Time seems only to effect the rate of confirmation of stereotypes instead of being conducive to the building up of trust. Information contradicting the stereotype is considered a temporary coincidence. Land is considered by both, although for different reasons and related to their social identities, as non-exchangeable. Land is definitely kept out of exchange relations between black and white in southern Africa.
- In the second half of the eighties and the beginning of the nineties these two parties have been more or less forced and squeezed towards each other through the evolution in conservation ideology in which neighbouring communities are becoming increasingly considered as 'partners in conservation' instead of 'enemies'. In the late eighties and early nineties there has been an ideological shift in nature conservation, primarily politically motivated, from the policy of exclusion to that of participation (which is not to be confused with 'inclusion' as the various example of community conservation make clear) of local communities in conservation policy. Organisational co-operation has been tried in several types of programmes in the public (for instance CAMPFIRE) as well as in the private sector (for instance Robin Hurt) or in a public-private partnership (for instance Madikwe Game Reserve). Cautious forms of positive reciprocal exchange are beginning to emerge on the basis, still, of economic, instrumental and mainly opportunistic considerations only. Effect

still rules over affect, but moving up the scale in another 'tone'. Participation in nature conservation for black communities often still implies exclusion from the land. Participation seems to mean that they are allowed some economic benefits in exchange for respecting the boundaries of the wildlife area and no poaching. It seems as if they are more or less paid for their acceptance of exclusion. Their acceptance is 'marketed' as a 'partnership in conservation'. Exclusion is now brought under the guise of an egalitarian discourse of 'community conservation' in the same way as I described for organisation and management literature on cultural differences. Nonetheless, it signifies a start of a more positive reciprocal exchange.

Will these economic exchange also foster more 'mature' types of reciprocal exchange relations in which effective and affective elements are both at play and in which the underlying trust substantiates and makes the relation more sustainable? For my case study much will depend on the specific context related to land and hunting in Zimbabwe in which the SVC has to operate. To pose the question specifically in the context of this thesis: how did the whites get their land for hunting in present-day Zimbabwe? Which brings us to story about white settlement in the territory of the Ndebele king, Lobengula, and its subsequent spread into Mashonaland.

## 4 The Land Question and Private Wildlife Conservancies in Zimbabwe

*In which the national and social context and history of land (re)distribution in Zimbabwe is described and how it has influenced the development of private wildlife conservancies and shaped the arena for rivalry between black and white identities in Zimbabwe.*

### Introduction

The development of private wildlife conservancies started in South Africa and the concept was later also applied in Namibia and Zimbabwe. The latter has much in common with South Africa. They have shared much common history throughout the twentieth century. Both were granted effective independence from Britain under white minority rule, South Africa in 1910 and Southern Rhodesia in 1923. Both countries experienced a war as a result of responses to black liberation movements, and international sanctions in support of these movements, to remove the white minority from political power. Many of the early radical ideas of black resistance in Zimbabwe, going back to the first half of the twentieth century, came from South Africa through Zimbabwean men who worked in the mines or who went to South Africa for education.<sup>1</sup> In both countries whites were forced out of political power, but their economic power remained largely intact.<sup>2</sup> Much of that power is vested in the unequal land distribution between black and white in these countries. The resulting imbalance in land ownership and possession was further aggravated by unequal access to support services. Economic and institutional support favoured the white above black farmers.<sup>3</sup> In both countries the relations between black and white have always been dominated by their struggle for the possession and use of land.<sup>4</sup>

In this chapter I want to concentrate on The Land Issue in Zimbabwe, in the first place as a political context and more specifically in relation to the development of conservancies in the country. Secondly to understand the development of rival identities of black and white related to land in the particular context of Zimbabwe. In the previous chapter I already described the regional background of the development of the relationship between white and black social identities in southern Africa. In this chapter I shall specify the general observations and conclusions of Chapter 3 for the Zimbabwean con-

1 pp. 139, 143, 144, Ranger, T.O. (1999), *Voices from the rocks. Nature, culture & history in the Matopos Hills of Zimbabwe*, Harare: Baobab; Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press; Oxford: James Currey.

2 pp. 90-91, Stoneman, C., (1998), *Lessons unlearned: South Africa's one-way relationship with Zimbabwe*, in: Simon, D., *South Africa in southern Africa: reconfiguring the region*, Oxford: James Currey; Athens (USA): Ohio University Press; Cape Town: David Philip Publishers.

3 pp. 98, Keith, T. (1994), *Lessons from southern Africa*, in: Minnaar, A. (ed.), *Access to and affordability of land in South Africa: the challenge of land reform in the 1990s*, Pretoria: HSRC Co-operative Programme.

4 pp. 128, Denoon, D., (1972), *Southern Africa since 1800*, London: Longman.

text. After a short description of the physical features of Zimbabwe, I shall commence my description and analysis on the day the first white people arrived in this part of southern Africa in 1890 with the Pioneer Column<sup>5</sup> and started a process of land appropriation. Black farmers made vociferous protests about this process. In first instance mainly locally, but the process grew out into a national and more or less united struggle over land in the seventies in the Struggle for Independence.<sup>6</sup> In 1980 a black majority government took over and I shall describe what happened in relation to land policy in the eighties, up till 1992 when the radical Land Acquisition Act was installed. I shall end this chapter by describing and analysing the impact of this latter Act for the development of conservancies in the period between 1992 and 1998.

### The Physical Features of Present-Day Zimbabwe

An understanding of the physical aspects of Zimbabwe is essential because they have a direct bearing on the answer to the question of whether if a conservancy is tolerated and accepted by the government as form of land use or not. In particular parts of Zimbabwe, conservancies are not allowed because it is considered good land for agriculture in particular cash crops for food or export. This is an upshot of a conjunction of the soil conditions and the climatic circumstances in particular parts of the country. Zimbabwe is a landlocked country with no direct access to the sea. The shortest distance to the sea by rail or road, 287 km, is via Beira in Mozambique.<sup>7</sup> Zimbabwe is dominated by a plateau at 600-1300 m above sea level. The gentle undulating landscape is often broken by bornhardtts, enormous, usually upstanding, bare rocks and smaller kopjes, isolated granite hills, which makes cultivation difficult. This typical aspect of the country is most common in the two provinces in which the SVC is located, Masvingo and Manicaland Provinces.<sup>8</sup> The country is physiographically divided into four zones, based on the criterion of altitude: Highveld, 1200-1500 metres; Middleveld 600-1200 metres; Lowveld, below 600 metres and a separate category for the Eastern Highlands, which raise above 1500 metres (see Map 2).<sup>9</sup>

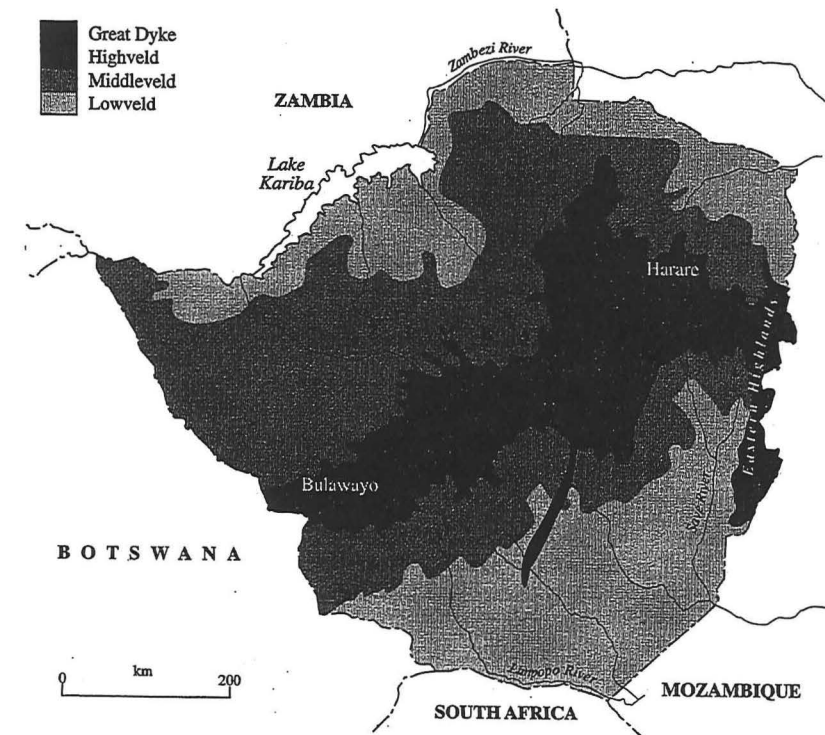
5 pp. 214-221, Thomas, A. (1996), *Rhodes. The race for Africa*, Harare: African Publishing Group.

6 It should be noted though that despite the word Independence, Southern Rhodesia in fact never was a 'ful-colony of Great Britain, like New Zealand or Australia, but power to rule the area was only delegated to white settlers when they achieved 'responsible government' in 1923. Southern Rhodesia never achieved the Dominion Status, which would have meant that they would be really 'autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status in both their domestic and external affairs but united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations'. Great Britain remained the final lawful authority. This was contested in the Unilateral Declaration of Independence by Ian Smith's Rhodesian Front Party in 1965'. But this lack of ultimate and formal sovereignty meant that Great Britain was heavily involved again in the negotiations in Lancaster House at the end of the seventies to become the independent state of Zimbabwe in 1980. pp. 390, 391, note 8, 9, Mutambara, J.G. (1981), *Africans and land policies: British colonial policy in Zimbabwe, 1890-1965*, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Cincinnati.

7 Moyo 1991: 21.

8 Ibid: 23.

9 pp. 304, Moyo, S., O'Keefe, P. & Sill, M., (1993), *The southern African environment. Profiles of the SADC countries*, London: Earthscan Publications.



Map 2 Physiographical division of Zimbabwe in four zones

Zimbabwe's climate is moderate because of its altitude and dominated by three seasons:

- A hot dry season, from mid-August till the onset of the rains between the end of October and January;
- The warm to hot wet season which can last till March or April, temporarily interrupted by a dry spell in February;
- Cool to warm dry season from April till August with cool nights and warm sunny days.<sup>10</sup>

Without going into detail of soil types, slopes, percentages of rainfall and the like it is important for my argument to remember that Zimbabwe is mapped and divided into five Regions, I to V, which are in fact agro-ecological zones. The Regions correspond to a large extent to the physiographical areas mentioned above. Only the Lowveld is subdivided into two regions. The categorisation into Natural Regions is used as a basis for land-use planning, including land designation and resettlement schemes.

10 Ibid: 305.

- Natural Region I: Characterised by high altitude, cool temperatures and high, reliable rainfall of over 1000 mm. It comprises 5835 km<sup>2</sup>, being the Eastern Highlands in Manica Province, bordering Mozambique;
- Natural Region II: This is the region where most large-scale commercial farmers are to be found with an average rainfall between 700-1000 mm. Annually. Here most maize and tobacco farmers are to be found. It comprises 72,745 km<sup>2</sup> mainly in the northeast of the country around the capital Harare;
- Natural Region III: This region contains a high proportion of communal land. Rainfall is between 650-800 annually, but usually comes in infrequent heavy storms. The area comprises 67,690 km<sup>2</sup>;
- Natural Region IV: Rainfall is between 450-650 mm. per annum. The Region forms the transition area between the middleveld and lowveld. The area is prone to seasonal droughts. Together with Region V this area was particularly hard-hit by the 1982-1984 drought and the drought in the early nineties. The area comprises of 128,370 km<sup>2</sup> with a high proportion of Communal Land;
- Natural Region V: This final category is reserved for the low-lying zone of the lowveld with an annual rainfall of less than 450 mm., which is on top of that also unreliable. Without irrigation only extensive animal husbandry is possible. And even that proved not to be a viable economic option in the long run. Apart from agricultural crops like sugar-cane, based on extensive irrigation, wildlife utilisation, for example through tourism of all sorts, is today considered one of the most economically viable options for this region. The area covers 112,810 km<sup>2</sup>. (See Map 3).<sup>11</sup>

## The Land Issue in Zimbabwe, 1890-1980

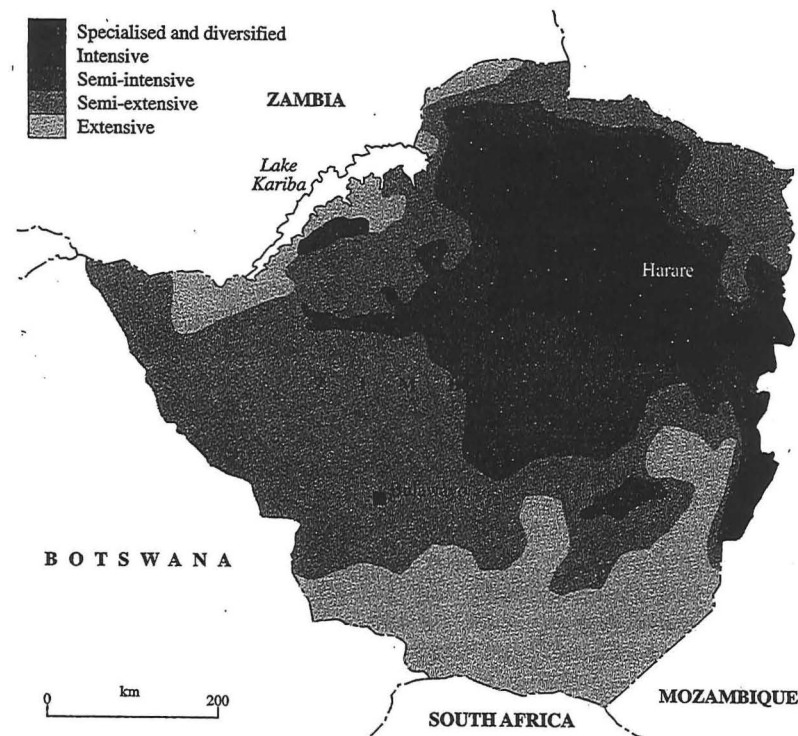
### First Contact

In 1889 the British South Africa Company (BSAC) was granted a Royal Charter by the British government. Under this charter the company was authorised to enter and exploit territories north of the Limpopo River, but no further then the Zambezi River. The BSAC, i.e. Cecil John Rhodes, expected to find great mineral wealth in the area designated by the charter, just as they had found diamonds in Kimberly and gold in Witwatersrand.<sup>12</sup>

This Royal Charter illuminates the location of the south and north boundary of present day Zimbabwe, namely the Limpopo River in the south and the Zambezi River in

<sup>11</sup> Ibid: 306. Droughts occur(ed) regularly in southern Africa. An overview since 1800 for instance shows that there were (severe) droughts almost every twenty years. 1820-1830 was a severe drought period. Not only for southern Africa, but for the whole continent. 1844-1849 were five consecutive drought years. Over the period between 1875-1919 rainfall gradually decreased in southern Africa, ending with a severe drought in 1910. 1921-1930 saw severe droughts in the area. From 1930 to the second half of the sixties rainfall was pretty good with an occasional bad year. From 1967 till 1973 the region was fairly dry again. Finally in the eighties and early nineties there were many droughts: 1981-1982; 1982; 1983; 1986-1987 and finally in 1991-1992 the worst drought in living memory (pp. 91, Southern African Research & Documentation Centre (SARDC), IUCN & SADC (1994), *State of the environment in southern Africa*, Harare: SARDC.

<sup>12</sup> Thomas 1996: resp. 154-160 & 161-163.



Map 3 Categorisation of Natural Regions in Zimbabwe

the north. In the east it was necessary to deal and negotiate with the Portuguese who were also a signatory to the Treaty of Berlin and who ruled over Portuguese East Africa.<sup>13</sup> In the west the charter was bounded by the British Protectorate of Bechuanaland or 'the road to the north' as it was called.<sup>14</sup> These were all 'European' constraints. Rhodes also had to deal with the African population which in the west of the chartered area was comprised of the Ndebele, led by their king, Lobengula.<sup>15</sup> He is described as an impressive

<sup>13</sup> pp. 425-430, Best, J. & Zinyama, L.M. (1985), The evolution of the national boundary of Zimbabwe, *Journal of Historical Geography*, 11 (4): 419-432.

<sup>14</sup> pp. 348, Wesseling, H.L. (1992), *Verdeel en heers. De deling van Afrika, 1880-1914* (translation: Divide and rule. The division of Africa, 1880-1914), Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker. The British, or rather Rhodes' expansion in southern Africa from south to north, especially north of the Zambezi, former Northern Rhodesia, now Zambia, brought him into conflict with the Portuguese who had envisioned a 'contra-costa' empire in southern Africa connecting Mozambique in the east with Angola in the west. Rhodes' march and annexation literally bisected the Portuguese ambitions (ibid: 370-371).

<sup>15</sup> pp. 2, note 5, it is important to differentiate between the Transvaal Ndebele and the followers of Mzilikazi, who eventually settled in present-day Zimbabwe. Lobengula was the son of Mzilikazi. The Transvaal Ndebele live in KwaNdebele in South Africa, Paton, E.M. (1999), Population pressure and land degradation: historical perspectives on population and resources in KwaNdebele, paper presented at the conference *African environments, past and present*, 5-8 July, St. Athony's College, Oxford.

man who was considered 'every inch a king'.<sup>16</sup> As a king he owned 'absolutely land, subjects, cattle and grain'.<sup>17</sup> So, if the BSAC planned to launch any exploration in the north, it had to negotiate a deal with Lobengula. In 1888 Lobengula was visited<sup>18</sup> by a delegation from Rhodes, headed by one of Rhodes' trusted companions, Charles Rudd. After long days of negotiations, he was eventually able to press Lobengula to sign a favourable concession<sup>19</sup> in which they were granted 'complete and exclusive charge of over all metals and minerals situated and contained in my [Lobengula HW] Kingdom, Principalities and Dominions, together with full power to do all things that they may deem necessary to win and procure the same...'.<sup>20</sup> In exchange for these favours they paid Lobengula with a 1000 Martini-Henry rifles, 100,000 rounds of ammunition and a steamboat to be delivered on the Zambezi River. Over and above this, Lobengula would receive a stipend of £ 100 a month.<sup>21</sup> 'The Rudd Concession is considered the modest beginning of the land question in Zimbabwe'<sup>22</sup>, although in actual fact it was not a grant in land but a concession of mineral rights. In other words, it was a grant in a particular form of exploitative land use; land became, contrary to African notions of land, an exchangeable commodity. Rhodes thought that he had reached a historic deal opening up all the land of the Ndebele and of their tributaries, the Shona falling under them, who were living in the east of present-day Zimbabwe. He thought he had covered the whole area in one deal with Lobengula. But that was in fact not true at all.

Rudd's party and Rhodes had taken Lobengula's rhetoric in which he claimed that he was the 'undisputed ruler over Matabele land and Mashonaland' at face value. But, although Lobengula raided the Shona and extracted tribute from them, he did not rule them. In fact, his kingdom did not extend any further than a sixty mile radius around Bulawayo.<sup>23</sup> It is said that Rhodes and Rudd's party went along with the king's rhetoric for strategic advantage of having to deal with only one authority covering the whole area.<sup>24</sup> There is also a possibility that it might also have been an authentic belief of Rhodes and those with him consonant in line with the observation that the British were far more sympathetic to warrior states like the Ndebele, than to peasant states like the Shona. In historiography scholars have paid more attention to the heroic warrior state

of the Ndebele than to the peasant and sedentary Shona.<sup>25</sup> From this perspective it was considered only 'natural' that the Ndebele ruled the Shona and that if the negotiators agreed on a deal with Lobengula, that this would also imply the inclusion of Shona territory. This tendency was reinforced and reproduced later in history when 'it was part of the Rhodesian mythology that the Shona were a miserable, cowardly lot who had only been saved from extinction at the hands of the Ndebele by the coming of colonial rule, for which they were remarkably ungrateful'.<sup>26</sup>

Parallel to Rhodes' initiative, at the beginning of 1889, between 1500 and 2000 Boers decided to migrate from Zoutpansberg (South Africa) and settle in Shona domain across the Limpopo River. Louis P. Bowler claimed that he received permission from a Shona Chief for this. Selous, the famous white hunter we already met in the previous chapter, also claimed that he was granted a concession by two Shona chiefs for exclusive mineral rights in a large chunk of land in their country. When he heard about the Rudd Concession, he began to write articles in newspapers claiming that Lobengula had no claim on Mashonaland at all and that consequently Rhodes had no legal claims to that area.<sup>27</sup> In other words, Selous contested Rhodes' claims. What complicated the matter even further for Rhodes was that Selous was invited, he was fluent in Ndebele and very popular in Britain on the strength of his book *A hunter's wanderings in Africa*, when two of Lobengula's indunas (generals) visited Queen Victoria to consult her about the white men entering his country. Because of Selous' presence, the official interpreter, Colenbrander, had no other option than to translate correctly without being able to favour Rhodes' cause through selective or twisted translation.<sup>28</sup> This resulted in a situation in which the Queen gave a written answer to Lobengula which his two indunas had to deliver to him personally. In it she made clear that the negotiations had not been carried out with the Queen's authority and that Lobengula should not exclude other willing and deserving men from deals with him. 'A King gives a stranger an ox, not his whole herd of cattle, otherwise what would other strangers arriving have to eat ...?'<sup>29</sup> This opened the doors wide for Rhodes' competitors and was lethal to his own plans in the area. He countered this danger by opening a diplomatic offensive on the key-players in Great Britain in this scramble, by offering them money or shares in the BSAC and a place in his encompassing vision and scheme to rule Africa, if only they would support his cause. Aware of every trick, he took care that the Queen's letter to Lobengula was only delivered much later. By that time the major players in London were all firmly behind Rhodes' plans (i.e. bought) and whatever the Queen's letter advised Lobengula could not have undermined Rhodes' plans. It became a 'major victory' for Rhodes<sup>30</sup> in terms of his enormous capabilities of winning, persuading and buying people to adopt his course and vision, although it would turn out not to be a victory for the African people.<sup>31</sup> These developments also made it perfectly clear to Rhodes and the British govern-

16 Rotberg in Wesseling 1992: 366.

17 Mutambara 1981: 144.

18 Interesting in the context of this thesis is that, when they left Kimberley in two wagons, they told bystanders that they went on a hunting expedition (Thomas 1996: 191). No one would bother to probe more deeply if you said you would go out hunting. It was obviously a usual outdoor pastime.

19 Although the negotiations were not what we would call 'fair', two people played an important role in 'convincing' Lobengula, a missionary by the name of Helm, who was a trusted interpreter of Lobengula, and the Imperial Deputy-Commissioner of the British Protectorate of Bechuanaland, Shippard. The first deceived Lobengula with verbal promises, which were never put into the concession document. The second assured Lobengula that England would only like to see a peaceful and friendly relationship with the king, while in actual fact he wanted the Ndebele kingdom destroyed, which would come to pass a few years later (Thomas 1996: 192-195).

20 Known as 'The Rudd Concession', 30 October 1888, pp. 262, Rotberg, R.I. (1988), *The founder. Cecil Rhodes and the pursuit of power*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

21 Thomas 1996: 196.

22 Mutambara 1981: 154.

23 Ibid: 42, note 71.

24 Thomas 1996: 197.

25 pp. 11, Beach, D. (1994), *The Shona and their neighbours*, Oxford, Cambridge (USA): Blackwell.

26 Ibid.

27 Thomas 1996: 202.

28 Ibid: 204-205.

29 Ibid: 206.

30 Ibid: 206-207.

31 Ibid: 206-212.

ment that they had to make haste with settling people in Ndebele and Shonaland. Rhodes ordered Johnson to recruit a group of pioneers, and especially to select a large enough group of people from influential, largely English-speaking families. If Lobengula then decided to attack them or cut them off, the prominent fathers of the pioneers would demand assistance and imperial forces could come to the rescue. But who could be best approached to guide them through the still unknown land? Who knew the country best? Unfortunately for Rhodes it was Selous. As I described in Chapter 3, Selous was familiar with that part of Africa. He even shot his first elephant there, although Selous was not the first white hunter to wander through Lobengula's country. That honour has to be accorded to William Finaughty who preceded Selous by several years and who also went into Mashonaland, north of Lobengula's territory. Of further interest is that Finaughty was accompanied 'by a Hottentot called Cigar'. It was the same Cigar who also accompanied Selous a couple of years later on his travels in Lobengula's country. Selous is said to have said that he has 'never since seen his equal as foot hunter'.<sup>32</sup> Rhodes had to convince Selous to guide the pioneer group into Matabeleland. Characteristically he also 'sold him out' for £ 2,000, in cash, a hundred De Beers shares, of which he was chairman and through which company in gold and diamonds he amassed great financial fortune, a grant of 21,000 acres in Mashonaland and a salary of £ 2 5s a day'.<sup>33</sup> Selous promised not to write any more damaging stories and his concession with Chief Mapondera was 'folded into the Company'.<sup>34</sup> To be prepared should Lobengula decide to attack them, as Selous and Jameson had warned Rhodes<sup>35</sup>, the column was fitted out with 'all the paraphernalia of modern warfare'<sup>36</sup>, like machine-guns, Martini-Henry rifles, searchlights, rocket launchers and the like, all loaded on 117 wagons. In this fashion they could leave on the 26 June 1890, in a Pioneer Column which stretched for two and a half miles<sup>37</sup> to go 'up-country'<sup>38</sup> for the ultimate goal of finding gold, just like in South Africa in Witwatersrand. The consummation which they expected on the high plateau of Mashonaland.<sup>39</sup> All the people on the column were promised they would be allowed 'to peg out fifteen mining claims each'<sup>40</sup> after the demobilisation when they had reached their goal. In actual fact they were promised land. From that perspective the Rudd Concession can indeed be interpreted as the beginning of The Land Question in Zimbabwe.

32 Capstick, F.C. (January 1999), Wm. Finaughty: Matabele hunting ground pioneer, *Safari Times Africa*.

33 Thomas 1996: 217.

34 Rotberg 1988: 295.

35 Their warning was based on the rage of the Ndebele and Lobengula's indunas about the deal their king had struck with Rhodes. To vindicate himself before his people, Lobengula condemned his personal advisor on the Rudd deal, Lotshe, to death, together with all his family and descendants, which was directly and literally executed (Thomas 1996: 212).

36 Rotberg 1988: 299.

37 Thomas 1996: 218-219.

38 'There's magic in these words for all old South Africans. (...) "Up-country" will bring back to the Pioneer of the 'nineties a recollection of the creaking wagon; the patient, straining bullocks; the unearthly scream of a hyena breaking in on the soft silence of the veld at night; the camp fire at the outspan, and the cool, early trek when the morning star is paling before the grey-green dawn. (...) Only the pleasant experiences are remembered. The discomforts are forgotten, or merely recalled with a grin.', pp. 7, Marshall Hole, H. (1928), *Old Rhodesian days*, London, MacMillan and Co., Ltd.

39 Rotberg: 295.

40 Ibid: 300.

### Annexation of the Lowveld

The first resting place of the Pioneer Column was Fort Victoria<sup>41</sup> (now Bulawayo). From there on a group moved further north in the direction of Fort Hampden (now Harare).<sup>42</sup> A small contingent of the Column stayed in Fort Victoria prompted to do so by an 'unshakeable faith in the mineral wealth of the district, a belief no doubt fostered by the evidence of the gold-mining activity of the ancient in the precincts of the nearby Zimbabwe Ruins'.<sup>43</sup> The ruins were the first target in the pioneer's endeavours to try and find gold. Under the guise of doing archaeological research and excavations, a company, called Rhodesia Ancient Ruins Ltd., acquired a concession to dig at the site. But, instead of laying bare the remains of an African civilisation, they 'dug the ground, sifted the gold they found thereby and assigned it to the melting pot'.<sup>44</sup> The largest company looking for mineral wealth in the area was the Consolidated African Copper Trust, a company which not only had concessions in Matabeleland but, by 1905, also 'held most of the Sabi [Mashonaland] copper claims, including the original Bradley's Coper, which was renamed Umkondo in 1903'.<sup>45</sup> This is interesting to note because the remains of the Umkondo claim now form part of the SVC. Although the expectations were sky-high, not many minerals were found. The exception was Umkondo, where there was copper in sufficient quantities but transport difficulties 'caused work to decline slowly till the mine was compelled to shut down in 1910'.<sup>46</sup>

In 1893 and 1896, the Matabele rose in revolt in protest about unfair white claims to the land, which resulted in violent clashes between the Matabele and the white imperialists. Selous was still active in helping Rhodes and helped to suppress the two Matabele uprisings.<sup>47</sup> Superior firepower secured and consolidated Rhodes' power in Rhodesia, battering the warrior state of the Matabele into subjugation.<sup>48</sup> As a result, the BSAC jurisdiction over Matabeleland was confirmed by Order in Council on 18 July 1894, which authorised Jameson, Rhodes' aide in Rhodesia, to allot farmland and gold claims. The Order of Council set the boundaries for the new state of Southern Rhodesia, encompassing Matabele and Shonaland and Manica.<sup>49</sup> Rhodes could be satisfied with

41 pp. 22, note 1, The appendage 'Fort' was soon dropped, but in 1921 it was officially renamed Fort Victoria. 'Notice 270 in the Government Gazette No. 1392 read that 'it is hereby notified His Honour the Administrator has approved of the alteration of the name of the town to 'Fort Victoria' by which name it shall be known for all official purposes as from 1st July 1921'. It appears that the reason for this change was that for some time there had been a muddle in the mail whereby post for Victoria, Rhodesia, was being sent to Victoria, Australia, and vice versa.' Sayce, K. (1978), *A town called Victoria*, Bulawayo: Books of Rhodesia.

42 See for a (white) history of the development of Salisbury in the period 1900-1914, Tanser, G.H. (1974). *A sequence of time. The story of Salisbury, Rhodesia, 1900 to 1914*, Salisbury: Pioneer Head.

43 Sayce 1978: dustcover.

44 Ibid: 64. In fact Rhodes' dream that he would find a 'second Witwatersrand' had already been shattered in 1894 when a survey concluded that Rhodesia contained various minerals resources like nickel, copper and coal, but only some (very) modest supplies of gold (Thomas 1996: 279).

45 Ibid: 92.

46 Ibid: 102.

47 Capstick, F.M. (March 1999), Frederick Courtney Selous D.S.O. (1851-1917): dean of Africa's big game hunting, *Safari Times Africa*.

48 Rotberg 1988: 418-449 & 551-580; Thomas 1996: 234-260.

49 Thomas 1996: 259. By 1893 there were some 3000 Europeans in what would become Southern Rhodesia (pp. 39, Yudelman, M. (1964), *Africans on the land*, Cambridge (Massachusetts): Harvard University Press; London: Oxford University Press.

these developments as 'Rhodesia was ... to him (...) as her first-born (...) to a woman'.<sup>50</sup> More important than Rhodes' sentiments is the fact that the white invaders 'brought with them new ideas and technology, most importantly the notions of exclusive access to land and the concept of fixed boundaries (...)'.<sup>51</sup> What Scoones has called 'the politics of straight lines' in colonial Zimbabwe.<sup>52</sup> These straight lines had been translated in South Africa in the 1880s into the erection of fences, following the introduction of fencing in many other parts of the Western world.<sup>53</sup> At the first agricultural census in 1918 the Cape Province alone lists 15,000 farms completely fenced and 13,000 partly fenced on a total of 31,000 farms. For the Union of South Africa the figures were respectively 38,000 and 30,000 in a total of 76,000 farms.<sup>54</sup> The material for the fencing was imported mainly from the United States of America. After 1922 barbed wire became popular and was imported in much larger quantities than smooth fencing wire.<sup>55</sup> Just like in America, wire fences were made to 'keep things apart'. The effect of wire fences in a country already segregated in terms of black and white can be easily guessed. It follows as the night the day that wire was used with great enthusiasm for fencing National Parks. In Kruger National Park there was a 'steely desire for hard edges'. In the apartheid years a fence came to be seen as of 'National importance, given the fact that it will form the boundary between White and Bantu districts'.<sup>56</sup> In Zimbabwe, as in Botswana, fencing assumed great importance as a control measure for the periodic outbreak of FMD, when these countries started to export beef to the EEC in the fifties and sixties. The EC refused to accept unspecified meat and blocked its export when there was even the slightest indication or fear of a possible contamination by FMD.<sup>57</sup> In order to control the disease the Departments of Veterinary Services used an extensive fencing systems. Fences were also extensively used in Kenya by Richard Leakey in order to try and control poaching. A fence makes the exact boundary immediately clear, and it also makes patrolling very feasible. The simple fact that the boundary is made visibly exact, means that conflicts almost invariably flare up after a fence has been erected. As long as the exact boundary is kept rather vague, everybody can live with the situation because

50 Stent in Rotberg 1988: 555.

51 pp. 5, Mitchell, L.J. (1999), Land and social constructions on the Cedarberg frontier. Contested resource use in colonial South Africa, c. 1725-1795, paper presented at the conference *African environments, past and present*, 5-8 July, St. Athony's College, Oxford.

52 pp. 44, Scoones, I. (1996), Range management science and policy. Politics, polemics and pasture in southern Africa, in: Leach, M. & Mearns, R. (eds), *The lie of the land. Challenging received wisdom on the African environment*, London: The International African Institute in association with Oxford: James Currey and Portsmouth (N.H.): Heinemann.

53 pp. 5, Archer, S., (1999), Technology and ecology in the Karoo: a century of windmills, wire and changing farm practice, paper presented at the conference *African environments, past and present*, 5-8 July, St. Athony's College, Oxford. There were pioneers who already experienced with wire fencing in South Africa in the 1870s (*ibid*: 7).

54 *Ibid*: 7.

55 *Ibid*: 8. See for an overview of the 749 (!) varieties of barbed wire Clifton, R.T. (1971), *Barbs, prongs, points, pricklers & stickers*. A complete and illustrated catalogue of antique barbed wire, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press.

56 pp. 31-32, Bunn, D. (1999), An unnatural state: tourism, water, and wildlife photography in the early Kruger National Park, paper presented at the conference *African environments, past and present*, 5-8 July, St. Athony's College, Oxford.

57 pp. 301, Owens, M. & Owens, D. (1985), *Cry of the Kalahari*, London: Collins.

everybody is allowed to have his or hers own idea about the exact location of the boundary. No disputes surface, because there is no need to cause a fuss. And if a dispute ever did arise there was always room for negotiation and manoeuvring because nothing was fixed. There was room for explanation. With a fixed boundary in the form of a fence it becomes a statement in itself, as described in a poem of W.H. Auden:

'Between two hills, two villages, two trees, two friends  
The barbed wire runs which neither argues nor explains'.<sup>58</sup>

The whites in Africa introduced fixed boundaries and later, to combat FMD and poaching, fencing became a common practice throughout southern Africa, accompanied by a rising tide of protest against the practice. The fence came to symbolise the segregation of black and white on either side of the frontier it represented. It also became a symbol of the written and fixed boundary of the fence by whites versus the especially oral and flexible boundary of the Africans.<sup>59</sup> Much reciprocal exchange between black and white was focused on the fence, its location and its meaning.

Right from the start white pioneers in present-day Zimbabwe claimed and demarcated territory (not straightaway with fences but eventually this was the case), which was also the primary incentive for joining the Column in the first place. From their first point of arrival at Fort Victoria, they spread out further inland claiming land, setting boundaries and 'writing' them into the land. Already by 1893 a group of people had moved on from Fort Victoria to the east where a group of white farmers had been settled across the Sabi River in the northern Chipinga Hills since 1891. That first group endured many hardships to reach their destination, a story recounted in a book about the village of Melsetter in Chipinga District. The group, headed by Dunbar Moodie, reached the Sabi River on the 5th February 1891. 'No kraal, no boats, no food, damn all', recorded Dunbar, who then rode downstream and eventually found a native canoe which they used to ferry their possessions across. For another fortnight they struggled through barren deserted Lowveld, their horses and carriers completely exhausted and they themselves desperately ill with malaria. Eventually, forty-four days after leaving Penhalonga [South Africa], they reached Manhlagazi'.<sup>60</sup> They were followed in 1893 by a group of fourteen men, four women and three children, who left Fort Victoria in seven wagons. Again the Sabi had to be crossed with a great deal of effort.<sup>61</sup> They also traversed the Lowveld to settle finally in the healthier area in the Chipinga Hills, close to what is now the Eastern Highlands, north east of where the SVC is located.

Afflicted by endemic malaria the area of the Lowveld, and more specifically the Sabi Valley, was long considered 'unsuitable for white settlement' which was printed in red capital letters on the Government map of Southern Rhodesia, at the time.<sup>62</sup> Nowadays,

58 Cited in 'The wiring of America', pp. 74-76. *The Economist*, 19 December 1998.

59 pp. 59-77, Chapter 3, The spoken word and the barbed wire in Hofmeyr, I. (1993), *We spend our years as a tale that is told*. Oral historical narrative in a South African chieftom, Portsmouth, (N.H.): Heinemann; Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press; London: James Currey.

60 pp. 16, Sinclair, S. (1971), *The story of Melsetter*, Salisbury: M.O. Collins (pvt.) Ltd.

61 *Ibid*: 20.62 pp. 513, Bridges, E.L. (1948), *Uttermost part of the earth*, London: Hodder & Stroughton. This is the autobiography of Lucas Bridges.

when one drives from Bulawayo to Chiredzi in the Lowveld and takes the turn off at Ngundu, there is still a corroded sign saying 'Malaria Area' with a drawing of a malarial mosquito to make things even more clear. But this was precisely the reason that in 1919 Lucas and Despard Bridges, sons of missionaries in Tierra del Fuego, South America, wanted to settle there, because of an 'old longing to blaze new trails and to reclaim unused land [sic]'.<sup>63</sup> After an initial exploratory journey with an experienced hunter and transport driver, Albert Hamman, Lucas 'quickly made arrangements with the British South Africa Company to acquire the land [where the Devuli and Sabi Rivers join], and had cabled his cousin John Yeoman to proceed to this spot under the guidance of Ally Hamman and start constructing the camp'.<sup>64</sup> The two brothers Bridges are considered the '1920 settlers of the Rhodesian lowveld, (...) who pioneered European settlement in the Sabi River valley and (were) responsible for opening up a large area that had been considered uninhabitable'.<sup>65</sup> Devuli Ranch, as it was called, comprised some one million acres of land in the Lowveld. Despard Bridges and his wife are buried on the land of the former headquarters of Devuli Ranch, which is now part of the SVC, and was bought by the former General Manager of the Devuli Ranch, Derek Henning, who renamed the property Chishakwe. After the Liberation Struggle, in 1981, the western part of the Devuli Ranch, 78,434 ha, was purchased by the government for resettlement. 'It was the biggest single property purchased by the government for peasant resettlement'.<sup>66</sup> The southern boundary of Devuli Ranch was formed by the Turwi, or Turgwe, River. The general manager of Devuli, Sommerville, bought a large piece of land laying south of the Turwi River, in partnership with someone who followed in the early Bridges' footsteps, James Whittall, and created Humani Ranch.<sup>67</sup> Whittall was descendant of the famous merchant family of Whittall in Turkey.<sup>68</sup> They bought a 17,000 acres ranch with 900 head of cattle.<sup>69</sup> Later on, around 1958-1959, Sommerville was bought out by the brother of James Whittall's mother, Hingston, after which Humani became the sole property of Whittall. Cattle and trading were there main economic activities in those early years.<sup>70</sup> The contours and boundaries of Devuli and Humani together cover most of the area, which has become the SVC in the 1990s.

One significant, remarkable feature of the area of the Sabi Valley is the huge but elegant Birchenough Bridge crossing the Sabi River. The Sabi River was, as I already indicated, a major obstacle to travelling from east to west or vice versa. At first all traffic crossed at the Sabi Drift during the dry season, from May till November. 'A span of oxen

was kept on the Fort Victoria side [west] to tow motorists across for £ 1,-, and was summoned by ringing a gong and beating a drum kept on the river banks or banging on a big sheet of iron hanging from a tree. Crossing the mile-wide drift was supposed to take about half an hour, but travellers had to allow another hour for the oxen to be collected and in spanned and, if necessary, brought across to the east bank. The in spanned oxen drew the car over the sandbanks and through the water, which in places came through the floor into the car and it was inadvisable to carry luggage on the running boards. The ox driver watched the car's front wheels carefully and directed the car driver to keep in line with the direction of travel'.<sup>71</sup> It did not require much insight to see that a proper bridge would be very convenient for travelling not to mention for commercial purposes. Chipinga and Melsetter farmers, supported by Umtali (now Mutare) industry, municipality and agriculture pressed for a proper outlet across the Sabi River. In 1931 a site was selected but the Government did not have sufficient funds to finance a bridge estimated to cost £ 30,000,-. So the Beit Railway Trust<sup>72</sup>, who had also built the bridge over the Limpopo River separating South Africa from Rhodesia, at Beitbridge, was approached. In 1934 it was announced that it were prepared to finance the bridge and in the same year the work on the bridge was started by Dorman, Long and Co., Ltd. The Bridge was built with a single-arch span, 1080 feet long and 250 feet high'. It was 'designed by Mr. (later Sir) Ralph Freeman on the lines of his magnificent bridge over Sydney Harbour (...) The Birchenough Bridge was built in two halves beginning from each bank of the Sabi, the gap being closed on 17th June, 1935, the upshot of careful and exact calculation. When completed, the bridge was the highest of its type in Africa and the third largest suspension bridge in the world. Of all the bridges built by the Beit Trust, in grace, beauty and technical perfection it is probably the finest, the great arch, silverly and elegant, having a fairy-like aspect against the blue of the sky above and the green of the bush below'.<sup>73</sup> The bridge was officially opened by the Governor in December 1935.<sup>74</sup> The same Alfred Beit, whose Railway Trust financed Birchenough Bridge at the northern tip of the SVC, also financed the fence that the SVC erected in the first half of the nineties through the Beit Trust, handled by the WWF.

Much more will be said about developments at the micro-level in relation to land appropriation in the Sabi Valley in the next chapter when I discuss the origins of the SVC. What is important for this chapter is to note that the land in the Sabi Valley was appropriated by white settlers only in the 1920s because before that time endemic malaria had frightened them off, through arrangements with the British South Africa Company of Rhodes. White settlement in the area is thus relatively recent. Nowadays you can still speak to the children of the first settlers, but the land surrounding the Valley was already taken by settlers, in the wake of and soon after the Pioneer Column

63 pp. 190. Tschiffely, A.F. (1953), *The man from Woodpecker Creek*, London: Hodder and Stroughton Ltd. This book is based on the autobiography of Lucas Bridges mentioned in the previous note and additional notes and stories. 'Woodpecker Creek' refers to the name the Indians gave him while he was living with his parents in Fireland, Lanooshwaia, meaning 'Man from Woodpecker Creek' (pp. 19).

64 pp. 55, Sommerville, D.M. (1976), *My life was a ranch*, Salisbury: Kailani Books (edited by his daughter Veronica Sommerville). D.M. Sommerville was the General Manager of Devuli Ranch for 30 years, 1935-1965.

65 Ibid: 63.

66 pp. 363, Zinyama, M., Campbell, D.J. & Matiza, T. (1990), Land policy and access to land in Zimbabwe: The Dewure Resettlement Scheme, *Geoforum*, 21 (3): 359-370.

67 Sommerville 1976: 98.

68 pp. 118-119, Whittall, J.W. (1901) *Frederick the Great on kingcraft*, London, New York, Bombay: Longmans, Green and Co.

69 pp. 64, Anonymous, not dated, *The Whittalls of Turkey, 1809-1973*, Great Britain: Faith Press.

70 Interview with landowner Humani, 10 September 1998.

71 Sinclair 1971: 114-115.

72 Ibid: 123. The Beit Railway Trust was a fund of £ 1,200,000 generated by a close associate and friend of Rhodes, Alfred Beit (Rotberg 1988: 113-116), to be used 'first for the development of communications and then for charitable, educational and other public purposes (...) the Trust has given the lead in the construction of railways and bridges (...)'. Dustcover, Beit, A. & Lockhart, J.G. (1957), *The will & the way, 1906-1956, The Beit Trust*, London, New York, Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co.

73 Ibid: 66. The Birchenough Bridge is featuring the Zimbabwean 20-cent coin (the Great Zimbabwe Ruins the one dollar coin).

74 Sommerville 1976: 133.



reached Fort Victoria in 1890. The BSAC governed Matabeleland and Mashonaland on the basis of their absolutely mistaken assumption that their deal with Lobengula was enough to give them, more or less unconditional, access to land in both Ndebele and Shonaland.

Through his judicious mixture of initiatives and plotting, Rhodes was the central figure in all these developments. He was able to energise and stimulate people to help him realise his plans. Once again returning to the little town of Melsetter on the east side of the Sabi River, it is remarkable to note how they describe a visit of Rhodes to this small outpost was described: 'Rhodes was very pleased with his visit; he found the settler contented and thriving and bravely determined to face and overcome all difficulties. He encouraged them to come to his camp and tell him their troubles but found they had very few. He had a knack of making people feel at home, and arranged for coffee, cigars and cigarettes to be passed round while he chatted with them for hours. (The settlers) told Rhodes that they looked upon them as a father. (...) His visit was a great excitement for the children as he brought the first toys they had ever received seen from a shop (...)'.<sup>75</sup> Even many years after his death in 1902, Rhodes' reputation and example seemed to be able to inspire people to devote their lives to his ideals which is aptly demonstrated by the description of the General Manager of Devuli Ranch when he saw Rhodes' statue for the first time in Cape Town in 1920: 'Near the top of the Gardens, I came to a large bronze statue on a massive granite plinth, in the middle of the pathway. It was of Cecil John Rhodes, the founder of Rhodesia. I had read and heard so much of him, but felt I knew so little. This was, in fact, the first likeness I had seen of the man who was at one time Prime Minister of the Cape Colony. I stared intently at the bareheaded bronze figure, square and stocky with a fine strong face. As I stood there in the quietness of the Gardens, I began to understand something of this visionary who, in life, had led the way North, and in death continued to encourage others to do the same. My eyes travelled down the granite plinth in which one smooth slab bore the lettering:

Cecil John Rhodes  
1853-1902  
'Your Hinterland is there'. [pointing north]

Just that simple wording and no more, but it gave me a genuine thrill of pleasure and set me tingling with excitement. Here surely was a message for me personally. I wondered what forces had guided me so directly to this spot (...) today it seemed that the message was intended for me especially. I felt that I was being offered part of a great heritage'.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Sinclair 1971: 45.

<sup>76</sup> Sommerville 1976: 19. See for a more Marxist approach to the history of these early years of settlement in Rhodesia, Phimister, I. (1988), *An economic and social history of Zimbabwe 1890-1948: Capital accumulation and class struggle*, London, New York: Longman.

### Further Land Alienation and African Responses

It was a heritage which proved to be a double edged sword one, which turned directly at the heart of the imperialist dreams developed and cherished by the white settlers. To a large extent this was because the land, its very soil is considered sacred to the Africans and is therefore indelible part of their social identity.<sup>77</sup> Right from the start, white decisions about land distribution and land use have been contested and protested about through African spirit mediums. They were speaking on behalf of the ancestors who were considered to have the ultimate authority over the land. Mwari was seen 'as the final authority behind their ancestors. (...) Mwari was believed to control the fertility of Shona occupied country, to give rain in times of drought and advice on the course of action in times of national crisis'.<sup>78</sup> The Mwari cult therefore played an important role in the 1896-1897 rebellions.<sup>79</sup> It continued to be a paramount influence in the resistance to white domination of the land ever after, culminating in the Liberation Struggle in the 1970s.<sup>80</sup> 'Given the belief in the power of the spirits of the ancestors to influence natural events related to land, it follows that conquest must set up an ambiguous relationship between the victors and the vanquished since the victors have no direct communication with the spirits of the ancestors of the autochthons. The very weakness of the vanquished in a sense becomes their strength. The consequence of this is that these beliefs provide the mechanism through which the formerly hostile groups may be linked together in a common society'.<sup>81</sup> If only the conquerors would have been willing to recognise and respect the spiritual ownership of the land as vested in the ancestors and High God, then a situation could have emerged in which political and secular authority over land would have resided in the hands of the dominant group, but the spiritual authority and ownership of the land in the hands of the autochthonous population.

This seems to have been the usual pattern in much of southern Africa. The Ndebele entering what is now Zimbabwe, recognized Mwari of the Matopo Hills as the ultimate owner of the land, despite the fact that they ruthlessly subdued the Shona people.<sup>82</sup> This was obviously also an option open to the new white conquerors. Mwari recognized them as 'His white sons' and some of them have even paid tribute to him, in the sense that they actually sent him gifts to his most important shrine in the Matopo Hills, Mato-

<sup>77</sup> What Roosens (1998: 11) calls 'primordial autochtony'. 'Dit principe kent aan individuen en groepen ten aanzien van een bepaald territorium een bijzondere kwalificatie toe omdat ze afstammen van ouders en voorouders die als 'eersten' op deze grond hebben gewoond' (translation: This principle accords a special qualification to individuals or groups in relation to a certain territory, because they descend from parents and grandparents who were the 'first' to have lived on that land. Roosens, E. (1998), *Eigen grond eerst? Primordiale autochtonie. Dilemma van de multiculturele samenleving* (translation: Own soil first? Primordial autochtony. Dilemma of the multicultural society), Leuven, Amersfoort: Acco.

<sup>78</sup> pp. 15, Daneel, M.L. (1970), *The God of the Matopo Hills. An essay on the Mwari Cult in Rhodesia*, The Hague, Paris: Mouton.

<sup>79</sup> Ranger, T.O. (1967), *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia, 1896-7*, London: Heineman.

<sup>80</sup> Ranger, T.O. (1985), *Peasant consciousness and guerrilla war*, London: James Currey. See also Ian, D. (1985), *Guns and rain. Guerrillas and spirit mediums in Zimbabwe*, London: James Currey.

<sup>81</sup> pp. 8, italics added, Mitchell in Schoffeleers, J.M. (1992), *River of blood. The genesis of a martyr cult in Southern Malawi, c.A.D. 1600*, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

njeni.<sup>83</sup> But that was certainly not standard procedure, which made Mwari highly critical of European settlers because they were 'always 'fighting with the land''.<sup>84</sup> Not only did they not pay sufficient respect to the owners of the land and recognise his authority, they insulted and violated this authority quite blatantly which is made clear by an emotional description of Mutwa about the planning and construction of Lake Kariba on the border between Zambia and Zimbabwe. In 1955 Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) and Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) formed a Federation together with Nyasaland (now Malawi) (1953-1963).<sup>85</sup> In 1955, the Prime Minister of the Federation, announced the decision to build a dam at Kariba to supply the Zambian Copperbelt and the industrial plants in Southern Rhodesia with power. The project was funded by the World Bank and other international banking houses, and is built by an Italian firm on the basis of plans from a French engineering company.<sup>86</sup> A huge campaign, with the appropriate name of 'Operation Noah, was set up to save as much wildlife from the rising tides as possible'.<sup>87</sup> The boot was on the other foot for the people who were living in the area and who owned the land for whom there seemed much less attention. 'If they thought of the people of the region it seems to have been with the happy expectation that they would adjust, while their loss would be offset by the gain to those who would build the dam, use its power, or perhaps find a vacation home upon its lake'.<sup>88</sup> To the people living on the land, Kariba was 'the navel of the earth' and 'the Knot of Time', (...) where past, present and future meet, and are joined together'.<sup>89</sup> In other words, the land is sacred to them and for that reason could not be abandoned under resettlement programmes for the sake of the construction of a dam. Mutwa carries on and describes how he had heard about 'prayer meetings held by Christian Mashonas, prayers for the Kariba dam to collapse – prayers addressed both to Christ and to Mulimbu together, prayers that the men building the dam might be killed. I have intended a curse ceremony at which a High Curse was put on the dam for all eternity – on the dam, and on the white man too!' To add more emotional empathy and persuasion to his argument, Mutwa states that 'if you think this proves that the Africans are a primitive, superstitious, subhuman rabble, try hurling a dead pig into a mosque in Dar-Es-Salaam, or into a synagogue in Jerusalem, and see what happens. Or try disfiguring a statue of the Virgin Mary in the presence of a group of Sicilians on their own island, and see what they do to you'.<sup>90</sup> These fragments from various sources, in different contexts all pinpoint only one possible and inevitable conclusion, that land is the soul and heart of social identity processes of Africans in

southern Africa. With the commencement of white settlement in the area, aggravated by their definite sense of cultural superiority and disregard for and ignorance of local cultural norms, this could only lead to antagonistic and rivalling identities, coinciding with a racial divide between black and white related to the land: the whites relating to landscape and Africans relating to the soil. The inescapable conclusion was that the African people would protest and rebel against this state of affairs. How rival identities related to land and socio-political developments shape(d) history in Zimbabwe is beautifully described in a recent book by Ranger.<sup>91</sup> I want to draw upon this book in more detail, because many parallels can be drawn between his historical case study, starting in 1897 and rich in personal detail, of the relationships in terms of social identities between black and white in and around the Matopos Hills and my case study of the SVC in the nineties. They follow, and to a certain extent complement, each other in time. His study ends by the end of the eighties. He describes the first half of the nineties as a rough sketch. The SVC was officially inaugurated in 1991. The parallels and similarities in the two case studies suggest that the processes described within the particular contexts of each of them carry the potential for some broader generalisations, both theoretically as well empirically.

The Matopos Hills have a very idiosyncratic landscape. 'It contains some of the most majestic granite scenery in the world. The landscape has been carved out from an almost flat surface of granite by millions of years of weathering, resulting in great 'whalebacks' and domes, and castle-like formations. Mzilikazi, king of the Matabele, who led his people here from Zululand<sup>92</sup>, was so impressed that he gave them the name Matabo, which means 'bald heads'.<sup>93</sup> There are many Mwali or Mwari shrines in the area and 'the cult came to express the essence of their extraordinary landscape. (...) The great rocks [Bald Heads] stand for Mwali's authority (...) and Mwali (...) speaks from the rock itself'.<sup>94</sup> Hence the title of Ranger's book, *Voices from the Rocks*. Mwali fused nature and society, because the Rocks were not only considered to be his voice, but were also held responsible for giving (or withholding for that matter) water. Water is considered 'a gift from the rock'<sup>95</sup> with which agriculture can be developed. Mwali is not only about landscape or nature or natural features, but also about the people living in that nature as a society who have to seek for their livelihood. Mwali merged nature with culture.

83 Daneel 1970: 73.

84 Ibid: 83.

85 It was the termination of this federation after a nationalist uprising in Nyasaland that led to the independent states of Zambia (24 October 1964) and Malawi (6 July 1964). It was only in Southern Rhodesia that the white settler community under Ian Smith, as a white minority, took over government in the Unilateral Declaration of Independence in November 1965.

86 pp. 4, Colson, E. (1971), *The social consequences of resettlement. The impact of the Kariba resettlement upon the Gwembe Tonga*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

87 See for a heroic description of Rupert Fothergill, the man responsible for Operation Noah, Meadows, K. (1996), *Rupert Fothergill. Bridging a conservation area*, Thorntree Press.

88 Colson 1971: 4.

89 pp. 128, Mutwa, C.V. (1969)[1964], *My people*, Anthony Blond.

90 Ibid: 130.

91 Ranger 1999. In relation to the development of his argument about the Matobo National Park see also Ranger, T. (January 1989), 'Whose heritage? The case of Matobo National Park', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15 (2).

92 Mzilikazi was the father of Lobengula and 'chief of the House of Khumalo, a minor Zulu clan'. He had abandoned the famous Zulu king, Shaka, after a quarrel over the distribution of loot and had taken 300 of his followers to the north. After being pushed further north by the Great Trek of the Boers in 1837 (although De Boers always persisted that they settled in a country with 'a strange absence of human life' beyond the Orange and the Vaal [River] according to Agar-Hamilton in February 1991: 52), they finally settled in Mashonaland. The Sotho tribes he defeated on his way called his warriors Amandebele (i.e. 'people of the long shields'). It became anglicised as 'Matabele'. Their capital became Gubulawayo, 'The Place of the Killing' because there, people were sacrificed for rain (Thomas 1996: 182-184).

93 Text from a brochure produced by the Matabeleland Branch of the Wildlife Society of Zimbabwe, 'Matabo National Park'.

94 Ranger 1999: 21.

95 Ibid: 25. Notice the beautiful parallel with the Biblical story about Moses who smote a rock from which water instantly sprang to nurture the thirsty people of Israel wandering around in the desert.

When the whites entered on the scene, under the leadership of Rhodes, they began straightaway to create frontiers between different parts of the Matopos and separate nature from culture by mapping the area in general and the mapping out of future farms in particular.<sup>96</sup> Part of the mapping consisted of designating a certain part of the Matopos for the creation of a national park, which became fact on 19 November 1926<sup>97</sup>, when the Rhodesian government proclaimed an area of 224,000 acres of the Matopos the first national park in Rhodesia. Culture and nature were forcefully separated. Although it had been a human habitation and under cultivation for generations, it was described and (re)imagined by the whites as 'African wilderness and (re)made accordingly. Because at that time there was not yet a government department for national parks, that only came in 1949<sup>98</sup>, it was put under the custodianship of the Forestry Department.<sup>99</sup> The materialisation of the different types of land-use planning was the fencing off of the areas and thus their physical demarcation from each other. These sharp and visible boundaries were simultaneously an acute expression of segregation; demarcating land claims as much as rival identities on either side of them. The ideology surrounding Mwali had stressed man's co-existence and reciprocal relationship with the environment. These reciprocal ties were broken in the process of creating (white) boundaries.<sup>100</sup>

After the proclamation of the first national park in 1926, more areas followed. In the southeast Lowveld suggestions were put forward for the creation of a game reserve in the Chipinda Pools area. The idea failed to gain the support of the Chief Entomologist because the creation of the reserve would interfere with land use by European ranchers and with the Matibi No. 2 Native Reserve. There was another attempt in 1933. 'The major constraint to the proposal was [again] that a total of 1500 people would have to be moved from the area earmarked for the new game reserve'. The Fort Victoria Publicity Association campaigned especially hard the cause of this game reserve and was supported in its effort by the Umtali (present-day Mutare) Publicity Association. The latter tended to stress the potential for tourists coming to Umtali after having visited the reserve. The Minister for Commerce and Transport also began to support the idea and in 1934 the Gona-Re-Zhou Game Reserve was established by Proclamation Number 3.<sup>101</sup>

96 Ibid: 42.

97 Matopos National Park was the first game sanctuary in the country. By 1933, there were already four areas devoted to game, Wankie, Victoria Falls, Kazuma Pan Game Reserve and Matopos National Park (pp. 259, Mutwira, R. (January 1989), Southern Rhodesian wildlife policy (1890-1933): a question of condoning game slaughter?, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15 (2).

98 Ibid: 260.

99 Ranger 1999: 62.

100 See for another parallel example of this process of separating nature and culture by white boundary creation, Moore's description of the process of the establishment of Nyanga National Park in the Eastern Highlands in Zimbabwe. In this example, the local chief, Tangwena, also claimed that a particular piece of land within the park boundaries, Kaerezi, was inalienable his peoples, which is underpinned with cultural practices like 'propitiating ancestral spirits, recognizing sacred features of the land scape [compare with Matopos], and enforcing "respect for the land" (*kuremekedza nyika*)' (pp. 135, Moore, D.S. (1996), Marxism, culture, and political ecology. Environmental struggles in Zimbabwe's Eastern Highlands, in: Peet, R. & Watts, M. (eds), *Liberation ecologies. Environment, development, social movements*, London, New York: Routledge.

101 pp. 76-77, Masona, T. (1987), Colonial game policy: a case study of the origin and administration of game policy in Southern Rhodesia - 1890 to 1945, Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Zimbabwe.

In the second half of the thirties, the potential for tourism became an important argument and part of the discourse arguing for the creation of game reserves and national parks. In 1938 the Minister of Agriculture and Lands formulated the matter as follows and the words proved to be prophetic: 'I think that the game of the Colony in the future is going to be not only a great attraction but also a valuable asset to the Colony'.<sup>102</sup>

In association with emergence of game reserves and national parks came the state regulation of hunting. The general rule was that requests to kill game to feed Africans were refused.<sup>103</sup> Only in rare instances were these stringent laws suspended.<sup>104</sup> The reason for this strict state monopoly on hunting had to do with a fear for the economic depletion of wildlife resources (see Chapter 3) but also, and maybe even more importantly, with the political reason that the 'Government was reluctant to pass the skill of the use of guns to Africans (...) Many of them who kept guns had old muzzle loaders bought before colonialism from Portuguese traders'. One of the main reasons economic depletion was not considered paramount in this respect is that much of the game was shot in large numbers anyway in an attempt to eradicate and control the tsetse fly (hence the title of Mutwira's article). In the early 1920s the government thought that, in order to eradicate the tsetse fly, they had to accompany the process of eradicating game with intensive settlement. Europeans were sceptical about this development because they dreaded the idea that Africans would settle in areas in which the whites would prefer to settle. This led to a situation in which large areas of marginal land were completely fenced, after which the area was cleared of any game. Only after this operation had taken place were Africans allowed to move into the reserve.<sup>105</sup> It is therefore not astonishing that '(t)he criminal records in the Zimbabwe National Archives are full of cases of Africans imprisoned for hunting with dogs or for setting traps on European land [and that] African opposition to government policy was widespread'.<sup>106</sup> While all this was happening private farmers were pressing for more freedom to hunt game on their own land without restrictions. In 1914 the wildlife law was amended to include the proviso that '(t)he owner of any land or the occupier thereof with the consent of the owner or any holder of land under Permit of Occupation from the British South Africa Company or any European person duly authorised by such owner or holder, may take or kill game upon such land at any time'. The game licence cost £1 and did not put any restriction on the number of game that could be killed at any time.<sup>107</sup> In 1917 there could be no shadow of doubt that landowners were making the most out of their freedom to the extent of the extermination of nearly all wildlife on their land, not so much because of their own occasional sport hunting but by contracting private hunters to supply for structural trade in biltong and hides. This was an unfavourable development from the

102 Ibid: 79.

103 Although certainly not all the game was protected under the Ordinance. All fish, crocodiles, baboons, lions, cheetahs, leopards, wild dogs, hyenas and a few others did not fall under the Ordinance. They were considered vermin, and there was a reward for their extermination (Mutwira 1989: 253). But most of these animals are not considered edible by Africans, like impala, kudu, reedbuck and the like are. But these were all protected!

104 Ibid: 259

105 Ibid: 258.

106 Ibid: 257 & 261.

107 Ibid: 255-256.

perspective of the preservation of species and the government tried 'to prevent people from being employed to shoot game for the purpose of trade. But (it was) maintained that certain latitude should be given to owners of cultivated land and to persons who had put up fences'.<sup>108</sup> This liberal attitude contrasted strongly with the difficulties Africans experienced in obtaining licences to hunt as I described earlier. One could conclude with Masona that 'the licenses and permits given to whites were so liberal that one had to be extremely extravagant to breach the law. For the non-white, the story was completely different'.<sup>109</sup>

### *Acts of legitimisation*

The Government played an important role in legitimising the land appropriation by white settlers through the formulation and implementation of different Acts. The most important in this respect are the Land Apportionment Act of 1930, the Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951 and the Land Tenure Act of 1969. The Land Apportionment Act of 1930, which was preceded by a study of the Morris Carter Land Commission, can be seen as the legal document legitimising the land segregation at the time. All three Acts are to be regarded as an *ex post* formalisation of already existing practices. Before the Land Apportionment Act of 1930, Africans had already been living separately from white settlers in African reserves since 1902, a situation ratified by the Imperial Government in 1908.<sup>110</sup> The Act though was not about the African Reserves, but about the remaining land which was classified into four types: European Area, Native Area, Undetermined Area and the Unassigned Area. In a Native Area, other than in the Reserves, the African could buy land himself. The European Area was strictly reserved for Europeans and Africans were only allowed to occupy portions of it were they to supply labour in return. Whites, on the other hand, were allowed to settle in African areas for all matters 'deemed beneficial to the Africans', like trading, education or religious matters.<sup>111</sup> When land in the Undetermined Area passed into African hands, it became part of the Native Area. The Unassigned Area could be assigned to either African or white after which the land would become either part of the European or the African Area. With the legal backing of the Act, Africans were ordered to leave the European Areas for the African Reserves within a period of six years. But the Reserves could not absorb all the Africans evicted from European land. To tackle the problem the Government decided to extend the deadline from 1936 to 1941.<sup>112</sup> This did not help very much and many Africans began to look for other opportunities in urban and mining areas and a process of land alienation got underway, which in Arendt's terms created a willing labour pool

108 Masona 1987: 93.

109 Ibid: 97.

110 Mutambara 1982: 310.

111 Ibid: 456.

112 In that same year an entirely new Land Apportionment Act appeared containing the two Amendments to the 1930 Act in 1936 and 1937. The 1941 Act was based on the same principles as the 1930 Act. For that reason it is better concentrate on the 1930 Act in the main text. In an Amendment to the 1941 Land Apportionment Act, the category 'Native Land' was renamed as Native Purchase Area.

for the sake of the capital accumulation of the few.<sup>113</sup> The subsequent migrations themselves than created problems for urban and industrial areas. The implementation of the Act caused major problems not only because it was difficult to find additional land, but also it was virtually impossible to find the combination of 'suitable arable and pastoral land with permanent water for persons and livestock'.<sup>114</sup> Despite its problems, and every successive Rhodesian Government has had to struggle with it ever since 1930, the Act did institutionalise the division between black and white land, a heritage which still exists and has to be contested right up to today.<sup>115</sup>

The Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951 was intended to be a (white) conservation measure to curb environmental problems in the Native Areas caused by overgrazing in particular and in general by African farming methods. Instead of apportioning any blame to the unequal land distribution in the territory which caused the overcrowding of the Reserves, the Rhodesian government made the Africans culpable because of their 'shifting cultivation and other practices which are not conducive to profitable farming', claiming this was the root cause of environmental degradation.<sup>116</sup> The Act contained five parts. The first formulated what were considered 'good farming methods' like the construction of contour ridges and destocking of cattle. The second dealt with grazing rights for various classes of Africans. Part Three was meant to put an end to part-time farming, whereby Africans farmed only during the planting season after which they moved to urban areas to seek employment, only to return the next planting season. The fourth part made provision for the establishment of rural townships and businesses on the Reserve, where it was thought the landless could reside. The fifth and final part contained regulations for the compulsory use of African labour in the Reserve for the construction of roads and the like.<sup>117</sup> As a whole the Act 'sought to:

- Provide for good husbandry farming and protecting of natural resources by all Africans wherever they farmed.
- Provide security of tenure to the good farmer.
- Limit the number of stock in any area to its carrying capacity and as far as practicable to relate the stock to the arable land available.
- Allocate the arable and grazing ground as far as possible in economic units.
- All land outside the arable land was held communally not individually.
- Provide for the setting aside of land for towns and business centres in the Reserves'.<sup>118</sup>

113 In order not to repeat myself too often, I refer to my earlier comments on Arendt in Chapter 1.

114 Mutambara 1982: 480.

115 See for a more in detail description of the consequences of the Land Apportionment Act of 1930, *ibid*: 453-489. See also pp. 16. Maposa, I. (1995), *Land reform in Zimbabwe. An inquiry into the Land Acquisition Act (1992) combined with a case study analysis of the resettlement programme*, Harare: Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe: 'It is this piece of colonial legislation (i.e. the Land Apportionment Act) that entrenched and institutionalized land alienation as we know it today'.

116 pp. 131. Moyana, H.V. (1984), *The political economy of land in Zimbabwe*, Harare: Mambo Press.

117 *Ibid*: 134-135.

118 *Ibid*: 132-133.

It is hardly surprising that the land-use reorganisation under this Act led to even further insecurity of land tenure within communal areas.<sup>119</sup> Although the Land Husbandry Act promised security of tenure, it was tied to 'good farming practices'. Within the rigid boundaries of the Land Apportionment Act described above, the increasing population of the reserves could never live up to the requirements of 'good farming' laid down in the Native Land Husbandry Act, even had they wished. Plots were too small for sound agricultural practices and land would only be allocated to people who actually worked the land at the time of implementation. Those who were working in urban areas were left out. When they looked across their narrowly defined boundary in the reserve they could see the enormous stretches of empty and often under-utilised European land. National protest was building up and racial tension and political agitation were inexorably linked.<sup>120</sup> By 1958 49% of the land in Southern Rhodesia was alienated or reserved for Europeans, while they constituted only 7.1% of the total population.<sup>121</sup>

Finally the Land Tenure Act of 1969 should be noted in this context of favouring white appropriation of the (best parts of the) land. This Act replaced the Land Apportionment Act of 1931 and was primarily aimed to secure separate developments for black and white. The total acreage of land would be classified and divided in two, although the whites only constituted some 5% of the population at the time. In the 1969 Constitution of Rhodesia, European land was fixed at 18.1 million ha while the Native Areas, which were renamed Tribal Trust Lands (TTL)<sup>122</sup>, contained 18.2 million ha.<sup>123</sup> 74.2% of this land was located in Natural Regions IV and V, with the poorest and most unreliable rainfall in Zimbabwe.<sup>124</sup> Prime (European) farmland was approximately 75% of Region I and 66% of Region II.<sup>125</sup>

### *The Land Question After Independence, 1980-1992*

Let us return again to the case of the Matopos as described by Ranger. The examples mentioned above and the formulation of the different Acts make it abundantly clear, that in order to allow the different plans of white land use to materialise, it was necessary to move Africans around constantly to places not claimed by whites for farming or national parks. In effect black people had to be placed somewhere outside the fenced white areas, which was either white commercial land or National Park. This resulted in a structural sense of insecurity of land tenure among the Africans. The interest groups,

which developed in the Matopos to protest this state of affairs, like *Sofasihamba* and *Sofasonke*, were all related to the shrines of Mwali and developed a strong social identity as their foundation, which almost seems in reverse proportional to the insecurity of the land tenure. The more insecure, the stronger their identity and sense of unity. Protests were centred on the Matopos National Park. Many of the protests were expressed by the cutting of fences and by poaching<sup>126</sup>, not only these of the National Park, but also of the white farmers.<sup>127</sup> When protests had turned into a full-fledged Liberation Struggle in the seventies, 'guerrillas promised that the National Park fences would be torn down and the animals in the Game Park barbecued'.<sup>128</sup> In 1980 it seemed as if the fight had been won by the Africans with the help of Mwali. They said that '(t)he power to fight (...) came from the *mhondoro* spirits together with Mwari. That is why we won the land! The people saw it was the truth'.<sup>129</sup>

In the Matopos National Park nothing much changed under the new black majority government, partly as a result of the environmentalists' appeal to the international conservation and wildlife organisations in the world. When the new constitution was drawn up at Lancaster House, the British negotiators saw to it that National Parks were entrenched in it in the same sense as under the white minority regime. Another reason why time has virtually stood still is because the new government, just like the Rhodesian government, 'recognizes [only Western] property boundaries as they are written in title deeds and demarcated with beacons placed by the office of the surveyor general, not as they are remembered in oral tradition'.<sup>130</sup> Even when land was taken over by the Mugabe administration because white farmers left their property, 'there was no question of allowing peasant cattle on to the land. (...) The Mugabe government was as much at loggerheads with the people of the Matopos as the Rhodesians had ever been'.<sup>131</sup> In other words, strict and fixed boundaries of land-use (a white invention), National Parks and wildlife areas in particular, demarcated by fences, remained the cutting edge, the National Park fences falling under the black government, the fences of the newly established safari lodges in the hills on white farms. National Parks and these ecology-conscious white farmers share a common interest in conservation and tourism, and display a general negligence towards local communities. 'At Shumba Shaba Lodge, for example, [Ranger formulates rather rhetorically], I picked up Valerie Gargett's *The Black Eagle*, a book which celebrates birds of prey rather than human beings'. The (white) prime minister of the Federation had decided on the construction of the Kariba Dam in

119 pp. 83, Moyo, S. (1995), *The land question in Zimbabwe*, Harare: SAPES Books.

120 Blanckenburg formulates it rather undiplomatically: 'Even the Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951 which, viewed with today's concern for environmental issues, appears future-oriented in many parts, was refused by black farmers, largely because some conservation measures, such as contour ploughing, were put through by force' (italics added), pp. 17. Von Blanckenburg, P. (1994), *Large commercial farmers and land reform in Africa. The case of Zimbabwe*, Aldershot, Singapore: Avebury.

121 Yudelman 1964: 19.

122 TTL was renamed 'Communal Land' after Independence in 1980.

123 Ibid: 18-19.

124 Moyo 1995: 83.

125 pp. 17, Copestake, J.G. (1993), Zimbabwe. Country overview, in: Wellard, K. & Copestake, J.G. (eds), *Non-governmental organizations and the state in Africa. Rethinking roles in sustainable agricultural development*, London, New York: Routledge.

126 Ranger 1999: 186-187, 192.

127 Ibid: 236.

128 Ibid: 230.

129 Daneel in ibid: 241. Although the unanimity of the black people in the struggle should not be exaggerated as Kriger makes clear (Kriger, N.J. (1992), *Zimbabwe's guerrilla war. Peasant voices*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). Much of the 'popular support' was given because the peasants were threatened and beaten up by the guerillas in efforts to meet their logistical need and support their cause. 'Peasant voices in the Zimbabwe study support the compatibility of revolutionary success and lack of popular support (...) peasants had their own ideas and agendas and saw the guerrillas as potential allies or susceptible to manipulation to further their own goals' (pp. 19). The co-ercion of that period resulted in a structural fear for the party after the victory, 'because local party representatives often continued to coerce peasants after the war' (pp. 8).

130 Moore 1996: 135.

131 Ranger 1999: 244.

1955. In 1996 the Mugabe government decided on the construction of a dam in the Mthabezi River in the eastern part of the Matopos. Ranger relates that when he visited the dam site in August 1996 'it soon became clear that the technological project of the dam had [again] overridden local cultural considerations'.<sup>132</sup> White colonial and black governments in Southern Rhodesia, respectively Zimbabwe, seem to share sudden characteristics. Ranger ends his study by wryly noting that in conservation circles nowadays it is increasingly recognised that communities should be included in conservation efforts. This also holds true for the Matopos National Park. 'The Park's survival in the present climate depends upon the Communal people obtaining substantial benefit from its existence'.<sup>133</sup> To stress the ideological shift in the conservation scene Ranger calls the spokespersons of this line of thinking 'born-again' environmentalists.<sup>134</sup> The first half of the nineties is where Ranger's book ends and where I pick it up with my case study on the process of the SVC in trying to initiate a form of organisational co-operation with its communal neighbours. Will history repeat itself, like the Zimbabwean government repeated some aspects of Rhodesian government? Or will things turn out differently this time? Is government's role different in terms of compassion, empathy or any other way towards 'its own' people from that of the much demonised colonial government? One must not forget, following Ranger's argument above, 'that the current government, when it was a guerrilla movement, opposed the wildlife industry as a whole'.<sup>135</sup>

This section shows inevitably that the issue of land has dominated the relations between black and white in Zimbabwe ever since the Rudd Concession. Protests from Africans about the way land was handled and used by the white settlers in first instance and later the colonial government were present all along. The struggle for land did not commence with the Liberation Struggle in the seventies but it was its main theme because it has been the main theme in black and white relations dating back to their very first contacts. Locally, as I showed earlier, war raged over this issue before the formal start of the Liberation Struggle. At the national level the seventies are reserved for the 'real' political struggle over land. When Southern Rhodesia turned into present-day Zimbabwe in 1980, expectations were sky-high that at long last the land issue would be settled in a just way, restoring the reciprocal relationship between the soil and the people. But as Ranger's analysis of the Matopos Hills illustrates nothing much happened. It would appear that the reverse was the case. It seemed as if nothing had changed, only the colour of the government. Especially in relation to wilderness areas like national parks and game reserves, the government prolonged a policy in which people were not allowed to live within the boundaries of the park. A chief in the Eastern Highlands of Zimbabwe, cited by Moore, puts it as follows 'The National Park wants to burn huts in my area. We thought the whites had returned'.<sup>136</sup> Especially in relation to this type of land use, land remained a stumbling block between African peasants and government.

132 Ibid: 275.

133 Ibid: 286.

134 Ibid.

135 pp. 227. Hill, K.A. (1994), Politicians, farmers, and ecologists. Commercial wildlife ranching and the politics of land in Zimbabwe, *JAAS* XXIX.

136 Moore 1996: 135.

The post-independence government inherited a land tenure system which basically comprised three forms of tenure<sup>137</sup>:

- National (or State) land, which comprised mainly national parks and state forests;
- Communal Areas (CA), which were formerly known as the Tribal Trust Lands (TTLs);
- Commercial land, which consists of large-scale commercial farms, mainly white, and small-scale commercial farms, mainly black and formerly known as African Purchase Area.

Considering that land was the major motivation for the Liberation Struggle, not much seemed to happen in this field after Independence in the eighties. Despite the rhetoric not as many people as expected were resettled and not that much land was expropriated from the former colonisers. This can be partly attributed to the Lancaster House Agreement which marked the transition from colonial domination to political independence. The Agreement, which would be valid for a period of ten years, till 1990, 'tended to reflect a result less than that which might have been expected of a national liberation movement had it won an outright victory on the battlefield'.<sup>138</sup> 'Zimbabwe's Lancaster House Constitution resulted in a major compromise by the liberation movements'.<sup>139</sup> The Lancaster House Agreement of 1979 contained two important stipulations which hindered a radical land programme after 1980. The first was that 'all land acquired by the government be purchased on a 'willing seller-willing buyer' basis, and secondly that owners of any land seized by the government must be compensated in foreign currency'.<sup>140</sup> The Agreement signified the political strength of the white commercial farmers, which was to a large extent built on their economic power vested in freehold land tenure. In 1991 '(t)he large commercial farm sub sector contributes to the market delivery of maize, cotton and groundnut about 40%, to that of wheat, soybean, tobacco, coffee, tea and sugar cane 90 to 100%. 80% of all commercial beef sales through the Cold Storage Commission [CSC] and virtually all milk deliveries to the Dairy Marketing Board originate from large commercial farms'.<sup>141</sup> But the position of whites in Zimbabwe was also secured through the Lancaster House Agreement because of more geo-political considerations. The United States especially was afraid that Zimbabwe would be driven into the arms of the Russians. For that reason Kissinger insisted that Zimbabwe should be (financially) assisted by the USA and UK in its transition to black majority rule, on the promise that they would not expel the white minority.<sup>142</sup> The 'Kissinger Billion' was to '(...) provide for Governmental purchase and redistribution of large white owned holdings of fertile farmland, an essential component of

137 Moyo 1991: 57.

138 pp. 2, Mandaza, I. (1986), Introduction: the political economy of transition, In: *CODESRIA, Zimbabwe: the political economy of transition 1980-1986*, Dakar: CODESRIA.

139 Moyo 1995: 104.

140 pp. 42, Herbst, J. (1990), *State politics in Zimbabwe*, Los Angeles: University of California Press. The specific restrictions on land reform were written down in Chapter 3 of Zimbabwe's constitution, Section 16, Moyo 1995: 107.

141 Blanckenburg 1994: 27.

142 At one stage there seemed to have been a plan to evacuate all Rhodesians to Bolivia, Moyo 1995: 106.

national reconstruction in a country where the white, 4% of the population, occupied most of the commercially viable land'.<sup>143</sup> 'Thus the Lancaster House constitution was instrumental in restraining land acquisition throughout the decade'<sup>144</sup>, not only constitutionally but also financially.

Despite these institutional constraints the new government was undeterred and set up an ambitious resettlement programme.<sup>145</sup> They developed three resettlement models:

- 'Model A: individual smallholder arable production with communal grazing;
- Model B: cooperative farming with communal living;
- Model C: individual smallholder production with a centralized estate'.<sup>146</sup>

Its first target in 1980 was set to resettle 18,000 families on 1.1 million ha. of acquired commercial farmland over a period of three years. In 1982 a more ambitious figure was laid down in the Transitional National Development Plan of 162,000 families on 9 million ha. of land. This adjusted, optimistic figure was probably derived from the fact that in the first years after Independence the government was able to buy all the whole white farms which had been abandoned during the war or were sold just before or after Independence at very low prices, by people fearing the policies of the new black government.<sup>147</sup> The new target implied that commercial farmers would have to give up 60% of their total land of 15 million ha. but in 1985 only 36,000 people were resettled on 2.46 million ha. of land. In 1991, some 53,000 people were allocated land and the government had acquired 3.3 million ha. 'The pace of land acquisition increased from year to year, whereas that of the actual resettlement decreased'.<sup>148</sup> In the period between 1981 and 1991 a yearly average of 4800 settlers started farming, which is only about one-third of the target of 15,000 a year, set in 1985.<sup>149</sup> In 1988 the Government reduced its land acquisition budget by more than 50%, from Z\$ 11 million in 1987 to Z\$ 4 million in

143 Rossiter in Moyo 1995: 106. The actual name was the Zimbabwe Development Fund (ZDF) into which Britain agreed in the mid-seventies to put in £75 million. The fund was meant to buy out white farmers. This carrot was put on the negotiating table. When at last though, in 1979, the different parties sat down at Lancaster House to formulate the Constitution of the new Zimbabwe, there had been a change of Government in Britain, with Mrs. Thatcher now prime minister. She 'dangled' the ZDF before the noses to coax a favourable outcome in the negotiations, but when this was reached according to Britain, the Fund was shelved. Zimbabwe objected and accused Britain of chicanery but to no avail (pp. 165-166, Palmer, R. (1990). Land reform in Zimbabwe, 1980-1990, *African Affairs*, 89 (355): 163-181).

144 Moyo 1995: 109.

145 Although 'the government has never formally computed the actual demand for land, in terms of numbers of households requiring land for different uses, including residential, arable or grazing lands, in different regions of the country' (ibid: 119). The fact was that in 1980 42% of the country belonged to 6000 white farmers (Palmer 1990: 169).

146 Blanckenburg 1994: 31. According to Blanckenburg Model A has been the most successful. Until 1991, 92% (44,000) of the 48,000 settlers' families were Model A settlers (ibid: 31).

147 Palmer 1990: 169-170. In the period 1980-1983 the Government was able to buy 2,063,317 ha of land for an average price of Z\$ 20.02 per ha. In the period from 1983-1988 they bought only 474,945 ha for an average price per ha of Z\$48.18.

148 Ibid: 30.

149 Ibid: 30-31. Moyo's (1995: 118) figures and years differ slightly from Blanckenburg's. Moyo argues that in 1981, 18,000 people were scheduled to be resettled on 1.5 million ha. over five years. In 1983 this was scaled up to 165,000 people on 5 million ha.

1988.<sup>150</sup> At the end of the eighties the whole land resettlement programme had lost much of its reputation. The principal reason was that, although the Government acquired land and resettled people, it did not give the resettled farmers any security of tenure. The state retained ownership of the land and controlled it by monopolising the issuing of permits for usufruct.<sup>151</sup> Actually, the 'resettlement areas were often characterized by a degree of bureaucratic control which was all too reminiscent of past colonial schemes'.<sup>152</sup> In 1990 the Lancaster House Agreement expired and a time, untrammelled by the constraints and excuses of the Agreement, could begin. The Government introduced a new land policy programme in which they adopted the concept of land designation. Land could now be acquired by the government on a compulsory basis. The programme was aimed especially at Regions II and III, which cover the better soils and climatic conditions and in which large-scale commercial farmers have an over proportional share.<sup>153</sup> A complication which mired the prospects in comparison with the situation in 1980 was that now several black powerful politicians, government ministers, had become large landowners in their own right and had joined the powerful representative body of the commercial farmers, the Commercial Farmers Union (CFU).<sup>154</sup> 'For some members of government, indeed, land redistribution might now signify taking land from themselves, rather than giving it to peasants'.<sup>155</sup>

#### *New Attempt to Redistribute the Land, 1992-1998*

By now it will have become incontrovertible that the land issue has been a dominating theme under the Rhodesian government and that it remained one of the most important issues after Independence. At first, ambitions had to be restrained for institutional reasons like the Lancaster House Agreement and financial considerations following it. Hopes were high that after the Lancaster House Agreement expired in 1990, new opportunities could be created to try and attempt to redistribute the land in Zimbabwe more equally. Whatever the outcome realisation will also have dawned that not all the blame can be put on the constraints of the Lancaster House Agreement. 'Developments in the Land Redistribution Policy over the past 14 years show weak attempts by Government to put land resettlement on the national agenda'. One possible explanation for this state of affairs is that the commercial landowners (majority white<sup>156</sup>) contribute considerably to export earnings<sup>157</sup> and are consequently major taxpayers, which might make the Zimbabwean government reluctant to pursue their course too radically in terms of implementation and execution. (Political rhetoric about the issue is, as we have seen, another matter all together.) In 1983 the budget of the Minister of Lands was cut by 53%,

150 Moyo 1995: 116.

151 Ibid.

152 Palmer 1990: 172.

153 Blanckenburg 1994: 34.

154 The CFU was established in 1942 as the Rhodesia National Farmers Union (Hill 1994: 232).

155 Palmer 1990: 175.

156 In 1992 400 out of 4500 commercial farmers (i.e. 9%) were 'indigenous farmers', Blanckenburg 1994: 21.

157 50% in a normal year when there is no drought. Tobacco is the main export product (ibid: 27-28).

which was the largest cut for any ministry that year. In 1986 the Ministry of Lands was abolished as a separate ministry and put under the Ministry of Agriculture. Only around general elections did the issue of land redistribution resurface. In 1985, there was a weak attempt to revive the land issue on the national agenda through the formulation of the Land Acquisition Act which stated that all land in Zimbabwe put up for sale should be offered to the Government first. Only after it had refused the offer could any other interested buyer be approached. Furthermore the Act stated that the government could seize derelict land and, importantly for the nineties, identify under-used land for involuntary appropriation.<sup>158</sup> This latter aspect proved to be the upbeat for the controversial Land Acquisition Act of 1992.

The Act is presented as 'An Act to empower the President and other authorities to acquire land and other immovable property compulsorily in certain circumstances; to provide for the designation of rural land; to provide for the establishment of the Derelict Land Board; to provide for the declaration and acquisition of derelict land; and to provide for matters connected with or incidental to the foregoing'.<sup>159</sup> It is the part on 'compulsorily designation' especially that is important in the context of my argument, because conservancies are co-operative structures between several landowners. In the case of the SVC, twenty-four landowners all together. This means that if one or more properties were designated, this would have implications for the whole SVC and not only for the individual landowner. In Part II, Section 3 of the Act the acquisition of land is described as follows, which seems like a mirror image of Rhodesian formulations on the matter: 'Subject to this Act, the President may compulsorily acquire -

- (a) any land, where the acquisition is reasonably necessary in the interest of defence, public safety, public order, public morality, public health, town and country planning or the utilization of that or any other property for a purpose beneficial to the public generally or to any section of the public;
- (b) any rural land, where the acquisition is reasonably necessary for the utilization of that or any other land -
  - (i) for settlement for agricultural or other purposes; or
  - (ii) for purposes of land reorganization, forestry, environmental conservation or the utilization of wildlife or other natural resources; or
  - (iii) for the relocation of persons dispossessed in consequence of the utilization of land for a purpose referred to in subparagraphs (i) and (ii).<sup>160</sup>

On top of that the Act 'provides for the following [if compared with the Lancaster House Agreement]:

1. Payment for land acquired is to be in local currency only.
2. Government can now compulsorily acquire land which is being fully utilized whereas before in the amendment of the Zimbabwe Constitution in 1990 only 'under utilized' land could be acquired.
3. Government can now pay a 'fair price' within a 'reasonable period' instead of 'adequate' compensation 'promptly'.
4. Compensation is to be assessed by a 'compensation committee' made up of six people.
5. Where there is a dispute as to the amount of compensation, the parties can appeal to the Administrative Court for arbitration. However, the Administrative Court may not set aside an assessment on the basis that compensation is not 'fair'.
6. It does away with the willing-seller/willing-buyer principle. (...).<sup>161</sup>

The long and short of it is that it seems anything could happen. The Act makes provisions for (nearly) every possible acquisition of land without allowing the proper possibility of appealing to any court. This particular aspect of the Act comes to the fore when the Land Acquisition Act is related to the Constitutional Amendment no. 11, 1990. This amendment was thought necessary after the Lancaster House Constitution had expired and removed the restrictions imposed on the government under Section 16 of that Constitution<sup>162</sup>, especially in relation to the possibility of appeal over matters of 'fair compensation'. According to Maposa, the main contention in amendment No. 11 in relation to the above mentioned points is that:

1. 'Any land can be acquired ... even if it is properly utilized.
2. The legislator can set right provisions for assessing compensation and these will be applied without regard to the particular circumstances of each case.
3. The removal of the right of the court to assess whether the compensation is fair. (...).<sup>163</sup>

His analysis brings Maposa to the conclusion that the Land Acquisition Act (1992) is 'bad law' and a 'gross violation of individual rights', as it denies people 'the most basic natural principle of law', to recourse to courts of appeal if disputes over the fairness over matters of compensation should arise.<sup>164</sup>

Although the Act generated a maelstrom of political turmoil, strangely enough not much happened afterwards in terms of grand-scale acquisitions. In the period between 1992 and 1997 only some hundred farms have been designated, including some wildlife ranches.<sup>165</sup> Some of the farmers complained that they had not received a fair compensation in terms of the real market value of the property.<sup>166</sup> Nevertheless, the fact is

<sup>158</sup> Maposa 1994: 19-20.

<sup>159</sup> pp. 450, Land Acquisition Act, Chapter 20:10 (1996, revised edition).

<sup>160</sup> Ibid: 451.

<sup>161</sup> Maposa 1994: 73.

<sup>162</sup> pp. 48, Stiles, M. (July 1994), Zimbabwe's land reform: what's goin' on? In: *Southern Africa Report*, pp. 48-51.

<sup>163</sup> Maposa 1994: 73.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid: 73-74.

<sup>165</sup> Hill 1994: 234.

<sup>166</sup> Editorial, Zimbabwe: Government to seize white farms, *Southscan*, 12 (1): 8.



that it made perfectly clear that the Land Acquisition Act of 1992 was a major threat to wildlife ranches in general and conservancies in particular, because the government could 'simply step in and seize any farm it wishes'.<sup>167</sup> Conservancies might expect to be specifically targeted in this operation because the Ministry of Lands claimed that 'some farmers were diversifying into game ranching to escape designation. Presumably, the Ministry of Lands thinks that farmers perceive they will be 'politically covered' by the Department of National Parks, whose conservation philosophy encourages private wildlife ranching'.<sup>168</sup> In the political rhetoric surrounding the Act, another edge became paramount (again): the racial aspect of the land question: 'there is a tendency on both sides to see the issue in, quite literally, black and white terms'.<sup>169</sup> It has been this theme which has mainly dominated the popular discussion about the land designation process since 1992. This is of particular relevance to my argument. Although the discussion is a gross simplification of the process<sup>170</sup> in which many more factors and processes are at play and intermingle, it does make clear that in terms of identification and identity construction, the colour divide is and remains a powerful force, uniting the respective sides and at the same time separating the two parties on either side of the racial divide. A division which is symbolically demarcated by the colour of skin, but physically by fences separating commercial and communal land. Despite its racial overtones, care has to be observed not to equate the division immediately with blatant racism on each side. One of the consequences of the division on either side of the fence was that it 'perpetuate[d] the social distance between the races, thereby limiting the opportunities for Whites to understand both the ambition for advancement and the fact of its occurring'.<sup>171</sup> It is to be expected that from their side of the fence the whites could only imagine how the black people were living, rather than by knowing it from interaction or being among them. The only blacks with whom they actually interacted (i.e. giving orders) were their servants or employees. According to Godwin<sup>172</sup> and Hancock, there was also no genuine interest in knowing more about the black people. 'Consequently, social distance bred and fed upon dislike and ignorance, and encouraged a polite amusement or bewilderment'.<sup>173</sup> The things they did know only reinforced the stereotyped images of the black people. Everybody could reproduce and reiterate the stories that 'THEY smelt', were too noisy, demanded hand-outs, breast-fed their children in public, created long queues in

the Post Office, never said 'Thank You', or never showed any practical gratitude'.<sup>174</sup> Godwin and Hancock therefore come to the conclusion that 'ignorance born of distance rather than of an innate racism or idiocy – was [a] mark of Rhodesian-ness'.<sup>175</sup> Nevertheless Godwin and Hancock note that the discourse on race was the bonding factor for Rhodesians and used to invent an identity and a tradition.<sup>176</sup> Despite their discourse there was a widely-held and sincere belief, that 'most Africans benefited from, and even preferred, the forms of segregation and discrimination which did exist; and that Rhodesia continued to have the best race relations in the world'.<sup>177</sup>

In November 1997 the Zimbabwean government took a next step towards the realisation of (some of) its rhetoric about land redistribution based on the Land Acquisition Act of 1992. It published a list of 1471 farms to be designated in the Government Gazette on 28 November 1997. The government used five criteria to identify land for designation: if it was derelict, under-utilised, multiple-owned, foreign-owned, or contiguous to communal areas.<sup>178</sup> Mugabe's step was hailed by some and abhorred by others. At a ZANU PF ceremony to celebrate National Unity Day in Harare Province in November of that same year, the speech which was published in *The Herald* said: 'On Land Acquisition: We hail the Patriotic stance taken by His Excellency the President and his People's Government on the land designation and acquisition programme. We must never listen to the shrieks and cries of settler white farmers and their lame excuses for hanging on to the best land whilst our heroic people are packed like live termites in the tribal trust lands-poverty zones (...) Instead of extending a reciprocal hand of reconciliation our white farmers are trying to amputate the extended hand by: (...) Trying to turn the whole land issue into a black and white confrontation. We urge the Government never ever, to spare the so-called conservancies which are just white enclaves in this exercise which must be ongoing'.<sup>179</sup> Which directly links this political exercise to the (further) development of private wildlife conservancies in Zimbabwe. Mugabe added to the upheaval in his speech to the Fourth National People's Conference, which took place on 5 December 1997 in Mutare, by stating that '(t)he recent designation of 1488 [?] farms on some 4 million hectares of land is only the beginning of a process that is meant to completely reverse an unacceptable colonial legacy'.<sup>180</sup>

In the SVC, three properties were to be found on the list.<sup>181</sup> During the weeks and months following the publication of *The List*, all stakeholders in the process gave vent to strong opinions about the subject which were reflected in the newspapers. The government, headed by Mugabe, reiterated time and again that there was no question of

167 Hill 1994: 241.

168 Ibid: 241. I shall come back to this specific aspect of the political battle over land in the next two chapters, because the relation between the SVC and the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management (DNPWLM) is and has indeed been of particular importance to the development of the SVC.

169 Stiles 1994: 51.

170 To mention just one aspect of the complexity of the land issue: after Independence a new black elite emerged which 'acquired the same vested interests as the old [white] elite (stripped of its political relevance but still powerful economically', pp. 27, King, A. (July 1997), *Settler society in perspective, The Zimbabwean Review*.

171 pp. 47, Godwin, P. & Hancock, I. (1997)[1993], 'Rhodesians never die'. *The impact of war and political change on white Rhodesia, c. 1970-1980*, Harare: Baobab Books.

172 See for a fairly open, personal and well-written account (as apart from his academic intentions in his book with Hancock) of what it meant being a white Rhodesian in the last years of minority rule by the same author: Godwin, P. (1996), *Mukiwa. A white boy in Africa*, London: Picador.

173 Godwin & Hancock 1997: 48.

174 Ibid: 48.

175 Ibid: 49.

176 Ibid: 7 & 14.

177 Ibid: 307.

178 *The Farmer*, 17 September 1998, Criteria for identifying land. For the SVC, as I shall show in the next chapters, it was important that later on different categories of farms were again delisted, including those which were foreign-owned. It was decided that foreign-owned farms which were bought through the Zimbabwean Investment Centre and had an according permit would be delisted (*The Herald*, 6 March 1998, Five categories of farms to be delisted: Kangai).

179 *The Herald*, 22 November 1997, ZANU PF Harare Province Hails National Unity Day.

180 *The Herald*, 6 December 1997, More farms to be designated: Mugabe.

181 *The Farmer*, 4 December 1997, numbers 45, 46 and 1102, referring respectively to Makore, Humani and Mkwazine Ranches.

going back on anything and that the time for negotiation was over<sup>182</sup>, especially claiming sovereignty *vis à vis* Great Britain.<sup>183</sup> Individual farmers and their powerful representative body, the Commercial Farmers Union (CFU), tried to persuade the government to come back to the negotiating table and try to solve the land issue in a more combined effort.<sup>184</sup> Wildlife ranches, including private wildlife conservancies are also part of the CFU, through the Wildlife Producers Association (WPA) which had over 400 members in 1994.<sup>185</sup> In Zimbabwe, unlike in South Africa, there is no separate representative interest association for conservancies. The economically important subgroup of tobacco farmers also reacted strongly to the plans of the government by stating that the tobacco farms included in the list<sup>186</sup> did not fall under the official criteria of being under-utilised or being unproductive land.<sup>187</sup> The commercial farmers who were on the list, were given thirty days to appeal against their compulsory acquisition.<sup>188</sup> By the end of 1997, the Land Secretary, Dr Takavarasha, indicated that of the 1471 farmers on The List only sixty did not appeal against their acquisition.<sup>189</sup> One interesting detail in relation to the racial divide in land tenure is that of the 1471 farms on the list, it was said that 240 belonged to indigenous (i.e. black) commercial farmers. Their representative organisation, the Indigenous Commercial Farmers Union (ICFU), said that 'it failed to understand why farms owned by black farmers were designated alongside those belonging to white commercial farmers'.<sup>190</sup> The President of the ICFU, Mr. Nherera said that, even if these black farmers were under-utilising their land, it was because they were not given the same support as white farmers. If they were given similar support, he added, they would have even surpassed the productive levels of the white commercial farmers.<sup>191</sup>

182 *The Farmer*, 11 December 1997, Mugabe says courts have no role in land reform; *The Herald*, 16 December 1997, State won't go back to negotiating table on land issue; Mugabe; *The Herald*, 12 January 1998, Mugabe dismisses criticism against land reform; *The Herald*, 21 January 1998, Land reform to go ahead.

183 During a German tour in March 1998, Mugabe said in a speech to German captains of industry 'that Britain was against the land reform programme because it wanted to perpetuate its colonisation of Zimbabwe which he said would not be allowed to happen', *The Herald*, 25 March 1998, President defiant: land issue goes ahead.

184 *The Herald*, 29 November 1997, Designated commercial farms list rile CFU boss; *Zimbabwe Independent*, 5 December, Smith [former Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia] dismisses Mugabe's land grab as politicking; *Sunday Mail*, 14 December 1997, Campaign to fight land acquisition; *The Farmer*, 5 February 1998, CFU unveils plan to implement successful land reform.

185 Hill 1994: 226.

186 *The Herald*, 24 December 1997, Farm designation upsets top tobacco grower, 'He [Mr. Webb, President of the Zimbabwe Tobacco Association, ZTA] said at least 775 of the more than 1400 farms that were designated were in the tobacco-growing belt while about 550 have been put on the compulsory acquisition list'. There are an estimated 1700 large scale commercial tobacco growers in Zimbabwe. It was estimated that the tobacco farmer contributed some 25% to the forex earning of Zimbabwe, being US\$ 2.5 billion. If half of their land would be designated, so would their contribution to the forex earnings. This would affect 'the already shaky investor confidence in Zimbabwe', *Zimbabwe Independent*, 9 January 1998, Farm designation to cost foreign currency.

187 *The Herald*, 5 December 1997, Land acquisition 'anomalies' worries ZTA.

188 *Weekly Telegraph*, 10-16 December 1997, Zimbabwe farmers told to move out.

189 *The Farmer*, 8 January 1998, Report on compulsory acquisition objections complete this week, says top ministry official.

190 *The Herald*, 19 December 1997, Don't designate farms belonging to blacks.

191 *The Herald*, 23 December 1997, You should have us in land acquisition: ICFU. In March 1998 Minister of Lands, Kumbira Kangai, declared five categories of farms to be delisted, amongst which 'farms owned by indigenous persons' (*The Herald*, 6 March 1998, Five categories of farms to be delisted: Kangai).

Right from the start the international community, crucial to financing the programme, failed to respond favourably to the plans. The rich donor countries especially warned Mugabe to handle the land acquisition process with the utmost transparency, a characteristic which they thought had been lacking so far.<sup>192</sup> The year 1998 was destined to become an interesting year for doing research on a topic where the land issue was a prominent feature.<sup>193</sup>

The hopes of the black Zimbabweans were raised to a considerable height by political rhetoric and expectations that matters would turn out for the better in terms of land distribution in 1998 were paramount. Some villagers even seemed to feel that at long last it would become pay-back time and a moment to settle scores with neighbouring (white), large-scale commercial farmers. The *Sunday Mail* paid special attention to the relationship between landowner and the neighbouring communities in the context of the designation programme. This relationship became very important for the landowner because, if the surrounding communities were to testify that they benefited from the economic activities on the farm, that would make a strong point in an appeal against the designation and a pro for delisting.<sup>194</sup> In two consecutive weeks it ran an article on the subject. The first article emphasised the spiritual relationship between Africans and their land, which made them wary of co-operating with the landowner. In the second article, it was the particular relationship between landowner and community that stood in the way of co-operation. I shall quote both articles at length to allow the tone of the article speak for itself. 'Scores of commercial farmers in Mashonaland Central whose farms were listed for designation are now frantically lobbying for support from chiefs in a desperate and rare attempt to have their farms exempted from designation. The farmers (...) reportedly spent the whole week driving up and down to Chiefs' homesteads presenting their grievances and appeals against the stand taken by the government. Chief Coria Chiweshe said: 'They [i.e. white farmers] have become so generous. One of them approached me and said I should, at the party congress in Mutare, tell the ruling party that he is a good man who lives well with the local communities. But he is forgetting that he is the same man who has punished my people for a long time'. 'Villagers have had their livestock confiscated and asked to pay a fine for letting their cattle stray on his farm. He has been refusing the locals to fetch water or fish in the dam on his farm and even had some of the villagers arrested and fined for doing so. Now he needs my support. I cannot be seen betraying my people. We want land and this is what people have

192 *Zimbabwe Independent*, 28 November 1997, Danish government calls for transparency; *Zimbabwe Independent*, 5 December 1997, South Africa chides Zimbabwe on land issue; *Zimbabwe Independent*, 9 January 1998, Zimbabwe land acquisition contravenes accord: UK; *Zimbabwe Independent*, 16 January 1998, EU stresses openness in land redistribution. The tone of an important foreign newspaper like the *New York Times* was unvarnishedly cynical: 'No farm belonging to a high Government official is on the list. But a white-owned one near Mr. Mugabe's country estate, a farm he has already tried to seize three times, is' (*New York Times*, 24 December 1997, A showdown for Zimbabwe on unfinished issue of land). Only France took a somewhat different stance, *The Herald*, 16 March 1998, Land reform an internal matter, says France.

193 In all honesty it should be observed that the concept of 'destiny' to which I refer in this sentence for literary reasons, suggests far more inevitability and linearity than I would be methodologically and theoretically prepared to defend, as has become clear in Chapter 1 and 2.

194 Compare the stance taken by the government towards conservancies where the stress is put on the stipulation that they are only allowed to exist, despite the fact that they have no statutory definition, if they establish a 'formal and meaningful relationship' with the neighbouring communities.

been waiting for'. Chief Anke Chitsinede Negomo said the Chiweshe area had been robbed of land which belonged to the highly respected spirit medium of this country, Mbuya Nehanda, when whites arrived in Zimbabwe'.<sup>195</sup> The second article, one week later went on in the same tone: 'Some white commercial farmers whose farms had been listed for designation in Hurungwe were reportedly (...) lobbying for support from neighbouring villages to have the decision reversed, according to the Zimbabwe Information Service [ZIS]. Villagers of Kasimure in Hurungwe told ZIS that a farmer from Kuti Estates in Lomagundi district had approached them with papers to sign objecting to the Government's intention to acquire his three farms. The villagers, whose relation with the farmer have always been tense, refused to co-operate, reminding him of long-standing disputes. The villagers refuted the contents of the letter of appeal which said they enjoyed benefits from the farmer. Other farmers were allegedly forcing their employees to sign their letters of appeal against, despite deplorable living conditions they were being subjected to by the farmer, including poor housing and wages'.<sup>196</sup> More than half a year later the same newspaper came up with yet another story in which neighbourly relations between landowner and communities were put forward as hidden but extremely powerful criteria for designation; essential even if the official criteria did not readily apply. 'Member of Parliament for Beitbridge, Cde Kembo Mohadi has urged the Government to acquire all farms it recently delisted in the district before disgruntled landless peasants illegally resettle themselves on the properties. (...) He said of grave concern was the fact that most of the delisted farms belong to cruel landlords who had over the years impounded livestock from neighbouring communal areas for straying into their land, demanding heavy fines. (...) 'One of them for instance is impounding livestock from the communal areas and charging a fine of [Z]\$85. This man is a bad neighbour. How can they delist his farm?' asked Cde Mohadi'.<sup>197</sup> It was these kinds of stories which led the Zimbabwe Independent to conclude that '(t)he perception remained that the government had used land to punish its critics, both black and white, and to reward its favourites'.<sup>198</sup> The articles are exactly in line with the political rhetoric of Mugabe who 'raised the peasants' expectations with his speeches on the land issue. During his country-wide tour [in 1997 HW], he assured peasants he would have acquired the land by last December [1997 HW] and resettlement would have gathered momentum by the beginning of [1998' HW].<sup>199</sup> The racial card was skilfully manipulated by Mugabe who 'has made it clear that Britain should take responsibility for compensating 'its white children''.<sup>200</sup> In Mugabe's view, whites will obviously never be considered Zimbabweans.

Oral rhetoric was no problem, but the government found its hands tied as far as words and statements went in 1998 and it was hamstrung by financial constraints. The Zimbabwean Government had already found itself in gigantic financial difficulties, quite apart from the complicated land issue. In the first place these stemmed from pro-

mises Mugabe had to make in 1997 to war veterans after violent demonstrations in which they demanded financial compensation and appreciation for their contributions to the Liberation Struggle, which resulted in 'them receiving Z\$ 50,000 each in gratuities and Z\$ 2000 a month each as pension'. Over and above this 'they were promised 20% of the acquired farms'.<sup>201</sup> A second reason for Zimbabwe's financial problems was because of his involvement in the war in former Zaire, now the *Republique Democratique de Congo* (RDC), probably, and maybe only, for reasons of personal gain and to help a nephew with commercial interests in the Congo as some suggest. This involvement is costing him an estimated US\$ 400,000 a day.<sup>202</sup> A cartoon in the *Zimbabwe Independent* summarised the financial situation in Zimbabwe as shown in figure 8.<sup>203</sup>

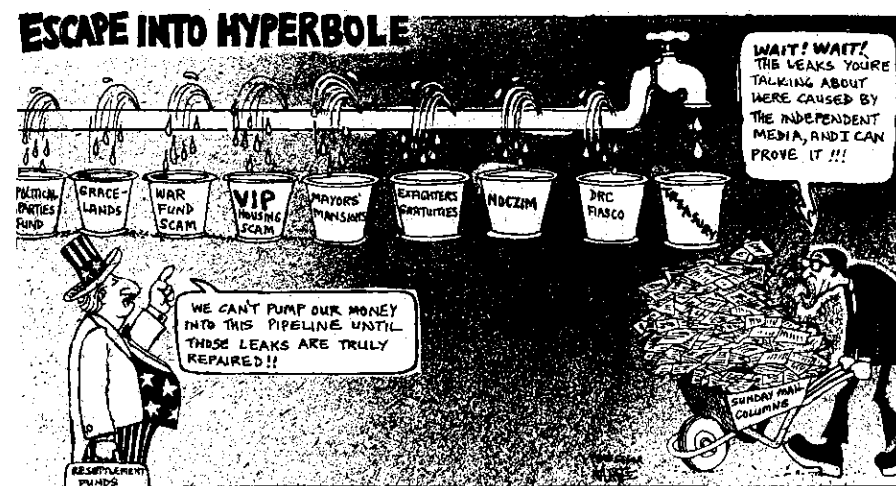


Figure 8 Cartoon about financial situation Zimbabwe

The Zimbabwean economy was already not in good shape and had been depreciating for years, but it finally crashed as a result of these combined problems in the second half of 1998.<sup>204</sup>

In this context the Mugabe government was not in a position to do anything to materialise the high expectations raised by the land designation and resettlement programme. This meant that despite the fact that he boasted of his independence of former colonisers and international public opinion, he had to come back to both of them for financial support. In order to finance the programme, the government organised a donor conference in September 1998. But before the conference began, communal

195 *Sunday Mail*, 7 December 1997, Farmers in desperate attempt to have farms exempted from acquisition.

196 *Sunday Mail*, 14 December 1997, Campaign to fight land acquisition.

197 *Sunday Mail*, 5 July 1998, MP not amused with delisting of farms.

198 *Zimbabwe Independent*, 21-27 November 1997, Designated farms list out.

199 *Zimbabwe Independent*, 18 September 1998, Donors demand transparency before funding.

200 *Zimbabwe Independent*, 9 January 1998, Zimbabwe land acquisition contravenes accord: UK.

201 pp. 38, *African Business*, May 1998, Mugabe sinking in land quagmire.

202 pp. 14, *New African*, October 1998, An African world war?

203 *Zimbabwe Independent*, 18 September 1998.

204 pp. 27, *New African*, October 1998, Zimbabwe economy on the rocks.

farmers in Svosve seemed to become so impatient that they started to invade private farms before official designation procedures had taken their course.<sup>205</sup> Racial overtones were never far away as a quote from an article in *The Herald* makes clear: 'About 70 angry villagers from Svosve communal lands in Marondera, Mashonaland East, stormed nearby Topsland Farm on Thursday protesting against racial utterances by the owner, who alleged that her sheep had died because some 'Africans from surrounding villages and compounds' were relieving themselves on the farm (...). She made the derogatory comments at her farm last week when she was answering the Governor of Mashonaland, Cde David Karimanzira, and other delegates to the recent international donors' conference on land (...).'<sup>206</sup> The example from Svosve was soon followed by other farmers in other parts of Zimbabwe, including properties in the SVC, especially Angus Ranch, Mukazi and Mukwazi Ranch.<sup>207</sup> In the Svosve case, President Mugabe ordered the protesters to move, which they refused to do, unless the government speeded up the resettlement programme and resettled them on the invaded farms later. Mugabe glibly made promises and at the same time ruled out the use of police force against the invaders.<sup>208</sup> This implied that the police would not remove the invading people from private property or prosecute them, although they were openly and intentionally trespassing. Maybe Mugabe thought that 'impatient' black farmers would put the donors under pressure to support the Zimbabwean land programme financially. There were even rumours that the farm invasions had been orchestrated by the government itself for this reason.<sup>209</sup> But the donor conference, which took place on three days in September 1998<sup>210</sup>, was a disappointment in terms of financial promises by donor countries and of the expected Z\$ 21,6 billion which was hoped for and expected to be raised for a total of Z\$ 40 billion to finance the total land reform programme, only Z\$ 17 million was realised.<sup>211</sup> The donors reasons for withholding their bounty primarily boiled down to their earlier criticism that the whole process of land designation was not 'transparent'<sup>212</sup> and a United Nations Development Programme Report concluded that the designation programme was 'biased'.<sup>213</sup>

205 *The Herald*, 11 June 1998, Peasants get impatient over land.

206 *The Herald*, 19 September 1998, Farmer's racist remarks rile Svosve villagers.

207 *The Herald*, 4 July 1998, War vets in Masvingo occupy delisted farm; *The Farmer*, 16 July 1998, Another attempt at illegal resettlement; *The Herald*, 12 August 1998, Another farm invaded; In the SVC: *The Farmer*, 20 August 1998, Provincial Round Up; *The Farmer*, 22 October 1998, Walk-ons.

208 pp. 24 *New African*, October 1998, Land war.

209 pp. 72, *The Economist*, 27 June 1998, Zimbabwe peasants' revolt; *New African*, October 1998, Zimbabwe: Land war.

210 *The Herald*, 9 September 1998, Donors' conference on land opens today.

211 pp. 13, *The Farmer*, 17 September 1998; *Zimbabwe Independent*, 11 September 1998, Land reform in financial trouble. An interesting detail for the Dutch readership of this thesis is that the Z\$ 17 million was donated by Kuwait and The Netherlands. This latter donor was described in the *Zimbabwe Independent* as follows: 'The Dutch come second only to the Scandinavians in their willingness to throw good money after bad in funding flawed development projects in the third world' (18 September 1998, Land and the good life in Durban).

212 *Zimbabwe Independent*, 11 September 1998, International donors insist on transparency and fairness on controversial land reforms; *Zimbabwe Independent*, 18 September 1998, Donors demand transparency before funding; *The Financial Gazette*, 10 September 1998, Donors insist on full compensation for farms.

213 *Zimbabwe Independent*, 25 September 1998, Land designation biased - UNDP report.

The donor conference was much more than a disappointment, first and foremost it was a definite set back for the Zimbabwean government. It meant that it would have to abandon its high flight of its rhetoric and initial intentions to satisfy international donors and allow the latter far more say in the whole process than it would have liked them to have. It was mainly in the period of the political and economic turmoil leading to the donor conference in September 1998, including farm invasions, that I did my research on the development of a form of organisational co-operation between the SVC and its neighbouring communities. In the heat of the debate between white economic power and black political power, verbalised in racial divisions between the two, through its programme of organisational co-operation the SVC had to prove that the enormous buffalo fence that separated them from their neighbouring communities was only a physical barrier to keep the wildlife in and not meant to keep people out or to stand as a symbolic reminder of segregation. It had to satisfy the wish of the minister that they were heading for a 'formal and meaningful relationship' with their neighbours.

### Linking Pin

Zimbabwe has built up an impressive reputation and tradition in wildlife conservation and wildlife utilisation as has been recounted in the previous chapter. But initiatives have not gone undisputed and the main argument has always been about land and land use, related to opposing black and white identities which has been the theme of this chapter. Black Zimbabweans claim to be related to the soil of the land through their spiritual attachment through their ancestors. They feel alienated in the way I quoted Arendt in the first chapter. The whites can never be seen as owners, only as Simmelian strangers, not really belonging to, and therefore not on the land. This has major repercussions for any form of organisational co-operation between black and white, especially when it is co-operation which should take place on a subject which lies at the heart of the dispute, land and hunting. It feels like co-operating in your own torture. How can you ever trust someone who is considered primarily responsible for your loss of social identity and loss of dignity? Especially in connection with wildlife utilisation, on communal as well as on private land, many Zimbabweans wonder if they fought the Liberation Struggle 'to be put behind fences' in the nineties,<sup>214</sup> in order to give room to mostly foreign European tourists to have their 'real African bush experience' through hunting? How can a black African reach out his hand over or through an electrified fence, symbolising and writing the whites power in lines for kilometre after kilometre? What happens if two opposed significations on land and land use work in a co-operative organisational structure? What does that mean for daily interaction between the two?

Paradoxically white Zimbabweans also relate to land, but more to *landscape* than to its *soil*. Soil is only considered important in terms of its potential for production. Although it is no longer solely commodity for them, they have converted the commod-

214 Alexander & McGregor 1999: 32.

ity of land into a possession. This also speaks from their claim to conserve and preserve the Romantic notion of a 'pristine African landscape'. That is their stake in the 'politics of the picturesque'.<sup>215</sup> Conservation requires land, and land is a highly problematic issue in the Zimbabwean context. The recent rise in private wildlife conservancies and related wildlife utilisation in Zimbabwe is taking place exactly on stretches of land which are at the centre stage of attention of the land designation process which claimed public attention in the early 1990s. The Land Question in Zimbabwe constitutes the arena in which black political power and white economic power meet and both struggle for survival and to win. This results in a straightforward political dilemma for the government. The government can surely see the benefits of economic activity in the field of tourism in the country. As the third largest foreign exchange (forex) earner, the wildlife industry is contributing considerably to the Zimbabwean economy. This positive aspect of the development of conservancies is particularly relevant to the poor southeast corner of Zimbabwe where the SVC is located. For this reason it probably allowed conservancies without statutory definition in the first place, if they were only willing to share their economic benefits with neighbouring communities and create a 'formal and meaningful relationship' with them. The uncertainty of conservancies in terms of statutory definition and land tenure could thus be opportunistically used to uplift the economic living standards of communities neighbouring the conservancies in Zimbabwe. Again, this has particular meaning for the SVC because it is located in between densely populated and very economically poor communal areas. At the same time conservancies occupy large chunks of land that could be used for resettlement. Again, this seems to hold to be specially significant to the SVC, because it is the largest private wildlife conservancy in Africa and it could be argued that conservancy property would be especially targeted for designation, because it is predominantly white-owned, which fits very conveniently into the political rhetoric about settling bills of the past.

However, conservancies are also ideologically and financially backed and supported by powerful international conservation organisations like the WWF and IUCN which are masters in mobilising popular support for their causes as is shown in Chapter 3 with reference to the ban on ivory trade within CITES. And Zimbabwe cannot do without the international community, and cannot risk international public opinion becoming too incensed against Zimbabwean policies in the field of conservation if it ever wants to realise its political ambitions with its land programme. It seems that in the short run land designation will not assume a revolutionary scale, as it is hampered by the government's financial constraints.<sup>216</sup> As a political context, the land designation programme causes major uncertainties for conservancies, especially because their position is also judged according to the status of their neighbour relations. So the land designation programme creates uncertainty for white landowners and hope and a goal for black communal farmers. Uncertainty, as well as hope, is a unifying force, consolidating both

black and white on either side of the land divide.<sup>217</sup> Conservancies can only counter this uncertainty by holding firmly to international environmental ideologies of bio-diversity and habitat conservation, just as Ranger indicated for the Matopos National Park. Political uncertainty about land is countered by conservancies by environmental orthodoxy about conservation. What will be given priority by the Zimbabwean government in its relationship to conservancies, political opportunism and populism about land or economic considerations to do with raising the living standards of black communal farmers in this poor part of the country? Or will it pursue both at the same time so as to send out mixed political signals to keep the conservancies in an uncertain position? And, subject of the next two chapters, how does this political dilemma specifically work out for the SVC and for its programme for organisational co-operation with its neighbouring communities? What mutual images exist in this particular case between white commercial farmers and black communal farmers? What kind of reciprocal relations exist? What is exchanged between the two? What time lapses between gift and counter gift are allowed? How did the political rhetoric about land designation in 1997 and 1998 influence the mutual trust between conservancy and community? What do the two parties expect of each other? How do they respect each other? How has the balance of the mixture between affect and effect, of being partner and party at the same time, inherent in all reciprocal relations, worked out in this particular case? What is the relationship between the SVC and the government, more in particular with DNPWLM? What role does hunting play in the SVC? In other words, what is the daily practice of exchange and relating between the SVC and its neighbouring communities? The many threads of historical and political (bounded) context and the theoretical conceptualisation will be brought together in the description of the case of the Savé Valley Conservancy and its organisational co-operation with the neighbouring communities in Chapters 5 and 6.

215 Bunn 1999: 27.

216 In a Dutch newspaper on 31 August 1999 it was said that 'De met veel bombastie gepresenteerde landhervorming verdween geruisloos naar de achtergrond', (translation: The redistribution of land which was announced with much pomp and circumstance slunk almost noiselessly into the background, *NRC Handelsblad*, De racisten hebben het gedaan (translation: the racists did it).

217 Although it should be added that much of the hope for black peasants is also built on uncertainty, as their hopes have been raised in vain so many times already, because the government seems to rule by rhetoric only.

## 5 The Savé Valley Conservancy: Genesis and Main Themes

*In which the organisational development of the Savé Valley Conservancy in the context of a continuation and reproduction of a white (hunting) identity and process of struggle over land distribution is described and in which consequently big game hunting, especially the buffalo, and the subsequent necessity to erect and maintain a buffalo fence are the main themes dominating its development; in which the same organisational development of the SVC sets the tone for the arena of direct reciprocal exchange with the neighbouring communities or through the SVCT*

### Introduction

The appropriation of the Sabi Valley by white settlers occurred fairly late in history, because of its endemic malaria and tsetse fly. It was indicated that the Sabi Valley was 'unsuitable for white habitation'.<sup>1</sup> The first white settlers entered the stage only in 1923 when the Bridges family obtained land from the British South Africa Company which would become Devuli Ranch, named after the river which formed its northern boundary and joins the Sabi River.<sup>2</sup> In the thirties, a second tract of land, south of Devuli Ranch became white land, bought by the General Manager of Devuli, Sommerville, later in conjunction with James Whittall, who had come to Africa drawn by the example and writings of Frederick Selous. Whittall, like Selous a generation earlier, went to Rugby School in Britain, and was also an avid hunter. Later the Whittalls bought Sommerville out and became the sole owners of what became Humani Ranch.<sup>3</sup> The main economic activity, right from the start until the end of the eighties was extensive cattle farming. Only in the sixties did the production of sugar and citrus begin in the Lowveld under a new irrigation programme, running parallel to cattle farming.<sup>4</sup> It was mainly one of the sons of James Whittall, Roger, who kept up the white hunting tradition and who set aside parts of Humani for wildlife utilisation.<sup>5</sup> It was only when in the eighties it final-

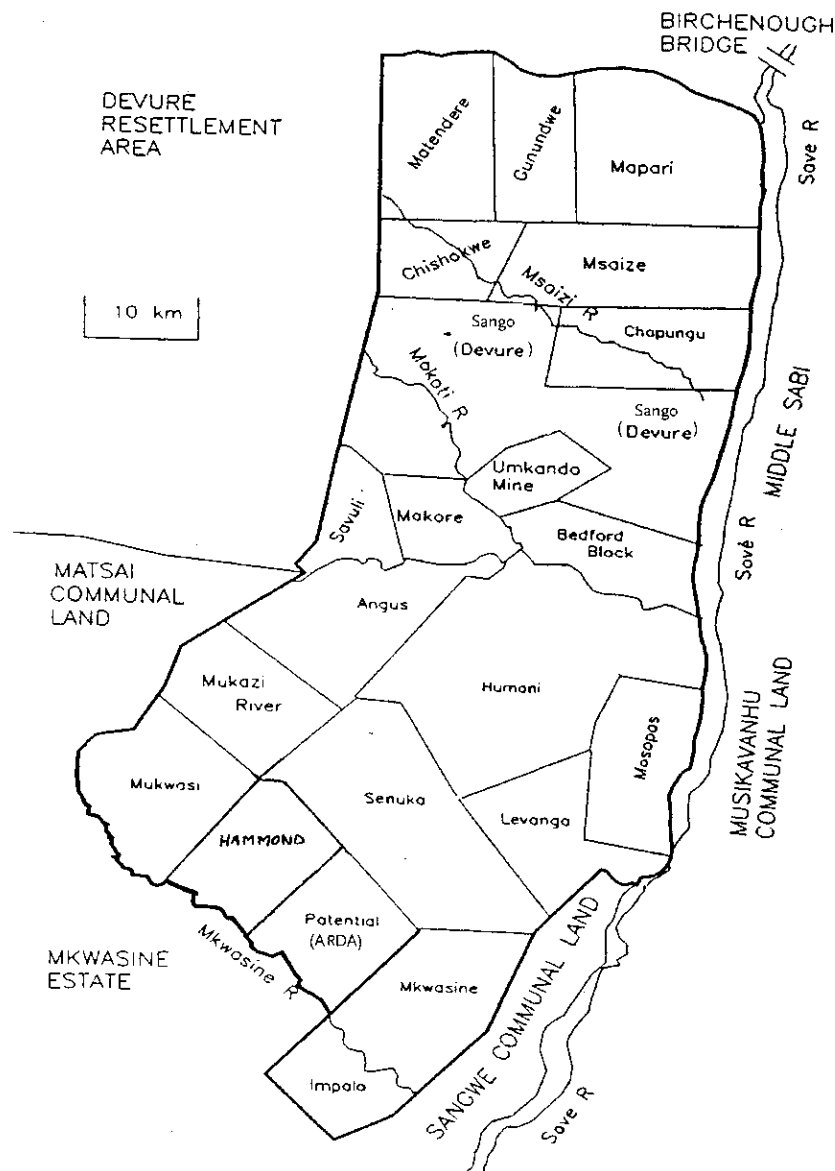
1 Tschiffely 1953: 190.

2 Ibid.

3 pp. 98, Sommerville, D.M. (1976), *My life was a ranch*, Salisbury: Kailani Books.

4 Yudelman 1964: 31; pp. 69-70, Haw, R.C. (1966), *Rhodesia. The jewel of Africa*, Salisbury: Flame Lily Books. The information is taken from two interesting older books on the blessings (for some) of Rhodesia. They were both written when the white minority in Southern Rhodesia was still very self-confident and in a politically powerful position. Especially the second book exudes that confidence. It describes, for example, that when the first settlers came '(t)he subsisting semi-nomadic indigenous inhabitants stood to gain most from the occupation, because they had most leeway to make up in civilisation's race. That the Africans have multiplied eightfold, to four million within a mere 65 years; that their cattle have increased almost fortyfold to over two million; that large numbers of Africans are now educated, well-dressed, healthy and enjoy abundant opportunity to advance in many directions - these things indicate something has occurred which is of value to all inhabitants! (...) Nobody has really been *dispossessed* in the process. (...) These ideas were put to work by the Whites and in the main they continue to provide the initiative, enterprise and capital' (68).

5 Interview with landowners Humani, 8 October 1998.



Map 4 SVC and individual properties

ly became clear that cattle farming was not a viable economic activity in the area (any-more) because of its unreliable rainfall and when the Devuli Ranch was carved up and sold to different and new (white) owners that the idea of starting a joint operation on wildlife utilisation took root and finally led to the formation of the Savé Valley Conservancy (SVC) in 1991.

The official formation of the SVC should not be seen as a point in time, before which there was nothing related to SVC type activities. Nor that at the time of formation there was a fully organisationally developed conservancy structure or wildlife utilisation scheme. In June 1991 a group of landowners signed the constitution of the SVC, but even that constitution was a temporary one which was amended in the time following the signing.<sup>6</sup> The establishment of the SVC is more of a particular moment in an ongoing process, which had already begun years before its official installation, for instance on Humani, and has continued afterwards. It is actually still going on, especially in efforts to find a way to relate to the neighbouring communities as I shall show in the next chapter. The year 1991 is a 'beacon-date' for the history books only and should not be interpreted as indicating any stage of finality. At best its installation should be seen as a symbolic expression of the consensus amongst the landowners that they should opt for wildlife utilisation as a land-use alternative in this part of the Lowveld. This interpretation also implies that chronology cannot tell the story of the birth of the SVC exactly. Things have happened since the inauguration of the SVC, which can still explain parts of the process leading up to its formation in the first place in earlier years. Things that were anticipated and came true. The drought of 1991-1992, for instance, actually coincided with this period and after the strict formation date of the SVC. Even so, this drought has explanatory value as it strengthened, and in a way confirmed and proved, the earlier consensus amongst the landowners to go into wildlife utilisation through a conservancy structure. The same holds true for the parts of land sold by Devuli after the inauguration of the SVC in the first half of the nineties. It followed the trend, set in the southern part of the SVC on Senuko and other properties before 1991, of attracting buyers who were not planning to go into cattle, but to pursue commercial interests through tourism, thereby making the conservancy structure more opportune.

The basic idea of the SVC was to restore the environmentally degraded area after years of cattle farming, restock it with wildlife which had been thoroughly eradicated for the purpose of cattle ranching in the previous period, over and above the black rhino for which they were already providing a safe haven on their properties. They wanted to let conservation pay for itself and make a financial profit through wildlife utilisation, primarily by launching hunting operations, which are referred to as 'consumptive tourism'.<sup>7</sup> The buffalo is the most sought-after, and therefore the most economically profitable, hunting trophy in Africa. For that reason the SVC wanted to restock the conservancy with buffalo, alongside many other forms of wildlife like giraffe, wildebeest, kudu,

6 The latest updated copy I could get at the Conservancy Office during my year of fieldwork in Zimbabwe was dated, 28 January 1997.

7 Consumptive tourism refers to an activity whereby wildlife is taken and 'consumed' through hunting or culling / harvesting, as opposed to non-consumptive forms of tourism whereby the wildlife is not taken but where people for instance look at and photograph the animals on photographic safaris.

sable, waterbuck, zebra and the like. One of the strict requirements imposed by the DNPWLM in Harare was that in order to buy and later on hunt buffalo, the area first had to be fenced off by a double electrified fence, in co-operation with the Department of Veterinary Services (DVS), with a stretch of seven metres of cleared land in between, to prevent buffalo of contaminating cattle outside the conservancy with the much dreaded Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD).<sup>8</sup> The erection and maintenance of the fence and the pursuit of buffalo to restock the conservancy are the dominating themes of the SVC in the nineties. The influence of these two issues is not confined to the SVC alone, but has even more serious and severe consequences for the relations between the SVC and the surrounding communities. Firstly the huge fence denies the communities access to the natural resources they were used to exploiting inside the SVC when it were still separate cattle farms, like thatching grass, firewood, building poles and the like. Secondly, they fear the contagion of FMD for their own cattle, as they are the closest neighbours of the SVC. Thirdly, the fence seems to symbolise and to mark the relationship of exclusion between black and white identities in the Save Valley.

In this chapter I shall describe the conservation record and tradition of wildlife utilisation in the area and its almost inevitable continuity in the formation of the SVC. On the basis of this historical description, I shall describe in detail the issues of the fence and the buffalo as they are not only essential to understanding the development of the SVC itself, but seem even more important for its paradoxical consequences on the reciprocal exchange relationship with the neighbouring communities. On the one hand it seems clear that, in order to be able to invest financially in community relations, the SVC needs to earn money, which is done most successfully by offering hunting operations, especially buffalo, to tourists. For that reason it seems only logical and natural that the SVC should erect a fence in order to be formally allowed to pursue that most favourable economic opportunity. On the other hand the fence and the buffalo mean that the white landowners of the SVC and the black members of the neighbouring communities are physically separated from each other, making the fence seem to become a fatal symbol of the general history of black and white relations, in the context of land and hunting, in Zimbabwe. In a way the fence could be said to block *and* facilitate the development of a reciprocal relation between the SVC and the surrounding communities simultaneously. By going into these issues I shall be able to answer some of the questions I formulated on the basis of my theoretical framework in Chapter 1. How the specific mix of affect and effect, characteristic of reciprocal exchange relations, takes shape in the relation between the SVC and the neighbouring communities, interpreted from the perspective of the SVC as focal point of my ethnographical orientation in this thesis will begin to emerge. This mix will be directly related to the context of land appropriation and exclusion as well as to hunting from which it derives. The socio-political and socio-economic development of the Lowveld will be presented within the boundaries of my central research question, which will produce a description of the continuity of a white identity in Zimbabwe related to land and hunting and will present the contours of a social identity of the black communities as perceived by the SVC and institu-

tionalised in the objectives and *raison d'être* of the SVCT. Remaining theoretical questions, mainly about the exact nature and content of the reciprocal exchange between SVC and neighbouring communities will be dealt with in Chapter 6, by presenting several specific cases on the issue.

### The Whittalls of Humani Ranch and the continuation of the white hunting ethos

The Whittall family has got an interesting story to tell about its forefathers. They were 'a family of yeomen of the county of Worcestershire, who lived on their own estate'. Charlton Whittall was in the British navy in the mid-eighteenth century, from which he resigned after the death of his father, to live on the family estate.<sup>9</sup> But he ruined the estate financially by indulging in a passion for horse-racing and was forced to take up a commercial job to prevent his family ending up in 'the utmost poverty'. He was sent to Smyrna (now Izmir) in Turkey to look after his employer's interests there.<sup>10</sup> When he arrived there, the city had just been devastated by a plague epidemic and all the Europeans had abandoned their quarters to flee to the countryside in the hope of escaping contamination. Charlton Whittall went to the village of Bournabat, where he engaged rooms in a house of a Venetian widow. She had one daughter, whom he married.<sup>11</sup> Charlton Whittall is the great-grandfather of the Whittall, J.W. Whittall, relating this story in the book cited. Hunting seems always to have been part of their common leisure activities as the book also relates a story entitled 'My curious adventure with a boar'.<sup>12</sup> More on the Whittalls in Turkey is to be found in a small, but far more recent book, which is not exactly dated and which is written for family use only, entitled 'The Whittalls of Turkey, 1809-1973'.<sup>13</sup> After arriving in Smyrna in 1809, Charlton Whittall set up his own company, C. Whittall and Co, in 1811. His brother, James Whittall, followed him to Turkey a few years later, in 1817.<sup>14</sup> Their business prospered as it is claimed that '(t)hey have the bulk of the English trade in their hands, branch offices all down the Southern Coast, mines and shooting boxes all down the sea coast of Asia Minor and yachts on the sea. They all have immense quantities of children'.<sup>15</sup> Nowhere it is exactly stated what kind of business they pursued. Only towards the end of the book, when there is a description of the decline of the business after the Second World War,

9 pp. 116, Whittall, J.W. (Sir) (1901), *Frederick the Great on Kingcraft*, London, New York, Bombay: Longmans, Green and Co.

10 Ibid: 118.

11 Ibid: 119-120.

12 Ibid: 158-161.

13 Printed by the Faith Press Ltd., Great Britain. This document was given to me for references, together with other material, by Julia Whittall, 29 May 1998. Author unknown.

14 pp. 9, *The Whittalls of Turkey, 1809-1973*, Faith Press Ltd.

15 Ibid: 12. Talking about 'huge quantities of children': In his book J. W. Whittall describes how his 'great-great-grandfather had thirty-two children by his one wife'. Almost regretfully he adds '(t)hey might have had more, but she died in her fifty-sixth year, owing to a mistake of her doctor, who attributed to fever a complaint which really arose from the prospective birth of another child, and virtually killed her by a mistaken treatment' (139).

8 pp. 29-31, Du Toit, J. (1998), Taking back the land, *Keeping Track*, April/May.



does it become clear that the bulk of their business was in opium, cereals and mohair. They were also into mining and had many other irons in the fire, all of which they were more or less forced to sell and abandon by the Turkish Government.<sup>16</sup> Their leisure activities in this little booklet are also described as being dominated by hunting. 'The climate is delicious, the country lovely and you get your amusement cheap, keep three or four horses (...) and hunt all kinds of game up and down the hills'.<sup>17</sup>

The two brothers, Charlton and James, ran the business in Turkey. In 1836 James died. The business passed from father to son. Charlton Whittall handed over the business to his three sons. One of them was James, who handed over the business again to his three sons, Richard Watson, Edward and Herbert Octavius, 'giving them respectively a 40%, 30% and 30% share in the business'.<sup>18</sup> His eldest son, James William, who was later knighted and is the writer of the book I mentioned earlier, was sent to Manchester to represent the family business over in Britain. He returned to Turkey in 1873 and set up his own company in Constantinople in order not to have to compete with his brothers in Smyrna. He took up residence in Moda on the Asiatic coast.<sup>19</sup> Sir J.W. Whittall died in 1910 and the business was run by three of his sons right up till the start of the First World War when Turkey went to war with the British by choosing to side with Germany. All activities of the company ceased.<sup>20</sup> After the First World War, business in Smyrna never really blossomed again and began to deteriorate. Eventually, after the financial crises in the late twenties and early thirties, Whittall and Co. in Smyrna was liquidated in 1938.<sup>21</sup> The business in Constantinople continued, although through the years it experienced mounting difficulties, mainly because of the 'ever changing Exchange Laws and Decrees. (...) In the early 1960s owing to shortages of foreign exchange new Exchange Laws were introduced, whereby only a part of dividends accruing to shareholders resident out of Turkey could be transferred and paid to them, the balance remaining in blocked accounts in their respective names at The Central Bank of Turkey'.<sup>22</sup>

Sir J.W. Whittall<sup>23</sup> who lived in Moda had eleven children. His three eldest sons took over the business in 1910. At least one of them, his second child, Frederick Edwin, is described as being fond of hunting: 'He was a keen big and small game shot throughout Anatolia and many of his trophies of deer and mouflon antlers are mentioned in Rowland Ward's Records. At Kira Biga he shot the world's record fallow deer, the head of which measured 37 1/2 inches on the outward curved and which weighed 24 stone'.<sup>24</sup> Another son of Sir Whittall, Hugh, wrote an unpublished and undated manuscript about the Whittalls in Moda.<sup>25</sup> He also explicitly mentions the importance of hunting as pastime for the family and the children. There are special sections in the manuscript on

'Shooting' and 'Fishing sea' and 'Fishing trout'.<sup>26</sup> In the section on shooting he relates that '(s)hooting has always been my favourite hobby and pastime from boyhood right up to the present day. At the early age of eight [!] my father presented me with a single barrel forty-five bore gun and I can still well remember potting at small birds sitting in trees or bushes during the summer months'. As a perfect example of an Anglo-Saxon Romantic he continues to write that '(I)t was not only shooting itself that I enjoyed. The wild nature of the countryside attracted and fascinated my feelings and I always sensed a mystery in the loneliness of the hills and forests. (...) The stillness of the open spaces fulfils something in the otherness of my being'.<sup>27</sup> The fifth son of J.W. Whittall, born in 1911 was named after his father, James William, and he is the one who emigrated to Rhodesia and laid the foundations of Humani. In the booklet his emigration is described in the following words: '[Whittall's] fifth son James William captained the XV at Rugby School and emigrated to Rhodesia where he became a successful rancher. He owns Humani situated in the Low Veldt, East of Fort Victoria, on the Sabi River. The ranch now consists of 102,000 acres of land with 4,000 head of cattle and 900 sheep. When he first bought it in the early 1930s the ranch covered an area of 17,000 acres with 900 head of cattle. Since he bought it he has laid 35 miles of piping to water the cattle, 200 miles of wire fencing around the many paddocks, cleared 100 miles of earth roads and built 4 dams to store water. He has made an airstrip for light planes and built a school for the natives. He runs two stores for the Africans and employs 120 labourers. He and his sons have themselves built three homes on the ranch. Apart from cattle they have irrigated 200 acres to grow crops and a further 200 acres are being developed'.<sup>28</sup> James Whittall was married in Rhodesia to Alfrida and they had four children, two sons, Richard and Roger, and two daughters, Jane and Sally. Richard, Roger and Jane with their partners and children still live on Humani. Sally went with her husband to live in South Africa. Richard married Julia Pascal who comes from a mining family and they have three children. Roger married Anne Page and they have four children. Jane married Arthur Davies and they also have four children. Sally married Ned Henwood and went to live in South Africa. She has two children.<sup>29</sup>

It has already inexorably emerged from what has been said that there is a strong tradition of hunting in the Whittall family, and that many of them hunted for sport. The different writers of published and unpublished documents about the family found it worthwhile to mention especially this pastime activity in their stories about the family. This tradition is heavily underlined by the fact that Selous, whom I introduced extensively in Chapter 3, also went to Rugby, the same school James Whittall attended a generation later and where the latter was intoxicated with the idea of hunting in Africa about which many stories were told by the proud former schoolmasters of Selous. The interest reached fever pitch when a teacher himself went to Rhodesia and came back with even more authentic adventure stories. This teacher motivated James to go to

16 pp. 56 *The Whittalls of Turkey, 1809-1973*, Faith Press Ltd.

17 *Ibid.*: 12.

18 *Ibid.*: 17.

19 *Ibid.*: 42.

20 *Ibid.*: 44-45.

21 *Ibid.*: 19.

22 *Ibid.*: 52-54.

23 J.W. Whittall of Constantinople was knighted by Queen Victoria at Osborne in 1898, *ibid.*: 58.

24 *Ibid.*: 62.

25 Whittall, H.M. (not dated), *Moda. A record with reflections from the days gone by.*

26 *Ibid.*: 69-87.

27 *Ibid.*: 69.

28 pp. 64, *The Whittalls of Turkey*. He was not the only son of J.W. Whittall who went to Africa. Also his tenth child, Elliot Charles, went to Rhodesia, but on to work for Rhodes in the mines and took part in the Boer War. His son again, was a farmer in Kenya, pp. 66.

29 Interview with landowners Humani, 29 May 1998.

Africa to hunt. In around 1930 he arrived in Southern Rhodesia through the port of Beira and then by train to Mutare, where his first action was to buy himself a copy of Selous' most famous book, 'A hunter's wandering in Africa'. He began with a job on a tobacco farm in Urvukwes in the Highveld. After one season he decided that the Highveld was already too civilised and wandered off to find another and more adventurous spot. He asked for a job as pupil at Devuli Ranch. In those days you had to pay to be a pupil at a farm. He did the job for one year and then bought a partnership in Humani with Sommerville. Indirectly James had been motivated to go to Rhodesia by Selous.<sup>30</sup> But there is even a more direct link between Selous' hunting tradition and the Whittalls, because Selous actually hunted with James' father, Sir James Whittall, in Turkey, and of which Selous makes note in his book that he was researching at the time.<sup>31</sup> In the book which was the product of this research period he states that '(...) in July 1894, I found myself in Constantinople, I determined to try to obtain some precise information as to the habitat of the large long-faced red deer (*Cervus Maral*) and the magnificently horned wild goats (*Capra Agagrus*) that I knew were denizens of the adjacent country of Asia Minor'. It was the fact that he was 'fortunate enough to make acquaintance of Mr. J.W. Whittall (Sir), who, as he has himself lately contributed two articles to the 'Field' on the subject of the red deer of Asia Minor, will, I trust, forgive the liberty I take in mentioning his name in full. (...) With the most large-hearted hospitality Mr. Whittall before our acquaintance was half an hour old invited myself and my wife to leave our hotel and become his guests for the remainder of our stay in Constantinople'. Further more '(...) he promised me to obtain for me further particulars from his brother, Mr. H.O. Whittall, of Smyrna, who had shot both deer and wild goats in the interior of the country'.<sup>32</sup> This particular copy of the book was personally signed by Selous on the 23 December 1900, with the words 'Dear Gerald, (...) accept the kind regards and best wishes of its Author'.<sup>33</sup> This book together with two other books of Selous and also signed with the same words by the author are now in the possession of the landowners of Humani.<sup>34</sup>

As I indicated already, James Whittall bought himself into a partnership on Humani around 1931. He obtained the money to buy his way into the partnership from an inheritance from his father. His father had not paid for a university degree and so in lieu James was bequeathed the money to buy himself into the partnership. Somewhere in 1958/1959 the brother of James' mother, a certain Hingston, bought Sommerville out

and from there on Humani has been the sole property<sup>35</sup> of the Whittalls. The primary activities on Humani right from the start were cattle and trading. The trading was mainly the buying and selling of beets and materials to local Africans. From his cattle he was asked to supply the mine-workers and the railway workers with meat.<sup>36</sup> He could hunt as much as he liked, as there was still plenty of wildlife in the area. In 1973 he retired from Humani and left its running to his children and lived for the rest of his life in Penhalonga with his wife, affectionately called 'Elf'. That is also where he died in 1994, three years after his wife passed away in 1991. He is especially remembered for 'his impeccable manners and 'old worldly' courteousness'.<sup>37</sup> Their departure symbolically marked the end of an era of cattle farming in the Save Valley and started a period of wildlife utilisation within the combined properties forming the Savé Valley Conservancy. They are buried, alongside each other, in the garden of their former house where Roger and Anne now live. The inscription on his grave says: 'Dad, You went from Turkey in 1930 to create for us a paradise in Africa on Humani'.<sup>38</sup>

The Whittall's hunting tradition is continued by James' second son, Roger. It is therefore perhaps no coincidence that it is Roger and his family live in the former house of James. All his life Roger has bought, reared, invested in and hunted wildlife commercially with clients on Humani. Their whole house and its atmosphere 'speaks' of hunting. In their living room trophies look down on you from every angle and every trophy has its own story to tell. There is a huge lion skin and head spread out over the main wall. When alive that lion had killed some twenty-seven head of cattle on Humani before Roger shot it. The lion faces a big leopard, likewise spread out, which was shot some twenty years ago. Before you pass under a sort of archway into the kitchen, you look straight into the eyes of a waterbuck. Not a particular big trophy, but the first trophy ever shot by his son. The huge mantelpiece is decorated by two large elephant tusks from an animal which were shot by National Parks personnel in 1975 after major complaints had come in from several neighbours about Roger's game destroying their cattle fences and waterpipes. National Parks shot some 300 at the time, partly from a helicopter. He told me that he tried to sue them, but that he lost the case. After most of 'his' elephants were shot, he tried to rebuild his population and by the time the SVC started in 1991 he had managed to build up a new population of about sixty head again. The wastepaper basket in the living room is made of an elephant leg. Their garden at the time of my field-

30 Interview with landowner Humani, 10 September 1998.

31 Selous, F.C. (1900), *Sport and travel, east and west*, London, New York, Bombay: Longmans, Green and Co.

32 Ibid: 1-2. The last-mentioned Whittall by the way is not the one I mentioned earlier who shot the several trophy records in Turkey mentioned in Rowland Ward. That was Frederick Edwin (not H.O.) Whittall. Nor was it the H.M. Whittall who wrote the unpublished manuscript about the Whittalls in Moda. It is yet another hunting Whittall.

33 Nobody at Humani could tell me who Gerald was.

34 When I first heard and asked about them in early July 1998, they were lent to a friend in Harare who had them on display in a shop window to attract tourists. I could have a look myself at the books on 8 October 1998 at Roger and Anne's house. The other two autographed books of Selous are: (1893) *Travel and adventure in south-east Africa*, London: Rowland Ward & Co Ltd.; *Sunshine and storm in Rhodesia, being a narrative of events in Matabelerland*, Both before and during the recent native insurrection up to the date of the disbandment of the Bulawayo field force, London: Rowland Ward & Co Ltd.

35 In the context of my description of Arendt in Chapter 1, I am aware that 'property' is a misleading term. In the context of the SVC, where the participants always refer to ranches and land as property, it is used to refer to formerly expropriated land, now 'owned' by new people.

36 Interview with landowner of Humani, 10 September 1998. The official title deeds mention the year 1964 as the year in which the property was bought. The reason for this gap is that in 1964 Humani was transferred from being private property and made into Company ownership.

37 pp. 10, Paolillo, K. (1994), Obituary James William Whittle, *The Hartebeest*. The magazine of the Lowveld natural history branch of the wildlife society of Zimbabwe, 26th Edition. This society was created in 1968 under the name of Lowveld Natural History Society. In 1988 it amalgamated with the National Wildlife Society and became the Lowveld Natural History Branche, pp. 6, (1989), *The Hartebeest*. The magazine of the Lowveld natural history branch of the wildlife society of Zimbabwe, 21st Edition. This operation of bringing the Society under the umbrella of the Wildlife Society was done by a shareholder (30%) of Savuli (i.e. property within the SVC) when he was chairman of the first (Interview with one of the landowners of Savuli, 10 June 1998).

38 Personal observation on several occasions.

work was roamed and 'terrorised' by a bushpig by the name of Fred. If he became too much of a nuisance, they chased him away with a steel pipe or with a piece of a garden-hose. They started off with two bush piglets, cute and small. They had to shoot the second after he had stolen food from 'the Africans' and they had wounded him severely at his left leg. This case symbolically testifies to the fact that wildlife on Humani is not always (maybe even 'always not') appreciated by their own workers or by the neighbouring property owners. In 1980-1981, for instance, National Parks was back again and shot some 1000 of his buffalo because of 'an assumed threat for transmitting FMD to neighbouring cattle'. His rhinos were also a constant source of complaints (and bills for compensation), especially from neighbouring Devuli Ranch. Outside their house is the beginnings of a crocodile farm, which Roger wants to pick up more seriously when his son has finished school and joins the business.<sup>39</sup>

Roger conducts his safari operations through 'Roger Whittall Safaris' for which he not only advertises for Humani within the SVC, but also for his hunting concession in the Zambezi Valley, on the Matetsi River. Hunting antelope and leopard are advertised as the main attraction on Humani. Waterbuck and sable are the major attractions in the concession in the north of Zimbabwe.<sup>40</sup> Roger Whittall Safaris has been operating since the early seventies, well ahead of any wildlife utilisation plans from other landowners in the SVC area. He also began to reintroduce several species on Humani. It is symbolically significant that he already had rhino on his property in the seventies. At first there were white rhino who actually arrived on Humani land quite by accident. One was given to him and another bull and cow were brought to Humani by National Parks from Mushandike Game Reserve where they were 'out of control'. Over the years they calved regularly and the population grew. In 1987 twenty black rhino were introduced onto Humani: 'In 1987 National Parks was reluctant to move rhino to Humani because of the distance and cost of transport involved, and because they thought that the area was too close to the Mozambique border. It took a lot of persuasion on my part, plus the fact that I paid for transport and gave a donation to the Rhino Fund, for them to agree to let us have 20'.<sup>41</sup> According to Derek Henning, former general manager of Devuli Ranch, at that time Roger Whittall also asked him to put aside land for wildlife on the Devuli side of the Turwi, which Henning described as the modest start of the SVC. Humani's black rhino can be seen as an important precedent for the later developments under the Rhino Conservation Project to which I turn later and which was so important to the formation of the SVC. The fact is that when the SVC started and the landowners removed the dividing fences between their properties, the different wildlife species which Hu-

mani had painstakingly built up and paid for over the years, dispersed all over the SVC. This was also the reason that they removed their internal fences, in 1993-1994 only later, than most property owners.<sup>42</sup>

Humani has four safari camps on its property. Turwi River Camp and Sabi River Camp are camps which are used for hunting and other types of tourists. Catering specifically to hunters, they have two more 'inland' camps, which are solely used for hunters. Turwi River Camp is beautifully located with a view of the Turwi River which flows through the middle of the SVC from east to west, dividing the area in a northern and a southern part. The area within the SVC north of the Turwi is referred to as 'The North' and south of the Turwi as 'The South'. When Conservancy Committee Meetings are scheduled, these always alternate between meetings in 'The North' and in 'The South'. From the camp there is a magnificent view on the wildlife roaming by the river and along the riverbanks. The lodges are built according to the 'back to nature' principle, which implies that they are open lodges.<sup>43</sup> The general dining-room overlooks the Turwi River and is lined up with all kind of horns from kudu, waterbuck and impala. From the dining-room to the first lodge they built a bridge made of rope, some ten to fifteen metres over a tributary of the Turwi River. On the way to the Sabi River Camp you pass through the spectacular Dwanga pans, natural pans which fill up during the rainy season and then slowly dry up in the course of the following dry season. In response to this process the area has sparse undergrowth, but is characterised by high growing and very characteristic Malala Palms, which also feature prominently in the logo of Roger Whittall Safaris. Just before reaching the Save River there is a group of yellow fever acacias which contrast strongly and beautifully with the long and erect Malala palms, of which the fronds make such a sinister whisper in the wind. The lodges overlook the Save River. Roger's lodges were the first in the area. They are targeted at the middle market and they try to give clients an experience of going back to nature as much as possible, an affect they also strive for in the architecture of the lodges. Their major clientele nowadays are bow hunters. Bow hunters usually find hunting with rifles too easy, not presenting a real challenge between man and animal. The most expensive hunt he offers is an elephant hunt which goes for approximately US\$ 35,000,-. A lion hunt comes next for around US\$ 30,000,-. His buffalo hunts are conducted on his Zambezi Valley concessions. He would prefer to do them in the SVC as well, but so far there are not enough buffalo (yet).<sup>44</sup> His main reason for this passion for hunting is he says 'to see how the game develops on his property'.<sup>45</sup>

Roger's hunting stories are myriad, one of them is immortalised in *The Hartebeest*, which I shall quote here at length to illustrate the continuous link with the thrilling hunting stories of Selous, Capstick and the like I mentioned in Chapter 3. The like of which (re)produce a white social identity in southern Africa. 'Professional hunters are a

39 All information in this section of the text derived from an interview with landowners of Humani, 8 October 1998.

40 Taken from the brochure of Roger Whittall Safaris.

41 Information derived from an official letter from Humani to the SVC in which it claims recognition and acknowledgement for its role in the history of rhino conservation in the area and thus its role in the 'pre-history' of the SVC, 28 July 1995. This letter was followed in 1996 by a letter and appendices in which Humani calculated its purchases of wildlife in the period between 1970 and 1996. All of this was passed on to the SVC after the internal fencing was taken down and Humani feels it has never been fully compensated, one way or the other, or recognised. From 1970 to 1994 they estimated an amount of US\$ 1.5 million of wildlife purchases. Between 1994 and 1996 another US\$ 1,814,149,-. The appendices to the letter were copies of all the purchases as far back as the seventies. Together they comprise a pack of one cm thick. Letter 17 July 1996.

42 Interview with landowner of Humani, 8 October 1998.

43 As to date there are very few large predators in the SVC, there is not yet any fear for the safety of clients. That might change if the SVC would also be restocked with larger numbers of big predators like lion and hyenas as is implied in future plans. Then the lodges should probably be 'closed'. The discussion about predators in the SVC has not yet reached a consensus on policy.

44 I will come back to this buffalo issue later on this chapter.

45 All information in this section is taken from an afternoon at Humani and a tour of the different camps, in other words a combination of interviewing, conversation and observation, 8 October 1998.

breed apart yet normally they end-up making the best conservationists. They are living close to nature, pitting man's mind against an animal who more often than not has the capability to kill. Roger Whittall of Humani Ranch has been hunting for many years, the big five being his 'babies' these days. In August a lioness nearly sent Roger to the Eternal hunting grounds. Out at Matetsi Ranch [in the Zambezi Valley] with an American client who was a first timer to Africa, they were sitting in a hide watching a pride of lion on a dead buffalo, when a lioness decided that man was a better meal. Roger saw that she was stalking and heading for the open back of the hide. So in the darkness he shone his torch for his client to shoot. Unfortunately the client wounded her. She and the pride then took off into the night. During the night sleep eluded him as the premonition of impending disaster haunted Roger. Yet the professional hunter, if he is ethical, will always follow up a wounded beast. Morning came and the old 'gut reaction' was not feeling too good. They began tracking her in thick jesse bush where the visibility was not more than four to five meters. Suddenly she came at full charge with the American as her target. Roger, with only the safety of his client in mind, fired both barrels into her, therefore turning her onto him. She lunged knocking his rifle high in the air (the marks will remain on the stock as a memory). Then she was on him. Reflex made him put his arm in front of his face, she ripped a section from the side of his head, taking away in the process part of his ear, before grabbing his arm. Three hundred and fifty pounds of fury shaking one hundred and seventy pounds was absolutely no effort on her part, for she could easily bring down a fully grown buffalo. Roger knew that he did not stand a chance. The client looking through his gun sight was getting a glimpse of the cat, then Roger's back, or his head moving up and down. Yet fate was for man that day, as the client's shot ran true. The lioness lay dead and Roger was covered in blood, mostly his own. The shredded tendons of his left arm dangling and blood pumping into the ground. Roger got up and walked to the vehicle. The wounds on his arm were hastily wrapped in ripped up shirts to try and stop the flow of blood. He was quickly taken to the nearby house where his first concern was to take a bath to try and clean away some of the mess. The pain after the first couple of minutes was so excruciating that he never thought one could hurt so bad. A doctor was found as Roger was rushed to the airport and he administered the welcome painkiller pill which brought Roger merciful sleep aboard the plane. Arriving at a Harare hospital where lying full conscious, Roger felt his right leg begin to have extreme cramps, probably due to the loss of blood. Roger demanded to remove himself from the table he lay on so as to restore circulation to his leg. Roger is known by the family and friends to have a very volatile temper; one can imagine that the nurses were subjected to a language that was in no ways the Quens's English! They stitched him up but did not clean the wounds. So going sceptic a few weeks later this did not improve the healing process. An operation is imminent and with luck his arm will be okay. Lady luck was indeed Roger's ally and we are all thankful he is around to tell the tale. As for the cleint he can dine out and entertain his grandchildren with the story and photos of a dead lioness and mauled man for many a year to come'.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>46</sup> pp. 28-29, Paolillo, K. (1991), Risks of the trade, *The Hartebeest*. The Magazine of the Lowveld Natural History Branch of the Wildlife Society of Zimbabwe, 23rd Edition.

The hunting ethos I described in Chapter 3 finds its almost linear continuation and reproduction in Roger Whittall, even more beautifully apposite because it can be traced back directly to the influence of Frederick Selous. His involvement and with him that of Humani in wildlife utilisation also indicates that the SVC did not come just 'out of the blue' in the area, but that activities were already taking place in this field, at least since the early seventies, on one of the largest properties in the SVC. There were five other developments and events in the area, which gave the final impetus to inaugurate and form the SVC. Or should I say 'formalise' the SVC?

### The 'inevitability' of the SVC

The first development was that already at an early stage the Rhodesian Government initiated the formation of Intensive Conservation Areas (ICA), which divided all commercial, read white, land into ICA's. The ICA was there, living up to its name, to promote conservation on commercial land. As the ICA was especially created to discuss matters about natural resources on commercial land, game was a regular item on the agenda, for example if a landowner was overshooting. The mandate of the ICA also implied that 'poaching' was always on the agenda. Ranch by ranch there was a report of what poaching they had experienced and what they had done about it. In the Lowveld they formed the Sabi Valley ICA, which included land on both sides of the Sabi River, including Devuli Ranch, Humani Ranch, Sabi Tanganda and Sabi Experimental Station. Even before the Liberation Struggle began in the seventies, the ICA had split up into two, with the Sabi River forming the boundary. The west side of the river kept the name of Sabi Valley ICA, while the east side became to be known as the Mid-Sabi ICA. The northern boundary of the Sabi Valley ICA was formed by Birchenough Bridge and in the south by the Mkwesine River. The main reason for the split was that on the west side of the river the focus was on cattle ranching, while the east side was primarily devoted to agriculture. Another consideration was that the distances between east and west, with only a few official crossings at Birchenough Bridge and the J. Quinton Bridge on the Ngundu-Tanganda road, were too long for effective communication.<sup>47</sup> The Sabi Valley ICA at the time was dominated by representatives from the big ranches in the area like Devuli and Humani, whose general managers or owners, in the case of Humani, often acted as chairmen of the body. During the time that the ideas about the SVC began to take root, Derek Henning, managing director of Devuli Ranch, was chairman of the ICA and because of that also became the first chairman of the SVC-to-be.<sup>48</sup> The ICA met every month. During the years of the Liberation Struggle, or 'The War' as it is (often) referred

<sup>47</sup> On older maps of the area one can also spot an informal crossing by the name of Dotts Drift or Sabi Drift. This used to be a crossing opposite Masapas, just in the bend of the river, which was created by Dicky Dott in the early days when he was owner of Angus, living in the northern section of it. He wanted to go in a straight line to Mozambique to hunt elephants and not bother about first having to go south to the official Ngundu-Tanganda road. Information from landowner of Chishakwe during an interview, 14 October 1998.

<sup>48</sup> Derek Henning was Director on the Board of Directors of Devuli Ranch from 1970 to 1980 and its Managing Director from 1980-1995. Information based on interview with landowner Chishakwe, 14 October 1998.

to by whites, it only held meetings every second month. In those years it was not easy to travel around freely and the ICA meetings became one of the very few occasions on which people from the white community could actually meet and socialise. For this reason the ICA meetings took on the connotation of a social event and of being a strong medium for social bonding and (re)confirmation of white social identity, rather than running the business of a strict conservation body. Members planned the meeting for a particular day and then took lunches with them and the day was mainly used for socialising. The ICA meetings consolidated as a very strong medium for a sense of belonging among the white community in the Sabi Valley: 'that was what kept us together' as one prominent member formulated it pointedly. During the peak years of the Liberation Struggle they had to drive to the meetings in cars armoured with steel plates attached to the bottom of the car in case they should drive over a land-mine and they always travelled in armed convoys in order to prevent to be ambushed. Despite these hindrances they were eagerly prepared to make these sacrifices to visit and attend the ICA meetings simply to be able to meet and socialise with other people.<sup>49</sup> In the memory of Anne Whittall<sup>50</sup>, the ICA played a very important role in the conception of the idea to form a conservancy. She told me the story that she still clearly remembers, standing out like a kind of beacon in her memory, how at one ICA meeting on Angus in 1989-1990, Jeremy Baldwin, then co-owner of Masapas stood up, saying with Pete Henning (no family relation with Derek Henning), 'we are sitting on a goldmine' and related how people in South Africa made good money out of wildlife and proposed to 'go gamewise', especially because they, i.e. the ICA, had people 'like Roger [Whittall] doing safaris'. Baldwin was, according to Anne, referring to MalaMala and Londolozi game parks in South Africa. It proved to be a spark, but one which was fanned into a flame a 'few days after that meeting' when Raoul DuToit from WWF/DNPWLM came in and brought them the idea about putting black rhino on their private land in order to protect them from poaching. I shall come back to this proposal of the WWF later in this chapter. It was the co-owner of Masapas, Pete Henning, who later contacted the Conservancy Officer of the Natal Parks Board in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa (see Chapter 3), asking it to send someone to come over to Zimbabwe and advise the SVC on the formulation of their constitution. Henning himself is a farmer from Louis Trichardt in South Africa, and the officer's report on his trip to the SVC mentions that Henning made 'numerous phone calls asking about detailed aspects of our conservancy work'. At a later stage the WWF officer in charge of the Rhino Conservation Project, also contacted South Africa, Sabi Sands in the eastern Transvaal in particular, to ask the people there if they could send a copy of their constitution to the SVC-to-be, which could be used as a guideline for their efforts. For the further development of the argument in this chapter about the main themes within the SVC, interesting to note that the Sabi Sands constitution was considered too restrictive to landowners with regard to fencing. 'Much time has been spent (...) trying to soften the Sabi Sands's constitution and thus making it more acceptable to

the Zimbabwean group of farmers'.<sup>51</sup> The upshot is that the SVC stands very much in the tradition of the South African conservancy movement and that the people who were trying to get the SVC off the ground in the first place actively sought to learn from, and also follow the example of, South African conservancies. It could be added that where I argued that the South African conservancies strengthened the boundaries between the (white) conservancy and the neighbouring (black) communities, the SVC was, in first instance at least, even more strongly attracted to the idea of creating a fenced-in island of wilderness, in the midst of communal lands. Or in the words of Neumann in his study on Arusha National Park in relation to its neighbouring communities in Tanzania, right from the start the landowners were 'imposing wilderness' on an island in between densely populated districts.<sup>52</sup>

In the nineties, the ICA was subsumed into the Natural Resources Sub-Committee, which became part of local government, Rural District Council, and was chaired by the District Administrator. The Sub-Committee is answerable to the Provincial Natural Resources Officer who in turn reports to the Natural Resources Board headquarters in Harare. The restructuring was meant to enhance the power of RDCs, including their say about commercial land. But, according to one source, the 'structure collapsed. Maybe not all over Zimbabwe, but anyway, here it is non-existent'. The Sub-Committee eventually also encompassed Communal Land, which 'wasn't the idea of the ICA in the first place'. The new structure is considered 'not as relevant anymore, but they have the legal authority'. The Sub-Committee is considered 'relevant only when there is a proper problem'.<sup>53</sup> The ICA and later the Sub-Committee were running parallel with the development of the inception of the SVC. The agendas for the different meetings all contained more or less the same structural points and areas of attention, which is not astonishing considering they were all about the same topic related to the same region with most of the same people involved: conservation in the Save Valley. Later, when the SVC was finally established, it simply seems to have 'taken over' the function of the ICA<sup>54</sup> as a white platform for conservation issues on private land and the later day Natural Resources Sub-Committee, although it has remained member of the Sub-Committee. 'The objectives of the ICA and SVC are identical' as one interviewee answered my question about this issue.<sup>55</sup> In effect, it could be said that the SVC became the ICA New Style, concentrating on private land only, and for that reason, especially in the Lowveld, dominated by whites.<sup>56</sup>

51 pp. 4, Report Markham on his visit to the SVC, 20 to 25 April 1991. What a nice symbolic coincidence that they especially asked the Sabi Sands for an example of their constitution, as Sabi used to be the name of the Save River!

52 Neumann, R.P. (1998), *Imposing wilderness. Struggles over livelihood and nature preservation in Africa*, London, Berkeley: University of California Press.

53 Interview with landowner of Chishakwe, 14 October 1998.

54 Only the property Impala, located on the southern side of the Mkwazine River never formed part of the Sabi Valley ICA. Now it is included in the SVC. Information from interview with Chairman of the SVC, 8 July 1998.

55 Interview with landowner Chishakwe, 14 October 1998.

56 Information in this section based on interviews with wives of landowners of Humani, 12 August 1998, and landowner Humani, 10 September 1998, unless indicated otherwise.

49 As the ICA united the whites in the area, the Liberation Struggle united the blacks, interview with Liaison Officer, 14 July 1998.

50 Interview with wife of landowner of Humani, 12 August 1998.

The example of Humani indicates a continuation of the old hunting ethos and image of white men, particularly the British, in Africa, as I described in the historical context in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4 I focused on The Land Question in Zimbabwe in general as being a relevant and crucial context to understanding the relationships between the SVC and its neighbouring communities. What is the status of the land question in the Save Valley as the second relevant development in the establishment of the SVC? The largest part of what is now the SVC was appropriated by whites in the twenties and thirties, the Bridges and James Whittall of Devuli and Humani Ranch respectively. Devuli Ranch used to own all the land within the SVC north of the Turwi River. And south of the Turwi River it owned Masapas and Angus, which by then also included Mukazi and Mukwazi.<sup>57</sup> Humani later bought Bedford Block north of the Turwi. This covers the north nicely but leaves part of the southern half of the SVC unexplained, to wit Senuko, Levanga, Mkwasine, Potential, Hammond and Impala. Up till 1973 this was State Land/Crown Land. At that time it was not sold as commercial land, because the soil was considered unproductive. So it was only in the seventies and early eighties that this part of the present-day SVC became commercial land.<sup>58</sup> It is interesting to note the reason the State Land was sold: it was unproductive. This meant that the people who bought the land did not buy it directly in order to make it productive and economically viable through cattle or agriculture. The sale attracted people with other interests in the land, for investment reasons (absentee landowners), or with the idea of creating tourism opportunities. Senuko, Hammond and Impala were all finally sold to people who wanted to make a tourism destination out of them, with either a strong undercurrent of hunting or even with this as the primary aim. The landowner<sup>59</sup> of Senuko is right at this moment deeply immersed in eco-tourism, but did do some serious hunting in his early years in Gonarezhou as Honorary Officer of the DNPWLM<sup>60</sup>, and in 1998 he did send in his request for a hunting quota on his property. Hammond was finally bought by an old American hunting client of Roger Whittall, a former high-ranking manager at Sara Lee/DE. Impala was bought by Naudé, a local farmer and business entrepreneur as part of an investment strategy, betting on the tourism potential of the SVC. Even if buyers did not buy properties right away to fulfil their own ambitions in the tourism industry, with or without hunting, they certainly bought them as an investment taking a gamble on the tourism potential they are trying to build within the SVC.

This process of attracting certain buyers to the land was accelerated when Devuli Ranch began to sell off its property in bits and pieces after realisation had dawned after

the drought in the eighties and beginning of the nineties that cattle would be hard to sustain in the Lowveld.<sup>61</sup> Devuli had already taken a serious beating during the Liberation Struggle, which only reached its peak in and after 1976 when '(...) the Lowveld became the new and bitterly-contested 'sharp end' of the war'.<sup>62</sup> At the beginning of the Liberation Struggle, Devuli began with a herd of 28,000 head of cattle. There were only some 6000 left at Independence in 1980. Some cattle had been sold, but the large majority had been stolen.<sup>63</sup> The reason for this grand scale action was that the Freedom Fighters wanted to break the economic power base of the white community. To really hit the heart of economic power in the Sabi Valley meant to hit the cattle. So the Freedom Fighters ordered the local population to have fresh meat in their house at all times that the soldiers might ask them for meat, i.e. checking them. And 'all times' meant 'all times', day and night. If this was found not to be the case, the people involved were severely punished. This resulted in constant pressure on the cattle farmers. The problem for Devuli Ranch was particularly severe at Angus, which borders a large stretch of Tribal Trust Land, now Matsai Communal Land. In this particular context of the Liberation Struggle this created a huge problem and within a short period of time all 3000 head of cattle were stolen from Angus, plus all the wire from the fences and the waterpipes. The bordering TTL was known as a 'no-go area' for whites as there was no white habitation, which allowed the freedom fighters to use it as a 'rest and re-group area'. This proximity of a rest and re-group area probably also contributed to the fact that cattle theft was so intense here. The assistant manager of Angus was ambushed and killed after he had been dipping his cattle. Later, the homestead was destroyed as well.<sup>64</sup> From there on it was no longer useful to keep Angus occupied and so the other managers where withdrawn to Devuli Head Quarters, present-day Chishakwe, and left Angus abandoned, only to return and reclaim it in 1982-1983.

At present Devuli Headquarters exudes an atmosphere of days gone by. You reach it quite simply by driving along the Humani Road to the north and nearly and at a certain stage you catch sight of buildings on your left hand, visible from the road. The main entrance is guarded by and decorated with two silverplated/painted spoked wheels on

61 Information in this section is from two interviews with landowner of Chishakwe, 18 June and 14 October 1998 and personal observations, unless otherwise indicated. The fact that cattle were not a sustainable land use in the Lowveld was an incontrovertible fact in the sixties, but was not given sufficient follow up. I shall come back to this issue later on in this chapter.

62 Godwin & Hancock 1997: 156.

63 Compared to Humani, Devuli lost far more cattle during the Armed Struggle. Humani lost 'only' an estimated 10% of cattle. Humani had certain advantages over Devuli. On the east side Angus (Devuli) formed the border. On the west side there was the Sabi River. The eastern border especially meant that Humani people could pursue cattle thieves over a far greater distance than Devuli people who had to stop at the border with the TTL. Humani could also follow them onto Devuli property. In this fashion many of the Humani cattle were retrieved. Humani patrolled the fences from the ground and from the air, using game scouts and managers. When cattle thieves were seen from the air they threw hand grenades at them. When found on the ground thieves were shot, as nobody wanted live witnesses to tell others who had caught them as they were fearful of reprisals. Furthermore the policies between the two ranches differed with regard to cattle theft: Devuli hired mercenaries during the Armed Struggle to protect it and its cattle, but they always stopped the pursuit at the border of the TTL and went after compensation from the government. One source estimated that they only got a meagre 30% compensation for all their losses. Humani was far more set on catching the thieves and less concerned about compensation, according to this source.

64 Interview with landowner of Mukwazi, 11 August 1998.

57 Devuli purchased Angus in 1944, Sommerville 1976: 189.

58 In how far also more political reasons were active in selling this State Land at the level of the old white government in 1973 I do not know and my interviewees were very evasive in their answer or response to questions probing into this subject. As they were equally evasive about all questions related to their role and position in the Liberation Struggle. The information on this aspect of the land falling under the SVC is derived from an interview with Chairman of the SVC, 8 July 1998.

59 Son of one of the 'sugar-pioneers' in the Lowveld, Sir Ray Stockil, who with people like MacDougall took the initiative in the sixties to grow sugarcane in the region (Haw 1966: 69-70). The son of this pioneer is now breaking new ground himself by introducing wildlife utilisation as land use option in the Lowveld.

60 An Honorary Officer is specifically asked by National Parks to become an officer because of a certain expertise. It is a non-paid job and voluntary. The Chairman of the SVC was Honorary Officer from the seventies onward till 1985.

either side of the gate. The story behind the wheels is that they are the wheels, gun-carriage wheels used in World War I, that were on the ox wagon which arrived in this area in 1915. The office is decorated with old wooden furniture, including a huge rectangular desk; an old grey safe is stands in one corner. The outside wall of the office is covered with faded maps of the old Devuli Ranch, showing the markings of the more recent split up. On one wall of the office is a large, i.e. approximately 1.2 metres, rectangular black and white photograph, placed in a wooden frame behind broken glass. It is a picture of the Sabi River at the spot where they would later build Birchenough Bridge in 1934. Remarkably the Sabi River then looked like a majestic stream, while nowadays it seems only full of sand.<sup>65</sup> The pioneers of Devuli Ranch, Despard Bridges and his wife, are buried just outside the gate of HQ. At the gate you turn straight to the left and follow the fence for some 500 metres and there the graves are to the left of the road. The graves lay within a typical 'English type' wooden fence, which is in a state of collapse at some points. The graves are not well kept; the text on the grave is by now difficult to read. He died on 4 February 1935 and the text says: 'God keep his vision clear in our hearts through the dark day[s] unti[l] the da[y] breaks'. Some letters, as you can read, have fallen off the tomb stone.

Straight after the Liberation Struggle in 1980, Devuli set to work to try to rebuild its herd, beginning with Head Quarters and leaving the other properties lying idle for the time being. A large chunk of land, 200,000 ha., was sold to the Government in 1982. This is now known as the Devuli Resettlement Scheme, situated to the east of the northern part of the SVC. In the second half of the eighties and beginning of the nineties Devuli was subdivided even more and sold off.<sup>66</sup> The process began in the south with Masapas on 9 July 1986. Angus, which was divided in three, followed in 1988. Lot 1 (Mukwazi) was sold to Rob Cunningham (and later sold again to an Italian family who are also vivid hunters), Lot 2 (Mukazi) was sold to Pete Wenham, and Angus proper was sold by and to Derek Henning himself. Later on he sold it to the Hunters' Association of Zimbabwe, who in turn sold half of Angus to Barrie Duckworth, a tough hunter in the same tradition as Roger Whittall, who had bought Mokore (originally known as Ouse) on 1 October 1992.<sup>67</sup> On that same day Humani bought Bedford Block. On 31 March 1989 three lots were sold in the north. Lot 2, which is now Matandere, Lot 3, now Gunundwe, and Lot 4, now Mapari. On 15 April 1989, these lots were followed by Lot 5,

65 *Sunday Mail*, 12 October 1997, An environmental disaster, 'In its current state, the Save River (...) has been converted from a surface water source to virtually a groundwater system. Here and there, there are patches of what once was a mighty river but which has since been choked to 'death' but tonnes of silt. The Save has simply become the sand river, existing more in name than in reality'; see also *The Herald*, 14 October 1998, Siltation..., presenting a picture of the Save River at Birchenough Bridge where a man is digging a trench in the sand to reach the water.

66 All information from an interview with landowner Chishakwe, 18 June 1998.

67 Barrie Duckworth launched his career under the old regime with the DNPWLM, serving in Wankie National Park, now Hwange NP, as Officer in control of problem animals straying the park and causing problems in the surrounding communities. He is married to a Dutch woman, who lived in Papua New Guinea for sixteen years. Her father had served under Governor Van Baal (the same I introduced in Chapter 1 in relation to the conceptualisation of reciprocity. It is a small world indeed!). They lived for some time in the house of one of the (white) legends in conservation in Rhodesia, Ted Davison, who served for thirty-five years at Wankie (see for his memoirs, Davison, T.E. (1967), *Wankie. The story of a great game reserve*, Cape Town: Books of Africa). Davison is the Rhodesian equivalent of Kruger NP's legend, Stevenson-Hamilton.

now Msaize, Lot 6, now Chishakwe, which Derek Henning bought himself, and finally Lot 7, now Chanurwe. In 1991, Lots 8 and 9, Chapungu and Sabi River, were sold. These were again sold on 19 January 1994 to a German industrialist and hunting enthusiast, Willy Pabst, who also bought Musawezi. He renamed the combined property Sango. Savuli was sold on 1 February 1992 to a group of buyers, a combination of a local farmer and people in the tourist business in Harare. Umkondo is a former mine, see Chapter 4, and formally belongs to the Zimbabwean Government. Willy Pabst has made a bid for that property, but he has other competitors who want to buy or lease Umkondo. I shall return back to this particular issue in the next chapter. This list demonstrates unequivocally that the new landowners in the valley cannot be regarded as successors in the cattle business. There has been a definite shift towards owners interested in hunting and the related field of tourism. Even when the properties were bought after the date of the official inauguration of the SVC, the scenario reinforces the idea that it is mainly hunters and tourist operators who are interested in buying land in the Save Valley. The money earned with the splitting up and selling of Devuli Ranch was primarily used to pay shareholders in Devuli Ranch, who had not seen any returns for years. The name Devuli Ranch still exists but now operates as an investment company. The Bridges family still has some shares in the company but nothing major or significant. Later on in this chapter, I shall come back to the issue of land within the SVC, because, as I already described in Chapter 4, The Land Question resurfaced with new vigour in 1997 when 1471 properties in Zimbabwe were listed to be compulsorily designated by the government for resettlement purposes. Three properties within the SVC were also listed, which had major consequences for the organisation and its proposed organisational cooperation with the neighbouring communities.

A third, but far less controllable or predictable issue which made the creation of one or another kind of organisational structure for wildlife utilisation in the Save Valley virtually inevitable at the end of the eighties and beginning of the nineties, was the droughts which wiped out every hope of ever recovering a serious and viable cattle business in the Lowveld. In 1982-1983 a severe drought hit Zimbabwe. Once again, the writing was on the wall: it is impossible to make cattle farming economically viable in Regions IV and V. Struggling against environmental degradation, i.e. that 'the vegetation could no longer sustain viable stocking rates', the beef profits declined.<sup>68</sup> Or in the words of the Chairman of the SVC, in a discussion organised by the Centre for Private Conservation in Washington (U.S.A.): 'We saw soil erosion. We saw over-grazing. We saw the loss of perennial grasses. And we were forced, by the end of the eighties to sit down and really think about what our future was. Where were we headed? It was absolutely certain that we were headed for an economic disaster, let alone an ecological disaster. (...) And (...) when the better quality grasses disappeared, our carrying capacity started taking a knock, and you could carry less stock on the land. At the same time, the viability of cattle production was on the decline. The returns per head were less (...). They compensated by putting more stock on which exacerbated the problem even more and

68 pp. 255, Goodwin, H.J., Kent, I.J., Parker, K.T. & Walpole, M.J. (1997). Tourism, conservation & sustainable development: Volume IV, The south-east Lowveld, Zimbabwe. Unpublished report.

soil erosion was the inevitable result.<sup>69</sup> One of the consequences was that the cattle farmers had to seriously consider destocking their ranches. But in order to destock there must be an alternative to make the land productive. The final 'incentive' came when another drought hit them in 1991-1992. It was 'one of [the] worst droughts in living memory. The rainy season, that normally lasts between November and March, almost completely failed and the rains were patchy and unpredictable (...) rivers and lakes dried up and many trees died'.<sup>70</sup> The farmers had to look for another land use option, and (very) quickly. Ranches, which were solely dependent on cattle and did not have any agriculture alongside it to compensate for the loss of cattle through the drought, especially faced severe problems. The droughts rode rough-shod over the farmers, forcing them to act willy-nilly. The drought accelerated the process of finding an alternative land-use option. One particular option had already been suggested by WWF/DNPWLM and was in operation on a few properties in the Save Valley: wildlife, in particular the rhino, which forms a fourth development on the road to creating the SVC.

Black and white rhino are indigenous species to Zimbabwe.<sup>71</sup> The white rhino had already become extinct earlier in the twentieth century, but was later redeveloped from South African stock in smaller recreational parks like Kyle and the Matopos. The black rhino was kept in the large wildlife areas, such as the Zambezi Valley. This area was very accessible from neighbouring countries like Zambia (see Chapter 3). In the second half of the eighties and beginning of the nineties there was an enormous increase in commercial rhino poaching, especially in the National Parks which had low staffing levels and this allied with the easy access of the Parks made them easy prey to poachers who could retreat quickly over the border after their 'hunting' expeditions. Why there was such an upturn in the 1980s, virtually to disappear again after 1993, is difficult to explain. 'Many questions remain unanswered, in particular concerning the international trade in rhino horn'.<sup>72</sup> Nevertheless, the problem was acute in the eighties and the DNPWLM launched Operation Stronghold to protect the rhino in the National Parks better by raising personnel numbers plus better intelligence, awareness and education. But it never received the funding it needed for the project and the black rhino continued to decline. Inexorably it emerged that the DNPWLM could not protect the black rhino in its own sanctuaries because of a shortage of funding. In 1989 it put forward the Black Rhino Conservation Strategy in which it proposed, among other ideas, the creation of eight Intensive Protection Zones (IPZs), where extra protection could be guaranteed. Secondly, and most importantly for the development and creation of the SVC, was the decision for '(t)he development of translocated breeding nuclei else where in Zimbabwe - that is, on private land, and particularly where groups of landholders were prepared to establish co-operative 'Conservancies' - as a second-line insurance policy'.

The project leader of the Rhino Conservation Project, whose task it was to sell the idea to private landowners is, as I already mentioned above, Raoul du Toit.<sup>73</sup> His official title is Project Executant Rhino Conservation Project. He now works full-time for the WWF Zimbabwe again, but used to be seconded to the DNPWLM.<sup>74</sup> The WWF offices in Harare are situated in a quarter where the majority of the embassies are located as well as several offices from multilateral organisations like the IUCN. The office is conveniently placed on the corner where Lanark Road debauches on busy, four-lane Second Street. The office itself is housed in a stately old home with parking space in front of it, often full with Landrovers and other four-wheel drive vehicles with the familiar and world famous panda-logo on their doors. A visitor entering the building through the main entrance comes face to face with a big wooden bookcase with glass doors, largely filled with written documents held together by plastic spirals, indicating its report status, even before the reception counter in the left corner of the hall is discerned. Because these houses were originally not designed for efficiency or to be divided in offices in an orderly and mathematical manner, it is not easy to find the way to a particular office. To find Du Toit's office, I went into the building on ground floor and then had to go out again, go along a tiny corridor in order to enter his cramped office with orderly registered files piling up against every wall. In 1989, in line with the Rhino Conservation Strategy, he was looking for private land on which to house 'his' rhino. The spot had to be sufficiently far away, geographically, from the Zambian border where it was believed the poachers came in. The Lowveld seemed to fit this criterion and luckily the climatic condition were close to those in the Zambezi Valley. Finally, as the Lowveld is in Region IV and V, it is gazetted for wildlife as a form of land use. The Lowveld was an ideal spot for creating a safe haven for rhino. That same year, 1989, he was also, strictly coincidentally, asked by the landowner of Senuko to evaluate Senuko to assess its wildlife production potential. There was immediate rapport between these two men which 'did the trick'. The landowner of Senuko suggested that they might breed rhino on Senuko. Then they remembered there were also rhino on Humani. This naturally led to the idea of joining Humani and Senuko and using this combination to try to convince other property owners to join them as well. Roger Whittall especially deserves 'conservation credits' for his role in this process. A domino effect of landowners joining the initiative was the result. Du Toit could arrange a grant from the Beit Trust to finance the necessary fence, management and anti-poaching unit. Z\$ 1,000,000 was granted for the fence. The funding was made conditional in the sense that the conservancy would repay the grant by spending an equal amount of money on restocking the SVC. So their 'repayment' of the grant was made productive through restocking. An extra Z\$ 320,000 was granted for the management and anti-poaching unit.<sup>75</sup> Twenty-four rhino were brought in at that time. With the SVC, two other conservancies were created for the

69 pp. 7, Conservation through commerce. A roundtable discussion, Washington: Centre for Private Conservation, January 1999, italics added.

70 pp. 2, Brown, J., Cooke, E., Smith, R., & Stelfox, H. (1992), Devure 1992. A study of the effects of drought on the large mammals of Devure Ranch, Zimbabwe, Oxford University Expedition Report, unpublished. Driving through the SVC in 1998, one could still see the many silent witnesses, i.e. dead trees, to this drought.

71 Information in this section from: Background Black Rhino, (undated), The Zambezi Society, 6 pp.

72 Ibid: 1. In Chapter 3 I suggested a possible explanation by postulating the role of Asian speculators on the Asian stock exchanges.

73 This section of the text is based on an interview, 25 June 1998, with the project leader of the Rhino Conservation Project and personal observations.

74 Markham 1991: 4.

75 Save Valley Conservancy - Financial obligations of members, 22 April 1991. Attachment to Report Markham 1991. See also: WWF, Multispecies Animal Production Systems Project. Funding policy for Beit Trust/WWF conservancy project, 31 March 1991. Here it also said that '(i)t is envisaged that the Beit Trust / WWF support for the overall conservancy project will extend until the end of 1995'.



same purpose: the Chiredzi River Conservancy, located close to the SVC near Chiredzi, and the Bubiana Conservancy, located near West Nicholson on the right side of the road to the border-crossing at Beitbridge.

Now there was a Rhino Conservation Strategy and there were safe havens to put them in, but the ratification of the Rhino Conservation Strategy first had to go through the Department's Directorate and the Parks Advisory Board.<sup>76</sup> After that it had to be approved by the Ministry of Environment, which took another two years. The WWF did not wait until the Strategy was officially recognised, but went ahead and translocated black rhino to the above-mentioned conservancies. This was sheer piece of good luck for the rhinos because the DNPWLM continued to face huge problems in trying to protect the rhinos in its reserves, hampered by financial constraints and 'bureaucratic obstructiveness that resulted largely from the faction fighting that has plagued the Department [NPWLM]'. 'In contrast to the dismal scenario within the public Parks estate, the major rhino Conservancies were becoming well established, and represented the only really secure nuclei of black rhino in the country'. Despite this success, or maybe because of it, the (white) conservancies got a very bad (black) press. It was said that 'the Parks estate has been stripped of its rhino populations in favour of private Conservancies'. It was also suggested that the conservancies were making large financial profits, money which should have gone to the State, mainly from the presence of the rhino. This circuit of gossiping and make-believe produced an atmosphere of 'suspicion and distrust, and have given rise to all kinds of 'conspiracy theories [around the conservancies] (...) Particularly saddening has been the way in which the 'race card' is being played, by some NGOs as well as by individuals within government'. In other words the stereotyped image of white identity in southern Africa once more came up trumps. The subsequent interaction between black and white was contaminated in the sense that the image stood in the way of trust building, taking first steps in a reciprocal relationship and thus co-operation. Image as the basis for exclusion between black and white, and simultaneously for inclusion of people of the same social identity, of the ones belonging to 'us'. There is also a time factor at work in this development. In negative reciprocity, as in generalised reciprocity, there is no stipulated time for repayment. Repayment depends on strategic opportunity. The Land Issue simmered on between black and white for most of the eighties, but now the establishment of conservancies offered an opportunity to demand the appropriated land back. The Backgrounder concludes that it 'is the communal lands that currently represent the 'missing link' in rhino management'. By that conclusion it was already suggesting that some form of co-operation between private and communal land might be necessary to secure the political and social acceptability of conservancies and with this the long-term survival of the rhino in safe havens. But the quotations just cited already indicate that it will probably be an uphill battle to generate that co-operation. The next chapter is entirely devoted to the reciprocal-exchange-road of trials and errors negotiated by the SVC to try and create that missing link. In conclusion, all conservancies were born of the idea of stopping further rhino poaching. This focus and *raison d'être* for conservancies in Zimbabwe, their links with and guidance from South African conservancies and their being on (white) commercial land and corresponding to

white social identity make them highly susceptible to the idea that they are nothing more than a continuation of bygone colonial days and will almost inevitably arouse a storm of protest for that reason.

There is yet one more fifth argument to put forward to explain why the SVC almost *had* to be created, inexorably like a force of destiny. The argument is the development of international tourism in Zimbabwe, the underdevelopment of the Lowveld in this respect, and the related upsurge in wildlife utilisation on private land throughout the region of southern Africa. It is also an argument which again seems only to add to the national and local suspicion of this conservancy movement, on top of the ones mentioned above, as the tourism sector in Zimbabwe is dominated by whites.<sup>77</sup> Tourism contributed an estimated 5% to Zimbabwe's GNP in 1992 and provides jobs for some 50,000 people, both directly and indirectly.<sup>78</sup> *The Economist Intelligence Unit Country Report Zimbabwe* stated in 1996 that the number of visitors rose to 1.4 million in 1995, which was 33% higher than the year before. The report also states that the 'potential [of tourism] remains enormous'.<sup>79</sup> In 1997 there were 1.7 million tourists visiting Zimbabwe and the Minister of Mines, Environment and Tourism, said in an interview in 1998, he expected more than two million visitors by the turn of the century.<sup>80</sup> The Zimbabwe tourism sector has grown at an average of 20% annually since 1990.<sup>81</sup> Zimbabwe's share of the African tourism market is 3%-4%.<sup>82</sup> Tourism in Zimbabwe is primarily based on the Parks and Wild Life Estates, which constitute some 13.1 % of the country. The two government bodies responsible for wildlife tourism are, the DNPWLM and the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA), which are both responsible to the Ministry of Environment and Tourism.<sup>83</sup> Conservation and tourism are inextricably linked in Zimbabwe because of this bureaucratic arrangement. Wildlife tourism used to be concentrated in National Parks, like Victoria Falls NP and Hwange NP. Although the tour operators were mainly white<sup>84</sup>, at least the parks were run by a black governments department. But by the end of the eighties wildlife utilisation was increasingly advertised as optimum land use for private land (white-dominated) for semi-arid areas in Sub-Saharan Africa in general and for the Lowveld in Zimbabwe in particular. This was actually a process which for Southern Rhodesia / Zimbabwe had already begun in the early sixties when Dasmann and Mossman were asked to make an assessment of the possibilities of cropping and culling game to be sold to Africans, without harming the wildlife population on the property. They did a case study and experiments to this end on the Doddieburn Ranch and came to the conclusion that wildlife was a more economically

77 Goodwin et.al. 1997: 6.

78 Ibid: 5.

79 pp. 19, *Economist Intelligence Unit Country Report Zimbabwe*, Third Quarter 1996.

80 *Zimbabwe Independent*, 9 October 1998, Tourism seen as major economic anchor.

81 *The Financial Gazette*, 8 October 1998, Zimbabwe pins economic hopes on fast growing tourism sector.

82 Goodwin et al.: 6.

83 Ibid: 5.

84 In December 1994, only 10% of the tour operators in Zimbabwe were black (called 'indigenous'). At the Zimbabwe Professional Hunters and Guides Association, only 2,5% of its (voluntary) members are indigenous, Goodwin et.al. 1997: 7.

76 This section is, again, based on information from the 'Backgrounder Black Rhino'.

viable land use option than cattle in this respect.<sup>85</sup> Although the results of Dasmann and Mossman's study and subsequent experiments were positive about wildlife as land use option in the Lowveld, the idea did not take off to any large extent<sup>86</sup>, albeit the amount of land devoted to wildlife increased steadily in Zimbabwe, especially in the seventies. Between 1974 and 1989 the area devoted to wildlife in Zimbabwe increased 62%, from 59,7000 to 97,000 hectares.<sup>87</sup> In the eighties new attempts were made to convince farmers that wildlife utilisation was a profitable land use option and in publications it was stressed, again, that wildlife utilisation was a more economically viable land-use option than cattle raising, especially in Regions IV and V.<sup>88</sup> Everything in the garden seems rosy but the results and conclusions were not as unequivocal as some want us to believe. In conversations and publications on the subject, the authors often refer to a study by Jansen, Bond and Child of the WWF in Zimbabwe to 'prove' their point that wildlife is more economically viable than cattle.<sup>89</sup> In a conversation they will tell you that 'research has proven' that wildlife is economically more profitable than cattle. But Cumming and also Jansen *et al.* are actually very cautious in their conclusions. In 1990, on the basis of material from Child and Martin from the DNPWLM, Cumming concluded that '(t)here is some evidence that greater wealth can be generated from semi-arid rangelands under wildlife than can be generated from livestock'.<sup>90</sup> Two years later, Jansen *et al.* state that their 'results indicate that the answer to the question 'cattle, wildlife, both or neither' is far from simple – and *not* the undisputed 'wildlife' that many have advocated (or hoped for). It appears that cattle ranching is economically viable in some areas of Natural Regions IV and V and could be financially rewarding if the negative effects of a number of government policies could be removed. Wildlife, on the other hand, is financially and economically viable in many areas – but not all areas and not for all activities'.<sup>91</sup> Nevertheless these vague indications have had major effects on land-use policy, for both communal and commercial land. The government introduced

a programme of wildlife utilisation on semi-arid state land, CAMPFIRE, which I introduced in Chapter 3. On private land in Regions IV and V many farmers turned (partly) to wildlife utilisation schemes. This latter development in particular took off fairly well and the SVC also got off to a promising start. The SVC, three years after its official inauguration as a rhino conservancy in 1991, asked Price Waterhouse for an assessment of the wildlife potential specifically for the SVC, i.e. to go beyond only being a safe haven for black rhino.<sup>92</sup> 'The major conclusion of this land use report (...) was that tourism offered considerably greater economic potential than cattle ranching, and that the conservancies should implement a range of wildlife utilization activities, with an emphasis on high-quality tourism'.<sup>93</sup> In the Price Waterhouse study it was also concluded that hunting, especially the buffalo, would enhance the viability of the scheme considerably.<sup>94</sup> Because so far the SVC had been a cattle area, all buffalo had been previously eradicated to remove contagion of FMD. In order to get permission from Veterinary Services for the re-introduction of buffalo, the ranchers had to get rid of all their cattle, to which the SVC-members decided in 1992. In that sense the Price Waterhouse document only legitimised the course of action and developments later followed by the SVC, but the ongoing developments on commercial land made them a direct competitive threat for the already established wildlife tourism facilities in the country run by the DNPWLM.<sup>95</sup> This put the relations between the DNPWLM and the private sector under severe strain. I shall come back to this relationship later on in this chapter when I discuss the 'main themes' of the SVC. For the time being and to raise the level of suspense, it is enough to say that permits from the DNPWLM are a prerequisite for all wildlife activities in Zimbabwe, including buying and translocating buffalo and other species.

In a nutshell it can be said that the SVC did not come 'out of the blue'. There were several inter-related factors which contributed to its almost inevitable birth, further development, and also its concentration on the two 'main themes', which will be introduced later. The continuation of the white hunting tradition in the heartland of the SVC on Humani and the fact that they were already heavily involved in wildlife utilisation, both consumptive and non-consumptive, and restocking wildlife, including black rhino in the area since the seventies can be considered crucial to the later inception of the SVC. This still gives Humani a *status aparte* within the SVC, not because it wants to be

85 Dasmann, R.F. & Mossman, A.S. (1960), The economic value of Rhodesian game, *Rhodesian Farmer*, 30: 17-20; Dasmann, R.F. (1962), Game ranching in African land use planning, *Bulletin of Epizootic Diseases of Africa*, 10: 13-17; see also chapter 17. Robins, E. (1964), *Afrika's wilde dieren* (translated from the English original: *Africa's wildlife* (1963)). Baarn: Uitgeverij Bosch & Keuning.

86 pp. 12, Martin, R.B. (1994), Alternative approaches to sustainable use: what does and doesn't work, Paper presented to conference: *Conservation through sustainable use of wildlife*, 8-11 February 1994, Brisbane, Australia.

87 Skinner, J.D. (1989), Game ranching in southern Africa, in: Hudson, R.J., Drew, K.R. & Baskin, L.M. (eds), *Wildlife production systems. Economic utilisation of wild ungulates*, Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.

88 Child, B.A. (1988), The role of wildlife utilisation in the sustainable economic development of semi-arid rangelands in Zimbabwe, Unpublished D.Phil. Thesis, University of Oxford; Bond, I. (1992), The financial and economic returns of cattle and wildlife production systems in commercial and communal farming systems in Zimbabwe, unpublished Report prepared for the Zimbabwe Wildlife Management and Environmental Conservation Programme. World Bank/Price Waterhouse.

89 pp. 249, Barnes, J.I. & Kalikawe, M.C. (1992), Game ranching in Botswana: constraints and prospects, in: Van Hoven, W., Ebedes, H. & Conroy, A. (eds), *Wildlife ranching: a celebration of diversity. Proceedings of the third international wildlife ranching symposium*. Pretoria: Centre for Wildlife Management.

90 pp. 17, Cumming, D.H.M. (1990), Developments in game ranching and wildlife utilisation in east and southern Africa, in: Renecker, L.A. & Hudson, R.J. (eds), *Wildlife production: conservation and sustainable development*, Alaska: University of Alaska Fairbanks, italics added.

91 pp. 42, Jansen, D., Bond, I. & Child, B. (1992), *Cattle, wildlife, both or neither. A summary of survey results for commercial ranches in Zimbabwe*, WWF Project Paper no. 31, italics added.

92 Price Waterhouse et al. (1994), *The Lowveld conservancies: new opportunities for productive and sustainable land use, Save Valley, Bubiana and Chiredzi River Conservancies*. Harare: Price Waterhouse.

93 pp. 18, Attwell, C.A.M. (July 1998), Environmental Impact Assessment for loan application to the IFC for the restocking of wildlife species in the Savé Valley Conservancy.

94 Price Waterhouse 1994: 100-105.

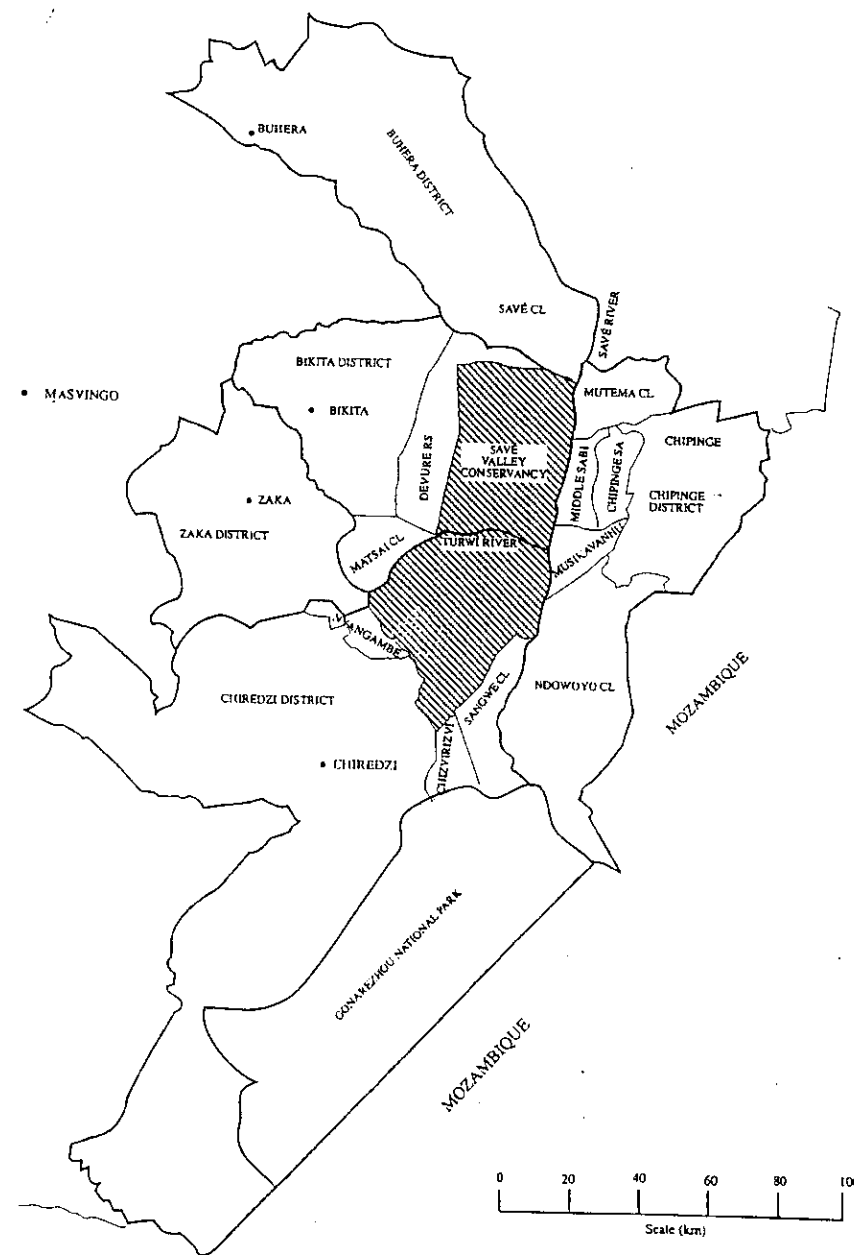
95 *Sunday Mail*, 11 August 1996, Hotels lose tourists to game farms, 'Farm and ranch accommodation has become so popular that an increasing number of tourists are shunning the established hotel system to spend time in private properties, hunting and sightseeing. It was (...) the hunting excursions offered at these properties that are money spinners'. See also *The Herald*, 9 August 1996, Conservancies set up to pull tourists to Lowveld: 'With one large National Park situated in the extreme south-eastern end of the country, as the only tourist attraction, the region appears to be neglected as far as investments in the hospitality industry was concerned. Several local members have set up conservancies to 'create tourist attractions' in the form of game parks, bird sanctuaries, and natural forests (...): *Sunday Mail*, 9 August 1998, Game farming to boost tourism; *The Herald*, 7 April 1997, Chiredzi gets more tourists: 'More tourists are now visiting the south-eastern Lowveld following the establishment of private wildlife conservancies in the area. The Gonarezhou National Park has not been able to attract a lot of tourists'.

compensated for its years of investment in wildlife, but more because its owners are direct descendants of the first pioneers in the area and are the living history of the area. The other landowners arrived on the scene much later. South of the Turwi this began in the seventies and eighties, and north only by the end of the eighties and beginning of the nineties when Devuli was split up and sold. Many of the new owners were attracted to the idea of buying property in the area because they were keen on hunting, just like Roger Whittall, and this has strengthened the hunting ethos and white identity construction within the SVC as a dominant force considerably. A potent force, but there were other factors contributing to the formation of the SVC as well, like the droughts, the Rhino Conservation Project, the studies which predict better economic returns in semi-arid lands if they turn to wildlife utilisation schemes and tourism, and, very important, the example of conservancies, both conceptually and in terms of practical examples for drafting constitutions and other technical details, in South Africa. Finally it is fair to say that the creation of the SVC is just a formalisation of a certain stage in its development, of which the organisational climax, potential and maturity has not yet been reached.

### Description and formal organisation of the Savé Valley Conservancy

In order to understand the main themes dominating the policy discussions of the SVC right from the start, I need to describe the geographical area, the formal organisational structure and objectives of the SVC, because they directly relate, influence or form a perfect image or metaphor for the dominating policy issues. Let me begin by giving a general impression of the SVC in terms of location within the structure of Zimbabwe's provinces, districts, and wards, geography, physical features and flora and fauna. Such a description is also essential to understanding the local political struggles between the SVC and neighbouring communities I shall describe later on. The SVC is situated in the southeast Lowveld of Zimbabwe with its southern boundary approximately forty-five kms northeast of the town of Chiredzi, its eastern boundary being the Save River after which the conservancy is named<sup>96</sup>, its northern boundary lies not far from to Birchenough Bridge and its western boundary in the northern part of the SVC being formed by a resettlement scheme on land of the former Devuli Ranch and to the south by Matsai Communal Area. Some sixty kms to the south of the SVC lies Gonarezhou National Park, the second largest national park in Zimbabwe, bordering Mozambique and South Africa. Hwange National Park is the largest park in Zimbabwe and is located to the south of the famous Victoria Falls in the farthest southwest of the country. The SVC is located in two provinces, Masvingo and Manicaland, and two districts, Chiredzi and Bikita and is surrounded by another three districts, Zaka, Buhera and Chipinge District (see map 5). The SVC is a co-operative structure comprising twenty-

<sup>96</sup> The river on the eastern boundary of the SVC used to be called the Sabi River. In the eighties this name was changed to Save River to approximate the pronunciation of the word by the local Africans more closely, using a soft 'v' which sounds like in-between a 'v' and 'w'. The SVC added an accent on the 'e', making it Savé River, for foreign marketing purposes, so that potential clients would not confuse the word Save with the verb 'to save'.



Map 5 SCV and surrounding districts

four private, individual cattle ranches (see Map 4). They were converted 'into a single cooperatively managed commercial wildlife reserve'<sup>97</sup> of 3387 km<sup>2</sup>. It is the largest private wildlife area on the African continent. In figure 9<sup>98</sup> there is a list of properties, related to owners, commercial operations and acreage.

Figure 9 SVC list of properties, owner(s), operations and area (ha)

Ranch	Owner	Operations	Area (ha)
Matandere	Pioneer Capital Partners/ARDA	Safari camp*/hunting safaris	13,123
Gunundwe	B.J. Gous	Safari camp	11,374
Mapari	H.J. Vorster	Safari camp/Stop Inn	23,153
Chishakwe	Rovambira (Pvt) Ltd	Construct camp/hunting safaris	9,977
Msaize	Powerlock (Pvt) Ltd	Safari lodge/hunting safaris	16,340
Chanurwe	Pabst Holdings (Pvt) Ltd	Safari camp/hunting safaris	44,348
Chapungu	Zimbabwe Sun Ltd	Will be building camp	12,976
Musawezi	Pabst Holdings (Pvt) Ltd	Directors camp**/hunting safaris	12,662
Sabi	Pabst Holdings (Pvt) Ltd	Idem	18,790
Umkondo	'Leased' to Pabst Holding (Pvt) Ltd?	Idem	6,627
Savuli	Savuli Property Investments (Pvt) Ltd	Safari camp/hunting safaris	5,529
Mokore	Mokore Ranch (Pvt) Ltd	Safari camps/hunting safaris	7,451
Bedford Block	Dunmow (Pvt) Ltd	Idem Humani	12,215
Angus	Sabi Star Enterprises (Pvt) Ltd	Safari camp/hunting safaris	15,792
Humani	Humani Estates (Pvt) Ltd	Safari camps/hunting safaris	41,158
Mukazi River	Mukazi River Ranch (Pvt) Ltd	Safari camp/hunting safaris	11,457
Senuko	Senuko Ranching (Pvt) Ltd & Savé Lodges (Pvt) Ltd	Safari camp	24,120
Levanga	Kingsbrook (Pvt) Ltd	Safari camp/hunting safaris	13,040
Masapas	Bateleurs Peak Farm Holdings (Pvt) Ltd	Building safari camp/hunting safaris	15,437
Mukwazi	Wenhope (Pvt) Ltd	Safari camps/hunting safaris	12,549
Hammond	Mid West Ranching Ltd, Nyerzi Safaris	Safari camp/hunting safaris	12,109
Potential	Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA)	Safari camp/hunting safaris	12,146

97 Attwell 1998: 18.

98 Goodwin et al 1997: 251, updated August 1999. Of the owners only these of Chishakwe, Humani and Senuko, also live on their property. The rest of the properties are run by their managers. There is not one property owner in the SVC who is solely dependent on the earning from the commercial operations. This means that all owners can see their property in the SVC as an investment opportunity (interview with Conservator, 4 June 1998. Information on 'commercial operations' from interviews with Conservator, 20 April and 7 May 1998).

Ranch	Owner	Operations	Area (ha)
Mkwesine	Mkwesine Ranching Co. (Pvt) Ltd	Hunting safaris	12,547
Impala	Fair Range Estates (Pvt) Ltd	Safari camp/hunting safaris	8,097
Total			373,017

\* Alongside safari camps there are also often more sober hunting camps available. I have not distinguished between 'camp' and the often more luxurious 'lodge' as the line between them is too arbitrary to be of use in this general description

\*\* Only for directors, clients and guests of Pabst Holdings

The property owners range from family-owned businesses, like Humani and Levanga for instance, to foreign investors like Pabst Holdings (Germany) and Mid-West Ranching (USA), to large companies like Zimbabwe Sun, part of Delta Corporation, one of the largest firms in Zimbabwe.<sup>99</sup>

The physical features of the SVC are dominated by a gently undulating topography with scattered granite kopjes. The altitude varies from around 500 m in the south to around 600 m in the northwest extremity of the SVC. The highest hills and ranges rise up to 250 m above the flats, but most of them are around 100 m high. The vegetation of the SVC is dominated by mopane open woodland. Apart from the distinctive granite kopjes the landscape is characterised by many baobab trees which are a typical feature of the Lowveld.<sup>100</sup> The biggest baobab in Zimbabwe even seems to be located in the SVC, on Makore. It has a circumference of 27.61 metres and a height of twenty-one metres. It competes for the title of the largest baobab in Zimbabwe with another huge tree of the same species near Victoria Falls, which has to be permanently guarded to prevent tourists from damaging it by carving their names in its trunk. But its circumference is 'only approx 20 mts'.<sup>101</sup> It is quite difficult to describe the landscape of the SVC as one landscape. The area encompasses several landscapes, which makes it such a beautiful place. There are stretches covered with mopane woods, but also open bushlands where huge termite mounds lend a distinctive character, riverine areas with big trees, natural pans as I described earlier with tall, thin malala palms, together with yellowish fever acacias and hilly countryside. And these types of vegetation are home to all kinds of mammals, many re-introduced in the area after the inception of the SVC, since they had been wiped out during the cattle years, and birds. There are many antelope like kudu, impala, and eland to be seen. There are giraffe, waterbuck, wildebeest, buffalo,

99 In 1998 Delta Corporation was ranked the third largest company in Zimbabwe, behind Zimply, a manufacturer of agricultural equipment, Hippo Valley, part of Anglo-American and a sugarcane growing and milling company, also located in the southeastern Lowveld. Delta Corporation is into a wide range of products in the mass market, like beverages, retail business and tourism (pp. 9-13, Top Companies Survey - Supplement to the *Financial Gazette*, 15 October 1998). Italics added.

100 It is no wonder that the logo of the SVC contains a baobab and a rhino, against the background of a setting sun.

101 pp. 25, Tayler, D. (1992), The largest baobab, *The Hartebeest*. The Magazine of the Lowveld Natural History Branch of the Wildlife Society of Zimbabwe, 24th Edition.

zebra, nyala, greysbok, bushbuck, sable, warthogs, hippo, crocodile and of course the rhino to name just the better-known animals. There is also a healthy population of elephants in the SVC. It began with the elephants introduced on Humani. During and after the drought in 1991-1992 a huge group of 510 elephants, 130 in 1992 and 380 in 1993<sup>102</sup>, were translocated from nearby, overpopulated Gonarezhou National Park, where they were dying from lack of water.<sup>103</sup> As the SVC was traditionally land on which cattle were raised and cattle had to be watered daily, the SVC has a far better water development than Gonarezhou. The different properties comprising the SVC have pump stations in the Save and Mkwasi Rivers to deliver water to large water reservoirs, which in turn supply watering points for game all over the SVC.<sup>104</sup> In 1993 elephants were translocated in complete breeding herds, which was a world first. The SVC paid Z\$1000 per animal, regardless of size. The operation was made financially possible by funds made available by the US Department of Fisheries and Wildlife and Care for the Wild. The operation was carried out by Clem Coetsee of Wildlife Management Services.<sup>105</sup> His record catch for one day was thirty-two elephants. If everything went smoothly and transport was available, twenty-five could be moved per day.<sup>106</sup> As we have seen from the examples of rhino translocation to Humani described earlier and elephant translocation to the SVC, the relations between SVC and the DNPWLM were good and co-operative. The SVC also houses some species of predators, although there is no consensus yet among the members, about the species and numbers of predators that should be allowed in the SVC. Currently there is a healthy population of leopard, for which the SVC is specifically marketed to potential hunters<sup>107</sup>, and cheetah and hyena have returned and there is a nucleus of a lion population. Conservation-wise it is important to note that three to four packs of African wild dogs, or painted hunting dogs roam the SVC.<sup>108</sup> They occur only in Africa and the wild dog is an Appendix I endangered species on the CITES list. There are only some 5000 left on the continent. The SVC has fifty to sixty of them.<sup>109</sup> If you go to the bar at Senuko Safari Lodge there is a huge, very beautiful drawing of wild dogs by Lin Barrie, hung above the fire place. Senuko also organised a special wild dog weekend when the wild dogs were denning. As well as all this large wildlife there is also an abundance of species of birds, estimates of which range from 200<sup>110</sup> to more than 400<sup>111</sup> registered species of birds. The most common species

102 pp. 24, Tayler, D. (1993), Save Valley happenings, *The Hartebeest*. The Magazine of the Lowveld Natural History Branch of the Wildlife Society of Zimbabwe, 25th Edition.

103 Based on information from brochure from Senuko Safari Lodge.

104 Goodwin et al 1997: 248.

105 Information taken from pp. 15, Putterill, G. (1993), Elephant translocation - Gonarezhou, *The Hartebeest*. The Magazine of the Lowveld Natural History Branch of the Wildlife Society of Zimbabwe, 25th Edition. For a visual impression of the translocation see the video, *Dusts of destiny*. Wildlife capture and translocation, section: Elephant management, building a game reserve, (1995), Harare: ATA. Since 1991 some 1600 animals have been brought into the SVC at a cost of approx. Z\$ 7.000.000 (Goodwin et al 1997: 254)

106 pp. 17, Havnar, P. (1993), Elephants on the move - 1993 translocation from Gonarezhou, *The Hartebeest*. The Magazine of the Lowveld Natural History Branch of the Wildlife Society of Zimbabwe, 25th Edition.

107 Brochure Savé Valley Safaris & Roger Whittall Safaris.

108 Goodwin et al 1997: 253; brochure Senuko Safari Lodge.

109 Presentations on wild dogs during Annual General Meeting, 15 May 1998.

110 Brochure Savuli Safari.

111 Information sheet Senuko Safari Lodge.

to be seen are the southern yellowbilled hornbill and lilac-breasted roller and among the rare(r) birds seen in the SVC belong the Madagascar squacco heron and the bateleur eagle.<sup>112</sup>

The SVC main office is an old guardhouse of the Mkwasi Estate Police Force, which they moved into in September 1997.<sup>113</sup> Mkwasi Estate is a sugarcane plantation bordering the SVC to the south and the SVC office is located in the middle of large paddocks with sugarcane in different stages of maturity and processing. It is a stone and plaster building. The office is rectangular, fairly spacious and is divided in two by a huge counter standing left of the centre, leaving only just enough space on its left side to reach the other side of the counter. On the right side the counter is directly attached to the wall. Above the counter hangs a board where all kind of little leaflets are attached with pins, mainly to do with hunting and tourism. The walls are painted in two shades of grey. The floor is made of cement with transparent wax on top. On the right side of the counter, in the corner facing the door, is the desk of the secretary, with a computer, a printer and against the wall three shelves, which are filled for some 40% with binders containing correspondence, financial reports, reports on rhino and fences *et cetera*. Behind the desk is also a filing cabinet with three drawers. The top one is decorated with a sticker of WWF/Beit Trust. The office has four windows, which are often covered by, most of the time, closed curtains to keep the sun out. In front of the secretary's desk is a chair made of reed and the pigeon-holes for the mail. The space between the chair and the pigeon-holes is often taken up by boxes which contain SVC merchandise like shirts, caps and shorts. The huge counter is the communication centre of the office, with the radio, fax and two telephones on it. The counter is not high enough to stand straight and do your business, and not low enough to sit at it, which results in people always hanging over it. Right against the counter are two chairs made of reeds with a small table in between. On the table is a pile of brochures and magazines, consisting of some *National Geographics*, *The Farmer*, a brochure on the rules and regulations of hunting in Zimbabwe and some tourism magazines. Under the counter, which can only be seen and reached from the other side, are miscellaneous bits and pieces: the hard disk and printer of the Conservator's computer are installed there, but there is also a pair of binoculars, two rhino jaws and a pile of old printed paper which is used to write on. The Conservator's wooden desk is placed behind the counter in an angle of 90°, loaded with a computer and paperwork. Opposite his desk is a clothes-horse with shirt and coats with the SVC logo attached to it, in different sizes and colours. On his right hand side there are two store-rooms, former police cells with solid steel doors and a wall with a huge blackboard, or more correctly, a greenboard, attached to it with a copy machine underneath it. The greenboard is used mainly as a visual memorandum of things which

112 In Chapter 2 I described some autobiographical aspects. One of them was that I grew up with a strong and romantic image of African wildlife. One can imagine what a pleasure it was to do research in an area like the SVC replete with the wildlife, beautiful trees and vegetation. Especially when I drove through the SVC around sunset there was an immense satisfaction of my romantic vision of Africa with a red sun was rapidly disappearing behind the horizon, setting the landscape ablaze in the process, while impala and kudu and other grazers were literally jumping over the road just in front of my car. What influence will these very personal and basic emotions have on the material I am presenting in this thesis? And how should that be judged?

113 Interview with Conservator, 23 April 1998. The rest of the description of the office is based on personal observation.

have to be done within the next few days, ranging from things to buy in the nearest town, Chiredzi, to calling someone, or ordering bottles for blood samples of animals. The store-room on the right is used mainly to keep all kinds of paperwork: bits of unstructured archive material, forms and paper for the copy machine. The store-room on the left is used for heavier bits and pieces, like a bike, some tyres, a wheelbarrow, oil, petrol and even tusks of dead elephant found in the SVC.

It is against this physical landscape and the office in a former police station that the constitution of the SVC describes its three objects:

- 'To develop and maintain opportunities for the conservation and sustainable utilization of natural resources in the Conservancy area and its environs, through coordinated and mutually supportive action between landowners (...);
- To assist where possible in the attainment of national objectives for wildlife conservation, notably the protection and breeding of endangered species, in the hope that these species shall become components of a sustainable land-use system; however the conservation of endangered species within the Conservancy would not be necessarily dependent upon economic incentives (...);
- To promote *bona fide* research into ecological and economic aspects of natural resource management (both to guide the development of the Conservancy and to yield information of relevance to land-use in similar areas) and to develop monitoring systems appropriate to the needs of Conservancy management'.<sup>114</sup>

The organisational structure of the SVC is simple and rather flat (see figure 10).<sup>115</sup> The Chairman of the SVC is chosen every year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), which takes place in May. Clive Stockil is currently Chairman of the SVC, a position he has held since May 1992. The first Chairman of the SVC was Derek Henning, as I already mentioned earlier. The Chairman is mainly responsible for chairing the Conservancy Committee Meetings (CCM) and maintaining external relations with relevant institutions like the DNPWLM and the Veterinary Services in Harare. He is also responsible, if you can describe it that way, for keeping the coalition of landowners who form the SVC together, which is a pretty diplomatic task for there are many sensitive issues at stake about land (use) and decisions with long-term consequences for individual owners. The Conservancy Committee represents the twenty-four members, property owners, who are together forming the SVC. The current Conservancy Committee consists of twelve members.<sup>116</sup> They are chosen on a yearly base, also at the AGM. They have a meeting once a month. These meetings are held on a rotational base on the different properties in the SVC. Official minutes are taken at the CCM by the SVC Secretary, officially proposed for approval and secondment at the next CCM and thereafter signed by the Chairman, and kept in a minute book at the Conservancy Office. The Conservator is an important function as he represents the oil lubricating the works of the SVC. He

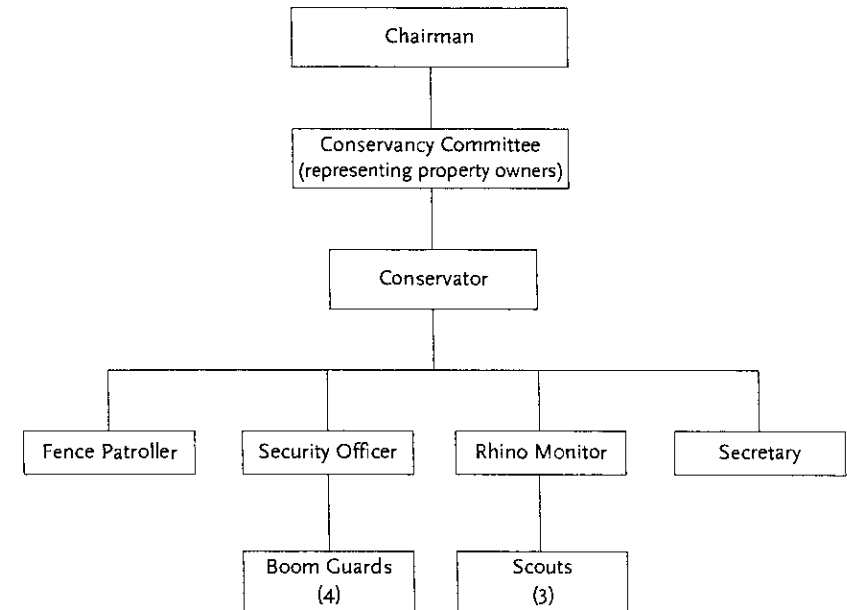


Figure 10 Organogram SCV

is the Executive Official of the SVC.<sup>117</sup> He is actually the man 'on the spot' and has to arrange a thousand things all at once to keep all the different activities of the SVC on the road. He could be described as the liaison officer between the members of the SVC. His tasks are mainly concerned with the internal operations of the SVC itself. In contrast to the Chairman's responsibilities, he has no major external representational functions. There is no official job description for the Conservator but the present office-holder made one himself. His main tasks involve the inspection and maintenance of the perimeter fence, compiling fence reports through his fence patroller and liaising about the fence (maintenance) with the different property owners or their managers. His main aim is actually to keep the Veterinary Department in Harare satisfied. It sends someone to check on the status of the fence every year. If ever it finds anything wrong with the fence, like low voltage or breakages, the SVC can be in deep trouble, because the Veterinary Department can come into the SVC, for instance, and shoot all the buffalo to prevent FMD from contaminating neighbouring cattle by escaping through a broken or malfunctioning fence. Before the inauguration of the SVC, it had already taken such measures on Humani, as I described earlier on. As the SVC is a huge area, the length

114 Constitution SVC, section 3, version 28 January 1997.

115 Drawn for me by the Conservator, 4 June 1998.

116 1998-1999.

117 So far, the SVC has had one Conservator and one Field Co-ordinator since its launch in 1991. The current Conservator started in July 1994. interview with Conservator, 4 June 1998.

of the fence is accordingly, 313.5 km in total<sup>118</sup>, cutting straight through rough bushland and crossing rivers. It is a formidable challenge to keep it up to standard. The Conservator is also responsible for organising the CCMs, which implies sending out notices, compiling reports, taking the minutes and fitting together information which seems relevant to the Committee. He is in charge of the Security Officer and the Boom Guards. Another of his major tasks is related to the wildlife within the SVC. First and foremost working in tandem with his Security Officer he has to run the anti-poaching side of things, while also trying to earn money through wildlife by hunting. And wildlife cannot be just hunted. In order to hunt the different properties first need to be granted a hunting quota. In order to get this hunting quota, the wildlife has first to be counted. That is a tremendous task if one looks at the size of the SVC or even at the size of the different individual properties. The Conservator does not have to do the game count himself but he assists the property owners in the task, collecting the data from the different owners and compiling these into a document for the yearly Quota Meeting. He has to collect information on hunting, like trophy sizes, numbers and so on, from the different properties to be sent to the DNPWLM for inspection and control. He is the primary liaison person for the WWF Rhino Programme, which also requires regular reporting. The scouts must report all sightings of individual rhinos in the SVC. These sightings must then all be recorded to the SVC Office which then has to enter them into spreadsheets, complete with time, place, condition, and which particular rhino it was. Every six months a report on the rhino monitoring has to be sent in to the DNPWLM. If ever there is a problem with a rhino, for instance causing difficulties with the fence or anything else, he must act to solve it. In between these major responsibilities, many smaller and *ad hoc* matters crop up. The Fence Patrol Officer, the Security Officer and Rhino Monitor are primarily responsible for gathering information in their specific fields and handle the common incidents themselves. In other cases they have to turn to the Conservator. The Secretary is there basically to assist the Conservator. Finally there are the Boom Guards and Scouts. The Boom Guards man and work the two booms of the SVC, Bravo I and Bravo II, in the south and north of the conservancy.<sup>119</sup> The boom must be operated twenty-four hours a day, which is done in shifts. The scouts are the eyes and ears of the Conservator in the field, especially for issues related to poaching and conservation.

One final aspect, which has to be described before I can start on the main themes dominating the attention of the SVC, is the financial obligations the members have towards the conservancy. There are basically two levies the members have to pay the SVC on a yearly base:

- Annual levy: to pay for the running costs of the SVC, amongst other things to keep the SVC Office going. The SVC tries to keep this levy to an absolute minimum by doing its best to generate profit-making enterprises within the SVC, like the selling of venison and firewood (although so far, October 1998, neither has worked out);

<sup>118</sup> Information sheet at SVC Office, July 1998.

<sup>119</sup> The SVC has twenty-five, mostly locked, gates, excluding the pedestrian entrances. The two Bravos are guarded and opened day and night. Mukwazi and Mapari have a guard on permanent duty during the day. The other entrances are opened on occasions, interview with Conservator, 30 April 1998.

- Fence maintenance levy: to keep the perimeter fence up to required standard. I shall come back to this specific levy in discussing the main themes of the SVC.

On top of these two annual levies, the AGM can decide to add extra levies, although it is quite reluctant to do that too easily because as long as the SVC is not really making (much) profit, landowners are reluctant to continue and spend money on the SVC in the form of levies. Nevertheless, for the year 1998-1999 they added another three levies to the two mentioned above:

- Game levy: this is a levy paid into a restocking fund, which was established prior to the application for a loan at the International Finance Corporation (IFC) of the Worldbank in 1998. It was decided at the Special General Meeting in October 1996 that the members would contribute to this fund on an equal footing. The contribution was set at Z\$ 10,- per acre<sup>120</sup>;
- Fence upgrading levy: made necessary because of requirements from the Veterinary Department, following a FMD outbreak in the southwest corner of the SVC in 1997. The Department required that the SVC add veldspan<sup>121</sup> to the already existing fence over a length of seventy km bordering Matsai Communal Land (see for a detailed account of this case further down);
- Repayment levy: the SVC applied for a (soft) loan from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) of the Worldbank for US\$ 1,000,000. They did receive the loan, which they will have to repay. The individual owners pay to the SVC a levy and it will start repaying the loan, because it is the legal entity which applied for it. It would not have been possible for the IFC to give a loan to all individual landowners.

These disparate types of levies underline what seem to be important issues within the SVC, the restocking of the SVC and the maintenance of the fence. The restocking of the SVC is important because the opportunities of wildlife tourism cannot be fully exploited if the area is not sufficiently stocked with wildlife. 'But some pigs are more equal than others' to cite George Orwell's Animal Farm, and the SVC is particularly keen on reintroducing buffalo for hunting purposes, because it is the most wanted trophy among the African Big Five, i.e. rhino, elephant, leopard, buffalo and lion, and thus the most financially lucrative option in wildlife tourism. Just to emphasise that the importance of the fence cannot be overestimated let me repeat just once again that to be allowed to keep buffalo, the area has to be securely fenced to prevent the animals from spreading the dreaded FMD. If the Veterinary Service is not satisfied with the fence, which it checks once a year, it is in a position to shoot all the buffalo. For that reason the SVC considers the related issues of fence and restocking (buffalo) to be of prime importance if it is actually to make wildlife a viable land-use option. This again has a direct bearing on possibilities for organisational co-operation with neighbouring communi-

<sup>120</sup> Chairman's report to the AGM, 15 May 1998.

<sup>121</sup> I shall also come back on this issue in more detail, when discussing the main themes within the SVC. Veldspan is fence-material built up in squares which narrow down from top to bottom. It is meant to prevent also smaller animals from crossing the fence.

ties. On the horns of a dilemma the SVC needs to earn money in order to be able to invest in the organisational co-operation, for which means that the buffalo and the fence are important not only to the SVC, but indirectly also to the neighbouring communities. But the fence is literally and symbolically a major obstacle to the communities in their relationship with the SVC, because it demarcates the appropriation of the land and prevents their utilisation of it. In the next section I shall discuss these two issues of the SVC in more detail.

### Main themes within the SVC related to organisational co-operation with neighbouring communities

The main themes of the SVC are primarily derived from a systematic analysis of the minutes of the CCM taken, since it was launched in 1991. During my fieldwork in Zimbabwe in 1998 I was allowed to attend the CCMs for observation. For a general introduction I want to give a short description of the ritual of an at random CCM I attended in 1998. It is a typical example of the way the SVC handles its CCM. The way they organise such meetings has probably not changed since the inception of the SVC as can be concluded from the same words, which are reiterated after every CCM, only the location and thus the people responsible vary: 'The Chairman said he would like to thank Mr. And Mrs. Whittall for their excellent lunch and for the use of their facilities (...)'.<sup>122</sup> Whatever property was chosen to host the CCM, the trip to the property always began by travelling a longer or shorter distance along Humani Road, which stretches right from south to north through the SVC.<sup>123</sup> Somewhere down the road you then have to turn left or right, depending to which property you have to go, in The North or in The South, in order to reach the homestead or safari camp, where the CCM usually takes place. The CCM always commences at nine o'clock, which means that if the meeting is in The North, people have to set out some one and a half to two hours in advance. At that time usually all sorts of wildlife crosses the road, like impala, kudu, wildebeest, zebra and so on, in a beautiful early sunlight. The CCM is opened at nine o'clock and continues straight away and without interruption for drinks or anything else till the agenda has been gone through, which is usually between twelve and one o'clock. Then lunch is served. Most CCM members stay for lunch, some leave if they have other business to attend to. During the dry season the meetings usually take place in a shaded area in the garden if it is a homestead or under a shelter in a safari camp. This means that there is always a chorus of 'noise' from wildlife and / or domesticated animals. When the CCM was held at Savali Safari Camp, some twenty fruitbats were hanging upside down in a tree just outside the shelter where the meeting took place. On the small but steep hills on the other side of a small pond facing the camp, there was a group of baboons, probably settling some sort of hierarchical dispute, a process which was accom-

panied by a crescendo of barking and quick charges creating clouds of dust. Let me give a description of a typical CCM against this background. 'Again a meeting in the north of the SVC, at the same turnoff as the CCM in May. The reception is always nice with tea and coffee and in this case also nice home-made muffins. I was (jokingly) welcomed by the Financial Secretary of the SVC with the words: 'are you coming again to spy on us'? The setting is the same as the May CCM, with the Chairman and minute-taker sitting behind a table with a table cloth and the members sitting before them like an audience [watching a film]. [Everything outside in the garden]. The atmosphere during the meeting is informal and jovial but they also speak out their minds very straightforwardly and during discussion they do not address each other directly but through the Chairman, officially calling him Mr. Chairman [as if he is a satellite sending the sound waves through to the other members]. This is in sharp contrast to the strict informal use of first names right from the moment of being introduced to each other. In conversations between whites they use some typically white Zimbabwean terminology, like the frequent use of 'eeh man' or 'I tell you', or 'I hear what you say, but...'. One of the other 'trademarks' of their conversations is the use of nodding with their head in combination with a slight closing of the eyes, to indicate a place or location elsewhere and far away. In general there is what I would call a masculine atmosphere, with members telling each other male coterie stories about encounters or incidents, which happened to them 'one day'. Many members of the CCM smoke heavily, almost all only cigarettes, mostly Madison. The most common beer brands they drink (in the bar and sometimes during the lunch following the CCM) are Castle, Hunters, Bohlinger or Pilsener. Zambesi ('Zimbabwe's own Lager' as it is advertised) is not often drunk. [The Chairman allows the discussion free to run without much interference or direct manipulations on his part, but gives a clear and good summary at the end linked to a sense of direction for the decision needed]'. It is at these meetings that the main themes within the SVC are discussed and take shape.<sup>124</sup>

### The Fence

The SVC and the DNPWLM are well acquainted with each other.<sup>125</sup> The Chairman of the SVC used to be an active and well-respected Honorary Officer of the Department and the SVC, and Humani in earlier years, who had pioneered successfully in the field of translocation of rhino and elephant. The top management of the DNPWLM, Nduku and Martin, were sympathetic to the idea of rhino conservancies turning into full-time wildlife utilisation. There was a positive exchange between SVC and the DNPWLM. There were also positive relations between the Veterinary Department and the SVC. And the top rungs of these three organisations communicated on a regular basis in the early days of the SVC. One of the meetings in 1991-1992 was of particular importance to the later development of the SVC. Both the directors of the Veterinary Department and of

122 Minutes CCM, 12 November 1991.

123 Humani Road is actually a public road. So, although it runs through private properties, the SVC is not allowed to close it to any ordinary traffic wanting to drive over it. That is also why it must be kept open for twenty-four hours a day.

124 Description from fieldnotes 10 June 1998. Between brackets is from fieldnotes from another CCM, 6 May 1998.

125 Information in this section is taken from interview with the Chairman of the SVC, 8 July 1998.



the DNPWLM were present and spoke on behalf of their departments.<sup>126</sup> It was an official meeting in Harare and minutes were taken. At that meeting the director of the DNPWLM, Nduku, promised the SVC a 1000 buffalo per year to be available for sale over a period of three years, totalling 3000 buffalo. Conditional for the sale of the buffalo was the erection of a 'buffalo fence' around the SVC. The director of the Veterinary Department, Hargreaves, promised its co-operation in formulating the criteria for the erection of the fence. Although minutes of the meeting were never received at the SVC, they went ahead and began to erect a fence.<sup>127</sup>

The fence had to be a double fence.<sup>128</sup> An outer fence, which is called a perimeter game fence, and an inner, so-called buffalo fence. The outer fence was funded by the Beit Trust, through the WWF (Z\$ 1.2 million), and the inner fence by the landowners themselves (Z\$ 3 million). A general problem within the SVC is that not all properties are equal in size, especially not in relation to the length of the fence running over their property. Some have large properties but these do not border the outside and so they do not need much fencing. Some properties are small(er), but because of their position within the SVC, adjoining the Communal Lands, need much fencing. To spread the costs of the fence equally the SVC took the then total acreage of the SVC (845,000 acres) and divided it by the complete length of the fence (345 km).<sup>129</sup> This led to a figure of 0.4 km of fence per acre. Every 10,000 acres had to fund four km of fencing. All landowners could now pay pro rata, i.e. per unit, for the erection of the fences. Both fences have to be constructed according to strict specifications from the Veterinary Department.<sup>130</sup> The game fence must have a minimum height of 1.9 metres and should contain ten strands of wire. The standards (at least fifteen cm  $\emptyset$  must be twelve metres apart, with droppers (nineteen-twenty-five mm  $\emptyset$  every metre. There must be two positive and two earth electrified strands situated no less than twenty-five cm above the ground (lower) and one metre (upper) The minimum voltage should be five KV, i.e. 5000 volts. The fence must be patrolled on a daily base, and breaks should be repaired immediately. Every twenty km of fence should have one patrol officer. The buffalo fence must have a minimum height of 1.2 meters and should contain six strands of wire (high-tensile steel (2.25 mm of 2.36 mm gauge or barbed wire). The standards must be seven metres apart and sunk 'at least' one metre into the ground, and a dropper (eighteen cm  $\emptyset$  every half metre. Straining posts to support the fence may not be further apart than 400 metres. The fence must have one electric wire, 800 mm above the ground. The voltage and patrolling are the same requirements as pertaining to the game fence. The buffalo fence should at least be 7,5 meters away from the game fence. The area in between must be

126 The Veterinary Department does not fall under the DNPWLM, but is a department of its own, under the Ministry of Agriculture.

127 Conversation with Chairman of the SVC, 1 October 1998.

128 This section is based on interview with Conservator, 23 April 1998.

129 This length has now been changed because, after the erection of the fence, Hammond joined the SVC when it was bought by Schenk, an American and old hunting client of Roger Whittall. The fence is now 313.5 km. The entrance to the conservancy has also now been removed from Senuko to Hammond, just past the bridge over the Mkwazine River. They were in the process of constructing the new boom, with appropriate accommodation for the boom guards, in October 1998.

130 Attachment to minutes Fence Meeting, 25 February 1996: Standards of fencing as prescribed by Department of Veterinary Services.

kept clear at all times, up to a distance of one metre on the outsides. The SVC employs one fence patrol officer. He circumnavigates the complete fence twice a month on a bicycle and reports to the Conservator on the general condition of the fence, and he pays specific attention to the voltage. The Conservator puts this information in a monthly fence report.<sup>131</sup> The day-to-day maintenance, repairs and control is the responsibility of the individual properties, which employ fence guards for this purpose. The fence report started in the beginning of 1996 with two patrol officers who reported separately every month, but this actually gave too much information to put on a spreadsheet twice a month. The Conservator himself tries to inspect the complete fence twice a year, but in practice only manages to do so once a year. He does the tour on a motorbike in between the fences, checking voltage and general condition at random. It takes a few days to complete the tour and he camps overnight in a tent. The fence patrol officers have two sheets: one the general 'fence inspection record sheet' in which they fill in the most basic of information about date, position, time and comments about the two fences, especially about their voltage, four wires all together, and the grass under and in between the fences. There is also a more extensive sheet which is called the 'fence breaks and animals seen questionnaire'. It is specifically designed to find out if there are any buffaloes or other wildlife, roaming in the vicinity of the fence and if these caused any damage to the fence, or even worse, if they left the SVC. Should buffaloes escape, this must be reported to the local and provincial Veterinary Officer, within twenty-four hours. It also asks questions about how much livestock from the communal and resettlement areas is seen in the SVC. This is because FMD not only breaks out when wildlife, i.e. buffalo, gets out of the SVC, but also when cattle wander into the SVC and having grazed go out again, always with the danger that they take FMD with them. To make that perfectly clear, the questionnaire ends by saying: *The fence guard must be told that:*

1. If the fence is broken so that a buffalo can get out of the Conservancy, this must be closed immediately and reported to the manager/landowner as soon as possible.
2. If buffalo ever get out of the Conservancy this must be reported immediately to the manager/landowner and the Conservancy.
3. If cattle ever come into the Conservancy, this must be reported immediately to the manager/landowner and the Conservancy. The cattle must be driven straight away to the headquarters and put in a secure enclosure.
4. Whenever there is any kind of break in the fence, it must be repaired immediately, if it is not possible to close it because some tools or materials are need then it must be closed with thorn bush and repaired as soon as possible'.<sup>132</sup>

131 I was never allowed to see any monthly fence report, because they are 'fairly sensitive' the reason being 'some landowners perform better than others'. A few fence reports though slipped through 'the security system' as they were part of material I was given at a Conservancy Committee Meeting. Going through them you can see that voltage and grass under and in between the fences are the major problems. The fence report lists all the properties and reports on the status of their fences and maintenance.

132 'Fence breaks and animals seen questionnaire', SVC. Emphasis in original.

That this fear for FMD is not exaggerated, and that it also has a tremendous influence on the organisational co-operation between SVC and neighbouring communities although not even explicitly mentioned, was proven in 1997, when there was an outbreak of FMD in the southwest corner of the SVC, in the Matsai Communal Area. The outbreak occurred on Mukwazi Ranch in August 1997 and was used by the neighbouring communities as a vehicle to present all the grievances built up over the years, going back to the alienation of their land as 'commercial land'. It is also a case which clearly shows all the major ingredients presented as crucial to understanding the relations between SVC and neighbouring communities in this thesis, namely hunting, land and fences in a context of reciprocal exchange. As this chapter focuses on the internal affairs and main themes of the SVC, this case will not be presented here but in Chapter 6 in which I describe and analyse the relation between SVC and neighbouring communities in terms of reciprocal exchange.

To control the spread of FMD the Veterinary Department has divided Zimbabwean territory into five zones:

- Clear Zones / EC Offtake Area: cattle from this zone is meant for export to the countries of the EC. They go to specific abattoirs for slaughter and then proceed to Europe;
- Clear Zone / No-Offtake Area: all other clear areas;
- Green or Buffer Zone: the zone between Red and Clear zones. Here cattle is permitted to move within the zone or to the red zone, or to abattoirs of the Cold Storage Commission (CSC)<sup>133</sup> for slaughter. Cattle here are not vaccinated against FMD. The zone is bounded by cattlefences which are patrolled and maintained by the Department of Veterinary Services. No buffalo are allowed in this zone;
- Red Zone or Vaccinated Zone: this zone is in between a Buffer Zone and a wildlife area. Cattle are allowed to move within the zone or to the abattoirs of the CSC. Again no buffalo allowed in the zone;
- Wildlife Zone: the areas falling under the DNPWLM, i.e. National Parks and Safari Areas, and Forest Land. Some commercial farms in Masvingo Province and Matabeleland North are also included as is some communal land in the latter;
- If there is a FMD outbreak Veterinary Services can impose three other categories on land: Buffalo Presence Areas, FMD-infected and Quarantined Areas, and FMD Areas.

Over and above this control and division of areas, the DVS also controls the movement of animals. Here they make a distinction between:

- Controlled species which may not be moved without a DVS permit: buffalo, wildebeest, warthog and bushpig;
- Cloven-hoofed animals, including all Artiodactyls not mentioned above;

- Other species, which include elephant, zebra, rhino, hippo, ostriches and other birds, crocodiles and other reptiles.<sup>134</sup>

The DVS has to be very strict about these rules and regulations as export to the EC is at stake and Zimbabwe is a beef exporter. Many cattle farmers who export to the EC are located in Masvingo Province. These farmers were not happy to see a wildlife area of such huge size created next to their cattle operations, and have followed the fencing of the SVC with great care. They even went with the DVS official who came to inspect and control the fence after completion.<sup>135</sup>

The SVC itself is categorised as a Red Zone because of the buffalo and is surrounded by several other categories of DVS. On the eastern boundary it borders a Red Zone. In the south the SVC is within a Buffer Zone, because of the proximity of Gonarezhou National Park. To the north and west it borders clear zones, which in turn are the bordering areas of the FMD Free Zones, where cattle are reared for export. Export zones for cattle in Zimbabwe are concentrated in the centre (with an extension to the southern Masvingo Province), north and north east of the country.<sup>136</sup> The outbreak in 1997 occurred on the southwestern boundary of the SVC, on a property previously falling under Angus, part of Devuli Ranch, bordering a Clear Zone.

#### *The SVC fence and the urge to hunt*

In the previous section the fence featured prominently in its function of preventing the spread of FMD between red and clear zones, in this case corresponding with commercial and communal land. Although the fence was primarily erected for veterinary reasons, the construction has hardly ever been considered in that specific context by the SVC members. The fence was perceived in relation to its ultimate function, first of keeping the rhino in the conservancy by a single perimeter fence, but very soon after that, of making it possible to (re)introduce buffalo which 'unfortunately' required a double fence to prevent the spread of FMD in the SVC for hunting purposes. It was their wish to reintroduce buffalo and therefore they had no option but to erect the fence. At that level the SVC had mainly to negotiate with the DVS for the fence and the DNPWLM for the buffalo. So let us return again to the beginning of the SVC in 1991, the year it were formally inaugurated as a rhino conservancy. To be a rhino conservancy it (only) needed a single perimeter fence, with no heavy interference from or control by the DVS. It is interesting to note that none of the members of the SVC at that stage really had clear ideas about how to erect a fence, what materials to use and how to organise the operation. So in the first CCM there was discussion about the materials that should be used for standards and droppers. One point up for discussion, for instance, was that landowners and managers wondered if steel standards would be better for the fence than wooden ones, because the white ants would surely find them (and destroy them) and

<sup>133</sup> Under the Rhodesian government this commission was called the 'Imperial Cold Storage Co', pp. 118, Sinclair, S. (1971), *The story of Melssetter*, Salisbury: M.O. Collins (pvt.) Ltd.

<sup>134</sup> Attwell 1998: 30, 32-33.

<sup>135</sup> Minutes CCM, 7 March 1995.

<sup>136</sup> Information from Veterinary Services Office, Chiredzi, 21 May 1998.

they needed constant, strict maintenance. But the Rhino Executant said that field trials in Botswana had learned that steel standards are ineffectual as they 'did not penetrate deep enough into the moist sub-soil to significantly increase the earthing current'.<sup>137</sup> And what droppers should you use? Wooden ones need to be replaced fairly often. And what type of wire? Barbed or plain? And if every landowner/manager were to be responsible for building his own fence, would it be according to uniform standards or could everyone decide for himself? When they agreed on the material, the next question was where to order it.<sup>138</sup> Prices of steel, for instance, rose steep in November 1991, with an estimated increase of 80% to 90%. Who had old prices and what were the delivery conditions? Would it be held in general stock in the SVC or on the different properties? In 1992 the first Conservator of the SVC resigned because he was fed up with the slow progress, first that of the fence but that of the SVC in general. Thwarted by the slow progress he could not see any future in the project and he 'was frustrated over the enormity of the poaching problem' especially in a context in which communication was a major problem.<sup>139</sup> He was succeeded by a field co-ordinator and work on the fence continued.

It was at this time that the first inklings of making it not just a rhino conservancy but to go beyond this and make wildlife pay for itself began to be mooted. The Chairman told the Committee that 'he had paid a visit to the Sabi Sands Conservancy which borders onto the Kruger National Park in South Africa (...) He said the Sabi Sands area was very similar in its makeup to that of the Save Conservancy. The Sabi Sands Conservancy was founded by a group of private ranchers, who gave up their cattle because of the poor rainfall and veld conditions in the area, and turned to game. He said they were making a vast profit (...) (The Chairman) proposed that the Conservancy be turned into a total wildlife block with all the internal fences removed and to have the big game species brought back into the area'. To make the carrot even more attractive he said that he had heard that 300-500 buffalo would be culled in Gonarezhou and that he preferred them to be brought into the SVC. For that reason he had paid a visit to the DVS, in the company of Roger Whittall, and the DVS had 'stipulated that the cattle had to be removed from the area, and a strong fence along its boundaries'.<sup>140</sup> If all the landowners could be convinced about this specific future for the SVC, the fencing would become a far stricter project. The final decision about the future of the SVC could be taken at the AGM in May, which was scheduled to be held, where else would be better for symbolic reasons, on Humani. At the next CCM the Chairman could tell the Committee that members both in the north and south of the SVC were supportive of the idea. The next item on the agenda was to order a feasibility study on the project, which was decided upon.<sup>141</sup> But first it had to be officially decided at the AGM. 7 May 1992, 'all members agreed that if the feasibility study proved that wildlife was more viable than cattle, they were prepared to go into a game-only operation'. The head of DNPWLM was also present at the AGM

and said that 'he would give the Conservancy the necessary input of game'.<sup>142</sup> In anticipation (and expectation) of a positive outcome of the feasibility study, the process of fencing could continue, but now it had to focus on a buffalo fence, which implied a plethora of consultation with the DVS, which would be the final institution to approve of the fence. First there were 'smaller' questions to be answered. Would the buffalo be held in a confined area within the SVC or would they roam freely all over the SVC? Would a single buffalo-proof perimeter fence be sufficient? They decided that one well kept and electrified perimeter fence would be sufficient for the SVC.<sup>143</sup> The buffalo could be bought from the DNPWLM, i.e. Gonarezhou for Z\$ 100,-, excluding capture and transport.<sup>144</sup> But unfortunately in January 1993, it was reported that the DVS, in the person of its director, was 'not prepared to consider a standard [single] fence' as perimeter fence for the SVC. The DVS would visit the SVC and would give recommendations 'on a minimum standard of a fence' which became a double fence as described above. While this was underway the CCM considered reaching out to the communities to inform them about the SVC and possible community projects.<sup>145</sup> In the meantime the feasibility study was still not finished<sup>146</sup>, but nevertheless the SVC forged on. It was working on the buffalo fence and expected it to be ready by August 1993.<sup>147</sup> Unfortunately in July it had to be reported to the CCM that, especially in the south of the SVC, they were not going to make the deadline of August and they asked for an alternative plan. Matter of factly it was also reported that the DNPWLM was probably going to be made a parastatal and if it succeeded, they would have 'to manage their resources from an economic point of view'. The far-reaching consequences this would have for the relations between SVC and Parks, and the availability of buffalo, could not yet be envisioned.<sup>148</sup> The fence was not finished in August, five properties had still to do their bit, but the SVC still wanted the buffalo. Therefore they erected bomas to put them in for the time being. But the bomas had to be inspected by the DVS first before they could let the buffalo come in.<sup>149</sup> At that stage no one was under any illusion that the fence would not become a bone of contention between the landowners and the SVC. The SVC could not go ahead if all landowners did not shoulder their part of the work. In November it was stated that once the buffalo were approved a final date would be set for the completion of the fence. If landowners or their managers did not manage to keep the deadline, the SVC would do the job and would charge the landowner later.<sup>150</sup> By March 1994, the buffalo fence was still not finished in terms of electrification. In the north alone some thirty-six km of electrification had yet to be finished. The game fence was already in place. In the south the situation was not much better. Again the CCM threatened that it would do the fencing if the landowner would not take his responsibility, and bill him

137 Ibid.

138 Minutes CCM 12 November 1991.

139 Minutes CCM, 14 April 1992.

140 Ibid.

141 Minutes CCM 27 April 1992.

142 Minutes AGM, 7 May 1992.

143 Minutes CCM, 22 June 1992.

144 Minutes CCM, 1 July 1992.

145 Minutes CCM, 5 January 1993.

146 Minutes CCM, 22 February 1993.

147 Minutes CCM, 8 June 1993.

148 Minutes CCM, 1 July 1993.

149 Minutes CCM, 9 September 1993.

150 Minutes CCM, 17 November 1993.

afterwards. A firm deadline was decided upon: the fence, both game and buffalo, had to be ready by 31 May 1994.<sup>151</sup> However, in April a representative from the DVS did an initial informal check on the fence and came to the conclusion that he was 'not impressed with the fences in general and got the impression the Conservancy was not serious about getting buffalo'. The permission to be allocated buffalo was postponed (again).<sup>152</sup> In August the CCM reports that the bomas for the buffalo were ready for inspection by the DVS, despite the fact that the perimeter and buffalo fence were still not up to standard.<sup>153</sup> In the minutes of October it is reported that the buffalo had arrived but with regard to the fence, things had still not changed for the better and, rather desperately, the CCM stated that 'all members of the Conservancy who do not have their fences (both game and buffalo) complete by 31 October will be charged for all feed for the buffalo while they are kept in the bomas'.<sup>154</sup> But again, in November, the sad conclusion had to be drawn: new deadline of 30 November will not be met, as twelve (!) properties have still not had the fences erected up to standard nor had all the properties discarded their cattle<sup>155</sup> and they ended the year with the fence still incomplete.<sup>156</sup> In 1995 the struggle continued. Buffaloes were held in bomas but could not be released either because of an incomplete fence and because there were (even) still cattle around on different properties. The Cattle Producers Association (CPA) was following the activities of the SVC with respect to the fencing very closely and undoubtedly heard the rumours about the difficulties with regard to the fence. At the beginning of 1995, it was announced that the DVS would inspect the fence by the end of February and that, a few weeks before that date, the Conservator will do a pre-inspection, which would give the SVC 'time to iron out any problems'.<sup>157</sup> The biggest problem seems to have been to obtain the minimum of five KV on the electrics. Although the fence receives the most attention in relation to animals, the fact that the government was looking to the SVC to check if it kept its promises with regard to helping the communities was not overlooked.<sup>158</sup> By now tension was rising in the SVC, as the final inspection of the DVS was approaching apace. It hired two persons who would do weekly inspections on the state of the fence in the north and in the south of the SVC. In response to the critical questions posed by the government a Liaison Officer was attracted and employed for one month (!) to pay attention to the community relations.<sup>159</sup> He was not hired directly by the

SVC, but by the Trust which the SVC had created for this purpose. An extensive description of the development of the Trust will be given in the next chapter. Sufficient for now is to note that the creation of the function of Liaison Officer and the creation of the Trust were taking place at the same time that the fence is reaching its completion. This was partly in answer to the critical monitoring of the government, but was also a response to the fact that several communities had already protested about the location and erection of the buffalo fence. Luckily for the SVC the DVS was delayed and announced that it would only be able to come for inspection by mid-March.<sup>160</sup> This was also the time, the DNPWLM placed a temporary ban on the movement of buffalo, but the chairman of the SVC declared that the decision was in no way linked to conservancies, 'but purely [had to do with] inhouse fighting at the parks head office' and there was a 'feeling that the issue will resolve sooner rather than later'. The fence inspection finally took place on 30 May and landowners signed agreements about the maintenance of the fence and a statement that all their cattle were off their property. With this in hand the director of the DVS could sign and issue the release for the buffalo.<sup>161</sup> This took another two months to complete and only in August 1995 could the DVS say that they had 'received the fax containing signatures from all landowners saying that all cattle had been removed from the conservancy'. There was a fly in the ointment as by this time the DVS was already expressing its concerns that 'the agreement entered into by the landowners and the veterinary department would not be adhered to and fences will not be maintained as specified'. It took some quite convincing rhetoric on the part of the chairman to convince the DVS that the fence would be properly maintained. Still the DVS wanted quarterly reports and periodic blood testing to keep records of the developments with regard to FMD. With these assurances 'the chairman was very pleased to present the official release permit for the buffalo. ALL BUFFALO CAN BE RELEASED AS OF 2ND AUGUST 1995'.<sup>162</sup> He did not say that the fence was approved, but implied that by this specific formulation. The fence was seen purely in the light of a function to make the buffalo possible in the SVC. Priorities in this respect are very clear.

Building a fence is one thing, but maintaining it presented the SVC with its own particular problems. It seems that the maintenance remained a struggle, if we are to believe the words of the Conservator that the fence is 'the bane of my [his] life'.<sup>163</sup> No wonder that I was not allowed to see the fence reports. The main problems seem to be the grass growing under and between the fences, areas which should be kept clear according to the regulations, and the voltage. As early as 25 February 1995, a special Fence Meeting was held on Humani to try and sort out the difficulties with the fence and to explain once more the idea of a fence levy introduced at the AGM in 1995. The basic idea was

151 Minutes CCM, 15 March 1994.

152 Minutes CCM, 11 April 1994.

153 Minutes CCM, 25 August 1994.

154 Minutes CCM, 4 October 1994.

155 Minutes CCM, 9 November 1994.

156 Minutes CCM, 13 December 1994.

157 Minutes CCM, 12 January 1995.

158 Minutes CCM, 8 February 1995.

159 The Community Liaison Officer was financed with money from the Beit Trust (pp. 10, Du Toit, R. (1998), Case study of policies that support sustainable development in Africa: the Savé valley Conservancy, Zimbabwe, Paper presented at the Scandinavian seminar college workshop on: *An African perspective of policies which support sustainable development*, Harare, 28-30 September). Later, August 1995, he would be financed with the same money, but this time it went through the Trust, especially created by the SVC to relate to the communities (see further down). It is symbolically meaningful to note that the same Beit Trust which helped to separate the SVC from its communities through financing the fence, also financed 'the bridge', i.e. Liaison Officer, (also no coincidence, as it also financed Birchenough Bridge!) between the two. Another meaningful

observation is that as soon as the Trust was created in August of that same year, the Liaison Officer was attached to the trust and to the SVC. So in fact he is working for the communities, within the context of the SVC. I shall come back to this issue in the next chapter. The contrast between two fence patrol officers for 345 km of fences and one Liaison Officer for one month for 119,000 people in the five surrounding districts is a striking one to note in terms of priorities!

160 Minutes CCM, 7 March 1995.

161 Minutes CCM, 28 June 1995.

162 Minutes CCM, 2 August 1995. Emphasis in original.

163 Conversation with Conservator, 23 September 1998.

that every property was responsible for its own fence maintenance, but also paid an annual fence levy of Z\$ 0.90 per acre. This levy then created a fund with which the SVC could maintain the fence in case the property not be keeping its fence up to the required veterinary standards. If a landowner maintained his fence properly would be reimbursed at the end of the year per kilometre of fence for which he was responsible. The owners who did not do a proper job on the fence would receive a reimbursement minus the costs of the job done by the SVC. He also informed the members that a 'risk assessment team' would visit the SVC, the DVS was obviously still not sure about the fulsome promises of the SVC to 'access the cost benefits of buffalo in situations such as ours and the possibilities and risks of the spread of Foot and Mouth Disease'. The DVS had warned the SVC about the serious consequences of the team's findings in the sense that if there were problems with the fence, the outcome of the assessment could mean that there never would be any further problems, as, 'with no buffalo, there will be no need for the buffalo fence'. This special meeting ended with a full report on all the fences.<sup>164</sup> The risk assessment team came in at the beginning of 1997 and in June the results were received by the CCM, which were 'better than expected, [but] there was still some concern on the maintenance, monitoring and action thereof'. Rather prophetically there was the observation of the team that maybe impala jumping out of the SVC were a greater risk for spreading FMD than were buffalo.<sup>165</sup> At the same meeting the fence maintenance was discussed once more but 'this matter was not resolved'.<sup>166</sup>

The current fence maintenance costs are estimated on figures from 1996-1997. The figures are based on responses from ranches, asked to give financial details on their fence maintenance.<sup>167</sup> The response was not particularly high, and of the total length of approx. 345 km they only received figures representing 116,3 km. Out of these figures came a calculated cost per annum of Z\$ 2210 per kilometre of fence. The costs are structured as follows per km/ per annum in Z\$:

• Labour costs (these include tractor driver, herbicide team (incidental), fence guards (permanent) A fence guard earns approx. Z\$ 510, - per month) :	1327,-
• Tractor costs (to operate between the fences):	331,-
• Herbicides (to keep clear between fences):	92,-
• Material (for reparation of the fences):	385,-
• Other:	75,-
Total:	Z\$ 2210,-

Despite the special Fence Meeting and the report of the risk assessment team, maintenance of the fences remained and remains a problem. The DVS is constantly threaten-

ing the SVC that it will wield 'the big stick'<sup>168</sup>, i.e. come in and shoot the buffalo if the SVC is not maintaining its fences properly. One of the problems with the conservancy concept in this respect is that it is a voluntary association of landowners which leaves the individual properties a great deal of leeway. And the conservancy does not have much, if any real, sanction to force the individual members to live up to their promises. One 'escape' the SVC pursued was that it told the individual landowners and their managers that the DVS had sent it a letter stating that the DVS would hold the SVC, instead of the different properties, responsible for the maintenance of the fence, which would mean too much administrative hassle. Now the SVC, legitimised by the letter of the DVS, could interfere directly in the fence maintenance programme or lack thereof of the individual properties. If such a letter ever really came is a matter of surmise.<sup>169</sup> The SVC and CCM can only try to persuade the different properties to comply. For the maintenance a single double row of fencing gives problems. The fence levy did not solve the problem because in the end many landowners did not pay it<sup>170</sup>, because there were those with a large acreage but with a relatively short fence, which meant that they still had to pay a fair amount and could be modestly reimbursed. And visa versa, there are those with small acreage but with a long fence who could expect a healthy sum as reimbursement. At one stage they thought of abandoning the idea of a levy altogether but the DVS was so much on their backs the vice-chairman told the CCM in May 1998, stating that it was 'sick and tired' of the casual attitude of the landowners to the fence<sup>171</sup>, especially after the outbreak of FMD in 1997. Under the circumstances its only option was to keep up the levy to show its commitment to the fence issue, which it did for the financial year of 1998-1999.<sup>172</sup> No matter what it did to try and organise it, the fence continued to be a problem right through 1998. In September I went with the Conservator to have a look at the upgrading of the fence on Mukwazi. On our way back, the Conservator made random checks on the voltage of the fences, which was simply not present. We also came across fairly loose hanging wires instead of tight, straight ones, plus brittle droppers and high grass. These observations were revealing, as this is certainly not the most difficult stretch of fence to maintain in the SVC.<sup>173</sup>

All this goes to show ineluctably that the fence is a major issue within the SVC. It is a big issue because there is a strict veterinary requirement about keeping buffalo within bounds. And buffalo it wants, to be able to hunt them. The SVC wants them to hunt because the Price Waterhouse feasibility study indicated (ex-post) that buffalo would make the wildlife operation economically viable. The buffalo forms part of a broader restocking plan of the SVC. So for that reason the fence assume a primary importance for the SVC for the simple reason that it wants to be able to have buffalo to hunt.

168 Minutes CCM, 12 February 1997.

169 Conversation with Conservator, 23 September 1998.

170 'As will be discussed under finances, \$150,000 out of \$ 273,000 of the fence maintenance levy has NOT been paid', minutes CCM, 9 April 1997.

171 CCM, 6 May 1998.

172 Interview with Conservator 30 April 1998.

173 Personal observations, 23 September 1998. I had already made similar observations on another occasion in another part of the SVC when I was travelling in the north of the SVC with the Liaison Officer and we, completely at random, visited a stretch of fencing near the Devure River. Here the fence was riddled with large holes, which had been stuffed fairly loosely with some thorny branches, 28 May 1998.

164 Minutes Fence Meeting, 25 February 1996.

165 Conservator's report, June 1997; compare with outbreak of FMD later in the year on Mukwazi in chapter 6.

166 Minutes CCM, 25 June 1997.

167 Interview with Conservator 30 April 1998. The maintenance costs for 1998 were based on only 82 km of reporting.

Although what has just been said could lead one to think that not everybody in the SVC seems serious, determined and fully committed to the project. The reasons for the attitudes of the different properties can only be guessed. It was noticed in the CCM at a certain stage that the landowners had 'different agendas' in relation to the creation of the SVC.<sup>174</sup> The light-hearted attitude with which some property owners seem to treat the fence issue, and the fact that the seriousness has to be stressed over and over again reinforces this general image. Then it can be observed that the power and authority of the SVC over the landowners is more theoretical, i.e. in the constitution, than practical. Although the SVC threatens the landowners it will charge them and so forth, this step has never been taken. Not because there was no inducement, but because it would probably put the coalition in jeopardy. The fence is a perfect illustration of the strengths and weaknesses of the integration of the SVC. Thirdly, the broader context, it can be noted that having committed itself to the financial investment in the fence, the SVC also reached a financial point of no return. Should a property leave the SVC now, it would cost the owner a wad of money to fence himself out in the first place and after that re-fence the property, not only outwardly towards the communal areas, but also in relation to neighbouring properties. Furthermore, he would still have to pay and round off his financial obligations to the SVC for earlier investments, like the restocking levy. So the fence is a strong indication about the internal functioning and operation of the SVC. But as I shall show in the next chapter in describing the reciprocal exchange between SVC and neighbouring communities in several different cases, for the communal farmers the fence means much more than a physical and visible barrier for buffalo only plus being a clinical preventive measure. For communal farmers the fence 'embodies the reality of the boundary and supposedly writes it permanently into the earth'<sup>175</sup>, i.e. the demarcation between commercial and communal land. The fence is seen 'as a type of demarcation or 'writing' that fixes white authority in the countryside'.<sup>176</sup> Broadly speaking the erection of fences is understood as being part 'of a wider net of white control'.<sup>177</sup> In the next chapter I shall show that consequently the organisational co-operation between the SVC and the neighbouring communities can best be described as a 'war of the fences'.<sup>178</sup> This war is waged within the wider context of a historical line of reciprocal exchange between black and white in the area, related to land and hunting. All that can be noted so far, is that the SVC created an organisational structure to deal with the local communities and employed a Liaison Officer. Nothing in the minutes refers to any other, more personal interaction between the SVC and neighbouring communities, or between individual farmers and their direct neighbours. So, what has been done to reach each other over the fence, Trust, Liaison Officer, meetings and the like, seems

174 When I asked the Chairman about this he could not give any clues as to what these different agendas could be, and said it was only 'political bull' as he had explained on several occasions, interview with Chairman SVC, 8 July 1998.

175 pp. 77. Hofmeyr, I. (1993), *We spend our years as a tale that is told*. Oral historical narrative in a South African chieftdom, Portsmouth (NH): Heinemann; Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press; London: James Currey, the chapter title is worth mentioning as well: 'The spoken word and the barbed wire. Oral chieftdoms versus literate bureaucracies'.

176 Ibid: 61.

177 Ibid: 71.

178 Ibid: 73.

more like an exchange of intentions than anything else. Or in the literary words of Farah, they seem more 'fond of developing a more intimate relationship with rituals than with people'.<sup>179</sup> In the next chapter I shall delve deeper into describing the formal structure of organisational co-operation within the context of this war of the fences, replete with its acts of domination and resistance. But let me first turn to the other main, but very related issue which has dominated the discussion with the SVC from the early day right up to this day: the buffalo.

### *The buffalo as symbol of economic prosperity*

'Big game hunters have continued to elaborate on the cunning, aggression and almost supernatural strength of the African buffalo for the last hundred years'.<sup>180</sup> Captured in a formula it reads like 'B + LS = F'.<sup>181</sup> This means Buffalo + Lousy Shot = Funeral. Stories of buffalo hunts do not seem to dry up, and in Zimbabwe there are plenty. 'As you have often said in your "Zimbabwe Hunter Edition" there have been many stories about buffalo hunting, and there will still be many more to come'.<sup>182</sup> The buffalo is considered by big game hunters to be the 'epitome of wild Africa'.<sup>183</sup> If, on top of that a feasibility study concludes that a wildlife utilisation programme is economically viable when commercial buffalo hunting is included, it is easy to understand why the SVC was, and is, so obsessed with obtaining buffalo.

In 1985 the number of buffalo in Zimbabwe was estimated at 66,500.<sup>184</sup> In 1995 it was estimated that there were (only) some 48,000 buffalo left in Zimbabwe. In the fifties their numbers had already markedly decreased, mainly as a result of tsetse fly control measures which eliminated buffalo from commercial farming areas, including the SVC area. In the sixties this was followed by elimination of buffalo because of FMD. In the eighties and early nineties their numbers decreased drastically as a result of severe droughts. In Gonarezhou National Park especially, many died during the drought of 1991-1992. Most buffalo are confined to the State protected Parks & Wild Life Land and the adjacent communal lands, especially where the communal lands form part of a CAMPFIRE District. In the nineties FMD-infected buffalo were allowed on private land, i.e. conservancies, after the approval of the DVS had been obtained as the former section on the fencing of the SVC has described (see Figure 11).<sup>185</sup>

179 pp. 12. Farah, N. (1992), *Gifts*, London: Serif Publishers (in association with Baobab Books, Harare)

180 pp. xvi. Prins, H.H.T. (1996), *Ecology and behaviour of the African Buffalo. Social inequality and decision making*, London, New York: Chapman & Hall.

181 Capstick in Prins 1996: xvi.

182 pp. 28. Sauzier, C. (September/October 1997), Another story of buffalo hunting, *Zimbabwe Hunter*, 3 (3).

183 Interview with professional hunter, Managing Director Hunters & Guides Africa, 12 March 1998.

184 The Cape Buffalo was nearly wiped out in east and southern Africa by the turn of the nineteenth century through a 'plague of Biblical proportions', rinderpest, which also affected domesticated cattle in a unprecedented way (Watkin, J. (1997), ... and buffalo?, *Swara. East African Wildlife Society*, July/August, 20: 4). The Maasai of East Africa, lost some 90% of their cattle and called the rinderpest *enkidaaroto*, 'the destruction' (Adams & McShane 1996: 36). The rinderpest spread south and arrived in Zimbabwe in 1896 and wiped out nearly all buffalo (Child 1995: 149).

185 pp. 144-147 & 150. Foggini, C.M. & Taylor, R.D. (1996), Management and utilization of the African buffalo in Zimbabwe, In: *Proceedings of a Symposium on the African buffalo as a game ranch animal*, Onderstepoort, 26 October.

**Figure 11** Number of African Buffalo on private land, present and projected<sup>186</sup>

Property	Area (ha)	Fence length (km)	Projected area (ha)	No. of buffalo present	No. of buffalo projected
Save	330.000	341	330.000	384	5000
Chiredzi	1200	10	81.600	158	1800
Towla	20.250	59	180.000	133	2000
Chipimbi	125	17	1250	42	90

As I indicated above the buffalo are a key species in safari hunting and therefore it is important to describe their position in Zimbabwe as an essential context to understanding the development of the relations between DNPWLM and the private sector wildlife utilisation industry, of which the SVC also forms part. Especially when marketed together with hunts for dangerous game like elephant, lion and leopard, it forms a highly attractive package for hunters. The buffalo forms the second most valuable species after the elephant. Elephants contribute some 22% to the national trophy fees earned annually, while the buffalo earns some 13%, followed by sable antelope with 11%. In 1993 the revenues from hunting trophies in Zimbabwe were US\$ 12,826,360,-. Between 1986 and 1993, the trophy prices of buffalo rose 62%, from US\$ 654 to US\$ 1084,-.<sup>187</sup> In CAMPFIRE areas, the average trophy price in 1997 was US\$ 1163,-. See for the development of average prices of trophies of the four key species I already mentioned in CAMPFIRE areas Figure 12.<sup>188</sup>

**Figure 12** Average trophy fees of the four key species in CAMPFIRE areas (US\$)

Species/ year	1994	1995	1996	1997
Buffalo	918	1052	1114	1163
Elephant	6781	6796	7712	7908
Leopard	1756	1980	2779	1720
Lion	3000	2228	2693	3200

In order to understand the role and impact of the buffalo in the context of the SVC and the consequences for the organisational co-operation between the SVC and its neighbours, it is necessary to describe three related aspects. The first of these is the quota-setting of buffalo for hunting purposes. Only with a sufficiently large herd of buffalo it is

possible to realise an economically viable offtake through hunting. The second aspect is the way the SVC tried to finance its restocking operation. This not only applies to buying buffalo, but also other species considered to make the area (more) attractive to potential (hunting) tourists. In all the routes it tried to fund their restocking programme, the organisational co-operation with the neighbouring communities was put forward as an important aspect of the application. Thirdly, and evenly fundamental to understanding why the organisational co-operation with the neighbouring communities is considered so crucially important to the sustainability of the SVC, is the relation between the SVC and the DNPWLM in relation to buying buffalo.

The market price for buffalo trophies depends on their quality, which is strongly related to their size. In order to make the hunting business sustainable, it is necessary to set quota for the offtake of animals, to guarantee that 'wildlife populations maintain themselves and continue to survive biologically into the future', so that they may also be hunted in future years and remain economically viable.<sup>189</sup> In order to decide on a quota, base-line data have to be collected. We need to know the growth rate of the population, which for buffalo is typically about 7%. Offtake quotas will always be equal or slightly less than the growth rate. It is also essential to know how large the population is in order to decide on the exact numbers. This can be estimated by various types of game counts. I shall return to this later. And finally it should be known what kind of offtake will take place, trophy hunting or cropping for meat or a mixture of both. Trophy hunters aim specifically at certain age classes of bulls, which is between eight and twelve years of age. In this age class they are mature, with large horns and a hard boss. In other words, trophy hunters are selective. If the buffalo are cropped, they are killed more randomly over different age strata. It is estimated that only 2% males of a buffalo population reaches maturity every year. This means that if the offtake is for hunting purposes only, the hunting quota, is set at 2%. Cropping is non-selective, which would mean that the offtake could be set at 7%. A mixture of both forms of offtake would give figures in between these two extremes. Although the percentages are quite stable indicators, much depends on the estimates of the actual population in the field. There are basically two methods to estimate the numbers of animals in an area:

- Aerial Sample Surveys;
- Ground Based Methods:
- Walked transects;
- Road Strip Counts.

Let me describe all of these briefly. The aerial survey is done in the dry season, because there is not much vegetation and the animals can be readily seen. It can only be used for the larger species like elephant and rhino, which can be seen from the air. It is a convenient way to cover large areas. Aerial surveys are carried out by trained staff from the DNPWLM, with assistance from the WWF. Ground-based methods can be divided into two. The walked transects 'are lines or strips of people of a limited size that are walked

<sup>186</sup> Ibid: 150.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid: 152.

<sup>188</sup> Unpublished data WWF Zimbabwe, 1998. Two districts bordering the SVC are CAMPFIRE Districts with Appropriate Authority, Chiredzi and Chipinge.

<sup>189</sup> pp. 9, WWF (November 1997), *Quota Setting Manual*, Harare: WWF. The rest of this section is also based on information from this manual, unless otherwise indicated.

by a person or group of people counting animals as they go'. They can follow either fixed or variable routes. Finally the road strip counts are 'made from the back of a vehicle by counting the animals seen on either side of the road'. This is probably the most difficult one in terms of calculation. 'The average distance from the road in which the animals are seen forms a strip in which all animals are assumed to have been seen. If the length of this strip is known, the area of the strip can be calculated. If we assume that the number of animals is the same inside and outside the strip for the same area, we can then make an estimate of the animals outside the strip'. The best way to estimate population size is to use a triangulation of different methods and compare its outcomes over a series of years. Then it is also possible to see the trends in the population.

The SVC introduced game counts in 1996 in order to decide the offtake. They use (or intend to use) different methods: the road strip count, 'sweep count' (= walked transects), and an aerial count, although the last has so far not been used. They also use two other methods which do not fall strictly into the categorisation described above, the 'Manager's Estimate' and 'Water Point Count'. The first one especially is an interesting in relation to the buffalo. For the sake of comparison I shall describe the game count figures for 1998 of a (very) common species in the SVC, the impala, and a scarce one, the buffalo. For 1998 all the properties gave a manager's estimate of the number of impala on their property, which totalled 77,289 head within the SVC. On top of that, most of the properties did a road strip count, which number totalled 62,566 animals. The difference between the two figures can be (to a certain extent) attributed to the six properties who did not do a road strip count at the time. Although there is a difference in figures, the manager's estimate and the road strip counts roughly coincide. The recommended trophy offtake for impalas is 4% and for cropping the figure is 6%. The final applied percentage of the offtake is based on the managers' estimates and for trophies is 2.15% and for cropping 8.88%.<sup>190</sup> The interesting thing is to observe that the offtake is based on the managers' estimates. Let us now turn to the same Quota Data Sheet, but this time for the buffalo. The population estimate for this sheet is based solely on the managers' estimates. Seven properties did not bring produce any figures. The rest together came to a figure of 1005 buffalos(!). One property also did a water point count, which gave a significantly higher number of animals than estimated by the manager (estimate 230, water point count 339). One property did a sweep count, which also resulted in a higher number of animals (estimate 80, sweep count 148). But 1005 buffalo in the SVC is definitely more than I can identify from other sources, mainly the IFC loan application from July 1998 in which appendix 10.4 indicates only some 261 buffalo, being purchased and progeny, to 31 March 1997, Foggin and Taylor's article in 1996 which gave a number of 384 buffalo for the SVC as I indicated above, and the General Quota Meeting of January 1998 which indicates 'around 550 animals'.<sup>191</sup> If Foggin's estimate was accurate for 1996 and with a growth rate of 7% that would mean for 1998, a

maximum population of 438.<sup>192</sup> If the IFC Application is what we base our calculations on we would end up with a putative population of buffalo of 279<sup>193</sup>, nothing near the estimate at the General Quota Meeting, let alone the accumulated managers' estimates. Nevertheless, a percentage of 1.69% is recorded on the official Applied Trophy Offtake, which is well under the recommended 2% of trophy offtake. The actual Approved Quota Number of buffalo is seventeen but then whether out of 1005 (1.69%) or out of 279 (6.09%) or 438 (3.88%) or 550 (3.09%) buffaloes makes a huge difference, especially in relation to the age structure of the herd. This gives a strong indication that the buffalo is being overhunted in the SVC if all the buffalo hunts are sold to clients, which in turn indicates the eagerness of the properties to be able to sell profitable buffalo hunts. This goes a long way towards explaining why they tried so hard to find money to restock the SVC with different game species, including the buffalo, which again featured prominently. Although the reasons for applying for funds varied slightly from document to document, the relations with the neighbouring communities were always prominently wielded as a social and political legitimisation, for ultimately attaining economic purposes.

The attempts to find money for restocking the SVC can be divided in three, the 'donor route', the 'shares route' and the 'loan route'.<sup>194</sup> The donor route was 'kicked off' in 1995 with a document on the Savé Valley Conservancy Trust, presented in a beautiful brochure, printed on good quality paper. It has a dark green cover, decorated with a full-colour African-style drawing of an African village in which wildlife seems to be integrated into daily life as a woman with a pot on her head walks beside a cheetah, a giraffe and a bit further on is an elephant which is gently strolling around. The aim of the document was 'to raise the sum of Z\$ 69 million (approximately US\$ 7.7 million) over a period of five years for the Savé Valley Conservancy Trust. Z\$ 65 million of the funds raised will be invested in Savé Valley Wildlife Services Limited on behalf of the communities surrounding the Savé Valley Conservancy (...). This company will, utilising these funds, purchase designated species of wildlife to restock the Conservancy (...). In so doing the communities will attain a proprietary participation, together with the owners of the land, in what is arguable the most significant conservation initiative in Africa today'.<sup>195</sup> For this purpose a Trust representing the community was formed on 9 August 1995<sup>196</sup>, and trustees were chosen on the Board of the Trust. They were selected primarily for their expected ability to bring in the donor money for the Trust. The Chairman of the Trust was a senior manager from Delta Corporation and the Secretary of the Trust was the retired Price Waterhouse consultant who wrote the document in the first place. Both were white. At this stage I shall not go into further detail about the Trust or its rela-

192 An annual increase of 7% on a population of 384 is 26.88. A figure based on 1996 would indicate for 1998 a population of 438 ( $2 \times 27 = 54 + 384$ ).

193 An annual increase of 7% on a population of 261 is 18.27. A figure based on 1997 would indicate for 1998 a population of 279.

194 Interview with Conservator, 21 May 1998. The donor-route and share-route were tried almost simultaneously.

195 The Savé Valley Conservancy Trust, (1995). Proposal to create an interdependence between the surrounding communities and the Savé Valley Conservancy in the south east Lowveld of Zimbabwe. Savé Valley Conservancy Trust. The document was written by a retired Price Waterhouse consultant in Harare.

196 Ibid: 11.

190 Two properties also did a water point count, which totalled 8428 impalas and finally three properties did a sweep count, totalling 2788 impalas. Information based on Quota Data Sheet SVC for impala, 1997 Offtake and 1998 Quota Application.

191 Minutes General Quota Meeting, 15 January 1998.



tionship with the SVC not to mention the reaction of the people it seemed all about, the communities surrounding the SVC. The next chapter will go into those aspects of the Trust. Here it is enough to explain the basic idea, which was to create a joint venture with the communities through the Trust. This would be achieved through the following organisational structure, see figure 13.<sup>197</sup>

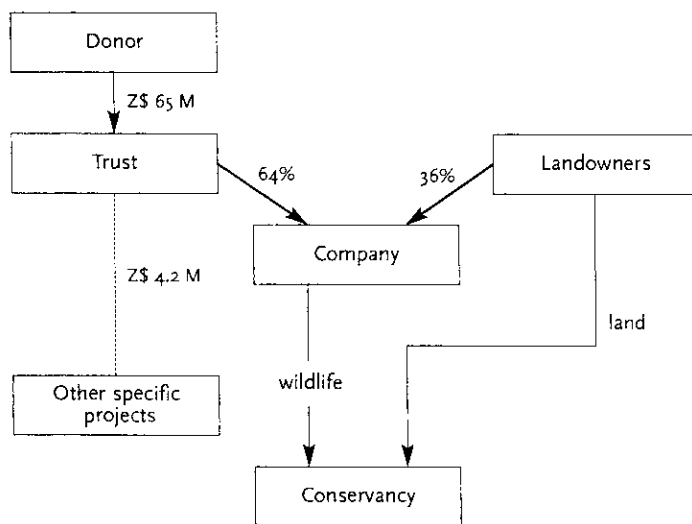


Figure 13 Organogram joint venture SVC and neighbouring communities

As in any commercial joint venture structure, the two partners would participate in the new company according to what they were bringing into the company. The landowners would bring in their land, which would give them a 36% share in the company. The communities, through the Trust, would have a 64% share, based on the donor money they were supposed to attract. With that money they would buy wildlife and restock the SVC. As the wildlife is ultimately state-owned the landowners would pay a levy to the Trust starting with 2% in year one, and increasing to 5% over a five-year period.<sup>198</sup> With that money the Trust would be able to initiate all kinds of community-based development projects in the wards surrounding the SVC. And apart from this direct flow of capital, the surrounding communities would also benefit from 'increased employment opportunities (...) in both the construction of the various tourist facilities and thereafter in their on-going operations. Indirect employment opportunities will be created in

businesses supportive of and complementary to those in the Conservancy'.<sup>199</sup> Before this document was even finished, it had already asked a consultant to look into the possibilities of community-based development projects. This report was finished by October 1994.<sup>200</sup> With this proposal under their arm, the Chairman and the Secretary of the Trust toured the UK to find donors interested in putting money into the project. They came back and reported their findings to a Special General Meeting of the SVC in October 1995. The Secretary told the members that people had reacted enthusiastically to the proposal. When one of the members asked what it was the donors were 'excited about', he told them that 'it was the idea of a living example of sustainable development, something they have been interested in for a long time. They were aware that if the conservancy is successful than the communities around it will prosper and they like that idea'.<sup>201</sup> Their excitement must have remained within bounds as not one single donor was prepared to put any money into the project. The Chairman, whom I interviewed in 1998 about it, said it quite plain that the message of the donors was loud and clear, that it was an 'interesting idea', but because 'you are private sector we cannot sponsor it'.<sup>202</sup> End of Act one.

If the non-profit sector cannot sponsor a project in the private sector, then it should look for an alternative within the private sector itself. It tried this through the 'share route'. A booklet similar to the donor document, but the drawing had been replaced by a photograph of a stately elephant standing under some trees against a beautiful sunset was produced. 'The prospectus seeks to attract investment in the company "Savé Valley Wildlife Services Limited" formed to fund the restocking of the conservancy with the full wildlife spectrum of wildlife indigenous to the area. The company will exist in partnership with owners of the land comprising the Conservancy. (...) This prospectus seeks to raise a sum (...) of Z\$ 69 million (US\$ 8 million) which will be used to fund the restocking of the area with restocking designated indigenous species currently not present'.<sup>203</sup> The emphasis from investing in the SVC through the Trust has been replaced by direct investment in the company. The communities were not entirely forgotten, or left altogether. It mentions the Trust, which was formed, according to this document, 'with the aim of ensuring that the benefits created by the Conservancy flow *beyond the perimeter fence* and include the communities that surround it'. In terms of this offer 3,686 million ordinary "B" shares are being allotted to the Trust against wildlife (...) and perimeter fencing that has been donated to the Conservancy by external donor agencies. It is also the hope of the company that the purchasers of the "B" shares offered in terms of this document will donate some or all of their future dividend flow to the Trust in order to further these aims'.<sup>204</sup> Obviously, some aspects of the charitable donor route have left

199 Ibid: 24.

200 Cunliffe, R.N. (October 1994), Savé Valley Conservancy community-based projects: overview and presentation of project concepts. This unpublished report was prepared for the Beit Trust, WWF and DNPWLM.

201 Minutes Special General Meeting, 11 October 1995.

202 Interview with Chairman of the SVC Trust, 25 June 1998.

203 Savé Valley Conservancy, (25 September 1995). Private placement document for Savé Valley Wildlife Services Limited, Savé Valley Conservancy.

204 Ibid: 6, italics added.

197 Ibid: 7.

198 Ibid: 5-8.

their traces in this commercial enterprise. Tourism, both consumptive and non-consumptive, is considered 'the basis of revenue generation for the area'.<sup>205</sup> However attractively the deal was presented, it also failed to strike a chord. Although at the AGM in 1995 the Secretary of the Trust said 'that there is a very good chance of success in raising these monies, but needs to get feedback from international companies once they have seen the prospectus. Various local companies have also shown great interest, namely Anglo American, Mobil, BP/Shell, Barclays and Willovale'.<sup>206</sup> The Chairman and Secretary of the Trust then toured the USA and the UK with the idea and had to come back with the message that it was a 'nice idea', but 'not commercial enough'. Individuals and companies told them that they could consider donating money to the idea on the basis of philanthropy, but would not buy shares on a commercial basis. They were 'caught in between the commercial and donor world'.<sup>207</sup> End of Act two. But their 'in-between'-status fortunately caught the attention of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the commercial branch of the World Bank, which gives out loans through the funding of the Global Environmental Fund (GEF). It finances projects which fit the SVC case like a glove, being commercial in orientation but with a strong undercurrent of environmental and development issues.

For that reason, the next extensive document produced was the IFC loan application in 1997. Up till then, the Trust had always been presented as an integral part of the SVC. The SVC had created the Trust and it was structurally related to it. In both former attempts to find funding the Trust was central to the operation in the sense that funding or donor money would go through the Trust. With the IFC matters assumed a different course. The IFC loan application had to persuade the IFC in three fields of project sustainability: environmentally/ ecologically, economically and socio-politically. Under the latter heading the Trust resurfaced, presented as a 'philanthropic agency for supporting local community development'. This latter was definitely necessary as '(t)he negative political image of the electrified game fencing and upmarket eco-tourism adjacent to over populated communal lands must obviously be converted into a positive context for local communities. However, experience elsewhere in Africa has shown that relationships between rural communities and adjacent wildlife/tourism venture are highly unstable if they are based merely on political appeasement and largesse. The interaction between the commercial and communal sectors must be one of genuine economic symbiosis, rather than a one-way outflow of a token proportion of earnings from the wildlife/tourism industry'.<sup>208</sup> To live up to these statements it applied for a loan of US\$ 1,000,000, of which 50% would be 'debt forgiveness', which meant that 50% of the money repaid would go to a project in support of the original project.<sup>209</sup> Further benefits of the loan were considered:

- 'a 4% grant for administration which comes out of the US\$ 1 million.
- There is a US\$50,000 grant to the WWF for environmental capacity technical assistance'.<sup>210</sup>

The organisational structure which was presented in the loan application was the following, linking the communities and the SVC through the Trust, Joint Committee and Working Committee, see Figure 14.<sup>211</sup>

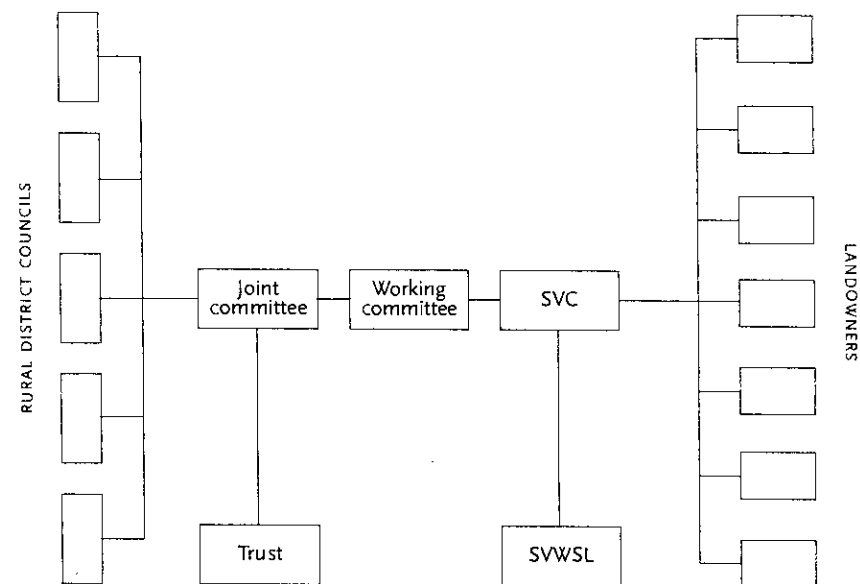


Figure 14 Organogram joint venture SVC and neighbouring communities for IFC application

But in their negotiations with the IFC, the latter did not want to get involved with the Trust, because, according to the Chairman of the Trust, a similar project of the IFC in South America 'went sour'. It adjusted the plan accordingly. The Trust would not receive the 50% debt forgiveness, an amount of approximately Z\$ 10 million at that time, this would now go to the SVC. The SVC would commit two million to the Trust to give them a starting capital to be able to apply for their own GEF funding.<sup>212</sup> With this new development the Trust became far more than it had been before, a separate entity. At least in the organisational structure the Trust and the SVC-Company were no longer

205 Ibid: 1.

206 Minutes AGM, 26 May 1995.

207 Interview with Chairman of the Trust, 25 June 1998.

208 pp. 3 Loan application, Savé Valley Wildlife Services Limited to IFC/SME Program, 17 June 1997.

209 Ibid: 11; see also minutes CCM, 25 June 1997.

210 Minutes CCM, 25 June 1998.

211 Ibid: 4, IFC loan application. The acronym SVWSL stands for Savé Valley Wildlife Services Ltd. Its role will be explained further down.

212 Minutes CCM, 11 February 1998.

allowed to be linked.<sup>213</sup> The Joint Committee and Working Committee were strictly speaking no longer necessary and became superfluous. The idea was now that the Trust, after having found its own funding, could buy wildlife, lease it to the SVC and also receive money for the progeny of that stock. It sounded promising but the financing of the restocking operation which in the donor route had gone entirely through the Trust, had to be abandoned under pressure of the IFC. The charity of the shares-route, through which shares were allotted to the Trust against wildlife and where dividends were meant to go into the Trust, was also abandoned. The Trust was on its own, receiving a starting capital, and then it has to make its own way.<sup>214</sup>

Besides to the loan application itself, the IFC required an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to be written. The SVC approached a consultant from Harare, C.A.W. Attwell, who was approved by the IFC.<sup>215</sup> Formally this EIA was not yet necessary in the legal context of Zimbabwe because, although Zimbabwe does have an EIA policy, it has not so far got EIA legislation. But it was a strict IFC requirement. The objectives of the EIA are:

- 'Highlighting potential negative impacts on both environment and local communities, and
- isolating potential situations under which sustainability of the project may be threatened, viewed in the light of the three "sustainability sectors", [ecological, economic and socio-political]'.<sup>216</sup>

The final text of the EIA had to lie on public display for sixty days in Washington. Only then could the final decision about the loan be made by the IFC. The three sustainability factors all had their own particular sensitivities and had to be regarded in the context of the difficult situation in which Zimbabwe found itself at that particular time, in relation to The Land Issue, economically and socio-politically. The three sustainability aspects were all judged by separate divisions within the IFC. The sensitivities on the ecological aspect of the project were strictly on the SVC side, mainly related to the fact that the document had to go through a sixty-day period of public scrutiny in Washington. It was a form of public exposure of a white commercial initiative in southern Africa in relation to the environment, which could be potentially dangerous if ideologically motivated groups took it into heads to protest about the project publicly. Economically and financially the sensitivity was also a SVC matter, which lay in the fact that the SVC-Wildlife Services Limited<sup>217</sup>, the commercial company of the conservancy, has no assets with which it could guarantee the loan by any means. Luckily for it the Delta Cor-

poration<sup>218</sup> was prepared to 'stand guarantor for the loan', but in order to do that they needed the financial commitment of the individual members and to substantiate the commitment all members had to give a profile of their financial ability to repay the loan in ten years' time. This meant that they had to give Delta 'a letter from the member's auditor or banker indicating that the member has sufficient resources to meet the financial commitment of the loan'.<sup>219</sup> Their commitment would thus imply a point of no return for at least ten years and expose their actual financial capability. The SVC had probably already reached a point of no return after all the investments in the fencing, but with the IFC loan the project would become definite. It was made clear that the SVC was only an option for financially well-to-do landowners, investors who had sufficient amounts of money to wait for a longer period of time to receive a return on investment. Finally the socio-political aspect was of crucial importance, not so much to the SVC, it was in favour of linking the Trust to the loan and organisationally to the SVC, to the IFC. It insisted on a split between the two. This aspect required a great deal of time before it was straightened out and the final text of the EIA could be laid down for public scrutiny.<sup>220</sup> Another aspect of the procedure which absorbed a considerable amount of time was that the IFC required a letter from the Minister of Mines, Environment and Tourism in which he endorsed the plans of the SVC. This requirement had come up just when the Zimbabwe government had announced its land designation operation in November 1997. For the IFC it was crucial to know if land in the SVC would be designated and used for resettlement in the near future, i.e. within the ten-year period in which the loan had to be repaid. If that were the case, the loan would not be opportune from an environmental and restocking perspective anyway, apart from the equally important question of who would then repay it. The IFC later agreed that a letter from the Permanent Secretary (PS) would also suffice.<sup>221</sup> The Chairman of the Trust would draft a letter and send it to the PS for approval and a signature, after which it could be sent to the IFC. The Project Executant of the Rhino Conservation Project wrote two and a half pages of suggestions for this draft, summing up positive quotes made by the government and other officials in the course of time about conservancies in general and the SVC in particular, indicating that the SVC was observing all requirements laid down by the government in tolerating conservancies.<sup>222</sup> The Chairman of the Trust and the PS also met personally to speak about the issue and the PS had made it clear that the SVC could not expect any definite answer on the land issue, or a letter of total recognition. Guarantees like that could not be given under the present political circumstances. The most it could expect was a letter of endorsement of the specific project. The Chairman of the Trust drafted a letter which he sent to the IFC for approval. The draft letter 'contained the least of the things the IFC wanted to read and the most the PS was prepared

213 Minutes CCM, 10 June 1998. 'EIA had to be redrafted, as the SVC Trust and the Company had to be shown as separate, and the original EIA dealt with the Company and the Trust linked'. EIA is an acronym for Environmental Impact Assessment, to which I turn further down.

214 At the same time, as I shall describe in the next chapter the original (majority white) Trustees were replaced by a new group of (majority black) Trustees.

215 Minutes General Meeting, 16 October 1997.

216 pp. 27, Attwell, C.A.M. (July 1998), Environmental Impact Assessment for loan application to the IFC for the restocking of wildlife species in the Save Valley Conservancy.

217 The SVCWSL would function as a commercial intermediary between IFC and SVC, which was required by the IFC, and would on-lend the IFC-loan to the SVC, Minutes CCM, 25 June 1997.

218 Also shareholder in Senuko Safari Lodge, the up-market tourism facility of the Chairman of the SVC.

219 Minutes General Meeting, 16 October 1997.

220 Minutes CCM, 5 August 1998.

221 The PS was considered more in favour of conservancies in general in circles within the SVC, than the Minister himself.

222 Undated notes Project Executant '(...) on the core of a letter to PS (...) to push for official endorsement from him (...) of Savé Valley's Worldbank and IFC proposals'.

to put on paper'.<sup>223</sup> After some delays<sup>224</sup> the letter could be passed on to the IFC and the final approval for the loan was given on 27 September.<sup>225</sup> One of the main problems in prising the letter from the PS was, of course, that the government of Zimbabwe is ambivalent in its position towards the conservancies. It is indubitably very happy to see the revenues from tourism rise, in which the conservancies in the southeast Lowveld in particular are playing an important role. Its problem is that the conservancies, mainly white landowners, seem to stand for a continuation of an unequal land distribution between black and white in Zimbabwe. This particular ambivalence is most clearly expressed in the relations between the SVC and the DNPWLM.

The relations between the SVC and the DNPWLM were launched in 1991 in the most cordial and co-operative way. No wonder, because the Chairman of the SVC was a highly respected Honorary Officer of the Department with a huge success in community conservation in Mahenya, bordering the Gonarezhou National Park, credited to him. This was considered to be the foundation of the CAMPFIRE programme which was launched so successfully in 1989.<sup>226</sup> It so happened they were also brothers-in-arms in the field of nature conservation. The conservancies saved their black rhino, for instance, which was the foundation for of a broader approach to wildlife utilisation in conservancies. Under the old regime, the DNPWLM also promised the SVC buffalo, if it saw to the erection of a fence of the required specifications of the DVS.<sup>227</sup> Everything seemed to proceed smoothly and a bright future for the SVC seemed to be on the horizon based on a (very) positive reciprocal exchange between the SVC and the DNPWLM. Since then, positions have shifted and in recent years two developments have put that relationship under (severe) stress. The first is the fact that the director of the DNPWLM, Willie Nduku, and his deputy, Rowan Martin, were suspended in July 1995 and subsequently dismissed on allegations of illegal financial transactions to do with the translocation of elephants. 'The (12) charges (5 Martin, 7 Nduku) basically relate to authorisation of the capture, sale and translocation of 200 elephants in Gonarezhou National Park in 1993. The Minister of Environment and Tourism had to authorise the capture of 200 elephants by Wildlife Management Services, their sale to that company and their subsequent export to a national park in South Africa. She asserts that Dr. Nduku, even if he had general delegated authority, did not have the specific authority'.<sup>228</sup> Not only was the translocation of elephants to South Africa mentioned, more harmfully the translocation of elephants to the conservancies was 'officially denounced as a form of economic sabotage, through the alleged squandering of "state assets" (...)'.<sup>229</sup> But as I already described earlier, they were very sympathetic to the conservancies and had promised to sell them buffalo, after it had erected the required buffalo fence. When they were sus-

pending and the director was replaced by an acting director, Willis Makombe, the new regime told the SVC that it did not have any agreement with the DNPWLM about buffalo, but that Nduku and Martin had only made promises 'as persons', not officially on behalf of DNPWLM.<sup>230</sup> And that was that. Shortly afterwards the DNPWLM instituted a ban on the translocation of live animals, including buffalo from national parks to private property. And because '(b)uffalo are not available from private land sources in any significant numbers (owing to the FMD containment strategy)<sup>231</sup>', this DNPWLM-policy led to a serious setback in the development of the SVC into a fully fledged wildlife utilisation programme. Whereas the DNPWLM relates the ban officially to FMD, informally, many in the field think they are in the know that the ban is for political reasons of arising from the dichotomy of the DNPWLM versus conservancies. Since 1995 no buffalo have been introduced to the SVC, to the utter frustration of the CCM and all members. It came to a point at which one of the foreign investors in the SVC wrote a report in which land designation and the ban on translocation of buffalo were the two issues at stake. He handed the report over to President Mugabe, when the latter was touring Germany in March 1998, and had probably just listened to his speech on land designation in Zimbabwe.<sup>232</sup> One of the three goals and objectives of the report is that '(I)t is respectfully requested that the Government of Zimbabwe: (...) instruct the Director of National Parks to issue game catching permits in overstocked National Parks for reintroduction of game in general, but Cape Buffalo specifically, into the Save Valley Conservancy'.<sup>233</sup> By the end of 1998, the situation had not improved with regard to the selling of buffalo.

If 1995 was a problematic year because influential sympathisers of the conservancies had to resign their offices at the DNPWLM, the year 1996 added another complication to the relationship between the SVC and the DNPWLM and put an end to a positive reciprocal exchange. This was transformed into a political exchange of accusations, not only with the SVC but with the private wildlife sector in general. In 1996 the DNPWLM was set up a 'Statutory Fund'<sup>234</sup>, which meant that it had to earn its own money commercially through its tourism and other operations, and could not any longer count on state subsidy.<sup>235</sup> This actually meant that the controlling body of wildlife tourism was also transformed into a commercial competitor at the same time, a move which has led to much criticism and political rivalry between private sector, including the conservancies, and the DNPWLM. As a controlling government body, the DNPWLM's reaction to its new position was twofold: centralisation of authority and close scrutiny of private sec-

223 CCM, 10 June 1998.

224 It was rumoured that the PS sought backing for this letter from the Minister himself, which took quite some time.

225 Minutes CCM, 7 October 1998.

226 Independent Traveller, Supplement to *Zimbabwe Independent*, 26 September 1997, Mahenya a success in eco sustenance.

227 Conversation with Chairman SVC, 1 October 1998.

228 *The Herald*, 14 March 1997, Parks in-fighting led to charges.

229 Du Toit 1998: 9.

230 Conversation with Chairman SVC, 1 October 1998.

231 Du Toit 1998: 9.

232 *The Herald*, 25 March 1998, President defiant: land issue goes ahead. 'Addressing a meeting of German's captains of industry and commerce, Cde. Mugabe said Britain was against the land reform programme because it wanted to perpetuate its colonisation of Zimbabwe (...).

233 pp. 1, of what is popularly known within the SVC as the 'Pabst Report'. The other two goals of the report had to do with the designation of three properties within the SVC, which would break the SVC into three. Italics added. The minutes of the CCM, 1 April 1998 state: 'The Chairman thanked Mr. Pabst for his presentation and for championing the cause of the Conservancy and its members'.

234 *The Herald*, 8 November 1997, State suspends issuing of leases to safari hunters, operators.

235 In the 1996/1997 budget funding of the DNPWLM was cut from Z\$ 90 million to Z\$ 10 million (!), which was not even enough to pay the department's salary bill, pp. 16, *Economist Intelligence Unit Country Report Zimbabwe*, third quarter 1997. See also *Financial Gazette*, 12 September 1996, Cash-strapped Parks and

tor operations in wildlife tourism. The centralisation was essentially focused on the most financially lucrative activity, which was financially crucial to conservancies<sup>236</sup>, of the private wildlife utilisation schemes, trophy hunting. Statutory Instrument 76 of 1998, gazetted on 27 March 1998, introduced strict controls on the export and import of wildlife and trophies. It also authorised 'the Director of National Parks and the Director of Customs and Excise to give trade permits on wildlife and trophies'. Statutory Instrument 26, which became effective on 13 February 1998, brought strict control on hunting and safari operators and 'granted full ownership of wildlife to the Government'. Nick O'Connor, Chairman of the WPA, called the centralisation a 'total disaster' for wildlife conservation in Zimbabwe and the CAMPFIRE Chairman at the time, Jaconia Nare, also said the new regulations gave too much power to the DNPWLM.<sup>237</sup> The centralisation was seen by the private sector in the context of earlier reports about the malfunctioning of and nepotism within the DNPWLM. As hunting is the most lucrative aspect of wildlife tourism it should come as no surprise that it was exactly on issues to do with the allocation of hunting quotas that the DNPWLM was criticised.

It was particularly the Zimbabwe Independent which reported at length on this particular issue of hunting quota. 'Interference from cabinet ministers in the allocation of hunting quotas to some safari-operators could damage the credibility of National Parks (...) Documents in the possession of the Zimbabwe Independent show that over the last two years Environment and Tourism minister Chen Chimutengwende has overruled the acting director of the DNPWLM, Willis Makombe, and gone against the advice of ecologists in what appears to be a campaign to favour selected concession owners. Major beneficiaries of ministerial intervention are based in the Matatsi and Deka safari areas in the north-west of the country. On August 9 1995, Hwange Safaris headed by Toby Musariri, was advised by Parks that it would be allocated an additional eight buffalo, to make a total of 16, despite the advice that trophy quality in the Deka pool area was 'not particularly good' by Parks ecologist Don Heath in a previous document. However, it was emphasised that the favour would not be repeated in 1996. In 1996 Musariri went ahead and marketed 16 buffalo in the Deka area before appealing to Makombe on March 6 for a doubling of the quota to the amended 1995 level. He also asked for an additional lion and informed the acting director that six bull elephants, six bull buffaloes, three male lions, three leopards, five kudu and two bushbuck had been marketed and deposits taken in anticipation of his quota request being approved in the nearby Hwange C state hunting area. A request for the hunting of a portion of the state land quota in the Deka area in addition was being made on August 7 and was turned down a week later on the grounds that the quotas had been set 'at a safe level at sustainable yield' for each particular area. However, a September 3 communication between the Department and Musariri shows that the Deka quota was 'amended as per minister's request'. Victoria Falls Hunters had their quota upped on Chmutengwende's instructions on January 4 1996. A further abuse of the quota system has manifested itself with

the Parks department's instruction on January 24 [1997] that all hunting operators be allocated an additional hunt with a bag of an elephant, buffalo, lion and leopard to raise funds for the CITES meeting [Oh irony!]. In some of the smaller areas this effectively doubled the quota considered sustainable. The Minister of Industry and Commerce, Nathan Shamuyarira, also entered the fray on April 30, 1996, by asking Makombe to meet him in his offices and instructing him to overrun his decision not to allocate a hunt to Austrian businessman, dr. Pisse. When approached by the Independent Makombe said he knew nothing of these matters (...).<sup>238</sup>

As a Statutory Fund the DNPWLM was under fire for its commercial activities in wildlife utilisation. As state agency and controlling body, it was itself in turn scrutinising the private sector safari business on more or less exactly the same issue: illegal hunting operations. 'In January [1997], Criminal Investigators Department raided offices of 40 safari operators following allegations that some of them had externalised their earnings (...)'.<sup>239</sup> This followed an allegation in 1996 that the state was losing millions of dollars through illegal deals in foreign exchange by safari operators. 'Following the 1991/1992 devastating drought, over 200 commercial farmers in the Matabeleland region who previously reared cattle ventured into lucrative game farming. Since then, they have fortified their ranches, which have become safaris in direct competition with Government-run wildlife tourist attractions'.<sup>240</sup> The accusations flew back and forth between the DNPWLM and the private sector. According to its critics the DNPWLM continued to frustrate the private wildlife sector as one Letter to the Editor in the Zimbabwe Independent made very clear: (...) 'they have continued a policy of frustrating all sales and movement of game in order to try to paralyse the development of the private land tourism industry'.<sup>241</sup> In turn DNPWLM continued to look for irregularities in the private sector. And when one was found, The Herald made a threatening headline out of it, like 'Bar foreign hunters'. In the end it was about a single incident of a farmer in Matabeleland South who had invited a foreign hunter to shoot an elephant on his property. The farmer had been hiding behind the notion that this elephant had been a 'problem animal'.<sup>242</sup> Sometimes the DNPWLM and the private sector were even caught together as in a case about illegal hunting in 1997: '(t)hirty-five tour and safari operators will soon appear in court for illegal trophy hunting and overhunting involving more than \$80 m. in a scam that is alleged to involve some of the officials of the DNPWLM'.<sup>243</sup> The end result of it all was that the Chairman of the Wildlife Producers Association (WPA)<sup>244</sup> at the time, Oosthuizen, could draw no other conclusion than that 'there had been, politically, mistrust and suspicion of the wildlife industry resulting in the suspension of top Parks personnel, centralisation of all permits and the assasination of

236 *A Tourist Paradise*, June-July 1996, The conservancies. 'Hunting for conservation is an essential part of a conservancy: without it cannot survive financially'.

237 *The Standard*, 12-18 April 1998, Shaky period for tourism; *The Herald*, 14 February 1998, Wildlife management regulations amended.

238 *Zimbabwe Independent*, 23 May 1997, 'Double standards' in National Parks quotas cause for concern.

239 *Zimbabwe Independent*, 25 July 1997, Producers clash with Parks over procedures.

240 *The Herald*, 23 September 1996, State loosing millions in illegal forex deals.

241 *Zimbabwe Independent*, 24 January 1997, Letters to the Editor: National Parks resumé.

242 *The Herald*, 15 August 1998, Bar foreign hunters.

243 *The Herald*, 20 March 1997, 35 in alleged \$80 m hunting scam.

244 *The Herald*, 1 October 1997, Ethical sustainable use of wildlife. WPA was created in 1985 'to, among other things, promote the ethical conservation and sustainable use of wildlife on privately owned commercial farms and ranches'.

wildlife exports'. He was quoted to have said that '(...) it is time for Parks to become more friendly and start to realise that we [whites] are also Zimbabwean and indigenous'.<sup>245</sup>

Stereotypes and mistrust, resulting in a spiral of negative reciprocity, seem to be the outcome of the developments described above. Most antagonism can be traced back to one single issue; a kind of beacon in battle: the fence related to buffalo. In combination they function as a magnet attracting all social interaction between the different stakeholders in the process to centre on them. They are the alpha and omega of the organisational co-operation between the SVC and the Trust. If there were no fence, there would be no buffalo and no need to fund restocking of wildlife and there would be no need to co-operate and exchange with neighbouring communities through the medium of a joint venture. By describing a host of smaller and bigger affairs, a pattern inexorably emerges which shows that the context on the ground for the organisational co-operation between the Trust and the SVC resembles a circus with countless smaller and bigger rings, which, often indirectly and often only through image-making or sheer hearsay, are related to each other. Such a ring can grow bigger or smaller over time. In the next chapter I shall describe and analyse the process of formal organisational co-operation between the Trust and the SVC in terms of reciprocal exchange.

### Linking Pin

Many notions about the theoretical framework introduced in Chapter 1 find their (often implicit) translation and operationalisation in the descriptions of everyday life reciprocal exchanges and development process in the genesis and main themes of the SVC. I have indicated some in between and interwoven with the descriptions. Let me summarise the main theoretical implications of this chapter once more:

- It has become clear that the 'inevitability' of the SVC can be explained by describing the context of white settlement in the Lowveld which shows a line of continuity and (re)production of white identity as I described in Chapter 3. Reproduction in the sense that certain historical similarities can be observed. For instance, the way Roger Whittall keeps up and is an expression of the white hunting tradition in southern Africa. But also through the direct link between conservancies in South Africa and Zimbabwe, where South African conservancies have been used as an example for the SVC; the continuation of the ICA in the SVC, and even the appropriation of land as I described in Chapter 4, takes place in similar vein. Of course, land is no longer 'taken' in the way this was done during colonial days. No, nowadays land is bought by buyers through the market mechanism. But, especially in the southern part of the SVC, land was only designated commercial land in the seventies, after which buyers were welcome. For Africans living on and around this land, this means that they were consequently excluded and expropriated from that land. They were never a

potential buying party in this market mechanism, as they were also no party when Devuli and Humani were carved out. Indignantly they have protested about this state of affairs ever since. Devuli and Humani experienced that protest during the years of the Liberation Struggle, when their cattle was taken and its boundaries constantly trespassed upon. The protests did not stop with Independence. The situation was not just a carbon copy of the past, it was also adding and producing new elements and dimensions to it. The creation of the SVC and the Trust might be seen as new dimensions of respectively an old story of white identity construction and as a way of relation building between black and white in the Lowveld;

- The hunting tourism the SVC tries to attract is also a new dimension in this construction process of white identity in southern Africa. The lion's share of the hunting tradition nowadays is not so much continued by white people who live in Africa hunting, but by inviting foreign hunters, i.e. from Europe and the United States of America, to Africa. In order to attract the foreign hunter to Africa, an image of Africa which appeals to the potential client has to be created. Here the buffalo comes in, because it is the buffalo which is presented as an expression par excellence of Africa as it 'once was' or 'should be', the masculine adventure and the lurking danger on the Dark Continent. The buffalo is an image and metaphor for Africa as an unspoiled and wild hunting paradise: an Eden conserved by electric fences for foreign white hunting tourists. The buffalo and the fence are expressions and a means to reduplicate and preserve the Western image of Africa, keeping it alive and the customers satisfied. This description also indicates the socio-economic and socio-political development of the SVC within the Lowveld;
- The formal organisation chart of the SVC and the job distribution within the SVC reflect much of the traditional relations between black and white in Zimbabwe. Black people only participate in the formal organisation at the lower levels as 'eyes and ears' in the field and on the ground of co-ordinating whites on the higher levels of organisation. The black participation in the SVC is therefore strictly confined to a local role and it is the whites who interact with the outside and global world of fundraisers, government officials, and clients. With the development of the Trust this has the potential to change;
- The objectives of the SVC reflect the preoccupation of whites with landscape in southern Africa by emphasising the primary importance of wildlife conservation and natural resource management;
- It has been shown that the overwhelming intricacies and the complexity of its interactions between the SVC and various stakeholders in different arenas (i.e. rings), being government departments in Harare, brothers-in-arms in the SVC, or neighbouring communities, can be signified by interpreting them as a particle in an ongoing process of reciprocal exchanges, both positive and negative. Together these arenas can be characterised as a 'system of (often interrelated) reciprocities'. The major theme around which the exchange is focused and which is relevant to my subject, is

<sup>245</sup> *Zimbabwe Independent*, 25 July 1997, Producers clash with Parks over procedures.

the issue of land symbolised by the fence as the protested signature of the current (white) landowner. Time and timing in this exchange are not stipulated, but depend on strategic opportunity. Effect rules over affect. With fences they write their white African identity on the land and at the same time relate that identity to their wish to hunt. Therefore, the related issues of fence and buffalo are the dominant themes within the life world of the SVC;

- The idea and establishment of the Trust by the SVC is considered its gift to the communities. It seems as if the SVC wants to reach two goals in one blow: it creates a Trust to relate 'formal and meaningful' to the neighbouring communities and thus politically and socially legitimising their wildlife utilisation scheme towards the government; by so doing it satisfies the government's assertive scrutiny and critical stance towards conservancies in the first place. Its second goal is to use the same vehicle to push the government, i.e. the DNPWLM, to sell its buffalo. If the assumption that the ban is a political move towards white conservancies only and has not so much to do with FMD is correct, then the Trust could be the ideal structure to mediate between the SVC and the DNPWLM in the purchase of buffalo. How could the DNPWLM refuse poor (black) communities permission to buy buffalo and reap economic benefits from this? The DNPWLM selling buffalo to the Trust would be the appropriate return gift to the SVC. It would substantiate and realise the proposed win-win-situation. This also explains why in all its applications for funding the restocking operation, the SVC was so keen to thrust the Trust to the fore as the mediator for the funds. The Trust is a double-edged sword, strategically and opportunistically, in order to be able to buy buffalo (indirectly) and is an answer to the threats of the government in an affective gesture towards the communities. As in any reciprocal relation, it comprises a mixture of effect and affect. In this case the strategic intentions are to a certain extent hidden behind the affective rhetoric of organisational co-operation in order to achieve sustainable development for the poor black communities surrounding the SVC;
- At the same time, the Trust objectifies the SVC's image of the communities: the communities are seen as in need of (white) help. The SVC is willing to help but frames the help in an organisational structure in which preformulated objectives only serve to magnify the SVC's image of the communities: the Trust has been established to help with and set up of projects for the needy.

Theoretically the point has now been reached at which it is relevant to ask if the gift from the SVC has been accepted, and should that be the case, what is their return gift and does this match the expected return gift. Is their return gift considered by the SVC as a fitting representation of their gratitude which answers its idea of a win-win-situation? Should the gift not be accepted, what is the reason for this and what conclusions does the giver draw from this refusal? Does it end up for them in a lose-lose situation instead, or a win-lose for either party? The final question should be posed and answered concerning what is considered the counter action of the neighbouring communities in response to the initiatives of the SVC in the field of wildlife utilisation? The next chap-

ter will take a closer look at the acceptance and gratitude of the communities, or lack of it, towards this gift and how the ongoing process of reciprocal exchange takes place on the ground and in everyday relations between the SVC and the Trust and individual landowners and their direct neighbouring communities.

## 6 The Savé Valley Conservancy and the Buffalo Fence: Paradox of Economic Profit and Neighbourrelations

*In which the initiative and local arena of the SVC to create a Trust to relate to the surrounding communities is described and analysed in terms of reciprocal exchange on two levels of interaction: between SVC and Trust and on the level of individual landowners and their direct neighbours. The cases will be presented in relation to the main issues of land and hunting in Zimbabwe.*

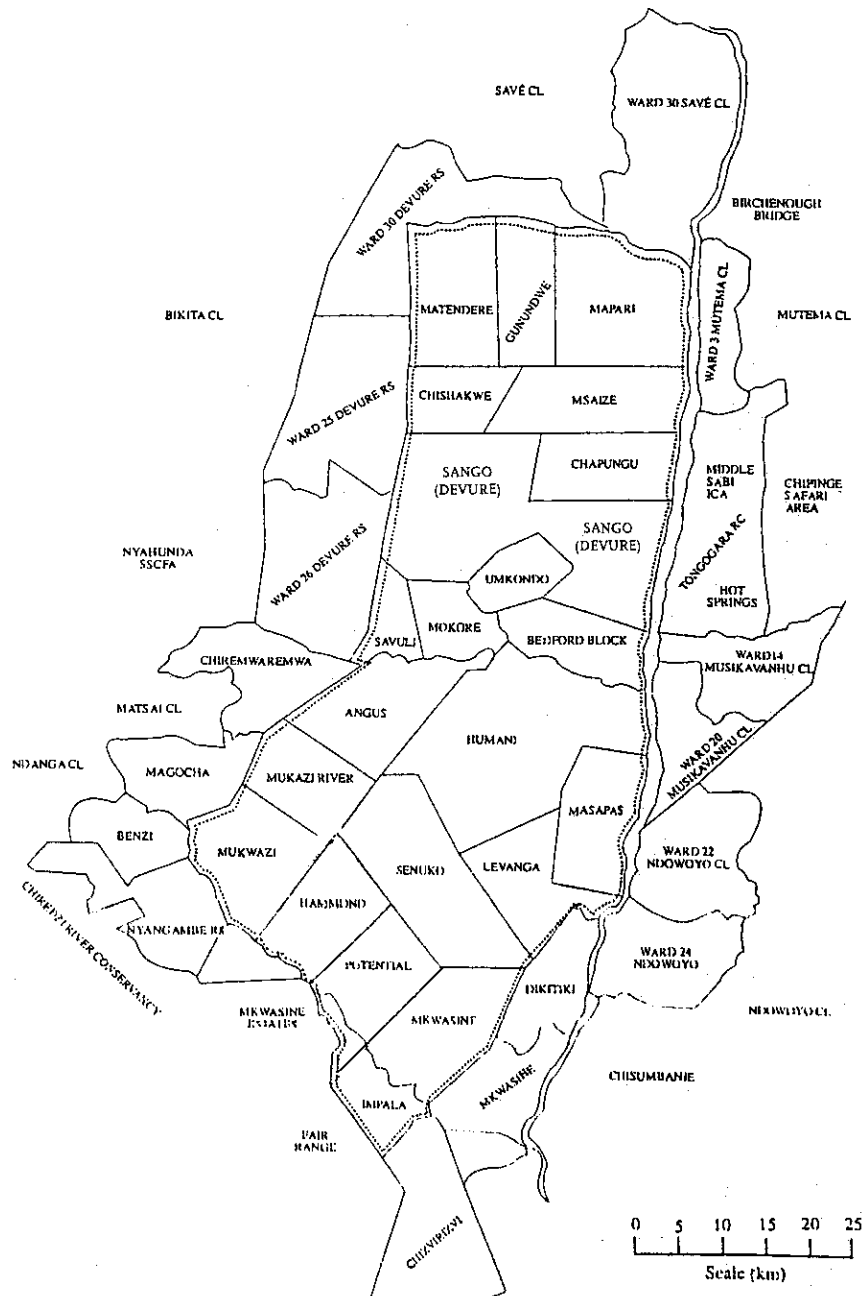
### Introduction

Reports of white-on-black racism abound in the region where sugar production, game ranching and hospitality industry pop up all economic activity. Industrial powerhouses Triangle, Hippo Valley and Mkwazine Sugar Estates have since the great drought of 1991-92 been joined by a host of white-led private animal sanctuaries – called conservancies – in creating employment. At most farms racism had become institutionalised (...). Unimpressed by the ethnic composition of the conservancies, Vice-President Cde. Simon Muzenda, recently told the white ranchers to include more blacks into their schemes'.<sup>1</sup> If it were to achieve this, the SVC had two options. The first of these would be to attract black landowners to the Lowveld. The different properties within the area of the SVC which were sold in the nineties had all to be offered to the government first, which would have given the opportunity to introduce black land ownership into the SVC. But this did not happen and the government signed a document of no-interest in the land, after which the SVC was free to attract other buyers. They all turned out to be white. Apart from ARDA there is no black ownership to date in the SVC. The second option open to the SVC was to create an organisational structure in which it could cooperate with its black neighbours, which it did in the form of the SVC Trust (SVCT). In the previous chapter I already introduced and described the Trust as part of the different 'funding-routes' the SVC tried in order to finance its restocking operations. The attention of the SVC was actually drawn to the neighbouring black communities when the Minister answered questions in parliament about the status of conservancies in Zimbabwe and stated that conservancies would only be allowed if they were able to create a 'formal and meaningful relationship' with the neighbouring communities.<sup>2</sup> This was probably an important reason behind the creation of the SVC Trust. The SVCT was presented to the five neighbouring RDCs at a workshop in Chiredzi in March 1996, based on the Price Waterhouse document. On that occasion the SVCT was more or less window-dressed as the gift of the SVC to the communities; it was presented as a gold-

<sup>1</sup> *Sunday Mail*, 20 October 1996, Lowveld still white dominated.

<sup>2</sup> *Hansard*, 14th February 1996, 3971.





Map 6 SVC and adjacent Wards and Communal Lands

en opportunity for the neighbouring communities to take the plunge and participate in the (white-dominated) tourism sector in Zimbabwe. It was implicitly expected that the communities would, as a sort of reflex, use the SVCT to relate and communicate with the SVC and use it as a platform for their concerns and protests. The SVCT represented the communities through a Board of Trustees, who were mainly white and based in Harare, which meant that even if the communities wanted to contact them, this would be no easy task. The Trustees, putatively representing the communities, were literally 'out of reach' for them. How the SVC arrived at this specific composition of Trust and Trustees and how this construction developed over time will be described in this chapter. At the same time, parallel with and in relation to the developments of the Trust, I shall describe how the neighbouring communities did relay their opinions and did exchange ideas about the erection and location of the fence and by claiming land in the SVC. In the previous chapter a fair amount of attention was paid to the internal developments of the SVC and its position in relation to the surrounding communities. Extensive attention has been paid to the context, historically in Chapter 3 and 4 and at a national political level in Chapter 5, in relation to the concepts of trust and imagery, which help to understand and explain the present-day operations, development and position of the SVC. In this chapter the focus falls specifically on the process of reciprocal exchange between the conservancy and its neighbouring communities. This approach allows more attention to be paid to the position of and opinion of the communities about this proposed organisational co-operation, although my point of departure remains, as in the rest of this thesis, my ethnographic orientation on the SVC as initiator of this process of organisational co-operation. Theoretically the remaining questions will be answered as to what is exactly reciprocated between the SVC and SVCT and the communities? What is excluded from exchange? What is expected as return in reciprocal exchange and within what time frame? How are the reciprocal exchanges (e)valuated and how does that relate to context and situationality? And finally, is this joint venture a win-win-situation in the way it is presented by the SVC? By answering and describing the answers through my presentation of empirical data, I shall be able to close my analysis of this particular case study and in Chapter 7 come to a general conclusion on the central research question with which I began this thesis.

### The development of the SVC Trust

As I described in the previous chapter, the SVC proposed, or 'offered' would be a better word, the construction of a Trust to the communities. The Trust would be a joint venture-like partner of the SVC, its share and influence proportional to the donor money it would be able to attract. The figure, which was visualising the gift of the SVCT to the communities, seemed impressive because the shares were presented as being overwhelmingly in favour of the communities with 64%, and only 36% for the landowners. But the figure for the Trust was a virtual one, based on things hoped for (i.e. donor money), while the figure for the landowners was based on the 'hard currency' of land. The SVC tried to transform the virtuality of the Trust by appointing Trustees who were

considered capable of attracting the necessary donor-money. If only the status of the Trust could be based on solid donor-money, the figure would probably impress the government with the gift of the SVC to its neighbours. So while the Trust was set up to represent the communities, its priority lay in attracting the required donor funds. If donor funding proved slow in coming, the Trust would remain an empty shell and a structure on paper only. The Trustees were selected with this consideration in mind. Nine Trustees were chosen, one representative of each surrounding District and four from Harare.<sup>3</sup> The four from Harare especially were chosen with an eye to attracting donor-funds. A senior manager from Delta Corporation was appointed chairman. He was the one especially charged with working in conjunction with the writer of the 'Trust-proposal' charming money out of donor pockets. This was an illusion as I described in my disquisition on the different routes taken to fund the restocking programme in the previous chapter. The chairman of the Trust was very active and energetically he pursued the issue of donor money for the Trust, but he was doomed to disappointment. And despite his indubitable activeness in going after donor-money, the complete Trust of nine members never met in actual fact. This means that, even if the communities would have liked to have communicated with the SVC through their representatives in the Trust, there was never an official opportunity created by the SVC, a lapel which might be considered indicative of the SVC priorities with the Trust. The same could be said for the later structure of organisational co-operation with the neighbouring communities which the SVC presented in its loan application to the IFC, in which it proposed the Joint and Working Committee. Only the Joint Committee met. The Working Committee never did. In this context it is interesting to note that the Joint Committee consisted of RDC members only, without containing any representative from the SVC. These members did come together. The Working Committee, comprising of representatives from the communities<sup>4</sup> and three members of the SVC, including the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman, never saw each other or spoke to each other in the formal context of a meeting.<sup>5</sup> Can this state of affairs be explained? As we have seen in the previous chapter there is a veritable sea of official written material from the SVC in which the Trust takes a prominent place. But is it attention and emphasis on paper only, which never got off the ground in real life? Is the Trust just a shop window with no commercial promises behind it? Is the Trust no more than a make-believe decoy to put government officials and policy makers in Harare off the scent in an answer to the written answers to the Minister? Is it a form of ritual exchange between the SVC and Harare, mentioning the communities for rhetorical reasons only? Let me return to the inception of the idea of the Trust.

3 Among them also Professor Marshall Murphree, who might be considered as one of the most influential advocates of community-based natural resource management in southern Africa with a solid reputation for integrity. Strategically this was a good move by the SVC in its attempts to legitimise its activities. At the time he was chosen as Trustee, Murphree was still Director of the Centre for Applied Social Studies (CASS) of the University of Zimbabwe, the same institute from which I received my Research Fellowship.

4 Four out of five were the same as those on the Joint Committee, information from interview with Liaison Officer, 22 April 1998.

5 Conversation with Liaison Officer, 28 May 1998.

The (proposal to constitute a) Trust was presented to the RDCs at a workshop on 28-29 March 1996.<sup>6</sup> This was the first time that the RDCs were informed about the initiative. There had been no prior consultation about the Trust with the RDCs. Under the heading of 'The strategic choices for local communities', the paper plunges straight to the heart of the matter saying that 'one strategy for the local communities [would be] to advocate that Government should designate the land occupied by the Save Conservancy for resettlement by the local communities'. But, after considering this option, Metcalfe comes to the conclusion that neither resettlement nor designation of the land to be used for wildlife by the communities would work out and in conclusion suggests that 'the distinction between private land and communal land remains'. He states that the division can only work out 'if a joint venture is established which binds the two land use systems, through a mutually agreeable arrangement'.<sup>7</sup> The Land Question, which is so important to the identities of both black and white in Zimbabwe where land is considered inalienably theirs by the Africans, is brusquely brushed aside in this formulation. The solution to the land issue is not redistribution but co-operation, but co-operation on the conditions set by the SVC. It is slightly more nuanced than this and it would be unfair to typify the situation as the whites simply consolidating their power over land. The SVC also gives opportunities to communal landowners, i.e. the RDCs, in its conservancy coalition. RDCs could participate by granting land-use rights to the conservancy while retaining ownership: '(t)he Conservancy would relocate the game fence and the community would join the Conservancy as full members'.<sup>8</sup> The paper concludes by formulating that '(m)any things may be possible but little will happen without a spirit of trust and genuine commitment to a common vision for the future'.<sup>9</sup>

This first workshop in March 1996 at which the creation of the Trust was explained and rationalised, had a follow-up in April 1996. At this an initial (and as far as I know only) draft of a 'project identification plan' for the RDCs surrounding the SVC, in which Metcalfe formulated the ways in which the communities could benefit from the proposed Trust was tabled.<sup>10</sup> This follow-up was asked for by the RDCs at the workshop in Chiredzi. The draft contained a range of benefits, like direct and indirect employment opportunities, meat supply, fuel supply, technology transfer, develop managerial capacity and so on, but this April document also already pinpoints constraints laid on the social environment by the project: 'Local communities have recently witnessed the erection of a substantial wildlife fence around the conservancy'. As I explained in the previous chapter, the fence was necessary because of veterinary regulations related to 'foot and mouth' disease and contingent isolation of buffalo, considered essential by the Conservancy, from cattle (essential to communal agriculture). 'The fence symbolises a

6 Metcalfe, S. (1996), Benefits of the Savé Valley Conservancy to local people, Workshop on the Savé Valley Conservancy Trust, 28-29 March, unpublished proceedings.

7 Ibid: 2.

8 Ibid: 5.

9 Ibid: 6. Recollect (once again) that the Zimbabwean Government signed a document of 'no-interest' in the different properties in the SVC which were put on the market in the second half of the eighties and nineties. With this in mind it seems like a good idea to propose a joint venture instead.

10 Metcalfe, S. (April 1996), Enhancing the capacity of neighbouring communities to benefit from the proposed Save Valley Conservancy Trust, Zimbabwe Trust, unpublished report.

separation between commercial and communal, black and white ethnic groups, and between livestock and wildlife as a land use. There is minimal social interdependence between the conservancy members and the local communities'.<sup>11</sup> In line with this observation, actually directly after the Introduction it concludes, that '(i)t is the complete contrast between these two communities, the *conservancy community* and the *neighbouring communities*, that threatens the stability of the Conservancy's plan [i.e. to establish a form of organisational co-operation through the Trust]. The contrast in ethnicity and wealth is obvious. This combustible reality is what puts an imperative on the creation of an interdependency between these two primary stakeholders'.<sup>12</sup> A second follow-up was given in May 1996 with a report on the responses in the field, i.e. of the communities surrounding the SVC, to the establishment of the Trust, written by the same consultant. This report was also specifically prepared for the RDCs, as the appropriate authorities on the communal lands and representing the communities through democratic elections at their request.<sup>13</sup> There are a few issues which are mentioned by nearly all respondents to this fact-finding-mission, and which directly relate to the issues raised in earlier chapters: the (location of the) fence and related to that that 'this project cannot be seen as separate from the 'land issue' but as a progressive response to it'.<sup>14</sup> This is not to say that they 'dismissed the SVC proposal out of hand' but that 'the process (...) by which the SVC proposal was formulated was flawed [and] (a)lso the conservancy fence lacked diplomacy (...)'.<sup>15</sup> What is striking about this document is its straightforward formulations, both by the local authorities and communities and by the consultant who wrote the report, who dared to write it all down without bothering to wrap it up in diplomatic flummery. At the RDC level, for instance, it is mentioned that the RDCs feel that they 'have effectively been presented with what appears like a 'blueprint' (the proposal [to create the Trust]) e.g.:

- the conservancy is established;
- the fence is sited and situated;
- the SVC Trust is established;
- 5 Trustees (white) are already appointed and apparently others already approached, (whom the RDCs are assured are 'trustworthy');
- the SVC Trust proposal is already published in final form;
- the SVC Trust wants to fundraise as soon as possible on behalf of the beneficiaries, who are not well informed of their new status in regard to the SVC'.<sup>16</sup>

The RDCs are well aware that what the SVC proposes is in actual fact based 'on a trade off between economic and political strengths, each party having more of one than the

other'. The commercial farmers have economic power, while the communities have political power. The RDCs feel that they are being bought with economic incentives by the SVC and they are not sure that the price the SVC is prepared to pay is high enough. The way the SVC handled the presentation of the Trust does not seem to indicate that it rated, literally, the communities and local authorities highly. It did not seem to deem it necessary to communicate with the communities in order to negotiate a price for their goodwill. Instead it gave them a 'take-it-or-leave-it' offer, wrapped up, in economic development language. And the SVC did not give the RDCs time to consider their position and for that reason there was no 'courtship ritual' between the partners 'to explore each other's attitudes and motives' on the other side of the fence.<sup>17</sup> At the community level the major issue was the fence and the relationship with their 'farmer next door'. The communities do not really relate to the SVC as one organisation but have to do with the farmer whose boundary they happen to share. And '(n)o amount of Trust supported development will cover up for bad relations on the ground'.<sup>18</sup> Only interaction on the ground will be able to build up a relationship of trust. This seems to be what has happened with Gunundwe, whose management has given five bulls to the neighbouring communities as 'an offer of friendship', not a 'once off gift, but 'hopefully the start of a 'give and take' relationship. In return, the ranch hopes to be able to work out ways and means to protect the ranch from poaching and general hostility'.<sup>19</sup> Although they were not the only one who considered the SVC creating a Trust as a gift, 'provided the communities respect the boundary and do not poach'.<sup>20</sup> This is how the SVC sees the reciprocal relationship: it offers the gift of the Trust and the return gift from the communities is a priori defined and should consist of respecting boundaries and no poaching. The communities obviously do not want to reject the gift straightaway, but do have a natural suspicion accepting it because they are not sure they want to pay the expected return gift. Especially not because the communities are already paying for the SVC by their denial of access to SVC land and the fence cutting them off from their natural resources. Communities also expressed their concern that if they accepted the gift of the Trust to be like 'manna from heaven', they would cede any possibility of claiming the land for resettlement or other purposes.<sup>21</sup> The difference in expectations of what a reciprocal relationship between SVC and communities involves comes specifically to the fore in the border area between Matsai Communal Land and the SVC. The Matsai people already stated at that particular stage of the SVC development that they wanted to settle the local land issue of the seventy-two families first before venturing any further into deeper waters with the Trust. I shall describe this Matsai case in more detail later on. The buffalo fence was generally seen as a 'hard edge' between the parties. Rather prophetically at the time, one participant stated that 'we will see you coming back again' (the business is not over)'.<sup>22</sup> It seems obvious that the communities were not very willing to accept the gift and its implications of a return gift straightaway, if at all. In the

11 Metcalfe April 1996: 14

12 Ibid: 4.

13 Metcalfe, S. (May 1996), Report on response of local authorities and neighbouring communities to the proposal by Save Valley Conservancy to establish a community development trust, Zimbabwe Trust, unpublished report.

14 Ibid: 3.

15 Ibid: 3 & 2.

16 Ibid: 4.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid: 6.

19 Ibid: 9 (Appendix I).

20 Ibid: 16.

21 Ibid: 3 (Appendix I).

22 Ibid: 10 (Appendix I).

report, Humani is presented as an example of a ranch having a positive reciprocal relationship based on trust with neighbouring communities, built over time.<sup>23</sup> Without beating about the bush the report plainly reveals that it is not only the institutional, structural and organisational co-operation which is essential to the success of the inter-dependency between SVC and communities, but also, and maybe even more so, the relationship between the individual commercial farmer and his direct neighbour in the communal lands. But no matter what the relationship is between farmer and community, there has been a 'general outcry' over the fence line.<sup>24</sup> Because relationships on the ground are so important to the communal farmers, and thus for the SVCT representing them, it is worthwhile to 'visiting' the different hotspots around the SVC where fence wars are raging or have been part of the ongoing reciprocal exchange process

### Cases of reciprocal exchange between SVC (members) and communities<sup>25</sup>

#### *The Sango-Maronga case*

Bordering Sango, the Maronga people protested about the fence line which was put on the eastern side of the river on the land from the Mid-Sabi Irrigation Scheme fence, because it cut the people off from the important riverine area which supplies all sorts of natural resources like reeds, firewood and water for their animals.<sup>26</sup> But the fence was erected there at the explicit request of and in a formal agreement with the Mid-Sabi Irrigation Project.<sup>27</sup> According to the DA of Chipinge, it was for all the small-scale white farmers whose land adjoined Mid-Sabi who put pressure on it to ask the SVC to put up the fence on their side of the river, with the specific idea of preventing the villagers from reaching it and depleting its resources.<sup>28</sup> The Liaison Officer tells a somewhat different story saying it was not so much the small-scale farmers as a Zimbabwean NGO, Environment 2000, which put pressure on the project in an effort to save this part of the Save River by erecting a fence.<sup>29</sup> Actually the SVC fence does not encroach on the land of the Maronga people themselves. The fence is on the land of the Mid-Sabi Project a little to the north and as such belongs to the latter and not to the Maronga people. The fence crosses the river again at the former Tongogara Refugee camp, where in earlier

23 Ibid: 17 (Appendix I).

24 Ibid: 15 (Appendix I).

25 It maybe superfluous to say but, to my knowledge, no cases around the SVC have been withheld, of which I knew but did not present in the thesis because they would 'disturb' the developing line of argument.

26 Minutes of a meeting held at Makore Camp of Sango Ranch, 19 December 1997: 'The meeting had been prompted by the Maronga peoples complaints about the Sango boundary fence which crosses the Save River and follows a boundary on State Land – former Tongogara Refugee Camp and on ADA land – thus Middle Sabi for about 28 km'.

27 Although nothing seems to have been put down on paper about this agreement and the man with whom they negotiated the deal with them representing the Mid-Sabi Project has been moved to Harare and they have lost track of him. They did try to locate him to ask about any minutes or other formalities relevant to their agreement. Interview with manager Sango, 5 August 1998.

28 Interview with DA Chipinge, 11 September 1998.

29 Conversation with Liaison Officer, 11 September 1998.

days refugees from Mozambique were housed, stopping short of entering Maronga Communal Land. Despite this, the DA of Chipinge described the fence as coming 'from across the river', i.e. from white commercial farmers, on land which is not theirs. The interpretation is that of white farmers taking their land again. A further complication to the issue is that the Save River also marks the boundary between the Bikita and Chipinge Districts. The fence is therefore seen as a Bikita fence encroaching on Chipinge land.<sup>30</sup> The fence once scrawls again its white signature on the land as the Maronga have also complained that their cattle were impounded when they crossed the fence and that they themselves were prosecuted for trespassing when they passed through the fence.<sup>31</sup> The landowner of Sango, claims the fence location is exactly on the spot which was agreed with the Mid-Sabi Project. And he is very much in favour of keeping the fence there to rehabilitate the riverine area. In order to convince the RDC Chipinge as well he invited its members on a tour in his helicopter to fly over the area<sup>32</sup>, to show them the difference between the fenced-in stretch of land and the riverine land to which the communities have straight access. It is a contrast between lush vegetation and a depleted landscape. Although the difference is striking and obvious, the complaints from the Maronga people have persisted. When the manager of Sango visited the Maronga community to speak to the people about the possibilities of exchange between them and Sango, i.e. for instance cheap meat, helping them with the upgrading of the school, providing building poles and thatching grass in exchange for refraining from poaching, the discussion almost inevitably turned to the fence and the debate really heated up, with people starting to shout and make wild gestures at the manager. One of the villagers even had to be taken away by his fellow villagers when his shouting, yelling and gestures began to get out of hand.<sup>33</sup> When I left in November 1998, no solution to the problem had yet been found. This is not a problem in the legal sense of the word: nothing about the fence is illegal, but the sensitivity about its location seems almost ineradicable and has to be dealt with one way or the other, because it can add to the already existing political image that conservancies are only about securing land titles and even expanding them through these kind of operations.

#### *The Mapari/Chapungu- Mutema case*

A similar case of fence location cutting off peoples' access to the riverine section is where the boundaries of Mapari and Chapungu meet at the Save River, where the people under Chief Mutema live. In earlier days, when both properties were still part of Devuli Ranch, they had cattle on the land and had eradicated all wildlife, except for some impala and the like. Obviously the Save River was important for watering the cattle. The routine was that they brought the cattle to the river every day and let them drink, after which they were brought back within the fences which were roughly one kilometre

30 Interview with DA Chipinge, 11 September 1998.

31 *The Herald*, 30 July 1998, DA seeks solution over row of Save fencing.

32 The landowner of Sango uses his helicopter in the SVC, as I used a car. When he was in the country and attending a CCM, his helicopter stood parked alongside cars of other landowners.

33 Visit and observations at meeting between manager Sango and Maronga people, 7 September 1998.

inland, not closing off the riverine section. Both communal and commercial farmers had access to the river, although legally, i.e. in terms of title deeds, the boundary of the property ran through the middle of the river. In the cattle farming era the communities could water and graze their cattle in the riverine area. When both properties joined in the initiative to form the SVC and 'turned to wildlife', it was no longer possible to bring the animals to the river, let them drink and then bring them back again. Wildlife had to have free access to the river to drink. For that reason, the fence was erected as much as possible in the middle of the river, following their official boundaries. Where there are large sandbanks in the river it proved especially easy to put up a fence. The communities complained about the location of the fence through their chieftainship, the local authorities, landowners, their managers and the SVC. They demanded that the fence be re-erected on the old location so that the banks of the river would be free again. But the fence remained where it was. Only some sections were relocated, not because of the complaints of the Mutema people but because they were too easily washed away during the rainy season. When the consultant toured the communities they said to him that '(b)y putting up on the new fence line without local consensus the relationship with the farmer could be said to have taken a step backwards'.<sup>34</sup> In 1998 an unfortunate incident happened which exacerbated the situation. In July 1998 Mapari game scouts arrested the councillor and a team of people who were on Mapari Ranch to harvest ilala palm as was the custom. They said they were unaware of the fact that the arrangement had been cancelled by the landowner who 'had been given negative reports on his neighbours'. The people were angry about the arrest because it was considered a 'sign of lack of respect on one of their leaders [which] was very worrying to the community as a whole, especially when (...) the landowner snubbed the Councillor when he made an attempt to meet him after this incident'.<sup>35</sup>

### *The Levanga-Gudo case*

Yet another case along the riverside of the SVC is where Levanga borders with the land of the Gudo people. This case has nothing to do with access to the riverine section, but arises from symbolic value of land. Levanga is one of the most inaccessible properties of the SVC, but also very beautiful endowed with natural pans in which hippos and crocodiles reside. It has also most of the elephants in the SVC. The case of the Gudo people basically concerns a protest to do with the signature of the fence on the land. The Gudo people claim that they used to bury their chiefs and perform rituals on certain koppies on Levanga. Levanga also contains particular natural pans at which the Gudo people perform rain rituals at prescribed times. The councillor wrote a letter about the issue to the DA in Chiredzi asking him to intervene and to begin the process of designating the land. It is worth quoting extensively from this letter, because it summarises in a nutshell and in a localised setting the basic clash between black and white identities in Zimbabwe as related to land. 'As you may be well aware, there is a portion of land falling under

a Mr Otterson which lies between Save River, Chirovamupande River and Dombo Hills and this land is endowed with the Sadziwe Marshes. You might also be aware that upon Dombo Hills, is the burial place for the Chiefs of the Gudo people. That land is of devout Cultural importance to the people and I cannot over-emphasise the value placed on it by them. My consultations with elders of the land reveal how worried the people are, with the plan by the current title holder of the Estate, to develop that portion of land into a lucrative sugar plantation. Whilst the people do respect the law and the right to dispose subject, use alienate or conversion of one's land as the owner deems fit, they are afraid the efforts of the whiteman, to put the land under irrigation shall not only spoil the sacredness of the land, but shall pe[r]vert its cultural significance and cut the umbilical cord between their ancestral spirits and themselves. They are afraid and indeed extremely worried, that they are being forgotten irrespective of the fact that, the title-holder of the land forcefully took it away from them the rightful and hereditary sovereigns. It is sad to note that much is not being done to assist the people reclaim their pride and appease their provident ancestors. As a useful reminder, the Gudo people used the Sadziwe Marshes to perform their ritual ceremonies. They held annual cultural ceremonies which included not only a fishing festival but also convened to summon rain (mutoro). They would also gather to thank their Ancestral spirits for providing and protecting them, in the course of the year, and would purge the spirits to continue to provide for them, and to protect them. The holding of these ceremonies is a conspicuous characteristic of the Gudo people, without which they are not unified and identified. It will be a traversity of their loyalty and respect for someone to arrogantly erect a building on top of the graves of their ancestors. It is such a mockery and relentless contempt for a white man to plant sugar on sacred marshes where ritual ceremonies were conducted from time immemorial. It is such immense cruelty to cut the Gudo peoples' ties with their history. It is sad to realize that against such a background of relentless deprivation, no-one has ever attempted to assist the Gudo people to assert their worries and to revert back the established mutual contact with their ancestral spirits'.<sup>36</sup> On the basis of these arguments the councillor asks the DA to designate portions of Levanga to be handed over to the Gudo people. In the same month he also took the story to the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC), which put the item on the radio news, emphasising that a white farmer was destroying a black cultural heritage.<sup>37</sup> The latter move seems to represent a similar process to that described by Carruthers, and in fact can be increasingly observed world-wide<sup>38</sup>, in her paper on a comparison between the Aborigines in

36 Letter Councillor Ward 1, Chiredzi District, to DA Chiredzi, 12 March 1998.

37 Interview with Liaison Officer, 18 May 1998; interview with manager Levanga, 11 June 1998.

38 In the United States of America Indians have begun to lodge claims to their land with increasing frequency more and more. An example are the Oglala Sioux Indians in South Dakota who have battled juridically for years to get their land back. Even when they were proven right and they were compensated with a sum of US\$ 122 million, they refused to accept the money, although they are desperately poor, because they say 'Het gaat ons om het land van onze voorouders. Dat houdt ons bij elkaar, dat maakt ons tot wie we zijn' (translation: 'It is about the land of our ancestors. That keeps us together and that makes us who we are'), *NRC Handelsblad*, 3 July 1999. Een restje soevereiniteit (translation: A remainder of sovereignty). A similar story is told about the Inuit of Canada who reclaimed their land successfully and since 1 April 1999 have given the right of self-government over their land, covering some 2 million square kilometres in northern Canada, which they call Nunavut, which means 'our land'. 'De verbintenis met het land wordt beschouwd als een

34 Metcalfe May 1996: 15 (Appendix I). Other information from interview with Liaison Officer, 18 May 1998.

35 Minutes of a meeting held at Manesa Rest Camp, 24 July 1998.

Australia and the San in South Africa, namely that is that through their claims to land the local people aim 'to recapture their (...) culture'.<sup>39</sup> From this perspective it should not even come as a surprise that at first they did not mention the issue at all to the new manager, and only recently have become aware, or (re-)realised the importance of land. 'Land claims may (...) re-open a frontier, which has been closed for a long time', as 'country' brings people into existence, it is integral to their 'being'.<sup>40</sup> Through this process though land (once more) assumes the status of 'contested landscapes'.<sup>41</sup>

Levanga was bought in October 1986. Before that time the property had been without a manager living on it for a period of two to three years. Gudo people could come onto the property at anytime without any interference.<sup>42</sup> Before that time, Levanga was stateland used as a bufferzone to the Tribal Trust Lands, which probably also implied that people had free access.<sup>43</sup> At the handover of the property nothing was mentioned about Gudo claims on parts of the land. When the manager, who happens to be the landowner's brother, visited Chief Gudo to inform him about his plans for Levanga, nothing of the like was brought to his attention. Approximately 95% of his labourers are from Gudo, but no one ever told him anything about the issues at stake. They only came up with the claim in 1989. The Liaison Officer, who at that time was still in local government, suggested that they would check on the claims at the Surveyor General's office, which they never did.<sup>44</sup> The manager did notice that people came and went on the property to harvest natural resources, in particular meat. Moonlit nights are especially favourite times for setting and checking snares because they can work without the use of artificial light. They put rows of snares in game tracks and after some two to three days come and check if they have caught anything. If that is the case they take the animal with them and leave the other snares. If an animal is unlucky enough to be caught at a later date by such a snare, it just dies and rots.<sup>45</sup> In their first year on Levanga they collected some 300-400 snares a month. It was at a time that the fences were still made of plain wire, which is ideal for constructing snares. Consequently the fences were cut

'natuurlijke mentale genezing' voor Inuit die hun identiteit zijn kwijtgeraakt' (translation: 'The connection with the land is considered as a 'natural mental healing' for Inuit who have lost their identity'), *NRC Handelsblad*, 3 April 1999, Het ijzig territorium (translation: 'The icy territory'). Finally, the first Scottish elections in nearly three centuries in 1999 featured land related to identity as an important issue, *NRC Handelsblad*, 24 April 1999, Hertogen en vazallen (translation: Dukes and vassals).

39 pp. 3, Carruthers, J. (1999), Past and future landscape ideology. The Kalahari Gemsbok National Park and Uluru – Kata Tjuta National Park compared, paper presented at the conference *African environments past and present*, Oxford, 5-8 July.

40 Ibid: 4 & 8.

41 Ibid: 12. Another and one of the best known examples of a successful land claim specifically in the field of nature conservation is that of the Makuleke community who 'demanded that their rights to the Pafuri area [northern Kruger National Park] be reinstated', in which they succeeded in 1998. 'One of the values of the ceremony marking the agreement in May 1998 was the reassertion of the Makuleke sense of identity which closely linked to the land and fauna of the Pafuri triangle', Cock, J. & Fig. D. (1999), From colonial to community-based conservation: environmental justice and the national parks of South Africa, paper presented at the conference *African environments past and present*, Oxford, 5-8 July.

42 Interview with manager Levanga, 11 June 1998.

43 Liaison Officer at meeting with manager Levanga, the DA Chiredzi, Councillor of Ward 1 and representatives of Chief Gudo, 27 May 1998.

44 Conversation/interview with Liaison Officer, 14 July 1998.

45 Conversation with manager Levanga while visiting him with my supervisor, 1 July 1998.

in order to set snares on the property. The manager began to employ five guards from the Gudo community to whom he offered 5c a snare. It was a productive move, although he said he realised that they would probably not pick up snares of family or relatives. The manager claims that it was precisely at this particular point in time, when he was seriously counter-forcing poaching that the problems with the community commenced. What exacerbated the problem is that on occasions he also caught their cattle, which he found grazing on his property, and sold them back to them for Z\$1 a head. If they were not willing to pay, he threatened them he would 'follow the official procedure', which meant that he would impound the cattle and report the matter to the Veterinary Department. To retrieve their cattle the Gudo people would have to pay the Veterinary Services some Z\$ 10 per head. One day the manager's cattle were found grazing in the maize fields on communal land. The Gudo people caught them and he had to pay Z\$30 per head to get them back. In total he had to pay Z\$1200, Z\$600 for the damage done to the maize field and Z\$600 to get his cattle back.<sup>46</sup> According to another source, the official dealing with the issue had said to the manager that 'they were actually not talking about the issue, but about your relationship with your neighbours'.<sup>47</sup> Or to put in the words of yet another source, 'the manager's reputation followed the case like fire finding its way through dry grass'. Probably a minor reciprocal reckoning amongst the broader reciprocal reckoning about land.

There are two major economic developments on Levanga, the introduction of cash-crops, citrus and paprika, on seventy ha of irrigated land and a newly built safari camp which he has leased to Senuko for five years.<sup>48</sup> It is precisely these two economic centres of the property that are claimed by the Gudo people. His safari camp is built on the borders of the natural pans and his cash-crops seem to be located at the burial sites the Gudo people have mentioned. According to the manager, he tried four times to come to an agreement with the Gudo people about using the natural pans for their rituals. But, according to the manager again, on each occasion they did not keep their part of the bargain. The first time they asked him if they would make use of the pans for ritual purposes in 1989-1990, he granted them full freedom to do so unconditionally. They came in and to his astonishment caught all the fish. The same happened the second and third time. The fourth time they negotiated an access regulation for some three weeks in 1996. An MP was even invited to participate in the talks. The Gudo people wanted to come as a whole group, but the manager refused. The Liaison Officer of the SVCT also joined the talks and the final agreement was that eleven people would be allowed to come, for half a day and to catch eleven to fifteen fish. They would police the activity themselves. Nothing about the agreement was committed to paper. The whole agreement was an oral one. Despite the agreement, they all came in and 'slaughtered his pond'. Another source told me that it was rumoured that, when the ritual was taking place the manager's brother, the landowner, was on his way over from Chipinge. When he saw that all the fish had been taken from the pond, he kicked the representative,

46 Interview with manager Levanga, 11 June 1998.

47 Interview with Liaison Officer, 14 July 1998.

48 Senuko also take their guests to Levanga to see the elephants. When I drove back from my interview with the landowner the road was blocked for some time by a small herd of elephants.

which symbolically means kicking Chief Gudo, and confiscated the fish, which he later sold himself in Mutare.<sup>49</sup> The cash-crops were not yet there in 1998, but the manager was then clearing the bush and building the irrigation network. He was planning to plant paprika, which is sold as a cash-crop to the dyeing industry, and oranges.<sup>50</sup>

On 27 May 1998 a meeting was planned with all the stakeholders involved to discuss the issue on Levanga.<sup>51</sup> Present were the councillor of the ward (and the writer of the letter I quoted before at length), the DA Chiredzi, three representatives from Chief Gudo, the liaison officer and the manager. It is with this meeting that I began my Introduction right at the beginning of my thesis, because it so clearly shows the differences in identity between black and white in relation to land in Zimbabwe. When they had finally found the manager on his property, he was working somewhere at the new clearings. He invited them to come over either to his new safari camp or his house to talk over a cool drink. Deaf to all such offers, they insisted that they would hold the meeting under a shady tree on the border of the new clearing. It was around 11.15 hours and the sun was hot, but they did not want to create a situation in which they would have to put pressure on someone whose hospitality they had enjoyed and whose drinks they had drunk. In other words, they did not want the small reciprocal obligations to stand in the way of the bigger reciprocal reckoning over land. So the meeting started with a few opening lines from the liaison officer. The ward councillor was the one who took the lead in the discussion and claimed that in earlier days, the land at present falling under Levanga had been theirs and it had been forcefully taken from them under 'the old regime'. Now they had come to negotiate about that land, in particular the burial places and the natural pans. At first it seemed as if he wanted to discuss access to these places only. The manager replied that he did not know about any burial place, but if they would point them to him he would take care not to disturb them in the process of clearing the land. The councillor explained Shona culture precludes any direct pinpointing of a burial place, because to do so is improper and considered a bad omen. With regard to the pools, the manager told the delegation that he had already once negotiated access to them, which ended up with many people coming onto the property and 'slaughtering' the pond. So, access could be discussed but within firm conditions. A trench war loomed. At that stage the DA took over and tried to steer towards a compromise, but the

49 Conversation with Liaison Officer, 14 July 1998.

50 The trees will take some seven years to mature and earn money through export. It is a tricky business in the sense that the oranges must be absolutely unblemished to be considered for export. Even when a leaf has scratched the surface of an orange when blown by the wind, consequently scarring the skin of the orange it is considered unfit for export. A year with more than the usual amount of wind can cause serious damage. Even in a normal year this can add up to some 40% of the harvest. This 40% is then sold locally at a very low price. Especially when a farmer branches out into citrus and sends his first load to be checked, the oranges can be easily rejected. It is also interesting to note that there are now (1998) four properties within the SVC, i.e. Humani, Levanga, Masapas and Chishakwe, turning increasingly to agriculture and cash-crops because the SVC is not making the money it had hoped and projected in the first place, a problem especially related to the unavailability of buffalo. Information from tour with landowner of Humani, 29 May 1998 and conversation with landowner Levanga, 1 July 1998.

51 Based on observations while present at the meeting. During the meeting I had to make sure not to create the impression that I was 'one of them (white) landowners', which would probably be the 'natural' reaction of the other participants because apart from the landowner, I was the only white present. If I succeeded I shall never know for sure. But at least I consciously took care that I would not stand out physically and in terms of body language on the side of the landowner.

councillor in a manner verging on the aggressive interrupted him. He said that he could not face the Gudo people he represented with a compromise, they would have to obtain the pieces of land claimed in ownership. He said that he could not return with a message that he had negotiated a deal whereby so many people for so many minutes were allowed access to their burial and ritual sites. The manager in his turn said that anyone interested could see his title deeds, which would show the exact boundaries of his property. The councillor said that he had seen 'another map' on which the boundaries are not at all clear. Questioned he could not be more specific about it and was also to produce the map. The manager said that he had not expected the Gudo people to claim the land, but to negotiate access only. The councillor replied that he had written a letter concerning their claims to the land to the chairman of the SVC, in the expectation that he in turn would inform the manager of Levanga. Again he could not prove his point by showing the letter. Only later did I find out from the chairman that there was indeed a letter, the letter from which I took that long quote. But obviously that letter has never been communicated to the manager of Levanga as it was not a letter specifically addressed to the Chairman of the SVC, but to the DA Chiredzi. The councillor and the manager did most of the talking, while the DA tried to remain impartial. The representatives of Gudo were consulted in Shona on a few occasions during the meeting but, because the discussion was in English, the manager does not speak Shona, they were not able to participate directly in the discussions. Nor was the discussion in English translated for them by anyone. Despite this hitch in communications it became clear that here were two parties standing opposed to each other with neither prepared to compromise. The Gudo people adhered to their land claim and the manager to his title deeds. After the Liaison Officer explained that what the Gudo people described as their land had probably previously been state land to which they had had free access, so that it seemed as if they owned it. This image of previous ownership is reproduced in the Gudo community over and over again and the double fence reminds them daily that someone else took it. This evokes a strong desire to protest about this state of affairs. After one hour of arguing the two parties split again and went home without any further progress being made. The councillor concluded that the two parties were the victims of cultural misunderstanding: the manager could not understand their rituals and they did not understand anything about tourism development. What began as a meeting to negotiate access to certain pieces of land ended up with a straightforward land claim.<sup>52</sup>

Nothing was solved at the meeting and the struggle continued.<sup>53</sup> In September 1998, the Gudo people began to organise systematic cane-cutting on Levanga by youngsters between the age of eight and fifteen at night. They were later seen selling the sugarcane on the Mutare Road. Six of those youngsters were said to come from one family, and

52 It was interesting to note that, on the way back with the Gudo delegation in my car, it came out that they were not a united front. The DA nearly bitterly laughed at the idea, so fiercely defended by the councillor, that near the end of the twentieth century negotiations took place 'about something like a little pond and an ancient burial site'. So where I talk about 'us' and 'them', white and black, I certainly do not want to give the impression that there is only unity and consensus within the camps. In that sense it is an intellectual abstraction to talk about 'us' and 'them'. This holds true for the coalition of landowners who form the SVC as well as for the surrounding communities.

53 Information from Liaison Officer, 6 October 1998.

their father has one house in Chipinge and one in the Gudo community. Chief Gudo promised the Liaison Officer that he would talk to the father and warning him that if it should happen again, he would be expelled from the community. The trouble was that the cane-cutting was not the only problem to beset Levanga. The Gudo people also caused two veldfires<sup>54</sup> and continued to cut the fences in the cattle section to make snares out of them. Pigs found their way onto the property through the holes in the fence and proceeded forage in the cane fields, uprooting the sugarcane. This continues to happen despite the fact that meetings in which they try to solve this matter have taken place.<sup>55</sup> For his part the manager seems to try to make a serious effort to build up some kind of relationship with the community by sending the chief meat and supplying the community with building poles, thatching grass and firewood. He also arranged transport to bring it to take it to their villages.<sup>56</sup> The minutes state that, despite his donations and gifts, the Gudo people 'repay him' by poaching, stealing cane plus the cutting and theft of wire. This is made even worse because there is 'also the lack of co-operation to deal with the lawlessness in the area'. The overwhelming importance of the land as an inalienable possession taken from them long ago still seems to trigger off a spiral of negative reciprocities, despite trials of launching a positive exchange by gifts to and supplying the Gudo people with necessities. The manager considers it a lack of gratitude and has ordered that if pigs from the neighbouring communities are seen on the property, they will be shot, instead of being caught and returned them to the community, where it is asked whose pigs they are. In October 1998 a group of poachers from Gudo was followed by the game scouts, but all escaped save one. He was being held by the game scouts on Levanga overnight so that they could take him to the police the next day. But, when evening fell, a group of Gudo people came to where he was being held bearing bows, arrows and sticks and intimidated the game scouts to let their fellow poacher go or else... And the game scouts, although armed with rifles, (had to) let him go.<sup>57</sup>

Within the SVC the Gudo people have won themselves a reputation of being 'difficult'. In his annual report 1997-1998 the liaison officer writes that 'Gudo area has since been identified as an area posing the biggest threat to the SVC in terms of illegal hunting, veld fires, thefts etc. It was also discovered that the people in this area work in close collaboration with Chipinge people'.<sup>58</sup> Faced with this obduracy, the chairman and the liaison officer wanted to start a community project armed especially at co-operation with

the Gudo people and in 1996 proposed that they build a traditional village along the route to the SVC. Visitors to the SVC could then be guided through the traditional village, pay an entrance fee and buy locally-made curios. People under Chief Gudo had been the main source of labourers when Senuko was building its lodges. So the chairman wanted especially ask them to be the first to be offered a business opportunity in co-operation with the SVC. Taking due note of their image it was thought that if it could 'crack this nut' other communities would follow suit more easily.<sup>59</sup> However well intentioned, the plan aroused a storm of protest. The Gudo people were afraid that it was a strategy of the SVC to 'grab land from them', in the same way that the land of Levanga had been taken under the 'old government'.<sup>60</sup> The people opposing the plan were assured that nothing like that would happen<sup>61</sup> in this case and they selected a committee which would be responsible for guiding and organising the erection and building of the traditional village. The committee consisted of the younger brother of the chief and a group of selected and respected elders from the community.<sup>62</sup> So far so good but, try as they might they could not assemble a labour force. The chairman of the SVC was prepared to lend them Z\$ 5000, interest free and with no set time frame for repayment, in order to hire a crew to do the building for them. On top of the loan, the chairman provided building poles, thatching grass and the necessary transport. These latter extras were all free of charge. No wonder the Gudo people spoke about the project as 'the baby' of the chairman and liaison officer.<sup>63</sup> They eventually commenced building in May 1996, but progress was really slow. At the beginning of 1998 the state of play could be described as 'mbeva zhinji nadzina marisa', Shona for 'many mice produce little'. In March 1998 a meeting was held at which it was noted that the building was still not completed and they 'agreed to a deadline of April 30th to complete whatever needed to be done at the village'.<sup>64</sup> By May 1998 only some 60% of the projected traditional village had been build. Despite support of the councillor for the ward, the community never seems to have become really enthusiastic about the idea. The councillor said that they would borrow no more money from Senuko, but supply the labour from the community itself, if only to show that the project meant something to them. This was a timely decision as by now, building poles and thatching grass were being stolen from the site. They even had to appoint a caretaker who was supposed to keep an eye on things and prevent material from being stolen. But not after long the caretaker was driven away by means by verbal threats that he would be beaten up and by intimidation through witchcraft. So, once again the building site of the traditional village unguarded and the (by now nearly) inevitable happened. In May 1998 the village was burned down. In

54 A game guide at Senuko told me in a conversation on 30 September 1998 that there had been a tremendous veldfire on Levanga and that they had fought it most of the evening. The moment they had it under control, it started somewhere else. The spoor was followed by trackers and they found out that people were carrying a poached eland out of the SVC and on their way had lit veldfires to keep the game scouts busy. The trackers ended up in the village where they found out that one poacher had fled. The second poacher was arrested and handed over to the police. They say that he belonged to the same family as the young cane-cutters. This gave the liaison officer the idea of a conspiracy mounted by a certain group within the Gudo community which constantly try to distort the relations between Levanga and the community by plotting against agreements.

55 Minutes of a meeting held at Dombo Primary School, 21 September 1998.

56 Ibid: During the meeting it is mentioned what the manager had already given to his neighbours: 1500 bundles of thatching grass, 224 tons of cane tops, 900 building poles, 1700 cords of firewood and supplied transport.

57 Interview with Chairman, SVC 9 October 1998.

58 Yearly Report, April 1997 - March 1998, Liaison Office. See also cane cutting incident.

59 Interview with Chairman SVC, 8 July 1998.

60 Although it never was Tribal Trust Land, always Stateland. It never belonged to the Gudo people in that sense.

61 More than five meetings were held with all the stakeholders and the chairman and the liaison officer organised a fieldtrip for the chieftainship and the committee members to visit Mahenya in the Chipinge District where there is a similar project, and where they were able to talk to the chairman of the Mahenya committee. Mahenya is also a community project of the chairman of the SVC. After the visit, the Gudo people seemed convinced.

62 Minutes of Dombo Traditional Home Committee Meeting at Dombo School, at May 1996.

63 Conversation with Liaison Officer, 8 May 1998.

64 Minutes of a meeting held at Zungudza Primary School, 25 March 1998.



August 1998 the chairman and the liaison officer set up one last meeting with the Gudo people telling them that they wanted to sell the idea for a traditional village to someone else. The people asked if they could have one last chance, up to 10 September. That request was granted 'but they were warned that by the due date, 10th September 1998, there is no tangible improvement on completion of the project, there was not going to be another consultation meeting and the decision will be upheld. The meeting ended with a prayer'.<sup>65</sup> In September, at a meeting with the Nyangambe community at the Nyangambe school they proposed that these people build a traditional village, which could be marketed to clients from Mukazi, Mukwazi Hammond and Senuko.<sup>66</sup> To be continued...

### *The Angus-Matsai case*

On the west-side of the SVC one case in the south-west between the SVC and neighbouring communities is dominating the scene, that of the Matsai Communal land. It is a fitting and major case to illustrate all the aspects of reciprocal exchange that I have described and explored in the previous chapters, being matters of different identities, material and immaterial exchange, historical and national context of black and white relations in southern Africa, The Land Issue in Zimbabwe and the symbolic role of the fence and the wish to exploit hunting within the SVC. The incidents I will describe here form part of an ongoing process of hostility between Matsai Communal Land and commercial land, now part of the SVC. It can be brought back to the issue of land alienation, which they never accepted and protested and continue to reclaim. In 1997 two major 'vehicles' occurred which could be used separately and in combined cumulative force to (re)write their statement about the land issue once more. The first vehicle was the FMD outbreak on Mukwazi in August 1997 and the second the land designation programme, which was published by the government in November 1997. These incidents also shed light on the particular role of the Trust as mediating body between the communities and the SVC. In this case it will be shown that the Trust was not able, nor the Liaison Officer or Joint Committee for that matter, to play a significant role in representing the communities towards the SVC. Let me start with describing the consequences of the FMD outbreak and its major impact on the relations between SVC and the Matsai community.

After it was suggested, and later verified by laboratory tests, that there was indeed a FMD infection in the SVC, it was up to the DVS in Harare to decide upon further action. The DVS began by stepping up surveillance in the province as well as setting up road blocks in and around the affected areas. Cattle on Mukwazi Ranch, which is fenced out of the SVC, are no longer allowed to be sold on the hoof. They may only be sold to be

65 Minutes of meeting held at the Gudo traditional village, 10 August 1998.

66 Personal observations at meeting with Nyangambe community, 6 September 1998. One interesting but highly relevant sideline in this context is that the manager of Mukwazi told me after the meeting quite bitterly that he had recognised 'at least eight people' who had also invaded his property earlier on. His body language and that of the landowner of Mukazi reflected and expressed their thoughts on the matter.

slaughtered. One thing became clear after the DVS had checked on the SVC fence, namely is that the FMD outbreak had not occurred because of a break in the fence.<sup>67</sup> This meant at least that the SVC could not be attacked on their fence maintenance. Nevertheless the SVC was ordered to upgrade the fence between the Mkwazine River and the Turwi River (sixty-seventy km) on its western side, by raising the total height to 2.4 metres and adding veldspan to it.<sup>68</sup> The puzzle was, if it were not buffalo getting through the fence, what was the reason of the outbreak? It was suspected that it could have been caused by other cloven-hoofed animals like kudu and impala which are able to jump over the fence. Hence the demand the fence be raised. These cloven-hoofed animals might have been the carriers of FMD, having brought the disease into the communal areas by drinking from the same water as the cattle. To check this suspicion, the SVC was asked to collect and send in blood samples of cloven-hoofed kudu and impala in particular to check if they could be identified as the carriers of the disease.<sup>69</sup> In the CCM at the time the chairman said that he had spoken to someone from the Cattle Producers Association (CPA) who had said that 'apart from a few hotheads making allegations and claims, the situation was under control'.<sup>70</sup>

The DVS decided that all cattle for the communal areas had to be vaccinated, but this would destroy the 'clear area'. So on second thoughts they decided that, to protect the national herd, all the infected cattle should be slaughtered. The beasts would be replaced with clear and qualitatively slightly better cattle through the CSC. It all seemed clear and above board but the communal farmers in Bikita and Zaka refused the swap, because they doubted that the cattle would be of the same value as the ones being slaughtered<sup>71</sup>[HW1][HW2]. What they meant to say was that they saw the value of their cattle was not so much in terms of meat prices, as in draught power, for ploughing their fields. If all these animals were replaced by new cattle they would lose all their trained animals and it will take years before they could school the new cattle to be used as draught animals.<sup>72</sup> Now the communities were really angry in the sense that they had to pay for living next to the SVC, without benefiting from it. At the CCM in July 1998, the chairman of the SVC informed the committee that the communities see the SVC 'as a burden, loud and clear'. For that reason the chairman, accompanied by representatives from the Zimbabwe Farmers Union (ZFU) and the DVS, went to speak to the communities and explained to them the possibilities of working together with the SVC in a joint venture-like structure, the Trust. The basic idea being that the Trust would buy wildlife by finding its own funds and then leasing the founder stock to the SVC. The SVC would pay the Trust a lease price and also for the progeny of the founder stock. This would cre-

67 Conservator's report, September 1997.

68 CCM 8 July 1998 and interview with Conservator, 5 October 1998.

69 This suspicion turned out to be founded as in seven out of thirty samples between 22 March and 5 May 1998, they discovered high titres for FMD 'ranging in value from 40 to greater than 640 for SATII.(...) The Vet Department are concerned about the proportion of positive titres especially with one showing such a high value that it was probably showing symptoms of the disease at the time it was shot', Conservator's report, 10 June 1998. Although impala and kudu 'will clear the disease out of their system after a while', buffalo contain 'a maintained infectious system', Minutes CCM, 4 November 1998.

70 CCM Minutes 3 September 1997.

71 *The Herald*, 18 September 1997, Cattle slaughtering hits snag in Zaka, Bikita.

ate a fund with which the Trust could initiate all kinds of community development projects in the neighbouring communities. According to the chairman, the ZFU, which represents communal farmers in Zimbabwe, was very enthusiastic about the potential of the idea and would have liked to co-operate on it. Teetering on the brink it asked the SVC to give the communities something tangible 'as a token' that the SVC was willing to help and invest in them. That token could consist of cleaning three infected diptanks.<sup>73</sup> The Chairman added that it would be good to work on such a token, as the current situation was not conducive to the whole land designation process and the position of Angus, Mukwazi and Mukazi, formerly undivided as Angus, in the process. None of the three properties was on the official designation list, which seems to have irritated the Provincial Government and there are rumours that it are trying again to get it on the list.<sup>74</sup> It seems the enthusiasm about delivering a token of goodwill had quickly faded away because at the CCM in October of the same year, the issue resurfaced again with force. The chairman informed the committee that he had been called by Chris Foggin, Principal Research Officer of the DVS<sup>75</sup>, about the FMD issue. Foggin had warned him that the issue could remove the head of the DVS, Dr Hargreaves, from his post as the whole issue was now 'turning political'. He had asked the chairman to 'do his part on the ground level' and convene a meeting with the Matsai people. The chairman went on to reiterate that this problem could only be solved through the Trust-idea and that the SVC should now devote all its energy to the Trust'. 'If we don't deal with it we will have pressures on our boundaries we have never known before'.<sup>76</sup>

The buffalo and other cloven-hoofed animals which were seen as a burden by the Matsai peoples and not these alone. Nor was it first the desire of the SVC to utilise wildlife through commercial hunting in their conservancy, which troubled the communal farmers and for which they felt they had to pay the price. A major concern had to do with the land itself. When Angus was still undivided and belonged to Devuli, it had attracted labour from the Matsai community and, as was the tradition in those days, you 'didn't pay them, but you fed them'. So it gave them a small plot on (combined) Angus land to plough and plant with their food crops. During the Liberation Struggle, Angus was abandoned as I described earlier and left to itself. Surging the opportunity the people came onto the property, in a sense illegally, and settled down. Even after Independence, Angus was not immediately put back into operation. When operations were finally restarted on Angus, the people refused to leave on the grounds that they were or had been employees of Angus and therefore had the right to live on the property, even after retirement. After Independence the issue was 'politicised'. In 1983, thirty-three families were evicted from the property by the then DA of Bikita, because it was discov-

ered that they never 'officially worked for Angus'. Only three families, who had officially been employed on Angus, were allowed to stay and live on the property. The rest of the houses were burned down. The DA who had been in charge of the operation was then transferred to another district and his replacement was 'a weakling', so the families began to come back on the property and nothing was done about it. The new DA claimed that he could not find the file on the issue and the process had to begin all over again. The Provincial Governor at Masvingo, who was brought in as an arbitrator, believed the families formerly evicted were right. By now their number had swelled to seventy-two families and this 'somehow' became the official figure. The management of Devuli never agreed with that figure but, nevertheless, the seventy-two families were granted the right to live there. In those days Angus was still a cattle ranch and the veterinary fence was situated farther inland than the official boundary of the property indicated. This was done for reasons of convenience as it followed an easier landscape than going up hill and down dale. It enabled the fences to be monitored from by a 4X4. When that veterinary fence was erected inside the legal boundaries of Angus, it was no use of erecting another fence according to the boundaries of the title deeds, which would inevitably be situated, relatively close to a well-kept and maintained veterinary fence. This situation persisted as long as Angus remained a cattle ranch and the Matsai people took the veterinary fence for the property fence, going right up to that fence to build their huts and encroaching on the land just behind the veterinary fence. When Angus became part of the SVC and had to join in erecting the buffalo fence, it located the fence on the exact boundary according to the title deeds, which in the meantime had been divided into three and sold.<sup>77</sup> But the Matsai people started to complain verbally that the fence was now on their land. They said that they knew 'from their forefathers', who could indicate exactly where the boundary was.<sup>78</sup> They have persisted doggedly in this interpretation, even when Angus became part of the SVC. When the SVC presented them with the idea of the Trust, they said that 'the issue of resettling the seventy-two minus families had to be resolved before the Conservancy tries to sell its idea [of the Trust] to them'.<sup>79</sup> They added that the families 'have very high expectations of getting land from the SVC for resettlement'.<sup>80</sup> So the SVC had to come up with a solution.

The initial solution proposed was an idea namely put forward by the former owner of the undivided Angus, Rob Cunningham, and the chairman of the SVC, to let the SVC buy roughly one-third of Mukazi and sell that stretch of land to the Trust, asking it to exploit it for the benefit of the communities: not by living on it but by utilising it for wildlife and in that process create revenue for the people. The provincial governor also

72 Interview with land owner of Mukwazi Ranch, 11 August 1998. The landowner said explicitly that he was empathetic to this argument of the communal farmers.

73 A diptank is a concrete 'bath' for cattle, with a combination of water and insecticides into which cattle are plunged to get rid of ticks and other parasites. If people refer to a diptank in a conversation, or in a meeting like this CCM, they usually do not refer to the actual diptank but the catchment area it represents, interview with land owner of Mukwazi, 11 August 1998.

74 CCM, 8 July 1998.

75 *The Farmer*, 27 November 1997. Dr. Chris Foggin wins 1997 Wildlife Oscar.

76 CCM, 7 October 1998.

77 The then owner of Angus first had to ask permission from the government to subdivide the land, which was allowed. Then he had to offer it for sale first to the government. Only when it signed a statement of 'no-interest' was he allowed to try and attract other buyers, which happened.

78 Interview with landowner Chishakwe, 18 June 1998. The same story of people 'encroaching' on Angus property was also related to me in an interview with the liaison officer of the Trust, interview 18 May 1998 and co-owner of Humani, 10 September 1998. It is of no use asking oneself the question if the claims of the Matsai community about their forefathers is 'true' or not. Their statement should be interpreted as part of an oral reciprocal exchange of arguments with the SVC.

79 Yearly Report Liaison Officer, April 1995 to March 1996, 26 May 1996.

80 Undated monthly Progress Report Liaison Officer, 1996.

liked the idea. But the SVC proved to be unable to raise the required funding, repeating its failure to raise funds through donors to finance their restocking programme, to buy the land which greatly disappointed all parties involved. Mukazi was then bought by a new owner who said that he would give them a piece of land and when Mukwazi could not solve the problem either they found a 'solution' by erecting the SVC fence and excluding the families. But, although they were now outside the fence, they were still on the property according to the title deeds.

To solve the matter once and for all the SVC asked Agritex<sup>81</sup> experts to come in and do a survey in order to find a more suitable spot for the families. After ground checking they came to the conclusion that '(t)he total area of the marked out area [for the families] is 688 ha of which only 75 ha is potential arable. There is 150 ha (...), which has got very deep soils, but got a slope greater than 12% which reduces it to class 7. This means that this area can only be used for grazing. If this area is to be cultivated then strict conservation measures should be followed to avoid siltation of Mkazi river'. So, in fact, that particular piece of land could not accommodate the seventy-two families. They selected another area of 500 ha on the property which would be suitable land for the resettlement of the families and they came with land 'of which 300 ha is potential arable, 150 ha is class 8 and 50 ha is class 7'.<sup>82</sup> On early drawings of the SVC it is even possible to see a piece of Mukazi which is demarcated as 'proposed village area'.<sup>83</sup> The whole process proved very time-consuming. In May 1996 the DA of Bikita and a representative of Chiredzi District 'unanimously agreed that the alternative area to the south of Mukazi Ranch which is 500 ha in extent was the best option (...)'. It was also agreed that the Conservancy could fence in the area that was fenced out, once a favourable decision had been made about the 500 ha. The families in question were said to be prepared<sup>84</sup> to give their labour for free to assist in the re-alignment of the fence. '(...) The Chairman reiterated the sentiments of all the officials by indicating that a solution of the Matsai/Angus issue was long overdue and putting it to rest now through a solution acceptable to both sides was likely to have positive effects for both the programme and the people'.<sup>85</sup> In his monthly report to the SVC the liaison officer states that '(t)he Matsai/Angus issue is now bound to move forward. The officials of Bikita and Chiredzi districts have unanimously agreed to a report by Agritex officials'. It is expected that these developments 'will put this issue to rest before the end of this year 1996'.<sup>86</sup> It would take longer and in August 1997 a final report was released which seems to confirm that the matter could now be finalised. Land was offered to the affected families by the present landowner of Mukazi and Agritex had chosen a suitable section. Although during the

final visits of the Agritex officials to Mukazi the report seems to indicate that the landowners of Mukazi and Mukwazi did not really enthusiastically support the process on the ground. 'The third meeting was scheduled for 30/07/1997 at the lower boundary (Mukazi/Mukwazi) to discuss and agree on the boundary of the 500 hectares potential arable. Agritex and affected farmers walked the boundary and established the 500 ha. The vehicle which we were using had a breakdown and had been taken to Chiredzi for repairs. We were also supposed to meet the landowner and manager to finalise on the boundary and arrange that they take us back to base. May be due to other commitments they did not turn up and we ended up walking for 2.4 kms. to base. On 31 July 1997 affected farmers, Save Valley Conservancy representation and Agritex went back to the lower boundary hoping to meet the landowners. Due to the bad terrain of the Ranch and the size of our vehicle, we ended up walking for +15 kms. to and from the meeting point to where we left the vehicle. (...) The landowners and manager again did not twin up'. The Liaison Officer reported that '(t)he unfortunate behaviour by the owners of Mukazi Ranch made it impossible to finalise the matter. A full report was compiled by the Agritex officers and copies of this report were distributed to all the concerned parties. I think all other concerned parties are looking to the farmer to honour his part of the agreement'.<sup>87</sup> But despite his attitude to the matter, the 'landowner of Mukazi Ranch (...) finally accepted the recommendation by Agritex Chiredzi'<sup>88</sup> and the Agritex report concludes with the expectation that 'the affected farmers can actively sit at their new site on or before 31/11/1997 which happens to be the start of the rainy season'.<sup>89</sup> To make absolutely certain a rider that 'agreements made between Save Valley Conservancy and land owners and/or Manager should be in black and white, signed and circulated to other players to remove the element of suspicion' was added.<sup>90</sup> It was now actually only a matter of Agritex finalising the paperwork. In September 1996 the liaison officer was already anticipating the Agritex paperwork and wrote in his quarterly report: 'I am happy to report that this matter [Angus issue] has been resolved'.<sup>91</sup> '(...) (T)he fencing was due to start immediately upon receipt of the relevant documentation from Agritex. This was in August 1997; since then the documentation has not been forthcoming. (...) It has been agreed by all relevant parties that the settlement of the families concerned on this area of land would have resolved the issue completely'.<sup>92</sup> But in November 1997 the officially announced land designation programme cut right through this solution. Since the August report nothing has been heard or seen from Agritex. A reciprocal reckoning for insults received in the process?

After the publication of the land designation programme in November 1997, the protests and claims of the Matsai people began again with renewed fervour<sup>93</sup> and in August 1998 they started to invade Mukazi, Mukwazi and Angus. At first, at Mukazi

81 Agricultural & Extension Services.

82 Letter Agritex to DA Chiredzi, 7 December 1995.

83 Undated map of the SVC. On the same map are also two cattle areas indicated, on Mukwazi and Mkwasine.

84 In minutes of a meeting in October 1996 between the stakeholders it is explicitly mentioned that the families concerned were 'more than ready' to give their labour for free to re-align the fence. Minutes of meeting at Chiremwaremwa Business Centre, 25 October 1996.

85 Minutes of meeting at Chiremwaremwa Business Centre, 2 May 1996.

86 Monthly Progress Report April 1996. When the Liaison Officer started working for the Trust, but in fact for the SVC, he used to write a report every month and once a year an annual report. But because of the fact that he never got any feedback or any other form of reaction he stopped writing the monthly reports later on.

87 Progress Report Liaison Officer, May to September 1997, 8 October 1997.

88 Monthly Report Liaison Officer, August 1996, 4 September 1996.

89 Report of Agritex to DA Chiredzi, on visit made to Mukazi Ranch, 6 August 1997.

90 Ibid: 3.

91 Quarterly Report Liaison Officer, June 1996 - August 1996, 10 September 1996.

92 Information sheet 'Background on Angus Ranch', which I received from the manager of Angus during an interview, 15 June 1998.

93 Interview with landowner Masapas, 11 August 1998 and Liaison Officer, 18 May 1998.

and Mukwazi, it all happened fairly peacefully, although the property owner said that there were some '5-6 ex-combattants' and that the group of 150-200 'was behaving like primitive people'. The landowner asked the DA of Chiredzi to come with him and talk to them and the DA had been '100% co-operative'. The police could not attend, because they 'had no transport'. The landowner said that he would provide for transport, after which the policeman said 'just a minute' and 'never came back'.<sup>94</sup> When he and the DA finally arrived at the spot where the people were invading the property, they were, according to the DA, in a pretty violent mood. When he asked them if they wanted him to address them on the issue, some said yes and some said no and he then decided not to do it, because he thought 'that it needed only a spark' to 'let the situation turn violent'. Although there was no police, on this occasion he was accompanied by his guards. He himself said he had had a firearm in his pocket and if necessary he would 'shoot to kill' and had instructed his guards likewise. This was not necessary and the people later left the property peacefully.<sup>95</sup> From that date onward the invasions were regular and grew increasingly destructive. The invaders started to cut down trees and threatened people, especially game guards. The Conservator reported all the invasions to the CFU representative in Masvingo by e-mail, emphasising the lack of support the landowners and managers were receiving from the local authorities, specifically the police, which he explains as the outcome of 'instructions from the top'. In the e-mails he also indicated that he did not understand what made the invaders act the way they did. He specifically mentions the fact that the invaders announced that they would begin to disrupt the activities of the labourers working on the upgrading of the fence. 'This type of activities makes no sense at all. Even less than the other activities', like clearing fields on Angus where there is no water or trees for felling.<sup>96</sup> From the perspective of the underlying inalienability of the land and the symbolic role of fences as the signature of the landowner, the disruption is in fact perfectly logical and obviously the only possible line of action to be adopted. The people want to stop or erase the signature of a white landowner and consider the land theirs. In a last, hand-written report on Angus to the CFU representative in Masvingo, the conservator observes, much to his surprise, that when told by the police that they were acting illegally, invaders had said that they were unaware that what they were doing was illegal.<sup>97</sup> How can you occupy your own land illegally? The invasions were creating intensive radio contact between the properties affected and between properties and the head office of the SVC. And because the radio system is open, it was possible to follow the process by just listening to and noting the communication over the radio. At a certain point the manager of Mukwazi reported that 'they start like chop-chop', indicating that people started to cut down trees and 'they don't think they will stop at Mukwazi'.<sup>98</sup> Game guards were threatened that the invaders would 'have their arms and legs for supper'.<sup>99</sup> When people later also began to invade Angus they con-

tinued with this cutting down of trees. It was done at random and there was no discernible pattern, all at about one metre above the ground. They also stripped pieces of bark from the trees to make their protests known as a kind of 'natural graffiti'. They even started to clear the bush systematically as if preparing their fields for an upcoming agricultural season, and erected temporary huts.<sup>100</sup>

The role of the DAs in this context is ambiguous to say the least. Unquestionably they are responsible for all the types of land falling under their district, communal and commercial land. They have to represent both. But in the context of the land designation process this is very difficult as they also chair the District Land Acquisition Committee. This committee has to submit ideas and applications on properties they think should be designated to the provincial level. In this case the whole Matsai community, not only the seventy-two families to be accommodated, have applied at the DA's office for the designation of 'the whole of Angus'. So while the DA Chiredzi accompanies the landowner to see the people who are invading his property and urging them to get off the property, at the same time he is applying for its designation in other circles. The landowner is saying that the DA of Chiredzi has been '100% co-operative' takes on an ironic twist from this perspective. From the district level the application for designation goes to the Provincial Land Acquisition Committee, chaired by the PG and finally the application reaches the National Land Acquisition Committee, which is chaired by Minister Msika. Although there has been an application for the designation of the whole of Angus through this process, there has been no reply yet, although they are expecting a positive outcome soon.<sup>101</sup>

The accommodation of the seventy-two families and the land designation programme of November 1997 have considerably delayed the upgrading of the fence as a precaution against future FMD outbreaks and in compliance with orders of the DVS. In the Conservator's report of 1 April 1998 it is said that '(t)he Veterinary Department have indicated serious concern that the upgrading of the fence has not commenced and have requested that the Chairman and myself [i.e. the Conservator] meet with the Director of the Department of Veterinary Services and Mr. Bob Swift, the CFU deputy director of commodities to discuss their concerns and issues related to the upgrading of the fences (...) The seriousness with which the Department and the cattle producers view the fence, should not be underestimated and a decision needs to be made at this meeting to proceed immediately with the alterations'.<sup>102</sup> In his July report he states that '(a)ll materials except one load of poles have been received for the fence upgrade (...) A person to oversee the upgrade exercise has been found and I hope to get this started early next week. The Mukazi fence re-route issue requires sorting out before that fence can be upgraded'.<sup>103</sup> This last remark was repeated in his August report.<sup>104</sup> Since Agritex went to 'finalise the paper work' nothing more has been heard. If the solution were accepted and formalised, they would have to take this into account when deciding the exact loca-

94 Interview landowner Mukwazi, 11 August 1998.

95 Conversation with DA Chiredzi at the DA Canteen, 24 September 1998.

96 E-mails Conservator to CFU representative in Masvingo, 13 August and 19 August 1998.

97 Undated and hand-written report of Conservator on Angus invasions. Date probably beginning of September, as he mentions the coming visit of the PG on 14 September 1998.

98 Radio message 17 August 1998.

99 Conversation with the person in charge of radio contact on 18 August 1998, when Mukwazi was invaded.

100 Tour to see the damage done on the property and interview with manager of Angus, 10 September 1998.

101 Interview with Chairman Joint Committee, 7 July 1998.

102 Conservator's report, 1 April 1998.

103 Conservator's report, 8 July 1998.

104 Conservator's report 5 August 1998.

tion of the upgraded fence on Mukazi. In the meantime they had begun to upgrade the fence on Mukwazi. When the upgrading of the fence was finished on Mukwazi, they had to continue the work on Mukazi and needed to know where exactly to erect the fence. There was no joy as the Agritex deal was still not finalised. A final attempt was made to settle the deal, and the liaison officer convened a meeting at Mukazi Ranch on Monday 5 October 1998 with all necessary political stakeholders involved, namely representatives of the Matsai people, i.e. two ward councillors, the DAs of Bikita and Chiredzi, and Agritex. But then, in the late afternoon of Friday 2 October 1998, the acting DA of Chiredzi, the DA himself was on leave, called the SVC office, while the liaison officer was out, to say that the 'meeting had to be postponed indefinitely', without giving any further reasons. It later transpired that one ward councillor had refused to attend the meeting, despite the fact that the higher level hierarchy in Bikita had asked him to do so. The other ward councillor would have come, although he had not been re-elected at the latest council elections, which meant that at the meeting, strictly speaking, he could no longer be officially considered as representative of his ward. The rumours had it that he was on his way out of local government because he was not elected anymore because he had spoiled his chances of re-election because he was too positive about the SVC. Not for nothing was he the chairman of the Joint Committee of the SVC, mediating between communities and SVC. And that was that, and the message from the communities resounded loud and clear: we are no longer interested in the plans we made earlier, we are after the whole of the Angusses.<sup>105</sup> End of solution, but not end of story. A few complications have to be added to integrate the case even further.

In the first place it should be made clear why the Matsai people were no longer interested in the plan to peg out a suitable 500 ha of land to be accommodated, before the official designation of Angus was still not decided upon. Why throw away a good opportunity when a new one is not yet assured? Why take the risk? In a meeting between the Provincial Governor (PG), the DA of Bikita District, the chief of the Matsai people, the chairman of the SVC, its conservator and the liaison officer of the Trust, held on 20 August 1998, the mouth of the chief let drop that the PG himself had said in a meeting with the Matsai people in Mashoko at the beginning of 1998 that 'the whole of Angus' would be designated by June 1998. The Matsai people had waited till the end of July to see if his words would come true. When this was not the case, they began to invade the properties to make clear their point that they were after the land and wanted the PG to live up to his promises. They gave the PG a week to convene a meeting and settle things, otherwise they would move in and start building their villages. The landowners and their managers were also invited to this meeting.<sup>106</sup> It is interesting to note that they were not speaking about the sub-divided Angus, but of Angus proper, also comprising Mukazi and Mukwazi. History seemed to be repeating itself. It is the Matsai people versus Angus, just as it was during the Liberation Struggle. The PG indeed set up a meeting, although not within a week. The meeting was arranged for 14 September 1998 at the Old Mashoko Mission.<sup>107</sup> The excuse of the PG for the late meeting was that he had

been out of the country, so he could not comply exactly with the demand. Therefore it had to be a fortnight later. 'Coincidentally', in the meantime, the PG was able to digest the results of the disappointing donor conference (9-11 September 1998) which betrayed the fact that the donors would not support the programme financially and criticised the way the Zimbabwean government was handling the process (see Chapter 4). Be that as it may, the PG was too late with his meeting and the people began to invade again. This time neither Mukazi nor Mukwazi was their goal, but only of Angus. Whereas the invasions on Mukazi and Mukwazi had been fairly peaceful, on Angus they did substantial damage by chopping down trees. It is pregnant with significance that they continued their invasions on Angus, because that property is the name-bearer of the Angus property on which they have inexorably set their sights. So if any location would suit their purpose for conveying their message that they want Angus designated loud and clear, it would be the property still bearing its name. Adding to the plausibility of this symbolic interpretation of their invasions is the irrefutable fact that Angus has no water. The natural water is on Mukazi and Mukwazi, but not on Angus. Angus has to pump water from the Turwi. This explains why, after the sub division, Angus was never asked to accommodate people and these were sent only to Mukazi and Mukwazi. There is simply no water, unless you are able to pay for a pump. Even the dam, which is on Angus, is a strictly artificial one, in which there is only water because it is pumped into the dam to keep 'the croc happy'.<sup>108</sup> So the people invaded Angus not because they really envisaged living on the property but because its name signifies the historic continuity of their struggle over land.

At last, the meeting with the PG was settled and they gathered at Old Mashoko, which is the traditional and general meeting place if Wards 1, 2 and 3 have something to discuss together. It is an open space sheltered by six huge mango trees, which give sufficient shade when the sun burns down mercilessly during the summer. It is the same spot at which the PG made his earlier announcement that Angus would be designated. The PG came along in his chauffeur-driven, air-conditioned Jeep Chrysler to meet the people. While no police had ever showed up at any time during the recent invasions on Angus, now the police from Bikita and Mashoko were present in full uniform and with two cars, Landrovers. Approximately 500 people had gathered, sitting on the ground in the shade of the mango trees, while the PG stood in front of them, addressing them. From a spectator's point of view to the right of the PG were two lines of chairs for the local leadership, in this case two assistant DAs from Chiredzi (under which the three properties fall) and officials from Bikita (under which the Matsai Area falls), and three ward councillors from Matsai. No-one from the SVC showed up.<sup>109</sup> During his speech the PG never mentioned the three ranches as distinct properties, but constantly referred

108 Interview with Manager Angus, 10 September 1998.

109 One property owner gave the reason that his manager could not make it 'because he went to Harare to repair a freezer'. Another manager said that he was 'tied up at the ranch'. The Conservator was on leave on Lake Kariba and the Chairman was recovering in Harare from an attack of cerebral malaria. The vice-chairman also sent word that he was 'unable to attend'. It turned out that I was the only white face around. When the PG saw me coming he took me for a property owner or at least as one of their managers. So he sent a police officer to invite me to the line of chairs in the front. I refused, saying that I was only a researcher and preferred to sit amongst the crowd under the mango trees, so as not to give the wrong impression to the people that I was somehow a stakeholder in the battle.

105 Participating in conversation at SVC office, 5 October 1998.

106 Conversation with Liaison Officer, 27 August 1998.

107 Participant observation and conversations with Liaison Officer during the day, 14 September 1998.



there were not enough drinks in the house. The liaison officer and myself served out some beers, seven, and for the rest of the group we serve chilled water, all to give the manager the opportunity to talk to the PG. In the course of their conversation the manager asked the PG why the government was resettling people in Natural Region V? To which the PG answered that '80% of the people live here, so what choice do we have?'<sup>113</sup> The manager also asked point blank if Angus had already been designated, to which the PG replied, 'no, you were designated, but not gazetted. But Angus will be designated in the next phase'.<sup>114</sup>

The week after the PG had addressed the people of Matsai in Old Mashoko, there were no more invasions, but there was an increase in poaching, the work of youngsters who went onto the property with dogs to chase kudus off the property, passing them through the fence onto the communal land, after which they were killed and eaten. In one week they had poached one kudu from Mukwazi and three from Mukazi. But from 28 September 1998, they also began to invade Angus again. The appeal made by the PG had obviously not made a lasting impression.<sup>115</sup> The conservator informed the police who said that they did not have direct orders to do anything about invasions. He also tried to reach the DAs of Chiredzi and Bikita, but could not contact either of them. Then the liaison officer called the PG directly, who said that he would only be informed about this through the DA of Chiredzi and Bikita, and certainly not through the liaison officer.<sup>116</sup> The conservator tried the police again and to his surprise they replied that they would go out to Angus. When the conservator asked them if they were going to arrest anyone for squatting or trespassing, they said that they could not tell him yet as they had to be 'very diplomatic' about the issue. Later it emerged that the police had indeed been on Angus but that they did not do anything and, following their visit, the people remained on the property overnight for the first time. It was rumoured that when the police asked them to move they had threatened the officers saying that if the latter did anything, they would take up arms and defend themselves. The following day, one of the Angus landowners came down from Bulawayo in his plane for the very first time during the invasions and stayed overnight on the property, while his manager was on leave, and met the squatters the next day. He claims<sup>117</sup> he had told them that he was 'the big boss from Bulawayo' and had shaken hands with them, and in order to respond to his gesture many had to put their *pangas* and axes in their other hand. After that he offered them a drink which they happily accepted. He suggested that the Angus manager had to apply some 'reverse psychology' and offer the ringleaders of the invasion jobs on the property. After this suggestion, there was no further follow-up as far as I can

judge and he left for Bulawayo. But the story does not end there. That same day I had the conversation with the owner of Angus the police went to the property again and used three teargas grenades to underline the urgency of their message. They arrested six people and tore down the temporary structures the invaders had put up. The next day<sup>118</sup> I ran into the manager, returned from leave, in Chiredzi town where he told me that the same invaders had now come to him to ask if they could use the thatching grass and poles they had used for their temporary accommodation (!) to which he agreed. On 8 October 1998 they convened a meeting<sup>119</sup>, between the invaders, a group of thirty to forty people, the police, the manager of Angus and a PR Officer of the police, at the place where the invaders had settled on Angus. The message from the police was straight forward, they had their orders from the provincial level which informed them they had to be strict with, i.e. arrest and prosecute, any invaders. People had to give the government time to go through all the official procedures to designate a property. The villagers were told: 'it is finished'. Much to everybody's surprise the invaders replied that 'it was not finished' and that they would remain on the property, while the police and the manager went their separate ways. They also told them, that should they want to talk to them again, they could always find them at this same place on Angus. And the police did nothing.

It was not known if these particular group of Matsai people had anything to do with the letter of 6 October 1998, i.e. two days earlier, which was sent, and signed only with the 'Bikita farmers', to all ministers and ministries, starting at the President's office right down to the lowest level, stating that the SVC must be held 'fully responsible' for the FMD outbreak the previous year. They also said that they did not like the idea of swapping their infected cattle for 'clean cattle', but saw the necessity of it, so they wanted to go along with the proposal, under two conditions:

1. The SVC must accept and take the complete blame for the outbreak and must pay Z\$ 9000,- compensation per head of infected cattle;
2. The SVC must create a buffer zone of some ten km between the buffalo in the SVC and the cattle of Matsai communal areas.<sup>120</sup>

The SVC office diary mentioned on 12 October 1998 '11 squatters, chopping trees + fencing around lands'. 13 October 1998 the police went in again and arrested five people, but the Office diary on 15 October says 'squatters 15 in number'. 16 October I again ran into the manager of Angus in town, where he told me that he had spoken to the police (again). They had told him that the day before they had received 'an instruction' that they were no longer supposed to arrest any squatters. The manager could not tell me where the instruction had augmented, but the result was that all the people who had been arrested so far (eleven) had been released without further punishment. At the local level this seemed the end of the game. The CFU representative in Masvingo and the chairman, recovered from his malaria, tried to influence the PG in Masvingo. The latter

118 2 October 1998.

119 Conversation with manager Angus, 9 October 1998.

120 CCM meeting, 7 October 1998.

113 It is not true that 80% of the Zimbabwean population is living in Region V.

114 Although there are rumours that the shareholders of Angus include a high-ranking Minister in Mugabe's government and people from the army. The liaison officer concluded that if that were the case, the PG was only 'buying time'.

115 Which was not the first time, as the case from Stanmore Farm proves. On this occasion the same PG was also unsuccessful in persuading the invaders to leave the property, *The Herald*, 30 September 1998. Squatting families resist being moved.

116 When the PG had had to wait on a few occasions while visiting Angus he had said to the liaison officer that he had 'behaved badly'. Later in the text I shall return to the specific position of the liaison officer in this context.

117 Conversation with owner of Angus, 1 October 1998.

promised to look into it, but that did not remove the invaders. Office diary entry of 26 October: '8 families: cutting trees, digging holes for houses'. On 28 October I saw the manager for the last time during my stay in Zimbabwe. The next day I was due to leave for South Africa to 'finish' the fieldwork with some final interviews in Pietermaritzburg. The manager told me that the invaders have 'knocked down some 800 metres of upgraded fence, worth some Z\$ 32.000,-'. It all began with the FMD 'coming through' the fence and it has ended with the tearing down an upgraded fence. The fence seemed the bottom line. Physically it was essential to prevent FMD infecting their cattle. Symbolically they hated it, because it separated them from their land.

Two short and final aspects of this case. The first concerns the role of Humani and the second the position of the liaison officer. The upgrading of the fence is in the interests of everybody in the SVC and therefore everybody has to pay a 'fence upgrade levy'. This seems reasonable but Humani refused to pay, because it claimed that the SVC still owed them money for their financial contribution to the SVC in founder stock and later progeny.<sup>121</sup> In fact Humani was asking for recognition of the fact that they had had the vision of utilising wildlife on the property long before the SVC was even considered. Their role is greatly neglected in the mythology about the inception of the SVC. In the myth-forming the chairman and WWF seem to play a far more important role. Now it is repayment time, in a literal sense.<sup>122</sup> The negotiations were tough. An earlier meeting with the Financial Chairman of the SVC led to nothing. For the upgrading of the fence they urgently needed cash in hand to pay for the material<sup>123</sup>, and Humani had to contribute a goodly sum because it is a large property and the upgrading levy is calculated per acre. Finally the case was temporarily settled when the co-owner of Humani 'said that he would loan the fence upgrade money to the Conservancy to enable it to carry on with the fence upgrade, until the situation had been sorted out. The Committee felt that whilst this was not the ideal response it would be sufficient in the interim'.<sup>124</sup> A small reciprocal affair in the midst of a case of a big reciprocal reckoning on the issue of land.

Another reciprocal reckoning was afoot, this time to do with the liaison officer in this particular Matsai case. When the squatters on Angus were forcibly removed and their huts burned by the DA of Bikita in 1985-1986, the liaison officer was the one holding and lighting the matches. For that reason it is impossible for him to liase this conflict between the SVC and the Matsai people.<sup>125</sup> When he tried to speak to a group of people on 12 August 1998, just as people started to invade the properties, this was a flop.<sup>126</sup> He met them at the gate at Mukazi 2, which is the gate on the border between Angus and Mukazi. When the group caught sight of the liaison officer they exchanged greetings and gathered under a tree near the fence, where they began to dance and chant. The liaison officer approached them with a very polite and respectful greeting. He also introduced me and I greeted them in the same polite way by bowing my head and clapping

my hollow hands, not too loud. Again, I was the only white man around. The liaison officer began to talk to them in Shona, telling them that cutting down live trees was not the correct procedure and that they had to protest the government for not fulfilling its promises, instead of blaming the landowners. Scarcely had he uttered a few words when an enormous tumult broke out and they began to shout and yell, waving their pangas and axes and making all kind of angry gestures, pulling angry grimaces. No discussion was possible under the circumstances and the people started to walk to the gate, waving their 'trophies' sieged from Angus, as everybody was carrying something, ranging from building poles, and thatching grass to firewood. The atmosphere grew tenser when they began to yell that tomorrow they would 'burn the grass' and 'we will tear the fence down and cut all the wire'. Addressing the liaison officer they said that this time they 'had cut trees, next time we cut you to pieces'. They also called him a 'traitor', defending the interests of the whites<sup>127</sup>, referring to his role as liaison officer for the SVC, considered a white men's world and to his role during the eviction of the families from Angus in the eighties. When he tried to drive away they not only continued to yell at him, but also banged on his car and even threw a pole at the vehicle hitting it on the boot. Again a reciprocal reckoning influencing someone's attitude and functioning within the organisational setting of the SVC and its related Trust.

This case makes as clear as day the way in which the fence is symbolic of the relationship between the SVC and its neighbouring communities in the matters of the ownership of the land and hunting. The exchange between communities and the SVC takes place via the fence. The fence is constantly used to make statements in an ongoing exchange about land. An exchange within the context of the ultimate exchange, which they have never accepted, because it would be to acknowledge that their land had been taken. Land which is inalienably theirs. Whatever is put forward by the present landowners to try to pacify the relationship over land, it is always treated merely as insufficient compensation for former crimes of land alienation perpetrated by the whites. Everything put forward by the SVC, be this material or immaterial, towards the communities is seen as totally inadequate repayment for a crime committed long ago. Everything a landowner does for the community is part of a recompense, a punishment to be exacted for the crimes of his forefathers. Land is the big exchange that can never be. The minutes of the CCM show the importance of the fence to the SVC as I described in the previous chapter, but for quite other reasons than does obtaining for the communities, namely in terms of making hunting possible. That the communities perceive that same fence in a completely other context means that deep down the SVC cannot understand why communities are not prepared to respect the boundary fences when they are the recipients of so many material advantages and gifts from it. The ultimate highlight of this gift-giving from the perspective of the SVC is its founding of the Trust as the symbol of and vehicle for improved and trusting community relations: the Trust as the new image of co-operation between black and white in conservation in Zimbabwe.

121 Minutes CCM, 7 October 1998.

122 See also the file on all the wildlife purchases of Humani between the seventies and 1996, I introduced earlier.

123 Minutes CCM, 5 August 1998.

124 Minutes CCM, 7 October 1998.

125 Conversation with Liaison Officer, 24 September 1998.

126 Observations, 12 August 1998.

127 Which was probably part of the reason they took him in the first place, conversation with Conservator, 23 September 1998.



*More examples of interaction between SVC(members) and communities*

Besides to this major case there are many more smaller incidents which have taken place around the SVC. From the perspective of the communities, many of these basically have to do with the attitude of the landowners towards the communities, which engenders all kinds of behaviour which do not 'bring harmony between races'.<sup>128</sup> The liaison officer is often forthright and blunt in his reports on this matter. He formulates his objective of his work for instance as '(t)o resolve differences between neighbours thereby bring common understanding and harmony through change of behaviour and attitude in an environment of opposing and differing cultures and political background'.<sup>129</sup> These parties do not interact together easily and the communities often complain to the liaison officer about 'ill treatment of community members by managers/landowners [and] injured and sick employees being sent late to clinics/hospital for treatment (...)'.<sup>130</sup> In order to stimulate the managers and landowners to meet and learn to know and appreciate their neighbours which should build up a relationship between the SVC and communities, the liaison officer sent them a list with the names of the wards and councillors and where they could be contacted for organising meetings. This was all work for nothing and in February 1997 he reported that he 'still await[s] to get some feedback on what progress landowners have made in this respect'.<sup>131</sup> Nothing ever happened. He has also never had any feedback from the CCM, its chairman or the AGM on his monthly, quarterly, and yearly reports, which he began to compile when he took on this job.<sup>132</sup> Starved by a lack of feedback he began to send in fewer, less extensive reports. Most of what has been captured in these reports under the concepts of 'attitudes' and 'behaviour' is what is considered normal behaviour between black and white in this area of the Lowveld. I have never come across any detailed description or examples in any report to what kind of behaviour or attitude in daily life it is actually referring. For that reason, I can only depend on my own observations in this respect. To give an impression I shall describe a few examples of what happened in the interaction between black and white within the context of SVC operations when I was near or present, based on my fieldnotes. Although most of the landowners and their managers will not admit it openly, many consider themselves in a master-servant relationship, i.e. a 'command structure', to black Zimbabweans. Some of them are also likely to refer to the Bible for religious legitimation.<sup>133</sup> It is that basic assumption which runs through many, if not all, interaction between black and white. For instance, when I went to the new Research Base which the SVC is building on Levanga, it was interesting to note the interaction between the conservator and the builders. We drove up close to where they were building and the conservator inspected what progress was being made. The builders dropped everything they were doing at once and gathered around the conservator. He noted cer-

tain things and ordered them to adjust these, not in the form of a discussion on the issue, but in a voice of command. The workmen informed him that they had not been delivered certain material with which they could carry on and whether the Conservator could take care that he brought this in the next time he passed by. After the inspection the conservator (and I) got into the car again and he drove away. After some 50 to 100 metres he realised that he had forgotten to tell them something and stopped the car. Instead of turning to the building site again, he hung out of the car window and yelled. When that did not produce the desired effect he banged on the car door with his hand with some force to attract their attention. When they realised that he was calling them they came running towards the car and waited standing beside the car to hear his next remarks. After he had told them what he had in mind, he left without any further greeting.<sup>134</sup> Everyday life in the SVC is full of incidents like these which, perceived in themselves, are minuscule examples of interaction between black and white. It begins with driving through the SVC with a car. All whites in the SVC drive cars, many 4X4 Toyota Pickups or Landcruisers. In the SVC there are no official transport facilities. There is no bus service. The closest public transport comes is a fifteen to twenty minutes drive before crossing the Mkwazine River. The bus turns left off the main road into the Matsai area. At this point there are always black people waiting for transport opportunities to go into the SVC, to visit relatives, and also because many of them are employed in the SVC, working in the different lodges and workshops. So (most of the) whites drive cars and (most of) the black wait for a lift. The black people waiting for a lift know exactly which white drives which car. So they also know exactly who usually picks in people for a lift and who does not, and this information is rumoured around. Some landowners/managers have a bad reputation for not giving anyone a lift. The same can be said about speaking Shona or any other local dialect. Only a very few landowners or managers speak Shona fluently. Others do not speak Shona at all or only a few words like greetings and farewell. The chairman of the SVC, for example, is known and reputed for his fluency in Shangaan, and for that reason can communicate with the Gudo people in their own language. Others are notorious for the opposite.<sup>135</sup> Everyday life in the SVC taught me much about white perspectives on the relationship between SVC and neighbouring communities. Many of them are wrapped up in a joke. On a few occasions when I arrived somewhere in the SVC for the first time and had to introduce myself and say what I was doing, people started to make jokes.<sup>136</sup> Like asking if I knew the joke

134 Fieldnotes, 23 September 1998.

135 Conversation with liaison officer, 8 May 1998. Three properties in the SVC have black managers. One of them is the parastatal ARDA. Interestingly enough one of the others is the manager of Mukazi, the property with all the problems with the neighbouring Matsai. When the liaison officer met the invaders on Angus on 12 August 1998, the black manager of Mukazi was escorting the group to the gate in his Toyota Landcruiser. At the gate he stopped the car, got out leaving the engine running and said to me: 'it is easy to make a big mistake'. According to the surrounding communities, black people who work for white initiatives like these managers do or the liaison officer for that matter, all 'speak the white language' (conversation with Liaison Officer, 23 September 1998). It is rumoured about the liaison officer that he 'belongs' to the 'white camp', which is not a good development for his job as liaison officer. It was even said that the rumours have grown stronger since he drove around a good deal with me, either in my car or his own (conversation with liaison officer, 28 May 1998).

136 The following examples are from various places at which I made my fieldnotes. For reasons of privacy I do not specify them in detail.

128 Yearly Report Liaison Officer, April 1995 to March 1996, 26 May 1996.

129 Quarterly Report Liaison Officer, March to May 1996, 10 June 1996.

130 Monthly Progress Report Liaison Officer, May 1996.

131 Monthly Progress Report Liaison Officer, February 1997.

132 Interview with Liaison Officer, 18 May 1998.

133 Interview with a landowner of Savuli, 10 June 1998.

about what the blacks had invented. 'Can you name one thing they have contributed in terms of inventions to mankind?' 'Even if they had invented the wheel they would have broken it afterwards'. Roars of laughter. Or when I arrived somewhere and I was introduced to the secretary and the man said that I was doing research 'on the economic viability of the SVC or something like that'. When I added that I was also interested in neighbour relations he said jokingly, 'Yeah, what I told you, a waste of time'. Or again on another occasion on which I had to explain what I was doing and some of the people present had already heard my presentation at the AGM and said that I was in the SVC 'to see if we do it right with our black neighbours'. One of the other people present answered the question and said, 'the answer is 'no, we don't''. Her sally was greeted with gales of laughter. Stimulated by this oral exchange, one of the other attendants started to imitate a game scout in his dialect, whom she describes as hanging around and drinking in a bar, but pretends to his (white) superior over the radio that he is (very) actively pursuing an animal on a spoor. One final example from 'a suitcase full of observations'. There was a meeting taking place with a community. A white landowner from the SVC also participated, but his body language clearly showed his lack of interest in the proceedings. His eyes, for instance, never focused on the speakers nor did he react to anything that was discussed during the meeting. He was there in body but not in mind. The meeting was chaired for more than one and a half hours by a councillor who was introduced as the chairman for this meeting and who addressed the people gathered, whites included, several times during the meeting. After the meeting this councillor and chairman wanted to ask to this particular landowner something and approached him, but was not recognised and the landowner asked someone standing nearby in an audible voice, readily audible also to the bystanders, 'who,... is that guy the Councillor'? All these are anecdotes and observations of jokes and funny remarks. It would be far too easy to be judgmental about it. In a certain context, things are said which must not be immediately taken to be representing complete social reality, but at least they indicate a certain discourse about black and white relations in the region. An important aspect of white discourse about black communities, which also comprises a plethora of rumours, images and discussion, is poaching.

From the perspective of the SVC a great deal of the interaction between SVC and communities has to do with poaching and the stealing of fence wire. For this purpose, the SVC keeps a confidential Investigation Register. They opened the register under the first conservator. He was an ex-DNPWLM man who had anti-poaching as his first priority because of his upbringing in the Department. He began the register zealously, but he was only with the SVC for a short while as I described in the previous chapter, and the subsequent field co-ordinator and current conservator did not give it as much priority in their work. After a few years the latter tried to update it, but as it is already difficult enough to collect the necessary information on current cases, let alone on cases which are farther removed in time. The police is usually reluctant to give information about anything and is usually not very keen on handing over or showing the forms on which the sentences of cases are noted. They often say that the records are kept elsewhere and that, as a result, it cannot help them any further. This explains why the information that they could get hold of is 'piecemeal, incomplete and cannot be com-

pletely trusted'.<sup>137</sup> Despite these shortcomings the register gives an indication of poaching incidents in the SVC. It is divided into four major columns: date, place of offence, nature of offence, and final outcome. Browsing through the register gives the impression that the majority of the cases is about snaring, often with wire abstracted from the fences of the SVC, hunting with dogs and fishing without a permit. Many cases have no registered final outcome. The ones that do have a registered final outcome are dominated by monetary fines ranging from Z\$ 50 to Z\$300-400, with an incidental higher fine. Remembering that the minimum salary of a domestic worker is Z\$ 450 per month, it takes no great stretch of the imagination to realise that these are relatively huge fines. If the offender is not in a position to pay, he (or she in some cases) will be sentenced IWL (In With Labour). Usually one month's IWL average Z\$100.<sup>138</sup> These are the cases which come up before the police. Cases in which the police was willing or forced to act. Many cases never reach this stage and are dealt with at a property level. This is not considered an advantageous development, because the SVC is often accused of taking justice into its own hands, arising from the general image that police does not pursue the cases seriously. Many point to how reluctant the police were to act when the land invasions took place and argue that that is its general attitude towards the white community. This leads to a process in which the managers or landowners do take justice into their own hands by beating up a suspect or keeping him in custody just a bit longer without food or drink. The landowners feel that if they do not take action themselves and handed the suspect over to the police, in many cases, they will be released very quickly because the police cites 'incomplete evidence', even though the landowner or his manager is highly confident about the nature of the offence. It is especially in circumstances like these that the landowner or his manager is not eager to hand over the suspect to the police, and makes sure 'that the message comes across'. The mediating role in these exchanges between SVC and communities is played by the game scouts. This is probably why the game scouts are often the targets of complaints. Most grievances from the communities about the game scouts focus either on the fact that they arrest people outside their jurisdiction, i.e. outside the SVC, especially women bathing or doing the laundry, or shoot dogs who come too close to the fence and are suspected of being hunting dogs. For example, Ward 30 in Buhera District formulated allegations against game scouts on Mapari whom they wanted to beat up because the 'game scouts come into the communal area with guns [and] (...) game scouts are taking people's wives [and] the game scouts ill-treated members of the community especially women and children found near the fence'.<sup>139</sup> Another example of such an incident erupted in the Chibuwe

<sup>137</sup> Interview with Conservator, 23 September 1998.

<sup>138</sup> Parks & Wildlife (Law Enforcement) Investigation Register (Confidential), May 1997-June 1998. The rest of this section is based on conversations and interviews with several people in and around the SVC on the subject. For reasons of privacy I do not specify the person or the date.

<sup>139</sup> Minutes of meeting between Ward 30 and Manager of Mapari, 4 October 1996. Similar remarks are made about game scouts in reports of liaison officer about issues brought forward by communities about the SVC: 'unlawful arrests of women and demands for sex from the arrested women by game guards (...)' (Monthly Progress Report Liaison Officer, May 1996). The issue also features prominently in his Annual Report 1995-1996, in which game scouts are alleged to be involved in poaching themselves and 'game guards confiscating communities' properties e.g. "paggas", axes, bows and arrows were cited' (Yearly Report April 1995-March 1996, 26 May 1996).

community, bordering Humani. Game scouts had arrested suspected poachers and later ran into them when they were relaxing after duty in a beer hall. A fight broke out. Who knows what exactly happened between the game scouts and the suspected poachers in the light of the above-described context? Are the complaints (completely) fake? Is there only 'a grain of truth' in them? Whatever the answer, poaching and badly behaved game scouts are part of the daily discourse on interaction between the SVC and surrounding communities.

Usually every incident leads to its own meeting(s) at which the situation is discussed among the different stakeholders. Every one of the five districts surrounding the SVC has its own share of incidents followed by meetings.<sup>140</sup> In Chipinge District, for instance, they had a meeting in August 1996 about a lion which had come out of the SVC and killed livestock in the communal areas, to wit three donkeys and one cow. The people affected asked for compensation, which was granted, after which they were informed that 'the neighbours would be expected to reciprocate this understanding move by devising their own methods that would initially reduce and eventually eradicate losses in the Save Valley Conservancy through poaching, theft and vandalism of property'.<sup>141</sup> The assumption underlying many of the initiatives taken by the SVC towards the neighbouring communities seem to be clarified by this, earlier and later examples, showing that it is prepared and willing to bestow economic and tangible benefits on the surrounding communities, but at a reciprocal price, first and foremost not poaching and for respecting the boundaries. Later, after the announcement of the land designation programme in November 1997, as we have seen in the extensively discussed Matsai case, the SVC asked and basically expected a price in terms of political legitimisation of the conservancy concept in Zimbabwe. In the same district the liaison officer also had a meeting in June 1997 about 'a length of wire which was cut from the fence and stolen'.<sup>142</sup> What's new? In Buhera District the same types of stories abound. In 1996, for instance, there was a meeting at which the main topic was the issue of the game scouts accused of 'taking wives' I described above. This coincided with the stealing of wire and so it was decided that the community and the landowner 'find time to sit down together and discuss [the fence] matter'.<sup>143</sup> In Bikita District the Angus vs. Matsai issue dominated the agenda of the different meetings. The other properties have had only minor incidents with their neighbouring communities. In many cases, big and small, the theme that the economic gifts of the SVC or the individual properties must be seen as an ongoing process to try and start a positive reciprocal exchange with the surrounding communities recurs. The problem is that only one fitting return gift is expected (and even accepted): respecting the boundary, i.e. the fence which also implies no poaching. 'I am also having various lengths of wire stolen from the buffalo fence opposite Villages

26 recently, (and reported to ZRP [Zimbabwe Republican Police]) and Village 31, some time back. I have supplied thatching grass and poles to the people on my south/western boundary this year and I am hoping to do some land preparation during Nov/Dec as I did last year. However I do tend to lose interest when faced with the above incidents'.<sup>144</sup> Only a very small part of the territory of Zaka District borders the SVC and I could not find any specific minutes on meetings with stakeholders in this district. To finalise the circle around the SVC, which started with Chipinge District, Chiredzi District has had its fair share of incidents, including the Matsai issue, but it has also experienced some promising beginnings. Another typical example of the problems between communities and SVC, or rather individual properties, is Mkwasi Ranch. In April 1997 there are minutes from a meeting which was set up to 'try and resolve the problems Mkwasi Ranch is facing. (These problems included loss of off sets and other pieces of wire through cutting)'.<sup>145</sup> Chiredzi District is also the home of an incident in which the fence did not create problems because the landowner and the people from the Nyangambe community decided together where the exact location of the fence would be. It evolved into a process of give and take, which produced mutual respect and satisfaction. One advantage is that the Nyangambe area is not overpopulated, as it is a resettlement scheme and does not carry the heritage of the Armed Struggle, like Matsai.<sup>146</sup> It is no wonder that this community has now been especially singled out by the chairman of the SVC to be offered the 'golden opportunity' of building a traditional village after the Gudo initiative failed to work out in the end.

From all these cases, large and small, it can be concluded that there is quite some degree of disagreement between the SVC and individual property owners on the one side and the neighbouring communities on the other side. Basically the conflict seems to boil down to a question of the ownership of the land. The signature of the fence is constantly contested. The fence, which can be considered a two-sided symbol for the communities, one of land ownership and exclusion from hunting. No wonder that it is precisely by these two issues that the communities make their protests known: they claim the land verbally or take it physically by invading it, or they hunt, most of the time using snares which are made of the same fence which is meant to exclude them from indulging in that practice. In fact, they write their signature with the same fence, but for other purposes. The wires constituting the fence have an Escherian mirror image in a snare. The paradox of legal correctness in terms of title deeds and fixed boundaries and its inversion by protesting it for social justice is striking in its symmetry. In the context of Zimbabwe in general and of the Lowveld in particular, it has been made as plain as a pikestaff that it is often very difficult, if not impossible, to find out what 'really' happened, because virtually nothing is ever written down and most of the agreements and deals are oral. Versions from different sources are the only possibility of creating any perspective on a case. But, in the light of the paradox I described above, that does not matter or creates a difference in understanding the underlying process, which is crystal clear, despite its paradoxical character. Strangely enough the clarity and symmetry seem

140 These are recorded from the time the liaison officer took up his employment and was asked to play a mediating role in these kind of conflicts. He keeps files on the meetings he has in the different districts. Because I had the opportunity to look into the files freely I have quite a complete overview of the official and minuted meetings between the SVC (members) and neighbouring communities, mediated through the Liaison Officer.

141 Minutes of a meeting held in Chibwe, 30 August 1996.

142 Minutes of a meeting held at Charuma Primary School, 3 June 1997.

143 Minutes of a meeting near Duwure Bridge, 4 October 1996.

144 Letter of partner Savuli to Bikita RDC, 10 October 1996.

145 Minutes of a meeting held at Mareva Primary School, 30 April 1997.

146 Conversation with Liaison Officer, 14 July 1998.

to be captured by the paradox, which in turn can only be constructed along the lines of interpreting the different cases in terms of reciprocal exchange. I shall return to the specific theoretical implications of the relationship between the SVC and its neighbouring communities after I have finished my exposé on the development of the specific organisational co-operation between the SVC and the SVCT.

### The further development of the joint venture between SVC and SVCT

Despite all these struggles, in September 1996, the major stakeholders in the organisational co-operation, i.e. RDCs, the SVC and the SVCT, came together in the Tambuti Lodge Hotel, now a school, 'to forge an 'agreement in principle'.<sup>147</sup> Although these struggles were ineluctably of particular significance in this ritual, was this meeting only one more step in an ongoing exchange of earlier rituals, which no longer matched or fitted the actual state of affairs like a fictitious play to temporarily escape a harsh reality? A ritual of Neckel's 'functional ego' in which 'empirical subjects already seem to have abandoned the fruitless quest for the real self (...) [and] (i)n place of the small, sickly, constantly endangered ego, a sovereign ego with great pretensions now step forward, a personality who can make the most of its opportunities and is not afraid of being inferior? (...) Egocentric calculation and ceaseless narcissistic desire for gratification come together in seeing the moral claims of interaction as mere obstacles to the pursuit of private interests'.<sup>148</sup> Or should it be interpreted as positive persistence from the side of the SVC determined to not let go of its initiative despite major opposition and counterforces trying to undermine it? Whatever the answer, the meeting at the Tambuti Lodge Hotel was based on '(t)he challenge (...) to create a sufficiently robust agreement [for] both side of the SVC fence to coordinate the key stakeholders (communal and commercial farmers) in perpetuity'.<sup>149</sup> The workshop split into four groups to discuss various issues and give a report on them afterwards in a plenary session. There was a group on general issues, one on the Trust and one on the co-ordination between the SVC and the districts. The most extensive report came from the fourth group on 'issues facing SVC/ community interdependency', with the 'boundary/fence' being the first issue to be recommended on: 'Ranch/community SVC fence lines (not the legal boundary) should be revisited & mutually agreed & ratified by the RDC. Historic precedents & pressing needs for land should be addressed'.<sup>150</sup> The major outcome of the workshop was an extra investment in a ritual exchange within an extended organisational structure in which a Joint Committee, consisting of representatives from the five RDCs, would 'represent beneficiary interests' (see Figure 15<sup>151</sup>).

147 pp. 1, Metcalfe, S. (September 1996), Establishing interdependence between Rural District Councils, Save Valley Conservancy and Save Valley Conservancy Trust, unpublished report on workshop 2-3 September.

148 Neckel in Berking 1999: 141-142.

149 Metcalfe September 1996: 1.

150 Ibid: 4.

151 Ibid: 8.

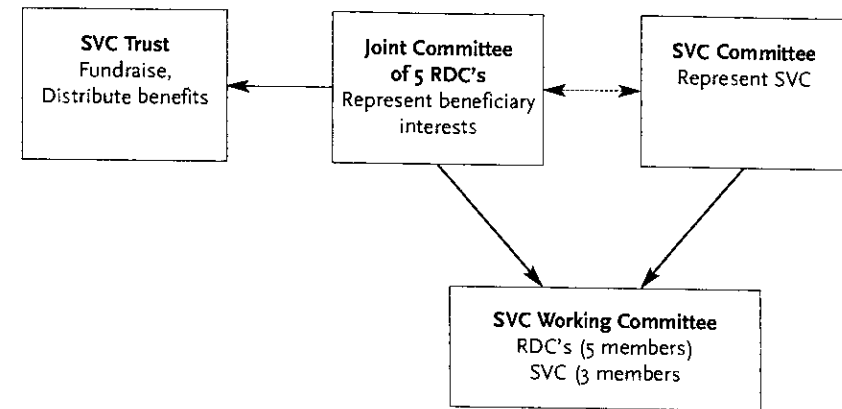


Figure 15 Organogram Joint Committee of RDC's

As can be deduced from figure 15, the Joint Committee operates like a buffer between the Trust and the SVC. A buffer because, so far, the trustees of the Trust have been chosen primarily by the SVC themselves, with little eye to choosing people who could be considered really representative of the surrounding communities, but who were selected for their expected fund-raising abilities, as I described earlier on. Through the Joint Committee the communities could exercise a more direct influence on the SVC. This development put the Trust on the inactive list as a direct platform for consultation on issues between the SVC and the communities, but it still remained a perfect paper vehicle to display in the shop window of the SVC, indicating that the SVC was establishing community relations. The only active member in the Trust remained the chairman, the Trustee from Delta Corporation. The Joint Committee in turn would not relate to the SVC directly but approach it through a Working Committee in which representatives of the Joint Committee and SVC would be participating. In effect, it seems as if the communities and SVC were being pushed further apart by the creation of extra organisational structures. The profit the Joint Committee enjoyed above the Trust was that the creation of the Joint Committee was a joint decision between the SVC and the RDCs and not a solo initiative undertaken by the SVC alone. Furthermore it was indicated that the SVC Trust 'should be established by consensus between the main stakeholders'. On paper the Joint Committee and the Working Committee could work out a new establishment for the Trust. So far, obviously, the Trust was considered by the communities and RDCs as an initiative of the SVC in which they were not considered as serious partner in the decision-making process. How could the SVC, i.e. white landowners, decide properly on who would represent the communities best? Through the setting up of the Joint Committee the initiative for the filling up of the Trust with representatives, i.e. Trustees, was effectively taken over from the SVC, which could let its voice heard through the Working Committee, but which would not be directly responsible for

choosing people.<sup>152</sup> It has to be reported that this organisation structural detour worked in the sense that the Joint Committee did meet. Its first meeting was already in December of the same year. Although that meeting was primarily for selecting the Trustees for the Working Committee<sup>153</sup>, its very existence indicates progress in the process of coming to a more balanced form of organisational co-operation between SVC and surrounding communities.

The second meeting of the Joint Committee was in February 1997. Two things of interest to do with this meeting are worth mentioning. In the first place by now there seemed on the part of the communities a serious interest about getting involved in the operation of and thus organisational co-operation with the SVC seemed to have developed, as the members expressed their feelings that 'some of the grey areas could be cleared if:

1. copies of the Save Valley Conservancy Constitution could be made available to them (This was agreed to and [the Chairman of the SVC] was going to post these copies to them by Monday the 3rd March.)
2. representatives were to attend meetings of the Save Valley Conservancy'.<sup>154</sup>

The second interesting point to observe about this second Joint Committee Meeting is that Mr. Makunde was selected to chair the Joint Committee for a term of two years. He was a councillor for a ward in the Matsai Communal Area. This development is significant because of the fact that his becoming chairman of this committee meant that he played an important role in the mandate he received from the communal farmers of Matsai in the controversy which developed in 1997-1998, following the FMD outbreak and the Land Designation Programme. As I described above in the Matsai case, he was considered much too pro-SVC which cost him his local goodwill and, as a result, in the following election he also had to forfeit his councillorship because of the lack of popular support. Furthermore, a discussion was held among the members about the specific 5% levy the SVC would pay the Trust annually. Was it a realistic percentage, not too low? The chairman of the Trust, the only active trustee of the Trust, promised that he would present an explanation to the Committee at the next meeting. That next meeting took place in March. He began his presentation by stating that 'the original formula [of the levy] could be flawed because it was designed without the consent of the five (5) Rural District Councils (...) and the RDC's could be forgiven if they perceive it as an

imposition on them'.<sup>155</sup> Mea culpa. At the same time it had already become clear that, neither the donor, nor the shares-route would result in any funding of the Trust for restocking purposes. So the whole idea of a levy on donor funds was in jeopardy. The alternative the chairman of the Trust presented was that the SVC would pay a levy to the Trust as a 'biological interest rate on the progeny of designated animals'.<sup>156</sup> The chairman of the Trust promised the Joint Committee he would be able to present details on this proposal by the end of March, after which the next meeting could be convened. The work took a little longer, as the next meeting of the Committee was called only in August. At that time the SVC was in the process of applying for a loan from the IFC and a representative of that organisation was also planning to attend the meeting. At that stage the SVC was still under the impression that it could attract a loan from the IFC with full organisational involvement of the Trust and so the chairman of the Trust explained the situation to the Joint Committee accordingly: '(a) concessionary element is included in the proposal, whereby IFC is being requested to waive repayment of 50% of the loan on condition that this repayment (US\$ 0.5 million) is instead used by the conservancy to bring in wildlife that will be released within the conservancy but will be regarded as an endowment for the SVC Trust. The SVC will then be obliged to buy the progeny of the Trust's animals each year, at the prevailing live-sale market price for these animals. This will result in an annual return of revenue to the Trust, approximating some Z\$ 400 000 per annum'.<sup>157</sup> With this money the Trust could then finance and develop all kinds of community projects which would be put forward by the Joint Committee. The proposed deal was made all the more attractive by adding that the breeding stock that is brought into the SVC by the Trust would remain as 'an endowment in perpetuity'. This means that if it brings in, say, 1000 animals, these 1000 animals will remain to be considered the founder stock of the Trust, despite the natural mortality in the herd. The annual increase of the herd will be a net rate, which means a balance between births and deaths, including poaching losses. Every animal over and above the number of animals that was originally introduced will be bought, maybe 'leased' would be a better word, by the SVC.<sup>158</sup> The representative of the IFC wanted to know from the Joint Committee, 'if communities will accept a wildlife endowment as a long-term investment. Will they not exploit the wildlife over the short-term?' The reason behind his question was that a tourism development takes many years to mature and begin to make steady financial profits.<sup>159</sup> Nevertheless, one representative replied that 'the RDC work-

155 Minutes Emergency Joint Committee Meeting, 11 March 1997. At the same meeting it was revealed on the basis of investigations by the DA of Buhera that the organisational structure of the SVC, company and Trust was 'quite in order' and thus acceptable to them. At the same time, 'they warned that Government was wary of private ownership of wildlife and the political motive by the Conservancies. (...) "Trend carefully on new territory" was the message'.

156 Ibid. 'Designated species' are species that are specifically chosen by the SVC to be bought to restock the conservancy.

157 Minutes Joint Committee Meeting, 29 August 1997.

158 Ibid.

159 As an important sideline, which will not be elaborated in the context of this thesis: to promote and develop tourism in this part of Zimbabwe, the chairman of the SVC had initiated the Southern Tourism Development Initiative in October 1997. 'The initiative was said to have its strengths in Gonarezhou National Park which has unique animals and attraction centres - presently under development; in the various cultures of the peoples in the region; in the various activities embarked upon by commercial farmers in support of the

152 The New Trust would consist of two representatives from each RDC surrounding the SVC: 5 Districts = 10 representatives. They would in turn choose additional members of the Trust: 1 traditional leader, 2 MPs and 3 influential citizens. For the last they think of people from the SVC team, for instance the (former) chairman of the Trust and the man from the Rhino Project, WWF. Information from interview with Liaison Officer, 21 May 1998.

153 Minutes Joint Committee Meeting, 10 December 1996. All Joint Committee Meeting were held at Mapari Stop Inn, an accommodation of Mapari, part of the SVC in the north. At all meetings representatives from the SVC were present, not as members but 'in attendance'.

154 Minutes Joint Committee Meeting, 26 February 1997. The constitution of the SVC was given to the representatives at the next Joint Committee Meeting in March 1997. I have not come across any representative from the Joint Committee ever attending a Conservancy Committee Meeting.

ing committee and other regulatory mechanisms are well established and there has been much discussion on joint ventures. The need now is for capitalization. Instead of talk there must be action'. Not without reason, the representative of the IFC 'thanked the meeting for the strong assurances he had received regarding the environmental, economic and social sustainability of the proposed restocking project'.<sup>160</sup> By August 1997 all official indicators seemed to show that the SVC and the surrounding communities were slowly approaching each other and had found common ground on which to co-operate organisationally in this venture. This was the last Joint Committee meeting which has been recorded in minutes. Two incidents rudely interfered with this positive developments, the FMD outbreak on Mukwazi and its further consequences for the deteriorating relations with Matsai Communal Area (see case description) and later the official publication of the Land Designation Programme in November 1997.

Despite its setbacks the SVC persevered and stoically continued to get the co-operative structure off the ground and there was a further formal meeting and workshop of the Joint Committee, the SVC and the SVCT in March 1998 to discuss a draft of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the SVC and the Trust. The report was once again written by the same consultant who had also compiled the previous reports on the development of the joint venture between SVC and neighbouring communities, Simon Metcalfe. Again the text is fairly open and honest in its formulation. 'Initially, the SVC took it upon themselves to establish the trust and a core team of trustees (SVC Chairman, Delta Corporation representative and WWF project officer) endeavoured to fundraise. While the intent may have been positive there were several flaws to this. The RDCs were not in command of the trust nor its fundraising (...) The current position is that the Trust Chairman (...) has written to the Chairman of Bikita RDC (...) who is the chairman of the Joint RDCs [Joint Committee] (...) offering to stand down all the trustees in favour of trustees nominated by the RDCs. The trust would then effectively become the fiduciary mechanism (company) of the RDCs, through which they could become a business partner of the SVC'.<sup>161</sup> In other words, the organisational structure

initiative e.g. conservancies; in the regions proximity to Mozambique, South Africa and the Indian Ocean; in th existing infrastructure e.g. Buffalo Range Airport, communication systems etc. and the projection or economical returns to the nation' (Minutes of meeting held at DA Office, Chiredzi, 20 January 1998). In February 1998 the initiative was renamed the Gazaland Tourism Initiative (GTI). The area from Zaka to the coast of Mozambique was formerly known as Gazaland (a Shangaan/Ndau name for the region) and to the south Gazaland spilled over into South Africa as far as the northeastern section of Kruger National Park. For instance, before the amalgamation of the Rural and District Councils, the Chiredzi Council was known as Gaza Khomanani Council and Chipinge was formerly known as Gazaland. In fact, the Gazaland Tourism Initiative tries to organise transborder tourism in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Mozambique (interview with Chairman SVC 8 July 1998). In this sense, the GTI runs parallel to WWF plans to create immense Trans-Frontier Conservation Areas (TFCA) (Duffy, R. (September 1997), The environmental challenge to the nation-state: superparks and national parks policy in Zimbabwe, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 23 (3)), one including Kruger National Park in South Africa, Gonarezhou in Zimbabwe and Banyini National Park in Mozambique. They would be 'glued together' by privately owned conservancies and communally owned land. (Hanks, J. (September 1997), The objectives and activities of the Peace Park Foundation, paper presented at the International Conference on *Transboundary Protected Areas as a vehicle for international co-operation*, Cape Town, South Africa, 16-18 September).

<sup>160</sup> Minutes Joint Committee Meeting, 29 August 1997.

<sup>161</sup> pp. 2. Metcalfe, S. (March 1998), Report on a workshop of the Joint Committee of Rural District Councils to Consider Proposals related to the Save Valley Conservancy and the Save Valley Conservancy Trust, unpublished report.

of co-operation has now entered a phase in which it is increasingly turning into a 'normal' joint venture structure, in which both parties and partners have an independent stake in the process and in deciding which way business should be going as well as in how to follow its own strategy within the organisational structure to ensure economic benefits from it. While this was going on the process of the loan application to the IFC had made it clear that the earlier idea of the SVC of endowing the SVCT with US\$ 0.5 million could not be pursued any further as the IFC wanted the endowment to the Trust separated from their loan to the private sector.<sup>162</sup> So now the Trust is not only organisationally on its own functioning through the RDCs, but also has to find its own funding, although with starting capital from the SVC.<sup>163</sup> But, at the time of the workshop, the land designation programme had run right through the cautiously built-up of the process of organisational co-operation and '(i)t was recognised that the land designation issue had confused and destabilised everything for the time being'.<sup>164</sup> In the discussion the participants came to the conclusion that it was not so much the question whether land would be designated, but whether it would be used for resettlement yes or no. If the land were used for resettlement, then the whole idea of a wildlife venture had to be given up. It 'would be a disaster for the conservancy'. If the land were designated, but the pattern of land use remained the same, the RDCs would have the option of participating in the SVC as landowners and investors, on behalf of the communities (I shall look at this aspect of RDC participation later on in this chapter). The coalition of stakeholders in the SVC would change and it would 'accommodate indigenisation and equity policies'. On the basis of these considerations the Joint Committee came to the conclusion that 'in principle the idea of the Trust being an RDC instrument for establishing a joint venture between the RDCs and the SVC was agreeable'.<sup>165</sup> In the MoU it was stated that the RDCs, as well as the SVC, would have to study it in more detail, 'comb through it', to see if it 'represents the basic intents of the parties and [if] they must feel happy to commit themselves to its spirit and practical purpose'.<sup>166</sup> It was agreed that the Joint Committee would organise and select trustees for the Trust in June 1998. It was on this date the RDCs and the SVC would give their final response to the MoU. The signing of the MoU and the appointment of the new Trustees would all take place at a ceremonial meeting.<sup>167</sup> The final organisational structure of the Trust would be as presented in Figure 16.<sup>168</sup>

162 Ibid: 5.

163 Z\$ 2 million over four years.

164 Ibid: 9.

165 All quotes taken from ibid: 10.

166 Ibid: 9. I will come back to the exact text of the MoU further down in the text of this chapter.

167 Ibid: 15.

168 Ibid: 8.

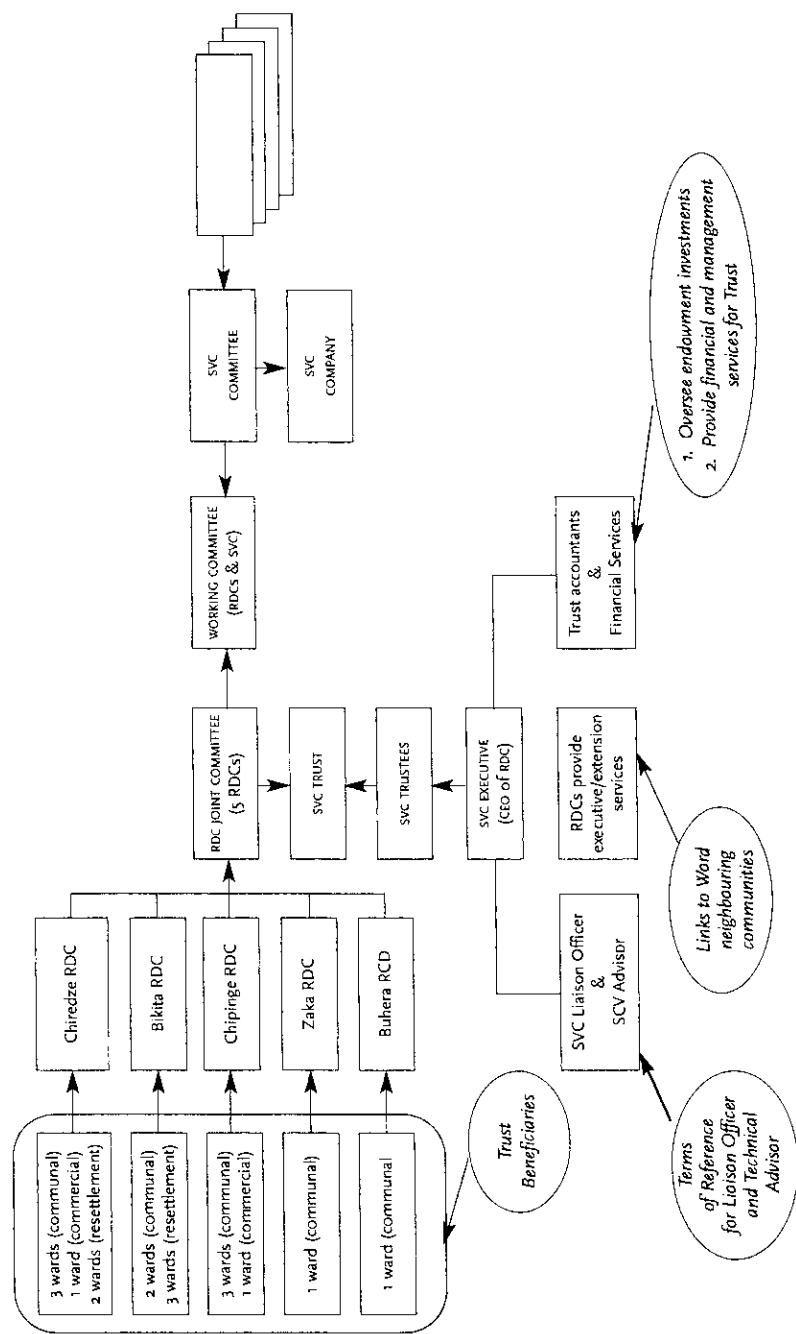


Figure 16 Organisational structure of SVCT

My fieldwork seemed to coincide exactly with the climax of the final stages of the organisational co-operation between SVC and the RDCs.

With this bright future as background, it is interesting to see what other options are open to the RDCs in joining the SVC initiative in terms of adding their own land to the conservancy, plus extra options arising from the designation programme. In fact this boils down to two options, one in the north and one in the west of the SVC. The latter option is the best-known example, so let me start with the lesser known one in the north, the Buhera District. In this district the idea is to create a conservancy on communal land in the southern part of the district, Wards 29 and 30, which is not so densely populated. They have estimated that it would cost them some Z\$ 30,000,000 for fencing, water development, relocation of people, removal of old buildings and the erection of lodges and other such work. They want to try and find that money through a commercial set-up, by finding a joint venture partner in the private sector, or within National Parks or Government, which would be willing to invest in this business opportunity commercially. Of course other donors would be welcome as well, but the idea was based on commercial principles. According to the Assistant Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Buhera District, who was also a member of the Joint Committee, they had send their proposal to the Zimbabwe Tourism Association (ZTA) for consultation and approval some two years ago, but so far had not received an answer. They wanted to try and follow it up now as people in the Council had begun to ask questions about it. They had targeted the project for March 1998, but now they were looking at December 1998. At that stage the idea was to start out on their own as a communal conservancy and then later join the SVC as the first commercial/communal conservancy in the country. If they were given 'the green light' from the ZTA, they 'can start talking to the communities'. Buhera was also in the process of becoming a full-fledged CAMPFIRE district. They were already considered a CAMPFIRE district but did not yet have Appropriate Authority. The main difference according to the Assistant CEO between CAMPFIRE and their idea of a conservancy was that CAMPFIRE was managed by the local communities themselves, while their idea was to create a joint venture in which the communities would participate through the election of Council members into the RDC.<sup>169</sup>

Another example of a district willing to step into the boat with the SVC was Bikita District. The same district which was also heavily involved in the Matsai issue, so one wonders what the exact intention of the RDC was. Was it in it for business opportunities or was its action another expression of and episode in the saga of The Land Issue? Let the case provide the answer on this seemingly paradoxical role of the Bikita RDC. It concerned one piece of land in the middle of the northern part of the SVC, Umkondo Mine. I have already mentioned it in the chapter on The Land Issue in Zimbabwe (see Chapter 4, p. 179). It is a beautiful piece of land in terms of landscape, although it is full of the left-overs and remains of the copper-mining which had once been exploited there. After the mining activities closed down the mining equipment for which a buyer could be found was sold off and, the rest was left to rot and /or taken over by the bush. At some spots this lends Umkondo Mine the image of a ghost town. Strangely enough this

169 Interview with Assistant CEO Buhera District, 15 July 1998.

adds to the picturesqueness of the landscape. The mine shafts were not filled in or secured and many metal installations were just left lying around. It was open-cart mining, which means that it created a huge crater-like hole in the ground. The bottom is now filled with water providing home for a crocodile.<sup>170</sup> Umkondo Mine is a piece of State Land, but because it is land-locked within the SVC and economic activity there has ceased, the government was willing to lease the land to whoever is willing to pay the price. The first to clinch a deal was the German landowner of Sango, Pabst, who launched a leasing process. Having at least taken this step he always thereafter proclaimed that Umkondo Mine was officially his. The Bikita RDC checked on his story, because if Pabst had indeed leased the property, he also had to pay charges to the Bikita RDC. The investigation led to the conclusion that Pabst had applied for the lease but it had never yet been finalised and that he had never paid for it.<sup>171</sup> This was confirmed in a letter from the Secretary for Lands and Water Resources which says that 'the agreement of lease has not yet been concluded and no one has, as yet, taken occupation of the piece of land. The reason why the lease agreement has not yet been concluded is that some of the conditions of lease are still under discussion'.<sup>172</sup> In the meantime, Pabst had gone ahead and managed Umkondo Mine, considering the mine his, a conviction which was writ large on small aluminium plates all over the property with 'Pabst Holdings' inscribed on them. One reason that he was so confident about the outcome of the discussion around Umkondo Mine was because he knows the Minister of Lands, Minister Kangai, personally.<sup>173</sup> He wants to rehabilitate the mine, beginning by removing all the remains of earlier mining activities, which will cost a mind of money. Pabst also went to Bikita RDC in his helicopter and showed them how much it costs just to manage the property, let alone rehabilitate it. He claims, this shocked them considerably. Undeterred, they continued their struggle to get AA over Umkondo Mine. If they were to win, they would have to find a suitable joint venture partner with sufficient capital to commence operations. The Bikita RDC and Pabst were not the only players in the game in which the stake was the lease of the Umkondo Mine. As the mine falls under Bikita, the RDC was also approached by others who were interested in leasing it from them. Among them is another member of the SVC, the landowner of Makore, who approached Bikita RDC in 1997 to apply for a lease of Umkondo Mine, not to rehabilitate it, but solely for trophy hunting.<sup>174</sup> The lease amount would then be proportionate to the available quota. The estimated quota would be, two leopards, two eland, four kudu, four zebra, four wildebeest, 100 impala and four duiker. He added that '(a)s you can see this is not a very big quota and by itself does not constitute an economic or viable operation. Hence the need

for an operator who has the back up of other animals and a safari operation to get this lease'.<sup>175</sup> In order to make his bid more attractive to and opportunistic for the RDC he began a joint venture with a black safari operator, who also wrote a letter to the Bikita RDC in which he announced the joint venture with the words: 'I here let you know that the two of us [Makore and Mjimba] have formed a joint venture safari operations. I hope you are aware that this business has been for one section of our community i.e. the whites. Our government is in pain encouraging that we the blacks be in this stream line. We have identified Umkondo state land and the two of us being the two different communities together augers very well to what our government wants or requires'.<sup>176</sup> In fact Makore had two options for Umkondo Mine: it could go into it as a joint venture partner with the Bikita RDC directly<sup>177</sup>, or could obtain a lease to operate the mine under his joint venture with Mjimba. Both options had a similar structure, that Makore did the financing and hunting development on the property and the other delivered the political legitimacy. In May 1998 Mjimba repeated its offer to the Bikita RDC in an extensive letter in which it also mentioned the exact amounts of fees the RDC would receive in US dollars were it to lease Umkondo to it.<sup>178</sup> There is no official paperwork from Sango in the RDC file on the issue. Pabst only communicated verbally with them and offered to rehabilitate the area for them. At that time the landowner of Makore still thought that Sango had 'a 60% chance against him 40%', because Pabst has 'connections on the highest political level', i.e. the Minister of Lands himself, which makes his position 'very strong'.<sup>179</sup> The problem was that as long as the Bikita RDC had no AA, it could not enter into a formal joint venture on the Umkondo Mine. So in June 1998 it tried again to put pressure on the Minister of Lands and Agriculture through a letter from its representative Member of Parliament (MP)<sup>180</sup>, urging that a decision be made about Bikita's application. "Minister, I am given to understand that Bikita Rural District Council has been in touch with your ministry over time in a bid to secure the said piece of land [Umkondo Mine] for the said purpose [AA]. What continues to worry the council is that your ministry is yet to give a definitive position in terms of actually supporting the council in this case. Worse still, there are off-the-record indications to the effect that the very piece of land may already have been leased to somebody else [Pabst]. Fortunately, on this particular point, you assured me that that was not the case'.<sup>181</sup> This elicited no response. In July a letter was sent to the Minister of Lands and Agriculture to remind him of its earlier letter: 'could we therefor humbly *implore you*, Cde Minister, to help us – and help us as a matter of urgency'.<sup>182</sup> The last letter in the file on the Umkondo Mine at the Bikita RDC is the reply of the Minister of Land and Agriculture in which he says nothing about the AA approval for Bikita, but does say that 'the Lessee is agreeable to go into a joint

170 Observations during visit, 17 May 1998.

171 Interview with CEO Bikita RDC, 14 July 1998. He told me that the Minister for Lands and Agriculture had told it to him personally that there is no official lease contract between his ministry and Sango.

172 Letter to the CEO, Bikita RDC, by Secretary for Lands and Water Resources, 8 August 1996.

173 Remember that Pabst was also the man who met President Mugabe during his tour through Germany in March 1998. According to Pabst, he was able to meet and speak with Mugabe on five occasions, information from interview with Pabst, 5 August 1998.

174 It seems a suitable spot for leopard hunting. When I visited Umkondo Mine, 17 May 1998, I was overwhelmed by an intense smell of rotting meat near the main mining shaft. This wafted from two impala carcasses hung in trees as bait for leopards.

175 Letter landowner Makore to Bikita RDC, 8 September 1997.

176 Letter Mr. Mjimba to Bikita RDC, 27 November 1997.

177 Letter landowner Makore to Bikita RDC, 20 May 1998.

178 Letter Mr. Mjimba to Bikita RDC, 18 May 1998. Mr Mjimba knows that Makore is also applying for a direct joint venture with Bikita RDC. Mr. Mjimba and the landowner of Makore are old acquaintances, and have become close friends, who help each other out if necessary.

179 Interview with landowner Makore, 1 October 1998.

180 Who coincidentally also happens to be the Minister of Education, Sport and Culture.

181 Letter Mr. Machinga to Minister of Lands and Agriculture, 16 June 1998.

182 Letter Mr. Machinga to Minister of Lands and Agriculture, 23 July 1998, emphasis in original.



venture with the council (...). Without an AA this would not lead anywhere in the long run. Case unfinished. It would be a positive development for the SVC were a black landowner with AA to enter onto the scene of the SVC. It would give a tremendous filip towards legitimising its position politically. At the same time this 'salvation' could come from the same district, which parallel to its claim on Umkondo Mine, was a key player as district authority in the Matsai case, which was in the process of seriously undermining the SVC initiative. The paradox of being a 'saviour' and 'executioner' at the same time, is made possible by the specific national context of land designation and the historical context of contrasting black and white social identities related to land.

Despite the extremely bumpy ride the SVC had experienced in establishing organisational co-operation with the neighbouring communities, in November 1998 things finally seemed to come together in a ceremony at which the Trust of the SVC was taken over and handed over to a new Board of Trustees, all of them black in contrast to the first Board and every Trustee representing some of the neighbouring communities. All, except one businessman from Chipinge, were from local authorities at the district level. As an elected authority it can be considered to represent the local populace surrounding the SVC. The actual ceremony took place on 27 November 1998, at Mapari Stop Inn, where the Joint Committee has always held its meetings. The meeting had been planned much earlier, actually already in June of that year, which can be gleaned from the workshop report in March.<sup>183</sup> Because of the national context of Zimbabwe and the local difficulties, including the Matsai case, the upgrading of the fence and the loan application to the IFC, it had to be postponed time and again. For that reason I was not physically present at the ceremony, which is to be regretted.<sup>184</sup> This means that I cannot give first hand observations, but have to rely on the report, which is written by the liaison officer. It is interesting to note that on the list of those attending the meeting, there was no DA from any of the five districts present. Buhera and Zaka had sent proxies and other representatives had been chosen for the remaining districts. There was a strong delegation from the SVC and its supporters from the WWF, including the chairman of the old Board of Trustees, the chairman of the SVC, the conservator and several people from the WWF. Also in attendance were the two representatives of the oldest white tradition in this part of Zimbabwe, who are also councillors for their respective districts, Humani and Chishakwe, the latter being the former Devuli headquarters. The liaison officer was the facilitator of the meeting. The chairman of the SVC was asked to make the opening remarks and to present the gift from the SVC, the New Trust to the communities through the new Board of Trustees. 'The SVC Chairman heralded this gathering as a historical event that had taken a long journey to materialise'.<sup>185</sup> Despite the initial route that the SVC had taken to present the communities with the Trust, i.e. set up a Trust without prior consultation and choosing its own Trustees, the chairman said

that 'the principles on SVC had been discussed openly to allay any fears and suspicions and wished them to adopt the same spirit'. The next speaker was the chairman of the old Trustees, who gave a short historical overview of how the Trust had developed and emphasised that 'the Trust idea was holed to the success of the SVC [i.e. politically legitimising it] adding that the SVC's failure will impede progress of the Trust'. He also mentioned that the SVC was borrowing money from the IFC and that the Trust would be granted some Z\$1 million 'seed capital' over four years. This is only half of what it had thought of in the first place.<sup>186</sup> I am rather hazy about the reason for this as it was decided upon after I had already left. Finally he reiterated that it is essential to the success of the Trust that it find its own funding in order to be able to buy and invest wildlife in the SVC.<sup>187</sup> Following these two introductions came the election of the chairman of the Trust, the selection of additional Trustees and the handing-over ceremony. In the structure of the New Trust there was provision, that over and about the representatives from the communities and RDCs, the Trust would complement its membership with five additional Trustees who would be selected for their strategic importance to the SVC. They were selected at this meeting and would be formally approached afterwards. Their declaration as Trustee would of course only be possible after they had accepted the offer of becoming a trustee. They were looking for two members of parliament, two technical advisors and one traditional leader. It is interesting to see who were selected for these posts for strategic reasons. As members of parliament, those two would approach the Minister of Agriculture and therefore be very influential in the land question. One was minister Kangai, who played a very important role in launching and frantically defending the land designation programme in 1997. The other member of parliament was the Minister of Education, Sports and Culture, Mr. Machinga, who also happens to be the one who wrote the letters exhorting Kangai to do something about the claim of Bikita RDC to the Umkondo Mine. As technical advisers they selected the former chairman of the Trust and the executant of the Rhino Conservation Strategy from the WWF. The latter who had played such an important role in establishing conservancies in Zimbabwe in the first place. As traditional leader they selected Chief Mutema. This chief had clashed with the landowner of Mapari on several occasions about the exact location of the fence near the river. It seems as if the SVC was offering them a piece of the economic cake, a further gift of the SVC, in order to pacify them and ask of them a return gift in the form of legitimising the SVC and respecting its boundaries. No wonder that at the official hand-over after lunch the former chairman of the Trust presented the new Chairman with a check of Z\$ 10,000 and a copy of the Notarial Deed of the Trust. They 'shook hands in the process. Delegates there applauded to this *exchange*'.<sup>188</sup> Now the Trust was officially in the hands of the communities, with their own selected Trustees, and it had become an official bridge to structure the co-operation between the SVC and the neighbouring districts. The Memorandum of Understanding, the body and soul of the organisational structure of the Trust, was not on the agenda during the take-over.

183 Metcalfe March 1998: 15.

184 Although it would be too easy to conclude or even suggest that I should have stayed longer to 'finish' this case. The process of organisational co-operation is still ongoing even after the November inaugural meeting. I jumped on the train when I arrived in Zimbabwe and jumped off at a certain stage. But any stage is rather arbitrary in relation to social reality and never final.

185 Minutes of inaugural ceremony on the hand-over / take-over of the Save Valley Conservancy Trust. 27 November 1998. Following quotes in this section are all from this report.

186 Compared with amount of Z\$ 2 million mentioned in minutes CCM, 11 February 1998 (see note 163).

187 How it will achieve this, when it decided at this same hand-over that the Trust will hold meetings twice a year minimum is rather a mystery to me.

188 Italics added.

That issue would be handled and finalised in another meeting. By June 1999 the meeting had still not taken place.<sup>189</sup> Without the formal recognition of the MoU, the Trust is essentially an empty organisational shell, a hollow ritual meeting place. Therefore it is interesting to take a closer look at the draft text of the MoU and see what elements and emphases of my analysis of the process of organisational co-operation between SVC and neighbouring communities turn up again in this text.

I had expected that the key elements of my description and theoretical interpretation of the issues at stake between SVC and surrounding communities would be made clear as presuppositions right at the beginning of the MoU. And I was not disappointed. In the Preamble the following issues, amongst some others, are put forward: firstly that the 'land use within the SVC is established as *wildlife-based tourism*'.<sup>190</sup> This means that it lays down the possibilities for non-consumptive and consumptive tourism. Hunting is implicated, although (still) hidden, in this formulation. Secondly that the Trust '*has been established for the promotion and sponsorship* of involvement by the rural communities surrounding the area of the Conservancy in the economic and conservation activities of the Conservancy'. This ineluctably betrays that the Trust can be seen as the gift from the SVC to the communities. Implied in the word 'economic' is the hope that the communities may gain material advantages of this co-operation. Implied in the word 'conservation' is the hope that the communities do not poach. But most importantly for the whole argument of this thesis is the final formulation of the preamble, which says 'NOTING that although the Conservancy boundary physically provides a *hard edge* between it, as private land, and the surrounding communities, as communal land, the intent of this Memorandum of Understanding is to soften that edge through a social and economic partnership aimed at the mutual benefit of the Conservancy and its neighbours'. This formulation seems to say it all: the fixed boundary, which the whites introduced into southern Africa and in the context of the SVC demarcated and symbolised through the buffalo fence, will remain to segregate black and white. In order to sweeten this bitter pill, the SVC offers a reciprocal exchange through the fence, in which the SVC extends economic benefits to the communities in return for respecting the boundary.<sup>191</sup> On the basis of these propositions, the MoU could proceed to describe the objectives of both the SVC and the Trust. In effect the objectives must mean a kind of operationalisation of the presuppositions formulated in the preamble. In this respect the MoU is consistent. In the objectives of the SVC it is noted, amongst other things and building on the presuppositions I quoted above, that tourism must be understood as consisting of 'consumptive (i.e. game cropping and safari hunting) and non-consump-

tive (i.e. tourism<sup>192</sup>) forms'.<sup>193</sup> The communities return in the objectives of the SVC by stating that the SVC aims at the 'development of a programme to enhance communication with neighbouring communities and to stimulate the *economic and social advancement* of such communities through durable linkages with the Conservancy's wildlife industry'.<sup>194</sup> With regard to the issue of the hard-edgeboundary, it is stated that the object of the SVC is the 'construction and maintenance of the perimeter game fencing to a specified standard'.<sup>195</sup> It is driven home that the fence is there strictly for purposes of wildlife management, and does not refer to anything else. The many boundary disputes I described above speak for themselves in this respect and contrast starkly with the formulation in the MoU. The Trust is formulated as having only one objective: 'to foster *co-operation* and communication between the Conservancy and its neighbouring communities through *beneficial* and durable economic relations'.<sup>196</sup> The rest of the text is devoted to the summing up of all the kinds of projects and activities the Trust could potentially initiate for the communities. The gift of the SVC to the communities is specified in more detail in a section of the MoU, which is summed up under Points 4.1 to 4.9, the 'opportunities' the SVC '*offers*' to the Trust. The mutuality of the arrangement is stressed in the section which sums up the opportunities the Trust should ideally offer to the SVC. The political legitimisation aspect of the Trust-construction is most clearly formulated in the wording of the final opportunity: 'A joint venture *partner with whom to collaborate with government agencies* particularly the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management in terms of translocation of founder stock'.<sup>197</sup> Its legitimising character is underlined further in the section on the obligations of both the SVC and the Trust: 'Publicise the Understanding to other parties *especially the Government of Zimbabwe* and the Zimbabwe public at large'.<sup>198</sup> Finally, the reciprocal exchange returns in two sections of the MoU. Firstly in Point 3, where it is mentioned that 'it is the intent of the Conservancy, through its Committee, and the RDCs through its Trust, to foster a *mutually beneficial* partnership'.<sup>199</sup> The mutuality turn up a second time in the section on the obligations of the Trust and of the SVC, where it is said that 'a positive and dynamic local agenda [is ensured] including, *inter alia*: the making of rules related to the relationship between the Conservancy and the Wards eg. poaching, fence management, fence alignment, access, transport through Conservancy etc.'.<sup>200</sup> An interesting solution is envisioned in the section on conflict resolution between the SVC and the Trust / communities. The SVC, of course, settles its own problems in the CCM. All disputes between SVC and communities or within communities are delegated to, after the local

192 This probably does not cover what they mean exactly, as safari hunting is also a form of tourism. What they probably mean to say is photographic safaris and the like (for instance horse-riding etc.).

193 Ibid: 1.4.

194 Ibid: 1.5. It is the only article in the MoU that is presented in a bold letter type. This article probably signifies more than anything else the *raison d'être* of the whole Trust idea. Italics added.

195 Ibid: 1.3.

196 Ibid: 2.a, italics added.

197 Ibid: 5.5. Here also speaks the ultimate wish to buy buffalo for the SVC through the Trust. Italics added.

198 Ibid: 6.6, italics added.

199 Ibid: 3, italics added.

200 Ibid: 6.4. 'Fence management' in context sounds like a euphemism for respecting the boundary by the communities. Not for nothing is it mentioned directly after the issue of poaching!

189 Personal communication with Conservator.

190 Memorandum of Understanding between the Save Valley Conservancy and the Rural District Councils of Chiredzi and Bikita (of which it is part) and Chipinge, Zaka, Buhera (of which it is a neighbour), first draft, 30 January 1998. Further quotes in the text without a note are also taken from the preamble of this document. Italics added.

191 The other two points in this preamble are the description of the SVC as 'an amalgamation of 24 private ranches' and a description of the Trust as 'corporate whose function is to act as the fiduciary institution for the Joint Committee of Rural District Councils'.

authority has dealt with such matters, either to the Joint Committee (i.e. conflicts within communities) or to the Working Committee (i.e. conflicts between farmers and specific communities).<sup>201</sup> However elegant the formulation and structure may seem, this obviates the SVC formally from any form of *direct* involvement and interaction with the communities. In other words, every contact between SVC and even individual farmers and communities is transformed into a mediated contact. In yet other words, by this formal organisational structure of co-operation, the interaction between the SVC and communities is, ritualised and objectified; the joint venture joins and separates simultaneously, replicating any reciprocal exchange relation. It seems like a form of reciprocal exchange, similar to the Kula ring Malinowski described, in which the ritualised exchange of shells was a precondition necessary to pacify potentially hostile relations between rival identities and clear the ground for everyday trade and interaction alongside it. A difference between Kula and the situation in the SVC is that it can be argued that the Kula ring ritually reconfirmed a situation already peaceful, while that is not the situation in the SVC case. Be that as it may, the primary objective of both rituals is the same, to harmonise relations to such an extent that everyday interaction and trade can take place. In other words, the context of the two might differ, but the core of the activity is similar. The MoU is concluded by some formal formulations about the duration of the memorandum, amendments to the memorandum and finally the agreement which should be undersigned by the Chairman of the SVC and the Chairmen of the RDCs.

With the Trust and new trustees in place, the SVC has created a formal organisational structure for economic co-operation with its neighbouring communities. When the Trust and the SVC undersign the MoU the organisational structure can be 'filled' with some sort of constitution. With the hand-over ceremony finalised and the signing ceremony-to-come, I have described the long and complicated process to come to a form of organisational co-operation between the SVC and the neighbouring communities. The process to reach organisational co-operation as such can be described in a few keywords. What complicated the matter immensely and delayed the process considerably was the specific historical and social context and the local arena of the SVC, which I explained in detail in the previous chapters, most specifically 3, 4 and 5.

### Theoretical explorations of reciprocal exchange in between SVC and SVCT or communities

Following the basic structure of reciprocal exchange as presented by Mauss, three main questions are relevant to my theoretical framework in the context of the organisational co-operation between the SVC and the neighbouring communities. The first is what were the intentions of the gift-giver, i.e. the SVC, in presenting the communities with a gift, i.e. the Trust? Secondly, how willing were the communities and RDCs to receive this gift? Thirdly, have the communities (so far) presented a fitting return-gift? Added

to these 'main-frame' matters, the question should be asked what mix of affect and effect is present in the reciprocal exchange between SVC and communities? For the purpose of conclusions to this particular chapter it is suffice to say that it has inexorably emerged that the relations between the SVC and the communities can be characterised primarily as a reciprocal exchange relation. The complexity of this simple observation hides the fact that the SVC as well as the communities cannot be perceived as single entities but should be considered an amalgamation of different groups and interests with correspondingly different historical and social backgrounds and contexts. This produces different arenas, which although different are also related. Related not only to each other but also to other levels of interaction with different Government Departments like the DNPWLM, the Veterinary Department and the Ministry of Agriculture, multilateral institutions like the WWF, and international funding institutions like the IFC. But, as the focus of this chapter has shown, the relationship refers not only to higher levels of interaction but also to levels closer to the ground, between individual farmers and directly neighbouring communities; between game scouts and communities; between landowners and police and through the police with the communities; and so I could go on by specifying all the different levels of reciprocal exchange which together constitute the system of reciprocities I described in this thesis surrounding and encapsulating this process of establishing a joint venture. With my conclusion in mind I focus here on the level of conclusions that can be drawn for the level of interaction between the SVC and the neighbouring communities in terms of reciprocal exchange. In the main text describing and analysing the micro-level theoretical and empirical, sub-conclusions have been drawn already.

Let me answer the three questions with which I opened this section in turn. What were the intentions of the SVC in offering the gift of the Trust to the communities? It would be (far too) easy to say that there were only strategic consideration at play in the SVC. Of course, such tactics were important in response to the answers of the Minister in Parliament in 1996. And of course they were important in lobbying for a loan and legitimising the SVC project politically and socially. And of course they were important because nowadays everybody in conservation circles is paying lip service to the importance of community relations, and in order to play along with this it is virtually impossible to escape thinking otherwise. Community relations nowadays have the power similar to that of a dominant paradigm in science. Only a conscious heretic will argue otherwise. And of course conservation is a well-respected ideology to use to defend your property in the context of the threat of land designation. All these factors are undoubtedly at work, but not only they. There is also a deep commitment to conservation of the landscape, springing from their historically built relationship with the landscape. And not only with its own land but with landscape in Zimbabwe and southern Africa in general, which naturally implies an awareness of the people populating that land. That commitment might be based on an old-fashioned Romantic and British tradition of Africa as an unspoiled Eden, but it obviously remains a powerful drive urging individuals and institutions to take initiatives. This is the reason the SVC pays so much attention to awareness programmes on conservation and formulates its conservation goal as its first objective in its constitution. Within the present context of international conservation bodies, this implies that communities are seen as partners and part of the conservation

<sup>201</sup> Ibid: 7.0.

strategy. In conclusion, the intentions of the SVC were primarily conservation-oriented, which in the present context implies that communities were to become part of the strategy in terms of sustainable development. Being a private sector initiative this meant that they went for an option, a joint venture, which was in the end commercial in orientation. Earlier trials to guide it along another route had failed. A joint venture is the most common idea put forward to structure wishes of organisational co-operation with a commercial orientation. For that reason, the SVC had to objectify the other party, i.e. the communities, as partner in a legal organisational structure, which became the Trust. The SVC had to take the initiative because there was no other private organisational co-operative structure available to represent the communities on which to build. On top of these primary intentions many issues were at play in the context of the SVC, which forced it to also think and act strategically. This is not meant as a moral judgement of any kind, but is simply a conclusion on the basis of the empirical material presented in this and previous chapters. It says that the SVC operated along the lines of a certain logic, which can be deduced from the process of the establishment of the joint venture. This is far from saying that it operated in either a good or a bad way. Seen from its perspective it operated rather consistently towards the communities, guided by its trials and errors along the process route.

The second question is how willing were the communities to receiving and accept the gift of the SVC? The answer to this question should provide me with the necessary information to contextualise the operations of the SVC in this field: was its offer well considered? In other words, did it try (enough) to place itself in the 'mind of the receiver' to estimate and calculate their willingness to acceptance? Did it give (enough) consideration to whether the gift was an appropriate one under the circumstances? And was the timing of the gift appropriate? All answers to these questions are relevant to form an interpretation of the willingness of the communities to accept the gift with open arms, thus obliging themselves to repay it with a fitting return. In other words, the answer to this second question already has implications for the answer to the third question about a fitting return gift from the communities to the SVC. From the material presented in this thesis it can be concluded that its offer was well considered in terms of the ideological climate prevailing within multilateral conservation circles in the nineties. The time was ripe for finding a willing ear to head the discourse of community relations with a commercial orientation, especially in Zimbabwe. The CAMPFIRE programme had paved the way for the acceptance of this attitude and by the time the SVC came up with its idea, 1995-1996, CAMPFIRE was enjoying the heyday of political popularity and it might well be thought that the idea of the SVC would fall on fertile ground among the major Western donors and conservation organisations. The gift was also well considered in terms of the increasingly difficult relations with the DNPWLM. The SVC could scarcely deal any longer directly with the DNPWLM, after the suspension of its popular support in the top of the DNPWLM. The idea of presenting the DNPWLM with a Trust, representing the communities, and buying wildlife from the DNPWLM, directly for the benefit of the communities, seemed like a well balanced, considered strategy. The gift also seemed well considered in terms of the economic situation of the country. Zimbabwe had begun to slide in a negative economic spiral and the first to suffer from its ill effects were the farmers in the communal areas. This negative economic development

could be blamed to a large extent on the Zimbabwean Government, and so it seemed only the perfect situation to stand up as the SVC and offer the communities the gift of the Trust, specifically created in order to generate future economic benefits for the communal farmer. So it seems that the answer to the question of whether the gift was well considered from the perspective of the SVC and therefore if it might be sanguine about the gift being accepted with open arms, can now be given positively. But nothing could be further from the truth.

There were three inter-related aspects of the complicated context which were not properly considered by the SVC when it made its offer. In the first place there was its enormous lack of socio-cultural antennae attuned to the historical role and current context of land in the social identity construction of black Zimbabweans. The whites in the SVC have never seriously wanted to believe (and probably were (and are?) not able within the context of their social identity to do this) or accept that the land they are now owning and occupying, and which they call their property, is still their land in the eyes of the neighbouring black Zimbabweans. The land will remain their inalienable possession and nothing, and I repeat nothing, will come and stand in between their claim on that land as I described in Chapter 2 under the section 'Excluding from reciprocity through keeping'. No gift in the world, no matter how comprehensive is ever able to repay for the guilt incurred by alienating their land. Every gift is judged only in terms of the amount of compensation for the earlier 'crimes' of land alienation. And they can only be fully compensated if they get their land back. Secondly, the SVC committed an enormous omission in neglecting the communicative ritual surrounding every gift exchange. It just dropped the gift on the doorstep of the neighbouring communities without any formal announcement, or regard for etiquette, or any other communicative expression. It had never asked what kind of gift the communities would like, for instance. It had a gift in mind, not so much to satisfy the wishes of the recipient, as to gratify its own wishes, expressed primarily in its expectations of a fitting return gift, namely respect for its boundaries and, by implication, no poaching. It seems as if the gift was given more with an eye to eliciting a return gift from the communities, than with the idea of making the recipient happy. The paradox is that the return gift is not forthcoming if the recipient is not made happy in the first place. Only then will the feeling of moral obligation prompt the offer a return gift. The SVC did learn from its experiences and now it has ritualised the process to a large extent, trimming it out with appropriate ceremonies and the like. Having made this gesture it now seems as if the communities are at least considering accepting the gift, although the final ingredient, the MoU, has not been signed yet. If they accept the gift will be confirmed in the interpretation of their return gift. But the third and last aspect which destroyed any hope of the SVC to being able to present an appropriate gift to the communities was the role of the Zimbabwean Government. This third aspect relates directly to and activates the first aspect I described. The Zimbabwean Government announced an extensive land designation programme in November 1997, served up with a flood-tide of political rhetoric. This programme cut across all the processes of reciprocal exchange between SVC and neighbouring communities and politically legitimised anew the complaints of black Zimbabweans towards (mainly) white landowners. It was precisely in the aftermath of that land designation programme that I did my fieldwork in Zimbabwe. No wonder that I

can present so many cases of disputes between the SVC and its neighbouring communities over land. If ever the communities had a strategic opportunity and would find a willing ear to listen to their claims, it would be in this political context. The downside of it all is that it could be argued that the Zimbabwean Government did not launch the programme in order to implement it, but just to stir up old resentments, to camouflage its own incompetence in running the country in an economically prosperous way. If the Zimbabwean Government had calculated the costs of the implementation of the programme, it could have known that it would never be able to finance such a scheme, not even with generous funding from the international community. It lifted the lid off Pandora's box and its political strategy did raise many expectations and generated a boulevard of broken dreams and promises. The consequences of this political manoeuvring were specifically felt on the ground in and around the SVC as it was the spark which triggered off a process of negative reciprocity between the SVC and communities, explained in everyday detail in many of the cases presented in this chapter. Because of these three neglected aspects, the gift of the SVC was not properly received in the first place and not directly accepted as a consequence by the communities. In the political context of 1998, it was judged only in terms of the level of compensation for the underlying, over-ruling issue, dividing black and white and uniting each side for different reasons, Land. And on the issue of land, only negative reciprocity remains. Although the system of reciprocities can simultaneously contain also elements of positive reciprocity. Affect and effect occur at the same time.

In the light of the previous two answers, the third question to be answered is, if the communities presented the SVC with a fitting return gift. The simplest answer could be 'no', at least not in the sense that the SVC had anticipated and hoped for, respect for the boundaries and no poaching in combination with political legitimisation at the national level. This is not taken lightly within the SVC. It does not understand that its gift has only been partly accepted, but that the communities and their leaders, some of them also participating in the Trust (!), are simultaneously hoping for and working towards their designation. The SVC feels rejected and finds the communities ungrateful for the offer and gift of the Trust. So, in that sense the gift has alienated the SVC and neighbouring communities maybe even more from each other, a feeling reinforced by the formal and ritualised character of their interaction through the Trust, Joint Committee and Working Committee, which leaves hardly any room for affect, but the plenty for effect in the relationship between them.

In the basic reciprocal structure of giving, receiving and repaying, many aspects of the remaining theoretical questions I formulated at the beginning of this chapter have already been touched upon. But let us return once more to these questions to work through this chapter systematically in answering them. The presentation of the different cases has shown quite plainly what is reciprocated between the SVC and the SVCT or the neighbouring communities. This covers a whole range of things, but foremost intangibles. In terms of tangible things the conclusion has to be that there is not so much of an exchange but more of one-sided giving on the part of the SVC and individual landowners for which nothing tangible is received in return from the communities. They are also not in a position to repay the gifts in kind because of their poor economic position, but they are also not expected to repay in a material way. They are expected

to repay by respecting the boundary of the property and abstaining from poaching. After the answers given by the minister to questions raised in parliament and the publication of the land designation programme, they are also expected to legitimise the existence of the SVC politically. So there is a material giving from the side of the SVC and the landowners for which an immaterial return is expected. The problem with this kind of exchange is that it has the odour of a buying-off operation. This is too hasty and immediately load this form of exchange down with an over-abundance of moral judgement. It is clear that the two exchange partners are very much out of equilibrium both in terms of economic possibilities and of political goodwill. Both can be satisfied by something the other has. From that perspective to institutionalise such a form of exchange in the form of organisational co-operation would offer a win-win situation. This would probably constitute the ingredients of an answer from the rational choice type of approach, which is also basically the approach taken by the SVC to the surrounding communities. But that leaves out the crucial importance of the broader historical and social context of black and white relations in southern Africa related to land and hunting. It is context which sheds light on the question of why the rational choice option is not considered a true choice for the surrounding communities. The context of black and white identity construction in southern Africa, related to The Land Question in Zimbabwe, i.e. its unequal distribution, means that the surrounding communities perceive and (e)valuate every gift only as insufficient compensation for their loss of land. This means that the gift might be accepted, but not in terms of creating a (moral) obligation to repay. The situationality from November 1997 onward continuing to 1998, heightened this perception and aggravated the entrenched suspicion aroused by the gift of the SVC (i.e. the SVCT), because the political rhetoric once more (re)awakened or gave an opportunity to express the sentiments and antagonisms between black and white on this issue. Because the black Africans perceive land as inalienably theirs, they will perceive every gift in terms of (inadequate) compensation. Only if the land itself is part of the exchange are they interested, as I have shown in the Matsai case about the seventy-two families on Angus who would have agreed to accepting that piece of land, but were stymied by Agritex which stopped the deal after the bigger opportunity of land designation of the whole property presented itself. The one example of a neat give-and-take decision process on the exact location of the fence, the Nyangambe case, was also only made possible because of its specific context and situationality as sparsely populated resettlement scheme and a progressive American landowner. These exceptions aside it is clear that land is usually excluded from exchange. What is exchanged mostly between the SVC and the SVCT and the surrounding communities is intangible, suggestions, intentions, promises, participation in organisational structures, oral exchanges in meetings, ideas, and organisational rituals. Many of the intangible exchanges are hardly ever operationalised or have any follow-up in material exchanges. Or to formulate the situation in terms of my theoretical framework, the time frame is not (exactly) clear for either side. This can be traced back to the observation that black and white have a different opinion about what should be exchanged and within what time frame: the SVC time-norm for exchange is immediacy and based on what is given now and should be repaid directly as in balanced reciprocity. For the SVCT and the communities the exchange now taking place is constantly related to the context of the historical appropriation of their land. The

time frame for the return of their land is not stipulated but dictated by strategic opportunity. If that strategic opportunity is not present at a certain stage, they accept compensation, i.e. appeasement. But as soon as a strategic opportunity presents itself they try to achieve their original objective of getting back their land. A situation of fraught with rising expectations develops. What exactly constituted *their* land historically is sometimes difficult to figure out because of (mainly) oral traditions and the subtle mixture of strategic opportunity with the suspicion of historical facts being sometimes constructed.

As can be judged from the cases presented in this chapter, culminating in the installation of the new Trust, the reciprocal exchange relationship between the SVC and communities is a mixture of strategic considerations and affective relations, although the strategic relations dominate the present scene, strengthened by the national political context on land, which has revived many old sentiments about the unequal distribution of land in Zimbabwe. The strategic relations as in balanced and negative reciprocity can be easily recognised in the cases presented in this chapter. Far less obvious are the more affective aspects of the relationship, which paradoxically and even ironically have to do with the attachment to the land of both white and black. Both want to conserve the land for their own reasons of social identity. Whites identify with the landscape and blacks with the soil to which they belong and from which they come. Both are caught up with the other in an endless struggle of negative reciprocal exchange over land, which can probably only be broken and reversed into a positive exchange when a major 'land gesture' is being made by the white landowners. What kind of gesture that might be will be explained in the appendix in which I shall present recommendations to assist the SVC to manage its co-operative structure with their neighbours, constructed on my findings. Before coming back to the issue more extensively in the next chapter presenting the General Conclusions of this research project, it is already possible to observe that the straightforward win-win-situation and implicated evolutionary (economic) development towards a balanced reciprocal exchange, which the SVC presented to the communities as the basic reason for its initiative in setting up the SVCT is far more complicated and is wrapped up in many layers of constraints in the context of their social identities, related to land and hunting. Constraints which can certainly not be reduced to economic calculations or motives, but have to do with the basic Being of people, both black and white, in relation to land. If economic calculation and rational choice do not turn in the scale but social and socio-cultural aspects do, the question of to what scenario this leads and how to cope with it in terms of organisational co-operation and management, both from the perception of the communities and the SVC becomes relevant.

Before turning to suggesting coping strategies for management or tentative solutions for the situation, it is necessary to return once more to the issue of the 'paradoxical fences' which have come to life in the descriptions of the SVC and its relations with its neighbouring communities and the SVCT in these last two chapters. There are different paradoxes to be discerned. In the first place the paradox of economic profit and neighbour relations. In order to maximise the scheme of wildlife utilisation, the SVC has to offer safari hunting. In order to offer safari hunting it needs the Big Five, in particular the buffalo as the most important trophy animal. In order to keep these animals, it needs a buffalo fence for veterinary reasons. So, in order to maximise the conservan-

cy operation economically, it can not escape the erection of a huge fence. Economic profitability is a *sine qua non* for economic neighbour relations. Only then will the SVC be able to invest in and undertake something with and for the communities. But in terms of social neighbour relations the fence is an insurmountable physical and symbolic obstacle, because it puts the disputed signature of the white owner and identity on the land. In that sense, the fence is a symbol of the paradox of economic rationality and social consciousness. Another paradox which the fence signifies is that of the economic power yet political powerlessness of the white landowners. It was erected on the basis of economic power. It is disputed and vandalised by politically powerful, but economically poor, communities and economic power does not constitute a sufficient deterrent to prevent or fight it. A broken fence is a symbol of economic power coupled with political powerlessness. A third and final paradox the fence represents is that of being a barrier to positive reciprocal exchange and a straightforward issue to usher in a negative reciprocal exchange, yet at the same time the fence has the potential to become a reason for positive reciprocal exchange in terms of negotiating its location as we have seen with the Nyangambe fence location. This option of communication has not been tried elsewhere in the SVC where the communities have been confronted with the erection of the fence out of the blue, with the inevitable aftermath of protest by the communities.

These conclusions are only partial ones pertinent to this chapter in which I have described the reciprocal exchange relations between the SVC on one side of the fence and the Trust and communities on the other side. I have finished every chapter with these kinds of partial conclusions, which simultaneously function as a linking pin between the different chapters. In the final chapter these conclusion must be accumulated in a final and overarching conclusion answering the central research question of this thesis. It is the place where empirical detail and theoretical generalisations must meet and, ideally, match.

## 7 General Conclusions

*In which answers to the central research question are formulated and in which conclusions are drawn about the different sub-themes covered in this thesis. Furthermore future scenarios will be formulated on the basis of lines of continuity, context and change for the SVC and its relationship with the SVCT and its neighbouring communities.*

### **Introduction and reiteration of (theoretical) research questions**

This chapter is disquisition on the conclusions drawn from this research project. Conclusions can never be presented without reiterating some of the crucial arguments presented earlier in the text. This implies that this chapter also contains fragments of a summary, but only where relevant to elucidate the conclusions, not as primary objective. As indicated in the introductory chapter and Chapters 1 and 2, this research can be characterised as being descriptive, explorative, explanatory and should give an indication of what to expect in the future about the (further) development of the joint venture under study. For reasons of the first three aspects, a theoretical framework and methodological approach has been formulated in which the theoretical framework is used as a heuristic instrument to describe the case study in context. This emphasis on description in relation to context makes this research ethnographic in orientation. Following the central research question primary attention has been given to the organisation under study and the initiative taken by the SVC in launching a joint venture with the neighbouring communities through a Trust. The perspective of the neighbouring communities is first described in the context of and in contrast with mainly white identity construction in southern Africa in general (Chapter 3) and in Zimbabwe in particular (Chapter 4) and, secondly, by concentrating on the interaction between the SVC and neighbouring communities as described in the different cases in Chapters 5 and 6. In this chapter I want to answer my central research question and formulate scenarios about how the future of this initiative taken by the SVC might develop, on the basis of the lines of context and continuity which form the focal point of the subsequent chapters. In order to formulate an answer it is relevant to reiterate the central research question and the theoretical sub-questions I formulated earlier, after the presentation of my theoretical framework.

The central research question is formulated as follows:

*How did the initiative taken by the Savé Valley Conservancy to establish organisational co-operation and benefit neighbouring communities through a Trust develop in terms of reciprocity and related trust, whereas the two partners belong to groups with rival social identities with respect to land (and hunting) in Zimbabwe, in the period 1991-1998, and how can these developments be explained?*

On the basis of my theoretical and conceptual exploration, I began by making clear that, although the SVC proposed a(n) (economic) win-win situation to the communities in the shape of the SVCT, tentative theoretical doubts could be raised in how far such a linear, seemingly automatic and deterministic line of development could take place on the basis of reciprocal exchange, as reciprocal processes are inherently ambivalent, implying economic as well as normative aspects. Furthermore I argued that reciprocal processes are intertwined with processes of trust and imagery. In this thesis reciprocity and trust are presented as two sides of the same coin. Imagery is important in so far it enables or obstructs the commencement of a positive exchange and growing trust. In that respect commercial and communal farmers are both 'loaded' with images of each other based and result of historical and social contexts in southern Africa, which formed and constituted their respective social identities. These social identities are to a large extent both related to land and hunting, but with different outcomes. Going into further detail in Chapters 3 and 4, the historical and social context (also) seemed to indicate that there was not much chance that the SVC and communities would launch a formal organisational co-operation because of crucial differences of social identity related to land. In the two chapters on the historical and social context, I have elaborated on the differences in social identity between black and white in southern Africa to substantiate that expectation. In Chapters 5 and 6, I turned to the case study itself to see what actually happened in the field itself. In a way, the expectation proved to be wrong, if we consider the takeover ceremony in November 1998 as proof of the achievement of the SVC in establishing a co-operative structure with the surrounding communities through the SVCT. It would seem that the expectation of non-co-operation between SVC and communities can be falsified. But can that be considered the final answer in relation to context and processes of social identity construction as described and analysed in this thesis? Is an economic win-win situation or even the prospect of it, enough to bridge differences in social identity related to land? Or is the joint venture an empty shell and temporary victory because mutually ascribed (mis)trust is too high and persistent to allow the essential earned trust to develop and make positive reciprocal exchange within the joint venture possible? In the section on future scenarios for the joint venture of the SVC, I shall answer that question in more detail.

In my theoretical framework, I focused most of my attention on the concept and conceptualisation of reciprocity, from an anthropological perspective. Although reciprocity is considered important to the stability of co-operative structures, joint ventures in particular, organisation and management literature or literature on structures of co-operation barely scratches the surface of the concept theoretically. For that I had to turn to the anthropological discipline where reciprocity has a well-described and analytical conceptual history, going back to the founding fathers of the discipline, like Malinowski and Lévi Strauss. In the context of the organisational structure of co-operation between the SVC and the neighbouring communities through the SVCT, the following theoretical and empirical questions relevant to the field of study were formulated:

- How did the socio-political and socio-economic constellation in Zimbabwe and the southeast Lowveld in which the organisational structure of co-operation is meant to prosper develop in relation to land and hunting?;

- How did the historic context of socio-economic and socio-political relations in terms of land, hunting and social identity develop between black and white in southern Africa and more specifically in Zimbabwe?;
- How do (and did) mutual perceptions of identities and reputations of black communal and white commercial farmers become (and became) institutionalise(d) as stereotypes?;
- What is the specific mixture of affective and effective elements in the organisational relationship between the SVC and neighbouring communities and how are these related to the described contexts?;
- What is in actual fact reciprocated between the two co-operating parties and partners and what and who is excluded from this process?;
- What is the particular time-cycle in which the reciprocal exchange between the parties takes place?;
- How are the issues and things reciprocally exchanged (e)valuated and how is this value related to context and situationality?;
- What is expected and within what time frame of a return gift within the reciprocal relationship?;
- What does the trust relationship between the two co-operating parties and partners tell us about their reciprocal relation?

All of these questions have already been answered at the end of the different chapters in this thesis. But the answers had necessarily to be piecemeal as they can be based only on the material presented in that particular chapter. In this concluding chapter the different answers have to be integrated into a comprehensive and overall presentation. The integrated answers are structured as follows:

- General answers to central research question;
- Conclusions on the theoretical and social relevance of the research;
- Methodological conclusions on research project;
- Future scenarios.

In this concluding chapter I shall not elaborate on the practical implications and suggestion this research project might have for the operations of the SVC in the context of this topic. Practical recommendations do not form part of my central research questions nor of my theoretical questions. For that reason I shall elaborate only on the more consultancy-like recommendations in an appendix to the thesis. This placement in an appendix is also in line with my general methodological approach to this research project in which I have tried to observe and study the SVC in its operations by being part of it, but at the same time have done my best to remain as much an outsider as possible. This meant particularly that, during the course of my research, I never came up with suggestions or advice on the issues being studied. Within the context of a research project on a problematic and sensitive subject within the organisation, this is sometimes rather difficult to achieve, as it is often implicitly and automatically expected in organisations that the researcher comes up with ideas, opinions and solutions. Towards the end of my fieldwork I presented my research findings to the CCM and formulated some



(at that time and stage) tentative conclusions.<sup>1</sup> But also at that occasion I have not presented them with any possible solution(s).

### General answer to central research question

The central research question consists of different parts. The first part: 'How did the initiative of the SVC to establish organisational co-operation and benefit neighbouring communities through a Trust, develop?' and the indication of the time frame 1991-1998, reflects the ethnographic orientation of the thesis. It is answered by describing an organisation, i.e. the SVC, and organisational processes, i.e. the joint venture development between the SVC and its neighbouring communities, within the concept of reciprocity and the related concepts of trust and imagery. These concepts have been chosen because they adequately 'fit' the current discourse on community relations or community conservation within the debate between the dominant organisational players on the conservation scene. Here 'mutual exchange' and 'mutually beneficial relations' between the area under conservation policy and the neighbouring communities are keywords, best covered in the theoretical concept of reciprocity. In turn, this discourse forms part of the wider theoretical discourse within organisation studies in which the question of how people can be bound to organisations in a time of increasing individualisation, fragmentation and atomisation is posed. Of deeper significance is the fact that the process of organisational co-operation takes place in a context of two groups with rival identities, black communal and white commercial farmers. The description of their rivalry has been confined to the main issue dominating Zimbabwean national politics ever since the advent of the white people in the region in 1890, land and related, hunting. The first part of the central research question, 'How did the initiative taken by the Savé Valley Conservancy to establish organisational co-operation and benefit neighbouring communities through a Trust, develop...', refers to the ethnographic orientation of this study. The following part of the question, 'in terms of reciprocity and related trust', refers to the theoretical perspective from which this (process to establish a) co-operative organisational structure is described and interpreted. The next part of the question, 'while the two partners belong to groups with rival social identities with respect to land (and hunting) in Zimbabwe', refers to the social and historical contexts in which these developments take and have taken place. Contextualising organisations and organisational processes, clarifies that they inevitably form part and parcel of wider historical and societal developments, in this case in southern Africa and more particularly in Zimbabwe. In that respect, the description of context in itself already has explanatory value. The period mentioned in the question, '1991-1998', refers to the official launch

of the SVC, as a formal and legal organisational entity (1991), and my year of fieldwork (1998). The final part of the question, 'how can these developments be explained', focuses more on the interpretation and analysis from a theoretical point of view than on description and context. It is here that the theoretical framework and the concepts mentioned earlier must prove its and their worth, i.e. must be able to produce plausible interpretations. As is a common and general problem with demarcations, the line between description and analysis is not a strict one. The selection of what forms part of a description and what is left out is already part of the analysis and interpretation taking place and some aspects of the analysis are best presented through a description. But for the sake of analytical clarity, it is worthwhile to retain the distinction between 'sheer' description and explanation.

Chapters 1 and 2 are devoted to the construction of my theoretical and methodological framework. By presenting it to the reader at this early stage of the thesis, I offer the opportunity to become aware of my focus and theoretical and methodological 'fieldwork glasses' with which I looked upon the social reality being studied. The concept of reciprocity is the starting point for my theoretical discussion, for reasons I have indicated already earlier. In conservation circles the assumption and expectation behind the idea is that if the conservation area provides the communities with tangible economic and financial incentives, taken from their tourism incomes, the communities will 'repay' this gift by respecting the boundaries and the wildlife of the conservation area and even protect it. In general, conservation policy intentions nowadays focus on establishing a positive reciprocal relationship between a wildlife area and its surrounding communities. They want to turn from negative to at least balanced reciprocity. Following this debate on conservation practices, the concept of reciprocity presented itself with considerable force as a tool to be used in analysing this particular case study of organisational co-operation in private conservation in Zimbabwe. In organisational studies, I could not find specific or sufficient elaboration on the concept though, whereas the concept of reciprocity has a considerable and noteworthy conceptual tradition within the anthropological discipline. I constructed my analytical framework around the notion of reciprocal exchange mainly as presented in anthropological literature and related it to the concepts of trust and imagery. These latter two concepts are always implied in the conceptualisation of reciprocity, although hardly ever explicitly mentioned or elaborated upon. For reasons of analytical clarity, I presented them as separate concepts, but under the conceptual umbrella of reciprocal exchange. The main theoretical point I make in Chapter 1 is that I argue that reciprocal exchange processes are a mixture of strategic intent and affective consideration. Because of this mix, I use the near tautology 'reciprocal exchange', indicating the affective aspects of the relation under 'reciprocal' and the more strategic ones under 'exchange'. No one ever knows for certain the exact content of the mixture and therefore calculation, estimation and evaluation of the Other are the inevitable consequence. Within that process of valuation the image of the Other is an important and crucial determinant for the end conclusion. The image of the Other determines if he or she is to be trusted beforehand or not (ascribed trust); if a reciprocal exchange relation will actually get off the ground or not. Images and stereotypes are constructed over long periods of time, which makes a historical reconstruction of the

<sup>1</sup> Minutes of CCM, 7 October 1998. I actually wrote my own text of my presentation to the CCM to be included in the minutes. In the discussion following my presentation, the members asked me, amongst other things, to comment on the role the liaison officer in the SVC. I suggested that he should be at least co-opted onto the CCM, so that he could have first hand information on the direction in which the SVC was heading and could report to the CCM directly about the developments in the relationship between the SVC and the neighbouring communities. The suggestion was adopted and from the next CCM onward, the liaison officer participated in the meetings (minutes of CCM, 4 November 1998). Some consultancy-result after all!

context of black and white social identities and relations related to land and hunting in southern Africa necessary and worthwhile.

In Chapter 2 I have explained, before I turned my attention to contextualising the case study and presenting the case study itself, my methodological approach, in response to the type of explorative research that is required for answering my central research question and in line with the function of my theoretical framework as a heuristic tool. For my case study with an ethnographic orientation and with a theoretically explorative character, I have chosen a qualitative methodology. The reasons for this choice were a mixture of methodological considerations, but primarily because of the fitting nature and contents of this highly politically sensitive case study, and personal preference for a qualitative approach. I not only present my methodological outline and design in the chapter but I am also (already) reflecting on the process of research. A methodology is to be used 'in the field', separating the framework from the actual execution and experience, is as useless as saddling a horse without riding it. The end result is a description of method and a mixture of a (nearly) Post-Modern argument on the role of coincidence in fieldwork and pragmatic research planning and anticipation. Where these two are brought together, as in my research, classical anticipation and Post-Modern 'go with the flow' and match in a fairly harmonious and stimulating way. The extensive reflection on my research project is done in order to present the reader extensive methodological transparency. In the first place to convince him or her how well I have handled the research organisation. Secondly to read between the lines of my thesis and judge accordingly what biases and distortions have (unconsciously) played a role in my research process: What are my parameters of my construction of social reality?

After the presentation of my theoretical and methodological credentials in Chapters 1 and 2, I continue in Chapter 3 with an extensive description of the historical process of a white identity construction in southern Africa related to land and hunting. I focus mainly on processes of white identity construction, because my ethnographic orientation is on the SVC, which is an organisation consisting, with one minor exception, the parastatal ARDA, of descendants of the white pioneers in the region, supplemented by some foreign white businessmen. Black identity in the context of land and hunting is also presented, but mostly as a strategic contrast to clarify the process of white identity construction. This strategy emerges most clearly in relation to sketching the black and white relationship to land. I argue that both groups derive their identity from the land and related hunting activities, but in a completely different and often contrasting way. Black Africans derive their social identity from the soil of the land and are related to it as a baby to its mother, by its umbilical cord. In contrast, white Africans derive their social identity from the landscape in the Anglo-Saxon Romantic tradition as an ideal Eden. They relate to the land as a man to a beautiful object of desire. The first is a blood tie, the second is one of choice and visual attraction. The first group lives with it and they grow old together, the second cherishes it and tries to conserve its ideal beauty. The first is a vertical relationship with the soil of the land, the second a horizontal tie with the things on the land. The first identify with the land as does a root, the second as a house on a property. The first consider land inalienable, the second consider land ultimately as a tradable commodity. The first invest in land for life, the second for economic and financial profit. The first perceive land communally, the second individually. For the

first land(rights) have soft, flexible boundaries, the second demarcate their land with solid and hard edges, exemplified in the location of wired fences. The first hunt(ed) on the land in order to live, the second hunt(ed) on the land as a way of living; life and lifestyle. Land to the first is a matter of being, to the second of image. These two groups with opposed and antagonistic approaches and relations to land met at the end of the nineteenth century and taking advantage of their superior firepower, the whites appropriated much of the land in present-day Zimbabwe. The bullets have become the seed and metaphor for the relations of negative reciprocity between black and white over land ever since, a process which knows of no stipulated time frame for repayment. (Re)action and reaction are dependent on strategic opportunity in an ongoing process.

In an age in which organisations experience the effects of increasing fragmentation and risk, it has become increasingly relevant to ask what binds (groups of) people to organisations and convictions. The concept of trust has been put forward by several authors as an important ingredient of that binding process. But how is this achieved in organisations and in organisational structures of co-operation? It was really this question which lay at the basis of the move towards community conservation in the nineties of the multilateral conservation organisations like the IUCN and the WWF and initiatives taken by organisations like the SVC: How do we bind surrounding and neighbouring communities to our conservation ideas, initiatives and efforts? Their answer was by offering them material advantages in order to embark on a reciprocal exchange relationship, in which the communities would repay by respecting the boundaries and the wildlife of the conservation area. This is also one of the presuppositions on which the initiative of the SVC is based.<sup>2</sup> This also embodies the hope that the reciprocal relationship will foster a trust relationship (earned trust) between the two in its wake: the material gift as catalyst for immaterial trust. The problem is that not every reciprocal relationship is based on the same level or type of trust. Maximum and ultimate trust is given in situations of generalised reciprocity only, wherein which time frame is stipulated and in which there is trust because of a shared and value-laden social identity. It is not primarily material things that are exchanged, but immaterial things like trust, loyalty, and above all, a sense of belonging expressed in the production and reproduction of a shared social identity. This is not what is found in the case study of the SVC in relation to its neighbouring communities. In the case study the co-operating partners and parties have very different social identities and do not share a sense of belonging. Trust and loyalty are therefore not (easily) exchanged. In balanced reciprocity, trust is not necessarily based on a shared identity but on expectations of an equal exchange of material value. The mutual expectations are based on calculations, (e)valuations and estimations of what is given and what should literally be repaid. As long as the repayment is considered sufficient, trust is prolonged as is confidence that, in a next exchange, the other will also keep his (or her) part of the deal. Therefore it is important to ask the question whether a gift is accepted and if so, how it is repaid? This type of reciprocal exchange, a win-win situation, was the intention in the initiative of the SVC. But the gift of the SVCT from the SVC was not valued by the communities as expected by the SVC. It came to

2 The other is a strategic answer to the policy guidelines the Minister of Environment and Tourism formulated for conservancies in answer to written questions in Parliament.

that conclusion by (e)valuating in turn the repayment of the communities, which in its eyes was not appropriate as poaching continued and the respect for the boundaries deteriorated even more, largely because of the national socio-political context of land designation, especially in the southwest corner, bordering the Matsai communal area. This conclusion was not constitutive to the further development of a trust relation between the two. In negative reciprocity trust is absent. Reciprocal exchange is based on keeping the other at a social distance. This is achieved by stereotyping and emphasising the mutual differences in social identity in exchange. It is this type of reciprocity, which at first sight seems to come closest to describing the relationship between the SVC and neighbouring communities. But this conclusion would not do justice to the commonality of both social identities of the two partners, as both relate to the land, although in different and even antagonistic ways. It is the land, which paradoxically divides and simultaneously unites the parties. It is a paradoxical mix of generalised and negative reciprocity. Generalised and negative reciprocity are inversely related to each other: both processes confirm social identity in an exchange with no formally stipulated time frame. The difference is that in generalised reciprocity, social identity is (re)produced virtually unconsciously in a sense of belonging. In negative reciprocity social identity becomes almost fixed and institutionalised in stereotypes, in which the emphasis is on difference and mutual exclusiveness. The binding in the latter type of reciprocity is on the basis of exclusion: if you are not part of the rival group, you automatically are considered part of the other group. The first type of reciprocity is based on inclusion, based on a shared heritage and identity. In generalised reciprocity, internal integration of the group is emphasised through a common social identity. Its orientation is inwards on the group; it stands together as in a circle shoulder to shoulder with the backs of the members facing outside and their faces focused on the inside of the group. In negative reciprocity, boundaries of identity are emphasised and are the defining mark showing on which side you are. Its orientation is outward, intent on guarding the boundaries of its social identity; its members stand together as in a circle shoulder to shoulder, but with their faces focused on the outside and their backs to the inside. The first safeguard their social identity by integration, the latter by confrontation. The first preserve the symbolic boundary of their identity by belonging, the latter by keeping the boundary fixed and closed to outside penetration. In both types, trust is unconditionally given to the other members of the group. It is negative and generalised reciprocity which forms a paradoxical mix in this case study because of the commonality and opposition in the social identities of the two partners. Both relate to the land as the ultimate basis of their social identity, although with a different emphasis and for different reasons. It is in that common basis that they share an affective tie, although they have difficulties in understanding each other's different perceptions in relation to land. That is why it seems that only negative reciprocity remains. This paradoxical mix between generalised and negative reciprocity is interpreted by the SVC in the sense that it considers balanced reciprocity as a mean between the two extremes, which could therefore provide a basis for co-operation in an economic win-win situation. But balanced reciprocity does not point towards a paradox, because of its strict bookkeeping and calculative characteristics. Furthermore a paradox does not have a solution in terms of a mean or 'in between', because a paradox is a way of holding two opposing forces at the same time. Instead of looking

for the mean, the SVC should accommodate and manage the paradoxical mixture of generalised and negative reciprocity of its relation to the communities. It should acknowledge the common affective tie to the land, i.e. generalised reciprocity, and the struggle of the communal farmers to obtain a stake in the land again, i.e. negative reciprocity. Accommodating this paradox can only be done through giving the communal farmers an honest stake in the land itself instead of in operations on the land.

For all clarity, remember that I am working here with ideal types of reciprocal exchange only. This means that they will certainly not 'fit' or match with social reality and complexity, but they can be used to indicate the direction of the processes being studied. They can show if and how far the binding of the SVC and neighbouring communities has succeeded. The conceptual linkage between processes of identity construction and reciprocal exchange make the introduction and extensive description of historical and social context inevitable. How else is it possible to understand the current state of rivalry between the (white) commercial and (black) communal farmers in Zimbabwe? In my case study of the SVC and its initiative in creating a joint venture with the neighbouring communities, it unequivocally emerges that in terms of the typology the spectrum is limited to the paradoxical processes in the realm of negative and generalised reciprocity. The generalised aspect of the relationship is based on attachment of both parties and partners to the land (although for different reasons), which at the same time initiates the bitter struggle between commercial and communal farmers in a process of negative reciprocity. It is this latter process which also seems the most obvious one, and which obscures our vision on the affective ties which simultaneously bond commercial and communal farmers.

Thus, the relationship of negative reciprocity between the SVC and the neighbouring communities expressed itself basically through an exchange of material and immaterial statements about the ownership of the land. Both claim(ed) the land to be theirs. In the early stages, the dominant whites enjoyed the legal and economic possibilities issuing forth from their political power to 'substantiate' their claims. Their land claims were politically and legally legitimised respectively in different Acts and title deeds and economically through productive agricultural exploitation. Materially following the various juridical justifications, they expressed their ownership of the land by the 'wiring' of southern Africa. Fences became the signatures of white land ownership. But, despite these immaterial and material legitimising activities, the black Africans never let go of their birthright. They have protested about subsequent developments ever since. One of the most persistent and widely chosen way of protest was and still is, by hunting, which is called 'poaching' by the white landowners. It is mostly subsistence poaching, which is the major type of poaching throughout Africa. They live from what their land has to offer them, no matter that there is temporarily someone else on it who acts as if it is his land. The strongest symbol of this protest is the fact that the black Africans often use pieces of the hard-edge wire from the property boundaries to construct their snares, which are then set out on the property. The wildlife is caught with the same wire meant to protect it and separate it from the communities. The wire that divides wildlife from black Africans is the same wire that connects them once again: an ironic paradox. Other forms of poaching are also practised by black Africans, but here they are only the lowest level executioners; the ones in the field killing the animal and delivering the mer-

chandise to middlemen at a relatively low price. The major economic money-making from the product, ivory or rhino horn, starts from there. These businesses and rackets are far more likely to be managed and run by white people or Asian or African businessmen / politicians than black peasants living in the rural areas. The white man also hunts on the same land, but not for the pot, nor is it likely he is involved in the direct poaching of elephant and rhino. Either hunting is a leisure activity for himself or he economically exploits this leisure activity by offering paying clients the opportunity to hunt on his land. Hunting is a major economic activity in wildlife utilisation and a much used and propagated method to let conservation pay for itself, especially in private wildlife conservancies, which began to develop at the end of the seventies in South Africa, in the province of Natal. But because hunting is about large amounts of money and is attributed wildlife a high financial value, the next step is to secure this asset behind even more formidable and often electrified fences, for veterinary reasons, to prevent wild animals from causing damage in neighbouring communities, to secure a shooting area for hunters to go their way unhindered and to keep potential poachers outside. The last two reasons are seldom made public. The last aspect especially gains in importance as the value of wildlife increases and every poached animal becomes what is seen as a privation of potential hunting income. This in turn makes the protest voice, which has always been part of the poaching exercise anyway, louder and therefore demands more severe protective measures. In South African conservancies this has led to a situation in which security firms with, amongst other people they employ, personnel with a hard core ideological background and practical military counter-insurgency training in the apartheid era are hired to protect the wildlife for the landowner and the hunter. Obviously they protect the wildlife by focusing on keeping people out, the old fortress approach. Their presence continues to emphasise the white land claim and deny it (once again) to the black African. In this way the fence and its (often (para-)military) protection becomes the barbed signature of the white landowner and the hated stereotype of an unequal land distribution in southern Africa. Consequently the struggle about land between two groups with rival identities, black and white in southern Africa, can be described as a war of the fences. The stereotypes, which pertain to this configuration, are that every black African is a potential poacher and every white man a land robber. It has led to a fundamental (ascribed) distrust between black and white in southern Africa, when it concerns the issues of land and hunting. The aspect of the reciprocal relationship can be characterised as negative with strategic considerations playing a pivotal role in decision processes concerning the actions to be taken towards each other. It is the people belonging to these two groups who, in the case of the SVC, have to work together in a joint venture.

In the colonial and apartheid era both political and economic power were vested in the whites in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia. The stranglehold of white over black was suffocating, both politically and economically. The same holds true for the dominating discourse in wildlife conservation, formulated primarily by white Europeans and Americans, within multilateral conservation agencies. Their Romantic notions about how nature and wildlife should literally appear in a picturesque 'typical African' landscape and be preserved and conserved as such, can be summarised as the 'fines and fences' or 'fortress' approach: people out of conservation areas, fence and guard the

boundaries of remaining pieces of 'unspoiled Africa'; maintain natural Africa as it should be. African people were often considered a threat to this ideal image, eliciting the ever present fear they might spoil it. There was an unvarnished animosity between African people and nature conservationists. Both considered the other a party to be fought and to be the subject of protest as the main enemy. Politically the black majority was able to free itself from white domination, but only after intense, bloody and many years of struggle. In Southern Rhodesia this happened in 1980 when it became independent and was ruled by a black majority government under Robert Mugabe. In South Africa this changed in 1994, when the first democratic elections were held and Nelson Mandela took office as the first black president. Parallel to these political developments, international conservation agencies realised increasingly that their policy on nature conservation had to be adapted to new socio-political realities, sooner rather than later. Democratic majorities cannot just be excluded from conservation areas, without anything in return. That would be politically and socially unacceptable. Instead of considering them as potentially threatening parties, conservation agencies began to see and redefine and reconstruct them as partners in conservation, but partners in a particular sense. They would receive material and economic benefits from the conservation area, in exchange for respecting its boundaries. The simple norm of reciprocity became the core of international conservation policy. It was a reciprocal norm derived from the ideal type of balanced reciprocity: equality and immediacy are the keywords, although what equality consisted of was formulated by one side only, the conservation authorities.

In South Africa and Zimbabwe this particular norm of reciprocity was difficult to work with because in both countries after they had had to cede their political dominance, the whites retained their economic power, in agriculture and agro-business based mainly on their ownership of (the best) land. The unequal distribution of land made it impossible to exchange on an equal footing between black and white. In wildlife conservancies in South Africa this even led to a reverse development in which landowners sealed off their land even more than before to protect their economic assets, i.e. wildlife. More negative reciprocity was the result consisting of a process of strategic action and counteraction, in which neither party felt obliged to repay the other for affective reasons; there was no time-frame stipulated. Timing of reciprocal exchanges depended solely on strategic opportunity; a negative tit-for-tat between political and economic power. The official objective of the party with political power, the black Africans, was to strive towards a more equal distribution of economic power a process which is intimately linked with land ownership.<sup>3</sup> Ever since Independence in 1980 the Zimbabwean government has tried to come to grips with The Land Question. At first it was hindered by the Lancaster House Agreement, which seriously curtailed its freedom to

3 From a political anthropological perspective it seems only natural that these official and noble objectives were not met in the informal reality of everyday life. Nor were they achieved through an evenly balanced and equal process of shared ideological zeal. Some people in political power tried to use that power for their own enrichment. These examples were, of course, publicised by the people with economic power, the white Africans, as proof that the politicians were not after equality, but just wanted to reverse roles. In their eyes this legitimised their defensive strategies in co-operation with the programme and ideals. They say they agree on the basis of the moral principle of the programme of land redistribution, but that they cannot live with the way it is operationalised in policy.

manoeuvre for a period of ten years. Although there are some who say that the Lancaster Agreements are only used as a scapegoat for the incompetence of the government itself to deal with the issue. In 1990 it could launch with renewed possibilities, culminating in the Land Acquisition Act of 1992 which gave the government far reaching powers to designate land for purposes of resettlement of black Africans. But not much happened with the Act in the years immediately after it was passed. The climax (so far) only came in November 1997 when the Zimbabwean government announced a land designation programme in which 1471, mainly white, farms would be designated in the course 1998. But the government lacks teeth, i.e. economic power and consequently financial resources, to implement a programme of that magnitude. And because the land issue is so politicised by now, i.e. land-justice and land-grab can no longer be discerned from each other in the programme, the Zimbabwean government could not count on financial support from the international donor community which was the firm message at the donor conference in September 1998. It seems rather strange that at that level the Zimbabwean government did not realise its position in drafting these plans earlier. According to some critics, this proves that it launched the land designation programme for political electoral purposes only, knowing already that it would never be in a position to implement a project of this comprehensive nature. The rub was that the whole programme, with its concomitant political rhetoric and process did stir up and (once again) activated old, latent, brooding mutual stereotypes between black and white regarding land. The land designation programme proved to be a splendid strategic opportunity for black communities to substantiate their claims to white commercial land and carry their protest further than they usually could within the legal constitution of Zimbabwe, by invading properties, i.e. deliberately trespassing legal boundaries of ownership, thereby maximising political pressure.

Chapter 3 on a context of the construction of a white social identity in southern Africa and Chapter 4 on the national political context on The Land Question in Zimbabwe provide the reader with an answer to the part of the central research question in which it is stated that the organisational co-operation being studied is between 'two groups with rival identities with respect to land and hunting'. Together these two chapters give the reader a sufficient and a to-the-point socio-economic and socio-political context to be able to be introduced to the case study in the Chapters 5 and 6, where I answer the first part of the central research question by describing the actual process of the development of organisational co-operation, in terms of reciprocity and trust, between the SVC and the SVCT, which the SVC initiated in order 'to benefit neighbouring communities'. The SVC was officially inaugurated in 1991 and my fieldwork took place in 1998, which explains the specific timeframe of my research question. Based on my argument in Chapters 3 and 4, I can describe the establishment of the SVC as an almost linear (re-) production of white social identity in southern Africa in general and in Zimbabwe in particular in relation to land policy and hunting.

A strong force at a national level to propel a joint venture with the neighbouring communities through a Trust (SVCT) can be traced to the reciprocal exchange of statements between the Zimbabwean government and the SVC. Although conservancies were and are established in different parts of Zimbabwe, mainly in the Regions IV and V of the country, they have no statutory definition (yet). This leads to questions in par-

liament about what policy the government was following exactly with regard to conservancies. On that occasion the minister answered that conservancies would only be allowed in Zimbabwe if they were to form 'a formal and meaningful relationship' with their neighbouring communities. What he meant was that the conservancies had to share their economic benefits with the neighbouring communities in an institutionalised way. The reply thought up by the SVC to satisfy the government was to form the SVCT and to try to establish a joint venture with the neighbouring communities. The reason for launching a co-operative programme with the neighbouring communities at the local level can be traced back to the pressures on the boundaries of the SVC, some of which can date back to the Liberation Struggle as the Matsai case indicates. Even more generally, there are several communities around the SVC, which have claims to parts of the land, like the Gudo people on Levanga, and other communities living near the Save River, like the Mutema people. These pressures were increased immensely by the expedient of invading different properties after the announcement of the land designation programme in November 1997, because all the sentiments about land had been resuscitated and legitimised anew. A specific level of reciprocal exchange colours the initiative of the SVC, which is the problematic relationship between the SVC and the DNPWLM. After the major supporters of conservancies at the top of the DNPWLM were suspended and the DNPWLM became a statutory fund in its own right, relations cooled down. When the DNPWLM decided to impose a ban on the translocation of wildlife, including buffalo, to commercial land, relations really soured. Since then the SVC has not been able to buy a single buffalo and add it to the already existing small herd in the SVC. A tit-for-tat war developed between the private sector wildlife utilisation industry and the DNPWLM, each accusing the other of irregularities in the most lucrative part of the utilisation industry, trophy hunting. The DNPWLM was accused of corruption and nepotism in its granting of permits. The private sector was in turn accused of illegally marketing animals to overseas hunting clients and concealing foreign currency from the cash-stripped government. The creation of the SVCT is related to this level of reciprocal exchange. Right from the beginning when the SVC created the SVCT, the intention was to let the SVCT become a vehicle to attract donor money for restocking the SVC with wildlife. The idea behind it was, amongst other ploys, that the DNPWLM could hardly resist selling buffalo to the SVCT for social and political reasons, as it represented poor communities which are being given an opportunity to earn money by participating in a wildlife enterprise. The description of the different cases 'on the ground' demonstrates unequivocally that most of the reciprocal relations between the SVC on the one hand and the SVCT and communities on the other hand, can be characterised as a hybrid of generalised and negative reciprocity with the process being steered, at first glance, far more by strategic opportunities than by the affective considerations on both sides. If the two parties communicate and negotiate directly with each other, the relationship moves from negative reciprocity towards a more balanced form of relationship. This has mainly to do with the fact that the basic assumption of these face-to-face communication processes is that both parties should get something out of it. When face-to-face communication breaks down, only negative reciprocity remains: both try to get as much as possible without paying for it. Together these related but different levels of reciprocal relations between SVC and different stakeholders constitute a system of rec-

iprocities which I describe from the viewpoint of the SVC, as the central focus of my case study and ethnographical orientation. Reciprocal exchange has proved to be a good conceptual tool to describe the organisational processes being studied. Which brings me to answering the last part of the central research question, 'How can these developments be explained?'

The aspect of trust is absent in negative reciprocity. The other party is not trusted at all. A situation of distrust obtained and Machiavellian strategy prevails over affective complaisance. In balanced reciprocity trust is given on the condition that both parties live up to their part of the exchange immediately. Affect enters the relationship in the sense that both parties feel more or less morally obliged to live up to their part of the relation for the sake of the Other. A balanced mixture of strategic self-interest and complaisance is the order of the day. Mutual trust is expected to be part of the relationship. A mixture of negative and balanced reciprocity as described above presents problems most exactly in its consequences for the trust relationship and the corresponding image that is attached to the Other. In a situation of negative reciprocity trust is not expected and trust is not given. In that sense the situation is relatively clear: no mutual expectations of trust. But if a relation is not a 'pure' case of negative reciprocity, but (sometimes) tends towards balanced reciprocity the level of trust becomes (even more) a matter of estimation and mutual disappointments can easily occur. In balanced reciprocity an immediate and balanced return is expected. When that is not given (as in a relationship with characteristics of negative reciprocity), both parties feel betrayed and blame the other party for not living up to its part of the deal. Or it might happen that their return is not considered as valuable as what the one party has given in the first place and the Other is accused of lacking the right propensity for gratitude. But it might as well be that the original gift was not (e)valuated in the same manner and at the same level by the recipient as presented and expected by the giver. The lack of gratitude from the recipient then corresponds with their (e)valuation of the gift and not with the (e)valuation and expectations the giver attached to it. Disappointments in this field are often 'translated' into the (re)construction of the image of the other party (stereotype), which is described as untrustworthy: they do not live up to their promises and in the context of reciprocity, they do not keep their part of the bargain, they do not repay in kind. Consequently, the relationship can easily deteriorate into a spiral of mutual unfulfilled expectations.

The SVC presented the communities, the Zimbabwean government and the DNPWLM with their gift of the SVCT, in an attempt to start a relationship of balanced reciprocity with them. With the communities, it began, unfortunately in a stage when it had already decided on the SVCT, direct communication with them in order to force the relationship into balanced gear. And to a certain extent the communities went along and did not refuse the offer and gift of the SVC out of hand and, in November 1998, they did show up at the take-over ceremony of the SVCT and they do study the MoU, although, so far, they have not countersigned it. That aspect and level of balanced reciprocity seem to have been reached and should be acknowledged as a major achievement of the SVC under circumstances which were far from conducive to this development. I shall come back to this point later, under 'Future scenarios for the SVC'. One critical note, apart from the late start of the direct communication with the communities, on

this development which could be sounded, is that the exchange between the SVC and the communities and the SVCT seems increasingly more like a (organisationally structured) ritual dance of official meetings, than of face-to-face and human-to-human relations between (members of) the SVC and members of the communities. At the same time it should be noted, as a counter to the critical note, that ritual as such is an important aspect of reciprocal relations. The Kula ring, with which empirical example the debate on reciprocity began with Malinowski, also functioned at two levels. At one level there was the ritual of meeting and exchanging shells. If that meeting was successful it created a peaceful atmosphere between potential hostile groups and made it possible at a second level to do 'real business', i.e. trade, and parallel to and following the ritual of peacekeeping shell exchange.<sup>4</sup> The SVC does invest in the first level of ritual, although in first instance it forgot about the importance of the first approach-ritual by presenting the communities with a *fait accompli*. But the SVC seems to leave the second level of personal interaction unaccounted for. There are incidents of personal exchange between landowners/managers and neighbouring communities, but these have no structural character, nor are exchanges a habit of all members of the SVC. The relationship between SVC and communities also simultaneously has the characteristics of a negative reciprocal relation. Communities still want land in the SVC have claimed it through invasions or by other means, like poaching. The SVC interpreted this behaviour in the context of its gift to the communities and concluded that the recipients are ungrateful and not keeping their part of the bargain and consequently is disappointed that its gift of the SVCT and deed of goodwill is not embraced and repaid adequately by the communities. The corresponding image is that the communities are not trustworthy to deal with. This image should be added to the already existing image of communities as being in constant need of help from the white commercial farmers. The image is institutionalised in the creation of the Trust and its objectives as an institution set up in order to help the needy communities. Is the disappointment of the SVC in terms of economic calculations justified? Probably it is. In terms of a bookkeeping approach to reciprocal exchange, the SVC has lost. But it could well be that the communities, the recipient, (e)valuated the gift of the SVCT differently and in their eyes repaid the SVC sufficiently by going along with the initiative on the basis of their shared attachment to land and as far as could possibly be expected given their fight over that same land. For that reason they were prepared to attend the take-over ceremony at the Mapari Stop-Inn. The return of the communities consists of their non-refusal of the gift of the SVCT, which in a way is also an acknowledgement of a shared attachment to land by both the SVC and the neighbouring communities (although with a different emphasis). It is acknowledging that, virtually obscured under the struggle over land in a process of negative reciprocity, an affective tie is binding the SVC and neighbouring communities. Land is both binding and separating the SVC and neighbouring communities. As this is the case, an economic win-win proposal will never work out, unless the communities are

4 I do realise that it is dangerous to make this kind of general comparison because it does not pay sufficient attention to the local and historical context of the two examples, in time or place. But at the same time I considered it opportune to compare them, although not empirically, in order to be able to indicate an analytical similarity.

offered a stake in the land itself. A major reason for the disparate (e)valuation of the gift of the SVC can be found in the context of the system of reciprocities of the gift. The SVC did not launch the SVCT for affective reasons. The major reasons for creating the SVCT was the statement of the minister about what conservancies should do in order to be allowed in Zimbabwe and its problematic relation with the DNPWLM which prevents it from buying the much wanted and needed buffalo. Strategic reasons were paramount in the SVC's decision to create the SVCT. For that reason the communities, the DNPWLM and the Zimbabwean government have mixed feelings about accepting this gift, because acceptance of the gift, implies at the same time accepting the obligation to repay. For the communities, the expected repayment would mean respecting the boundaries and the wildlife inside the SVC. For the DNPWLM the expectation is that it would once again grant permission for the translocation of buffalo to the SVC and the Zimbabwean government is expected to recognise the SVC officially as a legal and appropriate form of land use. But none of the expected repayments has eventuated so far. So what can be the explanation that they seem to have accepted the gift by showing up at the take-over ceremony, but do not appear to be taking steps to repay it? What could provide an answer to this question?

It is here that I have to return to the two important chapters on the context of this joint venture. To answer the question why the gift seems accepted but not repaid it is necessary to turn to the issue of land once again related to the theoretical notion of reciprocity. Africans consider their land as inalienably theirs. Land is excluded from reciprocal exchange. The whites took much of their land during the colonial era and under 'the old regime'. This is neither forgotten nor forgiven. Every gift of a landowner or organisation representing landowners like the SVC is directly perceived as insufficient 'compensation' for that loss, which can actually never be repaid, other than by returning the land to them or giving them a real stake in the land instead of its produce only. From this perspective every gift is seen as a pay-off of guilt, as part of the fine for a crime committed; as gestures of shame and repentance. Fines and gifts of repentance are never repaid in kind and also do not elicit the moral obligation in the recipient to return the gesture, other than accepting the donor as part of the social community. The amount represented in the gift is only seen as symbolic repentance for of the total compensation expected for the loss, which they cannot indicate by estimation. Here again it is important to reiterate the relationship between Africans and the land: it is excluded from reciprocal exchange because of its sacred nature; it is the focal spiritual point of their social identity; without land there is no being. When the land was taken from them by the white settlers, the original owners of the land put a curse on the latter, for which no fixed amount of compensation can be paid. Authentic repentance would only be shown in a gesture of a return of the land. Unfortunately the social identity based on landscape and hunting of the whites in southern Africa and in Zimbabwe is just 'not equipped' to grasp the spiritual and inalienable dimension of land to Africans and because of this cannot understand the seeming lack of gratitude from the communities after the various gifts they have bestowed on them. Because land can be exchanged and traded from the perspective of the white social identity, it has a certain economic value attached to it and consequently can be compensated when taken. This is also why the SVC offers the communities an economic and business opportunity which can be cal-

culated and presented and fits in with the social identity of the whites. The same principle applies to the wildlife: they offer the communities money if they lease animals, in particular the buffalo to the SVC, because that is the 'cash cow' (what an appropriate name to describe the role and position of the buffalo to former cattle farmers!) of this form of wildlife utilisation. This seems a fitting explanation and answer to my question because the issue of compensation or repentance is also at the root and the heart of the disagreement on Zimbabwe's land designation programme between Zimbabwe and the international community. The Land Acquisition Act of 1992 says that the farmers on designated properties will not be compensated for the land itself, but only for the developments on the land. From my theoretical interpretation in terms of what is usually excluded from reciprocal exchange and the social identity related to land this is a rather logical formulation: the land which was (often) forcefully expropriated in the past cannot be compensated in monetary terms when taken back by its rightful owners. But to people with a social identity who see land as 'just' another tradable commodity, which happens to be composed of the people mainly constituting the powerful players in the international community, this Act and consequently the programme announced in November 1997 is utterly unacceptable, and the main reason for not financially supporting the programme at the donor conference. This adds to the general image of whites in southern Africa in general and in Zimbabwe in particular that whites remain strangers in the Simmelian meaning of the word. They have taken the land and have never shown any repentance by returning it to the original owner. Therefore they will never be granted the social acceptance of belonging. Both black and white are locked up in two social identities, which lead to a Babylonian confusion in communication over the issue of land. Of course this root issue is confusingly covered by layer upon layer of the dirt and excrements of everyday power play, politics, personal feuds and selfish interests, ideological fashions and unexpected outcomes of the intricately woven configuration of reciprocal exchange relations. But together these social realities piled upon social realities constitute the life world in which organisations, and joint ventures with them, have to operate and find their way.

The most potent symbol of these differences in social identities between black and white in the Lowveld of Zimbabwe is the buffalo fence surrounding the SVC. It is symbol of the segregation of black and white on either side of the fence. It is a symbol of segregation between white economic power that can afford such a fence and black political power to protest about the fence. It is symbol and signature of white domination over land, which the black Africans consider ultimately and inalienably their land. It is symbol of the segregation between rich white commercial farmers and poor black communal farmers. It is a symbol of Zimbabwe being part of the global economy, because the fence is ultimately enforced by important export countries in the EU, to which beef is exported from cattle farms in Zimbabwe. It is a symbol of white social identity in southern Africa because it is erected in the first place to create the opportunity for (white) sports hunters to hunt for leisure in the SVC. It is a symbol of the white domination of the tourism sector in Zimbabwe. Finally, it is symbol in the eyes of black Africans that the wildlife issue and business is put above human needs in the area. First and foremost though the buffalo fence signifies the general paradox and dilemma of a white wildlife utilisation scheme in southern Africa: the fence is necessary to make eco-

conomic profit through sport hunting possible and make wildlife utilisation economically feasible in the first place. This economic feasibility is a necessary pre-condition for any conservancy to start and invest in community relations through joint ventures or by other means. No fence, no attractive hunting packages, no profit, no sustainable business, no conservancy, no community investments, no nothing. A fence then is the first requirement to begin a business in wildlife utilisation based on sport hunting. At the same time a fence is blocking community relations because it symbolises so oppositely the type of domination which black Africans have protested about and fought against ever since the advance of the whites in southern Africa, their domination over the land. Whereas the fence is meant to make it financially possible to cross the divide between the SVC and communities by investing in the Trust, the fence simultaneously emphasises the divide between local communities and the SVC. It is actually a paradox similar to that which characterises a reciprocal relation: it draws boundaries and at the same time opens up the possibility of crossing them. In a reciprocal relationship it is also 'us' relating to 'them', thereby crossing the boundary between 'us' and 'them' in the reciprocal exchange. At the same time as the boundary is crossed it is also re-instated. Malinowski's Kula ring again provides a fitting example. In the reciprocal relationship the boundary is crossed and the parties and partners reach out towards each other. At the same time the crossing of the border confirms the divide between 'us' and 'them'. The parties and partners can only reach out to each other because they trust the Other on the basis of the peacekeeping rituals with which every meeting is opened. The buffalo fence is enabling community relations and at the same time blocking them if there is not sufficient trust between the two parties. Based on the mutual imagery of both black and white, this will be hard to achieve. This means that, despite the fact that the SVC did create a Trust and that it did formalise the institutional framework and seems to have overcome all obstacles, there is an exceedingly long way to go before it can also alter or rectify the image of whites in Zimbabwe, thereby creating a more constructive atmosphere of trust between the joint venture partners. Till then the paradoxical fences will remain to be protested about and attacked by communal farmers as hated symbol of The Land Question in Zimbabwe.

Once more and by way of conclusion, the general argument of the thesis in a nutshell is: the SVC proposed an economic win-win situation to the neighbouring communities, based on balanced reciprocal exchange. From a theoretical point of view it was already clear that such a straightforward and linear development is not to be expected, because of the inherent ambivalent nature of reciprocal processes in terms of a mix of affective and effective elements; of normative and strategic aspects. The chapters on the historical and social context of processes of (white) social identity construction in southern Africa, began to substantiate this theoretical doubt more firmly. Finally, the empirical case study itself showed loud and clear that this doubt seems fully justified and demonstrated that although the economic win-win rhetoric did produce an undersigning of a joint venture agreement between the SVC and the neighbouring communities, it did not result in the expected and suggested return gift from the communities. Quite the contrary even, poaching did not decrease and the attacks on the boundaries of the SVC intensified in the course of 1998, mainly because of developments and the strategic opportunities offered to communities in the national political context. Continuing in

this line of expected economic win-win would lead to a lose-lose situation in which the communities will not receive the economic benefits from the SVC, because the SVC will not be politically legitimised by the communities, which eventually undermines the basis for existence and economic exploitation of the SVC. Therefore the basis for further co-operation should be sought for in their shared attachment to the land, although for different reasons and with a different emphasis. In the section on 'Future scenarios for the SVC' I shall return to this option in more detail.

### Theoretical and social relevance of this research

The primary objective of my theoretical framework was to be used as heuristic model for describing and explaining the organisation and process being studied. Although the theoretical framework was primarily constructed as a heuristic model, I nevertheless consider it worthwhile to pause and reflect on the theoretical implications and relevance of my study. These theoretical implications can be structured according to the following issues:

- Relevance to organisation studies;
- Relevance to conceptual development;
- Relevance to African Studies.

Let me pinpoint the relevancy of each issue. Organisation studies have borrowed conceptually from the social sciences in general, in particular from the discipline of anthropology for the development of its work on organisational culture and symbolism. Here organisation and management studies recognise the importance of anthropology. But these are only a minor handful of what the treasure trove of anthropological concepts has to offer. This study has theoretically explored a new possibility of using the concept of reciprocity and related concepts and basing the theoretical framework on the debates, which have raged, and still continue, in anthropology and explore how the conceptualisation can be translated towards and applied in studying an organisation and its initiatives towards organisational co-operation.

By applying the concept of reciprocity as developed in anthropology, to studying organisations it has once again plainly emerged, as more authors have already come to the same conclusion as I described in Chapters 1 till 4, that any serious anthropological study of organisations and organisational relations has to pay a major slice of attention to the historical and social context in which the organisation is operating. If, on top of that, the organisation being studied is (co-)operating in an environment with groups with strongly different and even antagonistic social identities, the issue of context has to be related to processes of identity construction in order to identify the root of the differences. Without extensive attention being paid to the historical, social and political context in this thesis, I would have never been able to discern the line of continuity the SVC represents in southern Africa in terms of white social identity and organisational developments towards hunting. I would also not have grasped the root of the conflict between SVC and SVCT and communities, namely the land. I would have been con-



stantly derailed by the everyday escapades of local detail. In organisation studies attention is paid to context, but it is often confined too much to the current social and political context. Although important, this omits taking the important historical dimension of context seriously into account.

The relevance of this study to the further development of the concept of reciprocity is that, in the first place, it is persistently shown that reciprocity has a meaning as an heuristic instrument in the economic realm of organisations and organisational co-operation (and mergers). Secondly, that processes of social identity construction are crucially important to understanding reciprocal exchange processes. Consequently the study of historical and social context becomes inevitable in describing, understanding and analysing the current state of affairs. Both aspects, social identity construction and context, add considerably to the scope of understanding processes of reciprocal exchange in organisational co-operation. Thirdly and following the second point, context and social identity construction can demonstrate plainly why reciprocal relations are inherently paradoxical in nature. It presents the participating actors with a seemingly paradoxical rhizome of politics and endearment based on and rooted in supra-personal and unintended processes of context and social identity construction. In order to struggle and find himself a way through this confusing web of impressions and images, the actor has to rely on a mixture of knowledge and ignorance, translated into a certain degree of trust in the counterpart. This becomes all the more relevant as reciprocal relations are never dyadic in nature but always form part of larger configurations, which only adds to the confusion. Therefore reciprocal exchange relations cannot be perceived without explicitly paying attention to the related concept of trust. In that sense it is a beautiful twist of fate that my case study is about organisational co-operation between the SVC and the SVCTrust. I am always directly reminded of the importance of trust in studying reciprocal relations as I am constantly reminded of the importance of imagery in the construction of trust. In the case of the SVCT this is literally the case: the image of the SVC of the neighbouring communities is directly translated into the objectives and *raison d'être* of the Trust as an organisation representing the needy blacks and financially equipped to help them.

The relevance of this thesis to African Studies is that it is a first case study at this level of an organisation in the sphere of private conservation trying to relate to neighbouring communities. There are many studies on the dynamics between National Park and communities, but so far private conservation in Africa has only achieved a marginal position in academic publications. Furthermore, this study brings together historical perspectives on whites in southern Africa and the consequences of these for the present-day functioning of organisations. Often studies only do one of the two, either a study of history, or a case study of a present-day operational organisation. I already mentioned this earlier when I argued the importance of the historical context in organisation studies. Another point I would like to make in this context is that African Studies have a general tendency to focus attention on the relatively (often economic) powerless in Africa and from that position criticise the powerful. This study breaks with that major trend in African Studies and focuses on the economically powerful white minority, gathered in a private wildlife conservancy, not without being critical on their operations and way of

handling issues, but certainly also not with an a priori negative bias towards the powerful.

Although the subject of this study is socially highly relevant to both black and white in Zimbabwe and I am convinced about the quality of my study and analysis, I still find it rather difficult to formulate and estimate the exact social relevance of my own research and studies. It usually sounds so obligatory to say that you hope and expect that your research will contribute to a better understanding of something and furthermore will add to the betterment of this world and so on. Firstly, it is always fairly easy to formulate hopes for the better. Secondly, it usually is a gross and bombastic overestimation of your own influence in this world and even in your own small field of research. If my analysis of the SVC and of the relationship between the SVC and its neighbouring communities has made one thing clear, it is that there is still much of the continuity of the struggles which began already with the advent of white advancement in southern Africa. I do not suspect or expect that my research will forge a breach in this tradition, although I shall formulate some powerful recommendations in the appendix, based on the conclusions formulated here. Let me try to formulate a fairly sincere estimation of the social relevance of this study. If this study and analysis remains a Ph.D. thesis only, it might have some social relevance if it is read by the different decision makers in the SVC and used in their reflections on their programme of community relations and their joint venture with the communities through the Trust. Apart from this it will be used as a reference in (small) academic circles as the first full-fledged Ph.D. study of a private wildlife conservancy in Zimbabwe. The direct social relevance of the study to the SVC and neighbouring communities could be definitely increased were I to be invited by the SVC to come and help, in collaboration with the Liaison Officer and the consultant who has written all the reports on community issues of the SVC, Simon Metcalfe, to develop a programme in line with my favourite future scenario which I shall present later on and the practical implication of which I shall spell out in my appendix on recommendations.<sup>5</sup>

### Methodological conclusions on the research project

Research can be as confusing and coincidental as life itself, but research also presents itself as a far more confined arena than life and for that reason can be systematically covered far more easily, especially when the focus of the study is on a single organisation. A strategic combination of coincidence, anticipation and planning gives the researcher good opportunities to gather and construct empirical data within an organisation. Anticipation is a concept which deserves special attention most pertinently within organisation anthropology. It is often suggested that anthropology might offer refreshing perspectives on organisations and organisational processes, but that the anthropological method of research, stereotyped in participant observation, takes far too long and thus becomes far too expensive for organisations to consider consulting on a regular, struc-

<sup>5</sup> I dare to be firm in this because I am convinced of my analysis and corresponding options for improvement for the SVC.

tural basis. Properly developed skills of anticipation could provide an answer to this dilemma. Anticipation can shorten the time required for the organisation anthropologist to participate in organisational life to come up with a description, analysis and recommendations on the problem under study. With proper anticipation, an organisation anthropologist knows where to go and where to be in the organisation or its broader context and, most importantly, when. In the methodological training of organisation anthropologists at universities in the Netherlands, the aspect of the development and training of skills of anticipation in fieldwork in organisations should receive far more attention than is currently the case. Only then can the time-span of being in an organisation being shortened; only then can coincidence be enforced, but this thesis is not the place to elaborate further on matters of curriculum development in methodological training.

One final remark should be made concerning the periodisation of research. In general, anthropologists regard a one-year period of fieldwork a minimum to come to grips with the social reality being studied. On the basis of this case study research, I would suggest that every periodisation of this kind is a fairly arbitrary in relation to the field of study, although I acknowledge that a certain (longer) period of time is necessary to allow the researcher to gather, collect and construct data and interpret social events or 'social dramas' to borrow from Victor Turner. Every entry into and exit from the field is a rather arbitrary combination of planning, institutional opportunity and personal context. I suspect that the periodisation is given not so much by specific ideas about learning about the social reality in the field, but more by the cycle of production of scientifically presentable knowledge by the researcher. In other words, the periodisation emphasises too much that a social reality being studied can be fully known through (long enough) research, instead of stressing the (inevitable) piecemeal approach of every academic endeavour in comparison to the complexities of everyday life. It takes the researcher a certain amount of time to carve out a piece of social reality in the field, and dress it with empirical data that are 'complete' and polished enough to be presentable in an academic publication. In order to be able to produce such a publication, the researcher must be in the field for a certain period of time to make his selective construction of empirical data, and must take sufficient time to find out what should and could be included in and excluded from the empirical data, in relation to his or her paradigmatic perspective. You have just read and have nearly finished my attempt at this challenge.

### Future Scenarios for the SVC

By describing the context and processes of social identity construction, I have related the present-day developments and state of affairs in the SVC to lines of continuity from the past and from the socio-political context. At the end of this thesis it seems worthwhile to draw the line even further and see what can be estimated and cautiously predicted about future developments in this field, more specifically for the SVC and its relation with the neighbouring communities. The essence of describing scenarios like this is to see what would happen if circumstances remain the same and what would happen if circumstances were (to be) change(d). Scenarios always imply a form of radicalisation of social

reality for contrast and for the sake of clarity. At the beginning of every scenario process is the aim of the organisation to survive and achieve self-development. At the end of every scenario process is the development of policies, decisions and actions to improve the fit between aims and assessment. This implies that assessment lies at the heart of the scenario process: assessment of the characteristics of the organisation, including its willingness to change, assessment of the environment, current and future and assessment of the fit between the two.<sup>6</sup> It is for this type of assessment and scenario planning, 'memories of the future'<sup>7</sup> particularly, that organisation anthropology and this study is helpful. Here I shall sketch three scenarios: one which would happen if things do not change; one which would happen if more gifts were bestowed on the local communities surrounding wildlife areas and a third scenario in which a fundamental other approach to community relations is suggested. Let me explore the basic ideas of these three scenarios below.

The first scenario is what would happen if the SVC continues on the road it has taken up till now. It can be concluded that the SVC has achieved its objectives towards the communities by creating the SVCT and by persuading representatives of the communities to participate in it. The presupposition presented to the communities and the SVC members alike is that the joint venture is a win-win situation for both. The core of the win/win situation is political legitimacy for the SVC and prospects of economic benefits for the communities. Its official installation in November 1998 accordingly can be described as a major achievement for the SVC. Despite tremendous difficulties in the national context and its consequential land invasions at the local level, following the announcement of the land designation programme in November 1997, the SVC persisted in its objectives of creating a joint venture and succeeded in creating an organisational structure with people to operate within its context. Despite the gloomy prospect of different and mutually exclusive social identities related to land with which I began this thesis, the critics should be rightly silenced by this achievement of the SVC. Based on an assessment of the differences between black and white in southern Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular, as sketched in the two chapters on historical and social context, it was not a natural expectation that the SVC would succeed in its objective. But the SVC won the day and succeeded in establishing the joint venture. But will this scenario also be sustainable? To answer this question, I should assess the process which has led to the joint venture and future scenarios. There are already constraints involved in the process leading up to the joint venture which are proving difficult to cope with for the SVC: in the first place the prospective economic benefits for the communities at large have not (yet) materialised. Stretched out over a period of three to four years (1995-1998), this is difficult to explain and can be interpreted by the communities as a 'boulevard of broken promises'. So the SVC does not live up to its promises. If promises take as long to materialise, they lose their persuasive appeal, especially if there are no clear indications that things will change for the better soon. Secondly, and conversely, the partner representing the communities so far has not prevented the communities for

6 pp. 7, Van der Heijden, G.M.C., (1996), *Scenarios. The art of strategic conversation*, Chichester, New York: John Wiley & Sons.

7 Ibid: 116-118.

undermining the land claims of the landowners by applying for their designation and by making their protests known through poaching and land invasions. This means that the partner is not living up to the expectations of the SVC either. What then is the use of continuing this joint venture if both partners do not seem to get what they intended out of it? Is political legitimacy enough to sustain the structure? Thirdly and most importantly, the SVC cannot control or foresee or influence the processes related to black perspectives on their social identity related to land and hunting. Without giving the communities a real stake in the land, the struggle over the ownership of the land will prevail, alongside ongoing discussions on co-operation and shared interests, as an expression of the paradoxical mix between generalised and negative reciprocity. This last part is the main issue indicating that the (potential) win-win situation, which was confirmed in the ceremony in November 1998, cannot be anything other than only a temporary victory, after which and, possibly at the same time, land claims and conflicts over land will erupt again with persistent force. The Land Question will continue to be a time bomb under every initiative of this sort.

The second scenario would be to assess what would happen if the SVC were to begin to give more to the communities through the Trust. And by this I mean giving in a very material way. What would happen if the SVC were to commence supplying the communities with more fresh meat, more building poles, more firewood, more thatching grass, more money for projects on schools and other development issues? What would happen if this were to happen in a one-way structure: the SVC gives to the communities as a rich man gives alms to the poor, just because the SVC (or its landowners are) is rich and the communities are poor and with no direct reciprocal obligation on the part of the recipient. This approach has been applied with seeming success in other private wildlife schemes in the region. Neighbouring Malilangwe Conservation Trust, owned by a wealthy American businessman, relates to the neighbouring communities in this way and not have the kind of pressures on its boundaries as those which trouble the SVC. This is also because in part it borders a resettlement scheme which is relatively sparsely populated. But in general this approach seems to work. A similar approach has been taken by millionaire Richard Branson (major shareholder in Virgin), who has bought himself the Ulusaba Game Reserve in the Northern Province of South Africa, worth some estimated R40-million (approx. US\$ 7 million). An announcement in the local newspaper reported that 'Branson (...) will pump millions of rands into the local community (...)'.<sup>8</sup> I do not know how this worked out, but I can imagine that it had a similar effect as the Malilangwe Conservation Trust, which means that a similar patron-client relationship is built, appeasing land claims and protests (for the time being?). Similar examples of the new rich Western business elite buying their own tracts of bush and wilderness Eden in Africa could be given all over southern Africa and spending large amounts of money on neighbouring communities. Is this the way forward then? I do not think so, basically because of the fact that it might appease the neighbouring communities for a while because they will probably not confront such a generous milch cow immediately. But, as I have described in the thesis, land to black Africans is about

things other than monetary value. It is about the soul of the people. And probably the soul can be 'bribed' for a while by excessive gift-giving, but such a practice cannot sustain the relation in the long term because it only treats symptoms and not the causes of the conflict between black and white in southern Africa. To come back to the metaphor of the time bomb: it will delay its detonation but will not turn off the clock. The clock will continue to tick as long as the gifts are received but will not spring the trigger mechanism in the meantime. But, whenever the stream of gifts slows down to a trickle, or even worse, dries up, for whatever reason, the clock will tick towards ignition. The same will probably happen if a strategic opportunity to reclaim land happens to present itself in the political context. Scenarios one and two are examples which give enough data to make it plausible to assess that an economic win-win situation between SVC and communities (alone) is not enough to bridge the divide in respective social identities.

A third scenario would be that (white) landowners of private wildlife conservancies or reserves eventually would recognise and acknowledge the root course of the tension between landowners and neighbouring communities and try to deal with it accordingly. It would mean that they became aware of the spiritual dimension of the significance of land to Africans. It would mean that they invested in communities through land; giving Africans a stake in the land instead of a stake in the produce of the land. It would mean a more sincere synergy of interests between black and white in the southeast Lowveld of Zimbabwe. It would mean that the SVC would acknowledge the paradoxical mixture of generalised and negative reciprocity. It would mean that the SVC would not only recognise what divides them from the neighbouring communities reiterated and reproduced in processes of negative reciprocity, but would emphasise more what binds and bonds them in a process of generalised reciprocity in which their different but common attachment to the land is expressed and (e)valuated by giving communities a stake in the land. It would mean adding a non-economic meaning to the proposed win-win situation, band recognising the force and power of processes of social identity in economic processes of organisational co-operation. Clinging to an economic win-win rhetoric will only lead to processes like these described in the first two scenarios, which will not remove the string, The Land Question, from the process of negative reciprocity. By giving the communities a stake in the land, processes of generalised reciprocity will be given a change to develop, without the obstruction and interruption of incidents of negative reciprocal exchange. The third scenario would mean a strategy which makes use of the power of social identity processes in organisational co-operation, which has proven to be a formidable powerful force in binding and bonding people, groups and organisations together. The SVC had already tried once to settle a dispute more or less along these lines, on former Angus with the seventy-two families, but had to break its promise because of a lack of funding. Since then, that option has been shelved. There are the two districts, Bikita and Buhera, which in principle want to start joint ventures with the (members of the) SVC by adding their communal land under Appropriate Authority to the SVC. But the SVC does not really give any priority to those initiatives in its policy towards the communities. In its current joint venture the share of the communities is dependent on the donor money it is able to attract. In all the various stages of the idea of the joint venture since 1995, the partner was always offered shares in the SVC, but never in land. The shares have always been based on donor-money. Donor

8. Lowvelder, 18 May 1999, Virgin will plough money into community.

money with which they could buy wildlife and lease it to the SVC. They would be given shares based on things on the land, fitting to the social identity of whites in southern Africa, but no shares in the land; they would become involved in the business operations but not engaged in the land. By offering them shares in the land, a definite breach with the history of white social identity in southern Africa could be achieved. By offering them shares in the land, the detonator of the time bomb would be removed. The shares in the land can be offered as business-oriented as in the original idea of the joint venture, proving that the idea in itself is a step forward, an improvement simply appeasing communities by excessive gift giving. It would show the recognition that the basic cause of the tension between black and white in the Lowveld in Zimbabwe is rooted in the land and simultaneously offer the communities an initial step towards solving this issue once and for all after a century of mutual misunderstanding. It would require adaptation on the part of both partners in the joint venture: white landowners and the SVC will have to show that they are able and flexible enough to go beyond their roots of social identity and recognise African values about land. Communities must realise the revolutionary potential of the programme and participate accordingly, which implies positive reciprocal exchange to allow trust and adjusted images to be generated through the process of the programme. Both partners will have to go beyond the 'usual practice and perception' of a century of mutual misunderstanding and maltreatment. Both will have to conquer their fears about such a development. White commercial farmers must cope with their fear of giving the neighbouring communities a real stake in the land and acknowledge their potential for a contribution to the co-operative structure. The SVC, i.e. the (white) commercial farmers, will have to retract its own general attitude towards black communities which depicts them as indigent needing (white) support instead of being potential contributors in it themselves in the co-operative structure. The (black) communities will have to cope with their fears and suspicions of co-operating with white commercial farmers, which is certainly not an automatic choice within the national political climate in Zimbabwe, where the distinction between black and white instead of their joint potential is emphasised. The neighbouring communities will have to put this behind them and with it their own general attitude, which has proved to be a strong social force and part of their bonding as black communal farmers. The practical implications of this scenario in terms of defining the stake in the land of the communities as well as in terms of how to proceed in order to cope and remove mutual fears in co-operation, will form the starting point for my recommendations in the appendix.

At this final stage of this thesis it is interesting to speculate which scenario will most probably be adopted. To a certain extent one could suggest that scenarios are a matter of choice and policy. The fact that the SVCT did materialise proves that a rhetoric of an economic win-win proposal, despite a seemingly negative assessment of the possibilities for such a joint venture in terms of groups with antagonistic social identities, can work out in the short term because of choice and persistent policy in that direction. But to leave it there would underestimate the power of context and processes of social ownership. Only by adopting such a strategy can the cycle of negative reciprocity be broken. Only then will a process in the direction of generalised reciprocity have a chance. But nevertheless in this argument some scenarios seem to develop more 'naturally' than others. From this perspective it seems that Scenarios 1 and 2 are most likely to eventu-

ate as they are a natural follow-up to past policies and practices. It would prove that The Land Question in Zimbabwe has no real solution, but that the dilemma can only be accommodated and managed in a sub-optimal way. In both scenarios, the sting of the difference between black and white identity in Zimbabwe will remain and the 'alienation' in terms of Arendt and 'primordial autochtony' of Roosens (see Chapter 1 and further) will continue to extort its toll in terms a negative reciprocal exchange between white and black over land wherever and whenever a strategic opportunity occurs. Time and patience will always be on the side of the black Africans and somewhere in the future their cause will triumph.<sup>9</sup> It will prove time and again that the rhetoric of an economic win-win situation alone does not fit the social reality of organisational co-operation between commercial and communal farmers in Zimbabwe. Only with the decision to essay the revolutionary approach described in Scenario 3, could they remove the sting from the black and white relations. I call it 'revolutionary' because it is not a 'natural choice' with regard to context and social identity. It is what Van der Heijden calls 'an element of novelty and surprise in directions where the vision of the organisation needs to be stretched', which leads to a so-called 'challenge scenario'.<sup>10</sup> It would bring a breach with tradition and expectations, acknowledge the positive power a win-win situation based on processes of social identity, and a supreme example of proper organisational anticipation and management. It would show that a social identity is not a deterministic stray jacket, but something that can be adapted, used and managed for justice and organisational performance sake. It would also prove once more the value of organisation anthropology for management.

9 To make one side-step to China once more, just like China awaited its chances with regard to the return of Hong Kong (1997) and Macau (1999) and are now awaiting their chances with Taiwan.

10 Ibid: 119 & 217-218.

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## Recommendations

It is worthwhile to emphasise once again that these recommendations are made in the conviction that the longer term political and social legitimacy of private wildlife conservation and utilisation in Africa in general and in Zimbabwe in particular is at stake if no immediate progressive and visionary action is taken. These recommendations are based on my analysis throughout the different chapters in the thesis and the third scenario I described in Chapter 7. In this particular scenario I assume that the commercial farmers of the SVC recognise, or are beginning to be convinced they have to recognise, the paradoxical mix of generalised and negative reciprocity related to land as the cause of the tension between the SVC and neighbouring black communal farmers. The explicit recognition of this paradoxical role of land in the relation between SVC and neighbouring communities has to be ineluctably faced and dealt with in any attempt to settle the hostility and smooth the way for organisational co-operation between the two. Land simultaneously unites and divides commercial and communal farmers. It divides because to a large extent whites took the land off the Africans after their arrival in the Pioneer Column. It unites, because both derive their very powerful social identity and bonding from the land, although for different reasons. The lines along which land divides in Zimbabwe are far clearer and more often more emphasised than the points at which it (could) unite(s) the two parties. This means that any programme to bring the parties close(r) together should focus on the aspect of the shared attachment and commitment to the land. Furthermore, it is axiomatic that both commercial and communal farmers are convinced among themselves that land is the common base for both and that any improvement in the relation is related to formulating opportunities for both to participate *in* the land itself and not only, or primarily, in the produce of the land.

A consultancy process and programme for both parties could be built on the basis of my analysis and assumptions. Ideally such a process should contain the following aspects and chronology:

- Separate sessions and workshops for commercial and communal farmers to discuss the paradoxical nature of attachment to land in Zimbabwe and to build consensus on this issue. These sessions will form the crucial base from which to begin a revolutionary process of organisational co-operation between commercial and communal farmers. These meetings must continue till there is a general consensus amongst members of the SVC and among the communal farmers adjacent to the SVC, on the paradoxical role of land in the process of social identity formation of both black and white in southern Africa.

*The sessions and workshops should work towards the conclusion that land not only separates commercial and communal farmers, but that it is also a crucial bonding element between them and basis for organisational co-operation.*

- Following this first series of sessions and workshops, resulting in a form of consensus, discussions should be held between SVC and SVCT on the question of how communities could be given a stake in the land of the SVC.

*These discussions should ideally result in a proposal in which several options of 'stake-in-the-land' for communal farmers are listed.*

- The SVC and SVCT should discuss this proposal at length with their respective constituencies. Only when there is a general idea of acceptance by both constituencies can the process be carried ahead.

*The discussion(s) should ideally lead to a general and shared understanding of the 'stake-in-the-land'-option as the basis for further and sustainable organisational co-operation between the SVC and the SVCT.*

- The 'stake-in-the-land'-option should be legally, financially and organisationally operationalised by a joint commission of the SVC and SVCT and worked out in terms of mutual opportunities, commitments and responsibilities.

*After the process of operationalisation, the operationalised 'stake-in-the-land'-option should be communicated to the respective constituencies.*

- The operationalised version of the 'stake-in-the-land'-option should be implemented, monitored and evaluated and added/developed as the solid

*non-economic basis for sustainable organisational co-operation, i.e. a positive and generalised (affective) form of reciprocal exchange, between SVC and neighbouring communities.*

- Parallel to all these activities and right from the start, there should be a thorough communications plan to

*communicate the process and progress of the programme systematically and intensively through appropriate media to all relevant stakeholders in the process.*

The relevant stakeholders as we have seen in the thesis range from the grassroots level communities, to government level ministries, important NGO levels in between and regional/international/multilateral conservation and development organisations.

*This communication will spread the message of this progressive approach to establishing durable organisational co-operation between commercial and communal farmers in Zimbabwe.*

This process does not happen automatically. The SVC and the communities need a team of black and white senior consultants to facilitate, and a permanent and full time co-

ordinator not only to organise and monitor the process, but equally important, to take care of the communication process to all different levels of stakeholders. It goes without saying that these broad recommendations are not the place to go into details about the exact format and items of programmes, workshops and consultations, which would follow from these recommendations. It will be up to the co-ordinator and consultancy team to write that detailed programme and communications plan within the overall framework of this analysis and subsequent approach.

*It is my (virtually solemn) conviction that this form of and approach to people management will prove to be the ultimate and most sustainable and effective form of wildlife management in the twenty-first century!*

After my own analysis of the processes of organisational co-operation between the SVC and neighbouring communities, I do realise that the process I describe above seems so deceptively easy and maybe even naïvely optimistic. Nevertheless, if my argument that land at the same time divides and unites commercial and communal farmers in Zimbabwe is convincing, there should be no doubt that the only solution to sustainable organisational co-operation between the two parties is to set up a programme that stresses and works from their commonality, instead of their differences. It is a process that will probably take years to mature and requires a full-time programme. For the process to succeed it is essential that the different items on the programme are not just incidents amongst a host of other issues, but a continuous chain of events and experiences that govern a positive reciprocal exchange programme. Therefore a full-time co-ordinator is essential to the process and programme as is a team of committed, empathic and knowledgeable consultants.

Throughout its genesis and first years of existence the SVC has proved itself to operate from a strong conviction and vision of (private) wildlife conservation and utilisation. It also dared to be different and entrepreneurial in suggesting a fresh approach towards community participation based on business principles and (assumed) shared economic interests. Now it has to proceed in the same progressive line and enter the next phase of visionary organisation development in which they add a non-economic basis to the already existing structure of organisational co-operation, which will make the structure sustainable. The non-economic basis of the co-operation will come out of the joint powerful forces of black and white social identity related to land, in which both will have a tangible stake in the land, based on a mixture of effective and also affective elements in the reciprocal exchange process.