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PhD in Development Studies

University of Witwatersrand

An analysis of the post 1980s transition from pastoral to game farming in South Africa: a case study of the Marico district.

Supervisors: **Professor P. Bonner and Professor N. Nieftagodien**

A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Declaration

I declare that this is my own unaided work. It is in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted for any other degree or examination or to any other university.

_____

Nqobile Zulu

20 March 2015

University of the Witwatersrand

Abstract

This thesis is an analysis of narratives of private game farming in Groot Marico. Through this case study, it argues that the material and symbolic processes of game farming and hunting depict a 'colonial present' in their constitution. Part of that 'colonial present' stems from 'white privilege', a legacy of South African history. A major part comes from the gate-keeping function of in-group beneficiaries represented by associations and networks. Race, class, language and capital are used to maintain the status quo. The situation has been aided by a state whose neo liberal policies support commercialisation more than social justice redress. The thesis traces the historical antecedents and the contemporary socio-economic and political factors that have led to white farmers' conversion into game farming from domestic livestock production. Continuities of practices, from farm ownership to hunting have been processes that maintain the status quo. Yet white farmers have argued that these continuities are 'tradition', whether in hunting or game farming, while being silent on the lack of transformation of the industry. Despite the visibility of a few high-profile black personalities, the industry remains overwhelmingly white. I argue that the game farming community has created a 'structure' to which high-profile black figures can belong, not only as examples of transformation but primarily to protect vested interests by their token inclusion. Economic and political status has been the criteria upon which the few black figures have been 'allowed' into the group. In spite of the racial demographics, game farming is not homogenous as the Groot Marico case studies reveal. There are cleavages around the position of game farmers within the hierarchy of game farming, and these are informed by class. Trophy-hunters, meat producers, and small, marginal farmers all occupy different spheres within the game farming sector. The trophy hunter and game breeder are at the top of the hierarchy as opposed to the small one man game farmer surviving at the margins. The meat producer deals with the economics of supplying a niche market at a different level from the trophy game farmer and the small one man game farmer. Yet these three are bound together in an increasingly besieged farming community where land reform is a constant reminder of what can be lost. Other bonds of solidarity derive from a shared discourse of conservation that ties it to the maxim 'if it pays it stays'. This economic tenet, describes the game farming community's approach to wildlife conservation.

Key terms: private game farming, conservation, 'colonial present', South Africa, neo liberalism, race, class

List of Abbreviations

Acronym	Explanation
ABSA	Amalgamated Bank of South Africa
Agri SA	Agriculture South Africa
AMC	Agricultural Marketing Council
ANC	African National Congress
ARA	Animal Rights Africa Report
CBNRM	Community Based Natural Resource Management
CDE	Centre for Development Enterprise
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CHASA	Confederation of Hunters Associations of South Africa
DEAT	Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism
DOA	Department of Agriculture
GEAR	Growth Employment and Redistribution
NRF	National Research Foundation
NWDACERD	North West Department of Agriculture Conservation, Environment and Rural Development
PHASA	Professional Hunters Association of South Africa
RSA	Republic Of South Africa
SAHCGA	South African Hunters and Game Conservation Association
SANParks	South African National Parks
SCI	Safari Club International
SONA	State of the Nation Address
WRSA	Wild Life Ranching South Africa
WTA	Wildlife Translocation Association

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Table of Contents

Declaration 2

Abstract 3

List of Abbreviations 4

Acknowledgements 5

Chapter One 8

- Introduction 8
- Aims of the study 12
- Key Research questions 15
- Methodology 16
- Site Selection 16
- Research Design 17
- Snowballing and gaining access 23
- Data collection and analysis 27
- After interview notes 32
- Locating the researcher within the research 33
- Ethical considerations 35
- Research audit trail 36
- Structure of the thesis 38
- Time frame 42

Chapter Two 43

- Introduction 43
- Definition of terms 43
- Political economy of game farming 47
- A Colonial present 52
- Game farming: economics and conservation 56
- Colonial conservation policy: a contemporary legacy 59
- Conservation in private game farming 61
- Regional outlook 63
- Provincial studies 66
- International studies 68
- Conceptual premise of the thesis 70
- Conclusion 70

Chapter three: 73

- Contemporary game farming and the colonial present 73
- Historical Background 73
- National Parks Contribution to private game farming 81
- Contributing Factors to the rise of game farming from the late 1980's 84
- The legislative Impact 87
- The role of the state 93
- Regional comparison 103
- A South African legacy: the 'colonial present' 109
- Conclusion 113

Chapter four: 115

- The nature of the industry 115
- Game origin 116
- Game capture and translocation 117

South African consumptive game usage 120
Trophy hunting 127
Biltong hunting 132
Fair Chase and ethical hunting 135
Game auction: is it conspicuous consumption? 139
Conclusion 149

Chapter 5 151
Cultural practices: national contributions or continuities? 151
Associations: lobby groups or regulatory substitutes? 151
A fellowship of game farmers and hunters 162
Seeds of transformation or Continuities 170
Gender and generation visibility 176
Conservation as metanarrative in game farming 181
Conclusion 189

Chapter six 192
Case studies of Groot Marico game farming 192
The Northwest province 193
Groot Marico 198
From stud breeding to game (trophy) farming: Case study A 203
A game farm with multi-function land-use: Case study B 209
Small scale game farmer: Case study C 216
Curtain call: Groot Marico game farming 221
Conclusion 235

Chapter seven 238
Game farming: 'path-breaking' or continuity 238
Developments in game farming 240
Pathways of the sector 248
Conclusion- implications of the shift into game farming for South Africa 251
Contribution of research 261

List of Primary Sources 263
Audio-visual source 263
Bibliography 264
Theses 285
Online Articles 287
Internet sources 292
Newspapers and Magazines 293
Parliamentary Documents 294
Archival Material 294

Chapter One

Introduction

The core objective of this thesis is to analyse the transition from domestic animal production to game farming and the broader ramifications of the shift on the re-construction of rural landscapes. Beyond that, the thesis reflects on the manner in which game farmers drawing on the historical developments of game hunting, farming and ownership, have appropriated and shaped the dominant game farming narrative in order to position themselves favourably in the contested agrarian economy. This focus has been kindled by two broad premises. First is that the shift from pastoralism to game farming in the democratic era has transpired in the context of an on-going land reform and redistribution programme which has failed to reach its intended targets and has been criticised for its slow pace (Binswanger, Bourguignon and Brink 2009; Bond 2005; CDE 2008; Hall and Lahiff 2004; Kariuki 2003, 2007). As a case in point, there is acknowledgement that the target of 30% distribution of agricultural land by 2014 (de Villiers 2008) set by the state had not been achieved (Heard 2014; Nkwinti 2014) despite the revisions to the target date (de Villiers 2008). For instance, since 1994, only 5 000 farms encompassing 4, 2 million hectares had been transferred to black beneficiaries (Zuma 2014), a small figure in relation to the twenty year period the ANC has been in power.

This is in stark contrast to the phenomenal growth experienced by the game industry within a similar timeline. For example, in 1993 "South Africa had approximately 3 357 exempted wildlife ranches or 7 039 992ha fenced areas" which by 2005 had increased to about "6 330 ranches covering approximately 14 789 000ha" (NAMC 2006: 16) indicative of an expansion rate averaging about 6, 4% annually in exempted areas.[1] These figures point to a doubling of the land under game farming in a 12 year period pinpointing the rapid pace of conversion. Similarly, Flack (2002:77) propounds that close to 500 000ha of land was converted from cattle to game farming land in 2002. Meanwhile it is estimated that around 12 000 privately owned game farms are in operation in South Africa, with 9 600 having

1Farms with specifically wildlife suited fencing to keep game in enabling the owner to claim 'ownership' of animals on his side of the fence. Possession of an exemption certificate entails the landowner being in possession of a provincial permit whose provisions apply to the hunting, catching and selling of game species noted in the permit (NAMC 2006, North West Provincial Gazette No. 6986, 2012).

certificates of exemption (Dr. Herman Els 2011)[2]. This figure could be higher because statistics related to the industry are provincial rather than centralised while some farms are not recorded as game farms even though they operate as such. For instance, Cousins, Sadler and Evans (2008) refer to 9 000 wildlife ranches whilst also noting that 15 000 landowners practised a mixture of domestic livestock production and wildlife ranching. Significantly, this conversion effectively took off land from other agricultural production activities like cattle farming into game farming thereby reducing the country's food security capacity.

Secondly, the failure to address social equity in South Africa (Bond 2005; Brooks *et al* 2008) through land reform is accepted as an inevitable outcome of state and capital compromise. Yet the growth of the game farming industry is contrary to this critical policy objective of redressing past imbalances. Indeed, President Jacob Zuma acknowledged the slow pace of land reform in his 2012 State of the Nation Speech stating only 8% of the 30% target of land redistribution for 2014 had been distributed (Zuma 2012 SONA). This estimation sits close to the 7% projection for the period up to 2011 given by Cousins and Hall (Brandt 2013). Therefore, there is agreement that land redistribution has slowed down as a state priority since the early promises made by the ANC government with a proposed extension of the target date to 2025 (Greenberg 2010) being an expression and consequence of this slow pace. On the one hand, the growth figures for game farming with its largely white identity point to the success of the collective narrative in affecting the transformation of rural landscapes. Therefore, its exclusive nature and separateness as a national presence amidst the land reform target failures demands explanation. Therefore, this thesis seeks to investigate the strategies deployed by game farmers to maintain this disproportionate land and farming monopoly.

Game farming is widespread in all provinces except the Western Cape (NAMC 2006). Hunting takes place throughout the year with the majority of the hunting conducted between March and October, while June, July and August are the most popular months (PHASA 2009). The latter 3 months are in winter. A major justification for the

[2] The quoted figure of 12 000 is anecdotal evidence, not corroborated from any physical counting by a statistical organisation. They were cited by Dr Herman Els, Manager: Hunting and Conservation; South African Hunters and Game Conservation Association during a telephone conversation in March 2011. This was one difficulty faced by the researcher in that the state could not be relied on to produce accurate figures due to various reasons ranging from inefficiency of data collection methods to the different departments not working together in information sharing

operation of the sector has been the claim of its economic contribution to the national economy. For example, sector estimates maintain that the "thriving wildlife industry contributes R7.7 billion annually to the country's economy" (Gert Dry in the Farmer's Weekly 2010). Hence when compared to the R2, 6 billion that the government planned to spend on provision of water services in 2011 (Zuma 2011) or the R147 283 million approximate gross value of estimated agricultural production in 2011[3] the quoted statistic is a formidable figure. This national economic contribution cannot be easily ignored as the contrast with the budget for water provision -which is a basic right- by the state, is still surpassed by the wildlife figure showing its value to the national fiscus. Notably, Minister Edna Molewa mentioned how in the 2010 hunting season "total revenue of approximately R1.1 billion was generated by the local and trophy hunting industries collectively."[4] This figure is a far cry from the touted figure of R7, 7 billion even though the former only takes into account "revenue generated through accommodation and species fees" (ibid). Yet in 2012, there was an approximated figure of R1, 24 billion claimed to have been spent by foreign hunters in South Africa (PHASA Press Release 2014)[5]. Generally, these figures serve the purpose of raising game farming's social and symbolic capital, enough to exert influence on national policy based on the economic contribution they make to the national economy.

In spite of the variation in these figures, the tourism related business has become a leading industry in most developing economies (Roussot 2005). South Africa is no exception. An estimated 13 million tourists visited the country in 2012 compared to 3 million in 1993, revealing a huge leap in tourism (StatsSA 2013). One can posit a relationship between this rise and commercial cattle farmers who are turning to game, seeking to tap into this tourist market, especially European hunters. It is important to point out at this early juncture that hunting should be viewed as one of the main driving forces of game farming (Cloete *et al* 2007) because the one supports the other,

[3] See 'About SA – Agriculture: Economic contribution' in www.gov.za/aboutsa/agriculture.htm (Accessed 23/07/2012).
[4] See the Department of Water and Environmental Affairs Minister's speech at the 2012 Hunting Indaba on : http://www.environment.gov.za/?q=content/ednamolewa_speechduring_officialopening_huntingindaba (Accessed 27/03/2013)
[5] Note that the quoted figure includes such spending as airfares, transport, ammunition, hunting gear,, clothing, shipping costs and trophy handling, licenses and permits, additional tours and travel costs, miscellaneous costs, daily fees and amount spent on hunting game. (www.phasa.co.za/full-value-of-foreign-hunters'-spending-in-sa-calculated-at-r1,24-billion) accessed 7/04/2014. Despite that one may argue that the figure is an optimistic calculation considering that it includes, costs like ammunition, hunting gear and clothing which are not everyday expenses for seasoned hunters who may bring these ready made into the country. Similarly, transport costs in South Africa could fall under travel costs while additional tours and miscellaneous costs cannot be factored in as these are not guaranteed spending projections for dedicated hunters.

ensuring that wildlife pays for its reproduction. As a result, it is from the hunting revenues that most game farmers are able to sustain their business. In a similar vein, Van der Merwe and Saayman (2002b) state the existence of four pillars of game farming: ecotourism, breeding game (rare and endangered species), production of processed game products, and hunting. However, only a few farmers have the means to practice all four pillars while the majority engages in the single production option of hunting or breeding game. In this study, the symbiotic relationship of game farming and game hunting is seen as integral to its success when run as a joint enterprise.

A number of farmers have converted partially to game farming, being engaged in a mixed production system which retains domestic livestock production in combination with wildlife stocking. This has contributed to agricultural decline since the reduced cattle production has not been replaced by game meat in the national food chain. Importantly, this reflects an apparent weakness of the sector that in spite of its growth, game usage is only for a limited few and not the greater majority portraying a quandary for the local sector. The failure of the local game industry to supply the protein needs of the country is reflected in examples outside of South Africa. New Zealand, for instance at its height in the 1970s was producing "140 000 commercially harvested wild deer" (Kerr & Abell 2013:1). Locally, the phenomenal growth of game meat production has not resulted in it supplanting cattle in meeting the nation's protein needs. One explanation is that people engaging in this activity as producers and consumers have largely remained white, explaining why the levels of game meat production have not risen to national significance. Nonetheless, in the past three decades, wildlife farming as an agricultural activity has been growing at a fast pace (NAMC 2006) an assertion backed up by the earlier quoted figures. Its growth too has been facilitated by the continued demand for hunting from both the international and domestic white market. Yet the deliberate quoting of the sector's contribution to the national economy is a way of framing a favourable side to the sector's story eliding the loss of domestic meat production and the unchanged nature of the industry.

Transformation of the game sector has been slow, a fact that has been long acknowledged by the state. For instance, Marthinus van Schalwyk, former Minister of Environmental

Affairs and Tourism[6] in November 2004 bemoaned how professional hunting remained explicitly white and male dominated (DEAT 2004). A decade later, this lack of transformation was acknowledged even by the industry actors themselves. For example, Cyril Ramaphosa speaking in his capacity as Stud Game Breeders' spokesperson bemoaned the status quo:

> 'The transformation must continue and it must not remain a lily-white industry. It has to respond to changes in the country".[7]

On this occasion in 2014, he was speaking from an insider's vantage point. Notably, the former Minister's observation on this 'separateness' is succinct since it cuts to the core of the structural order defining the sector.

This thesis's core argument is that relations and the manner in which game hunting and farming have been organised as an industry point to a colonial past re-invented in the democratic space to suit the contemporary period. To borrow from Gregory "the capacities that inhere within the colonial past are routinely reaffirmed and reactivated in the colonial present" (Gregory 2004: 7) as formulated from the racially exclusive space of game farming. The thesis illuminates how the status quo has largely remained the same in the sector through an analysis of the structural and social organisation of the collective and individual subjectivities of industry actors. As an ethnographic case study on game farming, it builds on the literature on the subject while narrowing its focus to how the players have constructed, performed and articulated various forms of their collective narrative in protecting the continuities of skewed land ownership. Yet in doing this, there is an awareness of the individual stories of game farmers as producers of their own individualised scripts. The Groot Marico case studies therefore centre on the personal production options and circumstances that have guided individuals into conducting this form of land- use option as a production enterprise.

Aims of the study

[6] This was before President Jacob Zuma's cabinet reshuffle which left Marthinus van Schalwyk as Minister of Tourism only with Environmental Affairs having gone to Ms Edna Molewa.
[7] See www.news24.com/Green/News/Ramaphosa-applauds-game-industry-20140123 and www.bdlive.co.za/business/2014/01/24/ramaphosa-calls-for-best-managed-industry-in-the-world-to-share-skills (accessed 24/01/2014).

The principal motivation of this study is to explain how the conversion from pastoral farming to game farming has shaped game farmers' livelihoods in the Groot Marico. It further analyses the intersections between conversion and broader agrarian (e.g. land redistribution) and economic processes in the post-apartheid era. I examine how game farmers have carved a niche for themselves while holding on to land access and ownership amidst the ongoing land reform efforts of the state. The project, contributes significantly to an overall understanding of the collective and individual agency of actors within the game farming sector. Related to this thread is a focus on materialism within the sector accounting for how the different game farming tiers relate to each other. In relation to that, the layers focus analyses the impact of financialisation, how it links to stratification, class and race as concepts closely associated with the industry's operations. For example, trophy hunting relates to biltong hunting as the hierarchical extension of having graduated from the latter indicating upward mobility. I will examine the differences between the two and how one leads to the other. Similarly, the question of how far game farming and hunting ties into conservation in its operations as opposed to an economic issue will be investigated.

The thesis provides a history of game farming and hunting by focusing on pre- and post-1994 developments within the broader historical context of the sector. The outline shows how in the contemporary period, a re-invention has occurred in which past legacies have been surreptitiously merged to foster continuities of old practices. Further reference will be made in the thesis to the value of fellowships and associations as pillars of this characterisation. This research showcases the white game farmers' continual negotiation of the democratic transition which is insightful in any analysis of elite capture and land processes as a post-democracy social script. To borrow from Pilossof (2010:72), the:

> study of groups like white elites who have found ways to function and maintain their positions in independent African states offers very valuable insights into how the new black governments conceive of the nation and ways to manage it.

In as much as this is a study of the internal dynamics of game farming, it also sheds light on South African state policy as it relates to the game sector. In examining the unfolding story of Groot Marico where there are restitution cases still under contestation; the

case of two informants' farm are prime examples, this case study gives an indication of how government intends to proceed with rural transformation in land reform. In this thesis, I review whether this reform in the sector, if it has occurred, has not fallen into the category of those reforms that when "led by the State can become tools for patronage and a different kind of political manipulation" (Walt 1999:12). I interrogate the realities playing out on the ground by questioning the accrual of benefits whether individual or for the group, and how these are constructed. Although several studies (Kjelstrup 2011; Ngubane & Brooks 2013, Snijders 2012) have already shown the unintended consequences of this interventionist approach by state organs, there is a compelling case to conduct a review of institutional arrangements within game farming. I address this issue by using the examples of sector associations to reflect on broader questions of hegemony, relations and regulation within the sector. Through consideration of these aspects, the thesis presents a broader perspective on the structural constraints that limit the reform of the sector than is usually presented. In this light, the research interrogates the new initiatives being implemented by the sector investigating the extent of transformation in introducing new players. In the South African post-apartheid context, the historical *de-facto* and *de-jure* rights of white game farmers are analysed through a framework which conveys the internal dynamics, key trends and features which stem from individual and collective agency. The study seeks to highlight how white game farmers and their institutions navigate the post-democratic space. These descriptions and analyses bring an understanding of interventions as interpreted and implemented within specific socio- economic, cultural, historical and political contexts in South Africa. These understandings are what the thesis seeks to contribute to social sciences generally.

The reference to legislation, policy proposals, amendments and implementations offers a way to cast a light on how balance is maintained between the state and the game farming grouping. In this regard, the roles of game sector associations will be interrogated for their significance in ordering relationships with the state and presenting an image of the sector to the outside world as a collective narrative. Therefore, this study provides additional insight into representative organisations illuminating their bearing on the industry. Among the issues discussed will be the symbolic power of these associations, the tensions between state bureaucracy and sector bodies on current governance practices that define the industry. As a case in point, the concept of 'self-regulation' and 'self-

administration' will be discussed as aspects of the sector associations' carving of a regulatory sphere of influence. The latter draws attention to the interrogation of policy regulation while considering the implications of such reflections in understanding colonial and post-colonial legacies. Relative to this is a contribution to the understanding of policy continuities as they impact on developments within game farming. Hence, the study frames the conditions of this sector's operations.

Through examination of external and internal dynamics that have contributed to the development of the industry, the thesis considers the impact of game farming and hunting on Groot Marico specifically, and South African agriculture generally.

Key Research questions

The research seeks to address:

> How the South African game farming sector and its different internal components works in the post-1994 period? What are the divisions that constitute this sector?

The study's considered questions inform and bring to the fore the framing claims of game farmers' lived experiences through space (re)production. By addressing the private game farming narrative, the research draws deeply on the ways in which this shift in land-use is articulated and understood by the different actors. For example, my overarching themes demanded an interrogation of the industry discourse such as 'conservation', 'sustainable utilisation' and 'if it pays it stays' as some of the tenets associated with the sector. Key questions this study analyses include;

> Is the South African game farming sector in the post-1994 period a reflection of colonial processes or a neo liberal production model?

> What are the practices being produced in game farm spaces and locales?

In addition, it sheds light on the land reform model as it applies to game farming. I reflect how shifts in land use patterns in South Africa fit in the broader context of post-apartheid widening inequality and reduced economic prospects for the greater black majority.

> What is the role of the state in relation to game farming? Does game farming feature in the South African land reform context?

I also dwell on changing broader structural issues.

What are the wider implications of game farm conversions to rural development and transformation?

Through engagement with questions of positionality and identity among game farmers in post-apartheid South Africa, my research seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of patterns of social differentiation within this sector. Pertinent to undertaking of this research was to ask for example:

> How and why has the game sector grown so rapidly in the late pre to post-democracy era? What are the factors that have contributed to the growth?

By specifically articulating the historical antecedents, the research addresses the challenges, opportunities and constraints of game farming and hunting. Included are socio-political relations as they apply to North West province game farming. Through land tenure, rural development is impacted by the land reform and land redistribution model whose development is guided by the state policy in South Africa.

Linked to the question on challenges will be an exploration of the contradiction between national parks and private game farms.

> What is the role of private game farms that is different to national parks? How are the two –National Parks and private game farms-related? What impacts if any, do they have on each other's operations?

These sub-questions shed a light to contrast private game farming with National parks pointing to the overlaps and gaps that exist.

Methodology

Site Selection

The study dissects the historical and socio-economic issues affecting the transition in farming patterns in Groot Marico. Groot Marico encompasses both the town and agricultural district. It is part of the Ramotshere Moiloa municipality in the Ngaka Modiri Molema district of the North West province.[8] The area's fame is drawn from the stories made famous by the late author, Herman Charles Bosman who located his stories of

[8] Interview with state informant Zz in Mahikeng government complex, North West (01/02/2012).

Afrikaans farmers in Groot Marico after his brief six month sojourn in the town.[9] An annual festival celebrating the author organised by locals adds life to the relatively sleepy town.[10] There has not been much literature coming out of Groot Marico. This thesis contributes an ethnographic study of the area on the subject of game farming and hunting. Furthermore, it creates an understanding of local histories and present realities for game farmers by investigating how internal dynamics relate to the structural socio-economic and political processes of agriculture. Previously, I had conducted research on the perceptions of fast track land reform in Umguza district in Matabeleland North in Zimbabwe (Zulu 2008). This thesis follows a similar pattern of discussing land-use conversion and tensions emanating from this process. It falls in line with one research theme in the NRF Chair in local history and present realities investigating the macro and micro sociological processes as they are defined and determined in post-apartheid South Africa. My particular emphasis is on social ramifications of game farming and hunting.

In a sense, the site for this study self-selected. Initially, the brief was to research game farming in Limpopo, but a chance encounter with an ex-officio member of PHASA who farms in Groot Marico convinced me to shift the study site to that area. The official offered to assist with interviewee referrals, which enabled the researcher to adopt the snow balling technique to locate research participants whilst also easing the process of gaining the farmers' trust. Doing this went a long way in enabling access, although some individual farmers later reneged on scheduled interviews at the last moment sometimes leaving me stranded at the farm gate after arriving for a scheduled interview. Another reason for choosing the study site was the number of game farms in Groot Marico; there were 68 within the area according to Gaborone (2006:102) making the locality a viable option for a study site.

Research Design

I deemed qualitative research appropriate in situating and understanding the context and trajectories of game farmers as they made/make the shift from pastoralism to game farming. Since the qualitative approach is less structured and a more flexible way of

[9] One of these is 'A Teacher in the Bushveld' in 'My Life and Opinions' by Herman Charles Bosman. Rebecca Davis's Rhodes Masters thesis 'Unstable Ironies: Narrative Instability in Herman Charles Bosman's "Oom Schalk Lourens" Series' offers a critical reading of these stories placing them into context.
[10] Interview with Egbert van Bart, an 'indigene of the Marico' who ran the Marico information centre and was part of the Herman Charles Bosman society in Groot Marico, 28/11/11.

collecting data, it enabled the researcher to gain intricate insights not often offered in quantitative research (Neuman 2000). In this way, I could conduct an empirical investigation into the game farming experience examining how the sector has been navigating the post-democratic terrain. This assisted in the "exploration of the quality of experience through the study of meanings and processes" (Nzayabino 2011:40) for the individual farmers. Thus, I could then showcase the variables percolating through game farming and hunting, for example the trajectories of class formation.

In doing this, I examined the industry from bottom up, insider's view of lived realities. Drawing upon the realities and encompassing perceptions of the different stakeholders, the researcher derived the implications of conversion on the social and power relations as framed and contested in the game farming social context. Being an empirical study, I relied on qualitative methods influenced by the grounded theory approach. The choice of employing grounded theory was because "it makes its greatest contribution in areas in which little research has been done" (Punch 2006:104). I deemed grounded theory appropriate in a study inquiring into the internal dynamics of the shift into game farming. I chose to use grounded theory as a tool to understand the negotiated meaning of basic social processes inherent in interactions of a society's members (Blumer 1986, Dey 1999, Jeon 2004) in this case white game farmers. The study acknowledges the fact that social processes evolve through structures, being subject to implied or explicit codes of conduct and procedures which circumscribe how interactions unfold thereby shaping the meaning that comes from them (Starks & Trinidad 2007). Thus I sought to develop explanatory theories (Glaser & Strauss 1967) of game farming and hunting at the micro-level taking into account these social processes. Thus the analysis of hunting fellowships, marketing of hunts and the spatial exclusivity of hunting as aspects of social processes become explanatory anchors of understanding the game sector dynamics.

Applying the grounded theory entailed examining the 'six Cs' of "social processes; causes, contexts, contingencies, consequences, co-variances and conditions" (Creswell 2008, Strauss and Corbin 1998) aligning with the researcher's goal of seeking to understand the patterns and dynamics in the sector. Therefore, the study's objective of seeking to investigate how the conversion to game farming has been accomplished and maintained focused enquiry into how various societal systems contributed to the present

state of affairs. For example, the study investigated governments' role as the regulating authority together with the conditions that have prevailed to facilitate this transition. Thus employing the case study approach allowed for 'analytic generalisation' (Yin 1994) of game farming which directly feeds into the use of grounded theory to derive a fuller picture of the emerging story.

In relation to choice of grounded theory, I adopted the case study approach for its unique strength relating to its capacity to deal with a plethora of evidence ranging from documents, artifacts, interviews and observations (Yin 1994). As such, it enables the conveyance of multiple perspectives and voices allowing for researcher reflexivity usually associated with ethnographic work. This study adopts Greenstein's (2006:88) definition of a case study as "typically an intensive, in-depth study of a few cases – often a single case – where the goal is to develop as full an understanding of that case as possible". The same methodology was applied to the game farming case studies selected for this research as shown in chapter six. Significantly, the adoption of specific cases assumes that they are a reflection of similar cases thus the selected cases help to provide a better understanding of that particular phenomenon (ibid) incorporating its processes and context. For example, highlighting a purely trophy hunting farm from a biltong hunting farm serves to juxtaposition the stratification that separates the two. Similarly, Bryman (2004:51) shares the same view noting that: "exemplifying cases……are often chosen not because they are extreme or unusual in some way but because they will provide a suitable context for certain research questions to be answered."

This study applies this philosophy to the generalisations made from the case studies of game farming as they apply to the South African context generally. By focusing on a detailed case study of Groot Marico district selected game farms, the research fits in with Greenstein's (2006:87-88) observation that "a hallmark of qualitative research is that it is naturalist – it tends to study people in their natural setting". Meanwhile, focusing on the single district of Marico enabled the researcher to focus on shared trajectories of game farmers, investigate the micro characteristics of the industry and the structural like provincial legislation and processes, socio-political factors on the developments within the sector. Comparisons could then be made of these farms and the contrasts derived from this analysis.

In adopting this approach, I explored aspects of game farming and hunting at the micro level by investigating its implementation as a land-use option for the farmers concerned. As such, using the case study approach makes provision to ask 'how or why questions' (Yin 1994) on game farming as a contemporary phenomenon within the South African context. Adopting these types of questions which by their nature enquire on social processes made the case study method appropriate for this study (Babbie 2004, Yin 1994) helping to shed light on the scale and context of private game farming. Taking up this approach is useful in understanding continuities and discontinuities in the sector. I adopted "a case-study approach that tries to infer programmatic, as well as political motives from events, policies, actions, and statements" (Ascher 1999: x) that would allow for dealing with the complex reality of game farming as a sector. For instance, in the section on 'conservation', the researcher analyses 'how' its discourse is applied within the sector and 'why', the rationale behind it. Doing this at the group level – association- and also at the micro, individual game farmer level brings out the nuances and the different understandings of the implications for adopting conservation as a leit-motif for the actors involved. Thus at two levels, the game farmer in Groot Marico serves as the unit of analysis whilst also the group, associations and fellowships present the other unit as cases to be studied.

Thus, an unstructured interview approach was developed for the study to explore more fully participants' views, positions and lived experiences in relation to game farming and hunting. Despite its flexible structure, this instrument had core themes designed into the tool, to be covered throughout the research process. Hence the conversational style of the interview process. Since this was an 'exploratory' case study, I adopted the socio-historical approach in explaining why certain phenomenon have happened the way they have in the shift to game farming land use. Using this approach, I specifically drew on the historical knowledge and information of individual farmers whose farms have been passed on from one generation to the next as in the example of the trophy hunting case study cited in chapter six. Importantly, following this approach allowed for the agency of the actors to come through pointing to how they chose the conversion path they took. This involved asking individual decision-based questions during the face to face interviews. In this regard, interviews were conducted with individual farmers with a view to compare and contrast the different production pathways taken by each. Lastly

the interviews with game farmers serve as means to map the terrain illuminating the individual subjectivities of game farmers within the social structure.

My overarching themes entailed an investigation that would be locally specific but still draw on a national perspective while incorporating the regional and global dynamics. Hence mapping the study included review of literature on game farming and agriculture. Consequently, this investigation guided the researcher to derive 'explanations of empirical phenomena' (Burawoy 1998) used to produce the story of game farming in Groot Marico. This entailed applying a reflexive approach to the research process through extracting the general from the unique, yet simultaneously connecting the present to the past (Burawoy 1998) in the research process and during the write-up phase. For example, interrogating a game farmer's chosen model accounted for 'local specificities' while also taking into consideration the national socio-political plus the historical and economic context–structural factors- that impacted the conversion decision. The format makes use of the unique strength of grounded theory through directly linking the macroscopic issues to the observable fact under investigation (Punch 2006) allowing for the depiction of the legacies of game farming and hunting in South Africa using the case study data of Groot Marico. Additionally, participant observation was applied as a research method of the study when attending auctions including association seminars for example as a way to observe group dynamics. The process was applied even when conducting interviews to capture the social practices occurring in these interactions. As a participant observer, I engaged in multiple dialogues with the study participants focusing on the social dynamics of the participants in their natural settings.

When engaging with secondary material, I started with literature on game farming and hunting, journals and theses, zoning in on the local by drawing a detailed catalogue and historiography of the research subject. For instance Carruthers (1988) and Van Der Merwe (2004) theses provided an invaluable historical reflection on colonial hunting, the regulations and the growth of private game farming. Delving into literature indicated the extent and nature of game farming allowing for parallels and comparisons to be made with other case, area and issue specific studies conducted. Theses by Brandt (2013) and Mkhize (2012), Gaborone (2006), Kjelstrup (2011), among others proved invaluable as specific area studies on game farming of the Eastern Cape, the North West

and KwaZulu Natal provinces respectively. Also included was the examination of official documents like bills and provincial statutes to present an overview of the legal environment operational in the country which directly impacted this transition. For example, the North West Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism provided legal notices like the 'Game Movement Regulations, General Notice 207 of 2012' which were important in mapping the provincial legislation governing game in the study area. Significantly, the regulations contextualised the North West provincial legislation informing the study's greater attention to the nuances of the regulations in comparison to other provinces and the impact of this on game farm operations.

Additionally the game farmers' association communication from newsletters to official correspondence with government or other stakeholders was reviewed. Game farming related articles formed a crucial part of the documentary analysis, for example publications like Game & Hunt, Wildlife Ranching to name just two. The purpose of reviewing these documents was to tap into the game sector's 'official' voice while investigating the discourse espoused by these documents. The Farmer's Weekly magazine also served a practical function in showing the farming continuities more specifically game hunting and farming in South Africa. As a long-standing platform carrying farmer focused articles, it was useful in tracing the trajectory of trends within the farming sector from apartheid leading up to the post-democratic period. Despite there being noticeably few articles on the North West province and a handful on Groot Marico in these specialised publications, they served their purpose in giving a national perspective on the sector from the industry's own point of view. Other media sources for example newspapers the *Mail & Guardian, Mafeking Mail, Sowetan, City Press* and *Sunday Times* were useful for media comments on contemporary industry specific articles dealing with the topic. When combined, these sources focused the research on the discourse of the industry showing the connections and the discordance that existed through particular time periods.

In addition, archival sources were examined for statistical data and other historical material in order to review the extent to which milestones have been reached and to connect key events. For example, the anecdotal statistics given in chapter one earlier on the numbers of game farmers were tested against the numbers given by provincial

authorities and other affiliated bodies that deal with industry statistics. The archival material obtained from Wits Historical papers helped to capture the history of Groot Marico. Carruthers's (1988) thesis proved invaluable in providing insights which could be supported by evidence from the archive material. Government departments like Statistics South Africa provided the agricultural statistics and other economic figures. Some secondary sources used included theses from Brandt (2013), Carruthers (1988), Gaborone (2006), Mkhize (2012) and Warren (2011) among others in which the subject was game farming or hunting. All of these materials served as a platform from which this research proceeded. Conclusions were drawn from this multi-dimensional perspective detailing the processes, contradictions and tensions as closely as they could be captured. Since the researcher aimed to give an inside view of the game farming transition story, there was a deliberate strategy to sidestep the game farm workers as a category of research participants. The decision was consciously taken as a practical consideration of the research process. One reason for this ploy was to make ease of entry easier especially with the critical component category, the white game farmers. Another reason for this was the awareness of a cohort of studies on game farming whose specific focus dwelt on the plight of farm workers.[11] For this reason; I chose to focus on a different topical issue for this study.

Snowballing and gaining access

Initially I encountered resistance and reluctance to be interviewed by game farmers and government officials. For practical reasons to do with the nature of the research and the target participants, I applied snowball sampling in this study as a means to gain acceptance with the research respondents. Snowball sampling is a technique used "to study groups or individuals that are hard to identify or locate" (Greenstein 2006:110). The deliberate adoption of this strategy took into cognisance the fraught situation of conducting research on game farms. Part of that conviction came from an understanding of the difficulty associated with research, but more specifically the tensions around researching white game farming in South Africa. A number of scholars have pointed to this difficulty of conducting research on game farms. For example Brandt (2013) and Mkhize (2012) cite the same difficulties as does Luck (2004) and Nyama (2008) before

[11] The project, 'Farm dwellers: the forgotten people? Consequences of conversions to private wildlife production in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape', was in process during the time period this research was undertaken.

me among others. These three authors mention having had to negotiate the difficulties of entry and lack of co-operation from game farm owners as respondents in their studies. In her Cradock study, Mkhize (2012:22) identifies the challenges as an example of "a reality that was encountered in the course of this study". Another case in point would be Nyama's (2008) which can explain why the study on corporate citizenship is a case study of the one game farm which granted her access. Similarly, Brandt (2013) also makes reference to this tension as complicating the space for conducting research on game farms. Hence my adoption of snowballing as a technique to locate and engage respondents became an imperative methodological tool for my research. The reason for this being that it is a technique whereby an interviewee suggests other potential interviewees who are a part of his network (Babbie 2004). Thus, the offer of assistance by the well-known game farmer in the area became a game changer in the same way as the association's name too opened other doors easing entry for the researcher.

For this study, I began by conducting a preliminary interview with one game farmer who was an ex-officio member of PHASA. The association had provided me with the lead in contacting this informant. I then followed this up with 5 interviews of provincial government officials with different roles within the North West Department of Agriculture Conservation and Environmental Services following upon referrals gathered from the initial contacts. These preliminary interviews served to highlight the themes that I needed to focus on in the study while helping to clarify mutual areas of agreement between the state, game farmers organisation representatives and farmers. With the intention of further exploring the emergent themes that were coming to the fore, I proceeded to contact more game farmers via snowball sampling and insider referrals.

A further definition of snowball sampling is a "non-probability sampling procedure in which the sample grows by adding individuals identified by respondents or informants" (Greenstein 2006:194). For example, after attending the Wildlife Ranching South Africa seminar in 2012, the researcher sought the assistance of one executive member who then introduced the researcher to potential interviewees. As a sampling frame used to identify and locate respondents, its advantage is that it overcomes the difficulties of reluctance to be interviewed which some farmers and government officials harboured. As a case in point with the provincial state officials, the period in which the research was conducted - 2011-2013 coincided with the rise in rhino poaching in the North West province.

Consequently, some of the provincial state officials who were feeling the pressure from national government reneged on scheduled interviews choosing instead to concentrate on report production for their superiors as a matter of urgency on the day of the interviews. Meanwhile, during this tense period, farmers who stocked rhinos on their farms were nervous of strangers and reluctant to do anything that would give out information and the location of their farms. Snowballing therefore opened doors particularly in this very suspicious and tense farming environment, as word-of- mouth referrals became valuable, redeemable vouchers for the researcher to deploy when seeking interviews.

As indicated above, snowballing was the strategy adopted to identify respondents for the study, for example from game farmers to hunters and from provincial state officials to national. Even though in some occasions it was from national state officials to provincial, yet it achieved the intended purpose of identifying the interviewees. However, one criticism of snowball sampling is that it produces a homogenous research population sample (Neuman 2000) hence the representativeness of the sample becomes questionable (Babbie 2004). Despite this pointed shortcoming, in this study this weakness became its strength in recruiting white farmers and even hunters as respondents. Through recruiting individuals from within a close knit group, one could then investigate the relations of these associations and how the networks operated internally. Meanwhile, the usefulness of snowballing technique became evident in the field. Apparently, everybody seemed to know everyone in the game farming sector indicating a close knit 'community' with the links to the associations and industry affiliation being a common denominator among the respondents. Brandt (2013) refers to this close knit aspect of the game farming and hunting actors in the Karoo which has its drawbacks as she discovered. This familiarity as critiqued by Greenstein (2006) can create the possibility for potential bias. That having been said, this general 'fit and commonality' showcases the common denominators linking the individuals in the game farming business. Therefore, I conducted interviews with a varied range of stakeholders who were selected for their belonging to the following categories; 20 white game farmers in the area, 3 academic representatives who have written on the subject, 3 professional hunters association representatives, 2 game farmers' association representatives. Among state representatives 7 members of select local government spheres were interviewed, 4 dealing with game farmers directly from licensing to conservation, 1 provincial parks and tourism official, 1 land claims official and 1 national environmental registry official. Interviews were also

conducted with 1 local area long term resident and tourism operator and 2 animal rights activists. Additionally, a number of informal conversations were held during the fieldwork with other stakeholders. These were helpful in putting into perspective the local area history, history of farming and the perceptions 'outsiders' held of the game farming sector.

The first interviews conducted were with 4 former committee members of Professional Hunting South Africa (PHASA) who were practising game farmers. These individuals had been involved in the day to day policy discussions at provincial and national levels with government over legislation governing the industry. All of these respondents were men except for the President or CEO of PHASA at national level who at the time -2012- was female. From the first initial contacts, I was directed to other interviewees building up the game farmers numbers to 10 respondents while government officials went up to 10 provincial officers including 1 official from the North West Parks and Tourism Board and another from the Land Claims department. Even though the number of interviewed game farmers is not representative of the farmers in the area –Gaborone (2006) claimed there were 68 game farmers- the sampled respondents depict various processes of conversion and different timelines. Such a varied range enabled a deeper investigation of the patterns of conversion similar to other studies, Brandt (2013), Brooks *et al* (2011), Kjelstrup (2011) ,Mkhize (2012) serve as a few examples. Therefore as case studies, the sample respondents represent area pioneers in game farming and the late comers making for a significant mix of interviewees.

All of the interviews were recorded on-site at the game farms of individual farmers or at offices of provincial government and other state officials. Sandwiched in-between interviews with game farmers and state officials were three interviews with academics who have written on game farming and hunting who coincidentally were also hunters in their own right. I was able to obtain mentoring from these distinguished academics, benefitting from their intimate knowledge of the sector as a whole. All were followed up by repeat interviews either telephonically or face to face to verify specific information and clarify further questions that were emerging from the data.

Questions focused on the history of game farming to the demographics of game farming and the contributions made by the sector. Reasons for conversion into game farming

were also investigated together with views on hunting regulations and market(s). These were followed by others on game capture; conservation and mandate of both the state and organisations working in the game farming sector among many.

Data collection and analysis

For the purposes of this study, key informant interviews were conducted with individual game farmers, sector representatives and provincial government officials responsible for permit allocation and those for conservation. These were governed by the need to specifically target informants who would provide a balanced picture (Babbie and Mouton 2001) of game farming. This informed the inclusion of the local area long term resident who was not a game farmer, and the informal conversations with other local residents for example helped to place the research into perspective, particularly the local context and its different threads. Semi-structured interviews with white game farmers, sector association representatives, hunters, academics who have written game related articles and other stakeholders including provincial government rural development officials were conducted as the primary means of data collection.

Wherever possible, information gathered from the interviews was triangulated as a means of cross-referencing facts and attaining validity. A justification of triangulation provided by Fontana and Frey (2003:99) state that:

> "Human beings are complex and their lives are ever changing; the more methods we use to study them, the better our chances to gain some understanding of how they construct their lives and the stories they tell us about them".

Hence the drive within this research was to apply varied methodology to properly capture the stories of game farmers in Groot Marico as adequately as possible as indicated by the added use of after interview notes. Meanwhile, Bryman (2004:275) defines triangulation as "an approach that uses 'multiple' observers, theoretical perspectives, sources of data and methodologies". For this study, the adoption of grounded theory as the basis from which all the other theorisation about game farming could emerge was a deliberate deployment of triangulation as defined by Bryman. Hence the theories could be 'multiple' as the research was not restricted to one theorist but applied multiple perspectives following through the empirical data sources that were

investigated in the study. Another reason for applying triangulation methods in this qualitative study was to enable the researcher to check corroboration (Silverman: 2005) of issues. Therefore, this study adopted the following triangulated methods of data collection, key informant in-depth interviews, participant observation, farm visits including note taking during and after the interviews.

The first round of interviews were important for providing background historical material serving to sharpen the research questions (Creswell 2008) while narrowing the study's scope of concern. This first process was enriching in building locally specific understanding of game farming and hunting as an agricultural activity in Groot Marico. For example, the interview with the long term resident and tour operator provided the overall history of farming in the area from fruit farming (predominantly of oranges) to cattle ranching which was later replaced by game farming. It was on this occasion too, that the issue of Mampoer distillation was discussed, although the brief history of the introduction of game farming was enlightening.

Similarly, interviews with provincial government officials were very important in providing information on policy, national and provincial statutes- including enforcement of regulations. On occasion, the juxtaposition of these interviews with those of game farmers provided opportunities to unearth the nuances lurking underneath the surface of the relationships between the two, therefore revealing the complexities and tensions. This juxtapositioning was conducted on the basis of Fontana and Frey's (2003) warning for interviewers to be alert to respondent differences while making the appropriate amendments during unanticipated developments. I have already referred to the cancelled interviews that occurred as a result of the rhino poaching crisis experienced within the North West province. This situation was compounded when a national government official visited the area coincidentally at the same time as I was in the field to conduct interviews with provincial officials. These field dynamics could not be anticipated but had to be dealt with as they arose. As an example, on another occasion, I had to schedule another interview with the farmer's wife when it became apparent that she was more forthcoming than the farmer who was reticent. Part of this dynamic could have been a result of former's command of the English language –she had been a teacher at a local school- thus was more comfortable in using the language than her husband who preferred Afrikaans more than English. She was effusive in her responses as opposed to

her husband and remembered events and timelines much more vividly than her husband.

Through key informant interviews, the lived realities of stakeholders did emerge, as the above example shows. Additionally one could point to their locations within the game farming hierarchy, for example the wife above was the family business administrator handling the financials and permits. The key informant interviewees focused on the perspectives, experiences and challenges faced by the farmers. This enabled the researcher to interrogate how the various actors experienced this process, including how external stakeholders; -for example, academics and local area residents outside the game farming field assess the conversion. This latter part was assisted by formal and informal discussions with hunters, industry writers, opponents of game farming and other minor stakeholders. Through these discussions, an indication of the sector's extent in terms of reach and influence, challenges encountered and lessons learnt became clear. The key-informant interviews were 'in-depth' interviews producing what qualitative researchers call 'rich thick' descriptions. A thick description is "a rich, lengthy description that captures actions as they occur" (Greenstein *et al* 2003:57, 72) providing colourful detail thereby giving the reader "a feeling for social setting" (ibid). Qualitative in-depth interviews therefore proved suited to the research as an appropriate method of collecting the desired data for this study, from providing the reasons for conversion to the farmer's views on game farming in the country.

Unstructured open-ended questions were used during the face-to-face interviews specifically focusing on game farming history, game stocking and capture, the type of hunting practised, conservation, provincial regulation of the sector, the hunting market in general just to name a few.[12] Adopting the approach of using open ended unstructured questions freed the respondents to express their opinions and views which were captured verbatim, providing a rich thick description. Interviews generally lasted from one and a half hours, to two hours since interviewees were free to talk at length as compared to when closed questions are used (Bryman 2004). Making the questions open- ended enabled a follow-up of the topic under discussion to its 'logical' conclusion allowing the researcher to exhaust an interesting strand that cropped up in the interviews. This was done particularly for those topics that centred on the broad themes already set by the

[12] For a detailed outline of the questions see the Appendix at the end of the thesis

researcher during the preliminary stages. Most of the interviews were tape recorded with the respondents giving their permission for the interviews to be tape recorded. The reason for tape recording the interviews was to provide more detailed and objective data (Stubbs 1983) in spite of the awareness that work would be longer when transcribing this material. There were a few interviews which were not tape recorded because the research participants declined to be interviewed on tape but agreed to a note taking interview. The interviews were carried out from 2011 to 2013 intermittently including a period of participant observation that ran concurrently when the researcher attended industry seminars and auctions.

Added to that, the combined use of secondary material in the form of desk research and the primary material in the form of interviews and participant observations has the extra advantage of the two methods complementing each other. Interviews allow for an insider view point while secondary research brings in the documented perspectives and opinions of other researchers, commentators and erstwhile relevant actors. This enables the researcher to check and confirm the validity, consistency and reliability of data (Neuman 2000). Hence the reference to other studies in KwaZulu Natal (Kjelstrup 2011); the Eastern Cape (Brandt 2013, Mkhize 2012) and the North West (Gaborone 2006) operated to confirm where the analysis accorded with those of my study and where they differed. Participant observation completes the picture as it allowed for a thinking, analysing researcher who reflected on the data gathering process as it was being conducted. The earlier mentioned incident of interviewing the farmer's wife after having interviewed the farmer was a consequence of such type of analysis conducted during fieldwork. As enunciated by Bryman (2004:338) participant observation permits "the ability to observe behaviour and implicit features rather than just rely on what is said". Hence in the latter section of the thesis, I mention an incident that happened at a WRSA seminar I attended which was enlightening on the operations of the sector.

I in tandem with Mouton's (2003:195) "keeping on target, while hanging loose" dictum attended a number of hunting excursions with the aim of understanding game hunting 'first hand', which also helped with gaining acceptance from the participants. This is also in line with Creswell's (2003:21) observation that "one of the key elements of collecting data is to observe participants' behaviours by participating in their activities". In more ways than one, participant observation opened doors that would have

remained closed since from that I could then gain the actors' trust. Establishing trust with respondents is important in an ethnographic study (Fontana & Frey 2003) since fieldwork "involves social relationships and personal feelings" (Neuman 2003:375) particularly true for the game farming context. A demonstration of this matrix was made more obvious when I was introduced to some respondents by one WRSA official after attending the organisation's seminar. I had been trying unsuccessfully to secure interviews with these industry players to no avail. One word from the official led to granting of access erasing the several failed attempts in which I had been ignored, rebuffed or kept waiting for scheduled interviews that were just not translating into interviews.

Data analysis was done by employing the multi-layered approach of Miles and Huberman (1994) in analysing qualitative data. The process started through drawing up a list of codes derived from the objectives of the study, its research questions and the general themes as they were derived from the literature review. These codes were then categorised into proper themes to be analysed. The reason for coding the data is because "codes are partly analytical as they link various segments of text to a particular concept" (Charmaz 1983:111, De Wet and Erasmus 2005) enabling the researcher to discuss the findings systematically. As an example, I could connect the history of hunting to the declaration of national parks and then to the emergence and growth of private game farms. Additionally coding also connects the links to theory, data and conceptual framework –multivariate analysis (Glaser 1978) enabling a scaffold to emerge which would support reflexivity that is needed to properly conduct a study of this magnitude. This coding process helped to show the categories that relate to each other, pointing to how they do so thereby ensuring the ease of grouping them according to themes and patterns.

Following this patterning sequence in the respondents' answers led to Fielding and Lee's (1998) 'storyline' or explanation, which the researcher used to narrate the findings on the transition to game farming and hunting for individual case studies. For example, this was done in factoring the different and similar circumstances under which farmers shifted to game farming and their chosen trajectory in their everyday practice. This was very important in the study since one cannot divorce the economic (quantitative) from the storyline (qualitative) aspects of the research. In conclusion, the

unit of analysis begins at individual level although group analysis –the associations representing the sector- were investigated in so far as actions/non action of individuals affect the groupings or society in which they reside and form a part of. Hence in presenting and discussing the findings I chose to follow a structure that begins with the origins of game farming while reflecting on the historical and political at the national level. I follow that up with a discussion of the different groupings and end up with individual cases, finally linking it all back together by offering a conceptual and theoretical analysis. Therefore an analysis of theoretical and conceptual frameworks accompanied the 'thick descriptions' as a measure to understand the "broad societal processes" and the ways in which they impinge on the '*smallest of communities in profound ways'* " (Noor 2010). Thus game farming was placed in the socio-political agrarian context that could then be explained by theory as a flexible way of combining data and theory (Neuman 2000). The reason for this was to avoid committing the "scholastic fallacy" of reflecting "social reality by producing data without theory" or "theory without data" (Bourdieu 2000) hence the choice of grounded theory to generate theory.

After interview notes

An additional research tool that I made use of within this study was the after interview notes. Making use of this tool came from having learnt from experience gained through researching Zimbabwean fast track land issues (Zulu 2008). I had learnt that interviewees tend to react differently, talk more openly and freely when the interview materials such as the tape recorder, note book and pen have been put aside. What flows from the conversation is no longer carefully chosen answers like choreographed performance but natural responses. Significantly, some of the richer material came from these 'unguarded moments' where the conversation was freely flowing undisturbed by the tape recorder in-between the researcher and the respondent. For this researcher, these notes later formed the basis of follow-up interviews which proved invaluable in getting clarification while mining these gems of data. Applying the grounded theory formula of constant comparison of the research data, reflexivity, became invaluable in this exercise as it allowed for theory generation stemming from observations, insightful quotes and other associated fieldwork gems picked up during this phase. It is such contexts that provide explanation of a concept which the interviewee 'deliberately' or unconsciously did not elaborate on during the process of the interview.

Prominent researchers have found this practice of making after interview notes a useful tool. For instance, Dorothy Hobson (Oakley 2003) in her research on housewives, posits how the after interview conversation sometimes reveals the interviewee's ambivalent responses given earlier in the interview. My own observations picked up the same patterns proving that snippets of the responses to questions on government regulations or the impact of sector associations were 'studied' or guarded responses that sounded practised. Similarly, Babbie (2004) refers to this phenomenon as the 'social desirability of answers' whereby people consciously 'filter' responses to create a good image. For example, respondents would refer to unpleasant dealings with state officials when applying for permits, yet during interviews they would portray the system as being proficient in permit processing. Similarly, sector associations were portrayed as a necessary evil which served as a useful insurance policy against the state even though during the interviews this fact had been glossed over. One would argue that these perceptions are heartfelt, as brought to light by the passionate engagement of the interviewees on these topics long after the formal interview had been concluded. As a result of this experience, I have come to approach the after interview notes as part of the essential tool for my data collection arsenal. Being able to record this data immediately after the interview moment allows the researcher to reflect on the insights which can then be compared with the taped interview and notes supplementing the data collection strategy. In this instance, the after interview notes apart from serving as an instrument of data collection enable the researcher to balance the immediate environment of the interview and the period of detachment after it. Engaging in this exercise allows for analysis of responses and some reflections on the body language of the interviewee. Away from the interview process, these notes serve to capture nuances that emanate from the interview process adding to the depth of the material that the researcher has on hand for use in analysis.

Locating the researcher within the research

Power imbalance between the researcher and the 'researched' are normal occurrences of the research process which every researcher has to deal with as an outsider coming in to seek information from his/ her informants. In my case, there were occasions when this role was inverted, particularly when interviewing senior white male game farmers who believed they were in a much more powerful position than the young black man with a tape recorder asking questions. Here, I am reminded of an incident in the North West

where a respondent kept addressing my supervisor –a white male in his retirement years- instead of the young blackman with the tape recorder and camera who was conducting the interview. Yet this incident despite being an individual experience is emblematic of the structural violence which has been one facet of South African history particularly the uneasy relationship that has always existed between white farmers and their black workers. Various studies have documented this tension. Among them are Atkinson (2007); Brandt (2013); Ewert & Hamann (1999); Kjelstrup (2011); Mkhize (2012) among others. The struggle to converse with some of my informants was compounded by my limited ability in Afrikaans which was the first language for a majority of the respondents.

To ease tensions, I had to be forthcoming early on by informing the respondents that I was a Zimbabwean national resident in South Africa. My revelation made the situation much easier to navigate on most occasions as I was viewed as a 'different black'[13] than the local black South African. Such a distinction presented the researcher as 'non-threatening' to his interviewees. I hasten to add that these interviews were conducted at the height of Julius Malema's call for nationalisation of mines and land expropriation without compensation – from 2010-2011 before his expulsion from the ANC youth league presidency in 2012. Hence the uncertainty for their farming future could have been on the minds of the actors during this time since Malema's voice was resounding from the offices of the ruling party's youth league. My open declaration made the research process a little easier in that game farmer respondents felt freer to express themselves to me as an outsider with the experience of 'Zimbabwe's failed land reform' behind him. For them, this was a dynamic which they could identify with and use to establish rapport with me while also explaining their situation as game farmers in a South African context very different to Zimbabwe. I was aware of this dynamic but for the purposes of the research, I felt compelled to 'perform' along fully understanding that this was to be my trump card into entry as the researcher in a closely guarded and overly suspicious community. In seeking to tell the 'farmers' story', I needed to listen to their 'voice' -the purpose of this research- while also being aware and open to the nuances of other stories emerging from this narration. This narration is an example of these nuances. My part as researcher was to guide the process using the structured

[13] For more on this, refer to the interview notes and quotes more especially where local labour is compared to migrant labour, particularly Zimbabwean.

interview questions to achieve that purpose while sticking to the themes and objectives of the research. For example, there is one particular interview where I kept reminding the interviewee that the subject matter was about South African issues when it became apparent that he would refer to the Zimbabwean situation at every question that was posed to him. The following excerpt from the interview illustrates my point;

> Interviewee S: the Zimbabwe has other problem. They are in a political mess, Zimbabwe is a mess.
>
> Nqobile: we'll speak about the Zimbabwean politics later but can we proceed with the South African situation?
>
> Interviewee S: I can't say anything else for it other than that is it a mess…and no thinking African, white or black, can think what is happening in Zimbabwe is right. I mean, I am outspoken at the moment, I have spoken for the reason it's costing wild life a huge amount.[14]

Thus, on reflection (reflexivity) my 'Zimbabwean invocation' at times also presented its own difficulties. On odd occasions, the overwhelming feeling was of being instrumentalised as a result of this identification I projected. It was a reminder of my 'foreignness', being a 'stranger' as in Simmel's 'social type (1908/1971) in a South African place and space. Such a classification also carried assumptions about my views on the Zimbabwean land reform. For the most part, the supposition was that I brought a sympathetic understanding of the plight of the South African white commercial farmer having witnessed 'close hand' the 'devastating' fast track land reform effects back home. Generally, it was a process that had to be negotiated during interviews even though it was a worthwhile sacrifice since it made the interviewees willing to discuss their stories with the interviewer. Nonetheless, it is important to always remember that the interview process is a human encounter in which both the interviewer and interviewee shape each other's thought processes during the interview session. Thus at times, the interviewee's responses to the interview questions are shaped by their views of the interviewer. Consequently, as a process of self-representation, it was important that I understood this stand-point from which the interviewees viewed their life-stories as they told them to him. On that basis, an understanding of the interviewee's situational position could be garnered from their own point of view rather than from the researcher's.

Ethical considerations

[14] Interview with respondent S (academic and biltong hunter) Pretoria (8/10/2011)

Since land issues are usually contested terrain, the possibility existed that in the course of the fieldwork some aspects of the research would challenge participants. A few were concerned how the data would reflect upon their person while others were concerned about their organisations. In order to address these concerns, participants' anonymity was ensured, as was the confidentiality of the data they provided. Participants were made aware that they could exercise the right to withdraw from the interviews at any point during the process. Informed consent was sought in all cases as a pre-requisite to data collection with the informants made aware of the academic nature of the research to which they could freely contribute or exercise their right of refusal. Following that, information relating to the purpose of the research, the methods employed, and the intended use of the data collected was made available to all participants. One reason for this was so as to engender an honest and open relationship between researcher and participants. Part of that bargain of honesty compelled my exercise of care in ensuring the protection of research participants' information. For example this research was conducted during a rise in rhino poaching in the country and I had to pledge not to divulge the rhino availability in the sampled game farms. By protecting the respondents' identities and also not revealing their precise locations, I hope I have achieved that bargain. In the same vein, principles of justice were observed ensuring that participants were treated with fairness and equity throughout the research project. I made it a point to engage with the interviewees in the same way throughout the research. To this end, I will make the final product of this study available to the respondents should they require it. It will also be available through the University's website and even as a publication. To this end, ethical clearance was sought from the University of Witwatersrand's Ethical Clearance Committee with the research only proceeding in line with the formally granted legal approval.

Research audit trail

Conducting an ethnographic research posed particular difficulties associated with this kind of study which I was aware of and sought to minimise. I have already pointed to some of those challenges that were encountered in the field. The time consuming nature of the research was taken into practical consideration with the allotted time I had given to conducting this study being impacted upon by the respondents' availability or non-availability. I addressed issues of site access, building and managing relationships with individuals and organisations being studied. This was done by making contact and being allowed to gain entry by a prominent former association president and game farmer and

also via representative associations. This had its merits as it opened up the study site at the highest level which I then used as a referral to gain the acceptance of other participants in the study- the snowballing technique or method. On the downside, one can view the commonality of dealing with issues as a result of dealing with members of an in-group.

One limitation that had to be overcome related to the sensitive nature of dealing with a topic on land issues and white farmers which is potentially divisive. On its own, the subject becomes a politically charged topic stemming from the historical and political environment from which contemporary agriculture has emerged. I have particularly taken note of the fact that, people's identity narrative is usually subject to change depending on the context (Kalmer & Thomson 2006). I therefore paid attention to discrepancies during the interviews conducted. To navigate around this atmosphere, I gave precedence to the respondent's well-being rather than to academic gains. To increase the chances of the respondents' participation in the research, I committed myself to publishing as accurate a picture as possible of the findings while also making available the study to the participants should they require that.

To navigate around language issues, I used an interpreter –research assistant- to conduct some of the interviews in Afrikaans. One disadvantage with this is that these interviews may have fallen prey to additional layers of meanings and biases including interpretations being embossed into some of these interviews leading to misunderstandings (Fontana and Frey 2003). Fortunately, one interview was conducted which on analysis had to be re-done after the observation that it was not following the basic structure that was laid for this research. The research assistant was re-trained and given a strict protocol of questions to follow similar to the interviews conducted by the researcher. The other action taken was to limit the Afrikaans interviews in order for the researcher to conduct the interviews in English himself. This had the advantage of the researcher being in control of the interview process and the direction taken despite its limited dimension in that interviewees had to speak in a second language –English- which they might not have been very fluent in as when using Afrikaans their home language. One particular example of the issues the researcher had to deal with in conducting this research was the fact that the respondents preferred to mostly use Afrikaans particularly at the WRSA Seminar in Pretoria where papers were delivered in Afrikaans except by the invited guest speaker from France and by another guest speaker who was a rhino expert based in South Africa.

The choice of using an Afrikaans interpreter was for the purposes of overcoming language and cultural barriers including self-imposed 'social hierarchies' which are very significant in a South African context especially where land and farming is concerned. I specifically refer to these 'self-imposed social hierarchies' –for lack of a better term- which came to the fore during the organising of research interviewees necessitating the need for an Afrikaans interpreter. For example, my white Afrikaner interpreter was asked why he did not know much more than me, with regards to the subject of game farming since he was Afrikaans. In that sense, I was constantly made aware of the dynamics of the research interaction, and was constantly being reminded of being 'black' in a South African context of land reform and the tenuous position of white farmers. At other points, I was being referred to the fast track land reform of Zimbabwe and the 'supposed chaos' this brought to the country and what it portended for South Africa if the process followed the Zimbabwean example. In a way, some of the interviews sounded like publicity sessions justifying the game farming lifestyle people had chosen. Oddly enough, this seemed to invert the power relations in favour of the researcher with the interviewees finding the need to justify themselves and their land-use choices even if the interview questions were not specifically asking for justifications.

Structure of the thesis

This thesis follows a two tier structure. First, I contextualise game farming and hunting in the global, regional and national milieu depicting South Africa's position in this environment. In the national context, the study recognises the tensions stemming from "an apparent incompatibility between the rights of nature and those of people making a living from it" (LaRocque 2014:74). Thus the thesis's testing of the conservation hypothesis analyses these tensions through examination of the production practices as tenets that define the industry's operations. This will be done by tracing the broad contours of how operational models differ, how the actors deal with issues and their justifications for conversion. The case studies are featured right towards the end in chapter 6, where the details of the contemporary realities of Groot Marico game farmers in the North West are described.

Secondly, the study investigates how game farming and hunting relates to the restructuring of access and ownership of land as a resource. I sought to develop an understanding

of the ownership patterns, tracing the history of farm ownership to reveal their implications including the impact on rural development. By detailing the structural patterns which supported land ownership, the politico-economic characteristics and social networks of a sample of game farmers will be revealed. Investigating this will lead to a fuller understanding of the socio-economic and socio-political nuances of game farm operation in Groot Marico and South Africa generally. For example, the effect of land reform on game farming and hunting is investigated with a focus on the state's trajectory of reform and its impact on the sector.

Allied to the above, the study illuminates the social and material processes of the transition from apartheid to democracy in the North West province. The conversion from conventional forms of agriculture like domestic livestock production to game farming is explored within a framework which conveys the individual and group context under these social conditions. Linked to the latter, the economics and rationale of choosing a specific land use system over another is examined and discussed using the findings that emerge from this study. As such, the study therefore builds on and contributes to work which investigates and documents the lived realities and perceptions of game farmers in the shift to game farming and hunting.

Chapter one posits the motivation for the study and locates it in the debate over land use and agrarian development in South Africa. Its specific focus on game farming describes the historical continuities that relate to broader agricultural processes in the country and their relation to the socio-political. Deliberately, it begins critically to interrogate the discourses and practices of the private game farmers especially in relation to its interaction with the state. Therefore the sections that follow discuss the influential structures like the associations, the fellowships and how they appropriated the discourse of 'conservation'. The chapter also delineates the important themes and terms deployed in this thesis. It covers the background to the study, aims, rationale, key research questions and the methodology adopted to conduct the study.

Chapter two discusses the relevant literature on private game farming in South Africa whilst also presenting a broader perspective on the on-going agrarian and land debates. In doing so, it lays a basis for this study by reflecting on the socio-historical antecedents, perusing how different authors debate the growth of the sector. A central focus is an

analysis of the development from hunting as a colonial past-time, to game preservation in national parks then to the expansion of private game farming. Broadening the discussion is a close examination of the concepts that identify the sector and the factors that have supported the sector's growth. Finally, the chapter sets out the theoretical framework on which the analysis hinges.

Chapter three provides a historical narrative of early colonial hunting in public spaces, mostly state owned and its evolution to the current game farming and hunting set-up in the private realm. By detailing the factors that contributed to the growth of game farming, it covers the contemporary developments instrumental in the astronomical rise of the sector. Significantly, race and class factors provide a platform to understand the socio-economic and political conditions navigated by sector players. On the one hand, the examples of Kenya and Zimbabwe serve to contextualise game farming as not only a South African process but also a regional land-use feature stemming from colonial legacies. Additionally, Zimbabwe is important later in the comparison made by the farmers themselves indicating how as a framing reference point, it represents a comparatively nuanced way to discuss processes in the South African landscape.

Chapter four examines the nature of the industry in the post-1994 period. It discusses the origins of the wildlife on the farms, how they are moved, sold and the close details of the legislation regulating this movement. It provides a fuller picture of the two major strands of consumptive game usage namely trophy hunting and biltong hunting indicating the class element that separates the two. Additionally, the section discusses the concepts of 'fair chase' and 'ethical hunting' as elements that differentiate contemporary hunting from the colonial period when hunters were referred to as 'butchers' because of the wholesale slaughter of wildlife during hunting excursions. As a justification of hunting, this argument is important in reducing the criticisms of opponents of hunting serving to elevate the sector to a higher level of hunting practices which links to 'conservation' and 'sustainable utilisation'. Still related to the discussion of consumptive use of game is the feature of high-profile auctions and the effect they have on the industry. The growth of auctions as a way of selling off animals is related to downstream sub-sectors but linked to that has been the select auctions which are the preserve of a few like game breeders and business people diversifying their investment.

These auctions have brought forth tensions that reflect the hierarchical cleavages resulting from the classist and elitist element represented by these particular auctions. The question then becomes; do these reflect the aspirational tendencies of the sector or they are a window to the conspicuous consumption of a wealthy few?

Chapter five focuses on the 'cultural practices' inherent to game farming. The central argument here is that these practices have enabled continuities in the sector from both a structural feature and also from the agency of individual actors. For example the discussion of the major associations within the sector and the role they play in safeguarding the business of private game farmers supports this argument. Highlighted here is the symbolic power wielded by these sector organisations in its relationship with the state. Related to this aspirational part is a focus on the slow pace of transformation being a barrier emblematic of the sector. Here the argument debates the economic and other constraints limiting new entrants from joining the sector. One of these limiting factors is the close knit structure of the sector, which I refer to as 'fellowships'; which enable those identifying with the in-group to prosper from the networks offered in these guilds. For those outside these fellowships, there is the belief that the sector needs to transform. This is followed by a discussion of gender and the generational nature of the sector, hinting at the male macho character and the continuity that comes from preparing the younger generation for the eventual takeover of the family business. I close this section with a discussion of the grand narrative of conservation as an important concept that the sector claims to be contributing nationally.

Chapter six presents the practices of game farming as they occur in Groot Marico. Firstly, there is a discussion of the area and how game farming has grown. The major contribution in this section is the description of three chosen case studies of game farming in the area depicting the different tiers and how they are constituted. As a storyline of game farming in the area, the sections showcases the perceptions of the individual game farmers on their chosen livelihood while also presenting a more consistently maintained analysis of the reasons for these choices. It also delves on the other stories of game farming in the area showing how the three selected case studies are unique in their processes whilst also pointing to the similarities that relate to area specificities of Groot Marico as a farming area. The discussion ends with a reflection

on the implications of land reform on game farming, focusing on the land claims on three farms in the area and how the settlement of these in other provinces may impact the direction in the North West Province

Chapter seven concludes the thesis by reflecting on the constituent elements I consider important to an understanding of developments within game farming in South Africa. It relates back to the previous chapters engaging the discussion in the theoretical implications of the themes discussed. Further to that, it places Groot Marico game farming into the South African context. The section frames the economic, political and social practices of contemporary South Africa placing particular emphasis on land reform and issues of equality as they relate to game farming. In this vein, it takes Fraser's (2007) 'colonial present' concept showing how in a number of respects, game farming in the contemporary period still borders on this definition.

Time frame

The period covered in this thesis is from the late 1980s to post-democratic -20 years after 1994- period since a number of case studies used indicate a conversion period prior to 1994. Despite this time-line, a historical section has been included which draws a picture of the growth of hunting in South Africa and its eventual morphing into a lucrative private game farming and hunting industry. Inclusion of this section serves to contextualise the elitist, race related nature of private game farming and hunting while also pointing to the socio-economic and historic factors that supported the growth of this industry in South Africa. Data included stretches up to 2014 as long as it carried an impact on the final analysis of contemporary game farming helping to paint a fuller picture of the developments taking shape within the sector.

Chapter Two

Introduction

This chapter stakes the position of this study through a review of the literature on commercial agriculture. Narratives of private game farming have crisscrossed a range of subjects from economic and conservation contribution to the plight of farm workers, transformation and social justice issues. By virtue of investigating rural post-colonial transformation, the study will engage ongoing relationships between race, class and land that structured the colonial experience and now its legacies. In pointing to the significance of Groot Marico's spatial location in the broader game farming storyline, the chapter navigates the conceptual territory of material and symbolic processes, how they are framed and contested in the private game farming space. In embarking on this process though, it is important that I define a number of key terms as used in this study. An understanding of these is crucial to framing the argument of this thesis.

Definition of terms

A number of terms applied in this study, such as game farming and game ranching among others, have contested meanings. To begin, the word game "derives etymologically from *gaman*, old high German for 'amusement' a connotation that it still carries today" (Cioc 2009:5) later acquiring an association with hunting as a reference to the sport hunting of European aristocrats (ibid). In the South African context, hunting of wildlife to a great extent is viewed by outsiders as a luxury hobby for the benefit of a few wealthy local individuals and foreign hunters. Thus part of the earlier meaning of the activity has been retained while being expanded to include an extra layer of people belonging to a certain class stratum of society. This notion is important to keep in mind in the argument of the deployment of capital as laid out in this thesis. Proceeding from the above, game farming in this study will refer to the practice whereby privately owned land is put to the use of game animals. Such farms are distinct from agricultural farms by the absence of internal fences although they have game- proof boundary fencing (Lindsey *et al* 2006, Smith & Wilson 2002) bordering these farms. Another working definition is the one given by Leopold (1986:4) in Carruthers (2008b) that game farming is "an intensified form of game management that involves propagating wild species in confinement." This last definition carries the same connotations as 'wildlife-based production' (Spierenburg & Brooks 2014), the other term by which this enterprise is referred. The former definition's importance for this thesis is the point of wildlife production in captivity. Returning to the

earlier game farming conceptualisation, the similarity in both definitions is the issue of captivity behind a fence, which is significant since this type of farming cannot be practised successfully without the restricted movement of animals by the owner's stringently fenced-off property. Moreover, the fencing that supports this production option can be up to 2/3metres high, being of sufficient strength to keep animals like buffalo and rhinoceros inside the fenced-off area. Thus it is a specialised type of fence. This restricted movement enables rapid reproduction of the wildlife, at levels much higher than its natural cycle (Cousins, Sadler and Evans 2008) thereby justifying the 'farming' description, a practice akin to domestic livestock production. Hence the thesis' use of the term fits in with this understanding.

For Pollock (1974), game ranching is the scientific management of certain species of wildlife in their natural habitat without an effort to domesticate them. This definition emphasises the lack of man-made intervention (in domesticating the wildlife) which fits into the description of the processes at National Parks or very large conservancies. In these situations there is minimal intervention unlike in private game farms. Grossman *et al* (1999) in Carruthers (2008b) proffer a description that emphasises the profit-making aspect, -'commercially orientated stocking and use of game'- rather than the free movement of animals offered earlier. This is an important distinction especially in light of the shift from cattle ranching to game, justified on the basis of economic contribution particularly after 1994. Additionally, it offers a hint of the defining practice of game ranching where the aim for profit is key implying that less profitable wildlife may not feature on private game farms as the profitable ones. This is a significant defining factor in relation to conservation as claimed by private game farmers.

Nonetheless, both definitions hint at the specialised nature of this activity- 'scientific management' and 'commercially orientated'- drawing attention to defining operational characteristics of the industry. Meanwhile the latter's reference to stocking and use points to the active manipulation of the process by human beings in order to attain profit from such enterprise .This is an important distinction in categorising the wildlife that is found within the controlled spaces. It is important as the sector's operations hinge on the successful achievement of having the correct balance of wildlife and type while being able to use that ownership to one's economic advantage.

Reflecting different views, Du Toit (2007) and Bulte & Damania (2005) draw a clear distinction between 'game farming' and 'game ranching'. The former notion refers to game farming being a small fenced area where wild animals are intensively managed to produce and harvest marketable products while game ranching is described as a large privately owned or communal area, either fenced or unfenced that is extensively managed in order to utilise wildlife products through hunting, sales, tourism and other 'indirect' use of ungulate species (Du Toit 2007). Whereas Bulte and Damania (2005:1224) view wildlife farming as "intensive management and husbandry of wild stock" while wildlife ranching is "less-intensive management in semi-free ranching contexts". Du Toit's (2007) definitions emphasise the size on which the commercial captive propagation of wildlife is conducted while Bulte & Damania focus on the art or science of the activity. Both definitions are applicable as they provide a clearer picture of the magnitude of operations in the sector which can impact the type of wildlife production practiced whether trophy hunting or small-scale biltong hunting. A different weighting comes from Furstenberg and Van Niekerk (2004:31 in van der Merwe 2004: 10) who

> define game ranching as intensive game production with the emphasis on the conservation of the productive soil substrate. Game farming is defined as extensive game production with the emphasis on the conservation of habitats and productive plant growth, meaning that any given specie must be able to survive on its own in a given natural habitat.

This definition starts similarly like Bulte and Damania's (2005) but incorporates 'conservation' as accompanying the production system.

In this study, the close technical distinction between farming and ranching is not over-emphasised as game farming and game ranching are taken to mean the same concept based on the overlap between the two. One justification for this is derived from the fact that the Afrikaans language does not make a distinction between 'farming' and 'ranching' with both being commonly referred to as "*boerdery"* that is farming (Carruthers 2008 b:163). In addition, ranching will be used here as in the common parlance usage associated with the cattle production while in this study when used together with game will refer to the active production of wild animals in private farm land. For this study, the importance attached to human interference is the fulcrum upon which game farming rests. Henceforth the WRSA definition of wildlife ranching as "the management of game in a game fenced

system, with human intervention through the provision of water, the supplementation of food, the control of parasites and the provision of health care" (Raats 2011:13) is succinct. Importantly, this last definition from an association that epitomises the sector emphasises the human interference in nature. Therefore wildlife ranching can be similarly linked to domestic livestock production where the supply of essentials is a defining production variable. Hence the reason for my application of the two terms, game farming and game ranching inter- changeably in the thesis as they convey the above notion of production. Additionally, scholars have not conventionally made the distinction, using the term game farming (Smith & Wilson 2002) in reference to private wildlife production.

For the purposes of this study, the terms farming and ranching will be used interchangeably. In line with the above, a game farm will refer to an area of land in which wildlife is kept that is adequately fenced off, following the specific fencing requirements for game as gazetted by South African law. In this space, varied wildlife species are preserved for the purposes of either game hunting, providing meat or meeting the breeding needs of other industry actors with a specific focus on supplying the needs of the game farmer's chosen market. In addition, game hunting will refer to the practice of searching for, capturing or killing or attempting to capture or kill, poisoning or lying in wait for any wild animal (van der Merwe & Saayman 2003) particularly in private game farms. This usually involves trophy hunting which is the stock and trade of game hunting by foreign tourists although there is a sizeable domestic biltong hunting market.

Significantly, I examine the conservation discourse later in the thesis, and how it is used as justification by game farmers for their land use. For now though, a working definition of the term will suffice. In order to be able to recognise and engage with this debate, it is necessary to define conservation. For this thesis, I will focus attention on two definitions, conservation is:

> the management of human use of the bio-sphere so that it may yield the greatest sustainable benefit to present generations while maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of future generations (Krynauw 2001b:26).

> the managing and utilization of any resource in such a way as to ensure its perpetuation (Carruthers 1988:10; 1990:191).

Both definitions refer to the management and usage of the resource for continuity purposes. Additionally, Krynauw's (2001) mention of sustainability conforms to the contemporary discourse of 'sustainable use' that has become associated with discussions on the environment, resource usage and in this instance private game farming. Linked to the general discomfort of conservation and its usage is the notion of transformation. Transformation in the South African post-1994 landscape refers to the state driven process of:

> "the creation of material conditions to ensure that the people as a whole benefit from this process through a rising standard of living and a continuous and all-round improvement in the quality of life. This responsibility would be impossible without a similarly continuous process of increasing productive investment in the economy, in both absolute and relative terms" (ANC 1996).

Yet as pointed out by Gaborone (2006), there has been very little transformation of game farming in the North West province. Some blame for the lack of drive in the transformation process can be laid at the slow pace of land reform. However, as the thesis will show, government's lack of proper regulation of the industry is also another factor. Importantly though, a major part has been the active resistance of the industry players to change. This links to the 'colonial present' thesis which I argue to be a defining variable of the industry. Colonial present entails a context whereby the socio-economic and material conditions enjoyed by former colonial elites continue to the contemporary period. The benefits accrued stem from the historical connections of dispossession, subjugation and were created and supported by the colonial state. It is a condition which the democratic state engages with, in this case through applying an economic transformation model to re-constitute a national model that reflects greater participation of the previously disadvantaged. I use the term 'colonial present' in relation to game farming practices in the same vein as Fraser's (2007) definition of South Africa's white farming near monopoly. I further extend the definition to the powerful status of game sector associations in state regulation of the sector.

Political economy of game farming

This thesis examines how game farming developments and conversion have occurred and thrived in the context of post-apartheid capitalism as defined in Neville Alexander's (2002) seminal text on post-apartheid South Africa and race relations. The salient aspects of his argument on the entrenched racialised class divisions of post-apartheid South Africa provide a succinct explanation of income differentials enabling the pursuit of

hunting. Together with the theme of unequal power relations in social formations, his observations map a scaffold for analyzing the game farming context. One question I deal with is whether developments in the game sector corresponds with the compromise negotiated in the period of transition which effectively left economic power relations intact (Kasrils 2013; Terreblanche 2002). Pertinently is conversion an instance of agricultural development following the example of macro-economic policy? The economic focus stems from a realisation of the impact of global economics on domestic agriculture where the fall of prices and opening up of agricultural imports (Marinda 2006) proved disastrous for local famers. The resultant effects created conditions for a shift into other forms of agricultural production, thus game farming became a viable option in comparison to livestock production. For example in the 1980s, globally there was a shift from redistributive land reform to market-assisted land reform of the 1990s (Bernstein 2002, Lahiff 2007, Villiers 2003) explaining South Africa's World Bank driven (Alexander 2002; Bond 2005; Marinda 2006) 'market based' model.

Among the factors accounting for this shift, three stand out. Firstly, the consequences of the 1973 oil embargo (Terreblanche 2002) coupled with the end of the post-war boom and the onset of economic crisis[15] worldwide led to this development phase. Secondly, the dip in support for land nationalisations in donor countries during the structural adjustment period resulted from the third factor, the fact that redistributive reforms proved too bureaucratic, cumbersome, slow and costly (van den Brink 2002) thereby negatively impacting agricultural structural reform. Thus the new South African government faced this state of affairs when taking over in 1994, which caused them to embark on a policy of 'willing seller, willing buyer' (Lahiff 2005) land reform. During the post-1994 phase, the underlying objective became the agricultural approach which emphasised intensive production to maximise export earnings while meeting domestic consumption needs (Lahiff 2001, de Villiers 2006). Nonetheless, Lahiff's (2007) criticism of the 'willing buyer, willing seller' model of land reform as advocated by the state in this period is insightful. This policy failed to release land to new black farmers –it had been projected that white commercial farmers would willingly

[15] Marinda (2006) sets out a timeline drawing the reader's attention to the drought, policies and the economic environment of the 1970s onwards and how it affected agricultural farm debts and the state's deregulation of the sector.

sell farms in exchange for fair compensation- which did not happen as envisaged. In contrast the majority white farmers consolidated operations while others diversified production (Marinda 2006) retaining a hold on the land. For this study, it serves to position the 'large- scale, capital–intensive' game farming into this frame allowing a reading of the positionality of the actors.

Consequently, it provides an explanation of the land reform model advocated for in game farms under land claim and the restitution thereof. Linked to this thread is the question of how game farmers have managed to continually insert themselves within the broader national economic processes. This happened through deploying economic contribution (Van der Merwe 2004), following the lines of the neo-liberal market based state support towards property rights and fair compensation (Cousins 2004, Greenberg 2010, Ntsebeza 2006, van der Walt 1999, Walker 2012) and through other competing processes. Following from the latter, another related area of investigation interrogates to what extent black voices are being silenced in the contest between race, land redistribution and reversing past injustices especially regarding rural agricultural land.

Accordingly, the study's interrogation of the reasons behind the transition in farming pattern has to be set against a varied context of factors. Included among these, is to extend the issues raised in transformation to game farming by asking how the existing structures are still fundamental to continuities of the past. One question derived from this is the place of game farming in the context of agricultural production and social inequality. Another significant issue is the examination of the rapid increase of white farmers turning to game farming (NAMC 2006) which begs the question of how much impact this trend is having on South Africa's settlement of the land question. This is of direct relevance to my argument in the thesis as analysis of the 'new spatial politics of land enclosure' aligned with 'new forms of commodified nature production' (Spierenburg and Brooks 2014:152) is important to the understanding of the larger land reform matrix. Such a normative stance is directly contradictory to the impending land claims settlement and the land reform programme. Yet one argument is the assertion that "only 13 percent of land can be used for crop production, of which one-fifth is high potential arable land" (Bernstein 2013:25). This has been re- emphasised by the game farming industry players who claim to be making productive use of land

unsuited for other forms of agriculture. The case studies cited in the thesis provide examples of this justification. One implication drawn from the statistic is that game farmers are making productive use mostly of land that is agriculturally unproductive in a number of ways.

Yet when considering the fact that game farming and hunting are land-extensive activities (Bond *et al* 2004), questions have to be raised when Atkinson (2010) brings to the fore the reality of food imports as substituting for the loss of agricultural production. Has game farming replaced domestic livestock production in supplying the country's meat quota needs? Such analysis is borne out by the information that "in the nine years between 1993 and 2002, the number of commercial farming enterprises decreased from 57 980 to 45 818" (Atkinson 2007:55) while the 2012 figure from the *Financial Mail*[16] put the numbers of commercial farmers at 37 000. The exponential growth of game farming (Carruthers: 2008b, Flack 2002, NAMC 2006, Smith & Wilson 2002) during this period is in direct contrast with the decline of traditional agriculture. Although part of the decrease can be explained by the consolidation of farms with the successful farmers buying out the struggling ones, the decreasing figures depict a concerning turn of events. Despite the decline, Bernstein (2013) points to the increase in the 2010 maize crop which was the highest since 1982 attributing that to genetically modified seeds. If we follow this line of thinking, then such farming methods provide an answer to the threat of food imports, leaving game farms to operate as they are, since they do not threaten food security.

That having been said, the government has sought ways to grow the agricultural sector (Gordhan 2012:7) as a means of investing in the future food security of the country. Food imports of wheat, meat and poultry are evidence of a shrinking agricultural productive sector. As a notable example, the formerly thriving tea industry has been replaced by imports from Kenya and Uganda.[17] A projected government measure to address this situation while meeting the goals of redistribution include applying 'a proposed land ceiling' (Child 2012) on farmers and multiple landowners. Consequently, game farmers threatened by such proposition have criticised the state's agriculture approach as being ideological rather than economic (Child 2012) and have implored the

[16] See the article by Shannon Sherry 'AGRICULTURE. Go big ...and small' in the Financial Mail, 20 January 2012
[17] See R. Tjale 'Farm crisis puts food supply in jeopardy' 19 January 2012 in www.sowetan.co.za, (accessed 20/01/2012).

state to consider sustainable utilisation of these farms, which apparently would pose little threat to the game farming community. The land ceiling proposition stems from the fact that a number of game farmers hold several land properties in their portfolio while consolidation for some is a natural progression for succeeding in the sector. As an indicator of the seriousness of the government on this measure, President Zuma proposed a cap of 12 000ha per farmer in the 2015 SONA address. Therefore in seeking to develop an understanding of the nature of the shift in rural products from livestock to game, this study seeks to show how these changing relationships between game farmers and the state and other actors can be used to develop an understanding of contemporary rural transformation.

Nonetheless, by acknowledging that rural landscape transformation through game farming is an on-going process, the study sheds light on the current processes and that are taking place using Groot Marico as a case study. Through investigating how the game farming sector has emerged and developed, I seek to uncover the continuities and discontinuities that characterise the sector. At the same time, there is an understanding that because it is a process in transition, the process of navigating this terrain has to adapt to its movement and shifts as the actors negotiate the political terrain. In this regard, Bernstein's (2002) analysis is useful, having shown how organised white agriculture repositioned itself for the democratic South Africa. This thesis can add to that knowledge by testing this finding among the game farming actors. Even though the mechanisms can be different, examination of game farming's social axes is important to discern the connections that provide an explanation of the processes at work. Through the study of farm owners' responses to farm conversions – the case studies in chapter six – this study provides new insights into these processes from a local perspective.

The study therefore recognises the role of game farming and hunting in the restructuring of agriculture as carrying possibilities for opening up new avenues for rural transformation. Yet these openings are dependent on the collaborative efforts between government, white farmers and rural communities bordering these farms. The usefulness of Fraser's (2007) postulations on the 'colonial present' in this regard offers a framing device upon which to weigh and consider these processes. Thus, how far are power relations a throwback of social conditions developed and augmented in the past? In the Fraser's (2008) Levubu study for example, the unintended consequences of an

interventionist approach by state organs leads to an unequal partnership between 'communities' and white agribusiness. The partnership works in favour of the latter, since they are better organised, have technical skills and control market prices. Hence examining on-going relationships between these stakeholders in relation to this particular type of land use -game farming- paves the way to highlight material and symbolic processes of historical patterns of land ownership and its legacies. The thesis builds on and contributes to this work. By examining key characteristics like language, hunting fellowships and the generational passing down of the baton among others that define the sector it posits these as enablers of the 'colonial present' borne out of individual experience but also as part of the in-group matrix.

A Colonial present

This study draws on Fraser's (2007) application of the 'colonial present', a concept originally coined by Gregory (2004) in his book '*The colonial present*', whose narrative centres on colonial re-imaginations of three Middle Eastern countries. Fraser applied this idea to an analysis of South African land reform and state involvement in partnerships with agribusiness. He indicated how land reform outcomes result from the colonial present (Fraser 2007) strengthened by relative position of white farmers and traditional leaders stemming from past policies. An important contribution that Fraser makes is to look at the present in relation to the past. My point of departure is predicated on the examination of relationships in the private game farming and hunting sector, their construction and deployment in these recreated spaces. Similar to Fraser (2007), I examine the effect of capital even though my focus is on game farming and hunting processes. Additionally, I borrow from Lefebvre's (1991) concept of the 'representations of space' arguing that game farms reflect a 'conceptualized space'. Consequently, is what being reflected in the socially engineered private game farming and hunting field legitimations of particular social relations governed by race, language, gender and class? Therefore, in addressing and evaluating the study's key argument, I adopt Bourdieu's (1979; 1985; 1991) frameworks on taste, capital and power. I use these to explore the overall impact the taste distinction may have on hunting preference and the type of animal hunted for example, which can also be an indicator of power differentials linked to resource accumulation. In some cases these concepts have facilitated the format of the conversion from pastoral farming to game farming in specific cases on Groot Marico and in the country in general.

By considering the networks and connections associated with game farming and hunting, the thesis investigates how the industry recreates continuities through managing social dynamics. For example, who is hunting in these spaces? How do they link up with game farmers? What are the issues that have to be negotiated by new entrants? Tackling these questions highlights the barriers facing new entrants particularly black farmers, which still persist despite South Africa being viewed as a 'postcolonial place' (Fraser 2007) yet complicated by the 'colonial present' (ibid) operational in private farming spaces. One can draw another question from this scaffold. How are options and opportunities being created by stakeholders in the industry linked to powerful networks? While Bernstein (1996, 2013) has shown how white agriculture repositioned itself in preparation for the democratic state, Kamuti (2014) discusses the strategic alliances of game farmers in KwaZulu-Natal. The latter shows how the alliances are significant in exploiting loopholes provided by the 'fractured state' (Kamuti 2014), an important descriptor of the state's regulatory policy status with regards to game farming. Adding its own scholarly contribution to this framework, my study traces the national footprint of sector associations through examining the concepts of 'self-regulation' and 'self-administration' as applied by these sector players. Further to that, I examine the local alliances in the North West province and the fellowships that define hunting arrangements as key elements in understanding the sector operations.

Many scholars agree that South African white farmers have had a near monopoly on technical and entrepreneurial skills needed for commercial agriculture since they were the only commercial farmers under apartheid (Atkinson 2007; Cousins 2006; Fraser 2007; Greenberg 2003; Hall 2004; Kariuki 2003 & 2007; Marinda 2006; Villiers 2003). As a result, other groups often lacked the technical, marketing, legal or financial skills needed to farm land commercially. A major contribution to this lack was the systematic shrinkage of farming space for indigenes resulting from a series of legislation like the 1913 Natives Land Act, passed to formally demarcate land between black and white people, by restricting the black ownership to 7% of the country in specific areas (Dodson 2013; Marinda 2006). Other Acts enacted by the colonial state like the Native Trust and Land Act 18 of 1936 even though raising the land ownership percentage to 13% still entrenched the racial land segregation (ibid). Further to that, the apartheid state advocated the Bantustan system and the group

areas act consolidating the idea of separate areas and spaces outlawing racial mixing (Marinda 2006; Terreblanche 2002). Despite the post-1994 state efforts at reforming the agricultural sector (Cousins 2004; Hall 2004, 2007; Lahiff 2005, 2007; Ntsebeza 2006; Walker 2012) studies on game farming have revealed how this separateness has continued in the sector (Brandt 2013, Brandt & Spierenburg 2014; Gaborone 2006; Mkhize 2012; Snijders 2014; Spierenburg & Brooks 2014). The continued popularity of game farming indicates a case of business operating as it did in the past. How then, has this status quo prevailed? In this study, the contention is that game farming and hunting have presented opportunities for continuity of the 'colonial present' where processes and spaces are claimed by a racial minority community through land ownership and possession of capital resources to engage in these activities.

As such, this research explores the view that white game farmers have deployed their historical advantages to restrict new entrants coming into the business of game farming and hunting in the contemporary context in the North West province. Thus returning to Fraser's (2007) argument that certain colonial aspects or characteristics -in this case white farmers' privileged position- have survived into the contemporary period allows the research to delve into the question of legacies of game farming. More recently though, Josefsson (2014) has followed the 'colonial present' analysis in her study of game farms in Kwa-Zulu Natal by focusing on the identities inherent in the locality. My study adds a further layer by discussing the continuities in the production options for the game farmers and their offspring. For my study, the question then becomes what are the strategies that are being adopted by sector players to sustain the 'colonial present'? Linked to that, how do sector actors maintain a balance between the political and social imperatives of land redistribution and the economic factors? For instance, scholars have shown how opposition from landowners and interested parties can stall the process or result in excessively high compensation costs (Bernstein 1996, 2002; Cousins 2004; Lahiff 2003, 2007; Moyo 2001 and van der Brink 2002) which relates to the political and economic costs of addressing historical inequalities. Arguably though, Kamuti's (2014) 'fractured state' concept can provide a clue as to the relative position of the state in contrast to organised wildlife sector organisations. Here, the regulatory disjuncture between national and provincial bodies as analysed in the thesis are an indicator this issue.

Nonetheless, the economic and political costs of redistribution ties into the re-configured state of the game farms with their game fencing and their 'conservation' of wildlife adding to the changing land narrative enhanced by these actors.

Arguably, texts by (Bond 2005, Marais 2001) provided invaluable insights into the post-1994 political and economic landscape which set the tone for South African macro-economic policy. Another example is the tome by Kasrils (2013) which was important in opening a window to the political maneuvering which framed the various economic decisions that decided agrarian policy. As a case in point, Kasrils (2013) refers to the 'Faustian pact' between the state and capital that governed the eventual format and processes of agricultural and land reform. Kasrils implies that the state was effectively trapped into implementing macro-economic policies that ran counter to the new government's aims to redress colonial and apartheid social injustices. This was particularly evident in their approach to land redistribution. Another useful contribution in this scaffold is provided by Ntsebeza (2006) whose subject is the property clause and its impact on land redistribution in South Africa. His argument is that the clause as guaranteed in the Constitution protects property owners, in this case white farmers, guaranteeing the farmers more defined rights than it does the redress of land dispossessions for Africans. From this angle, policy decisions and tensions can be analysed while dwelling on the historical, social, economic and political structural factors as contextualised by assorted texts. Do these, when combined prove the 'colonial present' thesis that I use to evaluate the game farming processes? Chapter three provides a historical context examining all the related macro and micro factors related to the phenomenon.

Nonetheless, Freund's (2010) warning against 'conspiracy theories' in reference to the South African economy focused texts serves as sufficient precaution. Freund cautions against taking a narrow focus in explaining the South African post-1994 structural economic set-up. However, he too refers to the 'elite pact' (ibid) echoing more or less Bond's (2005) analysis which supports Kasrils' (2013) insider's 'Faustian pact' argument. Thus these texts are important in setting a foundation for the instrumental reasoning that has guided South African agrarian policy and consequently farmers' production options. Nevertheless, the reports by Burgener, Greyling and Rumsey (2005), DOA (2006); NAMC (2006) proved valuable for reviewing the legislative environment as it relates

to game farming and hunting in South Africa. For example the NAMC (2006) report provided a state based context of the challenges of governance of the sector detailing the wildlife ranching environment and the relations as investigated by the agricultural authority. At the provincial level, the North West ordinances (2008, 2012) provided context in which to review the laws governing game farming and hunting within the province. Therefore, this study sets out from the base laid by these debates to contribute to the knowledge gap by investigating the practices of Groot Marico game farmers and their representative organisations in South Africa.

Game farming: economics and conservation

One of the early articles on private game production in South Africa is by Bilgake (1966) revealing the debates around wildlife production among the Scientific community in the 1960s. The article shows how private game farming's key elements were put into place. It gives us an evaluation of the sector's operations, pointing to the beginnings of private game farming as an industry. Importantly, it also periodises game farming, as a synopsis of when the full economic potential of game farming in South Africa was beginning to be realised. It points to a developing market for hunting and live animal sales, which had taken shape in that period despite the industry's infancy. This is despite the fact that private landowners had set up preserves on their farms as early as the 1860s onwards (NAMC 2006). Although it is important to point out that hunting in this period had grown as a sport, there was little effort to actively reproduce wildlife species in farms at sustained high levels as is currently the case. This lack of motivation came from a naïve belief in the abundance of wildlife roaming free in the country until the threat of extinction from over-hunting proved undeniable (Beinart 1990; Carruthers 1988; Paton 2007). Nonetheless, Bilgake's (1966) article makes recommendations which are given in a cautionary manner indicating the uncertainty of the period with regards to the function of wildlife, its place alongside livestock domestic production and the development that it would take. Yet one of the advantages of wildlife production that Bilgake (1966) cites is the reduced labour demand for this production type as opposed to livestock farming. This stemmed from the belief that wildlife does not need much human interference as livestock production. Interestingly though, employment generation is one of the contributions recounted by contemporary sector players as a national contribution to reducing rural unemployment. As one sub-theme addressed in the thesis, the views of game farmers on the subject can shed light on whether and

how game farming provides more labour opportunities.

Nearly thirty years later, Benson's (1991) study reads like a handbook to guide private game farmers on wildlife management even though written in the early 1990s. One reason for this thrust is better explained by its publication in the *Wildlife Society Bulletin* as being a manual for members while the other is that this period was the growth period for private game farming. At this time the industry was beginning to grow seriously as an alternative to livestock production, explaining the prescriptive nature of the text as if to guide would-be game farmers into making the conversion decision and on how to proceed. The value in these texts is how they show continuities in debates like the economic contribution of wildlife compared to domestic livestock production since the early 1990s. Therefore investigating conversion before democracy and after can be useful in revealing the factors that contributed to this decision.

Nonetheless, a growing number of studies on the theme of conversion from pastoralism to game farming have been published (Carruthers 2008b, Cloete *et al* 2007, Smith & Wilson 2002, Suzuki 2001, and Wels 2003). For example, Smith and Wilson (2002) found that a majority of the conversions were run on livestock farming principles while the game stocked on the farms was decided upon with a view to the market instead of ecological adaptation. Yet its conclusions suggest the economic and sustainable advantages of private game farming. The study by Jansen, Bond and Child (1992) takes a different approach to conversion indicating a number of possibilities that include converting fully, partial conversion where cattle and wildlife exists side by side, or refraining from taking either of the two options. The study's conclusions are formulated through substantiating the survey results of commercial ranches in Zimbabwe. I have included a case study of partial conversion in chapter six which adds to similar research, and contributes to greater understanding of the game farming production options. The latter inclusion demonstrates multiple ambiguities that percolate through the sector, particularly where economics and conservation are concerned. In tackling this work, I focused attention on understanding game farming and hunting as an industry, how it has grown whilst also re-inventing itself over time between different political dispensations and the reasons for such growth.

A fair number of studies have focused on game farming and hunting's overstated importance to tourism including its impact on job creation and foreign currency earning potential as the major scope of their arguments (Barnes 2001, Botha 2001, Bothma 2002, Carruthers 2008b, Cloete *et al* 2007, Koelble 2011, Krynauw 2001a, Lindsey *et al* 2006, Milton *et al* 2003, Van der Merwe & Saayman 2002, 2003,). There has been little systematic study to date aiming to develop an understanding of the nature of the shift in rural products from livestock to game. Very few have shown how these changes can be used to better understand contemporary rural land-use transformation. In filling that gap, this study focuses on the internal dynamics operational within the game sector describing in detail the interconnections between the various actors. Through this study, the thesis sheds light on the prevailing environment. This has not yet been done by previous studies which mostly have had a narrow, singular economics focus. Examples of the recent South African literature on the economics of game farming and hunting include among others (ABSA 2003; Bothma 2002; Cloete *et al* 2007; Koelble 2011; Saayman *et al* 2011; Van der Merwe & Saayman 2003; Warren 2011). To a large extent, the focus has been limited, giving little attention to social issues affecting the sector.

A few exceptions include Shirley Brooks (2004, 2005 and 2006) and Wilson & Smith (2002). The latter focus on the spatial extent and distribution of privately owned game farms and conservancies while the former focuses on animal geographies. However with Brooks, one can trace a progressive line from discussions of Kwa-Zulu Natal National Parks (2004, 2005, 2006) to the focus on wildlife commodification (2011) in private game farms and its implications on livelihoods for farm dwellers (2008; Ngubane & Brooks 2013) in her sole authored work and collaborations. A similar trajectory is evident in Carruthers writings though she discusses a wide range of topics from game protection in the 19th to early 20th century Transvaal (1988, 1995a) to the environmental history of Southern Africa (1990). Further to that, she presents a social and political history of the Kruger National Park (1995b) moving to a discussion of conservation in South African National parks (2008a). Lastly, the seminal article, 'Wilding the farm or farming the wild?' (2008b) has been invaluable to this work in its treatment of the progression of game ranching in South Africa since the 1960s to the post-1994 period depicting the challenges confronted by agriculture and pastoralism. My study owes a factual debt to both Brooks and Carruthers texts for the historical and

contemporary material conditions in which game farming has to be viewed. Nevertheless, in both these writings, one finds constructions and analyses of National Parks development and legislation which my thesis then juxtaposes their functions to those of private game farms. Meanwhile, it extends the analysis of the subject further by focusing on Groot Marico in the North West province from the late 1980s onwards.

Colonial conservation policy: a contemporary legacy

Two scholars, Brooks and Carruthers offer a periodisation of South African colonial conservation policy analysis. Whereas the former starts earlier in the 1920s to 1940s (Brooks 2004, 2005, 2006), the latter engages with the subject from mid-19th century onwards (Carruthers: 1990, 1995a, 1995b, 2008a). However, there have been analyses by Beinart (1989, 1990 review article); Mackenzie (1988) and Neumann (2001) examining the politics of colonial conservation. In their exploration of British colonial conservation, they discuss the spatial re-configuration of landscapes where the removal of Africans living in these areas followed an ideology "embedded in racial and cultural superiority" (Neumann 2001:641) that disregards African people's well-being. Such analysis neatly fits into the basis for the formulations of Transvaal policies too, thus allowing a reading of colonial framing of conservation reinforced by the apartheid history of South Africa whose legacies have slipped through the post-1994 South African landscape. As an example, the North West ordinances are derived from the Transvaal policies while the statutes related to 'poaching' in communal areas are derivatives of colonial legislation. Related to the above, Carruthers (1988) thesis was invaluable in highlighting the history of game protection in the Transvaal in the 19th and early 20th century periods. Its focus on the early legislation that was enacted then pointed to the racial and class divide in operation in the access to game. Similarly, Beinart (1989, 1990, and 2007); Cioc (2009); Grove (1995); MacKenzie (1988); Wels (2003) provided a glimpse of the politics of colonial hunting, relating this to conservation and environmental issues.

These histories of wildlife exploitation put into context the segregation of the black population from wildlife utilisation; "constructing a parochial white conservation ethic" (Scoones 2011:606) whose legacy has continued into the present in the form of very little black representation either in game hunting or farming.

Similarly, another contribution is made by Cock and Fig (2000) in which they focus on the 'colonial conservation' in South African National Parks and the challenges of opening up these formerly racially exclusive spaces to the black majority in the post democracy era. Yet again, the importance of National parks in and to the development of private game farming cannot be over-emphasised offering as it does a window into sector practices including their origins. Nonetheless, an important argument proffered by sector players has been the 'cultural' aspect of game hunting and farming as aspects of a long heritage, therefore a practice whose tradition has carried on. Meanwhile, even though rendering of benefits of power differentials is one sided, it allows for a reading of this re-imagining in the contemporary game sector. Further re-imagining of the privately reordered landscape has seen authors like Botha (2001) proceed a step further to suggest the inclusion of game farmers into the protected areas scheme as an option to expand the range of public protected areas under the Convention on Biological Diversity. Through changing the narrative, the text in particular elevates the 'sustainable utilisation' thesis to a higher level as it mixes private game farming into the international conventions treaties signed by the state. Agreeing to such conditional ties moves game farms a further step away from land reform targeting. Except for van Der Merwe (2004); the texts presented here highlight how very little is mentioned on the historical and contemporary dynamics affecting privately owned game farms which is this study's point of departure despite their formulating the ground breaking canvass on which this thesis leans.

Nonetheless conservation policy whether provincial has depended upon the state's economic policy inclination. For example the study by King (2009) which centres on the Mpumalanga Parks board, shows how a deliberate adoption of a commercially oriented conservation policy was not only a consequence of neoliberal policies after 1994 but also reflected the 'spatial economy and history of racial segregation' endemic to South Africa. While the work by De Villiers (1999) on the settlement of the Makuleke land claims in regards to areas in national parks is insightful in its attention to the commercial aspect trumping the social justice imperative, it too reflects the state's capitalist framing of development programmes. In both cases one could argue that the formula used was indicative of the direction of future disputes going the same way in the private game farming. In this thesis, I take both views into consideration, juxtaposing the adoption of conservation as a mantra by game actors. By testing how far conservation extends

in practical application within the game farming operation, the thesis draws upon this to consider the extent to which this annunciation is revealing of the premises upon which the sector organises itself. Thus examining how far this extended to everyday practices in game farming can be contrasted with the goals of social justice and political imperatives for redistribution. Therefore, one major aspect of the research investigated the weighting given to conservation as juxtaposed to economic considerations in private game farming decision making.

Conservation in private game farming

Within various circles in a South African context, private game farming has been cast as a "conservation success story"[18] engendering "a social and political legitimation" (Wels 2003:137) on the invaluable contribution of this sector to the national conservation effort. A number of post 2000 enquiries have focused on the theme of conservation (Barrow *et al* 2000, Bond *et al* 2004, Botha 2001, Brooks 2004, Carruthers 2008a, Cousins *et al* 2008, Jones *et al* 2005, King 2009, Krynauw 2001b, Lindsey *et al* 2006, Milton *et al* 2003) and sustainable ecotourism attractions (Van der Merwe 2004) in relation to game farming. In part, this approach can be directly related to the dominant discourse of nature conservation during this period being tied to economic development influencing the sustainable utilisation discourse. With the exception of Barrow *et al* (2000) who review community conservation policy and practice in East Africa while Brooks (2004) and Carruthers (2008a) discuss policy though focusing on Natal and South African National Parks respectively. The other authors explore the role of private game farmers in conservation. What emerges thus is a picture of consistency in conservation contribution by game farmers even though 'conservation' could not have figured as an overriding factor in the farmer's conversion decision. These debates downplay the structural economic and political factors that provided impetus to the transition rendering conservation a by-product of an ongoing conversion process induced by socio-economic and political conditions which I reflect on in chapter three.

It is this rendering of the 'conservation' ethos that has been echoed by industry inclined commentators like Dry (2010); Du Toit (2007); Pretorius (2010) and

[18] The documentary 'The South African Conservation Success Story' produced by Peter Flack is also available as a book. Among the narrators were Peter Flack, a retired game rancher and 'conservationist'; Shane Mahoney, a Canadian wildlife biologist, writer and researcher and Dr David Mabunda then CEO of SA National Parks.

Krynauw (2001b) whose focus is on the promotion of conservation in game ranching through a sustainable ranching approach. Interviews with the different sector players revealed this representation of conservation as a game farming narrative. In various articles, the authors were writing in their professional capacity as WRSA Director of Marketing –Pretorius- while Dry was a former President of the WRSA. Similarly, Flack and Mahoney (2010) whose documentary film, '*The South African Conservation Success Story*' eulogises the role of game farmers in conserving wildlife, conjuring images of super-heroes for this remarkable story. The former is described on the video back cover as a retired game rancher, lawyer, businessman and 'conservationist' while the latter is a Canadian wildlife biologist, writer and researcher. What the documentary film does is to present a perspective which pays greater attention to the contribution of game ranching to South African wildlife conservation subtly underplaying that of National Parks. Such emphasis is no surprise considering that Peter Flack is also the producer and part narrator of this documentary. In the narrating the story, the film extols the virtues of private game farming to greater wildlife conservation in South Africa parallel to National Parks. It traces how the decisive and 'noble efforts' of these committed private individuals helped revive the dwindling wildlife population in the country bringing the numbers up to a level where game could be hunted sustainably. Such articulation followed on the heels of other endeavours in public fora both domestic and international, as a concerted exercise in pitching the South African model encompassing the 'if it pays, it stays' motif as the innovative 'best practice' way forward for wildlife conservation. Significantly, all these sources present a scaffold from which the industry can be discussed in a positive light.

However, the study by Bulte and Damania (2005) disrupts the discourse by warning against the uncritical support for the 'supply-side approach to conservation' thereby under-estimating the imperfections of a market-led treatment of conservation. The investigation by Bulte and Damania (2005) presents a theoretical economic model interrogating the complex layers that define the economic factors impacting the sector thereby putting into question a number of the conservation claims attached to the practice. An earlier article by Macnab (1990) posits a similar line of argument further stating how the conservation value of game farms is limited. Through a number of other studies cited throughout the article, the authors back their position by referencing the biological and

economic arguments. In sounding these cautionary notes, other scholars like Ascher (1999), Barry, (2007) and Cock (1991, 2007) have issued a warning note on the dangers of neglecting to discuss the environment as a political and social justice issue. Such framing serves to counter the hegemonic discourse of conservation as presented by the former and current land-owning elites. Through inserting the dynamic of equality in the distribution of natural resources these scholars question the logic of policy and practices in the field, something which the game farming community is silent about.

Despite the rise of narratives on private game farming, there have been few dissenting voices to the rhetoric placed in the public domain. One of these critics Pickover (2005) in her treatise on 'Animal rights in South Africa', devotes a book chapter to the critique of trophy hunting and another on wildlife sales concluding how the treatment of game is a consequence of their objectification. Importantly, Pickover's (2005) book is significant not only for exposing unethical practices among industry actors but also in that the sector has always been conscious of the image it portrays to the general public. As an example Coetzer (2011) explores the subject of public perceptions of hunting in South Africa and its implications for the future of the industry. This is largely important as my research reveals the offensive and defensive strategies adopted by the major players to influence not only public perception but also politicians who legislate policy that impacts the sector. Ironically though, it is this same objectification of wildlife, what Brooks *et al* (2011) describe as 'commodification of wildlife' which has led to the raison d'être for their conservation in private game farms. A number of studies hint at this in the arguments that they posit tying it to sustainable utilisation. In this regard, my study brings a new understanding of game farming and hunting specifically the different tiers or stratum of the sector since these have a bearing on the wildlife 'conserved' by game farmers. The study posits that new rural dynamics shaped by the transition to game farming and hunting are indicative of land owner initiatives in installing a different form of land tenure.

Regional outlook

The emphasis on private wildlife economics has not only been limited to South Africa in the region with countries like Botswana (Barnes 2001), Zimbabwe (Hughes 2001; Jansen *et al* 1992; Suzuki 2001; Wels 2003; Wolmer 2007) contributing to the regional body of literature on the economics of wildlife production. The Botswana study

by Barnes (2001) echoes the justification of wildlife usage as a positive economic contributor to national income. It argues for the economic efficiency of the sector, even going further to build a case for wildlife utilisation over livestock production while also urging the support for non-consumptive wildlife tourism. Being closer to North West province and generally sharing similar soils, it is interesting how the support for game production over livestock is the same. While the four Zimbabwean based studies focus on private farming, Child (1995) and Hughes' (2001) focus is on the communal farmland in Eastern Zimbabwe emphasising how switching to Eco-tourism (CBNRM) which included wildlife hunting enabled the use of marginal black farm land. Yet Hughes (2001) goes further than that by pointing out how eco- tourism represents 'a new kind of settler colonialism' in which "white-owned firms and white tourists are coming onto black land" (ibid: 595), a version of what I term 'colonial present' in South African game farming. Similar issues have been debated in the South African context, for example Brooks *et al* (2011) discuss the wilderness commodification in KwaZulu Natal noting how land consolidation inevitably results in the displacement of farm dwellers whose presence has to be 'hidden' in these reconstructed spaces. Who then has access to these spaces? In what capacity do they access these locales? My thesis answers these questions by looking at the race and class element of hunting and the human selection that plays a hand in the availing of these hunting spaces and their accessibility by specific actors as opposed to others.

On the one hand, Child (1995) makes the point that the resolution of the conflict between wildlife and people became 'progress for both' implying how failure to have resolved this issue in the manner it was done would have been a disaster for both. The implication on analysis hints at communal residents and wildlife being placed at the same level thus treating the agency of these human actors as dependent on an external benevolent force. The question then is, would there be no progress for these communal residents if there was no wildlife? This question is important as it places wildlife at the centre of rural people's progress, making it a "palliative for the ills of African backwardness that was prescribed" (Neumann 2001:644) in the colonial period. Significantly, Neumann's (1995 and 2001) focus on the British colonial influence in Tanzania is perceptive as it reveals how this external solution for a domestic issue impacts locals. In the 2001 article, he highlights how the colonial authorities enforced the removal of local communities from fertile valley areas through denying the

villagers protection from elephants, disarming the villagers while driving the wildlife into these populated areas. Some of these strategies are reminiscent of the African dispossessions that took place in the creation of South African national parks (Brooks 2005; Carruthers 1988; De Villiers 1999; Paton 2007) thereby leading to a displacement of Africans from land by wildlife. A result of this action though is to leave the argument open to critics who say it promotes wildlife survival to the detriment of local communal area people's livelihoods and social justice. To an extent, the importance placed on game farming reflects this belief as the case studies of Groot Marico game farmers in Chapter six and the strategy for land claim settlement presents a picture of the land-use preference.

Returning to the regional literature, Bond *et al* (2004) discuss wildlife contribution to conservation in Southern Africa posing questions on the legitimacy and sustainability of these. One contribution they make is with regards to the state devolvement of rights over wildlife to landowners as an essential requirement for private production. This argument fits in with my engagement of the call by sector associations for 'self-regulation' and later 'self- administration' as enabling conditions for operating in the sector. A similar study by Lindsey *et al* (2006) explores the potential of trophy hunting to encourage wildlife conservation in Africa, with Bond *et al* (2004) arguing that trophy hunting has been an entry point for game ranchers. However, the study by Jones, Stolton and Dudley (2005) addresses the issue of how private properties in East and Southern Africa contribute to biodiversity conservation and rural development. A common feature among these texts is the issue of private game farming's contribution to conservation which I tackle too as an important theme in my thesis.

One view is that by adopting such politically correct terminology, game farming fits into the neo-liberal ideology of 'free markets' in which the South African state operates. Through advertising players' own capital outlay –auctions being one example- in this production activity, such actions silence other discourses that question the inequalities bequeathed by South Africa's colonial and apartheid history. Nonetheless, this form of identity creation and recreation reflects broader processes linked to academic scholarship on post-colonial transition in which former landed elites find themselves in continuous negotiation over their subjectivities and identities, place and space amidst a new social order. The study of Franco- Mauritian landowners (Salverda: 2013) provides

an example of this repackaging narrative in which a balance is maintained between state redistribution and land ownership. Close to home, a similar thesis by Suzuki (2001) focuses on the subject of Zimbabwean commercial farmers who turned to wildlife production in the period before and after independence. As a survival strategy, Wels (2003) discusses the 'trade off' adopted by actors practising private wildlife conservation in Zimbabwe as processes of 'reciprocal exchange' with surrounding villages.

Thus in the South African context, what picture do game farming claims of employment creation and revenue generation serve to paint in terms of the economic relevance of the sector as opposed to domestic livestock production? Is the quantification and claims for greater employment opportunities as compared to livestock production a bargaining chip with the state in the context of a post-democratic South Africa? Nonetheless, a thought provoking analysis by Snijders (2012) examines how the formulation of neo liberal South African wildlife policy has been a vehicle for the sector's growth. Therefore, as an agrarian land-use, players can claim the place of game farming in the South African political economy, attributing the growth to individual capital investment without state subsidies. Does this imply then that state legislation and its application within the sector is central to an understanding of operational processes of the industry? Such question leads to the need to investigate the clamour for 'self-regulation' and 'self-administration' which have been part of the industry's discourse in its engagement and critique of state regulation of the sector. Consequently, this study engages with how these contestations and contradictions in policy are playing out in the boardrooms but also in the judicial arena.

Provincial studies

Recent area specific research projects (Brooks *et al* 2008, 2011; Nyama 2008; Sims-Castley *et al* 2005;Smith & Wilson 2002) focusing on the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal proved invaluable to this work. In particular Liv Kristin Kjelstrup (2011) '*Landscapes of Dispossession*'; Nomalanga Mkhize (2012) '*Private Game Farms and the Tenure Security of Farm workers and dwellers*', Femke Brandt (2013) '*Tracking an invisible great Trek*' on Craddock, Eastern Cape were valuable in allowing for comparisons and differences to emerge from the approaches to the subject matter. The first difference is geographical as my research is based in the North West Province of

South Africa. Secondly, one of their chief focus areas is the impact of game farming on farm dwellers and food security. For example, Mkhize's (2012) thesis is on tenure insecurity of farm workers and dwellers in converted farms while Brandt's examines the "re-configuration of power and belonging on trophy hunting farms in the Karoo" (Brandt 2013). Both authors emphasise paternalism as an exercise of power by game farmers over their workers. One other thesis, Nyama (2008) focuses on corporate citizenship basing her study on a single case study of an Eastern Cape game farm and its relationship to its major stakeholders –the workers- and the owners efforts at uplifting the latter. A different relationship is forged by the actors in the Nyama (2008) study when compared to those in Mkhize's (2012) and Brandt's (2013) studies. Although one may conclude that it was this positive relationship that enabled Nyama's access to this game farm as her study site while she was denied access to other intended sites leading eventually to her one case study of this farm. My research focuses on the relationships and the socio- political dynamics that emerge and impact on the conversion to this farming method and the justifications thereof for this type of land-use system of production. From that perspective there is a similarity with Brandt's (2013) thesis, though my framing reference of Fraser's 'colonial present' and the application of Bourdieu (1979; 1985; 1991) adds a new dimension to the power play issues in the sector. Through examination of the complex set of relations and narratives driving the transition process, the study thus opens up understanding of the phase of rural land reconfiguration underway.

A similar area specific thesis by Gaborone (2006), '*The status of game farming in the North West Province*' documents the moral and political position of game farming in the selected province of study. It focuses on the sector's compliance with black economic empowerment. My study builds on this theme, picking up on the issue of transformation as a small part of the justifications for continuity in maintaining the status quo by some in the sector. This is achieved through gate-keeping functions that allow a few black individuals to join the sector; Brandt (2012) also mentions this citing the example of black professional hunter and some of the challenges faced by this individual in practising his profession. While Gaborone's (2006) study is important in indicating the range and scope of game farming in the North West province, it is limited in its coverage of the historical and social factors which influenced the shift to this form of land-use. Its focus is on Black Economic Empowerment compliance of the game farms studied, relating how in

the post democratic era, efforts to uplift the formerly neglected black communities into this sector can achieve racial representativity only through specialised legislation. In discussing how this transformation of the sector can proceed, however, Gaborone's moralistic viewpoint comes to the fore. While the need for transformation is undisputed, he reduces this narrative to a plea for "the game ranching sector to commit itself to substantive and realisable targets which will change it into a typical South African, multi stakeholder inclusive entity" (2006:148). Although this statement is a salient observation on the need for transformation in the sector, its weakness lies in grouping the sector as if there is one homogeneous recognisable South African entity. I will concede that this could be a slip-up from an embedded researcher –the author worked for the North West department of Agriculture at the time and was also a farmer- who is also an insider in the unfolding story. Nevertheless, the analysis is clouded by this complicity.

Yet one advantage exercised by Gaborone in his North West study, was his access to farm records that were available to him through his position within the Department of Agriculture and Conservation in the province. This was evident from the appendix in his thesis providing the list of game farms in the province and the names and contact details of owners. Though this list proved useful to this study, as an outsider I relied on the goodwill of actors which invariably reduced the sample size because of the difficulty linked to conducting game farming research. Such concerns about access to records and respondents are reflected upon by Brandt (2013) and Mkhize (2012) showing how the outsider status presents its own difficulties in researching closed communities like private game farmers in this contemporary context. Yet the North West province and Groot Marico in particular provides an excellent case study to further theorise the social conditions of private game farming within the broader game farming narrative. Boehm and Schirmer (2010) while not focused on game farming bring into relief the social conditions operating in contemporary North West farming areas. Their coverage of case studies of restitution and land reform reflect the attitudes of farmers and their treatment of farmworkers pointing to paternalistic conditions under which employment relations are structured.

International studies

On the international front, scholars Kerr and Abell (2014) focus on big game hunting in New Zealand citing the economic aspects of the business. Meanwhile

Heberlein and Willebrand (1998) compare the attitudes towards hunting across time and continents between the United States and Sweden. A similar article by Andersen *et al* (2014) attributes increased wildlife density in certain areas in North America and Europe largely on declining hunter numbers among other factors, hence arguing for increased individual hunting quotas. Importantly, this argument points to the usefulness of hunters as predators supporting the natural lifecycle through their hunting which helps to keep an ecological balance in wildlife numbers. Locally, the same argument of man replacing the natural predator has been put across in arguing for the function of hunting and why it should not be banished. Going in the opposite direction is the article by Rutberg (2010) which argues against state agencies being advocates of hunting. The author cites the need to act in the public interest as being the imperative force that should guide these authorities therefore enabling them to act fairly. Although the latter study is focused on American operations, it is important in the South African context as the embedded nature of conservation state officials both national and provincial can affect their independence in dealing with legal transgressions within the industry. As this thesis will show, this compromised standing can and does have an impact on the official or politician's ability to be neutral in matters dealing with the industry. Similarly, perception and attitude management is important in the game farming sector as shown in the discourse chosen by the actors and continued reiteration of conservation and economic contribution for example.

Another study by Langholz and Lassoie (2001) discusses the perils and promise of privately owned protected areas indicating how they can become closed off playgrounds for the elite both wealthy landowners and their clients. As a phenomenon, my thesis addresses this in relation to the stratification that has become associated with the South African game farming and hunting sector. An earlier book by Cioc (2009) focused on 20th century wildlife protection treaties arguing how these are best understood as international *hunting* treaties rather than as *conservation* treaties (2009:1). Significantly, Cioc here highlights how hunting is more the aim rather than conservation which when applied to the private game farming sphere aptly points us to the real motivation for game conservation. Despite writing about the 20th century world treaties, Cioc's argument still applies and fits in with the modus operandi of '*if it pays, it stays*' as practised by the South African contemporary game farming sector. What is being preserved are the conditions and the rights to hunt rather than the conservation of wildlife.

Conceptual premise of the thesis

Through the consideration of the deployment of economic, social, symbolic and cultural capital (Bourdieu 1979, 1985, 1991, 2000), I explore how wildlife producers have demarcated the sector as a social and geographic space, following Levebvre's (1991) social production of space for a select grouping of people. Does this spatial segregation which is both a "symbolic as well as material act" (Brooks 2006:7; Fraser 2008), enable landholders to cling to the game farms as extensions of their heritage while re-constructing a new socio-spatial order? Thus the question links to the colonial present construct as applied by Fraser (2007) where the closed off sector allows for continued domination by a few. This analysis is shared by Mkhize (2014) who views the contemporary displacement of workers from game farms along this continuities spectrum, linking it to the historical relations as they were governed in the colonial era. All these texts are of direct relevance to my argument since in chapter three -o*n the historical background section*- I draw on the historical social conditions to explore how hunting began to take on a distinctly class and race character during the colonial period. This enables another contribution that links the colonial to the contemporary. This takes into account how the social construction of 'space' (Lefebvre: 1991) is a product of, to borrow from Karl Marx[19], 'social relations of production'. Meanwhile, the analytic focus on class interests as provided by Harvey (2001) enables another contribution on the subjectivities of game farmers as a social in-group whose domination of the sector still carries authority even despite the loss of political power. As a result this thesis posits a framing reference via the paternalism conduit and the hierarchical structure of the sector.

Conclusion

In many respects, various narratives have been invaluable in mapping the South African structural economic terrain under which private game farmers have sprouted and now operate. Articles by Ewert & Hamman (1999); Hall (2004, 2007); Koelble (2011); Lahiff (2005, 2007) can be grouped into this category while Weeks (1999) and Terreblanche's (2002) postulations on South African macro-economic policy of Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) is insightful in presenting a background under which most conversions took place. Even though addressing the same economic period in his

[19] See Karl Marx's (1859) 1970 'A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy', Moscow Progress Publishers.

book for example, Bond (2005) provides a context in which 'elite capture' could be underscored in the analysis of game farming and the slow pace of land reform. Similarly, Bernstein's (2013) article showcases how commercial agriculture's organised stance which was facilitated by the out-going government, has preserved the sector's advantageous position in negotiations with the post-1994 state. Before that, Greenberg (2010) had pointed out how an equitable land and agricultural policy needed to tackle the hegemony in commercial agriculture including its agro-industry. A question deriving from the engagement with the texts is whether the same hegemony prevailed in game farming. Therefore the texts importance to the thesis can be linked for example to the treatment I render to game sector associations and the analysis thereof. On the other hand, Hart's 'Rethinking the South African Crisis' (2013) facilitated my reading of 'otherness' within the context of game auctions and the social distance of the actors involved from the majority black population.

In addition, the research drew on Bourdieu's (1985, 1991, 2000) conceptions of 'capital', both social and cultural capital in particular. To a lesser extent, 'symbolic capital' also presented a perspective for explanation which was also applied as a basis for the conceptualisation of the relations and processes that inform the game farming context. I viewed Bourdieu's theorisation as being sufficiently abstract to include adequate variation making it applicable to a variety of contexts (Strauss & Corbin 1998) related to the game farming phenomenon. In addition, application of Bourdieu's theorisation of 'symbolic power and group making' (Wacquant 2013) offered the reading of a latent pattern of behaviour that holds significance in the understanding of relationships in game farming. Therefore, from this understanding, game consumption could be investigated as sociological framing whereby "the satisfaction derived from goods relates to their socially structured access" (Featherstone 1990:5) in a setting "in which people use goods to create social bonds or distinctions" (ibid). In this context, the work of Baudrillard (1981, 1998); Bourdieu (1985, 1991, 2000), Harvey (2001) and Weber (1978) provided invaluable insights on commodification; 'spaces of capital' and the class categorisation accompanying game farming stratification.

As a conceptual explanation of processes and outcomes within the social setting of game farming and hunting under study, these framings proved a useful alternative. Thus

Bourdieu's (1989, 1991) theorisation in regard to social space and symbolic power for example is very useful in engaging with the role of associations and fellowships examining their impact in shaping collective action and contestations with the state. Similarly, the deployment of social, cultural and symbolic capital (ibid: 1985, 2000) became useful pivots upon which to analyse the processes of insertion into the national economic discourse for example and the role of actors in sustaining the perceptions that accrue as a result of these actions. Hence the contextualisation of state regulatory environment amidst strategies adopted by game farmers and their associations become intricate intersections of issues deserving study.

Lastly, through a review of literature and the case studies investigated in the thesis, I offer a reading on how the perspectives it introduces fertilise discussions on game farming

Chapter three:

Contemporary game farming and the colonial present

> [*H*]*ow could* we come to understand…the genesis of the present, along with the preconditions and processes involved, other than by starting from that present, working our way back to the past, and then retracing our steps? (Lefebvre [1974] 1991:66; *emphasis in original*)

> Accordingly, to understand the present conjuncture in South Africa it is essential to have a sense of its history, to reflect on constraints and the possibilities created by that history." (Bundy 1993:49)

Adopting Lefebvre and Bundy's approach above, this chapter draws on the past to situate the present dynamics underlying the South African game farming industry. Do the 'preconditions and processes' reflect the colonial present? To begin with, colonial hunting in South Africa moved from the public to the private domain following the trajectory of conquest, while also mirroring race and class priviledge. In the period when game was hunted in wide open spaces, it was almost made extinct; indeed some animals did become extinct in this period.[20] Hunting then was a necessity of survival for consumption, commerce but also for sport as a hobby. Realising this over-hunting folly, a concerted effort by the colonists led to the preservation of game resulting in the growth of game populations. This helps to explain how and why game once again became commoditised as a basis for its conservation in the private game farms, which is the position in the contemporary period. Simultaneously, the chapter discusses the factors that have contributed to the phenomenal growth of private game farming. I compare South Africa to Kenya and Zimbabwe to point out the similarities and differences that exist, showing that South Africa is not unique in its game farm development trajectory. Covering this history of developments within the sector enables identification of the salient aspects of the 'colonial present' within the continuities of game farming and hunting. It indicates a reading of these constructions as a continuum of the greater South African history of land dispossession and resource appropriation. This chapter leans on the historical literature of game farming in colonial and apartheid South Africa but it also picks up on post-1994 literature to ground its central argument of the 'colonial present' as identified in hunting processes and ownership patterns.

Historical Background

[20] According to Brown (2002) by the 1850s, the Cape lion had become extinct while the Quagga (a Zebra relative) suffered the same fate in the 1860s.

The British tradition of 'the hunt', 'the king's game' or 'game preservation'; prevalent in other colonies was limited in South Africa (Beinart 1990, Carruthers 1995, Child 1995, Mac Kenzie 1988). As Beinart (1990) argues, early British hunting was a sporting and scientific pursuit combining ritual and economics in a complex relationship. Nonetheless, hunting had been a part of early South African life incorporated in the livelihoods of local ethnic groups like the San, Bantu tribes and later the Boers. It was not just a British sporting hobby despite the references to 'royal game' (Brown 2002) in the Cape Colony. In the African chiefdoms, game had symbolic meaning with the most valuable animal products like leopard skins and ivory being reserved for special use by the kings and chiefs (Beinart & Hughes 2007). Meanwhile hunting itself was a subsistence activity (Brown 2002) done with traps and rudimentary weapons.

How, when and why did the transition from white cattle production to game farming happen in South Africa? Several explanations can be given tracing the reasons for the rise of hunting and game farming including its shift from domestic animal production. To start with, hunting parties had decimated wild animals in South Africa's interior by the late 19th century (Beinart 1990; Beinart & Hughes 2007; Brown 2002; Carruthers 1988, 1995b & 2008a; Mac-Kenzie 1988) a process exacerbated by the inland trek of disgruntled Afrikaners leaving the Cape. Around this period too, a well-developed export market resulted in ivory becoming one of the major export items coming out of the Transvaal (Beinart 1990; Carruthers 2008b) while venison was exported in large quantities to overseas destinations by Afrikaner hunters and traders (Mahoney 2010). The period also saw the rise in dried biltong (Beinart 1989, 1990) becoming an Afrikaner tradition[21] during the trek. In South Africa, during this period, "Wildlife were free goods, not owned by anyone, at least in colonial law" (Beinart and Hughes 2007:63) even though the free hunting applied to white groups while the blacks were restricted.

Importantly, the ownership of advanced weaponry by settlers resulted in the near extinction of wildlife. Hence it could be reported that the Trekboers efficiency in game extermination threatened the basic structure of San existence (Penn 1986) since their livelihood had been largely based on hunting wildlife for food and subsistence. Meanwhile the hunting by the Afrikaners as they moved inland pushed the San and Bantu

[21] Carruthers posits that "Game meat formed the staple diet to such an extent that the Voortrekkers wearied of it" (1988:10).

groups further away paving the way to the dispossession of indigenous population while strengthening the emerging power and authority of the colonists. The Afrikaners 'efficiency' had a greater impact as noted by Stevenson-Hamilton[22] that "the damage they [Africans] do in a year is not equal to that done by a few Boers in a week" (Carruthers 2001:55) with reference to the hunting habits of the two groups in the Kruger National Park. Advances in firearms technology facilitated the Boers destruction of game during this period. Importantly, Carruthers (1988) offers an explanation for the 'low footprint' of indigenous Africans hunting habits linking it to their low population as hunters and their use of basic technology as the inhibitors, and not because they had a 'traditional' wildlife conservation ethos that they practiced. In spite of its comparatively low environmental impact, African hunting became classified as poaching and the colonial government imposed restrictions limiting participation for the conquered. Colonial legislation governed the hunting of whites (both British and Afrikaner) to the exclusion and limitation of hunting opportunities for other ethnic groups in the country (Brown 2002). A consequence of this was the disruption of indigenous livelihoods and customs. Meanwhile, "Hunting became 'intrinsic to Boer culture' in the nineteenth-century Transvaal" (Beinart & Hughes 2007:63)[23] partly as a necessity of surviving the great trek. I argue, that tradition has carried on up to this day with the "jagtersgemeenskap[24] (hunting fellowship)" (ibid) now represented by sector associations such as PHASA, CHASA (Confederation of Hunters Associations of South Africa) and the WRSA (Wildlife Ranching South Africa).

The Afrikaner hunting tradition has brought with it social ramifications whose legacies still reverberate even with the later generations in the guise of private game farming and hunting. Through colonial conquest and legislation, African people have been excluded

from hunting despite the fact that amongst Xhosa men, for instance, hunting was depicted as a favourite pastime (Beinart & Hughes 2007). Buttressing this point, Beinart and Hughes further indicate how colonial hunting in southern Africa was largely dependent on indigenous people's knowledge and skills (ibid). This sentiment is shared by Trapido and

[22] Colonel James Stevenson-Hamilton was the first Chief Warden to run the Sabi National Park before it became the Kruger National Park. See Paton 2007 and also James Stevenson-Hamilton (1937) South African Eden: From Sabi Game Reserve to Kruger National Park

[23] See also Delius, P "*Abel Erasmus: Power and Profit in the Eastern Transvaal* in W. Beinart, P. Delius and S. Trapido (eds.) Putting a plough to the ground: Accumulation and Dispossession in Rural South Africa 1850-1930. Ravan Press, Johannesburg

[24] Carruthers (1988:43) though gives a different spelling and definition, "jachtergemeenskap (Hunting community)".

Wagner who refer to the "*swart skuts* (black marksmen) who were supplied with arms by Boers and who retained a share of the bag" (Beinart, Delius & Trapido 1987:23; Carruthers 2008b). Nevertheless within this relationship of production there were hierachies as:

> In some areas, blacks controlled the hunt entirely. The missionary, Hofmeyr, attested to this and explained how black chieftains obliged white hunting parties to pay a substantial levy before allowing them to enter their territories (Carruthers 1988:66).

This control was replaced by the colonial Cape administration after full conquest through the 1888 Game Protection and Forests Act (van Sittert 1998) when game hunting was regulated under the Conservator of Forests with permission now being sought from this official (Gess & Swart 2013) rather than chiefs. Key to an analysis of the above context is the realisation of developments, from conquest to assertion of colonial authority over territory and resource usage. With the progression of land acquisition by white farmers, these processes resulted in the emergence of a white gentry owning private land. Cleavages developed among the white colonists when the landlords instituted action to enjoy wildlife on their own farms by protecting the hunt from fellow whites who did not own land. For instance,

> In the late nineteenth century, landowners including mining magnates and some Boer notables began to view with alarm the decline in game and opportunities for hunting as a socially exclusive pleasure pursuit. Protecting the hunt on their own properties became associated with the broader project of protecting animals in game reserves. (Beinart 1989, 1990; Carruthers 1988, 1995a; NAMC 2006).

Marico was one of the districts where white farmers developed a proprietary interest on the wildlife in their farms (Carruthers 1988, 1995) by establishing private game reserves which were gazetted between 1867 and 1881.[25] This proprietary attitude to game marks the period when game hunting moved from the public sphere to the private farming domain of private farm hunting. At this point, property owners made efforts to safeguard the natural occurring wildlife for their own and associates' private hunting. Even absentee landowners legally secured their private hunting rights using gazetted notices as territorial ownership markers, especially of the free roaming game on their farms.

[25] Carruthers (1988:71,93) mentions Marico as one of the districts in which notices were placed prohibiting trespassing including hunting on farms by farm owners while "some landowners also went to great lengths to protect the game on their farms by erecting fences."

Therefore, despite the absence of laws acknowledging private ownership of wildlife, the farmers' actions were 'de facto' declarations of ownership made more concrete through the erection of farm fences supported by trespass notices. These ownership rights were then turned into 'de jure' rights when the Volksraad inserted clauses into the law recognising land owners' game rights to hunt on their own farms whilst also offering protection to absentee land owners against trespassers.[26] The law particularly restricted black people by prohibiting them from any form of hunting except when protecting their field crops from birds (Carruthers 1988). Clearly then a distinction was occurring between white landowners and those whites who did not own land, and also their black counterparts in these areas.

The 'privatisation' of hunting extended to the public sphere. The case study by Gess and Swart (2013) reveals how one official abused the permit allocation system to consolidate his hunting access and those of his friends. The official used his public office status to exert influence on the Cape Colony department of Agriculture to allocate buffalo hunting permits to his associates while denying access to other white applicants. This reveals the early elitist and selective nature of game preservation[27] linked with political economy that would later be associated with private game farming and hunting in South Africa. For instance, landowners recommended severe penalties for Africans and poor whites hunting on state lands while resisting preservationist laws targeted at reducing hunting on their farms (Carruthers 2008a & b). As in the above case, officials facilitated provision of hunting permits to their close associates. These 'landed gentry' were exhibiting feudalistic and monopolistic characteristics in their preservation action which can be interpreted as racist and classist in nature. As posited by Carruthers (1988) Wildlife protectionism is heavily imprinted by the hegemonic group as the above cited examples reveal. The colonists first restricted indigenous hunting leaving a white free-for-all, later rescinded upon realisation other near extinction caused by unrestricted hunting. Following that, landowners protected their private hunting. Similarly, Cioc (2009) confirms how early twentieth century hunters concentrated on protecting particular hunting grounds and valued prey compared to the protection of whole habitats, ecosystems, or bio-regions

[26] Article 531, Clauses 6 and 7 of the game law enshrined landowners' rights granting them permission to give written consent for hunts on their farms. See Carruthers E, J. 1988, Game protection in the Transvaal: 1846-1926, PhD Thesis, University of Cape Town: pg 132-134.

[27] Preservation here is understood as "the identification of a natural resource and the prevention of any active interference" see Carruthers, E.J. (1988:10)

with whites in agreement on the restrictions of black hunting (Carruthers 1988). The elitist and exclusive manner in which 'hunting rights' were allocated and dispensed ensured the dispossession of indigenes and later poor whites in this enterprise, aspects of which have carried on today.

I argue therefore that private game farming and hunting emanated from this period. Marking the transition into game farming where the links to game hunting in private spaces that this study examines. Once farmers began to fence off their farms to protect the game inside from outside interests, this action denoted the beginning of private game ranching and hunting. Even though the farmers were not actively propagating the wildlife; that is, breeding game and encouraging its growth through active interference nevertheless they were 'preserving' the game that occurred naturally on their farms for their own hunting consumption needs. By doing so, farm owners were staking their 'de facto' hunting rights over those of everyone else who were not farm owners during this period. This marks a distinctive phase from game 'preservation' for private hunting purposes on farms in the area with farmers assuming private ownership rights.

The colonial dispossession in game hunting stems from legislation. The 1886 'Act for the better preservation of Game' and the 1889 Dog tax (Brown 2002) passed by the colonial government are two examples. Through the dog tax, further restrictions were imposed on the indigenous people while white colonists increasingly exerted power and authority over the indigenous population, limiting the latter's livelihood options by imposing restrictions on hunting. Significantly, these issues reveal how power and domination are reflective of colonial legacies and power asymmetries (Beinart & Hughes 2007) in the sector whose residues have endured to this day. Currently, game owners are mostly white males. About 2% are black farmers (Brooks *et al* 2008) indicating the established practices and ownership patterns that are a throwback to the colonial dispossession period. Essentially, these ownership patterns reveal a form of the colonial present in game farming. Thus game politics has a long history related to colonial settlement (Wels 2003) and its associated dispossession of indigenous peoples of their natural resources, land included. Consequently, the consistent and shifting justifications of game farming are tied to the South African political economy. Economic contribution and conservation constitute two major aspects.

Yet the notion of class as a peculiar enabler of hunting rights is not restricted to South Africa. According to Vuorisalo *et al* (2014) hunting in Finland was distinctly elitist from the period of 1865 to 1920[29][28] similar to the sport hunting practised by British nobles in Europe and in the colonies (Beinart 1990, Carruthers 1995, Mac Kenzie 1988). In the South African context especially after the union, hunting exclusivity became the norm as I have discussed. I argue that the race and class elements of game hunting and farming today are rooted in these colonial and elitist origins. As symbols of capital, symbolic or material, they have enabled further extension of the race and class stratification defining the sector.

Nevertheless, game preservation then, became a central focus for the state with the awareness of the near extinction of wildlife leading to the setting up of game reserves.

From Game reserves to National parks

The first Game reserves were established in the mid-1890s in the former Transvaal and Natal provinces in response to uncontrolled hunting and declining wildlife (NAMC 2006, Carruthers 1995).[29] They were intended to halt the wildlife pillage taking place in the country. Brown (2002) posits that wildlife instead of scenery was the basis of South Africa's environmental concern within these protected areas. Early game reserves became sanctuaries for animals in danger of extinction for example, the elephant. The reserves were purely preservation oriented rather than conservation inclined, being state funded although driven by private efforts (Mahoney 2010). The lobbying efforts of former 'penitent butchers', Cape scientists, settler farmers and politicians (Brown 2002) led to game protection associations and stricter enforcement of hunting regulations, particularly after 1902. James Stevenson-Hamilton, the first warden of Kruger National Park, and Jan Smuts[30] played a huge role in saving wildlife from further hunting while also enabling the natural breeding of game in state protected areas (Paton 2006). Jan Smuts' involvement ensured the state representation

[28] See Vuorisalo, T; Talvitie, K.; Kauhala, K.; Blauer, A and Lahtinen, R (2014) 'Urban red foxes in Finland: A historical perspective. Landscape and Urban Planning, Volume 124, April 2014, pgs 109-117 in http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2013.12.002

[29] See also Paton, A.J. 2007 Transformation of the myth and the myth of transformation: Over 100 years of guiding in South African game reserves. Johannesburg, University of Witwatersrand, Masters Thesis. Although his date is 1895 for Umfolozi and Hluhluwe game reserves. Delius, P. 'Abel Erasmus: Power and profit in the Eastern Transvaal'. Carruthers, J. (1988) though posits that the Pongola game reserve was political, created as a buffer to stop the Portuguese encroachment into the territory

[30] Jan Christiaan Smuts, former State Attorney to the South African Republic under Paul Kruger, former Minister of Education, Minister of Interior, Defence and Mines and finally Union Prime Minister.

in a more formal manner as he also championed the earlier efforts at legislation.

When wildlife had increased, the preservation agenda expanded to allow for hunting. Initially the Sabi Game Warden's role had been to create a wildlife surplus that would be shot by hunters (Paton 2007). Understandably, such appropriation of the 'hunting rights' within game reserves relates to the growth of white hunting demand but also as a consequence of colonial practices where power and authority over the wildlife resource usage belonged with the colonialists. Additionally, the fact that this hunting would occur in a "preserve (an area wherein animals are preserved for the use of the privileged few)" (ibid: 37) should be viewed as having planted the seed for private game farming industry's continued exclusivity since the same hunting rights did not extend to indigenes.

Due to the growing public concern for wildlife protection, the promulgation of the first National Parks Act in 1926 concurrently with the founding of the Kruger National Park building on the former Sabi Game reserve started a new chapter on National parks. Closely following this were the establishments of Addo Elephant National Park, the Bontebok and the Kalahari Gemsbok National Parks which came into being in 1931 (Carruthers 2008b). The creation of the parks, just like the establishment of game reserves, led to the forced land dispossession of the indigenous black people who were removed to make way for these National Parks.[31] Consequently, this renewed perceptions that South African game preservation was for a select race and elitist in nature (Beinart 1990, Cock 1991, 2007, Khan 1990, NAMC 2006) since black people could be moved from their rural homes to make way for wildlife which they were restricted from hunting. This reflects the earlier period of settlement where hunting was conducted by white males as an exclusive priviledge of the hegemonic group after colonial conquest. The situation in game farming today arises from this period. It retains the key features of remaining in private farms, maintaining its racialised class oriented character. The dispossession of the indigenes from hunting and the alienated relationship to wildlife was later validated by the politicisation of the largely Afrikaner National Parks Board, more so after 1948 (Wu & Turner 2004) when yet again

[31] Ramutsindela, M.F. 2004 'Parks and People in Postcolonial Societies: Experiences in Southern Africa'. Kluwer Academic Publishers. See also Carruthers, J. (1995) The Kruger National Park: a social and political history, Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press and Paton, A .J. (2007) Transformation of the Myth and the myth of transformation. Masters thesis, Wits University.

black people were deliberately left out of decision-making concerning wildlife use.

This 'bounded' notion of 'nature' –particularly wildlife- is currently what SANParks seeks to debunk. One example is their plan to build a new hotel at Kruger National Park aiming to cater for the emerging (predominantly black) middle class.[32] As a policy of trying to reverse the legacies of colonialism and apartheid, these ideas have been criticised as 'taking the suburbs to the parks' (Cock 2007). However, I contend that they should be seen as attempts to reverse a colonial present reflected in the alienated relationship to wildlife for the majority black population. This hotel development has been tied to compensation of land claimants, offering the land claimant community a stake in the income of the hotel (Bailey 2011). The implementation of such plans presents a new challenge for game farmers, just as the calls for nationalisation of mines and land expropriation are getting louder. The above plans echo Beck's position encouraging SANParks to explore the financial feasibility of hunting within the Kruger National Park (Cock 2007), something which had been done previously. Yet any change in legislation to open operations of National Parks would result in direct competition stifling the expansion of private game farms. This would be especially so, if these 'new emerging clientele' –black middle class- favour National Parks, as a renewed social space for their hunting pursuits over private game farms. Meanwhile, should the effects of the economic recession that affected Europe and America recur that may reduce the number of foreign trophy hunters. Yet this development may open a new avenue for the previously hunting disenfranchised blacks allowing them a return to an old hobby that has been removed from their repertoire.

National Parks Contribution to private game farming

To a large extent, developments in the National Parks contributed to the trajectory taken by private game farmers. For instance, Beinart and Hughes (2007:212) argue that:

> Wildlife farming was never restricted to venison in that from the start it was also linked to commercial hunting and tourism. Wealthy landowners in South Africa had begun to buy wildlife and trout estates on the borders of the Kruger National Park and it was an easy transition to see the commercial tourist potential.[33]

[32] See www.krugerpark.co.za/docs (accessed 27/11/2012)

[33] See Carruthers, J. 1993 '*Game protection and early industrialization: Development in the Transvaal, 1880- 1900'*. Pretoria: University of South Africa.

These enterprising landowners rode on the crest of the Kruger National Park wave while offering an exclusive experience on their farms. As reflected by Carruthers (2008b) the commercial game hunting practiced in the Kruger National Park in the 1960s pioneered game ranching principles. This sheds light on the thinking that influenced farmers to follow suit, recognising the potential of game farming. Meanwhile, a justification for hunting in National Parks was that it would keep the ecological balance of the park tying 'official commodification' of game (NAMC 2006) to a sustainable conservation and development ethos. Once the pressure mounted from the green movement, Kruger National Parks stopped culling elephants and buffalo, closing the huge abattoir near Skukuza which had been built for that purpose.[34] Further, The Protected Areas Act, 57 of 2003 (amended by Act 31 of 2004) prohibited 'extractive activities' in national parks including hunting (ARA 2010). This restriction on the operations of the National Parks provided a gap in the market that was exploited by the private game farming sector.

The same game ranching policy served the early pioneers of private game farming, who bought their stock from National Parks while sharing expertise with its officials. For instance, Wels (2003) mentions how in the 1980s, the Natal Parks Board played an advisory role in commercial hunting within Kwa-Zulu Natal private conservancies. This sharing of expertise continues in the present era as indicated by a North West Tourism Board manager who recounted assisting private game farmers with business market assessment.[35] Before 1994, this collaboration sustained the early development of the sector through a constant supply of wildlife from the parks to the private sector. For example, Ian Scott Barnes of Inyala Ranch in the Zululand region started a private game farm on his 1000 acre plot of land that had been previously used for cattle ranching, with free game from the nearby Umfolozi game reserve given by Norman Deane, a Natal Parks Board official. His neighbours imitated his example going further to combine their resources by creating private wildlife conservancies whilst sharing costs (Brooks *et al* 2008). Additionally, Sas-Rolfes (2011*a*) highlights how the Natal Parks Board supplied white rhinos for a token fee to private landowners. This system was exploited by farmers who benefitted from rhino hunting incomes without necessarily breeding the animals themselves. Thus to an extent, national parks have subsidised the private game farm business particularly the pioneers

[34] Interview with B2 game farmer's wife in Groot Marico (03/10/2012). Carruthers reflects how the large abattoir 'processed, canned and dried thousands of culled elephants, buffaloes and hippopotamus" (2008b:161),
[35] Interview with state tourism development official, North West Parks Tourism board. 3/02/2012, Mahikeng

enabling the commodification of wildlife conservation.

Additionally, the Natal Parks Board also offered packaged hunts in Mkuzi Game Reserve to interested individuals in 1989[36] indicating its practice of commercial game hunting. Yet Ascher, critiques this 'nominal' manner of doing business by government, questioning why "governments chronically ignore the first principle of resource economics for public lands, namely, that they should charge the users the full value of the resources they extract, lest the users overexploit 'cheap' resources" (1999:16). Further credence to Ascher's point is supported by the standpoint of provincial parks officials who view their core mandate as that of conservation rather than parks profiteering from wildlife resources. Hence for one North West official, the sale of the park's game is determined by the need to balance the ecology of a game park as opposed to the financial income raised from this exercise. Thus population sizes determine the sale of game within a park which informs how the state operates in relation to its own game auctions.[37] The National Parks auctions differ to the ones held by private game farmers as the motivation is different. For example, the state official firmly believes that the state conserves more animals than private game farms arguing that the percentage of protected areas under coverage is much higher than that of game farms. The basis for such an argument lies in the fact that parks sell their animals annually to private game farmers even though the latter pass these off through hunting and further onward sales (ibid). In essence, the state parks serve as a cheap production factory supplying the needs of private game farmers; a point highlighted in the earlier critique by Ascher.

As intimated above, there is a clear demarcation of operational processes which also relate to colonial patterns of spatial exclusivity. National Parks have become, to borrow from Brooks "an idealized space of public concern" (Paton 2007:60) while private game farms resemble a "recreational space of personal concern" (ibid) following post-1994 tourism growth. That public concern can be reformulated to meet the constituency of the governing group as evidenced by the proposed developments. The latter part is the experience that now has to be sold to black locals as the formerly disenfranchised users of wildlife. Exclusivity in the private game farms becomes the product differentiator for the white hunting consumer replicating the colonial era of white hunting priviledge in a reconfigured Eden where black people's presence is minimised. On sale at private game farms is that personal private space

[36] See 'Hunting Regulations', *Farmer's Weekly* May 5 1989 pg. 34.
[37] Interview with state tourism development official, North West Parks Tourism board. 3/02/2012, Mahikeng

as opposed to the public shared space of national parks, once again repeating the exclusive and class origin of the practice. Despite that, the demand for use of the National Parks space and utilities is high. Statistics from "SANPark's tourism database indicate that 75% of the visitors to the parks are South African residents" while "24, 4% are international tourists" (SANParks 2008:2). The former statistic does support the idea that National Parks still serve a sizeable portion of the South African public whose consumption of nature focuses on tourism. Private game farms cater mostly for the consumptive needs of the international hunting market and sections of the country's population whose passion is hunting and its products. A 'division of labour' therefore exists between these two groups.

The growth of private game farming may be attributed to various factors ranging from the political, social and economic. Here below is a brief discussion of some of the inter-related factors that can be pointed out as having led to this growing shift in farming enterprise.

Contributing Factors to the rise of game farming from the late 1980's[38]

Several factors have contributed to the diversification into game farming. I have chosen this periodisation as a reference point for special consideration because it encompasses the decade before South Africa's re-entry into the global international trade. I believe it was a turning point for many farmers as my discussion of the centripetal factors to diversification will show. To begin, the switch to game farming is a business decision which takes economic considerations into account as the narrative below shows. Added to that, policy creates an enabling environment in which the conversion can be undertaken while also supporting the continuous growth of the sector particularly where policy is favourable.

Stemming from past colonial practices, the South African polity promoted a whites-only commercial agricultural sector drawing heavily on state subsidies, protectionist measures and the use of cheap labour especially during the apartheid era (Carruthers 2008b, Fraser 2007, Hendricks 2001, Kariuki 2007, Lipton 1993). In the era of open market system or 'market driven' (Kinsey 1999, Lahiff 2005, Terreblanche 2002) economics of the late 1970s to early 1980s, the South African model buckled under international pressure leading to deregulation and removal of state subsidies. The decline of agriculture was hastened by farm debt which in 1990 stood at R16bn (Lipton 1993) while the boycott of apartheid era

[38] I have left out the period from the 1920s to 1980s, which detail is sufficiently covered by Carruthers (2008b:164-176).

products especially towards the end of apartheid closed international markets, worsening the situation. Additionally during this period, a combination of factors like recurrent drought, for example the state in 1992 set aside R4bn as drought relief rescue funds (Lipton 1993), expensive cattle medicines and low beef prices pushed cattle farmers to adopt other strategies. Game farming became a viable option. It is in this context that the deregulation process was largely completed by the installation of the country's first democratic government in 1994 with the announcement of a new macro-economic policy in 1996 termed GEAR[39] (Bond 2005, Fraser 2007, Marinda 2004, Weeks 1999). GEAR as tabled by the new ANC led government in mid-term 1996, removed state subsidies, the protection of control boards and other organs of state that had for a long period shielded white commercial farmers from market forces. As propounded by Hall and Ntsebeza (2007:10),

> White farmers confronted with the sudden withdrawal of State support, and exposed to foreign competition in domestic markets, had to adapt rapidly to remain in business.

Part of the adaptation was the shift into game farming as an alternative to cattle farming. Trophy hunting farms presented a viable option in contrast to the low beef prices in the GEAR environment which promoted a 'competitive' (therefore cheaper) Rand for trade with the international community. During this period, growing perceptions of South Africa as a safer destination than most African countries especially after the 1994 democratic elections led to the growth of wildlife tourism (Bothma *et al* 2009) as an important contributor to the South African economy.[40] This served as a magnet for would-be game farmers as they could tap into a ready market. Linked to this, prices of wildlife rose astronomically, Snijders points to "a tenfold increase of wildlife prices in the period 1991-2001" (2012:512) serving as a pull factor that proved attractive to farmers in a period of declining beef prices and expensive cattle medicines. Thus difficulties with traditional farming made conversion to game farming, a business worth considering. Those already in the business looked to conserve and increase their wildlife stock triggering growth in the

[39] Growth, Employment and Redistribution programme announced by the South African government in June 1996 whose stated purpose was to increase economic growth through fiscal expenditure reduction, a tight monetary policy and trade liberalisation. N.B this definition can be gleaned from Weeks 1999. For a longer discussion, see Bond, P.2005 'Elite Transition: From Apartheid to Neoliberalism in South Africa' pg. 78-84,284. Prior to this was the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), official ANC policy from January 1994 and government policy after the 1994 democratic elections. It was later abandoned for GEAR.

[40] See 'Tourism 2010', Report No. 03-51-02 (2010) in www.statssa.gov.za/publications/Report-03-51- 02/Report-03-51-022010.pdf (accessed 25/09/2014)

demand and supply of game.

Compounding the situation in the GEAR period was the state's allocation of a miniscule budget "of less than one percent to land reform" Kariuki (2003:38) revealing the low commitment with which the new government was tackling issues of land redress. Therefore, white farmers could shift their land-use options without the fear of state led land appropriation of their farms while the low budget meant that funds were limited even if farmers were willing to profitably sell their farms to government. As explanation for this failure to deal with issues of economic redress, Ronnie Kasrils, a former cabinet Minister[41] laments how the ruling party, out of naivety "became prisoner of the neo-liberal global economy" (2013:xxii) likening it to a Faustian pact. In this 'confessional', the former Minister acknowledges how "tight budgetary obligations were instituted which would tie the hands of any future government's redistribution plans" (ibid: xxv) thus accounting for the low land reform budget. Therefore, it is understandable that in such a policy environment, white commercial farmers used the leeway to shift their land-use activities to game farming as an alternative production system since there were no encumbrances prohibiting them from doing so. Other contributing factors to conversion include the rural economic decline in this period referred to by Giliomee (2009) and the interest rate increases of 2000-2002 (Bond: 2005) which hurt farmers badly. At the same time, the rand currency depreciation of 23 % from July 2001 to early 2003 before its recovery in April 2003 (Marinda 2004:43) contributed to the shift into game farming aimed at international hunters since the foreign exchange rate made it cheaper for transnational hunters. Farmers particularly set on offering trophy hunting on their farms, were encouraged by the growing popularity of South Africa as a hunting destination for overseas hunters particularly after the 1994 democratic elections.

One explanation for the poor commitment to land reform by the new government relates to the South African economy's set-up. It consists of a very strong commercial, mining, service, manufacturing and industrial sectors which contributed up to 96,9% of Gross Domestic Product (ABSA 2003,CDE 2005,Van der Merwe & Saayman 2003, Terreblanche 2002) making it structurally different to most African countries. Thus, it was not and has

[41] Ronald Kasrils served as Deputy Minister of Defence (1994-1999); Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry (1999-2004) and Minister of Intelligence (2004-2008) under the ANC led government.

not been entirely dependent on agriculture like some third world economies since the other sectors contributed extensively to the national economy. Hence on taking over power the ANC led government might have relegated agricultural reform to the back burner because of the structural set-up of the economy. The 'Faustian pact' thesis partially supports this analysis especially considering the policy influence of big business. Nonetheless, the impact of commercial agriculture has been waning from contributing about 20% of GDP in the 1920's to just 3.4% in 2004 (Carruthers 2008:4b). Despite the consistent growth of the game sector in the past three decades, this trajectory of decline cannot be overlooked. One explanation is that South Africa's agricultural subsidies are among the lowest internationally having progressively dropped to about 4% compared with 22% in the United States, 45% in the European Union, 5% in Japan and 1% in New Zealand (Carruthers 2008: 4b). The latter two are not heavyweights in the agricultural produce market as compared to the US or some European countries or even South Africa itself. Moreover, net earnings from agriculture continued to drop in South Africa from R110 per hectare in 1990 to around R80 in 2000 (Carruthers 2008: 4b). These developments took place in an environment where farmers found it increasingly difficult to make a living from their land investments. Diversifying into game farming for some presented an opportunity to start anew.

Thus market forces have been a pull factor towards wildlife land use pattern (Bond *et al* 2004). For example, Professor Piet du Plessis, director of research and conservation at WRSA, claimed that game investment could result in an investment return of between 20% and 25% on one's original capital (Wessels, 2010) presenting huge profits unlike other investment instruments in the market. These figures may be exaggerated 'market talk' –an exception rather than the norm- to attract more people into the industry. Nonetheless, it is easy to see how the prospect of earning such figures could make game farming attractive to entrepreneurs in South Africa.

The legislative Impact

In addition to economic considerations, a number of legislative changes can be attributed to having facilitated the shift to game farming. For example, in the late apartheid era, the South African Law Commission drafted the Theft of Game Act of 1991. This virtually privatised ownership of wildlife cancelling the *res nullius* classification in South Africa (Sas-Rolfes 2011: *a; Snijders 2012*) in which free roaming wildlife belonged to the state. This marked a decisive turning point in legislation, a boon for white farmers before the change in political

context. According to game farmer Y[42], the legislation allowing for private ownership of wildlife together with the easing of export procedures for trophies encouraged industry actors and those looking for entry. Pre-empting this changing political context just prior to the 1994 democratic dispensation, the De Klerk government initiated the process of land reform with the Abolition of Racially Based Land Measures Act 108 of 1991 repealing the colonial 1913 and 1936 Land Acts legislation, as well as the apartheid formulated Group Areas Act of 1966.[43] The lifting of the moratorium on land reform set in motion a series of legislative events which had been preceded by economic and political changes. These signaled a new era which white commercial farmers had to prepare for, made more concrete by the change of government in 1994.

Other reasons can be postulated for the doubling of land under game farming within a 12 year period (NAMC 2006) during the post 1994 period. Among these explanations, the enactment of a series of Acts focusing on labour equity; extending of rights to farm workers and dwellers served as push factors contributing to this shift in farming pattern. First among these was the Labour Relations Act of 1995 which was followed by the Labour Tenants Act, 1996 (Act No. 3 of 1996) and the Interim Protection of Informal Land Rights Act, 1996 (Act No. 31 of 1996). The following year, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (RSA 1997) was enacted together with the Extension of Security of Tenure Act 62 (RSA 1997).[44] The latter Act protected the rights of occupation for farm workers and tenants from arbitrary farm owner evictions. In 2001, ESTA was amended to incorporate the specification of farm dweller rights to burial on the farm where they lived and the visitation rights to the graves of relatives who no longer live on the farm (Hall 2003). This came from a realisation of the inadequacy of the act in supporting workers' rights and the amendments were meant to extend more protection. Another piece of legislation, the Sectoral Determination of Agriculture Act implemented in 2002 aimed at setting a minimum wage for farm workers (Boehm & Schirmer 2010) added to the farmers' woes. As a result of the slew of legislation, responses varied from heightened farm evictions and employment of migrant and seasonal labour (Atkinson 2007;

[42] Interview with game farmer Y, Groot Marico, North West 03/10/2011.

[43] See Van der Walt (1995) pg. 11-'*White paper on land reform 1991'*.

[44] The Acts are in the government of South Africa website, www.gov.za/documents. Extension of Security of Tenure Act 62 of 1997 provides for stringent procedures on eviction of tenants by the landowner, offering protection to farm workers, especially those who have resided 10 years or longer on the land and are 60 years old.

Bernstein 1996 & 2013; Brandt 2013; Mkhize 2012) to conversion into game farming, 3 357 farms in 1993 to 9 000 in 2008.[46][45] Besides, conversion supported farmers' labour reduction strategies although that is a partial explanation. Added to that, the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act passed in 2000 (Boehm & Schirmer 2010) resulted in increased white farmer insecurity. Exacerbating these fears was the anticipation of the enactment of the new minimum wage for farm workers in 2003 (Bernstein 2013) which added to pressure on farmers leading some to shed off farm labour by converting to game farming.[46]

Associated with the contemporary political climate particularly after 1994, issues of land restitution and expropriation, farm security issues as well as the need to reduce farm labour have been linked to the shift to game farming (Cousins *et al* 2008. As one example, the enactment of the Extension of Security of Tenure Act (No. 62 of 1997) served as a catalyst that brought a high uptake of game farming (Brooks *et al* 2011; Kjelstrup 2011). Chief among the concerns of farmers were the tenets that regulated the residence, evictions and the facilitation of long term security of land tenure[47] of farm workers. Whatever the problems of farm workers evictions that the state intended to address, the farmers believed otherwise. As Du Toit points out, farmers felt that, "The Act gives these occupiers the life-long right to occupy land which is not theirs" and "occupiers may therefore obtain security of tenure on someone else's land at the expense of the owner" (Du Toit 2004:168). Such sweeping 'inalienable' rights given to tenants and farm workers threatened white farmers land ownership and use of their farms leading to the switch into game farming and the subsequent release of farm workers living on their land as they made way for wildlife (Brandt 2013; Brooks *et al* 2011; Kjelstrup 2011; Mkhize 2012). During the same period, the enactment of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (Act No. 75 of 1997) catapulted the rate of conversion to game farming by some farmers. Once the regulation of farm labour became part of government policy through the enactment of this Act, commercial farmers felt disempowered. Through regulating issues such as dismissals, sick leave and maternity leave including retirement provisions; farmers' business transaction costs skyrocketed.

[45] See the Chapter One, introduction to the thesis.
[46] See also Wegeriff *et al* (2005:33, 9) 'Still searching for security: the reality of farm dweller evictions in South Africa'. Polokwane North and Johannesburg : Nkuzi Developmental Association and Social Surveys. On page 9, they draw a table depicting farm evictions from 1984-2004, incorporating explanations of the evictions.
[47] See Government Gazette of the Act at www.saflii.org.za website. The website also includes a database of cases heard in the High Court since the Act's enactment. (accessed 12/12/2013)

Subsequent to that, the introduction of minimum wages in the Agricultural sector in 2002 added to the farmers woes. The paternalistic structure ordering social relations between farm workers and their white employers was now denuded by policies (Atkinson 2007, Ewert & Hamman 1999) such as the BCEA. This became a push factor from agriculture. Game farming supported the displacement of regular labour with seasonal labour and also the increasing employment of foreign nationals (Mkhize 2012). To a great extent, legislation stripped off the farmers' power and authority over their employees which for too long had been relationships run on a form of paternalistic benevolence with the farmer being the benefactor and the farm worker his willing dependent.

Nevertheless, favourable legislation also contributed to the shift. For instance, changes effected to the Meat Safety Act (No 40 of 2000) enabled game farming to become an industry supported by the Department of Agriculture. In amending the Act, two concessions were made to the Game Meat Scheme. Firstly, farmers could register game slaughter facilities as rural abattoirs where they complied with basic conditions on meat safety and hygiene. Secondly, granting that meat safety checks would be conducted by a trained meat examiner instead of a certified meat inspector (Hofmeyr 2014) repealed legislative obstacles. These concessions rescinded the strict provisions of the Meat Safety Act, relaxing the provisions for trading in game meat. Similarly, Gert Dry, former President of the WRSA believed that Acts and provincial ordinances relating to the hunting, catching and trading of game, enabled the land-owner to claim ownership of specific game on his land (WR 2008) which encouraged the shift to game farming. For example the 1991 Theft of Game Act together with the certificate of adequate enclosure sanctioned hunting on private land thereby offering protection to farmers with game fenced wildlife.

As of 2012, sector associations assert that the industry is over regulated by the state and that it should be allowed to be self-regulating or self-administering[49][48] considering the general incapability of the state together with the provincial government to enforce policy (Malan 2010). Substantiating the claims are stories of game farmers emigrating to neighbouring states where laws are not as stringent as in South Africa. For example it has been alleged that Mozambique allocated 64 000ha of game farms to South African farmers (de Jager 2011) to conduct business. This was intended to pressure the state by putting

[48] Interview with WRSA executive officer, Pretoria, 31/05/12.

across the threat of farmers leaving South Africa for neighbouring states where the environment is seen as legislatively conducive to their practices. In one dimension this is reminiscent of the Afrikaner great trek, when Afrikaners left the Cape colony for the interior as a rebellion against the British Cape governance. South African farmers face insecurity over land reform and a proposed land ceiling on land ownership (Child 2012) made worse by uncertainty about the reconstitution of land (De Jager in Child 2012). This type of sector posturing is understandable in such a political landscape. Despite these insecurities, some farmers are multiple land owners with various farms while most game farms are found in huge tracts of land (Brooks *et al* 2011) which makes them very productive in species production while also availing the hunter a huge surface area in which to conduct a hunt. Therefore, this ability to exercise land ownership and practice this form of land-use indicates that policy and politics have been largely supportive in providing an enabling environment for the industry's growth.

Additional factors

In addition to the political, legislative and economic considerations that were made by farmers framing the conversion decision, there were other factors that came into play. The commercial farmers' rural insecurity linked to the criminal activity targeting farmers in the countryside –pervasive farm murders are a case in point[49] - have affected farmers' personal security. Coupled with a rise in stock theft, some farmers felt pushed into game farming as the following refrain shows; "Natural predators, such as lion and leopard are ….good and relatively cheap game wardens" (Van der Merwe 2004:68). This observation summed up a salient pronouncement on an environment which had increasingly become dangerous for white commercial farmers in some rural regions of the country. On a different note, HIV/AIDS related deaths of farm labourers and the resurgence of malaria became negative factors pushing cattle farmers into game farming since the cost of worker absences impacted productivity (ABSA 2003; Carruthers 2008b). Information availability and its dissemination among practising game farmers and those looking to invest contributed to the shift. In addition, the leadership provided by various associations like CHASA, PHASA and the WRSA for example served as platforms advocating the comparative advantages of

[49] Giliomee (2009:566,690) states that "During the 1990's more than a thousand farmers, 80 percent of them Afrikaners, were killed" going further to say "farming in South Africa is the most dangerous job in the world." I hasten to say the last comment might be an exaggeration although Giliomee does not go as far as Du Toit P. (2004) 'The Great South African Land Scandal'. South Africa, Legacy Publications; who paints a completely gloomy picture of the fate of white farmers in democratic South Africa.

game farming over other types of farming including its touted profitability. Through latching on to the compatibility with existing values and practices of hunting and cattle ranching, these voices convinced farmers to convert into game farming. (ABSA 2003; Bond 2005; Bothma 2002a; Carruthers 2008a & b; Cousins 2008; Du Plessis 1997; Krynauw 2001a; Nell 2003).

I have addressed how the shared expertise and provision of excess animals by wildlife management in state protected areas to and with private farmers supported some of the pioneer commercial private game farmers. On the international stage, conservation and sustainability became global development discourse driving the agendas of international agencies like the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). South African game farmers then adopted this conservation discourse linking their enterprises to this 'morally' and economically beneficial land-use pattern (Cousins *et al* 2008). Applying the discourse to their enterprises works to ward off the potential threat of land reform since South Africa is a signatory to these international conventions and has an international reputation that has been based on respect for property rights and the constitution. Other factors include how Africa's growing population became a concern for researchers who saw wildlife as a means of dealing with the increased demands for protein for the growing African population (Carruthers 2008b).

As shown above, there were a plethora of factors which acted as push and pull factors towards the decision for conversion. While much of that can be linked to the economic and political, there are other underlying factors some of them social, health related and some technological, which when examined collectively, influenced the shift in land- use practice by farmers. Admittedly, the protections that had been offered by state subsidies once withdrawn hurt farmers badly. A combination of drought factors, lower prices and the international boycott of South African products caused farmers to restrategise. Historical moments, like the end of apartheid and beginning of majority rule, deprived white farmers of their paternalistic power and priviledge over their farming enterprise while their own safety was not guaranteed because of the surge of farm related murders. Game farming to a large extent offered a retreat into the 'once familiar' –refer to the colonial hunting in the previous section- becoming a preserve into which white farmers could carve a 'safe space' to continue their farming enterprise. Thus, the international discourse of 'sustainability, conservation' became an important justification in the conversion decision whilst also

framing it in economic contribution terms to the national fiscus. Another probable explanation is given by Ruth Hall (2009) who mentions the consolidation of farm holdings by some in the sector. This factor neatly fits in with some facets of game farming which requires extensive holdings for game to roam freely and is a huge marketing advantage to international tourists interested in trophy hunting. This was the case particularly for those farmers who were interested in creating conservancies (Brooks *et al* 2011, Kjelstrup 2011). From the descriptions and general factors given above, the question *'why'* the phenomenal increase happened is explained by all these combined factors.

The role of the state

Industry legislation reveals an enlightening picture when one traces its early developments. A number of provincial acts and ordinances many of which predate 1994 make up the legislation governing game farming and hunting. For example, some provincial ordinances can be traced to the 1910 Union of South Africa, formed by uniting the four British colonies (Carruthers 2008b). For instance, the reference to the Transvaal ordinance in the North West province is a relic of this period. One consequence of the legislation predating 1994 has been a fragmented and complex system of rules (Boshoff 2008; Brooks *et al* 2008, Burgener *et al* 2005). Another complication was the debate on whether wildlife could exist alongside agri- culture which had long been viewed as being on opposite ends of the stratum. During the 1920s to 1930s there were conflicting views on agriculture and wildlife. The official line favoured agriculture and labelled wildlife ranching as prone to spreading disease. In addition wildlife ranching was viewed as duplicating the role of national parks (Carruthers 2008b). These views changed in the 1950s with the acceptance that domestic animal production could occur side by side with wildlife. Consequently, the establishment of nature conservation departments in the four provinces was regularized (ibid). A further development was the certificate of adequate enclosure legislation; Nature Conservation Ordinance, 1974 (Ord. 19 of 1974)[50] enabling farmers to claim game that was fenced off on their land. Following that, other pieces of legislation were promulgated in the 1980's. Despite its century's long history, trophy hunting was only properly regulated in 1981 when the four provincial nature conservation agencies announced legislation to control the hunting industry (Pickover 2005). In the later stages of apartheid, pressure to categorise the industry stemmed from the social and political circumstances of the time. Consequently, wildlife

[50] See Government Gazette, Nature and Environmental Conservation Ordinance, 1974 (Ordinance 19 of 1974)

ranching became a fully-fledged agricultural activity in 1987 when the former Department of Agriculture bestowed its recognition (Department of Agriculture 2006). The Game Theft Act 105 of 1991 was another policy attempt to support the fledgling industry through positive regulation.

However, matters were complicated by the fact that wildlife ranching had not been formalized during the 1993 amalgamation of the agriculture and conservation Departments (Brooks *et al* 2008). This ambiguity is responsible for some of the conundrum afflicting the sector. For example, apart from being integrated with Agriculture, this sector is incorporated into other sectors of the economy like tourism and conservation. Accordingly, one view says the sector has been left in limbo between the Department of Agriculture and that of Environmental Affairs and Tourism with no clear sense of belonging to one or the other.[51] This loophole has been exploited by game farmers since falling between the cracks allows them to enjoy the benefits of tourism and agriculture, while for a time, the strict meat laws did not apply to their enterprises as they would if game had been categorised an agricultural product. Despite gaining agricultural status in 1987, game only became considered an agricultural product in terms of the Marketing of Agricultural Product Act 47 of 1996 (NAMC 2006) without the prohibitive restrictions accruing to other agricultural products. The Game Theft Act 105 of 1991 already acknowledged the commercial production of wildlife by those persons who owned game and went further to legislate compensation for losses accruing from acts of theft.[52] In this light, game attains commodity status valued enough to be protected under legislation.

Set against this background, legislation which had been hampered by poor training, minimal resources and staff also resulted in abdication by the four provinces in 1990[53] leading to what industry actors call 'self- regulation' (Pickover 2005). It is this self-regulation which opponents of game hunting - animal rights groups and the conservation lobby among others- say has allowed the recipients to flout international and national conventions on the

[51] Dr Gert Dry, President of WRSA in a 2008 article '*Game Ranching: quo Vadis?'* presents a compelling argument on why game ranching should fall under Agriculture. A view shared by other game farmers as indicated in 'Should agriculture take over the game industry?' Farmer's weekly (2006-11-20). In the article, an Eastern Cape game rancher claims: "Game animals are, after all, simply another farming commodity" indicating the economic consideration in which game production is viewed.

[52] Game Theft Act 105 of 1991, Subsection 1, 3.6 and 7 in www.justice.gov.za/legislation/acts/1991-105.pdf (accessed 24/09/2013).

[53] This was just before South Africa's democratic elections when negotiations were being held. The Bantustans crumbled during this time.

handling of wildlife (ibid). The cases of lion caged hunting[54] and rhino poaching serve as examples of the concerns that have been raised against some of the operational ethics of the sector which the state has tried to remedy. Yet the state has partly contributed to such problems through the unconsolidated legislation but also through the poor deployment of its human resources. The Directorate of Animal and Aqua Production Systems acknowledged the "legion of confusing and potentially conflicting legislation" (2006:3) as one prime example of state governance failure.

Moreover, the legislative complexity has been complicated by the challenges to government policy proposals made by game sector representatives where they viewed the proposed policy changes as being detrimental to their members' business growth. A good example was the 2010 Supreme Court challenge by the Predator Breeders' Association to government's prohibition banning lion caged hunting.[55] This is despite the fact that the streamlining of regulatory policy as mooted by the state was beneficial to the sector since it would allow for a consolidated but clear regulatory environment. For example, in an interview, one game farmer likened the process of applying for hunting permits within the 9 provinces to applying for 9 driving licenses to drive the same vehicle in the different provinces of South Africa.[56] As a response to this concern, a senior official in the North West department of Agriculture and Conservation referred to this bureaucracy as the "Nine plus one".[57] In the state's defence, he indicated how legislatively, the provinces were competent, independent authorities outside of national government. Although the official was sympathetic to the views of game farmers, he was adamant that national government included provincial authorities' input when passing new laws. Similarly, he believed that provincial authorities took national government statutes into consideration before passing provincial laws thereby ensuring alignment. Whatever the problems presented by focusing on the different views of the legislation of the industry, there is no denying some consolidation is needed. For example, an official confirmed that:

> We are currently in a process of substantial review of the TOPS Regulations and species list, and will repeal the original regulations, amendments and lists made to date, as soon as the revised regulations are

[54] This refers to the hunting of basically 'tame' lions, which have been cage reared and are then released into the farm just before being hunted.
[55] See 'New hunting rules spark controversy' in Farmer's weekly 2007-03-06. The association succeeded in getting the regulation rescinded. The Supreme Court of Appeal of South Africa Judgment, Case No: 72/10.
[56] Interview with informant M 2011/03/10 in Marico district, North West province
[57] Interview with senior provincial official P² at the Mahikeng government complex 06/12/2011

> implemented. The reason for repealing it is that it has become very difficult to keep track of all amendments (all published as separate notices).[58]

In the game farmer's opinion, the process could be made easier through centralisation instead of the fragmented state of the legislation environment. Such sentiments, rather than being seen as grumblings from an individual represent a critical commentary on the tensions associated with dealing with a multiplicity of state legislation by sector actors. As Cilliers *et al* (2014:5) point out:

> according to the constitution of South Africa (South Africa 1996); governance is arranged in terms of three 'spheres' and not 'levels' of government. This means that one sphere is not above the other in a typical hierarchical system, but rather that the spheres govern as autonomous entities. The environmental governance function is assigned as a concurrent function of national and provincial spheres of government while municipal planning is assigned exclusively to local spheres of government.

There is a genuine discrepancy within the various regulatory policies applying to the sector. This creates a disjuncture between the different spheres of government and impacts administration and policing of regulations. As a case in point, a North West official reflected on the differences in operating models between the Western Cape and the Northern Cape in contrast to the North West province.[59] Notably, this junior official contradicted the earlier views of his senior who emphasised the alignment of regulations between national government and the 9 provinces as stand-alone bio-diversity regulators operating in South Africa.

Nonetheless, in early 2000, government representatives agreed to set non- binding guidelines to streamline the Provincial level permit process in a workshop for Civil Society representatives and industry stakeholders (Network for Biodiversity 2003). This promise was an acknowledgement of the fault lines in the state system but the recommendation was not followed up possibly, for the obvious reason, that permits offer a revenue stream for the Provinces. Thus streamlining permit allocation and making it a national state department function would circumvent provincial offices. Hence by December 2011, nothing had

[58] Private email correspondence from Deputy Director, Policy Development, Directorate: TOPS Regulations and CITES (Department of Environmental Affairs), Pretoria. (10 March 2014).

[59] Interview with state informant Zz 01/02/2012 in Mahikeng government complex, North West. The official was referring to how the Western Cape refused to issue an import permit without first having seen the converse export permit. On the other hand, the Northern Cape was still offering translocation services when the North West had closed. Thus the official confirmed the non-alignment of provincial processes.

changed within the state's operations as confirmed by the North West official (ibid). Inevitably, loopholes in the system have been abused by actors bent on serving personal interests.

It is in this context that the permit process has been abused by some state officials –as alleged by a game farmer interviewee- to solicit bribes from game farmers and hunters looking to expedite the process.[60] The probability of this happening is high considering that the permit process is subject to approval by a responsible official. This can have the effect of elevating the power of the state official over the applicant. Thus, for a quick approval, the applicant may likely pay a bribe in order to expedite the permit allocation for a hunt. The reference to rhino poaching in the North West –see below- is an example of this abuse of the system. Furthermore, if they have an international client who has a limited time period in the country and wants to hunt one of those rare approved species like leopard or a rhino, the pressure of time may be an added inducement to pay a bribe to expedite licensing.[61] Informant M, referred to hearing about some of these practices, although he was reluctant to provide details when pressed on the prevalence of the issue (ibid). However, there was corroboration of this sentiment by a number of the interviewees including hunters, game farmers and some association representatives.[62] If this is true, then it would explain the reluctance of the state officials to restructure the system that pays them personal dividends over and above their normal salaries.

Violations of hunting regulations occur on both sides. In an interview with a North West state employee, the informant revealed that there were hunting outfitters and professional hunters who hunted without permits[63] for various reasons. This was seen as a challenge by state officials who believed that they were "the custodians of the animals" (ibid) and thus could not tolerate such flouting of regulations even though the illegal hunts were for plain game mostly for meat. The official indicated how once the culprits were taken to court, the fines were either minimal thus not being a deterrent enough, or the department sometimes lost the court case leading to the loss of authority by the provincial state officials:

[60] Interview with informant M on 2011/03/10 in Marico district, North West province.

[61] Interview with a professional hunter now operating his own business in Namibia (23/09/2013)

[62] In a majority of the interviews, participants claimed to have heard or known people who resorted to bribes in order to expedite permit process applications, yet none would point to a single individual. I did not pursue this line of questioning further since I did not want to jeopardise my study.

[63] Interview with department of agriculture, conservation and environment informant Zz 01/02/2012, Mahikeng government complex, North West. The of staff shortage issue was discussed by the Deputy Director for Bio-Diversity management and conservation in another interview.

> Sometimes we find that they do not take nature conservationists issues as serious matters (ibid).

Besides this, the official further acknowledged the challenges faced by officials pointing to how game farmers and hunters put pressure for quicker permit processing whether for an exemption permit or hunting permit disregarding the department's turn-around times. Added to that, the state representative recognised the effects of manpower shortages relating how an official could attend the release of a predator but would not be available for the hunting of that predator after the lapse of the release period as stipulated by law due to other commitments. Therefore, hunts could be conducted illegally as the system was open to abuse because of the constraints faced by provincial officials (ibid). In such a context, the loopholes within the system, manpower shortages or legislative inadequacies can be easily exploited by the actors depending on what they set to achieve as their personal goals.

For instance, the scourge of rhino poaching has been linked with private game farming[64] forcing the government to take action to prevent the species from becoming extinct in the country. This has led to an effort to review laws in order to strengthen the protection of rhinos as stated by President Jacob Zuma:

> We also want to put a stop to the hunting of white rhinos by foreign hunters. We also want to strengthen the rules and regulations with regards to the hunting of rhinos in general,[65]

This acknowledges that hunting of white rhinos has been to an extent a 'free for all', which now called for action from higher up in the state structures than the provincial authorities who regulate the game farming industry. By alluding to the fact that hunters should belong to a government recognised association –this is not unique to South Africa- the state President inadvertently promotes the existing associations, strengthening their national visibility and voice while tacitly acknowledging state regulatory lapse in monitoring. This action becomes an example of the government abdicating its duties and responsibilities to the associations as furthering calls for 'self-regulation' and 'self-administration'. Meanwhile, the stipulation of 'relevant experience' inadvertently shuts the door on newcomers particularly the previously disadvantaged thereby promoting a continuity that

[64] See 'Trophy hunting may be put on hold for a while', Farmer's Weekly, 13 October 2011.
[65] See Mouton 2012 in www.timeslive.co.za. The laws have been tightened after the North West scandal of prostitutes posing as hunters, then hunting rhinos on a North West farm on behalf of a Thai national. See mg.co.za/article/2011-07-22-poachers-prostitutes-and-profits(accessed22/10/2012)

supports the status quo. The President's statement continues thus,

> We also want to ensure that hunting takes place in the presence of environmental inspectors or an official of the issuing authority who is authorised to conduct compliance inspections, (ibid)

To ensure this, the state would have to employ more officers to adequately monitor hunting on farms while pouring more resources into the conservation departments to meet this objective. Despite this noble intention, it may not happen in practice because provincial government does not have the means –resources, human and otherwise- to carry this through. Informant Zz's earlier acknowledgement serves as a case in point. In saying this, I am taking into consideration some reservations that were expressed by industry stakeholders. For example, one respondent viewed the issuing of permits as being just 'a book exercise' with no follow- through being made by state officials on the land owner to ensure everything was in order. Understaffing and lack of capacity by the state officers to fully carry out their job responsibilities[66] were some of the reasons advanced for this 'laissez faire' attitude. These observations are supported by the admission of one North West state official who felt that the system could be improved significantly through technological advancement within the national departments. His opinion was that monitoring would be made much easier if there was a way in which officials could tap into the network system to check information on hunters that would reveal their hunting activities within the whole of South Africa.[67] Such a system, in the official's view, would improve the administration of paperwork allowing for easier checks and balances within the permit and licensing units nationwide. Relatedly, one game farmer felt that the state was the greatest threat to the industry stemming from its other social and governance priorities which made officialdom pay little attention to developments in the industry while being busy with pressing service delivery matters.[68] For instance, service delivery priorities could focus attention and resources on water and sanitation for the previously disadvantaged than on game farming as the latter is viewed as priviledged. It is in light of this that the state has to be made aware of "the dictum that the government must devise administrable instruments that enable the government-as-owner to appropriate a large rent share as is practical" (Ascher 1999:9) which in the South African context might entail charging appropriate fees for licenses and

[66] Interview with academic respondent R who is also an active hunter, Pretoria 29/05/ 2012
[67] Interview with state informant Zz 01/02/2012 in Mahikeng government complex, North West.
[68] Interview with informant M, Groot Marico 2011/03/10

permits which are in keeping with the prevailing market trends.

How has this continued to happen under the democratic government's watch? Government's contribution to the status quo has been the unintended result of a neo-liberal economic policy which has preserved old legacies while closing the door to the black majority.

> For despite certain interventionist measures, the government's economic policy continues to function within the constraints of the structural legacy of the apartheid era and globalized neo-liberal restructuring policies (Davies 2012:400).

In addition, Ascher views this phenomenon as government policies being in error because "they do not husband natural resources in ways that further society's welfare" (1999:3). Therefore, when the ANC government implemented a macroeconomic policy which prioritized deficit reduction, a tight monetary policy and trade liberalization under GEAR (Weeks 1999) it effectively played into the hands of white farmers. By implementing a 'willing-buyer, willing-seller principle' (Lahiff 2005, Greenberg 2010) farmers were effectively granted a 'veto' over land thereby protecting existing land owners who were mainly white. For example, because government did not have right of first refusal in any sale, white farmers could sell their land to anyone invariably giving them "discretionary power tantamount to a veto, to decide whether to sell to the government" (Fraser 2008:25) ensuring the dominion of markets and accumulation in rural development and enterprise. It is this same ideology that has supported the growth of the game sector.

Thus, material priviledges of white farmers have been maintained through the protection of property rights of beneficiaries of colonialism (Fraser 2007), though this is being challenged through land claims, some of which are still unresolved. It appears as if this legal protection – protection of private property rights as enshrined in the 'property clause' section of the Constitution's Bill of Rights (Ntsebeza 2006, Walker 2012) - has enabled white farmers to shift to game farming and provision of hunting services. One pull factor into this 'lucrative industry' is the view that it is not easily prone to fluctuations in market prices and exchange rate fluctuations like agricultural or pastoral farming; again a result of neo-liberal policies. As propounded by Davies (2012:400) "Indeed it is contended that many Afrikaner capital elites are among the best positioned to take advantage of this contemporary restructuring of capitalism, production and social relations." Therefore the government's neo-liberal stance and the Constitution have positively impacted the growth and operations of the sector. The

government's stance on skills and its emphasis on commercial agriculture appears heavily reliant on white farmers; a position that has been exploited by the latter. In the following chapter on sector associations, I will return to this argument. The position of white farmers has been strengthened by the model of land reform the government has adopted especially in introducing black farmers. The failures of land reform (Du Toit 2004) have weakened the state's resolve to transform the game sector. Earlier policy intentions by the government to start training and supporting its own players in the game farming industry so as to break the monopoly held by white game farmers did not materialize as the example below shows. This last observation takes into account that the government itself had promised the following:

> The DoA (Department of Agriculture) will establish a National Wildlife Ranchers/Farmer Programme for New participants in partnership with relevant government department and non-governmental organisations in order to create an enabling environment for emerging wildlife ranchers/farmers to participate in the entire wildlife ranching value-chain. This programme will comprise of various phases from farmer/rancher mentorship phase to the value-adding and market-access phases. (www.nda.agric.za)

Yet an initiative like this reflects the state's movement "away from the explicitly pro-poor ideals of the 1990s towards a stronger interest in promoting a class of black commercial farmers" (Walker 2012:825). Nonetheless, this reflects the state's neo-liberal leanings. To date, as far as I know, there are no indications to suggest that a National Wildlife Ranchers programmme has taken or is taking place, which could be explained by the fact that government is not a monolithic entity despite being dominated by a single political party (Ascher 1999). Therefore the weighting given to implementing such programmes has to be balanced against other state-funded priority areas with which a developmental state like South Africa has to contend. In such a context, the state has steered clear of putting much needed financial resources into a wildlife programme when it has not met with much success in its agricultural programmes in support of land reform beneficiaries. This lack of state leadership, has allowed wildlife sector associations to step into the gap and offer piece-meal initiatives that offer training and other support to black aspirant hunters or game farmers without necessarily reconstituting the structural set-up of the sector. For example, the South African Hunters and Game Conservation Association (SAHCGA) is supporting

such an initiative in Mafikeng.[69] In light of this, the national government or local government needs to enforce an empowerment charter (Gaborone 2006) to measure the transformation of the heavily white male dominated game farming and hunting industry.

An examination of policy documents and interviews with government and state officials provides insights into the state's intentions although these have not translated into action on the ground. For example, the Department of Environment and Tourism in 2007 circulated draft regulations (van Schalwyk 2007) whose purpose was to streamline and direct the governance of wildlife utilisation. The draft policy of the regulations had the following among its objectives:

- Support the effective management of an ecologically and economically viable wildlife ranching systems.
- Ensure the sustainable management of natural resources as utilised by the wildlife ranching sector.
- Facilitate the development of a set of Norms and Standards, Guidelines and a Framework for a sustainable wildlife ranching sector.
- Promote and support equitable access to and participation in the wildlife ranching sector.
- Provide a framework for effective management of animal health and welfare
- Establish a National Wildlife Ranch / Farm and Animal Database
- Facilitate the promotion and marketing facilities and strategies within the wildlife industry.
- Support relevant poverty alleviation and food safety issues
- Promote research and development, and training and support service. (www.nda.agric.za)

Very little has been achieved to date with regards to meeting most of these objectives. Thus there have been many gaps, which have been exploited by private sector actors for the reasons of expediency and conducting business under minimal state interference. As well intentioned as the draft policy is, there is a general acceptance of poor enforcement of hunting regulations, and failure to collect and collate the relevant data (Pickover 2010).

[69] Interview with SAHCGA executive official, Pretoria 5/02/2013

This failure draws into question government's grip and control of the industry. This is confirmed by North West conservation officials' admission that their statistics were incomplete because some game farmers had still not returned their hunting slips to the officers for recording.[70] Therefore, the complete picture of happenings in the sector may only be estimated since the instruments for measuring are flawed. Hence the reference to 'self-administration' mentioned earlier, whose resonance may reflect a colonial present in which the state is a bit-part player in monitoring wildlife use whilst supporting those already in the industry points to the state's failings which can partly be explained by the very first objective in the draft resolutions above. Since the core business is 'supporting' ecology and economics, social equity can be relegated to the periphery as it is not a core issue as reflected by the state.

Regional comparison

I will now draw upon regional examples of Zimbabwe and Kenya, to consider processes that have taken place in game farming and hunting with the intention of contextualising South Africa's position with reference to other African countries. Similar to South Africa, Kenya and Zimbabwe have their history of colonial occupation, a racialised conservation ethos linked to the racialised land and agriculture pattern. This was followed by a negotiated land settlement during the early democratic years. These factors directly link to the growth of the game farming sector in the two countries and allow for comparison and contrast with South Africa. The other reason is to highlight the variations while depicting the emergence of general trends in the sector. Granted, the timelines for the three countries' post democratic reforms are different, but that does not take away the salient parallels to the approach of the agrarian question and its impact on the game industry in all three countries. This approach works to spotlight South Africa's game farming trajectory including its specific and particular processes. It does so by pointing to the socio-economic, political and historic challenges faced by the South African actors by placing game farming in an African regional context, albeit in a small way.

Firstly, as a former British colony, Kenya shares a similar tradition of private game ownership to South Africa. For example, rhino, elephant and large predator conservation is

[70] Interview with senior provincial official P², (Mahikeng0 06/12/2011, Interview with state informant Zz 01/02/2012 (Mahikeng), North West.

being conducted on privately owned land by individuals, communities and companies in Kenya. In contrast to South Africa, Kenya has gone further by implementing policies and legislation enabling local Maasai communities to benefit from wildlife use (Beinart & Hughes 2007). Such initiatives are conducted through equity-sharing schemes where partnerships between the private sector and the local Kenyans in the area have been formed (Mwangi 2009). South Africa adopted a different model enforced after land reform considerations whereby the private game farmer leases the farm continuing with the production practised earlier generally indicative of a gulf in the type of partnership favoured by white farmers with their black counterparts. On the other hand, the Kenyans have gone about land reform through establishing what is called 'group ranch' where a group of pastoralists graze their individual herds in a demarcated rangeland area to which they have official land rights (Jones, Stolton and Dudley 2005).

In South Africa, those land rights are abrogated with claimant communities having no user rights on these lands. The Kenyan ranches are regulated by the Land (Group Representatives) Act of 1968 (ibid). A number of these group ranches have followed some form of conservation management on all or part of their land while others have set aside land for sanctuaries (Jones, Stolton and Dudley 2005). In addition, some group ranches have come together as Wildlife Associations creating extensive range areas making wildlife a sustainable form of land use, demonstrating how huge incomes can be earned through an integrated land use approach involving wildlife (Barrow *et al* 2000). A similar model has been proposed in the Midlands area of KwaZulu-Natal under the auspices of the Gongolo Wildlife Reserve which aims to take "about 40 000 hectares in extent and incorporate at least 16 farms" (Brooks *et al* 2011) even though it is a group of white farmers coming together to create a huge conservancy. Similar efforts in South Africa have resulted in private conservancies. Despite the group ranches 'success story' however, there has been a decline in wildlife numbers in Kenya. This decline has been attributed by South African industry actors to the Kenyan banning of trophy hunting which occurred in 1977 (Lindsey *et al* 2006b), in-1976 according to Bond *et al* (2004)- when the country branded itself as an eco-tourism destination (NAMC 2006). In support of their analysis, they claim that a reversal of the dictum "*if it pays it stays*"[71] - resulted in the weakening motive for private

[71] This maxim is said to apply to wild animals in the game farming and hunting sector in South Africa as being true in the sense that the onus of preserving and conserving game relies on its profitability. It has legal connotations to selling and

conservation leading to a drop in wildlife. Ironically though, Bond *et al* (2004) claim that South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe benefitted from Kenya's ban to become dominant market players by the 1990s. As argued by the South African pro-hunting grouping, the logic is that the banning of licensed hunts resulted in increased poaching of Kenyan wildlife and a decline in wildlife numbers as the natural birthing cycle was not in pace with poaching.

The dictum *'if it pays it stays'*, I would venture, is part of a deracinated South African game farming ideology, layered with meaning. It ascribes a utilitarian preservation undertone for the wildlife that does bring economic dividends. By design, this slogan thus asserts that those game animals that bring more profit should be 'farmed' while those that require the farmer to spend money on their preservation without bringing due profit do not deserve the farmer's 'conservation'. It ties in with the idea that wildlife conservation in private game farming is closely linked to the profit motive as opposed to conservation for the sake of future generations' benefit from use of that resource. Private game farmers in South Africa argue that conservation is linked to the profit motive, and economics will continue to drive land use. Therefore, if hunting brings the most economic benefits, then it has to be encouraged and supported instead of being banned as the Kenyans did. Yet the Kenyans have continued in their chosen course instead of taking the South African advocated path of hunting as the panacea to game's long term conservation future. Currently, the Kenyan grass-roots movement has responded by applying pressure on the state to toughen anti-poaching legislation while proposing a new wildlife and Conservation bill (Howden 2013).[72] The latter was adopted in December 2013. Importantly, the Kenyan model has reaped benefits for the economy as reflected in the tourism revenue from safari tours raking in 12, 5 percent of the country's revenue and 11 percent of jobs.[73] This shows that a wildlife use as a resource can still reap economic benefits without taking the path advocated by South Africa's private game farming fraternity.

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buying of game as sanctioned by the state. Poaching would not apply in this instance. Nevertheless some would dispute as unethical, expectations that conservation of wildlife should be tied to profitability (Novellie *et a*l 1996).

[72] See Daniel Howden's article 'Kenyans rally to save their wildlife' in mg.co.za/article/2013-10-18—Kenyans- rally-to-save-their-wildlife (accessed 22/11/2013) detailing how young Kenyans are dealing with poaching by putting pressure on politicians, magistrates for stiffer sentences.

[73] See 'Chinese ivory smuggler gets record sentence after landmark Kenya trial' in www.timeslive.co.za/africa/2014/01/28/chinese-ivory-smuggler-gets-record-sentence-after-landmark-Kenya-trial (accessed 28/01/2014)

Zimbabwe, on the other hand presents a different story, although comparisons can be made with both Kenya and South Africa. To begin, there are claims that the first commercial game ranch was launched on the Henderson farm in the lowveld in Zimbabwe (formerly Southern Rhodesia) (Dassmann 1964, Bigalke 1966; Wels 2003). Here wildlife was reportedly kept applying scientific methods more or less along cattle ranching systems; proving the benefits of wildlife in comparison to cattle ranching. Thus, the base for wildlife ranching was laid in Zimbabwe from this programme. On a different note though, most of the successful game farming or ranching in Zimbabwe has occurred in the drier parts of the country, natural regions IV and V. These agro-ecological zones have average annual rainfall of 450-650mm and 450mm respectively (Wels 2003:45, 46). Such areas, which had been seen as suitable for livestock ranching, were later put to game ranching use in the later part of the 20th century. Wildlife production as a concept has grown in leaps and bounds -since 1959- to a point where it "entirely eclipsed cattle as the form of property and medium of accumulation" (Child 1995, Suzuki 2001) by the late twentieth century in some parts of the country. Implicit here is wildlife's importance in shaping the livelihoods of some white commercial farmers in Zimbabwe particularly in the mid-1980s to early 1990s (Pilossof 2012; Wels 2003). As propounded by Wolmer (2007:267):

> manufacturing and marketing of wilderness has been particularly evident on private game ranches and in so-called conservancies in the lowveld, where former cattle ranchers have gone to new lengths in the creation of a wilderness spectacle.

Therefore, game ranching grew from cattle farming after the realisation that more varied wild animals could be stocked on the same piece of land (Child 1995, Wels 2003). Similarities in the process can be drawn to what has transpired in South Africa. For example, other factors such as low cattle prices, the competition for grazing with wild animals and fear of the liberation war which escalated in the 1970s led to the decline in cattle ranching with a converse increase in game farming (Suzuki 2001; Wels 2003). A point to note here is that one of the liberation strategies was to attack white commercial farmers close to border areas and in isolated rural outposts to destabilise farming operations (Pilossof 2012:22-24; Wels 2003). Conversion to wildlife farming could have been a way for commercial farmers to avoid becoming war casualties. Later, after independence, game's foreign currency earning ability became an attractive magnet pulling in white commercial farmers who were diversifying to this form of land-use (Pilossof 2012).

Meanwhile, the capital accumulation potential of game ranching came to the notice of the state. Government was attracted by the revenue collecting prospects offered by trophy hunting ventures which were associated with the industry (Suzuki 2001, Wels 2003). Second only to tobacco exports, eco-tourism involving game farming was the highest foreign currency earner in Zimbabwe before the disruptions associated with fast track land reform (Suzuki 2001). For example, Lindsey *et al* (2006b:880) cites US$ 16 million per year -2005 figures and before- being the value of trophy hunting contribution that was made to the nation. Dwarfing these figures is the US$ 433 million income from tobacco exports in the 1990's (Goebel 2005:359). Despite this revelation, the quoted figure for trophy hunting is indicative of how important this sector has been to contributing to gross domestic product in the country.[74] In support of this earning potential, a 1990's study conducted by the World Wide Fund for Nature revealed the huge returns averaging 10, 5% (Jansen *et al* 1992) earned by individual game ranches making them lucrative financially. It is this economic consideration which has driven the shift in farming patterns from cattle rearing to wildlife or game enterprise by white farmers in Zimbabwe and also in South Africa as argued in this thesis.

Some Zimbabwean game ranches have been family farms passed on from one generation to the next, while others have been bought by newcomers attracted by the economic opportunities associated with the industry. Inevitably, there have been tensions between the two groups, though not serious enough to warrant space in this research. Hunting has provided the bulk of the income earned by game farmers with the majority of the tourists coming from the United States, Australia, Germany, India and Japan including other countries (Suzuki 2001). This was the period before fast track land reform in Zimbabwe. However, game farming in Zimbabwe has not been without its share of controversy. It has been viewed suspiciously as an attempt to block government efforts to acquire 'unutilised' land for redistribution to the landless black majority population whilst at the same time accruing huge profits to the white game farmers without giving back to the majority (Dunn 1995; Goebel 2005) black population in the country.[75] In recognition of this accusation, Wels (2003) in a discussion of Save Valley Conservancy case study proffers the concept

[74] Wels (2003:134) claims US $ 12, 826 360 were 1993 Zimbabwe trophy hunting revenues.

[75] Practising game outfitters were accused of externalisation of funds leading to a clampdown on operators by state security agencies in 1997. See Wels (2003:149).

of 'reciprocal exchange' as a means in which the white owners tried to navigate the tensions around their profiting from this enterprise while gaining goodwill from neighbouring villages. It is tensions like these which invoke questions on the processes of game farming as an enterprise that operates on an exclusive basis for a priviledged few in an African setting where resource conflict has a historical colonial base. Some of these issues resonate with what will be discussed with regards to South Africa.

Similar to South Africa, legislation too played a part in the growth of the industry in Zimbabwe. The enactment in 1975 of the Parks and Wildlife Act handing owners the rights to wild animals found on their properties and the willingness of government to sell National Park wild animals to farmers (Bond *et al* 2004, Child 1995, Wildlife Producers Association 1998) gave rise to a legitimate form of private wildlife ownership recognised and buttressed by the state. Notably, the Act's enactment was five years before the Zimbabwe's independence in 1980. The Act has interesting parallels to South Africa's Game theft Act of 1991 which came before the 1994 democratic elections. Hence some of the processes that transpired in Zimbabwe seemed to be replicated years later in South Africa as the above reflections indicate. Similarly, during the first decade of Zimbabwe's independence, there was an international shift in wildlife conservation thinking that led to 'sustainable' utilisation becoming the dominant form of preservation (Suzuki 2001), partly as a realisation of trophy hunting revenue. This ties in with the prevailing 'sustainable development' discourse of the period which defined 'sustainable development' as:

> Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.[76]

This policy stance supported the growth of the industry leading to efforts to extend benefits to black people living in rural areas. Hence the government of Zimbabwe in collaboration with some international partners in the development business initiated the CAMPFIRE[77] programme, opening space for participation of rural communities in wildlife utilisation through their rural district councils (Murombedzi 1999). Thus;

[76] Source; 1987 World Commission on Environment and Development, Brundtland Commission report: 'Our Common Future'. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[77] Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources was constituted via a 1982 amendment to the Parks and Widlife Act (1975). Considered a flagship programme, it combines conservation with wildlife resource usage bringing in communal people to partake in this activity.

> In Zimbabwe's dual land tenure system, CAMPFIRE in effect constitutes a transfer of the notion of ownership over wildlife to the communal sector - a right that the white farmer dominated freehold sector has had since 1975. (Murombedzi 1999:287)

Therefore, CAMPFIRE (Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources) enabled the participation of black communities living in rural areas in wildlife utilisation even though this was negotiated through rural district councils which had authority over the distribution of dividends from hunting conducted in these designated communal areas. Despite its challenges, this programme was significant "for its participatory approach and its innovative strategies for confronting the developmental and environmental problems of some of the most marginal rural areas" (Alexander & McGregor 2002:606). This flagship programme was one differentiator of Zimbabwean wildlife resource use and accrual as it extended dividends to the formerly disadvantaged and excluded section of the population. However, during the period of fast track land reform most of the gains that had been made were reversed. That having been said, some private game farmers, conservationists and members of NGOs supported the establishment of a Trans Frontier Park linking Zimbabwe, Mozambique and South Africa as a way of saving game that was being threatened by land invasions (Ramutsindela 2004:69) during the period of fast track land reform.

In conclusion, Zimbabwe has a number of similarities to South Africa such as the manner in which legislation played a part in wildlife utilisation and access. Some of the legislation dates back to the colonial era even though the ruling party made efforts to address these after independence. Additionally, the exchange of ideas on conservancies and even the translocation of animals as in 1993, when 200 elephants from Zimbabwe's Gonarezhou National Park were moved to South Africa (Wels 2003) shows the extent of relations. In the next section I will turn to South Africa to explore the post-apartheid context of wildlife use in game farming and its legacies.

A South African legacy: the 'colonial present'

As the brief cases of Kenya and Zimbabwe highlight, wildlife use in Africa is mired in colonial legacies that have impacted the growth trajectory of the two states. In the South African context, I will argue that the adaptation by white farmers to game farming as a land

use pattern has been an ongoing exercise which kept certain elements of the old way of living while adjusting to the new. In a previous section, I discussed how hunting attained an exclusive status making it a preserve for a priviledged few with the black population deprived of hunting rights. To a great extent, not much has changed in the game farming and hunting sector. It remains a largely white male dominated space. Part of that can be explained by the fact that even though South Africa has changed politically with power in the hands of the ANC since 1994, the material conditions have largely remained the same economically (Hendricks 2001, Terreblanche 2002). The state inherited systems from the past which were racially discriminatory, for instance white commercial agriculture. Historically, the South African polity promoted a whites-only commercial agricultural sector. This sector drew heavily on state subsidies, protectionist measures and the use of cheap labour in the apartheid era (Atkinson 2007; Carruthers 2008; Fraser 2007). The context changed with the passage of time and under the shadows of international developments and in the neo liberal era with the South African state following the deregulation model, a process continued by the ANC government.

Yet the earlier mentioned land reform initiatives by De Klerk were seen as piece-meal and not completely addressing the land issue including other colonial era and apartheid induced injustices. A follow-up to this process was conducted by the country's first democratic government in 1994 with the announcement of a new macro-economic policy in 1996 called GEAR[78] (Fraser 2007, Weeks 1999). There were a series of acts which were brought in by the ANC led government to remedy what had been the prevailing status quo whose one constant has been "widening inequalities, ongoing dispossession in many forms" (Hart 2013:229) more so in the rural context. For example, taxes on 'unproductive' land, although intended to release land by forcing farmers to sell, have been seen as pushing farm owners into turning their private land into game ranches (Botha 2001, Milton *et al* 2003, South African Government 2003) by stocking the land with wildlife. Encouraging this shift is a wildlife policy environment which positively supported and priviledged the protection of land under wildlife use (Koelble 2011) as it is viewed as contributing to the country's conservation efforts. Its effect was and has been sufficient to encourage the conversion to game farming. It is under such conditions that the present day game farmers have adapted

[78] Growth, Employment and Redistribution programme announced in June 1996. The stated purpose was to increase economic growth through fiscal expenditure reduction, a tight monetary policy and trade liberalization. (Weeks 1999).

their business operations even though very little transformation has occurred in the sector.

The questions to ask then are: what has changed and how far? One premise is that the social structure has remained the same in the game farming and hunting industry as it was and is deemed to be in the agriculture industry. One can posit that white farmers have found a way to successfully negotiate land redistribution through game farming and hunting. Such action adopts a similar strategy as shown in the Zimbabwe case study. Therefore, under the new democratic dispensation, "the creation of new democratic spaces in post-apartheid South Africa are framed within old attitudes, practices and expectations" (Lieres 2007:227) linked to continuities of a colonial present. Here, one could point to the protection of the hunt and banning of African hunting as echoes from the colonial period now reflected in these white hunting spaces. Some of these new spaces like game farms have been converted from old agricultural land usage becoming eco-tourism spaces through wildlife farming. Consequently, these 'new spaces' are "registered in continuities of historic relations to property, production and economic power" (Bernstein 2003:212 in Mkhize 2012: 52) raising important questions around marginalisation and exclusion of the majority black population. As a case in point, in a land dispute with a Groot Marico game farmer, game fencing was cut by some members of the neighbouring village leading to the farmer seeking court relief. The matter was partially resolved after the court's intervention.[79] Through this act of sabotage, the affected villagers displayed their frustrations with the slow pace of the settlement of their land claim. Despite the presumed powerlessness against the structural system, the symbolic act of fence cutting as application of 'weapons of the weak' (Scott 1985) as last resort is a clandestine yet poignant protest against perceived racial continuities in ownership patterns of disputed resources.

Game farming as a form of land use and tenure paves the way to claiming a social law of land access. By these means, private game farmers '*claim'* land ownership through economic productivity, continued occupation and conservation (Hughes 2001) hence halting or reconfiguring the redistribution efforts of government (Langholz and Lassoie 2001, Brooks *et al* 2011). It is this production capacity factor which the industry uses as leverage by referencing the sector's economic contribution coupled with its conservation contribution. From this, the political action of holding on to the land (Fraser 2008) through

[79] Interview with state informant Zz (Mahikeng), North West (01/02/2012).

conversion to game farming attains symbolic, ennobled meaning above the material issues it carries. Reference to the 'conservation' contribution as part of the national effort becomes very significant. This analysis accords closely with the observations that, white commercial farmers have been adroit at sidestepping state policies (Atkinson 2007) by continuously re-articulating their wildlife production in depoliticized and ethical terms (Suzuki 2001). Do the laws of the land such as TOPS[80] which where gazetted by the democratic government buttress this position? Thus the frequent reference to private game farmers having conserved more animals for South Africa's benefit than they consume in their hunting activities serves its purpose. Therefore, engaging in wildlife farming serves as a production option supporting the international goal of attaining a '*sustainable*' living planet (ABSA 2003). Latching on to the coattails of this international development discourse adds an extra dimension since South Africa is a signatory to the CITES convention. All this works to achieve the intended objective of obtaining and retaining possession of the land while subtly fending off land redistribution efforts.

Therefore, does ownership of wildlife provide white farmers with a privileged position? In a different vein, the question to be asked should investigate the efforts to transform the industry from the inside although Gaborone (2006) tackles this subject in his thesis on transformation of the game farming sector in the North West. Importantly, Lieres's (2007) earlier observation about democratic spaces being 'framed within old attitudes and practices' is indicative of the gate-keeping function inherent to game farming spaces thereby endowing a priviledged status for owners and hunters. In light of this observation, the perpetuation of colonial and apartheid patterns of ownership has meant that hunting and game farming have remained an exclusive almost white male preserve bearing in mind that production options are not equally accessible by all. Structures of social difference and relations of power mediate agricultural and wildlife ranching options with capital as an additional limiting factor. When taking into account issues like age, gender, wealth, class and ethnicity these can become favourable conditions or barriers (Scoones 2002) in the sector keeping it as an exclusively white, male dominated industry. Hence those who own and have the means can enjoy the priviledged hunting status and game ownership. Therefore, despite the democratic government's attempt -through rhetoric, policy and land

[80] Threatened or Protected Species regulations governing the wildlife and game farming industry in the country came into effect on 1 February 2008 and apply to listed species.

reform initiatives -(half-hearted as it may be)- to level the playing field and open up opportunities for black farmers, the white male hegemony and monopoly of the lucrative industry has remained intact. One explanation by (Atkinson 2007:75) is that agriculture's importance as producers and employers may have influenced the state's reluctance in enforcing tough legislation measures to transform the rural economy. This would explain the half-hearted land reform processes.

Has government inherited a legal system that helps game farmers to maintain their hegemony? Interestingly, South Africa has a unique situation in which game is privately owned under a *res nullius* classification whereby wild animals belong to nobody. Yet wildlife can become the property of anyone who assumes possession through effective physical control -*res alucuius*- even while the regulations governing the industry relate to wild game belonging to the state (Benson 1991; Carruthers 2008b; Dorrington 2007 *private papers,* NAMC 2006). To this end, the Game Theft Act 105 of 1991 strengthened the hand of game 'possessors' significantly recognising their status in law just before democracy. Questions have also been raised of how government regulation or lack of regulation impedes the industry (Sims-Castley *et al* 2005). I argue that regulation has assisted the growth of the sector as discussed above. As opined by an industry player, "the private ownership of wildlife and the exemption status given to game farmers has facilitated the administration and export of trophies" (Dorrington 2007 *private papers*). Regulation has created favourable conditions to support the phenomenal growth of the sector while maintaining the status quo. Following from this, it is notable that in some rural areas enduring social structures bestow substantial power to white farmers and their allies (Mayson *et al* 2001; Fraser 2008) which in several ways does express the context of game farmers. It is in this environment of contestation, negotiation and continuities that the state has had to govern the sector.

Conclusion

This section has shown how the history of game hunting and farming in South Africa is tied to its colonial and political roots. The segregationist policies associated with a racialised hunting past during the colonial and apartheid periods have alienated the sector from majority participation by the black populace in the post-democracy era. Yet they have also provided possibilities upon which the sector's growth has been built as a socially exclusive space. More- over, despite changes after 1994, the political processes that have supported

this segregationist and exclusionary character have not translated to the socio-economic and agricultural arena. Thus to a large extent, polarities that continue to dog the sector as illustrated are not unique to South Africa but depict a fate that has also afflicted Kenya and Zimbabwe in different ways. South Africa differs from these examples in its late arrival in the democratic arena, its political stability and its well-developed infrastructure that has assisted in attracting the foreign trophy hunters to its shores.

Significantly, South Africa's sizeable white population, which is well represented in agriculture as land owners, also combines an income capacity allowing for engagement in biltong hunting activities as consumers. This has supported the continuation of this 'colonial' pastime for this sector of the population. A huge contemporary advantage has been the 'sustainable utilisation' discourse locally reflected through the 'if it pays, it stays' maxim. This thesis of 'sustainable utilisation' whereby hunting is tied to conservation has been internationally attractive as it fits in with other development and market related discourses like neo-liberalism. Yet it places the role of the game farmer as a breeder of surplus animals that will be hunted, once again reflecting that colonial role attributed to the reserve game warden. Read from this insight, game farming represents a 'colonial present' with its spatial exclusion and the processes that accompany it. On the other hand, this maxim has differentiated South Africa's model from Kenya's, for example by creating a niche segment for South Africa's trophy hunting market. Generally though, national legislation from the colonial period to the present era together with the lack of stringent policing, have gone a long way towards maintaining and growing the industry. Added to that, the economic downturn in domestic agriculture combined with loss of state subsidies, a depreciating rand and policy shifts were some of the factors that accelerated conversion to game farming. Yet the overall reflection is one of continuity in which a 'colonial present' lingers in the spaces and processes of game farming.

Chapter four:

The nature of the industry

This chapter builds on the previous chapter by investigating the scale and value of private game farming. Continuing from the post-1994 developments –when the socio-political environment of agriculture shifted-, it discusses key features of the sector including how growth has spawned subsidiary businesses. The discussion tracks the movement of animals from point of origin to other destinations revealing their passage's bearing on the industry. Discussion centres on how the different contestations are playing out and being managed by the actors in their localities. Legislatively, the origins and movement of wildlife have implications for habitat use; hence animal movement entails engaging with the provincial officials for the issuance of permits to fulfil legal provisions. In a small measure, this section will deal with state relations with the private game farming sector.

A contextualisation of hunting and its categories, with a special focus on trophy and biltong hunting considers the economic contribution of hunting and its value to the national economy. This ties in to the implications of the discourse adopted by the sector. For example, the principle of 'fair chase' in hunting has been appropriated as a distinguishing characteristic by which sector actors define the 'hunt'. Tellingly though, game auctions when perceived as conspicuous consumption, denote the impact of speculative capital and outsider financialisation of the sector. Such capital affects the auction prices while also ensuring that small-time players are side-lined from the action. Issues of affordability lead to class stratification while the factor of outsider status to this section of the game farming grouping (fellowship) perpetuates gate-keeping. The auction performance can be directly linked to the economic positioning of a few in the sector while the auction's national visibility positively impacts the position of the industry within the national political economy. This has significance particularly with regards to land reform. For example, an examination of how investment finance feeds through game farming reveals the impact of socio-economic and political developments in the industry.

To understand the processes involved in game farming and hunting, it is necessary to delineate how the sector operates. I will start by establishing where the animals come

from and related processes of wildlife movement by farmers.

Game origin

Game farmers typically obtain their game through three sources, some from state institutions, private auctions, but mostly from private individuals. The National Parks Board puts animals out to tender where interested parties can place bids. For example, official tenders were issued by the Northern Province Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism for professional hunters and their clients to hunt animals escaping from the Kruger National Park, Letaba Ranch, Andover and Manyeleti[81] (SANWILD 2001). The KwaZulu Natal Conservation services have also sold game through the National and Provincial game reserves (ibid). This has been a long-standing tradition as Bigalke (1966:99) points out as early as the 1960's, Provincial Nature Conservation Departments supplied farmers with wildlife including offering advice on its management. Apparently this option for buying wildlife has continued since tender notices put out by wildlife and nature reserve owning municipalities or SANParks advertised wildlife sales (NAMC 2006). There is a provincial and public-private transactional relationship that supports the growth of the sector. Besides these, animal dealers operating as independent brokers advertise game sales through industry publications or bulletins like 'Landblou weekblad', the Farmer's Weekly, 'Wildlife Ranching', 'SA Hunter' and 'SA Wild and Jag' with multiple sites or locations of where the sales will take place. Quoted prices tend to include the delivery charge since the independent brokers include these as part of their running costs.

In addition, game auctions provide another avenue to source wildlife. These constitute an average of one third of game trade (NAMC 2006). Auctioneering companies advertise in bulletins giving descriptions of their stock on offer. For example, indications are given of the animal's age, gender, pregnant status[82], price, quantity and disease absence if its buffalo, tuberculosis (TB) and brucellosis (CA) tested and a brief description of the animal's appearance. For instance, in 2009 Vleissentraal, a game marketing company auctioned over R200m worth of game alone (Wessels 2010). This company is an active auctioneer within the sector. Meanwhile, the sector has also kept pace with advances in technology since some game has been auctioned online by www.bidorbuygame.co.za for example. Game farmers also sell privately to each other

[81] The last three are provincial game reserves. The tenders were for buffalo, hippo, lion and elephant
[82] Selling of pregnant wildlife contravenes a voluntary code of conduct operational in the sector

and exchange game. Similar to Zimbabwe and Namibia, South African wildlife on offer is privately owned indigenous species (van der Merwe 2004) which in itself facilitates trade between owners. In contrast, in the United States, the state or federal government owns the wildlife or holds it in trust (Licht *et al* 2014) while in South Africa the removal of the *res nullius* classification combined with the Game Theft Act 105 of 1991 facilitated the private ownership of wildlife. Once this happened it was easier to own and trade wildlife thereby enabling the growth of the sector. It is apparent that wildlife trade has grown on the back of state support, from animal and expertise provision to supportive legislation. This growth over a period of times has also presented other related business opportunities, for instance game capture and its transportation.

Game capture and translocation

The growth of game farming has spawned other related sub-sectors which serve the sector such as game capturing and translocation services, taxidermy, veterinarians among others. The game capture and translocation industry is shown has an annual turnover of R100 million while an estimated 130 000 game animals are captured and translocated annually.[83] Statistics from industry sources reveal how, "In the 2010 capture season, an estimated 167 440 head of game were translocated by 44 capture companies employing an estimated 1 320 staff members" (Dry 2011:25). This is further evidence of the exponential growth of the game farming sector and the subsidiary sub-sectors serving the industry. One such sub-sector is the game capture and transportation division. It is represented by the Wildlife Translocation Association of South Africa (WTA), comprised of professional game capturers and related industry role-players (NAMC 2006). It controls on the movement of wildlife from sellers to buyers.

From its inception in the 1990's, the WTA's objective was to bridge a gap by facilitating "liaison between private enterprise and nature conservation authorities by adopting a cooperative approach towards improving the ethical and professional standards within the industry".[84] Another objective is sealing contractual agreements with provincial authorities for the issuing of permits and the implementation of conservation policies. Its role has been facilitated by state legislation requiring permits for

[83] See the statistics on the home page in http://wtass.org. (accessed 2/06/2014)
[84] See the WTA in http://wta.org.za/index.html (accessed 6/6/2012)

the movement of wildlife into and out of a province (by import and export permits), making the process an onerous task for the average game farmer.[85] Consequently, the more successful game farmers employ an administrator who handles all the permit applications for the farming unit while some farmers leave this task to their wives who double up as the business bookkeeper. On other occasions, the game capture and translocation company fills this role by applying for the permit on behalf of the buyer and then transporting the animal to its new home.

The WTA draws its members from both the private and government sectors. Its claim to enjoy recognition at "both national and provincial levels by conservation authorities" and that "anyone who wishes to tender for government or big business contracts must be a member of the WTA" (NAMC 2006:28) ascribes to it a powerful position within the sector. The WTA carries weight in the industry enough to state that "the interests of the industry are best served through *self-regulation*"[86] a role it has assigned to itself as reflected by the goals of the organisation. The WTA's claim to be a facilitator has to be seen in this context. I view this 'self-regulatory' aspect as reflecting the close ties the WTA has with the WRSA and other organisations operating in the sector that push the same agenda. The mantra of 'self- regulation' within the game farming sector appropriates the government's function to the sector, and bestows power that can be deployed for its members' benefits.

The issue of permits is essential to any game farmer as it applies even in the case where two farms border each other but are listed as being in different provinces according to the government gazette. The same procedure occurs even if the game species are common to the provinces. Game farmers objected to this process as it involved dealing with provincial authorities and the different legislation applicable to each. For example, the North West province applied the 'Game Movement Regulations' Notice 207 of 2012 to legislate the capture and translocation of game. The hunting season is the same across provinces, beginning on the 1st of March and closing on the 30th September every year.[87] As explained by a provincial official, the translocation permit is issued by the

[85] Interview with game farmer Y, Groot Marico, North West 03/10/2011.
[86] See WTA in http://wta.org.za/index.html (accessed 6/6/2012)
[87] Provincial Gazette Extraordinary, 11 April 2012, General Notice, Notice 207 of 2012 'Game Movement Regulations' No. 6986, Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism.

receiving destination based on their knowledge of the farming facility where the game is being relocated. As an example, if the client was based in Rustenburg, it would be the Rustenburg office that would issue a translocation permit after having requested an official confirmation of the existence of the seller's exemption permit. Where the animals were being moved to a different province, then the North West province would request an import permit from the receiving province, while presenting the client with an export permit.[88] This process among others requires substantial administrative work for game farmers who often resort to the services of translocation companies if the costs are not prohibitive.

The game capturers or translocation companies make their profit by capturing and then transporting wildlife from the seller to the buyer helped along by their ability to efficiently negotiate the provincial legislation and deliver the animal to the game farmer. Yet operators' business conduct of buying cheap from the game farmer and then selling on auction or to the next buyer at a higher price leaves small time players disillusioned. For example, one interviewee complained:

> You get nothing. I have sold blue wildebeest for R1200 to them. It's a sheep's price. But when you are going to the auction you will pay between R2200 and R2400 for it. This is the problem. There is too big a gap.[89]

This quote is revealing of some of the tensions which have arisen as the sector's growth has resulted in specialised sub-sectors like game translocation. The interviewee, a farmer practicing combined farming, had domestic animals (cattle, sheep and goats) but also game on his farm. His involvement in both domestic livestock and game farming make him well- acquainted with market prices in both fields. Despite the scale and value of the game farming market, small players struggle to make a profit, resulting in cleavages forming between the various actors in the sector.

The efficiency and ability is self-made, stemming from the objective of "Developing national norms and standards for the construction of wild herbivore holding pens and

[88] Interview with state informant Zz 01/02/2012 (Mahikeng) complex, North West
[89] Interview with game farmer, respondent T (12/11/2012)

transport vehicles".[90] I argue that the game farming sector appropriates some of the regulatory authority, of a state that is slow in keeping pace with developments within the sector. For example, another objective of the association involves "Improving the operating ethics and professionalism of private game capture units" (ibid). This objective confirms a sector whose ethics were questionable and needed improvement, a state of affairs which proper policing and regulation of the industry could bring into line. The fact that the association identifies this gap and aims to fill it inadvertently comments on the state's regulatory capacity which needs propping up by the sector players on their own initiative. Because of this, the strong hint at the self-regulatory nature that the association seeks to establish for itself in the game industry makes it a force to contend with particularly from the government regulatory and policy monitoring side. Notably the association appears to have carved an advantageous role that benefits its members since "a cooperative approach with nature conservation to grade capture equipment and facilities" (ibid) puts it in a prime position to offer expertise and dictate the operational terms.

Before discussing the two main types of hunting practised in the industry, it is necessary to give an indication of the context of game farming while addressing its availability for hunting as a commodity.

South African consumptive game usage

South African farmers have full legal control of who hunts on their farms and when, as long as this complies with the provincial hunting statutes. Thus hunting must be done in collaboration with the farmer or under the farmer's auspices after having obtained permits from provincial authorities. The provincial hunting regulations determine hunting seasons and open seasons. The regulations define when game is to be hunted, the species and the numbers of game to be hunted and game transportation from one province to the next. For example, the North West province stipulates that "Mass capture and translocation season starts at the 1st of March of every year and ends by the end of 30th September of every year".[91] Meanwhile the province's approved hunting season starts on the 1st of May ending on the 31st of July Hunters must pass the North

[90] See WTA in http://wta.org.za/index.html (accessed 6/6/2012)
[91] 'Game Movement Regulations', General Notice, Notice 207 of 2012, No. 6986, Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism. Provincial Gazette Extraordinary, 11 April 2012. Interview with state informant Zz 01/02/2012 in Mahikeng government complex, North West

West ordinance before they can hunt within the province. Once approved, they can then apply for a hunting permit, valid for a year and renewable annually. In 2012, a professional hunting permit in the North West province[92] cost R100 for each species.

There are some exceptions to these regulations. Certain game farms have legal approval to hunt all year round if they have met the North West department of Agriculture Conservation and Environment's requirements. One such condition is that ranch size has to be 400 hectares for the owner to be given an exemption permit. Any ranch less than that obtains a keeping permit whereby for every hunt, there has to be a hunting permit obtained from conservation authorities. The permit has one year validity which can be extended following a renewal application. In contrast the exemption permit, valid for three years, gives authorisation for hunting all year round except for specified species, lions, rhinos and sables among others. In these cases, size is important. It determines the operation of the business and literally subjects larger ranches to a different set of regulations than smaller ones. It is also the bigger ranches which are usually preferred by regular hunting clients whose experience is heightened by hunting in these huge spaces. Such clients, particularly, overseas trophy hunters pay a premium price for an opportunity to hunt in the large sized spaces where the game is 'free- ranging'.[93] Therefore farmers with large hectarage have an advantage. Consequently various farmers are combining their farms to create conservancies to replicate this imagined hunting experience for the client looking to hunt in a wide expanse of land.[94]

Game farming handles mainly two types of hunting; trophy and biltong hunting despite the existence of other types of hunting. Trophy hunting is dominated by overseas foreign hunters while the majority of biltong hunting is done by locals (Saayman, van der Merwe & Rossouw 2011: 221). Trophy hunting is defined as "an activity where wildlife is hunted by means of a rifle, bow or similar weapon primarily for their horns ....and or the skin, in order to be displayed as trophies (Saayman, van der Merwe and Rossouw 2011: 120). However biltong hunting is defined as "a cultural activity where wildlife is

[92] Interview with state informant Zz 01/02/2012 (Mahikeng), North West.
[93] Interview with game hunter R, Pretoria, 29/05/2012, Interview with game farmer Y, Groot Marico 2011/10/03
[94] See Brooks *et al* (2011) Creating a commodified wilderness: Tourism, Private Game Farming, and 'Third Nature' Landscapes in KwaZulu-Natal in *Tijdschrift voor Ecomonische en Sociale Geografie, Vol. 102, No. 3*, pp 260-274

hunted by means of a rifle, bow or similar weapon for the use of a variety of meat products, such as biltong and salamis" (Saayman, van der Merwe and Rossouw 2011: 120). This categorisation of biltong hunting as a cultural activity is significant as shown in the central argument of the thesis whereby the 'tradition' of hunting by whites is used as justification for the continuation of this exclusive practice.

Bow-hunting can be conducted in both trophy and biltong hunting excursions, and it is growing in the country with hunters shifting from using high powered hunting rifles to using hunting bows.[95] The switch has resulted from the state's firearms legislation that has made it onerous to obtain a firearms licence. Some in the hunting circles have claimed that the Firearms Control Act negatively impacted game hunting when it placed tight restrictions on gun licensing in 2004. For example, it was "claimed that about 50% of potential overseas visitors were no longer interested in visiting South Africa, and preferred to go to neighbouring countries" (NAMC 2006:32). Similarly, respondent T[96] opined that the firearms legislation had negatively impacted the industry. Furthermore, with the state being more restrictive of black gun ownership than white gun ownership, his perception was that this would negatively affect any future growth prospects of black hunters joining this elite sector. In one sense, such legislation is reminiscent of the colonial era legislation when African were restricted from hunting. Even two decades into democracy however, the popularity of the specific form of hunting among blacks has not caught on.[97] This was substantiated by a state interview informant who acknowledged the lack of black applicants for hunting permits within the North West province.[98] Related to the state's firearms restrictions has been a return to the newer types of muzzle loader guns whose appearance has also been as a result of the firearms legislation (ibid). Notably, the muzzle loader does not need a license application, explaining its increased popularity which indicates that hunters are subtly circumventing the legal system. The two types of hunting –bow hunting and muzzle loader hunting- are viewed as specialised types of hunting requiring a requisite set of skills like patience, being a good shot and stalking ability to close the distance

[95] Interview with academic informant and hunter, Pretoria, 29/05/2012.
[96] Interview with game farmer, respondent T
[97] Organised Taxi hunts in KwaZulu Natal have become a popular recreational activity by black hunters who use dogs to hunt for small game. See Maditla N (2011) 'Taxi hunters destroy rare Oribi' in www.iol.co.za (26/02/2011) and Phillips, L (2012) 'Illegal hunting with dogs an ongoing problem in KZN' in www.farmersweekly.co.za (3/09/2012)
[98] Interview with state informant Zz 01/02/2012 (Mahikeng), North West.

to the target in order to make the kill.

Industry estimates place the number of South African local hunters at around 200 000 with a combined net worth of R2, 9 billion to the sector (Coetzer 2011) although these estimates are over projections. For instance, the Professional Hunters Association of South Africa (PHASA) had +/- 1 200 professional hunters[99] on its books while the South African Hunters and Game Conservation Association (SAHGCA) claimed to have 36 500 registered members. Hence there is a huge disparity between industry estimates and registered members even accounting for non-registered local hunters. Thus, the questioning of claims that game meat represents 20% of the proportion of South Africa's red meat consumption[100] being an overestimation does hold. This is particularly so, since the majority of the population has no easy access to the meat either through hunting or buying from the farm butcheries. A few retailers stock the product on their shelves with only a few upmarket restaurants selling game meat.

Statistical disparity also exists in estimates of the game farming sector's economic impact and profits. Industry actors observe that "biltong hunting amounts to around R3,1 billion and trophy hunting only accounts for around R510 million" with combined hunting and downstream services valued at approximately R6 billion (Hofmeyr 2010). These figures support the high scale value of the sector. Notably, these figures are not verified, collated statistics but are projected and quoted by stakeholders in the industry who have an interest in projecting a good image.[101] Sounding a cautionary note on these figures, Professor Morne du Plessis' observed that; "The theory is fine. But there are some very fine predictions on very little data" (Kings: 2013)[102], calling into question the authenticity of the cited figures. Given the above, I suggest that the figures cited by Hofmeyr are collapsing the hunting income including license fees, accommodation, assets and other assorted hunting costs as an optimistic estimation of income accrual without the benefit of collected statistics. This validates the point of questioning these statistics given by industry

[99] Interview with PHASA executive officer, Pretoria, 5/2/ 2013
[100] See Annelie Coleman, 'Game meat: the scientific approach' in Farmer's weekly (2009-06-08).
[101] Coetzer presented these figures on industry perceptions at the Absa wildlife Conference while Hofmeyr was writing in an industry publication, 'Wildlife Ranching 2010' and does not state where the cited figures come from except to say "I recently saw figures indicating that…."
[102] The chief executive of the World Wide Fund for Nature in South Africa raised the objection in light of figures that were projected in support of producing rhino horns for trade via specific farms that would target this farming method. See Sipho Kings 'Govt's push to legalise rhino horn trade splits experts' in mg.co.za/article/ (accessed 23/11/2013)

actors which should not be taken as depicting a true picture of the state of affairs.

Despite the industry's own assessment of the relative importance of biltong hunting, the argument has persisted that the game farming industry's growth has been generally driven by trophy hunting revenue (Lindsey *et al*: 2006b). This indirectly indicates the success of sustainable utilisation. Nonetheless, trophy hunting has led to the growth of breeding farms which sell game 'stock' on auctions at expensive prices. For example, a buffalo cow and her heifer were sold for R20 million in April 2012 at a North West game auction near Swartruggens (Christie 2012). This is a consequence of the pressure put by trophy hunters for the best trophy size and the competition to 'bag' that prized trophy. One effect of this is the subsequent stress that game farmers endure in trying to meet the demands of trophy hunting clients. The assertion that "the buffalo cow that fetched the record price had a horn spread of 109cm, making it *the biggest of any cow in captivity*" (Christie 2012:20 emphasis in text) indicates the importance of trophy size. I will draw on the insights of Erika Alberts (2012:5) writing in the 'Publisher's note' of the Wildlife Ranching magazine "Buffalo trophies tell us more about ourselves than they do about buffalo." Trophy sizes are a reflection of the hunter's ego and the bigger they are, the more important the trophy is, as a reflection of the hunter's prowess among peers, until the next time someone else matches the trophy or surpasses the standard that had been set. This ties in with the Lamprecht definition of a trophy indicating that as a species, buffalos have come to attain a special place in some hunters' arsenal of trophies. Therefore, as observed by Erika Alberts, the subjugation of the buffalo as symbolised by the hunter's trophy helps us to understand the hunter. That understanding can also be transferred to an understanding of the motivations of the trophy game breeder and the auction bids for these types of animals.

The study by Barratt (2012:71) records 63% of the hunters sampled classifying themselves as biltong hunters and only 7% as trophy hunters. Indeed the high numbers for biltong hunting reveal the huge local market for biltong. Likewise, hunting's popularity in the South African landscape is revealed from the statistics provided by the WRSA in 2012 showing that 80% of their members were engaged in hunting with only 20% focusing on eco-tourism. A combination of the two is practised by the majority of the 80%

since they also offeaccommodation lodges on their game farms.[103] Hunting is preferred by farmers because it generates a higher income than ecotourism only without necessarily incurring huge expenses on improving infrastructure (Lindsey *et al* 2006b) at these hunting farms. This is true mainly for biltong hunting farms rather than trophy hunting farms since the latter cater mostly for an international market.

The consumptive usage of wildlife drives game farming's growth. Game is hunted and killed usually for its usage as meat; fresh or as biltong (dried), for its horns as trophies or bones (Fennell: 2008). Lion bones have a huge market in Asia. There has to be a constant supply of animals to support this consumptive usage, which explains the sector's argument of conservation for sustainable utilisation. One way of categorising operations in the sector points to the intensive and extensive production system in game farming. In intensive production, animals are taken into a camp system where selective breeding is conducted to build up special qualities like horn length of buffalos with an eye on the trophy market (Dorrington 2011). Such ranches function as suppliers to the specialist hunting market, predominantly trophy hunters generally serving the needs of hunting game farms rather than supplying the needs of hunting within their own farms. The development of intensive farming with game as a production system has resulted from the need to secure and protect investments made. For example, sable and buffalo species, which are worth a lot of money, have to be protected from poaching, disease and calving problems among others. As a result, these animals are placed in camps where the owners can keep an eye on them on a daily basis ready to deal immediately with any arising issues.[104] Most farmers practise extensive production where the wildlife is free to roam around without specific camps being set aside within the game farm itself with little interference in the animals' breeding patterns. These two production systems supply the two types of hunting conducted in South Africa.

Part of the sector's consistent argument has been to claim that they conserve more animals than they hunt, hence sustaining and growing the wildlife population. Therefore, by arguing that hunting off-take rates are typically only 2-5% of male populations

[103] Interview with WRSA executive officer, Pretoria (31/05/2012)
[104] Interview with game Breeder NQ, Swartruggens (28/05/2012).

(Lindsey *et al* 2006b:880) the implication is that trophy hunting is sustainable. This justification purports that the rate of reproduction in breeding lines of wildlife is much higher than the off-take; therefore game farming plays a conservation role. However, questions have been raised about how hunting proponents tend "to exaggerate the potential for wildlife population growth" (Rutberg 2001:34) when justifying their sustainable utilisation thesis. For example, Professor Louw Hoffman from Stellenbosch University cited the need for providing a scientific based study on wildlife numbers within the game industry which would support sustainable harvesting.[105] Therefore, I argue that hunting is being done on an ad hoc basis which cannot be indisputably categorised as 'sustainable utilisation'. The industry's own statistics and the larger perceptions of itself justify this scepticism despite the overall majority reiterating the discourse of conservation.

Though some game farmers claim to promote eco-system balancing, biltong hunters have been accused of condoning in-breeding. Opponents argue that through their non-discriminatory hunting practices, hunters overlook basic breeding philosophy (Allendorf 1983; Anderson 1985; De Bois *et al* 1990). Some biltong hunters are accused of discounting basic hunting ethics (Radder *et al* 2000) like hunters' indiscriminate shooting of the biggest animal which they want for their own consumption but could be an animal in its breeding prime. This reveals that the hunting society is not a completely homogenous 'community' but has layers that can be peeled off to reveal its different facets. For Dr. Johan Kriek, a game farmer, "hunting is indispensable on a game farm" and is "something every game farmer must offer" because "we have to disperse (*sic*) of older animals, and we use the hunter as a selective predator" (Hofmeyr 2010:11). Lending support to this notion is the statement by a North West trophy hunting farmer who likewise says that, "I have up to ten groups of biltong hunters here a year and we use them to take the females and the older males off, which will not become trophies."[106] Herein, biltong hunting serves as a crucial management tool functioning to cull those animals not desirable as hunting trophies. Importantly, such statements tie the hunter to the overall success of the business thereby justifying the functional utility of hunting in the sector. One impression given by such statements is the

[105] See Coleman's article 'Game meat: the scientific approach', *Farmer's weekly* 2009-06-08.
[106] Interview with game breeder and trophy hunter EM (Koster) 26/01/2012.

selective hunting of older animals, which ensures that game hunting is sustainable and ethical, therefore bringing into sharp focus the above authors' observations to the contrary. I argue that when taken in context, Dr. Kriek and Hofmeyr's assertions made public in an industry publication should be viewed as 'making the right noises' while the situation on the ground may be much closer to Allendorf, Anderson, De Bois and Radder's observations.

Noteworthy too is that this ethical justification of hunting paints a picture of fairness in terms of practice. The description as 'a selective predator' elevates the hunter to a crucial entity within the natural ecosystem. Yet this may not be a true reflection of what happens in the hunting fields as hunters may look for the biggest trophy animal or the biggest meat carrying animal for their pot. The point about the hunter being 'a selective predator' proceeds from the view that "a hunter is a predator participating in a world where predation belongs" (Posewitz 1994:20) hence placing the hunter as part of the natural ecosystem.[107] This view has to be examined in the context of game ranching where for the most part, the natural predator has been removed in the natural cycle because of threats posed to the other game like Nyala or blesbok. Therefore, "The result is that the evolutionary process of survival of the fittest through natural selection is also removed from the system" (Buijs 2010:58) and has been replaced by man 'the hunter' who will select only the best animal to hunt and not the weakest. Similarly, LaRocque (2014) provides a compelling argument on natural predation, its effects on off-take and carrying capacity[108] pointing to how they relate to vegetation utilisation by herbivores. Therefore the two authors provide a counter argument to man's effects as the hunter to those offered by natural predation which cannot be replicated by hunting.

Trophy hunting

South Africa is a favoured destination for overseas trophy hunters because they can legally hunt the big five (NAMC 2006) while the abundance of wildlife, (hunters have a choice of close to 65 trophy species to hunt) the highest number worldwide (NAMC

[107] See Pickover, M. 2005 'Animal rights in South Africa', takes issue with this simple analogy justification arguing that man as hunter has an unnatural advantage over the hunted prey.
[108] Off-take is the proportion of animals sold or consumed in a year (www.fao.org, accessed 16/03/2014) and carrying capacity refers to the number of animals that can graze an area without over-grazing.

2006:9) places the country in an advantageous position. The consistently favourable exchange rate for western hunters is an added advantage. Increasingly though, there has been a growing presence of Asian hunters with most of the North West permits for rhino hunting issued to Vietnamese and Thai passport holders. Even then, applications for predator hunts have also come from English, American and Australian passport holders.[109] Two interviewees expressed a preference for American hunters pointing out how these are usually old, experienced hunters wanting to add the African hunting experience to their extensive hunting exploits.[110] With this international clientele, the uncertainty of external events negatively impacting the trophy hunting business is not lost on actors. For example, the internal politics in other countries, terrorism and the world recession were seen as external threats to the sector. As a result, a number of South African professional hunters suffered extensive losses from cancellations by Spanish, Norwegian and other Scandinavian hunters originating from these countries (ibid) especially after the 2008 recession.

Trophy hunting has been described as "the quest for the ultimate 'trophy', the most impressive, largest and/or heaviest specimen" (Lamprecht 2013:66). In the description, the 'incomparable' make of this game creature explains its display as an exalted 'trophy'. A defining attribute is subject to "some quirk of international markets or some chance characteristic" (Beinart & Hughes 2007:71), for example the appeal for a set length of horns as the cited case of the 109 cm horn length buffalo proved. That quality separates it from the rest of its family making it exceptional, hence the hunter's desire for this specific animal's display on his or her collection of conquered animals. Critics argue that "the best of a species should be protected, not pursued" (Posewitz 1994:94) since hunting has implications for the sustenance and regeneration of that species. Therefore, it is crucial that the most desirable 'trophy' animals are allowed to breed while the hunter focuses his/her hunting attention on the older animals which have survived longest and will no longer impact the genetic pool. One argument in favour of this is the fact that the hunter pits his/her skill against an animal which has been a survivor. As such, engaging in this hunting is akin to "restricting yourself to the pursuit of these uncommon, individual animals elevates your personal standard" (Posewitz 1994:

[109] Interview with state informant Zz 01/02/2012 (Mahikeng), North West.
[110] Interviews with farmer Y (2011), TZ (26/01/2012) in Groot Marico and EM in Koster (26/01/2012).

96). Following this line of thinking, the trophy hunting adherents rationalise that "killing appears not as termination of life but as an act that is critical to its regeneration" (Ingold 2000:13), a reiteration of the idea of hunting as a management tool. Therefore "by selectively managing the hunting of trophy animals, the game farmer allows the trophy animal to breed and to carry its genes on to its offspring" (Fourie & van Rooyen 2012:59). Such rationalisation serves to justify hunting as sustainable utilisation, closely tying it to conservation.

Failure to observe this survival of the species protocol has consequences as indicated by one game breeder who stated that "the negative effect of selective shooting by hunters had resulted in animals with not only smaller horns, but also a smaller body size" (Fourie & van Rooyen 2012:57). Thus trophy hunting has implications for and on the industry. Attempts to address this impact can be seen in the growth of game breeders whose genetic manipulation of game should be viewed as efforts to supply the market with a unique trophy hunting product. For example game breeders end up resorting to genetic manipulation (Allendorf 1983; Buijs 2010a; Lindsey 2008) as a way of keeping pace with the demand for speciality trophies wanted by trophy hunters.

Despite the above discussion, for industry players, 'a trophy' is the wrong term to describe the action and process of hunting. Instead, hunters choose to refer to the animal as being a representative of that animal's species "because an animal grows its horns until they are their longest and they wear down when he grows old".[111] Such an assertion implies that there is no exact science to trophy measurement since there may be no exact time period when it is known precisely that the animal has reached its horn growing apex. Yet the Safari Club International (SCI) record book tally which is recognised by the South African industry tells a different story as the competition to submit 'trophies' with the longest horns runs counter to the explanation given above. Similarly, PHASA has maintained a record of trophy fees since 1995 (Wels 2003) again indicating how important this yardstick is as a competitive measure of excellence. The quest for providing the best trophy has spawned a specialised sub-sector within the industry. Gert Dry, former president of Wildlife Ranching South Africa (WRSA)

[111] Interview with an academic informant, Pretoria, 29/05/2012

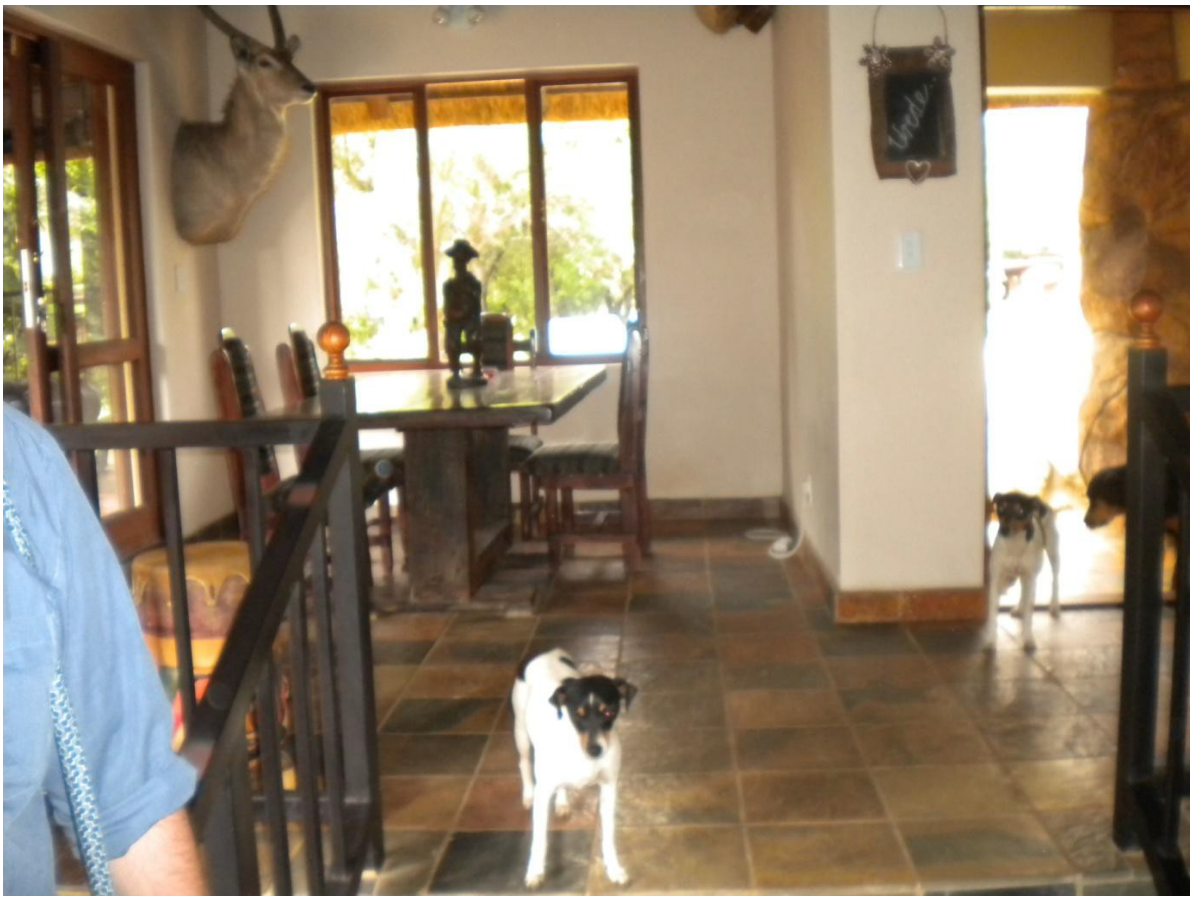
acknowledged the impact of trophy hunting as being the main driver of buffalo breeding (Dry 2010). Therefore, these specially bred buffalo are mostly 'farmed' to meet the needs of a specific trophy hunting clientele. Similarly, well-known wildlife auctioneer Brandon Leer, commented that "the value of all game species is ultimately sustained by their hunting value" (Brunt 2011:16, 17) revealing the important role hunting brings to the wildlife industry.

Nonetheless trophy hunting has spawned unintended outcomes within the sector. According to Marina Lamprecht writing in the 'African Outfitter' magazine moral rectitude sometimes does not apply since;

> like any market, trophy hunting is dictated by the principles of supply and demand, so long as there are clients willing to pay big bucks to hunt certain trophies '*by any means*', there will be operators willing to offer canned or unethical and illegal forms of hunting –provided they continue to get away with it (Lamprecht 2013:66 *own emphasis*).

In this view, what happens on the ground is different from the rhetoric those in the industry use to explain and justify it, being determined sometimes by the unscrupulous professional hunter and the wealthy client. For example, there have been allegations of unregistered professional hunters hunting with clients in the North West province, then failing to remit the client's trophies abroad as promised. This presents a challenge to the nature conservation department since they cannot act against unregistered hunters within the province. In the end, they refer these cases to sector associations who face the same dilemma if the hunter is not registered with them either.[112]

[112] Interview with state informant Zz 01/02/2012 (Mahikeng), North West.



An example of a trophy mounted on the wall of dining-room in the guest lodge at one of the game farms visited during the research for this thesis.

The point by Brandon Leer above is worth bearing reflection on considering the statistics in the table below on the top-five income generating species hunted by trophy hunters in 2010. Listed below are the five high income earners of game animals hunted by trophy hunters in the 2010 hunting season according to the Professional Hunters Association of South Africa.

Table 1: Top five income-generating Trophy species in South Africa 2010

Lion	R116 784 096
Rhino (white)	R61 648 600
Kudu	R27 015 698
Buffalo	R25 172 073
Gemsbok	R18 104 669

Figures courtesy of PHASA

Lion and Rhino come first and second in the stakes which is not surprising for the sector considering how the furore over lion caged hunting indicated how lucrative the

business was and how strong it had become as an organised sub-category. Similarly, rhino hunting was popular despite the upsurge of rhino poaching which has become a national scourge. As a result opponents of hunting have called for the banning of rhino hunting while actors in the industry have called for the harvesting of rhino horns as a counter proposal to suit game owners with rhinos on their farms.

Biltong hunting

Biltong hunting contributes the bulk income for most game farmers (Bothma 2002; Cloete *et al* 2007; Hofmeyr 2010) hence its importance in the game farming industry. For a long while, it was an activity pursued by landowners, their close family and friends for which the farm owners did not charge hunting fees. The view of hunting as cultural activity stems from how it has grown among a specific ethnic and class grouping as a leisure activity the group practices. Hunting for the pot, as biltong hunting is sometimes called, has grown in South Africa as the figures in the earlier sections revealed. It is currently particularly popular with business people from Gauteng[113] a feature stemming from the fact that Limpopo and the North West province –the two biggest hunting destinations- are two to three hours driving distance from Johannesburg. Another factor that is beginning to reshape the hunting landscape are corporate hunts, whereby big business combines team-building sessions –especially on game farms with conference facilities- together with hunting safaris for interested employees.[114] Such experiences may yet open up biltong hunting to the previously excluded black population.

Yet that very notion of enjoying hunting as a hobby is based on the practicalities of affordability to engage in this exercise. Pricing is a factor. One hunter mentioned shooting a wildebeest for R2 100[115] on a 2012 game hunting trip in Limpopo. By his calculations, hunting for his own consumption works out as very economical when considering that he would have paid R31.90/kg[116] for beef in Johannesburg but his

[113] Interview with WRSA executive officer, Pretoria, 31/05/2012. Warren's (2011) study shows Gauteng produces the highest number of biltong hunters.
[114] Interview with game breeder and trophy hunter EM in Koster 26/01/2012, Interview with game farmer B, Groot Marico, 25/01/2012.
[115] Interview with game hunter T, Pretoria, 29/05/2012. This figure is similar to the average price of R2 200 for a Blue wildebeest cited by Warren (2011:67, 69).
[116] Information derived from an FNB article on 'Agri-weekly market trends', domestic beef prices (Class A beef), in www.fnb.co.za/pdf (accessed 3/06/2013).

wildebeest was worth R12, 50/kg in comparison. In addition to desirable pricing (compared to the cost of purchasing game meat) and enjoying hunting as a hobby, another advantage is the health benefits of eating free ranging wildlife –"low-cholesterol, low-fat protein alternative"[117]- as opposed to hormone induced beef from cattle. Significantly, meat collection is important here since the whole hunting excursion's success is dependent on 'bagging' the biggest game on offer that will represent value for money on the hunting trip. Though these benefits are valuable, it is important to recognize that they are only available to those who can afford to pay for them. These hunting costs are the value paid for the game animal and exclude related costs of petrol, accommodation, cartridges, and licenses among others. In addition, hunting equipment is expensive, whether it is a rifle or bow, while the added accessories approximating ammunition, suitable clothing, a shooting telescope, and vehicle among other things, puts it beyond the reach of most South Africans, 26 % of whom live on less than US$2 a day (World Bank 2015).[118]

Nonetheless, in contrast to the international market, South African hunting is viewed as being relatively 'cheap'[119] by regular hunters who claim that prices have stabilised over the years. For example, an average springbok cost R400 in 2012. This was said to be "cheap, you can't hunt for that price anywhere in the world".[120] However, hunting remains an expensive exercise which can only be engaged in by people in a particular stratum of society. This has historically been the case. A 1989 SAHCGA survey showed that members spent an average R6 090 yearly on hunting[121] while the national average yearly income for blacks in 1990 was R6 008[122], below the average hunting spending by white elites. More contemporary figures demonstrate that the cost of hunting remains high. Warren's (2011:29) calculated that average hunter spending per hunting season was R9 081, 45. What is clear is that hunting is for those with the economic resources to pursue this venture. It is a costly pastime considering the associated costs and fees to be paid up-front. According to Barratt (2012) 86% of hunters were in fulltime

[117] See ABSA, 'Game ranch profitability in South Africa', (2003:9).
[118] See www.data.worldbank.org/indicator (accessed 16/03/2015)
[119] [119] Figures of NZ $3 600 which is equivalent to ZAR 33 088,54, while the US had Nebraska at $4 607 (ZAR 48 767.32) and Michigan $3 971 (ZAR 42 034.95) given by Kerr & Abell (2014) seem to bear out this proposition. The currency conversions were done using the live currency converter rates supplied by www.xe.com (accessed 1/4/2014.)
[120] Interview with academic informant, Pretoria, 29/05/2012
[121] See 'Hunting and Conservation' in Farmer's Weekly, May 5 1989, p 36.
[122] Servaas van der Berg gives a table on Trends in inter-racial income distribution in 'Current poverty and income distribution in the context of South African history', Stellenbosch Economic Working Papers: 22/10, October 2010 pg. 9, www.ekon.sun.ac.za/wpapers/2010/wp-222010/wp-22-2010.pdf (accessed 3/10/2013).

employment while only 1% were unemployed. One game farmer described his business philosophy during the hunting season as trying to attract hunters who will spend at least R10 000, hence his active discouragement of, for example, hunters interested only in shooting one Impala.[123] Notably, this farmer's projection for his clients' spending is close to Warren's average hunting spending.

The class nature of biltong hunting even though practised mainly by locals in particular deserves further consideration. Just like trophy hunting, which is principally for sport, it offers the possibility of earning an income for accommodation provision. The biltong hunters on average stay around four days in a hunting camp and hunt "at least three times a year" (van der Merwe 2012:25). This is a costly exercise strictly for the devoted hunting enthusiasts whose purchasing powers allow such levels of participation. As an example, a respondent[124] put his annual hunting budget at R35 000 per annum. Though this figure is at the extreme high-end of the ladder, it tells its own story of economic elitism. Despite not being reflective of the average game hunter's budget, it reflects the financial exclusivity of game hunting as a select activity for those with the economic resources to pursue it. As acknowledged by an interviewee,

> "It is really a luxury business because if people do not have money then they will not hunt and I find that quite tough."[125]

Related to the issue of income is professional class. Significantly, one interviewee stated that most of his hunting clientele were doctors and professors[126] and I personally encountered three university professors[127] during the course of this study. This is an example of Bourdieu 'cultural economy' as the "intellectual's taste for natural, wild nature" (1984:220). Complicating the class element, Barratt's (2012) quality of life study indicates that 52 % of South African hunters had a degree or diploma while only 6% had a post-graduate degree. A further 19 % of the hunters were categorised as

[123] Interview with game farmer B, Marico district, 29/05/2012.
[124] The respondent was a high ranking, game association official during the time of the interview.
[125] Interview with game breeder and trophy hunter TZ, Groot Marico (24/01/2012)
[126] Interview with game farmer in Marico district, 25/01/ 2012.
[127] I had originally set out to interview two academics; a Pretoria based University Professor and a Potchefstroom Professor. I only discovered that the two were hunters in the course of fieldwork. I then coincidentally met another Professor from UNISA, at a farm –having finished a game hunt- when I arrived to conduct an interview with the game farmer.

professional businessmen. Therefore, the three Professors encountered conducting hunting fit into the 6% category being described by Barratt endorsing the point of cultural capital as a signifier of hunting.

A discussion of biltong hunting would be incomplete without an indication of the top hunted species. Listed below in table two are the five most popular game animals hunted by South African biltong hunters in the 2010 hunting season according to the Professional Hunters Association of South Africa (PHASA). The statistics exclude those hunters and game farmers not affiliated to the association.

Table 2: Top five income-generating Biltong species in 2010

Kudu	R972 750,00
Blue Wildebeest	R646 898,00
Eland	R566 300,00
Impala	R456 820,00
Gemsbok	R433 551,00

Figures courtesy of PHASA

PHASA's figures here are similar to Warren's (2011) categorisation of most preferred species which lists Gemsbok, Blue Wildebeest, Eland, Kudu and Impala. Value for money is an important criterion for 'biltong' hunters. This is supported by Barratt's 2012 study in which 99% of "the hunters were plain game hunters" (Barratt 2012:70) indicating they were 'hunting for the pot'. Because they are hunting for the pot, it is logical for them to hunt the large species like Blue wildebeest and Kudu hence the popularity of these species. Therefore the larger the animal, plus the 'fair' hunting price charged by the game farmer; the more economic it is to conduct biltong hunting for individuals with means.

Fair Chase and ethical hunting

A discussion of hunting has to incorporate an exploration of its ethical guidelines, which are built in part on the concept of 'fair chase'. This is a defining motif determining how the individual will behave in the hunting excursion such as choosing his shots carefully and only shooting old game that he/she will use. Such a principle by which the hunting sector claims to abide serves as a measure by which the majority hunting grouping deflects criticism from opponents of hunting. The moral authority applied by

most hunters and game farmers adopts the notion of 'fair chase'[128] as a justification of the merits and ethics of hunting. In applying this notion of 'fair chase', the aim is to distinguish hunting as an activity that values 'just' and 'reasonable' standards thereby appropriating special qualities associated with civilised 'gentlemanly' conduct. In discussing the origins of this notion Brown (2002:88) points to the 'rules of the chase' as having been laid down by "self-professed 'gentlemen sportsmen' in the metropole", tracing its origins from Victorian hunting codes.[129] These codes cloak the hunter in the veil of a disciplined 'gentleman' who is therefore not a butcher but a reasonable hunter who will exercise his/her hunting privilege for the greater good. According to Jim Posewitz, an American hunter and author, fair chase

> addresses the balance between the hunter and the hunted. It is a balance that allows hunters to occasionally succeed while animals generally avoid being taken (1994:27).

Stemming from this definition, there is condemnation of the use of machinery in the pursuit of game as being a violation of fair chase rules. Furthermore, both shooting animals from cars and shooting young animals (Lindsey *et al* 2006b) are seen as unfair to the animal and frowned upon. The preference is for stalking wildlife until the hunter shoots the animal. In this 'chase', there is pride of place in the sense that the hunter supposedly pits his/her skills against the chosen animal until he/she manages to shoot it. Such a practice is perceived as fair since only the chosen animal is shot down. If the shot does not produce a 'clean kill' and the animal is wounded; it is the hunter's obligation to track that wounded animal and bring it down as part of hunting ethics.

Yet fair chase does involve expectations which can clash with the profit motive for sections of the hunting grouping. As an example, one hunting client complained to his professional hunter when the elephant hunt he had paid for ended anti-climactically for him. He had expected a long hunt which would have involved tracking the elephant for days before finding its spoor and finally shooting the animal. His expectations were dashed when he was driven in a truck, led to his elephant under an acacia tree, which he then shot (Dorrington 2011). This incident and the illegal rhino

[128] See Clause 4 and 34 of the Handgun Hunters Association of Southern Africa's code of conduct in www.handgunhuntersa.com/downloads/HHASA_Code_of_Conduct.pdf (accessed 12/08/2013).
[129] See Mackenzie, J.M. 'The Empire of Nature', chapter 11.

hunting incidents in the North West province[130] demonstrate that hunting expectations do differ from the reality on the game farm. Consequently the hunter's expected 'fair chase' may not materialise when up against the chase for quick profit turnaround, which can result in unscrupulous business practices. In this case, the owner's interest was in the numbers of hunters brought to hunt at the farm and not in the quality experience of the one client.

On the other hand, some fair chase sceptics claim that the animal had no chance, regardless of the manner in which it was hunted, as it was not on free ranging land. In addition they may point to how the hunter's unfair advantage was made more so by the availability of fencing to limit the wild animal's escape route. The definition of an ethical hunter as "a person who knows and respects the animals hunted, follows the law, and behaves in a way that will satisfy what society expects of him or her as hunter" is problematic (Posewitz 1994:110). Whose expectation in society is taken as the norm to which hunters should adhere? Different groupings have different points of view based on their sectorial interests when it comes to the issue of hunting. These ethics can be defined by the powerful in society, who manage to have their voice heard above those of the other groups. In a similar vein, the hunting sector has 'captured' the market on game including its own definitions of its contributions and uses to the national economy.

Nonetheless, a useful term that could substitute for ethical hunting is 'responsible hunting'. This concept ties in with Aldo Leopold's beliefs that "ethical behaviour is doing the right thing when no one else is watching –even when doing the wrong thing is legal" (Mafikeng Mail 2011:2) implying some idealism on the part of the hunter. Through adoption of a code of conduct, -'responsible hunting'- this delineates "a criteria against which the right or wrong of the act of hunting can be judged" (ibid) regardless of one's cultural background, a criteria agreed upon by those in the sector.

In South Africa, attempts to enforce the concept of 'fair chase' within the game farming sector led to the huge furore that was provoked by 'caged lion hunting' after an expose by the television programme 'Carte Blanche' in 1997. Posewitz defines this practise as "shooting captive or domesticated big animals in commercial killing areas

[130] Refer to 'Rhino butchers caught on film at North West game farm' in www.mg.co.za/article/2012-11-08-rhino-butchers-caught-on-film

where a person with a gun is guaranteed an animal to shoot" (1994:59) which implies an unfair advantage to the hunter. Moreover it calls to question that earlier principle of 'fair chase' as claimed by proponents of the sector who use it to differentiate their hunting as being fair play. Set against the background of the caged lion hunting and the 2005 draft norms aimed at governing game farming, in 2007 former Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Marthinus van Schalwyk, drew up draft legislation to ban caged lion hunting while offering to define terms of engagement in ethical hunting. This was strongly objected to by breeders involved in this lucrative business –see Table 1- who through subsequent court action, managed to delay the passage of the proposed legislation. Rather than van Schalwyk's proposal that lions bred in captivity should be free ranging for two years before being hunted, the decision was left to the provinces. The North West issued a 96 hour edict where lions had to be free from their cages before being hunted. Additionally, lions were removed from the national large predator list, after breeders argued that the lion clauses were too restrictive for business and economically ruinous for the local economy (ARA 2010). As a result, before the legislation was debated in Parliament, it was subsequently withdrawn in its format to be replaced by a watered down version of the original document.

This strong-arm action by the breeders association revealed the power of organisation in effectively preventing government regulations from threatening their business. Secondly, it drew attention to the sector as a whole, which would have contributed to individual game farmers and hunters joining associations to protect their interests. Thirdly, the defeat of the state in court strengthened the hand of the 'organised interests' within the sector leading to their advocating for self-regulation and the self-administration of the sector. Fourthly, the negative publicity drawn up by this scandal put the spotlight on game farming and game hunting, leading to an introspection which contributed to efforts to clean up the industry from within before government focused its full weight of state machinery again on the sector. Notably, there were no records of lion trophy prices in PHASA record books for the 1996 and 1997 periods despite the records being there for 1995 (Wels 2003). One can argue that the industry went to ground following the furore of lion caged hunting implying the secrecy of some of these operations.

Game auction: is it conspicuous consumption?[131]

Game auctions provide a useful way of buying game for prominent industry actors which allow for the viewing of the animals while they are held up in holding pens before one takes ownership. Yet for the majority of farmers, the best method of buying game is straight from the 'veldt' to the new farm 'home', which is a quicker transaction. This is particularly useful if the seller is within the same province as the buyer because the game can be moved quickly to its new habitat. This reduces stress on the animals from being held up in pens for a long period[132] which is normally what happens in an auction sale. However, there have been a growing number of high profile auctions[133] since 2010 onwards whose record breaking prices have been widely reported in local media. Industry commentators have attributed these contemporary high auction prices to shifting trends in the wildlife industry over the past few years as driving the demand for wildlife (Brunt 2011, Bezuidenhout 2014). The specialised game breeders who supply 'quality' trophies in terms of horn length for example, to the trophy hunting outfits have played a significant part in driving up prices.

Several arguments have been advanced for the unusually high prices that have been fetched by game breeders from selling certain animals like buffalo. One reason is that quality stud animals attain high prices in any industry, hence the price disparity between commercial and stud prices (Brunt 2011, Dry 2012). A related argument is that very wealthy individuals are investing in wildlife because of above stock market returns or bank investment avenues.[134] The shift to wildlife markets guarantees the investment since investors can take action ensuring that it remains vibrant (Brunt 2011). However, the high auction prices are stage- managed performances through which the actors involved are performing to a well-choreographed conspicuous consumption script. As important markers of 'distinctiveness' and 'separateness', game auctions serve the

[131] Consumption here is used in the sense of Baudrillard's use of the term, as a structure external to and coercive over individuals taking the form of a structural organization, a collective phenomenon, a morality which is a coded system of signs. See George Ritzer, 'Introduction' in Baudrillard, J. (1998) *'The Consumer Society: Myths & Structures'*, London, Sage Publications, pg. 14-18.

[132] Interview with farmer Y, Groot Marico, 2011/03/10.

[133] See R. Bezuidenhout's article, 'Auction turnover breaks the billion-rand barrier'. It gives a breakdown of average auction prices since 2011 to 2013 and the record auction prices from 1991-2013. (Famer's Weekly, Tuesday 28 January 2014)

[134] See Lisa Steyn 'Big bucks for game ranchers' in www.mg.co.za/article/ (accessed 10 January 2012) and Adriaan Kruger 'Johann Rupert pays R40m for buffalo bull' in m.news24.com (accessed 20/09/2013).

purpose of presenting a highly visible picture of the sector. To borrow from NAMC (2006:22) "Nevertheless, auctions remain an important *price setting mechanism*" where "rare species often fetch high prices" (ibid *my emphasis*). The document goes further to qualify the earlier statement by indicating that this is despite the fact that "a large number of animals are traded directly from seller to buyer" (ibid) indicative of the confidence in private sales and the realistic, generally 'reasonable' prices from such transactions by the majority of industry players. As proffered by interviewee TZ, private sales drastically reduce the roles of middlemen found in auctions whose commissions add to the overall cost of the auctioned animal.[135]

There have been reservations expressed over the record prices fetched by the animals. One interviewee revealed his scepticism on the high auction prices:

> Umm, how can you afford a 20 million buffalo, that doesn't mean that all the offspring of that buffalo will go that price? And what are you going to do about surplus animals, are you still going to sell them for a few million rands. I don't believe that. I think that's only a bullshit story. To put it mildly, umm, this is not fair. For, for the, people they are not serving the people. I'm producing meat, and the meat goes to the people. What are you going to do with that high price buffalo? You are not going to slaughter it for the people? This is a problem, there are only a few rich guys involved and not even the government makes money out of that, and we have to accommodate everybody. We have to accommodate the government, we have to accommodate all the people who are all working together, this is the thing.[136]

As described above, auction prices, particularly the record breaking buffalo, are viewed as artificial by small industry actors revealing the impact of new capital on the sector. One explanation points to the manipulation of the market by industry players with a lot to gain from these artificial prices as hinted at by a few industry experts. For instance, Ernest Janofsky, head of agribusiness at ABSA was quoted as having diplomatically said; "In my personal view, these high prices are wonderful advertisements for the industry and its growth, but I don't think they will keep" (Christie 2012:20). Similar sentiments were echoed by Gustav Collins founder of Wildvest, a wildlife investment company. Expressing his reservations, his comment was that auction prices were "a little artificial stimulation of

[135] Interview with game breeder TZ, Groot Marico 26/01/2012

[136] Interview with game farmer B, Groot Marico, 2012/05/13

the market" going further to say that "it does happen that association members buy among each other at auctions partly to stimulate the market and to create the market for the offspring of their animals" (ibid). Janofsky and Collins' statements were commentary on a single stud buffalo bull which had been brought for a South African record R18 million in 2011[137] (ibid). Such assertions are very illuminating, coming from actors dealing with investments in the industry. If these two experts in agriculture finance and investments have reservations on the financial direction being taken by the auctions, then there is need to question these prices while scrutinising their speculative focus.

For example when the R18 million price is compared to the R500 000 paid for a buffalo cow and calf pair in 2010, (a record for the South African National Parks then), there is no justification for the inflation over one year. The R500 000 buffalo sold at a Kirkwood auction were originally from Addo Elephant National Park traditionally demanded highly as breeding stock[138] which speaks volumes about the quality of this buffalo. Yet there is a huge price disparity even though there is a one year gap between the public National Parks wildlife auction and the private auction. Based on this evidence, the implication is that artificial market stimulation by the private actors is happening as a deliberate process to raise prices.

Stimulating buffalo prices in the private sector works to achieve the desired end result of higher prices throughout. In saying that, one can postulate that the price received by the National Parks for their buffalo could be the more realistic market and industry price related to the 'ordinary' game farmers' domain in which the majority trophy hunting game farm owners and game breeders financially operate. In this light, I am factoring in the 'price setting mechanism' trait that is attributable to auctions.

A counter argument is that sellers do recoup their investments when they sell the highly desirable animal's offspring to other breeders (Brunt 2011). Yet such an opinion supports

[137] This price was surpassed by R8 million when a young buffalo bull was sold for R26 million at a 2012 auction in Bela Bela attended by over 1 000 people generating turnover of R122 million overall, see www.sowetan.co.za/news/2012/09/04/; see Murray Williams 'Cape buffalo sold for R40m' in www.iol.co.za/news/ (accessed 23/09/2013).

[138] The buffalo is free of bovine tuberculosis, corridor disease and foot-and mouth disease, making it a high value stock animal. See 'Media Release: Record price for Addo buffalo at Kirkwood auction' in www.sanparks.org/ (accessed 12/08/2013).

the statement by Gustav that this is speculative behaviour. Additionally, a leading figure in the industry expressed his reservations, seeing this as "excessive input from a profit-driven private sector."[139] Based on this accumulated evidence I contend that game auctions constitute a public demonstration of opulence as a high-end aspect of game farming. As a public performance, high profile auctions are 'staged' to attract and reinforce a materialistic identity, an 'imagining' representative of this specific successful image of game farming. As succinctly observed by an interviewee:

> You know that's where the millionaires come in. These guys that got these big game farms, and they still got businesses in the cities and they can run that farm and they still have managers doing it, because they got money behind them. You see for me, I use the money that I earn here to pump back into the farm, to make a living never mind the rest that's going on.[140]

Thus these specialised game auctions in comparison to private sales are a class spectacle that in the main, only depicts a playground for a privileged few. The particularly exorbitant prices fetched by wildlife at this auction serve to fulfil a particular function of price benchmarking as suggested above. Extending this analogy further, Veblen's account of conspicuous consumption which "addressed social stratification in terms of instrumental displays of wealth and prestige" (Scott 2006:39) is useful in explaining the performance of these game auctions. Further reading into the auction public performance spectacle, one can view this (game) materialism as an example of social signalling. These game auctions must be hyper- visible public spectacles as a legitimising notion for the sector. I base this notion on the wide media[141] coverage that the ground-breaking price garnered but also on the understanding of 'bigger is better' that has captured the imagination of the new elites.[142] As an element of conspicuous consumption, the millionaires are signalling "the symbolic communication of distinctiveness through different patterns of spending that are markers of inter-group separateness" (Sheehan 2010:72). Hence game farmers like B and C, living off mainly on game farming incomes cannot compete with the millionaire elites. Thus, private game

[139] *Anonymous telephone correspondent Johannesburg 23/06/ 2012*.
[140] Interview with game farmer C (Groot Marico), (22/06/ 2012).
[141] See the newspaper coverage by Sowetan 20 September 2012, City press, mail & guardian, citizen, media 24, timeslive 20 September 2012, Sunday times
[142] For example Danai Mupotsa's, 2014, PhD thesis 'White weddings' about the wedding spectacle or the birthday celebrations which are over the top.

auctions define an element of the sector cleavage that is stratified by class consumption patterns. Notably, the huge price gap as noted by farmers B and C is not reflective of an industry norm.

Yet the juxtapositioning of the public and the private auction serves to emphasise the conspicuous consumption symbolised by the latter. Hence high end private auctions present an image which is but one side of the story. The case presented here highlights how a specific strand of financialisation of agriculture is superseding the traditional socio-economic principles of the sector (Anseeuw 2013) as an emerging phenomenon. As highlighted, the price difference between the buffalo sold by the National Parks and the one sold at the private auction is too huge to ignore especially since the animals are natural to South Africa and bear no import costs, and they are both disease free which is a major factor in the sale of buffalo. Significantly, the comments by the game farmer about the 'millionaires' that are involved in these auctions point to a trend in which financial muscle is being deployed to dominate and dictate the pace by some elite actors with the capital means to do so. Nevertheless, this phenomenon is "an extremely effective way of hindering inter-group permeation" (Sheehan: 2010:72) thus continuing the exclusion of other people. Thus there is an element of social stratification that is subtly taking shape in game farming through this 'financialisation', in part from the portfolio diversification of these millionaires. The protestations of farmer B and C are testimony to this.

In this light, it is not surprising then that in a 20 September 2012 article in the *Sowetan* news- paper, millionaire businessman and ANC politician Cyril Ramaphosa apologised for bidding nearly R19,5 million for a buffalo cow and her calf at a game auction near Rustenburg (www.sowetan.co.za) in the North West Province. He was quoted as having said that it was a mistake he regretted later, going on to say:

> I've been chastised by some of my good comrades, and even before they chastised me, I did admit that was a mistake. I regret it because it is an *excessive price* in the sea of poverty. I belong to a community and it was one of those moments when I was *blind-sighted*, (ibid). *(Emphasis mine)*

This begs the question whether the very public apology made on a public platform –SAfm-radio and reported in other print and online media platforms was a political gimmick coming at a crucial few months before the ANC National Conference. On the one hand, it could have been epiphany or conscience from a member of the 'community' whose eyes

were now opened having received his Damascene moment after being "blind-sighted". On the other hand it could have been a staged performance. Read as a 'staged' performance, this public apology continues that script of a public spectacle in which Cyril Ramaphosa has to denounce his failed bid as an example of inter-group conspicuous consumption. The latter reference to 'community' brings other questions: which community? Is it the black majority poor community of which he is an integral part, because he comes from that part of society and now remembers after his re-awakening? All the more so in the light of the over-arching issue of pervasive social inequality in South Africa. Could he be referring to the ruling party political community in which he is a comrade? Or the ranching community to which Cyril Ramaphosa belongs to as an elite game farmer within the inter-group? He now regrets having put his bid through because of the conflict of interest that he now finds himself in as a supposed representative of the former previously disadvantaged community.

If indeed he had been blind-sided, as this author would assume that is what he meant, then by whom? Was it the conspicuous consumption performance that blind-sighted him? Or was he blind-sided by the latter elitist millionaire grouping of game farmers (the stud breeders group) of which he has become an important member who participates in the auction performance? By his public apology, he effectively is 'othering' in his reference to community through his construction from both the spoken and the unspoken. Effectively, his distancing of himself from the elite group that bids at these auctions casts a conspicuous light on the auction performance while his newfound remembrance of the plight of the other poor 'community' does cast an excluded light on them. Thus he has 'othered' both groups in trying to regain his stature while constructing himself as part of this 'community' for which the assumption is that he is referring to the majority black 'community' who cannot engage in this 'conspicuous' game auction behaviour.

Worthy to note is that there is no law against bidding for a game animal in democratic South Africa. Yet the point here is that it casts the bidders as being outside the ambit of everyday South African struggles especially for the majority poor. As an example of 'conspicuous consumption', the game auction stands out starkly as a commentary of the class divide in the country. Participation becomes an indictment on a ruling party politician indicating how far removed he has become from his former constituency. This is a picture that the majority dominated white sector of game farming would rather do without since it

brings bad publicity instead of the desired transformation that the sector would rather be touting. When referring to the '*excessive price in the sea of poverty*', Ramaphosa, the astute politician is in fact admitting to Hegel's contention that "poverty immediately takes the form of a wrong done to one class by another" (Harvey 2001:287). In this context, it explains his 'othering' I referred to earlier pointing out how this element of the game sector is far removed from the majority of the South African population; a consequence of a colonial legacy that continues to define the sector. As the cartoon below refers, his image has taken a battering from the 'conspicuous consumption' auction performance which the apology intended to restore.

The cartoon below, published three days after the *Sowetan* article, serves to succinctly depict a caricature of Cyril Ramaphosa's standing in the eyes of some public commentators. It particularly relates to the political developments in the run up to the ANC Mangaung Conference which took place in December 2012 where Cyril Ramaphosa was elected ANC Deputy President.



It is this association with the game farming sector that has put Cyril Ramaphosa in a pickle. It took the chastisement of *good comrades* to bring him back into the political fold. Despite this, we need not lose sight of the fact that Cyril Ramaphosa was outbid by another millionaire, Bloemfontein businessman Boet Troskie (www.sowetan.co.za) for the buffalo in question hence his apology is for having had the intent but not having committed

the action. Read as a template in this context, his apology is an acknowledgement that he has failed his 'good comrades' by his conspicuous failed bid casting him in the web of material exclusivity. Read in isolation, the above apology so far casts Ramaphosa in a 'good' light, redeeming him back into the 'community' to which he had belonged. But his last statement in this saga shows the real reason for the failure of his intent to translate into action:

> Ramaphosa said later that his budget did not allow him to pay R20m for the buffalo cow. "I spent my budget on other animals. And like any businessman, you must know when to stop, (ibid).

Analysing this last statement in light of the above, we can draw a conclusion that his decision was made not on any sentimental basis as a 'good / bad comrade' but as a calculating businessman[143] with a limit on his exercise of conspicuous consumption. In making his bid, Ramaphosa was ready to flex his financial muscle with a clear-cut set objective –where the limit of his budget stopped- having a clear plan of action on how he was to proceed in this exercise. In this public performance of putting his hand up to place a bid, he still has control of his faculties enough to know when to stop bidding. There is no sentiment there for the poor but a practical business decision that allows him not to be "blind-sighted" by the 'conspicuous' auction moment. Thus, he has a limit to consumption.

Yet another motivation for this 'buying' behaviour can be attributed to the 'fellowship' syndrome whereby it is an old boys' club game of scratching each other's back; what Harvey (2001) refers to as 'reciprocal dependence'. As a case in point, in the footnote to the article on the R40 million buffalo, Kruger (2013) notes that Tilman Ludman, the owner of the game farm selling the buffalo was close friends with Johann Rupert, the buyer. Reading into that footnote presents a critical commentary. In one dimension it explains this 'old boys club' form of 'fellowship' phenomenon whereby a social network group of people are pushing up prices in order to create a market they already control. To follow through some of the consequences of that trajectory, a description borrowed from Anseeuw (2013) offers an apt reading of the processes at play. Anseeuw's article on the African land rush refers to people who are:

[143] Cyril Ramaphosa's bid went up to R19, 5 million, he eventually spent R15 million on other game. See S. Christie "Buffalo cow fetches R20 million" in *Farmer's weekly, Thursday 26 April 2012*.

> seeking to diversify their portfolios. Owing to their anticipation that the agricultural sector is an investment for the future, they engage accordingly in 'Malthusian oriented speculations' (2013:164).[144]

In the game context, as opposed to land speculation, these capitalists actors are speculating on wildlife futures but more specifically on specific game, buffalo to be precise. Bearing in mind that the buyers are game breeders too, just like the sellers, places them into the category of 'status group' (Weber 1978)[145] sharing a common identification. This then explains why they would still buy buffalo even though they are not certain if there is to be a return on investment since the action ties in with their consumption status as a 'signifying element' (Baudrillard 1981,1998).[146] To apply Marx's analysis from Harvey:

> Only as personified capital is the capitalist respectable…….Moreover, the development of capitalist production makes it constantly necessary to keep increasing the amount of capital laid out in a given industrial undertaking, and competition makes the immanent laws of capitalist production to be felt by each individual capitalist, as external coercive laws. It compels him to keep constantly extending his capital, in order to preserve it, but extend it he cannot, except by means of progressive accumulation. (Harvey 2001:238).

Thus, the above scenario is playing out in the game sector through these high-end auctions in which multi-millionaires participate, albeit with some qualifications. Since this grouping represents the dominant actors, on the next auction, the buyers would be the sellers and when the roles are reversed there would still be support from the in-group as the former did earlier. At this juncture, I argue that the pattern might repeat itself in a cyclical manner raising the spectre of "coerced consumption" where a recurrent form of competition is dependent upon the response of others in similar circumstances (Urry 2002:41).[147] Understood in this context, Baudrillard's (1981, 1998) analysis of the 'commodity sign' works to place the buffalo in this lofty position where its possession endows signifying qualities for the owner among a group of peers. Writing on the same concept, Wels (2003:132,133) discusses the buffalo as "a symbol of economic prosperity" considered to be the "epitome of wild

[144] See Anseeuw, W (2013) 'The rush for land in Africa: Resource grabbing or green revolution?' in South African Journal of International Affairs, 20:1, 159-177, DOI: 10.1080/10220461.2013.780326 (accessed 24/09/2013).
[145] See Weber, M. (1978) 'Classes, status groups and parties' in W. G. Runciman (ed.) *Max Weber. Selections in Translation*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press
[146] Baudrillard, J. (1981) Towards a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign, St. Louis, Mo.: Telos, Press and (1998) 'The Consumer society: Myths and Structures'. London, Sage Publications.
[147] See Urry, J. (2002) 'The Tourist Gaze' (second edition), London, Sage Publications. Urry uses Hirsh's (1978) thesis on the social limits of growth to explain the phenomenon of positional competition in detail.

Africa". Hence the 'novelty' of ownership of the designated animal becomes the driving motivation for this prized capture much like what drives those in the lower rungs of the hierarchy to engage in hunting as a lifestyle choice. As a social script, it becomes the embodiment of 'vertical differentiation' (Urry 2002) within the game sector where ownership of these animals puts one on a higher pedestal from the rest of the crop. Therefore, the beneficiaries of this scheme are the 'big boys' playing in the elite leagues as opposed to the 'regular' game farmer whose interest in game is solely for the business of supplying the biltong hunting market. Harvey (2001) aptly describes this process as a form of capitalist development in which new capital investment creates its own accumulation niche by destroying old capitalist forms of investment in its trail.

The admission by Johann Rupert, a member of the consortium that bought a R40 million buffalo in 2013 that their investment might decrease in value with the increased availability of such rare breeds in due course (Kruger 2013) is insightful. The question then is why invest in a product like the buffalo bull if one understands that it may lose value before a return on investment? The answer is located in the "consumption of novelty" (Campbell 1995:118)[148] symbolism whereby the staging of that conspicuous consumption performance is emblematic of a 'self-construction' process. Therefore, the prestige and honour that comes with ownership of such an animal far outweighs the financial risk of a return on investment. Status then; as in Weber's (1978) typology of social stratification, becomes a saleable commodity represented by these auction buffalo. Therefore, a successful bid embodies a prize that is 'worn' with pride as 'a man above men' among the specialist game breeders and owners. Tellingly, this very notion is based on a social stratification system embodied by these specialist game breeders' auctions which as exclusive preserves of the specialist game breeders and game buyers, the average game farmer cannot afford participation. Yet again this is part of a South African social structure where "the sharp contrast between extravagant wealth and luxury on the one hand, and extreme poverty and destitution on the other" (Terreblanche 2002:29) exist side by side. For those standing on the outside of this wealth display, the contrast presented is representative of the social divide that separates

[148] Campbell, C. (1995) 'The Sociology of Consumption' in Daniel Miller (ed.), Material Consumption: A Review of New Studies, London, Routledge.

the ‘haves’ from the ‘have not’ as a typical South African storyline of existing in different social worlds.

Importantly though, one has to acknowledge that there is the other majority game farming community, for whom such auctions are beyond reach. The example of game farmers’ reaction to the auction prices makes this point. Such auctions are a preserve of the few elites, highlighting a class distinction that supersedes racial boundaries in the sector, as Cyril Ramaphosa and others like him demonstrate. Yet this incident provides impetus and opportunity to re-articulate the race-cum-class cleavage that polarises the view of the sector by a majority of the South African population. The divide though is not only structural, resulting from colonial privileges and disenfranchisement but is also socially constructed as a product of financial ability.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued how specific characteristics of the sector have become key defining images and how the continued conversion of nature to natural capital has followed class patterns in its exclusionary practices. As an arena in a contested private domain, wildlife consumptive usage and economic contribution serve to justify and explain its agricultural function. Nonetheless the nature of South African game farming fits in with broader local and global processes of resource contestation. Thus in this analysis, we have to be conscious of the social, economic and political circumstances in the country post-1994. To a large extent, game farming and hunting are practices of the wealthy whose advantaged status can be traced to colonial and apartheid legacies, which continue to be passed down as tradition enabling unfettered continuity. Likewise, Mkhize’s assertion that “this private wildlife land-use has a cultural resonance with white South Africans who can engage in these activities through privileged access to land as owners or consumer elites” (2012:17) furthers our understanding of the socio-economic structure of the sector.

As pointed out, class-belonging enables engagement in the wildlife activities whether it is hunting, farming or buying at specialised auctions. Yet this belonging has elements of continuity from colonial era privileges and precisely because of this there is a delicate balancing act which all the actors are aware of and managing for their particular purposes. Thus from an examination of the game capture and translocation to the auction

performance, followed by the capital outlay needed for investment in a game farm it all leads to the same deduction, economic contribution. Meanwhile, the emphasis on fair chase as a defining factor of hunting operations is deliberately referred to, as a weight carrying facet for which players in the sector should be praised. By emphasising the humane way in which the hunted animals are treated, it answers the critique of animal rights activists. This repositioning works to retain and continue industry actors' advantageous position securing their land interests. On the one hand, as expressions of a distinct 'class power', game auctions denote a stage whereby wealthy actors can enact a public display of conspicuous consumption immune from the everyday harsh realities of South Africa's inequalities, and, to an extent, the smaller farmer's challenges of production. At a smaller scale, the same can be said for the economic ability of engaging in the hunt. It is what is presented in the public domain; the income from hunting and the auction figures quoted as examples that enable this conclusion on economic contribution. But, as I have indicated here that does not tell the full story as various motives have been questioned, for example the debate around actual income generated from hunting and the authenticity of the buffalo auction prices.

Chapter 5

Cultural practices: national contributions or continuities?

The previous chapter investigated the key features of private game farming, from the consumptive usage to self-imposed rules of hunting engagement (fair chase) ending with analysis of private auctions as they define a specific production system as practiced by elite farmers. This chapter continues the investigation of the sector by delving into internal dynamics focusing on two overlapping primary characteristics: fellowships and associations. Sector players have devised ways of manoeuvring around the state system through negotiation with and substitution of the state. This is helped along by the competing governance and citizenship models. For example, sector players have stepped into the state breach by offering alternatives to the forms of game farming governance and regulation promoted by the post-apartheid state. By focusing on three of the major associations in the sector, the chapter reveals how these representatives have constructed roles as arbiters, partners, victims and protagonists in negotiating interactions with the state.

Through detailing the cultural practices of game farming, this chapter frames the meaning and impact of the politics of identity preservation by white game farmers as colonial continuities in a democratic South Africa. However, the gender division of the sector itself relates to the nature of the product, (hunting and game farming) which ties in to the masculine nature of the sector and character of the actors. At another level, the masculine dominance reflects the need for continuity in the family business as shown by the mentoring of young males into particular roles. This allows for continuity in class and elite priviledge ensuring that those who do not belong, find it hard to establish a foothold in the sector. In this environment, conservation serves as a useful metaphor for the 'public good' contributed by the sector to the national economy both nationally and globally, making it invaluable beyond its economic contribution. Therefore the narrative of game farming in terms of land-use and agriculture relates to international developments on 'sustainable use' and the 'global conservation' discourse reflecting its useful deployment in the South African context.

Associations: lobby groups or regulatory substitutes?[149]

[149] I use substitute as in the analogy of a match, where the player comes in at crucial points in the game, a game-changer, even

Most game farmers belong to one of the major associations namely WRSA, South African Hunters and Game Conservation Association (SAHGCA), PHASA and CHASA. There are also a number of independent operators with no affiliation to any organisation. The dominant association in the sector is the Wildlife Ranching South Africa (WRSA) formed in 2005 from a coalition of game farmer organisations around the country. It emerged from offshoots one of which was the Northern Wildlife Organisation (NWO) which had provincial focus and the South African Game Ranchers Organization (SAGRO) which had a national presence. Therefore, it is important to note that the WRSA's policies have been adopted from these earlier organisations which have spanned over 30 years existence.[150] The South African Hunters and Game Conservation Association (SAHGCA) have a longer history having been founded in October 1949.[151] It claims to have 36 500 registered members drawn from 71 branches nationally.[152] Both the WRSA and SAHCGA are 'old' experienced organisations with institutional memory whose authority has been reinforced by the amalgamation with smaller affiliates. This is important since the WRSA's major objective as a "purposively constructed organisation" (Portes 1998:10) is to be the "spokesperson for the game industry at the national level seeing that the government was unwilling to deal with multiple individuals."[153] I believe that the above motivation was the crux of the organisation's formation. Bringing together all the smaller associations under one umbrella adds the capacity of calling on strength of numbers, especially in lobbying the state. The association represents around 1 500 to 2 000 paid up members (WRSA Manager: 2012) enabling it to respond to policy and administrative changes as an organised collective. Its importance to those members is reflected by one interviewee's repeated assertion that the association handles all the big administration duties that farmers cannot do for themselves.[154] For example, the WRSA helps with supporting documentation for motivating for gun licences and acts as the members' spokesperson to government to "fight for their rights on regulations within the game trade and translocation"[155] all of

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though he/she is a bit-part player. The substitute doesn't replace the referee (the state) but comes in at important intervals to influence proceedings, positively effecting a favourable outcome for his/her team.

[150] See www.wrsa.co.za/component/k2/item/ which implies continuity of the social system –policies carried over-, now being reinvented under the democratic dispensation.

[151] See Chris Nel 'Responsible hunting synonymous with Conservation', Farmer's Weekly May 5, 1989 pg. 35.

[152] Interview with SAHCGA executive officer, Pretoria, 5/02/2013

[153] Interview with WRSA executive officer, Pretoria, 31/05/2012.

[154] Interview with game farmer Z, Groot Marico 26/01/2012

[155] Interview with WRSA executive officer, Pretoria, 31/05/2012.

which adds to the value of WRSA membership.

But, the WRSA membership figures represent a small fraction of the game ranchers in South Africa even though the association serves a strategic importance to its members. As indicated "they only represent a small percentage, about 1/6.th" [156] Similarly, in questioning the representativeness of the WRSA, Buijs (2010b:9) posits that the WRSA only represents 15% of game ranchers in the country. This figure is close to the mark given by the interviewee, which even by the association's own admission is not representative of the industry majority. Since the actual number of game farms is not exactly known, (an indication of the state's failure to adequately and accurately monitor the industry), the association is punching way above its weight. For instance, the WRSA belongs to the national Wildlife forum through its provincial chapters, is part of the rhino conservation forum, the predator management forum and a member of the hunting and wildlife association of South Africa.[157] The executive body holds regular weekly and monthly meetings with the state, up to the level of Deputy Director General in the departments of Environmental Affairs and Agriculture. At the provincial level, the same happens with the heads of department of DEA and Agriculture[158] (ibid). This regular interaction with the state suggests active state lobbying for influence. This would carry with regards to formulating policies and regulations that govern the industry. One example is the successful role played by the WRSA in getting approval for the registration of the 'Game Meat Scheme'. Through this scheme, registered game farmers can commercially produce meat to be sold to retailers "under the Meat Safety Act (No 40 of 2000)" which was the "WRSA's practical alternative to the strict and over-regulating impact which the draft Game Regulations will impose on game farmers" (Wildlife Ranching 2010:47). In this instance, the WRSA deployed its corporate power to successfully lobby the state for a favourable outcome focused on the sector's specific interests. What emerges is a picture of an understanding of how the state bureaucracy operates formally, combined with the ability to negotiate and insert the institutions being represented into the state processes. By this manoeuvring for advantage, the association as a social structure reveals how far-reaching its hegemonic power extends

[156] Interview with academic informant, Pretoria, 29/05/12.
[157] Interview with WRSA executive officer, Pretoria, 31/05/2012
[158] Interview with WRSA executive officer, Pretoria, 31/05/2012

as it influences regulation by the state.

The WRSA has the mandate from the provinces to issue permits to translocate meat (warthogs) endorsed by the Department of Agriculture's directorate of Animal Health.[159] This enables members to by-pass the bureaucratic hassle of obtaining translocation licenses from state departments. In a way, this 'regulatory power' held by the WRSA opened room for "developing their own sets of rules or standards to fill 'institutional voids' where rules to guide behaviour are needed but not provided by the state" (Arts 2003 in Buscher 2005:6). The WRSA is a powerful player with the capacity to produce favourable outcomes for their members who then enjoy discrete benefits, particularly with regards to regulation. For "an increasingly beleaguered and marginalized white family farming class" (du Toit 2013:20) such organs are central to their continued survival and operation in the South African agricultural space. Hence statements from game farmers' family members affirming how the system works and should not be changed[160] have to be read in this context. Such sentiments reveal the instrumental reasoning of individuals who benefit from the status quo.

When the Western Cape provincial agriculture department needed assistance in drafting a management plan for wildlife ranching, it approached the WRSA (Raats 2011), another example of the over-arching reach that the WRSA exercises. As shown above, the WRSA has influence both at provincial and national levels enabling it to punch above its weight in matters affecting the game sector. By employing a concerted strategy that is both pre-emptive and sometimes reactionary, the WRSA legitimises its relevance in the agricultural sector and in the national economy effectively embedding itself in political and legislative domains. In this regard,

> they help to set the political agenda, to determine choices from that agenda, to implement (or to thwart the implementation of) those choices, and to shape the beliefs, preferences.....that individuals bring to more encompassing political arenas (Cohen & Rogers 1992:393).

The WRSA exerts influence on the South African land-use debate by pointing to the economic capacity of wildlife trade (Pretorius 2010) which brings to light their real

[159] Permit to transport warthog and wild pig meat out of an African fever controlled area (Animal Disease Act 1984; Act No. 35 of 1984). Interview with WRSA executive officer, Pretoria, 31/05/2012. I was shown this permit book.
[160] Interview with farmer B in Groot Marico, 25/01/ 2012.

motivation. For instance, the WRSA President credited one of the association's breakthroughs as having stopped the conservative CapeNature Translocation Policy by involving politicians from the Western Cape, Ministers of Environmental Affairs and Agriculture in lobbying against the intended legislation. Consequently, the final decision was to rewrite the policy making it more economically viable for the game farmer (WRSA 2010:1). The pre-emptive strike strategy adopted by the WRSA showcases the calculating nature of the association who felt they had to act because "although the document was published under the name CapeNature, it would have influenced the whole of South Africa" (WRSA Regulatory 2010:27). Taking the fight to one province and blocking the legislation effectively sent a clear message to the other provinces intending to emulate the Western Cape. The one tenet of the proposed legislation that was subject to serious dispute was the term "historical natural distribution areas and mapping" (ibid). It would have had serious implications for the game farming sector through removing the carte blanche distribution of wildlife in farmers' ranches. Instead, the policy was intended to strictly enforce the stocking of wildlife as natural occurring species in the habitats that make up the owner's farms. Defeating this motion enabled industry actors to practise game farming based on economic principles, not as dictated to by nature (buffalo, lions and rhino are not naturally occurring in all areas) nor by the state in this instance as represented by the province.

It may be argued the bargaining power the association has carved for itself with the state both at national and provincial levels is both hegemonic and social capital (Bourdieu 1985). It is made possible by the ever-present representation of the associations in state bodies where they can articulate their economic contribution while asserting their interest. Further to that, by inserting representations at local and national policy levels, the WRSA manages all political engagements for their own favourable outcomes. By ensuring the failure of the enactment of the CapeNature legislation in one province, it effectively arrested any further developments that would compromise the interests of the game sector nationally. When understood in the accumulation sense, the dividends are reaped in the form of 'self- regulation' or 'self-administration' with the state only playing a supporting role, having been subtly substituted by the associations. Further evidence of the state substitution was the demand by a director of WRSA to a North West department of Agriculture, Conservation, Environment and Rural Development official to report non-complying (overgrazed) game ranches to the WRSA head office

in Pretoria.[161] This followed an article by the official in which he was critical of the game ranching sector's conservation role. A lot can be read into the WRSA official's response to the criticism which included the assertion that transgressors should be reported to the organisation. One deduction is that the WRSA official believes the organisation to be in an authoritative position above that of the provincial state. In this posturing, the WRSA representative reduces the role of the state and its official to a subsidiary role while elevating his association as having a moral authority over national game ranches. Secondly, it can be viewed as undermining state credibility (Rutberg 2001) in the public domain. Demanding that the state official should report to the WRSA effectively appropriates state responsibility and authority while subtly watering down the non-compliance point being made by the state representative. It is therefore far more likely that the WRSA official in this incident is following the sector script described by Pretorius (2010) earlier, of influencing South Africa's land-use debate through the wildlife economy as being part of a strategic agenda.

Besides the state influence there are additional membership benefits of belonging to the WRSA. These include attendance at seminars and information days where data is shared on the latest game industry trends. Members also get loyalty cards which include discounts at businesses associated with the industry like taxidermists, feed and chemical companies, veterinarians and those selling game fencing, to name just a few. Through such fora, the WRSA can influence "the distribution and presentation of information regarding all the benefits of game ranching in South Africa –especially that which pertains to all role players-" (Holtzhausen 2010:5). The case presented here highlights the significance of belonging to an association like the WRSA. Therefore, its distinguishable functionality as a 'game changer' has a central place in members' game farm operations.

In comparison to the WRSA, the Professional Hunters Association of South Africa (PHASA), established in 1978 is the representative body or "the mouthpiece of +/- 1 200 professional hunters including +/- 30 international members"[162] hunting in the game farms around the country. Similarly, PHASA attends quarterly wildlife forum

[161] See 'Game rancher takes wild swipe at conservation professional', *Farmer's weekly*, 7 May 2010 pg. 4
[162] Interview with PHASA executive officer, Pretoria, 5/2/ 2013.

meetings, Inter Provincial Professional Hunting and TOPS and Species Listing Workshops where the Department of Environmental Affairs is represented.[163] The extended reach into the state for both organisations is a replication of the Bourdieusian (1979, 1985, and 1991) network of institutionalised relationships and symbolic ties. I am reading the organisations' insertion into the state body corporate as 'credential' for converting 'capital' into credit. For these organisations, such belonging endows significant political influence, what Hayek (Cohen & Rogers 1992:401) describes as the "domination of government by coalitions of organized interests." Nonetheless, the state has played a part in the delegation process facilitating its own substitution. Evidence of this is that in 2011, the associations' position was strengthened by President Jacob Zuma's statement, hinting at the state's plan to only licence hunters belonging to an association.[164] A statement on licensing only hunters belonging to government recognised associations reveal not only the impact and currency these organisations have but the sub-contracting by the state of its regulatory role. There is also the inverse negative factor for those outside the collective without the weight of associations' backing. In this instance, they may be forced to join either of the groups despite their reservations, if the only way to get a licence or permit becomes conditional to associational membership. One outcome that stems from this prescriptive state formulation is that it makes associations industry arbitrators together with the state even though the latter is delegating some of its administrative responsibility to the former. Therefore, belonging to an association presents a safety net whose capital supports and protects game farmers in their chosen enterprise.

Thus, there are obvious benefits derived from belonging to an association the WRSA, PHASA, CHASA and SAHCGA or to all. This can be summed up as applying 'substantive rationality' (Weber 1978), as a means of taking advantage of bargaining power. As revealed by Respondent X, the "threat from government forced people to organise"[165] something that farmers have done and gone further, "associations are a response to government not doing what it's supposed to be doing"(ibid) which I read substituting for the state in recognition of its failure to regulate the industry. Therefore, the state indirectly implores individuals to join together as a

[163] Interview with PHASA executive officer, Pretoria, 5/2/2013. This information was brought up in an interview with senior provincial official P² at the Mahikeng 06/12/2011
[164] See 'Trophy hunting may be put on hold for a while', *Farmer's Weekly*, 13 October 2011
[165] Interview with academic informant cum hunter, Potchefstroom 2/04/2012

collective lobby group formed of these organisations. It is in reference to this bounded solidarity, what informant X refers to as "the American way" of coordinating and mobilising support hence gaining leverage in state policy formulation. Borrowing from Bourdieu (1985:249), I argue that "the profits which accrue from membership in a group are the basis of the solidarity which makes them possible" and the state by its actions and inactions ends up ostensibly promoting these associations. Since associations appreciate the significance of a united front within the industry (Kitshoff 2013) they speak with one voice on common issues, for example conservation and economic contribution. Hence when these organisations negotiate with government on behalf of their constituency, they present a powerful lobby to which the state pays attention in constituting policy that benefits the sector. As such, they engender influence which Davies (2012:398) refers to as "the huge bargaining power that organised businesspeople in the modern sector of the economy wield." In that deployment of power these organisations sometimes substitute for the state recognised industry representatives.

An illustration of this power of collective action is the victory garnered by SAHCGA when it challenged the constitutionality of the Firearms Amendment Act of 2003 at the High Court.[166] Through actions such as this, sector associations can be *de jure* and *de facto* regulators of their own industry. This can happen in collaboration with the state where necessary and sometimes through prodding the state in a specific direction as the cited court case shows. Such prodding would be the WRSA's push for 'self-regulation /administration' whose effect targeted the removal of stringent state control in the game farming business to be replaced by the association role. In 2010, Arthur Rudman, WRSA director at the time, urged the reporting of overgrazed wildlife ranches to the WRSA (Rudman 2010) instead of "the legally mandated organ of state that regulates soil conservation" (Buijs 2010b:8). Thus we can read into this what Bourdieu[167] refers to as "innumerable acts of antagonistic construction that agents operate, at every moment in their individual and collective struggles, spontaneous or organized, to impose the social vision of the world most conforming to their interests". Yet again Bourdieu serves as a useful reference point in understanding the actions of

[166] See Steyn, A J 'Lawmakers or lawbreakers?', *Farmer's weekly*, 17 June 2011 pg. 98.
[167] Bourdieu, P. 1977:2 in L. Wacquaint (2013:14) 'Symbolic power and group-making: On Pierre Bourdieu's reframing of class', Journal of Classical Sociology 0 (0) 1-18, SAGE

sector representatives by pointing out how the group applies its social capital to achieve domination. Similarly, Bernstein's (2013:42) referral to "dense networks and practices of covert collusion between corporate interests and government" can be applied to an analysis of the type of relationship that has developed between the state and game sector associations. For example, in advocating for 'self-administration', the WRSA implores that:

> Game ranchers in possession of adequate enclosure certificates (AEC) or exemption certificates (EC) and TOPS standing permits (TSP) would be allowed to issue written permissions for the hunting of listed species. A hunting permits register would then be monitored by the wildlife industry. The same would apply for relocation permits. Approvals, in turn, would then be monitored by Government. (Raats 2011:15)

Accepting such proposals and making them standard operating procedures in the sector would push the state to the periphery of the industry, emasculating its role to influence and effectively monitor events. According to Davies (2012:399) "these legislative initiatives serve as a useful example of the continuing efforts of Afrikaner and white capital elites to cement their historically advantageous position." This focus speaks to the continued hold on power of the organised game farming sector while neutralising the bureaucratic state machinery as in the CapeNature debacle referred to earlier. This is a picture of associations securing the conditions of their "private regulation of the market" (Bernstein 2013:36) through ring-fencing their corporate interests.

Yet in another dimension, this relationship between the state and game organisations is invaluable in so far as economic gains and state efficiency benefit from such connections. This is particularly so, since the tourism contribution of the industry is in the national interest. Meanwhile its organisational expertise could be harnessed to improve the state's national and provincial inefficiencies in implementing and policing legislation. To borrow from Andries du Toit (2013:21), the big challenge is to develop "approaches to rein in corporate power, and at the very least ensuring that value chain governance happens in more pro-poor ways." As things stand, it is corporate class interests –those of the game farming community- that are being planted in the state domain. Nonetheless, relating these as unequivocal national interests can be detrimental to transformation efforts, as it means redress of historical inequalities competes with economic contribution. Conversely, it is "the mutual vulnerability of both the state and capital to globalisation

pressures *which* compels them to cooperate, so that the state's regulation of markets is widely accepted within a 'fateful compromise' which advances both state autonomy and capital interests simultaneously" (Davies 2012:399 *my addition*). The state on its own is in a weak position to dictate terms of engagement to this sector of the economy particularly in this global neo-liberal environment.

Part of that difficulty arises from the fact that the sector has been 'rebranding' (Bernstein 2013:24) its image to fit in with the democratic dispensation in line with the shifts in ANC policy. Shedding the old in favour of the new more globalised character resonates with the neo-liberalist discourse propounded by the international community into which the state has bought as seen in its environmental legislation. Therefore the conservation contribution and sustainable utilisation thesis as a sector refrain works to fulfil this function, indicating the sector's indispensable role to the nation. Yet the 'sustainable livelihoods' refrain remains theoretical, having not been fully extended to the black majority, particularly the rural poor who are being displaced to make way for game farms. Thus to invert Judith Butler (1993:2) the discourse does not produce the effect that it names but is a paradox considering the exclusive nature of game hunting whose relationship with sustainable livelihoods can be viewed as incongruent in the strict sense of the discourse. Certainly, as Bernstein alludes, a little self-initiated transformation has been undertaken by commercial farmers and related organizations (read game farmers and their associations) "typically as a gesture towards 'rainbow' nationhood –the new inclusiveness- but not in ways that threaten existing (and expanding) configurations of power in relations of property, production and markets" (2013:40). Examples here include the local level efforts of PHASA and WRSA association branches in the North West province assisting local black farmers. One example is the failed initiative for community game ranching,[168] PHASA's Conservation and Empowerment fund, SAHGCA's training of black professional hunters in Mahikeng.

Similarly, the links with the powerful lobby groups such as CHASA, PHASA, and WRSA among others that these farmers belong to help to keep them firmly entrenched in their priviledge. Atkinson, in a discussion of the contemporary state of

[168] Interview with former PHASA executive member, Pretoria, 2011/08/12

commercial agriculture, claims that "commercial agriculture organizations are also grappling to find a meaningful niche in the broader social order" (2007:75). Such analysis explains the significance of game farming associations and the authoritative voices they wield in negotiations with the state. Additionally, since "agriculture has undergone deregulation, agribusinesses have been empowered in South Africa" (Fraser 2007:841) ensuring the relevance of game farming as a sector playing a huge part in the contribution to the country's economy.

The economic and social coalitions that have seen the forging of alliances between the different groupings like the WRSA, PHASA, SAHCGA, WTA among others sees some executive members of one association sitting on boards of the other association as a measure of ensuring cross-pollination of ideas and strategies to tackle mutual areas of concern. One advantage of this as espoused by a former executive member of PHASA is that it provides the individuals concerned with an "inside edge and being the first with more knowledge about the industry".[169]

Nonetheless, the associations have not always had an easy ride with the state. PHASA for instance, was forced to start transforming while cleaning up its lion canned hunts and other illegal activities before the state could offer it national recognition as a body representing a specific constituency in the country. They literally had to expel 'rogue' prominent members from the association before garnering recognition.[170] Here the state bartered 'recognition' for compliance and regulation to the PHASA executive, functions which, I argue, should have been exercised by the state as a national authority. Similarly, the association found fault with the state machinery and the frustrations that go with representation. For example, a former PHASA official complained that state officials representing South Africa at quarterly Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) conventions treated these trips as shopping opportunities instead of fighting for the cause of the industry. His feeling was that it would have been better if state officials were accompanied by industry representatives who would argue for instance on the rhino poaching issue in these types of forum (ibid). Although it has not always been one way traffic in favour of private

[169] Interview with former PHASA executive member, Pretoria, 2011/08/12.
[170] Interview with former PHASA executive member, Pretoria, 2011/08/12

game farmers, the complaint here is on the inefficiency of state representatives, a common refrain from private game farmers which supports state substitution.

A fellowship of game farmers and hunters

What is the culture of game farming and hunting? There are moral, institutional and political implications tied in with game farming and hunting tradition. Does game farming have its own sub-culture that is peculiar and particular to the sectorial context? To begin with, the fact that WRSA membership is predominantly white with only 2% black membership[171] in 2012 tells a South African story in itself. Notably, the WRSA black membership was much less than the 5% female membership overall, yet the organisation claimed to be a national representative of game ranchers (ibid). This should be seen as white representation. One reads into these figures the slow pace of transformation both racially and gender-wise. In addition, exhibited here is a characteristic trait of continuity linked to exclusivity, reminiscent of the colonial hunting period. The latter is reinforced by the fact that it was only PHASA, who had a white female top executive, the CEO elected in 2010 while the other associations had white male- dominated executives on their boards with no black representatives.

Further to that, WRSA Seminars are held in Afrikaans, including the paper presentations, revealing an industry which has taken a particular type of South African identity that it wants to be known by in the spatial domain.[172] One speaker during the 2012 WRSA Seminar quipped that he only spoke in English when he had to defend himself and received much generous hearty laughter from the majority of members in the audience.[173] Reading into the Afrikaans speaker's assertion, one could surmise that the speaker identifies himself as a 'victim'[174] who only has to use the English language as a defence mechanism. Thus his agency and freedom comes from expressing himself in the Afrikaans language. In this posturing, it is his Afrikaans identity that comes to the fore playing "the symbolic role… as the core marker of identity" (van der Waal 2012:453) as projected by the

[171] Interview with Herman Els, WRSA Manager, Pretoria, 31/05/2012.
[172] I attended a WRSA seminar on 30 March 2012.Only two papers were presented in English; one by the French speaking key note speaker and the other on rhino poaching by a 'rhino expert' while the rest were in Afrikaans. The key note speaker sat stone faced throughout the proceedings. No English translation were available for the Afrikaans presentations.
[173] WRSA Game Ranching Seminar 30 March 2012 scheduled presentation. A similar position is posited by Mark John Burke, a 'proud Afrikaner's blogger who writes, " Flemish Belgians are particularly proud of their language and much like Afrikaners they tend to only speak English in an emergency" (www.thoughtleader.co.za/ (accessed 2013/04/04)
[174] In this, I am reading the speaker as one of those white farmers who feels victimised by "political disarticulation from the state" Fraser (2008:25).

speaker. Consequently, he feels confident enough to joke about it to fellow 'members', in a predominantly Afrikaans social setting. Thus the use of Afrikaans language serves as "a function of expressing social belonging, based on membership" (van der Waal 2012:452) as reflected in how his remarks are well-received by the WRSA grouping the speaker was addressing. Noteworthy in this context is that the key note speaker was a French first language speaking expert who valiantly conducted his main address in English despite the latter not being his first language. A reciprocal action could have been the conduct of speeches in English, if only to engage the key note speaker and other English speaking guests at the seminar. Yet the fact that this was not done, presents a backdrop to reading the sector's social script.

As postulated by a South African Hunters and Game Conservation Association (SAHGCA) representative, "the face of game sector associations is the white Afrikaner"[175] which the above incident supports. Further to that, the WRSA, PHASA, SAHCGA all carry a strong Afrikaner identity: a visit to the offices of these organisations on any given day demonstrates the dominance of the Afrikaans language as the medium of communication and the 'whiteness' of the office bearers. In confirming this characteristic, an assertion made by an interviewee posits that white Afrikaners "are farmers at heart"[176] hence their majority status in game ranching. The respondent continued thus, "there is not a household in this country that doesn't know somebody that hunts, has hunted or owns a rifle. That's the way we are" (ibid). This generalisation of the white Afrikaner tying him to the soil[177] and hunting irrevocably marks his place in relation to the land while silencing those disputing his connection to and possession of that land. This ties into a long history of contest over who has rights to the land, with indigenous black South Africans claiming this very same land based on their ancestry and other ties to that land being held in possession by the white farmer. To borrow from Alexander, such a generalisation selectively appropriates to itself a "usable past" whose "history is teleological, intent on showing how a particular *group identity* came about, and by doing so legitimizing and glorifying it" (2007:192 *my words*). In claiming that "*that's the way we are!*" the interviewee appropriates the position of speaking for the dominant group in game farming. In this role,

[175] Interview with SAHGCA executive officer, Pretoria (05/02/2013).

[176] Interview with informant Y in Pretoria, 29/05/2012

[177] See Davis, R. (2006) who writes on the sustaining myths of Boer identity, of the Boer as being close to the soil in her thesis 'Unstable Ironies: Narrative Instability in Herman Charles Bosman's "Oom Schalk Lourens" Series', Master's thesis, Rhodes University

he is stating a supposedly matter-of-fact position which should be common knowledge and thus accepted as such without question.

This "naming of the 'fact' is itself a narrative of power disguised as innocence" (Trouillott 1995:114) when we read into the contours of this assertion. Its innocence lies in the claim of the status quo being what it is, because it has always been. Therefore, the continuity in land- holding through conversion to game farming symbolically relates to the colonial past even though it is stripped of the material, capital and land redistribution connotations it embodies. By applying moral and emotional justifications for their hold on this productive land now being used for game farming, white farmers can claim 'belonging'.

> Even if you take this farm that we are on, my husband's stepfather was here for 15 years. He died in 1999 and we took over in November 1998. The damage that he caused by over-grazing you can still see today. And where are we, we are now in 2012.[178]
> Certain areas in the country is marginal land. Wildlife is the only thing to survive in these areas.[179]

Having established the terms of their 'earth connection', the moral grounds for utilisation of the natural resource that is wildlife and the land becomes irrevocably linked. Conversely the implication from the earlier notion is that any white Afrikaans household that does not hunt or own guns is not living up to its 'cultural' heritage. Understood in this context; Bourdieu's analysis that "cultural consumption is predisposed, consciously and deliberately or not, to fulfil a social function of legitimating social differences" (1984:7 in Urry 2002:80) becomes a useful analysis of the justification employed above. There is a ring of truth in the interviewee's 'construct' as alluded to by Mkhize who states:

> it can be argued that this private wildlife land-use has a cultural resonance with contemporary white South Africans who can engage in these activities through privileged access to land as owners or consumer elites (2012: 17).

Mkhize (2012), following Terreblanche (2002), draws attention to the priviledged status of these actors, while Terreblanche also draws attention to the colonial inequalities that have continued to the present. Importantly this accounts for economic power to afford hunting or ownership of a game farm and legal gun ownership among other things, which enables

[178] Interview with farmer B's wife in Groot Marico 2012/05/13
[179] Interview with farmer JM in Groot Marico 2012/01/26. Several game farmers shared this opinion

whites to partake in these activities as producers and/or as consumers. For example, a report by the Employment Equity Commission, showed whites represented 72, 6 % of top management positions in 2012[180] indicative of a commanding capital position for whites. This statistic is still a high figure, considering the state's laws on transformation which seek to address equity issues taking cognisance of the country's demographics and apartheid history. Hence Interviewee Y's statement is silent about "continuities of historic relations to property, production and economic power" (Bernstein 2003:212) to which Mkhize, Terreblanche and the Employment Equity Commission report allude. His false assumption of neutrality negates the issues of racial transformation that needs to be reflective of the country's demographics and racialised past. In the same manner, the silence extends to how this status quo has come to be in the history of South African land access and game farming thus eliding the historical truth in which "the past always determines the shape of the present" (Jones 2013:222). Yet the history of colonial conquest, segregation and apartheid, systematically disenfranchised the majority black population. Hunting and land ownership were casualties of this era whose scars still reflect in the present. In this sense, to extend Trouillott's analysis further, "It is a product of power whose label has been cleansed of traces of power" (1995:114) which lays moral claim to this cultural realm while negating the history of dispossession that created the present land reform deficit for the majority rural black population.

Therefore, a declaration like the above paints a connection to land and its uses as a resource. In the "*farmers at heart*" assertion, the respondent implies that game farming and game hunting are symbolically tied and linked to an Afrikaner's way of life. Clearly, the speaker is not alone in this positioning ('farmers at heart') as Fraser (2008:25) talks of "their material and symbolic interest in the land". I draw parallels with Ruth Hall's reference to the "white tribe of Africa – predominantly white (male) Afrikaner farmers" (Bernstein 2013:33). Such discourse appropriates a strategy "in which explanation at times becomes defence" (Furlong 2003:207) particularly if the right to hold on to the land and practise this land-use becomes a strategy for justification in the light of clamours for land reform. In short, this link can then be extended to the de-politicised 'social identity' of the Afrikaans speaking game farmer and game hunter as a distinct grouping that has

[180] See the 'Commission for employment equity annual report: 2012-2013' in www.labour.gov.za/downloads/documents/ (accessed 6/08/2013). See also Bond, P (2005) 'Elite Transition: from Apartheid to Neoliberalism in South Africa', Pietermaritzburg, UKZN Press, pg18-19 and SAIRR (2010) 'South Africa Survey 2009/10: Employment and Incomes', p81.

occupied a specific South African economic space. Thus, they have been able to create:

> a commodified culture which views cultural identity as a saleable commodity within the free market environment of post-apartheid South Africa …..to entrench Afrikaans.. material interests and their historically determined structural privilege, while opening up the possibility of new markets on the back of newfound political acceptability (Wasserman 2009:75 in Davies 2012:203).

Nevertheless, this is not a suggestion that the sector is made up of Afrikaners only as a grouping even though they are the majority people actively involved. Certainly, as the visible face of game farming and hunting, Afrikaners represent "strong elements of continuity, if only because of the size and power of entrenched business groupings" (Chabane, Goldstein and Roberts in Davies 2012:393) as reflected by associations like WRSA, PHASA, and SAHCGA. A form of policing and enforcing this identity begins with the magazines they produce, to the preferred language of communication leading up to the executive members that run the affairs of the associations including the board members.

The Afrikaans discourse is perpetuated in articles in 'Wildlife Ranching' the official "*WRSA publication for the wildlife ranching industry of South Africa*" and 'Professional Hunter' magazine, the "*official magazine of the professional hunters association of South Africa*". They are written in Afrikaans with no direct translation to English. A reading into this positioning is that the magazines represent an Afrikaans medium meant only for fluent readers of Afrikaans. According to Ahmed (2012) one definitive aspect of an institution is the categorisation of 'who' it is shaped for and who is shaping it. Therefore, principally the magazines speak to and for an Afrikaans speaking game sector. Thus the Afrikaans language and the whiteness of these settings speak volumes of the social identity carried by the sector. Even then, one has to place a disclaimer here that the 'Professional Hunter' magazine does not carry as many Afrikaans language articles as the other publication. Despite that, the overwhelming evidence points to the earlier conclusion. For example, one WRSA magazine had 16 articles out of 22 written in Afrikaans[181] including full-page advertorials, discriminating against those who cannot read Afrikaans. Further reflection of the Afrikaans dominance was a wildlife auction close to Sun City in the North West province in 2012, where

[181] Wildlife Ranching Vol.3, No. 3, Winter 2010. On average, other publications have 10 articles in Afrikaans.

the auction conducted by Vleissentraal (an active auction house in the game sector) was held in Afrikaans. Findings by Warren (2011:28) on the profile of the biltong hunter, provided statistics indicating that 78, 4% of the sample respondents were Afrikaans speaking. Again this indicates the leaning towards Afrikaans that the industry has taken as an identity of the group. Thus, the Afrikaans language as a vehicle of and for meaning encapsulates an 'ethnic identity marker'. As a "socio-historical phenomenon", it is an expression of "relations of power" (Bourdieu 1991:44)[182] particularly in the farming context. Consequently, it can be mobilised to support and priviledge the specific social group –one might postulate near- segregation as one example or cross-racial class segregation as the other- for which some in the game farming sector find employing the Afrikaans language[183] a useful gatekeeper.

Thus, this identity reflects a "nostalgia for a past only recently faded and yet already re- imagined" (Swart 1998:744) in which the Afrikaans identity reigns supreme in this cultural activity. Hence the theme of colonial continuity as postulated in this thesis attains validity in this context. Notwithstanding that, the industry recognises the need for powerful black connections in its midst for its survival, as in the Ramaphosa example and others who are courted to support the WRSA cause in policy discussions. For example the WRSA president wrote thus:

> Another very positive step is that high-profile black businessmen are entering the wildlife ranching industry –the latest being Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa. With a special combination of high-level experience, in not only business and politics, but also stud cattle breeding, Ramaphosa is well positioned to play a major role in shaping the future of the game industry in South Africa.

Reading into this statement, the claim of this very important person's belonging to this grouping implies its reach into the powerful black business and political

[182] The same idea is shared by other theorists such as Derrida, J. (1986) Of grammatology in H. Adams and L. Searle (Eds.) *Critical theory since 1965* (pp 94-119). Tallahassee, University Press Florida; Foucault, M. (1980) The history of sexuality, volume 1: An introduction. New York, Random House; (1986a) 'The discourse on language' and (1986b) 'What is an author?' in H. Adams and L. Searle (Eds.) *Critical theory since 1965* (pp 148-162 & 138-148). Tallahassee, University Press Florida.

[183] The South African Institute of Race Relations revealed that Afrikaans is no longer a 'white language' with 4,1 million people (60%) Afrikaans home language speakers being people of African, coloured and Indian descent while only 2, 7 million (40%) were white. (www.sairr.org.za/media/media-releases/Afri) accessed 2013/04/23. But it is the white Afrikaans speakers, this thesis is focused on since the other races are not as well represented in the sector in the North West province.

connections.[184] Similarly, in the course of an interview,[185] an association official let on that Lekganyane, the powerful spiritual leader of the Zion Christian Church (ZCC) sect was a SAHCGA member and spoke fluent Afrikaans having been educated in an Afrikaner elite school. He was reported as being a good shot having won a number of regional Association organised shooting competitions. Unsolicited as it was, this piece of information lays claim to the reach of the game farming grouping. In one way, embeddedness in the Afrikaans language appropriates the positive cultural capital of game culture since language becomes a tool for the exclusion of non- Afrikaans speakers barring them from access. In this regard, it is interesting that the interviewee finds it relevant to point to Lekganyane's Afrikaans fluency implying that it is one important factor to membership of the group. To borrow from Vernon February, deployment of this strategy allows for "a culture of the few" (1991:2) whereby language plays "an important role in the struggle for self-independence and freedom" (ibid: 74). While not expressly clamouring for freedom, these few can then run the game sector in the exclusive realm of Afrikaans dominated space as a continuation of a cultural activity that is rooted in past colonial traditions.

Therefore, Afrikaans usage serves as a useful tool in claiming independence of sector away from state intervention in this community of game farmers. In one sense, "Afrikaans as a badge of social identity"[186] (Giliomee 2003:364) serves its purpose as a factual statement marking the presence of "the organization Afrikaner prepared to wage the language 'struggle' on an organized" (ibid: 401) base in the South African game farming economy. Following the same trajectory, "Afrikaans as a language" remains "the symbol of their sense of place and community" (ibid: 664) which the game farming sector clings to amidst the shrinking of "sites and spaces in which what was once thought of as separate –identities, spaces, histories- come together or find points of intersection" Nuttall 2009:20). Yet the fear of nationalisation and transformation of the rural countryside threatening their very livelihood and existence has opened the door for the Ramaphosas and Lekganyanes to be invited into the circle. The WRSA president's reference to Ramaphosa and the SAHCGA official's Lekganyane slip are testimony to that. The

[184] See 'From the president's pen: Industry inspires confidence' in Wildlife Ranching, Volume 3, No. 3, Winter 2010 pg. 1.

[185] Interview with SAHCGA executive official in Pretoria, (05/02/2013). According to the South African government information service, the church has the highest Christian following of all churches in the country. See www.info.gov.za/aboutsa/people.htm. (accessed 2013/08/29).

[186] For more, see H. Giliomee's 'The Afrikaners: Biography of a people' (2003), Tafelberg, Cape Town.

biggest point of intersection is the class interest or grouping and command of Afrikaans which preserve the overall structural set-up of the sector. This is not just a defence of the language but should be seen as a defence of a way of life for people who have chosen an economic path –game farming- in which they have carved a niche market for themselves. As Afrikaner game farmers, they have a lifestyle they would protect from the majority via negotiated transformation routes they control. As an example, I observed at one of the game auctions, I attended that it was held at the brother of the wildlife seller's farm thus indicating Bourdieu's 'social uses of kinship'[187] analogy as useful in understanding the close knit and familial culture that is associated with game farming.

Invariably, "jagtersgemeenskap (hunting fellowship)" (Beinart & Hughes 2007:63) defines the traditions and symbolisms associated with game culture. For example, an interviewee mentioned how in the early days of starting the family game farm, the majority of hunting clients were brought in by professional hunter friends of his which helped to sustain the business. Similarly, he would use his networks to satisfy his own hunting clients' needs by hunting at his networks' farms when he could not supply the desired animal on the family farm.[188] As expressed by Warren (2011:33) "hunting is a social activity where most hunters hunt in groups of four". A similar observation was made earlier by Hazel *et al* (1990) who state that in the process of hunting, hunters build companionship with other hunters therefore forming a fellowship which can lead to subsequent hunts. Correspondingly, interviewee B mentioned doing business with only one specific game capture company and no "business with the other guys".[189] This is despite the fact that there was no tangible advantage offered by this business over the others. Therefore Putnam's (2000:19-20) definition of 'social capital' as the "connections among individuals- social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them" becomes an apt description of membership value that accrues as a result of belonging to some of these networks making social capital both a "private good and a public good" (ibid). Therefore, one has to be a member of the fellowship to be admitted into the close knit community that makes up the game

[187] See Bourdieu, P. 'The Logic of Practice' as translated by Richard Nice, Stanford University Press, California, where he refers to the practical uses of kinship in both material and symbolic interests pg. 167
[188] Interview with farmer Y, Groot Marico, 2011/03/10.
[189] Interview with farmer B, Groot Marico, 2012/01/25.

farming and hunting sector.

In this communion, there are rules and regulations –some unspoken- which are followed to the letter. For example, hunting respondent T reported that he only hunts with "a select group" who have been friends of his for "twenty and thirty years" some of who "have been members of the same shooting club for thirty five years."[190] He further went on to say those that he invites to his hunts have to come highly recommended, reinforcing the point that hunting is a 'closed old boys club' reserved for members only. To borrow from Portes (1998:10) this type of social capital represents "bounded solidarity and enforceable trust, and its main result is to render formal or overt controls unnecessary", as the above case has shown. When interrogating this closed door policy culture, one explanation might be the safety and risk factors associated with hunting. These necessitate hunting with someone who can be trusted to handle their weapon safely when in camp or out on the hunt. That responsibility rests with the organiser of the hunt, hence the reluctance to bring any unknown human variable into a potentially dangerous or risky situation where lives might be at stake. Membership longevity in the shooting club extends beyond 1994 reinforcing the white priviledge associated with that era. In applying Bourdieu's (1985:248) definition of social capital as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to a possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition" it is significant to point out that these members can always tap into network- mediated benefits (Portes 1998).

The selective invitational character of the sector is put under scrutiny in the next section on transformation within the sector.

Seeds of transformation or Continuities

There have been observations made that the industry is not transforming, (Gaborone 2006, Josefsson 2014) as has been discussed in previous sections. Yet the hyper-visibility of Cyril Ramaphosa for example, as a member of the game farming sector may point to the strides of the sector. Nonetheless, one can argue Ramaphosa's presence provides a useful framing reference for concluding on the class stratification of the sector that works in

[190] Interview with game hunter T, Pretoria, 2012/05/12.

combination with the race factor. By virtue of Cyril Ramaphosa's struggle credentials[191] and political influence within the ruling ANC, he is a useful cog in the wheel of the game farming sector and its interactions with government. This is aptly pointed out by the WRSA president's quote in reference to relations that accrue particularly when peddling political influence. As implored in one of the letters published in the Wildlife Ranching magazine entitled '*Get the politicians on our side'*, the writer uses the USA Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation lobby group whose powerful example could be copied in the South African context "to harness the power of our politicians –some structure for them to '*belong to'*- where those who are interested, can be kept informed of the issues and opportunities" (Smith 2010:7 *my emphasis*). In ceding ground to a black politician, the suggestion is that an invitation ought to be extended but whose conditions and terms are clearly defined as in the reference to 'structure', 'belong to' and 'being kept informed'. By being 'placed' in a structure the politicians will 'belong to', there is an implication that the whole relationship is being manipulated for a specific purpose. Hence the price to pay is minimal, while business continues as normal.

Nevertheless, as a strategy, co-optation of political elites is not unique to South Africa as Salverda (2013) points out about the Mauritian landowners' maintenance of an elite position. Interestingly, this strategy was also used by the Transvaal Game Protection Association in the early 1900's. They garnered support to their cause by bestowing patron status to leading politicians, one of whom was General Louis Botha[192] consequently resulting in game protection becoming one of the first issues dealt with by the Union government after the war (Carruthers 1988). As a strategy, it continues a precedent established during the colonial period by engaging prominent political personalities to the cause. Thus the rate of change is managed as well as the direction of the change itself. In Smith's (2010) exhortation, there is a suggestion that the politician has to be guided in the choices and decisions that he/she makes in order "*to harness the power of our politicians*" for the benefit of the larger group. Thus the pace of change is dictated by the in-group without full transformation.

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[191] Cyril Ramaphosa, a founding member of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) led the ANC negotiating team during the transition to South Africa's democracy and was Chairperson of the Constitutional Assembly. He turned to business in 1996 after losing the ANC Deputy President contest.

[192] See Carruthers E, J (1988) 'Game protection in the Transvaal: 1846-1926', PhD thesis, University of Cape Town. General Louis Botha the Prime Minister of the Transvaal in 1907 was one of the architects of the Union of South Africa; see www.sahistory.org.za

Despite these self-initiated programmes, the core structure of control and authority resides with the initiators. Indeed the huge capital outlay aspect and relations that affect game farming and hunting make it difficult for black outsiders who do not 'belong to a structure' to succeed in this highly network focused environment. As propounded by this thesis, there is a gate-keeping function subtly supported by the associations. As observed by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (Cousins *et al* 2010:2) "the level of transformation within the hunting community for previously disadvantaged individuals is reported to be extremely low", a context that has not changed much. Therefore, the white bodies that shape the sector as subjects of these institutions (Ahmed 2006) are representative of the constituency embodied by the industry. As a result, the few black members are exceptions to the rule because of their high profile and usefulness in 'belonging to a structure' in which "a new form of oligarchic power is emerging which combines entrenched economic interests with those of a new black bourgeoisie" (Andreasson 2006 in Davies 2012:399). Their purpose is that they can be cited as examples of transformation preserving the delicate balance that has been achieved thus far. Meanwhile, the state is kept at bay in seriously enforcing transformation of the industry. As propounded by Davies;

> These and other adroit balancing acts between a strong material position and distinctive cultural legacy typifies the means by which certain Afrikaner capital elites have capitalised on the liberalisation of the domestic economy to reposition themselves in the new dispensation. (2012:392)

Therefore, the pre-occupation with the economic contribution that the industry makes to the national economy –as in Pretorius' (2010) proposition- is an assertion and justification of the sector's space in the post-apartheid economy.

Bearing in mind such comments as the above, does it imply that Cyril Ramaphosa has fallen into this structure of "belong*ing* to" from which he now has to delicately extricate himself via his auction apology mentioned earlier? The caricature cartoon cited earlier is a powerful reflection of how the cartoonist views his association with the game farming industry. His membership is a powerful advert for the sector's guided transformation that works to present a politically correct image to the South African public. Yet the cartoonist's interpretation is that he has lost touch with his earlier political constituency, hence the view of him on a braai stand with the buffalo standing over him while a group of

miners stand away in a 'strike' pose. This last image stems from a miners' strike, around the time of Ramaphosa's auction that crippled operations nationally.[193] Yet before his summer apology on SAfm radio; Cyril Ramaphosa in the winter edition of the Wildlife Ranching magazine lauds the 2012 Gala evening organised by the WRSA going further to say "Well done WRSA. You can be proud of the value you add to the industry" (Ramaphosa 2012:7). Varied interpretations can be drawn from this.

Firstly, Cyril Ramaphosa bestowed legitimacy to the industry as a powerful black representative because of his political history. In the publication of his letter, the magazine has heeded the implorations by Smith the letter writer above on harnessing "the power of our politicians" to benefit the wildlife ranching sector. Cyril Ramaphosa's congratulatory letter in an insider publication –Wildlife Ranching 2012- substantiates his 'belonging to' the sector as enunciated by Smith's 2010 article. Secondly, the fact that the publishing team at the publication chose to publish this particular letter among many others shows the importance with which they view his letter writing. Read in the context of Foucault, the power of writing attains the instrumentality of a certain political function (Foucault1979:189 &193), hence this letter represents an important coup for the game industry. Significantly, it serves as an endorsement on the sector, which can be usefully deployed to point to the transformation 'progress' the sector has made. Therefore one can conclude that the WRSA has succeeded in portraying a case for transformation with the Cyril Ramaphosa example above.

This does not cloud the fact that as a group feeling under siege, publishing Ramaphosa's letter is a pro-active way of managing and containing attacks from populist and radical political organs like the ANC Youth league. Alarming inflammatory statements from the youth league's president like:

> They (whites) have turned our land into game farms. The willing-buyer, willing-seller (system) has failed," M a l e m a said. "We must take the land without paying. They took our land without paying. Once we agree they stole our land, we can agree they are criminals and must be treated as such[194]

[193] Events before and leading to the Marikana striking miners massacre when 34 miners were gunned down by the police on 16 August 2012 in the North West. The miners were demanding a wage increase from Lonmin platinum mine, at which Ramaphosa was a shareholder.

[194] See 'Malema: White people are criminals', iol news, 8 May 2011, www.iol.co.za/ (accessed 23/01/2013) and Hart, G

As a counter to such calls for nationalisation of mines and farm acquisition -Zimbabwe-style- playing up this demonstration of Ramaphosa's support and industry participation re-assures game farming actors on the safety of their investments. Importantly though, the capital expenditure needed to set-up explains the reluctance of the state to capitalise game farming projects as land reform initiatives. A major disincentive is that such a huge investment becomes a serious indictment for the government to gamble with in trying to assist new game farmers in transformation efforts of the sector. Chief among the considerations is the general lack of success stories with various failed land reform beneficiaries.[195] In addition, the fact that hunting as a leisure pursuit has not grown among the black elite, unlike golf, also becomes an extra hurdle on the budding black game farmer who needs clients to grow their new venture. This is despite the claims being made that the client demographics are gradually shifting if the biltong hunters and corporate retreats figures are anything to go by as suggested by three interview respondents.[196] Yet these black clients are few partly as a reflection of the colonial legacy of land dispossession in which the struggle for land and resources is a continuing process.

Returning to the earlier discussion, Mr. Smith, the letter writer, shows an understanding of the fact that "man's economy as a rule is submerged in his social relationships" (Polanyi 1971:46). Hence his call for engaging the politicians in a clearly defined '*structure*' is aimed at developing and cultivating those relationships to harvest their worth. Sanctioning the printing of the letter from Cyril Ramaphosa then is a deliberate strategy of putting across to readers that the sector has the 'voice' and 'ear' of powerful politicians. Thus everything else is under control. In advocating for this action, Mr. Smith

> does not act so as to safeguard his individual interest in the possession of material goods ; he acts so as to safeguard his social standing, his social claims, his social assets . (Polanyi 1971:46)

It is this same awareness and understanding of his place in the scheme of politics, as representative of the 'party' black elite that makes Cyril Ramaphosa apologise for his lack

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(2013) 'Rethinking the South African Crisis: Nationalism, Populism, Hegemony; UKZN Press. Julius Malema was still President of the ANC Youth League during this period in 2011 before his expulsion from the party. After starting a new party, the Economic Freedom Fighters, he continued his onslaught; see 'No reconciliation without land: Malema' in www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/ (accessed 16/10/2013).

[195] For a damning focus, see Du Toit P. (2004) 'The Great South African Land Scandal', South Africa, Legacy Publications, which presents a one-sided view on the issue.

[196] Interview with farmer A, Marico district, 2012/03/11 and farmer B and the Koster trophy hunter

of judgement when bidding for the buffalo bull. The political 'price' that could have been paid would have been losing the party nomination at the 2012 ANC Conference but fortunately for him, he won the party deputy presidency post. One can read into this public apology the public performance of a power struggle. It clearly was a power struggle in which class politics is deployed to score political points. In support of this analysis, we need to consider that this apology came after Julius Malema[197] had openly criticised Cyril Ramaphosa over the buffalo bid and Marikana. Hence Ramaphosa felt pressured to respond in the same media platforms. Nonetheless, when Ramaphosa earlier praised the WRSA over the Gala dinner in 2010, he was claiming and staking his place –his prize- at the table of the 'private' game ranching fraternity's top elite. By this action, he showed the different guises of his social relationships in which his gaze in this instance is fixated at the top echelons of the sector. In his apologetic rendition, his politician's gaze though fixated towards the top has been brought back down, depicting a "concern for the social reality of daily life" (Harvey 2001:126). His apology is addressed to the majority of South Africans who do not belong to the elite game farming class. This operates as a counter to Julius Malema's criticism, reclaiming lost ground for Ramaphosa as the people's representative. Thus both Mr. Smith and Mr. Ramaphosa depict a "narrow politics of the self" (Blaser and van der Westhuizen 2012:387) where self-interests and self-preservation rule supreme which can deploy strategies –praise and apology- depending upon individual context. Generally though, very little transformation has filtered through the sector to the majority black population.

A major contribution to the lack of transformation as a barrier to entry is the gate-keeping function practised by industry actors which works to keep it as an exclusive preserve for a priviledged few. A case in point is the discussion raised on the use of language and other attributes that subtly serve this particular function. One newspaper article quoted a young black hunter alleging that "the so called old boys club was unduly influencing community leaders with braais, cars, and luxury accommodation to secure the precious hunting rights" (Groenewald 2013:14). Thus the implication is that those who do not belong to the inner-group, in this instance the emerging black hunter who is not yet established, are kept out of the lucrative business. This results from the latter's inability to compete in a structurally

[197] Julius Malema, former ANC youth league leader, was expelled from the party in April 2012 for various indiscretions breaching party protocol. Prior to the ANC Congress elections in December 2012, Julius launched a campaign to discredit his opponents, including Cyril Ramaphosa. See http://mg.co.za/article/ and http://news24.com/. (accessed 20/9/2012)

skewed and socially defined process, heavily weighted against them. Interviews with game farmer Y and X[198] reflected how trophy hunters select 'a hunt' based on trust and liking for the individual, what Warren (2011:37) refers to as "the social, mental and psychological perceptions of hunters." For instance, a hunting company owner claimed that a proven track record of bringing rich American hunters gave his company an advantage in access to community hunts in Limpopo over young, up-and-coming black hunters. This point about a track record was supported by trophy hunting game farm owners who mentioned repeat business which went up to 90% for some.[199] Going further in defending his company's access to the community hunt allocations, the business man said; "The old hunting firms go to American hunting fairs to win hunters for these safaris. It takes years to build a good reputation" (Groenewald 2013:14). But once that reputation has been built, the loyalty dividends can be extensive as reflected by the eight safaris across Africa that a game farmer engaged in with a client. Similarly, another client had been hunting with the same outfit from 1985 to 2012.[200] The fact that game farmers need to go twice or three times overseas,[201] to international hunting conventions, before bagging a hunting client also points to the huge costs involved in advertising the trophy hunting business. Furthermore, the value of the local currency in relation to the hunters' country of origin also plays a part in the frequency of marketing trips undertaken and is a barrier to emerging game farmers. Nonetheless, the slow pace of transformation in the industry has been a construct of gate-keeping by industry actors.

Gender and generation visibility

It has already been pointed out how the public face of game farming is a white middle-aged masculine dominated environment. A gendered division of roles is a defining feature of the sector. Thus, the female CEO of PHASA, Adri Kitschoff referred to this game script as "the nature of the beast".[202] This admission is confirmed by documented findings of various studies. For instance, Warren's (2011:31) study reveals that males make up 98, 8% of South African biltong hunters while Barratt's (2012:64) study of hunting showed a ratio of 94% males compared to 6% for females as figures

[198] Interview with farmer Y, Marico district, 2011/03/10 and interview with farmer Z 2012/01/26
[199] Interview with trophy hunting game farm owner, former PHASA executive, Koster, North West 26/01/2012
[200] Interview with trophy hunting game farm owner, former PHASA executive, Koster, North West 26/01/2012
[201] Interview with farmer Y, Marico district 2011/03/10 and interview with farmer Z 2012/01/26
[202] A poignant statement, t when considering that Adri Kitschoff –the informant- was the female CEO of PHASA, a male dominated organisation, where sub-committees like its Conservation and Empowerment Fund board had only 1 female in contrast to the 9 male members making up the rest of the board. Adri became CEO on 1 January 2010.

for the participants. Likewise, Steinbeck (cited in Cock 2007) remarks on the masculine nature of the sector positing how in many respects the hunting process is macho in its character. This analysis accords with the statistic given by a North West licensing official who noted that in 2012 there was only one registered female hunter within the province[203].

It is against this backdrop that the response by a female interviewee, when asked about the operations of the family game farm, was telling about the social organisation of the game farming enterprise. Her remark, "I tell you there are certain things that only a man can do"[204] indicated the gendered division of roles upon which the family business was organised. In this case, the woman was restricted to the less public realm as supporting cast in the family game farm. As reflected in her responsibilities, she was the administrator dealing with the g a m e f a r m ' s paperwork. This observation is not an isolated case as for example, only 5% of WRSA members are female[205] with the justification being that women help their husbands run the enterprise. Among the interviewees, the female respondents were in the main accepting of these roles. The gendered nature of the sector extends to the farms where women frequently run the family guest lodge or chalet particularly for the struggling game farmers. In those farms that are highly profitable, women are largely invisible in the day to day running of the business. Sometimes, they work as the booking agent and other secretarial related duties like obtaining hunting permits.[206] Some of these duties can be done telephonically with very little movement outside the farm environs For the most part; they are hidden behind electrified fences in the houses that have been built on the farms or away in some city suburb somewhere far from the farm.[207] As one of the case studies cited in the study indicates, the young man whose passion was wildlife convinced his mother –a renowned cattle stud breeder- to shift from cattle farming to game.[208] Having done so, the young man took centre stage in running the converted farm as a trophy hunting business while

[203] Interview with state informant Zz 01/02/2012 (Mahikeng),North West. This female hunter was reportedly a white South African in her fifties.
[204] Interview with B2, game farmer B's wife, who takes the hunting bookings and does the permits for the family business, Groot Marico, 2012/03/10.
[205] Interview with WRSA executive officer, Pretoria, 31/05/2012
[206] Interview with game farmer B's wife, who takes the hunting bookings and does the permits for the family business, Groot Marico, 2012/03/10
[207] Interviewee, Y's wife lived in the city in the Eastern Cape, together with the children who were attending school. The husband, assisted by a white manager, ran the family game farm.
[208] Interview with farmer Y, Trophy hunting farm, Groot Marico, 2011/03/10

his mother took a back seat. This is a conservative white farming community for whom gender and age roles are strictly defined and played out in a patriarchal institution. Such sentiments espouse paternalism as the preferred modus operandi for running the game farms and the association. Therefore, game farming and game hunting are male-centred spaces and dominions as well as being racialised and elitist zones of exclusion as propounded by the data cited above.

Linked to the above issue of gender in game farming and game hunting is the inter-generational rite of passage between father and son or even daughters. Sons are taught by their fathers to hunt as soon as they are deemed old enough. O'Keefe in 'Professional Hunter' proudly writes, "My son's first hunt at the age of ten was a three hour stalk into a herd of Impala, where he bagged one at less than 30 paces" (O'Keefe 2012:45). In relating the narrative of his son, O'Keefe affirms his son's hunting prowess and heroism. Simultaneously, he is laying claim to his own contribution as the father of this young hunter who has successfully pursued and subjugated an Impala. Further to that, he makes the point that his son had to go through a rite of passage first by doing the manual camp chores before being allowed on his guided first hunt. A similar point was made by interviewee T who mentioned how his son –a twelve year old- bagged his first hunt after having served his 'two year' apprenticeship cleaning rifles and doing the manual labour associated with the hunts his father was conducting.[209] Another game farmer and self-trained hunter said:

> What I have learned in the bush of course I teach my grandchild. She is 12 years old now. She enjoys to go with Oupa in the bush, and I told her that this season I will give her a chance to shoot her first Impala.[210]

From this, one gets the picture of a common understanding from this 'community' of hunters on how hunting 'tradition' cum 'culture' is passed on inter-generationally. For example, SAHCGA offered junior hunting courses for those aged between 12 and 18 as a way of promoting hunting and its values.[211] This promotion among the in-group's children allows for continuity of the hunting tradition later on as they become adults.

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[209] Interview with game hunter in Pretoria, 29/05/2012.
[210] Interview with game farmer C Groot Marico
[211] See 'Hunting and Conservation', Farmer's Weekly, May 5, 1989 pg. 36.

As depicted above, "Masculinity is *bestowed*" and is "passed from father to son" (Eldredge 2001:62,133 *emphasis in text*) in this social group. Thus, the ability to finally hunt their first game animal is a signifier of the sons having graduated to hunter 'manhood' after having learnt the application from their fathers as male mentors. Thus when Willem van Rooyen, an accomplished South African hunter[212] writes regretfully that he "hasn't had the privilege of growing up with a father or uncle who could take him hunting as a young boy" (2012:57), this is significant. Despite his perceived handicap, that had not stopped him from engaging in a trophy hunting quest (ibid: 56) whose basis appears as a mission to reclaim that lost childhood rite. Willem's regret read in conjunction with the above discourse adds to this pattern of a tradition of passing down the hunting baton seemingly as a rite of passage into this male-macho 'fellowship'. Being a patriarchal macho-dominated sector, makes for the interesting observation of how the 'licence to hunt' is passed down from father to son encompassing all that the former has learnt including values and norms to the younger generation -the custodians of the future- securing the family tradition. This narrative of young 'hunter training' serves as a stage of necessity for the journey into hunting masculinity. It performs for the group the function of passing down a legacy. Consequently, it has a functional utility in teaching responsibility and safety awareness since the youngster cleans and packs the hunting weapons usually before and after the hunt. However, this practise while promoting continuity can serve to justify the argument of this activity being *our tradition* even though it is a practice that is being actively cultivated. Similarly, some game farmers do practise a formal rite of passage with their sons too as future inheritors of the family business as stated in one interview;

> We have our son here and he knows exactly what he is working for here. He is working towards his own future; that makes it all, that makes the difference.[213]

> From my experience everybody has someone else that is taking over. My son, he runs a farm near Rustenburg at the moment and he is taking over more and more as we go along, umm, there is a lot of young people coming in.[214]

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[212] Willem van Rooyen is featured in the WRSA magazine as one of a few individuals who managed to shoot a record number of animals listed in the South African excellent sporting achievements awards.
[213] Interview with game farmer B, Groot Marico, 2012/03/10
[214] Interview with combined game breeder and trophy hunting farmer, Groot Marico 24/01/2012

Therefore, Bourdieu's positing that "**cultural capital** can be converted into economic advantage and transmitted from one generation to another" (Scott 2006:50 emphasis in text) illuminates our understanding of the maintenance of existing power dynamics in the racialised and gendered structure pervading the sector. Thus, the rite of passage for sons to train as professional licensed hunters by hunting with clients on family farms is preparation training for their eventual takeover of the family business.

The age range of the male game farmers is mostly the elderly, around 50+ years although in the last 2-3 years businessmen in the 30-40 age range were investing in the game farming sector as owners or shareholders on game farms.[215] As explanation of this inclination towards the mature age range of game farmers, an academic interviewee[216] observed how a large majority of them had been farmers for most of their lives. Likewise, this would explain the conversion from other forms of agriculture. Furthermore, his opinion was that some were retired businessmen whose shift into game farming was a natural progression into an easier farming model befitting of their advanced years. This assessment is partly true since game ranching invariably has its advantages over the day to day 'busyness' of running an agricultural enterprise. The interviewee further confirmed that young people were working in the sector as professional hunters, and game farm managers. On a number of occasions, the researcher observed that from the list of farms visited, the professional hunter was the game rancher's son in most farms while the managers at two farms were young people in their late twenties.

Associated with the male-macho image of the sector is the symbolism of the khaki dress code or military fatigue green worn by most WRSA, PHASA, SAHCGA members or game farmers in their farms. According to Paton (2007:32) "the South African nature tourism industry clearly displays a subliminal nostalgia for the colonial period, and hangs much of its imagery on macho stereotypes and a vicarious glorification of hunting imagery." One can posit that it is a war-time relic of military associations that most in the industry can identify with. As observed from interviews and conversations with players in the industry, a number have served as members of the South African Defence

[215] Interview with WRSA executive officer, Pretoria, 31/05/2012.
[216] Interview with University lecturer cum hunter, Potchefstroom 2/04/2012

Forces as army recruits or as national military conscripts.[217] In this sense, to borrow from Morrell, the masculinities displayed in the sector "retained, and appear still to retain, connections with a remembered past" (Morrell 1997:175) a colonial continuity which the khaki attire works to preserve within this sector. Nevertheless, the khaki dress is a logical dress code chosen by people who spend most of their time outdoors. To an outsider, the khaki attire appears as a symbol of common identification. When worn during a national convention or seminar as in the WRSA annual general meeting, what is constructed is "a significant site of identification" (Norval in Blaser 2009:184) signalling the unmistakable picture "of a particular group" (ibid) whose social imaginary is well defined even through dress. Dress is therefore central[218] to these individuals' self-image and sense of identity within the sector. Additionally, dressing in khaki is also a constitutive act significant in its national rendering and re-appropriation of contested space within post-apartheid South Africa. Thus the military fatigue has the connotation as an identity marker but also as a masculine symbol that goes hand in hand with farming wildlife, handling guns, being outdoors and hunting as a male macho activity.

Conservation as metanarrative in game farming

> to judges who ruled that wildlife and its pursuit belonged to all of us,
>
> and to generations of hunters who restored the wildlife abundance
>
> Jim Posewitz 1994

Posewitz's quote refers to the American context but deserves to be tested in the South African setting where claims[219] for restoration of wildlife are made as a victory statement by wildlife owners. This is despite the silence on the structural set-up which over a long period restricted the use of wildlife for Africans as a conservation strategy following the near extinction of all wildlife. Hence the claims by sections of the hunting population that their contribution privileges them to hunt as they conserve

[217] Interview with informant AR on the sidelines of the WRSA seminar in Pretoria in 2011. The informant refused to be recorded as some of the information discussed was sensitive, relating to rhino poaching.

[218] All the interviewees wore similar style of khaki dress even though the shades of colours varied. I made the same observation at the WRSA seminar and also at the auctions visited. A specialised shop at SAHGCA offices in Pretoria sold the clothing amongst various other hunting paraphernalia.

[219] A 2011 book and video entitled 'The South African Conservation Success Story' produced by Peter Flack traces the conservation history from 1652 to 2000s.

game more than they kill, hides simmering colonial connotations. Conservation has become a by-word of private game farming by industry actors for which they claim credit as a national contribution beyond what the state could have achieved. Its importance is succinctly captured by Kepe's observation that "in South Africa conservation receives preferential treatment" (2004:14 in Goebel 2005:357), thus a domain which the private game farming sector has appropriated for their own interests to benefit from. As posited by Carruthers (1988:10),

> Conservation reinforces material values of a utilitarian nature, and is determinedly against waste; for these reasons it is often considered to be 'liberal' in concept.

Indeed, conservation has been germane to game farming, cleaved between sustaining the production of wildlife to meet the demands of hunting while also protecting the burgeoning growth of the industry. Nevertheless, game farmers apply conservation in this utilitarian sense and thus adopt the functional classification of the term in their justification of the national significance of game farming. The seed for this type of thinking was planted as early as the 1960's by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Services which had "started to propagate the idea that nature conservation has a place on the farm" (Bigalke 1966:99) more so coming after a period in which wildlife had been viewed as incompatible with pastoralism and was being actively exterminated on farms. Similarly, an informant[220] expressed the view that the issuing of P3 exemption permits[221] in 1968 by the Transvaal conservation authorities opened the loophole for farmers to shift into game farming. Once their farm fencing met the required specifications, holding these permits allowed farmers to operate outside of hunting seasons throughout the year thereby increasing the farmers' game farm profitability. Thus the present day game farming community then began running with this conservation motif which is still one of their current justifications of game farming.

Nevertheless, the financial demands of conservation constrain both provincial and national government (Cousins, Sadler & Evans 2008) creating an opening that has been

[220] Interview with an academic informant in Pretoria, 29/05/2012

[221] The permit lists all the 'exempted' animals that can be hunted on a game fenced farm. Exemption removes from the farm all the restrictions that apply to hunting on any other piece of land, making hunting legal throughout the year.

exploited by the game farming sector for their own ends, more so when they claim to be "pro-development and pro-conservation" (Ascher 1999:22). The estimate that 80% of South Africa's nature conservation occurs on privately owned land (Carruthers 2008b; Jacques 2010) buttresses the contention. Regulation of the sector both by the provinces and the state is ill-equipped to measure the conservation impact; the danger being that markets drive the industry rather than the other way round. In addition, in the post-apartheid RDP era, "conservation was viewed by many governmental officials as a luxury compared with the pressing political and economic needs facing the country" (King 2009: 420). Thus from the beginning, the governing African National Congress (ANC) party did not set the country's conservation agenda. From the state of affairs emerges the perception by the international community, which includes groups like Interpol, doubting the South African state's ability to govern its game farmers. This takes into consideration game farmers' regular circumvention of trade bans in the rhino horn (Ammann 2013)[222]. This paints a completely different picture from what many players in the industry would have people believe of a law-abiding, self-regulating sector. Ammann's aspersion casts doubts on state policing of game farming while issuing a warning on this sector's ability to exploit the governance cracks which has been abused before by the game farming sector as in the example of caged lion hunting.

In continuously resorting to this conservation claim, the game farming community has adopted this thesis of overall 'good' through its "demands to be taken seriously as an ethical project" (Green 2010:290 in Mkhize 2012:66). By emphasizing their contribution to the national economy, the implication is that any disturbance or restructuring of game farming activities would be 'disastrous' for the nation generally. In this context, this is a very powerful argument in light of the protection of the environment for future generations that ties in with the sustainable utilisation debate that is currently in vogue globally. Animals like the Oribi[223] are on the decrease, having been classified as endangered species on the South African Red Data List (Buijs 2010:57) partly because its low commercial value makes it unprofitable on game farms. This

[222] Journalist Karl Amman made the comment, in light of the government's push for the legalisation of rhino horn trade. Amman cited corruption and lack of control by the state as evidence that would be used to oppose the request to trade during the CITES 2016 meeting. See Sipho Kings' 'Rhino farms: Win-win or hell, no?' in mg.co.za/article/(accessed 23/11/2013).

[223] The Oribi has a long history as an endangered species as seen through the Transvaal Proclamation of 26 February 1895. See TA SS4569 R11888/94 and Carruthers 1988:157 for more on this.

points to the fact that the sector's maxim of "*if it pays, it stays*" determines the conservation fate and value of wildlife. As a result, it thus should be read as "only if it pays it stays" (ibid) since the over-riding principle governing the sector's actions is the commercial value of the conserved game to the farmer. In this light, "the price-proprietorship-subsidiarity hypothesis" (Cousins *et al* 2010:3) serves a useful analysis in enabling understanding of the notion of sustainable utilisation in game farming. The hypothesis focuses on the value placed on captured wildlife and how this enables the economic usage and management of this wildlife at local level (ibid).

Two schools of thought exist in relation to hunting and conservation. The first claims that "hunters are the worst conservationists, because they destroy their subject", while the other claims hunters are "the best conservationists because they will ensure their subject is not driven into extinction for the love of the sport" (Paton 2007:69). For game actors, the conservation discourse has been proffered as a legitimation exercise for a particular normative order (Cock 2007) engendered from the earlier preservation[224] period, "used to mobilise an exclusive Afrikaner nationalism" (ibid) especially during apartheid. Continuation in the latter period has resulted from the lack of closer examination of this conservation discourse and how it disguises the racial character of the sector and its continuities. As enunciated in a North West newspaper[225]"past South African conservation policies excluded local communities and African individuals and rendered the industry a preserve for the wealthy and the privileged." Such context reflects the colonial epoch and was particularly true in the period after 1948 when the National Parks Board severely restricted access to the National Parks for the black majority population (Wu & Turner 2004). Hence conservation of wildlife in game farming echoes this past. Green (2010:290 in Mkhize 2012:66) argues that the conservation discourse has legitimated a new space "in which whites can reinvent themselves heroically without worrying too much about the effects of their intervention." Thus when recent literature claims that game farmers have done a lot for wildlife conservation in comparison to the state, both national and provincial government (Bond *et al* 2004; Botha 2001; Cousins *et al* 2008; Jones *et al* 2005; Joubert 2004; Lindsey *et al* 2006; Malan 2010 and Van der Merwe *et al* 2004)[226]

[224] Chapter 3 the historical background section, relates how hunting began to take racist and classist undertones.
[225] '*Anonymous*': *The Mail* 2007:pg 15
[226] This is an old argument whose genesis can be traced back to the period when the danger of free-for-all hunting was

it is rendering this heroic version. The functional utility of wildlife apart from the economic argument can be soundly affirmed. Even though critics argue that "it is the current reality in the sector that scores have been marginalized and denied opportunities to effectively participate in and benefit from commercial hunting activities" (*The Mail 2007:15*), the criticism is undermined by the counter conservation argument. It is far more likely the conservation debate has morphed into a politically correct discourse that has subsumed the land redistribution debate in its wake. As Beinart and Hughes (2007:1) point out, "the rise of conservationist practices and ideas, was also deeply rooted in imperial history" an indication of the British, American and Afrikaner colonial influence on the conservation ethos that is inherent in South Africa whereby wildlife also becomes conserved as a commodity for production for a specific group exclusive of others. In reference to conservation as a segregationist process, Wels (2003:19) mentions "a 'splendid isolation' from the neighbouring (black) communities in line with the apartheid thinking." One would hypothesize that a similar trajectory has occurred in South Africa whereby the conservation motif because of its global resonance has been latched into by those in the game farming sector for their own purposes.

Although the above argument may be true, it is necessary to distinguish the conservation practices of game farmers. As an illustration, there is "a distinction between simply ranching wildlife and ranching wildlife following conservation recommendations" (Cousins, Sadler & Evans 2008:7) which may not be generally practised by all game farmers. As espoused by Daan Buijs of the North West Department, Biodiversity Scientific Support, "there's a limit to the extent that the private wildlife industry can conserve biodiversity –and that limit is currently being tested by an ignorance of natural systems and ecological processes" (Buijs 2010:56). Additionally "because game animals are not easily moved at will and their effect on the vegetation cannot therefore be strictly controlled, the principles of good grazing management would be violated if they were used on farms together with or in addition to cattle, sheep and goats" (Bigalke 1966:100) which is the norm in some marginal game farms, again indicating that economics rather than scientific practice drives decision making. Furthermore, for game farmers, conservation is incidental to the profit motive from which they base their decisions of

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recognised leading to the legislation on hunting seasons and the proprietary interest on wildlife on farms by land owners. See Carruthers, J. 1988:160.

running a game farm. Hence they "overstock their properties, and commonly introduce exotic species, such as fallow deer (*Dama Dama*) and manipulate genetics to create aberrant varieties such as white blesbok (*Damaliscus dorcas*) to increase diversity of saleable trophies" (Lindsey *et al* 2006b:882). The CapeNature debacle referred to in chapter four, would have bound game farmers to maintain production with natural occurring species specific to their farm's regional location instead of exotic species. Similarly, Buijs (2010b:8) commenting on the prized buffalo and sable bulls likens this type of process to "selective breeding for the market, not conservation of species." This shows that the profit motive has been the main driving force in decision making rather than conservation.

Following on from the above, game owners enjoy the added benefit of tax concessions on their land as part of the country's conservation estate (Brooks *et al* 2008). This is a double benefit when viewed in light of the fact that hunting farms emphasise a far higher take-off than would be the case in a state-run protected area. For game owners, skewed population ratios are the norm, with animals bought on auction meant for hunting purposes rather than 'conservation' (ibid). Linked to this tax benefit, an interviewee[227] speculated that game ranching is not profitable but is being subsidised by other businesses. He further ventured that:

> It's being subsidised by that and what they are doing is they are converting the money they are investing in the game ranching into capital gain. So what happens is, is you buy a game ranch for R5 million. You put a fence up which you write off against tax. You buy animals which you write off against tax. You build a lodge which you write off against tax, you develop it as a game ranch.

Therefore conservation comes second to the profit motive being pursued by game farmers. As a result, Buijs' contention that "many small ecologically unviable game ranches are overstocked" (2010:57) does support the view that maximisation of revenue generation is the principal motivating factor. Even by their own admission, industry players have expressed their reservations and discomfort with the policing of biodiversity rather preferring that the state focus its efforts on supporting economic sustainability and job creation in the sector (Jacques 2010). Such a stance reinforces the indication that state

[227] Interview with academic informant in Pretoria, 29/05/2012

regulated conservation is not the chief motive for game ranching. Further to that, the vehement opposition to full implementation of the letter of the law in matters pertaining to conservation is clear signal that game farmers are business oriented rather than conservation minded. To borrow a quote from Jacques Malan, then president of Wildlife Ranching South Africa (WRSA), "It's crazy for biodiversity enthusiasts to think they can make national parks out of financially viable commercial wildlife ranches" (Malan, *Farmer's Weekly* 2010) going further to say that "we could move game ranching from the environmental sphere to the agriculture sphere, which is more production-orientated" (ibid). Such expressions of outrage serve as acknowledgement that capitalism and markets drive game ranching much more than the conservation ethos.[228] Therefore, game farmers are conducting farming with wildlife whereas conservation is the by-product of this process. A Potchefstroom interviewee[229] in academia who is also an avid hunter phrased it thus;

> the dilemma in the industry is that the industry doesn't know where it should be ……. Whether they want to be part of agriculture or whether they want to be part of conservation. Hence what they are practicing is nothing more than animal husbandry (ibid).

It is therefore far more likely as stated by Beinart and Hughes (2007:12) that "actions and events are usually shaped more immediately by the dictates of economic survival, material benefit, and political contingency or particular patterns of consciousness." The case presented here highlights how the wildlife ranching 'community' in South Africa is cognisant of this sociopolitical-economical imperative and are able to exploit the situation for their own ends. As expressed by an interviewee,[230] "what they are doing is not bio-diversity conservation, what they are doing is indirect conservation". One inference drawn from all of this is that National Parks are the true practitioners of conservation as opposed to the private game farmers. For example, an interviewee responded thus, "the industry as such is motivated by economics and the government has far more pure conservationist ideals."[231] As a result, "species with high conservation value are often worthless to the commercial sector" (Buijs 2010:58) lending substantiation to the notion that conservation

[228] See also Pretorius, J.L (2010:7) who states that "game ranching is first and foremost an agricultural activity with a huge socio-economic impact, but one that makes an important contribution to conservation" *Farmer's weekly*, 7 May 2010.
[229] Interview with academic informant cum hunter, Potchefstroom 2/04/2012
[230] Interview with academic informant in Pretoria, 29/05/2012.
[231] Interview with farmer Y, trophy hunting, Groot Marico, 10/03/2011.

is incidental to the game ranching business with economics being the primary objective. It is a view espoused by Cousins *et al* (2010:2) "Indeed, ranches are businesses first and foremost, competing to attract customers". Hence one bone of contention between pure conservationists and game farmers has been the issue of "moving species outside of historical range"[232] indicating that the stocking of wildlife by game farmers is informed by the dictates of supply and demand in the market rather than following the natural occurrence of wildlife in their natural habitat.

Similarly, the breeding of exotic breeds of animals is intended to supply a unique product to the market, although it is an issue which the WRSA Board of Directors has expressed serious concern over (Dry 2012) even though the game breeders have not been officially sanctioned. Some examples of the commonly bred hybrids and colour variations (ibid, Cousins et al 2010) include blue wildebeest, black impala or springbok and the golden gnu. Concerns raised include how this "intensive genetic manipulation" (Dry 2012:1) has created "alienation between game ranchers and conservationists" with the former being able to "hide behind the conservation system" (ibid) while pure conservationists view their actions as interference with the natural ecosystem.

It is clear that creating a balance between economic and conservation interests are dependent on the game farmers' profit motive which on a scale of values would be biased towards the former rather than the latter. Koelbe's (2011) article on a few cases in South Africa provides an example of how the drive for profit eventually triumphs over ecological considerations, even though the initial motivation would have been to preserve bio-diversity in the targeted land-use. In reference to this characteristic Koelbe (2011:15) states how the "commitment to conservation is also a commitment to exclusivity and, by its nature, reserved for the relatively affluent", an observation Beinart and Hughes (2007) also allude to. Once again, this is a view borne by and from South Africa's racialised past.

International Statutes like CITES[233] on animals that can be 'sustainably farmed'

[232] Interview with academic informant in Pretoria, 29/05/2012

[233] Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species seeks to protect endangered species from the over-exploitation caused by unregulated international trade in wildlife through maintaining a balance between the profitable wildlife business and the disappearing resources. (Patel, S. Houston Journal of International Law 18 (1995-96) pp162

encourage and make it legal to breed and rear certain animals. This paradigm of 'sustainable utilisation'[234] supported by the International Union for Conservation of Nature has been used to justify hunting in South Africa by the hunting community.[235]This is despite the fact that "The 'primitive art' of sustainable yield may not be able to gauge precisely how much resource can be extracted without risking future yields", (Ascher 1999: 2) something which advocates of sustainable utilisation model are silent about. It is from this premise of sustainable utilisation for example that South Africa, "even introduced limited black rhino trophy hunting" (Sas-Rolfes 2011:7 *a*) following CITES approval in 2004. Such a classification renders the designated animals vulnerable to human exploitation whereby wild animals are commercially bred to meet set production quotas depending upon demand. The proliferation of canned lion hunting stands as an example of the unintended consequence of the loopholes exploited by actors in the industry. Such commercial breeding has only focused on the profit margin and meeting the tourist lion trophy demand whilst sacrificing the suitable conditions for rearing wild animals. The latter point ties in with the observation made earlier by one interviewee that people are practicing 'animal husbandry' in the guise of game farming where the production line is the key driving force.

Legislation developments have helped to legitimatise the industry supporting its growth, whilst indicating the sector's importance to the country's economy. But, in the same vein, the inadequacy of legislation has enabled the sector to exploit the governance inadequacies. For instance, CITES regulations were only published and came into effect in March 2010 (Carroll 2010) yet South Africa has been a ratified member since 1975.[236] Such a context has worked to the industry's favour particularly the 'self-regulation cum self- administration' referred to earlier that the associations clamour for. Nonetheless, South Africa enacted such legislation as the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act 2004 (Act 10 of 2004) governing the sustainable use of wildlife resources.

Conclusion

[234] Article 2 of the 1992 Convention on the Conservation of Biological Diversity encourages preservative natural resources use preventing their total depletion in the present. Took effect in December 1993. The premise is that resource harvesting is maximised as long as the existing "stock remains constant" and "the new growth can indefinitely supply a constant yield" (Ascher 1999: 281) which might not be true as its dependent on other factors

[235] The Wildlife and Environment Society of Southern Africa (WESSA), PHASA, Endangered Wildlife Trust, World Wide Fund for Nature and the South African government in Cock (2007).

[236] See the full list of member countries in the www.cites.org/eng/disc/parties/index.php (accessed 27/11/2011)

Based on the argument raised in this chapter, the conclusion is that certain strands of game farming are a domain and play-ground for a class group in which the majority black population are marginalised. For example, the expenses related to preparing the young to hunt is a luxury most in the black community cannot afford as reflected in the income levels. Thus, Scott's usage of Bourdieu's insights can be usefully deployed here to explain the goings-on in the game farming sector.

> For Bourdieu consumption is motivated by the need for social groups to achieve status through forms of 'distinction' that reinforce class position. Taste judgements, rooted in the **habitus**, are a marker of social class and are deeply tied to hierarchical access to economic capital, **cultural capital** and **social capital**. (Scott 2006:40 *emphasis in text*).

It is from the shared norms, values and trust that the fellowships and networks are formed and function while also enabling continuity of a 'culture' of the few by the few defined by a common race, language, gender among other traits as identified in this chapter. The polarisation depicted by the sector is reminiscent of how the larger South African society is structured (Bond: 2005) where transformation is merely figurative but not substantive in dealing with the structural inequality. As noted by the WHO that inequality:

> interacts across four main dimensions –political, economic, social, and cultural – together constituting a continuum along which groups are, to varying degrees, excluded or included (2008:2)[237]

Therefore, the above can be extended to explain the events in the game farming sector as fitting into the description particularly with regards to the latter three facets, economic, social and cultural. By deliberately choosing to emphasise a particular strand of history that ties Afrikaners and the white commercial class to game farming and hunting, the conservation narrative weaves a storyline shorn of the effects of past political processes. Economic, social and cultural facets of game farming are presented through the optics of the actors involved in support of their own conceptualisations that only give one side of the story. For example, the manner in which the different bodies or associations (institutions) operate within the sector as elite, well connected lobbies is reflective of an understanding of the socio-political context in which they operate. Similarly, when the

[237] Ataguba, J. E. and Olufunke, A (2012) 'Explaining health inequalities in South Africa: A political economy perspective, Development Southern Africa, Vol. 29, No. 5, December 2012, pp 756-764

associations engage with the state as major players in influencing state policy, they take on a stage managed persona as wildlife economic contributors. Thus, this discussion of the role of the game associations including their impact on the sector is very crucial to our understanding of contemporary developments in game farming. Negotiation and contestation are resorted to as strategies for the maintenance of position by the associations on behalf of their members in this increasingly contested post- apartheid space. I believe, drawing a brief history of these institutions anchors their position in relation to the state as socio-cultural spheres of influence. Proceeding from the above premise, conservation becomes a central theme for the bargaining with the state, a useful reservoir the sector can always draw on.

The following chapter will delve into the storylines of individual farmers to point to the heterogeneity of the sector and the differentiated nature of production models. For instance, there are struggling game farmers living on the margins; whereby the farmer is the hunter and everything else in-between while the wife subsidises the family income by running a bed and breakfast on the same property, the family farm. For some, the complete conversion to game farming has not happened. These farmers still keep domestic animals like cattle, sheep and goats as a hedge against which to balance the family income should the proceeds from the game farming enterprise, mostly biltong hunting, be inadequate for subsistence needs. It is these individual game farmers at different ends of the rung to which the focus of the next chapter will turn.

Chapter six

Case studies of Groot Marico game farming

This chapter presents three individual stories of game farming based on primary data centering on the study area, Groot Marico. It begins with a description of the North West province, narrowing down to a focus on the study site. The chapter addresses the key question of this thesis on the internal workings of the game farming sector. I answer 'how' the farmers operate and 'why' they converted, by dwelling on three case studies. In selecting the three, I sought to reflect the heterogeneity of game farming as represented in the categories that are used as examples in this section. The narrative woven from the interviews indicates how historical relations between farmers and surrounding communities, farmers and workers, and farmers and state officials (both provincial and national) have been impacted by this form of land-use. Additionally, the narrative interrogates the new social, economic and political realities being created in the district. Discussion centres on the varying class interests indicating how the levels of both material and network capital are playing out and being managed by the actors in their localities. Therefore, this chapter informs a reading of the different practices of game farming as reflective of the local, area specific, socio-economic and socio-political context and inter-generational continuity in ownership.

For farmers, adaptability is key in the agricultural sector and that is no different within the game farming sector, as the stories of the three game farmers in this chapter reveal. It is the personal philosophy of the farmer, the timing of entrance into game farming and the support base behind him –mentors, resources- that determines the level of operation. Similarly, the farm size and the type of animal stocked on the game farm determine the earning potential of the farm which also links to the type of business conducted on the farm whether it is trophy or biltong hunting. By drawing on similarities and differences in game farming in the district, the land claims being contested present a threat for the game farmers whether big or small. Relatedly, the one case that has been settled presents an opportunity for structuring other land reform deals in the area. The implications of these for the future of game farming in Groot Marico, and to an extent In South Africa at large, demand investigation.

Before a fully-fledged discussion of these issues as they affect game ranching in the Groot Marico case studies is undertaken, it is necessary to draw a picture of the province from which the research site is located.

The Northwest province

The province came into being in March 1994 as a result of merging the former Bophuthatswana homeland and the western part of the Transvaal.[238] Prior to the 2011, the North West province covered 116 320km² or 9.7% of the total land area of South Africa (Cloete 2010:49). Following the provincial boundary changes between the years 2001-2011, the province was reduced by 11 348,9km² to its present size of 104 882km² (StatsSA 2012: 4). The 2011 Census puts the actual provincial population at 3 509 953 (StatsSA 2012: 15). Three official languages are spoken in the North West province namely SeTswana which is spoken by the population's majority, English spoken primarily as a second language and lastly Afrikaans (ibid). Known as the 'Platinum province' because of its platinum deposits, the province shares a border with Botswana on the north, the provinces of Free State and the Northern Cape on the south. On the north-east and east is the Limpopo province and Gauteng.[239] Mining has been the mainstay of the North West economy generating more than half of the province's gross domestic product (Grub 2005).[240]

See provincial map below.

[238] See Francis, E. (1999) 'Learning from the Local: Rural Livelihoods in Ditsobola, North West Province, South Africa' in *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 17, 1, 1999.
[239] See 'South Africa Year Book 2011/12, Land and its People' in www.gcis.gov.za/sites/www.gcis.gov.za/files/.(accessed 1/08/2013)
[240] See Grub, A. 2005 'The Impact of Labour Legislation on South African farm workers' livelihoods in the Skuinsdrift Area, North West Province', MA Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.



Described in the local newspaper as "forming the southern part of the Kalahari Desert", the North West Province is also depicted as providing "the authentic African bush experience" in a uniquely hot, dry African climate (*The Mail 2008:3*; Cloete 2010). Adding to this description, Gaborone (2006:56) points to how most of North West province is covered by savannah vegetation, "made up of principally thickets, shrubs and barely woodland, thus making it ideal for game farming." Substantiating this

assertion, a respondent pointed out how his farm was located in a transitional area which changes from Highveld to bushveld with a higher rainfall pattern than Limpopo.[241] Descriptions hinting at the 'authentic African bush experience' captures the language used in advertorials for game farming pursuits particularly aimed at international hunters. The weather pattern is associated with almost all year round sunshine, explaining the African climate description. Continuing the description, the same newspaper extols the virtues of the province claiming that it has the "finest game reserves, cultural sights, archaeological treasures as well as entertainment resorts" (*The Mail 2008*). In support of this assertion, the province is home to the Pilanesburg National Park, the Madikwe Game Reserve and the Rustenburg Nature Reserve among others. Of these parks, the Pilanesburg National Park, the Madikwe Game Reserve, the Borakalalo and Botsonalo Game Reserves have allowed hunting as a revenue generating stream to help with running costs of the parks (NAMC 2006, Cloete 2010; *The Mail 2008*) taking advantage of the abundance of game in these areas.

For Cloete (2010) game ranching in the province can be categorised into two separate activities. First is the provision of consumable activities, recreational, trophy, biltong hunting and wildlife meat. The second relates to non-consumable activities which incorporate accommodation provision, game breeding, wildlife viewing, adventure and agri-tourism. According to Gaborone (2006) game farming in the province involves both intensive and extensive production. The former practice occurs in small farms of generally 100ha or less while the latter happens on large farms where hunting and breeding of wildlife occurs. Significantly though, the provincial government requires that game farms need to be 400ha and above as the criterion for qualification for an exemption permit. The permit allows the holder to hunt, all year round, species within their farm except for listed threatened species including rhinoceros and sable. Any farm less than 400ha falls under a 'keeping permit' which comes with a restriction that hunting can only be allowed after approval from the licensing authority. The holder of a 'keeping permit' has to apply for a hunting permit if they want to hunt any other animal on their farm that is not listed on the permit they hold. Thus if the farm has kudus, the owner cannot hunt impala without having obtained a second hunting permit for

[241] Interview with respondent EM in Koster 26/01/2012

impala.[242] Once having satisfied the legal requirements for operating a game farm, there are a number of advantages a game farmer can tap into as a farmer in the North West province.

Firstly, the diversity of species available in the province makes it an attractive hunting destination as the following hunting figures reveal. Its proximity to the OR Tambo International airport and the urban conurbation of Johannesburg and Pretoria gives the province an advantage over other destinations on South Africa's tourism trail. In 2010, the North West accounted for 25% of leopards hunted nationally, while lions made up 70% of the national total. Additionally, the elephant ratio was 30% of the national total (*Mafeking Mail* 2011:3). Similarly Barratt, (2012:69) affirms this popularity indicating how the North West province was the second most preferred hunting destination in the country with 24% of total visits, behind Limpopo province which had 33% of the hunting sample of visitors. These findings are supported by Van der Merwe *et al* (2011). Therefore the North West province contributes significantly to the national hunting economy. Further credence to the figures is provided by the former North West Agriculture and Conservation MEC Mandlenkosi Mayisela who revealed that between October 2004 to September 2005, professional lion hunting[243] alone earned R42 million in hunting fees for the province (van Zyl: 2007). This is in addition to the sum of R19 million turnover of sales made from provincial private auctions which included several species (North West university data: 2010).

It is important to note that the province during this period was cited as one of those facilitating caged lion hunting through its stipulation that a lion could be hunted if it had been roaming free for 96 hours. Hence when Minister Van Schalwyk sought to amend the rules to enforce a 24 month[244] free roaming period before a lion could be hunted, North West province was cited as one such bad example that needed to conform. The laxity of the provincial authorities in enforcing regulations created a gap exploited by

[242] Interview with state informant Zz 01/02/2012 in Mahikeng government complex, North West.

[243] Claims were that the North West province had less stringent lion hunting regulations, leading to lion breeders in the Free State seeking translocation permits to the North West for the lions to be eventually hunted there. In 2011, 83 export permits were issued to transport lions to the North West province. See Groenwald, Y. (2011) 'Wildlife officials' link to hunting' in http://mg.co.za/article/ (accessed 13/09/2013).

[244] See 'New hunting rules spark controversy' in Farmer's weekly 2007-03-06 and also ARA Report 2010 'Hunting in South Africa: A bloody mess'

sections of the private game farmers in the region to conduct lion caged hunts. Understandably, there was apprehension from provincial officials following the Minister's intervention, which should be understood in the context that the game farms in the province serve as an important income stream for the provincial coffers as further evidenced by the 2010 figures of lion hunts given above and the hunting revenues below.

Table 3 below illustrates North West Province hunting revenue figures over a four year period.[245]

Year	US$ equivalent	Exchange rate	South African Rand Equivalent
2008	$17,063,183	10	R170 631 830
2009	$11,969,128	10	R119 691 280
2010	$11,448,740	10	R114 487 400
2011	$10,170,279	10	R101 702 790
Grand Total	$50,651,330	10	R506 513 300

Source: Courtesy of figures supplied by the NW DACE (2012).

There are three issues worth noting from these figures. First, they indicate substantial income from hunting. Furthermore, the data collected are incomplete because game farmers had not submitted all their records, which means the income was likely higher.[246] Finally, the impact of the economic recession is evident, with the constant decline in income from 2008. Even then agriculture, although dualistic in nature (Cloete 2010)[247] maintains a substantial presence since many sheep farms, cattle and game ranches are to be found in the northern and western parts of the province. The eastern and southern parts of the province are crop- growing regions that produce maize (corn), sunflowers, tobacco, cotton and citrus fruits. Approximately one third of the white maize produced in the country comes from the province (Cloete 2010; Grub 2005) making it an important producer of one of the country's staple food products. Yet the popularity of game farming in the province in the contemporary period is undoubted, with the main tourism areas in the province being Marico, Rustenburg and Brits

[245] For purposes of consistency and ease of explanation, I have converted the US dollar currency to the rand (the department's statistics were given as US $ by using the average rate of 1US dollar being equivalent to R10. Although this might not be statistically accurate for the year periods, it does serve its purposes of illustration in the use of this table.

[246] Interview with provincial state licensing official F1 in Mafikeng 2011-12-06

[247] Cloete (2010:88-99) explains that there is commercial and communal agriculture, going further to give a breakdown of the commercial agricultural sector in the province and its economic contribution

(Clarke: 1997 in Gaborone 2006). Similarly, the case studies do give an indication of how far this 'new' farming pattern has taken root in the Marico district in the North West province particularly and in South Africa in general.

Groot Marico

Groot Marico District is famous for being the inspirational place for Herman Charles Bosman's stories whose descriptions of the Afrikaans farmers in his books such as 'Mafeking road' and 'A Sip of Jerepigo'[248] became literary folklore. It is one of his quotations that this chapter begins with. His legacy is celebrated in a festival held annually in the town to commemorate his life and writings. Groot Marico, (Big Marico) derives its name from the perennial Groot Marico River. According to Mucina and Rutherford (2006:461)[249], the area receives summer rainfall ranging from 550-600mm with mean monthly maximum and minimum temperatures being 36,7°C and -0,4°C for January and June respectively. Deciduous vegetation leads to dense, short thorny woodland, comprising mainly of Acacia species with herbaceous layer of mainly grasses on deep, high base-status and some clay soils on plains and lowlands" (ibid:461). Marico is located in the beautiful bushveld surroundings with the Marico region stretching northwards, following the green valley of the Marico River, a tributary of the Limpopo. Extending beyond Zeerust, it stretches past Nietverdiend, Zwingli, over the crocodile-spine of the Dwarsberge reaching up to the Botswana border.[250] It is positioned between the towns of Swartruggens and Zeerust, on the way to Botswana. Zeerust, the administrative centre for Groot Marico is about 35 kilometres from Groot Marico. The district falls under the Ramotshere Moila municipality in the Ngaka Modiri Molema region. As a historical site, the district has a variety of attractions which include rock painting by early San and Bushmen people, an old water mill which is now a national monument on the farm of Naauwpoort. David Livingstone's ruin of the first mission station that he erected is also in the district at Mabotsa (ibid).

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[248] See 'Dr Ngaka Modiri Molema District: Groot Marico' http://www.tourismnorthwest.co.za/central/groot_marico.html accessed 12/11/2011.

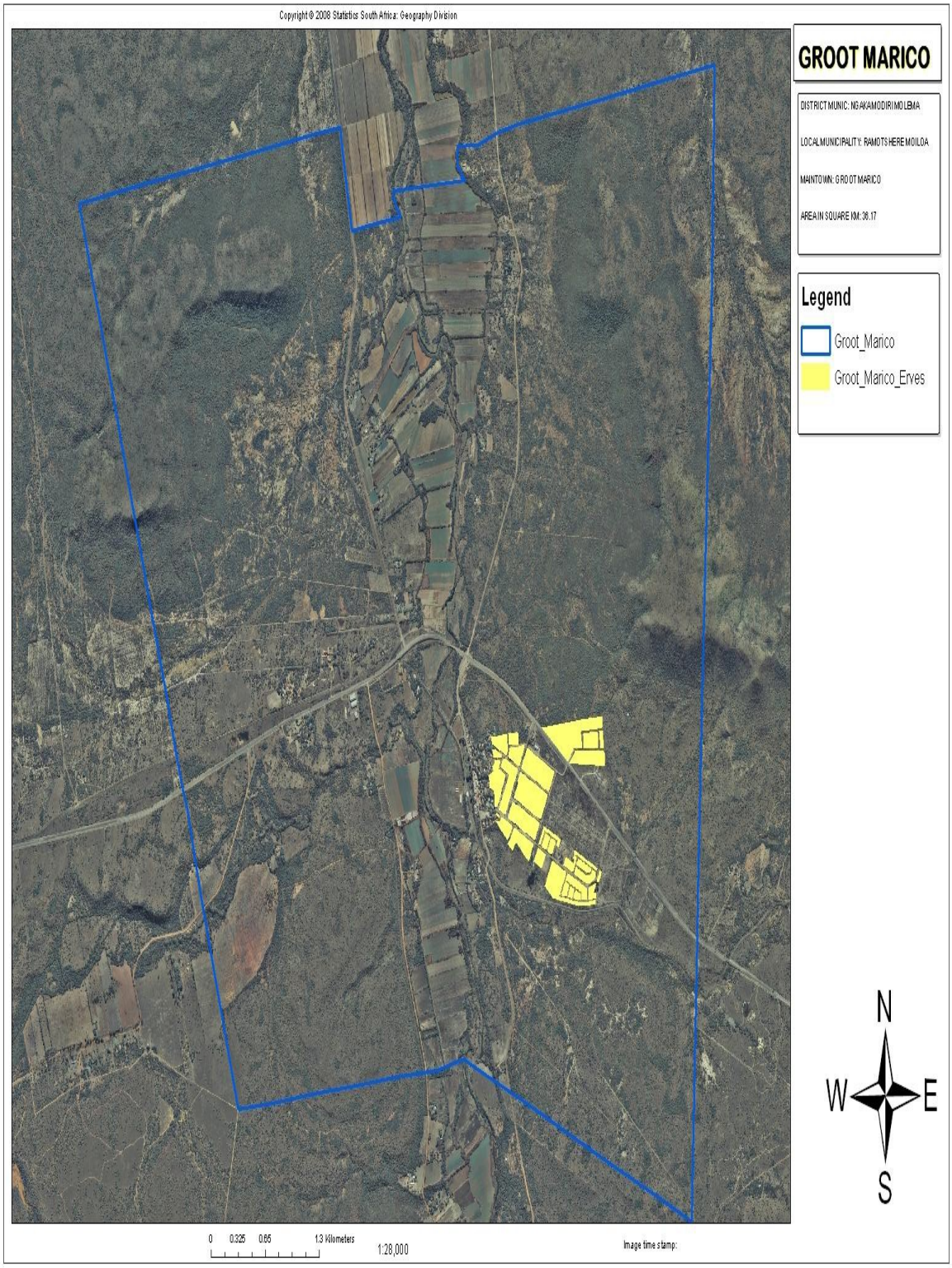
[249] See Mucina, L and Rutherford, M.C.{eds} (2006) The vegetation of South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland. Strelitzia 19. Pretoria, South African National Biodiversity Institute

[250] See 'Dr Ngaka Modiri Molema District: Groot Marico' http://www.tourismnorthwest.co.za/central/groot_marico.html accessed 12/11/2011.

The Marico region is described as 'cattle country' in its tourism website which may be a misnomer considering the number of burgeoning game farms that are in operation. According to a provincial state official interviewee, Groot Marico has very rich open spaces with free roaming species, an abundance that has supported conversion by farmers. Species range from hyena, leopard, kudu, impala and bushbuck among many others. The easy availability of wildlife enabled the release of more than 500 permits issued to traditional leaders for the hunting of Impala in the rural areas under their control. The traditional leaders then use their discretion to sell these hunting rights to hunters from Rustenburg or from Johannesburg. Officers from the department then patrol the area to ensure that the hunters are complying with the quotas and the permit restrictions. Despite this organised allocation of hunting rights, there have been reported cases of poaching particularly on traditional lands. That poaching has been conducted at night and mostly for consumptive purposes, for example kudu and impala, by community members[251] indicating their disgruntlement with being left out of the benefits of hunting income. As Cousins (1997:1) frames it: "[h]ow do legally defined rights to resources become effective command over those resources?" Thus the need to experience individual benefits, which is usually not the case for everyone in a community, leads to the resort to poaching as hunger or poverty alleviation through exploitation of an abundant resource which they see being exploited by outsiders.[252] Yet again, this places a spotlight on the contestation in natural resource usage which can be viewed as being unfairly allocated by some stakeholders within the district. However, poaching has not been restricted to black people only but there have been reported cases of white hunters, hunting without permits, who have been caught and fined for these transgressions (ibid).

Below is a cartographical representation of Groot Marico.

[251] Interview with provincial state licensing official F1 Mahikeng 2011-12-06.
[252] Interview with state informant Zz 01/02/2012 (Mahikeng)North West.



Map courtesy of Statistics South Africa, Geography division (2012).

Groot Marico has a population of almost 3 400 people (Stats SA 2012). According to a Groot Marico long-term resident,[253] game farming in the area started earnestly after the mid-to-late 1980's following a long drought period when cattle farming started failing. The farmers then saw an opportunity to diversify into game farming made easier by the abundance of wildlife in the area and the fact that game seemed to have survived the local drought much better than cattle. Similarly, Francis (1999) in her study of Ditsobola, in the same province, also mentions the fact of drought as a push factor but also highlights the impact of farmers' loss of state subsidies and the high interest loan repayments.[254] Thus the above combination of factors among others became the main causes for conversion into game farming.

During this period, a number of farmers sold off their farms to 'outsiders', people from outside North West province. Labelled as 'weekend farmers', these were people basically investing in property in South Africa" paying for the farms "what you would pay for a middle class house in Johannesburg or Pretoria.[255]

> B: There is a lot of farms that is bought and convert to game farming, umm, from guys with money like Gauteng people or corporate groups. But it's a pity. Because the farm is just a, it's not profitable. It's just a sideline for them to, to get rid of a lot of money. They are not there, they don't have the hands on policy to make the farm be profitable.

Following this ownership change was the loss of employment for most farm-workers with the new owners downsizing their operations while other farmers turned to game farming.

> C: Now you've get three or four just down the road here. That started around about 2000, you see so everybody goes over to game, so now the open farms they've got a lot of game as well.

Yet, an official in the provincial conservation department insisted that a number of game farmers in the district had inherited the family business. The informant went on to confirm that in the 13 years as an official, records going further back five years show

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[253] Interview with Egbert van Bart, an 'indigene of the Marico' who ran the Marico information centre and was part of the Herman Charles Bosman society in Groot Marico, 28/11/11.
[254] See Francis, E. (1999) Learning from the Local: Rural Livelihoods in Ditsobola, North West Province, South African in Journal of Contemporary African Studies, 17, 1, 1999 pg. 54.
[255] Interview with Egbert van Bart, in Groot Marico, 28/11/11.

these same farmers had been dealing with wildlife.[256] Thus there were three groups among the game farmers, the ones who had recently bought their farms and converted, those who inherited the family farms and those owners whose land possession could be traced beyond 1994 even though they converted after democracy. This typology will be useful in understanding the pathways chosen by the farmers in the later section of this chapter. Game farming then became a way of generating income while also making productive use of their farms. Since the devastating effects of the drought, one primary concern became the restoration and regeneration of the soil which had been affected by a long history of cattle overgrazing.[257] The next stage was to create a market for the wildlife allowing the early pioneers to focus on supplying live animals to new entrants and trophy hunting. For instance, one pioneer specifically targeted trophy hunting further specialising on bow hunters as the exclusive offering on the family farm. According to the informant, this specific farm has done so well that they only cater for 12 overseas hunters per year –mostly American- during the hunting season, with advance bookings made two years before the scheduled hunt.[258] At the other end of the scale are those farmers targeting the local market of biltong hunters who generate an extra income from keeping "a few head of cattle while others distill mampoer[259] on their farms" (ibid). Emerging from this comparison is the differential status from the successful trophy hunting farm to the struggling biltong hunting and mampoer brewing farmer. According to one informant, in the last two decades nearly every farm in the area has been converted to a game farm (Dorrington 2012) with some operating as dual purpose cattle and game farms. Game farming has stimulated tourism in the area since most of the hunters who hunt in the district bring along their wives and families with them who then go on a tour of the area organised by the local private tourist information office. For instance, the Bosman weekend is a famous event in the Groot Marico calendar and is held annually.

Following below are three case studies of game farming in the district. These cases have been chosen from the interviews conducted with game farmers in the area as they reflect

[256] Interview with provincial state licensing official F1 (Mahikeng) 2011-12-06.
[257] Game farmer B's wife mentions the progress made by shifting from cattle farming to game farming after the inheritance of the family farm by her husband from his stepfather. Groot Marico 15/06/2012
[258] Interview with Egbert van Bart, in Groot Marico, 28/11/11
[259] Mampoer refers to the liquor brewed in some poorer rural parts of the country. Farmers brew this beer from their own farm stills. This tradition was illegalised when the first commercial liquor outlet was established during Paul Kruger's time, although some farmers still continue brewing up to this day.

the varied dimensions of operations in the district.

From stud breeding to game (trophy) farming: Case study A

This game farm's history started off with a young man's frustration with cattle farming on the 4 500ha family farm. He had formally joined the family stud breeding farm business in 1984 having always had a passion for wildlife while none of his siblings were interested in farming. A positive contributory factor working in his favour was the receipt of a state sponsored land bank loan meant to establish young white farmers on the land. He used the money to purchase a neighbouring farm which had come into the market having formally been a portion of the family farm that his grandfather had sold off previously. Two years later, he convinced his family to make the transition to game farming, proceeding then to convert the farm in phases. The conversion decision was helped by the discovery that a few neighbouring farmers were making money from hunting as a sideline business. Subsequent conversations with people who were already in the industry, for example Norman Atherstone of Atherstone Nature reserve and the Varty brothers, Dave and John owners of Londolozi and Sabi Sands[260] convinced the young man that he was on the right track. The impact of the drought in 1985 made the decision to switch that much easier. Afrikaner[261] stud bull was sold while the proceeds were ploughed into game fencing. Another contributing factor was that most of the cattle had been translocated to KwaZulu-Natal where there was better grazing prospects for cattle, compared to the drought-stricken Groot Marico. Since the property was virtually empty, (some of the cattle were placed on rented farms in the area) it could be stocked with game, which was done in 1986. In 1988, the young man obtained his professional hunter's licence becoming a member of PHASA and subsequently rising through the ranks over the years to become an executive member. He has been a member ever since. Meanwhile, in the same year 1988, the game farm welcomed its first local hunters who became regulars at the farm allowing for continuity and flow of business. During this two year period, the game stock grew rapidly since it was now fenced in. In addition, Hartebeest were brought in from Namibia adding to the kudu,

[260] Thomas A Koelble's article, 'Ecology, Economy and Empowerment: Eco-Tourism and the Game Lodge Industry in South Africa', *Business and Politics: Vol. 13: Iss. 1, Article 3* provides a case study on the Londolozi model and how it pioneered eco-tourism operations.

[261] Afrikaner cattle are indigenous breeds "known for longevity, good milk production, easy calving, and smooth short-haired skin with tick resistance. Afrikaners can thrive in heartwater, redwater and gall sickness areas" (Coleman, A. (2013) 'The Indigenous Afrikaner – a beef breed for the future' in Farmer's Weekly, Monday, January 14, 2013)

impala, and warthog population that existed naturally on the farm. Yearly reinvestment into the farm added new species among these Gemsbok, Wildebeeste, Nyalas, Zebra and Tsessebe bought from the Nature Conservation department. The wildlife were added into the different herds increasing the range of species available on the farm.

Money made from game was re-invested into the business leading to the building of a lodge within two years. Coincidentally, game prices rose around the 1990s period at the height of national farm conversions while the devaluation of the rand brought in more tourists into the country, including international hunters. Seeking to expand the business's reach, the young man embarked on trips to the United States during this period to secure clients whilst also benefitting from the international clients who were brought in by fellow professional hunters. His PHASA membership was beginning to pay dividends particularly in the building of international networks, a connection that was facilitated by a fellow PHASA member. The first US client came in 1990 with the income from this hunt being used to build a hunting camp which doubled as a lodge within the property. The conversion was well on the way.

The cattle production business continued but on neighbouring rented farms. Instead of stud breeding, one bull for every 20 cows it was now commercial farming where four bulls were put in with 120 cows. The strict monitoring that had been practised at the height of the stud breeding operation was relaxed as this side of the business was being scaled down. This meant breeding was no longer as strictly monitored as before while attention was being given to game farming. As a result, there was a reduction in fenced off camps from 35 to 9-10 camps of bigger herds. Later on in the mid-1990's, the cattle were sold off with the money earned being ploughed into the purchase of 'high value rare species'; 5 disease free buffalo (2 bulls and 3 cows) including some rhino and sable. Offering a huge incentive at this juncture was the prices they paid for stocking up, R30 000 for a buffalo and R9 000 for Sable.[262] For A, this was an indication of the future financial dividends that could be reaped from stocking the above and later offering them for sale. Incidentally, this new investment was related to the objective of expanding the

[262]I was informed that the game farm was selling Sable for R180 000 (2011 figures) apiece regardless of the animal's gender. A huge jump from the R9 000 prices paid when stocking their farm in the 1990's thereby supporting the argument that game produces huge returns on investment.

trophy hunting side of the business which later became the pillar of the business.

I believe this selling of the cattle was no coincidence since red meat prices had dropped drastically around this time period. For example, two articles in the 1990 *Farmer's Weekly*[263] point to the challenges faced by stud breeders giving an indication of how this farmer's shift was a calculated business decision which was directly proper considering the circumstances even though the informant claims that his actions were lucky gambles. This switch proved to be a good investment since it enabled receipt of the majority income from overseas trophy hunters allowing the hunting to be diversified instead of only relying on the local market. Another advantage accruing from having more international than local hunters was the low carbon impact of the tourists combined with the preferred hunting method being bow hunting. This allowed the owners to have limited hunter numbers on their farm while the foreign currency spending power of the hunting clientele was a major positive business benefit. Additionally, the low impact hunting enabled the business to offer live sales of excess wildlife which was sold to a growing receptive market of new players who had recently converted their farms. The growing popularity of game farming during the 1990s enabled this wildlife entrepreneur to supply game adding an extra source of revenue.

It was during the 1990s period, when cattle prices were falling that the wildlife began to outnumber the cattle on the farm. Simultaneously, the Rand continued sliding, hastening the decision to completely convert into game farming and hunting. The remaining cattle that had been moved to a leased off farm in KwaZulu Natal area were sold off with the income earned from sales ploughed into completely making the family business reliant on game farming.

As an example, after only 4 years of having game fencing, the farm was culling 60 kudu yearly; hunting accounted for only half that figure leaving the remainder to be sold off. With growing experience, the famer added to the game stock bringing in more rare species. Sable antelope were brought in from Zimbabwe, 3 buffalo were added to the stock as well as 5 white rhino. From this investment, the growing reputation of the game

[263] See Clarke Gittens' 'Stud farmers- an endangered species' in Farmer's weekly, 22 June 1990 pg. 32 in which the author points to the existence of technology as threatening industry practitioners. See also 'Red meat: tough times ahead' in Farmer's Weekly, 7 September 1990 p 47 where the department of Agricultural Economics at the University of the Orange Free State predicts a fall in prices right up to 1991.

farm was enhanced both locally and internationally. Total transition was achieved in 1998 –a decade after the first paid hunt on the farm- when the remaining cattle on the leased property were sold. This is close to the seven year period mentioned by another successful trophy hunting farmer[264] indicating how the business is not a quick turn-around production process. Thus, the sizeable income derived from the sale of the stud cattle easily enabled the buying of expensive buffalo, sable and the setting up of infrastructure that could befit the status of a trophy hunting farm good enough to attract and retain international hunting clients with their demands for expensive taste.

Nevertheless, it was not always smooth sailing along the path of growth and establishment of the business. For instance, incidences of disease spread between game and cattle did occur as in the example given by the informant where his neighbour's dairy cows caught 'snotsiekte'[265] supposedly from his wildebeest. This example points to the hazards posed by game to domestic animals and vice-versa which the game farmer has to guard against. One cannot overstate the suspicion with which wildlife is viewed in some farming quarters stemming from the earlier farming times. In the early history of South African farming, there was an almost eventual extermination of wildlife which was seen as disease-carrying agents threatening agriculture. Therefore, some wildlife species generally was treated as vermin including by state agricultural and veterinary officials (Bigalke 1966, Carruthers 2008). In the trophy hunting farmer's case, as a way of creating good relations with his neighbouring dairy farmer and as a means of deflecting responsibility, farmer A eventually removed his Wildebeest. His opinion was that it was better to have good relations with neighbours than fight over something that could not be conclusively proven. In any case, he already was challenging some land claims that were hanging over the family farm and did not want any complications on a different front. By this stance, farmer A was proving his pragmatic and practical nature in the realisation that he needed the support and cooperation of his neighbour more especially in an unstable farming environment. Since farming was a common denominator between him and his neighbour, there was need to avoid conflict but seek to build cooperation in that one aspect that was a livelihood for both.

[264] Interview with trophy hunting game farm owner, former PHASA executive, Koster, North West 26/01/2012

[265] Snotsiekte, also known as 'Bovine malignant catarrhal fever (BMCF) is a highly contagious incurable viral disease carried by wildebeest common in Limpopo, the northern parts of KZN and in the North West's Marico, Zeerust and Swartruggens areas. See Farmer's weekly, 'Bovine malignant catarrhal fever has marked impact on red meat industry', Tuesday 13 September 2011.

In conclusion, several insights can be drawn from this case study. Firstly, the respondents (farmer A and his mother) believe there are many advantages of game farming over cattle farming, in their case, stud breeding. For example, carrying a third of buffalo stock compared to cattle still gave higher returns, around ten times, because of the prices that were fetched by buffalo. The extra income enabled the respondents to pay salaries above minimum wage whilst also bringing in seasonal contract workers. Secondly, wildlife is seen as being better adjusted to drought periods than cattle and hence can survive. This appears to have been the case for this game farm. Thirdly, as some of the early pioneers in game farming in the area, Farmer A's decision to seek mentoring from the Varty brothers and other people who were already into game farming set up the business for the relative success that it managed to attain in comparison to others in the area. As an example, one former PHASA executive and successful trophy hunting game farmer described having assisted farmer A in securing international clients in the United States of America by introducing the former to his own networks.[266] As has been mentioned earlier, such action is very important in setting one up particularly in an environment where trust, repeat business and word of mouth advertising is an essential stock and trade of the sector.

Farmer A argues that game farmers create more jobs than cattle farmers while also contributing to increased female employment who tend the guest facilities. According to the informant, this is what happened even though the jobs were seasonal. Another point is that they are at the lower levels in terms of skills, for example skinning the game that has been shot, changing the bedding and cleaning the lodges. Importantly, this example is at the 'high end' of the game farming business, trophy hunting, which is specialised and for a select type of clientele. Conversion into this game farming type was largely facilitated by the stud breeding business which the family had been running for years.

[266] Interview with trophy hunting game farm owner, former PHASA executive, Koster, North West 26/01/2012



Picture C: An example of lodging provided by the game farm. Notice the satellite dish on the roof and also the close encounter with wildlife that is offered on these types of farms.

Despite being in an 'African bush' setting complete with wildlife, hunters can still experience the comforts of home. Trophy hunting game farmers like farmer A provide such luxury for the hunters' consumption together with the exclusive experience of hunting in small parties. The high-end of the market is for the pioneers in the business who mainly target foreign trophy hunters as discerning clientele who prefer having the best of both worlds and can afford it. On offer then is an imagined experience of idyllic African bush accompanied by facilities that can match first world material comforts.

A game farm with multi-function land-use: Case study B

The following case study follows the story of a 4 200ha family farm which combines game farming, and a butchery business with cattle and sheep production. It is a combined farming business because the farmer views game farming alone as not being profitable conceding that there are too many game farms selling the same products. In this argument, he is not alone as confirmed by another game farmer who ventured how one would not get rich from conducting hunting alone since it was a complex business with multifaceted factors beyond an individual's control.[267] Therefore B's business model serves as a strategy to manage these multiple elements to his advantage. Notably, the family did not fully convert their cattle farm as they felt the market for game did not justify full conversion preferring instead to hedge their farming production enterprise by adopting a multi-function land-use system. In their study on changing land use trends, Smith and Wilson (2002) have documented this diversification approach where partial conversion is a strategy to benefit from two production systems. One advantage stated by the game farmer is that the combination of game and domestic stock enables the efficient and maximum utilisation of the vegetation (grass and trees) on the farm stemming from the different feeding habits of the species.

> well it's as I said, it's the productivity and the risk. You have to check your veld that you don't over utilise your veld, you have to control your numbers. And as I said the combination in the species is very important because you have to utilize everything. We are lucky here, because you have a grass farm and a tree farm, so you have two species you must utilize everything. And this is where the sheep comes in. Because as I told you they are utilizing all the herb and all the stuff that other things don't eat. It's unbelievable. But this is the meat master sheep. It's a combination. It's a cross between the Damara (12.13) this is an indigenous and the Dorp, the Droper (12.17) is a cross between a Dorsset horn from overseas and a black head Persy. It's also indigenous, so they utilize everything. But, if you see them grazing, mostly, cheap stuff that other things don' eat.

Case study B's farm has been in the family since 1972 when it was bought by the present farmer's father who passed it on to his son in November 1998. Game farming only began in 2006, almost 20 years after A, because of the demand for game meat. Most of the animals were bought from Botswana (200 blue wildebeest) while the rest

[267] Interview with trophy hunting game farm owner, former PHASA executive, Koster, North West 26/01/2012

were bought from neighbouring farms including from farmer A whose farm is separated by a fence from B. Game animals kept on this farm include the following: warthog, impala, nyala, blue wildebeest and kudu; specifically biltong producing species. Three million Rand was spent that year stocking the farm with game, a sizeable investment. Yet when considering the timing of entrance, in 2006, it meant that game farming was already established in the area hence game prices were high while the buying of some animals from Botswana added to costs. Meanwhile, to prevent in-breeding,[268] the farmer introduces new blood into the gene pool, bulls or cows, every three years although his preference is for cows over bulls because cows are easily accepted into the herd while bulls usually have to fight for their place. The fighting does at times cause serious injury to the animals which the farmer would rather avoid. In addition, bulls may not breed as anticipated hence the reluctance. As elaborated by the farm owner, the business is engaged in meat production, involved in the marketing of their products to niche markets like lodges and distribution companies. The majority of the farm income came from supplying the niche market with game meat[269] whose prices are higher, which is then supplemented by hunting. From the owner's perspective, the blue wildebeest is the most productive animal on the farm while the eland production had to be stopped when it showed signs of suffering from ticks. Despite keeping Wildebeest on his farm together with cattle, this farmer did not report of any cross-contamination between the two. Hence this may indicate the inconclusive aspect of disease transference between the two or reflect the management skills of this farmer in keeping the two apart.

Biltong hunting on the farm is conducted mostly during winter, although very selective hunting is done throughout the year to prevent the hunting of calving cows, young animals and prime bulls. The preferred hunting done on this farm is 'walk and stalk' type of hunting with guns. Although the farmer stated that his hunting prices which began at R2 000 for blue wildebeest in 2012 were 'cheap', he felt that these were viable

[268] In-breeding "causes greater mortality and reduced fecundity in many species" which can "lower fitness and reduce the potential for the population to adapt" see Robert C. Lacy, 1993. 'Impacts of In-breeding in Natural and Captive Populations of Vertebrates: Implications for Conservation', University of Chicago.

[269] 'Game Meat Scheme' through which registered game farmers could commercially produce meat to be sold to retailers under the Meat Safety Act (No 40 of 2000). This was the "WRSA's practical alternative to the strict and over-regulating impact of the state draft Game Regulations.

since they were affordable to his middle class South African hunting clientele. As opposed to case study A above which is a strictly 'bow hunting' trophy farm targeting international hunters, the latter dislikes bow-hunting labeling it as "wasting my time."[270] An explanation to this is that 'bow-hunting' takes some skill to master and is not a popular hunting method for local biltong hunters.

> *B*: Walk and stalk. With guns. Sometimes there are people doing bow hunting but they are only wasting my time.
>
> *Nqobile*: Why do you say they are only wasting your time?
>
> *B*: It all depends as I said the breeding of animals. At the end when there is a surplus you have to sell it and the prices are not high, so you have too, umm, market the meat. By doing shooting.

Thus, the farmer could be prejudiced towards it seeing it as something that can derail his plans of harvesting game meat as rapidly as possible as projected in his business. The hunting done here is mostly by people from Gauteng, through private advertising like the internet via the business website although the farmer did use '*Landbou Weekblad*' twice in 2006, during the early days of the game farm. Deliberately targeting Gautengers instead of locals already hints at the class element associated with biltong hunting affordability, although it makes business sense considering the province's proximity.

This advertising does confirm that idea of middle and upper class people having access to the medium of advertising and thus being able to hunt at this particular farm. On this basis, the farmer claimed to have a few black hunting clients; one of whom owned a butchery while the other was a medical doctor. The farmer's reference to status (Weber 1978) further consolidates the association of hunting as being subject to affordability and not only through race. Consequently it indicates that only certain class categories of people are able to hunt, since hunting affordability is subject to cost factors as has been referred to earlier in the thesis.

Farmer B targets local biltong hunters in contrast to his neighbour and competitor. While his hunting prices are cheaper, he also has to have a large number of clients hunting on his farm in order to make up for this difference. Farmer B claimed to have on average

[270] Interview with meat producing game farm owner, Groot Marico, 15/06/2012.

five groups of hunters per year who would have between four to seven people in the group coming to hunt at his farm. Linked to that, the business has a self-catering lodge which can accommodate 14 people in three tents and two chalets. As enunciated by the owner,

> We are a hunting lodge in the first place; it's not a private apartment. If 14 men come, then 14 men stay. Perfect.

The owners prefer unaccompanied male hunting clients since the amenities they offer are very basic, closer to rustic. Four men can share a chalet while two can share a tent which might prove inconvenient if couples came together since the amenities do not offer much privacy and comfort. Hence for him, it is a numbers game that focuses on high turnover as reflected by the reference to hosting 35 groups of hunters per year. The latter emphatically makes the point that this side of the business is not a luxury holiday place but a sleeping area for hunters, male hunters more specifically. As emphasised by his wife, "it's all about kilogram per hectare even if it's a nyala, even if it's a bushbuck, even if it's a duiker… " which effectively is the business slogan.

> Sometimes they have to shoot the bulls, sometimes you have to shoot the cows that haven't calved and sometimes you have to shoot young ones. …… It all depends on your, your, your, need for meat. In winter time the risk is not so high that you will shoot an animal that has a calf or something like that. Umm, so it doesn't matter now, if you are shooting a female or a male. But later on, it will matter because they are pregnant and all that stuff.

The game farmer clearly distinguishes his family game farm and the products it offers from the other game farmers in the area. Hunting is done throughout the year since the farm is a meat production enterprise with some of the hunters hunting for the farm butchery as part of the arrangement the farmer has with his clients. Winter time is regarded as the best time to hunt by the farmer since there is no fear of shooting animals that are calving, whereas at other times the business does carry the risk of hunting its best breeding stock and young game animals. Part of that risk stems from the fact that there is no scientific basis to the hunting that could help distinguish the animals, young versus old, male versus female, since the motivation for the hunting is to supply meat to the business.

The farmer is a WRSA member who claims that the association does a lot of administration on behalf of its members, benefitting these on issues like gun registration and legal information provision. Yet B's wife who handles the administration side of the business, was opposed to the association's clamour for 'self-regulation' cum 'self-administration'. She believed the state run system worked efficiently and deserved praise instead of being substituted by private operators. This assertion went completely against the argument provided by the associations even despite the B's observation that:

> There is no department that is not affected by very very poor incompetent people.

Yet the interviewee later praised the veterinary meat inspectorate department specifically singling out the department head:

> Yes, he visits often. He has been here about once every year. But he has got deputies, they come on an annual basis. They visit the abattoir. And these people know what they are talking about, so as long as you have got competent people. But I tell you things have just gone down the drain.

One recurring complaint from the family members was the incompetence of the provincial officials when it came to issues of regulations and running farming affairs although the agricultural inspectorate responsible for checking up on the abattoir was praised for its efficient inspections every year.

On labour issues, the farmer claims his type of farming is "more labour intensive than game farming itself because of the different divisions"[271] within the business. Apart from three hunting guides the farmer employs 5 other people at the farm abattoir while his professional hunter son and his marketing wife add to the number of employees on the business books. The farm abattoir also adds to the labour complement as opposed to other game farms without this facility. Hunting guides are contract workers who only work for six months of the year during the hunting season. The wife also doubles up as the permits person for the farm including conducting the necessary bookings and administration work for the business. The majority employees are foreign nationals particularly Zimbabweans at the abattoir and butchery because they have the necessary practising certificates.[272] This was despite the fact that the farmer complained about some former Zimbabwean

[271] Interview with meat producing game farm owner, Groot Marico, 15/06/2012.
[272] These certificates are the 'blockman' certificates in meat processing which are Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) accredited thus meeting the legal requirements for operating a butchery

employees who after having been financially sponsored to acquire work related diplomas, left their jobs before the farmer could make his return on investment in them. Nevertheless, the farmer justified his employment of Zimbabwean nationals over locals by claiming that the:

> Tswana have no work ethic. I mean if they think they got a good tip from the hunter on Sunday, they just don't pitch up for work on Monday. I mean why? They have no loyalty, they have absolutely no loyalty.

As a game farming labour storyline, the issue of comparing foreign migrant workers to locals is not new. Brandt (2013) also points to a similar observation about Zimbabweans' work ethic in comparison to the local workers in the Karoo trophy hunting farms. Generally, the tone highlighted in the above snippet is reminiscent of the paternalism associated with white commercial farmers and their relationship with their workers.[273] As an example, the farmer goes further to say that, "you can be good to your people and I think we are" but then complains about the Zimbabwean workers who returned home when they began feeling homesick. Such an attitude is best described as paternalism which:

> as moral action, …consists of one agency (the superior one) *deliberately* doing something to another agency (the inferior one), in the belief that it will *promote the good of the latter*. The superior agency believes that he or she is qualified to act on the other person's behalf (Atkinson 2007:44 *own emphasis*).

Thus the latter's being 'good' to 'his people' was contingent on them working for him a requisite amount of productivity time in return. Boehm and Schirmer (2010) make similar observations regarding some farmers' paternalistic attitudes to their workers within the same magisterial district of Groot Marico. Despite farmer B's acknowledgement of the Zimbabwean workers' feelings of homesickness, he still feels slighted that they returned before his investment in them had fully paid dividends according to his own standards;

> I mean you can't keep losing; pumping money into people, training them and borrowing or lending them money, and they just never return. That is a bad investment.

[273] See Mkhize (2012:37-39) and Brandt (2013) who give a description of some of the paternalistic practices exercised by game farmers in Cradock and the Karoo respectively.

For the game farmer, his 'investment' in his employees requires a return on investment. In this case of the Zimbabwean workers, his feeling was that he had not yet derived his money's worth before the employees left his employment.

Within the context of farming production, the business model applied at this farm is a replica of the model the farmer used to practice on his Lichtenburg grain farm from which he was exporting 20 000 tons a year to Botswana. The farmer reluctantly sold off his entire operation piecemeal after 1994 when a huge portion fell under a land claim. When that large portion was bought by the government, the family relocated to Groot Marico within the same province to join B's father in meat production. Farmer B later converted a portion of the farm to practise wildlife production. Ironically, there are conflicting claims on the game farm too which the farmer is contesting. As reported by an official from the conservation department, there were a number of pending cases whose details the official did not divulge.[274] Nonetheless, as a firm believer in value addition on his products, B felt the need to establish an abattoir on the farm to process the game meat before putting it out to the open market. It is this value-addition on his product that explains why his business is doing very well though the farmer was reluctant to discuss figures, only acknowledging the businesses' healthy financial state.

As a long term strategy, the respondent had started breeding golden wildebeest caught from among his own animals for future trophy hunting. Being aware of the dangers of wildebeest 'snotsiekte' disease on his domestic animals, the farmer has made a point of keeping his cattle separate from the wildebeest to prevent the spread of the disease. On a different note, just like his neighbouring game farmer, the farmer has a land claim over his farm which he has contested. His belief is that the claims are politically motivated since there are two groups claiming his farm, whereas it is also a different group that is claiming his neighbour's game farm and the claims are not on a block area basis but are for individual farms. The claim process on his farm has been on-going for a number of years although that has not stopped production on his farm.

In closing, one can trace the continuity of the farm ownership from the period 1930 when it was owned by another white family before B's father bought the property in 1972. B

[274] Interview with state informant Zz 01/02/2012 in Mahikeng government complex, North West.

then took over from his father and he in turn is in the process of preparing his son for eventual takeover. Interestingly B mentioned how some of the black hunter clients were people with a military background who knew how to handle guns hence hunting was just an extension of their training. This is a valid point as it invalidates the argument that there might not be a market for black hunters, based on the assumption that gun possession is not something associated with middle class black people as compared to white people who also have licensed guns for hunting purposes. On closer examination, this is a true observation since in July 2010, the Black Gun Owners Association of South Africa took the government to court decrying that "only 2% of all black applicants were successful in obtaining firearm licenses" (Steyn 2011:99). But again, the issue that it is people with military training, hence who are able to handle their guns does restrict hunting to a certain category of people and not the majority even among the black middle class group. Importantly though for B hosting black hunters on his farm was an indication of transformation and a step in the right direction in restoring black and white relations. Over and above that, for the business, the numbers game was the bottom-line dictating operations.

Small scale game farmer: Case study C

The next case study discusses the story of farmer C whose 100 hectare cattle farm was converted to a game farm. Compared to the other two, this is a very small game farm. He bought the cattle farm in 1972 from his wife's uncle who had inherited it from his father. His wife's uncle was already farming in Botswana. C later converted a section of the bigger 200 hectare cattle farm into a game farm viewing this section as needing an intervention. He deemed game farming to be of benefit, considering the effects of erosion that had been visited on this portion by cattle overgrazing. The soil erosion had created a 'footpath' leading to the water point, which looked like a 'donga'. To deal with the problem, the farmer put game in the area reasoning that since game does not follow the same footpath as cattle, their effect would not be the same as the cattle. Game farming started in 1994-1995. Additionally, the farmer felt that game was not easily susceptible to disease unlike cattle while veterinary medicine was now very expensive particularly with dipping costs having risen. Interestingly, the farmer was inclined to deal crudely with problems. Rather than purchase medicine to deal with disease, he chose to kill diseased wildlife in order to stop the spread to other animals. This method of managing wildlife disease would receive the disapproval of game breeders as being

unscientific, considering that some spend a lot of money on veterinary medication for their wildlife investments. His justification was that the cost of medicine had become prohibitive higher than his projected spending. The same point is made by Smit (Gaborone 2006) that farmers incorporated game into their livestock production for this simple fact of ease of management and the assumed cheaper running costs as opposed to livestock production.

The farmer's first animals were kudus, warthogs, bushbucks and impalas naturally found on the farm which he fenced in. Every second year, he would buy from game capture companies new blood impalas to regenerate his stock especially if the animals were coming from hard water areas like Botswana similar to the area of Groot Marico. Every third year, he would buy kudus. The farmer claimed to have eight different blood lines for the impalas while the kudus had five blood lines which was his measure of preventing in-breeding among his stock. The game farmer stated that he had never bought any animals from auctions as these were spaces where, "the people with money go to." Arguably, this statement echoes the view of other hands on game farmers like B indicating the class stratification reflected by auction participation.

The farmer belongs to two associations, the WRSA and the local AgriSA association. Membership of AgriSA enables him to tap into the local Afrikaans farmers' network, a throwback to his cattle production days and a network for local agriculture dynamics.

The preferred mode of hunting is done on foot by stalking the animal with the hunter pitting his skills against the animal being hunted. It only happens for three months of the year during the open hunting season, an acknowledgement of the small size farm and the type of permit for which he qualifies. In contrast, a neighbour across the road has a three thousand hectare farm, where hunting is done throughout the year because of the exemption permit held by the farmer and the abundance of wildlife. Farmer C claims his reason for hunting only during the open season is to avoid hunting young suckling animals and their mothers, which he says happens at big farms. His motivation in this regard is that he needs his wildlife to recuperate and breed, which makes economic sense considering the size of his farm which does limit the quantity of animals that can be stocked. Rather than using the term biltong hunting, the farmer prefers 'meat hunting' when describing the hunting activity taking place at his farm. His justification for that

description stems from his belief that hunters hunt mostly for fresh meat rather than for dried meat popularly known as biltong, hence the name is a misnomer.

Word of mouth advertising is the preferred mode by which he gets his clients and this works for him since he claims to have a lot of friends who then bring their own friends to hunt. It reinforces the earlier point about 'hunting fellowship' reflecting how this farmer can rely on ties of friendship to tap into a 'meat hunting' unit for his own marketing. Hunting clients are mostly from Johannesburg and Pretoria who are not 'professional hunters' as in being licensed, but who regularly hunt game. These are 'social' hunters who see the activity as a break from the tedious exertions of modern day life and business in the city. This ties in with the farmer's preference for non-professional hunters as a control issue; "under my supervision", so that he remains 'the expert' in the hunting that occurs on his farm. The game farmer claims to have no formal game hunting training, being self-taught. Nevertheless he imparts the knowledge that he has gained through the years to hunters who come and hunt at his farm. This may explain his preference for 'virgin' hunters, not professionally trained hunters, as a way of maintaining the field power relations in his favour.

I will argue that considering the size of the farm, an enterprise like this "is not profitable in a commercial sense, although it may still give the owner sufficient psychological returns" (ABSA 2003:32). Therefore, he can savour the satisfaction of owning a game farm instead of a cattle farm for example, thus participating in a sector that is held in a different hierarchical position to the latter while retaining greater operational control. As a semi- retirement business, it is sufficient to keep the farmer busy while holding on to the dream of having a farm. The farm also includes a 'bed and breakfast' business run by the farmer's wife. The farmer claims that the combined income is sufficient to keep the family business going. I have to mention at this point that the farmer professed to having only one farm worker working at the farm. Once again, the lone employee is an indicator of the smallness of the business and its scale of operation. Similar to case study B above, the farmer complained about the drunken behavior of his farm worker during working hours made worse by the one week disappearance by the worker from his place of employment on one occasion after receiving his wages.

The farmer's impression of overseas hunting clients is negative; "I am not very fond of them", labeling them as 'bad shots'. This assertion was exemplified by the story of the one Canadian client at his farm who had to make four shots to bring down a Kudu bull putting farmer C off international hunters. According to C, one shot should be enough to bring down the animal. Consequent to that experience, he prefers to send any international clients to friends for their hunting expeditions. It is important to note how shooting skills matter for game farmers cum game hunters as they not only define one as a good marksman or hunter but also prevent loss. When an animal is injured, it becomes imperative on the hunter to bring it down to prevent cruelty to the animal but also to avert the danger posed by this injured animal. Similarly a wild shot can be dangerous in the veld hence the need for accuracy by hunters. Another reason for his disdain towards foreign hunters is their desire to shoot from a vehicle which he does not practise on his farm since doing that is against hunting ethics, according to his strict definition. Even then, because of the size of C's farm, the hunting excursion may not be an experience comparable to someone with a larger farm hence the 'walk and stalk' hunting that he practices does fit in with the limitations of his farm size. Additionally, he would have to work hard to convince international trophy hunters to hunt in his farm as the latter bring with them a perception of 'wild Eden' to which farmer C's farm size does not equate.

On average, the hunting clients spend three to four days hunting on the farm. The farmer takes in six hunters at a time. His justification for the business being sustainable is the argument that one must live off what they love doing hence his claim to being a 'conservationist'. This is despite his observation that;

> As long as there is money in game, we will protect the game you see. If there is no money in it, nobody will even try to protect it![275]

Such justification qualifies the 'conservationist' claim being embraced by the game farmer pointing to the real economic motivation behind practising this type of farming. Additionally, the farmer is practising some form of 'slash and burn' in which certain

[275] Interview with game farmer in Groot Marico 16/06/2012.

portions or blocks of the farm are burnt to rid them of the alien vegetation that might not belong to the area. This pattern is repeated every two or three years. Following that earlier reference to 'conservation', the farmer justifies hunting on the farm as a means of keeping the ecological balance of wildlife within this farm habitat. Without hunting on his farm, the game would overrun the farm from natural breeding and eventually run out of grazing which would lead to the game's demise. Thus hunting becomes a tool of keeping the numbers of game down with the hunter serving as the natural predator.

In keeping with the theme of continuity and tradition, he is passing on game farm knowledge to his 12 year old female grandchild. Her enjoyment of going out to the bush with him qualifies her as a 'conservationist', according to his standards. It is this same qualification that has convinced him to offer her a chance to hunt her first Impala, a reflection of the passing down of the torch by the older generation to the young as alluded to earlier in this thesis. Despite the obvious gender disparity, the grandchild as an only 'heir' interested in game farming enables the overlooking by the grandfather of her being female. One might also justify this considering that farmer C passed a portion of his cattle farm to his daughter, therefore within the family history, gender roles do not come into play.
On the subject of trophy hunting, farmer C believes that every animal is a trophy for the hunter because:

> It's on you, a chip on your shoulder, that you managed to get that animal in his environment. So that is a trophy as well, so these big ones they are the stud bulls, that's what I call it.

By this explanation, the game farmer justifies his own interpretation of trophy hunting even though it can be argued that the environment is the farmer's.

In conclusion, one can argue that this farmer is well aware of the limitations of his circumstances, thus operates within these as shown above. By pointing out that game farms are more expensive, almost double the amount of a cattle farm when they are being sold off, the game farmer reveals the motivation for his conversion. Nevertheless one of the reasons for such high costs is the price of fencing which the farmer forecast at R100 000 for a kilometre of fencing – being 2012 rates - compared to the R8 000 that he paid when putting up his game fence himself in the mid-1990s. Again, it is

important to point out the cost- cutting measures practised by this farmer; therefore he could refer to having put the fence up himself instead of merely hiring out other people to do it for him. It is this awareness which makes him comment on his status in relation to some of his wealthy neighbours thus:

> How can I do it? From the money that I get from the farm and I still make a living? You see what I am saying, I can't do it. I'm not flying that high. I fly that high where my wings can carry me.

As a result, farmer C buys his animals only after an auction has ended at a reduced price because this will be leftover stock being sold at a fraction of the auction price. This is not a contradiction of his avowed stance of never buying from an auction but is an acceptance that he cannot compete on the auction open floor to buy wildlife. The money used to pay for the animals is income earned from hunters, never from his own pocket reflecting the business' tight margins. It is only sustainable because the farmer does not spend beyond his means, justifying his reluctance to bid at auctions where he would have to compete with those that are 'flying high' and have deep pockets. For him, it is strategic to wait until after the auction and only buy those 'left over' animals for which the auctioneer is now desperate to sell. From this point on, the power has shifted slightly to the game farmer as he can negotiate a favourable price on the animals as opposed to when the animals are the centre of attraction on the auction floor. Additionally, there are no potential bidders to push up prices. In some way, this strategy is reminiscent of the hunting terms and conditions on his farm with his preference for 'non-professional hunters' depicting this game farmer as a person who does not like competition and would rather operate on his own terms. However, it also points to a farmer who is aware of his limitations thus is willing to operate within those circumscribed boundaries. Despite having started the game farm business in 1994-1995, the enterprise seems to have remained operating in the margins of 'sustainability' without having grown substantially as compared to the other two case studies cited in this section. One possible explanation for this lack of growth could be the lack of innovation by the game farmer while another is the financial muscle which too appears to have been a hindrance hence his constant need to be cost-cutting in all his expenditure. For those game farmers in the category of farmer C, provision of the basics in the form of a tent sets them apart from their competitors as offering a truly 'bush experience' for city people looking for adventure.

Curtain call: Groot Marico game farming

The three case studies reflect different production options undertaken by game farmers in Groot Marico including the target markets for each. Comparatively, the meat producer prefers hunters alone without their families. This precludes any disruptive family consequences on his production capacity since hunting supplies the meat quota for his butchery and the services industry. He prefers serious hunters to keep the meat conveyor belt going instead of visitors seeking an outdoor holiday. As a meat producer, game farming is not mutually exclusive from livestock production with the two being practised together as land uses on one farm with game fencing separating the two production systems. Whereas the trophy hunting family had to remove the stud cattle to completely make way for game. Despite the two being neighbours, they practice different production systems and ideologies. Farmer A caters exclusively for international trophy hunters having graduated from local. On the one hand, the limitations of the smaller game farmer, small in terms of farm size and scale of operation, dictate the terms and conditions of his farm operation. Thus the type of animals, the tent facilities that he uses to accommodate his hunting clientele and therefore the type of clients that he is willing to hire out his services to are influenced by his business model. For all three though, conversion has taken different paths depending on the vision they had for the long term future development of their farms but also financial and other resources have played a part in the final product on offer.

The three examples do not encompass the full extent of game farms operational in Groot Marico despite offering an important window into a majority of the processes. These case studies provide insight into the route taken by farmers in the development of their farms both production and marketwise. Peculiar to this area is the ownership by one Indian family of a lion hunting farm while another family of Greek origin has a stake in a few game farms in the area. Thus, these two reflect that game farming is not only practised by Afrikaners in this area. The Greek patriarch mentioned how he was one of the pioneers of game farming in the district having started operating a game farm in 1976, way before everyone else in the area. This farmer claims to have had a reciprocal relationship with the former Bophuthatswana government. It was this association which resulted in him supplying game animals to Madikwe game reserve.[276] This claim is substantiated by a

[276] Interview with combined game breeder and trophy hunting farmer, Groot Marico 24/01/2012

Farmer's weekly advertisement for a game auction in which the latter's advert states that a portion of the sale proceeds would be used to support the conservation efforts of the Bophuthatswana government in its reserves. To this end, his example of co-operation with the state can be viewed as a survival strategy. Nevertheless, he benefitted from operating a monopoly in the area. He started off with 1 000 hectares and currently holds 11 000 hectares.

Evidence of the class differential is revealed by the combined game breeding and trophy hunting farm which operates a lodge with first class facilities including an Olympic-sized swimming pool. There is also a helicopter landing pad mainly used by the owner but which is also used by visitors to the game farm. Further to that, importing and exporting wildlife since 1981 has given the farmer significant footprints in the industry, while the live capture of four or five hundred animals a year is additional proof of being a top player. When there was a land claim on the farm, the farmer was quick to settle with the claimants and provincial organs of state, acquiring a 99 year lease on the farm which has kept operations going.[277]

Doing a quick settlement with the state reflects the farmer's experience of dealing with state organs –the cooperation with Bophuthatswana government earlier- indicative of an individual able to play the political game. Moreover an early settlement prevented a long-drawn out legal battle while enabling the farmer to keep an upper hand since the terms of agreement included employing a number of locals without changing the structural set-up of the business. For example, members of the community cannot hunt on the farm nor have access to grazing, allowing for the game farmer's continued operations apart from the rental he now pays. The differences in the manner of operation in which individuals are running their farms are highlighted by the social and class stratification in which the farmers are bracketed. In a way, all four examples provide consumable and non-consumable activities associated with their game farms from hunting to accommodation provision even though the operational scales are different. For the trophy hunting clientele, accommodation provision has to be of the highest standard considering that the clients are paying huge sums of money in foreign currency. Additionally, game type differs as here rhinos, sable and buffalo are prized prey additional to the other game found on the farm offering the trophy

[277] Interview with combined game breeder and trophy hunting farmer, Groot Marico 24/01/2012

hunter a rich, cherished trophy variety. The same goes for the patriarch's trophy hunting clients. The mentioned animals are not found on the other two cited game farms. Collectively these case studies provide a means of understanding social stratification within the game farming league which follows a form of hierarchical pattern despite the khaki and lime green attire that is common clothing among the game farmers. Following the above, there is clear division of labour, what we can classify as specialisation by different categories of game farmers.

Local and national socio-political factors have determined the game farmers' course of action in this transition. Game farms in Marico are mostly owned by English –farmer A- and Afrikaans speaking –farmer B and C- white families, a legacy of South Africa's colonial farming history. According to a provincial state official, there were no black owned game farms in Groot Marico, except for the Indian owned lion hunting farm- while in neighbouring Zeerust, one small farmer had a 'keeping permit', allowing him to stock a few animals. An explanation for the Indian game farm ownership relates the other commercial businesses they run in the area. On the other hand, the reason advanced for the lack of black game farmers was that they kept open farms without control over wildlife movement.[278] But, a collective narrative locates the answer in the gate-keeping factor and continuities of historical legacies. A different point yet illuminative is that trophy hunting farms in the Marico area are mostly conducted by non-Afrikaner white game farmers as the majority owners. Examples include the Indian owned lion hunting farm, the Greek owned trophy hunting and breeding farm and the English owned trophy hunting farm. This allows them to side-step the biltong hunting market, mainly dominated by local Afrikaner hunters while focusing on the international market.[279] This dichotomy, although pointing to the local cleavages within the sector, also reflects an understanding of situational context by the farmers.

Another high-end game farmer has a business strictly focused on exotic game breeding. He has done well for himself, judging by the size of his 5 000ha farm which has benefited

[278] Interview with provincial state licensing official F1 in Mafikeng 2011-12-06. One reason for having this 'open farm' is that these farmers would be farming with cattle as their core business but having Kudu and Impala as well on the same farm. These animals can move in and out of the farm because the farms do not have game fencing. The owner by virtue of a keeping permit, can apply for hunting rights during an open hunting season.

[279] Most of their clients are American tourists recruited at Safari Club International (SCI) wildlife conventions held in US states.

from consolidation through buying off neighbouring farms. The game found here range from buffalos, sable, rhinos to the special bred colour variants like golden gnu, black impala[280] and golden wildebeest. Thus the game breeder specifically focuses on the provision of wildlife to the two groups at different levels. For those seeking a trophy animal, the game breeder serves that purpose by mixing the best breeds and even interfering in nature to ensure that the result is of the highest possible standard. That is the nature of his business. The farm has electronic surveillance equipment installed in pens around the farm enabling the owner to view what is happening from his city offices or home in Rustenburg.[281] What emerges thus is a picture of the lengths to which the game breeder has invested in technology to secure and monitor his wildlife investment. Further to that, this example shows the technological impact within the sector for the affluent as in the case of this game breeder, giving glimpses of the quality of lifestyle conversion into game farming has brought. Yet access to technology has opened the way for the businessman type of farmer who lives in the city but can still keep track of his game farm investment through employment of gadgetry.

What the different categories have in common is the survival of the industry, the manner of permitting system as defined by the state through its provincial authorities and the general direction of agriculture in the country. These common denominators place these different strands of game farming in a grouping that supports each other for a common survival cause.

Emerging as a common strand from the interviews with the different game farmers was the role they played in conservation of wildlife and how they were helping preserve the country's natural resources including the land. For instance, farmer C when answering the question about the improvements he had brought to the farm, his first response was; "Well, the first improvement I made to the farm was to take the cattle away".[282] Implicit in this statement is that conversion to game farming from cattle ranching had a huge impact on soil conservation on his farm. Such sentiments need to be viewed in the specific context in which game farming has been invoked as contributing to national

[280] One WRSA insider claimed these were selling for close to R600 000 in mid-2012. See Farmer's Weekly, 2 July 2012 'Colour variant game naturally profitable' in www.farmersweekly.co.za (accessed 30/12/2013).
[281] Interview with game breeder TZ, Groot Marico 26/01/2012
[282] Interview with game farmer in Groot Marico 16/06/2012.

conservation efforts. Set against this background, the 'productive farming' of cattle which contributed to guarantees of food security pales into insignificance in the shadow of game farming's contribution to conservation. Yet the number of cattle farms converting to game farming is a worrisome trend when taking into account that most of these, like farmer C above, only 'produce' game for the hunting meat market without supplying on a commercial supply-side scale as they used to do when supplying cattle for the beef market. Even though B is trading game commercially, he too is supplying to a specialised market whose access is only for a select few.

Despite farmer C's light-hearted view of the contribution to conservation in the quote above, there is the real fear for most of the game farmers about farm invasions occurring in the guise of land redistribution, emulating what happened in Zimbabwe. It was a repeated theme among the majority of interviewees, made more real by the unsettled land claims hanging over a number of the farms. Raising the spectre of Zimbabwe's 'disastrous land reform'[283] became a constant reference point the game farmers used to juxtapose South Africa's current situation and the route that the state land reforms were supposed to avoid. Such constructions have not escaped the academic lens of various land authors. For example Goebel remarks how:

> Zimbabwe has become an important framing device for reading land reform in South Africa: for some a haunting spectre of potential disaster, for others a hopeful sign of the possibility of radical change. (2005:348)

Thus, Zimbabwe's example was then being usefully deployed to paint a picture of failed state land reform, '*potential disaster',* as a warning which South Africa's state authorities would do well to heed. In this, farmers were practising covert self-preservation based on threats they deemed were real. What their insinuations hint at is "a fear framed both as a question and a premonition: Will we become like Zimbabwe?"[284] By applying moral

[283] There has been a steady stream of academic literature critical of Zimbabwe's fast track land reform. Rory Pilossof provides a study that separates the strands of academic literature on Zimbabwe in 'The Land Question (Un)Resolved: An Essay Review', *Historia 53,2, November 2008, pp 270-279*. The current literature pointing to the success of the new farmers of Fast track land reform includes 'Zimbabwe takes back its land' by J Hanlon, J Manjengwa and T Smart 2013, Jacana Books and 'Zimbabwe's Land Reform: Myths and Realities' by Scoones *et al*, 2011, James Currey and Jacana books.

[284] Allison Goebel's 'Is Zimbabwe the Future of South Africa? The Implications for Land Reform in Southern Africa' *Journal of Contemporary African Studies 23, 3, Sept. 2005* provides a useful academic debate addresses the

and emotional justifications for their land holding now converted to game farming; the farmers can claim 'belonging' and rural economic productivity as moral grounds for utilisation of the two natural resources, wildlife and the land. This form of land use and tenure paves the way to claiming a social law of land access, whereby private game farmers by reference to economic productivity, past occupation (belonging) and conservation practices retain possession of the land (Hughes 2001) halting or re-configuring the redistribution efforts of government (Langholz and Lassoie 2001, Brooks *et al* 2011). Presented through this lens, the game farmers are helping to shape land redistribution policy through such framings while also portraying themselves as bearers of land-tenure practices that are productive for the South African economy.

Accordingly, the political action of holding on to the land (Fraser 2008) through conversion to game farming attains symbolic, ennobled meaning above the material properties it carries (ibid). Reference to 'traditions of white hunting', 'culture' and links to the land then add to the socio-political claims buttressing the economic and conservation arguments. Consequently one can argue, "White commercial farmers have proven adept at bypassing the government's policies" (Atkinson 2007:75) by re-articulating "their business in increasingly depoliticized and moral terms" (Suzuki 2001:618). Using Zimbabwe's example of 'failed' land redistribution which was premised on appropriation of white commercial farmland for redistribution to black farmers is a poignant example. It effectively critiques the flaws of reverse racism elsewhere whilst pointing to the potential threat of the same processes should they happen in a similar fashion at home. Its deployment is useful though as a stark warning of what might happen to the South African economy if Zimbabwe's example were to be followed. This type of rhetoric is succinctly captured by Freund (2010:22) who writes of "the vengeful and economically disastrous fast-track land reform taking place after 2001 in Zimbabwe". However, it is noteworthy that the redistribution of land "is a political, social and economic issue even more than a moral one" (Carruthers 1988:317) especially considering South Africa's historical legacies. Hence this strategy of

question. Percy Zvomuya, 'Zimbabwe's land myths exposed' in Mail & Guardian Friday April 20 to 25 2012 p 9 is an example of some of the South African media's latest take on the issue. A quick internet search using the term 'will we become like Zimbabwe?' brought out 127 000 000 hits showing how popular and real in the media this fear is. (the search was conducted on Google search on 9/10/2013)

emphasising the sector's contribution to the national economy places it in a category of 'national interest', to be guarded and preserved from destruction in its structural form. That having been said, the South African state has been emphatic in distancing itself from copying the Zimbabwean path of land reform. It has placated both its national and international audience by framing its actions on good governance and democratic principles (Goebel 2005; Brown 2010)[285] quintessentially neoliberal tenets. Despite these assurances, there is a general fear among white game farmers of land redistribution being a threat to their livelihoods.

Analysing the above, I argue that the neo-liberal,[286] 'free market' policies adopted by the state have enabled the wealthy; as in the example of the game farmers above, to accumulate more wealth for their own consumption and in their production of consumption patterns for an elite group of people. The cited case studies augment this argument. It is therefore far more likely that this market based land reform strategy – advocated by the agricultural expert system- has enabled farmer D above to sign a 99 year lease on his farm after settling with the provincial authorities and the land claimants. This state of affairs has enabled business to continue as usual for the game farmer who has ridden the wave of state policies by signing a concessionary agreement that appears as compromise but yet is tied into continuities of legacies of the past. These continuities are referred to by Hebinck, Fay and Kondlo (2011:222) who posit that the "agricultural expert system that has gradually taken shape in South Africa…plays a prominent role in the design of land reform." As a case in point, the claimant community cannot access the game farm for their own hunting and agricultural needs since this model does not follow the script advised by the departmental experts implementing state policy. Yet it is important to recall that in the early years of democracy, the ANC believed that:

> the reality of land claims process in South Africa may indeed be the strongest mechanism to ensure maximum participation of and maximum economic benefit flow into communities (Hanekom 1996:14)[287].

[285] See Karima Brown's Business Day article of 30 April 2010 'South Africa: Zuma says SA Will Not Copy Zimbabwe's Land Invasions' in allafrica.com/stories/201004300009.html (accessed 17/10/2013) one of many assurances by state officials. Jacob Zuma was speaking in his official capacity as South Africa's president.

[286] See Bond, P. (2005) Elite Transition: from Apartheid to Neoliberalism in South Africa' for a consolidated argument on this process.

[287] Hanekom, D. 1996. 'Community approaches to wildlife management'. Keynote address by Minister Derek Hanekom, Minister of Agriculture and land Affairs, South Africa. p.13-22. In ODA: African wildlife policy

Here Derek Hanekom former Minister of Agriculture and Land Affairs, was reflecting the government's position which has shifted over the years from maximum community participation to maximum economic benefit flow for the state and private capital. Therefore, in this contemporary period, the claimant community has to be content with dividends paid by the farmer and the jobs attained by a few among them at the farm. The lease agreement protects the game farmer's investment from the threat of redistribution while the 'claimant community' will encounter difficulties should they disassociate themselves from the agreement even though the contract may be to their disadvantage. Thus the game farm itself, still serves as a zone of exclusion, elitist in nature despite being a symbol of land 'redistribution' on paper.

As a land-use pattern, game farming has been viewed as the most productive tenure system for that piece of land under claim to the extent that it has been left as it was operating –a form of continuity- enabling the prevailing status quo to remain intact. In this instance, the game farmer continues with a production system which is a throwback to the Bophuthatswana era when he started importing and exporting wildlife in 1981. Thus the functional usefulness of wildlife as an economic resource endures (Carruthers: 1988) in the private sector in the con- temporary period being supported and enabled by state legislation and processes. Likewise, insight from the North West Department of Agricultural Conservation Environment and Rural Development (NWRD, 2008) that:

> Sustainable development means the integration of social, economic and environmental factors into planning, implementation and decision-making so as to ensure that development serves present and future generations

captures the logic behind keeping the game farm operating as it was despite the 'return of the land' to its rightful owners. I would argue that the economic and environmental factors have trumped social justice. Nonetheless, a similar phenomenon has occurred in southern and eastern Africa therefore is not confined to South Africa. According to Moyo (2008:78):

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consultation - Final report of the consultation. 18-19 April 1996, Civil Service College, Sunningdale Park, Berkshire, United Kingdom.

> Land-use conflicts and policy debates uphold moral and socio-economic value in allocating prime land to wildlife and tourism uses and consider such allocation to be of greater utility than the land-use utility of the majority of human beings (small farmers) vis-vis the few individual farmers and the animals themselves!

Small farmer individual benefits are usually dispensed with, at the expense of larger projects like the cited example of the 99 year lease extended to the game farmer in the form of a settlement of the land claim. In this vein, the state's role is supportive of private capital in the form of the eco-tourism business that the game farm represents. The motivation of the state's leaning towards business is explained by the provincial revenue stream from activities such a s trophy hunting –see table 4 hunting revenue- of which this particular farm is a contributor as it focuses on trophy hunting as the core of its business. Eco-tourism serves the "*ideological* function of legitimating particular forms of social arrangements, patterns of power and distribution of wealth" (Barry 2007:66 *emphasis in text*) to the exclusion of land claimants opposed to this type of arrangement. As a summary judgement in De Villiers (1999:19) explains it,

> Without the ownership of their lands, tribes are hopelessly vulnerable to exploitation and lack of capital upon which to build a viable future.

Inadvertently perhaps, state policies and practices permit historical continuities which reinforce existing inequalities.

This is contrary to the tenets of the Bill of rights, enshrined in the South African Constitution, which "places a responsibility on the State to carry out land-related reforms and grants specific rights to victims of past discrimination" (Lahiff 2007:1579). However, Patrick Bond's articulation of the silence of the RDP document on how the state would deal with Constitutional provisions on private property rights particularly regarding land reform and evictions (Bond 2005) is very informative on how the state has proceeded to deal with land reform. As an example, the state's reliance on the Expropriation Act of 1975 allows protections like full compensation to farmers whose land has been expropriated[288] thereby stifling expropriation since the state can claim to be limited by lack of funding for

[288] See Holmes, T. 'New land reform Bill – dangerous or not?' in mg.co.za/article/2014-06-23-new-land- expropriation-bill-dangerous-or-appropriate (accessed 24/06/2014)

carrying out its mandate. The prolonged legal challenges by farmer A and B on the land claims serve a different example to the route taken by D. In this instance, the 'successful' land claimant is not the master of his or her land but the state is, since it has the ultimate say on the land usage as in the case of D. As espoused by a North West state official, the department's long term objective is to declare the province as a hunting tourism destination.

> But there are big plans for example at Marico where there is a bio-sphere plan. It is under discussion and the communities are part of it. So if that bio-sphere was to be proclaimed then we will see a lot of communal land being proclaimed from within, then there will be a high tourism value, a high amount of hunting coming in.[289]

The state official's optimism about the tourism potential to benefit the greater Marico community, his next statement indicated the top-down approach of this proposed initiative since discussions were being held at his Mafeking office with only tribal representatives. Leaving the status quo as is, as in the case of game farmer D and the example above promotes "continuities of historic relations to property, production and economic power" (Bernstein 2003:212) as opposed to supporting the expansion of communal land tenure. Such a course of action perpetuates the skewed power relations inexorably relegating to the periphery, rural communities in their own development. On the basis of the state policy position, I argue that this prescriptive formulation was the logic behind the department of Rural Development and Land Reform's proposal to settle the Mhlanganisweni community's land claim on the 13 300ha Mala Mala private game reserve in Mpumalanga. The proposal was for the state to buy the private game reserve – one of the largest in the country (Groenewald 2013b) - with the former owners being requested to stay on. Speaking on this land claim, Minister Gugile Nkwinti said:

> The land ownership structure in South Africa needed to change, but there was no need for the economic use of the land to be changed,[290]

[289] Interview with state informant Zz 01/02/2012 in Mahikeng government complex, North West.

[290] See 'Will Mala Mala go for mahala?' in www.timeslive.co.za/thetimes/2013/07/31/will-mala-mala-go-for- mahala (accessed 1/08/2013). Note that the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform emerged from the Department of Agriculture and Land Affairs leading to the formation of a new department called the Department of Agriculture and Forestry. The Department of Rural Development and Land Reform has drafted a policy framework entitled 'The Comprehensive Rural Development Programme' (Ministry of Rural Development and Land Reform 2009). The Minister's declaration is based on the tenets of this framework since one of its rural development aims is to support "the optimal use and management of natural resources" (ibid: 4). For more see www.dla.gov.za/.pdf (accessed 6/09/2013).

Therefore, this assessment when understood as the government's position on settling such related land claims explains the logic of the 99 year lease for the Groot Marico game farmer and breeder. It is based on the premise of a hostile economic climate for new smallholder African farmers whose prospects for success are marginal (Hall 2007) therefore the state's logic of advocating large commercial production. Echoing this position, a North West official said:

> We are in a capitalistic system and it happens everywhere……..That is what matters the most. We are saying that we need to see the management plans to judge the capacity and to judge whether this would be sustainable or not. That is what we look at.[291]

The North West province is following a national script as the above quote and the example of Mala Mala game reserve shows. For that reason, the state has used its "power over land and the power to define what constitutes an appropriate land-use" (Wolmer 2007:1), indicating the state's agency as a player in the politics of land use as articulated in the context of game farming continuities. From the foregoing, what emerges is that:

> current land and agrarian reform practices have ……..ideologically favoured the kinds of farming practiced by white landholders, and that has entrenched normative and institutionalized views about the means and direction of agricultural development (Hebinck, Fay & Kondlo 2011:227).

On this basis, the 99 year lease given to the Groot Marico game farmer and the Mala Mala settlement are reflective of this ideology. Yet on the contrary,

> the mutual vulnerability of both the state and capital to globalisation pressures compels them to cooperate, so that the state's regulation of markets is widely accepted within a 'fateful compromise' which advances both state autonomy and capital interests simultaneously (Davies 2012:399).

For this reason, the land claim is settled by handover to the community recipients of rights to ownership of the land through a signed lease agreement while farmer D retains user rights to the land. Through this, the state can claim to have restored the land to its

[291] Interview with state informant Zz 01/02/2012 in Mahikeng government complex, North West.

'rightful' owners even though the beneficiaries have not taken physical ownership of the land in question. But this very action is based on

> two simultaneously operating discourses that are best described as 'Leave existing land use intact' and 'Do not subdivide the farm into numerous smaller farms' (Hebinck, Fay & Kondlo 2011:229).

As discourses guiding land reform, these two cases are powerful in shaping the direction and processes of agrarian development in South Africa as revealed by the cited land reform cases above. Invariably, such a line of thinking fits in with the processes of game farming and hunting as its land-use favours land consolidation for greater wildlife 'conservation' as claimed by its practitioners. Continuing on this theme, Hebinck, Fay and Kondlo argue that "Current land-use.....is well embedded in local and global networks of power (ibid: 229) which hinge on "a kind of 'coerced harmony' (Bond 2005:56) defining social, political and economic relations. For example, farmer D reiterated how he had supplied and supported the former Bophuthatswana reserves with game and fundraising efforts. Further to that, he had operated as an exporter and importer of wildlife, while 98% of his clientele was foreign. By emphasising this information, his expectation is that the states' tourism revenue interests would remain central to the business in order for the community to accrue its income. From this statement, the implication is clear that the prevailing land-use has to be left unbroken as a condition for the claimants to benefit financially. Thus, 'social justice' has been done through the 'so-called chequebook restitution' (Groenewald 2013b) the land has been restored while the economic imperative is left with the commercial game farmer who can continue the 'productive' use of that land. Meanwhile, the state is 'free' and not obligated to offer state support to the poor land beneficiaries who could potentially 'fail' to make productive use of the land they have been newly resettled in. Since that land-handover has not happened in practice, the state's material, social and other obligations are relinquished. Such a paternalistic approach to rural development robs people of the rights to self-determine (agency) their own economic development and food security.

Despite this example, there are other local realities at play affecting land claims. As has been referred to earlier, land claims are threatening the game farm ventures in the Groot Marico area. Consequently the game farmers have complained how this is negatively

impacting their business. For example, game farmer A was fending off three competing claims on the family farm which he says is time consuming and an expensive exercise for his family to deal with. The situation was made worse, according to the informant, because he believes the claims are being driven by state officials in the province for reasons best known to them. Reasons for his notion stem from the two failed attempts at claiming the family farm by 'disgruntled former employees' and others who he claims were being 'coached' into making their claim by a provincial official in one state department. These claims were successfully contested by the family after engaging the services of a lawyer. Additionally, the assistance of long term employees who testified against the claimants helped to prove the falsehood of the claim.[292] Quite separately from this case, the state reconstituted the Restitution of Land Rights Amendment Bill to legally deal with fraudulent land claims (Mokone 2013) as recognition of false claims -such as the ones successfully defended by game farmer A-, being lodged by fraudsters. Nonetheless, Walker (2012, 2008); Wels (2003) among others have pointed out that there are still outstanding claims countrywide which have not been settled while it is common to have competing claims on a piece of land by different groups. Henceforth, farmer A's case is not unique. As pointed out by a North West Parks official:

> I don't think all the land claims have been settled. They might still be others, I may not know of the cases. I know that with the state owned game farms or game reserves, the cases are still on.[293]

Similar situations are playing out in the game farms in Groot Marico, whose future remains uncertain due to the pending claims.

One consistent feature of conversion to game farming is the loss of employment (Brandt 2013) which sowed the seeds of disgruntlement in Farmer A's former employees. According to A this led to the land claim by former employees based on their tribal historical heritage in the area, particularly because the employees family history of working in the area was longer than that of Farmer A's family farming history. On the basis of outstanding claims such as the one referred to here; the state extended the deadline for lodging claims for restitution from December 1998 to December 2018

[292] Interview with farmer Y who runs a trophy hunting farm in Groot Marico, 10/03/2011. The workers testimony proved the lack of historical ties of the claimants while the farmer claims that in private conversations, these claimants confessed to the workers that they were being coached on the claim by state officials.
[293] Interview with North West Parks and Tourism Board official.

(Mokone 2013). Thus even though operations continue as normal for game farmers, the ever present threat of land claims serve as a constant reminder of the uncertainty of their operations in this socio-political environment. In such a context then, D's settlement with the province through the 99 year lease is therefore a strategic compromise that enables continuity of the game farming operation albeit with a guaranteed production period for the game farmer amidst co-payment of dividends to the claimant community. This lease period also affects the generational issue of handing over the baton putting a timer to continuity.

Conclusion

Apart from its economic contribution to the farmer and to the national economy, game farming, to borrow from Salverda, (2011:7) "is a significant status symbol among economically powerful" South African mostly white families and individuals. This is in so far as it relates to land ownership (ibid) and wildlife possession as an 'exotic' signifier of wealth accumulation and consolidation. The helicopter landing pad is an important indicator of how far some of this wealth extends. In A's case, the trophy hunting game farm portrays this trait since the shift from a specialised form of production, stud breeding, turns into trophy hunting, specifically bow hunting. On the one hand, a few farms are run as a pure business model as in case study B whose combined domestic stock and game farm resulted from the experience of running a combined grain milling unit together with a cattle ranching farm. The latter's model is different to the other examples of game farming in the area as a result of applying past experience into extension with game farming but also as a consequence of late entry. For a number of others, diversification instead of specialisation has become a key survival strategy in this competitive environment. For instance, case study B runs an abattoir on the farm premises selling game meat while supplementing the farm income with domestic animals like cattle and goats. This is over and above the biltong hunting business in which they have invested in by building chalets to accommodate their guests.

As an element of continuity, family game farms A and B were passed down inter-generationally. One was jointly run, as in the example of case study A's family farm, run as a mother and son operation. The interviewee claimed to have bought out his other

siblings.[294] Differently, farmer B's son works as the resident professional hunter as preparation for eventual take-over of the family business. Generally, the largest game farms are those whose owners had a head start getting into the lucrative game farming business –those who got in early, pioneered the trend- like D or case study A's farm. Therefore, A's early start enabled him to make mistakes and learn from these without the added pressure of competitors. The latter was able to carve a niche market for himself targeting international bow-hunting clientele having graduated from local biltong hunters. His ability to offer a uniquely different product as compared to the rest of the other game farms in Groot Marico sets apart the product offering. As an illustration, the particular trophy game ranch is so lucrative that it only accepts 7 international hunters' bookings per year. Doing so allows A to make his profit while this marketing tool of exclusivity becomes a differentiator signifying the product type offered at this ranch.

Therefore when Mkhize contends that "undeniably, the sector is characterised by highly entrepreneurial and risk-taking individuals, deeply involved in all aspects of their enterprises which require expensive international marketing and publicity to attract and retain clientele" (2012: 7) it is a fair description of individuals like A, D and B. Farmer B opted for multi uses of the land and value-addition –game meat production- after converting the family farm because of his entrepreneurial flair. Similarly, the 99 year lease holder could afford the luxury of getting his nephews into the same business while also affording to supply stock to other farmers including state game parks.[295] This speaks to the earlier assertion of wealth accumulation and consolidation. This game breeder holds annual auctions at his brother's farm where he sells his excess animals. Conversely, it is the one-man operation where the wife adds to the family income, family game farms like case study C which are struggling. The farmer doubles up as the professional hunter and game farm owner while the wife runs the chalets that house the biltong or pot hunters on their hunting trips. For this type of farmer, his target market is the low-end biltong hunter who comes via family networks or word of mouth advertising. Sometimes clients come through the no frills website run by the couple or even better still via the local small-time publicity agent of the area who runs an information centre which doubles up as a booking agency for accommodation and the like. In this aspect, we see how game farming and hunting is also impacting other

[294] Interview with Game farmer Y in Groot Marico, 10/03/2011.
[295] Interview with game farmer, breeder and trophy hunting supplier 12/12/2011.

downstream industries. As an example, the booking agent gets commission from booking visitors into these lodgings during times when hunting bookings are few or when there is none. As a case in point, during one of my research visits to the area, I was booked into case study C's 'basic' chalet accommodation which was within budget for a student on a field trip. This was opposed to A's accommodation offering which includes satellite television, internet access plus the latest technological gadgets to satisfy the international visitor's needs.

Therefore, as these case studies reveal, the industry is heterogeneous while having its cleavages into which different groups fit and find their own point of penetration. The capital resources commanded by individuals or families determine their claim in terms of land-use and level of operation. Operating a trophy hunting farm or game breeding is the higher end of the spectrum where highly commercialised and capitalised local farmers with economic muscle function as compared to their counterparts running biltong hunting farms. The latter survive because there is a segment of the local market (hunters) as depicted in the 'fellowship of the hunter' that was referred to earlier in the preceding chapter. The former's capital reserves enable them to tap into the 'global capitalist' economy –through marketing- to the international trophy hunters. Meanwhile, biltong farmers serve the 'home market' or local economy of biltong hunters that is generally cushioned from the everyday struggles of the majority of the population as the earlier categorisation of this group of people showed. Therefore the two types can exist side by side because they serve two distinct categories while they also feed off each other as shown by the trophy hunting farmer supplying excess game to the auction market or even through private sales to the small game farmers.

Chapter seven

Game farming: 'path-breaking' or continuity

Although this research is a local case study, it speaks to wider debates on land transformation and game farming in particular. A central theme of this thesis has drawn parallels of the restructuring process in the game farming sector, with the broader dynamics impacting agriculture reform. The principal argument of the thesis is that the nature of game farming as a land-use pattern in democratic South Africa reveals colonial continuities that have extended to the contemporary period. These continuities, Fraser's (2007) 'colonial present' exhibit characteristics of an elite, class and race related past-time priviledge for a minority of the population. Thus, it is this salient continuity that is at the centre of the analysis of the thesis; in particular how the status quo has been preserved in the democracy period and the similarities to the exclusive racialised hunting of the earlier colonial and apartheid periods. There is a discernible pattern from the period of hunting being a sportsman's unencumbered leisure pursuit, to the period of wholesale slaughter of wildlife for the export and domestic markets before its near extinction. One argument refers to 'tradition' whereby hunting has been largely a white preserve where 'cultural elitism' has carried on as a consequence of historical and material priviledge. As stated by Walker (2010:24) South Africa's "strongly racialised settlement patterns still dominate post-apartheid landscapes" with game farming being no different. Among the cited examples of Groot Marico game farms, there is only one Indian owned game farm while the rest are white owned, indicating a racial ownership configuration. On the main, in Groot Marico, the hunters were mostly white. Thus chapters four and five unpacked how the structure of this pattern is organised –Scollon's (2001) 'nexus of practices'-, what I argue as being key features of the sector (traditions, hunting and cultural practices, conservation, farm inheritance), as reflected in the South African game farming context.

When Mkhize postulates that: "The emergence of game farming must be seen within the context of general liberalisation of the agrarian political economy of southern Africa" (2012:61) she offers a partial understanding of this contemporary period. One narrative is that this re-emergence has seen the exponential growth of game farming as reflected in chapter one. As an alternative land-use in the post-apartheid era, its financial value needs to be documented and engaged together with the socio-political aspects. The

economic utility of game supported its movement into an exchangeable commodity while the decline in commodity prices and loss of subsidies pushed farmers to convert. Farmer A proves this case. The shift into trophy hunting from stud breeding, bore fruit once the sable and buffalo replaced the stud cattle as the farmer's saleable commodity. By this action, farm owners were acceding to liberalisation market tenets of demand and supply, which determined the pace and direction of the growing sector. Meanwhile, democratisation with its accompanying rights based legislation only served to speed up the conversion process with a significant number of farmers shifting into game farming. Farmer B and C converted in 2006 and 1994 respectively as two examples of post-1994 conversions in Groot Marico. Thus conversion has to be seen as self-preservation by farmers. By engaging in game production, they could imprint a 'new' farming model on the land, reduce the number of workers on the farm while also laying claim to contributing to 'conservation'. Factors such as the Game Theft Act 105 of 1991 legislation, the socio-economic and political climate became key determinants of the sector's growth while other agricultural enterprises were under threat.

Nevertheless, the concerted strategies by sector actors, including the deployment of the conservation discourse, have played a huge part in enabling game farming continuity. Again, Scollon's (2001) analysis of practices and their relationship to discourse is key to understanding the 'social space' of game famers and their actions. Simultaneously, the status quo –racialised dispossession- is reproduced. This is reflected in the centrality of the Afrikaans language and the 'whiteness' of the sector as major defining features. It has occurred in a period where the state's land reform policy has failed to meet the goals of redistribution as set out in policy documents like the ANC's 1994 Reconstruction and Development Programme. Part of that failure can be attributed to the state's neoliberal leanings as shown in the settlement models in chapter six. Certainly, the fact that game animals have attained an economic value that resonates with the earlier period of exports of ivory during the 19th and 20th centuries has been a major influence on state policy. Yet the major difference in this era is that game animals are preserved in private game farms rather than in national parks. Such game is only conserved for its economic value whereas wildlife without viable economic value is missing from this 'conservation' effort by game farmers. The Oribi is a useful example in this category. Consequently, the influence of 'markets' is clearly at play,

which explains the unpopularity of the Oribi on game farms because of its low demand and sale price (Buijs 2010a). Therefore, the economics of demand and supply drive the sector; determining which animals are 'conserved' and which are not. In this posturing, the sector's popular maxim, '*if it pays, it stays*' is self-explanatory.

Yet, as providers of a specific recreational activity for 'lovers of the hunt', game farmers meet the demands of individuals interested in taking an escape into nature for both the biltong and trophy hunter. In providing affluent city dwellers with a means of reconnecting to nature through pitting their hunting skills, they define class aspiration. This reflects the social and class stratification that points to the sector cleavages. As an example, there is a huge chasm that exists between trophy hunting farms and the small biltong hunting farms in the manner of farm size, type of animal hunted and the facilities that are on offer for the clients. Case studies A and D are good examples when compared to C.

Developments in game farming

A number of developments have contributed to the growth of the sector. Chief among these is the certificate of adequate enclosure legislation; Nature Conservation Ordinance, 1974 (Ord. 19 of 1974) and the Game Theft Act 105 of 1991, legitimising farmers' ownership of wildlife on their farms. These incentivised the preservation and conservation of wildlife for its economic worth. I argue this step, the 1991 Act, was a last gesture by the white government to consolidate the hand of the white game farming sector. As a result, the legal protection for game farmers contributed to increased investment in the sector as farmers erected regulated game type fencing with the knowledge that their game investments had legal status. Farmers confidently ventured into game ranching as a legitimated 'productive' agricultural concern, whose agricultural status was granted in 1987 even though game only became considered an agricultural product in terms of the Marketing of Agricultural Product Act 47 of 1996 (NAMC 2006). Secondly, the politics of the democratic era led to the consolidation and organisation of the game sector associations whose purpose is to serve and protect the interests of the sector. Such developments have led to the adoption of offensive and defensive strategies by the sector organisations in relation to the state. These struggles are reflective of the efforts of white organised agriculture whose political constituency and voice, although having been reduced in the new democratic dispensation, still carries purchase with state

officialdom. In this light, Bourdieu's (1991) symbolic power construct helps our understanding of this effect.

There are a number of ways in which this defence of the status quo is happening. First of all by adopting the 'neutral' and politically correct language of 'conservation, economic contribution' and moral belonging to the land as white South African farmers; the sector taps into contemporary national and international discourses. One effect is shifting the imperative of land reform away from the domestic arena. In this light, the usefulness of the Zimbabwean land expropriation example comes to the fore. Anchoring the argument is the 'warning' that South Africa does not need to emulate Zimbabwe's development trajectory of forcefully appropriating land. Such logic, carries the hallmarks of a 'reasonable' warning, and is deployed as neutral and politically correct discourse. Yet on the other hand, it also urges a continuation of the 'hands-off' approach that maintains the status quo, allowing for continuity in ownership of game farms by the few. This strategy of predicting "dire consequences for South Africa's economy should an ANC government prevail with what were considered ruinous, unworkable and flawed" (Kasrils 2013: xxv); land reform policies is not new. Ronnie Kasrils, a former cabinet minister, ruefully reflects in his epitome how the same strategy was used by big business, white elites and international finance to "*circumscribe*" South Africa's development trajectory, right from negotiating the democratic transition to majority rule.[296] This rhetoric is a continuation of a strategy that has worked before in different arenas of economic contestation in the South African polity.

Nonetheless, other streams of continuity can be traced within the sector. As in the case of the history of national parks in South Africa, game farming has been a highly politicised and racialised environment. It is a history sector associations fully comprehend hence the adoption of strategies to win 'black' politicians to their cause. This explains the transformation efforts being touted by the organisations and the 'strategic' visibility of members like Cyril Ramaphosa. For example, Ramaphosa was the spokesperson of the select Stud Game Breeders[297] group. Following on the idea of

[296] Ronnie Kasrils was a member of Umkhonto weSizwe, becoming Head of Military Intelligence in 1985, acted on the military sub-committee during the negotiations for democracy becoming a government Minister from 1994 until 2008. In this memoir, he offers reflections on his time in the liberation struggle, in government and reflections after these periods.

[297] Cyril Ramaphosa joined the six member group in 2010. In 2014, he was quoted as the spokesperson for the group. As

'strategic visibility', I argue therefore that the publication of Ramaphosa's letter in the WRSA magazine in 2012 was a deliberate ploy to 'appropriate' his membership of the sector as an important endorsement from a very influential political figure and member of the ruling party. On the converse, the letter suggests what Ronnie Kasrils describes as "selling political influence" (Kasrils 2013:xxiii) by Ramaphosa himself as a means of opening doors in this closed sector. Noticeably, when writing the letter, Ramaphosa was already an important member within the sector, the select Stud Game Breeders group. As an 'invited' political figure in the game sector, he does not represent the majority blacks outside of game farming. Hence when Julius Malema criticises Ramaphosa's auction bid, it is a critique of the 'other' and Ramaphosa's 'private affluence' that has helped him gain acceptance with the white game farming community. This is fundamental since Ramaphosa's eroded 'moral authority' can only be reclaimed through his renunciation of the buffalo auction moment. Consequently, his failed auction bid stands in stark contrast to the majority South African population's 'public squalor'. Read in this light, his action of denouncing the 'auction moment' is telling considering that there is no law against bidding for game by a prominent member of the ruling party. Even if the majority of members –*his good comrades*- might have viewed that as an excessive 'consumption' action, his right to free choice is not dependent on their opinions of his purchase or non-purchase. Yet the moral response shows the underlying social currents in which individuals in the game sector particularly elite auction bidders, operate within the national ambit.

One development of game farming has been the continuation of the dispossession of black 'communities' even in contexts where they have succeeded in lodging a land claim. Just like in the creation of national parks, white recreational interests backed by economics trumped the rights to land access for black people in communal areas. To borrow Marx's analysis:

> class interests can be transformed into 'the illusory general interest' provided that the ruling class can successfully universalize its ideas as the ruling ideas'. That this will likely be the case results from the very process of class domination. (Harvey 2001:271)

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a distinguishing trait, they "do not breed exclusively for the trophy hunting market but focus on game breeders who genuinely seek to breed outstanding animals for future generations". See www.studgamebreeders.co.za and www.news24.com/ (accessed 24/01/2014).

Similarly Kariuki (2003) and Kasrils (2013) advanced this point in their argument on the negotiated transition towards South Africa's democracy. In their portrayal of the ANC's dalliance with white capital, they contend that commercial white agriculture's interests remained protected, to the detriment of an effective land redress process for the previously disadvantaged. Granted, the white farming community is no longer the ruling class in post- apartheid South Africa, yet its interests in farming are still being vigorously contested as the high court battles won by the game sector (lion caged hunting challenge and the Firearm legislation) and the challenges to land claims portray. Evidence to that effect in the North West provincial context is supported by the settlement made with the Greek game breeder and trophy hunting farmer in Groot Marico, while farmer A and B were contesting land claims made on their respective farms. Meanwhile, Land Reform Minister, Gugile Nkwinti's statement in chapter six indicates how economic expediency supersedes the right to land ownership for successful land claimants where national government is concerned. In this instance, the Mala Mala case serves as an example. Thus the agency of 'successful' black land claimants is stunted by the state's bureaucratic handling of the land reform process in which the favoured model is commercialisation. Thereby long-term leases are granted to former game farm owners (farmer D) who coincidentally have the capital to continue in the same line of business. I argue that white game farmers perceive their role as guardians of South Africa's agricultural production. In performing this role, they serve as a buffer preserving the nation's productive capacity, pointed allusions to Zimbabwe emphasise the point, whilst also making 'conservation' work. I have already shown how 'conservation' has contested meaning even though sector players claim it for their own ends.

However, game farming and hunting represent lifestyle choices for middle to upper class individuals. In this category are those who can afford to exercise these choices by having a game farm or engaging in biltong or trophy hunting. Yet others bid large sums of money at game auctions for animals like buffalo, generally enjoying the use of wildlife as a natural resource exclusive to their access as priviledged individuals. In this sense then, the theme of colonial continuity is apparent as the majority that enjoy this priviledged access are white whether locals or international trophy hunters. The Groot Marico case studies provide proof of this assessment. Whites still engage in hunting as

in colonial times, in exclusive spaces reminiscent of the period when indigenous blacks where denied hunting rights in their own countries of origin.

Nevertheless, tensions exist within the sector depicting the cleavages that furrow the tapestry. In some instances, the value of game species `like specially bred 'disease free' buffalo is in dispute with small-time game farmers describing the auction prices as being inflated and therefore artificial. Conversely, game breeders argue for the credibility of these prices as being reflective of the value the market places on 'specially bred' game animals. Importantly, both parties argue from entrenched 'capital' positions defending sectorial interest, one as potential buyers and the other as sellers of a 'specialised' product. It is precisely because of this positioning that the value judgements of each are put into question. A further analysis of this contestation and tension borrows from Leibowitz *et al* (2010:91)[298] who state that:

> Alternatively, it could be seen to reveal the extent to which differences of power and privilege are lived out through more concrete and immediately material categories than that of 'race'.

The tension arising from this dispute centres on the capitalisation within the industry. The peripheral, marginal players and middle group fear the speculative nature of the 'elites' and what it portends for their own survival. Evidence to that effect is shown by farmer B and C's reactions to the price fetched by the buffalo bull at the North West auction. The elite's business model has the capacity of moving away from the former's core business function. The statistics indicating that 25% of WRSA game farmers are weekend farmers with businesses or permanent jobs in the city during the week, who employ farm managers to look after their farms[299] reveals the type of game farmer emerging in this set-up. In the thesis, the Groot Marico game breeder using technology to monitor events at the farm from the comfort of his Rustenburg office or at home, is representative of this game farmer. The implications for the sector are that this new game farmer is a business or executive type different from the farmer who was tied to the land he farmed, being reluctant to let anybody run the day to day business of the farm without his direct supervision. In a way, this new executive farmer is

[298] Leibowitz, B.; Bozalek, V.; Rohleder, P.; Carolissen, R. and Swartz, L. (2010) "Ah but the whiteys love to talk about themselves": discomfort as a pedagogy for change in Race Ethnicity and Education, 13:1, 83-100.
[299] Interview with WRSA executive officer, Pretoria, who himself acknowledged that he is a weekend farmer. 31/05/2012.

reminiscent of the "cheque book farmers" of the early twentieth century described by Macmillan in Beinart, Delius and Trapido (1986:4) as;

> men with large capital acquired in mining, industry, law or commerce who were able to adopt lavish improvements only because they need not make ends meet on the farms alone.

These are elements of continuity of past capitalisation models where individuals with the financial muscle come into the sector to change operations and processes. An example is of farmer B, whose combined livestock and game producing farm has followed the marketing model that supplies to lodges and distribution companies as niche markets. His approach is different to the new breed of emerging game farmers, men like Cyril Ramaphosa, Norman Adami and Boet Troskie.[300] The latter's son Jaco outbid Ramaphosa for the R 20 million buffalo cow and heifer bought at a North West game auction near Swartruggens in 2012. These elites can afford speculating on expensive buffalo breeds as 'lavish improvements' on the sector, having already made their money elsewhere while not being dependent on game farming income for survival like B or worse A. The entrance of 'bourgeoisie' businessmen like Boet Trotskie, Johann Rupert and Cyril Ramaphosa adds the dimension of the businessman game farmer endowed with huge financial muscle to push and drive the industry in a particular direction. Thus such individuals can afford the astronomical prices quoted at select auction floors partly because their wealth has been acquired from other business interests outside of farming. Hence they are not sorely dependent on game farming. For example Johann Rupert who inherited the Rembrandt group from his father Anton Rupert, successfully unbundled the group converting the multi-million rand business into a multi- billion euro business.[301] Thus as individuals line up to bid in these specialised breeders high- end auctions, the collective narrative highlights a further strand of stratification within the sector.

Another reason is that as the 'bourgeoisie' businessmen stamp their footprints on the

[300] Norman Adami was the managing director of South African Breweries, while Boet Troskie was the executive producer of the successful 'Gods must be crazy' films. Cyril Ramaphosa is a multi-millionaire who profited from his political status to amass his wealth via black economic empowerment deals acquiring shares in mining and various sectors giving him a significant economic footprint in the country. Until 2013, Cyril Ramaphosa had shares in blue chip companies like Bidvest and SAB-Miller while his Shanduka group of companies owned shares in Lonmin.

[301] See Adriaan Kruger 'Johann Rupert pays R40m for buffalo bull' in m.news24.com (accessed 2013/09/20).

sector, such speculative behaviour sets a bench mark from which to launch and establish their stranglehold on the industry. As an elite class, these individuals represent the conspicuous consumption exploits of the wealthy few, having moved from the hunting playgrounds to the relatively 'new' frontier, the breeding of prized game. In the 'elite' auctions, they are setting a trend on the converse side of 'izikhothane'[302] in South Africa. Both groups are exercising their very different displays of power in "the form of 'prestige' spectacles for wider publics" (Featherstone 1990:14). The game auctions are given wide media coverage while 'izikhothane' contests or sessions have a captive local audience who goad and praise the actors depending on the performance on display. At this juncture, it is imperative to point out that game auctions occur regularly but the ones under discussion are distinguished from the regular auctions of the small-time industry players. As a symbol of masculinity, these auction bids serve as competition whose imagery is aptly captured in the 'mine is bigger than yours' mentality just like 'izikhothane' challenge each other's wealth display.

As an observation made by the researcher reveals at a game auction in the North West, a few game farmers arrived in light aircraft –single-seater and two-seater planes- portraying the wealth attributed to individuals in the industry. The Groot Marico game farming pioneer, the Greek farmer, had a helicopter landing pad at his farm while his reception facilities boasted top-class amenities for the discerning international hunter. Such displays of opulence reveal the class differentials associated with an elite few. Yet one explanation for the opulence is that advances in technology have released the 'new breed of capitalist' farmer to pursue his main interests whilst monitoring his game farm enterprise from the sanctuary of his mobile home office. The researcher saw this deployment of technology in action at a North West game breeding farm where monitors and cameras allowed the game owner to view and monitor events happening at his farm while sitting in his Rustenburg office or home at all hours of the day. Another explanation is that this 'new farmer' because of his cultural association with the land as an Afrikaner (Bernstein 2013) still claims part of that land as his heritage through game

[302] 'Izikhothane' has become a term associated with township youths who audaciously display a version of conspicuous consumption by burning up money and expensive clothing "in a display that asserts wealth through indifference to the commodity". See Megan Jones 2013 'Conspicuous destruction, Aspiration and Motion in the South African Township' *Safundi: The Journal of South African and American Studies, 14:2, 209-224*, DOI: 10.1080/17533171.2013.776749

farming investment. Nevertheless, they would rather enjoy the comforts of urban living while having the option of reverting to the sanctuary offered by ownership of a farm as and when the need arises. Game farmer A for instance does not live on the family farm, but in the city in the Eastern Cape. He only comes to the farm during the hunting season, when bringing international trophy hunters. Game farming therefore offers that lifestyle as opposed to other farming enterprises requiring on-the-farm daily management. As one respondent asserted "game ranching has glamour and it is better to say one is going to their game farm than a cattle farm"[303] revealing the status that comes with game ranch ownership.

Presented through Harvey's 'spaces of capital' (2001) analysis, this explains the unraveling process in the sector. For the hands-on, living on the farm type of game farmer, (farmer C) the operational field is now being driven out of range. For instance, it would be difficult to find a trophy hunter interested in shooting such a very expensive buffalo, since what the hunter would be willing to pay cannot be sufficient to recover the money paid at the auction. For example, one North West trophy hunting outfitter advertised his buffalo hunts at R200 000[304] per client for a 7 day hunt in 2011, a figure way below the auction prices paid for by the breeding speculators. Quite separately from this example, trophy hunting prices are subject to market forces which because of the competition in the sector for international clients would not be too far off the quoted price. As a case in point, the Dallas Safari Club auctioned off an endangered 'old' black rhino in January 2014 on behalf of the Namibian government for a 'record' price of US $350,000.[305] This figure translates to less than R4 million[306], a far cry from the R40 million fetched by the Cape Buffalo in the 2013 South African auction even though a black rhino permit is a rare occurrence for trophy hunters, increasing its demand as opposed to a Cape Buffalo whose permit is not hard to obtain. The auction prices therefore present a new form of accumulation, disguised conspicuous consumption by an elite 'status group' not dependent entirely on game investment. This thesis has highlighted this shifting class alliance as a

[303] Interview with game breeder NQ in Marico district, 28/05/2012
[304] The actual price quoted on the brochure is US$ 20 000, I have converted to South African rands by multiplying by 10. The hunt is an inclusive package covering the trophy bull buffalo, hunting licenses, food provision, airport transfer, professional hunter's daily fees, tracker's fees, skinner's fees, 4*4 hunting vehicles, accommodation, transport of the trophy to the taxidermist, 14% VAT as extras.
[305] See 'Rhino Hunt Auction stirs more controversy' in http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/ (accessed 20/01/2014)
[306] I have used the prevailing rate of 1 South African Rand being equivalent to 0,092 US Dollar. See www.likeforex.com (accessed 20/01/2014) 11:41am.

'new' feature of the game sector revealing the divisions that are becoming inherent to its development. But this aspect deserves further study.

Pathways of the sector

The evidence and argument developed in the thesis point to the emergence of patterns and the pathways created by major actors in the game farming sector. Firstly, capital plays a huge part from setting up a game farm, fencing and stocking the wildlife. Further, the game auctions involving game breeders constitute a higher link to the commodification of the sector. Therefore, game animals like buffalo and sable –at selective game auctions- have been very specifically pushed beyond the reach of many practising game farmers. This is particularly so for those with limited sources of finance from their farming enterprise which does not extend beyond what the business makes. This 'financialisation' aspect has attracted a new kind of speculative investor into this very specialised sector whose focus is the futures market as opposed to the game farmer looking into the day to day survival of the farming enterprise. Thus, it is this cleavage that will in the long term restructure the sector. One consequence has been the demise of small family-owned game farms who fail to compete. The high number of listed game farms for sale as depicted in sector websites[307]is an indication of the distress suffered by peripheral players. It may also point to saturation of the market at this lower end of the sector's rung.

Moreover, the state's support of commercialisation via the manner of land claims settlement backs this emerging model in the game farming sector, similar to the agriculture sector. For the North West provincial government, tourism is a significant economic contributor to the province's finances; hence the support for tourist related development. The levies earned from licenses and permits as depicted in table 3 , chapter 6, provide a regular stream of revenue generated from already established industry players. Indications therefore are that bigger game farms are seen as the way forward, invariably favouring the farmers with huge financial reserves as opposed to the small farmer, be it an emerging black resettled land claimant or the white small family farm. Therefore, as 'spaces of capital' (Harvey 2001), the reconstruction has moved

[307] See 'More than 100 farms available' in www.proprite.co.za; other websites include www.africagamefarms.com; www.kriekwildlife.com;www.gamefarmestates.co.za; www.gamefarmnet.co.za among a host of websites (accessed 26/09/2013).

beyond the game farm dictating the structural reform of the sector. Henceforth consolidation will become more prevalent as an unintended consequence of the state's action, creating and perpetuating a dual agrarian structure in the rural countryside where pockets of small black farming exist surrounded by large commercial farms as seen in former homeland areas like the North West.

I contend that there is already a form of dual structure in the game farming sector when considering the two different target markets of the trophy hunting and the biltong hunting farms. These two forms will continue into the foreseeable future since there is a developed market from which the game farmers have allocated and divided market share depending on their business strategy. Farmers A, B, C and D are proof of this market share. Some of the structural features determining this are the rand exchange rate for foreign hunters, which, with the state's neo-liberal leanings, indicate no threat in the near future. Hence these businesses are assured of continuation more especially if they survived the recession of 2008 and onwards suffered by the West. For the biltong hunting farms, South Africa's inherited structural inequality has not changed much in the post-apartheid period, fostering aspects of continuity. Hence the white biltong hunting market will continue into the foreseeable future because of the 'ambiance' associated with game hunting and the continued training of the young as hunters. Farmer C's granddaughter was being prepared for her first hunt at age 12 while another interviewee (a hunter) mentioned preparing his 10 year old son for his first hunt. In addition, the closure or shrinkage of other recreational spaces for the white public inadvertently supports the growth and continuance of biltong hunting, while the fellowships keep this as a closed 'boys club' space. Thus, Njabulo Ndebele's description of the visit to a game lodge and how such visits "reaffirm and celebrate a particular kind of cultural power: the enjoyment of colonial leisure" (Ndebele 2007:100) provides an apt description of the colonial influences and continuities behind game farming. In this analysis, I anchor this argument in the social boundedness of hunting as an inclusive and exclusive white space.[308]That exclusive nature is one facet which favours mostly 'white' male elite participation stemming from the fellowships' 'old boys club' syndrome extending from

[308] For a related argument, see Femke Brandt (2013:38) who cites the studies of Ballard 2005, Ballard & Jones 2011; Lewis 2001 to explain how whites in the 'new' South Africa use 'social qualifications' to determine access and exclusion to certain spaces as conditions to and justifications of 'belonging'. A similar situation is playing out in the game hunting and farming sector.

shooting ranges to biltong hunting trips. A wealth differential in the form of higher incomes provides the financial ability to partake in this generally costly pastime. It is from this state of exclusivity that "the whole social logic of differentiation, the distinguishing processes of class or caste which are fundamental to the social structure" (Baudrillard 1998:74) of the South African game farming and hunting sector hinge on. As a social process, its continuity can be traced back to colonial times when hunting was a white priviledge considered part of the frontier lifestyle. In the present era, its exclusivity is portrayed as a bearer of 'tradition' –"*that's the way we are*"-[309] wherein discriminatory practices can and do operate. South Africa's structural inequality only serves to reproduce this class based pastime although it has markings of being racially connotated in its constitution.

Similarly, its macho attributes work to portray the masculinity of the sector tying in to the lifestyle association that hunting represents. As an outdoor activity, it taps into the character of South African domestic culture feeding off the gender separation of roles as espoused by game farmers and the supportive roles played by their wives. Among the cited case studies, men were in charge of field operations while the women had supporting roles like doing farm administration work. Thus 'man' the hunter or game farmer can contend with 'nature' pitting his 'skills' against an adversary in the shape of game. As a measure of character, it is the hunter's trophy collection attributes that are admired as a reflection of the hunter's skill and therefore his manhood. Thus the more 'trophies' the hunter collects, the more admired he becomes within this social circle placing 'him' in a prestigious position among the peer group. Additionally, as depicted earlier, the young are trained to hunt with the 'mentors' – read male patriarchs be it fathers, grandfathers or uncles. The 'tradition' practice perpetuates the theme of continuity since the passing down of the baton, can later translate to 'culture'- "*that's the way we are*" when applied as a defence of the select lifestyle. Such a defence tends to gloss over the implication of the gate-keeping function and application of processes that have become synonymous with the sector like the reserving of professional hunting training and opportunities mostly for white males.

[309] Interview with informant Y in Pretoria, 29/05/2012

Despite that, corporate and government departments are subtly transforming the industry. As pointed out by a few game farmers, a trend has been growing where corporate and government departments take their employees on retreats at game farms. Consequently, that has given a few black people a 'taste' of hunting with a number making return visits to game farms on their own specifically to engage in the hunting excursion.[310] As contended by game farmers, there is little transformation slowly taking shape in the hunting market although that is hindered by the Firearms legislation and the lack of knowledge from the would be black participants on the hunting opportunities available to them. Nonetheless, this lack of knowledge can be blamed on the 'selective' nature of the industry in which 'old boys club' fellowships actively propagate their own hunting continuity while restricting the entry of newcomers.

Conclusion- implications of the shift into game farming for South Africa

A dynamic is emerging in the game farming sector similar to the consolidation happening in agriculture proper. Studies by Brooks *et a*l (2011) and Kjelstrup (2011) have documented this phenomenon in their research of game farming processes in Kwa-Zulu Natal while Brandt (2013) refers to a similar process in trophy hunting farms in the Karoo. However, the entrance of multi-millionaires into the space, who have other business interests elsewhere, creates an angle that takes conspicuous consumption and speculative behaviour into a stratospheric orbit. Despite the capitalised nature of the industry, these new players have taken capitalist production to a new height threatening the small family game farms. As an indication of this orbit reached by these auction buyers, the prices fetched by the buffalo are much higher than the prices asked for in sales of game farms whose selling price includes the animals found within the respective farm. For example, the highest advertised price in 2013 for a game farm on one website was R73 million for a 4 882 ha farm in Bulgerivier. Included in that price were 'a huge dam' and the wildlife within the farm including other extras.[311] This was the highest price on this website at the time (2013) while on average, the majority farms ranged in the lower R10 millions or less though they had 'abundant game' (without describing what type of game this was). Admittedly, this may exclude the existence of buffalo in these farms as top species in the game farming sector. The cited farm has two lodges that can accommodate 30 people

[310] Interview with farmer Y, Groot Marico, 2011/03/10, Interview with game breeder and trophy hunter TZ, Groot Marico (24/01/2012).

[311] See www.gamefarmnet.co.za/ (accessed 26/09/2013).

including a number of boreholes and waterholes for game drinking water. The R40 million buffalo bull is R33 million short of this farm price, yet the farm comes with infrastructure including game animals. This indicates an emerging tension from which the sectorial cleavages are widening particularly taking into account the concerns raised by small-time game farmers (B & C) at the astronomical prices garnered at high-end private auctions. As an indication of market distortion, the buffalo price adds an interesting footnote to the game ranching storyline.

On a different trajectory, one facet of the high-end game auctions indicates the 'new business entrepreneur' investing in only one aspect of the sector but not the complete business. Thus, instead of buying into the ownership of a game farm and inheriting the challenges that come with ownership, this new breed of entrepreneur is prepared to invest in the shared ownership scheme of the buffalo while leaving someone else to deal with the other aspects of the farm business. For example, the R40 million buffalo bull of 2013 was bought by a consortium of investors including the multi-millionaire Johann Rupert (Kruger 2013). It is a definite power shift in the sector that is precedent setting. It is likely that such developments are making industry financiers very nervous as it is a variation of agriculture futures but very dependent on one variable, the buffalo bull, without the back-up of other assets should markets fail. On the sidelines of these private auctions, the smaller game farmer (farmer C) surviving on the margins who does not benefit from these developments works to protect his/her increasingly precarious existence. The picture painted by the high number of game farm sales at the above cited website points to the distress players face. Specific sales have been re-advertised at reduced prices less than the original earlier advertised price indicating that there were no available buyers at the prices quoted by the owners. Hence the consortium's business model is illuminating.

Yet the lack of game farm buyers is an indication that 'regular' game farming has reached its saturation point despite the speculative promise of the 'elite' buffalo auctions. As a case in point, PHASA, citing the preliminary findings of the environmental affairs department reported a decrease in hunting revenues for 2012 when compared to 2011.[312] Thus a decrease in hunting revenue can be linked to the financial distress suffered by

[312] SAPA 'Hunting revenue decreases', 21 November 2013 in www.sowetan.co.za/ (accessed 21/11/2013)

small-time players leading them to sell off the game farms as business concerns. Diversification by farmers into the game farming sector may have reached its zenith. Hence the specialisation of these game breeders whose focus includes buffalo and sable game species serves to show a 'temporary' niche side of this market. Other game animals have almost reached a stable price regimen as reflected in the complaints by game farmer B. Consequently, this context leads to a parallel market for the small-time actors in the industry where they sell animals to each other away from this very public spectacle. As intimated by game farmer C, one coping strategy is waiting to buy left-over animals from auctions since prices are much more realistic then, being close to the game farmer's own projections.[313] Another's solution is to complement hunting with value-addition by selling meat to niche markets.[314] Shaping these strategies is the understanding that the survival of small-time actors is very much dependent on an existing biltong hunting clientele whose price sensitivity does force the former to keep prices at a certain 'reasonable' level or have an option above the regular model. Farmer B's combined livestock and game production is a reflection of his appreciation of the meat market. Therefore engaging in high stakes auctions is tantamount to applying for bankruptcy, the more so when farmers are dependent on the profits accrued by the business without having another source of income. On the contrary, the state auctions by the National Parks function as a realistic price setting mechanism indicating the 'proper market price'. Arguably the National Parks auctions can work to supply breeding animals on the 'cheap' for private sector actors to profit from. Juxtaposed against the private auctions, the price disparity between the two is too huge a chasm to explain away as the result of 'free market' forces in operation. To borrow from Anseeuw:

> This debate takes us to the crossroads between increasing agricultural production and responsible, sustainable and equitable investments, assessed from a socioeconomic and political angle. (2013:173)

Investment in high-end buffalo purchases does not contribute to increasing food security neither does it fit the bill of '*responsible, sustainable and equitable investment'*. Rupert's earlier admission serves as an anchor for making this point. Instead, its speculative nature and conspicuous character in South Africa's agricultural environment of widespread social inequality and increasing food insecurity constitutes

[313] Interview with game farmer C in Groot Marico 5/10/2012
[314] Interview with game farmer B in Groot Marico; 3/10/2012

an indifference to the socio-economic class differences that pose a threat to the country's political stability. To borrow from Posel,

> If our relationships to commodities may be both alienating and self-expressive, so too the debate about the place of conspicuous consumption in a new and fragile democracy should consider appropriate modalities and limits that, while cognizant of the racially charged symbolic politics of acquisition, also keep the aspiration to a humane and just society at the forefront. (2010:173-174).

In the midst of such social context, it is the special interests of the mainly white elite that are being focused on, determining the 'possibilities' and 'potentials' of the sector even though this represents one side of the coin. Thus Malema's criticism of Ramaphosa's auction bid stems from this alienating conspicuous consumption in a sector which is charged with slow racial transformation. Nonetheless, as 'spaces of power' game farms and the high-end auctions function as "forms of overt or tacit domination" which "silence certain actors or keep them from entering at all" (Cornwall & Coelho 2007:11)[315] to compete with this 'status group'. The deployment of culture, tradition and language demonstrate the gate-keeping function that maintains the exclusivity of game farms. At the high-end, the auctions further support the stratification even within and among the in-group, bringing into greater focus the racial and economic power dynamics driving the sector. Yet the deployment of economic, social, symbolic and cultural capital (Bourdieu 1979, 1985, 1991, 2000) reflects the power relations that support the defence of the status quo and consequently continuation of the 'colonial present' in game farming.

Building on the above argument, game farming is markedly heterogeneous being shaped by a plurality of pathways which can be united by convergence of interests. Conservation, the economic contribution of game, the relationship to wildlife and stability of the farming sector are common rallying anchors from which the disparate groupings speak with one voice. Additionally, the production methods adopted by the players such as trophy hunting, biltong hunting, game breeding, mixed game and cattle farm as examples have at times set the farmers on a collision course. Yet, adaptation strategies adopted by game farmers in the face of the democratic state's mandate to reform the

[315] Cornwall, A. and Coelho, V.S.P. 2007 'Spaces for Change? The Politics of Participation in New Democratic Arenas', London, Zed Books.

sector has led to a varied number of strategies uniting the sector under one banner. One of these is the settlement of land claims as an example of this nuanced understanding of how to negotiate the political system as the example of farmer D and that of Mala Mala reflects.

However, the state's actions and inactions have opened the door to the sector to organise itself to meet the challenges threatening its members. Through representative associations, the game farming sector has deployed offensive and defensive strategies that take cognisance of the political, economic, social and legislative framework prevailing in the country. The last is an acknowledgment of the protection of property rights as enshrined in the South African Constitution which the land owning classes resort to as a mechanism of forcing the government to protect their capitalist accumulation. An example of this is the land claims settlement contestations in which white farmers use the courts to acquire favourable compensation for improvements on the farms thereby delaying and tying in knots the land reform programme (Greenberg 2010; Walker 2011) while also being able to remove the wildlife on the farms. Similarly, Brandt (2013) points out that during the conversion process, farm infrastructure is removed or destroyed to make way for the open space for wildlife. It is this infrastructure that is hard to replace in the event of a land redistribution exercise. Thus, this explains the state's logic to continue with the prevailing land-use production as opposed to accruing the cost of farm infrastructure replacement together with training of land beneficiaries over and above paying fair compensation. Nonetheless, the state's inadequacies have been a millstone tripping up its own programmes. The reference to the differences in legislation operating in the 9 provinces is ammunition game farmers have used to point out the failure in aligning governance and regulation of the sector. Meanwhile, the unresolved land claims also reflect badly on the state's capacity. In 2014, there were still 8 471 unresolved land claims from the 1998 cut-off date that were still awaiting resolution.[316] In other respects, the state's inaction has benefitted game farmers who can continue business as usual despite the uncertainty cast by unresolved land claims. Yet for the claimant group, it is a double blow considering the length of time in which the claim would have gone unresolved. Yet when it is resolved, they are made by the state to engage in an unequal

[316] See 'Media Statement: Statement by the Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform, Gugile Nkwinti (MP) at a media briefing on the opening on the re-opening of the Land Claims Process, 01 July 2014' at www.ruraldevelopment.gov.za/ (accessed 07/7/2014).

partnership with the game farmer.

I have already pointed out how the farming situation in Zimbabwe has provided a useful framing reference for South African farmers as a defence mechanism. Similarly, this 'victimhood' can be reprised from that earlier justification of using Afrikaans as the language of communication at seminars and through publications. It also extends to the farms where because of the legislation that has been effected by the state to protect workers, farmers are feeling the pressure. For example, one respondent expressed how the Chinese in South Africa do get away with underpaying workers while farmers with Afrikaans surnames could never get away with the same offence but would be taken to court.[317] Thus one reads this 'victim' framing as acknowledgement of the loss of protection that used to be afforded the white farmer from the colonial period right up until the end of apartheid. Hence deploying this defensive strategy works to enhance the endangered protection status that ties in with the Zimbabwean comparison of the potential production demise waiting to afflict the country should the white farmers be removed from the lands they farm.

Offensive strategies have also been deployed when the industry felt the state's threat on its livelihoods was interfering with their business. For example, the challenge to the proposal to completely ban lion caged hunting and the challenge to the Firearms legislation led to court victories for the sector ensuring a form of continuity of business as usual. This has been helped largely by the state's bungling[318] a weakness used by the sector to point to the ineffectiveness and inability of government to carry out and implement its own regulations. As a result, this has put the sector in a powerful negotiating position leading to clamours for 'self-regulation' rephrased later to 'self-administration' as a chorus sung by industry representatives. The state's concessions in allowing the WRSA for example, to issue translocation licenses for warthogs though not a total dereliction of duty works to strengthen the hand of the sector in the

[317] Interview with B2 game farmer B's wife, Groot Marico 3/10/2012

[318] Steyn's article 'Lawmakers or lawbreakers?', Farmer's weekly, 17 June 2011 pg. 98-99, reports how the firearms act had been through 7 amendments since it was first gazetted on 10 April 2001, while the Firearms Amendment Act of 2003 contained over 200 changes. "Despite this, the act has already been challenged three times in court". The article further describes how the state gazetted in 27 May 2011, norms and standards for hunting which exposed the state's ignorance on guns, bullet weight and the appropriate rifles particular to size of animal. Another issue reflected upon in this thesis is the game licensing, different for the 9 provinces; a loophole that has been exploited by unscrupulous actors who buy animals in one province then move them to another where they can be legally hunted.

national battle for territory and influence. In this acquiescence, the state's hand has been subtly weakened while that of associations has been strengthened following a typical neo-liberal free market script promoting institutionalisation and weakened state regulation. Internationally, conservation as a leit-motif identified with the sector elevates the industry's position, making state folly should this remarkable 'South African' private game farming success story be disrupted by a government bent on land redistribution. Therefore, the evidence presented here illustrates "how the micropolitics of engagement can subvert the best intentions of institutional design" (Gaventa 2007:xv) as seen in the continued lease agreements given to game farmers in land restitution settlement cases.

Comparatively speaking, South African game farming is not unique as references to Kenya and Zimbabwe have shown in chapter three. The negotiated nature of settlement of the historical land imbalance following a neoliberal market tenet shaped the land acquisition strategy by the state in all three countries, even though Zimbabwe later conducted fast-track land reform. Similarly, the protection of property rights entrenched the hold of white farmers, landholders before democracy. In this context, the conversion to game farming has occurred as an alternative livelihood in the competitive agriculture sector but also as a lifestyle choice for the landed elite in Zimbabwe and South Africa. Global events have propelled this shift as in the example of the discourse on conservation which Kenya and South Africa have approached differently but still used its power to portray unique marketing characteristics they identify themselves with. For instance, Kenya banned hunting but branded itself as a tourist destination of note for wildlife tourism. In contrast, South Africa has branded itself as a 'success story' for private game ranching and hunting where hunting and conservation have been successfully blended to work side-by-side. The latter links to the motto, *'if it pays it stays*' which the industry has successfully adopted to focus on the positive contribution of utilitarian conservation aspect of wildlife farming more than the hunting part. Thus, the claim to having conserved more game animals in the privately owned game farms than the country's national parks hence earning the right to 'sustainable use' of this resource through 'responsible' hunting works to their advantage.

Yet one consequence of conversion has been the 'social construction' of the sector as a 'white' male dominated environment catering and being catered for, mostly for this

social group. Such collective narrative within the sector represents a critical commentary on spatial marking, re-imagining and gate-keeping within private 'local spaces' in the new democracy. This is particularly significant "in the South African context, where geographical space and therefore language distribution are still organised according to racial and socioeconomic divisions inherited from the apartheid era" (Vigoroux 2005:246). As spaces of capital (Harvey 2001) either through accumulation via the game farm ownership or when spending that capital through hunting, game farms serve as distinct zones of exclusivity. In addition, the significance of Afrikaans language as a medium of communication by actors within the sector engenders the notion of spatial marking whereby language becomes one element dictating the 'system of relations' (Bourdieu 1989) and the identity of actors. In this context, the earlier discussion of the brochures supplied by the industry in their marketing, Afrikaans language use and the 'fellowships' of hunters and game farmers reinforce this form of bounded solidarity. It is the social exclusivity of this sector that solidifies this image. The seedbed for this analysis stems from considering that black employees on game farms are mostly in the lower paying jobs as trackers, skinners and lodge staff instead of being professional hunters. Sometimes, only casual jobs are available, on a demand basis for extra labour as and when there is need. The more skilled roles are 'reserved' by the business owners for their children or other white males who are slotted into roles such as farm managers. Once again, the acknowledgement of this power differential and inequality is reinforced by Ramaphosa's reference to skills transfer, prospects for individual growth and job satisfaction within the sector (SAPA 2012) as important elements that would enable transformation of the sector.

Similarly, the power play extends to the treatment of workers, a continuation of the farming storyline characterised by paternalistic tendencies. Relationships with workers are built on a skewed basis where the farmer as a benevolent benefactor expects and demands loyalty from the black workers. For example, farmer B's wife acknowledged removing the rations they used to give the farm workers every Friday after the state's introduction of the minimum wage for farm workers. The research confirms experiences elsewhere in the North West province as the case study of farmworkers by Lemke and van Rensburg (2014) presents similar findings. Farmer B expressed his shock, feeling of betrayal and disappointment when workers exercised their agency by leaving their place of employment. He was unwilling to acknowledge the circumstances

of the former workers' choice of action. Yet, if as indicated by other studies like Brandt (2013) who refers to 'job reservation' practice in her study of game farms in the Karoo; skills transfer is questionable when employment is made unavailable. Granted, there are not many black people engaged in hunting as potential clients. But in a country where the majority population is black, it raises questions of why they are not involved in such a lucrative industry either as consumers or as producers. The answer lies in the gate-keeping function of the 'white' social group who work to maintain the status quo –'colonial present'- even despite the loss of political power under South Africa's democratic dispensation. Therefore, Njabulo Ndebele's question: "Does the game lodge not represent the ultimate 'leisuring' of colonial history?" (2007:99) retains currency in defining the social processes happening in the game sector. I venture the conclusion that elements of continuity abound in the industry from the treatment of the workers, the 'reserving' of certain jobs for whites to the exclusive game farming and hunting space that has for long been an "over-determined, social environment" (Barnett 2011:677).[319] Therefore, the entrenched positions in which the sector's transformation is occurring at a 'slow' pace calls to mind the 'spatial marking' of this space as a zone of exclusivity for an in-group. Transformation is therefore managed as a continuous negotiation of place and space within the post-apartheid continuum where for the former white elite, these spaces are shrinking. Thus an understanding of game farming has to account for how the 'colonial influences' of old continue to impact practices within the sector as a broader commentary on the post-apartheid South African agricultural economy and its contradictions.

To counter the accusations that the sector is largely white in its organisation and the practices inherent to its character, the reference to Zimbabwe as an example of failed reform for many game farmers becomes a logical counter point. Such an argument questions the logic for land redress merely focused on social justice without considering the economic and conservation impact such action would have on the country. For game farmers, pointing this out enables a positioning of their individual and group interests as closely linked to the national in terms of economic contribution and conservation

[319] Barnett, P.E. (2011) Discussions across difference: addressing the affective dimensions of teaching diverse students about diversity in *Teaching in Higher Education, 16:6, 669-679*

value. In this rebranding and reclassification, what is presented is a situational and contextual understanding of the industry's location within an African context. Therefore, this grasp of the specific historical and material condition within the specificity of a South African location enables the deployment of symbolic power by the group in defence of class and capital interests. It enables a navigation of the post-democratic terrain in a politically correct way whilst maintaining old priviledges for a select few. Nevertheless, South Africa's late entry into the democratic sphere combined with its developed infrastructure and the significant white population in the country presented unique opportunities for a vibrant game farming and hunting industry. That it had an international foot print can be attributed to the recreation of a hunting 'Eden' in various guises in private game farms; again a form of colonial continuity.

This re-construction of the rural landscape has changed the local dynamics of land reform processes pushing those operating at the margins further away. As an example, the removal of farm dwellers from these spaces is a case in point. Further to that, the reconstruction does not end with the landscape but extends to the re-imagining of the wildlife itself. The growth of the industry has supported diversification leading to its specialised strands as depicted by the game breeders with their record breaking buffalo, bow hunting offerings in trophy hunting and other industry specific traits. For some industry players, nature has to be assisted in taking its course hence the existence of these record breaking buffalo bulls. This type of thinking has led to the breeding of colour variants and genetic manipulation, shunned by 'pure conservationists' as being unnatural interference in processes of nature. One defence applied by game breeders which fits in the new democratic dispensation is how they have conserved more animals than national parks. This makes them indispensable to the national conservation project despite the undeniable self-serving element of only conserving game with an economic value; hence the unpopularity of the Oribi, while the breeding of variants indicates a capitalist ethos. I have already referred to the differences between South Africa's model and Kenya. A major explanation for this manipulation of genetics is to meet the demands of a highly competitive market whose hierarchical grading is valued by the discernible difference of one trophy from the next. In this vein, the private game farming conservation model *–if it pays, it stays*'- retains a central place in the South African neo liberal economy implying its retention in its present form.

As has revealed by this study of game farming in Groot Marico, "the agricultural sector is not homogenous. Farmers work in various regional settings …… with disparate levels of resources and global penetration" (Atkinson 2007:78) and thus farmers do not specifically belong to a unified coherent grouping despite the bounded solidarity they occasionally put on display when dealing with the state. This thesis has brought to the fore the contestations and differentiation within the game farming community, laying bare the sector cleavages. Taking note of the above, it is important to consider that game farming is a derivative of the South African agricultural social and political context. During interviews, some game farmers seemed to hold "racially imbued conceptions of the South African government" (Fraser 2008:29) and I encountered suspicion that I was working for government even despite reassurances that this research was an academic exercise. These are realities of the South African socio-economic and political context borne by the mistrust reflected in the long history of racial dispossession (Greenberg 2010) which has not dissipated in the 'colonial present' engendered by these spaces. Complicating the issue further is the question of land redress which is still not completely addressed. Therefore discussions of land reform and the manner in which it should be conducted seemed to arouse these sentiments and strong feelings from game farm respondents.

Contribution of research

A few caveats are necessary when locating this research's contribution to scholarly literature of its genre. Even though the research's contribution to the scholarship on Groot Marico game farming and its development in South Africa add a contribution to game farming literature, it is important to note that:

> Firstly it is almost impossible to over-emphasise the enormous differences between individual farms and between areas of the country, in a multitude of aspects of farm life (Atkinson 2007:11).

Although having said that, there are pervasive issues that are all encompassing – conservation being one of them- whose contextualisation and usage can be generalised. Despite that, there are many types of localised differences between farms and farming areas (ibid) which deserve to be researched as this study does for the district of Groot Marico. The fact that, "Each farm is in a sense unique, so that an accurate system of sampling is virtually impossible to formulate" (Roberts 1959:4) on its own justifies the logic for conducting this research. In other respects, the area specific focus of this study

stands as a contribution in its own right in comparison to other studies.

Finally, despite the narrow and limited focus of this particular research, the researcher intends that its findings will allow for qualified contextual specificities and generalizations. It should, present a description and analysis of, to use Belinda Bozzoli's words, "*local regional as well as national perspective"* (Bonner 2010) on the subject of game farming and hunting in the North West province. By specifically focusing on the Groot Marico for example, it is possible to compare and contrast the study's findings with those conducted elsewhere in the country to analyse the cogency of emergent themes, local histories and the legacies thereof. It is anticipated that the study will contribute to knowledge production and generation through identifying further areas of research that others can pursue.

Having introduced the idea of conspicuous consumption as embodied by the elite game auctions of buffalo, further research is needed to study how owners view their purchases. First hand privileging of these actors' voice would contribute further to an understanding of this aspect of game buying behaviour and the justifications that are made by these industry players.

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farmer C- Groot Marico

Game farmer D- Groot Marico

Game farmer EM - Koster Game

farmer Y- Groot Marico

Groot Marico local long-term resident – Groot Marico Game

breeder NQ -Swartruggens

Game breeder TZ –Groot Marico PHASA

executive officer - Pretoria SAHCGA

executive officer -Pretoria WRSA

executive officer -Pretoria

DACE provincial official (conservation) - Mahikeng

DACE provincial official (licensing and permits) - Mahikeng

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