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Personal markets and impersonal communities? Prospects for community conservation in Botswana

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**Personal Markets and Impersonal Communities? Prospects for community  
conservation in Botswana**

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## Introduction

A wave of wildlife poaching hit southern Africa in the 1970s and 1980s. Several species, including, elephant and rhinos, came close to extinction. Efforts by wild life departments to control these illegal activities were largely unsuccessful. The government departments had relied too long on top-down approaches which excluded local communities from these areas (Peters 1994). At the same time, African countries were also witnessing a sharp rise in rural poverty as structural adjustment programs, financial mismanagement, and political turmoil took a heavy toll on both people and natural resources. Clearly, a conservation system based on exclusionary National Parks and Game Reserves was not functioning properly. To redress the breakdown in conservation regimes and growing social inequities, conservationists and international donors proposed an alternative approach which sought to balance economic growth with resource conservation by taking into consideration the needs of local communities.<sup>1</sup>

In Botswana, CBNRM broke new ground in the practice of wildlife management, rural development, and tourism in the early 1990s. Learning from other community-based projects, such as CAMPFIRE in Zimbabwe, policy makers realized that unless material incentives accrued to rural communities, conservation would be an uphill task. Projects in Botswana adopted elements of the CAMPFIRE model wherein communities collaborate with private safari operators in the management of natural resources and by sharing economic returns.

The prospects for meeting CBNRM goals in Botswana were high. Botswana, unlike many African countries, scholars argue has many of the characteristics that bode well for development. Botswana is typically propped as an example of success stories in Africa. Since independence in 1965, Botswana has successfully held five parliamentary and council elections. The country is praised for providing a rule governed environment and stable macro economy, and has been able to garner the support of society in respecting constitution and the rule of law which, for the most part, provides a framework for the democratic rights of its citizens.

The high expectations associated with community based development strategies, however, met with mixed results. Much of the CBNRM policy literature argues that community conservation did not borne the development fruits, neither of conservation nor of rural development that development planners had originally expected. Indeed, it has been difficult to create representative and accountable local level self-governing organizations, a critical building block of community-based approaches. Participation in some of projects often remained limited to select members within communities and benefits have not been equitably distributed. The state has also struggled to adapt to community-based approaches. Planning and implementation continues to be fragmented across multiple government bureaucracies often in conflict with each other. These and other related problems thus indicate that the task of simultaneously reducing the control of an entrenched bureaucracy, stimulating the use of the private sector, and incorporating communities in resource management is more complex than policy makers initially realized.

This paper, thus, is an attempt to probe the types of institutional interactions that lend themselves toward fulfilling (or not) the goals of community based projects—resource management, community empowerment, and equitable material development. I argue that policy goals of community based approaches are not realized in part because analysts have paid little or no attention to understand the characteristics of states, markets, and communities. Markets actors, for example, are portrayed as being

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<sup>1</sup> The current trend in community based natural resource management projects (hereafter CBNRM) in Southern Africa started in the 1980s with Administrative Management Design for Game Management Areas (ADMAGE) and Luangwa Integrated Resource Development Project (LIRDPA) in Zambia and Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) in Zimbabwe. Since the late 1980s and early 1990s, Namibia, South Africa, and Botswana also have implemented community-based natural resource management projects.

driven by only those institutions, which pattern behavior along profit-maximizing tendencies (Fafchamps 1999).

In order to overcome this shortcoming, the paper argues for an alternative conceptualization recognizing that community organizations, firms, and state agencies, are heterogeneous in terms of their institutional logics. Bureaucracies, private firms, community based organizations do not embody the ideal-typical logic commonly ascribed to these categories. Actors within the market do not function only according to the invisible hand, actors within the states do not only apply impersonal rules, and community actors are not only driven by norms of reciprocity. Rather, each of these actors are driven by multiple rationales for organizing and managing collectivities. In other words, states, markets, and communities, *each* include some combination of explicit codified legal-rational logics, profit-maximizing procedures, and reciprocal-personalistic practices. The CBNRM process set in motion interactions among these actors and organizations with different institutional logics. As communities, bureaucrats and firms develop new rules to conserve wildlife and alter agricultural practices, state and market structures become "embedded" in institutional and cultural patterns of African communities in new ways.

The distribution of material benefits from CBNRM is one of the main sources of conflict, both within communities and with external actors. For many safari operators in the Okavango Delta, community concessions are often the only way they can remain in business, because most commercial concessions have leases for 99 years. To maintain access to an area, and thus remain in business, safari operators have to convince rural communities. Thus, the selection of safari operators by local communities is a critical "site" for analyzing the articulation of different institutional logics. It is at these junctures that various actors exhibit their tendencies and institutional logics.

This paper draws on findings from five villages of the northern-panhandle of the Okavango Delta and discusses the politics surrounding the creation of the Okavango Community Trust (OCT) and the Bugakwe Cultural Community Trust (BCCT).<sup>2</sup> In the case of the Okavango Community Trust, I found that safari operators have embedded themselves in local patterns of reciprocal-personalism. They know the symbolic "language" of the community, its idioms, and therefore are able to mask their profit motive behind local notions of reciprocity.

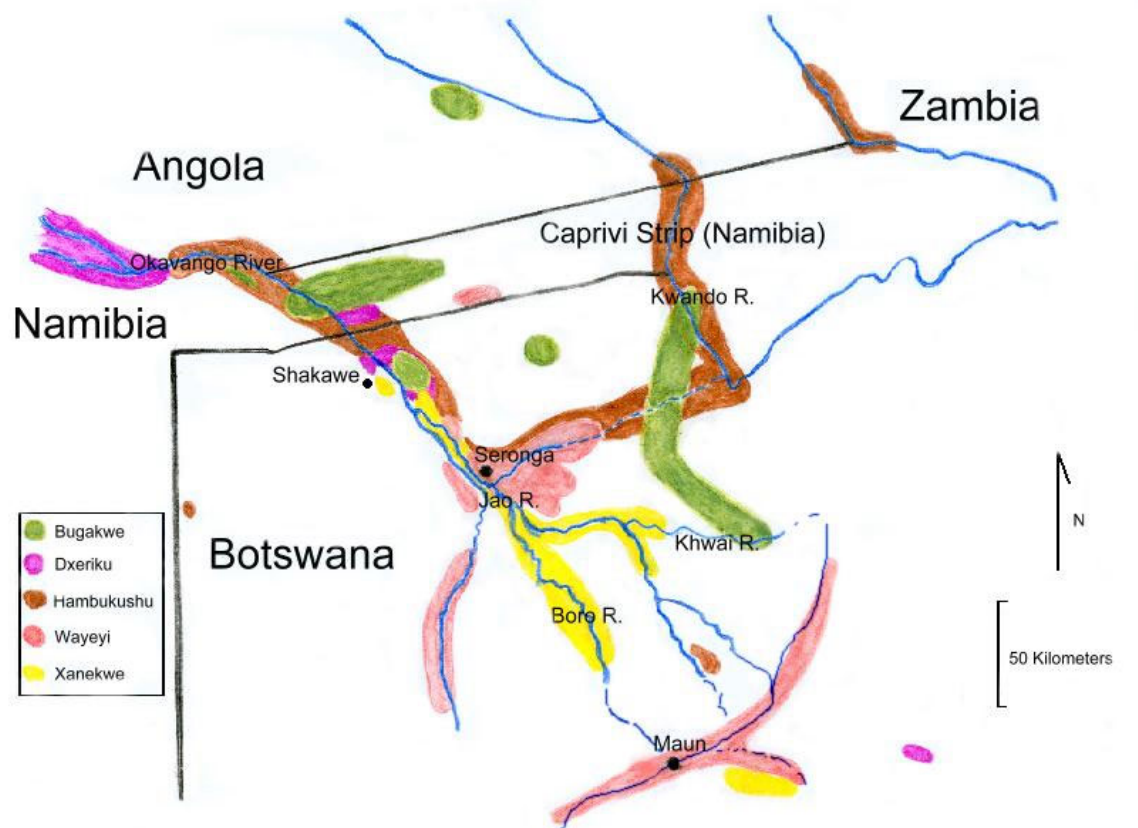
CBNRM was conceived as a participatory bottom-up approach to conservation and development. Gudigwa (or BCCT) poses a particularistic challenge to universal notions of "community". During the first years, OCT came under much criticism for rent-seeking, lack of collaboration among the five villages, and co-optation by the safari operator who relied primarily on particularistic ties within the community.

The Bugakwe were the most critical about the problems within OCT and mobilized for their own community project. Given the historical practices of marginalization, the Bugakwe are in general skeptical of state driven CBNRM strategies. However, increasingly many Basarwa, especially the younger generation, believe that by participating in the tourism market and proposing their own

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<sup>2</sup> Villages in the panhandle of the Okavango Delta are nestled between the Caprivi on the north and the rest of the Okavango Delta on the South (Figure 1). A handful of villages, scores of cattle-posts and small settlements are strung almost in a straight line for a distance of 180 kilometers. The villages are 500 kilometers or an almost a full-day's drive from Maun, the main town in Ngamiland district. The panhandle of the Delta is an ecologically critical area. It is upstream, and water from the Okavango River first enters Botswana through the panhandle. The river spills over the Okavango Delta near the village of Seronga, ninety-five kilometers from Mohembo, spreading across a vast complex of twisting waterways, islands, floodplains, and lagoons— nearly 15,000 square kilometers in extent. Resource use and livelihoods in the panhandle therefore influence the shape of the hydrological pulse, which in turn has effects throughout the Delta.

community based organization struggle against historical patterns of exclusion. They therefore have begun to represent themselves as hunters-gatherers and deploy this representation to make claims on land and resources, especially the CBNRM process.



(Source: <http://anthro.fullerton.edu/jbock/Okavango/index.html>)

**The question is not whether all markets are embedded, but how are they embedded and what is the nature of their embeddedness....**

Modernity and capitalism implies an increasing penetration of the market institutions. However, what is meant by the notion of insertion of market institutions? How does this relate to the idea of embeddedness? Does market formation imply “dis-embedding”?

The term embeddedness has been deployed in several ways since the time (Polanyi 1944) used it in the *Great Transformation*. Embeddedness has been used both as an analytical and an ideological foil to the notion of self-regulating markets. Modern day Polanyis discredit (capitalist) markets for their regressive dis-embedding qualities and argue that only via socialism or community can economic actions be re-embedded. From this perspective, dis-embedding is the removal of social objects from the sphere of the “social” into the sphere of the “market.” Why this is considered negative, however, is sometimes a matter of ideological persuasion.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Writing during the time of British hegemony in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in *The Great Transformation*, Polanyi argued that throughout history resources—goods and services— have been allocated through reciprocity and redistribution. Polanyi’s criticism was directed against the rise of fascism and authoritarianism, which he saw emerge due to the dis-embedding of economic exchange. According to Polanyi, before capitalism, economic actions were “embedded” in community, politics, and religious activities. Trade, money, and markets were not inspired only by

Granovetter resurrected and popularized this interpretation to argue that social relations stabilize exchange relationships (Granovetter 1985; Granovetter and Swedberg 1992; Granovetter 1995). Embeddedness in certain “weak ties” is interpreted as social capital. In these network-oriented studies, the argument is that close ties (for example, multiplex social relationships which could include family, religious affiliation, belonging to the same community) among actors (individuals, groups, or organizations) provide the “trust” for transactions to take place (Granovetter and Swedberg 1992; Swedberg 1993; Smelser and Swedberg 1994; Zafirovski 2001). Another assumption is that these ties or informal relations are social/commonly shared. Finally, these relations are considered assets or resources available to those who participate in these relations.

Contemporary applications of the embeddedness concept are thus used to reject the notion of self-regulating markets and to demonstrate the social character of economic life. The strength of embeddedness approaches is in their critique of under-socialized or atomized-actor accounts of neo-classical choice theoretic approaches. However, the application of embeddedness in network-oriented scholarship, as well as anti-market approaches is to some extent at odds with Polanyi’s original formulation. Those who adopt a social network approach a la Granovetter to embeddedness construe development as a teleological process where the economy disembeds itself from social relations. Furthermore, they neglect examining the “market” itself as a social object. Modern day Polanyis by seeing markets as dis-embedding/disembedded, base their analysis on a reductionist reading of Polanyi.

Polanyi’s work can be interpreted at several levels. According to Polanyi, all societies included a mix of the three ideal types (reciprocity, distribution, and exchange), and markets were social institutions reflecting a complex blend of politics, culture, and ideologies. Polanyi’s discussion on markets was to challenge the asocial market construct and to suggest contestation in the process of market formation, but at the same time point out the emerging hegemony of markets over other arenas (and normative values) of social life. From Polanyi’s perspective, the “self regulating market was a utopia” because land, labor, and money are fictitious commodities. Similarly, I also use the concept of embeddedness to argue that markets are socially constituted and to highlight the cultural foundations of markets.

Integral to Polanyi’s conception of embeddedness is also the idea of double movement. Polanyi argued that successful contestations that challenge the deregulation of land, labor, and money evolve into counter movements. The double movement, in the contemporary context can be seen in the emergence of social capital (Fine 2001), Islamic organizations, anti-globalization protests, as a response to the neo-liberal Washington consensus (Pred and Watts 1992).

(Hart 2002) argues that Polanyi’s key lacuna “is his agnosticism on the question of the social and political forces through which the double movement is constituted in any particular juncture” (Hart 2002, 816). My conceptualization of “embeddedness” does not build on the Granovetterian institutionalist understanding of culture as embedded within structures of social relations. Instead, I want to present a non-reductionist, ethnographically grounded discussion about the articulations of divergent institutional logics and how they are mutually constituted. In this paper, I also suggest that in a dynamic view of embeddedness, contestation is closely related to the idea of multiple modernities (Eisenstadt 2001; Gaonkar 2002). The institutional logics are produced by conflicts and contestation among actors located at different sites.

### Embedded Markets in rural Africa

Political scientists since Bates (1981) have begun to challenge the dichotomy between states and markets, especially in the aftermath of macroeconomic reforms of the 1980s and 1990s. The emerging consensus

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profit making, but also influenced by politics and religious values. Economic relationships were managed either through reciprocity among kin or friends or through distribution by the state or a similar central/communal authority and did not constitute a separate sphere. The industrial revolution, however, removed the constraints on exchange. The economy, in industrial society, came to be “directed by market prices and nothing but market prices” and “human beings behave[d] in such a way as to achieve maximum money gains”(Polanyi, 1957: 43, 68).

is that price signals often do not provide sufficient incentives for efficient economic activity; and governments lack the information or flexibility to correct market failures. While both the state and market are essential mechanisms for social coordination, they work best when they are “embedded” in networks and associations that cushion risk and build trust among the relevant economic actors. This view argues that *informal institutions*: customs, traditions, and norms matter, especially in the early stages of market development. This is because the major barrier against the development of markets in developing economies is the absence of an effective mechanism to protect property rights and enforce contracts.

These scholars argue that all societies rely on a mix of impersonal markets and communitarian institutions. However, in modern societies the domain of the market and the state are pervaded by universalistic norms and formal institutions (Platteau 1994). Representing this perspective, (Stiglitz 2002), for example, points out with market development and deepening the value of informal institutions declines (or should decline if an efficient market has to function). As modern state matures and develops representative forms of governance with a clear hierarchical structure and a system of laws, rules and regulations, it replaces “community” as the guardian of social business, and personal contract (Stiglitz 2002, 65-66).

Many Africanist scholars, alternatively, argue that indeed capitalistic markets are more pervasive in the lives of Africans and are becoming the main institutional basis for livelihoods. However, while markets are pervasive, they are not classically capitalist, nor working optimally, either for improved livelihoods or for development. Governmental sectors often offer few resources and impose even less coordination and discipline (owing to the downsizing of the state), thus leading to a high degree of local inventiveness (Guyer 2001, 197-198).

The arguments in these contextual studies on rural Africa highlight the fluidity and changing nature of African reality. Rural Africa is portrayed not as a falling into a pre-determined path toward modernity where the pre-capitalist past is simply a vestige of history. Rather social and institutional processes are constantly formed through interactions with institutions of modernity—the market exchange via a (capitalist) market structures and legal-rational statist institutions and remembered pre-capitalist practices. The only constant in this process is change—where ‘no condition is permanent’—apart from maybe poverty (Berry 1993; Moore and Vaughan 1994).

A key aspect for understanding the nature of market in Africa, thus has been, an emphasis on the notion of “wealth-in-people”. According to Guyer (1995), the concept was developed by Miers and Kopytoff in the 1970s and has been popularized as a specifically African mode of accumulation whether in the Marxian terms as accumulation of social relations or in substantive institutional terms as kinship, religious clientelism or political prebendalism (Miers and Kopytoff 1977). Scholars such as Goran Hyden (economy of affection), Sara Berry (investment in social networks) have also emphasized the notion of investment in social relations/wealth in people as a key aspect that manages African social, political, and economic life (Hydén 1980; Berry 1993) . The consensus among these scholars is that in African societies investing in personal relations has often been more important than adhering to the imposed set of colonial and post-colonial institutions which are ontologically grounded in modern, western, values and institutional practices.

These ideas—of accumulation of social relations—can help us further clarify the notion of embeddedness, especially as it is applicable to Africa. As various actors involved in the CBNRM position themselves to benefit from it, they create new relationships of clientage and reciprocity, both among community members and with external actors. Thus, by examining how different actors undertake calculated investment in social relations and cultivate shared expectations of reciprocity brings “agency” to the idea of embeddedness.

### **Market embeddedness in the Panhandle: Investing in people, investment in cattle ...**

“Cattle were the epitome of social and symbolic capital; the capital that linked a material economy of things to a moral economy of persons, and so constructed a total economy of signs and practices” (Comaroff and Comaroff 1990, 206).

"*Modimo o o nko e metsi*" is a common refrain among Batswana. It means "A God with a wet nose." Like other agro-pastoral societies, in Botswana cattle has historically been attached a social and moral significance far beyond its economic value. The number of cattle a man owns defines his wealth, and indicates his status and prestige. In the past, cattle were vital for praying to ancestors, the transfer of bride price and in other rituals. These days, cattle are still used as payment by a man's family to the family of his prospective wife, provided as compensation for the loss of one of the family especially at funerals. Cattle also act as security against misfortune, as in times of need they can be sold or exchanged for other goods. Cattle, the essence of dependability, were largely self-producing and were mobile in the face of drought and danger; they permitted the stable storage, exchange, and seemingly spontaneous growth in wealth (Comaroff 1990, 201, cf. Burchell 1822-24, 2: 272, 347).

The production and exchange of cattle gave form to the pre-colonial political economy. Until the mid 1800s communities living in the Delta lacked a unitary state and existed as diverse settlements since none of these entities were powerful enough to impose their rule on others.

Tswana rulers established political clientage of cattleholders integrating newer followers through the exchange of cattle. Chiefs extended their power if they were good hunters or possessors of cattle, which helped dispense patronage. The term *kgosi*, which is associated with ruler, king, and chief, also denotes a rich man (Gulbrandenson 1996, 53). “The *kgosi* lent a portion of his cattle to ward headmen. This patronage rested upon the *kgosi*'s personal decision, and could be rescinded by him at any time. Accordingly for a headman who was a commoner not only his office but also, to a great extent, his economic base depended on his personal loyalty to the *kgosi*” (Gulbrandenson 1996, 59). The pre-colonial polity was also managed via controls over the agricultural cycle. The chief regulated the process by giving out seed and thus allowing for sloughing. In this way, a chief was able to extract tributary labor, which also provided surpluses for later redistribution (Comaroff and Comaroff 1990, 202).

Along with controlling cattle, chiefs also maintained power through social relations such as marriage ties, by dispensing patronage, and performing the intercessory role between the ancestral spirits and the community. The existence of shrine and ritual objects were handed down from one to the next chief, thus indicating the continuation in the chieftanship (Tlou and Campbell 1984). However, a chief was really the head of a matrilineage and had to win the support of his maternal relatives, especially that of his nephews and their mothers. A man's sisters could either win him the support of their husbands in other lineages or turn them against him. Exogamous marriages helped knit the various lineages together.



Time period	Historical context	Cattle Exchange
1700-1840	Pre-colonial encounter. Period of relative “equality”. Arrival of the Bayei using the delta. Humbukushu encounter with the Basarwa.	Not commodified
1840-1906	Strengthening/“consolidation” of the Batawana chiefdom/ and hardening of ethnic categories/hierarchies.	Social status and accumulation via cattle. Rise in social hierarchy by acquiring cattle.
1906-1966	British colonial period Botswana as a labor reserve. Contested servitude and incorporation into South African mines/WENELA for wage labor.	Control over cattle—both material and symbolic control (via Mahisa and <i>kgamelo</i> )
1966-1996	State discovers diamonds provides developmental goods	Cattle via mahisa and <i>kgamelo</i>
1996-2001	Increased market incorporation. State provides public goods through drought relief and CBPP.	Decline of cattle as a source of wealth. Decline of <i>kgamelo</i> and mahisa

Several social mechanisms provide the basis for production and exchange of cattle “Cattle were the media through which men shaped their social biographies. These were spoken of as the only heritable wealth of real worth (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999, 203). *Mahisa*, historically, provided the means of converting wealth in cattle into wealth in people. Cattle is borrowed or loaned within local communities through the institution of *mahisa*. This is an arrangement where wealthy farmers give one or two beasts to poorer farmers on a long-term basis. Those who receive the heifer are responsible for taking care of the cattle and in turn can keep the milk and use the offspring for the ploughing. Farmers can also keep every third or fourth offspring for building their own herd.

When asked, whether they had cattle, and if so from whom, most people in the panhandle villages mentioned the names of a few people from whom they got *mahisa* cattle. Like elsewhere in Botswana, most of the cattle was owned by a minority (for example, the chiefs of all the villages, such as *Kgosi* Maeze, Thomamotsi, a powerful board member of OCT Sakuze, the local representative Sekondeko, etc.). In Botswana, the ownership of cattle has been skewed.<sup>4</sup> This inequality, far from being a recent phenomenon, however, was inherent in the pre-colonial order.<sup>5</sup>

In a different arrangement, *moraka*, a large number of cattle are transferred to thus instantly providing the recipient with a herd and sufficient draught power. Cattle also circulate on need basis, where households who lack draught animals approach those with sufficient animals. *Go tsenya mabogo* (putting in hands) is one way for richer farmers to support others in the community.

### 1996: rupturing the cattle complex ...

<sup>4</sup> Cattle ownership is uneven. Among traditional farming households, 47% have no cattle, and 20% have fewer than 11. While 71% of such farming households own only 8 percent of the total national herd, the wealthiest one percent own roughly 25% of the herd, and the wealthiest 2.5% of farming households own 40%. Cattle ownership is especially gender biased. About 60% of all female farmers have no cattle, compared to 33% for male farmers. The average number of cattle owned by female farmers is six, compared to 20 for male farmers (Botswana Human Development Report 2000).

<sup>5</sup> The unequal distribution is closely linked with perceptions about wealth and the wealthy. In the panhandle villages, the chief along with the dominant lineages, have historically also been the richest and the elites have continued to play the role of benevolent patrons.

The year 1996 is always associated with CBPP a bovine disease that afflicted all the cattle in Ngamiland District. In February 1995, the Cattle Lung Disease/ Bovine pleuropneumonia (CBPP) struck Ngamiland. There had not been a single case of CBPP in Botswana since 1939. To prevent the spread of lung-sickness, the government killed over 400,000 head of cattle, and constructed new veterinary cordon fences to separate the cattle of Ngamiland from the rest of the country and from wildlife

The destruction of cattle was a traumatic event. “We wept like children,” said Ghaishemodimo. “The cattle was like our children and we could bare to see them slaughtered. They had to drag people away from the *kraals* when they came to pick up the cattle,” he added.

The government established a cash compensation program for those whose livestock were eradicated, paying 500 Pula per animal for 70% of their animals, with the other 30% of the compensation in kind. The state allocated 44 million Pula to be disbursed. Some of the funds were devoted to labor-based relief and development projects (LBRDPs) in which people were paid to work on projects such as the debushing of roads. Majority of cattle owners decided to receive cash.

The cattle-lung disease suddenly in one stroke dislocated the material basis of the dominant agro-pastoral mode of production, but more important shocked the social relations of domination built around cattle. One of the immediate term effects of CBPP was the collapse of farming and increased monetization of production, consumption, and social reproduction practices.<sup>6</sup> The lack of draught power and availability of drought relief from the government led people to stop ploughing.

“In the past people grew millet, sorghum, groundnuts and there were good harvests. These last few years the harvests have not been good because instead of using cattle, we now have to use hands which does not give us good yields. These days life is difficult because of money. For someone to survive he/she should be working. Since most people are not working they have a hard time.”<sup>7</sup>

However, while farming has collapsed, most people received compensation from the government. There mushroomed several tuck-shops selling household commodities. “There was a lot of money that was suddenly available in the community,” said the Mr. Banda, the headmaster of Ngambao High school in Seronga. For the first time many people were able to purchase commodities such as toothpaste, soap, soups, and other household items exported from South Africa. The cattle-boys, youth who grew up at the cattle post and rarely came to the villages, were found at local bars.

Social practices such as weddings and funerals underwent a transformation since cattle, which was gifted as bride-price, was now replaced by household items and money. There were suddenly no cattle slaughtered for funerals or weddings. The market has emerged as a powerful idiom at nodal points of kinship organization: in funeral rites, marriage ceremonies, and the domestic division of labor (Geschiere 1997).

The sudden infusion of money also affected patterns of accumulation. The monetization of local political economy further commodified labor relations. Elite cattle owners in the panhandle were able to play the role of benevolent patrons by providing wage labor. The sale of labor for wages has increasingly become a more reliable source of income than rearing cattle or undertaking agriculture.

In these rural communities, the wealth differences were now perceptible. Most of the elite also started recognizing cattle alone could not be taken for granted as an investment and they had to re-invest and transform their wealth in cattle into other forms.

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<sup>6</sup> This is not to suggest that there were no natural disasters or crises in the panhandle villages. Elders remember an outbreak of locusts and Tse Tse in 1940 and 1970. In 1940 people moved to present day Gunotoga, and 1970 to Seronga.

<sup>7</sup> Mishak, Seronga, November 16, 2001.

Tuck-shops became a common investment strategy. Over thirteen tuckshops opened in Seronga in the 1990s. “People found that they have a lot of money, so they decided to make tuckshops. Not surprisingly, large cattle owners who received large sums in compensation opened majority of the tuckshops.

“Money has changed peoples lives. Money has put us in a better stage. There is development because of money. Money has improved farming through hiring other people to plough the fields, buying fence and seeds. Through money we can now buy fishing nets to catch fish and boats to travel to different areas. Money has helped parents to take their children to school by paying for school fees and buying them clothes.”<sup>8</sup>

In the modernist discourse of elites such as Kgosi Maeze, Seronga is seen a decade behind in development from the sub-district headquarters, Gumare. Their goal is to have Seronga designated as a sub-district. This would lead to more government resources as well as private sector investment which would bring more tourists. It is no surprise that these days, in anticipation of the tarred road and electricity which are listed in the 2000-05 District Development Plan, every once in a while there are “prospectors” who come to Seronga to scout around for properties around the panhandle. Investing in a campsite or a holiday home for the fast emerging urban middle class Batswana is a possible investment in the pan-handle.<sup>9</sup>

It was in this local context that CBNRM inserted itself. In 1993, the Natural Resource Management Project (NRMP), which was the implementing agency for the CBNRM project in Botswana, established the Chobe Enclave Community Trust and the Sankuyo Tshwaragano Management Trust, to introduce community-based conservation projects in Botswana.<sup>10</sup> In the panhandle, the NRMP held “consultation” meetings. USAID’s NRMP consultants came to the panhandle on the urging of the private sector to convince local communities about the benefits of CBNRM. However, there was strong resistance from community members. The discussion at the *kgotla* in Gudigwa was especially testy. The *Bugakwe* were not ready to forego their special hunting rights. “Hunting is our birthright, and we will not give it up” said the gaunt Amos, one of the elders in Gudigwa (the response of the Bugakwe to CBNRM it discussed in further detail in a subsequent section.)

However, after CBPP, and especially after the compensation monies had been consumed, people began to pay attention to the CBNRM project. CBNRM came to be seen as an important source for collective and individual material benefits including employment, transport, meat, and help for funerals.<sup>11</sup>

These days, if safari operators want access to many of the rich wildlife areas of the Okavango Delta, whether for hunting or for photographic tourism, they have to enter into state mandated legally binding agreements to provide benefits to remote local communities. CBNRM has also become an important means for many safari operators in the in the Okavango Delta to gain access to wildlife concessions.

### ***Investing in Personal Relationships: One face of embedded markets***

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<sup>8</sup> Kgosi Maeze, Seronga, January 03, 2002.

<sup>9</sup> What is holding back investment, according to investors is the lack of a “management plan” especially for the area. A management plan would designate how different resources would be used and establish a property rights regime which would facilitate the privatization of conservation and development in the Delta.

<sup>10</sup> Botswana’s economy relies predominantly on wealth from diamonds and its livestock industry. However, national parks and game reserves occupy 17% of the total land area of Botswana and a further 22% has been designated as wildlife management areas. With 39% of the land dedicated to conservation and wildlife management, in recent years, tourism has been highlighted as a key sector for diversification. Tourism accounts for about 40% of employment opportunities that have been created in the northern part of Botswana. Investment by the private sector in the Botswana economy as a whole has increased from P150m to P500m over the past ten years.

<sup>11</sup> “Benefits” is a technocratic and reductionist term used by CBNRM policy makers. These “benefits” are critical nodes of distribution and closely intertwined with communities’ access to money, power, and prestige.

CBNRM policy provided a new development grid by introducing developing categories such as: “JVPs”, “CBOs”, “Deeds of Trust”, “Board and Management”, etc. CBNRM” also brought with it developmental norms of community participation and empowerment, public private partnerships, and privatization.

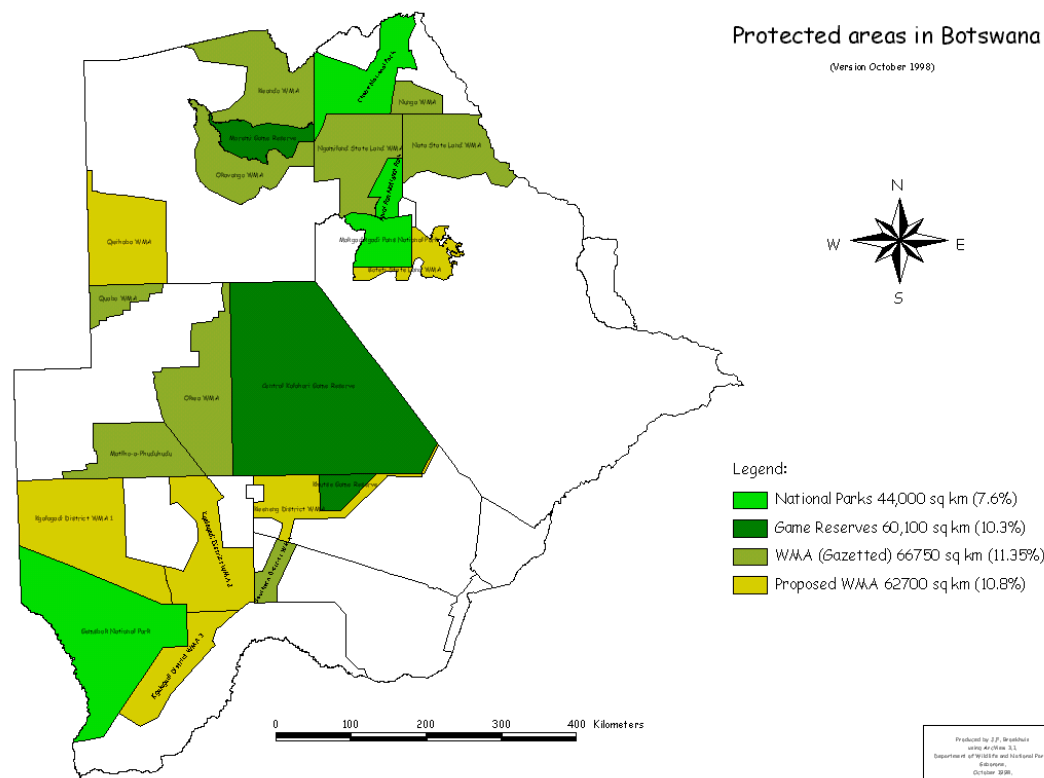
To gain benefits through CBNRM, communities have to register a local organization. The organization creates a “constitution” which lists the various rules and regulations governing the trust (how are members to be elected, the organizational structure, benefit distribution, mechanisms to enter into a contract with the private sector, etc.). After a community trust has been registered, it can apply to the land-board for a “head-lease” to the WMAs which have been designated to the communities.<sup>12</sup> On receiving permission from the government, the trust can put up the area for a tender (the tender process has been discussed in a later section). The private sector/safari operators submit their tenders to a district level technical advisory committee (TAC) which comprises of district officials. After short-listing the proposals, the safari operators are given an opportunity to make an oral presentation to the community at the *kgotla*. The contract time has been stipulated as 1 +1+3+5+5 (15) years, where the community has the opportunity to review their relationship with the joint venture partner at the end of each period and decide whether they want to go for re-tender.

In the official discourse of CBNRM—bringing together of market, state, and communities has taken a specific form of “joint venture”. “Target communities are first leased land and rights over what were historically have been *their* animals in the form of a quota.” Through CBNRM the state wanted to create community based organizations in which all members consider themselves equal and participate in decision making, elect representatives who would represent their demands and needs to the market actors and the state.

In general, however, market actors in Botswana’s tourism sector complain about the lack of business sense on the part of local communities. They argue that community-private sector CBNRM projects are inherently more complicated than private concessions. It is more demanding to work with rural illiterate communities and they claim that they often have to bend over backwards to make communities happy. One of the operator’s, for example, pointed out that he has to hire at least twice as many employees than required, because communities expect him to provide more employment opportunities. It is reasonable to expect that remote rural communities in the Delta are unable to perform like exchange-rational market actors similar to private safari firms. They do not for example, have the business expertise, accounting and marketing skills, or other skills expected for the functioning of modern firm. However, it is also a simplification to characterize rural communities as ignorant, disorganized and corrupt, without examining the behavior and interactions of private sector actors with remote local communities in the Okavango Delta.

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<sup>12</sup> WMAs were officially recognized through the Wildlife Conservation Policy of 1986 to encourage the commercial wildlife industry. These areas cover 22 % of Botswana’s land and are set aside exclusively for wildlife utilization or land use that is compatible with wildlife. To rationalize the previous land use system with WMAs, in 1989 there was a re-zoning of all Controlled Hunting Areas (CHAs). CHAs are administrative blocks used by the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) to administer hunting quotas. The entire land of Botswana has been divided into 163 CHAs, which have been zoned for various types of wildlife utilization: commercial photographic areas, commercial wildlife utilization (hunting), community managed wildlife utilization and livestock areas, community photographic areas, and un-designated areas.



Source: <http://www.cbnrm.bw/>

### Safari operators as patrons

In April 2001, the *kgosi* (chief) of Gunitsoga passed away. In Botswana, customary authorities are important figures. While the powers of chiefs have declined (Holm 2001), they still command deference from their “subjects”. When a chief passes away, the funeral arrangements reflect a particular chief’s power and prestige. The ceremonies last for many days and the funeral itself is a public affair where most of the important people of the area, including other chiefs attend the funeral. All the chiefs of the Okavango region attended the Gunitsoga chief’s funeral. People even came from as far as Gaborone, Botswana’s capital, to pay their respects. The safari operator also attended the funeral along with his managers. During the funeral, it was announced that the safari operator was not only paying for the casket, but had also given money for two cows. Usually at funerals only chiefs and immediate male relatives who speak. However, at the Gunitsoga chief’s funeral, the safari operator was one of the first few people to address those who had gathered to express their condolences. In his speech to those attending, the operator expressed his gratitude to the people for allowing him the privilege of contributing to the chief’s funeral.

After the funeral, several people praised the safari operator’s gesture. He was one of them and had shown that he cared for his people. However, there were also those who pointed out that if it were a funeral for a common person, the safari operator would not have been there. Notwithstanding the rival explanations about the intentions of the safari operator, the contribution and presence of the safari operator was a symbolic gesture. In the five, panhandle villages of the Okavango Delta the safari operator is commonly called *sephalana*, which traditionally means a granary, but now is also a name of a retail store in Maun. During times of food insecurity in the past, people would turn to chiefs and other elites for help. As benevolent patrons, the chiefs would provide for the people. By contributing to and attending the funeral, the safari operator had shown his benevolence toward the community and reinforced his standing as someone who would there in time of community’s need. By renaming the

safari operator in the idiom of granaries and provider of welfare, the local people were evoking an embedded patron-client relationship and not that of an autonomous market actor.

However, what difference does this make to the CBNRM process and the role of informal institutions?

### **Cashing-In investments in personal relationships: The re-tender/renewal debate**

In 2000, Wolfarlin, a professional hunter and one of the owners of Robert Bates Safaris, approached some of the community members in the five panhandle villages with an offer. The only way Wolfarlin could be in business was by convincing the people of the five villages to allow him to continue as a partner in the CBNRM project.

Thus, from 15<sup>th</sup>- 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2000 the five villages of Seronga, Gunitsoga, Eretsha, Beetsha, and Gudigwa voted to decide whether they would remove Wolfarlin's Robert Bates Safaris as a "joint-venture partner" or continue their partnership with the safari company.

Following the voting, state officials monitoring the elections declared that the majority of votes were cast in favor of re-tender, in effect voting against the current safari operator. Two hundred six people from the five villages voted for a re-tender, while one hundred ninety six people voted to renew the safari companies contract.

The safari operator, however, disagreed with this result and by May 2001, he was able to change the decision in his favor. How was the safari operator able to accomplish this? What made those who were vehemently opposed to renewal eventually agree?

In the months leading up to the vote and after the voting, there was intense debate about the issue in the five villages. At the local bars, houses which sold *bojalwa* (locally brewed beer), tuck-shops, and other places in the villages where people often gathered informally, people got into heated arguments and held competing and divergent positions about renewing the *lakhwa* (white) businessman's contract or going for re-tender.

Those who supported the renewal usually argued about the benefits of keeping the safari operator. Highlighting the positive contribution of the safari operator Kotongwa, the chairman of the village development committee said, "the safari operator has kept his promises to the community. If we go for re-tender, Wolfarlin [the safari operator] will remove all the equipment in the concessions and fire all the employees at the (safari) camps. I don't think the new safari company will be able to employ as many people in the first year."<sup>13</sup> A similar argument was made by Kane Motswana, who was in the OCT board in the previous years, "Look at the problems of OCT. It is because of the board and not the businessman. The JVP (Joint Venture Partner/safari company) has paid his amount, but the community does not have development. This is because the (OCT) board has many problems."<sup>14</sup>

Those who wanted re-tender hinted that improprieties had taken place and "people" were talking about corruption by some of the board members. Most often than not, statements made in public were with regard to the "performance" of the safari operator, and whether or not there were sufficient benefits from the partnership. At the tuck-shop run by *Kgosi* (chief) Maeze, the representative of the paramount chief, the discussion about renewal and re-tender was also about monetary benefits: "We just want more money. Whoever, gives us more money, we will select them." Mishak, a member of Seronga's village trust committee also opined, "[H]e (the safari operator) promised us a tractor, boreholes, and a training school (for tourism). None of this has happened. Maybe a new safari company will provide us with these benefits."<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> S. Kotongwa, interview, Seronga, 28 March, 2001. To protect the anonymity of respondents, names of community members interviewed, especially with regard to the renewal and re-tender process have been changed.

<sup>14</sup> Kane Motswana, interview, Gudigwa, 20 March 2001.

<sup>15</sup> Participant Observation, Seronga, April 03, 2001.

By evaluating performance of the safari operator, these remote rural communities, it seemed, were behaving like exchange rational market oriented actors, calculating the economic costs and benefits of their relationship with the safari operators. Indeed, rural communities in the Delta are learning the language and discourse of negotiating in (im)personal markets. However, on scratching the surface, it became clear that behind the public discourse, there are other internal differences, levels of meaning and interests that shed light on the institutional articulations in embedded markets.

Following the voting on the issue, the state agents who were officiating declared that the majority of votes were cast in favor of re-tender, in effect voting against the current safari operator. The safari operator disagreed with this result. He claimed that the OCT constitution (which also functions as a Deed of trust, i.e., gives OCT status as a legal entity under Botswana law) did not specify whether the number of villages or total number of votes should be counted.<sup>16</sup> Since the constitution did not clearly specify the voting procedures, the safari operator along with the management of OCT argued that all benefits from OCT (employment, quota fees, etc.) are distributed to each village. Hence, the voting should be considered according to number of villages. The safari operator also complained to the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) and the Directorate of Economic Crimes and Corruption (DCEC) that another safari operator was illegally canvassing in the area. He claimed to have information of money that was paid to specific people in the villages to vote against renewal. In addition, during the election some of the people working at the safari camps could not vote, since they were not present in their home villages when the voting took place. They were later not allowed by government officials to vote in another village. Finally, during the elections in Gudigwa there was a shouting match between those who wanted renewal and those who wanted re-tender. The chief told people that if they voted for renewal they would have to face the consequences.

Along with using legal arguments to bolster his position, the safari operator also skillfully played on his status as *sephalana* and exploited informal ties with key community members. This was the key to remain in business.

The OCT board had the final authority to interpret the constitution and decide whether the safari operator's contract could be renewed. In the five years of his contract, the operator had employed some of the key people from the villages to different positions, thus creating what seemed to be a strong alliance in favor of the operator. Board members also received 85,000 Pula every year as a "sitting allowance" to attend the trust's meetings. One of ex-board members hinted at the use of sitting allowance as an incentive, "[I]n the past the sitting allowance was 100 Pula...now the board gets 800 Pula. The workers get much less...but board gets 800, this is not good."<sup>17</sup> Having invested in cultivating personal relationships, for safari operator it was time to "cash-in". Several board members realized that it was time to return the favors of *sephalana*.<sup>18</sup> The Board of OCT decided to consider the number of villages (3-2) rather than the number of people as the real outcome of the elections. The board members later argued that the constitution is silent whether the number of villages or total number of votes should be considered. However, the OCT constitution gives the Board the final authority to make a determination about whether the number of villages or total votes should be counted.

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<sup>16</sup> The constitution of OCT is a legally binding document. However, it was drafted by a lawyer who was hired by the safari operator. The constitutions of community-based projects were originally drafted by the USAID/NRMP project and were replicated by several different communities without much deliberation.

<sup>17</sup> Papadi Mwezi, personal interview, Gunitsoga, November 20, 2001.

<sup>18</sup> Giving examples of how the safari operator had influenced the board, Benson Maeze, who is considered to be a fair person, is a member of the VTC and also *Kgosi maeze's* son said: "Sakuze is the chairman of the Seronga Village Trust Committee and member of the OCT executive board...but he teaches the tourists Setswana and Seyei at the camps. Kikina Shomana is a radio operator and was vice chair, he is also the daughter of the ex-councillor Shomana's brother. Kesefilwe is an accountant, but was also the member of the VTC."

After the controversial decision of the Board to allow the safari operator to continue, the debate at the *kgotla* was cantankerous. Benson Maeze, the chief's eldest son, and Masalakha, the nephew of the previous district councilor, had mobilized several people to write to the District Commissioner (DC) in Maun to intervene in favor of a re-tender. The mood at the meeting was tense, because the eldest son of the chief and the nephew of an important person had gone against the wishes of their fathers and other elders of the village who now supported the board. By asking the state to intervene, Benson and those who supported a re-tender hoped that they could bolster their position. Benson and Masalakha were not acting alone, but had been supported by their age-mates, many of whom had been to primary or secondary school together, and these days met at the local bars, tuck-shops, etc. The younger generation was getting frustrated with the lack of employment opportunities in the panhandle villages, and with the old ways of the *madalas* (elders). By appealing for intervention by the state, these young people not only indicated that they wanted change, but also by doing so, they risked disrespecting their elders. The renewal and re-tender debate, on the one hand, galvanized the community, thus changing existing patterns of collective action and social trust. The ambiguity of rules, however, also created an opening for negotiation between local community and external state and private sector actors.

### **Stirrings of a countermovement?**

The tender/renewal debate provided an opportunity for local communities to pay more attention to issues of participation and empowerment. This was evident during the elections of the Village Trust Committees (VTCs), which took place after the new contract had been signed. Many (not all) of the VTC members, who it was rumored had taken “gifts” or benefited personally from the safari operator and had not represented the interests of the community were not elected. Local communities it seemed were becoming cognizant that a balance had to be found between wisdom of the *madalas* and the education of the youth. Benson Maeze and several other younger community members were elected to the VTCs. People in the villages had now realized that the constitution, which has been created without input from the community, was responsible for creating the ambiguity about the election rules. It had been difficult to change the constitution until that time:

“People have been in conflict. They made the constitution in favor of the board. All the clauses refer to the board, giving them the mandate to make decisions. We have asked them to change the constitution since it does not include community input. But they said that they didn't have money to change some of the clauses in the constitution.”

This changed after the renewal/re-tender debate. With help from a local NGO, the constitution of OCT was translated from English to Setswana, and VTC members were “sensitized” about the byelaws. This was the first step, for many people, towards taking responsibility of “their” community trust.

For the first five years of OCT, the village level committees were not empowered to take decisions and most the money was not invested in other villages. After the tender/renewal debate the safari operator also changed his tune. Following the renewal of the contract, the safari operator along with several management people addressed *kgotla* meetings in each of the villages, informing them about hiring a manager specifically to deal with local communities. There were also proposals to begin construction on the delayed projects in Gudigwa and Eretsha.

The renewal/re-tender debate galvanized local communities in the pan-handle, developed their organizational and political skills to counteract the more powerful economic interests of external private sector actors. The elections, for example, also represent the realignment of different institutional logics—communities were learning the language of legal rationality of the state. The renewal/re-tender also provided the Bugakwe in Gudigwa an impetus to make cultural claims on the state.

### **The Bugakwe Cultural Community Trust...: “Ancient in a modern world”**

Colin, one of the active participants in the newly formed “*Mosarwa* Trust” asked me if I wanted a T-shirt. The print on the T-shirt was “Ancient in a Modern World” along with the logo of the



newly created community trust, BCCT. Collin was proud of the T-shirt since it symbolized their identity as Bugakwe, especially their hunting-gathering livelihood.

Gudigwa residents, however, were the most reluctant to accept the safari operator for the subsequent five years. The Bugakwe had increasingly become resentful about OCTs performance. The main concern of the Bugakwe was that the benefits from the private sector operator were not being fairly allocated to the five villages. Expressing the community's dissatisfaction Gontso, one of the more vocal youth pointed out:

“The money goes to the board and they control the how the money is spent. Even here in Gudigwa, I think that that Jacksons are being bribed, I think the private sector is manipulating the (community) board, they give false information and the board comes back and force us to agree with whatever they have arranged with the private sector.”

The safari operator had promised employ people from the pan-handle villages in the camps. However, there was a strong perception among the Bugakhwe that they were being discriminated in the employment opportunities.

“People are hired without due process. OCT leaders are crooks, they twist things so that their villages can benefit. Leaders for their family when it comes to employment.”

Overall, there was sense that Gudigwa had been neglected in the CBNRM project. Emphasizing this point, one of the elders bemoaned:

“They do not assist us as agreed. That is in funerals they fail to provide coffins. Some bodies were buried in blankets. They had promised that they will look after the give villages equally. But gudigwa has been neglected. They failed to even build a house for the radio.”

The Bugakwe Cultural Community Trust (BCCT) emerged from social mobilization in response to the marginalization by the state, private sector actors, and neighboring communities.

Their relocation to Gudigwa in 1988, creation of a special hunting quota, and then becoming a part of the OCT which was dominated by the Seyei and the sumbukushu their previous owners in pre-colonial Botswana, increased their sense of deprivation and in turn created an impulse to start their own project.

State policies in through the 1970s and 1980s transformed the rights of the Bugakwe San had over resources (Hitchcock 1982). First, by transforming their rights to access the Delta into “free game licences” then to a “hunting quota” in order to manage the resources.

However, when community projects were established, the government removed these rights, and transfered the “hunting quota” to the rest of the communities residing in the area, in effect the Okavango Community Trust. Amos, one of the elder's from Gudigwa, expressed his hostility by arguing that:

The Basarwa should be free on their land. We really need to be separated from the Mbukushu and the Bayei since they are regarded as important from us. The Kaporota camp should be allocated to us if not, one from your camps should by any means be given to the Basarwa, since we are the original inhabitants of this area.

Indeed, for the Basarwa, their identity as the “First people of the Kalahari” is tied to historical rights over land, hunting as a way of life which highlighted their differences from other neighboring communities.

Many Bugakwe initially resisted this incorporation. However, increasingly there is the view that by participating in the tourism market and proposing their own community based organization they will be able to struggle against historical patterns of exclusion. It seems that resistance by the Bugakwe is in the form of their claim on CBNRM. The best the Bugakwe can do is to get their “own” ecotourism project, which commodifies their culture making them curiously ancient in a modern world.

In Gudigwa, the history of marginalization of the Basarwa is closely intertwined with their contemporary claims on the state. In the past, the representations of them as “savage and uncivilized”, “of the bush”, became justification for servitude, while in the present the Basarwa are enclosed in the assimilationist modernist jargon of the post-colonial Botswana state.

### **Challenging the Market Actors: Embeddeness of the Botswana state**

In general, there has been distrust between the state and private sector. From the perspective of the state, the relationship between the private sector and the community is one of co-optation and manipulation. According to state actors, the private sector has, from the beginning of the trust, used whatever means—legal, extra-legal, personal relationships, material incentives, and threats of making the trust bankrupt—to strengthen their control of the area. However, the state has been unable to effectively shape CBNRM outcomes at the local. Why is this the case?

State actors see themselves as “protector” of the communities vis-à-vis the safari operator. During the tender and renewal debate, the state thus applied its legal-rationality through various means ranging from court injunctions, visits by the District Commissioner, followed by a letter to the chief by the minister. Wildlife officials addressed *kgotla* meetings and advised board members to follow the rules and do the right thing (which was not to renew the contract of the current operator and instead opt for a re-tender).

However, state actors, especially Wildlife officials who are charged with CBNRM projects, have had limited influence on OCT. Instead of cultivating embedded relationships, the state has merely tried to impose its own version of Weberian formal rules and democratic norms. While the values promoted by the state are progressive, they do not resonate with local actors because they view the state as being too distant, who show up only to tell them what to do. State officials often unaware and/or unwilling to recognize the perceptions of local communities about the state, continue to preach the government’s expectations about forming an egalitarian, efficient, and legal-rational community organization:

We do not want you to come to us next time saying that the people you elect are not doing their job. Let us elect people who know how to read and write, because in our management plan some of the things were not followed. Let us improve you because you have been misusing money.

Berating community members and the board, another state official told the community:

You are [the board] are elected in bad times because I have a letter from the minister complaining about what the board did. Now this is your only chance to correct this mistake. You have made a conflict between the private sector and the government because of the board.

However, the board had already signed a new contract with the safari operator, hence state actors were unable to influence the outcome of renewal and re-tender. The inability of the state to effectively intervene is because its legal-rationality is fragmented at the local level. This is because the legitimacy of the state, especially in rural areas, is rooted in ideas of paternalistic care-taking and social control.

### **Diamonds are not forever...**

Botswana is considered exceptional among African countries. It has been a stable democracy with free and fair elections since independence in the 1960s. Compared to other African countries Sierra Leone and Congo where natural resources have been the root for countless civil wars, Botswana’s diamonds have not elicited similar rent seeking by its elites. British colonialism also did not lead to severe hardship due to extractive policies, leaving the area to its own devices. With good fiscal management policies, Botswana remains by far an exception among African countries.

However, poverty, unemployment, and inequality have been rising in Botswana. In 2000, unemployment was estimated at about 20%, while *half* the population of 1.6 million was income poor. Poverty is predominantly a rural problem and is especially severe in Ghanzi, Ngamiland, and Kgalagadi districts which are also where most wildlife is located. It is estimated that in 1993, 55% of rural Botswana were

living in income poverty, against 46% in urban villages, and 29% in urban areas. Income distribution is also skewed, with the poorest 40% receiving 12% of total national income in 1994 compared to 59% for the richest 20%.

There are several explanations for these developmental issues. One of the prominent argument is that these problems in Botswana's are related to a limited absorptive capacity and the size and spatial distribution of the population. At 1.6 million, the population cannot create sufficient absorptive capacity for domestic production. In many rural settlements, consumer populations are too small to sustain business on a scale that could make an impact on unemployment and poverty. This situation will only be exacerbated with the deepening HIV/AIDS endemic. Botswana has both a high HIV prevalence rate and high rates of poverty (about 47% of its people live below the poverty datum line). This will sharply deteriorate as able-bodied persons and working people who support dependents die due to AIDS.

High HIV prevalence rates and the attendant rise in morbidity and mortality has caused Botswana to slip 51 places down the Human Development Index rankings of 174 nations from an impressive 71 in 1996 to 122 in 1999 and 2000. It has also slashed years off life expectancy. UNAIDS and US Bureau of Census estimates suggest that life expectancy in Botswana could drop to 29 years by the year 2010.<sup>19</sup>

In the remote rural areas, such the panhandle villages of the Okavango Delta the developmental crisis is further exacerbated because historically they have been "given" developmental goods and rarely mobilized for development activities by the state. The reason why the Botswana state has been "weak" in penetrating and mobilizing society for development (Migdal 1988) is because of the unique political economy of Botswana which relies on diamonds. Botswana's political elites, most of who are also cattle barons, have historically supported the livestock sector at the detriment of other economic sectors (Peters 1994). The abundance of financial resources from diamonds has thus lead to an "under-exploited" society.

The Botswana state has not (and does not need) to extract resources (for example, taxes) from societal actors. Like other African countries, the ruling elites in Botswana have appropriated resources to benefit themselves as evident in the unequal holding of cattle wealth (Gulbrandensen 1996; Comaroff and Comaroff 1999). However, diamonds have provided the state with sufficient revenues, and hence elites are not tempted to appropriate more resources, while at the same time they are able to gain the quiescence of the localities by providing developmental goods.

### **Conclusion...**

In this paper I argue that in order to understand the prospects for market friendly community conservation one needs to examine the articulations of divergent institutional logics that markets, states, and communities bring together in CBNRM. This paper considers the various logics of institutional coordination evident in current efforts to promote wildlife management in Botswana through community collaborations with state regulators and private concerns. As communities, bureaucrats and firms develop new rules to conserve wildlife and alter agricultural practices, state and market structures become "embedded" in institutional and cultural patterns of African communities in new ways.

The paper traces institutional patterns and organizational capacities that emerge through the articulation of imposed and pre-existing institutional logics. The infusion of market and state logics is often incomplete and older logics of social organization can become the raw materials for the creation of new institutional practices. An interesting finding of this research is that extra-community actors idealize the way in which communities are embedded in reciprocal-personalistic relationships and economy of affection structures. The state purports to provide an enabling environment by providing a legal framework. However, in reality we see the state's embeddedness in its paternalistic view of local people, as "children who need grow up." Market actors exhibit their embeddedness by masking their profit

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<sup>19</sup> The data in this section are drawn from the Botswana Human Development Report 2000.

motive behind the idioms of reciprocity. The hegemony of these private market actors, however, is always in flux since it depends on investing in fluid and flexible alliances among different local groups. Local communities re-work legacies of prior marginalization through the idiom of community based market-friendly conservation strategies to gain access to areas from which they were excluded in the past.

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