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LOWVELD PRACTICES IN MAHENYE, ZIMBABWE: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF RESILIENCE IN A MARGINALIZED SOUTHERN AFRICAN COMMUNITY

by

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Lowveld Practices in Mahenye, Zimbabwe: A Critical Analysis of Resilience in a Marginalized Southern African Community.

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The concept of resilience has been developed by scholars in the social-ecological systems resilience and community resilience/disaster literature. While initially a descriptive model, the framework of resilience has since integrated both literatures and become a prescriptive tool for sustainable development initiatives. Political ecologists critically argue that the current conceptualization of resilience is problematic given resilience scholars' lack of engagement with situational social complexities related to power and knowledge. They also argue that mainstream resilience literature is devoid of cultural, historical and political analysis. As such, individuals and communities at the margins of power may vulnerable to the application of resilience as a development tool. To assess how marginalization and power relationships might influence the processes of resilience, I collected oral histories from people living in Mahenye, Zimbabwe. Mahenye is a marginal community located in Zimbabwe's rugged lowveld region. The area is prone to recurrent drought and has a long history of conflict since colonial encounters. In recent decades, Mahenye's biogeographical continuity with the Gonarezhou National Park and the community's relationship with the Communal Areas Management Program for Indigenous Resources program has intensified conflict with more dominant social groups over conservation and development. I argue that mainstream and situational resilience approaches have several points of convergence that may contribute to the resilience literature. These convergent foundations include the utility of traditional ecological knowledge vis-a-vis adaptive capacity, the conceptualization of power relationships in shaping vulnerability and the engagement of nested systems changing across multi-temporal and multi-spatial scales. Finally, I argue that resilience may be a beneficial framework for development practices but only within a situational approach. The exercise of power and knowledge must first be situated to a specific social-ecological system before resilience can be considered a development tool.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

Resilience refers to the capacity of a social-ecological system to absorb shock and disturbance while maintaing its form and function (Walker and Salt 2006). Resilient systems thrive in environments of change through constant adaptive responses (Magis 2010). Encouraged by the potential benefits that characterize resilient human-environment interactions, practitioners and scholars alike are increasingly turning to the concept of resilience to inform their framework of sustainable development. For example, resilience conceptual language was integrated into the discussions and documents of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2002, and subsequently, these resilience concepts have been incorporated by such development institutions as the World Bank and the United Nations Development Program (Turner 2010).

Despite the growing institutionalization of resilience in sustainable development, key social scientists have argued that the application of resilience frameworks to socio-political systems remains problematic (Cote and Nightingale 2011; Turner 2010). These critics argue that many social concepts used by resilience proponents fail to account for power differentials at different social scales and thus, fail to explain how these power differentials influence levels of *marginalization*.

Marginalization is a key concept in characterizing resilience because the processes of marginalization constrain sustainable livelihood opportunities for households and communities and limit their available livelihood options when perturbations occur (Wisner et al. 2003). The processes of marginalization result from the inequalities of nested political economies, and are therefore indicative of the historical power dynamics in a given society (Blaike and Brookefield

1987). To fully understand any social-ecological system's resilient capacity, power disparities must be included as an integral component of systems (Cote and Nightingale 2011). Thus, sustainable development cannot be achieved until the complex social processes of power differentials and marginalization are addressed in the conceptualization and application of a resilience framework.

Mahenye, Zimbabwe offers a compelling geographic case study by which to explore how power differentials may, or may not, shape social-ecological resilience vis-a-vis the experience of marginalization. Mahenye people have been described as marginalized on geographic, economic and political scales (Blaint and Mashinya 2006; Murphree 2001). For example, the Mahenye ward[1] is in an isolated corner on Zimbabwe's southeastern border to Mozambique, and Mahenye people are of Shangaan ethnicity, a minority ethic group with limited representation in district and national politics of Zimbabwe. Like many other Shangaan groups, historic agro-pastoral livelihoods in Mahenye have been constrained by the displacement of the Mahenye people from their ancestral land. In the 1960s, the colonial government of then Rhodesia[2] appropriated the traditional land of Mahenye people for wildlife conservation purposes, and today Mahenye people continue to live on the periphery of Gonarezhou National Park (GNP) (Murphree 2001). Given this proximity to GNP, Mahenye people have been subject to numerous wildlife conservation initiatives that have also included particular sustainable development goals (Murphree 2001). Mahenye's political, ethnic and geographic conditions of marginality make the location an appropriate case study for exploring how the processes of marginalization, and consequently power disparities, shape levels of resilience.

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[1] Mahenye ward is a geographical location in Zimbabwe's Chipinge District. Mahenye people populate the ward.

[2] Before gaining independence, Zimbabwe was known as Rhodesia. See Chapter Two for more detail.

Thus, this thesis critically explores how complex power dynamics relate to social-ecological resilience in Mahenye by asking the following central research question: *To what degree has an experience of marginalization influenced, if at all, social-ecological resilience in Mahenye, Zimbabwe?*

To approach this question, I focus on Mahenye peoples' perceptions and experiences of marginalization in relation to their livelihood practices, and I attempt to situate these experiences and practices within Mahenye's nested social-ecological rangeland landscapes[3]. I describe how rural marginalization is experienced by Mahenye people and how these experiences shape their social-ecological resilience. To more specifically focus my central research question, I am guided by the following subsidiary questions: *For range-dependent agropastoralists in Mahenye, how is marginalization experienced? And, more specifically, are their livelihood strategies resilient given any experience of marginalization? And if so, how?*

Conceptual Framework

My central research question is framed by the concept of resilience. Resilience has been defined across the literature as the capacity of a system to absorb disturbance and re-organize while undergoing change so as to essentially retain the same functions, structures, identities and feedbacks (Berkes and Ross 2013; Folke 2006; Magis 2010; Walker et al. 2004). This means a resilient system is capable of recovering from external disturbances in a manner that maintains its provision of goods and services to dependent groups (Walker and Salt 2006). In environments characterized by change, resilient systems are those that develop the ability to thrive through constant adaptive responses (Magis 2010).

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[3] Lowveld rangeland is the dominant ecosystem found in Mahenye. Lowveld refers to type of rangeland ecosystem found in southern Africa. See Appendix A for definitions of rangeland ecosystems.

Ultimately, proponents of resilience are concerned about "sustaining 'life support systems', and the capacity of natural systems to provide for livelihoods into the future" (Scoones 2009:XX). There is an implied relationship between the concepts of resilience and sustainability (Chambers and Conway 1992). Indeed, as noted earlier, a resilience approach to sustainable development has increasingly become adopted by practitioners and academics alike (Turner 2010), in large part because, as Walker and Salt (2006) argue, only those social-ecological systems that can absorb and respond to perturbation through adaptive capacity are capable of meeting present needs while retaining capacity for future generations to meet their needs. This definition of sustainability (see UNDP) thus depends on building adaptive capacity within socio-ecological systems in which the most appropriate strategy for sustainable development is strengthening resilience behavior.

Sustainable development is most needed in semi-arid regions of the world because some 10 to 20 percent of the world's dry-land ecosystems can no longer meet the livelihood needs of the people living there (Walker and Salt 2006). Furthermore, rural people in semi-arid regions are increasingly recognized as populations most vulnerable to global climate change (Turner 2010). Beyond environmental vulnerability, rural populations in semi-arid regions are also recognized as some of the poorest people in the global political economy, and hence sociopolitically marginalized. Consequently, the need for a resilience approach to sustainable development is most pressing in these vulnerable, semi-arid social-ecological systems.

The study area for this thesis, Mahenye, Zimbabwe is located in such a vulnerable, semi-arid region known as the lowveld. The lowveld is found in southeastern Zimbabwe and is characterized as a conflicted land at the margins (see Scoones et al. 2012; Wolmer 2005). At

political, economic and geographic levels, the lowveld's communities exist on the periphery of

Zimbabwean society, and, as is the case across many of sub-Saharan Africa's numerous

rangelands, social-ecological processes in Zimbabwe's lowveld are in crisis. Soil erosion,

biodiversity loss, poverty levels and social fragmentation are commonplace.

The Resilience Alliance[4] has recognized the lowveld's vulnerability and examined the

region as a general case study for building resilient behavior through transformability, or the

capacity to create a fundamentally new system when social-ecological conditions make the

existing system untenable (Walker and Salt 2006). Researchers associated with the Resilience

Alliance have studied how cattle ranchers have reinvented commercial ranches as safari and

wildlife conservancies and have concluded that such transformations have produced successful,

resilient land-use practices (Cumming 1999). Walker and Salt (2006) note that subsequent

political events have compromised the success of the ranchers' adaptive behavior. Nonetheless,

the initial findings of the study are still celebrated as novel solutions for building resilience (see

Cumming, Cumming and Redman 2011).

However, the Resilience Alliance's lowveld study demonstrates many of the limitations

of the resilience literature as a whole. The authors of the study focused on the adaptive capacity

of commercial cattle ranchers, but they did not contextualize the broader social landscape in

which the ranchers are situated. For example, the lowveld's cattle ranchers are the local elite

(Scoones et al. 2012). These ranchers hold vast swathes of private land due to the colonial

history of dispossession that advantaged white land tenure over indigenous land claims

(Andersson and Cumming 2013). In fact, Scoones et al. describe the lowveld as a "racialized

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[4] The Resilience Alliance is a group of organizations and individuals involved in ecological, social and economic research, which has created, and continues to develop, the framework of social-ecological systems resilience (Walker and Salt 2006).

landscape, built on a violent colonial inheritance of dispossession and highly skewed land ownership" (2012:529). The cattle ranchers' historical advantage creates the necessary conditions for the possibility of their adaptive responses. Yet, neither this historical advantage nor the contemporary implications of this history for indigenous communities located within the same social-ecological landscape are acknowledged by the authors.

As demonstrated by the Resilience Alliance's lowveld study, supporters of the resilience framework often focus on abstract functions and structures of social institutions without examining deeper historical, political and cultural meanings (Cote and Nightingale 2011). Many of the social concepts used by resilience proponents fail to account for local power differentials and how these power differentials affect degrees of marginalization, which in turn shape degrees of resilience. As some scholars note, critical studies about "issues of power, authority and complex rationalities" (Cote and Nightingale 2011:485) are needed because there is a lack of focus on class, gender and power relations in the resilience literature.

The purpose of this thesis is to partially address this gap in the literature by applying a sociological approach to the concept of resilience. A sociological approach to resilience asks who benefits from adaptive responses, who is made vulnerable by such responses, and perhaps most importantly, why these benefits and vulnerabilities occur (Cote and Nightingale 2011). A sociological approach to resilience is particularly pertinent in cases of marginal social-ecological systems in which inhabitants and ecosystem functions are susceptible to systematic exploitation and prolonged injustice. Thus, in the case of Mahenye, Zimbabwe, this thesis explores how marginalization may be experienced and how such experience may shape the degrees of social-ecological resilience.

CHAPTER TWO - CASE DESCRIPTION

Mahenye is found in the lowveld region of Zimbabwe in southern Africa. To properly

situate Mahenye in a contemporary social context, I am providing a description and historical

overview at national, regional and local scales. I first describe the current socio-economic

condition of Zimbabwe. I then provide a brief general history of Zimbabwe, which is followed

by a regional overview of the lowveld. I then conclude with a local, site-specific discussion of

Mahenye, which includes a brief description of the Shangaan ethnic group.

Zimbabwe's Current Socio-economic Condition

Formerly a colony of the United Kingdom, Zimbabwe gained independence from a

white-minority administered political system, a former nation-state called Rhodesia, in 1980.

Since that time, Zimbabwe has been a parliamentary democracy governed by the Zimbabwe

African National Union - Patriotic Front (Zanu-PF) (CIA 2013), and the Zanu-PF president,

Robert Mugabe, has been Zimbabwe's head of government.

Zimbabwe has a population of 13.72 million (World Bank 2013). Indigenous African

ethnic groups comprise 98% of the population. Of these, 82% are Shona, 14% are Ndebele and

2% are groups such as the Tonga, Venda, Sotho and Shangaan (CIA 2013). Zimbabwe's white

population is less than 1% of the country's population, and mixed and Asian ethnicities make up

the remaining percentage of the population (CIA 2013).

Zimbabwe's GDP per-capita[5] is US$ 600, which ranks 227 out 229 countries in the world

(CIA 2013). This economic indicator reflects other inequality statistics indicative of Zimbabwe's

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[5] This statistic has been adjusted for purchasing power parity.

high poverty level. For example, 95% of the population is unemployed or underemployed, and 72% of the population lives below the national poverty line (CIA 2013; World Bank 2013). Zimbabwe's external debt, which is US$ 10.7 billion, presents numerous obstacles for economic development (UNDP 2013).

The United Nations Development Program's Human Development Index[6] scores Zimbabwe at .397, which is markedly low by comparison to the world's mean score of .675 (UNDP 2013). Risks of infectious disease are very high, with common occurrences of schistosomiasis, bacterial and protozoal diarrhea, hepatitis A, typhoid fever and dengue fever (CIA 2013). It is estimated that 14.3% of Zimbabwean adults are infected with HIV/AIDS (CIA 2013). Nearly 5,500 deaths per year are due to malaria (UNDP 2012). Life expectancy at birth is 51 years (World Bank 2013). Despite these poor health indicators, Zimbabwe's population is growing at an annual rate of 4.38% (CIA 2013).

A Short History of Zimbabwe

The stone ruins of Great Zimbabwe, a UNESCO World Heritage site, provides evidence of a thriving trade civilization populated by the Karanga[7] between the 11th and 15th centuries (UNESCO 2013). At their height, the Karanga controlled much of the Zimbabwean plateau and accrued wealth through the gold and ivory trade with societies as far away as China and Persia (UNESCO 2013). Contemporary Zimbabweans still celebrate this historic heritage and have adopted the Karanga totem of the steatite bird as a national emblem (Huffman 1985).

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[6] HDI is a composite index measuring three dimensions of development: long and healthy life, education and a decent standard of living. 1.0 represents a perfect score.

[7] The Karanga are a Shona-speaking ethnic group of Bantu heritage.

Southern Rhodesia

Karanga political power waned in the late 15th century, and not long after, Portuguese explorers began visiting the Zimbabwean plateau in the early 16th century, although it was not until the late 19th century that European settlement began in earnest (Pikirayi and Chirikure 2011). In 1889, the British South Africa Company (BSACo) led by Cecil Rhodes was granted a royal charter for the economic exploration of south-central Africa (Meredith 2005). A year later, Rhodes and other "pioneers" from BSACo invaded and conquered Shona-held territory known as Mashonaland (Meredith 2005). By 1893, BSACo had also conquered the Ndebele kingdom in Matabeleland, and successfully claimed the land between the Limpopo river and the Zambezi river, a territory slightly larger than Montana, as Southern Rhodesia (CIA 2013; Meredith 2005).

The arrival of BSACo's settlers set in motion a restructuring of the region's social, economic and ecological landscape (Moore 1993). The United Kingdom (U.K.) annexed Southern Rhodesia from BSACo in 1923 and allowed the resident white population to self-administer the colony (CIA 2013; Meredith 2005). Under the administrative structure of Southern Rhodesia's colonial state, traditional and customary ways of life for indigenous people were drastically altered:

> Taxes, colonial land policy, and the incorporation of rural Africans into a regional wage labor economy historically shaped gendered divisions of labor and gendered relationships to the local landscape. While men migrated to commercial farms, industrial centers, and cities in search of wage labor, women managed lands to which rural families claimed customary access (Moore 1993:385).

Rhodesia and Independence

The colonial state of Southern Rhodesia continued until 1965 when Ian Smith's white-minority government unilaterally declared independence from the U.K. (Merdith 2005). Smith's Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) was met with economic sanctions by the U.K.,

and eventually the United Nations (CIA 2013). Nevertheless, the country, then called Rhodesia, continued to expand economically and thousands of white immigrants arrived "attracted by an affluent lifestyle and a sub-tropical climate that made everyday life pleasurable" (Meredith 2005:320).

Although Smith continued to consolidate white-minority power in Rhodesia throughout the 1960s, two black nationalist movements, Zapu and Zanu, began to gain traction and inspire revolt (Meredith 2005). In 1972, Zanu launched a guerrilla war from outposts in Mozambique (Meredith 2007). The first four years of the Zanu-led insurgency were limited to the border areas of north-east Rhodesia and Mozambique, but the war intensified after Zanu's leader, Robert Mugabe, was released from a Rhodesian prison (Holland 2008; Meredith 2007). Mugabe fled across the Mozambique border in 1975, and by early 1976, Zanu guerrillas were infiltrating in mass into eastern Rhodesia (Meredith 2005). Around the same time, Zapu guerrillas opened a western front along the Rhodesian borders to Botswana and Zambia. Over the next three years, the guerrilla uprising spread to nearly every rural area in the country and threatened to overthrow the urban capital of Salisbury (Meredith 2005).

Pressured by U.N. sanctions and the now ubiquitous guerrilla war, Smith acquiesced to free elections in 1979 (CIA 2013). Mugabe's political party, called Zanu-PF, won 63% of the national vote, and in April 1980 Zanu-PF took control of the now newly independent country of Zimbabwe (CIA 2013; Meredith 2005). Zanu-PF has remained in power since these 1980 elections, and Mugabe was most recently reelected president in June 2013. However, many of Zimbabwe's political processes under Mugabe's long reign have been marked by corruption, intimidation, and considerable violence (CIA 2013; Meredith 2005).

Fast Track Land Reform Program

One of the more controversial policies instituted by Mugabe has been the Fast Track

Land Reform Program (FTLRP) enacted in 2000 (Matondi 2012; Meredith 2007). Since the

arrival of BSACo's colonial settlers over a century ago, land distribution has been a contentious

issue in Zimbabwe. During the liberation struggle, land reform favoring the native black

population was an emblematic theme, and in the thirty-three years since independence, it has

remained a bitterly contested issue in Zimbabwe (Matondi 2012).

The issue came to a head in the late 1990s when landless war veterans from the liberation

war began illegally appropriating farmland from white commercial farmers (Meredith 2007).

Pressured by these land occupations, the Zimbabwe government co-opted the movement in 2000

and implemented state-controlled expropriations under policies of FTLRP (Moyo 2011). The

stated aims of FTLRP's land redistribution have been to reverse racial patterns of land ownership

and broaden access to a more ethnically diverse population (Scoones et al. 2011).

Internationally, FTLRP has been a contentious policy with many in the international

community claiming that human rights have been infringed upon by the Zimbabwean state (CIA

2013; Meredith 2007). Furthermore, some in the international community have claimed a causal

relationship between FTLRP and Zimbabwe's collapse experienced in the mid-2000s (Meredith

2007). However, many contemporary scholars have argued that there have been positive

outcomes for farmers on resettled land and that ultimately the majority of Zimbabweans will

benefit from FTLRP by gaining access to land (Matondi 2012; Moyo 2011; Scoones et al. 2011).

Despite the controversy surrounding FTLRP, it is clear that land reform processes have

drastically reconfigured Zimbabwe's rural areas and not just on resettled farms, but also in the

communal areas as well (Scoones et al. 2011). Thus, social relations have been reconstituted

through the FTLRP land reform program and continue to shape social, political and ecology

relationships in Zimbabwe (Moyo 2011; Matondi 2012).

The Lowveld

The Zimbabwean national narrative includes the country's lowveld region. Technically,

'lowveld' is a biogeographical term describing a type of savanna found in southern Africa

(Wolmer 2005). "Low" refers to altitude under 600 meters (approximately 2,000 feet), and

"veld" is an Afrikaans word literally meaning "pasture"(Wolmer 2005). In Zimbabwe, the term

lowveld is generally only applied to the southeast region of the country despite the fact that other

areas of the country meet the term's technical criteria (Wolmer 2005).

Ecosystem

The lowveld is primarily within the government mandated natural region V, which is

designated for livestock raising. The lowveld region has two distinct soil zones consisting of

either clay or sand, and is dominated by either *mopane* woodland[8] or *miombo* vegetation[9],

dependent upon the soil zone (Scoones 1992). A semi-arid region, the lowveld's average annual

rainfall is below 450 millimeters, which makes it the driest region in Zimbabwe (Wolmer 2005).

When rain does fall, it is usually erratic and poorly distributed as most of the rain comes during

short-duration, high-intensity storms between October and February (Nyakatawa 1996). Issues

related to minimal precipitation have been recently compounded by major droughts in

1982-1984, 1991-1992 and 2001 (Scoones 1992; Wolmer 2005).

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[8] Mopane (*colophospermum mopane*) is a type of African hardwood tree found in southern Africa that grows in hot and dry areas between 660 to 3,770 ft in elevation (Scoones 1992).

[9] *Miombo vegetation* refers to an ecoregion of savanna intermittently distributed across the Central African Plateau, including central Zimbabwe. The ecoregion is characterized by a large number of tree species and sparse grass cover (WWF 2013).

Cattle in the Lowveld

The administration of colonial-Rhodesia considered the lowveld as an ideal cattle ranching environment and much investment was made into the commercial livestock of European settlers (Andersson and Cumming 2013; Mavedzenge et al. 2008). As a result, white-owned cattle ranches were separated from black-inhabited communal areas (Andersson and Cumming 2013; Wolmer 2005). This racially-based separation of livestock gave rise to a dualistic production system favoring European commercial interests (Mavedzenge et al. 2008). The most productive land was appropriated for European commercial use while African agro-pastoral activities were increasingly pushed to marginal, fragile land (Andersson and Cumming 2013). The colonial installment of a dualistic production system that favored European commercial interests over the indigenous population's subsistent livelihoods set in place a land pattern of vast, sparsely populated European ranches contrasted with densely population black communal areas, known as "native reserves" during the colonial period (Andersson and Cumming 2013). The legacy of this tenure pattern is still apparent in the lowveld today: "Much of the lowveld, and in particular its communal areas, is very remote and only accessible via 'dust' roads through massive, unpopulated ranches" (Wolmer 2005:261).

Gonarezhou National Park and Wildlife Conservation

While the colonial cattle lobby was perhaps the most powerful voice in constructing lowveld tenure and land-use patterns, a secondary colonial narrative cast the lowveld as pristine wilderness worthy of conservation (Andersson and Cumming 2013; Scoones et al. 2012; Wolmer 2005). As early as 1902, BSACo administrators in the lowveld established the 'Gona-re-shaw Forest' as land set aside for neither cattle ranches nor native reserves, but rather for a protected area whose use would be left for future determination (Andersson and Cumming 2013). Setting

aside this large swath of land allowed a quasi-game reserve to be established in 1934, which

limited human habitation in the area but still permitted both European and African hunting

(Andersson and Cumming 2013; Mombeshora and le Bel 2009). At the behest of the cattle lobby,

the game reserve was de-proclaimed in the 1940s to enable a tsetse fly control program

(Mombeshora and le Bel 2009)[10]. The interference of the cattle industry, however, did not stop

colonial administrators from continuing to partition protected wildlife areas from black-held

land. For example, in the 1960s, the district commissioner of Nuanetsi District (now Mwenezi)

established the Buffalo Bend Game Reserve, the Malipati Game Reserve and the Manjinji Pan

Bird Sanctuary (Anderson and Cumming 2013). Then, in 1969, the Gona-re-Zhou Game Reserve

was re-established (Andersson and Cumming 2013). This reserve was transformed into

Gonarezhou National Park (GNP) in 1975, with boundaries slightly smaller than the preceding

game reserves (see Appendix B) (Andersson and Cumming 2013; Mombeshora and le Bel 2009).

Even with the establishment of a national park, the interests of wildlife conservationists

remained secondary to the interests of those in the commercial cattle industry. For example,

liberalization of beef markets in the 1980s required Foot and Mouth disease control, and this

resulted in game-proof fencing the GNP, including sections of adjacent communal areas such as

Mahenye (see Appendix B) (Andersson and Cumming 2013).

However, the lowveld's commercial cattle industry was seriously damaged by the

1991-1992 drought, and over the next several years, numerous cattle ranches in the lowveld

consolidated to form private wildlife areas, such as the Save Valley and Malilangwe

Conservancies (Andersson and Cumming 2013; Scoones et al. 2012). As conservation areas and

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[10] Tsetse flies can transmit varying forms of trypanosomiasis to both human and domestic animal populations, and thus, represent a threat to commercial cattle operations. Prior to colonization, people in the lowveld had largely adapted to the presence of the tsetse fly by hunting and gathering wild foodstuffs rather than herding domestic cattle.

rhetoric grew, so too did foreign funding for such efforts. In 1998, GNP received a donation of US$5 million from the World Bank Global Environmental Facility to enhance biodiversity conservation and management in the park (Wolmer 2005). In addition, the lowveld's private conservancies received considerable backing, both ideological and financial, from influential international conservation organizations such as the World Wildlife Fund and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (Wolmer 2005).

International support of wildlife conservation in the lowveld has continued throughout the 2000s, especially since the establishment of the Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Park (GLTP) in 2002 (Andersson et al. 2013). The GTLP links the Limpopo National Park in Mozambique with the Kruger National Park in South Africa, and the GNP in Zimbabwe in addition to the smaller Manjinji Pan Sanctuary and Malipati Safari Area also in Zimbabwe's lowveld (Peace Parks Foundation 2013). The formation of the GLTP has created a powerful coalition of wildlife conservation organizations, field-based NGOs, commercial hunting operators and other conservation-related businesses all supported by substantial international backers (Scoones et al. 2012). For example, the Frankfurt Zoological Society granted US$13 million to the GNP in 2011 for anti-poaching programs and to keep out land invaders inspired by the land reform policies of the FTLRP (Scoones et al. 2012). Consequently, wildlife conservationists profoundly shape both the physical and social landscapes of rural communities in the lowveld, particularly for those communities living on the edge of protected areas (Andersson et al. 2013).

Wildlife conservation in Africa has often elevated the interests of wildlife over humans and has been used as a tool of dispossession (Carruthers 1995). In the lowveld, the promotion of wildlife conservation has raised the debate about wildlife versus people with particularly stark

racial overtones (Scoones et al. 2012). For example, the proclamation of the Gona-re-Zhou Game

Reserve displaced over 1,500 Shangaan families, who were forcibly relocated to the Matibi II

native reserve (Mombeshora and le Bel 2009; Wolmer 2005). Such evictions had multi-

dimensional consequences for displaced Shangaan communities. As Wolmer notes, "As well as

causing the loss of riverine plots and grazing land and communities' immediate transformation

into poachers, [Gona-re-Zhou] evictions caused the separation of certain lineages from the

physical basis of their identity—their ancestral land" (2005:265).

The debate about wildlife versus people has become even more acute since the

implementation of FTLRP in 2000 (Scoones et al. 2012). The national policy of land

redistribution has provided a platform for local communities to reassert traditional land claims

(Mombeshora and le Bel 2009). For example, in May 2000 the Shangaan-speaking Chitsa people

invaded a portion of the GNP to re-occupy a tract of land from which they were forcibly

removed when the park was established (Mombeshora and le Bel 2009). The Chitsa people

quickly established an agricultural community complete with boreholes, pole-and-mud schools

and a contract with Delta Breweries to grow sorghum in large quantity (Scoones et al. 2012).

Given traditional Shangaan livelihoods, commercial wildlife conservation is not a culturally

viable development option as Chitsa people prefer to cultivate the land and herd cattle (Scoones

et al. 2012). Such activities are clearly problematic for the GNP's administrators, particularly

given the park's obligations of a being a central member of the international GLTP. Over a

decade of contentious mediation resulted in a tedious agreement reached in 2011, though this

was only agreed upon after GNP received a substantial grant from the Frankfurt Zoology Society

to reenforce the park's boundaries (Scoones et al. 2012). The agreement has allowed the Chitsa

people to stay on their reclaimed land, but the new park boundary is now heavily defended and

any cattle straying beyond the established fence line are liable to be impounded or shot (Scoones

et al. 2012).

Mahenye

Nested within the contested landscape of the lowveld is the rural ward of Mahenye.

Located at the extreme southern end of Chipinge District near Zimbabwe's border with

Mozambique, Mahenye covers roughly 210 square kilometers (see Appendix B) (Murphree

2001). *Mopane* woodlands cover the ward and dense riverine vegetation near the Save river

supports a broad array of floral, fish and avian species (Murphree 2001). The alluvial soils found

in and around the riverine ecosystem are used for cultivating vegetables and dry-season grains

(Murphree 2001). Dry land cultivation of grains such as maize, sorghum and millet is

constrained by the lowveld's low and erratic rainfall, though many people try to cultivate small

gardens for subsistence (Murphree 2001). Cattle are important for both livelihoods and social

status (Mukamuri et al. 2013). Wildlife hunting and non-timber forest products, such as mopane

worms and Ilala palm (*Hyphenea petersiana*), are also important to the livelihoods of many

people in Mahenye (Mukamuri et al. 2013; Murphree 2001).

Mahenye's socio-political location has been characterized as discrete and isolated

(Murphree 2001). Mahenye peoples' eastern neighbors are located across an international border.

To the south-southwest is the vast expanse of the now unpopulated GNP. The Save river to

Mahenye's west separates the ward from Sangwe Communal Land, which is an entirely different

administrative district and providence. Perhaps most importantly, within Chipinge District, the

people of Mahenye are an ethnic minority given that all the other wards in the district are

populated with Shona-speaking Ndau people, and the Mahenye people come from an entirely

different linage of Shangaan-speaking people (Murphree 2001).

Shangaan ethnic group in Mahenye

Prior to European colonization the Shangaan populated a region spanning the south-east

of Zimbabwe, the north-east lowlands of what is now South Africa's Limpopo Province and

much of what is now Mozambique's Gaza and Inhambane Provinces (Mombeshora and le Bel

2009; Murphree 2001). Given the variability of rainfall in these areas, the Shangaan practiced

agriculture along rivers and streams, and they relied heavily on hunting, fishing, trading and

gathering wild foods (Mombeshora and le Bel 2009). Contemporary Shangaan people are

oriented towards livestock production (Mukamuri et al. 2013), but prior to tsetse fly controls,

they kept cattle on a limited scale (Mombeshora and le Bel 2009).

The onset of colonialism saw Shangaan populations in South Africa and Zimbabwe

displaced and compressed as conservation areas such as the GNP and Kruger National Park were

carved out of traditional Shangaan lands (Murphree 2001). In Zimbabwe, the Shangaan were

forced onto native reserves in either the Chiredzi District or the Chipinge District including

Mahenye ward, although many migrated to Mozambique (Murphree 2001).

Traditional Shangaan politics cluster around chiefs and headmen, and the royal Shangaan

linages near the GNP included Chief Tshovani, Headman Chitsa and Chief Mahenye

(Mombeshora and le Bel 2009). Despite colonial and post-colonial efforts to reduce the influence

of hereditary chiefs, Mahenye people have repeatedly displayed a solidarity with traditionally

legitimized authority figures through various government and district council elections

(Murphree 2001). Such political cohesion has allowed Mahenye to maintain its cultural

distinctiveness; however, adherence to traditional authority has also marginalized the community in national and district-level politics (Murphree 2001).

Mahenye and wildlife conservation

Mahenye is biogeographically contiguous with the GNP. When the park was formed during colonial rule, the Rhodesian government appropriated Shangaan territory for conservation purposes (Blaint and Mashinya 2006; Murphree 2001). The formation of the park forced the people of Mahenye to resettle across the Save river on the perimeter of their former land (Murphree 2001).

There was a double expropriation of rights to land and wildlife because the resettled group in Mahenye was denied access not only to their ancestral land and its natural resources but also to the wildlife in their newly settled ward (Blaint and Mashinya 2006; Murphree 2001). The colonial government claimed state-ownership of wildlife both inside and outside of protected areas; therefore, the resettled Shangaan people of Mahenye were forbidden to hunt as a livelihood option even in their new territory outside the park (Blaint and Mashinya 2006). This was not a minor prohibition because wildlife hunting was an integral component to Shangaan culture and livelihood strategies (Murphree 2001). As a centuries old community-in-practice, the people of Mahenye had evolved well-defined communal practices to make hunting offtakes sustainable (Murphree 2001).

It was thought the end of colonialism would restore Mahenye peoples' access to their land, but after independence, access and use was not restored (Blaint and Mashinya 2006; Murphree 2001). In fact, the newly formed Zimbabwean government reinforced their hold on the GNP as park officials intensified anti-poached raids into the Mahenye ward (Murphree 2001). The government believed that the foreign exchange generated by park visitors outweighed the

livelihood interests of Mahenye people (Murphree 2001). This decision antagonized the

relationship between Mahenye people and park officials, and consequently, problems with

poaching increased (Blaint and Mashinya 2006). Mahenye people could no longer see wildlife as

a culturally meaningful livelihood option, but rather, as a threat to life and property (Blaint and

Mashinya 2006; Murphree 2001).

Substantial steps were taken in 1982 to quell the conflict between GNP officials and

Mahenye people (Blaint and Mashinya 2006; Murphree 2001). A prominent rancher in the

lowveld intervened by proposing a community-based conservation program that would disperse

financial benefits of wildlife conservation to the Mahenye community (Murphree 2001). The

proposal suggested that wildlife within Mahenye ward would be recognized as property of the

community, with community rights to sell the wildlife on the safari hunting market and the

profits of commercial hunts going back to the community (Murphree 2001). In return, people of

of Mahenye would have to limit illegal wildlife takes and maintain wildlife corridors in the

Mahenye ward (Blaint and Mashinya 2006). This innovative proposal, eventually agreed to by all

parties, is today recognized as the conceptual precursor to Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE (Communal

Areas Management Program for Indigenous Resources) (Murphree 2001). Through the 1980s the

conservation program had difficulty working through issues related to the devolution of power

and distribution of financial benefits below the district level (Murphree 2001). In 1990, the

Mahenye program came under CAMPFIRE arrangements and throughout the following decade,

annual CAMPFIRE dividends averaged US$ 10 to US$ 30 per household (Blaint and Mashinya

2006).

Given the limitations of Mahenye's sport hunting capacity, the people of Mahenye turned to non-consumptive ecotourism to diversify their wildlife-related income activities (Murphree 2001). Once again at the behest of the prominent rancher who originally proposed Mahenye's conservation program, two upscale safari lodges were built along the Save river on Mahenye's communal land (Murphree 2001). In 1996, a contract between the private company Zimbabwe Sun Hotels and the Chipinge Rural District Council (RDC) was negotiated so that the hotel company would pay an annual percentage of the lodges' gross receipts to the RDC (Blaint and Mashinya 2006; Murphree 2001). The lodges still remain under CAMPFIRE arrangements, which entitles 75% of the fees paid to the RDC to be channeled back to the Mahenye ward (Blaint and Mashinya 2006).

For some time, the Mahenye CAMPFIRE project was a noted success. In 2001, the last time data were available, the program received an 89% performance rating from the national CAMPFIRE administration, with 75% being the standard for 'model' status (Blaint and Mashinya 2006). But legal and structural constraints, such as authority never devolving beyond the RDC to Mahenye ward and Zimbabwe's complex national bureaucracy, have limited community benefits (Murphree 2001). Furthermore, a study in 2006 found that participatory decision-making processes had broken down in the community and had resulted in distrust and disillusionment among the Mahenye people regarding local elites and businessmen who run conservation activities (Blaint and Mashinya 2006).

Summary

Mahenye is nested in a complex, contested landscape. The people of Mahenye are a marginal, ethnically distinct community with a history of dispossession and subjection.

Traditionally, the people of Mahenye have relied on agro-pastoral subsistence, but since the 1980s, wildlife conservation has been livelihood option for many households in Mahenye. The push for wildlife conservation remains a contentious issue in the community, especially now that benefits from the CAMPFIRE program are not equitably distributed. What's more, the construction of Mahenye as a conservation area has meant that residents' agricultural subsistence is routinely threatened by elephants and buffalo raiding gardens and fields (Murphree 2001). The multi-scaled political economy shaping Mahenye's socio-ecological landscape is complex and raises questions about the resilience of local livelihoods. Who wins and who loses as contested pathways towards resilient livelihoods are pursued?

CHAPTER THREE - LITERATURE REVIEW

Resilience thinking has developed across a wide array of disciplines over the last four decades. As explained in Chapter One, *resilience* is defined across the literature as the capacity of a system to undergo change while retaining the ability to properly function (Berkes and Ross 2013; Folke 2006; Magis 2010; Walker et al. 2004). The resilience framework initially emerged from the ecology literature and later expanded further by social-ecological systems scholars (Berkes and Ross 2013; Folke 2006). The resilience framework captures systematic relationships between society and nature and focuses on concepts such as thresholds and adaptive cycles (Walker and Salt 2006).

The resilience framework has also been adopted by health and psychology scholars (Berkes and Ross 2013; Brown and Westaway 2011; Magis 2010). This broader literature, while initially concerned with individual responses to adversity, has increasingly focused on community-level resilience, and has subsequently provided the conceptual background for resilience in the disaster literature (Berkes and Ross 2013; Brown and Westaway 2011; Magis 2010). Despite little overlap or cross citations between the two disciplines (i.e. social-ecological systems resilience and community resilience), there are many similarities and shared applications between the two disciplinary strands that have inspired efforts to create an integrated approach in both theory and practice (e.g., Berkes and Ross 2013; Magis 2010).

Increasingly, however, social scientists are recognizing limitations to resilience conceptualization, particular regarding the literature's failure to address complex social relations and conflicts related to class, gender and ethnicity (Cote and Nightingale 2011; Scoones 2009; Turner 2010). As Berkes and Ross note, "One relative silence in the community resilience

literature is the relevance of power relationships" (2013:17). Similarly, a lapse in addressing social complexity occurs in the social-ecological systems literature. For example, "A key reason why [the resilience literature] is so problematic is in part because it allows too much focus on the structures and 'functionality' of an institutional system, devoid of political, historical and cultural meaning" (Cote and Nightingale 2011:484).

Nevertheless, as a concept, resilience is increasingly applied to frame human development strategies and has been mainstreamed by such international institutions as the United Nations Development Program and the World Bank (Turner 2010). As scholars and practitioners increasingly address issues related to climate variability, the acceptance and application of the resilience framework will continue to grow. Thus, critical examination of the resilience approach is necessary so that the conceptualization and application of resilience adequately addresses social complexity and power relationships.

In this chapter, I first discuss the social-ecological systems strand of the resilience literature. This is be followed by a review of the community resilience strand. I close the chapter by providing several critiques of the resilience framework, and argue for the continuing development of a situated resilience approach.

Social-Ecological Systems Resilience
The concept of resilience emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s in ecology in the development of ecological stability theory (Berkes and Ross 2013; Folke 2006). Ecologist C.S. Holling (1973) postulated that natural systems intrinsically have multiple domains of stability and that resilience relates to the ability of a system to persist within one of these domains. In his argument, Holling challenged proponents of the steady state concept, which holds that the

balance of nature is a single-equilibrium system (1973). Rather, Holling posited, disequilibrium, or multi-stable states, is a stronger conceptualization of the balance of nature (1973). He arrived at this conclusion after he empirically reviewed the "success of [biological] populations [thriving] in widely fluctuating environments" (Fratkin 1986:270). Holling labeled these persistent populations as "resilient" given their ability to adapt and persist despite changes and disturbances to their habitat (1973).

As Holling and others continued to develop the resilience argument, they began to emphasize the integral link between society and nature. Proponents of resilience analyzed the interdependencies shared between social and ecosystem processes and found these interdependent systems to be greater than the sum of their parts (Liu et al. 2007). As a result, the developing resilience literature became focused on complex adaptive systems that included both social and ecological processes. This led to the adoption of the term *social-ecological system* in the resilience literature from about 2000 onward (Berkes and Ross 2013).

At its most basic level, the social-ecological systems scholars recognized two primary conditions: 1) social systems are inseparably tied to the ecosystems in which they are embedded and; 2) social-ecological systems are complex and adaptive (Walker and Salt 2006).

The first condition assumes that people and ecosystems form an integrated system in which social processes and ecosystem processes are coupled, interdependent and co-evolving (Berkes and Ross 2013). Because social and ecological processes form one interdependent system, there exists inevitable feedback responses between the interrelated domains. This means a change in one domain (i.e., social or ecological) will precipitate change in the other domain. Recognition of such interlinked feedback responses means social and ecological domains cannot

be understood as two separate systems but rather as one integrated system (Walker and Salt 2006).

The second condition, that social-ecological systems are complex and adaptive, is derived from Holling's disequilibrium concept (1973), or multi-equilibrium conditions (Berkes and Ross 2013). Because nature does not exist in a steady-state, social-ecological systems are unpredictable and exhibit unexpected change. The complexity of components within a given system makes the responses to the variability it experiences "surprising" (Holling 1986). Furthermore, as a complex system is continuously confronted with change, it demonstrates varying degrees of adaptation (Folke 2006). Adaptation is inevitable, but unpredictable, and can cause a system to cross into new regimes or into complete reconfigurations of the system (Walker and Salt 2006). Thus, because systems behave in a nonlinear way and can exist in different domains, social-ecological systems are understood as complex and adaptive (Folke 2006; Walker and Salt 2006).

Thresholds and Adaptive Cycles
Beyond recognizing the two primary social-ecological conditions discussed above, the social-ecological systems literature highlights two additional key dimensions of resilience. These are *thresholds* and *adaptive cycles*. Thresholds relate to the boundaries at which a system "flips" into a new regime or a new state characterized by significantly different behavior (Walker and Salt 2006). Social-ecological systems, though affected by many variables, are usually driven by just a small number of controlling, and often slow-moving, variables (Walker et al. 2004). If even one of these controlling variables goes beyond its threshold, the system is fundamentally altered and begins to behave in a new way. Often, the crossing of a threshold causes undesirable or unforeseen surprises, and makes recovery to a system's former state difficult to improbable

(Walker et al. 2004). A resilient system has the capacity to absorb shocks and disturbances, and thereby avoid crossing the thresholds of controlling variables and entering a regime change.

The second key dimension of the resilience concept discussed in the social-ecological systems literature is adaptive cycles. Adaptive cycles refer to how an ecosystem organizes itself and responds to change (Walker and Salt 2006). In the social-ecological systems literature, the various ways in which a system organizes and responds to change has been categorized as a progression of four phases: 1) rapid growth; 2) conservation; 3) release; 4) reorganization (Carpenter et al. 2001; Folke 2006; Gunderson and Holling 2002; Walker and Salt 2006). The progression of these four phases is considered an adaptive cycle (Gunderson and Holling 2002).

The rapid growth phase occurs under those conditions when resources are most available and are entrepreneurially exploited so that exponential change occurs in the system (Folke 2006; Walker and Salt 2006). Walker and Salt (2006) suggest that during this phase the components within a given system are weakly interconnected and loosely regulated.

Incrementally, the rapid growth phase transitions to the conservation phase. During this second phase, growth stasis and rigidity occurs within the system (Folke 2006). Resources are increasingly stored and used efficiently (Walker and Salt 2006). However, increasing efficiency decreases system flexibility because redundant behaviors are eliminated. As a result, components within the system become more interdependent, and the system as a whole becomes more vulnerable to disturbances. Although the system is increasingly stable, it is less resilient over a range of conditions (Walker and Salt 2006).

The next transition, from conservation to release, can occur in a flash when a disturbance to the system causes an unraveling and release of the system's resources (Walker and Salt 2006).

A major perturbation may cause the loss of some of the system's components and attributes such as certain species or social memory (Carpenter et al. 2001). This is a phase of chaotic destruction but "becomes a source for reorganization and renewal" (Walker and Salt 2006:78).

Out of the release phase's destruction comes a recreation of a new system through the fourth reorganization phase. In this quick period of change, new actors (e.g., species or political groups) and ideas take hold and shape the future of the system (Walker and Salt 2006). The reorganization phase is relatively brief, yet this is where major change occurs and sets the course for next iteration of the system (Carpenter et al. 2001).

As the reorganization phase ends, a new phase of rapid growth emerges, and the adaptive cycles begins anew. As Walker and Salt note, the new rapid growth phase may be similar to the previous rapid growth phase, or it may "precipitate a collapse into a degraded state (in social systems, a poverty trap)" (2006:79).

Importantly, adaptive cycles occur across temporal and spatial scales and are influenced by the interactions and interdependencies of these cross-scale dynamics (Folke 2006; Walker and Salt 2006). The notion of nested adaptive cycles is captured in a concept called *panarchy*, which refers to hierarchical sets of adaptive cycles at different scales and their cross-scale effects (Gunderson and Holling 2002; Walker and Salt 2006). Panarchy explains the processes of complexity and uncertainty in the social-ecological resilience literature by describing the intricate cross-scale effects of nested adaptive cycles that are not necessarily predictable (Folke 2006).

Community Resilience

As mentioned previously, a second school of resilience thinking has emerged independently from the social-ecological systems literature, and consequently, focuses on different questions and dimensions related to resilience at the community level rather than at the social-ecological systems level. This second strand of resilience thinking initially came from the mental health and psychology literature because of scholars' interest in why certain people respond more effectively than others to difficult life experiences (Berkes and Ross 2013). Recently, however, the concept of resilience from the mental health and psychology literature has been scaled up to the community level, particularly as to how resilience relates to community response and recovery to disasters (Paton and Johnston 2001). The community resilience literature defines resilience as the capacity of a community to withstand disturbances while maintaining its social infrastructure (Adger 2000). Additionally, a community's resilience is often understood as the capacity of its social system to mobilize community resources and work toward a communal objective (Berkes and Ross 2013).

Studies in this strand of the resilience literature are focused on identifying community strengths and behaviors that build resilient processes and enable resilient responses to disturbances (Berkes and Ross 2013; Magis 2010). Across the community resilience literature there is an agreed upon set of key community attributes that strengthen resilience. These attributes include such factors as social networks, proactive community leadership and adaptive social learning that foster social inclusion and a sense of belonging (Berkes and Ross 2013). Scholars have recognized that these key community attributes are often outcomes of collective action that rely upon a community's capacity to self-organize and its sense of agency (Berkes and

Ross 2013; Magis 2010). Thus, self-organization and agency are key concepts in the community resilience literature.

Another key concept in this literature relates the capacity of a community to mobilize and engage its resources (Magis 2010). For communities confronted with change and disturbance, having diverse and redundant community resources is an important dimension of resilience (Berkes and Ross 2013). It is noted in the literature that analyzing the diversity and redundancy of community resources plays an important role in "shifting the focus away from the quantitative availability of *resources*, and towards the scope of available *response options*" (Cote and Nightingale 2011:478, emphasis in original).

Vulnerability

A community's availability of response options is contingent upon two dimensions that are discussed in the community resilience literature. These dimensions are: *vulnerability* and *access* (Wisner et al. 2003). The concept of vulnerability has been developed in the fields of disaster research and research on entitlements, and increasingly, elements of vulnerability research from these two fields is contributing to the analysis of vulnerability in social-ecological systems and sustainable livelihoods (Adger 2006). Vulnerability is most often conceptualized in the literature as being the composite of characteristics of a person or group and their environment that shape exposure to a natural hazard, and capacity to cope with and recover from the impact of a natural hazard (Adger 2006; Wisner et al. 2003). Proponents of vulnerability as a resilience concept generally take the position that, while hazards may be natural, disasters are an outcome of complex social processes (Bankoff 2004; Wisner et al. 2003). Thus, as a concept, vulnerability includes the totality of linkages and relationships in a given social situation that produce the necessary conditions for a disaster to occur (Oliver-Smith 2004).

Vulnerability relates to community resilience in that the degree of vulnerability is shaped by the accumulation, or erosion, of resilience factors such as adaptive capacity and self-organization (Adger 2006). Weakened dimensions of resilience are thus more likely to occur under conditions of marginality, which creates mutually reinforcing sources of vulnerability (Wisner 2003). Thus, vulnerable populations are those at risk not simply because they are exposed to a hazard, but more importantly, because they are economically, geographically and politically marginalized (Bankoff 2004; Blakie and Brookfield 1987). As Wisner et al. note,

> Most people are vulnerable because they have inadequate livelihoods, which are not resilient in the face of shocks, and they are often poor. They are poor because they suffer specific relations of exploitation, unequal bargaining and discrimination within the political economy, and there may also be historical reasons why their homes and sources of livelihood are located in resource-poor areas. (2003:55)

Access

The second dimension, access, is closely integrated with the concept of vulnerability. Access refers to the accessibility of power, structures and resources to specific individuals, families, communities and classes (Wisner et al. 2003). Those with better access to information, legal rights, social networks and all iterations of capital (i.e., human, social, physical, financial and natural capitals) are less vulnerable and in a better position to avoid disaster (Wisner et al. 2003).

The conceptualization of access is utilized in the community resilience literature to help researchers understand the patterned distribution of wealth and power "because these act as major determinants of the level of vulnerability across a range of people" (Wisner et al. 2003:93). Because access to resources is based on social and economic relations, the conceptualization of access is rooted in underlying political economies (Wisner et al. 2003).

Thus, proponents of the access model (see Wisner et al. 2003) consider structures of dominations and social relations as vital determinants of vulnerability.

Given its influence in determining degrees of vulnerability, access is an important dimension of community resilience. People with greater access to social and material resources have a larger availability of response options when they are confronted with change and perturbation. The inverse is true for those lacking access to social and material resources. In such cases, limited access can actively deplete a household or community's resilience. For example, sociologist Dessalegn Rahmato (1988) found that poor and disadvantaged households in rural Ethiopia were initially able to recover from a disaster such as famine, but in their recovery they often depleted the availability and access to future response options, which thus compromised their resilience to the next famine.

As Adger (2006) notes, the points of convergence between vulnerability and social-ecological resilience research are more numerous and fundamental than the points of divergence. More broadly, Berkes and Ross (2013) argue for an integrated resilience approach given the similarities and shared applications between the social-ecological systems and community resilience schools. Ultimately, insights from these interdisciplinary schools of resilience demonstrate the co-evolutionary nature of social and natural systems, and the value of these insights forms a rationale that perhaps resilient ecosystems and resilient societies are the best form of sustainability for all (Adger 2006).

Critiques of Resilience

Despite its growing acceptance and application, the resilience literature has not been without its critics. Social scientists, particularly those from a political ecology approach, have

argued against resilience proponents. The concept of resilience has been criticized as an abstract structural-functionalist notion that fails to account for community heterogeneity and power relationships (Berkes and Ross 2013; Cote and Nightingale 2011; Folke 2006; Leach 2008; Turner 2010). For such critics, the structural-functionalist approach to resilience is particularly disconcerting in that the resilience concept has slipped from descriptive to prescriptive applications and is increasingly being used as a tool for systems management (Cote and Nightingale 2011; Leach 2008; Turner 2010).

For example, the resilience literature has identified adaptive capacity as a vital attribute of resilient systems (Magis 2010). Therefore, proponents of resilience have used adaptive capacity to frame policies of adaptive governance in relation to sustainable resource use (Folke 2006). However, critics claim that both the conceptualization and application of adaptive capacity, and more broadly the resilience concept as a whole, has been "devoid of political, historical and cultural meaning" (Cote and Nightingale 2011:484). Political ecologists have argued that governance systems are embedded within place-specific cultural and political complexities (Moore 1993). Thus, any institutional design that fails to account for underlying social complexities cannot adequately govern sustainable resource use in a socially meaningful way. This means the capacity of a given system to adapt to change must be framed in the historical context and cultural values of the actors involved (Cote and Nightingale 2011).

Political ecologists have also highlighted the complexity of competing interests within a singular community (Argawal and Gibson 1999; Moore 1993). Researchers from the political ecology school have argued that the notion of homogenous communities with shared interests and goals are not representative of social reality. Instead, political ecologists posit that

communities are heterogeneous and conflicted by competing interests and divergent agendas (Moore 1993). They argue that the resilience literature often treats communities as homogenous entities that share a common purpose (Turner 2010).

Ultimately, the critiques of resilience thinking demonstrate that power relationships have not been adequately addressed in the resilience literature (Berkes and Ross 2013). Many in the social sciences recognize that power relationships are primary drivers of social organization and social change (e.g., Foucault 1972). More specifically, some environmental sociologists posit that power operates in and through social-ecological systems in ways that link society and environment together (Cote and Nightingale 2011; Wisner et al. 2003). For example, the dichotomy between colonial power structures and traditional tribal autonomy in Zimbabwe creates power differentials that elevate colonial modes of resource conservation over traditional livelihood practices of indigenous communities (e.g., the enforcement of fortress-style conservation in the form of national parks and private conservancies has displaced indigenous practices of sustainable wildlife harvests). Power produces dynamic pressures that define how individuals and people groups relate to the natural world. Thus, by not fully engaging the social complexities of power dynamics and how power shapes human-environment interactions, the resilience literature is missing a fundamental aspect of social-ecological processes and limitations on resilience, especially community resilience.

Situated Resilience
Despite these critiques of the resilience literature, the resilience framework has proven to be a productive middle ground for social and environmental scientists (Cote and Nightingale 2011). Collective research agendas in this literature are addressing the challenges faced by

human-environment interactions under stresses caused by global environmental and social

change (Adger 2006). As such, the resilience framework should not be written off by critical

social scientists, but rather, productively critiqued to make the conceptualization and application

more responsive to social complexities and intersectionalities:

> When power and knowledge are conceptualized as dynamic and situated processes –
> inherent to socio-environmental systems rather than externalities that need to be
> controlled – and agency distanced from self- determining, rational actors, the focus of
> empirical investigations and theoretical development shifts to political and ethical
> questions as crucial drivers of social-ecological outcomes rather than 'inconvenient'
> politics that can be simply sorted out through institutional design. (Cote and Nightingale
> 2011:484)

This push for "situated resilience" attempts to address the question of resilience of what and for

whom by situating complex processes of power within social-ecological systems (Cote and

Nightingale 2011). Such a critical question is particularly pertinent in cases of marginal social-

ecological systems in which inhabitants and ecosystem functions are vulnerable to systematic

exploitation and injustice.

Vulnerability research from the disaster literature provides a point of convergence for

situated resilience and mainstream resilience approaches. As Bankoff (2004) argues,

vulnerability is the historical consequence of political, economic, social processes. Therefore, in

the conceptualization of vulnerability as it relates to human–environment interactions, power

relationships are understood as inherent to social-ecological systems. Indeed, Wisner et al.

emphasize this by stating, "Root causes [of vulnerability] reflect the exercise and distribution of

power in a society" (2003:53). Recognizing unequal power distribution in a society as a "root

cause" of vulnerability allows processes of marginalization to be understood as key limitations to

adaptive capacity. Thus, the conceptualization of vulnerability within the disaster literature

provides a powerful analytical tool to situate power relations within broader social-ecological processes of the resilience framework.

Traditional ecological knowledge

A final key concept and point of convergence for situated resilience and mainstream resilience approaches relates to traditional ecological knowledge (TEK). TEK is a body of knowledge that is generationally accumulated by a group of people living in close relationship to their local environment and is developed through specific practices of resource use (Berkes et al. 2000; Barthel et al. 2010; Gandiwa 2012). It consists of "biophysical observations, skills, and technologies, as well as social relationships such as norms and institutions, that structure human–environmental interactions" (Gandiwa 2012:256). TEK is recognized in the resilience literature as an important mechanism of resilience because TEK stores social memory, which is vital for adaptive learning (Folke 2006).

The influence of TEK in shaping human-environment interactions leaves it at a critical juncture for understanding the degree of resilience in any particular social-ecological system. TEK contributes to the manner in which a community of users interacts with the local, natural environment. For example, traditional hunting practices by the people of Mahenye had evolved centuries-old communal regulations that ensured sustainable hunting offtakes without depleting the stock of available wildlife (Murphree 2001). TEK also contributes to the manner in which community members interact with one another and external groups as well. Thus, TEK's role in both the internal and external power relations of a given community make it a key concept for a situated resilience approach. The study of TEK in a situated resilience approach opens space for occluded knowledge-bases to contribute to understanding a social-ecological system's resilience

by asking how resilience might be conceptualized by a local community given the framework of their TEK.

Summary

Resilience thinking has increasingly become a dominant framework for sustainable development practices. The conceptual tools of resilience rightfully embrace complexity and change over time occurring at a range of spatial and temporal scales. The resilience literature has been a productive literature for social and environmental scientists to work together in confronting the multitude of social-ecological challenges across the world. However, the growing application of the resilience framework for systems management and sustainable development requires a critical approach. What is being promoted as resilient? For whom do resilient processes benefits? Such questions must consider the dynamics of power relationships that intersect through class, gender and ethnicity and are situated in historical and cultural contexts.

CHAPTER FOUR - DATA AND METHODS

From a resilience perspective, I am asking the following research question: *to what degree has the experience of marginalization influenced, if at all, the social-ecological resilience in Mahenye, Zimbabwe?* To explore this question, I sought to describe the experiences and perceptions of the Mahenye people, particularly those with agro-pastoral practice and knowledge, to understand to what extent power dynamics have shaped the Mahenye peoples' social-ecological resilience.

Since the relationship between resilience and power is a relatively unexplored topic, I chose a qualitative methodology to address the research question. I selected this approach because qualitative methods are useful in uncovering substance embedded in a social phenomenon of which otherwise little is known (Strauss and Corbin 1998). Because the relationship between resilience and power is relatively unexplored, I did not intend to test preconceived ideas about this relationship and qualitative methods are best suited for such an approach. Moreover, my objective for this study was to understand marginalization and resilience from the experience and perceptions of the Mahenye people, and researchers using a qualitative methodology can reveal experiences from the perspective of others. Thus, a qualitative approach was the best fit for my research. Specifically, I used oral history as my data collection method and analyzed the data using a constructivist grounded theory approach (Evans 2013).

Oral History

Oral history is a qualitative method developed by historians but employed by a broad range of social scientists (Thompson 1988; Warren and Karner 2010). In using oral history

methodology, the researcher gathers data about past events, people, decisions, and processes

from the subjective perspective of the observers and participants of that particular past (Truesdell

N.d.). In this way oral history focuses on the meaning of past events to individuals involved

rather than the events themselves (Thompson 1988; Warren and Karner 2010). Because an oral

history is "embedded in temporal, geographical, political, cultural and social fields" (Warren and

Karner 2010:27), the researcher can capture participants' meanings attached to historical events

to describe their experiences of their social fields (Warren and Karner 2010). . Therefore, oral

history helps researchers describe complex human experiences.

Memory is the foundation of oral history and is recognized as a subjective phenomenon

because memory is "shaped by the present moment and individual psyche" (Truesdell N.d:1).

Oral history allows the researcher to capture how an individual's present-day values and actions

have been informed by his or her past memories. Additionally, memory plays an important role

in shaping traditional ecological knowledge (TEK). Current literature about social-ecological

resilience highlights the importance of historical oral communication in storing and sharing

memories that shape local culture and inform what and how livelihoods are pursued (Barthel et

al. 2010). Such memories form the basis of TEK, which is most often learned and acquired

through oral transmission and physical demonstration (Barthel et al. 2010; Gandiwa 2012).

Therefore, oral history, which is grounded in memory, is an appropriate data collection method

for capturing the TEK passed down from generation to generation by individuals in Mahenye.

Sampling

Purposive sampling was used to select participants for this study. Research participants

from Mahenye were identified as individuals who had personally experienced the functions and

services of Mahenye's ecosystem either through agricultural or pastoral practices. I selected such

participants because current literature identifies the personal experiences of participation (e.g.,

farming or raising livestock) as important for the acquisition and transmission of social memory

related to social-ecological processes (Barthel et al. 2010).

My purposive sampling was aided by several key informants and gatekeepers (Warren

and Karner 2010) in Mahenye. These were several individuals with whom I had good rapport

and were well connected and respected within the community. I discussed at length the proposed

plan for this study with these select individuals and informed them of the necessary

characteristics of potential participants relevant to this study. I asked these key informants and

gatekeepers to identify experienced agropastoralists in the Mahenye community. Thus, the

purposive sampling focused on individuals with in-depth knowledge and experience of

ecosystem functions as well as the historical struggles of marginalization in the country.

Sampling and collection of oral histories continued until a saturation point was hit wherein no

new themes emerged from the oral histories. In total, I collected oral histories from 17

individuals. Two of the participants sampled for this study fall within what Miles and Huberman

identify as "politically important cases" (1994:28). These were salient participants because they

connected the study to several politically sensitive topics, and they were purposively sampled for

their political importance.

Prior to my fieldwork, I had identified gender is as an important characteristic of

marginalization because gendered social relations in Zimbabwean society impact an individual's

experience of social processes. Especially in rural communities, gender is an important

dimension in shaping what and how particular daily activities are pursued and even how one

interacts with the local environment (Schroeder 1997). Furthermore, gender can impact the degree of social benefits enjoyed by an individual. Thus, one's experience of marginalization can be greatly influenced by one's gender. Initially, I had planned to gather an equal proportion of oral histories from females and males to insure a perspective on gendered relations. However, once in the field, collecting oral histories from willing women participants proved difficult. My research visit coincided with the rainy season in during which most women work long hours tending their fields and in addition to their other household responsibilities. In fact, even the elderly women in Mahenye spend long hours farming. Thus, some women who were approached for this study replied that they could not spare the time for the oral history collection. Consequently, in the sample, five individuals were women and 12 were men.

Data Collection

Once potential participants were identified, my primary community gatekeeper contacted the potential participants and informed them about the study. Initial participant contact came from this community gatekeeper in order to establish the study's legitimacy in the community. If a potential participant agreed to take part in the study, I then met with the participant and provided her or him with a verbal explanation of the study. This explanation included the participant's rights as a research participant as well as the means of the data collection. The script for this verbal explanation was taken from the University of Montana's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved informed consent form.[11] Several key informants from the community indicated that written consent would make potential participants wary of participating given the skeptical disposition of many community members towards foreign researchers. Thus, once the

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[11] See Appendix C for IRB-approved informed consent form.

informed consent form was read aloud, the participant provided his or her verbal approval/ disapproval.

If approval was given, I proceeded with gathering the participant's oral history. My oral history collection took place in accessible and public settings, such as open *kraals* and community boreholes. My fluency in the local language was not adequate to collect an oral history unassisted; therefore, I hired a translator who could speak the local language. I also insured that the translator was not a resident of Mahenye so as to avoid any potential social sensitivities that may have influenced participants' responses. Prior to collection, the translator and I discussed at length the interview guide in order to decrease the potential of misinterpretation.[12] We also cross-checked the translation of difficult words or phrases with my key informant who is fluent in English and Shangaani.

Because my research question is focused on the experience of marginalization and how that experience shapes resilient livelihood strategies, I focused my collecting of oral histories on participants' experiences and recollections of current and past agropastoral practices and the social context surrounding these practices. Participants were asked to recount particular memories of influential events, former and/or current struggles and hardships, and personal perceptions of and meanings attached to Mahenye's social-ecological system. I asked questions in English, which the translator then translated in Shangaani. Most participants replied in either Shangaani or Shona and their responses were translated back to me in English by the translator; however, three participants were confident in their English and chose to give their oral histories in English.

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[12] See Appendix D for interview guide.

Participants' oral histories were digitally recorded. These recordings included the original responses given by the participants in the language of their choice, as well as the translation of their responses if they were given in either Shangaani or Shona.

Each participant was given the option to remain anonymous. This is not a common practice for oral histories; however, it is acceptable when the data collected originates from a historically marginalized or oppressed population.[13] All of the participants elected to remain anonymous.

It is standard practice for oral histories to be archived in a public institution (Thompson 1988); however, in some cases, the sensitivity of the oral histories may discourage participants from releasing their histories for public archiving. In such instances, personal archiving can be used, wherein a copy of the participant's transcript is given to the participant for him or her to use at his or her own discretion.[14] In this study, a copy of each participant's transcript will be released to the participants for personal archiving once the transcripts have been securely delivered to my key informant in Mahenye.

Transcription was done after I returned from my field work. I first assigned a pseudonym to each participant. Then, the digital recording of each oral history was transcribed verbatim based on the English translations captured in the audio files. Once all 17 oral histories were transcribed, I proceeded with data analysis.

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[13] The technique of anonymous oral histories comes from a discussion I had with Dr. Janet Finn from UM's Social Work department. She has experience collecting oral histories from marginalized populations and has used this technique in such situations.

[14] This is another oral history technique explained to me by Dr. Finn that is employed when the population concerned is historically marginalized and/or oppressed.

Constructionist Grounded Theory Analysis

I analyzed participants' oral history transcripts using a constructionist grounded theory approach. Of the several grounded theory approaches (e.g., classic, Straussian or constructionist) (Evans 2013), I found the constructionist approach was the best fit for the purpose of this study. Constructionist grounded theory is rooted in the assumption that "knowledge, truth, reality and theory are . . . contingent and based on human perception and experience" (Howell 2013:16). Thus, constructionists question objectivity and positivism. Given the focus of my study on Mahenye peoples' perceptions and experiences and my own perspective as a sociological researcher, a constructionist grounded theory analysis was most appropriate for my data analysis.

Another rationale for constructionist grounded theory analysis was that, in contrast to classic grounded theorists, constructionists allow for specific questions and a review of the literature about a particular substantive area to be formed prior to data collection (Evans 2013). My review of the resilience literature allowed me to focus on the specific relationship between power and resilience. Although this research prior to data collection did not allow me to approach the data without preconceived questions and assumptions, an objective approach to the issue under study was not possible given my own positionality in Mahenye (e.g., my role as a non-indigenous researcher or my role as director of a non-profit that operates the region). Thus, like other constructionists, I do not form specific questions from a review of the literature prior to data collection, which would prevent grounded theory analysis.

In each transcription, I elected to manually code the data rather than rely on software such as NVivo. This decision was made due to limited time for analysis and the prevalence of four emergent themes in the data that became apparent during my time in the field. These four themes will be discussed in the 'Findings' chapter of this thesis.

Coding by hand, I formed two types of codes (open and axial codes) common to qualitative analysis (Strauss and Corbin 1998). With my initial open codes, I looked for "patterns of action and interaction between and among various types of social units" (Strauss and Corbin 1998:278). These patterns were given a general thematic categorization. For instance, the following excerpt was coded as 'non-beneficial CAMPFIRE:' "It is not actually helping but you can go borrow money from CAMPFIRE. It is just a loan. It doesn't help because you have to pay it back. It is not benefitting us at all" (Luvani 1/15/14). Over 30 open codes of this nature were created and placed in my code book.

These open codes were then analyzed to form axial codes, which reconnect open codes across categories and themes (Strauss and Corbin 1998). My axial codes were created from the definitive emergence of the four themes that became apparent during data collection. For example, the previously mentioned open code of 'non-beneficial CAMPFIRE' was attached to the axial code of 'negative perceptions of conservation.' I color coded each axial code and placed colored tabs to connect open codes to their corresponding axial code. Over 100 tabs were used to organize the data vis-a-vis the axial codes. Once the data was organized by axial codes, I noted the various thematic dimensions of each axial code on the corresponding tab. For instance, the previously mentioned open code of 'non-beneficial CAMPFIRE' that was recoded axially as 'negative perceptions of conservation' was labeled with a 'CF' to indicate the thematic relationship to CAMPFIRE.

I continued to code each transcript with open and then axial codes until all transcripts had been coded. All of the axially-coded transcripts were then combined in order to process the axial codes across transcripts. These coded transcripts totaled over 137 pages. I concluded my analysis

once all the transcripts had been processed across axial codes and these codes were verified

against the saturation point of the four emergent themes that became apparent during data

collection (Strauss and Corbin 1998).

CHAPTER FIVE - FINDINGS

By analyzing the oral histories collected in Mahenye, I found four emergent themes in the data: 1) a perceived loss of cultural connectedness in the younger generations of Mahenye people vis-a-vis their rejection of the older generation in Mahenye; 2) a negative perception of Mahenye's traditional authority; 3) a negative perception of wildlife conservation initiatives in the area, particularly regarding Gonarezhou National Park and CAMPFIRE; and 4) perceived limitations of the local economy. This chapter summarizes these themes as expressed by the oral history participants.

Perceived Loss of Cultural Connectedness

The most recurrent theme across the data was participants' perception of declining cultural connectedness among the younger generations of Mahenye people. This declining cultural connectedness was often perceived in relation to a rejection of the older generations of Mahenye people by the younger generations. Participants expressed that the social norms, values and practices historically held by Mahenye people are being rejected by the younger generations, and participants described these perceptions of declining historic culture in various anecdotes.

Marriage and culture

Most participants spoke of changing marriage practices and norms in relation to their perceptions of declining cultural connectedness among the younger generations. In the past, Mahenye people waited until they were well into adulthood before marrying; however, the practice of waiting for maturation before marriage is weakening according to most participants. As explained by Vumbhoni,

> These young kids, these modern lives, it has become strong. I don't think there is any way back. They marry very early. Small boys in Grade 6 or Grade 7. But in the past we

were really grown us and knew, 'Ah! I am old enough now to have a child.' We married much later than now. (1/17/14)

Another participant, Mafanato, reflected this observation when he stated, "[Young people] are marrying too early. For example, in my day we were still marrying later. I did not marry until I was 35. It was okay. But now, very young boys get married" (1/18/14). Vumbhoni and Mafanato's anecdotes encapsulate the perspective of nearly every participant in this study that increasingly Mahenye people are getting married at a younger age, which in their opinion weakens the historic culture of Mahenye people.

According to the participants, the changes in marriage practices and norms have negatively impacted the cultural cohesion of Mahenye people. When probed about why changing marriage practices were problematic, participants responded with comments such as, "It seems that our culture has died . . . There are no longer any principles pertaining to our culture" (Vumbhoni, 1/17/14). Another participant responded by saying, "We are no longer the Shangaans we used to know ourselves" (Luvani 1/15/14). Clearly, marriage practices and norms contribute to participants understanding of their cultural identity as Shangaans. Participants described how in the past strict cultural norms, such as completing initiation rituals, paying *labola*[15] and practicing abstinence before marriage, dictated how, when and to whom one could get married. From the perspective of the participants, the loss of these norms and values has altered the Shangaan cultural identity of Mahenye people and led to disagreeable sexual behavior:

> The Shangani name no longer bears the same respect that it used to during my day. Now the Shangani are known as prostitutes because of these children coming up these days. Long back we were respected because they knew if you wanted to marry a woman, a

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[15] Labola is a token, financial or material, given by the groom's family to the bride's family.

good Shangani, you get someone who is very dignified but now it is different . . . Shangaan people are all prostitutes. (Sebuku 1/17/14)

Language and culture

Declining use of the local Shangaan language was another dimension of weakening cultural connectedness among Mahenye people as described by the participants. Some participants noted their own pride in the language but expressed fear of the rejection of their language by the younger generations. As one participant explained, "I place value on the Shangaan language . . . but slowly it is dying because now the young people prefer the Shona dialects at the expense of Shangaan" (Chitsa 1/15/14). The Shona language, in addition to English, is the official language of Zimbabwe. Both languages are taught in primary and secondary schools, including Mahenye's two schools. Beyond school, Shona is also utilized as the primary language of commerce in Zimbabwe. Thus, from the perspective of Shangaan speaking people, contemporary Zimbabwean society is made meaningful through the lexicon of foreign languages. Consequently, as a marginal ethnic group, the Shangaan in Mahenye must learn Shona if they are to actively participate in modern Zimbabwean society.

As explained by several participants, the learning of Shona has negatively influenced the value of the Shangaan language: "[Old people] are trying to pass it down but the young people just say, 'Ah! Speaking Shangani is old fashioned! I don't want to be seen as old fashioned. Why should I speak Shangani?'" (Chitsa 1/15/14). Such a comment demonstrates the deceasing value of the marginal Shangaan language given the dominance of Shona in contemporary Zimbabwe, particularly for Mahenye youths eager to assimilate with contemporary society.

Language is a foundational element of cultural identity. Therefore, the declining use of Shangani in Mahenye is changing the identity of Mahenye people: "Shona is so dominant.

[Young people] don't want to be seen as Shangaan" (Bwala 12/30/13). Speaking Shona allows the younger generations to identify with contemporary Zimbabweans rather than be associated with historic Shangaan culture that is often stereotyped as "old-fashioned." As a result, many participants expressed fear in what they see as diminishing Shangaan culture in Mahenye because of the decreasing value of the Shangaan language: "I am afraid it is, our culture, it is going to be wiped away" (Chitsa 1/15/14).

A point should be made that Shangani is spoken by many Shangaan ethnic groups outside of Mahenye. As described in Chapter Two, Shangaan people are spread across a region encompassing South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe and the Shangaan language continues to be spoken across this region. As a result, the entirety of the Shangaan language and culture is not necessarily threatened with extinction. The views expressed by the participants regarding the declining use of Shangani relates solely to their localized experience in Mahenye where they have perceived a decline in historic Shangaan culture.

TEK and culture

Similar to the views expressed about their local language, participants also spoke about declining traditional ecology knowledge (TEK) amidst the youth of Mahenye. Like the Shangaan language, the youth of Mahenye find the older generation's TEK "old-fashioned." As a result, the youth are not interested in acquiring the TEK necessary to practice the historic livelihoods of Mahenye people, which were highly reliant upon hunting wildlife and gathering wild foods.

According to many participants, TEK used to be taught by parents and other elderly members of the community. For example, some participants recalled storytelling as a mode of TEK transmission: "Our mothers and fathers used to tell us [stories]. Long back, we learned through those folk-stories . . . so that you learn about the space of life" (Mahoho 1/16/14). Other

participants spoke of active teaching in the field: "Growing up I saw the elders going hunting and I learned the tactics of hunting. So my father used to wake up early in the morning, take me out in the bush" (Nisson 1/5/14). Regardless of the mode of transmission, nearly all participants spoke of active community involvement in equipping Mahenye's youths with TEK: "[Learning TEK] was actually part of community training. The elders would train us how to hunt . . . we were taught which foods to eat, which ones were poisonous, which ones were good and so on in terms of what to collect and what not to collect" (Kaya 1/15/14).

Participants spoke of TEK as being essential to surviving both normal daily life as well as responding to the lowveld's recurrent droughts. One participant explained that her father use to sit down and "[tell us] how we survived here during drought, what was eaten and how we were suppose to respond to events like disasters such as flooding" (Mahoho 1/16/14). Many participants fondly recalled the different wild grains and fruits they would collect during such times. While interviewing Langavi, she excitedly demonstrated which foods she collected as a child. In fact, she left the interview to go and collect some foods and came back with bundles of *nzvidnda*, *tshikohlora*, *tondo*, *mugaradede* and *hoka*. *Hoka*, in particular, was one wild food that most participants mentioned as essential to responding to drought[16]. Hunting was also mentioned by nearly every participant as a survival response option. As Mafanato explained, "There was also hunting and gathering fruits and wild foods from the forest. For the hunting, we actually ate the meat straight . . . that is how we did it, survived the droughts" (1/18/14).

When participants talked about the transmission and use of TEK, their explanations were almost always accompanied by a follow-up statement about how TEK and related practices are

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[16] *Hoka* is a long grass with seeds that are soaked, dried and then ground into a meal. The *hoka* meal is then constituted into a thick porridge similar to the staple food *sadza*.

not of interest to the younger generation in Mahenye: "Even if you teach them, they are not willing to eat! The old people, like me, we still eat those foods even today but to feed to the children with that kind of food? They don't want it" (Chitsa (1/15/14). Despite older Mahenye people still using their TEK to inform drought response options, the younger generation does not want to take part:

> For me, even now when there is drought, I still use the wild foods but the problem is with this young generation because they don't like that kind of food. But for me, personally, it is still as in the past. When there is drought, I use those kinds of food because I am not worried about these modern foods, even if I don't get them. Even if I spend the whole month without tea, that is not a problem but for these [young kids], just one day! [laughs] . . . Just one day and [going without tea] is a very big problem. (Langavi 1/16/14)

Modern foods and processed maize meal were often cited as the main foods that the younger generation prefers to eat. In times of drought, however, such foods are not always readily available. Thus, some participants expressed fear that declining TEK among Mahenye's youth will negatively impact their ability to cope with drought: "These [young kids] if they had drought like what we experienced they won't be able to survive, these kids. They won't resist such drought because they won't eat the wild foods" (Sebuku 1/17/14).

As mentioned above, participants linked declining TEK among Mahenye's youth to the youths' rejection of the older generation and their corresponding cultural norms and values. For example, when I probed Langavi as to why, in her opinion, declining TEK is problematic, she replied by saying,

> For me the biggest problem is the erosion of culture. The old generation really wants to pass down the traditions, the culture of this place but these young people no longer respect, they don't listen to us. So for me that is the biggest problem because [culture] is where everything hinges on for things to be okay, cultural practices should be followed. (1/16/14)

This comment demonstrates the link between TEK and culture. The generational transmission as well as the day-to-day utilization of TEK is embedded within cultural norms, beliefs and practices. Therefore, according to numerous participants, as various elements of TEK are not transmitted to the younger generations, the overall cultural connectedness of Mahenye people declines.

Traditional authority and culture

The theme of declining cultural connectedness in Mahenye was also expressed by participants in relation to their perceptions of traditional authority. Participants expressed that the traditional authority, particularly the authority attached to the role of the chief, has historically been responsible for maintaining the cultural connectedness of the community and has acted as the keeper of Mahenye's cultural identity. However, the current chief is a young man in his late twenties, and as already discussed, the younger generation in Mahenye is perceived as being dismissive of historic cultural norms, beliefs and values. As such, the chief's role as the custodian of Mahenye's historic culture has not been properly enacted in the opinion of most of the participants. Langavi demonstrates such an opinion when she states,

> Even the chief, the leaders, the village heads, they don't have time to sit down. They are young people and they don't have time to sit down with old people, like me, so that they learn the Shangaani ways, the Shangaani culture, so that things can really go on well. (1/16/14)

Chitsa shared a similar sentiment:

> The chief is very young. He won't listen to us. He says, 'You are old fashioned and ah! you are not from the royal family or even a chief. I'd rather hear it from another chief.' So these problems come from the chief not wanting to learn because he thinks we are just old fashioned. (1/15/14)

He went on to say, "The young generation has nothing to learn. They should be led by the chief. He is custodian and resource of the ancestors but the chief is not willing to do that because he is

young" (Chitsa 1/15/14). These statements from Langavi and Chitsa encapsulate the vast

majority of opinions expressed by the participants regarding the failure of Mahenye's traditional

authority to properly act as a caretaker of their historic culture. According to the participants, by

not fulfilling cultural responsibilities, the failure of the traditional authority has contributed to the

declining cultural connectedness among Mahenye people, particularly between the young and

old generations.

Negative Perception of Traditional Authority [17]

Given the perceived failure of traditional authority to uphold cultural norms, values and

beliefs, most participants expressed a negative perception of the traditional authority; however,

the negative perceptions expressed by participants encompassed more dimensions other than

simply the traditional authority's failure to maintain Mahenye's historic culture. Corruption,

powerlessness, conflict and fear were other distinct elements that characterized participants'

negative perceptions of the traditional authority.

Corruption and powerlessness

Many participants spoke of the traditional authority in Mahenye as a corrupt system that

provides personal benefits to only those in power. For example, many participants mentioned a

recent population increase in Mahenye and attributed the population rise to the chief's corrupt

behavior. Given the relative availability of land in the Mahenye area, participants described how

some people in Zimbabwe are eager to move to Mahenye and how the chief is willing to allocate

land to these potential settlers upon the token of a bribe. Though many participants voiced their

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[17] While the majority of negative opinions were reserved for the chief and his royal family, many
participants also expressed negative perceptions of lesser authorities such as village heads and kraal-
heads. Thus, I am using the typology of "traditional authority" to include the various individuals involved
in Mahenye's local political structure.

displeasure regarding such a trend, they mentioned that it was beyond their control because the

chief was personally benefitting from the population influx:

> The one who [has] the whole authority invested in him is the chief . . . even if you say, 'We don't want people coming in,' someone can just come and bribe the chief. It is a corrupt system whereby people can just come and give money to the chief and they are allocated land but that benefits the chief only, not the whole community. (Langavi 1/16/14)

Another participant voiced similar concern:

> Even if we don't want [people moving into Mahenye], the chief encourages people to come in because for him, it is power. He benefits from everyone who settles here. They pay something to him. So even if I don't want, I am powerless. It is the chief's decision to accept people or not, and for him, he will not refuse because it benefits him. So even if many people come, we have no control. (Luvani 1/15/14)

These statements exemplify the perception of corruption as described by numerous participants.

In their opinion, the chief has opened up the community to outside settlement not just to benefit

from monetary bribes but also for the patronage the newcomers owe the chief for allowing their

settlement to occur. Moreover, the statements above also demonstrate the feelings of

powerlessness that corruption creates in those not benefitting from the corrupt activities.

Participants voiced dissatisfaction with Mahenye's increasing population and fears about

increasing population pressures on limited natural resources but feel unable to influence these

events. Unfortunately, according to the participants, the processes of new settlement and land

allocation are outside their control and rest solely with the traditional authority. Thus, as

commoners, most participants expressed feelings of powerlessness vis-a-vis the new settlement

and land allocation in Mahenye.

Another example of corruption that was mentioned by numerous participants was in

regards to the chief and his family benefitting from food relief programs during times of drought

or crop failure. The interview excerpt below is just one example of a participant describing this

corrupt behavior by the traditional authority:

> K: When crops fail, whether it is drought or elephants, then the government comes in with these grain loan schemes or the relief organizations, like CARE International, they come in and give relief aid, food aid. But in most cases it is the big ones.
> S: Big ones?
> K: Yeah the village heads and the top guys they just get it and in most cases the ordinary person does not get it. And these guys, they steal the cash transfers. There is suppose to be criteria, the aged and so on, like me, that should be the targeted group for the cash transfers but still the cash goes to the big guys again. (Kaya 1/15/14)

This explanation, along with many others voiced by participants, describes the opportunistic

nature of the traditional authority. In times of community need when crops have failed,

individuals from the traditional authority leverage their power to accumulate both money and

food. Despite the involvement of both governmental and non-governmental agencies, the power

invested in the traditional authority allows individuals such as the chief or a village head to divert

relief aid away from the common people of Mahenye and instead use the aid for his or her own

personal benefit. As another participant described,

> The chief [is] placed with those relief programs, especially the food. It [is] placed at his homestead and he [says], 'Wait and I will give it out tomorrow.' But during the evening, the food disappears. He moves it to Mozambique or gives it to some of his close family members who are not suppose to be the beneficiaries. Then tomorrow, you gather, you won't see the food. He says, 'I only have 50 bags available.' But it was 100 that were offloaded. Some of [us] go and see it in Mozambique. It happened. I saw it in 2005. (Mahoho 1/16/14)

This same participant went on to say, "We try to say [stop] but [the traditional authority]

just says, 'Shut up! You don't have ownership of this land. This is for the [royal] family. . . If you

don't like it, you can go to Mozambique over there.' So we don't have any voice here" (Mahoho

1/16/14). This statement demonstrates that, like suffering the corruption surrounding settlement

and land allocation, participants do not feel as if they have had any power to influence the

corrupt appropriation of aid food and cash by the traditional authority. These feelings of powerlessness were almost always voiced in connection to participants' descriptions of corruption on the part of the traditional authority.

A final example of the perceived corruption perpetrated by Mahenye's traditional authority regards the historic tradition of the *zunde ramambo*. *Zunde ramambo* refers to a field owned by the chief that has historically been used to assist the most vulnerable members of the community: "People go and work in that field, they can produce stuff to help those who are in need. It is the chief's responsibility to feed his people, the orphans or other people who are vulnerable" (Kaya 1/15/14). Community members work collectively in the *zunde ramambo* knowing that the produce of the field will provide assistance to the most needy in their community. Additionally, some participants described that the produce from the *zunde ramambo* can be used for the broader community to assist during times of drought or crop failure. Thus, participants described working in the field as an act of community service.

However, in the opinion of most participants, the historic traditions and communal value of the *zunde ramambo* has been corrupted by the current chief. Participants described how the current chief continues to hold the *zunde ramambo* but does not disperse the crop yields to vulnerable individuals or the broader community in times of crisis; rather, the chief keeps the produce for his own use and leverages his position of power to coerce community members to continue to work in the field. For example, when asked if the current chief has continued the historic tradition of giving away the grain from the field, one participant responded,

> What!? Not at all! But we go to work in field, and he doesn't give it to because it is one of the traditional services that the chief would keep a store of grain to help those in need. So the practice still goes on here but in terms of being a help in need, no. People just go and work there but he doesn't give it to those in need. (1/15/14)

Another participant complained, "I don't see any benefit from [*zunde ramambo*]. [The chief] just uses people cheaply, free labor, cheap labor, exploiting people for his own benefit" (Mahoho 1/16/14). This same participant stated that community members cannot refuse to work in the field "given [the chief's] power" (Mahoho 1/16/14). Once again, whether in relation to land allocation, relief aid or *zunde ramambo*, participants described feelings of powerlessness in relation to the corrupt behavior of the traditional authority: "It is difficult to make any change. Change is not possible, in other words" (Vukona 1/17/14).

Conflict and fear

Another dimension of participants' negative perceptions of Mahenye's traditional authority regarded the aggression of those in power and the resulting prevalence of fear as a mechanism to maintain power. The nature by which the current royal family acquired power is contested. Different stories were told by individual participants, particularly if the participant was related to the royal family or not; nevertheless, there was consensus among all these stories that, indeed, the genesis of the current royal family's ascent to power is colored by conflict. Sometime in the early in twentieth-century two individuals named Hakamela and Muzamani lived in or around the Mahenye area and shared a close relationship. Participants disagreed as whether the men were kin or close friends; nevertheless, the majority of participants described Muzamani as the rightful heir to the chiefship in Mahenye during that time. However, through some force of political maneuvering, as most of the participants explained, Hakamela gained control of the chief's position and thereby denied Muzamani's claim to the chiefship. From that point forward the decedents of Hakamela have kept the chiefship passing from father to son. Thus, as one participant summarized, "The ones who are running the chiefdomship now, they are

not the true chiefs. It was stolen by this Hakemela. We know that, but to remove them from there

is a problem" (Sithole 1/17/14). To ascertain a historically accurate narrative about this power

struggle would take further investigation and was not the focus of this research project; however,

varying renditions of this anecdote were recurrent among participants' responses and

demonstrated a general consensus that the legitimacy of the current royal family's claim to power

is, at the very least, contested.

Beyond the contested nature of the current chief's claim to power, participants also

described the chief's use of fear as a mechanism to maintain his power. For example, when asked

if one could voice dissent or lodge complaints about the chief, participants responded with

statements such as, "Those [in power] don't like it. We are afraid to say anything because we will

be in trouble . . . You will be chased away from Mahenye by the chief if you complain" (Vukona

1/17/14). Another participant said this, "You will be chased out of here! Nobody will ever

question the chief. If you do, you will be chased [away]" (Sebuku 1/17/14). According to many

participants, the fear of forced removal from one's home by the traditional authority stymies

open dissent or criticism of those in power.

More than just being driven from Mahenye, some participants also expressed fear of

death as a reprisal for complaining against the chief:

> I tell you there is a guy there, in that [royal] family, who is terrible. If he tells you, 'You
> are going to die today.' For sure, you are going that day. You are going for sure. And
> people know this. We won't try to do anything like [complain]. (Mahoho 1/16/14)

Like the statements before, this quote from Mahoho captures the fear voiced by many

participants with regard to the traditional authority. According to the majority of participants,

fear is mechanism utilized by the traditional authority to maintain power, which creates a conflicted relationship between the royal family and the rest Mahenye's people.

"There is no chief here"

Ultimately, the intensity of participants' negative perceptions of the current traditional authority was made apparent by participants' recollections of previous regimes. Many participants talked about the chiefs from their childhoods or those described in folk-stories as custodians of tradition who operated with the best intentions for the community. As one participant said, "The old chiefs would take time to listen to the life of the community" (Vukona 1/17/14). Other participants offered positive recollections of the *zunde ramambo* operating for the benefit of the community. These positive perceptions of chiefships in the past were distinct from the negative perceptions of the current chief voiced by most participants. While speaking about the current chief, one participant said, "You are talking about a chief. Who is the chief? Who is the chief? No one! We don't have a chief. The chiefs have long died . . . So there is nothing. There is no chief here" (Vukona 1/17/14). This statement summarizes the degree by which most participants negatively viewed their current chief. The corrupt, conflictual behavior of the current chief and his associates, as described by most participants, has instilled feelings of powerlessness and fear and thus corrupted the historic role of the traditional authority.

Negative Perceptions of Wildlife Conservation

Negative perceptions were not only reserved for Mahenye's traditional authority. Most participants also voiced discontent with the wildlife conservation initiatives in the area, specifically the Gonarezhou National Park (GNP) and the Communal Areas Management Program for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) program.

Gonarezhou National Park

As discussed in Chapter Two, the GNP was officially gazetted in 1975. At that time, a notable Shangaan population was living within the boundaries of what was to become the park. The Save river cut between the people in Gonarezhou and the people in Mahenye, but according to every participant, the two groups considered each other as one. For example, one participant said, "I was born [in 1939] on [the Mahenye] side of the river. There were people on [the Gonarezhou] side and people already on this side when I was born but we were the same people" (Kaya 1/15/14). Another participant stated, "I was on [the Mahenye] side. But some of my relatives were [in Gonarezhou] so they eventually were moved to this part. But you know? We were one people" (Mahoho 1/16/14).

Participants not only spoke about the social bonds between the groups on either side of the Save river, they also described the equal access to natural resources on the Gonarezhou side: "[We had] access to wild resources because long back, when things were tough, we would just go there and even when things were not tough. It was just a way of life. Just hunting, collecting honey in the Gonarezhou area." (Kaya 1/15/14). Many participants had similar memories about Gonarezhou prior to the gazetting of the GNP and they described the area as integral to Mahenye peoples' hunting and gathering livelihoods.

However, when the park was established, the Shangaan in Gonarezhou were forcibly removed from the area. One participant was present the day the Rhodesian authorities announced the forced removal. Here is how he remembered the occasion,

> Then . . . what was called the district commissioner at that time, Mr. Wright, came in and [told] our people there, 'You are going to be moved. This land is for animals, wild animals. Very suited for wild animals. There's the river. There's good vegetation, grass, trees and so on. So you are moving away.' The people refused, said, 'We can not move.' [The Rhodesians] said, 'No no no. You just make a decision now of where to go. We are

going to move you from here to Malipati and no where else. Those who plan to go to Mozambique, just go. We don't worry about you. Those who want to cross over to Mahenye, then go! Those going to the Chiredzi side, go! Pack now and go. Next week by Thursday trucks are coming here to collect all of you to take you away.' (Sithole 1/17/14)

According to Sithole, the population in Gonarezhou was given one week to move from their homes. He went on to say that if someone was found after that week, "You could be shot so some of them hid" (Sithole 1/17/14). Though many migrated across the Save river into Mahenye, participants described how the Gonarezhou population became scattered across Zimbabwe's lowveld and even into Mozambique: "We were split because of the park. [Some] were sent to Tshovani. Others came [to Mahenye]. . . and others went to Mozambique, over there to Gaza. There was a split of our people" (Mahoho 1/16/14).

For many participants, the Gonarezhou eviction and consequent closing of the GNP's boundary was a landmark event that significantly altered life in Mahenye. From blocking access to valuable natural resources to denying visitation to sacred areas, participants consistently described the establishment of the GNP as a blow to Mahenye people: "Because of that conservation area, [the GNP] . . . they have locked all of the areas which were of the community" (Choguli 1/4/14). Though the gazetting of the GNP was nearly 40 years in the past, participants describe the negative influence of the park on Mahenye people as an ongoing struggle. As one participant said, "[Access] is now illegal. That is one thing that has changed. It [used to be] easy just to go hunt, collect wild foods" (Kaya 1/15/14). He went on to say, "The law is the law. We respect that but it has made life difficult for us" (Kaya 1/15/14).

Not every participant was as diplomatic towards the conservation laws enforced by the GNP. In fact, many participants expressed rebellious feelings towards the GNP. For example,

[The GNP] is not a good thing. That park is our area and we are not happy, even to now, that they took that area. So even when people go to hunt, they have no problem with breaking the law. We are bitter that the whites took our land. So when people go to hunt, we have no problem with that. It is our area. Who would like to have his area taken away, his life taken away? It is our land so it is okay. We can hunt. Even if those guys don't like it, we will still hunt. (Magezi 1/16/14)

Communal Areas Management Program for Indigenous Resources

Similarly, participants also expressed negative perceptions regarding the Communal

Areas Management Program for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) program, which was

initially established to help mitigate the difficulties caused to the livelihoods of people in

Mahenye by the enforcement of the GNP's wildlife conservation policies. However, rather than

bringing benefits to Mahenye people, participants described CAMPFIRE as bringing nothing

favorable to the community: "There is nothing. [CAMPFIRE is] not giving anything, just

elephants coming into the fields" (Sebuku 1/17/14). Another participant described the

consequences of CAMPFIRE as even worse,

CAMPFIRE made us slaves. There is nothing that we can get, only to be stopped from hunting the animals that we used to hunt. Now there is completely nothing for us. We are just slaves. Those animals are ours. We should be benefitting from them. It is now benefitting the politicians and those of the chief's house. Nothing else. Even if the elephant is shot, whether it is meat or it is money, we get nothing. We are just slaves. (Magezi 1/16/14)

These two statements demonstrate the three primary complaints expressed by participants against

CAMPFIRE: the perceived role of CAMPFIRE conservation policies in increasing human-

wildlife conflict, limited access to natural resources given CAMPFIRE conservation policies and

the perceived corruption across multiple levels of CAMPFIRE administration.

Elephants have been and continue to be problematic to agricultural production in

Mahenye. The large, wild herbivores with their powerful sense of smell will raid crops during the

growing and harvest seasons. For Mahenye people whose livelihoods are heavily reliant upon

subsistence agriculture, crop destruction by elephants represents a catastrophic threat. In order to protect their crops, many participants described how in the past, prior to the establishment of CAMPFIRE, they would stay in their fields over night and light bonfires on the edges of the fields. If elephants did venture close, they would beat on drums and metal canisters in hopes of driving the animals away. As a final measure, if the elephants were still not deterred, participants described how they would resort to shooting the animals with either their bows and arrows or powder-hammer actuated guns: "We used bows and arrows to hit the trunk. The moment you hit the trunk, it got disturbed and went around hitting trees until it died. So that is how we managed to control them" (Langavi 1/16/14).

However, this same participant explained that due to the conservation policies put in place by CAMPFIRE, protecting one's field in this manner is no longer permissible: "The elephants destroy crops . . . and if you try to do what we used to do in the past, then you are arrested" (Langavi 1/16/14). CAMPFIRE regulations prohibit people in Mahenye from killing problem elephants in order to protect their agricultural fields. Though people in Mahenye are still allowed to light fires and beat drums, according to participants, this protective measure is proving less and less effective: "We can go [to the fields] and beat drums, make noise, whatever, make noise. Sometimes elephants can get offended and they just come after people so it's not very . . . not very effective. So that's the biggest problem" (Kaya 1/15/14).

In order to deal with problem animals, Mahenye's CAMPFIRE committee contracted a safari operator to drive away or kill problematic animals, particularly elephants. However, there are limitations to this arrangement. Given the conservation policies of CAMPFIRE, a quota for how many elephants can be killed each year restricts the safari operator's effectiveness in

controlling all the problem elephants. What's more, participants explained that over the last

several years the safari operator has become increasingly complacent in dealing with destructive

elephants and other wildlife:

> We complained that the [safari operator] does not attended to PACs [problem animal control] and he really does not attend. In the past 6-7 years, he has never attended PAC. Our cattle are pulled down by crocodiles, elephants wander at will eating crops and so on, killing people. We had one dead lady leaving a very young child about 2 months. We told the operator to go kill that elephant and he did nothing. (Sithole 1/17/14)

The failure of the safari operator to effectively deal with destructive wildlife and the restrictions

placed on the common people of Mahenye regarding how they can protect their fields left most

of the participants complaining that CAMPFIRE has made life in Mahenye more difficult: "We

were far off better without CAMPFIRE because before CAMPFIRE if an elephant comes to my

field I can kill it and eat the meat" (Mahoho 1/16/14).

While most participants recognized that crop-raiding elephants and other human-wildlife

conflicts were a problem in the past, they would also note that the problem has become worse

since CAMPFIRE was implemented in Mahenye: "We had that problem in the past, but it was

not that severe because there were not that many elephants, like now. It is because of

conservation . . . that they are increasing" (Kaya 1/15/14). Many participants explained that the

increasing conflict between humans and wildlife was not just because of the prohibitions placed

on protecting one's field but also because the conservation policies have allowed wildlife

population numbers to drastically increase. Thus, according to the explanations of many

participants, "CAMPFIRE made things worse. It expanded the area that is available to

wildlife . . . So, it's a problem of conservation" (Luvani 1/15/14).

Participants also voiced frustrations with CAMPFIRE regarding the restrictive policies concerning access to wild resources. Adjacent to Mahenye's habitable settlements is a conservation wilderness area administered by CAMPFIRE. As participants described, this forested area, much like Gonarezhou, was once used for hunting and gathering wild resources. However, access to wild resources has been curtailed because of the regulations put in place by CAMPFIRE policies: "Even just moving in the forest area or the wilderness area is illegal in itself. So you can't freely collect even the honey . . . [or] some of those wild foods. You can not move freely because of CAMPFIRE" (Kaya 1/15/14). As one participant described, hunting and gathering in the wilderness was "part and parcel of my life when I was growing up" (Magezi 1/16/14). Thus, to make illegal once economically and culturally integral community activities requires shifts in both livelihood structures and cultural norms and values. For most of the participants, CAMPFIRE has failed to achieve meaningful shifts in either of these domains, and therefore, they perceive the program as a restrictive hinderance to once sustainable wildlife resources.

Participants also spoke about their perceptions of corruption regarding the administrators of CAMPFIRE. The program is meant to be a community-based project in which benefits of wildlife conservation are shared equally across Mahenye. However, most participants described CAMPFIRE as a money generating scheme for the local elites and politicians at the district level. As one participant described,

> Some they are gaining, some they are not. If you are saying that money should be shared equally, it's no longer going that way. Some they are suffering. Some they are getting . . . to those who are on top, [CAMPFIRE] is an advantage. (Nisson 1/5/14)

As discussed in Chapter Two, CAMPFIRE generates income through safari hunting concessions and non-consumptive ecotourism. Theoretically, percentages of the income are shared between the rural district council in Chipinge and the local CAMPFIRE committee in Mahenye. The CAMPFIRE committee is tasked with doling the benefits equally across the community. When CAMPFIRE was first instituted in the early 1990s, benefits were disbursed through cash dividends paid per household. However, as the population in Mahenye increased, the cash dividends became smaller and smaller. Thus, to maximize the impact of their percentage, Mahenye's CAMPFIRE committee pooled the money to build for the community a school and a grinding mill. Some participants noted that, in addition to the school and grinding mill, a dip tank for cattle was scheduled for CAMPFIRE funding but "money for the dip tank disappeared in the hands of [rural district] council" (Sithole 1/17/14). This same participant went on to say, "Funds always disappear in council offices. A lot of funds!" (Sithole 1/17/14). Most participants shared a similar view that, indeed, a large percentage of CAMPFIRE funds never reach Mahenye because of corrupt behavior in the Chipinge RDC.

Those CAMPFIRE funds that do reach Mahenye are funneled through the local CAMPFIRE committee; however, most participants expressed mistrust in the committee, particularly the current chairman. The chairman is an uncle to the young chief and an influential member of the royal family. For example, my research visit had to be approved by the CAMPFIRE chairman, and upon my arrival in Mahenye, I had to first meet with him before meeting with the chief in order to discuss my research plan and schedule. Most of the participants described the chairman's behavior as corrupt and his use of the position as chairman as problematic: "[The chairman] is actually one of the problems" (Kaya 1/15/14); or from

another participant, "[The chairman] takes all that [money] and puts in his pocket and uses it for his own affairs and his own family" (Sithole 1/17/14).

Participants' perceptions of corruption regarding the behavior of the CAMPFIRE chairman were intertwined with perceptions of corruption regarding the traditional authority. This is understandable given the relationship of the CAMPFIRE chairman to the chief. Consequently, just as participants expressed feelings of powerlessness in confronting the perceived corruption of the traditional authority, so too did they indicate feelings of powerlessness to affect change regarding the perceived corruption of CAMPFIRE authorities:

> Those people are very powerful. There is nothing you can do about [CAMPFIRE]. They are the owners, the chief. What can we do about it? There is nothing. Even if I was younger, there is nothing I can do about it. (Magezi 1/16/14)

This same participant, along with many others, indicated that CAMPFIRE had not always been problematic: "If an elephant was killed in the earlier days, they would make sure each household however small the portion was . . . would get it. The chief that was there when CAMPFIRE was started . . . listened to what people wanted" (Magezi 1/16/14). The cash dividends in particular were mentioned by most participants as being the most beneficial to the community. However, according to the majority of participants, these direct benefits, animal meat or cash-in-hand, were no longer coming from CAMPFIRE. Thus, devoid of these benefits and given the negative perceptions of increased human-wildlife conflict, limited access to natural resources and the perceived corruption, most participants expressed a desire to see CAMPFIRE terminated in Mahenye:

> I don't want CAMPFIRE in the area unless it goes back to the earlier days because now the money is there but it is just taken by the top leadership . . . So get rid of CAMPFIRE or go back to the earlier days. (Kaya 1/15/14)

Limited Local Economic Opportunities

The final emergent theme from the data concerned participants' perceptions of limited

economic opportunities in Mahenye. These perceptions were expressed in a variety of ways and

were often discussed in relation to the participants' livelihoods. As already discussed, most of the

participants explained that the majority of their livelihoods in the past were based on hunting and

gathering wild resources and small-scale subsistence agriculture. With the introduction of

conservation policies some of these livelihood activities were curtailed but not entirely

eliminated. Indeed, nearly all the participants described their current livelihoods as being

predominately based on subsistence agriculture. However, they also explained that a shift

occurred in Mahenye's local economy at the onset of the colonial cash economy and the

introduction of modern goods and services. The shift to a cash economy made it necessary for

Mahenye people to diversify their livelihoods in order to generate cash incomes. For example,

when one participant was asked why he went to South Africa in 1957 to look for a cash-earning

job, he replied,

> Can you buy a bicycle with honey? The lifestyle was changing. Modern things were
> coming. We wanted those things. To get those things, we needed money. You couldn't use
> honey or whatever to get those things. You had to get money. So the changing life made
> us go look for work even though the food was available. The need for the modern
> gadgets, that is why we went to look for work. (Kaya 1/15/14)

Most of the participants had similar experiences as they were old enough to recall the transition

from a predominately subsistence-based economy to a predominately cash-based economy.

Participants explained that although the shift to a cash-based economy made income generating

activities necessary, in a marginal area like Mahenye, locally-based income generating activities

are difficult to make successful. Consequently, many participants described life since the

transition to a cash economy as a struggle:

Before then, we didn't need money. We survived off agriculture, just growing our crops. Then you eat, it provides your food. Even salt and stuff was not important because there is a special kind of soil, usually along the river banks, that can be used as salt. So we would simply go there and get it. But now, everything needs money so life is difficult. Money is not easy to come by. (Luvani 1/15/14)

Given the difficulties in earning money, some participants explained that they sell their cattle or construct and then sell sitting mats from the reeds found along the banks of the Save river. In both cases, participants described how these goods, whether cattle or reed mats, were primarily sold outside Mahenye because markets in towns or cities beyond Mahenye were more profitable:

You can make the mats with those reeds and you can go to Buluwayo and they cost $10 there. Here, it is $2. For sure. So if you make ten of them and go to Buluwayo, 10 times 10 is $100. You stay just three days; you come back with your money and you can fend for your family with that money. (Mahoho 1/16/14)

Mahoho's statement demonstrates one facet of the perceived limitations of Mahenye's local economy. Locally sold goods and services are not nearly as profitable as those sold in an outside market. As participants described, products such as cattle and reed mats may be sold in the local market for a minor profit but those same products can be sold for a more substantial profit in a market outside Mahenye. Regardless the product, participants described income generation in Mahenye's local economy as problematic.

While participants spoke about selling livestock and reed mats as minor income generating activities reliant on outside markets, they identified poaching and labor migration as major income generating activities. These two recurrent examples of major income generation still rely on outside markets and thus still represent perceived limitations to Mahenye's local economy.

Poaching

Most participants described hunting as a way of life prior to the implementation of GNP and CAMPFIRE conservation policies. More than just a livelihood, hunting was described as a cultural practice: "It is cultural to hunt among the Shangaan. For some families it is actually within the family, the spirit of hunting . . . [so] for some of us it is cultural to hunt and provide meat" (Mafanato 1/18/14). Thus, despite conservation policies having converted hunting into an illegal act, many people in Mahenye continue to hunt wildlife on a regular basis. These hunting practices are categorized by government agencies and conservationists as poaching.

In addition to its role as a cultural practice, most participants described poaching as a substantial income generating activity. Given the perceived limitations of Mahenye's local economy, poaching appeared to represent one of the few viable income generating options. From a capitalistic standpoint, this makes sense. Mahenye people have a comparative advantage in supplying meat markets with wild animals given their intimate knowledge of Gonarezhou and other surrounding wilderness areas. Mahenye people also have close proximity to the productive fisheries found in the Save river and at the river's confluence with the Runde river. Furthermore, the TEK of the older generations informs locally adapted and successful hunting, tracking and fishing practices. Thus, poaching both terrestrial and aquatic wildlife may indeed be the most profitable income generating activity for Mahenye people given the market demands outside of Mahenye for wild meats. As one participant noted, the market for poached meat is always available, "If [I] go and do fishing, [I] know they're going to sell and make money from it" (Nisson 1/5/14). Thus, with Mahenye peoples' comparative advantage from poaching and outside markets, poaching represents a viable economic opportunity in an otherwise limited

economic environment: "[Poaching] is a source of money. There [are] limited sources of money so what else can we do? We will not stop" (Chitsa 1/15/14).

Many participants took care to note that the poaching conducted by Mahenye people does not target big game animals such as elephants or lions. Instead, according to many participants, local people in Mahenye only poach small game such as impala or dykes. Some participants, however, did acknowledge that big game animals were being poached in the area but they believed that such poaching was being done by Mozambicans who "cross over to hunt the big game and actually use guns" (Mafanato 1/18/14).

Labor migration

Another viable economic option described by participants was labor migration to markets outside Mahenye. Labor migration to South Africa was the most commonly referenced destination in the sample. Based on their personal accounts, labor migration was exclusively practiced by male participants. These men described their experiences as migrant workers in South Africa during the mid-twentieth century in a variety of ways but various patterns emerged in their descriptions. Most of the participants who went to work in South Africa would first cross from Mahenye into Mozambique, given the remoteness of Mahenye from transportation centers. From Mozambique they could take a bus into South Africa and eventually make their way to Johannesburg. The mines in and around Johannesburg were the most commonly referenced employment locations mentioned by these participants. The majority worked in the mines on temporary work permits, and at the end of these permits, the participants described how they would return to Mahenye "to come back with money and enjoy ourselves here" (Kaya 1/15/14).

As one participant described, labor migration to South Africa was an important economic activity not just for the individuals working in South Africa but also for their broader network of kin relationships:

> We came [back] with groceries, money. We would share with the rest of the extended family. [Labor migration] actually helped us to be together rather than being a part. People who went to work not only worked for the nuclear family but also went for the extended family. (Kaya 1/15/14)

Kaya's description of working for his broader kin relationships exemplifies the common practice of rural households in diversifying livelihoods by sending a member of the house to work as a waged laborer.

Participants mentioned that South Africa was the best destination for labor migration because of the country's strong economy: "[In Zimbabwe] there were jobs but they were not well paying. The wages in South Africa were much better" (Vumbhoni 1/17/14). They also said jobs were accessible during that time in the mid-twentieth century: "It was very easy to find work in South Africa. Here [in Zimbabwe] it was difficult" (Kaya 1/15/14). Interestingly, all of the participants who participated in labor migration described their experiences with fondness. They all mentioned that they enjoyed returning home to Mahenye with money in their pockets but also that they enjoyed their time in South Africa. The following comment encapsulates the perspective of most of the participants who worked in South Africa:

> South Africa was good then. I haven't been there since 1971 . . . I would have loved to go back but because of the war. I came back in 1971, before the war, and I couldn't go back. But what I remember, I enjoyed myself. (Kaya 1/15/14)

While most participants who worked in South Africa enjoyed the experience of their labor migration and also believed their migration was a beneficial endeavor for their extended kin relationship networks, these same participants expressed concern about the current state of

labor migration to South Africa for young men in Mahenye. Some participants expressed

grievances about the immaturity of young Mahenye men migrating to South Africa:

> We were responsible back then because we went there, worked there but provided for our families. These young people now just go to South Africa to enjoy themselves. They are not responsible. Sometimes they don't even come back or they don't support their families here. (Chitsa 1/15/14).

For those young men who do return from South Africa, participants noted that they are not

returning with much money:

> Most of them when they get [back], they don't have a lot of money. Maybe because they go there illegally, so maybe they pay bribes and so on, on their way back. They really don't have much to show. It is better that they work for low paying jobs here because it is more profitable than going there. I don't see the difference. Taking up a lowly paying job in Zimbabwe might be better than going to South Africa. That's the way I see it. (Kaya 1/15/14)

The final concern about modern labor migration voiced by participants, which was mentioned

briefly in the statement above, regarded the current illegality of labor migration to South Africa.

Participants explained that changes to labor laws in South Africa and domestic constraints on

securing a passport in Zimbabwe have made the migration to South Africa for waged worked

more perilous and less profitable.

Despite the perceived decline in the benefits of labor migration to South Africa, the

limitations of the local economy in Mahenye continue to drive young men from Mahenye to

South Africa: "If they had to wait to get work in Zimbabwe then where? Where? Where are they

getting employment in Zimbabwe?" (Sithole 1/17/14). As a result, as this same participant

explained, "Even today most of our sons are in South Africa" (Sithole 1/17/14).

Summary

Analysis of the oral histories revealed four emergent themes related to: 1) a perceived loss of cultural connectedness in the younger generations of Mahenye people vis-a-vis their rejection of the older generation in Mahenye; 2) a negative perception of Mahenye's traditional authority; 3) a negative perception of wildlife conservation initiatives in the area, particularly regarding Gonarezhou National Park and CAMPFIRE; and 4) perceived limitations of the local economy. These emergent themes were drawn from participants' descriptions of their experiences of marginalization in Mahenye. The significance of these themes and their interconnectedness in relation to resilience will be interpreted in the following chapter.

CHAPTER SIX - DISCUSSION

The primary research question addressed in this study was to what extent the experiences of marginalization shape the social-ecological resilience of Mahenye people. Relatedly, a second question examined in this study regarded how culture, history and politics influence resilient processes. Exploring study participants' descriptions and perceptions of how life in Mahenye has evolved over the course of their lives provided insights into how experiences at the margins has influenced resilient processes, or a lack thereof, and how those processes that do occur at the margins may not be equally shared across power domains.

Experiences of marginalization

The emergent themes from the oral histories indicated that several key experiences are related to life on the margins in Mahenye. For example, the perception of declining cultural connectedness among Mahenye people suggests that the historic culture of Mahenye people is vulnerable to the more dominant Shona and European cultures. As participants described, Mahenye youths perceive their historic culture as old-fashioned and are increasingly rejecting Shangaan culture in favor of the dominant Shona and European cultures. This rejection of historic culture disconnects Mahenye's younger generations from their heritage, livelihoods, TEK, traditional governance and local ecology. The historic culture of Mahenye people must compete with modern Shona and European cultures, and based on this study's sample, the local Shangaan culture of Mahenye people is weakening.

Another experience of marginalization found in the oral histories suggests a disproportionate distribution of power and wealth in Mahenye. The negative perceptions of the traditional authority and the limited local economy are indicative of the disproportionate

distribution of power and wealth in Mahenye. The corrupt traditional authority accumulates wealth at the expense of the common person in Mahenye by not distributing community benefits such as CAMPFIRE funding and food relief during times of drought.

The negative effects of the inequitable distribution of community benefits are compounded by the dominance of a cash-based economy, which necessitates cash-earning economic activities for Mahenye people. As participants described, Mahenye's limited local economy makes earning a wage problematic for many people in Mahenye. Minor income generating activities such as selling livestock and reed mats are inhibited by Mahenye's poor local economy. Consequently, individuals turn to outside markets for better cash-earning opportunities. The major income generating activities described by participants that require access to an outside market are poaching and illegal labor migration to South Africa; however, such deviant forms income generation are vulnerable to market fluctuations and legal policies and enforcement. Thus, while the powerful local elite can accumulate wealth through corrupt behavior, those at the margins in Mahenye must survive off of vulnerable, and often times deviant, livelihoods. This finding reflects similar findings in the disaster literature that the processes of marginalization constrain livelihood opportunities for households and communities and limit their available livelihood options when perturbations occur (Wisner et al. 2003).

Furthermore, the negative effects of a cash-economy are connected to the weakening of traditional culture in Mahenye, which taught and valued subsistence livelihood activities through the hunting and gathering of wild foods. As Mahenye's traditional culture has weakened so too has the practice of traditional livelihood strategies because such livelihood strategies were informed by traditional cultural practices. Consequently, people in Mahenye have begun to rely

more and more on market-based income generating activities, which leaves them vulnerable to the outside perturbations discussed above. Ultimately, the dominance of a cash-economy in Mahenye negatively effects Mahenye peoples' adaptive capacity and this negative relationship is compounded by Mahenye's diminishing traditional culture.

Another emergent theme from the data related to the perceptions and feelings of powerlessness seen and felt by participants. The recurrent descriptions of constrained agency suggests that powerlessness is an experience of marginalization in Mahenye. For example, the prevalence of fear maintained by the chief and his kin resulting from their assertion of power has diminished the voice of community members. In contrast to participants' descriptions of their historical relationships with previous chiefs as communicative, the current chief was described as removed and unwilling to listen to individuals from the community. Moreover, previous chiefs were recalled as working for the common good of Mahenye people and serving as proper custodians of Mahenye culture. The current chief was decried as only concerned with the advancement of his family and his own personal enjoyment. The royal family more broadly was described as being more concerned with gaining greater political power than with fulfilling their historic roles of cultural role models and community leaders. In relation to these negative perceptions of the chief and his family, participants expressed feelings of powerlessness in confronting the corrupt and self-serving behavior of the traditional authority. Many participants explained their feelings as hopeless in effecting positive change in the community. They were fearful of reprisal from the traditional authority if they did complain or attempt to make change and this fear seemed to diminish participants' sense of agency.

Thus, the four emergent themes from the data indicate that cultural loss, including TEK, vulnerable livelihoods and resource constraints, as well as political powerlessness are all experiences of marginalization for Mahenye people. How then do these experiences of marginalization relate to resilience?

Resilience and TEK

Wangari Maathai, Nobel Peace Prize laureate and founder of the Green Belt Movement, speaks about a people's historic culture as a foundational element of social-ecological resilience (Maathai 2009). In reference to indigenous African cultures, she states,

> Culture gives a people self-identity and character. It allows them to be in harmony with their physical . . . environment, to form the basis for their sense of self-fulfillment and personal peace. It enhances their ability to guide themselves, make their own decisions, and protect their interests. It's their reference point to the past and their antennae to the future. (Maathai 2009:160)

In relation to resilience, historic culture acts as conduit for disseminating TEK, which, as discussed in Chapter Three, has been identified in the resilience literature as a key condition for adaptive capacity, and hence, social-ecological resilience. Thus, TEK is a point of convergence for mainstream and situated resilience approaches. When TEK is employed by local populations and passed down to future natural resource users, resilient processes are more likely to be present in the local social-ecological system. Conversely, when TEK, and for that matter historic culture more broadly, is not actively disseminated, historic knowledge and culture are diminished. Such a loss represents a potential threat to TEK, and with it, a system's resilience.

Based on this study's oral histories, previous reports characterizing Mahenye people as culturally unified (i.e. Murphree 2001) do not hold true today. Participants expressed negative perceptions of the traditional authority as proper caretakers of Shangaan culture and lamented the

younger generation's rejection of Mahenye peoples' historic culture, which was labeled by them as old-fashioned. As such, participants described the current culture of Mahenye as fragmented and in decline. For example, the anecdotes of changing marriage values and norms among Mahenye's youth reflected the broader trend of cultural decline in Mahenye. Similarly, the rejection by Mahenye youths of TEK and historic drought response options because of their preference for purchasing or receiving modern foods over hunting and gathering wild resources also reflected the loss of local Shangaan culture, including TEK.

From a resilience perspective, the loss of TEK within the historic Shangaan culture could have a negative effect on adaptive capacity and the availability of response options in times of crisis. As participants noted, the cultural connectedness of Mahenye people in the past allowed TEK to flourish and inform livelihood strategies and adaptive capacity during times of drought. TEK is created through social learning across generations and this learning provides a foundation for adaptive capacity. If households embrace their TEK then adaptive learning during times of drought does not have to be reinvented every drought cycle. Rather, TEK-informed response options can be refined and adapted to each specific crisis.

For example, response options discussed by participants exhibited similarities across households but varied slightly within each individual household. The importance of using wild foods such as *hoka* and *chubas* recurred across participants' explanations but variations occurred in relation to other strategies. One participant described boiling the skin of an elephant to create a thick reduction sauce, which could be eaten over the top of *hoka* porridge. Another participant mentioned a similar response option but with the variation of using a cattle hide in place of the elephant's skin. Such a small variation exemplifies the diversity of TEK-informed response

options adapted from household to household through not only processes of social learning, but also individual creative agency.

However, general TEK is in decline among Mahenye people and this may limit the peoples' collective adaptive capacity with the declining availability of response options during times of drought. As many of the participants noted, rather than responding to drought by collecting wild resources, receiving food aid, when it is actually distributed, and relying on market-based modern foods such as processed maize have become the dominant community coping strategies. Participants noted the younger generation's increasing preference for modern foods over the wild foods that were once essential to drought response options. Coping with drought by relying on food aid and globally traded foods at the expense of TEK-informed coping strategies diminishes the community's adaptive capacity.

Ultimately, the loss of culture is indicative of a loss of TEK practices and historic livelihood options. As noted in Chapter Three, resilience is defined across the literature as the capacity of a system to undergo change while retaining the ability to properly function (Berkes and Ross 2013; Folke 2006; Magis 2010; Walker et al. 2004). Therefore, the emergent theme in participants' oral histories regarding the decline of historic culture in Mahenye indicates declining adaptive capacity for common Mahenye people because historic culturally-based TEK is rapidly losing out to external, modern cultures.

This finding regarding the decline of TEK in Mahenye suggests that TEK is surprisingly vulnerable to unequal power relations and the processes of marginalization. Like any form of knowledge, TEK is related to power. Because knowledge is created and disseminated through relationships of power (Foucault 1972), TEK's continued cultivation is shaped by the dynamic

pressures of power. Moreover, TEK is embedded within historic cultural norms, beliefs and practices. If the historic culture surrounding TEK is marginalized by more dominant and/or modern cultures, generationally accumulated TEK is left vulnerable to decline as contemporary users-in-practice reject their historic culture.

Resilience and livelihood options

While the rejection of historic culture, and corresponding decline in TEK, is limiting adaptive capacity for the younger generations in Mahenye, historic processes of land dispossession and wildlife conservation policies are limiting available livelihood options for Mahenye people. All of the participants spoke about their childhood and early adult livelihood options and coping strategies to drought revolving around hunting and gathering wild resources. Wild resources were hunted and collected in the Gonarezhou forests, the Save river and forested areas surrounding Mahenye settlements. However, access to these areas and the natural resources found therein has been cut off by the formation of the GNP and by conservation laws related to CAMPFIRE. As a result, the current capacity of Mahenye people to hunt and gather wild resources is severely restricted, and consequently, their access to available livelihood options is curtailed.

As discussed in the disaster literature, access to available livelihood options is a key dimension of resilience. With limited livelihood options, Mahenye peoples' livelihoods are vulnerable to shocks and perturbations, such as drought or crop-raiding wildlife. Participants described how in the past drought was an unpredictable but recurrent event, and yet, the availability of TEK-coping strategies allowed them to absorb the effects of drought while maintaining their subsistence livelihoods. Conversely, participants' explanations regarding

current access to livelihood options, and their increased dependence on cash-based economic

activities, suggests diminishing resilient potential. According to many participants, poaching is

not only a response option to drought but also a daily livelihood option; however, poaching is not

a stable livelihood option as it is an illegal activity vulnerable to unpredictable market forces and

legal policies and enforcement.

Viable livelihood options for Mahenye people have also been significantly limited by the

historical processes of dispossession and restrictive conservation policies. Thus, Mahenye's

overall social-ecological resilience must be situated within the limitations imposed by these

historical processes. According to the participants, the processes underlying illegal activities such

as poaching are not merely caused by the contemporary pressures of a cash economy but are

rooted in decades-old processes of land dispossession and conservation-based prohibitions on

natural resource usage. The adaptive capacity of the Mahenye social-ecological system cannot be

understood outside this history of decreasing legal access to natural resources. Unfortunately,

analysis of these historical processes rarely occurs in the social-ecological and community

resilience literature (e.g., the Resilience Alliance's lowveld study discussed in Chapter One). If

resilience is to be prescribed as a development tool, then application of resilience concepts must

first be situated within the processes of history and power relations in order to understand place-

based access to livelihood options.

Moreover, participants' descriptions of Mahenye's limited local economy suggests that

increasing dependence on market-based livelihood options has increased vulnerability to shocks

and perturbations. As discussed about, the historic processes of land dispossession and

conservation policies have compounded the necessity of a cash-based economy in Mahenye.

Similarly, dependence on market-based livelihood options has decreased adaptive capacity, which again has been necessitated by the historic processes of dispossession and conservation policies. These findings from the study suggest, in support of a situated resilience approach, that resilience cannot be analyzed or prescribed without regard for a community's or social-ecological system's historical context.

Resilience and power

From a political ecology standpoint, power relationships shape access to livelihood options and degrees of vulnerability (Cote and Nightingale 2011). In relation to resilience, unequal distributions of power can potentially lead to social-ecological processes whose benefits are inequitably apportioned. The oral histories reveal that power relationships in Mahenye are not equally distributed, and increasingly, this imbalance of power is limiting the adaptive capacity of Mahenye people.

According to the participants, power in Mahenye is concentrated within the traditional authority, and more specifically, with the chief and his house. This concentration of power has enabled the chief and his house to derive benefits at the expense of the broader community. Corruption was a charge frequently leveled against the chief by this study's participants. Additionally, the prevalence of fear and accompanying feelings of powerlessness were frequently voiced by participants in relation to their perceptions of the chief's corruption. Therefore, lacking the power to confront growing corruption, participants expressed frustration with their lack of agency.

Agency is discussed in the community resilience literature as a key requirement to adaptive capacity (Berkes and Ross 2013). As a mechanism of adaptation, agency is seen as the

capacity of an individual to act by his or her own freewill; however, agency does not occur in a social vacuum. Therefore, political ecologists argue that agency is less about self-determining, rational actors and more about situational relationships of power that influence how one can interact within his or her own environment (Cote and Nightingale 2011). In other words, the dynamic pressures of power shape the adaptive capacity of individuals, households and communities. Thus, from a situated resilience approach, power relationships are integral processes inherent to social-ecological systems, and consequently, agency cannot be defined as the actions of self-determining, rational actors. Adaptive capacity is contingent upon the situated processes of power.

As discussed in Chapter Three, the conceptualization of power within the broader notion of vulnerability that is found in the disaster literature provides a basis for the convergence of community resilience and situated resilience scholarship. Wisner et al. (2003) note that power is a root cause, or underlying driver, of vulnerability, and consequently, a limiting factor of adaptive capacity. Likewise, situated resilience scholars such as Cote and Nightingale (2011) argue for the critical examination of resilience by situating complex power processes within social-ecological systems.

Indeed, the findings from this study suggest that resilience is in fact influenced by the dynamic pressures of power. Participants described how the local elite in Mahenye exert their power through multiple domains – be that through CAMPFIRE initiatives, corrupt behavior related to land allocation or propagating fear among common people in Mahenye. These exertions of power influence a loss of agency for those individuals on the margins. Consequently, adaptive capacity decreases. This dynamic suggests that the conceptualization of agency as it

relates to self-determining, rational actors in Mahenye must be situated in the context to power

and politics. In other words, the actions and rationale of individuals in Mahenye cannot be

understood outside of situated power relationships, which exert dynamic pressures on how

individuals respond and adapt to change. For example, community members expressed anger and

frustration over the chief's exploitative behavior in relation to the *zunde ramambo*; however, the

concentrated power in the chief's household dissuades open criticism from or reforming action

by community members. From a community resilience perspective, wherein diversity and

redundancy are key forces in resilient processes, the concentration of power within a single

household is problematic for adaptive capacity. Moreover, from a situated resilience perspective

one could argue that the chief's concentration of power results in resilient processes that benefit

only himself and other local elite.

Argument for Situated Resilience

Conceptually, both social-ecological and community resilience offer potential pathways

to newly imagined methods of sustainable development. However, as resilience concepts are

increasingly embraced by development institutions such as the World Bank and the United

Nations Development Program, the use of resilience as a prescriptive development tool should be

applied through a situational approach. As findings from this study suggest, underlying forces of

culture, history and politics shape the adaptive capacity of a given social-ecological system.

While nested across temporal and spatial scales, the domains of culture, history and politics have

material influence on place-based adaptive capacity. Thus, resilience can not be abstracted from

place-based analysis but rather must be situated in the historical complexities of each given

social context in which resilience is being analyzed or prescribed.

Moreover, this study suggests that resilience is influenced by the experiences of marginalization. Participants in this study demonstrated that their marginal positionality has decreased their adaptive capacity. This was exemplified by participants' descriptions of experiences such as the mono-culture of modernity eroding local TEK or the corruption of Mahenye's traditional authority decreasing community trust while increasing inequality across the community. The findings from this study suggest that the experiences of marginalization force individuals to vulnerable livelihoods rather than building resilient response options. Therefore, any prescription of resilience as a development tool must recognize the situated power relationships that shape marginality in a given community. Unfortunately, recognition of these situated power relationships does not often occur in either the social-ecological systems or community resilience literature.

There are points of convergence, however, between mainstream and situated resilience approaches as discussed in Chapter Three. An additional point of convergence found in this study relates to the concept of panarchy found in the social-ecological resilience literature. The complexities of power relationships and processes of marginalization found in Mahenye demonstrate the multi-dimensional composition of Mahenye's social-ecological landscape. Mahenye as a community is nested within a broader temporal and spatial panarchy of national and global change. Because of the uncertainty and unpredictability inherent to such panarchy, concrete conclusions about resilience are difficult to assert, particularly if such conclusions are devoid of political, historical and cultural meaning. Therefore, approaching resilience on a situational basis provides the best opportunity to analyze a given system's adaptive capacity. Continued development of the situated resilience approach might allow researchers to analyze

power relationships expressed through politics, history and culture in relation to a system's

resilience. Only after the analysis of power is integrated into mainstream resilience approaches

can the move towards prescriptive resilience development possibly achieve equitable

implementation of adaptive capacity building.

Limitations

Several limitations of this study should be noted. My positionality as a foreign, male

researcher may have affected the information shared by the study's participants. Also, as a non-

Shangaan individual, I do not have insider's knowledge related to the nuances of Mahenye

people's culture, history and politics. Thus, the findings and analysis found in this thesis are

limited without additional research from an individual with insider's knowledge. This particular

limitation is compounded by my lack of fluency in the Shona and Shangaan languages.

Collecting data through a translator may have limited my ability to ascertain the subtleties of

participants' particular accounts. Additionally, my sampling method was non-probabilistic, and

therefore, my findings and analysis are limited to the sample. I cannot generalize to the broader

Mahenye population, but rather, can only speak to the perceptions and experiences of those

participants in the sample.

The limited age range of the participants in the sample is a limitation to this study as well.

Because my target demographic for participants was older Mahenye people with practical

experience using local TEK, my sample excludes the perceptions and experiences of younger

Mahenye people. Inclusion of more youthful perceptions might alter the analysis of Mahenye

peoples' adaptive capacity because there may be divided perspectives between the different

generations.

There may also exist divided gendered perspectives; however, my sample does not adequately cover this concern because there is not equal distribution between female and male participants. As mentioned in Chapter Four, some females who were approached for this study did not wish to participate because they did not have available time for an oral history collection. My research visit coincided with the rainy season and Mahenye women spend long hours tending their fields during such time. These farming duties are in addition to household duties such as cooking and childcare. Therefore, some women approached for this study could not, understandingly, spare the time to participant. However, the under-representation of women in the study's sample limits the conclusions drawn from this research.

A final limitation regards my general field of study. Because my education and research are first and foremost grounded in sociology, I do not have expertise in ecology and thus cannot discuss the ecologic resilience of Mahenye's natural environment. Ideally, future studies on the situated resilience of Mahenye would include multiple researchers with expertise in both social and ecological sciences. Researchers conducting a multi-disciplinary study could form a more in-depth analysis of the adaptive capacity of Mahenye's social-ecological system.

Conclusion

As the conceptual framework of resilience increasingly moves from descriptive to prescriptive domains of development, multi-disciplinary research is necessary to identify critical relationships of who wins and who loses when resilience is pursued as a development initiative. For marginal groups whose degrees of vulnerability are greater than core groups, building adaptive capacity must be approached with situational awareness. What cultural, historic and political processes have contributed to the marginal group's vulnerability? How will attempts to

build resilience influence vulnerability? In the case of Mahenye, as described by participants in this study, building resilient processes at the moment would most likely benefit a select, powerful few and further increase the vulnerability of those at the margins. Thus, continued research is necessary to discover if the experiences of marginalization produce only vulnerable, coping strategies rather than resilient, adaptive responses.

Appendix A. Definitions of Rangeland Ecosystems

Range Ecosystems	Definitions
Rangeland	Land carrying natural or semi-natural vegetation which provides a habitat suitable for herds of wild or domestic ungulates (Pratt and Gwynne 1977).
Savanna	A specific type of rangeland found in tropic or sub-tropic regions. The key feature common to all savannas worldwide is climate, specifically, a hot wet season of 4 to 8 months in duration, and a cool dry season for the rest of the year (Cole 1986).
Veld	An Afrikaans term describing savanna environments in southern Africa, conventionally divided by altitude into highveld and lowveld.
Highveld	Savanna ecology found between altitudes of 1,200 to 1,800 meters that consists of dense woodland (predominantly *Brachystegia spiciformes* and *Julbernadia globiflora*) interspersed with expanses of grassland along drainage lines (Short and Norval 1981).
Lowveld	Hot and dry, semi-arid savannas found between altitudes of 150 to 600 meters with average annual rainfall between 400 to 600 millimeters. Zimbabwe's lowveld consists of clay or sand soil zones, and is dominated by either mopane woodland or miombo vegetation, dependent upon the soil zone (Scoones 1992).

Appendix B. Study Area
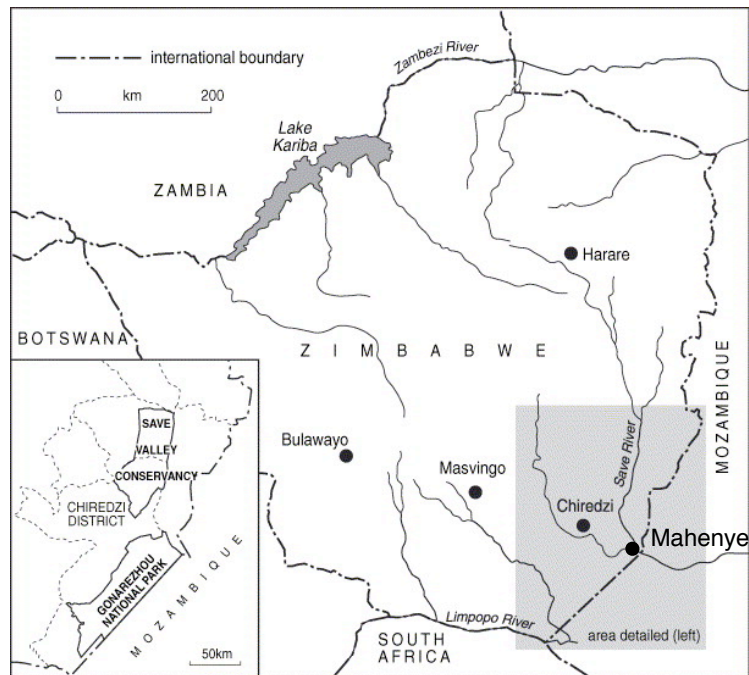
_*Map modified from original found in Wolmer *et al.* 2004.

Appendix C. Informed Consent Form (IRB Approved)

The University of
Montana

Department of Sociology
The University of Montana
Missoula, MT   59812-1047
(406)243-4381

INTERVIEWEE INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

Title: *Lowveld Practices in Mahenye, Zimbabwe: An Oral History Project*

Project Director: Scott E. Byington
Department of Sociology
M.A. Candidate
The University of Montana
Missoula, MT 59812
Phone: 406-243-4381 (Campus)
Email: scott.byington@umontana.edu

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to learn about experiences of people living close to the land in Mahenye, Zimbabwe. Your account will contribute to the understanding of how rural communities in southern Africa interact with the natural environment and how the social relations present in rural communities shape these human-environment interactions. The project will contribute to the project director's Master's thesis and contribute to the on-going mission of the University of Zimbabwe's Centre for Applied Social Sciences, which seeks to understand rural natural resources use dynamics, as well as the aspirations of local people living in rural areas.

Procedures: If you agree to participate in this project, you will be asked to take part in an audio-taped interview that will take approximately two hours. The interview topics cover family life, community life, farming, animal husbandry, other social relationships and other events that capture your experiences of living in Mahenye. You may chose not to answer particular questions, and you may discontinue the interview at any time. Upon completion of the interview, the audio-tape will be transcribed, and you will receive a copy of the transcription to review for accuracy and to decide if there is any information in the transcript that should not be included in any publication. If, upon review of the transcript you choose not to be identified by name in any publication, a pseudonym will be used. If, upon review of the transcript you choose to withdraw from the project, you may do so. If, upon review of the transcript you wish to donate a copy of it to the University of Zimbabwe's Public Archives for future scholarly and educational purposes, you will be provided with a separate release form.

Confidentiality: As a participant in the oral history project, you will be identified by name on the interview transcript and in any published work that includes accounts from your interview. If, upon review of the interview transcript, you prefer not to be identified by name, a pseudonym will be used for any reference to your interview.

Management of Data: The tapes of the interview will be returned to you or erased after the interview has been transcribed. You will be given a copy of the transcript. The project director will maintain a copy of the transcript in a secure file accessible only to him during the course of the project. At the end of the project the transcripts held by the project director will be destroyed.

Benefits: Your participation in this project will contribute to our understanding of rural life in Zimbabwe's lowveld, as well as the aspirations of local people living in rural areas.

Risks: Answering some of the questions related to your life experiences may cause you to recall sad or difficult memories. You may refrain from answering any questions that are uncomfortable for you. You may end the interview at any time.

Although we believe that the risk of taking part in this study is minimal, the following liability statement is required in all University of Montana consent forms.

> In the event that you are injured as a result of this research you should
> individually seek appropriate medical treatment. If the injury is caused
> by the negligence of the University or any of its employees, you may be
> entitled to reimbursement or compensation pursuant to the
> Comprehensive State Insurance Plan established by the Department of
> Administration under the authority of M.C.A., Title 2, Chapter 9. In the
> event of a claim for such injury, further information may be obtained
> from the University's Claims representative or University Legal Counsel.
> (Reviewed by University Legal Counsel, July 6, 1993)

Voluntary Participation/Withdrawal: Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time.

Questions: If you have any questions about the project, please contact Scott Byington at 406-243-4381.

Statement of Consent: I have read the above project description. I have been informed of the risks and benefits involved, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. Furthermore, I have been assured that any future questions I may have will also be answered by the project director. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study. I understand I will receive a copy of this consent form.

_____
Printed (Typed) Name of Interviewee

_____   _____
Interviewee's Signature   Date

Statement of Consent to be Audio-taped: I agree to have this interview audio-taped. understand that the audio-recording will be either erased or given to me upon request following transcription.

_____   _____
Interviewee's Signature   Date

Appendix D. Interview Guide

Preliminary Interview Guide[18]

Introduction: Thank you for agreeing to meet with me and take part in this interview. I will be tape recording our interview today. The purpose of this interview is to learn about your experiences living here in Mahenye as a (farmer or herder). What is it like to live in Mahenye and to make your living off the land? Your account will contribute to our understanding of the experiences of rural communities in the lowveld. The interview will take about 1 hour. Please let me know if you want to stop at any time and take a break. If there are questions that you do not wish to answer, please let me know, and we will skip those questions. If you want to end the interview, please let me know and we will do so. Please ask for clarification of the questions at any time. The interview topics cover family, community, nature, work and other events that may have made an impression on your life. With each topic, I'll pose a series of questions and ask you to share particular memories or stories that come to mind. Do you have any questions at this point? Please feel free to ask me questions along the way.

Interview Guide:

- Family (e.g., Where and when were you born? Where did you grow up? What sort of paid or unpaid work did you and others in your family do while you were growing up? Do you have a favorite memory from this work?)
- Community (e.g., Describe the Mahenye community. What was it like when you were growing up? Has it changed over the years? If so, in what why has it changed? Do you attend community gatherings? Describe these.)
- Nature (e.g., Describe the lowveld around Mahenye. What was it like when your were growing up? How do you think it has changed over time? Because of these changes, have you or the community changed the way you farm or herd? If so, in what way?)
- Work (e.g., Describe your typical day of farming or herding. What is your favorite part of farming or herding? What is your least favorite? Who taught you how to farm or herd? Do you have a favorite memory from your time on the land?)
- Events (e.g., Are there any big events that you can recall that influenced life in Mahenye? What were some of your experiences on the range after the Save Valley Conservancy was enclosed? Or after land reform in 2000? How has the proximity of Gonarezhou shaped your farming or herding practices?)

Are there other stories and memories about living here in Mahenye that you would like to share?

Closing: Close with thanks for participation and recap of next steps: transcription of tape; opportunity to review and edit; right to withdraw; option of giving permission for the transcript to be archived at UZ or NAoZ; interviewee can contact me with any questions.

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[18] There are many labels given to an interview guide (e.g., interview schedule or interview protocol). Given my familiarity with Warren and Karner's qualitative research text (2010), I have elected to use their particular terminology concerning an interview guide.

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