Time to farm

A qualitative inquiry into the dynamics of the gender regime of land and labour rights in subsistence farming: an example of the Chiweshe communal area, Zimbabwe

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Abstract

In the context of multiple stressors such as land shortage and food insecurity, the thesis deals with gendered land and labour rights as a social aspect of food production in subsistence agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa. Using the Chiweshe communal area in Zimbabwe as an example, it identifies, investigates and draws conclusions on higher-order social processes of gender, power and incremental institutional change in a local context. To that end, it investigates how access to and control over land and labour rights are governed by gender and how that determines men's and women's social goals in production and reproduction as well as their strategies for meeting the goals and the opportunities for achieving them.

Using a qualitative method of inquiry based on interviews and observations with maize peasant farmers, men and women, an empirical material is constructed and interpreted. Using constructivist grounded theory, men's and women's social goals and strategies in production and reproduction are identified, mapped out and analysed. Drawing on gender theory and new institutional theory, which recognise power and discursive signs of institutional change in rules, norms and values, it uncovers layers of social complexity in the dynamics between female and male land rights as well as between male land rights and female labour in the gender regime. In so doing, it shows how power relations emerging from unequal land and labour rights are enacted in cooperation, competition and conflict within polygyny, between spouses and between co-wives.

The findings show how land, besides being a natural resource for food production, is an important social, cultural and intergenerational symbol, especially for men. This has implications for women and for their position and room of manoeuvre in food production. It also shows how the gender regime is subject to incremental institutional change through gendered agency, mainly from within the regime but accelerated by land scarcity as an external process. To conclude, the gender regime of land and labour rights has implications for how gender is enacted in everyday strategies, constructed in terms of female and male identities and configured in terms of masculinity and femininity. In the end, it is argued, these conditions affect food production and, in its extension, also food security.

Acknowledgements

Note to the reader

This thesis is rooted in an economic history project called 'Africa between commons and private property: land use and land tenure in communal areas of Zimbabwe' (starting in 1998). Empirically, the project emerged from the observation that there is a gap between potential and actual food production in subsistence farming in a particular study area: *Chiweshe, Zimbabwe*, which in several bio-physical and economic ways resembles other rural areas in sub-Saharan Africa. Theoretically, it was based on the propositions that the formal regulation of land rights, the distribution of land and the gendered division of labour in smallholder farming are crucial for understanding production. Methodologically, the project was designed as a case study of the institutional causes and socio-economic consequences of the food production gap in, paying special attention to continuity and change in the institutional setup around land tenure, land use and human well-being. In the early project phase, the intention was to study land ownership from a historical, property rights and land rights perspective and to estimate production and productivity over time using a quantitative and qualitative approach. However, in the light of early findings in the data analysis the scope of the study shifted. Inspired by constructivist grounded theory as a research strategy, the theoretical perspective and method of inquiry turned away from property rights theory, external institutional change and quantitative estimates of production and productivity towards a qualitative, sociological and new institutional approach.

The new direction pays more attention to gender, power and piecemeal institutional change from within the setting. It allows for a grounded as well as a discursive analysis of interviews as the main data source, which in turn invites the use of a reflexive methodology. As a result, the study is now set in a new institutional frame centered on social complexity and sustainability. It pays detailed attention to informal rules, norms and values influencing the gendered access to and control over land and labour. It identifies gendered social goals in subsistence farming and maps out the strategies for pursuing these goals by studying how gender is enacted and reproduced when women and men, as peasant farmers, are 'doing gender'. Further, it explores the configuration of masculinity and femininity in the research setting, it studies power dynamics in decision-making processes and it analyses how female and male identities are constructed in relation to land.

The theoretical and methodological approach has shifted from new institutional economic theory towards other new institutional theories, mainly sociological and discursive, and towards the use of more power theory in the gender analysis. The research topic has shifted from external to incremental

internal change and moved beyond the gendered distribution of land, the gendered division of labour and the gendered organisation and management of production into the construction of male and female social goals, strategies and identity and the configuration of masculinity and femininity. The renewed frame employs an explicit qualitative research strategy that has shifted the approach and methods to a qualitative method of inquiry using text analysis, constructivist grounded theory and reflexive methodology.

The study shows how the gender regime of land and labour is interwoven with masculinity and femininity. It shows how social constructions in Chiweshe are produced and reproduced in three types of power dynamics and interactions: between women and men, among women, and among men. To put it simply, the study identifies interactions and dynamics of 'doing gender' in relation to land and labour rights relevant for food production and discusses its causes, consequences and meanings. In its extension, this raises questions on food security and empowerment of socially disenfranchised groups.

Now, in what sense is this project informed by or will it contribute to the broad field of sustainability science? Empirically it addresses vulnerability because it is set in the social context of poverty, land shortage, major epidemics (like HIV/AIDS) and food insecurity in sub-Saharan Africa. Further, it addresses social complexity owing to the discussion of land not only as a natural and economic resource in production but also as a social and cultural asset for shaping gendered identity and meeting gendered social goals and strategies. As such, this may represent a substantive contribution to understanding gender and power dynamics among peasant farmers but also to a more systematic understanding of subsistence farming from a social angle in a context where economic perspectives on land tenure, production incentives and market access may not suffice.

As noted, the project was not designed in sustainability science but owing to theoretical and methodological shifts over time it came to be shaped by research strategic choices, which are relevant and can be of interest for sustainability science. Although the subject matter of food production and landownership need to be scrutinised also from institutional, economic and technological perspectives underlining access to inputs and markets, it was *reframed* in this project into a social and cultural matter whereby different understandings emerged. Thus, with the postcolonial critique in mind against the use of western theory in the global south, this thesis seeks to apply new institutionalism (from history, sociology and political science), power theory from transition theory and grounded theory (from medical sociology) in a research setting in sub-Saharan Africa. In so doing, it may be a contribution *to* sustainability science although somewhat less of a contribution *within* sustainability science.

Finally, I need to make an observation about the textual strategy of using a first person language throughout the thesis. In the pursuit of reflexivity and in accordance with the interpretivist epistemology in the thesis the use of first person language seems appropriate. The use of 'I' is in fact acceptable, recommended or even required when one plays a decisive role in constructing the presented data (interviews and observations), in combining ideas (theories and concepts) into analytical frames and in reframing the research scope (Webb, 1992). Moreover, it may help the reader in seeing that the story that I tell here is *one* plausible version of what is going on in the particular research setting in terms of land, labour, power, gender and food production. The use of first person language is therefore meant to increase the intersubjectivity and hopefully also the readability.

Lund, August 2011

Karin Steen

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1 Introduction

Farming, food and gender

The organisation of production over time, including inputs of land and labour as production factors, is a core issue in economic and social history (Hopkins, 1973) as well as a challenge for sustainability. This thesis will highlight an example of how food production, in terms of access to and control over land and labour, is organised according to gender in subsistence farming in sub-Saharan Africa. Gender theory has shown, repeatedly, how access to and use of land and rural labour in production and reproduction is gendered (Agarwal, 1994a, Elson, 1989, Kabeer, 1994, Meinzen-Dick et al., 1997, Shortall, 1999). Following that, the thesis will investigate the gendering and power dynamics of land and labour among peasant farmers in the Chiweshe communal area in Zimbabwe.

The research setting is particularly interesting for two reasons. Firstly, the bio-geo-physical conditions in terms of fertile soils and favourable climate in the Mazoe district, in which Chiweshe is located, offers a potential for high crop yields. Despite favourable conditions food production in the area is low, however, and there seems to be a gap between the potential and the actual output (Field data, 2000, 2007). This gap calls for research not only from natural, technological or economic standpoints, but also from a social and cultural point of view like in this thesis. Secondly, in the study area there are social relations that bring gender arrangements to the fore. On the basis of gender, marriage determines how land and labour is distributed and managed and how social relations in production and reproduction are structured and interact. This results in a *gender regime* (Connell, 1987) which provides an analytical context for a detailed empirical study of how asymmetric power relations in the context of food production come into play as an aspect of gender dynamics. The study is set in a context where subsistence farmers are exposed to multiple stressors like HIV/AIDS and land degradation (Bai et al., 2008). In a wider sustainability perspective, I therefore argue that although the focus here is mainly on inequality in the distribution, control over and use of land and labour as natural and social resources[1], the research also *relates* to production potentials and food security. Indirectly, I thereby touch upon multilevel sustainability challenges.

For several reasons, mainly population increase, changing diets and land use changes, the global food demand is expected to increase rapidly (Hubert, 2010).

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[1] Following Flor Avelino and Jan Rotmans, I use a broad definition of resources seen as persons, assets, materials or capital, including human, mental, monetary, artefactual and natural resources (Avelino & Rotmans 2009:551).

As a consequence, food prices are expected to rise (Hertel et al., 2010, IFAD, 2010), and, in fact, are already doing so (FAO, 2011a, FAO, 2011c). Agencies and scholars alike therefore argue that smallholder agriculture in developing countries must contribute more to contemporary and future global food supplies (Collette et al., 2011, IFAD, 2010, FAO, 2011b). In sub-Saharan subsistence farming the difference between potential and actual food production is large (IFAD, 2010, World Bank, 2007). Despite favourable natural farming conditions and high potentials for increased agricultural production (Lobell et al., 2009) the yield gap signals that there are serious natural and social challenges. In many areas, levels of agricultural production are stagnating and in consequence farmers may risk food insecurity (Ivanic, 2008).

The yield gap is much debated, not least because it is hard to explain and overcome in all its complexity. As a whole, the debates on food production, yield gaps and food security are multi-facetted and draw on knowledge from a broad natural, technological, economic, political and social field. Land shortage, low land productivity and low farming capacity owing to persistent poverty and health impairments are common explanations for low food production and high food insecurity (World Bank, 2007). Apart from this there are structural, institutional and gender-related causes (World Bank et al., 2009). Although the yield gap serves as a *motivation* for the thesis it is not within the scope of the study to deal with all the factors that contribute to the gap. The thesis will primarily focus on one social aspect that is not well researched: the gendering of food production in subsistence farming and its multiple dynamics. I have chosen this focus in the belief that gender dynamics have implications for food production and, in its extension, also for food security. The main rationale for choosing gender is that it refers to socially constructed inequalities that are fundamental to social relations and institutions thus reflecting higher-order processes in society. The gender organisation of food production thereby serves as a second *motivation* for the study. Nevertheless, there are obviously other economic, political and social reasons for food insecurity, such as government policy, infrastructure, distributional patterns in society, etc. As a delimitation of the research scope, other reasons for the yield gap, apart from the gender organisation in the local setting, will not be investigated.

Throughout the 20th century, food production increased in Chiweshe, thanks to infrastructural investments such as extension services (Munyaradzi, 1988). Despite the production increase the area is said to be somewhat food insecure, at least according to peasant farmers that I interviewed in 2000 and 2007 (Field data). This calls for a scrutiny of those natural and social conditions that may constrain increases in present and future production levels. As an example, I observe that gendered land and labour rights in the area change over time and thus need to be understood in a long term perspective (see chapter 2).

In addition, there is need for a contemporary view of how gendered institutions operate and how gendered strategies are exercised and enacted in everyday life. Thus, I will study the present time and how the gender regime of land and labour rights determines access to, control of and the detailed organisation and management of land and labour including women's and men's strategies in production and reproduction (chapters 5 and 6).

I assume that gender dynamics in the setting affect production in both qualitative and quantitative terms. I will study how gender may determine and possibly delimit production opportunities and then, in extension, reflect in the conclusions on how that may have repercussions on food security. Since food production in subsistence farming is family based, it is necessary to pay attention to how *families* organise and manage natural and social resources in production and reproduction. That applies particularly to the way in which rights and responsibilities are shared between women and men in the domestic sphere where production meets reproduction and how that gives rise to different male and female strategies. This leads to the research questions to be explored here.

Research questions and approach

As stated above, economic and social history deals with the organisation and dynamics of production, reproduction and consumption and how they are reproduced or changed over time. In addition, it deals with how resources are distributed and employed in these processes, including *who* controls and *what* becomes of the surplus, if any, which is thus a matter of power. Following this line of reasoning and in search of institutional change, there are four research questions all of which I will approach from a constructivist, interpretivist and qualitative position (Charmaz, 2006, Ragin and Amoroso, 2011). In the first question there is a focus on *gender, rights and resources*:

- In what terms and on what grounds can the institutions of land and labour rights and their interaction in production and reproduction in Zimbabwe's communal areas, with special reference to Chiweshe, be understood as a gender regime?

I will discuss the first question in terms of rights and access to land and labour as institutions including rules and norms of ownership, distribution and control. In so doing, I will study how production is organised, managed and gendered at the nexus of land and labour rights. The existence of a gender regime is a proposition and a starting-point in the thesis. In actual research I will investigate how the gender regime is expressed, how it operates and, thus, on what basis the

land and labour rights institutions in Chiweshe can be understood as a gender regime. In particular, I will describe and discuss how social rights and relations in resource distribution, production and reproduction are gendered in the local context. This leads to the second question and a focus on *power:*

- How does the gender regime operate in terms of power; how do spouses (woman/man) and co-wives (woman/woman) respectively, exercise power in relation to each other in the polygynous wedlock; and how do spouses and co-wives respond to such power?

I will discuss the second question in terms of two relations within polygynous wedlock: the wife to husband relations and the wife to wife relations, respectively. Concerning the wife to husband relation I will investigate it in terms of access to land, control over land, the income generated from land, and decision-making power. Concerning the wife to wife relation I will investigate it in terms of 'easy' (good) ties or 'uneasy' (problematic) ties resulting either in shared or in competing and conflicting interests. This leads to the third question and a focus on *gender, social goals and strategies:*

- What are the social goals and gender strategies, female and male, that women and men aim for, navigate towards and seek to achieve in the gender regime; how are the strategies enacted; and in what respect are the strategies an indication of institutional change?

I will discuss the third question in a detailed analysis of how women and men operate as food-producing peasant farmers within the gender regime and how they develop and employ male and female strategies and practices according to female and male social goals: what do women and men *think*, *speak about* and *do* in subsistence farming and what do they aspire and aim for? To that end, I will apply gerund coding from grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006). Based on the gerund codes I will construct condensed and synthesised categories to be translated into men's and women's strategies, sub-strategies and practices. Thereafter, I will investigate how the strategies are enacted and to what extent they are indications of institutional change in the gender regime. Thereby, the scrutiny of the first, second and third question forms the basis for a discussion of the fourth question to which I may not have a full answer:

- How do social higher-order processes of gender and power, expressed in terms of the gender regime of land and labour rights in Chiweshe, influence food production in a local context?

In early research, in an effort to estimate the capacity for increased production, I intended to document quantitatively the actual production and productivity, in Chiweshe, and to do so via land and labour. This turned out to be a difficult task, however, since such data is hard to obtain and may suffer from low reliability. Instead, I took a qualitative approach to production levels and observed whether and on what grounds peasant farmers describe and perceive their own situation as food (in)secure. Such an approach resembles research on how subsistence farmers or other disenfranchised groups in society *perceive* poverty (Hulme, 2004). In research more issues emerged and I shifted the focus towards relations of power and gender, and their enactments, as being important for production. In relation to that, I will consider if and to what extent the gendered organisation and management of food production in subsistence farming, including male and female strategies, can be said to affect, or even hinder, food production.

Definitions and positioning

Regarding definitions, I see subsistence farming as populated by an analytical category that I call 'peasant farmers'. Peasant farmers are *partially* integrated into *incomplete* (and imperfect) markets (Ellis, 1988). They cultivate for home consumption purposes mainly, while selling only *some* crops on the market (Chibnik, 1978). In addition, their main factors of production, such as land and labour, are *family based* rather than purchased in the market (Ellis, 1988). As of late, the understanding of how to define, analyse and interpret subsistence farming is changing (Bryceson, 2002). Research on subsistence farming often has a broad scope with focus on the 'multiplexity' of livelihoods (Bryceson, 2002). Besides land, such research often investigates diversified livelihood strategies, including animal husbandry, and multitasking including handicraft (Ellis, 2000, Elmqvist and Olsson, 2006). In the study area people diversify their livelihoods only to a limited extent through handicraft, poultry or cattle, however. In an attempt to improve the farming conditions, the Land Husbandry Act of 1951 (Government of Southern Rhodesia, 1951), as one of its aims, puts a limit to the number of stock based on the carrying capacity of the soil (Machingaidze, 1991). Even if the effectiveness of the Land Husbandry Act is questioned (Machingaidze, 1991, Phimister, 1993), farmers in the area under study still have very few heads of cattle (Field data, 2000, 2007). Therefore, the thesis does not include animal husbandry in the study of subsistence farmers' gendered access to, distribution of and control over land and labour.

In the thesis I refer to *food security* in subsistence livelihoods as an overarching issue in subsistence livelihoods. According to the present

understanding it is a multi-dimensional phenomenon with four main facets: availability of food, stability of food supply, access to food, and utilisation of food (FAO, 2000). The definition of food security has been refined many times since the concept emerged in the 1970s. Currently it is said to exist 'when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life' (FAO, 2002). The current meaning and general use of the concept of food security is inspired by Amartya Sen's work on capabilities and entitlements (see Clay 2002) which has also influenced contemporary multidimensional understandings of poverty. The primary focus here will not be on either technological or economic aspects of food production and food security, such as subsistence farmers' use of seeds and fertilisers or their access to and transactions in markets, but on how social aspects, especially gender and power dynamics, influence or even partly determine the conditions for production (see Andersson et al 2011). Thus, I use economic concepts, such as production, but I have no economic perspective on productivity or efficiency. Instead, I study social and cultural norms, rules and values and structural levels connecting to higher-order processes of gender and power. This distinction is important as the problem framing has implications for the way we understand the problem and for how we seek sustainable pathways to improve the situation.

Following the gender theorist Robert Connell (1987), I define and use the term gender regime as a set of norms and rules that determines, according to gender, 'who can have what and do what' in a certain organisation, like in the one in subsistence farming under scrutiny here. Gender regimes are historical compositions, always imperfect and under construction (Connell, 1987). This implies that a seemingly persistent gender regime may be subject to pressure and reinterpretation over time. Gender regimes may, in turn, reflect an overall *gender order* meaning the social relations that structure gender in society (Connell 1987), such as patriarchy[2], for example. Thus, regimes refer to deep structures such as beliefs, values and routinised ways of doing things. Deep structures can be said to be characterised by internal disagreement, tensions, conflicts, and competing interests while at the same time displaying coherence and shared rules (Geels, 2011).

Following the sociologist Ann Swidler (1986: 273), I define *strategies* as 'persistent ways of ordering action through time.' This means that women and

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[2] Patriarchy in this thesis means 'the manifestation and institutionalisation of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of male dominance over women in society in general. It implies that men hold power in all the important institutions of society and that women are deprived of access to such power. It does *not* imply that women are either totally powerless or totally deprived of rights, influence, and resources' (Lerner 1986:239, *The creation of patriarchy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press).

men in Chiweshe who in their everyday lives 'build lines of action' thereby also create strategies, which I will analyse and discuss profoundly in chapter 6.

There are four research challenges that partly position my thesis. In sequence, the first challenge refers to the issue of women versus gender as an analytical category. The second challenge refers to the gendered coding and distribution of working tasks and workloads versus the underlying rational and further implications of such gendering. The third challenge refers to the productive meanings of land versus the symbolic and gendered meaning of land. Finally, the fourth challenge refers to the problem of tracing gradual and piecemeal change in institutions. Below, I will expand on each of the challenges.

Gender – beyond women only

Firstly, while many studies for good reasons address the (precarious) conditions of rural women and their livelihoods, especially in Africa (Hay and Stichter, 1996), one contribution here will be to perform a comparative analysis relating women to men, men to men, women to women, and female to male, thus a gender analysis rather than a (mere) focus on women. I will refer to Sally Shortall (Shortall, 1999) who has moved beyond research on women and farming towards gender and control of land in rural areas, and in so doing I will extend her discussion to that of a sub-Saharan context.

Labour as a social contract – beyond working tasks/loads only

Secondly, while many studies highlight the fact that women spend more hours than men in productive and reproductive work (Boserup, 1970, Elson, 1989, Momsen, 1991), a second position will be to reach *beyond* the gendered coding of labour and the weight of the work load by asking questions such as: *How* do women and men work? *Why* do (many) women in sub-Saharan Africa work long hours? *What* are the social contract and social interactions between wife and husband within the gender regime? The task will be to weave these questions into a local exploration of gender and power as higher-order social processes.

Land as a social symbol – beyond a natural input in production only

The importance of land rights and the failure of many land administration programmes to protect women's land rights are highlighted in the development literature (Agarwal, 1994a, Wanyeki, 2003). In its Policy Research Report on land, the World Bank (2003) recognises that past initiatives often failed to distinguish how control of land is divided *within* the household (Deininger, 2003). The Policy Research Report argues that the strengthening of women's land rights is important both for potential gains to agricultural productivity and for human capital investments at the household level, such as nutrition and child schooling. Therefore, the Policy Report stresses legal measures, education, and capacity building, as well as preferential treatment of women in public programmes, such as those dedicated to land titling and land reform (Deininger, 2003, World Bank et al., 2009). Moreover, FAO argues (2011) in 'The State of Food and Agriculture' that women in developing countries need secure land rights for the improvement of food security and development (FAO, 2011d). However, even if the emphasis on women's land rights is central, the analysis of rights in relation to work is often overlooked. That is, a dual emphasis on women's land rights *and* women's labour, understood within a gender frame, is necessary for creating desired developmental improvements.

Property rights theory may help identifying women's weak land rights and the fuzzy land rights system practised in the study area. With an orientation towards gender and institutional theory, capable of grasping changes, I will locate land in a wider *social* context, however, and highlight other aspects and meanings. Besides being necessary for food production, land may be a matter of safety, symbolism, status, lineage connection and men's identity. In line with this reasoning, Jules Pretty (Pretty, 2002) underlines the cultural aspect of land and argues for a special connection between 'man and land'. In pastoral societies the analogy would be 'man and cattle' meaning that not only land but also cattle bring status and wealth. Although cattle can thus be seen as a productive resource, like land and labour, it will not be dealt with here.

In the context of the gender regime in the study area, I will show how I interpret the interaction and dynamics between weak land rights for women and strong land rights as part of male identity. Power relations thereby become important. Drawing on gender theory and institutional theory, which recognise power and discursive signs of social change, the study will seek to uncover layers of social complexity in the dynamics between female and male land rights as well as between male land rights and female labour.

Gradual piecemeal change – instead of abrupt institutional change

In new institutional theory there is a call for frameworks that can identify, locate and trace not only abrupt but also *gradual* institutional change (Mahoney and Thelen, 2010). There is also a call for frameworks that can theorise if and how institutions change in different ways over time when there is no abrupt and easily identifiable transformation (Thelen, 2003, Waylen, 2009). The problem of not being able to grasp change *within* institutions has often led institutional theory to focus on external factors as a main cause of fundamental institutional change. From a comparative sociological and historical perspective, James Mahoney and Kathleen Thelen (Mahoney and Thelen, 2010) argue that the common focus in institutional theory on institutional breaks and external forces is a limitation; instead they stress the need to create theories and frames that are capable of analysing internal, piecemeal and gradual institutional change. To that end, one contribution here will be to illustrate how we can identify and understand piecemeal changes from within the institutions of land and labour rights in the gender regime in Chiweshe.

Theory, methodology and data

As already noted, my research proceeds from and is framed by a dual institutional and gender perspective, which is strengthened by the use of a gender methodology to be discussed further in chapter 4. From an institutional perspective I will discuss land and labour as institutional arrangements and thus identify how they are regulated by norms and rules that determine how they are accessed, distributed, owned and used. From a gender perspective I will investigate gendered differences in the access to natural and social resources as well as the gendering of production strategies and decision-making processes. The gender methodology also implies a need to recognise that knowledge comes from somewhere and therefore for me to situate myself within the research frame (Haraway, 1988). This calls for a reflexive research approach (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009).

Seen as social arrangements, institutions can be located and practised on several social scales, individual or structural. The gender regime of land and labour rights in subsistence farming is in itself an institution that entails norms and rules that regulate rights to and distribution of land and labour. At a first glance, such a regime may seem persistent. Yet, even seemingly stable or static settings are continuously recreated by agents and structures who interact (or counteract each other) in order to reproduce, consolidate and perpetuate (or change) the setting. Firstly, my major concern is to understand how land and labour rights and social relations of power operate and interact in the gender

regime of land and labour rights in subsistence farming. Secondly, my ambition is to identify agency, gender interaction and potentials for change in the regime. The analytical ambition to capture not only continuity but also signs of regime changes for the sake of further transformation will affect the choices I make in theory (chapter 3), methodology (chapter 4) and data representation (chapter 6).

When I embarked on research, I applied an overall institutional and gender perspective on land rights. In research, I discovered that the land rights system in the study area was insecure and uncertain; that land rights were interrelated with labour rights; and that there was much 'talking' and storytelling around land and how to make sense of the land situation. In an effort to capture (any) social change and for the sake of better explaining my preliminary findings, I needed further theory. Such continuous search for adequate theory and concepts with higher explanatory power is common in qualitative inquiry (Silverman, 2010). To that end, I developed an analytic frame of theories and concepts after my field work, rather than before embarking on research.

By applying discursive institutional theory, which is useful for identifying change, I can visualise additional patterns in my data. Discursive institutional theory focuses on signs of change or signs of upholding the status quo. Following the course of discursive institutionalism, I use Vivien Schmidt's (Schmidt, 2008) argument that change starts as an act of thinking in an actor's mind. Accordingly, change can best be captured by considering institutions from the point of view of ongoing activities, or *doings* and *enactments*. Thus, I draw on various strands of new institutional theory – historical, sociological and discursive – which capture those aspects that play a decisive role in the gendered production strategies and in the overall performance of the gender regime.

Proceeding from various strands of new institutionalism, I develop a *theoretical frame* for studying these changes. In addition, I search for signs that reinforce, undermine or change the underlying rationale of the regime, and for signs of how the rationale can be negotiated from within the regime. In particular, I focus on the gender dynamics of the regime in terms of gendered aspirations and performance as well as the *meaning* of various kinds of doings, including thinking and talking. In interpretive approaches it is common to use heuristics for guidance throughout research as well as for identifying relevant aspects and important questions (Geels, 2011). As the reader will notice, I will use several such heuristics as thinking tools for analysing the gender regime.

In my fieldwork in the Chiweshe communal area, in 2000 and 2007, I generated 132 interviews with subsistence maize farmers, men and women, six village heads, plus numerous observations. I also interviewed two informants who are civil servants and three informants who had resigned from government offices. Based on this, and with a focus on land and labour, I constructed an empirical material on the gender regime in the study area. In addition, I

conducted a qualitative text analysis (Bergström and Boréus, 2000) of material on land rights and family labour that is relevant for understanding the study area: documents, legislation and secondary literature. The interview data contains both contemporary and oral history interviews. Through the life story interviews, as narratives, the picture of the past can be re-evaluated (Letherby, 2003). Narratives can also capture complex actions, events and doings (Geels, 2011) and thus help us make sense of everyday life.

Grounded theory as an iterative research process results in emerging understandings that are grounded in primary data. Although, I did *not* construct data in the field in complete accordance with the iterative idea of grounded theory, I was much inspired by grounded theory in my later analysis and interpretation of data. My ambition to capture aspects of change from interviews informs the way that I use the social constructivist approach to gerunds coding in the data interpretation phase that sociologist Kathy Charmaz (Charmaz, 2006) suggests. In contrast to any approach of testing or confirming preconceived categories, Charmaz' constructivist approach has an important strength in that it encourages the creation of new codes in the analysis by defining what we actually *see*, rather than what we expect to see, in empirically grounded data. For my work, the grounded theory approach means that in the empirical material, I have categorised every word or line of data with verbs into detailed ongoing activities, *gerunds*. In that way I was able to make the most of primary data in search of agency and process. In so doing, I found out how informants *think* about, *speak* about and *enact* gender and to what extent they uphold status quo or go (think, speak or act) against the gender regime.

Coding with gerunds thereby helped me detect and give meaning to action, lines of action and sequence in order to grasp any change while avoiding a static viewpoint. Next, I constructed categories from the *extracted* gerunds. Building categories in grounded theory is the analytical step of selecting certain codes as having overriding significance and abstracting common themes and patterns in several codes into one and the same analytical concept. In a later step, I enriched the most significant theoretical categories into concepts serving as components in an emerging analytic frame (Charmaz, 2006). The intention is not to build a new grounded theory as such; instead, I use the categories to describe and discuss the key female and male strategies, sub-strategies and processes that arise after structuring the gerunds into clusters based on the most illuminating categories. I display and discuss these findings in chapter 6.

Positioning the thesis within sustainability science

The thesis can be seen as a case of how well-being among disadvantaged groups in subsistence farming, including food security, may be jeopardised because of a social conflict over a limited and even dwindling natural resource, namely land. In the actual setting, rules, norms and values that determine access to, ownership of and control over land, and indirectly also decision-making capacity and women's labour, is negotiated among men as a group, between spouses, and between wives in polygynous marriages. In that respect the land conflict is enacted in micro social processes between actors with differentiated power: men to men, women to men, and women to women. Thus, the study gives priority to social, rather than to economic or technological aspects of sustainability, and how the distribution of power and entitlements between differentiated groups in society, such as men and women, may influence land ownership, land management and food production.

Using an in-depth single-site approach I explore how higher-order social processes such, as gender and power, come into play and interact with a local context. This can be seen as an adequate critical approach in sustainability science (see Turner and Robbins 2008). Further, I explore how local discourses serve dominant interests but also how such social relations within the local gender regime trigger piecemeal institutional change that may, later on, open up pathways to empowerment for disadvantaged groups. This search for signs of complex societal transformation can be seen as intrinsic to sustainability science. Following Steven M. Manson's (2001) typology, I take his aggregate approach to social complexity in the study of the dynamics of the gender regime. Concerning boundaries, I primarily investigate agency in relation to structures within the regime but also in relation to external structures like land scarcity and government regulations. Concerning land and labour rights and in search of incremental institutional change, I analyse regularised relationships between actors and interpret their interactions in terms of competition, cooperation and conflict in everyday politics and in 'doing gender'. Concerning scale I study how higher-order processes or so called deep structures of gender and power are enacted in a local context. Concerning adaptation I consider how increasing land scarcity affects the rules and norms for how land may be accessed, exchanged, used and controlled in the regime (Manson, 2001).

My approach resembles constructivist and qualitative political ecology in terms of using a critical perspective including gender and power (Turner and Robbins, 2008). Focusing on such higher-order processes, I explore how access to, use of and control over land as a natural, social and cultural resource interact with labour as a social and cultural resource. It also resembles political ecology when it comes to exploring how land degradation, land shortages and land

distribution affect men and women differentially, and in how the gender regime seen as a local social arrangement may affect human vulnerability. The attention to gender, power and land as a natural, social and cultural resource resembles the debates also in 'gender and ecology' and 'gender and rurality'. Like in 'gender and ecology', I study gender inequality in land distribution (MacDowell, 1992). Like in 'gender and rurality', I study the variation in how gender in rural settings is constituted and how that can be theorised (Bryant and Pini, 2011).

Research strategy and structure of the argument

The thesis is designed as a constructivist and interpretivist inquiry (Charmaz, 2006, Ragin and Amoroso, 2011). Within that frame the research is designed as an indepth single-site study serving as a particular mode of qualitative inquiry. Using grounded theory as a particular strategy for coding and interpreting interviews and observations, I perform a data close empirical analysis resulting in analytical categories. These categories are both synthesised interpretations of data and simultaneously emerging and condensed images of reality (Charmaz, 2006, Ragin and Amoroso, 2011). The categories that emerge from the intense analysis serve as a basis for developing two sets of gendered strategies, male and female, that represent differentiated pathways for fulfilling gendered social goals. In a next step, I use analytical induction for shifting continuously between the categories and theory in order to match the images emerging from data with conceptual ideas (Charmaz, 2006, Ragin and Amoroso, 2011).

There will be no clear differentiation between introductory and analysing chapters. In chapter 2, I will start the analysis of the gender regime with an early description and interpretation of the research setting informed by findings and discussed in relation to previous research (see Figure 1). This scene setting serves as a basis for further reading. In chapter 3, I will discuss theory, concepts and the constructed theoretical frame that I will use for interpreting and discussing data further. In chapter 4, I will discuss methodology in terms of how I approach the field and the subjects as a gender theorist, how I evaluate my research methods and how I employ the specific procedures in the data analysis in more detail.

As regards the research questions, I seek to answer them in sequence. Answers to the first three will allow me to contribute to a discussion of the fourth research question. More specifically, and as an outline of the thesis, I devote three chapters to the description and analysis of the gender regime. In chapter 2, I present the specific social setting of the gender regime within which women and men navigate. This serves to introduce, describe and establish how the gendered land and labour rights as institutions interact with the practices of

polygyny and bridewealth (see Figure 1). In chapter 5, and in search of an answer to the second research question, I will analyse two types of power relations within polygyny (see Figure 1): interactions between women and men as well as interactions between women. In chapter 6, I will present the empirical material in an aggregated and synthesised form based on the detailed gerunds coding of primary data and seek an answer to the third research question. Here, I will display women's and men's respective overall strategy consisting of clusters of female and male sub-strategies and practices. On that basis I will analyse in-depth the strategies, sub-strategies and practices in the gender regime of land and labour rights in Chiweshe (see Figure 1). The ambition is to identify the dynamics of the gender regime but also to locate emerging institutional change. In the analysis we will therefore see how actors, women and men, both reproduce the strategies and initiate change in the gender regime. In chapter 7, I will discuss my findings on the gender regime on land and labour and their implications for food production and, in its extension, possibly also for food security (see Figure 1). Thereafter, I draw conclusions and offer some reflections.

Chapter 7

Chapter 5 & 6

Chapter 2
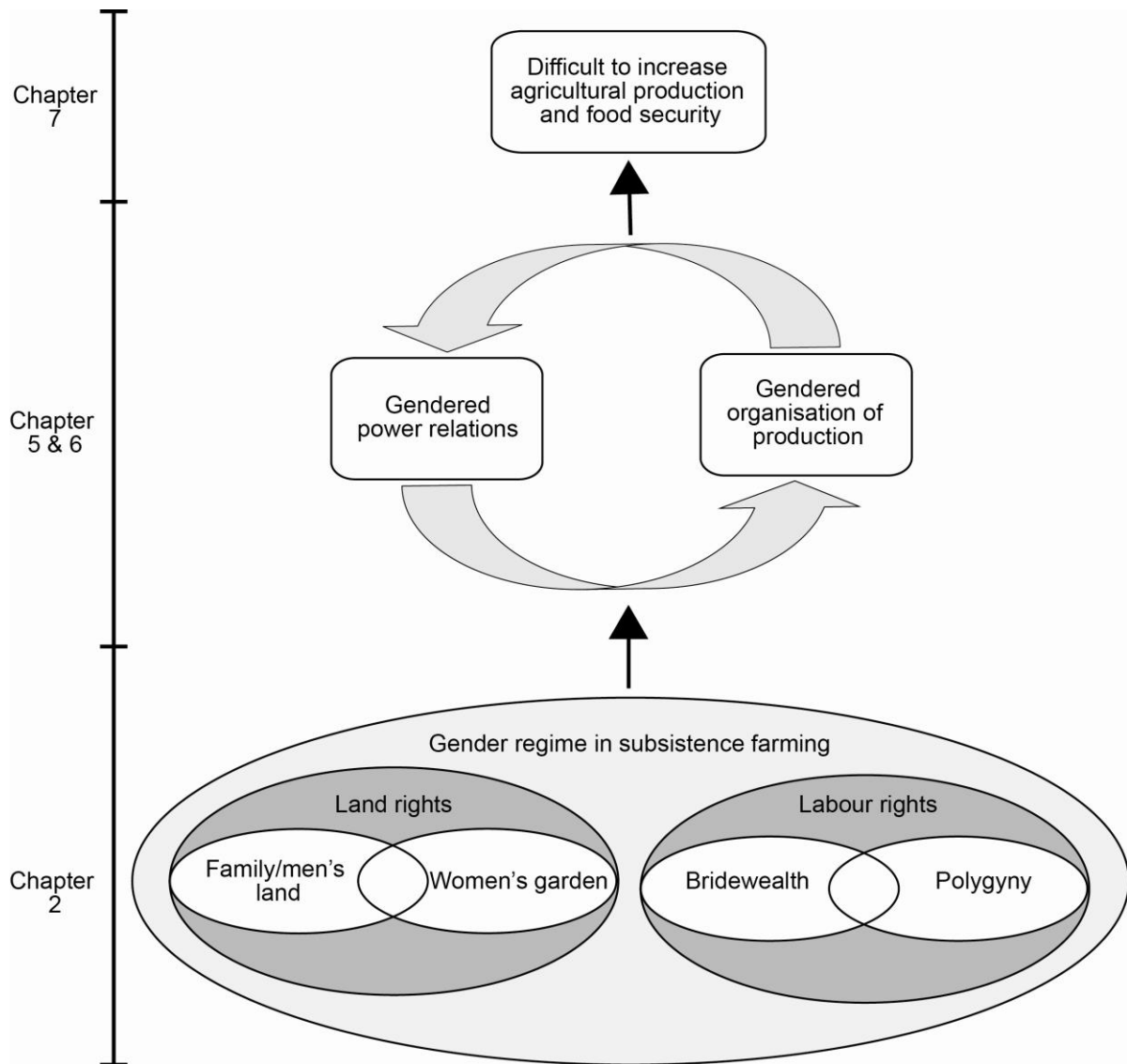
Figure 1: The gender regime in subsistence farming.
The gender dynamics of land rights and labour rights within wedlock give rise to differentiated male and female strategies in production and reproduction. The gendered power relation and the gendered organisation of production, which entails the strategies, affect each other. In turn, they affect food production and, in extension, food security. Source: Karin Steen. Layout: Karin Steen and Ann Åkerman.

2 Setting the social scene

In this chapter I will discuss the social setting of the study: the gender regime of land and labour rights in subsistence farming, in Chiweshe. In this setting, land is important for several reasons and labour is closely associated with land via social rules and norms. The reasoning here is informed by the analysis of my empirical data, which I will discuss in more detail in chapter 4 on methodology.

Contextualising Chiweshe

Peasants on good soil

Zimbabwe has often been called the 'bread basket' of Southern Africa (Loewenson, 1992). The Mazoe district, in which the Chiweshe communal area is located, is well known for its favourable farming conditions, with fertile soils, called sandy loams, and reliable rainfall (Fitzpatrick, 1986, Muir, 1994, Munyaradzi, 1988, Rurinda, 2007).[3] The soil and the amount of rainfall should make the area attractive for both small and large scale farmers. In Zimbabwe maize is the major staple food crop grown by a vast majority of peasant farmers, both large and small scale farmers alike (Cobo et al., 2009) for both family use and for occasional sale on the market. The demand for it is relatively price-inelastic, reflecting its role as the staple commodity in the diet of nearly all Zimbabweans. Its cultivation demands considerable amounts of labour input and it is grown in all agro-ecological zones and by all farmers in the study.

In the study area, maize farming is characterised by a combined commercial and subsistence production in a setting where there is no developed land market and no evidence of the use of a labour market. This has implications for the gendered division of labour within the household. Rights to land are administered under communal management of land and most households make use of unpaid family labour. Concerning ownership, men are de facto land holders. They control land and mediate land rights to women. Men and women, but primarily women, work on men's land. Women spend more time than men

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[3] The soil in the area is made up by cambisols, a relatively young soil (Rurinda, 2007), that is very fertile (Fitzpatrick, 1986). The rainfall is high in Chiweshe, with 700-1,050 mm rainfall per annum with rainfall confined to summer (Mur, 1994, Rurinda 2007). The soils were in 1950 reported to be of high productivity (red brow soils, red contact loam soils, red dolerite soils), medium productivity (light brown soils) and suitable for grazing and rice (grey black *vlei* soils) (Munyaradzi 1988 referring to S1060/3 Agricultural Blueprint for Chiweshe. National Archives of Zimbabwe). There is, however, a high variability in soil fertilit,. Within a village the status may vary widely depending on soil type, an individual farmer's management practices and the general farming system in the area (Nyamangara et.al. 2000).

in carrying out most of the agricultural work, as is also often the case in other Zimbabwean settings and other sub-Saharan societies (Davison, 1988, Espey, 2011, Mtaita, 1997, Steen, 1997). At present, land in communal areas, former reserves, is vested in the President and the Rural District Council must grant permission to settle on, or farm, such land (Government of Zimbabwe, 1983). The State assigns the rights to land use in the area in order to create a space where inhabitants are seen as traditional farmers. The pressure on customary land (in communal areas) has led to a multiplication of legal governance institutions for land. Therefore, the authority and legal guidelines over land, divided between traditional leaders and other government institutions, are unclear and in many cases overlap (Paradza, 2011b).

More people on less land

Potential per capita food production is partly determined by the declining availability of land. To a limited extent, clues to today's low production levels are to be found in processes that were set in motion during the creation of the Chiweshe reserve. With increasing population pressure, in spite of large-scale patterns of out-migration, land is getting scarcer and parcels are getting smaller. This increasing land shortage is an important factor affecting the practices of land and labour rights (Field data 2000, 2007).

Since the 1930s, when peasants were evicted by colonisers from surrounding fertile areas and moved into the Chiweshe reserve, the area has been characterised by land shortage (Johnson, 1964, Munyaradzi, 1988). Concerns that no more virgin land was available in Chiweshe began to surface as early as in the 1930s and continued throughout the 1940s and 1950s. Since then cultivation has continued on the existing fields to the detriment of the fertility of the soil (Johnson, 1964, Munyaradzi, 1988). During this period (1930-1960), each family head should have been given about six acres of land, but this policy was not adhered to by the colonial administration within Chiweshe. Thus, farmers received larger holdings and land was still adequate in size (Munyaradzi, 1988). However, when the next generation required land they experienced the shortage (Munyaradzi, 1988, Chief X, 2007). In 1957, the colonial administration[4] decided that the Chiweshe reserve was 200 per cent over-populated (Bessant, 1988, Munyaradzi, 1988) and the minimum amount of land necessary for an 'economic holding' was eight acres for a family head (Munyaradzi, 1988). Later on, in 1995 the adequate size of a landholding for

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[4] The Assessment Committee facilitated the implementation of the Land Husbandry Act 1951

'subsistence' was six acres (Moyo, 1995)[5] while in 2000 and 2007, land holdings among interviewed farmers average 4,5 acres (Field data). For our information, the average family size in Zimbabwe is four persons (Zimbabwe CSO, 2002). The process of diminishing access to land per person within the reserve, later called the communal area, seems to have continued as the population and the proportion of cultivated land have increased (Field data, 2000, 2007). My interviews indicate that there may still be some virgin land left for some farmers in some of the villages under study. As late as the 1990s and 2000s, bushes and forests were converted into farming land (Field data 2000, 2007). But, on the whole, farmable land per person (or unit) is diminishing and so is the opportunity for long term sustainable farming on reasonably large land lots.[6]

On the other hand, some of the farmers whom I interviewed cannot make use of (all) their land. A substantial number of the farmers in the area have part of their land in fallow, which in itself is a practice for land improvement, but fallow also means that peasant farmers are too poor to have the means, such as labour, fertilisers, plough or tractor, to cultivate all their land. Sometimes they are malnourished or impaired by ill-health and thus have only little energy to work. So, even though the area is densely populated some farmers experience a labour shortage during planting and harvesting periods. Hence, merely increasing the available land will not immediately solve the production problems. This is seen in cases where farmers who are given additional land cannot use all their land, due to lack of labour, and thus risk losing it (Field data, 2000, 20007). As I will show and argue, some production problems are related to poverty, but at bottom there are social barriers to increased production. Men could engage more in production, but depending on their social goals I will argue that men are more concerned with other rational activities besides food production while women, who are the key players in production, do not own or control land or other resources. Nevertheless, the land pressure is also important in another way; it is through the land pressure that the gendered relations become even more pronounced. I see in the interviews that women had stronger rights to land in the past. But now, when land is scarce, women's land rights are squeezed and there are more conflicts over land. Thus, the production problem is

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[5] This is so according to Agritex's Communal Area Land Use Re-organisation Programme (Moyo 1995).

[6] There is a longstanding debate on whether a population pressure resulting in a land shortage is a problem for production in terms of land degradation or if population density has positive effects (Andersson, 2011). However, in the subsistence farming area under study, characterised by prevailing poverty and hoe farming, there are limitations to how small a family's land holding can be and still produce enough food to keep the family food secure.

present mainly because of poverty and gender relations. Further, some of the poverty problems are in turn caused by gender relations.

Increasing the area under cultivation was the method used to increase production in the 1930s. One reason why farmers were not interested in intensified farming methods was that virgin land was still available (Munyaradzi, 1988). In 1940, the Southern Rhodesian government began limiting families' access to land within the reserve in order to force them to farm intensively; but these actions had limited effects (Bessant, 1988). After the centralisation scheme, which forced resettlement in Chiweshe in 1941, land became an issue for farmers there (Munyaradzi, 1988). Furthermore, authorities made efforts during the 1950s to increase the peasant maize production and they later planned a green revolution in maize production (Rukuni, 1994). Moreover, the closeness to Harare had the effect that farmers in Chiweshe were early on, around 1950, considered to be industrious and market oriented (Bessant, 1988, Munyaradzi, 1988). Farmers diversified crops in order to meet the demands of the cash economy and vegetable gardens began to boom in the 1940s (Munyaradzi, 1988). After independence, maize production increased considerably in Zimbabwe's communal areas (Eicher and Rukuni, 1994) and supposedly also in Chiweshe. During the 1980s Zimbabwe's smallholder maize production was one of the few success stories in Africa; it was even called a second agricultural revolution (Eicher and Rukuni, 1994). However, as often seen in my interviews, present production levels do not meet the farmers' expectations of food security (Field data, 2000, 2007). The welfare level has not increased enough to have a secure standard of living.

Nyamangara et al (Nyamangara et al., 2000) suggest that the shortage of arable land in Zimbabwe's communal areas demands that a necessary increase in agricultural production is achieved by increasing the productivity of land which is already under cultivation, rather than by bringing virgin lands into production (Nyamangara et al., 2000). However, there is a gradual acidification and general decline in the nutrient status of soils in communal areas. If the trend continues, soil fertility may become a major limiting factor for crop production (Nyamangara et al., 2000). This trend is relevant for my study area as well.

To conclude the discussion on land pressure, the increasing population in the Chiweshe communal area contributes to a shortage of arable land per person. The soils in the area were suitable for farming at the creation of the Chiweshe reserve in the 1930s, but have become increasingly more nutrient deficient. The small plot sizes of good soils, if fertilised, and good rainfall make intensified food production necessary and possible. However, the farmers are subsistence farmers with limited access to necessary inputs for an intensified production. Therefore, the organisation of agricultural production with gendered land and labour rights becomes important along with sustainable farming methods to stop

a downward spiral of poverty and environmental degradation (Scherr, 2000). By drawing attention to the way in which the gender regime of land and labour rights affects or can even obstruct food production, productivity and food security, this study is an effort to increase our understanding and create a space for a more critical view of socially constructed barriers.

Land as a political symbol

Land issues have been a dominant theme in Zimbabwe's history (Alexander, 2006, Andersson, 1999, The commission of inquiry into appropriate agricultural land tenure systems Zimbabwe, 1994). Ever since the British South Africa Company (BSA Co.) established rule over the area through a land concession with Lobengula, King of the Ndbele, in 1889 (Rukuni, 1994), the land question has been central in Rhodesia's, later Southern Rhodesia's and now Zimbabwe's, history. The appropriation of land by the European settlers triggered the first Chimurenga[7], an uprising by native Zimbabweans 1896-1897 (Rukuni, 1994). The dual structure of land settlement, established in 1890s, was reinforced and formalised in 1930 by the Land Apportionment Act (Government of Southern Rhodesia, 1930). The dual agrarian structure meant that land was racially segregated; land for European descendants was private while land for indigenous Africans was held under traditional tenure and user rights (Alexander, 2006, Rukuni, 1994). At this point in time, the Chiweshe reserve was created and African peasant farmers were moved into it. The limitation of land in the reserves was in conflict with the farmers' needs for more land. These land issues, as well as the dual racial structure of land holdings, have been strong motivators underlying liberation movements, as seen in rebellions and the nationalist movement.

Land is a political symbol in Zimbabwe and was one of the main issues in the liberation war that led to Zimbabwe's independence in 1980 (Alexander, 2006, Scoones et al., 2010). During the first decades of independence the dual structure of land holdings remained essentially unchanged (Scoones et al., 2010). However, during the post-2000 'Fast track'[8] land reform, the period in which peasant farmers occupied large-scale commercial farms that were owned by white Zimbabweans, more farmers acquired land. The actions of the fast-track occupiers were later ratified by land allocating authorities (Field data, 2007). Some of the peasant farmers in my investigation participated in the land

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[7] Chimurenga is a Shona word for rebellion or struggle.
[8] The process is called Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP). Estimates vary, but around seven million hectare of around 12 million ha devoted to large-scale commercial farming in 1999 have been taken over since 2000. Most land today is under small-scale farming, either as communal areas or resettlement (Scones et al 2010).

occupations. Nevertheless, in 2007 about 80 percent of all farmers in Zimbabwe lived in communal areas with limited access to land (Scoones et al., 2010). All the peasant farmers in my study live in a communal area, except one resettled family. During the Fast track land reform, the large scale commercial farms in Mazoe may have been attractive to settle in because of their preferable farming conditions and close proximity to Harare, both to the peasant farmers in the Chiweshe communal area as well as to others.

The Mazoe area, in which the Chiweshe communal area is located, has had a prominent influence on Zimbabwean culture and ideology. Nehanda, a legendary woman and a spirit medium who played a critical role in the first Chimurenga 1896-7, originated from Mazoe (Ranger, 1967). The nationalist uprising during the 1960s that led to independence drew on the Shona and Ndbele cultures, Nehanda and the first Chimurenga (Bessant, 1994, Ranger, 1967, Ranger, 1977). Also during the third Chimurenga, as the Fast track land reform is called, the spirit of Nehanda was a source of inspiration for some land occupants (Sadomba, 2008). For instance, Nehanda was portrayed in an influential poem for the nationalist movement[9](Bessant, 1994, Ranger, 1977). This, together with the good farming conditions, makes the area ideologically and culturally significant in Zimbabwe's history.

Historical changes in gendered land rights

This study seeks to fill a knowledge gap in the debate about gendered land rights in Zimbabwe in the 20th century. The conventional wisdom of women's historical land rights and how land rights were divided between men and women before the European settlers arrived, tells how the European colonisation deprived African families of their land and forced them into native reserves with limited and diminishing access to land (Retired civil servant X and Y, 2000, Chief X, 2007). Yet, women seem to have had gardens as long as the public memory tells (Field data 2000, 2007).

My data corresponds to the conventional wisdom, but for Chiweshe there are three important exceptions: the allocation process; the land size; and the land security for women. Thus, I stress the importance of *adjusting* historical data and *include* women's land rights. My findings show that before the creation of the Chiweshe reserve, married women could be allotted land in their own right alongside their husband's land. These plots were comparable in size to the plots that men received from authorities such as chiefs. This contradicts the conventional wisdom suggesting that women had weak and indirect land rights.

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[9] Solomon Mutswairo's poem was first published in Shona. A Shona and an English version is found in *Zimbabwe: Prose and poetry* (1974) New York (Ranger, 1977).

However, as indicated in the interviews, women were allotted land through their husbands only after the creation of Chiweshe reserve, and this usually consisted of no more than a small piece of land for a garden. As women are allocated land through husbands their rights to land are also weakened. This corresponds to the process of how women were forced into stronger patriarchal control by the colonial administration (Schmidt, 1992).

Hence, processes set in motion by the colonial administration can be a constraining structure contributing to the problem of low production even today. If we suppose that control of land is a determinant of production output then the practice reinforced by the colonial administration may constrain production today. At the time of independence, the patriarchal control was not relaxed in society (Kirkegaard, 2004) and the patriarchal status quo is thus woven into history. This is seen nowadays when gender relations within wedlock are viewed as if they have been the same historically as they are in the present. Hence, in the conventional wisdom, fortified by patriarchal structures, things are as they 'should be'; justified by the argument that this has always been the practice, although that is debatable.

The meaning of land

Land shortage and land use changes are material facts with real material consequences in terms of how, what and how much one can produce, yet land as a resource also has intangible, symbolic and cultural-interpretive implications (Geels, 2011). For men, in the study area, there are strong reasons to navigate and manoeuvre in order to access land; in that sense there is what I call *a land imperative*. Land is obviously important for peasant farmers for various reasons as seen in the rhetoric that men employ in their claims and their quest for land

In the interpretation of interviews, I identify three main reasons for its importance: it is a *natural resource* for food production and food supply; it is an aspect of *male identity*; and it denotes a *lineage responsibility*. First, in the setting of subsistence farming land is an essential basis for food production and income generation, thereby serving as a security for peasant farmers. Secondly, the possession of land is an intrinsic part of a man's identity: both for becoming, and staying, a man. In addition, it may have symbolic meaning. In the study area, the symbolic value is related to men's identity. In Zimbabwe, there are symbolic aspects of peasant land claims and symbolic struggles have both immaterial and material outcomes. Cultural meanings of land are constitutive forces, which shape history and the interpretation of reality; in that sense they are not only reflections of the material base (Hammar, 2007, Moore, 1996). Moreover, there is a strong sense of connectedness between people and the land,

'man and land', which is experienced especially in farming cultures (Pretty, 2002). The public norm, in the study area, states that being a man demands having land, therefore men still have a strong right to land in themselves (Field data 2000, 2007), as one interviewee explains it:

> Steven: Men are dignified through land.

This interview extract can be theorised to reflect the perception of many interviewees, namely that a man needs land to acquire dignity. The third reason for the importance of land is connected to symbolic aspects and to a man's relation to his lineage. It can be theorised that men, in the study area, feel a temporal and inter-generational responsibility in relation to land, not only between living and future generations but also between living and *past* generations. According to such reasoning, men feel a responsibility to guarantee the safety of lineage land, and even better, to increase the amount of land under the authority of their lineage. I discuss such access to land below.

Social interaction in Chiweshe

The 'navigation' that men and women perform takes place within the local setting of the villages and the surrounding fields. The interviewed peasant farmers live in six villages in southern Chiweshe communal area, about 100 kilometres north of Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe, as seen in Map 1. The interviewees live within an area of about 1,5 km^2. There is a small drawn-out centre along the tarmac road running through the Chiweshe communal area, with a few shops and an office for the police and other government administration. At the local *Growth Point*, which is the labelling of service centres in communal lands in Zimbabwe, men interact with men. Many negotiations and much decision-making take place here. Some homesteads are located at the Growth Point, while the majority of the homesteads are located at the very farms surrounded by their fields. Thus, some families have their homestead in direct connection with their neighbours' homesteads, while others live in rather isolated places. All women have their own house for food preparation. Visitors should sit for a while and greet the family in such a 'cooking hut'. As such, this is a place where a lot of interaction takes place; gossiping, negotiations and decision-making; between men, between women, between men and women as well as between friends, acquaintances and strangers. Further, women interact with co-wives at their homestead or in the fields while sharing the workload. Women can interact with other women at their respective homesteads, in the cooking hut while preparing meals as well as while walking to the shops, fetching water or walking to church on Sundays.

Husbands and wives interact at the homestead, while eating and resting, and sometimes in the fields (Field observations 2000, 2007). An example of the spacial structure of peasant farms in Chiweshe is seen in Map 2.

Map 1: The location of the Chiweshe communal area in Zimbabwe.
Adapted from Eicher and Rukuni (1994). Layout: Ann Åkerman.

Map 2: Examples of spacial structure of peasant farms in Chiweshe.
Remote sensing imagery 2-10-2010. Source: GoogleEarth © 2011 Google. Layout:
Ann Åkerman.

'Doing gender' in Chiweshe

In the setting, peasant farmers 'do' gender in several ways. Men do gender in relation to women, by having and enacting rights and obligations that women do not have, such as having land and making decisions for the family. Further, men do gender in relation to other men by discussing land issues. Notably, they do not speak with women about land. There is also a hierachy between men, in terms of who has the most attributes of manhood, such as land, wives and wealth. Older men are usually wealthier and hence can have several wives. In addition, younger men have difficulties in accessing land due to land shortage. Women do gender by taking care of the family, providing food and raising children. Women also do gender in relation to their husbands. They can do this, for example, by recognising a husband's supremacy and thereby showing him respect. Further, women do gender in relation to other women within polygyny[10]. The senior wife of a husband has more power in deciding about the whole family. However, a junior wife can be favoured by a husband, which improves her position in the family, but also leads to tensions between wives (Armstrong, 1992, Field data 2000, 2007). Thus, according to my data, men become men through holding land. This is done in dichotomy with women having weak land rights. Concerning gender identities, women become women through taking care of children and family. I will discuss this in chapter 6, where I focus on men's and women's obligations and aspirations in relation to gendered strategies in production and reproduction.

The gender regime of land and labour rights

Here, I will discuss subsistence farming as a setting for the social context of the gender regime, wherein men and women enact norms and rules as well as develop and employ strategies. While I keep an overall focus on the gender regime in this chapter, I will return to female and male strategies in chapter 6.

The gender regime

Gender regimes are not fixed, they are in continuous flux (Connell, 1987). They are produced and reproduced, interpreted and reinterpreted. The gender regime of land and labour rights institutions in polygyny in subsistence farming, is enacted and negotiated by the actors involved and thus embedded in society. Furthermore, modes of production are in themselves gendered and certain types of gender relations can be associated with certain modes of production (Stamp,

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[10] Polygyny is the denotation for male polygamy.

1989). Donna Pankhurst (1988), as a peace and development researcher, argues that some elements of the central wife-husband relation in rural Zimbabwe, besides being a conjugal contract, resemble those of a sharecropping agreement (Pankhurst, 1988). The economist Hanan Jacoby (Jacoby, 1995) has the same argument for the whole of Sub-Saharan Africa. He interprets the gender relation within marriage as a social contract where women 'pay' food to men in return for access to land. Hence, men control access to land and the majority of women's agricultural produce, which can be interpreted as wives paying husbands a share of their agricultural output in exchange for cultivation rights (Jacoby, 1995). This form of social contract and exchange is practised in the study area. In addition, men 'pay' for women's future labour and children through bridewealth. Moreover, what the economic anthropologist Claude Meillassoux (1975) calls an 'agricultural domestic community' is an apt description of other dimensions of the setting: land is common to the group, access to land is subordinated to membership of the group, and individuals practise self-sustaining agriculture under sexual division of labour. Further, people are linked together by *unequal ties of personal dependence* (Meillassoux, 1975).

In sum, I thus classify the regime in the study area as 'a gender regime of land and labour rights in subsistence farming'. The social setting is characterised by two interrelated institutions in food production: a land rights institution and a labour rights institution. These institutions are determined by a power relation, between husband and wife, which governs resource management. I argue that this particular relation between the two lineages in marriage allows me to describe the relation between husband and wife as 'a long term social contract'. This social contract includes gendered rights and obligations to land and labour.

Drawing on my empirical material, interviews as well as observations, I will now discuss land and labour institutions while saving the discussion on power and resource management for chapter 5. In the communal land rights institution, men as de facto land holders control land and mediate land rights to women. In the polygynous labour rights institution, a man's access to additional farm labour can be extended via additional wives whose labour he controls. Among peasant farmers, access to land, labour, time, and decision-making power in relation to resource management is thereby determined by gender.

In Figure 2, I display how I initially interpret the regime. Here I specify the institutions of land rights and labour rights which are at the core of the gender regime of land and labour rights. The institution of land rights includes family land, controlled by men, and the (vegetable) garden, controlled by women. The institution of labour rights includes polygyny and *roora*, the Shona word for bridewealth. Thus, the two institutions are gendered. The gender regime shapes

female and male strategies (see chapter 6), which in turn affect food production and, in a longer chain of causality, also food security, as I will argue later on.

My overall understanding of the gender regime, including land and labour rights, is grounded in interviews and my interpretation of interview data. In the data analysis, I used such descriptive and concrete interpretation techniques as recommended by the sociologists Matthew Miles and Michael Huberman (Miles and Huberman, 1994). This implies that you note and outline social themes and patterns, employ counting and comparison, identify clustering and consider plausibility. In chapter 4 on methodology, I will discuss methods and techniques in-depth and thereafter continue the discussion on findings in chapter 5 and 6. Below, I will discuss actions and interactions in the gender regime.
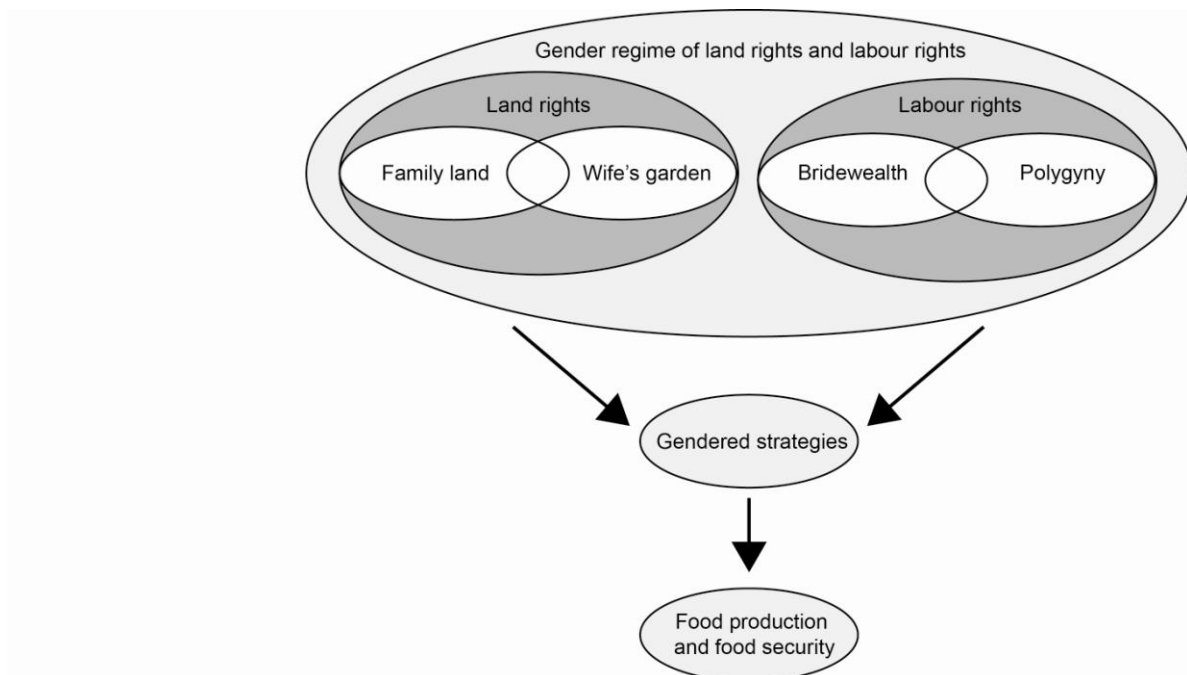
Figure 2: The gender regime in subsistence farming: a specification.
Source: Karin Steen. Layout: Karin Steen and Ann Åkerman.

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On family, household and wedlock

Both in pre-colonial and colonial times, family in Zimbabwe was organised as a traditional extended family rooted in the agrarian economy where male elders controlled the assets of subsistence such as land and cattle (Ncube et al., 1997b). But family life, as a social organisation, is in flux. As an example, the economic as well as the social authority of elders, within and outside the family, has been undermined by new economic relations and processes outside agriculture (Ncube et al., 1997b). In the discussion on the functioning of the institutions of land and labour rights, I need to explain how I use the concept of household and wedlock. The household can be described as a group 'cooking from the same pot' (Scoones et al., 2010: 57). More precisely, and following the feminist economist Naila Kabeer (Kabeer, 1991), I define the household as 'a primarily family-based collectivity, concerned with the generational and daily reproduction of its membership, that is sleeping, resting and eating' (Kabeer 1991: 34). In the case of polygyny the household includes all women, and their children, who are married to the same man. The household may also include elderly relatives and the children of relatives. In Zimbabwe, many production, reproduction and accumulation processes occur at the household level (Scoones et al., 2010). In the thesis, I focus mainly on the intra-household interaction between wife and husband in wedlock and partly on the interaction between co-wives in polygyny. The term wedlock refers to wife and husband as two spouses married to each other. If a man has several wives he is thereby engaged in several wedlocks.

Gendered land rights

In general, differences in property rights are a central axis and a cause of gender inequality in many rural societies (Agarwal, 1994a). Further, in agrarian societies land is a key asset in production (Carruthers and Ariovich, 2004) and landownership provides both economic and social power (Shortall, 1999). If secure access to land is a key element of protecting food security for people who depend on agriculture for their livelihoods (Knight, 2010), then gender inequalities in land ownership or land use may endanger rural food security and the wellbeing of individuals and families (FAO, 2010).

There are differences between the terms property right and land right as practised in the area in terms of use rights, control and right to exclude others from using the asset (Steen, 1997). I use the term land right as it implies a security to land, as Bina Agarwal argues:

Rights are defined here as claims that are legally and socially recognized and enforceable by an external legitimized authority, be it a village–level institution or some higher level judicial or executive body of the State (Agarwal, 1994b: 1459).

Land can be distributed in various ways according to various principles. In Shona society private ownership of land is often said to have been unknown (Batezat, 1989, Chenaux-Repond, 1993). Anthony Hopkins' (Hopkins, 1973) economic historical argument for West Africa may be extended to include also Zimbabwe: as land was abundant it did not acquire a market value, and thus rights to land were not defined (Hopkins, 1973). Land could therefore not be inherited and people thus had only usufructory rights. Land was controlled and distributed by the male heads of society and the chief controlled land for the benefit of his tribal group. The chief allotted land to the male heads of household in the village, who in turn distributed portions of the land to their wife or wives, while any unused land was returned to the common domain for redistribution to other men (Schmidt, 1992). Every male had an unalienable birthright to land whereas women had access to land through their fathers or husbands. In other words, men are said to have had primary rights to land while women have secondary land rights (Batezat, 1989, Chenaux-Repond, 1993, ZWRCN, 1994). In wedlock, women's labour guaranteed continued access to lineage land.

From a gender perspective it can be argued that contemporary 'family' land that is allocated by the village head to the male head of household, can be interpreted as a husband's right to land that he, in turn, can allocate in parts to his wife or wives. Moreover, fathers may divide their land among sons. In sum, land-allocating authorities, such as chiefs and village heads, give priority to men in land distribution processes and men thus have strong land rights, in the right of being a man.

All men in communal areas, such as Chiweshe, have a birth right to land (Government of Zimbabwe, 1982a, Government of Zimbabwe, 1988). However, there is not enough land in the area for all grown up sons and the size of land holdings, as seen in the interviews, now averages four acres instead of up to six acres of land during the first decades of the Chiweshe reserve. This is why some men migrate to towns or start a business, beyond land, while still keeping an interest in potential land claims. Given the land shortage, it is an important finding that land right institutions are neither clear nor fixed; they are *fuzzy,* fluid and *constantly negotiated*. This underlines the *insecurity* and *uncertainty* in the process of land allocation to men as family heads. The rules and criteria for being allotted land seem to be under constant reinterpretation, which I will return to in more detail, in chapter 6 in the discussion on strategies.

The garden

Women are entitled to a land plot called 'a garden', *tseu* in Shona. However, women in general, and in the study area, have no *direct* rights to land in themselves (Izumi, 2006, Ncube et al., 1997a, ZWRCN, 1994). Land legislation, which is referenced to custom and tradition, thus puts a woman in a less favourable position than that of a man, in relation to rights, as regards the allocation of land in her own right in communal areas (Government of Zimbabwe, 1982a, Government of Zimbabwe, 1988). In 1982 there was a change in the legislation concerning women's rights to land and women may now be allowed to be allocated land in their own right (Government of Zimbabwe, 1982b, May, 1987). The allocation of land to women in their own right also depends on the view taken by the local authority responsible for assigning the land, such as chiefs or village heads. In reality, women are seriously disadvantaged. In communal areas, however, the traditional weight is heavy and in practice women seldom access land in their own right. (Andersson, 1999, Izumi, 2006, Ncube et al., 1997a). In the study area, as in other communal areas of Zimbabwe, women's land rights are instead mediated through men: for unmarried women through their fathers and for married women through their husbands. Meillassoux (Meillassoux, 1975) argues that the direct exploitation of women in the agricultural domestic community is partly alleviated by the fact that women are given allotments or gardens, all or part of whose produce is theirs. Moreover, as Jacoby (Jacoby, 1995) argues, women 'pay' for the garden with the fruits of their labour. This is also confirmed in my empirical material, as we shall see.

According to the peasant farmers in my study, a woman has the following rights: to grow whatever she wishes in her garden; to farm in the way she so pleases; and to control the produce and profit after the children are fed and taken care of. However, the husband has some control over the garden as he decides certain spatial conditions such as the plot's location and size and the duration of the 'contract'. A husband with several wives must, according to the practice explained to me in interviews, give each a garden of her own. The garden is most important for women in polygyny as their situation is more exposed than that of monogamously married women; in that sense women's fallback position is weaker (Sen, 1990). The following quotation from an interview represents the common perception:

> Jonah: A husband who does not give his wife a garden is no good man because a garden is very essential for every family.

This extract shows that even if women's land rights are secondary to their husbands' rights, a proper husband gives his wife a garden. The two following interview extracts represent two views of how women see their right to a garden:

Regina: That's *my* land in his land. I take it as *his land* but he cannot take it.

Betty: I see it as *my* land but I know it is *his place*. He doesn't mind**.**

These remarks show that most women consider the garden as theirs, but Regina, like some women, says that her husband cannot take it back, while Betty, like some other women, is aware that her husband can recall it. A husband *can* recall the garden as it is his land, but he *should* not, according to how interviewees describe the practice. At all events, women's land rights are utterly insecure.

Moreover, my findings show that a husband in a polygynous marriage may favour one of his wives. Due to the land shortage he sometimes encroaches on one wife's garden for the sake of another. Thus, Meillassoux's argument that the garden, the profit from which a woman controls, serves to compensate her for her workload and subordinate position, is only partially applicable in this setting. Women cannot be certain about or rely on the conditions for their gardens set by their husbands, because the rules of the regime at large are set by men in society. This rule-making in itself contributes to women's subordination.

In the event of divorce or widowhood, a woman's right to land becomes even more uncertain. My findings give a multi-faceted picture of who has strong rights to family land when a married man dies. In interviews, I hear that a man's land belongs to his lineage to which his wife does not belong, but a widow can sometimes stay with her children on the land. In some cases a widow can remarry one of her brothers in law (her deceased husband's brothers). This practice has diminished due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, however, and it is not recommended that men inherit a sister in law after her husband's death (Paradza, 2011a). Some interviewees report, however, that a wife may inherit or that her sons, if any, may inherit. It seems as if each family decides according to its own preferences, but widows' rights often have to yield preference to those of sons. Further, divorced and widowed women are said to be able to receive a part of their fathers' land to support their children. If land was abundant there would be land for a single woman with dependents to return to her paternal home. However, a divorcee or widow now has to compete with her brothers and nephews back home on limited land. Single women often lose, putting them in a weak fallback position (Sen, 1990).

There seems to be some flexibility in how the actual shortage of land is interpreted. Even if land is 'finished', as some interviewees say, it often seems possible to find land for those in great need or those who have special reasons, if

village heads and chiefs so agree. This condition derives from a concept that Gaynor Paradza terms *matongo*, which is equivalent to 'vacant land' or 'previously inhabited place' in Shona (Makura-Paradza, 2010, Paradza, 2011b). Paradza argues that land availability in Zimbabwean communal areas is dynamic so as to grant temporarily use rights to land to settle on. She argues that *matongo* is especially important for single women as women only have secondary rights to land (Makura-Paradza, 2010, Paradza, 2011b). The concept of *matongo* corresponds with the flexibility in land granted to men in my study, but as it was not in focus in my interviews I cannot find explicitly that *matongo* is practised, but it nevertheless may be so.

Gendered labour rights

In the study area the institution of labour rights, together with land rights, governs the organisation and management of agricultural production. From my interview data three themes emerge as central for governing labour rights within wedlock more specifically. Besides the overall gender relation, which I will deal with in chapter 5 in terms of power within wedlock, there is polygyny and bridewealth which I will focus on here. Concerning rights to labour, polygyny can be interpreted as a way of *allocating* women's labour while bridewealth is a way of *accessing rights* to women's labour.

Bridewealth – an institution for men's labour rights

Peasant farmers in the study area practise bride-wealth, *roora* in the Shona language. The interviewees elaborate on how it is practised and why, and give a variety of reasons. Both interviewees and other sources note the contractual relationship and security that bridewealth had in the distant past (Stamp, 1989). Sometimes bridewealth is paid as a ceremony or security:

> Envilda: If my husband did not pay *roora* to my parents then my spirit won't rest when I die. If he didn't thank them for my services as a woman I would have worked for this family for free. Moreover, my children will face difficulties in life because my mother did not get her mother's cow [which is a part of the roora]. That cow is for my mother's ancestors so they will be happy. Then they will guide my girl children to proper marriages and even guide my boys. Roora even makes my ancestors happy and our marriage will prosper. Illness and death are in most cases caused by not paying roora.

This interview extract shows that for Envilda, as for many peasant farmers, paying bridewealth is an act and a sign of good behavior, it makes the family prosperous. But it is mainly a symbolic act without any real economic importance. It seems that interviewees want to continue practising bridewealth

without really reflecting over or minding the origin of the practice. For them it seems to be a ceremony without sacrifice. It is a common view that bridewealth is paid by a son-in-law not so much as a payment in advance for his wife's future labour and children but as a compensation to his parents-in-law for the costs of having raised a daughter. Prisca explains it in the following way:

> Prisca: *Roora* is a way for my husband to pay back everything my parents bought for me and it is also payment for raising me from childhood till now.

In this interview extract bridewealth is clearly a compensation for costs. Payments are made in order to legalise the marriage because without them it will not be regarded as a proper marriage. Without bridewealth the relationship looks like casual sex or prostitution (Bourdillon, 1993).

There are further arguments for the practice of paying bridewealth, both in the literature and in the study area. In research, views of bridewealth range from instrumental explanations, from the point of view of individual or collective interests, to structural explanations from the point of view of whole societies (Kressel et al., 1977). In research on polygyny there are also other compensation arguments related to the practice of bridewealth. The sociologist Remi Clignet (Clignet, 1970) argues that bridewealth is paid to the bride's family as compensation for the emotional, social, and economic loss of a daughter (and sister) resulting from a woman's marriage. Further, traditional marriage is a transfer of a woman's sexual and reproductive rights in addition to her labour from her family to her husband usually in exchange for money or gifts (Jacoby, 1995). According to this reasoning bridewealth would make women subordinate to men. However, in line with arguments in 'new household economics', bridewealth could be a transfer to the benefit of women in the sense that parents invest in a daughter's human capital (Jacoby, 1995).

The rights that one person or group can exercise over another are called 'rights-in-persons' by historian Suzanne Miers and anthropologist Igor Kopytoff (1977). Rights to a person are transferred at marriage in many systems practising bridewealth. Through the payment of bridewealth, within many African systems of kinship and marriage, the husband and behind him his corporate kin group acquire certain rights in a wife from her kin group; these rights usually include rights in children, domestic services and sexual rights. In a patrilineal society, like in my study area, bridewealth includes a 'childprice' or 'childwealth' (Miers and Kopytoff, 1977), meaning that the husband's lineage pays to the wife's lineage for rights to the children that she will bear within marriage. Again, when the husband dies, his various rights are inherited by his lineage (Miers and Kopytoff, 1977). Members of kin groups both belong in and belong to his or her kin; they are both members of the group with rights and a part of its wealth

(Miers and Kopytoff, 1977). Miers and Kopytoff argue that 'rights-in-persons' are usually mutual but seldom equal and exist in almost all social relationships.

Rights-in-persons may cover not just a person's services but his or her entire person (Miers and Kopytoff, 1977). They argue that transactions in rights-in-persons are a principal part of African systems of kinship and marriage and not just an analytical artifact created by outside observers (Miers and Kopytoff, 1977). The transactability of rights-in-peoples as discrete and separate items is also remarkable. Moreover, transfers of such rights are normally made in exchange for goods and money, and the transfer may cover total rights-in-person. Therefore, such phenomena as kinship and the acquisition of wives are still inevitably bound up with exchange that involves equivalences in goods or money (Miers and Kopytoff, 1977). Kin groups 'own' and may dispose of their blood members in ways that may be similar or comparable to 'property'. However, as these rights and transactions are integral parts of the social organisation of society, they are comprehended as such and not in any possible way as slavery. For a fuller understanding of the context of the society the 'traded' person should not be compared to a 'free' person but to other members in her/his own society. Then it is possible to evaluate the *relative entrapment* of the person in question and the power that other individuals or groups have over that person (Miers and Kopytoff, 1977).

Moreover, interview evidence indicates that bridewealth *can* be seen as an advance payment for labour and children. Some women reflect and make the abstraction that their husbands have paid for their labour as expressed here:

> Tsitsi: We work. *Roora* is the payment for our work.

Another woman said her husband paid bridewealth for a number of reasons:

> Emily: … so that he will be helped in every service he needs. I can say it's a payment for my work.

Also some men are straightforward explaining the reasons for bridewealth:

> Stanley: I pay for the labour that my wife will perform in marriage.

Hence, there is evidence in the study area that bridewealth is a payment for labour and services. Again, Envilda argues:

> Envilda: It has to be paid because otherwise my parents won't be happy. Because if *roora* is not paid, they think I am bearing children for free.

Children born within marriage are viewed as belonging to their father's kin. The demand for wives is then broadly derived from the demand for children who

potentially bring prestige, old-age security, workforce, and heirs. This is also found in other polygynous systems (Jacoby, 1995). Another woman takes the argument further:

> Gertrude: You can't take something from someone for free [i.e. take a daughter from her parents without paying]. Men don't pay for labour because the money they pay and how I worked for the family doesn't even correspond. So in comparison the payment is nothing.

Gertrude agrees with other women that husbands should pay for labour and that the amount of bridewealth today does not at all correspond to the actual work that a woman performs during her whole marriage. Whether the practice of bridewealth is a commodity transaction is a question to which varying answers are given, both among my interviewees and among older testimonies and researchers (Kazembe and Mol, 1986, Kileff, 1970, Stamp, 1989). The variation in statements may be a sign that peasant farmers interpret the practice of bridewealth in different ways or that the practice is actually changing in one way or another. The original rationale of the practice may thus not necessarily hold today (Thelen, 2003). In the study area, the view still dominates that bridewealth represents compensation for the outlay of expenses. Further, today there is discontent with the fact that bridewealth is becoming more of an exchange-value. However, whether bridewealth originally was an economic institution or not, or whether some peasant farmers do not want it to be an institution with an economic rationale, findings show that the practice of bridewealth actually can be and is used as an economic one. The custom has now become articulated as an economic relation of production. The view that it can be a question of purchase is prevalent among Africans in different times (Kileff, 1970). Thus, to discuss bridewealth in terms of purchase of and access to labour may be a theoretical way of considering intra-household and intra-wedlock relations in pecuniary terms. This approach is relevant for the analysis of my data.

The interviews give signs that the level of bridewealth payments has increased considerably in real terms over the last couple of decades, which is also confirmed in other testimonies (Bourdillon, 1987, May, 1987). However, as the sociologist Michael Bourdillon states, bridewealth has always been a substantial outlay (Bourdillon, 1993). Instead, Bourdillon argues that, the increased share of cash payment in bridewealth represents a slight change in its function. What was seen a compensation for the loss of a productive daughter is now seen as a compensation for economic costs in terms of education and expenses for raising the daughter (Bourdillon, 1993). Apart from the religious symbolism connecting cattle to ancestors, the system of marriage payments was linked to the circulation of cattle and to the whole system of kinship relations. The payments were essentially seen as family or group affairs. However, there

has been a change towards viewing bridewealth as a cash payment between individuals and not as much as a practice that circulates or cements family ties (Bourdillon, 1993, May, 1987). Interview statements in my field data are in line with Bourdillon's interpretation. Cash payment is a means for fathers to enrich themselves and husbands to access 'an argument of superiority' over their wives. It is important to note that an old tradition, in this case bridewealth, turns into a different tradition when it is practised in new ways under new circumstances. This can be called an institutional layering (Thelen, 2003). The most far-reaching example of a right-in-person is obviously to control the whole person, as indicated in the following two statements from my interviews with two married men:

> Charles: I paid *roora* so that I can control my wife.

> James: I paid *roora* so that I can own my wife.

Charles' and James' statements are not only explicit examples of a far-reaching interpretation of rights-in-people. Their statements also indicate that bridewealth represents another dimension than just a connection between two lineages, namely gender power within marriage. This discussion on power within wedlock will continue in chapter 5. Some men say that they pay for their wife to be loyal and to obedient. Thus, even if the payment of bridewealth does not literally mean 'to own a wife' it means that a husband may believe that it is a way 'to control a wife'. Apparently, in the area under study, bridewealth can be used as a force in power relations. This is also supported in other older testimonies (Kazembe and Mol, 1986). Further, bridewealth as exchanged between males can turn women into exchangeable objects thereby contributing to their subordination (Ncube et al., 1997b). Although farmers may link bridewealth to a husband's rights to female labour, the incentive to work long hours may not be bridewealth but the concern for their children, as explained by Envilda and Rosemary:

> Envilda: We work no matter if *roora* is paid or not. We work because of love and love of our children. For most women in our country their *roora* is not paid in full, but they are working any way.

> Rosemary: If you want to escape work that means you are not a mother. We work for our future.

In this setting, to work for their children can be interpreted as an integral part of being a mother and being a woman. Other women put it this way:

Elisabeth: My dear, no one works for someone else. Because if men *pay* roora that means women are working for money and they are not. To be smart and be able to eat properly a woman has to work.

Wadzi: I don't think they pay for labour because I will be working for my children anyway.

Susan: I don't think they pay for labour because I *have* to work for my family.

These women express that they work for their children and family regardless of the payment of bridewealth and this often seems to be the case. That the payment refers to children is also seen in Henrietta's explanation:

Henrietta: They pay *roora* in exchange for women to bear children. Because if I fail to have children [sons] my parents will give him another wife meaning my sister or cousin will come to bear children.

Henrietta's explanation also shows that if she will not bear children then her lineage will provide a new wife. This shows that not only the spouses, but their respective lineages, conceal a social contract through bridewealth. In this case, the right-in-person that is transferred from one lineage to the other is the right to children born within wedlock.

Bridewealth frequently relates to a particular economic system. Bourdillon, who studies the Shona peoples, argues that when the economic system changes it might be expected that also marriage patterns will change slowly (Bourdillon, 1993). In the literature it is often expressed that bridewealth has changed its importance (Bourdillon, 1993, Stamp, 1989). Peasant farmers whom I interviewed have diverging explanations for the rationale of the practice of bridewealth. One reason for this may be found in Swidler's argument (Swidler, 1986) that in times when a practice is not under change, then established ways of acting do not command much immediate cultural support.

Labour rights and bridewealth are closely linked to polygynous marriages. Sociologist Remi Clignet, and economist Amyra Shechtman Grossbard (Clignet, 1970, Grossbard, 1980) both argue that the probability of finding bridewealth as a practice in society varies directly with the presence of polygyny. Evidence also suggests that bridewealth payments are higher in more polygynous societies (Borgerhoff Mulder, 1995, Grossbard, 1980). In the study area, there is an incentive to marry many wives instead of hiring labour. In blunt terms, and supported by interviews: women are cheaper and work harder than hired labour. It may be suggested that through bridewealth a man buys a woman's productive and reproductive capacities. Instead of working harder himself to increase production, a man can use the profit from his first wife's labour to pay bridewealth for a new wife to work for him. I suggest that bridewealth can be

interpreted as an institution within the polygynous setting for men's *rights* to women's labour, where men can *buy* women's productive and reproductive capacities in polygyny. I now turn to discuss polygyny.

Polygyny – an institution for men's access to women's labour

As a focus, I study gender in relation to production and reproduction. Polygyny has important implications for production and gender relations are clearly visualised within the frame of polygyny. My main objective is not to explain the existence of polygyny but to discuss its implications for production and gender relations. Yet, I will highlight certain reasons for its rationale that are commonly expressed. As a sociologist, Jack Goody argues that it is not polygyny that needs to be explained but its absence, that is monogamy, because the former is common while the latter is rare (Goody, 1973). Nonetheless, the origin and rationale of polygyny is a discussion in itself and also a field where romanticised benevolent patronage exists (Clignet, 1970). Not all polygynous systems are alike and practised in the same way (Clignet, 1970). The principles underlying the recruitment of additional co-wives and the social economic and political characteristics of the societies that practise plural marriages, underlying this particular form of familial arrangement, differ as do individual motivation. Meanings and manifestations of polygyny thus vary with, and actually also within, the context (Clignet, 1970).[11]

Economics of polygyny
Even if a discussion of polygyny in economic terms can shed light on the function of the gender regime, I do not assume, as some economists and anthropologists do, that polygyny is only a matter of putting a price on women as expressed in bridewealth and other compensations (Grossbard, 1976, Jacoby, 1995). According to this kind of research, husbands are expected to acquire an additional wife if the price is right for him and polygyny is thus a function of the 'demand for wife-services' (Grossbard, 1976). In line with this reasoning people determine their needs for marriage in terms of personal values and resources and the cost involved in marriage (Grossbard, 1980). A husband will prefer two wives to one wife, if his valuation of the second wife's services is at least equal to the compensation she requires. Then again, in line with this argument, a woman will prefer monogamy (if she can choose) because her total income, the product of her hours of work and the hourly compensation, is clearly larger under monogamy than under polygyny. Therefore, the man and each of the two women have conflicting interests (Grossbard, 1976).

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[11] For a discussion on the principles of polygyny see Remi Clignet (1970).

Some research, such as new home economics, including the economist Gary Becker, also discuss marriage, as well as polygyny and bridewealth, in economic terms; bridewealth and the division of marital output serve to equate the aggregate demand for and supply of wives in Becker's theory (Becker and Posner, 1993, Borgerhoff Mulder, 1995, Jacoby, 1995). The fact that high bridewealth is typically observed in polygynous societies in Africa, reflects a high demand for wives (Jacoby, 1995). However, even if a husband probably contemplates the extra value of an additional wife when considering polygyny, this does not mean that he thinks solely in economic terms. Further, I do not consider women to be free to choose polygyny or monogamy in this setting. I find that the explanation of polygyny offered by new home economics is too simplistic for the study. In addition, Becker's model of household behaviour, 'the new home economics', is criticised for being used in developing countries while not being particularly suitable for it. The critique concerns for example the implicit assumption of nuclear families and pooling households (Fapohunda, 1988), while in this setting spouses as well as co-wives not necessarily share (household) goals. The notion of disagreement between spouses in social goal setting is also emphasised by Amartya Sen (Sen, 1990). Power in gendered relations is therefore important for explaining polygyny.

Scales

In Chiweshe, polygyny has been practised for generations but today it seems, from my observations, that a majority of men and women live in monogamous marriages and that only a minority of all peasant farmers here actually practise polygyny. Yet, it must be noted that I cannot state fully the 'incidence and intensity' of polygyny (Clignet, 1970) – neither in the area nor among peasant farmers in the study. For a comparison with other polygynous societies in the 'polygyny belt' in sub-Saharan Africa, in which Zimbabwe is not included, a third to a half of married women lived in polygynous unions in 1995 (Jacoby, 1995). In the 1970s, Goody (Goody, 1973) argued that in societies where women farm more, there is a high incidence and/or intensity of polygyny. But within Africa, it is in the east that women farm more and it is in the west that polygyny dominates (Goody, 1973).

Moreover, several scholars have documented a positive relation between income and polygyny (Becker, 1974, Clignet, 1970, Grossbard, 1980). Thus, polygyny does not necessarily seem to decline with the development of a cash economy (Clignet, 1970). Further, there is evidence from other polygynous societies in Africa that educated men have more wives (Grossbard, 1980). At the same time, Clignet argues that of all social changes, women's education is the only aspect that may reduce the extent of polygyny (Clignet, 1970). Further, the observation that polygyny is not decreasing with 'modernity' is supported by

other sources. Clignet mentions that many observers notice that polygyny in cities tends to increase with the length of time spent there and with higher levels of occupation (Clignet, 1970). The relation between polygyny and urbanisation is thus a U-shaped curve (Goody, 1973). From this we can conclude that polygyny is defined in both 'modern and traditional terms' (Clignet, 1970) and that this must be remembered in the debate.

As a consequence of land scarcity and polygyny, Jacoby (Jacoby, 1995) notes that, if a man holds *extra* land, in a polygynous society, his path to wealth lies clearly in the accumulation of wives who will work his extra land. In a monogamous society this option is not open and the path to wealth lies instead in renting out land to tenants or selling it. Hence, there is a reverse relationship between societies with polygyny and land rentals[12]. This reasoning partly fits the area under study in which, when land was abundant, polygyny was practised and land was not rented out but communally controlled.

Reasons and rationales for polygyny
Along a process of diminishing access to land, and sometimes because of urbanisation, Bourdillon (1993) argues, extended families in Zimbabwe have become smaller since a large household is a heavy economic burden and people are now content with smaller families compared to the ideal in the past. Where polygyny survives it often takes a different form from polygyny in the past. A husband can for example have one wife in the city and one in the rural areas to work his fields. The wives now live separately and have different social and economic functions. Instead of increasing the size of one productive and cooperative unit, a polygynous man may obtain separate households in different areas and operate different productive units. Or if polygyny is frowned upon in the area, he might maintain a wife in a separate household (Bourdillon, 1993).

One view is that the size and composition of households varies with the division of labour. This idea is represented by Hopkins (Hopkins, 1973) for West Africa. In line with this argument, polygyny would be a result of extensive farming and women would be responsible for the major part of farming. This follows Ester Boserup's argument (Boserup, 1970). Early on, she proposed that the high incidence of polygyny in sub-Saharan Africa is rooted in the sexual division of labour in hoe agriculture and based on women's large economic contribution (Jacoby, 1995). She also argues that farming technology is one reason for polygyny. She claims that in societies where women carry out most of the agricultural work a wife will often welcome a second wife to help her share the work load (Boserup, 1970). Further, it is often argued that women's large

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[12] Jacoby (1995) refers to Pryor (1977) The origins of the economy: A comparative study of distribution in primitive and peasant economies. New York: Academic Press.

contribution to production in Africa is the main reason for the practice of polygyny (Jacoby, 1995). Jacoby gives evidence from West Africa to support Boserup's hypothesis linking polygyny to women's role in agricultural production. There is a relationship between women's productivity and the number of wives in households, which also lends support to Boserup's general thesis that men have more wives when female labour contributes a larger share of agricultural income (Jacoby, 1995). Clignet also argues, based on evidence from West Africa, that the incidence of polygyny is positively related to the productive value of the female members of a group (Clignet, 1970).

Boserup (1970) sees the plough as the key force in the transition from polygyny to monogamy. In her view, population pressure eventually leads to agricultural intensification and eventually a declining role for women in agriculture. In Chiweshe there has been an increase in population, but this has not entailed a decline in women's role in agriculture. Jacoby suggests that, international demand for export goods may be a far more important factor in the evolution of African marriage patterns (Jacoby, 1995). A consequence directly of the productive contribution of women, Jacoby argues, is the price elasticity of demand for wives in polygynous societies (Jacoby, 1995). Men have more wives when women are more productive, that is, cheaper. Hence, polygyny should decline during agricultural development.

However, there is a sharp criticism of the argument that a high workload and sexual division of labour are the main rationales for polygyny. Goody (Goody, 1973) argues that while hoe agriculture, female farming and polygyny are clearly associated in a general way, there is little evidence that connects variations in rates of polygyny with differences in the role of women in farming (or trade). Goody (Goody, 1973) continues his argument by stating that polygyny cannot be explained in terms of women's contribution to agricultural production when productivity of labour in a largely subsistence situation is low. The hypothesis that female farming is directly related to the accumulation of women (marrying more wives) does not appear to fit any evidence from Africa (Goody, 1973). Besides Boserup's sexual division of labour argument, researchers argue about various reasons for the existence of polygyny such as: the absence of a labour market, the demand for children, the demand for insurance, the inequality across men within a marriage market, and men's demand for sex. Now, I will discuss these rationales for polygyny.

Jacoby argues that the nonexistence of *labour market*s for women coexists with polygyny (Jacoby, 1995). The reason for nonexistent labour markets for women could be that since women produce food jointly for themselves, children and husbands, they are easier to supervise than hired female workers. Marriage is then, besides child care and fostering, one of the few ways to augment the household's female workforce (Jacoby, 1995).

In continents where more *children* are desired, polygyny is more prevalent (Grossbard, 1980). However, the average number of children born to women in monogamous marriages is higher than for women in polygynous marriages (Clignet, 1970). But the number of children for a polygynous husband is of course higher and it is his individual preference for children that directs the marriage pattern within a polygynous regime. There is evidence elsewhere in Africa of an inverse relationship between fertility per wife and number of wives (Grossbard, 1980). Further, there is evidence from other parts of Africa where the practice of polygyny is a way to increase fertility (Cook, 2007, de Kok, 2009). Also among my interviewees the value of future children is mentioned as a rationale for, or at least as a benefit of, polygyny:

> Martin: I marry many wives to get many children because I want my name to be heard in many villages.

There can be several reasons for wanting many children such as old-age security, workforce, prestige, heirs or as social company. However, this man practises polygyny as he wants many children who will have his name and make it well known in the area. Many children can thus be seen as contributing to or even guaranteeing his fame and hence his future prosperity. Polygyny can also be an *insurance* that operates through networks of kinship thereby compensating for the lack of credit or insurance markets in society (Jacoby, 1995). Jacoby also supports Becker's stress on *inequality across men within a marriage market* in explaining polygyny. Jacoby's studies show that men with greater wealth, with more productive farms (and taller men!) have more wives (Jacoby, 1995).

According to my interviews, the historical rational of polygyny was that people wanted to expand the family in order to be able to protect themselves during insecure times. Yet, it is difficult to evaluate how important this aspect was in the past and whether it was one aspect among others. The issue of protection is now replaced by the issue of state governance and the state's violence monopoly. To express what happened to polygyny in theoretical terms we can follow Thelen (Thelen, 1999) who suggests that it is likely that over time additional rationales are *layered* into an institution.

A reason for polygyny expressed in the interviews, but not so often in the literature, is *sex* alone, apart from reproduction. Goody suggests that sex must play a powerful role in polygyny and argues convincingly that 'the reasons behind polygyny are sexual and reproductive rather than economic and productive' (Goody, 1973: 189). For Zimbabwe, other researchers also argue that sex is the true reason for polygyny but not how the practitioners explain it (Ncube et al., 1997b).

As I see it, the rational for polygyny is multifaceted in the study area. An additional reason mentioned in the interviews, but not in the literature is, as one farmer expressed it, that men marry many wives 'because they can'. Polygyny allows men to marry several wives or to have extramarital relationships in addition to a wife. Thus, the gendered power relation in a patriarchal system in itself has explanatory power for polygyny. In contrast to men, interviewed women offer a type of straightforward answer: men want more wives for pleasure. This is in line with Goody's (Goody, 1973) argument above. Further, by using the regime for doing what a man, but not a woman, is allowed to do, that is being in more than one love relationship, can be a sign of how men dichotomise gender in order to reinforce their manhood. This is expressed by Wellington:

> Wellington: That is what a bull does. It is a sign of manhood.

Polygyny is in this interview extract one way of establishing male identity. Moreover, I argue that some men practise polygyny to *look* wealthy, and some to *become* wealthy. For those who practise polygyny to become wealthy there are two reasons to see polygyny as a way to access wealth: first, by allocating women's *labour*, and secondly, to access *land* by articulating the argument of having dependents to support. The first strategy sees additional wives as additional labour input in farming. Polygyny can thus be a production strategy for increased wealth through access to additional labour. This was a rationale and a practice within men's strategy, when land was abundant but it may also be so today (as I discuss in chapter 6). However, under the given circumstances, there is very little room for extra income in farming and women thus have to diversify their income. Hence, poverty limits the possibilities for intensification. The second rationale that seems to have been added and layered over the years is the practice of having many wives in order to get access to a greater area of land to cultivate. When land was abundant, or at least more abundant than before the creation of the Chiweshe reserve, a rational for polygyny for both men and women could have been to cultivate more land and hence increase food security within the family. With decreasing access to land this rational has become less and less important until the situation developed that an additional wife does not mean more land for the family but instead less land for each wife. This is shown for other parts of Zimbabwe as well (Armstrong, 1992). It suggests that polygyny will eventually decrease as land gets scarcer and it becomes more expensive to practise polygyny. The large household is then no longer a source of wealth but a burden. On the other hand, polygyny practised with this rationale can also still be a strategy to access land, which I will discuss in chapter 6. This may become a reason for practising polygyny in the future.

To conclude, there are several reasons for polygyny in the literature. There are Boserup's arguments (Boserup, 1970) on sexual division of labour, women's large economic contribution in agriculture and the labour intensive technology used in hoe farming. Moreover, there are arguments such as the lack of a labour market for women; men's demand for children; demand for assurance; inequality between men; and men's demand for sex. To some extent and in various ways all these arguments are mentioned in my interviews. Yet, my summarised interpretation is that men's demand for *pleasure, control and fame* are the most relevant rationales for polygyny to consider further in the gender regime under study here.

The gender regime in summary

The gender regime of land and labour rights in subsistence farming is made up of gendered land rights and gendered labour right, as I show in Figure 2. Men have use rights to land and this is based on their birth right. However, these land rights are uncertain and insecure, as I will show in chapter 6. Through their husbands, and in accordance with their decision-making power, women are allocated land for a (vegetable) garden. Thus, women's rights to land are indirect, secondary and even more insecure than men's land rights.

If an institution is defined according to what it performs, that is according to function, the first obvious function of polygyny is the opportunity for men to take several wives. Yet, polygyny is now also an instrument for men to access women's labour and services. Early on, one important rational of polygyny was that men had an opportunity to become 'a big name' from having many children. This was one way for men to increase their status and acquire fame. As I see it, this rationale is still relevant for men. Another road towards fame, and thus another rational for polygyny, is for men to access much land and thereby become a village head. Hence, polygyny can be a way either to look wealthy or to become wealthy. From the perspective of women, perceptions about polygyny are ambiguous. On the one hand it offers an opportunity for women to access a man and thereby the rights and obligations that follow from that in relation to land, labour, children and sexual services. On the other hand, as polygyny circumscribes women's room of manouvre, it is generally disliked by women.

However, to understand polygyny it should be studied in relation to bridewealth. There are also purely symbolic reasons for the practice of bridewealth without further economic or power reasons attached to it. Nevertheless, through bridewealth a man can *access a right* to a woman's labour and other services and through polygyny he can *access* more *labour* and more services through additional wives. This is so at least in situations of conflict within wedlock when husbands see the 'right-in-people' as his right to access his

wife's labour and services. Within the scope of this analysis, I cannot determine whether the rights to women's labour is a practice that reinforces existing power relations or the other way around. Nevertheless findings show, as practised today, that the labour rights institution is inherent in the gender power relation within wedlock as I will discuss further in chapters 5 and 6. The discussion in this chapter has now contributed a preliminary answer to the first research question on the gender regime.

3 Theory

Institutions, gender and power

In this chapter I will introduce the theories and concepts that I selected and combined into a theoretical framework for analysing the gender regime of land and labour rights in subsistence farming in Chiweshe. In qualitative inquiries it is suitable to start from a few initial ideas and then construct the full analytical frame only after the field work is completed. In the early research phase I therefore followed Charles Ragin's and Lisa Amoroso's advice (Ragin and Amoroso, 2011:77) to keep a *fluid* rather than a fixed analytical frame 'to limit the influence of pre-existing ideas'. Not until the in-depth data analysis did it become clear what type of theories and concepts I needed, in more detail, for understanding and making sense of data (Silverman, 2010). In the final section of the chapter, I will report briefly how I use grounded theory. In short, it did not come to use in an iterative process in the construction of field data as is often seen but only for coding data into gerunds and for creating analytical categories grounded in data. In chapter 4, I will present the details in gerunds coding.

In research I proceed from and combine new institutional theory and gender theory. Institutional theory explores and explains how relatively enduring features of political, social and economic life such as norms, beliefs, procedures and rules are constitutive and thus shape human behaviour and action (Mahoney and Thelen, 2010). Gender theory explores and explains how individuals act upon and interact with social and cultural constructions of masculinity and femininity. Further, it deals with power relations that are embedded in interactions between women and men and between female and male. How to select and combine theories into analytical frames is a question of methodology. Kathleen Thelen (Thelen, 1999), as a historical and political institutionalist, suggests that it can be productive to combine several types of new institutional theory be it historical, sociological or discursive. Following this, I will combine strands of new institutional theory with gender and power theory to understand the dynamics, interactions and processes of change in the gender regime. In particular, I will study how access to, control over and use of land and labour is gendered. I also seek to locate emerging social change in the gender regime.

In this context, I understand institutions as phenomena that *regulate* access to, control over and use of material and immaterial resources in the interest of a given group. Regulations thereby determine inclusion and exclusion of actors as well as responsibilities (obligations) between groups of actors. Moreover, institutions must have some *determinance* as regards predictability, continuity

and stability in time and space as well as in the *magnitude* of actors involved. The research focus here will be on how the institutions of land and labour rights are regulated, used and modified over time. To that end, I will combine theories each of which has a certain focus and generates a certain type of knowledge.

I will combine institutional theories to study formal and informal rights and rules in relation to land and labour as well as incremental changes in the institutional arrangement. In addition, I draw on gender theories for studying how gender is enacted in the gender regime, how land rights and labour rights interact and how power is embedded in those processes. In addition to a perspective inspired by historical and sociological institutionalism, I will use discursive institutionalism, as discussed below. Since there is much 'talking' in the study area it is suitable to analyse narratives and discourses and to trace their local political content. From a methodological point, I see the selected theories, rooted in institutional and/or gender theory, as epistemologically complementary and compatible. Moreover, I agree that it is important to keep an epistemological awareness and openness in the process:

> Making a choice of one epistemological position or another in a given context is not an act of discarding or deciding against the other position – it is an act of being aware of the choice being made and taking responsibility for it. Being epistemologically aware opens up more choices for action (Schlindwein and Ison, 2004: 30).

As a sociologist, David Silverman (Silverman, 2010) argues that theory provides *a footing for viewing the world*, separate from, but still about the world. Obviously, facts do not 'speak for themselves' (Berger and Luckmann, 1979). This means that even if we allow data to speak as much as possible for itself, we have to contribute some theory or concepts to data in order to allow the empirical material to release its message (Gherardi and Turner, 2002). The theory that I am looking for thus needs to be flexible enough to allow empirically rooted understandings to emerge from data and thus 'let the data speak' (Cresswell, 2007). To that end I will use grounded theory for coding data with gerunds and for creating analytical categories that will serve as a theorised and aggregated understanding to be further discussed in chapter 6. It should be noted that although the selected theories are of Western origin, I have not evaluated the effect of that. Below, I will first introduce my approach to institutions, gender and power and then the theoretical frame itself.

Institutions and discourse

Although new institutionalism has moved beyond a formalistic understanding of political institutions, institutions are often, but not always, still understood in formal terms such as procedures taking place outside agents (Kulawik, 2009, Schmidt, 2008). In contrast, I see institutions as given but also as socially and historically contingent; institutions are *internal* to the actor, and thus given, but also created and *changed* by actors and thus *contingent*. Even if rules and regulations in institutions are shaped by individuals, action is not exactly an automatic product of rational agents' calculated, path-dependent, or norm-appropriate rule-following. Instead, action is the process on which agents consider, create and maintain institutions (Schmidt, 2008).

Institutions are systems of meaning, and their way of working and how individuals behave within them depend on the *meanings* incorporated in the institution (Mackay, 2009). Thus, I find it important to include discourses in the discussion on institutional change. Discursive processes of collective identity formation, in which the negotiation of shared aims or the interpretation of previous experiences with political institutions or social policies takes place, are crucial for understanding how political actors mobilise and pursue their claims (Kulawik, 2009). Regarding individuals, they often become aware of an institutional rule mainly when their attitudes differ from one another or when different institutions have conflicting rules and norms (Schmidt, 2008).

Norms that are central in the discussion on institutions have different positions in different new institutional theories. Where to locate ideas within institutions affects the way we see such ideas; are they established social agreements or preliminary, contested and debated ideas? My interpretation is that in sociological new institutionalism the norms *are* the institutions. Ideas are thus understood as norms that are as fixed as rules and will frame action. In historical new institutionalism ideas are contested *at the creation* of an institution. In discursive new institutionalism ideas and even institutions are *internal* to agents as agents *do* institutions. Schmidt (Schmidt, 2008) argues that ideas and discourses are changeable by those who perform them. Contestations of power, gender and patriarchy are therefore continuously ongoing. This is a perspective I share. Instead of perceiving rules as rather fixed consensus norms, I will focus on *power* and *conflicts* in my description of how society, and individuals in society, have decided what rules to follow (or resist) and how to behave in relation to that (Kenny and Mackay, 2009, Mackay, 2009).

Following Teresa Kulawik (Kulawik, 2009), I agree that besides being sedimentations of discursive struggles, institutions are also locations for communication. Institutional arrangements have important implications for discursive practices because they structure our access to discursive arenas where

we debate institutions and styles of communication (Kulawik, 2009). As I will show in the analysis, institutional arrangements in my study limit the access to discursive arenas, especially for women. The discourses take place in situations and in discussions to which women have no access, such as meetings between village heads or in sites where men rest, chat and debate. In the study area such institutional arrangements exclude women, as far as I can observe.

Following Schmidt (Schmidt, 2008: 305), I will refer to discourse as 'talking about one's ideas'. This discussion on ideas, discourses and institutional change, influenced by Schmidt and Kulawik, both discursive institutionalists, touches upon an old social science debate on how structures relate to agency. I will discuss this further in relation to the idea of purposeful choice. Here, my perspective is that individuals, through thoughts and speech, initiate changes in an institution by altering the discourse that it is embedded in.

Gender

Here, I will first describe my view of what gender *is*. Secondly, I will describe how I use gender in the analysis. Overall, I will observe how gender *operates* as an *enactment* in society. First, concerning what gender *is*, gender does not only refer to women, which is a common misunderstanding (Momsen, 2010). Instead, gender is a way of organising social practice. Further, gender *relations* are understood as a historically and socially constructed form of relations between women and men (Momsen, 2010). Gender relations are often naturalised and thus seen as the way things are and must be practised (Burns, 2005). But, because gender identities are historically and socially acquired they are flexible and not simple binary constructions (Momsen, 2010). In addition, gender is one of the most important structures within all documented societies (Connell, 1995, West and Zimmerman, 1987), and as such, gender relations are inevitably power relations (Kenny, 2007).

Gender *roles* refer to the household tasks and types of employment socially assigned to women and men (Momsen, 2010). The *sexual division of labour* is thus an allocation of particular types of work to particular categories of people (Connell, 1987) and a way of coding labour according to gender. Further, the sexual labour division also refers to specific work-designs including appropriate technology (Connell, 1987). In this context, I see property relations as a basic determinant of the sexual division of labour and of gender relations (Kelly-Gadol, 1976). I also suggest that gender inequalities are bound to the control of property (Kelly-Gadol, 1976). Further, if authority is defined as accepted power in a certain context, then we can say that the main axis of the gender power structure, in the study, connects authority with masculinity (Connell, 1987).

There has been a contentious debate among feminist theorists on the sex-gender distinction (Moi, 2005). Notwithstanding, and for the purposes of this thesis, to analyse the acquired rights and strategies towards land, labour, production and reproduction, the notion of gender as socially constructed is sufficient. I see gender as often following sexual bodies of reproduction. Thus, I understand *gender* as the socially acquired notions of masculinity and femininity by which women and men (and their actions) are identified (Momsen, 2010).

Oyewumi (Oyewùmi, 1997) argues that 'gender' and 'women' are Western concepts, not suitable in many African societies. However, I argue that the concepts of gender as well as woman and man are highly suitable in at least *this* context as peoples' roles, self-images, expectations and wishes, tasks and roles to a large extent follow the two types of genders and biological sex/bodies providing the rational for the organisation of the social world.

In addition, I agree that gender is not what you *have*, it is what you *do* – as a routine and a recurring accomplishment (West and Zimmerman, 1987). West and Fenstermaker (2002) express it in the way that gender is an 'interactional accomplishment' (West and Fenstermaker, 2002). To some extent *individuals* do gender. But it is a situated 'doing', carried out in the presence of (and in response to) others who are presumed to be part of the same gender enactment. Rather than as a property of individuals, gender is a matter of social relations: both as an outcome of and a rationale for various social arrangements as well as a means of legitimating the gender division in society (West and Zimmerman, 1987). Gender is enacted in reference to powerful normative conceptions, relevant to particular gender categories, female or male (West and Zimmerman, 1987). Since I view gender as an enactment, the attention shifts from matters internal to the individual, and thus focuses on relations and institutional arenas (West and Zimmerman, 1987). West and Zimmerman's concept of 'doing gender' and West and Fenstermaker's concept of gender as 'interactional accomplishment' have certain similarities with Judith Butler's 'performativity' (Moloney and Fenstermaker, 2002). The concepts intersect in some areas and diverge in others. Butler draws on psychoanalysis and poststructuralist language theory while West, Zimmerman and Fenstermaker draw on social theory; here the latter suits my purpose better for studying *doings* (Moloney and Fenstermaker, 2002).

The gender focus that I employ here affects my view and selection of institutional theories. While gender is often neglected in mainstream new institutionalism[13](Kenny and Mackay, 2009) gender can be a crucial dimension

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[13] The exceptions according to Kenny and Mackay (2009) are Pierson (1996) 'The path to European integration: A historical institutionalist approach.' *Comparative Political Studies* 29

in the study of institutions and processes of change. Perceiving institutions as gendered is central to understanding ideas, strategies and outcomes of actions. I agree that it also reveals the ways in which institutions reinforce and structure unequal gendered power relations (Mackay and Meier, 2003). The gendering of new institutionalism also brings power to the forefront of institutional analysis (Kenny and Mackay, 2009). Several feminists therefore argue that institutional theory needs a gender or power perspective to be able to explain why gender equality reforms and norms are difficult to institutionalise (Mackay, 2009, Waylen, 2007). I do not necessarily intend to make a specific contribution to new institutionalism by including gender, but several of the new institutional researchers I use have this ambition (Kenny, 2007, Kenny and Mackay, 2009, Kulawik, 2009, Mackay and Meier, 2003, Mackay, 2009, Waylen, 2000, Waylen, 2009).

Gender norms shape institutions and prescribe and proscribe 'acceptable' masculine and feminine forms of behaviour, rules and values for women and men within institutions (Kenny and Mackay, 2009). Thus, social constructivism as seen in feminism and in some new institutionalism is useful in the analysis. With social constructivism and a gender perspective I can systematically identify the norms, symbols and cultural factors that play an important part in gendering the institutions under study (Mackay, 2009).

Further, even if the gender focus in this thesis mostly concerns the relation between men and women and the division of rights, obligations and strategies between them, there is need for two clarifications: First, women and men are heterogeneous analytical categories with heterogeneous identities and interests that intersect with other aspects of identity such as being a divorcee, a widow, a female head of household. Secondly, besides the relation between husband and wife there are other gender relations within the family such as relations between co-wives and between father and son or father and daughter. Yet, the analysis here is for the benefit of theorising the gender regime as a deep structure and not for giving a representative picture of diverse individual situations.

Institutions appear at different levels and have different rationales. In addition they may operate differently for women and men. Thus, polygyny can be an institution for men to access women's labour, while for women polygyny can be an institution for having children and for accessing land to support them. The garden as an institution represents another example. On one level of abstraction the garden regulates and distributes land to women, on another level it can be interpreted as an instrument within the patriarchal power regime for determining women's actions and opportunities. This is done by controlling

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(2):123-63 and Skocpol (1992) *Protecting soldiers and mothers: The political origins of social policy in the United States*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

women's access and rights to land for the benefit of the husband or family. From these examples, it is evident that the institutions under study have gender differentiated purposes, regulations and enabling structures. This means that gender theory increases our awareness of the dual regulations and rationales that institutions may entail. Thereby, gender awareness is necessary for exploring how institutions perform and transform. Moreover, gender relations are cross-cutting and institutions on all levels can be gendered, from overarching symbolic institutions to the actual level of interpersonal day-to-day interaction where the continuous enactment of gender takes place (Kenny and Mackay, 2009). This multi-layering will affect the gender strategies that I discuss in chapter 6. In sum, gender carries meaning and interest and with a gender perspective follows an inclusion of power indicating that gender is a crucial and useful category in research on social interaction (Haavind, 2000, Scott, 1996).

Power

Power is a core feature of this study and one particular question therefore emerges in relation to the gender regime of land and labour rights: who has the power to change, modify or resist these institutions? Institutional perspectives that see ideas, norms and rules not as fixed but under contestation may accommodate power as an aspect of institutional change. Yet, institutional theory is generally insufficient for exploring asymmetric relations and must be supplemented by theories on power.

Foucault (Foucault, 1990), who sees power as relational, argues that power is exercised from innumerable points in non-egalitarian mobile relations. Following Foucault in that respect, I study power in non-egalitarian gender relations wherein one person can obstruct another person's options. Further, I view power as a *resource* that is regulated by institutions. As an example, the patriarchal exercise of power is regulated and fortified by the institution of polygyny. This perspective on power suits my intention to study what men and women do respectively to exercise power in relation to each other.

The often used distinction of power relations as in 'power over' and 'power to' represents another aspect of power. Like feminist economist Naila Kabeer (Kabeer, 2005), I will make a distinction between 'power to' and 'power over' where the first is a positive and the second a negative connotation to agency. 'Power to' refers to people's ability to make their own life choices and act upon it even in the face of opposition from others; 'power over' refers to the capacity to override the agency of others (Kabeer, 2005).

Power in new institutionalism

Institutions have distributional effects and they reflect, reproduce and magnify particular (existing) patterns of power (Thelen, 1999, Waylen, 2007). While new institutionalism acknowledges that some groups are privileged over others, these theories are often criticised for underplaying the importance of power relations (Kenny and Mackay, 2009). However, power can be seen to be incorporated silently into institutional understandings of actors and interests and the role of negotiation, conflict, and contestation in the creation and adaptation of institutions (Kenny and Mackay, 2009, Thelen, 1999, Waylen, 2007). Agency is acknowledged mainly at 'critical junctures' and path-dependency is used to explain the continuity of power of the powerful. However, Kenny, a feminist institutionalsist, argues that this concept of power often results in a static view of institutions more concerned with institutional continuity than with institutional change (Kenny, 2007). I agree with Kenny that without feminism or power and contestation it is difficult to explain changes by new institutionalism alone.

Three dimensions of power

Power is often described as having three dimensions (Badersten and Gustavsson, 2010). The first dimension concerns relations between individuals. Here power is concrete, direct and substantial; A has power over B, in the way that A can make B do things that B would not otherwise have done. The second dimension of power concerns collective decision-making and how those individuals who control the agenda setting thereby exercise power by including or excluding certain issues (Badersten and Gustavsson, 2010). The third dimension of power, which was introduced by Lukes (1974) who spoke in terms of the *faces* of power, concerns structural power and the act of making preferences. Here power is exercised as a subtle socialisation where certain groups shape the preference of other groups also meaning that certain issues are prevented from appearing in people's minds in the first place. The third dimension of power refers to power over thinking in the way that those who have power can affect other peoples' perception of themselves and their wishes. The third dimension also covers the ability to define a situation or an event and thus to influence how it should be understood. According to the third dimension of power, a gender divided society makes people, knowingly or unknowingly, define themselves, their interest, and their expected behaviour based on gender. Moreover, the third power dimension also means power over language, which in many ways governs the way we think (Badersten and Gustavsson, 2010, Lukes, 2005). Yet, I will not consider the power dimension of language because there are too many language barriers for me when I enter an African context, in order to do it fluently.

All these three dimensions of power are relevant for my study of actual and potential institutional change. There are, however, many difficulties in identifying one single source of power in any given situation. This is so because many factors, which in themselves possess a certain power, are involved (Lukes, 2005, Shortall, 1999). The three-dimensional power debate can guide us in how power is *exercised* and how it is *identified*, but it does not discuss the *sources* of power in any detail (Shortall, 1999).

Sources of power

There can be several sources of power. Michael Mann argues that 'resources[14] are the media through which power is exercised' (Mann, 1986: 6). This perspective is suitable for my use of power as I focus on the resources that individuals can mobilise in order to exercise power for the sake of achieving a certain goal. Mann presents a resource based typology of power: economic, military, political and ideological power. However, only economic and ideological power would be applicable in the social setting under study here; military power refers to larger units such as the state and political power refers to the state itself (Mann, 1986). In my discussion on changes in land and labour rights institutions, I will follow Flor Avelino and Jan Rotmans (2009) who actually build on Mann in their power typology. Avelino and Rotmans' articles are useful as they summarise a longer social science debate on power into a constructive approach using a conceptual vocabulary that is adequate in sustainability research.[15] They categorise power resources in terms of: (1) mental (information, concepts, ideas, beliefs); (2) human (human leverage, personnel, members, voters); (3) artifactual (apparatuses, products, construction, infrastructure, art); (4) natural (raw materials, physical space, time, organic life); and (5) monetary resources of power (funds, cash, financial stock) (Avelino and Rotmans, 2011). People use the different types of resources while exercising different types of power. In two articles, Avelino and Rotmans (Avelino and Rotmans, 2009, Avelino and Rotmans, 2011) develop a typology of power *exercise* by distinguishing between innovative, transformative and constitutive exercises of power. In the next section, I will discuss how power is exercised in processes of reenactment and/or change.

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[14] I follow Avelino and Rotmans' broad definition of resources as persons, assets, materials or capital, including human, mental, monetary, artefactual and natural resources (Avelino & Rotmans 2009:551).

[15] Avelino & Rotmans (2009) is a reader on power theories for use in transition theory.

Power in change

Avelino and Rotmans (2009), explicitly stress power as decisive for institutional change and identify four types of power giving rise to four different types of *institutional change*: (1) innovative power; (2) destructive power, (3) constitutive power, and (4) transformative power. In the later article they leave out the destructive power in their framework (Avelino and Rotmans, 2011). Following Avelino and Rotmans (Avelino and Rotmans, 2009), I define the relation between institutions, resources and power: institutions are put in play to mobilise resources to exercise power. As an example and illustration of one of my core arguments, I say that men as *actors* use the *gendered land institution* to mobilise the *resource* of *land* to exercise *power* to access women's *labour*.

Avelino and Rotmans define power as 'the ability of actors to mobilise resources to achieve a certain goal' (Avelino and Rotmans 2009:550) and they see power as a way to describe change. In their reasoning, different types of power give rise to different degrees of institutional change. I will explore gender via the lens of 'doings' and it is therefore adequate to apply a power framework that defines power as an *ongoing* activity and a capacity to mobilise resources for some purpose (Avelino and Rotmans, 2009). I will use power in two ways. First, power is a component in my analytical framework for studying changes in institutions as I do in chapter 6. I use the Avelino and Rotmans (2009) typology of power to describe how power is exercised in actor oriented strategies for the sake of achieving change or keeping status quo in institutions and thus, finally, in the gender regime. Before that, in chapter 5, I conduct a more specific analysis of two types of power relations within wedlock: (1) husband to wife as well as (2) co-wife to co-wife. From the three dimensions of power, I develop the tools that I will use in the analysis of power in polygynous wedlock. On the basis of the power analysis in chapter 5, I will develop the argument for my conclusions, chapter 7, on how the gender regime of land and labour rights may hamper food production and food security.

Empowerment

One way to think about power is in terms of *the ability to make choices* (Kabeer, 1999). Following Kabeer, empowerment is thus the process by which people, who have been without power, gain power, in particular as regards strategic life choices. However, a process of empowerment often begins from within a person, which makes it difficult to measure. Empowerment comprises not only forms of observable action but also the meaning, motivation and purpose that individuals bring to their action; their *sense* of agency or self-worth (Kabeer, 2005). This way of reasoning has similarities with my intention to study

thinking as a very early sign of change, as suggested by Schmidt (2008). This is so because both arguments refer to a process that starts within a person's mind. Further, I agree with Kabeer's argument that the possibility to make *real* choices is central in exercising power, and, that the dimensions of *choice* – in resources, agency and achievements – are indivisible in determining the meaning of an indicator and hence its validity as a measure of empowerment (Kabeer, 1999). Thus, I will be aware of this when I discuss changes in institutions. Further, there is an overlap between the third dimension of power discussed earlier, and what feminists call 'the power within' (Kabeer, 1994) meaning that empowerment requires real choices on strategic issues. Moreover, Kabeer's discussion on the empowerment variables and the acknowledgement of choice, fits well with Sen's 'capability perspective' where an individual's advantage is judged in terms of 'freedom to achieve' (Sen, 1995) 'rather than in terms of primary goods, incomes, and other proposed spaces' (Sen, 1995). Both Kabeer's and Sen's arguments are compatible with my use of Avelino and Rotmans' phrase: the *ability* to mobilise resources to achieve a certain goal.

Thinking and doing institutions and institutional change

I agree with Kulawik (Kulawik, 2009), who sees institutions in a process oriented way wherein institutions can be defined as 'sedimented discourses'. In order to capture change, Kulawik stresses the crucial aspects of agency and activity and the notion that actors are 'doing institutions' (Kulawik, 2009). The focus on 'doings' can be used for exploring gender and for studying everyday activities according to the ideas of 'doing gender' as suggested by West and Zimmerman (West and Zimmerman, 1987). I mentioned this above, as well as 'gender as a practice' (Connell, 1987) and 'everyday politics' (Kerkvliet, 2009). Institutions are enacted, this means that they can capture ongoing activities in terms of gerunds. Such acting, the performance of gender in everyday life, can be captured in data such as observations or interviews. I will return to this in chapter 4. Since institutions are enacted, I need to perceive a time dimension when studying institutions. That is also needed, obviously, when studying institutional change. I agree with Charmaz' definition of a process:

> A process consists of unfolding temporal sequences that may have identifiable markers with clear beginnings and endings and benchmarks in between. The temporal sequences are linked in a process and lead to change. Thus, single events become linked as part of a larger whole (Charmaz 2006: 10).

Thus, I look for single events and link them together to find the 'doings' of institutions and institutional change. A change in an institution can be a break

but it can also be a change that is not visible on the surface of the institution, but a change in the rationale of the institution or a change in who uses the institution and how (Thelen, 2003). I will return to this in my theoretical framework. I mentioned that institutions are internal to agents who maintain and change them. I understand a change in institutions as emerging in a person's *thinking*, followed by *speaking* with others; later on the change is seen in *one* person's *acting* followed by many persons' acting (Schmidt, 2008). I will present Schmidt's ideas further in the theoretical framework. Even if difficult to change, institutions are not fixed, precisely because they are perpetuated by actors who '*embody* and *enact'* norms and scripts (Mackay, 2009). Thus, the seeds of change are ubiquitous.

Institutions are changed by actors in relation to other actors when ideas on how to 'do' the institution are discussed and contested in a 'discourse' wherein actors debate the ideas. If there is a change in views on how the institution should be operated, then the discourse is, or may be, followed by change in actions (Schmidt, 2008). When power and gender are included in a perspective where people do or enact institutions, it follows that institutional change is a consequence of discussions and contestations of ideas and practices (Mackay, 2009). Inequalities embedded in gender and power relations make institutions into arenas for contestation. Institutions are ambiguous rather than unambiguous and thus have an inherent contradictory potential (Onoma, 2010). Institutions are indeed constituted by discursive struggles as they are understood as 'sedimented discourses' (Kulawik 2009:268). The outcome of the contestation of ideas can be a value, an idea or a practice that is solidified, but not fortified. As time goes by, layers of discourses about the institution are built. What distinguishes institutions from discourses is that institutions are relatively fixed functional units that serve certain purposes, such as making binding decisions or distributing social benefits (Kulawik, 2009). The codes for acting embedded in institutions may be reinterpreted, but in their daily routinised operations they are naturalised, and therefore not available for open contestation (Kulawik, 2009).

To sum up the discussion in this chapter, I have a gender and power awareness and a perspective wherein people 'think and do' institutions. As such, institutions are sedimented discourses. People contest ideas about and through gender and power, and the result is 'sedimented' in new layers of discourses in the institution. In addition, I argue that individuals make changes in institutions by mobilising resources to reach a certain goal. In the following, I will present my theoretical framework for capturing such a change in institutions.

A theoretical framework for studying change

Power has many dimensions and so has change. The ambition to capture change made me look for and draw on such new institutional theory that can be combined with a gender perspective and notions of power. Accordingly, and as mentioned, change can best be captured by considering institutions, and activities within, as ongoing or *'doings'*. I draw on several strands of new institutional theory – historical, sociological and discursive – that capture aspects that play a decisive role in the gender regime. In addition, I search for signs that reinforce, undermine or change the underlying rationale of the gender regime and how the rationale can be negotiated within the regime. In particular, I focus on the gender dynamics of the gender regime in terms of gendered performance = 'doings'. Understanding complex and varying causal patterns is crucial for any attempt to grasp the gendered nature of institutional change. In order to trace causal regularities I need a theoretically informed and empirically adapted framework (Waylen, 2007). Based on *creative combinations* of new institutional theory of various strands (Thelen, 1999), I construct a theoretical frame that allows for a systematic analysis of incremental institutional change in land and labour rights institutions, both in my historical and contemporary data. Used wisely, institutional theory can thus capture not only big breaks but also piecemeal changes (Mahoney and Thelen, 2010).

In the contemporary empirical material I look for agency in terms of instances and options to change institutions within the gender regime of land and labour rights. I view agency as, initially *thinking* and then, *doing* institutions. The analytical framework for the study of changes is partly constructed for the analysis of the oral history interviews on the historical processes and changes regarding the land and labour right institutions during the 20th century. Further, it is also constructed for an analysis of contemporary times of how the gender regime of land and labour rights operates. Activities are worth studying in a snapshot as they describe emerging changes or the actions needed to confirm or rebuild a status quo. Nevertheless, I find it useful to build a complete framework as it offers tools to get a full picture of institutional change from understanding how an institution works in everyday life, to how a modification is initiated and further onwards towards long term changes in an institution.

Although I will use the theoretical framework in several steps, I will present the entire framework here including its five interlinked components. In Figure 3, I visualise the frame. In the analysis of the gerund coding on present times, in chapter 6, I will use the '*actor* close' components. In the discussion on historic changes in the gender regime, I will use the '*process'* components. I will now present the five components in the theoretical frame starting with the three 'actor close' components followed by the two 'process' components.

In Figure 3, the three components at the top represent what I call 'actor close components'. The first component, *discourse*, is derived from Vivian Schmidt (2008) who distinguishes between *thinking*, *speaking* and *acting*. These are discursive abilities that make actors reflect upon institutions and, possibly, start to change them (Schmidt, 2008). If we believe that change starts with thinking (Schmidt, 2008), then we can categorise these actions as *supporting*, *complying*, *modifying*, or *resisting* an existing institution (Kerkvliet, 2009). The second component, *everyday politics,* is inspired by Ben Kerkvliet (2009) in relation to comparative politics. These two components of theories are useful in the discussion as they help me grasp possible changes that I have detected in data. I analyse individual interviews and then aggregate them on a group level. Besides describing change or status quo, these two components express agency as they describe agents' thoughts, speech and actions.
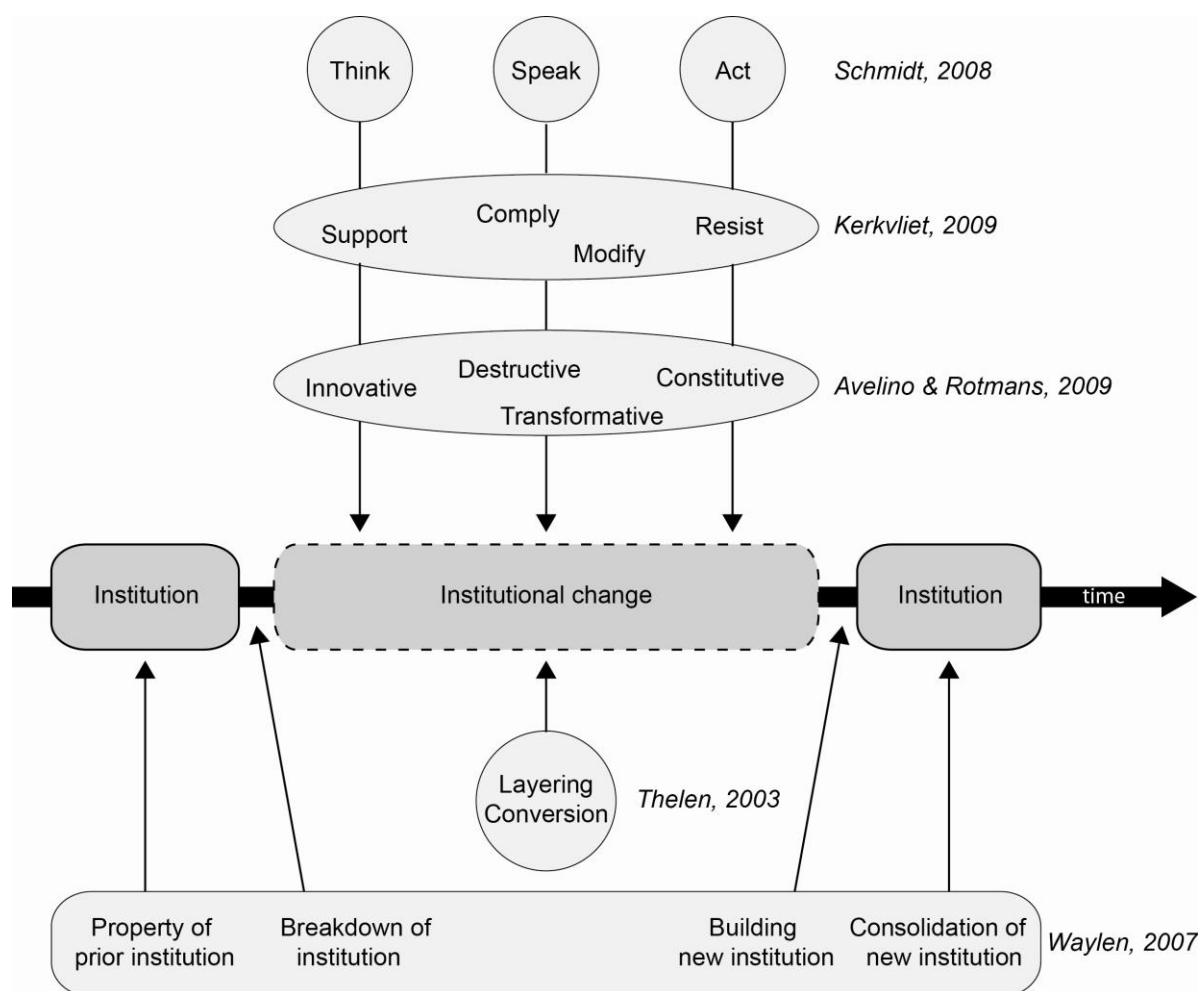
Figure 3: The institutional model.
    A theoretical framework for studying institutional change. Source: Karin Steen. Layout: Karin Steen and Ann Åkerman.

In order to continue the discussion on actions there is first a need to discuss agents and actors. The fundamental understanding of what it means to be an agent is constructed and may change over time and across contexts (Biermann et al., 2009). Agency can be the capacity to act in the face of for example change or to produce effects, positive or negative, that ultimately shape processes. Agency may also involve the ability to understand and reflect on situations and relationships. Agency is a dynamic behavior that can be created and lost and is shaped by process (Biermann et al., 2009). Moreover, social scientists have long debated whether social outcomes are primarily a product of individual actions or broader social structures. For many scholars, structure and agency are seen as two sides of the same coin where agents are both enabled and constrained by structures (Avelino and Rotmans, 2009, Biermann et al., 2009, Giddens, 1984, Kenny, 2007, Thelen, 2003). Following from my definition of institutions as sedimented discourses, I emphasise the role of actors and the emerging change in their *thinking* (Kulawik, 2009, Schmidt, 2008).

The third actor close component, at the top in Figure 3, is *power for change*. I use Avelino's and Rotman's (2009) definition of four types of power leading to different types of change. As previously presented, these four types are (1) innovative; (2) destructive; (3) transformative; and (4) constitutive power and change. On a group level, I will identify the degree of change and classify the type of power used. *Power* is here a way to describe *change*. Whether there is change in the institutions, or status quo, will be determined by looking at how the rationale of the institution is affected. The rationale refers to men's and women's opinions and perceptions of the institution. I call this the 'inner organisation' of the institution, meaning how the institution is constituted and organised. I will define and apply the three actor close components in chapter 6.

Now I will discuss the two process components, at the bottom in Figure 3. The first process component, *periodicity*, refers to the specific situation when change appears. It is based on Georgina Waylen's (2007) study of gendered outcomes of transition in national regimes, thus capturing institutional change. Waylen works in the field of institutionally oriented feminist political science. From her research I take the awareness on what to study during a period of change in institutions, by dividing the process into parts for studying along a timeline. In order to locate changes one needs to describe the institution *before* and *after* the change; or in case of no sharp changes or junctures, what the institution was like at one point in time and what it was like at a later point in time, or at several later points in time. I will analyse how the rationale, the user and the actual organisation of it has changed between the chosen points in time.

Waylen divides a period of change into four periods of analysis, which I will use in the following way: (1) the specific property of the previous institution; (2) the period of break-down of the institution and the way it breaks

down; and (3) the building of a new institution. What happens during the period of change will affect the new system. Now, we need to be aware of who controls the process of change or breakdown. If I use Avelino and Rotman's (Avelino and Rotmans, 2009) vocabulary and reasoning on power and change then I refer to the matter of initiating a change that demands transformative power. Yet, to consolidate the change demands constitutive power. And the final period to study, as suggested by Waylen (Waylen, 2007), is (4) the stability versus quality of consolidation of the new institutional period.

One question arising from Waylen's tool is: how short a time period should pass in order for a change to be called a break? I suggest that Waylen's frame is useful for me even when I do not find critical junctures or break-downs but rather more extended and incremental institutional change. I think it is possible to draw out/extend the break in time and consider a longer period of piecemeal changes and still use Waylen's theory for the periodicity of breaks. Further, Waylen developed her analytic tool for analysing the gendered outcome of institutional change in the relation between women and the state. Still, it can be applied in my context, as women also here negotiate changes in institutions in relation to the group in power at different levels, in this case men, husbands, chiefs and in some cases even government rhetoric and policy.

In the period from the 1930s until 2007 (my last field trip) there are several possible critical junctures. If I use Waylen's periodicity, I expect to see change in the 1930s at the creation of the Chiweshe reserve, in 1980 at Zimbabwe's independence and around 2000 at the time of the Fast track land reform. In the data analysis I may find also other breaks or changes worth studying.

Finally, for the second process component, at the bottom in Figure 3, I draw on Thelen (2003). This is *a typology of institutional change*. She discusses the presence of institutional change underneath the surface of an apparently stable institution. Thelen analyses how institutions persist through critical junctures, and cases where institutions are still present but have lost their importance (Thelen, 2003). She shows piecemeal institutional changes and gives analytical tools for studying them. She introduces two mechanisms of institutional transformation to the debate that are applicable to my data: (1) institutional *layering;* and (2) institutional *conversion*, bringing the analyses further beyond the dichotomy of institutional stasis and innovation (Thelen, 2003). The first mechanism, institutional layering, is a partial renegotiation of some elements of a given set of institutions while leaving others in place (Thelen, 2003). In a layering process inherited institutions adapt to emerging new circumstances. In layering, people work around those elements of the institution that they cannot change and add another layer of function to the old institution instead. Importantly, their actions did not push developments further along the same track as suggested by the argument on increasing returns

(Thelen, 2003). The second mechanism, conversion, is when an old institution is used for new problems caused by shifts in the social context. This is also the situation when institutions are redirected to new purposes. There are changes in the role they perform and/or the functions they serve. Conversion can also be when new marginal groups enter the institution and turn an existing or inherited institution to new ends (Thelen, 2003). Thelen argues that many institutionalists have shown that institutions tend to remain "sticky" (Thelen and Steinmo, 1992): what the institution was originally designed to handle does not necessarily equal the task it performs now. Institutions seldom reflect the taste of its creators, or the current power distribution. Institutional survival is often linked with institutional transformation and institutional stability may contain a major dose of institutional adaptation (Thelen, 2003).

Even if Thelen (Thelen, 2003) refers to changes in formal institutions on a national level the discussion is useful for my study. Thelen's (2003) theory on institutional change is suitable for studying the institutions in my setting, both the land rights and the labour rights institution, as I do not expect any big breaks in institutions. Instead I focus on how institutions persist and evolve. I will use Thelen's concepts of layering and conversion to interpret what kind of change, if any, has taken place within the institutions. It will be possible to see potential layering or conversion by looking at the role that the institution in focus, land rights or labour rights institution, has and has had, or in changes in the rationales of the institutions, or in how women and men reflect on it.

For the sake of explaining conformity, change and the process emerging from it, I employ institutional theories suitable for the study of change. In order to capture 'doings', enactments or processes in terms of activities, I coded the interviews into gerunds from grounded theory.

Grounded theory for interpreting and illustrating the process

The major concern in the interpretation of interviews has been to understand how the institutions of land and labour rights function and how relations of power come into play in the gender regime. The ambition has also been to identify and locate processes of agency and change.

Grounded theory is both a theory (a product) and a method (or process) for constructing that theory (Charmaz, 2006). Grounded theory means to construct theory out of data while keeping close to the data. Charmaz' approach suits the purpose here in the following way: to use data to learn how people *make sense* of their *situations* and *act* on them (Charmaz, 2006). To that end I do gerunds coding according to Charmaz (Charmaz, 2006) whose advice is to categorise every word or line with verbs in order to catch the agency and processes, if any,

in the empirical material. In so doing, I hope to see how informants are enacting and thinking gender, how they are doing agency, and how they try to break out of the regime or uphold status quo. Coding with gerunds is efficient for detecting actions and processes, making sense of sequences or avoiding a static view. An important strength in Charmaz' method is to be able to create codes from what is actually seen in data and thus encourage discovery (Ragin and Amoroso, 2011) in contrast to the more problematic way of using preconceived categories to approach and analyse data. A good point in defence of not having the categories of research determined before the data analysis is expressed by Dey: 'There is a difference between an open mind and an empty head' (Dey, 1999: 251). This presupposes a broad pre-knowledge of the actual research field. The ambition here is to let data decide the categories. There is also another reason for how Charmaz' type of grounded theory suits me. She has a symbolic interactionism perspective which is possible to combine with my research. I see it as if a researcher *constructs* and *interprets* a portrayal of the studied world that is visualised from empirical data, and not an exact picture of it (Charmaz, 2006).

In practice, I first constructed gerunds and then categories. I divided the gerunds into thinking, speaking and acting in accordance with Schmidt's (2008) notion of how institutional change starts in a person's thinking and then possibly continues as a person talking and acting. Later on, I constructed categories on the basis of the gerunds and translated these into men's and women's strategies within the gender regime of land and labour rights. Gerunds coding in grounded theory is an important method for grasping change in interview data. In chapter 4, I will show and explain in detail how I perform gerunds coding and construct gerunds and how I identify 'doing gender' in data. In chapter 6, after I have constructed the gerunds via grounded theory methods, I will present and interpret the interviews mainly in terms of gerunds rather than in quotes. In so doing I will apply the theoretical framework that is presented here and constructed to grasp change.

4 Methodology and material

Constructivism and interpretivism

Ontologically and epistemologically, I proceed from a constructivist and interpretivist approach to study social reality in subsistence farming. In research, I am interested in *how* people construct aspects of their reality in everyday interaction (Silverman, 2010). In a qualitative inquiry, I will describe and interpret social themes in everyday life that emerge from the empirical material that I constructed in the field (Kvale, 1997). Overall, I use text analysis as a method for analyzing primary data such as interviews, observations, official documents, legislation and other publications. I also draw on secondary sources.

The land question has long been a political issue in Zimbabwe; from the colonisation of the area, to the formation of Rhodesia in 1965 and onwards from 1980 in Zimbabwe. Official documents and information on the land is available for the Chiweshe reserve from its creation in the 1930s and up to present times. Through interviews in Chiweshe, I found complementary data on land rights in relation to labour rights as well as data on how women and men interpret the gender regime of land and labour rights, which was not accessible in government publications or secondary sources. Further, since gender sensitive data can be difficult to access in government documents, especially before the 1970s, I use interviews as an important data source on land and labour both for historical and present times. Moreover, I use life history interviews going back to the 1930s for constructing gender sensitive information. There are limitations with oral history, however, because memories of past times may be selective or affected by the present life of interviewees (Thompson, 2000). The historical gender sensitive information that I constructed is therefore of questionable quality when I go further back in time.

Gender methodology

As I see it, in my study area the access to factors of production such as land and labour is largely determined by gender. Thus, a gender perspective can offer the lens that I need for studying the dynamics of land and labour rights. In order to grasp fully the family farm in theory, I will study women's work and patriarchal authority as noted by Carolyn Sachs (Sachs, 1996) in her work in rural sociology and women's studies. I need gender theories to delineate the social organising principle in the study area and for taking a gender relational approach to women and men. With the help of gender theoretical concepts, tools and analytic

framings, I can sift my data (Ragin and Amoroso, 2011) in search of gender processes and power dynamics relating to land and labour rights.

The question as to what constitutes feminist social research has long been an issue (Maynard, 1994). The earliest definitions of feminist research centred on 'research on, with, and for women' (Kelly et al., 1994). But feminist researchers do not agree on whether or not there is a specific feminist method (Maynard, 1994, Reinharz, 1992). Rather than a specific feminist *method* there can be a perspective often practised by many, but not all, feminists. Obviously, there is diversity and divergence in feminist research. A feminist approach may determine the subject of inquiry, the kinds of questions that are asked and the approach towards what is studied. It may also fulfil an overt political commitment that the output of the research should contribute in some way to transforming the relations of inequality and domination in focus (Glucksmann, 1994, Kelly et al., 1994, Reinharz, 1992). Following Shulamit Reinharz, as a sociologist, it can be suggested that feminist research methods are simply methods used by those who identify themselves as feminist researchers (Reinharz, 1992). So what are these methods? Feminist researchers in social sciences have often shown a preference for qualitative research designs, such as ethnography, grounded theory and action research involving (in-depth and open-ended) interviews (Bryman, 2004, Kelly et al., 1994) in search of interviewees' experiences and perceptions (Letherby, 2003). Yet, in principle, such methods are qualitative rather than feminist. Although my study is not intended as a feminist political project it may have political implications. The focus will be on the dynamics and implications of a gender regime of land and labour rights in subsistence farming.

Feminist standpoint, situated knowledge and 'the other'

Some feminists argue that there is a feminist epistemology, namely a feminist standpoint, meaning that women across the world can understand each other as they are all women who have experienced patriarchal sub-ordinance (Nicholson, 1997). There is a risk, though, that this approach sees gender as the only, dominant and overriding social structure thus neglecting other important layers of belonging and aspects of identity. Rather than arguing for any one privileged feminist standpoint a feminist theorist such as Donna Haraway sees knowledge as situated and embodied. She calls for:

> …politics and epistemologies of location, positioning, and situating, where partiality and not universality is the condition of being heard to make rational knowledge claims. These are claims on peoples' lives. I am arguing for the view from a body, always a complex, contradictory, structuring, and structured body, versus the view from above, from nowhere, from simplicity (Haraway 1988: 589).

Thus, only contextual and *partial* perspectives can give *objective* visions. This allows us to be responsible for our views. Unlocated claims of knowledge are irresponsible in contradiction to situated and embodied knowledge (Haraway, 1988). Dorothy Smith, a feminist sociologist, argues in the same way that:

> [t]he 'one true story' is nothing more than a partial perspective claiming generality on the basis of social privilege and power (Smith, 1988:121).

Further, Sandra Harding, as a philosopher of science, argues in a similar way that methods in science are not neutral or positive, but inevitably full of contextual values and interests (Harding, 1986). Along this line of reasoning sociologist Beverly Skeggs argues that 'objectivity, therefore, requires taking subjectivity into account' (Skeggs, 1997). Harding argues that an improved version of objectivity, called 'strong' objectivity, is needed in which one recognises one's standpoint and values in contrast to the conventional 'weak' objectivity which is dependent on the objectivity ideal (Harding, 1995). These two concepts of situated knowledge and strong objectivity are compatible and in some variation accepted by many feminist researchers. I agree with the thought that the researcher cannot give a completely objective picture of reality as the story told is socially embedded and affected by the researcher herself or himself.

It is not just *impossible* to be neutral, but it is also an *advantage* to be aware of your situation and research methods. By being subjective you can actually reach insights from that part of reality where you are situated. Haraway's ideas about situated knowledge is welcomed by many feminist researchers (Lykke, 2008) as it solves a dilemma. We can now escape both relativism and universal meta-explanations. However, it is important to underline, as does Skeggs (Skeggs, 1997), that even if a researcher's personal values may influence his or her view, we are positioned in but not determined by our locations. Below, I will discuss my own 'situatedness' in the sections 'Interviewer' and 'Security on conclusions'.

For many researchers it is worth aiming for the capacity to see from the periphery. But here lies a serious danger of romanticising and appropriating the vision of the less powerful while claiming to see from their positions, because to see from below is neither easily learned nor unproblematic. Haraway argues:

> ….we [women] "naturally" inhabit the great underground terrain of subjugated knowledges…[….]. The standpoints of the subjugated are not "innocent" positions (Haraway 1988: 583).

She continues to suggest that subjugated standpoints are preferred by many researchers because they seem to promise more 'adequate, sustained, objective,

transforming accounts of the world' (Haraway, 1988: 583f). Sachs argues that Haraway's concept of situated knowledge proves particularly helpful in dealing with questions relating to rural women as rural women's knowledge is situated in their particular localities and daily activities (Haraway, 1988, Sachs, 1996). Of course, there are differences in how rurally situated women experience their lives, but Sachs argues that certain aspects may unite rural women and offer common experiences because life, and production, are organised along family structures and patriarchy (Sachs, 1996). Hence, they have a common situated knowledge. Nevertheless, to me it seems as difficult to suggest that there is a common experience for farming women as it is to suggest that there is a common experience for women. Even though there might be common gender relations, especially in rural production, there is also, from a rural woman's standpoint, as in a feminist standpoint, a risk of assuming that gender relations are very much alike in different areas and that there are thus certain overriding themes or categories. Although there may be similarities in *experiences,* due to the farming of the land, I suggest that there are *multiple* rural standpoints.

Another risk arises when the idea of multiple standpoints or situated knowledge is adopted and that is the risk of making others exotic. An example is the belief that the lives of rural Zimbabwean women (and men) are so different from mine that it is impossible for me to understand them. Women are then often viewed as victims or as 'the other'. Chandra Mohanty, as a postcolonial feminist, critiques Western feminism for portraying third world women as a homogeneous group leading truncated lives, victimised by the combined weight of 'their' traditions and beliefs and 'our' Eurocentric history and present time (Mohanty, 2003, Sachs, 1996).[16] Mohanty warns against Western feminism setting up its own subject as implicit reference, that is, the yardstick by which to encode 'others' (Mohanty, 2003). Also Oyêwùmí critisises the observers' common mistake of homogenising all African societies (Oyewùmi, 1997)[17]. She argues, as I mentioned briefly in the theory discussion on gender, that women and gender are Western concepts alien to many African societies. Such observers' descriptions fail to acknowledge material and cultural specificity and thereby risk neglecting or even leaving altogether out of account the actions of women. In that way, in Mohanty's vocabulary, to use *gender* in research on African societies would be to apply a Western feminist yardstick. In this connection, I discuss my own efforts to avoid categorisation in the final section of the chapter.

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[16] This is a critique against, for instance, Boserup's essentialisation of 'woman' in development (1970).

[17] However, Oyêwùmí nearly makes the same mistake of lumping African societies together and assuming that women and gender are not useful categories in any African settings.

From rational choice via structured choice to purposeful choice

What if the researched women's views collide with my interpretation? It is questionable how far the commitment of seeing through the eyes of the women that I study can and/or should be stretched. There can be a tension between their characterisation of their experience and views and my interpretation of it. What might arise is an asymmetric and hierarchical relation between researcher and researched, which feminist research often seeks to avoid (Bryman, 2004). If I believe in the idea of a women's standpoint, I should be able to identify fully with the women interviewed. However, as discussed above I do not agree with this, because, if I totally accept situated knowledge to the extent that I try to 'see through their eyes' and accept data at face value it would be tantamount to saying that there is no need for any analysis. But as Skeggs argues, there is no reason to expect the subjects to reach the same conclusions or produce the same analysis as I do; I use an academic framework to explain their experiences and they use different discourses to which they have access. Yet, I should avoid a mere translation from their words into my concepts. These women's (and men's) frameworks for understanding have been developed from their contextual position, just as have mine (Skeggs, 1997). They can of course also have different interpretations from each other. Instead of stating that women suffer from 'false consciousness', when not believing their claims are sincere, a more appropriate research strategy is to look not for any flaws in their claims but for their living conditions and the way these conditions might generate the contentment they express (Bryman, 2004, Reinharz, 1992). I thus try to understand their view from a 'committed standpoint' (Glucksmann, 1994), and then analyse their experiences by using theoretical tools in social research (Ragin and Amoroso, 2011). Although I cannot see through their eyes I have 'been there' and hence received some more understanding of their experiences and views and thereafter I try to be true to the nature of the phenomenon that I investigate (Bryman, 2004). I can also learn about the context via other sources and methods. Here it is possible to interpret informants' views and choices (and mine) as *structured choices* to use sociologist Anthony Giddens' concept. He argues that:

> …structuration theory is based on the proposition that structure is always both enabling and constraining, in virtue of the inherent relation between structure and agency (and agency and power) (Giddens 1984: 169).

In structuration theory 'structure' is defined as rules and resources. The structure is at the same time the mean and the result of the actors' actions. Society is not fixed in advance but produced and reproduced by the agents' acting. The agents are knowledgeable when it comes to most of their actions, and can explain the

motives and change their behaviour, but not always. The agents are not aware of all of the consequences that their actions bring about (Andersen and Kaspersen, 2003). In rational choice theory it is assumed that autonomous people make rational choices. Yet, Giddens explains how choices are structured, and further, Nancy Folbre, a political economist, explains how *purposeful choice*

> … encourages us to ask how people define and pursue their desires, but avoids any implicit dichotomy between rational and irrational (Folbre 1994: 28).

The notion of purposeful choice is one way of avoiding the structure-agency dichotomy. It allows an exploration of how institutions may play a key role in structuring choices (Folbre, 1994, Waylen, 2000). Mackay expresses this as a rationality that is socially constituted and context bound (Mackay, 2009). Or to express it in Giddens' words:

> To be a human being is to be a purposive agent, who both has reasons for his or her activities and is able, if asked, to elaborate discursively upon those reasons (including lying about them) (Giddens 1984: 3).

Thus, I see people's choices as *meaningful* but limited and constrained. Choice is also influenced by power including real interest and the obstruction of choice. In chapter 3, I presented Lukes' argument that the third dimension of power refers to how people are socialised into certain preferences. At least one question follows from this: Is power exercised even if there is no resistance or complaints, or are choices free? Sally Shortall (Shortall, 1999) refers to how Weber argues that domination follows power and the most stable power pattern is one where both rulers and the ruled *believe* in the *legitimacy* of domination (Shortall, 1999, Weber, 1968). Shortall suggests that we follow Gaventa's way around the theoretical and empirical problem of real interest. Gaventa focuses on the *obstruction of choice* rather than trying to identify real interests. He suggests that, if it can be shown that a person or group was prevented actively and consciously in choosing his/her interests, it is reasonable to assume that these choices expressed by the individual or group are probably not his/her real choice. Thus, I will look at the institutional rules that deny women access to land. I suggest that property confers power, and it could be argued that it is in women's real interests to have access to the land equal to that enjoyed by men. However it is unnecessary to make this claim, according to Gaventa. What can be claimed with certainty is that women are unable to make the same choice as men can, in relation to land, labour and production, because the land rights institution prohibits their access to the key resource: land (Gaventa, 1980, Shortall, 1999).

To sum up the last two sections, I argue that in my research, first, it is not possible to look through the informants' eyes, but instead I must aim at listening to their views while 'being there'. Secondly, the researcher should try to act independently, with the help of theoretical and methodological tools. Thirdly, differences between mine and the interviewees' views and interpretations, and also between different views among them, emerge because all of us are differently situated and thus make different purposeful choices in our strategies. Further, I view choices in the following way: people consider the obstructions that structure their possibilities and out of that they make purposeful choices to meet their goals. By analysing how (women's) choices are obstructed I can interpret in what ways the strategies are 'structured purposeful strategies'.

After this introduction on gender methodologies including situated knowledge and purposeful choice, I now narrow the methodology discussion to focus on the considerations I have made in relation to interviews.

Interview methodology

I see interviewing as a conversation where knowledge is generated through the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewed (Kvale, 1997). Thus, interviewing is a way of accessing, but also constructing, knowledge. In two ways, hermeneutics is a relevant epistemology for an interview investigation. First, it can help shed light on the dialogue: what is it possible to talk about and in what ways? Secondly, I can clarify the process that I go through when I interpret the texts, which in itself is a sort of dialogue with the text (Kvale, 1997). The hermeneutical circle is a useful tool for understanding one's own interpretation process (Bergström and Boréus, 2000). It helps me to be aware of and reflect upon my own prejudices, especially as I interpret aspects of a society other than my own. Throughout the whole data analysis, I had a hermeneutic and interpretative approach. First, I read the interview texts to get an overall view. Then, I focused on specific themes and specific expressions to try to develop their meaning. Finally, I returned to and compared the overall view with the meanings emerging from the parts. And so I kept going through the hermeneutic circle until I reached a reasonable interpretation without inner tension or contradictions (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009, Kvale, 1997). When the interpretation is done there will be no contradictions within one interview but there may be tensions between interviews. Further, it is necessary to incorporate outliers in the analysis, and look for similarities between them and the emerging pattern, for the sake of achieving a richer and more authentic picture of reality. This is what Charles Ragin and Lisa Amoroso call a process of

analytic induction (Ragin and Amoroso, 2011). It serves to refine the match between analytic frames and the condensed images emerging from evidence.

Interviews as data

Hermeneutically, the interview *is* what it means for the narrator. It shows us the narrator's picture of reality rather than reality itself (Glucksmann, 1994). The interview contains both the creation of and the negotiated interpretation of the text (Kvale, 1997). Further, as an extra dimension, oral testimonies can be seen as reflecting a discourse (Glucksmann, 1994). The transcribed interview is not a finalised text; instead it appears at the same time as it is interpreted. Moreover, written interviews can be seen as texts revealing the interpretive moment more than the actual setting. It is possible to view my written interviews as 'partly interpreted texts' since they are not always word by word accounts but more of a summary or portrayal. If the interview is seen as a text it becomes possible to view it as a *genre* and a *narrative*. What is said during the interview is thus affected by both parties' ideas of what it means to see interviews as a genre: what can be asked and answered? In what ways can it be done? The interview thus creates a certain way of talking (Widerberg, 2002).

In my data I can see that interviews often turned into a sort of storytelling. Further, gender not only shapes the fieldwork processes and presuppositions, but also the products in the field such as field notes, methodological accounts, and published research (Warren, 1988). Having discussed interviews from a methodological point of view, I will now discuss how I conducted them, constructed them as texts and then interpreted them. My ambition has been to use frames and methods that capture change in my data. To that end, I will show how I use grounded theory for coding with gerunds and building categories.

Interviewees

I conducted interviews on two occasions, in May 2000 and March 2007. Together with my research assistants, I interviewed 58 women and 59 men. Of these peasant farmers, nine men and sixteen women live in a polygynous marriage, whereas the others are, or have been, monogamously married. Moreover, I interviewed some respondents on only one single occasion, whereas I interviewed others on several occasions and in various kinds of interview situations. In such a process of multiple interviewing, I could return with new questions and thus direct the interview investigation (Reinharz, 1992). In total, I conducted 132 interviews with peasant farmers in six villages, 63 interviews with women and 75 with men. Thus, some men and women were interviewed on several occasions. In addition, I and my assistants conducted six interviews with

the village heads on their rules and practices for land allocation. We also conducted in-depth interviews with three elderly informants who had retired from positions in various government offices and two informants still in office.

I am interested in how the gender regime of land and labour operates in an extreme conflict situation where the rules of the regime are really put to a test. My intent is not to generalise the information, but to elucidate the specifics (Cresswell, 2007). I thus carried out purposive sampling. In order to get a broad view, I first maximised the sample to cover a lot of variation in the characteristics of the informants (Cresswell, 2007, Silverman, 2005). Following from that, the informants were selected without me or the interpreters knowing beforehand who they were. We approached the peasant farmers in two different ways – some were approached at their homes while others were approached in the fields. After that, I investigated certain informants' experiences further for the sake of minimising the sample into a focused theoretical sample that matched the preliminary findings in my data (Ragin, 1994). Hence, I first searched for a variety of peasant farmers who either had no/little or much land and who were: old, young, divorced, widowed, married in polygynous or monogamous marriages and who were either the first wife or among the later wives. Some people were chosen because I heard that they were or had been involved in land conflicts. I also interviewed the local leaders, such as all the village heads, the chancellor and the chief. In this way I hoped to get a diversity of views of land and labour rights within the gender regime which I could compare continuously.

By interviewing people with as different characteristics as possible and in extreme social situations I would be able to see the rules much more clearly and how the regime works 'under stress' rather than how it works in the 'normal' state or how it is supposed to work, which is often described by interviewees living in good conditions. This means, that in order to be sure that my concepts have explanatory value for many individuals, I have to look for people in different situations. Further, as I chose to make a purposive rather than a statistical sample of interviewees this means that when I refer to 'men's thinking' or 'women's strategies' this is not a statistical but a theoretical generalisation of what men or women as analytical categories think or employ as a strategy (Ragin and Amoroso, 2011).

Next, I have to deal with outliers in relation to the categories. This means that I have to examine the members of a category, for example that of all interviewed women peasant farmers, to make sure that all of them can be described by the concept that they are meant to exemplify. After that, I have to test the limits of the concept by closely examining the members who are relevant for the category. If all members of a category do not fit together then the relevant category can be reduced and narrowed, for example from *all* women

to all *single* women farmers. Or, I can discard the concept and develop new ones. The core issue in the clarification and elaboration of categories and concepts is the valuation of '*to what extent the members of a category exemplify the concept describing the category'*. If there is a mismatch between a concept and the broad category that it should represent then this is a signal that I should probe deeper in the analysis by either narrowing or refining the concept or by replacing it with a new concept that can cover all members (Ragin, 1994).

Interviews

I conducted four types of interviews. The first type, individual interviews on farming practices, served to provide data on the natural setting. The second type, individual interviews on land and gender, served to provide data on individual perceptions and experiences of land, labour and decision-making processes. The third type, life stories and oral history interviews, served to provide contemporary and historical perspectives on social change. The fourth type including four gender and age divided group interviews, served to provide data that could highlight gender relations. I used different interview formulas, such as closed and open ended questions, where the first type of interviews tended to include more closed questions while the second and third type had more open-ended questions (see questionnaires in Appendix 1.).

I do not speak Shona, the local language. Three assistants and interpreters therefore helped me conduct the interviews in Shona. Most of the interviews were written down in Shona and then transcribed and translated into English while some interviews were translated simultaneously and written down in English as they took place. Some interviews were recorded and subsequently transcribed by the interpreter into English. This was done in order to have a possibility, later on, to look into the way the questions were asked and the translation made, if questions will arise on that.

I was present at some interviews. To get an impression of the quality of the interview questions, how the interviews were conducted, and in what ways the different interviewers made an imprint, I made sure to be present on at least one occasion with all three assisting interviewers and once during all four different types of interviews. In that way I was able to change the questions and discuss with the interpreters the interview situation and their tactics. I then also knew how to interpret different types of answers from interviews conducted by the different interviewers as their way of translating into English differed somewhat.

The interpreters transcribed the answers from spoken language and wrote down the interviews either as a summarised account in English or as word by word accounts in Shona that they later on transcribed into English. In this way, there is a risk that some information is missed or misunderstood. A further risk

of losing information appeared when I corrected some grammar and language errors made by the interviewees or the interpreters. I have also done some editing to make the point clearer and more readable because English is not their – or my – mother tongue. The motive for correcting the language is that this will clarify the interviewees' understanding of the processes and make it more accessible for the reader. The answers that I present are therefore not always direct quotes but often more of a summarised version that brings out the essence. Such condensed images serve as portrayals of the empirical context.

I do not envision that the interviewer is unearthing objective facts and meanings from the interviewee's memory. Instead I see the facts and meanings that arise from an interview as originating from the informant's experiences but also as affected or constructed in the interview situation by the questions asked and the discussion that takes place (Kvale, 1997). Interviewing, and above all open-ended interviews, are appealing as a method, when I am interested in exploring people's own views and perceptions of their life world and their interpretations of reality. It is possible to grasp people's own expressions when they relate them in their own words. It is also a means of avoiding, or at least limiting, the control over interviewees and thus paying attention to the questions that are important for them and also acknowledging how they perceive different aspects. The study can become interviewee-oriented by adding new questions as topics arise from interviewee's answers. Hence, I did follow-up questions to capture and to probe deeper into specific themes. Further, semi- or unstructured and semi-open interviews differ from surveys and structured interviews by including free interaction between the researcher and interviewee and offer opportunities for clarification and discussion (Reinharz, 1992).

Interviewer

The role of the interviewer in the interview situation is much debated in social research and in feminist methods (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2009, Glucksmann, 1994, Kelly et al., 1994, Kvale, 1997, Maynard, 1994). The focus on the interview situation has often been in an effort to reach rapport or equality and/or feminist political awareness or activity. In a frequently cited and influential article (Bryman, 2004, Kelly et al., 1994, Maynard, 1994) the sociologist Ann Oakley (Oakley, 1981) argues that, when a feminist researcher interviews a woman then the use of a prescribed interviewing practice of keeping a distance and not engaging emotionally, is morally indefensible. Further, Oakley argues that the aim of learning about the life world through interviewing is best achieved when the relationship between interviewer and interviewee is non-hierarchal, and when the interviewer is prepared to invest her or his own personal identity in the relationship (Oakley, 1981). This approach is relevant

and much feminist methodological literature after Oakley's article still shares the same attitude towards the role of the interviewer: to strive to limit hierarchical barriers and distance between the interviewer and the interviewed (Kelly et al., 1994, Maynard, 1994). But Glucksmann also has a point:

> ... there has been a tendency in much of the writing on feminist research to focus on the research process itself, in particular on the relationship between the researcher and researched, as if it were a form of political practice (Glucksmann, 1994: 150f).

Thus, the creation of a transparent and equal relation between researcher and informant, where each may gain something from the process, may appear as the main objective of research. The focus on this has been so strong in feminist methods, as if it were the perfect model of researcher-researched relation to be aimed for and successful application of it counts as *being* feminist or as *acting* according to feminist principles (Glucksmann, 1994). My experience and view, as I discussed in the gender methodology section, is that it seems impossible to overcome the structured inequality between the researcher and the researched, both women and men, within the research process and within the interview situation. It is more honest to recognise these structural barriers (Glucksmann, 1994, Reinharz, 1992), and to recognise that while the researcher's aim is to produce knowledge, those being researched have a different interest in relation to their own situation (Glucksmann, 1994). This very different relation towards the research process, between researcher and researched, is an inevitable feature of research. But, as Glucksmann establishes, while conventional value-neutral researchers had no problem with it, feminist researchers have found it more difficult to accept (Glucksmann, 1994). As Rheinharz puts it, we should see rapport as a 'fortunate outcome of some projects rather than a precondition of all research relationships' (Reinharitz 1992:266f). In addition to the feminist ideal in interview situations, a mythology on women's particular contributions to the fieldwork enterprise has emerged. However, the view of women's special place in fieldwork may be more historically determined than universal, more an issue of discourse than a social fact (Warren, 1988).

I suggest that there is an asymmetric relation in interviews. However, it is worth doing what is possible to limit the hierarchical relation in interview situations, and certain methods are available. To limit the asymmetry we can choose a 'safe place' for the informant on the interview occasion; in the context of this research we conducted the interviews in the informant's house (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009, Kvale, 1996).

The unequal relation in the interview situation and the effect it can have on the knowledge production was one reason for me not to be present in the interview situation. I felt that my presence could influence the interviewee to

give the answers that they thought I expected, which would affect research negatively. In addition, the interviews were time consuming for the interviewees and simultaneous interpretation from Shona to English, for my sake, would have taken a lot more time from the interviewees' other duties. Further, if I interview poor, uneducated, Zimbabwean, peasant farmers, men and women then I may be less equal with the interviewee since we do not represent the same class or culture. This is one reason to use local interpreters as mediators, a sort of half way mediator between my culture and theirs. On the other hand, I wanted to be present in the area, but outside the interview situation, to be able to discuss with people and answer their questions about the research. When I was present in the area, and also in the interview situation, I felt the necessity to invest my own personal identity in the interview relation. While accepting the limits of research, it is obviously important to reflect on one's own behaviour in the research situation and its effect on both the interviewee as a human being and on the quality of the research including the ambition of good behaviour, respect and openness (Reinharz, 1992).

In the research setting I had, however, to deal with issues of gender in ways that were not always consistent with my own values. As Reinharz argues, feminist researchers in the field must be prepared to handle the intersection of how they behave themselves and how women and men in the research setting act as subjects in accordance with the gender ideology of the context (Reinharz, 1992). Reinharz puts it: 'women ethnographers have difficulty escaping the study of gender no matter what their research agenda' (Reinharz, 1992: 62). At the same time, the researcher's gender can be both positive and negative in the same research setting (Reinharz, 1992). Besides the (asymmetric) relation in the interview situation my own 'situatedness' also affects my construction and interpretation of the data and the focus of the study. I discuss this further in the section 'Evaluation criteria in qualitative research' at the end of this chapter.

The research assistants' positions also affect the outcome of the interviews. The three assistants are all Shona, but from different parts of Zimbabwe. One is from the area under study, which affected some of the interview outcomes. In instances where he was aware of the effect – some answers were given to please him – and he made me aware of it. On the other hand, a positive consequence of the fact that he originates from the area was that he could explain and interpret some information that we received in the interviews in greater depth and could thus contribute additional information. The second assistant comes from another part of Zimbabwe but belongs to the same totem as the chief. This means that he is seen as a person who belongs to the area in some way. Thanks to this he was trusted by the chief, which was of assistance in obtaining access to information. Being a man probably eased this further. The third interpreter is from another part of Zimbabwe. Her main quality as an interpreter is that she makes people

feel comfortable – she creates a 'safe place' – and the interviewees trust her and share personal information. This was valuable when we wanted to ask questions on personal issues and encouraged interviewees to share intimate information on the relationship between spouses. Being a woman she was probably positive in her interviews with women without compromising the trust she received from men. The interviewer characteristics that I am aware of here may possibly have affected the interviews. In the interpretation of data, I have therefore had this in mind. There may also be other effects of which I am unaware.

Interpreting interviews

In this section I will introduce the methods that I use in the analysis of interviews. First, I will discuss interpretative methods and then how I use the method of coding with gerunds in grounded theory. My goal is not to visualise reality *as it is.* Instead, I will construct images and categories from data that I related to concepts and analytical frames in order to create a *representation* of the social world (Ragin and Amoroso, 2011). To that end I will compare evidence in the interview texts. As an example, I will look for similarities and unifying patterns but also differences, tensions and contradictions.

In the analysis, and to some extent also in the presentation of interviews, I have constructed what sociologist Karin Widerberg (Widerberg, 2002) calls *portraits*, or what are generally called *portrayals* or *ideal types*, such as the single wife, the woman with co-wives, the landless widow, the monogamous husband, and the polygynous husband. These ideal types are constructions based on typical elements from several informants. Thereby they represent an element of analysis because the purpose of having ideal types is to present the essence of the rules and norms that are practised in the setting and how they vary between types. It is also a way of expressing consistency and entirety in the material that I mainly present thematically (Widerberg, 2002).

In addition, I have looked for discourses in the interviews and as examples I have found ideas of 'the African farmer'. This is a land-holding man in contrast to landless women. Moreover, there is the idea of 'the altruistic and constantly working woman' in contrast to men who are busy doing other things. Thus, by interpreting the interview material from a discourse perspective other images arise from the material than when I used a thematic perspective (Kvale, 1997). With a discourse perspective I can reveal a lot of talking and storytelling in the data. This storytelling is important in the interpretation of the interviews, mainly because I construct it as an analytical category of condensed data, turning into a strategy, as I will discuss further in the next section.

The real challenge in the analysis has been to identify agency and change in my data. The problem has been to find tools that can identify and grasp change.

In chapter 3, I introduced the theoretical framework that I constructed for analysing change. To complement the framework with methods for analysing change, I have chosen useful tools that Charmaz (Charmaz, 2006) suggests for grounded theory. In the theory chapter I discussed the rationale for using the grounded theory method of constructing gerunds: to capture processes, agency, and change. In this section I will discuss grounded theory in more detail. I will show how I apply the coding method to my data: first, how I construct gerunds, and secondly, how I build condensed, synthesised and theorised categories on men's and women's activities, which I later convert into strategies.

Doing and interpreting observations

I made numerous non-participatory observations while walking around with assistants or peasant farmers in the six villages in the study. I walked along footpaths in the fields and strolled around houses and shops. I looked for signs of gendered land and labour rights. Among the things I noticed were the effort that women invest in their gardens at almost every farm that I visited; women's labour intensive multi-tasking in production and reproduction; some men working together in the fields with women in their families; and many men resting or discussing in the shade. I made notes and drawings of the observations in my field diary. I then analysed this information and used it as a backdrop to the analysis of interviews.

Ethics

I considered ethics in research while I conducted interviews, interpreted data and started to represent reality (Bryman, 2004, Silverman, 2005). Participation in the interview investigation was voluntary and subject to consent. I have reflected on the possible effects I had on the area under study. I evaluate the effects to be marginal. Yet, if any effects were at all long-lasting I think it was the group discussions which focused on gender relations and spouses' expectations. I consider the research to be *with* the interviewees, not *on*. In a very limited sense the results of the research can be *for* women and men in similar settings, but not for these specific interviewees. Further, the anonymity of participants is kept through the use of aliases when the interviewees' answers are presented in the thesis. For the same reason the names of the villages are not revealed. I do not see that the outcome of research (the final thesis) will cause any harm in any way to the participants, either in the participants' relations to each other, or in their relations to authorities. Through reflexive gender methodology discussed earlier I have aimed to avoid jargon, prejudice, or the reinforcement of gender categories.

Identifying gerunds and constructing categories

I suggest that there is *no one* way of interpreting data. I focus on signs of institutional change and the result thereof is my construction (Charmaz, 2006). By coding the interviews in 'gerunds' (verbs in –ing form) it is possible to find signs of agency and change in data (Charmaz, 2006). I look for acts of 'foreground discursive abilities' (Schmidt, 2008) such as *thinking* (as articulated in interviews); *speaking* (articulated in conversations within wedlock and referred to in interviews); and *acting* (performed within the confines of, but as an act in relation to, a specific institution) (Schmidt, 2008). Further, thinking, speaking and acting can be of any kind such as: supporting, complying, modifying/evading or resisting (Kerkvliet, 2009). In this way I am able to capture emerging changes. I will now discuss the details of this procedure.

Coding with gerunds

I have carried out a procedure of thorough coding including: (1) line by line coding; (2) focused coding; (3) 'in vivo' coding; and (4) axial coding. The codes serve to label, separate, compile and organise data (Charmaz, 2006). There are two main phases of coding; First, *initial* coding, with gerunds, and thereafter, *focused* coding for organising data into categories. In initial coding I conducted line-by-line coding where I coded activities and events with gerunds in an effort to both *detect* and *visualise* actions. Actions serve either for initiating change or for reproducing status quo. In line by line coding every line is coded with a gerund. This helps you to see the familiar in a new light (Bauman, 2004). Further, it frees you from being absorbed in your respondent's worldviews (Charmaz, 2006). In a further attempt to disinter any process from the data, I not only tried to *find* action in data but also to code data *as* action. This means to see actions in all parts of data; this curbs our tendencies to make conceptual leaps and to adopt prevailing theories *before* we have done the necessary analytic work (Charmaz, 2006). When data serves as a basis for gerunds and categories, we can avoid superimposing prefabricated categories and interpretations.

In the initial coding phase I also used coding as *'in vivo'* codes. I used 'in vivo' coding for such general terms in the social setting with which everyone is very familiar and which implies condensed and significant meaning. Specialised terms that the informants use, such as 'roora/bridewealth', provide a useful analytical point of departure even if the terms do not stand on their own without analytic frames or theory (Charmaz, 2006). In vivo coding is a useful method when I look for informants' views and actions and when I want to preserve these views in the coding itself (Charmaz, 2006). At a collective level of analysis, in vivo codes reflect *assumptions*, *actions* and *imperatives* that *frame action*

(Charmaz, 2006). Hence, I have looked for implicit *meanings* and how people *construct* and *act* upon these meanings (Charmaz, 2006). I found that the following in vivo codes are particularly important for the informants: '*tseu*/garden'; '*roora*/bridewealth'; and 'love portions'. The first two entail connotations of special behaviour and of expectations and possibilities. The latter is a concept that describes, in various ways, how wives want to regulate husbands' affection in wedlock. In the end they turned out not to have enough analytical power, so I discarded them for the sake of other more productive concepts like 'telling stories' and 'navigating towards accessing land'.

In the next coding step, I used the codes that I created through line-by-line coding in *focused* coding, which is the second main coding phase in grounded theory. In focused coding I sorted out the most useful categories for interpreting my data: that is the most significant and frequent codes. I used these codes to sift through large amounts of data (Charmaz, 2006). When the codes were saturated with information (Ragin and Amoroso, 2011), I started building categories to explain the coherence in data. As a final step in the coding process, I applied axial coding for building categories. I will return to this in the next section. Some examples of gerund coding are displayed in Box 1.

Constructing categories

The codes, concepts and categories that I have constructed are rooted in data and built step by step in an upward going process (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The selected codes may be those codes that are most frequent in data or that have the strongest explanatory power (Charmaz, 2006). Building categories in grounded theory means that you select certain codes that have overriding significance. It could also be codes that have the capacity to abstract common themes and patterns in several codes into analytical concepts. Glaser and Strauss defined a category as a 'conceptual element in a theory' (Charmaz, 2006). Also, the most significant categories can in a later step be made into the decisive concepts of an emerging theory (Charmaz, 2006). In my use of grounded theory I do not really build a theory, however, but use it mainly for analysing data.

To see how gerunds fit together, 'what goes with what', I built categories by using interpretative methods like *counting* and *clustering*, *noting patterns*, and *seeing plausibility* as Miles and Huberman suggest (Miles and Huberman, 1994). In addition, I use their methods for drawing conclusions, testing and confirming findings, and securing the quality of conclusions. These methods, which are easy to combine with grounded theory, helped me in the actual crafting in qualitative research (Ryen, 2004) and for increasing credibility.

Interview questions and answers	A first step of gerund coding	A second step of gerund coding, starting to build categories
Do you have a garden? Yes, I now have.	*Having* a garden.	*Having* a garden.
What decision-making power has your husband got over your garden? A husband has powers over the garden. It is still part of his land. So he has control over the garden.	Husband *controlling land*. Husband *controlling garden* as part of it.	
Can your husband take the land back if he wants to? Yes, he can take back the land. He gave it to the second wife when he married her.	Husband *having right* to give and take land as he wishes.	*Being aware of insecure right to land*.
What chance do you have of keeping it if he wants it back? As in my case, i tried to get support from relatives and the village head, but I failed. I then tried to get another piece from the village head to use as a garden and this also failed. I then got permission to use part of someone else's garden, but my husband put an end to this as well. So I have no chance of keeping my garden.	*Seeking support* from village head and relatives. *Seeking support* from village head for new land. *Receiving permission* to use other's *garden*. *Being stopped* by husband.	*Navigating to access* any *land* under any conditions.
I tried to share crops with the second wife. I planted two beds with vegetables when my husband was away, but he uprooted everything on his return.	*Trying sharing* with co-wife. *Being exposed to 'destruction'* by husband.	*Trying to adapt* to new circumstances decided by husband.

Box 1: Gerund coding: some examples from the data analysis. Source: Karin Steen.

In the **left** column, I show an extract from an interview with a woman.
Both the interviewer's questions and the woman's answers are displayed.

In the **middle** column, I show a first step of gerund coding.
In italics, I indicate the gerunds extracted from the woman's answers.
The gerund can emerge from the answer, or I can choose another word which expresses the condensed meaning.

In the **right** column, I keep the most useful gerunds and introduce some new gerunds, as they summarise some of the previous gerunds. Now the initial building of categories has started and data is thereby aggregated, theorised and synthesised.

The initial categories, which readily emerged from the gerund coding, were the following: (1) Trying to access land; (2) Claiming land, including telling stories; and (3) Engendering identity/power relations/gendered rights. In the next phase I added qualitative properties to the categories whereby I related main categories to subcategories and specified their property and dimensions by building a dense texture of relationships around the 'axis' of a category. The purpose of such *axial coding* is to sort, organise and synthesise large amounts of data. The data that was fractured in the initial coding is now reassembled to give coherence to the emerging analysis (Charmaz, 2006). Axial coding is a technique suggested by Strauss and Corbin (Charmaz, 2006). It added quality and richness to my initial categories although it did not reveal any new information. As a procedure it entails an organising scheme that serves to link visible categories together by asking questions such as:

1) What are the conditions, circumstances or situations that can answer questions like: 'why, where, and when'?
2) What are the actions/interactions (routine or strategic responses to issues, events or problems) that can answer questions like: 'how and for whom'?
3) What are the consequences (outcomes of actions/interactions) that can answer questions like: 'what is going on'?

Compared to axial coding, I found the technique of building a *matrix* to create *clusters* as suggested by Miles and Huberman (Miles and Huberman, 1994), to be more fruitful. In a dialogue with my theoretical framework from chapter 3, I built a matrix for the categories as well as a discourse for the typologies of everyday politics (Schmidt, Kerkvliet) as seen in table 1. I worked back and forth between the matrix and the cluster to develop categories, fill them with qualitative properties and organise relations between them. Thus, in practice I used the methods of clustering and building matrixes simultaneously to create the main categories and sub-categories. I display the clusters in Figure 4. They reflect the gendered categories that emerged when I oscillated between the matrix and clusters.

In table 1, I listed the categories as rows and the discourse and everyday practice typologies as columns. In table 1, I use two of the three actor close components from the theoretical framework in chapter 3 that I constructed for the analysis of change. I used the actor close components from Schmidt (thinking, speaking and acting) and from Kerkvliet (support, comply, modify and resist). Considering the discourses and the typologies of everyday politics based on Schmidt and Kerkvliet, in table 1, it becomes evident that the discourse gerunds can also be used as *background ideational abilities*. Background ideational abilities

Table 1: Categories, discourses and gerunds.
The table is based on 'the cluster matrix method' in Miles & Huberman (1994). Source: Karin Steen.

Categories / Discourse gerunds	Men: telling stories	Women: telling stories	Men: manouvering to access land	Women: manouvering to access land	Men: engendering identities/	Women: engendering identities
Thinking: Support & Comply						
Thinking: Modify & Resist						
Speaking: Support & Comply						
Speaking: Modify & Resist						
Acting: Support & Comply						
Acting: Modify & Resist						

enable individuals to act in a given context to create and maintain institutions (Schmidt, 2008). Thus, this means that thinking speaking and acting, besides being *foreground discursive abilities* (Schmidt, 2008) can be seen as an indication that a change is emerging in an institution. Yet, it can also be part of background ideational abilities which serve as a basis for references when supporting and re-enacting a familiar institution.

Moreover, when individuals act they can either consolidate or contest the institution. It becomes visible that the categories of 'engendering identities through gendered rights' and 'engendering identities in relation to men', seen in the far right columns of table 1, are actually categories of doing or enacting gender. When men act in accordance with an institution they search in their background ideational abilities to find arguments for supporting their own land claim. Land claims that are supported by using a familiar motivation seem to be more readily accepted. I will discuss this in chapter 6 on strategies.
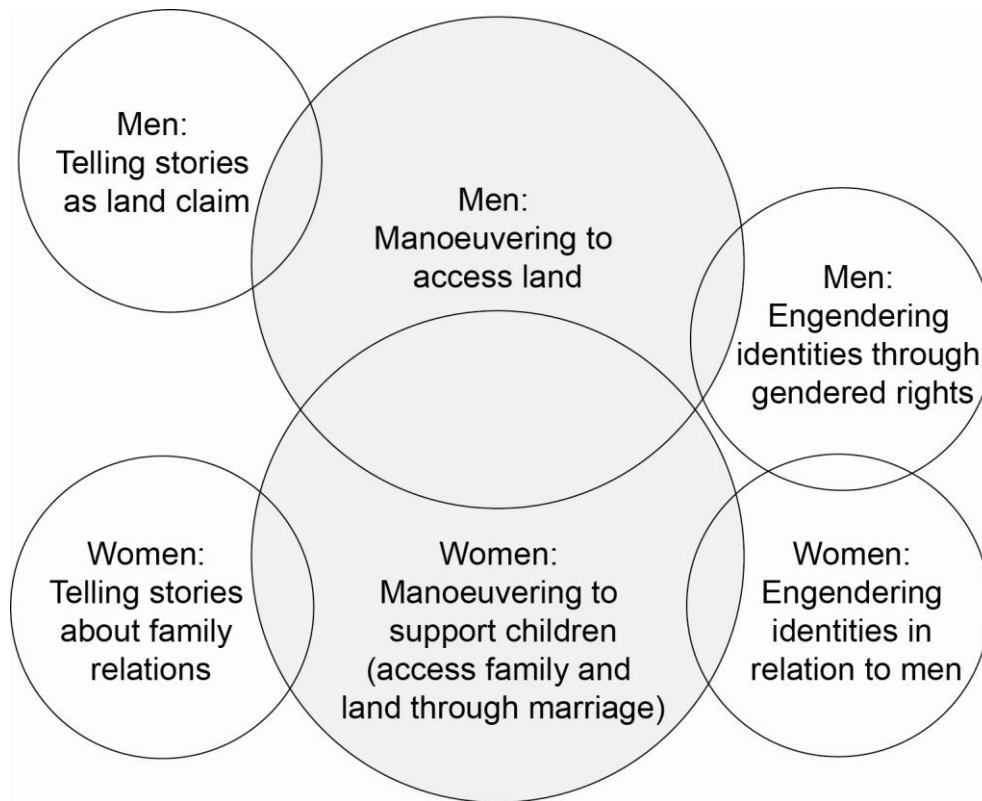
Figure 4: Overlapping clusters of categories.
   The clusters are constructed on the basis of gerunds in the initial analysis. Source: Karin Steen. Layout: Karin Steen and Ann Åkerman.

Further, men use their foreground discursive abilities when they argue for new rules for accessing land that suit their individual needs. In case of old justifications, based on gender, that support new land claims, they fortify the gendered practices and the gendered institutions. I interpret this as follows: if men achieve a change in the land right institution, they are redoing/enacting the gender norms. In chapter 6 I will continue and elaborate this discussion.

Next, at this stage I clustered the categories as seen in Figure 4, where 'Manoeuvering to access land' and 'Manoeuvering to access family and land' are the main categories. Activities in the other two sets of categories support the main category. The three categories at the top of the figure are for men and the three bottom categories are for women. As seen in the figure, the two sets of men's and women's categories on navigating and engendering identities are related, as men and women do gender partly in relation to each other. I separate the two categories of telling stories as men and women tell stories about different issues.

Next, I returned to my first line-by-line gerunds. In the process of conducted line-by-line coding with gerunds I constructed hundreds of different gerunds. These ranged from explicit actions such as *buying*, *farming*, *marrying, settling,* to feelings and thoughts such as *crying*, *feeling* safe, *finding, looking* after, *obeying*. Direct actions were most common. In the examples where the interviewee informed the interviewer about an idea or a thought it was done in terms of describing an action such as telling a story about how things are usually done or should be done. This emerged as the sub-strategy of 'telling stories'.

As an example, it is important to observe that as regards data on men and land it was not always received as an answer to explicit questions on land acquisition, but as ancillary information while discussing other issues. Land was an issue that occurred and returned repeatedly. Moreover, women were more talkative than men and data from these interviews therefore forms a richer source from which to build categories. There may be several reasons to why women were more willing to talk. For instance, maybe women were more interested in the interview topics, they may have felt more comfortable in the interview situation, or talking to the research assistant may have opened a vent for them. Next, I grouped the gerunds according to the topic (land, labour) and the social relation (polygyny) within which they took place, and then divided them between thinking, speaking acting and in favour of or against an institution. The groups of gerunds that I created can be seen in Tables 2 and 3 in Appendix 2: 'Men's gerunds by topic area and relations' as well as 'Women's gerunds by topic area and relations'. In the appendix most of the gerunds that I identified are sorted into the different categories of 'navigating'.

To continue, there was a further need to fill the categories with qualitative properties and to decide the relation between them. In grounded theory one should collect more data in this phase, but this was not possible in my case. Nevertheless, before I finished the categorisation of all gerunds, the important saturation in categories emerged (Ragin and Amoroso, 2011). This means that adding new gerunds did not spark any new theoretical insights or reveal any new properties of the core categories (Charmaz, 2006).

In compensation for not being able to collect more data, I applied several interpreting techniques to clarify and build more coherent categories: especially using the ideas of *partitioning variable, clustering* and *subsuming particulars into the general* (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Using the method of 'partitioning variables', I tried to unbundle a variable to make sure that each category contains only what is distinguished as one single variable (Miles and Huberman, 1994) or rather what I would call 'one aspect' in accordance with qualitative inquiry and vocabulary. I thus realised that the categories 'manouvering…' and claiming…'

could be divided into sub-categories (se chapter 6). Next, I aimed at coherence. Thus, I used the technique of *clustering*. The content analytical technique clustering is a general label for the process of inductively forming categories and the iterative sorting of things (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Subsuming particulars into the general is a tactic related to clustering. By answering the question 'What is this specific thing an instance of?' I built more general categories. By working back and forth between clusters and matrixes of gerunds, again, I aimed at saturation (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Thus, a richer image emerged from the categories: in their properties, in their relations and in their gender differences. Finally, I turned the categories into the strategies that I will discuss in chapter 6. I will now conclude this methodology chapter with a discussion of the validity, reliability and credibility of my conclusions.

Evaluation criteria in qualitative research

It is a central evaluation criterion in qualitative research that a reader who analyses the same data with the same approach can *see* what the researcher *saw* whether s/he agrees with it or not (Kvale, 1997). In an effort to achieve this, I evaluate my interpretative methods and techniques against Miles and Huberman's (Miles and Huberman, 1994) exhaustive principles[18] for both drawing conclusions and for testing and confirming findings. Further, my ambition is also to practice a reflexive methodology as Mats Alvesson and Kaj Sköldberg (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009) suggest. This means that I strive to: (1) be systematic in the selection and use of techniques and research procedures; (2) clarify the primacy of my interpretation; (3) reflect on the problem of representation and authority; and (4) be aware of the political-ideological character of research (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009).

To achieve rigour and accountability in qualitative research I make an effort to show my procedures and how I construct reality (Holliday, 2007) because all

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[18] The methods suggested by Miles & Huberman (1994) for drawing conclusions are: noting patterns and themes, seeing plausibility, clustering, making metaphors, counting, making contrasts and comparisons, partitioning variables, subsuming particulars into the general, divide into factors, noting relations between variables, finding intervening variables, building a logic chain of evidence, making conceptual/theoretical coherence. In the testing and confirmation of findings the methods are: checking for representativeness, checking for researcher effects, triangulating, weighting the evidence, checking the meaning of outliners, using extreme cases, following up surprises, looking for negative evidence, making if-then tests, ruling out spurious relations, replicating a finding, checking out rival explanations and getting feedback from informants. However, I have not used all of them.

discussion and references to empirical data, trivial or not, are the results of interpretation (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009). Reflection in empirical research can be defined as the 'interpretation of interpretation' including critical self-exploration of one's own interpretations of empirical data (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009). In this research, my position as a feminist Swedish researcher and married 40-year old mother of three may affect the choice of research topic, the construction of data and its interpretations. I proceed from a gender theory perspective. I am aware of the risk of the presumptions that may follow from that and I therefore aim to be transparent in the choices I make. However, as Alvesson and Sköldberg argue, it is difficult to clarify the taken for granted assumptions and blind spots in my own social culture, research community and language (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009).

To increase credibility I have applied a number of safety precautions. First, I am explicit about my perspective and aware of my situated knowledge. And I agree with Harding on strong objectivity, as I state in the section on 'Gender methodology'. Secondly, to use grounded theory may improve the authenticity of the conclusions. Grounded theory as a methodology contains correctives that may reduce the likelihood of either making common sense conclusions or superimposing your preconceived notions on data (Charmaz, 2006). Charmaz' constructivist grounded theory offers tools for avoiding certain errors such as either having too thin data or not scrutinising the data adequately and instead mistaking routine rationales for analytic insights and merely superimposing preconceived notions on data. By careful and systematic data coding, as displayed in this chapter (and in Appendix 2), I try to avoid such traps (Charmaz, 2006). This is an effort, as far as it is possible, to 'let the data speak for itself' as advocated by grounded theory practitioners and other qualitative researchers (Charmaz, 2006, Miles and Huberman, 1994, Widerberg, 2002) while at the same time taking the full responsibility as a researcher for the actual data interpretation. Thus, I strive to make sure that the categories and the conclusions are rooted in and based on my empirical material rather than on my presumptions on gender differences and inequality.

Thirdly, a further safety precaution for increasing credibility concerns the reliability of the conclusions. This can be improved by multiple methods (Silverman, 2006). In order to make the sources of evidence dependable and complementary, researchers could strive for *triangulation*, even if not always fulfilled, by comparing findings with and contextualising them into previous research (Miles and Huberman, 1994). But, since the gender regime of land and labour is not the focus of much previous research, the opportunities for triangulations are limited. As I show in table 2, my data is distributed between the

data sources of: individual interviews with women and men and group interviews with female and male farmers; interviews with local leaders (chiefs, councilors and village heads); observations in the field; official documents and archive records; as well as secondary literature when available. All in all, the interviews contribute new information on the gender regime that was difficult to acquire before.

Fourthly, as a final safety precaution, Miles and Huberman (1994) offer tools to tackle such mild forms of a 'holistic fallacy' that I experienced. This is when a powerful hypothesis seems to explain everything whereby all new evidence points in the same direction. In my case, I had to counter the risk of explaining everything in terms of gendered power relations. Miles and Huberman (1994) argue that, if it is possible to reproduce the finding in a new context or in another part of the database then the finding is a dependable one. In an effort to overcome the 'holistic fallacy', I analysed interviews of different kinds and from different points in time. I was nevertheless able to replicate the finding of a gender regime of land and labour rights. Further, when I applied grounded theory methods for a deeper interpretation, according to the principle of 'letting the data speak', this gave me the same finding again. Hence, I do not think that I superimpose unequal gender relation as an explanation, and I evaluate my findings as being rather solid. However, others will have to be the judges of that.

Table 2: The thematic contributions from sources.

Subjects / Sources	Land rights men	Land rights women	Historical land rights men	Historical land rights women	Labour rights men	Labour rights women	Historical labour rights men	Historical labour rights women
Individual interviews	x	x	x	X	x	X	x	x
Group interviews	x	x	x	X	x	X	x	x
Observations	x	x						
Literature	x		x					
Documents	x		x					
Archive records	x		x					

5 Power in polygyny

This chapter is about power. The organisation of production and reproduction in the gender regime under scrutiny is family based, which makes it particularly important to analyse power within wedlock. There are two main types of power relations in polygynous settings, wife to husband and wife to wife, which I will study along two core axes of relations: (1) women's position vis-à-vis husbands, and (2) seniority or hierarchy between co-wives (Clignet, 1970). In the analysis I will identify indicators of power and explore how sub-ordinate and super-ordinate positions of women and men, respectively, operate within polygyny.[19]

First, I will present the approach for analysing gendered power relations within wedlock. Thereafter, I will analyse power relations and positions between spouses and among co-wives. This is done in the belief that power affects interaction within the gender regime while also underlining the importance of gender in the organisation of food production. As indicators of power between spouses within wedlock, I look at their *control over* land, income and decision-making. I will also analyse power relations between co-wives by discussing how they share burdens and compete for their husband's attention and resources. The discussion serves as an input to the analysis of gendered strategies in chapter 6. The proposition is that power relations between spouses affect how women and men develop and employ strategies while the relative position of women and men influences their ability to achieve their social goals in production. Given that female and male strategies differ in this particular social setting, as seen in the next chapter, the overall food production may depend on whose strategies are most successful for fulfilling the gendered social goals.

The aim here is not to *measure* power within wedlock but to show how power operates in the gender regime of land and labour rights and how that may affect food production. In sum, it will be clear that power relations between spouses and between co-wives consume much time and energy orienting the focus away from farming activities. In extension, this may affect food security.

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[19] For the power analysis Clignet suggests four axes of relations within polygyny. Owing to the lack of data, two axes of relations are outside the scope of this study: (1) the relative position of women and male members of their own kin group; and (2) the relation between mothers and their offspring (Clignet, 1970).

Studying power within wedlock

Power categories

In their analytical frame for studying power, Avelino and Rotmans (Avelino and Rotmans, 2009, Avelino and Rotmans, 2011) build on the distinction 'power over' and 'power to' and suggest three types of power relations between people, suitable for the purpose of analysing power within wedlock. The types of power relations are: (1) to exercise 'power over'; (2) to exercise more power than another person; and (3) to exercise a different power than another person (Avelino and Rotmans, 2009, Avelino and Rotmans, 2011). The first power relation concerns: (A) mutual dependency; (B) one-sided dependency; or (C) independency where persons may or may not have power over each other. The second power relation concerns (A) cooperation; (B) competition; and (C) co-existence depending on whether the two persons have collective, mutually exclusive or independent co-existing goals. The third power relation relates to the type of power where two persons mobilise different resources which may lead to a situation of (A) power synergy; (B) power antagonism; or (C) power neutrality (Avelino and Rotmans, 2011).

These typologies and manifestations of power relations, in total nine types, will shed light on the power relations within wedlock that I discuss here. I use the notion that power is not always power *over* someone. Instead people can exercise different kinds of power, as discussed in chapter 6, and in different areas (Avelino and Rotmans, 2009, Kabeer, 2005). As the focus here is on the effects of power on production, there is no need to employ all of Avelino and Rotmans nine distinctions of power. I build on their typologies and manifestations of power relations in a two-dimensional diagram where 'power over' and 'power to' crosscut with 'sharing goals' and 'not sharing goals' as displayed in the diagram in Figure 5. Later on in this chapter, in the section 'Non pooling-spouses', I will explain the meaning of 'sharing goals' and 'not sharing goals' to be further developed in chapter 6.

Figure 5 illustrates the types of power relations that I identify in the interviews according to the two axes of relations within wedlock: wife-husband and wife-wife. Further, a relationship where the husband exercises more power than his wife may result in a conflict or competition depending on the extent to which the goals of the power exercise are mutually exclusive (Avelino and Rotmans, 2009). The distinction 'power over' and 'power to' will contribute to show if one spouse's strategy will be over-ruled by the other spouse's strategy or if female and male strategies can be employed alongside each other. If they have a collective goal or goals that are independent of each other, then their relationship can be described in terms of cooperation or coexistence, rather than competition. If men exercise power

```
                    Power over
                        ↑
                        |
                        |
Sharing goals ←─────────┼─────────→ Not sharing goals
                        |
                        |
                        ↓
                    Power to
```
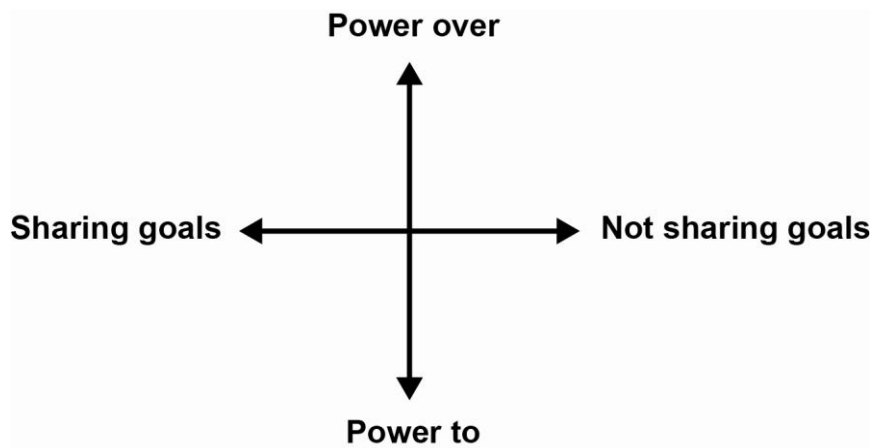
Figure 5: Two-dimensional diagram of power relations in polygynous wedlock.
          Source: Karin Steen. Layout: Karin Steen and Ann Åkerman.

in a way that disrupts or prevents power exercised by women, then there is antagonism instead of synergy (Avelino and Rotmans, 2009). At the end of the chapter, I will summarise the discussion from various sections into the quadrangles in the two-dimensional diagram.

Methods for studying power

Power is generally understood in three dimensions, as seen in the discussion on power in chapter 3, and there are three main methods for studying power (Badersten and Gustavsson, 2010). The first method for identifying power is to *ask people about who has power*. The second method is to *study decision-making processes* because there can be discrepancies between rumours about who has power and actual power to decide. As it is difficult to study all steps in a decision-making process, a third method of measuring power is to *concentrate on the resources* that actors have. In the third way of measuring power, the decision-making process is disregarded and the one who *looks* most powerful is assumed to *be* most powerful (Badersten and Gustavsson, 2010). Despite such limitations, I use the three methods for analysing power by: (1) asking spouses 'who has power'; (2) identifying the power in decision-making; and (3) evaluating the potential resources for exercising power. According to the definition of power as the ability to mobilise resources for a certain goal I studied resources (Avelino and Rotmans, 2009). Concerning power in decision-making processes, I did not observe but only

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asked questions about the process. Given that it is difficult to grasp power relations within wedlock in interviews (Kabeer, 1994), and that it is difficult to disentangle choice and power in social relationships within family and household (Kabeer, 1998), I tried to be sensitive to the problems and ask relevant questions not about power itself but about relations and facts that may serve as indicators thereof.

Following the three methods of studying power, I will discuss power relations between spouses in terms of (1) the control of family resources; and (2) decision-making processes, which are also in line with other empirical studies on power distribution within households and within polygyny (Blanc, 2001, Clignet, 1970, Tambiah, 1989).

Within the dimension on (1) control of family resources, I will investigate (A) control of land, and (B) control over income from family fields and women's gardens. I include control of land as a resource, and as a sort of income-generating possibility and thus as a determinant of power. I find land to be important in itself (for food production) as well as being an important power resource for achieving other goals in the setting. Everyone needs land, for different purposes besides food production (see chapter 2), and everyone thus tries to mobilise the power resources to access land. The ability to mobilise land is a resource and a means to access power in other areas while also other resources can be mobilised to exercise power to access land. Moreover, as the peasant farmers are situated in a subsistence society, land is the most central resource in production while sometimes there is no income to study. Moreover, there are symbolic reasons for men to access land as discussed in chapter 2. For women the relevant type of land, which they may control including the income from it, is the garden.

As most of the income in the study area comes from agriculture this is the income that I will consider when I discuss control of income. Many farmers, mostly women, diversify income via handicrafts for sale such as basket-making or knitting. Income from these activities is important for increasing women's independence (Moser, 1989). However, in the interviews only the relations to land and the income from land were in focus, which means that the limited data on this issue limits the discussion here. Within (2) decision-making power, I investigate (A) the relative ability of one partner to act independently and to engage in a behaviour against the other partner's wishes, and (B) the ability to control a partner's actions (Blanc, 2001, Pulerwitz et al., 2000). I will discuss the power relation between co-wives in terms of (1) 'easy' (good) ties, and (2) 'uneasy' (problematic) ties. I will look at how a wife's individual relationship to a shared husband, including her ability to mobilise resources to access power, affects the power relation between co-wives. I now turn attention to the analysis of control of land and income.

The interview context

I will present extracts from interviews which exemplify and display my interpretation of interview data. The questions and answers that I present belong to longer ongoing conversations between the interviewer and the interviewed. Thus, the interviewer had established trust and could therefore ask more direct questions. Further, some questions are leading. In those cases I have considered what questions to ask in order to receive information on a certain issue. Earlier questions on the topic were less directly framed but finally we stopped beating around the bush and asked a more leading or provoking question. Thus, it was possible to ask questions about decision-making power. Moreover, I noticed that it was I who was hesitant to talk about a sensitive issue such as male dominance. Most interviewees, both women and men, did not find it as sensitive as I did, possibly because it may be a social fact for them and something that many believe is right.

The data from the interview investigation that I present here concerns control of land, control of income and to some extent also control of labour, as well as decision-making power. Moreover, it concerns relations in polygyny. The extracts are chosen as illustrative examples of the discussions and the arguments that I have on gender and power over land and labour as well as in and between the two wedlock relations. I draw on interviews from all of the six villages in the investigation. Naturally, the names are fictitious. For further discussion on interview methods see chapter 4. To sum up, I will analyse the two axes of power relations within polygyny (wife to husband and wife to wife) and illuminate my findings with extracts from the interviews.

Non-pooling spouses

Gendered rights and obligations within wedlock lead to conflicting interests and goals. Moreover, in the analysis of emotional and social relations between spouses it is evident that spouses do not pool their resources, which creates a situation of *non-pooling* within wedlock(Kabeer, 1998, Tambiah, 1989). This means that the income generated by one spouse is not expected to be shared with the other spouse after their obligations are met in terms of feeding the family and sending children to school. Further, both women and men view a woman as belonging to another family and lineage than her husband and children. This means that there is limited 'social absorption' of the wife into her husband's family (Clignet, 1970). This is also seen in statements where women declare that, in the event that their husbands remarry, they want them to marry a woman in their own lineage, such as a sister. In

addition, I see this in the interviews in statements on inheritance of family land, garden and property. In the following extract Pharaoh explains:

> Interviewer: Will your wife inherit your land?
> Pharaoh: No, that's impossible. How could I give my wealth to a stranger? My wife is not part of my family. She is just a friend.

The stranger mentioned is not his wife but her relatives. If she inherits the land he thinks that her relatives will inherit it after her. That would mean a transfer of his lineage land to the wife's lineage, which he is strongly against as guarding land for one's own lineage is considered important for men in the study. To continue, the strong idea that wives do not belong to the husbands' lineages has several effects: non-pooling in households and possible emotional distance due to tense relations between spouses. There is a large emotional distance between spouses, as I have shown with interview extracts, where spouses do not seem to communicate much or share views. As we shall see, I argue that competition rather than cooperation is the main determinant of interaction between spouses.

In this context, plural marriages barely accentuate the power exerted by husbands, as also Clignet (Clignet, 1970) argues regarding other polygynous societies. The large emotional distance between spouses, following from non-pooling, zero-sum and non-absorption of wives into husbands' lineages, could assist husbands to exercise their 'power over' in more authoritative ways. On the other hand, the spouses' limited pooling and limited social absorption reduce husbands' authority over wives. Women's gardens are a source of empowerment for women and maybe also an aspect of husbands' expressive authority. I will now explain instrumental and expressive authority.

Husband and wife

Clignet argues (Clignet, 1970: 147) that African polygynous societies are in themselves an 'institutionalisation of male preeminence'. From the discussion on the gendered regime of land and labour rights in chapter 2, I draw the conclusion that the regime is patriarchal in the sense that patriarchy is defined as male superiority with power over land and labour concentrated to elderly men and to the male heads of households. As I argue in chapter 2, I view monogamous families in this context as 'not yet' polygynous and embedded in a polygynous regime. This means that the wife-husband relation in monogamous marriages within the polygynous setting can have the same power relations as in a polygynous marriage

(Clignet, 1970). Nevertheless, even if the prerequisities in a polygynous society seem to be in favour of male dominance in gendered power relations, I argue that it needs to be investigated in the specific case.

Instrumental and expressive authority

To clarify power relations between spouses, Clignet analyses authoritarian power by identifying *instrumental* and *expressive* authority, where attainment of individual and collective goals is *instrumental* for authority, and maintenance of cohesiveness within the family means *expressive* authority. The function of expressive authority may be to reduce the tensions created by the exercise of instrumental power. If the economic dominance of the husband affects the social and emotional climate in the family then there may be mechanisms to reduce these tensions (Clignet, 1970). Further, expressive authority can be issues such as gifts and concessions from the husbands to wives. Further, as wedlock is not a firm engaged in production, expressive authority in this context can also be studied in everything except production that people engage in while managing social relations of production and of enacting gender. For the purpose of this thesis I will consider the instrumental and expressive authority distinction when I discuss power relations between spouses. Below, I will do this mainly in relation to the control of land.

Control of land

Control of family land
In the capacity of being men and heads of households, men as husbands control family land. There is no power struggle over a husband's land, the fields, between spouses, from what I can see in the interview data, since a husband's authority to access land and distribute part of it to wives in most cases is not questioned. Thus, I turn directly to women's land, the garden, which is the scene of many power struggles in wedlock.

Control of land in the garden
Spouses often have different views on how the control of land over woman's garden should be and actually is exercised, both in theory and practice. Two spouses interviewed separately, Francisca and Pharaoh, share their views starting with Francisca:

> Interviewer: Do you have a garden?
> Francisca: Yes, I have.

Interviewer: What decision-making power does your husband have over your garden?
Francisca: He does not have any decision-making power over my garden.
Interviewer: Can he take back the garden?
Francisca: No, he cannot do that.
Interviewer: Do you have a right to sell the produce?
Francisca: Yes, but I sell very little as my family eats most of the produce.
Interviewer: Does your husband have a say in what to sell?
Francisca: No, he cannot say anything about it.
Interviewer: Who decides what crops are grown in your garden?
Francisca: I decide.
Interviewer: Who decides who works in your garden?
Francisca: I decide that too.
Interviewer: Do you see the garden as your land or as part of your husband's land?
Francisca: I take it as my land and he does the same.
Interviewer: If your husband needed more land, would he consider taking a part of your garden?
Francisca: He can't do that because the garden is small. [She needs the whole of it and it is too small for the husband to grow maize in.]

Francisca sees the land in the garden as hers and she believes that Pharaoh does so too. She also believes that he cannot take it back as it is too small for growing his crops. She thinks that she makes decisions on domestic and economic issues as well as on issues relating to farming, and that they decide together outside the farm (Field data 2000). Francisca's husband Pharaoh sees the control of land in her garden in a different way. Below, the italics in data underline the contradictions between spouses:

Interviewer: Does your wife have a garden?
Pharaoh: Yes, she has a garden.
Interviewer: Do you see her garden as part of your land or as land that she controls?
Pharaoh: I see it as part of my land.
Interviewer: If you needed more land, would you consider taking a piece of your wife's garden?
Pharaoh: Yes, because it is part of my land. I decide over it.
Interviewer: If a husband does not give his wife a garden, can he still be considered to be a good husband?
Pharaoh: He cannot be considered to be a good husband, since a garden is very essential for every family. [It is in the garden that the wife grows the vegetables for the family's consumption.]

Pharaoh considers the land in the garden to be his and says that he may take it back if he needs more land. The spouses do not share views on the control of land in the garden, and they do not seem to speak about issues of control and decisions. This

may be so because they are non-pooling. Pharaoh, like all women and many men interviewed, argue that a 'good man' would allocate land for a garden to his wife.

Conflicts arising from land shortage become acute when it concerns women's land rights within wedlock. Interviewed women to a larger extent than men consider the garden as theirs and they consider husbands to be bad husbands if they do not give women a garden. But husbands do not respect a wife's land rights as much as wives expect them to do. Many husbands say that husbands who do not give their wife a garden can still be considered good husbands. Interviews and other investigations indicate that the practice of gardens may be on the decline (Batezat, 1989, ZWRCN, 1994). Another reason for men's rising interest in women's gardens is the income that they generate. Some men have shifted from being supportive to women sharing the income, to withdrawing part of the control over the garden. Only few men withdraw women's control over the garden but findings show that the majority of men intervene in the production in ways such as telling the wife what to grow and how to till the garden or claiming part of the income earned from it.

There are many variations in the degree of control that a husband exercises and how much he would respect women's partial land right to a garden. In an 'ideal case' a good husband would allocate a garden to his wife, as discussed in chapter 2. However, in the end, the land *is* the husband's land and many women know that. The control of land is closely connected to the control of income as almost all income in the setting is generated from what the land can produce.

Control of income

This interview answer is an example of the general praxis that men control family land and have power over decisions and income generated from that land:

> Interviewer: What can your wife do in farming?
> Douglas: She can't do anything outside her own garden.

This shows that the husband decides on farming practices and also controls the income that is generated from the garden, whereas ideally it should be controlled by the wife. Pharaoh explains:

> Interviewer: What farming decisions can your wife make in her own garden?
> Pharaoh: She decides what to grow and what to do with the profit. She can dispose of the profit as she wishes.

Even if a woman agrees with or accepts part of her husband's control of the garden, there is a strong awareness, among women, of their right to a garden in the 'ideal case' as expressed by Esther:

> Esther: I and my husband agree on what to sell from the garden and how much. If he sells it alone, that will be stealing from me.

As discussed in chapter 2, in the 'ideal case' women should control the garden and the income generated from it. However, I cannot find evidence in the interviews that the 'ideal case' is commonly practised. There is a strong divergence between the ideal and the actual practice concerning women's control of income from gardens. Nevertheless, there are cases where the relation between spouses seems to be friendly and they share farming activities:

> Interviewer: Do you have a garden?
> Susan: Yes, I have a garden.
> Interviewer: What decision-making power does your husband have over your garden?
> Susan: My husband has some power over it because that is his land. But most often we discuss before we decide.
> Interviewer: Can he take back the garden?
> Susan: It's *our* garden so he can't take it back. I don't think he will do that when we are married and there is love in our marriage.
> Interviewer: Do you see the garden as your land or as part of your husband's land?
> Susan: I see it as my husband's land. So does he, because he inherited it from his father.

This reasoning shows that there is trust between spouses, at least as far as the wife describes it. It also shows that rather good relations between spouses are, even if not practised as in an 'ideal case', the foundation for woman exercising some control of income and land in the garden. Moreover, some women say that they control the income from their gardens, but when probed with the following questions the picture becomes more facetted:

> Interviewer: What decision-making power does your husband have over your garden?
> Florence: All that is in the garden is mine. My husband has *no* power over my garden.
> Interviewer: Can he take the garden back?
> Florence: He has power to do so but he has never done so. If he does that, I won't do anything.
> Interviewer: What chances do you have to keep it if he wants it back?
> Florence: I will just leave him. I can't consult anyone. If I go to the village head, there will be a problem at home when I come back.

In this conversation Florence believes that she controls the garden as long as her relation with her husband is smooth. In case of a disagreement, however, she will lose the control. It is common for women to contradict themselves when it comes to the control of land and income, as illustrated by Emily who develops her opinion in this interview:

> Interviewer: What decision-making power has your husband got over your garden?
> Emily: I have the power over my garden.
> ………………………………………………………………
> Interviewer: Do you have a right to sell any of the produce from your garden?
> Emily: I sell, but afterwards I have enough for my family.
> Interviewer: Does your husband have a say in what to sell from the garden?
> Emily: He doesn't have a say about selling and not about what to do with the money from selling.
> Interviewer: Who is primarily responsible for deciding what crops to grow and who should work in the garden?
> Emily: *He makes those decisions.*

The final answer here shows that her husband exercises some control over her garden even though she stated the opposite in the beginning of the interview. The interview continues:

> Interviewer: Who has got the decision-making power, in your household, on domestic decisions?
> Emily: We share the decision-making.
> Interviewer: What farming decisions can you make without asking your husband for permission?
> Emily: *I decide what crops to grow, but I can't decide over profit.* I'll have to wait for him. I sell and store, but I keep the money for him to decide.
> Interviewer: What decisions can you make in the garden?
> Emily: *For gardening I decide everything.*

In the last two answers she contradicts herself again and she finally states that *she* decides everything in her garden. Women often contradict themselves by saying: 'my husband has the decision-making power' but later on they might add: 'I decide on everything'. This is the case also with Mary:

> Interviewer: What decision-making power does your husband have over your garden?
> Mary: My husband has the power to decide and we work together.
> ………………………………………………………………

Interviewer: Does your husband have a say in what to sell from your garden? Or what to do with the profit?
Mary: No, I do what I want with the profit from my garden.
…………………………………………………………………………
Interviewer: What farming decisions can you make without asking your husband for permission?
Mary: I decide in everything.

Mary's first answer seems to be in total contradiction with the other two answers. I interpret Mary's contradictions as I interpreted Emily's answers. In fact, I argue that women do not *contradict* themselves. Instead it means that husbands have delegated the decision-making to wives, but women are aware of a husband's power to make a final and different decision. This is a rather common sequence of answers, where at first the woman states that she has control over her garden, but when asked to make her answer specific or to say what will happen in the event of a disagreement between spouses, she argues that the husband has the power. I interpret this as the wife has responsibility over the family's everyday well-being, but the husband has the final decision, if he wants to. The husband has delegated the power of decision to his wife concerning matters relating to growing food, preparing food and cooking. This is so because it is a woman's responsibility to provide food for the family. Where relations between spouses are good the husband gives the wife authority over the garden. However, it is his land and in some cases he reclaims control. Husbands have also delegated decisions on everyday family care to their wives.

Moreover, there can be several combinations of distribution of rights to use, grow, sell and dispose of income from gardens between spouses. Relations within the specific wedlock determine the practice and it is common in all families in the study that husbands have a final say meaning that he controls land and income. Even if it is common that women perform and control labour in the garden, husbands may sometimes decide what to grow and sometimes control part of the profit. This is in stark contrast to the 'ideal case' of a woman's garden as presented in chapter 2. In the interviews, I see that when a husband interferes in the garden it is for the purpose of controlling the profit or of making farming decisions.

Mobilising the resource of land
As stated in chapter 2, I see the property relations as a determinant of gendered power relations. Women's control of farming practices may be partly diminished because of their lack of control of property, in this setting the land, as illustrated by the next four interview extracts:

Interviewer: Would you like to be allocated land in your own right?
Agnes: I don't think my husband would accept it, but I want to be allocated land in my own right. Then I will be free to grow crops of my own choice. I will be able to sell more and have more money.

Interviewer: What do you think the difference would be if you were allocated land in your own right instead of through your husband?
Magadaline: I think I will have more freedom than I have now.

Interviewer: What would your husband think if you were allocated land in your own name?
Midia: He would be afraid of losing power to control me.

Interviewer: What would your husband think if you were allocated land in your own name?
Envilda: He will not like that because he wants to keep on oppressing me.

Agnes' answer means that her husband controls the land that she is farming as well as a large part of the farming process. She wants to control the land herself in order to control the income generated from it. As Magadaline expresses it, she will have more freedom generally if she is allocated land in her own right. Agnes also believes that if she had all the control over decision-making in the family and in farming she would produce more and earn more profit. This is a belief shared by many women. Further, Midia's and Envilda's answers show a more direct link between control of property and male supremacy. Midia's and Envilda's husbands exercise instrumental power over their wives (Clignet, 1970). Moreover, there are also answers from men which show that land is a basis of power in wedlock; this means that land is a resource to mobilise to exercise power (Avelino and Rotmans, 2009). Even if some men say they would welcome that their wife's having land in her own right other views are more common:

Interviewer: What would you think if your wife was allocated land in her own right?
Eric: I would think that the marriage is broken

Interviewer: What would you think if your wife was allocated land in her own right?
Robert: I would send her away. I would think that she now wants to have another home that she leads. In fact I would think that she is rebelling.

I interpret the answers in the two sections above, from both women and men, as meaning that land is a resource to mobilise in order to exercise power in wedlock.

Dignity and respect

Having land is a part of the male identity (see chapter 2). Moreover, wives also pay respect to husbands by being allocated land through them.

> Interviewer: What would your husband say if you were allocated land in your own right?
> Prisca: He will be disappointed because every man needs to be allocated land himself not through his wife.

> Interviewer: What would your husband say if you were allocated land in your own right?
> Ratidzo: People will start calling that land farm by my name. That will make me lose dignity in society.

> Philda: I like to be allocated land through my husband because that shows love and that there is no division in the family.

Besides paying respect to husbands, women also acquire dignity by being allocated land through husbands, it seems. When women access land through husbands this is a way to 'honour your husband' and 'to be dignified as a woman', as it was put by the women interviewed. Thus, it is part of female identity to be subordinate in land rights. A consequence following from seeing land as part of male identity and from seeing property as a source of power, is that the land shortage becomes integral to women's subordinate identity (see chapter 6).

Summing up control of land and income

Land is a source of power in relations between wives and husbands. As men have stronger land rights than women they are able to mobilise land as a resource in power relations and they do so with a view to either changing or maintaining the status quo in gender and land relations, as I will discuss in chapter 6. Sally Shortall, as a sociologist, argues in her book on property and power that the structure of farming culture in itself, with men controlling the land resource, affords men more power than women (Shortall, 1999). Men exercise power over women since only men can mobilise the resource of land in their own right while both women and men need the land. Further, men also control the income generated from land. However, women can exercise a partial power by mobilising the land resource in gardens, but only as long as husbands allow it. Further, the practice that wives often control part of or even all the income from the garden produce, if husbands allow it,

leads to a situation where husbands exercise less instrumental authority. Thus women can exercise power in at least one area, namely the garden.

Decision-making power

Another way to view the power relation between spouses is to study the decision-making power itself to see: who makes decisions? In the interviews, I asked questions about decision-making in farming, both in the garden and in the fields, in domestic decisions and in decisions outside the family. Most of the answers displayed here concern farming decisions. As mentioned, the indicators of decision-making power that I focus on are: (A) the relative ability of one partner to act independently and to engage in behaviour against the other partner's wishes; or (B) the ability to control a partner's actions. The general distribution of decision-making power is exemplified by Shylet's phrase:

> Shylet: A woman is under her husband's rules.

The distribution of decision-making power is brought to a head in polygynous wedlock, as expressed here:

> Norah: To live in polygyny is like being in a prison. No matter if I sometimes want to decide something, he is always oppressing me.

Norah's statement may seem more negative towards her husband's power than Shylet's answer, maybe because she is living in a polygynous wedlock.

One aspect of decision-making is that spouses often have different perceptions of their relative position in the decision-making. The spouses Pharaoh and Franscisca, whom I mentioned early in the discussion on control of land, are once again good examples of the situation that spouses do not have the same picture of decision-making in wedlock:

> Interviewer: Who has the decision-making power in your household in domestic decisions?
> Francisca: I have that power.
> Interviewer: Who has the decision-making power in your household in economic decisions?
> Francisca: I have.
> Interviewer: Who decides in the fields?
> Francisca: I do.
> Interviewer: And outside the farm?
> Francisca: Both of us decide about off-farm issues.

> Interviewer: Who decides what crops to grow?
> Francisca: I do.
> Interviewer: Who decides over the profit from the fields?
> Francisca: I do.
> Interviewer: Who decides what crops to store or sell from the fields?
> Francisca: I decide again.
> Interviewer: What decision can you make in the garden?
> Francisca: I can make all decisions.
> Interviewer: What would happen if you did not want to work in your husband's fields?
> Francisca: Women are always working willingly in the fields, but if I do not want to do that I just say so.
> Interviewer: What reasons are there for a woman not to want to work in her husband's fields?
> Francisca: If I am ill I will just tell him. He would not do anything.
> Interviewer: What ways are there to escape work?
> Francisca: No, I just tell the truth.

Francisca says that she makes most decisions. Further, she mostly works willingly, but if she does not want to work she just tells Pharaoh and he will accept it. However, Francisca's husband Pharaoh has other opinions on decision-making in their wedlock:

> Interviewer: Who has the decision-making power in your household in domestic and economic issues? What about decisions in the fields and outside the farm?
> Pharaoh: I decide in all those areas.
> Interviewer: What would happen if your wife did not want to work?
> Pharaoh: I will look for another wife. I will tell her my intention to marry another wife.
> Interviewer: What do you think of polygyny?
> Pharaoh: It is a source of problems and a risky encounter, because a man can easily die because of such an action.
> Interviewer: What would your wife say if you married another wife?
> Pharaoh: She would not agree.

Pharaoh's view that he decides in all areas is in total contradiction to Francisca's answers. As Pharaoh is not fond of the practice of polygyny, these two last answers mean that he would not marry an *additional* wife. Instead, if Francisca does not obey his will to work, he would divorce her and marry a new one whom he expects to work. Francisca and Pharaoh seem to be concordant neither on ideas and values, nor on the distribution of decision-making power in their wedlock. This is common in the interviews and may be an indicator that the spouses are non-pooling, not just in economic matters but also in social matters. This is a consequence of the limited social absorption of wives into husbands' lineages (Clignet, 1970) (See chapter 2).

The power of threat
There is also the issue of threat in decision-making relations. There can be different kinds of threat as part of the power exercise. These threats concern (1) violence; (2) divorce; and (3) polygyny in power negotiations on decisions and obedience. The three types of threats are visible in the interviews.

The threat of polygyny
The *first* type of threat that men can use in the power relation within wedlock is that of polygyny. The Boserup 'work load argument' saying that women welcome a co-wife to share their workload, discussed in chapter 2, does not offer a frame that is relevant for understanding the interviewed women's perception of polygyny. Women in both monogamous and polygynous marriages dislike the idea of having co-wives, irrespective of the work burden. The fear of having co-wives is a reason for women to work long hours and accept a husband's control of their labour. A major aspect of the labour-polygyny relation is the husband's possible threat to marry another wife. Findings show that many women feel forced to work or obey because of silent or spoken threats of divorce, violence or polygyny. These threats put women in a weak bargaining position in negotiations (Sen, 1987). It can be argued that polygyny as practised today is an instrument for patriarchal exercise of power defined as men's control over women's labour (Hartmann, 1981). The *first* is the threat of additional wives as expressed in these three answers:

> Emily: I can't say I don't want to work because that is the first thing of misunderstanding that will cause polygyny.

> Tsitsi: When I refuse to work, that's when he finds another wife.

> Julie: I do not want him to remarry and he does not need to as I am able to meet his demands.

These answers are examples of how women dislike the idea of having co-wives irrespective of the work burden. I find that the fear of having co-wives is a reason for women to work long hours and accept a husband's control of their labour. However, it must be noted that many women work hard, willingly. Monogamous families are merely *potential* polygynous families, and the influence of plural marriages as a model is so pervasive that it shapes the perceptions and attitudes of individuals (Clignet, 1970). This is the perception that I noticed among interviewed women. That the threat of polygyny is a resource that men can mobilise in a power relation in wedlock is seen in this woman's answer:

> Mary: He has to tell me what he wants, children or anything. I will do it.

Mary is prepared to obey in any matter to avoid polygyny. As I understand it, most women are prepared to go far to avoid polygyny.

The threat of violence

The *second* type of threat that appears is violence. The threat of *violence* is one important force in the power relation between spouses. Three women explain:

> Norah: If I say no and do not want to obey him he will beat me. He was an understanding husband before he married the second wife, but now he is treating me as his servant. If I just say 'I don't want to' I will be starting a war.

> Envilda: I have to go and work in the fields because he will beat me, so no matter when I am ill, I'll go.

> Emily: My husband was like a bulldog without a proper wife. His problem was that every time he had affairs outside he beat me and called me names. I end up telling him to bring the wife home so I could rest. I end up thinking I do not mind whether he marries ten or more women because I want my body not to be hurt.

Norah and Envilda obey their husbands' words to work as they fear that their husbands can be physically violent. Emily fears both polygyny and violence and thus obeys her husband. And some men quite blatantly affirm that, if wives do not follow a husband's authority, they will implement the threat of violence:

> Interviewer: What would you do if your wife did not want to work in your fields?
> Isaac: She can be beaten by me.

In this extract, Isaac confirms that he, as well as many of the men interviewed, is prepared to put the threat into effect.

The threat of divorce
The *third* threat is that of divorce:

> Interviewer: What would you do if your wife did not want to work in your fields?
> Stanley: The marriage will break, I will divorce that wife and marry another wife.

Men also say that they use the tool of threat in the power relation between spouses. Martin is one example of a husband who could possibly use threats in the power relation between spouses:

Interviewer: What would you do if your wife did not want to work in your fields?
Martin: I will force my wives to work.

The above statements support my argument that threats are an important weapon in the power relation between spouses. They may influence women's work input and the probability that they will obey their husbands. These answers are examples of threats of polygyny, divorce and violence that put the wife in a weak position in negotiations. To use Sen's terminology, women have a weak fall-back position (Sen, 1987). These threats are resources (in fact a source of power) that men can mobilise as a bargaining tool in negotiations within wedlock. I view the balance of power in negotiations as a balance of advantage and an inequality of resources (Connell, 1987). The choice of exit is not an alternative for many of the women interviewed. This means that they have to stay and obey a husband's rules. Moreover, power relations have a clear causal link with violence or the threat of violence within marriage (Blanc, 2001).

Violence in relation to power, acts of intra household violence or threats thereof are not individual deviances, but a form of person-to-person violence embedded in power inequalities and ideologies of male supremacy. It is not a deviation from the social order. It is in a significant sense an enforcement of it (Connell, 1987). Thus, power relations need to be incorporated in the understanding of the present existence of polygyny (Ncube et al., 1997b), as well as the effects on production and reproduction.

The reason for practising polygyny today may not be the same as the reasons for introducing it in the first place. This is also found in other parts of Zimbabwe (Ncube et al., 1997b). As Thelen argues on institutional change, the rationale of the institution at its creation is not necessarily the rationale for its practice today (Thelen, 2003). Hence, polygyny may have effects on women's position in wedlock now even if historically it did not. To some extent both Meillassoux and Clignet discuss women's status within wedlock in relation to polygyny. Meillassoux argues (1975) that despite women's crucial role in reproduction in polygynous societies they never appear as vectors of social organisation (Meillassoux, 1975). Clignet argues that there are two underlying principles in individual relationships in societies and families practising polygyny: (1) the subordination of women to men; and (2) the subordination of the youngest elements of society towards senior age groups (Clignet, 1970). Further, Meillassoux notes from other polygynous regimes that women are unable to acquire a status based on the relations of production. Despite the dominant position that women have in agriculture as well as in domestic labour, women are not

granted the *status* of producers (Meillassoux, 1975). Moreover, women's subordination exposes them to the exploitation of their labour, in that they lose their claim to their produce, as well as to the exploitation of their reproductive capacities, since children are mostly seen as belonging to the husband's lineage (Meillassoux, 1975). My interviews also provide support for this argument.

Boserup (Boserup, 1985) asserts that polygyny, among several factors, perpetuates the low status of women. However, maybe the polygynous regime in itself does not affect the status of women. It may have been low anyway. Goody argues that the differentiation of women seems to be higher in monogamous regimes than in polygynous. If women's status is poor it is at least evenly poor between women (Goody, 1973). For a single woman in a polygynous regime living in a monogamous marriage will enhance her status in her own eyes but not in practice because of the disadvantages for women (Goody, 1973). However, the exposition of women can also be more extreme in monogamous regimes as is shown by Oyewumi (Oyewùmi, 1997). As such, it may not be the polygynous regime in itself that makes wives subordinate, but the way in which it is practised.

Women's purposeful choices

I have located the unequal relation of power in wedlock and identified that wives may not be aware of how they themselves are not free to make choices and act independently against a husband's will and wishes. I interpret this as examples of women's purposeful choices (Folbre, 1994), meaning choices that are constrained by the gender regime but still meaningful as discussed in the methodology chapter. This is an example of how women follow husbands' will without thinking about it or questioning it. Ester explains the decision-making process on farming (land and profit) in her garden:

> Ester: Me and my husband always share our views with each other and then we agree… We usually agree, but if there is a reason for him to have another view he will make another decision. Then we will agree and share the view he has. We have to share views.

This was therefore another instance where a woman does not question her husband's will but follows it. It exemplifies purposeful choice, in which a woman follows her husband and chooses to side with him. Rosemary:

> Interviewer: What decision-making power has your husband got over your garden?
> Rosemary: He doesn't have any power over my garden. But he makes decisions and tells me.
> Interviewer: What chances do you have to keep it if he wants it back?
> Rosemary: I will talk to him, but when he doesn't understand, I just have to leave it.

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Interviewer: Does your husband have a say in what to sell from your garden?
Rosemary: No he doesn't have a say, but he gives me suggestions on what to do.
Interviewer: Who is primarily responsible for deciding what to grow in your garden?
Rosemary: He decides what crops to grow, but I will agree with him.
Interviewer: Do you see the garden as your land or as part of your husband's land?
Rosemary: I see it as my husband's land and he also does.
Interviewer: If your husband wanted more land would he consider taking a piece of your garden? Do you share his view?
Rosemary: If he decides to take a piece of my garden I will share his views because he will have some idea on what to do with the land. The idea will be good for my family. So I have to agree.

These two passages once again show that women can view *husbands'* will and decisions as the spouses' *common*, or their own, will and decisions. The husband's supremacy is natural to the extent that some women do not think they could have a different will. It could also be that they have another will but that they know that it is not possible to exercise their will because of their limited bargaining power. Thus they accept a husband's will from the beginning. Here are two final illustrations of *purposeful choices* (Folbre, 1994). They indicate that women's 'choices are structured'; that women are limited in their thinking; and that women have the option to make another decision than their husband:

Interviewer: Who makes decisions in your garden?
Jenina: Women decide in their gardens, but the idea is shared with husbands. When the husband agrees with what the wife suggests that's when we say *I*, the woman, *decide*. When he refuses we say *he decides*. That's the difference.

Interviewer: Who makes decisions in your garden?
Naomi: I make the decisions, but sometimes he determines that he will make the decision.

These are telling examples of structured and purposeful choice. The wife may decide as long as she decides what the husband would have decided. The women call that 'a shared decision' or that 'the woman decides'. The only way for the wife to decide is if she decides what her husband expects and wants. Women have the choice, if they want to decide they have to decide according to the structure, the husband's will. Therefore I identify this as a purposeful choice: that is the best choice for achieving whatever goal in mind given the limitation of the husband's supremacy. In these examples of a wife's purposeful choices, husbands do not need to bring threats into the bargaining process. However, the threats can be present but not explicit. It can still be a question of conflict of interests as wives may have a different wish but make a purposeful choice in line with their husbands' wishes

because they have no other choice. Finally, here follows Gertrud's telling explanation of how decision-making in general is carried out between spouses:

> Gertrude: If women decide, that means that the idea is shared with the husband. So when the husband agrees that's when we say *I* decide but when he refuses *he* decides. So that's the difference.

This shows that husbands have the power to decide and that it can be difficult to think abstractly about your own decision-making power when it is very limited. Gertrude is used to following her husband's decision to such a degree that she (maybe) does not question it. I find it evident that husbands in fact have the major decision-making power here. To sum up on decision-making, I have shown that husbands control decision-making in wedlock and to a large extent control their wives' actions. Wives have a limited possibility to act independently and against their husband's wishes. If wives have any such opportunity at all, it is while tending to the garden. Their choices are structured and often follow their husbands' wishes even if they originally wanted something different from what the husbands want. Therefore I argue that wives' purposeful choices are very structured.

Implications of power relations between husband and wife

Control of husbands' land and the income that it generates
In total, the power relation in terms of control of family land, meaning land that husbands control, is an example of a power relation of one-sided dependency. Husbands have 'power over' wives while both spouses want land. However, there is power cooperation between husband and wife in some domains, that is, in the production of food for family consumption. Women produce most of their families' food in husbands' fields and spouses have the common goal of feeding the family.

Control of the garden and the income that it generates
Husbands exercise the power to allocate land to women for producing food, and women produce food for their families in their gardens. Men control the land in the garden, but women have some rights to it. Thus men exercise more 'power to' land in the garden than women do. However, when women use the garden, they mobilise the resource of the garden to exercise several types of power. A mobilisation of the garden would serve many interests, both practical and strategic gender goals. If distinguishing between women's practical and strategic gender needs or interests (Kabeer, 1999, Molyneux, 1985, Moser, 1989) the garden is important for the family's food security, which is a woman's *practical* gender need.

Practical gender interests or goals are goals that women want to fulfil and that are prescribed to them as responsibilities, duties or obligations because they are women. Fulfilling a practical gender interest does not challenge the gender order (Moser, 1989). Moreover, the garden is the area where women have an opportunity for agency and hence the most crucial area for women's *strategic* gender interests. Fulfilling strategic gender interests or goals would be a challenge to the practised gender order. That means, that by mobilising the resource of the garden women can exercise 'power to', in the self-empowering way mentioned by Kabeer (Kabeer, 2005). That is, they can empower themselves by achieving strategic gender goals.

For men the garden has filled and continues to fill the purpose of feeding the family, as women have the main responsibility for the children and are supposed to grow food for the families in their gardens. For women, besides the task just mentioned, the purpose of the garden is also, at least today, as a source of independence and freedom of choice. Women can have a garden as a 'piggy bank' and control income and expenditure or have it as a 'loot fund'. As a husband may not control the production process or crop sales he is not aware of the amount of income that his wife can make in the market. Also, this is an important opportunity to meet strategic gender interests. Thus, through the garden women can fulfil both practical and strategic gender roles and interests (Moser, 1989). Moreover, that the garden can be a space of freedom for women, is noticed by Meillassoux (Meillassoux, 1975) for other rural societies practicing polygyny.

In gardens, dependency is not one-sided as in a husband's fields. While wives are dependent on their husbands for the allocation to them of a garden, husbands are dependent on the food produced in gardens. Men are also dependent on women's labour in men's fields, although there men exercise some degree of control over the input of women's labour. It is in this respect that the institution of bridewealth gives husbands the opportunity to exercise power over their wife/ wives, because they can allocate some rights in relation to their wives' labour through payment of bridewealth.

Control of decision-making

Following the findings from the interviews, my proposition is that men's strong negotiating power based on the resources that they can mobilise may diminish women's power – both in farming practices and in everyday life. While there are ways in which women can access and exercise some power, this capacity is in no way comparable to that of men. I will now turn to discuss how women and men respectively mobilise resources to exercise power.

How men mobilise resources to exercise power
Men have more resources at their disposal to mobilise in order to exercise power than women have, and men exercise 'power over' women. Because men can mobilise economic resources, mainly land but also the resource of threats, women's possibilities to act independently against their husbands' will are limited. Thus the purposeful choices that women make are severely structured (Folbre, 1994).

There are institutions that favour men's exercise of power over women. The power relation within wedlock is affected by the institutions of land rights and labour rights, as discussed in chapter 2. The institution of polygyny regulates power between spouses, and in consequence it affects power relations between spouses. The way polygyny is practised increases husbands' supremacy over wives. In the conversations quoted it is possible to see that polygyny accentuates men's strong bargaining position in the power relation between spouses, with the threats of polygyny, violence and divorce.

In the setting under study, the tense emotions within wedlock, as an effect of husbands' instrumental authority and the idea of non-pooling households, could affect both the decision-making and the resource management. A husband's limited affection could make it easier for him to force his will. In the interviews, I did not focus on husbands' attempts to reduce the tensions created by their authority. However, husbands' allocation of gardens to wives can be interpreted as a sign of expressive authority (Clignet, 1970).

How women mobilise resources to exercise power
Above all it is through the *garden* that women can access power, practise agency, exercise 'power to' or power within and thus become empowered. Wives mobilise the resource of the garden and the resources generated from it to exercise power, if not *over* men at least in relation to men to the extent that the negative effects of men's exercise of power over women are limited. It is through control of an economic surplus, if husbands allow it, that women can exercise their own agency. The more a wife is in a position to earn an independent income, the less pronounced the instrumental authority of her husband should be (Clignet, 1970). This is another way of saying that, the more income she controls the more empowered she can become.

Giving care, in order to achieve goodwill
Wives have more resources, besides the garden, to mobilise in order to exercise power in their relation to husbands. There are both material and immaterial resources to mobilise in order to access power in decision-making (see chapter 6).

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Women mobilise the resource of their bargaining capacity by improving it through affecting husbands' benevolence. Wives are dependent on their husbands' goodwill and appeal to it. This is done in two ways: they can either use the ideological resource of the 'ideal man' or use sorcery.

Ideal man and ideal woman
Based on the reasoning in chapters 2 and 5, I can discuss an ideal case of practising the rights to a garden as well as the ideal man and the ideal women. In the power relation between spouses, a wife may appeal to her husband's possible will that spouses should be able to fulfil their respective gender roles, to *become* man and woman. Women appeal to husbands being 'a good husband' or an 'ideal man'. This is how femininity speaks to masculinity.

The values and norms that I study in this setting are not at the same level as hegemonic masculinity, as I understand the concept (Connell, 1995). Instead, the values and norms constructing the hegemonic masculinity are in my view situated on a sub-conscious level. However, the values and norms that I consider in the setting are on a conscious level, meaning goals and aspirations regarding an ideal way of living. Thus, I argue that the norms and values add up to an 'ideal man' and an 'ideal woman', which can be seen as value-based institutions.

My interpretation of the ideal man in the area under study is a husband who controls land for his lineage and provides his wife with a garden so that she can cater for the family. The corresponding ideal woman is a woman working hard to provide for and support her family. A wife can appeal to a husband by being a 'good wife' through cooking, giving care and affection. Here, women mobilise the ideological resource of appealing to her husband as 'being a good man'. Women mobilise it by being friendly and using affection. In this way women mobilise the resource of husbands' goodwill.

Love portions as sorcery
The second way in which a wife may affect a husband's goodwill is through 'love portions'. Women use love portions, or 'love potions' as it can also be called, to improve a husband's goodwill by serving him a *potion* of herbs, acquired from a traditional healer, or by putting herbs in his regular meals. These herbs will make him more affectionate towards his wife. In this way she may improve her bargaining position as he will be more positive towards her requests and demands. Women *do* believe they can affect husbands by using love portions. Also men believe in the power of potent herbs. Thus, women exercise 'power over' men. In chapter 6, I will discuss love portions as an aspect of women's sub-strategies.

The power relation between spouses is a power play where women do not get land. But as a compensation strategy, women appeal to a husband's goodwill in order to induce a friendly attitude. In that way women can expand their resources, in terms of control and decision-making power in wedlock, or keep status quo, for instance, by keeping and managing the garden. In chapter 6 this is connected to the strategy of 'handling husbands'. Concerning the garden, women have to rely on husband's good will for that, but there are expectations on husbands in this regard:

> Interviewer: What would you say if your husband did not give you a garden?
> Julie: I would consider him to be a bad husband.

There is an almost concerted view that a 'good husband' provides his wife with a garden. Thus, women have to secure their husbands' good will as women themselves have a weak bargaining position with few sources to mobilise other than the idea of the 'ideal man' and 'love portions'.

Women have limited bargaining power in negotiations within wedlock (Sen, 1987) but can regulate sex in 'love portions' as a tool in negotiations with husbands on family decisions. I interpret giving care to be the main immaterial resource that women control. Women who restrict it can use that purposeful choice as a strategy to access men and hence land. However, women are exchangeable in the regime of polygyny where a man can take another wife, so this may be an ineffective strategy for a woman. Even if a love portion in itself is a material item the effectiveness of this potential power resource will have to be interpreted as being immaterial.

Shared and conflicting interests
The manner in which the two institutions of land rights and labour rights, discussed in chapter 2, interact and the way the consequent strategies are formed, imply that women and men have both shared and conflicting interests. In the context of uncertain and insecure land rights, a family of husband and wife/wives has a shared long-term interest in securing the family right to land. Further shared interests sometimes relate to investing in children, which here means sending children to school and paying school fees. Also, regarding women's rights to a garden in many cases both spouses value its contribution to the family's food consumption. Therefore, I have placed the husband-wife relation in the garden in the middle of Figure 6; in the garden the spouses can share goals, but women may have empowerment goals as well; and each spouse exercises power over the other, but a husband's power exceeds that of a wife. The relation between spouses as regards men's farming land is a more one-sided-dependency in favour of a man, yet his wife's labour is needed for production.

In families that can cooperate, gendered rights and obligations, combined with non-pooling of family resources, lead to conflicting interests and goals. Most visible are conflicts of interest in polygyny between wives over a husband's resources, such as his investments in different wives' children. If a husband favours a particular wife, he will probably be more willing to pay school fees for her children. Some men prioritise fame and expansion for their lineage, while most women operate according to a shorter time horizon of feeding and educating their children as a social goal. In figure 6, spouses' sharing or competing goals can be found in all four quadrangles.

As I mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, I have used three ways to study power (Badersten and Gustavsson, 2010). I have thus: (1) asked spouses who has power; (2) analysed the power in decision-making; and (3) evaluated which resources can be put in play for exercising power. I have shown, through these three methods, how men exercise power over women.
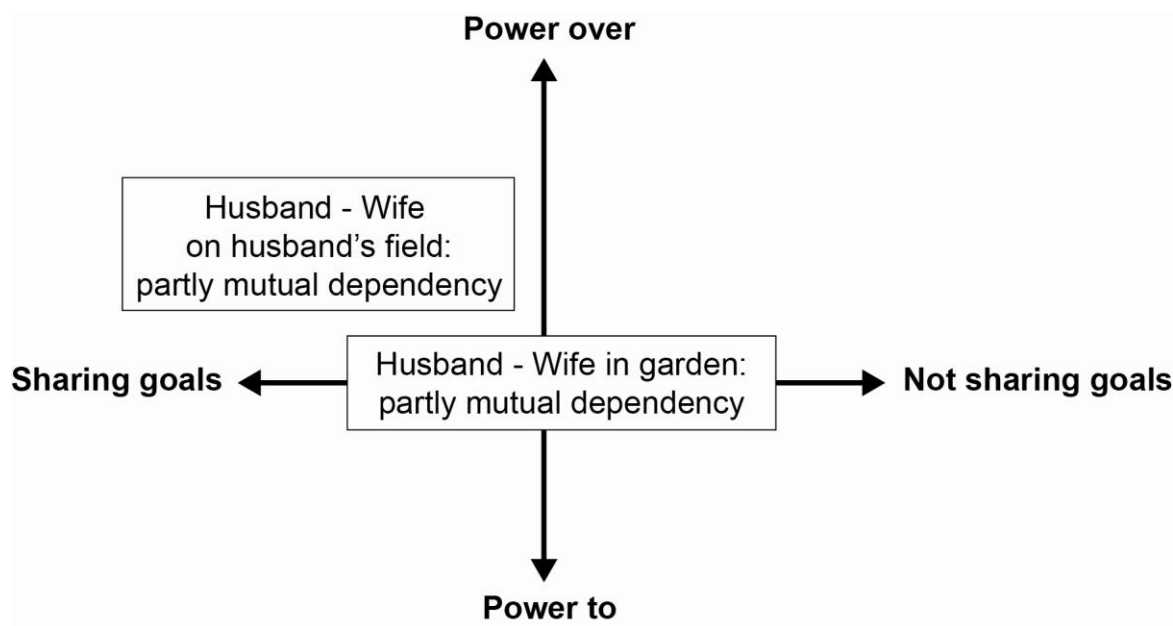
Figure 6: Two-dimensional diagram of power relations between spouses.
        Source: Karin Steen. Layout: Karin Steen and Ann Åkerman.

Wife to wife

Women, and more exactly married women, do the major share of agricultural work. If they are/have co-wives they should share the resources, workload, and ideally also the social goals. The rationale for the study of power relations between co-wives in polygyny is that their relation may affect the agricultural production. I seek to show how much time and effort is spent on other issues, instead of farming, and I interpret how that may affect farming and its output.

Senior co-wives occupy a position that is superior to that of junior co-wives (Clignet, 1970, Clignet et al., 1977). But in reality younger wives can be in a powerful position in relation to co-wives. Moreover, a relation between co-wives that is not in my focus is childrearing. It is an unavoidable interaction between co-wives (Clignet, 1970).

Easy ties between co-wives

In some few cases wives describe the relation to their co-wives as good or friendly. Regina, who was 35 years old at the interview occasion:

> Regina: To live in a polygynous marriage is good, because wives will share ideas. I am happy I am the second wife, because I see the first wife as my mother in law, but maybe she doesn't see it as I do. I have someone to share ideas with. She is as good as my sister. I want my husband to marry more wives if he wants to.

Nevertheless, the wives do not pool their work input. Regina continues:

> Regina: I keep the harvest from my garden and from my husband's fields separated, because I have to work for *my* family in the garden.

Regina controls the harvest from her garden while the harvest from their common husband's fields will be shared between the wives. Non-pooling co-wives are more common in situations where the relation between wives is tense.

Uneasy ties between co-wives

Also Prisca and Ratidzo describe a non-pooling relationship between co-wives:

> Prisca: I prefer to work alone…. The other wife is a problem.

> Ratidzo: We, the wives, end up looking after ourselves. I work in my garden first, before I work in my husband's fields.

Women may keep their harvests separated even when ties are more cordial between co-wives. Such a power relation may be seen as *neutral*. It means that not only spouses but also co-wives are non-pooling. In some cases women describe the relation to co-wives as neither good nor bad but that they do not interact much and instead live rather separate lives. The wives take care of their own children and do not intervene more than necessary. Ratidzo works in her garden before she works in her husband's fields because the fruits of her labour will then benefit *her* children. The children are also the reason why she stays in polygyny:

> Ratidzo: For me to be the first wife is very painful, because that's the permanent wound in my life. I wanted to leave him but because of my children I have to stay but I have withdrawn my love from my husband. I am here for my children not love.

As seen in the interviews, competitive feelings among co-wives are more common than neutral ties. However, my data gives no clear indication whether it is induced by husbands, as Clignet tends to suggest. He argues that strains between spouses may either induce informal ties and good relationships among co-wives, what I call easy ties, or be conducive to the emergence of competitive feelings among co-wives (Clignet 1970). Rather, I suggest that competition for resources is following from the competition for the husband's affection and resources. Clignet mentions husbands' possible favouritism as one source of conflict induced by husbands.

Favouritism

Here is an example of favouritism, as the first wife sees it, creating bad relations:

> Envilda: These women are coming to challenge the first wives! Here my husband is treating me very bad. He beats me and takes my property to give to his second wife. Women want to be married into polygyny because of the husband. Men are trouble causers because my husband said all bad things to the second wife about me. He gives her power before she comes. She comes with confidence that she is superior to me.

This is a second example of a husband's favouritism creating bad relations between co-wives.

> Norah: We women don't like other women's progress. At the end we are destroying for each other. I planned my marriage and my family. Since I was a teenager I didn't want to love a married person that's why I chose my husband. I worked hard for him and me to be off the ground and he is now a man. Then another woman uses all her love tricks to attract my man. Actually, we women are lazy, we don't want to work for our own things and we

destroy other women's foundations. So, men take us as they want. There is no women empowerment. After all we don't think about the pain of other women... From poor marriage we create thieves, prostitutes and killers. The other wife destroyed my children's education and life. It is better to stay single than to destroy our nation by marrying a man who is married and already has children... When he marries another wife everything will be shared. No matter if I work hard there will be no progress in wealth for my children.

Norah continues:

> Norah: These modern days co-wives are not a good thing anymore. I hate this system like hell! It doesn't matter that I am the first wife. It's worse! My children's life is the saddest thing in my life. They were used to being loved by their father. He was the most caring husband but now he withdraws his love from me and his children too. He is enjoying himself. I am afraid to leave my kids alone. I am their only sympathy now and they are the ones who keep me here. I am here for my children not for my husband. I divorced him in my mind from the day he came with his new wife. Now, my dear, sex with him is rape. I accept sex so that he won't chase me away from my children. But I lost all the feelings for him. I don't mind if he keeps on marrying because I have lost him already. I don't care.

Norah dislikes polygyny as it has meant problems for her in relation to both the co-wife and their common husband. The major problem between co-wives and thus a source of conflict is money and resources.

> Ratidzo: The most problems are about money, because when our husband shares the money between us co-wives each one of us will think that someone else has been given more. Also, it's not easy for me to share my husband with other wives.

The problem of money, which Ratidzo expresses, I interpret as a problem of sharing and competing for the husband's resources. In some cases the first wife mobilises the resource of 'the idea of the first wife's authority' to exercise power over co-wives, as Prisca tells:

> Prisca: It's bad to be a second wife. To be the first wife is better. For me as a second wife life is very hard. I was beaten by the first wife and all my clothes were thrown out and she told me to sleep outside her houses. My husband was quiet because he knew that he did wrong things. In this case I can't say he wanted me for a change of something. She is just envious. He is busy apologising to his wife (that he married me) but he also says he loves me. Sharing food with the other wife is also a problem. I sometimes spend two days without food because she has locked the kitchen. I don't like the first wife.

Besides showing a bad relation between co-wives, this answer also shows that the first wife has some power over subsequent wives. But, on the other hand and in some cases not according to the tradition people tell, the newer wife/wives have

acquired more power in relation to the first wife. Next, Estelle, a young and third wife sees how good it can be to come to an already settled home:

> Estelle: I like my position as a third wife because now I own everything; husband, money and nice houses.

If a woman marries an older man he has usually accumulated wealth together with his previous wives, thus offering a new wife more wealth and less hard work. Estelle continues:

> Interviewer: What would you say if your husband married another wife?
> Estelle: I don't allow my husband to marry another wife because I want to be the last so I am very jealous. I will do anything to prevent him from marrying again such as fighting or using love portions.
> …………………………………………………………………
> Interviewer: Who decides who works in your garden?
> Estelle: I mostly find labourers to work in my garden and I just ask my husband for money to pay them.

Estelle feels that she is the favourite and thinks she can stay the favourite. That a woman who marries an already married man does this to share the wealth is expressed by many women and men in the interviews. Here Eric explains:

> Interviewer: Why do women want to marry an already married man?
> Eric: They are after plundering someone's wealth.

That the wealth already accumulated at a settled home can be one reason to marry an already married man, Estelle showed us, and there may be other explanations as well. Nevertheless, this discussion shows that wives are concerned about sharing wealth, when they consider relations between co-wives. The favouritism she gets from her husband, or a good starting position compared with the first wives who usually have to work hard, is a reason for tense relations between co-wives. The wealth that she now experiences is the product of hard work by his first and second wife. However, Estelle is aware of her insecure right to land:

> Interviewer: Would you like to be allocated land in your own right?
> Estelle: I think yes because you will be able to sell the crops without consulting anyone. Again, I am afraid of the first wives so I really need land but they don't give me because they want to give [land] to men only.

Wives' insecure land-holding when a husband dies is accentuated by polygyny. The chance for Estelle to stay on the land, as a subsequent wife, is limited. The insecure rights to land is a fact for all women (as they are not seen as belonging to the husbands' lineages), but most severe for the latest wife. This is so as land is limited and older wives presumably have older sons who can safeguard their mother's right to stay on the land in the role of being the mother to the lineage's sons. All the problems mentioned in this section amount to women expressing the fact that they face in the capacity of being co-wives. That kind of subordinance is induced directly by husbands, or indirectly by the polygynous practice in itself.

Subordination and competition

This is in line with Clignet's notion that the greater the wife's subordination to her husband, the more she will compete with her co-wives to gain or keep her husband's favours (Clignet, 1970). Euphania tells:

> Euphania: My husband went to live with this woman (at her parents' home). He sold our farm produce and went with all the money to this woman. I was left with no money and I suffered together with my children. I then went to this woman's parental home and set all huts and everything else with a thatched roof on fire out of anger…. The woman then came to stay with my husband at my homestead. I was forced to share my hut and house with her until her own kitchen and house had been built in our homestead…. My husband then stopped treating me as a wife. He stopped having sex with me, stopped buying clothes for me, and yet made me work in the fields while the second wife dressed smartly and did not come to the fields.

This vivid extract shows that a husband's unequal treatment of co-wives is a reason for bad relations between co-wives. The bad relations are reasons to mobilise resources to out-manouvre the co-wife, even if it seldom becomes as violent as in Euphania's case. There is a lot of talking within a polygynous wedlock. Much time is spent on handling relations rather than on farming:

> Henrietta: Before I came to live with my husband and his other wife I thought polygyny was good. But now I think it is very difficult to live in polygyny. There is too much talking and no happiness in polygyny… I cannot control another wife.

Access to power

There is a lot of reasoning in the interviews on ways to exercise power over another person's activities. Women also mobilise resources to control co-wives directly. Through witchcraft there are ways for a woman to exercise power over a co-wife or

over a husband's mistress and that is by putting spells on the woman with the help of a traditional healer. (*Sorcery* is used on husbands to control them.) Here, again, Euphania tells the interviewer how she consulted a traditional healer on how to handle the co-wife:

> Euphania: I got so angry about the bad way my husband was treating me so I decided to use witchcraft…. I got a man to do this for me. I wanted my husband back. I went to this man with the second wife's footprint with me and an iron nail. I was instructed to say all my grievances and direct them on the iron nail…. Then one morning … the second wife woke up crying. She had an iron nail embedded in her foot…. She died … and I won back my husband.

Euphania believes in the power of the spell that she put on her co-wife. If women believe in witchcraft it is possible to use it as a resource to exercise power.

Summary wife to wife

Women can also exercise power, but over other women rather than in relation to men. The dominant themes in the relation between co-wives concern sharing resources and handling the husband. The husband's treatment of each of his wives seems to be the most important determinant of the way co-wives interact. Clignet also finds the same phenomenon in other polygynous societies (Clignet, 1970). There seems to be both cooperation and conflict between co-wives (consequent on a husband's attitude towards each of them), but conflicts predominate, *partly* because of the way husbands display favouritism. Women are dependent on husbands and thus mobilise resources to attract their favours in order to exercise power in relation to co-wives. Wives have more or less 'power to' their common husband. In some families and on some issues they have common goals and the power relation is manifested in *cooperation*. There may also be cases of *co-existence* where co-wives do not cooperate but have independent aims to raise their own children. However, as seen in most interviews the power relations between co-wives are cases of *competition* or at best *co-existence*.

The power relation between co-wives *should* if relations were smooth be one of *mutual dependency*. In that event both or all wives have 'power over' and are dependent on each other. Alternatively, it *should* be one of *cooperation* where all wives have similar, collective goals and one of the wives has more power than the other wife or wives. In this last case wives exercise 'power to'. Nevertheless, as I have shown, the relations between co-wives are instead often a matter of *competition*, where the wives are powerful in different ways and their goals are
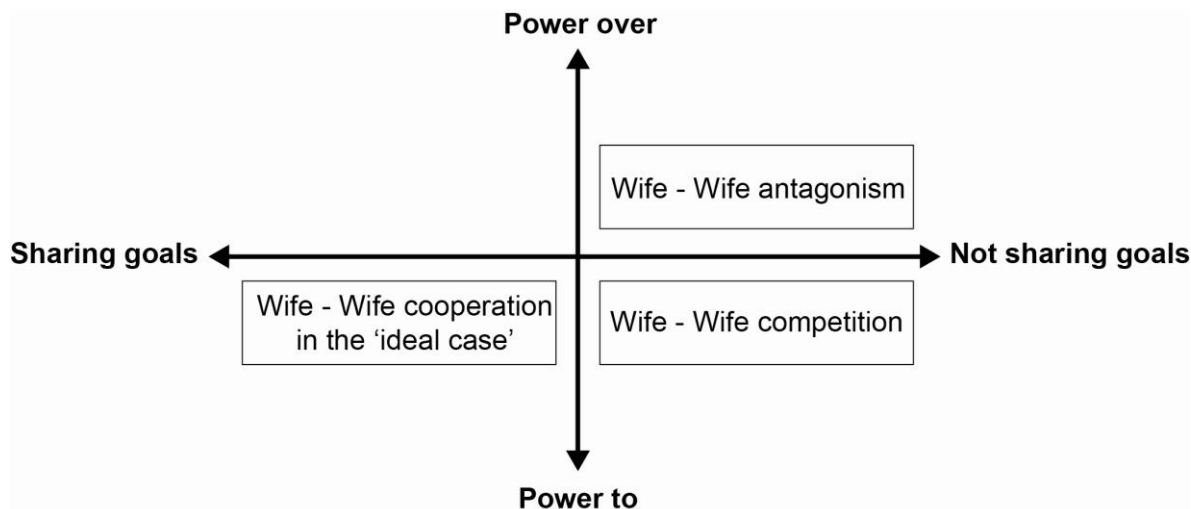
Figure 7: Two-dimensional diagram of power relations between co-wives.
        Source: Karin Steen. Layout: Karin Steen and Ann Åkerman.

mutually exclusive. The co-wives mobilise the resources of *seniority*, *favouritism*, being a *good wife* or *sorcery*. Or if the relation between co-wives is more tense, then the power relations can be described as a situation of *antagonism*, especially if in the exercise of power wives restrict, resist or disrupt one another. These are examples where (some) women actively try to limit the access by a co-wife or wives to a husband's goodwill and resources. As such, the power relation between co-wives can be situated in several places in figure 7.

Summary

In sum, the gender regime in Chiweshe is characterised by an asymmetric power relation. Husbands exercise two types of power in three types of fields: 'power over' wives, 'power over' decision-making, and 'power to' women's labour. Men exercise instrumental power over women. This means that, as we will see in the next chapter, men may be more successful in exercising their strategy and out-competing women's strategies, especially when strategies among spouses are conflicting. Women exercise two types of power in two types of fields: a certain limited 'power over' men by producing food for the family in the garden and a limited 'power to' achieve strategic goals and empowerment (Kabeer 2005) by using the garden as a 'piggy bank' or 'loot fund'. Moreover, women exercise a

certain limited 'power over' men by appealing to husbands' goodwill for various reasons and to meeting a variety of purposes. Wives exploit the resource of mobilising the image of a 'good man' which is an expression of the value-based norm of the 'ideal man' within the gender regime. As another aspect of exercising power within wedlock women draw on the resource of offering their husbands special 'love portions'. Senior women can exercise power over younger wives in the capacity of seniority. However, younger wives are often favoured by their husbands, which may lead to conflicts. The main power dispute between co-wives appears in the competition for a husband's favours and resources. Thus, wives who can out-compete other women in terms of attracting more favours and resources from husbands can be said to exercise more 'power over' co-wives and more 'power to' fulfil their practical and strategic goals. Overall, I see no striking changes in power relations between spouses in interview data. Yet, to the extent that power relations are embedded in a wider social context other emerging institutional changes may influence gender relations between: men, spouses, and women within polygyny.

In this chapter I have reached a partial or preliminary answer to the second research question on power in the polygynous gender regime. In the next chapter I will explore this further by discussing how spouses mobilise resources and exercise power within wedlock in order to influence or even change the land rights institution; especially in terms of how it governs the control over the garden. This is reflected in the very strategies, sub-strategies and practices that women and men employ and in how well they succeed in implementing them. I will also continue the discussion on *how* to mobilise resources to achieve change and then identify and locate the institutional changes that may be emerging. Finally, in chapter 7, we will see that men's 'power over' women influences the gendered organisation of production to the extent that this may hamper food production and food security.

6 Strategies in the gender regime

Navigating towards gendered goals

In chapter 2, I introduced the social setting and the gender regime of land and labour rights in subsistence farming. I discussed the gendered land rights in terms of a man's rights to farm land and a women's access, via her husband, to a garden for vegetable production. I discussed the gendered labour rights in terms of men's potential access to and control of women's labour through bridewealth and polygyny. In chapter 5, and as a specific aspect of the gender regime, I analysed power within wedlock between spouses and among women as co-wives. In order to understand better the dynamics of the gender regime it is necessary to clarify how gender strategies emerge, develop and interact. Thus, in chapter 6, I will show how the gender regime of land and labour rights gives rise to differentiated female and male strategies shaped by gendered opportunities, obligations and aspirations. More specifically, I will display and discuss how women and men, respectively, navigate within the gender regime via female and male strategies, sub-strategies and practices in order to fulfil their social obligations and reach their gendered social goals. The proposition is that the analysis of how women and men perform, enact and thus 'do' gender in relation to land and labour will increase our understanding of what is going on in the gender regime. This, in turn, is essential for explaining how the gender regime delimits production or may at least limit the potentials for increased production or even, in its extension, jeopardise food security.

Over time various social conditions emerge, which initiate institutional changes in land rights. Since women in the study have only secondary rather than primary land rights the challenge of accessing new land has mainly been an issue for men. But in a situation of land shortage, the conventional way of accessing land through male inheritance and birthright is no longer available for all men. The land shortage, or the imminent risk of it, thus creates an unsettled social and institutional situation, especially for men. I shall therefore argue that peasant farmers now need to find and explore new ways to access land. The limited availability of land fosters the emergence of changes in the institution of men's land rights thus giving rise to a main male strategy that I call: 'navigating to access land'. In parallel to men's main strategy, I argue that the main female strategy is not to access land but to 'navigate to raise children' to enact and fulfil a gendered obligation. Under these conditions, however, the norms and rules of polygyny and bridewealth may be a hindrance for

women in reaching their social goal, as we will see. This results in a minor emerging institutional change in polygyny in favour of monogamous marriages.

I will now define certain key concepts and then employ the three 'actor close' theoretical components of the model in chapter 3: *discourse, everyday politics* and *power for change*. After the analysis of male and female strategies, I will consider the effects that the strategies may have on the institutions of land and labour rights in the gender regime.

On culture and strategies

I need to define and clarify certain concepts, especially culture and strategy. Following Swidler (Swidler, 1986: 273) I define culture in simplified terms as a 'tool kit' meaning 'the publicly available symbolic forms through which people experience and express meaning'. The definition suits my purpose as it covers practices and activities such as: formal rituals and ceremonies as well as informal cultural practices such as beliefs, language, gossip, stories and rituals of daily life (Swidler, 1986). Culture shapes the capacities from which strategies of action are constructed and Swidler argues:

> …a culture has enduring effects on those who hold it, not by shaping the ends they pursue, *but by providing the characteristic repertoire from which they build lines of action* (Swidler, 1986: 284). (My emphasis added).

In any culture or society, people employ short term practices and longer term strategies. In the introduction I follow Swidler and briefly define the meaning of strategies as 'persistent ways of ordering action through time' (Swidler, 1986: 273). More specifically, following Swidler again, a strategy consists of what a person wants and aims for; the rationale for such ends/goals; what s/he does to reach the goals; and how s/he reflects on her/his own actions. In this context, I consider strategies to be rooted in and shaped by the social context rather than being rooted primarily in personality. Thus, I see strategies as structured.

I will argue that perceptions are imbued by the gender regime, which also influences female and male goal setting and defines appropriate actions, roles and behaviour. In line with that, I will argue that gender dynamics in this study are rooted in a certain type of cognition that becomes pervasive. Explicitly, this means that gender determines what is produced, how, by whom, for whom and based on what resources. I can thus argue that gender not only determines 'who can have what and do what' in this particular gender regime; gender also restricts farming

activities and production size, which may affect food security. In the research context, women and men have gendered rights, goals and obligations. In principle this condition separates men from women and unites women and men respectively. This makes gender into a main dividing line in terms of identity. Moreover, the struggles over meaning are gendered in the sense that women and men mobilise different cultural understandings to justify their claims over resources, as also observed in other settings (Goldman and Schurman, 2000, Rocheleau and Ross, 1995). Obviously, there can be different strategies *within* a group of women/men but due to gendered prerequisites the gendered strategies that separate women from men are more predominant than any individual type of strategy.

At the outset of research, the intention was to study gendered *production* strategies. But in the data analysis it appeared that while strategies affect food production both directly and indirectly, and in its extension maybe also food security, production itself is not the primary concern. As I will show, there are many other ongoing activities in the setting relating to land, labour and production but based on other rationales than increased production for food security. I will therefore discuss how and why women and men employ different strategies while navigating towards their gendered goals. I will also analyse agency, processes and institutional change by using the three actor close components in the theoretical framework: discourse, everyday politics, and power for change.

In the methodological discussion in chapter 4, I introduced the procedures and techniques for how to code interview data and how to construct analytical categories based on the codes. Essentially, the analytical categories represent a synthesised and theorised understanding of the empirical material (Ragin and Amoroso, 2011). On the basis of the analytical categories I construct the female and male strategies, sub-strategies and practices that I discuss and display here.

Identifying strategies via gerund coding

People enact gender everyday when they reproduce or negotiate the gender regime in their *thinking*, *speaking* and *acting*(Schmidt, 2008) and by *supporting*, *complying*, *modifying* or *resisting*(Kerkvliet, 2009) the rules, norms and values of the regime. Hence, actors who are doing, redoing and reforming gender affect the institutions involved. In the analysis of all the 'doings' that I identify in the interview data a number of clusters emerged. Based on those, I constructed analytical categories, which I later translated into gender strategies that I will display in figures. Such illustrations make apparent the connection between three

strategic levels: a main strategy, a sub-strategy and a practice. The main strategy is the summation of all sub-strategies and practices and all the practices and sub-strategies support the main strategy. In Figure 8, the diagram explains how I organise the gendered strategies, which I will now start analysing by employing the theoretical framework.
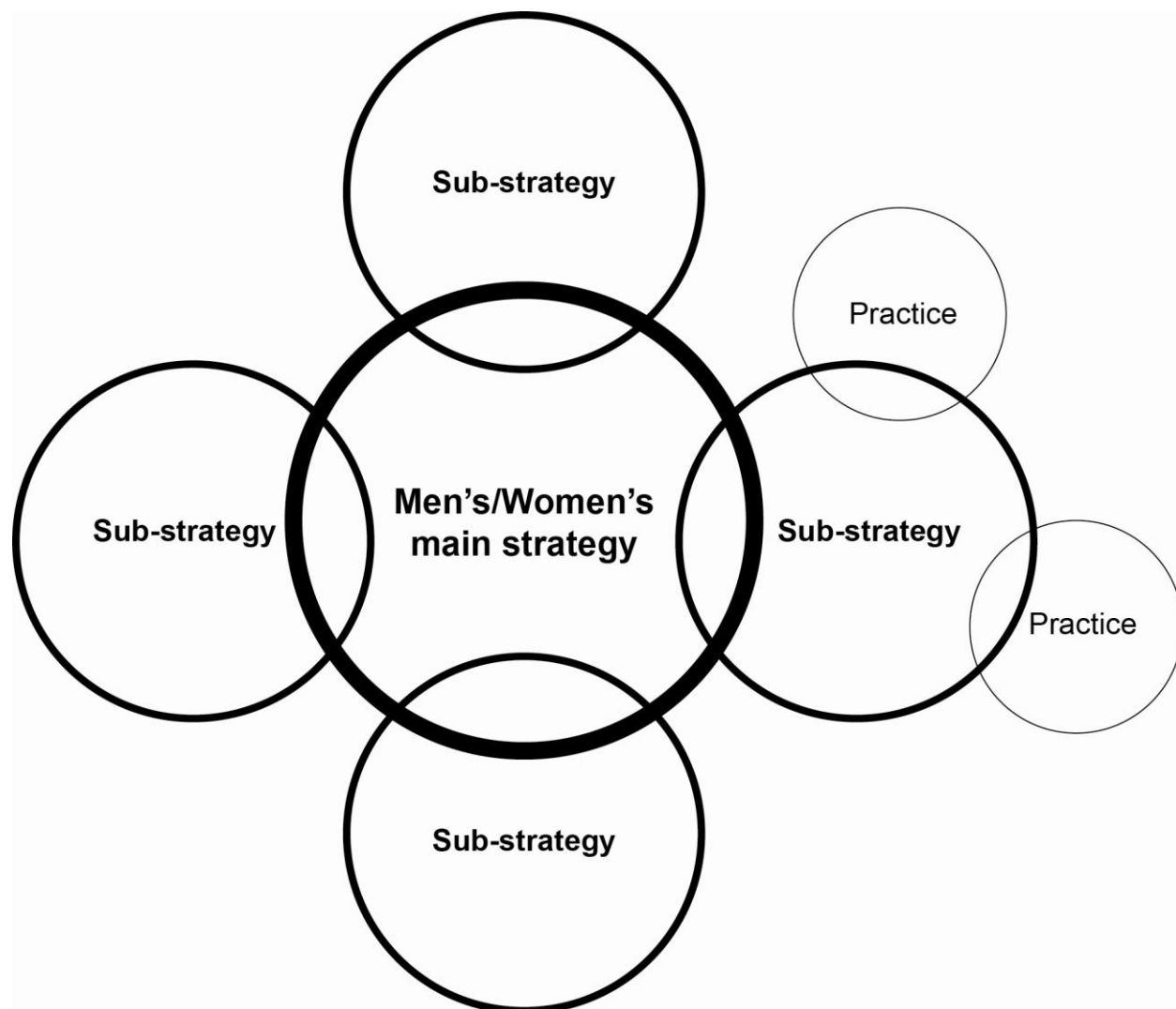
Figure 8: A principal sketch of strategies.
　　　The strategies are defined by the gender regime of land and labour rights. Source: Karin Steen. Layout: Karin Steen and Ann Åkerman.

Analysing change

I will apply the theoretical framework and analyse change in the strategies and in the larger institutions. The framework focuses on individual actors in the present time. A change in strategy can lead to a change in an institution, which I will define as a sedimented discourse.

I have applied the theoretical framework to my interviews in two steps: First, inspired by Schmidt (Schmidt, 2008) I use discourse to investigate everyday politics (Kerkvliet, 2009). I look at what people are *thinking*, *speaking* and *acting* and to what extent they are *supporting*, *complying*, *modifying* and *resisting* the institutions of land rights and polygyny. Secondly, I have applied the power component from the analytical framework (Avelino and Rotmans, 2009) to identify the resources that people mobilise to exercise power and possibly to initiate change in the direction they like. I will now discuss the three components (see Figure 9) in detail.
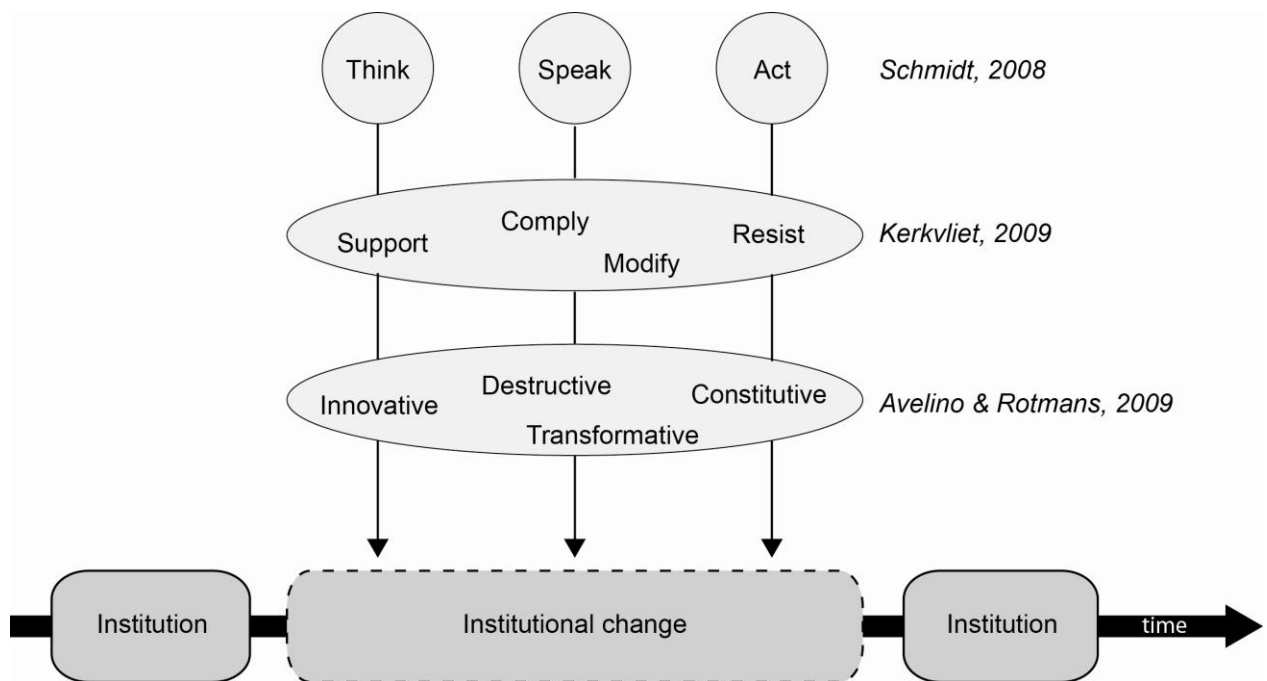
Figure 9: Actor close components in the institutional model.
   A theoretical framework for studying institutional change. Source: Karin Steen. Layout: Karin Steen and Ann Åkerman

Discourse

In chapter 3, I introduced the concept of *discourse* – 'talking about one's ideas' (Schmidt, 2008:305). Schmidt discusses how institutional change starts at the level of individuals. The discussion of ideas can initiate institutional change in an individual actor's mind. Such discussions, as seen in all the *speaking* in the data, are sites of change according to discursive new institutionalism. Schmidt contributes with an understanding of how institutional change can be initiated. She distinguishes between 'background ideational abilities' – encompassing human capabilities, dispositions, and knowledge of how the world works and how to cope with it – that help actors follow rules. This is seen in contrast to 'foreground discursive abilities' – thinking, speaking and acting – that make actors reflect upon and possibly start changing institutions (Schmidt, 2008). Often, institutional change starts in processes of foreground discursive abilities because people have a capacity to *think* and *speak* outside the institution in which they continue to *act* (Schmidt 2008:315). The discursive abilities represent the logic of communication which:

> …enables agents to think, speak, and act outside their institutions even as they are inside them, to deliberate about institutional rules even as they use them, and to persuade one another to change those institutions or to maintain them (Schmidt 2008: 314).

Actors have the *power* to be critical of the status quo even as they follow the rules of the institution. Discourse as an *interactive process* enables agents to change institutions because the discourse allows them to understand and talk about institutions as objects at a distance even if they continue to use them. This is so because a discourse spans two levels: the everyday level of enacting an institution and a meta-level where individuals communicate about what goes on in this institution. This enables them to discuss and persuade each other as a *prelude* to action (Schmidt, 2008). Following discursive institutionalism, I look at how change starts from 'foreground discursive abilities'. To that end, I build on Schmidt's argument that change starts in an agent's thinking, followed by speaking and acting. This frame of analysis fits my data (because I find a lot of thinking and talking in the interviews), and it is here that I can possibly see emerging signs of change in institutions. Whereas the size and amount of land and labour are to some degree given in the gender regime under study, the ideas of how to practise and use these resources are changing. The institutions entail ideas, norms and values and how to act out of women's and men's possibilities, practices, limitations and access. The discourse on gender rights, goals and responsibilities is thus very visible in the area under study.

Following Schmidt, a thought about the institution or practice *precedes* an action to change it. However, Swidler discusses thinking and acting in another way and she argues that people in periods without much change can live with great discontinuity between talk and action (Swidler, 1986), while in troubled periods with many changes, values are unlikely to be good predictors of action (or of future values) (Swidler, 1986). This means that there does not need to be any connection between thinking and acting. In settled cultural periods, the culture and social structures appear to be set and it is in accordance with them that people think and act. There is no discussion, in Swidler's argument, on where aspects of change actually start to unsettle the culture, making people think and act in new ways. Thus, people are simply faced with an already changing structure. Nevertheless, to argue that change starts with thinking is not in contradiction to Swidler as the actual start of change is not up for discussion in her argument. Thus, I can still perceive change as starting in actors' minds.

However, there is no available way of knowing the process by which ideas go from thought to word to action, ultimately precipitating an institutional change. This raises the question of agency, which again brings us to the concept of discourse (Schmidt, 2008). I argue that in my setting it is most useful to view change as starting in the minds of women and men (*thinking*). The next step is to express it within wedlock (*speaking*) and the third step is to start behaving (*acting)* according to the new conviction.

Lukes (Lukes, 2005) views the relation between thinking and acting in one way which contradicts Schmidt's approach in two ways. Firstly, according to Shortall (1999), Lukes argues that there is a visible discrepancy between thought and action. Suppressed people believe they follow their own belief in their actions, even though they have been forced upon them. They believe it is their own belief, since they have been taught to act in that way and that is how they act in normal cases. Their 'true' thoughts can become visible at short notice, in abnormal cases, when they act collectively. Lukes suggests studying their true thought or will in abnormal cases when the suppressor's power is limited. By studying abnormal cases (like revolutions) in the way that Shortall does when she interprets Luke's argument, we can identify the power structures that are invisible in normal cases (Shortall, 1999). In my interpretation of Schmidt's argument, people can hold a thought of their own even if they are suppressed and cannot openly contest the oppressive institution. This means that they can have an opinion independent from and in contradiction with the suppressor's opinion. Such thinking in contradiction to the ruling idea can be identified in talking and I may find it expressed in the

interviews. Further, I suggest that the ideas expressed in abnormal situations are often more strongly tainted by the oppressor's ideas.

I employ the method of studying extreme cases (see chapter 4). It might be a solution to view Lukes' suggested study of abnormal cases as 'an abnormal case in time', such as a revolt against rulers, while I study extreme situations such as exposed relational situations of, for example, widowhood and landlessness. I study marginalised individuals and society's treatment of them, as I believe that it is in such extreme cases that the ruler's ideas and norms, as expressed in the institution, are most visible. Then, it is not the suppressed but the suppressor's idea that is seen. An example in the setting is how widows in practice become landless while the rule often expressed says that they have some rights to land.

Everyday politics

The second 'actor close' component in my analytical framework, *everyday politics* in peasant societies, is inspired by how Ben Kerkvliet (2009) sees this:

> …[it] is entwined with individuals and small groups' activities while making a living, raising their families, wrestling with daily problems, and interacting with others like themselves and with superiors and subordinates (Kerkvliet, 2009: 232).

Further, Kerkvliet defines everyday politics as follows:

> …[it] involves people embracing, complying with, adjusting, and contesting *norms* and *rules* regarding *authority* over, *production* of, or *allocation* of resources and doing so in quiet, mundane, and subtle expressions and acts that are rarely organised or direct (Kerkvliet, 2009: 232). (my emphasis)

Thus, all the activities under study in the area fit into these everyday political activities. Further, it is useful to create a common analytical frame by combining Kerkvliet's categories with Schmidt's distinction of thinking, speaking and acting. In addition to Schmidt's approach I use Kerkvliet's classification to sharpen the argument that any change begins *within the mind* of actors followed by their thinking and acting. According to Kerkvliet (Kerkvliet, 2009), actions can *support*, *comply* with, *modify* (and evade) or *resist* a rule or norm.

Drawing on Kerkvliet, I specify Schmidt's typology as follows: All the discursive abilities (thinking, speaking, acting) can be in favour of or against the existing institution. Kerkvliet's typologies of action are divided between those in favour of institutions – (1) support or (2) comply – and those against – (3) modify (and evade) or (4) resist. This makes it theoretically possible to classify an influence or

intention as any of twelve possible ways in total (see Table 3). Further, the third type, (3) modify, is not completely against a praxis as it is not intentional but can have unintended effects on an authority or a rule. The extent of intentionality marks the extent to which an act is (1) supportive or (2) compliant. Support involves deliberate endorsement of the regime or institution. Compliance is more a matter of supporting without much thought about it (Kerkvliet, 2009). One large realm of everyday support and compliance involves relations within households as carried out and enacted 'day in and day out'. Further, everyday support and compliance involve production, distribution and use of resources, which above all comply with or reinforce differences and help perpetuate a political system and authority (Kerkvliet, 2009). Between compliance and resistance there are (3) modifications and evasions of what authorities expect, or against how an institution is practised. Kerkvliet does not consider modifications to be forms of resistance because they are not intentionally opposing the superiors. Instead, when people make shortcuts in order to get by in everyday life it may unintentionally lead to a modification of, in my setting, institutions. In these cases people do not comply with authorities' expectations but have no intention to resist (Kerkvliet, 2009). Finally, (4) resistance involves *intentional* acts or claims by subordinate people against superiors. In this case I interpret resistance as being against an institution as it has currently been practised. In Table 3, I display a combined typology where Kerkvliet's terminology serves to specify Schmidt's terminology. The combined typology is useful for locating, classifying and interpreting small indications of emerging change, especially within thinking and speaking. To that end, I sift data through the categories (Ragin and Amoroso, 2011).

Table 3: The typology for categorising thinking, speaking and acting.
    Source: Karin Steen.

	Supporting	Complying	Modifying	Resisting
Thinking	IN FAVOUR	IN FAVOUR	MAYBE AGAINST	AGAINST
Speaking	IN FAVOUR	IN FAVOUR	MAYBE AGAINST	AGAINST
Acting	IN FAVOUR	IN FAVOUR	MAYBE AGAINST	AGAINST

Power for change

The third 'actor close' component, *power for change*, in the theoretical framework refers to a typology of power and how power is exercised. Here I draw on Avelino and Rotmans' definition of power as 'the ability of actors to mobilize resources to achieve a certain goal' (2009:550). Different types of power cause different degrees of change. Avelino and Rothmans conceptualise power in relation to structural change and then develop a power framework. A typology of how power is exercised can be deduced by distinguishing the different ways and different levels in which one can mobilise resources. They distinguish five types of power: (1) innovative, such as creating or discovering new resources; (2) destructive, (3) constitutive, (4) transformative, perhaps redistributing old resources or replacing them with new resources; and (5) systemic (Avelino and Rotmans, 2009). Transformative power means to exercise power temporarily, whereas constitutive power is needed to establish permanent change. Avelino and Rotmans suggest that:

> …[the] distinction between types of power is based on two dimensions: 1) the nature of mobilization: *constructive* versus *deconstructive*; and 2) the level of mobilization: *resources* versus the *distribution* of resources. Within these dimensions, four ideal types of power are defined. At the level of resources, we find *innovative* power (constructive) versus *destructive* power (deconstructive), and at the level of resource distribution, we find *constitutive* power (constructive) versus *transformative* power (deconstructive). All these exercises of power are embedded in systemic power… (Avelino and Rotmans, 2009:554).

All forms of power can either *enable* and *enforce* or *resist* and *restrict* one another from being exercised. This fits well with Kerkvliet's concepts of everyday politics because the concepts '*enable*' and '*enforce*' are comparable with Kerkvliet's concepts of *support* and *comply*, whereas the concepts of *resist* and *restrict* are comparable with Kerkvliet's *modify* and *resist*. I will use Kerkvliet's typology as I find it more nuanced in the analysis of forward discursive disabilities, such as thinking, speaking and acting (Schmidt, 2008). Moreover, I use Avelino's and Rotmans' (Avelino and Rotmans, 2009) typology in the analysis of institutional change on a group level as well as in the analysis of the different types of power that are used to enforce these changes, whether they be transformative, innovative, destructive or constitutive. I use their conceptualisation of power dynamics to systematically describe actors' strategies in terms of power. Such strategies can include various combinations of power exercise (Avelino and Rotmans, 2009).

Avelino and Rotmans deduce four conditions for the ability to exercise power: (1) *access* to resources, (2) *strategies* to mobilise them, (3) *skills* to apply those

methods, and (4) the *willingness* to do so. Strategies refer to various methods[20] that are applied in order to mobilise resources. Strategies also include how actors exercise power as a reponse to how others exercise power (Avelino and Rotmans, 2009). This discussion of how to exercise power resembles Kabeer's (Kabeer, 1999) empowerment discussion wherein she distinguishes between resources, agency, and achievements. Agency here means to mobilise resources for some purpose. Achievements can be strategic, such as really 'getting out' of poverty or entrapment or subordination, or traditional, like simply 'getting by' (Kabeer, 1999). Avelino and Rotmans (2009), on the other hand, argue that empowerment can be the attainment of (1) resources, (2) strategies, (3) skills and (4) willingness to exercise power. I will consider this when I interpret the female and male strategies. Next, it is fruitful to compare the level of change accomplished by an individual or a group of actors by using Kabeer's (Kabeer, 1999) concept of 'transformatory significance'. The ability to choose is central to the concept of power; one must constantly reflect on the availability or absence of choice in relation to dominant power structures (see the discussion on choice in chapter 4 on methodology.) The consequences of *choices* can be estimated according to their *transformatory significance*, defined as:

> ... the extent to which the choices made have the potential for challenging and destabilizing social inequalities and the extent to which they merely express and reproduce those inequalities (Kabeer 1999: 460f).

When I discuss emerging changes at the end of this chapter, I will apply this and see what transformatory significance the changes may have on the institutions of land and labour rights. The concept corresponds to practical and strategic gender needs or goals, discussed in chapter 5, as it can be used to assess the outcome of change in terms of gender or equity. Next, I will discuss the gendered strategies that I deduced from the gerund coding. In order to be able to interpret the possible institutional change that I find in the data, I will apply the three 'actor close' components of the theoretical framework: discourse (Schmidt, 2008), everyday politics (Kerkvliet, 2009) and power for change (Avelino and Rotmans, 2009).

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[20] For example: formalisation, ceremonial activities, voting, prohibition, subsidies, contests, management models, etc. (Avelino 2009:556f).

The main male strategy: navigating towards access to land

Based on the discussion in chapter 2 on the meaning that peasant farmers in the study attach to land plus the discussion on 'ideal man' in chapter 5, I argue that male identity is partly constructed on the basis of controlling land. The main impression from interviews with men is that they act to keep open all ways to access land. This is seen in what they do and say about rules, norms and practices of rights to land. Accordingly, I call the main strategy constructed from the analysis of their interviews: 'navigating towards accessing more land'. Land is scarce, but there are various ways in which it can be acquired. Men are generally concerned with how to access this limited resource using both well-known and newly invented methods in order to fulfil their present and future land needs. By using new ways men initiate a possible institutional change, using new resources to exercise power to conduct a change in their own favour (Avelino and Rotmans, 2009). Gerunds such as 'applying' (for land), 'requesting', 'asking', 'hearing', 'talking of', generated from the data, are explicit indications of how men manoeuvre themselves in search of land. All sub-strategies are subordinated to the main strategy of navigating towards access to land, but each one represents a specific way to fulfil the main strategy. Men's main strategy, their sub-strategies and their practices are displayed in Figure 10. Below, I will start discussing the sub-strategies.

Men's goals could, in fact, be described as unproductive in terms of farming. However, the outcome of their actions may not necessarily be inefficient because the rationale for men, I argue, is not directly to increase food production or productivity per se. At first glance, men's main action in relation to production is to secure their lineages. To continue and safeguard their lineage's right to land is an ideal and moral obligation for a man, something a man who aspires to act in accordance with the 'ideal man' wants to follow. I thus suggest that men's strategies are spatial and expansive, reaching far into the future (as well as back in history). A man's goal is not primarily to improve the conditions for this or the next generation, but for (many) future generations. As an analytical consequence, this focus may in the short run reduce productivity in food production.
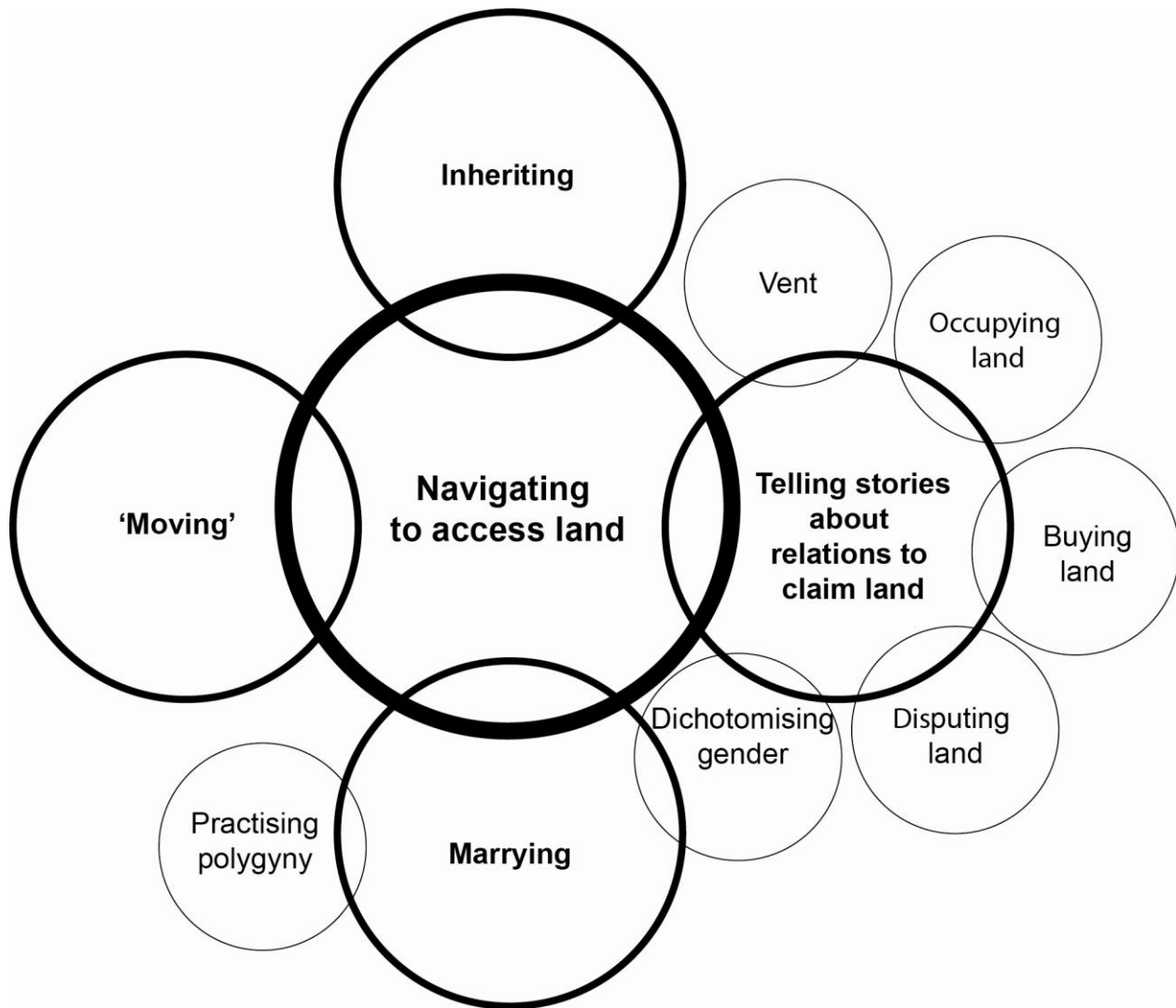
Figure 10: Cluster of men's strategies for navigating towards land access.
Source: Karin Steen. Layout: Karin Steen and Ann Åkerman.

Inheriting as a sub-strategy

Several generations ago, the prime method for a man to access land was through inheritance from his father. Expressed as an entitlement, the 'natural' way of accessing land was through inheritance and all men were entitled to land. This is expressed in an interview with Gertrude, an elderly woman:

Gertrude: Man is man – he gets land.

Gertrude's extract shows the social norm that seems to be that nearly all men get a piece of land to support the family. This also explains that simply for being a man, a man expected, and still can expect, to get land as he is entitled to it. Despite the land shortage, people speak of a birthright to land. As one chief explained it:

> Chief X: Even though land is in short supply, everyone [every man] has a strong right to land.

I interpret this as if men have a strong belief in the material and immaterial value of land and in their own connection to land. Thus, it seems that men have a self-evident right to land. Even in a situation where there is insufficient land people are not willing to abandon the idea of a man's natural right to it. The conventional way to access land for a man is still through inheritance, which is one of four main sub-strategies. I find that men still have a birthright to land even if each generation of men receives less land than the previous generation. Nevertheless, since land is central to men in a context of land shortage, they have to use other ways, old and new, to access land. By looking at the diagram in Figure 10, one can tell that land pressure and the legislation forbidding sales of land are significant obstacles to accessing land. Men therefore have to manoeuvre themselves via several (new) sub-strategies in order to navigate towards land access.

Moving as a sub-strategy

In a longer time perspective men can move as a strategy to handle the shortage of land[21]. The sub-strategy of moving has temporal and spatial dimensions and entails both physical and professional moves. Even if living in town or having another career to support a family as a result of having no land, a man seldom gives up the thought of accessing land in the rural area of his origin (Field data 2000, 2007). Seen from the perspective of both those who have land and those waiting in the villages for land, it is an issue of uncertainty. People who are away can suddenly return and claim their right to land. If people come back they are sometimes 'squeezed in', as interviewees express it, on land not intended for allocation to families as settlement and for farming purposes thus causing occasional land conflicts. To be 'squeezed in' means that land belonging to another peasant farmer or land which is actually intended as commons for fuel-wood collection or for

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[21] In the past there were other reasons for migration. Under colonial rule men had to move to get money income to pay taxes introduced by the colonial government. However, in this thesis I discuss only reasons for migration that are related to land.

separating one farm from another through small strips of land is allocated to a man who returns and succeeds in claiming his land right.

The continuously diminishing availability of land after the creation of the Chiweshe reserve means that men need to invest more effort in new sub-strategies and navigate wisely in order to access and control land.

Marrying as a sub-strategy

Marriage and being married is to some extent an aspect of men's identity, as men in this way become men in relation to women. This is why the circle of dichotomising gender in Figure 10 touches both the identity circle and the marriage circle. Below, I will discuss polygyny as one of the main practices in the sub-strategy of marriage.

Polygyny
In addition to the cluster in Figure 10, there are two new discourses that I will discuss later. One is 'buying land' and the other is 'practising polygyny for new reasons'. I will now address two aspects of the practice of polygyny: (1) land access, and (2) husbands' control over wives and their labour.

First, one reason for men to practise polygyny, discussed as one of many in chapter 2, is as a strategy to access land. Before the creation of the Chiweshe reserve, when unclaimed land was available, polygyny could be a method for accessing land. Today, however, the discourse and rationale for practising polygyny to access land is a re-invented strategy. To access land through polygyny is not really a new method, but the circumstances are new. In the past, land was presumably abundant but now it is scarce. Hence, the new discourse demands new ways of *persuasion* as to why precisely one has a right to land. To be allocated land from village heads or the chief for the sake of children's well-fare is the new rationale, whereas the previous rationale was to have the ability to farm more land by having more wives. This is a new way for some men to fulfil their goal of increasing the area under their dominance in order to improve conditions for their lineage. Having *dependents* is a valid criterion for land access in the setting, whereas unmarried men have weak land rights. Further, some men try by strength of numbers to make their growing families into a village in order to become village heads and thus receive fame. The efforts made to establish a village reveal the significance of controlling one's own land area. The ambition and attributes of the many meanings of land are also noticed in other studies (Andersson, 1999). An example of using polygyny to access land is seen in this interview extract:

> Henry: A man may see that he is poor and hence needs more land to develop and so he marries many wives.

Here polygyny is a means to obtain both land and wealth. Notice that he does not consider the fact that besides more land he will also get an additional wife and future children to feed. He may not take that into account as he considers all the food and wealth produced as *his* wealth.

The second aspect of polygyny, related to the old rationale of having more wives as a way to access more land, is a way of viewing women as bearers of value. I argue that, in an economic sense, women are not only a labour resource but also a part of a strategy, as a facilitator and argument that is used to have the right to access land. Women are in this practice a bearer of value; they are valuable as an asset during negotiations for more land, as the right to the resource of land to some extent follows with them. My suggested interpretation of a husband's view of a wife and her labour – or even of the wife per se – as property will clarify the discussion on power relations within the production process in the family unit. Some men see themselves as owners of their wife's labour. In interview data there is evidence of the perception that a husband owns his wife as seen in this answer from a middle-aged man:

> Interviewer: Should women be able to inherit land?
> Bothwell: No, because a woman is part of my property and it will be ridiculous to see property inherit another piece of property.

This expresses the view that a man has ownership and power over his wife or wives. Thus, concerning labour rights within wedlock, the institutions of bridewealth and polygyny are important as it seems that it is partly through them that men can control women's labour, as I discussed in chapters 2 and 5. Following from the discussion on polygyny as a practice for accessing land, I expect that polygyny will not diminish as long as there is a shortage of land, which is the case in many communal areas in Zimbabwe.

Telling stories – a new discourse and sub-strategy

The activity of telling stories is expressed in different ways and touches upon most other aspects of the strategy cluster. Thus, it is so prominent that I see it is a sub-strategy of its own. It consists of five practices: dichotomising gender, claiming land, disputing land, occupying land and telling stories as a vent, as I display in

Figure 10. Before moving into these specific practices I discuss the meaning of telling stories as a sub-strategy.

Men tell stories to access land at a time when a man's birthright to land through inheritance cannot always be met, due to the imminent risk of land shortage. Thus, telling stories is a new way of manoeuvring themselves to access land as the land limitations make it impossible for every man to access land through inheritance. The lack of land, as well as the fuzzy, insecure and uncertain land rights, as I discussed in chapter 2, make the act of telling stories a central sub-strategy. Presumably, people always discuss rules for access to resources, but in a situation of acute land pressure the practice of telling stories as a form of everyday politics becomes prominent and substantial. This sub-strategy implies manoeuvring to access land through storytelling with the goal of being the one who accesses the limited land. When men tell stories they discuss and suggest hierarchy in land claims between men. As access to land shrinks, the criteria for accessing land become more important. One must adapt to the new criteria in order to attain the set of properties needed to access land. Since women's rights to land are secondary, the problems that men encounter when trying to access land are with other men who are pursuing the same goal. Thus, men tell stories to invoke their belonging while emphasising other men's non-belonging; hence, they promote their individual or group rights to land. Their stories concern rights to land, the history of their families or villages, land conflicts with colonial settlers, and the importance of land in the 'Chimurengas' as well as in the Nationalistic movement that led to the independence of Zimbabwe (Field data 2000, 2007).

The idea of 'the African farmer as connected to land' and the notion that 'land dignifies a man' in Zimbabwe', as seen in my data, certainly represent a case of tradition or culture becoming ideology (Swidler, 1986). One way to claim the right to land is thus by referring to history and convincing others that oneself is part of it. Another way is through describing oneself as able and talented. Through these stories men legitimise their claims on land. These stories can be interpreted as strategic practices to strengthen identity and to motivate one's right to land in the community. Story telling thus becomes an on-going negotiation for land access and a sort of everyday politics.

The reason for telling stories is to open up new avenues to access and claim land. Moreover, it is a way to locate oneself: socially, in hierarchies and between gender; spatially, in certain bio-physical locations; and regarding lineage, in creating a line between the deceased and the unborn. Leslie Bessant (Bessant, 1994) argues that songs sung at work-parties and in children's play served a similar purpose in another part of Chiweshe from the 1930s until the 1990s. Bessant argues

that locating oneself was the basis for understanding one's place in society (Bessant, 1994). People tried to stabilise their society through songs. In the same way as telling stories, these songs located them in the lineage and in the area, as men or women and as following or violating the community's obligations. Later, in the 1950s a new theme of land shortage emerged in their songs reflecting a change in their reality; land shortage became critical in Chiweshe and the nationalism movement arose (Bessant, 1994). Now it can be argued that the objectives seem to be similar in the songs and in telling stories. According to my data, men's storytelling consists of five practices one of which is dichotomising gender.

Dichotomising gender

The practice of dichotomising gender to access land is another dimension of securing land and becoming a man. This practice has become more important as access to land diminishes and therefore I locate it as a practice linked to the sub-strategy of telling stories. It is an act of separating and keeping women and men apart, which at the same time is an act of subordinating women. The emphasis on the gender difference between women and men, i.e. women's non-rights in dichotomy with men's rights, is a method for keeping land rights within the group of men while safeguarding access to a larger land share. While having and controlling land seems to be necessary to *become* a man, dichotomising gender can be a way for a man to continue *staying* a man. This reasoning is supported by interview evidence. It could be argued that a man is a man because women have no rights; the power over women makes a man a man.

In Figure 10 the practice of dichotomising gender touches upon both sub-strategies of marrying and telling stories to claim land. This is so because it is within marriage that I see that men's right to land is in dichotomy with women's non-rights and women access land (only) through men. Further, it is in the activity of telling stories that gender is dichotomised. Men's stories include how men have always been allocated land in their own right; the special connection between an African man and the land; or that a man needs land to be a man. They contain no mention of women in connection with land, however. When asked, the storyteller explains that they have no special connection to land or any desire to hold it (Field data, 2000, 2007). This is supported by the two assumptions of 'ideal man' and 'ideal husband' (see chapter 5). Firstly, a land holder is synonymous with a man, as seen in these statements by village heads:

> Interviewer: How do you decide who should get land?
> Enoch: You need to be a family *man*.

Interviewer: What characteristics does a person need to have in order to acquire land?
Joel: It should be a good person; if *he* is bad we don't accept *him*.

Interviewer: What characteristics does a person need to have in order to acquire land?
Andric: *He* should be a *son* of a resident.

These statements show that it is self-evident to the interviewees that only 'good husbands' should be given land. Andric continues to explain to us:

Andric: It is the rules that forbid that women get land. The Government regulations say 'one farm for one family'.

Andric's statement shows that it is also self-evident for the interviewees that the family head is synonymous with a man. Secondly, the idea of what I call an 'ideal woman' is referred to, when interviewees dichotomise gender in relation to land. Joel talks about the women who do not meet the 'ideal woman' standard:

Joel: These single women to whom we give land give us problems.

The village head, or the husband's lineage, should offer these women land if they fulfil the requirements of being widowed, as discussed in chapter 2, but Joel does so unwillingly. Other village heads explain why:

Michael: Divorced women are not considered when it comes land acquisition. They will encourage separation and the break up of families.

Caleb: A widow or divorcee deserves land… But a woman who behaves badly won't get land. A prostitute may cause havoc in the village by bringing all sorts of men here.

Women who want land and ask for it will not be seen as 'good women'. They do not express femininity and cannot live up to the norm of being an 'ideal women'. This may explain why women seldom apply for land because a 'good woman' should be allocated land through her husband. To be feminine women should want to be allocated land through a husband and thus honour him. In chapter 5, I showed examples of women who wanted to be allocated land through a husband for the sake of dignity and respect. When women also appeal to the 'ideal woman' and 'ideal man' thus means that male and female identities are constructed and can be understood as polarised characters with land and superiority associated with men (Kirkegaard, 2007).

Disputing land boundaries

Men fight over land. The practice of disputing land boundaries, also a part of telling stories as land claims, concerns farmers who already have land but who feel threatened by – and themselves threaten – neighbours' land claims. These land claims may end up in land disputes, in the village, over boundaries or over different families' rights to land. There are numerous examples of neighbours disputing boundaries, requiring village heads and the chief to mediate and come to a decision. Pharao tells us his story:

> Interviewer: Have you ever borrowed land from anyone?
> Pharao: Yes, I borrowed land from my neighbour. I wanted to grow more cash crops and my land was not big enough. I paid two bags of fertilizer for the use right.
> …………………………………………………………………
> Interviewer: Have you tried to buy land?
> Pharao: No.
> Interviewer: Have you tried to be allocated more land?
> Pharao: Yes, I went to the village head where we register our names for resettlement.
> Interviewer: Have you ever had a land dispute?
> Pharao: Yes. The dispute involved myself and my neighbour. The disputed area was where my yard was. The village head had to help resolve the dispute. He decided that I had to give up the land. I had to change my yard and move further down my field to allow my neighbour to expand towards my previous yard. The land disputes on boundaries are more serious now than in the past. The authorities are the biggest threat to keeping land.

The shortage of available land led to a situation where Pharao had both to lend land and to register for resettlement. The land shortage also led to a land dispute between him and his neighbour. This extract is an example that illustrates how the land shortage and the land legislation, only allowing communal use rights, in combination with men's birthright to land, are determinants that necessitate a negotiation process.

Land occupation

Land can be occupied, yet this practice to access land is extraordinary. Some of the men who were interviewed took part in the 'Fast track' land reform in the years following 2000. In 2007 they had accessed new rights to land in former large scale commercial farms. Some of them had moved their homes to the new areas and some still lived in the villages. They felt secure but were safeguarding land in both places by farming it, lending it to relatives and trying to be industrious on their new lands in the sense of leaving none of it in fallow, which can be a reason to lose it. Many stories were told about possible reasons to be evicted from new land, such as

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keeping it in fallow or not living there, and how to safeguard the newly acquired land right. The practice of land occupation is a part of telling stories because it is embedded in the discourse of land and man, colonialism and the 'Chimurenga'.

Opening a vent

To some extent telling stories can also serve as a vent to ease the pressure of not having enough land and dampening the worry about insecure and uncertain access to it. It can also be a way to 'brag' about your own gifts. Further, a vent is an important part of initiating a possible institutional change. This means that it is through a vent that almost anything can be expressed, without risking consequences, and some of the 'talking' may be an embryo that is taken up by the listener and brought forward to initiate an institutional change.

Buying land – a new discourse

The second new discourse, besides practising polygyny to access land through dependents that I discussed above, is the practice of buying land in the Chiweshe communal area. Many stories are told about the practice of buying land. A situation characterised by a lack of available land is in economic terms a market failure. Economic competition should by itself open up a land market. However, sometimes it is possible to purchase land in the area. I have no information on when this practice was introduced, but despite its illegality (Government of Zimbabwe, 1988), I found several instances of it. When farmers explain it, they say that land itself cannot be purchased, but improvements such as buildings and constructions on the land can be bought. This creates a situation, according to my interviews, where the buyer considers the *land* to be bought while there is a risk that the seller's relatives will claim the right to land and argue for their right to inherit it.

Summing up the male strategy: navigating towards access to land

I have shown that land is essential for men as a resource for food production, as an aspect of identity and as a lineage responsibility. Due to the limited land resources, men must develop new ways of accessing land, thus starting a potential change in the land right institution for men. Besides accessing land through inheritance, marriage, and moving, telling stories emerges as a prominent way to access land.

The main female strategy: navigating to raise children

Women's main strategy, alongside men's, is defined and coded by the gender regime of land and labour rights. Here are some examples of the gerunds that I generated through coding from the data: 'marrying' (to raise children), 'arguing' (with husband and co-wives), 'disliking' (polygyny), 'having' (land or a garden) and 'working' (in the fields or in the garden). These and other gerunds form women's main strategy; I call it 'navigating to raise children'. In the interviews I see a main storyline: for a woman to become a woman, she must marry and raise children. Thus, women's social goals are connected to family building. If there is a belief and a norm for the 'ideal woman' in the area, it consists of a hardworking, self-sacrificing woman raising her children. I dwelled on this in chapters 2 and 5. Thus, women's goals are short term. They focus on their children as the *next* generation only, compared to men's inclinations to prioritise their lineage also in terms of *future* generations and thereby establish bonds with unborn generations. This adds to the symbolic value of land. I display the cluster of women's main strategy, sub-strategies and practices in Figure 11.

Marrying as a sub-strategy

Marrying and having children serve as a first step (and a sub-strategy) towards succeeding in the strategy to raise children. The next step – to access land to feed the family – is also realised through a husband, as I discuss below.

Accessing garden land as a sub-strategy

A main reason for women to marry is to access a garden in order to support a growing family. Women's strategies to access land and to navigate to raise children are connected to family building. Wives are interested both in their own right to a garden and in their husbands' right to land as that also comes to their benefit. Marriage is thus 'an indirect access to a husband's right to land'.

Increasing land pressure has had different effects on the two main gender aspects of the land right institution – organising men's and women's land rights. While men still have a birthright to land, women's land rights, on the other hand, seem to have changed more fundamentally at the time of the critical juncture (Field data, 2007) of increasing land pressure after the creation of the Chiweshe reserve, as I discussed in the introductory chapter.
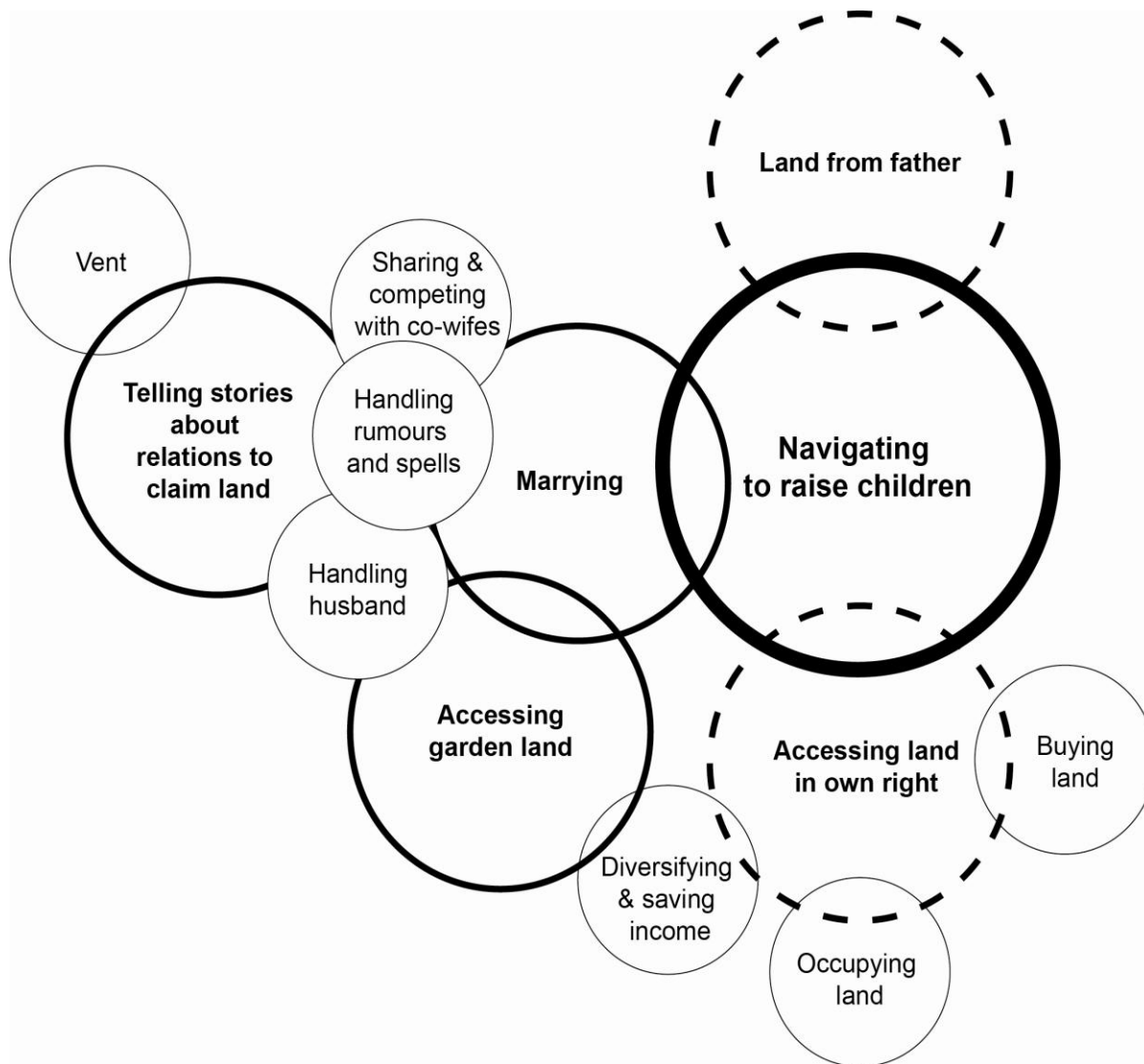
Figure 11: Cluster of women's strategies to navigate towards raising children.
Source: Karin Steen. Layout: Karin Steen and Ann Åkerman.

Today, the size of a husband's landholding affects the extent to which a woman receives a garden, but partly it is the husband's decision whether to give his wife a garden or not and, if he does, it is he who decides its size. I thus assume that a husband's patriarchal power and control of women in the area and period under study has increased. The processes of accessing land, and getting the right to that land, differ between men and women. While men have four ways, through four sub-strategies, to access land (as seen in Figure 10) women have, in reality, only one, through *one* sub-strategy (as seen in Figure 11). For men, inheriting is a direct way; moving, is another direct way but in a longer perspective; telling stories is a

direct yet uncertain way; and marrying is an indirect way. In reality, women's only way to access land, by marrying, is an indirect way. The only 'natural and proper' way for a woman to access land is through a husband. I find evidence in the interviews that to receive land from fathers is an indirect and now no longer common way, while the emerging way of buying or occupying land may represent the only direct ways.

Further, there are two arenas for negotiating land rights relevant in the study area; for men it is in the village and the larger community, for women it is within wedlock. Thus, women's strategies to access land, the garden, are mostly directed towards husbands. Women use a garden under uncertain conditions that are decided by the husband. As I discussed in chapter 5, negotiations on women's land rights take place between the spouses where the patriarchal power relation affects the outcome. In the negotiations, women have few resources to mobilise and their bargaining power is weak (Sen, 1987). Moreover, men are concerned with strategies for *accessing* land while women are concerned with strategies for *staying* on land as I will show in the following.

Widow with children, especially sons
Above all, and as I have mentioned, women's strategies to access, use and partly control land are connected to family building. Women access land indirectly through men and marriage and can thereafter stay on the land for the purpose of raising and supporting the children. Children belong to the husband's lineage. If a woman is widowed, her children may be an incentive for the husband's lineage to allow the widow stay on the land. Grown up sons are often eager to protect their mother's right to land, partly because it will benefit them in the future. A grown up son is thus in reality, for a widow and in the eyes of her husband's family, a legitimate reason for her to keep the land (Field data 2000, 2007).

Diversifying and saving income
Having a garden, which is where women often grow vegetables, is a security for them, as I discussed in chapter 5. Maize grown in men's fields and vegetables and groundnuts grown in women's gardens are neither weeded nor harvested at the same time. Thus, women's labour peak in one place does not compete with her labour peak in the other. For many women an income from vegetable sales is the only income earned. But if the income from the garden increases then a husband's interest in his wife's garden may increase. This may in turn result in a limitation of women's control over farming activities. From a gender perspective and from a

woman's point of view, the main rationale of having a garden is nevertheless to be able to feed her children and husband and in that way 'become a woman'.

As I discussed in chapter 5, gardens are important for women as it is a site where they can exercise agency. Women can use the garden in a strategy to diversify and save income. As seen in Figure 11, I identify 'diversifying and saving income' as a practice, which overlaps with the two sub-strategies of 'accessing garden' and 'accessing land in one's own right' as it is through these two sub-strategies that the practice can be realised.

Handling husbands

A problem for women to succeed in their strategy to raise children emerges in relation to their husbands. They have to handle men in relation to land, as I have discussed, and also, if living in polygyny, in safeguarding a fair share or a larger 'unfair' share, of husbands' resources and care, compared to what other wives get for themselves and their children. Handling one's husband is a prominent practice as it touches on the sub-strategies of 'marrying', 'accessing garden' and 'telling stories about relations' and the practice of 'handling rumours and spells'. Much of the discussion in chapter 5 concerns how women have to 'handle husbands' as a direct effect of women's weak 'fall-back position' (Sen, 1987).

When women handle husbands, the main resource that they want to secure is their access to the (natural and social) resource of a garden, which they then have to defend. It is also the most important resource for women if they are to succeed in raising children, as it is in gardens that women grow much of the family food for home consumption. Not all women interviewed have a garden. Importantly, a woman being allotted a garden is not equivalent to a woman possessing land. Women's insecurity in the access to a garden is a main reason for conflicts over land within wedlock. Women living in polygynous marriages and women who have had serious conflicts with their husbands are most aware of how the garden is part of the husband's land and thus recognise that husbands might recall it. If a husband wants to reclaim the garden for his own purposes the women interviewed do not expect themselves to return it voluntarily, but the chance of their keeping it against their husbands' will is small, as I see it. If a woman needs support in a conflict over her garden she seeks it from her husband's parents. They can have a say as their son often farms his father's land. There are situations where women accept a husband's reclaiming the garden, especially if he transfers it to their grown up son starting a new family. Again, the wellbeing of a mother's children is in focus, but now only that of her *sons*.

Sharing or competing with co-wives

In chapter 5, I discussed the relation between co-wives in more detail. Here I will bring up other aspects. For women the rational of polygyny may have been the same before the creation of the reserve: to access land; to get a husband (if no monogamous man is available); bear children and thus become a woman. But the price has become higher for the women in the area as the idea of women's emancipation seems to get stronger (Field data, 2000, 2007). Both increasing land pressure and emancipation are important processes exogenous to the institution of polygyny, which may affect the prevalence and magnitude of polygyny. In theory, co-wives should be able to share work and resources for their families' common good. But few women see any positive rationale for polygyny nowadays, at least not for women. Even if polygyny can be rational for a man, interview evidence shows that ending up in a polygynous marriage is irrational for a woman if she is to fulfil her social goals. This is so unless she is the last and youngest of her husband's wives, since she is then often favoured by her husband. Yet, this position is also challenging (see chapter 5).

In a monogamous marriage there is always a possibility that the husband will marry again, a risk that many women fear and take measures to safeguard against. Findings show how women in polygynous marriages are aware of their weak land and labour rights and that they seek ways to make their own and their children's livelihoods more secure in competition with the other wife or wives (see Handling husbands). Furthermore, they often look for alternative sources of income (see the section: 'Diversifying and saving income').

One way in which women may handle the potential conflicts with co-wives is, if a husband intends to remarry, that women can suggest that he marries one of her sisters. In that way her lineage's investment in the marriage is guarded. Grossbard argues that in polygynous societies this is practised in order to limit frictions and to keep marginal returns from each wife stable (Grossbard, 1980). Further, if the practice to share with co-wives is not an alternative, there are different ways to handle co-wives. 'By handling her husband', a woman can edge out a co-wife. Another practice is to use witchcraft on a co-wife to make her sick or make their (shared) husband turn against the co-wife. This practice is more often used against potential co-wives such as a husband's mistress/es.

Telling stories about relations as a sub-strategy

Telling stories is also an important sub-strategy for women. Women's stories differ from men's and concern various issues, such as family relations; family conflicts; the act of sharing with other wives; the husband, his mistress/es and methods to deal with this, such as witchcraft, as also seen in chapter 5.

Handling rumours and spells

An essential part of telling stories that I see in the interviews, is for women to handle rumours of witchcraft and spells. First, rivalry between co-wives and competition for men and their resources and goodwill, makes it realistic for women to believe that someone has put a spell on them. The risk of attracting a spell can make women more inclined to follow social rules. A part of telling stories concerns those about someone who has done something wrong or had a woman rival and thus was bedevilled. The practice of handling witchcraft and rumours about it, while navigating to raise children, is a reality for women. Secondly, a woman or man can be labelled a witch. The reasons for attracting the witch-label range from not conforming to rules of community to causing illness and death. A woman who is labelled a witch by society may have more autonomy (Munyuki-Hungwe, Forthcoming), and in practice more secure rights to the land that she is farming, as others do not want to intervene with her. The women labelled witches could gain more independence but they lose out in social relations. Children of witches may have problems as adults as people may be reluctant to interact with them (Munyuki-Hungwe, 2011). Thus, to be labelled a witch does not seem to be an appealing alternative for women in their main strategy to raise children.

Opening a vent

Closely connected to the previous practice is the sub-strategy of telling stories as a type of vent for women's frustration over problems relating to husband and co-wives; resource scarcity; and problems of sharing and unfairness within polygyny. *Speaking*, as a specific aspect of telling stories, seems to be important as a vent to complain and to put up with circumstances that women find difficult. Further, for women as well as for men, a vent is an important part of initiating a possible institutional change.

Land from father as a sub-strategy

If a woman has no husband but maybe children to support then, according to the interviewed farmers, she should be able to access land through her father. In cases were wives are divorced, or if they are expelled from a husband's land if widowed, or if a husband is 'misbehaving', then women should in theory be able to return to her parent's home. However, in case of a divorce, parents should sometimes pay back the bridewealth. If children were born within marriage the bridewealth should not be repaid since children belong to the fathers' lineage. Nevertheless, exposed women are often welcomed back without repayment of the bridewealth, but her father's land is often too limited (in competition with brothers) for her to stay on. Therefore, accessing land from one's father is an old practice to access land that is now fading way because it is no real alternative. I therefore display it as a dotted sub-strategy in Figure 11.

Accessing land in your own right as a sub-strategy

It could be argued that it is for the first time in modern history, that women in Chiweshe are now attempting to acquire more permanent land rights – in contrast to temporary land access in one's own right, i.e. 'matongo', which I discussed in chapter 2. Efforts to access land more permanently in your own right as a woman is a new emerging pattern. As long as land was abundant, the now practised and gendered tenure regime was not necessarily disadvantageous for women. Although women's strategic needs of gender equality were not met, they had land to satisfy their practical needs (Moser, 1989). When colonial settlers forced people into reserves with increasing land shortage, it seems as if women's land rights became more marginalised and thus that women had weaker land rights than men. Given the land shortage and men's strong motive to be allotted land, findings show that in general it is almost impossible for women who have a husband or father to be allotted land, even if they live under bad conditions. The only argument accepted in the community for a woman to be allotted land in her own right is to feed her children when she has no male relative.

I find evidence, as I discussed in chapter 5, that the patriarchal regime as practised prohibits women from *being able* to or even *to wish* to be allotted land in their own right. As husbands will not allow it, most women instead think, maybe as a consequence of purposeful choices (Folbre, 1994), that married women should be allotted land through husbands. I argue that land rights are an ingredient in the gender power relation. However, some women want to be allotted land in their own right, in order to be independent of their husbands in farming decisions and to have

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a safe livelihood. These women feel insecure in their marriage or face problems that they relate to their weak land rights. They may fear that husbands will abuse them, maltreat them in economic terms or divorce them as seen in chapter 5. Most of these women live in polygynous marriages. Moreover, if a woman wants land in her own right she may approach the village head or the chief. Joyce, a monogamously married young woman explained that she wants land in her own right even though her husband would dislike it:

> Joyce: If my husband gets a second wife, it means that she and I will have to share his land. If I have land in my own right, then I can keep my land and the second wife has to look for land of her own.

To have land in her own right, is for Joyce a way to safeguard against problems in case her husband marries another wife. Theoretically, having land in one's own right would be a type of insurance against problems in polygyny. As such, accessing land in one's own right is a sign or effect of the practices of 'handling husbands' and 'sharing and competing with co-wives' as two aspects of women's main strategy to raise children. It can also be interpreted as a step in the direction of the practice to 'diversify and save income'. Even if some women want to access land in their own right, very few succeed in this sub-strategy. However, after the land occupations in 2000, a fair share of land occupants were women who used this sub-strategy. The reason for a woman to access land in her own right can be summarised by Magadaline:

> Interviewer: What would the difference be if you were allocated land in your own right instead of through your husband?
> Magadaline: I think I will have more freedom than I have now.

I interpret this answer as an example of how a woman expects that if it were fully accepted and enforced by the embedding society that women may possess land in their own right, then women's independence and freedom would increase and destabilise the idea of an 'ideal woman'. I also argue that the control of land is probably a determinant of independence and opportunities to exercise agency. These women seeking to access land in their own right represent a new and emerging institutional pattern. There is an additional aspect of accessing land in one's own right. For a woman to control land, on her own or together with a husband, is also a security against a husband's lineages in the event that she is widowed, as Julie, an elderly woman explains:

Julie: The land we are cultivating belongs to my husband's family. When my husband dies that will maybe be difficult for me. His brothers will ask to remarry me, but because of the risk of attracting AIDS I will refuse. Then they will chase me away, which means I lose everything. However, if I own land with my husband it means I will stand my ground and declare war because that's my land. Owning land with my husband is much better.

This answer shows that a woman's own control of land, or control together with husbands, would put widowed women in a better position against husbands' lineages in case of conflict. To conclude, according to many women in the study the opportunity to access land in one's own right would be a resource of independence and could thus be theorised as an avenue out of polygyny.

Buying land

The practice of buying land is an unusual way to access land, partly because women seldom access land in their own right owing to dichotomised gender; their secondary land rights; and the limited availability of land causing competition between men and within wedlock. Nonetheless, there are a few women in the area who have bought land. All of them originate from outside the area. It is uncertain, though, if that is the main reason or not for being able to access land. Yet, it may be accepted that women not originating from Chiweshe may conduct 'un-cultural deeds' such as accessing land in their own right, while this behaviour would not be accepted for women originating in the area. Thus, it seems, though I have no real evidence for it, that women foreign to the area have more freedom of manoeuvre.

Occupying land

During the period of land occupation after 2000 a substantial proportion of occupants from the villages under study were women. Their rationale was to support their children, young as well as grown up. Some were widows, but not all. Also in land occupations in other parts of Zimbabwe independent women (widows and divorcees) took part. However, there are studies showing that the emancipatory potential of resettlement, earlier and new (within the Fast Track Land Reform Programme), were short-lived and illusory, as the traditional authority reasserted its control and patterns of land access thus remain skewed against women (Goebel, 2005, Jacobs, 2000, Matondi et al., 2008, Scoones et al., 2010). Women constitute about 65 percent of the rural population, but only about 18 percent of the land distributed during the Fast track Land Reform Programme accrued to women (Mazhawidza and Manjengwa, 2011). Studies show that women were not allocated land to the same degree as men due to lack of formal qualifications and lack of access to male-dominated patronage networks (Scoones et al., 2010). The women

in my study simply moved into the farms and stayed there until their right to that piece of land was confirmed by the chief or land pegging authorities. Nonetheless, this practice is an unusual way to access land, and may be only a one-time event.

Summing up the female strategy: navigating to raise children

In the present gender regime, women's only way to access land, as a condition for success in the main strategy to raise children, is by marrying. To receive land from fathers is a custom that is fading way. There is a possibility to occupy or buy land. But in practice these options are few and limited. Nevertheless, this may be an embryo of change in the land right institution that will allow women to be allocated land in their own right, according to a future norm and a changing land right institution. Moreover, women expend much effort on coping with their insecurity in relation to land rights and do so by juggling relations within polygyny as reflected in their stories. In this section, on men's and women's strategies, I have analysed how men and women manoeuvre within the gender regime of land and labour rights. The gendered strategies that I have discussed are constructed, as I showed in chapter 4, on the basis of interview data and through the procedures of gerund coding and category building. In the next section, I will discuss in detail how men's and women's strategies within the regime may initiate changes in the institutions of land and labour rights and thus, as a consequence, in the gender regime.

Emerging institutional change

In this section, I will analyse the possible emerging changes that men/women are initiating in the land and labour rights institutions by carrying out their purposeful gendered strategies. To that end, I will apply the three actor close components in the theoretical frame: discourse, everyday politics and power for change.

Changes in men's land rights

In this context, I will draw on Schmidt (Schmidt, 2008) for discussing the emerging discourse and Avelino and Rotmans' systemic approach (Avelino and Rotmans, 2009) to categorise the resources that are mobilised to exercise power. As part of a discourse expressed in the interviews, men are telling stories to access land at a time when a man's birthright to land through inheritance cannot be met, as a consequence of the diminishing availability of land. Men *think* a lot, as expressed in the interviews, about how to access land for themselves and their lineage. They

think of 'men and land' which is part of the tradition-discourse, they think of 'land and colonialism', and they think of 'land in the liberation movement'. The tradition-discourse underlines the need for and the value in following traditions. If mobilised, these resources are *constitutive*, which means that they build on present values of how things are or should be.

Moreover, and again as part of the same discourse, men *speak* a lot to support men's birthright to land, even in a situation when there is not enough land for all men, and to support the rule of gendered, dichotomised land rights. Also men's birthright rule and the dichotomised land rights are *constitutive* resources, which belong to the tradition-discourse. Men's discussions involve strong feelings as expressed in the interviews, thus they do not only *comply* with the land rights rules practised today but also actively *support* them. They thereby exercise constitutive power in favour of the status quo regarding the situation of men's birthright to land and women's secondary use right through men. Men establish the current distribution of resources, and as such they are dominant in their exercise of constitutive power. As a third aspect of the institutional discourse, men also *act*, drawing on the constitutive resources mentioned, by carrying out every-day practices in accordance with their convictions. To stay on and keep on tilling the land as before is also a sort of everyday politics (see Kerkvliet 2009). To do nothing new is to *support* and *comply* in (at least) *acting* with the land right institution as it is practised.

Most women are concerned about the land shortage in the area both for themselves and their male relatives. The reactions range from *supporting* to silent *compliance* in *thoughts* with the institution of men's birthright to land and women's secondary use right through husbands. However, women do not *speak* much about the institution of men's land rights. They do not *act* at all directly in relation to the institution, but in everyday doings they *support* or comply with it. Women have no resources to employ and do not want to make a change, as far as I can investigate here. Maybe they use the *constitutive* resource of tradition-discourse to support it.

There are strategies that men employ to access the limited land, besides inheriting land, which are *not* changing the land right institution. One way is to move physically and professionally. The other is to marry more wives to access extra land. When marrying, men use the resource of land and the *constitutive* immaterial resource of the idea of polygyny to attract more wives and then in turn access more land. Among men employing this strategy, there are both men who *support* and those who only *comply* with the present land right institution.

Nevertheless, in some aspects men *think*, *speak* and *act* to achieve change in those aspects of the land right institution that govern men's land rights. There is a

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lot of *speaking* within the community with the intention to *change* the *criteria* for land access by adding new criteria to men's birthright rule. I express this as a strategy of telling stories but in a way this is a matter of everyday politics. I wish to stress that nobody questions men's birthright to land, neither men nor women, but it seems that when land is in short supply other mechanisms of discrimination need to be introduced. There is an emerging change, as seen in the new criteria for accessing land rights, that the focus in the land allocation process is shifted from men's birthright towards a dispersed or more diffused situation where men argue and juggle various arguments according to different criteria for accessing land. The storytelling about the (new) criteria for land access is the basis of an emerging discourse and in fact, this is a potential discourse on land claims.

When men employ the strategy of telling stories to express reasons for their own rights to access land, they are also changing the criteria for access to land. Thus, they are initiating an institutional change. In this way they are 'sedimenting' a new discourse, in Kulawik's (2009) terminology, to the institution of land rights. Further, when men initiate a change in institutions it can be both intentional and unintentional. When they act without the intention to change institutions, to make everyday life easier by adding new criteria to draw on in the navigating process, it is an example of *modifying* an institution.

Men mobilising resources
Men use different resources to change the criteria for accessing land in their own favour. They can use: (1) the immaterial resources of the tradition-discourse in combination with the idea of belonging to the community; (2) the ability to farm; (3) having dependents; and (4) owning money. Individuals also use these resources for arguing that they themselves should be allocated land. The first resource used, to change the criteria added to men's birthright to land, is the resource of *belonging*. When men use the immaterial resource of the tradition-discourse and belonging, versus other men's *non*-belonging, they stress their own belonging in the area or in the lineage as reasons for accessing land. This can be theorised as a matter of 'the other' and is thus a matter of identity.

The second resource used, to change the criteria added to men's birthright to land, is being able to farm. This means having skills and resources to farm, primarily agricultural education, equipment and inputs like seeds and fertilisers.

The third resource employed to change the criteria, is to have considerable numbers of dependents to support as a consequence of living in polygyny. It is not new to use polygyny as a means to access land but it is a matter of practising polygyny with a new rationale. The 'old' way of practising polygyny, to access

more land through additional wives, stays intact while a new way is added. This is a matter of *layering* a new rationale to old ones (Thelen, 2003). These men use *innovative* power to give the institution of polygyny a new rationale. The aim of the strategy, besides accessing land in itself, is to become important, sometimes in the capacity of a village head, and to expand lineage and land under the lineage control.

The fourth resource used to change the criteria, is that some men use their economic resources to buy land and not only buildings or other improvements on it. The act of buying land is a way to change the criteria for accessing land rights, intended or unintended, and sometimes it may also be a way to *resist* the current rules of the land right institution. Nevertheless, even if it is illegal to buy land, this is still allowed and accepted by those in power. However, some people dislike it and *comply* with the still current rules (of inheritance rights) by doing everyday acts, but also *resist* the emerging change by expressing their dislike. Sometimes they *resist* by denying the buyer the actual right to the land and by claiming the way to access land traditionally. An example of this is when a brother of a man selling land refuses to accept the buyer as the new possessor of the land and still claims lineage right to it. Often, such a brother is proven right by the chief, who may nevertheless have accepted the sale of that piece of land in the first place. This is a major source of land disputes. Further, to pay for land is an *innovative transformative* power that is used as it mobilises a new resource to exercise power to access land in this setting. Newturn is a peasant farmer who has bought equipment on land. Some would think that he had thereby also bought the right to *farm* the land even if the land cannot be exchanged.

> Newturn: We used to live in another part of Chiweshe, but we had no land of our own. I came to the village head with my mother looking for land. The village head's son Mathew requested us to stay at his land since he had acquired land in the new resettlement area. The village head advised his son Mathew to inform the chief about the arrangement. The chief in turn advised us that as long as we had agreed there is no problem. I paid for the house that was built on the farm and for the labour cost that had been used to clear the field. When Mathew died, his older brother Solomon, asked us to leave. However the village head, asked us to ignore Solomon's directive. Because of the conflict between Solomon and us we are not yet registered in the councillor's book or in the village head's book. The village head insisted that we stay on the land and that we would be registered later. This is now a problem that is not solved. The chief prohibits the sale of land. In the event of the death of Solomon's father, the village head, problems will arise since my family is not yet registered on this land.

This account describes how some people use economic resources to access land. These are examples of strategies that men employ, when manoeuvring to access land, while at the same time initiating changes in the criteria for men's access to land. When men tell stories they advocate changes in the land right institution in favour of norms and rules that would give their kind of group access to land. In this process they are initiating an institutional change that I here name 'stressing attributes for change in allocation'. Men who change the criteria are examples of men exercising *transformative* power. Further, these men are *speaking* of something new while still *acting* within the old institution of land allocation. By *acting* and using the institution as usual, meaning using background ideational abilities (Schmidt, 2008), while also *thinking, speaking* and *acting*, using foreground discursive abilities to understand the situation and suggest changes to the rules, they aim at changing the land right institution.

While men's birthright argument is still considered valid, there are inconsistencies between that strategy to access land and the strategy to buy land. Also within the birthright strategy there is now an order of priority. To 'be able' can be in conflict with the birthright, as being able includes having farming skills and the ability to afford, for example, equipment and inputs. On the other hand, 'being able' fits well with the new discourse to buy land since money is required for both. Further, within the strategy of inheritance as a way to access land sits the assumption that when a man inherits land then he is supposedly a young newly married adult who will soon have children to feed. Hence, the birthright argument within the inheritance strategy has similarities with the new strategy to practise polygyny for the reason of accessing land owing to the situation of having dependents to support. Both arguments rest on the idea (or fact) that you have dependents as a criterion for accessing land.

Changes in women's land rights

As land is important in both men's and women's strategies, there are potential conflicts between spouses over women's gardens. Men control women's gardens and thus in turn their land rights. Women *think* about, *speak* of and strongly *support* their praxis of having a garden, as expressed in interviews. Women think that the proper way for wives to access land is through husbands. When wives act to access and keep a garden then the practice of 'handling husbands' is central. It includes the decision-making process within households and, if living in polygyny, sharing husbands' resources with co-wives.

Women's gardens do not seem to be an important issue for men. Hence, as far as I can see in the interviews, men do not *think* of or *speak* about gardens but silently most often *support* the practice in *acts* every day by continuing and thus accepting the present practice of offering women a garden. Men strongly *support* the *rules of distribution* for gendered land rights that are practised; that women are allocated land through men, which means that women do not have the same rights to land as men have. Dichotomised land rights, between men and women, seem to be important for men's identity. Men establish the current distribution of resources, as such being dominant in their exercise of *constitutive* power. They want the status quo to remain in what they consider to be the central part of women's land rights, which is women's access to land through husbands. Men use the *immaterial constitutive* resources of patriarchal power and the tradition-discourse, including 'man and land' with gender dichotomised land rights, and the resource of economic dominance to *support* a status quo of the mandate to allocate women gardens.

Some men *act* to change women's rights to gardens and encroach on them. However, this may not necessarily represent a change in the very land right institution that concerns women's rights per se, as it does not concern the *rules of distribution*. Men use the power assigned to them in line with the current institutional design to determine women's rights to gardens including the practical *conditions* such as access, durability, size and control. However, most women dislike the very conditions for having and using a garden, which are also a consequence of the land shortage. If men want to support changes in women's conditions to access gardens with good arguments, then they can mobilise *constitutive* resources such as the idea of the rules of distribution now practised and men's supremacy to make changes in conditions. That is, they can change the *conditions* as long as the *rules of distribution* are kept intact. Men, in contrast to women, do not seem to consider the conditions to be integral to women's rights to a garden. However, maybe men do believe for instance that the size of the garden is an aspect of current land rights, but still believe it is possible to make such a change while still being a 'good' husband. Or maybe they mobilise patriarchal resources of decision rights to *transform* the institution to limit women's rights to gardens. However, the evidence I see in the interviews does not really support this argument.

If husbands delimit women's rights to gardens by changing the conditions (place, size, time), women *resist* in *thought* and *speech* and partly in *acting* by making a fuss or appealing to husband's parents. Women feel the need to draw on *constitutive* resources to keep their rights, while also men believe that *men* use *constitutive* resources for status quo. This contradiction is possible as the group of men and women, respectively, consider different aspects of women's land rights as

central. Women seem to consider the central aspects to be the *conditions* of women's rights to gardens, while men seem to consider the central aspect to be the *rules of distribution*. Women here mobilise the *constitutive* resource of the idea of being a woman and being a man or 'ideal man' and 'ideal woman', which I introduced in chapter 5, to exercise power to access gardens.

Wives appeal to husbands *as men* to give them *as women* the necessary resource (garden for food production) to fulfill women's obligation and responsibility to take care of the family and raise children. A man's responsibility is, in relation to this, to provide women with the necessary resource, land in the form of a garden, to enable women to fulfill their obligation. To use the argument that both men and women should fulfil their parts of the gendered obligations is to use an *immaterial constitutive* resource. In this case the intention is to maintain the gender relations, thus the resource is *constitutive*. As seen in chapter 5, women appeal to men's benevolence by mobilising *immaterial* resources of care, such as 'love portions' and 'ideal man', to make husbands meet their demands to have access to a husband's resources, in this case, the land made available for the garden.

On the whole, there may be a *transformative* change when men dominate and exercise power to redistribute resources. Still, it is too early to say if men's, possibly new, restrictions on the conditions for the garden should be considered as *transformative*, or if the changes will be limited and, therefore, still be contained within men's right in line with the institutional design, that is the *rules of distribution*, to regulate *conditions* of women's land rights. If husbands succeed in mobilising patriarchal power for a *transformative* change to restrict women's rights to gardens, women are unsuccessful in their exercise of *constitutive* resources to exercise constitutive power of status quo.

If there are any signs of change in the interviews, they are on an individual level and not related to the institution of land rights per se even if the emerging changes concern land rights. The outcome is in some individual cases a transformative change in favour of some husbands' *acting*. Maybe it is possible to argue that wives in these cases *resist* husbands' *transformative* power to limit the right to a garden by exercising *constitutive* power. On the other hand, there may also be changes in favour of wives' acting. The individual change that a wife can achieve while employing her strategy to access a garden, if a husband is unwilling to allocate land to his wife, is to get a garden in the first place, and then secure it in relation to co-wives. In that case, it would still be a strategic achievement of transformatory significance (Kabeer, 1999) for women to strengthen their rights, using *constitutive* resources. It is an accomplishment at least to *have* a garden in

accordance with a woman's right to a garden as advocated in the area. It can also be a strategic achievement to keep status quo if husbands use *transformative* power to strive for an actual change in women's rights to gardens.

An additional external process affecting women's land holdings, besides the increasing land pressure, is the idea of women's emancipation. Women's emancipation can also be a *transformative* resource to mobilise. However, many men are not sensitive to such an argument in relation to women's land rights. While land pressure affects most women with gardens negatively, in terms of size and control, this may to some extent be counteracted by women's emancipation. The emancipation of women affects their willingness to put up with the negative effects that land pressure has on their gardens. These women's wish for stronger rights to gardens is reflected in women's *thinking* and *talking* but not yet in their *acting*. This may be an emergence of a minor change in favour of women's: (1) access to gardens; (2) stronger rights to gardens; and/or (3) access to larger gardens. Time will tell if it is so.

Women getting land in their own right

Some women are *acting* to access land in their own right. Apparently, it is within the minds and actions of these women and within society's ability to legitimise the actions, that women can have land rights in their own name. The women and the embedding society are not only *thinking* and *talking* about the possibility that some categories of women should be able to have land in their own right, they are also *acting* in that direction. It is not easy to determine whether the idea of women's right to land in their own name is triggered by the exogenous process of women's emancipation, or if they remember that in history women could have land rights in their own name. Women who apply for land in their own name do not necessarily use *transformative* power as it is possible, in theory, for women to access land in their own name (if they have 'good' reasons). However, if they mobilise the resource of women's emancipation then it is a *transformative* resource and at the same time a strategic achievement.

Even if women want access to land in their own right they do not necessarily want a change in men's rights to land. The ideas of men's rights in their own name and women's rights in their own name are not in contradiction with each other. Men are not so much *against* women accessing land in their own rights, but they are in favour of men accessing it for various reasons. As men's identity builds on land, and land rights in dichotomy with women's non-rights, in a situation where land is scarce, the constitutive power of men's rights weighs heavily. Nevertheless,

women's rights in their own names are a threat to the idea of an 'ideal man', since this questions the gendered dichotomised land rights.

The *destructive* power needed to destroy the idea of dichotomised land rights seems to be stronger than the (partly) *transformative* power of women's possibility to have land rights. Women who occupy land within Fast track resettlement, partly use a *transformative* resource (women's emancipation) and partly a *constitutive* resource (women *have* right, in theory and historically, to access land in their own right) and a *destructive* resource (the gender dichotomised land rights do not make men become men) to *transform* practice to a new one – or to return to an old one practised before the creation of the Chiweshe reserve. The event of land occupation in itself seems to be an *innovative* resource, a new kind of 'one time resource', which women use.

Changes in the gendered institution of polygyny

As seen in the discussion on men's and women's strategies in this chapter, I do not discuss bridewealth. It seems neither to be an institution affected by men's and women's strategies nor an institution that they are interested in changing. When I consider bridewealth it is in relation to polygyny and concerns the relations of power within wedlock, which I discussed in chapter 5. If there are emerging changes in labour rights, as an effect of men's and women's strategies and interests, it is in the institution of polygyny. Thus, it is changes in the practice of polygyny that I discuss here.

If someone *complies* with or *supports* the regime, which is gendered, someone enacts gendered tasks and thus reproduces the regime every day. Men's thinking about the labour right institution of polygyny may not concern *labour* itself, but rather men's *control* of women and hence their labour – or control of labour and hence control of women. The male polygynous practitioners necessarily *support* most or all parts of the institution, but also a majority of non-practitioners *support*, or *comply* with, the part of the institution that concerns men's control over women. Men do not *speak* much about polygyny, neither for nor against it, as it is seen as long having been a natural part of society, which (if a man) one can choose to practise or not. Thus, it does not seem to be a big issue for men. Many of men's actions within polygyny reveal men's power over women. Concerning control of the garden or women's labour it boils down to men's power over women's opportunities. Here it can be argued that men establish the current situation. They are dominant in their exercise of *constitutive* power of men's supremacy and want the status quo to remain.

Further, in one way men's strategy to manoeuvre to access land may affect the institution of polygyny. As accessing additional wives can be a way to access more land, a change in the institution of polygyny, given the limited availability of land, is the *layering* of the rationale (Thelen, 2003). This may be an *innovative immaterial* resource that some men mobilise to change the conditions in the land rights institution during a situation of limited access to land that, in turn means a layering of the rationale in the institution of polygyny. To become a village head by the force of numbers of wives and children is also a new rationale when land is scarce. It is also a strategy, partly to access land, that some men employ and which affects the institution of polygyny. As this strategy is an effect partly of scarcity of land it may also be practised in the future.

Many men *resist*, in the way that they disagree or dislike, the institution of polygyny as they think, for various reasons, that it is good neither for women nor men nor children. Most of them *think* women are maltreated in polygyny. However, as I see it, men who *resist* polygyny in *thought* and *speech* do not necessarily resist it in *deed*. They just stay out of it. It does not demand any effort.

To get married and get children is a central strategy for women, thus to become a man's additional wife is the price some women are willing to pay, but the price has become higher, I argue, as the idea of women's emancipation gets stronger. Wives in polygyny *think* much about *resisting* the institution of polygyny. They are trying to find out for themselves what opportunities there are within polygyny when they manoeuvre to raise their children successfully. Sometimes they think of negotiating and sometimes of manipulating to get their way. Sometimes they protest openly with varying results and sometimes they resign to a husband's authority. To elaborate on possible strategies is very time-consuming. Further, women *resist* in *speech*. They certainly have an *intention* to change the institution by acting, but most of them do not *act* against it.

Women, in this study, who *act* against and *resist* polygyny, are women who live with monogamous men, as they have more to lose if husbands remarry. If women end up in polygyny, and if polygyny is not in accordance with their strategies, then they can *modify or evade* it. The acts of resistance due to conflicts arising from living in polygyny sometimes end in the dissolution of their marriage. The practical problems of sharing limited land and one and the same husband become evident for people living within and outside polygyny. These problems are the reasons for resisting it, as I see it. Very few women, if any, succeed in resisting polygyny fully if already married and their husbands intend to remarry. However, they *are* resisting even if failing.

Women have resources to mobilise – personal care; the resource of 'love portions'; and the *constitutive* resource of an 'ideal man' – in order to succeed in their strategy to keep the status quo or in their strategy to make a change (depending on if they are living in polygyny or in monogamy). The resource of the 'idea of women's emancipation' is used by women to work against polygyny. Some men agree with this and are therefore easy to convince about the idea of not taking another wife. Using women's emancipation is an *innovative transformative* power as a new resource is mobilised for change. Thus, a discourse that changes preferences and later on also rules (Schmidt, 2008) may be an emerging change in favour of monogamous marriages.

In the present state of research it is not possible to identify changes in the magnitude of polygyny since the creation of the Chiweshe reserve. Both increasing land pressure and emancipation are important processes, exogenous to the institution of polygyny, which may affect its extent. However, very few women see any positive rationale for polygyny nowadays and it is possible to find an emerging change in *thinking* and *speaking* against polygyny. The stories women tell concern how to handle co-wives and their husband in relation to his mistress(es). They are also about their own struggles in relation to co-wives and such stories concern: the problem of sharing; rumours of witchcraft; and polygyny as a source of these problems. For women, telling stories, which I consider as *thinking* and *talking,* is a way to initiate an institutional change in the institution of polygyny.

In conclusion

The strategies that men and women employ in Chiweshe are gender coded and defined by the gender regime of land and labour rights in subsistence farming; and thus constrained by its structures and institutions. Thereby the strategies are the result of what Nancy Folbre (1994) calls purposeful choice and as such they are meaningful for peasant farmers to employ for reaching the primary social goals of getting and securing land (men) and raising children (women) for 'becoming men' and 'becoming women'. When actors employ and enact the strategies this may initiate institutional change in the land and labour rights.

I have shown, in face of the limited availability of land, how men navigate towards accessing land, which is their main strategy, and how women navigate towards raising children, which is their main strategy. Men navigate through finding old and new ways to access land for themselves as individuals and for their group. Women access land, which is necessary to succeed in their main strategy, by

marrying. After that they continue to manoeuvre themselves to access the necessary resources to raise children by handling husbands and co-wives; partly by telling stories and sometimes even by using spells.

By expanding the social process of change to include thinking and not only acting, it is possible to find an *emerging* change in thinking and speaking from *within* the social and institutional setting. This approach is more sensitive as it locates a possible emerging, gradual and piecemeal change early on. The alternative would be to discover change only when it is implemented or more abruptly or through external forces (Mahoney and Thelen, 2010). I find some emerging changes in the land right institution. Men's strategies initiate a change in the criteria for men's access to land in addition to men's non-questioned birthright to land. For women, there may be a change in women's thinking of their own land rights. Women are aware of their land rights being secondary and the insecurity that this implies when they manoeuvre to raise children. In this context, women think of the advantages of having land in their own right. Even if there is no big change yet, only in thinking and maybe in speaking but very seldom in acting, there is, nevertheless, a possible emerging change in women's land rights from within.

There are some changes in the labour right institution of polygyny. For men, there is a new rationale added to the practice of polygyny, which I can identify in their thinking, speaking and acting. That is, practising polygyny to access more land for the purpose of having dependents to support. As the availability of land is diminishing, polygyny can thus continue to be an attractive strategy to access land for some men. However, this is a strategy that men employ in relation to land and not in relation to polygyny as a labour right institution. For women, polygyny is a major obstacle to success in raising children. Moreover, women's emancipation has made polygyny an even more unattractive type of wedlock as in women's experience it limits their independence and opportunities. Thus, there is an emerging change in women's thinking, speaking and acting against polygyny. However, even if women resist polygyny in action this does not mean that they succeed in their aim to stay out of it, as it is men who decide whether or not to marry additional wives.

The discussion in this chapter contributes the final aspects of the answer to my second research question on power in the polygynous regime. Further, the discussion is meant to offer an answer to the third research question on gendered strategies. This now takes us to the final conclusions, reflections and implications from the study of the gender regime in Chiweshe.

7 Conclusions

In this chapter, I revisit the research questions and summarise research findings. I also draw conclusions and reflect on their implications. In the thesis, I explore how higher-order processes in society, like gender and power, come into play in a local context of subsistence farming that is characterised by a lower food security than would be expected from the favourable bio-physical conditions. In short, the thesis deals with three matters: how the institutions of land rights and labour rights in production and reproduction in subsistence farming in Chiweshe operate as a gender regime; how that gives rise to gendered social goals, gendered strategies and gendered power relations; and how gendered institutions and gendered dynamics affect food production and indirectly also food security, as illustrated in Figure 12. The main research focus is on women's and men's land and labour rights, their social goals and strategies as well as their power relations and interaction in decision-making processes. In detail, I try to uncover the connections between the institutions of land rights and labour rights and how individuals, women and men, understand, employ and negotiate these rights. In so doing, I seek to illustrate how agency in social relations is structured according to gender and power and how this may result in changes in rules, norms and values in a setting that is seemingly stable and persistent.

As an input to sustainability science I seek to understand and explain incremental institutional change in subsistence farming as well as aspects of functional complexity in production and reproduction as overlapping spheres. To that end, I analyse gender and rurality in terms of the gender regime of land and labour rights and scrutinise how gender interacts with power in ways that have not previously been profoundly and systematically addressed. Proceeding from gender theory, my initial proposition was *that* gender matters in food production while my results illustrate in more empirical and theoretical detail *how* gender matters in production and reproduction. I investigate this by analysing, in particular, how gender strategies and practices, female and male, emerge and are enacted within the regime. In the analysis I see that gender and power influence how *land* is accessed, distributed, used and controlled; how *labour* is organised, divided and controlled; how *strategies* are formulated and enacted in relation to social goals; and how women and men engage in bargaining and *decision-making processes* in order to enjoy their rights, meet obligations and fulfil gendered social goals.

In the analysis I also find that when women and men act in accordance with the gender regime they employ strategies that initiate institutional change. Through

everyday activity in men's strategies there is an emerging institutional change in terms of piecemeal amendments to the necessary criteria for acquiring land. Through everyday *thoughts* and '*talks*' against the practice of polygyny in women's strategies there is an emerging institutional change in gender dynamics and possibly in the gender regime. This means that piecemeal institutional changes emerge from *within* a seemingly stable and persistent context.

As a specific outcome of research, I argue that the local land distribution system enforced by the land shortage generates a social conflict over land. In this conflict, land is seen not only as a natural resource for food production but more so as a symbolic resource for fulfilling gendered goals. Rules, norms and values in the setting accentuate the asymmetric power relation between spouses where men, owing to the gender regime and the symbolic value of land, can control not only land but also women's labour and most of the decision-making process. In consequence, men can determine the social conditions for food production. The overall argument, grounded in empirical field data analysed and interpreted in a detailed research process informed by theory, is that the ubiquitous gender regime affects food production in myriad ways. It is therefore important to understand the social relations in food production and reproduction, especially so in a situation where the favourable natural preconditions in Chiweshe have deteriorated owing to land degradation. Furthermore, in the longer term it can be expected that climate change and variability will serve as multiple stressors in combination with already existing challenges, as in other similar areas in sub-Saharan Africa (IFAD, 2010).

There are certain limitations to my research, which deserve mentioning. Regarding methodology and research design, I would use grounded theory throughout the whole research process if I were to restart the process. In that way I would possibly be able to contribute new theory on gender and power as higher-order process in a local context. Regarding research methods, I would have liked to include more participatory techniques in interviewing and observations. Regarding the empirical material, I initially intended to estimate the capacity for increased food production to improve food security, but owing to the limited reliability of available data, I took a qualitative approach to production levels and food security and instead focused on peasant farmers' own *perception* of food security. Future research could benefit from a quantitative approach to land and labour in terms of measuring gendered contribution to and control of land, labour and food production.

Although I address and discuss the research questions throughout the thesis, I will now return to them in concert and relate them to empirical and theoretical findings.

Answering the research questions

The first research question – on the gender regime

- In what terms and on what grounds can the institutions of land and labour rights and their interaction in production and reproduction in Zimbabwe's communal areas, with special reference to Chiweshe, be understood as a gender regime?

This question is in focus in chapters 2 and 6 where I discuss land rights and labour rights as prerequisites for production and reproduction. Women and men have different rights to land and to women's labour *because* they are women and men. In line with the land rights institution men have family land and through men, women have indirect access to garden land. The labour rights institution is organised in relation to the practices of bridewealth and polygyny offering men a rights-in-person to women's labour (Miers and Kopytoff, 1977). I have two main findings in relation to the discussion of female and male social goals and how women and men, respectively, use rules, norms and practices for 'becoming a woman' and for 'becoming a man':

Insecure and ambiguous land rights
The *first* finding refers to the lack of clarity in the regulation of land rights, which is *vague, fuzzy* and *uncertain*. The land right institution is insecure for both women and men, but in different ways. In addition to the uncertainty about *who* can be allotted land there is uncertainty concerning on what *terms* a person can control or may lose her/his land or land rights. For men, the uncertainty and insecurity refer to their land rights as heads of households and whether they will be able to secure their rights to land in relation to other *men*. Several images emerge from my empirical material on the rules governing land rights in the area. All men are said to have a birthright to land and despite the land shortage, all interviewed men seem to aquire land, sooner or later, with the help of village heads or fathers. Thus, the social norm seems to be that nearly all men get a piece of land to support the family.

For a woman, the uncertainty and insecurity refer to the allocation of land, especially the garden land if she is married, and to a field in her own right or in her father's right if she is divorced or widowed. In the interviews I and my research assistants noticed that women had a vague understanding only of the norms and rules of land distribution. This may be explained by the fact that women, as a group, are excluded from discussions on how to interpret, employ and negotiate the

land rights. A woman's land rights are insecure and uncertain as she depends on her husband, or her father, for access to land in the form of a garden. In that respect women are subordinate to men as husbands and therefore, it seems, women have to offer men special treatment in order to secure their indirect right to land, that is the garden. Women in polygyny also have to handle co-wives with whom they compete for their husband's resources.

Moreover, in the community, views vary on the rules and norms that regulate land rights. Interviewees describe these rules and norms in a variety of ways, even in contradictory terms. Apparently, land rules are not clear to all members of the community and this may reflect that not everyone is well informed; that a change in values between different groups of people is emerging; or that there is a continuous insecurity around land rights that everyone has to cope with. As seen in the land discussion, throughout the thesis, there are numerous aspects of insecurity. From this I draw two main conclusions. First, community members do not necessarily share values, experiences and information on land issues. This leads to situations where *men need bargaining and persuasive power to negotiate and claim land rights*, especially in relation to other men. Secondly, land rights and norms for land distribution are ambiguous and in addition they are *unequal, discriminatory and insecure, especially for women but also for men.*

Historical changes in women's land rights
The *second* finding in the analysis on the gender regime refers to changes in women's land rights as seen in chapter 2. The life story interviews show that women's land rights were changed at the creation of the Chiweshe reserve in terms of: (1) the allocation process; (2) the size of land plots; and (3) the security of access to land. In the period before the creation of the Chiweshe reserve, a woman could be allotted land in her own right alongside her husband and under the same conditions. This is a stark contrast to present times when a woman is allotted land mainly/only through her husband who decides whether she gets land (at all) and how much. To conclude, this means that in contrast to conventional wisdom *land rights for women have weakened over time.*

The second research question – on power
- How does the gender regime operate in terms of power; how do spouses (woman/man) and co-wives (woman/woman) respectively, exercise power in relation to each other in the polygynous wedlock; and how do spouses and co-wives respond to such power?

This question is in focus in chapter 5 where I discuss power in terms of two relations within polygynous wedlock: wife to husband, and wife to wife. Concerning the wife to husband relation, men control land and have decision-making power. Thus, husbands exercise two types of power in three types of fields: 'power over' wives, 'power over' decision-making, and 'power to' women's labour. But as I showed, there are certain ways for a woman to exercise some power in relation to her husband, for example in relation to the garden and by appealing to her husband's benevolence. It is in relation to their gardens that women have an opportunity to make *purposeful* choices. Even if women cannot fully make *real* choices, since they do not control land, their own labour, or the ability to make decision, it is possible for them to exercise some agency and make some strategic achievements. Thus, it is important for empowerment that women are able to defend their gardens. The choices that women make in relation to gardens may thus have certain *transformatory significance* (Kabeer, 1999). Women exercise two types of power in two types of fields: a certain limited 'power over' men by producing food for the family in the garden and a limited 'power to' achieve strategic goals and empowerment (Kabeer 2005) by using the garden as a 'piggy bank' or 'loot fund'. Moreover, women exercise a certain limited 'power over' men by appealing to husbands' benevolence for various reasons and for meeting various purposes. Concerning the wife to wife relation, I showed how women both cooperate and compete for men's land and benevolence.

I can now conclude that the gender regime in subsistence farming in Chiweshe determines how land, as a natural resource and a social institution, is an asset not only for food production and income generation but also *for gaining social rights to labour and decision-making power within wedlock*. This is an expression of *the symbolic value of land*, as I mentioned in chapter 1.

The third research question – on gendered strategies

- What are the social goals and gender strategies, female and male, that women and men aim for, navigate towards and seek to achieve in the gender regime; how are the strategies enacted; and in what respect are the strategies an indication of institutional change?

This question is in focus in chapters 2, 5 and 6 where I show how the gender regime determines *what* can be produced, on *what* land, with *what* labour, and for *whom*. In principle, the male strategy is to navigate to access land and secure it for

themselves and their lineages. In principle, women, as an effect of the gender regime, aim to secure their children's needs in terms of food consumption, education and future opportunities while at the same time being able to handle the practice of polygyny in relation to a husband and co-wives. The female strategy here is to accept and follow a husband's rule-making and decision-making in order not to lose out in relation to co-wives or possible future co-wives.

Navigating towards social goals

The *third* finding (chapter 6), relates to how people navigate towards their social goals defined by the gender regime. The institutions, strategies and practices that I investigate are of primary concern for food production but there is much other thinking, speaking and acting within the gender regime that may affect food production indirectly. Thus, when men navigate towards their goal of accessing land this influences land rights in such a way that rules, norms and values about land rights are kept in flux. This may in turn *open up opportunities but also create more insecurity for those, mainly women, who are not engaged in and have little say in the land claiming process*. This leads to the fourth finding.

Contesting and negotiating land rights

The *fourth* finding (chapter 6), relates to how the land rights system is under constant negotiation. The fact that land is limited while everyone, both women and men, needs land to fulfill her/his social goal creates a situation where women and men compete for land. Within men's principal strategy of navigating towards accessing land there is a sub-strategy called 'telling stories', which serves to *change the criteria for land access* in order to match men's needs both individually and as a group. Thus, 'telling stories' is a sort of everyday politics that aims at modifying the land right institution, in one's own (or men's) favour.

Cooperation and conflict

The *fifth* finding concerns *cooperation and conflict (*chapter 5 and chapter 6). The ways in which land rights in subsistence farming and labour rights in polygyny interact give rise both to cooperating and conflicting interests between spouses. Within a family, husband and wife/wives have a common interest in securing the family's right to land under the insecure and uncertain conditions and the ambiguous regulation of land rights and land distribution. Here spouses have a reason to *cooperate* for a common good. But within the same family gendered production strategies combined with polygyny and the norm of *non-pooling* of

resources imply that spouses have *conflicting* goals and interests, and thus competing strategies for achieving their gendered social goals.

Thinking – as an emerging institutional change
The *sixth* finding concerns how strategies can be an indication of institutional change (chapter 6). By broadening the concept of change beyond acting to also include thinking and speaking as discursive indicators of change, I can *identify early and gradual* institutional change.

The fourth research question – on food

Finally, I have come to the fourth research question, which I may not be able to answer in full. Nevertheless, I intend to show how the gender regime influences food production and, in its extension, how that may affect food security:

- How do social higher-order processes of gender and power, expressed in terms of the gender regime of land and labour rights in Chiweshe, influence food production in a local context?

Throughout the thesis I have discussed social complexity in terms of relations, interactions and dynamics that serve as 'barriers' to increased production. The analytic description of the gender regime in chapter 2; the power analysis between spouses and co-wives within wedlock in chapter 5; and the analysis of the gendered strategies in chapter 6; all support the argument that the gender regime of land and labour rights constrains agricultural production, which in turn may jeopardise food security.

For the sake of establishing evidence in support of my argument, I have constructed 'a logical chain of evidence' (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The chain is based on the method of analytic induction wherein I use the two interlocking circles of enumerative induction and eliminative induction (Miles and Huberman, 1994). 'Enumerative induction' means collecting a number and variety of instances all going in the same direction, whereas 'eliminative induction' means testing a proposition against alternative interpretations of data. Following the reasoning of 'a logical chain of evidence' I argue that if all boxes in Figure 12 are correct, then agricultural production and food security are impeded by the gender regime in Chiweshe. I will now show, in more detail, how I built the chain.
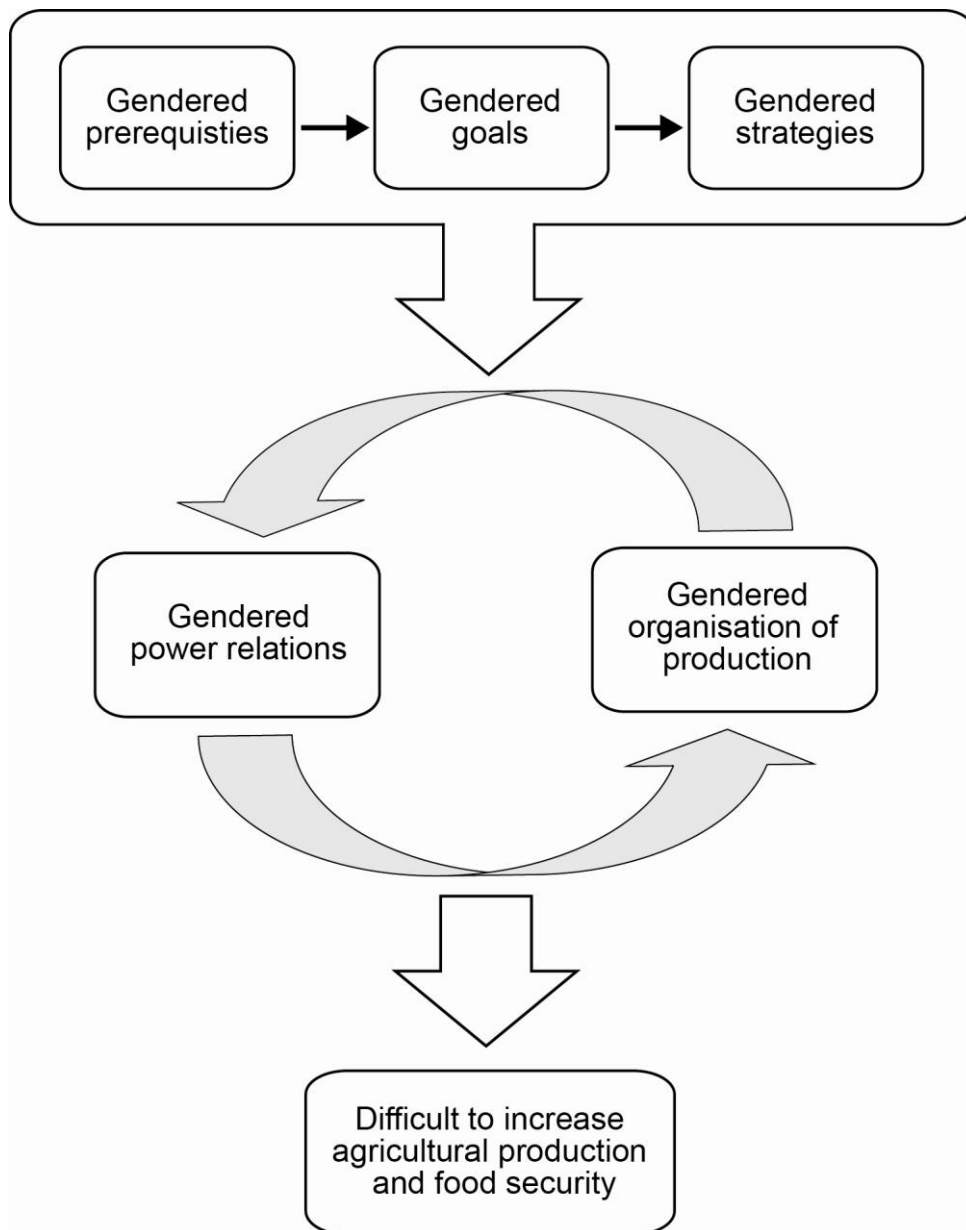
Figure 12: Chain of assumptions for evidence making.
Source: Karin Steen. The idea of 'a logical chain of evidence' comes from Miles and Huberman (1994). Layout: Karin Steen and Ann Åkerman.

The gendered regime implies that men and women have different *gendered social goals* such that men aim to secure access to land while women aim to raise children (chapter 6). In combination with *gendered prerequisities,* in terms of rights (or no rights) to land and labour (chapter 2), this creates *gender organisation of production* resulting in women's and men's *gendered production strategies* (chapter 6). Now, I have shown how the gendered power relation (chapter 5) increases men's bargaining power and makes it stronger than women's bargaining power. Thus, in this social setting men have higher chances of employing their strategies to achieve their social goals.

Moreover, much time and energy is spent on discussing land rights, claiming land, and navigating towards gender differentiated social goals. In chapter 2, I describe the social environment and the gender regime wherein women and men interact. In chapter 5, I analyse *how* and *why* they interact in power relations. In chapter 6 I discuss *how* and *why* they navigate towards their gendered goals. In conclusion, it is a main finding that the dynamics of land shortage and insecure land rights necessitate that men and women *invest time in such navigation*.

Finally, it is a gendered priority for women in the setting to fulfill the social goal of raising and supporting their children, which in turn has several benefits for human well-being as confirmed by other observers in other settings (FAO, 2010, Kevane, 2004, Meinzen-Dick et al., 1997, Quisumbing and Maluccio, 2000). In policy (see Deininger, 2003), the family (or household) is often seen as *one united entity* with shared goals despite the fact that there is both empirical evidence and theoretical reasoning that disputes this. Among others, Amartya Sen (Sen, 1987) recognises that women and men have different and often conflicting production strategies that are subject to bargaining from unequal positions of power. I argue that given that the gendered prerequisites for food production – such as unequal access to land, labour and decision-making power – operate in favour of men and to the disadvantage of women this will hamper food production and make it inefficient. This means that there are social barriers for increasing agricultural production, and in extension, for reaching food security. One crucial social aspect of food security is that, despite the fact that women are the main food producers in terms of labour, time management and responsibility, they have no proper status as food producers (see Meillassoux, 1975). Thus, it can be argued that the gender regime, in the way it operates here, may contribute to food *in*security and thus serve as an obstacle to the solution of the food crisis. But when we understand how the gender regime directs men's and women's strategies such insights may allow us to suggest pathways for increased food production and, in extension, food security.

With this chain of assumptions for evidence-making, using the example of Chiweshe, I claim to have offered a suggestion but not a complete explanation for the idea that the gender regime of land rights and labour rights in subsistence farming has a critical effect on food security. I therefore suggest that as an explanation the gender regime in this local context is a necessary but not a sufficient cause of limited food security. With the 'assumptions for evidence-making', I show the line of reasoning and argue that the gendered organisation of production is an important factor that we need to consider in relation to improved food security, not only in Chiweshe, but possibly also in other similar settings of subsistence farming. Even if I see meaning as context bound, it *may* have a reach beyond the actual research setting when we speak in terms of higher-order processes and how these, gender and power, are enacted in the local. Following the idea of transferability (Guba and Lincoln, 2005, Miles and Huberman, 1994), I thus suggest that it may be possible to generalise *theoretically* the existence of a gender regime from the Chiweshe example to a similar context – if this is done on the basis of a profound an empirically grounded interpretation.

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Appendix 1: Interview questionnaires

Interview questionnaire: Women

NB: Make sure below that it is clear if the answer refers to the wife's garden or to the husband's land/family land.

Name: Maiden name:
Village:
Farm size: Garden size/s:
Head of household: Age:
Number of children: She is number_of_wives in total
Other permanent and/or temporal residents in the household:

Draw a rough sketch showing the location of all the land that the family currently: 1/ owns, rents, borrows, and 2/ rents out or has given out. Be sure to include all land that is in bush, fallow, idle, or has never been cultivated. Show prominent landmarks (river, hill, etc.). Mark family members' plots, general soil types and land quality. Estimate the area of the plots.

POLYGAMY/POLYGYNY & ROORA/LOBOLA/BRIDEWEALTH
1. How many wives does your husband have?
2. When did you marry?
3. Did you manage to have a Christian marriage? How big was your bridewealth?
4. Why do people pay *roora?* (e.g. for labour; or for other reasons)
5. Why do men marry many wives?
     (e.g. for labour; as a method to be allocated more land; or for other reasons)
6. What do you think about men marrying many wives?
7. Why do women want, or why don't they want, to have co-wives or marry a man who already is married?
8. What do you think of having co-wives? Does it matter if you are the first or second wife? If yes, why, how? Alternative: Would you mind if your husband married another wife?
9. If you needed more labour at your farm, would you prefer that your husband marries another wife or hires labour? Why?
10. What would happen if you did not want to work in your husband's fields? What would your husband do?
11. What reasons are there for a woman not wanting to work in her husband's field?

12. In those cases, what ways are there to escape work?
13. When do you work in your husband's fields and when in your own garden?
   13b. If you do not have time to work in both, where would you work?
   13c. If you could decide yourself, where would you work?

WHO HAS THE COMMAND OVER PARCELS OF LAND?
14. Who is primarily in charge of this farm? Who is the family head?
15. Who is the land allocated to? Who controls the land? Whose name is on the paper?
16. Who is primarily responsible for deciding what crops are grown on this plot?
17. Who decides who works on this plot?
18. Does this person have a right to sell any of the produce from this plot?
   If yes, all of it or how much?
19. Can this person sell the land if he wants to without asking the chief, chancellor or other
   authorities for permission?
20. Can this person give away part of the land if he wants to without asking the chief, chancellor
   or other authorities for permission?
21. Do members of your household have their own portions of land at this farm? If yes, who,
   what land and how much land?

WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS FOR WOMEN'S GARDEN?
22. Do you (the woman) have a garden?
23. What decision-making power has your husband got over your garden?
   23b. Can your husband take the land back if he wants to?
   23c. What chances do you have to keep the garden if he wants it back?
   (e.g. support from neighbors/chief, traditional right etc?)
24. Do you have a right to sell any of the produce from your garden?
   If yes, all of it or how much?
25. Does your husband have a say in what to sell from your garden? Or about what you do with
   the income/profit?
26. Who is primarily responsible for deciding what crops are grown in your garden?
27. Who decides who works in your garden?
28. Is the harvest from your garden kept and stored separately from the production of other plots,
   or is it lumped together with all production?
29. Do you see your garden as your land or as a part of your husband's land? Does your husband
   see it in the same way?
30. If your husband needs more land, (e.g. for cash crops), would he consider taking a piece of
   your garden? Why/why not? Do you share his view?
31. If there was not enough land to give to your grownup sons, would your husband consider
   taking a piece of your garden to give to them? Why/why not? What would you think about
   that? Is a son's right to land more important than a mother's garden? (If the respondent has
   no son, then ask about what women in general would think.)
32. If a husband does *not* give his wife a garden, can he still be considered a 'good husband'?
   Why/why not?

HOW WAS THE GARDEN ACCESSED?
33. When did you (the woman) acquire this garden?
34. Was it cleared land or in bush when you acquired it?
35. How did you acquire the garden?   ( ) bought   ( ) inherited
    ( ) borrowed   ( ) rent-in   ( ) village council   ( ) cleared it
    ( ) allocated through husband   ( ) other   (Describe the process.)
36. Have the boundaries of your garden changed since you acquired it?
    If yes, why, how and when?
37. Have you ever lent part or the entire garden to anyone else?
    If yes, why and to whom? What were the circumstances/conditions?
38. Have you ever borrowed land from anyone?
    If yes, why and from who? What were the circumstances/conditions?
39. Have you ever had any other garden that you no longer possess because you sold it, gave it
    away, or for any other reason?
    If yes, what were the circumstances/conditions?
40. Where do/ did your mother in law have her garden?
    40b. Have the gardens, belonging to women in this family line, always been located in the
    same spot? (If his wife's garden is in another place, ask why the husband decided to move
    it).

WHO HAS STRONG/WEAK LAND RIGHTS?
41. Is there enough land so that everyone who wants land can get a plot? If no, who has the
    strongest and who has the weakest right to land? (e.g. husbands, wives, grandmothers,
    grandfathers, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, etc).
    41b. Is there enough land in the area so that all sons can get their own plot? If no, who will
    get a plot and who will not?
    41c. Can all women get a plot? Can they get a whole farm if they want to or do they get a
    plot on their husband's or father's land, only? Why/why not?
42. How is it decided who should get land and who should not? Who are involved in the
    decision-making process? (Describe the process.)
43. Is it possible to decide that someone has to give away a part of his/her plot to someone else?
    What happens if the land is underutilised?
    (Can there be other reasons for strong/weak rights?)

PREFERENCES - TENURE
44. Have you tried to buy land? If yes, when and describe the process?
45. Have you tried to be allocated more land?
    If yes, when and describe the process?
46. Should women be allowed to be allocated land in their own right? Why/why not?
47. What do you think your husband would say if you were allocated land in your own right?
48. Would you like to be allocated land in your own right instead of through your husband?
    Why/why not?
    48b. Do you think it would make any difference? If yes, how? If no, why?
49. Would you like to own land instead of being allocated land? Why/why not?

49b. If yes, what can you do if you own the land that you cannot do now?

ALTERNATIVE TO FARMING
50. Do you have any other sources of income (other than farming)?
    If yes, what other sources and how much income do you earn from it?
51. What do you do with the income from (a) the husband's fields,
    (b) the wife's garden, (c) the husband's income from other business,
    (d) the wife's income from other business?
52. What property do you possess?
53. Who will inherit your garden and your property?
    (If female headed household, then ask about the whole farm).
54. Do you think that women should be allowed to inherit land, house, money, cattle or other property? Why/why not?
55. If your husband died, what would you inherit?
    55b. Will you inherit the land? If not, can you still stay on the land for instance if your son inherits it? Who decides about this? (Describe the process.)

WOMEN´S STATUS IN THE FAMILY AND IN SOCIETY
56. Who has the decision-making power in your household?
    Domestic decisions? Economic decisions? In the fields? Outside the farm?
57. What farming decisions can you make without asking your husband for permission, for instance if he works outside (away from) the farm?
    (Can you decide what crops to grow? Can you decide over the profit?
    Can you decide upon what crops to store and sell?)
58. If you have a garden, what decisions can you make there without your husband's permission?
    (Can you decide what crops to grow? Can you dispose of the income from sales/profit as you wish? Can you decide what crops to store and/or sell?)

LAND DISPUTES
59. Have you, or any member of your household, ever had a dispute about land control or land boundaries? If yes, who was involved and what was the dispute about? If yes, what parcel was involved?
60. Who was involved in resolving the dispute?
    ( ) we resolved it ourselves   ( ) religious leader
    ( ) village chief   ( ) district court
    ( ) village committee   ( ) regional court
    ( ) witnesses   ( ) police
    ( ) other:_____
61. What was the decision?
62. Are disputes over land ownership?
    ( ) more serious now than in the past
    ( ) not as serious now as in the past
    ( ) not a problem
63. Are disputes over parcel boundaries?

(within the family: between wives, or between husband and wife)

( ) more serious now than in the past

( ) not as serious now as in the past

( ) not a problem

64. Who presents the biggest threat to keeping land?

(e.g. family, neighbouring farmers, outsiders, authorities)

64b. Do men and women face the same threat?

(for women: the question normally concerns the garden).

65. If a farmer has lent a piece of land to someone for a long period of time, does s/he run a risk that the borrower may try to claim it?

( ) high risk   ( ) low risk   ( ) no risk

65b. If there is a risk, how many years are considered risky?

65c. Does the same count for a woman who has borrowed land from her husband (or father)?

(for women: the question normally concerns the garden).

66. If a local authority (such as a chief, headman, chancellor) knows that a farmer holds a farm, what is the possibility that someone else can take it?

( ) not possible   ( ) may be possible   ( ) very possible

66b. Does the same count for a woman?

(for women: the question normally concerns the garden).

67. What is the most serious type of land dispute that farmers face in this area?

68. Do these disputes discourage farmers from investing in their land?

(e.g. labour, money, seeds, fertiliser, improving soil condition).

69. Is there any particular type of land that is more likely to lose than other types of land? (e.g. arable land, a woman's garden, land in bush or fallow).

Closed questionnaire on farming: Men

NB: Make sure below that it is clear if the answer refers to the wife's garden or to the husband's land/family land.

Name: Village:
Farm size: Garden size/s:
Head of household: Age:
Number of children: Number of wives:
Other permanent and/or temporal residents in the household:

Draw a rough sketch showing the location of all the land that the family currently: 1/ owns, rents, borrows, and 2/ rents out or has given out. Be sure to include all land that is in bush, fallow, idle, or has never been cultivated. Show prominent landmarks (river, hill, etc.). Mark family members' plots, general soil types and land quality. Estimate the area of the plots.
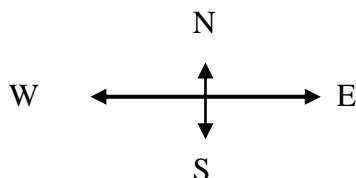
PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PARCEL
1. Describe for each parcel at the farm:

	Family land/husband's land	*Wife's land*	*Other's:…… land*
Easy to till			
Average			
Difficult to till			
Very fertile			
Average			
Not very fertile			

2. How would you describe the quality of soil on this farm compared with other land in the area?
    ( ) better in quality   ( ) about the same   ( ) worse
3. On this parcel, how serious a problem to productivity is each of the following? (ask about each person's land.)

	Serious	*Average*	*Not serious*
Drought			
Soil compaction			
Cracking			
Flood			
Weeds			

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Pests
Animals
Other

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION
4. What types of crops do you grow?
     (For instance drought resistant crops, food crops, cash crops)
5. Why do you grow the crops you do?
6. What crops do you grow on what type of land? Why?
   (e.g. on the best land, close to the house, in the garden)
   Crop refers to sum of fields which belongs to the same person which are planted in the same crop.
   Husband's crop 1:   H's crop 2:   Wife's crop 1:   W's crop 2:
7. What crops did you cultivate last season?
8. What is the area under cultivation?
9. Is this your usual cropping pattern? (If no, what is it?)
10. How much did you harvest?
11. Where/how did you get the seeds?
12. Do you apply: Manure ( )   Fertiliser ( )   Pesticides ( )   Herbicides( )
13. What were the costs of inputs last planting season?
    (ask about husband's and wife's land separately.)
    Seeds: labour: fertiliser: tools: other inputs:
14. Do you use hoes, draught power, tractors or any other mechanised services? (Describe what technical assistance is used, and if hired what it costs. Also investigate in which fields it is used.)
15. What are your plans for the next planting season?
    (Ask for both husband and wife.)
16. How often are you not able to grow enough to meet the needs of your family (e.g. due to drought, flood, etc.), meaning you have to buy or receive aid?
    ( ) every year   ( ) most years   ( ) some years   ( ) never
17. How does access to credits, transport, extension service, markets etc. affect your production plans?
     17b. Is there something else you would like to grow that these constraints prohibit? If yes, what?

MARKETING CROPS
18. Did you sell any crops this year?
19. Are you able to sell the crops you want to sell? If no, why not?
20. How often do you grow a surplus of maize or other crops to sell?
    Maize   ( ) every year   ( ) most years   ( ) some years   ( ) never
    Other crops:___   ( ) every year   ( ) most years   ( ) some years   ( ) never
21. How much maize and other crops have you sold since the last harvest?
        Number of bags or no of kilo: price received: to whom sold:
Maize:

Other crops:_____

22. How much maize and other crops have you bought since the last harvest?
    Number of bags or no of kilo: price paid: from whom bought:
Maize:
Other crops:_____

23. How much land have you got under food cropping and how much under cash cropping? Are you satisfied with that division? Or do you just sell the surplus after the family's food need is met?

24. If you sell any crops, when do you make the decision to sell?
    Do you decide if you should sell any crops before planting season and then plant any special crops for selling? Or do you wait to decide until the harvest and sell the surplus, therefore not planting any special food or cash crops, or food or cash crops separately?

25. Does the strategy differ between the crops grown in the garden and in the other fields? If yes, why and how?

26. Where do you market your crops?

27. How do you organise the transport to the market?

28. How much does the transport cost? (for instance $/bag/km).

29. What prices do you get for your crops? ($/bag or $/kg).

INVESTMENTS

30. Have you made investments in the farm such as for ditches, ridges, roads, pumps, dam, or irrigation schemes?

31. What are your future investment plans?

32. Have you ever used land as collateral? If yes, in what way?

33. Have you ever borrowed money? If yes, from whom and for what did you use the money? If no, why not?

LABOUR INPUT

34. Could you describe what sort of work you do during a day?

35. Who do you work with in the fields?
    35b. What do the other members of your family do?
    35c. On what land do you work and on what land do they work?

36. How many hours do you work a day? How many hours do the others work?
              In agriculture: At home: Outside the farm/ in another job:
Husband
Wife
Other:……………..

37. Do you ever hire labour? If yes, how often and what do you pay them?

38. Do you ever pay for your wife's labour? If not, does she share the produce with you?

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Life history interview: Women

These questioned should be asked about the present time and about past times. She should be asked to describe: *what* were the changes in the practices, *when* did they took place, *why* and *what* were the effects? Please, focus on *changes* and *gender* differences. It is important to notice at what specific time things happened or were practiced. Ask if it was before the reserve was created/ when the reserve was created/ when they married/ or at any other specific time.

Name: Village:
Head of household: Age:
Number of children: Number of wives:
Other permanent and temporal residents within the household:
Farm size: Size of wife/wives garden/s:

Draw a rough sketch showing the location of all the land that the family currently: 1/ owns, rents, borrows, and 2/ rents out or has given out. Be sure to include all land that is in bush, fallow, idle, or has never been cultivated. Show prominent landmarks (river, hill, etc.). Mark family members' plots, general soil types and land quality. Estimate the area of the plots.
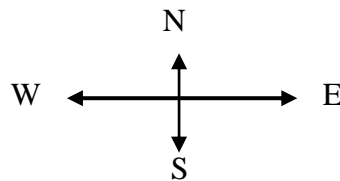
LAND RIGHTS
1. What was the supply of land before the Chiweshe Reserve/Native Area was created? If there are differences from today, what has caused the changes?
2. Was there enough land before the Chiweshe Reserve was created/ when you married/…, so all sons could get their own plot? If no, who got a plot? Has these conditions changed over time?
3. Under what conditions could women be allocated land in their own right and through their husband? Has these conditions changed over time?
4. How have women's right to a garden changed?
5. Nowadays, do newly married women get a garden of the same size as when the reserve was created/you were newly married/…?
6. Have women's rights to family land/husband's land changed? If yes, how?
7. What would husbands have said in the past if their wife/wives was/were allocated land in their own right? How has that changed?
8. What were the necessary characteristics (criteria) for a farmer to get land before the Chiweshe Reserve was created? (e.g. being a: male, master farmer, married, having a family to support, kinship)

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Why could/could not women fulfill these conditions and get land?

8b. What was the situation like when the reserve was new?

8c. Has that changed until today? If yes, in what ways?

9. Who was involved in the decision-making process of land allocation before the Chiweshe reserve was created? When the reserve was new? How and why has that changed until today?

10. Has a chancellor's/chief's/headman's authority over land changed since the Chiweshe Reserve was created and until today? If yes, How?

11. Has there been, any differences between chiefs, headmen and chancellors in recognising women's request for land?

12. How has a farmers' security to land changed? What about women's security to land? Has there been any risk to lose the land you are farming or grassing to any other farmer or to government?

13. Where does/ did your mother in law have her garden?

13b. Have the gardens belonging to women in this family line always been located in the same spot? [NB: If the wives' gardens are in another place, then ask why husband decided to move it].

INHERITANCE

14. Has women's inheritance rights changed since the Chiweshe Reserve was created/you married? (Ask about land, house, cattle, property, money, other). If yes, how?

14b. Who has the strongest right to family land in case a husband dies? (Wife, sons, relatives, other?)

14c. Does each family decide according to their preference or are there some rules? [Ask the respondent: Could you please describe the process?].

PERCEPTIONS OF LAND RIGHTS

15. Do people consider their right to land when they cultivate it? How was the situation in the past? Does/did the land tenure system affect their farming strategies? Are/were people aware of the kind of right to land under communal management that they have/had?

16. Have people's attitudes towards title deeds changed? If yes, in what ways?

17. Do farmers prefer to own land instead of having use rights under communal management of land? Has that changed? Why, why not? What would the difference be if they owned the land?

17b. Do the same count for women as for men?

GOVERNMENT POLICIES

18. How has the government's land policy and specific land laws affected peoples land rights? What about women's land rights? What were the effects of the following:

The creation of Chiweshe Reserve?

1930 Land Apportionment Act have?

1940 Centralisation of all land in Chiweshe Reserve?

1942 Commission of Enquiry of Natural Resources?

1944 Production and Trade Commission?

1951 Land Husbandry Act?
1969 Land Tenure Commission?
1980 Independence?
Any other government intiative?
19. What issues, in particular, were debated in this area at the time of the preparation and promulgation of (each) specific land law(s)?
What were the effects of the following events/acts:
1930s The creation of Chiweshe Reserve?
1930 Land Apportionment Act have?
1940 Centralisation of all land in Chiweshe Reserve?
1942 Commission of Enquiry of Natural Resources?
1944 Production and Trade Commission?
1951 Land Husbandry Act?
1969 Land Tenure Commission?
1980 Independence?
Any other government initiative?

ROORA/LOBOLA/BRIDEWEALTH
20. Has the practice of roora changed? Has the reason to pay roora changed? Have the prices changed? In what ways? (How was it before the reserve was created/ when the reserve was created/ when you married. How has that changed until today?).
20b. Do people arrange Christian marriages to a larger extent nowadays than before? Why?
21. What can a husband demand if he has paid roora? What rights does he then have to the women's labour?

POLYGAMY/POLYGYNY
22. Has the practice of polygamy changed? Are there different reasons to marry many wives today than previously? For labour? As a method to be allocated more land? In what ways have the practices changed?
23. Have women's reasons for marrying a polygamous man changed? Why do women want, or why do they not want, to have co-wives or marry a man who already has one or more wives?

LABOUR
24. If a husband does not treat his wife well and wants her to work a lot in the fields, in what ways can she then try to escape to work in the fields?
25. Are there any specific reasons for a woman not to want to work in her husband's field? Does a woman have a right to not work for her husband if she does not want to?
26. What would a husband do if his wife did not want to work in his fields? Can he force her?
27. Has a husband's power over women's labour changed?
28. How has the gender division of labour changed?
29. Have women's and men's responsibilities in farming changed? In what ways?

Interview: Village head

Name: Village:
Head of household: Age:
Number of children: Number of wives:
Other permanent and temporal residents within the household:
Farm size: Size of wife/wives garden:

Draw a rough sketch showing the location of all the land that the village head controls for the benefit of his village (currently owns, rents in, borrows, and land that is rented out or given out). Be sure to include all land that is in bush, fallow, idle, or has never been cultivated. Show prominent landmarks (river, hill, etc.). Mark general soil types and land quality. Estimate the area.
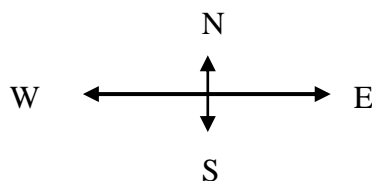
LAND RIGHTS
1. What land do you control and allocate to people? What are the boundaries?
2. Is there any common land in the area? What is it used for?
    If no, has there been any common land previously? (When? How much?)
    If so, why has the common area diminished?
3. Can you allocate a piece of the common land to someone?
4. Can you decide that this person is in such a need of land that you can recall land given to someone else in order to allocate it to the person in need?
5. Is there any land that you cannot allocate to someone?
6. How do you decide if someone should be allocated land or not? What are the characteristics needed to get land? What do they need to do to get land?
7. Under what circumstances can women be allotted land? Why cannot they be allocated land in other situations? Any examples?
8. Can people from outside the village be allotted land? If so, anyone or only particular persons? How do they proceed? How is it possible when land is so scarce?
9. Do people pay for the land? Who needs to pay for land? Do they have a stronger right to the land if they have paid for it than if they have not paid? If not, if the land is taken back, do they get their money back?
10. Now when land is scarce, how do you measure one person's right to land against another person's right to land?
11. When land has become scarce over the years, what land have you more recently allocated, to whom and for what reason(s)? And before that?

DISPUTES/CONTROVERISIES
12. In what matters do people consult you?
13. Do you have to solve conflicts? Any examples?
14. Are there any civil disputes for instance between spouses? Any examples?
15. What problems are there with land in your area? Land disputes?
16. Are you involved in solving family disputes on land?
17. Who has the strongest right to land: a wife or a son?
18. Who will inherit land? Are there any rules? Any practices/traditions?
19. Have the matters in which people consult you changed?
20. Do you know what main tasks the village heads before you worked with?

THE POSITION AS A VILLAGE HEAD
21. What do you do as a village head?
22. What obligations do you have as a village head?
23. What advantages are there for you as a village head? (nowadays/previously).
24. What legal rights are vested in you as a village head?
25. Has this changed from the past and until today?
26. How do you become a village head?
27. How do you work with the chief?
28. How do you become a member on the 'advisory committee' that the village head consult?
29. Can a woman become a member on the committee? Why/why not?
30. Can a woman become a village head? Why/why not?

THE VILLAGE AS A GROUP
31. Is the village a unit, wherein everyone has the same sir-name? Are people related to one
     another within the village?
32. Does the village have common property? Any commons?
33. Does the village take care of any daily chores/work together?
34. Do the families in the village organise anything together? (e.g. grassing and herding cattle?)
      Are there any 'work parties' in the village?

Group interviews: Women

Describe: *what* changes in practises have taken place? *When* and *why* did they take place? What were the *effects*. Focus on changes and gender differences.

Names: Villages:

RELATIONS
1. What is a 'good husband'? How has people's perception(s) of a 'good husband' changed?
2. What is a 'good wife'? How has people's perception(s) of a 'good wife changed?
3. What has changed in the relation between husband and wife since the 1930s?
    3b. Have husbands' demands on their wives changed? If yes, how?
    3c. Have wives' demands on their husbands changed? If yes, how?
4. Have women's and men's responsibilities/obligations in farming changed?
    If yes, in what ways? Have women's, or men's, possibilities in farming changed?

ROORA/LOBOLA/BRIDEWEALTH
5. Has the practice of roora changed? Has the reason to pay roora changed?
    Have the prices changed? If yes, in what ways?
6. What can a husband demand if he has paid roora? What rights does he then
    have, if any, to women's labour? Or are there other rights?

POLYGYNY/POLYGAMY
7. Has the practice of polygamy changed? Are there different reasons to marry many wives today
    than in the past? For labour? As a method to be allocated more land? In what ways have the
    practices changed?
8. If a husband can support many wives and all children? For instance, if there were a lot of land
    would it then be alright to marry many wives?
9. Why do women want, or why don't they want, to have co-wives or marry a man who already
    has one or more wives? Has that changed?

LABOUR
10. If a husband does not treat his wife well and wants her to work a lot in the fields, in what
    ways can she then try to escape the work in the fields?
11. Are there any specific reasons for a woman not to want to work in her husband's field?
12. Does a woman have a right to not work for her husband if she does not want to?
13. What would a husband do if his wife did not want to work in his fields? Can he force her?
14. Has husbands' power over women's labour changed?
15. How has the gender division of labour changed?

ALLOCATION OF LAND, SIZE OF LAND
16. Has the gender division of land changed? If yes, how?
17. How have changes in land supply in Chiweshe affected women's land rights?
18. How has the size of women's gardens changed? Do newly married women nowadays get a garden of the same size as newly married women in the past?
19. Is it easier or more difficult for a woman to be allocated land in her own right i.e. to be allocated a whole farm? What has caused the changes?
20. What conditions are needed for a farmer to be allocated land? To be a man, educated, married, kinship, have contacts. or….? How has that changed?
21. Are there (or have there been) any differences between the chiefs and the chancellors in recognising women's request for land?

SECURITY OF TENURE
22. Has a farmer's security to land changed?
23. How have women's rights to a garden changed?
     What about women's security to a garden?
24. How have women's rights to family land/husband's land changed?

GOVERNMENTS LAND POLICES
25. How has the government's land policy/policies and specific land laws affected women's land rights in Chiweshe?
     What were the effects of the following events/acts:
     1930sThe creation of Chiweshe reserve?
     1930 Land Apportionment Act have?
     1951 Land Husbandry Act?
     1942 Commission of Enquiry of Natural Resources?
     1944 Production and Trade Commission?
     1980 Independence?
     Any other laws or government policies?

Appendix 2: Gerunds for women and men, respectively

Women: Gerunds related to categories. *Main category: **Manoeuvring to raise children***

Trying to access or control land/garden	*the meaning of that*	Diversifying income	Trying to access a husband	*the meaning of that*	Telling stories about relations	*the meaning of that: serving as a 'vent'*
having, owning, using, selling, deciding, registering, having documents, paying tax, cultivating, notifying village head, signing papers, feeling safe	Signs of having control	Doing business	**Sub category 1:** Moving & family building: marrying, living, moving, failing marriages (one or several), relatives moving, building house		obeying, cultivating, having children, using love portions, using witchcraft (in relation to a husband)	Second level interpretation: managing one's husband, using sex as resource tool, using witchcraft
seeking, trying, hearing rumours about selling (land)	Using hearsay to access land		having children		sharing, working together, using witchcraft (in relation to co-wives)	Second level interpretation: managing co-wives, using witchcraft
regaining, receiving	Processes relating to 'holding land' = reflect 'having land' as well as and 'being insecure' about land		**Sub category 2:** Handling relations within polygyny: 1: trying, willing, protesting, fighting, resigning. 2 trying to share, seeking support, receiving permission, being stopped, uprooting crops. 3 Working for children	Conflicts within household		

buying, paying, inheriting, allocating	Ways to access new land, or new ways for controlling land		working for wage, becoming a worker. Obeying			
not lending, lending, borrowing, considering giving, having no choice, not receiving	Ways of gaining land temporarily or keeping extra land without using it		**Sub category 3:** Using witchcraft: telling stories, killing, bleeding, winning, being operated, being amputated, possessing			
losing, being stopped, uprooting, feeling insecure, establish extra garden, keeping land at home	Safeguarding measures					
Sub category 1: Trying to access/control garden in relation to husband: restricting sex, stop having sex, using love portions, using spirit medium, possessing husband, dying from AIDS						

Men: Gerunds related to categories. *Main category: Manoeuvring to access land.*

Trying to access land and trying to control land	Moving (in relation to land and family)	Telling stories to claim land	*the meaning of that*	Engendering identities through gendered rights	Managing and/or controlling wives	Expand-ing family	*the meaning of that*	Manag-ing family
Sub category 1: Ways of claiming land: buying land, issuing, certifying, pegging, demarcating, willing to farm, managing farming, allocating homestead, holding land, having land, owning, taking over land, paying fees, up-keeping, owning property, utilising, claiming, keeping land in resettlement, utilising for keeping, utilising as claiming, proving worthy, knowing rights, recognising rights, getting interested in rights, speaking of title deeds, claiming, raising debates, raising claims, debating, fighting, liberating, strengthening	moving, moving back, going away, moving away, going to resettlement, residing, relating, returning, changing village, needing consent to move, being moved to Chiweshe, being temporary - becoming permanent, leaving, belonging	Telling stories about comm-on land history, claiming land rights, thinking	Describing or verifying rules and tradition Justifying and streng-thening rights to land	*Second level interpretation* men in dichotomy with women, women's non-rights in dichotomy with men's rights, 'man is man' because women have no rights, power over women 'makes man a man!'	**Sub category 1:** Practicing polygyny: marrying, polygyny creating problems, creating labour, creating continuity, mall-treating women, no catering of women's needs, pushing away wife, deciding on crops, deciding on work, punishing women who don't work, divorcing, not divorcing, women not having rights, denying woman money, denying women rights to spending.	marrying/ polygyny	Accessing land both as a goal and as a way to become a village head. Securing land is good (crucial) for lineage.	buying food, paying school fees, buying fertilizer
selling land, selling improvements (i.e. equipments and buildings on land), not having a sales-permission	settling, permitting, arranging, restricting settlement				building relationships	having children		

Sub category 2: Ways of accessing land: wanting land, allocating land, being allocated land, was allocated land, acquiring land, applying for land, inheriting, applying, getting, requesting, receiving, being given, wanting to grow, looking after farm, defining land for claiming, restricting settling, consenting, recommending, squeezing, hearing histories, recognising, not caring, not being interested, acting, looking, asking					**Sub category 2**: Practicing roora: paying when 'marrying', paying for obedience, paying for control, following tradition, commanding wife (to work), paying = Roora as indication of a man's right to women's labour/ 'owning' women's labour			
claiming, defining land, clearing, changing boundaries								
giving to son, son inheriting								
working, tilling, ploughing, cultivating, growing crops, using land for grassing, producing, selling, being prosperous, building a house, investing, improving			Land as a natural and economic resource					
Sub category 3: Disputing land: disputing borders, resolving, placing boundaries, facing threat, resolving disputes, not working because of disputing, losing land, shrinking commons, settling in commons, valuing land, being unsure of rights, threatening, protecting, risking, not risking, losing, chasing, negotiating, interfering, forcing, discouraging								
farming for nation, being dignified through land			Land as status					