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# African Dynamics

VOLUME 16

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# Nature Conservation in Southern Africa

*Morality and Marginality: Towards Sentient Conservation?*

*Edited by*

Jan-Bart Gewald, Marja Spierenburg, and Harry Wels




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Cover illustration: 'Digging deeper': A young elephant, name unknown, Kruger National Park. Photograph by Harry Wels.

The Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data is available online at http://catalog.loc.gov
LC record available at http://lccn.loc.gov/2018960025

Typeface for the Latin, Greek, and Cyrillic scripts: "Brill". See and download: brill.com/brill-typeface.

ISSN 1568-1777
ISBN 978-90-04-38100-1 (paperback)
ISBN 978-90-04-38511-5 (e-book)

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# Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| AA | Appropriate Authorities |
| AFRA | Association for Rural Advancement |
| AIA | Animal Improvement Act |
| BEE | Black Economic Empowerment |
| BMATT | British Military Advisory Training Team |
| CAMPFIRE | Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources |
| CBNRM | Community-Based Natural Resource Management |
| CITES | Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora |
| CPR | Common Pool Resource |
| DAFF | Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries |
| DEA | Department of Environmental Affairs |
| DEAT | Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism |
| DNA | Deoxyribonucleic acid |
| DoA | Department of Agriculture |
| DNPWM | Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management |
| EKZNW | Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife |
| EMA | Environmental Management Agency |
| ESTA | Extension of Security of Tenure Act |
| FIFA | Fédération Internationale de Football Association |
| GWLPT | Global White Lion Protection Trust |
| IUCN | International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources |
| KZNHCA | Kwa-Zulu Natal Hunting & Conservation Assciation |
| NAMC | National Agricultural Marketing Council |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| PES | Payment for Ecosystem Services |
| PTSD | Post Traumatic Stress Disorder |
| RDC | Rural District Council |
| REDD | Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation |
| SABCTV | South African Broadcasting Corporation Television |
| SAGRO | South African Game Ranching Organisation |
| SANParks | South African National Parks |
| TOPS | Threatened or Protected Species Act |

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| | |
|---|---|
| VOC | Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie |
| WINDFALL | Wildlife Industries New Development for All |
| WRSA | Wildlife Ranching South Africa |

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# Introduction: People, Animals, Morality, and Marginality: Reconfiguring Wildlife Conservation in Southern Africa

*Jan-Bart Gewald, Marja Spierenburg, and Harry Wels*

Every animal I have killed, I have felt for and I have prayed for it.
VUPENYU DZINGIRAI

• • •

Closer comes the screaming knife/
This beautiful creature must die.
MORRISSEY

• •
•

## Introduction

Writing of the establishment of contemporary South Africa, the highly respected and renowned historian, Robert Ross, drew his readers' attention to the fact that the country had its origins in an economy that was built upon slave labour.[1] A dark slave history that cannot be ignored when looking at the past of southern Africa. Far from being isolated from the world, the Cape was, 'integrated into the wider structures of the VOC's mercantilist empire, with a level of capitalist farming which responded closely to market forces'.[2] As the Cape colony expanded, so too did its demand for labour, and from the

1 R. Ross, *Cape of torments: Slavery and resistance in South Africa* (London, 1983). For further detailed work on Cape Slavery and the Dutch, see L. Mitchell, *Belongings: Property, family and identity in colonial South Africa, an exploration of frontiers 1725–c. 1830* (New York, 2009); K. Ward, *Networks of empire: Forced migration in the Dutch East India Company*, (Cape Town, 2009); R. Shell, *Children of bondage: A social history of the slave society at the cape of Good Hope, 1652–1813* (Johannesburg, 1994). 'Slave' as in 'enslaved person' (https://andilit.com/2011/10/12/slaves-vs-enslaved-people-the-subtle-strong-power-of-words/, accessed 4 October 2018).

2 N. Worden, *Slavery in Dutch South Africa* (Cambridge, 1985), 3.

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very beginning this was provided by slaves. By 1713 the number of slaves at the Cape exceeded the number of *burghers*, European settlers. A traveller to the Cape in 1730 noted that, 'Every farmer requires many more slaves than members of his own household to grow his crops and develop his land'.[3] In the present, the majority of South Africans carry this slave past in their genes, stories, memories, and psyche, and throughout the country the material remains of this economy continue to exist.[4] In the Western Cape, much of this history has been repackaged as a lucrative tourist attraction, which besmirches and hides the truth whilst making it appealingly palatable to countless Euro-powered day-trippers and vacationers. More than forty years ago, Ross warned:

> At the Cape of Good Hope there are many exquisitely beautiful farm houses built in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries … They were built by slaves and with the proceeds of the exploitation of slave labour … Beautiful they may be, but neither they nor the society that built them can be the objects of romanticism … The class that had these houses built had human beings plucked away from their homes and shipped from all the ports of the Indian Ocean to the Cape. Then they were worked in the fields, until they died … The life of the slaves was harsh, short and frustrated.[5]

However, for all its erudition, what is missing from this analysis, in fact missing from practically all of southern African historical analyses, is the role of animals[6]

3 Worden, *Slavery in Dutch South Africa*, 10.

4 The surnames of hundreds of thousands of people throughout southern Africa continue to indicate the slave status of their ancestors, the Januarys, Februarys, Appolus, and Junius being obvious examples, and the names Malgaas (Madagascar) and Mazbieker (Mozambique) continuing to indicate the geographical slave origins of contemporary southern Africans. V. February, *Mind your colour. The 'coloured' stereotype in South African literature* (London, 1991). Namibian politicians Emil Appolus, Neville Cupido, and Piet Junius, being examples of people of slave descent. In contemporary South Africa, the issue of slave descent, particularly in the so-called 'coloured' community, continues to be explored by people in search of their ancestry, see http://camissapeople.wordpress.com/, accessed 24 February 2014.

5 R. Ross, *Cape of torments: Slavery and resistance in South Africa* (London, 1983), 1–2. In a similar vein, the introduction to W. Dooling, *Slavery emancipation and colonial rule in South Africa* (Athens, OH, 2007) contains a thoroughly devastating albeit correct critique of the luxury wine farms of the Western Cape.

6 Next to 'human-animals'. We concur with C. Yampell, in S. E. McFarland and R. Hediger (eds.), *Animals and agency: An interdisciplinary exploration* (Leiden, 2009), 279: '… despite the unfortunate necessity of divisive binaries, "animal" will represent those species with which human-animals share the taxonomic Kingdom of Animalia'.

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(as much as that of slaves and women used to be),[7] as being central in the establishment of contemporary southern Africa.[8]

Contemporary southern Africa was established through the extensive and relentless exploitation of both people and animals in the interests of capital, on the basis of a morality that appeared to be divinely sanctioned, and was enforced through brute force of arms. This not only applies to its agricultural and industrial areas, but also to those areas 'set aside' for nature. In contemporary southern Africa 'nature conservation' proceeds unabated driven by the seemingly natural logic of capitalist profit motive, which is sanctioned by legislation and a dubious and ever shifting moral discourse, and enforced by implacable paramilitary units, often with a shoot to kill policy, that are not answerable to democratic sanction. Nature conservation in southern Africa has at its basis the enforcement of legislation that has consistently privileged the few at the expense of the many – in which the many include animals. Game laws were introduced and enforced in the Cape at the discretion and enjoyment of a small part of the settler minority. Similarly, in the polities that developed out of the Cape and eventually southern Africa as a whole, it was the interests of a small minority that determined what animals and what territories would be 'preserved', and which would not; which people would be permitted to hunt and cull; and which human-animals and animals would have to move or be resettled. In this, the central role accorded to men who served in or had served in formal military employment is truly striking. Nature conservation in southern Africa is a phenomena which is characterised by an interplay between Capital, understandings of Morality, and forms of Militarism,[9] that are all dependent

7 That is, argues Joanne Bourke, one of the reasons why '(f)eminists identified their own travails with those of slaves of both sexes' and why 'the rights of animals have always been implicated in debates about the rights of women and slaves', in *What it means to be human. Reflections from 1791 to the present*, (London, 2011), 143, 164.

8 To be sure, there have been papers, articles, books, and publications detailing the effects of hunting on animal populations, the role of hunting in the development of frontier economies, but virtually no publications that have sought to place animals at the centre of analysis. Striking examples of work that does seek to deal with animals seriously is that of the historians Sandra Swart and Nancy Jacobs. N. Jacobs, 'The Great Bophuthatswana Donkey Massacre: Discourse on the ass and politics of class and grass', *American Historical Review*, 108 (2001), 485–507, and S. Swart, *Riding high: Horses, humans and history in South Africa* (Johannesburg, 2010).

9 W. Beinart, *The rise of conservation in South Africa. Settlers, livestock, and the environment 1770–1950*, (Oxford, 2003); W. Beinart and J. McGregor (eds.) *Social history & African environments* (Oxford, 2003); R. Duffy, *Killing for conservation. Wildlife policy in Zimbabwe* (Harare, Oxford, Bloomington IN, 2000); J. Carruthers, *The Kruger National Park. A social and political history* (Pietermaritzburg, 1995); J. Carruthers, *Wildlife & warfare. The life of James Stevenson-Hamilton* (Pietermaritzburg, 2001); S. Dovers, R. Edgecombe, and

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upon the shared subservience and marginalization of animals and certain groups of people in society.[10] Although the subjectivity of people is commonly made in the more general histories of conservation in southern Africa, the subjectivity of animals is hardly ever seriously considered or explicitly dealt with. Amongst others, it is Gay Bradshaw who explicitly speaks of the 'historical trauma' that is experienced, shared, and intergenerationally transferred by both persecuted, brutalised, and marginalised humans and sentient nonhuman animals. In an example bringing together the fate of American Indians and grizzly bears, she writes: 'The experiences of the grizzly are not much different than those of their human tribal counterparts, American Indians, who have been subjected to what Maria Yellow Horse Braveheart terms historical trauma – that is "the cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma experiences."'[11] The devastating fire in the Grenfell Tower in London in June 2017 in which an estimated 80 people died as a result of poor fire safety standards[12] could similarly be linked to the fire in a mega pig sty in Erichem, the Netherlands, in which in July 2017, 24,000 pigs died, also because of a lack of fire safety standards, like sufficient fire escapes, use of fire resistant materials, etc.[13] Insurance issues seem to dominate the aftermath of both fire tragedies,[14] similar to the times when slaves were just considered to be cargo that could be manipulated and used to secure insurance money.[15] This edited volume seeks to embed its chapters explicitly in the context of these considerations, focusing on processes of marginalization.

A number of chapters discuss recent developments in nature conservation in Southern Africa that suggest that after an initial 'turn to the community',

B. Guest (eds.) *South Africa's environmental history. Cases & comparisons* (Claremont, Athens OH, 2002); B. Büscher and M. Ramutsindela, 'Green violence: Rhino poaching and the war to save southern Africa's Peace Parks', *African Affairs*, adv058 (2015).

10 M. Pickover, *Animal rights in South Africa*, (Cape Town, 2005).

11 G. Bradshaw, *Carnivore minds. Who these fearsome animals really are* (New Haven, London, 2017).

12 https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/jun/14/fire-safety-concerns-raised-by-grenfell-tower-residents-in-2012, accessed 24 September 2017.

13 S. Van Zwienen, 'Roep om maatregelen na grootste stalbrand ooit', *Algemeen Dagblad*, 28 July 2017.

14 http://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/news/grenfell-tower-fire-insurance-industry-fire-risk-warning-cladding-sprinklers-safety-deaths-a7807891.html, accessed 24 September 2017, and http://www.omroepgelderland.nl/nieuws/2139833/Eigenaar-voormalige-Knorhof-wil-niet-tekenen-sloop-varkensflat-Erichem-ligt-stil, accessed 24 September 2017.

15 A. Hochschild, *Bury the chains. The British struggle to abolish slavery* (London, 2005).

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however flawed the attempts were to include hitherto marginalized communities, we are now witnessing a 'return to the barriers', and a renewed focus on exclusion, elite capture, and militarization. Another series of chapters aims to foster 'the animal turn' by discussing the history of animal-human interactions by actively seeking to include animals as active agents, as well as actual attempts in nature conservation to do justice to the subjectivity of animals.

## Back to the Barriers: Capitalism and Other Forces to Be Reckoned With

Much has been written about the history of wildlife conservation in southern – and eastern – Africa and how it was built on evictions and exclusions of local farmers and pastoralists.[16] The history of the 'penitent butchers' who turned conservationists when their commodities and trophies became scarce is well documented.[17] Their efforts to create protected areas for those animals they deemed worthy of conservation, protecting them from those who were not responsible for their near extinction but whose hunting for the pot, trade, or self-defence was now criminalized and labelled poaching are equally well documented. Having seen their space and livelihood options curtailed, first to make way for white farmers, many black communities now faced further evictions and restrictions. The result was an often deep-seated antagonism towards conservation – and especially conservation authorities who operated in a military style to keep them out and in line.

Often touted as one of the greatest conservation efforts of the twentieth century, Operation Noah neatly brings to the fore the militarisation and exclusion that has become the hallmark of conservation in southern Africa. Operation Noah was the name given to an attempt initiated by park rangers in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), particularly Rupert Fothergill, to rescue wild animals

16 J. Carruthers, *The Kruger National Park*; D. Brockington, *Fortress conservation: the preservation of the Mkomazi Game Reserve, Tanzania* (Bloomington, 2002); W. Beinart and P. Coates, *Environment and history: The taming of nature in the USA and South Africa* (London, 2002); M. Ramutsindela, *Parks and people in postcolonial societies: Experiences in southern Africa* (Dordrecht, 2004). M. Draper, M. Spierenburg, and H. Wels, 'African dreams of cohesion: Elite pacting and community development in transfrontier conservation areas in Southern Africa', *Culture and Organization*, 10.4 (2004), 341–353.

17 K. Brown, 'Cultural constructions of the wild: the rhetoric and practice of wildlife conservation in the Cape Colony at the turn of the twentieth century', *South African Historical Journal*, 47.1 (2002), 75–95.

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from death by drowning in the Zambezi as the Kariba Dam began filling with water in the late 1950s.[18] In the interests of settler industry in Southern Rhodesia, the Zambezi River was dammed, and, despite Operation Noah, countless hundreds of thousands of animals drowned, while thousands of people were forcefully deported. In Northern Rhodesia, anthropologist Elizabeth Colson initiated her long-term (1956–2016) analysis of the Gwembe Tonga who were displaced by the rising waters.[19] In Southern Rhodesia ex-servicemen who had served extensively in World War II, Malaya, and against the Mau Mau, were deployed in a military-styled operation to save animals from the rising waters. Much was made at the time of the heroic efforts of people involved in Operation Noah to save animals, whilst the truth of the matter was that the operation saved only an infinitesimally small number of animals. Operation Noah was presented in the classic British militaristic tradition that glorifies World War II. Indeed one of the more popular books at the time explicitly lays the link in its rather bombastic title, *Animal Dunkirk: The Story of Lake Kariba and 'Operation Noah' the Greatest Animal Rescue Since the Ark.*[20] The horror and marginalisation of the displaced and deported Gwembe Tonga was silenced in the process.

In the 1980s it became clear that what became known as 'fortress conservation' was counterproductive, as it could not stop 'encroachment' and 'poaching'. As a consequence new approaches were developed that aimed to include local communities that had been excluded for so long, and were bearing the brunt of the costs of living with wildlife. The People and Parks, and CBNRM (Community Based Natural Resource Management)[21] approaches were hailed as the new way forward, as a strategy to combine conservation with local economic development of groups that had been marginalized both from

18 K. Meadows, *Rupert Fothergill: Bridging a conservation era* (Bulawayo, 1997).

19 In the event, the people deported on account of the flooding would come to occupy Professor Colson for the remainder of her life. E. Colson, *The social consequences of resettlement: The impact of the Kariba resettlement upon the Gwembe Tonga* (Manchester UK, 1971). E. Colson, *The social organization of the Gwembe Tonga* (Manchester UK, 1967).

20 E. Robins and R. Legge, *Animal Dunkirk: The story of Lake Kariba and 'Operation Noah' the greatest animal rescue since the Ark* (London, 1959). YouTube abounds with short films dealing with 'Operation Noah' in the fine tradition of *Where eagles dare, The bridge over the river Kwai*, and *The guns of Navarone.* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eTEBr5829u8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_xaKRk870JU; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gy8jIwR5J98; accessed 23 June 2017.

21 W. Dressler, B. Büscher, M. Schoon, D. Brockington, T. Hayes, et al. (2010) 'From hope to crisis and back again? A critical history of the global CBNRM narrative', *Environmental Conservation,* 37:01, 5–15. D. Hulme and M. Murphree, *African wildlife and livelihoods: the promise and performance of community conservation* (Oxford, 2001). M. Wells and K. Bradon, *People and parks: linking protected area management with local communities* (World Bank,1992).

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mainstream economic development as well as conservation. Inclusion was fostered by focusing on sharing mainly economic benefits and employment generation through tourism – including hunting tourism. Less attention was paid to access to natural resources, and almost no attention was paid to so-called intangible benefits local residents might equally derive from nature.[22] Local farmers and pastoralists were believed to value nature only as resources, not for its intrinsic values.

While initially hailed as solutions to the problems of conservation and exclusion, since the turn of the century critique on community-based approaches has been mounting. Many scholars have raised questions about the neat fit between the People and Parks and CBNRM-approaches and the neo-liberal interpretation of the concept of sustainable development. As a result, the private sector has come to dominate these approaches, to the detriment of the communities that were supposed to finally benefit from nature and its conservation. Some have even interpreted it as a new 'Scramble for Africa'[23], arguing that community approaches have resulted in the private sector gaining access to and control over large areas of land it hitherto had no access to. The heavy focus on tourism also resulted in emphasizing the importance of 'pristine nature', which – through its particular interpretation – once again excludes most local residents. Residents who, if they are involved at all, are still treated as homogeneous communities, which easily renders them subjects of conservation regimes, rather than active citizens.[24]

The gradual exclusion of local residents through approaches that were supposed to include them have not meant an end to the use of the term of community-based approaches and the use of community development as a justification for the expansion of conservation areas and concomitant tourism. The alleged benefits for impoverished communities still surface in the justification of for instance transfrontier conservation initiatives, despite evidence

22 S. A. Bologna and M. Spierenburg, 'False legitimacies: The rhetoric of economic opportunities in the expansion of conservation areas in Southern Africa', in *Institutional arrangements for conservation, development and tourism in Eastern and Southern Africa* (Dordrecht, 2015), 119–137. Cocks, M. L., Dold, T., & Vetter, S. (2012). "God is my forest': Xhosa cultural values provide untapped opportunities for conservation'. *South African Journal of Science*, 108(5–6), 52–59.

23 P. Carmody, *The new scramble for Africa* (Cambidge, 2011).

24 J. P. Brosius, A. L. Tsing, and C. Zerner, *Representing communities: Histories and politics of community-based natural resource management* (Lanham, MD, 1998); S. Shackleton, B. Campbell, E. Wollenberg, and D. Edmunds, 'Devolution and community-based natural resource management: creating space for local people to participate and benefit'. *Natural Resource Perspectives*, 76:1 (2002), 1–6.

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to the contrary. New targets set through for instance the Convention on Biological Diversity to increase the surface dedicated to conservation have served to justify further involvement of the private sector – especially private landowners. This has resulted, especially within southern and eastern Africa, in a growing sector of private nature reserves and game farms, which again is justified by referring to the contribution this sector makes to economic development – including job creation for the poor.[25] Critical studies have done little to change these dominant narratives.

Community approaches have also been critiqued by those who claim that combining community involvement and development with nature conservation is impossible. Some of these scholars and activists have called for a 'return to the barriers' and enforcing strict protection. And while military style patrolling of both public and privately protected areas has never ceased, uniforms and guns have returned with a vengeance. The increase in the poaching of rhino and elephants over the last few years – some even speak of the rhino crisis – seems to have sparked violent retaliation against the culprits, including actively pursued 'shoot to kill' policies, palpable again among a wealthy (mainly white) audience in the region as well as in the North. Gruesome pictures and videos circulate on the Internet, and little attention is paid to those who still bear the brunt of the costs of conservation. Mozambicans are vilified and allocated the main responsibility for the demise of the rhino in Kruger National Park. Even if they were the main culprits – which is a moot point – the picture painted leaves little room for an understanding of the plight of the 7000 people in the new Limpopo National Park – or even more if we count the number of people living on the edge of the park, whose livelihoods and sense of place were severely threatened by the declaration of the park in 2002/3, and the ensuing wildlife translocation and human resettlement plans.[26] Those believed to constitute the market for rhino products are not spared by conservationists either, as plans to inject rhino horns with poison suggest. Whether this is a feasible solution given the size and dispersion of rhino across Kruger Park is debatable. What it does to the rhino is a question that is hardly asked. And this strategy does beg the question: what is being protected for whom and from whom? Do rhino get so

25 M. Spierenburg and S. Brooks, 'Private game farming and its social consequences in post-apartheid South Africa: contestations over wildlife, property and agrarian futures', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 32:2 (2014), 151–172.

26 B. Büscher and M. Ramutsindela, 'Green violence: Rhino poaching and the war to save Southern Africa's peace parks', *African Affairs*, 115:458 (2015), 1–22. J. Milgroom and M. Spierenburg, 'Induced volition: Resettlement from the Limpopo National Park, Mozambique', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 26:4 (2008), 435–448.

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much attention as an emblematic species that serves to justify claims to territories and violent strategies of barring access to marginalized local residents; are they protected as commodities that look well in what some have termed 'the playgrounds for the rich', or are they valued as sentient beings?

## Towards Sentient Conservation

All those who have dealt with slavery as an institution know that the slave knows more about the master than the master knows about the slave. Extending this statement to the relations that exist between people and other animals, it is evident that animals know more about humans than humans know about animals. In much of the world, and in particular in the West and its settler satellites around the globe, man's dominion over all other animals is religiously sanctioned. For the adherents of the Abrahamic religions, God has created all animals subservient to man and granted man dominion over them all:[27] man as the master, and the animals of the world as the subaltern playthings subject to the will and dependent upon the mercy of humankind.

Research conducted primarily within primatology, but also beyond, indicates increasingly, and by now quite definitely, that the differences that exist between humans and other animals is one of degree and not kind. Scientists from a range of neuro-disciplines have acknowledged this in the signing in 2012 of the Cambridge Declaration on Consciousness.[28] The arguments that appeared to make us unique as human beings are falling by the wayside. Our ancestor *Homo habilis*, so named for her ability to make tools, which was supposed to distinguish us as humans from other animals, has turned out not to be alone in tool making. In groundbreaking work, legendary primatologist Jane Goodall demonstrated nearly fifty years ago that chimpanzees at Gombe Stream in Tanzania made and fashioned tools for termite fishing.[29] Chimpanzees in West Africa have demonstrated the ability to make tools to harvest algae.[30] In fact, tool making extends beyond primates and extends even to birds,

27 Genesis 1:26 'Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."' English Standard Version.

28 http://fcmconference.org/img/CambridgeDeclarationOnConsciousness.pdf. See also chapter H. Wels, in this volume.

29 J. Goodall, *In the shadow of man* (Boston, 1971).

30 www.mpg.de/10816806/chimpanzees-fishing-algae, accessed 14 June 2017.

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with ravens having demonstrated the ability to cut and trim tools to get at food morsels in experiments.[31]

Cognition, and the ability to understand one's own existence, is not limited to humans. Numerous studies have shown that many animals are self-aware. Related to this is the demonstrated ability of some animals to consciously self-medicate. Sheep, cattle, ants, and many more animals have been shown to self-medicate, but the extent to which this is conscious activity driven by self-aware cognition is debatable. However, this is certainly conscious activity for chimpanzees. Research conducted by Michael Huffman in Tanzania documented conscious self-medication for ailments amongst chimpanzees. In his words:

> Biochemist colleagues analyzed the broad-leafed plant, *Vernonia amygdalina*, and discovered more than a dozen new compounds with antiparasitic properties. After chimps chewed the plant, Huffman would come to learn, parasite loads (as measured by eggs in their stool) decreased by as much as 90 percent in a day. The plant was an effective dewormer. It was also known to kill domestic goats in West Africa, and that toxicity highlighted the apparent skill with which the chimps exploited the plant. Somehow they used enough to kill parasites, but not so much as to kill themselves.[32]

In addition Huffman was able to demonstrate that chimpanzees consciously sought out these plants at times when they were most needed on account of increased infection.[33]

Language, the ability to communicate complex ideas by means of vocalised sound, is certainly no longer the purview of humankind. Recent work conducted on baboons in southern Africa has demonstrated the existence of at least six distinct vocalisations that are used by baboons in a variety of combinations to express and exchange ideas with other baboons.[34] That forms of language

31 B. Heinrich, *Mind of the raven: Investigations and adventures with wolf-birds* (New York, 1999). See also M. Bekoff and J. Pierce, *Wild justice. The moral lives of animals* (Chicago, London, 2009).

32 https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/18/magazine/the-self-medicating-animal.html?smprod=nytcore-ipad&smid=nytcore-ipad-share, accessed 24 May 2017.

33 Huffman has established CHIMPP, being the acronym for, Chemo-ethology of Hominoid Interactions with Medicinal Plants and Parasite, and is established at Kyoto University, Japan. https://www.pri.kyoto-u.ac.jp/sections/social_systems_evolution/huffman/index-j.html, accessed 24 May 2017.

34 CNRS. (2017, January 12). 'Baboons produce vocalizations comparable to vowels', *ScienceDaily*. Retrieved April 27, 2017 from www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/01/170112143111.htm.

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are an ability that extends beyond primates is demonstrated by recent research conducted in Arizona on prairie dogs. After more than three decades of research Slobodchikoff, an emeritus professor of biology at Northern Arizona University, has concluded that:

> Beyond identifying the type of predator, prairie-dog calls also specified its size, shape, color and speed; the animals could even combine the structural elements of their calls in novel ways to describe something they had never seen before.[35]

Aside from language, culture is another aspect that is brought forward as being that which distinguishes us from other animals – that is, behaviour carried forward across the generations that is acquired through learning, and not through instinct, and which differs from region to region independently of environment. In the late 1990s, Andrew Whiten of the University of St. Andrews initiated a series of publications, which conclusively proved that chimpanzees display culture. As one reviewer reported:

> No less than 39 distinct behaviours, such as aimed throw and rain dance, have been recognized and catalogued in seven chimpanzee populations across Africa indicating that the behaviours are transmitted socially rather than genetically. It is possible to see young chimpanzees observe adults and then practice the behaviours. According to Whiten and colleagues, genetics 'cannot account for the observed variability,' in part because they 'found no evidence that habits vary more between, than within, the three existing subspecies of chimpanzee.'[36]

Twenty years later, Whiten and his team of researchers have shown that not only do chimpanzees display culture, they also display cumulative culture.[37] An overview of Whiten's truly impressive publications list and collaboration with colleagues around the globe emphasises once more that the differences

35 https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/12/magazine/can-prairie-dogs-talk.html?smprod=nytcore-ipad&smid=nytcore-ipad-share&_r=0, accessed 24 May 2017.

36 L. Brown-Hovelt, 'Chimps have culture', 3 November 1999, http://archive.archaeology.org/online/news/chimps.html, accessed 25 May 2017).

37 A. Whiten, 'Chimpanzee and human cultures', *Current Anthropology*, 39 (1998), 609–610. G. L. Vale, S. J. Davis, S. P. Lambeth, S. J. Schapiro, and A. Whiten, 'Acquisition of a socially learned tool use sequence in chimpanzees: Implications for cumulative culture', *Evolution and Human Behavior*, (2017).

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that exist between us and other animals, primates in particular, are differences in degree and not kind.[38]

Had by some fluke or miracle one of our ancestors *Homo erectus*, or close relative *Homo naledi*, still been alive today unchanged by evolution, it is most probable that we would have treated our progenitor with the same contempt and disregard with which we treat other animals. *Homo naledi*'s skull size (a cranial volume of 560 $cm^3$ for the males and 465 $cm^3$ for females)[39] was only slightly larger than that of contemporary chimpanzees (282–500 $cm^3$).[40] If our conduct with regard to *Pan troglodytes* (chimpanzee) is anything to go by, far from *Homo naledi* being feted and protected, she would have been exterminated as vermin and pests, or hunted as bush meat, and at best placed behind bars in an enclosure to be gawked at by distant relatives.[41]

Much has been written on animal conservation in southern Africa, yet nothing so far that has sought to place the animals that are being written about and dealt with in the discussion at the centre of the analysis, that is, as sentient beings with feeling, emotion, and empathy. Still, central to the academic and popular dialogue surrounding conservation in southern Africa is a discourse of morality. The 'conservation' of animals is presented in popular culture as a sacred quest to 'protect' and 'preserve' the natural history of the sub-continent. Within this discourse, hunting is good it is argued, as it protects the stock and thins out the weak and so forth. Given the, by now, overwhelming scientific evidence that people differ from animals in degree and not in kind, it might be an appropriate moment to herald a new phase in wildlife conservation in southern Africa. After a phase of *preservation* during colonial times, followed by a phase of *fortress conservation*, followed by a phase of *community-based conservation*,[42] and now, given the scientific evidence that has broken down the species divide between humans and animals, we are now entering the phase of *sentient conservation*, a label recognizing, following, and translating

38 A. Whiten, 'Social learning and culture in child and chimpanzee', *Annual Review of Psychology*, 68 (2017), 129–154; see also N.H. Lents, *Not so different. Finding human nature in animals* (New York, 2016); R. Corbey and A. Lanjouw (eds.), *The politics of species. Reshaping our relationships with other animals* (Cambridge, 2013).

39 J. Hawks, M. Elliott, et al., 'New fossil remains of Homo naledi from the Lesedi Chamber, South Africa', *eLife*, 6: e24232 (9 May 2017). https://elifesciences.org/content/6/e24232, accessed 25 May 2017).

40 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chimpanzee, accessed 25 May 2017.

41 More often than not this is essentially also what happened to people, R. J. Gordon, ' "Bain's Bushmen": Scenes at the Empire Exhibition, 1936', in Lindfors, B. *Africans on Stage: Studies in Ethnological Show Business* (Bloomington & Indianapolis and Cape Town 1999), 266–289.

42 Following the labels provided in W. M. Adams, *Against extinction. The story of conservation* (London, 2004).

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the discourse of the Cambridge Declaration. It is a label in which the morality to include all sentient beings, and the marginality of both human and non-human in wildlife conservation come together. It is not about prioritising the non-human above humans. It is about recognising the marginality of both local communities and animals and trying to do something about them in equal terms, making the marginality of both the local community and the animal the centre of attention in 'sentient conservation' through acknowledging sentience across species boundaries as well as a morality that equally applies to both human and non-human animal.

Exactly who gets to determine the criteria by which an animal may be deemed to be expendable, or 'made killable' in Donna Haraway's terminology,[43] is not discussed. Trophy hunters certainly do not seek out the weak; they generally seek the largest and most imposing in terms of a variety of criteria that are thoroughly dependent upon fashion, taste, and whim, and certainly not biological forte. Consequently breeders select livestock on the basis of criteria that vary in response to demand driven by 'market forces'. Exactly how lucrative this can be is illustrated by the fact that the newly resurrected quagga, which it must be noted is biologically indistinguishable from Burchell's Zebra or plains zebra, retailed in March 2017 for between ZAR 580,000 and 1,740,000 (EUR 50–100,000).[44] Mike Gregor, Chairman of the Quagga Project, which had put the animals up for auction, noted, 'typically it is difficult to even find a buyer for plains zebra'.[45] Indeed, a common plains zebra stallion retails for a hundredth the cost of a newly bred quagga, with offers for sale at a mere ZAR 6,000 (€500) in May 2017.[46] The last quagga died in the Amsterdam Zoo on 12 August 1883. Its wild fellow quaggas were already gone from the wilds of southern Africa since sometime in the 1870s, 'driven to extinction by European hunters'.[47]

The example of the quagga shows, amongst many other things, that, although this edited volume focuses on nature conservation *in the geographical region of southern Africa*, it cannot be understood without taking the global contexts into account. With the quagga, it may be that southern Africa is related to the Dutch, the early imperialists and white hunters that entered their lands, but it goes much further than that. Important here is the global travelling and reach of ideas and ideologies about nature conservation, labelled the 'Global

43 D. Haraway, *When species meet* (Minneapolis, London 2008).

44 https://quaggaproject.org/first-quagga-project-sales-reach-record-prices-at-auction/, accessed 26 May 2017.

45 https://quaggaproject.org/first-quagga-project-sales-reach-record-prices-at-auction/, accessed 26 May 2017.

46 https://www.olx.co.za/farming-and-industrial/livestock/q-zebra/, accessed 26 May 2017.

47 W. Adams, *Against extinction*, 20.

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Conservation Regime'.[48] It is global in terms of human-animal relations vis-à-vis health issues. The call for 'One Health',[49] linking human and animal health, although still rather functionalist and anthropocentric in much of its logic, can in some ways be seen as an 'animal turn' in the domain of health.[50] It is global in the paradoxical sense that the relation between the practices of nature conservation and place do not have to be one and the same as the popularity of *ex situ* conservation,[51] or 'captive breeding', makes clear.[52] *Ex situ* conservation can take place anywhere around the globe. Wherever breeding facilities are set up, *ex situ* conservation can take place. While *ex situ* conservation does not seem to rely on a particular location, it relies to a large extent on the assumption that after successful in-house breeding, the animals can be reintroduced, rehabilitated, or rewilded somewhere around the world into the wild again (endemic or not). Without that, often implicit, assumption, *ex situ* conservation would be 'little more than a farming technique to artificially maintain a gene pool …'.[53] Indeed it is a globally spread process and business, firmly entrenched in and made possible by 'the juggernaut of technology based capitalism'.[54] Conservation in southern Africa is therefore as much a global phenomenon as globalisation is a particular southern African phenomenon. What the following chapters try to show and analyse is how people, animals, morality, and marginality are reconfigured globally and played out in nature conservation in southern Africa.

The book is structured in four parts, starting with 'Animals in Wildlife Conservation' developing the argument outlined in this introduction further: why animals matter in conceptualising and thinking about wildlife conservation and why we suggest the dawn of a new conservation era, which we call 'sentient conservation'. The second part is entitled 'Histories in Wildlife Conservation', looking at the broader historical trends, continuities, and changes in wildlife conservation in southern Africa. Part 3, 'Politics of Wildlife Conservation', and Part 4, 'Critical Voices in Wildlife Conservation,' zooms in on the various political dynamics around the good cause of conservation.

48 Ibid., 43–67. See for a comparison, relations between and the travelling of ideas about nature conservation in the United States and South Africa: W. Beinart and P. Coates, *Environment and history. The taming of nature in the USA and South Africa* (Oxon, 1995).

49 http://www.onehealthglobal.net/what-is-one-health/, accessed 19 July 2017.

50 For a recent publication focusing on Africa see K. Bardosh, *One Health: Science, politics and zoonotic disease in Africa* (Oxon, 2016).

51 As opposed to *in situ* or 'in the field' conservation, like national parks and other categories of nature reserves, see Adams *Against extinction*, 147–150.

52 Ibid., 144–147.

53 Ibid., 144.

54 Ibid., 228.

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Part 1 opens with a chapter by Michael Glover, in which he explores both theoretically and empirically how a history of southern Africa would look like from the perspectives and subjective experiences of cattle: a history of southern Africa where the marginalized voices of the non-human other are put centre stage and in the process turning away for the 'classical' anthropocentric approach to analysing and describing history. His chapter is intellectually embedded in the 'animal turn' in the discipline of history. His empirical trial focusses on the example of 'modern' and genetically engineered Bonsmara cattle in South Africa, in which humans have tried, by way of conscious breeding strategies, to eradicate all animal subjectivity in the cows, in order to produce docile meat-producing bodies, walking calmly to their slaughter in order to satisfy the human need for meat consumption. How does history in southern Africa look from a cattle-centred perspective?

In his contribution, Jan-Bart Gewald draws attention to and reflects on the implications of the longstanding relationship that exists between baboons and humans. Gewald notes that, precisely because baboons are so very much like humans, we are fascinated by them. This fascination extends beyond the physiognomy of baboons, and more specifically to their social nature, their clear and consistently demonstrated care and affection for their young, their intelligence, their social interactions that include fun and games, and their emotions and fears. All of these attributes serve to ensure that baboons are more than merely creatures; they are, as Gewald notes, 'a mirror to ourselves as humans, and as deserving of historical analysis as humans'. Inspired by the work of Robert Sapolsky, Gewald provides a short overview of human and baboon relations over time in southern Africa, and seeks to emphasise that those who interact with baboons are well aware of the sentience and self-awareness of baboons. In other words, humans interact with baboons in a wide variety of ways, and in so doing are aware that there is more that binds than what differentiates us.

Like Glover's chapter, Harry Wels' chapter also finds itself positioned in the context of an 'animal turn', although in his case in the social sciences (if we apply disciplinary distinctions), and more specifically in anthropology. In his chapter, he takes up the very concrete question of how to accommodate animal subjectivities in fieldwork in nature conservation, with his case focusing on the rewilding of white lions in South Africa. How is it for an anthropologist to accept lion subjectivity and take individual lions on board as respondents, just like human stakeholders? Wels' mixes these more methodological explorations with reflections of a more auto-ethnographic nature, which might explain his particular anthropocentric intellectual route through academia. In a reflexive way, it shows how worthwhile it is, for understanding processes in nature conservation, to explicitly accommodate the voices of marginalised

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non-human others, just as we advocate for listening and taking into account the marginalised voices of human animals in nature conservation. Even processes of marginalisation are not to be considered uniquely human.

Part 2 opens with Draper's chapter, which excavates the history of transfrontier conservation, connecting environmental histories of the United States, Europe, and southern Africa. The loss of the last frontier in the US sparked feelings of nostalgia for the 'wild, untamed' landscapes now conquered. This nostalgia formed the basis of the national park movement, which sought to recreate these areas, albeit without the presence of the indigenous peoples that used to inhabit the land. At the same time, colonial settlers were seeking ways to 'acclimatize' in the colonies, importing and adapting ideas about wilderness and ecological niches. In the post-colonial era, transfrontier conservation areas – partly beyond the control of independent states – provide new possibilities for elites to connect with nature. However, arguing against the critique of scholars emphasizing the elite capture and neo-liberalization of transfrontier conservation, Draper presents the story of the formidable Kingsley Holmes to show that wealthy proponents of transfrontier conservation can genuinely be concerned and work for both conservation and local development.

On the face of it, the quagga, an equine from southern Africa that became extinct in 1883, would appear to have little to no link with Nazi breeding programmes and attempts to re-establish prehistoric aurochs and horses in the forests of Eastern Europe. Yet in her contribution, entitled 'Resurrection Conservation: the return of the extinct?', Sandra Swart traces the links that exist between the attempted resurrection of the quagga and breeding programmes (Nazi or otherwise), and argues that there is an urgent need for the humanities to be involved in programmes that seek to resurrect the dead. Quite strikingly, Swart notes that although the attempts at resurrecting the quagga may appear to be correct in terms of colouring and stripes, the projects do not necessarily allow us to savour once again the true sounds and smells of the extinct quagga. That is, that there has been an over-emphasis on the visual, at the expense of the other senses, and that, if this is the case, what then has been created instead?

In Part 3, 'Politics in Wildlife Conservation', chapters discuss the links between capitalism and conservation, notably through the commodification of wildlife. The chapters by Spierenburg, Snijders, and Kamuti discuss developments in relation to the upsurge in private wildlife-based production, or game farming. Spierenburg discusses the history of game farming in South Africa, demonstrating that the emergence of the 'wildlife industry', as it eventually became known, was very much related to issues of identity, belonging, and the justification of maintaining control over vast stretches of land – at the expense of farm workers' and farm dwellers' access to land, but justified by referring

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to the importance of conserving global goods and the promise of job creation and development. Research, however, has shown that this promise is rarely fulfilled. Kamuti discusses how game farmers both lament and use what is referred to as a lack of coherent government policies towards game farming in South Africa. Focusing on the province of KwaZulu-Natal, he demonstrates how local game farmers build on historical connections with the provincial conservation authorities to foster their own interests over those of farm dwellers and land reform beneficiaries. At the same time, they try to dodge oversight and control by switching back and forth in their allegiances to both the departments of agriculture and environmental affairs, and have formed a formidable lobbying organization defending their interests at a national scale.

Snijders' chapter speaks to the issue of sentient conservation, presenting a detailed description of how every phase of the lives of 'wild animals' on breeding farms are scrutinized and controlled. Using the latest technology, game farmers control the fertility of animals and breed animals selectively to cater to the tastes of tourists, including trophy hunters. His chapter demonstrates that the concept of wildlife has become a debatable one on game farms, and that the claim that game farming contributes to nature conservation is also dubious.

Part 4, 'Critical Voices on Wildlife Conservation', opens with the chapter entitled 'Continued state monopoly and control of community-based natural resource management in Zimbabwe: The Case of Hurungwe's CAMPFIRE Programme'. In dealing with the CAMPFIRE natural resource management programme in Zimbabwe, Vupenyu Dzingirai, Albert Manhamo, and Lindiwe Mangwanya, of the Centre for Applied Social Sciences at the University of Zimbabwe, inadvertently paint a desperately sombre picture that illustrates the collapse and breakdown of social norms and values within society in Zimbabwe on account of the crisis associated with the government of the erstwhile president Robert Mugabe. In their contribution, Dzingirai and his colleagues describe how CBNRM initiatives sought to develop structures whereby people living next to national parks could participate and benefit from the natural resources present:

> CBNRM sought to empower community members especially those located close to state patrolled conservation areas defined in law as protected areas, to manage wildlife and other resources. Under CBNRM, communities would be authorised to earn revenue from wildlife and to determine its use.

In their contribution the authors illustrate the centralisation of power, and thus revenue, within these initiatives. The paper speaks to the breakdown in morality, an aspect that was missing in the settler state and exported to the

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so-called 'Tribal Trust Lands', where people had to make a living, but which subsequently came to spread to the country as a whole. In other words, Dzingirai and colleagues illustrate how the breakdown in social morality, engendered by political mismanagement, has also come to be extended and evident in natural resource management in Zimbabwe where centralisation has led to the effective exclusion of local inhabitants:

> … what we see in Hurungwe and other places in Zimbabwe is disenchantment against CAMPFIRE. We can say that as they continue to find it irrelevant and costly to their lives, and as they see it as a mechanism to enrich and empower local authorities to better control them, local people will shack it off from their lives.

In other words, far from the enthusiastic success that it appeared to be, sociopolitical developments in Zimbabwe's recent history have meant that honourable initiatives have been subverted and blighted at the expense of rural communities and local flora and fauna.

Paul Hebinck's chapter, as the final chapter of this edited volume, focuses on how to look at and understand poachers and poaching 'from below'. Often poachers and poaching are judged from a moral high ground as just 'wrong', but, in coming to that conclusion, not even taking time or making an effort to try and understand poachers' own perspectives and narratives about why they poach. The moral high ground assumes there is only one way to look at nature, while Hebinck shows and argues how there are different natures – plural – to be distinguished if one takes a look 'from below'. Such a perspective would put an end to the all-too-easy and immediate criminalisation of 'poaching' or hunting outside the context of sports. The chapter also convincingly argues how 'poaching' is not only about appropriating meat or other natural resources but that 'poaching' is also about communicating resistance to wildlife authorities, by local people and communities that are all too often marginalised by these same authorities. This is an argument, an empirical grounding, and an exploration of processes of human marginalisation that strongly relate the chapters in Part 4 of this volume together.

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# PART 1

## *Animals in Wildlife Conservation*

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CHAPTER 1

# A Cattle-Centred History of Southern Africa?

*Michael Glover*

## Introduction

In the past few decades a range of disciplines in the social sciences have witnessed an 'animal turn': a conceptual shift away from the long-standing assumption that the social sphere is exclusive to humans.[1] Similarly, a growing number of voices argue for the inclusion of animals in the polis.[2] Via citizenship theory, some have conceived of animals as co-authors of society, so that animals are recognised as co-citizens, denizens, and members of sovereign communities.[3]

A core premise informing a wider view of society and politics – one that includes animals – is that animals are sentient. Animals have conscious, subjective minds, which intend toward the world to feel and experience it; they have rich affective states.[4] As centres of experience, animals are individuals with unique personalities and psychological lives of their own. An animal is thus a subject, not an object – a someone, not a something. As sentient experiential selves, animals exist within the sphere of morality.[5] There has been an

1 H. Ritvo, 'On the Animal Turn', *Daedalus*, 136:4 (2007), 118–22; K. Weil, 'A report on the animal turn', *Differences*, 21:2 (2010), 1–23; K. Peggs, *Animals and sociology* (London, 2012); R. Wilkie, 'Multispecies scholarship and encounters: Changing assumptions at the human-animal nexus', *Sociology*, 49:2 (2015), 323–239; S. Swart, ' "But Where's the Bloody Horse?": Textuality and corporeality in the "Animal Turn"', *Journal of Literary Studies*, 23:3 (2007), 280.

2 R. Garner, *The political theory of animal rights* (Manchester, 2005); A. Cochrane, *An introduction to animals and political theory* (New York, 2010); S. O'Sullivan, *Animals, equality and democracy* (New York, 2011).

3 S. Donaldson and W. Kymlicka, *Zoopolis: A political theory of animal rights* (New York, 2011).

4 J. Panksepp, *Affective neuroscience: The foundations of human and animal emotions* (New York, 1998).

5 J. Dunayer, *Animal equality: language and liberation* (Derwood, 2001); P. Cavalieri, *The animal question: Why nonhuman animals deserve human rights* (New York, 2001); G. Steiner, *Animals and the moral community: Mental life, moral status, and kinship* (New York, 2008); G. L. Francione, *Animals as persons: essays on the abolition of animal exploitation* (New York, 2009); M. Nussbaum, *Frontiers of justice: disability, nationality, species membership* (Cambridge, 2006); T. Regan, *Animal rights, human wrongs: an introduction to moral philosophy* (Lanham, 2003).

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expansion of the social, the political, and the ethical to include animals in their own right.

I submit that animals lie in the purview of what Jorma Kalela calls the 'great responsibility' of historians as 'guardians of sound knowledge of the past … instrumental in making sure that justice is done'.[6] If via silencing and inattention we err in excluding certain human groups, as shifting historical lenses indicate, then we err in excluding animals. To place animals at the centre of a historical analysis is a justified endeavour. Many historians have recently begun to include animals as legitimate subjects of history.[7]

In two decades of debate over writing animal histories, one concern has been how humans can come to appropriately grasp and write about animals' lives and experiences if the texts, on which these accounts are based, are written by humans.[8] Furthermore, historical texts about animals are often written *for* humans. The concern is that human understanding of animal experiences and their agency is contaminated by human textual mediation. One reflective scholar, Erica Fudge, invites us to consider whether historical accounts of animals over time might not simply be a history of shifting human ideas about animals, so that animal history doubles back as another branch of human intellectual history, by 'telling human stories, in human terms'.[9]

It is true that animals' lived experiences, as with other marginalised groups, do not feature in the 'centres of power and record-keeping'.[10] However, a number of scholars have reflected on this methodological question of accessing animals' lives and experiences via human texts and offered thoughtful views on how animal histories can be written.[11]

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6 J. Kalela, *Making history: The historian and uses of the past* (New York, 2012), 24.

7 M. Few and Z. Tortorici (eds.), *Centering animals in Latin American history* (London, 2013); D. Brantz (ed.), *Beastly natures. Animals, humans, and the study of history* (Charlottesville, VA 2010); L. W. Carlson, *Cattle: An informal social history* (Chicago, 2001); A. Mikhail, *The animal in Ottoman Europe* (Oxford, 2014); V. D. Anderson, *Creatures of empire: How domestic animals transformed early America* (Oxford, 2004); J. Clutton-Brock, *A natural history of domesticated mammals* (Cambridge, 1999).

8 E. Fudge, 'What was it like to be a cow? History and Animal Studies', in L. Kalof (ed.), *The Oxford handbook of Animal Studies* (New York, 2017), 265.

9 *Ibid*.

10 S. Swart, ' "The world the horses made": A South African case study of writing animals into social history', *International Review of Social History*, 55:2 (2010), 248.

11 Swart, ' "The world the horses made": A South African case study of writing animals into social history'; Swart, "'But where's the bloody horse?'": Textuality and corporeality in the "Animal Turn"'; Fudge, 'What was it like to be a cow? History and Animal Studies'; E. Fudge, 'A left-handed blow: Writing the history of animals', in N. Rothfels (ed.), *Representing animals* (Bloomington, 2002), 3–18; H. Kean, 'Challenges for historians writing animal-human history: What Is Really Enough?' *Anthrozoös*, 25:1 (2012), 57–72; J. Hribal,

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First, animals are to be recognised as richly sentient beings, not machines or 'automata' as Descartes thought.[12] This recognition draws our attention to requiring an understanding of the animal's biology.[13] As Sandra Swart has argued animals' biological discrepancies 'show us a different world.'[14] In thinking about how animals experience the world, we are aided by some grasp of their physiologies and their emotions.

Insights from disciplines like zoology, ethology, linguistics, ecology, psychology, and animal welfare science, for example, can enable historians to have a sense of the animal's sensory faculties, behaviour, and emotional and communicative expressions.[15] In this way the historian is guided to ask better and more just questions about historical documents and to interpret more richly and accurately those documents about animals.[16] Accepting the scientific import of humans and other animals' emotional and cognitive similarities, and reflecting the interdisciplinary approach to understanding animals, Gay Bradshaw, for example, by drawing on a range of disciplines including neuroscience, psychology, and ethology, has developed the notion of trans-species psychology and initiated research on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in animals, which she has recognised in elephants, chimpanzees, parrots, bears, and other captive animals.[17] When locked in cages, isolated, bored, disfigured, and otherwise brutalised, animals are psychologically afflicted in ways similar to humans. Animals' bodies and behaviour are a kind of text

'Animals, agency, and class: Writing the history of animals from below', *Human Ecology Review*, 14:1 (2001), 101–12; C. Wolfe, *What is posthumanism?* (Minneapolis, 2010), xxx:127, 141 243; N. Shukin, *Animal capital: Rendering life in biopolitical times* (Minneapolis, 2009), 130, 155, 197.

12 Swart, ' "The world the horses made": A South African case study of writing animals into social history', 258; Hribal, 'Animals, agency, and class: writing the history of animals from below', 101–2.

13 Swart, ' "The world the horses made": A South African case study of writing animals into social history', 258; A. Skabelund, 'Animals and imperialism: Recent historiographical trends', *History Compass*, 11:10 (2011), 804.

14 Swart, ' "The world the horses made": A South African case study of writing animals into social history', 257.

15 Fudge, 'What was it like to be a cow? History and Animal Studies', 275.

16 *Ibid*., 274.

17 G. Bradshaw, *Elephants on the edge: What animals teach us about humanity* (New Haven, 2009); A. Potts and G. A. Bradshaw, 'You see me, but do you hear me? The science and sensibility of trans-species dialogue', *Feminism & Psychology*, 20:3 (2010), 407–19, doi:10.1177/0959353510368285; G. Bradshaw, *Carnivore minds: Who these fearsome animals really are* (New Haven, 2017); G. Bradshaw et al., 'Building an inner sanctuary: Complex PTSD in chimpanzees', *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 9:1 (2008), 9–34.

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for the historian to interpret, a point to which I return at junctures in this chapter.[18]

Writing about animals is also an exercise in sympathetically imagining animals' lives and experiences.[19] The novelist J. M. Coetzee, through his fictive character Elizabeth Costello, calls for a corporeal interpretation of animals' experiences.

> Anyone who says that life matters less to animals than it does to us has not held in his hands an animal fighting for its life. The whole of the being of the animal is thrown into that fight, without reserve. When you say that the fight lacks a dimension of intellectual or imaginative horror, I agree. It is not the mode of being of animals to have an intellectual horror: their whole being is in the living flesh.
>
> If I do not convince you, that is because my words, here, lack the power to bring home to you the wholeness, the unabstracted, unintellectual nature, of that animal being. That is why I urge you to read the poets who return the living, electric being to language; and if the poets do not move you, I urge you to walk, flank to flank, beside the beast that is prodded down the chute to his executioner.[20]

Acknowledging animals as legitimate subjects of history draws us towards a visceral and corporeal interpretation of animal experiences.

The lack of linguistic texts penned by animals is not insurmountable. Human groups who historically did not leave written texts behind are not thereby excluded from history.

Nor is communication reducible to human language and texts. Humans convey meaning in manifold ways beyond the verbal sounds we issue or the texts we write. Body language, facial expression, tone, eye movement, and posture, for example, meaningfully communicate how we feel and convey our experiences. Such means of communication are similarly available when we interpret animal experiences. In the late nineteenth century Charles Darwin wrote over 450 pages on animal and human emotional commonalities in a monograph entitled *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals*

18 Swart, ' "The world the horses made": A South African case study of writing animals into social history', 249.

19 M. Nussbaum, *Frontiers of justice: Disability, nationality, species membership* (Cambridge, 2006), 345.

20 J. M. Coetzee, *The lives of animals* (Princeton, 1997), 162.

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(1873), and in which he argued that animals experience emotional states including dejection, grief, helplessness, guilt, pride, love, modesty, shame, anxiety, astonishment, horror, and also devotion, patience, joy, and love.[21]

Cattle behaviour and their bodies tell us stories of their conscious lives. Though not in human language, there is rich communication between cattle. Cattle communicate with olfactory, visual, and auditory signals.[22] Cattle have a sharper sense of smell than humans.[23] Bulls can recognise pheromonal changes in cows up to four days before the latter are on heat (oestrus).[24] Cattle also communicate with vocalisations in a variety of ways: to greet one another, to express a desire for contact, and before and during coition.[25]

Sympathetically imaginative literary figures have given affecting descriptions of animals' lives without recourse to human language and texts as sources of evidence. The emotional worlds of cows were not lost on William Shakespeare's King Henry the sixth. Consider his, Shakespeare's, description of calves prised away from their mothers.

> Thou never did'st them wrong, nor no man wrong:
> And, as the butcher takes away the Calf,
> And binds the wrench, and beats it when it strays,
> Bearing it to the bloody slaughterhouse;
> Even so, remorseless, have they borne him hence:
> And, as the Dam runs lowing up and down,
> Looking the way her harmless young one went,
> And can do naught but wail her darling's loss.[26]

Shakespeare was reading calf and cow experiences from their bodies. Grasping their bodily subjugation and actions, he could conjure a sense of their experiences. The calf 'strays', the cow 'runs … up and down' and protests by 'lowing' and 'wailing'.

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21 C. Darwin, *The expression of emotion in man and animals* (London, 1873), 67, 73, 83, 84, 137, 178, 195, 196, 197, 198, 254, 278, 321, 350, 362, 363, and passim; See also J. Rachels, *Created from animals, The moral implications of Darwinism* (New York, 1990), 57, 60, 138, 175.

22 M.-F. Bouissou et al., 'The social behaviour of cattle', in L. Keeling and H. Gonyou (eds.), *social behavior in farm animals* (Wallingford, 2001), 113.

23 C. Phillips, *Cattle behaviour and welfare*, 2nd ed. (Malden, 2002), 91.

24 J. M. French et al., 'Behavioural predictors of oestrus in domestic cattle, Bos Taurus', *Animal Behaviour*, 38:6 (1989), 914.

25 Phillips, *Cattle behaviour and welfare*, 96.

26 W. Shakespeare, 'The second part of king Henry the Sixth', in *The complete works of William Shakespeare* (New York, 2014), 46.

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Social bonds are highly important to cattle: isolated, cattle are more afflicted by fear and stress, and less so when in social groups.[27] Cattle forge strong and enduring relationships with their families and fellow cattle.[28] Cattle choose friends to groom and lick in turn, and select to graze near to their companions.[29]

In thinking of animals' experiences, we should avoid a human solipsism, which denies that we can meaningfully comprehend the experiences of other species. No human can fully grasp the experiences of another human, never mind the experiences of a vastly different human, from a different society, class, gender, geography, and historical era.

Writing histories of animals has many good implications. Despite some important work, the animal turn in Southern African scholarship has remained small.[30] An important exception is Sandra Swart's scholarship on horses, which argues that a sensitive treatment of horses does not merely add to history but 'changes it'.[31] For Erica Fudge, writing animal histories entails no less than a fundamental recalibration and re-evaluation of what it means to be human.[32] Animal History, Hilda Kean argues in a similar vein, raises fundamental questions, not so much about the materials drawn upon, but about the 'function of the history writing and the role of the historian.'[33]

Moving from methodological aspects, in what follows I will cursorily sketch a history of cattle in Southern Africa and introduce the modern position of cattle via a glance at the first systematised, modern cattle eugenics programme in Southern Africa.

## Cattle as Central to South African history

Today's cattle, *Bos taurus* and *Bos indicus*, are 'domesticated' mammals who descended from free-roaming or wild Aurochs (*Bos primigenius*) in India,

27 Bouissou et al., 'The social behaviour of cattle', 113.

28 V. Reinhardt and A. Reinhardt, 'Cohesive relationships in a cattle herd (Bos Indicus)', *Behaviour*, 77:3 (1981), 149.

29 *Ibid*.

30 See for example S. Swart, *Riding high: Horses, humans and history in South Africa* (Johannesburg, 2010); L. Van Sittert and S. Swart (eds.), *Canis Africanis. A dog history of southern Africa* (Leiden, 2008).

31 Swart, ' "The world the horses made": A South African case study of writing animals into social history', 248.

32 Fudge, 'A left-handed blow: Writing the history of animals', 11.

33 Kean, 'Challenges for historians writing animal-human history: What is really enough?', 64.

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Southwest Asia (the 'Fertile Crescent', specifically the Taurus mountains in Southern Turkey), and possibly North Africa during the Pre-pottery Neolithic era.[34] In Southwest Asia in 10,000 BCE, *Bos taurus*, and in South Asia in 8000 BCE, *Bos indicus*, were the first domesticated cattle.[35] Cattle were among the earliest large mammals to be domesticated, around the same time as pigs, goats, and sheep, preceded only by dogs, *Canus familiarias* (15,000 BCE).[36]

Domesticated cattle likely migrated into Southern Africa about 2000 years ago.[37] Archaeological evidence suggests that Bantu-speaking Africans have lived south of the Limpopo River, what is now South Africa, since around 500 AD.[38]

Since then, cattle have lived in a form of community with the pastoralist groups of Southern Africa and cattle have became thoroughly entwined – in fact central – in the social, cultural, spiritual, and economic worlds of Southern Africans.[39]

Cattle were considered capital by both the Nguni and Sotho-Tswana, and were the predominant means of accumulating, holding, and reproducing wealth.[40] When a large herd of cattle belonged to one male pastoralist, the

34 D. E. MacHugh, Greger Larson, and Ludovic Orlando, 'Taming the past: Ancient DNA and the study of animal domestication', *Annual Review of Animal Biosciences*, 5 (2016), 3330–31; B. Arbuckle et al., 'Documenting the initial appearance of domestic cattle in the eastern fertile crescent (Northern Iraq and Western Iran)', *Journal of Archaeological Science*, 72 (2016), 1; A. Scheu et al., 'The genetic prehistory of domesticated cattle from their origin to the spread across Europe, *BMC Genetics*, 16:1 (2015), 10–11; F. Stock and D. Gifford-Gonzalez, 'Genetics and African cattle domestication', *African Archaeological Review*, 30:1 (2013), 52.

35 MacHugh, Larson, and Orlando, 'Taming the past: Ancient DNA and the study of animal domestication', 331.

36 *Ibid*.

37 B. Bousman, 'The chronological evidence for the introduction of domestic stock into southern Africa', *African Archaeological Review*, 15:2 (1998), 148; L. H. Robbins et al., 'The advent of herding in southern Africa: Early AMS dates on domestic livestock from the Kalahari Desert', *Current Anthropology*, 46:4 (2005), 673–74.

38 C. Feinstein, *An economic history of South Africa: Conquest, discrimination and development* (Cambridge, 2005), 16.

39 M. Poland, W. D. Hammond-Tooke, & L. Voigt, *The abundant herds: A celebration of the cattle of the Zulu people* (Cape Town, 2003), 14–33; R. Pennington and H. Harpending, *The Structure of an African Pastoralist Community: Demography, History, and Ecology of the Ngamiland Herero* (Oxford, 1993); J. L. Comaroff, 'Goodly Beasts, Beastly Goods: Cattle and Commodities in a South African Context', *American Ethnologist*, 17:2 (1990), 195–216; A. Mager, ' "The People Get Fenced": Gender, Rehabilitation and African Nationalism in the Ciskei and Border Region, 1945–1955', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 18:4 (1992), 765–66, 769–70.

40 Feinstein, *An economic history of South Africa: Conquest, discrimination and development*, 18.

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cattle signified to other pastoralists that he possessed wealth, power, influence, and a capacity for patronage relationships. Men's 'ownership' of cattle also meant that cattle could be loaned or traded for labour.[41] Cattle were core to the social order of pastoralist societies; and chiefly power was premised on cattle.

Under settler colonialism, cattle entered an era in which their own deaths became routinized and standardized into an event that would become part of a ubiquitous industrial process. Conceptually, under settler colonialism, cattle were conceived of as valuable once dead. For cattle, this marked a tragic departure from their valuable-when-alive position in pastoralist societies.

Where purposive slaughter was infrequent, and happened to a hapless cow or bull in pastoralist societies, routinized slaughter, calf theft, and the systematised abuse of cows and bulls' reproductive organs were unchallenged norms in the colonial eras. With the advancement of settler colonialism in South Africa, cattle too were colonised in a way radically different to their subjugated but more respected positions in pastoralist societies. Although subjugated and held captive, in Zulu societies for example, cattle were regarded with esteem and inspired a rich poetic and oral tradition that celebrated the beauty of Nguni cattle. Marguerite Poland and David Hammond-Tooke write that:

> The sight of a herd of Nguni cattle at pasture … is a sight that has entranced pastoralists for thousands of years. It is a sight that has given rise to a complex and aesthetically rich naming practice and has inspired vivid imagery in [Zulu] praise poetry and many other forms of the oral art. Cattle are celebrated abundantly by the Zulu people in daily life – for their beauty, their fecundity, their value in social exchange, and their presence as mediators at the threshold between man and their ancestral shades.[42]

Cattle were not mere commodities to Southern African pastoralists. The centrality of cattle to the Nguni, for example led Poland and Hammond-Tooke to speak of 'The African Cattle Complex', and indeed cattle marked every major life event for Zulus. In addition to their presence in religious ceremonies, and ancestral communication, cattle featured at human conception, birth, puberty, matrimony, what is called 'bride price', and death.[43]

41 Poland, Hammond-Tooke, and Voigt, *The abundant herds*, 19.
42 *Ibid*., 34, 35–105.
43 *Ibid*., 15.

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In all pre-colonial Southern African Bantu societies and in some regions into the twenty first century, cattle were exchanged as bridewealth.[44] In human social terms a herd of cattle's primary function for pastoralists was to bind social relationships *qua* bridewealth. An essential responsibility for male heads of homesteads was to accumulate captive cattle so that these beasts could be used to purchase wives for their sons, an agreement in which women were obliged to give sexual access, child-bearing rights, and domestic and agricultural labour to their new husbands. The new brides in this arrangement were to acquire a house and lifetime 'security'.[45] Should a woman be unable to bear children, the cattle would be returned or a replacement bride would have to be provided. In this respect links between homesteads and families were forged, and definitively patriarchal pastoral economies reproduced.

Cattle are everywhere yet *in their own right* nowhere in Southern African history. It is striking for example to read scholarship on the Xhosa Cattle Massacre of 1856–7, for there exists no admission of what this tragic event meant for cattle.[46] It is common cause that the Cattle Massacre marked a powerful blow to Xhosa resistance to colonial intrusion, rapidly facilitating and enabling a consolidation of colonial subjugation. In the wake of the bloodletting, inspired in part by the visions of the young prophetess Nongqawuse, Jeff Peires writes that the Xhosa 'national, cultural and economic integrity … *finally collapsed*' and that the 'majority of Xhosa 'accepted that the catastrophe of Nongqawuse was irreversible.'[47] My focus is on the effect of the wholesale slaughter *on cattle*. During the bovine pleuropneumonia or lung sickness epidemic of 1855, over 100,000 cattle fell ill and languished in that year.[48] By September of 1857

44 A. Kuper, 'Traditions of kinship, marriage and bridewealth in southern Africa', *Anthropology Southern Africa*, 39:4 (2017), 267; A. Kuper, *Wives for cattle: bridewealth and marriage in southern Africa* (London, 1982).

45 Poland, Hammond-Tooke, and Voigt, *The abundant herds*, 30; Kuper, 'Traditions of kinship, marriage and bridewealth in southern Africa', 274–75.

46 J. Peires, *The dead will arise: Nongqause and the Great Xhosa Cattle-Killing of 1856–7* (Cape Town, 1989); J. B. Peires, 'The central beliefs of the Xhosa Cattle-Killing', *The Journal of African History*, 28:1 (1987), 43–63; T. J. Stapleton, ' "They no longer care for their Chiefs": Another look at the Xhosa Cattle-Killing of 1856–1857', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 24:2 (1991), 383–92; A. Ashforth, 'The Xhosa Cattle Killing and the politics of memory', *Sociological Forum*, 6:3 (1991), 581–92; G. T. Sirayi, 'The African perspective of the 1856/1857 Cattle-Killing movements', *South African Journal of African Languages*, 11:1 (1991), 40–45.

47 Peires, *The dead will arise*, 341 (emphasis added).

48 Peires, *The dead will arise*, 340.

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in excess of 400,000 cattle were massacred.[49] How was this experienced by the cattle? For cattle these events were nothing short of genocide, pulverising their populations and social and cultural relationships. They wailed, thrashed about, and experienced stark terror. As Darwin has noted, 'horses and cattle suffer great pain in silence; but when this is excessive, and especially when associated with terror, they utter fearful sounds'; he continued that he had 'often recognized … the agonized death-bellow of … cattle'.[50] It does not take exceptional powers of imagination to grasp that the disorientation, anxiety, fear, horror, despair, and bewilderment that Darwin observed in animals undoubtedly reached a supreme acuteness and intensity among the cattle during those terrible months. After experiencing trauma, like humans, animals too suffer acute depressive states and other psychoses.[51]

Gay Bradshaw's trans-species psychological scholarship on elephants shows that after culling episodes and concomitant social collapse, the trauma inflicted upon elephants – for example seeing and hearing their kin languish – entails 'a fractured and psychologically damaged community at levels that western culture is only beginning to appreciate.'[52] Coupling this insight with the premise that, emotionally, animals including humans differ in degree alone – it follows that vast psychological destruction and trauma was cast upon cattle societies during and in wake of the Cattle Massacre. Bradshaw and others' insights thus forcefully hint at what the Cattle Massacre must have been like for surviving cattle, whose reality – including kin relationships and social structures – was vividly torn apart before their eyes. To get at the specific content of this psychological destruction requires further research, but its existence is hard to plausibly deny and clearly demands emphasis.

The massive reduction in cattle numbers implied dramatic shifts in class, economic, social, and political structures for Xhosa societies. Owing to their structural centrality in Xhosa societies, for cattle the massacre saw the beginning of their shift away from their pastoralist position towards their modern station as economic units in breeding and industrialised production facilities.

Cattle were wealth in Xhosa pastoral societies. This is why slaughtering cattle was infrequent, reserved for especial occasions – to kill cattle for everyday

49 Peires, *The dead will arise*, 340.

50 Darwin, *The expression of emotion in man and animals*, 83, 84.

51 J. Lorimer, 'Elephants as companion species: The lively biogeographies of Asian elephant conservation in Sri Lanka', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 35:4 (2010), 897.

52 I. G. A. Bradshaw, 'Not by bread alone: Symbolic loss, trauma, and recovery in elephant communities', *Society & Animals*, 12:2 (2004), 149, doi:10.1163/1568530041446535.

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food would be to routinely destroy reproducible capital. Xhosa aristocracy exerted power and elaborate patronage-control by holding cattle.[53] In common with Zulu societies, Xhosa societies were deeply patriarchal: all chiefs were male. Women were subordinated via a range of social prescriptions and were, for example, in their dwellings not permitted to sit in the same place as men, nor were they licensed to verbalise even a *syllable* that was contained in the name of their father-in-law or chief.[54] Chiefs 'owned' the majority of cattle – the bedrock feature of their power and patronage – and lent these to sub-chiefs. Sub-chiefs in turn enlisted their subjects to manage the cattle in exchange for the exploitation of their – the cows' – udders, namely via 'milking'. Those without cattle were indigent. Since the Cattle Massacre drastically diminished the number of cattle, it substantially undermined chiefly rule and thereby radically reconfigured Xhosa societies. Ecological disaster, namely the *rinderpest* epidemic of 1896–7, further undermined the prospects of pastoralist relationships, taking the lives, as it did, of some 90% of cattle in the Cape Colony and regionally facilitating the establishment of a Southern African migrant labour system around South African mines.[55] The import of the Cattle Massacre and the *rinderpest* epidemic was, for the position of cattle in South Africa, in retrospect earth-shaking, for it precipitated the shift towards their modern position as economic units calibrated predominantly in terms of their capacity to yield milk (cows) and become 'edible' flesh (bulls).

While the erosion of pastoralism in South Africa was paramount in the colonisation process, it was also piecemeal and uneven. As Anne Mager argued in her study of the Ciskei in the mid-twentieth century,

> If there was one single issue which provoked the greatest resentment, it was that of stock limitation. To reduce a man's cattle was not only to strip him of his wealth (indeed, there was little wealth in the Ciskei), but to destroy his social base in the community and the foundations of male supremacy. Reducing cattle numbers interfered drastically with African social and economic relations; impoverished women and men were driven to seek work in town. While men were fending off the threat of proletarianisation they were also fighting back the onslaught on lobola and

53 Stapleton, 'They no longer care for their Chiefs', 384.

54 Peires, *The dead will arise*, 370.

55 C. Van Onselen, 'Reactions to rinderpest in Southern Africa 1896–97', *The Journal of African History*, 13:3 (1972), 484.

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patriarchal authority. While men held onto cattle they retained the symbolic power of the patriarchal order.[56]

Such scholarship is highly valuable for understanding shifts in pastoral societies, but I want to consider a discrete focus, namely the effect colonial subjugation had on cattle themselves.

## 'Functional Efficiency' Comes to Southern Africa

Also in the mid-twentieth century, domesticating cattle in Southern Africa became hyper modernised, obsessively data-driven, and systematic in large part due to the influence of Jan Bonsma's 'cattle breeding' enterprise at the Mara Research station.[57] I employ the euphemism 'cattle breeding' with discomfort. The predominant bull breed in South Africa, Bonsmara, emerged from Jan Bonsma's eugenics enterprise at the Mara Research Station in Limpopo.

In Southern Africa, Jan Bonsma was the leading expert in cattle genetics and described himself as an 'animal geneticist'.[58] Bonsma published over 50 academic pieces on cattle breeding.[59] For twenty years Bonsma led a team of scientists in the genetic programme that yielded modern Bonsmara cattle.

The term Bonsmara is derived from the breeding programme's lead scientist, Bonsma, and Mara, the Mara Research Station at which their genetic information were first systematically recorded and manipulated. In name, Bonsmara symbolise the beginning of cattle's ontological domestication exclusively for their flesh in South Africa. In thoroughly modern ways, cattle were ontologically reconceptualised – from their more respected and spiritually significant position in pastoral societies – to become mere 'beef'. Bonsma's ideas, which he presented with granite conviction, were highly influential and saw Bonsmara cattle becoming part of cattle industries in Namibia, Uganda, Zambia, Argentina, USA, Australia, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay.[60]

56 Mager, ' "The people get fenced": Gender, rehabilitation and African nationalism in the Ciskei and border region, 1945–1955', 770.

57 Of course, particularly in rural contexts, many Southern Africans today herd cattle according to older pastoralist mores.

58 J. Bonsma, *Jan Bonsma and the Bonsmara cattle breed* (Pretoria, 1985), Forward, 11, 12.

59 *Ibid*., 40–42.

60 'More About Us', *Bonsmara SA*, accessed May 11, 2017, http://bonsmara.co.za/eng/bonsmara-breed/more-about-us/.

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Key to this historical shift for cattle was Bonsma's reconceptualization of cattle as beings to be calibrated in terms of their 'functional efficiency'.[61] To be sure, most human groups domesticated animals through genetic interference ('breeding'), a process that has occurred piecemeal for thousands of years across the globe.[62] An 'efficient' commoditisation of animals was not a new idea. In Britain in the late eighteenth century Robert Bakewell had pioneered modern livestock breeding, and his ideas spread to British colonies in the twentieth century.[63] Enabled by expanding wealth and demand from an industrialising Britain, Bakewell became the predominant cattle eugenicist and was the first to breed cattle exclusively for 'cutability', namely the extent and proportion of a bull's flesh once stripped from his carcass.[64] Distinguished in that he temporarily loaned 'his' captive bulls to many farmers in exchange for money, thus multiplying the number of cattle he could observe, Bakewell's impact was truly remarkable and his extensive eugenics enterprise became a key influence, for example, in Charles Darwin's theory of natural selection.[65] In 1884 Darwin wrote,

> Let this work of selection, on the one hand, and death on the other, go on for a thousand generations, who would pretend to affirm it would produce no effect, when we remember what in a few years Bakewell effected on cattle … by this identical principle of selection.[66]

For cattle in Southern Africa in the mid-twentieth century, dramatic changes in domestication methods and how their human masters conceived of them began to occur.

Valuing cattle exclusively in terms of the extent to which they were efficiently converted into 'beef' was Bonsma's core idea, and it would come to radically transform the lives of cattle born via modernised 'breeding programmes' in Southern Africa.

> A producer must breed animals to be adaptable, fertile, functionally efficient and efficient converters of feed in order to produce end products

61 Bonsma, *Jan Bonsma and the Bonsmara cattle breed*, 18–20, 24.
62 J. Clutton-Brock, 'How domestic animals have shaped the development of human societies', in L. Kalof (ed.), *A cultural history of animals*, 1 (Oxford, 2007), 73–83.
63 H. Cecil Pawson, *Robert Bakewell: Pioneer livestock breeder* (London, 1957).
64 Carlson, *Cattle: An informal social history*, 176–78.
65 R. J. Wood, 'Robert Bakewell: Pioneer breeder and his influence on Charles Darwin', *Casopis Moravskeho Musea*, 58:8 (1973), 231–42; Carlson, *Cattle: An informal social history*, 179.
66 Wood, 'Robert Bakewell: Pioneer breeder and his influence on Charles Darwin', 239.

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> valuable to man. In other words, every concept of livestock production must be measured in terms of efficiency and this is what I have tried to do over five decades of research.[67]

Jan Bonsma's *raison d'être* for his cattle eugenics programme emerges at key moments in his part-autobiographical and summative text, *Jan Bonsma and the Bonsmara Cattle Breed*. At one striking moment Bonsma writes,

> The whole object of genetic improvement should be to produce cheaper meat. In other words, the superior genotype should give a superior phenotype at the lowest cost possible.[68]

In this way cattle are not only reduced to mere objects but also made cheap for humans to purchase. They are conceptualised ideally as 'cheaper meat'. Bonsma's project was to transform what he called 'tropical degenerates' into much larger, broad-shouldered, virile bulls with large testes for transmitting their genetic heritage to unborn cattle.[69]

For cattle, manifold new criteria became the very preconditions for their existence, whether they were 'functionally efficient' or not. Each Bonsmara bull and cow had his or her own personal genetic dataset, which detailed their numerous measurements and scores. Bonsmara cattle were 'selected', the sanitised inverse term for *not slaughtered*, on the basis of cumulative score on a wide range of indicators.

Generally captured by the term 'body conformation', these indicators included: longevity, birth rates and fertility, walking capabilities, tick-repellency, coat colour, sleekness of coat, edible flesh once stripped from their carcasses ('cutability'), skeletal structure, hair coarseness, and the ratio at which they, the bulls, could convert feed to edible flesh.[70]

The very ontology of cattle became engineered, scripted, and minutely controlled. Bonsma's cattle eugenics made a virtue out of killing undesirable animals. Notice his use of the word 'immediately' when he writes that:

> In selecting cattle for the Bonsmara breed, every animal that had completed a performance test, was subsequently evaluated and cattle that showed

67 Bonsma, *Jan Bonsma and the Bonsmara cattle breed*, 24.
68 *Ibid*., 25.
69 *Ibid*., 3–4.
70 *Ibid*., 12, 13, 15, 18, 21.

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> signs of hereditary weakness or defects, were immediately culled. This is the only way to eliminate defects in the breed.[71]

We should pause to remind ourselves of the type of being we are considering. Cattle are big mammals but also sensitive and easily alarmed. Cattle perceive sounds at higher frequencies than humans, and a shouting human voice triggers sharp fear. Cattle are quite seriously 'frightened' by human shouting.[72] For bulls the purposively cramped crush or stock cages excite their most acute fear.[73] In Bonsma's enterprise inflicting fear became a necessary and standard part of bulls' lives. When cattle experience fear their hearts race and their breathing becomes rapid, their chests pound like quick gongs. At times their fear is expressed by vocalisations, foaming at the mouth, defecating, and urinating uncontrollably. Cattle also express fear by attempts to flee or thrashing about.[74]

It is hard to imagine how cattle agency can be seriously doubted. Myriad instruments and tools indicate an intentional constriction of cattle agency, so that the tools themselves represent negative evidence of cattle agency. What are bull whips and piercing whistles and leg binders and cattle prods and sticks and dehorners and ear tags and bats and poles and spiked nose rings and iron branders and fences and muzzles and crush pens and squeeze chutes and neck clamps – if not instruments of torture employed exclusively with an eye to crush cattle agency?[75]

To signify their station, all Bonsmara cattle were branded with hot iron on their right shoulders. The practice has become a tradition for the Bonsmara Breeders' Society.[76]

Like humans and other mammals, cattle have the physiological correlates for the experience of pain. Analgesics soften pain perception in cattle and act upon the same neurological structures as morphine.[77] When cattle experience fear they produce pheromones and other cattle respond by becoming fearful also.[78]

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71 *Ibid*., 23.

72 D. F. Waynert et al., 'The response of beef cattle to noise during handling', *Applied Animal Behaviour Science*, 62 (1999), 28.

73 Phillips, *Cattle behaviour and welfare*, 122.

74 *Ibid*.

75 Compare Swart, ' "The world the horses made": A South African case study of writing animals into social history', 251.

76 The cover image of the Bonsmara website's home page is of an iron brander in the form of a 'B' that glows white and deep red. 'Bonsmara SA Home Page', accessed 27 June 2017, http://bonsmara.co.za/eng/.

77 Phillips, *Cattle behaviour and welfare*, 59, 61.

78 A. Boissy, C. Terlouw, and P. Le Neindre, 'Presence of cues from stressed conspecifics increases reactivity to aversive events in cattle: Evidence for the existence of alarm substances in urine', *Physiology and Behaviour*, 63:4 (1998), 489.

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As with humans, cortisol levels in cattle increase when they experience fear and stress.[79]

Owing to the core feature of reproduction, prospective Bonsmara cattle were killed for gendered reasons. For bulls, functional efficiency meant they could be efficiently transformed into edible flesh. In Bonsma's words,

> Heaviness of the forequarter which constitutes the shoulder blades, spine and related tissues are indicative of the desirable bull.[80]

While alive, bulls were considered valuable for their semen and fertility. 'The functional efficient bull' writes Bonsma, must have a 'high fertility and sex drive' and 'must be alert and immediately cock his ears when a cow passes'.[81] He emphasises that, it is 'of the utmost importance that the bull must have well developed testes with a circumference of 34–40 centimetres'.[82] In 'creating the Bonsmara breed', he writes, 'no inheritable defects were tolerated in the selection process' so that 'only one bull out of every six bulls kept was selected for further breeding purposes, and only after extensive testing'.[83]

Bonsmara cows, by contrast, were reduced to bearers and feeders of calves. Cows in this view were birthing and feeding machines, valuable only insofar as these roles were performed most efficiently. Strong emphasis was placed 'on the importance of a sound, efficient udder', and '[c]onformational features such as teat shape, size, placement and udder attachment [were] also crucial in judging cows for functional efficiency'.[84] Data relating to fertility were recorded for each cow, and any cow that 'skipped two calves within an 8 year period was slaughtered'.[85]

Cattle eugenics has proliferated and become normalised in Southern Africa. The SA Stud Society – a major breeding society whose motto is 'Profit through Genetics' – lists 21 registered bull and six cow 'breeding societies' in South Africa alone.[86] An estimated 13.8 million cattle live in South Africa, and by conservative estimate close to three million are slaughtered annually.[87]

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79 Phillips, *Cattle behaviour and welfare*, 121.
80 Bonsma, *Jan Bonsma and the Bonsmara cattle breed*, 19.
81 I*bid*.
82 *Ibid*.
83 *Ibid*., 13.
84 *Ibid*., 17.
85 *Ibid*., 13.
86 'SA Stud Book, Cattle Breeders' Societies', *SA Stud Book*, accessed 1 June 2017, http://www.sastudbook.co.za/p107/about-us/sa-stud-book's-history.htm.
87 'Scope of the Industry', *Red Meat Research and Development South Africa*, accessed 15 June 2017, http://www.rmrdsa.co.za/REDMEATINDUSTRY/Scopeoftheindustry.aspx.

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Not all cattle are thrown into the world via modern eugenics enterprises, however, and in South Africa there is a strong urban-rural dualism, so that around 40% of cattle are held captive by subsistence or 'emerging farmers', representing some 5.5 million bovines.[88]

### Cattle Agency

Did Bonsmara cattle resist their transforming position in Southern African societies?

Of course sensitive recognitions of cattle's subjective experiences do not feature in Jan Bonsma's work, but he and his team of cattle breeders were indeed deeply concerned with cattle agency. Cattle agency was disruptive to the extent that it *was* mentioned in the record-keeping centres of the eugenics program. Since temperament refers to an emotional response, mood and behaviour, we can fairly interpret cattle's temperament as one expression of their subjectivity and agency.

It is imperative to note that in Bonsma's ontological domestication project there began a systemised attempt to have cattle agency phased out. Indeed attempts to strike out cattle agency were central to Bonsma's breeding enterprise.

> Temperament is of the utmost importance in judging an animal for functional efficiency since animals with a bad disposition can make management difficult and often hazardous.[89]

Bonsmara are today proudly described by modern farmers as 'docile and pleasant to handle'.[90] Cattle agency was of course in no way phased out, but under conditions of extreme, minute control what agency remains?

In my submission, given the physiological and neurological discrepancies between animal species – whose commonality is *sentient experience* – we should regard animal agency in a looser sense than the sense in which it has been applied to humans. Some scholars – Cary Wolfe is an example – believe that we inappropriately anthropomorphise animals when we ascribe agency to them. Wolfe sees this ascription of agency to animals as an unwelcome

88 *Ibid.*

89 Bonsma, *Jan Bonsma and the Bonsmara cattle breed*, 21.

90 G. Treston, '12 Facts You Should Know about Bonsmara Cattle', *That's Farming*, (1 July 2016), http://www.thatsfarming.com/news/bonsmara-cattle-breed.

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view that hinges on a conception of morality as reciprocal.[91] One weakness of Wolfe's critique consists in his misrepresentation of what he calls the 'liberal justice tradition'.[92] In liberal ethics reciprocation is *not* a necessary condition for ethical relations – to see this, consider that young human babies and aged humans are not in reciprocal ethical relationships with the rest of society, yet they are understood as beings who definitively and especially require moral protection.

I submit that we should retain a recognition of animal agency but in looser, less anthropocentric terms, so that agency is understood, in part, just as subjectively acting and feeling and being in the world in a species-relevant and characteristic way. When animals exist in their characteristic ways, unhindered by human instrumentalisation, they are expressing their agency – they express how they wish to live. Agency is in part a conscious desire and appeal for freedom, an aspect of being that plants, for instance, lack. The fact that we are commonly uninterested in developing requisite, or simply have deficient, interpretative faculties to appreciate such agency is not an indication of the absence of animal agency. Consider as one illustration the numerous affecting videos of cattle released into meadows and fields after long confinement on what are called 'farms'.[93] As the cattle rapidly exit their prisons they skip, dance, and gambol with heightened energy, joyous to loosen the arthritic stiffness in their limbs and feel the fresh air and grass and sun on their bodies. And as the cattle frolic, roll on the grass, and nuzzle each other one has a distinct impression of their exhilaration and ebullience. This to my mind is cattle agency. Reader, watch the footage yourself. Their message rings loud and clear: *we do not wish to be imprisoned in these metal cells; we do not want to live in humiliated isolation from our kin and our young.* That is what a sensitive and empathetic reading of cattle released from carceral degradation tells us. When they gambol and dance, cattle communicate to us their desire for liberation.

If we adopt a gravitas appropriate to the recognition of the core fact of animal sentience, accepting that animals *differ in degree and not in kind*, it appears that we are compelled to affirm that we are inflicting nothing short of an around-the-clock, societally endorsed, profit-driven, self-regenerating

91 Wolfe, *What is posthumanism?*, 127, 143.

92 *Ibid.*

93 Compassion in World Farming, *Dancing Cows?* (2012), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5KaltDoZ6ww; iDIMi, *Cows Literally Jump for Joy after Being Released into an Open Field*, 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CL5htSOieRI; R. Cornock, *Happy Cows Skipping out to Grass for the First Time. April 2012*, 2012, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=huT5__BqY_U&t=67s.

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genocide against millions of our bovine relatives. That is a fact of the modern position of cattle that we cannot close our eyes to. Given the near-universal nonchalance with which we accept the routinized slaughter – more accurately *murder* – of cattle, it becomes a matter of moral obligation to consider what our response to the position of cattle should be. We should not regard cattle or any sentient animals as those who can be owned, used merely for human means, trapped, held captive, hurt, sexually violated ('artificially inseminated'), and killed. Although at present – that is to say contingently – it remains a marginalised perspective to speak in defence of cattle, that is what justice requires.

Cattle occupy an undignified – no, colonised – position in Southern Africa. This chapter has argued that animal histories are worthy endeavours. It considered some methodologies for taking animals seriously in historical writing and contended that the lives of animals can be respectfully written about. It then regarded the case of Bonsmara cattle as a way of locating cattle historically in Southern Africa and reminding us of the relationships we have with them.

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CHAPTER 2

# Brothers in Arms: Baboon-Human Interactions, a Southern African Perspective

*Jan-Bart Gewald*

> Any Baboon we see anywhere we are going to stop and try and kill him.[1]
> Baboons are a scourge. Just like tree-hugging hippies.[2]
> 'Death for no reason is murder'.[3]

In early 2011 a baboon named Fred was captured and executed in Cape Town, South Africa. In the years prior to his death Fred had come to the attention of the world on account of his leading a gang of baboons, 'which developed a reputation for raiding cars, assaulting and interfering with tourists, and stealing food'.[4] Prior to his untimely death, Fred who was able to open the doors of cars and houses, had the unfortunate tendency of demonstrating the finer points of breaking and entering to the youth of his troop.[5] Fred, had, as so many of his compatriots had been doing since 1652, also raided the gardens, rubbish tips, and kitchens of the inhabitants of Cape Town.[6] For this, Fred and his fellows

1 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q9IYpwx3-_w, accessed 14 April 2017.

2 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DL9qSRjHlqY Public comment by Alan Wilke, accessed 14 April 2017.

3 The Smiths, 'Meat is murder', track 9 from the album, *Meat is murder*, Rough Trade Records, 1985.

4 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fred_%28baboon%29, accessed 24 January 2018.

5 http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/earth/wildlife/9674445/Cape-Town-baboons-get-paintballed.html, accessed 24 January 2018.

6 Cape Archives Depot, Cape Town (CAD), Source 3/CT, Vol. No. 4/1/11/752, Ref: G 65/6/192, Executive Committee Cape Town City Council. 'Baboon Nuisance in Silvermine and Table Mountain Nature Reserves 1967' and 'Here in South Africa they kill sheep, and packs of baboons are known to attack and kill small dogs in suburbs in Cape Town. They're a pest. If you love nature so much, realize that nature is cruel and stop being a pussy'. Comment

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have consistently been hunted and hounded. Indeed, after his death, post-mortem x-rays showed Fred's body to be peppered with buckshot.[7] The relationship between humans (*Homo sapiens*) and our distant cousins (*Papio*) has a long and distinguished history, and one that was not always fraught with violence and discontent.[8] Baboons had been around for at least a million years when our hominid ancestors first started using fire.[9] In ancient Egypt, baboons were sacred and considered to be the earthly manifestation of the deity Thoth, who was associated with a wide variety of noble and important issues, including 'the arbitration of godly disputes, the arts of magic, the system of writing, the development of science, and the judgment of the dead'.[10] Baboons graced the stages of Elizabethan England, appearing in, amongst others, Othello and Macbeth, allowing one social commentator to state that, 'early modern London's stage baboons remind us that the lines between aping and acting was often deliberately blurred'.[11] Indeed, the lines between us, as *Homo sapiens*, and them, as *Papio*, continue to be blurred; the symbiosis between the two has a long and distinguished career, and, as we shall see, this is particularly true in southern Africa.[12]

As a child growing up in southern Africa, I was often confronted by baboons in a wide variety of guises. My first conscious memory of the ferocity of baboons was implanted when Whiskers, our Irish Setter, was torn to pieces by a

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by Theodore Tait in a baboon murder video. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-dJjHteQuaY, accessed 14 April 2017.

7 There are numerous news reports dealing with the exploits of Fred. A useful introduction to the life and times of Fred is to be found on his Wikipedia page. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fred_%28baboon%29, accessed 7 October 2016.

8 S. Swart, 'Baboons, colonial discourses and moral agency', in W. Woodward (ed.), *The animal gaze: Animal subjectives in southern African narratives* (Johannesburg, 2008).

9 http://www.livescience.com/51937-earliest-baboon-fossil.html, accessed 24 April 2017, and F. Berna, P. Goldberg, L. K. Horwitz, J. Brink, S. Holt, M. Bamford, and M. Chazan, 'Microstratigraphic evidence of in situ fire in the Acheulean strata of Wonderwerk Cave, Northern Cape province, South Africa', *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 109:20 (2012-05-15), E1215–E1220.

10 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thoth, accessed 7 October 2016.

11 H. Dugan, 'To bark with judgment: Playing baboon in early modern London', *Shakespeare Studies* (2013), 78.

12 S. Swart, 'Ferality and morality: The politics of the 'Forbidden experiment' in the twentieth century', in M. Pina and N. Gontier (eds.), *The evolution of social communication in primates,* (Dordrecht, 2014); 'Lucas's story: The invention of the South African Baboon Boy', in W. Speitkamp and S. Zehnle (eds.), *Afrikanische Tierräume: Historische Verortungen* (Koeln, 2014); K. Koutstaal, *'Blurred lines' How different views on baboon agency shape the conservation policy making dialogue in Cape Town, South Africa* (unpublished Master's thesis, Leiden University, 2013); and R. S. Levine, 'Who was Lucas the Baboon Boy; or, Can the subaltern speak?' (paper submitted by R. S. Levine, PhD candidate History, Yale University, 2012).

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troop of baboons whilst in the veld with my father in the vicinity of Madziwa in present-day Zimbabwe. As a child I watched fascinated as baboons untied wrappers from sweets thrown to them by tourists in a game-park. Just like humans, the baboons took the sweet-wrappers in their hands and pulled them open. I have a memory, probably apocryphal, of a story told to me by my parents' gardener, with whom I often drank sweet milky tea and ate thick jam and margarine covered hunks of bread, that baboons could speak just like humans, but that they consciously did not do so in the presence of white people, as otherwise they would make them work for them. As a child I enjoyed the monthly cartoons of 'Adoons Hulle' by T. O. Honibal in *Die Huisgenoot*.[13] Fascinated, I handled the skulls, collected by my uncle and stored in his room in my grandmother's house, of a young female baboon and a baboon infant, so much like a small human. Later, whilst at secondary school in Windhoek, Namibia, the photographer Nietzsche Reiter on Kaiserstrasse, displayed a series of photographs of baboons gambolling in the swimming pool of one of the settler farms in the Auas Mountains.[14] In this period of time I accidently nearly shot my best friend's father through the head, after he handed me a loaded revolver to shoot at a troop of baboons on the road between Windhoek and Gobabis. During my geological fieldwork I came upon countless skulls and skeletons of baboons that had fallen in to the water tanks scattered here and there on the farms of central Namibia. I experienced the racism of former schoolmates, who after having entered the police service openly referred to waiters at the Thüringerhof Hotel in Windhoek as 'Ojim' (Baboon). Whilst crossing the border between Zambia and Zimbabwe at Kariba, I saw baboons sidle up to the enormous grain trucks stuck waiting at customs and let themselves be driven across the border whilst gorging themselves on maize corn. At the Victoria Falls Hotel, where rich dollar-paying guests drank high tea, my girlfriend and I were able to sneak into the pool, where we saw the tactics that a troop of baboons had worked out to hoodwink tourists into flinging mangoes at them. Whilst conducting fieldwork for my PhD, I discovered a valley in the Khomas Hochland where, whenever I stopped and rested there, I would be sure to see a baboon troop as curious about me as I was about them. In the Naukluft and the Waterberg, I saw that tent canvas provides no protection whatsoever to baboons intent on raiding for the camping essentials of naïve tourists. Like so many, I witnessed the experienced baboon raiders that operate at Cape Point and Sir Lowry's pass near Cape Town in South Africa. Later still, whilst visiting Victoria Falls in Zambia,

13 https://c1.staticflickr.com/1/95/247423888_8002e6088c_z.jpg?zz=1, accessed 28 April 2017.

14 With time Kaiserstrasse has become Independence Avenue, but the shop still exists: http://www.nitrei.iway.na/index.html, accessed 28 February 2017.

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I foolishly nearly got myself attacked by the troop of baboons that made a living by raiding visitors crossing to and fro between Zambia and Zimbabwe to buy commodities, including loaves of bread so beloved by the troop.

I could continue the endless listing, on and on, of baboons in my life, suffice it to say that, all in all, my relationship with baboons goes back a long way, and it is precisely because they are so very much like ourselves that I am so fascinated by them. Their physiognomy, so like our own, is not the only aspect: more specifically their social nature, their clear and consistently demonstrated care and affection for their young, their intelligence, their social interactions that include fun and games, and their emotions and fears. All of these attributes serve to ensure that baboons are more than merely creatures; they are a mirror for ourselves as humans, and as deserving of historical analysis as humans. In this, I follow the pioneering work of Sapolsky. In a groundbreaking article published in *Foreign Affairs*, he indicated 'how studies in primatology are rendering the exceptionalism of the human species suspect', and that 'experiments have shown that other primates possess a "theory of mind", or the ability to recognize that different individuals can have different thoughts and knowledge'. Quite rightly, Sapolsky concluded 'that the purported uniqueness of humankind has been challenged most by studies of primate social science'.[15] In further research, Sapolsky and Share referred specifically to the 'Emergence of a Peaceful Culture in Wild Baboons', in which the word culture is particularly revealing. The article suggested the 'overwhelming power of cultural influence on the behaviour of baboons'.[16] In this paper, I give a short overview of human and baboon relations over time in southern Africa, in which I seek to emphasise that those who interact with baboons are well aware of the sentience and self-awareness of baboons. I hope that this will contribute to an analysis of human-baboon relations over time.

## Baboons

The baboon comes in a wide variety of shapes and sizes. According to Wikipedia baboons can be classified as follows:

> Five species of Papio are commonly recognized, although there is some disagreement about whether they are really full species or subspecies. They are *P. ursinus* (chacma baboon, found in southern Africa), *P. papio*

15 R. M. Sapolsky, *Foreign Affairs*, 85:1 (Jan/Feb 2006), 104–120.

16 R. M. Sapolsky and L. J. Share, *A pacific culture among wild baboons: Its emergence and transmission* (2004). PLoS Biol 2(4): e106. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pbio.0020106.

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(western, red, or Guinea baboon, found in far western Africa), *P. hamadryas* (hamadryas baboon, found in the Horn of Africa and southwest Arabia), *P. anubis* (olive baboon, found in the north-central African savannah) and *P. cynocephalus* (yellow baboon, found in south-central and eastern Africa). Many authors distinguish *P. hamadryas* as a full species, but regard all the others as subspecies of *P. cynocephalus* and refer to them collectively as 'savannah baboons'. This may not be helpful: it is based on the argument that the *hamadryas* baboon is behaviourally and physically distinct from other baboon species, and that this reflects a separate evolutionary history. However, recent morphological and genetic studies of *Papio* show the *hamadryas* baboon to be more closely related to the northern baboon species (the Guinea and olive baboons) than to the southern species (the yellow and chacma baboons).[17]

**Social Creatures**

The strong attachment of these creatures to their own young is an interesting trait of their character. I have frequently witnessed very affecting instances of their attachment, when a band of them happened to be discovered by some of the African Colonists in their orchards or corn-fields. On such occasions, when hunted back to the mountains with dogs and guns, the females, if accidentally separated from their young ones, would often, reckless of their safety return to search for them through the very midst of their fierce pursuers.[18]

Baboons, as anybody who has ever spent time observing them can vouch, are extremely social beings, and human beings make use of this strongly developed innate sociability to further their own aims. The literature abounds with examples of baboons protecting, caring for, and nurturing their young. Hard-wired as social beings, baboons seek social attachment and social contact. Baboons produce vocalizations comparable to vowels, and combine these in varying ways to communicate with others.[19] Numerous reports and photographs exist

17 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baboon, accessed 24 April 2017.

18 T. Pringle, *Narrative of a residence in South Africa* (London, 1840), 50.

19 CNRS. (2017, January 12). Baboons produce vocalizations comparable to vowels. *Science Daily*, accessed 27 April 2017 from www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/01/170112143111.htm. With thanks to Harry Wels for drawing my attention to this article.

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FIGURE 2.1 Baboon carrying her dead infant

of baboons caring for deceased young, carrying the pitiful remains of dead children in their arms or on their backs.[20]

Buchan and Alberts, in an article published in *Nature* in 2003, showed that male baboons recognize and care for their own offspring. In other words, it is not only a trait of baboon mothers but also of fathers to care for their young. The authors concluded that their study 'suggests that paternal care has really deep evolutionary roots in primates'.[21] A clear example of this behaviour was recently provided by Evan Schiller and Lisa Holzwarth, wildlife photographers in Botswana, who described and documented an example of a male baboon

20 http://www.gettyimages.nl/detail/foto/mother-baboon-carrying-her-dead-baby-stockfotos/491320693; http://www.gettyimages.nl/detail/foto/chacma-baboon-carrying-dead-baby-stockfotos/521253766 and http://www.wildlife-pictures-online.com/baboon-mother.html, accessed 27 April 2017.

21 J. C. Buchan, S. C. Alberts, J. C. Silk, and J. Altmann, 'True paternal care in a multi-male primate society', *Nature* (2003), 425, 179,. https://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v425/n6954/full/nature01866.html, accessed 27 April 2017.

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intervening to snatch a baby baboon from lionesses who had killed the baby baboon's mother.[22] Humans make use of the highly developed social nature of baboons to employ them as pets, lookouts, shepherds, and as assistance animals.

**Baboons as Herders**

> The Namaquas said, that, not long ago, a man had brought up a young baboon, and had made it his shepherd. It remained by the flock all day in the field, and at night drove it home to the kraal, riding on the back of one of the goats which brought up the rear. The baboon had the milk of one goat allowed to it, and it sucked that one only, and guarded the milk of the others from the children. It also got a little meat from its master. It held the office of shepherd for twelve moons, and then was unfortunately killed in a tree by a leopard.[23]

Alexander referred to the use of baboons by people in Namaqualand as shepherds for their goats and sheep in the early 1800s. Little more than a century later, German settlers, who had come to occupy parts of Namaqualand, had not only appropriated the land of the Namaqua but some of them had also adopted from them the technique of herding sheep and goats by baboons. W. Hoesch of Okahandja, in present day Namibia, who prefaced his article by extensive reference to the social skills of baboons when under threat, reported on the activities of a female baboon named Ahla, who was used to herd goats on a settler farm in central Namibia:

> Baboons are extraordinarily vigilant animals. To sneak up upon a herd in the field is astonishingly difficult. In most cases the timely alarm calls of sentries in highly placed positions prevent an approach that would allow for close observation. The best way to approach these animals is from a heavily camouflaged position close to their usual water source, as their dependency on water is big. If by chance one is able to approach a herd in the field, the sentries will descend as quietly as possible from their highly placed positions and quietly, rather than threateningly, cover the retreat of the herd. The suckling children cling onto the belly and chest hair of

22 http://voices.nationalgeographic.com/2014/04/03/baby-baboons-dramatic-encounter-with-lions-ends-with-a-heroic-twist/, accessed 27 April 2017.

23 Alexander, II, 229–230.

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> their mothers, elder juveniles ride on the backs of mothers or made to flee faster by slaps. Only when a certain safe distance has been reached, do the elder men begin their cannonade of insults, by which they draw off the pursuer of the herd and possibly also alarm potential enemies that have entered into their domain.[24]

Ahla, was the third in a series of baboons employed by Mrs Aston on her farm Otjiruse. When asked as to why she employed baboons, Mrs Aston gave the following illuminating comment:

> The loss of grazing herd animals was for me, as long as I employed natives, no longer bearable. Every evening upon return there would be one lost to theft or missing an animal. Now finally things are working out, the herd returns in the evening to drink in a compact group led by Ahla, with her call *bo-bo-bo*.[25]

Hoesch describes how Ahla was taken from her family and re-socialised to live with the goatherd kept by Mrs Aston, in which, in the words of Hoesch, Mrs Aston 'represented in Ahla's world the despot that ensures stability'.[26] The extent to which this particular analysis is correct is debatable, but Ahla's care for her adopted family is beyond doubt.

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24 W. Hoesch, 'Über Ziegen hütende Bärenpaviane (Papio ursinus ruacana Shortridge)', in *Zeitschrift für Tierpsychologie*, 12 January 1961, 18:3, 297-30. JBG's translation of 'Bärenpaviane sind überaus wachsame Tiere. Eine durchs Gelände streifende Herde anzupirschen, ist außerordentlich schwierig. In de Mehrzahl der Fälle verhindert der frühzeitige Alarmruf eines erhöht sitzenden Wachtpostens eine Annäherung auf Beobachtungsentfernung. Am ehesten gelingt es noch, die Tiere an ihrer Wasserstelle von gut getarnten Ansitz aus zu beobachten, denn ihre Wasserabhängigkeit ist gross. Glückt es einmal, eine Herde in freiem Felde bis auf kurze Entfernung anzupirschen, so gleiten die Wächter so geräuschlos wie möglich von ihren erhöhten Ansitzen herab und decken zunächst mehr schweigend als warnend den Rückzug der Herde. Die Saugkinder klammern sich im unterseitigen Haarkleid der Mütter fest, ältere Jungtiere reiten auf deren Rücken davon oder werden durch Klapse zo schnellerer Flucht ermuntert. Erst wenn eine bestimmte Fluchtdistanz erreicht ist, beginnen die alten Männchen ihre Schimpf-Kanonade, wodurch sie den Verfolger von der Herde ablenken und vielleicht auch potentielle Feinde des in ihr Revier Eingedrungenen alarmieren'.

25 Hoesch, 'Über Ziegen hütende Bärenpaviane', 297. JBG translation of 'Die Verluste an weidenden Herdentieren waren für mich, solange ich Eingeborene als Hirten beschäftigte, nicht mehr tragbar. Jeden Abend fehlten bei der Rückkehr aus dem Felde einige durch Raubzeug versprengte oder verirrte Tiere. Nun endlich klappt es, die Herde kommt abends geschlossen zur Tranke, vorneweg Ahla, mit ihrem Lockruf bo- bo-bo'.

26 Hoesch, 'Über Ziegen hütende Bärenpaviane', 298.

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**Baboons as Lookouts**

> It is the practice of these animals to descend from their rocky fastnesses, in order to enjoy themselves on the banks of the mountain rivulets, and to feed on the nutritious bulbs which grow in the rich alluvial soil of the valleys. While thus occupied, they usually take care to be within reach of some steep crag or precipice, to which they may fly for refuge on the appearance of an enemy; and some of their number are always stationed as sentinels on large stones or other elevated situations, in order to give timely warning to the rest of the approach of danger.[27]

> Baboons are the best watchmen for lions; and if the king of beasts comes near them at night, they set up such a clamour that he is fain to retire; so that the safest place for a benighted traveller to sleep, is under the rock which the baboons frequent.[28]

Samuel Daniell, the English painter of natural history, who visited the Cape during the first British occupation and who accompanied Dr Somerville and Mr Truter as secretary and draughtsman on their expedition under the auspices of the acting governor, Lieutenant-general Francis Dundas in 1801 to 'the country of the Booshuanas', is rightly known for his highly detailed, realistic paintings of the Cape and beyond. His paintings provide us with an extremely detailed view of the material culture of the people depicted. As such, his depictions of 'A Booshuana Hut' or 'Booshuana Woman Manufacturing Earthenware' are useful for teaching, as they allow us to view the world as it existed in the Cape two hundred years ago.

Daniell's sketches, paintings, and etchings were completed and prepared for publication by his brother in Britain in 1820, whilst Daniell himself went on to Sri Lanka, where he died in 1811. Daniell was thus not personally present when his prints were published, and this partly explains why the flora depicted is atypical. That is, although the subject matter central to the picture is correct, all too often the flora depicted has clearly emerged from the imagination of somebody who has never seen a camel thorn tree or protea in reality.[29] Daniell's paintings can, if used incorrectly, provide us with an overview of the Cape in which the different ethnicities are bound hard and fast to specific and

27 Pringle, *Residence in South Africa,* 50.

28 Alexander, 1, 171.

29 https://archive.org/stream/dictionaryofnati14stepuoft#page/34/mode/1up Reference to Samuel Daniell, accessed 27 February 2017.

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unique material cultures; in other words, the paintings could be used to argue that ethnicity and material culture were immutable and unchanging in the Cape of 1800. In addition, it is true that his paintings consciously seek to depict a series of mutually exclusive ethnicities, one of which is that of the 'Boors'.

In a series of at least four prints Daniell shows that baboons were included and considered to be an integral part of the culture associated with 'Boors' (as he spells it), either as settled on the farms and city of the Cape, or whilst on trek. Daniell's painting, 'View of the Lion's Head', appears to have been initially sketched by Daniell facing south-south west in the Tamboerskloof near to what is today the junction between Kloof Nek Road and Gilmour Hill Street in Cape Town.[30] The painting depicts the Lion's Head with in the foreground a large Cape Dutch manor house with classical Cape Dutch gables and broad steps leading up to a brick wall surrounding what is probably a garden with a tree immediately in front of the house. To the right, below the steps, is a small, unadorned rectangular building, which is probably the slave quarters of the household. In the front of this building, two figures are depicted next to a smoking fire, one sitting on the ground and another standing and carrying a shoulder yoke. Bearing in mind the earlier comments regarding the flora depicted, in the foreground a palm tree, with fronds similar to banana leaves, and aloes adorn the picture, whilst in the background trees similar in form and shape to eucalyptus trees can be seen. But of crucial importance for this paper is that which is depicted in the left foreground of the picture. Rising up from the enclosed garden in the front of the house is a tall pole of about five metres in length. The pole is topped by a small platform upon which sits a chained baboon.

Clearly baboons tethered as lookouts and seated at the top of tall crow's nests next to Boer houses made an enormous impression upon Daniell. In two other paintings of Boer houses, one in the wine country of the Hottentots Holland and another in the grain fields of the Overberg, baboons are shown sitting on a waggon wheel and on a platform on top of tall poles directly adjacent to the Boer houses depicted. In a fourth painting of Boers on trek, a baboon has been depicted seated inside a waggon and is clearly part and parcel of the trekking party, as much as the two men smoking pipes in front of the waggon, the woman lying on a mattress with a baby, and chickens, guinea fowl, and small springbok foal so clearly are.[31]

The conscious inclusion by Daniell of baboons in all of his paintings depicting Boer households indicates how central these animals were within

30 https://www.gettyimages.nl/fotos/lion-head-image?page=8&sort=mostpopular&mediatype=photography&phrase=lion%20head%20image, accessed 24 January 2018.

31 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trekboer#/media/File:Daniell_Trekboer.jpg, accessed 24 January 2018.

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the household. It is clear that the baboons, with their deeply instilled sense of community and social solidarity, coupled with their excellent hearing and sight, excelled as lookouts for the families which they were part of. In the same way that Alexander noted that whilst travelling it was advisable to camp near baboons as 'Baboons are the best watchmen for lions', so too Boer farmers and trekkers made use of baboons as lookouts who had been re-socialised into seeing the Boer family, which they were attached to, as their own family: a family for which they were prepared to sound the alarm.

### Jack Soldier Baboon

One baboon, who was prepared to sound the alarm for her band of brothers, was a female baboon known as 'Jack' who was wounded and served with great distinction in World War One.[32] Jackie belonged to Albert Marr, who enlisted for service in World War I at Potchefstroom in the North West province of South Africa in August 1915. Jackie accompanied Albert Marr as mascot of the 3rd Transvaal Regiment and served on the front in France and Flanders where:

> He would … light cigarettes for his comrades in arms and was the best sentry around due to his great senses of hearing and smelling which allowed him to be able to detect any enemy long before any of his other army mates could even notice their approach.[33]

> At night when on guard duty with Albert, he was particularly useful because of his keen eyesight and acute hearing. He could give early warning of enemy movement or impending attacks with a series of short, sharp barks and tuggings at Pte Marr`s tunic. Jackie wore his uniform with panache, would light up a cigarette or pipe for a pal and always saluted an officer passing on his rounds. He would stand at ease when requested, placing his feet apart and hands behind his back in regimental style. At the mess table he used a knife and fork in a proper manner and cleverly used his drinking basin.[34]

32 https://wildlifetv.wordpress.com/2013/08/19/jackie-baboon-south-african-world-war-i/, accessed 27 April 2017.

33 https://wildlifetv.wordpress.com/2013/08/19/jackie-baboon-south-african-world-war-i/, accessed 27 April 2017.

34 http://samvoa.org/special-interest/world-war-i/jackie-the-baboon/, accessed 27 April 2017.

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At the battle of Passchendaele in late 1917 both Jackie the baboon and Albert Marr were wounded.[35] The descriptions of what happened are truly astounding, but given what we know about baboons not really surprising:

> As the explosions surrounded them, Jackie was seen trying to get some protection by building a little fortress of stones around himself. Unfortunately he didn't manage to finish his little safe area and was hit by a chunk of shrapnel from a shell explosion nearby which also injured Albert.[36]

In the words of Lt-Col. R. N. Woodsend of the Royal Medical Corp:

> It was a pathetic sight; the little fellow, carried by his keeper, lay moaning in pain, the man crying his eyes out in sympathy, 'You must do something for him, he saved my life in Egypt. He nursed me through dysentery'. The baboon was badly wounded, the left leg hanging with shreds of muscle, another jagged wound in the right arm.
>
> We decided to give the patient chloroform and dress his wounds. If he died under the anaesthetic perhaps it would be the best thing; as I had never given an anaesthetic to such a patient before, I thought it would be the most likely result. However, he lapped up the chloroform as if it had been whiskey, and was well under in a remarkably short time. It was a simple matter to amputate the leg with scissors and I cleaned the wounds and dressed them as well as I could.
>
> He came around as quickly as he went under. The problem then was what to do with him. This was soon settled his keeper: 'He is on army strength'. So, duly labelled, number, name, ATS injection, nature of injuries, etc. he was taken to the road and sent by a passing ambulance to the Casualty Clearing Station.[37]

Jackie's right leg was subsequently amputated, but both privates made a full recovery and were awarded medals for valour. Jackie would return to the Transvaal but died in a house fire in 1921, his companion Albert Marr passed away in the 1970s.[38]

35 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Passchendaele, accessed 27 April 2017.
36 https://wildlifetv.wordpress.com/2013/08/19/jackie-baboon-south-african-world-war-i/, accessed 27 April 2017.
37 http://samvoa.org/special-interest/world-war-i/jackie-the-baboon/, accessed 27 April 2017.
38 https://samilhistory.com/2017/12/26/jackie-the-south-african-baboon-soldier-of-world-war-one/, accessed 24 January 2018.

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## Baboons as Assistants

### *Jack the Signalman*

In the 1880s a railwayman, J. H. Wilde, lost both his legs in a shunting accident near Port Elizabeth. Upon recovery he was able to find employment as a signalman near Uitenhage. This was primarily so because of the symbiotic relationship that he developed with a female baboon who became known as Jack.[39] Wilde had previously seen the baboon acting as a *touleier* (a person walking ahead and leading draught oxen) on an ox-waggon and realised that a baboon could be trained to assist him in changing signals and shifting points on the railway. As a newspaper of the time put it:

> The baboon worked the points in the signal-box and manipulated the levers according to the whistles from his master [sic!]. So proficient did he become that eventually he came to know which levers to work for each train without any instructions from Mr. Wilde.
>
> …
>
> Besides working the points at the signal-box, Jack used to stand on his hind legs beside the track as the trains went by and hand to the passing engine drivers the key to the uitenhage coal sheds.[40]

In this way Jack came to work with Wilde, initially by pushing him around in his invalid cart, and later by actually shifting points. News of the baboon being employed to shift the points came to the ears of the authorities, who upon inspection saw that Jack was capable of carrying out the tasks allotted to him.[41] Retired magistrate H. T. L. Maclear wrote a letter to the *Daily Dispatch* (newspaper for the eastern Cape), in which he described Jack in the following manner:

> While on a visit to Uitenhage 70 years ago (1883–4), I was advised to visit the signal box outside the Uitenhage station and interview Mr. J. H. Wilde and his famous baboon … The baboon took up his position at the

39 http://www.futilitycloset.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/podcast-episode-9-1.jpg, accessed 24 January 2018.

40 Copied from newspaper clipping on display in the Albany Museum in Grahamstown in October 2016.

41 There are numerous sources available dealing with Jack: http://www.krugerpark.co.za/krugerpark-times-2-9-yesterdays-tales-19650.html and https://www.animallaw.info/article/monkeys-and-horses-and-ferretsoh-my-non-traditional-service-animals-under-ada, accessed 26 April 2017. Jack's skull is displayed along with a wide variety of texts in the Albany Museum in Grahamstown.

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> six-levers panel and Mr. Wilde, signalling with his finger three times, the baboon pulled down the third lever, releasing the necessary points … I was informed that there were several official tests before Wilde was allowed to place the controls in his pal's custody.[42]

When Jack died, Wilde, who was a keen taxidermist, hoped to have Jack stuffed. In a letter to the Albany Museum, Wilde wrote 'I would wish him mounted sitting in a chair with one hand resting on his knee as that was a favourite position of his when alive'. Note here Wilde's desire to commemorate his dead companion in a fitting manner. A commentator noted that Wilde 'intended to treat the baboon's skin, but he was so overcome with grief at the loss of his pet, that the body was left too long and the skin began putrefying'.[43] Wilde donated Jack's skull to the Museum on the following condition:

> … that I may at some future date be permitted to reclaim it as I was so unfortunate at not being able to set him up. I may some time wish to have the last relic of so faithful a servant.[44]

Clearly Jack was more than merely an animal to a bereft Mr Wilde.

### Baboons for Hunting

> Like hunting Negroes, except without all those annoying laws and such.[45]

In the early 2000s, whilst sitting on a terrace in downtown Windhoek and drinking beers with friends, I was sickened to hear and see a young twenty-something German hunting tourist in his cups brag and describe how he had shot and killed a baboon. Whilst mimicking his taking aim and shooting, he stated, 'Ich habe ihn von der Klippe weggefegt' (I wiped him off the rock). In this simple statement, in which he acknowledged the gender and, I would thus argue, the personality of the other, this hunter brought to the fore the very worst in those that kill for sport. Humans armed with rifles enjoy hunting baboons.

42 Newspaper clipping in Albany Museum, Grahamstown, photographed in October 2016.
43 Newspaper clipping in Albany Museum, Grahamstown, photographed in October 2016.
44 Excerpt from a letter written by Mr Wilde to the Albany Museum on 30 April 1890, photographed by the author in October 2016.
45 Comment by Robert Jensen, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_z1qc587TOY, accessed 14 April 2017.

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British Military Advisory Training Team or BMATT soldiers stationed in Zimbabwe in 1988–9 would spend part of their free time honing their skills by hunting baboons in the Inyanga Mountains.[46] As one of the officers deployed in Inyanga confided to us, whilst bragging to me and chatting up my future wife, baboons are the most like humans and are fun to hunt in the very terrain where 'Terrs' once operated. Here too, as with the drunken German, the human nature of the baboons being hunted was acknowledged and emphasised as providing the hunter with a necessary frisson akin to that experienced when hunting humans.

The fact that baboons, and certainly hunted baboons, are akin to humans comes to the fore in many photographs and YouTube videos that exist of hunters killing baboons. Often murdered baboons are dressed up for trophy photographs as if they were people. Caps or hats are put on their heads, rifles and bows placed in their hands, and above all bottles and cans of beer and spirits are placed in their hands.[47] For the hunters involved, the murder of beings so akin to ourselves requires, it seems, more justification than the slaughter of other animals, domestic or otherwise. The killing of a baboon is more than the killing of an animal; it is the killing of a relative; and the hunters are all very well aware of this.[48] Hunters filmed whilst killing baboons consistently refer to the human-like nature of the beings they are about to murder, and display emotions that one does not normally see in the killing of other animals. Thus, when Paul H. shoots a male baboon, whilst safely ensconced on granite boulder overlooking the killing field, his guides say, 'Ah, he is down; *ja*, he is down', and Paul H., giggling with the hilarity of a mega adrenalin rush enthuses, 'Hey, dead baboon, dead baboon… yeah dead baboon, sniping them, I like sniping baboons'.[49] The murder or execution of a relative requires particular justification. Baboons are presented as 'a dangerous and destructive pest', the 'Ultimate Varmint!'[50]

Typically baboons are presented in the following manner by those setting out to kill them:

> We are here in Africa, we are going Baboon hunting … we are all going to have a good time, I brought the whole family. Baboons are basically

46 On BMATT see, 'British military training assistance in Southern Africa: Lessons for South Africa?', *Africa Insight*, 22:3 (1992), 218–25. http://journals.co.za/docserver/fulltext/afrins/22/3/590.pdf?expires=1488271024&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=5F2DC4897BC7B8068A17EB6FD2F4E51F, accessed 28 February 2017.

47 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGTEU3CzGEQ, accessed 14 April 2017.

48 http://www.care2.com/news/member/872205973/3753889, accessed 24 January 2018.

49 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGTEU3CzGEQ, accessed 14 April 2017. In this case the killed baboon is arranged with a beer bottle in his lifeless hand.

50 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q9IYpwx3-_w, accessed 14 April 2017.

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> varmints in Africa; all the farmers who have got a pivot … don't want baboons.
>
> They will also tear up irrigation pipes, not because they are thirsty, but because they are bored. They also climb up buildings and tear off the antennae's and break in to houses looking for food, and occasionally they do actually steal infant children and kill them.[51]

The last sentence here is presented in the video with a still photograph of a stuffed full-grown baboon male skull displaying its incisors and canines. Another hunter justifies his killing by claiming that baboons capture and kill the calves of young antelope in order to open their bellies to drink the mother's milk, thereby displaying his ignorance of the fact that milk curdles when brought into contact with stomach juices.[52] In other instances, hunters present themselves as good Samaritans protecting the local population with the claim that the baboon just murdered was a notorious 'goat-killer'.[53] In addition there are those who claim: 'To all the haters, baboons wreck havoc [sic!] on farms in SA. With agriculture being as important as it is in this country, killing them is important pest control. So no, they did not eat it, and no they didn't have to justify the shot'.[54]

A further factor that comes up, not so much in the soundtrack of the actual videos of baboons being murdered but certainly in the comments section, are the many and varied references to race. Some of the comments are the blatantly unrestrained racist comments of Internet trolls, and others are more subtle but equally racist, in which it is clearly understood that baboons are Afro-Americans or Black Africans. Thus Frogboyattacks is pretty straightforward when he states 'Shoot that Nigger', whilst Tyrone CatKiller Kang is only slightly more subtle with his comment, 'great shot. [C]ome to America and become a policeman in the ghetto'.[55] There is no doubting the sentiments of Spud Moterrey: 'Baboon looked like Michelle Obama'.[56] Bdawg starts his comments with 'I want to grab my 270, go to Africa, and shoot some boons too', and when challenged progresses to, 'oh maybe I'll accidently shoot a couple of crusty Africans too', as if his intentions were not clear at the start.[57] The

51 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q9IYpwx3-_w, accessed 14 April 2017.
52 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NYKC8oL7v8, accessed 14 April 2017.
53 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DL9qSRjHlqY, accessed 14 April 2017.
54 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sH6S91tupGo, accessed 14 April 2017, comment by Wade Basson.
55 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sH6S91tupGo, accessed 14 April 2017..
56 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CdJjHteQuaY, accessed 14 April 2017.
57 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CdJjHteQuaY, accessed 14 April 2017.

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Internet abounds with racist posts and sentiment, but few are as blatantly offensive as the juxtaposed photographs of a young man and a baboon, and the caption 'Don't ask it's a monkey thing'.[58]

The concept of having been bloodied and the necessity of 'first blood' in the creation of soldiers that have moved beyond the squeamish and into the terrain of being prepared to kill a fellow human being is the domain of sociologists and of much controversy at present. The blood wings of American and Canadian soldiers, the initiation rituals of Pokot, the mass slaughter of Donkeys in Bophutatswana, or Browning's description of the transition of German policemen into cold-blooded killers, are all rituals in which boundaries are consciously transgressed, and normal human beings are transformed into those prepared to kill and maim another.[59] Within the Rhodesian army, soldiers attempting to become members of the elite counter-insurgency regiment, known as the Selous Scouts, were expected to kill and then eat baboons as part of their training and, I would say, their further initiation into the killing of human beings. This is made particularly clear when one bears in mind that, in some cases, the baboons killed for 'training' purposes by prospective scouts were dressed in insurgent slouch hats, and adorned with wristwatches and rifles. As such, on internet for a dedicated to the glorification of the Rhodesian past, it is not uncommon to find photographs encaptioned, 'Look who is coming for lunch', and displaying a baboon killed and dressed in guerrilla slouch hat, wristwatch, and Rhodesian Army FN rifle, prior to being eaten during Selous Scout training.[60]

## Conclusion

As with other animals, baboons are sentient beings, and we as humans are very well aware of this fact. Most humans with any knowledge of baboons would say that baboons are not only sentient but also self-aware and conscious of themselves in relation to others. Baboons are more akin to ourselves than most

58 http://www.funnyjunk.com/funny_pictures/4289065/It+s+a+monkey+thing/, accessed 11 January 2018.

59 D. Winslow, 'Rites of passage and group bounding in the Canadian airborne', *Armed Forces & Society,* 25:3 (Spring 1999), 429457; M. Bollig, *Die Krieger der gelben Gewehre: intra- und interethnische Konfliktaustragung bei den Pokot Nordwestkenias* (Münster, 1992); N. Jacobs, 'The Great Bophuthatswana Donkey Massacre: Discourse on the ass and politics of class and grass', *American Historical Review*, 108 (2001), 485–507; C. Browning, *Ordinary men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the final solution in Poland* (New York, 1998).

60 http://www.theselousscouts.com/images/selection/17.jpg, accessed 28 February 2017.

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of us, who call for the murder of baboons, would ever dare openly admit. Baboons may not be able to record their own history, but we as humans are able to do so. Recording how humans and baboons have interacted with one another through the ages is, for all those who acknowledge sentience and emotion in others, a legitimate endeavour. I for one believe that an animal-centred history has much to teach us as humans, for we as humans are not alone on this earth, and it is a fallacy and hubris to believe that this planet was created for us alone.[61]

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61 Genesis 1:26, 'Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth" '.

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CHAPTER 3

# Rewilding White Lions: Conservation through the Eyes of Carnivores?

*Harry Wels*

## Introduction

'Whom and what do I touch when I touch my dog?' asks Donna Haraway[1] in the opening to her book *When species meet*. Is it only the living creature of flesh and blood in that moment, or is it the whole history of domestication, training, breeding, and what else of this critter? Being Donna Haraway, she of course chooses for the complex option and reflects in the rest of her book on what this means for what happens when human and non-human species meet, a kind of multispecies ethnography that 'centres on how a multitude of organisms' livelihoods shape and are shaped by political, economic, and cultural forces'.[2] I love her for that and will try to follow her example in this chapter, although I have to take the 'touch' part of her question metaphorically, as my case is about wild white lions that I should better not literally 'touch'. Nevertheless I tried to connect to them deeply through observations and imagining myself being amongst them. So maybe I should adapt Haraway's question to my case, that is, 'what do I see, when I see a lion?' Another and a related question I want to explore in this chapter in the context of when species meet is inspired by the work of Helen McDonald, and is how '(…) encounters with animals are always to some extent encounters with ourselves and with who we think we are'[3]; 'biosociality' as Woodward would probably label it, 'a sociability across apparently disparate species' in which 'animals are subjects who have agency and intentionality'[4], where in encountering them we are 'becoming with'

1 D. Haraway, *When species meet* (Minneapolis, 2008), 3.
2 K. Tomaselli, 'Ethical procedures? A critical intervention: The sacred, the profane, and the planet', *The Ethnographic Edge*, 1:1 (2017), 3–16.
3 H. MacDonald, *Falcon* (London, 2016), 7.
4 W. Woodward, *The animal gaze. Animal subjectivities in southern African narratives*, (Johannesburg, 2008), 51.

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them in Haraway's words[5]. In the process, I hope to be mindful of Woodward's[6] warning that '(c)onventionally, animals have been read as symbols, rather than as sentient beings with their own individualities and their own contribution to the plot'. I will try to imagine them as my fellow sentient beings, just like humans, where I define 'sentience' following Bekoff and Pierce[7] as 'the capacity to feel things, to have subjective experiences'. Where Haraway elaborates on her question primarily in relation to dogs and MacDonald in relation to falcons, I will focus in this chapter on the controversial conservation[8] and rewilding of white lions in the Timbavati area in South Africa.[9]

Lions speak strongly to the human imagination, from symbolising kingdoms to symbolising human courage and strength.[10] In the case of white lions, this includes being the bringer of heavenly messages[11] as well. For many people in the Global North who lump them together with the other animals of the 'Big Five' (elephant, rhino, buffalo, lion and leopard), they simply represent 'the idea of Africa'[12] (Mudimbe 1994). For their symbolic capital, rich, famous, or powerful people throughout history have always loved to have lions as pets, loved to be shown with lions or show off with lions, from pharaoh Ramses II, BCE, through menageries in Europe and the Ottoman empire in the Middle Ages,[13] right up to contemporary times where nobility,[14] hippies,[15] and an 'ordinary' family household in Germany[16] took lions as pets, or where the super rich of today show off with their lions on Instagram.[17] Despite their huge and globally recognized symbolic capital,[18] on the ground, they have followed the fate of many if

5 In L. Faier, and L. Rofel, 'Ethnographies of encounter', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 43 (2014), 363–377.

6 Woodward, *The animal*, 16.

7 M. Bekoff and J. Pierce, *The animals' agenda. Freedom, compassion, and coexistence in the human age* (Boston, 2017), 11.

8 Bekoff and Pierce, *Agenda*, 142.

9 www.whitelions.org.

10 M. De Cleene and J. P. De Keersmaeker, *Compendium van dieren als dragers van cultuur* (Gent, 2012), 472.

11 L. Tucker, *Mystery of the white lions. Children of the Sun God* (Hoedspruit, 2003); J.Z.M. Hieronimus, *White spirit animals. Prophets of change* (Rochester (Vermont), Toronto, 2017).

12 V. Y. Mudimbe, *The idea of Africa*, (Bloomington, 1994).

13 http://mad.hypotheses.org/620, accessed 14 April 2017.

14 P. Cavendish O'Neill, *A lion in my bedroom* (Sydney, 2004).

15 A. Bourke and J. Rendall, *A lion called Christian* (London, 1971, updated version 2009).

16 P. Stiff, *Tommy goes home*, Salisbury (Rhodesia), 1977).

17 http://uk.complex.com/pop-culture/2014/03/instagram-animals, accessed 13 April 2017.

18 The value of that 'capital' became particularly clear by the uproar, how appropriate, that erupted around the world when on 1 July 2015, the lion Cecil was shot by Walter Palmer. 'Palmer shot it with with a crossbow powerful enough to fell an elephant. The bolt,

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not most predators in the wild around the world: persecution through hunting or other attempts to exterminate them by almost every means possible.[19] As a result, they already went extinct as mega fauna in Europe a long time ago, that is, in human terms (100,000 years), if not in geological terms. Montbiot[20] beautifully describes how once lions of flesh and blood raised their heads on the very spot where now only bronze statues of lions raise their heads: in Trafalgar Square in London. With the exception of a small population of around 523 Asiatic lions in India's Gir Forest National Park,[21] lions only remain, although in seriously reduced numbers, on the African continent. 'This is largely due to conflict with humans over livestock losses. Lions in particular suffer from conflicts with humans, as their psychological impact on people is often greater than their actual economic impact'.[22,23] The fact that there are also many stories and records of man-eating lions, the most well-known and publicised ones being the man-eaters of Tsavo,[24] does indeed add to their reputation as a

striking somewhat off target, merely wounded the lion; so according to the hunter's code of ethics, Palmer was obliged to follow it up. It took a day to track the wounded animal, whci was then killed using a rifle. Palmer and Bronkhorst [the South African Professional Hunter accompanying Palmer] then posed, grinning triumphantly, to be photographed next to its corpse – with the crossbow. The deed itself outraged many across the World, but the widely published photograph and the dumb pride in the hunters' faces unsurprisingly hit a raw nerve among conservationists and the wider public' (J. Clarke, *Overkill. The race to save Africa's wildlife* (Cape Town, 2017), 39. As this chapter is not about Cecil, I leave it at this Loveridge, A. Lion hearted (New York, 2018).

19 W. J. Ripple, J. A. Estes, R. L. Beschta, C. C. Wilmers, 'Status and ecological effects of the world's largest carnivores', *Science*, 343 (2014), 6167.

20 G. Montbiot, *Feral. Rewilding the land, sea and human life* (London, 2014), 91.

21 www.girnationalpark.in/. In terms of the symbolic capital to which I refer in the text, the heading on this websites is illustrative: 'Gir National Park: The majestic home of the royal king', accessed 5 April 2017. See also M. Rangarajan, 'Animals with rich histories: The case of the lions of Gir Forest, Gujarat, India', *History and Theory,* Theme Issue 52 (2013): 109–127.

22 T. J. Huqa 'The impact of climate variability on the ecology of a lion (*Panthera leo Linnaeus* 1758) population and lion livestock conflicts in the Amboseli ecosystem – Kenya' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leiden, 2015), 16.

23 It is important to note here that the economic impact of lions depends primarily on the economic circumstances of people. It is often rather easy for Western conservation NGOs to make a statement such as the quote I use, as their representatives do not have to live with lions as local communities do. If a lion kills livestock of a poor member of a local community, the economic impact is much larger and can be livelihood threatening, compared to employees of conservation bodies who usually literally do not have lions 'in their backyard' (cf. J. Mbaria and M. Ogada, *The big conservation lie. The untold story of wildlife conservation in Kenya* (Auburn, WA, 2017)).

24 Made into a movie in 1996 with Val Kilmer and Michael Douglas, entitled 'The ghost and the darkness'. The film is based on the book by John Henry Patterson (1907), entitled

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'problem animal' and as 'vermin' to be eradicated.[25] The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) estimated in 2015 that their numbers in the last 21 years have been reduced by 43%, bringing them to between 23,000 and 39,000 lions left in the wild, which earns them the status of 'vulnerable' in IUCN terminology.[26] 'Among the causes of decline, the most important are *indiscriminate killing* in defence of human life and livestock'.[27] In South Africa, an estimated 7000 lions are held in captivity[28] as part of what can be labelled the 'lion industry',[29] including (canned) hunting, trade in lion parts,[30] and lion parks. It is an industry that is under severe critique from many animal rights organisations.[31] The CITES[32] meeting in Johannesburg in 2016 did nothing to alleviate the serious concerns for the fate of the lion in South Africa. Many had hoped and argued that lions should be 'uplisted' from 'vulnerable' to 'endangered', from 'Appendix II' to Appendix I', in order to achieve a higher protection status within the IUCN. Nine African countries officially proposed 'uplisting' the lion this way, but during the conference their proposal did not go through, which means that for now they remain 'vulnerable', and under that label the trade in body parts can officially and legally continue.[33] In the South African

'The man eaters of Tsavo', which relates the story of how lions interrupted the building of the Uganda Railway through East Africa at the end of the 19th century by killing and eating labourers, and how in the end the lions were hunted down (their stuffed bodies today still on display at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago) (https://www.fieldmuseum.org/at-the-field/exhibitions/tsavo-lions, accessed 8 June 2017).

25 J. Clarke, *Save me from the lion's mouth. Exposing human-animal conflict in Africa* (Cape Town, 2012), 43–72.

26 www.iucnredlist.org/details/15951/0, accessed 5 April 2017.

27 *Ibid*., accessed 14 April 2017, italics mine. For reasons of nuance, it is important to note here that the 'indiscriminate killing' in the quote also or even primarily holds for the killing of lions if they are nowhere near humans or livestock. The routine and systematic killing of predators has been, and in many places around the world still is, common practice in conservation areas like national parks and nature reserves (G. Bradshaw, *Carnivore minds. Who these fearsome animals really are* (New Haven and London, 2017), 235–239.

28 http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/07/150722-lions-canned-hunting-lion-bone-trade-south-africa-blood-lions-ian-michler/, accessed 5 April 2017.

29 www.nrdc.org/onearth/lion-industry, accessed 14 April 2017.

30 https://africageographic.com/blog/the-african-lion-bone-trade/, accessed 5 April 2017 see also: 'The extinction business. South Africa's 'lion' bone trade', report by EMS Foundation and Ban Animal Trading, July 2018.

31 www.bloodlions.org; www.bornfree.org.uk/campaigns/big-cats/in-action/lion-conservation/trade-in-lion-parts/; www.goodthingsguy.com/environment/lion-cub-petting/, accessed 5 April 2017.

32 Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species.

33 http://traveller24.news24.com/Explore/Green/shockwildlifetruths-lions-fail-to-get-uplisted-at-cites-cop17-20161003, accessed 5 April 2017.

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media it was suggested that it was an 'attempt to appease the fierce opposition from lion bone and body part traders and the hunting for entertainment enthusiasts'.[34] The South African Department of Environmental Affairs has now decided that it 'will allow 800 captive-bred lion skeletons to be exported every year'.[35] In the documentary 'Blood Lions' it is observed that '(t)he trouble is, nobody can tell the difference between wild lion bones and captive bred lion bones'.[36] In other words, if the market for these body parts grows and becomes highly profitable, it may be an incentive to poach wild lions and sell them on the world market. Since then, incidents like this have been reported.[37]

Attempts to research and conserve lions in the wild go back to colonial times on the African continent.[38] One particular form of lion conservation over the years has consisted of attempts to 'rewild' domesticated lions. Probably the best-known attempts have been made by George and Joy Adamson in the 1960s, who immortalised Elsa the lioness in Joy's books[39] and George's lion research centre in Kenya, Kora, now Kora National Park.[40,41,42] Elsa's story was made into a film in 1966, starring Virginia McKenna and Bill Travers, who, moved by the plight of the lions, started the Born Free Foundation in 1984.[43]

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34 *Ibid*.

35 www.seeker.com/south-africas-plan-for-legalized-lion-carcass-trade-sparks-outcry-2297515115.html, accessed 5 April 2017.

36 http://traveller24.news24.com/Explore/Green/shockwildlifetruths-lions-fail-to-get-uplisted-at-cites-cop17-20161003, accessed 5 April 2017.

37 www.timeslive.co.za/sundaytimes/stnews/2017/01/29/WARNING-GRAPHIC-IMAGE-Lions-hacked-to-death-for-traders-in-body-parts1; www.pressreader.com/usa/honolulu-star-advertiser/20170205/281706909417619, accessed 5 April 2017. At its annual meeting in 2018, Safari Club International (SCI), one of the biggest hunting bodies in the world, came up with a new policy that 'prohibit(s) captive-bred lion operators and agents from marketing, selling or advertising any captive-bred lion hunts through the organisation [SCI], or at its regional and international shows. (…) Safari Club International hunters and clients were also notified that hunting trophies from captive-bred lions would automatically be excluded for the organisation's "record book"', S. Bloch, SA's captive lion hunters under fire, *The Sunday Independent*, 11 February 2018.

38 G. Packer, *Lions in the balance. Man-eaters, manes, and men with guns* (London, Chicago, 2015).

39 J. Adamson, *Born free* (London, 1960); *Living free* (London, 1961); *Forever free* (London, 1962).

40 G. Adamson, *My pride and joy. An autobiography* (London 1986); A. House, *The great safari. The lives of George and Joy Adamson* (London, 1993); see also G. Patterson, *Last of the free. A moving story of three young lions, restored to the wild* (London, 1994); T. Fitzjon, *Born wild. The extraordinary story of one man's passion for lions and for Africa* (London, 2010).

41 For a more critical reading and approach to the work and personality of George Adamson, see Mbaria and Ogada, *The big*, 10–13.

42 Another less well-known early lion rewilding project is N. Carr, *Return to the wild* (London, 1962), in then Northern Rhodesia, now Zambia.

43 www.bornfree.org.uk/about-us/, accessed 5 April 2017.

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The initiatives to rewild lions have been as controversial as they have been well known, with many scientists doubting whether domesticated lions, or lions born in captivity (or any other animal for that matter), could be re-introduced into the wild or 'rewilded'.[44] Not only was it considered controversial conservation, it was also considered to be a 'conservation myth'.[45]

It is especially this 'controversial' and 'myth' element of lion rewilding in relation to conservation that gives us a good opportunity to explore more elaborately the question posed by Donna Haraway and the observation of Helen MacDonald with which I began this chapter. Is what I described above what we 'touch' when we talk about the conservation of lions? And what do these narratives of controversy and myth tell us about ourselves? I will take my own research and a contemporary and probably less globally well-known attempt at rewilding lions that is being run by lion ecologist Jason Turner and lion shaman Linda Tucker in South Africa as my source of empirical data. The project involves bringing endemic white lions back to the wild in the Timbavati area of the Limpopo Province of South Africa, considered the original territory they come from.[46] From Adamson's Kenya in the 1960s to the white lions in South Africa now, there is continuity and change in their attempts to rewild lions. The world has become a different place, and decolonisation in Kenya in 1963 and the end of apartheid in South Africa in 1994 have had serious impacts on their respective countries and what they are becoming. But there are also continuities, such as the strong convictions and sometimes outright stubborn conviction of 'rewilders' in their cause.

The one continuity I would like to focus on in this chapter, in relation to the two opening questions of this chapter, is that both George and Joy and Linda and Jason have treated and continue to treat their lions as individuals, persons, and agents of change in their own right. They took and take 'animal subjectivities' seriously: 'she or he is regarded as an individual, sentient being who experiences emotions, who, possibly, enacts morality, who has agency, intentionality, a sense of the teleology of her or his life, as well as an ability to recognise and fear death and its advent',[47,48] In the 1960s the Cartesian

44 V. Menon, N. V. K. Ashraf, P. Panda, and K. Mainkar (eds.), *Back to the wild. Studies in wildlife rehabilitation*, (New Delhi, 2005).

45 www.huffingtonpost.com/luke-hunter/captive-lion-reintroducti_b_1724368.html, accessed 5 April 2017.

46 http://whitelions.org/about/our-mission/, accessed 5 April 2017. This is not the only attempt so far to rewild white lions: see A. Schofield, *White lion. Back to the wild* (Cape Town, 2013).

47 Woodward, *The animal*, 7.

48 For an extensive conceptual and theoretical exploration of 'animal agency', see McFarland and Hediger 2009.

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divide between human and animals was still much more firmly in place than it is now. 'Unlike "men", animals were mere "automata" or moving machines, driven by instinct alone'.[49] This assumption has become almost unthinkable nowadays given the mounting scientific evidence, ranging from Payne[50] to De Waal[51] to Bekoff,[52] to Bradshaw,[53] to Safina,[54] who all have continued to further 'blur the distinction between human beings and the rest of life on earth'[55] and to make clear that 'differences among species are differences in degree, not differences in kind'.[56] This also goes for the differences between humans and animals: it is a matter of degree and not of kind. On the basis of all this scientific evidence Calarco concludes his *Zoographies* writing: '(I)n brief, *we could simply let the human-animal distinction go*'.[57] Over time this evidence and these lines of argument have especially had a considerable impact towards changing most scientific perceptions of the human-animal distinction. Within academia, this has culminated in the Cambridge Declaration of 2012, in which a range of (neuro-)scientists state: 'We declare the following: "The absence of a neocortex does not appear to preclude an organism from experiencing affective states. Convergent evidence indicates that non-human animals have the neuroanatomical, neurochemical, and neurophysiological substrates of conscious states along with the capacity to exhibit intentional behaviours. Consequently, *the weight of evidence* indicates that humans are not unique in possessing the neurological substrates that generate consciousness. Nonhuman animals, including all mammals and birds, and many other creatures, including octopuses, also possess these neurological substrates"'.[58] It seems that in the wake of this declaration and parallel to its development, personhood and the agency of and especially

49 J. Bourke, *What it means to be human. Reflections from 1791 to the present* (London, 2011), 8.

50 R. Payne, *Among whales* (New York, London, 1995).

51 F. de Waal, *The age of empathy. Nature's lessons for a kinder society* (New York, 2009); F. de Waal, *Are we smart enough to know how smart animals are?* (New York, 2016).

52 M. Bekoff, *The emotional lives of animals: A leading scientists explores animal joy, sorrow, and empathy, and why they matter* (Novato, 2007); M. Bekoff and J. Pierce, *Wild justice: The moral lives of animals* (Chicago, 2009).

53 G. Bradshaw, *Elephants on the edge. What animals teach us about humanity* (New Haven and London, 2009).

54 C. Safina, *Beyond words. What animals think and feel* (New York 2015).

55 Payne, *Whales*, 252.

56 Bekoff and Pierce, *Wild justice*, 13.

57 M. Calarco, *Zoographies: The question of the animal from Heidegger to Derrida* (New York and Chichester, 2008), 149, italics in original.

58 http://fcmconference.org/img/CambridgeDeclarationOnConsciousness.pdf, accessed 5 April 2017, italics added. see also: http://institut.inra.fr/en/Objectives/Informing-public-policy/Scientific-Expert-Reports/All-the-news/Animal-consciousness, accessed 15 August 2018.

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emotions in non-human animals have by now become much more scientifically accepted than in Adamson's days. This has even reached the level that Lents writes: '(S)peaking of evidence, why is the burden of proof placed on those claiming that animals do have emotions? (…) It seems to me that, given all of the behavioural similarities documented in this book and many others, the default position should be that all animals experience mental states that we know as emotions. In any view, the burden of proof should be placed on those who would oppose that claim'.[59] The *Scientific American* Spring Edition (2017) writes in its Editorial Introduction to the edition: 'My guess is that you will feel somewhat at home, even among the strangest creatures. After all, we are animals too'.[60] The assertive power of the animal rights movement and its icons, from Peter Singer's 'Animal liberation'[61] to Tom Regan's 'The case for animal rights',[62] has also significantly added to this almost worldwide change of perception of the non-human animal. Michelle Pickover[63] contextualises this animal rights discourse for South Africa and quotes, amongst others, Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu in saying: 'I have seen at first hand (sic) how injustice gets overlooked when the victims are powerless or vulnerable, when they have no one to speak up for them and no means of representing themselves to a higher authority. Animals are in precisely that position'.[64] This notwithstanding and no matter that the South African constitution is considered one of the most progressive and inclusive in the world,[65] it was also made clear by the then minister of Environment and Tourism, Valli Moosa, that '(t)he Constitution will not be amended to include animals' (in ibid:7). Juxtapose this with Garreth Patterson's hope for the 'New South Africa' in 1994: 'When I voted for the ANC during the country's historic elections in 1994 it was one of my greatest hopes that, with the addressing of human rights in South Africa, the addressing of what should be the natural rights of animals would follow'.[66] You can imagine what happened to that hope given what has happened in South Africa since 1994: the release of the documentary 'Blood lions' on canned hunting in 2015 and the

59 N. H. Lents, *Not so different. Finding human nature in animals* (New York, 2016), 67.
60 A. Gawrylewski, 'Amazing animals', *Scientific American*, Special Collector's Edition, 26:2 (2017), 1.
61 P. Singer, *Animal liberation. A new ethic for our treatment of animals* (New York, 1975).
62 T. Regan, *The case for animal rights* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1983).
63 M. Pickover, *Animal rights in South Africa* (Cape Town, 2005).
64 In Pickover, *Animal rights*, 15.
65 www.atlanticphilanthropies.org/news/20-years-south-africas-remarkable-constitution-remains-unfulfilled, accessed 10 April 2017.
66 Patterson, *Last*, 53.

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decisions being made at CITES 2016 in Johannesburg. Probably not much of it was left.

The rest of the chapter is structured as follows: I will take my own research into the rewilding project of the white lions as a starting point to explore possible answers to the questions of Haraway and MacDonald, with which I began this chapter, and from there will try to formulate more general implications for lion conservation and research.

## Accepting Lion Subjectivity?

I had a seriously speciesist upbringing.[67] Although I always said I loved animals, wanted to become a veterinarian from an early age, I ate them all the same, and nobody in my family or in our circles of friends ever posed a single question about that; the paradox was considered 'normal' and was probably not even noticed as such. A bit like Temple Grandin: loving animals so much that you design their slaughterhouses in such a way that, according to Grandin, they experience less stress before they are being stunned and killed, and label this as creating 'a stairway to heaven' for them.[68] What fitted perfectly as the cherry on top of this speciesist family upbringing was taking up a study in the social sciences, anthropology to be more precise, where 'the social' was assumed and reduced to 'slegs mense' (Afrikaans for 'only people'). I felt complete, competent, and confident in this human world, and this continued comfortably up until close to my fiftieth birthday. I did read about animals a lot though, but I never considered that 'part of the job' or useful enough to explicitly use in my academic writings. My teaching on topics related to culture, organisation, and management, at the department of the same name, never was about animals, although I was fascinated and read what ethologists were writing about the role of culture in animal configurations.[69,70] Then my 'wilful

67 Going seamlessly together with a rather masculine perspective on the world and life in general. This is probably not a good mix for travelling the route that I am trying to carve out for myself these days, given the convincing arguments that ideas about 'manhood' are central ' in systems of animal exploitation' (blurb, B. Luke, *Brutal. Manhood and the exploitation of animals* (Urbana and Chicago, 2007).

68 Bekoff and Grandin do not agree on this topic: see www.psychologytoday.com/blog/animal-emotions/201304/my-beef-temple-grandin-seemingly-humane-isnt-enough, accessed 11 April 2017.

69 K. N. Laland and B. G. Galef (eds.), *The question of animal culture* (Cambridge, MA, 2009).

70 It was intellectually exciting, for instance, to realise that both organisational and animal culture received a strong impetus from academic work in those fields during the second half of the twentieth century in Japan (H. Wels, 'Japanese wisdom? Reflections on broadening "the

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ignorance'[71] was shattered reading Jonathan Safran Foer's *Eating animals*[72] (2009) and Hal Herzog's *Some we love, some we hate, some we eat*.[73] A midlife crisis? Maybe. But it made me think about my life and academic work up until then in a different light. It made me think differently not only about my own life style and food habits but also my earlier academic work on private wildlife conservation, especially my PhD,[74] that was all *about* conserving non-human animals but never *with* them. I was basically arguing, although often implicitly, for a 'sustainable use' approach in private wildlife conversation;[75] 'if it pays it stays' is often mentioned in the circles of my research on private wildlife conservation and game farming (see chapter Tariro Kamuti in this book). It means that conservation has to make money from the animals and natural resources through various forms of tourism (including hunting) or other ways of 'harvesting' animals for their meat, skin, or other body parts.[76] For me this framework has changed considerably since my 'animal turn', and I have reflected on that in a recent auto-ethnographic article.[77] From this animal turn onward I have tried to include the non-human animals as actual agents and subjectivities in and of themselves in my research and fieldwork on wildlife conservation. I continued, but seriously intensified my readings on animal issues and matters. Instead of only talking to people and focusing on words and texts, I have tried to figure out and experiment with how to include the non-human animal methodologically as agents equal to humans in the configurations of private wildlife conservation.[78]

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social"', unpublished paper presented at the International Society for the History, Philosophy and Social Studies of Biology (ISHPSSB), Montpellier, France, 7–12 July 2013).

71 Understood as 'avoiding potential evidence' (K. Lynch, 'Wilful ignorance and self deception', *Philosophical Studies*, 173:2 (2016): 505–523, 522).

72 J. Safran Foer, *Eating animals* (Boston, 2009).

73 H. Herzog, *Some we love, some we hate, some we eat. Why it is so hard to think straight about animals* (New York and London, 2010).

74 H. Wels, 'Fighting over fences. Organisational cooperation and reciprocal exchange between the Savé Valley Conservancy and its neighbouring communities in Zimbabwe' (unpublished PhD thesis, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 2000); H. Wels, *Private wildlife conservation in Zimbabwe. Joint ventures and reciprocity* (Leiden, 2003).

75 Cf. H. Prins, J. G. Grootenhuis, and T. T. Dolan (eds.). *Wildlife conservation by sustainable use* (Dordrecht, 2000).

76 M. Spierenburg and S. Brooks, 'Private game farming and its social consequences in post-apartheid South Africa: contestations over wildlife, property and agrarian futures', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 32:2, (2014), 151–172.

77 H. Wels, ' "Animals like us": Revisiting organizational ethnography and research', *Journal of Organizational Ethnography*, 4:3, (2015), 242–259.

78 Cf. P. Locke, 'Elephants as persons, affective apprenticeship, and fieldwork with nonhuman informants in Nepal', *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 7:1 (2017), 353–376. See also H. Wels, 'Whispering empathy: Transdisciplinary reflections on research methodology', in

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FIGURE 3.1 Khanyisa (front) and Khanyezi
PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN BY THE AUTHOR

In 2016 I had the opportunity to have an uninterrupted stretch of three months of fieldwork at Mbube, one of the three properties of the Global White Lion Protection Trust in South Africa. There I got to know two white male lions, Letaba and Regeus, and two tawny lionesses, Khanyezi and Khanyisa (see the two lionesses in Figure 3.1).[79]

I decided to 'forget about people' for a while and focus all my research and fieldwork energies on trying to understand these four individual lions, in the hope that along the way and with more interaction with them I would start to not only theoretically and conceptually make them equal players and agents in conservation but also experience them as such. And that was not an easy task

B. Musschenga and A. Van Harskamp, (eds.). *What makes us moral? On the capacities and conditions for being moral* (Dordrecht, 2013), 151–165; K. Dalke and H. Wels, 'Ethnographic research in a changing cultural landscape', in J. Nyman and N. Schuurman (eds.), *Affect, space and animals* (London, 2016).

79 The names of the four lions/lionesses were given to them by Linda Tucker and considered meaningful in the context of and following on the idea that Timbavati is the place 'where the star lions came down' (see further down): Khanyezi – Central Star (African roots); Khanyisa – StarLight; Regeus – First Ray of Sunshine (Latin roots); Letaba – First Ray of Sunshine (African roots). Thanks to Volunteer Coordinator Dorothee Sowa for providing these names to me (8 June 2017), as they are not yet on the website of the Global White Lion Protection Trust. I have kept their given names in my own research.

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for this anthropologist with a speciecist upbringing. It was quite incredible (and confrontational) to find out just how anthropocentric my thinking was (and I hope only slightly still 'is' at this point). In my research so far I had always taken my human 'respondents' or 'actors' as knowledgeable and had written down every utterance and text coming from their mouths or writing from their hands as relevant data for my analysis. In my meetings with human animals we exchanged words and ideas; when meeting more often we got to know each other. They could read what I wrote; they communicated in ways with me that I could pick up on or could make sense of relatively easily as we are of the same species. But now I had to develop that same respect for and ideas about four individual lions, across the species divide. I had to convince myself that the lions and I could come to some sort of 'communicative understanding'[80] and believe and think that the lions, all four of them individually and collectively, were trying to convey ideas and provide qualitative data for my research; that our species were meeting in equally subjective ways such that they informed me about and 'told' me stories about what was happening in the conservancy, just as I had done for so many years in my earlier research on private wildlife conservation: stories of political manoeuvring, meetings, coalitions, faction fighting, and so on. Brought up in 'scientific traditions that had been initially configured to downplay continuities with humans', I was experimenting and trying 'how to interact with a nonhuman intersubjectively'[81] in order to create 'the possibility of treating nonhumans as research informats'.[82] And in trying to do this I felt the deep existential weight of what it means to be brought up in, being part of, and living in the anthropocene.[83] At first it seemed almost impossible for me to take the lions equally seriously as actors in the configuration, to consider their communication to be as valuable as my interviews with Jason and Linda, to consider their paw prints in the bush to be as significant as the texts written by human hands. Speciesism seemed a hard nut to crack for me, while intellectually, theoretically, and in terms of social justice I was all for treating human and non-human animals alike. But isn't it often the case that armchair intellectualism is relatively easy, while being in the field confronts one with the complex realities on the ground and within yourself that are less easily dealt with than through erudite reasoning and writing (cf. Alvesson and Sköldberg 2000)?[84]

80 Locke, *Elephants*, 361.

81 Ibid: 369.

82 Ibid: 370.

83 www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/aug/29/declare-anthropocene-epoch-experts-urge-geological-congress-human-impact-earth, accessed 11 April 2017.

84 M. Alvesson and K. Sköldberg, *Reflexive methodology. New vistas for qualitative research* (Los Angeles and London, 2000).

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FIGURE 3.2 Letaba looking at me intently
PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN BY AUTHOR

Is it worth the effort to discipline, if not force yourself, to live up to your moral reasoning and theorizing about the plight of the non-human other? I think it is, and it is the same fieldwork experience amongst the lions that convinced me of its value, as it has done for so many other fieldworkers in the field of animal studies that I have cited in this chapter so far. The very first day I was in Mbube I tried to check out, from inside my car and with the aid of my telemetry, where the lions might be. Through the combined technology of car and telemetry I could come close to them, but I couldn't get a visual on them, till the time, it seemed, when the lions themselves decided to show themselves to me. It was especially Letaba in this case who stepped out of the thicket, onto the road, and gazed at me intently (see Figure 3.2), as cats both big and small will do, and walked towards my car and its open window with his eyes never off me (see Figure 3.2).

There was no real fear in me; these lions have already been monitored twice a day for some 10 years, so are very used to cars and people, but I did feel impressed if not intimidated by this respondent. Close to the car, he passed and then went back into the thicket. It felt like what one of the most famous early lion researchers, George Schaller, describes in his book on his lion research in Tanzania: 'immensely satisfying'.[85] From that day onward I checked Letaba

85 G. B. Schaller, *Golden shadows, flying hooves* (New York, 1973), 214.

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and the other lions at least twice a day, early morning and beginning of the evening; sometimes for many hours, I just sat with them and observed them in order to try to understand and empathise with them better, most of the time aided by Nippert-Eng's most helpful book[86] on 'watching closely' and my own musings on empathy.[87] Despite the fact that these lions are used to people (in cars), all observations were made from the car, usually from a distance of 20–30 meters,[88] because the GWLPT has a policy in which they do not want the lions to get used to direct interactions with humans; it is a rewilding project after all. In the dark I used either a thermal monocular or a spotlight with a red filter to prevent any inconvenience to the lions' eyes, and when I had a good visual I switched off the engine (cf. ibid). Binoculars belonged – in addition to the telemetry and a notebook and fountain pen – to the standard gear (along with hot water, rooibos teabags, and some fruits and biscuits).[89] I was basically trying all the time to imagine what it would be like to be a lion (following Nagel's (1974) famous question 'What is it like to be a bat?'[90]) There were also some afternoons, evenings, and nights when I tried to find them and be with them, and it always seemed or turned out that they were the ones deciding to see me or show themselves to me, instead of the other way around.

What I call my 'interactions with lions' were therefore actually interactions between 'me-in-the-car and lions', as if co-existence and connections between wild/rewilding predators and humans can only exist when mediated by fences and other human technologies that keep the species apart, like cars.[91] This again is a terrain characterised by many contesting voices. George Adamson (see above), but also current day Kevin Richardson,[92] actively and physically engage(d) with lions. Is this habituating them to people to a degree that can only lead to disaster in the longer term (as some predict, see for one example the 'canned hunting' debate below), or is it a lack of belief in what Gay

86 C. Nippert-Eng, *Watching closely. A guide to ethnographic observation* (Oxford, 2015).

87 H. Wels, *Whispering*.

88 Cf. J. A. Turner, 'The impact of lion predation on the large ungulates of the Associated Private Nature Reserves, South Africa' (unpublished MSc-thesis, University of Pretoria, 2005).

89 M. R. Canfield, *Field notes on science & nature* (Cambridge, MA, 2011).

90 T. Nagel, 'What is it like to be a bat?', *Philosophical Review*, 83:4 (1974), 435–450.

91 The combination of cars and cameras has especially dominated many people's interactions with lions. This type of 'participant observation' is probably the path most wild lion research has followed and is still following. It has led to many beautiful documentaries and books describing and showing lions' social lives (see, for instance, M. Bright, *The pride. A family of killers fighting to survive*, London 2010).

92 K. Richardson (with Tony Park), *Part of the pride. My life among the big cats of Africa* (New York, 2009)

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Bradshaw in her latest book calls 'Pax Carnivora'?[93] Can we learn to co-exist with predators without technology like fences or cars keeping us apart? Can we go beyond our fears of them? Can we beat the cultural constructions of our own making that have kept humans and animals segregated for so long, and on which basis entire global industries feel themselves legitimised to exploit animals for 'sustainable use', ranging from the cruelties of medical research, to the meat and dairy-industry, to fishing, to hunting, to making animals 'property' without giving them any right of appeal, and make them 'killable',[94] as we used to do with slaves and women? Gay Bradshaw believes we can. With the current scientific evidence in hand, 'at (…)[this] moment of species re-unification', we have 'the opportunity to vanquish the self-imposed fear and ignorance that have held humanity hostage. Seeing the world through the eyes of the carnivore is the first step in learning how to relate with these kindred beings, and ourselves, honestly and responsibly'.[95]

It was ultimately their gaze that convinced me of their agency, as the animal gaze has so often convinced people:[96] eyes 'locked into mine'[97] or how Marc Bekoff's dog 'locked eyes with him'.[98] Just as described by Payne about whales, lions 'make an "eye catch"';[99] they find your eye and make contact, and communicate. During those three months I developed an almost easy kind of familiarity especially with Letaba. To me this familiarity was confirmed on the last day of my stay when I went for the final morning check. I had full signal on the telemetry but no visual again; I was on the road next to the thicket. I stopped the car, switched off the engine, and waited for things to happen (or not), and within a couple of minutes Letaba came out of the thicket, went to the middle of the road, almost exactly in the middle of my two head lights, caught my eyes, walked towards me, passed my side of the car, his mane brushing the door, and lay down at the rear wheel of my car (see Figure 3.3).

Some five minutes later his twin brother, Regeus, came out of the thicket and joined his brother (see Figure 3.4). Am I imagining things, 'making things

93 Bradshaw, *Carnivore*.
94 Haraway, *Species*.
95 Bradshaw, *Carnivore*, 264.
96 Woodward, *Animal*; J. Derrida, *The animal that therefore I am* (New York, 2008); P. Armstrong, 'The gaze of animals', in N. Taylor and T. Signal, T. (eds.), *Theorizing animals. Rethinking humanimal relations* (Leiden, 2011)
97 S. Montgomery, *Walking with the great apes. Jane Goodall, Dian Fossey, Biruté Galdikas* (White River Junction (VT), 2009), 13.
98 Bekoff and Pierce, *Agenda*, 73.
99 Payne, *Whales*, 214.

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FIGURE 3.3 Letaba laying down at the back of my car on the final morning of my stay. PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN BY AUTHOR

up', interpreting this 'humanimal'[100] encounter too romantically, or is this what happens and is allowed to happen 'when species meet',[101] in the context of our new understanding of differences in degree and not in kind as scientifically articulated and expressed in the Cambridge Declaration? I think so. Let me substantiate this claim with a rather long quote from Bekoff and Pierce's latest book. Yes, it is a different species; it is about a dog and, yes, it is a domesticated animal, but the dog shares his evolutionary continuity, his sentience, and subjectivities with Letaba and me. 'Inuk was a very fit dog, getting regular long runs, as he was a mountain dog, and very healthy for thirteen-plus years. But he declined fairly rapidly due to a gastrointestinal problem, so the veterinarian to whom he went and really liked prescribed a large orange pill, as I [Mark Bekoff] remember it, that had to be shoved down his throat. There was no guarantee that the pill would work but it was worth a try. To say the least, Inuk hated the pills, and after having three a day for four days, he ran away when he knew the pills were coming no matter how softly I spoke to him. He'd cringe in the corner of his large outdoor run or scoot up the dirt road as best as he could. No one

100 Cf. McFarland and Hediger (eds.), *Animals and agency. An interdisciplinary exploration* (Leiden and Boston, 2009).

101 Cf. Haraway, *Species*.

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FIGURE 3.4 Regeus joins his brother Letaba.
PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN BY AUTHOR

seeing him would draw any conclusion other than he didn't want to take the pills. *If Inuk were a human*, and in many ways he was, *there wouldn't have been a shred of doubt that the pills were not at all welcomed.* Inuk also did not appear to get any better and *clearly was telling me* no more pills please'.[102]

Now, don't get the wrong impression that all was sheer bliss and happy interpretive reflexivity. There were days and times that I sighed with George Schaller, and murmured with him that 'when the meaning of some behaviour was obscure to me, I wished lions could express themselves with more than growls and snarls and roars (…) [but then] language is a mask that helps to obscure feelings and thoughts (…) an animal's existence is more likely to become clear from its gestures'.[103]

Like Schaller, for three months '(m)y existence revolved around lions'.[104] These three months taught me that it might be possible to take lions seriously as respondents, that they are certainly willing to exchange and communicate, but that I have to seriously 'unlearn' the taken-for-granted ideas and assumptions from my upbringing and studies in the social sciences. This unlearning

102 Bekoff and Pierce, *Agenda*, 118, italics added.
103 Schaller, *Golden shadows*, 72.
104 Schaller, *Golden shadows*, 90.

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feels almost like a 'leap of faith' for me, as it brings me into a world that I am not familiar with in terms of upbringing and studies, and all this at a later stage in life. It is also means entering a more-than-human world that is not yet very much recognized or accepted in the social sciences, from colleagues to students, and which is often received with a lot of giggling, amazement, and sometimes outright irritation. Sometimes when asked about my 'animal turn' I get the impression that people think that I have in some ways 'radicalised' (such an associative concept these days) in my attempts to rethink conservation in South and southern Africa by taking animal agency explicitly into the equation, just as they declared Friedrich Nietzsche finally insane only when he consoled and put his arms around the neck of a horse that was being whipped in the Italian city of Turin. My (un)learning so as to accept non-human others as equally competent and relevant respondents, and as co-creators of my data just like their human counterparts, has become an important theoretical, methodological, and reflexive journey. Making sense of these data and what I think the lions are communicating to me, as with humans, through their behaviour and interaction with me and with others, is the challenge I deal with in currently writing a multispecies ethnography about this fieldwork. Lions are at least no longer only 'species' to me. They have become persons and personalities, much in the same way as long term lion researcher Fritz Eloff describes: 'My research on the Kalahari lions has convinced me that each lion is an individual being, with its own "personality". (…) And this applied not only to individual lions, but prides as well'.[105]

## What Do I Touch/See When I Touch/See a White Lion?

The white lions of the Timbavati are unique and only occur endemically at this one place on the globe. The local populations of Sepedi- and Tsonga-speaking people, and especially shamans in and around Timbavati and Africa at large, have already known this for a long time through oral traditions; they consider white lions to be of particularly important symbolic and religious significance,[106] which is in line with more general tendencies around the world to interpret colours in a symbolic way,[107] also linked to white animals.[108,109] On

105 F. Eloff, *Hunters of the dunes. The story of the Kalahari lion* (Pretoria 2016), 152.

106 Tucker, *Mystery*; Hieronimus, *Spirit animals*, 82–120.

107 Th. van Leeuwen, *The language of colour. An introduction* (London and New York, 2011), 16–19.

108 Hieronimus, *Spirit animals*.

109 In the scientific realm, see for instance http://blog.nature.org/science/2016/02/03/white-deer-understanding-a-common-animal-of-uncommon-color/; in the more popular realm,

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the African continent the colour white has been ascribed with a lot of symbolic power, where white stands usually for 'purity' and is used in a 'series of antithetical pairs',[110] white signifying the 'unsullied and unpolluted'.[111] 'Shangaan sangomas, or diviners, say these lions are the messengers of the ancestral spirits, and their presence brings order and stability to life. There is also the belief that, when they are born, the earth is about to undergo great change'.[112],[113] For the general public the white lions were only 'discovered' by Chris McBride in early October 1975 when he was studying (tawny) lions in the Timbavati for his master's degree,[114] although there are references sightings in the Timbavati in 1938 by Joyce White – what is in a name – whose family owned a lot of land in the Timbavati area and were friends of President Paul Kruger[115] and 1959.[116] 'The white lion is a rare phenotype or colour variant of the African lion *Panthera leo* that has a white coat colour (…) with either yellow, blue or green eyes … The white coat colour is not due to albinism [or Piebald, which is pigmented spots on a white underground], but rather leucism resulting from a double recessive allele'.[117] Their uniqueness comes at a price though as they are an attraction for zoos and hunters, for which they are bred extensively to the detriment of the gene pool and to such an extent that they have been became technically extinct in the wild for 12 years, between 1994 and 2006, so that there are now more white lions in captivity than in the wild.[118] The Global White Lion Protection Trust was founded in 2002 to try and turn the tide, and it started a rewilding and rehabilitation programme[119] that has resulted so far

see, for instance, http://fengshuiserenity.blogspot.nl/2012/06/sacred-white-animals-of-prophecy.html, accessed 14 April 2017.

110 V. Turner, *Forest of symbols. Aspects of Ndembu ritual* (Ithaca and London: 1967), 74.

111 Turner, *Forest*, 76.

112 R. de la Harpe and P. de la Harpe, *In search of the African lion* (Cape Town, 2012), 126.

113 Similar to what Tacitus writes in his *Germania* about the symbolic and prophetic meaning of white horses among Germans (in T. Lemaire, *Onder dieren. Voor een diervriendelijker wereld* (Amsterdam, 2017), 221 and 225.

114 C. McBride, *The white lions of Timbavati* (Johannesburg, 1977) and subsequent white lion project, C. McBride, *Operation white lion* (London, 1981).

115 www.tigertribe.net →white lions.

116 J. A. Turner, C. A. Vasicek, and M. J. Somers. 'Effects of a colour variant on hunting ability: The white lion in South Africa', *Open Science Repository Biology*, (2015).

117 Turner et al., *Effects*; see also F. Sunquist and M. Sunquist, *The wild cat book* (Chicago and London, 2014), 12; G. L. Smuts, *Lion* (Braamfontein, 1982), 246–250.

118 www.whitelions.org, accessed 14 April 2017.

119 L. Tucker, *Saving the white lions. One woman's battle for Africa's most sacred animal* (Berkeley (CA), 2013).

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in three prides being established on three properties, six out of ten of which are white lions: four males, two females.[120]

In order to get more white lions back into 'the wild', it is important for the prides on the different properties to have cubs. Pride formation is key to that process, and it was exactly during my three months of fieldwork (September-November 2016) that the two white males, Letaba and Regeus, were brought together with the two tawny females, Khanyezi and Khanyisa, in the hope that they would establish a pride and mate. It was during these weeks that I followed them as much as possible to see what was happening. As there are so few white lions left in the wild, Jason is very careful not to lose any of 'his' white lions. Lions have a formidable arsenal of claws and teeth, so male-female relations must be approached with utmost caution. Since they considered that Letaba's character was more gentle than that of Regeus, they first let Letaba out of the boma, a large but fenced holding facility, to get to know the lionesses. After a couple of weeks, Letaba was lured back into the boma and, after some weeks of 'quality time' with his twin brother, Regeus (known to be more aggressive towards the opposite sex) was released from the boma to meet the ladies. But he missed his brother so much that, instead of sharing time with the lionesses, he was mostly found on the other side of the fence facing his brother. Next phase was to release both males and see what would happen, and hope for a pride and mating. And indeed things happened! Letaba became almost obsessively possessive of the lionesses and wouldn't allow Regeus closer than some 20–25 meters in their vicinity. This resulted in a situation where Letaba was laying next to the lionesses, jealously watching if not guarding them, especially Khanyisa, with Regeus laying in the margins, some 20–25 meters away from them. Whenever one of the lions moved out of that established order, there developed a lot of excitement and anxiety amongst them (see Figure 3.5). Between the males this lead to some fights that led in the end to minor injuries, such as Letaba's eye, which was probably hit, and was closed and full of puss for some weeks before it healed, and some scratches here and there.

Letaba's injured eye was an interesting case in the context of rewilding these white lions: Let nature take its course or intervene? Because there are so few white lions left in the wild, one could imagine that Letaba's eye was a matter of concern: What if it got seriously infected? What would that do to a 12-year-old lion? The dilemma was that, in order to have a closer look at the eye, Letaba would have to be sedated; sedation usually causes a lot of social disruption with a group of lions, and so in this situation it could even mean Regeus seizing

120 *Ibid*: → 'Meet the Royal Family'.

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FIGURE 3.5 Letaba guarding Khanyisa and Khanyezi, with Regeus keeping his respectful distance. PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN BY THE AUTHOR

the opportunity to 'take over' from Letaba now that his brother was in a weak position as a result of the sedation and not able to defend himself. We therefore monitored closely and tried to take pictures of the injured eye on every occasion we had a proper visual and send them through to the veterinarian in order to make the judgement whether to intervene or not. In the end Letaba's eye healed by itself, and that was seen by Jason and other colleagues within the conservancy as a 'true' result of rewilding these lions, since it showed a physical and mental condition good enough for Letaba to take care of his own healing. Some months later a new brotherly fight erupted, and this time it was Regeus who received an injury in the middle of his forehead. It also looked bad, but in the same way, he took care of his own healing. No matter all the social manoeuvrings, the bonding and fighting of the males and females, none of this lead to pregnancies until just recently: in September 2017 Khanyezi got two cubs of which one survived, and hid them right in the thicket behind the Volunteer House where I was staying.

To adequately answer the question of Haraway in as much richness as possible within the constraints of the number of words of a chapter, I need to mention two final, brief points. The first one is a short explanation of the term 'wild', so important in order to understand what it stands for in the term 're*wild*ing'. Mbube borders the tar road that leads to the Orpen Gate of

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Kruger National Park. Its southern fence runs parallel to the tar road, with only a small stretch of grass in between the road and the double fence. Alongside the road live many local communities and there is on-going poaching, mostly through putting out snares. Mbube is patrolled twice a day, and there are 'fence patrols' and 'snare patrols' that check the various sections of the property on a very regular base. Still, it cannot prevent poaching from happening, and regularly a snare is found on Mbube, sometimes with an animal in it. Once it was the sister of Khanyisa, Nyeleti, who was found, killed, in one of these snares in April 2013. This has resulted in Mbube being divided into a Lion-free Zone and a Lion Zone in which the lions can move freely, but which has turned out to be too small to sustain a suitable number of prey animals for the lions to hunt for their own food. So they are – what they call – 'being supplemented' every 3–5 days. All this subdividing and safeguarding is of course happening together with erecting more fences, actually within fences, at which point the lion zone becomes a kind of 'island' in the midst of a buffer zone all around it. In the White Lion Protection Plan (Turner 2016:8), Turner writes about 'semi-free roaming conditions' for the lions. This is not the ultimate goal of rewilding of course – the aim is 'fully free-roaming' lions – but the question is when do they dare take that leap given the on-going threats of poaching. In 2013 it was a tawny lioness who died in a snare; just imagine if an even much rarer white lion was caught in a snare. This leads to a situation on Mbube where there are many fences, and both the males and the females can often be found close to them, or even patrolling them, often spotting game on the other side of the fence. What are they communicating to us in being at the fences so often? Do they indicate that they need more space? Do they communicate that they want to hunt for their own food? The fact that no pregnancies occur, is there a message in that? Don't they trust the situation for having offspring? Are they asking for less control, more of the 'wild hearts' of Linda and Jason? One result of their rarity is that Jason and Linda do not fully dare to allow these white lions to live a fully wild life. According to them, this would seem to involve too many risks of them dying in the process. In order to show the implications of this understandable caution and risk aversion, here is an example. On the other property, Tsau!, where lions and lionesses do hunt for themselves, they do not bring in 'dangerous prey animals' like buffalo, which, when hunted by the lions, might end up injuring or even killing the lions. Here we touch on some of the dilemmas of trying to rewild an animal that is close to extinction, if not extinct, in the wild: How much risk do you allow in the rewilding processes of an animal that is close to extinction in the wild? How wild is wild? How much control do you want to keep over the rewilding process? Every decision

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that assesses and makes choices regarding these dilemmas can have severe consequences for the ultimate goal of rewilding these white lions into their original endemic home of the Timbavati, about which Linda writes on her website: 'African elders tell us that **Timbavati** ("*Tsimba-Vaati*") means the Place where the StarLions came down'.[121]

The second point – of ultimate relevance in the context of 'sustainable use', and such a powerful and almost rhetorical concept in conservation circles in southern Africa (see other contributions to this volume) – is about a specific form of hunting, popularly known as 'canned hunting'. 'Canned lion hunting can be defined as the hunting of usually captive-bred lions in confined, fenced spaces. The size of the area can vary from, literally, a cage to an acre, to 20 hectares, to 1000 hectares or more. All these different-sized areas have one thing in common. They are all areas of land that do not represent a lion pride's true territorial range in the wilds'.[122] Canned hunting is 'cheaper', in many more ways than only in monetary costs as we will see, '… than a legitimate "fair chase" hunt – around $20,000 as against, say, $80,000'.[123] In the development of their conservancy of the white lions, the protests of Jason and Linda against canned hunting in South Africa remain a constant;[124] the campaign against canned hunting is an on-going item on their website.[125] Often people refer to the Cook Report of 1997 as the first time canned hunting was exposed to the public. I took that 'fact' for granted until I read Smuts' book on lions in Kruger and his time with the research section of Kruger National Park since 1969. About lion-culling operations he writes: 'it was discovered that some of the interested parties wanted to buy adult lions for trophy hunting purposes. These animals would be released into an enclosure where clients could be guaranteed a successful hunt'.[126] To me this reads like outright canned hunting, even before they invented a word for it in the 1997 Cook Report. So canned hunting has been with us already for quite some time. Of course, canned hunting is a form of hunting, and if we talk about lions then not only canned hunting but also hunting itself has been a contentious issue in terms of quota, size, age, gender.[127]

121 www.lindatuckerfoundation.org/marahs-life-story/, accessed 16 April 2017, emphasis in original.
122 G. Patterson, *Dying to be free. The canned lion scandal* (London, 1998), 6.
123 Clarke, *Overkill*, 47.
124 Tucker, *Saving*, 312–327.
125 www.whitelions.org → our campaigns → canned hunting, accessed 14 April 2017.
126 Smuts, *Lion*, 197.
127 Packer, *Balance*.

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Imagine that in the early days of Kruger National Park, when Stevenson Hamilton was in charge, every lion would also be shot on sight in order for browsers to build up their herds.[128] In her biography on Stevenson-Hamilton, Carruthers writes: 'Any creature which competed with the human hunter for antelope as prey was considered to be "vermin". It seems strange to modern conservationists that two of the "big five" (…) – *lion* and leopard – were thus actively hunted *with extinction as the aim*'.[129] Hunting in relation to the accumulating knowledge and scientific evidence of how sentient beings, the ones referred to in the Cambridge Declaration, can suffer and grieve as a result of being hunted and being chased,[130] might suggest that we should feel outraged by the lack of a 'fair chase' when it comes to canned hunting. But should we not consider whether maybe hunting in a more general sense is something that we can no longer sustain in the face of mounting scientific evidence? If we know we, in fact, differ in degree and not in kind from animals, can we than still morally legitimise hunting them? If we differ from animals in degree only, shouldn't we apply the same ethics and justice to other sentient beings as we do to fellow humans? It is not considered ethical nor is it legally allowed 'to hunt' people; it is not considered ethical nor legally allowed 'to eat' other human beings; and it is not considered ethical nor legally permissible 'to torture' fellow humans. If that is the case, and animals are like us, what than gives us the (moral) right or legitimacy to continue to do all these things to non-human animals and not consider someone probably out of his or her mind or 'criminal', if he/she would do the same to humans? Basically what the subtext and implication of recent scientific evidence seems to suggest is that what we don't allow with regard to humans should now be extended to other sentient beings as well, because they are like us. As Bekoff and Pierce convincingly argue: '(…) what we've learned about who animals are should, indeed must, make a difference in how we treat them'.[131] Or do we remain 'wilfully ignorant' in the face of all this scientific evidence? What do I touch when I touch a dog? Or lion for that matter.

128 J. Stevenson-Hamilton, *South African Eden. From Sabi Game Reserve to Kruger National Park* (Cape Town, [1937] 1993).

129 J. Carruthers, *Wildlife & warfare. The life of James Stevenson-Hamilton* (Pietermaritzburg, 2001), 107, italics added.

130 Bradshaw, *Elephants*; Bradshaw, *Carnivore*; B. King, *How animals grieve* (Chicago and London, 2013).

131 Bekoff and Pierce, *Agenda*, 29.

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### Finally, *a Dash of Auto-Ethnography: An Attempt at Rewilding Myself?*

What do my encounters with white lions and this rewilding project tell me about myself?[132] It is interesting to note that many people who write about and actually practice rewilding projects often sound like 'true believers', sometimes against all odds. Through the research for his book on rewilding George Monbiot writes that his 'world had become alive with meaning, alive with possibility' and 'I had found hope where *hope* had seemed absent'.[133] And Marc Bekoff in his 'rewilding our hearts' writes that 'there are many reasons to hope that as a society we can harness our basic *goodness* and optimism and all work together as a united community'.[134] Rewilding, according to Bekoff, is 'about being nice, kind compassionate, empathic, and harnessing our inborn goodness and optimism'; 'primarliy it [rewilding] means opening our hearts and minds to others'.[135] Jane Goodall, a personal friend of Bekoff, leads and joins in this chorus of optimism with her own biography with the title *Reason for **Hope***.[136] This 'hope' and 'goodness', especially in the context of South Africa, will remind many of the optimistic texts that Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu offered the South African nation when it prepared itself for the big transition in 1994 when Nelson Mandela became its first democratically elected black president. Tutu knows the White Lion Trust well. When the Trust was participating in the Global March for Lions on 15 March 2014, they asked him to support the march with a prayer for all creation, and white lions in particular. That prayer now features prominently on the website of the Global White Lion Protection Trust.[137] On Tutu's birthday, 7 October, the Trust congratulates 'the Arch' in the programme of the International Peace Lecture given in his honour at the University of the Western Cape, with texts like 'Prayers for peace on earth' and 'Our sincerest gratitude for your lifetime contribution to humanity and nature'. All this discourse fits seamlessly with the many optimistic books that Tutu himself has written, but especially his book, together with his daughter Mpho Tutu, *Made for goodness. And why this makes all the difference*.[138] This

132 MacDonalds, *Falcon*.
133 Montbiot, *Feral*, 255 and 256, italics added.
134 M. Bekoff, *Rewilding our hearts. Building pathways of compassion and coexistence* (Novata, 2014), 146, italics added.
135 Bekoff, *Rewilding*, 5.
136 J. Goodall, (with P. Berman), *Reason for hope. A spiritual journey* (London, 1999), bold added.
137 http://whitelions.org/
138 D. Tutu and M. Tutu, *Made for goodness. And why this makes all the difference* (London and Sidney, 2010).

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discourse resonates strongly with the ways Linda Tucker sees her role as lion shaman, which has many religious overtones; the leadership course on Lion Hearted Leadership that the White Lion Trust offers is also full of religious discourse, references, and ritual.[139] Where do secular science and near-religious hope meet? Can you be scientifically rigorous in your analysis and still be religiously hopeful for the future of wildlife/nature conservation? Why do I feel 'at home' in this research? Here I bump into a paradoxical feeling: in my 'rigorous scientific analysis' of chances for successful lion conservation and the way people go about the conservation processes, I feel rather desperate and almost downtrodden. My own encounters with the white lions give me a kind of 'religious hope' for their future. It is a hope that secularly anticipates a world where human and non-human animals can co-exist in a non-exploitative way: Is this maybe a world in which we grant non-human animals citizen rights as suggested by Donaldson and Kymlicka in their thought-provoking and well-argued book *Zoopolis*?[140] To start Zoopolisses around the world so that they actually work as doable and concrete 'mini-utopias' – definitely not the kind of utopia that is only metaphorically used as a hope for a fictitious future Eden[141] – we might need a 'rewilding of our hearts'[142] in order to allow ourselves to accept the inherent risks in co-existing with all sorts of non-human, including predatory, animals. Is this what I find in this research? Is that what this research and the encounters and attempts at 'participant observation' with the four white lions – I slept in the car when they went asleep, I followed them in the car when they went on patrol, I tried to follow their gaze when they seemed to look intently at something, I made detailed notes on all their interactions in my fieldwork diary[143] – tells me about myself? And let us also not forget this crucial question: Can I, or better, dare I, suggest that after this stint of three months of fieldwork I 'know' these lions? Is my number of hours with them in any way indicative of how well I know them by now? Probably not. How

139 Cf. M. Draper, 'Zen and the art of garden province maintenance: The soft intimacy of hard men in the wilderness of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, 1952–1997', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 24:4 (2005), 801–828.

140 S. Donaldson and W. Kymlicka, *Zoopolis. A political theory of animal rights* (Oxford, 2011); see also E. Mejer, *De soldaat was een dolfijn. Over politieke dieren* (Amsterdam: 2017).

141 Cf. H. Achterhuis, *Koning van Utopia. Nieuw licht op utopisch denken* (Rotterdam, 2016).

142 Bekoff, *Rewilding*.

143 Although some may consider this to be a 'participant observation', an '(extremely) light' version compared to how literally Charles Foster took it by going 'truly feral' (a quote from *The Economist* on the back cover) by living like a badger eating earthworms, or becoming a fox scavenging dustbins at night, or being hunted as a red deer in the highlands of Scotland (C. Foster, *Being a beast. An intimate and radical look at nature* (London, 2016). In that light, my own rewilding obviously has just begun.

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do I figure out how well I know them? If I can predict in the field what they are going to do next? That I can show through the length of my bibliography at the end of this chapter that I have read a lot about lions and related issues? That I can reflect on the superficiality of my knowledge about them with all this questioning? That, as a 'seasoned researcher', people accept my knowledge claims more readily and unquestionably? Advancing age comes with more automatic 'authority'? But does that in the end help contribute to getting to know them for what they are as individuals, as persons? All 'wicked questions', so high time to jump ship and end the chapter with some tentative conclusions.

## Tentative Conclusions on Implications for Lion Conservation and Research

What we metaphorically touch in every individual white lion is a plethora of meaning, and the resulting articulation and narrative of that particular meaning for ourselves is what the encounter with the white lion is telling us about ourselves. And that can change over time. It can change as a result of new knowledge that we take on board, as for instance the mounting scientific evidence of the continuities and similarities between human and non-human animals that has implications for how we estimate and interpret their agency, and how prepared we become to take their communication as fieldwork data that is as equally relevant as that coming from human animals. This same academic evidence, that is, how the differences between human and non-human animals are a matter of degree and not of kind, can have implications for how we should relate to them from a moral perspective. This is a complex terrain that equals the on-going debates that rage about how morality plays a role in our interactions among ourselves as humans. This might be a topic where our choices depend on how we give meaning to our encounters with non-human animals and what they tell us about ourselves, as it has done for so many animal researchers, meaning that is saturated with how they think they are touched by the animals. It is in this manifold meaning of the word 'touch' that the two questions that structure and guide my exploration of my white-lion research come together. 'What do I touch/see when I touch/see a white lion' and 'how am I touched myself by my encounters with white lions' are two questions that were never meant to speak to each other when the authors wrote their respective books but are now linked together in this chapter. Juxtaposing these two questions takes us from delving into the many entanglements of human-lion exchange, which has eventually lead to the current predicament of lions worldwide, to attempts to restore, rehabilitate, and conserve (white) lions in a

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co-existence with human others. Conservation that is compassionate[144] – that takes wild-living apex predators into the equation based on theories of 'trophic cascades'[145] and that is based on research that takes a non-hierarchical multi-species approach[146] – tries to look at conservation or, even better, co-existence through the eyes of carnivores.[147] It is a conservation full of hope that comes with thinking about mini-utopias in the here and now, along with all their daily challenges, but, alas, such is multi-species life.[148]

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144 M. Bekoff (ed.), *Ignoring nature no more. The case for compassionate conservation* (Chicago, 2013).

145 'Trophic cascade theory explains the role of apex predators in regulating populations of their prey and mesopredators' (A. D. Wallach, M. Bekoff, M. P. Nelson, and D. Ramp, 'Promoting predators and compassionate conservation', *Conservation Biology*, 29:5 (2015), 1481–1484, 1483. See also A.D. Wallach, W. J. Ripple, and S. P. Carroll, 'Novel trophic cascades: apex predators enable coexistence', *Trends in Ecology & Evolution*, 30, (2015), 146–153.

146 Cf. D. Letsel, F. Brunois, and F. Gaunet, 'Etho–ethnology or ethnoethology', *Social Science Information*, 45:2 (2006), 147–153.

147 Cf. Bradshaw, *Carnivore*.

148 To add my little contribution to this hope, my wife and I recently started the Wild White Lions Foundation (see www.wildwhitelions.org).

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# PART 2

## *Histories in Wildlife Conservation*

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CHAPTER 4

# National Parks, Eco-Frontiers, and Transfrontiersmanship in Southern African Conservation

*Malcolm Draper*

The eco-frontier concept is new but speaks to the old and ever-changing relationship between humanity and nature that is the subject of environmental history, which narrates the past as a series of struggles and compromises with nature, rather than merely a series of battles leading to boundaries between societies. Drawing on this development in scholarship that has drawn literary scholars, geographers, along with social and natural scientists back into the house of history where all disciplines belong, this essay applies the eco-frontier concept longitudinally. It illuminates how shifting paradigms of human engagement with nature can lead to inversion rather than progression. This is illustrated with the following themes: acclimatisation, conservation, national parks, sport, wilderness, capitalism, transfrontier parks, ecotourism, and the vital historical role of the transfrontiersman. Finally it is shown that in southern Africa, a mediagenic transfrontiersman was hired to market it as an ecotourist destination, a post-national and post-colonial borderless product with culture – indigenous in particular – now being given primacy over and fused with nature, rather than the two alienated from one another as was the case in the imperial and colonial era. Ecocriticism has opened a new frontier for scholarship and, while showing the shortcomings of the project, it can also appreciate the sincerity of postmodern transfontiersmen's journeys of reconciliation with their past as conquerors turning inward to the ultimate frontier to be tackled within the Western self. Such a perspective can challenge the anti-neoliberal orthodoxy.[1]

1 My methodology focuses on the self. It is a mix of intimate participant observation and auto-ethnomethodological experimentation without any ethical clearance.

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## Introduction

Natural frontiers have always set limits and challenges for human society. Eco-frontiers are more complex and as shall be argued include crossings within the self.[2] Since the agricultural revolution around 10,000 years ago, humanity began a course to transcend these limits and increase food production and thus facilitate human population growth at the expense of other natural communities. A fundamental aspect of this process was the domestication of plant and animal life. Through this people came to distinguish between nature and society. With the taming of nature came the taming of human culture through what Norbet Elias called the 'civilizing process'.[3] The social formation of the nation state in the modern period ensured that human culture became domesticated through nationalism. Yet nations grew and exceeded their ecological carrying capacities, forcing Europeans to spread around the world in search of fresh frontiers to conquer and new nationalisms emerged. Alfred Crosby compared them to swarming locusts when he coined the phrase 'ecological imperialism'.[4] As he shows, people took with them their plants, animals, and, unwittingly, their diseases, which, in the lands of demographic takeover, were part of the package of colonisation. Acclimatisation societies aimed at facilitating biological exchange were formed and launched at some noteworthy dinners in Paris and London with menus reflecting metropolitan enthusiasm for consuming exotic species. The first recorded society was the French Société Imperial d' Acclimatation, established in Paris in 1854 by the famous zoologist Sainte-Hilaire and attracted the patronage of, amongst others, the Emperor of France, the King of Siam, and the Emperor of Brazil.[5] This was the heyday of natural history when zoological and botanical imaginations were running riot. Nowadays biologists are concerned with the ecological impact of this exchange. Yet, apparently paradoxically, the acclimatisation societies provided some strong roots for the contemporary conservation movement. The story of European

2 S. Guyot, 'The eco-frontier paradigm: Rethinking the links between space, nature and politics', *Geopolitics*, 16, 675–706.

3 N. Elias, *The history of manners* (Oxford, 1969), and *The civilizing process, Vol. II State formation and civilization* (Oxford, 1982). (Originally published in German in 1939, and in English as *The civilizing process, Vol. 1.*)

4 A. W. Crosby, *Ecological imperialism: the biological expansion of Europe, 900–1900* (Cambridge, 2004).

5 C. Lever. *They dined on Eland: the story of the acclimatization societies*, (London, 1992); T. R. Dunlap, *Nature and the English diaspora: Environment and history in the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand*, (Cambridge, 1999); T. R. Dunlap, 'Remaking the land: The acclimatization movement and Anglo ideas of nature', *Journal of World History*, 8:2 (1997), 303–319.

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and American trout in South Africa shows this through the biographies of key figures in the Frontier Acclimatisation Society and other similar organisations in South Africa, whilst in New Zealand, where the societies were the most widespread, they simply changed their name to Fish and Game New Zealand and administered sport and the conservation of the sporting species and habitats.[6] At the same time, the wild frontier became inverted as the closing of the frontier in America in 1890 turned the tide of history and stimulated many riding in Rousseau's wake to value the natural, the wild, and the savage just as it seemed to be receding. South Africa soon followed suit with national parks – 'America's Best Idea'.[7] As Jane Carruthers showed, nationally these were a fusion of Afrikaner and English white nationalisms. Provincially in Natal and Zululand it was a merging of English and Zulu nationalism, which created the Zululand wilderness areas within nature reserves.[8] Conservationists became the new cowboys fighting the enclosures of modernity, but had to appeal to the sentiments of the time, and nature became enclosed in protected areas. In recent decades conservation has entered a transnational phase, as global conferences such as the Earth Summits in Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg suggest.

Transfrontier/transnational parks have come of age and spread around the world becoming emblematic of this new frontier of recognition that ecosystems and the geographical social and management systems of nation states do not coincide. In southern Africa they are pointed to as tangible evidence of the African Renaissance. Europeans, who had adopted the idea of national parks in a slightly different way, have now merged their parks across borders. The European model was different and the European Green Belt initiative is

6 M. Draper, 'Going native: Trout and settling identity in a rainbow nation', *Historia*, 48:1 (2003), 55–94. Draper, M. 'Holy trout – New Zealand and South Africa', in S. Snyder, B. Borgelt, and E. Tobey (eds.), *Backcasts: A global history of fly fishing and conservation*, (Chicago, 2016), 178–194.

7 *The National Parks: America's best idea* is a 2009 documentary film for television, DVD and companion book (ISBN 978-0307268969) by director/producer Ken Burns and producer/writer Dayton Duncan which features the United States National Park system and traces the system's history. The series won two 2010 Emmy Awards for outstanding writing in episode 2 'The Last Refuge', and for outstanding non-fiction series.

8 J. Carruthers. 'Creating a National Park, 1910–1926', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15:2 (1989); J. Carruthers. *The Kruger National Park: A social and political history* (Pietermaritzburg, 1995); J. Carruthers, 'Nationhood and National Parks: Comparative examples from the post-imperial experience', in *Ecology and empire: Environmental history of settler societies* (Pietermaritzburg, 1997); M. Draper, 'Zen and the art of garden province maintenance: The soft intimacy of hard men in the wilderness of KwaZulu-Natal (1952–1997)', *Journal of Southern African Studies,* Special Issue on Masculinities in Southern Africa, 24:4 (December 1998), 801–828.

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a grassroots movement for nature conservation and sustainable development along the corridor of the former Iron Curtain but does not have parks at its core. At the same time, in the developed world, craving for the natural, wild and 'other' has never been more acute bringing with it a new form of consumption in the form of eco-tourism with its beckoning frontiers of adventure. The ultimate eco-frontier, however, appears to be inward and gestures towards examination and transformation of the Western self, in which American President Donald Trump has no interest. In the current 'swamp draining' era of Trump, Brexit, and xenophobia, nationalism is experiencing a regressive renaissance. The planned Mexican border wall would be a death knell for transfrontier conservation. Whether the associated form of conservation – national parks – is boosted remains to be seen.

The wild frontier became inverted with the closing of the frontier in America in 1890 – whether imaged or real. The inversion was by no means complete. The parks frontier became internally contested between resource conservationists and wilderness preservationists and externally threatened by forces of developers. Rather than concern about nature being a smoothly rising curve as Nash proposed,[9] it became a contested terrain where tides could turn quite rapidly. Redclift has argued that this is so for the forging of civil society and the concept of the frontier more generally, and shows how a sociological understanding of space and place requires historical sensitivity.[10]

In the developed world, craving for the natural, wild, and 'other' has never been more acute bringing with it a new form of consumption in the form of eco-tourism with its beckoning frontiers of adventure. It is the contention of this chapter that transfrontier parks in southern Africa are an opportunity to reinvent parks in the postcolonial context. In so doing, the divorce between nature and culture is being deliberately mended and culture is being brought into the foreground of the tourist gaze.

## The Frontier Thesis

'Frontier' was appropriated by the Anglophone world from the French in the fifteenth century with the meaning 'borderland', the region of a country that fronts on another country. The use of frontier to mean 'a region at the edge of a settled area' is a North American colloquialism that stimulated historian Frederick Jackson Turner's 'frontier thesis', which claimed that America's

9 R. Nash, *Wilderness and the American mind* (New Haven, 1967).

10 M. Redclift, *Frontiers: Histories of civil society and nature* (Cambridge, MA, 2006).

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distinguishing national character emanated from the frontier experience.[11] Other settler societies had different terms such as the Australian 'outback' and New Zealand's 'back country'. In South Africa, 'frontier' was also used and has similarly provided historians with a way of assembling and understanding the past.[12] Alaskan motor vehicle number plates proudly announce it to be 'The Last Frontier' and Alaskans, self-conscious of being more ruggedly American than other Americans, refer to other states as 'the Lower 48'.

In South Africa, white people from the rural Eastern Cape have a proud sense of their pioneering toughness, despite not having as romantic a frontier history as North America. It was there that the Frontier Acclimatisation Society was formed whose most notable achievement was to stock the remote waters of the province with trout imported from Europe and North America, as did its counterparts in New Zealand and other settler societies such as Australia and North America.[13]

This trout naturalisation process has not been as contested anywhere in the world as it has been in South Africa with controversy now erupting around Cape Nature's (the provincial conservation agency) World Bank funded efforts to poison certain rivers in the Eastern and Western Cape and attempt to return them to their former trout-less state. Such ecological restoration is painfully ironic since Cape Nature's headquarters at Jonkershoek are literally built on a trout hatchery. The founder of Cape Nature was Douglas Hey, a freshwater scientist specialising in trout propagation. His father Sydney was a trout pioneer in the Frontier Acclimatisation Society acknowledged for having almost single-handedly stocked the rivers of the Eastern Cape. As in New Zealand, the acclimatisation movement spawned a whole cohort of conservationists and organisations that jealously guard the land and water of the nation, albeit initially in the European game-keeping tradition of eliminating poachers, predators, and competitors of their prized fish and game. Echoing Aldo Leopold's epiphany in America, they got around to 'thinking like a mountain' and realised that in the absence of predators – New Zealand has none – the deer were denuding the countryside, so open season was declared.[14]

11 F. J. Turner, *The frontier in American history* (New York, 1996 [1920]).

12 N. Mostert, *Frontiers: the epic of South Africa's creation and the tragedy of the Xhosa people* (New York, 1992).

13 M. Draper, 'Going native: Trout and settling identity in a rainbow nation', *Historia*, 48:1 (2003), 55–94.

14 S. Flader, *Thinking like a mountain: Aldo Leopold and the evolution of an ecological attitude toward deer, wolves, and forests,* (Madison, WI, 1974); M. Draper, 'Holy trout – New Zealand and South Africa'.

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When the trout controversy first emerged in the 1980s, South African fly fishers organised themselves into a federation which had its genesis and leadership in the Eastern Cape and strong roots in the Frontier Acclimatisation Society. While they maintained that they were a conservation organisation that embraced indigenous species and habitats, which has proved to be true, the initial impulse to organise came from the state withdrawing protection for trout. At the time fly fishers reiterated a claim made by a Natal Parks Board fisheries scientist that trout had enriched the country by filling a niche in the ecosystem, which, in the cooler high altitude waters, was vacant prior to colonisation.

This and other settler society discourse provided the evidence for a 'vacant ecological niche' thesis.[15] As a totem species, trout provided, to invoke Merton's functionalism, both a manifest and latent function.[16] Manifestly they provided recreation and identification with the local landscape, thus encouraging an environmental consciousness. Fly fishers were explicit about this. Latently, they provided a 'canary in the mine' function by initially relieving settler anxieties about their own ability to acclimatise to Africa. Their success in temperate ecosystems reassured Europeans about a future in Africa in certain niches at a time when doubts about colonisation of the tropics were confirmed by Europeans perishing unless interbred with local people of colour. The war over trout in South Africa fits Commaroff's argument that ecological anxieties about indigeneity and aliens in South Africa are linked to ideas about national formation and identity, although a neglected dimension was the historical roots of conservation.[17] The trout story provides an illuminating window to these, through which much more remains to be seen.

Despite having sophisticated conservation agencies, in North America and other temperate nations, the European Brown Trout has a largely undisputed place in the ecosystem. South Africa, not being a 'country of demographic takeover', as Crosby puts it, and having a variety of ecosystems including temperate zones, has a national character that is contested, thus making for more radical revolutions in ecological thinking. These come with changes in conservation leadership from those with European, most importantly Scottish identities (to whom the brown trout is owed, along with Germany), and interestingly Douglas Hey was a hybrid of both nations.

Turner first announced his frontier thesis in a paper entitled 'The Significance of the Frontier in American History,' delivered to the American

15 M. Draper, 'Going native?'

16 R. K. Merton, *Social theory and social structure* (New York, 1957).

17 J. Comaroff and L. Comaroff, 'Naturing the nation: Aliens, apocalypse and the postcolonial state', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 27:3 (2001), 627–651.

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Historical Association in 1893 at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. His timing was perfect since the National Census had declared in 1890 that the frontier line had dissolved giving cause for alarm about the loss of the wellspring of American identity. The idea rapidly gained currency among intellectuals. Several amongst whom (including historian Theodore Roosevelt, who was to become president) thought that the closing of the frontier marked a new era in American life, necessitating United States international expansionism. Therefore some interpret the frontier thesis as the stimulus of a new surge of American imperialism. Roosevelt's interpretation notwithstanding, this was not Turner's scholarly intention. As he put it: 'Much has been written about the frontier from the point of view of border warfare and the chase, but as a field for the serious study of the economist and the historian it has been neglected.' He made 'no attempt to treat the subject exhaustively' in the paper; 'its aim is simply to call attention to the frontier as a fertile field for investigation, and to suggest some of the problems which arise in connection with it.'[18]

The current upsurge in thinking about 'eco-frontiers' is testimony to our indebtedness to Turner's groundbreaking legacy.[19] Since it was a Frenchman (Sylvan Guyot) who pioneered the eco-frontier paradigm, it is appropriate to pull a French connection from Turner. In the preface to his book (1920) in which the Frontier Thesis was published in its original form, he makes the following concluding point:

> Writing at the close of 1796, the French minister to the United States, M. Adet, reported to his government that Jefferson could not be relied on to be devoted to French interests, and he added: 'Jefferson, I say, is American, and by that name, he cannot be sincerely our friend. An American is the born enemy of all European peoples.' Obviously erroneous as are these words, there was an element of truth in them. If we would understand this element of truth, we must study the transforming influence of the American wilderness, remote from Europe, and by its resources and its free opportunities affording the conditions under which a new people, with new social and political types and ideals, could arise to play its own part in the world, and to influence Europe.[20]

18 F. Turner, *The frontier*, 2.

19 S. Guyot. 'The eco-frontier paradigm: rethinking the links between space, nature and politics', *Geopolitics*, 16:3 (2011), 675–706.

20 F. Turner, *The frontier*, 2.

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### The Ultimate Eco-Frontier of Wilderness

One of the solutions to the loss of the Wild West was the creation of national parks, which coincided, with the closing of the frontier. These came to be the natural tourist showpieces of America, which could not compete with the cultural attraction of Europe's art and architecture, but instead began to value the mountains as cathedrals.[21] This created a new inverted frontier that reversed the struggle between civilization and wilderness in designated zones. For Roosevelt's administration the need for such places to reinvigorate the rugged masculine American character was clear. As I later show, in Alaska 'the last frontier' the park ideal is contested and it is in the idea of wilderness that American frontierism faces itself as flawed.

While national parks were commercialised and became developed for tourism, within the state conservation agencies a struggle between the resource conservationists and preservationists emerged culminating in non-utilitarian policies in some parks in the early decades of the twentieth century, and eventually the Wilderness Act of 1964. This embodied the desires of the romantic transcendentalists by creating a form of protected area most strictly preserved along nature-centred, or ecocentric lines. It has become the most significant eco-frontier, which, together with the issue of population growth, forms the litmus test of environmental politics.[22]

Human population density defines both wilderness and the frontier. According to Williams, if one takes Turner's definition of frontier (two people or less per square mile), all censuses after 1890 show the sparse frontier returning to the Great Plains of America. Over a third of the Plains' counties (nine million square miles) hold fewer than six people per square mile, and nearly half of those counties hold less than two people per square mile. 'The frontier is not only surviving, it is also expanding at rates unprecedented since the Dust Bowl. If Turner thought taming the frontier helped define American values and character, what does it say about us that we have failed?' The intention of William's article is to celebrate this failure and report how a conservation vision of New Jersey academics, Frank and Deborah Popper, in the form of a 'Buffalo Commons for the Great Plains' is creeping towards reality.[23]

21 W. Beinart and P. Coates, *Environment and history: The taming of nature in the USA and South Africa* (New York, 1995).

22 R. Eckersley, *Environmentalism and political theory: Toward an ecocentric approach* (Albany, NY, 1992).

23 F. Williams, 'Info plains sense', *High Country News* (January 15, 2001). D. and F. Popper 'Small can be beautiful: Coming to terms with decline', *Planning* (July 2002), 20–23.

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The National Center for Frontier Communities, formerly known as the Frontier Education Center, in 1997–98 brought together a multi-disciplinary group of experts as a consensus group that developed a matrix for determining frontier status, based on population density, distance to the closest 'market' for services, and travel time.[24] For conservationists Mitteremeier and colleagues, wilderness is at the end of the spectrum of the lowest human impact and thus population density. They acknowledge it as being a social and historical construct with a legal definition. But in order to operationalize wilderness for scientific purposes, they go beyond protected areas to survey all the land on Earth. Initially their threshold for wilderness was defined as one person per square kilometre, but they reasoned that this was too severe and loosened it to five. Rounded off, this would be three people per square mile, which puts it close to Turner's frontier ending at two. By this measurement, coupled with an intactness threshold, 'just under half of the planet remains wild'. The word 'frontier' has a place in their vocabulary, albeit enclosed in inverted commas to indicate that it is an inverted frontier: '22% of the planet's original forest cover remains as undisturbed "frontier forests"'.[25]

The first author of the article cited is Russell Mittermeier, a scientist who has made his way to the head of Conservation International. The authors are self-conscious 'not to suggest that the wilderness areas are *terra nullius*, empty lands'. They tend to be relatively empty given that they are not resource-rich areas, so bio-diversity richness tends not to overlap with wilderness areas. However, they argue that the coincidence between areas of biological and cultural diversity, at least in Africa, means that:

> … high-biodiversity wilderness areas provide the last strongholds for many of the world's languages. Finally, there are strong aesthetic, moral, and spiritual values of wilderness, permeating all cultures and religions, and providing a firm imperative for its conservation.[26]

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'From maps to myth: The census, Turner and the idea of the frontier,' *Journal of American and Comparative Culture*, 23:1 (2000), 91–102, with R. Lang 'The Buffalo commons: Metaphor as method,' *Geographical Review*, 89:4 (1999), 491–510. 'Is there still a frontier? The 1890 U.S. census and the modern American west,' *Journal of Rural Studies*, 13:4 (1997), 377–386, with R. Lang; 'The Great Plains: From dust to dust,' *Planning* (December 1987).

24 'Frontier: A new definition. The final report of the Consensus Development Project', *Department of Health and Human Services* (Ojo Sarco, NM, April 1998).

25 R. Mittermeier, C. Mittermeier, et al.,'Wilderness and biodiversity conservation', *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the USA*, 100:18 (2003), 10311.

26 Mittermeier et al., 'Wilderness and biodiversity conservation'.

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The second author in the team of seven, his wife Cristina, is also a scientist with a powerful profile serving on many boards including that of Conservation International. A Mexican by birth, she has moved away from biology to photography, 'which allows her to tell an emotional story that links the devastating effects of biodiversity loss and human well-being. More importantly her images demonstrate that human beings can and should co-exist harmoniously with nature.' Her portfolio is dominated by a colourful parade of portraits of traditional people.[27] It has a modern digital redolence of the George Caitlin Gallery in the Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC where one can find his more than 600 portraits of Native Americans with their horses, buffalos, and habitat that he was dedicated to defending and conserving. One also comes across the following startling text box explaining a huge landscape and how the competing vision of *terra nullius* won through:

> George Catlin first proposed in 1832, the idea of a national park, one that encompassed the Great Plains with the buffalo and native tribes. Exactly forty years later, when Thomas Moran painted his *Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone* (opposite wall), Congress made the Yellowstone the first national park. In 1893, Moran rendered a romantic panorama of the same of the same scene (above), two years after the United States Federal Census announced that the frontier was closed; no more free land was available to homesteaders. Moran's landscape, however, is totally devoid of Indians – an empty wilderness and a symbol of the expansive open spaces of the West that had inspired immigrants and settlers into these vast territories.[28]

The 1890 Census established that the genocide that Caitlin feared had been realised. Instead of being territories that would conserve cultures alongside nature, national parks became nature reserves with native inhabitants forcibly removed and placed in reservations. Modern planning decided that wild human culture and nature ought to be separated and compartmentalised. In national parks the emphasis was initially anthropocentrically placed on tourist habitat, the creation of which continues to roll around the world displacing and changing local people's relationship with their natural environment. Oddly enough, the wilderness cult, which defends and celebrates the ultimate

27 http://www.cristinamittermeier.com

28 Text Box in the Smithsonian Art Gallery. Thanks to environmental writer and friend, Bill Lamprecht, for sending me to the George Catlin gallery when I visited Washington DC in 2006.

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eco-frontier and has been the subject of great debate among scholars, has also been the movement championing the rights of indigenous people to remain on their ancestral land and pursue traditional lifestyles.[29] This has led to the changing of the IUCN Category I definition of a wilderness area and carries with it the problem of 'enforced primitivism'.

In South Africa, the Natal Parks Board's provincial game reserves in Zululand were the site of the initial importation of strict wilderness protected area ideas from the United States after the Second World War. This was where the black rhino was saved from extinction. The man associated with these deeds was Ian Player who went on to found the Wilderness Leadership School, the World Wilderness Congress, and the Wild Foundation, all of which are flourishing. For Player, the most important dimension was the transformative aspect of the wilderness experience, which opens the spiritual realm and the journey to the wilderness within the self – the most testing frontier in his view. His latter life was been dedicated to this and he established a Jungian dream centre at home on his farm, which his widow Anne maintains. The transformation of the western self is for Player what eco-tourism ought ultimately to be about. His own life change came about through such an experience in the Zululand wilderness and forged his identity as an African. This took place in a reserve on an inverted frontier, but it is as well to return to Turner's frontier thesis here. He wished to turn our attention away from fixation upon how Europeans civilized the American wilderness and instead consider the reverse.

> The wilderness masters the colonist. It finds him a European in dress, industries, tools, modes of travel, and thought. It takes him from the railroad car and puts him in the birch canoe. It strips off the garments of civilization and arrays him in the hunting shirt and the moccasin. It puts him in the log cabin of the Cherokee and Iroquois and runs an Indian palisade around him.[30]

In the United States, national parks became playgrounds for such cross-dressing in the image of Daniel Boone. In South Africa, racial segregationist ideology did not encourage such activity; instead they became sites to re-enact the 'Great Trek' of the Afrikaners from British imperialism.[31] In contrast to America's modernist national park architecture, however, South African

29 M. Draper, 'Zen and the art of garden province maintenance'.

30 Turner, *The frontier thesis*, 4.

31 It is true though that Afrikaner *veldskoene* (bush shoes) and sometimes bare feet or a bare chest with African pride in a big *boep* (belly) prevail on such safaris.

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parks accommodated tourists in thatched native-style *rondawels* set out in circles like African homesteads, but with the exception of some, such as the Free State's Golden Gate National Park, which followed the American model. The wilderness model, meantime, which rejects all tourist infrastructures, also came from America and in South Africa also existed in tension with the national park model, which from the outset experimented with public-private partnerships in tourist service provision.

## Capitalism's Eco-Frontier

Generally speaking, national parks formed the first theme parks, another of which Walt Disney was to later make famous as Disneyland. The South African geographer Manu Ramuditsela has dubbed the dominance of the national park model in our geography as 'emparkation'.[32] The British sociologist Alan Bryman has termed the global spread of theme parks as 'Disneyisation'. He parallels American sociologist George Ritzer's notion of 'McDonaldisation' to draw attention to the spread of principles exemplified by Disney theme parks since the opening of Disneyland, California, in 1955. Popular culture is aware of this and created its own term 'Californication', which became the title of a pop song by the Red Hot Chilly Peppers.

Bryman sees four large-scale trends in economy and society: theming, dedifferentiation of consumption, merchandising, and emotional labour.[33]

Bryman, like Ritzer, does not claim the trends are caused by particular companies but reckons that Disney parks' success may have hastened their assimilation. Both sociologists write in the wake of Max Weber's work on the rationalisation of society, which takes place when tradition gives way to modernity. Like Weber, they try to identify the zeitgeist or 'spirit of capitalism' which always seeks new frontiers, shape-shifting as it evolves, restlessly seeking greener pastures. There exists a Korean company called 'Eco-Frontier' with a mission 'Dedicated to making a difference today for a better tomorrow, Eco-Frontier is contributing to making the world more sustainable, helping healthy growth of businesses, and raising the quality of life for the public.'[34]

32 M. Ramutsindela, *Parks and people in postcolonial societies: experiences in Southern Africa* (Dordrecht, 2004).

33 A. Bryman, 'The Disneyisation of Society', in P. Adler and P. Adler, (eds.) *Sociological Odyssey: contemporary readings in sociology* (Belmont, 2001); G. Ritzer, *The McDonaldization of society: An investigation into the changing character of contemporary social life* (Newbury Park, CA, 1993).

34 http://www.ecofrontier.com/eng/company/mission.asp

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In South Africa, Conservation Corporation Africa was formed in the late 1980s by the Varty brothers, who set about embarking on the 'high road' pointed to by Anglo-American's scenario sketcher, Clem Sunter.[35] From their family's Londolozi Private Game Reserve established in the 1930s with basic low cost accommodation, grew a company that from 1991, began realizing 'our dream of extending Africa's green frontier by developing and sustaining wildlife sanctuaries across the continent and inviting the world to share in our vision.' Once they went out of the African continent to encompass reserves and resorts in India and Latin America, the company was rebranded as '& Beyond'.

They maintain that their vision began with Londolozi, an ambitious project in the early 1990s in KwaZulu-Natal called Phinda – the Zulu word for 'return'. 'Phinda would become the most compelling realisation of the dream of creating sustainable conservation through responsible tourism.' The model targets high-end tourists with a model, which they claim 'demonstrated that, by harnessing international capital through low-impact, high-yield tourism, conservation land could prove its economic viability whilst affording rural communities a meaningful share of the benefits.'[36]

While discussing his autobiography *Full Circle* on the SABCTV eco-programme 50/50, Dave Varty recalls a fireside conversation at Londolozi in 1979 with their 'great mentor Dr. Ken Tinley who set Londolozi on it's path. Which became the model that sort of birthed an industry and was also the model that directed some of the policy for South African conservation.' The conversation was more of an unresolved debate, which polarised the resource conservationist's anthropocentric perspective maintained by Tinley and the wilderness advocate's ecocentric position held by Jim Feely who was then with the Wilderness Leadership School. Varty recalls Feely as being a 'disciple' of Player's. Although Player did leave the Natal Parks Board to found the School, it was Feely who brought wilderness books by authors such as Leopold and Tripensee from America to Player, and the Zululand reserves, which gave Player the models to follow.[37] Player observed that, since then, Feely went the scientific route and he the spiritual path.[38]

Varty remembers Feely, a close friend of Tinley's, maintaining that 'conservation will survive because of faith' and Ken Tinley said that 'conservation will survive because of economic viability'. Feely asked 'why does a church remain

35 C. Sunter, *The world and South Africa in the 1990s* (Cape Town, 1987).
36 http://www.andbeyond.com/
37 M. Draper, 'Zen and the art of garden province maintenance'.
38 Pers. Comm. Ian Player, interviewed by M. Draper, Shaya Moya Karkloof, November 1995.

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on Fifth Avenue in New York, if you were … why don't they knock it down and build a shopping mall?' Despite Feely's compelling argument, they followed Tinley's route. But looking back on their path, which has gone around the globe and back to Londolozi, Varty reflects that:

> … nearly 30 years later, it's a real industry in southern Sub-saharan Africa, economic viability. But I believe under the label of *Full Circle*, that Jim Feely was right and the future is a lot more about sort of the spiritual side or the wilderness side of this industry. And there is a thought that there is a relationship between the diminishing human spirit and the diminishing wilderness. And I would like to believe that if we grow the wilderness in the world, we will re-grow the spirit of humanity.[39]

With that conclusion, Varty reveals that the capitalist heart still has a longing for meaning that is not satisfied by a growing bottom line and that there remains an inner frontier to be tackled. He also shows that Player and Feely did not diverge as much as Player thought.

## The Ultimate Eco-Frontier: The Wilderness Within

There too is a similar reflexive questioning to be found among conservationists who did not pioneer private reserves. In an email discussion on the role of wilderness in 2006, which included Player, Feely, myself, and Tinley, and many others in global wilderness circles, Drummond Densham, who had worked with Player at iMfolozi in the 1960s and went on to manage the reserve later in his career, questioned the place of wilderness in an African context.

Densham's work elsewhere in Africa found that everywhere authorities are being forced to source revenue-streams in addition to government subsidies to fund their conservation mandates. Private tourism operations are a popular source of revenue, especially if foreign currency is earned. Yet he argued that there are instances where this partnership is not delivering on the expected revenue streams and the demand by the private operators to expand their operations to make more money for the formal management authority seems to be ever increasing. He arrived at three conclusions:

1. I am coming to the realisation that the American concept of wilderness seems to be a *universally accepted one* as I see people, community people,

39 http://www.5050.co.za/ViewerStory.aspx?storyID=10069
D. Varty, *The full circle* (Harmondsworth, 2008).

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the general public, and professionals, who do not have a clear understanding of what wilderness is, embrace it once it has been explained to them.

2. There may not be an *African wilderness context*.
3. Thirdly, I am becoming convinced that it will be in the application of the wilderness concept that the context will emerge and that it will vary from country to country or even region to region in Africa.[40]

Jim Feely in his response considered the phrase 'essentially untrammelled by man' from the 1964 US Wilderness Act. He pointed out that these environments are rare in Africa and gave examples of how man has used the land going back to time before the Stone Age Era in the Imfolozi Reserve and other parks. He argued that if the phrase 'essentially untrammelled by *industrial* man' is used to describe African wilderness areas, he can live with it and maintained that these areas should be managed to replicate the disturbances to the vegetation and animal populations carried out by pre-industrial people.[41] Player replied that he enjoyed Feely's comment and wished he said more:

> I really prefer too his description 'industrial man' because it has the right ring 'dit klink mooi'. For me there is always some sort of stench surrounding industry, black smoke stacks, and the smell of sulphurated hydrogen and other such stinks such as that coming out of paper mills.

He recalled reading that the moors of Britain were a refuge at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. 'Workers went there on their days off (not many I am sure) to get away from the stench and noise, to these poor folk the moors were certainly untrammelled and gave solace to the spirit, even though they had been used by livestock probably for millennia'. He went on to argue that although iMfolozi Game Reserve and its relatively very small wilderness area, as Feely proved, has been peopled for millennia and 'cannot be described as "untrammelled" but the wilderness area is a refuge and inspiration for many thousands of modern people from all around the world.' He reckoned that it is 'the crucible from which emerged' the global wilderness movement associated with the Wilderness

40 D. Densham <densham@sai.co.za> 'Wilderness concept in an African context', 12/8/2006, 9:35 AM.

41 When I met the late Feely on a recent Maloti-Drakensberg transfrontier tourism research trip, he showed no signs of spiritual musing. Instead he demonstrated a hard-nosed understanding of archaeological evidence and treated all creation myths – both Biblical and indigenous – with patronising humour. Jim Feely, Pers. Comm. Maclear, Eastern Cape, November 2006. PO Box 237, Maclear 5480, South Africa; email: jimfeely@xsinet.co.za. For an example of Feely's recent scholarship see 'Black rhino, white rhino: what's in a name?' *Pachyderm*, 43 (July–December 2007), 111–115.

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Leadership School, the WILD Foundation and the World Wilderness Congress. 'The iMfolozi Wilderness is regarded by many people as the Walden of Africa.'[42]

To achieve this global scale required considerable financial backing, which Player won through his own growing celebrity status since the film 'To Catch a Rhino' in which Metro-Goldwyn Meyer dramatized his role in saving the rhino in Zululand. It also was facilitated by his growing circles of influential friends such as Laurens van der Post who introduced him to Carl Jung's work and set him on the journey within.[43]

Player was an active intellectual. When speaking to participants on a pre-World Wilderness Congress course, Player always shared some sage advice and a scholarly reference to something they 'have to read'. For 2007 in Anchorage, Alaska, it was a US Forest Service social scientist's article dealing with how the depth psychology of C.G. Jung provides a set of concepts for exploring the spiritual aspect of nature and the implications of this viewpoint for natural resource management and research.[44] For 2001, in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, it was David Tacey's *Edge of the Sacred: transformation in Australia*, which is an assessment of Australia's spiritual future and settler reconciliation with Australia's indigenous peoples. The Central Australia is argued to be especially 'heavy', and invokes a sensibility unknown to many Australians who perch on the edge of the huge continent in an attempt to avoid the spiritual potency of the Australian landscape.[45]

Player concluded his email by explaining why the *Erythrina Caffra* leaf is the logo of all the organisations [Wilderness NGOs founded by him]. It was Grey Owl who said 'You are tired with years of civilisation, I come and offer you what a single green leaf.' Grey Owl (originally Archie Belany) was the archetypal transfrontiersman and hunter turned conservationist who called the frontier between wilderness and civilization the 'land of shadows'.[46]

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42 **From:** icplayer
**To:** Drummond Densham
**Sent:** Friday, December 01, 2006 8:18 AM
**Subject:** Fw: Re Wilderness in an African Context.

43 M. Draper, 'Zen and the art of garden province maintenance'.

44 H. Schroeder, 'The spiritual aspect of nature: A perspective from depth psychology'). In *proceedings of Northeastern Recreation Research Symposium*, April 7–9, 1991 (Saratoga Springs, NY, 1992), 91–96.

45 D. Tacey, *Edge of the sacred: Transformation in Australia* (North Blackburn, Victoria, 1995).

46 For some of his writing see Grey Owl, *The men of the last frontier* (London, 1931); *Pilgrims of the wild*, (Toronto, 1934). For biography see L. Dickson, *Wilderness man: The amazing true story of Grey Owl*, (Toronto, 1999); D. B. Smith *From the land of the shadows: The making of Grey Owl*, (Saskatoon, 1990). See also Sir Richard Attenborough's 1999 movie *Grey Owl*, starring Pierce Brosnan.

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### Transfrontiersmen in the Land of Shadows

Transfrontiersmen point us to a different dimension than the geographical frontier explored above. It also transcends that offered by Howard Lamar and Leonard Thompson in their comparative study of the frontier in North America and South Africa. They define the frontier as a zone of interaction between previously distinct peoples. James Gump, who extended their definition in comparing the Zulu and Sioux, summarises this as a process whereby relations between people begin, develop, and crystallize. The frontier 'opens' when contact is made and 'closes' when one of the parties dominates the other.[47] This is the conventional view of histories of conquest in black and white. When the idea of cultural hybridities (as opposed to collaborators) is introduced, Grey Owl's shifting idea of shadows seems more appropriate. Beinart has termed this the 'vernacular'.[48] Furthermore, the history of Empire has been seen as a struggle for ascendancy between people. With the recent turn to the agency of nature in the story in the emerging field of environmental history, things get more complicated and more interesting. As Beinart and Hughes note, the frontier in southern Africa was a frontier of heat rather than the cold of North America.[49] In such an environment, Europeans might have had the technological means to assert themselves over indigenous people, but they were by no means confident that they could acclimatise. This is why I maintain that the Frontier Acclimatisation Society's efforts with cold water-dependent trout might seem marginal but are vital to a proper grasp. The trout as a canary in the mine of colonisation assured long-term success in settlement and sustainable commodity frontiers. Interestingly enough, protective legislation for trout in South Africa and New Zealand set limits to its commoditization.

As they acclimatized and naturalized, Europeans set about the simultaneous processes of ensuring their long-term sustainability through conservation, which is linked to process of colonial identity formation. While the history of national parks reflects the mainstream political iconography, the wilderness current carries countercultural elements that wash up in eddies for those fishing for something unusual.[50] For historian Roderick Nash, the national park

47 H. Lamar and L. Thompson *The frontier in history: North America and southern Africa* (New Haven, 1981). J. Gump *The dust rose like smoke: The subjugation of the Zulu and the Sioux* (Lincoln, NE, 1996).

48 W. Beinart, *The Rise of Conservation in South Africa: Settlers, livestock, and the environment 1770–1950* (Oxford, 2008).

49 W. Beinart and L. Hughes. *Environment and empire* (Oxford, 2007), 58.

50 J. Carruthers, *The Kruger National Park*; M. Draper, 'Zen and the art of garden province maintenance'.

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is America's greatest cultural export.[51] Parks generally were an American idea that European cities absorbed as a norm into their town planning. National parks in European countryside were not in contrast created as unpeopled landscapes. Wilderness preservation was not a possibility since there simply was nowhere unmodified by civilization. Nevertheless, the rewilding of Europe with wilderness as an ultimate goal is on the agenda of international meetings.[52] In Pondoland the impetus of mining and paving suggests that the unwilding of the Wild Coast is probably inevitable. The push behind mining proposals for important conservation sites from Mtentu in the Eastern Cape to Wakkerstroom in Mpumalanga shows that the elite has put the alternative of ecotourism under pressure. This was prefigured at St. Lucia during the transition from apartheid when Ian Player threatened to prostrate himself in the path of the bulldozers in an act of protest similar to green 'monkey wrenching' made famous by Edward Abbey.

For Player, ecotourism is more than an ecologically and economically sustainable adventure. It ought to be about a life-changing experience, which is oft reported from wilderness trail hikers in the Wilderness Leadership School publications. In this rite of passage, the guide plays a vital role and in the Zululand wilderness, Magqubu Ntombela, the late Zulu game guard who was Player's inspiration and mentor, was the original figure. I have dealt with this theme elsewhere, and it takes us into the realm of what has become known as 'Dark Tourism', with the 'Darkest Continent' providing the ultimate destination. In that exploration Player's near death experience with a lethal snake was paralleled with other narratives such as that of Laurens van der Post with a tiger in Indonesia during the Second World War and Linda Tucker with lions in South Africa recently. All were saved by indigenous spiritual connection with animals and were reborn.[53]

Van der Post introduced Player to the work of Carl Jung. Jung explains this as *metanoia* – a process of reforming the psyche as a form of self-healing, a proposed explanation for the phenomenon of psychotic breakdown. As such, it is viewed as a potentially productive process. In so doing, Jung was depathologizing psychosis. Through this path of theory and practice, Jung has

51 R. Nash *Wilderness*.

52 'Wilderness and Large Natural Habitat Areas in Europe', EU Presidency and European Commission Conference, (27–28 May 2009), Prague, http://www.wildeurope.org/attachments/028_Conference_Agenda_draft.pdf

53 M. Draper, 'African Wilderness® Pty Ltd: An authentic encounter with the Big Five, death and the meaning of life', in C. Ryan, S. Page, and M. Aitken (eds.) *Taking tourism to the limits: Issues, concepts and managerial perspectives*, (Amsterdam, 2005), 113–128.

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taken Van der Post, Player, and conservation into medical discourse about vitality:

> And conservation to van der Post meant not merely preserving what is already behind us, but preparing the world for tomorrows. He called this understanding of conservation a metamorphosis, after the Greek meaning of *metanoia* (awareness that transforms). In other words, conservation is creation, not merely preservation.[54]

The wilderness stream of thought has been identified with extreme preservationist ecocentricism, but if we take the above argument as seriously as the medical fraternity, then we have at least more cause for thought about the ultimate eco-frontier, the journey to the wilderness within. Such a journey can begin with anxieties about belonging and indigeneity. For Player, the rebirth stripped him of his white *baaskap* (racist paternalism) that he'd brought from the mines of Johannesburg to the Zululand Wilderness and left him in no doubt that he was an African in the cradle of mankind. It is a story of mythical autochthony like many other endeavours of lineage and pedigree fabrication. While many scholars have tried to show that the Greeks came out of Africa, they themselves did not seem to care.

> No surviving Greek author, not even Herodotus, attempts to provide anything like a systematic historical account. Presumably the question did not interest them: they seem not even to have imagined that as a population they were anything but indigenous. The Athenians believed that they were autochthonous, that is, sprung from the ground (chthon) itself.[55]

It seems that the world prefers myths to accounts faithful to the evidence and this could explain why Van der Post's legacy seems to have survived the overwhelming evidence of his Hemingway-like 'mythomania' that Jones uncovered in his biography. It also might explain why Feely – who Player refers to as 'the brain' – died in relative obscurity, unlike the charismatic Player who had a huge public memorial dripping with spirituality. Feely viewed all creation myths as being like 'Bible stories', which 'you can believe if you like'.[56]

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54 S. Taylor, 'Editorial', *Vitality,* Department of Health and Kinesiology, 2:3 (2007).

55 M. Lefkowitz and G. MacLean Rogers (eds.), *Black Athena revisited* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1996), 9. See also M. Lefkowitz, *Not out of Africa: How Afrocentrism became an excuse to teach myth as history*, (New York, 1996).

56 Pers. Comm. Jim Feely at his home near Maclear in the Eastern Cape. I visited Feely while researching fly-fishing eco-tourism in the Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier Park with a

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### On the Cutting Edge: Transfrontier Eco-Tourism

Encompassing the wilderness wall of the Drakensberg Mountains that defined Natal as the 'Garden Province', the Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier Park has all of the features of a frontier. Indeed, farms on the South African side bordering Lesotho are termed 'frontier farms', since farmers feel besieged. The South African Police Services' Stock Theft Unit is in a continual state of war against incursions from Lesotho. Nevertheless, politically there is peace in the region and the peace parks have been hailed by the political elite as 'tangible evidence of the African Renaissance', which will deliver economic sustainability through conservation and eco-tourism. The regional iconography of transfrontier parks resolves issues of identity for the elite, which I have explored with colleagues with whom I collaborated in this volume. The reception on the ground by people living in and around the park has not always been welcoming since conservation has a legacy of alienating people from their land and resources.[57] Furthermore, tourists have tended to stay on the well-trodden route between national parks and game reserves, with the wealthy taking the expensive packages to the private lodges.

There was a plan to put transfrontier tourism on the map using the mediagenic modern day Adventurer and Explorer Kingsley Holgate prior to the Football World Cup in South Africa. He is a storyteller, showman, and philanthropic white Zulu transfrontiersman extraordinaire, who worked with the regional organisation 'Boundless Southern Africa' to open new routes and promote a new brand of transfrontier tourism that shares eco-tourism benefits with communities. He launched his trip in Durban and spent his first night at Giant's Castle where he visited rock art in San/Bushman caves (the Bushmen have long gone) and community outreach initiatives including football projects. It was a condition when South Africa was granted the Football World Cup for 2010 that the flow of tourism would be spread around with the neighbours,

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panel I put together in 2005 for the eco-tourism specialist of the project, including Player's contemporary Bill Bainbridge who headed the former Forestry Department when it controlled the Drakensberg. The proof of that are the pictures of me fishing in the resulting book produced by the Maloti-Drakensberg Project *The Maloti-Drakensberg Experience*, (Jive Media, The Maloti-Drakensberg Project, 2007), 59, 63. Paul Dutton wanted to write Feely up for an honourary doctorate but was too late and he passed away in 2015. I wrote Bill Bainbridge up for one some years back. Bainbridge's double-edged tribute to Feely: http://saveourwilderness.org/2015/10/30/jim-feely-and-imfolozi/

57 M. Draper, M, Spierenburg, and H. Wels, 'African dreams of cohesion: Elite pacting and community development in Transfrontier Conservation Areas in southern Africa', *Organisation and Change*, 10:4 (2004), 341–353.

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so this initiative was a sincere attempt to do so. The purpose of the expedition was to raise awareness about Boundless Southern Africa and TFCA s as international tourist destinations, including:

– Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area
– Limpopo-Shashe Transfrontier Park
– Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park
– Lubombo Transfrontier Conservation Area
– Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Conservation Area.

At the Boundless Southern Africa exhibition in Durban on the 8th of May, Holgate said that, while the expedition is about linking communities, cultures, and nature, he would promote the 2010 World Cup to the people he would meet. He claimed to distribute 100 mobile education libraries to schools and use their environmental vehicle to educate children in schools and communities along the journey. Apart from distributing lap desks, 1000 Life Straws (water purifiers), mosquito nets, and malaria education pamphlets, Holgate and his team would upgrade community soccer fields. 'We are very excited about the soccer pitches. We really want to promote the sport', he said.[58] The expedition initiated a Boundless Southern African Soccer Challenge to be played during the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Ranger Training candidates were identified as bursary winners and there was an introduction of community conservation programmes under the auspices of African Nature Trails.

This was done in the new entrepreneurial spirit of the African Renaissance. Whilst globalisation and neo-liberalism are blamed for all ills, it can be argued that the new realpolitik of African capitalism is not altogether ruthless and mean-spirited but also bold, adventurous, warm-hearted, and generous. I have made this argument with regard to Kingsley Holgate and his role as co-founder of Shakaland, the Zulu Disneyland of cultural tourism, which I helped establish and manage as his employee.[59] He was pictured in the newspaper with his arm around Manhlembenhlembe, a Zulu Shakaland member in colourful traditional attire. On one of his adventures he assisted the Maasai with a similar venture.

While Holgate is not in the same era as the transfrontiersmen of nineteenth-century settlers in Natal, those hardy adventurers who, escaping the constraints of colonial society, crossed over the Thukela River to seek their fortunes in the Zulu kingdom, being traders in labour, guns, and hunted wildlife

58 *Weekend Witness* (9 May 2009).

59 B. Carton and M. Draper, 'Bulls in the boardroom: The Zulu warrior ethic and the spirit of South African capitalism', in B. Carton, J. Laband, and J. Sithole (eds), *Zulu Identities: Being Zulu, past and present* (Pietermaritzburg and New York, 2008), 591–605. Benedict Carton

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products, they were extractive opportunists bent on accumulation above all else. But they also could speak for the colonised and as John Laband put it, occupied a paradoxical position:

> One such was Henry William Longcast. Like Dunn, he hobnobbed once with the great of his world, with Zulu kings and princes, British high commissioners and generals, and even with the Empress of France. Yet, unlike Dunn, that agile political survivor … he was crushed in the end by the closing of the frontier.[60]

It must be mentioned here that the agile survivor Holgate careered between being a trader, filmmaker, marketer, and cultural tourism operator, which also included being a safari operator. He started the company Wilderness Safaris that now holds many of the community tourism concessions such as that of the well-known Makuleke community, which won a land claim for a part of Kruger National Park. This company claims it practices 'responsible ecotourism and conservation':

> The reason we exist is to protect pristine wilderness areas and the flora and fauna – or biodiversity – that they support. We believe that in protecting these areas, and including the local communities in this process, we will make a difference to Africa and ultimately the world. In short, we believe that the world's wilderness areas will save humankind.[61]

It is worth reflecting on the role of the contemporary transfrontiersman in satisfying what could be described as a postmodern desire to make contact with and conserve the nature and cultures that modernity ran roughshod over. Shakaland was developed from a film set of the TV series *Shaka Zulu* into a 'cross-cultural centre', which was an important site in helping usher white capital from apartheid to non-racial democracy with Holgate and his team of interlocutors as guides (I have to confess I was on the team and helped design the experience). Now it has grown into Disney-like proportions and nature is being brought more directly into the crossing equation. I hosted a meeting with white lion conservationist Chris McBride at Shakaland in 1987, who was going to try and bring more nature into

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and I have extended this study of white Zulu transfrontiersmen to include eco-tourism themes in work yet to be published.

60 J. Laband, 'Longcast in Zululand: The paradoxical life of a transfrontiersman, 1850–1900', *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, XV (1994/1995), 17–39.

61 http://www.wilderness-safaris.com/

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the experience while he worked for Buthelezi and Steele's KwaZulu Bureau of Natural Resources.

Holgate brought TV to rural Zululand with the Rural Television Network sponsored by advertisers, so he went to rural southern Africa to demarginalise the local people and bring them into the action when the World Cup focused on Southern Africa in 2010. He wanted others to follow and to spend time and money away from the centres and the usual beaten track. The trouble is that conservation can marginalise people by intervening between them and their resources, and experts impose models of sustainability. This presents a paradox and a process of inclusion and exclusion.[62] Another lies with the usual dilemmas for tourism, which comes with social change and risks, as does modernity more broadly.

While low-density high-level tourism can have a lower social impact per dollar, it embodies the paradox of packaging and commodification, which makes natures and cultures products on display to the well-heeled. Here the gulf between the richest and poorest is most obvious, but the neo-liberal idea is that a trickle-down of employment will take place. The idea of indigenous people baring their chests and displaying their cultures is repugnant to some who feel it smacks of paternalism and similarly see the packaging of nature for the wealthy as 'ecocolonialism'.[63]

The Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier Project funded by the World Bank, encountered another paradox in its ecotourism work. Wealthy tourists appreciate trout, considering themselves environmentally friendly, and practice catch and release. While the conservation authorities were turning their back on trout, Leonore Beukes, the Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier Project ecotourism specialist, suggested that the hatchery at Kamberg be outsourced to the community, but it was demolished instead. She became the marketing manager of Boundless Southern Africa.

The Lesotho authorities have no anxieties about trout, which were introduced by Europeans after the Second World War. They consider them a valuable tourist attraction to their land, which lacks the imprint of 'imparkation' – apart from the tiny Sihlabathebe National Park, a minuscule fraction of the Drakensberg Park land. The herders in the mountains of Lesotho fish for and eat the trout. A South African guide outfitters company called Tourette have a base camp, which drives local community development and river conservation in Lesotho.

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62 Draper, Spierenberg, and Wels, 'African dreams of cohesion'.

63 P. A. Cox, 'A tale of two villages: Culture, conservation and ecocolonialism in Samoa', in C. Zerner (ed.), *People, plants and justice: The politics of nature conservation* (New York, 2000), 330–334.

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An article about trout fishing in Lesotho calls it the Last Frontier for fly fishermen. The magazine *FlyFishing* calls itself 'Africa's original' and has its roots in the Federation of Flyfisherman of Southern Africa, which, although launched in the 1980s when protection for trout was withdrawn in the Cape, has a lineage traceable to the Frontier Acclimatisation Society and by now proven track record in fresh water conservation. A local guide outfitting company that facilitates trips to Lesotho or elsewhere is called Frontier Flyfishing. A clothing company with a prominent brand in local shopping malls is called Senqu River Wear, after the Senqu River in the Maluti Mountains.

In the Maluti Mountians, conservation interventions to manage the commons with western planning do not have any lasting impact on land use patterns. Short of forced removals, Sotho people are unlikely to allow wildlife to replace their cattle, sheep, and goats. High altitude herders in the mountain see themselves living in a wilderness and, given the rugged terrain and the hardy desperation of it inhabitants, it is an area which is largely lawless with stock theft and marijuana smuggling an ongoing problem that authorities cannot control. Should the area be cleared of human habitation, then a no-man's land of a park would simplify law enforcement. The Lesotho government has gladly accepted World Bank donor funding for the conservation of the Maloti-Drakensberg, but has not hurried to legally designate their mountains as parkland.

### The Nature/Culture Cocktail

Transfrontier areas in southern Africa also make for a different context. Their plans include human settlement and are planned with areas zoned from high to low human impact. It was the lack of development in the Drakensberg, which was secured by Wilderness legislation passed under the Forest Act in the 1970s, that many feel won KwaZulu-Natal's 242,813 ha uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park its UNESCO World Heritage Status in 2000. But this was not a wilderness without human footprint. The status was awarded based on several criteria, half of which are cultural and half natural.

> The park satisfied criteria (i), (iii), (vii), (x) of the operational guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.[64]

64 http://whc.unesco.org/en/criteria/
http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/985

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I facilitated a meeting with retired veteran conservationists Bill Bainbridge, Drummond Densham of the NGO Wilderness Action Group, and a postgrad student who followed my old employer Holgate from Durban to Giant's Castle in the Drakensberg where he began his epic journey. The morning after a good arrival party, he made a trek to a cave with a display of San culture and preserved rock art, and made an off-the-cuff promise of free accommodation and training to the local Zulu dancing troupe of the amaHlubi at Shakaland, where they could learn how to improve their choreography and interpret their performances for tourist audiences. He then went out of the park to watch a soccer match between the local high school and the fire-fighting team. He handed out prizes to both teams and a floating trophy for the winner. He then danced with both teams.

Holgate's adventurous spirit of transfrontier engagement together with the outreach efforts by the guide-outfitter companies sheds quite a different light on transfrontier conservation than our earlier critical take.[65] A reviewer said it was too cynical, so this chapter aims to be more hopeful and trusting of the spirit in which people engage in in transfrontier projects. Kingsley Holgate's Arab Dhow, from which he distributed mosquito nets along the Mosquito Coast, is on the roof of Mozambique Restaurant in Ballito near King Shaka airport. Every meal eaten on the Spirit of Adventure contributes funds for more nets to combat malaria. Moreover I hope to have also given an alternative perspective to Bram Büscher's anti-neoliberal perspective, which was inspired by James Ferguson's *Anti-Politics Machine*, which also focused on the little landlocked country of Lesotho.[66] Ferguson has reconsidered his 'anti' perspective and concludes his reflection on the matter urging us to 'go beyond seeing in "neoliberalism" an evil essence or an automatic unity' and that 'some rather useful little mechanisms may be nearer to hand than we thought'.[67] Clearly capitalism is a double-edged sword, which can cut both ways, but the developmental alternatives have proven to be blunt instruments leading to what Sunter termed the low road. Robert Chambers sketches two opposing approaches to rural development: either academic – taking a critical, pessimistic view, or practitioner – actively engaged and optimistic.[68] Both have their place but my

65 M. Draper, M. Spierenberg, and H. Wels, 'African dreams of cohesion'.

66 J. Ferguson, *The anti-politics machine: 'Development,' depoliticization and bureaucratic power in Lesotho* (Cambridge, 1990); B. Büscher, *Transforming the frontier: Peace Parks and the politics of neoliberal conservation in southern Africa* (Durham, NC, 2013).

67 J. Ferguson, 'The uses of neoliberalism', *Antipode*, 41:1 (2009), 183.

68 R. Chambers, *Challenging the professions: Frontiers for rural development*, (London, 1993); R. Chambers, *Whose reality counts: Putting the first last*, (London, 1993); R.Chambers, *Revolutions in development* Inquiry, (London, 2007).

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engagement with transfrontiersmen has made me swing to the latter. In my conversations with them, both Holgate and Player lament their beloved Africa's capacity for self-sabotage but continue to strive for 'good change', which is how Chambers defines development. Chambers believes that people have the capacity for greed and philanthropy, which has been explored by my colleagues.[69]

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69 M. Ramutsindela, M. Spierenburg, and H. Wels, *Sponsoring nature: Environmental philanthropy for conservation* (London, 2011).

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CHAPTER 5

# Resurrection Conservation: The Return of the Extinct?

*Sandra Swart*

> Every creature is better alive than dead, men and moose and pine trees, and he who understands it aright will rather pre serve its life than destroy it.
>
> HENRY DAVID THOREAU

•••

> Sometimes dead is better.
>
> STEPHEN KING, *Pet sematary*

⁘

The quagga was one of the very first animals afforded formal protection by the colonial state. Alas, by then it had already been extinct for three years.[1] The Cape Colony (in act no. 36 of 1886, 'Act for the Better Preservation of Game') prohibited their being hunted without special permission from the Governor.[2] It was hardly necessary. The quagga had vanished from the wild for a decade

1 This chapter has brought older research back from the dead by back-breeding existing essays, hybridizing with younger research. So some paragraphs are drawn directly from S. Swart, 'Zombie Zoology: The quagga and the history of reanimating animals', in S. Nance (ed.), *The Historical Animal* (Syracuse, 2015) and Sandra Swart, 'Frankenzebra: Dangerous knowledge and the narrative construction of monsters', *Journal of Literary Studies*, 30:4 (2015).

2 The Act gave special protection to the quagga and to hippo, buffalo, and others – but the closest hippo was over 500 km away, and the few remaining buffalo in the area had learned to become elusive denizens of deep bush. See E. Couzens, 'The influence of English poaching laws on South African poaching laws' (MA thesis (Environmental Law), Universities of Natal and Nottingham, 2001), 51. See also, for how slow the state was to act on endangered wildlife, M. S. Steyn, 'Environmentalism in South Africa, 1972–1992: an historical perspective' (unpublished MA thesis, University of the Orange Free State, 1998).

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and from zoos for three years before the authorities accepted its extinction. In fact, the first 'conservation NGO'[3] was established nine days after the last known quagga died on 12 August 1883. On an unseasonably cold damp morning, the keepers did their rounds at Amsterdam's Natura Artis Magistra ('Nature is the teacher of the arts'), the oldest zoo in the Netherlands. They found the old mare lying dead on the cold stone floor of her cage.[4] She had become a popular exhibit since her arrival in 1867,[5] a refugee from a sustained campaign of slaughter against the quagga. The quagga disappeared from its once-extensive range by the mid-nineteenth century. The last relict population in the Orange Free State was wiped out in the 1870s and the last quaggas died out in the wild in 1878.[6]

Unlike the lonely old mare, her fellow striped horses had wandered the grasslands of the southern parts of Africa – the Karoo and the southern Free State – in huge herds. The name 'quagga' (/Xam! or San-Bushman / *Habba*; Khoikhoi *quácha;* isiXhosa *iqwara;* Afrikaans *kwagga*) was perhaps onomatopoeic – capturing their bark or 'shrill, barking neigh, of which its name forms a correct imitation'.[7] William Cornwallis Harris (1807–1848) who embarked on an extended hunting trip across the Orange River found their numbers overwhelming, comparing the din of their hooves 'to nothing but to the din of a tremendous charge of cavalry, or to the rushing of a mighty tempest. I could not estimate the accumulated numbers at less than 15,000 [of quagga and gnu]; a great extent of country being actually chequered black and white with their congregated masses.'[8] At mid-century they still seemed to exist as 'interminable herds … Moving slowly across the profile of the ocean-like horizon, uttering a, long files of Quaggas continually remind the early traveller of a rival caravan on its march … Bands of many hundreds are thus frequently seen during their migration from the dreary and desolate plains'.[9] But quaggas were increasingly hunted for their hides and

3 The Natal Game Protection Association was set up by sportsmen determined to prosecute those transgressing game laws and to negotiate with the state to further extend protection.

4 'Too few reserves result in too little habitat', *Fiat Lux* (3 March 1984).

5 A. C. Van Bruggen, 'Illustrated notes on some extinct South African ungulates', *South African Journal of Science*, 55 (1959).

6 B. J. Weddell, *Conserving living natural resources* (Cambridge UK, 2002), 46; R. M. Nowak, *Walker's mammals of the world* (Baltimore, 1999), 1024–1025.

7 W. C. Harris, 'Sporting in Southern Africa', *Quarterly Review*, CXXVII, June (New York, 1839), 113.

8 Harris, 'Sporting in southern Africa', 113. See also Charles Williams, *Narratives and adventures of travellers in Africa* (London, 1859).

9 In *Guide to the gardens of the Zoological Society of London,* (London, 1867), 27.

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FIGURE 5.1 A quagga stallion by Samuel Daniell (1775–1811)
IMAGE IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

sometimes even their flesh ('possessed a taste which seemed to be between beef and mutton').[10] They lost the battle over grazing with settler livestock. Their mobility made some think they were just momentarily elsewhere, roving other routes, along their seasonal paths. Travellers, hunters and farmers had a nebulous notion that the quagga numbers were waning. Yet their once immense numbers, intensified by their penchant for living in large aggregated herds, rendered their extinction unimaginable. Besides, 'quagga' was carelessly and promiscuously used – by several human groups – to mean *any* striped horse. No one worried when the specimens on display in European zoos died off – in 1872 in London and 1875 in Berlin and finally the old mare in Amsterdam in 1883. No one grasped that it meant annihilation, until the zoos' plaintive requests for a replacement could not be met by South African suppliers. Then they realized it was complete extermination. As Henry Anderson Bryden lamented in 1899:

> As the quagga may now be fairly considered as absolutely extinct as the dodo – for alas! although easy enough to destroy, no human skill can ever

10 Explorer William John Burchell quoted in 'The Quagga', *The Saturday Magazine*, 531, 10 October 1840, (London: John W. Parker), 143.

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> restore it to its natural haunts … From the point of view of the naturalist, the final disappearance of the true quagga is a fact full of melancholy interest. That an animal so beautiful, so capable of domestication and of use, and to be found not long since in so great abundance, should have been allowed to be swept from the face of the earth, is surely a disgrace to our latter-day civilisation. No human effort can now recall this magnificent form – it is gone forever, after an existence of untold thousands of years upon its spacious plains.[11]

Yet the quagga has returned from the dead. Or at least *something* has. His name is Kevin.

Kevin, his Facebook profile boldly declares, 'works' as an 'assistant lecturer', an expert in 'Equine studies' at Elsenburg College.[12] His office is a field amidst the vineyards outside the university town of Stellenbosch and I suspect that his consulting hours are flexible. Almost a decade ago, he was abandoned by his mother and adopted by the equestrian centre as a waif. His human foster-mother, Kate Hurst, received a cryptic (or cryptid?) request on her answering machine enquiring if she could adopt a quagga. It was akin to being asked to find a bird cage for a dodo or accommodate a coelacanth in one's garden pond. She admits to simply disregarding the message as a student hoax: 'I thought it was a wind up … even I knew that the quagga is extinct.'[13] But she followed up and Kevin, the little foal, was drawn into a horsey herd of humans: he was fed electrolytes, glucose, and probiotics through a syringe until he recuperated sufficiently to deploy his sucking reflex and moved on to goat's milk. He became, in Latour's metaphor, a 'beloved monster'.[14] The staff and students (his fans were dubbed 'The Quagets') spoiled him with birthday parties and lavished attention on him. His Facebook page status updates reports on his happy if quiet life at the college. But his 'relationship' with other zebras is frankly very 'complicated'. His 'status' is a question of bitter academic debate.

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11 For contemporary late nineteenth century awareness of the quaggas nearing extinction, see H. A. Bryden, *Kloof and Karroo: Sport, legend and natural history in Cape Colony, with a notice of the game birds, and of the present distribution of antelopes and larger game*, (Longmans, Green and Company, 1889). 396, 401–402.

12 Technically 'Cape Institute for Agricultural Training: Elsenburg'.

13 Interview, K. Hurst, Elsenburg, Stellenbosch, 14 November 2013.

14 For an extended discussion, see B. Latour, 'Love your monsters', in M. Shellenberger and T. Nordhaus (eds.), *Love your monsters – Postenvironmentalism and the anthropocene,* (Oakland CA, 2011), 17–25.

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FIGURE 5.2 Touching History
PHOTO BY AUTHOR

## The Final Frontier?

A (human) generation ago, in 1986, a German-born South African taxidermist, dreamed up a plan to revivify the long-vanished quagga and then to restore it to the thing we imagine as the 'wild'. This chapter tells the history of this quixotic Quagga Project, embedding it in a context of the changing aspirations behind restoration. It discusses other past attempts to restore vanished animals and contrasts this discourse with contemporaneous de-extinction projects. In one sense this is a new level of trans-frontier conservation, where the frontiers are between the living and the dead. The chapter wishes to illustrate that this is a part of the broader conservation movement that really requires input from the humanities, especially environmental historians.

There is a long history of collegial confusion and less collegial contestation in classifying zebras. This is not made easier by the great variation in striping between closely related individuals: there are even albino zebras seen in the forests around Mount Kenya. Early travellers blithely referred to 'wild horses' or

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'wild asses' in the hinterland. At times, everything with stripes was a 'quagga'. In fact, there were at least three types: the quagga south of the Orange; the plains zebra (once called Burchell's zebra) in the north and east, and mountain zebra in the southwestern Cape. The mountain zebra's range probably overlapped with that of the quagga in the south. Now they are all allopatric so crossbreeding is improbable but historically this was not the case (for example, the cape mountain zebra was separated from the Hartmann's Zebra, as a result of extirpation by hunters in the northern Cape). It is frequently confidently announced that the quagga or plains zebra and the mountain zebras could never interbreed – but, in fact, sub-species or even species can hybridize. Indeed, the official Status Report of 2015 suggests DNA testing and hybrid individuals should be euthanized. In 2004, the taxonomy of the zebras was revisited and it was determined that the Cape Mountain Zebra and Hartmann's mountain zebra are two distinct and separate species.[15] Yet a genetic study by Moodley and Harley the very next year concluded that the two should be simply sub-species of the single species: 'Mountain zebra' (*Equus zebra*). To add to the confusion, the plain's zebra (*Equus quagga*) was once classified as *Equus burchellii* – and known as the 'common zebra', 'Burchell's zebra', or even 'the quagga'. Pieter Boddaert had described the quagga in 1785 and gave them the binomial *Equus quagga.* As the quagga had been classified first and provided with a binomial name before the plain's zebra received their name in 1824, it was resurrected and restored – in a sense – by becoming the binomial for all plain's zebras. So extinct quaggas are now *Equus quagga quagga*. However, none of this was decided by the early 1980s: scientists were still unsure whether the quagga was a fourth zebra species, a version of the Plains zebra, or, some outliers still staunchly maintained, less closely related to the zebra and more closely related to the true horse.[16] The public was utterly uninterested in the minutiae and far behind on the shifting frontiers of taxonomy. They only knew one thing – the quagga was dead.

What was a quagga? A quagga was essentially a zebra coping with austerity measures. Mother Nature was stingy with the stripes. As an otherwise sober scientist noted in 1985, the quagga looked like the result of a 'mix-up in a costume shop, [where] a couple were issued the front half of a zebra suit and the back half of a horse'.[17] The few traveller's paintings and photos (all of the same beast)

15 C. P. Groves and C. H. Bell. 'New investigations on the taxonomy of the zebras genus Equus, subgenus Hippotigris', *Mammalian Biology,* 69:3 (2004),182–196.

16 J. A. Miller, 'Telling a quagga by its stripes', *Science News*, 128, 70; D. K. Bennett, 'Stripes Do not a zebra make, Part I: A cladistic analysis of Equus', *Systematic Zoology*, 29 (1980), 272–287

17 Miller, 'Telling a quagga by its stripes', 70.

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FIGURE 5.3 The little foal that started it all
PHOTO BY AUTHOR

show an equid more ass than horse-like, with an upright mane, striped on its forequarters, but becoming a stripeless light brown along its rear and underbelly, with long white socks. Even so, the quagga and plains zebras appeared awfully alike. In fact, a German zookeeper, Lutz Heck (1892–1983), proposed in his 1955 book *Grosswild im Etoschaland,* that ordinary plains zebra, discerningly selected for reduced striping, could be bred (over time) to create a creature at least visually identical to the long-dead quagga.[18] He knew it was practicable or at least possible because, during the war, when he was breeding from an unusually faintly striped plains zebras, a foal was born in 1940 that had no stripes on its rump.

The idea of restoration inspired the German-born Reinhold Rau (7 February 1932, Frankfurt – 11 February 2006, Cape Town), who had a job as a taxidermist at the South African Museum (now Iziko) in Cape Town. He had been trained to prepare fossils at Frankfurt's Senckenberg Natural History Museum

18 L. Heck, *Grosswild im Etoschaland: Erlebnisse mit Tieren in Südwestafrika* (Ullstein, 1955), 68–69. See also L. Heck, *Animal safari: Big game in South West Africa* (Methuen, 1956). See Lutz Heck, *Animals, my adventure, experiences in the wilderness and the zoo*; (Methuen, 1954) or the original L. Heck, *Tiere – Mein Abenteuer. Erlebnisse in Wildnis und Zoo* (Ulstein, 1952).

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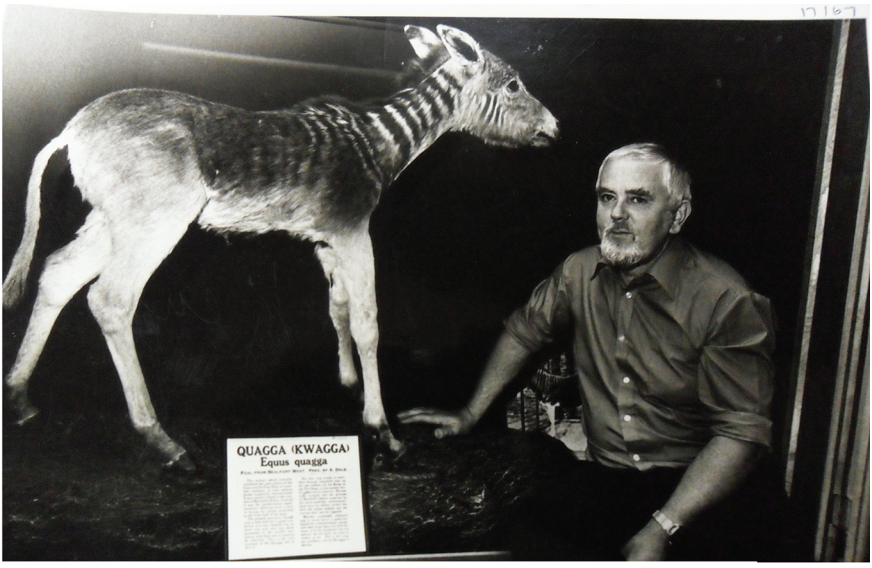



FIGURE 5.4 Rau and the foal, 1980
SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL ARCHIVES REPOSITORY, (SAB), 17167, 'MNR. REINHOLD RAU, HOOF VAN DIE DIERE OPSTOP AFDELING VAN DIE SUID-AFRIKAANSE MUSEUM IN KAAPSTAD BY DIE ENIGSTE OPGESTOPTE KWAGGA IN AFRIKA'. BURO VIR INLIGTING

and joined the South African Museum in 1951. In 1969, he tried to refurbish the museum's quagga foal, a mere week old when killed for display purposes. The quagga caught his imagination. So, two years later, he embarked on a fact-finding mission in various European museums to assess the few remaining quagga specimens. He already dreamed of the possibilities of back-breeding[19] and discussed it with German specialists who were largely encouraging, conscious of Lutz's proposal.[20] Despite the quagga's classification (*Equus quagga quagga*), Rau started to think (echoing the great hunter Selous a half century before[21]) that it was rather the southern version of the common Plains Zebra (then *Equus burchelli*), which itself differed greatly between individuals in

19 K. Child, 'Quaggas come back to life', *The Times* (15 May 2017).

20 For a list, see A. Rząśnicki, *Complete list of the specimens of skeletons and skins of equus quagga quagga* (*GM.*) *Preserved in the museums of the whole world in 1939*, (n.p., 1949) and then Rau's revision: R. E. Rau, 'Revised list of the preserved material of the extinct Cape Colony Quagga, equus quagga quagga', *Annals of the South African Museum*, 65:2 (1974).

21 F. C. Selous, 'Burchell's Zebra', in H. A. Bryden (ed.), *Great and small game of Africa* (London, 1899), 79–84, see 79.

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terms of striation, with stripes fading towards the south of the country – just as they did on the southern part of the quagga.

Of course, Rau could have focused his restorative energies in other directions. By the 1970s, the total number of mountain zebra was less than 100, black rhino less than 400, roan antelope less than 350. Other – still extant – zebras were in grave danger at the end of the 1970s: the Hartmann's mountain zebra was down from 50 000 plus at mid-century to a mere 2000.[22] The Grevey's zebra of Kenya, Somalia, and Ethiopia fell from 10,000 to 1500 in a mere decade. It is easy with hindsight to suggest he should have focused on the living. But he wanted to do something bigger.

### Building an ARKive?

As Eve Palmer noted in the 1966 *Plains of the Camdeboo,* echoing Bryden's 1899 lament, 'Of all our vanished creatures we mourn these quaggas most of all.' By the time Rau was about to launch his scheme in the 1970s, guilt over the colonial era (over what was done towards animals, at least) was evident in the middle-class English-language press like the *Mercury*, which put the blame squarely on 'white colonists'. There was general feeling that, while many species had vanished (sabre-toothed cats, short-necked giraffes, giant baboons[23]), they did not disappear on our watch. The quagga was different. By the mid-1980s, the mainstream press used the case of the quagga as a damning indictment of the destruction by earlier (white) generations: 'The Victorian principle – the more we submit to technology the greater the benefit to humanity – has been proved false'.[24] The hugely popular and influential 1982 *The Conservationists and the Killers* by John Pringle, a past president of the Wildlife Society of South Africa, used the quagga as leitmotif in a Manichean tale of 'good' versus 'evil', with the quagga as victim in this epic struggle.[25] The 1980s saw a resurgence of the Quagga as symbol, especially with the 1983 centennial of its extinction.[26] The public came to care about the quagga in a way that was

22 'Mountain Zebra in danger of being wiped out', *Sunday Tribune* (15 January 1978).

23 Early hominids may have hastened their decline, although climate change may have been the ultimate cause. See Richard Klein, 'Middle Stone Age man-animal relationships in southern Africa: Evidence from Die Kelders and Klasies River mouth', *Science*, 190:4211 (17 October 1975), 265–267.

24 'A good way to start', *Daily Mail* (2 May 1984).

25 M. Waddacor, 'Now the book of (wild)life', *Sunday Times* (28 November 1982).

26 For more, see J. C. Greig, 'Editorial – the lesson of the quagga', *African Wildlife*, 37:4 (1983), 134–135; '1883–1983: Centennial of the extinction', *African Wildlife*, 37:4 (1983), 146–148.

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not true of the extinct blue buck or the Cape Lion. Perhaps it was the name (which seemed a relic from an earlier, more authentic time).[27] In fact, tellingly, the Endangered Wildlife Trust entitled its magazine *Quagga*. The quagga became the talisman of this powerful public discourse – the metonym for extinction through hubris.

But it was also a period of possibilities. There had been a resurgence of game in the 1960s, with notable successes like lions returning to Zululand in 1965 (in an admittedly illicit act of feline smuggling by conservationists).[28] Ian Player's 1972 *The White Rhino Saga* celebrated the rescue of the charismatic creature that had stood at the edge of extinction. A new spirit strutted the land – a sense that guilt could be assuaged and that opportunities existed to fix past mistakes. There was thus a fresh zeitgeist of rewinding the clock on extirpation. Rau was inspired to back-breed a quagga.

Conservation, like politics, is the art of the possible. Rau tried to make his dream reality by seeking state support and the help of individuals. The 1980s saw calls for state partnerships with private initiatives for conservation.[29] Conservation – as explained in other chapters in this volume is a hybrid animal in southern Africa (and sometimes an unbeloved monster) – a mixture of state and private intervention. Yet, while local farmers, some conservation officials like 'Butch' Smuts, and private trusts were willing to help, many state conservation personnel did not support the notion at first – dismissing the proposed programme as a 'merely academic exercise of very dubious conservation value', which would produce only a 'look-a-like'.[30] Rau's plan was rejected by the Parks Board and the National Zoological Gardens. Moreover, the Endangered Wildlife Trust rejected Rau's proposal in 1983, ironically in the same year that they adopted the 'quagga' as the title for their journal. The conservation world (both in universities and in the veld) largely reckoned the quagga a separate species, which consequently condemned Rau's proposal to mere caprice and

27 For exactly the same reason the word quagga may resonate objectionably with others. The name quagga or kwagga is also being erased from the landscape of memory as old-fashioned or out-of-place. For example, the Department of Art and Culture renamed two towns called Kwaggafontein, Ekukhanyeni, and Mthombomuhle in 2015. On the Stellies Rage Facebook group of the University of Stellenbosch – quagga or kwagga is a synonym for the antiquated or ludicrously out of touch.

28 R. Philp, 'Guerillas in the mist', *Sunday Times* (12 December 1999).

29 'Priceless natural heritage', *The Argus* (25 June 1986).

30 Quagga Project Archive, Letter, Director, Natal Parks, Game and Fish Preservation Board to Rau, 27 November 1975, Letter, Director, Department of Nature and Environmental Conservation, 1 October 1985. See also Reinhold Rau, 'Rough road towards re-breeding the quagga – how it came about', March 1999, unpublished manuscript.

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fantasy. A serendipitous development in molecular biology changed everything. In 1984, using tissue from Rau's foal, researchers working under Russell Higuchi at the University of California sequenced the DNA from quagga tissue (and at the same time isolated DNA from millennia old mammoth tissue). Possibly apocryphal literary legend avers that this inspired Crichton's *Jurassic Park*. Certainly, Higuchi formally recognised and expressed gratitude to Rau for the physical tissue and, more importantly, the 'inspiration' for his DNA analysis remarking that without Rau's 'interest it would never have taken place'.[31] Additional molecular study compared Mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) extracted from a quagga's skin to that of the plains zebra, which seemed to suggest that the quagga was a subspecies of the plains zebra.[32] Rau was right.

Interest escalated and a committee was set up, with no help from the authorities (in fact, the website laments 'Until the present, no State funding has been forthcoming').[33] They drew on the expertise of academics at the University of Cape Town and Stellenbosch, veterinarians, and museum staff. A small herd of only nineteen founders was constituted out of thousands auditioned. The brownish tinged zebras were translocated from Hluhluwe-Umfolozi reserves in (now) KwaZulu-Natal and the zebras with reduced striping came from Etosha.[34] The first foal was born in 1988 in the Cape. The press took an interest in the 'bold plan'.[35] Some even hoped a similar project could be started to breed back the extinct Cape Lion. Selection for diminished or reduced striping was (and continues to be) painstakingly applied. After four generations, the new foals began to display a perceptible level of stripe reduction akin to many of the museum specimens Rau studied. Public acceptance and state interest grew: quaggas are now written into the identity of the state itself – appearing on the Western Cape's coat of arms designed in 1998 along with a bontebok (an

31 Quagga Project Archive, Letter, Russell Higuchi to Rau, 3 October 1989.

32 R. Higuchi, B. Bowman, M. Freiberger, O. A. Ryder, and A. C. Wilson, 'DNA sequences from the quagga, an extinct member of the horse family', *Nature*, 312 (1984), 282–284; M. Georgeand O. A. Ryder, 'Mitochondrial DNA evolution in the genus *Equus', Molecular Biology and Evolution*, 3 (1986), 535–546; Higuchi, et al., 'Mitochondrial DNA of the extinct Quagga: Relatedness and extent of postmortem change', *Journal of Molecular Evolution* 25 (1987), 283–287; J. M. Lowenstein and O. A. Ryder, 'Immunological systematics of the extinct quagga (Equidae)', *Experientia*, 15:41, 9 (1985), 1192–3. For recent summation: E. D. Lorenzen, P. Arctander, and H. R. Siegismund, 'High variation and very low differentiation in wide ranging plains zebra (equus quagga): insights from mtDNA and microsatellites', *Molecular Ecology*, 17:12 (2008), 2812–24.

33 See www.quaggaproject.org, accessed 1 January 2017.

34 'Elksabe Brits, 'Kwagga terug nah y uitgesterf', *Beeld*, 4 April 2016.

35 J. Clarke, 'Bold plan to bring the quagga back to life', *Sunday Times*, 10 January 1988; 'Extinct quagga to be brought back to life', *The Citizen* (21 May 1988).

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animal brought back from the edge of extinction and the quagga who, by 1998, seemed about to brought back from over the edge).[36]

By 2004, 21 foals had been born. Some of these new-borns evinced clearly diminished stripes. After three (zebra) generations, a landmark goal was attained: a simulacrum of the original quagga. The little living landmark was Henry. Henry could have been the doppelgänger of the foal Rau restuffed in 1969 when he was born at Pampoenvlei in 2005, a year before Rau's death.[37] Shortly before his death, Rau told a *New York Times* reporter: 'We will have given back to the Karoo … its original zebra. And that will be enough for me.'[38] Rau could pass away peacefully the following year, at his home surrounded by his dogs and finches. That is the short history of the Quagga Project, told with linear, confident triumphalism: a whiggish success story.[39] After all, a bearded hero boldly planning a rescue operation (called crazy by everyone else) in order to save the animals in the face of adverse climate – both human and natural – is a story that many of us know well. It is even is built into the Judeo-Christian myths around Noah's Ark. We are also used to reading of the white male heroes who saved Africa's wildlife (this one just seems a little more bookish and a lot less likely to wear khaki shorts and wrestle lions than James Stevenson-Hamilton, Harry Wolhuter, 'Butch' Smuts, Nick Steele, and Ian Player). Thus it is a recognizable and compelling narrative. It is a story that makes sense culturally. But it is only one way of telling the story.

If one revisits the 'origin story', it appears that the idea came to Rau by his reading Lutz Heck's book. But there was an older motive: as a young man Rau had witnessed Lutz raise the dead. Lutz and his brother Heinz had run the Berlin and Munich zoos in the years before World War II. Both were connected closely to the Nationalist Socialist leadership and they supported Nazi ecomythography: for the 1936 Olympics in Berlin, Lutz constructed a totally Teutonic zoo, with 'Wolf Rock' at its centre, stocked with quintessentially ideal 'German' animals. But the Heck brothers also sought to resurrect the beasts of the romantic opera of Richard Wagner, who was idolised by the Nazi party, and who had espoused an ancient reverence for the animal spirit. The Hecks wanted to

36 'New coat of arms heralds quagga's comeback', *Cape Argus* (23 July 1998); 'Zebra experiment on track to re-breed extinct quaggas', *The Star* (17 September 1997).

37 See www.quaggaproject.org, accessed 1 January 2017.

38 J. Yeld, 'Rau leaves behind more than memories', *Cape Argus*, 22 February 2006.

39 See E. H. Harley, et al., 'The restoration of the quagga; 24 years of selective breeding', in *Restoration of endangered and extinct animals*, (Poznan, 2010), 78–87; and the Quagga Project webpage, www.quaggaproject.org/index.htm (accessed 1 November 2013). See also P. Heywood, 'The quagga and science', *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine*, 56:1 (2013), 53–64.

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bring back the mythic dead: the creatures of the conifers. To do so, the Hecks claimed to use a venerable and an age-old method of simply selectively breeding animals to bring out certain desirable traits (as the Quagga Project *was*, in fact, to do a generation on): 'What my brother and I now had to do was to unite in a single breeding stock all those characteristics of the wild animal which are now found only separately in individual animals'.[40] Even an ostensibly vanished animal's genes might be found in the genetic pool of closely related kin or direct descendants. Thus if the Hecks began the slow programme of 'breeding back' animals most similar to their extinct ancestors, over generations they would be able to re-establish their original ancestral beings.[41] The brothers tried to revive the aurochs (the wild ancestor of domestic cattle), the wisent (a forest bison), and the tarpan (a so-called primitive horse breed) – by superficially restoring primordial purity, to resurrect the proud and wild, in order to cleanse the degenerate animals spawned by domestication. These beasts were intended to re-wild the forests of the Third Reich as living totems to its supremacy. The Hecks worked under the patronage of Hermann Göring, who also revived for himself a title *'Reichsjägermeister', itself* extinct for two centuries.[42] Together they wanted to repopulate the *urwald* forest landscape with totemic creatures of the Nazi imagination.[43] Some of these so-called back-bred animals were indeed released into the newly plundered Polish forest. Heck later recalled: 'In my youth my imagination was caught by the famous description in [Wagner's] Nibelungenlied of Siegfried's hunt in the forest … I was interested above all in the two huge wild oxen, which … are regarded as the most powerful representatives of primeval German game – the European bison and the aurochs.'[9] Heck had, as noted earlier, also purportedly tried back-breeding the quagga, but noted with dry understatement: 'Unfortunately, this experiment was undone by the war.'

Yet the Hecks bred-back not purity but a paradox, or an animated absurdity or even a living lie.[44] They were attempting to revive the pristine aurochs in as short a space of time as possible (after all, when Göring urged one to hurry, one did). Yet, because of their rushed job, they actually did not have

40 L. Heck (translated by E. W. Dickes), *Animals: My adventure* (London, 1954), 143.

41 Heinz crossed Highland, Hungarian, and Corsican cattle, while Lutz mated Spanish with French cattle.

42 'The Reich's Master of the Hunt'.

43 For a pioneering study, see P. Viereck, *Metapolitics: The roots of the Nazi mind* (New York, 1941, revised 1965). For a scintillating recent analysis see M. Wang, 'Heavy breeding', *Cabinet*, 45 (2012). http://www.cabinetmagazine.org/issues/45/wang.php, accessed 1 January 2017.

44 This section drawn from Swart, 'Zombie Zoology' and Swart, 'Frankenzebra'.

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time to back-breed over generations so they simply created a hybrid mongrel of modern breeds. Some labelled the project a ruse, which created new breeds as mere facsimile of extinct ones – merely engineered curiosities – akin to P. T. Barnum's much-vaunted 'genuine fakes'. Most of the apparently ancient animals survived only fleetingly. The aurochs in the Polish forest were eaten by starving soldiers. When the Allies bombed Berlin in January 1944, the zoo animals burned in their cages or became run-aways. Lutz's son shot the rampaging aurochs. However, some of the aurochs managed to persist at the Munich zoo. It was these that Rau witnessed as a boy, which stimulated his dream to breed back a quagga. Years before he emigrated to South Africa, Rau had stumbled upon an ageing aurochs performing in a travelling circus near Frankfort – perhaps a trifle *infra dig* for the beast intended to reign with its human Nazi masters for a thousand years.

### The Herd Reich?

The Heck brothers' ambition was in line with that of the Nazi elite: expansion. Their aim was to move across the borders into Poland's Białowieża forest and back in time to revive extinct beasts. It was a bloody reshaping of borders echoing the Nazi project itself. In fact, some Polish green groups still resist the (once) back-bred beasts for historical and political reason.[45] In spite of the ideological baggage, forty years after the war (at the same time Rau formed his committee), Heck cattle became appreciated in various spots across Europe for rewilding or restoration projects. The '*Bos primigenius*' lost its taxonomic status, and today classificatory schemata no longer distinguishes the aurochs as separate species from domestic cattle.[46] Some conservationists consider them useful in preserving an environment of mixed forest and meadows.[47] However, when a few were imported to a

45 Some criticism has been simply of the methodology (rather than the politics) of the Heck programs as early as the 1950s. See T. Van Vuure, 'History, morphology and ecology of the Aurochs (*BOS PRIMIGENIUS*)' http://members.chello.nl/~t.vanvuure/oeros/uk/lutra.pdf. Recently, Mitochondrial DNA analysis shows a possible Near Eastern Neolithic origin for domestic cattle with possibly no clear demonstration of domestication of European aurochs – which would have destroyed the Heck Project ontologically.

46 S. A. Zimov, 'Pleistocene Park: Return of the mammoth's ecosystem', *Science*, 308:5723 (6 May 2005), 796–798.

47 C. J. Donlan, J. Berger, C. E. Bock, J. H. Bock, D. A. Burney, et al., 'Pleistocene rewilding: An optimistic agenda for twenty-first century conservation', *The American Naturalist*, 168:5 (2006), 660–681.

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farm in Devon in 2009, the British press reported on this bovine invasion of 'Nazi cows' with a hybrid mixture of flag-waving xenophobia and sardonic satire: 'Giant Nazi cows on the loose in Britain'[48], 'UK: Nazi 'Super Cows' Shipped to Devon Farm'[49], and the *Daily Mail's* 'In an English field, the cattle created by Hitler', who ran a picture of the Heck cattle captioned 'We were only following udders'.[50]

### 'Holy Crap, We Can – So Should We?'

Crichton's global smash hit *Jurassic Park* (and Spielberg's movie adaptation) were cautionary tales about scientific arrogance. As Crichton had his character Dr Ian Malcolm ruminate: 'Scientists are actually preoccupied with accomplishment. So they are focused on whether they can do something. They never stop to ask if they should do something. … Discovery, they believe, is inevitable. So they just try to do it first. That's the game in science.'[51] As noted by ecologist Douglas McCauley, unintentionally echoing Crichton's Dr Ian Malcolm's fears: 'The conversation thus far has been focused on whether or not we can do this. Now, we are progressing toward the: "Holy crap, we can – so should we?" phase.'

A brief survey of existing global initiatives highlights the contrast offered by the Quagga Project. There are two and a half ways to bring back the dead.[52] The first is back-breeding or essentially artificial selection as deployed in the Quagga Project. The second method is straightforward cloning – transferring the nucleus of an extinct animal's cell then transferring the egg into a surrogate mother. It is technically possible in some cases although fraught with challenges. The second possibility has an alternative, which depends on cloning but uses genetic material synthesised in a lab (from a genetically sequenced animal) rather than extracted from a preserved specimen. So, for example, instead of extracting DNA from ancient woolly mammoths, the DNA of its relative the

48 *Metro* (Tuesday 21 Apr 2009 11:22 am), http://metro.co.uk/2009/04/21/giant-nazi-cows-on-the-loose-in-britain-41480/ accessed 1 November 2013

49 *Constantine Report* (22 April 2009), http://www.constantinereport.com/uk-nazi-super-cows-shipped-to-devon-farm/

50 *Daily Mail* (21 April 2009).

51 M. Crichton, *Jurassic World* [incorporating *Jurassic Park* and *The Lost World*] (New York, 1997), 294.

52 N. F. Carlin, I. Wurman, and T. Zakim, "How to permit your mammoth: some legal implications of 'de-extinction'", *Stanford Environmental Law Journal*, 33, 3–57, 2013.

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modern Asian elephant could perhaps be re-engineered and then cloning could occur using an Asian elephant as surrogate mother.

Movies and blockbuster novels explain science to the public (and are a lot more exciting than old fashioned and protracted back-breeding) so cloning initiatives superseded back-breeding programmes in the public's fancy. This was particularly true with the much-publicised rise of 'Ancient DNA studies' or paleogenetics in the 1980s.[53] Ancient DNA research was very sexy and in keeping with the bold 1980s zeitgeist and thus became well-known pop science.[54] Concomitantly, the notion of cloning woolly mammoths won over the popular imagination, followed later by others like the – more obscure and less dramatic – huia bird, Pyrenean Ibex, Esfahan mouflon,[55] Galapagos turtle, and Passenger Pigeon. Then the Thylacine Project made global headlines, by declaring its target of resurrecting the Tasmanian wolf, a carnivorous marsupial driven to its death by a colonial bounty system in the 1930s.[56] The director of Sydney's Australian Museum boasted that he would clone the thylacine from a preserved furless pouch-baby specimen.[57] Between 1999 and 2005, while the Quagga Project was patiently and quietly back-breeding zebras, the museum's 'emphasis on the scientific progress that would be made via the sequencing of the thylacine specimens almost always gave way to the public spectacle engendered by the compelling … idea of "resurrecting" an extinct species'.[58] The public loved the idea. After all, they had seen it at the movies – only with dinosaurs – and Dolly the sheep had been created in 1997 and a pet dog was cloned in South Korea in 2008 (bringing back dead pets eerily echoes the Stephen King quote that opens this chapter).

The Lazarus Project – named for the biblical figure purportedly brought back to life by Jesus – not only focused on the thylacine, but has been trying to

53 Breeding back is infinitely cheaper, do-able and can yield a whole population of species rather than one individual, such as in the case of cloning.

54 R. Wayne, J. Leonard, and A. Cooper, 'Full of sound and fury: The recent history of ancient DNA', *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics*, 30 (1999), 457–477, see 458.

55 Hajian, et al., (2011).

56 For incisive discussion, see Amy 'Genuine fakes – Cloning extinct species as science and spectacle', *Politics & the Life Sciences*, 29:1 (2010), 48–60. See also S. Siva Kumar, V. Subramanian, S. R. Walimbe, and L. Singh, 'Current trends in 'ancient DNA studies – A review', *Current Science*, 76:7 (10 April 1999).

57 In a neat comparison, Freeman has analysed the public representation of both the quagga and thylacine projects. Carol Freeman, 'Ending extinction: The quagga, the thylacine and the 'smart human'', in C. Gigliotti (ed.), *Leonardo's Choice: Genetic technologies and animals* (Springer, 2009).

58 A. Fletcher, 'Genuine Fakes', 52.

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resurrect Australia's gastric-brooding frog, famous for giving birth through its mouth, and extinct since 1983. Frog tissue, fortuitously stored in a freezer for 40 years, provided the DNA, and they used eggs from the related great-barred frog, swapping the nuclei with that of the gastric-brooding frog. Although none of the resulting embryos have yet managed to survive, they have contained genetic material from the gastric brooding frog.[59] These projects habitually make overconfident claims ahead of what is presently scientifically possible, notwithstanding a sequence of disasters[60] – like the cloned bucardo, or Pyrenean ibex, who died only seven minutes after being born, labouring to breathe through malformed lungs. Seven minutes must be the shortest period a species has ever existed. Yet in the popular domain and in some scientific circles, the hubristic rhetoric persists. Indeed in some restoration projects, the only thing successfully cloned, and brought back from the dead, has been Victorian arrogance.

But the Quagga Project is poles apart. It has arrived at a much more humble and self-reflective place of introspection. Just before his death, admittedly, Rau still definitively considered the animal's aesthetic aspect to be the only yardstick of authenticity: 'The quagga is a quagga because of the way it looked, then if you produce animals that look that way, they are quaggas.'[61] At that time, the Quagga Project declared: 'The definition of the quagga can only rest on its well-described morphological characteristics and, if an animal is obtained that possesses these characters, then by definition, it will be a quagga.' But a decade later, it had evolved into a more self-reflexive, humble and cautious position: 'The definition of a quagga can only rest on its well-described morphological characteristics and, if an animal is obtained that possess these characters, then it is fair to claim that it is a representation of, at least, the visible quagga phenotype.' Moreover, there has been a move towards a taxonomy of self-reflection. The quagga has been adapted in nomenclature to 'Rau Quagga'. The shift in classification both imprints the animal's idiographic history and its close connection with humans – acknowledging the anthropogenic forces in its history. It has been decided that, when an animal is born which has no

59 Yong, 'Resurrecting the extinct frog with a stomach for a womb', *Phenomena* (15 March 2013).

60 For a very readable critique of such boldness, see S. Becker, 'We still can't clone dinosaurs', in K. Grazier, (ed.), *The science of Michael Crichton* (Dallas, 2008). For a discussion, see S. Weidensaul, *The ghost with the trembling wings – Science, wishful thinking and the search for lost species* (New York, 2002), 214–242.

61 'Extinction is forever – or is it?', (3 October 2006), http://www.southafrica.info/pls/procs/iac.page?p_t1=2779&p_t2=7363&p_dynamic=YP&p_content_id=217955&p_site_id=38

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scorable stripes on the hind part of the body, and no stripes on the legs, then it qualifies:

> Accepting that [they] are only selecting for this set of attributes of the original quagga, and not for any other genetic features which may have been possessed by the original quagga population, [they] will then term this a 'Rau quagga', the qualification giving acknowledgement to Reinhold Rau, whose vision and drive inspired and guided the project in its initial stages'.[62]

As a key project member concedes: 'We are not arrogant. We don't know that these zebra are quaggas. We only know what the extinct quagga looked like, not what sounds they made or what behavioural characteristics they exhibited.'[63]

This further reinforces the argument that a species is not so much a genetic inevitability, but also always a human choice.[64] Their identity is at least as historical as it is biological. Species are imagined just as nations (and other identities) are.[65] Restoration projects are not politically neutral. Instead, they are constructs of their historical contexts: both in terms of the technology and science that makes them feasible and the zeitgeist that makes them desirable. They might act as a demonstration of that which anthropologist Renato Rosaldo labelled (even though in a different context) imperialist nostalgia, which fetishizes an exotic elicitation of the dead past.[66] The restoration projects tend to fit the yearning nostalgia for that which one destroyed oneself. Rosaldo explains that 'people destroy their environment and then they worship nature'. So, one could ask, is restoration ideology just scientific *revanchism, a misdirected faith in the old blood, like the doomed faith of the Hecks?* While the Heck project was supported by an ambitious, technocratic state for potent propaganda and mass spectacle on a tight time-budget, the Quagga Project was at the outset subsidized by local capitalists, with the patience to plan for

62 The Quagga Project, http://www.quaggaproject.org/what-is-quagga.htm, accessed 10 November 2013.

63 Quoted in K. Child, 'Quaggas come back to life', *The Times* (15 May 2017).

64 Drawn from S. Swart, *Riding high – Horse, humans and history in South Africa* (Johannesburg, 2010); see especially chapter 7.

65 See B. Anderson, *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. (London, New York, 2006).

66 R. Rosaldo, 'Imperialist nostalgia', *Representations*, 26, Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory, (1989), 107–122.

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several generations, with a middle-class tourist attraction in mind. The first decade and a half was funded through private patronage by individuals and companies like Mondi Paperwaste and Pure Cane Molasses, as well as more self-interested *groups like the Confederation of Hunters Associations of South Africa* and the *Detroit Chapter of Safari Club International*.[67] Only in 2000, was the project acknowledged by the government and an accord made that South African National Parks would co-operate by supplying plains zebras with reduced striping and help with relocation costs.[68] Relations soured in 2015, with SANParks distancing itself from the project somewhat. This manifests a worldwide trend in (increasing) re-wilding and the (rarer) de-extinction projects, which evince an alliance between rich patrons, sometimes farmers and landowners and scientists, both academic and corporate.[69] Genetic material is easily commodifiable: robust, long-lasting, and a breeze to duplicate.[70] Lawyers are already looking into the 'patentability of animals brought back from extinction'.[71] The U.S. Patent Office has decided that 'non-naturally occurring man-made organisms including animals' can be patentable subject matter. So it could be seen as part of a scramble for a new biological market: private restoration for potential profit could be seen as a form of neoliberal necromancy. One could dismiss the project as the excesses of leisured-class self-indulgence. But there is both courage and generosity in starting a project whose results one will in all likelihood not live long enough to enjoy oneself. There is also something undeniably elegant in its pre-twentieth century simplicity. This is not the bombastic 'Big Science' claim of cloning, but rather something humans have been doing for ten thousand years – breeding the animals we needed – whether for our fields, our tables, our wars, or for our souls.

67 http://www.quaggaproject.org/quagga-donations.htm, accessed 1 November 2013.

68 The Quagga Project Association, represented by its chairman Dr Mike Cluver and South African National Parks by its CEO Mavuso Msimang, signed an agreement of co-operation. The state first became involved with the project in 1998 with the movement of 14 Quagga Project zebras into the Karoo National Park. See 'Parks body joins quest to "rebreed" the quagga', *The Star* (3 July 2000); 'Suiwer kwagga dalk gou gebore', *Die Burger*, (30 June 2000); J. Bonthuys, 'Uitgestorwe kwagga lig dalk weer sy kop', *Die Burger* (3 November 2001).

69 Or even average middle-class patrons – the Quagga page invites individuals to make a donation.

70 For this idea, see J. Roof, *The Poetics of DNA* (Minneapolis, 2007), 198.

71 M. R. Swedlow, 'The woolly-mammoth in the room: The patentability of animals brought back from extinction through cloning and genetic engineering', *Washington Journal of Law, Technology and Arts*, 11:3 (2015).

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## Back to the Future?

One conceit deployed consistently is that a 'small herd of animals provides the chance to travel back in time over more than a century'.[72] The quagga operates for some as a form of time travel: a way of experiencing in some visceral way an Anthropocene version of Jurassic Park. Interestingly, the Quagga Project has a movie of its own now which teaches some fairly heavy-handed lessons about diversity. Rau's name appears in the final credits of the movie *Khumba*, an animated film about a zebra born looking like a quagga, who is blamed for the drought in the Karoo by his superstitious community so he embarks on a quest to sow (or perhaps simply eat) his wild oats. It made $28 million at the box office and was dedicated in memory to Rau and named after one of their progeny.

The real Khumba (born 11 January 2010) now roams Cecil John Rhodes' Groote Schuur Estate on the slopes of Devil's Peak. (Perhaps fittingly Khumba means 'Skin' in isiXhosa). Extinction guilt is not solely a South African phenomenon,[73] but the quagga is a particularly interesting way of 'righting a wrong'[74] in a country where reparations are contested. This is a little discussed part of practical conservation, referred to in this book's introduction, which operates at the nexus of capital and morality. The question of whether we are responsible for the actions of our ancestors becomes more hotly debated, and public debate is increasingly fractured and fractious. Reparation for the injustices of slavery (alluded to in the introduction to this book), colonialism, and apartheid are complex and still developing ideas. Reparations for environmental injustice to other beings is a much less discussed issue but could perhaps involve a similar acknowledgement of historical wrong and show a commitment to redress as a kind of restorative justice (of which there is usually scant mention in conservation discourse). It could be part of a healing process that may encourage the prevention future similar wrongs. (Of course, the project could also be criticised as still being the mission of an elite group of white, mainly male agents determining which animals get preserved, as described in the introduction to this book. Equally, one could ask how different is this – morally – from the actions of the 'penitent butchers' turned conservationists?). In 2001, Rhodes' old estate and the areas around it saw the removal of foreign

72 'Resurrecting extinct quagga', *Daily Dispatch* (13 February 2016); B. Jordan, 'Karoo welcomes the quagga back from the dead', *Sunday Times* (27 September 1998).

73 P. B. Banks and D. F. Hochuli, 'Extinction, de-extinction and conservation: a dangerous mix of ideas', *Australian Zoologist*, (2016).

74 K. Child, 'Quaggas come back to life', *The Times* (15 May 2017).

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invasives like the fallow deer and sambar, and returning the indigenous quasi-quagga.[75] Arguably the restoration of the quagga – in whatever form – can act as an antidote to the pervasive pessimistic narrative in South Africa of unstoppable declension. It may even help some feel a kind of atonement. 'There are many people all over the world who are concerned about the destruction mankind is doing to the world and are trying to stop it. I am one of them,' Rau observed: 'Maybe I'm conservative, but I see a chance to rectify a mistake that was made.'[76] Rau also noted that he felt 'science has given us the tools to try rectify a mistake man made 150 years ago because of ignorance and greed and we believe it is our ethical obligation to do this.'[77] After all, there is a symbolic resonance that predated the Rhodes Must Fall movement in approaching a restoration project through the Rhodes Memorial.

## Are We All Quagets Now?

Aside from Khumba, it is interesting that the quagga project stud have mainly 'white' names (Willie, Patricia, Suzanne, Rebecca, Taylor, Freddy, Craig). 'Henry' was named for 'Henry Louw', a Cape Town businessman on whose farm he was born.[78] Does the western cult of conservation, as Tim Ingold labelled it, offer a new folk taxonomy, with the Rau Quagga becoming a totemic species for the educated, leisured and perhaps nostalgic middle classes?[79] We cannot ignore the close kinship ties between the quagga and another wild beast very far from extinction – capitalism itself. The 'labour' performed by the quagga is symbolic (despite nineteenth century attempts to domesticate it) but – ironically – its symbolic work makes it an economic actor in a globalised economy, intended to draw foreign capital through tourism. Once a cultural commodity has been identified as authentic – the 'real McCoy', in Rau's words[80] – its value

75 J. Yeld, ' "Quaggas" darted in Devil's Peak round-up', *Saturday Weekend Argus* (10 November 2001).

76 'S. Africa's quagga saga: righting a past wrong', *Christian Science Monitor* (2003), and see South African Info 3 October 2006, drawn largely from Quagga Project website. http://www.southafrica.info/pls/procs/iac.page?p_t1=2779&p_t2=7363&p_dynamic=YP&p_content_id=217955&p_site_id=38, accessed 1 November 2013.

77 C. Bisseker, 'Genetic science helps right the wrongs of the past', *Financial Mail* (14 July 2000).

78 H. Bamford, 'Almost a quagga … but not quite', *Saturday Weekend Argus* (19 November 2005).

79 For the cult of conservation, see T. Ingold (ed.), *What is an animal?* (London, 1988), 12.

80 C. Bisseker, 'Genetic science helps right the wrongs of the past', *Financial Mail* (14 July 2000).

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climbs, as does public demand for it. Extinction brought rarity value to the quagga – value it had lacked in life – and recreating the quagga was not entirely new. In 1935, a taxidermist firm in London even suggested how they could fake a quagga skin:

> The markings we could reproduce fairly easily with stains and careful scorching. We believe the material to use would be … [a] hot weather coat from a White Donkey (South African) or White Mule, if such a thing exists … and one might say it was still a South African product.[81]

One can see Khumba for free from one's car as one drives along the M3 towards Cape Town but one can now view the quagga as a tourist attraction: there are quaggas spread between ten breeding sites and one can get to know them as individuals (Cynthia, Hermon, Lucia, and Ryan, and so on) and only a few are technically Rau quagga. It is interesting to note that three Rau Quagga just sold at an elite game auction at Webersburg Wine Estate in Stellenbosch. They had no reserve price (after all no quagga had been sold since 1880) and they went under the hammer for R580 000 each – a family group of a stallion and two mares went for R1.74 million. For comparison's sake, it is worth noting that plain Plain's Zebra are on auction usually for less than R10 000 each.[82] In the Stellenbosch region, high-end wines and high-concept conservation go hand in hand.[83] Restoration projects certainly create the possibility for profitable tourism. Even paleobiologists vehemently opposed to resurrecting the woolly mammoth admit that 'for all my protests, I'd pay to see one if it was there.'[84] The introduction to this book alluded to ventures that try to re/create 'pristine nature' to capture the profitable overseas tourist market. Not only is ecotourism increasingly popular but so-called 'last chance to see' tourism (viewing near-extinct creatures or landscapes before it is too late) is especially on the incline with growing ecoconsciousness in tourism.[85] Would de-extinction projects offer tourists a similarly lucrative '*first* chance to see'?[86]

81 C. J. Skead, *Historical mammal incidence in the Cape Provinc*e, 11, (Department of Nature and Environmental Conservation of the Provincial Administration of the Cape of Good Hope, 1987), 564.

82 K. Child, 'Quaggas come back to life', *The Times* (15 May 2017).

83 L. Johns, 'Product of providence and precision', *Sunday Argus* (25 November 2007).

84 T. Herridge, 'Mammoths are a huge part of my life. But cloning them is wrong', *The Guardian* (18 November 2014).

85 P. M. Whittle, E. .J. Stewart, and D. Fisher, 'Re-creation tourism: de-extinction and its implications for nature-based recreation', *Current Issues in Tourism*, 18:10 (2015), 908–912.

86 Whittle, et al., 'Re-creation tourism', 909.

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### The Tourist Gaze?

As discussed, the Rau Quaggas exist only in the eye of the beholder – on two levels. It is an individual choice whether or not one believes this is a quagga, and whether the belief is predicated purely on the stripes: 'The only characters that have been used to identify the Quagga are its coat-pattern characters.' The physical remains of the quagga are minimal: only five museums worldwide display their stuffed bodies, seven skeletons, 13 skulls, 23 skins and only one quagga was photographed alive. The aesthetic side of the animal was thus key in the creation of a creature only accessible through historical texts, a few skins, and stuffed samples and photographs of one specimen (and arguably, more cynically, in creating a tourist attraction intended to be viewed from cars).

Yet, even if one accepts that animals are what one sees, perhaps there has been insufficient interrogation of the original quagga's adult size, possible sexual dimorphism, height at the wither, tail, pastern length, nostril width, and movement (paces), and so on as characteristics potentially important to its distinct identity. No one in the Quagga Project selected for singularities of social behaviour, herd dynamics, or everyday habits of eating, mating, and fighting. Even if we keep an anthropocentric perspective, why is (our) sight privileged over our other sensory experiences of the quagga – especially since it was christened for its sound: the barking call '*quácha*'? The animal's smell, sound, and movement are lost in the privileging of the visual. Moreover, recent bioacoustics studies suggest that long-range calls by stallions are crucial in understanding social organization – even important in classifying the Equidae – with 92% accuracy by researchers (and by in assigning calls of seven species/types). (For example, the length of the call separates horses from kiang, Somalian ass, and Grevy's zebra, with the Grant's zebra between these groups.[87]) Animals are more than just their skins. Are we missing crucial historical evidence in over-privileging the visual aspect of the animal – and thus making conservation errors? *Did we bring back the wrong quagga?*

### Quagga on the Rocks

The quagga lives on in the rock art of the people who knew it best. Once seen as merely the graffiti of the defeated, rock paintings are now seen as invaluable and irreplaceable, lending itself to a zeitgeist, as well as being art in its own

87 R. Policht, A. Karadžos, and D. Frynta, 'Comparative analysis of long-range calls in equid stallions (Equidae): Are acoustic parameters related to social organization?', *African Zoology* 46:1 (2011),18–26.

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right. The art sometimes becomes a palimpsest or an archive of successive messages. Today's scribbles by tourists and school children, anxious to leave some mark of their own existence, has already obscured much of this art (sometimes the graffiti is so old it is legally protected too).[88] Some of the original paintings have been chipped away by *igqirhas* or healers chiselling the red ochre from the walls to use in medicine. Other aboriginal art has been smudged and rubbed away by livestock using the caves and rock shelters.[89] Over the years, a second extinction because of livestock has occurred. The first was the original extinction – the plague of domestic beasts competing for grazing encouraged the colonists to slaughter the quagga in the first place. The second erasure is of their memory, the traces they left behind. The oily wool of thousands of sheep have rubbed away rock paintings of the quaggas in a second secret and ongoing extinction.[90]

There are many paintings of quagga, like the one of a!Kann site in the arid lands south of the Orange River. The many quagga paintings are all by anonymous artists – except for one by Xaa-tin, whose son Dia! Kwain,[91] served time at the Breakwater Prison and was interviewed by Bleek and Lloyd, and who provides the only instance of San rock painting where the name of the artist is known for certain.[92] Perhaps the motto Natura Artis Magistra of the zoo that housed the last quagga might be turned around productively for our purposes? Art can teach nature: the rock art might be a useful source in rethinking the kind of quagga we need. The quagga is certainly better known for its spectacular and symbolic death rather than its quotidian and material life. If the /Xam! knew the quagga best, surely their input would be useful? What would they prize as important about the quagga? Skin colour and reduced striation might certainly not be the most salient feature in their view. It is likely that the /Xam used the word /habba to mean zebra and quagga.[93] Indeed, extant rock art would bear this out: the colouring was not the most important thing to the /Xam! as it varied considerably and was often completely ochre-shaded.

88 K. Davie, 'On the trail of the quagga and the /Xam', *Mail and Guardian* (30 October 2008).

89 M. Burgess, 'Abusing the Bushman's canvas', *Farmers Weekly* (15 June 2012).

90 Rock art is technically protected by the National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999) – it is illegal to damage or alter within a ten-metre radius of the surface surrounding rock art.

91 W.e Graham, 'A heritage that is set in stone', *The Star* (6 December 2005).

92 Bushman or San are both names variously accepted or rejected. Most aboriginal peoples prefer to be known by their language – Ju/'hoasi, /Nu,!Kun or Khwe.

93 J. D. Lewis-Williams, *Myth and meaning: San-Bushman folklore in global context* 2016. See also Bleek, 1956, 286, and K. Davie, 'On the trail of the quagga and the/Xam', *Mail and Guardian* (30 October 2008).

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Rau had wondered whether the reduced striping of the quagga was an adaptation to more open and arid landscape, like that of the semi-desert Karoo.[94] Embryological studies show that a zebra's base colour is black, and white is the addition. The evolutionary reason behind the development of the stripes have elicited a range of suggestions.[95] Stripes on the zebra are as individual as a human fingerprint. Some say that when a foal is born the mother circles it to imprint her stripes on its mind. Some argue they play a role in temperature regulation. A recent study showed that the stripes may discourage flies as they polarize light. A conventional proposal has been that the stripes offer crypsis for zebras in tall grass or dappled light – this is unlikely as zebras are not reticent beasts. Unlike other camouflaged creatures, they do not hide quietly in the face of danger: they erupt noisily and flee. Another suggestion has been 'motion camouflage' – the stripes might make it difficult for a pursuing predator to estimate distance and judge direction.[96] Some suggest a social function for the stripes. Individual recognition is facilitated by the stripes and a prompt for grooming.[97] This is especially significant if, as in the Rau quagga, the striping is anthropogenically engineered for cosmetic reasons. Would intentional stripe diminution affect any or all of these functions?

For some the Quagga Project is simply too slow in diminishing the stripes. In 2005 there was an echo of the scam by the London taxidermy firm to produce ersatz quagga skins seventy years before. A game farmer from North West, tiring of the long time the Quagga Project was taking in breeding over several generations, thought of a quick-fix solution. He proposed simply crossbreeding donkeys and zebras to produce quaggas for the canned hunting market (as the Heck brothers had done, only much more crudely).[98] A happy by-product – the

94 R. E. Rau, 'Additions to the revised list of preserved material of the extinct Cape Colony Quagga and notes on the relationship and distribution of southern Plains Zebras', *Annals of the South African Museum,* 77 (1978), 27–45.

95 B. Larison, R. J. Harrigan. H. A. Thomassen, D. I. Rubenstein, A. M. Chan-Golston. T. B. Smith, 'How the zebra got its stripes: a problem with too many solutions', *Royal Society*, 2:1 (2015).

96 M. J. How and J. M. Zanker, 'Motion camouflage induced by zebra stripes' *Zoology'*, 117 (2014), 163–170.

97 Prothero, *Horns, tusks and flippers*, 2003; P. Grub, 'Equus burchellii', *Mammalian Species*, 157 (1981), 1–9.

98 Studying the photos of the Eeyore-like nineteenth-century quagga (the only one photographed resided in the London zoo) and comparing it to the magnificent albeit romanticized paintings, one wonders if it was not a hybrid between quagga/zebra and a donkey (which was entirely possible given the predilection for hybridization). In fact, quagga and donkey remains have been confused in the past. Sometimes skins were simply stuffed with donkey skeletons by sloppy taxidermists. E. H. Harley, et al., 'The Restoration of the

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farmer blithely explained – would be slowing the fleet and canny zebras down with the donkey blood, for the rich hunters can be poor shots, whose reach exceed their range. The Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism used this case to illustrate the dangers of hybridization and canned hunting. Experts called for the banning of all intentional hybridization for hunting – as it threatens sub-species and certainly does not contribute to biodiversity conservation – and it might prioritize the wrong thing.[99]

There is already a strong element of battlefield triage in global conservation efforts. 'Triage' is a good choice of word as it conveys the inherent emotional cost when doctors are forced to screen patients to prioritize the order of treatment. Medical triage creates a corollary imperative that to a degree contravenes the very code from which it stems. After all, life must be conserved, yet they are compelled to rank the medical interventions: so some will live and others will die.[100] In fact,

> … most of us are already making these choices, and making them all the time. Not that we think much about it. But every time we decide what to buy, where to build, or who to put in charge of spending our tax dollars, we're indirectly deciding which species deserve our consideration and which species can do without it.[101]

Simple economics dictate that conservation is a zero sum game – and not everyone can win. Species and ecosystems face habitat loss, pollution in water systems and soil, extreme weather events – all inevitably accelerating under the new 'climate-change denying' world order. There is some theoretical work on the scientific (and political) mechanisms behind this triage.

Some scientists have argued that a species-based approach (like that very evident in creating the Bontebok National Park, Mountain Zebra National Park, and Addo Elephant Park) is in itself fatally flawed.[102] Ehrlich, for example, has

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quagga: 24 years of selective breeding', in R. Slomski, *Restoration of endangered and extinct Animals* (Poznan: 2010), 78–87.

99 Y. Groenewald, 'Zonkeys and ligers for canned hunts', *Weekly Mail and Guardian* (3 November 2005).

100 See R. Stoffle and M. Evans, 'Holistic conservation and cultural triage: American Indian perspectives on cultural resources', *Human Organization*, 49:2 (1990), 91–99; see 95.

101 M. Nijhuis, 'Conservation triage', *Slate*, http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/politics/2017/05/why_it_might_be_ok_to_cancel_your_times_subscription_over_bret_stephens.html

102 S. McIntyre, G. W. Barrett, R. L. Kitching, and H. F. Recher, 'Species triage – Seeing beyond wounded rhino', *Conservation Biology*, 6:4 (1992), 604–606. State-funding was directed into preserving the sub-species and in 1937 the Mountain Zebra National Park was proclaimed in the Eastern Cape to try to preserve the species (using specific parks for specific

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argued that our contemporary 'species-centric' ideas confuse conservation efforts towards populations, which are lost at an exponentially higher rate.[103]

Were one to be in the position of a Noah (as in Operation Noah, discussed in the introduction to this book, or the earlier, more biblical and bearded version) choosing which pairs of animals are admitted to the ark, how does one choose who to save? There is no space – in terms of finance or habitat – for all.[104] In this sense, the Quagga Project is individualistic in the classic liberal tradition – you help the one you choose. Equally, some analysts urge that society 'focus on conserving living animals, not on an expensive quest to bring back extinct ones – or some variation of them'.[105] Bringing them back – although cripplingly expensive – might not even be the most costly or difficult part. Moreover, they might simply go extinct again – especially if animal restoration is privileged over habitat preservation.[106] Funding is often directed to impressive mega-fauna (rhinos and elephants), and charismatic or photogenic animals (like lions), or towards causes that promote them as celebrity individuals (like Cecil the lion). There are other ways to direct this funding, of course. One could triage by prioritizing species that play some sort of essential role in their ecosystem –like apex predators? One could prioritize highly endangered species or *evolutionary distinctive species*. Alternatively one could focus on Erhlich's call for population above species and try to preserve a diverse genetic pool of existing species? One research team has worked out a life-and-death linear programming equation.[107] They criticize the criteria above as neglecting *'the cost of management and the likelihood that the management will succeed.'* They have (literally) done the maths and demonstrated that strategic triage ensures the conservation of one and a half times as many species with the same amount of funding. On the other hand, even bringing back a few strategic animals might be problematic. The refrain 'extinction is forever' is a valuable weapon in modern conservation's limited arsenal. Some scientists have admitted inflating statistics on the

flagship area-defining animals was not unusual: e.g. Addo Elephant National Park in 1931 with only 11 elephants and Bontebok National Park with 17).

103 L. E. Ogden, 'Extinction is forever … or is it?', *BioScience*, 64:6 (2014), 469–475; see 472.

104 M. Nijhuis, 'Conservation triage', Slate,http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/politics/2017/05/why_it_might_be_ok_to_cancel_your_times_subscription_over_bret_stephens.html

105 D. Ehrenfeld, 'Resurrected mammoths and dodos? Don't count on it', *The Guardian* (23 March 2013).

106 D. Jorgensen, 'Reintroduction and de-extinction', *BioScience*, 63:9 (2013), 719–720; quote from 719.

107 L. N. Joseph, R. F. Maloney, and H. P. Possingham, 'Optimal allocation of resources among threatened species: a project prioritization protocol', *Conservation Biology*, 23:2 (2009), 328–338.

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rate of extinction to scare the public into taking action.[108] It has been argued that the 'extinct are martyrs for the broader conservation cause'.[109] So de-extinction projects might threaten conservation itself, allowing a scepticism to creep in: the public might not take extinction seriously any more. Scientists would become the boy who cried (Tasmanian) wolf.

Many argue that 'it's better to spend the money on the living than the dead.'[110] After all, of South Africa's 300 extant mammals a third face a dubious future – mainly because of habitat loss and destruction. Senior scientists like Stuart Pimm and Paul Ehrlich have called de-extinction a 'spectacular waste of everyone's time' and a 'fascinating but dumb idea'.[111] McCauley concluded: 'The dominant message in this analysis appears to be that doing de-extinction en masse would be counterproductive … If this is ethically messy, ecologically awkward, and *now also really expensive* – I'm out.'[112] The bulk of scientific opinion seems to lie further on a gamut from Thoreau's 'Every creature is better alive than dead' and closer to Stephen King's 'Sometimes dead is better.'

But the Quagga Project can escape such trenchant critique. In most de-extinction, there is a high risk of failure due to difficulties of cloning – but not for Rau as only low technology has been used – just 'old school' back-breeding. There are ecological risks of introducing long-absent or genetically modified species, which is not the case in the Quagga Project. Critics have been anxious that de-extinction might produce commodities that 'just mimic the biology of extinct species, but fail to resurrect their ecology: maybe concentrate on species that went extinct recently rather than older extinctions; only work with species that can be restored to levels of abundance that meaningfully restore ecological function'.[113] The Rau quagga fits the bill. One can see de-extinction

108 L. Hannah and B. Phillips, 'Extinction-risk coverage is worth inaccuracies'. *Nature* 430 (2004), 141.

109 P. B. Banks and D. F. Hochuli, 'Extinction, de-extinction and conservation: a dangerous mix of ideas', *Australian Zoologist*, (2016).

110 D. Shultz, 'Bringing extinct species back from the dead could hurt – not help – conservation efforts', *Science* (27 February 2017). http://www.sciencemag.org/news/2017/02/bringing-extinct-species-back-dead-could-hurt-not-help-conservation-efforts

111 L. E. Ogden, 'Extinction is forever … or is it?', *BioScience*, 64:6 (2014), 469–475; see 472.

112 D. J. McCauley, M. Hardesty-Moore, B. S. Halpern, and H. S. Young, 'A mammoth undertaking: harnessing insight from functional ecology to shape de-extinction priority setting', *Functional Ecology*, (2016). See http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1365-2435.12728/abstract

113 D. J. McCauley, M. Hardesty-Moore, B. S. Halpern, and H. S. Young, 'A mammoth undertaking: harnessing insight from functional ecology to shape de-extinction priority setting', *Functional Ecology*, (2016). See http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1365-2435.12728/abstract

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as an ethical duty or a form of reparation (as in the Quagga Project) or a way of attaining new scientific knowledge.[114] Animal subjectivity (as referenced in the introduction to this book) has come to replace animal agency – but I would push this further to animal 'culture'. There may be a loss of culture in resurrected animal species, which the Rau quagga certainly may have neglected to their cost. After all, we have mentions of behaviour by travellers like Barrow, in *Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa* (1797–8), writing of the quagga as 'well-shaped, strong-limbed, not in the least vicious; but, on the contrary, soon rendered by domestication mild and tractable; yet, abundant as they are in the country, few have given themselves the trouble of turning them to any kind of use. They are infinitely more beautiful than, and fully as strong as, the mule, as easily supported on almost any kind of food, and are never out of flesh.' In recent times, the manager of the Karoo National Park, who received the project's progeny, still unsure what to even call the transitioning population in 1998, nevertheless did notice that the becoming-quaggas or 'quaggas in the making', as Rau put it, were behaving differently at least to mountain zebras: a different 'high-pitched bleat', an aversion to mountain zebras, and a penchant for 'hanging out with eland or springbok'.[115]

In restoring the quagga is the point to conserve their history or their present being? Is there a quagga-ness and cultural identity and passed on by the herd or between mother to child? Sandler pointed out that what is important about species is not just that they exist but that they exist in context – as part of a network of relationships, as part of performing certain functions.[116] Moreover, some critics suggest that a better use of de-extinction technology is restoring critically endangered species and reviving extinct sub-species like the quagga, rather than bringing back long-extinct or unique species. As Jones points out: 'This idea circumvents many of the criticisms of de-extinction from conservationists, whilst retaining public interest in de-extinction'.[117] The Quagga Project (and perhaps restoration projects more generally) teach one to avoid tidy answers – be they in reconstructing histories or in deciding conservation policy. Seemingly seamless classificatory schemata are fraught with

114 J. R. Bennett, R. F. Maloney, T. E. Steeves, J. Brazill-Boast, H. P. Possingham, and P. J. Seddon, 'Spending limited resources on de-extinction could lead to net biodiversity loss', *Nature Ecology & Evolution*, 1. https://www.nature.com/articles/s41559-016-0053

115 Quoted in B. Jordan, 'Karoo welcomes the quagga back from the dead', *Sunday Times* (27 September 1998); see also P. Harris, 'Extinct quagga making a comeback', *The Star* (14 August 1998).

116 R. L. Sandler, *The ethics of species: An introduction*, (Cambridge UK, 2012).

117 K. E. Jones, 'From dinosaurs to dodos: who could and should we de-extinct?', *Frontiers of Biogeography*, 6:1 (2014), 20–24; see 22.

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instabilities and contradictions.[118] Animals have been classified and culturally 'constructed' depending on who was doing the classifying. Which physiognomies and features were considered relevant changed over time and were further eroded by the Darwinian refutation of the fixity of species. Finally, in an apt metaphor, mtDNA analysis shows that zebras, with their colouration on a cline, are not a rigidly distinct species: they exist in shades of grey, not black and white.

## Conclusion: Earning Its Stripes?

One can ask a brutal question: what is the point of the quagga? One answer is a form of mental restoration for people. The de-extinction of the quagga was a conscious act of contrition and reparation. It has the power to reach a much wider audience than most conservation stories. After all, the mountain zebra's story (of rescue from near-extinction) is one of success and optimism, but it entirely fails to grip the public imagination.[119] It has made few headlines and has no purchase with the public. The quagga, however, operates on a uniquely powerful symbolic level. Perhaps the quagga is only a small step on a long journey; maybe it is even a step in the wrong direction. Perhaps it is quixotic to re/create an animal. But the Rau quagga does allow us to encounter the rarest animal of all in conservation circles – one that is itself on the very brink of extinction – and that is *hope*.

Accepting that species classification is, at least partly, a human judgement, I posed questions to the archives and growing literature on de-extinction. So I put the very same questions to the foster mother of the orphaned quagga at Elsenburg.[120] I asked her: Can a single quagga exist without being inducted into his culture by the herd? Can he be genuinely quagga (or even zebra!) if raised only with horses and humans (after all, she has noted that 'People are his mates, but horses taught him manners.')? But what is authenticity? Does he even look physically like a quagga – as he was gelded (castrated) at six months (hardly something even a very unlucky quagga would have experienced) and

118 H. Ritvo, *The Platypus and the Mermaid, and Other Figments of the Classifying Imagination* (Cambridge MA, 1997).

119 'Mountain zebra in danger of being wiped out', *Sunday Tribune* (15 January 1978); O. Loubser, 'How the Cape mountain zebra was saved from extinction', *The Natal Mercury* (2 December 1978); 'Mountain zebra returning slowly', *Eastern Province Herald* (15 May 1879); K. Harvey, 'Saved by Stripes', *The Citizen* (26 July 2003).

120 Interview, Kate Hurst, Elsenburg, Stellenbosch, 14 November 2013.

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now has a diet supplemented with commercial horse supplements like molasses, lucerne, and oats. Did he learn his behaviour and mannerisms – maybe even his voice and body language – from the horses and humans he grew up with after his mother abandoned him? What gives this quagga its identity – its genetic make-up? Its appearance? Its behaviour? Its habitat? Its history? Us?

There was a long pause, before she responded: 'Is he a *real* quagga? I don't know … We just think of him as Kevin.'

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# PART 3

## *Politics of Wildlife Conservation*

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CHAPTER 6

# The Emergence and Socio-Economic Impacts of Wildlife Ranching in South Africa

*Marja Spierenburg*

## Introduction

Driving through the Karoo, one cannot help but notice the endless stretches of high electric fences. In some areas they continue for hundreds of kilometres, dotted with signs warning trespassers about dangerous wildlife, along with the occasional boom gate to allow tourists to enter. Where not so long ago angora goats and merino sheep grazed behind knee-high fences, now one can occasionally spot wildebeest and giraffe while driving on the roads.

The owners of the wildlife ranches claim to have restored the land to 'what it was like when our forefathers arrived', conveniently ignoring the fact that at that time the land was also used for livestock breeding.[1] Fierce debates take place over these conversions, with some of the remaining farmers claiming that the wildlife ranches are 'breeding places of vermin', others angry about the destruction of farming infrastructure that had been subsidized by the (apartheid) state.[2] Other debates relate to the impacts these farm conversions have on farm workers and farm dwellers.[3] Proponents of the shifts to wildlife ranching present this as a win-win situation benefiting both nature conservation and local economic development, resulting in more employment opportunities in South Africa's countryside, where unemployment and poverty are posing immense problems to local government.[4] Others fear that the

1 W. Beinart, *The rise of conservation in South Africa: Settlers, livestock, and the environment 1770–1950* (Oxford, 2008).

2 F. Brandt, 'Tracking an invisible Great Trek: An ethnography on the re-configuration of power and belonging on trophy-hunting farms in the Karoo' (unpublished PhD thesis, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Amsterdam, 2013).

3 M. Spierenburg and S. Brooks, 'Private game farming and its social consequences in post-apartheid South Africa: contestations over wildlife, property and agrarian futures', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies,* 32:2 (2014), 151–172.

4 J. A. Langholz and G. Kerley, 'Combining conservation and development on private lands: an assessment of ecotourism-based private game reserves in the Eastern Cape', *Centre for African Conservation Ecology* (*formerly TERU*) *Report, 56* (2006).

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conversions result in the further shedding of labour and increased evictions of farm dwellers (AFRA, (2003)).

These debates, as well as the sight of the fences, became the inspiration for a research project that aimed specifically at studying the socio-economic consequences of conversions to wildlife-based production for this marginalized group of people.[5] This chapter will discuss the history of farm conversions to wildlife ranching in broad strokes, and will situate the conversions in the context of broader debates and developments concerning rural development, land, land, labour, and livelihoods. The chapter in that way also provides the context for those by Tariro Kamuti on governance of wildlife ranching in KwaZulu-Natal and the chapter by Dhoya Snijders on the breeding practices of wildlife in South Africa.[6]

While the rate of farm conversions increased drastically after South Africa's transition to democracy,[7] the first conversions took place in the mid-twentieth century.[8] Within different regions of the country, the conversions followed different trajectories. However, in South Africa, these trajectories were all related to threats to the position of white farmers in society and a desire to hold on to land once alienated from local populations.[9] Conflicts over land and changes in agricultural policies and markets were important sources of these threats. Hence,

5 The project initially focused on KwaZulu-Natal province and was supported by funding from SANPAD (South Africa Netherlands Partnership for Alternatives in Development). It was later expanded to include the Eastern Cape. Generous funding from NWO-WOTRO enabled the continuation and expansion of the project, for which we are most grateful (file number W 01.65.306.00). Between 2007 and 2014, the project has funded the research of a number of master's and doctoral students. The project involved cooperation between the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the University of the Free State, the University of Cape Town, and the University of the Western Cape.

6 Research conducted by the author as well as by Tariro Kamuti and Dhoya Snijders was part of a project entitled 'Farm dwellers the forgotten People? Consequences of conversions to private wildlife production in Kwa-Zulu-Natal and Eastern Cape provinces'. This programme was funded by the Dutch national research foundation NWO-WOTRO.

7 D. Snijders, 'Wild property and its boundaries–on wildlife policy and rural consequences in South Africa', *Journal of Peasant Studies,* 39:2 (2012); N. Zulu, 'An analysis of the post 1980s transition from pastoral to game farming in South Africa: A case study of the Marico district' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Witwatersrand, 2016).

8 D. A. Nell, 'The Development of Wildlife Utilization in South Africa and Kenya, c. 1950–1990' (unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Oxford, Oxford Trinity, 2003), 101–2; Snijders, 'Wild property'.

9 J. Carruthers, 'Wilding the farm or farming the wild? The evolution of scientific game ranching in South Africa from the 1960s to the present', Transactions of the Royal Society of South Africa, 63:2 (2008), 160–181; N. N. Mkhize, 'Private game farms and the tenure security of workers and dwellers in Cradock-implications for tenure reform in South Africa' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Cape Town, 2012); H. Wels, *Securing wilderness landscapes in South Africa: Nick Steele, private wildlife conservancies and saving rhinos* (Leiden, 2015).

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this chapter will continue with a brief overview of the most important agrarian changes influencing the emergence of wildlife ranching in South Africa.

### Taking the Land and Holding on to It

The farm conversions occur in the context of spatial legacies that subdivided South Africa geographically in disproportionally vast and fertile territories for white people and marginal territories for black people. During apartheid, townships and 'homeland' or 'bantustan' territories were constructed to control the mobility of Africans and create a cheap labour force.[10] These 'homelands' represented only 13% of the territory, or 17% of all rural land.[11] Apartheid, however, built on earlier colonial processes of land dispossession and labour disciplining, and in the Western and Eastern Cape these occurred before the implementation of the Native Land Act of 1913, which was chosen as the cut-off point in the land restitution policy allowing dispossessed people to reclaim ownership of land after the dismantling of apartheid.[12]

Enclosures and fencing ensured a certain form of control and notions of 'civilisation' during colonial conquest and occupation. While many Africans were forced to move into reserves – and later the 'homelands' – some nevertheless managed to – albeit precariously – hold on to land for cultivation and grazing on white-owned farms as slaves, serfs, wage workers, or labour tenants.[13] The development of these arrangements differed from region to region, however. To illustrate this, I will compare the developments in the two regions that were the main focus of the research project: the Eastern Cape part of the Karoo and the Midlands in KwaZulu-Natal.

The British occupied the Cape Colony at the turn of the nineteenth century and soon implemented the English legal property system, awarding settler farmers freehold title that made them individual, private owners of land. They also began to restrict the mobility and access to land of Africans, who were labelled as

10 See e.g. C. Bundy, *The rise and fall of the South African peasantry, second edition* (Cape Town/London, 1988); A. H. Jeeves and J. Crush, *White farms, black labor: the state and agrarian change in Southern Africa, 1910–50* (Oxford, 1997); S. Terreblanche, *A History of inequality in South Africa 1652–2002*, (Pietermaritzburg, 2002).

11 C. Walker, A. Bohlin, R. Hall, and T. Kepe (eds.), *Land, memory, reconstruction, and justice. Perspectives on land claims in South Africa* (Athens, OH, 2010).

12 *Ibid*.

13 Bundy, *The rise and fall of the South African peasantry*; C. Crais, *White supremacy and black resistance in pre-industrial South Africa: The making of the colonial order in the Eastern Cape, 1770–1865* (Cambridge, 1992); R. Ross, *Cape of torments: Slavery and resistance in South Africa* (London, 1983).

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'squatters' and 'vagrants' by colonial officials and landowners in need of labour. Both British settlers and 'Trekboere' moved into the Karoo, and over time turned the area into prime sheep farming country, mainly for wool production. British settlers introduced Merino sheep for wool production, which built up commerce considerably and became one of the colony's dominant exports, attracting European capital investment in wool farms.[14] With the expansion of early commercial farming in the region, European settlers were not only concerned about labour shortages but also felt threatened by a successfully competing African peasantry tapping into opportunities created by the colonial economy. Black peasant farmers in the eastern part of the Cape Colony were, however, increasingly constrained to produce on white farms in various forms of 'quasi-feudal' social relations.[15]

Initially, sheep farming was rather labour-intensive, as sheep had to be moved across great distances in this semi-arid area to provide for enough grazing. To accomplish this, a 'shepherd-and-kraal system' was instituted, accompanied by the establishment of outlying *veeposte* (livestock posts), requiring the continued presence of Africans in the landscape. Over time, however, technological innovations and investments altered the infrastructure of the settler farms, which stimulated the concentration of ownership and land consolidation in the Karoo and affected labour demands. Windmills and fences appeared from the late nineteenth century onwards and facilitated the process of enclosure of private property.[16] On the farm, the windmill improved access to water, and wire fences changed the grazing patterns of domestic stock, which in turn altered labour demands on the vast sheep farms. The enclosed camps for sheep replaced shepherds and made *bywoners* or tenants, who often manned the outlying *veeposte*, redundant. Fences allowed higher stocking rates, as the farmer could control his stock better in comparison to the shepherd-and-kraal system, where sheep could die or disappear easily when herded to and from grazing areas. Fencing was believed to 'civilize' the country; it improved farmers' methods of surveillance and control.[17]

The fences drastically altered social relations among the inhabitants of the territory. They reordered the landscape and its control; social relations were depersonalised, as society was increasingly defined by relations between

14 Ross, *Cape of torments*.

15 C. Van Onselen, 'Race and class in the South African countryside: Cultural osmosis and social relations in the sharecropping economy of the South Western Transvaal, 1900–1950', *The American Historical Review,* 95:1 (1990), 99–123.

16 S. Archer, 'Technology and ecology in the Karoo: A century of windmills, wire and changing farming practice', in S. Dovers, R. Edgecombe, and B. Guest (eds.), *South Africa's environmental history: Cases & comparisons* (Athens, OH, 2002), 112–138.

17 Archer 'Technology and ecology in the Karoo', 124–127.

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owners and non-owners of land.[18] The fences resulted in the displacement of many people, shepherds, and *bywoners* (tenants and share croppers), who had to look for homes outside of these fences when their labour was not required any longer. At the same time, farm workers themselves often protested against harsh farm regimes by frequently leaving and moving onto other farms. The continuous search for better wages and working conditions produced a constantly available, and mobile, labour force that lived in the district,[19] for whom access to land for cultivation and small livestock became increasingly difficult.

In KwaZulu-Natal the system of labour tenancy continued for a much longer period. From the late nineteenth century, during the period when Natal was a British Colony, a partly symbiotic (but also exploitative) relationship developed between white farm owners and black residents in the region.[20] With only a few designated 'native reserves' in the western part of the Colony and an already densely settled coastal area, black homestead heads entered into agreements with white landowners, which enabled them to live and run cattle on private land while, in exchange, providing labour to the farm. The evolving system of labour tenancy became an entrenched feature of the social history of the region.[21]

Despite persistent attempts by the state to stamp out the practice – including large-scale forced removals from these farms in the 1960s – labour tenancy has persisted, albeit in altered form, into the present. As a result, most privately owned Midlands farms have members of Zulu-speaking households living on them, and while they are often poor, they are often reluctant to leave land that they regard as home and where they can keep livestock.

Initially, in the absence of fences, cattle were moved down from the *sourveld* grazing available on the Estcourt and Mooi River plateau, to the lower-lying *sweetveld* grasslands in winter. By the early part of the twentieth century, the central Midlands farms were becoming more profitable. Labour tenants were becoming an expense to the rapidly capitalising farmers. Not only did they and their cattle occupy valuable land on productive farms, they could also not always be relied upon to perform their labour duties. From the 1930s onwards, tensions between African fathers and sons arose as sons began to abscond, not

18 L. Van Sittert, 'Holding the line: The Rural Enclosure Movement in the Cape Colony, c. 1865–1910', *Journal of African History,* 43 (2002), 118.

19 L. K. Evans, 'The makings and meanings of homeland spaces: A social history of resettlement in the Ciskei, 1960–1976' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Sheffield, 2010).

20 S. Brooks, M. Spierenburg, L. Van Brakel, A. Kolk, and K. B. Lukhozi, 'Creating a commodified wilderness: Tourism, private game farming, and "Third Nature" landscapes in Kwazulu-Natal', *Tijdschrift voor economische en sociale geografie,* 102:3 (2011), 260–274.

21 T. V. McClendon, *Genders and generations apart: Labor tenants and customary law in segregation-era South Africa, 1920s to 1940s* (Portsmouth, NH/Oxford/Cape Town, 2002).

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returning from the mines, causing homestead heads to break their informal labour contracts with the farmers.[22]

African livestock keepers retreated further north and east into the *thornveld*, where landowners might buy a second farm in addition to their more productive land in the Midlands. These 'labour' farms were acquired in response to the perceived problem of the presence of labour tenants, and were at least a partial solution to the problem from the point of view of both farmer and labour tenant. At certain times of the year, tenants living on labour farms would be summoned to the associated productive farm to work; thereafter, they would return to the labour farm or seek work on their own initiative on the Transvaal mines. In effect, therefore, the north-eastern region historically served as a source of private cheap labour for Midland farmers: McClendon coins the term 'off-site labour tenants' to describe the situation of these people. It is important to note that, apart from the sporadic labour demands of the farmer, farm dwellers on *thornveld* labour farms experienced a high degree of autonomy because they lived on land that was not actually occupied by the owner.[23]

While the descriptions above indicate different regional trajectories in relation to the arrangements and persistence of labour tenancy, they also demonstrate a number of similarities. Initially, labour was scarce, which facilitated the persistence of labour tenancy arrangements, despite the fact that the state – especially the apartheid state – tried to prevent Africans from having even some rudimentary form of control over and access to land in the 'European' areas.[24] However, through subsidies and major capital investments many white farmers were able to invest in infrastructure as well as mechanise important parts of their production. As a result, labour tenancy over time became less essential to farmers' operations. Farmers needed fewer workers but more skilled ones.[25]

## Threats to the System and the First Conversions to Wildlife Ranching

During the second half of the twentieth century, the economic conditions for (white) commercial farmers deteriorated in some areas of the country. Farmers

22 *Ibid*.

23 Brooks et al., 'Creating a commodified wilderness'.

24 S. Brooks and L. Kjelstrup, 'An anatomy of dispossession: Post-apartheid land rights and farm dweller relocation in the context of a private game reserve initiative, northern KwaZulu-Natal' *Journal of Contemporary African Studies,* 32:2 (2014), 238–257; McClendon, *Genders and generations apart.*

25 Jeeves and Crush, *White farms, black labor*.

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in the Karoo were affected by increasing farming costs and declining wool prices. An increasing number of farmers went bankrupt, while others managed to stay afloat by increasing the scale of their operations. The number of farms declined but their seize increased. A couple of farmers saw opportunities in switching to wildlife ranching. Wildlife ranching was believed to have smaller labour requirements that compensated for the increase in the costs of farm labour during this period.[26] The increasingly enclosed and large consolidated stock farms in arid and semi-arid areas were ideal for game farming, which was perceived to be more profitable, economically and ecologically, than stock farming. Nell writes that 'the changing nature of rural landholding may also have contributed to the expansion of land used for wildlife'.[27] Game farms were increasingly perceived as marvellous investments and quite a few farms were taken over by landowners who had no connection to farming,[28] often with the former owner staying on as manager. Ownership of a game farm was becoming a status symbol in South Africa.

The development of wildlife utilization as land use has been entangled with the interests of wealthy farmers who were at the forefront of the industry.[29] Wild animals were easily accommodated (also together with livestock) on the extensive livestock farms, as both forms of land use required a comparable infrastructural layout with 'fenced enclosures, watering points, and transport infrastructure linking them to markets and clients'.[30] Nell further argues that as a result of this advantage the start-up costs were relatively low, although 'infrastructure demanded by game ranching such as specially-constructed – and higher – game fences, roads, and accommodation for clients could ultimately require significant private investment'.[31]

Nell[32] focuses mainly on economic motivations for conversions, though some status issues are discussed as well. However, other concerns seemed to also have played a role, notably concerns about the increasing resistance against apartheid. Wels[33] discusses these in relation to the emergence of wildlife ranching in Natal. In his book on Nick Steele, the initiator of the conservancy movement in Natal, he relates how Steele was mainly driven by a desire to

26 D. A. Nell, 'The development of wildlife utilization in South Africa and Kenya, c. 1950–1990' (unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Oxford, Oxford Trinity, 2003), 101–2.
27 Nell, 'The development', 105.
28 *Ibid*., 106.
29 *Ibid*., 106.
30 *Ibid.*, 10.
31 *Ibid.*, 101.
32 Nell, 'The development'.
33 Wels, *Securing wilderness*.

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recreate the wilderness landscape he missed after being transferred away from the reserves of (the then homeland) Zululand to the farming area of Natal. However, his focus on military style patrols as an important means to accomplish this did much to promote the idea of conservancies and wildlife ranching among farmers in the area. Complaints about cattle theft were cited by farmers as reasons to convert to wildlife management; yet there was also a general fear of crime and increasing activities of anti-apartheid activists. Poaching on the newly established conservancies was often discursively linked to these activists, and the patrols – organised through the Farm Patrol Plan initiated by Nick Steele – allowed farmers to protect their properties without being seen as openly supporting apartheid.[34]

In the 1960s a number of farmers – albeit small – started to develop business models based on wildlife production.[35] Backed by agricultural unions they formed provincial – and later national – associations to lobby for policy changes that would promote wildlife ranching.[36] The most prominent organisation became the South African Game Ranching Organisation (SAGRO). Wildlife ranchers claimed that authorities were actively preventing the production and trade in wildlife, and financial institutions were hampering their development by not recognizing wildlife as an economic asset. Wildlife, however, could not be owned legally and hence was considered a risk by the financial institutions such as the Land Bank.[37] In 1989, the lobbying started to have an impact.

By that time, interest in wildlife ranching increased as a result of economic problems in the 'conventional' agricultural sector. In the 1980s, South Africa's economy was stagnating, resulting in reforms, notably in the agricultural sector. The state began to promote the shift towards economies of scale, fostering a further concentration of landholdings in a attempt to streamline the increasingly debt-ridden sector.[38] The state also started to cut back on subsidies that had kept some of the less successful producers in place and to privatise development banks.[39]

In 1989, then Prime Minister P. W. Botha agreed to open the National Game Conference.[40] Shortly afterward he instructed the Law Commission to start

34 *Ibid.*

35 J. Carruthers, 'Wilding the farm or farming the wild? The evolution of scientific game ranching in South Africa from the 1960s to the present', *Transactions of the Royal Society of South Africa,* 63:2 (2008), 160–181; Nell, 'The development'; Wels, *Securing wilderness.*

36 Snijders, 'Wild property', 503–520.

37 *Ibid.*, 'Wild property'.

38 J. Van Zyl, N. Vink, J. Kirsten, and D. Poonyth, 'South African agriculture in transition: the 1990s', *Journal of International Development,* 13 (2001), 725–739.

39 Van Zyl et al., 'South African agriculture'.

40 Snijders, 'Wild property'.

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working on the problems wildlife ranchers experienced with the legal protection of game and to explore whether wildlife could be accommodated by agricultural legislation such as the Stock Theft Act. This necessitated a redefinition of wildlife, which till then had been res nullius, within the categories of wild and domesticated.[41] The Game Theft Act changed this by integrating the concept of occupation, arguing that enclosing was sufficient to show one's intention to – physically – control wildlife on one's property. Adequate enclosure, attained by erecting 2.4 metre-tall game fences around one's property, was needed to claim the wildlife on one's land. The Game Theft Act was approved and adopted in 1991 – just before the end of apartheid. The Act bestowed landowners with the right to (a) capture and keep most species without having to apply for separate permits, (b) to hunt at any time of the year, and (c) to market, sell, or donate animal commodities at will. Legislation was strictly tied to landownership.[42]

## Post-1994 Deregulation, Reregulation, and Commodification

Since the first democratic elections in 1994, South Africa's post-apartheid governments have been and are struggling to reconcile the need for social transformation by addressing historical injustices with the need to stimulate economic growth, while at the same time restructuring government itself. While this restructuring process initially was explained as a short-term 'shock therapy' to respond to the economic stagnation that had set in during the 1980s, many authors have concluded that the South African state appears to have embraced an enduring neo-liberal project, focusing on a reduction of the role of the state and a more important role for the market in addressing economic and social issues.[43] This has resulted in sometimes-conflicting policies – or contradictory policy outcomes.

In relation to the agrarian sector, the first post-apartheid government not only introduced a land-reform program to help change the racially skewed distribution of land but also continued to further deregulate the agrarian sector. Marketing boards were closed, price controls abolished, export monopolies

41 *Ibid.*; this volume.

42 Snijders, 'Wild property'; D. Snijders, 'Shifting species in South Africa: Wildlife policy, rural consequences' (unpublished PhD thesis, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 2015).

43 C. Bassett, South Africa: Revisiting capital's 'formative action', *Review of African Political Economy,* 35:116 (2008), 185–202; A. Habib, 'South Africa: Conceptualising a politics of human-oriented development', *Social Dynamics,* 34:1 (2008), 46–61.

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were abandoned, most of the remaining subsidies abolished, while at the same time a strong emphasis was placed on boosting export production An important effect of this deregulation was the strengthening of the producers and agribusiness corporations in the richer export-oriented sectors closely connected to the world market, which further fuelled a process of land consolidation.[44] Heightened pressures on commercial farmers to compete in a more liberalized environment have taken their toll: since 1993 the number of commercial farming units has decreased by at least 20% down to 40,000 farming units in 2010.[45] This does not mean, however, that white landowners own less land; the result is merely larger properties in fewer hands. Land reform has not significantly changed the racial distribution of land. While estimates vary, and plans have been introduced to extend the cut-off date, by 2012 about 7.5 % of formerly white-owned land had been transferred through the land-reform programme – private sales and arrangements are not included in this figure.[46]

The deregulation also had major consequences for the workforce. The consolidation of agricultural production and land contributed to a decline in the number of jobs on the commercial farms between 1985 and 1995, followed by a slight increase up until 2002, before declining again.[47] At the same time, government also tried to regulate the labour issue. During the 1990s, agricultural workers were recognized for the first time in the Labour Relations Act, but only in 2003 was a minimum wage introduced for the sector.[48] As a result, an attempt was made to further reduce the number of farm workers, and there has been a significant tendency to replace permanent workers by casual labour.[49] In addition to the government's labour legislation, government passed the Labour Tenant Act in 1996 and the Extension of Security of Tenure Act (ESTA) in 1997 to address the rights of people living on privately owned land – including (former) tenants. The objectives of this legislation were to secure farm dwellers' rights to occupy and use the land, preventing arbitrary

44 G. Williams, J. Ewert, J. Hamann, and N. Vink, 'Liberalizing markets and reforming land in South Africa', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies,* 16:1 (1998), 65–94.

45 SA Parliament, 2010.

46 C. Walker and A. Dubbs, *The distribution of land in South Africa: An overview*. Fact Check no.1. (Belville, 2013).

47 N. Vink and J. Van Rooyen, *The economic performance of agriculture in South Africa since 1994: Implications for food security*, Development Planning Division, Development Bank of Southern Africa, 2009.

48 Brandt, 'Tracking an invisible Great Trek'.

49 M. Aliber, M. Baipethi, and P. Jacobs, 'Agricultural employment scenarios', in R. Hall (ed.), *Another countryside? Policy options for land and agrarian reform in South Africa* (Cape Town, 2009).

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evictions and regulating relations between farm dwellers and landowners.[50] In practice, many have argued that the unintended consequences of the regulations have been an increase in the number of farm dwellers displaced from farms. The fear of farm dwellers claiming land through ESTA resulted in many pro-active evictions just prior to the passing of the act. Furthermore, once the act was passed, many landowners have used it as a guideline for legal evictions.[51]

Subject to fierce global competition and feeling threatened by the land-reform program and new labour legislation – whether this feeling is justified or not remains a moot point – white farmers developed a range of strategies to hold on to the land and to justify their place in post-apartheid society. Shifting to wildlife-based production is one such a strategy,[52] and the number of wildlife ranches increased dramatically after 1994. How much land and how many farms have been converted is difficult to estimate, as not all changes of land use and ownership are registered with the government – sometimes only with certain departments. Nevertheless, in 2006, the NAMC estimated that wildlife is produced on nearly 10,000 commercial farms, covering about 14.9 million hectares.[53] More recent estimates cite the number of 9 000 wildlife ranches, but with an expanded area of 17.04 million hectares.[54] However, it is difficult to ascertain whether these are realistic figures or mere promotion.[55]

Wildlife ranching takes on different forms – hunting farms (both 'biltong' and trophy hunting), what is called 'ecotourism', breeding for live sales, and breeding for venison – which are sometimes combined on the same property, also occasionally in combination with more 'conventional' forms of agriculture. Some farmers have gradually converted their farms, taking down internal

50 R. Hall and L. Ntsebeza, 'Introduction', in L. Ntsebeza and R. Hall (eds.), *The Land Question in South Africa: The challenge of transformation and redistribution* (Cape Town, 2007).

51 Ibid.

52 N. Andrew, F. Brandt, M. Spierenburg, D. Snijders, and N. Mkhize, 'Land consolidation and the expansion of game farming in South Africa: Impacts on farm dwellers' livelihoods and rights to land in the Eastern Cape', *Africa for sale? Positioning the state, land and society in Foreign Large-Scale Land Acquisitions in Africa* (2013), 97–130.

53 NAMC, 'Report on investigation to identify problems for sustainable growth and development in South African wildlife ranching: National Agricultural Marketing Council', 2006.

54 A. Taylor, P. Lindsey, and H. Davies-Mostert, *With contributions from M. Child, I. Little, G. Martindale and S. Page.* 'An assessment of the economic, social and conservation value of the wildlife industry and its potential to support the green economy in South Africa', *The Endangered Wildlife Trust,* (Johannesburg, 2016).

55 D. Snijders, 'Shifting species'; Wels, *Securing wilderness*.

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fencing and stocking their land with wildlife. Over time, neighbouring farms were bought and amalgamated to create enough space for wildlife and tourism activities. Some also form conservancies: farmers retain ownership of their individual farms, but fencing between the properties is removed to allow wildlife to roam across vast stretches of land. Other farm owners enlist the assistance of investors to expand their properties and invest in wildlife and tourist accommodation. Some wildlife ranches are part of big international corporations controlling multiple properties, both in South Africa as well as abroad.[56]

### Farmers or Conservationists?

Interviews with local farmers and managers in the wildlife industry reveal a number of common motivations for farm conversions, all centred on a desire to hold onto their land.[57] Many argue that stock farming is no longer profitable and that game requires fewer permanent workers (and thus resident farm dweller families). Others, on the other hand, claim that game farming creates more employment opportunities than conventional farming,[58] and hope that emphasizing their new role, as nature conservationists will protect them from land reform. They argue that they are contributing to returning the land to natural wilderness, to 'the way it was before commercial farming spoiled the landscape' – conveniently forgetting the history of the black peasantry displaced by commercial farming. Especially in the semi-arid part of the Eastern Cape Province, the Karoo, there has been a long-standing debate, spanning more than a hundred years, regarding how best to manage its biophysical environment.[59] These debates centre on land degradation, desertification, and perceptions of over-stocking, and many game ranchers claim that wildlife-based production is the best remedy for these problems.

Conversions to private wildlife conservation and production are driven by a growing market for nature and wildlife tourism, both consumptive and

56 Andrew et al., 'Land consolidation'.

57 T. Kamuti, 'Private wildlife governance in a context of radical uncertainty: dynamics of game farming policy and practice in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa' (unpublished PhD thesis, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, University of the Free State, 2016); N. Mkhize, 'Game farm conversions and the land question: unpacking present contradictions and historical continuities in farm dwellers' tenure insecurity in Cradock', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies,* 32:2 (2014), 207–219; D. Snijders, 'Shifting species'.

58 Langholz and Kerley, 'Combining conservation'.

59 E. Nel and T. Hill, 'Marginalisation and demographic change in the semi-arid Karoo, South Africa', *Journal of Arid Environments*, 72:12 (2008), 2264–2274.

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non-consumptive. They are also facilitated by legislation and policies that allow landowners to economically exploit the wildlife on their properties.[60] This process of commodification of nature has become the subject of a growing body of literature.[61] Most authors place the increase in the scale at which nature is economically exploited in the broader context of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism has become a globally dominant political project and has also been taken up by the South African government.[62] Within this project, the market is put forward as the solution to both environmental and societal problems.[63]

Nature becomes increasingly marketed as a refuge from the modern world. Private wildlife conservation and production bet on international and relatively wealthy nature tourists coming to southern and South Africa to enjoy an unforgettable wilderness experience. As a result, the relations between hosts and guests on private game reserves and game farms are largely shaped by the (perceived) demands of the market.[64] From the point of view of the landowner – for whom wildlife-based development is now a crucial source of capital generation – the wildlife and wilderness experience provided must live up to the expectations of the tourist and the market-based images to which they have been exposed. This involves the discursive repositioning of farms through tourist marketing, as well as, in most cases, physical and spatial alterations to the landscape.[65]

While state conservation organizations in South Africa generally are supportive of the expansion of wildlife habitat through farm conversions, and increasingly seek to cooperate with game ranchers or even devolve conservation tasks to private landowners,[66] some questions have also been raised in relation to their contribution to the resilience of the network of protected areas. Concerns have been raised about the stocking practices by game ranchers, who have been accused of focusing on those species that are popular with tourists for game viewing and hunting. Legislation to limit the transport of protected species is fiercely fought by the national organization representing game

60 Snijders, 'Wild property'.
61 N. Castree, 'Neoliberalising nature: Processes, effects and evaluations', *Environment and Planning,* 40 (2008), 153–173.
62 Terreblanche, *A History of inequality.*
63 K. Bakker, 'The "commons" versus the "commodity": alter-globalization, anti-privatization and the human right to water in the global South', *Antipode*, 39:3 (2007), 430–55.
64 S. Brooks, M. Spierenburg, and H. Wels, 'The organization of hypocrisy? Juxtaposing tourists and farm dwellers in game farming in South Africa', in W. Van Beek and A. Schmidt, *African hosts & their guests: Cultural dynamics of tourism,* 201 (Suffolk, 2012).
65 Brooks et al., 'Creating a commodified wilderness'.
66 Snijders, 'Wild property'.

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ranchers' interests, Wildlife Ranching South Africa The intensive breeding of trophy animals raises questions about the 'wildness' of some of the wildlife on private wildlife reserves and game ranches, along with concerns about the contamination of wild populations by animals escaping from these areas.[67] These concerns have resulted in legislation such as the Threatened or Protected Species (TOPS) Act, which entails restrictions on stocking and transportation practices resented by many wildlife ranchers. At the same time, however, the state has benefitted from rising revenue streams, and the Department of Environmental Affairs (dea) has tended to facilitate the growth of the wildlife industry. An increasing number of animals can be hunted in South Africa, with the Eastern Cape topping the list at 56 huntable species.[68] The Eastern Cape Province's permit fees alone amounted to 66.83 million rand in 2009,[69] a figure which does not include other revenues such as transportation permits, daily fees, taxidermy exportation fees, or fees for keeping wildlife on private land. Environmental policy has been contested by landowners, and the DEA has criticised game farmers for harmful conservation practices. Yet, it is DEA policy that prescribes the high game fences that have led to disputed borders and in effect reinforce farm owners' claims to land and wildlife. Politically and legally, the policy has placed wildlife species into new [private] property regimes that facilitate the privatisation and commodification of game, thereby contributing to expansion of game farms.[70]

Confronted with some of the critiques emanating from the DEA along with a perception of over-regulation, wildlife ranchers shift their allegiance between the DEA and the Department of Agriculture (DoA), claiming that wildlife now has officially been recognized as an agricultural product and that wildlife ranching is just another form of – productive – agriculture.[71] However, while overall the DoA appears supportive, and many within the Department believe that wildlife ranching serves as a motor for local economic development, some critiques can be heard as well. A former minister of Agriculture and Land Affairs questioned the productive value of game farms and suggested a moratorium on them at the 2005 National Land Summit. Rural Development and Land Reform Minister Nkwinti described game farms as 'elitist' and said they

67 Andrew et al., 'Land consolidation'; Snijders, 'Wild property'.
68 Snijders, 'Wild property'.
69 Carol in Snijders, 'Wild property'.
70 Snijders, 'Wild property'.
71 Snijders, 'Shifting species'; T. Kamuti, 'The fractured state in the governance of private game farming: the case of KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 32:2 (2014), 190–206.

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amounted to a 're-colonisation of the countryside'.[72] Some have also raised questions in relation to food security, arguing that wildlife ranching is a waste of productive land and that wildlife populations transmit diseases to domesticated livestock.[73] At the same time, however, new and powerful champions of the game farming industry have arisen. Cyril Ramaphosa, former trade union leader and current President of South Africa, owns a number of game farms in the north of South Africa. He is a member of the WRSA and has on numerous occasions defended the wildlife industry in public speeches.[74] In September 2012, he apologized after he had made an ostentatious 18 million Rand bid on a TB-free buffalo at a game auction.[75]

Until the notorious Mala Mala case, land reform played scarcely any role in debates about wildlife ranching. In 2013, the Ministry of Rural Development and Land Reform agreed to pay one billion SAR to multi-millionaire Michael Rattray to settle a land claim lodged by a community of 15,000 people who had been evicted from the land in the early twentieth century.[76] The deal was, interestingly enough, hailed by Minister Nkwinti, who had been critical of the impact of game farming on land reform.[77] The settlement, which wiped out a large chunk of the Land Claims Commission's budget for that year, seemed to confirm concerns expressed by some land-rights activists that wildlife ranching had a negative impact on land reform firstly by driving up land prices, rendering land reform very costly. A related issue is the amalgamation of farms that accompanies most of the farm conversions and the creation of 'pristine' wildernesses justifying the movement of farm dwellers from their homesteads scattered across the farms, which subsequently allows them to be moved entirely off the farms following the provisions of ESTA – rendering the evictions legal. In our discussions with government staff – both at the provincial and national level – however, land reform and wildlife ranching were rarely connected, even though in the case studies involved in our research project, the Gongolo Private Game Reserve, land claims and conflicts over these claims

72 M. Haywood, 'Re-wilder or hyperwilderness–plus ça change', *South African Journal of Art History,* 22:1 (2007), 195–203.

73 Govender, 'Minister considers stopping all new golf estates and game farms', *Sunday Times*, 7 August 2005 (http://allafrica.com/stories/200508070155.html; last accessed 22 February 2018).

74 See e.g. 'Ramaphosa a beacon of hope for SA farmers', *Farmers Weekly*, 20 December 2012. (http://www.fin24.com/Economy/Ramaphosa-a-beacon-of-hope-for-SA-farmers-20121220).

75 See 'Ramaphosa sorry about 'R18m' buffalo, *City Press*, 20 September 2012. (http://www.news24.com/Archives/City-Press/Ramaphosa-sorry-about-R18m-buffalo-20150429).

76 See http://www.ruraldevelopment.gov.za/news-room/news-flash/file/3078, and Joubert and Hofstatter (2013).

77 See http://www.drdlr.gov.za/news-room/media-statements/file/2302.

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derailed the establishment of the private reserve.[78] Approaches did vary from province to province though. While provincial authorities in the Eastern Cape were unwilling to consider wildlife ranches for land redistribution,[79] some land claimants in KwaZulu-Natal did acquire wildlife ranches, mainly through restitution cases.[80] In the latter cases, land-reform beneficiaries were often required to continue the game-farming operation, which, given the large amounts of capital required to do so, as well as the lack of experiences in this type of land use, posed considerable problems for the beneficiaries.[81]

All these contradictory policies and voices do, on the one hand, create an uncertainty in terms of the policy context in which wildlife ranchers operate, which their main representative body, Wildlife Ranching South Africa, has bemoaned publicly. On the other hand, however, this uncertainty also creates room for manoeuvring by wildlife ranchers, pitting government departments and bodies against one another and shifting their allegiances regularly.[82] Nevertheless, the WRSA is promoting a more uniform – and advantageous – policy environment, and appears to be dominating the processes within the Wildlife Forum, which was set up to design new policies for the sector. It has successfully excluded a number of actors from the Forum – including farm worker and dweller representations.[83]

## Impacts of Farm Conversions on Farm Dwellers

Social justification is provided by the claim forwarded by game farmers and their professional organizations that game farming generates more employment than 'conventional' farming, and that game farming hence is a win-win strategy fostering both local economic development and nature conservation. While stocking and breeding practices cast serious doubt concerning the conservation claim,[84] the economic development claim can equally be questioned.

Even researchers who are quite adamant about the positive impacts of farm conversions on employment creation, such as Langholz and Kerley,[85] nevertheless cite reduced labour demands as an important motive for game farmers

78 Brooks et al., 'The organization of hypocrisy?'; Kamuti, 'Private wildlife governance'.
79 Andrew et al., 'Land consolidation'.
80 M. Ngubane and S. Brooks, 'Land beneficiaries as game farmers: conservation, land reform and the invention of the "community game farm" in KwaZulu-Natal', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 31:3 (2013), 399–420.
81 Ngubane and Brooks, 'Land beneficiaries'.
82 Kamuti, 'Private wildlife governance'; Snijders, 'Wild property'.
83 Snijders, 'Wild property'.
84 *Ibid*.
85 Langholz and Kerley, 'Combining conservation'.

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to shift to wildlife-based production, a finding confirmed by researchers in our research project.[86] One of the early promoters of game farming forwards the same advantage.[87] Labour demands, however, do vary across different modes of game farming.

The high-end 'eco-tourism' lodges indeed generate more employment than 'conventional' farming, especially for women. However, this is a rather fickle industry; during the first few years after the financial crisis, many of the high-end lodges witnessed a drastic reduction in the number of bookings, and many employees – especially in the lower ranks – either lost their jobs or saw their working hours and pay significantly reduced. Most of the jobs created are seasonal and temporary, and former farm workers and dwellers often only have access to these insecure jobs in the lower ranks.[88]

Most other forms of game farming result in the shedding, casualization, and outsourcing of labour.[89] Hunting and breeding farms require far less labour. Only a few labourers are kept on to maintain water points or as trackers, and on hunting farms some of the women manage to obtain jobs looking after the guests in the hunting lodges, but hunting parties are often small. Furthermore, while the high-end 'eco-tourism' lodges tend to follow official hospitality sector regulations and offer slightly higher wages, hunting and breeding farms tend to stick to the low wages of the agricultural sector.[90]

Positive statistics provided by other researchers[91] are often skewed towards one mode of game farming, and fail to take into account the effects of the amalgamation of properties accompanying most conversions. While the owner or manager interviewed may have hired more staff, he – in most cases – does not take into account the fact that most of the labourers on the farms acquired to expand the game farm (on average about 5[92]), lost their jobs as well as access to land. It must be noted, however, that the shedding and casualization of labour as well as attempts to prevent land claims by farm dwellers are not particular to game farming. While the justifications may differ, very similar mechanisms and strategies are being deployed by the remaining commercial farmers in South Africa.[93]

86 Brandt, 'Tracking an invisible Great Trek'; Mkhize, 'Game farm conversions'.

87 R. C. Bigalke, 'Some thoughts on game farming', *Proceedings of the Annual Congresses of the Grassland Society of Southern Africa*, 1:1 (1966), 95–102.

88 Andrew et al., 'Land consolidation'.

89 Spierenburg and Brooks, 'Private game farming'.

90 Brandt, 'Tracking an invisible Great Trek'.

91 Langholz and Kerley, 'Combining conservation'.

92 *Ibid*.

93 S. Bolwig, S. Ponte, A. Du Toit, L. Riisgaard, and N. Halberg, 'Integrating poverty and environmental concerns into value-chain analysis: a conceptual framework', *Development*

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Game farming has not offered a solution to the loss of jobs in the South African countryside, as has been claimed by its supporters. In addition, shifts to game farming and the conversion of the landscape to 'wilderness' significantly reduces possibilities for farm dwellers to claim the land, even in cases where they have been residing on farms for several generations.[94]

## Concluding Remarks

The emergence and growth of game farming in South Africa has been facilitated by game farmers' access to private property, but has also been driven by a desire to maintain that access and ownership. Conversions both in the past as well as in the present appear to be related to threats to the position of white farmers experienced in South Africa. From the incursions by 'terrorists' opposing the apartheid regime to the post-apartheid promise of land reforms to return land to those who lost their lands under colonialism and apartheid, these threats – whether real or perceived – have spurred an increasing number of farmers to shift from conventional farming to wildlife-based production. Another constant factor in these conversions are problems with the profitability of conventional farming, with fluctuating prices, and an increase in the 'production squeeze' (cf. Van der Ploeg).[95]

The conversions have, in many cases, been accompanied by an increase in scale through the amalgamation of multiple properties;[96] a strategy also deployed by the remaining commercial farmers. In addition, the wildlife sector has benefitted from an increased commodification of wildlife – and 'wilderness',[97] attracting quite a number of foreign and international investors. The Game Theft Act ensured game farmers' claims on wildlife as property, and hence financial benefits derived from wildlife. Elsewhere in this volume, Dhoya Snijders discusses how these processes of property claims and

*Policy Review,* 28:2 (2010), 173–194; A. Du Toit, ' "Social exclusion" Discourse and chronic poverty: A South African case study', *Development and Change,* 35:5 (2004), 987–1010; J. Ewert and A. Du Toit, 'A deepening divide in the countryside: Restructuring and rural livelihoods in the South African wine industry', *Journal of Southern African Studies,* 31:2 (2005).

94 Brooks et al., 'The organization of hypocrisy?'.

95 J. Van der Ploeg, J. D. *The new peasantries: struggles for autonomy and sustainability in an era of empire and globalization* (Oxford, 2012).

96 Brandt, 'Tracking an invisible Great Trek'; Langholz and Kerley, 'Combining conservation'.

97 B. Büscher, S. Sullivan, K. Neves, J. Igoe, and D. Brockington, 'Towards a synthesized critique of neoliberal biodiversity conservation', *Capitalism Nature Socialism,* 23:2 (2012), 4–30.

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commodification have resulted in the introduction of a host of modern technologies in the breeding of game.

While increase in scale and the use of technology as well as the shedding of labour are also common strategies in 'conventional' farming in South Africa, conversions to game farming have additional advantages. Promoting an image of game farmers as conservationists, also allows game farmers to address their unease about their social position in post-apartheid South Africa – though with mixed results. Furthermore, it justifies militarized security of their properties.[98]

Social justification is provided by the claim forwarded by game farmers and their professional organizations that game farming generates more employment than 'conventional' farming, and that game farming hence is a win-win strategy fostering both local economic development and nature conservation. While stocking and breeding practices cast serious doubt concerning the conservation claim,[99] the economic development claim can equally be questioned. While different modes of game farming produce different impacts, overall, game farming is not the solution to the burning issue of unemployment in the countryside it was promised to be.[100] Furthermore, shifts to game farming and the conversion of the landscape to 'wilderness' significantly reduces possibilities for farm dwellers to claim the land even in cases where they have been residing on farms for several generations.[101]

Government's ambivalent and internally divided stance is not only a source of complaints by game farmers and their professional organizations but is also used to create room for manoeuvre by game farmers.[102] Using old networks and new allies within the ANC [103] the expansion of game farming has been able to continue, despite some critical voices asking questions about conservation practices, and the impacts of game farming on food security and land reform. The fate of the wildlife industry therefore seems less dependent on government policies than on the whims of investors and the financial sector.

98 B. Büscher and M. Ramutsindela, 'Green violence: Rhino poaching and the war to save Southern Africa's peace parks', *African Affairs,* 115:458 (2015), 1–22; Wels, 'Securing wilderness'.

99 Snijders, 'Shifting species'.

100 Brandt, 'Tracking an invisible Great Trek'; Mkhize, 'Game farm conversions'; Spierenburg and Brooks, 'Private game farming'.

101 Brooks et al., 'Creating a commodified wilderness'.

102 Kamuti, 'Private wildlife governance'; 2014.

103 Kamuti, 'Private wildlife governance'; Wels, *Securing wilderness*.

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CHAPTER 7

# 'If It Pays, It Stays': The Lobby for Private Wildlife Ranching in South Africa

*Tariro Kamuti*

## Introduction

This chapter will focus specifically on attempts by white farmers and their organisations to shape governance to their advantage – as well as their complaints about the lack of coherent legislation, when in fact this allows them to make extensive use of the gaps. Since the 1960s, private wildlife ranching grew phenomenally in southern Africa (especially Zimbabwe, Namibia, and South Africa) due to favourable conditions, as the governments 'at various times and to various degrees – granted people who own land that's home to wildlife full legal control over animals on that property'.[1] Ownership of wildlife by private landowners had started as early as 1975 in Zimbabwe through the Rhodesian Parks and Wildlife Act,[2] while in Namibia this happened from 1967 onwards.[3] This private ownership of wildlife through legislative means can be taken as a state's way to advance its ideology at a particular juncture.[4] In line with this idea, wildlife has increased on private land in southern Africa.[5]

1 See also 'Some scientists say the only way to save species may be to privatize them', (https://futurism.com/some-scientists-say-the-only-way-to-save-species-may-be-to-privatize-them/), accessed 13 Apr. 2017; K. Muir-Leresche and R. H. Nelson, 'Private property rights to wildlife: the southern African experiment', (http://cei.org/sites/default/files/Kay%20Muir-Leresche%20-%20Private%20Property%20Rights%20to%20Wildlife%20The%20Southern%20Africa%20Experiment.pdf), 2000.

2 S. Jones, 'A political ecology of wildlife conservation in Africa', *Review of African Political Economy*, 33:109 (2006), 483–495; Büscher and Dressler, 'Commodity Conservation', 367–376.

3 D. L. van Schalkwyk, K. W. McMillin, R. C. Witthuhn, and L. C. Hoffman, 'The contribution of wildlife to sustainable natural resource utilization in Namibia: a review', *Sustainability,* 2 (2010), 3479–3499.

4 X. Jianchu, 'The political, social, and ecological transformation of a landscape', *Mountain Research and Development,* 26:3 (2006), 254–262.

5 Muir-Leresche and Nelson, 'Private property rights to wildlife'; M. Brink, M. Cameron, K. Coetzee, B. Currie, C. Fabricius, et al., 'Sustainable management through improved governance in the game industry', *South African Journal of Wildlife Research*, 4:11 (2011), 110–119; G. Child

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However, despite the robust growth and development of the private wildlife ranching sector, even on the back of seemingly proactive government action, 'game farmers have raised concerns about the industry's governance, in particular the lack of consultation, inconsistent regulation, lack of capacity and leadership, and indecisiveness in government.'[6] This chapter argues that, while there have been challenges encountered with the regulation of the wildlife ranching sector, the game farmers are in fact 'able to effectively manoeuvre and to maximise their advantages as private landowners'.[7] The chapter draws information from empirical data collected through interviews and observations done through a study of the governance of private game farming with special focus on KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa. The chapter proceeds by looking at the concerns that have been raised with regards to the regulation of the wildlife ranching sector. This will be followed by a discussion of the concept of 'if it pay, it stays' which has been used to anchor the wildlife ranching sector. This will help to understand the basis of the lobby to recognise wildlife ranching as the same as livestock farming. Game farmers have strategically positioned themselves through networking with the political elite as a way of forging ahead with their activities, and this needs to be explained. This explanation will be followed by a general discussion and concluding remarks.

## Concerns with Regulations in the Wildlife Ranching Sector

Inappropriate regulation is alleged to contribute to low biodiversity conservation on game ranches, for example, the regulations in South Africa, Namibia, and Botswana that require ranches to have perimeter fencing for the farmers to be able to use wildlife.[8] This requirement has caused compartmentalisation of game ranches into mean sizes ranging 8.2–49.2 km$^2$.[9] Small game ranches restrict natural ecological processes such as immigration, emigration, and

and B. Child, 'The conservation movement in Zimbabwe: an early experiment in devolved community based regulation', *African Journal of Wildlife Research*, 45:1 (2015), 1–16.

6 Brink, et al., 'Sustainable management', 110.

7 T. Kamuti, 'The fractured state in the governance of private game farming: the case of KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 32:2 (2014), 190.

8 P. A. Lindsey, S. S. Romanach, and H. T. Davies-Mostert, 'The importance of conservancies for enhancing the value of game ranch land for land mammal conservation in southern Africa', *Journal of Zoology*, 277 (2009), 99–105.

9 P. A. Lindsey, S. S. Romanach, and H. T. Davies-Mostert, ibid.

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predation that require intensive management, while overstocking is prevalent leading to ecological degradation.[10] In view of such developments, there is a suggestion that, to improve the contribution of game ranching in terms of conservation, there is a need to craft better regulations or introduce incentives for land uses that are ecologically friendly.[11] In KwaZulu-Natal, the provincial conservation authority, Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife (EKZNW) adopted the 'Procedures and Standard Terms and Conditions for Keeping Wild Animals in Captivity' on 30 October 2013.[12] This was a first for the country as the conservation authorities in that province after 'four years of delays, obstruction and even litigation' finally succeeded in putting mechanisms 'to ensure humane conditions are prescribed when wild animals are kept in captivity' and which were 'to be incorporated into permits'.[13] According to the procedures and standard terms and conditions:

> Captivity is a situation where an animal is kept in custody, constrained, controlled or dependent on humans, or where animals are contained in a cage, enclosure, boma or fenced land that is too small for them to sustain themselves independently … where the fencing is not porous to that species.[14]

Of particular interest to this chapter, is that the procedures, and standard terms and conditions also stipulate the minimum size of a 'commercial game reserve/game farm [to be] where game animals are held on land greater than 400ha [and that] approval from the Ezemvelo Board for Game to be held in

10 J. A. Cousins, J. P. Saddler, and J. Evans, 'Exploring the role of private wildlife ranching as a conservation tool in South Africa: stakeholders perspectives', *Ecology and Society*, 13:2, (http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol13/iss2/art43/), 2008; P. A. Lindsey, S.S. Romanach, and H. T. Davies-Mostert, 'The importance', 277, 99–105.

11 P. A. Lindsey, S.S. Romanach, and H. T. Davies-Mostert, ibid.

12 Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife, 'Procedures and standard terms and conditions for keeping wild animals in captivity' (http://www.kznwildlife.com/ezemvelo/downloads/finish/6-scientific-services/21-board-adopted-standard-terms-and-conditions-for-keeping-animals-in-captivity-for-implementation-january-2014/0.html), accessed 12 March 2014.

13 See 'New rules for keeping wild animals in KZN', (http://www.iol.co.za/news/new-rules-for-keeping-wild-animals-in-kzn-1543690), accessed 6 July 2017.

14 Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife, 'Procedures and standard terms and conditions for keeping wild animals in captivity' (http://www.kznwildlife.com/ezemvelo/downloads/finish/6-scientific-services/21-board-adopted-standard-terms-and-conditions-for-keeping-animals-in-captivity-for-implementation-january-2014/0.html), accessed 12 March 2014.

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enclosures less than 20ha in a Game Park is required'.[15] Overall, one would argue that these procedures, and standard terms and conditions are of acceptable national and international best practice for 'instilling ethics and compassion into the treatment of wild animals in captivity'.[16]

Another example is that the legislation introduced in South Africa that relates to threatened and protected species (TOPS) would go towards addressing issues of translocation of animals, unethical hunting activities, and setting of hunting quotas.[17] Jacque Malan, a former president of the Wildlife Ranching South Africa (WRSA), said at their congress that 'TOPS was introduced because of canned hunting.'[18] The issue of canned hunting has caused a great deal of consternation within the wildlife sector, with the animal protection organisations being the fiercest critics of the practice.[19] Unfortunately, with different provincial regulatory regimes there are different approaches to canned hunting in line with the implementation of the TOPS regulations. It is difficult to ascertain the effectiveness of the TOPS legislation for achieving its intended objectives with respect to ensuring the sustainable utilization of wildlife. But the fact that the state has recently attempted to introduce amendments to TOPS regulations suggest that there are real challenges in its implementation and subsequent effectiveness.[20] This recent move to introduce amendments to TOPS legislation has caused consternation amongst game farmers. For instance, Gert Dry, then president of Wildlife Ranching South Africa in 2013, said at the inaugural WRSA Congress that their organisation would only support new TOPS regulations that work for their vision of the 'green economy in wildlife ranching'.[21] Peter Oberem, then

15 Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife, 'Procedures and standard terms and conditions for keeping wild animals in captivity' (http://www.kznwildlife.com/ezemvelo/downloads/finish/6-scientific-services/21-board-adopted-standard-terms-and-conditions-for-keeping-animals-in-captivity-for-implementation-january-2014/0.html), accessed 12 March 2014.

16 See 'New rules for keeping wild animals in KZN', (http://www.iol.co.za/news/new-rules-for-keeping-wild-animals-in-kzn-1543690), accessed 6 July 2017.

17 P. A. Lindsey, S. S. Romanach, and H. T. Davies-Mostert, ibid.

18 Speech at the Inaugural WRSA Congress, April 2013.

19 See for example,' South African panel recommends Canned hunting ban' http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/oct2005/2005-10-25-04.html, accessed 12 Sept. 2010; 'Predator breeders win canned lion appeal' *The Times*, 29 November 2010, [Online] URL: http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/article788777.ece/Predator-breeders-win-canned-lion-appeal or 'SA farmers fingered in lion smuggling' 27 May 2013, *The Times*, [Online] URL: http://www.timeslive.co.za/thetimes/2013/05/27/sa-farmers-fingered-in-lion-smuggling

20 Personal notes from my observations at the inaugural WRSA congress in Modimolle, Limpopo Province on 11 April 2013.

21 Personal notes from my observations at the inaugural WRSA congress in Modimolle, Limpopo Province on 11 April 2013.

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vice president of the WRSA, said on the same occasion that the Minister of Environmental Affairs had given the WRSA top priority to provide input on the amendment of TOPS regulations.[22] In Peter Oberem's view, this gesture was a sign that government was taking the game farmers seriously, and clearly they do constitute a powerful lobby.

In contrast to the state departments, game farmers through their various representative organisations seem to be united in voicing their concerns to the government. An earlier study found that:

> … the membership of the WRSA is inclined towards unity in promoting the private wildlife ranching sector. The game farmers represent themselves as risk takers as seen in the investment required to set up and maintain a game farm, given the long turnaround time to break even. Some of the game farmers have diversified operations, that is, mixed livestock and wildlife production to hedge them against risk. The game farmers present themselves as a special group of South Africans, since they have perceptions of working very hard against the odds of operating under an uncertain agricultural and environmental policy, and a harsh business environment. Game farmers perceive to be working against the negative public perception that game farming is a hindrance for the majority black population to access land and its inherent resources.[23]

They constitute a strong special interest or lobby group. Many of these organisations voice complaints about the state's actions. For example, game farmers and hunters allege that the public participation processes are not done well.[24] The game farmers, through the WRSA, say that they participate in various forums where they are invited by government, but thereafter there is no feedback. The next thing that happens is the publication of new regulations to which they must conform, as for example in the case of new controls regarding the M99 drug (also called etorphine), used in tranquilizing game for relocation.[25] The South African Veterinary Council introduced new regulations in 2012 that restricted game farmers from using the drug to immobilise animals for instance, in cases of emergency.[26] These decisions,

22 Personal notes from my observations at the inaugural WRSA congress in Modimolle, Limpopo Province on 11 April 2013.

23 T. Kamuti, 'A critique of the discourse of the green economy approach in the wildlife ranching sector in South Africa', *Africa Insight*, 45:1 (2015), 146–168.

24 Wildlife Ranching South Africa, 'The M99 dilemma', *Wildlife Ranching* 5:3 (2012), 51–57.

25 Wildlife Ranching South Africa, 'The M99 dilemma', *Wildlife Ranching* 5:3 (2012), 51–57.

26 See 'Game farmers seek solutions', *South African Hunter*, June 2013.

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in the view of the game farmers and hunters, are made without adequate consultation.

In a study of the economics of game ranching in South Africa, it was found out that government departments apply 'command and control methods to ensure compliance and fail to reflect more contemporary approaches of incentives and co-management'[27] that emphasise 'the importance of persuasion rather than compulsion in environmental regulation'.[28] This depicts a situation that is referred to as monocentric governance.[29] However, the extent of involvement of other role players suggests that the state does not currently dominate in the governance of the wildlife ranching sector, as farmers have largely thrived in the challenging policy context. Others contend that in reality environmental governance is done through a blend of 'governmental command-and-control, market tools and community-based institutional arrangements'[30] in the management of natural resources. They argue that such a medley of approaches is suitable to deal with difficult situations that arise from the governance of natural resource use. A study on Tanzania shows that it is beneficial to take some positives from common pool resource (CPR) management approaches, which may be community-based and implement them within the framework of payment for ecosystem services (PES) incorporated in market-oriented governance systems.[31]

Due to the historical background of land ownership in South Africa, most of the prime land is in private hands. Private property and the market play a critical role in a capitalist system, which explains uneven power relations between different classes of people.[32] When it comes to nature conservation, a lot of studies have focused on the tension between the management of national parks or public protected areas and the surrounding communities. Given the increasing extent of high fences that have been erected by game farmers, one wonders whether this is the best way through which the government can

27 J. Musengezi, 2010. 'Wildlife utilisation on private land: understanding the economics of game ranching in South Africa' (unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Florida, 2010), 128.

28 G. Child and B. Child, 'The conservation', 2.

29 J. Newig and O. Fritsch, 'Environmental governance: participatory, multi-level – and effective?' *Environmental Policy and Governance,* 19:3 (2009), 197–214.

30 R. Muradian and L. Rival, 'Between markets and hierarchies: the challenge of governing ecosystem services', *Ecosystem Services,* 1 (2010), 93.

31 B. Fisher, K. Kulindwa, I. Mwanyoka, R. K. Turner, and N. D. Burgess, 'Common pool resource management and PES: lessons and constraints for water PES in Tanzania', *Ecological Economics,* 69 (2010), 1253–1261.

32 G. Palermo, 'The ontology of economic power in capitalism: Mainstream economics and Marx', *Cambridge Journal of Economics,* 31 (2007), 539–561.

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manage the wildlife resources that the country is endowed with. The fence has become a signifier of ownership of land and can be a source of conflict over natural resources.[33] This is very significant, particularly if such a trend has the effect of locking out other stakeholders from wildlife resources at a time when there should be a drive to bridge the gap between the poor and the rich under the democratic dispensation since 1994. A glimpse into game farming shows that the sector is made up of 10,000 registered private game ranchers, occupying about 20 million hectares of land, it contributes R9 billion to the Gross Domestic Product and employs about 100,000 people.[34]

White farmers are able to bolster their hold on land under the guise of conservation, thus making the game farms a seriously contested space due to the exclusion/inclusion dynamics brought about by erecting fences to protect game, with inherent displacement of farm dwellers.[35] Such conflict and sometimes the deprivation of livelihood alternatives steeped in uneven power relations is evidence of what may be termed the 'social injustices of conservation'[36] or the 'unexpected consequences of protected areas'.[37] Governance mechanisms effected through fences and other punitive measures by the state to achieve globally crafted market-based conservation goals cause spatial conflict, for example, in the case of communities around the iSimangaliso Wetland Park in northern KwaZulu-Natal.[38] The fence is used to curb human-wildlife conflict,[39] to protect animals from escaping, and thus to ensure individual

33 J. Bennett, A. Ainslie, and J. Davis, 'Fenced in: Common property struggles in the management of communal rangelands in central Eastern Cape Province, South Africa', *Land Use Policy,* 27 (2010), 340–350.

34 See 'The wildlife industry rises to the challenge', *Farmer's Weekly* 12 Apr. 2013, 44.

35 F. Brandt and M. Spierenburg, 'Game fences in the Karoo: Reconfiguring spatial and social relations', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies,* 32:2 (2014), 220–237.

36 B. Büscher and W. Wolmer. 'Introduction: The politics of engagement between biodiversity conservation and the social sciences', *Conservation and Society* 5:1 (2007), 2. see also S. Sullivan, 'Conservation is sexy! what makes this so, and what does this make? an engagement with celebrity and the environment', *Conservation and Society,* 9:4 (2011), 334–345.

37 P. West and D. Brockington. 'An anthropological perspective on some unexpected consequences of protected areas', *Conservation Biology* 20:3 (2006), 609. See also C. Greiner, 'Unexpected consequences: wildlife conservation and territorial conflict in Northern Kenya', *Human Ecology,* 40 (2012), 415–425.

38 M. Hansen, 'New geographies of conservation and globalisation: The spatiality of development for conservation in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, South Africa', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies,* 31:3 (2013), 481–502.

39 M. K. Kesch, D. T. Bauer, and A. J. Loveridge, 'Break on through to the other side: The effectiveness of game fencing to mitigate human–wildlife conflict', *African Journal of Wildlife Research,* 45:1 (2015), 76–87.

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ownership legalised through the Game Theft Act 1991 (Act No. 105 of 1991). Damage to wildlife by the game-proof fences has also been noticed together with an effect of limiting natural processes, for example, disruption of migratory routes and hindrance of access to critical resources.[40] Game farming also presents a challenge to the concept of carrying capacity as a way of determining how much stock a farmer should keep.[41] However, on the other hand, the fence helps to act as a gatekeeper to prevent intruders, which works well for the game farmer but excludes the locals. This situation is contrary to the environmental justice movement in South Africa, which gravitates towards 'social transformation directed to meeting basic human needs and rights'.[42]

### If It Pays, It Stays

The phrase 'if it pays, it stays' is attributed to John Ledger (Associate Professor at both Wits University and University of Johannesburg, South Africa), for having been the first to apply the phrase to conservation, during the time when he was a Director of the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT).[43] The phrase was used to emphasise the idea of the intrinsic value of wildlife for people, 'especially poor communities battling to make a living', in order to contain 'the conflict of wildlife with human interests'.[44] It is ironic here that the phrase is used with the impression of being mainly useful to helping poor communities. Nevertheless, the private wildlife sector in the southern African context is largely dominated by this discourse that 'what pays stays.' Revenue generated in relation to the relevance of a species is in turn ploughed back into nurturing that species. This view is contrary to pure ecological principles regarding the niche of each organism in a particular ecosystem.[45] Attaching value to certain species is inevitably

40 J. A. Cousins, J. P. Saddler, and J. Evans, 'Exploring the role of private wildlife ranching', 2008.

41 A. Benjaminsen, R. Rohde, E. Sjaastad, P. Wisborg, and T. Lebert, 'Land reform, range ecology, and carrying capacities in Namaqualand, South Africa', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers,* 96:3 (2006), 524–540.

42 J. Cock, 'Connecting the red, brown and green: the environmental justice movement in South Africa', (http://146.230.128.54/ccs/files/Cock%20Connecting%20the%20red,%20brown%20and%20green%20The%20environmental%20justice%20movement%20in%20South%20Africa.pdf), (2004), 6.

43 P. Oberem, If it pays, it stays. *Wildlife Ranching,* 5 (2016), 230–234.

44 P. Oberem, If it pays, it stays. *Wildlife Ranching,* 5 (2016), 232.

45 R. Costanza, 'Visions, values, valuation, and the need for an ecological economics', *BioScience,* 51:6 (2001), 459–468; C.L. Dybas, 'From biodiversity to biocomplexity: a multidisciplinary step toward understanding our environment', *BioScience,* 51:6 (2001), 426–430; E. H. Franz, 'Ecology, values, and policy', *BioScience,* 51:6 (2001), 469–474; L. Sievanen, L. M.

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a selective process that will exclude other 'less valuable' species leading to their neglect and subsequent degradation, loss or eventual extinction. Determining the optimum economic value of wildlife resources is, however, a complex process, and one characterised by uncertainty.[46] Attaching value to certain species is part of a broad perspective that argues for a narrow quantitative valuation of nature's services to humanity.[47] Clearly such an approach places more emphasis on market interests than social imperatives.[48] This idea began gaining momentum in KwaZulu-Natal through hunting in the period of development of conservancies, with the idea that the latter could become self-sustaining.[49]

Conservation of biodiversity, as projected by the private wildlife ranching sector, has to be contextualised to the hunting sector since hunting is significant as an anchor of the private wildlife ranching sector in the form of sales for fresh meat, trophy, and biltong hunting. Conservation of biodiversity emerged as a motivating factor for hunters, though this is highly contested.[50] The rhetoric of conservation is strongly articulated by the KwaZulu-Natal Hunters and Conservation Association (KZNHCA). In my conversation with the representative of the KZNHCA, he said that, 'hunters are real conservationists, because they pay'.[51] He cited the annual value of the hunting industry in the country of more than R7bn, which comes out of the hunters' pockets, and stated that, 'this money keeps farms going, that keeps populations going, that keeps reserves going'.[52] He reminded me of the way business people

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Campbell, and H. M. Leslie. 'Challenges to interdisciplinary research in ecosystem-based management', *Conservation Biology,* 26:2 (2011), 315–323.

46 L. W, Burger, D. McKenzie, R. Thackston, and S. J. Demaso, 'The role of farm policy in achieving large-scale conservation: Bobwhite and buffers', *Wildlife Society Bulletin* 34:4 (2006), 986–993.

47 D. Brockington, 'Ecosystem services and fictitious commodities', *Environmental Conservation,* 38:4 (2011), 367–369; T. A. Benjaminsen, M. J. Goldman, M. Y. Minwary, and F. P. Maganga, 'Wildlife management in Tanzania: state control, rent seeking and community resistance', *Development and Change,* 44:5 (2013), 1–23.

48 Cock, J., 'The "green economy": a just and sustainable development path or a "Wolf in Sheep's clothing"?', *Global Labour Journal*, 5:1 (2014), (https://escarpmentpress.org/globallabour/article/view/1146/1202), accessed 2 March 2015.

49 H. Wels. Fighting over fences: Organisational co-operation and reciprocal exchange between the Save Valley Conservancy and its neighbouring communities, Zimbabwe', unpublished PhD thesis, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (2000) (http://dare.ubvu.vu.nl/handle/1871/50617), accessed 8 Oct. 2014; H. Wels, *Securing wilderness Landscapes in South Africa: Nick Steele, private wildlife conservancies and saving rhinos* (Leiden, 2015).

50 P. A. Lindsey, P. A. Roulet, and S. S. Romanach. 'Economic and conservation significance of the trophy hunting industry in sub-Saharan Africa', *Biological Conservation,* 134 (2007), 459–469.

51 Interview with KZNHCA Representative, 15 July 2011, Pinetown.

52 Interview with KZNHCA Representative, 15 July 2011, Pinetown.

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think these days, that they will only keep something on a piece of land if it is economically viable. Wildlife is thus comparable to cattle and sheep, which have a price on their head, and the same is expected for game. This view was also corroborated by one of the District Conservation Officers whom I interacted with. If game has value it has a reason to exist, and to a large extent the hunter determines the value of game, followed by the ecotourist. If the hunter is willing to pay for an animal then there is reason for a farmer to keep the animal on the game farm, because the farmer is generating income by owning a specific animal that the hunter is looking for. So game has become a very competitive commodity compared with livestock.[53] Conservation is seen as an expensive practice, and the question of who carries the conservation costs has lingered in the sector. There is emphasis on the need to use scarce financial resources efficiently in the conservation realm by taking care of all the costs involved, and they suggest incorporating the return-on-investment framework.[54] So the link between hunting and conservation is that there is value in game because it can be hunted. The representative of the KZNHCA put it across as follows:

> It is important to understand our philosophy that hunters are conservationists. We hunt not only to enjoy the meat or to enjoy the experience but we also hunt to make a financial contribution. That money goes back into restocking of the farms, into maintaining infrastructure, into paying the people actually working there; the guides, the trackers, the skinners, the people cleaning the lodges and things like that. So we firmly believe that through hunting and the money we put in, about R7 billion a year, vast amounts of that goes back into that same industry to maintain stock levels, to improve infrastructure and to ensure that what we love most, that is, hunting is actually available for the future and future generations as well. If there was no monetary link I do not think that hunting could have contributed to conservation.[55]

The KZNHCA representative then went on to claim that it was the hunters who started the rhino protection efforts. According to his understanding, the hunters had realised the devastating effects of the slaughter that had happened

53 Interview with a District Conservation Officer, 3 May 2011, Pietermaritzburg

54 W. Murdoch, S. Polasky, K. A. Wilson, H. P. Possingham, P. Kareiva, and R. Shaw, 'Maximizing return on investment in conservation', *Biological Conservation,* 139 (2007), 375–388.

55 Interview with a KZNHCA Representative, 15 July 2011, Pinetown.

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many decades or even centuries ago and that it could not continue.[56] While hunting may indeed contribute to conservation, especially on a commercially run entity, in this interview the KZNHCA representative over-emphasised the role of hunting in conservation without giving a hint of some of the transgressions of hunters. Be that as it may, the discourse of 'if it pays, it stays' has become dominant in the wildlife ranching industry of late and in nature conservation in general. Ironically the discourse also says the 'best way to save wildlife is to kill it.'[57] This discourse forms part of the bottom line of the wildlife ranching industry, and it has dominated contemporary conservation narratives that stress commodification, for example, the idea of putting value on nature or payment for ecosystem services.[58] This is in contrast with the wildlife ranching and hunting fraternities' criticism levelled against the Kenyan conservation policies that, since the 1977 ban on sport game hunting, wildlife populations have been on the decline.[59]

The obvious concern with this discourse of 'if it pays, it stays' is that this view is contrary to ecosystems thinking, in which the role or niche of each organism is seen as valuable in making up a functional and self-contained ecosystem.[60] Each organism and its role needs to be understood,[61] thus ecology poses questions of the state of human/nature relationships.[62] If farmers adopt the 'if it pays, it stays' principle it would imply that they will be selective in their wildlife ranching operations by pandering to the hunters' market dictates through keeping those animals that bring in income ahead of those that are

56 See also S. L. Mossman and A. S. Mossman, 'Wildlife utilization and game ranching. Report on a study of recent progress in this field in southern Africa', *IUCN Occasional Paper* No. 17, (Morges, 1976).

57 See Kevin Crowly, 'South Africa hunters say best way to save wildlife is to kill it! money works in mysterious ways' Mail and Guardian 22 June 2015. http://mgafrica.com/article/2015-06-22-south-africa-hunters-say-best-way-to-save-wildlife-is-to-kill-it-money-works-in-mysterious-ways/, accessed 22 June 2015.

58 B. Büscher, 'Derivative nature: interrogating the value of conservation in 'boundless southern Africa', *Third World Quarterly*, 31:2 (2010), 259–276; B. Büscher and W. Dressler, 'Commodity Conservation: The Restructuring of Community Conservation in South Africa and the Philippines. *Geoforum*, 43 (2012), 367–376.

59 Muir-Leresche and Nelson, 'Private Property Rights to Wildlife'.

60 R. Costanza, 'Visions, values, valuation, and the need for an ecological economics', *BioScience*, 51:6 (2001), 459–468; C. L. Dybas, 'From biodiversity to biocomplexity: a multidisciplinary step toward understanding our environment', *BioScience*, 51:6 (2001), 426–430; Franz, 'Ecology, values, and policy', 469–474; L. Sievanen, L. M. Campbell and H. M. Leslie, 'Challenges to interdisciplinary research', *Conservation Biology, 26*(2) (2012), 315–323.

61 Dybas, 'From biodiversity to biocomplexity', 426–430.

62 D. Torgerson, 'Expanding the green public sphere: post-colonial connections,' *Environmental Politics*, 15:5 (2007), 713–730.

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not in demand. In this way, it is possible to argue that hunters are not truly contributing to biodiversity conservation as such because biodiversity conservation needs to be carried out in its totality by valuing all the organisms in an ecosystem. This debate shows how difficult and challenging it is to integrate natural sciences and social practices towards common conservation goals and initiatives, perhaps especially when land is privately owned.[63]

Ethically doubtful hunting practices, such as 'canned hunting', and 'put and take' hunting, are also a concern.[64] The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism[65] expressed concern that there are many breaches of the principle of a fair chase and the humane treatment of animals. Persecution of predators is also rampant.[66] These issues are a cause for concern for authorities. They depict more of the business imperative of game ranches than the conservation side, thus having a detrimental effect on biodiversity.[67] All these controversies point towards the ambiguous place that hunting occupies in this context. Despite its role as an anchor to the sector, ethical and legal questions around various forms of legal and illegal hunting remain, and hunting as a primary activity creates different actors that all compete in the arena of private wildlife governance. The discourses surrounding what constitutes legal and

63 S. R. Carpenter and L. H. Gunderson, 'Coping with collapse: ecological and social dynamics in ecosystem management', *BioScience*, 51:6 (2001), 451–457; Franz, 'Ecology, values, and policy': 469–474; B. Büscher and W. Wolmer, 'Introduction: the politics of engagement between biodiversity conservation and the social sciences', *Conservation and Society*, 5:1 (2007), 1–21; B. A. Minteer and T. R. Miller, 'The new conservation debate: ethical foundations, strategic trade-offs, and policy opportunities', *Biological Conservation*, 144 (2011), 945–947; L., Sievanen, L. M. Campbell and H. M. Leslie. 'Challenges to interdisciplinary research', 315–323.

64 M. Cadman, 'Lions in captivity and lion hunting in South Africa – an update: a report commissioned by the National Council of SPCAs', (Alberton, 2009); P. A. Lindsey, S. S. Romanach, and H. T. Davies-Mostert, 'The importance of conservancies', (2009), 99–105; J. A. Cousins, J. P. Saddler, and J. Evans, 'The challenge of regulating private wildlife ranches for conservation in South Africa', *Ecology and Society*, (http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/volXX/issYY/artZZ/), 2010.

65 Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 'Panel of experts on professional and recreational hunting in South Africa. Report to the Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism', (Pretoria, 2005).

66 J. A. Cousins, J. P. Saddler, and J. Evans, 'Exploring the role of private wildlife ranching as a conservation tool in South Africa: stakeholders perspectives', *Ecology and Society*, 13:2, (http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol13/iss2/art43/), (2008); J. A. Cousins, J. P. Saddler and J. Evans, 'The challenge of regulating private wildlife ranches', (2010).

67 J. A. Cousins, J. P. Saddler, and J. Evans, 'Exploring the role of private wildlife ranching', (2008); P. A. Lindsey, S. S. Romanach, and H. T. Davies-Mostert, 'The importance of conservancies', (2009), 99–105; J. A. Cousins, J. P. Saddler, and J. Evans, 'The challenge of regulating private wildlife ranches', (2010).

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illegal hunting are often strongly oppositional, depending on which side of the 'fence' each stakeholder stands.

### Lobby to Treat Wildlife Ranching Like Livestock Production

Conservation authorities are now facing a strong lobby from the wildlife producers who want to be permitted to treat wildlife in the same manner they do with domestic stock,[68] and this is a contentious issue that has not been extensively explored by scholars.[69] However, this push for 'game farming' to resemble conventional farming is causing a lot of challenges for the environmental regulation authorities. The numerous issues include, for instance, intensive wildlife (captive) breeding, trophy breeding, predator control, illegal dog hunting, canned hunting, colour variants of animals, and the introduction of species not naturally occurring in the particular area (extralimital species). While there have been positive ecological and economic spinoffs,[70] the growth of the wildlife ranching sector has been associated with challenges specifically for the regulatory authorities. The regulation of the wildlife ranching sector has been quite contentious, for example, in that it has grown ahead of regulation[71] in contrast to the idea that the sector is over-regulated.

The Game Theft Act 105 of 1991 is especially important, as it declared wildlife on private property to be the property of the landowner rather than the state. The 'ownership of game' (as stipulated in this law) facilitated the fast development of the game-farming sector. Contrary to industry concerns about recognition of game faming, it is clear here that the state facilitated the development of the game-farming sector. One then asks why there was a need for a strong state regulatory regime. One argument is that, largely due to the growth of the game farming industry, there has been translocation of wildlife around the country without due attention to historical species distribution patterns or genetic factors, hence the need to control that and other related activities.[72]

68 J. du P. Bothma, 'It is time to end the debate on introducing exotic wildlife', *South African Journal of Wildlife Research*, 35:1 (2005), 97–102.

69 See also D. Snijders, 2015. 'Shifting species in South Africa: wildlife policy, rural consequences' (unpublished PhD thesis, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 2015).

70 J. A. Cousins, J. P. Saddler, and J. Evans, 'Exploring the role'; Brink, et al., 'Sustainable management',

71 J. A. Cousins, J. P. Saddler, and J. Evans, 'The challenge of regulating private wildlife ranches', (2010).

72 K. Hamman, S. Vrahimis and H. Blom, 'Can Current trends in the game industry be reconciled with nature conservation?', *African Indaba e-Newsletter,* 1:5 (2003), 3–6.

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One example is the introduction of exotic species (fallow deer *Dama dama*, Barbary sheep *Ammotragus lervia*, red *lechwe Kobus leche*) and other species regarded as invasive (like *Eurasian boar Sus scrofa*) onto game farms.[73] Exotic species 'are not native to a given region because they occur naturally somewhere else', while endemic species 'are those that are found only in a given area and nowhere else'.[74] One also needs to understand that, 'the word indigenous is derived from the Latin word *indigena*, which means to be born in a specific place.'[75] Exotic species are often introduced in order to augment the variety of animals available for trophy hunting, and farmers can go as far as to alter the genetics to produce competitive forms of wildlife, as hunters are prepared to pay a premium price for them.[76]

The high demand for the new forms of species exerts pressure on the game farmers to increase the introduction of exotic species, but this has negative veterinary, ecological, and genetic implications.[77] Deliberations at the inaugural WRSA Congress held in Limpopo Province during 10–12 April 2013 indicated that game breeding is a fledging subsector in the game-farming fraternity, though concerns about undesirable products were raised. Breeding of wildlife species has become part of the economic rationale behind game farming within the broad trend of 'private[z]ation, commodification and deregulation' of wildlife in South Africa.[78] Using the Rule of Gauss, it is argued that species that are similar should not inhabit the same environment, as the indigenous species can be eventually replaced by an exotic species that might be aggressive.[79] This is because, if the exotic species does not manage to outperform the indigenous species, it will not survive in that environment.[80] This concern extends to the introduction of endemic species to southern African areas beyond their historical distribution, for example, the black wildebeest (*Connochaetes gnu*) in Namibia and blesbok (*Damaliscus pygargus phillipsi*) in the Lowveld region of South Africa.[81] The introduction of these exotic species is purely driven by

73 P. A. Lindsey, S. S. Romanach, and H. T. Davies-Mostert, 'The importance'
74 Bothma, 'It is time to end', 98.
75 Bothma, 'It is time to end', 98.
76 P. A. Lindsey, R. Alexander, L. G. Frank, A. Mathieson, and S. S. Romanach, 'Potential of trophy hunting to create incentives for wildlife conservation in Africa where alternative wildlife-based land uses may not be viable', *Animal Conservation*, 9 (2006), 283–291.
77 Lindsey, 'Potential of trophy hunting', 283–291.
78 D. Snijders, 'Wild property and its boundaries – on wildlife policy and rural consequences in South Africa', *Journal of Peasant Studies,* 39:2 (2012), 504.
79 Bothma, 'It is time to end', 97–102.
80 Bothma, 'It is time to end', 97–102.
81 P.A. Lindsey, S. S. Romanach, and H. T. Davies-Mostert, 'The importance of conservancies'.

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their ability to easily adapt (for example, blesbok) and their attractive value for the tourism, hunting, and live-sale activities undertaken by game farmers. In this way tourism is increasingly associated with the exploitation of nature through neoliberalism.[82] Another example includes the nyala (*Tragelaphus angasii*), much valued by the trophy hunting industry.[83] This introduction of extralimital species has negative effects such as hybridisation, reduction in the survival rate of those species introduced, as well as causing deterioration of the habitat and the displacement of species that originate from within that area.[84]

In interviews with officers from Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife, they acknowledged that there is increasing pressure from the national game-farming organization Wildlife Ranching South Africa. WRSA argues that game farming is over-regulated, since farmers need different permits to hunt/capture, transport, and sell game. The Department of Environmental Affairs is seen to be 'going overboard' in regulation of game farmers, and the regulatory processes are viewed as unnecessary bureaucracy. In a recent newsflash, with regard to this issue, the WRSA said that:

> Many of the members of WRSA and definitely many WRSA Board members of the past have had the wish for game ranching to fall under the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF). Hopefully, they will have a better understanding of our industry, than the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA), which I consider over the top administration and bureaucracy stemming from the fact that they do not understand the fundamentals of our industry. Wildlife ranching is primarily agriculture with the primary product being meat and takes place exclusively on often damaged, marginal agricultural land. Last year, a member of WRSA and Chairman of one of our Chambers in the North West Province, Mr Peter Knipe managed to get 12 antelope species listed in accordance with the Animal Improvement Act (AIA), a function of DAFF and in so doing formed the WPA, the new wildlife registering authority. This threw the cat amongst the pigeons, splitting members into

82 B. Büscher, 'Letters of gold: enabling primitive accumulation through neoliberal conservation', *Human Geography*, 2:3 (2009), 91–93; R. Duffy and L. Moore, 'Neoliberalising nature? Elephant-back tourism in Thailand and Botswana', *Antipode*, 42:3 (2010), 742–766; J. A. Cousins, J. P. Saddler, and J. Evans, 'Selling conservation? Scientific legitimacy and the commodification of conservation tourism', *Ecology and Society*, 14:1 (http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol14/iss1/art32/), 2009.

83 Bothma, 'It is time to end', 97–102.

84 Bothma, 'It is time to end', 97–102; J. A. Cousins, J. P. Saddler, and J. Evans, 'Exploring the role'.

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> 2 camps, those who wished to take the potential opportunity of 'escaping from the sharp and tenacious claws of DEA into the welcoming arms of DAFF' and those who are rightfully cautious, not knowing in any detail what this change means for them individually and for the industry. Accusations and counter claims were hurled from one camp to the other, causing unhappiness, dissension and unacceptably aggressive anger. Our next steps are to hold a workshop, together with the Registrar (DAFF), to ensure progress is accelerated and the remaining 40 odd species listed and gazetted. The next step will be to determine how WRSA will be involved with the administrative company.
>
> What we as WRSA need to do is ensure level heads, stop the internecine fighting and work together with all parties to take this opportunity and make it work for us, ensuring a better future for all, one way or the other.[85]

Amidst this pressure, it can be seen here that there is a lingering question in the regulation of the private wildlife sector relating to which one among the government departments is the lead department that directs the overall conduct of the sector in order to create an environment of certainty and stability. As mentioned above, challenges in the game-farming industry emanating from the tussle between the DAFF and DEA are further complicated by issues relating to land, particularly those connected to outstanding land claims under the restitution programme, which are handled by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform. A combination of interests involving all these departments constitutes a mosaic that has resulted in on-going tension between the state, private landowners, other actors in game farming, and rural communities. This is not a uniquely South African experience. In the regulation of biomass markets in Kenya, for example, 'different institutions have overlapping responsibilities, which leads to institutional confusion'.[86] This seems to be the situation prevailing in the regulation of the game-farming sector in South Africa, given the tension caused by how the various government departments interact.

However, for the conservation authorities the regulations are important. For instance, in KwaZulu-Natal there are certain species that cannot be put in a certain area because of historical distribution, for example, bringing Gemsbok

85 See the newsflash of the WRSA (http://us3.campaign-archive1.com/?u=c6a6c8f0d-14444fadb0963826&id=e7762bc618), accessed 12 July 2017.

86 R. G. Wood and B. Garside, 'Informality and market governance in wood charcoal value chains', (http://pubs.iied.org/17274IIED), 2014, 3.

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(*Oryx gazella*) from the Kalahari to an area in the coastal region. Eland (*Taurotragus oryx*) in Limpopo province are, it is argued, not the same as the eland in the Drakensburg (eland that are better suited to the ecological context of the Drakensburg). In line with this reasoning, a study of the geographic distribution of giant sable (*Hippotragus niger variani*) subspecies populations, based on their physical characteristics, has shown that sable may look alike while they actually have genetic differences.[87] This has critical management implications as some of these subspecies are considered to be endangered.[88] This provides justification on the part of the conservation authorities to strictly adhere and enforce regulations that limit practices of bringing certain species to private properties in the province. This strict enforcement has led to a strong view on the part of game farmers that they should be regulated by the department of agriculture, not the department dealing with environment and conservation. The game farmers want to operate in an economic environment equal to cattle farming, and some express frustration that the ecological context does not allow it.[89] There is a dominant view that the permit system is not in the game farmers' favour and that there is more that could be done to reduce bureaucracy.[90]

This is exacerbated when the property happens to cross provincial boundaries (which also constitutes an argument for challenging the regulation of selective breeding across geographical boundaries where the species are found). A District Conservation Officer indicated to me that there are cases, for instance, where game farms on the fringes of Newcastle and Utrecht (towns in KwaZulu-Natal Province) extend over into Mpumalanga Province.[91] The owners of such properties have to comply with regulations from both the KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga Provinces. This is one of the challenges, related to demarcation, where sometimes areas under the same ecological conditions span different local and provincial administrations. Therefore, the game farmers concerned subsequently become subjected to different regulations emanating from each administration and hence not harmonised. Farmers blame conservation authorities for loss of business because of delays in issuing permits.

There is concern that if there is a decline in demand for wildlife, South African farmers would switch to more viable land uses with potentially disastrous

87 B. J. van Vuuren, T. J. Robinson, P. VazPinto, R. Estes, and C. A. Matthee, 'Western Zambian sable: are they a geographic extension of the giant sable antelope?', *South African Journal of Wildlife Research,* 40:1 (2010), 35–42.

88 B. J. van Vuuren, et al., 'Western Zambian sable', 35–42.

89 Interview with a Game Farmer, 19 April 2011, Pietermaritzburg.

90 Interview with a District Conservation Officer, 3 May 2011, Pietermaritzburg.

91 Interview with a District Conservation Officer, 20 February 2013, Newcastle.

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consequences for biodiversity conservation.[92] This is possible, for example, through increasing emphasis on maximising returns on investment in conservation.[93] Another concern is that neoliberal policies are inclined towards the consumptive use of nature,[94] with an effect on the local ecosystems that prioritise certain species over others[95] or 'the development of funds of natural capital on private lands for marketable commodities at the expense of ecosystem services that benefit the public'.[96] In this regard 'capitalism perpetually seeks to create a geographical landscape to facilitate its activities at one point in time only to have to destroy it and build a wholly different landscape at a later point in time to accommodate its perpetual thirst for endless capital accumulation.'[97] Farm conversions then constitute the modification or destruction of the previous form of economic activity contributing to capital accumulation so as to give birth to a new system that is adaptable to prevailing economic conditions.[98]

In connection to the controversial regulations regarding trans-location of game between provinces, an official from the Department of Environmental Affairs said that it is always imperative to put controls in place as part of checks and balances in order to take care of risks that are either ecological or disease-related.[99] Game or floral species in the receiving area might be at risk and this needs to be checked first and addressed if there is a problem before a permit is issued. The KwaZulu-Natal conservation authorities are hesitant to

92 J. A. Cousins, J. P. Saddler, and J. Evans, 'Exploring the role'.

93 Murdoch, et al., 'Maximizing return', 375–388.

94 Jones, 'A political ecology of wildlife', 483–495; Büscher and Dressler, 'Commodity Conservation', 367–376.

95 Jones, 'A political ecology of wildlife', 483–495; M. S. Northcott, 'Artificial persons against nature: environmental governmentality, economic corporations, and ecological ethics', *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1249 (2012), 104–117.

96 C. L., Lant, J. B. Ruhl, and S. E. Kraft, 'The tragedy of ecosystem services', *BioScience,* 58:10 (2008), 969.

97 D. Harvey, *The New Imperialism* (Oxford, 2003), 100.

98 See also R. Negi and M. Auerbach, 'Primitive accumulation, capitalism and development', *Human Geography,* 2:3 (2009), 100–104; M. Arsel and B. Büscher, 'Nature™ Inc.: changes and continuities in neoliberal conservation and market-based environmental policy', *Development and Change,* 43:1 (2012), 53–78; B. Büscher, 'The political economy of Africa's natural resources and the 'great financial crisis', *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* [*Journal of Economic and Social Geography*] 103:2 (2012), 136–149; B. Büscher and M. Arsel, 'Introduction: neoliberal conservation, uneven geographical development and the dynamics of contemporary capitalism', *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* [*Journal of Economic and Social Geography*] 103:2 (2012), 129–135.

99 Notes from a speech by an official from the Department of Environmental Affairs at the inaugural WRSA Congress in Modimolle, Limpopo Province on 11 April 2013.

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approve the introduction of hybrids or colour variants into the province. In other South African provinces, extralimital species have been introduced into private game reserves with the idea of attracting more tourists and improving their wildlife experiences.[100] KwaZulu-Natal is a unique province in South Africa, which does not allow colour variants of game, for example, the golden wildebeest, black impala, and black and white kudu. It should be noted, however, that many game farmers in KwaZulu-Natal are proud of their contribution to conservation and are proud of this fact. However, the state is not operating in a vacuum, and game farmers always take issue with government departments, even to the extent of going to court as the matter of WRSA's reaction with regards to regulation of the M99 drug shows.

### Connections with the Political Elite

There is an assertion that 'Agri SA has invested heavily in its close relationship with the highest echelons of government.'[101] Agri SA is a powerful white-dominated agricultural organisation. This trend of connections between the WRSA and the political elite has been witnessed. I was an observer at the inaugural WRSA Congress from 10–12 April 2013 in Modimolle, South Africa, where members of the WRSA went about their business of discussing sector specific issues affecting their operations. It was a great opportunity to witness their deliberations and interact with their members for those three days, while collecting valuable information about experiences of game farmers and their interaction with other actors in the sector. At the inaugural congress of the WRSA on 10th April 2013, Peter Oberem, the Vice President of WRSA, expressed great admiration for a new member, Cyril Ramaphosa, who had been elected as the Vice President of the ruling African National Congress in December 2012.[102] Ramaphosa went on to become Deputy President of South Africa and eventually became the president of the country as of 15 February 2018. The WRSA were looking towards making use of Ramaphosa's contacts in the ruling party and business world. There was also expectation

100 K. Maciejewski and G. I. H. Kerley, 2014. 'Understanding tourists' preference for mammal species in private protected areas: is there a case for extralimital species for ecotourism?' *Plos One* 9(2) (http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0088192), 2014.

101 M. Jara and R. Hall, 'What are the political parameters?', in Hall, R. (ed.), *Another countryside? Policy options for land and agrarian reform in South Africa* (Cape Town, 2009), 215.

102 T. Kamuti, 'A critique of the discourse of the green economy approach in the wildlife ranching sector in South Africa', *Africa Insight*, 45:1 (2015), 146–168.

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of help from Ramaphosa in influencing government policy so as to favour the wildlife sector in future.

Cyril Ramaphosa owns a game farm in Limpopo Province. He encountered a media backlash in 2012 after he made a R19.5 million bid for a buffalo cow, named Tanzania with its four-month-old heifer calf at the Piet du Toit Game Breeders Auction in Limpopo Province.[103] The backlash made him publicly apologise for showing off such wealth in a country that is struggling with unemployment, poverty and inequality.[104] Nevertheless having not secured the buffalo cow, Ramaphosa went on to use the 'budget on other animals' for his business.[105] His association with other game farmers was apparent when in an interview, Ramaphosa said that:

> I have made many Afrikaans friends. I'm finding that there's a lot of commitment to change and to securing a common future for the industry, where all those who have been excluded historically will be included. That to me is quite comforting.[106]

This was also very comforting for the game farmers, knowing that at last they had someone from the ruling party who understood their sector as he was now part of it. Ramaphosa was scheduled to address the WRSA inaugural congress but for unknown reasons did not attend the occasion. Cyril Ramaphosa's case shows a trend involving the emergence of a new brand of black game farmer in the country, one useful to use as an example of the much-needed transformation in the sector.

## Discussion and Conclusion

The policy document on game farming acknowledged that the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act 107 of 1998) was the preserve of the then Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) and was expected to lead in the implementation of particular national environmental

103 See 'Talking bull with Cyril Ramaphosa', http://www.farmersweekly.co.za/article.aspx?id=22178&h=Talking-bull-with-Cyril-Ramaphosa, accessed 23 Sept. 2013.

104 See 'Ramaphosa apologises for buffalo bid.' http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/2012/09/20/ramaphosa-apologises-for-buffalo-bid, accessed 17 Aug. 2015

105 Ibid.

106 See 'Talking bull with Cyril Ramaphosa', http://www.farmersweekly.co.za/article.aspx?id=22178&h=Talking-bull-with-Cyril-Ramaphosa, accessed 23 Sept. 2013.

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management laws.[107] This is understandable on the basis that the environmental portfolio requires the skills and capacity to administer environmental regulations. However, there is acknowledgement in the policy that, even though National Acts look easy to interpret, there have been discrepancies at provincial level, especially in relation to the movement of animals and the introduction of species to areas where they did not naturally occur. Each province has its own 'take' on the same issue, which makes it difficult for game farmers when they have to deal with different provincial authorities.

The 1+9 principle (wildlife regulations from the 9 provinces under one national regulatory framework) may be having a negative impact on game farming, at least from the perspective of the national game-ranching bodies. The 1+9 principle is a form of decentralisation in the management of natural resources where the central government cedes 'power, authority and responsibility … to lower level institutions'.[108] However, there are matters currently administered at the provincial level, which game farmers feel ought to be centralised, such as those pertaining to the issuing of rhino hunting permits (personal notes from interviews with game farmers). The game farmers argue that, if there is a single national office issuing rhino permits, it will become easy to track, control, and manage the scourge of rhino poaching. They have the idea that there should be an official who is always available to ensure approval of permits within 24 hours and that this is crucial since they will be serving taxpayers.

The state has been grappling to catch up with developments happening within wildlife ranching on private land. There is need to strengthen institutions dealing with private wildlife ranching, for instance, the policy dialogue that has been initiated through the Wildlife Forum is commendable.[109] This is essential to facilitate the development of a clear policy on game farming. The question of the position of game farming at the interface of agriculture, environment, tourism, and rural development (incorporating land reform) should be addressed. As the initiative of the Wildlife Forum shows, some actors in government aim for the development of an integrated approach to solve the rift between the Department of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, and the Department of Environmental Affairs. Alignment of departmental functions and regulations along national, provincial, and local spheres will bring policy consistency and pave the way for better implementation. There is a need to

107 Department of Agriculture, 'Publication of policy on game farming for public comments', Government Gazette (Notice 874 of 2006), (Pretoria, 2006).

108 Jones, 'A political ecology', 486.

109 D. Snijders, 'Wild property and its boundaries – on wildlife policy and rural consequences in South Africa', *Journal of Peasant Studies,* 39:2 (2012), 503–520.

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identify and iron out the discrepancies brought in by the implementation of the 1+9 principle. This will help to address the issue of weak institutions and pave the way for a clear and consistent game-farming policy to increase stability in the wildlife-ranching sector, though this will be to the advantage of the game farmers.

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CHAPTER 8

# Controlling Sex and Death: On the Wildlife Trophy Industry in South Africa

*Dhoya Snijders*

An Ankole bull belonging to Cyril Ramaphosa, now president of the Republic of South Africa, sold for R640,000 at the Ntaba Nyoni auction in May 2017. With horns of over 110cm the bull was the prize animal at the first Ankole auction in South Africa. Ramaphosa had fallen for the creature in Uganda, but was prohibited by the Department of Agriculture to import the breed. Together with an embryo transfer specialist, he therefore travelled to Uganda to bring embryos back home instead.[1] With its majestic horns, the Ankole has quickly become popular with game farmers, who buy them for breeding purposes and who sell hunts and horns in the wildlife industry. The Ankole is but one example of the industry's constant search for new trophies.

This chapter looks into the commercialisation of wildlife in South Africa and explores how natures are transformed into resources through specific social appraisals.[2] By looking at South Africa's trophy-breeding industry, it aims to show how many new commercial human-nature relations have emerged. In a short span of time since the legal privatization of wildlife, virtually each life stage and body part of wild animals has been employed for commodification. As Noel Castree writes: by means of socio-technical procedures 'noun-chunks of reality' are being 'cut' from the dynamic complexity of nature and are marketed as resources.[3]

By examining the different roles certain species play in the trophy industry, this chapter argues that the privatization of wildlife has led to intensive management and control over not only the habitats of wildlife but also over each aspect of the lives of such animals. Whereas the wildlife business before was mainly focused on experiencing animals in nature (ecotourism) and taking their lives (hunting), it is now quickly developing methods to capitalize

1 See https://www.farmersweekly.co.za/agri-news/south-africa/cyril-ramaphosas-ankole-bull-sells-r640-000.

2 D. Harvey, 'Population, resources, and the ideology of science', *Economic Geography*, 50:3 (1974), 256–277.

3 N. Castree, 'Commodifying what nature?', *Progress in Human Geography*, 27:3 (2003), 273–297.

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on other aspects of wildlife bodies (such as the alteration of bodies and body parts). It is thereby actively producing new kinds of nature.

The text is divided along the lines of three phases in the lives of wildlife, namely sex (on breeding wildlife), death (on hunting and killing wildlife), and after-death (on wildlife meat, souvenirs and trophies). I will start off with a contextual paragraph that conceptualises the research, and illustrates the steep rise in trophy breeding.

## Performing Wildlife in South Africa

Cooney and colleagues define trophy hunting as the hunting of animals with specific desired characteristics (such as a large horn size) that is carried out on a recreational basis and is not a part of livelihood strategies or subsistence.[4] The practice of trophy hunting usually involves a financial transaction by a hunter to a hunting outfitter, who sells the hunting experience as well as the animal and the sought-after trophy. This trophy is an animal part, which is seen as a token of remembrance of the hunt and can consist of the complete animal or, more often, a specific body part such as antlers, horns, tusks, or teeth.[5] This study delves into the practices of a relatively novel exercise within the hunting sector whereby animals are bred specifically for the trophy industry. This trophy breeding has quickly become the norm in South Africa and is facilitated by South Africa's property regime. In South Africa, legal frameworks have shifted to provide land owners, who demonstrate their intention to own wildlife (by erecting fences and taking other measures), ownership over species as well as many other liberties regarding the lives of wildlife (see Snijders, 2015). The breeding of wildlife has thereby become possible outside of zoos or laboratories, and has become common on private wildlife ranches and game farms.

This has led to a blurring of the concept of wildlife.[6] To understand what wildlife is in South Africa, it is important to look beyond category names and study how animals are 'enacted' and how human-wildlife interactions are shaped.[7] Because human-nature interactions influence the proliferation, behaviour, and the morphology of animals, it is important to understand how

4 R. Cooney, C. Freese, H. Dublin, D. Roe, D. Mallon, M. Knight, et al., 'The baby and the bathwater: trophy hunting, conservation and rural livelihoods', *Unasylva*, 68:1 (2017), 249.

5 *Ibid.*

6 *Ibid.*

7 M. E. Lien and J. Law, '"Emergent aliens": On salmon, nature, and their enactment', *Ethnos*, 76:1 (2011), 65–87.

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these different bodies have developed in relationship to each other. It is important to look beyond biological descriptions and understand how wildlife is enacted as biocapital, how human-animal interactions are shaped, and how they are shaping human-human interactions as well.

While there is a long tradition of tourism/ecotourism centred on the lives of wild animals, and their deaths and carcasses have been capitalized on throughout history, the Ankole embryo transfer example illustrates a shift towards capitalization on wildlife reproduction – the event that determines lives and bloodlines. In terms of revenue, the death of animals has historically provided ultimate returns, but trophy breeding is currently expanding its scope by developing new value and multiple new commodities in the reproduction phase as well as during the lives and deaths of animals.

Sundar Rajan defines this – the redefinition of life 'through the contradictory processes of commodification' – as biocapitalism.[8] Interventions in the life cycle, whether they are by highly technical or more traditional methods, go hand-in-hand with new human-animal and human-human relations. This has particularly happened in South Africa where grand parcels of land were converted from traditional farming to wildlife farming land and farm workers and managers have had to learn how to relate to new species, new landscapes, and new markets. Wildlife in South Africa has become enacted in the function of different types of biocapital. These enactments do not only depend on technological advances, such as embryo transportation, fencing, or medical control but also on 'the politico-legal frameworks through which control is exercised'.[9]

## Sex, on the Breeding and Birthing of Wildlife

To increase value, biocapitalism places a magnifying glass on individual features of animals. Instead of buying a permit to hunt simply any springbok or elephant, the trade in wildlife has begun to focus on qualities such as intercalving rates, sperm quality, fat percentage, colour, and, of course, horn size. The manners in which capital is extracted from wildlife animals are concurrently becoming more diverse. It is therefore necessary to examine the on-the-ground process of market-based trophy hunting.

8 K. S. Rajan, 'Genomic capital: public cultures and market logics of corporate biotechnology', *Science as culture*, 12:1 (2003), 87–121.

9 E. Garland, 'The elephant in the room: Confronting the colonial character of wildlife conservation in Africa', *African Studies Review*, 51:3 (2008), 51–74.

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Traditional definitions of domestication break the phenomenon up into three different practices: 'the capture and taming by man of animals of a species with particular behavioural characteristics, their removal from their natural living area and breeding community, and their maintenance under controlled breeding conditions for profit'.[10] These practices correspond neatly with current practices on South Africa's private wildlife reserves. This can in part be explained by the most common former profession of South Africa's trophy breeders. Trophy industry personnel are often trained as agricultural specialists and frequently have a background (or are still involved) in conventional farming. These farm managers are accustomed to the production mode of modern agriculture and its focus on efficiency, effectiveness, reduction of labour, automatization, and up-scaling.[11] Therefore, they 'produce' wildlife and commonly name animals 'units'. An article in *Farmer's Weekly* describing former potato, maize, and cattle breeders shifting to rhino breeding, for instance, writes that their 'breeding programme is founded on six principles: habitat and feed, camp size, social structure and behaviour, reproduction, general management, and economics'.[12] This kind of agricultural focus became increasingly possible after the legislated privatization of wild animals, and, as it gained popularity, it started exerting more and more control over animal bodies (see chapter by Marja Spierenburg in this book). The scrutiny and encroachment on reproductional functions of these bodies quickly followed. Wildlife producers are now increasingly experimenting with wildlife breeding and are valuing unborn animals as well as the carriers thereof with the intention of 'improving' nature. During wildlife auctions, some of which are online and transnational, new technology such as wildlife ultrascanning is used to sell wild animals before they are born. Pregnant female buffaloes are scanned 'live' for instance, so that potential buyers can see that the animal is indeed a healthy mother. Dugmore reported in *Farmer's Weekly* that:

> Anticipation ahead of the Stud Game Breeders auction on 4 September this year was high. But it reached fever pitch when stud game buyers received ultrasound scans of sable antelope, roan antelope and buffalo.

10 S. Bökönyi, 'The walking larder. Patterns of domestication, pastoralism, and predation', in J. Clutton-Brock (ed.), *The walking larder. Patterns of domestication, pastoralism and predation* (London, 1989), 22–27.

11 J. Lorimer and C. Driessen, 'Bovine biopolitics and the promise of monsters in the rewilding of Heck cattle', *Geoforum,* (2011). http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0016718511001746

12 http://www.farmersweekly.co.za/animals/game-and-wildlife/is-rhino-breeding-a-potential-gold-mine-for-cattle-farmers

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> Vets had already confirmed the animals were pregnant, but the scans meant buyers could see the embryo or foetus for themselves. One of the animals scanned was a buffalo cow (Lot 152) from Mpumalanga's Kwanare Game Farm, shown to be in the early stages of pregnancy to a renowned stud male. The buffalo's gestation period is 11 months and combined with her impressive calving dates (22/03/10; 01/03/09; 26/02/08; 07/01/07), there's every chance Lot 152 will produce another calf by March 2011. She sold for the highest price ever paid for a female buffalo – R1.75 million.[13]

Veterinarians say that the ultrascan technique comes from livestock breeding and state that 'scans excite game breeders and buyers in exactly the same way they excite livestock breeders'.[14] Previously, these techniques were not used on wildlife, particularly because physical control over wildlife in the form of capture, holding, and anaesthesia technology were not yet developed. Now, one veterinarian reported to *Farmer's Weekly*, it is part of a process, which is all about 'production and improvement' in which intercalving periods, genetics, and pregnancy are closely monitored.[15] With some species, game farmers are experimenting with 'embryo-flushing', in which either 'fresh' fertilized or 'frozen (cryo-preserved) eggs are placed into the uterus of females to establish pregnancy and DNA-typing of particularly buffaloes. Before wildlife anaesthesia and restraining technology was developed, meiosis was difficult to induce and thereby financially unpredictable. Advancements in technology, often as a result of experimentation by private landowners, has brought more stability and control over these natural processes. Embryo-flushing adds a dimension of control by making it possible to circumvent natural diseases like tuberculosis or foot and mouth disease, which are rife in high-value animals such as buffaloes. 'We've already learnt you can do embryo flushing without spreading diseases, which means you can harvest embryos from buffalo in Kruger National Park or Tanzania and transfer them to clean buffalo, thereby achieving a much greater distribution of genetics,' says fertility and cloning expert Morné de la Rey.[16] With diseases making the production of wildlife uncertain to impossible in specific regions of South Africa, the technique of embryo flushing, in which

13 H. Dugmore, 'Scans and embryo transfers – game follows cattle', *Farmer's Weekly*, (2010). http://www.farmersweekly.co.za/index.php?p[IGcms_nodes][IGcms_nodesUID]=4e0e-837d5a63ec710c9c9b01bf0becae

14 *Ibid.*

15 *Ibid.*

16 *Ibid.*

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both embryos and semen can be disinfected and washed to kill viruses, can lead to new opportunities.

Besides aiming for disease-free animals, breeders try to breed those species and improve those animal features the market has interest in. It is clear that visitors of game reserves rank certain species above others,[17] and many wildlife rankings are derived from hunting discourse. For instance, the most 'brave' or 'dangerous' species are judged to be the most formidable species and, accordingly, the five most difficult species to hunt on foot – the African elephant, Cape buffalo, lion, leopard, and rhinoceros – were coined as the 'Big Five'. These species are not only the summit of contemporary 'African safari hunting',[18] they also are must-haves for ecotourism reserves, public parks, and the silver screen. They are the most valued species in game auctions, although other species now follow close behind (partially because of export and conservation restrictions for Big Five species). The most hunted species in South Africa however are ungulates; springbok, impala, blesbok, kudu and blue gnu lead the numbers lists.[19] As hunting is confined to official lists of huntable species, there is a political scuffle between the wildlife industry and environmental affairs officers about the number of species that can be hunted and in which region. What can be said is that the South African industry has booked ample success in increasing the number of huntable species: with a list of more than 60 mammalian species, South Africa boasts the highest number of huntable species in the world.[20]

Trophy hunting and breeding is strongly linked. Breeders especially focus on producing and 'improving' huntable species and their trophy features. With most species the horn is the trophy feature and its size determines the animal's

17 T. Gehring and E. Ruffing, 'When arguments prevail over power: the CITES procedure for the listing of endangered species', *Global Environmental Politics*, 8:2 (2008), 123–148; e.g. B. Harllee, M. Kim, and M. Nieswiadomy, 'Political influence on historical ESA listings by state: a count data analysis', *Public Choice*, 140:1–2 (2009), 21–42. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11127-009-9409-z

18 In recent years there have been restrictions on the hunting and exporting of eye-catching species such as the Big Five. Pressure from national/international conservation organizations has led to a halt in some trophy industry practices, although new practices are simultaneously being legalized. For instance, in 2017 the Minister of Environmental Affairs published draft regulations, which, if approved, would allow the export of 800 lion skeletons annually, reopen trade in rhino horn, and reverse a moratorium on leopard hunting.

19 T. Carroll, *The Department of Environmental Affairs hunting statistics*. Presented at the 2010 Annual General Meeting of the Professional Hunting Association South Africa, Pretoria.

20 See G. Damm, 'Hunting in South Africa: Facts, risks and opportunities', *African Indaba*, 3 (2005), 1–14.

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value.[21] The credo in trophy judgement is generally straightforward: the bigger the better. How 'bigger' is measured depends on the trophy record-system that one adheres to. These record books have deep historical roots and are social constructions of value. The more than a century-old Rowland Ward and the increasingly popular American Safari Club International systems are 'the best known, most widely used, and most appropriate to the African hunting scene'.[22] The two systems have similar ambitions, but use slightly different rules and administer animals in a different manner. Going by these books, only a small percentage of animals are trophy-worthy. As the horn size determines the price of the animal (and each inch adds a couple of hundred dollars to the total price), breeding practices are geared towards producing trophy-size creatures. Hunting advertisements like the following have become common:

> Trophies on offer include kudu of 55" and more, Sable of 40" and more, Roan of 28" and more and excellent Buffalo. Visit Nuutbegin soon for the best wildlife breeding genetics available.[23]

The Ankole example also shows that, with the technological advances of wildlife anaesthesia and translocation, it has become more popular to import species from different regions because of their trophy value. With a 2010 scandal involving Zambian sable antelopes, which implicated South Africa's Minister of Agriculture, it became clear that the import of rare species from abroad had become an industry worth millions of rands. Although the Department of Agriculture's director of animal health had confirmed that there was 'an embargo on the importation of hoofed animals from Zambia', 153 sables were caught in the Kafue National Park in Zambia, and sources close to the minister tried to smooth the way for the irregular importation of these antelopes.[24]

Besides imports of favourable subspecies, there has been a proliferation of importing exotic wildlife species to South Africa. The popular proverb, which says there are no tigers in Africa, now no longer rings true. Tigers are imported, bred, hunted, shot, made into trophies, and exported. Tigers are also being

21 Tusks, body length, and weight are measured in hornless species such as crocodiles, hogs, elephants, and rhinos.

22 Excerpt from chapter seven of the *Professional Hunters' Course Guide Book of the Eastern Cape Game Management Association Academy of Professional Hunting*.

23 Advertisement on www.nuutbeginsafaris.com, accessed in August 2013.

24 G. Ntsaluba and S. Brümmer, 'Bucking the system', *Mail & Guardian*, (2010). http://www.mg.co.za/article/2010-05-28-bucking-the-system

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commercially bred in South Africa. In 2015, there were 44 known facilities with at least 280 tigers being bred for trophy hunting and trade.[25]

In the footsteps of big game hunters like Theodore Roosevelt and Frederick Selous, hunters have come to see themselves as collectors of species, who strive for complete taxonomies. This urge to collect has historically been presented as a scientific legitimation of hunting, and this narrative persists today. In 2013, a museum in Cape Town asked a big game hunter to donate his collection of trophies for their educational scientific exhibition. It consisted of 'over 300 taxidermied specimens, of which over half were full mounts and included every game animal in Africa currently available on license, with the exception of nine animals comprising mainly forest duikers).[26]

The practice of trophy breeding challenges the list of 'game animals on license'. That is, the list of huntable species is expanding – quicker than official taxonomies – by means of hybridization, splitting, and crossbreeding. This creates 'new species', which may appeal to collectors, while at the same time leading to obscurity in terms of environmental protection laws. The golden gnu provides a good example.

*Case Study: The Golden Gnu*[27]

Amina game reserve is situated approximately 150 km north of Pretoria and has a sign saying: 'We have Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment procurement recognition, so you can score *BEE points!'* (*referring to the affirmative action program of the Republic*). *The area has many* Black Wildebeest, or gnus, of which the Department of Environmental Affairs has stated that they should not occur there. They are invasive to this region, plus these animals are virtually extinct according to government, something the private wildlife industry contests. Because of these official classifications permits to hunt the animal are more difficult to obtain (and prices have dropped, although it is difficult to establish a causal relation between these two occurrences). By crossing and selectively breeding blue gnus Hannes of Amina game reserve has found a way to increase his business opportunities. A new type of animal is the result, which is attractively marketed as the golden gnu because of its yellow-gold colour. Both conservationists and game breeders have different opinions on new species

25 https://www.ecowatch.com/community/environmental_investigation_ag

26 P. Flack, (2013). https://www.peterflack.co.za, visited November 2013.

27 This case study is derived from fieldwork notes that were presented as part of my dissertation (D. Snijders, 'Shifting species in South Africa – wildlife policy, rural consequences' (unpublished PhD thesis, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 2015)).

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> like the golden gnu with breeders saying they are natural occurrences that are artificially selected and isolated, and conservation officials speaking of selective cross-breeding programs. In any case such breeding programs are unwarranted if one wishes to have official conservation status for one's land, but it can be attractive for collectors who seek exclusive hunts. Golden gnus are unique niche commodities that one can sell to hunters, ecotourists and other game breeders for high prices (i.e. the golden gnu has become one of the top selling species in South Africa). Furthermore, the owner reckons, new species like the golden gnu may not be recognized by policy, including a possible evasion of the Alien and Invasive Species legislation. As a reaction to this type of breeding program official conservationists issued a paper stating that this sort of breeding for trophy purposes can 'lead to undesirable levels of inbreeding or, still worse, hybridization of subspecies; significant impacts on the habitat can be caused by the introduction of undesirable invasive or alien game taxa and deliberate modification of indigenous vegetation; and in general, unregulated relocation of animals can have a variety of other unfortunate consequences.[28]

Ramaphosa, who has invested heavily in wildlife breeding, found the idea of breeding golden gnus particularly appealing. He officially joined breeders such as Hannes, brought BEE-credits[29] into the equation, and set up the Stud Game Breeders association. Ramaphosa mentioned that he is 'committed to making a difference by facilitating transformation in South Africa by joining the game breeding industry and by preserving and enhancing the superior genetic pool SA has in the world',[30] At times Ramaphosa has had to tone down his connection to the wildlife industry, as he was publicly grilled for making a bid of 18 million rand for a male buffalo. 'It was a mistake to even put up my hand to do so, and I've been chastised by some of my good comrades. Even before they chastised me I did admit that that was a mistake. I regret it because, I mean, it's an excessive price in the seas of poverty … it was one of those moments when I was blind-sighted,' Ramaphosa said.[31]

28 K. C. D. Hamman, P. H. Lloyd, and J. C. Stadler, *Hunting as an acceptable management tool for conservation,* (2005). Submission to the Panel of Experts, Department of Environmental Affairs, Pretoria, South Africa.

29 Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) is an affirmative action programme launched by the South African government to redress the inequalities of apartheid by giving certain previously disadvantaged groups economic privileges previously not available to them.

30 'Cyril Ramaphosa joins Stud Game Breeders', *Farmer's Weekly*, (2010). http://www.studgamebreeders.co.za/sgb_news.htm

31 R. Munusamy, 'Cyril Ramaphosa: the true betrayal', *The Daily Maverick*, (26 October 2012).

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Prices are still on the rise for stud breeding, and cross breeding has not ended. Besides golden gnus one can encounter golden blue gnus, white elands, chocolate impalas, white and yellow blesboks, and white, black, and copper springboks (sold together as a 'grand slam') to mention just a few of the 'new species'.

### Death: On Hunting the Wild

Wildlife-related products such as trophies, skins, and weapons have come to be important cultural artefacts in the hunting community, as they carry stories and are passed on from generation to generation. Particularly in Afrikaans communities, hunting, conservation, and the appreciation of wildlife have been written into identity stories on the Afrikaner culture and its origins.[32] At a professional hunting school, which I attended as part of this research, students were taught how to tell hunting stories at campfires and in front of groups of clients. Local hunting magazines promulgate them weekly and add stories by experienced hunters as well as by 'newcomers' in the practice such as women, children, and celebrities. Anthropologist Heidi Dahles demonstrates that this type of narrative brings out a symbolic battle between humans and animals (See also MacKenzie, 1987; Ritvo, 1989). Dahles remarks that, whereas humans usually make a strict distinction between themselves and animals, hunters blur this distinction to construct a symbolic 'fair game' (Dahles, 1993). For the sake of good sport, hunters unite with nature through narratives and also by means of camouflage clothing and practices like 'crab-walking'.

One could remark that this battle is fictional. Animals are not aware of the game or its rules, and are severely handicapped in terms of weaponry. But this does not explain why hunters construct these narratives and how value is added to hunting. Using Dahles' idea of category blurring, one could also argue that hunters have created a world in which they escape from human society by interacting with wildlife and uniting with nature. By framing animals as fierce, cunning, or able to run like the wind, the animal is staged as an equal and formidable opponent. By anthropomorphizing the animal, and simultaneously zoomorphizing the hunter, boundaries that separate human and animal species are traversed and broken down. Through these stories hunters also expand on their 'unison with nature' by removing other humans and human artefacts from the hunting grounds. The visitor, often depicted as a businessman who

32 See for example J. Carruthers, 'Changing perspectives on wildlife in Southern Africa, *c.* 1840 to *c.* 1914', *Society and Animals*, 13:3 (2005), 183–200.

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lives a busy urban life, can escape here from social engagements and re-engage with nature and its mystic entities.

Rather than offering a physical animal or one of its body parts, the outfitter thus offers 'the hunt',[33] a particular kind of interaction with an animal that allows one to immerse in nature, currently available as a package-deal commodity. Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset affirms that 'one does not hunt in order to kill; on the contrary, one kills in order to have hunted'.[34]

Clients are guided by a professional hunter, without whom no overseas client is allowed to hunt on South African land. These professional hunters help locate the animal and tell hunters how to shoot animals, from what distance, and when. 'These guys, they come from Norway or Germany where they hunt between the trees and shoot animals at 30 yards', an outfitter told me during the professional hunting training. 'They are not used to these plains in which you need to make a 150-yard shot. They miss all the time'.[35] Some hunting outfitters therefore require their clients to begin their day on the shooting range to practice distance shots. A controversial practice called 'canned hunting' has also arisen, in which animals (especially carnivores such as lions) are hunted on exceptionally small properties to ensure swift success. To secure success on normal hunts, the professional hunter plays a large role. Assistance during hunts is usually provided by trackers. This is a lower-skilled job that is carried out by farmworkers or ex-farmworkers who are predominantly black males.[36] In the hunting theatre, trackers perform many duties to facilitate the hunt. Not only do they help find the species but on various hunts I joined, trackers were also dropped off at strategic places throughout the property to 'drive' the desired species towards the client's rifle range. When the animal is shot, trackers transport the carcass and are generally involved in skinning and removing the blood from the prey. They thereby mainly perform backstage tasks that facilitate the onstage spectacle.

33 Similar to MacKenzie who called 'imperial' hunting 'The Hunt': a marker of white dominance, manliness, and sportsmanship. In a striking process of anthropomorphism, hunters this way picked 'fair' fights with the largest and most attractive male antelope (J. MacKenzie, *Chivalry, social Darwinism and ritualised killing: The hunting ethos in Central Africa up to 1914* (Cambridge, 1987)).

34 J. Ortega y Gasset, *Meditations on hunting. Howard Wescott* (New York, 1972).

35 Interview H. Koster, 2009.

36 F. Brandt, 'Tracking an invisible Great Trek: An ethnography on the re-configuration of power and belonging on trophy-hunting farms in the Karoo' (unpublished PhD thesis, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 2013).

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Some Africans are presented as what Neumann would call 'good natives'[37] and thereby perform onstage tasks also. They are presented, for instance, as intrinsically possessing a bond with nature and excelling at understanding, tracking, and hunting wildlife. On game farms such ideas about natives materialize in different forms. While local modern dwellings and livelihoods are removed or made invisible to visitors, most ecotourism reserves and some of the more upmarket hunting reserves offer staged 'cultural' performances at the lodge, which involve exotic clothing and rituals such as 'African dancing'. These may include trips to staged cultural villages, 'encouraging tourists to experience at one and the same time a trip into a primeval "natural" past and traditional "African" culture'.[38] Theoretically, it latches on to MacCannell's ideas as the hunters and tourists believe they are being presented with a form of staged authenticity, which relates to a non-existing 'true' authenticity.[39] Ndebele has written, however, that the ambiguity of such representation of Africans is particularly difficult to reconcile for black African tourists.[40]

### After-Death: On Mounting Wildlife

After death sets in, wildlife bodies are treated in different manners depending on their status. If they are hunted by trophy hunters, they may receive a ritual tribute, which much depends on the hunter's origin. German hunters, I was taught during a professional hunting course, are known to give the animal a 'last meal' by putting a leaf or twig of the animal's favourite shrubs in its mouth. A twig is then wiped in the animal's blood and placed in the hunter's hat after which everyone drinks a toast and recites a 'Waidmannsheil', a word of thank and praise, to their prey. South African rituals include the eating of (a part of) the animal's liver, if it is the first animal one has shot in his life, and having one's forehead and cheeks marked with blood from the kill. After such rituals, the carcass is cleaned and photographed. For most hunters this is a

37 R. P. Neumann, 'Primitive ideas: protected area buffer zones and the politics of land in Africa', *Development and change*, 28:3 (1997), 559–582.

38 K. Mathers and L. Landau, 'Natives, tourists, and makwerekwere: ethical concerns with "Proudly South African" tourism', *Development Southern Africa*, 24:3 (2007), 527. https://doi.org/10.1080/03768350701445632

39 D. MacCannell, 'Staged authenticity: Arrangements of social space in tourist settings', *American Journal of Sociology*, 79:3 (1973), 589–603.

40 N. S. Ndebele, *Fine lines from the box: Further thoughts about our country* (Cape Town, 2007), 104.

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defining moment of the hunt, as it registers and eternalises the successful act of hunting. A lot of attention goes to the composition of the shot in which the hunter, his rifle, and the trophy are carefully put into composition. The carcass particularly is staged in such a manner as to demonstrate its horn size (against a clear sky and preferably photographed from below), its skin, and its head. Sometimes a tracker or farm worker holds up the animal from behind while remaining out of sight of the camera, Brandt[41] shows. An important rule we learned was that 'if the photograph doesn't flatter the client and his trophy, he'll never be happy with it'. Grass, branches, and vegetation in front of the animal are removed, just as all traces of other humans or human objects. The body and head are then positioned with sticks and stones in a 'dignified manner'. Dignity here means, for instance, that excessive traces of blood, wounds, or aggression are concealed, that the hunter is not to put his or her foot or body on the animal, that liquor and cigarettes are absent, and that the animal's tongue is not hanging out.

During the trophy picture moment, a twig is in some cases positioned in the carcass's mouth and, the animal is arranged in a lifelike posture facing the camera, albeit in a subjugated manner, which is made clear by the position of the hunter or the camera angle. After the design phase, the photo is taken of the client and his or her trophy. The photo is to be taken from below and the horns are to be contrasted against the sky so as to demonstrate the size of the trophy. In most cases a photo is also taken together with the professional hunter who assisted, while trackers tend to be absent from trophy pictures. From here on the animal body is prepared for skinning and dissecting: the wildlife carcass is sent to a butcher or abattoir, while the skin is sent to a taxidermist for trophy production (depending on the hunter's desires). If wildlife is culled by shooting teams (and thus have no trophy status), all rituals are neglected: the animal does not receive tributes, and the carcasses are transported directly to abattoirs, butchers, and in some cases taxidermists for souvenir production. While the trophy photo must not be underestimated for its value as a 'token of victory',[42] many hunters want a corporeal record of the hunting achievement (and investment), and this is where yet another step in the value chain comes in. The services of a highly

41 F. Brandt, *Tracking an invisible Great Trek*.

42 M. Brower, 'Trophy shots: early North American photographs of nonhuman animals and the display of masculine prowess', *Society and Animals*, 13:1 (2005), 13–32; L. Kalof and A. Fitzgerald, 'Reading the trophy: Exploring the display of dead animals in hunting magazines', *Visual Studies*, 18:2 (2003), 112–122.

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regarded taxidermist are called upon to 'resurrect' and immortalise the animal against steep costs. Although there are many different mounts, varying from key body parts such as horns and tusks to complete body mounts, the process, once again, camouflages the violence of the killing, while accentuating the vivacity and power of both the animal and the hunter. As the anthropologist Jane Desmond writes:

> In order not to call attention to the required killing that precedes the taxidermy state, all marks of the cause of death such as bullet holes and arrow incisions must be hidden through meticulous stitching of the hide. With the cause of death excised from the visual equation, so also is the presence of the human who precipitated it. The resulting museum dioramas seem to restore the Edenic state before or outside of human presence. In the mounting of hunting trophies, like the deer head on the wall as home décor, of course, the equation is slightly different; in this environment, although the lifelikeness of the animal is still required, the very presence of its body serves as mute and silenced testament to the power and prowess of the hunter, indirectly invoking both the cause and moment of death.[43]

## Epitaph

In South Africa, the effect of wildlife ownership regulations has been considerable. Besides creating increased individual wealth overnight by giving added value to land and wildlife, the regulation's financial security measures contributed to the wildlife economy on a macro scale. By putting a 'price on the head of wildlife', a marketing system commenced in which prices of utilizable wildlife species inflated, and wildlife business was absorbed by financial markets and organs. With the implementation and fortification of wildlife ownership through the 1991 Game Theft Act, a legally guarded and defined version of game farms came into being that promoted high game fences, and raised wildlife and land prices considerably. Wildlife is being commodified and converted into money in different manners: besides extending and capitalizing on hunting and ecotourism, privatization has enabled wildlife bodies to be scrutinized in each stage of their lives. Wildlife is thereby bred, raised, sold, and

43 J. Desmond, 'Postmortem exhibitions: Taxidermied animals and plastinated corpses in the theaters of the dead', *Configurations*, 16:3 (2008), 347–378.

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processed into trophies and meat according to principles, which are sponged from modern agriculture.

For South African landowners, wildlife has come to present an attractive alternative natural resource to stock. It is highly mobile, self-reproducing and is adapted to South Africa's land and ecology. By removing and fencing off natural threats – such as predators and disease – to its existence a game farm can, without much effort, produce surplus biomass. What makes the resource distinct from traditional farm animals is that human predators are willing to pay not only for the corporeal resource but also for the experience of removing it from the land. Game-capturing teams come in once or twice a year, animal auctions are organized for the landowner, and trophy hunters arrive to pay and maintain the experiment. Moreover, the animal carcasses can be knotted into capital flows multiple times. The trophy hunter buys the experience of killing the animal, the abattoir buys the meat of the animal, the taxidermist pays a commission for the skin of the animal, tourists buy leftover skins that are interwoven into ornaments, and employees either accept residual meat as a partial wage or buy it with their measly wages.

The wildlife industry is therefore continuously pushing boundaries and further exploring the wildlife body and its life phases. National politico-legal frameworks have assisted in this boundary blurring exercise by making the wildlife body rife for biocapitalism and genetic alteration. This chapter aimed to demonstrate and illustrate how crucial life phases such as sex, death, and after-death are increasingly scrutinized, managed, altered, and controlled, and go paired with a whole range of commodity types.

TABLE 8.1 Wildlife life stages and matching commodities

| Phase | Stage | Commodity |
|---|---|---|
| Sex | Meiosis | Sperm; embryo-flushing |
| | Gestation | Ultra-scan; embryo sales |
| | Birth | Animal trading; subsidies |
| Death | Death | The hunt; culling; translocation; abattoir undertaking |
| Post-mortem | Carcass | Trophies; souvenirs (bone, hair, tail); wildlife meat; leather; plumage; eggs; pet food (offal); fat (oils); taxidermy (skin, bones and horn). |

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This sharp turn towards biocapitalism and the blurring of boundaries between wildlife and agricultural products has led to a discourse in which animals are subjectified and which is discordant with, what the editors of this book have named, a form of sentient conservation (see the introductory chapter to this book). As this chapter shows, in the practice of the hunt, animals are narrated to be formidable opponents of hunters with individual aspects that benefit them in the hunting arena, while simultaneously animal bodies and bloodlines are increasingly sculpted by breeders to increase profits. In this discourse, the morality and marginality of animals remains unconsidered, while their power and potency to do harm to mankind is overemphasized. Wildlife is thereby increasingly becoming commoditized and has in the process become more subjectified. This is a hardship that has been identified long ago and is summed up neatly by Marx who stated that, 'of all the great motive forces handed down from the period of manufacture, horse-power is the worst, partly because a horse has a head of his own'.[44]

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44 K. Marx, *Capital: A critique of political economy,* Vol. 1 (New York, NY, 1967), 497.

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# PART 4

## *Critical Voices in Wildlife Conservation*

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CHAPTER 9

# Continued State Monopoly and Control of Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Zimbabwe

## *The Case of Hurungwe's CAMPFIRE Programme*

*Vupenyu Dzingirai, Albert Manhamo, and Lindiwe Mangwanya*

### Introduction

Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) is a community-based natural resources management programme (CBNRM). It gained popularity in the late 1980s and early 1990s in southern Africa, following disenchantment with what has come to be called fortress conservation: a state-led form of conservation criminalising local roles in and use of natural resources. As a movement, CBNRM sought to empower community members, especially those located close to state-patrolled conservation areas defined in law as protected areas in order to manage wildlife and other resources. Under CBNRM, communities would be authorised to earn revenue from wildlife and to determine its use. This was revolutionary, because no other programme, not even Zimbabwe's WINDFALL programme, had come close to delegating to communities the power to decide what to do with income raised from wildlife. For this reason, CBNRM became popular, and there was an unprecedented rush by states in the region not only to be associated with CBNRM but to also have a similar initiative within their borders.[1]

Zimbabwe had its own: CAMPFIRE. In CAMPFIRE, the government, through the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management (DNPWM),delegated management of wildlife to local authorities. The department allowed the *appropriate authorities* (AA) to operate safari hunting, alone or in partnership with safari operators. The *appropriate authority* status was conditional. Rural district councils (RDCs) pledged a greater role for local participation in

1 B. Child, *Origins and efficacy of modern Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) practices in southern African region* (Cape Town, 2003), 1–7.

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CAMPFIRE for communities. The aspiring *appropriate authority* would particularly promise to let wards determine how they wanted revenue from wildlife utilised. This devolution of authority would incentivise local people to value wildlife, and to desist from poaching and other subversive activities. At the height of CAMPFIRE, there were 21 districts that had been accorded this provisional authority status. All of them promised local participation so as to pass revenue generated from wildlife to those living with wildlife and promised a greater say on matters relating to wildlife conservation.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s scholars and researchers learned that CAMPFIRE had been monopolised.[2] They found that hunting contracts were negotiated by local authorities with communities given no say. Similarly, they found that communities were also not consulted as to hunting quotas or about which animals would be for off take. Councils kept communities away from these roles and refused to heed the desperate calls to hunt marauding animals.[3] Researchers also showed that in addition to marginalizing communities in terms of management issues, the *appropriate authorities* also monopolised the revenue from CAMPFIRE. During that period, 50% to 90% of the revenue was retained by RDCs.[4] In holding on to CAMPFIRE revenue, the authorities cited various legislations and policies that they claimed gave them the mandate to do so. Some quickly cited provisions in CAMPFIRE that they said empowered them to keep wildlife revenue for administrative and management purposes. In practice, the monopoly of benefits was to cater for the bureaucratic needs of these local authorities. And, whatever the reasons for it, revenue capture resulted in very little reaching the producer communities who paid the direct and indirect costs of living with wildlife. Dzingirai shows how even the revenue that survived capture was also eyed and appropriated by local elites. In one district, the local chiefs used the revenue as bride price for an additional wife, while in another community leadership shared it amongst themselves. So in both instances, ordinary villagers were the losers.

2 D. Hulme and M. Murphree, 'Policy arena: Communities, wildlife and the "new conservation" in Africa', *Journal of International Development*, 11 (1999), 277–285; A. K. Hill, 'Zimbabwe's Wildlife utilisation programs: Grassroots democracy or an extension of state power?' *African Studies Review*, 39:1 (1996), 103–121; J. C. Murombedzi, 'Devolution and stewardship in Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE programme', *Journal of International Development*, 11 (1999), 287–293.

3 V. Dzingirai, 'The new scramble for the African countryside', *Development and Change*, 34:2 (2003), 243–264.

4 B. Campbel, and S. Shackleton, 'The organisational structures for Community Based Natural Resources Management in southern Africa', *African Studies Quarterly*, 5:3 (2001), 6.

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So whether it was in relation to participation or benefit sharing, there was a noticeable centralisation and monopoly by the local authority at the expense of communities. Indeed, researchers began sounding alarms against CAMPFIRE, describing it as nothing but a recentralisation process, a subcommittee of the state, a scheme that saw communities as perpetual adolescents. For Murphree one irony and hypocrisy was never lost, that the authorities that denied people benefits were the same that demanded more power from the state for onward devolution to local communities.

This recentralisation and monopoly led to a wave of protest from local people. In some areas such as Nyaminyami, it was preliminarily reported during the 1990s that local people were poaching wildlife.[5] In other areas such as Binga it was provisionally reported that people were encroaching into wildlife areas for purposes of displacing CAMPFIRE through agriculture.[6] In yet other cases such as Nkayi, communities violently attacked not the animals but people who championed CAMPFIRE.[7] Finally, other scholars reported the use of arson to eliminate both wildlife and the space on which it depended.[8]

Two decades have passed since these ominous findings, and we don't quite know what has happened to CAMPFIRE post 2000. There have been enormous changes in Zimbabwe, including the dismantling of large-scale commercial agriculture to give way for smallholder agriculture, increased intolerance of dissent, and the much written about economic collapse, which has given rise to institutional innovations in Zimbabwe.[9] This chapter intends to take stock of the CAMPFIRE situation post 2000, in some ways trying to understand whether the unfolding political and economic changes explain any of this. This paper focuses on the performance of CAMPFIRE in Hurungwe District, which we describe below.

Hurungwe, or Urungwe as it used to be known, is a district in the northern part of Zimbabwe, forming the border with Zambia in the north. The northern half of the district is hot and semi-arid. This is the part that is mountainous and

5 C. S. Mackie, 'Aerial census of elephants and other large herbivores in the Sebungwe Region Zimbabwe, 2001', *Occasssional Paper 3, WWF-SARPO* (2002); P. Balint and J. Mashinya, 'CAMPFIRE through the lens of the "Commons" literature: Nyaminyami Rural District in Post-2000 Zimbabwe', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 34:1 (2008), 127–143.

6 P. Balint and J. Mashinya, 'CAMPFIRE during Zimbabwe's National Crisis: Local impacts and broader implications for community based wildlife management'. *Society and Natural Resources*, 21:9 (2008), 783–796.

7 J. Alexander and J. McGregor, 'Wildlife and politics: CAMPFIRE in Zimbabwe', *Development and Change,* 31:3 (2000), 605–627.

8 V. Dzingirai, ' "Every Man must settle where he wants": The politics of settlement in the context of CAMPFIRE', *Zambezia* 23:1 (1996), 19–30.

9 L. Mangwanya, 'Lives at risk: A study of the impact of trypanomiasis in Hurungwe District, Zimbabwe' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Zimbabwe 2017).

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is an extension of the Zambezi escarpment. Much of the land in Hurungwe is unsettled, not only because of the mountainous nature but also because of disease. During early colonialism, the district experienced Rinderpest epidemic that killed both wildlife and livestock. In the 1950s, there was an outbreak of tsetse, which killed people and livestock. The diseases especially Trypanosomiasis, still remain although now concentrated in patches of forests as yet unsettled.[10] And the area has been home to malaria, which will not go away despite even the most intense anti-mosquito sprays. These deadly diseases have over the years discouraged human settlement, and the area itself remains wild.

Particularly after independence, there were concerted efforts to make the area habitable, or at least to clear the diseases.[11] Donors were mobilised and so the fly especially has been pushed to areas of the Zambezi Valley. The area is now occupied by various ethnic groups. The original Korekore are the majority and until recently were pursuing a hunter and gatherer way of life.[12] The second largest ethnic group is of Karanga origin; these are long-term migrants into the area. These frontier migrants landed in the early 1980s with help from the state. The Karanga are mainly crop farmers who are interested in establishing large fields for commodity (tobacco and cotton) production in the unsettled buffer and hunting areas. The last group is fairly recent and is called 'the squatters', people of mixed origin, who are former farm workers. These 'squatters' tend to be from Malawi, Zambia, and Mozambique and were pursued by the state for supporting commercial farmers during the traumatic land reform.[13] This group is interested in carving out homes in the district's unsettled wildlife area.[14]

The area itself has wildlife, much of it spilling from the nearby wildlife areas of Chewore, Mana Pools, Sapi Forest, and Charara. In the 1980s, the Hurungwe Rural District Council (HRDC) started CAMPFIRE. This meant that it would create opportunities for hunting through limiting immigration. In this connection, the local authority rezoned particular areas of the district, creating at least three safari areas for hunting lions, buffaloes, and elephants, among other species. These concession areas were leased to hunting firms owned by commercial farmers who had formed alliances with political elites now cutting their teeth in a sport still dominated by the white

10 V. Dzingirai and L. Mangwanya, 'Struggles over carbon in the Zambezi Valley: The case of Kariba REDD in Hurungwe, Zimbabwe', in M. Leach and I. Scoones (eds.), *Carbon conflicts and forest landscapes in Africa* (London, 2015), 143–162.

11 *Ibid.*, 147.

12 Mangwanya, 'Lives', 51–53.

13 B. Rutherford, *Working on the margins; black workers, white farmers in colonial Zimbabwe* (London, 2001), 268.

14 Dzingirai and Mangwanya, 'Struggles', 146.

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TABLE 9.1 Hurungwe Rural District (HRDC) CAMPFIRE Revenue, 1992–1999

| YEAR | INCOME |
|---|---|
| 1992 | $85,000 |
| 1993 | $70,000 |
| 1994 | $81,000 |
| 1995 | $71,000 |
| 1996 | $58,000 |
| 1997 | $51,000 |
| 1998 | $45,000 |
| 1999 | $44,000 |
| TOTAL | $503,000 |

race.[15] The Council has striven to keep these areas unsettled, not just as a contractual agreement with hunters but also as a strategy to maintain a wilderness fit for a truly viable African hunting safari. As a result of this, maybe, CAMPFIRE has generated revenue and illustrates this Table 9.1.

In recent years, HRDC has added to its CAMPFIRE programme a large project called KARIBA REDD, which seeks to generate revenue through carbon credits. The project is sponsored by Carbon Green and a consortium of former white commercial farmers whose land was expropriated by the state in the last radical land reform. Some of the farmers also operate hunting safaris in the district in partnership with political elites. Like CAMPFIRE, the project is against human settlement and further agriculture in Hurungwe. The argument is that illegal and continuous settlement results in further deforestation, resulting in fewer carbon credits. In this connection, HRDC has bitterly attempted not just to block new settlers but also evacuate any settlers like those who were illegally settled in buffer zones that have good carbon-credit stocks. The total revenue from carbon credits is not fully known because this CAMPFIRE project is, in terms of its management, opaque to everyone other than the Council and its partners, but money has been raised.[16]

15 V. Dzingirai and L. Mangwanya, 'Struggles over carbon in the Zambezi Valley: The case of Kariba REDD in Hurungwe, Zimbabwe', in M. Leach and I. Scoones (eds.), *Carbon conflicts and forest landscapes in Africa* (London 2015), 143–162.

16 *Ibid.*, 146.

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When CAMPFIRE started, HRDC supported the full participation of people. Furthermore, it also supported revenue disbursements at the local level, which bore the cost of living with wildlife. The Council also supported compensation for any crop or livestock damage incurred within the framework of CAMPFIRE. Not surprisingly this caused a great deal of excitement within CAMPFIRE, and some positive attitudinal change in respect to wildlife and conservation was initially noted in the early 1990s. Decades later, it's not clear whether CAMPFIRE is being implemented in ways that support participation or whether we are dealing with a morbid form of participation that simply advances the concerns of the local authority, HRDC. Similarly it is not clear whether there is revenue capture or whether there is continued revenue disbursement to local communities to support livelihoods and compensation for property damage. Even more ambiguous are the subversive strategies people are adopting against CAMPFIRE in those cases where they have issues with it. This is what we sought to find out in this chapter.

This chapter is based on ongoing and separate fieldwork by the authors in Hurungwe, especially after 2012. It is also based on secondary and indirect sources sourced from the district, because the HRDC is not always keen to share primary information with researchers. The information is rather scanty but we believe it supports our hypothesis, which states that there is continued revenue capture and morbid participation, both of which are leading people into subversion.

## CAMPFIRE and Local Participation

In this section, we want to examine whether there is participation in CAMPFIRE. In this connection we wanted to find out the extent to which the people are involved in CAMPFIRE's decision-making process, information sharing, transparency, and other management processes like quota setting and attending meetings.

According to the local authorities, participation is ongoing and alive in CAMPFIRE. An officer of the Council, Mr Moyo attested to this. He denied that there is exclusion of communities in CAMPFIRE management, adding that:

There are no challenges; there is a structure set from grassroots to deal with participation issues.[17]

According to him there are various grassroots structures for participation, which include:

17 Interview with Mr Moyo, Magunje, 4 March 2017.

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> ... Village Wildlife Management Committee, Ward Wildlife Management Committee and the mother structure, the District Wildlife Management Committee, which is a subcommittee of the HRDC. These structures are open to people, and are in fact used by them to channel their needs as regards CAMPFIRE ...[18]

It is true that these structures exist in the villages and in the wards; the CAMPFIRE committee was created in the 1990s, shortly after the start of CAMPFIRE. Other lower-level structures were subsequently created to feed into this structure. So from this view point there is participation in CAMPFIRE, but when one looks at the institutions critically, a different picture emerges. The different picture is that there is no participation, at least not in the sense of engaging communities to decide on issues of concern to them. Where there is participation, it is really the kind that seeks to co-opt or mobilise people for CAMPFIRE on behalf of the Council. In workshops called to discuss CAMPFIRE-related issues, communities clearly point out that there is no involvement of local people. We shall refer to three such workshops.

The first workshop was held in Chirundu on 30 March 2015. This was called by ZPWMA, with funding from John Stevens Guided Safaris Africa and African Wildlife Foundations. Participants included safari operators, CAMPFIRE representatives, HRDC officials, Zimbabwe Republic Police, the President's office, civil society, and public prosecutors, in addition to the communities. These participants were grouped and were made to itemise what the major problem in CAMPFIRE was. At least three groups mentioned the issue of limited participation as seen in these extracts from the workshop:

**Problem analysis working group**

*Group 1*

Community involvement is poor

Poor coordination of information and communication

Motivated and skilled leadership inadequate

Recruitment and selection criteria not implemented

Poor development in the area

FIGURE 9.1 Group 1: Problem analysis feedback

18 Interview with Mr Moyo.

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**Problem analysis working group**

*Group 2*

Promote joint monitoring among stakeholders

Poor coordination among stakeholders in resource mobilization and information sharing

There is need for joint planning among stakeholders

Establish proper communication networks among stakeholders

Chiefs' indaba 'listening'

Lack of community engagement/awareness

CAMPFIRE strengthening policy issues

FIGURE 9.2 Group 2: Problem analysis feedback

The groups pointed out that communities remained uncoordinated, by which they meant they were not part of CAMPFIRE and its management structures. They mentioned that they were not privy to information, adding that all that occurred was shared among technical people and powerful people who were not resident in the ward. For communities, this alienation is central to continuing problems such as poaching. That the communities present raised it more than once in the session suggests how strongly they feel about participation and its lack.

Another group, Group 2, in the same workshop also felt the same, perhaps placing more emphasis than Group 1 on the issue of participation. The group felt that there were issues to be sorted out in CAMPFIRE. They felt that the technocrats turned a deaf ear to local concerns regarding CAMPFIRE. They said that there was no 'community engagement'. What exactly they had in mind is difficult to say, but it would seem that they felt that their leaders, who ought to be engaged and consulted on their own behalf, were simply left out by the elite of CAMPFIRE practitioners, led by HRDC. Perhaps it is for this reason that they suggested, going forward, the need for dialogue forums that they labelled 'Indaba'. The chiefs were to be incorporated in these forums representing the people.

Another group, Group 4 also pointed out the same thing about poor participation. They pointed to the lack of participation, as is clear from the evidence in Fig 9.3.

The group mentioned that local community leadership was not involved in CAMPFIRE and also that communities had 'no sense of ownership'. By this they did not just mean a sense of alienation; they also meant a feeling of being

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**Problem analysis working group**

*Group 4*

CAMPFIRE – review and revamp

Local community leadership

No sense of ownership

No community initiatives

Lack of feedback from stakeholders

Projects proactive

Improve and assist with farming methods

FIGURE 9.3 Group 4: Problem analysis feedback

marginalised, and a feeling of being ignored and not considered worthy of feedback. As one of the participants explained later:

> We feel like strangers in CAMPFIRE. We feel like orphans who have no right to be to be told about things that affect them. And yet they always say that CAMPFIRE is for the community.[19]

Clearly, from the workshops, it is evident that there is no local participation in CAMPFIRE. Not only do the local communities say that there is no participation but even their traditional leaders also indicate the same concern. We shall only make reference to one such revelation by traditional leadership. In August 2016, the Environmental Management Agency (EMA) called a meeting with the local community at Nyamakate Secondary School. The meeting was called to discuss issues of environmental concern such as veldt fires, poaching, and deforestation, and many people were invited. Also present were chiefs, represented by Chief Chundu. When his turn came to speak, the chief did not mince his words, attacking corruption in CAMPFIRE, and the lack of transparency and accountability. He attacked the way CAMPFIRE was being run, adding that it excluded even the traditional leaders as representatives for the community. He ended by saying that:

> Leaders should learn to speak the truth all the time and support the government programs. CAMPFIRE project must be revised in the way it is

19 Interview with workshop participant, Chirundu, 30 March 2015.

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> being run so that the community should run it and develop their areas in line with ZIMASSET, which is the economic blue print till 2018.[20]

Another example of there being lack of participation in CAMPFIRE comes from Kariba REDD+. This project seeks to extend the CAMPFIRE concept to forests. The players are mostly former commercial farmers who have promised to sell carbon credits to overseas players. These players in conjunction with the council manage the REDD programme, deciding whom to engage as buyers of carbon credits. Furthermore, the company and council decide where the project should be concentrated and its boundaries, which affect local communities. Chief Chundu observed – and has never hidden his bitterness for not being involved in the determination of boundaries for the project – that the company and Council were skipping him instead of:

> … Sitting down with us under a tree and letting us know what is planned under this Kariba REDD carbon project … What tends to happen is that the white people and Council are forcing matters on us, instead of sitting down with us. Now I hear they are camping in the forest, in my land, and I don't know what they want …[21]

In the interview, the Chief of course is exaggerating that HRDC is forcing things on people, because this is not what is happening, but there is no doubt that there is top down implementation of the project. In fact, when asked whether they are incorporating local people in Kariba REDD, one council officer quickly justified the lack of participation, adding that:

> We are the local authorities, and we are in charge of all that lies in the land. We are empowered to implement any project that furthers interest of the district and the nation.[22]

So when we add what people said in that workshop in Chirundu in the northern tip of the district and when we put this together with what the Chief said at Nyamakate, which is located centrally in the district, the clear finding is that there is no participation in CAMPFIRE. The people are strangers to CAMPFIRE and are not owners of the processes. And this runs counter to what the HRDC profusely tells outsiders and researchers on CAMPFIRE.

20 Chief Chundu's speech, Nyamakate Secondary School, 4 August 2016.
21 Interview with Chief Chundu, Karoi, 16 August 2016.
22 Interview with Mr. Moyo, Magunje, 20 August 2016.

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The point that there is no participation in CAMPFIRE is apparently not new. Ngwerume and Muchemwa and Mhaka point out this matter in their recent studies on CAMPFIRE in Hurungwe, that there is no participation.[23] They reveal that there is lack of transparency; people do not trust the office holders, because they have no right to check on how CAMPFIRE revenues have been expended nor can they demand a meeting or an explanation. Furthermore, Dzingirai and Mangwanya also observed that there is no CAMPFIRE participation.[24] So the finding of this study merely corroborates this increasingly held observation that CAMPFIRE has alienated the local people and their traditional institutions.

In the section that follows, we turn to the issue of revenue and illustrate the revenue capture that characterises CAMPFIRE.

## CAMPFIRE Revenue Capture

In this section of the chapter, we are interested in assessing whether or not there are revenue benefits for the people as was promised at the inception of CAMPFIRE. We are interested in seeing whether communities enjoy dividends and whether they are also compensated in cash for the crop damage they experience from wildlife. The section is also interested in finding out about other forms of benefits for the local people. So what does an analysis of secondary sources and interviews say about this objective? It is immediately clear that there are limited benefits from CAMPFIRE and that there is continued state capture of revenue meant for the local level.

The first piece of evidence that suggests that people have no direct benefit from CAMPFIRE revenue paradoxically comes from a HRDC representative. Asked whether there is any money or incentives given to the people, the officer tacitly remarked:

There are no more cash incentives … community is not getting any cash benefit …[25]

23 T. E. Ngwerume and C. Muchemwa, 'Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM): A vehicle towards sustainable rural development. The case of CAMPFIRE in Zimbabwe's Mashonaland West, Hurungwe District', *Journal of Emerging Trends in Economics and Management Sciences*, 2 (2011), 75–82; V. Mhaka, 'The impact of foreign donor funding withdrawal on the sustainability of the CAMPFIRE programme. Some reflections from Hurungwe CAMPFIRE District' (unpublished MSc. Thesis, Bindura University of Science Education, 2014), 46–59.

24 Dzingirai and Mangwanya, 'Struggles', 147.

25 Interview with Mr Gomwe, Magunje, 4 March.

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Another officer of the HRDC concurs with the above:

> There are no cash benefits anymore. Sure we used to give them benefits especially when CAMPFIRE started. But this is past now … we have terminated the practice and we have no regrets …[26]

The Council provides a reason for the break with the past where emphasis was on the sharing of benefits with communities. The Council maintains that the measure was taken to prevent further abuse of the facility by local people. It is said that, before this measure was taken, CAMPFIRE committees were abusing money from CAMPFIRE. Those cited in this abuse included CAMPFIRE committee members. It is possible that the people at the local level were abusing CAMPFIRE revenue, because Dzingirai also reports abuse of money in Binga in the early days of CAMPFIRE.[27] But it is possible that local people in Hurungwe were not able to explain how the money was used, not that they had abused it. That, however, is beside the point. The point is that there is no longer the promised disbursement of money to communities as was originally envisaged in CAMPFIRE.

But people are not just being denied their money; they are also not being compensated for the loss of their livestock, crops, and even lives. In Hurungwe, marauding animals remain real, as a local paper reports that in 2017 the district lived in fear of marauding lions, which thankfully were shot by a professional hunter.[28] In spite of this, people were not compensated. The evidence of absence of compensation comes from various sources, but we focus on the HRDC staff. Asked whether there is compensation for property damage as promised by CAMPFIRE, the officer remarked:

> We have no compensation. As a Council, we no longer follow this recommendation in CAMPFIRE …[29]

And we also talked with villagers who had lost livestock and had crops raided by marauding animals post 2000: not one of them had received compensation because of wildlife, even though they remember that they are supposed to be compensated. Six of the 10 victims had filed reports with the Council; the rest had not bothered reporting the issue.

26 Interview with Mr Moyo.
27 V. Dzingirai, 'Every Man', 19–20.
28 *The Herald*, 28 March 2017.
29 Interview with Mr Gomwe.

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Just as in the case of revenue, the Council is quick to explain why it is varying from this CAMPFIRE principle. The Council cites abuse of the facility by some unscrupulous individuals in the district. People were deliberately leaving crops unattended to create a scene for compensation, according to an officer of Council:

> Benefits caused problems of illegal settlements as people moved out to the peripheral areas in order to get money for damaged crops. They went to the buffer areas where there are animals, and planted their maize there. They did so in the zones where animals have a right. And so you can see there was mischief …[30]

The abuse of revenue was greatly contested by local people, who said that, if crime was involved at all, then the perpetrators should have been arrested and prosecuted. Equally, the issue that they abused compensation was also dismissed by local people. In fact, many villagers interviewed in this regard took great offence against the Council for rubbing salt in their wounds.

If it is contested that local people abused revenue for compensation and dividends, then what exactly is the proper interpretation? A proper interpretation is that the Council is using this explanation or more correctly creating an explanation that allows it to deny what essentially is a people's right in CAMPFIRE. It is using this discourse to hold on to revenue from CAMPFIRE, which is kept in its own coffers at HRDC at all costs, and excludes communities from enjoying benefits due them. This point becomes even stronger when it is recalled that there is no community that has, in the last 7 years, been allocated revenue by the Council, even in those cases where needs are legitimate:

> You ask for the money so it can be used for boreholes, because there is no water in Hurungwe. People are suffering from diarrhoea because there is no clean water. But if you ask for the money you won't get it. Wards are denied usage of money for any benefit.[31]

We were not able to get a clear directive from the Council forbidding ward committees from using their money. But neither were we able to come up with a single project that was created as a result of requests from local people. What this suggests is that the Council is holding on to revenue for its own purposes. As Dzingirai and Mangwanya have noted, the objective now is to use

30 *Ibid.*

31 Interview with village head, Kazangarare, 10 March 2017.

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CAMPFIRE revenue to support bureaucracy at the district council.[32] This is increasingly becoming important because no longer do Councils receive grants from government; they are required to fend for themselves, and CAMPFIRE revenue is one of the easy sources of income.

Clearly people are no longer benefiting from CAMPFIRE. Where they receive any funding, it is with clear instruction on how such money ought to be used. This point is not new; already Mhaka also found that the local people in Hurungwe had no right to make decisions about the use of CAMPFIRE revenue.[33] People are of course told that this is their money, and that they should use it according to their own formulas. In practice this is no longer the case, if indeed it ever was. The Council has captured all.

### Subversion as a Response to the CAMPFIRE Squeeze

In this section of the chapter, we look closely at how people are responding to the monopolistic governance of wildlife resources. Our contention is that local people are engaging in acts of environmental subversion to ensure that they are free from CAMPFIRE. It is not just disenchantment.

### Poaching and Wildlife Elimination

There is evidence that communities are becoming even more hostile to CAMPFIRE. An HRDC official quotes a statment from people of Nyaodza are responding to problems of CAMPFIRE:

> Don't tell us about Kariba REDD or CAMPFIRE. Don't even try to talk us into that evil programme. Better it is abolished of the face of the earth …[34]

This antagonism is not just reflected in words, as the above statement clearly shows. It is also reflected in poaching in buffer zones, which is a practice villagers conduct under the guise of searching for stray livestock or artisanal mining:

32 Dzingirai and Mangwanya, 'Struggles', 147.
33 Mhaka, 'The impact'.
34 Interview with Mr Moyo, Magunje, 28 February 2017.

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> They go there in the protected areas. They say they are looking for cattle; sometimes they say they are going for gold panning, when in fact they are poaching big time. They are poachers in disguise.[35]

This remark is not an exaggeration; even local leaders attest to this poaching. For example, in Nyamakate area, Chief Chundu told government officials that his people were engaged in illegal hunting:

> The area has been heavily affected by high numbers of poaching, high numbers of people arrested for cutting down trees …[36]

So serious is poaching that it is now causing the HRDC a lot of embarrassment vis-à-vis investors and partners. In particular, the Council says that this poaching is jeopardising safari hunting, driving safari hunters away from the district. As an officer of the Council told the press four years ago:

> Our clients do not like inconveniences of coming across people wielding spears, with packs of dogs … our CAMPFIRE is dying because of this poaching.[37]

The ecological consequences are clear; animals are becoming extinct in the district, where once they were abundant. Recently, a council ecologist broke the news to a local daily paper that plains game were now threatened, adding that:

> Kudu, zebra and buffalo no longer exist in the game area due to massive poaching …[38]

For the Council, the upsurge in livestock raids by lions reported in the district is ample proof that traditional prey are becoming fewer and difficult to come by. This suggestion is not altogether correct. It may be the case that more and more people are encroaching into protected areas where lions dwell, easily becoming the target. In this connection, the upsurge could reflect more human-wildlife interactions than an absence of traditional prey.

35 *Ibid.*
36 Chief Chundu's speech.
37 *The Herald*, 3 April 2012.
38 *The Herald*, 18 September 2014.

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But people are not just poaching wildlife; they are also embarking on total elimination of marauding wildlife, both edible and non-edible, from their area. Deadly methods to remove wildlife including poisoning those animals which cause the most serious of damage to wildlife. An officer at HRDC, addressing the question on how people were responding to CAMPFIRE said that:

In 2012 many elephants were poisoned using oranges laced with cyanide … [39]

Just where the community is getting cyanide from is very difficult to say. Cyanide is a controlled substance and is only sold to those engaged in mining for use in gold processing. Perhaps it is from the many artisanal miners that operate in Hurungwe that the lethal substance is acquired. Whatever the source of it, people now have their hands on cyanide, which they use to get rid of animals they consider a problem to them. It must be pointed out that this practice is neither new nor localised: only recently nearly 60 elephants were killed, although the motive seems to have been for ivory.[40]

Wildlife killing has led to a decline in the elephant population in Hurungwe. In 2001, an aerial survey showed that there were 5741 elephants in Hurungwe's Chewore Safari Area. In 2010, the population of elephants had dropped by an estimated 12% to 5058.[41] So serious is the poaching and killing of wildlife that HRDC has sought the services of the law enforcement agencies to curb the practice. According to a local daily, HRDC has recruited the services of Zimbabwe Republic Police and Zimbabwe National Parks and Wildlife Management Authority to thwart what it said was serious poaching that left CAMPFIRE in operational doldrums.[42]

An officer of the Council recently told a leading daily newspaper that the strategy was paying off. The officer praised the security forces, adding that:

> Investigations … led to the arrest of 3 suspected poachers in the Nyamakate area of Hurungwe. The area falls under Chief Chundu and has become notorious for harbouring poachers … [43]

But if local sentiments are anything to go by, it is likely that this fortress conservation will not succeed in stopping poaching and the killing of wildlife. As one of the villagers said:

39 Interview with Mr Gomwe.
40 *News Day*, 30 October 2015.
41 P. T. Kuvawoga and E. Gandiwa, *Aerial survey of elephants and other large herbivores in Chewore Safari Area, Zambezi: 2010* (Harare, 2011), 11–12.
42 *The Herald*, 4 June 2013.
43 *The Herald*, 10 November 2016.

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We will not rest until they see that we are not happy with wildlife and those people behind it … [44]

Thus the desire by local people to get rid of wildlife is as powerful as the desire to perpetuate CAMPFIRE. It is clear that the two are on a collision course, but time to turn to another type of subversion: Encroachment.

### Encroachment in Wildlife Areas as Subversion

The second response to centralisation and the monopoly of CAMPFIRE is encroachment – for purposes of settlement and agriculture – into the buffer area. Evidence for this subversive practice is clear. Village heads from the affected areas continue to allocate land to new settlers in zones marked or set aside by HRDC and DNPWMA as CAMPFIRE areas. In an interview with a local daily, the HRDC chairman said that the illegal settlement of people, facilitated by traditional leaders was so serious that it had pushed the buffer zone to less that 4km from the protected area.[45]

Just who are these settlers? It is difficult to say, but a ward leader described them as 'known' hunters and gold panners, who are not engaged in any 'meaningful' agricultural activities.[46] If they are hunters and gold panners, there are also people who are serious about making money through agriculture, especially tobacco and cotton production.

Whatever their origin or their purposed livelihood strategies, these people have now encroached into the buffer zone, which according to an official of Council:

> … is the heart of CAMPFIRE … [47]

These 'squatters', as they are called sometimes by authorities to criminalise their settlement,[48] have openly and successfully opposed the Council's plans to evict them, even going as far as using the law.[49]

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44 Interview with Mr Nyati, Chewore, 4 March 2016.
45 *The Herald*, 30 Sept 2016.
46 *ibid*.
47 Interview with Mr Moyo.
48 J. Kapfumvuti, 'Diverse interests among multiple actors in REDD+ initiatives: challenges and opportunities for sustainable forest management in Kariba REDD+' (unpublished MSc thesis, University of Zimbabwe, 2014), 59.
49 *The Horizon*, July 1994.

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What is observed about encroachment is not entirely new. By 2011, scholars had already begun to describe this encroachment and the players involved in Hurungwe and in the Zambezi Valley. They noted how local people struggled to recover their land. Chimhowu called this struggle between local people and CAMPFIRE a 'silent war of attrition'.[50] This research simply confirms this practice, which arguably has grown in scope since the early 2000s.

### Arson through Veldt Fires as Subversion

The third subversive response is through veldt fires. People do this in order to permanently scare wildlife away from the area:

> If we do not burn these forests we have problems with lions … burning scares away predators … [51]

But they also start fires as a means of displacing CAMPFIRE through agriculture. Thus they burn huge tracts of land in a system that resembles the traditional Chitemene farming. Whether these fires are done for hunting, for scaring wildlife, or for farming, they are always a secret matter. These fires, according to a 70-year-old man and leading farmer in the area, are started at night in order to avoid detection.

> We do it all the time but especially at night because we don't want to be arrested by CAMPFIRE people. So we start fires in the night … [52]

The clearance of the land is done in the dry season, and these fires often rage out of control due to wind and dry grass. And in every dry season there are veldt fires to the extent that in the month of September 2015 alone, over 1000 veldt fires were started in Hurungwe.[53] One Council official estimates that over 57,000 hectares of forests are destroyed by fire in a month. The burnt area includes wildlife buffer zones. This is a big blow to the CAMPFIRE project and the animals it tries to conserve.

50 A. O. Chimhowu, 'Engendering greater citizen rights in CAMPFIRE: A double edged sword? Some reflections from the case study of Hurungwe', *Institute for Development Policy and Management*, (2002), 2–25.

51 Interview with a villager, Nyaodza, 28 February 2017.

52 Interview with Mr Chikwapuro, Magunje, 20 August 2016.

53 *The Herald*, 16 May 2016.

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We must quickly note that arson reports are not new; already scholars working in Hurungwe repeatedly pointed out this practice. That this is easily picked up by researchers working in the district means the problem is large and no longer a secret. It means that sightings of fires are prevalent not just in time but in space as well. But to summarise the chapter:

### Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter we sought to look at whether there was participation in CAMPFIRE. We also sought to examine whether there is capture of revenue and benefits by the local authority. Finally, we wanted to see how people responded to recentralisation and the monopoly of CAMPFIRE.

What can be said without doubt is that participation remains a pipe dream for people in CAMPFIRE in Hurungwe. Plans involving CAMPFIRE are made by the local authority, and this includes what to do with wildlife and what to do with any values derived from it. People are invited to participate only when or where it benefits the local authority. We have termed this morbid participation, because its end is tragic for local people, CAMPFIRE, and wildlife. Secondly, concentration of benefits remains the norm in CAMPFIRE. While in theory communities are equal partners in revenue sharing, in practice the revenue is monopolised by the local authority. The Council receives revenue from wildlife and, instead of passing it on to local people according to an agreed formula, it holds on to it. We have called this process 'revenue capture' in CAMPFIRE and have shown how it is cascaded to the lowest level in the district.

Thirdly, and as a result of the serious of absence of participation and continued capture of revenue, local people have redefined their position in respect to CAMPFIRE. A spirit of romance has been replaced by a spirit of antagonism. People hate wildlife, seeing in it a pest more than a resource. People also hate those championing CAMPFIRE, whether it is safari operators or the local authority. A programme to eliminate CAMPFIRE and its features is now in place, and this includes widespread poaching and encroachment into wildlife areas for purposes of pursuing better and competitive strategies such as crop production. We have called this 'a programme of subversion'.

In short, there is no positive aspect to CAMPFIRE. The themes intimated in the 1990s are consummated in the present generation. If there is a change, it is that these themes of control and exclusion are now widespread. This raises the critical question about the future of CAMPFIRE and CBNRM in the region.

We can only conclude that CAMPFIRE will die, if it has not already died. Speaking at an annual gathering in Victoria Falls on the future of CAMPFIRE,

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Marshal Murphree, who is a founder of CAMPFIRE, predicted CAMPFIRE would not die because of its immense promise and contribution to people's lives. But what we see in Hurungwe and other places in Zimbabwe is disenchantment with CAMPFIRE. We can say that, as they continue to find it irrelevant and costly to their lives, and as they see it as a mechanism to enrich and empower local authorities to better control them, local people will rid their lives of it. They will reject the programme, relegating it to the dustbin of disasters: that endless list of programmes and initiatives that have failed to bring about development and conservation. And when this finally occurs, we will be back to where we started, that is, fortress conservation with its emphasis on people as being criminals opposed to nature.

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CHAPTER 10

# Poaching: Between Conservation from Below, Livelihoods and Resistance

*Paul Hebinck*

## Introduction

'Poaching is a contested term and has different meanings in the different cultural and legal contexts it occurs.'[1] The notion 'poaching' is extremely problematic, and not just conceptually. It is not well understood and too easily assumed to be destructive and to negatively impact biodiversity. These assumptions also easily appear as 'received wisdom'[2] or resting on a conceptual understanding that there is only one nature.[3] The one-nature discourse potentially ignores that there are other, contrasting and contesting interpretations of nature, which, in turn, motivate 'local' people to engage in modes of appropriation of nature that, given the enactment of conservation laws, are designated as illegal. The act of 'poaching' is consequently treated as a criminal offence. 'Poaching' does, in my view, not always do justice to why local people in villages close to sites of plenty appropriate natural resources in this way. 'Local poaching' has, despite the community and the participatory-oriented nature of the recent (community-based) conservation discourses,[4] too often been probed *without* incorporating the underlying values, claims on usufruct, and access to resources, practices, and knowledge repertoires of local people and their interactions with the natural environment, including domesticated and wild animals. Nor are the emerging

1 N. Carter, J. López-Bao, J. Bruskotter, M. Gore, et al., 'A conceptual framework for understanding illegal killing of large carnivores', *Ambio*, 46 (2017), 251–264.

2 M. Leach and J. Fairhead, 'Fashioned forest pasts, occluded histories? International environmental analysis in West African locales', *Development and Change*, 31 (2000), 35–59.

3 N. Gombay, ' "Poaching" – What's in a name? Debates about law, property, and protection in the context of settler colonialism', *Geoforum*, 55 (2014), 1–12. See also M. Blaser, 'The threat of the Yrmo: The political ontology of a sustainable hunting program', *American Anthropologist*, 111 (2009), 10–20.

4 F. Berkes, 'Rethinking Community-Based Conservation', *Conservation Biology*, 18 (2004), 621–630.

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local realities in villages and in community-based conservation projects and programmes, and their relative achievements, taken into account. Moreover, not much is known about what is hunted and by what means. The often-used term 'illegal wildlife hunting', as preferred by some contemporary authors,[5] is also a problematic notion. Routine subsistence activities come to be criminalized under the category of 'poaching'. 'Illegal wildlife hunting' leaves political questions unanswered, such as 'whose laws' are being trespassed.

The focus of this chapter is on wildlife, which, in addition to what are known as 'iconic' animals, also includes fish. The objective is to develop a more nuanced view concerning 'poaching', one that reflexively provides space for 'poaching' in contemporary (rural) development, and conservation discourses and debates. Similar in scope and outlook as Woodroffe and colleagues,[6] who seek to solve human-wildlife-conflicts by improving the status of wildlife, this chapter seeks to contribute to the conservation debate by deconstructing what constitutes 'poaching'. My endeavour to do this navigates different layers. The first layer entails perceiving 'poaching' as being made up of multiple realities, practices, and motivations. Secondly, 'poaching' can possibly be understood conceptually as a mode of wildlife appropriation with its own ontological foundation, shaping, in turn, its practice and motivations. Thirdly, 'poaching' does not just co-exist next to or operate independently from other modes of wildlife appropriation but is also transformed and reshaped over time through mutual interactions with other modes. The importance of mutual shaping is that we should not deconstruct hunting in isolation from other forms. Interactions amongst and between kinds of hunting gradually blurs the distinction that can be made between 'subsistence' hunting, 'bushmeat' hunting, or simply 'poaching', as the local discourse often goes, along with hunting for trophies and recreational purposes, and the poaching of wildlife that is organised by syndicates.

Drawing on literature and field research data, three interrelated themes and debates, along with sets of questions, are then addressed.

1. The chapter reviews the question of whether 'bushmeat' hunting can be interpreted as a form of 'conservation from below', and if so, why, when, and how. This responds to the argument in the literature[7] that local resource users have developed or are developing intimate knowledge of

5 See R. Duffy, F. St John, B. Büscher, and D. Brockington, 'Toward a new understanding of the links between poverty and illegal wildlife hunting', *Conservation Biology*, 30 (2016), 14–22.

6 R. Woodroffe, S. Thirgood, and A. Rabinowitz, *People and wildlife, conflict or co-existence?* (Cambridge, 2005).

7 This is well summarised by J. Murombedzi, 'Pre-colonial and colonial conservation practices in southern Africa and their legacy today', *Washington, DC: World Conservation Union* (*IUCN*), (2003).

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the ecological status of the resources, their rates of reproduction, their rates of sustainable off-take, as well as their forms of sustainable off-take. Important questions have been left unanswered up until now. Is 'poaching' per definition unsustainable? Are claims on sustainable harvesting by 'poachers' ignored and indeed not properly investigated? The claims on sustainability are also lodged by hunters themselves. Implicitly this implies that 'poaching' could be based on a different ontology, one that builds on significantly different people-animal (or prey) relations than syndicate and trophy hunting.

2. This chapter reflects on the question of whether 'local poaching' primarily means hunting for subsistence, for food and ritual purposes, and for barter trade by people residing in rural and communal areas. This also includes the question of whether 'poaching' is primarily motivated by poverty, as is assumed by many,[8] but also includes the question of whether, when, and under what conditions, local poaching evolves into 'commercial poaching', blurring the distinction between them.

3. The chapter simultaneously explores 'local poaching' as an act of resistance to the specific way the appropriation of wildlife is regulated and institutionalised in community-based conservation conditions, and those in private game farms and national park settings. Conservation policies do not just serve to conserve and protect wildlife and biodiversity but also to find ways to control how nature is to be appropriated. The legacy of past policies, which continues in the present, is one that has guided a one-nature perspective: a nature that needs to be protected and thus the way it is appropriated and controlled. Exclusion has unfolded over time as the mechanism to achieve this goal. Local people were and still are largely and varyingly legally excluded from appropriating wildlife. Processes of exclusion manifest themselves not just in criminalising laws, in fines and arrests, but also through fences that keep people out and that fences in wildlife in parks, reserves, and on game farms.[9] Ultimately,

8 J. D. Sachs, J. E. M. Baillie, W. J. Sutherland, P. R. Armsworth, N. Ash, et al., 'Biodiversity conservation and the Millennium Development Goals', *Science*, 325 (2009), 1502–1503; E. Bowen-Jones, D. Brown, and E. Robinson, 'Economic commodity or environmental crisis? An interdisciplinary approach to analysing the bushmeat trade in central and west Africa', *Area*, 35 (2003), 390–402; W. Adams, R. Aveling, D. Brockington, B. Dickson, Elliott, J. Hutton, et al., 'Biodiversity conservation and the eradication of poverty', *Science*, 306 (2004), 1146–1149; Duffy et al., *Towards a new understanding*.

9 T. Pasmans and P. Hebinck, 'Rural development and the role of game farming in the Eastern Cape, South Africa', *Land Use Policy*, 64 (2017), 440–450; M. Spierenburg and S. Brooks, 'Private game farming and its social consequences in post-apartheid South

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fences act as a socio-material device *par excellence* that redefines not just the role of wildlife in society but also people-wildlife and property relationships, and the broader political economy.

The analysis of these three themes is organised around four key questions adapted from Bernstein' analysis of political economy:[10] who (legally) owns wildlife (e.g. questions of ownership and shifting property rights), who is allowed to harvest it (questions concerning claims of usufruct rights and access), who gets what (how is the value distributed), and what is done with the proceeds (for the purposes of accumulation, consumption, or pleasure). The reality also forces us to raise questions of social struggle (e.g. contestation, resistance, or disobedience of the rules and regulations) versus the way the proceeds from nature are distributed. The reality is of course not so simple and straightforward but more diffused.

The chapter proceeds as follows. It first considers what the notion of poaching conveys in theoretical terms. I then make a distinction between the various modes of appropriation of nature, and wildlife in particular. Three forms are distinguished and characterised and placed in a historical context. The second part of the chapter zooms in on the dynamics of 'poaching' in order to answer these three questions. In the conclusion, I reflect on the dynamics and rapid changes happening in the realm of 'poaching', which, in turn, necessitate our redefining of poaching. 'Local poaching' does not operate in a vacuum and is transformed in many ways through interactions with 'syndicate poaching'. This, in turn, raises questions about the sustainability of 'poaching' and all other modes of hunting.

## 'Poaching': Commoditisation and Property

'Poaching' stands for a mode of appropriating wildlife, which not only, in essence, captures our sociological imagination as a practice but also as property and the social relationships between people concerning wildlife. 'Poaching' thus involves (changing) property relations and the struggles to gain access and a share of the benefits of nature.[11]

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Africa: contestations over wildlife, property and agrarian futures', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 32 (2014), 151–172.

10 H. Bernstein, 'Rural livelihoods and agrarian change: bringing class back', in N. Long, Y. Jingzhong, and W. Yihuan (eds.), *Rural transformations and development – China in Context: The everyday lives of policies and people* (Cheltenham, 2010), 79–110.

11 J. Ribot and N. Peluso, 'A theory of access', *Rural Sociology*, 68 (2003), 153–181.

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1. 'Poaching' conveys an act of illegally appropriating wildlife, which is claimed to be property (e.g. private, collective, royal, public). 'Poaching' intentionally contravenes the laws and regulations enacted to protect wildlife and other renewable resources. It includes not just illegal harvesting but also sale, purchases, transport, and possession.[12] 'Poaching' is an illicit[13] form of appropriation, a form of direct access sanctioned by custom but criminalised by contemporary modern state law. A series of laws have been enacted in the southern African region by the state in order to conserve and protect natural resources, including wildlife. These laws allocate to the state, private landowners, and resource communities organised in community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) projects, now and in the past, the right to own and benefit from wildlife. This has turned wildlife into a commodity,[14] a thing that can be owned and exchanged. Resources defined as property implies, as Karl Marx argued in 1842,[15] theft; poaching then is appropriating illegally what is claimed to be property. 'Poaching' is the manifestation of *de jure* rights upheld by the state, and entrenched in fences and private property relations coming into conflict with the *de facto* rights and claims of local people. 'Poaching' in this way needs to be positioned at the interface between *de jure* and *de facto* rights, and the claims and sanctions derived from these.[16] This makes 'poaching or illicit access also rights-based.[17] 'Poaching' thus may also be conceptualised as part

12 R. Muth and J. Bowe, 'Illegal harvest of renewable natural resources in North America: Toward a typology of the motivations for poaching', *Society & Natural Resources*, 11 (1998), 9–24.

13 Ribot and Peluso, *Theory of access*, 164.

14 See for a theoretical discussion on the commoditisation of nature, D. Brockington, R. Duffy, and J. Ingoe, *Nature unbound. Conservation, capitalism and the future of protected areas* (London, 2008). B. Büscher and R. Fletcher, 'Accumulation by conservation', *New Political Economy*, 20 (2015), 273–298.

15 K. Marx, Proceedings of the Sixth Rhine Province Assembly. Third article. Debates on the law of the thefts of wood. October 1842. First published in the Supplement to the *Rheinische Zeitung* (https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/Marx_Rheinishe_Zeitung.pdf)

16 Such emerging contexts are discussed as conditions of legal pluralism where people must accommodate differing legal traditions in one locality; see F. Von Benda-Beckmann, 'Who's afraid of legal pluralism?', *Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law*, 47 (2002), 1–46; J. Unruh, 'Land tenure and legal pluralism in the peace process', *Peace & Change* 28 (2003), 352–377; R. S. Meinzen-Dick and R. Pradhan, 'Legal pluralism and dynamic property rights' in *CAPRI Working Paper* (Washington: CGIAR Systemwide Program on Collective Action and Property Rights, 2002).

17 Ribot and Peluso, *Theory of access*, 164; see also K. O'Brien, 'Rightful resistance', *World Politics*, 49 (1996), 31–55; and K. J. O'Brien, 'Rightful resistance revisited', *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, (2013), 1–12.

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of the rights-based social struggle against fences, private property arrangements, and other expressions of exclusion, and as being excluded from accessing wildlife for subsistence, barter, and cultural purposes. 'Poaching' turns out to be a discursive means or strategy to underpin and to legitimise one's claim on the benefits of nature, and thus accessing it. These are well expressed in hunters' narratives as we will see later in this chapter.[18]

2. 'Poaching' has an ideological dimension and is being judged morally, thus bringing up issues of history but also class, gender, race, and ethnicity, and of control and claims to morality. Quite a few authors point out that, in the context of southern Africa, control and morality is intrinsically associated with white settler histories, whiteness, and western notions of human-wildlife relationships as well as with issues of masculinity and status.[19] Trophy hunting in southern Africa involves a '(racial) hierarchy, domination and exclusivity'.[20] It is peculiar to note what is 'played out' during a hunt: where one sits in the van – inside or in the back; who carries rifles, and the division of tasks during the hunt between the hunter, the game farmer, the farm worker who tracked the lynx early in the morning, and the skinner:[21] an atmosphere of exclusiveness, which David Harvey[22] would analyse as a class division between those who are able and allowed to enjoy conservation benefits and those who are not.

18 A good example of hunters narratives is R. Hitchcock 'Traditional African wildlife utilization: subsistence hunting, poaching, and sustainable use', in H. Prins, J. Grootenhuis, and T. Dolan (eds.), *Wildlife conservation by sustainable use* (Boston, 2000) 389–416. There is quite some literature on poaching in the US organised around narratives of poachers. See for instance: Forsyth, C., Gramling, R., & Wooddell, G. The game of poaching: Folk crimes in southwest Louisiana. *Society & Natural Resources* 11 (1998), 25–38.

19 This is well depicted in S. Brooks, 'Images of 'Wild Africa': nature tourism and the (re) creation of Hluhluwe game reserve', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 31 (2005), 220–240; J. Carruthers, *The Kruger National Park. A social and political history* (Pietermaritzburg, 1995); Hughes, D., *Whiteness in Zimbabwe. Race, landscape, and the problem of belonging*. (New York, 2010); C. Gressier, *At home in the Okavango. White Batswana narratives of emplacement and belonging* (Oxford, 2015); S. Marks, *Life as a hunt: Thresholds of identities and illusions on an African Landscape* (Oxford, 2016).

20 F. Brandt, Tracking an invisible Great Trek: An ethnography on the re-configuration of power and belonging on trophy-hunting farms in the Karoo, (unpublished PhD thesis, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 2013: 182).

21 Pasmans and Hebinck, *Game farming*, 446

22 D. Harvey, *A brief history of neoliberalism* (Oxford, 2005).

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3. 'Poaching' reflects clandestineness, a secret act arousing some kind of excitement. Reading the narratives of hunters, or when one interviews hunters, various notions of excitement, of sportsmanship, adventure, and masculinity circulate. Hunting for trophies or simply meat (e.g. biltong) is not simply a sensational experience – local 'poachers' tell about the charm, experience, and skills you need to command to be able to find and kill an animal – but also the thrill of the kill and the thrill to escape arrest by wardens or the police.[23]

The transformation of wildlife into a commodity and the associated processes of exclusion sanctioned by law concern not only social relationships and people's relations to wildlife but it also changes the properties of wildlife. Von Benda-Beckman and colleagues refer to this as 'property acquiring new properties'.[24] The property rights ensuing from the privatisation and commoditization of wildlife are about the relationship between people concerning things such as wildlife, and the new or redefined meanings they attach to wildlife.[25] Property rights involve relationships between people and resources. It is not only about ownership *per se* but instead about bundles of rights and social obligations.[26] Rights to wildlife are thus embedded rights. As Von Benda-Beckman and colleagues (2006) lay out, property arrangements find their expressions in three different 'layers of social organisation'. Firstly, there is the layer of ideology (e.g. cultural ideals, gender, masculinity) and, secondly, a legal-institutional layer recognising and codifying people-wildlife relations. Thirdly, there is the layer of 'concretised property relations', which is about social relations between actual property holders. This is the interesting but complex layer of culturally embedded social obligations, reciprocity, and also the shifting alliances between family and, increasingly, the state, international conservation organisations, NGOs, and so on. Forming alliances has long served as one of the channels through which access to productive resources such as wildlife is gained

23 C. Forsyth and T. Marckese, 'Thrills and skills. A sociological analysis of "poaching"', Deviant Behavior 14 (1993): 157–172.

24 F. Von Benda-Beckmann, K. Von Benda-Beckmann, and M. Wiber, 'The properties of property', in F. Von Benda-Beckmann, K. Von Benda-Beckmann, and M. Wiber (eds.), *Changing properties of property*. (Oxford, 2006) 1–39.

25 Von Benda-Beckman et al. *Properties of property*; J. Ferguson, 'The cultural topography of wealth. Commodity paths and the structure of property in rural Lesotho', *American Anthropologist*, 94 (1992), 55–73.

26 See Von Benda-Beckman et al. *Properties of property*; C. Lund, 'Negotiating property Institutions: On the symbiosis of property and authority in Africa', in K. Juul and C. Lund (eds.), *Negotiating property in Africa* (Portsmouth NH, 2002) 11–43; M. Chanock, 'A Peculiar sharpness: An essay on property in the history of customary law in colonial Africa', *Journal of African History*, 32 (1991), 65–88.

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and, in turn, has shaped livelihood strategies.[27] Rights, like the meanings of the resources, are therefore not fixed but are often fluid and temporary, subject to negotiation, potentially conflictive, and generating ambiguities associated with certain ways in which wildlife is used.[28]

## Perspectives and Practices of Appropriating Nature

'Local poaching' or hunting for bushmeat has a long history spanning the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial period. More recently, poaching and hunting have been widely documented notably in Africa's tropical regions: the Congo Basin and West Africa's forest zones,[29] and predominantly discussed in the context of hunting posing a threat to conservation.[30] Relatively few studies focus on hunting for bushmeat in southern Africa on or close to game reserves, parks, and game farms.[31] The creation of game reserves, parks, and game farms has a two-sided impact on the intensity of 'poaching'. Their expansion

27 S. Berry, 'Social institutions and access to resources', *Africa*, 59 (1989), 41–55.

28 Ribot and Peluso, *Theory of access*, 172; see also S. Berry, *No condition is permanent. The social dynamics of agrarian change in sub-saharan Africa* (Madison, WI, 1993).

29 J. Robinson and E. Bennett, Hunting for Sustainability', in S. Manika and M. Trivedi (eds.), *Tropical Forests* (New York, NY, 2000). 'Links between biodiversity consumption, livelihoods and food security: the sustainable use of wild species for meat', Occasional Paper of the IUCN Species Survival Commission No. 24 (Gland, 2002); E. Milner-Gulland and E. Bennett, 'Wild meat: the bigger picture', *Trends in Ecology & Evolution*, 18 (2003), 351–357; E. de Merode, K. Homewood, & G. Cowlishaw, 'The value of bushmeat and other wild foods to rural households living in extreme poverty in Democratic Republic of Congo', *Biological Conservation*, 118 (2004), 573–581; A. Lowassa, S. Magimbi, and B. Kaltenborn, 'The effect of wildlife conservation on food dependency of local people around Serengeti National Park, Tanzania. Report for the Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute' (Arusha, 2004); J. E. Fa, C. Peres, and J. Meeuwig, 'Bushmeat exploitation in tropical forests: An intercontinental comparison', *Conservation Biology*, 16 (2002), 232–237; J. E. Fa, S. Ryan and D. Bell, 'Hunting vulnerability, ecological characteristics and harvest rates of bushmeat species in afrotropical forests', *Biological Conservation*, 121 (2005), 167–176; J. E. Fa, S. Seymour, J. Dupain, R. Amin, L. Albrechtsen, and D. Macdonald, 'Getting to grips with the magnitude of exploitation: Bushmeat in the Cross–Sanaga rivers region, Nigeria and Cameroon', *Biological Conservation*, 129 (2006), 497–510.

30 D. Brown and A. Williams, 'The case for bushmeat as a component of development policy: issues and challenges', *International Forestry Review*, 5 (2003), 148–155.

31 Carruthers, *Police boys and poachers*. W. Adams, 'Sportsman's shot, poacher's pot: hunting, local people and the history of conservation', in B. Dickson, J. Hutton, and W. M. Adams (eds.), *Recreational hunting, conservation and rural livelihoods: science and practice* (Chichester, 2009) 127–140; M. Hayward, 'Bushmeat hunting in Dwesa and Cwebe Nature

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in numbers and hectares has gradually reduced the hunting grounds people historically hunted. Similarly, more recent peri- and urban expansion because of population growth has substantially reduced the space for hunting, notably in areas that are open access and communally managed (e.g. commonages). At the same time, the concentration of wildlife in such entities has created a new source of bushmeat in the southern African region and thus more opportunities for 'poaching'. In most cases this also means the importation and conservation of new game species. There are a large number of privately owned nature reserves in the region that are close to where most rural, communal areas are found.

I distinguish here three different practices or modes of appropriation of wildlife as property. This distinction has to be made to capture the multiple realities of 'poaching' and that it is enacted in many ways, by different categories of social actors, affiliated in different networks for varying purposes and embedded in specific rituals and human-animal/wildlife relationships. Each mode redefines the social relationships between the actors involved concerning wildlife, redefining, in turn, the meaning of wildlife.[32] The first 'poaching' practice I distinguish is 'local poaching', 'subsistence' or 'bushmeat hunting'. I will use these notions interchangeably but simultaneously realising that 'bushmeat hunting' is a term used in the literature by biologists and ecologists, and refers to meat from the forest or bush, which includes wildlife. 'Local poaching', on the other hand, is like hunting commonly used in the local discourse and can, in turn, be further subdivided; a subdivision I will elaborate on in more detail in this chapter. A second way is trophy, sport, and venison or biltong hunting, which over the last few decades has been increasingly organised in privately held game farm settings.[33] A third mode, which I have termed 'syndicate poaching', is associated with the slaughter of animals like rhinos, lions, and elephants, and with

Reserves, Eastern Cape, South Africa', *South African Journal of Wildlife Research*, 39 (2009), 70–84; Pasmans and Hebinck, *Game farming*.

32 Muth and Bowe, *Illegal harvest*, based on a literature review of some 10 different forms of 'poaching'. I have condensed these to three as I find their typology overlapping.

33 Pasmans and Hebinck, *Game farming*; P. Cloete, P. Van der Merwe, and M. Seeyman, *Game ranch profitability 2015 edition* (Pretoria, 2015); W. Adams, 'Nature and the colonial mind', in W. Adams and M. Mulligan (eds.), *Decolonizing nature: Strategies for conservation in a post-colonial era* (London, 2003) 16–50; W. Adams, 'Sportsman's shot, poacher's pot: hunting, local people and the history of conservation', in Dickson B., Hutton J., and Adams W. (eds.), *Recreational hunting, conservation and rural livelihoods: science and practice* (Chichester, 2009) 127–140.

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violence, organised crime, and trafficking of wildlife.[34] These three modes, as I will argue, do not necessarily operate in isolation from each other or represent separate life worlds. I will come back to this in the concluding section of this chapter.

Common to all these modes of appropriating wildlife is that they occur in networks, networks that connect wildlife sites and hotspots in the southern African region in various ways to neighbouring 'local' villages and villagers, global markets, hunters and their associations, and consumers of venison. These are also driven by different motivations in part shaped by the nature of the network they are embedded in: accumulation and the making of a profit from nature, enhancing livelihoods, reducing poverty, providing food security, improving ones diet, claiming customary rights to wildlife – and let us not forget gambling and having fun and feeling pleasure, which all varyingly motivate social actors at different levels of intensity to hunt and to 'poach'. These networks, varying from village to village and between associations, are shaped by the nature of the market (e.g. the demand for certain species), and the social actors and the regulatory governance structure that shapes the intensity of the processes connecting the 'local' and the 'global'. Hunting associations in Europe and the USA, which organise hunting trips and mediate between hunters and community-based natural resource management projects for wildlife quota and private game farms for trophy, are regulated by law and have to comply with established rules and regulations. Hunting for venison and trophies is well regulated by (international) conventions (e.g. Standards for Hunting Methods in South Africa, which is incorporated in the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004). The management of game and species in South Africa, for instance, is subject to international obligations such as Threatened or Protected Species (TOPS).[35]

'Syndicate poaching' does not comply with such laws and standards but is obviously regulated by mafia conventions. These mafia-like poaching syndicates are globally well connected.[36] I will provide some evidence that their connections spread out to villages in the southern African region. The 2016 Netflix film 'The Ivory Game'[37] shows this in great detail. The recent accusations against a top government official in South Africa[38] also indicate that the Chinese connection

34 B. Büscher and M. Ramutsindela, 'Green violence: Rhino poaching and the war to save Southern Africa's peace parks', *African Affairs*, 115 (2016), 1–22.

35 J. Cousins, J. Sadler, and J. Evans, 'The challenge of regulating private wildlife ranches for conservation in South Africa', *Ecology and Society*, 15 (2010).

36 See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Triad_(organized_crime)

37 https://www.netflix.com/nl-en/title/80117533

38 A National Government minster is accused of hanging out with a Chinese organised crime figure who traffics rhino horns and openly brags about bribing South

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goes beyond the village and involves the state apparatus. The recent increase in poaching of elephant, illegal logging, and overfishing of the Zambesi River are directly the result of Chinese syndicates operating in the Zambesi province of Namibia and elsewhere in the region. Chinese crime syndicates operate in different ways; what is known is that crime syndicates have established networks with 'locals' in Zambezi to poach elephants for their tusks. Illegal fishing also involves Chinese traders providing local people with nets to catch fish in the Zambezi River. Recently protected tree species in the Zambezi were confiscated by the authorities.[39] Private game farms in northern Kwazulu-Natal are affected by poaching syndicates that work closely together with Chinese nationals based in the Jozini area. Lacking rangers, most of whom do not have firearms and a large area to patrol, makes protection a difficult task.[40] On the other hand, there are also examples of white farmers allowing hunting on their farms. This interaction between hunters and poachers and landowners may be termed 'white complicity'.[41] 'Syndicate poaching' is not just driven by the mafia's pursuit of wealth. Gao and Clark show the complexity of the ivory trade, which is also shaped by Chinese consumers' motivation stemming from the socially constructed economic, social, cultural, aesthetic, religious, and medical values of ivory.[42]

Moreover, the process of statuary law-making defines the legality of the appropriation of wildlife. Some of the practices are conceived as legal and condoned by the law, while other practices are considered illegal according to the same law. From that moment onwards, laws enacted that devolved the right to appropriate wildlife to land-holders triggered the privatisation of wildlife management. The Wildlife Act of 1975 in Zimbabwe, the 1975 Conservation Ordinance in Namibia, and the Game Theft Act 105 of 1991 in South Africa made venison and sports hunting a legal practise. Hunting for subsistence purposes or for local sale, possession, and transport were from that moment on designated as illegal and thus punishable. These laws were later amended after independence in 1980 and 1990 in Zimbabwe and Namibia, respectively, and were extended to also include the right of communities residing in communal areas to benefit.[43] 'Local poaching' nevertheless remains a criminal act and the

African Justice and Immigration officials (http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/mahlobos-rhino-poacher-mate-20161112).

39 http://oxpeckers.org/2017/02/xuecheng-hou-and-timber/

40 S. Mthethwa, 'Hunting in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Preliminary unpublished report', (2016), 1.

41 Malcom Draper, pers. comm., May 2017.

42 Y. Gao and S. Clark, 'Elephant ivory trade in China: Trends and drivers', *Biological Conservation*, 180 (2014), 23–30.

43 B. Child, 'The practice and principles of community-based wildlife management in Zimbabwe: The CAMPFIRE programme', *Biodiversity and Conservation*, 5 (1996), 369–398.

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actor criminalised. Moreover, the idea that community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) would be an ideal vehicle for securing wildlife conservation, which would simultaneously both generate benefits to the wildlife resources and enhance the well-being of the rural people residing with these wildlife resources, is not always supported by the vast literature.[44] CBNRM has proven not to function as premised. Nor does the market operate in ways that always support endeavours of CBNRM communities to reap the benefits of their control over wildlife resources.[45] I will return to the implication of the failure of CBNRM later in the chapter.

Wildlife was, before these laws were amended, considered owned by the state but not necessarily an open-access resource. The appropriation of wildlife was varyingly regulated by the state and by customary authorities. Historically Africans hunted for wildlife as an everyday life practice, one that was sanctioned by the then 'pre-colonial' tribal authorities. The form of hunting was traditionally or rather culturally regulated.[46] Specific species could not be hunted because of taboos (e.g. you do not hunt your totem). There is a tendency to romanticise, as Murombedzi (2003) argues, about what is known as pre-colonial conservation practices. As societies were socio-politically hierarchical, the rights to use wildlife were often such that commoners were excluded from the proceeds of nature. Game could often only be killed with consent of

B. Jones and M. Murphree, 'Community-based natural resources management as a conservation mechanism: lessons and directions', in B. Child (ed.), *Parks in transition. Biodiversity, rural development and the bottom line* (London, 2004), 63–104; B. Child, J. Musengezi, G. Parent, and G. Child, 'The economics and institutional economics of wildlife on private land in Africa', *Pastoralism: Research, Policy and Practice*, 2 (2012), 18.

44 See Berkes, *Rethinking community based conservation*, P. Balint and J. Mashinya, 'CAMPFIRE through the lens of the 'commons' literature: Nyaminyami Rural District in post-2000 Zimbabwe', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 34 (2008), 127–143; F. Nelson and A. Agrawal, 'Patronage or participation? Community-based Natural Resource Management reform in sub-saharan Africa', *Development and Change*, 39 (2008), 557–585; M. De Vette, R. Kashululu, and P. Hebinck, 'Conservancies in Namibia: A discourse in action', in B. Arts, S. Van Bommel, M. Ros-Tonen, and G. Verschoor (eds.), *Forest-people interfaces* (Wageningen, 2012) 121–139; J. Kahler, G. Roloff and M. Gore, 'Poaching risks in Community-Based Natural Resource Management', *Conservation Biology*, 27 (2013), 177–186.

45 See R. Lapeyre, 'The conflicting distribution of tourism revenue as an example of insecure land tenure in Namibian communal lands', in W. Anseeuw and C. Alden (eds.), *The struggle over land in Africa – Conflicts, politics and change* (Cape Town, 2013), 85–104; R. Lapeyre, 'Revenue sharing in community-private sector lodges in Namibia: A bargaining model', *Tourism Economics*, 15 (2009), 653–669; M. Bollig and E. Olwage, 'The political ecology of hunting in Namibia's Kaokoveld: from Dorsland Trekkers' elephant hunts to trophy-hunting in contemporary conservancies', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 34 (2016), 61–79.

46 Murombedzi, *Pre-colonial and colonial conservation*.

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the chief or king. In addition, there were also local rules on how the trophies would be treated; trophies like elephant tusks and lion skins would usually be given to the chief as a gift and to show support, and were used for traditional ceremonies. The title of Hinze's paper ' "Without Chiefs there would be no Game" – Customary law and Nature Conservation'[47] is telling in this respect. Although this does not imply that during pre-colonial times 'poaching' or 'illegal hunting' was absent. Poaching could be interpreted as an act of resistance against the pre-colonial order. Pre-colonial Africa surely had their Robin Hoods. Another point to make would be that such 'local poaching' in many situations was in harmony with customary rights over wildlife.

Laws and the making of laws, however, need to be put into context. On the one hand, statutory law with regard to protection of wildlife has often been designed without consulting local communities, respecting their laws and customs, and the new laws would impact on their customary rights. I will return shortly to this aspect when I discuss 'local poaching' in more detail. On the other, the development of statutory laws to protect wildlife began with the realisation by various social actors (e.g. the State, local and international NGOs, local people) that wildlife numbers at the time of enactment were finite due to over utilisation by the elite, white settlers, local hunters, and so on. Jane Carruthers' research and publications elaborated in detail on the assault on wildlife in southern Africa.[48] These were the times, as MacKenzie[49] explains, that commercial hunting for ivory and skins in British colonial Africa served as a perk for European settlement, which gave way to a hunting culture on the part of a colonial elite consisting of settlers, autocrats, and bureaucrats who were deeply obsessed by shooting trophies, sportsmanship, and an old boys culture.[50] These hunting practices co-existed with 'subsistence' hunting, which was important for African people. Like most white settlers, African people

47 M. Hinz, *Without chiefs there would be no game: Customary law and nature conservation* (Windhoek, 2003).

48 J. Carruthers, ' "Police Boys" and poachers: Africans, wildlife protection and national parks, the Transvaal 1902 to 1950', *Koedoe*, 36 (1993), 11–23; J. Carruthers, 'Influences on wildlife management and conservation biology in South Africa c.1900 to c.1940', *South African Historical Journal*, 58 (2007), 65–90; J. Carruthers, 'Nature conservation and natural resource management 1870s–2000', in P. Delius (ed.), *Mpumalanga. History and heritage* (Scottsville, 2010), 247–291.

49 J. MacKenzie, *The Empire of nature: Hunting, conservation and British imperialism* (Manchester, 1988).

50 See also E. Steinhart, 'Hunters, poachers and gamekeepers: Towards a social history of hunting in colonial Kenya', *The Journal of African History*, 30 (1989), 247–264. E. Steinhart, *Black poachers, white hunters: a social history of hunting in colonial Kenya* (London, 2006).

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and particularly those who came to settle on annexed land, also depended on the same natural resources as those they displaced. Losing or gaining territory implied loosing or gaining animal resources. Moreover, additional aspects contributing to the depletion of wildlife include human population growth (leading to increased human-wildlife conflict), increase in grazing areas, and drought (conflict over scare resources such as grazing and water).

This was also the time that conservation biology became an influential body of knowledge shaping the discourse of conservation. It coincided with the moment in the southern African region when the need for managing (that is conserving and preserving) wildlife became a key societal objective. Conservation biology evolved from a descriptive naturalist perspective to one that emphasised that wildlife 'should be studied and not hunted'.[51] Wildlife like any other natural resource could (or should) have an economic value. Discovering and assessing that value, and how to use and access it, was one of the material reasons behind the spread of wildlife sciences more broadly.[52] Protecting wildlife and conserving biodiversity became an important driver for research and the further development of the discipline. The further development of the discipline was very much contested and hampered by the vested economic and political interests of veterinary and agricultural scientists, and their institutions. To varying degrees, these sciences positioned themselves vis-à-vis the science of wildlife, as wildlife was seen as threatening 'the all-important pastoral economy of South Africa and the retention of any large area of undisturbed nature was consequently undesirable'.[53] Wildlife transmitted diseases to domesticated animals and they needed to be kept apart. Predators like lynx and lion causing damage to livestock or crops were relabelled as vermin or problem animals, and could thus be hunted.[54] This was, as Carruthers[55] explains, the main push behind a new form of environmental governance: national parks and game reserves. Wildlife could then also be studied in its natural environment, and commercial and illegal hunting could be contained. At a later stage, notably from the 1950s onwards, wildlife management science developed a new branch: game farming became an object of study and developed as a

51 Carruthers, *Influences on wildlife management*, 77.

52 W. Beinart, 'Empire, hunting and ecological change in southern and central Africa', *Past and Present*, 128 (1990), 162–186, 176; Carruthers, *Influences on wildlife management*, 75.

53 Carruthers, *Influences on wildlife management*, 77.

54 W. Beinart, *'Empire, hunting and ecological Change*. W. Beinart, 'African history and environmental history', *African Affairs*, 99 (2000), 269–302. J. Murombedzi, *Pre-colonial and colonial conservation*.

55 J. Carruthers, 'Changing perspectives on wildlife in Southern Africa, c. 1840 to c. 1914', *Society and Animals*, 13 (2005), 183–200; J. Carruthers, *Influences on wildlife management.*

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recommended domain for the gradual development of what is now a thriving business.[56] The role of the market and the intensity with which market relations shape the dynamics of conservation has been framed as neoliberal conservation. The market indeed increasingly extends into nature conservation practices (e.g. trophy hunting, eco-tourism, game viewing).[57]

## Unpacking 'Local Poaching'

'Poaching' is usually associated with poverty. The commonly voiced, received wisdom is that local people or commoners appropriate nature out of poverty and hunt whatever they can get their hands on, indiscriminate of species and numbers. The Millennium (now Sustainable) Development Goals discourse directly associates poaching with enduring poverty.[58] Ending or reducing poverty is the best possible strategy to stop 'poaching'. The causal relationship assumed between poaching and poverty has been critiqued and needs further scrutiny. The reverse is also claimed to be important: poaching may lead to poverty, certainly under conditions when 'poaching' of wildlife, illegal logging, or fishing takes place on a large scale in indiscriminate ways. Such 'poaching' poses severe threats to household level food security strategies that hinge on sustainable harvesting from the wild.[59] Quite a number of publications point to local and global market demand for illegally hunted products as an *explanans* for its

56 J. Carruthers, ' "Wilding the farm or farming the wild"? The evolution of scientific game ranching in South Africa from the 1960s to the present', *Transactions of the Royal Society of South Africa* (2008), 160–181; Pasmans and Hebinck, *Game farming.* Cloete et al., *Game ranching profitability.*

57 J. Silva and N. Motzer, 'Hybrid uptakes of neoliberal conservation in Namibian tourism-based development', *Development and Change*, (2014); B. Büscher, 'Anti-politics as political strategy: Neoliberalism and transfrontier conservation in Southern Africa', *Development and Change*, 41 (2010), 29–51; R. Lapeyre, 'The Tsiseb Conservancy: How communities, the state and the market struggle for its success', in R. Van der Duim, M. Lamers, and J. Van Wijk (eds.), *Institutional arrangements for conservation, development and tourism in eastern and southern Africa.* (Heidelberg, 2015) 39–59.

58 Sachs et al. 2009, *Biodiversity conservation*. Bowen-Jones et al., *Economic commodity or environmental crisis?* (2002); Adams et al., *Biodiversity conservation and the eradication of poverty* (2004); R. Duffy et al., *Toward a new understanding* (2016); R. Grey-Ross, C. Downs and K. Kirkman, 'An Assessment of illegal hunting on farmland in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa: Implications for Oribi (Ourebia ourebi) conservation', *South African Journal of Wildlife Research*, 40 (2010), 43–52.

59 C. Romanelli, D. Cooper, D. Campbell-Lendrum, M. Maiero, W. Karesh, D. Hunter and C. Golden, *Connecting global priorities: Biodiversity and human health a state of knowledge review* (Geneva, 2015); S. Sethi and R. Hilborn, 'Interactions between

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continuation.[60] Whether local poaching is a threat to biodiversity and species composition in local ecosystems, as is often argued in the literature,[61] is subject to debate. One could then even make a point by saying that these poaching activities that take place on a commercial scale (e.g. organised on demand by syndicates, traders, and local elites) undermine 'local poaching'. This increasingly is a reality that needs to be taken into account when discussing local biodiversities and livelihood opportunities.

The remainder of this chapter serves to deconstruct 'poaching'. There is little detailed and reliable quantitative data available on how much is being hunted or 'poached', how that compares to ecological thresholds, and how much is 'legally' hunted as trophy and billtong. There is more information on what motivates and drives people to 'poach', who 'poaches', and how 'poaching' is organised. I will use data from recent studies in South Africa (Eastern Cape,[62] Venda,[63] and KwaZulu-Natal[64]) and Namibia[65], and to an extent in Zimbabwe.[66] William Mponwana conducted a series of interviews in Uitzicht in the Mogalakwena Municipality of the Waterberg District, Venda, and Limpopo with Peter, Masipa, Daniel, Kharthu, April, James, Aumen, Kingsley, Maffie and Benjamin. Shile Mthethwa interviewed two hunters and two game wardens/ranchers involved in anti-poaching campaigns in KwaZulu-Natal in October/November. Rodger Lubilo collected data from 75 'poachers' in three conservancies in the Zambesi province in Namibia between 2011 and 2015.

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poaching and management policy affect marine reserves as conservation tools', *Biological Conservation*, 141 (2008), 506–516; D. Sheil, 'Conservation and biodiversity monitoring in the tropics: Realities, priorities, and distractions', *Conservation Biology*, 15 (2001), 1179–1182.

60 Bowen-Jones et al., *Economic commodity or environmental crisis*? (2003); J. Brashares, P. Arcese, M. Sam, P. Coppolillo, et al., 'Bushmeat hunting, Wildlife declines, and Fish supply in West Africa', *Science*, 306 (2004), 1180–1183; Gao and Clark, *Elephant ivory trade* (2014).

61 This position is defended in Bashares et al., 2002, *Bushmeat hunting*.

62 Pasmans and Hebinck, *Game farming;* Hayward, *Bushmeat hunting.*

63 Mponwana, *Bushmeat hunting in Limpopo*. Unpublished report (2016).

64 Mthethwa, *Hunting in KwaZulu-Natal*. Unpublished report (2016); T. Kamuti, 'Private wildlife governance in a context of radical uncertainty dynamics of game farming policy and practice in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa', (unpublished PhD thesis, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, University of the Free State, 2016).

65 Lubilo, R., 2018. 'Enactment of 'community' in Community-Based Natural Resource management in the Zambezi region, Namibia', (unpublished PhD thesis, Sociology of Development and Change, Wageningen University).

66 S. Matema, 'Bushmeat hunting in Save Conservancy, Zimbabwe', (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Zimbabwe, 2007).

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Before I elaborate on these strategies and practices in some detail, I will dwell on what they have in common. Hunters' narratives are full of references to adventure, the thrill of the kill but also the thrill to escape arrest, the excitement, and craftsmanship. Hunting is recreational and socially bonding but also sport and gambling. Taken together their narratives display that 'poaching' is not necessarily related to poverty nor do they tell us that 'poaching' is purely rational and is responding to market incentives. The excitement of hunting combined with satisfying one's cultural needs and exercising one's natural or birthright to harvest wildlife explains the continuity of bushmeat hunting despite it being criminalised. Hayward suggests it is the '*relatively wealthy city dwellers who are seeking reminders of their traditional lifestyles*'.[67]

Hunters also turn out not to be professional hunters per se. Most have paid jobs, varying from headmaster, to herder, security guard, and taxidermists. Some are unemployed. Hunters assert they not only hunt for food or financial gain. Hunting is also recreational and bonds friendships, they say:

> We hunt for fun and to enjoy the thrill of seeing one man's dogs outpace another man's. We go hunting to extend our friendship. There are about thirty of us. We go hunting every Sunday morning. We drive all around Limpopo and we have been as far as Kwazulu-Natal and the North West looking for game. We went to Kwazulu Natal for four days and came back with 22 gemsbok. These dogs are quick. My male dog named Dollar is very strong and can kill a big buck by himself. I usually go with two dogs from all my dogs when just going casually. In Potchefstroom the fields are flat and you can see animals very easily [Masipa].

The sites where the hunting takes place are mostly in the communal areas, nearby a game farm or reserve. The most commonly hunted animals are bush pigs (bosvark), springboks (gazelle), and impalas. Other animals, which hunters report to have hunted and caught, are rabbits, warthog, caracals, gemsbok, oribi, kudu, rock hyrax, springhaasie, and birds (guinea fowls and the crested Francolin).

> I've killed eleven bush pigs this year. There are a lot of pigs in these bushes. This month alone I've also killed two impalas. Big ones. I have killed caracals but do not eat them. Other people eat them but I don't because it has a bad smell. I have also killed some animal that is found near the

67 Hayward, *Bushmeat hunting,* 79.

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> river. It is able to go up trees and looks like a cat. It is called letlaparankwe. Its meat is red like that of a cow. I walk up to 15km as I hunt all the way up to the mountain [of one of the nearby villages named Nkidikitlana]. There are some days where I get nothing. If I am able to track an animal today and not kill it, it encourages me to come back the following day looking for me [Daniel].

Vlakvark (referred to as *topo*) or warthogs are the least hunted. They are known for their aggression and ability to sometimes injure or kill dogs:

> A real hunter is one that is able to kill a vlakvark. That animal can even kill you as a hunter. They outsmart dogs a lot and often when we see them we make sure our dogs don't attempt to go after them. A vlakvark is different from a bosvark (bushpig). A vlakvark will go into thorny bushes knowing your dogs won't follow. That's when your spear becomes handy but you need to be careful because that thing can kill you. These are always going up and down because they are hardly killed. We fought a warthog from midnight till am when our boss asked is to kill them. The warthog came out of a hole flying like a bullet. The dogs were so tired that they rested under a tree. As the warthog stops and faces us, we have to climb up trees. Then we get off once it starts moving. Its level of danger to humans can be like that of a lion. It is easier to kill if it's hole is under a tree then you easily stab it on its head as it peeks [Kharthu].

Some say that they have no preference for the type of animal to hunt but rather go out in hopes to find meat. Whatever is found and killed suffices for the hunter.

> I never go hunting and come back empty handed. I will make sure I'm in the bushes all night till morning until I kill something. Last time I went hunting I killed three animals in one hunt. Meat is meat and as long as it can support us. I've killed rock hyraxes which very tasty meat [Peter].

Hunters walk up to 20km in total in the wild as they go hunting. Some hunters prefer to track animals by using spores while others hunt near the river. Others do not follow a particular path but just go wherever the road leads them:

> When I go hunting, I first test to see if there is wind. If there is wind I usually go perpendicular to the direction of the wind. After covering significant distance, I turn and go against the wind. I won't catch anything apart

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> from this way. That way, animals coming my way won't hear me approach because of the wind. I can track animals for more than three hours before seeing anything. Animals can sense us and dogs can also sense animals. Early mornings are a perfect time to go hunting. I wish I had greyhounds because they are the fastest. But they are stupid dogs because they have no brakes and can die easily while in pursuit and hit into trees [April].

The hunter narratives also point out that apart from ordering 'poaching' discursively, 'poaching' is differentiated in terms of 'technology' and social organisation. It is important, for instance, to differentiate hunting with well-trained hunting dogs[68] and particularly taxi hunting, which has become very popular, particular in South Africa.[69] Dog owners form groups and transport them in a taxi, from where they are released to hunt down animals. The hunters cum dog owners gamble amongst themselves whose dog will win the chase killing the prey first. Hunting with dogs requires a financial and social capital investment in well-trained and well-bred hunting dogs and collectives. Taxi hunting is contested by conservationists and portrayed as destructive and dangerous.

Below is the narrative of a hunter in KwaZulu-Natal who was interviewed by Shile Mthethwa in October 2016. The narrative explains the social organisation of the hunt, the how, and what is hunted and when. The role of hunting dogs is central in this narrative.

Mr C is a local hunter in Northern KwaZulu-Natal who denied ever using any snares. He professed to be hunting with dogs and started his own dog-breeding programme. He mentioned that there are four to five breeds of dogs which are generally used in the area for hunting; namely the borzoi, saluki, proter (a greyhound like breed), indigenous dog breed and one he referred to as *impondo* (it looks like a greyhound [proter], *saluki* or *borzoi* but its ears are pointed and small like an Alsatian or German Sheppard. His preferred breeds are the saluki and borzoi which he currently owns and is trying to breed. The hunting he claims takes place in the mountains of the communal area and is mainly for duiker, hares and rabbits. He mentioned that all the speed hounds or hunting dogs are sight animals as they can't follow the scent of an antelope. For that reason they are held by the owner during the hunt and are only released when an antelope is seen. Holding also conserves the energy of the dogs and also increases the chances of success during the hunt.

68 See: http://mashable.com/2015/07/19/south-africans-dogs-hunting/#uq.27cnfaSqO.

69 See T. Kamuti, *Private wildlife governance*, 277 ff. http://www.traveller24.com/Explore/Green/pics-illegal-taxi-dog-hunters-destroying-sas-biodiversity-capenature-20160829

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The duiker he claims are seen when they are herding cattle and the area where they are seen is marked especially if it is seen in the same area more than twice. The person who has spotted and confirmed the area where the duiker stays is the leader of the hunt and he is the one who sets the rules of how the hunt is to be conducted. He will call for the hunting party and set the date, hunters in the area are free to invite hunters they know from other areas. Mr C says he hunts for spot and most of the people that he acquainted to who are not from his village, he met during hunting expeditions in his area or their area when they are invited to participate in a hunt. Hunters walk in a c shape to draw the antelope into the semi-circle so it can be hunted. Disputes of whose dog caught the antelope are settled by each owner who thinks it's his dog that made the kill describing how his dog makes a kill before they go and inspect the dead animal. The one who is proved right keeps the kill, if the other party is still not satisfied the other parties arbitrate but the final decision rests with the one who called for the hunt to take place. In most instances the one who called for the hunt will get to keep the animal or give it to the one he thinks is telling the truth. Argumentative hunters are more often than not ostracised and not invited to future hunts, if they insist on joining anyway the senior guys sit him down and in no uncertain terms tell him he is not welcome.

Hunts he says are conducted before sunrise or early morning, part of the reason he says is the fact that "proters" tend to overheat when chasing down an animal. This breed he states finds it difficult to cool down naturally during the heat of the midday sun and may even die if they are not helped to cool down by pouring water over them. The borzoi and saluki don't have the problem of overheating during the chase, part of the reason he says he prefers breeding them. The hunting dogs he says have to be taken out periodically so they can stretch their legs and come back home tired. This is done to avoid the dogs being mischievous, as they tend to start chasing down goats and getting into all sorts of trouble. For this the dogs are taken to the mountain and allowed to chase anything as long as it's not dangerous, this way they tend to tire quickly and herded back home. The dogs he says spend most of their time locked during the day only to be released at night to resume guarding duties.

Dog or taxi hunting is significantly different from the hunter who makes use of snares, spotlights (for night hunting), slingshots, and short and long stabbing spears. Often these hunting technologies are combined, this to emphasise that it is not just a modern form alongside 'traditional' forms of 'poaching'. Along with their well-trained hunting dogs, hunters walk with a spear made from reinforced steel. The steel is sharpened at one end and the other end is tied with layers of rope or cloth for grip. The spear is used to stab bush pigs when they go

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into holes or when the dogs are holding the animal down. Warthogs stuff their bodies into thorny bushes or trees making it difficult for dogs to attack.

### 'Poaching' as Discursive Strategy

Making sense of the field data, I build on Von Benda-Beckman et al.' (2006) theorem of 'property acquiring new properties' and Ribot and Peluso,[70] by conceptualising 'poaching' as a form of appropriating wild life that is embedded in and shaped by a variety of strategies that are discursively expressed and legitimised. I identify three discursive 'poaching' strategies. These are not clear-cut, as we will see, but partly overlap.

1. 'Poaching' is a legitimate practice, which is sustained by claims on cultural and customary rights to feed ones family and to supplement the family diet with protein.
2. 'Poaching' is an 'act of resistance' against the processes that exclude local people from appropriating wildlife. 'Poaching' is a birthright.
3. 'Poaching' also, and increasingly, serves to satisfy a market demand. Hunting for cash has become more and more important.

### 'Poaching as Legitimate'

Haywards[71] case study in the Dwesa and Cwebe forest reserves of the Eastern Cape underpins the argument that bushmeat hunting is significant, quantitatively and socio-culturally, and that it supports rural livelihoods. It holds significant nutritional value and supplements locally produced and purchased food with protein from the natural environment. Bushmeat holds great sociocultural value for rural people, in particular the poor.[72]

Hunting for food is an often-recurring answer in interviews and surveys with 'poachers'. Knapp and colleagues[73] sampled villages outside Ruaha National

70 Von Benda-Beckman et al., *Properties of property* and Ribot and Peluso, *Theory of access*.

71 Hayward, *Bushmeat hunting*.

72 S. Kachula and C. M. Shackleton, 'Quantity and significance of wild meat off-take by a rural community in the Eastern Cape, South Africa', *Environmental Conservation*, 36 (2009), 192–200; D. McGarry and C. Shackleton, 'Children navigating rural poverty: rural children's use of wild resources to counteract food insecurity in the Eastern Cape province, South Africa', *Journal of Children and Poverty*, 15 (2009), 19–37.

73 E. Knapp, N. Peace, and L. Bechtel, 'Poachers and poverty: Assessing objective and subjective measures of poverty among illegal hunters outside Ruaha National Park, Tanzania', *Conservation and Society*, 15 (2017), 24–32.

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Park in Tanzania and found that 79% of the 'poachers' poached for food, while some 78% also hunted for cash. Those hunters who called themselves poor stated hunting to obtain food was paramount.[74]

*Seshebo* in Venda refers to anything that can be eaten with porridge (pap) or rice or samp and is usually in the form of red meat or chicken.

> I hunt for seshebo. I do not sell anything. Even when I kill an impala, it is all mine. I do not want anyone near it. Bushmeat has little to no fats compared to this processed meat. It is healthier and this meat can cover me for an entire month [Daniel; James].

Quite a few hunters mentioned the need for meat for sustenance (*seshebo*) and argued that bushmeat is readily available and goes a long way. One hunter stated that his preference is for bush pigs only:

> I go for these pigs only. I used to hunt rabbits at a younger age. My current dogs aren't as strong as my previous pack. They go for pigs because they like animals that put up a fight. I sometimes help them fight the pigs as some are tough especially the warthogs as opposed to the bush pigs. Baboons are also a problem because they get violent so when I have my spear or axe I am a part of the fight to try and protect my dogs. When they see bucks they assume they are goats and I have to shout at them to chase but they remain still [Aumen].

Another hunter referred back to before 1994 when they were given permission to hunt in the village and so became accustomed to hunting from then on. The hunter opted not to disclose the type of tools he used to hunt over the years. Other hunters had mentioned him as someone who possessed guns for hunting:

> Back in the day when the white people were in power, they gave us rights to hunt locally. There was an abundance of animals roaming around back then. We had kudu, all kinds of bucks and meat was an easy find. I don't recall a time whereby I would go to the shops to buy meat. (…) Nowadays I'm older, there isn't as much game as before and I have to go with my grandson into the wild and he does most of the work [Kingsley].

Research by Rodgers Lubilo in three conservancies in Zambezi province, Namibia, shows that 'poaching' is associated with being poor. Local communities

74 Knapp et al., *Poachers and poverty*, 27.

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in the three conservancies belong to the group of people who could be termed poor and politically marginalised, who have limited alternative livelihood options other than living and carving out an existence in the conservancy.[75] Only a few are employed by the conservancy. Many struggle and make ends meet through low-input farming that often suffers from baboons and elephants; casual labour and hunting are among the few options comprising value-adding activities in the area. Field data obtained from interviews shows that many hunt for the pot and supplement their diet with protein from the wild, including fish, small mammals, and antelopes.

'Local poaching' in the conservancies is also legitimised and explained by conservancy members as a cultural practice that revolves around an intimate association of culture and nature. Hunting is culturally well embedded; from time immemorial they have hunted wildlife, they say, and were taught by their parents how to hunt. This is reflected in the cultural norms, practices, and in the way hunting is talked about. Nature and culture are seen as co-evolving (Ingold 2000). Hunting forms an integral part of socialisation processes: at a young age, boys learn the hunting skills from their fathers and learn the behaviour of the various species of wildlife. Since this is a cultural practice, it is not perceived as illegal but as an essential livelihood asset.

For many hunting is a birthright. '*You are born with it*' is a commonly heard expression. Rodgers managed to informally interact and engage with local poachers to get an idea of the meaning of poaching as a God-given right to use the game. They expressed anger for being referred to as poachers as they feel insulted. '*How can someone who does not live here with us refer to us as poachers just because we harvest our own resources? We are just good hunters and above all, we have kept these wildlife for many years,*' explained one of the local hunters in Sobbe conservancy.

> It is our right as inherited from our forefathers that we should hunt wild games for meat, and use it in such a way we want. In the old days we used to hunt for the whole village. When I come from hunting I would distribute the meat to all the people in village, but today because of the government, we cannot openly do that we hide because they have criminalised hunting of game, which is not good. We will continue to hunt because we are entitled to eat meat and government can't stop us in order to make foreigners rich.

75 K. Khumalo and L. Yung, 'Women, human-wildlife conflict, and CBNRM: Hidden impacts and vulnerabilities in Kwandu Conservancy, Namibia', *Conservation and Society*, 13 (2015), 232–243.

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These sentiments are commonly shared by many of the local people in the communities including the younger ones who also added that:

> Hunting is our right, and we should be allowed to hunt, and the conservancy should engage the government to change the laws, what do we benefit? Nothing, so when you hunt, you are able to have food for the family.

### 'Poaching' as Contestation

Those without the ability to legally enter a game farm or make use of its resources appropriate game through 'illegal' hunting. Game farmers and nature reserve managers in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal say they sometimes have to cope with animal losses, especially bushbuck or other ungulates, due to 'poachers' entering from 'the other side of the river'. The interview by Shile Mthethwa with Mr A., a white male working in a land claim reserve, learned that when on patrol they remove on average per month ten snares both fresh and old from the reserve. As the area is made up of continuous game farms, he stated that those farms that seem to be affected the most by poaching are those on the periphery with fewer incidences for those more central in location. 'Poaching' is perceived as a threat and a crime, and game farmers and hunters specifically consider it 'unethical' and 'illegal'. Mr B. who was once the head of the anti-poaching team for the largest game reserve in the region, said that on a monthly basis they remove forty to fifty snares from the property. Mr A. stated that in their reserve they remove on average about ten snares per month with their focus being on game trails where the animals walk. The use of hunting dogs came up in both interviews as problematic. Their off-take cannot be quantified. Mr A. mentioned that they have a shoot-on-sight policy with regards to dogs on the property. Mr B. indicated that hunting with dogs is a very big problem in the area, with their intelligence information showing a number of syndicates operating in the area. He says that there are now established and reputable hunting-dog breeders in the area who are the go-to people if someone seeks to purchase a dog. The price of hunting dogs, such as greyhounds, has increased due to the popularity of hunting in the area.

Regardless of why people hunt bushmeat, it potentially involves more than a 'wildmeat crisis'.[76] The 'poaching' on and around game farms as well as in

76 E. Milner-Gulland and E. Bennett, 'Wild meat: the bigger picture', *Trends in Ecology & Evolution*, 18 (2003), 351–357.

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CBNRM projects such as those in Namibia studied by Rodgers Lublio[77] and in Zimbabwe by Steven Matema[78] and others[79] can be interpreted as a specific contestation of the way wildlife conservation is organised: as private game farming, and in nature reserves and national parks. It is different from the violent contestations against game farm owners in KwaZulu-Natal, which have resulted in open conflict over land claims,[80] or the 'silent' contestations over game farming in the Karoo, which have resulted in a 'process of displacement' of farm dwellers.[81] Game farms in the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal, and elsewhere in southern Africa have created a new source of bushmeat that is appropriated by 'poachers'. 'Poaching' may thus be interpreted as a contestation against being excluded from those resources.[82] The 'fencenization' of the rural areas and the changes in the nature of fencing are a clear manifestation of that exclusion.[83] Fences are boundaries that separate people from wildlife and signal who owns wildlife. More and ever-higher fences prevent the previously possible interactions between 'white' commercial and 'black' homeland farming practices. '*In the old days*,' an informant from a rural village in the Eastern Cape once remarked during a discussion in early 2000 about land-use changes, '*our cattle often grazed on white land; now with these high game fences this is not possible any longer. To let our cows be inseminated by these big commercial bulls is no longer possible*.' The fencing put an end to the co-evolution of 'homeland farming' with farming for trophy and game-meat production. Fencing also deprives local black people of their socio-cultural rights to wildlife. This is a break with the past, when black people hunted freely, when their livelihoods were a combination of growing crops, keeping cattle, and hunting game. Similar processes are occurring in Namibia where fencing – officially condemned by state law and agrarian reform polices – encroaches on conservation areas in favour

77 Lubilo, *Enacting community*.

78 S. Matema, 'Bushmeat hunting in Save Conservancy, Zimbabwe', (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Zimbabwe, 2007).

79 V. Dzingirai, 'The new scramble for the African countryside', *Development and Change*, 34 (2003), 243–264.

80 S. Brooks and L. Kjelstrup, 'An anatomy of dispossession: post-apartheid land rights and farm dweller relocation in the context of a private game reserve initiative, northern KwaZulu-Natal', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 32 (2014), 238–257.

81 F. Brandt and M. Spierenburg, 'Game fences in the Karoo: reconfiguring spatial and social relations', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 32 (2014), 220–237, 234.

82 Pasmans and Hebinck, *Game farming,* 447.

83 See also, for an historical pointing of the same process, L. Van Sittert, 'Holding the line: The rural enclosure movement in the Cape Colony, *c.* 1865–1910', *Journal of African History*, 43 (2002), 95–118.

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of an expansion of a commoditised cattle economy.[84] Wolmer[85] notes similar developments in the Lowveld in Zimbabwe.

At the same time, the reality of 'poaching' is not hidden or denied by the game farm and estate managers. On the contrary, it is publicly discussed and spoken of as a 'criminal', 'unethical' activity that threatens the game farm and biodiversity. 'Poaching' and the presence of 'poachers' together legitimise their drive to continue and even intensify the securitisation of the rural areas close to game farms and national parks.

There is substantial evidence that poaching occurs in conservancies in Namibia. This is not in line with the objective of conservancies to prevent and reduce poaching in favour of trophy hunting. Poaching nevertheless occurs, which is quite evident in the fieldwork by Rodgers Lubilo.[86] Local hunters convey in their narratives to him that they continue to hunt as a way of rejecting, resisting, and showing disobedience to the conservancy framework. The way the conservancy is enacted means for them that they are largely excluded from the distribution of benefits in the forms of paid jobs or projects. Most local hunters are not formally educated, are poor and marginalised, and will not be absorbed into the current management systems that require some level of education. Poachers realise that community-based conservation will normally benefit the conservancy elites, the educated, those in influential positions. Hunting means survival for them, and simultaneously a protest against exclusion and elite capture.

> When there are jobs, we are not employed, they need educated people, they also employ their own children and friends, so for me, I keep quiet and kill whenever I get chance, because if we talk they don't like us' [a local 'poacher' at Kwandu].

> When we kill an animal we either exchange for basic essentials, sugar, money, clothes, etc., and we can survive, but when we stop, where will we get money and who is benefiting from this conservation [a local hunter at Wuparo].

84 C. Van der Wulp, *Transformation Of communal land: Illegal fences in the N≠A Jaqna Conservancy, Namibia*, (unpublished Master's thesis, Sociology of Development and Change, Wageningen University, 2016); W. Odendaal, 'Elite land grabbing in Namibian communal areas and its impact on subsistence farmers' livelihoods', *Policy Brief 33* (Cape Town, 2011).

85 W. Wolmer, *From wilderness vision to farm invasions. Conservation & development in Zimbabwe's South-East Lowveld* (Oxford, 2007).

86 Lubilo, *Enactment of community*.

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> As long as we remain poor, we will continue to hunt the game, and we are ready to go to jail if arrested because we have no choice; look here, since we started the conservancy, we are not employed; it's the same people, and those educated who get the jobs [a local 'poacher' at Sobbe].

Some scholars attribute the failure of community-based programmes to weak institutional control mechanisms that create opportunities for local elites to siphon off substantial shares of local resources.[87] Balint and Mashinya[88] also note similar processes of elite capturing in Zimbabwe's CAMFIRE projects.

> The elite are in control and they benefit both, from salaries and also from those who kill animals because they are somehow related [a teacher].

Local hunters feel excluded and have valid arguments for continuing their protest by continuing to poach. The employment criteria in many conservancies favour elites, friends, close relatives to traditional leadership, and those linked to field staff of supporting NGOs and state agencies. This excludes those without connections within the community, who then respond by being disobedient vis-à-vis maintaining the status quo. This state of affairs has many interpretations; some local poachers have also developed networks with outsiders to provide a ready market, making local poaching a form of employment for those involved.

> Hunting is a form of employment for us, we are not educated and we can't find jobs, so we hunt to support ourselves; that is the only thing we can do [local hunter at Kwandu].

### Poaching for Cash

Bushmeat is simultaneously hunted to satisfy an urban market demand for game meat motivated by preference, or by cultural needs by urbanites. The demand for bushmeat is driven by its low prices relative to domestic meat, or by

87 J. P. Platteau, 'Monitoring elite capturing in community-driven development', *Development and Change*, 35 (2004), 223–246; M. Thompson and K. Homewood, 'Entrepreneurs, elites, and exclusion in Maasailand: Trends in wildlife conservation and pastoralist development', *Human Ecology*, 30 (2002), 107–138.

88 P. Balint and J. Mashinya, 'CAMPFIRE through the lens of the "commons" literature: Nyaminyami Rural District in Post-2000 Zimbabwe', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 34 (2008), 127–143, 129.

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a preference for its taste, as Barnett[89] suggests for Mozambique. Research by Matema[90] shows that people consume bushmeat for its taste. They hunt, however, to earn cash to support the family.[91] A dynamic market not only exists for bushmeat in towns, as is mostly assumed, but also in rural villages. The study in Save Conservancy in southern Zimbabwe showed that, according to the hunters, villagers from neighbouring communities constituted the largest proportion of bushmeat buyers (74.5%,). Hunters (n = 150) also sold bushmeat to local business people (12.4%), police camps (2.1%), teachers (6.2%), and nurses (4.8%). Some hunters (2.8%) exchanged bushmeat for grain in Mozambique.[92]

Mponwana's study[93] supports the conclusion drawn by Matema (2007) that the local market is a predominant outlet for bushmeat. When there is a demand for a particular type of animal, some hunters go out to find that animal to sell. Sometimes the availability of the animal determines whether a hunt for a particular animal occurs. Prices for bushmeat are usually negotiated between buyer and hunter. These hunters usually go as far as into reserves. There was talk in some of the conversations that hunting in reserves take place because their employers are ripping them off, pocketing tips received from licensed hunters who come trophy hunting.

> I have a friend not too far from here who probably has his fridge filled with six pigs worth of meat awaiting collection. He is a violent hunter, that one, such that he kicked a porcupine once and has in his legs a piece of its spikes. He hunts only to sell and hunts only in reserves at night.
>
> The Arab and Indian tourists pay in dollars when they come this side. They used to tip us in dollars in front of our bosses. Say now an Arab tourist tips me; he tells me I'm giving you a tip of $200. Our bosses now take our tips and at the end of their visit they give you like $80 from your original tip. I often work hand in hand with the Arab to not speak to my bosses about missed shots (for which they have to pay). They pay me to be quiet and In the case of a wounded animal we make meat of it by selling it after finding it [Kharthu].

The owner of the greyhound dogs benefits twice, from both hunting and breeding:

89 R. Barnett, 'Food for thought: The utilization of wild meat in eastern and southern Africa', *Kenya: Traffic East-Southern Africa*, (2000).
90 Matema, *Bushmeat hunting in Save Conservancy.*
91 Matema, *Bushmeat hunting in Save Conservancy*, 36.
92 *Matema, Bushmeat hunting in Save Conservancy*, 40.
93 Mponwana, *Bushmeat hunting.*

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> These greyhounds are so useful. Sometimes I have teachers and officers coming to me looking for meat. Luckily I have friends who own reserves, so when I'm broke I load my dogs and go hunting. I then sell to these people [Masipa].
>
> I do not eat pork therefore all the pigs I kill I sell to those that eat pork [April].
>
> My brother and I are the only people that eat meat from four-legged animals. So we take some of the meat from our kill and sell the rest [Benjamin].
>
> When a friend of mine wants meat. I hook them up with some of the guys who work on the farm who may know of the whereabouts of those animals. At night we go out hunting. Then from there we benefit from selling [Maffie].

## Discussion and Conclusion

A few issues emerge quite clearly. 'Poaching' or bushmeat hunting continues to exist. It serves as an additional source of protein for the poor; it produces cash for household-related investments; and it satisfies culturally defined needs for certain meat. Local people in conservation areas will continue to resist, reject, and will remain defiant when conservation institutions organised by the state, private sector, and community-based conservation projects continue to administer wildlife the way they currently do. Benefits from wildlife are not well distributed; the current distribution system largely benefits local elites. Were conservation policies and strategies to become more inclusive and redistributive, rather than exclusive, and would thus ensure that various interests groups are integrated and not treated as minorities so that people would see their livelihoods as more safeguarded, 'local poaching' might be reduced in the long run. The pressure on wildlife resources might then diminish. By conceptualising 'poaching' or bushmeat hunting as a culturally embedded and shaped mode of wildlife appropriation ('hunting is our birth right'), some degree of 'local poaching' will continue.

A second wildlife question, as part of the many other agrarian questions, is which mode of appropriation is sustainable. Does the natural parks conservation mode or the private game farm mode, coupled with other forms of 'Fortress conservation',[94] create conditions for sustainable production and

94 D. Brockington, *Fortress conservation: The preservation of Mkomazi Game reserve, Tanzania* (London, 2002).

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reproduction of wildlife? 'Accumulation by conservation', as Buscher and Fletcher[95] frame the current neoliberal model of the appropriation of nature that extends into wildlife conservation, '*denies that the fundamental unsustainability of capitalist production threatens* (…) *the basis for the existence of life, both human and non-human, in much of the globe*'. Can capitalism cum neoliberalism address the wildlife crisis that manifests in loss in biodiversity of the world's fauna and flora, or are we part of a scenario where '*the system would find another basis for renewed accumulation that, while further intensifying its ecological contradictions, would be able to stave off the long-anticipated "limits to growth" imposed by these contradictions for some time to come*'.[96]

Or, alternatively, is the solution for the wildlife crisis already practiced but not well understood by nature conservationists and not appreciated by the market? When viewed from a different angle and accepting an ontological turn, one may argue, in contrast to what some conservationists[97] argue, that local poaching is sustainable. Local hunters point out that they are selective as to what kind of animals can be hunted for home use, as well as when and how. There is some acknowledgement in hunters' narratives that animals can be attributed with agency. A village hunter in Wuparo conservancy claimed the following.

> We also know what animals we can kill and not kill; for us we hunt for our families; we don't want to get rich, we just need for our pot, But those who kill elephants are poachers because they kill, remove the ivory, and run away, leaving the meat to rot that is not good, so those are poachers who should be arrested, not us who kill for relish.

This is much in line with the Venda phrase '*ga nama ga e jewe*', which translates as '*the place where meat is not eaten*'. This is widely used by villagers to refer to game reserves and is very telling about how local villagers view game farms and reserves.

On the other hand, we need to be aware of counter claims. Mr B., in an interview,[98] mentioned that a school principal was once arrested driving in his *bakkie* with five fresh carcasses mostly impala and nyala cows. He said that the hunter was removing productive animals, which would help replenish the numbers.

95 B. Büscher and R. Fletcher, 'Accumulation by conservation', *New Political Economy*, 20 (2015), 273–298, 293.

96 Büscher and Fletcher, *Accumulation by conservation*, 293.

97 See, for instance, C. Gibson and S. Marks, 'Transforming rural hunters into conservationists: An assessment of community-based wildlife management programs in Africa', *World Development*, 23 (1995), 941–957.

98 Mthethwa, *Hunting in KwaZulu-Natal.*

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The three modes of appropriation that were distinguished in this chapter do not unfold in a vacuum or simply co-exist. These modes need to be conceptualised and understood as mutually transforming and shaping/reshaping each other in such a way that the boundaries and even the discursive means by which they are legitimised become blurred. This leads, in turn, to a reassembling into new modes of appropriation, generating new kinds of conservation spaces with different and new attributes. The boundary between poaching for cash and/or food and 'syndicate poaching' is easily blurred and often crossed as the following examples indicate. Local fishermen sell their fish to Chinese traders in exchange for fishing nets, while over-fishing the Zambesi. Hunting syndicates often have someone working in the reserve who informs them about the areas where game is usually concentrated so that they don't waste time once inside the reserve. These are examples of new conservation spaces that contribute to biodiversity losses and a deepening of the wildlife crisis, strengthening, in turn, the further militarisation of wildlife conservation.

Alternative conservation spaces potentially exist and are expressed in narratives and claims such as those of the hunter claiming sustainability of his hunting methods and experiences that are shaped by hunter local bodies of knowledge.[99] Together with the Venda phrase '*ga nama ga e jewe*', these narratives may form a relevant starting point for recognizing that there are alternative modes of sustainability in wildlife appropriation. These hinge on fundamentally different human-wildlife relationship interactions than those exhibited in market-oriented modes of appropriation. These involve asymmetrically connected ontologies[100] and involve local claims on sustainability and wildlife appropriation that are embedded in locally accepted cultural repertoires. Notions guiding wildlife appropriation are well shaped by the idea that it is a birthright to hunt. It seems that such conservation spaces exist and respond well to the rural poverty challenge: hence the reference in the title to ' "poaching" as conservation from below'.

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99 See also Murombedzi, *Precolonial and colonial conservation.*

100 Blaser, *The threat of the Yromo.* See also Gombay, ' "Poaching" – What's in a name'.

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