Beyond Militarized Conservation: The police labour regime and its effects in the Kruger National Park

Emile Fredrick Smidt

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Beyond Militarized Conservation:
The police labour regime and its effects
in the Kruger National Park

Verder kijken dan naar gemilitariseerd natuurbehoud:
De effecten van het politiële arbeidsregime
in het Krugerpark

Thesis

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This thesis is dedicated to frontline conservation staff – all of whom I worked with or interacted with in one capacity or another - who died while involved in anti-poaching or general conservation work: Zeph Ngubane, Shayanduku Gumede, Martin Mthembu, Dexter Chilunde and Wayne Lotter. It is also dedicated to those conservation workers who continue to be subjected to the problematic workplace practices and relations described in this thesis and that this work will in some way contribute to a conservation workplace premised on dignity and care.

For Mama Terry

For my Family

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Acronyms

ANC	African National Congress
Armscor	Armaments Corporation of South Africa SOC Ltd
AfRSG	African Rhino Specialist Group
BSP	Biodiversity Social Projects
CCMA	The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
COIN	Counterinsurgency
CoP	Conference of the Parties
CPA	Criminal Procedures Act
CPZ	Composite Protection Zone
CSI	Chief of Staff Intelligence
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research/Technology for Special Operations Research Area
CSVR	Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation
DEA	Department of Environmental Affairs (South Africa)
DEFF	Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (formerly DEA)
DPCI	Directorate of Priority Crime Investigation (HAWKS)
DSM-5	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders, Fifth Edition
EDGE	Eco Defence Group
EKZNW	Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife
EMI	Environmental Management Inspector
FMD	Foot and Mouth Disease
GIS	Geographical Information Systems

GIS	Gesamentlike Inligtingsentrum (Joint Information Centre)
GKEPF	Greater Kruger Environmental Protection Foundation
GLC	Greater Lebombo Conservancy
GLTP	Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Park
GLTFCA	Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area
GPS	Global Positioning System
GRAA	Game Ranger's Association of Africa
HDVE	Hulpdiens Vegelement (Auxiliary Service Combat Element)
ICCWC	International Consortium to Combat Wildlife Crime
ICDP	Integrated Conservation and Development Project
IFAISA	Institute of Accountability in Southern Africa
IPZ	Intensive Protection Zone
ISD	Internal Stability Division (SAP)
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
JMC	Joint Management Committee
JPZ	Joint Protection Zone
K2C	Kruger to Canyons Biosphere Region
KNP	Kruger National Park
KPA	Key Performance Appraisal
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LEAP	Law Enforcement and Anti-Poaching Strategy (SADC)
LNP	Limpopo National Park
MAJOC	Mission Area Joint Operations Centre
MOZAIC	Mozambique Assistance and Investment Corporation
NAD	Native Affairs Department
NATJOINTS	National Joint Operational and Intelligence Structure
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPB	Natal Parks Board (present-day EKZNW)
NPB	National Parks Board (present-day SANParks)
NPA	National Prosecuting Authority
ODC	Office of Defence Cooperation (U.S.)

OTGBS	Oos Transvaal Gesamentlike Bestuurs Sentrum (Eastern Transvaal Joint Management Centre)
POP	Public Order Policing (SAPS)
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
RMG	Rhino Management Group
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADF	South African Defence Force (apartheid era)
SANDF	South African National Defence Force (post-apartheid)
SANParks	South African National Parks
SAP	South African Police (apartheid era)
SAPS	South African Police Service (post-apartheid)
SAPS STF	South African Police Service Special Task Force
SARB	South African Reserve Bank
SAWC	South African Wildlife College
SWA	South West Africa (present day Namibia)
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organization
TBVC	Transkei, Bophutatswana, Venda and Ciskei (semi-autonomous former homelands or bantustans)
TEBA	The Employment Bureau of Africa
TFCA	Transfrontier Conservation Area
TRAFFIC	Trade Records and Analysis of Flora and Fauna in Commerce/The World Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
TRT	Tactical Response Team (SAPS)
U.K.	United Kingdom
U.S.	United States of America
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
WNLA	Witwatersrand Native Labour Association
WRD	World Ranger Day

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Abstract

Where the restoration of law and order is privileged in response to an intensification of rhino poaching, this thesis invites a more critical look at what political implications this holds for those conservation workers who do conservation policing. It argues that we adopt an expanded conceptualization of police, one that goes beyond the everyday policing functions of field rangers and that the use of force involved in these enforcement duties works in conjunction with forms of power. This thesis proposes to move the debate of violence in conservation beyond that of militarized conservation and focuses our attention to how police, in its wider meaning, shapes the conservation workplace and in what ways it intersects with characterizations of the broader South African workplace, typified by structural features that perpetuate low wages, precarity and racism. This thesis is informed by a twelve-month extended ethnographic study of field ranger anti-poaching practices in the Kruger National Park (KNP), South Africa. It relies mainly on participant observation, informal conversations and semi-structured interviews with close to 200 respondents related to the rhino poaching issue in and around the KNP; event ethnography of key environmental and conservation practitioner summits; observations of criminal proceedings in the Skukuza Periodical Court; a short comparative study of responses to rhino poaching by KwaZulu-Natal provincial conservation authorities; and engaging the services of a co-researcher who spent six months living in households of community members to the south west of the KNP to investigate what impacts militarized conservation holds for those communities. In response to the many institutional obstructions from the KNP in terms of access to data and internal documentation related to the rhino poaching issue and the labour process, this study also relies heavily on archival and open source information to complement the observations made in the Park.

This thesis makes several core interventions. Firstly, at a metatheoretical level, it demonstrates that police is a political technology in the maintenance of order, one that seeks not only to regulate society with

the effect of maintaining class and racial distinctions but that its utility also reaches into the ordering of labour who do violence work. Police, in effect, has very little to do with crime prevention but is more concerned with maintaining asymmetrical social order. Secondly, interrogation of archival sources has opened up many opportunities to trace continuity and change in the KNP and in what ways ideas, practices and people have been recycled from a time when the Park was embedded in the counter revolutionary responses of the apartheid state during the 1980s and in what ways those practices have become reconstituted in its present-day responses to the 'war on poaching' despite somatic and managerial changes. These historical forays also illuminate the ways in which labour was simultaneously produced, erased and controlled in the making of the Kruger landscape and that a distinct mode of racialized paternalism and a cheap labour regime shaped and continues to inform the labour process in the Park.

Thirdly, this thesis found that police structures the conservation workplace and the labour process in distinct ways, giving birth to a new politics of production. Melded with the historical features of the colonial and apartheid workplace regimes, it gives rise to a distinctive form of labour regime, the *police labour regime,* a form of workplace organization that holds particular consequences for field rangers who do violence work. This thesis shows that a historical anxiety over labour value and productivity has shifted from loyalty to privileging violence and aggression in ways that are at times irregular, arbitrary and extrajudicial. It also shows that these transgressions do not occur in a vacuum of voluntarism but that intense political pressure and features in the labour process in the form of significant supplementary income and incentives, together with institutional complicity and the threat of workplace marginalization, structure these irregular practices in field ranger encounters with rhino poachers.

Lastly, it shows that the police labour regime also shapes the institutional life in the KNP in distinct ways. Most notably the Park's proclamations of ranger wellness are not matched in reality and field rangers suffer considerable mental health and moral injuries due to their continued exposure not only to violence and the fear of violence but the irregular nature of that violence. It shows that efforts to mitigate these effects are seen as operational burdens and that institutional whiteness and institutional racism remain as notable, at times hard to detect, features in the workplace. Policing is also turned inwards in instances of mistrust, leading to workplace victimization, torture and animalization of workers. It also shows that financial indebtedness, stimulated by significant irregular income, acts as a new mode of labour control and precarity under the police labour regime.

Verder kijken dan naar gemilitariseerd natuurbehoud: De effecten van het Politiële Arbeidsregime in het Krugerpark

Samenvatting

Tegen de achtergrond van het herstel van de openbare orde als reactie op een intensivering van de neushoornstroperij biedt dit proefschrift een kritische beschouwing van de politieke implicaties hiervan voor de natuurbeschermers die belast zijn met handhaving. In dit proefschrift wordt gepleit voor een bredere opvatting van politiewerk, die verder gaat dan de alledaagse politietaken van rangers. Volgens deze opvatting gaat het gebruik van geweld bij deze handhavingstaken samen met vormen van macht. Het debat over geweld bij natuurbehoud zou niet beperkt moeten blijven tot gemilitariseerd natuurbehoud. In dit proefschrift wordt belicht hoe de politie, in bredere zin, vormgeeft aan de werkomgeving van het natuurbehoud en hoe deze zich verhoudt tot de Zuid-Afrikaanse werkomgeving in het algemeen, die gekenmerkt wordt door structurele factoren die lage lonen, bestaansonzekerheid en racisme in stand houden.

Voor dit proefschrift is twaalf maanden lang uitgebreid etnografisch onderzoek gedaan naar de bestrijding van stroperij in het Kruger National Park (KNP, Krugerpark), Zuid-Afrika. Als onderzoeksmethode is onder andere gebruikgemaakt van participerende observatie, informele gesprekken en semigestructureerde interviews met bijna 200 respondenten. Deze gesprekken en interviews gingen over het probleem van de neushoornstroperij in en rond het KNP. Verder is gebruikgemaakt van evenementen-etnografie van belangrijke topontmoetingen van milieu- en natuurbeschermingsdeskundigen; observatie van strafzaken in de Skukuza Periodical Court, en een kort vergelijkend onderzoek van de reacties op neushoornstroperij door de provinciale natuurbeschermingsinstanties van KwaZulu-Natal. Daarnaast heeft een collega-onderzoeker zes maanden ingewoond bij leden van gemeenschappen ten zuidwesten van het KNP om onderzoek te doen naar de impact van gemilitariseerd natuurbehoud op

deze gemeenschappen. Gezien de beperkte toegankelijkheid van gegevens en interne documenten van het KNP, is in dit onderzoek ter aanvulling van de observaties in het Krugerpark ook intensief gebruikgemaakt van archiefmateriaal en openbare bronnen over het probleem van de neushoornstroperij en over het arbeidsproces.

Dit onderzoek heeft een aantal belangrijke inzichten opgeleverd. In de eerste plaats wordt op metatheoretisch niveau aangetoond dat de politie functioneert als een politiek middel om de orde te handhaven. Daarbij wordt niet alleen beoogd om het maatschappelijk onderscheid op basis van klasse en ras te handhaven, maar ook bepaald wie er geweld mag gebruiken bij de beroepsuitoefening. De politie doet weinig aan misdaadpreventie, maar houdt zich meer bezig met het in stand houden van de asymmetrische maatschappelijke verhoudingen. Ten tweede was het met archiefonderzoek mogelijk om continuïteit en verandering in het Krugerpark te ontdekken en na te gaan hoe ideeën, werkwijzen en mensen uit de tijd van de contrarevolutionaire aanpak door de apartheidsstaat in de jaren tachtig in het park zijn hergebruikt en worden ingezet in de huidige 'oorlog tegen de stroperij', ondanks veranderingen in de organisatie en het management. Uit dit historisch onderzoek komt ook naar voren hoe arbeid tegelijkertijd geproduceerd, verwijderd en onder controle gehouden werd bij het aanleggen van het Krugerpark en dat het arbeidsproces in het park tot op de dag van vandaag gekenmerkt wordt door een uitgesproken vorm van raciaal paternalisme en goedkope arbeid.

Ten derde blijkt uit dit onderzoek dat de politie een duidelijk stempel drukt op de werkomgeving en het arbeidsproces van het natuurbehoud. Hierdoor ontstaat een nieuwe productiepolitiek. In combinatie met de historische koloniale en apartheidskenmerken van de gang van zaken op de werkplek ontstaat er een speciaal soort arbeidsregime: *het politiële arbeidsregime.* Deze organisatievorm heeft specifieke gevolgen voor rangers die geweld mogen gebruiken in hun werk. Uit dit onderzoek blijkt dat een historische bezorgdheid over de waarde van arbeid en productiviteit een verschuiving teweeggebracht heeft van loyaliteit naar het op een soms ongebruikelijke, arbitraire en onrechtmatige wijze bevorderen van geweld en agressie. Ook blijkt dat deze misstanden niet plaatsvinden in een vacuüm van eigenrichting, maar dat dit illegale optreden tegen neushoornstropers ontstaat onder sterke politieke druk en door bepaalde kenmerken van het arbeidsproces. Rangers worden hiertoe aangezet met het vooruitzicht van aanzienlijke bijverdiensten en bonussen en de dreiging van marginalisering op de werkplek. Ook de institutionele medeplichtigheid draagt hieraan bij.

Ten slotte blijkt dat het politiële arbeidsregime ook op verschillende manieren van invloed is op het institutionele klimaat in het KNP. De uitspraken van de leiding van het Krugerpark over het welzijn van de rangers stroken niet met de werkelijkheid en de rangers ondervinden aanzienlijke psychische en morele schade van hun voortdurende blootstelling aan geweld en de angst voor geweld, dat bovendien tegen de regels ingaat. Uit het onderzoek blijkt dat pogingen om deze effecten tegen te gaan als een operationele last worden gezien en dat institutionele witheid en institutioneel racisme typerende, soms moeilijk waarneembare, kenmerken van de werkplek blijven. De ordehandhaving wordt ook naar binnen gericht wanneer er sprake is van wantrouwen, wat leidt tot represailles op de werkplek, foltering en onmenselijke behandeling van werknemers. Ook blijkt dat financiële schulden, in de hand gewerkt door zeer onregelmatige inkomsten, dienen als een nieuwe wijze van arbeidscontrole en arbeidsonzekerheid onder het politiële arbeidsregime.

Trefwoorden: politie, macht, arbeid, productiepolitiek, institutioneel klimaat

Preface

Critiquing Conservation Reason: An Insider's Dilemma

In much the same tradition as Joseph Blum,[1] an apprentice of Michael Burawoy at the University of California Berkeley, it is the world of academia that I find intimidating and unknown. On the other hand, the world that ethnographers in critical conservation seek to enter, the protected areas and national parks of southern and East Africa, is one that I am most familiar with in a way that many other researchers in this field are not. It was in these remote places where I did more than earn a living for close to eighteen years – it was a place where I forged exceptionally close friendships and experienced moments that I suspect would be hard to replicate in other work environments. Working as a section ranger and technical advisor, my daily job included digging holes for fence posts to erect fences that would do more than enclose predators and mega-herbivores as much as it was meant to keep out trespassers – it clearly delineated the philosophical and material divide between nature and society. It was a job that varied from the adventurous and glamourized – chemically immobilizing lions at night and ear notching black rhino from helicopters to the decidedly unspectacular and mundane - fixing broken toilets and dealing with employee disciplinary issues. Some of these work experiences also brought me face to face with the prospect of death – walking away from a light aircraft crash and coming face to face with a charging black rhino bull are but two examples. It was a job where, as a section ranger (with a semi-automatic rifle cradled in my arms), I was *the* authority over the territory I surveyed including the animals and people who entered those spaces. The remote location of the conservation workplace and its separateness from the rest of society did not insulate it from the politics that continues to dominate South African life. Like many black mid-level managers, in a largely white dominated field, overcoming the pejorative label of being seen reductively as nothing more than an affirmative action appointee was real. As with many people of colour, the never-ending struggle to prove that I was capable was ever-present. At the same time, the most

sincere and enduring friendships that I continue to have are with white former colleagues.

It was also a job where the meta-population management and monitoring of black rhino was more than just another administrative requirement or of fleeting personal interest to me. Working with highly skilled field rangers relying only on the spoor and feeding sign to silently locate and approach black rhino on foot after hours of tracking, hand rearing a black rhino calf and the boma management of wild captive black rhino, elevated this species to a place of reverence in my imagination. It was in iMfolozi Game Reserve in South Africa - widely credited with bringing (white) rhino back from the brink of extinction and where rhino monitoring and management was at the centre of its organizational pride and culture - where this reverence for rhino was consolidated. It became the topic of many hours of conversation with friends and colleagues, pouring over the minutiae of individual rhino sightings, shifting home range patterns, group compositions and associations and what these observations may mean for population estimates and management interventions. At other times, it included conducting forensic crime scene investigations at rhino carcasses and cutting open rhino skulls to extract bullet fragments that frustratingly resulted in very little progress in identifying and successfully prosecuting the perpetrators. Talk of black rhino permeated our everyday lives. It was only while conducting my masters research on the purported beneficiation from community based natural resource management interventions that I came to appreciate how pastoralists revered their cattle as much as I did black rhino. Only then did I begin to question who's reverence of what was more legitimate.

Where conservation practice and the very particular social relations that it engendered, living in remote, secluded places (something that I referred to as a 'bubble') has formed such an integral part of my adult life, coming to formulate a critique of conservation reason has been fraught with personal, social and emotional dilemmas. Upon hearing of the death of a trusted field ranger I worked with in iMfolozi Game Reserve and being shaken by the senselessness and violence of his death during an anti-poaching operation, I was acutely aware that many of my close friends still in conservation would have to respond to a radio call when gunshots were heard, not knowing whether they too would have to kill someone in the course of their duties or instead be killed themselves. I could only imagine what ramifications such outcomes would hold for their own lives and the lives of their families. This is the world that I have been part of for more than half of my life and it is this world I now seek to interrogate using critical theory. Blum observed that, "[d]etaching oneself from the field of study is a problem that probably plagues

all ethnographers" and that this dictum was especially true for him as someone who earned a living from the shipyards in the Bay Area (2000: 107). Suffice it to say here that for me an ethnographic investigation of conservation practice is more than reporting on local processes and global forces of militarized conservation - critiquing conservation practice may be construed as a critique of the people who *do* conservation – at times those very people I have built relationships with over the years. Here, however, I am generally concerned with the political roles people play and not necessarily the individuals who play them.[2] Despite this, those former colleagues and friends may construe my critique of conservation practice as a personal attack, something that may very well be unavoidable - albeit unintended - and that may entail a seemingly inescapable burden of risking an entire social and professional network that I have acquired over my nearly two decades in conservation. Coming to terms with that has not been easy. Being immersed in the insulated world of a PhD process almost entirely devoted to understanding seemingly abstract philosophy and social theory has in many ways alienated me from the people and praxis of conservation.[3] In effect, as Sara Ahmed (2012) laments, the research process is one of estrangement. At other times it has helped to make sense of the disturbing phenomena I encountered. I am painfully aware that critique alone is not an end in itself but that it is instead solidarity with an underclass of conservation labour that animates this work – solidarity with those field rangers who taught me so much, not only in teaching me field craft, but for their affection, humour and sincere companionship and to highlight the conditions under which they live and work. My critique here is not because I have conceived of ready-made solutions to the complex and very real threat of wildlife crime but to offer a cautionary note to the costs that the forms of conservation policing described here pose to the very people who do conservation work and the forms of authoritarian governance it gives rise to. It is only through making plain what these costs are, that an alternative, socially just and dignified conservation workplace politics can hope to be conceived.

<div style="text-align: right;">Cape Town, South Africa, March 2022</div>

Notes

[1] See Blum, J.A. (2000) 'Degradation Without Deskilling: Twenty-five Years in the San Francisco Shipyards' in Burawoy, M. et al. (2000) *Global Ethnography: Forces,*

Connections, and Imaginations in a Postmodern World. Berkeley: University of California Press, p.106-136. Blum worked as boilermaker, welder and shipfitter in the shipyards of the Bay Area in San Francisco for 25 years. It was while he was still working in the shipyards that he undertook his PhD candidacy in sociology at UC Berkeley.

[2] See Marx's reference to "bearers" of economic relations where the focus on roles rather than individuals recognizes the different, even contradictory, positions individuals occupy (Harvey 2010: 47-48).

[3] This insight is taken from the author Karla Cornejo Villavicencio, a daughter of illegal immigrants. In studying the precarious lives of illegal immigrants, she felt alienated from their daily struggles through her own privileges as a PhD candidate at a prestigious U.S. university. [Online] Available at: https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/24/books/review/the-undocumented-americans-karla-cornejo-villavicencio.html?action=click&module=Well&pgtype=Homepage&section=Book Review (Accessed 27 March 2020).

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Introduction: The Problem with Policing

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1.1   Policing the Problem – The Problem with Policing

The image that has perhaps most dramatically captured the public imagination and been at the centre of political discourse that has epitomized the rhino poaching[1] crisis over the last decade has been the gruesome image of a rhino, its horns crudely hacked off, breathing raspingly through the gaping wound on its face. This was the scene sketched by an interlocutor,[2] who was addressing a London based audience on the challenges faced by rangers in a South African game reserve in this so-called 'war on poaching'. He proceeded to prod his audience to contemplate what could possibly be worse than being confronted by the image of the dying rhino. He went on to relay his personal experience to responding to what amounted to a 36-hour anti-poaching operation resulting in a 'contact'[3] where a suspected poacher[4] was shot and injured in an ambush conducted by conservation law enforcement personnel. He approached the victim who was still alive, lying on his stomach, his face covered by long, dreadlocked hair. When he turned the victim over and the hair covering his face fell away, he could see that the man had been mortally wounded, his face below the eyeline had been shot off – where his nose, his cheekbones and jaw should have been was gone. There was nothing he could do despite his advanced training in first aid and the man soon succumbed to his injuries before he could be attended to by professional paramedics who were *en route*. He shared with me the macabre sounds and frantic death throes this man made before the life seeped out of his body and the disturbing, almost callous, indifference by rangers involved in the incident, making insensitive jokes. He also understood that it was a mechanism that these rangers employed to shield themselves from the obvious trauma of the disturbing scene unravelling before their eyes. While they sat shivering in the light rain and the pitch dark with only the lights of their headlamps

and torches illuminating the eerie scene, waiting for members of the South African Police Service (SAPS) and paramedics to arrive, what disturbed him most was that the victim could so easily have been himself or one of his own friends or colleagues working on anti-poaching operations that has come to typify contemporary conservation work in a time of intensified rhino poaching.

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This vignette offers a small insight into the gruesome reality of the violence at the frontline of some anti-poaching operations. It is one that is hidden in the sanitized and decontextualized media or official accounts we often encounter in reports on 'the war on poaching'. Indeed, this is not the first instance where the nature of the violence of anti-poaching operations has been made explicit. Barbora also references images of armed police and paramilitary personnel crowding around the emaciated bodies of young men "whose faces have been blown off" in anti-poaching operations in India's Kaziranga National Park (2017: 1147). When rangers are called on to 'stop poaching', the disturbing events encapsulated in this vignette rarely animate the deliberations of species conservation protagonists, be they scientists, conservation policy makers or practitioners in the non-governmental organization (NGO) sector. It is an alienation from the violence of this particular form of labour where the disconnect between the ideal of saving a species is so far removed from its violent operationalization. The violent labour that some ranger encounters with poachers entail, is, in many ways, *essential* and *necessary* to the functioning of a political economy of (rhino) conservation in South Africa. In distancing itself from this violence, conservation protagonists are able to continue to position conservation endeavours as an inherent good, devoid of human costs. In foregrounding the violence depicted in this vignette, its purpose is to show that this violence is not ahistorical or anomalous to the conservation endeavour, particularly in saving charismatic species such as rhino. Where the notion of defending the last 'bastions of nature' (see Terborgh 1999) is instilled so deeply in the moral psyche, this thesis invites a more critical examination of what such ostensibly noble and innocuous sounding position statements entail and that the violence with which it is inscribed often holds serious consequences not only for marginalized groups living in or adjacent to

protected areas but also conservation labour at the forefront of anti-poaching operations who can be subjected to problematic workplace practices in pursuit of these conservation ideals.

The imagery that persists, however, is that of the slain rhino – one where "the decimation of wildlife" is equated to "a sort of cultural genocide" (Moore 2015: 45; see also Bunn 1996, Burnett 2018; Büscher 2021, Lunstrum 2014). This symbolic power of wildlife and the manner in which particular animals "congeal the complex meanings and struggles about identity and sovereignty" has driven much of the public clamour - predominantly from a white and economically privileged section of both the South African and international community - to 'save the rhino' (Field 2008 in Sodikoff 2012: 7). Where the defence of rhino has become, arguably, constitutive of whiteness[5] itself (Burnett 2018), this sub-set of public outrage has fuelled the impetus and added credibility to a course of action to strengthen law enforcement in the face of intensified wildlife crime and that being 'tough on crime' is the most appropriate and pragmatic response under circumstances that necessitates urgent action.

Where the official and public discourse not only urges, but glamourizes 'stopping poachers' in the pursuit to re-establish 'law and order', this thesis argues that such normative turns often "depend on aggressive policing" (Schrader 2019: 1) and that aggressive order-maintenance policing is "masked by the regularity of legal processes" (Harcourt 2001: 19). Here it bears reminding that not all policing is conducted by professional police forces. Indeed, this thesis situates the practices of combatting wildlife crime in the Kruger National Park (KNP),[6] the focal area of this study, as a policing function. It is a preliminary signpost that we should also be alert to the wider concept of police power and the myriad of institutional forms which are also imbued with this power (Neocleous 2014b). There is a growing body of evidence from around the world that points to how this pursuit of security and order spills into acts of police and military misconduct and brutality, acts that are often perpetrated with impunity (Belkin 2016, Belur 2010, IGADF 2020, Jauregui 2013, Williams 2015) and often with a racialized bias (Davis, 2017, Hall et al. 1978, Schrader 2019, Seigel 2018). This is particularly pertinent in the South African context, considering the notoriety of the apartheid security forces who had a particular penchant for racially repressive and brutal tactics, often including gross violations of human rights (Gossmann 2006, Hansen 2006, O'Brien 2001, TRC 1998, Vol. 5, Ch.1). Many of these practices,

such as routine abuse and torture reminiscent of apartheid era policing persist in contemporary South African policing (Kynoch 2016). Acts of deviance by state actors are especially prevalent in elite and specialized police and military units where a dangerous 'warrior culture' is allowed to develop unchecked[7] (see also Belur 2010, IGADF 2020). These units often operate under increasingly blurred sets of rules and norms that ultimately normalizes deviance. In essence, it is a sense of exceptionalism and separateness in the identity formation of these units that permits a wider latitude of action that is seen as *necessary* in times of urgency, and the perpetrators see themselves as above the law.

The KNP has throughout its history projected similar tendencies of exceptionalism and has actively sought to inculcate a warrior culture amongst its field ranger services as this thesis will demonstrate. The simplistic representation of rangers as heroes saving nature (see Büscher 2021, Duffy et al. 2019, Marijnen and Verweijen 2016) obscures acts of deviance, especially so in instances where policing is presented as an unproblematic and legitimate response in the face of intensified wildlife crime. Foucault (1980) reminds us that it is not the legitimacy of the state to restore order that is at stake but its methods of subjugation that should be of concern. Consequently, it is not only the gruesome nature of the violence at the conservation coalface that this thesis brings to attention but that state sanctioned violence in the KNP is not immune to the same abuses of power that besets professional police and military institutions.

These acts of deviance are often attributed to a sub-set of ill-disciplined staff or framed as the actions of a few 'rotten apples' within the organization. Yet, it is the institution of policing that repeatedly shields its officers of misdeeds and instead become more insular and defensive in the face of criticism rather than subjecting itself to greater transparency and accountability to the communities they purport to serve (Vitale 2017). Advocates campaigning against police brutality maintain that the use of disproportionate or extrajudicial force by police is not a sign of a broken policing system but that it is eminently designed to work that way,[8] that attempts to reform the police does not address the underlying rationality of police to structure violence (Seigel 2018). While addressing such forms of deviance are crucial to holding officials accountable and addressing problematic institutional cultures,[9] focusing solely on prosecution as a corrective measure obscures a wider interrogation of police and its primary role at the centre of modern state formation and that it is "a tool for

managing deeply entrenched inequalities" (Vitale 2017: location 458 single column view). While intersubjective meaning making and perpetrator agency *do* play a role in how field rangers justify their actions, it does not fall within the scope of this work.

Instead, this thesis highlights the workplace pressures, social formations premised on domination and the unequal hierarchies of power that this fraction of labour is subjected to in the Kruger and in what ways police amplify these relations. It emphasizes that police deviancy does not occur in a vacuum of voluntarism but is preconfigured, on the one hand, by a complex set of workplace social relations typified by a brand of historically racialized paternalism and coercion. It is within this context that these problematic relations together with worker precarity in the form of labour migrancy and specific structural features of the labour process, to name but two aspects, are mobilized to order its pool of labour and maximize labour productivity. On the other hand, Kruger also has a long-standing association with the apartheid security apparatus that has shaped not only its securitized worldview but also its martial practices. It is at this intersection of security and labour, specifically how security *configures* labour, that is a central concern of the thesis. In bringing security and labour into focus, this thesis illuminates its effects on the conservation workplace and the institutional life within Kruger. It brings attention to what consequences it holds for low paid, racialized conservation workers at the forefront of anti-poaching operations in the KNP and to contextualize these dynamics in a country that continues to struggle to shed the lingering afterlives of the apartheid workplace.

Following on from the problem statement outlined above, the remainder of this introductory chapter will provide an overview of the contemporary scholarly debate on militarized conservation and its conceptual shortcomings. It then offers an alternative conceptual prism through which we can better understand the responses to rhino poaching in the KNP and its effects on the mode of governance and institutional life in the Park. It then sketches the extent of the rhino poaching problem and its human costs in South Africa and in the KNP in particular. Next, I sketch a short biographical profile of the KNP, paying particular attention to the manner in which its leadership actively carved out an identity for itself as an exceptional space and deploying this exceptionalism to exercise their authority. This also provides a critical contextual groundwork for what is to follow. Next, I sketch the methodology that

guides this research and a detailed account of the methods and fieldwork strategies deployed. I also reflect on doing research in closed contexts; aspirations for respondent confidentiality and ethical dilemmas. Following that, I frame the research objectives, the central research question and sub-questions and end with the layout of the thesis.

1.2 Situating the Academic Debate: From Green Militarization to Green Violence to Community Policing

A surfeit of popular and academic attention – from diverse disciplinary perspectives ranging from anthropology, geography, political ecology, criminology, military studies, conservation science and even queer studies - has critiqued this seemingly novel militarized turn in conservation or pointed out the limits of deploying higher densities of armed field rangers in the context of an upsurge in rhino poaching over the last decade (see Annecke and Masubulele 2016, Barichievy et al. 2017, Burnett and Milani 2017, Büscher and Ramutsindela 2016, Duffy 2014, Hübschle 2016, Humphreys and Smith 2014, Lombard 2012, Lunstrum 2014). The debate has largely centred around Elizabeth Lunstrum's concept of 'green militarization' which critiques the "use of military and paramilitary (military-like) actors, techniques, technologies, and partnerships in the pursuit of conservation" (2014: 817).

Conservation practitioners themselves dismiss the critique of conservation practice through the lens of green militarization and instead contend that conservation has always been 'militarized' to one extent or another.[10] This view also corresponds with Neumann's findings in Tanzanian state conservation agencies that individuals trained by the state in firearms handling and dispensing state sanctioned violence - such as former police, military and prison officials - "have been traditionally the primary source of recruits for game rangers" (2001: 307). Indeed, Lunstrum herself concedes that green militarization is not a new occurrence and that its purpose, as a concept, is "to invite a more sustained, wide-ranging investigation into the militarization of conservation practice" (2014: 828). Despite the consensus that African conservation has been intertwined with military practices since the colonial period, the critique of green militarization continues to rile practitioners in the Kruger. To counter the critique, they prefer to frame

their responses to rhino poaching in the KNP as 'responsible' (Hübschle and Jooste 2017, Jooste and Ferreira 2018) or, more explicitly, as 'responsible green militarization'.[11] It is this assertion by Kruger managers, that its responses are 'responsible', that this thesis challenges.

A number of scholars also point to the limits of 'green militarization' as a sufficiently broad concept, that the focus on militarization in conservation, narrows the focus on only one dynamic to a problem that has much broader relational political economic dynamics. An analysis of violence in conservation cannot only be concerned with the use only of military hardware but needs to be expanded to include an analysis of military doctrine, tactics, informal rules, population-centric strategies and interoperability with other security actors (see Verweijen 2015). Specifically, an analysis of violence in conservation concerned with these aforementioned tenets has to bring counterinsurgency (COIN) into the analysis. Shaw and Rademeyer contend – erroneously so, as this thesis will demonstrate - that to conflate anti-poaching operations in the KNP with COIN "draws heavily and uncritically on external stereotypes of South African (white) military and security sector prowess without any real understanding of the current security establishment" (2016: 2). Other critiques instead see the use of military practices, technologies and partnerships as a "series of 'intensifications" after Nealon (2008: 5, see also Büscher and Fletcher 2018, Massé 2019). This implies a historical continuity at differing levels of magnification over time. Indeed, Büscher and Ramutsindela (2016) show such historical continuities in their critique of green militarization and that it is perhaps more fruitful to conceptualize violence in conservation as 'green violence'. Crucially, green violence emphasizes those structural, unseen forms of violence implicit in contemporary political economy and it is important not to lose sight of these 'less spectacular' forms of violence and the concerning consequences they hold for marginalized groups. However, in foregrounding spectacular or direct violence it serves to show that its presence is intrinsically linked to the structural phenomena that shape the labour process and that these two aspects of violence are not mutually exclusive in the KNP. Moreover, by directing our focus at direct violence, it also makes the source of violence less nebulous and disconnected from the institutions that perpetrate these forms of violence (Seigel 2018), and in doing so it offers some prospect for transformation.

Furthermore, many scholars, including political ecologists critiquing militarized conservation, often find themselves in a dilemma at recognizing the dangers poaching and wildlife crime poses to biodiversity. In an attempt to stem its persistence, they have called for forms of law enforcement that are more 'inclusive', one that devolves policing to a community level (Massé et al. 2017b, see also Hübschle and Shearing 2018). This thesis challenges that community policing can be a progressive movement and instead follows Schrader (2016) who posits that the deployment of community in participatory initiatives to bring about security was, and remains, integral to counterinsurgency interventions that seek to pacify populations. Jensen (2010) posits that it is at this nexus of security and development, that security becomes privileged in the absence of radical socio-economic transformation. Furthermore, community is not an antidote to state violence but rather a means through which state violence becomes legitimated, that it devolves responsibility for disorder at the door of the 'community' where it is the community and not the state that has become responsible for ensuring order and that it further causes rifts within communities.[12] Thus, Vitale argues, "community policing does not empower communities in meaningful ways…[i]t expands police power" (2017: location 294, single column view).

Implicit in some of these concerns is a call for the de-militarization of conservation. Alison Howell (2018) argues that the limits in militarization as a concept lies in its presumption that militarization has encroached on a peaceful liberal order. In other words, that there was a peaceful and equitable social order before it was altered through militarization. Such thinking obscures an underlying continuity of oppression – what she calls 'martial politics' - and that de-militarization in itself cannot provide a meaningful solution (ibid.). Schrader also contends that if police were stripped of military-style gear it would *still* be able to enact social control, surveillance and the killing of armed and unarmed people.[13] The focus on the hardware that characterizes militarization often obscures the underlying problematics of policing in enacting social order.[14] Neocleous (2021) argues that the mainstream literature critiquing the militarization of police creates a blockage in critical thinking about police power. It suggests an uncharacteristic shift in police from the seemingly benign maintenance of order and peace to forms of coercion appropriate to war zones (ibid.). Such a position perpetuates a myth that 'normal' policing is not about violence, that it is distinct from war and that it should be

insulated from the technologies of war (ibid.). However, it overlooks a continuity of oppression elucidated by Howell (2018), a rationality of rule ensconced in the concept of 'police', that has been part of and continues to inform conservation governance in the KNP. Kienscherf (2016) also argues that compliance-based community policing does not presume it is devoid of coercive practices. It continues to order and shape the Park's relations to people living on its borders and, crucially for this thesis, the labour in its employ.

1.3 Advancing the Debate: Expanding our Understanding of Police and the Ways in which it Configures Conservation Labour

It is here that this thesis makes an innovative contribution to the literature on militarized conservation and to move the discussion and analysis beyond militarization. Firstly - at a metatheoretical level - it dispels the notion that we conceptualize policing as an institution separately from police as a form of power (Neocleous 2000). In this expanded conceptualization of police, it illuminates the way in which the constabulary functions of the police and its penchant to use force works in conjunction with state power. Thus, police and the security it seeks is not a benign response to a "universal need for protection from risk or danger but […] a political technology central to the construction of both the modern state and capitalism" (McMichael 2012: 7). It urges us to question what these short-term security interventions may mean for long term governance, how they expand into seemingly non-traditional policy fields such as conservation and specifically the manner in which police orders conservation labour. Where conservation law enforcement in the context of an upsurge in wildlife crime is conceptualized as a policing function, the critical literature on police emphasizes the ways in which the administration of wage labour, more generally, is subordinated in the pursuit of political economic rationales encoded in capitalism (Neocleous 2000). However, very little attention is paid to how those fractions of labour that *enforce* state sanctioned violence – police officers themselves – are subordinated and ordered in pursuit of these political economic rationales.

Secondly, drawing on the critical literature on the labour process and the manner in which racial, gender and class inequalities are produced and reproduced in the workplace, this thesis brings this work in conversation with the work on the labour process in bordered work spaces such as the factory floor. It leans on the work of Karl von Holdt's (2003) analysis of the *apartheid workplace regime;* Michael Burawoy's (1985) *factory regime* and to bring these insights into conversation with Chris Smith's (2003) *dormitory labour system* or Ngai and Smith's (2007) *dormitory labour regime.* Following these conceptual characterizations of the workplace, this thesis proposes that to understand how social/labour relations are ordered in conservation spaces under the logics of police, it may be fruitful to conceptualize the bordered conservation workplace under the conditions described throughout this thesis as a *police labour regime.*

It can be argued that the Kruger Park is a site of densely concentrated value derived from international tourism and that the visible role played in environmental politics adds a veneer of credibility – and thus value - to the South African state on the international stage (Death 2011). However, labour as source of value is left largely undertheorized in conservation due to the obvious absence of a tangible commodity. Sodikoff (2009) and Ramutsindela (2015) argue that where conservation seems to be the antithesis of production, there is a need to know how labour value in conservation is produced (see also Ekers 2015, Garland 2006, Jacoby 2001, Thakholi 2021). Building on these insights, together with Bunn (1996), this thesis proposes a key avenue for generating labour value under the police labour regime. Where violence has become a central feature in conservation (Neumann 2001); and where a number of scholars have demonstrated that violence is a central feature of the modern state (see Neocleous 2021, Seigel 2018); and capital accumulation (Blomley 2003, Marx [1867]1976); there is a need to know precisely what role the application of violence by conservation labour plays in generating value in conservation in the context of a police labour regime. Here, the thesis leans on the insights of Joseph Pugliese (2013) in how violence is situated as productive. This thesis will demonstrate how the expression of labour value has shifted from loyalty as value (see Bunn 1996) and reconfigured to privilege violence as a measure of field ranger productivity.

Furthermore, this thesis demonstrates that conservation anti-poaching operations in the KNP draw heavily on counterinsurgency (COIN) tactics and doctrine. Where Foucault (1980) implores that we focus our attention

on the methods of subordination employed by the state, we should remain alert to the proficiency of the apartheid state for brutal and irregular practices encoded in its COIN operations (Gossmann 2006, O'Brien 2001) are not forever consigned to the past. A number of critical scholars in conservation have referred to the proliferation of COIN in conservation (see Devine 2014, Dunlap and Fairhead 2014, Minarchek, 2020, Peluso and Vandergeest 2011, Verweijen and Marijnen 2016, Ybarra, 2012). Few have unearthed the genealogy of counterinsurgency, its links to pacification nor its theoretical positioning within the concept of police. Neither has there been an ethnographically thick description of what its use looks like in practice and how the practices enshrined in COIN render that fraction of labour increasingly precarious due its inherent tendency to draw its practitioners into violence, often in ways that are irregular or extrajudicial.

Lastly, this thesis also expands on the preliminary observations of scholars in critical conservation on the consequences militarized conservation holds for conservation law enforcement staff (Duffy et al. 2019). Where the consequences are not described in detail, this contribution provides an ethnographically thick description in what ways the use of violent practices shapes the institutional life and the labour process within the Park and the concerning consequences it holds for low salaried workers.

1.4   The 'War on Poaching': An Overview of the Rhino Killed and the Human Costs

The last decade has seen a dramatic – but hardly unprecedented[15] - surge in rhino poaching in South Africa, with close to 8 000[16] animals killed between 2008 to 2018. Put into perspective, this total number of animals killed in South Africa dwarfs the total population of both white and black rhino in the three next most important rhino range states in Africa, namely Kenya, Namibia and Zimbabwe with a total rhino population of 4 692 animals (Emslie et al. 2016). Approximately 60 percent of those animals have been killed in the KNP and it is here that militarized responses to the poaching threat is considered to be most intensified (see Annecke and Masubulele 2016, Büscher and Ramutsindela 2016, Lunstrum 2014). It is only in 2018 that the number of rhinos killed annually in South Africa have

fallen under 1 000 animals for the first time in five years, leading to, arguably, premature declarations of success. In recent assessments, KNP officials have reported on the effectiveness of what they call the 'ranger' effect', where despite the high incidences of incursions by poachers, it is the efforts of ranger personnel and the deployment of technology that are attributed to the reduction in animals killed. In effect, that its militarized approaches to poaching are bearing fruit. Detractors suggest that it is the radically reduced population numbers in the Park that make it increasingly difficult for poaching groups to detect and kill rhino. Where rhino poaching data is presented without context in terms of what proportion of the rhino population is killed year on year, it offers little information on whether poaching is indeed decreasing.[17] Such narrowly defined data on rhino poaching also avoids the politically unpalatable, and reputationally damaging topic of the possibility that Kruger's rhino population numbers could have been significantly overestimated.[18] Despite these criticisms, South African National Parks (SANParks), the parent body of the KNP, continues to insists that it is its law enforcement pillar and the significant expenditure in security that has precluded even worse rhino losses (SANParks 2019). However, it is spurious, Harcourt (2001) argues, to make simplistic correlations between enforcement and crime rates where those correlations tell us nothing about a range of other social factors that impact on criminal activity.

Over the same period, 3 461 suspects have been arrested, injured or killed within the country, with 52 percent of those interdictions made in the KNP. Previously, the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA),[19] which disseminates rhino poaching statistics centrally, used the term 'neutralized' to refer to killed, injured and arrested suspects. The use of the term obscures the ability to measure the deadly nature of the law enforcement actions in the KNP. The use of this term also bears a disturbing similarity to the terms and phrases used by apartheid era security operatives where words such as "*neutraliseer* [neutralize], *vernietig* [destroy], *elimineer* [eliminate], *uit te wis* [wipe out] …became common parlance" (TRC 1998, Vol. 2. Ch.1: 38). The continued use of this language in the present moment also points to another important argument this thesis makes – that discourses and practices learned from its close relations with the apartheid era security forces are deeply embedded in the institutional makeup of the KNP and are recycled in times of urgency. Discursively, political figures and SANParks officials

have repeatedly framed the threat of rhino poaching as a national security threat or a 'war' and that its responses constitute a 'war on poaching' (see Chapter 5). Kynoch (2016) demonstrates that similar discursive constructions were deployed by national leadership in the safety and security ministry in its 'war on crime' in the late 1990s. Much of this political rhetoric, together with the adoption of militarized ranks within police structures, in effect gave political authority for the violent use of force by police, a feature that has become commonplace in South African policing despite early efforts at transformation after the end of apartheid (ibid.). Kynoch (2016) posits, that when police work is defined as a 'war' and criminals as enemies, expectations of restraint from rank-and-file police officers becomes increasingly remote.

Over the last year or two of the period under review, DEA reports on rhino poaching statistics refer only to arrested suspects - to include incidences of death - and still provides no clarity over the number of suspects killed in anti-poaching operations.[20] Shaw and Rademeyer (2016) speculate that between 150 to 200 suspected poachers have been killed in KNP towards the midpoint of the period under review (see also Hübschle 2016, Rademeyer 2016). Media sources quote much higher numbers of between 300 and 500 suspects killed.[21] This research can confirm that 112 suspects have been killed between January 2010 and August 2014,[22] 21 suspects killed over a 7-month period in 2015[23] and a further 45 suspects killed between January to November 2016.[24] Thus, over a 74-month period a total of 178 suspected poachers are confirmed to have been killed in the KNP with an average of 2.4 people killed per month.[25] Compared to the number of deaths recorded during Zimbabwe's war on poaching in the 1980s during 'Operation Stronghold' where shoot-on-sight policies were passed into law to protect rangers from prosecution, 167 suspected poachers were killed over a 108-month period between 1984 to 1992 - an average of 1.54 suspects killed per month (Milliken et al. 1993). In Kaziranga, India's stronghold for the conservation of greater one-horned rhino where similar *de facto* protections are in place to insulate conservation law enforcement staff from prosecutions, 68[26] suspects were killed in a 108-month period from 2007 to 2015 (a monthly average of 0.62).

What these numbers suggest – despite the significant gaps in the data[27] - is that the lethality of contemporary responses to rhino poaching, in the KNP specifically, is unprecedented. It is evident that the rate of deaths on average per month were even lower under policies that legitimized the

use of deadly force in Zimbabwe and India. While no such policy exists in South Africa, the use of force is legislated under Section 49 of the Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977[28] which legitimates the use of deadly force only in instances of private defence. Questioning the number and circumstances around the death of suspects in the KNP is becoming increasingly pertinent in the context of ever-increasing reports of torture, disappearances, sexual assault and secret killings in conservation settings in Africa and Asia.[29] The killing of people under questionable circumstances in the Kruger also has a historical precedent. During the height of the apartheid state's counter revolutionary efforts, at a time when the Park was increasingly drawn into the embrace of the military in the Cold War politics of the 1980s, unarmed men, women and children were also wounded and killed with impunity (Chapter 6). Consequently, it is not only the sheer number of people killed in the Park that is at stake but the circumstances under which these deaths occur and how these practices gain such institutional footholds.

Despite the rhetoric that poachers are well armed, have military training and are associated with terrorist groups (see White 2014) or organized criminal networks (Gustafson et al. 2018), the deadly confrontation taking place away from the public gaze has highly uneven outcomes. After a decade of intensified rhino poaching in the KNP, the 19th July 2018 marked the first time a field ranger was shot and killed in a firefight or contact with suspected poachers.[30] No rangers have been prosecuted or formally reprimanded for the illegal or excessive use of force in the KNP in the period under review. Instead, where any critique of ranger practices is construed as undermining conservation efforts, it is a "necropolitics of heroism"[31] that takes centre stage. As a counter discursive tactic, it frames rangers as 'conservation heroes', which serves to position the violence as regrettable but 'necessary' and to glorify the 'sacrifice' of rangers in instances where they are killed or injured. All this, however, further obscures the broader political context of uneven workplace power relations; labour practices that vitalize violence; the long-lasting emotional and mental health consequences; low salaries; separation from their families; and long working hours that typifies the working conditions of many black field rangers in the KNP.

1.5   The Republic of Kruger: State Power at the Periphery and the Shaping of its Exceptional Authorities

Jacob Dlamini (2020a) contends that the geographical location of the KNP - what Patrick Harries (1987) called 'a forgotten corner of the Transvaal' - situated in the remote, far north-eastern corner of South Africa, was where the nation state met its limits. Further still from the reaches of the nation state is the far north-eastern corner of the KNP itself, at the junction of the international border with Zimbabwe and Mozambique, known as Crooks' Corner, an epitaph used to describe the scant regard which was applied to the rule of law. Despite its remoteness, these outer reaches of the nation state were not entirely devoid of government, that void was slowly beginning to be filled by another state-like actor, the KNP itself.[32] Foucault (1980) dispels the notion that, in the study of state power, we think that its reach is diminished in these far-flung corners. In contrast to Dlamini (2020a), Foucault claims that it is precisely in these peripheral areas - at its extremities - that we look for its effects in its regional and local forms (ibid.). It is here, in its ultimate destination that power surmounts its constraints, and the institutions that embody the legitimacy to control and subordinate, equips itself with ever more violent and "less legal" means of intervention (ibid.: 97).

By the time Stevenson-Hamilton arrived to take up his post as warden in the winter of 1902, his arrival marked the physical expansion of the colonial order, not only over territory and its resources, where it previously had a light footprint, but also the administration of Africans living in the area (Dlamini 2020a). His arrival in effect marked a new social and political order, one premised not only on preserving wildlife but control over African people living in the area (ibid.). In fact, when the National Parks Act was passed unanimously in both houses of parliament in 1926, Jan Smuts, the leader of the opposition, expressed the hope that the Park would extend as far north as central Africa (Carruthers 1995). Such territorial ambitions demonstrate the nascent thinking behind the expansion of protected areas in Africa, one of territorial and resource control, including the control over a vast pool of cheap labour. That the dislocated residents around the KNP viewed and continue to view the Kruger as a state within a state, that "has always exercised a significant degree of judicial and disciplinary power" (Meskell 2009: 91), is hardly surprising. In making claims on the state, the people living on its boundary would direct these claims through the Park (Dlamini 2020a).

This external view of Kruger by the communities that flanked its western boundary was directly attributed to the way in which it conducted itself and the authorities it exercised over the daily lives of people living in its ambit. The Park became the proxy of the state in fulfilling the functions of a number of government departments. This included conducting functions on behalf of the Native Affairs Department in the administration of so-called squatters in terms of the allocation of places of residence, the provision of water, marking out plots for subsistence agriculture and the protection of livestock against depredation;[33] it oversaw the distribution of anti-malarial medication on behalf of the Department of Health;[34] it fulfilled the functions of the Department of Agriculture-Technical Services in maintaining and patrolling the foot-and-mouth disease deterrent fence; the functions of the Customs and Excise authority to control the flow of people, goods and contraband;[35] and the functions of the South African Police (SAP)[36] in enforcing, amongst others, any acts that could pose a threat to national security, the illegal possession of intoxicating alcohol and most importantly the illegal immigration and influx control of migrant labourers. Where it fulfilled the functions of the SAP, it explicitly emphasized its functions in this regard as a national security function.

> In terms of the Code List of offences […] Class A offences and the maintenance of good order are classified in terms of the security of the state. It must therefore be accepted that such a service of public authority be viewed in the most serious light in terms of the rank of importance.[37] [own translation]

That the Park was positioning its own role as exceptional by framing its functions of public authority as the highest order of priority in the context of other state functions, was clear. It was not only its role in ensuring the safety of the state in terms of the prevention of capital crimes, especially where the possession of firearms and ammunition by Africans were seen as a threat to national security, influx control was also framed as a national security issue.

> This is one of the especially important functions that are carried out by field personnel in the Park. If it is kept in mind that the entire eastern boundary of the Park is also an international border, and that the natives in that neighbouring state ceaselessly try to infiltrate the Transvaal, the prevention of incursion is a task of national interest.[38] [own translation]

It even tried to position its most quotidian function, the enforcement of the National Parks Act as being in the national interest

> The National Parks Act is in contrast to Provincial Ordinances a national republican law and the enforcement thereof is in the national interest.[39] [own translation]

The Park explicitly sought to document the range of functions it conducted on behalf of other government departments in order to justify, inter alia, that it should be the rightful recipient of taxes from squatters; to position itself favourably in terms of a more equitable budgetary allocation from the state; to justify its continued access to free labour from illegal immigrants; and most importantly that its very existence and the duties performed by its officers were directly tied to the security of the state itself, that it was, in effect, an indispensable component of the state apparatus. It was through the continuous reiteration in official communications, at times in documents marked 'Secret', that it reinforced this view of itself as exceptional and that it continued to be imbued with exceptional authorities. It is no coincidence then that the Park is often referred to as "another country", [40] a 'tenth province', [41] 'the last outpost (of conservatism)', [42] or, perhaps more universally, as the 'Republic of Kruger'[43] (see also Matelakengisa 2020, Rademeyer 2016, Ramutsindela 2016), a moniker that emphasized its distinct authorities and that it is a space governed by its own rationalities. It points to a deeply held belief that Kruger saw itself akin to a state within a state – or, as Lynn Meskell more pointedly asserts "Kruger *is* the state" (2006: 109, emphasis in original) - at times superseding the authority of the nation state.

The genealogy of how the Kruger came to have such semi-autonomous powers can largely be accredited to its first warden, James Stevenson-Hamilton. Stevenson-Hamilton "did not want an official unconnected with game preservation to have the right to travel in the reserve at his own free will", including other law enforcement agencies such as the Border Customs Control and the South African Constabulary (Stevenson-Hamilton 1974: 109-110). In eliminating the dual control of multiple law enforcement agencies, the duties of the game reserve officials soon became interchangeable with that of customs and policing work (ibid.). A Government Notice No. 2078 gazetted on the 14 November 1930 stipulated the strict conditions of entry into the Park noting that "[d]uring the period from the 15th day of November in every year to the 15th day of

May the following year […] no person other than a member, officer or servant of the Board shall enter the Park".[44] Thus, for six months of each year, Stevenson-Hamilton had full control over the wildlife and people within the confines of the reserve.

Stevenson-Hamilton saw to it that both white and native rangers were sworn in as police, "invested within the boundaries of the reserve, with full powers of constables" (Stevenson-Hamilton 1974: 110). However, it is worth noting that the National Parks Board Act only empowered black[45] field rangers the power to arrest black suspects.[46] Furthermore, Dlamini (2020a) also points out that these powers were not only confined to the boundaries of the Park but that it extended to one mile beyond the boundary.   Stevenson-Hamilton   was   appointed   Sub   Native Commissioner, not only within the game reserves which gave him full control of all the natives living on the farms of land companies which were incorporated into the reserve, but also those living immediately beyond the Park's borders (Bunn 2006). He was also appointed as Special Justice of the Peace which gave him the authority not only to adjudicate court hearings but mete out sentences (Stevenson-Hamilton 1974). In the tradition of 19th century colonial administration, magistrates and native commissioners were given "considerable latitude in resolving problems locally…[where] magistrates ruled over Africans in their districts like 'little kings'" (Evans 1997: page unknown). Where Stevenson-Hamilton embodied these dual authorities - authorities akin to that of a sovereign - one can appreciate what forms of expression this mode of direct rule could look like in his efforts to stamp out all forms of resource use within the Park. To enable him to do that, he needed to be acquainted with the minutiae of everyday life, extending his authorities beyond those aspects of daily life that were confined to resource use where any transgressions, no matter how trivial, could not be allowed to go without reprimand in his pursuit to establish a new order.

> …in one case native children, two years of age, were prosecuted for starting a fire. Adults were charged with an array of offenses including being drunk, not paying their taxes, being 'deranged', trespassing, poaching and even for their own disappearance. Vague offences are noted…such as 'natives causing trouble'…[and]… 'walking through the park' (Meskell 2012: 223).

These offences hardly constitute the dire threats said to have faced the Park - or the state for that matter - but as Dlamini (2020a) contends, these

authorities empowered Stevenson-Hamilton to employ stiff punishments and 'exemplary violence' so that the Africans engaged in even the most benign activities became criminalized. Here one can only surmise that Dlamini's (2020a) use of the term 'exemplary' can only refer to Stevenson-Hamilton's willingness to use exceptional violence against so-called offenders, no matter how insubstantial their offence, to act as an example and to deter future 'offenders'. This is not unlike Massé's contemporary observation on rhino poaching in the border areas of Kruger in Mozambique that its purpose is not only to mete out violence as punishment on the individual but also to make "punishment and violence on the body *visible to others* to demonstrate the power and authority" of conservation law enforcement officials (2017: 171, emphasis added). These forms of exemplary violence also have an earlier historical precedent in contestations over land and resources. During the struggles to reclaim the commons during the enclosures in the English countryside during the late 16th century, these forms of exemplary punishments were particularly brutal and took the form of perhaps 500 to 1 000 executions per year (Hay 1992 in Blomley 2003). However, despite the far-reaching authorities that Stevenson-Hamilton accumulated, he could not entirely stop Mozambican hunters from killing wildlife and fleeing back into Portuguese held territory, leading him to lament that the Transvaal game laws did not allow for the extradition of these perpetrators after they fled across the border (Dlamini 2020a). He yearned for total control of the black body even across national boundaries.

What is clear, is that Stevenson-Hamilton had accumulated considerable punitive powers, - what Jane Carruthers called an "undisputed authority and freedom of action" (1995: 67) - not only over the land and wildlife, but over the daily lives of people living within the landscape. That Stevenson-Hamilton was able to amass these authorities is all the more impressive considering that when the National Parks Board (NPB) was established in 1926, it lay outside the public service and had much less power than a government department, prompting Stevenson Hamilton to describe the KNP as the "Cinderella of Departments" (1926: 226). He was often at the mercy of an indifferent Board who sought to curtail his authority and with whom he had at times a turbulent relationship (Carruthers 1995). Even after Stevenson-Hamilton returned to London and was approached by the Board to consider re-accepting the position of warden after a short hiatus, he agreed to do so only if he had

"a written guarantee […] to the effect that all internal administration of the Park […] and in fact all matters outside of financial control and general advertising work shall be left entirely in my hands without interference" (Carruthers 1995: 70).[47] The Board telegraphed its agreement with the caveat that it could not renege on its obligations under the Act (ibid.). Despite the authority of the Board, mandated by the Act in its oversight powers over Park officials like Stevenson-Hamilton, the fact that they would entertain and accede to such a demand speaks volumes about the influence he was able to exert over high ranking state appointed officials. It was also a spill over feature of British colonial administration that revolved around a near religious faith in the initiative and autonomy of "the man on the spot" (Evans 1997: page unknown). Where the reappointment of Stevenson-Hamilton came with these near absolute powers, one can only surmise what authorities and influence he exerted over African people. Stevenson-Hamilton earned the moniker 'Skukuza', meaning destroyer (Dlamini 2020a), "he who scrapes clean" (Carruthers 1995: 92) or "to strip bare" (Meskell 2006: 109), referring to his forceful[48] reputation of evicting African residents from the Park. The Park headquarters continues to bear the name Skukuza, a stark reminder of the Park's legacy of violence. In the eyes of many displaced residents, the institution that is Kruger is still conflated with Skukuza (Meskell 2006) and the continued use of the name serves to "keep a certain history alive" (Ahmed 2012: 38). Thus, the politics of the Park and its relations with people is still defined by this "action of stripping all that existed before" (Meskell 2006: 109).

The authorities that Stevenson-Hamilton amassed was not necessarily confined to his person or to his period of tenure, it continued into the 1980s where white section rangers in areas bordering Mozambique were given the authority of immigration officials by the Department of Home Affairs.[49] They thus had direct control over the flow of labour into and out of the Republic, especially where that labour was applied for its own purposes. Today, this sense of autonomy and authority continue to be evidenced at even the most localised levels within the Park itself.

> In KNP you had this idea that what [senior managers] say will be implemented on the ground but there is a lot of resistance from guys like [name omitted] and [name omitted] … in fact each section is run like an independent park and will only be implemented by a section ranger if they see fit.[50]

Moore (2015) also reported that such levels of resistance and autonomy extended to different organizational levels within the KNP stretching back to the 1950s. With the advent of science-based management, the newly appointed biologist, T.G. Nel "had difficulty in getting rangers and staff to cooperate" (ibid.: 71). Despite these intermittent resistances to science, it was already mobilized selectively to position the practices within its borders as exceptional, that its management interventions were based on a 'scientific' approach. During the 1930s, scientific land management was premised on the ability of the Park administration to manage its resident African population in a way that stood in contrast to how African populations outside the Park's borders were perceived (Bunn 2003). Inside the confines of the reserve, African populations and their cattle ostensibly mirrored the idealized image of rural harmony where Africans in the landscape matched the essentialist views of compliant 'natives' that did not offend European sensibilities. Outside the game reserve, in the 'native reserve', Africans were seen as unruly, degraders of the environment and increasing in population size that caused alarm. Another central feature of its 'scientific' land management was in the artificial provision of water and the centrality the waterhole played, affording the nascent tourist an appreciation of wildlife (ibid.). The waterhole became a literal aperture through which wild Africa could be viewed and appreciated by the tourist. The centrality of water provision was particularly emphasized during the drought of the 1930s, where the supply of artificial water for wildlife came to represent a mode of "enlightened modern management" (ibid.: 217). The notion that the country was 'drying up' also formed part of a broader national anxiety (Beinart 2003). Drought was seen as not only as exacerbating rural poverty, its impacts also undermined a broader national rhetoric that saw agricultural development as central to forging a "unified and modern white nation" (ibid.: 237). Through the application of this newly developed field of conservation science, vis-à-vis its management of African peoples and wildlife, the Kruger could position its practices as the epitome of scientific land management and this internalized view of itself has persisted to the present where it continues to see itself as a world leader in the sphere of conservation science (Carruthers 2008, 2017).

Furthermore, the Kruger landscape also held a quasi-religious significance in Afrikaner Christian nationalism[51] as it began to displace the dominant Anglophone narratives of the Park (Bunn 2003). The Kruger

landscape and its originary wilderness narrative together with the heroic struggles of the early Trek Boers forging their way through the South African hinterland held strong religious connotations for the Afrikaner nation and its proximity to god (ibid.). This imagery of the Park, as a pristine landscape, was diametrically opposed to the lived realities of many working-class Afrikaners living under dire conditions in the industrial work regimes that typified the rapidly industrializing and heavily polluted cities of the depression era where their racial distinction in terms of living standards was not that much different to working class African and coloured people (ibid.). The Park thus represented a return to an idealized image of the past - the farm - which represented an image of honest, hardworking pioneers and one of rural harmony (ibid.). This imagery of the farm and its associated racial pride found in the heroics of its trekker past, descriptions of the lowveld[52] inscribed the landscape "with the exemplary suffering of nineteenth-century trekker parties" (ibid.: 211). This led to a concerted effort in trying to rewrite the history of the Kruger landscape in terms of trekker history and any evidence of the routes that these trekker parties took in the Park was deified and memorialized (see Pienaar 2012). Thus, a return to the Kruger landscape for many urban Afrikaner tourists was akin to a pilgrimage (Bunn 2003), and it is in this light that the landscape continues to be venerated in the imagination of many white South Africans. It is no coincidence that science and religion were simultaneously deployed in the Kruger. It underpinned the colonial encounter, differentiating between humans and the less than human, the colonizer from the colonized and legitimized the subjugation of the latter in service of the colonial political economy (see Mpofu and Steyn 2021).

It is within this context, one of sanctioned autonomy, its sanctity as a symbol of late Afrikaner Christian nationalism and an internal view of itself as a world leader in conservation science, that fomented the notion that it is distinct or exceptional. Even in a time of the greatest threat to the apartheid state, during the height of the anti-apartheid struggles in the mid-1980s, the Park was able to dictate how security was conducted in a manner that did not impinge on the sanctity of the landscape (see Chapter 4). This self-perpetuating logic of exceptionalism instilled in Park administrators a sense of entitlement and positioned its own claims of threats as the highest order of priority where it could insist on exceptional measures in exceptional times. It is this exceptionalism that continues to permit the KNP to dispense its authority in its 'war on poaching' over the

people who labour in it or those whose presence is seen as an aberration. However, despite its claims at exceptionalism, the KNP is not legally authorized to operate extra-constitutionally. The violence that characterizes its efforts to save a species is perhaps a yearning not only for a mere return to 'law and order' but a specific typology of order, reminiscent of the image of rural harmony and racial ordering that is already so deeply inscribed in its genealogy and historical geography. In effect, the Kruger embodies not only a social construction of wild nature (Cronon 1995) but remains "tethered to notions of race" (Hays 2019: 142). Its efforts to restore 'law and order' seeks to reaffirm old hierarchies and it is representative of an ongoing process of racial formation and racial ordering (see also Chapter 7).

1.6 Methodology

This thesis draws on twelve months of ethnographic fieldwork from April 2016 to March 2017, including a month-long revisit in August/September 2018, in the Kruger National Park. It leans mainly on participant observation and informal conversations with approximately ninety (90) field ranger staff in six separate ranger teams across the landscape. This ethnographic work reflects on the lived experience and practices of black field rangers under circumstances that have been described as 'militarized' (see Büscher and Ramutsindela 2016, Lunstrum 2014) in a time of intensified rhino poaching. It offers an opportunity, as Sara Ahmed contends, to 'thicken' our description which requires more than describing an action in detail, but to "locate an individual action in terms of its wider meaning" and historical context (2012: 8). Furthermore, some accounts related here are premised on 'fleeting encounters' with individuals and not what many suppose an ethnography normally entails, one consisting solely of lasting interactions (ibid.).

In 'ethnographying' the police, Didier Fassin (2017) suggests that the process entails much more than just an equivalence to participant observation, fieldwork or a qualitative approach. It is a much richer and complex method of scientific research than just being there, requiring, amongst others, a long-term presence, an experience of the social worlds of others and an intimate knowledge of people and places (ibid.). In making sense of this world that encompasses police, it is the process of

method, experience and, crucially, the singular operation of writing that gives meaningful order to the disparate succession of events and disparate facts (ibid.).

Methods

Due to the sheer size of the Park[53] and the specific distribution of the rhino population, the highest threat levels, in terms of poaching, are experienced in the southern portions of the Park where rhino population densities are at its greatest.   Since threat levels are differentiated across the landscape, the study was able to examine whether everyday practices by anti-poaching staff also differ across the landscape. Subsequently, I interacted with three ranger teams in areas that make up the Intensive and Joint Protection Zones (IPZ and JPZ respectively) where threat levels were at its highest; two ranger teams in the north of the Park making up the Composite Protection Zone (CPZ) where incidences of rhino poaching are very low but was experiencing an increase in elephant poaching;[54] and the Special Ranger team, a rapid reaction team, who are deployed across the Park (but mostly in the south) who respond specifically to active poaching events.

My interaction with field rangers by and large mirrored that of Didier Fassin's own study of French police officers where "…it was not the rank-and-file officers who obstructed me with secrecy, but rather the hierarchy of the police" (2011: 20). Mat Coleman also notes that interviews with high-ranking police officers are in effect "controlled public relations exercises…which are highly selective on details" (2016: 78). In trying to understand 'state power in blue', ride-alongs allow for opportunities to better understand what police officials say and do (ibid.). I spent close to 470 hours[55] of participant observation with field ranger staff, in what Coleman calls 'ride-alongs' (see also Steinberg 2008), spending up to 10 hours per day on the back of a pick-up truck with field rangers in pursuit of poachers; sitting and waiting to be picked up after a patrol; going on general foot or vehicle patrols; monitoring radio calls and logging 'real-time' incidents on CMORE; being on 'stand-by' with a reaction force rangers; checking detection zones for poacher footprints; and participating in training exercises. I was also afforded the opportunity to participate in and observe a cross-border operation between SANParks Environmental Crime Investigation (ECI) officers and Mozambican anti-

poaching authorities (both state and private) to apprehend a renowned rhino poacher. The spectacular imagery that such 'cross border operations' elicit contrasted sharply with the mundaneness and waiting around that characterized the week-long operation.

I also lived in field ranger/junior staff accommodation when conducting participant observation with three of the six field ranger teams, which gave me extensive opportunities to have informal conversations, beyond normal working hours to interact with other A and B band (low salaried) workers living in the staff 'villages' (compounds[56] or *kampong* as they are referred to colloquially). It offered me the opportunity to experience the conditions under which these staff have to live as iterations of migrant labour – experiencing the challenges of communal outdoor cooking and communal bathroom facilities, and hearing what effects the separation from their families have on them and the daily indignities and inconveniences these living modalities produce.

I also participated in in-house or informal training sessions that included re-enactments of a number of anti-poaching scenarios. These included, amongst others, a simulated exercise in the tactical approach and arrest of suspected armed poachers hiding in a thicket; laying down a scent trail for dog handling teams to follow up on; donning a bite suit to re-enact a dog bringing down a suspected poacher; and instruction on using the newly adopted under-barrel 'grenade launcher' to fire smoke or rubberized projectiles.

In order to document these conversations and observations, I made use of extensive contemporaneous fieldnotes (see Emerson et al. 2011, Walford 2009). Most fieldnotes were not made in the presence of respondents except where it was clear they wanted me to note down something that they had said to ensure that it was recorded accurately. I also produced my pocket notebook on regular intervals to note down translations of xiTsonga words and phrases as a deliberate strategy so that respondents became more accustomed to me making notes in their presence. While many field rangers are xiTsonga, and to a lesser extent sePedi, siSwati or tshiVenda speakers, it should be noted that most field rangers spoke either English or Afrikaans as a second or third language and it is through this medium that I was able to communicate with them. Where field rangers could not speak either English or Afrikaans, a colleague would act as interpreter. In most cases fieldnotes were made at the end of the day and in some cases a few days after an event (in the more

extreme cases up to two weeks later) where the content of the conversation was particularly disturbing, in most cases related to the killing of a suspected poacher and the emotions experienced during and after the event by the respondent. These narratives had a marked impact on me and noting down the details required a considerable amount of emotional energy and engaging in the notes right away was often simply too draining emotionally. This did not mean that the substance of the conversation was lost - in most cases delaying the note taking was complemented by the passing of time to reflect on the nature of the narrative as well as situating the conversation in subsequent engagements with the same individual, where these subsequent engagements helped put his or her worldviews and what informed these sometimes violent and extrajudicial actions into perspective. In this way, it negated the propensity to rush and draw conclusions prematurely (Emerson et al. 2011).

In addition, I also conducted semi-structured interviews with approximately forty (40) junior, mid-level, senior and executive staff from different organizational units within KNP. These semi-structured interviews included fifteen of the twenty-one section rangers (there was one section ranger vacancy at the time of the study), four of the five regional ranger incumbents in the KNP and four senior ranger services personnel. Other KNP staff included a pilot from the airwing; armourer, corporate environmental crime investigators; conservation services; scientific services; veterinary services; people and conservation services; special projects; KNP shop steward representatives and the manging executive of the KNP. It also included numerous informal conversations with hut attendants, picnic and camp site cleaners and supervisors; biotechnicians, gate guards, field guides, reservation staff, petrol attendants and temporary staff.

The study relied heavily on archival research most notably the Skukuza archives and the personal archives of Stephen Ellis held at the Africa Study Centre in Leiden which houses an extensive collection of material related to southern African conservation and its links to the apartheid era security forces, totalling over 2 300 archival records. In addition, the University of Johannesburg Library and Information Centre: Archives and Special Collections related to the recruitment of Mozambican migrant labour was also consulted, however, the number of archival records were too numerous to make a thorough study of its contents. However, Dlamini cautions that "we have to read the colonial archive against the grain,

finding in it evidence that was not meant to be there, locating meaning not intended by the archives, and hearing voices not meant to be heard" (2020a: location 989, single column view). To underscore this point, the Skukuza Archive was purged of some its most damning evidence prior to the regime change in 1994[57] (see also Meskell 2012), hence its account of history is also contingent on what administrators at the time thought was permissible. However, Dlamini (2020b) further argues that many apparatchiks in the South African security police tend to perpetuate the myth of the total obliteration of the historical record and the efficiency of the security services in attaining that goal, but, that its attempts to obliterate the past was far from complete. Belcher and Martin (2013) contend that archives are a public record of specific forms of governmental knowledge and it is through such public records that state institutions can be held to account. That such repositories are a record of *all* governmental activities is contestable but it offers the state the façade that it is performing a foundational duty of liberal statehood, that of transparency and accountability (ibid.). In other words, as Joyce posits, "the archive [is] a technology of liberal governmentality" (1999: 35). Hidden in this performance is the "on-going struggle over what kind of knowledge is produced about state activities, who holds authoritative knowledge, and what is knowable, sayable and open for contestation" (Belcher and Martin 2013: 405). What struck me most about the record in the Skukuza Archive was that the activities, even if it is was an abbreviated record of state activities, was recorded by virtue of its own bureaucratic logics – the writing of memoranda and reports were part and parcel of the logic of officialdom. It is through these dispatches that we are still able to reconstruct – despite its absences - an idea of the contestations and activities that took place in the Park. Today, in the 'war on poaching' it is uncertain what is being recorded for the public record. Informal, and a perhaps more insightful, record of the Park's activities is communicated on private digital messaging applications such as WhatsApp or on private Facebook groups. It is on these platforms that the daily, unedited practices and information is dispatched, further undermining the production of the historical record and what is knowable.

In addition, a short comparative study was conducted interviewing Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife (EKZNW) officials, both in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park (HiP) and a senior manager tasked specifically with rhino security in the province. The organization also experienced high levels of

rhino poaching and the purpose was to contrast and compare responses to rhino poaching and its concomitant costs for people and praxis from a different part of the country. Semi-structured interviews and informal conversations were also conducted with firearms and field ranger training service providers; senior national law enforcement officials from the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA); prosecutors involved in wildlife crime from the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA); the state veterinarian based in the KNP; the scientific officer of the African Rhino Specialist Group (AfRSG); a former collector (intelligence officer) in the apartheid era SADF; a forensic expert on the rhino DNA indexing system or RhODIS; private rhino owners; a police use of force scholar; a polygraph examiner; a state security analyst; a clinical psychologist and practitioners who manage wildlife crime portfolios in the international conservation NGO and intergovernmental sector totalling a further twenty three (23) semi-structured interviews and untallied informal conversations.

Event ethnography was conducted at the CITES CoP17 conference in September 2016; the Game Ranger's Association of Africa (GRAA) annual general meetings (AGM) in 2016 and in 2018; the KNP Ranger Services AGM in November 2016; a senior field ranger workshop; a poisoning workshop for KNP section rangers and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Rhino Management Group (RMG) meeting held in Skukuza in March 2017.

The study also incorporated observing court proceedings - spending approximately thirty-four (34) hours, over an eight week period, in the periodical court in Skukuza (which sat every Wednesday of the week except public holidays) – to better understand the manner in which 'justice' is operationalized, the multiple contentions around the 'facts' of the case and to match what was absent from formal court narratives and what was observed in practice; the glacial pace at which 'justice' was dispensed; the social relations between court officials, prosecutors, the police and conservation law enforcement staff (see Chapter 6); and putting a human face to these poachers, who are often framed as highly trained, heavily armed ex-combatants from the civil war in Mozambique (Gustafson et al. 2018). This latter narrative did not at all materialize in the charges against suspects in the Skukuza Court. The most lasting impression for me, was sitting behind an 18-year-old, first time offender standing in the accused box, my attention focused on his shivering legs as

he stood before the intimidating authority of the magistrate for illegally fishing in the Park.[58] Dressed in ragged shorts and plastic flip flops held together by stitches of string emphasized not only the spectre of poverty that looms over his life which likely compelled him to fish in the Park, but also how it is people like him, who are so starkly excluded from the social and economic centre, who bear the brunt of the awesome power of the state for such minor infractions. It reminds of Foucault's notion of discipline, where the "slightest departure of correct behaviour [is] subject to punishment…so that, if necessary, everything might serve to punish the slightest thing" (Foucault 1977: 178).

A co-researcher [59] was engaged to investigate what consequences militarized responses to rhino poaching had on people and families living in villages adjacent to the south western portions of the KNP, the areas most affected by rhino poaching for a period totalling six months. He conducted (at times I participated in these interviews) in the region of forty-three (43) semi-structured interviews and countless informal conversations with people living adjacent to the Park. He was, at times, able to live in households of those families directly affected by violent practices of Park and police officials, most notably living in a household of a family (for close to two months) whose unarmed son was killed in the Park while fishing (see below). This strategy gave us the ability to access people living in those communities with a range of experiences associated with living adjacent to a securitized space such as the KNP – teachers, small business owners, Traditional Authority officials, unemployed youth, small scale farmers on the Sabie River, protest organisers,[60] community activists who were prominent during the anti-apartheid movement, people employed both in KNP and private conservation areas adjacent to the KNP – including those who have been dismissed and/or tortured on suspicion of theft or poaching - and religious leaders. He was able to gain these levels of access despite the high levels of suspicion in those communities as a result of either police/KNP informants or provocateurs involved in illegal activities.[61] However, it is important to note that access was not unfettered due to a climate of mistrust and fear that pervaded amongst people living in these communities and at times, particularly initially, which placed him in situations of considerable risk, to the point where we considered abandoning the strategy out of fear for his safety. It is a testament to his determination and ability to engage with people with authenticity despite these initial risks and suspicions to the extent that he

was able to have a number of cordial interactions with the very individuals who threatened him on his first visit to a community that was protesting the actions of the Park in the wake of the killing of a fisherman. His character traits, especially the deep empathy and respect for the people he engaged with far exceeded his language abilities (although as an isiZulu speaker he was still challenged by the xiTsonga which is widely spoken in the area). In engaging a co-researcher, a number of methodological issues rear its head, foremost whether ethnographic data collection can indeed be delegated (see Fassin 2017) and issues related to dilemmas of translation, power dynamics and the positionality of the translator (see Bujra 2006, Stone and West 2012). However, it is his personal traits that so enriched the co-production of knowledge and the manner people perceived him - from my perspective as young and urbane, his dreadlocked hair offering him a semblance of credibility. To others, his outward appearance created the impression that he was a womaniser and liberally used intoxicating substances. When these individuals discovered that these assumptions were unfounded, it cemented his position as a trusted interlocutor. This was most starkly revealed when he confided in me a romantic interest in him by one of his interlocutors. I encouraged it, saying that it is often in the context of work that people forge relationships. He on the other hand thought it was inappropriate and unethical, particularly in the context of researching the impact trauma and violence have on people's lives.

Doing Fieldwork in Closed Contexts

The range of methodological tools and multi-sited engagements deployed above was largely in response to the range of closures and obstructions encountered within the Park. These multi-sited engagements were also an attempt to follow in what ways ideas, people, practices and relationships are diffused across the conservation space (see Falzon 2009). This 'multi-sitedness' also extended across time, to trace the historical trajectories of people, technologies and practices and in what ways they are (re)deployed in the present moment. Being granted a formal research permit by SANParks to conduct my research in Kruger did not imply unfettered access and misses the "performative, embodied and affective ways" in which Park officials mediated access to information, people, places and practices (Belcher and Martin 2013: 408). While, conducting research in

spaces of closure is often and uncritically characterized as illiberal or authoritarian, Koch (2013) proposes that such spaces of closure can also occur in spaces that are considered liberal democracies. Her example of U.S. detention facilities for illegal migrants and the U.S. military are two such examples and that we instead consider adopting "the term 'closed contexts' as a means to focus on the nature of closure and coercion itself" (ibid.: 390). However, closure was not absolute, there was fluidity between closure and opportunity (Beban and Schoenberger 2019) and that openness and closure are woven together as part of a governmental technology in some instances or bureaucratic incompetency in other instances (Belcher and Martin 2013). What was open and what was closed was also determined by spatiality, being *in* the Park did not mean I had access to the people and practices related to anti-poaching operations in the various ranger sections. Those spaces remained closed until such time I was granted explicit access.

At other times, the candid admissions by field rangers and section rangers of their own extrajudicial actions; criticisms of senior management and politicians; the incompetence of the military and the police; and the shortcomings of the various security technologies costing millions of Rand, marked a stark openness. The closures themselves were also subject to a typology where requests for information were not always explicitly denied out of hand and often included delays for long periods of time. It ranged from unanswered phone calls to key gatekeepers (in one instance it included multiple phone calls per week over a four-month period to one individual), passing requests for information from person to person or committee to committee or simply not acknowledging emails. Other forms of closures, some bordering on the intangible, included the feeling of constant surveillance (see Ryan and Tynen 2020) and an atmosphere of distrust and suspicion. At other times these obstructions were more overt including firm emails to correct claims – often those critical of practices in the Park - before research proposals/extensions could be approved and patronizing discussions around scientific rigor and questioning the validity of qualitative methods.

Most notably, these obstructions took the form of the outright denial for request to (all) information after a delay of close to two-and-a-half years (including non-security related information), reneging on the conditions set out in our formal research agreement, and writing a letter of complaint to my academic supervisor in an attempt to discredit or

muzzle the preliminary research findings related to the arbitrary and irregular use of force and institutional complicity. The former compelled me to search for and interrogate other sources of information that could complement the narratives and observations made while in the Park. The latter, carried with it a veiled threat that I could become responsible for hindering future critical research into militarized responses to rhino poaching in the Park; sowed self-doubt in the findings of my research; impacted on my writing output; and resulted in censure to write opinion pieces on the rhino poaching issue in the public sphere before the findings of my research could be peer reviewed. Where the knowledge produced during the course of this research first needed academic credibility, the academy itself also presented another form of closure. Despite the democratic and radical positionality of the critical sciences, including political ecology, what knowledge can be produced, when and by whom is also subject to discipline.

While there are consequences these obstructions have in terms of the production of knowledge, such closures also open up alternative paths to understanding the context. Beban and Schoenberger (2019) posit that the problem is often 'networked' and it is through this lens that I turned my attention to archival (despite its limitations – see above) and open source records to understand the problem of labour and security in the Park. It has offered a crucial insight into the historical formations of these two phenomena in particular and how the 'network of history' continues to, with differences, shape labour and security practices in the Park. Without these obstructions, it is unlikely that I would have interrogated the archival records in as much detail.

Deductive Disclosure and Ethical Dilemmas

Maintaining respondent confidentiality (see Appendix 1) was a central aspiration in the research design where rich descriptions of participant's surroundings and personal traits could make them identifiable to superiors and colleagues (Kaiser 2009). This 'deductive disclosure' (ibid.) can cause rifts in small, closed communities such as the KNP. More importantly, it can hold serious repercussions for certain staff and lead to their systematic marginalization and victimization. However, maintaining the identity of all respondents was not always possible. Büscher and Ramutsindela (2016) posit that in the scholarly work on violence in conservation, very little

attention is paid to the continuity of such violence and how that violence is often perpetuated by the same actors. To demonstrate this continuity between the past and the present in the Kruger it was not possible to maintain the confidentiality of one such respondent, Colonel G.P. 'Otch' Otto (see Chapter 4). Our encounters were limited to two brief events – once in the Skukuza rest camp for approximately ten minutes in February 2017 and again in a telephonic conversation in March 2021 for approximately forty minutes. This is not the first time Otto is named in scholarly work related to the Park and its martial practices (see Austin et al. 1992, Ellis 1994, Massé 2017, Meskell 2012). Here, in naming Otto, its purpose is to show his central role in the conceptualization of counterinsurgency doctrine in the 1980s as Head of Security in the Kruger and how many of these doctrinal concepts, infused with racial bias, have been reiterated in the 'war on poaching' in his capacity as Mission Area Manager in the Park.

Similarly, key role players like retired Major General Johan Jooste who was appointed in 2012 to head Kruger's anti-poaching response was widely reported on in the media and has been referred to by name in much of the literature related to green militarization in the Park (see Duffy 2016, Hübschle and Jooste 2017, Humphreys and Smith 2014, Lunstrum 2014, Shaw and Rademeyer 2016). Where much of what is understood in the public domain about the rhino poaching issue in the KNP comes from publicly available comments made by certain officials, many snatches of conversation and stories are also repeated and circulated in the socially confined world that is Kruger. One example is a quote I presented to a senior manager without disclosing the identity or place of work of a respondent but he was still able to correctly identify the speaker. I tried to overcome deductive disclosure by only referring to the speaker as a 'senior KNP manager' or 'KNP field ranger' but it will not in every instance shield the identity of the respondent especially where the incident described and the individuals involved in the incident are widely known in the Park or where an individual occupies a specific job portfolio. However, I do take special care to not to compromise junior staff who are already subjected to uneven power relations. Furthermore, while I conceal the precise localities of the field ranger teams I worked with, it will be widely known to those working in the Park where I conducted participant observation. The designation of a specific group of rapid reaction field rangers, the Special Rangers, is also a designation that I chose not to

conceal because its continued use also has historical resonances (see Chapter 5). However, any specific quotations from field rangers in this group (as is the case with other field rangers) continue to be guarded by research confidentiality. In this thesis, only those comments that have been made in the public domain reveal the identity of the speaker and comments made during the course of this research remain guarded by research confidentiality, with the exception of Otto.

Hearing the accounts of both perpetrators and victims of violence had a profound impact on my emotional wellbeing (and that of the co-researcher) and gave rise to seemingly intractable ethical dilemmas in how to deal with these accounts. One such dilemma – and by far the most fraught - was the killing of an unarmed fisherman, Sibusiso Dlamini.[62] I worked very closely with a co-researcher who lived in the home of Dlamini's mother for close to two months. With time, he started meeting the friends of Dlamini who were with him on that fateful day. In his conversations with them, he heard their traumatised narratives and witnessed their tears as they recounted the unbearable sight of seeing Dlamini shot as they ran for safety and what they felt was an unforgivable act of continuing to run as he lay dying on the river bank. During the course of this research, we made the acquaintance of a senior prosecutor from the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) who, ostensibly, was also concerned about the secrecy and irregular practices by KNP officials in entrapment operations (see Chapter 6). She was eager to interview these witnesses (the police docket made no mention of witnesses or co-conspirators). In an email to a close friend, I spelled out the nature of my dilemma.

> …about the meeting with the NPA and these witnesses…I have decided against my better judgment to go ahead with the meeting. Hiding behind the veil of academic distance is a cop out. My intention was always from the outset to bring about a discussion of transformation and social justice (whatever that means). Absolutely nothing will happen to shine a light on these injustices if I don't take this step…I am involved. The consequence is that someone might be arrested and charged with murder. The other consequence is that [the] family will never get justice. Fuck.[63]

Both the co-researcher and I had a healthy scepticism of the prosecutor and was aware of a culture of collusion that exists between officers of the court and law enforcement officials (Bruce 2011, Vitale 2017). It is a close-knit social world, one that I had also witnessed first-hand in the

Skukuza Periodical Court (see Chapter 6). We were concerned that these witnesses would be arrested and somehow implicated in Dlamini's murder or prosecuted or victimized on a manufactured charge. Here, not even the legal system and its officers, offered a meaningful avenue for redress for people like Dlamini's family and friends (see Beban and Schoenberger, 2019). Instead, the criminal justice system seemed to be implicated into the broader system that was culpable in his death. The motivation of this prosecutor, in this instance, seemed entirely punitive, to make discoveries so as to determine whether there was sufficient evidence to prosecute the field ranger involved in the shooting. We were also concerned by this approach, being aware of the workplace pressures that field rangers are subjected to that predicate such violent actions (see Chapter 5 and 6). It was a position between two undesirable choices where the narrow outcomes seemed, to us, devoid of any justice at all. In the end we left it to the family and the witnesses to pursue interviews with the prosecutor and a newly appointed investigating officer (after we raised the potential dangers of doing so), which some of them did. To date no person or institution has been held to account for the death of Sibusiso Phiri Dlamini.

1.7   The Research Objectives

The objectives of this research project are as follows: -

1. To open up opportunities for reflection and rethinking conservation practice, one premised on non-violence and one that is disentangled from the neoliberal economic logics that frame the value of nature and people in economic terms.
2. To seek opportunities for re-aligning conservation priorities, premised on care, inclusion and dignity for people who live and work within and adjacent to protected areas.

1.8   The Research Question

Proceeding from the problem statement outlined above, the central research question is as follows:

How does turning to police as a response to restore law and order in the face of an upsurge in wildlife crime in the Kruger National Park (KNP) shape the conservation workplace and the institutional life in KNP and what consequences does it hold for conservation labour?

To supplement this overarching research question, supplementary questions that arise are:

1. What are the historical and relational dynamics that foreshadow the effects of police in the KNP vis-à-vis its treatment of labour and its securitized practices?
2. In what ways are the anxieties over labour productivity in KNP (re)configured under the police labour regime?
3. If police is indeed incapable of preventing crime, to what extent does it need to lean on irregular practices and what do these practices look like in the KNP?
4. In what ways does the police labour regime (re)shape institutional life in the KNP and what consequences does it hold for workers at the forefront of anti-poaching operations?

1.9   Layout of the Thesis

Following on from this introductory chapter, **Chapter 2** situates this thesis theoretically, drawing on an expanded definition of police, its links to theories of the state and the administration of waged labour and the ways these insights into police intersect with theories of structural racism, labour value and the labour process in shaping institutional life in conservation.   **Chapter 3** outlines how labour was historically simultaneously produced and erased in the making of an exceptional landscape. It also shows how African labour in the Park was ordered through a combination of racialized paternalism and coercion and how these factors, together with the particularities of an enclaved space, shaped a particular brand of structural domination in the Park. It also sketches the central role the KNP played not only in the steady supply of cheap labour for the exploitative labour regimes that characterized South African capitalism but that it had a distinct predilection for precarious migrant labour from Mozambique. Lastly it describes the manner in which the

KNP matched – and in some ways exceeded - the cheap and coercive labour regimes that was so commonplace elsewhere in the South African workplace through its own use of a compound system, rations and low wages.

Chapter 4 frames the deep historical collaboration between the KNP and the apartheid security apparatus and that it was entrenched in the security architecture of the apartheid state through its membership and participation in the apartheid era National Management Security System (NMSS). It shows that the Park played a central role in the state's manhunting operations of insurgents; how the same actors are recycled from the mid-1980s to the present and what tactical and ideological precepts they bring with them; and the manner the ranger uniform as a key cultural artefact reinforces its martial identity and shapes ranger practices. **Chapter 5** is focused on contemporary conservation labour. It builds on historical and relational processes to extract labour value and how those anxieties over labour productivity have been reconfigured under a police labour regime. Firstly, it shows how an environment of intense and unrelenting political pressure shaped its contemporary responses to rhino poaching and that its militarized responses did not evolve in an institutional vacuum. By invoking the figure of the warrior, this reconfiguration of field rangers profoundly shifted its measure and expression of labour value which historically lay in the notion of loyalty into using violence as an accounting metric of labour productivity.

Straddling Chapters 5 and 6 is an ethnographic interlude. Its purpose is to ethnographically sketch the working day of field rangers in the KNP and the manner these daily repetitions foment frustrations and fear and how these factors offer a starting point to understanding how rangers themselves justify their actions as a counter point to the structural features that shape their work. **Chapter 6** follows on from this ethnographic description of everyday practices to expand on the notion of the warrior and the manner in which its incantation together with historically situated counterinsurgency practices reshape contemporary conservation policing practices. It focuses on two key conservation policing practices, namely the use of deadly force or what practitioners like to call the rules of engagement and the manner they become (re)interpreted in the KNP; and the centrality of counterintelligence gathering operations and their violent and perverse transformation. **Chapter 7** sketches in what ways the police labour regime shapes institutional life in the Kruger and the consequences

it holds for employees despite its proclamations of care through its ranger wellness programme. In conclusion, **Chapter 8** traces continuity and change in the Kruger and how the police labour regime re-emphasizes many of the old hierarchies and problematic practices that marked the apartheid era. It addresses questions around solutions and also points to areas for potential future research inquiries to complement this and other scholarly work in this field.

Notes

[1] The words 'poaching', 'poachers' and 'illegal or illicit' are used repeatedly in this thesis. I use these words cognizant of how marginalized groups of people in particular are framed and cognizant that through marginalization, livelihood strategies have become criminalized. The use of wildlife was and is still very much a part of a livelihood strategy of resource dependent groups as a source of protein or exchange. Hunting for meat was criminalized to create a labour force for the emerging gold mines on the Witwatersrand in the South African interior (Carruthers, 1995 - see also Jost Robinson and Remis 2014, Mavhunga 2014, Ramutsindela, 2002 for additional examples elsewhere in Africa where criminalization and protected area zoning impacted heavily on the bushmeat economy of hunters). References to the differences between subsistence or commercial poaching (see Duffy 2000) - where subsistence poaching is seen as hunting for food as a livelihood strategy and that their activities did not impact as greatly on wildlife populations as did the activities of commercial poachers – overlooks the possibility that so-called commercial forms of poaching by individual hunters also form part of a livelihood strategy in return for cash. This transaction does not make their motivations substantially different from the motivations of so-called subsistence poachers. Following McClanahan and Wall (2016), I also agree that the terms 'poaching' and 'wildlife crime' are viewed critically and that their use is inherently political in nature and serves to normalise the notion of Africans as criminals despite the history of violence and dispossession. Dlamini (2020a) also provides a comprehensive list of scholarly work pertaining to the social history of hunting, who decides when a hunter is a poacher and the links between hunting, criminalization and racialization (see Dlamini 2020a, Footnote 28, location 832, single column view). In spite of this, I will use the terms poaching and poachers to refer to activities and people shooting rhino to mirror the generalized characterization of the killing of rhino in the KNP.

[2] Informal conversation with conservation practitioner, June 2016.

[3] A contact is a military term to denote an engagement with enemy combatants often including an exchange of gun fire. In the KNP a contact is defined similarly but may also include a sighting of a poaching group, gun shots heard or the discovery of fresh poacher spoor/tracks or camps.

[4] My interlocutor could not confirm whether the suspect was armed or unarmed.

[5] Büscher (2021), following Hartnack (2014), emphasizes that 'white publics' should not be construed as homogenous and undifferentiated and that while remaining alert to such nuances, the public outcry around rhino poaching has been predominantly white. Indeed, he posits that an 'attack' on Kruger is construed as an attack on both white belonging and white capital, the latter referring to the overwhelming dominance of white ownership in the conservation industry. Jane Carruthers (1995) also notes that as the question of conservation was slowly injected into mainstream South African politics at the time of the proclamation of the KNP in 1926, that the politics of the time were distinctly white and that the socio-political culture of national parks were shaped by white interests.

[6] In this thesis the abbreviation KNP or the shortened form of 'the Kruger Park', or 'Kruger', or simply 'the Park' will be used interchangeably to refer to the Kruger National Park. I am also cognizant that the framing of 'the Park' is based on distinct colonial-era race-thinking, where the notion of 'the Park' embodies an historical and ongoing process of racial formation (Hays 2019). I use it here also to demonstrate how the Kruger was and continues to be called by its residents and adherents, and it matches the way it is referred to in Afrikaans as '*die Wildtuin'*, meaning literally 'the wild garden'. This notion that it is 'wild' obscures that reality that the Kruger is at once wild and produced.

[7] See the damning report of war crimes and unlawful killings by Australian special operations task group soldiers in Afghanistan [Online] Available at: https://web.facebook.com/60Minutes9/videos/afghanistan-war-crimes-inquiry-report/864544834300802/?_rdc=1&_rdr (Accessed 30 November 2020).

[8] 'Policing is not broken. Its "literally designed to work in this way"', *New York Times,* 28 April 2020 [Online] Available at: https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/28/opinion/police-reform-america.html?action=click&module=Opinion&pgtype=Homepage&showTranscript=1 (Accessed 28 April 2021)

[9] Military ethicists and mental health experts also argue that the prosecution and setting clear limits of conduct *aid* compliance and can contribute to the reversal of problematic institutional cultures. Reconciliation on the other hand can be seen as a licence to continue to violate rules and that it ensures that defective oversight mechanisms in the organizational and justice systems remain in place. See [Online] Available at:

https://twitter.com/davidwhetham/status/1329410521343418370?s=20
(Accessed 24 November 2020).

[10] Multiple informal conversations and semi-structured interviews with KNP managers April 2016 to March 2017. The response of a senior KNP manager, in a semi-structured interview in February 2017, encapsulates the general view of the historical continuity of militarized practices within conservation, stating that "…the literature is talking about the militarization or green militarization and its their view but er [that] is nothing new in conservation we have been always [using] firearms. We have always following [sic] the paramilitary training […] I was trained as a field ranger […] and again we were drilling and marching and doing the salute and all those things that was paramilitary. And conservation has, if you look at the founders of conservation in South Africa, most of them come from the military, I'm thinking of Stevenson-Hamilton [indistinct] from Natal. I mean most of [these] guys… I think Ian Player was…he came from the war and most of the guys here in Kruger National Park they have served in [the] military […] I mean there is this element of military if you look at firearms that we are using, where are we getting our firearms when [the] military upgrade[s] their weapons? Where do they take their firearms? Either to [the] police or to us. Most of our firearms that we use are coming from the military".

[11] See 'Responsible Green Militarisation: A Necessary Intervention', talk by Maj. Gen. Johan Jooste, 3 October 2017 [Online] Available at: https://web.facebook.com/events/royal-geographical-society-with-ibg/responsible-green-militarisation-a-necessary-intervention/127273461240263/ (Accessed 1 June 2021). Semi-structured interview with senior SANParks manager, February 2017.

[12] Schrader, S. (2016) 'Against the Romance of Community Policing', *For a World Without Police,* 7 September 2016 [Online] Available at: http://aworldwithoutpolice.org/2016/09/07/against-the-romance-of-community-policing/ (Accessed 11 August 2021).

[13] 'An Empire of Patrolmen', *Jacobin,* 18 October 2019 [Online] Available at: https://www.jacobinmag.com/2019/10/badges-without-borders-stuart-schrader-imperialism-policing-cold-war (Accessed 7 January 2020).

[14] Schrader, S. (2016) 'Against the Romance of Community Policing', *For a World Without Police,* 7 September 2016 [Online] Available at: http://aworldwithoutpolice.org/2016/09/07/against-the-romance-of-community-policing/ (Accessed 11 August 2021).

[15] African countries are purported to have suffered significant losses to their rhino population numbers over the last century culminating in the 'poaching wars' of 1980s. Where black rhino numbers across the continent were estimated to be in

the region of several hundred thousand in the 19th century; reduced to 100 000 by the mid 20th century; 65 000 animals in 1970; 12 000 to 15 000 by 1980 and approximately 3 500 by the late 1980s (Archival Papers of Stephen Ellis, Africa Study Centre Leiden University, Cumming 1987, Emslie and Brooks 1999, Leader-Williams and Albon 1988, Stelfox et al. 1979, Tatham and Taylor 1989). There is evidence that the number of purported live animals do not match the carcass count of poaching events (see Cunningham and Berger 1997) or that such early estimations of rhino numbers were grossly exaggerated (Milliken et al. 1993) on the one hand or underestimated at other times to pursue politically motivated agendas (Brooks 2001, Rookmaaker 2000). It is crucial that these population estimates be read critically within the political context of the emergence of African nationalism and decolonialisation across the continent. Such politically contingent events require a robust interrogation of rhino population data (see Rookmaaker 2000). Problematic methodologies of the past (and by inference the concomitant 'precipitous decline' of rhino populations across the continent) continue to be presented as fact in position papers, academic literature, population modelling exercises and international conferences such as CITES and provides a starting point for almost all analyses of a species under threat. Unfortunately, the primary focus of this thesis does not allow for a detailed deconstruction of the historical rhino population literature and how it is used to politically mobilize land enclosure in the name of conservation and the resultant conflicts over land that is so often a feature of society/nature dilemmas in many parts of Africa and the world.

[16] Officially, 7 899 rhino have been reported to be killed in South Africa between 2008 and 2018, with 4 755 animals (60,19 percent) killed in the KNP. It is important to bear in mind that even these official figures do not include a measure accuracy or precision to determine its confidence interval (CI) as carcass detection does not make use of a standardized, statistically sound methodology but rather on direct counts. KNP scientists speculate that approximately 30 percent of carcasses are not accounted for (informal conversation with KNP special scientist, 2016; EKZNW rhino coordinator, Rhino Management Group meeting February 2017). Official records therefore are open to contestation as it is a challenge to encounter all carcasses in the field, especially considering the sheer size and the physical characteristics such as dense vegetation in the KNP, the limited patrol area of field rangers and the actions of scavengers and carrion feeders. Field rangers and managers rely on a number of methods to quantify or enumerate the number of rhino killed, ranging from ad hoc aerial flights over hotspot areas, reports from visitors and trail rangers and vulture and other scavenger activity, amongst others. Ranger patrols are largely confined to patrolling detection zones where poachers are known to enter or exit the KNP or a section, thus excluding significant proportions of their patrol areas through foot patrols. Field rangers do follow up on tracks of poaching teams but due to

the sheer number of incursions, are unable to do so with every set of tracks that are detected. Those tracks that are fresh and hold a high likelihood of encountering suspects are prioritised. In other low risk areas, pre-designated patrol routes that dissect blocks are mapped out and rangers confine themselves to these patrol routes in the hope of detecting poacher tracks. Some of these patrol routes have not changed since 2003 in one of the sections that I conducted participant observation in. Field rangers are so skilled in navigation and route finding that on successive patrols on the same pre-designated patrol route, the subsequent patrol route was within metres of a GPS track plotted of the previous patrol (Fieldnotes, January 2017). In this way, complete area coverage is not achieved with a result that carcasses can easily be overlooked, particularly in dense vegetation that is characteristic of the mopani veld (plant community) of the northern and central sections of the Park or the tall grass stands in areas in the Pretoriuskop section in the south. Vulture activity seems to be the primary means of detecting carcasses from my conversations and participant observation with field rangers and section rangers, a method that is not without its shortcomings. This was also an approach relied upon during the 1980s and 1990s which proved highly unreliable, even to detect mass die-offs of herds of buffalo affected by anthrax outbreaks (see Skukuza Archives/Ranger Diaries/Shongoni/December 1991; Pretoriuskop May 1986).

[17] I acknowledge Dr. Cleo Graf for bringing this observation to my attention.

[18] Historical rhino population estimations in Africa have consistently emphasized that there were high numbers of black rhino, estimated to number several hundred thousand across the African continent in the early 20th century and reduced to 65 000 animals in 1970 (Emslie and Brooks 1999, Tatham and Taylor 1989). Conversely, southern white rhino numbers were fewer than 100 animals in the early 1900s (see Ripple et al. 2015) and even as low as 20 to 50 individuals, reduced to a single population in what is today the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park in KZN, South Africa (Emslie and Brooks 1999, 2002). There seems to have been a distinct disparity between rhino population estimates of both species between South Africa and the rest of the continent. This is a discrepancy that requires greater interrogation and critical analysis and is outside of the purview of this thesis.

[19] The national Department of Environmental Affairs was renamed the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF) in June 2019 incorporating the forestry and fisheries functions from the previous Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

[20] 'Minister Edna Molewa Highlights Progress on the Implementation of the Integrated Strategic Management of Rhinoceros' [Online] Available at: https://www.environment.gov.za/mediarelease/molewa_highlightsprogressonim

plementationofintegratedstrategicmanagementofrhinoceros (Accessed 27 March 2018).

[21] See Macleod and Valoi (2013) who make reference to 363 suspects killed between 2008 and March 2014 as well as 'Thousands of rhino, 500 poachers; grim toll in the hunt for prized horns', *The Guardian,* 18 October 2015 [Online] Available at: http://www.thegaurdian.com/environment/2015/oct/18/rhino-horn-boom-impoverished-african-poachers (Accessed 27 October 2015) which makes reference to over 500 suspected poachers killed between 2010 and October 2015; Former Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano also accused South African authorities of killing over 500 Mozambicans causing more hardships for the families they leave behind 'Nearly 500 Mozambican poachers killed in S. Africa's Kruger since 2010 - former leader' [Online] Available at: https://www.reuters.com/article/mozambique-poachers/nearly-500-mozambican-poachers-killed-in-s-africas-kruger-since-2010-former-leader-idUSL5N11R2OP20150921 (Accessed 28 March 2017).

[22] Email correspondence with senior SANParks official, 8 June 2015.

[23] 'Presentation to Portfolio Committee on Police Rhino Threat', Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation, 9 September 2015. [Online] http://pmg-assets.s3-website-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/150909DPCI_KNP.pdf (Accessed 6 December 2018).

[24] Informal conversation with senior prosecutor, National Prosecuting Authority (NPA), November 2016.

[25] In a parliamentary question to the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, the South African National Force (SANDF) reported killing 27 and arresting 110 suspects between 2010 and 2018 - see 'Question NW940 to the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans', 20 April 2018 [Online] Available At: https://pmg.org.za/committee-question/8604/(Accessed 12 October 2018).

[26] 'Horns of a Dilemma', *Hindustan Times* (undated) [Online] Available at: http://www.hindustantimes.com/static/kaziranga-rhino-poaching/ (Accessed 11 September 2017); 'How poaching was curbed in Kaziranga, and what it would take to step up conservation', 2 April 2018, *The Indian Express,* [Online] Available at: http://indianexpress.com/article/explained/kaziranga-rhinoceros-census-2018-how-poaching-was-curbed-and-what-it-would-take-to-step-up-conservation-5119865/ (Accessed 2 April 2018).

[27] As part of my approved research proposal to KNP, a request was made to KNP management, for access to various data including arrest data and fatal shootings, amongst others. This list was first submitted in November 2016 and then resubmitted after discussions to rework the request in August 2018. The second request excluded any obvious controversial issues such as fatal shootings and focused on generic, policy responses to poaching, field ranger overtime and

other information related to standard operating procedures, salaries, accommodation, etc. It was only in March 2019 that I received written confirmation that my request for data, even non-security related data, was denied, a process that took close to two and a half years to reach that conclusion. I have received no information (except for three [3] unsolicited documents) from KNP management despite their concerns over research rigour and the importance of triangulation. Even parliamentary inquiries into the human cost of anti-poaching operations have been stymied. In reply to Parliamentary Question No.1447 Internal Question Paper No.15 NW1723E (Ref: 02/1/5/2) to the Minister of Environmental Affairs dated 1 June 2012, regarding the date, time of day, names, nationality, village of origin and whether post mortem inquests were conducted in respect to the killing of suspected rhino poachers for the period 2011 to June 2012, the Minister deferred the question stating the complexity of collating the data. See [Online] Available at: https://pmg.org.za/question_reply/417/ (Accessed 12 October 2018). In October 2012, the Minister replied that "[u]nfortunately, the requested information cannot be provided as no statistics could be obtained from the South African Police Service (SAPS). In their response, the SAPS stated that statistics were only released once a year" [Online] Available at: https://pmg.org.za/question_reply/378/ (Accessed 12 October 2018). Under the Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000, the department has granted 39 out of 62 requests between January 2011 and May 2013 [Online] Available at: https://pmg.org.za/question_reply/458/ (Accessed 12 October 2018).

[28] Section 49 of the Criminal Procedure Act No. 51 of 1977 was initially amended in 1998, with the most recent amendment being Act No.9 of 2012. Section 49 is that section of the act that outlines the use of force in effecting an arrest and the use of deadly force.

[29] WWF's Secret War: WWF Funds Guards who have Tortured and Killed People', *Buzzfeed News,* 4 March 2019 [Online] Available at: https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/tomwarren/wwf-world-wide-fund-nature-parks-torture-death (Accessed 3 May 2019). See also 'Death in the Wilderness: Secret Killings, Enforced disappearances by the KWS, KFS Officers', *Standard Digital,* undated [Online] Available at: https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/special-report/death-in-the-wilderness/?fbclid=IwAR1RZPeU8RpkSF80THiAait7qBQ-SxKjVS-S7Cn3uMEKbJm-OgVqokSBCys (Accessed 12 May 2019).

[30] On 19 July 2018 a field ranger from Crocodile Bridge section in the south of the KNP, Respect Mathebula, was shot and killed, marking the first time a ranger was shot and killed in a direct confrontation with suspected poachers in nearly a decade of the 'war on poaching' [Online] Available at:

https://lowvelder.co.za/443135/update-deceased-field-ranger-identified/
(Accessed 18 February 2019). By the end of my fieldwork period in March 2017, all fatalities of rangers were as a result of 'friendly-fire' or 'blue-on-green' shooting incidents by police and military personnel. A ranger and SAPS member were shot and killed in a single incident where the ranger shot the SAPS member and a SANDF member returned fire killing the ranger on the 28 April 2012 in the Tshokwane section. This incident raises concerning questions about the ability of the various security personnel to adequately identify their targets - a key prerequisite in the use of deadly force - before opening fire. [Online] Available at: https://www.sanparks.org/about/news/?id=1873 (Accessed 19 February 2019); in September 2012 a trainee ranger was shot and killed in a firearms training exercise by a fellow trainee; in March 2017 in Lower Sabie section when a SAPS member was inspecting a confiscated rifle accidentally discharged the rifle, shooting and killing a field ranger , George Mdaka, who was seated in the doorway to the office [Online] Available at: https://www.netwerk24.com/Nuus/Algemeen/veldwagter-sterf-in-ongeluk-met-stroper-se-wapen-20170322 (Accessed 19 February 2019). The only other incident where a ranger was shot in a direct confrontation with suspected poachers was in March 2016 when one field ranger was shot and injured in the arm (a second field ranger was injured in the same incident when the same bullet passed through his backpack and he injured his back in the resulting fall – semi-structured interview, August 2016). Other non-deadly shooting incidents are: one section ranger shot (five times in the back) and severely injured in a shooting incident involving a member of the specialized Battle Field Surveillance (BFS) unit of the SANDF in May 2013 (semi-structured interview, March 2017). Again, this raises concerning questions about assessing the threat, identifying your target and the use of proportionate force to neutralize the threat as stipulated in the Act (see Chapter 6). One field ranger shot himself in the foot on a follow up in March 2017 (see also Rademeyer 2018).

[31] Lesutis, G. and Las Heras, J. (2020) 'The Necropolitics of Heroism', *International Viewpoint IV Online Magazine,* [Online] Available at: http://internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article6632 (Accessed 29 May 2020).

[32] The area that constitutes the KNP as we know it today did not come into being in one fell swoop. The Sabie Game Reserve (SGR), which largely corresponds with the southern portion of the present-day extent of the KNP, was proclaimed on 26 March 1898. It extended from the Crocodile River in the south, the Sabie River in the north, the Nsikazi River in the west and the Mozambican border to the east. During the South African War 1899-1902, the proclamation of the SGR was nullified. After the war, the land was re-proclaimed, including additional lands between the Sabie and Olifants rivers. Stevenson-Hamilton was appointed in 1902 - a position he held up to 1946. The Shingwitsi Game Reserve was proclaimed in

1903 to include the areas between the Olifants and Limpopo rivers. In 1916, the two reserves were consolidated to form what became known as the Transvaal Game Reserve. These areas were made up of both government-owned lands as well as privately-owned farms and in 1923, 152 farms or portions thereof to the west were excised prior to the proclamation of the Park on 2 September 1926 (see Carruthers 1989, SANParks 2018).

[33] Skukuza Archives NK/9/7 Bantoesake Mosambiek Bantoes 'Funksies Verrig Namens die Departement Bantoeadministrasie' [Functions conducted on behalf of the Native Affairs Department, undated circa 1959].

[34] Ibid.

[35] Skukuza Archives NK/9/7 Bantoesake Mosambiek Bantoes: 'Instelling van Paspoortbeheer tussen die Republiek van Suid Afrika en Mosambiek' [Implementation of Passport control between the Republic of South Africa and Mozambique].

[36] Skukuza Archives NK/9/7 Bantoesake Mosambiek Bantoes: 'Funksies verrig namens die Suid-Afrikaanse Polisie' [Functions executed on behalf of the South African Police].

[37] Ibid. "Volgens die Kodelys van Misdrywe […] word as Klas A misdrywe die veiligheid van die staat en die handhawing van goeie orde geklassifiseer. Dit moet dan aangeneem word dat hierdie diens ook 'n voorkeurorde van owerheidsweë as van die grootste belang beskou word".

[38] Ibid. "Hierdie is een van die besonder belangrike funksies wat deur veldpersoneel van die Wildtuin vervul word. As in gedagte gehou word dat die hele oosgrens van die Wildtuin ook 'n internasionale grens is, en at die bantoes in daardie buurstaat opophoudelik probeer om die Transvaal binne te dring, word die voorkoming van instroming 'n taak van nasionale belang".

[39] Ibid. "Die Wet op Nasionale Parke is in teenstelling met Provinsiale Ordinansies 'n nasionale republiekeinse wet en die uitvoering daarvan is van nasionale belang".

[40] Former KNP field ranger, November 2016.

[41] Fieldnotes, informal conversation with respondent living in Hoedspruit, bordering the KNP and staff members inside the KNP, 2016.

[42] Andrew Venter, CEO Africa Foundation [Online] Available at: https://www.andbeyond.com/fireside-chats/podcasts/ (Accessed 15 March 2021).

[43] Fieldnotes, informal conversation with respondent living in Hoedspruit, bordering the KNP and staff members inside the KNP, 2016.

[44] University of Johannesburg Library: Archives and Special Collections 46B/1 Pad 1.

[45] Here this thesis follows Jacob Dlamini (2020a) in recuperating a critical political tradition inspired by Steve Biko's writings on black consciousness that has been lost in South Africa, one where the category black or blackness is conceptualized as a political category, denoting distance from power and not one of ethnicity or related to the colour of one's skin.

[46] The power of arrest by black field rangers was limited to the arrest of black suspects. Black field rangers could therefore not arrest white suspects. See Skukuza Archives NK/9/18 Bantoesake/Veldwagters 1945-1974 [Native Affairs/Field Rangers]. "Die landswette bepaal dat blankes nie deur nie-blankes gearresteer mag word nie. (Blankes mag nie gearresteer word nie)." [The national law determines that whites may not be arrested by non-whites. (Whites are not be arrested)].

[47] It bears a striking semblance to Jean Bodin's treatise *On Sovereignty,* where a new sovereign, upon being installed as king, would utter the words "…the whole kingdom must be entrusted to me and put in my hands" ([1530-1596]1992: 8).

[48] Some xiTsonga speaking interlocutors in communities neighbouring KNP interpret 'Skukuza' to refer to the violent force of a flash flood that 'scrapes' a river bed, uprooting trees and shifting boulders (Fieldnotes 2016). This interpretation speaks of a violent and sudden event.

[49] Skukuza Archives NK/9/7 Bantoesake: Mosambiekers 1971-1995 [Native Affairs: Mozambicans]. Letter from Director-General Department Home Affairs to Jack Valance Greeff, Section Ranger, N'wanetsi Section, 28 June 1989.

[50] Informal conversation with KNP employee, February 2017.

[51] The historiography of Afrikaner Christian nationalism is complex and often shrouded in the myth that Afrikaners saw themselves as a "chosen and covenanted people" (Du Toit, 1983: 920). There is no evidence that the theological theses of Afrikaner settlers of the late 17th and early 18th centuries subscribed to one similar to the Puritans of New England, "deliberately founding new societies in accordance with their religious beliefs" (ibid.: 922). It was only in the late 19th century that an offshoot of Afrikaners, called the Doppers, "saw themselves as a unique people in Africa whose strength lay in isolation with freedom to practice apartheid with respect to both English and Africans" (Giliomee, 1983: 84). The Doppers were also greatly influenced by the poetry of Totius whose work dignified the suffering of war and they saw their own suffering and hardships in southern Africa as religious rite (ibid.). It is this grouping who had great influence over the early National Party in formulating ideas around racial segregation that became a signature policy under D.F. Malan known as apartheid (ibid.). It is from this iteration of late Afrikaner nationalism that Bunn conceivably draws his inferences.

[52] A low altitude subtropical zone falling within the savanna biome in the north-eastern corner of South Africa between 150 to 600 metres above sea level. The

KNP falls within this subtropical, low-lying savanna, typified by high mean summer temperatures; mild generally frost-free winters; a rainfall gradient of 750mm in the south west to 350mm in the north east; and endemic incidences of flooding and droughts (see SANParks 2019).

[53] The KNP covers an area of 19, 485km². In comparison Israel is slightly larger and covers a surface area of 22, 070km² (See World Bank Data – Surface Area [Online] Available at: http://www.data.worldbank.org/indicator/AG.SRF.TOTL.K2 (Accessed 12 September 2015). The total surface area of the GLTP is 37, 572km² (approximately the size of the Netherlands) and the GLTFCA is approximately 100, 000km².

[54] In 2016 46 and up to June 2017 30 elephant killed, mostly in the Composite Protection Zone (CPZ) of the KNP. See 'Minister Molewe Highlights Progress on Integrated Strategic Management of Rhinoceros' [Online] Available at: https://www.environment.gov.za/mediarelease/molewa_progression_integrated strategic_managementofrhinoceros_rhinopoaching (Accessed 8 September 2017).

[55] A total of 469,5 hours was spent conducting participation observation with KNP ranger services staff - with 56 hours spent with crime investigation staff; 382 hours with field ranger and section ranger staff; and 31,5 hours with control room operators.

[56] The compound system was a particular technology of labour control developed under the labour intensive mining industry in South Africa with the discovery of diamonds in the late 1860s. The barracks-like, single sex accommodation allowed for the rigorous searching of African workers, which fostered much resentment. While the compounds on the diamond mines were primarily to control the theft of diamonds, the gold mines on the Witwatersrand was specifically designed to ensure labour discipline and restrict worker movements due to the high number of desertions as a result of the poor health conditions and low wages (see Van Onselen 1976). The managerial dream of labour control has been and is very much replicated in various forms in the KNP, as movement was and still is highly regulated, especially so under the current state of securitization. The effects of such forms of labour control and its impacts on social reproduction has been well documented in the mining industry and has been central to what led to the workers strike prior to the Marikana massacre. Labour control through technologies of housing have not been fully described in conservation to better understand its rationale and its costs on such forms of labour.

[57] Informal conversation with Skukuza archivist, 2016.

[58] Fieldnotes April 2016.

[59] Here I use the term co-researcher deliberately in our distinct roles in unravelling the costs of militarized conservation. My focus was with field ranger staff within the Park and his area of focus was in the communities living adjacent to the Park.

The use of the term co-researcher is also a deliberate means to demonstrate that the respective knowledges we produced was weighed equally. The most tangible way that I could demonstrate this equality between us, aside from our friendship, was in the equality in wages. His salary amounted to 45 percent of the total fieldwork costs that included fuel, telephone/internet charges and accommodation and the gap in our respective salaries (there was approximately a ninety Euro difference in our monthly salaries) was negated by covering the cost of food from my living allowance budget. This also meant that his gross salary equated to his nett salary. Any costs incurred, related to the project, was covered by the project budget or my own personal savings.

[60] In response to the shooting and killing of Sibusiso Dlamini (see below), members of the Cork community blocked the main access road, the R536, between Hazyview town and Paul Kruger gate for three days. These actions forced KNP management to interact with community leaders and protest organizers to hear their grievances. However, the KNP's initial response on a local radio show in explaining the protests was that the road blockades were as a result of service delivery protests. This was a direct attempt to undermine and minimize the grievances of the Cork and Belfast communities, indicating the disdain with which the Park often deals with its neighbours. The Cork community demanded a settlement of ZAR 10 million for the family to force KNP to address the issue. Instead, the Park authorities nullified these demands by paying the family for 'funeral expenses' to the amount of ZAR 25 000 and purchasing groceries for the funeral (informal conversations with the Dlamini family, August/September 2016 and letters of correspondence between the family and KNP management).

[61] Due to the nature of counterinsurgency (COIN) practices, at times these provocateurs were themselves law enforcement officials or police agents looking to entrap would-be poachers (who would otherwise have been not been implicated in rhino poaching if they were not enticed). Such pseudo-operational tactics are but one of the array of practices characteristic of COIN practiced by the apartheid era security police and reiterated in contemporary conservation.

[62] Sibusiso Phiri Dlamini was shot and killed on the 3 August 2016 (ironically on the day of the local municipal elections, marking the procession of democracy in South Africa) while fishing in the KNP, in an area that is highly contested and where public access to the Sabie River is condoned to allow access to the many users ranging from small scale farmers who have water pumps on the inside of the Park fence to pump water to their fields on the northern bank of the river; as well as to ordinary community members to bathe, wash their clothes and to fish. Technically fishers require a permit from the provincial conservation authorities, not SANParks, if they fish from the northern bank (see below). This latter activity is largely condoned and Dlamini and his friends have been fishing in this area

entering through one of the many (unlocked) gates for about two years. As an unemployed youth in a district with chronic unemployment, he caught fish to sell so that he could purchase basic everyday necessities – at other times it was to have just enough money to buy alcohol and socialize with his friends on Friday evenings. Dlamini was shot in the chest with an exit wound on his back and the SAPS docket (CAS 04/08/2016) contained no crime scene photos, no statement from the field ranger who shot and killed him or any of the witnesses accompanying the field ranger (there were two 'white' men - contractors inspecting one of the security infrastructure used in that section of the Park - who was with the field ranger) or indeed the friends of Dlamini who was with him on the day. Essentially the statement by the section ranger responsible for the area merely stated that he 'saw the deceased lying in a pool of blood' (Informal conversation with senior prosecutor, NPA, December 2016). That Dlamini was unarmed would also have been apparent to the field ranger because he was only dressed in his underwear (BVD's- satin undershorts as they are called locally) while standing in the river. The co-researcher also accompanied Dlamini's mother to the mortuary where his body was examined in the hope of gaining access to his post mortem report. The authorities refused to release the report to her. Dlamini left behind a five-year-old son, his mother, brother and sister. See also 'Family bids farewell to fisherman allegedly killed by Kruger rangers', 13 August 2016 [Online] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VTZE6xQHtuk (Accessed 23 December 2021). Along the stretch of fence from Paul Kruger Gate along the R536 arterial road toward Hazyview, there are approximately fifty-six (56) gates over a distance of approximately 30km of fence line. The fence is not managed by KNP management but maintained by the State Veterinary Services. Some of these gates or turnstiles were installed by the State Veterinary Services while other gates were 'illegally' installed by community members to suit their access needs (semi-structured interview with State Veterinarian, 2016). The boundary of the Park in this area is also highly contested. In terms of the Act, where "a river … constitutes the boundary of any piece of land, that piece of land shall be deemed to extend to the middle of the river" (Act No. 8 of 1997: Land Survey Act, 1997, 33[1]a). There are a number of exceptions to this rule and the one most pertinent would most likely be an alleged agreement (purportedly signed in 1996) between the relevant Traditional Authority (TA) and SANParks to erect a fence on the northern bank of the river to allow mega herbivores access the river without causing a fence breakage and endangering the lives and crops of community members. Part of this agreement, as told to us by the TA and community members, was that community members would be allowed access to the river evidenced by the many gates and the number of water pumps on the inside (ie. in the Park) of the fence. Unfortunately, the TA could not provide us with the relevant agreement and any inquiries to SANParks were met with no response.

[63] Email to friend, December 2016.

Theoretical Building Blocks: Police, Productive Labour in Conservation, Race and Workplace Regimes

2.1 Introduction

What is clear from the body of critical scholarship investigating violence in conservation - ranging from Nancy Peluso's (1993) 'coercive conservation' nearly three decades ago; Peluso and Watts' (2001) 'violent environments' and their critique of environmental security at the turn of the millennium; Elizabeth Lunstrum's seminal conceptualization of 'green militarization' (2014); Büscher and Ramutsindela's subsequent expansion into 'green violence' (2016); culminating in Bram Büscher and Robert Fletcher's 'political ecologies of green wars', which brings together notions of "green grabbing, green militarization/violence, green economy, neoliberal conservation and biopower, amongst others" (2018: 106) – is that a wide-ranging and complex suite of theoretical and empirical scrutiny has been brought to bear to better understand violence in conservation and its links to forms of social control and the neoliberalization of conservation. What Büscher and Fletcher (2018) concede, however, is that they can only provide building blocks to a larger overarching conceptual framework that points to an understanding of "the centrality of violence and conflict both to the neoliberal political economy and to environmental conservation and their integrated socio-ecological manifestations and effects" (ibid.: 106).

This elusiveness is further magnified by the near hegemony of the notion of security (Rigakos 2011). Where security has attached itself to an innumerable range of social relations – be it social security, job security, environmental security, food security, the security of our children – it has increasingly come to be associated with a greater good (ibid.). The danger, Rigakos contends is that it repositions the analysis "not as a critique of governmentality but as an instrumental, pragmatic method of projecting

liberal discourse", one that presupposes a rational governmental discourse but masking underlying techniques of domination (ibid.: 59). Jackson (2013) also argues that the discourse of security depoliticises an issue, renders critical scholarship ineffective and creates an analytical and political blockage to interrogate state violence.

So too, has the issue of rhino poaching become a security concern, one that can only be ameliorated by reasserting 'law and order'. It is a default position that denotes a semblance of good, orderly and civilised government. The poaching of rhino threatens to drive an iconic species to extinction and its impending demise threatens not only one of the underlying pillars of the South African economy, wildlife tourism, but also wildlife as an ostensible vehicle for social upliftment in a country that ranks as the most unequal in the world in terms of income polarization. It thus becomes nearly heretical to be against security when it is framed as a vehicle to not only save a species but also where the security of rhino is conflated with social upliftment.

This chapter proposes to arrange a conceptual framework that critically analyses this concept of security through the lens of police. Firstly, it seeks to fashion a means to grasp continuity and change through the course of history. It posits that in our pursuit to understand the present we cannot disassociate present-day events in isolation from the past, that seemingly isolated phenomena are relational to other phenomena. Leaning on Marx's dialectical method, it shows how old processes find their way back in reconstituted forms despite proclamations of change. What follows, provides a conceptual framework that will show that security, through the lens of police, is historically conceived to order society and in bringing about that order, it seeks to consolidate unequal relations of power and wealth. Furthermore, it will show that where the *raison d'être* of police is to bring about order, that, historically speaking, order was nothing more than a brutish and violent statist project linked to setting new conditions of exploitative waged labour. Today, however, police meld these brutish forms of repression with milder forms of order maintenance policing but that the salience of brutality has not lost its utility, including in the enforcement of conservation law. Where the concept of police goes beyond critiquing its institutional form as a repressive agency, these theoretical insights position police in its much broader sense, that it is inseparable from state power. It also links the concept of police in ordering a class of labour with the scholarly insights of labour value and

productivity and features of the South African labour process that remains infused with racialized domination. In so doing, it provides a conceptual framework – the *police labour regime* – to formulate a critique of what effects policing practices in response to intensified wildlife crime have on the conservation workplace and in what ways it shapes the labour process and the institutional life in the Kruger National Park (KNP).

2.2   Continuity and Change: Thinking about History, Progression and Change

Bertell Ollman contends that "at the heart of every science is a search for relations", especially those that are not immediately obvious (2003: 2). Making it possible to uncover these relations, what others might consign to as separate, unrelated phenomena, is Marx's dialectical method which enables us to observe elements of change and interaction (ibid.). To grasp what is going on in the world, it is necessary to not only bring together the component parts of a system but also "the interlocking nature of past, present, and future" (ibid.: 3). Marx's version of dialectics was informed not only in his philosophical engagements with thinkers such as Hegel, but also his lived experience of capitalism. It is the specific characteristics of this particular class society, not only in the way in which social life is dominated by the law of value and the power of money but the ways in which it actively seeks to deny and obscure these relations (ibid.). Where these relations of interactions are obscured and disassociated from one another, one is only able to observe a fragment of existence, one that is partial and one-sided, and consequently we risk overlooking the patterns that emerge from these relations, especially those relations that are not immediately apparent (ibid.).

Thus, focusing on what is apparent - or solely, by extension on appearances - we limit our understanding of reality, relying only on those phenomena that are readily observable (ibid.). If our understanding of the world is based on what we see, hear or bump into, we forgo investigating how those phenomena arose and what lies beyond our immediate grasp (ibid.). For this thesis, however, it is not sufficient to merely recognize these interactions but to employ dialectics as a way to think adequately about history and the systemic connections that make up our social worlds. Dialectics offers a way of thinking of phenomena, the processes

through which it arose and the broader context in which it is found. It urges us to think about phenomena as processes and its relations to other phenomena.

In making these systemic connections to not only the social worlds under analysis but also the past, Foucault contends that "histories are not only histories of the past but also a critical analyses of power configurations persisting in the present… 'a history of the present'" (Hoy 1986 in Sathyamala 2016: 15). In this critical and systemic analysis of the past, the purpose is thus not to question the validity of the past but as Foucault urges, "to interrogate the rationality of the 'present'" (Gordon 1980 in Sathyamala 2016: 15-16). In the study of any particular event or institutional form, history needs to be interwoven into the inquiry rather than be seen as separate sphere in which we can locate cause or drivers of change (Ollman 2003). The passage of time does not denote change in and of itself. To better understand the persistence of inequality, repression and racialized subordination, it would also be imprecise to state that nothing has changed. Here, Arsel and Büscher (2012) argue that global capitalism is continually responding to, and seeking to overcome either ecological limits or limits more generally and it is this dialectic of change and limits that requires renewed attention. In the context of this thesis, state and private actors are responding to, and thriving on the prospect of limits, be that the extinction of a species or the ways in which intensified wildlife crime is framed as a security threat, limiting the potential for economic growth. It is thus necessary, Arsel and Büscher (2012) argue, to analyse how these organizational and institutional forms are operationalized at specific spatial and temporal moments. This conjunctural moment, the intensification of rhino poaching, arguably presents a moment for old processes and hierarchies to merely be reconstituted despite political revisions, changes in the somatic makeup of institutions and techniques of management (see Hamann and Bertels 2017, Orton et al. 2001). Furthermore, in tracing the continuity of practices and actors, Jonny Steinberg posits that "old instruments generally survive only when agents in the present find a use for them" (2014: 191). Those instruments that have no use become obsolete (ibid.). To understand what has survived from the past, Steinberg argues, that "one's analytical eye must focus on the present" (ibid.: 191).

This lays a foundation to understand change and the persistence of injustices within conservation. The following sections uses the critical

concept of police to understand the persistence of injustices under the logics of order maintenance and the administration of waged labour despite political revisions. It brings this concept of police into conversation with the scholarly work on labour productivity, the labour process, workplace regimes, racialized social systems and resistance to conceptualize how conservation labour, specifically those fractions of labour that enforce the law, is ordered, structured and controlled in new ways despite these political revisions.

2.3   Police: A Theory of Good Order, the State and the Administration of Labour

2.3.1   Expanding our Understanding of Police

Seigel argues that the popular concept of police has been "'relegated to the backwaters of police studies', stuck in criminology", that there is no urgency to make sense of the concept itself (2018: 4). It has encouraged a view, "that policing, like criminal law of which it is supposedly part, is no more and no less than a set of instruments to manage something called crime" (ibid.: 4). He argues that 'police' is one of the "least theorized, most neglected concepts" in modern lexicon which precludes a critical understanding of what police actually is; what is police power; and why it is granted such latitude in social life (ibid.: xx). From a criminology and international relations perspective, policing is strongly associated with a domestic constabulary function, that it is merely a modern institution for law enforcement (Holmqvist et al. 2015). This narrow focus on the study of police officers and criminology, excludes a vast area of policing where the concept of police was central to the fabrication of social order and by extension central to state power and integral to civilized life (Neocleous 2000). In *Policing the Crisis,* Hall et al. (1978) brought a critical lens to the moral panic around crime and sought to dispel the common-sense assumption that links police to safety. In effect, there is an absence of relationship between policing and crime reduction (Seigel 2018). Harcourt (2001) reinforces this assertion and also demonstrates the lack of an empirical relationship between policing and crime reduction.

This section follows Mark Neocleous (2000) in his political project to place the concept of police at the centre of an inquiry into bourgeois society. He argues that police should be one of the *supreme* concepts to

better understand the exercise of power. Our understanding of police should transcend the police institution and its role merely as a repressive agency but rather should place police as central to the *"fabrication of order"* (ibid.: xii, emphasis in original). In other words, "the police mandate was to fabricate an order of wage labour and administer the class of poverty" (ibid.: xii). Where security creates an analytic and political blockage to unravel how and through what means society is ordered (see Jackson 2013, Rigakos 2011), this section proposes to use the concept of police as a critical concept to understand violence in conservation and its effects on the administration of conservation labour.

The Origins of Police

Michel Foucault (2009), in his lectures on *Security, Territory, Population,* traces the genealogy of police as integral to a new radical heterodox way of rethinking the role of God and the governing of subjects through the apparatus of already established institutions – the king, the church, territory and the judiciary as part of a range of constituted bodies to name but a few (ibid.). Most striking is how at the beginning of the 17th century, the idea of police power came to be distinguished in its exercise of royal power to that of judicial power. Foucault (2009) identifies this distinction clearly where police power "remains clearly separated from justice…[where] police is in no way thought of as a sort of instrument in the hands of judicial power" (ibid.: 339). The police were thus not an extension of the sovereign "acting through his apparatus of justice" (ibid.: 339) but rather "the king acting directly on his subjects" (ibid.: 339). In other words, police *is* the permanent *coup d'Etat* – meaning literally the 'blow' of the state or the sovereign – in exercising royal power over his subjects. This *coup d'Etat* functions in terms of its own *rationality* "without having to mould or model itself on the otherwise given rules of justice" (ibid.: 339). Not surprisingly then, Foucault emphasises that "[p]olice is not justice" (ibid.: 339).

Harcourt (2008) makes fascinating forays into another dimension of policing where police played a central role in the *ancien régime*, most importantly in the regulation of the market and having the authority to set market prices. In the open-air grain markets of 17th and 18th century France, the role of police was literally to weigh bread and impose fines on those merchants whose bread was lighter in weight than the advertised

label, even in cases where the discrepancy was as little as one ounce, or where the price exceeded the market regulated price (ibid.). In recounting the daily routines of police in 18th century Paris, documented by de Freminville in his *Dictionnaire ou traité de la police générale*, the notion of 'police' was so closely associated with that of the 'market' that in his dictionary entry for markets he merely referred his readers by cross reference to another entry that read "Markets. See Police" (ibid.: 10-11). Foucault is equally explicit about the centrality of police to the market.

> Let's say, in short that police is essentially urban and market based, or to put things more brutally, it is an institution of the market" (Foucault 2009: 335).

Both Foucault (2009) and Harcourt (2008) trace a shift, where previously police was so closely associated with the regulation of the market to the birth of a new form of governmentality, one founded on economic and scientific rationality.

This birth of new governmental reason was to limit state intervention and thus to facilitate and to bring about conditions of *'laissez faire'* (Foucault 2009). In other words, police were no longer required to manage or control through regulations but rather to create regulations that would ensure the 'natural'[1] regulation of the market (ibid.). To do this, mechanisms of security or state intervention were necessary with the "essential function of ensuring the security of the natural phenomena of economic processes" (ibid.: 353). In this way the right to private economic interest and thus the freedom of individuals to secure their interests became a condition of the rationality of this new form of government. Failing to respect that freedom was not only a dereliction of the rights of individuals under law but was "above all, ignorance of how to govern properly", undermining the 'natural' tendency of the market to regulate itself (Foucault 2009: 353). This 'naturalness' has a deep resonance in European political thought, where the absolute authority of the sovereign to reign and mete out punishment was one willed by God (Bodin [1530-1596]1992). In its reconstituted form, under this new form of government reason, a signifier of a good, well-ordered government was one marked by the 'naturalness' of the market (Foucault 2009). In both forms of government, this 'naturalness' was inviolable. It points to the extent that law, administration, police and state power "present themselves as natural – 'the way things are' – and thus beyond critique" (Neocleous 2000: xv). These intersections of police as *coup d'Etat* acting with its own rationality

and independently of justice on the one hand and the efficient functioning of the market as a 'natural' process but paradoxically requiring enforcement on the other, are inseparable. It gives some insight into why responses to rhino poaching are predicated on a policing logic and why it is characterised by such violence. Firstly, it is related to this deeply held notion that the securing or property (of individuals or the state) is 'natural' and a signifier of good and civilised government. Furthermore, the use of disproportionate or exemplary violence stems from the fact that the authority of police lay outside the 'given rules of justice'. The history of police is thus the history of state power (Neocleous 2000). The following section seeks to make these linkages between police and state power more explicit.

The Inseparability of State Power and Police Power

To fully understand the allure of police, we have to bring into the analysis the notion of the regularity of the law where the maintenance of law is foundational to modernist forms of liberal statecraft (see Arnold 2007, Harcourt 2001). Here the function of the modern state was made visible through authorised administrative practices such as taxation, conscription, social and legal services and, importantly, the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in which the notion of the social contract was inscribed (Comaroff and Comaroff 2016). The state acquired the authority to make law and legitimately use force through modes of policing its citizenry or waging war on other nation states (Comaroff and Comaroff 2016). Any violation of order, inscribed in law, was seen as pathology and a dysfunction of the modern state and in restoring order, coercive actions by the state would thus be deemed beyond the realms of incrimination (ibid.). Inviolate amongst these laws of the liberal polity was the notion of private property being analogous to the rights of private citizens. A violation of private property was akin to violating the rights of the citizen where theft and assault, even if these were minor infractions against property or person, carried the threat of capital punishment (ibid.). Elucidating this point, Seigel (2018) posits that it is the supremacy of maintaining 'order', where order is inseparable from the modernist conception of the state and its ability to 'govern properly' (see also Foucault 2009, Harcourt 2008). Holmqvist et al. (2015) further argue that this appeal lies at the heart of the liberal framework where these

cosmopolitan norms and ideals related to private property and the protection of *these* rights imbue the term and practice of police as one that should be celebrated. Where the markers of a well-ordered government are conflated with maintaining the rights to private property, it implies that police ultimately serve to ensure the maintenance of asymmetrical conditions of private interests and individual freedoms – freedoms and rights that only certain class and racial formations within populations enjoy. In essence, police do not protect all people equally (Seigel 2018). Marx, in his critique of rights and the right to security in particular, argues that it is a central aspect of bourgeois society, that the invocation of security guarantees the preservation of private property (Neocleous 2021). It is this right to securing private property that underpins the idea of police (ibid.). Where securing private property is foundational to societies where wealth is asymmetrically apportioned, liberty is suspended in times of emergency (ibid.). It is the poor then that are seen as a threat to freedom and it is the poor who become the target of security, in effect, the target of police (ibid.). This then becomes the fundamental concern of capitalist society – the maintenance of a secure and orderly polity in order to secure private property (ibid.). Thus, Neocleous argues,

> [t]he fundamental problem for capital turns out to be the fundamental question of the police power (2021: 17).

Furthermore, another central purpose of the police project, Neocleous argues, is "the question of poverty and thus the condition of the class of poverty" (2000: ix). Neocleous posits, that when Marx turned his attention to the issue of crime, he swiftly moved "from the question of specific crimes, such as the 'theft' of wood…to the study of law and state power" (2021: 18). Thus, Marx's analysis of crime quickly shifted to an analysis of political economy, taking us into the realm of what he called "the 'innermost secret' of the bourgeois order" (ibid.: 18). In Marx's *Debates on the Laws of the Thefts of Wood,* the 'theft' of wood, previously a customary right, became criminalized with enclosure - effectively an act of privatization – and to stamp out this crime it required enforcement "in the form of a *forest* police managed by the *military*" (1842 in Neocleous 2021: 20, emphasis in original).

During the 16th century it was not only the crime of 'theft' that most animated public authorities in their pursuit of order, it was the act of begging and vagrancy (see Neocleous 2021). The process of primitive

accumulation was a seminal event that lay the foundations of deprivation for many peasants.   Primitive accumulation not only separated workers from their means of production and 'freed' them to sell their labour power, it also inscribed a specific set of social relations in capitalist society (Neocleous 2021).   It was a process that involved forcibly driving people from their land and homes and passing a set of 'bloody legislation' that legitimated the state to whip, brand and torture any person deemed a vagrant or vagabond and to bend them to the new conditions of wage labour (ibid.).   Only the old or incapacitated could receive a beggar's licence but anyone else over the age of fourteen refusing to work was condemned to either slavery or chattel bondage, branded and publicly whipped at a first 'offence' and executed as felons for similar repeat 'offences' (ibid.). Thus, the refusal to work was the primary definition of crime and disorder and in bringing about 'order', the state employed a range of brutal and repressive techniques. Here the notion of 'order' in effect meant that the state was legitimated to use any means necessary in its efforts to create a compliant and cheap working class in the service of capitalist or bourgeois interests. It is a process repeated across four centuries together with the theft of common lands, where the only means to sustain oneself was through waged labour (ibid.). It was thus the police that operationalized and enforced these 'terroristic' laws (after Marx in Neocleous 2021) in the establishment of a new order.

In modern state formations, Hall et al. (1978) argue, the function of police is not to eradicate violence and create a peaceful order but police play a central role in structuring and amplifying violence in its efforts to restore 'law and order'. Thus, our understanding of police cannot simply be limited to entail constabulary functions, its role is so much broader – the establishment of domestic order (Holmqvist et al. 2015). Thus, taking a critical perspective on police is at odds with the plethora of mainstream and dominant scholarship on policing and crime reduction (Seigel 2018). This dominant body of scholarship instead seeks to paint the picture of its "noble origins and ever-improving professionalization" (Seigel 2018: 5). These simplistic narratives of the professionalization of the police, its efforts at rooting out corruption within its ranks and community policing sought to position the police as inherently progressive and "few analytical tools to challenge the idea of police" (Seigel 2018: 5). Even in instances where police abuse results in a public outcry, it does not shift the

definitional role of police in society, that of maintaining the peace and being of service to the community (Seigel 2018, see also Fassin 2017).

Where mainstream analysis of police lay in its constabulary functions, in critical circles, the concept of police shifted focus to view the phenomenon through the lens of power. However, this only gave us a partial understanding of what police is. Part of this 'fog' is attributed to the Foucauldian treatment of police as yet another "symptom for 'power', 'discipline' and 'governmentality'" (Neocleous 2000: ix). Seen only through this singular lens, barely any mention is made of the police institution itself, the effect being that we begin to see no connection between the concept police and policing at all (ibid.). It diverts our attention from what police actually is and brackets our understanding of police between the uniformed officer and the maintenance of public order (Seigel 2018). Without making these linkages between police and policing our analysis is emptied "of the humiliations administered on…the street…the thud of the truncheon and the gratuitous use of 'discretionary' force'" (Neocleous 2000: x). Thus, a Foucauldian analysis precludes a more thorough interrogation of the role of police in meting out violence and the centrality of that violence to state power (ibid.).

In order to shift our analysis beyond the visceral acts of violence by police officers or focus only on the sweeping notion of 'power', we have to understand that at its core "[p]olice realize – they *make real* – the core of the power of the state" (Seigel 2018: 10, emphasis in original), police are essentially "the human-scale expression of the state" (Seigel 2018: 9). Quintessentially then, what defines police is the power it is imbued with in the actual application of force. The legitimacy to use force distinguishes police work from the work of other state functions. Police work "relies on violence or the threat thereof", in other words "violence work" (Seigel 2018: 9). When the public legitimizes the ability of the police to use force, in effect it legitimizes the state itself (Seigel 2018). Where the police embody the legitimacy of the state's means of coercion, police epitomize "sovereignty in action" and police are thus "fundamentally political" (Seigel 2018: 9-10).

Police, therefore, are enforcing exactly what the state and the market need it to do (Seigel 2018: 10). Soss and Weaver demonstrate the dystopian nature that these forms of government under police can take where public authorities "had imposed a 'predatory system of government' on poor black communities" (2017: 566). In order to

generate much needed revenue for the municipality, residents, primarily from poor and black communities, "were targeted, arrested and summonsed on civil-ordinance violations, were assessed prohibitive fines and fees, and were subjected to jail if they failed to pay" (ibid.: 566). These initial fines served as a gateway to a continual cycle of debt where the inability to pay one fine led to the imposition of further fines and increasing entanglements with the police and courts (ibid.). This form of extractive policing enabled the city to cover one fifth of its municipal budget (ibid.). This terrain for police was pre-empted by decades of disinvestment and policy retrenchment leading to "searing racialized poverty" and the state of neglect in these communities created a symbolic and political narrative of "'underclass' disorder and danger", posing a threat to broader society (ibid.: 571). Thus, restoring 'order' is natural, in fact, in Fassin's study of French police, the random identity checks of French youth in the ghettos of Paris fell "within the normal order of things" (2011: 6). Thus, "[t]he power to govern *is* the police power: the police refract the power of the state" and since "violence is fundamental to police [it is] because it also lies at the heart of the state" (Seigel 2018: 10, emphasis in original).

2.3.2   Turning to the Institutional Form of Police

Challenging Popular Misconceptions of Police

There has been a widespread criticism of the use of military-type gear and tactics, particularly its use in the management of civil unrest, which has fuelled a debate around the militarization of American police (Kienscherf 2016). It is a debate that surrounds not only the militarization of civilian policing but also the militarization of conservation law enforcement (see Büscher and Ramutsindela 2016, Duffy et al. 2019, 2015, Duffy 2016, 2014, Lunstrum 2014). A first misconception of police is that the use of military tools and militarized techniques against the state's own citizens is an aberration. It decries the notion of police officers acting like soldiers in blue. It has led to a renewed call to make clear the distinction between police and the military (Kienscherf 2016). However, Neocleous (2021) argues that focusing on aspects of militarization within the police creates an impasse in thinking critically about police power and obscures the rationalities that lay at the heart of the historical formation of police. He

contends that the militarization of police purports the impression of an important *shift* in police, that it implies police *becoming* militarized (ibid.). It suggests a break from 'normal' policing and it entails both an ethical and political claim that police should have no linkages to war (ibid.). This impasse further suggests that 'normal' policing is not about violence but that it is essentially about security, the maintenance of law and order and ensuring peace and tranquillity that creates conditions of prosperity for the state's citizens (ibid.).

It is here that Neocleous argues that this debate perpetuates 'a beautiful fiction', one where war power and police power and their respective institutions are entities that should be separated. It reinforces a mythology at the centre of liberal state formation, one where police power manages the behaviour of citizens domestically through consent and war power confronts foreign enemies through coercion (ibid.). Howell contends that the "concept of militarization falsely presumes a peaceful liberal order that is encroached on by military values" (2018: 117). Militarization as a concept offers the possibility of emancipation under conditions where civilian life has been engulfed by military values and technologies (ibid.). Like Neocleous (2021), Howell argues that the concept obscures the war-like relations of force perpetrated against those sections of populations – along the lines of race, gender, class, indigeneity and disability - that threaten the good order of the state (ibid.). Instead, she offers that 'normal' politics is not usurped by militarization but that an enduring feature of 'normal' politics is its martial character, that it is 'martial politics' and its war-like relations that is at the centre of the rationality of liberal governance (ibid.).

The debate on how to maintain the separation of these institutions further obscures the fact that the tools of repression – such as with the invention of tear gas - used to combat foreign enemies in World War I was initially developed to subdue 'unruly mobs' and 'agitators' by French police, both in the Parisian suburbs as well as in police actions in the colonies (Neocleous 2021). Thus, there is no real distinction between war power and police power, as these institutions have a historical overlap and, at its core, both institutional forms are vehicles to exert *state violence* (ibid.). The historical overlap between war and police is further evidenced in the use of the language and ideas of warfare in civilian policing. The 'war on crime', 'war on drugs', 'war on poverty', 'war on terror' (in its domestic expression as homeland or national security) - and in the context of this

thesis, the 'war on poaching' - suggest that the overlap and interlinkages between the two are part of a parallel and permanent campaign to subdue.

A second misplaced notion of the police is that it marks a shift in the nature of state-sanctioned punishment. Jean and John Comaroff, in their book *The Truth About Crime*, map a shift in the archaeology of punishment, and argue that punishment-as-a-spectacle under sovereign power has transformed to a less physical regime of discipline, one "administered in the name of civil authority" (2016: ix). This change in the archaeology of punishment contends that the body began to lose "its salience as a visceral target of penality" (ibid.: ix). Harcourt (2001) also notes this shift to take on a 'milder' form, where order-maintenance interventions are seen as 'new' and 'progressive', one that is politically more palatable and humane. However, he contends that this thinking is flawed, that it is by no means new and does not "present an *alternative* but rather an *addition* to severe penalties" (ibid.: 6, emphasis in original). Comaroff and Comaroff (2016) thus argue that "torture never really went away…it merely became less open to scrutiny" (ibid.: ix). Drawing on examples of torture and extrajudicial killings from the beating of Rodney King to the killing of unarmed black men in Ferguson and other parts of the United States (U.S.) to mineworkers at Marikana in South Africa, Comaroff and Comaroff emphasize instances where capital punishment is meted out without due process (ibid.). Thus, severe punishment and torture, thought to have disappeared with the unmitigated power of the king, continue as part of police actions.

This brings us to a third feature of police, one where this deeply coded moral association with the maintenance of order, obscures or legitimizes any wrongdoing associated with maintaining order. Harcourt argues that this public demand for "'get tough' law enforcement policies" has its origins in "deep-seated political, ideological, and even psychological dynamics" that has shaped modern society (2001: 5). In essence, the need to 'get tough', which invariably translates into the proclivity of police officers to break the law, is widely condoned and seen as necessary to return to a state of order. This production of order, inscribed with excesses, is often overlooked in the discourse about policing and it allows for a justification of disproportionate levels of force as 'reasonable' (Bachmann et al. 2015) or indeed 'natural' (Foucault 2009). It is this deeply ingrained rationality of liberal state power to suspend law that is ensconced in the notion of prerogative power (Arnold 2007). Where prerogative

power or the suspension of law in invoked, the state is legitimated to use extrajudicial force, even domestically, against those whose status is not only criminalized but who are politically excluded, in essence those persons who constitute 'bare life' (ibid.).

Comaroff and Comaroff (2016) emphasize this murkiness between enforcing the law and breaking the law as a feature of crime fighting. They argue that the general preoccupation with lawlessness and disorder has led to an "obsession with mass-mediated crime stories" where accounts of "CSI-style forensics, or epic accounts of supercops" who, "unlike in everyday life" solve every mystery, catch the criminals and restore order (ibid.: xii). However, these fictions clash with the unvarnished reality of crime fighting, in which "criminals are *not* always caught, cops are *not* necessarily clean, and the distinction between…law and its underside, is anything but decisive" (ibid.: xii, emphasis in original). Where the rigidity of rules that guide the actions of police presents an obstacle, it is instead flexibility or rather *irregularity* that facilitates 'effective' policing (Harcourt, 2001). In many instances, the actions of police officers in enforcing the law often involves "taking informal or extralegal steps…things [that] probably would not withstand a legal challenge" (Wilson and Kelling 1982 in Harcourt 2001: 128). Thus, as Harcourt argues, "the desired order depends on a lot of disorder, irregularity and brutality" (bid.: 127).

It points to a last misconception that we need to bring into our understanding of police. It posits that that these excesses in police action is directly linked to a limitation of police, that police is unable to prevent crime. Instead, police action is geared to stamping out misdemeanour offences. Where these offences would previously be considered offensive or annoying, it becomes reconfigured as positively harmful conduct, conflated with serious crime (Harcourt 2001). In the Kruger, this is evidenced in the large number of criminal cases against fisherman, snare hunters and trespassers who are conflated with armed rhino poachers perpetrating a priority crime.

The institution that is police has therefore developed very specific techniques to operationalize violence. Pertinent to this thesis, the following sections examine the historical roots of counterinsurgency and the technique of manhunting and the ways these facets became central to policing.

Situating Counterinsurgency: Operationalizing Social Order

To best understand the manner in which liberal social control is exercised, Kienscherf (2016) suggests we look beyond repression and instead lean on the concept of pacification. In the critical literature on police, scholars are unequivocal in making this link between liberal social control and pacification explicit (see Harcourt 2001, Kienscherf 2016, Neocleous 2000, 2021, Neocleous and Rigakos 2011, Schrader 2019, Seigel 2018). Kienscherf (2016) argues that it is through uneven processes of pacification, in other words a combination of coercion and consent, that liberal social control is deployed by the state to target specific individuals, groups or populations. However, little is said about this term called pacification (Neocleous and Rigakos 2011). It was a substitute term for what is known as counterinsurgency, a strategic approach used by the United States (U.S.) in its military interventions in Vietnam. The roots of counterinsurgency can be found prior to the Vietnam war, it was part of a near imperial reach of U.S. interest to grow and empower law enforcement or police in those states that were thought to present a threat to U.S. national interests after the Second World War (Schrader 2019). The U.S. developed a didactical training tool for police officers in these developing countries as a means to counter any form of communist agitation and its premise was that any form of subversion could not develop "if a well-trained, professional police nipped agitation – and crime – in the bud" (ibid.: 79). It equated any political agitation, no matter how benign, as potentially having a catalytic effect and thus, it was considered a crime (ibid.). It marked a shift within the U.S. security establishment, wresting counterinsurgency away from the oversight of the military into the Office of Public Safety (OPS), thus creating an institutional space within the state that placed crime prevention as the highest order of priority (ibid.). In effect, its proponents in OPS "transformed counterinsurgency into policing" (ibid.: 80).

Thus, the use of the term pacification is subsumed under a broader approach aimed at achieving security through policing, in other words, "fundamental to pacification is security" (Neocleous and Rigakos 2011: 25). Crucial to the argument of Neocleous and Rigakos (2011), is that security should not be understood as "some kind of universal or transcendental value" but as a "mode of governing or a political technology of liberal-order building" (ibid.: 26). Thus, security is nothing other than a police mechanism, a technique deployed in the fabrication of

social order (ibid.). McMichael, more pointedly asserts that police and the security it seeks is not a benign response to a "universal need for protection from risk or danger but […] a political technology central to the construction of both the modern state and capitalism" (2012: 7). Neocleous and Rigakos (2011) implore critical theorists to re-appropriate the term pacification to grasp the nature of security politics and deploy it as a critical concept to understand police power. Unlike security that "casts a deep fog over police projects", pacification requires us to ask who is being pacified, why are people being pacified and what the objectives of pacification are (Rigakos 2011: 63).

In tracing the historical transfer of military know-how gained from abroad to deal with large-scale domestic public riots during the late 1960s in the U.S., Kienscherf also notes that this was more than just anti-riot tactics and gear (ibid.). It also stressed the importance of combining security with development and good governance to win over those reconcilable elements within the population while eradicating the irreconcilable elements (ibid.). Contemporary interventions to conflict in society draw both on militaristic and humanitarian logics, where new justifications for repressive actions, such as indefinite detention, is coupled with 'best practices' in establishing the 'rule of law' (Holmqvist et al. 2015). Essentially, in establishing 'the rule of law', the notions of coercion, governance and order are mutually entangled, "'war' and 'police/policing' blur and bleed into one another – in the most fundamental way" (ibid.: 3).

Thus, this binary of 'hard' versus 'soft' policing where the former entails techniques of repression and the latter techniques of social upliftment is a false dichotomy (Neocleous and Rigakos 2011). Community policing, then, is seen as part of a range of tactical elements in a broader campaign of pacification, which does not mark a progressive turn in policing but is part of an "expeditionary counterinsurgency" campaign (Kienscherf 2016: 1188).

The Manhunt: Its Philosophical History and Function as part of the Police Project

While the responses to rhino poaching in the KNP is purported to be varied, including a range of responses from the use of state-of-the-art technological innovations to a 'whole-of-society approach, the foundational anti-poaching response in the Kruger is premised on

detecting the footprints of suspects, tracking those footprints and intercepting suspects. In other words, its primary response to the problem of rhino poaching is manhunting. In tracing the genealogy of manhunting, Foucault in *History of Madness*, points out that the primary role of the *Hôpital Générale* was to "prevent begging and idleness, the sources of all disorder" (2006 in Neocleous 2013: 14). It was forbidden to beg in the streets or on the outskirts of the city of Paris, in churches or at the doors of houses and the punishment for such 'offences' was public whipping or branding and for repeated offences, labour in galley ships or even death. To stamp out this disorderly conduct, militia of the *Hôpital Générale* went out hunting for beggars (ibid.). Marx also alludes to the 'hunting down of rascals' and Africa as a site 'to hunt down black skins' for slave labour (ibid.). Neocleous contends that it was not only the fact that vagrancy was at odds with the established order, manhunts were a decidedly political tool that intensified after periods of rebellion and insurrection. It thus had a more political nature and "searches and roundups constituted the foundation of police power" (ibid.: 15).

Grégoire Chamayou explores the philosophical history of the manhunt, which is not to be understood as a metaphor but that it "refers to concrete historical phenomena in which human beings were tracked down, captured, or killed in accord with forms of the hunt" (2010: 1). He posits that in ancient Greece "the manhunt [is] a very literal practice connected to the institution of slavery" (ibid.: 4-5). Here Chamayou traces the purpose of battles and military raids in order to acquire slave labour as fundamental to the economic life of the Greek city state at the time. This form of acquisition of slaves through the art of war was conceived as distinct from piracy, prompting Aristotle to proclaim that this particular art of war – the manhunt - was a 'natural' form of acquisition (ibid.). In this way the ancient Greeks conceived of manhunting as an 'art' or a technology of governance. Nascent state formation was thus literally founded on the logics of pursuit and Neocleous (2013) extends this logic to how manhunting was also foundational to the formation of a capitalist order. In order to legitimize how humans can be hunted and made slaves and to make a distinction between those who can be hunted and those who cannot, it is essential to deny that certain groups and classes of people belong to humanity – "to reduce them to a bestial animality" (Chamayou 2010: 6). In other words, in legitimizing manhunting, it is necessary to consign the target of these manhunts as a non-sovereign subject, a

stateless person, the 'other' or nothing other than 'bipedal cattle' (ibid.). It naturalized the separation between slave and master that was no different to the separation between humans and animals. It was seen as part of the 'natural' order of things.

McClanahan and Wall (2016) show how former military operators bring the skills learnt in wars fought in Iraq and Afghanistan and transpose them into African conservation to curb the poaching of rhino and elephant. For these 'warrior conservationists', the practice of pursuit or becoming a "poacher hunter" lies at the centre of the pedagogical policing that informed security and policing operations in these theatres of war (ibid.: 129). Thus, "the way to save and preserve African wildlife from poaching is through…the predatory technology of the manhunt" (ibid.: 129). It speaks of the "individuation of warfare" where the "targets are no longer whole areas of cities", but individuals (Smith and Humphreys 2015: 202). The manhunt, thus "represents the most elemental and primal form of group violence" and its use is legitimated in defence of private property (ibid.: 202). Furthermore, McClanahan and Wall (2016) also show that in hunting poachers, the underlying logic is "the separation of local peoples from traditional means of subsistence that exist outside capitalist relations" (2016: 131). Manhunting, thus, lies at the heart of the operationalization of primitive accumulation. In seeking this separation, the purpose is the construction of social order and the concentration of resources in the hands of capital (ibid.).

Technically speaking then, if you want to arrest undesirables you have to go and find them. "Manhunting is a technique of governing by making people feel insecure…living in constant danger of being tracked down" (Chamayou 2010: 141). Where manhunts are a part of this technique of governing, its officers also need to be impelled to conduct these hunts. Police officers then, "have been given numerical targets and are held responsible by their superiors for meeting them" and often it results in the hunt taking on spectacular forms. (ibid.: 142). Manhunts then become central to the organization of police work and is foundational to measuring the productivity of police officers.

These insights into manhunting show that its philosophical and historical origins lay in the legitimate acquisition of slave labour and in subsequent epochs a technique to stamp out vagrancy for the purposes of compelling those former peasants and artisans who suffered alienation from subsistence labour during the processes of primitive accumulation,

into waged labour. In the Kruger, manhunting continues to be a foundational technique to the police project, in not only re-establishing law and order, but that it is central to the organization of work and the structuring, ordering and control of the labour in its employ in very specific ways. The following section seeks to bring this critical concept of police into conversation with theories on labour productivity. It will build a theoretical bridge between police, in attaining its central function in the administration of waged labour, to theories that seek to understand how labour value is generated in capitalist societies.

2.4   Towards a Theory of Productive Labour in Conservation

The preeminent function of having to discipline labour is to realize surplus value. The foregoing section shows that the administration of wage labour is central to the police project. While bending labour to the new conditions of wage labour after the processes of primitive accumulation took on brutal and repressive forms from public whipping and branding to slavery, chattel bondage or even death, these modes of labour discipline are no longer necessarily legitimate. It is crucial, therefore to understand how surplus value continues to be created; in what ways labour is disciplined and what those processes look like in contemporary workplaces and specifically so in the conservation workplace.

Castree and Henderson critically engage with Büscher's (2013) postulation that the *concrete labour* working on and around protected areas is limited simply because "their *non*-transformation is the goal" (2014: 23, emphasis in original). Thus conservation, if it is to be profitable, looks to create value *elsewhere* in places beyond the landscape being maintained. Part of Castree and Henderson's reading of Büscher is that he contends that one arena where the potential for capital accumulation lies in is in 'fictitious capital' and it is here that the value of conservation is increasingly being created and appropriated (ibid.: 23). This is not to say that Büscher (2013) denies the role of concrete labour in conservation but that in contemporary political economy, value is also conceived of through other means and increasingly that seems to lie in the circulation of fictitious capital. While these explorations into the myriad ways value is created in conservation are crucial, this section seeks to bring the focus

back to the role of concrete labour. Indeed, as Harvey posits, there can "be no embodiment of value without concrete labour" (2010: 29).

Genese Sodikoff argues that a "scholarly analysis of conservation labour has been virtually absent" (2009: 445). Maano Ramutsindela also argues that there is "a need to know what happens to labour when capitalism penetrates into conservation areas and infuses new systems of value" (2015: 2260). In effect, it is a question of "how labour is produced, structured and controlled" (ibid.: 2268). To address this gap in the literature, this section revisits Cleaver's contention of the importance of Marx's theory of labour value, or, as he likes to conceptualize it, *"a theory of the value of labour to capital"* (2017: 65, emphasis in original). It provides an entry point back to the historical primacy of labour where the imposition of work was central to augment the wealth of nations during the *ancien régime* and continues to form a substantial avenue for realizing surplus value (ibid.). It offers a crucial avenue to answer what Genese Sodikoff (2009) considers a significant question related to the labour process and how conservation labour can be rendered productive. Furthermore, a central concern of the police project in the fabrication of social order is that this "fabrication of social order is organized around the administration of wage labour" (Neocleous 2013: 8). Thus, it brings together - theoretically speaking – the central concern of two critical concepts central to this thesis, namely police and its role in the imposition and administration of labour and the theory of labour value. Both modes are preoccupied with labour productivity and the generation of surplus value and it is crucial to apply those standpoints to the conservation workplace to see its effects. This thesis is concerned with how the former realizes the latter.

The Concept of Labour

The concept of labour itself is also in need of demarcation. It is a concept that can be defined as simple or complex, abstract or concrete, productive or unproductive, material or immaterial, amongst others. These various conceptualizations arise from the notion that Marx conceived of labour as a purely 'formative activity', one that is productive, where humans give 'form' to materials (Sayer 2007). Critics counter that there are many kinds of work that do not fit this definition and that many forms of work in the post-industrial age, based on services, point to new forms of work that can

be seen as immaterial (ibid.). Sayer counters this critique as superficial and unsatisfactory, because "Marx's theory of labour as 'formative' is not self-evident, nor is it based upon an isolated metaphor" (ibid.: 433). Sayer argues that it is necessary to conceive labour as "not a purely instrumental activity to meet only individual needs; it is always and necessarily a social activity" (2007: 434). In other words, "[i]t involves and sustains relations with others" (ibid.: 434).

Sayer contends that Marx's conceptualization of labour is founded on a Hegelian philosophy of labour, where Hegel notes that it is not only the material labour that gives rise to form that should be of concern but also the ways in which material labour harnesses those inorganic forms in the overall labour process.

> for example, I build a windmill, I have not given form to the air, but I have constructed a form in order to utilize the air…Even the fact that I conserve game may be regarded as a way of imparting form, <u>for it is a mode of conduct calculated to preserve the object in question</u> (Hegel 1991, § 56A: 86 in Sayer 2007: 434-435, emphasis added).

It is this insight by Hegel that is central to this thesis. Labour must be conceptualized not only as an inherently social activity and the role it plays in sustaining relations with others but it is the *mode of conduct* that is derived from the nature of these social relations that is crucial to understanding how labour is structured, ordered and controlled in the conservation workplace.

2.4.1 The Question of Labour and Value Creation in Conservation: The Centrality of Social Relations

Leaning on these insights by Sayer (2007), that labour is not to be conceived only as creating a material product but can be seen in a myriad of ways, including to conserve an object, to change the character of people or transform social relations. Here, the emphasis is on the *kind* of productive activity fostered in a society where people obtain what they want through exchange of value equivalents (Ollman 2003). Marx was thus inherently interested in "[w]hat *kind* of political, cultural, religious, and social life fosters such exchange and is, in turn, fostered by it" (ibid: 29, emphasis in original). By focusing on the relations of production,

Marx's analysis of the capitalist mode of production, is not "an economic treatise but…a work on social praxis" (ibid.: 29).

Michael Burawoy (1985) posits that it is therefore necessary for the process of production to also include political and ideological effects. Where raw materials are converted into manufactured goods through the labour power of workers, simultaneously, this labour process also "reproduce[s] particular social relations as well as an experience of those relations" (ibid.: 7-8). It is here that Burawoy offers a crucial additional building block. Alongside this labour process, "there are distinctive political and ideological *apparatus of production* which regulate production relations…[a] *production regime* or, more specifically, factory regime [which] embraces both these dimensions of production politics" (ibid.: 8, emphasis in original). Karl von Holdt develops Burawoy's apparatus of production – one that takes seriously a particular set of social relations and an experience of those relations – to match what he observed in a South African steel mill. He develops what he calls the *apartheid workplace regime* that provides a useful analytical handle to account for the racial structuring of the labour process in the South African context (Von Holdt 2003) and the role racial subordination plays in the politics of production. Joan Acker posits that it is these "interrelated practices, processes, action and meanings that result in and maintain class, gender, and race inequalities"

It is here that David Bunn (1996) offers a crucial analysis of how labour value on the sugar plantations in the province of Natal and the private game reserves adjacent to the KNP was generated through the particular 'politics of production'. In the 1920s, South African agriculture was experiencing its most intense phase of capitalization (Bunn 1996). In effect, the South African experience was, restating with differences, "the landscape aesthetics and property relations of nineteenth-century Britain" (ibid: 43). It was not only the aesthetics of the farm as a landscape but also game reserves and their associated agrarian labour pool that were being reimagined to match the picturesque English estate and its nineteenth-century village (ibid.). For Bunn the relationship between the production of landscape and the labour required to produce those landscapes, distilled itself in the notion of value. Bunn (1996) posits that the main arenas for extracting use value lay in the destruction of two elements, both having its origin in what was considered 'natural'. One was the exhaustion of "[n]ature as a site of value" under industrialized agriculture and the other the 'destruction' or exploitation of the "natural

bonds of fealty" between peasant labour and their feudal lords that coincided with the commoditization of tropical labour (ibid: 43). Thus, labour value lay in an intense "nostalgia for 'reserved' spaces where remnants of archaic value are to be found" (Bunn 2003: 207). It was in these bounded spaces, the nature reserve, that "preserved not only animals, but an older order of labour relation" where the archaic value of African game guards was ensconced in a "rictal mask of obedience" (Bunn 2001: 10).

By the mid-20th century, the creation of private game reserves adjacent to the existing KNP had so altered the eco-social environment of the lowveld that the livelihoods and survival of peasant families in the district were almost entirely tied to their employment in these spaces. It is in this context that a certain typology of labourer was cultivated, one who was at the same time both docile and one who best encapsulated the romanticized notion of the Shangaan or Zulu subject. It was thus a subject who was at once docile and a warrior in the embodiment of a tracker with formidable bush craft nous and an intimate understanding of the landscape and its fearsome wildlife (Bunn 1996). It was in the cultivation of this "appropriate ethnic subject" (ibid.: 46) that value was to be found. Performing this image of a docile subject willing to serve their master and excite the sensibilities of Europeans in navigating their passage through the dangers of the African bush was what was valued in these enclaved spaces. It was these qualities together with their meekness that were interpreted as fealty. Where livelihood survival was so closely linked to employment, Africans understood that they had to reproduce these qualities of labour value. While it brings into the analysis the notion of worker agency in shaping these dialectical relationships, this section wishes to emphasize that labour discipline was directly linked to the processes of primitive accumulation and the concomitant precarious livelihoods that came with the transformation of the landscape into game reserves. In other words, it emphasizes the structural features that gives rise to these modes of conduct.

2.5 The Politics of Production and Shaping the Ideal Worker: Race and the Structural Features of the Labour Process

Thus, following these insights above, our attention should be directed at the *nature* of social relations within the workplace and the manner it shapes *modes of conduct*. These factors give rise to a specific politics of production. David Harvey, in explicating the immaterial yet objective nature of value, contends that "[v]alue is a social relation, and you cannot actually see, touch, or feel social relations directly; yet they have an objective presence" (2010: 33, emphasis in original). Where value cannot always be directly perceived in the form of social relations, an analysis of social relations also has to include an analysis of race.

In tandem with these forms of social domination premised on race, the labour process itself also employs certain techniques to attract industry or eke out productivity from the labour force. Here regulatory concessions, for example leniency in pollution controls or tax incentives for corporate entities; or incentives in the form of supplementary income to low waged workers are mobilized to realize the desired economic activity or worker productivity. However, these workplace regimes premised on domination and unequal relations also foster worker resistance. It is crucial to critically evaluate resistance when it is construed as criminal or deviant. Together, these structural aspects of race and incentives play a crucial role in realizing a mode of conduct central to generating surplus value but that these techniques are also resisted by labour in a myriad of ways.

2.5.1 A Structural Interpretation of Racism and its By-products: Paternalism and Whiteness

Bernhard Magubane (1987) contends that it is in South Africa where the issue of race and class in society, while observable in many societies across the globe, has presented itself in its most pathological form. While this thesis does not wish to perpetuate the myth of South African exceptionalism, it does say something about the salience of race and class in South African society more generally and the South African workplace more specifically.

Here this section leans on Bonilla-Silva's (1997) seminal contribution of a structural interpretation of racism. He argues that, in the area of race

and ethnic studies, a slew of analysts has abandoned a thorough interrogation and reconceptualization of a phenomenon that is often at the centre of their concern – racism. He argues that for many, the notion of racism is assumed as self-evidentiary and that it is regarded as a purely ideological phenomenon (ibid.). Racism is thus reduced to a set of beliefs, implying that it is primarily through the lens of individual prejudice that racism operates in society and that those who hold racist views are irrational or stupid (ibid.). Marxist perspectives also reduce racism to merely a by-product of class dynamics, but argue that it is ultimately class that is the primary engine of social life (ibid.). In other words, the definition of class is delimited to "one's position within the relations of production", divided between the bourgeoisie who own the means of production and those owning labour power, the proletariat (Ekers 2015: 546). However, Ekers argues, that class is but one of a "broader number of relations of difference including 'race', gender and sexuality" (ibid.): 546). Institutionalist perspectives have brought in the notion of power that allow for the dominance at all levels in society. Where racism is viewed through an institutional lens, it posits a system in which whites are able to "raise [their] social position by exploiting, controlling, and keeping down others who are categorized in racial or ethnic terms" (ibid.: 466). Race then acts as an organizing principle central to social relations that "shapes the identity of actors at a micro level and shapes all spheres of social life at the macro level" (ibid.: 466). However, Bonilla-Silva contends that these interpretations consign racism to a racial project of neoconservatives or the far right obscuring the general character of racialized societies. In formulating a framework that centres race as a general characteristic of society, Bonilla-Silva sees the term racism as a means to describe racial ideology, which in itself is only part of a larger *racialized social system* (ibid.). It is this racialized social system that forms the theoretical apparatus for Bonilla-Silva's analysis of race in society. This apparatus

> refers to societies in which economic, political, social, and ideological levels are partially structured by the placement of actors in racial categories or races (Bonilla-Silva 1997: 469).

He thus posits that processes of racialization have 'pertinent effects' in social systems, where racial categories placed in "superior position[s]…receive greater economic remuneration and access to better occupations and/or prospects in the labour market, occupies a primary

position in the political system, is granted higher social estimation" (ibid.: 469-470). It is this totality of practices that constitutes a racialized social system. These practices are, however, not static, racism has shifted from eminently overt to indirectly covert (ibid.). Indeed, overt racism is no longer seen as legitimate (Christian 2019). Where races are beneficiaries of social rewards, ensuring these interests are maintained, they are attained collectively as opposed to individually and shaped in the field of real practical struggles. Where the general interests in society might be to eliminate these racial structures, this metamorphosis does not result in race-free societies but in social systems where these relations are merely reconfigured. A situation where not all members of a subordinate group occupy subordinate positions in a social system it in itself is not evidence of a non-racialized social system (Bonilla-Silva 1997).

However, Christian argues that Bonilla-Silva "omitted two essential components (or levels) from his racialized social systems approach: historical formations and global linkages" (2019: 172). In retooling Bonilla-Silva's racialized social systems, Christian (2019) seeks to make colonialism global which "re-centres racialized hierarchies in the making of the modern world" (ibid.: 172). Her analytical lens – a global critical race and racism (GCRR) framework – proposes, in part, that

> national histories shape contemporary racial practices and mechanisms, materiality is the foundation, racism is defined structurally and ideologically, and global white supremacy is produced and rearticulated in new deeply rooted and malleable forms (Christian 2019: 172, emphasis added).

Furthermore, Vincent also argues that social relations are influenced by a myriad of forces beyond the factory gate and that "specific manifestations of the labour process are socially unique…[that] struggle at the point of production is socially complex and not the same as class struggle within the broader social formation" (2015: 2). Therefore, we should look for what specific forms these social relations take on in the Kruger.

These racialized social systems are also evidenced in policing where racial bias is embedded in the regularity of the law (see (Hall et al. 1978, Harcourt 2001, Seigel 2018). In the U.S., it was most notable in the vagrancy laws based on legal and cultural restrictions on racial integration where people of colour were automatic signifiers of threat in white neighbourhoods (Schrader 2019). In the light of the unconstitutionality

of these vagrancy laws and in response to widespread civil unrest in response to these racial signifiers in police actions, criminologists in the 1960s were compelled to undergo a re-articulation, alluded to by Christian (2019) above, of what categories constituted a threat (ibid.). In conceptualizing order maintenance policing and its ostensible move away from overt racial categorization of threat, it only served to *rework* the salience of race where the "prognostic criteria for police intervention [was] drained of racial meaning" (Schrader 2019: 257). However, racialization in policing continues despite these ostensibly "non-racial forms of ascription of risk", where formal categorizations were previously founded explicitly on colour, police officers are now "compelled to use other proxies, like reputable or disreputable" (ibid.: 257). In reality, the U.S. political economy has not been relieved of the historical inequities that shaped the terrain of policing (ibid.). Its purpose is merely to achieve political legitimacy and suggest an image of police professionalization and neutrality and it is still people of colour who are in the main, the object of policing.

Intersecting with this analysis of structural racism at a macro-level, social relations at a workplace level are also characterised by racialized paternalism (see Du Toit 1993, Orton et al. 2001, Smith 2003, Van Onselen 1997) and whiteness (see Alcoff 1996, Ahmed 2012, Burnett 2018, Pugliese 2005, Wekker 2016). The former refers to a set of social relations that has characterised employment relations defining not only women's subordination to men but the subordinate position of blacks vis-à-vis white managers and supervisors (Orton et al. 2001). These paternalistic relations are often associated with what Smith (2003) characterizes as a dormitory labour regime (see below). In the Japanese context, paternalism is based on the preference of the employer to 'give' or make concessions to workers as opposed to ceding those concessions as a result of worker's demands (ibid.). Such 'giving' denotes a power imbalance between workers and employers and it was also founded on discriminatory and differentiating politics (ibid.). Paternalism mirrored feudal bonds of reciprocity and dependence and within an industrial workplace setting its purpose was "to deny or reduce conflict through the exercise of power by employers, in exchange for obedience, deference and diligence by workers" (ibid.: 334). Paternalism is foundational to the 'politics of production' alluded to by Burawoy (1985) and even though these social relations could not be 'seen or touched' (after Harvey 2010),

it "extended the diffuse bonds of exchange between employer and worker beyond the sale or purchase of labour services" (Smith 2003: 334).

Whiteness also provides another crucial conceptual prism through which to analyse the contemporary operation of race and racial inequality (Van Zyl and Boersema 2017). Whiteness should be read "as a configuration of power, privilege and identity consisting of white racialized ideologies and practices, with material and social ramifications" (ibid.: 2017). Here, the manner power and privilege intersect with the social construction of identity is an important handle to help understand how race operates in postcolonial contexts as well as acknowledging the heterogeneity in the ways the politics of whiteness plays out across the African continent (ibid.). How these racial interactions play out at a micro-level then, are subject to the particular context. Firstly, where the symbolic power of nature and wildlife "congeal the complex meanings and struggles about identity and sovereignty" (Field 2008 in Sodikoff 2012: 7), the rhino poaching issue has become constitutive of whiteness and a sense of belonging (Burnett 2018). In a postcolonial and post-apartheid context then, white communities have to constantly negotiate these new political realities to reassert their privileged positions (Van Zyl and Boersema 2017). Nature and the conservation of biodiversity and landscapes has become one such arena in which these white communities are able to reassert their privilege. Rhino poaching marks a perceived threat to that portion of society seeking to protect its privileges and where those privileges are asymmetrically apportioned along racial lines in South Africa, these collective claims of threat emanate predominantly from a white section of South African society. Moreover, where the somatic makeup of institutions is skewed towards whites, not necessarily in sheer numerical numbers but the occupation of critical operational and strategic layers, it shapes institutional epistemologies, cultures and bodies (Pugliese 2005). It creates the illusion of competence and coherence (Ahmed 2012) and imparts the figure of the white male as having a higher order of knowledge (Pugliese 2005). Where whiteness is not considered a racialized or ethnicized positioning, where it is seen as "ordinary, so lacking in characteristics, so normal, so devoid of meaning", pointing out its presence risks rendering the act equally devoid of meaning (Wekker 2016: 2). It is precisely this invisibility of whiteness that renders pointing out its presence inconclusive, yet it is "the visibility of non-whiteness that marks it as a target and a denigrated particularity" (Alcoff 1996: 8). Crucially,

these phenomena – paternalism and whiteness - should not be reduced to individuals who exhibit racist behaviour but that the observation of racism in individuals is a function of the manner it becomes reproduced in organizations – that individual racisms are a product of institutional racism (Ahmed 2012). Thus, social domination cannot be reduced to "discrete instances of intentional, arbitrary interferences" by individual actors but should be read in the context of the "relational and historical process that structures the position of one group of individuals vis-à-vis others" (Cicerchia 2022: 8).

2.5.2 Structural Features in the Labour Process: Realizing Worker Productivity and Worker Resistance

Racialized social systems premised on paternalism and whiteness alone, however, are not sufficient in itself to produce, structure and control a labour force. While these social relations have material effects they should be seen to operate in tandem with structural features embedded in the labour process. In this section, I lean on the insights of labour process theory – a framework to describe a specific mode of work organization – and the ways in which the structural features of the labour process with respect to incentives or supplementary income shape modes of conduct (Vincent 2015). These insights help to formulate part of a schema to explain that field ranger practices in the KNP, which are at times disproportionate, irregular and/or extrajudicial, do not arise entirely out of a vacuum of voluntarism but through processes of both social domination, outlined above, and features embedded within the labour process. If we see irregular practices entirely through the capacity of an individual to act arbitrarily (as in say the common trope of 'rotten apples' within an institution), it precludes an analysis of a key feature within the labour process that structures these workplace practices.

One of the seminal thinkers on the labour process, Harry Braverman (1974 in Vincent 2015), posits that for managers to ensure worker productivity, they are perpetually "trying to reduce the indeterminacy of labour power…they are seeking to control the pace and organization of work" to ensure the realization of surplus value (2015: 1). The primary function then of managers, is to extend their control over work (ibid.). Thus, control was central to Braverman's thesis and it alluded to "work environments in which there is low trust, coercion, limited worker

responsibility, and a generally directed and regulated working environment" (Smith 2015: 225). However, critics of Braverman contend that he overstated the importance of managerial control of labour, that subsequent thinkers in labour process theory also highlight themes of compliance and consent (ibid.). While rigid control can be expensive and counterproductive, it does not necessarily mean the end of managerial control and can coexist with other forms of work organization (ibid.).

Furthermore, Braverman also overlooked worker agency, their capacity to "game the system" and in so doing manipulating work organization (Vincent 2015: 2). Workers, Vincent argues, are thus "cocreators of the system of control rather than merely subjects of it" (ibid.: 2). However, focusing solely on the diversity of worker agency, proponents of a Marxian analysis of the labour process argue, that it distracts from challenging material issues such as wages and working conditions (see McKinlay 2007, Vincent 2015). In the capitalist mode of production, exploitation is not an untended or unfortunate lapse, "but inherent in the employment relationship" (McKinlay 2007: 1). Furthermore, despite the critique of Braverman, the continued relevance of his work is evidenced in the fact that managers *do* have various strategies of control to shape organizational practice in their pursuit of efficient forms of organization (Vincent 2015). Managerial forms are thus not neutral, they are able transform the "*potential* productivity latent in labour power into *actual* work and output" (McKinlay 2007: 1, emphasis in original).

Of the multiple forms in which employers are able to organize work, only a handful of key modes of managerial control are highlighted here in terms of its relevance to labour control in the Kruger. One such form of exercising authority over workers during their time at work is what Chris Smith refers to as a *dormitory labour system* (Smith 2003). It is the provision of dormitories by firms, an arrangement where workers live where they work. The benefits are, amongst others, that firms essentially have a labour force 'on tap' and the low staff turnover and retention of skilled labour could provide these firms with a competitive advantage (Smith 2003). Part of such an arrangement is that firms are able develop a protracted relationship with workers and their families. Associated with such arrangement of living at work, is its association with paternalism (see Section 2.5.1 above). The widespread use of dormitories – or compounds - in the South African workplace, such as mines, commercial farms and, pertinently, the Kruger, denotes that its use was therefore "more *systemic*

than *contingent"* (Smith 2003: 334, emphasis in original). The dormitory labour system thus creates a systemic environmental constraint which gives employers the advantage of control over workers in order to maximise labour productivity during the working day (ibid.). In this way, managers have additional measures of control over the working lives of workers beyond the market relationship. It helps to suppress wages, extends management authority in terms of lengthening the working day and blurs the customary or employment regulations on overtime and the spatial and emotional separation between work and home (ibid.). Smith (2003) also makes a distinction between the provision of housing for whole families and single-sex workers. In terms of the former, the relations are more 'paternalistic' where the 'care' of the worker is also geared to care for existing and future generations of workers. Its purpose is thus to 'secure' a supply "of *particular* workers for the exclusive use of the *particular* employer" (Smith 2003: 335, emphasis in original). This particularism also differentiates certain workers form others in that it denotes metrics of loyalty, length of service and employee skill profile. It is thus discriminatory and not based on a universal principle of rights with the result that certain workers benefit from particular relationships with employees and can access economic or social inducements such as allowances, social events or education scholarships for children (see Smith 2003). Single-sex dormitories in contrast have no interest in the reproduction of a next generation of workers. Its purpose is maximizing the labour services of temporary, migrant and contract labour (ibid.). In the Kruger, a fusion of these forms of dormitory labour is observable both in the past and the present-day.

A second strategy adopted by Kruger managers that this thesis wants to highlight, is the question of incentives. In order to maximize productivity or stimulate economic activity, the labour process creates incentives for individuals and corporate entities in the form of bonuses, regulatory leniency, subsidies or tax incentives (Cicerchia 2022). McKinlay also notes that, in order to overcome the stubborn opposition of workers, managers have attempted to skirt these resistances through "indirect means, such as the use of ramshackle incentive systems" (2007: 1). For Cleaver (2017), money itself has become a terrain of contestation that affects the ways in which it ruptures the value of work to capital. Money, in effect, subverts worker struggles and resistances and enables greater forms of control over labour. Cleaver argues that money hides and

increases exploitation (ibid.), particularly where it takes the form of significant supplementary or irregular income in the form of overtime or bonuses for meeting certain productivity targets. Where these productivity targets are premised on aggression and violence in the context of field ranger practices explored in this thesis, money can also shape workplace practices in disturbing and perverted ways. Sodikoff (2009) shows the mutually constitutive ways in which conservation agents either through their own actions or through collusion with people in their social worlds perpetuate a degree of forest degradation for subsistence agriculture. Forest clearing is directly correlated to the continued dependence on cheap agrarian labour for integrated conservation and development programmes (ICDPs). It is this structural feature in the labour process – below subsistence wages - that ensures the endurance of both forest clearing and the continued legitimisation of conservation and development programmes that are at the foundation of these dilemmas.

Worker Resistance

At first glance, this section on worker agency and worker resistances to modes of work organization may seem to be in tension with the primacy given to the material or structural features of the labour process raised above. It is a debate – between agency and structure – that continues to raise a lively contestation of ideas in the field of study related to the labour process (Vincent 2015). Michael Burawoy's (1985) seminal work showed that workers can retain agency despite the hostile environments in which they work. This section seeks to show that where worker agency is construed as crime or corruption, that such characterizations to delegitimise worker resistance to hostile work conditions and racialized social systems, require critical analysis.

There exists a power struggle between those actors who seek to preserve the structures that maintain their political and social dominance and access to resources vis-à-vis those who are subordinated in these struggles (Brandt 2016). These tensions vacillate between barely discernible resistances cloaked beneath the routine of cooperation to overt, and at times collective, struggles to challenge the frameworks that structure and embody the power discrepancies and the inequalities associated with them (ibid.). This theoretical thread, derived from James Scott's (1985) seminal work, *Weapons of the Weak,* shows how peasants in

agrarian societies challenge domination by landlords and the state. Phakathi lays out a number of strategies used by workers on the mines under the various workplace regimes to reassert their autonomy, ranging from "desertion, output restriction, go-slows, effort and time bargaining, sabotage, deliberate accidents, feigning sickness, drunkenness and theft" (2012: 284). These forms of workplace resistance to cope with tight management controls, despotic white supervision and hazardous working conditions that typified underground gold mining conditions can easily be assigned categories that are deemed deviant or criminal. This is evidenced in organizational studies where, for example, the misuse of employer's time and property by an employee is framed as 'theft' (Snider 2001).

The question then arises around the issue when worker resistance is framed instead as criminal conduct. In his study of the policing and criminalization of urban black and Latino youth, Rios (2011) proposes the concept *deviant politics* 'as a way of getting back at the system' where deviant behaviour is conceived as a response to ubiquitously oppressive forms of social control by police in poor and under resourced neighbourhoods. His interlocutors believed they had gained redress for the punitive social control they had encountered by adopting a subculture of resistance even when it included openly criminal acts. These transgressions served as a resource for feeling empowered and for gaining redress for the humiliation, stigma, and punishment they encountered (ibid.).

The function of deviance is, thus, also deployed to challenge the norm (Little 2016). Anti-apartheid struggles and resistance, while illegal, offered a counterpoint to institutionalized racism and segregation. Where deviance is punished, Emile Durkheim argues, it seeks to reaffirm currently held norms, which in his view, was a positive response beneficial to the good order and functioning of society (ibid.). However, unlike Durkheim, a critical sociology does not see crime as a necessary function of society but rather evidence of inequality (ibid.). Where acts of economic sabotage as listed by Phakathi (2012) and Scott (1985), or in the context of this thesis, the complicity of staff in the poaching of rhino, theft or illegal/unprotected strikes, should be viewed as a direct challenge to social injustice. Little (2016) emphasizes that this analysis

> is not meant to excuse or rationalize crime, but to locate its underlying sources at the appropriate level so they can be addressed effectively (ibid.: 306).

From this perspective, crime is not simply seen as functional or neutral. Institutions and criminal justice *are* part of governmental techniques that actively maintain unequal power structures. Who and what activity is labelled as deviant is part of who has the power to assign those labels – often those individuals or groups whose privilege and private property is being challenged (ibid.). Where theft is considered a major category of crime and where vagrants are labelled as deviant, these characterizations demonstrates a deep resonance with the historical rationale in establishing social order – the protection of asymmetrical property rights and the administration of productive work (ibid.). While this analysis does not provide a fully conceptualized theory of deviance as workplace resistance, it does offer a starting point by focusing on the underlying sources stemming, in part, from structural and social domination where we should direct our attention. Framing these acts simply as crime or corruption obfuscates the underlying injustices.

2.6   Concluding Remarks: The Police Labour Regime – bringing together theories on Police, Labour and Race

In summary, the theoretical building blocks of this thesis are premised on 1.) understanding police in its expanded form where violence work is central to state power and its role in the administration of social order and waged labour; 2.) conceiving labour productivity seen not only to be embedded in social relations but reflective of the *nature* of those social relations and the ways in which they *shape modes of conduct*; 3.) conceiving racism as part of a broader racialized social system with material effects; its deep malleability and ability to metamorphize at conjunctural moments – with the intensification of rhino poaching in the KNP seen as one such event; and one that sees national histories not consigned to the past but that they continue to shape contemporary practices and mechanisms; 4.) the structural features of the labour process such as supplementary income in the form of incentives or bonuses/rewards and the spatial working/living modalities of workers shape ranger practices and obscure greater forms of labour exploitation that render workers precarious; 5.) that sabotage should not simply be labelled as a crime or corruption but that we should look to its underlying causes; and 6.) collectively, these features evidenced in the labour process in the KNP are not static but even when there is change, it does not mean a society free, for example,

of racism or labour exploitation, but that these   features become reconstituted in ways that are less discernible and obscured by acts of care and consent.

Neocleous (2000) posits that it is wage labour that is at the centre of the police project in fabricating order. However, very little is said about the labour that metes out state violence – police officers themselves - and the manner this class of workers are produced, structured and controlled. Thus, analysing what effect these processes hold for black, low salaried field rangers in the Kruger National Park, this thesis proposes the *police labour regime* as a critical concept to unravel these dynamics. It offers a broader schema that overcomes the narrow emphasis, focused either on securitisation regimes (see McMichael 2012) or production regimes (see Burawoy 1985, Von Holdt 2003). Furthermore, it is this conceptualization of a police labour regime that makes the Kruger distinct from other workplace regimes such as the factory floor, the mine or the white-owned commercial farm where labour is also structured and controlled in different ways.

The empirical chapters that follow will make linkages to these theoretical insights. Chapter 3 will trace the trajectory of how labour was simultaneously produced and erased in the making of the Kruger landscape and, in the production of that landscape how labour was ordered, structured and controlled. It will also show that a specific mode of primitive accumulation, together with material aspects of the labour process such as below subsistence wages, rations and compounded accommodation created a hostile work environment and played a crucial role in labour control. It also highlights that the Kruger melded a particular form of dormitory labour and that it used this form of managerial control together with rations, and low wages to maximize and control the daily reproduction of labour power. It melds these historical insights into the production of labour with a historical insight into the Park's relations with the apartheid security forces and how this relationship shaped its martial practices in Chapter 4. These features that lay the groundwork of how labour was produced and structured together with the particular workplace practices, premised on a policing logic that typify the work of field rangers, are inexorable forces that guide how the productive value of labour within the Park has metamorphized. Chapters 5 and 6 will show that the productive value of labour in its 'war on poaching' lay in the expression of violence. Leaning on the insights of

Pugliese (2013) in how violence is rendered productive, in the context of torture in U.S. detention sites, the 'exchange' value of 'high value information' in exchange for withholding pain is what drives the economy of violence. In the Kruger this calculative economy - while still premised on violence - differs in its inner workings. It shows that concrete labour in conservation continues to be central to the labour process but that it has metamorphized from loyalty and docility to violence and aggression. However, it is the mode of conduct as a marker of labour value, that remains central, it has merely shifted from its historical form of docility interpreted as loyalty to the use of aggression in the contemporary conjunctural moment. It also means that this mode of conduct is not fossilized, it can revert to the former or metamorphize into something completely different (see Christian 2019). Where pacification elicits uncomfortable questions (see above), commentators on the rhino poaching issue in the Kruger and wildlife crime more generally, need reminding that it is merely a substitute for counterinsurgency. Together with manhunting, it is foundational to a very specific mode of governance in the Kruger. It is part of a larger police project in bringing about social order where order is not a benign response to a need to feel safe but a very specific mode of government. Its effects are not only to secure private and state property, secure white belonging and a sense of collective white identity in saving nature, reassert the Park's sanctioned authorities vis-à-vis its black neighbours or punish those who disturb the prevailing order but also to structure the labour within Kruger. Lastly, Chapter 7 shows the cumulative effects these features embedded in the labour process have on the field rangers engaged in anti-poaching operations. It demonstrates how field rangers are locked into the imposition of violent forms of work out of fear of losing significant forms of supplementary income. It is through these significant forms of supplementary income that field rangers become financially indebted through the purchase of affirmational consumer products. Where they either lose this supplementary income or are excluded from it, it may lead those who are indebted or those who seek to acquire aspirational consumer products, to participate in forms of workplace sabotage which, in turn, are framed as corruption.

Notes

[1] This naturalness was encapsulated in the notion that if prices of grain were allowed to rise through a mechanism of naturalness, this rise would stop by itself (Foucault 2009: 349). In other words, "…the price of grain will not continue to rise indefinitely but will settle neither too high nor too low, it will simply settle at a level that is the just level. This is the thesis of the just price" (Foucault 2009: 343).

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Producing the Kruger Landscape: The Historical Production, Erasure and Control of Labour in the KNP

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An Ethnographic Interlude: The Working Day

A Fraction of Everyday Ranger Life: The Working Day

Its predawn, 04h30 on a section ranger outpost somewhere in the Kruger National Park (KNP) on a crisp, clear June morning, in the middle of the South African winter. It's still dark, no indication yet that the rising sun will soon paint the eastern horizon in a beautiful, almost banal, palette of orange and reds. In the distance a leopard rasps in its guttural way, becoming ever fainter as it continues to patrol the limits of its territory; a fiery-necked nightjar [1] makes its almost presciently ominous lament considering the potentially violent manner in which the day could unfold. *Good-Lord-Deliver-Us-Good-Lord-Deliver-Us* it calls repeatedly - a nocturnal birdcall that is not at all part of the characteristic soft melody that will later coincide with the rising of the sun. I assemble with a group of field rangers and one ranger corporal. Some have just emerged from their single roomed accommodation,[2] their boots still untied, one has a cup of tea in hand, another zipping up his backpack so the contents don't spill, indicating their haste in getting up to face yet another day – perhaps also indicating either their reluctance or indifference to performing the routine that has become a trademark of their everyday work. They jostle to sign out their issued R1/R2 semi-automatic battle[3] rifles from the communal rifle safe. Others have been ready for some time, their battle jackets bulging with tactical first aid kits, Global Positioning System (GPS) units, multiple spare ammunition magazines and hand-held two-way radios; their semi-automatic rifles are slung over their shoulders and there is an easy conversation in xiTsonga[4] after the ritualized round of brazing-up, a militarized form of salute. The conversation is intermittingly interrupted by the sound of the cycling of their rifle bolts, checking that the rifles are safe; the characteristic sound of the insertion of a fully loaded magazine into the magazine receiver; the adjustment of a tactical rifle sling; and the

rechecking of a rifle scope. These firearms are not the factory grade models I was accustomed to; these rifles had distinct modifications – folding-stocks, red dot rifle sights,[5] camouflage/tactical paint, tactical white and infrared torches mounted on the hand guards and shortened barrels – identical to the rifles used by specialized South African police and military units not only during apartheid but still in use today. These rifle modifications have surpassed their original utilitarian purpose – they have been transformed into tools with purposes other than for the protection of field rangers against potentially dangerous wildlife and the occasional encounter with armed poachers in days gone past.

The ranger corporal sits in the idling single cab pick-up truck, smoking while he fills out the vehicle log sheet; the cabin heater turned on full blast to ward of the biting cold. He has been up since 03h00, a habit which has become his routine since the escalation of rhino poaching in his section some six years ago – mostly thinking about how he will deploy his colleagues this morning and how he can outsmart the multiple groups of poachers coming to hunt in his section – a burden of responsibility and planning that is clearly not equally shared by everyone in the group. Everyone is clad in their characteristic olive-green uniforms,[6] cold weather jackets and balaclavas - woollen full-faced hats mostly associated with 1970s era television bank robbers that only reveal the eyes and mouth of the wearer. It's *cold*. All these men on this morning who form part of the Field Ranger Corp of the Ranger Services department, are black. The section rangers, on the other hand, who are responsible for all conservation and law enforcement functions in each of the twenty two management units (or sections as they are commonly referred to) throughout the Park, could be black or white; male or female.

On this morning and as with most other mornings that I spend with field rangers during my twelve-month ethnography into conservation anti-poaching efforts in the KNP, the section ranger rarely, if ever, joins us. The task of countering the poaching threat at this everyday, distinctly unspectacular, risk laden and disagreeable coal face of the 'war on poaching' is left to this demographic of men (which also includes a small proportion of women)[7] - often low paid, black, post-apartheid iterations of migrant forms of labour.

Its hard to think that behind the easy banter and smiling eyes are individuals who are extraordinarily skilled in bush craft – their confidence in traversing extensive areas on foot that is peppered with potentially

dangerous wildlife – buffalo, elephant, rhinoceros, lion, leopard, hippopotamus, venomous snakes – comes with a deep understanding of animal behaviour and having the ability to judge what situations warrant what sort of reaction when confronted by any of these animals. It is a workplace that is mostly traversed without fear, where competence from a senior field ranger, often with an accumulated institutional and bush knowledge of as much of thirty years, is passed on to a junior field ranger; a competence that grows with every encounter until walking into a breeding herd of elephant and being completely surrounded while on foot merely requires a cool head and copious amounts of courage to see how these animals, who are already agitated by the scent of humans in the air, will react. And if the situation requires, they have the rifle competency to protect themselves and stop a charging elephant in its tracks. There are also teams of rangers where this confidence and competence is lacking and the near deadly experiences of past encounters with elephant insinuates an aura of fear of the potentiality that lies waiting every time they step off the vehicle to enter the swathes of the dense bush that lie ahead of them. It is also their almost unfailing ability to orienteer without the aid of a map or compass in an area the size of the state of Israel in places intermittently marked by management jeep tracks or tourist roads in relatively dense bush that repeatedly astounds me. Trees, bends in a streambed, termite mounds, windmills or pans are often the only navigational aids they require in a landscape so flat it rarely offers any topographical clues of where you are.

But most astonishing of all the tools in their bush craft repertoire is their ability to detect and follow human tracks for extended periods. Its a learned skill, an embedded institutional practice that possibly dates back to the inception of the Park at the turn of the 20th century. It is a skill that rangers in those early years most likely developed from following the herds of cattle belonging to their fathers. A skill so refined that some herd boys could discern the tracks of an individual bull in his father's herd in instances where the herds of many pastoralists intermingled. It is a skill that was further honed during the time when field rangers were the frontline agents of the apartheid state in detecting refugees[8] and job seekers illegally crossing the international border between Mozambique and South Africa, walking across the gauntlet that is the Kruger National Park, risking death by dehydration or being eaten by prides of lion who have become adept at hunting and terrorising the steady flow of travellers;

or risking capture and suffering either the indignities so often meted out to those seeking better lives and at other times death at the hands of a SADF soldier or conscript whose rules of engagement at the time differed to starkly to that of KNP field rangers. These groups of people were either fleeing atrocities of the nearly two decades long civil war in Mozambique or simply seeking employment opportunities in the mines, farms or elsewhere; or simply to reconnect familial ties with kin in the borderlands of the Republic. Often these ordinary, mostly peasant folk, would be smeared with the broad-brush stroke of 'terrorist'; members of liberation movements seeking to weaken the apartheid state through striking at its economic and cultural core. Who was peasant, refugee or job seeker and who was insurgent, was not readily obvious. These illegal crossings reached an apogee during the mid 1980s when fighting between the warring parties in Mozambique was at its most intense when thousands of crossings were recorded, quantified primarily through the reading of footprints, or 'spoor' as it is commonly referred to locally.[9] Despite the density of troop deployment from the then South African Defence Force (SADF)[10] responsible for border security, it was KNP field rangers who repeatedly outdid their military counterparts in detecting and apprehending '*deurlopers*' or '*mahambane*'. Today that institutionalised bush craft skill of detecting and tracking human footprints or 'cutting spoor' is deeply embedded in the practices of the current cohort of field rangers, both men and women, who are exceptionally talented in this singular art of manhunting. It is this practice of tracking that consistently brings about the means through which the greatest proportion of detection and apprehension of poachers occurs despite the millions of Euro that have been invested in security infrastructure and technology to detect and deflect incursions by poachers. This form of manhunting - relentless pursuit in military parlance - was a central feature of counterinsurgency practices adopted first by the white segregationist regime in Rhodesia and passed on to the apartheid era security apparatus in its bush wars in South West Africa and Angola.

During my twelve-month ethnography and participant observation of field ranger practices in the KNP, the primary activity or *modus operandi* of field ranger teams was to drive to a detection zone well before the sun has risen. As it became light, field rangers would be in position to detect any human tracks as early as possible. These detection zones, which more often than not was a sandy or gravel management track (commonly

referred to as firebreaks) that ran parallel to the Park boundary which poaching teams most likely would have to cross to continue hunting in areas that were frequented by rhino. These management tracks were periodically 'swept' by dragging a thick rubber mat behind a vehicle to 'erase' the accumulation of animal, vehicle and human tracks to ease the detection of fresh human tracks. Field rangers - both men and women - were incredibly skilled at detecting human footprints from the back of a pick-up truck. This was especially so in the case where poaching teams were adept at anti-tracking, a method whereby teams obfuscate their footprints by traversing a road on their hands and knees, walking back-to-front, pulling socks over their shoes, removing their shoes, running on tip toes to simulate the hoof prints of a zebra and many other techniques. Despite these efforts and despite the numerous other signs left on the road by animals, birds and insects, field rangers were more often than not able to detect poacher incursions despite the slight and indistinct clues left at these detection zones. From there they would follow the tracks for a short distance to determine the general direction of the poaching team and inform other ranger teams of a likely area where they might pick up these tracks, typically a dry stream or river bed or another firebreak. Through this technique of leapfrogging, ranger teams are able to gain valuable time on a poaching team who might be as much as six or eight hours ahead of the ranger team when they first detected the spoor. The use of vehicles also allows field anger teams to be highly mobile and cover a detection zone quickly or continue on to another detection zone if conditions (mainly limited by the position of the sun) and time permit. The height from the back of the vehicle also enabled field rangers to detect spoor away from the road verge into the veld where poaching teams would be less concerned about covering their tracks. This daily repetition and close attention paid to human footprints also enabled field ranger teams to build valuable field intelligence on the different poaching teams in terms of the number of individuals; the imprint of the soles of their shoes allow field ranger teams to determine the make of the shoe – the Converse All Star being the most prolific - whether these individuals have been in the Park before; and predict the possible route such poaching teams may take based on manhunting operations following the same poaching teams that had entered and exited the Park on previous occasions.

This is a routine that is played out *each day* in each of the twenty two sections across the Park in one form or another. There is no respite; no

let up, except for the few days occasional leave during each month and the annual leave of up to 30 days that is accrued every twelve months to each field ranger. It is a wearying routine that takes its toll on field rangers and their managers in different ways.

The adrenaline and the fear simmer at a subliminal level all day; each field ranger in a constant state of readiness expecting to be ambushed and shot at by a poacher or injured by an unsuspecting buffalo bull lying up unnoticed in the shade. A state of constant readiness that inevitably erodes their physical and emotional well-being, culminating in a state of chronic debilitation of varying degrees for different individuals involved in the kind of work that comes with doing the same thing day in and day out, year in and year out. These are the distinct and exceptional pressures faced by those doing this particular type of policing work. These pressures are exacerbated by deep levels of frustration at the never-ending onslaught of the poaching pressure; where the 'othering' of poachers is accompanied with a deep-seated hatred. Additionally, the need to reduce the tally of rhino killed in their respective sections is measured through organizational Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) where their ability to reduce the number of rhino killed is closely linked with remuneration and prestige in one form or another. It also brings about much sought-after respite from the daily reiteration. Reducing the number of rhino killed or reported and deterring poachers even if that deterrence simply means displacing the poaching pressure into a neighbouring section is the unspoken indicator of a job well done. To achieve this, at times, means a complicity of actions that may lead to the use of irregular, disproportionate or even extrajudicial use of force. The impunity of such actions is aided, not only by the sheer remoteness of where these violent encounters take place but also through a normalization of practices that are implicitly and at times explicitly condoned, not only by their immediate supervisors, but also senior managers higher up the organizational organogram. This, together with the added pressure to show results on which rests the much-vaunted international conservation reputation of the South African state, where the incrimination of a ranger for actions conducted in a law enforcement setting will undoubtedly incur not only potentially serious reputational consequences but threaten to derail and delegitimise a response that leans heavily on a policing logic. It is these very same men with the smiling eyes engaged in the easy early morning banter who are also both victims and perpetrators of state sanctioned forms of violence that carries with it

disturbing consequences not only for their adversaries but increasingly so for themselves, their families, the communities they come from and ultimately for conservation practice into the future.

Notes

[1] *Caprimulgus pectoralis* is distributed throughout the African continent south of the Sahara. Its call is characterized by "two slurred notes with a rising tone, ending with rapid, almost trilled series of notes with falling tone, *koo-WEEU, koo-WIririnri*; also set to the words *good lord deliver us* (hence name of Litanybird)…" (Maclean, 1993: 351). See also Hockey et.al, "Ad[ults] mostly call at dusk and dawn and in both periods, 66% of calls fall within a 15 min[ute] window; calling…[c]eases…77-39 min[utes] before sunrise (mean=54 min[utes], n=212)" (2005: 264).

[2] The spatial and historical configurations of living and working in remote environments during and after apartheid have been etched on the meaning of everyday family life and closely resembled the forms of labour controlled single sex accommodation or compounds that was so successfully used on South African farms and mines to control labour.

[3] The R1/R2 is a South African manufactured, licence built copy of the Belgian Fabrique National Fusil Automatique Leger (FN-FAL) that is no longer manufactured and largely withdrawn from general service except in special forces units such as the South African Police Service Special Task Force and other specialized military units. Called a battle rifle instead of an assault rifle as it uses high-powered 7.62x51mm ammunition as opposed to the less powerful 'intermediate' rounds of typical assault rifles. See 'Fact File: R1 Battle Rifle' [Online] Available at: http://www.defenceweb.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=6249:fact-file-r1-battle-rifle=&catid=79:fact-files&Itemid=159 (Accessed 8 July 2017). When the apartheid-era SAP and SADF transitioned to using the R4/R5/R6 5.56x45mm assault rifles (the LM4/LM5 are semi-automatic variants for civilian/police applications), many R1/R2 7.62x51mm rifles were either destroyed or transferred to parastatal conservation organizations such as the then National Parks Board (NPB and now known as SANParks) and the then Natal Parks Board (also abbreviated as NPB and now known as EKZNW). In anticipation of a regime change at the impending demise of apartheid in 1993, KNP management sought the transfer of *250* R1/R2 rifles from the SADF at a cost of ZAR 106 250 – USD\$ 32 492 at 1993 exchange rates ('Exchange Rates and Inflation Rates, 1981-2008' [Online] Available at: http://www.goldavailability.com/webpage5.html Accessed 15 August 2017) (see Skukuza Archives NK/13/4 1990-1995, Internal memo from Head: Conservation

to the Executive Director: KNP dated 7 October 1993 and Letter from Executive Director: KNP to The Commanding General: Eastern Transvaal Command dated 19 July 1993). Conservation practitioners adopted the R1/R2 7.62x51mm because the high-powered rounds were capable of being used for protection against mega herbivores such as elephant and buffalo. These rifles were also used in culling operations of breeding herds of elephant because of the penetration capability of the calibre; the low/zero cost of ammunition (thousands of rounds of 7,62x51mm ammunition must also have been transferred from the SADF and SAP to conservation authorities) and the self-loading nature of these firearms which made them ideal for such wildlife management applications. The R1/R2 was adopted into general use in the KNP around the beginning of 1991, replacing the .303 calibre bolt action rifle (see Skukuza Archives Ranger Diary Shangoni, 23 February 1991). Some of the field rangers in many of the 'hotspot' poaching sections and all of the members of special ranger unit are issued with R1/R2 rifles adapted to include some or all of the following modifications: shortened barrels (for tactical use in confined spaces such as house penetrations and easy transport in helicopters), folding stocks, tactical lights mounted on the hand guards, red dot sights mounted on modified rails with either brown, green or camouflaged tactical paint and cloth/tape to better aid in camouflaging their positions in ambushes or to prevent reflections.

[4] Xitsonga or Tsonga (erroneously conflated with Shangaan – the Amashangane Traditional Authority established themselves in the Bushbuckridge area under the Nxumalo Royal family after they were ousted by Portuguese settlers and thus the Shangaan are a component of the Vatsonga not its equivalent) is predominantly spoken in the peri-urban areas to the west of the Kruger National Park in the former homelands of Giyani, north of Phalaborwa; the Makuleke people who were evicted from the area between the Luvuvhu and Limpopo rivers in the Pafuri region of KNP and relocated to the Mhinga Traditional Authority; and Gazankulu, to the west and north west of Skukuza. It is one of eleven official South African languages. Historically the language was spoken from St. Lucia in northern KwaZulu-Natal, the areas in South Africa mentioned above, up to the Save River in Mozambique, southwestern Swaziland and southeastern Zimbabwe, comprising approximately eight dialects. It is the *lingua franca* of the field ranger corps in the KNP, although tshiVenda, siSwati, sePedi or Northern Sotho and English (the latter spoken mostly by high school graduates) are also spoken. Afrikaans is a language that is spoken mostly by an older generation of field ranger staff, which was acquired at a time during apartheid when *it* was once the *lingua franca* and the culture of the KNP was distinctly Afrikaner. See also 'Tsonga History Discourse' [Online] Available at: https://vatsonga.wordpress.com/about/ (Accessed 7 July 2017). Terms such as Shangaan and Tsonga are highly complicated, the idea of Shangaan identity is closely associated in the Kruger Park with notions of loyalty,

of people who have given up external political rights for the citizenship of the Park (Bunn (2001).

[5] Red dot optics are non-telescoping optics mounted on a number of field ranger rifles in the KNP. The red dot replaces the reticle - the crosshair lines or grid markings built into a sighting device such as a telescope or binoculars. The use of red dot optics allows even novice shooters to quickly acquire a target and accurately hit a target even if the shooter is rushed and does not have perfect alignment – essentially, if you can see the dot you can hit the target. It thus gives a shooter a precise aiming system and quicker first shot advantage see [Online] Available at: https://www.burrisoptics.com/blog/sights/how-a-red-dot-sight-works (Accessed 28 June 2020).

[6] Sometime in 2017, the ranger corps in the KNP adopted a camouflage uniform, eerily similar to that worn by the notorious Internal Stability Unit (ISU), a specialized police unit to counter internal unrest in the townships during the latter part of the apartheid years.

[7] It is not known what proportion of field rangers in the KNP are female due to the lack of transparency by officials. In my year-long ethnography, I encountered two black female field rangers who were based in a ranger outpost in anti-poaching roles.

[8] Trespassers or illegal immigrants were, and are still, referred to as 'Deurlopers' in Afrikaans (literally 'to walk through') and 'Mahambane' in xiTsonga.

[9] By 1989, 5 000 illegal immigrants were being repatriated back to Mozambique, a figure thought to be a fraction of the total number of illegal immigrants passing through the Park, based on spoor or footprint counts. See Skukuza Archives/13/4 Stafteiken Herbenaming Krugerwildtuin Kommando (KWK) na: Krugerwildtuin Eendheid (KW Eenheid) en uitbreiding van die Eenheid Sterktestaat [Renaming of Kruger Commando to: Kruger National Park Element and expansion of Element Strength], Letter dated 31 August 1990 on Kruger Commando letterhead.

[10] The South African military apparatus during the apartheid era was amalgamated under the South African Defence Force (SADF) – its post-apartheid iteration is the South African National Defence Force (SANDF).

6

Warrior Politics and the 'Dirty Work' of Anti-Poaching: Institutional Collusion, Ranger Misconduct and the Perversity of Intelligence

6.1   Introduction

6.2   The Use of Deadly Force: Rules of Engagement in Anti-Poaching Operations

6.2.1 The 'Dirty Work' of Anti-Poaching: Reinterpreting the Use of Deadly Force and Institutional Complicity

6.3   The Hidden Violence of Intelligence-led Policing: Communities, Counterintelligence Operations and the Perverse Use of Entrapment

6.4   Concluding Remarks

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7 The Police Labour Regime and Shaping Institutional Life in the Kruger

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7.2   The Illusion of Corporate Social Responsibility: The Ranger Wellness Programme

7.2.1 The Limits of Ranger Wellness: Operational Burdens, the Nature of Psychosocial Trauma and Moral Injury

7.3   The Persistent Hold of Institutional Whiteness and Institutional Racism in the Kruger

7.4   Turning Police Inwards: Animalization, Workplace Surveillance and Torture

7.5   Misdiagnosing Corruption: Sabotage as Worker Resistance

7.6   New Avenues of Labour Control and Precarity: Financial Indebtedness

7.7   Concluding Remarks

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8 Conclusion: Towards a Dignified Conservation Workplace

8.1   Introduction

The whole that constitutes the Kruger National Park is made up of many opposing and contradictory fragments – the past and the present; care and coercion; praxis and ideology; structure and agency; white and black; wealth and poverty; continuity and change; civil and military; order and disorder; police and war; the production and erasure of black labour – to name but a few. It is precisely this myriad of elements that made making sense of the complexity that is the Kruger and the writing of this thesis so challenging. Despite the attempt to include as many contradictory elements as possible, this is by no means an exhaustive account of the Park, its history or the contemporary dynamics it is embroiled in.

However, what the foregoing does show, is that the Park's history cannot be consigned to the past, that its contemporary struggles vis-à-vis the black communities on its borders, the black labour in its employ, its martial practices, institutional racism and whiteness and its sense of exceptionalism and sanctioned authorities are features that become re-amplified at varying levels of intensity throughout its historical trajectory. These features become increasingly exaggerated in times of intense political pressure and when the sanctity of its physical integrity and symbolism becomes most threatened. This was evidenced during the 1980s when the Park formed part of the state security apparatus when the apartheid state faced existential revolutionary threats. Today, the contemporary 'war on poaching' has again provided such a conjunctural moment in bringing to the surface these deeply rooted features of its institutional makeup.

This thesis provides a deep analysis and thick description of the labour regime in the Park and how its labour is produced, structured and controlled using theories of police, labour value, labour process and

racialized social systems to conceive of a distinctive form of labour regime, the *police labour regime,* to explore what effects policing responses to an intensification of rhino poaching have on the anti-poaching rangers and the institutional life within the Park. It provides a counter argument to one of the central narratives that justify and perpetuate the continuation of its militarized responses – a return to 'law and order'. It obscures that in returning to order, that order is asymmetrically applied and that in the contemporary South African and conservation political economy, order is highly racialized and demarcated along class lines. It is thus seeking a return to certain typology of order in reaffirming old hierarchies. This narrative of the inviolability of good order also conceals who bears the costs of such proclamations and the precise nature of those costs. It perpetuates a myth that while the sacrifices of rangers are regrettable, they are necessary in saving an iconic species such as the rhino. It shows that such discursive turns obfuscate the precarious workplace conditions of rangers. It is not only the risk of death but the systemic lack of adequate protective equipment; low salaries and the substantive inequalities it fosters; poor living conditions premised on labour control; labour migrancy and its effects on social reproduction; workplace relations premised on racialized paternalism and whiteness; long working hours; and the profound social, physical and mental health costs related not only to the fear of violence but the irregular nature of that violence, amongst others.

In concluding this thesis, what follows, seeks to reiterate the key findings of this work in the context of continuity and change; to offer a rebuttal to the clamour for solutions, that the pursuit of practical solutions delimits our thinking to only a fragment of the whole and thus omits an analysis of and addressing broader systemic ills; and lastly that these structures that shape inequality are also prone to rupture and that this moment offers the potentiality of transformation. Lastly, this moment also offers the reverse, a hardening of a position, and offers further areas for potential research to explore what consequences its actions over the last decade hold for conservation practice and the people who live and work in and around the Park.

8.2   Tracing Continuity and Change in the Kruger

As the impending demise of apartheid was becoming ever more evident in the early 1990s, a small cadre of National Parks Board (NPB) officials started articulating the need for change and greater inclusivity of previously marginalized communities. Dlamini (2020a) recounts an awareness by officials of the Park's own history of exclusion and conflict with neighbouring communities. Quoting an official at the time, there was an acknowledgement that "'the old way of running the park was forever gone'…[t]he park could no longer afford to be seen as a 'white man's playground'" (ibid.: location 4345, single column view). Other officials lament the stark differences between the 'First World' experiences of visitors to the Park and the 'Third World' realities of many people living on its boundaries, that this juxtaposition "was to look at South Africa in miniature" (ibid.: location 4363, single column view). These officials recognised the paternalistic attitudes which the Park displayed in its relations with its neighbours, treating their claims with dismissiveness and that change was not only a political imperative but a cultural and ecological necessity (ibid.). In short, Dlamini sketches a growing awareness of the Park's history vis-à-vis the people in its ambit and that there was a need for change – and *fast* as the country was lurching towards democracy (ibid.).

Fast forward nearly two decades from Dlamini's observation, Park authorities again sought to recalibrate its outlook by proclaiming a progressive evolution of its management philosophy and its renewed place in the socio-ecological milieu (Venter et al. 2008). The authors, mostly SANParks conservation and scientific services personnel, recognized that over the past century, its focus purely on change "originated more internally and were largely environmental, whereas the emerging issues are more external and largely social" (ibid.: 173). In developing its new philosophy of conservation management premised on adaptive management, it wanted to show that by integrating the biophysical and social systems it could better conserve and rehabilitate the natural resources within the Park (ibid.). The authors argue that its management practices, despite their damaging consequences, has been largely well intentioned and successful (ibid.). Part of this 'success' was its ability to "incorporate new knowledge…and [an] understanding of the socio-ecological system…to be 'forward-thinking' in an increasingly complex and uncertain world" (ibid.: 173). While this management philosophy is

largely geared to ensuring ecosystem heterogeneity, thus ensuring species and structural diversity, there is no evidence that this so-called evolution in its management philosophy has recalibrated and brought about meaningful benefits or earnest relationships with impoverished communities on its borders.

The question that emerges then is whether the old ways of running the Park has indeed changed? What has changed in the Kruger and what has remained the same despite these episodic moments of reflexivity? In tracing the dynamic of continuity and change, Jonny Steinberg argues that the scholarship on post-apartheid policing has been so engrossed in continuities with apartheid era policing that "a preoccupation with continuity risks blinding scholarship to what *has* changed" (2014.: 175, emphasis in original). Staying alert to Steinberg's caution, is it still appropriate to claim continuity and in doing so here, is there the danger that this analysis has become blinded to what has changed? Here I concur with Dlamini (2020a) when he states that there has been change and there has been continuity. More precisely, this thesis follows Orton et al. (2001), that new management techniques, improvement in housing, changing the somatic make-up of strategic and operational layers, amongst others do not in-and-of-itself denote change but that old practices and relations merely become reconstituted despite these changes. Thus, neo-paternalistic relations, for example, can coexist alongside the evolution in management practices and the composition of management (ibid.). Ewert and Hamman (1999) contend that democratization and pro-worker legislation has done little to fundamentally change the labour regime on South African farms. They show that unequal relations of power, poor wages, poor housing and work conditions remain in place, together with neo-paternalistic relations. These are also workplace features that stubbornly persist in the Kruger and it is here that this thesis contends that there has been very little fundamental change in the treatment of black labour and the structural features of the labour process. Where change is detected, it merely represents a reconstitution of old practices.

On the surface it appears that much has indeed changed in the Kruger since the fall of apartheid. Key strategic and operational levels have been diversified and black managers *do* occupy key roles in the management of the Park, a transition that started in the mid 1990s. Key positions are now occupied by African staff, particularly by women and importantly women of colour as is evidenced in the recent appointments of the general

manager of the savanna and grassland research unit[1] and the head ranger.[2] Similar changes are also evidenced in the appointment across the organization for example the appointment of SANPark's first black helicopter pilot,[3] a job category that seems to epitomise the 'technical', an area of expertise that was historically the sole preserve of whites. So too has been the appointment of the general manager of wildlife veterinary services, a position that is occupied by a black woman for the first time since the inception of the organization in nearly a century. Change is also mirrored in the appointment of many black park managers, a key operational layer that effectively stymied any aspirations of greater and more meaningful interactions with neighbours across its stable of national parks across the country after the fall of apartheid (see Maguranyanga 2009). So too has there been a greater diversity in terms of scientists and regional rangers in positions outside of the executive layers and into those operational layers that have for many years been the sole preserve of whites. These are important changes at an organization and Park wide level, it changes the somatic norm of the organization in important ways (see Ahmed 2012). However, these changes in the bodily norm does not necessarily imply progress where this thesis has shown that these individual actors, who happen to be black, continue to turn to the common-sense notion of 'law and order' to combat wildlife crime, positions that reproduce the violence and injustices we have seen when the overseers of Kruger happened to be white. Maguranyanga supports this view, noting the "'de-racialization' or 'Africanization' of park management does not necessarily ensure the 'transformation' of park management practices" (2009: 183). Thus, in a situation where not all members of a subordinate group occupy subordinate positions in a social system it in itself is not evidence of a non-racialized social system (Bonilla-Silva 1997).

Furthermore, the Park has acknowledged black belonging in the Park beyond the obvious and irrefutable evidence of iron age settlements such as Thulamela and Masorini (amongst others) in the north of the Park. In its 2021 Heritage Day celebrations, the Park made explicit reference to the cattle killings in 1939, specifically with reference to Chief Nyongane and the manner it was disguised as disease control and that his death, a year later, was directly linked to the deep sense of loss associated with the cattle killing.[4] The site of his burial is marked with a plaque that makes explicit this history of violent dislocation and begins to acknowledge the degree

cattle are revered in pastoral African societies and what impact these cattle killings held for African pastoralist societies. It does not begin to touch on the social fracturing, the destruction of household and generational wealth and its role in creating a new highly exploitable labour and class system. However, this first step is not an insignificant development, although I am cautious not to overemphasize the Park's reflexive turn in acknowledging the brutalities it meted out in the past when so much of it continues in its dealings with neighbouring communities, poaching suspects and labour, and that these forms of contemporary violence remain wilfully obscured in the present moment.

With regard to diversity transformation, this thesis has shown that where there has been continuity, it is in the ranger services where key operational layers continue to be occupied by white, mainly male employees. Where the urgency of counter poaching has become the highest order of priority within the Park, these priorities have been so far reaching so as to subordinate all other functions and other authorities in the Park. It has created a space not only for the continuation of the structures of domination that shape social relations and the manner value is extracted from its labour force but also its violent practices, practices that, as this thesis has shown, is drawn from its close association with the apartheid era security apparatus. These continuities are far from insubstantial, they *shape* modes of conduct and the institutional life in the Kruger.

The Kruger Park is so often associated with the idea that it is a place of distinction, an internationally revered icon that represents a victory of human endeavour in saving nature despite the manifold threats faced by nature. Hidden in this veneration of Kruger - and the preservationist project more generally - is the racist and eugenicist leanings informing the creation of these spaces. Stevenson-Hamilton's own thinking was informed by these eugenicist principles in his concern over black population growth and the threat black people, especially black children, held as a reservoir for the spread of malaria and the threat it posed to white settler populations (see Stevenson-Hamilton 1926). It is this threat said to reside in the 'native blood' that justified Stevenson-Hamilton's fervour for segregation of natives from whites and the eviction of natives from the Park (ibid.).

These underlying white supremacist leanings is also a feature that persisted at varying degrees of intensification throughout the historical

development of the Park. It was evident in the use of the pejorative term, 'huiskaffir', to refer to black residents living the Park (Chapter 3); the concerns over black population growth and its association with environmental destruction; the essentialised tropes of the Mozambican Shangaan and *his* ability as an ideal worker (see Chapter 3); the inhumane exclusion of the wives and children of Mozambican field rangers; the white supremacist flags Colleen Begg saw draped over computers in the early 1990s (see Chapter 7); and the open hostility towards black management appointees (Chapter 3). Today, these racist worldviews are expressed in the continued concerns over black population growth on the borders of the Park by contemporary white managers (see Chapter 3); the racially exclusive social circles (see Chapter 7); the section ranger demographic along its longitudinal axis where competency and trustworthiness is linked to race; the hidden, casual comments by senior Park officials about who was most competent to 'save nature'; and the animalization of black staff members suspected of being complicit in rhino poaching (see Chapter 7). These racist traits coincide with the Park's institutional whiteness, a feature that was ubiquitous in its management echelon for most of its history. While this feature of whiteness *is* changing, this thesis has shown the continuation of institutional whiteness at a very specific category of work within the Park – the work of anti-poaching and conservation policing. These features of whiteness and racism are not coincidental, the Kruger Park is deeply tethered to notions of race and racial ordering (see Hays 2019) and the clamour to restore 'law and order' under the logics of 'saving the rhino' has presented a contemporary historical juncture to reinforce these problematic relations, not only with regard to the disciplining of black people who are suspected of poaching but the black labour in its employ. It is these silences and the reluctance to address the issue of race, that continue to be a stumbling block in conservation initiatives in the Park and South Africa more generally (see Kepe 2009).

Furthermore, where black people are seen as 'out of place' within certain institutions or certain categories within institutions, they too have to reproduce those performances of whiteness to attain credibility. Thus, whiteness should not be purely viewed through the presence of white bodies but that we interrogate the politics of whiteness that characterize institutions and meanings around nature. Indeed, Van Zyl and Boersema (2017) acknowledge that despite a shift from white dominance in colonial

era regimes to black, majority governments, historical racialized inequalities persist in new social and institutional arrangements. Thus, there is a need to "challenge prevailing structures of racialized power and meaning" despite the absence of minority rule (ibid.: 652). Nature conservation and the conservation of rhino in particular, embody the power and meaning of white privilege. It is at this location that these structures of domination can be challenged.

Scholars also warn against sweeping allegations of the continued use of apartheid era counterinsurgency practices to counter rhino poaching (Shaw and Rademeyer 2016). While Shaw and Rademeyer demonstrate that counterinsurgency doctrine no longer informs SANDF doctrine or the security sector more generally, it is not the SANDF or other security actors that is brought under scrutiny here, it is the Kruger Park. The Kruger's security plans during the late 1980s was premised on counterinsurgency doctrine, conceptualized in the main by actors like Otch Otto (see Chapter 4). The fact that Otto himself was reinserted in a senior operational planning capacity in the 'war on poaching', points to a maxim deployed by Steinberg, referred to in Chapter 2, that "old instruments generally survive only when agents in the present find a use for them" (2014: 191). Those instruments that have no use become obsolete (ibid.). To understand what has survived from the past, Steinberg argues that "one's analytical eye must focus on the present" (ibid.: 191). This thesis has shown that actors in Kruger have found use in these old instruments, that certain facets of counterinsurgency and manhunting have been repurposed to deal with contemporary threats. It is clear that manhunting and the ability to detect, follow and intercept human tracks lay at the foundation of its 1980s concept security plan and it is an approach that has persisted to the present moment to detect and intercept rhino poachers. What has changed is the degree of interoperability or integration of SANDF troops with ranger teams. While there have been incidences of joint operations, particularly with special forces operators, my own participant observation with field ranger teams for close to a year indicate that field rangers work largely on their own, largely out of mistrust and the perceived lack of competency on the part of regular soldiers.

The irregular, disproportionate and at times deviant use of force is another aspect that has persisted from the past. It is yet another reminder that due to the inability of police in preventing crime, it has to resort to irregular practices and at times even resort to manufacturing success (see

Chapter 6). This thesis has shown that these irregular practices include the use of deadly force under questionable circumstances, the use of torture and employing techniques such as wetbagging and tubing that mirror apartheid era torture techniques, and most disturbingly, targeted killings and post-capture killings (see Chapter 6). This is also a feature of information gathering and intelligence-led policing. In the past, as is the case now, intelligence has always boasted a more subjective, data-led, and pre-emptive promise. However, as is the case in the past, information is highly susceptible to manipulation, especially when law enforcement entities pay handsomely for information. It can lead to inducing persons who would not have committed a crime and often such interdictions are presented as a success, when in reality it has been manufactured. Where these manufactured intelligence reports lead to a contact in ambushes, no attempt is made to arrest suspects, a feature that has also persisted from apartheid era security police ambushes.

Furthermore, its strategy to clear the Park from the outside and its similarities to Otto's creation of a cordon sanitaire in the border areas in Mozambique are on the surface very different and suggest a shift. Yet, the end result remains the same. In the 1980s it included a plan for the physical removal of entire populations living in the border regions, a dream that was never fully realized. In its war on poaching and clearing the Park from the outside, the dream is to remove a sub-set of the population from the border regions of Kruger under the guise of skills development training and subsequent voluntary emigration in search for low entry jobs. In both eras, black populations were framed as a threat, in the 1980s entire villages and today a sub-set of the population in the guise of young, unemployed black men. It is a racial bias that continues to inform how the Park views its neighbours even if the overt racialized categorizations of threat has changed.

The co-option of communities in the reframing of communities as 'partners' and the rhetoric to include communities in the broader green economy and its similarity to the limited interventions such as trading posts on the border to act as vehicles for human development under MOZAIC during the 1980s constitute another continuity, although the purported inclusion into the economy lay at starkly opposite ends. What has remained the same is the rhetoric of human development and the promise of economic development to wrest loyalties away from

opposition forces and bring populations under the sphere of influence of the Park.

The engagement of a host of former apartheid era security experts such as Major General (ret.) Johan Jooste, Colonel (ret.) Otch Otto and many former policeman and soldiers who imprint their expertise in the conservation arena in the present moment to 'save the rhino' shows that it is not only ideas and practices that get recycled but that individuals with skill sets in apartheid era COIN that get recycled in the 'war on poaching'. Integration and joint operations with other actors in the security establishment marks another continuity with the past. What has changed, is that the Park's integrated mission with other security actors, both state and private, is so much broader in the present moment. In the past South Africa was a pariah in the international community and had to rely on its own wits in deflecting security threats. Today, it is able to immerse itself in a global security community and global political economy of security. The Park, through agreements entered into by the state, benefits from cooperation from international police agencies such as Interpol and the FBI; intergovernmental crime fighting initiatives such as LEAP and the ICCWC; and other global initiatives to combat wildlife crime through its membership to CITES. Lastly the use of technology, while only mentioned in passing here, certainly was a feature of border security concerns during the apartheid era, for example the use of the electrified and lethal CAFTAN fence and the similarities in the use of contemporary security infrastructure and technologies with equally deadly outcomes.

Other key features by which we can measure continuity within the Kruger is staff housing and the salary structure. There *have* been improvements in the quality of housing for junior staff that are compatible for families. However, very few of those field rangers who I interacted with and who live in these self-contained units did not live with their families. When they do, it is only for intermittent periods. Even then, these improvements in housing units account for only a small fraction of the overall types of accommodation in the Park and they in no way constituted the primary option for housing for staff in those ranger outposts that had these upgrades. Chapter 3 demonstrates that seventy seven percent of all accommodation types in Skukuza, which houses the greatest number of employees in the Park, is comprised of single room accommodation, all occupied by black workers. The overwhelming majority of field rangers I interacted with continued to live in single

roomed units and black employees continue to share ablution and outdoor cooking facilities.

The persistence in income polarization between upper- and lower-income earners also has not changed in over a century. Furthermore, the gap between high income earners and low-income earners are also greater than the average income gaps within the broader South African society. Where income polarization is a predictor for inequality, the levels of inequality is thus substantially greater *within* Kruger than the rest of the country. If we take seriously income polarization as a predictor for inequality, and that its magnitude is substantially amplified in the Park, then this thesis contends that inequality as a barometer has not shifted in nearly a century of the Park's existence and that the spatial characteristics of the Park as an enclosed space further amply these inequalities. Park authorities continue to emphasize the Park's importance in terms of job creation and the broader regional economy (see Swemmer and Mmethi 2016, Venter et al. 2008). However, such proclamations do not match the reality that the areas adjacent to the Park continue to experience unemployment rates well above the national average (see Thakholi 2021) and that expanded public works programmes (EPWP) or so-called poverty relief programmes are part of the apparatus of pacification that seeks to discipline troublesome populations (Kienscherf 2016). Essentially, such welfare-cum-workfare programmes seldom address structural unemployment challenges, they undercut labour rights, they are unable to generate sufficient household savings for future shocks and they are often deployed as a substitute to conditional or unconditional cash transfers instead of being deployed as part of a broader safety net programme (Lal et al. 2010).

Precarity is another feature that has persisted, however the mechanism around precarity has changed. In the past the Park showed a distinct predilection for Mozambican labour, ostensibly because these workers represented the essentialized virtues of the Shangaan worker. In reality, Park management weaponized their precarity as migrant workers and the fear of being repatriated to a country that was beset by consecutive periods of deprivation under the coercive cotton regime and the civil war. This meant that for workers to escape these precarious lived realities, they had to reproduce the qualities sought by Park administrators – that of loyalty, and docility. Park administrators exploited this precarity of its migrant labour force to realize the desired levels of productivity from its

workforce. Today, precarity takes a different shape. It is not the fear of deportation that persists but financial indebtedness, pre-empted by the payment of significant supplementary or irregular income. Where field rangers become indebted through the purchase of aspirational consumer products such as vehicles or home improvements, it becomes necessary for these workers to reproduce the preferred qualities of labour value in the 'war on poaching', in this case, violence, out of fear of losing those opportunities that keep them in contention to earn these forms of supplementary income and becoming exposed to financial indebtedness.

Perhaps the most notable indicator of reconstituted change has been the reconfiguration of labour value in the Park. For most of the 20th century, Park authorities relied on loyalty as a marker of field ranger productivity and as a means to show fealty to its white section ranger cohort. In the racially structured social formations in the Park, typified by paternalism, it was fealty to the father figure in the guise of a white section ranger that acted as a measure of labour value. While the most overt act of loyalty was the arrest and even the use of violence against family members, the overall effect was to test to which social worlds black field rangers were most loyal, the Park or their cultural or familial peers. Under the police labour regime, paternalistic relations still continue. However, black field rangers are not necessarily as embedded in the paternalistic relations with white rangers or the social worlds of people living on the borders of the Park adjacent to where they work. Field rangers also do not find themselves in the same precarious position as migrant labour from Mozambique did, living in fear of deportation and they do benefit from the protections offered by the labour regulations. In cases where they are unfairly dismissed, they do have recourse through arbitration in the guise of the CCMA. Furthermore, black section rangers are also able to extract violence as a measure of productivity from field rangers. What has changed is the manner in which economic incentives in the form of significant amounts of supplementary income in the form of overtime, S&T, rewards, awards, experiential trips and training and the threat of exclusion from these incentives, structure workplace relations. Under the police labour regime, the most visceral measure of productivity is not only related to the willingness of field rangers to merely arrest individuals from their social worlds as it was in the past but their willingness to use violence, measured in the expenditure of ammunition or the use of torture on suspects. The purpose of both forms of violence serves to reproduce

another feature from the past, the expression of exemplary violence. Its purpose is to make, as Foucault (1977) argues, punishment legible to all, that the Park seeks to reaffirm old hierarchies. This is not to say that these practices on the part of its field ranger staff are part of a considered policy framework of the Park or SANParks but this thesis has shown that the particularism of the labour process in the Park, characterised by a dormitory labour regime, racialized paternalism and the payment of significant forms of supplementary income shape labour relations in *particular* ways that are diffuse and extend beyond the sale or purchase of labour power. These relations that shape field ranger practices cannot necessarily be seen, touched or felt directly (after Harvey 2010) but that they nevertheless have an objective presence. Furthermore, there is a long historical precedent of Park authorities seeking to shield those field rangers that were considered 'special' from prosecution in the execution of their duties. At times it included 'turning a blind eye', as Stevenson-Hamilton has done, to the illicit or the less-than-legal activities of its field ranger corps out of fear of losing its most productive workers. This penchant to conceal the illicit actions of its field rangers continued during the 1980s when the shooting of unarmed men, women and children were dealt with 'in-house' and this penchant for collusion and obscuring the actions of its field ranger cohort has continued under the contemporary intensification of rhino poaching.

8.3   The Clamour for Solutions: Towards a Dignified Conservation Workplace

Many of my conversations with conservation protagonists grappling with wildlife crime and conservation biologists concerned with the extinction of rhino has been characterised by the retort: 'great you have told us what is wrong, what alternative solutions do you propose?'. Even the preeminent economist Thomas Piketty in his 2015 Nelson Mandela lecture when addressing the question of solutions to the gross inequality in South African life posited, "[w]e are in the social sciences…our objective is not to come with ready-to-apply solutions or a 'magic bullet', but rather to contribute to a more informed democratic discussion about inequality".[5] Similarly, Cox, in differentiating the radical distinction between problem solving approaches and critical theory, contends that the former seeks to fix limits to a problem area to bring it under precise

examination within "the prevailing social and power relationships and the institutions in which they are organised" but – and this is crucial – it does *not call into question* those very relationships and institutions and the hand they play in causing problems and inequalities (1992: 128). Both Piketty and Cox's remarks are pertinent here as a response to almost every interaction I had with KNP management or with interlocutors involved in conservation management or conservation science - that it is not sufficient merely to focus our attention on the problem of rhino poaching as a fragment, or as an insulated phenomenon, but to bring into question our socio-political economic frame and the relational structural domination that perpetuates the levels of inequality and power differentials we observe in South African life.

A central theme of this thesis has been its critique of police as a response to curb wildlife crime, its underlying historical rationale pertaining to social control and the ways it shapes relations in the conservation workplace and structures the labour process. McMichael (2012) contends that Neocleous (2000, 2021), in his critique of police, has little to say on the issue of public safety where violence, although being socially complex, poses a very real threat within communities. Indeed, Neocleous (2000) states that *The Fabrication of Social Order* offers no proposals "to make the police more democratic…more accountable, less racist, less oppressive" (2000: xiv). In the light of this, how do we ensure safety and well-being within communities so they can be free of the tyranny of crime? These are legitimate critiques. Proponents of police argue that communities demand safety through police action, however, Alex Vitale ripostes that these same communities also demand "better schools, libraries, and jobs, but these services are rarely provided" (2017: location 60 single column view). This is so, because these communities have been and remain systematically denied access to political power to make their communities safer and healthier (ibid.). The genealogy of police suggests that police both as an institution and a form of power is not benevolent, that it is not intended to combat crime but to maintain social order, an order that seeks to maintain material and political differences between races and classes. Police does not equate to freedom from crime. As this thesis demonstrates, even where considerable resources and institutional priorities are committed to policing crime, it is unable to combat crime. Hence, police is simply not enough. This why this thesis highlights that policing turns its attention to misdemeanour

offences within the general populace, especially those sections of the population that are black and economically deprived. Furthermore, as a result of these limitations, it resorts to disproportionate, irregular and even extrajudicial force and where it is conservation law enforcement staff who perpetrate these acts, they risk considerable deleterious consequences to their emotional and mental health with knock-on consequences for their families and the communities they come from. On a practical level, Alex Vitale (2017) argues that we do need to reform the police, we need to get rid of the warrior mentality and militarized tactics, and we need greater public oversight over police actions. Limiting the scope of policing can also dramatically reduce state violence without sacrificing public safety (ibid.). Here Vitale leans on the examples of decriminalizing aspects such as alcohol, gambling, sex and drugs that limits the scope of police, reduce aggressive and invasive policing without it impacting on public safety (ibid.). However, he does concede that "there is a larger truth that must be confronted" (ibid.: location 3361, single column view). There is no technocratic fix as long as the basic logics of police remain (ibid.). Neocleous (2021) also argues that we start not with asking how police should be organized, whether they should be armed or allowed to use teargas or what is an appropriate use of police discretion or even what training is more appropriate. Instead, he argues, we should begin to ask questions about police power, that our starting point should instead be a critique of contemporary political economy (ibid.). It is clear that police, infused with the logics of its historical formation, is not the answer.

However, as Büscher (2021), following Foucault, reminds us, power can also be positive and productive. Power does not necessarily mean that its purposes are repressive, it can also be harnessed to facilitate and enable (ibid.). It is to this potentiality of power that we should look to when communities seek to be free from crime. In other words, that it is possible, as Jackson (2013) argues, to conceive of an alternative politics of how society is ordered. Here, instead of systematically disinvesting in poor neighbourhoods, if the power of the state is instead geared to improved housing, services, education, social safety nets, a share in political and economic power and a myriad of other interventions, then power can indeed be positive and productive.

Like Piketty, I hope that this thesis can contribute to a more democratic discussion about the social costs of conservation in general and what conservation under the spectre of police mean for an underclass of labour

in the KNP who are discursively valorized but in reality, are victims not only of racism, workplace victimization and animalization but that these workplace dynamics embroil them in disturbing incidents of abuse and torture. Where such institutional practices form part of an organ of state, such developments undermine the very principles of a just and equal society that many hoped for in their defiance of apartheid. Furthermore, the violence that is meted out against suspects, dehumanizes both the victims and the perpetrators of violence. Thus, the claims by Park management that its responses to the surge in wildlife crime is 'responsible' (see Chapter 1), does not add up to the weight of the evidence presented here. Instead it has treated its labour force as an 'asset', a thing that is disposable and can be used up. In tracing what has changed and what has stayed the same, a central aspiration of this thesis is to bring attention to the continuities and in particular the structural domination and the manner policing practices continue to shape relations in the Park. Where Park officials are understandably daunted by the scope of change that is required to bring about social justice, this thesis seeks to highlight that many of those injustices are of its own making and rooted in its particular history. It requires a painful reading of its past and deconstructing and interrogating the structures that allow for the continuity of inequality and injustice into the present to begin to take meaningful steps to addressing these issues *within* the Park. The hope is that the analysis presented here can help the Park and its people to shape its own history of the present and realize a conservation workplace premised on dignity and care. This can provide a stepping stone to a meaningful and wider engagement with society, especially those residents on its borders on both sides of the international boundary who have for so long carried the considerable costs of living in its ambit.

8.4 The 'Fragile Fortress': Cracks in the Structure and Areas for Potential Future Research

The Kruger National Park has, throughout its history positioned itself as exceptional. It, at times, usurped the authorities and functions of other state institutions, at times, superseding the authority of the nation state. It has always looked to position the observations and lay-expertise of its own officials as more authoritative in relation to that of other state departments. This was demonstrated in its assessment of the foot and

mouth disease outbreak and the 'unscientific' approaches of officials from the veterinary department; the veracity of military intelligence that pointed to the build-up of German troops within Portuguese East Africa during the Second World War; the assessment of threat from refugees at the height of the apartheid state's counter revolutionary efforts during the 1980s; and the competency and field craft skills of its own field ranger corps in relation to that of soldiers from the SADF. More recently, over the last decade in its 'war on poaching', it continued to position its own competency in apprehending poachers above those of the military and the police, its expertise as a world leader in conservation science (see Bunn 2003, Carruthers 2008, 2017) and a competent custodian of the largest rhino population on the planet.[6]

However, this façade of Kruger as exceptional, as a site of excellence and distinction, is slowly crumbling. The last-mentioned claim, is one that has for some time been met with scepticism[7] and evidenced, most recently, by Kruger's own admission that its white rhino population numbers have fallen from approximately 9 000 animals in 2013 to approximately 5 100 in 2017 (Ferreira et al. 2019). The latest reports point to a reduction of up to seventy percent of the white rhino population over the last decade, estimating its white rhino populations to be in the region of 3 500 animals in 2021.[8] That these significant reductions in population numbers, attributed to a range of factors, most notably the severe drought in 2015/2016 and rhino poaching (see Ferreira et al. 2019) or that its rhino population numbers have always been exaggerated due to a problematic counting methodology,[9] is moot. The point is that there is a growing erosion of public trust in the Kruger and the conspicuous role it has played in shaping the lives of people and the landscape over the last century. This erosion of authority is also evidenced in other spheres – the threat of closure of the Skukuza Periodical Court which has for so long been a vehicle to mete out its authorities and exemplary punishments;[10] the open and collective resistance from within its black employee ranks in the 2012 strike (see Chapter 7); open letters to the press and executive management highlighting racism and inequality in the Park;[11] and allegations of torture within the Park and an internal investigation/commission of inquiry into one of its most senior and long serving rangers;[12] the countless acts of sabotage by staff, including rhino poaching; and documenting human rights violations and administrative malpractice (see Matelakengisa 2020). One senior SANParks manager referred to this impermanence, stating

> I have always thought about this place, two million hectares, a 1 000-kilometre boundary, as a fortress and I am writing a little article…that says the 'fragile fortress'. I've learnt how fragile this place is.[13] [emphasis added]

The authority that it held in shaping daily life of people is faltering. It alludes to a potential rupture, yet another conjunctural moment in the history of the Park. It is crucial that such moments are bookmarked and to assess whether it presents an opportunity for meaningful transformation and movement towards a non-racial, socially just polity and a dignified workplace premised on dignity and care.

8.4.1 Areas for Potential Future Research

However, such a moment can also be a precursor to reassert its failing authority, a hardening of a position that seeks to place the saving of nature as the highest order of priority. The consequences are that the costs of such a hardening of position will continue to be borne by the people living in poverty on its borders and its employees, both white and black. Many of the innovations in terms of the organization of work, the implementation and roll out new security technologies and infrastructure, the reamplification of racialized paternalism and institutional whiteness, amongst others threaten to set the Park on a continued course that will continue to hold consequences for people and their relationship with nature. The following section offers a handful of areas that could require further investigation to measure their effects in the continuation of these structures.

The Afterlives of Security Technologies

Foremost is the question around the use of military technology in conservation and what consequences its use holds for conservation labour. The KNP has spent in the region of ZAR 1 billion between 2011 and 2016 [14] (see also Aucoin and Donnenfeld 2017) on security infrastructure and technologies. Scholars have pointed out the early role technologies played in conservation territoriality (Peluso and Vandergeest 2011). The debate around the use of a specific type of technology in conservation, in this case security technologies, has emphasized the increasing synergy between conservation and war and how these

technologies are being trialled to market new weapons at arms fairs, pointing to the political economic incentives embedded in these collaborations (Duffy 2016, Lunstrum 2018). Neocleous and Rigakos also argue that militarization, be it the police or in this case conservation, creates a "laboratory for the militarization of domestic security" (2011: 18). However, despite the prominence of security infrastructure and technology in contemporary conservation there is very little critical evaluation of the ways it impacts on the labour process through the expansion of labour time and what consequences the expansion of labour time into the night holds for anti-poaching rangers. Stewart (2012) contends that labour time has been substantially understudied in the central role it plays in the theory of labour value and that it is a largely unrecognized foundation of labour exploitation in the South African context where the long working week has remained stubbornly stable for over a century.

The adoption of technologies also exposes conservation agencies to financial risk. It is not only the installation and capital costs of these technologies, the costs of which are often carried by donor funds, but the on-going life cycle, maintenance, licencing and service provider costs. There are already indications of the dire financial risks faced by the Kruger Park, attributed to the loss of income from tourism due to the Covid-19 pandemic and budgetary cuts of up to 66 percent.[15] Scholarship is required to assess what links this financial precarity have to the costs associated with the acquisition of technology and conditionalities embedded in its bilateral agreements and it what ways it opens up further opportunities for private capital at the expense of public interests.

The use of technology also brings with it an intensification of workplace surveillance and accounting controls. This thesis has shown what implications accounting controls hold for the labour process and casting the analysis to the role technology plays in workplace surveillance and its implications for the labour process and the relations embedded in this process can further enrich this analysis.

The predictive capabilities of security infrastructure and data collection platforms are also an area of concern. The literature on precrime assemblages and predictive algorithms embedded in these technologies used in policing has concerning consequences for the objects of surveillance and the governance of society in general (see Mantello 2016, Harcourt 2007). Using these analytical threads can also shed light on the

nature of governance within conservation spaces and broaden our theoretical conceptualization of precrime assemblages in conservation governance. These technologies also have considerable legacies beyond what they were initially intended for (see McMichael 2012). Scholarship is needed to trace the afterlives of the use of security technology in conservation and what implications they hold for life in these circumscribed spaces in ways that was not anticipated at its inception.

The use of dogs for tracking and subduing a suspect during an arrest is also another innovation that has concerning potentialities. The use of dogs in colonial suppression and terrorising colonized populations (see Johnson 2009) and its use in the suppression of civil unrest and making claims against the state traditionally all used dogs as a 'technology of terror'. A U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) report shows that the use of dogs in civilian policing represent anti-black violence, that police dogs are used instead to instil terror not to "counter a physical threat [to officers] but to inflict punishment".[16] Where the use of dogs in conservation policing is often framed as a 'game changer', its near ubiquitous use in combatting wildlife crime and its problematic historical resonances with racial suppression, further analysis is needed into what its use says about restoring old hierarchies and in ways both dog handlers, who are invariably black field rangers, and the people who are the objects of these policing interventions using dogs, are brutalised.

Where the use of security infrastructure and dogs are often positioned by Kruger managers to make rangers safer, further investigation is needed to test these proclamations. Technologies that extend the working day into the night may provoke rangers to continue to use disproportionate force when they have less ability to assess threats. This, together with the use of dogs which has been historically used to 'inflict punishment' rather than necessarily bring about arrest, may further impact on the mental health of field rangers and inflict further moral injuries.

Actor Agency, Cosmology, Ostracization and Gender

This thesis delved in to the structural issues at play, specifically the manner rewards and workplace incentives and social formations have and continue to structure labour relations in the Kruger. Intersected with these questions related to structure are in what ways agency shapes the practices and the institutional life in the Park. Here Scott laments that the

social sciences are often complicit in treating nonelites as "ciphers of their socioeconomic characteristics", and while these factors are not insignificant, that it "is inadmissible, both morally and scientifically…to understand the behaviour of human agents without for a moment listening systematically to how they understand what they are doing and how they explain themselves" (2012: xxiii-xxiv).

In this regard, it would be instructive how the question of religion/the occult/cosmology – phenomena that frequently reared its head my conversation with interlocutors in the Park - shapes the very different social and political worlds of black and white in and around the Park and how it is used as a vehicle, not only to justify their actions, but the manner religion is mobilized specifically in times of social upheaval or uncertainty (see Niehaus 2001). Sodikoff (2009) and Jauregui (2010) give us some preliminary handles to understand how cosmology affects and shapes the lives of conservation agents in Madagascan forests and civilian police in India respectively. Jauregui (2010) in particular, points out the manner these public officials justify the use of violence as part of a professional and moral duty to restore order. These insights also resonate with how black and white rangers in the Park justify violence. The former mirrors the moral duty elicited by Jauregui's (2010) interlocutors and the latter see the role of religion in restoring a social order premised on racial hierarchy.

Scholarship is also necessary to build on work by Jacoby (2001) to understand how rangers negotiate social relations in the communities - who also happen to be the object of their policing actions - they live in. The paucity of the stories of black rangers as conservationists is still a stark absence. More work is needed to fill in these considerable absences and to rewrite the history of conservation in terms of the black experience. Furthermore, the absence of women in conservation, not only those in the managerial layers, but those task workers who harvest resources in the Park (see Dlamini, 2020a); the narratives around female migrants and how they were constructed as undesirable; and female field rangers is another lacuna. My limited interactions with these female field rangers in the Park suggest doing conservation is a significantly different experience for them. At the same time, we should remain alert to the essentialized tropes of women in conservation law enforcement and that their presence presents a 'softer' approach to conservation.

Labour Fragmentation

Furthermore, a thorough analysis of the nature of the conservation workplace regime in the Park through the various political epochs is needed; how it shaped the labour process; and the ways it shaped worker resistance over time can also enrich this analysis. Where the workers are dispersed across the Park in an area that is similar in size to the state of Israel, in what ways does this fragmentation of workers affect their solidarity; are there variances in workplace regimes at these micro levels; how do workers view resistances that are commonly portrayed as corrupt; how do they themselves understand the relations of power and how do they reinforce or undermine these features that shape labour process in the Park?

A Focus on Communities

Building on the work of the effects of militarized conservation on communities adjacent to the Park (see Sithole 2018, Thakholi 2021), this investigation has contributed in a small way to this and other works but unfortunately space did not allow for a fuller account of its impacts on these communities. Where some scholars like Shaw and Rademeyer (2016) contend that there is no evidence that militarized conservation holds any dangers for proximate communities, preliminary evidence gathered during this research suggests otherwise. An in-depth ethnography into the communities adjacent to KNP is still a lacuna in understanding broader costs of militarized conservation around Kruger, especially the consequences its strategy to 'clear the park from the outside' hold for target communities. In addition, Dlamini (2020a) shows how Park Forums are mobilized as evidence of the Park's engagement with is neighbours. In their disputes with the Park, communities often concede to settlements that are unfair, as in the case with disputes over human wildlife conflict (ibid.). What is not clear, is why communities accede to these unfair settlements; how co-option operates; how it undermines dissent; and what are the actual dynamics that shape the institutional lives of these institutions that impede more meaningful partnerships.

Furthermore, bringing an understanding of the social worlds of actual poachers, beyond a criminological perspective, is also very necessary. This kind of research, despite its many challenges, would go a long way to challenging the objectified version of poachers in the public imagination

and bring greater understanding of the lived realities of this underclass of people and may contribute to identifying and ultimately addressing the structural conditions that this section of the population face.

Historical Rhino Numbers

Historical rhino estimates form the basis of almost any analysis of a species under threat. A critical historical investigation is required to unravel these historical assertions in how we understand the ecology and status of rhino of both species across the African continent. From a political ecological perspective, sensitive to the existence of power relations inherent in knowledge production, deconstructing contemporary science around population estimates, together with a critical historical analysis can contribute immensely to challenging notions of species in crisis. Following in the footsteps of Melissa Leach and James Fairhead in their seminal volumes *Misreading the African Landscape* (1996) and *Reframing Deforestation* (1998), they challenge commonly held notions of forest cover loss; that these narratives are based on spurious evidence; and that they hold material consequences for people living in these contexts that require an 'urgent' need to be conserved. A critical analysis of historical rhino numbers can offer a meaningful critique to the imperative of 'saving rhino' and how rhino (and other charismatic species) are used as a tool to further legitimate enclosure and impose social order.

Notes

[1] [Online] Available at: https://www.sanparks.org/scientific-services/meet-the-team/dr-danny-govender (Accessed 12 October 2021).

[2] 'Q&A Sessions: Meet Cathy Dreyer, the rhino whisperer', *Mail & Guardian*, 16 September 2021 [Online] Available at: https://mg.co.za/environment/2021-09-16-qa-sessions-meet-the-rhino-whisperer-cathy-dreyer/ (Accessed 12 October 2021).

[3] 'Media Release: SANPark's celebrates South Africa's first black game capture pilot', 7 December 2020 [Online] Available at: https://www.sanparks.org/about/news/?id=58144 (Accessed 12 October 2021).

[4] [Online] Available at: https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/?keywords=heritagemonth (Accessed 12 October 2021).

[5] 'Transcript of Nelson Mandela Annual Lecture 2015' [Online] Available at: http://www.nelsonmandela.org/news/entry/transcript-of-nelson-mandela-annual-lecture-2015 (Accessed 9 December 2015).

[6] Comment made by senior Kruger manager at the Southern African Development Corporation (SADC) Rhino Management Group (RMG) meeting, held in Skukuza, February 2017.

[7] See comments by veterinarian, Dr. Kobus du Toit, 'Kruger rhino numbers in crisis, says expert', *Mail and Guardian,* 8 June 2015, [Online] Available at: https://oxpeckers.org/2015/06/kruger-rhino-numbers-in-crisis-says-expert/ (Accessed 5 April 2019) at end of 2014 he estimates between 1 529 and 4 585 white rhino in the KNP and refutes the 8 000 to 11 000 white rhino that are estimated to be in the Park using mathematical growth formula of 7 and 8% growth.

[8] 'Shocking statistics reveal that Kruger rhino population has dropped by nearly 70% in 10 years', *Daily Maverick,* 28 January 2021, [Online] Available at: https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2021-01-28-shock-statistics-reveal-that-kruger-rhino-population-has-dropped-by-nearly-70-in-ten-years/ (Accessed 8 March 2022).

[9] See comments by veterinarian, Dr. Kobus du Toit 'Kruger rhino numbers in crisis, says expert', *Mail and Guardian,* 8 June 2015, [Online] Available at: https://oxpeckers.org/2015/06/kruger-rhino-numbers-in-crisis-says-expert/ (Accessed 5 April 2019).

[10] 'Skukuza court closure was like a "knife in the back" of rangers', *Mail and Guardian,* 18 April 2012 [Online] Available at: https://mg.co.za/environment/2021-04-18-skukuza-court-closure-was-like-a-knife-in-the-back-of-rangers/ (Accessed 8 March 2022.

[11] Racism and Inequality at Kruger Park: Its like animal farm, say black employees' *City Press,* 3 April 2019 [Online] Available at: https://city-press.news24.com/News/racism-and-inequality-at-kruger-park-its-like-animal-farm-say-black-employees-20190319 (Accessed 20 April 2019).

[12] 'Kruger park ranger suspended for allegedly torturing black employees', *City Press,* 12 November 2019 [Online] Available at: https://www.news24.com/citypress/news/kruger-park-ranger-suspended-for-allegedly-torturing-black-employees-20191112 (Accessed 8 March 2022).

[13] Comments made by senior SANParks manager, GRAA AGM, June 2016.

[14] Semi-structured interview with senior KNP manager, March 2017.

[15] 'Beyond its exceptional beauty, Kruger National Park is on the ropes and hurting', *Daily Maverick,* 25 January 2022 [Online] Available at: https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2022-01-25-beyond-its-exceptional-beauty-kruger-national-park-is-on-the-ropes-and-hurting/ Accessed 16 March 2022).

[16] See [Online] Available at: https://www.aaihs.org/police-dogs-and-anti-black-violence/ (Accessed 12 September 2019).

Appendices

Appendix 1: Post Interview Confidentiality Form

International Institute of Social Studies

Respondent # :_____

_____

Post –Interview
Confidentiality Form

It is my goal and responsibility to use the information that you have shared responsibly. Now that you have completed the interview, I would like to give you the opportunity to provide me with additional feedback on how you prefer to have your data handled. Please select one of the following statements:

☐ You may share the information just as I provided it. No details need to be changed and you may use my real name when using my data in publications or presentations.

☐ You may share the information just as I provided it; however, please do not use my real name. I realize that others might identify me based on the data, even though my name will not be used.

☐ You may share the information I provided; however, please do not use my real name and please change details that might make me identifiable to others. In particular, it is my wish that the following specific pieces of my data not be shared without first altering the data so as to make me unidentifiable (describe this data in space below):

_____

_____

_____

_____

You may contact me at the following contact details:
emilesmidt@hotmail.com and/or +27 82 071 2340

Respondents Signature:_____

Date:_____

Investigator's Signature:_____

Date:_____

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Personal Information

Date of Birth	13 November 1972
Place of Birth	Cape Town, South Africa
Nationality	South African

Summary

- **Protected Area Management experience of approximately 18 years** in southern and East Africa.

- **Strong practical experience** in conservation management, personnel management, conservation law enforcement, black rhino metapopulation management including transnational black rhino translocations.

- **Strong project management skills**, with practical experience in implementing complex logistical projects in remote locations, working with multi-level stakeholders and a demonstrated ability to work independently.

- **Strong interest in the political ecology of conservation**, specifically unravelling what consequences normative, progressive sounding interventions may hold for conservation practice and people.

- **Strong interpersonal skills**, strong affinity to working with marginalised and vulnerable groups of people as well as engaging constructively with elite and powerful actors.

- **Strong problem analysis and analytical writing skills,** and the ability to disseminate findings to non-academic audiences

Education and Qualifications

2014 - 2022 **PhD Development Studies**
International Institute of Social Studies of Erasmus University, Rotterdam

2012 – 2013 **MSc Practicing Sustainable Development** [Pass with Merit]
Royal Holloway University of London
Distinction for Dissertation: *Continuing the Conversation: Unravelling Conservation Discourses and Practices in northern Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa*

2001 – 2002 **Bachelor of Technology: Nature Conservation**
Tshwane University of Technology
Distinction for mini-dissertation: *Principle and Preferred foods of Black Rhino in Marakele National Park*

1991 – 1995 **National Diploma Nature Conservation**
Cape Peninsula University of Technology

Academic Conferences & Workshops

2019 Crisis Conservation Seminar, Rhino Convention Centre, Hoedspruit, South Africa

2019 Cosmopolitan Karoo Research Forum, Stellenbosch University, South Africa

2018 Ending Wildlife Trafficking: Local Communities as Change Agents, Global Initiative against Transnational Crime, University of Cape Town, South Africa

2017 BIOSEC Workshop: Conservation in Conflict Areas, University of Sheffield University, U.K.

2017   The Value of Life: Measurement, Stakes, Implications Conference, Wageningen University, The Netherlands

2016   Current perspectives on Conservation in (and beyond) the Limpopo National Park. Workshop for sharing and mobilizing knowledge, Universidade, Eduardo Motlane, Mozambique

2016   14th Annual Savanna Science Networking Meeting, Kruger National Park, South Africa

2015   New Voices in Social Sciences, part of the 12th Development Dialogue, International Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, The Netherlands

Publications

2019   Duffy, R., Massé, F., **Smidt, E.,** Marijnen, E., Büscher, B., Verweijen, J., Ramutsindela, M., Simlai, T., Joanny, L. and Lunstrum, E. (2019) 'Why we must Question the Militarisation of Conservation', *Biological Conservation,* 232. pp.66-73.

2015   Embido Bejeno, C., Harcourt, W., Parra Heredia, J.D., Radley, B., Sathyamala, C., **Smidt, E.**, Soukotta, T. and Zahda, Y. (2015) 'Guest Editorial: Rethinking Democracy', *Development,* 58(1), pp. 7-9.

2015   **Smidt, E**. (2015) 'Last Word: 12th Development Dialogue - Rethinking Democracy: A Photo Essay', *Development,* 58(1), pp. 150-152.

Academic Awards & Scholarships

2014   EUSA_ID Erasmus Mundus PhD Scholarship

2013   Paula Anne Travel Award, Royal Holloway University of London

2012 Vanina Award, Royal Holloway University of London

2012 Irene Marshall Scholarship, Royal Holloway University of London

Non-Academic Employment History

Project Leader: Serengeti Rhino Repatriation Project

2009 – 2010   Frankfurt Zoological Society

Management and implementation of a multi-million US dollar project to translocate black rhino from South Africa to the Serengeti NP, Tanzania. Implementation of all technical aspects of the project including purchasing of assets; financial management and reporting; field ranger anti-poaching training; conceptualisation of reintroduction, security and monitoring plans; habitat assessment and threat analysis, multi-level and multi-national stakeholder liaison; infrastructure development; transport logistics; introduction of first cohort; boma care and post-release monitoring.

Section Ranger: iMfolozi Game Reserve

2004 – 2008   Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife

Management of 30 000ha in the west of iGR; personnel management of law enforcement and maintenance personnel; financial management of station budget; conservation law enforcement with strong emphasis on firearms proficiency and area coverage; strong emphasis on black rhino monitoring; wildlife management including the chemical immobilisation of lion and wild dog; use of Patrol Management Systems (ArcView 3.2) to

measure patrol effectiveness; liaison with traditional leaders and other law enforcement agencies; infrastructure management; human wildlife conflict investigations and submission of claims.

Acting Park Manager: Marakele National Park

2003 – 2004   South African National Parks

Management and responsibility for all conservation and tourism related activities, personnel and assets; management of multi-stakeholder forums – contractual park, fire protection associations, community policing, tourism stakeholders, neighbouring cattle farmers, local communities; assessment of tenders; park development and expansion; budget planning and implementation; IEMS and SMP planning; funding proposals for Extended Public Works Programmes.

Section Ranger: Marakele National Park

2000- - 2003   South African National Parks

Management of law enforcement and maintenance staff; biological monitoring and rehabilitation programmes (emphasis on black rhino monitoring using tracking); management of large bush encroachment and alien plant eradication programme; infrastructure development particularly perimeter fence construction; and tourism infrastructure; wildlife introductions; visitor management.

Section Ranger: Karoo National Park

1997 – 2000   South African National Parks

Management of a small law enforcement and monitoring team; specific focus on black rhino reintroductions, boma management and monitoring with an emphasis on tracking; long term boma management of orphaned black rhino calf; rehabilitation of newly proclaimed areas; captive breeding of endangered riverine rabbits and monitoring of free ranging population.

Community Development Officer: Qwa Qwa National Park

1994 – 1997 Agri-Eco

Management of a nursery of 70 000 tree and vegetable seedlings; permaculture demonstration garden; establishment of community gardens including small-scale farmers in neighbouring Lesotho; environmental education courses run in conjunction with neighbouring schools and university.

Student Intern: Golden Gate Highlands National Park

1993 South African National Parks

Presentation of week-long environmental education courses; adventure activities; basic environmental management.

Additional Skills

SPSS, QGIS, Atlas.ti, Office suite, presentations, participatory video.

Specialised field craft skills (tracking and telemetry); Patrol Management Systems; Dan Inject darting systems; specialised skills in solar electrical fencing systems; Rhino Specialist Group accredited trainer; physical and chemical capture specialist knowledge; accredited

assistant trainer in basic field ranger skills; advanced firearms handling, accredited range officer.

R e f e r e e s

Professional

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Operations Manager

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