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Published online: 24 Apr 2019.

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ABSTRACT

Existing studies on the trophy hunting controversy in recent years have largely represented the anti-hunting views of the Western public, while overlooking the opinions of African people. This study taps into Africans' social media narratives to illuminate the racially, politically, and historically charged context in which trophy hunting occurs in Africa. Data were collected from the Facebook pages of three major social media players with a predominantly African followership, namely, BBC News Africa, News24.com, and NewsDay-Zimbabwe. The dominant pattern was resentment towards what was viewed as the neo-colonial character of trophy hunting, in the way it privileges Western elites in accessing Africa's wildlife resources. However, the West's passionate criticism of violence against animals was viewed by participants as overblown, and as evidence of their (Westerners') higher regard for animals than for African people. Interestingly, trophy hunting was not objectionable from an animal rights perspective, but as a consequence of its complex historical and postcolonial associations. In addition, criticism was directed at African politicians who were perceived as allowing wildlife exploitation to satisfy their own greed. In this instance, far from tourism being a facilitator of intercultural understanding and peace, it appears to reproduce images and wounds of a colonial past.

Introduction

The last few years have seen sustained academic and public debate on trophy hunting, sparked by the much publicized shooting of Cecil-the-lion in July 2015 by an American tourist. However, most of the focus in scholarly works has been on the largely anti-hunting views of the Western public—the views of Africans who are much more connected to the hunting context have been overlooked. To address this gap, this study taps into social media to understand the ways in which Africans' responses to the trophy hunting controversy diverge from those of the anti-hunting Western public.

The lack of scholarly interest in Afro-based environmental views is noted by Chibvongodze (2016), who sees it as arising from the long colonial history in which indigenous people were denied recognition as effective ecological agents who were able to manage their natural resources sustainably. As a result, their views are either ignored or trivialised. Garland (2008) similarly notes that Western wildlife scientists and advocates working in Africa, although not all, are often ignorant of local worldviews, and frequently lament locals being corrupt, "in it for the money", or lacking the skills required to carry out conservation work.

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More pointedly, with respect to the trophy hunting debate, Macdonald et al. (2017, p. 251) write

> … views widely held in the wealthy West are often at odds with views within lion range countries, where lions often impose severe costs (including man-eating) on the people who live alongside them. Who has the right to make decisions about trophy hunting? How should the weight of opinions held on lion hunting in countries without lions, such as the USA (which has a thriving domestic hunting market), be ranked against the opinions held in African countries where lions occur (and where the financial consequences of a cessation of trophy hunting might bite hardest)?

Indeed, much of the opposition to trophy hunting comes from people who are far removed from the issues, with very little or no African experience (Angula et al., 2018). Thus, Angula et al. (2018) assert that the opinions held in Africa should not be overridden by those of people living in the developed West, as they (Westerners) do not have to bear the direct consequences of wildlife policy changes. For Batavia et al. (2018) top-down decisions by Western policymakers to enforce a ban on trophy hunting in communities where trophy hunting as a form of wildlife tourism has local support is not a sustainable pathway. Thus, for long-term sustainability of wild-life tourism in Africa to be possible, and for a more balanced and complete body of knowledge in that respect, it is important to consider the socio-cultural meanings and implications of trophy hunting, taking into account the views of local communities and broader stakeholders (Nordbø, Turdumambetov, & Gulcan, 2018). It is within this epistemic argument that this study is located. The social media methodology provided convenient access to a much larger sampling frame for African participants than is possible with interviews and other traditional techniques. Furthermore, by using already existing Facebook User Generated Content, the data could be gathered with minimal researcher bias.

Literature review

Trophy hunting in Africa: recent debates and developments

There is an extensive body of research on trophy hunting in Africa stretching over decades (Baker, 1997; Humavindu & Barnes, 2003; Lindsey, Roulet, & Romanach, 2007; Lindsey, Alexander, Frank, Mathieson, & Romanach, 2006; Lindsey et al., 2013; Lindsey, Frank, Alexander, Mathieson, & Romanach, 2007). However, most of these studies focus on the economic contribution of tro-phy hunting, and its contested link with conservation (Creel et al., 2016; Crosmary, Côté, & Fritz, 2015; Lindsey et al., 2006; Vora, 2018). In a large body of the conservation literature, as Batavia et al. (2018) note, trophy hunting has largely been tolerated and even supported. This is perhaps partially motivated by a desire to appear to be driven by reason and evidence, rather than emo-tion and hype (Nelson, Bruskotter, Vucetich, & Chapron, 2016). For instance Di Minin, Leader-Williams, and Bradshaw (2016) argue that banning trophy hunting would exacerbate biodiver-sity loss.

Over the last few years, however, especially following the shooting of Cecil in Zimbabwe, there has also been particular scholarly and public interest in the moral tenability of trophy hunt-ing, with strong critiques of the consequentialist arguments typically used by hunters to justify their "sport" (Nelson et al., 2016). Within the consequentialist argument, trophy hunting's cap-acity to generate funds and other benefits such as food and employment for local communities are emphasised (Di Minin et al., 2016; Mbaiwa, 2018). Since "Cecilgate", the industry has seen increased negative publicity and opposition (Batavia et al., 2018; Crosmary et al., 2015; Macdonald, Jacobsen, Burnham, Johnson, & Loveridge, 2016).

In reference to the moral debates, Batavia et al. (2018) assert that trophy hunting is morally indefensible, because compelling evidence shows that the animals typically hunted for trophies have intelligence, emotion, and sociality. In addition, they argue, in trophy hunting, the animals are debased, commoditized and "relegated to the sphere of mere things when they are turned

into souvenirs, oddities, and collectibles" (Batavia et al., 2018, p. 3). This sentiment is echoed in other recent studies (Lindsey, Balme, Funston, Henschel, & Hunter, 2016; Macdonald, Jacobsen, et al., 2016; Nelson et al., 2016). Trophy hunting has also been described as an ongoing re-enactment of Western colonialist history, wherein the hunting of wildlife is viewed as symbolically representing the conquering and subjugation of "subhuman" indigenous peoples (Batavia et al., 2018; see also Kalof & Fitzgerald, 2003; Mullin, 1999). Thus recent debates have sought to demonstrate that the trophy hunting controversy is not only about whether the practice supports or impedes conservation agendas, but also about the welfare of animals, and its more complex historical associations (Batavia et al., 2018; Nelson et al., 2016). As a result of the ethical concerns around trophy hunting, Bouché et al. (2016) note that there is continued pressure on Western countries to ban lion imports, and indeed countries such as Australia and France have instituted bans (Bouché et al., 2016). A number of airlines have also responded with transportation bans (Bouché et al., 2016).

Bauer et al. (2017) argue that under these circumstances, new approaches to wildlife conservation are needed. The challenge is that in many hunting areas, there are very few, if any, alternatives to trophy hunting which would maintain wildlife habitat and be economically viable (Macdonald et al., 2017). Lindsey et al. (2016) argue that there is an urgent need to find alternative funding streams to reduce the reliance of African countries on trophy hunting, while at the same time cautioning against short term moves to preclude hunting, before such alternatives are in place. In a response to Batavia et al. (2018), Dickman et al. (2019, p. 1) similarly advocate "a 'journey' rather than a 'jump' to end hunting, in the interests of limiting unintended consequences".

Traditional African views on wildlife

As noted, very little consideration has been given in existing literature to Africans' worldviews in relation to trophy hunting. Extant studies on the subject may be described as largely etic, that is, as privileging the outsider's gaze. However, a number of studies have examined the concept of Ubuntu (Chibvongodze, 2016; Forster, 2010; Murove, 2004), which underpinned traditional African views of and relationships with nature, including wildlife.

Ubuntu is a word from the Southern African family of languages (Ndebele, Swati,/Swazi, Xhosa, and Zulu), and, as Outwater, Abrahams, and Campbell (2005) note, Ubuntu is not easily translatable; it represents not a thing, but a philosophy and way of life that is the foundation of many African societies, with complex cultural connotations. Ubuntu combines the values of "humaneness", "caring and sharing", or "being in harmony with all of creation". It may also be understood as meaning "I am because we are" (Andreasson, 2010). As Du Plessis (2001) argues, understanding "interconnectedness" as encapsulated by the cultural concept of Ubuntu offers insight into an African concept of sustainability that can inform the Western sustainability model and make it relevant to Africa. Regarding the perspective of this article, Ubuntu can be viewed as providing a reconceptualization of the trophy hunting debate—in Ubuntu philosophy, the wellbeing of all humanity and of all nature takes precedence, before the rights of the individual (trophy hunter). Thus while a tourist might have a permit to hunt and shoot an animal, if the community and the environment suffer, it is considered that the principles of Ubuntu have been violated. It could also be argued that the consequentialist justification of sacrificing individual animals for the greater conservation good of populations and species would not be compatible with Ubuntu either. Ubuntu, being grounded in an attitude of caring and compassion, does not excuse gratuitous violence towards individual animals. In traditional African society, animals were killed if they posed danger (for example, to crops or to humans), or for survival (that is, for meat). There is however still work to be done on the finer interpretations of Ubuntu, as Lutz (2009) notes.

Chibvongodze (2016, p. 159) argues that African indigenous knowledge systems "utilise cultural beliefs and norms embedded in taboos, totems and proverbs to promote human tolerance towards plants, animals, mountains and rivers." He draws a contrast between Western philosophies on environmental conservation, which promote an individualistic moral obligation to conserve animals, with African philosophy which encourages a collective sense of responsibility to conservation, by meshing animal identities with clan names to create a sense of human/animal similitudes, thereby encouraging a communal commitment to conservation of animals (Chibvongodze, 2016; Galaty, 2014). Ubuntu signifies that the "wholeness of an African can only be complete when the human-spiritual-nature tripartite is achieved" (Chibvongodze, 2016, p. 158).

However, with the advent of colonialism, the role of Ubuntu in African communities was usurped by Western approaches to conservation, as indigenous people were systematically alienated from their natural environment (Akama, 1996; Akama, Maingi, & Camargo, 2011; Chibvongodze, 2016). When colonial conservation methods were introduced, nature was appropriated through fenced game parks, transforming native hunters into poachers, trespassers, and criminals (Chibvongodze, 2016; MacKenzie, 1997). Colonialism challenged the African philosophy that views humans and nature as an inseparable, singular entity—while Ubuntu attests to humans and nature as equals, Western anthropocentrism mandated humans as primary and central in the order of things (Chibvongodze, 2016; Steiner, 2010). Whereas historically Western philosophy viewed nature only as a means to an end, African philosophy depicted it as an end in itself (Chibvongodze, 2016; Murphy, 2018).

On a broader level, however, the role and merits of Ubuntu for modern African society remain a point of considerable contention. The 'incompatibility school of thought' (see Mwipikeni, 2018), on one hand, views Ubuntu as incompatible with contemporary African society's socio-political system. Matolino and Kwindingwi (2013, p. 202) point out, in their work titled "the end of ubuntu", that traditional worldviews such as Ubuntu only work well for "undifferentiated, small and tight-knit communities that are relatively undeveloped". Referring in particular to the South African case, they question whether Ubuntu can be made to fit in contemporary, highly diverse African societies that espouse ideas such as tolerance, cosmopolitanism, and democracy. The Ubuntu narrative, they assert "hardly addresses the increasingly globalised and sophisticated outlook" of modern African communities (p. 2015).

Koenane and Olatunji (2017), on the other hand, hold a starkly different view, arguing that Ubuntu remains competitive as a moral theory, and that it "will ultimately prove to be a desirable ethic which could contribute positively towards developing moral character in the contemporary socio-political environment in parts of Africa" (p. 263). In a similar manner, Metz (2014) finds Ubuntu a compelling philosophy that merits pride on behalf of sub-Saharans; one that can be refined and exported to international audiences. Other scholars argue that Ubuntu would need to be re-invented in order to suit modern African society (Chimakonam, 2016). Modern African society can therefore be described as characterized by a tension between a modern, globalized outlook, and the traditional Ubuntu ethos, each with its own set of virtues and challenges. One of the objectives of this study is to examine whether or in what ways African social media users express opinions of trophy hunting reminiscent of traditional Ubuntu views.

Method

Overview of the grounded theory approach

Given the many complex questions and research gaps around how trophy hunting is viewed from an African perspective, as shown by the review of existing knowledge, a grounded theory approach was adopted to allow the findings to emerge without confining them to a predetermined theoretical lens. Grounded theory is particularly useful where a relevant theory does

not exist or in areas where little is already known (Charmaz, 2014). The present study meets these two criteria. Furthermore, it would be counter-intuitive to impose an existing (Western) theoretical framework on a study which seeks to foreground a non-Western perspective.

Grounded theory systematically gathers and analyses data to identify key constructs relating to a particular phenomenon (Charmaz, 2014; Glaser & Strauss, 2017). The process involves three steps: coding and theorising; memoing and theorising; and, integrating, refining and writing up theories (Charmaz, 2014).

The grounded theory approach possesses three major strengths, which enhance the rigour and richness of this study:

i. *Ecological validity*: The emergent constructs in a grounded theory study are context-specific, detailed, and tightly connected to the data (Charmaz, 2014; Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Glaser & Strauss, 2017).
ii. *Novelty:* Grounded theories have the potential to offer fresh and innovative perspectives on a phenomenon because they are not tied to any pre-existing theory.
iii. *Parsimony:* Grounded theories unpack complex phenomena in ways that help us to understand our social world.

The study's rigour is further enhanced through thick description. The goal of thick description is to create verisimilitude, so that the reader is transported into a setting or situation (Creswell and Miller, 2000). In this instance, the quoted narratives are lengthier than is often the case in similar qualitative studies, to allow a more comprehensive representation of the posters' views to emerge.

In addition, the study combines data from three different Facebook pages, to maximise the diversity of perspectives on the investigated phenomenon. This triangulated approach created a richer, robust data set that captured African users' meanings more rigorously.

Data strategy

An online data strategy presented the best opportunity to tap into naturally occurring exchanges, or User-Generated Content (see Lu & Stepchenkova, 2014; Mkono & Holder, 2019), on the topic of trophy hunting, generated free from researcher bias. Facebook was chosen as the data source due to its ubiquity among Africans living in Africa and in the Diaspora. The pages of news channels that focus on African coverage were identified as the most strategic platforms for collecting data, because of their large African followership. Three Facebook pages were selected for that purpose, namely, BBC News Africa, News24.com (South African news), and NewsDay-Zimbabwe. These pages may be located via a simple search on Facebook.

Descriptions of the three pages are provided in Table 1, showing the numbers of followers, example stories on trophy hunting, and the total number of comments analysed. Relevant posts within the selected pages were then identified through keyword searches using the terms "Cecil the lion", "trophy hunting", and "Walter Palmer". The iterative data search continued until no new relevant insights were emerging from new results, that is, when data saturation was attained. A total of 1,070 posts were collated and analysed.

As the data were already available in the public domain, no consent was sought from individual participants. However, no identifying information about participants was collected or included in the presentation of findings.

Data analysis

The data were subjected to the constant comparative method of grounded theory (Boeije, 2002; Kolb, 2012). The first step was open-coding, which began with reading through and close

Table 1. Data sources.

Data Source (Facebook page)	Description (as of June 6, 2018)	Example stories (list not exhaustive)	Total comments analysed = 1070
BBC News Africa	4,015,939 followers	*Xanda: Son of Cecil the 'lion killed by hunter' in Zimbabwe* Posted July 1, 2017 *What Cecil the lion means to Zimbabwe* Posted July 31, 2015 *US lion killer 'sorry for disruption'* Posted July 30, 2015	519
News24.com	6,447,689 followers	*Foreign hunter accused of killing Zim's famous lion* Posted July 28, 2015 *10 consequences of banning trophy hunting in SA* Posted August 6, 2015	333
NewsDay-Zimbabwe	730,960 followers	*Zimbabwean pair appear in court over Cecil the lion killing* Posted July 29, 2015 *Do you know Cecil the lion? Watch what some Zimbabweans answered.* Posted July 31, 2015	218

examination of the collated social media posts. Proceeding sentence by sentence, sections of the narratives which addressed the research focus (that is, Africans' views on trophy hunting and the controversy around it) were identified and given labels, or codes. This was followed by axial coding, which identified similar codes and grouped them into core categories.

The second step, memoing and theorising, involved writing running notes on each of the identified categories, in order to delve into the latent meanings in data more deeply. The notes served as an interpretive tool and audit trail that connected the researcher's interpretations with the data. The iterative process of coding, memoing and theorising continued until no new insights were emerging.

In the third and final integrative phase of analysis, which is also termed selective coding (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Glaser & Strauss, 2017), the goal was to identify the central story line by establishing the relationships between the themes and synthesising them in the context of existing literature, but without necessarily seeking to fit the findings within a particular theoretical lens.

Limitations of social media analysis

Notwithstanding its many merits, the present social media analysis is subject to two particular limitations, which must be noted. First, the data by default exclude Africans who are not active on social media. This is significant to mention given the internet penetration in Africa of less than 40%. Secondly, social media analysis is subject to the sensationalisation and bias by the news media, in the reporting of stories. This may in turn influence the strength and direction of responses among social media users. However, this limitation is moderated by social media users' access to other information sources online and offline.

Findings

Five initial core categories were identified from the data, illuminating how African Facebook users viewed trophy hunting and the controversy around it, namely, (i) Western elites exploiting African resources; (ii) 'Cecil the lion' as 'Cecil John Rhodes'; (iii) Animals valued more than humans; (iv) Lions as a threat to human life; and (v) The politics of greed (see Table 2). Further interrogation of the categories revealed overlaps between them, on some patterns. On that basis, the categories were collapsed and reorganised into three themes, which were labelled to capture the essence of the data.

Table 2. Summary of data patterns and example posts.

Recurrent patterns	Example Facebook posts
Western elites exploiting African resources	Why paying in Las Vagas, USA. Africa needs money from its resources to develop. Why not paying here in Africa? Thats colonial mentality.
	Hunting in Africa while licenses are bought in Las Vegas? What the f**k is going on? If u want to kill my lion come get the license from me here in Africa!!!!
	They're mining our minerals and exporting it to Europe, America and etc, now killing our untamed animals, what is our leaders doing?
	These are terrorists. These terrorists should be treated as murderous, we are really trying to save our nature, and they come all the way from America to kill our beautiful animals, in the name of trophy hunters. … If I see you, I'll shoot you with an arrow. Useless pink nose.
	White people: "How can they kill such precious animals"
	Also white people: "We're a group of trophy hunters. I killed 16 lions boet" smh
'Cecil the lion' as 'Cecil John Rhodes'	That's wat i hv been wondering my Zim neighbours, takin pride in naming our heritage after the oppressors, why wasn't the lion named Farai?
	I'm relieved that Cecil the lion died. He was named after Cecil John Rhodes and this is testament to the death of the spirit of Cecil Rhodes in Zim. It's a mystery how both of them were linked to Oxford.
	All this puff & huff for nothing, what about thousands of innocent Zimbabweans killed during the satanic Gukurahundi. Its just a meer animal named after a colonial remnant, Cecil John Rhodes.
Animals valued more than humans	When a person is killed by a lion u smile no action taken, but a lion killed u run to arrest a person
	whats is so important about a 13yr old lion we got kids dying or pple starving and having no jobs and excess to proper healthcare but all you think of is a lion …
	So what he killed a lion note a humen so nothing wrong with that Why others pay to hunt in the park so whats the difference??????
	Rubbish, what's is it about this Lion? This is just wild animal. BBC please give us a better news
	Many Heroes and heroens dies in Africa were not praise like this Lion what was important in the animal does its value more than human beings created in Gods likenes and image or it was the god for Zimbabweans to worship? If it was an idol then iam sorry
	But what is it about these animals on BBC CNN et al? One time 47 people died in a road accident one day—I never saw it on BBC The other time 39 burnt beyond recognition in another accident—it was never breaking news. No drugs in hospitals—it's never told on the elite TV channels. Why why why ?
	How many people did that same lion killed.it's life lions kill people and people kill lions.get over it
	Oooh Man! Ooh brothers and sisters in Africa. Wild life?
	What are wildlife, when millions of African are dying and no African ountry could stand up and says no, enough?
	People are dying in neighbouring countries and home countries and they see it as normal. You want people who have not lost their senses join you in your ranting about a missing or dead WILD LIFE? What about the humans?
	Crazy world!
	People of nawadays value animals more than human beings and that's too bad … We are imitating the western world and that is not encouraging …
	People shedding more tears for Cecil, what of Dzamara
	… those beast are now devouring humans babies, of recent is a poor 10 year girl who was devoured by those beast as she went to toilet. So sad . It's better the lions be killed than lions killing humans!
	Why is the world paying more attention to that animal? Is that lion better or have more value than the hundred Isis is killing now are day? Or what about the school girls in Nigeria the conflict in Congo, insecurity and suffering of African migraines in some countries like Spain Greece etc. I think this are some of the issues people should place values on
Lions as a threat to human life	How many people did that same lion killed. it's life lions kill people and people kill lions.get over it
	These lions are, plenty in the Hwange national park busy eating people.'s domesticated animals in that area get one rename it,Cecil then,n stop mourning abt this dead lion afterall the proceeds frm that tourism business is not, benefitting the locals there

(continued)

Table 2. Continued.

Recurrent patterns	Example Facebook posts
	Some few months ago, a lion killed people in South Africa, nothing was done to it. I don't think killing a lion is a violation of any God-given commandment. We should be thankful that the people living in the area have one less man Hunter to worry about while they go about their lives.
The politics of greed	*In SA we have a rubbish practiced by white people called sport hunting. One wonders as to how can killing an animal be a sport. Their habit of giving fancy names to foolish acts is really disgusting. Savages!*
	Now I see why Mugabe dislikes these species. Kill all animals there and leave our animals alone.
	Thats the only problem i find in these moroons, they come to Africa to plunder our resources with their stupid dollars
	Too bad the question is do Africa value wild animals nature the answer is not, money first that matters more for black man
Outlier/minority opinions	*This is not just a lion. It was the biggest tourist attraction at Hwange. If you can't respect wildlife you won't respect your fellow man period! Animals think feel and have as much right to the planet as you do!*
	Whatever happened Cecil the lion has gone as thousands of other lions have been massacred. Mr. Walter is angry because of inconveniences or backlashes for him and his family after killing Cecil the lion, but he didn't think of Cecil's family!
	Cecil was not just an ordinary animal he was the most adorable lion possibly in the world.
	Without hunters there would be no game left in Africa. Hunters are the reasen the Sabel is back fron the indaingerd list ext ext. Catle use to be wild man made them tame for food.

The dominant pattern was resentment towards what was viewed as the neo-colonial character of trophy hunting, in the way it privileges Western elites in accessing Africa's wildlife resources. However, the Western public's passionate criticism of violence against animals (especially in the case of Cecilgate) was viewed as overblown and as evidence of their (Westerners') higher regard for animals than for African people. Thus, trophy hunting was not objectionable from an animal rights perspective, but as a consequence of its complex historical and postcolonial associations. It is notable too that in these narratives that the focus was neither on the animals that are shot by hunters, nor on the supposed benefits of trophy hunting for conservation. In particular, the consequentialist argument [the assertion that trophy hunting offers the only viable funding model for conservation in Africa (Nelson et al., 2016)] was conspicuously absent from the posts. Rather, among African users, trophy hunting was judged on its political and historical associations, that is, on the human actors, and their bases of power. In addition, criticism was directed at African politicians for allowing an exploitative form of consumptive tourism to occur, in order to satisfy their greed for money.

In the next sections the three key themes which emerged from the categories are discussed, namely (i) trophy hunting as neo-colonialist; (ii) animals valued more than humans; and (iii) the politics of greed. It should be noted that the Facebook quotes are not edited for typographical and grammatical errors, to preserve their raw authenticity.

Trophy hunting as neo-colonialist

Trophy hunting was viewed by the majority of African participants (70%) as neo-colonialist in the way it appears to exclusively give rich Westerners power over the majestic megafauna of Africa, through an activity from which Africans are economically excluded—[Walter Palmer paid over USD50,000 in fees for the Cecil hunt, for example (Pearce, 2018)]. The colonial histories of Africa and the postcolonial imbalances of power and wealth thus informed the way in which Africans constructed meanings about trophy hunting as a form of touristic consumption. One poster, expressing disapproval for Westerners' extraction of Africa's wildlife resources, wrote:

> They imported all the African exotic animals to their countries and have kept them in the Zoos for their locals to see instead of traveling to Africa.in other words they want to kill the tourism industry in Africa.these ppl colonized us and continue to harass our lives.

Another poster added, "They're mining our minerals and exporting it to Europe, America and etc., now killing our untamed animals, what is our leaders doing?", stressing the (perceived) failure of African leaders. Hunters were thus framed as exploitative and callous. In another post, trophy hunting was juxtaposed with what the poster characterised as other forms of Western domination and exploitation:

> When Somalis put out in small boats, and hold Western freight ships for ransom, the Somalis are labeled "pirates". But, how do we label foreign fishermen who poach sea life off the Horn of Africa, and dump toxic chemicals in the African waters. Trophy hunting is nothing new, just the most recent form of Western Colonialism

Under the new forms of Western colonialism which the poster alludes to, or neo-colonialism, developed countries are seen to exercise subtle forms of domination, exploitation and control over former colonies (Akama et al., 2011; Antwi-Boateng, 2017).

The exploitation discourse was also recurrent in the critique of the structural design of the hunting industry, which determines who profits financially from the activity. Here, posters criticised the purchasing of hunting licenses overseas: "Why paying in Las Vagas, USA. Africa needs money from its resources to develop. Why not paying here in Africa? Thats colonial mentality." Another poster echoed the sentiment: "Hunting in Africa while licenses are bought in Las Vegas? What the f**k is going on? If u want to kill my lion come get the license from me here in Africa!!!!".

The objections raised resonate with the concept of "distributive (in)justice" (Lamont, 2017)—a concern over whether monetary gains from the tourism system wholly flow back to Africa and to local communities there, who are considered the true owners and custodians of the wildlife resources (see also Dickman, Packer, Johnson, & Macdonald, 2018; Rylance & Spenceley, 2017). Indeed, trophy hunting has always raised questions around how benefits are allocated (Lindsey et al., 2006; Lindsey et al., 2007). Where distributive justice is not delivered, tourism is complicit in the articulation and perpetuation of unequal territorial and cultural relations; it becomes, as a result, a locus of "contradictions, juxtapositions and intersections", as D'Hauteserre (2004, p. 238) puts it. The configuration of the tourism industry in the trophy hunting scenario where some of the revenues accrue to overseas agents (for example in the form of booking/license commissions) re-enacts economic imbalances of the colonial past (Garland, 2008).

Other posters criticised the abandonment of indigenous African models of wildlife management, founded on Ubuntu philosophy, in favour of Western approaches. Within this critique, Western models were branded as responsible for the conservation crises that Africa faces:

> In the not too distant past African people had a healthy respect for the natural world and were more careful about hunting. Now most African people have had at least 150 years of being told all of the old ways were backward, sub-intelligent, and proof of our lack of civilisation. Having been forced off the land and out of the old systems of land use and frailties—old understandings of society and the animal world so many are disconnected to those old ways, no longer valuing animals and helping careless people hunt them all to extinction.

The poster here echoes Chibvongodze's (2016) assertion that with the advent of colonialism and the effects of globalisation under the neo-liberal project, the intimate relationship Africans had with nature has been undermined. Chibvongodze argues that in the pre-colonial era, guided by Ubuntu, African societies strove to co-exist and co-relate with animals and the environment in a respectful, and non-exploitative manner. Nature was not a commodity to be consumed for a price, nor was conservation dependent on the tourist dollar. The poster however goes further and acknowledges the shortcomings of the indigenous approaches: "The past of course wasn't perfect but the old ideals of Kingship, man and nature were way better than the broken

confused understandings people have been left with", while still dismissing the West's quest for "'civilising us' so we take money from anyone no matter how uncaring for killing just about any animal anywhere!". Nonetheless, the yearning for the pre-colonial past yet again demonstrates a dissatisfaction with a system that legitimises trophy hunting as necessary for conservation, perpetuating in the process the domination of the "rich white man".

Animals valued more than humans

A significant number of African posters (about 80%) also criticised the Western community, particularly in reference to Cecilgate (Lindsey et al., 2016), for championing the animal rights cause, while, in their view (the posters'), completely overlooking the suffering of African people. In short, the participants felt that Westerners cared more for animals than for African people, which, to them, undermined the West's moral authority—the West, for all its noble adulation and veneration of wildlife, seemed to care very little about the people who live in proximity to that wildlife:

> kids die everyday here in africa because of hunger but all you care about more are these "majestic" animals, i hear so much noise about these animals but hardly ever hear people protesting against poverty, what is wrong with this planet

> whats is so important about a 13yr old lion we got kids dying or pple starving and having no jobs and excess to proper healthcare but all you think of is a lion …

Notably, these criticisms expressed frustration with what was perceived as the misanthropic views of Western publics, which show undue moral concern for nonhuman animals while failing to demonstrate proper moral concern for human beings. One poster dismisses the animal rights sentiment of the Western public as un-African: "People of nawadays value animals more than human beings and that's too bad … We are imitating the western world and that is not encouraging … ". We observe here an instance where, as Akama et al. (2011) notes, neo- and post-colonisations result in hegemonic struggles as locals negotiate, resist and reject external influences and values.

Similarly, another poster commented, "Concentrate more on pple' well being than these animals. Cecil for that matter. Animals has become more important than pple? Hallelujah". It is interesting to note here also how the advent of colonialism has resulted in a sharper distinction between humans and nature, whereas traditionally, human and wildlife domains were intricately interconnected. The poster also took issue with the Westerners' response especially because the lion was named "Cecil", a name which, for many Africans, brings to mind the British imperialist Cecil Rhodes. This association was raised by many other posters, for example:

> I was curious about that too. Cecil Rhodes and Rhodesia came to my mind. Why would any Africa nation, and in particular Zimbabwe, name its favorite lion after its murderering oppressor Cecil Rhodes? Could the name Cecil be the reason behind this Lion being sacrificed. Maybe in their minds they were killing Cecil Rhodes and any reminders of Cecil Rhodes.

> That's wat i hv been wondering my Zim neighbours, takin pride in naming our heritage after the oppressors, why wasn't the lion named Farai?

Another poster cheekily observed that both Cecil Rhodes and Cecil-the-lion were linked to Oxford University (referring to Cecil the lion being studied by WildCRU, the Conservation Research Unit at Oxford University): "I'm relieved that Cecil the lion died. He was named after Cecil John … It's a mystery how both of them were linked to Oxford." Of course, the Oxford link is only coincidental, but the colonial associations are, in the mind of the poster, deliberate.

The posters also queried the "icon" status accorded to Cecil by many in the West in the aftermath of the lion's shooting, citing the many incidences of man-eating by lions. Again, by not

focusing on the loss of African lives to wild animals, Westerners had failed to match their compassion for animals with compassion for African people:

> And when did an animal become an icon? I think we have to come out of this so called crazy love for animals. By the time we start to care for animal as if its human then something is wrong. Some few months ago, a lion killed people in South Africa, nothing was done to it. I don't think killing a lion is a violation of any God-given commandment.

Another poster added: "We should be thankful that the people living in the area have one less man Hunter to worry about while they go about their lives". Although the issue of human-wildlife conflict has been thoroughly investigated in a number of studies (see, for example, Graham, Douglas-Hamilton, Adams, & Lee, 2009; Macdonald et al., 2017), from the posters' perspective, Westerners fail to appreciate the social cost of co-existing with wildlife for African communities. Understanding this reality helps illuminate, at least in part, why attitudes towards wildlife are vastly different between Westerners and locals (for an expanded discussion on this point, see Mkono, 2018).

The politics of greed

Criticism was not only directed at Westerners, but also at African politicians and leaders who were characterised as greedy and lacking a moral compass. Posters (60%) felt that white elites were able to take advantage of the economic desperation of Africa and its money-hungry politicians: "Corruption! The true cancer of Africa. No vision with a lack of leadership produces such results. Who's hands did this idiot grease?".

Another poster viewed African countries as faced with the difficult dilemma of choosing between the preservation of nature, or monetary gain, concluding that the latter prevails:

> The dichotomy of poor African states that rely on ecotourism is precisely this … what's more important, the preservation of nature (lions, rhinos, elephants) or self preservation? Clearly the latter seems to tip the scale unfortunately its at the cost of nature ….the lure of the elusive dollar is simply too great to ignore. Its a real sad state of affairs.

Trophy hunting was therefore the product of complicity between white men and greedy African leaders: "These are shameless white men, who believe that since they can give our stupid greedy leaders a few dollars to buy sausages for their kids, that they can boss around Africa doing as they wish. And that we the idiots will run to chew on the carcases with tears of appreciation in our eyes!". Greed violates the principles of Ubuntu, which places the needs of the community above the needs of the individual (Chibvongodze, 2016; Nussbaum, 2003). It is un-African. Again, the issue of distributive justice is brought to the fore, as posters felt that only the political elites and their families were enjoying the economic proceeds from the trophy hunting industry. For some countries, it is not clear from existing research what proportion of trophy hunting fees are actually channelled to conservation or to benefit local communities in Africa. Under Zimbabwe's Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE), communities should get some 80% of wildlife revenues and should be able to use them as they desire (Lindsey et al., 2007). Frost and Bond (2008) report, for example, that between 1989 and 2001, CAMPFIRE generated more than US$20 million of transfers to the participating communities, 89% of which came from trophy hunting. However, as Lindsey et al. (2007) note, corruption is endemic in all levels of the trophy hunting industry including politicians who are bribed to favour certain operators when granting hunting concessions.

The strong associations with race ("shameless white men") are again telling of the role of colonial histories and the neo-colonial present in the way Africans perceive trophy hunting. Trophy hunting therefore is shown to be divisive in a manner which is particularly unhelpful for achieving racial harmony in postcolonies. Whereas tourism recreation has been lauded in other contexts as fostering liminal experiences within which people of different backgrounds are able

to transcend their differences, this analysis of trophy hunting by Western tourists at least suggests that it engenders an atmosphere of strife and even racial hatred.

Outlier views

For completeness, it is important to note that there were a number of other outlier or minority views which largely echoed the criticisms raised by the Western public. These included questioning the machoistic motivations of hunters: "What kind of a human being feels that they are real man after trophy hunting and killing an animal that cant even fight back". Several other posters also expressed indignation over Walter Palmer's acquittal by the Zimbabwean government: "A statue!!!!!??? Instead bringing Walter James Palmer to prison … To save other lions like Jericho. You are building Cecil a statue … instead of giving him justice … ". A few posters stressed the intrinsic value of animals, and their revenue generating capacity: "This is not just a lion … If you can't respect wildlife you won't respect your fellow man period! Animals think feel and have as much right to the planet as you do!", and "It's so embarrassing how Zimbabweans don't know the importance of wildlife, hear people say 'what's so special about the lion we want bread and butter issues' … Cecil was not just an ordinary animal he was the most adorable lion possibly in the world. … It's a big blow to tourism which in turn a blow to that bread and butter you so desperately need". Space limitations do not allow for a detailed analysis of these outlier views. They are however discussed in other recent studies (Lindsey et al., 2016; Macdonald, Jacobsen, et al., 2016; Nelson et al., 2016).

Discussion

The moral quandaries surrounding trophy hunting in recent years have typically been debated in reference to the violence towards animals, and in terms of the links between the activity and wildlife conservation (Baker, 1997; Coltman et al., 2003; Lindsey et al., 2006; Macdonald, Jacobsen, et al., 2016; Nelson et al., 2016; Packer et al., 2011; Vora, 2018). However, in the findings presented, trophy hunting is understood and critiqued through a very different lens—the colonial histories of Africa and the associated neo-colonial distribution of power, money and access to resources in the present day. In addition, the moral authority of the West's recent anti-hunting campaign is also undermined on account of its (perceived) lack of compassion for African people. As such, among Africans, trophy hunting was a domain of political and cultural associations that transcend the conservation debate. Thus trophy hunting was interrogated as a racially divisive activity that, rather than helping to heal the wounds of the colonial past, aggravates them. This is particularly apparent in the view of the Cecil movement as proof that Westerners cared more for African animals than for African people. It is also evident in the interpretation of the name Cecil as associated with the imperialist Cecil Rhodes. To progress towards healing, as Garland (2008) argues, it is necessary to confront the colonial nature of the conservation model in Africa. Furthermore, it is important to recognise that sustainable conservation in Africa hinges on the long-term support of African publics at all levels.

It has however long been established that, through its approach to developing country destinations, tourism often perpetuates colonial forms of interaction (D'Hauteserre, 2004). Tourism in Africa reinforces and is indeed embedded in postcolonial relationships (Hall & Tucker, 2004). Akama et al. (2011) argues that forms of tourism that evolved during the colonial era interpellate into tourism structures in the postcolonial to perpetuate economic, political, and socio-cultural domination, stirring in the process local struggle and resistance.

For the African participants, trophy hunting re-enacts the past when settlers in the colonial era could hunt recreationally in national parks, while subsistence hunting by indigenous people was banned and officially classified as poaching (Akama et al., 2011). In postcolonial times, what

constitutes hunting versus poaching is also a racially drawn demarcation, as the "pastime" of trophy hunting can only be afforded almost exclusively by rich white foreigners. Garland (2008) suggests in this connection that it is important for Western biologists and conservationists to educate themselves about the complexities of African culture and history in ways they have not previously done. They must accept that their social responsibilities extend beyond a few outreach programs in the rural villages adjacent to protected areas in Africa, and assume responsibility for the role they play in shaping the world's imagination of both African animals and African human beings. It should also be noted, however, regarding the economic exclusion of locals from trophy hunting, that the same can be said about other forms of tourism which require significant discretionary income.

It is also clear that African leaders need to involve their citizens in crafting and defending their wildlife conservation policies. The image of the industry would benefit from greater transparency and accountability of all actors in relation to their use of trophy hunting revenues. Failing that, trophy hunting would continue to be associated with greed and immorality. In the long run, it is imperative that African governments strive to meaningfully empower communities to fully own, manage, and profit from wildlife resources.

Furthermore, although Ubuntu's role in traditional African society has largely been rendered redundant under the Western conservation models, there remains an opportunity for more culturally inclusive models. As Akama et al. (2011) argue, current Western models are problematic because they are grounded in a colonial legacy that serves to exclude indigenous approaches. Conservation should be more firmly anchored in the service of African communities, and in their traditional ways of being. By evoking the values of Ubuntu, conservation in Africa might have a greater chance of success by creating a stronger sense of cultural sensitivity and inclusion. But, of course, whatever the merits of Ubuntu are, it would be unrealistic and naive to expect African countries to revert *wholly* to traditional management approaches. Some sort of hybrid model would be more feasible and pragmatic.

To bridge the gaps between Western and African views on wildlife conservation, Garland (2008) suggests that conservation education campaigns run by Western NGOs and zoological parks need to broaden their message, contextualizing it within discussions of the histories and legal statuses of the habitats in question, and of the issues of poverty and rural development that shape these habitats' positions within the surrounding African societies. Garland (2008) further urges that influential representational channels such as the National Geographic Society (NGS), the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), and the Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS) must emphasise the ownership of wildlife resources by African nations and the crucial dependence of conservation efforts on the goodwill and labour of African people.

Conclusion

The article reveals strong links between the perception of trophy hunting and the colonial histories of Africa. Trophy hunting was viewed by African participants as a political and physical enclave in which the precious wildlife resources of Africa were plundered by rich Westerners, with the complicity of greedy African leaders. Far from tourism being a facilitator of intercultural understanding and peace, it appears in this instance to reproduce images and wounds of a colonial past.

The findings point to the need for a more reflexive Western thought on conservation which takes into account the less audible voices and of alternative cultural lenses. As Garland (2008) urges, it is important to reconfigure conservationist discourses so that they become an vector for educating Western publics about the challenges that African people face, and about the legacies of colonialism and marginalization on the continent, not just for African landscapes and game

populations, but for African people as well. Thus, it is important to continue to interrogate the ways in which tourism may deliberately and also unwittingly serve to neo-colonise. In that respect, tourism studies would benefit from more applications of neo-colonialist frames of analysis which reassert the ongoing nature of colonial power imbalances and cultural domination.

By investigating wildlife tourism practices using alternative lenses such as Ubuntu, a more diverse body of knowledge would emerge. Ubuntu in particular has been described as the gift that Africa will give to the world (Bolden, & Kirk, 2009; Forster, 2010), by making whole what is socially, culturally, and spiritually kept separate; by bridging rather than recreating Other boundaries of division (Andreasson, 2010; Seedat, Baw, & Ratele, 2010). The contribution that Ubuntu can make to sustainable tourism lies in its premise that nature is not just a resource to be exploited for human advancement. The challenge then is to find ways of integrating it with existing frameworks, cognisant of the evolving nature of modern African societies operating in an outward-looking, global geopolitical environment.

However, while it is useful to examine alternative cultural lenses for human-nature relationships, it is important to remain conscious of the nuances in worldviews among different African societies and individuals. Only by appreciating the vastly different lived experiences of African peoples in relation to wildlife will the West engage meaningfully with conservation in Africa. It would also be interesting to investigate, in future research, whether non-consumptive forms of tourism evoke the same reactions as those recorded here.

From a sustainability perspective, it is crucial to continue to interrogate consumptive forms of tourism such as trophy hunting, not only in terms of their economic value, but also in relation to their moral integrity, and from the perspective of local communities. In that endeavour, Africa's leaders are likely to have more support if they find meaningful ways of engaging their citizens in wildlife policy decisions.

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