The Kruger National Park was founded on the fiction of territorial integrity. Its founders, the South African government, imagined the park as a place with finite boundaries – even if these had to be fixed by law in order to turn a political desire to preserve South Africa's fauna into the legal fiction of a bounded and sovereign national park (Hansard 1926: 4367). They believed that the park "must form one continuous whole" and be large enough "particularly for animals who require plenty of room to move about" (Hansard 1926: 4367). The imaginary park thus conceived demanded a fiction of form (a clearly demarcated place with identifiable borders) and a fictive content (flora and fauna that existed independently of the world beyond the park's boundaries). But how to achieve this fiction in a place that was in fact peopled by Africans? This was the question that confronted the founders. However, in what they took to be an act of divine intervention, the place chosen for the park was not suitable for farming or grazing, had little water and "only a few natives" living there. As Piet Grobler, South Africa's Minister of Lands, told the National Assembly on 31 May 1926 when introducing the second reading of the bill that led to the creation of the Kruger park: "It seems a dispensation of Providence that we have been given the locality to establish a national park in the interests of the preservation of our fauna" (Hansard 1926: 4367). Grobler seemed aware that claims of territorial integrity for the Kruger park were fictitious and therefore open to challenge. However, he conceived of the threat as coming from the government itself. He told Parliament: "In the first place we must fix the boundaries by legislation" (Hansard 1926: 4369). There were vocal mining and farming lobbies that wanted free reign in the park, which had existed since 1898 as the Sabi Game Reserve but was now about to become the Kruger National Park. Grobler worried that these lobbies might prevail – unless the park's boundaries were cast in law. He said: "As long as the alteration of the boundary is in the hands of the Government the Government will always be exposed to being pressed by supporters to alter the boundary" (Hansard 1926: 4369).

The boundaries were indeed established by law, thus creating the fiction of territorial integrity. In truth, the boundaries fixed in 1926 were never as stable as the legal fiction made them appear. There were territorial inclusions, excisions, fencing and de-fencing throughout the park's history. These changes happened as farms were bought, land swopped, and Africans removed–either to expand the park or make real the fiction of its contiguity. Some of the changes happened as recently as the early 1990s (Joubert 2007). However, the fiction of territorial integrity persisted. It rested on assumptions about the park's locality that downplayed a history of flows, connections and movements within and without the park. These flows, connections and movements included epizootics, commodities such as guns, animals and humans. In some instances, these diseases, commodities, animals and humans moved in concert, in others on their own and in yet other instances at cross-

purposes to one another. However, they were constantly in flow, always connected and forever on the move in ways that belied the fiction that the Kruger park was one continuous whole and that it was removed from the biological, economic and political ecosystem that tied it to the world around it. Because of this fiction, the park was managed as a bounded and sovereign entity, with park authorities and state agencies such as the military using it as an outpost from which to defend South Africa against invaders: from diseases, Africans, illicit goods to political insurgents.

Legal fictions and material realities

To call claims about the bounded and sovereign nature of the Kruger park a legal fiction is not to say these claims did not have a reality beyond their legal foundation. They had a material reality that reflected South Africa's colonial and apartheid race relations regime. In fact, the borders did not simply fix the imaginary park itself, they also fixed ideas about who or what dwelt there, who owned the space, and who could migrate in and out of the park. The fiction of a bounded and sovereign park created, especially for people long used to valuing game as a source of food, new forms of value and ushered in new park-people relations. These relations were mediated through land, labor and poaching (Carruthers 1993). This is because the creation of the park increased land alienation as Africans were either forced off or voluntarily moved to make way for the park. This made real the fiction of the park's territorial integrity. In instances where communities were not removed immediately, they were made to construct the park's infrastructure. The fiction of territorial integrity marked Africans as sources of labor at best and sources of trouble at worst. It criminalized the dependence of Africans on game meat as a dietary supplement. Africans could not hunt, own guns or have hunting dogs. These injunctions were imposed by Paul Kruger's South African Republic. But the new national state used them, inspiring a poor relationship between 'white conservationists' and 'black poachers'. This relationship has persisted into post-apartheid South Africa because, while paying lip service to the need to mend relations with its African neighbors, the park refuses to accept that it is and has always been a place of flows, connections and movements.

As this chapter shows, the Kruger park has always been a place of flows, connections and movements. It has always been a place with multiple existences: for the biological agents that inhabit it, the animals that live inside it and of course the Africans who, while systematically pushed (some as recently as 1969) to the margins to make way for the park's expansion, have always lived with, in and around the park. The chapter examines this history of flows, connections and movements around and through the park to challenge the fiction of the park's territorial integrity. It looks briefly at the park's history of epidemics to show the ways in which diseases have always moved to-and-fro between the park and its outsiders. It also examines the history of the fencing of the park, an

idea thought of by a number of people, including the park’s first warden, James Stevenson-Hamilton, but brought to life by state veterinary officials in order to combat the spread of foot and mouth disease. The chapter also considers the movement of animals in and out of the park and the effect that this has had on relations between the park and its neighbors. The chapter points out some of the internal conflicts within government and between government departments and the National Parks Board over what to do about animals that had no sense of boundaries. The chapter compares the reactions of colonial, apartheid and post-apartheid governments to the problem of animals that know no borders. It also looks at the movement of people in order to debunk the fiction of territorial integrity. The need to challenge the fiction is made urgent by the fact that the Kruger park and the post-apartheid government are using the fiction to dispute legal land claims from Africans kicked out of what is today the Kruger park. The state and the park say that if the claims were approved, this would break up the park and turn it into nothing more than a conservancy.

Land claims and the fiction of territorial integrity:

In October 2009 the South African government announced it had decided “not to restore the park to the claimant communities because it is both a national asset and an international icon” (Department of Rural Development and Land Reform 2009). The claimant communities numbered 20 and were claiming half of the Kruger park’s 2-million hectares. The government said it wanted to consider forms of compensation, such as cash payments, other than the return of the claimed land. The October 2009 announcement was driven by the fear that giving claimants their land back would ‘destroy’ the territorial integrity of the Kruger park, the flagship of South Africa’s 20 national parks and a cash cow for SANParks, the government agency responsible for the management of South Africa’s national parks. As David Mabunda, the executive director of SANParks, said in the organization’s annual report for 2003/04:

> It would appear that recent land claims against national parks might have unintended consequences of undermining this objective (of managing South Africa’s biodiversity) in that some national icons like the Kruger National Park may be reduced to so many different owners that, in reality, its status becomes reduced to a conservancy (Mabunda 2004).

Mabunda said government might have to take “hard and uncomfortable decisions” (Mabunda 2004: 9) regarding land claims. He did not spell it out but what he meant was that government might have to consider rejecting the land claims for the sake of, in the case of the Kruger park, the park’s territorial integrity. These would be hard and uncomfortable decisions because they would go against the democratic government’s stated intention to restore land taken by previous governments to its rightful owners. In fact, the first piece of legislation passed by Nelson Mandela’s government after winning office in April 1994 was the Restitution of Land Rights

Act, passed in November 1994. As Colin Murray says: "This reflect[ed] the political importance attached to land restitution by the new government, for it symbolized a commitment to undoing some of the grotesque injustices of the segregation and apartheid eras in South Africa" (Murray 1998).

The law provided for land restitution, distribution, and tenure reform. It sought "to provide for the restitution of rights in land in respect of which persons or communities were dispossessed under or for the purpose of furthering the objects of any racially based discriminatory law" (Murray 1998: 1). The law laid out a complex process for lodging claims. Here is how it worked in simplified terms: A claimant or claimant community lodged a claim with a regional land claims commission; the claim was investigated for veracity; if the claim was accepted and gazetted, the commission recommended compensation (which could be monetary or the land itself), and a Land Claims Court ratified whatever decision was taken. The court was also empowered to act as arbiter in cases where there was no agreement over a claim, say, a current owner disputed the claim on his or her land. In the case of the Kruger park claims, most had been verified and gazetted while others were still being investigated. In fact, the Kruger park could not dispute the claims as they were known both to the park and the communities themselves. In most instances, claimant communities even had graves of ancestors inside the park. In other cases, individual claimants could still point to spots inside the park where they were born. Jimmy Mnisi, a community leader in Shabalala, a township on the southwestern edge of the Kruger park and part of a claim lodged by the Mahashi Community trust, said: "I was born inside the park at a place called Mkhukhu, about 10km from Numbi (one of the main gates into the park)." The Mahashi community claim was lodged in 1998, shortly before the 31 December 1998 closing date for land claims in the Kruger park. The claim was verified by government and "found to be prima facie valid" (Department of Rural Development and Land Reform 2009: 2) The Mahashi community was removed from the southwestern section of the park in 1969 to make way for the park's expansion and construction of a railway line outside the park. There had been a railway line cutting through sections of the park and government and the National Parks Board, the predecessor of SANParks, wanted the line to run outside the park. That is when the Mahashi community was kicked out of the park. Mnisi said: "The fact that we were in the park means we were owners of the park, that's why we're claiming."

The Mahashi were of course not the only communities who once lived 'inside' the park. In fact, for many of these communities, living 'inside' the park predated the park by generations. Communities such as the Ntimane, Nkuna, and Mhlanganisweni had also had their claims "found to be prima facie valid" while those lodged by the Ngobeni family, Gomondwane and Mathebula communities were still under investigation. These communities could, with the help of

graves, oral histories and even official reports from both government and the National Parks Board, point to where they once lived. In his address to Parliament on 31 May 1926, Piet Grobler, the Minister of Lands, said “only a few natives live in that area”, meaning along the ‘Senoetsie’ river ‘inside’ the park (Hansard 1926: 4367). Historians must question Grobler’s measurements. What exactly constituted only a few natives? This is not to suggest that the place was teeming with Africans and African homesteads. The Lowveld, the biodiverse landscape in which the Kruger park is situated, was a difficult place at the best of times: it was disease-ridden and agriculturally poor. But there were Africans living there and they seemed to have evolved ways of coping with their harsh environment. To say this is to point out that the Lowveld was not, as the Kruger park’s fiction of territorial integrity had it, a place generally bereft of people.

In fact, when James Stevenson-Hamilton, the first warden of the Kruger park, assumed his position in July 1902 as warden of the Sabi Game Reserve, the forerunner to the Kruger park, he counted between 2000 and 3000 Africans living in the park. As he said in his annual report for 1902, the Africans had dogs and most of the men had rifles and guns of one sort another. It did not take Stevenson-Hamilton long to get rid of the Africans, something that would earn him the Shangaan nickname Skukuza (meaning ‘he who clears away’). By 1 August 1903, Stevenson-Hamilton was able to report the following in his annual report for that year: “All natives have left the Reserve, which is now uninhabited by human beings, except the warden, three rangers and Native Police or game watchers. The latter are not allowed firearms” (Stevenson-Hamilton 1903). But the natives did not really leave, as we know from Stevenson-Hamilton’s own reports. They made their presence felt through poaching. He said, for example, there were two cases in 1903: one for killing a zebra, another for killing a warthog and an impala. But, he assured his readers, the cases were ‘severely dealt with”. There was also a case involving a “boy” from Portuguese East Africa, who was found inside the park hunting with an MH rifle. Stevenson-Hamilton said the “boy” was given “an exemplary sentence” which “had the effect of putting a complete stop to depredations on the part of the Natives” (Stevenson-Hamilton 1903). However, it was not simply Native poachers who caught the warden’s attention. He said in his report that there was “a good deal of native traffic” through the park and between the park and the towns of Komatipoort and Barberton to the south. He said Africans were traveling between these places either for work or to visit friends and relatives. On the other hand, there was “little white traffic”. However, far more serious for the warden, was the matter of “Portuguese natives armed with guns who can dodge backwards and forwards over the border”. These were, he said, “also a grave difficulty to contend with”. But African travelers, sojourners and poachers with guns and traps were not the only agents dodging backwards and forwards

over the boundaries of the Kruger park. There were also biological agents that knew no boundaries. These agents also moved in and out of the park with little regard for where its borders began and ended.

Parasites and diseases:

In the late 1800s, Italian soldiers on a military campaign in east Africa brought with them cattle from Asia. The cattle were infected with rinderpest, the so-called cattle plague. The epizootic traveled down the east coast of Africa and into the interior. By 1896 the epizootic, traveling at about 20 miles a day, had entered the Transvaal, through Southern Rhodesia and Portuguese East Africa and went from there to the Lowveld areas and beyond. The plague wiped out millions of cattle and other ungulates. Some historians consider the rinderpest key to the destruction of the last vestiges of economic independence among Africans as it destroyed their cattle, in a manner akin to wiping out someone's bank deposits. Stevenson-Hamilton knew all about the rinderpest. When he arrived in the Lowveld in July 1902 to assume his position, his "first reliable information about Lowveld conditions", given to him by a Nelspruit storekeeper named Tom Lawrence, was that cattle were still dying of rinderpest (Stevenson-Hamilton 1937). Cattle, a vital source of meat and draught power, were important to the people of the Lowveld, including the newly arrived Stevenson-Hamilton. He had to worry about things such as rinderpest because in the early days of the park, white rangers and the park's African police were allowed to keep domesticated animals and to grow crops for household consumption. Some of these domesticated animals drank from the same watering holes as the park's wild animals, something that scandalized some contemporary observers.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Stevenson-Hamilton paid attention to the condition of game and the domestic livestock kept by his staff. It was by now common knowledge that animals, wild ones especially, were vectors of deadly and economically crippling diseases such as rinderpest and foot and mouth. As Gilles de Kock said, it was also well known by the turn of the 20th century that wild animals played a key part "as reservoir host in the propagation and dissemination of disease to man and domesticated animals, e.g., trypanasomiasis, rabies, malignant catarrhal fever, swine fever, rickettsiosis, tuberculosis, foot and mouth diseases, rinderpest, psittacosis, etc" (De Kock 1945: 164). Some of these diseases could travel long distances either by air, through animals or, in the case of the Kruger park, on the persons of the many people who moved constantly through the park and its boundaries.

Still, Stevenson-Hamilton was able to report with confidence between 1911 and 1919 that the reserve was free of stock diseases. However, this confidence was shattered in 1923 when East Coast fever, a lethal disease of cattle caused by a blood parasite transmitted by the Brown ear tick (Joubert 2007: 69) struck cattle on a farm close to the reserve. Stevenson-Hamilton responded by

placing large sections of the park under quarantine. The quarantine was not removed in parts of the reserve until 1927. Then in July 1938 an epidemic of foot and mouth disease, believed to have come from Portuguese East Africa, where it was common, appeared in the park. The disease, a highly contagious viral infection that affects cloven-hoofed domestic animals such as cattle, pigs and sheep, and cloven-hoofed wild animals such as buffalo and wildebeest, was first detected in cattle belonging to one of the park's rangers (Joubert 2007: 69). The cattle had not been in contact with other animals, leading Stevenson-Hamilton to conclude that it was brought to the park by "either natives from Portuguese East Africa … or by motor car from the infected districts of Zululand" (Joubert 2007: 69). The park responded by killing the infected cattle, introducing carbolic dips for cars entering and exiting the park, and tightening controls over human cross-border flows.

With the foot and mouth disease scare still fresh in the minds of many, the park's veterinary authorities decided in December 1938 to destroy all cattle in the park as a precautionary measure (Joubert 2007: 70). This might have made sense for the park but it was an unmitigated disaster for the Africans living 'inside' and around the park. The wholesale killing began in January 1939, creating a collective sense of trauma and bitterness that is felt to this day and provides some of the moral logic at the heart of many of the grievances and land claims against the Kruger park. About 1000 cattle were destroyed, in an orgy of killing whose efficacy even Stevenson-Hamilton questioned. He challenged claims that cattle were a source of infection. He said:

> If, on the other hand, the game was suspected, as has from time to time been indicated, it would on the face of it appear as a waste of money and energy to kill all the cattle in the area without also killing all the game, in which case not only the Park but a belt of from 30 to 40 miles in width to the west of it would also have had to be cleared of both cattle and game (Joubert 2007: 70).

However, his complaints fell on deaf ears, even after he sarcastically pointed out that the Kruger park "was practically the only portion of the Lowveld which escaped East Coast fever, a fact due entirely to the strict control regulations as to entry and traveling" (Joubert 2007: 71). Veterinary authorities, a separate state department, were not well disposed towards the Kruger park, believing it to be a source of disease. In November 1944 the Lowveld was visited by another epidemic of foot and mouth disease but the veterinary authorities proved incapable of dealing with it. The park continued to experience periodic outbreaks over the years, including one between November 1958, 1959 and 1960. In 1959 the Kruger park also had its first confirmed case of anthrax. The park could not identify the source of the outbreak but suspected that it might have been from cattle owned by Africans living adjacent to the park, where there was an anthrax outbreak in 1941. The park responded

to the anthrax outbreak by asking government to, among other things, appoint a veterinarian to the staff of the Kruger park and to fence the park's north-eastern boundary to prevent animals from moving in and out. In 1967 the Kruger park detected its first case of tuberculosis in a dead impala. However, "the organism was never cultured to ascertain whether its source was bovine, avian or human" (Joubert 2007: 315). But starting in the mid-1940s, the Kruger park was also learning that disease was an important population regulator and that the periodic outbreaks of disease need not engender the kinds of bureaucratic and moral panic they had inspired previously. A park official named De Vos reflected the new thinking in the early 1980s. De Vos said it was…

> accepted that diseases and parasites that are part of the environment are normal and integrated components of the natural free-living ecosystem. Such diseases and parasites are there for a purpose, which is probably to the advantage of the natural environment (Joubert 2007: 112, volume 11).

Fencing the Kruger

Still, some officials believed that barriers such as a fence could control the movement of diseases between the park and its outside. In fact, the strongest arguments for the fencing of the Kruger park came from government's veterinary officials. But they did not own the idea. Stevenson-Hamilton first floated the idea of fencing the Kruger in 1945, a year before his retirement after 44 years on the job. The idea was taken up by his replacement Col. Sandenbergh, who said: "I am certain that sooner or later some means must be found to confine the game to the park if we are to ensure the existence of all species" (Joubert 2007: 145, vol. 1). Sandenbergh wanted game segregated from domestic animals. In fact, as early as the 1930s government gave white farmers along the southern borders of the Kruger poles and wires to build fences to protect their crops from wild animals. The plan failed. In 1948 the park received sisal plants from Zululand to experiment with as a possible barrier. The National Parks Board reiterated its commitment in 1953 to fencing and considered a number of 'natural' options, such as indigenous trees and shrubs. However, the board settled for the exotic sisal and proceeded to plant 1100 yards of the plant. However, porcupines, elephants and other animals gave short shrift to sisal, destroying it at will.

Then in June 1959 government's Department of Agricultural Technical Services announced that it would fence the park's southern boundary to fight foot and mouth disease (Joubert 2007: 148, vol. 1) The fencing of the park began in 1960, using barbed wire. It proved incapable of preventing animals from moving in and out of the park. But the park's authorities and the state insisted on it, saying it was intended to prevent the spread of disease. By July 1961, the park had fenced its southern, western and northern boundaries. By 1963, the park had fenced large parts of the eastern boundary. By 1980, the entire Kruger park was fenced. The fence

covered 1250km. The idea of using sisal as a barrier, meanwhile, had not died. In January 1976 the Transvaal Provincial Administration and the South African Defense Force began planting a sisal barrier from Crocodile River in the south of the park to the northern section of the park. The park was planted 50m to 500m inside the park and parallel to the park's eastern boundary fence, meaning on the border with Mozambique, which became independent in 1975 following a military coup in Portugal. However, ten months after construction began, both the military and the National Parks Board realized that the sisal barrier was a disaster. It grew poorly and animals, especially elephants, kept trampling it. The project was finally stopped in December 1979. According to Joubert, a former warden of the park, "This project was a total failure and must certainly go on record as one of the most ignominious and ill-conceived operations ever undertaken in the Kruger Park" (Joubert 2007: 33, vol. 11). Meanwhile, the barbed wire fence proved incapable of stopping flows between the park and its outside and the park continued to experience outbreaks of various diseases. In July 1990 the park recorded its first case of bovine tuberculosis, in a buffalo. According to Joubert, "The source of the infection was believed to have been cattle" (Joubert 2007: 404, vol. 11). Today, TB is one of the most common diseases in the Kruger park, affecting everything from antelope, buffalo to lions. In some ways, the continued movement of diseases between the park and its outside points to the futility of artificial borders founded on the denial of the park's reality as a place of flows, connections and movements. But diseases were not the only agents that showed up the artificiality of the park's boundaries. We also had the park's animals, which knew no boundaries and acted accordingly.

However, the movement of animals within and without the park is not innocent animal activity that can be considered in isolation from the park's siting in a wider social, economic and political ecosystem. In fact, it is through the flows, connections and movements involving animals that we see in the starkest terms possible what the creation of the Kruger park meant to the communities living adjacent the park. Denied the right to kill animals that damaged their crops, even when the law was ostensibly on their side in the matter, Africans could do little but shoo the animals away and then complain to their chiefs and the Native Affairs Department. The complaints often pitted the Native Affairs Department, which saw its legislative duty as the protection of natives and promotion of their welfare, against the National Parks Board, which saw its job narrowly as the preservation of South Africa's flora and fauna – with little or no consideration of the effect that its job had on Africans living adjacent to places such as the Kruger park. As this chapter shows below, the archives are full of often heated exchanges between the Native Affairs Department and the National Parks Board as each staked its mandate.

What the animals did was expose not just the shallowness of the park's borders and the fiction of its territorial integrity; they also exposed the precariousness of African life following the establishment of the park. In fact, it would not be a stretch to say that the relatively unfettered movement of animals between the park and its outside illustrated the ways in which even wild animals had better protection than Africans. As it was, Africans could not kill animals on the spot without being charged with poaching and could only ever complain about their losses after the fact. The law said they could defend their crops and livestock. However, the political reality in colonial and apartheid South Africa was such that the law existed only on paper for them. Ironically, this is still the reality for the communities that live adjacent to the Kruger park. The Native Affairs Department might be a thing of the past and yesterday's natives might be today's citizens but they remain as powerless as they were when they were the powerless subjects of white governments. The truth is that the communities that live on the edge of the Kruger park have as little power as they ever did.

Animal depredations; native depredations:

In his annual warden's report for 1903, Stevenson-Hamilton spoke of two cases of poaching in the park. The first case concerned the killing of a zebra; the second the poaching of a warthog and an impala. However, Stevenson-Hamilton assured his readers that both cases "were severely dealt with". In the same year, there was the case of a "boy" from Portuguese territory who was caught hunting in the park with a MH rifle. The "boy" was given an "exemplary sentence", said the warden, and this "had the effect of putting a complete stop to depredations on the part of the Natives" (Stevenson-Hamilton 1903). The idea that Africans were bad for game was of course not unique to Stevenson-Hamilton. It was in fact common among government and conservation officials from the park's early days to the present. On 24 October 1930, four years after the founding of the Kruger park, the National Parks Board wrote to the Secretary for Native Affairs to protest against plans by the Native Affairs Department to acquire land near a town called Acornhoek, adjacent to the southwestern section of the park, for African settlement. J.S. Potgieter, the secretary of the board, wrote:

> The Board learns with considerable alarm that your department is making enquiries for the purchase of farms near Acornhoek in the vicinity of the Kruger National Park. The Board desires that the danger of having Natives in areas bordering on the park should be pointed out, and it will be glad if you will be so good as to inform it of your Department's policy in this regard.

In his response, dated 17 November 1930, John S. Allison, the Secretary for Native Affairs, did more than simply apprise his National Parks Board colleagues of his department's policy. He reminded them of the department's mandate, which flew out of the 1913 Land Act, a law that limited African land ownership to 13% of

South Africa’s land surface. Allison reminded his parks board counterparts that Africans were permitted to buy land in “certain areas”, so-called released or scheduled lands as laid down by the act. He wrote:

> Your department will no doubt fully appreciate that it would be most difficult and invidious for this Department to prohibit Natives, who, it must be remembered prior to the commencement of the Native Lands Act, had an unrestricted right to purchase privately-owned land throughout the Transvaal, from acquiring land within the released areas, the extent of which, it may be added, is limited and by no means adequate. Indeed, it would seem that no object would be achieved by such a prohibition, seeing that under the law as it stands at present it is open to any European owner of a farm adjoining the Park to keep on such farm as many Native families as he pleases under labor conditions.

Allison was of course pointing out the board’s hypocrisy in trying to use its power as a government agency to undermine a law that was, from the point of view of Africans and their ‘legal guardians’ in the Native Affairs Department, already bad enough. However, the board was not deterred. In April 1931 there was the board again writing “with great regret” to complain about plans by the Native Affairs Department to find Africans land, in keeping with the provisions of the 1913 Land Act, near the Kruger park. The board said not only would such a transaction be regrettable, it would also not be in the interests of the board. The board did not want Africans anywhere near the park, believing that they were responsible for, as Stevenson-Hamilton put it in his 1903 report, “depredations” against game. In a letter dated 27 April 1931, Potgieter, the board secretary, wrote that “it was most desirable in the interests of the Kruger National Park that the farms in questions should be continued to be owned by Europeans who favored the protection of wildlife”. The farms in question were Sandringham and Birmingham, situated southwest of the park, and the Mhlangana tribe, under Chief Shopiana Mnisi, wanted to buy them. In his response to Potgieter’s 27 April 1931 letter, Native Affairs Secretary A.L. Barrett wrote: “The properties in question are some considerable distance from the Kruger National Park and … their acquisition will not extend native-owned property in that direction”. This was neither the first nor the last time the Native Affairs Department would clash with the National Parks Board over land for Africans. Not only that but the board was not the only adversary the department had to worry about when it came to finding land for Africans anywhere near the Kruger park. In 1939 Oswald Pirow, a cabinet minister, objected to Africans buying land near the Kruger park “on the grounds that the Natives would destroy the game”. Pirow was persuaded to change his mind-but only on condition that the Native Affairs Department extended the area of jurisdiction of Stevenson-Hamilton, already an assistant Native Commissioner for Skukuza, the headquarters of the Kruger park, to cover areas bordering the Kruger.

Land and access to it were not the only issues on which the Native Affairs Department clashed with the National Parks Board and government ministers. There was also the treatment of Africans and their grievances by government and the board. On 22 May 1946 the Secretary for Native Affairs wrote the following to the National Parks Board:

> While this Department realizes that the protection of animal life is the primary duty of your Board's officials and servants, it will appreciate your active cooperation in ensuring that, in their zeal to prevent poaching, your Rangers preserve the balance between the exercise of the duties required to attain this object and the interference with the right of Natives to protect their crops and property from the depredations of the animals.

The secretary was talking about different kinds of depredations to the ones that the likes of Stevenson-Hamilton and Pirow assumed to be the case. But he did not leave it there. He reminded his counterparts of the following: "The National Parks Act of 1926 limits the jurisdiction of the National Parks Board and its officers and servants to within 1 mile beyond the Kruger National park." This reminder to park officials of the Kruger park's fiction of territorial integrity and the legal obligations that went with that did not sit well with the parks board or indeed even Stevenson-Hamilton. In his response, Stevenson-Hamilton wrote the following: "No one seeks or has sought to prevent natives from protecting their crops, but hundreds of snares, and hunting with dogs in wild country close to the park border and not in the neighborhood of any lands, can hardly be classed under that head". Stevenson-Hamilton clearly saw himself and the Kruger park, with its bounded sovereignty, its fiction of territorial integrity, as an extension of state authority in the Lowveld. The Kruger park might have been on paper concerned only with the preservation of the Lowveld's flora and fauna. In truth and in practice, however, it was more than that, as the National Parks Board's disputes with the Native Affairs Department show. The Kruger park was in effect yet another agency through which the South African state could broadcast its power and project its authority. As Stevenson-Hamilton said in response to the Native Affairs Department's reminder about the extent of the park's jurisdiction, the park exercised authority in places where "no other adequate control existed". This is worth bearing in mind as we consider the ways in which the Kruger park was and was not of the state. As Carruthers points out (1993), it was not so much the creation of the Kruger National Park as a place for nature preservation as such that was disastrous for Africans. It was what the creation of the park meant in material terms. According to Carruthers, the creation of the Kruger park meant at the same time the establishment of the state in places that government had hitherto only reached on paper. "It was this, more than the protectionist measures, which impinged on and altered African life in the area" (1993: 4). It would not be a stretch to say that, for Africans

living on the borders of the Kruger park, the depredations of the state–primarily in the form of land alienation- were just as bad if not worse than the depredations to which they were subjected by animals which knew no boundaries and respected no borders. Here, too, we see the Native Affairs Department doing battle with the National Parks Board-with little to show in the way of success.

Long-suffering Natives and animals without borders

The archives are full of correspondence between the Native Affairs Department and the National Parks Board over animals that had no sense of the boundaries designed to keep them inside and Africans outside. We get from these letters and memoranda a sense of what it must have been like for many communities to deal with the depredation of game on their crops. Let us consider a sample from this voluminous correspondence. In a letter dated 31 October 1941 the Additional Native Commissioner for Bushbuckridge, a town southwest of the Kruger park, wrote to the Secretary for Native Affairs to report that hyenas had killed a donkey belonging to a native and that another native had had six cattle in his kraal killed by lions and hyenas. Bushbuckridge seemed to have been the worst affected of the communities adjacent to the Kruger park. In a letter dated 2 April 1943, the Secretary for Native Affairs reminded the Additional Native Commissioner that, in terms of the Transvaal Game Ordinance of 1935, it was lawful to kill game destroying trees, plants and standing crops. The secretary went on: “If the position in your area is such that the depredations of game on Native crops has reached a stage that it is a question of self-preservation in so far as the natives are concerned, their interests are the primary concern.” He said natives could set traps because they were not, after all, allowed to bear arms. He wrote:

> While no doubt there is bound to be abuse, if the damage to crops is so serious that the game must be destroyed, the natives should be allowed to protect their crops, which are their livelihood, in such ways as may be possible to them, especially as the law entitles them to do so.

On 5 May 1944 the Additional National Commissioner was again writing to the Native Affairs Department to complain about more animal depredations and to add his voice to growing calls for the department to authorize the shooting of animals harassing Africans outside the park. However, the man was quick to add the following: “I do not shoot myself, holding strong views on game protection; but I do agree with the (police) Station Commander that it is necessary to keep the number of big game within reasonable limits.” The Additional Native Commissioner was in some ways reflecting the thinking of his milieu when he blamed the depredations visited on African crops on animal overpopulation. The department did respond positively to calls for the shooting of game outside of the Kruger park, using modified .303 sporting rifles bought especially from the South African Defense Force for 610 pounds sterling. However, the execution of the plan seemed to have drawn the ire of the Native

Commissioner for Nelspruit, today's capital of the Mpumalanga province. The commissioner complained in a letter dated 15 May 1944 that the execution was "half-hearted" and that it would "only cause a further distrust by the Natives in the (Native Affairs Department) officials". He wrote:

> It is submitted that it should be obvious to any reasonable person that the killing of only six head of big game which come into the (native) reserve by the hundreds over a border approximately 30 miles long, would have no restraining effect and would only be a waste of time... Unless adequate measures can be taken for the protection of crops against game from the Kruger National Park, and incidentally for the preservation of grazing, it is suggested that consideration be given to the question of reducing or altogether remitting the squatters' rent payable by the Natives affected.

There is no indication in the archives if the man's recommendation was ever accepted. But his letter is one of many that point to the uselessness of the park's borders. It was telling of the times that at the same time as animals from the park were going in and outside of the park, destroying native crops and stock at will, Africans were frozen in place by the 1913 Land Act. With no freedom to move except to seek employment, Africans could do nothing but shoo away game from their crops and animals and complain to the Native Affairs Department. In fact, even seasoned bureaucrats seemed moved by the plight of the Africans. In October 1946, Victor P. Ahrens, the Secretary for Native Affairs wrote of "long-suffering natives" who "sustained great losses in stock and crops". Like the Native commissioner for Nelspruit, who believed that Africans were entitled to tax breaks because of losses caused by the Kruger park's animals, Ahrens thought that Africans were entitled to some form of compensation from the Kruger park. Ahrens wrote:

> I do feel that they are entitled to some compensation from the Parks Board, who breed and keep lions and other carnivora besides the game, and which do considerable damage to stock and crops, of lawful rent-paying residents of Trust land... After all, the Parks Board must rake in quite a fair amount of revenue, and I should say, would be in a position to meet these claims, I mean, properly substantiated claims of stock losses or damage to crops. If not, then I suggest that we organize an armed guard on the boundary and shoot and kill off all the lions, etc.

That was strong language indeed coming from a government official talking about another arm of government. We do not have records of the National Parks Board's responses to complaints from the Native Affairs Department. However, we can tell from the exasperated tone of the letters from Native Affairs department officials that it was not positive. The National Parks Board does not seem to have been concerned about the Africans who lived on the margins of its borders and the animals that had no regard for the park's much-vaunted territorial integrity. But the National Parks Board was not the only entity with no regard for Africans. In a letter

dated 17 April 1947 the whites-only Transvaal Land Owners' Association asked the Native Affairs department "to consider the question of trekpassing out of the (Pilgrim's Rest) District (adjacent to the Kruger park) any Native found guilty of poaching in the area. If this suggestions were brought into effect it would help considerably in checking the destruction of game". Trekpassing was a notorious measure used by the state to regulate the movement of Africans. It was not the same thing as the more notorious pass because it functioned more like an expulsion order. In a note dated 6 August 1947 the Chief Native Commissioner said: "There is no such thing as a 'trekpass' in any of the laws governing the occupation and control of Trust lands." Trust lands referred to lands set aside for Africans in terms of the Native Trust Lands Act of 1936, which sought to consolidate the 13% of the land set aside for Africans by the 1913 Land Act.

In the same note, the Chief Native Commissioner pointed out that, by law, Natives may be expelled or removed from an area "for specified reasons, but poaching is not one of them". Agitators and troublesome persons could be moved "in the interests of good order and administration". The official answer given to the association by the Secretary for Native Affairs on 1 September 1947 was no less forthright, if more diplomatic. The secretary said native crops were suffering and that some of the culprits were game belonging to farms owned by members of the association. The secretary wrote: "The amount of poaching done by Natives, who have no firearms, is small compared with the destruction effected by Europeans, but it is inconceivable that confirmed European poachers should be moved out of the district." The secretary added that "where there is a conflict between game preservation and Native settlement on Trust land, native settlement must receive paramount consideration".

The exchanges between the Native Affairs Department, on the one hand, and the National Parks Board and, to a lesser extent, the Transvaal Land Owners' Association, on the other, alert us to the danger of talking glibly about "the state" as if the state was one thing. It is clear from the above exchanges that the Native Affairs Department and the National Parks Board did not see eye to eye. It was not simply a case of bureaucratic wrangling. It was also a case of different mandates and conflicting orientations. The Kruger park was a state agency and in effect an extension of the state in the Lowveld. For its part, the Native Affairs Department was responsible for the formulation and implementation of government's native policy. However, the two agencies did not see themselves as being on the same side. The irony here is that, even when it was not concerned with native policy as such, the National Parks Board was in effect concerned with natives, the millions of Africans who lived on its borders and had to deal with Kruger park animals that knew no borders. As Carruthers says (1993), wildlife legislation in South Africa has always been developed with Africans in mind. In fact, says Carruthers, the (absent) presence of Africans in the formulation of

wildlife laws has always been a feature of South African conservation laws. Carruthers says the influence or perceived influence of this (absent) presence "has been a crucial determinant in shaping wildlife legislation in South Africa" (Carruthers 1993: 12). So the Kruger park was concerned with Africans even when it was not concerned with them. How could it not be? Its actions and policies affected Africans in a myriad ways.

Back to the future: The depredations of democracy

The callousness and official neglect with which the National Parks Board treated the park's African neighbors was in the main a function of South Africa's racialized politics. In a social and political context in which Africans did not enjoy rights of citizenship and figured in government calculations only as problems, it was not surprising that statutory bodies such as the National Parks Board reflected 'official' attitudes and thinking in their operation. Needless to say, these attitudes and thinking were not uniform as we know from the disputes between the board and the Native Affairs Department. This chapter should not be read to mean that the National Parks Board deliberately set the animals under its care on African crops and livestock. That was no the case. However, the board held on to the fiction of the Kruger park's territorial integrity despite overwhelming evidence that the park was more connected to its outside than the park's authorities cared to acknowledge. The fiction helped buttress and indeed justified the board's official neglect of and callous attitude towards the Africans living on the margins of the park. Instead of seeing the depredations of wild animals on African crops and livestock for the injustice it was, especially given the fact that Africans could not kill the animals, the board seemed to regard the Africans as the real problem. Instead of seeing animals moving in and out of the park as the real problem, the board and the park seemed to think that Africans were to blame for their lot and were in the way of the park's animals. This 'official' attitude seems to have survived the Kruger park's transition from apartheid into democracy, as this chapter shows below.

The argument being advanced in this chapter is that the Kruger park was founded on the fiction of territorial integrity, and that this fiction is rooted in a denial of the park's history of flows, connections and movements. This means, among other things, that the fiction is only a legal and official fiction. The diseases that have swept through the park over the years; the animals that have been going in and out of the park for years, the illicit goods that have passed through the park for decades, and of course the human beings who have charted various clandestine paths through the park have all exposed the lie behind the fiction of the park's territorial integrity. To say this is to make clear that while we cannot be blind to the heavy toll placed by animal depredations on African farmers, we cannot blame the Kruger park's animals in any simplistic sense. In other words, we cannot blame the park's animals for not 'knowing' that the Kruger park is a bounded and sovereign entity with boundaries

marking insider from outside, in from out. This is not to argue, however, that African farmers living adjacent to the park are unfortunate victims of an unfortunate situation. Far from it. The situation is unfortunate only because Africans were frozen in space by laws that limited their capacity to own land and rendered them impotent against wild animals. Until the advent of the Kruger park and, by extension, the entry of the state in the Lowveld, Africans seemed to have evolved an uneasy co-existence with animals. They depended on meat from wild animals but also devised ways to stop these animals from destroying their crops. However, this uneasy co-existence was destroyed by land alienation and the criminalization of African hunting practices. The Kruger park and the parks board should have stepped into the breach and protected Africans. They did not. This lack of care continues to this day, as this chapter is about to show.

Enter the future: the post-apartheid Kruger park

Sometime in the early 1990s, a pride of lions broke out of the southwestern section of the Kruger park, near the Numbi Gate. The lions attacked and killed a number of cattle belonging to African farmers living near the park. This was a regular occurrence and local farmers were used to it. They were also used to the fact that the Kruger park did not pay compensation for crops or livestock destroyed by its animals. However, the early 1990s were a different time. Nelson Mandela was out of prison, the ANC was unbanned and apartheid looked to be on its deathbed. Change was in the air. Even communities long used to being given short shrift wanted to experience that change. So, instead of shrugging their shoulders as they had been doing for decades each time Kruger park animals destroyed their crops and livestock, the African farmers decided to do something about their losses. They loaded the carcasses of the cattle killed by the lions onto the back of a tractor and drove to the Numbi Gate, where they showed the remains to park officials and demanded compensation. Elmon Mthombothi, a local farmer who helped drive the tractor to the Kruger park, said of the Kruger park officials he and his comrades met at the gate: “They would not listen to us. They told us: ‘Terug. Gaan weg. Dis nie ons sake nie. Gaan eet jou bees (Back. Go back. This is not our business. Go and eat your beasts).” The farmers did indeed return home. But they had, in a sense, broken the spell. They had staged their first direct and public protest against the Kruger park. Recalling the attitude of the park’s white officials, Mthombothi said: “They did not care.” But the farmers had had enough. “We decided this can’t go on.”

Asked what emboldened the farmers to confront the Kruger park, Mthombothi pointed to the year 1990 as an explanation. That was the year in which Mandela was freed from prison, the ANC and other anti-apartheid organizations were unbanned, and the first steps taken towards the multiparty negotiations that would eventually lead to the end of apartheid. “1990 had an influence. I am quite sure

about that. 1990 had an influence because there was change. If the country was changing, the Kruger park also had to change," said Mthombothi. The Kruger park could also see the writing on the wall. The park's authorities could see that apartheid would soon become a thing of the past, meaning the park had to find new ways of relating to Africans and the new political order. According to Salomon Joubert, who was the Kruger park's last white warden and the man at the helm when the end of apartheid began, the park accepted an invitation in 1993 to take part in a 'Community and Parks Liaison Committee', which brought together African farmers, homeland officials, conservationists and the private sector. The committee sought to mend relations between the park and its neighbors and to improve communications.

According to Mthombothi, Kruger park officials seemed to have gone to the meeting keen to discuss the future. However, the African farmers wanted to talk about the present and the past. More specifically, they wanted to talk about the damage done to the crops and livestock by animals from the park. Mthombothi said the farmers were particularly incensed by one practice in particular, a Kruger park policy that held that "if lions go outside the park, they are not the park's responsibility. But the funny thing is, snare the lions and you get arrested". Joubert (2007) also remembered this, as well as the necessity to share the park's economic riches with the neighboring communities, as some of the issues raised and in need of attention. The meeting resolved to form community forums to serve as a link between the park and its neighbors. The body formed for Mthombothi's area was called the Lubambiswano Forum. It was launched in November 1993, with Mthombothi as chairman. According to Joubert (2007: 550, vol. 11), the idea of community forums came from the park and was part of its attempts to rebrand and reorient itself towards the communities it had spent the better part of the 20th century neglecting. However, Mthombothi remembers the origins of the idea differently. He said: "It was a community initiative because we were experiencing problems with the Kruger National Park." He went on: "Farmers did not look at the Kruger National Park as something to be enjoyed – lions, elephants, hyenas" were breaking out of the park and destroying fields and livestock. But it was the 1990s and the park seemed determined to change. It agreed to allow local traders to sell their wares inside the park, created special educational programs whereby local schoolchildren could visit the park for free. Local communities were also given special permits to visit the park outside of popular holiday times, such as winter and summer holidays. The permits were for half of what South Africans living away from the park paid and a fraction of what it cost international tourists to enter the park. The special permits were given to local chiefs to distribute. Chiefs, their headmen and executive members of forums such as Lubambiswano could enter the park for free. The park also allowed people with ancestral graves inside the park to visit the graves,

mostly at Easter. People who wanted to visit graves had to inform the park in advance and the park arranged for a ranger escort on the appointed day. Later, the Kruger park also established a nursery to cultivate medicinal plants that traditional doctors could then harvest. The forums were also invited to help interview the Kruger park's first head of the Social Ecology unit, established in 1995 to build positive relations between the park and its neighbors. The unit has been renamed 'People and Conservation' and was elevated to a directorate in 2003.

However, the biggest change for the farmers was the park's agreement to pay compensation for livestock destroyed by animals from the park. The figure agreed on was 500 rands, small when it was first agreed to and even smaller today. In fact, when the figure was first agreed to in the early 1990s, the going rate for a cow was 4000 rands and about 1000 rands for a sheep or goat. Today, the going rate for a cow is 8000 rands and about 2000 for a sheep or a goat. So why then agree to a compensation figure that bore no relation to market prices then and today? Mthombothi said: "It was a random decision. But farmers were happy because it was better than nothing. This was a sensitive item on the agenda (of forum meetings with the Kruger park). We would spend hours talking about it." It is not clear why the Kruger park or the Lubambiswano forum thought that such an arbitrary an uneconomical arrangement could hold. As Mthombothi says, the farmers were only too grateful to get something. The Kruger park possibly saw the arrangement as something with which to quiten the storm and mollify poor African farmers with a list of grievances going back generations. Predictably, the arrangement did not hold.

On 23 April 2009 the Lubambiswano forum, whose members are drawn from the villages in the southwestern corner of the Kruger park, told park officials that it was doing away with the 500 rands compensation policy. The forum said it would now on only accept 8000 per cow, 1000 per goat and 1000 per pig. The forum told the park it would lodge a lawsuit unless the park met its demands. The park rejected the forum's demands. In January 2010 the forum met with lawyers to prepare a lawsuit against the park. The forum is demanding 1,3-million rands for more than 115 cattle killed by park animals since 2006. According to Enos Ngomane, a farmer in a village called Makoko and a volunteer for the forum, the claim does not count the sheep, goats, pigs, chicken and pets such as dogs killed by park animals since 2006. Cases from the village of Makoko listed in the lawsuit include the following: on 14 September 2007 lions killed three cattle, one of which was about to calve, belonging to Ngomane; on 18 September 2007 lions killed a cow belonging to a Lekhuleni family; on 26 September 2007 lions killed a cow belonging to the Sambo family; on 28 September 2007 lions killed a cow belonging to a man named Lubisi; on 18 March 2008 lions killed two cattle belonging to Amos Lekhuleni. In fact, Lekhuleni seems to have borne the brunt of the misfortune visited on Makoko by the

Kruger park. In September 2001 he lost his wife Eslina Sithebe to a fire that killed 23 people and destroyed a huge section of the Kruger park's southwestern corner. Sithebe was a seasonal temporary worker inside the park employed to cut grass used to thatch the park's tourist facilities. The same fire cost his brother Moses Lekhuleni, a ranger at the Kruger park, eight fingers. In October 2007 a lion attacked him while he was looking for his cattle outside the park. Lekhuleni said he was with a neighbor, Elliot Mgwenya, outside the park when a male lion hidden behind tall grass in the bush pounced on him. Lekhuleni said: “It jumped at me, bit into my arm and looked at me as I fell back. It then let go of my arm, peed on the ground and left. I was scared.”

People and cattle are not the only ones terrorized by the park's lions. Grace Leyane, a farmer and one of Ngomane's neighbors, has lost three dogs to leopard attacks. The lions that terrorized Makoko in late 2007 and early 2008 were a pride of five that seemed to have escaped from the park through a hole in the park's fence created when severe floods in 2000 damaged a lot of the park's infrastructure. There were five lions in the pride. One was killed by a train on the line that runs adjacent to the park; another was shot dead by park rangers; a third was caught and returned to the park, but two ran away. Ngomane, who lives 600m from the park's southern fence, said while domestic livestock had always been attacked by park animals, the attacks in 2007 were the worst he had experienced personally. “The cause is the fence. The fence collapsed in 2000 with the floods but has not been fixed. Ngomane was critical of the park and its 500 rands compensation. “It does not even buy a goat. You can't even buy groceries.”

Ngomane was opposed to the poaching of big game. “You can poach small game but if you kill a rhino you kill all of South Africa.” He said people could poach small game with snares but not big game with automatic weapons. He said big-time poachers threatened to destroy South Africa. But he was critical of the way the park had dealt with Africans over the years. “It's oppressing us. We love the Kruger but it's oppressing us.” In contrast, Mthombothi did not limit his criticism to the Kruger park only. He also blamed neighboring communities for some of the problems between them and the Kruger park. He said:

> We have some problems coming from the community. Elephants felled the fence and people started looting it. The fence was completely destroyed. We tried as a forum to call the community where the fence was looted but the chief was not supportive. People don't respect the fence.

It is of course possible to look at the “looting” of the park's fence as a display of weapons of the weak, with people who otherwise have no power using subversive methods to challenge and undermine the park. There is certainly an element of that. But it is also possible that the people who “looted” the fence were not so much using weapons of the weak as taking matters into their own hands. People who looted the fence are said to have used it to fence their crops

and livestock enclosures. The park failed to protect their property so they appropriated the park's property to provide their own security. However, the taking of the fence was not the only way in which the residents of Makoko have taken matter into their own hands. On 23 March 1997, the Sunday Times newspaper carried a story headlined "Villagers kill and eat 4 Kruger park lions". Reporter Mzilikazi wa Afrika wrote: "The villagers of Makoko Trust do not usually kill and eat lions. But they were desperate-and angry. They claimed that eight of their cattle had been killed by lions in two weeks and said that the man who put an end to the reign of terror was a hero." The hero of the piece was Samson Ngomane, elder brother of Enos Ngomane.

According to Afrika, the Kruger park blamed the residents of Makoko for lions leaving the park. The park said the villagers had torn down 500m of the reserve's fence to use for housing and to protect crops. Ngomane was quoted as saying: "We have no idea where the reserve fence went. It is the officials' fault that these animals were killed because they took so long to fix the fence. What are we supposed to do when lions and elephants come onto our land and destroy our livelihood?" The report said Ngomane trapped the lions by creating a tunnel made up of barbed wire, logs and using goat meat, placed at the far end of the tunnel, as bait. As each lion went into the tunnel, in hopes of grabbing the meat, the logs would collapse on it, breaking its back and killing. Ngomane killed four lions in this fashion. He told the Sunday Times: "When we heard the police were coming, we decided to eat the meat, in the hope that it would send a message to other lions that there was only death for them here." According to the report, the meat was rancid and tasted awful.

The police did indeed come, courtesy of the Kruger park. A spokesman for the park said: "These people have only themselves to blame. Every year we lose thousands of rands because of damaged fences and poached games." About 100 policemen in two armored trucks and vans descended on Makoko, surrounded it and searched every house. Police captain Barkies Barkhuizen told the Sunday Times, "We were armed because we were told the villagers had weapons and would resist our search. But we found no firearms or other dangerous weapons during the search." The relief expressed by the captain at finding no guns was part of a history of white paranoia about Africans with guns that went back to the earliest days of colonial conquest. Colonial authorities and the apartheid state did not want Africans armed independently with guns. The idea of Africans with guns was threatening because it had two undertones to it. On one level it suggested something subversive and therefore a threat to the state; on another level it spoke of freedom and agency, something that called into question the state's monopoly over the means of violence. In the case of the Kruger park, the fear of Africans with guns was given added urgency because of the role played by guns in the decimation of South

Africa’s fauna. However, as this chapter shows below, this fear and the fiction of territorial integrity did not keep guns out of the hands of Africans or even outside the Kruger park.

Guns in the park

In May 1912 Stevenson-Hamilton sent one of his men into Portuguese territory “with instructions to endeavor to purchase ammunition”. The man, a special detective, visited a number of kraals and discovered that ammunition was readily available in the property. In fact, the special detective returned from his mission with a packet of 10 rounds of new ammunition for the MH rifle. Stevenson-Hamilton’s spying and anti-poaching work also discovered that there were many firearms in the possession of “Portuguese natives” living on the border with the park. An African named Stetlelene, arrested for poaching and for shooting at the park’s native police, confessed that “most of the breech loading rifles in possession of Portuguese natives on the border were obtained by purchase, stolen, or picked up about the of the retreat of the commandos Northwards from Komatipoort in 1900”, at the height of the Anglo-Boer War. The presence of guns in African hands on the borders of the park was of grave concern to Stevenson-Hamilton. As he wrote in a report given to the Native Affairs Department in 1913:

> It is a serious danger to all Europeans living in the Low Country, but especially to the Portuguese themselves, that such a large number of natives should not only be well provided with firearms and ammunition, but should also have so much opportunity of learning to use them to advantage.

The warden was concerned about the threat posed to colonial authority by armed Africans. He said:

> In the event of any general or partial native rising in the border districts, it would, I am confident, be quickly discovered that the Portuguese natives are not only adequately equipped but are many of them extremely capable marksmen. Native trouble of a serious nature has before now arisen from causes quite as slight as the present.

He urged the South African government to ask its Portuguese counterpart to disarm Africans in its territory. Stevenson-Hamilton had of course had personal experience of the disarmament of Africans. When he arrived in the Sabi Game Reserve in July 1902 he found between 2000 and 3000 Africans living there. The men “had rifles and guns of one sort or another”, he said in his first report as warden. By August 1903 he had disarmed the Africans and expelled them from the reserve. He said in his annual report for 1903: “All Natives have left the Reserve, which is now uninhabited by human beings except the warden, three rangers and Native police or game watchers. The latter are not allowed firearms.” From the point of view of control over his African staff, this was an achievement for

Stevenson-Hamilton. However, it was a disaster when looked at in the context of unrelenting “poaching” from so-called Portuguese natives. As he himself realized: “They (the Portuguese natives) have the more impunity in that while they are all well armed our native police have assegais only.” In fact, the reserve had lost one of its African policemen to poachers from Portuguese territory in 1905 when he was shot and killed while on patrol in the Lebombo Hills. But even this was not enough to convince the warden to allow his African police to carry weapons. It would be years before African rangers were allowed to bear arms. Even then, the decision, forced on the park by necessity, seemed most painful.
Stevenson-Hamilton was certainly aware that there was an economic dimension to the problem of poaching. He noted in his 1913 report, people were poaching because they needed food. He wrote: “During the present year the scarcity of food in the border districts coupled with the absence of game in any numbers on the Portuguese side has resulted in poaching being carried to a degree hitherto unprecedented…” But even this was not enough at this time to persuade the warden to arm his African police so they could deal with the increased poaching. He could not in these early days of the park countenance the idea of arms-bearing Africans. Naturally, the “armed incursions by Portuguese natives” continues unabated. In the words of his 1903 annual report, Portuguese natives knew how to “dodge backwards and forwards over the border” of the reserve and Portuguese territory. The matter of these poachers was serious enough for the Prime Minister’s office to take it up and report it to the Governor-General. The report said:

> The Transvaal Attorney-General reports that this practice (of poachers crossing the border at will) gives rise to constant friction with the Police and is a source of no little danger to them in view of the fact that these Natives in many cases have no hesitation in using their rifles against the Police who endeavor to arrest them, and that the seriousness of the position is enhanced by the fact that these Natives appear to be under the impression that they can come into the Transvaal and poach with impunity.

Distilled to its basics, the charge here was that not only were these natives out of order, they also had no respect for boundaries. They did not know their place. But how could they know their place when the park’s boundaries were spaces of transition, not end points. For many of the people moving across the boundary between the park and Portuguese territory, the border did not so much demarcate a no man’s land as it did a place dense with familial networks. As Stevenson-Hamilton himself acknowledged in his 1913 report on the problem of poaching to government, the border did not nullify familial and community relations between people on either side of the border. The “natives on both sides of the border are closely and intimately connected by blood and marriage ties”. In some instances, the police and the poachers knew one another. Stevenson-Hamilton recounted one incident involving two African

policemen named Breakfast and Mafuta. The policemen apprehended four armed poachers. They arrested one of them but his colleagues fought back and freed him. As the poachers were running away and shooting at the two unarmed policemen, Breakfast recognized one of them as a relative and shouted: “Why do you want to kill me?” The relative answered: “Because we want to kill meat, and because you have caught my brother Sigodo.” Sigodo was a poacher who had recently been captured by the park’s police.

Stevenson-Hamilton was not the only one concerned about armed Africans. In June 1914 the Transvaal Game Protection Association wrote to the Transvaal Provincial Administrator to say it had received a report saying that Africans living near the Portuguese border and in Swaziland were “in possession of a great number of firearms, and that a good deal of poaching of big game takes place in this area by natives both of the Transvaal and from Portuguese territory, especially the latter”. The association wanted the problem raised with the Portuguese authorities. Included in their letter was a resolution that read:

> That the Administrator be asked to enquire into the matter and to approach the Portuguese authorities with a view to co-operative action being taken as was done in 1912 when, on representation from the Warden of the Government Game Reserves, through the Administrator, Government patrols were sent to disarm such natives on the Portuguese side of the Game Reserve as were illegally in possession of firearms.

The concern here was not so much for the game as it was over the idea of armed natives traversing the border at will and poaching with impunity. The border might have been a fictitious line on the ground (before the fence was put in after the 1960s) but Stevenson-Hamilton and others wanted it to mean something. They wanted the border to stand for something. It could be argued, in fact, that for the so-called Portuguese natives and local Africans who repeatedly crossed the border at will and poached with impunity, the border did have strategic significance. In a letter dated 22 July 1915 from the Secretary of Justice to the Secretary for Native Affairs, the two share a minute written by the Attorney-General in Pretoria to the Commissioner. The minute reads:

> I beg to inform you that it would seem that the accused originally came from Portuguese territory and may therefore be Portuguese subjects. As the Portuguese authorities are not bound to surrender their own subjects some difficulty may arise if extradition is applied for. Moreover the offence more easily provable appears to be one under the Game Laws in respect of which extradition cannot be obtained. The best course would seem to be to await an opportunity to arrest the accused within the Transvaal when they may be tried both for Attempting to commit Murder and for contravening the Game Laws.

It is likely that Africans understood the protection that the border afforded them when it came to clashes with the law or park authorities. It is likely that in moving to-and-fro between the park and Portuguese territory, Africans were not only giving a lie to fictions of territorial integrity, they were also playing one regime against another. We see this in some of the correspondence between Stevenson-Hamilton and his political bosses. In one of his reports on the problem of poaching, Stevenson-Hamilton lists a number of "Transvaal refugees", meaning Africans belonging to South Africa, who had fled to Portuguese territory to avoid having to pay tax and to subject themselves to South African authority. Among these men were Matafene and Mantanana Bynby. Not only were these men escapees from South Africa, they were also active poachers using the border for protection. We should be careful, however, to read in the poaching of these men acts of resistance and defiance of colonial power. Some of these men were actually poaching on behalf of white men who wanted men and did not care where that meat came from. In the same report in which he lists local Africans hiding in Portuguese territory, Stevenson-Hamilton tells the story of an African named Soxise. The man was arrested inside the park armed with a D.B. gun and 10 rounds of S.S.G. ammunition. Soxise said the gun and ammunition came from the 'Chef de Poste', the chief Portuguese government official in a town called Maplankwene and that he had been ordered to shoot meat for the official. Stevenson-Hamilton must have believed the man for he wrote in his report: "From the appearance of the weapon there is little doubt but that it was the property of a white man." There is no indication in the archives of what happened to Soxise but we can guess he was not saved by his being a messenger.

It did not take Stevenson-Hamilton long to realize that he could not continue fighting armed poachers with men armed only with assegais. By 1927 he was calling for the arming of African policemen. As he said in a minute dated 4 July 1927 …

> under the circumstances and as it is usual for these natives when armed to fire on our people, I think for the security of the lives of our men, apart from the interests of the security of the Park that an issue of firearms should be made to our border guards. The white ranger obviously cannot be everywhere and we depend on our native police patrols to catch poachers

In July 1927 he wrote to the National Parks Board to report an incident in which poachers fired 10 shots at two park policemen. He drew comparisons between the park and the South African Police, which he said had started arming its African members to deal with armed criminals. He said African members of the police force had "been faced with exactly the same difficulties as ourselves from armed bands of Portuguese natives, and for this reason about two years ago all South African Police native police stationed on the boundary were armed with carbines and issued with ammunition".

This had worked as the police had had fewer problems since then. Stevenson-Hamilton added: “It will be seen therefore that we have a precedent for arming our people with firearms. And I may point out that our boundary is much longer and our difficulties at least as great as those with which the South African Police were formerly faced.” This was no easy matter for either the parks board or the Native Affairs Department. On 11 August 1927 the National Parks Board wrote to the Secretary for Native Affairs, asking for legal advice on the question of “issuing firearms to natives in its employ”. The answer from the Native Affairs Department was brief. It wrote on 18 August 1927: “This is a matter which should be referred to the Chief of the General Staff: Department of Defense… for consideration”. It took a while but the park’s native police were eventually given arms. The parks board did not have a choice. It had to arm its native staff if it was serious about fighting poaching.

However, debate over the arming of the park’s police and their eventual arming in the park’s early days did not mean an improvement in relations between the park and the people beyond its borders. The relationship between the park and its neighbors continued to be mediated through land, labor and poaching. Nothing illustrates this better than an exchange that took place between Stevenson-Hamilton and the Native Affairs Department in 1922. In October of that year, the warden wrote to the provincial secretary of the Native Affairs Department to complain about natives using bows and poisoned arrows to poach game. “Bows and poisoned arrows cannot be kept for any other purpose than for hunting game, and from their noiselessness render them much safer weapons for natives use when hunting illegally, than are guns; and they cannot be discovered as can wire snares, the late sites of which may always be identified.” He asked the native commissioner of the district concerned to confiscate these. The Sub-Native Commissioner for the district concerned responded by saying it was “common practice for the natives in the wilder parts of the district to carry bows and arrows” for protection. He said because the natives had been deprived of their guns it seemed “only reasonable that they should b allowed to possess some means of protecting themselves and their property against the depredations of these animals”.

From Portuguese natives to Mozambican refugees

The Kruger park occupies the northeastern corner of South Africa. It is in a sense on the margins of the country. However, as the interrogation of the park’s fiction of territorial integrity above shows, the park has been throughout its history very much a part of key social, economic and political developments in South Africa. The park has been one of the many stages upon which the drama of South Africa’s race relations has been played out, with land, labor and poaching being the key elements of that drama. The park has also been the arena for some of the most remarkable political transformations in southern Africa. It has been the place through which South Africa had to literally and figuratively come to terms

with the collapse of white colonial rule and the advent of black rule on its borders. Coming to terms with these transformations meant coming to terms first with the transformation of Portuguese natives into Mozambican citizens in 1975, when Mozambique acquired independence following a coup in Portugal. The second reality check came in 1980 when apartheid South Africa had to come to terms with the reality of having on the Kruger park's northern border a black-ruled and anti-apartheid Zimbabwe. Long used to fretting over insouciant and pesky Portuguese natives who traversed the border at will and poached in the park with relative immunity, the park now had to contend with, in its view, threatening Mozambican infiltrators armed not with bows and poisoned arrows or ancient firearms, but sophisticated automatic weapons. The changed political circumstances on the northeastern borders of South Africa did away with pesky Portuguese natives and replaced them, in the view of the Kruger park and South Africa's military authorities, with Mozambicans who were definitely poachers but possibly political insurgents as well.

Between May 1981 and February 1983, the Kruger park lost 141 elephants, mainly bulls, to poaching. The poaching took place on the park's eastern border with Mozambique. The park mounted an offensive against the poachers and killed seven of them. It also began a probe that soon discovered that some of the park's black rangers stationed in the affected area were involved in the poaching. Many of the rangers came from the country then called Mozambique or had blood relations and ties across the border going back generations. The park decided to withdraw all black rangers from the border area and to dismiss about 45 of the 54 rangers implicated. The rest were transferred to other sections of the park. It also began offering its black rangers basic infantry training, conducted by the South African Defense Force. This was after regular members of the Defense Force had refused to be transferred to the Kruger park. Between 1982 and 1983, 78 black park rangers completed basic infantry training and they were then deployed along the border, to take over from 30 regular rangers who had been dismissed (Joubert 2007: 12-13, vol. 11).

More than that, however, the park "decided on principle that no Mozambican citizens would be appointed to the sensitive area" (Joubert 2007: 13, vol. 11). Among those affected by the decision was Augusta Mabunda, a park ranger who first joined the park in 1961 as a cook before signing on again in 1970 as a ranger. Mabunda came from a village on the Mozambican side of the border called Mapulangweni. He recalled the decision to withdraw all Mozambican rangers from the border with bitterness: "They moved us to Malelane (in the south of the park) because they thought we would let Mozambican refugees go." The irony was that for people like Mabunda, long used to a life the extended beyond the park's borders and existed beyond its fiction of territorial integrity, the park's boundaries and the citizenship ties it denoted did not mean.

Mabunda was as Mozambican as he was South Africa. Besides, poaching was not a 'national' problem. It was as much a Mozambican as it was a South African problem. As Mabunda, who served 30 years as a fulltime ranger at the Kruger park before retiring in 2000 and working part time for the park, said: "What I have seen … the people of Mozambique and South Africa want to go inside the park to kill animals." As for questions about citizenship, Mabunda voted as a South African citizen in South Africa's first democratic elections in April 1994. "At first I used a Mozambican I.D. But the whites said we must get South African I.Ds. I voted in 1994. I felt easy. I told myself I was half a person now." Mabunda's biography shows up the permeability of national borders and the boundaries of the park. In his person we have the embodiment of the flows, connections and movements that have always marked the Kruger park. However, the park could not deal with bodies that undermined the static and racialized spatialization of colonial and apartheid rule. Bodies that could move backwards and forwards through borders without regard to fictions of territorial integrity were a threat to the state. The threat was of course made real by incidents of poaching and after 1975 the existence of a free and independent Mozambique. That is why the park moved Mozambican rangers away from the park's eastern boundary with Mozambique. According to Joubert, a former warden of the park, Mozambican rangers were moved away from the boundary to curb poaching; according to Mabunda, he and other Mozambican-born rangers were moved to prevent them from allowing refugees fleeing civil war in Mozambique from entering South Africa via the Kruger park.

There was certainly a marked increase in the number of refugees streaming into South Africa via the Kruger park after 1975. This followed the intensification of a civil war between the ruling Frelimo and the insurgent Renamo. The latter were founded as a proxy army by Rhodesian security forces to help fight Zimbabwean freedom fighters who were using Mozambican territory as their base of operations. Renamo was taken over by South African military intelligence and used to destabilize Mozambique. We don't know if the Kruger park and the South African Defense Force appreciated the irony of being distrustful of rangers such as Mabunda for potentially mishandling a problem that the military had created. Although the park had always been a space of flows, connections and movements, it is fair to argue that there would likely have been no refugees streaming into the park in their thousands to avoid the carnage in their villages.

From the late 1970s onwards the park's annual records start recording the influx of Mozambican refugees into the park. By the 1980s and right through the early 1990s, the influx seems to turn into a flood as the civil war intensifies in Mozambique. In August 1989 845 Mozambican refugees fled into the Kruger park to avoid heavy fighting between Frelimo and Renamo. The refugees fled to Pafuri, in the north of the park, from Mozambique's Gaza province at

about 4h45am on 28 August 1989. The refugees were kept under guard at the South African Police's outpost in Pafuri before being repatriated back to Mozambique. This was one of the largest influxes into the park. In fact, most refugees tended to come into the park in small groups. This created a serious problem for the park, however, as the stories that follow show. Because the flow of humans through the park was constant, it did not take some of the park's predators long to start preying on human beings. On 14 May 1989 a lioness killed a Mozambican man near Nwanetse on the eastern boundary of the park. The man had been arrested a week earlier and repatriated to Mozambique as an illegal immigrant. In September 1989 a lion mauled a South African soldier stationed at the border. In that same month unidentified wild animals killed and ate a refugee while a week before that hyenas ate a refugee-the third such incident in one weekend. It was said that predators had become so used to human traffic passing through the park they knew where to wait for their prey. For the park's rangers, the problem was not simply that the park's predators-lions, hyenas, leopards, cheetahs-were feasting on often defenseless refugees. It was that the predators were acquiring a taste for human flesh, making it dangerous for any human being to be in the park. This was a monumental problem for rangers who patrolled the park-the size of New Jersey or Israel-on foot or by bicycle. In a report published on 6 August 1998, the Star newspaper reported the following: "Last year, field rangers became concerned for their own safety after 5 illegal immigrants were killed by lions in the north of the park, close to Punda Maria camp. At one point, three illegals were killed within three weeks." The report said park rangers tracked down and killed seven lions that "seemed to have developed a taste for easy human prey". The newspaper also reported that pictures taken of the stomachs of the lions revealed human hands, fingers, tongues, bits of cloth and a wallet.

According to Willem Gertenbach, general manager for Nature Conservation at the Kruger park, "There's a very good possibility that many more refugees have died because sometimes we find abandoned luggage and torn clothes, but we don't find bodies, not with the hyena population in the park" (Hammond 1998). Gertenbach said the most depressing story concerned Emelda Nkuna, an 11-year-old Mozambican girl found wandering around the park after her mother was killed by lions and finished off by hyenas on 21 July 1998. Nkuna and her mother were trying to make it to South Africa in hopes of a better life on the other side of the border. She was lucky that the park's rangers found her alive. That was more than could be said for the countless others who had been killed by crocodiles while trying to cross rivers to get to South Africa.

The lot of Mozambicans trying to cross into South Africa via the Kruger park was bad enough for newspaper columnist Charles Mogale to ask: "Do we really have hearts of stone?" His question provided the headline and the column was subtitled: "South Africans

seem to be blind to the suffering of their neighbors”. Mogale wrote about a “hair-raising” story…

> of a woman with two little children who joined a group trying to walk the 200km or so across the breadth of the Park. She was too slow for the rest of the group, and they left her behind. As days passed and she ran out of food and water for the children, she broke their necks-apparently to save them from a worse death in the jaws of predators. The woman was picked up by tourists driving through the park-but it was too late for her offspring. She drove to the spot where their little bodies lay (City Press 1998).

The column is wrong in one crucial detail: the park is not 200km but 60km in breadth at its widest point. However, there is no mistaking the tragedy it conveys. As the Star newspaper reported in November 1998, “Each year hundreds of Mozambican refugees are attacked in the park.” Some of these immigrants were shepherded through the park by human traffickers promising to use fetishes to protect refugees from predators and Kruger park rangers.

The Kruger park and the war against apartheid

A consideration of the flows, connections and movements that have defined the Kruger park throughout its history would not be complete without a look at the history of the park as an arena of some of the military skirmishes that took place during the struggle against apartheid. This is because the park also served as a battlefront in the struggle between the apartheid government and anti-apartheid forces. In fact, while the fencing of the Kruger was to a large extent driven by veterinary officials, the military took a particular interest in the fencing of the border between the park and the Kruger park. The South African military actually insisted on the fencing of the eastern boundary as early as 1974 when it started looking like the anti-colonial forces led by Frelimo were gaining the upper hand against the Portuguese army. The Portuguese authorities had built a fence on the eastern boundary but it was found to be substandard. In 1974 the South African government ordered that a new fence that would be game- and elephant proof be erected. Construction began in July and by March 1976 the entire eastern boundary was fenced (Joubert 2007: 32, vol. 11).

However, the military was not done with the boundaries of the Kruger park. In January 1976 it began planting a sisal barrier “to deter insurgents” (Joubert 2007: 268, vol. 11). The plan failed, as already explained above. But it was not too difficult to understand why the military wanted the sisal barrier. Following Mozambique’s independence, the military believed that Mozambique’s black rulers would offer sanctuary to anti-apartheid guerillas. The military feared that the guerillas would use Mozambique as a staging ground for their operations and make the Kruger park, whose entire eastern boundary straddled Mozambique, their point of entry. They were determined to prevent that from happening. The Mozambicans did in fact offer anti-apartheid forces sanctuary but these forces were never able to take advantage of the Kruger park as a point of entry.

There were many reasons for this. For a start, the ANC and other anti-apartheid organizations did not have a strong presence in the populous southwestern sections of the park, where guerillas would have had to hide themselves. Second, the Kruger park was one of the most policed and militarized corners of South Africa. By the early 1990s, the Kruger park alone boasted four military bases while the air force and South African special forces were based in Phalaborwa and Hoedspruit respectively. These were two of the biggest towns outside the Kruger park.

The sisal plan might have failed but the military did not give up on the Kruger park. The park was, in the words of Stephen Ellis, one of the "most sensitive strategic areas in southern Africa for reasons arising from the politics of the region" (Ellis 1994: 66). The Kruger, which is about 360km long and 60km wide shares a border with what is today Zimbabwe in the north and Mozambique in the east. These border regions were not particularly sensitive while Zimbabwe and Mozambique were under white rule. However, South Africa's military calculations changed with the advent of freedom in Mozambique in 1975 and Zimbabwe in 1980. The park's borders became in truth a military playground. The Kruger park had a police presence from its early days and the Skukuza Police Station was opened in 1910. According to Joubert, police presence in the park went back even further, to 1904. However, it was not until 1964 that the park had its first active military presence since the end of the Anglo-Boer War in 1902 when a British-aligned regiment known as Steinacker's Horse was based in the northern part of the park. In fact, Steinacker and his men were among the first park inhabitants Stevenson-Hamilton saw when he assumed his position in July 1902. He wrote in his report for 1903 that Steinacker had about 40 white men and 150 natives under his command in the park.

The park's new military presence came in the form of the Skukuza Platoon, under the Barberton Commando. The platoon drew its members from the park's white male staff. The park's military association turned serious after the fall of Portugal. Even before that, however, the South African Defense Force asked the park in 1973 to set up a commando, in line with the military's regional defense strategy (Joubert 2007: 267, vol. 11). At the same time, the military placed an officer in the Kruger. His job was to help set up the commando, plan and train members, improve communication between the park and the military, "develop an information network" with a focus on Mozambique, and liaise with neighboring commandos (Joubert 2007: 267, vol. 11). The park's commando was housed in the late Stevenson-Hamilton's house until 1977 when an electric short caused a fire that destroyed the house. In the early 1980s there was an air force unit based in the park's airport and in 1985 the military assumed full control of the park's borders from the police. In 1986 the military added to the park's eastern barriers by erecting an electrified 'Caftan' fence, ostensibly to keep out Mozambican refugees streaming into the park as they sought to

escape the civil war raging in Mozambique. The electric fence went live in June 1988.

By the early 1990s, the military had four bases inside the park: Masokosa Pan, Nkongoma, Shishangani, Makhadzi and Rietpan. Reservists, who were called up for two months at a time from what were called Citizen Force units, staffed the camps. The militarization of the Kruger also extended to the park's own staff. White park rangers underwent officer training. Between 1982 and 1983 78 black rangers were given basic infantry training and formed the core of the park's first anti-poaching unit. It would appear from the above passage, drawn mainly from Joubert, a former park official, that the presence of the military inside the park was purely defensive. However, such claims are open to challenge. Cock (1991) and Ellis (1994) pointed out, for example, that the park was central to the South African Defense Force's counter-insurgency strategy in Mozambique. They say the park was used by the military to provide Renamo, Mozambique's counter-revolutionary group, with military supplies. In fact, says Ellis, Renamo's supply base, Ngungue, was on the eastern outskirts of the park. The South African military might even have used the park to plan a chemical weapons assault on Mozambican soldiers.

However, the South African military was not the only agency to try and use the park. The ANC tried to use the park, especially after Zimbabwe's independence in 1980. According to a former ANC soldier, it was not until the mid-1980s that the ANC tried to use the Kruger park to infiltrate its members back into South Africa. Between 1985 and 1986, the ANC would send between eight and 10 people but they were no match for the South African military. Lynda von den Steinen writes: "Many people infiltrated through the Kruger part, sometimes up to eight or ten people at a time, but the capabilities of the security forces dealt them a serious blow throughout the operation" (Von den Steinen 2007: 74). Among the guerillas who died in skirmishes with the military in the park were Paulos Kgwadi, killed in 1985, Aaron Makwa (1986), Watson Majova (1986) Laurence Lesimola (1988), Reckson Shingange (1988), Patrick Baloyi (1988) and Peter Zitha (1988).

Conclusion

The end of apartheid in 1994 did not bring an end to the fiction of the Kruger park's territorial integrity. The fiction remains as strong as ever and is in fact being used by the park and the post-apartheid government to shield the park from land claims that, if successful, would reduce the park to half its current size. The government announced in October 2009 that it would not settle the claims by giving the land back to those from whom it was taken to make way for the park. Rather, government said, claimant communities would be given monetary compensation. Government said it did not want to break up the park because it was a national asset and an international icon. The park might certainly be an international icon, easily recognizable across the world as one of South Africa's major

tourist attractions. However, it is debatable whether the park is in fact a national asset, if by that we mean something of both real and symbolic value to every member of the nation. As Carruthers says (1993), the Kruger park was conceived as a national project in only a narrow sense of the term ‘national’. In fact, the Kruger park was conceived as a white South African project, with the white nation thought of in limited terms as being made up exclusively of white English-speakers and Afrikaners. Carruthers says: “Africans were generally regarded as irrelevant even to the new issues of aesthetics, tourism and scientific investigation and thus marginalized even further” (Carruthers 1993: 12).

But Africans did make themselves relevant to the park, either as forced or voluntary laborers, poachers, trespassers, neighbors whose livestock posed a threat to the park’s animals, immigrants and of course political insurgents. Africans made themselves relevant to the park by traversing paths charted long ago by both animals and human beings as they moved in and out of the park and through fences and boundaries that meant little because they could not account for the fact that there were blood and familial ties on both sides of the park. For many Africans, the value of the park’s locality resided in the fact that it offered meat that they could use to supplement their diet and provided trees and other medicinal plants that they could harvest to treat ailments. The formal establishment of the park in 1926 took away this form of value and criminalized attempts to hold on to it. Instead, the creation of the park ushered in a new regime of value that could be appropriated only as a tourist object to be captured only with one’s eyes or camera-never with the bows and arrows or guns of old.

However, some Africans continued to insist on the old pre-park forms of value. They did this by poaching, illegally harvesting medicinal plants or tending to the graves of loved ones, graves they had been forced to abandon when they were moved or forced to move from the park to make way for the park. These Africans could only hold on to the old form of value by living in spite of the park’s fiction of territorial integrity. In this, the animals and diseases that did not and could not recognize the park’s fiction of territorial integrity helped them. It is telling even when the military erected an electric fence in the 1980s that, some say, claimed more lives in its short time than the Berlin Wall ever did throughout its history, people and animals, not to mention epizootics, continue to go back and forth between the park and its neighbors. The electric fence has been turned off and the park’s barbed wire fences have been torn down and donated to neighboring communities. However, the park’s neighbors continue to be outsiders to the park. They continue to live beyond the park’s fence as it were. But they still insist on the park’s history of flows, connections and movements - poaching, trespassing, emigrating and claiming their land back, but getting nothing back except fictions about maintaining the territorial integrity of the Kruger National Park. ENDS