'On the Hunt for Belonging': Culture, Hunting and Indo-Muslim Men in South Africa

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Abstract

Indian migrants have been moving to South Africa for the last 150 years. Yet, amidst the predominant Black-White racial binary operating from within South Africa, pre- to post-apartheid, very little is actually known about this heterogeneous and complex community of people. In this paper, we particularly focus upon the subjective realities of 10 Indo-Muslim men, in and through their involvement in the sport of hunting. Through the use of semi-structured interviews, we grapple with their changing senses of national identity and belonging, from relatively invisible outsiders to sporting insiders. The pleasures and positions of these sporting Indo-Muslim men though does not necessarily alter their "middle-man" citizenship status more broadly

Keywords

Introduction

Hunting is a sport with a rich and varied history. In Britain and some other western countries, hunting has played an important role in the traditions, culture and social life of rural elites (Griffin, 2007), whilst in many regions illegal hunting continues to be a site of debate and contestation in struggles between conservation and local cultures and practices (Von Essen et al., 2015). Hunting is a controversial sport and draws criticism in relation to the position of the animal (prey), and the ethics of hunting and killing (Gibson, 2014; Kalof, 2014; Vitali, 1990; Orendi, 2007; Fischer et al., 2013). Yet despite widespread, and often vociferous opposition, hunting remains a popular sport in many countries (Griffin, 2007). The hunting industry in South Africa is the largest across the African sub-continent; generating $100 million (US) per year in national revenue (Damm, 2005; Lindsey et al, 2006). It is a multifaceted industry. For example, citizens of the country tend to hunt for biltong[1] whereas foreign tourists tend to hunt animals as a form of trophy (Lindsey et al, 2006). In this paper we consider the importance of hunting for Indian men of Muslim faith (hereby named Indo-Muslims), who generally occupy a "middle-man" position within South Africa's complex racial history. We consider the ways in which hunting forms an important part of their identities as *both* Indo-Muslim and South African. In this paper we argue that some Indo-Muslim men are able to comply with the cultural sensibilities of hunting, linked to their changing economic and social standings, which, in various ways, enable them to move from the position of relatively ignored outsiders, to sporting insiders. Yet despite their senses of connectivity to life in South Africa, achieved in and through hunting, they nevertheless continue to be rendered invisible in/through the national imaginary.

In order to develop this argument we 1) use the cultural significance of sport, and animal sports such as hunting, as a lens to examine complex power hierarchies; 2) contextualise the racial and political positioning of Indo-Muslim men in South African history; 3) reflect on the research process and associated ethics; and finally 4) explore the research findings. Through this paper, we endeavour to uncover and to re-present the sporting "truths" of Indo-Muslim men and their engagements with hunting, which have rarely been heard and/or told from within a South African context. We cannot claim this represents the sporting histories of *all* Indo-Muslims, or Indians as a group more broadly, but the particular and situated politics of a relatively small group of men from the northern territories of Rustenburg in South Africa, at the time of the research, in 2012. It is beyond the scope of this paper to speculate on the complex vagaries of being and belonging for broader collectives of men and women who may identify with the "Indian" and "South African" label, or hybrid versions of both imagined cultural communities, but which we recognise may inform future and further lines of enquiry[2].

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[1] 'Biltong' refers to dry meat.
[2] We acknowledge that this paper is specifically about Indian, Muslim men, male sports and men's connections to the national imaginary. We do not claim that this is representative of Indian women's experiences or that Indian women are passive bystanders to the national project in South Africa (Radhakrishnan, 2005). Indeed, there is also a need to explore women's politics in/ through sport (Hargreaves, 2000). Furthermore, from speaking to the participants of this study, it became clear that women also hunt, go on trips and socialise with

The Cultural Significance of Sport Histories and Hunting

In this paper, sport is viewed as a significant space of leisure from which to explore national, racial, gendered and class politics (Bairner, 2001, 2009). Indeed, the cultural praxis of sport in South Africa has a long and symbolic history, facilitating apartheid and racial segregation (Bhana, 2015; Booth, 1998; Nauright, 1997). Yet post-apartheid, sport has been used as a catalyst to bring people together (Cornelissen, 2007; Levermore and Beacom, 2009). Many politicians and media commentators claim that sport can help to build a nation, as symbolised by Nelson Mandela shaking the hand of Francois Pienaar at the 1995 Rugby World Cup in South Africa (Steenveld and Strelitz, 1998). Yet the notion that sport participation can lead to meaningful integration is highly questionable (Darnell, 2010; Höglund and Sundberg, 2008; Irlam, 2004). In response to hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa, despite relentless media representations of racial unity and cohesion to a world-wide audience, one of the organising stakeholders argued that '(U)nity is still fragile…' but nevertheless believed it takes 'silly things' like hosting sporting mega-events to 'reverse racism' (Allen, 2013: 411). Thus, sport offers the possibility of responding to forms of discrimination which are often manufactured in and through highly visible and globalised public arenas (Carrington, 2012). Arguably, for us, it is important to re-read sporting history in order to expose moments across space and time which have erased and/or hide complex and contradictory struggles of power. That is, functioning as a medium to reproduce particular classed, racialized and gendered narratives, creating and maintaining boundaries of being and belonging. Histories, if ignored or trivialised, only continue to bolster dominant narratives about sport and the engagement of particular (White, male, able-bodied, heterosexual) groups whilst rendering invisible or misrepresenting the political agitations of a broader collective of people (Ratna, 2017). We desire the telling of a different type of history, which exposes the intersectional construction of spaces for leisure (Watson and Ratna, 2011) and centralises the subjectivities of those in, but nevertheless on the boundaries of, sport and society.

The sport of hunting provides a rich history about the duality of both race and class in South Africa, which in many respects is often undetected or simply dismissed amidst dominant framings of the sport as an unethical pastime (Gibson, 2014). Trophy hunting has frequently caused international outrage, such as responses to the killing of Cecil the lion in Southwest Africa by American dentist Walter Palmer in 2015 (Woods, 2015). Such reactions are premised on romanticised and often anthropomorphic attitudes to wildlife, where identifiable animals such as Cecil are given an elevated status in comparison to the millions of animals slaughtered annually by humans within the meat industry. Game and trophy hunting can bring economic benefits to local communities, and has been linked to conservation efforts to

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men at the end of a hunt party. The remit of this paper limits a discussion of women's involvement in this sphere but this issue constitutes an important area for future study.

preserve endangered species (Gibson, 2014; Lindsey et al, 2006). Some communities living within game reserve areas may also support hunting as a means to control populations and the actions of large and dangerous animals, which pose a threat to human life and livestock safety (Sulle et al., 2014). However, the extent to which local communities benefit from revenue generated through trophy hunting is debatable (Lenao, 2014). Game and trophy hunting are complex social and economic activities that prompt strong reactions on all sides, as expressed within Shaul Schwartz and Christina Clusiau's 2017 film, 'Trophy'. Hunting has also diversified to include going on hunts as a highly sought after leisure and/or tourist experience: that is, staying at a 5-star hotel[3], going on early morning hunts with a professional hunter, possibly shooting an animal[4], followed by a long afternoon and evening of feasting (on a killed animal and/or other foods).

Bourdieu's analysis of social stratification (1984) and social class (1991) is useful here to further explain how sport, including hunting, can specifically reproduce racial hierarchies. That is, the socially structured nature of sport is dependent on the taste and distinction of individuals and groups. Taste and distinction are a result of the amount of cultural capital that one possesses to be an 'insider' within chosen sports, activities and organisations. The social milieu of sport is therefore seen to be a site of struggle, in which what is at stake is the capacity to impose and monopolise the legitimate character of that space. This construction of sport is a product of social class, whereby taste and taste distinctions establish the boundaries between different classes. Tastes are not individualistic choices but rather are socially conditioned, and reflect a symbolic hierarchy maintained by the dominant class. In South Africa, the dominant class is constituted through narratives about race. The development of hunting, for instance, as a means of providing food in ancient times to a sporting activity in more recent times, provides a rich history about the duality of both race and class in South Africa. Hunting, therefore, is very much an avenue whereby power and authority is asserted (and potentially contested). In other words, taste for hunting is utilised as a social weapon defining high from low; insider from outsider (Myambo, 2010). In this paper, whilst we recognise the ethical dilemmas associated with hunting, it is clear from this brief history, that the practice is unlikely to be challenged by the chief participants - White men - because of the function it serves for maintaining their privileges. Thus, hunting provides an interesting site to explore deep-rooted racial and social tensions, relevant to the construction of national and social belonging in South Africa (Littlefield, 2006)

As authors of this paper, we struggled long and hard about the politics of "doing" research in/through the context of hunting and held divergent opinions. The post-humanist turn in

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[3] Often exclusive accommodation is provided specifically for hunting parties at hunting lodges or what South African people call, 'farms'. Participants stay at such farms and are taken to 'the bush' to hunt for animals and then come back to the farm to eat, drink and sleep.
[4] Generally, different types of antelope are hunted (kudu, impala, lechwe and eland).

sociological studies has helped us to (re)frame and to (re)question the power relationships between humans, animals and society (see Atkinson and Gibson, 2013). Indeed, we are cognizant of how different racialized bodies have themselves been "animalised" and reduced to the position of "non-human", which serves ultimately to distinguish "real" (meaning, White, western, heterosexual, able-bodied men) from those fetishised in/through colonial history as "Other", that is, those lacking (in terms of mind and body) in relation to "human" standards of being (Carey, Millington and Prouse, 2014; Carrington, 2010). Further still, hunting 'with its weapons, tests of skill, dominance over dogs, and conquests of wild creatures' (Marks, 1991: 78) is perceived as a quintessentially masculine sport. Luke (1998) further conflates hunting with predatory heterosexuality, arguing that both are simultaneously an expression of power, dominance and virulent sexuality (see also Dunning, 1999; Gibson, 2014; Kalof, 2014). Our dialogues about hunting reflect broader academic, political and public discourses about the role and ethics of hunting. Yet, with different degrees of tolerance and acceptance, we attempted to 'look past hunting as killing' in order to critically make sense of the relationship between humans, hunting and the complex racialised, classed and gendered environment of Indo-Muslim men's lived positionalities (Atkinson and Young, 2008; Gibson, 2014; Curry, 2004). We thus chose to read hunting as a cultural context whereby power and authority are asserted and contested, and may be experienced differentially by Indo-Muslim male participants.

Indian Communities and Racial Politics in South Africa

Politics in post-apartheid South Africa is often centred on the idea of celebrating a multicultural population, dubbed the 'Rainbow Nation' (Myambo, 2010). Rainbow Nation ideology evolved from the progressive stance of the African National Congress (ANC) party on non-racialism. and supported the inclusion of people from all racial heritages in the struggle for freedom in direct opposition to the ethnic chauvinism of apartheid. Whilst the Rainbow Nation philosophy has offered new modalities of being in space, it is questionable whether it has really surpassed the facile injunction of "(C)an't we all just get along? - Black and White" (Myambo, 2010: 95). The battles for power and supremacy in South Africa predominantly remain two-fold: Black and White, arguably at the expense of the Indian population (Radhakrishnan, 2005). With a few notable exceptions, literature about the history, migration and settlement of Indian communities in South Africa is also relatively invisible compared to research about the Black experience (e.g. Bhana, 2015; Ramsamy, 1996). Ramsamy (1996) argues that while Black, Indian and other 'coloured' groups worked together in political solidarity against apartheid, they shared little else in common. He argued that racial unity in and between various racial and ethnic groups was not without divisions and contestations, as different political factions (including the Natal Indian Congress and the ANC) struggled to express a unified politics of resistance (Ramasamy, 1996). As the White-powered government (the National Party, NP) in South Africa began to weaken, the ANC grew stronger with the political support of the United Nations. The international boycotting of South African industries, commerce and forms of popular culture including sport during the 1980s also strengthened the ANC's political resolve (Bhana, 2015). Thus, the NP

adopted measures to rally the support of the heterogeneous Indian community. As a result, despite the majority of Indians continuing to support the abolition of apartheid, their intentions were often mis-read by Black people as either indifferent and/or in support of racial segregation (Ramasamy, 1996). Some members of the Indian community did worry though that any gains they had made in South Africa, since their arrival, would not be maintained under a Black-led ANC government. They feared the African-centric tone of the resistance movement did not reflect their own complex cultural heritages. More than that though, as a consequence of the NP's over-arching and constant reference to the racial ideologies that underpinned apartheid, some Indians unquestioningly consumed and reproduced - through their own thinking and actions - the notion of Black people as uncivilised and untrustworthy (Ramsamy, 1996). Thus, in the late 1980s, many Indians voted for policies of differential racial and ethnic chauvinism (named by the NP as the tricameral system), separating and positioning Indians in-between White and Black people (Ramasamy, 1996). In post- apartheid South Africa, the growing yet varied Indian population mostly remained as a 'buffer'; caught between the historical supremacy of a White minority, and the new found power of a Black majority. Indeed, as feared by some Indian groups, their cultural difference and position as non-indigenous natives precluded them from sharing entitlements to various civil and social rights.

Some Black populations, who under White rule were excessively deprived and given fewer opportunities (when compared to other racial and ethnic groups), began to occupy a relatively advantageous position which aimed to remedy the past, by supporting their material and political progress (Ramsamy, 1996). However, many Black people, despite post-apartheid changes, were still unable to successfully utilize support mechanisms due to the severity of the repercussions they suffered during apartheid. The business records of some Indian entrepreneurs, contrastingly, worked in their favour, and through formal and informal education, training and experience, they acquired higher levels of human capital (Bhowan and Tewari, 1997). With this capital they were able to successfully translate their modest skills into better jobs and higher incomes. Thus, the securing of better employment and, eventually, forms of connected social capital (Bourdieu, 1984; 1991) - as became evident in terms of their hunting experiences (see below) - further bolstered their economic progress. At the time, the material advancements of some elite Indians were seen as a threat to the monopolisation of private businesses by White South Africans. Hence, some White business owners, although still largely repulsed by the prospect of 'racial contamination', hired Indians as middle-managers (Bhowan and Tewari, 1997). This ploy continued to buffer them from Black groups, who they abhorred more than the Indians, yet did not allow various Indian groups to usurp their overall control and power (Ramasamy, 1996). The position of some elite groups of Indian men then, despite their upward mobility, did little to alter their wider "middle-man" status[5].

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[5] See Radhakrishnan (2005) for specific details about Indian women and their roles in the shift from pre- to post-apartheid South Africa.

Methods

In order to consider some of the complex issues related to hunting, belonging, and culture we conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews with 10 South African Indo-Muslim men who partake in hunting on an annual basis (hunting is seasonal) and were relatively experienced and established in hunting. The participants were aged between 18 and 68 years old and all were living in South Africa: Babu, Moosa and Qasim were all in their 60s and represented the oldest participants; Haroon, Raees, Ridwaan, Riyadh, Sameer and Tahir were in their 30s and 40s; Farhaan, at 18 years old, was the youngest participant[6]. The older participants had experienced apartheid before the 1980s and had experience of hunting during this time. Many of the other participants grew-up living with the legacy of apartheid, and were more attuned to the philosophy of Rainbow Nation. Participants were drawn from the North-West province of South Africa, Rustenburg. Due to access issues, the selection sample was restricted to this area, but this drew advantages: 1. The North-West province is predominantly a suburban and farm-occupied area with a culture of hunting amongst its residents; 2. The North-West province has a high concentration of Indo-Muslim residents, particularly in the Rustenburg area. Participants were identified according to the principle of 'snowball sampling' through acquaintances and family contacts of the lead author. Interviews were semi-structured and based on a life-history approach with participants reflecting on their initial involvement in hunting (for example, their first hunt and what got them motivated/interested), their continuation in hunting and their current involvement in hunting (see Ratna, 2010). Other themes discussed were hunting skill development, power relationships with other hunters, relationships with those running farms for hunting, and other wider social networks.

Ratna (2010) argues that many British Asian researchers who undertake studies about British Asian identities, lifestyles and cultures, are often charged with the criticism that their similar heritage biases their work. The main implication is that researchers are unable to remark upon cultures and experiences that are similar to their own from an objective viewpoint (Alexander, 2004). We argue that the primary researcher (the lead author) sharing the same gender, religious and ethnic/racial identity as the men being interviewed, coupled with the familiarities of language, cultural belief systems, and the lived experience of difference in South Africa, facilitated the data collection process. Arguably, shared experiences of oppressive social structures, social relations and the development of a political consciousness, helped to reinforce the stance of the 'interviewer as a friend', and 'insider', as opposed to an impersonal, objective researcher (Harris, 2002: 47). This positionality enabled the primary researcher to better achieve rapport and to elicit detailed and sensitive information from the participants (Farooq, 2009). Unlike Gibson's study in New Zealand where he became an active participant to facilitate a deeper connection with the practice of hunting, and the experiences of those people involved in his research, in order to sidestep the dominant ethical conundrum raised by the thought of 'killing animals', the lead author of this study chose to adopt the position of passive observer. Yet, his interest in hunting, and previous experience of hunting, allowed for a

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[6] All the participants were happy for their real names to be used in this study.

relationship of mutuality to evolve. Subsequently, a more relaxed interaction led to greater volunteering of hunting insights and stories (Gibson, 2014). Moreover, the lead author felt that as the participants of the study were not threatened by his hunting skills and status (as they might have been if talking to a hunter of equal or greater experience) they were less likely to engage in impression management and/or the production of idealised narratives that predominantly only spoke back to the notion of hunting as grotesque (Gibson, 2014). In many ways, he felt that he was seen as an interested novice trying to learn about an activity of great importance to them, thus the participants were willing to spend time with him and share personal and detailed stories (Littlefield, 2006).

The interviews were transcribed in full and then inductively broken down into meaningful categories and themes (Gerson and Horrowitz, 2002), including: the national and cultural significance of hunting in South Africa; negotiating capital and the elitist White context of the sport; racial distinctions between the Indo-Muslim male hunters and their Black and White peers; and also, the impact of religion on hunting practices and choices. Our focus was on the role of hunting in relation to notions of culture and belonging within the lives of our participants, and consequently other important issues, such as human-animal relationships and the ethics of hunting, were given less priority in both the interviews and our analysis.

The national and cultural significance of hunting

The men interviewed in this research were hunters with differing abilities. They had become involved in hunting at different stages within their lives; some had learnt to hunt in the context of their family (i.e. primary socialized hunters) and some learnt to hunt later in their lives (i.e. secondary socialized hunters). For all participants hunting plays an important role within their lives, yet most felt that they were judged in relation to discourses about the cruelties of hunting (Gibson, 2014). This type of pressure is reflected in the response of Tahir, a man in his mid-30s:

> Hunting is my life, you know, there's nothing else in the world I'd rather do, but, if you're not a hunter or you're not South African…there's this automatic assumption of how bad hunting is, you know? We read on the net and in the media, they don't know a single thing about hunting but they're ready to judge you for it, you know? Hunting is much more than just killing but they don't get that. It's never positive.

Hunting was viewed as highly significant to participants' (individual) leisure lives in South Africa. As Littlefield (2006) highlights, hunting is not just a sport or a pastime, it is a way of life that symbolises a sense of identity for these men, and as a sport, offers Indo-Muslims the

possibility of seeing themselves as quintessentially 'South African'. Sameer, also in his mid-30s, articulates this view in his interview:

> …in the Bushveld, urmm, how can I put it, urmm, let's just say, there's certain things regarding hunting which you'll learn… how can I put it to you? It's through mere effect that you're South African. Certain things that are just general knowledge; in other words, if you're not from South Africa, there's certain things I could explain to you that you would never understand. It's because we are South African. It's because it's part of *our* South African tradition.

Sameer's response clearly demarcates the sport of hunting as something intricately and intimately tied to South African culture and habitus. However, he is imagining South Africa as a country that others from outside this nation would simply not understand. Furthermore, although all the participants in various ways were aware of the ethics and morality of hunting, they argue that in the South African context, hunting is divorced from debates about cruelty, as it is deeply entrenched in ideas about South Africanness and their cultural ways of life (Littlefield, 2006).

The places and spaces of hunting offered Indo-Muslim men opportunities to experience and situate their own minority ethnic culture, in and through this national sensibility. For instance, Sameer goes on to suggest that hunting provides space and opportunities for families (including men and women) to come together, and support the development of their own Indo-Muslim community and kinship networks:

> You see, in the Indian community now, like there's not much mixing. Those days of mixing of different families was many years ago not nowadays. Now with these hunting trips, what it offers is this coming together. You know the feasting and the braai[7]? You see, we've got 22 cousins so we are already a huge crowd. So at the farm, it accommodates everyone. Whoever wants to go hunt, hunts, and then the rest of the day, you're just sitting and talking and braai'n. It's lecker[8] you know. It's how it should be.

Thus, hunting played an important role within the leisure lives of Indo-Muslim men, constituting a key cultural facet of their self-identity as both South African and Indian. Bourdieu's (1984, 1991) insights about capital, distinction and habitus are useful here, revealing how the cultural tastes of these Indo-Muslim men were not just simply individualistic choices, but were socially conditioned and reflected an understanding of the broader symbolic elite racialised hierarchies operating in South Africa. Exercising their cultural capital, in and through the context of hunting, enabled many of these Indo-Muslim men to not only bond with each other but also to feel like they could stake a claim to the nation.

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[7] 'Braai' is originally an Afrikaans terms but is popularly used to refer to people getting together for a barbeque.
[8] 'Lecker' is a commonly used term in South African to denote something as 'cool'; good.

Negotiating capital, class and Whiteness

Although an initial assessment of the role and significance of hunting within participants' lives reflected a positive relationship between hunting and South African-ness, at a deeper level, the provision and practice of hunting did demarcate racial divisions of power and belonging. As the participants in this study were of different ages, their point of entry into hunting was different from one another. The men who had hunted during the apartheid era, shared a very different story to the men who began hunting post-apartheid. For example, some of the older participants such as Raees, who began hunting shortly before the fall of apartheid in 1994 (Myambo, 2010), explained how hunting has changed over the years:

> It's like, anybody can go hunting in your neighbourhood now, but like when we grew up, very few people went. The thing is that for us, as non-Whites, to own a firearm wasn't so easy. Now, firearms are given out on competence, it's a prerequisite you know, so much better, now that you're judged on ability above anything else.

Moosa, 68 years old at the time of the research, who had hunted regularly at the height of apartheid, recollected how hunting has dramatically changed:

> In those days, you'd get to a White farm and the White farmer would look at you and say, 'you hunt?' But, you know, they were amazed, that here's a non-White folk, that wanted to hunt. It was new to them. And of course, there were White farms where non-Whites weren't allowed at all.

He further suggested:

> Hunting has definitely changed, it's better now, because we are now permitted to own firearms; licensed firearms. In those days, we used the guns that the farmer gave to us, legally we could not own one. Most of the farms and hunting territories are still White-owned, then and now, but now you have Indian people who have their own hunting farms, who own land that belongs to them, so it's a big step. Five just here in Zinniaville.

The testimonies discussed here reflect on the racial divisions evident in sport more broadly during apartheid (Bhana, 2015; Booth, 1998; Nauright, 1997). Provision was often racially segregated and for Black communities (which would have included those of Indian descent) access to facilities and equipment was restricted by White gatekeepers. Although, as suggested by older Indo-Muslim hunters including Moosa, Qasim, and Babu, they nevertheless found places and spaces where they could navigate restrictions to participate in this White South African tradition.   Yet, in this context, pre- to post-apartheid, whilst access has been increasingly granted and taken by non-White communities, including some Indo-Muslims, this hardly reveals a fundamental rupturing and dismantling of the cultural hierarchies that divide

White elites from all others in South Africa (Radhakrishnan, 2005). The racial elitism of hunting is still very much apparent.

However, it is accurate to note, hunting has generally advanced as an economic activity since 1994 when relations between South Africa and other nations improved with the end of apartheid (PHASA, 2011). In order to move away from the connection of this sport with labouring communities, and reinforcing the elite cultural stature of hunting, most of the men in the study were eager to associate hunting with money and higher class, rather than something that was base and lower class (Bourdieu, 1984; 1991). This is reflected in Farhaan's testimony, and although young at 18-years-old, he is still well-versed in the socio-economic realities of hunting:

> Hunting now is all about money. There's ethics involved and ways of doing hunting, but it all comes down to money. It's only a certain extent that you can drive issues because even if you're on your own, how far can you push it? Like, if you are on your own farm, and a White guy comes and offers more money than a Black guy, or an Indian guy, then you're going to give it to him first. So it becomes all about profitability. Money doesn't know any apartheid; as long as you're paying no one really cares. You have foreigners coming in (to hunt), like the Saudis and it's all just a money factor. If you're going to put money in, no one cares what colour skin you are!

This statement reveals the extent to which hunting has increasingly become a recreational pastime that attracts not only wealthy South African participants, but also hunters from overseas. The rise of hunting as a leisure industry has to a certain extent loosened the White-Black racial boundaries of this activity. To explain this change, it is important to note that agriculture as a form of livelihood has waned in South Africa. The downturn in profitability from agricultural activity has forced farmers to seek alternative sources of income, like opening-up their land for hunting purposes (Bye, 2003). Thus, poor White agricultural Boers who were previously considered lower class, through the rising economic value of hunting, have come to prominence (Lee and Hitchcock, 2001). Similarly, since the fall of apartheid, the Indian community have been able to use their economic capital to buy hunting farms (Bourdieu, 1984; 1991). Moosa's earlier identification of five Indo-Muslim men who own their own farms is indicative of their particular upward socio-economic mobility, thus reflecting how economic gain can be exchanged for cultural capital, facilitating insiderness to the White spaces and places of hunting in South Africa (Bourdieu, 1984; 1991).

Racial distinctions: 'I hunt, but not with Blacks'

From the men's testimonies it is evident that hunting represents an important element of South African national culture, and reveals changing class and racial boundaries of inclusion and exclusion. Yet, understanding the dominant cultural tropes operating in South Africa

also enables Indo-Muslim men to reproduce a narrative about themselves, which distinguishes them from the Black population (Bourdieu, 1984; 1991). An experienced, older hunter, Qasim, mentioned:

> Not many Blacks hunt. I've never seen many. I've seen maybe two or three Black hunters my entire life. Even they were those rich politicians. I mean there are the Blacks who have always hunted like on the tribal lands[9], but we don't really mingle with them. The upkeep [of the land] is not there and you just don't go there!

Through hunting, the popular imaginary of Black people as connected to a space that must be avoided is a mechanism used to differentiate Indo-Muslims from Black people and further maintain their connection to White people. Moreover, as hunting has become increasingly associated with holding a wealthy and privileged position, it appears the vast majority of the Black population have not been able to acquire the necessary financial capital to become involved with hunting (Littlefield, 2006). Haroon, in his 40s, was the only Indo-Muslim man who has hunted, and continues to hunt, on the tribal lands with Black people:

> I learnt hunting in the bush, where you don't have your sofas and games and what not. Hunting now is all about the excursion and less and less about the hunt itself. You want to hunt properly, you go to the bush. Not all these fancy farms that all these people go to!

For Haroon, hunting without any luxuries is a more authentic and fulfilling experience; it is all about the hunt (of the animal) and less about the excesses of socialising whilst on a hunting trip. Haroon is an exception to most of the Indo-Muslim men in the study, who all allude to the convenience of farms, which curtails opportunities for contact and engagement with Black hunters. Moreover, Indo-Muslim men's hunting tastes reflect their growing economic and cultural stature, an identity position they cannot maintain by hunting on tribal lands with Black men. Thus, hunting for Indo-Muslim men explicitly enables them to reproduce dominant narratives about Blacks as lower class citizens, thus, at the same time, playing up to White men. Tahir best sums-up this common view:

> We don't have anything to do with them (the Black people). They're work[10] as far as we're concerned. They get priority over us in the eye of the law, jobs, education, you name it. It's all corrupt! The whole system's corrupt! You know, when the White government was in power, it was safer, there was security, roads were built and the system worked, you know? These Black people, they're fucked by their own government, yet they continue to vote for them (the ANC)! You know what, let me ask you… you know what the most dangerous man in the world is? It's a desperate man and that's what they are. They have nothing so they'll do anything! Anything!

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[9] Hunting on tribal lands has generally been decreasing in South Africa as property is either taken over by corporate companies for hunting as a business and/ or Black people of the tribal lands have moved to urban centres for education and employment. Thus, the tribal community and their use of lands for hunting, has generally waned.

[10] Tahir is referring here to 'the work' as the Black people hired as servants in their homes and/or at the farm.

Tahir's frustration and anger, somewhat shared by most of the men in the study, is a result of their experiences of marginalisation by the Black-led government. Their resentment fuels a deep hatred and mistrust towards Black people, blaming ordinary Black people for their own positionality, whereas their White predecessors are erased from having any responsibility for their current predicaments. Indeed, the depiction of Black people is linked to criminality and danger, whereas White people (ironically given the history of South Africa) are selectively portrayed as guardians of a trustworthy political system. Although the obscured citizenship status of Indo-Muslims is undoubtedly problematic (Ramsamy, 1996), it is from this position that such discriminatory views of the Black community should be read and understood. Arguably, the position of Indo-Muslim men, racially triangulated vis-à-vis Whites and Blacks, means that despite their upward economic and cultural status, they remain civically ostracized (Kim, 1999). Post-apartheid, through acquiring capital, they continue to conform to a model minority status (Thangaraj, 2010) by attempting to assimilate into the dominant culture, through which they contest and negotiate their "middle-man" status in relation to both White and Black groups of people in South Africa.

Beyond race: Hunting and religion

For Indo-Muslim men, the emergence of Islamophobia was not as critical as the legacy of apartheid. This is an important point to reflect on as these men did not feel prejudiced because of their religion, as in South Africa their ethnic and racial identities made them feel more excluded from various citizenship rights. In the context of apartheid, religion gave some of the young men hope and solidarity. As Raees, in his 40s, states: "Yes, segregation saved us, it safeguarded our religion (Islam) at the very least, kept us together you know…" There is certainly evidence to suggest that during the apartheid years, separated from both White and Black communities, into Indian and 'coloured' residential areas, religious and ethnic heritage for many Indians of different faiths, was a legitimate source of identity and pride (Ramsamy, 1996).

Moreover, the men suggest that their religious sensibilities in this context were not viewed as a problematic or deviant facet of their identity, but one that was in some ways valued by White Afrikaner farmers. The benefits of this were identified by Sameer:

> It (religion) definitely is appreciated by the Afrikaner people. I mean, before, all of it was new to them but then again, us hunting was too. But ya, they respect it. Like, you have their people who drink in the night and then struggle to get up in the morning and they are not in the right frame of mind. As you know, hunting's an early morning thing and if you're not up and ready, that's going to really anger the farmers you know? With us, we're up at dawn anyway for Fajar (Morning Prayer) you know? So they see this and they appreciate it.

However, in other ways, some of the Indo-Muslim men suggested that they were beginning to question the common practices operating on White farms in relation to their religious differences. This mainly related to White cultural practices of feasting that contradict the

religious beliefs and values of many Indo-Muslim men (Larter and Allaire, 2006). Ridwaan, a 25-year-old hunter, explained:

> I think there's been this problem always. You go to a White farm and obviously where you braai, they've made food before. And I think the main one is the cooling facilities, like the slaughter house, they have their animals hung there and then when that touches our animals, it becomes haraam. Not all White farms accommodate (halaal strictures) but why should they? I mean our numbers are small but, don't get me wrong, there are the Boers (farmers) that do and that's good on them. The other thing is, although when we hunt, nine times out of ten it's just going to be us on the farm, you know there's been peeps drinking there before. Now there's a few 'halaal-only' farms, it still can be a little tense you know?

As religion is central to the identities of many of these men, they cited this as a major obstacle to their involvement with White groups. But, to various extents, they have been able to find farms which do accommodate their halaal feasting and non-alcoholic drinking preferences. Referring back to Moosa's earlier comment, he suggested that since apartheid, because of the many changes in regulations, they are now allowed to own land. Subsequently, with the economic capital acquired (Bourdieu, 1984; 1991), many have invested in their own farms. For these men, owning their own farms helps to circumvent common White cultural practices in order to negotiate and create spaces that properly support their pious practice *and* social enjoyment (Larter and Allaire, 2006).

Discussion: On the "hunt" for national inclusion and belonging

This paper responds to the under-researched nature of hunting which, as noted above, is surprising, given the history of how the sport is at the centre of many high-profile social and ethical tensions and controversies (Mckenzie, 2005). This project addressed this gap in the research by deconstructing 'hunting' and the dominant discourses that have created and re-created meanings associated with the sport (Littlefield, 2006). When analysing the findings, we became aware that little reference was made to the live animals themselves, with only passing mention of the dead animal and the associated "meat" produced from the carcass. This is indicative of the detached attitude displayed by many hunters to the animals who are at the centre of their hunts, and is in contrast to the arguments of several researchers that hunters understand their activities in terms of a close and sensuous relationship with their prey (Ingold, 1994; Marvin, 2005; Reis, 2009). But, we too, as researchers, did not probe the animal-human power dynamics in/through the interviews. Arguably, this reveals how we prioritised the power asymmetries in and between different humans, whilst the relationship to animals was invisible and less important to us. As researchers who initially queried the ethical conundrum of researching "on" animals, we neglected to question how we do research "with" or "for" animals, in the context of hunting (see Guiellemin and Gillam, 2004). Rather, what became apparent in this research was how Indo-Muslim men's lives were profoundly influenced by

hunting, uncovering the social structure and culture of hunting in South Africa, and how that was consolidated and re-shaped in and through Indo-Muslim men's involvement in this animal sport.

The lead author, as an inactive participant observer, but someone who had hunted with some of the participants in the past, used his racialised, gendered and religious identity to accrue the favour of those he watched, interviewed and hung around with before and/or after hunts and during feasts. We suggest this connectivity is not merely the result of identity-matching, but also related to his position as a young man in his early twenties (at the time of the research) whose demeanour was read as "eager to learn" about the social realities of those who were positioned as established and/or more experienced hunters. By not actively taking part in hunts, some of the ethical dilemmas related to hunting were circumvented. However, it was not completely possible to detach ourselves from the ethical context of this project, and we reflected, singularly and together, on our positions in relation to hunting as a leisure pastime. At the centre of this research was a re-occurring tension that we, as authors, had differing and contesting viewpoints about. On the one hand we wanted to recover and make visible the sporting (hidden) histories of a relatively marginalised "shadow" racial group in South Africa, whilst, on the other hand, we questioned the moral grounds of working in and through the context of hunting (Gibson, 2014). It is striking yet unsurprising that animals – the prey who are hunted – are absent from the interview transcripts, although our focus was not on the ways in which participants think about their prey, or relate to the animals who are essential to the practice of hunting. As noted above, the interview participants themselves only made passing reference to the live animals. This is indicative of a detached attitude towards the animals who are unwillingly and unknowingly partners in the hunt, and who transform from animal, to prey, to meat, and to trophy (Fausto, 2007). Hunting as a leisure practice is different to hunting for food, or other leisure pastimes, as it centres on the death of an animal for human pleasure. The silence from our participants, as well as our own oversight as researchers, in relation to the animals is telling in terms of broader hunter-hunted power dynamics, hunters' attitudes towards their prey, and the need for researchers to better engage with post-humanist frames of thinking about the relationships between animals and humans (Atkinson and Gibson, 2013)

We acknowledge hunting is a deeply controversial site, as stipulated by the authors of the paper and the participants of the study, yet as a cultural site it enabled us to explore the broader national and elitist significance of hunting, as well as the function of hunting as a means to elevate the self-esteem and sense of collective solidarity for Indo-Muslim men. That is, hunting enabled them to enact their national allegiance and masculinity as both South African and Indo-Muslim. For these Indo-Muslim men, being South African was synonymous with hunting. Arguably, the level of inclusion achieved by these men was a direct outcome of their ability to accrue and exercise various forms of capital linked to their wealth, their dissociation from Black hunters, and their hunting skills (Bourdieu, 1984; 1991). Religious observance was also valued by some of the participants, and was increasingly being negotiated across different hunting sites (e.g. the emergence of Indo-Muslim-owned "halaal" farms). Moreover, in the racialized context of South Africa where racism was institutionalised, legalised and internalised

to maintain apartheid structures (Harris, 2004), religious solidarity was important as well as featuring as part of the participants' own pious practice. Arguably, the racial, religious and political assertiveness of some of the Indo-Muslim men, is a masculinised response to discourses which have worked to render them invisible, and non-significant (Farooq, 2009). In varied ways, for the different men included in this study, a relative degree of acceptance to the mostly White, hegemonic and masculine spaces of hunting was possible, compared to the inclusion of poor Black South African men who did not possess similar combinations of valued economic and negotiated capital (Bourdieu, 1984, 1991; Kim, 1999). Exploring the hidden histories of Indo-Muslim men not only reveals the social constructed-ness of sport in South Africa and the delineation of racial, gendered, and class hierarches, but also reveals how acts of assimilation by "Others" reinforce and reproduce particular lines of inclusion/exclusion. This mostly confirms the elitist and non-Black sporting status of hunting.

Conclusion

The various places and spaces of hunting in South Africa offer Indo-Muslim men the possibility of elevating their "middle-man" status. Even though South Africa is now Black-governed, the land and economic influence still largely remains in the power of White people (Bhana, 2015). Although Whites as a social collective no longer have political influence (which unites them with the Indo-Muslims), hunting remains a site where material and symbolic power can be exercised. For some Indo-Muslim men, it is an opportunity to remain on "par" with the Whites; it is their way of negotiating some kind of insider presence in post-apartheid South Africa. Whilst undeniably many wealthy Indo-Muslim men have achieved cultural and economic advancement, which has enabled them to "play with" their White peers in/through the field of hunting, the extent to which this equates to transforming their "middle-man" status more broadly remains unclear. This research, into the particular lives and identities of Indo-Muslim men from Rustenburg in South Africa, is arguably significant beyond the cultural realm of hunting, reflecting their broader political struggles for visibility, social belonging and national security. Thus, the tangible and intangible boundaries of belonging remain socially and economically contested, contradictory and complex, requiring future and further unpacking.

The work of transforming South Africa into an equal multicultural nation-state for all has encountered many problems, with Myambo (2010) arguing that the battle for power and supremacy remains two-fold: Black and White (see Thangaraj, 2012). As noted in this research, during periods of civil unrest, isolation, segregation and social change, focus upon identity construction reveals how human (and animal) encounters alter and re-inscribe social circumstances and political divisions. However, engagement in leisure activities during such unstable times also enables individuals and groups to re-think ideas about themselves, to see themselves and their positions in society in new ways, and to engage in meaningful sites and sources of pleasure (Thangaraj, 2010). The power dynamics and pleasures enacted in and through leisure spaces extends beyond human actors, and thus questions of belonging and

inclusion also involve consideration of animals, and their relationships and interactions with humans. The relative invisibility of animals, the prey, from our own analysis, and from the testimonies of the hunters, was striking, raising further questions about how we centralise and make visible such human-animal relationships of power in/though future studies about sport and leisure.

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