CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

VISUAL CULTURE/EXPLORATIONS
9 - 10 July 2004
Department of Visual Arts
University of Pretoria

University of Pretoria

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Note regarding visual material:

Please note that it has not been possible to include all the visual material in these proceedings. Please contact the author of a paper for more information.

Foreword

The international conference *Visual Culture: Explorations* was dedicated to an interdisciplinary exploration of visual culture and was hosted by the Department of Visual Arts at the University of Pretoria in July 2004. This was the first time than an independent conference of this kind was hosted at the Department of Visual Arts. Over seventy abstracts were received, and almost forty papers were selected by the convenors. Papers were delivered by delegates from. Denmark, Germany, New Zealand, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

The sessions were structure around themes that are topical in the discourse of visual culture, as well as in many allied disciplines and fields, especially those that are interested in aspects of the visuality of culture. The interdisciplinary nature of the conference was confirmed by the fact that the speakers come from the following disciplines/fields:

Anthropology	Art History
Asian and African Studies	Communication
Cultural and Heritage Tourism	Cultural Studies
Design History	Education
Fashion Studies	Film Studies
Fine Arts	Historical and Heritage Studies
Information Design	Philosophy
Sociology	Visual Culture

Refereeing procedure

The papers delivered at the conference were selected by the convenors according to abstracts submitted by the presenters. Out of seventy abstracts received, only forty were selected for the conference. After the conference, the presenters were invited to submit their papers for consideration in the peer reviewed conference proceedings. The 19 papers subsequently received were submitted to two referees, who were asked to comment on the academic merit of the papers and whether they constituted original research. Thirty-one national and international referees, who are acknowledged specialists in the field, were consulted (see list below). The recommendations made by the referees were returned by the editors to the researchers, who were asked to address the suggestions/comments made by the referees in revising their papers. All the papers in this volume were revised by the researchers before publication. The original referee reports are in the possession of the editors.

Editorial panel

Prof J van Eeden, Department of Visual Arts, University of Pretoria

Dr E Basson, Department of Art History, Visual Arts and Musicology, University of South Africa

Referees

Prof Chris Bailey	Northumbria University, United Kingdom
Dr Eunice Basson	University of South Africa, South Africa
Ms Barbara Buntman	University of the Witwatersrand / Independent art historian, South Africa
Dr Jillian Carman	Independent art historian, South Africa
Dr Elfriede Dreyer	University of Pretoria, South Africa
Prof Trudie du Plooy	University of South Africa, South Africa
Dr Amanda du Preez	University of Pretoria, South Africa
Prof Pieter Duvenage	Bond South Africa, South Africa
Prof Pieter Fourie	University of South Africa, South Africa
Mr Federico Freschi	University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa
Prof Danie Goosen	University of South Africa, South Africa
Prof Anske Grobler	University of Pretoria, South Africa
Dr Michael Herbst	Rhodes University, South Africa
Dr Lize Kriel	University of Pretoria, South Africa
Prof Sabine Marschall	University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
Prof Catherine McDermott	Kingston University, United Kingdom
Prof Bert Olivier	Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, South Africa
Dr Frikkie Potgieter	University of South Africa, South Africa
Dr Annette Pritchard	University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, United Kingdom
Prof Elizabeth Rankin	University of Auckland, New Zealand
Prof Colin Richards	University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa
Ms Robyn Sassen	Independent art historian, South Africa
Mr Arnold Shepperson	University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
Prof Bridget Theron	University of South Africa, South Africa
Prof Dirk van den Berg	University of the Free State, South Africa
Dr Liese van der Watt	University of Cape Town, South Africa
Dr Bernadette van Haute	University of South Africa, South Africa
Ms Stella Viljoen	University of Pretoria, South Africa
Ms Karen von Veh	Witwatersrand University of Technology, South Africa
Ms Carine Zaayman	University of Cape Town, South Africa

SESSION: TRAUMA, PAIN AND IDENTITY

PAPER TITLE: SITE: MANIFESTATIONS OF MEMORY AND TRAUMA
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This paper will examine the importance of site in terms of memory and trauma with specific reference to the District Six Public Sculpture Project (Heritage Day, 24 September 1997, District Six) (DSPSP), as well as the site[1] of the presentation of this conference paper. The DSPSP took place within a transitional period of South African history, following soon after the historic 1994 elections. It clearly marks its historical reference to the forced removals in District Six (1968-1981), which marked or reflected on socio-political change on Heritage Day. The current relevance of the DSPSP is that land restitution is presently taking place on the scarred landscape, on which the temporary interactive exhibition was displayed. The paper will focus on selected artworks from the exhibition in which artists worked with the site's past and memories to memorialise and work through trauma.

I would also like to briefly push the idea of trauma and memory further with regard to the site of the presentation of this paper in terms of reworking the past in terms of art restitution and the van Tilburg Art Collection, housed in this particular site. I will also discuss a personal association. I will address this in the second part of the paper.

This paper will now focus on the setting of the DSPSP exhibition, which forms an integral part of the individual artwork's meaning. District Six was named the Sixth Municipal district of Cape Town in 1867. The area was inhabited by a diverse multi-cultural, working-class mixed racial community, urbanised from the early- to mid- 1800s. On 11 February 1966, the apartheid government declared the area a whites-only area under the Group Areas Act of 1950 under which South Africa was divided into separate territories designated for occupation by distinct racial groups. At the time, District Six was considered by the apartheid Government to be a slum and the estimated 33 500 residents were officially given one year to relocate to Cape Town's periphery. The actual number of residents was probably closer to about 50 000 - 60 000.[2] In 1968, the government moved in to demolish homes and thousands of people were removed from the area as part of the implementation of a policy of forced removals. Homes were still being bulldozed until 1981, fifteen years after the area was declared for whites only. The name 'District Six', therefore, came to signify the senselessness of apartheid's Group Areas Act and it was in response to the memory of this pain that the DSPSP invited participation in creating artworks directly on the landscape, just before District Six was scheduled for resettlement. Participators were invited to pay tribute to the previous residents and to mark the land with their

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[1] This paper was presented at a conference titled, "Visual Culture/Explorations" held at the University of Pretoria, 9-10 July 2004. The exact location on campus is the Old Arts Building, which houses the van Tilburg Art Collection.
[2] These figures are given by institutions such as the District Six Museum and the District Six Beneficiary Trust (http://www.d6bentrust.org.za/).

artworks, which would function as temporary memorials. The DSPSP was as part of a broader event, namely the District Six Festival[3] held on Heritage Day (24 September 1997). The day was chosen to establish District Six as a heritage site, which would remind the public of the injustice and damage caused by the forced removals perpetrated by apartheid officials in this area, and to reclaim the space for those who had been removed.

Over a period of nine months, five public meetings were called by the organisers all of who are artists, Kevin Brand (who was born in District Six), Dorothee Kreutzfeldt and Renate Meyer. Some artists were invited, but the project remained open to participation from previous District Six residents, lesser-known artists and any interested parties who wished to contribute[4]. Partnerships between ex residents and artists were encouraged.

Sixty-two artworks were eventually created by individual artists and groups or collaborations. Artists had inevitably to position their identity critically within historical material that dealt with social and political aspects of a specific site's past. Social and political aspects of South Africa's historical past are inextricably linked to the site; and artworks made in response to the site can be shown to be so 'constructed' as to incorporate such significations into the reading of the artwork. In this sense artists

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[3] The District Six Festival, which was to serve as an opening event, was planned as an open day for the general public with performance art, food stalls, a march, stilt walkers, choirs, graffiti artists, musicians and other events, and thus aimed at a very wide public audience.

[4] Questions of representation are raised here with regard to artists who were not ex residents being included in such a project. The Project was open to anyone who wished to commemorate District Six and pay homage to its ex residents. Interaction between artists and ex residents was encouraged. It is important to remember that District Six is the most well-known and romanticised site with regard to forced removals and different approaches may increase understanding of different cultural backgrounds of the people involved. However it still does raise questions of the authority of representing the other. Thus collaboration was encouraged and interaction from visitors who could have been ex residents i.e. Brett Murray's "Memory" work in which viewers were invited to "Mark a place on District Six that brings back memories" (Soudien, Meyer 1998:38). However this debate of representation continues…

Such an all-inclusive approach to curating presents a very different organisational procedure from more mainstream curating. The project that evolved into the DSPSP through interaction between the steering committee, the co-ordinating team, artists and former residents of the area, served to bring together a large range of artists, with varying educational training, visual literacy, life experiences and backgrounds. The District Six Museum, the District Six Civic Association, the District Six Restitution Committee, the Department of Art, Culture, Science and Technology, the Cape Town City Council, the National Monuments Council, the South African National Gallery, the Association for Visual Arts and the District Six Development Forum were all represented by individuals on the steering committee. The Urban Art Foundation and Robben Island Museum also participated. The organisers also saw themselves more as facilitators than curators and were involved in organising sponsorship, drawing up budgets and carrying out general administration of the project. Sponsorship was received from the District Six Museum, Ford Foundation, Baltic Timbers, Real Steel, Kohler Cores and Tubes, Nampak Corrugated, PPC Cement, Ready Mix, Vadek Paint, Constantia Paint, Graphic Workshop, Creda Press, Sappi Fine Papers, Besto Bel, Newlands Parks and Forests, Profile Engineering, All Glass, Vanstone, Cerebos Salt, Altitude Scaffolding, Association for the Visual Arts, South African National Gallery, Miller, Gruss, Katz and Traub, Cape Town City Council, Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, Safmarine and the German consulate. Artists who participated included: Alvin Schroeder, Andrew Porter, Arlene Amaler-Raviv, Beezy Bailey, Belinda Clark, Belinda van der Merwe, Black Fist Art Movement, Brett Murray, Bridget Baker, Carl Collingson, Clare Menck, Clemintina can der Walt, Clive van den Berg, David de Leeuw, David Solomon, Debby West, Denise Penfold, Dominique Espatelier-Noel, Donovan Ward, Dorthee Kreutzfeldt, Ena Carstens, Eve van Zyl, Gabriella Kaplan, Garth Erasmus, Gary Frier, Graeme Germond, Gregg Smith, Heel Arts Collective Dance Group, Hannele Maree-Smit, Hilmore Hotz, Hofmeyr Scholtz, Humzah Goolam, James Mader, Jo O'Connor, Johann Louw, Jos Thorne, Karen Press, Kevin Brand, Leon Vermeulen, Lien Botha, Lize Hugo, Lizza Littlewort, Margaret Chetwin, Martin Bacchus, Melanie Sutton-Wallace, Mustafa Maluka, Nadja Daehnke, Nazley Jafta, Nicholas Lehman, Nicola Jackson, Nicolaas Vergunst, Paulette Lamoral, Petra Mason, Pienaar van Niekerk, Randolph Hartzenberg, Raymond Smith, Renate Meyer, Roderick Sauls, Roger van Wyk, Simon Dunkley, Stellenbosch Paper Project, Strijdom van der Merwe, Sue Tatham-van Niekerk, Sue Williamson, Susan O'Grady, Thami Kiti, Tisa van der Hoorn, Veronika de Greef-Gabrielse, Victor Petersen, Warrick Sony and William Hewett.

could be seen to be using site-specificity[5] as a means to critique, evaluate and interpret the significations of the site. Artworks made in response to a specifically South African site enable viewers to 'deconstruct' the ideological interests underlying South Africa's political past, often through recourse to memory and a form of memorialisation.

The various artists' responses to the sites are all elements of a broad network of communication related to self and society in South Africa today. But artists and curators also attempted to bring fragments of memory and trauma, peculiar to the chosen site, to the fore through the exhibition to allow for commemoration. The landscape of District Six, an area that so visibly bore the brunt of the invasive policies of the political past, was inevitably treated almost as holy ground and approached with a sense of nostalgia, which will be addressed later in the paper. In a Bush radio interview (30 April 1997) Kevin Brand, one of the project organisers, explained that the project is about "issues and sympathies of the pain of the past … as a requiem to District Six".

In this way the artists' individual identities and motivations in relation to selected sites would inform the different creative processes and specific memories (personal and collective) which they desired or served in their reinhabitation or re colonisation of this space.

Andre Brink, Professor of English at the University of Cape Town, discusses local South African contemporary trends for defining history. He identifies a new historical trend/approach as being archaeological, using memory (described as unreliable, selective[6] and suppressive) as a tool to excavate the past. Furthermore he discusses the way in which historians cannot merely subvert past narratives by supplementing them with previously marginalised accounts of the past. These multiple versions will give a clearer picture of the past (from both Eurocentric and Afrocentric perspectives) than previously prescribed South African historical processes. Yet Brink also acknowledges the difficulty of retrieving or accessing fact:

> something may in fact have happened, but that we can never be sure of it or
> gain access to it, and that the best we can do is to fabricate metaphors - that is,
> tell stories - in which, not history, but imaginings of history are invented (Brink

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[5] The DSPSP exemplifies the significance of site specificity in local artmaking, particularly as it links to concerns of memory. The setting becomes integral to the reading and making of the artwork:

> 'Site-specific' is a term used to describe individual art projects where the location of the work is an integral component of its meaning. Since the eighties, 'site-specific' also has been applied to exhibitions including a number of artists whose works preference or are inspired by the site where they are shown. Preferred venues include buildings not associated with art or locations out of doors. With both individual projects and exhibitions, site-specificity connotes the inseparability of location in relation to significance (Greenberg 1996:364).

[6] This selectivity and conflict between history and memory is illustrated in an example by Rushdie: The narrator knows that it 'is the true desire of every artist to impose his or her vision of the world' (87). He goes on further to ponder this similarity of impulse between historical and fictional writing:

> 'I, too, face the problem of history: what to retain, what to dump, how to hold on to what memory insists on relinquishing, how to deal with change' (87-8). What he knows complicates his narrative task in that he is dealing with a past 'that refuses to be suppressed, that is daily doing battle with the present' (Rushdie 1983:88 in Hutcheon 1989:72).

1998:42).

In this sense, every act of memory may be understood as an act of selection and forgetting. Artists must deal with these complexities, compounded by their personal and collective pasts passed on through collective memory, which eventually becomes formalised into the continuous, unitary, closed master narrative[7] of history.

For the DSPSP, the archives[8] housed at the District Six Museum[9] served as a resource, together with close interaction and participation of some former residents of the area. Individual artists also drew on their own memories and identity, constructed by the personal and collective past. Such works dealing with memory in the form of temporary memorials may be seen to sanctify the past and act as *'aide - memoire'*. They conform to the idea of a 'counter-monument', a temporary and accessible form of public art, which sometimes invites spectator participation, produced in response to a particular historical moment as opposed to the more traditional, permanent forms of didactic sculpture, of which there is a long-standing history in South Africa.

The artworks and exhibition can also act as an agency for healing processes and commemoration. Working through trauma from the past is a requirement for meaningful memorialisation, as Ernst van Alphen, Director of Communication and Education at the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen in Rotterdam, points out:

> a trauma arises when an event cannot be worked through, understood within the
> frames of reference provided by the symbolic order. When an event makes "no
> sense" in terms of the culturally provided meaningful frames, it cannot be
> experienced or memorialised. This lack of a reference frame, which would allow
> a certain amount of distance from the event, can only lead to a repetition of the
> event in its full immediate directness. This repetition or return of the event has

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[7] Hutcheon links the political and constructed nature of narrative and representation as follows:
> We *can* try to avoid fixing our notion [of representation] and assuming it to be transhistorical
> and transcultural. We can also study how representation legitimises and privileges certain
> kinds of knowledge - including certain kinds of historical knowledge … our access through
> narrative to the world of experience - past or present - is always mediated by the powers and
> limits of our representations of it (Hutcheon 1989:54).
Historical narratives are re-representations of the past. The narratives used as sources of the past for the artists have agendas and function within a context that is historical, social, intertextual and political, as do their artworks and the exhibitions.
[8] The past is only known to us through textualised traces: documents, archives, photographs, films, literature, paintings, architecture, artifacts, oral tradition and so on, which are indirect, interpreted and complex in the present. Through its construction history becomes a complex intertextual cross-referential discourse. The artists worked with these textualised and constructed representations or traces, both formal and personal, as well as personal and collective memories. All these sources act as proof that something happened, yet we can never be exactly sure of what actually happened. These sources acted as reference material for the artists who grappled with their personal fragments and actualities, to re-represent the past as personal metaphors.
[9] The District Six Museum is a community museum that commemorates the area, and honours those that fought against any forced removals and the Group Areas Act. It was envisaged by ex-residents of the area in 1989, and opened on 10 December 1994. It moved to the Moravian (Keizersgracht Street) on the site of District Six in 1999, after the church was restored. The museum archives hold historical material in the form of newspaper articles from the 1940's to the present, photographs dating back to the turn of the century, paintings, prints, street signs, architectural vignettes, artifacts, recorded interviews with ex residents and official documentation regarding the region. The archives and museum collection are still growing.

nothing to do with memory; the very possibility of memory implies distance from
the event. On the contrary memory means indirectness (van Alphen 1997:163).

'Indirectness' implies a distancing of the self, or coming to terms with the event or trauma. The artists and curators can be seen to work 'indirectly' with the past within new frameworks. This implies that the trauma has already been worked through by the individual into collective memories and personal identity, through the agency of a text[10]. The individual artworks, exhibition and the broader framework of the festival serve as new texts.

The significance of the exhibition clearly lies in the fact that it took place after the first democratically held elections in South Africa of 1994. In a country where 'non-whites'' movements, living areas and land ownership were previously controlled by various apartheid laws, space and land have become highly politicised and controlled. These laws have also impacted on attitudes towards space in the arena of art. As Jennifer Law, a social anthropologist explains:

> Artists are dealing with change and new found freedom, I think that that is one of
> the reasons that installation art is popular at the moment. It is partially about
> asserting their right, their freedom to exhibit, outside of traditional spaces.
> Looking at the state of the country itself where space has been incredibly
> historically politicised and people have been confined into boundaries, these
> boundaries are now being challenged (Law interview 1996).[11]

District Six, in modernist terms, is a non-traditional and unconventional space for exhibiting art that presents a form of public commemorative art as temporary installation, rather than the conventional permanent monument associated with public commemorative sculpture. Artists were literally able to reclaim the landscape by 'reinhabiting' it through their artworks. It allowed for a symbolic reclamation of what apartheid law had taken away from its residents. Former residents who participated in the DSPSP exercised their previously denied rights by reoccupying the abandoned landscape and physically marking their presence. These participants also left their mark in the public space for other people to interact with; to remember the evicted residents, their present, future and their past.

Several of the artists' comments and artworks reflect ideas on the construction of identity within the past restrictive South African context and do so through links with the body as implicated in the chosen sites.

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[10] Casey supports van Alphen's comment on 'indirectness' in the following quote:
> commemoration is a mediated process, usually *through* the interposed agency of a text …
> and *in* the setting of a social ritual … only in the presence of others, *with* whom we
> commemorate together in a public ceremony (1987:218).

Casey refers to *commemorabilia* when referring to the vehicles such as rituals or texts or in the case of the exhibition, the artworks and public or communal DSPSP festival (1987:218). He continues by pointing out that the "past is made accessible … in the *commemorabilium* itself ... [however] distan[t] and anonym[ous]" the people and the event may be (1987:218). This would make the memories of District Six accessible to the artists, curators, residents and viewers of the exhibitions.

[11] "[B]odies and identities have, under apartheid, been spatially described. To comment upon the land is almost inevitably to comment upon the body" (Taylor 1996:82). In this statement Taylor echoes Law's comment about the new-found freedom of exhibiting outside of traditional spaces but extends the idea further in drawing parallels between land and body. In South Africa, where the movements of bodies have been so rigorously controlled by regulatory laws such as the Group Areas Act, such suffocating forces and constraints have impacted on and restricted the lives of large sections of the population.

Artists who were born in the area such as Kevin Brand and Roderick Sauls were forced to vacate the space worked with personal memories in their reclamation of the area. Kevin Brand represents the loss of what was once at Kaizersgracht Street by reconstructing "The Seven Steps" (3 x 4 x 5 m), a cardboard sculpture, commenting on temporariness and reflecting "that there was pain here before" (Bush Radio broadcast, 1997).

In his article, "To Remember and Forget: Archives, Memory, and Culture", Kenneth E. Foote, associate professor of Geography at the University of Texas, discusses landscape in terms of trauma, healing and public responses to space. He refers to particular sites of disasters and persecution (which include the gallows of Salem, Auschwitz, the Boston massacre site and the homes of serial murderers).[12] His insights are relevant particularly in the context of interventions in landscape. He identifies four ways in which landscape may be seen to signify and memorialise the past:

> sanctification, designation, rectification, or effacement … sanctification entails construction of a memorial - perhaps a building, monument, or park - and ritual dedication of a site to the memory of an event, martyr, great individual, or group of victims. Designation revolves around the marking of an exceptional event without the religious overtones borne of sanctification. Rectification occurs, generally after accidental tragedy, when a place or building is "put right" and reused … [E]ffacement occurs both actively and passively after particularly shameful events and involves obliteration of the evidence of violence (Foote 1990:388).

Rectification[13] has only recently occurred on the landscape of District Six, in terms of the reinhabitation of the land as part of land redistribution for ex-residents.[14] One may question how meaningful this rectification is. In terms of the DSPSP the temporary rectification was more meaningful in their reclamation of the space for ex- residents. The implementation of the plans for rectification and restitution include monetary compensation, alternative land, and access to government- subsidised housing and alternative relief from one's current residence. Artists engaged in the DSPSP were aware

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[12] He also discusses the construction of collective memory and agendas of nation-building through the construction of archives in relation to specific cases of violence, tragedies and massacres.

[13] Rectification within the South African context, according to Foote's usage, has been formalized in

> "In 1994, the Parliament of South Africa passed the Restitution of Land Rights Act (No. 22), which gave those persons dispossessed by past racial laws and practices between 19 June 1913 to the present the right to restitution if they were forcibly removed from their original properties. Approximately 2 500 ex-residents and landowners have submitted land restitution claims to the Commission on Restitution of Land Rights.

> The Act allowed for four types of restitution: (1) restoration of land, (2) alternative land, (3) payment of compensation, (4) alternative relief from one's current residence, and (5) priority access to state resources, such as government-subsidised housing.

> Although the Constitution of South Africa provides for restitution or "equitable redress", it was not until the enactment of the Restitution of Land Rights Act that the victims of forced removals could be given the legal recourse to reclaim land that was and is rightfully theirs."
> http://www.d6bentrust.org.za/aboutus/history.htm

[14] The Truth Commission and land restitution (see preamble to the Restitution of Land Rights Act No. 22 of 1994 [Butterworths Statutes of South Africa 1998, vol. 4, part 23/138]) and the preamble to the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act no. 34 of 1995 (Butterworths Statutes of South Africa 1998, vol. 6, Part 32:298-299) are some of the mechanisms which are being used by the nation in an attempt to heal itself after the trauma of apartheid.
The first phase of redevelopment has started and 9 homes out of 24 from the current phase have been built. Eight families have moved in (Terence Fredericks, District Six Restitution Committee, email correspondence 14 June 2004).

that their works of sanctification needed to be temporary interventions as they would have to make way for housing projects. The temporariness also metaphorised the changes that the site had seen and would still see, however. The works could serve as intermediate statements, paying tribute to the victims of a painful past.

District Six had been left virtually untouched and undeveloped since the last forced removals in the early 1980s. With the exception that the apartheid Government built the Cape Technikon, a technical college for skills- based training, in an attempt to attract new people to settle there. The idea of redeveloping such a sensitive site, especially for governmental buildings, was met with contempt by Cape Town citizens and did not succeed in encouraging citizens to move back to the area. As Foote suggests, a landscape may remain unused following effacement, with people being reluctant to reinhabit the space due to the shame, stigma and pain associated with it.[15]

> In some cases, the sense of shame and stigma is so great that a place, once effaced, will remain isolated and unused indefinitely, never to be reincorporated into the activities of daily life. Perhaps the 'silence' of these sites actually does 'speak' to the senselessness of the violence as eloquently as any monument would. In the end, all these cases show how social pressures shape landscape into an acceptable representation of the past. The disposition of the tragedy sites comes to mirror society's view of its own motives and aspirations (Foote 1990:391).[16]

The emptiness of District Six was evidence to a history of forced removals. It denotes acts of effacement. There is an irrefutable pathos in the emptiness as a message from the past. In a sense the temporariness of the artworks pays respect to this emptiness through the transient inhabitation of the space. Andrew Porter's "Untitled" installation (800 x 400 x 150 m) and Randolph Hartzenberg's "Salt Tower" (1,2 x 1,1 x 1,8 m), salt encased church bell that negated sound underscored this respect for emptiness and isolation. Porter excavated a demarcated section of land to resemble an archaeological pit or 'grave'. Viewers were encouraged to complete the artwork by filling it once again with the earth and 'relics', which the artist had unearthed from that particular site. The installation interacts temporarily with the District Six landscape and attempts to restore it to its prior silent, revered and 'sanctified' state, reinforcing the observation by Foote that such 'silence' does actually 'speak'. Porter's work in this sense is a good example of what may be termed a 'counter-monument'.

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[15] These sites will continue to hold the powerful symbolism which they are associated with forever, as Singer proposes in her unpublished 1999 paper:
> It is as if the memory of the person, or historical event is embedded in the landscape, that it somehow can't be erased no matter how much the landscape changes (Merryn Singer 1999: chapter 6:4).

[16] Neville Dubow endorses this point when referring to the space as the "salted" earth of District Six in the following quotation:
> An expression of collective will on the part of most Cape Town citizens: the ground was to be treated as salted earth - no one was to build there … For a while this seemed to be amazingly successful, so much so that the government was forced to use the technikon as the thin edge of the wedge … As a monument to ... intransigence (Dubow: www.districtsix.co.za/archte.htm).

In his book, *Sculpture Since 1945*, Andrew Causey discusses the idea of the counter-monument as it relates to art in a public environment.[17] He discusses the counter-monument as being:

> in the public domain and [invoking] public participation, but resist[ing] monumentality because it does not put itself outside time. Temporality is at the core of the issue. A monument is transcendent, claiming for a society that its ideals and achievements have value for following generations. There are elements of this in the counter-monument, which reaches beyond what is purely of today, but does so in a form that keeps today as well as the past in mind (1998:221).

Porter's work is temporary and brings this to bear on the viewer's participation in restoring the site to its former state. Through ritual interaction described earlier by Foote as designation, the past is laid to rest, not unlike a funerary ritual and sanctifies the past of the site. As an act of restitution, the work could become particularly meaningful to the prior residents and their families who were able to participate. Porter also placed artifacts, which he had found buried in the earth, at the bottom of the pit to be buried once more, thus extending the grave analogy and symbolising the respect in the gesture of returning something to its origin. By using the earth of the landscape as his medium, Porter literally excavated the specific past in the present and, through this action, memorialised and worked it through into the present to serve as a reminder for the future. Thus the work enacts the recognition that it is conditioned by the present. Porter's work can be seen to affirm "commemoration's presence as an insistent demand occasioning the response of vigilance and the vigilance of response (memory's active construal)" (Benjamin 1994:64). He also left a book on a pedestal at the edge of the pit, in which viewers could sign or comment on the project for the duration of the opening festivities. The book was later donated to the District Six Museum as a record and reminder of the event (Porter 1997: unedited videos).

As the viewers filled the grave and left their comments in the book, the artwork was completed as a performative ritual with a sense of closure. This interaction makes the artwork and process more accessible and relevant to the viewer, who experiences and enacts an event in which knowing and remembering combine in the commemorative act. James Young, in his book *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* explains this aspect as follows:

> In this exchange between artist, art object, and viewer, the sense of a single authority, a single signatory, dissolves altogether: that the work was never really self-possessing and autonomous is now made palpable to the viewer ... it passively accommodates all memory and response (Young 1993:33).

Without the interaction of the viewer the artwork would not be complete. By incorporating the viewer into the process, Porter ritualises and commemorates the past communally. Porter clearly challenges

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[17] Causey looks closely at the idea of art being taken into the public space. Causey does not examine public art from the aspect that public monumental sculpture usually serves a didactic, politically idealised agenda, but rather from the angle that it may be more accessible to the public within a public space. The context may denote accessibility, but here one must be aware of the level of accessibility of the art and the decoding tools of the potential target audience. I feel that the level of accessibility has to be considered in the South African environment, where art interest and education are extremely limited and unsupported.

the idea of permanence through the act of excavating and laying to rest, and through its audience participation it ritualises a moment in history by way of signifying through action rather than in the form of a permanent monument.[18]

The temporality of memory and its scarification are evident in Clive van den Berg's untitled fire drawings (30 x 10m) ignited at sunset on the day of the festival on the landscape. Van den Berg drew two flickering heads facing each other divided by a line or suitcase. Further memories of a mosque, house, church and a voters cross are enflamed onto the landscape. Described as a pyrophiliac in a recent Business Day article, van den Berg elaborates on his choice of materials, "It looks nice… the other thing I like about fire is that it's there, and it's not there. I'm attracted to its fugitive qualities. If you are trying to find a way to use art to speak about memory, it's perfect" (cited by Gus Silber, "Curator with a taste of fire gears up to assess entries" *Business Day*, June 2004:10).

The space of District Six is inevitably encountered with a sense of nostalgia and romanticisation. As Richard Rive states:

> Of course, we all knew that it was a slum. None of us who grew up there would deny that. It was a ripe, raw and rotten slum. It was drab, dingy, squalid and overcrowded … Before we were forced to go, those who could moved out for reasons of upward social mobility … Those who remained were by and large those who were unable to go … But a slum is never romantic especially for those forced to live in it … Today time has sufficiently romanticised and mythologised the District's past. It is now a mark of social prestige to have "come out of that" (Rive 1990:110).

As is clear from Rive's comment, people do have selective frames of reference to the past and, given the ethical importance of the events of the District Six removals, the treatment of subject matter related to it demands reverence and even a form of veneration. Leo Bersani supports this idea in his comment that the "troubles of memory and the heart's intermissions bring a kind of interpretive closure *now* to … memory" (1985:402). One's memory frames the past in a selective way, which suits the individual state of mind at the time. There are nostalgic ideals of the past of the area built up in the collective memory as the area has been given legendary status that was acquired via accounts and experiences. Annie Coombes supports this in that "so often nostalgia is used as a way of editing out difficult histories and complicated relations" (cited by Johnson, 2004 http://www.artthrob.co.za/04oct/news/coombes.html). However, a romanticised version of this past continuously represents District Six as a unified multicultural community, as Rive points out:

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[18] Maksymowicz suggests another important aspect of impermanence of such public art, in that it "throws open the interaction between artist, audience, and artwork. Unhappy viewers tend to be less unhappy about an image they consider disturbing if they know it will eventually go away" (Mitchell 1992:156). In the case of Porter's work, the so-called unhappy viewer could either turn a blind eye or help in restoring the site to its former state by filling the excavated area with earth. In this way Porter's work supports Young's summary of a counter-monument "as a valuable 'counterindex' to the ways time, memory, and current history intersect at any memorial site" (1993:30).
With the passage of time the works were silently incorporated into the layers of history of the space, just like the rubble and memories of its past inhabitants. In their temporary inhabitation of the space these artworks are themselves analogous to memories. The work acts as an '*aide-memoire*'.

> Within its boundaries, it practised no form of religious or colour discrimination …
> It practised no class discrimination, since almost everyone there was working
> class (Rive 1990:112).

Perhaps this is the District Six that its ex-residents wanted to remember and identify, sheltered internally from apartheid South Africa.[19]

In the DSPSP the work of Mustafa Maluka called "'Hollywood' - District Six" consciously pays tribute to the rich cultural heritage, as he says his work is: "A memorial to the great artists and entertainers who made District Six their stage" (DSPSP Catalogue:49). Through the use of large (2,4 x 30 m) white letters at the top of the amphitheatre, Horstley Street, Maluka clearly alludes to the famous Hollywood landmark in Los Angeles. He draws upon the associations of Hollywood as entertainment industry capital, known for its glitz and glamour, but also for its cut-throat competitive lifestyle.

The works that made up the DSPSP were left on the site until they were destroyed by the elements. As Renate Meyer comments, the artworks which were part of the DSPSP were:

> vandalised, metal was taken to be resold, precast walling, corrugated iron and
> bricks were removed (possibly to build informal settlements) and some
> installations were broken. The process was interesting as it showed how
> differently sculpture could relate to the everyday world; it allowed the public to
> reuse the material as they saw fit ... But it also allowed the public to mark its
> own presence (as in the case of works having graffiti placed on them or bashed
> down). Some artists expressed the view that to have their work destroyed was
> not a new concept considering the history of the District Six landscape, where
> so many people's lives and homes were destroyed (Meyer, DSPSP Catalogue
> 1998:1).

Meyer's point about the destruction of the artworks recalling the destruction that District Six had seen as a result of the forced removals again reveals the signification of site even beyond the event itself. The dematerialisation or disintegration of the site-specific artworks expresses vulnerability and precariousness. The assault of demolition of the artworks may thus be read as symbolic of the destruction of the past.

In pushing the idea of site further in terms of memory and trauma, I would like to briefly discuss the van Tilburg Art collection based on the Pretoria University's campus, where I am presenting this paper today. This collection raises issues of art restitution, which is formalised in most South African art gallery collecting policies, mainly focusing on the restitution of traditional cultural heritage to be returned to South Africa. I feel that art restitution demonstrates a practical engagement with memory and trauma,

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[19]This past represented through visual and literary works such as those of Gerard Sekoto, Gregoire Boonzaaier, Kenneth Baker, John Dronsfield, *Drum* magazine, *William Street District Six*, *Sala Kahle District Six* and David Kramer and Taliep Pietersen's *District Six: The Musical*, and later David Kramer's *Kats and Kings*, adds to the layers of nostalgia of an irretrievable past.

involving a reworking of the past with the intention of 'putting it right'- much in line with Foote's comment on recitification as discussed previously.

In 1999 I was contracted to document and research the van Tilburg collection housed in this building. The Commission for Art Recovery of the World Jewish Congress, based in New York, in particular requested documentation of the collection to reconcile with their information. My research into this collection took a very personal turn when I found links to my family name.

Mr. Jacob van Tilburg was born on the 13 September 1888 in Zouterwoude, the Netherlands. After his studies in Zouterwoude he moved to Dordrecht where in 1927, he became a Dordrecht City Council member for the Calvinist Christian Historic Union. In 1939, shortly before the Nazi invasion, he was appointed as alderman, a position he held until 1945. There is much controversy surrounding van Tilburg's past; I encountered many different versions and therefore have to allow for discrepancies. Van Tilburg accumulated a large, eclectic collection of artworks during his stay in Dordrecht, raising suspicion regarding the circumstances under which the substantial collection was acquired. Van Tilburg has been accused by many sources of acquiring his collection under unjust circumstances. In defence of van Tilburg, some say that he accumulated the works in cheap job lots from museums in the East that were closing down. The accusations include: looting Jewish homes once the families were taken to concentration camps; keeping artworks, businesses, shares, homes and valuables entrusted to him while Jewish families were dispersed or killed during the Second World War; and buying the goods at unfairly low prices from desperate sellers. I have copies of letters written to the Mayor of Dordrecht in 1945, complaining about van Tilburg's untrustworthiness in not returning the goods to the claiming families. van Tilburg was tried by the Commission of Conciliation and Control at Dordrecht in 1945. Subsequently he was removed from his position of power. He was also tried for Nazi collaboration in a post-war tribunal, and was also in trouble with the Dutch tax authorities.

In 1951, van Tilburg immigrated to South Africa with 91 containers of 'household goods'. The controversy in Dordrecht followed van Tilburg to South Africa. In 1977 more accusations and investigations were made by war crime investigation organisations, which were greatly publicised in the local press as well as the Dutch press. Van Tilburg died in 1980, leaving the collection to the University of Pretoria. The University had already started accessioning the collection before his death. There were appeals from the Jewish Community of Holland for the remnants of the collection to be returned to the community. Rabbi Soetendorp from Holland lodged and headed these complaints. Pretoria University negated the claims and stated that the collection was accepted in good faith, and if it could be undisputably proved that any part of the collection belonged to someone other than van Tilburg, then the works would be returned to their rightful owners.

It seems that van Tilburg attempted to obliterate a part of a traumatic history, yet collected valuable objects, which acted as proof to this past. In my investigation into van Tilburg, I received articles from

the Dordrecht archives. Upon reading these articles, an initially strong association with a collective traumatic memory became even more personal.

At this point I must briefly introduce a pertinent personal anecdote. Prior to this research, during a backpacking vacation in Europe I paid a visit to the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam. Together with the very moving displays in this museum, I encountered a book entitled *In Memorium*, which memorialises all the Jews who died in Holland during the Second World War. On investigation I discovered a couple of entries with my family name. One name in particular could be linked directly to my research:

> Engelberg, Natan.   31-12-1880   Jasin   9-4-1943   Sobibor
> (Solu Uitgeverij Koninginnegracht, Den Haag 1995:194).

Among the accusations translated from the Dutch Dordrecht archival material I found the following:

> In the concentration camp, Sobibor, Nathan Engelberg told fellow prisoners that
> he was betrayed to the Nazis by van Tilburg (Vrij Nederland 11 April 1998).

While my family is unaware of any links, I do feel that Nathan Engelberg may be a relation. Several members of both my maternal and paternal grandparent's family died in Eastern Europe during the Holocaust. Many family links were lost and therefore it is not surprising that no links have been established between any of the databases and that of the van Tilburg collection.

My research into the van Tilburg collection tied up with my interest in 'trauma and memory' and especially the site of this conference. Even though we cannot be sure of what happened as there is no conclusive proof, it raises many questions and few solutions. My familial fragment linked to my identity and a traumatic collective memory introduced during my research into the past allowed for a specific personal association within a collective consciousness.

In the DSPSP and van Tilburg Art Collection the intersection of memory and trauma with location becomes evident where site becomes integral to the reflected meaning of these specific pasts. In terms of van Tilburg, someone like Rabbi Soetendorp would argue for restitution to rework this past, with the intention of 'putting it right'. In terms of the DSPSP, site is synonymous with memory and trauma, which is integral to the meaning of the artworks. These counter monuments memorialise and rework the past to enable a working through of trauma and commemoration.

SESSION: TRAUMA, PAIN AND IDENTITY

PAPER TITLE: *THE VOLKSEMPFÄNGERS* (1975–1977) BY EDWARD KIENHOLZ AND

NANCY REDDIN KIENHOLZ: REWORKING MYTH AND HISTORY

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In 1973 American artist Edward Kienholz (1927–1994) and his wife and artistic partner since 1972, Nancy Reddin Kienholz (b. 1943), moved to Berlin to take up a year's grant offered by the Artist-in-Residence programme of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). For the next twenty-two years, the Kienholzes divided their time between the United States and Germany, spending six months in Berlin and six months in Hope, Idaho. While in Berlin between 1975 and 1977 they made nineteen mixed media assemblages known collectively as *The Volksempfängers*.[1]

The Kienholzes' initial project in Berlin in 1973 was *The Art Show* (1963–1977), an installation of nineteen figures (all cast from life using friends, family, collectors, critics and fellow artists as models) arranged as gallery-goers at an art show opening in a mock-gallery setting.[2] Based on Kienholz's concept tableau of the same name,[3] this parodic satire of the art world and pretentious art-speak eventually took five years to complete, primarily, Reddin Kienholz notes, because they 'discovered' Berlin's flea markets. As Kienholz states, these flea markets offered not simply a source of artistic material but perspectives on social history: "I really begin to understand any society by going through its junk stores and flea markets. It is a form of education and historical orientation for me. I can see the

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This paper is part of on-going research on the *Volksempfängers* series and presents a first exploration of ideas that I hope to refine and develop further.

[1] In the catalogue for their 1981 show *The Kienholz Women* (Galerie Maeght, Zurich) Kienholz retroactively acknowledged Reddin Kienholz as co-author of all works since 1972. The *Volksempfängers* catalogue, *Edward Kienholz: Volksempfängers* (Berlin: Nationalgalerie, 1977), predates his declaration and thus speaks of Kienholz as the sole creator of these works. I treat these works as collaborative pieces, following Kienholz's assertion of their full artistic partnership.

[2] The models for the figures included among others, Pontus Hultén, Jürgen Harten, Jenny and Noah Kienholz, Marijke Cronjin, Eduardo Paolozzi, Edie Rickey, Yoshi Ida and Karl Ruhrberg (of the DAAD). Each model was asked to bring and record an example (in any language) of what Kienholz called, "art world twaddle". In place of faces, the figures have air-conditioning vents that, at the press of a button, play the recording and blow hot air, thus equating the two. Edward Kienholz and Nancy Reddin Kienholz, *The Art Show 1963–1977: Edward Kienholz*. Berlin: Berliner Kunstlerprogramm/DAAD, 1977 (unpaginated).

[3] Kienholz's concept tableaux developed as a practical solution to the costly and time-consuming process of making large-scale installations, many of which required storage space as well. A concept tableau consists of a typed description of an idea for art work, signed with the artist's thumbprint and framed in a walnut frame. An engraved brass plaque (mounted on a walnut base) with the title of the work, the artist's surname and the date accompanies the description. The concept tableau functions in effect as a contract and sets out a three-part price breakdown that covers the initial purchase of the concept, an additional fee should the buyer want to turn idea into actuality and a final payment for materials and the artist's labour (the latter to be worked out according to the accumulated hourly wages of a labourer in whichever skill is utilised: for example, carpenter, electrician, welder etc). Some concept tableaux such as *The Portable War Memorial* (1968), *The State Hospital* (1966) and *The Art Show* were made at Kienholz's own expense and were purchased as completed works. Rosetta Brooks, "Concept Tableaux 1963-1967" in Walter Hopps (ed.), *Kienholz: A Retrospective. Edward and Nancy Reddin Kienholz* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art in association with Thames and Hudson, 1996):110. On the relation between the meaning of the *Concept Tableau: The Portable War Memorial* and the final installation, see my "Re-presenting America: Edward Kienholz's *Portable War Memorial* (1968), Vietnam and Cold War Politics", *De Arte* 65 April 2002:22–41.

results of ideas in what is thrown away by a culture."[4] Or as Reddin Kienholz writes: "We discovered our history of Berlin through the junk at these flea markets".[5] It was with that "junk" – or more appropriately, found material already dense with social and cultural meaning – and a self-conscious desire to learn German history through its discarded objects that the *Volksempfängers* series was made.[6]

The Volksempfängers are named for the inclusion of 'Volksempfängers', uniform radio sets or literally, 'people's receivers', that were mass-produced in Germany from 1933 to 1945 by all major German electronics manufacturers (such as Siemens and Blaupunkt) under the direction of the centralised German Radio Industry. These low cost radios with square Bakelite casings and speakers covered in cheap fabric, such as in *The Cement Box* of 1975, were designed as "political instruments" for the dissemination of National Socialist propaganda.[7] In order to control access to foreign stations and prevent the free flow of information, the radios had a limited bandwidth that restricted reception to the nearest local German radio station. According to a law dated 7 September 1939,[8] illegal use of the Volksempfänger or the spreading of information gained by such use was punishable by hard labour or death.[9]

The brainchild of Josef Goebbels, Minister of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda, the Volksempfänger ensured that Adolf Hitler's message reached into the homes of all Germans. With over 70% of Germans owning one by 1939,[10] all of Germany did indeed hear the Führer with the 'Volksempfänger', as the by-line for a 1938 Volksempfänger advertisement claimed.[11] So closely were these radio sets identified with National Socialism that their casings were stamped with the eagle and the swastika as well as with VE 301, in commemoration of the 30 January 1933, the day Hitler took power. Like all Nazi propaganda devices, the Volksempfänger's role was ideological and its appeal emotional. But as Paul Mathias Padua's painting, *The Führer Speaks* (1939), suggests, the Volksempfänger also evoked the very "metaphysics of presence"[12] that bound Hitler to the nation in

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[4] Kienholz quoted in Roland H. Wiegenstein, "Ed Kienholz, the 'Volksempfängers' and the 'Ring'" trans Dieter Lange in *Edward Kienholz: Volksempfängers*:12.

[5] Reddin Kienholz, "Chronology" in *Kienholz: A Retrospective*:259.

[6] An example of this kind of burgeoning curiosity can be seen in Wiegenstein's statement that Kienholz did not immediately identify the two boxes he bought at a flea market as "the Volksempfängers of Nazi fame. He bought them because they …impressed him as being 'German'". Wiegenstein, "Ed Kienholz, the 'Volksempfängers' and the 'Ring'":12.

[7] Erika Gysling-Billeter quoted in *Edward Kienholz: Volksempfängers.* Berlin: Nationalgalerie, 1977:58.

[8] "Gesetz vom 7.September 1939" reads as follows:

"1. Das absichtliche Abhören ausländischer Sender ist verboten. Zuwiderhandlungen werden mit zuchthaus brestraft. In lechterin Fällen kann auf Gefängnis erkannt werden. Die Empfangsanlagen warden eingezogen.

2. Wer Nachrichten ausländischer Sender, die geeigent sind, die Widerstandskraft des deutschen Volkes zu gefährden, vorsätzlich verbreitet, wird mit Zuchthaus in besonders schweren Fällen mit dem Tode bestraft." Cited in *Edward Kienholz: Volksempfängers*. Berlin: Nationalgalerie Berlin, 1977:58

[9] *Edward Kienholz: Volksempfängers*. Berlin: Nationalgalerie Berlin, 1977:58; Reddin Kienholz, "Chronology" in *Kienholz: A Retrospective*:260.

[10] Geoff Layton, *Germany: The Third Reich 1933–1945*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1992:69.

[11] The text for the advertisement reads: "Ganz Deutschland hört den Führer mit dem Volksempfänger" (in *Edward Kienholz: Volksempfängers*:28).

[12] The "metaphysics of presence" is Jacques Derrida's term for the western philosophical tradition's privileging of voice as an embodiment of presence or being. Such phonocentrism posits meaning as spontaneous and "immediately present to consciousness with as little mediation as possible". Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics*. London: Routledge

what Nazi ideology would call a 'spiritual union': in the beginning was the word and the word was the Führer, the Volk and the family.

The *Volksempfängers* are unified as a series by the repeated use of objects, namely radio sets and washboards (also stamped with markings of the Third Reich), as well as through the use of music from Hitler's favourite composer and "ultimate culture hero", Richard Wagner.[13] Most of the works in this series are fitted with hidden tape recorders that play one or more excerpts from the four music dramas that make up Wagner's ultra Germanic saga, the *Ring of the Nibelung.* In each installation, the music is activated when the viewer steps on a foot switch, visible here in the foreground of *The Cement Box*. The *Volksempfängers*, Reddin Kienholz notes, are also unified by the idea of radios as German men and the washboards, German women.[14]

Thus the works in this series incorporate a range of loaded cultural and social artefacts and icons of Nazism that point to its ideological, political and gendered complex of Volk and Führer. Despite this, writers such as Willy Rotzler and more recently Rosetta Brooks have maintained that the *Volksempfängers* are neither political commentaries nor interrogations of Germany's past.[15] Instead they hold that Kienholz's profound 'sensitivity' to objects restores their integrity and humanity and consequently, frees the works of the "cynical implications" of Nazism.[16] To claim otherwise, Rotzler asserts, would be to endorse a "foreigner's inadmissible and tactless interference in German affairs", which Kienholz, a fair and decent man would just not do to the country "in which he is a guest".[17] Instead, for Rotzler and subsequently, Brooks, "German properties only happen to be used" to put across a universal human message of the dangers of mass media and the sufferings of all in war.[18]

I would argue, however, that this dehistoricizing humanism not only dilutes and distorts the material and textual politics of the works and their production and reception of meaning but its idea that war is bad for everyone equalises the experiences of ordinary Germans and Jews and makes both into victims of Nazi oppressors. In this it recalls the mechanisms of denial and repression that Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich defined in 1967 as the German "inability to mourn" – a process of forgetting

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and Kegan Paul, 1975:131. Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*. Trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, in Peggy Kamuf (ed.) *A Derrida Reader: Between the Blinds*. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991:40, 46–47.

[13] Andreas Huyssen, "Anselm Kiefer: The Terror of History, the Temptation of Myth". *October* 48 (Spring 1989):29.

[14] Reddin Kienholz, "Chronology" in *Kienholz: A Retrospective*:259.

[15] Willy Rotzler writes: "The 'Volksempfängers' are not commentaries – either serious or frivolous – on a controversial piece of German history or the German national character". Willy Rotzler, "Messages – Coded by Ed Kienholz" trans. Stanley Mason in *Edward Kienholz: Volksempfängers*:11. For Rosetta Brooks, the "works are not political commentary, but rather social, human insight into a culture at war" in *Kienholz:A Retrospective*:160. Brooks does not deny the works' historical resonance as much as unreservedly endorse a depoliticised liberal humanist view of Kienholz's and the Kienholzes' work.

[16] Jörn Merkert, "Ed Kienholz and the Language of Objects" in *Edward Kienholz: Volksempfängers*:23–24.

[17] Wiegenstein's position is similar: " Being American he does not claim the write to criticise through his work another people's history and action in a similar in which he has criticized his own country. His reaction to the Volksempfängers and the emotions they evoke will always be that of a foreigner who would call interfering bad taste. Not only that, he did not want to hurt his German friends" . Wiegenstein, "Ed Kienholz, the 'Volksempfängers' and the 'Ring'":18.

[18] Rotzler, "Messages – Coded by Ed Kienholz" in *Edward Kienholz: Volksempfängers*:11. I have been working from the English translation of these essays but await the German originals in order to double-check their accuracy of meaning and tone. Rotzler's and Wiegenstein's comments can only really be gauged after that has been done.

borne, they argued, of a widespread refusal to confront Nazism and the enormity of the Holocaust and an avoidance of the questions of complicity, collective responsibility, guilt and shame.[19] Indeed, Roland Wiegenstein wrote of the *Volksempfängers* in 1977: "We are in trouble. The material … looks only too familiar … it … bring[s] back memories".[20] But as Andreas Huyssen notes of Anselm Kiefer's taboo-breaking use of the Nazi image-world, this retrieval is not nostalgic nor restorative but complex and critical. I suggest that the *Volksempfängers* be thought of as part of that process of critical confrontation and "coming to terms with the past" (Vergangenheitsbewältigung) that the German post-war generation and politicised left had begun on various fronts in the 1960s.[21] The fact that the Kienholzes are American and experienced Nazism from the 'other side' (Kienholz was a teenager in World War Two and Reddin Kienholz, a baby) does not shut down the works' structure of meaning and affect – in effect, it might be argued that this relation creates an interpretative distance (lacking in, for example, the statements by Rotzler and Wiegenstein quoted above) that opens out the Nazi terrain not to discomfort but to an active questioning of the ideological, social and psychological strategies that seduced a nation into terror, indifference and genocide.

I propose here that *The Volksempfängers* draw on and employ National Socialism's totalising master narrative or Weltanschauung (ideological vision of the world), but do so reflexively and paradoxically, in order to deconstruct the cultural and political mythologies used to legitimate and naturalise the horror and excesses of history. I will suggest here some of the ways the works do so and will concentrate on the use of intertextual strategies such as ironic allusion, recontextualised quotation and double-edged parodies. These take on not only Nazi propaganda and aesthetics, but also the ideological shadow of Richard Wagner and the music and mythology of the *Ring of the Nibelung*. Through an analysis of selected works, I will argue for a more active construction of meaning than previously suggested – one that involves the viewer in what Huyssen perceptively called the "terror of history; the temptation of myth".[22]

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[19] Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich, *Die Unfähigkeit zu Trauen* (Germany 1967), quoted in Susan Sontag, *Under the Sign of Saturn.* New York: Noonday Press, 1989 (1972):153; see also Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986:97.

[20] Roland H Wiegenstein, ""Ed Kienholz, the 'Volksempfängers' and the 'Ring'" trans. Dieter Lange in *Edward Kienholz: Volksempfängers.* Berlin: Nationalgalerie, 1977:12.

[21] Huyssen, *After the Great Divide*:96. See also Huyssen, "Anselm Kiefer: Terror of History, the Temptation of Myth" *October* 48 (Spring 1989):30. Kiefer's controversial 1969 photographic series *Occupations* that ironically quotes and restages Nazi gestures of occupation and domination is one such example, as are the documentary plays *The Deputy* (1963) by Rolf Hochhuth and Peter Weis's *The Investigation* (1965). Weis's play dealt with the Auschwitz trial that took place in Frankfurt from 1963 to 1965 and was based on the trial transcripts published by the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung.* (See Huyssen, *After the Great Divide*:108–109 and Uli Linke, *German Bodies: Race and Representation After Hitler.* London: Routledge, 1999:66-70, who traces the complexity of the stain of the Nazi past on Germany's radical student youth movement of the late 1960s.

[22] See Huyssen's article referenced above. The relation between history and myth in Nazism is an important and vast subject on its own. I have not dealt with this interrelation in any depth here because of the constraints of this conference paper but hope at least that some of the complexity filters through in language and the analysis of works. I plan to deal with the philosophical, historical and ideological structuring of history to serve myth in more detail in a longer article on the *Volksempfängers*.

"Whoever wants to understand National Socialist Germany must know Wagner", Hitler was apparently fond of saying,[23] not least for his adulation of the composer's but also as an ego ideal and spiritual precursor. Hitler's Wagner was an artistic and social visionary, committed to the revolutionary redemption of the German nation and pure Aryan spirit through biological racism and the need for violence in order to re-imagine Germany.[24] The Nazi narrative of nation or Volk is marked by a self-conscious mythification of history in which, Hannah Arendt writes, "the movement of history is explained as one consistent process": namely, the realisation (both destined and self-willed) of a so-called 'spiritual' urge to origin and essence defined through tropes of race, blood and struggle. In this all-embracing Weltanschauung, the Jew is constructed as the archetypal other that must be excised to achieve the biological and moral regeneration of the master race: the racially supreme Nordic-Aryan civilization.[25]

For Joachim Köhler, Hitler's Wagner and his philosophy of völkisch regeneration is most clearly staged in *The Ring of the Nibelung*.[26] He argues that the *Ring* can be seen as the mission statement of National Socialism – especially in the light of Wagner's own anti-Semitic writings on art and society and the völkisch readings of these, as well as of the *Ring* and its protagonists (particularly Alberich, Mime, Siegfried and Brünhilde), by the anti-Semitic, nationalistic and ultimately pro-Nazi Wagnerians of the Bayreuth circle.[27] In the *Volksempfängers*' series, the use of Wagner's *Ring* cycle seems to encode and

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[23] Hitler quoted in William Shirer, *The Rise and Fall Of The Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany*. Great Britain: Book Club Associates, 1963 (1959):101.

[24] See Joachim Köhler, *Wagner's Hitler: the Prophet and His Disciple*. Trans. Ronald Taylor. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000 and endnote 27. Köhler's book was first published as *Wagner's Hitler: Der Prophet und sein Vollstrecker*. Germany: Karl Blessing Verlag, 1997.

[25] Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism* quoted in Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy, "The Nazi Myth" *Critical Inquiry* 16 (Winter 1990):293. Nazi ideologues such as Alfred Rosenberg (in his *Myth of the Twentieth Century*, 1930) deliberately crafted this revision (or fictionalisation) of history to be properly mythic in both its origin and effect. Robert Cecil describes Rosenberg's *Myth* (especially its first section on the prehistory or mystical origins of the Aryan race and blood hygiene) as a "mad Valkyrie ride through the pages of history". As Cecil notes, for Rosenberg, 'history' was itself a mythic term not to be hindered by fact, explanation or rational argument, and needing only the illustration of "implausible and unprovable theses" to forge a sense of belonging. Robert Cecil, *The Myth of the Master Race: Alfred Rosenberg and Nazi Ideology*. London: B.T. Batsford, 1972:90–91, 83.

[26] Joachim Köhler, *Wagner's Hitler*:63.

[27] On the Bayreuth circle and its fanatical Wagnerism (*Wagnerismus*) see David C. Large "Wagner's Bayreuth Disciples" in David C. Large and William Weber (eds.) *Wagnerism in European Culture and Politics*. London: Cornell University Press, 1984:72-133. Among those Large discusses are, for example, Ludwig Scheeman and Houston Stewart Chamberlain (who married Wagner's daughter Eva). Like many others in Wagner's inner circle, these men were fervent admirers of his music and proselytisers of his ideas: many in the Bayreuth circle were under the mistaken impression that Wagner was as great a social visionary and philosopher as musician. Scheeman (who popularised Gobineau's *Essay on the Inequality of the Human Race*s (1853) in Germany) and Chamberlain were also recognised by Hitler as spiritual heirs of National Socialism, an official sanction that links their (inevitably selective) reading of Wagner's ideas, nineteenth-century völkisch ideology and the burgeoning 'science' of racism to the Nazi era. Scheeman, who was awarded the Goethe Medal for Art and Science on his eighty-fifth birthday, was fêted by the Nazi's as a "kindred spirit", "early fighter for their cause" and "an ideological model … of racial thought" (109). But it was Chamberlain's hugely successful *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century* (1899) that legitimised notions of racial inequality, especially amongst the upper middle classes who later courted Hitler. Chamberlain's tract turns to the philosophical sources of Wagner's theories (such as Arthur Schopenhauer and Paul Lagarde) and while he offers the same kind of arguments as the Master (Wagner), he saw his work as more rigorous and 'scientific' (a la Gobineau) than Wagner's, as a kind of rational social Darwinism. Although he died in 1927, Chamberlain was an early and important supporter of Hitler, having met him in 1923. In a letter to Hitler, which the latter published as proof of his heavyweight 'credentials' and the 'respectability' of Nazism, Chamberlain dispelled the idea of Hitler as a fanatic and praised him in mythic terms as a visionary in whom violence exists only "to shape the cosmos" so as to serve his Will and that of the Nation (124–125). Large argues for a more subtle analysis of Wagner's influence than Köhler (see below) and while he does not shy away from recognising the abhorrence of Wagner's statements, some of which could easily have appeared unaltered in Nazi literature, he suggests that much of the demonising and Nazification of Wagner is truer of the *Wagnerismus* of the Bayreuth Ideal than

draw on these characterisations and to make multilayered references to the social effects of the idea of Wagner as prophet, Hitler as disciple: [28] Germany, a Gesamtkunstwerk by Hitler, choreographed through what Walter Benjamin called the "aestheticization of politics". [29]

The Ring of the Nibelung comprises of four music dramas: *The Rhinegold*, *The Valkyrie*, *Siegfried* and the *Twilight of the Gods*, and was conceived as a four-day quasi-religious, communal celebration of the revolutionary potential of art and life. Very simply, it is a story of gods and dwarfs and humans in a primordial world ruled over by Wotan, god of power, domination and Law. This mythic atemporal place is corrupted by the treachery of the Nibelungs or dwarfs and can only be redeemed by the fearless innocent, Siegfried, or after his murder, by the self-sacrifice of the Valkyrie Brünhilde. Her action absolves Wotan of his failings as Valhalla, home of the gods, burns and the moral order is restored. The plot is set into play by the theft of gold from the Rhine maidens by the Nibelung dwarf Alberich who forswears love and fashions the gold into a ring of power.

For Theodor Adorno, Alberich is racialised in anti-Semitic terms[30] – the very stereotypes that völkisch ideology and, later Nazi propaganda, set up as binary constructions of 'Germanness' and 'Jewishness': pure-impure, beautiful-ugly, strong-weak, honest-scheming, superior-inferior. These binaries are implicit in Goebbels' so-called photographic evidence of the inferiority of the Jews, and explicit in an Aryan children's storybook, called "Trust no Fox, Trust no Jew", a page of which is shown in the slide on the right. The idea of the Jew as an alien, malevolent, corrupting force also found expression in Wagner's *Judaism in Music*, of 1850, which among other things, defines the Jew as naturally abhorrent to the German, and rails against Jewish egoism and its worship of capital over spirit or community. Wagner ends this diatribe with a recommendation that the only way out is Jewish self-annihilation, an idea that would, in later texts on this theme, be replaced, at least theoretically, by a conviction of the need for a more thoroughgoing conclusion to the 'Jewish Question', one which Hitler and the Nazi machinery of death later willing supplied. [31]

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it is of Wagner himself (113,133). He also points out that Wagner cannot be held accountable for the fact that his music was used as the soundtrack of the Third Reich. Yet there is a sense that this use was authorised, if not blessed, by the members of Wagner's family that openly supported Hitler and the Nazi cause – Wagner's widow, Cosima, his son and daughter-in-law Siegfried and Winifred Wagner, and daughter and son-in-law, Eva and Houston Stewart Chamberlain (133).

[28] Köhler's essential argument is that Hitler's passion for Wagner was not simply confined to a fanatical love of his music. Rather he asserts that for Hitler, Wagner was a fundamental legitimising force that gave ideological shape and high art status to his own sense of destiny and purpose. Köhler suggests that Wagner's music and writings formed an important basis that provided much of Nazism's ideological worldview or *Weltanschauung.*

[29] On Benjamin's understanding of the interaction of art and politics in Nazism, see Toby Clark, *Art and Propaganda*. London: Orion, 1997:52. Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy suggest that Benjamin's notion does not go far enough. They argue that the mythic identification of self with community (one of the aims of Wagner's total work of art of the future) produced by Nazism is set into play only by a total "*production of the political as a work of art*". Thus "[t]he Nazi Myth… is also the construction, the formation and the production of the German people in, through, and as a work of art". ("The Nazi Myth":303, emphasis in the original.)

[30] Theodor Adorno, *In Search of Wagner*. Trans. Rodney Livingstone. Great Britain: NLB, 1981:25–26. First published as *Versuch über Wagner*. Germany: Suurkamp Verlag, 1952.

[31] On Wagner's *Judaism in Music* (first published under the pseudonym K. Freigedank), see, for example, Köhler, *Wagner's Hitler*:86-88; Adorno, *In Search of Wagner*:27; and Paul Lawrence Rose, *Wagner: Race and Revolution*. London: Faber and Faber, 1992:78–88. Translations of Wagner's text vary and with it, the meaning and tone of its last two lines. In the English translation of Adorno's *In Search of Wagner*, for instance, Wagner's words are quoted as follows: "Without looking back, take your part in this regenerative work of deliverance through self-annulment; then are

This is the aural-ideological reference in the sound-image installation *The Cage* of 1975, which quotes Act Four of the *Rhinegold*. In this work ten Volksempfängers are placed on galvanized sheet metal shelving to which a chain link fence is attached. On the right is a tamper used to pound cobblestones, and thus evokes ideas of hard labour, toil and oppression. The scene is an allusion to Alberich's enslavement of his own race, the Nibelung, to produce gold, the source of his power. In this, Paul Lawrence Rose notes, it summons a common and traditional anti-Semitic equation of gold or money with 'the Jew', symbol of soulless capitalism, as the poster for the Nazi exhibition *The Eternal Jew* makes clear.[32] Köhler argues however that in his private notes on the *Ring*, Wagner characterises Alberich not only in terms of the pervasive nineteenth-century cultural anti-Semitism but as the embodiment of a potential 'danger' to the health of the nation: Jews "that race", Wagner wrote, "that destroys all living things like crawling insects". As Köhler notes, this prefigures Hitler's belief the Jews are to blame for all Germany's ills and present a global threat of Jewish domination (witnessed, for example, in this political cartoon of 1940).[33]

But in *The Cage*, the idea of Jewish domination referenced through the music drama is ironically recontextualised and critically distanced, for the title of the work, the arrangement of the Volksempfängers and the chain link fence all connote imprisonment, and echoes at once the internment of the Jews and their use as slave labour to serve German industry. At the same time, the imprisonment suggested calls up an enslavement of the mind in the propagandistic and ritualistic creation of the Volk. The Volksempfängers, placed on the shelves in an almost militaristic regimentation, were created to repress independent (unGerman) thought and as agents and devices of Nazi domination, they aided its mass appeal by naturalising its perversions of morality, bringing them home, in other words. In its silent state, *The Cage* is a haunting image of both perpetrator and victim, bound in the völkisch construction of self and other that is evoked in its music, but petrified in the face of the allusion to the terrifying historical realities this ideology wrought. *The Cage* thus turns the phantasmagoric construction of anti-Semitism against itself in order to confront the power of Nazi conformity and its policies of inclusion and violent exclusion.

The Ladder from 1976 is composed of two ladders that are placed over a metal grate and visually linked by two silver-painted plaster body casts of a man's arms and shoulders. The one hand reaches down and holds onto a damaged Volksempfänger while the other reaches up and through a rung to grasp a metal hubcap over which a silver frame and hooter of a Mercedes Benz steering wheel has

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we one and undissevered! But remember, only one thing can redeem you from the burden of your curse: the redemption of Ahasuerus – *Going under*!" [a literal translation of *Untergang*] (27). In Rose's *Wagner: Race and Revolution* "*Untergang*" is translated as "Destruction" (84). Wagner's statement could be interpreted as a desire, common to nineteenth-century anti-Semitism, for Jews to renounce Judaism and assimilate and thus be redeemed. Rose notes, however, that while the words themselves offer "an ambivalent interplay of metaphor and practicality", the underlying logic of the essay suggests that "even enlightened or converted Jews are unable to rid themselves of their inherent Jewishness – a view, Rose states, that became more explicit in his writings over the next thirty years (86).
[32] For a detailed discussion of the identification of 'the Jew' with money and gold, see Rose, *Wagner: Race and Revolution*:66–72.
[33] Wagner quoted in Köhler, *Wagner's Hitler*:63.

been placed. Traces of resin, which the Kienholzes use to seal their surfaces, are visible across the body casts. The foot switch for the Volksempfänger is in front of the smaller step-up ladder.

For Jörn Merkert this installation presents Germany's move away from its fascist past (the broken Volksempfänger) and towards a future as a divided country with no political centre (symbolised by the "torn body") but with a firm grasp on an economic future (the Mercedes Benz steering wheel). The Volksempfänger plays music from *Siegfried* (Act Two Scene Two and Act One, Scene Three), namely, Siegfried's leitmotif and forging song. Merkert suggests therefore that the work is a portrait of Siegfried, the young hero of the *Ring* who, he writes, "had to destroy the old to create the new [and] who … meets his destiny through his failure".[34] He interprets Siegfried as a symbol of the post-war reconstruction of West Germany. However, this idea of Siegfried as the embodied promise of national renewal after defeat was also valuable currency in Nazism's symbolic vocabulary of social rejuvenation after the humiliation of World War One. Indeed, as Kohler notes, Siegfried – the mythic man who knows no fear, forger of the sword *Nothung*, martyred redeemer – was Hitler's adopted and exulted identity, particularly in the writings of the Bayreuth circle.[35] Hitler as Germany's saviour was a staple of Nazi propaganda: in a 1930s propaganda poster, for example, Hitler as the "Aryan Messiah" [36] is conveyed through appropriating the conventions of Christian iconography, particularly the divine light of the Holy Spirit that illuminates his path and purpose as warrior-protector of the 'true' Germanic soul.

The Ladder encodes this myth of the Führer as saviour in both its objects and their arrangement, but it does so parodically through irony's charged, critical and evaluative edginess that posits difference rather than similarity in the relation between the parodic and source text. The Führer is symbolically put before us but rather than an unstoppable force of Messianic power, he is encountered here only as a trace whose propagandistic resonance is made impotent. For example, the Volksempfänger (the embodiment of his word as presence) is congealed by resin and lies cracked and shattered.

The body casts too insert an ironic reference to the heroic, muscular body of the Nazi ideal seen for instance in the various 'Siegfried's that populate Nazi art, such as Arno Breker's *Readiness* of 1939. But instead of the rigorously contained, hardened masculine body of fascism, we have a plaster cast, life-size fragment of a male body that does not conform to the aesthetic or ideological ideal. Instead of a monumental sculpture of a heroic warrior in which the Aryan body, as an imposing and insistent presence, stands as a visual metaphor for the imagined mythic force of Nazism and its self-fulfilling destiny, the male body of *The Ladder* appears more absent than present, more frail than manly, and as if suspended in air rather than rooted in the grand design of Nazi history. Paradoxically though, the life cast's fragile abstraction is rooted in a 'realness' that is doubled by the drips of resin that contour the arms. Both the body cast and the streaks of resin are indexical signs bound in a causal relation to their referents. They are also, in Norman Bryson terms, deictic marks that record the physical process of

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[34] Jörn Merkert, "Ed Kienholz and the Language of Objects":40.
[35] Köhler, *Wagner's Hitler*:79.
[36] Köhler quotes Wolfgang Wagner's description for the reason behind Bayreuth's embrace of Hitler:15.

production and as such, contrast the illusionistic erasure of the signs of fabrication of the Nazi aesthetic and its ideological drive to cohesion and transparency.[37]

The streaks of resin, however, also suggest sweat and hence, physical vulnerability and putrification. As marginal matter and bodily waste, sweat transgresses both the integrity of the bounded masculine body and puts the ideological coherence of Aryan übermensch at risk. For as Saul Friedländer writes, the idealised heroic masculinity of premodern classicism so beloved by the Nazi image makers signifies not only a return to an imagined past but also the magnificence of body that cannot decay. It is therefore the substance and visual trope of that union of nostalgia and death that Friedländer suggests is at the heart of Nazi kitsch, its Wagnerian, pseudo-religious idealism and attendant cult of death and heroism.[38] In its inversion of Nazi body politics, the fragmented and abstracted real-life 'body' thus undermines not only National Socialist aesthetics but also the ideological construction of 'destiny' that underpins and animates it. In its subversion of hegemonic norms and layering of presence and absence, *The Ladder* parodically installs just that kind of abstracting, anti-establishment aesthetic impulse that Hitler deemed 'degenerate' – albeit here through postmodern referentiality rather than modernist experimentation.

There is one more irony that signifies through the Mercedes Benz symbol: it lies not in a strategy of aesthetic rupture but in a return of a repressed site of continuity between the Nazi past and post-war Federal Republic of the 1970s. As Huyssen notes, except for reparation payments to survivors and to Israel (*Wiedergutmachung*), the Federal Republic of Germany's legitimising idea and its economic and social reconstruction was predicated on a total break with the Nazi past.[39] Omer Bartov suggests however that this repression – itself, Uli Linke observes, a symptom of the avoidance of the painful issues of guilt, shame and responsibility – normalised the social conditions for a process of forgetting in the new West Germany.[40] Given this historical context, the Mercedes Benz three-pointed star, perched high on the ladder that was for Merkert a positive sign of post-war success, stands not just for the promise of a renewed future, but also for the persistent though denied presence of the past. Placed alongside a Nazi propaganda image of the early 1940s, in which the Mercedes Benz symbol casts its prophetic shadow of world domination over the globe, the use of the symbol in *The Ladder* suggests perhaps that the ascendance of the brand Mercedes Benz ironically fulfils an ideal of power tied now

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[37] On deixis see Norman Bryson, *Vision and Painting: The Logic of the Gaze*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983:87–131.

[38] Saul Friedländer, *Reflections of Nazism: An Essay on Kitsch and Death*. Trans. Thomas Weyr. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984:30, 32, 42. First published as *Reflets du Nazisme*. France: Editions du Seuil, 1982.

[39] Huyssen, *After the Great Divide*:98.

[40] Omer Bartov writes that "Germany's remarkable economic reconstruction was predicated both on repressing the memory of the Nazi regime's victims and on the assumed existence of new enemies" (the Cold War) (778). Omer Bartov, "Defining Enemies, Making Victims: Germans, Jews and the Holocaust". *The American Historical Review* 103 (3):771-816, quoted in Uli Linke, *German Bodies*:154. Huyssen (*After the Great Divide*:98) notes that the notion of collective guilt and responsibility was popular with the Allies right before the end of the war and in the aftermath, at least until the Cold War became the West's primary focus, but it created a sense of German victimization that contributed to the avoidance of what Charles S Maier has called "the unmasterable past". See Charles S Maier, *The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust and German National Identity*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1988.

not to the military-industrial complex of National Socialism, but to the commodity imperialism of West Germany's economic and political recovery.

The Volksempfängers are a complex series that raise difficult questions – aesthetic, ethical and political – most of which I have not been able to deal with here. Nonetheless, in hinting at the layered ambiguities of form, content and socio-political context, I hope to have demonstrated that the Kienholzes' *Volksempfängers* engage with the objects and ideologies of National Socialist Germany in ways that estrange its aestheticization of politics and mythification of Völk and Führer, and further, that they confront the presence of the past, despite and because of the persistence of a post-war culture of denial. In this, the series can be said to function in context as part of the wider cultural and political process of resistance to forgetting known as Vergangenheitsbewältigung – dealing with, working through and coming to terms with the historical, political and moral implications of Nazism. Although I have only discussed two works in this paper, I would like to make this (exploratory) claim for, and offer these (provisional) concluding remarks to, the series in general: that in these works, the effects of estrangement and confrontation are enacted through a paradoxical aesthetic of appropriation and knowing contradiction, one that works to expel viewer passivity and demands an active form of meaning production and reception. In other words, the works involve the viewer physically (in stepping on a foot switch) as well as intellectually: challenging the viewer to interpret, decode, question and make connections in a way that is contrary to the anti-intellectual ethos of National Socialism as well as the interpretative obviousness (and banality) of Nazi propaganda. What I want to put forward then is the workings of an affective and provocative mode of involvement (as opposed to the sentimentalist and/or rabid emotionalism mode of address elicited by Nazism) in which the objects, music and meanings once bound to Nazism's ontological and teleological construction of Truth are re-presented and defamiliarised – in the process, making the viewer responsible to the historical implications of its excesses and fantasies of self and other. It is in this politically charged sense that – in opposition to Rotzler *et al*'s insistence to the contrary – *The Volksempfängers*, I think, not only address and speak to German history and society but also open up the problematic of the past and the uncomfortable issues of collective accountability, silence, shame and guilt. *The Volksempfängers* thus call out for further research.

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PAPER TITLE: MELANCHOLY CONSTELLATIONS: BENJAMIN, KIEFER,

KENTRIDGE AND THE PLAY OF MOURNING

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Intended as a summation as well as a continuation of several papers and articles I have written and presented on the work of Walter Benjamin, Anselm Kiefer, and William Kentridge, this paper[1] proposes to figure Benjamin, Kiefer, and Kentridge in and as a melancholy constellation. Melancholy constellation serves here as a theoretical configuration of the "moving concepts" (cf Bal 2002, Deleuze 2001)[2] with which Benjamin, Kiefer, and Kentridge "preposterously"[3] think and perform the imaging of history (cf Bal 1999, Fugmann 1998, Schoeman 2003a, 2003b & 2004).[4]

It is on the basis of these "moving concepts", "each of them multiple and displaced in itself" (Zizek 2003:278), that I will later refer to my theoretical concept of melancholy constellation as also a mobile constellation. Furthermore, while melancholia traditionally signifies a state of acedia or immobility its historical image is essentially dialectical: it signifies both black bile and inspiration, and always already "involves two mobile positions" (Bal 1999:25).[5] To speak of melancholy/mobile constellation, then, intimates "constellations of textual [and visual] relationships subject to dissolution and replacement at one and the same time", as Jameson (2002:4) writes in regard Lyotard's postmodernity.[6]

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[1] I want to express my gratitude to Maureen de Jager for her careful editing of this paper, and for her sensitive suggestions.

[2] Cf also Bersani's (1990:3) notion of "conceptual mobility" vis-à-vis authoritative immobility.

[3] I am here adopting Bal's (1999:6f) notion of preposterous history: "This reversal, which puts what came chronologically first ("pre-") as an aftereffect behind ("post") its later recycling, is what I would like to call a *preposterous history*". She relates her term to Freud's notion of *Nachträglichkeit*, a concept I will return to later. Bal (1999:9) writes: "Instead of classifying and closing meaning as if to solve an enigma, this study of what Freud would call *Nachträglichkeit* attempts to trace the process of meaning-production over time (in both directions: present/past and past/present) as an open, dynamic process, rather than to map the results of that process. Instead of establishing a one-to-one relationship between sign or motif and meaning, I emphasize the active participation of visual images in cultural dialogue, the discussion of ideas. It is in this sense that I claim art 'thinks'". Cf Benjamin's thinking-in-images. Bal's notion of preposterous history bears similarities with Miller's deconstructive literalising of the term "preposterous". As Norris (1993:210) explains, "[t]hus: 'preposterous', from the Latin *praepostero*, is defined as the act of 'putting before what normally comes after', or reversing the commonplace (logical or causal) order of priorities through a trick of linguistic figuration". My thanks to my colleague Michael Herbst for bringing this reference from Norris to my attention.

[4] My notion of "the imaging of history", which was suggested to me by Dirk van den Berg, and which features as a recurring problematic in van den Berg's own work, bears similarities with Damisch's (Bois *et al* 1998:3) notion of "the perception of history". Damisch's perception of history, derived from Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception, "connects to darkness in the sense in which you find this in Lucien Febvre, or initially in Michelet: 'l'histoire noire'". Damisch notes: "[I]n the midst of a history that was narrative, discursive, something suddenly occurred … a kind of silence. It would be, then, a matter not of narrating history but of seeing it". However, the dark or "blind" seeing of, but also listening to (cf Schoeman 2003a:107f), history that constitutes "l'histoire noire", ought to be contrasted with "Plato's [ocularcentric] movement from darkness to light into a visionary philosophy of history" (Taylor 1999:12). For more on ocularcentrism and ocular- or iconophobia, see Jay (2004) and van den Berg (2004).

[5] I have discussed this dialectic in some depth in my article "Reason and madness: Reading Walter Benjamin and Anselm Kiefer through Albrecht Dürer's *Melencolia I*" (2003a) as well as in my article "*Felix in exile*: William Kentridge's self-reflexive allegories of art and history" (2004).

[6] Though this does not mean that my deployment of the theoretical concept of a melancholy/mobile constellation ought to be read as coterminous with Lyotard's postmodernity.

Intricately related to the imaging of history is what Benjamin calls thinking-in-images (*Bilddenken*).[7] This is a critical concept to bear in mind when enfolding (rather than collapsing) the putatively "predominantly linguistic-discursive" nature of Benjamin's work with the "predominantly visual" work of Kiefer and Kentridge. For Benjamin, similarly to Aby Warburg, the image (so crucial to Benjamin's textual production) is not that of a reproduction, but rather that of a constellation (Weigel 1996:ix).[8] According to Benjamin (1999a:462), "an image is that in which the has-been comes together in a flash with the now to form a constellation". This materialised, embodied now, in which an image of the has-been becomes re-cognisable, is what Benjamin refers to as *Jetztzeit* or now-time, or what Bal rereads as the now-time of viewing and reading (cf Bal 2001a, Benjamin 1999a & 2003:389-411, Weigel 1996).[9] In this light, thinking-in-images would mean thinking-in-constellations, whilst the imaging of history would mean thinking or picturing history in mobile constellations, in the now-time of viewing or reading, "each time anew" (Bal 2001a:122). I say "each time anew" precisely because each now-time is always dynamically marked and inscribed by *Nachträglichkeit*, the historical force whereby "the past creates

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[7] Benjamin's *Bilddenken* might be figured in a mobile constellation with Deleuze's "images of thought". According to Rajchman (2000:32), an "image of thought" "is not a picture or representation of something, it is not a *Weltanschauung*, but has another more complicated 'untimely' [cf Bal 1999] relation to its time. It can never be simply deduced from the contents or concepts of a philosophy, instead it is a tacit presupposition of the creation of concepts and their relation to what is yet to come". Cf also Snow's (1997:15) reference to Cézanne's notion of "thinking in images".

[8] For instance, Aby Warburg's Mnemosyne project or *Bilderatlas* from the first decades of the twentieth century was composed by combining reproductive images from art history with contemporary mass media images — in and as somatic or embodied, mobile constellations. Van den Berg (2004) and Weigel (1996:151) note that Warburg's *Bilderatlas* heralded contemporary practices in visual culture studies such as intertextuality or cultural semiotics. Cf also Weigel (1995:139) on "the differences and caesuras that separate our academic practice from a work in "Warburg's Cultural Studies Library" [Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliotek]". She cautions: "In fact, however, the reception of Warburg's ideas today often exhibits aspects of a *reterritorialization* by re-erecting boundaries he had abandoned, be it in the form of a re-migration to an academic discipline or of the endeavor to undo the multiple exiles of the Warburg library". She refers to Warburg's own "famous turn of phrase about a 'border police bias'", and points out that "Benjamin, in his Bachofen essay, accordingly placed Warburg alongside Goethe and Bachofen in his 'disdain for the established boundaries between the sciences'" (Weigel 1995:140). It is also from the perspective of intertextuality and interdiscursivity that Warburg's *Bilderatlas* may be figured in a constellation with Benjamin's *The arcades project* (cf Rampley 2001:121-149), in which history is imaged in and as mobile constellations of dialectical images, bursting with now-time. Cf Weigel (1996:10) on Benjamin's concept "of a materialized, embodied now-time (*Jetztzeit*)", "the Now of cognizability [*Jetzt der Erkennbarkeit*]" in which images become readable, and which "coincides with the Now of a corporeal representation or action". Cf also Bal's (2001a) rereading of Benjamin's now-time as the present time of an embodied viewing and reading of images as material objects. In light of the above, one might counter Fried's (2002:234-239) somewhat one-sided assessment of the figuring of embodiment in Benjamin's thought. On the one hand, he correctly surmises Benjamin's aversion to the notion of empathy. See, for example, Benjamin's (1999a & 2003:389-411) critique of the role empathy plays in commodification and historicism. This would put Benjamin at a remove from the aesthetics of empathy, a particular tradition in nineteenth century German aesthetic philosophy — exemplified in the writing of Vischer, Wölfflin, and Schmarsow — which Fried bases his reading of Adolph Menzel's intense embodied realism on. On the other hand, Fried (2002:238f) misses the mark slightly when he suggests that embodiment "has no role, certainly no positive one, in Benjamin's thought". In fact, one might argue that embodiment plays a crucial role in Benjamin's thinking. One thinks particularly of his autobiographical writings, his "thought figures", his reading of Baudelaire's allegories of the experience of the modern city, Kafka's mystical-modern parables, and the Surrealists' experimentation with the corporeal limit experiences of the profane. His intense, dialectical interest in the Surrealists' experimentation with intoxicated embodiment also carries over into his Arcades project, and Benjamin's own experiments with intoxication, as documented in his protocols on hashish, attest to a heightened engagement with embodiment. See, for example, Benjamin's (1999b:673-679) deployment of emphatic projection in his essay, "Hashish in Marseilles". In fact, Fried concludes his book on Menzel with a passage from Sebald's *The rings of Saturn* (1995) which, in its surreal denouement of devastation, reminds one of some of Benjamin's own Kafkian writings! For more on Benjamin's corporeal and material engagement with texts and images see also Richter (2000).

[9] In light of the Baroque quality of much of Benjamin's thought, and in line with Bal's "neo-Baroque" or Deleuzian rereading of Benjaminian concepts, one might compare Benjamin's now-time with Deleuze's "now-here". As Tom Conley (2001:xvii) explains: "The pleats and hems of the ideal Baroque home thus do not merely refer to a 'nowhere', as if prompting a mirror-reading of Samuel Butler's *Erewhon*, but also to a 'now-here' that is present whenever and wherever the concept of its space is taken up". Cf Jameson (2002:4) on Lyotard's postmodernity as "a non-systematic 'actuality' stirring with a random coexistence of irreconcilable Nietzschean presents of time".

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itself retro-actively" (Kaufmann 1997:41).[10] In this sense this present paper is itself self-reflexively defined by *Nachträglichkeit*, figured as it is in a constellation with the past.

Crucial to my proposed thinking-in-images and thinking or picturing history in melancholy/mobile constellations, in the Benjaminian now-time of embodied viewing and reading (cf Bal 2001a:xii), will be "an engagement with the process of art production and reception as *performative*" (Jones & Stephenson 1999:1).[11] As Jones & Stephenson (1999:1) note:

> Thus the artwork [or historical image] is no longer viewed as a static object with a single, prescribed signification that is communicable unproblematically and without default from the maker to an alert, knowledgeable, universalized viewer… The notion of the performative highlights the open-endedness of interpretation, which must be understood as a *process* rather than an act with a final goal, and acknowledges the ways in which circuits of desire and pleasure are at play in [a] complex web [or in mobile constellations].[12]

This is of a kind with Bal's (1999:120, Schoeman 2003b & 2004) suggestion: "Art performs; so does writing; so does the looking we write about and with".

In this sense, figuring Benjamin's, Kiefer's, and Kentridge's performative, constellational projections,[13] in and as a melancholy/mobile constellation would correlatively mean mirroring their constellational projections with my own (cf Schoeman 2004).[14] It would mean, "being enfolded with" (Bal 1999:8) "the explosive and performative potential" (Richter 2002:18) of texts and images, where form mirrors content and content mirrors form,[15] in a textured,[16] mobile constellation.[17] The readability of this textured

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[10] The potentially melancholy shine of the signifying power of *Nachträglichkeit* or belatedness will be discussed further below. Cf Nägele (1991:81).

[11] For more on performance and performativity see Bal (2002:174-212). Bal adopts and extends Butler's (1993:2) understanding of performativity, "not as a singular or deliberate 'act', but rather, as the reiterative and citational practice by which discourse produces the effects that it names". For more on the relation between performativity and citation see Bal (1999) and Richter (2002:25) who cites Benjamin: "To write [or perform] history means to quote history. But the concept of quotation implies that any given historical object must be ripped out of its context". This ripping out of context may then be coupled with Bal's (1999:13) notion of citation as supplementation, seen not as invention but as intervention. Supplementation in turn may be related to the operations of allegory. As Orton (1994:115 qtd. Schoeman 2003a:81) writes, "[a]llegory takes over a truth or meaning and adds to it not to replace it but to 'supplement' it". For a performative enfolding of Bal's preposterous history and Benjamin's theory of allegory see Schoeman (2003a:80-82).

[12] My thanks to Maureen de Jager for alerting me to this passage.

[13] "[E]ach of them multiple and displaced in itself" (Zizek 2003:278).

[14] I mean this not only in the sense in which I project various shifting constellations in my main text but also the constellations I project in these endnotes. Thus the above constellations would performatively and self-reflexively mirror those below and vice versa, all the while opening up spaces for further imagined or projected constellations — interlaced with my work elsewhere and with the work of others.

[15] Cf Weigel's (1996:49f) citation of Benjamin's "Berlin childhood around 1900: "It taught me that form and content, the wrapping and what is wrapped in it are the same thing". Weigel (1996:53) writes, "…Benjamin's [self-reflexive and performative] manner of writing and manner of thinking cannot be seen as separate… [H]is thinking-in-images constitutes his specific and characteristic way of theorizing, of philosophizing, and of writing, and … his writings cannot be seen in terms of a dualistic opposition of form and content". I would proffer that the performativity of Benjamin's work is precisely what is also at stake in both Kiefer's and Kentridge's work, and by extension my writing on, or enfolding of, the work of all three.

[16] My choice of words is derived from Elkins (2002:44) who writes, "[h]istory should have the texture of what it describes and not just the restless rhetoric of modern academia". One might compare this to Deleuze's notion of "*texturology*: a theory or philosophy of the surface as skin … of texture as the site of point of view" (Bal 1999:30). Giving history texture and thus drawing attention to multiple and mobile points of view is precisely what seems to me to motivate a *performative* approach to writing (and art making); of course, the concept of performativity can itself become so much rhetoric.

constellation is called "'Stern-Bild', the image given in the constellation" (Menke 2002:356n19), perhaps propitiously imaged or figured in Kiefer's painting of 1999, *Light trap* (*Lichtfalle*).

I might add here that my conceptual deployment of the figure of a melancholy/mobile constellation, as a means of linking the work of Benjamin, Kiefer, and Kentridge, seems to be on a par with the deployment or figuration of constellations in the work of all three. Rather than opting for the mythic constellation of eternity, all three emphasise mobility and transience; rather than holding out for a metaphysics of truth, all three emphasise the shifting ground of multiple points of view, "each time anew" (Bal 2002:122). As Menke (2002:268) writes: "The ornamental structuring of the 'figure' cannot be definitively stabilized: the gaze sets up a constellation, reads a certain configuration from out of the texture of lineaments and its interlacings, and each time realizes a new relationship of figure and ground". Transience and the shifting ground of multiple points of view ultimately evinces both mobility and melancholia.

One of the principal aims of this paper will then be to view the multifarious history of seeing and imaging melancholia as fundamentally dialectical, as a philosophical constellation with which, and through which, to dialectically read the image in Benjamin's, Kiefer's, and Kentridge's work as melancholy/mobile constellation. This paper will linger with Kiefer's painting *Light trap*, read visually, intertextually and interdiscursively (cf Bal 1999:10, Schoeman 2003b) in conjunction with various images from both Kiefer's oeuvre and Kentridge's *Felix in exile* of 1994. Firstly, as a means of reflecting on Benjamin's, Kiefer's, and Kentridge's work: seen respectively as complexly melancholic; and figured together as melancholy/mobile constellation. And secondly, as departure point from whence to reflect implicitly on the historical performance as a melancholy performance, which, as Martin Jay (1996:22)) and Michael Ann Holly (2002:3, 10, 11) argue, "keeps the wound open"[18] — intransigently resisting current consolation and symbolic closure.[19]

It is with this resistance to the "totalisation of the de-totalised" (Jay 1996:7) in mind, coupled with the fascination in Benjamin's, Kiefer's, and Kentridge's work with the cloudy materiality[20] of objects and significations that inevitably resist complete appropriation (Bal 1999, 2001a & 2002, Damisch 2002,

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[17] Citing Benjamin, Menke (2002:354n4) articulates this performative interrelationship as follows: "The relationship between reading (or reader) and what is read can also be formulated in a textual metaphoric: 'What the constellation [*Gestirnstand*] effected [*wirkte*] in a human existence thousands of years ago, was woven in on the basis of similarity'. … The reading of constellation and the life that is similar become entwined in and as texture(s). Similarities that are read affect the reader as (ornamental) inscriptions, interweavings, interlacings of what is read and the reader/life" (cf Schoeman 2003b & 2004).

[18] Cf Taylor (1987:xxxi) on Lacan's insistence "that the impossibility of total satisfaction subverts the possibility of complete self-consciousness. Since there is always an Other 'within,' the subject can never coincide with itself and thus is forever split. What Lacan describes as the incomprehensible *reel* keeps the wound of subjectivity open". This has particular bearing on my discussion later of the inaccessibility of Nandi to Felix and of Felix to himself, in Kentridge's *Felix in exile*.

[19] Cf also Melissa Zeiger (qtd Sonstroem 2004) who speaks of a "refusal of consolation, maintained along with [a] refusal to dismiss the dead". Sonstroem's article addresses Freud's famous distinction between "healthy" mourning, which has an end goal, and pathological melancholia, which returns obsessively to the lost object. In a similar vein to Jay, and contra Freud, Sonstroem holds out for a "healthy" or productive melancholia, through which marginalised groups may collectively mourn the dead — in an ongoing, multifarious, open-ended process.

[20] I am appropriating Damisch's (Bois *et al* 1998:4) notion of the cloud as "what is purely material or substance". As such the cloud is a theoretical object, "which is closest to 'painting', and thus it has an emblematic value". It is "the emblem of pictoriality" as materiality. See also Schoeman (2003b).

Fried 2002, Holly 2002, Marin 1995, Pensky 2001, Schoeman 2004), that melancholy constellations will be traced by way of the figure of the ghost. As Holly (2002:3) writes: "Something remains; something gets left over";[21] the interminable ghost of the image before and after the image that we are materially faced with, in each present time of reading Benjamin, Kiefer, and Kentridge. It is a ghost which appears preposterously "to come and to come-back", to cite Derrida (1994:98).

Bearing this ghost in mind, let me then turn to Kiefer's painting *Light trap*, a prodigious painting in which the ghost or Adornian remainder[22] of the has-been, a Mayan temple or ruin, appears submerged in the ground against which a stellar constellation has been traced or figured in white. Punctuating the constellation are labels bearing the names modern astronomers have given the individual stars, "to describe their spectral type, luminosity and any other peculiarities" (Hartley 2000:193). Kiefer has inscribed the German title of his painting, "Lichtfalle", at the top left of the canvas. A rusty rat-trap has been attached just below the centre of the canvas, at the bottom of the line of golden paint running down the facing side of the submerged Mayan pyramid. Several shards of glass, lettered and numbered according to the stars, have been thrust inside the trap.

Kiefer's painting was painted in response to Tintoretto's *Origin of the Milky Way*, which "was probably painted in the late 1570s in the early years of the modern, scientific era" (Hartley 2000:201). According to Hartley (2000:201), "[w]hat attracted Kiefer to this painting was the linking of the creation of the stars, of our universe, with human procreation, the mirroring of the macrocosm in the microcosm". As such, Kiefer's image registers a dialectical or allegorical thematics of bidirectionality, whereby what is below is mirrored above, the archaic materiality of the earth[23] is neo-Platonically[24] mirrored in the heavens, and vice versa. Accordingly, what is base or *materia prima* is alchemically transmuted into the lofty or noble (figured by the golden trail descending from the top centre of the ghostly pyramid). And what is fallen, as in an apocalyptic pun on the German "*Lichtfall*" or "light fall" (Hartley 2000:196), allegorically refers forward toward the not-yet redeemed (cf Schoeman 2003a).[25] Moreover, the bidirectionality in Kiefer's painting, may be seen to trace, preposterously, "the process of meaning-production over time (in both directions: present/past and past/present) in an open, dynamic process" (Bal 1999:9).

Several constellations are enfolded with each other in Kiefer's painting. Firstly, Kiefer depicts the constellation of the Draco or the Dragon, "the name of a constellation at least since the time of the ancient Greeks" (Hartley 2000:194).[26] Secondly, the dragon is enfolded in a constellation with alchemy.

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[21] Cf Adorno (Leppert 2002:34) on the remainder as ungraspable leftover and Taylor (1987:xxxiii) on "a remainder left after everything seemed finished".

[22] Similarly, the figure of Nandi in Kentridge's *Felix in exile* may also be seen as ghostly trace or remainder. See below.

[23] Cf Rosenberg (1987:36) on Kiefer's emphasis on "the primacy of the land before meanings were attached to it".

[24] For more on neo-Platonism in relation to melancholia and bidirectionality in Benjamin, Kiefer, and Dürer see Schoeman (2003a).

[25] Cf the apocalyptic thought of Bloch with reference to the "not-yet" in Daniel & Moylan (1997).

[26] The most commonly cited mythical origin of this constellation is that of the dragon, Lodon, who, after being killed by Herakles in one of the twelve labours Hera set him, was rewarded for his faithfulness by being set in the stars. Hera (or Juno to the Romans) set Herakles these twelve potentially lethal labours out of anger for being tricked by Zeus (Jupiter)

As Hartley (2000:195) writes: "According to Carl Jung … the dragon lies at the very heart of the alchemist's vision. It symbolizes the chthonic, earthbound principle of the serpent [a recurring motif in Kiefer's work] and the airy principle of the bird. It was used as a symbol for mercury, which alchemists believed was able to turn base metal to gold or spirit". According to Jung (qtd. Hartley 2000:195): "As a dragon it consumes itself and as a dragon it dies and is resurrected as the [Philosopher's] Stone", emblem of higher human consciousness. The alchemical notion of higher human consciousness also relates intricately to both the figure of allegory and the historical image of melancholia. According to Benjamin (1998:229), the figure of allegory is

> related to alchemy, magical knowledge, processes of decay, isolation, spiritual death, and ultimately both material and spiritual transformation. Moreover, linking painting to alchemy, as something that matters both spiritually and materially, James Elkins (2000:155) notes, "[a]lchemy is at home in depression, uncertainty, and melancholy" (Schoeman 2003a:78).

A third constellation, that of the theory and discovery of black holes,[27] is evoked by way of the rusty rat-trap, attached just below the centre of the canvas, trapping the viewer or reader in the representation (cf Marin 1995:148). Hartley (2001:195f) notes that the rat-trap "is drawing light into itself and preventing it from leaving. The shards of glass are marked by letters and numbers indicating that they represent stars. Thus, the rat-trap becomes a black hole, 'a region of space-time from which nothing, not even light, can escape, because its gravity is so strong'". Kiefer's evocation of constellations of black holes refers to "their tremendous potential to destroy matter, even light" (Hartley 2000:196). Yet, when figured in a mobile constellation with alchemy, this destructive power may also be read as intensely transformative (though the reverse is also true; in such a constellation alchemy may revert to the black bile of melancholia, destruction, and death).

This contradiction or melancholy dialectic of destruction/redemption is a recurring motif throughout Kiefer's oeuvre, as figured, for example, in his painting *Nero paints* (1974). Here the constellational figure, "hypericon",[28] or emblem of a painter's palette, prefiguring by *Nachträglichkeit* the stellar constellation in *Light trap*, floats above or against a burned landscape allegorically evoking the black

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into suckling the bastard son Herakles (Hercules). It is said that, "Herakles sucked so vigorously at her breasts that milk spurted into the sky to form the Milky Way". It is here that Kiefer's painting links up with Tintoretto's (Hartley 2000:194).
[27] Kristeva (1989:88) speaks of the "black hole" of melancholy, an image that has particular relevance to Kiefer's *Light fall*.
[28] Cf Mitchell's (1985:5-6) notion of the hypericon, which "involves attention to the way in which images (and ideas) double themselves: the way we depict the act of picturing, imagine the activity of imagination, figure the practice of figuration". Dirk van den Berg's (2003:6) paper, "Not I: troubled representations of the self", addresses Mitchell's idea of the hypericon. See also van den Berg (2004). Mitchell's hypericon may be related to both Bal's (1999 & 2002) notion of the theoretical object and Stoichita's (1997) notion of meta-painting. Bal seems to derive her notion of the theoretical object from Damisch (cf Bal 2001a:5n5). For Damisch (Bois *et al* 1998:6) "the theoretical object [such as the cloud in the history of painting, or the hand of the Virgin in Piero della Francesca's Madonna del Parto] is [first] something that obliges one to do theory". Secondly, "it's an object that obliges you to do theory but also furnishes you with the means of doing it. Thus, if you agree to accept it on theoretical terms, it will produce effects around itself". And thirdly, "it's a theoretical object because it forces us to ask ourselves what theory is. It is posed in theoretical terms; it produces theory; and it necessitates a reflection on theory". Damisch's (Bois *et al* 1998:7) understanding of the theoretical object as a detail that "raises questions", suggests that Bal's (2001b:84-7) notion of the "navel detail", which borrows from Naomi Schor's *Reading in detail* (1987), may be registered as a theoretical object. See also Schoeman (2004).

bile of melancholia.[29] As Nägele (1991:81) writes with reference to Benjamin's enunciation of the melancholy or dead park of allegory: "It is a landscape of *Nachträglichkeit*, whose shine comes from the reflection of vanished and vanishing things. It is the autumnal landscape of melancholy, as it presents itself after the harvest, but also after reading". It is a melancholy landscape allegorically summoning the destruction of war and of allegoresis itself (cf Benjamin 1998, Buck-Morss 1997, Geyer-Ryan 1994, Handelman 1991, Schoeman 2003a & 2004).[30] In this sense, similar to several of Kentridge's works, Kiefer's melancholy landscape with palette may be seen to be both performative and self-reflexive (cf Schoeman 2004). Given the bidirectionality at play within the historical image of melancholia, the palette — emblem of the heroic melancholy artist as figured in Dürer's *Melencolia I* (cf Pensky 2001, Schoeman 2003a & 2004) — allegorically denotes both the destructive and possibly redemptive[31] properties of the process of enunciation and negation (cf Marin 1995).[32]

Evidencing "the irreducible plurality of particular constellations" (Zizek 2003:277f), the black holes of Kiefer's *Light trap* may also be figured, intertextually and interdiscursively, in a constellation with his paintings of sunflowers, which evoke black, rotten or sick, melancholic suns. His *The famous order of the night*[33] of 1996, for example,

> astutely visualises this sick sun or ideal sunflower. Like black suns,[34] the sunflowers seem to loom over us, as if we were prostate on the ground. While the sunflowers reach up toward the sun they also wither and die. But vice versa: if one reads the inscription at

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[29] For more on the relation between black bile and melancholia, see Stoichita & Coderch (1999) and Schoeman (2003a).
[30] See also Hanssen (2002:331n11) on "the disjunctive force of allegory's negative dialectic". Cf Benjamin (2003:165 qtd. Richter 2002:231) on "the destructive power of the allegorical intention". Cf Weigel (1996:xvii) on the "distortion into allegory".
[31] But if "the culture of redemption is the culture of death", as Bersani (Dean *et al* 1997:4, Bersani 1990) claims, then the notion of redemption, if not ultimately masking the urge to suicide as Bersani argues, is always already irreducibly knotted with death and failure. Yet if failure, as collapse and shattering, is a method for Bersani — against a culture of immobility and authority masking its own urge to self-destruct — then failure may be borrowed as a critical mobility within the notion of redemption, "endlessly repeated, or prolonged to infinity" (Silverman in Dean *et al* 1997:3). This critical approach would certainly cast Benjamin's, Kiefer's, and Kentridge's melancholy love affairs with death and failed redemption in a different, more sobering light.
[32] Marin (1995:90) writes: "The act of negation [of author and enunciation] in and beyond the present subverts the temporal categories of both past and future in what is a decisive moment of truth; it is in the moment of negation that death is demystified and demythified as a result of myth itself. The mythical element resides in the promise that the deceased will be forever present in the form of an eternal constellation of stars". To reiterate what I said earlier, rather than opting for the mythic constellation of eternity, the work of Benjamin, Kiefer, and Kentridge emphasises mobility and transience. Rather than holding out for a metaphysics of truth, all three emphasise the shifting ground of multiple points of view, "each time anew" (Bal 2002:122).
[33] *Die berühmten Orden der Nacht.*
[34] Hartley (2000:197) notes: "the alchemists used the image of the black sun or *sol nigger* to symbolize the death of base matter". This is related to the first part of the process of turning base matter into gold, during which base matter was supposed to turn black and enter the stage known as *nigredo*, "in which the body of the impure metal, the matter of the Stone, or the old outmoded state of being is killed, putrefied and dissolved into the original substance of creation, the *prima materia*, in order that it may be renovated and reborn in new form" (Lyndy Abraham 1988:135 qtd. Hartley 2000:197). Cf Thomas McEvilley (1996:4) on "the alchemical concept of the *nigredo*, a stage of the transformation of matter in which it burned down to a blackened residue before being reconstituted into a spiritual state in the *albedo*", in relation to Kiefer's oeuvre. Cf Schoeman (2000:72). See also Schoeman (1996:15, no. 9) on Derrida's textual interpolations of light and dark. Derrida (1987:86) writes, "But did not the Platonic sun already enlighten the visible sun, and did not the excendence play upon the meta-phor of these two suns? Was not the good the necessarily nocturnal source of the light? The light of the light beyond light. The heart of light is black, as has often been noticed". One might compare this to the Gnostic notion of a dark light, and of course to Kristeva's reading of melancholia and depression by way of the metaphor of the black sun, as the loss of an ideal of "thing". Cf Taylor (1999) below. Cf Marin (1999:76) who writes in *Sublime Poussin*: "How to show the darkness that all light contains at its source?" Hence also Damisch's notion of "l'histoire noire".

the top right of the painting, 'For Robert Fludd', an allegorical, alchemical or Kabbalistic countermotion is put into play. By way of the name or rebus of the sixteenth- to seventeenth-century English Rosicrucian, the force of descending here increases another that is acting in the opposite direction (Schoeman 2003a:95f).[35]

Kiefer's *Light trap* also enunciates a fourth constellation: that of the Holocaust.[36] This constellation is evoked by a closely related work Kiefer painted around the same time, entitled *Light compulsion* (*Lichtzwang*). The word "Lichtzwang" refers to the title of a book of poems by Paul Celan, the Jewish poet who is evoked in several of Kiefer's works, such as *Shulamite* (1983), referencing the Holocaust. Hartley (2000:198) notes that "'light compulsion' refers to the enforced lighting around the camps to ensure no-one could escape under cover of darkness". He notes "the word can also be read as 'forcing light in, together, preventing it from escaping", hence linking back to the trap in *Light trap*, now evoking the ovens of the extermination camps. In *Shulamite* Kiefer refers to Celan's "Death fugue" ["*Todesfuge*"] (1946), written in a concentration camp. In the poem "Celan pairs and contrasts Margarete with Shulamith: [the German] Margarete's female Jewish counterpart, whose grave in the air the Jewish slave workers are forced to dig. At the end of the poem, after the Jews are apparently shot, Celan concludes with a synecdochic verbal image of the two absent women: 'your golden Hair Margarete/your ashen Hair Shulamith'" (Biro 1998:183). In Kiefer's constellational image, which pairs and contrasts with several of his other works, the name Shulamith (inscribed as "Sulamith" at the top left of the canvas) evokes the melancholy absence or infinite exile of both women.[37]

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[35] Cf Benjamin's (1978:312) "Theologico-political fragment" on the dialectical relation between the sacred and the profane: "If one arrow points to the goal toward which the profane dynamic acts, and another marks the direction of Messianic intensity, then certainly the quest of free humanity for happiness runs counter to the Messianic direction; but just as a force can, through acting, increase another that is acting in the opposite direction, so the order of the profane assists, through being profane, the coming of the Messianic Kingdom".

[36] Bernstein (2001:373) cites Berel Lang: "[Holocaust] derives from the use in the Septuagint of *holokaustoma* ('totally consumed by fire') — the Greek translation of the Hebrew *olah*, which designates the type of ritual sacrifice that was to be completely burned". Bernstein adds: "The name 'the Shoah' equally possesses fitness and misdirection. In Hebrew *shoah* means, variously, destruction or wasteland; its Yiddish equivalent picked up the sense of a destruction of the Temples. 'Shoah' hence came to designate a destruction that was a 'breach or a turning point in history'". The destroyed, uncovered yet hidden Mayan temple in Kiefer's painting may then be figured in a constellation with the above.

[37] This absence, exile, or death in Kiefer's work, as well as in Kentridge's work, tends to be self-reflexive — that is, it involves a reflection on, or a questioning of, representation itself. As Mark C Taylor (1999:24) writes, "[s]ince absence inevitably haunts representation, representations figure a lack that cannot be filled". He notes, in similar vein to Marin (1995): "In the medium of painting [or drawing], the picture is the absence — perhaps even the death — of the thing" (Taylor 1999:24f). For Taylor (1999:35), "[t]he absence haunting representation repeatedly places the picture in question". My notion of self-reflexivity is different to Taylor's (1999:57) critical understanding of "a self-reflexive circuit", typical of modernism, wherein "all reference is self-reference, there is nothing outside the image or sign. The play of signs becomes as seamless as a web without holes, gaps, or rifts". In my estimation, self-reflexivity in the work of Benjamin, Kiefer, and Kentridge is precisely what *enunciates* or *opens up* holes, gaps, or rifts, both in their representations and in our (self-reflexive) reading or viewing of it. Self-reflexivity is then also the result of the irreducible gap between signifier and signified. The self-reflexivity of Benjamin's, Kiefer's, and Kentridge's work has the effect or affect of alerting the reader or viewer to the work's own textured, allegorical weavings and flurries, as these are melancholically enfolded with their always already absent referents. This philosophical and textured self-reflexivity is what "keeps the wound [of art and history] open" (Holly 2002 & Jay 1996). As a form of en-*folding*, to borrow Taylor (1999:59) slightly against himself, this allegorical self-reflexivity, which always refers the reader or viewer *elsewhere* (cf Schoeman 2004, n13), "interrupts the apparently closed circuits of self-reference and self-reflection". See also Schoeman (2004) on the fraught self-reflexivity of Kentridge's work, which, to cite Taylor (1999:77) out of context, "does not try to negate lack but deploys erasure to let absence stand forth in its withdrawal". The allegorically self-reflexive, and ultimately melancholic, questioning of representation within representation also bears on the representation of history — of things past or silent — a key concern for both Kiefer and Kentridge, as it is for Benjamin. Taylor (1999:28) writes: "That which is already missing constitutes something like an irreducible past — a past that cannot be re-presented. And yet, this past is at the same time the condition of the possibility of all presence and every present", that is, of all representation or "*Darstellung*, which mediates between saying and showing" (Missac 1995:28).

The repetitive indeterminacy[38] or self-reflexive ambiguity of Kiefer's works on the Holocaust "sits uneasily with the essentially spiritual reading of the alchemist's *opus*" (Hartley 2000:200). However, it is precisely the holding of two contradictory ideas together, without one negating the other, that lends Kiefer's works their melancholy dialectics. For Pensky (2001:246, 247) melancholy dialectics grants images a fragile redemptive power,[39] situated — retrospectively, by *Nachträglichkeit* — in "a space, albeit a terribly small one … between antinomies".[40] It is with this melancholy dialectics in mind that one may figure Kiefer's *Light trap* in a constellation with Kentridge's animated film *Felix in exile*,[41] a work that figures the melancholy absence or exile of Felix and Nandi, in a mobile, melancholy constellation.

Let me firstly contextualise Kentridge's film, which stages and in inscribed with the very recent South African past. In a previous article on *Felix in exile*, I noted:

> *Felix in exile* was made in 1994, shortly before South Africa's first democratic general election. In this context one might see the figure of Felix as melancholically reflecting (on) the ambiguities of 'Paradise Lost', that is, of the supposed Paradise of the colonial-apartheid past. Benjamin's understanding of knowledge as related to both allegory and guilt, as well as the fall into subjectivity, may then be related to the ambiguous conscious-raising processes, which followed the elections and which culminated in the often irreconcilable traumas and differences experienced during and after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The TRC represents the often terrible proximity between remembering and disremembering, innocence and guilt. Instead of resolving the contradictions and paradoxes of testimony, guilt, and forgiveness, and contrary to its

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[38] Cf Biro's (1998) characterisation of Kiefer's work as employing a hermeneutics of indeterminacy. Cf Bal's (2002:92) preference for "infinitude" over "semantic indetermination" or "endlessness", writing with reference to James Coleman's *Photograph* (1998-9): "It is this undecidability that Coleman's work not only demonstrates and endorses, but also sacrifices and transcends — in order to give voice" (Bal 2002:210). On the other hand, referring to the readability and unreadability of Benjamin's textual and imagistic figurations of ornaments, constellations, and flurries, Menke (2002:269) speaks of "a *gestalt-switch*, an incessant oscillation of undecidable determinations, in which according to Benjamin all ornaments participate. The difference between figure and ground and background, whose erasure would make ornaments, images, and arabesques impossible, is blurred in the undecidability of a polysemy, which is due precisely to the fact that decisions must be made constantly and that decisions always already have been made". Referring to the irreducible tension between readability and unreadability in Benjamin's texts, Richter (2000:232) writes: "[T]he decisions that the reader must make in the act of reading are to be wrested from the act of experiencing an aporetic moment of something that cannot be decided, something that can neither be given in advance not once and for all". For Richter, "Benjamin emphasizes the political importance of deferring a finite decision". Emphasising "…Benjamin's understanding of the *infinite* process of decision-making", he writes, "[f]or Benjamin, there can be no hope for transformation without the radical *keeping open* of future possibilities" (Richter 2000:233). He cites Benjamin: "The task is therefore not to make a finite decision once and for all, but rather to decide at every moment. But to *decide*" (Richter 2002:32). Richter's suggestion of the political importance of the infinite process of decision-making may in a sense be linked with Bal's notion of the political potential of undecidability. After relating polysemy with allegory, she writes, "[t]he question … is whether the semiotically inevitable undecidability and plurality of meanings is really so free". From the point of view of accountability she calls for the reinsertion of the political potential of Derrida's notion of undecidability within the theoretical discourse on art (Bal 2001b:72). Cf Derrida (1981:3) on undecidability and Derrida (1984:8) on indeterminism: "[F]or some of us the principle of indeterminism is what makes the conscious freedom of man fathomable". In the context of Benjamin's, Kiefer's, and Kentridge's *melancholic* approach to politics, history, and decision-making, see Pensky (2001) on the proximity between melancholia and indecisiveness in the baroque mourning play, and on the paradoxical attempt to overcome melancholia by way of a politics of decision-making.

[39] Cf Benjamin's (2003:390) notion of a "*weak* messianic power". See Schoeman (2004, n27).

[40] The "spectral", revolutionary-messianic space between is a recurring motif in Benjamin's thought, as in the multifarious figuring "of thresholds, transitions, and transitory acts and events". As Richter (2002:5) observes "[t]his transitory quality of thought and of writing is for Benjamin always both a liberation and a liability". Hence the irreducibility of what Pensky refers to as melancholy dialectics in Benjamin's work.

[41] 35 mm animated film, transferred to video and laser disc, 8 mins., 43 secs., colour. Soundtrack: composition for string trio by Phillip Miller; Go Tlapsha Didiba by Motsumi Makhene.

desire for symbolic closure [and consolation], the TRC as an event may be seen to open up the allegorical abyss of signification (Schoeman 2004:17n22).

This allegorical abyss of signification, fraught with melancholy repetition devoid of telos, may then be knotted[42] together with the melancholy dialectics at play in Kiefer's ambiguous works on the Holocaust, as noted above. Thus the historically specific melancholia, always already bidirectional, figured in *Felix in exile* may be "preposterously" enfolded with the historically specific trauma figured in Kiefer's work. Moreover, Kentridge's repeated allegorical use of the visual language of Weimar Germany resonates with "Benjamin's reading of the empty, inauthentic world of the Reformation [as formulated in his *The origin of German tragic drama*], which for him serves allegorically and dialectically as an expression of Weimar Germany…" (Schoeman 2003a:103n27). For both Kentridge and Benjamin the decay of the past (whether experienced from a German-Jewish or South African-Jewish perspective) allegorically pre-figures the decay of the present. Kiefer's work, too, repeatedly returns to the haunted/haunting site of the (German) past as a means to figure the irreducible complexities of the present.

Thus the "preposterous" enfolding of the work of Benjamin, Kiefer, and Kentridge in and as a melancholy/mobile constellation should, on the one hand, bear witness to, rather than elide, the actual historical embeddedness of their respective work. Benjamin lived through World War I and died shortly before the onset of World War II; Kiefer began working as a German artist after World War II; and Kentridge has produced his work both during and after apartheid in South Africa. Each individual's work reflects these different times and spaces, in multifarious and vacillating rather than positivistic ways.[43] However, what knots or links Benjamin's, Kiefer's, and Kentridge's work, even with the historical differences that inflect their work, is the historical trauma that marks both German and South African history. One may speak here, as Bal (1999:7) does, of a "coevalness", of a "shared time". Crucial in this regard would be the recognition of the multifarious critique of "fascist aestheticisation" that characterises the work of all three, in a way that would emphasise "the need to recognize critically the legacy of the past in the present (Koepnick 1999:8).[44] On the other hand, Kiefer, Kentridge, and

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[42] My use of the word "knot" is derived from Damisch's (Bois *et al* 1998:7) interest in "the idea of knotting, which is to say nouage as opposed to nuage [cloud]. I fantasize about writing a Theory of /Knotting/ [Une Theorie du /nouage/], which would ask how Western art constitutes itself in relation to a fundamental knotting or linking with geometry in Greece or even in Egypt…". See also Bankovsky's (2004) article "A thread of knots: Jacques Derrida's homage to Emmanuel Levinas' ethical reminder".

[43] For some the different timeframes that mark the work of Benjamin, Kiefer, and Kentridge would see Benjamin working within the context of modernism, whilst Kiefer's and Kentridge's work is often seamlessly characterised as postmodern. Nevertheless, numerous authors have pointed out that Benjamin's work pre-empts so-called postmodernism, and several have appropriated his work as such. Furthermore, as Jameson (2002:1) has noted recently, much of so-called postmodern thinking harks back to modernism, suggesting "the return to and the reestablishment of all kinds of old things, rather than their wholesale liquidation". The dialectic between modernism and postmodernism is to my mind precisely what is at stake in my constellational enfolding of the work of Benjamin, Kiefer, and Kentridge.

[44] Benjamin's multidimensional critique of fascist aestheticisation and the Nazi spectacle resurfaces in the Kiefer's work in ambiguous but important ways; Kentridge's concern with fascist aestheticisation and mass spectacle resonates with Benjamin's and Kiefer's work, though one ought not simply conflate Nazi aestheticisation and the aestheticisation redolent of the apartheid regime. There are important crossovers (both, for example, involve modernising functions, cf Koepnick 1999:9), but also important historical differences. What is critical though according to Koepnick (1999:2) is that "Nazi aesthetics [and by extension, apartheid aesthetics, GS] remains fascinating today because postmodern culture similarly desires spectacles and mass-reproduced representations. An uncanny soulmate of the Nazi spectacle, postmodernism incessantly recycles images of the Third Reich as it seeks in its own ways to break down modern boundaries between politics and aesthetics and to turn life into a fantastic [commodified, GS] work of art".

Benjamin all image history allegorically and melancholically through "other" histories (cf Hanssen 1998); the historical specificity of their work should also be visualised, read and dispersed elsewhere (cf Bal 2001b). For, as Hamacher (1988:175) writes, "[r]eading [and, by extension, the allegorical imaging of history, GS] is not the gathering of disparate things but rather that dispersion in which gathering alone is possible". This enfolding and dispersion elsewhere is arguably what Benjamin meant when he spoke of the now-time in which different histories come together in a flash, only to disappear again.

Bearing the above in mind, I want to linger with two drawings from *Felix in exile*. In the first drawing Nandi is traced and erased,[45] enunciated and negated as in Kiefer's *Nero paints*, in a constellation of drawings pinned to the wall of Felix's room. As constellation, she appears both asleep and, by virtue of the melancholy *Nachträglichkeit* self-reflexively performed during the course of the film,[46] as a corpse. Whether asleep or a corpse, the ghostly figure[47] or trace of Nandi (a black woman) can never be wholly available to Felix (a white man). Coupled with Felix's own unavailability to himself,[48] this is what lends the film its self-reflexive sense of melancholia, its sense of loss, absence and exile (cf Schoeman 2004).[49] By extension, it is this loss, absence and exile that has prompted me to adopt a self-reflexive and performative approach to this paper, given that, as mentioned earlier, the object of the art historian's analysis is always already a lost object (cf Holly 2002). To follow Richter (2000:161), representation as allegorically performed in *Felix in exile* is thus figured as a self-reflexive and self-critical act of "mourning over the unavailability of the other's body that the corpus of the text [drawing or film] enacts" (cf Schoeman 2004).[50]

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[45] For more on the melancholy dialectics of tracing and erasure in *Felix in exile* see Schoeman (2004).

[46] For more on Kentridge's self-reflexivity see Schoeman (2004) and below.

[47] See Schoeman (2004) on Nandi as ghost that haunts Felix and, by extension, the viewer/writer. As Derrida (1994:10 qtd. Schoeman 2004) writes: "What does it mean to follow a ghost? And what if this came down to being followed by it, always persecuted by the very chase we are leading?" Cf Caygill (1998:54 qtd. Schoeman 2003a:102): "[T]he mourning play is not the reflection of a higher life, but merely the reflection of a mirror in a mirror, and its continuation is no less shadowy that itself. The dead become ghosts".

[48] Cf Benjamin's (1999b:810) statement in his essay on Kafka: "[T]he most forgotten source of strangeness is our body — one's own body". Earlier on in the same essay he writes, "[f]or just as K. lives in the village on Castle Hill, modern man lives in his own body: the body slips away from him, is hostile toward him". For more on Benjamin and the strangeness or unavailability of our own bodies see Richter (2000).

[49] In his discussion of "the Lacanian moment of the imaginary vs. the symbolic", Bert Olivier (2004) notes that the (maternal) imaginary provides the child with an illusory sense of wholeness, an illusion with both positive and negative implications. On the one hand, the imagistic fantasy of wholeness is what provides the child with a sense of self and a sense of well being. On the other hand, the identification with an (illusory) other is based on misrecognition, and may result in regression and anxiety, rooted in a sense of loss. One might add here that in the context of Kentridge's *Felix in exile*, Felix's imaginary identification with (the maternal) Nandi, is precisely what produces his sense of melancholia, given that she is always already lost to him. For, as Missac (1995:5) notes, "there is always something inaccessible about the woman [or man] one wants to love". It may therefore be argued that Lacan's notion of the imaginary is intricately linked to melancholia, something Kristeva (1989) has suggested in her book *Black sun*. See also Schoeman (2004) for a reading of the enfoldedness of Felix and Nandi in relation to Lacan's notion of the mirror-stage, as well as Schoeman (2004, n21) on the intertwinement of sexual desire and knowledge, guilt, loss, and melancholia in Kentridge's *Felix in exile*.

[50] Richter (2000:158) writes: "The body prevents its reading from being organized into a closed hermeneutic system. In the moment of reading, it is in a certain sense already a corpse. This corpse registers its multiple and heterogenous affinities with absence and finitude". Cf Fried (1987) on the body's uncanny similarity with the corpse qua text, and my reading of the body/corpse/text/trace in *Felix in exile* in Schoeman (2004).

In the same drawing the naked Felix is shown with his back to us, a stance that prefigures his stance at the end of the film, thus setting up a cyclic or repetitive motion — or better yet, a loop.[51] His head partially overlaps with Nandi's head, which is strongly suggestive of his seemingly embodied projection of her as a melancholy extension of himself,[52] and as an image or constellation on the wall. The term "image" denoting Nandi might be enfolded here in a constellation with the wide range of different combinations and contexts in which the term appears in Benjamin's writings. Nandi may thus be seen as graphic image (*Schriftbild*), dream-image (*Traumbild*), image of history (*Bild der Geschichte*), mnemic image (*Erinnerungsbild*), thought-image (*Denkbild*), and dialectical image (*dialektische Bild*) (Weigel 1996:23).[53] Moreover, Felix's somatic, imagistic, and constellational projection, in turn, mirrors the viewer's/writer's own somatic, imagistic, and constellational projections.[54] Thus Felix is enfolded with the allegorical image or polysemic constellation of Nandi, and the viewer/writer is somatically enfolded with both him and Nandi, as well as with the various, mobile constellations figured paradigmatically and syntagmatically in the film. This multifarious enfolding sets up what Bal (1999:7) refers to as "a vision that can be characterized as a vacillation between subject and object of that vision and which changes the status of both".

In the second drawing, Nandi holds a pile of papers similar to the pile of drawings Felix pores over earlier on in the film. She looks up at the black heavens, appearing to imagine or project a bundled corpse as constellation against the black starry heavens behind her, which conjures again Celan's (2001:31) melancholy line, "we shovel a grave in the air where you won't lie too cramped". In a reverse mirror image of the first drawing, her head overlaps slightly with the constellation of the bundled corpse traced or figured in white against the night sky punctuated with white stars. Similar to the dialectical play in Kiefer's *Light trap*, the white here does not cause the black night sky to recede but rather to advance all the more.[55] Thus this drawing may be figured in a constellation with the first drawing, once again suggesting a bidirectional or deictic thematics in which Nandi mirrors (but also disfigures) Felix, Felix mirrors Nandi, and corpus mirrors corpse (cf Schoeman 2004).[56] Both drawings may then be figured in a constellation with Kiefer's *Light trap*, with the aim of highlighting the deployment of a Benjaminian self-

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[51] Margot Bauman (2004) notes that, "the loop, as a temporal form, functions either as a closed cycle, or a form that while apparently repeating itself is always differentiated". She writes: "Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari describe a loop folding back on itself, while not returning to its place of origin. Jacques Derrida uses this failure of origins to structure a system of ethics grounded in the elusion of the eternal return of the same". The failure of the loop to return to its origins seems to be a felicitous conceptual key to an understanding of the work of Benjamin, Kiefer, and Kentridge. The work of all three returns obsessively to the same (melancholy) concerns, while always with a difference.
[52] Bodily extension may indeed feature in *Felix in exile* in terms of a loss of self (cf van Alphen 1998, Schoeman 2004), but it may also be reread in Bersani's (Dean *et al* 1997:17) terms, "as an effect of reaching toward one's own 'form' elsewhere". According to Bersani, "[t]his self-dissolution is also self-accretion; it is self-incremental".
[53] See also van den Berg (2004) for a sustained discussion of different image types, as tabled by Gibson, Elkins, and Mitchell.
[54] Cf Fried (2002:14) on the "mysterious faculty of projection in the activities of both artist and viewer".
[55] In relation to the constellations of white stars against black skies or ground in both Kiefer's and Kentridge's work see Marin (1995:162f). He writes: "Putting a white spot on a black background makes this spot advance or stand out in relation to the black surface, but it does not make the black background recede. On the contrary, the black advances all the more as a result".
[56] Similar to the melancholy or neo-Platonic bidirectionality at play in Kiefer's *Light trap*, in *Felix in exile* the chthonic or telluric corpse is mirrored above as uranic constellation, and vice versa. Cf Hanssen (1998:94) on telluric matter and materiality and uranic spirit and spirituality, and Schoeman (2003a:91) on "the alchemical transmutation of lead into gold, the transcendence of mute matter into spirit".

reflexivity whereby "a certain representation of death refers to the process of representation as death" (Marin 1995: 87).

Moreover, as a form of "melancholy writing" (Pensky 2001: 5, Schoeman 2004),[57] the performative or preposterous imaging of history in the work of Benjamin, Kiefer, and Kentridge may be read as always already entangled with a dialectical or allegorical rhetorics of transience, disappearance, loss, ruin, obscurity, impossibility and failure. More specifically, in the imaging of history in the work of all three, one gets a sense "of the radically restricted range of the politically possible, and a concomitant heightening of the sense of the mournful, historically exiled, and imperiled contents of human experience", to cite Max Pensky (2001: 42) on Benjamin. In this regard, the imaging of history in Benjamin, Kiefer, and Kentridge, as "l'histoire noire", may be mutually related to the Baroque mourning play, and to the Jewish understanding of history as endless exile, danger and catastrophe (Pensky 2001: 18), both of which are characterised by a dialectics of melancholic repetition rather than resolution (cf Caygill 1998: 53, Jay 1996: 12, Schoeman 2004). Repetition or looping here includes the idea that melancholia is both the origin and result of the longing for (historical) knowledge and meaning. At the same time, the deployment or performance of repetition marks Benjamin's, Kiefer's, and Kentridge's work as "profoundly different" from artworks or theoretical works "that have 'The End' inscribed in them" (Bal 2002: 200).[58] As Thain (2004), paraphrasing Deleuze, notes, "what is repeated in repetition is difference itself".

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[57] Pensky (2001:5) notes: "Yet, insofar as writing about the incommunicable, about melancholy, could only 'mean' its intention as it springs from its object, '*melancholie redet sich selber*': melancholy always speaks and writes itself. The horizon beyond the interiority of melancholy is withdrawn as insistently as writing approaches it. The Thing, the unnameably, irretrievably withheld, whether the messianic day or the mother, absolute truth or eternal peace, establishes the impossibility and necessity of melancholy writing by its very absence. In this sense, the cultural critic who writes through/about melancholic culture is, for all perspectival achievements, perhaps even more savagely thrown back into the radical immanence of depression". Pensky then asks: "What, in other words, would it mean to write critically 'about' melancholia?" Pensky introduces his book on Benjamin with these remarks, and then goes on to project the historical image or constellation of melancholia as fundamentally dialectical: meaning both diabolical illness and privileged insight, both radical pessimism apropos meaningful, political action and messianic hope apropos not-yet, future fulfilment. He (2001:246 & 7) concludes his book by arguing that it is the dialectical oscillation within the image of melancholia that may produce or reveal — retrospectively, by *Nachträglichkeit* (cf Kaufmann 1997:41, Nägele 1991) — the most productive criticism, one in which contradiction and impossibility is both loved and used. It is from the mobile perspective of Pensky's melancholy dialectics, in which contradiction serves a productive, dialectical and critical purpose, that the work of Benjamin, Kiefer, and Kentridge may be imaged or projected in and as a *critical*, melancholy constellation. Cf also the dialectics of contradition in the melancholy writing of Kierkegaard (cf. Fried 2002:174) and Adorno (cf Leppert 2002). For Adorno, "Kierkegaard's melancholy inwardness thus becomes the truest expression of the phenomenology of the bourgeois *intérieur*, as well as the dialectical moment in which this phenomenology is referred to the idea of reconciliation" (Pensky 2001:142 qtd Schoeman 2004). Similarly to Benjamin's dialectical reading of failure in Kafka, for Adorno the "failure" of Kierkegaard's thought dialectically refers to its immanent, future reconciliation. Kierkegaard's veneration of contradiction on the grounds of the inward-turned self, as in inward-turned melancholia, may then be projected towards the "moment in which the strength of the individual is capable, through sacrifice, of harnessing the historical and personal forces that define his sorrow" (Pensky 2001:246). Instead of thereby wholly abandoning melancholia, for rendering us impotent (as in so-called left-wing melancholia), melancholia may be redeemed, in Benjaminian vein, for the critico-historical potential of its internal dialectics. See also Schoeman (2004) on redemptive melancholia in Kentridge's *Felix in exile*.

[58] Cf Schoeman (2003a:105): "While for Benjamin the anamnestic concepts of the sublime and the expressionless may ethically put an end to the dialectic of ascendance and descendance, both within allegory and melancholia, it will be suggested that this idea is itself enfolded with melancholia. Univocal knowledge here is always already bound to the *gravitas* of impossible endings". Whether inflected by theology or materialism, Benjamin's philosophy of history indeed holds out for an interruption of the mythic, Nietzschean eternal recurrent of the ever-the-same, of history as repetitive catastrophe (cf Missac 1995:111-113). But this interruption, caesura, reversal or redemptive/apocalyptic blasting or flashing of history is always already infinitely delayed; weakened or dimmed by the fact that history-as-catastrophe continues to haunt the present. One might say it serves, melancholically, as a "weak" retroactive force that opens up a

Following from this, Benjamin's dialectical reading of the infinite polysemy of allegory,[59] as both expression and transposition of melancholic or fallen knowledge, supplements the historical image of melancholia as fundamentally dialectical: signifying, for example, both illness and insight.[60] For Benjamin, "[m]elancholy vision … necessarily precedes allegorical technique. The assignation of meaning onto unredeemed elements of a natural-historical stage, a 'petrified, primordial landscape', presupposes the tremendous alienation from immediacy, from the quotidian, that the melancholic experiences" (Pensky 2001:116).[61] Benjamin's *visualised* dialectics of allegory and melancholia — wherein the one presupposes the other — may be seen to be especially pertinent to understanding both Kiefer's and Kentridge's work. This is so given the allegorical and melancholic suggestion in the work of all three that "a return from exile can never be a homecoming" (Weigel 1995:140). The circle always loses its way (Bankovsky 2004).

This infinite and melancholy exile may be given a dialectical face by way of another constellation, this time figured in a drawing by Kiki Smith, entitled *Constellation* (1996). What I have in mind here is an embodied reading of her constellation as an allegory of the autumnal resemblances between Benjamin's, Kiefer's, and Kentridge's work. The three faces in her drawing — each face resembling the face of the other — may be read as enfolded in a mobile and melancholy constellation — that is to say, as a single face, which appears in a flash.[62] According to Benjamin (qtd. Weigel 1996:125f), the perception of resemblance or similitude[63] in now-time "offers itself to the eye as fleetingly and transitorily as a constellation of stars". He writes dialectically:

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tiny space for the not-yet. Cf Benjamin's (2003:390) notion of the "*weak* messianic power" conferred on the present, as mentioned above.

[59] Benjamin (1998:175) writes: In allegory "[a]ny person, any object, any relationship can mean absolutely anything else". Entangled in both finitude and infinity, one might say that allegory, as a figure of speech, is "concerned with what is not shown, what cannot be represented, what must go missing", to cite Elkins (2001:201) out of context. Richter (2002:3) writes of Benjamin's work: "To the extent that any truth can emerge from his writings at all, it is one that the reader must seek in what the text does not say on the surface, not even between the lines, but in an elsewhere that remains open to discussion. Indeed, the truth of his writings *is* this elsewhere. Cf Buci-Glucksmann's (1994:39) suggestion that Benjamin's work "continually refers us elsewhere". If allegory — with its dialectical emphasis on surface materiality and on the spaces or gaps between words and things — is seen as the mobile link between Benjamin's, Kiefer's and Kentridge's work this characterisation may also apply to the latter two. See Schoeman (2004).

[60] Cf Nägele (1991:81): "The landscape of melancholy shows its autumnal face in the park of allegory, said to be dead. Like reading, this face has two sides: an outward side of melancholy and an infolded side of vision; both are contained in the German word *Gesicht*. In the vision, what is seen is transformed; sense and meaning are reconstituted out of the ashes of things". Both Kiefer's and Kentridge's work may be literally envisioned as materially and conceptually *performing* or *en-acting* the (alchemical) reconstitution of (historical) sense and meaning "out of the ashes of things".

[61] For more on Benjamin's thoughts on allegory and melancholia see also Schoeman (2003a & 2004).

[62] The Benjaminian flash may be messianic, apocalyptic, violent, erotic, ecstatic (cf Bal 2001a), but always occurs as an imagistic-acoustic caesura in time. Cf also de Jager (2004), Moses (1996) and Weigel (2002) on the caesura. For Benjamin, the image-as-constellation flashes up for an instant, only to disappear irretrievably. It is like "the flash, perhaps, with which one takes photographs at night" (Missac 1995:118), an apt metaphor for a writing or seeing of "l'histoire noire".

[63] Weigel (1996:176n11) notes that "…Benjamin's use of the term [similitude] is associated with his concept of the image, not as reproduction, but, in an older tradition, as likeness, resemblance, Latin *similitudinem*". Similitude encompasses "the meanings 'likeness, resemblance', and also, pertinently, 'counterpart'".

> [E]verything is a face: each thing has the degree of bodily presence that allows it to be searched — as one searches a face — for such traits[64] as appear. Under these conditions even a sentence (to say nothing of the single word) puts on a face, and this face resembles that of the sentence standing opposed to it. In this way every truth points manifestly to its opposite, and this state of affairs explains the existence of doubt. Truth becomes something living; it lives solely in the rhythm by which statement and counterstatement displace each other in order to think each other (Benjamin 1999:418).[65]

The "irreducible inadequacy" (Bankovsky 2004) of figuring this spectral, dialectical face of doubt, once and for all, is what knots the work of Benjamin, Kiefer, and Kentridge together. Coevally, it means there can be no consoling conclusion, no "The End" to the textual, performative flurries with which we attempt to configure their work — in and as a melancholy/mobile constellation.[66] As hypertext author Shelley Jackson (qtd Sonstroem 2004) writes, "[w]e are nearly all of us bad or disorderly writers; despite ourselves we are redundant, looped, entangled; our transitions are awkward, our conclusions unsubstantiated". All we are left with is the melancholy but also endlessly mobile realisation that "every text [or artwork] must fail" (Bankovsky 2004) if it is to speak — give face or do justice to the — other. Then and now, the failed, melancholy text or artwork that "thinks in images", "[acts] counter to our time and thereby [acts] on our time and, let us hope, for the benefit of a time to come" (Nietzsche qtd Deleuze 1994:xxi). Perhaps this is what Bal (1999:24) has in mind when she speaks of "the plurality of [impossibly] 'possible worlds'".

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[64] Cf Derrida's deployment of the *trait* in *Memoirs of the blind*, where its use, as the translators (Brault & Naas 1993:2) note, suggests a range of meanings: "from a trait or feature to a line, stroke, or mark". Derrida's (1993:45) suggestion that "[t]he heterogeneity between the thing drawn and the drawing *trait* remains abyssal", resonates with Benjamin's theory of allegory. See also Schoeman (2004, n6).

[65] This passage from Benjamin's *The arcades project* relates felicitously to van den Berg's (2003) discussion of the prosopon and antiprosopon. See also Richter (2000:103) on de Man's notion of proposopeia: "'The figure of prosopopeia,' de Man writes, is 'the fiction of an apostrophe to an absent, deceased, or voiceless entity, which posits the possibility of the latter's reply and confers upon it the power of speech'. Through this tropological manoeuvre, the absent subject "assumes mouth, eye, and finally face, a chain that is manifest in the etymology of the trope's name, *prosopon poien*, to confer a mask or face (*prosopon*)'".

[66] Cf Taylor (1987:xxxviii) on "the uncertainty of conclusions and the impossibility of concluding".

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PAPER TITLE: SPEAKING IN A LANGUAGE OF OBSTACLE AND DELAY: MUTE MATTER AND MOURNING IN THE WORK OF DORIS SALCEDO

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Colombian artist Doris Salcedo[1] identifies the context surrounding and informing her work – that is, her conflicted homeland of Colombia – as marked by extreme *precariousness* with regard to history and memory:

> When you are caught up in conflict, in precarious conditions, you can't even remember things, never mind produce history. History summarizes, sanatizes and smooths out differences, so that everything appears to have been perfectly synchronized as a unified stance. This is not available to us. We not only have to deal with economic precariousness but with the precariousness of thought: an inability to articulate history and therefore to form a community (Basualdo 2000:25).

In response to such precariousness, the work that Salcedo produces – though specifically informed by particular civil war victims' memories of trauma – may be read as bearing witness to precisely this precarious uncertainty: the fallibility and unreliability of memory rather than memory as dependable recall, the impossibility of a direct or synchronised articulation of remembered trauma, and a paradoxical incapacity to represent the past definitively as both present and presence. In Salcedo's words: "Extreme precariousness produces a paradoxical image, one that is not defined; an image in which the nature of the work is never entirely present. It is indeterminate, so silence is all there is".[2] In taking Salcedo's precariousness, and paradoxical silence, as a starting point, this paper[3] will attempt to consider some of the complexities involved in the figuring of memory, where Salcedo's mute witness, which neither "summarizes" nor "sanatizes" the past, may be argued to elicit a reading of memory, and of the figuring of memory, as always already marked by failure, ambiguity, aporetic tension and doubt

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[1] Salcedo was born in the Colombian city of Bogotá in 1958. She obtained her BFA from the University of Bogotá in 1980, before completing a Master's degree in sculpture at New York University in 1984. Thereafter she returned to Bogotá, where she lectured at Colombia's national university until the late 1980s (Princenthal 2000:40, Basualdo 2000:8-12). Her experiences of the civil war in Columbia – as an ongoing conflict between right-wing paramilitary organisations (which are closely allied with the Colombian Armed Forces) and the numerous guerrilla groups formed officially in the mid 1960s – have included first-hand witnessing of incidents of violence. Shortly after her return from New York in 1985, for instance, Salcedo witnessed the occupation of the Palace of Justice in Bogotá by the M-19 guerrilla group. The take-over's violent suppression by the army left the courthouse torched and over 100 people dead. Salcedo claims that this "terrible recollection" is what prompted her "to conceive of works based on nothing, in the sense of having nothing and of there being nothing" (Basualdo 2000:14). For more on the history of the Colombian war, see Leech (1999).

[2] In its recognition of precariousness and subsequent impetus towards silence, Salcedo's art-making shares pertinent affinities with LaCapra's (1994:66) "dialogic dimension of historical study". This entails that "one seeks not abstracted meaning but meaningful guides to thought and practice, and one seeks them not in a hypostatized past or in some teleological master code but in and through one's very exchange with the past. But to be critical and self-critical, this undertaking must be sensitive to the problem of the possibilities and limits of meaning, including the threat of finding oneself at the point of irrecoverable loss and empty silence". Such silence need not, however, amount to "a sign of utter defeat"; rather, it is "a *silence survenu* intricately bound up with certain uses of language [or representation]" (LaCapra 1994:65).

[3] My thanks to Gerhard Schoeman – for the insights afforded by our numerous (if melancholic) discussions of this material, for his astute observations in relation to this paper, and for bringing Salcedo's work to my attention in the first place.

(Merewether 2000:140). Rather than presuming to "objectify the past and bring it within our grasp, as in a problematic positivist historicism" (Bal 1999:6), Salcedo's work evinces "the disassembled and the diachronic" where the past is a fugitive "half-present reality": "You never manage to perceive it is something concrete; you never manage to grasp it" (Basualdo 2000:26).[4] To this extent, memory appears not to function in Salcedo's work as a cipher of forgetting and of a narrative 'working through' towards closure; rather, what is figured is "memory at the edge of an abyss" (Huyssen 2000:101). As Salcedo explains: "the only way in which I confront memory in my work is to begin with the failure of memory" (Merewether 2000:140).

But how does one figure this "failure"? And what are the implications, not just in terms of the precariousness of bearing witness to memory's failure, but also (and by extension) to the reading of this precariousness and to the precariousness of reading?[5] In considering these questions, this paper attempts to offer what is itself a precarious reading of Salcedo's work, as refracted through the lenses of two theoretical viewpoints, and vice versa. These are: firstly, Sigmund Freud's (1957:243-258) differentiation between mourning and melancholia (first published 1917), where the latter may be seen as ambivalent, unresolved or interminable mourning;[6] and, secondly, Emmanuel Levinas's (1998:5-7, 37-38)[7] distinction between the *saying* and the *said*, where the *saying*, as "nonthematizable, nonrepresentable, beyond the gatherings of history and memory" (Handelman 1991:250), is "a performative *doing* that cannot be reduced to a propositional description" (Critchley 2002:18) and that circulates as a trace or interruption within the thematisation and synchronised temporality of the *said* (Levinas 1998:37).[8] Correlatively, both of these approaches will be further mediated through Jacques

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[4] Salcedo's approach may thus be contrasted with what Huyssen (2000:102) refers to as "an increasingly spectacularized culture of memory and its obsession with public sites of commemoration, monuments and memorials". In relation to Johannesburg's Apartheid Museum, for instance, a magazine article (*Sawubona* March 2002:50) suggests that "memory has been made concrete for all to see and remember for always" – this is in stark contrast to Salcedo's contention that one never manages to perceive the past "as something concrete" (Basualdo 2000:26). Huyssen's reservations about spectacularised memory are not dissimilar to LaCapra's (1994:63) concerns about the utilisation of extreme trauma, and its remembrance, as "symbolic capital". Writing in the context of Holocaust memorials, LaCapra advocates caution that "the Holocaust may serve as 'symbolic capital' or as a pretext for self-serving monumentalization". Such "self-serving monumentalization" – be it in the context of the Holocaust, Apartheid or the Colombian civil war – is arguably counterproductive in its efforts to manage and contain the extremity of trauma and the ungraspable excesses of memory. Hence Salcedo's suggestion that "[o]ver the past few years the question of memory has been abused and exhausted as a theme" (Merewether 2000:140). This links to the discussion in the latter part of this paper, where Salcedo's figuring of memory is considered in relation to Levinas's *saying* as a *nonthematisable* remainder.
[5] Cf Richter (2000) on readability and unreadability. See also Weigel (1996).
[6] As Eng & Kazanjian (2003:3-4) clarify, Freud was to complicate his initial (somewhat oppositional) identification of the relationship between mourning and melancholia in *The Ego and the Id* (1923), suggesting a reconsideration of his former identification of melancholia as pathological. For the purposes of this discussion, however, the terms 'mourning' and 'melancholia' will be utilised as they relate to his essay of 1917.
[7] In various interviews, Salcedo herself makes numerous implicit and explicit references to the writings of Levinas. See, for instance, Basualdo (2000:11, 13, 27) and Merewether (2000:134, 137, 142, 145). However, the discussion in this paper offers a reading of Salcedo's work that recognises also the precariousness of reading artistic intention, and of a reading defined by artistic intention. The inclusion of Levinas's notion of the *saying* and the *said* in the context of this paper is thus supplemented by, and a supplement to, Salcedo's response to Levinas, in terms of an enfolded relationship. Cf Bal (1999:13) on "supplementation" in relation to artistic intention and quotation.
[8] Critchley (2002:17-18) offers the following summary: "[W]e might say that the saying is my exposure – both corporeal and sensible – to the other person, my inability to resist the other's approach. It is the performative stating, proposing or expressive position of myself facing the other. It is a verbal and possibly also non-verbal ethical performance, of which the essence cannot be captured in constative propositions. It is, if you will, a performative *doing* that cannot be reduced to a propositional description. By contrast, the said is a statement, assertion or proposition of which the truth or falsity can be ascertained. To put it another way, one might say that the content of my words, their identifiable meaning, is the

Derrida's (1994:6) figure of the specter[9] or ghost[10] as "an unnameable or almost unnameable thing", which serves as an apposite figure through which to read the nonthematisable and unrepresentable *remainder*[11] common to Salcedo's figuring of (failed) memory, Freud's identification of unresolved melancholic loss and Levinas's identification of the *saying* as an incomprehensible performative relation, albeit in different ways.

Lastly, and as a recurring though spectral concern throughout, this paper will attempt to 'speak' Salcedo's assertion that "silence is all there is" (Basualdo 2000:25).[12] At the limit point of the sayable, where the immensity of loss and the precariousness of memory would disable direct or literal representation, the mute materiality of Salcedo's works may be seen as a means of articulating the unsayable *negatively*. Hence silence does not operate here as regressive denial or negation: it functions, rather, as an interval or caesura within the formulations of representation, perhaps mirroring the interruption (and irruption) of the *saying* in the *said*. Like Derrida's specter, negativity serves the "function of marking a threshold in [our] ways of knowing, acting and speaking" (Budick & Iser 1996:xiii): "It 'is' not and does not say what 'is'" (Derrida 1996:4). And yet, through its performative doubling and undoing of signification, it enables us to "extend ourselves towards the inaccessible" (Budick & Iser 1996:xiv).[13]

Perhaps it is appropriate, then, to begin with this precarious silence; with Walter Benjamin's (1996:73) assertion that "[i]n all mourning there is the deepest inclination to speechlessness"[14] and with the words from Wittgenstein's (qtd Derrida 1996:11) *Tractatus*: "Concerning that about which one cannot speak, one must remain silent".[15] Mourning – albeit impossible mourning – and speechlessness with regard to the unspeakable, seem evident in numerous ways in Salcedo's *Atrabiliarios* (1991-96), as the title itself would seem to indicate. *Atrabiliarios* derives from the Latin *atratus* (clothed in black, in mourning) and *bilis* (bile or rage) (Princenthal 2000:55), thus pointing also to classical humoral theory which posited a connection between excesses of black bile, as one of the four humors, and the melancholic

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said, while the saying consists in the fact that these words are being addressed to an interlocutor… The saying is a non-thematizable ethical residue of language that escapes comprehension, interrupts ontology and is the very enactment of the movement from the same to the other".

[9] In keeping with Kamuf's translation of Derrida's text, *Specters of Marx. The state of the debt, the work of mourning, and the New International*, my spelling of the word "specter" is in American English throughout.

[10] Descriptions of the past as *haunting* the present are numerous, thus supplementing the link between a melancholic conception of the past and the Derridean ghost or specter. See, for instance, Van Alphen (1997:15): "a past that no longer exists but keeps haunting the present" or Butler (2003:468): "a certain unavowability that haunts the present". See also Nietzsche (qtd Dollimore 1998:234): "a moment, now here and then gone… nonetheless returns as a ghost and disturbs the peace of a later moment". For a discussion of the past and its ghosts in relation to Benjamin, see Richter (2002).

[11] Cf Leppert (2002:34) on the remainder as ungraspable leftover in relation to Adorno.

[12] Cf Salcedo's response in an interview with Merewether (2000:137): "In art, silence is already a language – a language prior to language – of the unexpressed and the inexpressible… The silence of the victim of the violence in Colombia, my silence as an artist and the silence of the viewer come together during the precise moment of contemplation and only in the very space where that contemplation occurs".

[13] Thank you to Gerhard Schoeman for alerting me to Budick & Iser's *Languages of the unsayable*.

[14] My thanks to Gerhard Schoeman for drawing my attention to this quote.

[15] See Derrida's (1996:11-29) response to this quote from Wittgenstein, which, he claims, "inscribes the injunction to silence into the order or the promise of a 'one must speak'" and which "beckons toward the event of an order or of a promise that does not belong to what one currently calls history, the discourse of history or the history of discourse".

temperament (Eng & Kazanjian 2003:7).[16] On the one hand, the loss being mourned in *Atrabiliarios* is related to the precarious, and unspeakably horrific, circumstances of civil war: the work, as Salcedo explains, was based on several cases of disappearance – of people who went missing and who, when discovered in a common grave, could only be identified by the shoes that they were wearing (Basualdo 2000:17). Hence the shoes included in this series of installations: inserted into niches cut directly into the walls and veiled behind taut sheets of translucent animal fibre which are stitched flush to the plaster with surgical thread.

But if the shoes that Salcedo invokes had allowed their owners' identities to be determined and identified, then the shoes that one finds in *Atrabiliarios*, on the other hand, are precariously *un*identifiable and *in*determinate. Behind their stitched screens of animal fibre, they are quite literally untouchable but also ambiguously sealed off from view. In refusing to resolve themselves into something cognitively graspable, they may thus be seen to evoke the dimness of remembering trauma. The veiled shoes – as precisely the remainder that once gave identity to a loss – are themselves now dispossessed of identity; marking both the inaccessibility of what is lost and their own inaccessibility, or "strange lostness" (Paul Celan qtd Huyssen 2000:92), as markers. Moreover, even though the shoes are installed in linear sequences, the effect, as Nancy Princenthal (2000:55) suggests, is one of temporal distance and repetition rather than narrative unfolding: "the dominant visual experience in *Atrabiliarios* is not of narrative coherence but of clouded vision".[17]

Both of these aspects – clouded vision and the absence of narrative coherence – would prompt a reading of this work in terms of Freud's (1957:243-258) conception of interminable, unresolved mourning or melancholia. For where mourning would posit a clear identification of the loss, a gradual withdrawal of the ego from the lost object and thus a working-through of the loss towards closure, melancholia, by contrast, is marked by ambivalence and uncertainty. That is, melancholia evinces an inability to externalise and to detach from the ill-defined lost object, and thus an ongoing struggle with the loss in terms of repetition and irresolution rather than closure (Freud 1957:243-258, Eng & Kazanjian 2003:3). Mourning, as Derrida (1994:9) suggests, "consists always in attempting to ontologize remains, to make them present"; thus "[n]othing could be worse, for the work of mourning, than confusion or doubt". Where confusion or doubt cloud vision – where, as Freud (1957:245) suggests, one "cannot see clearly what it is that has been lost" – both the recollection and the resolution of the loss is disabled: one is rather in the space of melancholia, where the ego is haunted by the precarious and uncertain "shadow of the [lost] object" (Freud 1957:249) as "something never cognitively apprehended but existentially known" (Bollas qtd Holly 2002:3).

Yet Salcedo's work may be seen to reference not only "the impossibility of burying loved ones, of elaborating mourning" (Princenthal 2000:49), but also the paradoxical impossibility of speaking this

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[16] See also Schoeman (2003a:83-89) on the relationships between melancholia, black bile, reason and madness as refracted through Dürer's *Melencolia I*.
[17] Cf Damisch (2002) and Schoeman (2003b) for more on the cloud as a sign and clouded vision.

impossible mourning, except via a "language of disappearance" (Princenthal 2000:50). As a cloudy, uncertain residue, the shoes are *both* a material remainder that cannot be eradicated *and* a ghostly trace that cannot be grasped. They testify, as a material presence, to what has been lost, but are themselves "in the process of vanishing" (Basualdo 2000:26). Moreover, because the recessed niches containing the shoes are covered over by sheets of animal fibre – these being flush with the wall – Salcedo's work confounds the relationship between two- and three-dimensionality, or between 'image' and 'object'. Inasmuch as the shoes are 'actual' objects *behind* the animal fibre, they also read as furtive images *upon* the surface of these screens, presenting themselves as tentative projections rather than as objects in space.

As such these dematerialised shoes become uncannily photographic;[18] where the photograph, as Mieke Bal (1997:195, 210) suggests, is both a surface we cannot reach into, and "a 'skin'… that cannot be shed". Salcedo's work – as with the photograph – offers us, perhaps, what Derrida (2001:23) might call a "strange verdict, without truth, without veracity, without veridicity": "one would never again reach the thing itself, one would above all never touch it. Wouldn't even touch the veil behind which a thing is supposed to be standing". Both the veiled, dematerialised shoes, and the photograph as ghostly remainder, therefore demonstrate precisely the melancholic precariousness of memory, which alerts us that "the past is irrecoverable and the past is not past" (Butler 2003:467). It is, in a sense, "*the ungraspable that one cannot let go of*" (Bruns 2002:233n24).

In figuring the past as neither graspable nor past – or, indeed, in making precariously present the ungraspable past – the photograph shares with melancholia a disruption of narrative coherence: it presents us with what Roland Barthes (1984:96) calls an "anterior future". In contemplating a photograph of his mother in her youth, Barthes is compelled to mourn her loss twice over: once because *she is already dead*, and once because – as the child that she is in the photograph – *she is going to die*. Says Barthes: "I read at the same time: *This will be* and *this has been*; I observe with horror an anterior future of which death is the stake… In front of the photograph of my mother as a child, I tell myself: she is going to die: I shudder… *over a catastrophe which has already occurred*. Whether or not the subject is already dead, every photograph is this catastrophe". This catastrophic "anterior future" of the photograph points to an interruption in synchronised temporality and indicates what Barthes calls "a defeat of Time": "*that* is dead and *that* is going to die". In this defeat of time, moreover, the *closure* of an end is precluded through the indefinite and precarious postponement of this paradoxical future death: in arresting the subject as a trace, the photograph also signals its enduring and persistent – if specter-like – *survival*, in spite of its multiple deaths.

In this regard the catastrophic photograph is not unrelated to the ambivalent and paradoxical state of melancholia, where the melancholic's inability to resolve and to establish definitively what *is already lost*

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[18] For a related discussion of Salcedo's *Atrabiliarios* as proximate with photography and death, see Princenthal (2000:50-51).

both forestalls and anticipates loss interminably. In some respects, the melancholic's absorption of the object into the ego – as a *shadow* – serves precisely to delay, indefinitely, the cognitive apprehension of a loss that may have always already occurred: *that* is lost and *that* is going to be lost.[19] But here, too, the *closure of loss*, in terms of a definitive ending, is subject to indefinite delay: melancholia attests to *both* the death/loss of the object, as a perpetually anticipated anterior future, *and* the object's equivocally enduring (if shadowy) survival within the ego. Thus both melancholia and the catastrophic photograph may be seen, to cite Colin Richards (2004:13), as paradoxically "dead and death-defying in trying to hold captive lost traces".

As with the catastrophic photograph, then, melancholia evinces a past fraught with paradoxes: it cannot be grasped but it cannot be done with; if it "remains steadfastly alive in the present", as Eng & Kazanjian (2003:3) suggest, then it does so rather as a precariously 'un-dead', ungraspable and "unnameable" specter (Derrida 1994:6). For Eng & Kazanjian, it is precisely because of the irresolution intrinsic to melancholic loss that one might find in melancholia a redemptive (rather than catastrophic) potential,[20] as a means of dealing critically and productively with the past. For, unlike in mourning – where "the past is declared resolved, finished, and dead" – in melancholia the past is "neither fixed nor complete". Thus past and present, they argue, may be brought into proximity in terms of "an ongoing and open relationship". One wonders, however, if this "open relationship" is not in the order of an open wound (Holly 2002:3, 10, 11) – or, at least, a site of uncomfortable grafting – rather than effortless and healthy reciprocity. To complicate Eng & Kazanjian's binary somewhat, it might be suggested that the paradoxical past of the melancholic is *both* "finished and dead" *and* "neither fixed nor complete": as an irrecoverable but persistent shadow falling across the present, it is *both* dead *and* death-defying, as well as radically unattainable in spite of its incessant proximity.

In this sense, the (ostensibly redemptive) interface of shadowy past and precarious present remains the site of unresolved (and catastrophic) ambivalence, as the crudely stitched seams in *Atrabiliarios* may be seen to indicate. Here, the cloudy memory of past loss (of the victims who went missing) is joined through stitching to a contemporary, quotidian context, but in a manner that interrogates the seamlessness of both narrative coherence and synchronised time. As Princenthal (2000:57) suggests, "the pain expressed most directly in *Atrabiliarios* is not conveyed by the material contents of the memory (the shoes, the missing people they stand for) but by the attempt to join that experience to [the] present". The site of joining is also a site of rupture: it suggests that the gap between past loss and present remembrance cannot be entirely closed.[21] The past is thus figured as both suffocatingly proximate and yet radically other to the present, which may be argued to echo the disrupted temporality of trauma itself. As described by Dori Laub (1992:69), the extreme incomprehensibility of the traumatic event exceeds "the parameters of 'normal' reality, such as causality, sequence, place and time. The

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[19] Cf Agamben (qtd Eng & Kazanjian 2003:13): "We ought to say that melancholia offers the paradox of an intention to mourn that precedes and anticipates the loss of the object".
[20] See Pensky (2001) on the Jewish tradition of history as dialectically catastrophic and melancholia as possibly redemptive.
[21] This is also an effect, of course, of the inability to close the gap between signifier and signified. Cf Holly (2002:3).

trauma is thus an event that has no beginning, no ending, no before, no during and no after". She continues: "This absence of categories that define it lends it a quality of 'otherness', a salience, a timelessness and a ubiquity that puts it outside of the range of associatively linked experiences".

In its extremity, trauma would therefore seem to be in excess of the temporal 'working through' towards closure that is afforded by the processes of mourning. Rather, its ubiquitous timelessness echoes the Derridean (1994:99) "untimeliness of the specter" as well as the "absolute zero of movement" (Princenthal 2000:81) that Princenthal identifies in relation to Salcedo's "language of disappearance" (Princenthal 2000:50). Salcedo's *Unland: the orphan's tunic* (1997), for instance, is particularly indicative of such temporal undoing: according to Princenthal (2000:81), this work suggests "an impossibly frozen moment of unending impact expressed as immutable stasis… that makes things tend to disappear into a state of altogether paradoxical dreaminess". As in *Atrabiliarios*, *Unland: the orphan's tunic* contains a site of uncomfortably violent yet tender grafting. Here two wooden work tables of slightly different heights are impacted and then joined through the laborious stitching of human hair into hundreds of tiny follicles bored into the wood. The hair forms a narrow dark band across the table surface, which Princenthal (2000:82) reads, at first glance, as an inflection of "the merest shadow". To one side, this stitched hair gives way to a nearly translucent layer of silk which shades the transition between the uneven tabletops and slips over the table's legs.

The "impossibly frozen moment of unending impact" that Princenthal refers to would suggest that here, too, the semblance of synchronised temporal continuity is disrupted and closure is forestalled. *Unland: the orphan's tunic*, as with *Atrabiliarios*, gestures "toward a past *and* toward a future that are as yet unpresentable" (Derrida 1996:11-12); and it does so, in its precarious timelessness, from the paradoxical perspective of a present which "even while being only passage does not pass" (Bruns 2002:232-233n24). As is the case in *Atrabiliarios*, then, *Unland: the orphan's tunic* evinces a melancholic "clouded vision" (Princenthal 2000:55) and "operates on the basis of invisibility" (Basualdo 2000:26): for Carlos Basualdo, one's apprehension of the work continually "fluctuates between a view of a detail and a view of the whole" in a manner "reminiscent of blindness" (Basualdo 2000:26). This inability to comprehend the work visually in its entirety would seem to reiterate again the failure of unambiguous memory in the face of incomprehensible trauma: this work has as its impetus the story of a six-year old who had witnessed her mother's killing and who, after that experience, had worn the same dress that her mother had made for her, day after day. Hence the subtitle, *the orphan's tunic*, which is taken from a poem by Paul Celan[22] (Huyssen 2000:96).

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[22] "The orphan's tunic" appears in an untitled poem from Celan's *Lichtzwang*, which reads as follows: "Night rode him, he had come to his senses, / the orphan's tunic was his flag, / no more going astray, / it rode him straight – / It is, as though oranges hung in the privet, / as though the so-ridden had nothing on / but his / first / birth-marked, se- / cret-speckled / skin" (qtd Huyssen 2000:96, 100). In an interview with Basualdo, Salcedo identifies an affinity between Celan's poetry and her sculpture: "Celan's poetry involves piecing together from ruptures and dissociations, rather than association and union. This is the way I approach sculpture. I concern myself with the disassembled and the diachronic" (Basualdo 2000:25-26).

Yet perhaps the melancholic emptiness of this work is most effectively evoked in the figure of the precarious 'un-land' to which its title refers: an uninhabited and uninhabitable space which evinces an "absolute zero of movement", to cite Princenthal (2000:81); and where, as Salcedo suggests, "there is nothing, where nothing happens" (Basualdo 2000:25). It is here that *Unland: the orphan's tunic* bespeaks not only the failure of memory to articulate trauma, but its own paradoxically 'failed' articulation: "in effect", says Basualdo (2000:25), "one bears witness to nothing". *Unland: the orphan's tunic*, in this regard, points to the "interminable task" (Derrida 1994:98) of bearing witness as occupying the non-place, also, of "the exteriority of absolute exile" (Levinas qtd Bruns 2002:223) where exile, as described by Levinas (1998:179), "signifies the outside where nothing covers anything, non-protection, the reverse of a retreat, homelessness, non-world, non-habitation, layout without security". And as such, Salcedo's precarious un-land – which is as incomprehensible as the trauma that informs it – would appear to signal the exile of signification itself. We are in what Celan (qtd Moses 1996:209) calls the "time-hole" or the "empty-text".[23]

But how does one read, and how does one read *in*, this empty-text? Against the temptation to regard this mute and inhospitable caesura as the space of irresolvable melancholic impasse – which would, in a sense, be to offer a resolution – it may be suggested that the interruption of (profane) time and space delimits what Stéphane Moses (1996:216) calls "a different kind of reality, through which absolute otherness can manifest itself". For Levinas (1998:88), this absolute otherness is designated as the *saying* – which takes the form of an ethical responsibility towards the other as something that escapes comprehension, precedes representation, and is irreducible to the propositional descriptions of the *said*. Where the *said* strives to thematise the radical alterity of the other and to synchronise "the insurmountable diachrony of time" (Levinas 1998:37), the performative *saying* is in excess of signification – "a beyond the said" (Levinas 1998:38) which nevertheless makes signification possible. The two are thus necessarily enfolded[24]: the *saying* is betrayed by the propositional language of the *said*; but the *saying*, as "a non-thematizable ethical residue of language that escapes comprehension" (Critchley 2002:18) also works to interrupt the certitude of the *said* from within.[25]

The exiled space of the un-land, the "empty-text", or the caesura in signification might thus be linked to Levinas's performative *saying* as designating a region – albeit a precarious one – "in which subjectivity no longer presides over things from a standpoint or perspective of the whole, certainly not from the

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[23] This resonates with Eaglestone's (2000:104) suggestion that the extreme trauma of the Holocaust "must be seen as an uncrossable gap, a 'hole in history', in Levinas's phrase, that we cannot fill". In a similar vein, LaCapra (1998:21) notes: "To the extent an event is traumatic, it creates a gap or hole in experience". The identification of extreme trauma as opening up a gap/hole/absence further echoes Phelan's (1997:5) suggestion that "trauma makes a tear in the symbolic network itself", which links, in turn, to Laub's (1992:69) discussion of trauma as incomprehensible.

[24] Because the *saying* and the *said* are necessarily enfolded, the *saying* can only signify through the ambiguity of every *said*. But ambiguity, as Handelman (1991:250) suggests, is "not paralytic perplexity, dark undecidability, or an anonymous 'effect of language'… Ambiguity here becomes the opening to the other, not an autonomous or indifferent linguistic self-reflexivity".

[25] Levinas's *saying* as "nonthematizable, nonrepresentable, beyond the gatherings of history and memory" (Handelman 1991:250), shares certain affinities with Heidegger's *sagen*, but also differs in that for Levinas this 'language before language' is intrinsically and necessarily *ethical*. For more on the parallels and differences between Levinas, Heidegger and Derrida apropos of the *saying*, see Handelman (1991:249-251).

perspective of ownership or conceptual possession" (Bruns 2002:223). In this precarious region, "the exteriority of the other penetrates the interiority of the self" (Waldenfels 2002:73) but in a way that the self is deprived of conceptual mastery (over the other, over the past, over incomprehensible trauma, over meaning). What is opened up, rather, by the 'open wound' (Holly 2002:3, 10, 11) of melancholia in Salcedo's 'empty-texts', is the performative play[26] of signification – which "highlights the open-endedness of interpretation" (Jones & Stephenson 1999:1) and interrupts what Ernst van Alphen (1997:3) refers to as "the repertoire of masterplots". For Van Alphen (1997:35), extreme trauma "cannot be represented, or made familiar in the form of a complete narrative. But it… can be known negatively, in the cracks and tears of the stories we tell". Or, indeed, in the un-land of a precarious silence – which, to cite Derrida (1996:15), "yet remains a modality of speech: a memory of promise and a promise of memory".

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[26] Budick & Iser (1996:xiv) discuss the play of negativity as a performative undoing or disabling of "[a]esthetic reduction as well as a totalizing of the self": "Instead, the enacted transformations that we observe… make it possible not so much to recuperate negativity or our identities as selves as to extend ourselves towards the inaccessible. Play as performance makes this inaccessibility both present and absent".

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SESSION: MEMORY, PAIN AND IDENTITY

PAPER TITLE: BAGHDAD CAFÉ: RHETORIC, 'EMBEDDED' JOURNALISTS AND THE 'OTHER' IN THE WAR IN IRAQ

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The Persian Gulf War

> was expressly manufactured for the screen and a global audience, complete with a premiere date (January 15, 1991) and a cast of familiar characters (the evil, dark tyrant; the fearless newsman; the infallible weaponry). In one sense, the history of the Persian Gulf War was written before it began; it was, like the reinscriptions of Hollywood cinema, a spectacular orchestration of a new ending for the Vietnam War.[1]

This paper centres on notions memory, culture and history and on how these contribute to constructing an identity by differentiating one from the 'other'. This discussion is particularly relevant in times of conflict and trauma, because it draws attention to the way in which the media functioned in the war in Iraq (which has been quite different to what one has seen in the past). The discussion is initiated by comparing and contrasting the representation of the Vietnam and Gulf wars[2] on television and then relating this to the portrayal and representation of the 'other', namely, the Iraqi soldiers in the television reporting of the war in Iraq.

The article examines history, culture and memory as highlighted by Marita Sturken. Firstly, this is discussed with reference to the Gulf War and secondly, with reference to the Vietnam War. Within the discussion a contrast and comparison is drawn to the war in Iraq and to the type of representation used on television. The discussion also focuses on instant history, cultural memory (photographs and films) and the creation of the 'other' and its link to myth. Reference is made to the memory of 9/11 and how the images associated with it effect the representation and narrative of the war in Iraq.

Although the Vietnam and Gulf Wars centred on very different issues, they were similar because they attempted to construct a national identity through difference. The Gulf War functioned as an antidote to Vietnam and made way for The New World Order[3], allowing America to assert and lead the political aspirations of the West. Similarly, one could argue that the war in Iraq will offer closure to the Persian Gulf War (this is evident through the pamphlet and radio message campaigns that the coalition forces have released). Some of the messages have included "we are here to help you, we will not abandon

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[1] Sturken, M. 1997. *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering.* Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press:123.

[2] From the 1950's to 1975, America sent approximately 3 million men and women to fight in Vietnam. The reasoning for getting involved in this war has become one of the strongest and controversial political debates within American culture. It has acted as a reference for much of America's involvement or lack thereof in other conflicts, post 1975. See http://www.vietnampix.com. In 1991, the USA bombed Iraq after the UN deadline expired, ordering Saddam Hussein to leave the occupied Kuwait. The war which resulted was the first 'real time' war as members of the public all over the globe watched the bombing of Baghdad as it happened.

[3] This was evident in President Bush's declaration at the onset of the Persian Gulf War: "The Vietnam Syndrome is over" (ibid:124).

you[4] …". The Saddam Hussein regime continued to exist after the Gulf War and according to the western media, instilled fear and oppression amongst its people. President Bush and Prime Minister Blair have vowed that this lack of freedom and expression will change once the conflict is completely over and a new leadership is democratically installed by the people. My concern is not about politics, however, but rather to investigate the ways in which the representation of America and how its identity has shifted during the reporting of the conflict.

According to Marita Sturken, the memories of the veterans contribute to cultural memory. This has an impact on the historical because in order to create history one has to rely on the memory of the events which are essentially a cultural interpretation[5] Society, Sturken shows, creates history at the intersection of 'fact', memory and culture. Each functions in producing and re-producing meanings in the Fiske[6] sense which maintains the social dynamics of the society. One can assume that today's generation, will "remember" Vietnam through its repetition in fiction films, whereas their parents will recall the war through television news images of the 1960's. Both will contribute to the history of the war for the next generation.

In her article "Spectacles of Memory and Amnesia: Remembering the Persian Gulf War", Marita Sturken writes that "the way a nation remembers a war and constructs its history is directly related to how that nation further propagates war"[7]. She explores this idea with reference to the Vietnam and Gulf Wars but her argument is also relevant to the war in Iraq. She argues that the spectacle of virtual television images in the Gulf War did not tell us anything about the narrative of the war, in contrast, it told us a lot about America's weaponry[8]. It became a 'virtual war' based on computerised images and satellite technology. This is particularly interesting concerning television, because of its visual nature; the act of dehumanising the war makes it more 'palatable' for the viewer. Sturken argues that the laser-type images contribute to the production of what she calls "instant history"[9]. The viewer witnesses the events almost in 'real time' and the topic for discussion is based on what has just happened. Once the event has taken place, it is no longer of prime concern because the most recent instant event takes over. With reference to the first Gulf War, President George Bush, Saddam Hussein and CNN's estimate of one billion people in 108 nations[10] watched the unfolding of historic events as they were happening. This led to the recurrent question of 'where did the Gulf War actually take place – Kuwait, Baghdad, Washington or over the whole globe?'.

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[4] Journalists such as Emma Hurst from the BBC constantly explained that this message campaign was not a propaganda campaign but used to try and overcome the resentment from the Iraqis who claimed that they were abandoned by the US forces after the Gulf War and left to deal with the terror from the regime.
[5] The integration of memory, culture and history becomes evident when one examines the history of apartheid within South Africa. Each cultural group had its own interpretation of the memories during the apartheid years.
[6] Fiske, J. 1987. *Television Culture*. London and New York: Routledge:1.
[7] Sturken, M. 1997. *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press:122.
[8] ibid:124.
[9] ibid:125.
[10] ibid:137.

Once the initial laser spectacle ended, reporter Scott Simon spoke to American soldiers, waiting in line, to telephone the United States. Upon asking whether the soldiers were telephoning home to speak to loved ones before the ground war started[11], one of the paratroopers replied that he was "calling to find out what's happening in this war. My folks can really see it […] Sometimes I have to remind myself that when I say 'I was there – I saw that', I saw that only on television, just like the people watching the war in Kansas or Kenosha"[12]. Consequently, the war seemed to become a 'video game'[13], with minimal face-to-face combat reported and broadcast, highlighting the notion that this was clearly a war about weaponry, taking place in real time. Viewers identified the enemy as a target on a computer screen, stripped of personality and human quality. This process also allowed the viewer to bear witness to the events as they were taking place, he/she could therefore watch instant history from the privileged position in the safety of his/her home. This relates to what Fiske and Hartley identify as "clawback"[14], where the audience is clearly separated from the violence which supposedly exists further away, outside the viewer's society. In addition, Vivian Sobchack identifies the concept of instant history as "history in the making"[15], where the popular audience "see themselves not only as spectators of history, but also as participants in and adjudicators of it"[16] because the audience 'feels' as if they are directly engaging in the action. The Gulf War not only created instant history but it also confirmed America's Military superiority to the world. This allowed the American state and its image to the world to assume a specific position of hierarchy, not only in relation to the Iraqis but also on a global level. Those viewers who identified with America and the Bush Administration were separate from the enemy and became a homogeneous audience through the process of interpellation by consenting to the 'preferred' reading of the television text[17]. This was the first step in creating The New World Order which united heterogeneous groups, and more substantially contributed to the current national identity amongst Americans. Here, instant history works on an ideological level, with reference to Larrain because it creates a social consciousness and awareness[18].

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[11] ibid:127.

[12] ibid.

[13] The 'video game' type footage is very specific because it presents its 'enemy' as a target position on a computer screen, who is denied any human identity, whilst the viewer watches from a privileged 'safe' position.

[14] Fiske, J and Hartley, J. 1978. *Reading Television*. London: Methuen:87. In *Television Culture*, Fiske identifies three stages of "clawback" that correspond to spaces that are both material and symbolic (see Fiske, J. 1990. Television Culture. London and New York: Routledge:288), The central space exists in the television studio, which is occupied by the anchor or television newsreader that tells the viewer the "objective discourse of 'the truth'" (ibid). Spatially, situated further away is the reporter, who according to Fiske is discursively subordinated, but functions in mediating the "raw reality" and the final "truth" spoken by the newsreader. In addition, the reporter merely functions in re-instating the authority of the newsreader. Finally, the furthest away from the newsreader, is the eyewitness, who has to be brought under discursive control. This creates an immediate irony; one has "the truth" positioned in the studio, but in actual fact, geographically, it is the most distant to "raw reality" and "the truth".

[15] Sobchak, V (ed.) 1996. *The Persistence of History: Cinema, Television and the Modern Event*. New York and London: Routledge:7.

[16] ibid.

[17] The audience becomes homogeneous because it accepts the reading that this war is necessary in achieving overall good and is a step towards greater democracy.

[18] In his study of Marx's theory, Larrain developed a distinction between a positive and negative conception of ideology. The positive according to Larrain was more concerned with the construction of social consciousness, the negative conception, however, referred to some form of distorted thought (see Hunt, A & Purvis, T. 1993. "Discourse, Ideology, Discourse, Ideology, Discourse, Ideology…" in *British Journal of Sociology*, 44(3):477). Thus there is a binary definition promoting a sense of social consciousness or distorted thought. An important point to consider however, is who decides whether something is conscious or distorted and in relation to whom?

In watching the television narrative unfold, the viewer assumes that he/she is in a privileged position, but in fact, according to Althusser, this has been ideologically constructed through interpellation[19]. If one had to take this from Gramsci's[20] perspective, the viewer will consent to promote a particular reading and consciousness. Robert Stam identifies the viewer's position of watching instant history with the Gulf War specifically as a "voyeur"[21], a passive bystander with a privileged point of view. I would argue for a more critical reading, such as that of Allen Feldman who argues that: "the perpetual entanglement with the video simulation of the war was crucial to the manufacturing of consent and, thus, politically and instrumentally implicated the viewing public in the action of violence"[22]. Feldman's argument views the process of witnessing historic events as they take place as a hegemonic process in the Gramsci sense which will manufacture a general consensus to the war. The viewer thus becomes an active participant on a 'virtual level', engaging in the combat from ones own home, and, thereby, constructing a social consciousness (Larrain). This consciousness has emerged accordingly.

The 'American might' represented in the Gulf war was dispersed by the events of 9/11, where American civilians were the victims and the American state was no longer the unified army presented during the Gulf war. The images of 9/11 created a new American identity and consciousness, namely, the victim. The war in Iraq has played directly into this image, the audience witnesses a new representation of America, on the one hand there is the victim and memory of 9/11 and on the other hand, there is the organised, mass of military artillery moving towards Baghdad in their search for the "Ace of Spades"[23].

As with the Gulf war, the actual location of the war in Iraq will also soon be asked - where did it take place – on our television screens, at the Pentagon, in the sky over Baghdad or on Iraqi soil? Perhaps this question merely highlights the fact that since the Gulf war, the whole concept of war and its representation thereof has changed. It is not only about conflicting groups but also about the process of how instant history takes place. The specific moment is documented through the television image and once it is recorded, the history is forgotten. George Gerbner in his article "Persian Gulf War, the Movie" discusses Frederick Williams' analogy of the Gulf War to the first moon landing in 1969. He comments that it was "one feat to put two astronauts on the surface of the moon, but another, perhaps just as amazing, to broadcast live that first human step on the moon's surface"[24]. The Iraqi conflict is not only about bringing down the regime and searching for weapons of mass destruction but also about reporting this event in real time, as it happened. For the first time, viewers witnessed journalists

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[19] Louis Althusser's thesis advocates that "ideology interpellates individuals as subjects" (see Althusser, L. 1984. *Essays on Ideology*. London: Verso:44). Thus, "ideology" constructs its subjects, which ultimately, has an impact on the relationship between the spectator and the text.

[20] According to Gramsci, "ideology" has an "integrating effect, which is based on its ability to win the free consent of the people. This hegemonic quality of a world-view is manifested in the solidity of popular beliefs (see Larrain, J. 1983. *Marxism and Ideology*. London: Macmillan:81). Thus the society almost 'absorbs' its differences in preference for those views which have become naturalised or popular.

[21] Feldman, A. "On Cultural Anaesthesia: From Desert Storm to Rodney King" in *American Ethnologist* 210 (2):404-418. USA: American Anthropological Association.

[22] ibid:408.

[23] I refer directly to the pack of cards with the images of the 55 most wanted men in Iraq that was distributed to the coalition troops, Saddam Hussein's card being the "Ace of Spades".

[24] Mowlana, H, Gerbner, G & Schiller, H, I (eds.) 1992. *Triumph of the Image: The Media's War in the Persian Gulf – A Global Perspective*. San Francisco, Oxford: Westview Press.

'embedded' with the troops, allowing the audience the privileged position of witnessing the conflict in 'real' time. I shall address the notion of an 'embedded' journalist because of its nature and implications. On the one hand, one believes that 'this is how it is', yet, on the other hand, there is the implied reading that the journalists are 'in bed' with the commanders[25]. Each report is also quite openly subject to military restrictions, which already informs the more critical reader or viewer that one is not getting the whole picture. There seem to be multiple levels of censorship and reconstructions of history at work. For example, the networks were given very specific mandates in terms of what could and could not be presented. The whole concept of the media centre on the border of Iraq soon fell apart because journalists were not actually being briefed accordingly. Journalists left because the information they were receiving was coming directly supplied by the military.

The language of each report clearly supplies a specific reading. For example, the term 'pockets of resistance' has become part of the standard jargon of the war in Iraq. Its positioning, however, needs to be clearly defined. The language of the text positions the reporter as well as the viewer on the defensive. Through the television narrative, the viewer is positioned accordingly and consents to the reading that the Iraqi soldiers are the aggressors. In terms of combat rules, if the coalition forces are the invaders and occupying forces, then the Iraqi soldiers are engaging in 'pockets of defence'. This implied reading immediately creates the polar position of who is part of the dominant ideology as opposed to those who are positioned in the margins. The coalition troops become the dominant hegemonic who although are heterogeneous in their make-up[26], are clearly homogeneous in their cause, i.e., overcoming the regime. This narrative positions the audience amongst the dominant who are distanced and defined according to whom they are not, namely, the Iraqi soldiers. Once again, the Iraqis are the unidentified, faceless opponents as was depicted during the Gulf War. They are not individuals but are the representation of the enemy, i.e. Saddam Hussein and his regime, separated from the viewer and represented as an unidentified 'other'. Despite the fact that there were journalists in Baghdad, the Iraqi soldiers still had no identifiable face, one merely witnessed them literally as 'pockets of resistance'. This was seen quite clearly in the advance towards Baghdad. The narrative almost became fictional[27], with soldiers shooting civilian and army cars which approached as they were considered 'hostile'. One was also introduced to the human side of the American military might when one heard commanders and soldiers shouting comments such as "Don't shoot, there's a guy coming out of the trees"[28]. The tone and choice of language used by the soldiers as well as the journalists highlights the notion of "rhetoric" as used by Bill Nichols, who argues that it is the "means by which effects are achieved"[29] within documentary film, but it is also relevant to the reporting of the war.

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[25] This was wonderfully portrayed in Zapiro's cartoon which showed a commander lying naked on top of a journalist on a tank.
[26] After the first few days of the war, Bush declared that there were over 40 countries that formed part of the coalition.
[27] The notion of watching instant history desensitises the viewer – one almost feels that one is not witnessing people being killed in real time. One starts to engage with narrative in the same way that one would a fiction film.
[28] This was broadcast on BBC, SKY and CNN, Saturday, 5 April 2003, with the coalition entrance into Baghdad.
[29] Nichols, B. 1991. *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press:134.

Nichols initiates his discussion of "rhetoric" in *Representing Reality* where he derives the term from Aristotle, who argues that "rhetoric" is a "means in which any argument can gain persuasive support"[30]. "Rhetoric" is the aperture of ideology because it functions as the window into ideology. This can function on two levels either, as evidence (factual material) or artistic proof (a text's construction and persuasiveness). The comments used by the journalists clearly highlighted both of these elements. On the one hand, one witnessed the events as they happened and on the other hand, the journalists reinstated this position via their commentary, especially when they were being shot at. The viewer was thus witnessing instant history (factual material) which was reinstated by the journalists commentary (a text's construction and persuasiveness).

At other moments, the viewer watched American soldiers, shooting and killing civilians in cars that were approaching. This was not fiction, this was reality television taken to the extreme, where people were clearly being shot at and killed as the world 'gazed'. Despite witnessing conflicts in action and fire-fighting, I would argue that the reporting of the war was still quite 'clinical'. Yes, one did see civilian casualties, far more than one witnessed in the Gulf War, but one did not witness the harsh reality of the war. The ratio of the images of weapons and military supremacy of the coalition far exceeded the images of civilians and casualties depicted on television. The civilians in hospital hardly spoke and the journalists had the final authoritative voice via the voice-over commentary. Only once the marines started pulling out of Baghdad, did one witness interviews and comments from civilians. This positioning was also present in 1991.

During the Gulf War "bodies and weapons were reified in the media. Dead civilians were referred to as 'collateral damage' and Iraqi soldiers as 'targets' (objects of the 'turkey shoot'), whereas weapons were ascribed the human characteristics of sight and memory"[31]. The body counts in Vietnam were now substituted with weapon counts, and the fragmented body of the American military during the Vietnam War was now replaced by a 'whole', moving forward in a single mass[32]. Despite the one on one combats, the Gulf War has been classified as a 'visual' war, this is in a 'virtual' sense and not a 'hands on' experience which is different to the Vietnam scenario.

The Vietnam veterans witnessed their war in ways very different to the Gulf veterans. This is evident through the 'icons' or visual codes which have now become synonymous with each war. For example, the Vietnam war is depicted through the following images: "American bombs fall endlessly on forested landscapes, the pleading faces of Vietnamese villagers, American soldiers laden with equipment walking through burned-out villages, GI's running away from the rotating blades of a helicopter"[33]. The Gulf War, in contrast, is associated with laser images, smart bombs, MIG jets, burning oil wells and desert landscapes. Both wars are relevant to this discussion because of the way they portray 'the

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[30] ibid.
[31] Sturken, M. 1997. *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press:133.
[32] ibid:133-134.
[33] ibid:90.

enemy'. In Vietnam and the Gulf, one bears witness to the enemy through the landscape and burning objects. One does not confront the enemy as an individual but rather as a symbolic representation of violence and destruction. In the eyes of the American people, the American war veteran in Vietnam emerged as the ultimate victim, having lost his innocence and having been betrayed by a nation[34], where the enemy who were nameless and faceless were confined to the unknown depths of the Vietnam jungle and the Vietnamese civilians caught in the crossfire. The civilian tragedy became evident through the documented photographs of innocent civilians weeping, running away and trying to come to terms with their fate, for example, the photographs which were released after the My Lai Massacre (1968) and the accidental napalm strike on Trang Bang Village (1972). The documented images which have emerged from these historic occasions such as the girl (Kim Phuc) running away from the toxic gas, who removed her clothing because the reaction of the toxic gas on her skin was exacerbated by her clothes. There is also the iconic image of the Chief of the South Vietnamese National Police pointing a gun to the head of an innocent man; each image has focused on the effects of the war on the civilian population. Throughout, the enemy remains nameless and faceless with the focus on the innocent men, women and children who were not directly involved in the war. Sturken argues that these historic images, form part of the memory of Vietnam as well as contribute to the cultural make-up and identity of the American nation because they focus on America's past and also draw attention to America's role in the conflict. The icons of the war in Iraq are not as unified and homogeneous as one saw with the Gulf War. Iraq allows more of a shift in its representation of its Military might.

The broken and burnt body of twelve year old, Ali Ismail Abbas will become an iconic image of the Iraq war. The narrative of him being injured and losing his parents from an American bomb will become part of the history and memory of the war. His story will not only be incorporated into Iraq's memory of the war, but it will also, using Sturken's concept, form part of the cultural make-up and identity of both America and Iraq and its representation within both the written and visual media. This adds to the humanitarian reality of all wars (including Iraq, The Gulf and Vietnam); people will be injured, families will be broken and lives will be lost.

The Hollywood films, yellow ribbons and the Vietnam Veteran Memorial all contribute to the cathartic process and 'healing' of the nation which confirms that the Vietnam War emerged as a painful part of American History. The memories of the veterans have contributed to the making of the fiction films, which in turn, have now become part of American culture and memory. As Sturken argues: "the narratives of popular films weave themselves into the experiences and memories of those who took part in the war and those who remember viewing news coverage of it. They become part of the cultural memory"[35]. George Bush, Oliver Stone, Arthur John Rambo, are a few of the war veterans who have also become part of the historical narratives in popular film. Although they have taken on very diverse

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[34] ibid:104.
[35] ibid:86.

positions regarding Vietnam, they show just on how many levels the memory of war is communicated. These men thus contribute to the greater picture of American memory, culture and history because today's audience, for example, starts to witness the events of Vietnam through their stories and the cultural artefacts which result there from.

In addition, Sturken argues that history and cultural memory converge in the form of docudrama which is, "in essence a mimetic interpretation of the past"[36]. In this mimesis, the past is narrativised and given closure. Sturken argues that films, such as *Platoon* (Oliver Stone, 1986), *Full Metal Jacket* (Stanley Kubrick, 1987), *Casualties of War* (Brian de Palma, 1989), *Born on the Fourth of July* (Oliver Stone, 1986) all contributed to a post-war catharsis surrounding unresolved issues, allowing the American people to come to terms with the war[37]. This occurred with the Gulf War, *Courage Under Fire* (Edward Zwick, 1996), *Three Kings* (David O. Russel, 1999) and the same applies to Iraq. There was discussion that Hollywood would be making a film on Private Jessica Lynch, the nineteen year old who was captured by the Iraqi soldiers after her commando was ambushed when they got lost a few days into the war. Her rescue was dramatically shown via night vision cameras as special forces raided the hospital where she was held prisoner of war.

Her story has finally emerged as a propaganda exercise when the coalition forces needed a hero. It has now emerged that Private Lynch was not a prisoner of war, but an injured veteran who was in an Iraqi hospital, waiting for her forces to take her home. There will not be a Hollywood film to tell her story, but her narrative and the documentaries about her rescue will ultimately become part of the historical narrative of the war as well as part of the memory, history and culture of Western society and its remembrance of the war. Her story emphasizes how the television medium plays into the war narrative. Initially one saw the worm-like mass of military tanks moving towards Baghdad but then journalists also released images of injured civilians and the American military identity shifted towards being the victim as the memory of 9/11 took over. The stories then had a more personal note, the language was very specific "the American people will not stand for this" and stories such as Jessica Lynch's were reported or images were released of an infinite number of coffins covered with the American flag returning home to the country's largest military mortuary. The narrative of the war took on this position when the controversial images of 21-year old Lynndie England et al posing next to naked inmates at the Abu Ghraib jail were released on the internet. Both perspectives (the coffin images and the prison photographs) are the icons which will form part of the memory and historical narrative of the war.

Robert Burgoyne identifies a historical narrative as "a performative discourse, a product of the same kinds of actions that produce historical events; the investing of the world with symbolic meaning"[38]. The

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[36] ibid:85.
[37] ibid:88.
[38] Sobchak, V (ed.) 1996. *The Persistence of History: Cinema, Television and the Modern Event*. New York and London: Routledge:58.

reporting of the war symbolically encodes its particular interpretation through its narrative, just like the Vietnam and Gulf War documentaries and films.

Although, the Vietnam and Gulf Wars are 'remembered' very differently, in both cases the enemy tended to be portrayed as 'other', as depersonalised, faceless 'elements' which exist on the 'outside' of the central narrative. As has been mentioned, the Gulf War presented its enemy as a target similar to video game technology. Vietnam presented the 'other' as the creators of explosions from the jungle and burning villages. The Gulf war presented its 'other' as targets on a radar screen and the war in Iraq encoded its opposition with a more complex approach because of the memory of 9/11. One witnessed the unbelievable 'technicolour' of "Shock and Awe", the injured civilians, others rejoicing and welcoming the coalition troops, resistance and defiance from those still loyal to the regime as well as the controversial Abu Ghraib prison images which caused a huge shift in the memory and history of the war. Despite the different kind of images with which one will remember the war in Iraq, the audience still identifies the aggressor as standing on the margin and not being part of society (as happened with the Gulf War). One bears witness to the conflict as the troops move into Baghdad, one sees footage from the point of view of a tank with the Iraqis represented as a de-personalised 'force' which exist on the periphery of the incidents shown. Although the Iraqi soldiers remain faceless, they represent the de-humanised, de-personalised 'other' which exist in the deserted wilderness, separated from the victims and viewers, who are watching from a place of safety (see Fiske and Hartley - clawback[39] as written on pg 2). This is clearly an encoded reading of the events which signifies that the Iraqis are barbaric and savage; the viewer is distanced from this and becomes part of or consents to (Gramsci) the dominant hegemonic position of the states discourse. The historical narrative will ensure that the Iraqi soldiers are adequately distanced from the viewer's society or community, allowing no 'gaps' for contradiction in the intended message. These depictions of the enemy become part of the historical archives of the war which will further re-instate and authenticate the 'preferred' reading of the events.

One can distinctly identify a separation between the positioning of the enemy in relation to the viewer. The opponent exists in the wild, outside of the parameters of society which is usually represented by the terrain [jungle (Vietnam) or desert (Iraq)] and remain faceless. The viewer identifies with the journalists and coalition troops who become the central protagonists. They have faces, names and live as part of a community in urban surroundings[40]. This encourages the reading that there is a distinct separation between that which forms part of a 'community'[41], this case the western or coalition community, as opposed to the 'other'.

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[39] See footnote 11 and 12.
[40] At this point, I am relating to the Serbian, Croatian and Muslim communities in general and not directly to the representation of their leaders.
[41] My use of the term 'community' relates to Raymond Williams' approach, who identifies that the term is always used positively, "unlike all other terms of social organisation (state, nation, society) it seems never to be used unfavourably, and never to be given any positive opposing or distinguishing term"[41]. The term thus has positive connotations and implies a sense of belonging to a social organisation with a sense of responsibility. Robert Thornton and Mamphela Ramphele place the term in a context which relates to this discussion: "the 'community' is the ostensible audience which must 'see' that justice is done, and whose mandate is assumed when executing the sentence imposed"[41].

In the portrayal of the Iraq conflict, there are two implied communities (the coalition troops and civilians), who, according to this interpretation, function in ensuring "justice"[42]. All that is 'lacking' is identified through the 'other', namely the Iraqi soldiers, who, in contrast, exist on the outside of the community, supposedly 'lacking' the organisational and responsible qualities of a society associated with the above-mentioned 'communities'. The soldiers or part of the regime is clearly represented as a disjointed, unorganised group which single-handedly attempt to resist the coalition.

My discussion refers to the reading of the 'other' with that which is considered different from the 'norm' or the dominant perception. Edward Saïd discusses this in his book "Orientalism"[43]. He argues that the "orient" in European discourses is a term which imagines or inscribes "a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences"[44]. He also argues that this Orient "has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience"[45]. It is in this sense that I argue that the Iraqi soldiers are 'other': the "image, idea, personality [and] experience"[46] of the soldiers is imagined or constructed as an identity that is used to define the West by contrast, an identity through difference.

Renata Salecl also explores notions of the 'other' in her article "The Crisis of Identity and the Struggle for New Hegemony in the Former Yugoslavia"[47]. Drawing on Jacques-Alain Miller's psychoanalytic interpretation of the ambiguous process of othering, Salecl argues that "our hatred of the Other is really the hatred of the part (the surplus) of our own enjoyment which we find unbearable and cannot acknowledge and which we transpose ('project') into the Other via a fantasy of the 'Other's enjoyment'"[48]. Our hatred of the 'other' includes, therefore, our "hatred of the Other's enjoyment, of the particular way the Other enjoys"[49]. This could be interpreted by the images shown to represent Saddam Hussein's palaces. We see the soldiers lazing in the palace gardens as well as sleeping in some of the beds. The journalists also embarked on an emotional narrative surrounding the decadency of Saddam Hussein's life by commenting on the pure gold fittings in his bathrooms or the pure granite walls and floors which engulfed his residences[50]. The enemy becomes a fantasy positioned and representing everything that is 'other'. The television narrative not only uses these images to highlight the decadence of Saddam Hussein and how he exploited his people for his own benefits, but also to re-enforce "the hatred of the Other's [Saddam Hussein's] enjoyment"[51].

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[42] ibid.
[43] Saïd, E, W. 1979. *Orientalism.* New York: Vintage Books.
[44] ibid:1.
[45] ibid:1-2.
[46] ibid:2.
[47] in Laclau, E (ed.) 1994. *The Making of Political Identities*. London and New York: Verso:205-232.
[48] ibid:212.
[49] ibid:211.
[50] Salecl examines the historical processes in the former Yugoslavia in order to understand the subsequent ethnic conflict. She explores the role of the 'other' in nationalism, arguing that the identification of a nation "is based on the fantasy of the enemy: an alien…" in Laclau, E (ed.) 1994. *The Making of Political Identities*. London and New York: Verso:211.
[51] ibid.

The familiar image of the dictator in his military uniform was nullified through his capture towards the end of 2003. The once fearsome and cruel dictator was now presented as a victim who was living in a bunker outside of Baghdad. Again, the language of the television narrative played a crucial role. His hiding place was constantly referred to as a "hole" where he supposedly hid as an animal. This time the audience witnessed a head and shoulder shot of his medical examination, but he was denied a voice. This analogy continued with his recent hearing where one was initially presented with the visual images of Saddam Hussein in civilian clothing, presenting his position to the Iraqi judge. This time instant history was not in 'real' time as was "Shock and Awe", this time it was only broadcast after the hearing without the audio track. Politically, one could account that this was because of censorship issues and the possibility that Hussein could communicate an encoded message to someone on the outside. From a narrative/television perspective, it emphasizes how the television medium is able to control the nature of the 'preferred' reading, allowing the voice-over of the journalist to direct the narrative. This plays a direct role to Sturken's notion of history, culture and memory. The initial conflict is over but because we are living in an age of instant history, our image bank of the war is constantly being uploaded. We have new icons to add to our memory of the initial conflict; the bodies of Saddam Hussein's two sons, Uday and Qusay Hussein, Saddam Hussein's capture and recent hearing as well as the Abu Ghraib prison images mentioned earlier. The laser spectacle has ended and the audience is now being presented by a more humanitarian approach to the war. These images do not negate our initial memory of the war but merely add to the memory we have of it as we move towards a resolution. The important point to remember however, is how the 'characters' are presented within the television text. The narrative is dominated by voiceless faces, who are separate and different, or to quote Salecl "an alien which has insinuated itself into our society and constantly threatens us with habits, rituals – indeed, discourses – that are not of 'our kind'"[52].

Today, years after the initial conflict, there are incidents of terrorism against the coalition. The media proposes that these are fundamentalists, individuals loyal to Saddam Hussein. Žižek argues that "any real Other is instantly denounced for its 'fundamentalism', since the kernel of Otherness resides in the regulation of its *jouissance*: the 'real Other' is by definition 'patriarchal', 'violent', never the Other of ethereal wisdom and charming customs"[53]. One witnesses the incidents, which happen almost on a weekly basis as revenge attacks by violent subjects, loyal to the previous regime, the central message of the television text implies that these acts are committed by the violent, fundamentalist Other[54] in the Žižek sense.

I would argue that the fantasy enemy is equated to the ideas associated with myth in the second order of signification, according to Roland Barthes. Here, "myth" is not a sense of false belief[55] but in an

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[52] ibid.
[53] Žižek, S. "Multiculturalism, Or, the Cultural Logic of Multinational Capitalism" in *New Left Review* 225 (September/October):28- 51. London: New Left Review Limited. This reference pg 37.
[54] ibid.
[55] O'Sullivan, T, et al. (eds.) 1992. *Key Concepts in Mass Communication*. London: Routledge:217.

anthropological sense, a "cultures way of conceptualising an abstract topic"[56]. In coming to terms with another culture, one creates a mythical representation of that culture. This has happened with the Western concept of the Iraqi culture and their oppression. Salecl's concept of a fantasy enemy does not imply that the enemy does not exist, in contrast, it deals more with the notion that one 'fantasises' about the image of the enemy. A community creates the picture that the enemy is more dangerous and more primitive. One witnessed this with reference to the portrayal of the Republican Guard, a militant, ruthless and supreme force who were prepared to die for their cause. This myth was blown out of proportion because when the coalition forces entered Baghdad, they surprisingly received very little opposition. The mythical notions of a unique army that was loyal to their leader simply fell away. The battle for Baghdad was minimal as opposed to the battle for Basra. It was the battle for Basra and Um Qasar which enhanced the myths of the loyalty of the Iraqi soldiers and subsequently the regime.

America's portrayal of the regime has almost taken one back to the Wild West with the introduction of the pack of cards representing the fifty five most wanted Iraqis. Finding the enemy in the maize of Iraq has now become the equivalent of a card game. The hyperbole of the troops almost playing poker in their hunt of the fifty-five shows one to what level instant history has brought us in the new millennium. It is a new game, where the winner will hold all the cards, in his/her pursuit of 'chasing the Ace of Spades', Saddam Hussein's card. The pack of cards reinstates the position and reading of the enemy. They are de-personalised, de-humanised and are clearly being hunted. The media has not critiqued, analysed or even questioned this type representation, but has merely continued relaying the information and ongoing monologue from the Pentagon.

The narrative continues with the emergence of the 'joker' of the pack', namely, the Minister of Information, Mohammed Saeed al-Sahaf. The most prominent international news networks such as BBC, CNN and SKY implied that the viewer was presented with 'all sides of the story', ie, from 'embedded' journalists, independent journalists, the Pentagon, Al Jazeerah and the Iraq Ministry of Information. One has to examine the way Mohammed Saeed al-Sahaf was portrayed. The notion of him being 'the joker of the pack' was clearly re-instated by the media. Although one cannot negate that he was clearly acting on orders to embark on his own propaganda campaign, one needs to examine his representation within the media. His commentary was usually negated by a counter-comment from an 'embedded' journalist. The fact that one does not know what has become of him re-instates his rhetorical use within the narrative. His commentary was merely used rhetorically to re-enforce the central argument (Nichols). During the initial conflict, there was evidence of the propaganda campaign of the Iraqis, but only now is the propaganda campaign of the coalition emerging. This is evident when someone like information secretary Whitman commented in an interview "the real story will emerge when the time is right". Is this clearly not a hegemonic process? One will learn the 'real story' about the war in Iraq once the historical will combine with the memory of the veterans and the cultural artefacts

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[56] ibid.

which will still emerge. One will undergo the same process that one saw with the Vietnam and Gulf wars.

To conclude, although the Vietnam, Gulf and Iraq Wars occurred during different decades and on different continents, there are similarities to how the West/United States represented the enemy. The enemy emerges as a 'mythical' or 'exotic other' against which a Western identity is created by differentiating itself from that which it is not. In addition, the representation of war has evolved into a faceless enemy, a hyperbole of civilian suffering, followed by a laser spectacular of fancy weaponry and smart bombs which are used to reinstate the identities of those in power. We are living in a millennium of instant history, allowing the television medium to re-define our memory of conflict and shaping the image and identity of nations. The war in Iraq exemplifies this as the image of America and its military has shifted along the victim-victor paradigm with the memory of its past conflicts contributing to its general identity and culture.

SESSION: VISUAL COLONIALISMS

PAPER TITLE: THE REVERSE GAZE: THE IMPACT OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN

GAZE ON AMERICAN TRAVELERS

KATHRYN MATHERS

> We shall not cease from exploration
> And the end of all our exploring
> Will be to arrive where we started
> And know the place for the first time.
> T.S. Eliot *Little Gidding* (No. 4 of 'Four Quartets')

Eliot captures a fundamental perception that home is discovered though travel. Even travel studies and theories of tourism have suggested that developing a picture of the bigger world through travel allows the individual to find their place in the world and that an encounter with the 'Other' defines a traveller's subjectivity (MacCannell 1976; Urry 1995). Yet, the study presented here is a rare example of how this happens in the daily lives of travellers. It explores whether travel does lead to a discovery of home and what that 'home' begins to mean to travellers. Research based on long-term ethnographic relationships with American travellers to South Africa shows how 21st century travel between a centre of power such as the US and the periphery replicates earlier centuries' colonial/imperial modes of being in relationship to the world. As in colonial times those with power (tourists) use visual appropriation to make the sites and the people they are touring conform to their expectations (Smith 1977; Urry 1990). This is clearly not a coincidental replication given the extent to which empire has taken on an American face in this new century.

Contemporary travel replicates a contact zone, a space that, as in colonial/imperial times, allows for encounters and interactions that do not always conform to the demands of accepted relations of power. The contact zone suggests the possibility of interaction and interwoven practices, although in the context of unequal relations of power (Pratt 1992:6). Pratt borrows the term transculturation from Ortiz to describe the complicated ways that people supposedly in the periphery pick and choose and manipulate the cultures and technologies of the metropolis, and even mobilize them for resistance (Ortiz 1995). The contact zone, can, therefore be a space where the seer is seen. In the particular contact zone that I observed young Americans were not free to simply gaze on South Africans, but felt a South African gaze, a reverse gaze fixed on them. In this paper I argue that this South African gaze changes American travellers' perceptions of the US and of being 'American'. Travel to South Africa makes it possible for young Americans to 'know America for the first time'.

American travellers to South Africa are not unusual in wanting to blend in so as to experience an 'authentic', backstage encounter with South Africans (MacCannell 1999). This was seldom achieved, however, as their interactions with South Africans constantly reminded them that they were 'other'. South Africans appeared to recognize them not only as foreign but also as American. The travellers soon learnt that they stood out not just because they spoke or dressed differently but because they

embodied their identity as American in ways that were clearly recognizable to South Africans. This experience of being recognized as American shocked these young travellers because it was not an identity that they considered to be their own.

National identities generally require a 'significant other' against which they can be constructed. "Overall the process of identity construction is subject to the "game" of difference and presupposes the drawing of symbolic boundaries" (Galani-Moutafi 2000:205). Narratives of national identity and homogenization in the US, however, often "deny the reality of elements that constitute 'an American way of life'" (Linde-Laursen 1995). Although other generations of Americans either had a clearer 'significant other' or a past or mythical landscape against which to better define their relationship to America as a nation, the young adults I was working with did not grow up with such a relationship and until September 11th 2001 identified themselves solely in relation to diversity within the US. Their identities were largely based on intra-national rather than international differences. They had not learnt to view the world with a nationalizing eye but rather a 'racializing' or 'ethnicizing' eye. Recognizing themselves as American required that they crossed a border.

The Gaze Past and Present

The gaze is a fundamental trope in both historical and contemporary travel writing as well as tourism theory. The colonial travel writer's gaze invariably met emptied landscapes that evoked scenes from 'home' while upholding unequal relations of power (Pratt 1992; Spurr 1993). The tourist gaze is equally implicated in structuring 'the other' through the use of visual appropriation to seize the lands, bodies and products of the colonized (Urry 1990). 'The gaze' produced in literature, journalism and travel writing by authors reflecting from their commanding view and with the 'permission' coerced, or not, of the colonized is considered to be the defining feature of imperialism and colonialism, of the power of the colonizer (Spurr 1993). In particular it is argued that the suppression of the gaze of the other is required for preserving the relations of power in the larger system of order (Spurr 1993:17). Some of these authors did use a 'reciprocal vision' in order to underscore their anti-conquest agenda which claimed that their explorations of colonized landscapes was an innocent pursuit of knowledge (Pratt 1992). Mungo Park for example told stories of how ridiculous he appeared to the Africans he encountered but in doing so he only increased the reader's belief in his authority and truthfulness. This reciprocal vision is entirely created by the gazer, it is a fiction of reciprocity.

Similar fictions prevail in the tourism industry and the tourist gaze, despite its diversity based on gender, class, and personal histories, uses visual appropriation to fulfil its main purpose; the consumption of goods and places. The idea that tourists have 'done it' because they have 'seen it' has, however, impoverished much research on tourists by privileging sight over other senses (Dann, Kristian, and Jacobsen 2002; Harrison 2003). Tourism Studies is, however, beginning to expand its thinking about tourists, both by complicating the idea of the gaze and by considering the way multiple senses structure tourist experiences. For example, Bruner, suggests that tourists have a "questioning gaze" (Bruner

2001:882); Koshar argues that the "optics of tourism" implies a more active and engaged search for knowledge than the 'tourist gaze' (Koshar 1998); and Perkins and Thorns assert that performance is a better metaphor than gaze for describing the tourist experience (Perkins and Thorns 2001). Studies that focus on tourist experiences show that these are made up of sight, sound, physical sensation and memory and that tourists are much more than just 'collectors of gazes' (Favero 2000; Harrison 2003). Favero's work with Italian tourists to Norway, for example illustrates how they actively engage with sites and negotiate their experience rather than simply absorb what they see (Favero 2000). MacDonald's research with the people setting up a heritage center on the Isle of Skye and its local visitors shows that the 'objects of tourist gazes' can be aware of how they are perceived and be self-consciousness about creating authenticity (MacDonald 1997).

Despite this troubling of the tourist gaze, the impact of a reverse gaze on travellers has not been considered. This is not the case in analyses of colonial and imperial encounters, which increasingly acknowledge the complexity of the relationships forged on the frontier of empire. Stoler describes the "intimate frontiers of Empire as a social and cultural space where racial classifications were defined and deified, where relations between colonizers and colonized could powerfully confound or confirm the structures of governance and the categories of rule" (Stoler 2001). Cooper and Stoler argue that colonization as much reflected as affected the social structures and relationships at the centre of empire, and was not simply a peripheral encounter (Cooper and Stoler 1997). This contact zone is "the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict" (Pratt 1992:6). It is a space in which it is possible for the colonized to gaze back and when they do the colonizer can no longer sustain an illusion of travelling through emptied spaces or of forming reciprocal relationships with natives. This leads to some of the more emotive scenes in travel writing such as when Barrow describes an attack he organizes on the !Kung by Afrikaner farmers. Pratt describes this event in Barrow's account of his travels in the interior of the Cape Colony as the:

> only nocturnal scene in the work, the only instance of direct dialogue, the only occasion Barrow dramatizes himself as a participant, the only outburst of emotion, the only outbreak of violence, one of the few scenes where people and place coincide, and the only time Barrow questions his apprehension of his surroundings (Pratt 1992).

Clearly when travellers cannot escape acknowledging the lives and bodies of the people whose lands they are travelling through whether as imperialists or tourists, whether through direct attack as Barrow did or a more subtle sense of being observed and labelled, they experience a fundamental shift in their own understanding of their position in the world. Whereas postcolonial studies and emerging studies of empire have, therefore, increasingly suggested the possibility of the native gazing back, little work in tourism acknowledges this 'reverse gaze' (McClintock 1995; Stoler 2001).

Disturbing the Gaze in Africa

Some work on tourists to Africa suggests that the contact zone of contemporary tourism is equally complex and similarly a space where the gaze can be reversed. In his unusual study of both the tourists and their 'hosts' in Ghana Bruner focused on the tensions surrounding the development of Elmina Castle as a tourist site (Bruner 1996). African American tourists felt very strongly that the castle should be memorialized because of its role in the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Ghanaians and local heritage and cultural agencies felt that the castle's history was far longer and more complex than this one period and that its role in the anti-colonial struggle was particularly worth memorializing. In this encounter between black Americans and black Africans, the reverse gaze disrupts the Americans' assumptions about their relationship to Africa and to Ghana when locals demand payment for photographs been taken of them. Photography, a classic technology of 'the tourist gaze', becomes a site of struggle between tourists and touree. The tourists want to see themselves as visitors but for the locals tourism is a commercial enterprise and this is underscored when they demand money for their images to be taken back to the US. They have been made aware of a perception of what they are doing in Ghana that does not match their own. Bruner, however does not explore the impact of this realization on the American tourists.

Ebron's observation of a homecoming tour to Ghana and The Gambia organized by the Alex Haley Foundation and sponsored by McDonalds goes further in illustrating how American attitudes are disrupted by a reverse gaze (Ebron 1999). The tour, based on Alex Haley's '*Roots*', was set up as an "evocation of African American discourses of cultural identification with Africa" (Ebron 1999:913). It, however, led to an encounter between Africa and America that elided contemporary politics, thus largely producing an experience based in colonial relationships. There were moments, however, when the actions and words of Africans disrupted these relationships. Despite remaining ignorant of the meaning of what the children that run after their bus called them; *Toubob* (meaning white person or European), the travellers did notice they were being seen as something they believed they were not when their hosts made no distinction between them, as black Americans who had already made a connection with their African identities, and other Americans. This was made obvious to them when they participated in a naming ceremony in The Gambia. All travellers, regardless of whether they had already given themselves an 'African' name, as many African Americans do, were 'named' in this ceremony (Ebron 1999). Ebron believes that the tour she participated in did produce a transformative personal experience but mostly because it rehearsed anticipated aspects of a homogenized Africa (Ebron 1999:911). But in the comfort zone of being given what they searched for, a homeland, the few anomalous experiences made it possible for the travellers to develop a stronger sense of their American-ness.

Sex tourism, although extreme, highlights the extent to which tourism echoes the structures of inequality and the uses and abuses of power during colonial times (Ryan and Hall 2001). It is "a classic moment in international relations [as] pleasure and danger come together with transgressions across borders of power along First World-Third World, Rich-Poor, male-female (often), old-young (often) in a peculiar and unstable combination of sexuality, nationalism and economic power" (Pettman 1997:101).

Yet Ebron's study of sex tourism to The Gambia by European and American women in search of 'romance' illustrates the complex negotiations that underpin these transactions (Ebron 1997). Sex tourism of course plays out some of the more obvious inequalities and anxieties between Africa and the north and between men and women. But Ebron's work with the young men that have sex with European and American women suggests that these men use their reverse gaze to construct a sense of the relationship that makes them, not exploited sexual objects, but entrepreneurs creating opportunities for social and economic mobility that are otherwise unavailable to them.

Americans in southern Africa

In this paper I offer a glimpse of how American travellers responded to South African gazing back at them. It is based on ethnographic research with American travellers that spanned southern Africa and the US. Unlike most research on travelers it incorporates interviews with travelers before, during and after their trips to South Africa and elsewhere in Africa. Over three years of interviewing and observing travelers I worked with a number of different groups[1]. All these travellers spent a minimum of four weeks in southern Africa and most came with particular educational or political goals. This was deliberate as I believed that the typical one or two week safari/beach holiday in South Africa is similar to such holidays in many other parts of the world and would not contribute to understanding the relationship between Africa and the US or the impact of travel on attitudes to Africa. The research was primarily qualitative and draws substantially on participant observation of American students in Cape Town during 2000. Although my conclusions are based on the experiences of a wide range of travellers, I draw primarily on the words and activities of the students whose lives I was a part of during most of their semester in Cape Town and whose journals are particularly illustrative of this discussion. Their responses to what they experience in South Africa were especially profound as this generation of Americans had to go so much further than many others to 'know America'. Although I observed or was part of many conversations that included South Africans and Americans, I did not interview or consistently observe South Africans interacting with Americans. The reverse gaze that I describe is something experienced by American travellers, it is their perception of how South Africans saw them and may not at all reflect the views of these South Africans.

> I felt a little intimidated on our first drive through town. I felt the tourist stamp on my forehead glowing bright like a torch even more so than in other places I've traveled Scott.

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[1] These included: One year independent study abroad programs that sent students from Californian universities to Cape Town, Pietermaritzburg and Durban in South Africa; a semester abroad program to the University of Cape Town coordinated by a faculty member from their Californian college who also taught a core class to the American students on the social and cultural history of Cape Town and South Africa; a summer political science course that consisted of a week of intense classes on the history and politics of South Africa in California and a three week tour of South Africa; an international reporting class, part of a masters program in journalism, during which students spent the first half of the semester studying South African geography, history, politics and society while setting up possible stories to investigate. They then flew to Johannesburg and Cape Town for an intense ten days of interviews and research. On their return they wrote up at least two stories each from South Africa (See: http://journalism.berkeley.edu/projects/safrica/); Global Exchange 'Reality Tours' which bring groups of Americans to South Africa on two tours a year that include visits to clinics, government and non-government agencies, rural villages and various sites of struggle history; young professionals from California who took a 6 week holiday traveling through South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe over Christmas 1999.

A tour of the peninsula and especially a visit to Clifton's Number 4 beach, right at the beginning of the college students' stay in Cape Town introduced them to the issues that would trouble the students throughout their time in South Africa. This set them on the path of finding ways to dress that would ensure that they would not immediately be recognized as tourists. The Americans hid their cameras and bought second-hand leather pouches and other sorts of bags to carry their books, as backpacks are particularly associated with tourists and especially Americans. They were thrilled when confused with locals and disappointed when South Africans asked them where they were from but then happy again when it was assumed they had been in South Africa longer than they had been. They hadn't come as tourists so they didn't want to be taken as tourists:

> Americans seem to be a big novelty here and people think we're cute. I just wish we weren't so obvious. I want to blend in so nobody changes their behaviour around us. That's the point of traveling. We were in a small group yesterday and a security guard spoke to us in Afrikaans, which made us so happy. Once you get past the video cameras and tourist traps, you can see what is really going on. Anne

The students frequently brought this first trip to Clifton up in conversations during their 6 months in Cape Town, worrying about how their cameras, their backpacks and their clothes made them stand out as visitors. The students remember their first visit to this beach not only because for many of them the bars and restaurants along the coast would become popular haunts during their stay in the city, but because it marked them so clearly as foreigners and tourists. Its impact though was more than the usual frustration at being perceived as a tourists, a category most people find offensive, as they prefer to think of themselves as travellers. This label was only the first in what to them felt like an increasingly restricted identity imposed on them by South Africans.

This was because it became very clear, very quickly for many of the students that no matter how comfortable they became in South Africa, they remained somehow marked as not just foreign but also specifically American. Once they speak, of course, any American is clearly identifiable as such in South Africa. But Phyllis, a year abroad student, described conversations with Zimbabweans while she was traveling that focused on her clothes. She was frustrated that Zimbabweans considered the way she dressed as an aspect of her culture and specifically of her 'American culture'. The fact that others recognized her Americaness simply through the way she dressed and assigned to her a 'culture' to which she did not feel she belonged was surprising to a young woman who thought of herself as African American and of 'America' as 'cultureless'. Rosaldo describes "culture" as something perceived in someone else and this is particularly the case of a nation as powerful as the US, which certainly terns to associate culture with the exotic, the other (Rosaldo 1993). Americans, like Phyllis, traveling in southern Africa learn for the first time that these 'exotic others' perceive them as having a culture, one that is instantly recognizable.

Tiffany, a Summer Session Political Science student wrote how she still hadn't *figured out how they* (South Africans) *can tell* (that she is American), *even when I'm not talking*. Liz, a year abroad student,

in a conversation back in California, was also convinced that South Africans did not need to hear Americans in order to identify them. She thought it was because Americans 'walk like Americans', that the way that they take up space, in fact command space, marks them long before they actually speak. Liz was unconsciously echoing Bourdieu, who wrote: "Bodily hexis is political mythology realized, <u>embodied</u>, turned into permanent disposition, durable way of standing, speaking, walking, and thereby of feeling and thinking (Bourdieu 1990:69-70).

Although Bourdieu is writing about the way men and women embody their roles within a society the experience of Americans in South Africa is a good illustration of the way that national identity can be built into a body's movements. For example in writing on the efficacy of commemorative rituals in building and sustaining national identities Connerton argues that such ritual performances incorporate social memory through performative memory which is in fact bodily memory or "encoded postures, gestures and movement" (Foster 1991:243). Mauss suggested something similar when he described techniques of the body as "ways in which from society to society men know how to use their bodies" (Mauss 1973:70).

> These 'habits' do not just vary with individuals and their imitations, they vary especially between societies, educations, proprieties and fashions, and prestiges. In them we should see the techniques and work of collective and individual practical reason rather than, in the ordinary way, merely the soul and its repetitive faculties(Mauss 1973:73).

The last thing I want to do, of course, is to suggest that Americans can be assigned a particular 'national character'. But in the encounter between Americans and South Africans in the contact zone, the reverse gaze marks Americans, not just as other, but also as belonging to a particular nation. This at least was how these young Americans understood their encounters with people they met in southern Africa. They felt labeled, categorized and, worse, judged, whether that was the intention of the Africans or not. Their response highlights how it is possible for the objects of a tourist gaze to return this gaze and influence the way tourists experienced this place and these people.

The Impact of a Reverse Gaze

> I'd wanted to be above it all, sporting and good-humored and sophisticated, but I saw now that I was an American after all (an American in my own fashion, of course, just as the Constitution allows us all to be) and that dancing around this fact connoted a shame that, at bottom, I didn't feel….My own experience has taught me that I can't, and don't want to, sidestep my own Americanness in order to placate the country's blunter critics, who frequently make fewer distinctions among us than we like to make among ourselves (Kirn 2003).

In fact what was so tough for many of these travellers is not just that they were seen as part of an 'American culture' but the way that that 'culture' was perceived. An American travel journalist wrote: "But the rest of the world doesn't automatically hate us for being American; neither does it love us for it. This, I think, is what really bothers some American travelers. More than the citizens of other nations, we want – need, even – to be liked" (Flinn 2001). When I first met with the college students in Cape Town in March

2000 they had been in South Africa for about a month and many of them felt that they had experienced some form of xenophobia. Some students had been equated with American foreign policy and held to book for the actions of the US government. Bahar, a year abroad student in 2000 had found living with South Africans difficult in part because of their perceptions about Americans, in particular the assumption that all Americans were rich. Dahlia who studied in South Africa in 1998 believed that television was the reason that South Africans felt such animosity towards the US.

> I also didn't like those youths' perception of us. They believed the stereotypical images of African Americans presented in the media (Dawson 2000:128 quoting an American student on a trip to Ghana).

Being recognized as American is, therefore, only one aspect of the reverse gaze experienced by Americans in Africa, as these travelers also get a lesson in what that identity seems to mean to South Africans. As Johanna, who spent a month in South Africa, writes in her journal:

> Perhaps it is only my paranoia, as one who feels like an accomplice in the great injustices many South Africans have suffered, but I thought I read on the faces of black South African passing my window both fear and revulsion. I also saw, from my comfortable, well-fed perch of complacency, abject poverty. Johanna

It was hard for them to be constantly reminded of their American identity but worse was being made, so they felt, to represent a nation that is often simultaneously despised and adored, sometimes envied by the people that they encounter. Pires, in his analysis of his study abroad programme, writes: "Americans are likely to experience a spectrum of African opinion ranging from envy to disdain concerning the great wealth and prosperity of the United States. If nothing else, most students come away from these exchanges with a greater appreciation for their privileged economic position and the wealth of opportunity available to them by virtue of their citizenship" (Pires 2000a:42). This student who spent a month in South Africa expresses a typical response:

> Possibly the most important consequence of the year {abroad} was my dramatically increased understanding of America as a nation and Americans as a people and why they are as they are. The opportunity of seeing oneself and one's country from "the outside inward" through the eyes and biases of a foreigner is an incredible and often shocking experience (Mortensen quoted in Pires 2000a:42).

Conclusion

> These 'inbetween' spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood - singular or communal – that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself (Bhabha 1994).

Like the interstices described by Bhabha the 'inbetween' spaces inhabited by travellers re-scripts the meaning of being 'from' the US and of home. Angus writes that "[t]he border is [not a] place, but the discovery of place… [It] is not difference; it allows difference to appear" (Angus quoted in Harrison 2003:143). By unsettling the traveller's assumptions about home, travel disturbs the naturalness of

belonging either to nation, race or ethnicity. The American travellers that I worked with established intimate ties with South Africans and other Africans and found their taken for granted intimacies at home shaken in the contact zone in South Africa. These relationships formed a reverse gaze as the 'other' looked back with all of its own set of assumptions and attitudes, thus positioning the traveller in unfamiliar ways. This research highlights the importance of shifting research in tourism from either the 'host' or the 'guest' or the impact of one on the other to the more complex and interwoven relationships between them.

Travel is a cultural experience that produces identities not places yet place remains important. The identities produced by travel are located in relation to America and this is an America that is seen, sometimes for the first time by these young travellers as being globally positioned. If colonial travel writing was, as Pratt writes: "the project whereby, to use Daniel Defert's terms, Europe takes consciousness of itself…as a planetary process rather than {as} a region of the world" (Pratt 1985:125), contemporary travel for Americans is an opportunity for them to become more conscious of the place they come from. This required these travellers to reconsider their ideas of self and other and resulted, not in greater knowledge of their host country[2], but greater understanding of its relationship to them as US citizens and to the US. The combination of learning to belong with the realization of belonging to a nation that is situated in relation to other nations produces in these young American travellers a new sense of the burden that they carry in their backpacks of privilege (McIntosh 1988). They had to recognize that they belonged to an imperial nation, and in the broader project from which this paper is drawn I explore in more depth what it means to young Americans to come face to face with the responsibilities-a new 'white man's burden' that comes with being American (Mathers 2003).

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[2] See: Mathers, Kathryn. 2004. Re-imagining Africa: What American students learn in South Africa. *Tourism Review International* 8 for a detailed discussion of what these same students learn and do not learn about South Africa and Africa during their five months on the continent. I argue that, although some shifting in their perception of Africa occurs, it has more to do with the relationship between the US and Africa than with any concretely changed knowledge about the place itself. The lessons described here about recognizing themselves as American are much more powerfully felt by these students and have a much longer impact on them after their return.

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PAPER TITLE: PRETTY AS A PICTURE: CONSTRUCTING THE PICTURESQUE

AT *THE LOST CITY*

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Introduction

Spatial practice intersects with issues such as power, social class, ideology, myth, identity, capitalism, taste, the representation of the past, and entertainment. Lefebvre (1991:17) accordingly claims that all socially produced spaces can be read as systems of signification that are linked to modes of production and historical circumstances. This paper suggests that the trope of the picturesque is embedded in the spatial practice of the South African theme park, *The Lost City,* to serve both aesthetic and ideological ends. Because landscape is a textual system, it "can be linked with generic and narrative typologies such as the … picturesque" (Mitchell 1994:1). The picturesque aesthetic not only engendered a particular form of tourism, but, as I will suggest, also inflected the manner in which theme park landscapes give form to narrative, myth and ideology. Because the picturesque is a narrative mode that is based on the principle of artifice, it lends itself to mystification and the ideological manipulation of scenery (Barthes 1972:81-84).[1] I am particularly interested in why and how the picturesque informs the conceptualisation and instrumentalisation of space at *The Lost City*. By invoking the picturesque, landscape is reconstructed to appear fascinating; it is 'improved' and commodified, and turned into spectacle for the purposes of entertainment. It is therefore clear that the aesthetic trope of the picturesque can be used to illustrate the work of ideology.

I will suggest that the picturesque at *The Lost City* is predicated on two distinct, yet ultimately related, discursive systems. The first is located in colonial ideology, and the second derives from the mechanisms used by theme parks to generate narrative structures. Colonial narratives required that landscapes be re-presented as 'readable' texts,[2] and this control, manipulation, and staging of land was

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[1] Since the picturesque presages human intervention and staging of the landscape, Barthes (1972:81) comments:

> The picturesque is found any time the ground is uneven. We find again here this bourgeois promoting of the mountains, this old Alpine myth ... associated with Helvetico-Protestant morality and which has always functioned as a hybrid compound of the cult of nature and of puritanism (regeneration through clean air, moral ideas at the sign of mountain-tops, summit-climbing as civic virtue, etc.) ... Only mountains, gorges, defiles and torrents can have access to the pantheon of travel, inasmuch, probably, as they seem to encourage a morality of effort and solitude.

[2] Carter (1987:41) suggests that colonial space "itself was a text that had to be written before it could be interpreted". According to Root (1996:154-155), western culture's economic, political, and cultural ideologies organised people's relation to the land, and this same system was subsequently imposed on its colonies. Root (1996:159) explains that "[t]he Western, Christian view of land and of the earth … [is] central to an understanding of the nature of European colonial expansion and by extension, the nature of European racism. ... The colonial project clearly drew on and manifested the conception of land dominant within Europe". Mitchell (1994:17) reasons similarly that "the discourse of imperialism, which conceives itself precisely (and simultaneously) as an expansion of landscape understood as an inevitable, progressive development in history, an expansion of 'culture' and 'civilization' into a 'natural' space in a progress that is itself narrated as 'natural'".

frequently enacted according to familiar aesthetic tropes such as the picturesque.[3] Childs and Williams (1997:103) thus argue that imperialism required other lands "*to look more like Europe*" (my emphasis). Similarly, theme parks rely on easily understood narrative structures that tap into the myths and visual imagery generated and sustained by popular culture. The picturesque resonates with distant memories of pristine nature and extinct civilisations, and because the "picturesque landscape is one that one walks into like a picture" (Dubow 1997:4), it coincides with the manner in which space is enframed at *The Lost City*.[4]

I will start with a brief delineation of the picturesque aesthetic before indicating its alignment with colonialism, tourism, and theme park entertainment, with specific reference to *The Lost City*.

The picturesque aesthetic

The picturesque was defined as an aesthetic category in late eighteenth century England, and coexisted with, and incorporated elements of, the tropes of the sublime and beautiful.[5] The picturesque became important when urbanisation placed a new value on wild, untamed areas distant from cities (Bate 2002:3).[6] Picturesque means "like a picture", and accordingly the painter's view of nature and pictorial models were invoked as examples of how to look at nature (Hussey 1967:4,9).[7] The theory of the picturesque was expounded in William Gilpin's (1724-1804) *Observations relative chiefly to picturesque beauty* (1789) and *Three essays on picturesque beauty* (1794), and Uvedale Price's (1747-1829) *Essay on the picturesque* (1794). The picturesque was singularly important in landscape gardening, particularly in the English "natural" garden popularised in the eighteenth century by William Kent[8] (1685-1748) and Lancelot "Capability" Brown (1716-1783). The picturesque "garden of ideas" evoked languorous melancholy and nostalgic longing through the judicious staging of uneven ground, hills, rocks, pools, cascades, trees, natural groupings of plants, serpentine paths, avenues, glades, temples, grottos, statuary, sham ruins overgrown by ivy and moss, and weather beaten structures such as pavilions. A good example is Louis de Carmontelle's Parisian Parc Monceau, which he designed in 1778 as a 'jardin pittoresque' and compared to the illusionistic set changes of a contemporary opera

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[3] Landscape always assumes symbolic, metaphorical, or representational qualities. Zukin (1991:17) points out the confluence between landscape and power: "to make a landscape was also to recreate natural topography in images of power ... activities [such] as landscaping the grounds of a country estate and drawing maps of the world to distort, obliterate, and rearrange geography to serve the interests of the viewer ... landscape both imposes and represents a visual order".

[4] The picturesque represents the conflation of perception, idea, imagination, reality, and representation (Dubow 1997:4).

[5] "Uniformity, regularity, symmetry, and smoothness epitomized beauty ... Only in the late eighteenth century, when roughness, irregularity, and asymmetry became 'sublime' or 'picturesque', did mountain forms, like ruins, gain favour" (Lowenthal 1985:140). Stewart (1984:75) sees the picturesque as a "rather bourgeois taming of the sublime which emerges at the end of the eighteenth century ... The terrifying and giganticized nature of the sublime is domesticated into the orderly and cultivated nature of the picturesque."

[6] Gurstein (2004) explains that "the appreciation of the actual scenery of nature – mountains, clouds, waterfalls, cliffs, rocks, trees, and … ruins – came late to the West and only after viewers had grown accustomed to seeing nature 'improved' and 'selected' by the art of landscape painting".

[7] The term Picturesque Beauty was coined by Gilpin, and denoted that which was beautiful and suitable for a picture (Hussey 1967:12-13,55). Landscape gardening and art theory developed along parallel lines regarding the formulation of the picturesque aesthetic. The picturesque quality is not necessarily found in the object itself, but rather in the spectator's subjective way of perceiving it – this means that the picturesque is often the product of the viewer's orientation or imagination (Carter 1987:239-240), which signals that the picturesque is indeed a code based on societal conventions.

[8] Rousham House in Oxfordshire, England, with the famous Venus Vale, exemplifies Kent's landscape style in the 1720s.

(Rosenblum 1974:114). The picturesque rapidly spread from gardening to painting, architecture, poetry, travel, and literature (Hussey 1967:18,5).

Trees, mountain peaks, ruins, and bodies of still water – lakes, streams, and pools – were particularly potent images in the lexicon of the picturesque, and became the locus of metaphorical meanings. Water, for example, was associated with infinity, reflection, and contemplation (Coetzee 1988:44). Ruins were commonly associated with transience and solitude, and consequently induced nostalgia and melancholic thoughts[9] (Hussey 1967: 152; Coetzee 1988:44,46; Lowenthal 1985:175). Ruins became prime exemplars of the picturesque because of their irregularity of form, their prospect of imminent decay, and because they represented the "triumph of nature over the transience of artifice" (Lowenthal 1985:140,156). In keeping with the taste for 'pleasing decay' in the eighteenth century, sham ruins were fabricated to enhance the picturesque quality of gardens (Lowenthal 1985:148-149). Mouldering ruins became the primary markers of the passage of time, and exemplified the *memento mori* that induced reflections on the evanescence of life (Lowenthal 1985:148). Sham classical ruins in particular signified "the ultimate physical expiration of a dead civilization" (Rosenblum 1974:114). Ruins in a landscape were furthermore believed to encourage rumination and introspection, leading to the sublime impression of transcendence attendant upon the sense of being heroically (and perhaps tragically) alone in nature (Smith 1993:79).

Picturesque vistas, as enunciated by Gilpin and Price, typically comprised a "series of prospects representing scenes from nature … [including] large bodies of water, wooded islands, [and] a few carefully chosen architectural accents" (Schenker 2002:85). Gilpin divided landscape into background, middle-distance and foreground to render it readable for viewers. This perspectival planar recession was often combined with the Claudean trope of "a dark coulisse on one side shadowing the foreground; a middle plane with a large central feature such as a clump of trees, [and] a plane of luminous distance" (Coetzee 1988:39).[10] The picturesque was consequently *envisioned* as a series of planned and composed static pictures or as a sequence of scenes that were designed to be seen from specific viewpoints (Sullivan 1973:112) or so-called stations. Carter (1987:254) thus notes that the picturesque was like punctuation in the landscape, causing viewers to stop and reflect at particular pre-determined sites.

Because the picturesque embraced abrupt variation, irregularity, individuality of place, contrast[11] (Gottfried 1998:2), asymmetry, roughness, disorder and rusticity, it was essentially predicated on formalist principles of visual appeal[12] located in the effects of form, colour, shape, light, shade, and modulation on the viewer (Stewart 1984:75; Hussey 1967:16). By means of the picturesque, selected,

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[9] Roberts (1995:141,143) observes that melancholy "invests all in an imagery of *memento mori.* Its most intimate emblem is the ruin, the declaration that proclaims its own transience".

[10] Coetzee (1988) explains that early travellers attempted to apply the category of the picturesque to the South African landscape, but that it did not lend itself to description in terms of this category. This was possibly because the land was too "unstaged" or "natural", in contrast with the pictorial terms with which travellers were more familiar.

[11] Contrasts between rough and smooth, and between light and dark were particularly popular (Gottfried 1998:2).

[12] Indeed, Hussey (1967:245) comments that "picturesque art merely makes you see".

ordered or 'fixed' parts of nature were reduced to aesthetic experience and were appraised in terms of abstract pictorial values and painterly qualities.[13] The picturesque aesthetic was governed by nostalgic and sentimental revivalism that valued the imagination, spontaneity, surprise and variety; it was evocative and associated states of mind and exotic ideas with specific landscape designs (Young 2002:2). The picturesque accordingly became a genre that was based on viewer expectations and codes of behaviour that privileged the quiet, and often solitary contemplation of nature (Schenker 2002:88).

Picturesque naturalism is paradoxical because it represents escapism and retreat from anthropocentricism in a "nature nearly devoid of human presence" (Schenker 2002:86), yet also epitomises human control over nature in order to achieve a preconceived, abstracted version thereof.[14] On the one hand the picturesque is a symptom of the possession and transformation of landscape, a kind of 'place-making' or inscription that mediates nature into a graspable frame (Stewart 1984:75; Hussey 1967:2; Dubow 1997:6). This form of so-called picturesque 'improvement' denotes restriction, forced design and correction of nature when it did not conform to picturesque expectations (Heydt-Stevenson 1998), and manifested once fear of nature abated[15] (Hussey 1967:5-7). Conversely, the picturesque aesthetic also represents pristine nature beyond human control, and may herald the victory of nature over man as a critique of luxury, utilitarianism and industrialisation.

In the eighteenth century, the taste for the picturesque designated a 'cultivated', upper class or elite taste, reflecting a relation to land based on class and the privileges of possession. But by the nineteenth century bourgeois consumers adopted the picturesque, and the taste for 'ruins' paradoxically signified upward mobility (Coetzee 1988:39; Schenker 2002:87). Because the picturesque tends towards the sentimental, it can be considered an example of kitsch, which supports its alignment with the generalised feminisation that manifests in the discourses of colonialism, taste, tourism, leisure, and entertainment from the nineteenth century onwards.[16]

The imperial picturesque and the domestication of difference
The picturesque can be associated with the ideological and aesthetic framework of colonialism since both functioned as modesof knowing and control based on visuality and spatial practice. The picturesque is indeed so prevalent in colonial rhetoric that this signals an intimate relationship between "colonial presence and the articulations of space which attend it" (Dubow 1997:2,4). Accordingly, spatial extension is integral to representing myths and essentialist ideas (Young 2002:6).[17] The picturesque

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[13] The picturesque aesthetic developed out of topographical painting, which enlisted the typical bird's-eye panoramic view as a means of documentation of nature.
[14] The picturesque is based on binary opposites such as art/nature, self/nature, and collective gaze/romantic gaze, or oxymorons such as 'managed wilderness'.
[15] It would be interesting to examine the picturesque in terms of Wilhelm Worringer's notions regarding abstraction and empathy.
[16] Sontag (1982:109) locates one of the origins of the camp sensibility in the artifice and surface allure of the picturesque.
[17] According to Young (2002:6), "[t]he tale becomes truer and the place, by implication, better as the former gains spatial extension … [landscape can also] reduce the whole and represent it in an intelligible, albeit biased fashion". Furthermore,

aesthetic was frequently invoked to construct a sense of place in a new colony. Like naming and mapping, the picturesque was an important enframing mechanism whereby colonial space was rendered familiar and manageable according to western schemas of representation.[18] The fact that the picturesque was literally 'staged' is important in the context of colonialism and theme park discourse, since in both landscape operates in terms of the metaphors of theatre, spectacle, and performance (Cosgrove & Domosh 1993:31), establishing pleasing backdrops for human enterprises.

Delmont and Dubow (1995:7,11) suggest that the "constitutive and communicative power" of the picturesque was precisely that it afforded "a visualization for someone: a foreign landscape brought into 'being-for-the-gaze'". The picturesque was a form of spatial organisation that created bounded colonial spaces that echoed the process of colonial settlement (Dubow 1997:1; Delmont & Dubow 1995:13) and the "confident assurance of entitled leisure" was played out in these self-referential, enclosed spaces of power (Delmont & Dubow 1995:14-15; Carter 1987:147). The picturesque vista recreated in a colonial setting thus symbolised both place making as the (social) production of space, and the subsequent possession thereof (Delmont & Dubow 1995:14; Carter 1987:250).[19] The European panoramic and topographic style of representation visualised colonial landscapes laid out like a map, across which the perceiving eye of the imperial subject could wander and consume at will. But more importantly, the picturesque code that represented nature "nearly devoid of human presence" (Schenker 2002:86) proposed a free and promising future for the colony, a *terra nullius* without so-called 'natives', endorsing colonial ideology that propagated the putative unpeopled state of places like South Africa (Coetzee 1988:177).

By assuming that the picturesque functioned to naturalise western hierarchies of race, class and gender, it is clear that it can be read as a hegemonic aesthetic that implicated the domestication of difference born from the simultaneous desire and fear of Otherness (cf Root 1996:160). The colonial mentality despised the backwardness of Others, yet also desired to preserve selected picturesque aspects thereof (Mitchell 1988:163). Linda Nochlin (1991:50-51) explains that the picturesque was a form of Orientalism that proposed that

> the people encapsulated by it, defined by its presence, are irredeemably different from, more backward than, and culturally inferior to those who construct and consume the picturesque product. They are irrevocably 'Other.'[20]

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the fact that the picturesque became a bourgeois taste is significant in terms of it being a vehicle for myth because Barthes (1972) believes that myth making is ultimately a bourgeois gesture.

[18] For a discussion of how early travellers to South Africa viewed the landscape in terms of the picturesque tradition see Coetzee (1988).

[19] In a colonial context, the picturesque could simultaneously signify "possession … [and] wildness and the romance of beginnings" (Carter 1987:250).

[20] The duality inherent in the picturesque was that it symbolised the celebration of decay as well as its prevention; Nochlin (1991:50-51) deliberates on the fact that the picturesque is predicated on the notion of destruction:

> on the brink of destruction, in the course of incipient modification and cultural dilution, are
> customs, costumes, and religious rituals of the dominated finally *seen* as picturesque.
> Reinterpreted as the precious remnants of disappearing ways of life, worth hunting down and

According to this paradigm, the picturesque was defined by its opposite, namely the ideology of progress and rationalism (Nochlin 1991:51). Similarly, the cult of picturesque tourism, dating from the late eighteenth century, was appropriated by mass tourism in the twentieth century and commodified the picturesque for touristic experience (Schenker 2002:87). Picturesque tourism was an intellectual enterprise that inscribed the notion of finding the world picturesque (cf Urry 1990:136-138) and embraced the spectacle of difference "refracted though the fictions of the picturesque, the exotic and the primitive" (Pollock 1992:60).[21]

The picturesque *Lost City*

The origins of contemporary theme parks can be located in European pleasure gardens of the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries. These gardens included various forms of entertainment, and like later theme parks, were "spaces rich with visual references, innuendoes, hints, and winks" (Young 2002:2; Schenker 2002:89).[22] Of particular significance for *The Lost City* is that a common trope in many of these gardens was nostalgia for "[t]he lost village" (Young 2002:2-3); like private picturesque gardens of the same period, many of them meditated on the "lost world evoked by classical ruins" (Rosenblum 1974:114). Much has been written about the spurious nature of theme parks and their cavalier attitude towards the past, but as typical postmodern spaces they can accommodate contradictory narratives with aplomb (Young 2002:5). Like colonial landscapes, theme parks are also liminoid spaces, bounded, controlled and staged for the consuming gaze. Furthermore, just as colonial landscapes were manipulated to approximate another vision of nature, theme parks frequently undermine local topography and identity and transform landscapes for the purposes of entertainment (Young 2002:6-8). The pursuit of the picturesque often robbed landscapes of their 'natural' ambiance, and this is similar to the vaguely timeless air or general aura of pastness that predominates at generic theme parks (Lowenthal 2002:17). Specificity is sacrificed for visual effect – a typical picturesque strategy.

The Lost City was opened in 1992 and was designed around the Legend of The Lost City that relates the story of how an ancient civilisation, ostensibly originally from Northern Africa, lived in harmony here with nature until destroyed by an earthquake some 3000 years ago. All that remained were the village ruins and the Palace, discovered and restored by the intrepid explorer, Sol Kerzner. The Legend is in itself picturesque, a pretty story, since it evokes a lost arcadia and the age-old myth of a rural golden age based on harmony with nature. And this is of course another paradox inherent in the picturesque, namely that in the binary opposition between nature and culture, the picturesque can represent culture rather than nature (cf Bate 2002).

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preserving, they are finally transformed into subjects of aesthetic delectation in an imagery in which exotic human beings are integrated with a presumably defining and overtly limiting décor.
[21] Picturesque tourism is hence a form of white tourism that is linked to specific middle-class ideologies (Bate 2002:8), and is almost certainly a gendered enterprise that privileged the male 'way of seeing'.
[22] A Google Internet search reveals that in travel agent terms, 'picturesque' means theme park nearby.

Because theme parks rely on immediate visual impact, views and narratives are planned and timed (Waldrep 1995:212); so, for example, The Palace of *The Lost City* forms a picturesque backdrop for the whole site. Visual impact is stage-managed, because nothing can be arbitrary in the "impression management" demanded by theme parks (Johnson 1981:161). Themeing, movement through space, and narrative consequently work together in the sequential structuring of vistas and events. Specific patterns of visitor movement are usually imposed in order to constitute the preferred narrative based on visual and auditory effects articulated in a precise manner in space (Waldrep 1995:199,213; Yoshimoto 1994:187). Mitrasinovic (1998) believes that theme parks present chains of "themescapes" that operate on the principle of framing, or "the displacement of visitors by the force of an alien visual and spatial ordering system and the impact of an exotic visual/narrative theme". At *The Lost City*, these themescapes function as picturesque narrative fragments that constitute atmosphere and drive the narrative. As previously mentioned, the picturesque was usually *envisioned* as a series of planned and composed static pictures that were intended to be seen from specific vantage points. This is comparable to how theme park themescapes enframe space and imbue it with narrative and identity. Picturesque tourism customarily directed discerning travellers to the best views, which they gazed at from the vantage point of 'stations' situated on elevated outcrops (Bate 2002:4), and I believe that theme park themescapes operate according to the same principle.

Virtually all of the characteristics of the picturesque mentioned previously can be identified at The Lost City. So, for example, the Garden is a romantic "garden of ideas" that is structured around typical picturesque iconography[23] that creates a visual, atmospheric, and thematic backdrop for *The Lost City*, and specifically for The Palace Hotel.[24] Patrick Watson transformed or 'improved' the original dry bushveld into a 25-hectare tropical fantasy forest, and planned the Garden around a series of artificial lakes, pools, fountains, waterfalls, ruins, and constructed paths. The iconography is Africanised – instead of Apollo and Venus, animal and bird sculptures peek out between the foliage. The different sections in the Garden include an ornamental forest with palms and exotic fruit trees, a wet tropical forest, a dry indigenous forest, and a royal palm forest.[25] Watson was aware of the need for an almost cinematic, picturesque panorama, stating that "the view 100 kilometres away is … important … . The vista has to fade out, from tropical at the centre to indigenous mountainside at the edges" (Works of wonder 1993:50). The Garden is thus structured to afford "endless opportunities for leisurely walks and scenic views", according to the custodians, Sun International (2000:16). Carter (1987:232-233) states that there are two kinds of picturesque, the one impenetrable and uninhabited, where one gets lost, and the other of openness and habitation, but both imply visual cultivation. This is evident in the Garden where all the paths are paved, signposted, and meticulously maintained; the areas closest to the

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[23] In the words of the Garden's creator, Patrick Watson, "in romantic landscapes such as Sun City and Lost City one has to use instinct" (Works of wonder 1993:50).

[24] According to Patrick Mda (1992:88): "The designer jungle, an ode to the flora and fauna of Africa, encompasses ... rainforests to swamps, baobab trees and bamboo thickets. Everywhere you look there are elephants, leopards, monkeys, snakes, birds ... palm leaves and the crowns of protea ... immortalised in every nook and cranny of the city, both inside and out. And from the midst of the exotic jungle soars The Palace Hotel".

[25] About 30% of the plants are indigenous to the region, and the other 70% are indigenous to Africa (Works of wonder 1993:50).

Palace Hotel are the most 'domesticated', and wildness exists only in the imagination of the visitor, not in reality.

The picturesque is also enunciated at The Lost City by means of the fake ruins, cracked masonry, and weathering; the foregrounding of picturesque ruin and decay makes it eminently believable that *The Lost City* originated thousands of years ago (Silverman 1992:30). Ruins were an integral part of picturesque tourism because they invoked an aesthetic experience based on the pleasures of the imagination (Gurstein 2004:4), and at The Lost City they signify nostalgia, historical exoticism, sublime delight in pleasing decay, and picturesque romanticism. The appreciation of ruins was located in a western mode of thought, and was underpinned by the notions of travel, exploration, and archaeological excavations, which were conflated and incorporated in the romance of colonial discovery during the nineteenth century. Martin Hall (1995:181) thus observes that the attraction of The Lost City can be situated in its "picturesque decay and patina, cracked and crumbling icons of the archaeological site". The ruins of the Royal Arena and Royal Baths in particular arouse memories of previously seen archaeological sites, whether real or fictional such as Atlantis.

Ruin lore was firmly entrenched in the western Romantic and picturesque tradition, but by the late nineteenth century it was also sited in the legends of the Queen of Sheba and Prester John, archaeological discoveries in Africa such as Great Zimbabwe, and the adventure stories of Rider Haggard. In Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* (1885), for example, the British discover a black race living among the ruins of a supposed great white civilisation. David Bunn (1988:18) believes that these ruins served the imperial capitalist drive by "reminding only of a *suitably distant epic past*" (my emphasis) that posed no threat to colonial hegemony. The ruins at *The Lost City* resonate with many texts that situate them in the lexicon of the picturesque. Firstly, because they are sham, 'mass manufactured' ruins deliberately arranged in a landscape to create picturesque effects, they appeal to the so-called kitsch tourist (Giesz 1969:172, 167). Secondly, the *Lost City* ruins represent the capacity to fabricate the past in order to create a generalised sense of pastness; because these ruins are devoid of original context or meaning, they merely become décor that stimulates touristic consumption (cf Walsh 1992:119). Furthermore, the "time-worn magnificence of The Palace" (Hawthorne 1996:23) and the ruins portray a "suitably distant epic past" at *The Lost City*, and more importantly, naturalise and legitimate the Legend regarding contact from North Africa whereby local history and culture are elided.

A last example of the picturesque at *The Lost City* is this pictorial map, which presents a typical picturesque view from a designated 'station'. The two proscenium-like columns provide the framing coulisse beloved of picturesque paintings, and direct the possessing gaze over the land, which unfolds like a panorama and fades into a pleasing "luminous distance". All the details on this map exaggerate the picturesque depiction of ageing and ruination. This again demonstrates how the picturesque aesthetic operates across genres and in disparate parts to ultimately inscribe ideological and mythical intent.

Conclusion

In this brief interrogation of the picturesque at The Lost City, I suggested that the picturesque aesthetic lends itself to the ideological manipulation of spatiality inherent in the staging of space in textualised landscapes such as theme parks. While theme parks elicit predetermined effects in a controlled environment, colonial spaces similarly enlisted the imperial picturesque to combine beauty with the imposition of stability. The picturesque is an easily adaptable and assimilated code that familiarises unfamiliar landscapes, embracing a politics of power disguised as an aesthetic sensibility. The picturesque is an appropriation of territory, either by 'improving' it or by colonising it, which is analogous to the manner in which subject countries were 'improved' under colonial rule. I also proposed that because the picturesque is a mode that domesticates or feminises, it is the ideal trope for articulating spaces of leisure and entertainment. Furthermore, picturesque gardens, colonial landscapes and theme parks might be considered as exclusionary spaces, not open to all: "like heaven, theme parks are good places, and traditionally a good place is not open to all" (Young 2002:7). This mechanism of exclusion tries to establish the notion that the picturesque is an acquired, even cultivated taste.

The picturesque at The Lost City seemingly offers visitors the quaintness of the past preserved. Despite the fact that the ancient inhabitants are never explicitly represented, because they are enframed by the picturesque, we assume them to be primitive or, in other words, picturesque Africans. Because the picturesque embodies nostalgic escapism (Bate 2002:7) it is effectively an anachronistic oxymoron; theme parks are therefore the best vehicles for an aesthetic that proposes 'managed wilderness'. Whereas the eighteenth century picturesque sought connections between nature and art, I believe that today's picturesque seeks associations between popular culture and landscapes as mediatised by Indiana Jones, *Gladiator*, *Relic Hunter*, Lara Croft, and Tarzan.[26] Indeed, the concept architect of The Lost City admitted that his main inspirations had been Tarzan, Indiana Jones, and *The African Queen* (1951) (Gates 1998), establishing a new genealogy for the contemporary picturesque.

The picturesque at *The Lost City* is a visual cliché that epitomises cultivated nature. Africa as mediated by the picturesque at The Lost City is therefore Africa of the colonial imagination – constructed, 'improved', tamed, domesticated, familiarised, and commodified. Since the picturesque is embedded in the notion of 'improved', civilised landscapes that are staged to render predetermined effects, it becomes a simulacrum, an empty signifier that fails to engage with the transcendent value of the experience of wild nature. Gurstein (2004:3) believes that the picturesque "came to seem paltry, even trivial …for a modernist sensibility seeking tragedy, sublimity, or transcendence", and in this manner the picturesque, ruins, nostalgia, melancholia and the simulacrum align at The Lost City to render the Baudrillardean disappearance of meaning[27] (cf Baudrillard 1994:162). Imagined locales are more

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[26] The Lost City ruins formed the backdrop for the American television series *Tarzan: the epic adventure* in 1997.
[27] According to Baudrillard (994:162), "melancholia is the fundamental tonality of functional systems, of current systems of simulation … melancholia is the inherent quality of the mode of the disappearance of meaning".

desired than actual ones, according to David Lowenthal (2002:18), and the picturesque lends itself to creating fantastical semblances that obscure and naturalise the power structures that underpin it.

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SESSION: IDENTITIES ACROSS BORDERS

PAPER TITLE: THE POSTMODERN *CORPS MORCELÉ* AS AN EFFECT OF CAPITAL

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The *corps morcelé* is Jacques Lacan's term for the body-in-pieces that arises in the subject's passage from the Real to the Symbolic. It is a retroactive phenomenon insofar as the fragmentation of this body is only experienced – in fact, recollected through fantasy – once the Real has already been foreclosed[1]. At that moment a non-differentiated *hommelette*[2] starts to assume, by way of the ego, an 'orthopaedic' armature on which to construct the Symbolic subject. As this subject emerges into the established norms of language and social law, the Real recedes into the unconscious, from which it can be recovered only in a mediated and remaindered form. The subject's experience of pre-Symbolic formlessness – associated in the work of Julia Kristeva, in particular, with the *jouissance* of drive[3] – is inverted into a fear of dismemberment.

Lacan states that the fragmented body

> usually manifests itself in dreams when the movement of the analysis encounters a certain level of aggressive disintegration in the individual. It then appears in the form of disjointed limbs, or of those organs represented in exoscopy, growing wings and taking up arms for intestinal persecutions . . . (1997:4)[4]

Lacan (1997:11) further lists 'castration, mutilation, dismemberment, dislocation, evisceration, devouring [and] bursting open of the body' as attributes of the *corps morcelé*. To let his reader visualise this body in bits, Lacan alludes to the work of Hieronymous Bosch, and also refers to the paranoiac-

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[1] The Real is foreclosed at the point of entry into social reality. As Žižek (2002:xvii) writes: 'the Real is not the pre-reflexive reality of our immediate immersion into our life-world, but, precisely, that which gets lost, that which the subject has to renounce, in order to become immersed into its life-world – and, consequently, that which then returns in the guise of spectral apparitions'. The *corps morcelé* can be counted among these 'apparitions'.

[2] The term is Lacan's, and means 'scrambled man' – see, for instance, *The four fundamental concepts of psycho-analysis* (1994:197), where it is related to the intriguing concept of the lamella.

[3] Kristeva (1982, 1986). Her term for this pre-Symbolic 'receptacle' is the semiotic *chora* – which later becomes the driving factor behind what she terms 'poetic language' (a language that can disrupt and rejuvenate the Symbolic).

[4] Out of interest, one should note that against this fragmented *corps* Lacan places the Symbolic I, which he also sets in the context of dreams: 'the formation of the *I* is symbolized in dreams by a fortress, or a stadium – its inner arena and enclosure, surrounded by marshes and rubbish-tips, dividing it into two opposed fields of contest where the subject flounders in quest of the lofty, remote inner castle' (1997:5). In effect, the non-I becomes associated with the fragmented, and the I with the self-(en)closed edifice (though, of course, one cannot – especially all these centuries on – evoke a castle without simultaneously evoking ruins). A third term is added: a surrounding area of bogs and litter (i.e., an area of ruination). What Lacan suggests is that the subject flounders between the bog and the castle; yet if one follows this logic all the way down it would appear that the castle is always unattainable (which could as easily make it the Real as the Symbolic Other – hence the argument in this paper). This would mean that the subject flounders nowhere other than in the garbage-strewn margins. Eccentricity and the status of being a satellite around an unrealizable ideal would therefore be the subject's lot by definition. If one bears this in mind, one can more readily understand why in Lacan the Other exists in an entirely unreciprocal relationship with the subject; and one can further understand why the Real is defined as Real only through its exclusion from the field of 'reality' – a field that a fresh reading of Lacan makes one repostulate as a midden.

critical method of Salvador Dali. According to Malcolm Bowie (1991:215*n*6), he might even have been influenced by the dolls of Hans Bellmer.

The work of these artists shares an approach to form that revels in unexpected combinations of body parts and in a slippage, as much cerebral as optical, between different orders of imagery and objects. In Dali we encounter a deliberate doubling of images, which seeks to represent the mind's capacity to discern multiple, overlapping sets of features in a given object or picture. In Bellmer's works a more disorientating and inversive principle holds sway: the body is turned into a strange polyp, sprouting limbs and organlike excrescences in unprecedented places.

These fragmented bodies share something else: they intermix and confound categories, disturb schemas, and so rupture the seamlessness of the signifying network (what Lacan (1994) refers to as the *automaton*). As such, they represent things that do not have equivalents in visible reality. Indeed, the only reason why we are able to interpret them is because of their divergence from the known. In other words, we cannot treat them as stand-ins for positively-existing objects; we make sense of them by placing them in relation to signifiers that do act as such stand-ins. If representation through the ages has been saddled with a mandate to offer self-affirming images of humanity, these inchoate, uncodifiable aberrations trouble that mandate. Instead of furnishing viewers with coherent, unified, taxonomically accurate pictures of the subject, they startle the eyes with visions of excess[5] and dissolution. The body is in disarray, spaces run into each other, objects mutate into objects belonging to different orders of being. In short, what we are faced with here is the horror of codes in flow[6] – which is nothing less than the horror of Symbolic collapse.

This paper seeks to use the *corps morcelé* against the reading one might construe for it on the basis of what has been outlined thus far. Instead of linking it to the postmodern to suggest that the fragmentary harbours a revolutionary counter-organisational power, the essay instead maintains that flows of code – as Deleuze and Guattari (1984) pointed out 20 years ago – are necessary to the maintenance of capitalism. In addition, the essay claims that the pluralist postmodern subject is itself a *corps morcelé* which is both an effect of capital, and an agent acting to further renew and diversify capital. From this an argument is made that capital is itself, as the reigning big Other of our present decentralised global economy, the ultimate *corps morcelé* or body without organs. Lastly, the paper suggests that, to the extent that the Real Thing's foreclosure is also the means by which it reappears in the Symbolic in the place of the Other, as both it and its spectral double, capital can itself be understood as the Thing. As such, capital is read not as an oppressive ideological force acting on behalf of invisible moguls to channel every subject into pursuits expedient to it, but as the only possible system for the contemporary age – the only one that can give postmodern subjects enjoyment by catering for their diversity, polymorphous perversity and decentrement.

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[5] The phrase is taken from Bataille, *Visions of excess* (1999).
[6] The link here is to the notion of coded flows as an aspect of capitalism's axiomatic in Deleuze and Guattari (1984, 1987). Cf. also Jameson's (1991) notion of 'total flow'.

Say the word 'subject' in a conversation about postmodernism, and one is likely to at once invoke a metonymic chain that would include such adjectives as split, divided, plural, dispersed, mobile, fragmented and, of course, decentred. This subject has been the subject of postmodern works as diverse as, say, Barbara Kruger's *Untitled (You are not yourself)*, Cindy Sherman's *Untitled* film stills and Paul McCarthy's *Tomato Heads*. In the latter work, the post-humanist subject is figured as a commodifiable doll with a huge brand-like tomato head standing amidst a constellation of interchangeable, yet notably maladapted and incongruous, body parts[7]. Here one encounters the *corps morcelé* in a figure overtly suggestive of capitalist consumerism, and one would do well to bear it in mind as the paper unravels.

The decentred subject also looms large in what is – perhaps overly broadly – termed postmodern and poststructuralist theory[8]. A recurring claim in such theory is that subjectivity can no longer be conceived of in the broadly humanist terms of a singular, self-identical and self-determining ego. Contra so-called Cartesian models that associate identity with consciousness, much postmodern theory posits a self that cannot be self-identical, since it only 'comes into being' through complex processes of mediation with others and the socio-linguistic field[9]. To make this point, some postmodern theory has tended to become reductive, using rhetoric and blunt generalisation to uphold the virtues of postmodern pluralism over the vices of alleged humanist uniqueness. Understandably, other theorists have criticised this tendency – perhaps none with more caricatural flair than Terry Eagleton (1996:79):

> The history of Western philosophy, so we are asked to believe, is by and large the narrative of [a] starkly autonomous subject, in contrast to the dispersed, divided subject of current postmodern orthodoxy. This ignorant and dogmatic travesty of Western philosophy should not go unchallenged. For Spinoza, the subject is the mere function of an implacable determinism, its "freedom" no more than the knowledge of iron necessity. The self for David Hume is a convenient fiction, a bundle of ideas and experiences whose unity we can only hypothesize. Kant's moral subject is indeed autonomous and self-determining, but in a mysterious way quite at odds with its empirical
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> determining. For Schelling, Hegel and the other Idealists, the subject is relational to its roots, as it is of course for Marx; for Kierkegaard and Sartre the self is agonizedly non-self-identical, and for Nietzsche mere spume on the wave of the ubiquitous will to power. So much, then, for the

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[7] The tomato-headed dolls thus become akin to bodies without organs – see later in the paper for a brief mention of this concept from Deleuze and Guattari.

[8] In terms of general texts, one could cite, for instance, Best and Kellner (1991), Hutcheon (1988, 1989) and Sarup (1988). Certainly as a term, the decentred subject is delineated and named more in general readings than in the texts of core theorists like Foucault, Derrida and Lacan. In these thinkers decentredness is performed rather than spelled out. For instance, Derrida's critique of the concept of centre or *ergon* enacts a discourse of decentring without – for obvious reasons – pinning the point down. Likewise, in Lacan the mirror stage articulates a moment where the subject is split and decentred (because it is in neither the centre of the self nor that of the other), without declaring decentrement at every turn of phrase.

[9] As Lyotard (1984:15) puts it:

> A *self* does not amount to much, but no self is an island; each exists in a fabric of relations that is now more complex and mobile than ever before. Young or old, man or woman, rich or poor, a person is always located at "nodal points" of specific communication circuits, however tiny these may be.

grand narrative of the unified subject[10].

The one name Eagleton omits is Descartes, yet certainly one should make room for him. It deserves repeated acknowledgement that Descartes' model of subjectivity is relational and representational. 'I think therefore I am' effectively means that 'I' is divided: it is only to the extent that a part of me can think me into becoming that I can be at all. As Jameson (reading Heidegger) puts it in *A singular modernity* (2002:46), the process by which the 'I think' relates to the 'I am' is one in which 'a thing [is brought] before one's self … thereby *imagining* it … perceiving it, thinking it or intuiting it'[11]. On the grounds of the subject/object split Jameson and others see at work in Descartes' *cogito*, one can further argue that the I that thinks is not the I that is, as much as reductionist readings of Descartes downplay the representational aspect of this relation[12]. It is only to the extent that the human animal is capable of difference that it is capable of synthesis, and what Descartes' *cogito* offers is a model of synthesis – proto-Hegelian even – not a model of unity.

It is thus by no means disjunctive if one leaps from here to the decentred self in Lacanian theory[13], which seems the most suitable model to pursue not only because of Lacan's (1994) sensitivity to Descartes' project, but also because this paper has already been established on a Lacanian framework. The Žižek of *The plague of fantasies* will serve best as a way in to this discussion:

> [T]he Lacanian "decentred subject" is *not* simply a multiplicity of good old "Selves", partial centres; the "divided" subject does *not* mean there are simply *more* Egos/Selves in the same individual . . . The "decentrement" is the decentrement of the $ (the void of the subject) with regard to its content ("Self", the bundle of imaginary and/or symbolic identifications); the

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[10] Elsewhere in the same book (1996:15-16), Eagleton pokes fun at the decentred subject:

> Nobody who emerges from a regular eight-hours-a-day television viewing is likely to be quite the same self-identical subject who once conquered India or annexed the Caribbean . . . In these circumstances, we might expect to find forms of subjectivity dramatically at odds with each other, as human subjects too stolidly self-identical to be open to otherness came eyeball-to-eyeball with human subjects too decentred to have much to open up in the first place . . . In the epoch we are imagining, what might gradually implode, along with a faith in the kind of reasonably certain knowledge we in fact enjoy all the time, would be the idea of a human subject unified enough to embark on significantly transformative action. Instead, one would hymn the praises of the schizoid, dishevelled subject, whose ability to fasten its own shoelaces, let alone topple the political state, would be bound to remain something of a mystery.

[11] The problem that arises is how to develop a narrative for this budding into (self)consciousness. What comes first: the subject (I think) or the object (I am)? The answer is, of course, that neither comes first, since this is a relational emergence. One should also take into account the following passage from Jameson (2002:48), which has uses for the essay's argument well beyond the confines of this note:

> In the context of a construction of the object by representation, this self that seems automatically to accompany the cogito and the focus on the represented object must also be grasped as a construction. The best way to make this point is to underscore the illusions generated by a substantive like "self", which suggests something like a person or a "me" located within and behind the whole process of perception. What Heidegger's model suggests, however, is rather a purely formal account of this emergence of the subject: the construction of the object of representation as perceptible formally opens a place from which that perception is supposed to take place: it is this structural or formal place, and not any kind of substance or essence, which is the subject.

[12] For a reading of Descartes sympathetic to the notion of the I that is as a representation of the I that thinks, and as one representation in a much larger totality of representations, rather than the (object)cause of all reality, see Žižek (1993:13). Jameson (2002:42-57) is also useful in this regard, although one should acknowledge that the insights he brings to bear are chiefly Heideggerian. The argument he makes for the unrepresentable nature of consciousness is also of interest to the essay's argument, though it cannot be explored further here.

[13] Cf. Jameson (2002:43-44).

"splitting" is the splitting between $ and the phantasmic "persona" as the "stuff of the I". *The subject is split even if it possesses only one "unified" Self*, since this split is the very split between $ and Self . . . [T]he subject's division is not the division between one Self and another, between two contents, but *the division between something and nothing*, between the feature of identification and the void (1997:141).

What Žižek wants us to grasp is Lacan's insight that the subject is irremediably split because of the impossibility of its coinciding with the Symbolic order[14], or of its finding in its Imaginary and Symbolic identifications anything more than the self as mask. This perception of a lack of correlation can also be understood in terms of the division between Real and Symbolic: the subject's innermost kernel – the thing that resists symbolisation – is always-already out of joint and beyond all possibility of re-connection, since it can only appear through the Symbolic, and then only via representation, often in the language of an idealised ontology of self and substance. In the place of the Real one finds the void, a point of Symbolic breaching, which can only be surmounted by a sliding, a glissade, which is what Lacan designates as the barred or empty subject ($). Hence, as Žižek (1997:141) puts it,

> The very sliding from one identification to another, or among "multiple selves", presupposes the gap between identification as such and the void of $ . . . In other words, the very process of shifting among multiple identifications presupposes a kind of empty band which makes the leap from one identity to another possible, and this empty band is the subject itself.

Commonsense responses to such perspectives on reality might include words like 'pessimism' and 'nihilism', since they construct the human being as no more than a plaster over the gap in a reality that might otherwise be construed as objective. Instead of a beautiful creature, a vessel for an immortal, godlike soul, we are given a masquerade outfit encrusted with shiny simulacra, underneath which we will surely find a more monstrous and apocalyptic form. Yet what Žižek, drawing on Lacan and Kant, in particular, is arguing is that there is no underlying substance, no concealed Being or Real Thing. The barred subject is precisely all there is, and every ontological proposition only exists to the extent that this 'sliding band' of identifications is what inaugurates the possibility of ontological truth claims in the first place.

One can follow this train of thought further in *The ticklish subject*:

> [T]he very idea of the universe, of the All of reality, as a totality which exists in itself, has to be rejected as a paralogism – that is to say, what looks like an *epistemological limitation* of our capacity to grasp reality . . . is the positive *ontological condition* of reality itself . . . [O]ne should avoid the fatal trap of conceiving the subject as the act, the gesture, which intervenes afterwards in order to fill in the ontological gap, and insist on the irreducible vicious cycle of subjectivity: . . . the subject "is" the very gap filled in by the gesture of subjectivization … (Žižek 2000:158).

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[14] Cf. Michel Foucault (1980:339):

> [I]t would be necessary to dismiss as fantasy any anthropology in which there was any question of the being of language, or any conception of language or signification which attempted to connect with, manifest, and free the being proper to man . . . The only thing we know at the moment, in all certainty, is that in Western culture the being of man and the being of language have never, at any time, been able to coexist and to articulate themselves one upon the other.

'Subject' is therefore at least three things: the moment of ontology's positing, the name for the gap that opens the instant ontology turns not into essence but into word, and the agent that overcomes the ontological gap. As a substantive tied to personhood, 'subject' becomes the very means by which the field of Being is positivised or actualised as a place for subjective activity. In effect, then, it is a master signifier – a signifying element that makes an entire network possible, while itself being the point at which that network is most attenuated[15].

One can grasp this argument more easily if one recalls Lacan's mirror phase. The subject emerges here as a possibility, but at the price of being alienated in the image of the other, which is taken as the model for the self. A gulf opens between self and other, and the Symbolic subject is what arises *as* that gap, in that gap, and as the answer to that gap. As such, being and nothingness or life and death cross over in the very locale where the self supposedly differentiates itself and aspires to the stability and unity of the 'I'. The subject is decentred insofar as it is determined by the image of unity found in the other. To the degree that it aspires to be the other, it will always remain empty of (the ideal of) self-posited and self-referring content. The split that *is* the subject cannot be healed through the self, for, turning inwards, one will only encounter the void. One cannot expect unity from the other, either[16] – hence the complicated, at once desired and unsatisfying, nature of the compulsions that propel so many of us to identify with and seek to emulate paragons provided by fashion, advertising and other media.

What we take to be inalienable properties of ourselves are, in Lacan's model, phantasmatic contents – identifications that cannot be called predicates since they do not attach to or modify a full, positive term. These properties become the surface features of what we call self[17], and as multiple selves sliding on the band of the subject, they create the illusion of a unique individual.

Multiplicity and plurality would therefore appear to be elemental in the constitution of the human subject:

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[15] On the master signifier, see, for instance, Žižek (2002:21-27). In effect, the master signifier is the single signifier in a network that has been raised to the point of being the 'subject' for all the others. In other words, it acts as the place of enunciation, bringing into play the totality of the enunciated units. In Lacan, the most well-known master signifier is the phallus, which is the core 'organ' of the social system, even though it is itself veiled or empty, and thus has no signifying capacity of its own (yet, at the same time, it stands for signification as such). Strictly speaking, the subject is in an analogous position as the master signifier of language (language speaks, yet only insofar as the subject is speaking); while the Other is in an analogous position in relation to the subject (while not being a subject, it stands for the field of subjectivity as such).

[16] Even though one will always look for it, since in Lacanian terms it is only from the Other that one can receive a sense of 'true' being. Note this passage in Žižek (1993:31):

> [T]he Other is originally the decentered Other Place of my own splitting. In classical Freudian terms: "others" are here only because and insofar as I am not simply identical to myself but have an unconscious, insofar as I am prevented from having direct access to the truth of my own being. It is this truth that I am looking for in others: what propels me to "communicate" with them is the hope that I will receive from them the truth about myself, about my own desire.

[17] In *Organs without bodies*, Žižek argues that the subject is nothing more than a surface effect: '(Self)consciousness is a surface-screen that produces the effect of "depth," of a dimension beneath it' (2004:118). For him the subject is a 'mediating agency . . . that has no positive substantial Being since, in a way, its status is purely "performative" . . . nothing but the outcome of its activity' (119).

we can appear as singular beings only if we cluster a set of attributes around ourselves. The need to manufacture such traits arises as the subject tries to locate itself in relation to another, and throughout life one continues to rework, renew and produce fresh characters in order to meet the Other's demands. For the empty subject, there is no escape from the question he or she always addresses to the Other: 'What do you want?'. 'Selves' are produced in an ongoing effort to make oneself worthy of the Other's desire. Every self, every identification, every mask is shown for and to the Other; and the Other responds by subsuming them and adding them to its account[18]. There is no end to this cycle because the Other is itself the void, and no amount of subjective content will ever fill it, or transform it into a positive ontological manifestation. One can only endlessly produce for it, and in the process endlessly consume in its name.

At this point capitalism enters the picture like W. B. Yeats' rough beast finally entering Bethlehem.

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In *Tarrying with the negative*, Žižek does not scruple to twist capitalism and the decentred postmodern subject into the same braid:

> Far from containing any kind of subversive potentials, the dispersed, plural, constructed subject hailed by postmodern theory (the subject prone to particular, inconsistent modes of enjoyment, etc.) simply designates the form of subjectivity that corresponds to late capitalism (1993:216).

When one starts reading around the area of postmodernism, one finds this claim recurring almost everywhere. In this context it will suffice to quote only two further examples: Kellner, in his *Media culture* (1995:256-57):

> [A]dvertising, fashion, consumption, television, and media culture constantly destabilize identity and contribute to producing more unstable, fluid, shifting, and changing identities in the contemporary scene. And yet one also sees the inexorable processes of commodification at work in this process. The market segmentation of multiple ad campaigns and appeals reproduces and intensifies fragmentation and destabilizes identity which new products and identifications are attempting to restabilize. Thus, it is capital itself which is the demiurge of allegedly postmodern fragmentation, dispersal of identity, change, and mobility. Rather than postmodernity constituting a break with capital and political economy as Baudrillard and others would have it, wherever one observes phenomena of postmodern culture one can detect the logic of capital behind them;

and Deleuze and Guattari in their *Anti-Oedipus* (1984:250-51):

> The strength of capitalism indeed resides in the fact that its axiomatic is never saturated, that it is always capable of adding a new axiom to the previous ones. Capitalism defines a field of

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[18] Yet what is credited to the Other is also credited to the self, given the dialectical entanglement of these positions. It is in this light – and with greater optimism – that one might read the following passage from Deleuze and Guattari's *Thousand plateaus* (1987:130):

> A strange inversion: as if in one form the doubled subject were the *cause* of the statements of which, in its other form, it itself is a part . . . the more you obey the statements of the dominant reality, the more in command you are as subject of enunciation in mental reality, for in the end you are only obeying yourself!

immanence and never ceases to fully occupy this field . . . [Capital] will always find a place for you within the expanded limits of the system, even if an axiom has to be created just for you.

Numerous other examples could be cited,[19] but it should be clear by now that the argument offered here emphasises the protean and amoebic qualities of capitalism. The fragmented, dispersed, plural subjectivity long associated with postmodernity would seem antithetical to a system requiring loyalty from its subjects, for how does one erect a building with materials that are constantly in motion and mutating or replicating willfully? Yet, as Deleuze and Guattari (1984) argue, a system only functions by malfunctioning[20], and indeed the only explanation for the success of capitalism surely lies in its capacity to be broad-based and labile enough to cover contingencies and the unexpected. Precisely by being decentred – by having multiple nodes and modes of power rather than any central point – capitalism meets the ever-increasing challenges to the market and to the broader socio-cultural milieu.

If capitalism's 'axiomatic' is so canopy-like that it overshadows and stunts almost anything that at first appears to be different from it, it indeed appears to be a homogenising structure; hence it is no wonder Deleuze and Guattari (1984:43) conceptualise it as a 'body without organs':

> [I]n the trip on the train in [Proust's *Remembrance of things past*], there is never a totality of what is seen nor a unity of the points of view, except along the transversal that the frantic passenger traces from one window to the other, "in order to draw together, in order to reweave intermittent and opposite fragments." . . . The body without organs is produced as a whole, but in its own particular place within the process of production, alongside the parts that it neither unifies nor totalizes.

Because the body without organs is the surface to which 'desiring machines' attach themselves, it acts to iron out differences: 'no matter what two organs are involved, the way in which they are attached to the body without organs must be such that all the disjunctive syntheses between the two amount to the same on the slippery surface' (1984:12). Yet, always-already, this homogeneity is marbled with distinctive signatures that continue to exist within the edifice; that is, different parts are attached in such a way that they are neither unified nor totalised – in other words, are not made part of the same substance – but are synthesised into a sameness in difference. Hence one can have plural clusters of

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[19] See, for example, Jameson (1991), Lyotard (1984), Norris (1990, 1992, 1993), Hutcheon (1988, 1989), Eagleton (1996) and Harvey (1989). In fact, one would have to work hard to find critics who have not linked postmodernism in one way or another to capitalism. Key early postmodern artists such as Jeff Koons, David Salle and Haim Steinbach themselves worked so emphatically with consumer culture that, at least in art practice, capital has always been implicated in art, and vice versa. The argument raised, though, turns more on whether or not this imbrication has been critical (to use a word like subversive here seems inappropriate since these artists never set out to undermine consumerism or to topple capitalism).
[20] Cf. Francois Lyotard (1984:11-12):

> Even when [the system's] rules are in the process of changing and innovations are occurring, even when its dysfunctions (such as strikes, crises, unemployment, or political revolutions) inspire hope and lead to belief in an alternative, even then what is actually taking place is only an internal readjustment, and its results can be no more than an increase in the system's viability.

Also see Deleuze and Guattari (1984:151), in which they argue that capitalism has learnt to feed on the contradictions and crises it provokes, to the point where 'the more it breaks down . . . the better it works'.

difference – feminism, conservativism, homosexuality, extremism, swingers, evangelists, anti-globalisation leagues – yet all are ultimately attached to the body without organs since all share the common motivation of desire. Even though these clusters have enough leeway to express their differences quite vocally, and even though they succeed to a fair degree in inscribing their anatomies on the minds of others, the capitalist system holds together – it has already made a place for them. 'In my father's house there are many mansions.'

It is no surprise, then, that in Deleuze and Guattari the subject is conceived of as a mobile element, a nomad, that passes through states, circles and centres without itself ever being central:

> [T]he points of disjunction on the body without organs form circles that converge on the desiring-machines; then the subject – produced as a residuum alongside the machine, as an appendix, or as a spare part adjacent to the machine – passes through all the degrees of the circle, and passes from one circle to another. This subject itself is not at the center, which is occupied by the machine, but on the periphery, with no fixed identity, forever decentered, *defined* by the states through which it passes (1984:20).

In short, what is being suggested is that Deleuze and Guattari's body without organs, and the decentred residual subject that attaches to it, is structurally akin to Lacan's *corps morcelé*. For one thing, in the schizoid deterritorialised plane evoked by these authors, terms normally invested with totemic singularity are brought to ruin and scattered about as a rubble of part objects. The plane lacks horizons, flows toward formlessness, and moves the fragments about like so much broken coral on a sea bed. Here objects might attach to objects with a surrealist indifference to conventions or categories, and with a postmodern openness to quotation and the adventitious, producing Bellmer- or McCarthyesque dolls at every turn[21].

A second reason for associating the decentred Deleuzian subject with the *corps morcelé* lies in the idea of the orbiting, shifting subject moving through states rather than originating or self-determining them. Here we return, of course, to Žižek's image of the subject as a band across which multiple identifications shift. It is an image of mutation, accumulation, and the multifarious. Yet the very seriality this shifting implies makes any association between the subject and a full term like the Thing untenable. For if the subject is the agency that slides, the Thing will be the obscure substrate over which it slides; and one must thus – even if it means pre-empting the discussion – assert that although the subject, the Thing and the body without organs find a joint metaphor in the *corps morcelé*, their disjunctive syntheses occur in different sites. As the subject synthesises its multiple identifications, acting as a body without organs for them, so the body without organs synthesises its manifold subjects. Yet only

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[21] This place of fragmentation and nontotalising syntheses is the one Jameson envisages in *Postmodernism, or, the logic of late capitalism* (1991:25):

> If, indeed, the subject has lost its capacity actively to extend its pro-tensions and re-tensions across the temporal manifold and to organize its past and future into coherent experience, it becomes difficult enough to see how the cultural productions of such a subject could result in anything but "heaps of fragments" and in a practice of the randomly heterogeneous and fragmentary and aleatory.

the body without organs can claim to be the master signifier in this network, since it appears to be singular and totalising – like the Thing.

It is essential to clarify this argument with reference to the concept of the Other, but no progress can be made without briefly opening a parenthesis within which to consider the Thing[22] – more particularly, the postmodern Thing.

As Žižek defines it, the Thing is 'the void in the Other (the symbolic order) . . . the pure substance of enjoyment resisting symbolisation' (2001:8), or 'a foreign body within the social texture' (122). As foreign as it is, though, its presence can only be shown by way of the Symbolic, which ascertains its place by determining its character in relation to the known signifiers of the chain. The flexibility of the chain, however, ensures that the Thing can appear in more than one guise – classically, it can emerge as both sublime and repulsive. As Žižek (1991:143) puts it:

> The same object can function successively as a disgusting reject and as a sublime, charismatic apparition: the difference . . . does not pertain to the "effective properties" of the object, but only to its place in the symbolic order.

Yet to understand 'place' here in the ordinary taxonomic or tabular sense would be to overlook the dialectical relationship of the Thing to the Symbolic order. Paradoxically, it is both the resistant substance that rends the Symbolic and the 'object' that spans the abyss. Here again Žižek's assistance is required:

> [Postmodernism] shows the Thing itself as the incarnated, materialized emptiness. This is accomplished by showing the terrifying object directly and then by revealing its frightening effect to be simply the effect of its place in the structure. The terrifying object is an everyday object that has started to function, by chance, as that which fills in the hole in the Other (the symbolic order) (1991:145).

In other words, the Thing is what fills in the very hole in the Other that has opened because the symbolic network has no category or name for the Thing. The irony is that it is only through manipulation of the signifying network that an otherwise ordinary object is transformed into something that sticks out or stains the otherwise transparent surface of the picture. Art's power to interrupt narrative and convention comes precisely from this capacity to push its language to the point where it turns into something else, for instance, the unsayable or un(re)presentable[23]. It is here that the Thing appears as what Žižek frequently calls a 'grimace of the Real'. As a disjunctive element, this 'grimace' fractures the Symbolic surface and reveals its constructed quality – its fragmented, piecemeal character.

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[22] Lacan's fullest treatment of the Thing is in his Seminar of 1959-60, *The ethics of psychoanalysis* (1999). Also see 'The Freudian thing' in *Écrits* (1997:114-145).
[23] The concealed reference here is to Lyotard's essay 'Answering the question: What is postmodernism?' (1984).

At the same time, however, this intrusion of the Real affirms the Symbolic because it *fills the very void it has opened*. In other words, the Real's emergence here plugs what the Symbolic cannot plug, and in the process gives the Symbolic a way to overleap what otherwise threatens to besmirch or collapse it. Thereafter, the Real itself takes on the character of a fragment: a little protruding bit, a *point de capiton* or perhaps a navel speaking of depths and mysteries that point beyond the Symbolic even as they are put in place through a reconfiguration of signifiers.

The totality of these signifiers masks the lack in the Other – the fact that the Other is itself what emerges from the foundational Symbolic castration that turns Being into no more than a retroactive fantasy. The 'true' totality would therefore be the Other's dialectical opposite: the Thing. It is this Thing that Žižek refers to in the following passage from *Tarrying with the negative* (1993:68):

> [T]he original intersubjective correlate of the subject – of the barred $ – is not another $, but S, the opaque, full Other possessing what the subject constitutively lacks (being, knowledge) . . . the Other – the other human being – is originally the impenetrable, substantial Thing.

In short, Žižek is claiming that the Thing dialectically reverts into the Other, and, more importantly, the Other reverts into the Thing, taking its place of fullness through its command of the Symbolic chain, even though it does not positively possess such fullness. It is only when the resistant substance of the Real intrudes a part of the Thing into the network of signifiers – an event precipitated, for instance, by trauma – that the Symbolic is threatened with a fragmentation that would disclose its inherently incomplete character.

In the light of this, the reason why the subject, the body without organs (i.e., the Other) and the Thing can all be represented by the *corps morcelé* is because none is a *corps*: none partakes of the unity of the Thing – not even the Thing itself, because it can only be revealed through representation: and it stands to reason that what cannot be represented can only be represented badly – that is, in fragments, for its totality is inconceivable.

One might now tender a certain conclusion: if the only totality possible in a human social system is one in which parts coexist in a semblance of totality, and if the model for that totality derives from a conception of indivisible Being that can only be posited – in the 'form' of the Thing – then a governing system might be said to give body, spectrally, to what is otherwise not experienced, literally, as a body. It is thus no surprise that Žižek (2001:123) claims: 'today more than ever, capital is the Thing *par excellence*: a chimeric apparition which, although it can nowhere be spotted as a positive, clearly delimited entity, nonetheless functions as the ultimate Thing regulating our lives'.

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For Henry Sayre (1989:175), Modernism still had a conviction in 'something like an authentic "wholeness," a sense of unity and completion that is the "end" of art', whereas postmodernism 'defines the present as . . . part of an ongoing process, inevitably fragmentary, incomplete, and multiplicitous'. In

his own inimitable manner, Žižek (2001:123) makes a similar point:

> [T]he aim of the modernist "symptomal reading" is to ferret out the texture of discursive (symbolic) practices whose imaginary effect is the substantial totality, whereas postmodernism focuses on the traumatic Thing which resists symbolization (symbolic practices).

The list of postmodern artists who have dealt with this Thing – especially by way of images of death – is extensive, though it will suffice to indicate such examples as Cindy Sherman, Joel-Peter Witkin and our own Kathryn Smith. In *Euphemism*, the exhibition for which Smith justifiably won the Standard Bank Young Artist's Award, the dismembered photographs titled *Memento mori* stand out as classic examples not only of the postmodern Thing but also of the *corps morcelé*. Smith's arrangement of the works, not in series but staggered vertically in a way that makes one think of paradigmatic rather than syntagmatic models, lays emphasis on fragmentation rather than narrative.

Works like those of Smith and Witkin strongly suggest that the *corps morcelé* is the most effective metaphor we currently have for the Thing – that indeterminable which is conceived retroactively in the Symbolic as a singularity, but which can paradoxically only appear in representation as fractured, orchestrated and theatrical.

The Thing materialised in images is thus always a compromise, and the artists mentioned here are only too aware of this fact. The theatricality and the overt play with conventions and studio contrivances index their hyper-sensitivity to the impossibility of conveying through images what cannot be conveyed. Instead of seeking more 'realistic', perhaps more documentary, means to portray the Thing, these artists embrace the failure in and of representation, and raise it to a new power by using their representations to talk about representation as a process, a staging. As a consequence the Thing is sublimated and overlaid with complexes of referential meaning, but it would be pointless to then mourn its loss, for it is only ever available in the sublimated forms made possible by symbolisation.

Self-reflexive art-making of this sort does, however, run the risk of folding back into the very stylistic conventions it adopts for critical purposes, and as such lays itself open for easier commodification. Even its subject matter, which often – especially in Witkin – outmanoeuvres its aestheticised formal representation, by no means defeats the ends of consumerism. Capitalism has a place for idiosyncrasies; it accommodates 'erratic excess', for as Brian Massumi claims (in Žižek 2004:184-85):

> [i]t's no longer disciplinary institutional power that defines everything, it's capitalism's power to produce variety – because markets get saturated. Produce variety and you produce a niche market. The oddest of affective tendencies are okay – as long as they pay.

The question is, why meet this situation with pessimism? Do we not empower ourselves more by embracing capital as the Thing, and by understanding that as much as it regulates our lives, it also makes those lives possible? If capital is the very Thing that fills in the void of the order it produces, it is

also the means by which we, as subjects, produce and consume the properties that determine us as both individuals and societies. Capitalism is not a monolithic commanding machine; it needs dispersal, difference and multiplicity – it needs us to thrive on the very diversity that we *do* thrive on. We cannot work in reverse: we cannot see the subject as determined by the system, for the opposite surely also applies. Capitalism's heterogeneity is the effect of the heterogeneity produced by its subjects through a collaborative act of *bricolage*. In spite of the inequalities and problems that take form through this act, in spite of the state regulations that arise to ward off the risk of political mayhem, social, economic and intellectual advantages are simultaneously created for certain social groups in particular.

In the capitalist system these groups do have freedom – perhaps the only and most productive, freedom possible in (post)modernity – the freedom, to paraphrase Lyotard (1984:59), of a determinism that is itself determined. Or, as Žižek (2004:114) puts it:

> As Kant already knew, freedom . . . means a reflexive cause that determines which (material) causes will determine me. Freedom means that I am never entirely a victim of circumstances: I will always dispose of a minimum of freedom to determine which circumstances will determine me . . .

Such determinism is only feasible because the postmodern subject is a *corps morcelé*, and because the capitalist system of which it is a part is itself a body without organs, a Thing whose action of limiting the field of Being is always-already the inverse: an action that makes the field of Being possible. Opening that field wide, capital allows for the subject to pursue its endless process of shifting among multiple identifications in its self-actualising quest for the full Other.

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PAPER TITLE: COMPUTERS, SEX AND POP: NEW MEDIA OBJECTS IN CONTEMPORARY JAPANESE CULTURAL PRODUCTION[1]

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In this paper, I shall attempt to map some ways in which contemporary Japanese visual culture and new media interface. I aim to provide an exploration of the roles these areas of production play in contemporary visual culture, rather than pursuing an interpretation of the material as such. Moreover, I am specifically interested in those aspects of either area that reflect a unique congruence between the two fields. What is at issue in both regards, is the blurring of boundaries between high art, and design, music, pop culture, and so on. The purpose of foregrounding these aspects is to demonstrate that the relatively new digital platforms are especially suited for the multi-media consumer oriented work of contemporary Japanese visual artists and designers. Thereby, I hope to demonstrate in quite a practical manner, some new kinds of cultural dynamics and geographies opened by developments in digital media, and suggest the implications of such developments for our notions concerning cultural identity.

But why Japanese visual production? What makes me, a South African woman who has never travelled to Japan, so interested in this area specifically? Perhaps the primary reason for my interest is the fact that Japanese culture is a seminal reference in today's pop culture. Testament to this are the number of films that take as their subject matter the West's delight in Japanese culture. The most recent example of such a film is, of course, Sophia Coppola's *Lost in Translation* (2003).

Even more apparent is the extent to which Japanese youth culture has infiltrated the rest of the world. From video or computer games such as the by now almost ancient *Tekken*, to television programmes such as *Dragon Ball Z*, *Pokemon* or the much older *Robotech,*[2] most of us will be at least marginally familiar with either this material, or its commercial offshoots. It is fair to say that contemporary Japanese pop culture is a worldwide phenomenon.

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[1] In its original context, namely the Visual Culture: Explorations conference (2004), this paper included a great deal of visual material that served to enhance the argument made in the text. Since the time that this paper was presented, the popularity of Japanese popular culture grew, and students all over the country (on all levels, including Masters degree) have embarked on research on this topic, but I have opted not to address the new material in this paper.

[2] *Tekken* was originally an arcade game, featuring a number of characters players can choose to fight against each other, or against the computer. This game has subsequently been made available on PC format, as well as on Playstation platform. It continues to be one of the most available and well-known games on the market. The *Dragon Ball* series, which has run in Japan since the eighties, was originally in comic book (Manga) format, aimed at the early adolescent boys market. It predates *Pokemon*, although in South Africa *Pokemon* heralded the new wave of interest in Japanese children's animation, with its appearance on local television in the late 1990s. It was followed by series such as *Beyblade* and *Dragon Ball Z*, but an earlier generation (to which I belong) remember their first exposure to the genre of Japanese animation through the *Robotech* and even *Heidi* series. More information on all these and other series can be found in Frederick L Schodt's *Dreamland Japan: Japanese Comics for Otaku* (1996) and Susan Napier's *Anime from Akira to Princess Mononoke* (2000). Roger Sabin also provides valuable information on the role Manga plays in the international comic book market in his *Comic, Comix and Graphic Novels* (1996: 226-235).

Apart from these examples, which are somewhat mainstream, there is of course also the fact that since the mid 1990s, many South African subcultures show an increasing interest in Japanese pop. A central focus of this interest is Japanese animations and comic books, or as they are known, Anime and Manga. Some of the more famous examples of Manga and Anime include *Akira* (Katsuhiro Ôtomo, 1987), *Ghost in the Shell* (Mamoru Oshii, 1995) and *Spirited Away* (Hayao Miyazaki, 2001). Importantly, although they are in animated format, most of them are not intended for children. In Japan, there is a major Manga readership ranging in age from five to sixty-five years. Moreover, many of the various Manga genres feature explicit scenes of sex and violence, and are intended for a diverse range of ages, sexes as well as intellectual and aesthetic tastes.

I believe the reason I find Manga, Anime and other forms of contemporary Japanese culture so seductive (and I would guess I am not unique in this) is that it provides visually attractive, and accessible content. It is popular culture *par excellance*. Sometimes the tone of these works is thoughtful, even philosophical, and sometimes it is rather lascivious. Perhaps not the most politically correct admission to make in the context of a conference such as this, but nonetheless, the sexual content in many of these comics are what draws me to them.

In addition, the sexual overtones are frequently intertwined with science fiction and techno fantasies, making them into wonderful fantasy landscapes of pleasurable escapist consumption. I do not have enough time or space here to prove that the narratives are characterised as such, but even a cursory glance at this material would convince anyone of such a claim.

An aspect of Japanese comics and animations that many people in the West often comment on is the infantilised nature of the erotic depictions in popular culture, especially with regard to (but not restricted to) the "cute" but hardcore eroticism of a genre such as Hentai[3]. Even in children's Manga and Anime, there can often be references to sex, and the figures in adult material often appear to be rather young. One is always at risk in such discussions to essentialize the production of another culture, and being restricted by length and focus, I cannot pursue this strand too far. Suffice it to say, however, that there seems to be a less rigid divide between childhood fantasy and adult eroticism in these narratives, than in so-called Western culture. Part of the popularity of Japanese popular culture is also certainly due to its erotic content, which might provide Western adolescents with an alternative perspective of sexuality than that to which they have access from their own culture.

Of course, sexual and fantastical projections onto the East are by no means new. As writers such as Edward Said in *Orientalism* (1978), Roland Barthes in *Empire of the Signs* (1970, trans. 1982), and others argue, the signifying power of the term "Japan" is more the result of Western fabrication than a

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[3] Hentai refers to the overtly sexual, predominantly pornographic genre of Manga.

reflection of "truth". I would have liked to nuance this debate somewhat,[4] but I accept the general criticisms raised in these texts. Such critiques are, however not the focus of this paper. Rather, I am focusing here on the way in which both new media and Japanese pop reflect an inherent dynamic heterogeneity as regards their production, and play a significant role in the shaping of culture in the digital age. With this, I am referring to the fact that both new media and Japanese popular culture lack a central governing concern or unifying aesthetic. Both are by nature predisposed to co-opting many diverse elements and influences, and to move and mutate very rapidly. It is further significant to note that both of these provide very accessible platforms for fantasy and escapism.

I would like to consider my own interests in Japanese pop culture as emblematic of my generation, and I regard the manner in which I am able to access these products, in other words through the Internet, DVDs, and so on, as indicative of the important role played by digital media in the dissemination of the latest wave of interest in, and export of Japanese pop culture. However, in order to understand the way in which these two fields interface, and, in fact, to argue that new media heralds a new era in the dissemination of popular culture, I need to first outline what I mean when referring to new media. For this, I turn to the influential theorist on new media, Lev Manovich, and what I consider one of the more useful definitions of new media objects.

In essence, Manovich (2001:19) argues that new media objects are commonly defined in terms of their physical forms. That is, what is generally regarded to be new media include the Internet and websites, computer multimedia, computer games, CD-ROMs and DVDs. But, Manovich rejects this bias towards material that remain within digital formats. He raises the question what we should make of works that employ digital media in the production, but are distributed in analogue format. Examples of such products include animated or digitally shot films and television, digital images printed in magazines, to cite but a few instances.

Manovich hereby suggests that a definition that reduces new media to the physical forms with which we interact, privileges the forms, while overlooking the possibilities of creative invention opened up by digital media. Stated more simply, Manovich contends (and I agree) that new media is more than the objects that carry the material. Instead, new media as a term should be seen to refer to the creative paradigms, such as seamless compositing and extended interactivity enabled by and characteristic of digital media.

At the heart of Manovich's (2001:20) argument in *The language of new media* is the notion that historically, with the establishment of any new communication technology, it is not only the way in which

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[4] This does not mean that I wish to contest Said and Barthes' arguments, but rather to point out that an application of their ideas on the subject matter of Manga and Anime cannot be a simple or straightforward affair. Instead, as the rest of the paper suggests, much popular culture from Japan deals with a perceived emptiness, a non-essentialist and perhaps celebratory attitude to a globalised culture. What an "outsider" would then romanticise, is not so much his or her own projections onto the "East", but he or she would be taking part in a communal escapist fantasy.

communication takes place that is changed, but also the nature of the communication itself. He cites the examples of the invention of the printing press, which greatly influenced the rise of the novel, and the cinematic camera, which in turn is indispensable to, among other things, our current notions of evidence and documentary format. The recent videos of beheadings in the aftermath of the Iraq war, which were launched on the Internet, would constitute a neat example of how the effects of the invention of both the camera and the Internet intersect in the contemporary media-savvy geo-political landscape[5].

I would argue that one of the essential attributes of new media that fundamentally alters the way in which we interact with information and material today, is its reproducibility. Once something exists digitally, it can be reproduced and manipulated almost *ad infinitum*. The fact that any product can be accessed on a variety of platforms means that the nature of information or product itself has been decentralised from the physical to the conceptual.

Say for example a character exists as information, in this case, a name, a set of physical attributes, and a set of personality attributes. This character can now easily be digitally reproduced in animations, prints and games. The pop rock band Gorrilaz provides a useful illustration of this phenomenon[6]. The band consists of four animated members: 2D, Murdoc, Russel and Noodle. They are the brainchildren of Damian Albarn of the Britpop outfit Blur, and Jamie Hewlett, creator of Tank Girl. While Albarn and Hewlett dreamed up the concept of having a fictional band, creating the songs and drawings for the Gorillaz, they are assisted by groups of animators and musicians. Gorillaz's first album *Gorrilaz* (also known as *Jeep*), released in 2001 (Virgin Records) was accompanied by the launch of their extensive website and live tours. The way in which Gorillaz utilise digital platforms to engage in the different arenas of music, live performance and the Internet, makes them pioneers of new media entertainment. And, it is interesting to note that the Gorillaz themselves are fundamentally influenced by Japanese pop culture.[7]

In his book *Postproduction*, French theorist Nicholas Bourriaud (2000:7, 12) contends that this decentralisation of information has reshaped contemporary culture in a radical manner. He suggests that digital media have allowed us to exceed the age-old practices of allusion, parody and

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[5] In the aftermath of the United States occupation of Iraq (since 2003), there have been a number of videos launched on the television network Al-Jazeera's website, of people of various nationalities being beheaded by what appear to be members of Al-Qaeda. For more material on this series of videos, one can visit a number of sites on the Internet, as it is an extremely popular topic. One such site is http://wizbangblog.com/archives/002452.php.

[6] The Gorrilaz were not, of course, the first to come up with a fictional celebrity identity. An important precursor here is the very character called Chappie, who was created by the Japanese group Groovisions. Chappie travels the world and has many merchandise items associated with him.

[7] This becomes clear when one views the Gorrilaz's promotional material. The most salient examples however, are that one member of their band, Noodle, is a young Japanese girl, adept at operating all manner of electronic gadgets, and that their short movies make many references to cult Japanese kung-fu and horror flicks.

appropriation, and that now the creation of actual work is secondary to the assimilation and reorganisation (mixing, if you will) of already existing material:

> Notions of originality (being the origin of) and even of creation (making something from nothing) are slowly blurred in this new cultural landscape marked by the twin figures of the DJ and the programmer, both of whom have the task of selecting cultural objects and inserting them into new contexts … The activities of DJs, Web surfers and postproduction artists imply a similar configuration of knowledge, which is characterised by the inventions of paths through culture. All three are "semionauts" who produce original pathways through signs. Every work is issued from a script that the artist projects onto culture, considered the framework of a narrative that in turn projects new possible scripts, endlessly.

Following the similar assertion of media critic Daniel Boorstin (1961), Manovich contends that new communication technologies alter the very nature and material of communication itself, Bourriaud's here indicates the direction in which that change is effected. The proliferation of digital media not only allows consumers of popular culture to access content on a variety of platforms, in a variety of media, but pop culture itself is starting to conform to those possibilities. As the example of the Gorillaz suggests, the many ways in which digital media have become part of popular culture, have prompted popular media to be constructed to work along those lines. In fact, popular culture has become an arena of multiples, decentralised presence and interactive usage.

With its well-known romance with technology, Japan is perhaps most uniquely situated to lead the way in seizing the artistic and creative opportunities presented by digital media. Moreover, Japan's pop culture is notoriously pervasive, and one can reasonably suggest that these two aspects together make for unprecedented productivity in the arena of new media entertainment[8].

As I have suggested earlier, pop culture has been well served by developments in new media technology. However, the most creative and artistic usages of new media and its interfacing with popular culture is not only really the simple extension of more traditional popular culture itself, in other words through the use of digital media in the production of television, film and comics. Instead, I consider the new form of visual culture that is characterised by an attitude towards content and technology, far more radical. Here, I am specifically referring to the directions taken in contemporary Japanese fine art practice, and the new wave of Pop[9].

Takashi Murakami, one of the most prominent and prolific contemporary Japanese artists, advocates the collapse of structures that would hold fine art apart from design, music, and popular culture. In fact, Murakami sees himself not so much as an agent of this shift, but rather as a symptom of it. To describe

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[8] Another example of a completely new media based entertainment group, which preceded the Gorrilaz, is the Japanese group called Groovisions (www.groovisions.com). They created a character called Chappie, and launched a chain of merchandise around this character. Chappie also makes appearances at art exhibitions and pop concerts.

[9] Obviously, the Pop Art of Japan is highly influenced by the American Pop Art movement of the 1950s and 1960s. One clear example of this is the way in which the highly successful Japanese artist Takashi Murakami has reinvented the idea art factory, first invented by Andy Warhol.

this shift, he has introduced the notion of the "superflat". As he states in his *Superflat Manifesto* (2000: 5):

> The world of the future might be like Japan is today – super flat society, customs, art, and culture: all are extremely two-dimensional. It is particularly apparent in the arts that this sensibility has been flowing steadily beneath the surface of Japanese history. Today, the sensibility is most prevalent in Japanese games and Anime, which have become powerful parts of world culture. One way to imagine super flatness is to think of the moment when, in creating a desktop graphic for your computer, you merge a number of distinct layers into one … I would like you … to experience the moment when the layers of Japanese culture, such as pop, erotic pop, otaku and H.I.S.ism fuse into one.[10]

Murakami's superflat manifesto was first published in the catalogue to the Superflat exhibition held at the Walker Art Centre in 2000. The exhibition focused on the work of contemporary Japanese artists, such as Yoshitomo Nara, Aya Takano, and Mr. (Masakatu Iwamoto). Interestingly, the catalogue takes a somewhat unconventional approach. Instead of the usual pictures with captions and text, the superflat catalogue features large splash page graphics on which traditional Japanese illustrations are brought seamlessly onto the same plane as the artworks on exhibition, as well as examples from computer games and Manga. An excellent example of the point Murakami is trying to make can be seen on the page featuring a still from an early Anime, Galaxy Express by Yoshinoro Kanada, juxtaposed with a print by the canonical Katshushika Hokusai (Murakami 2000: 25).

What Murakami is trying to illustrate by such juxtapositions, is that there exists a style of expression that reappears at various points throughout the history of Japanese art. This style is not only figured in the visual elements, but also in the creation of sensually stimulating fantasy worlds.[11] For him, this line serves as the inspiration for his own explosive compositions, but also explains the move towards conflating popular culture and high art. However, to understand this point, we need to step back in history briefly.

Within the Edo period in Japan, which lasted roughly from 1603 to 1868, a popular form of erotic pictures, named ukiyo-e, was freely available (Screech 1999: 13). Ukiyo-e literally means, "floating world picture", and referred to the sexual depictions of the lives of geishas and prostitutes, occupants of removed world of sensual pleasures referred to as "the floating world". Simultaneously, another form of illustration, namely Manga, gained popularity. These pictures features beautiful romantic landscapes, and portraits of Noh and Kabuki theatre actors. Of the artists who worked in this genre, Katsushika Hokusai is probably the best known. Importantly, these images were not considered art in the Western

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[10] For clarification, "otaku" refers to the youth culture of obsessive Manga and Anime fandom, and H.I.S. is a low-cost ticket agency in Japan, which has made travel to the rest of the world very accessible for the Japanese, and which has given rise to the stereotypical "Japanese tourist" phenomenon.

[11] Clearly, there are marked differenced between the original Ukiyo-e works, and contemporary Japanese Pop. However, what Murakami is trying to achieve with his Superflat theory, is to indicate the long standing history of secular images that were produced primarily for fantasy inspired consumption – pictures made for pleasure, whether purely visual or erotic.

sense; they were secular and commercial objects intended for aesthetic and erotic consumption. They were in fact the predecessors of modern day Manga, Anime and even Hentai.

When Murakami makes conscious reference to Ukiyo-e and early Manga in the Superfalt exhibition and catalogue, he is in fact resurrecting that secular and sensual approach to image consumption. His metaphor of "flattening out" thus indicates much more than a visual sensibility characterised by pop colours and cartoon-like style. It also implies a move towards a more populist fine art practice.

Murakami's theory further influences the manner in which he produces work. He founded the Hiropon factory in 1997, a collective of young Japanese artists and designers who all worked together on producing the large scale paintings and sculptures, as well as managing the production of lines of soft-toys and other merchandise generated by the factory. Late in 2000, the factory became the KaiKai KiKi Corporation, which operated along similar lines, but with a stronger emphasis on commercial products. The corporation now functions as a kind of brand, producing merchandise, CDs and DVDs for sale both in stores and online. However, they also continue to take part in large-scale International fine art exhibitions, and are afforded a great deal of critical attention. Being equally at home in contemporary fine art spaces and popular culture, Murakami and the KaiKai KiKi Corporation are indeed emblematic of, in his terms, the way in which the flattening out of culture is taking shape.

It is further significant that Murakami has been influenced by the proliferation of popular culture in the digital sphere, including computer games, animation and the Internet. Digital media have obviously been seminal in establishing the escapist fantasy sphere and large commercial engine from which he both draws ideas, and rely on for the distribution and popularisation of his products.

Delaware, a group of Japanese artists and designers, are perhaps more actively new media oriented in their approach. Established in 1993, Delaware describes themselves as a "Japanese super sonic group that designs rock and rocks design" (Sakamoto and Prat 2002: 145). Their work and activities include the production of music CDs, television commercials, magazines, t-shirts, websites, mobile phone animated graphics and live shows. On their website, one can buy their multimedia CDs, which feature music tracks, as well as artworks and documentation of their live shows and exhibitions. Their website is updated every week with a fresh graphic in their signature cross-stitch style.

Delaware is a world-renowned group, and have collaborated with many design companies across the world, including the London based design company Tomato. Their popularity and esteem is probably the result of the way in which they seize pop culture and technology in an inspired conjunction of form and content. They also personify the superflat principle, in that many of their works are parodies of art from the Western canon, such as their appropriation of Boticelli's *Birth of Venus* , Matisse's *Blue Nude* and Duchamp's *Fountain* in the shape of mobile phone graphics. By the same token, they also make

frequent reference to classical Japanese visual culture, such as their reworking of Sharaku's portrait of the great Noh actor, Ohtani.[12]

It would be glib to say that the group is particularly Japanese in their approach to media and design. But, as we have seen with the examples from Murakami, much Japanese art is concerned with a perceived 'emptiness' at the heart of their culture, an emptiness that Murakami (2000: 5) sees as the result of complete Westernisation:

> Where is our reality? [We hope] to reconsider "super flatness", the sensibility that has contributed to and continues to contribute to the construction of Japanese culture, as a worldview, and show that it is an original concept that links the past with the present and the future. During the modern period, as Japan has been westernized, how has this "super flat" sensibility metamorphosed? If that can be grasped clearly, then our stance today will come into focus… In this quest, the current progressive form of the real in Japan runs throughout. We might be able to find an answer to our search for a concept of Japanese who have been completely westernized… Within this concept seeds for the future have been sown. "Super flatness" is a stage to the future.

This 'flatness' of Japanese culture, its resistance to maintaining a sense of essential identity (at least in its popular culture) is thus clearly not lamented. Rather, many young Japanese artists embrace the flatness, or even superficiality of contemporary media culture as the primary mark of existence in the late twentieth and early twenty first century. Decorativeness, playfulness, sexiness, love of technology and youthful abandon characterise the output of many artists and designers of Japan. Intriguingly, the kind of orgasmic heterogeneous output of Japan, being so heavily informed by Western consumer culture, is often seen as particularly *Japanese*. This suggests that there is really a paradox here: being particularly *Japanese* would seem to involve the erosion of the notion of an essential Japanese identity.

Of course, the rise of digital media is an enormous contributor to growing globalisation, which sets the stage for the paradox I have outlined above. But are we simply to accept the emptying out of local culture in favour of a global village? This is not a debate I wish to enter into here, however, it returns us to my initial question concerning the nature of the romance with Japanese culture that informs my own, and many other people's interest in the subject matter I have dealt with today. I would, however, posit that the most interesting work done in this regard, are those that self-consciously and critically engage with the way in which Japanese identity is constucted both internally and globally.

A noteworthy example of such self-conscious engagement can be found in the work of Cape Town based sound artist, James Webb. His contribution to the YDEsire Softserve event at the Castle in February 2003, which he co-curated, is a case in point. The Softserve events are what is called "art parties" where DJs, artists and designers provide one night of dancing, exhibitions and music. With this event, Webb staged the introduction of a Japanese DJ called Wa. She was, however, completely his

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[12] Reproductions of these appropriations by Delaware can be found in Tomoko Sakamoto and Ramon Prat's *Japan Graphics* (2002: 38).

fabrication. She was no DJ, the sounds she seemed to be mixing at the event, were Webb's creation, not hers. In fact, she was not even Japanese, but Korean. Interestingly, she gained an enormous following in the lead up to the event, as the art world is notoriously susceptible to cultish celebrity constructions. Webb even told me that one artist, unaware of Webb's role in the set-up, explained to him that he has been a fan of Wa's for some years.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of Webb's work, however, is the nature of the sound piece "performed" by Wa. It is pure noise. In one sense, it can be seen to reference the genre of Japanese noise music. However, Wa's audience had been led to believe that she would be making light electronica. With this inversion of expectation, I propose that the noise references the set of associations with "Japan". Part of the popularity of Wa that was generated before the performance was due to her being marketed as Japanese, and the noise then signifies the artificial and synthetic nature of these associations. Moreover, noise is after all made up of conflicting, unharmonious elements, and Wa's performance thus indicates the confluence of a great number of diverse elements contained in that set of associations[13].

What Webb's work does, to my mind, is not so much to take part in the construction of a superflat or empty view of Japan. Instead, he makes critical reference to such a construction, and what is more, he employs the very mechanisms and institutions that enable such constructions, including the art world, marketing strategies and entertainment culture to make his point.

It is further significant that Webb employs new media in the mode of audio performance, as both a reference to the central role it plays in the popularisation and by extension perhaps, the flattening out of Japanese culture (among other things), and to embody the noise-like nature of "Japan" as identity. With this in mind, "Japan" should be understood to refer not only to the notion of a visual identity associated with the output of contemporary Japanese visual artists. One should also acknowledge the role of global popular and consumer culture (including its heavy reliance on new media) in the negotiation of this identity.

Wa shows that it cannot be argued that new media is simply an agent in the erosion of cultural identity. Instead, I would suggest that the popularity and nature of the new media objects make the already existing tensions within certain seemingly fixed identities, such as that of a culture, more apparent.

In this paper, I have traced the various ways in which new media and contemporary Japanese cultural production interface. I have focused specifically on the relationship between popular culture and new media, the influence of this relationship on fine art practice and design, as well as the role of new media

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[13] While this paper is, as I have stated at the beginning, not primarily an interpretation of the material as such, and this example cannot, due to restrictions of space, be analysed in depth, I hope the discussion sufficiently sketches the gist of the contemporary fantasy around Japanese pop, as I understand it to operate. This interpretation was discussed and supported by Webb in a discussion early in 2004.

in the perception of Japan as a superflat identity. I believe the reason why new media and contemporary Japanese cultural production can be mapped onto each other so well and in so many ways, is the fact that they are both inherently heterogeneous: new media objects being characterised by decentralisation and reproducibility, and contemporary Japanese popular culture being underwritten by a rejection of stratified hierarchies. In this way, they are also congruent in the sense that they are especially able to reflect the changes in tastes and technology, and the way in which our conception of identity is shifting.

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PAPER TITLE: THE MUSEUM AS MEMORIAL: SOME SOUTHERN SITES OF REMEMBRANCE

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While museums of history and culture have long been understood as stewards of memory in that the objects they house carry traces of the past, they did not typically embody the idea of commemoration. But after the unprecedented loss of life in World War I,[1] when special museums were established for collections associated with the war, alongside their obvious nationalist agendas they incorporated a memorial function, at least implicitly. In this context, however, remembrance was invariably secondary to the narrative of conflict embodied in military artefacts. Gathered together in profuse exhibits, including many spoils from the defeated enemy, they were reminiscent of ancient displays of war trophies. As signifiers of conquest rather than symbols of mourning, such exhibits tended to obscure individual memories of loss.[2] Some museums, however, embraced commemoration as a fundamental goal from the outset, and it is these that are the focus of this paper. In place of more customary northern-hemisphere examples, attention will be given to southern sites of memory and mourning in countries that were part of the British Empire – New Zealand, Australia and South Africa. The chief case studies for this paper are museums in Auckland, Canberra and Johannesburg that record and commemorate the World Wars and, in the latter case, more recent conflicts under apartheid.

After World War I Britain enforced a decision not to bring home her war dead, but instead honoured them in war cemeteries near the battlefields, each grave marked with a standardised headstone, although some read only 'here lies a soldier whose name is known but to god'.[3] The need to acknowledge each of the fallen was met by inscriptions in cemetery memorials of the names of those whose bodies could not be identified or had never been found. At home this process of 'nationalising' the dead took the form of memorials, the Whitehall Cenotaph and the Westminster Tomb of the Unknown Warrior, and the establishment of a National War Museum, set up as early as 1917 as part of the war effort.[4] Myriads of local memorials bore witness to how the war had affected even the smallest communities, and initially it was intended to distribute war memorabilia to museums regionally to acknowledge this.[5] Instead collections were consolidated in the national museum in London,[6] soon re-

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[1] World War I involved an estimated sixty-five million combatants, and war casualties included in excess of twenty million wounded and ten million dead. Horrific as these figures are, they were terribly extended in World War II with losses estimated at around sixty million.

[2] Gaynor Kavanagh records that it was originally intended to record the personal accounts of servicemen using the wax cylinder phonograph at the Imperial War Museum, which became the role model for many institutions of this kind, but that this was overlooked as the responsibilities of overseeing the collection of objects became more pressing. (2000:61)

[3] Laqueur 1994:155.

[4] The need to boost morale and the flagging recruiting campaign may well have been as significant reasons for founding the war museum as the need to prevent the irretrievable loss of relics. (Kavanagh 1994:122) Early proposals that the museum might be built as a national war memorial were rejected as extravagant and unsuitable by Cabinet. (Kavanagh 1994:134-35) The Imperial War Museum, which initially opened in the Crystal Palace, was ultimately to be housed, ironically, in the old Bedlam asylum.

[5] See Kavanagh 1994:103 ff for a discussion of the work of the Local War Museums Association.

named Imperial to recognise the achievements of the whole British Dominion. However, colonies had themselves begun collecting and soon laid claim to their own war records and trophies.[7]

Paradoxically, while colonial participation undoubtedly strengthened ties with Empire, the Great War has also been recognised as a powerful foundation myth in the development of independent national identities for the colonies. Both Australia and New Zealand, for example, whose men fought together as Anzac troops, have acknowledged the war as a crucible within which an autonomous sense of self worth was forged, perhaps offering some consolation for their fierce losses, particularly in the infamous Gallipoli campaign of 1915-16, where nearly 12 000 Anzac troops died. New Zealand lost one man in four in that campaign, and some 16% of her enlisted men in the war.[8] The impact on the small population was immense despite the distance from the sites of war. Indeed those distances intensified the need for memorials as not only were the dead not brought home for burial, but there was little likelihood that families would ever be able to visit their graves. Hence no doubt the willingness of the public to subscribe to the many memorials across New Zealand, and the great interest in war relics. A strong claimant for those sent from Britain was Auckland where plans for an impressive War Memorial Museum were already under way, but any aspirations to be a national repository were thwarted by the distribution of relics to local authorities throughout the country.

The inauguration of a grand memorial edifice in Auckland was largely opportunistic. By the turn of the century, the city's museum, established in 1852, was overcrowded and in need of larger premises and a new building had already been proposed. When this was delayed by World War I, the organisers did not want available funds divided with a war memorial for the Auckland district, so suggested that the two be combined.[9] This plan, prompted by limited resources, would have had a precedent in another southern colony some years earlier had a proposal come to fruition that Johannesburg combine a memorial to the British dead of the South African War with an art gallery.[10] To facilitate these South African projects, it was ingeniously suggested that the exterior of a new building could act as a memorial, while the interior housed an art collection. As it eventuated, it was realised that the partisan nature of the Rand Regiments Memorial made it unsuitable for a civic project, so it was built in

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[6] Interestingly there has recently been a modification of the policy of consolidation in a single institution in the opening of the war museum in Manchester – perhaps as much a reflection of the museum boom as of a perceived need to 'share' the collections and associated experiences.

[7] These demands were initiated by Canada with the founding of the Canadian War Records Office in 1916, soon followed by Australian requests. (McKernan 1991:37; Kavanagh 1994:120-21)

[8] Maclean and Phillips (1990:69) record 90 000 volunteers and 30 000 conscriptions from New Zealand in the First World War. It is estimated that 8% of all men of eligible age were lost.

[9] Despite its enormous cost for the time (over £200,000) the Auckland War Memorial Museum was also funded primarily by subscription, although this was augmented by a sizable government grant, presumably because it was a museum as well as a memorial.

[10] See Carman 2002:220-23. In the wake of World War I there were to be a number of memorial art galleries established in Britain, though they did not necessarily act as memorials per se. An example which actually included a Hall of Remembrance with a Roll of Honour was the Stockport Memorial Art Gallery. The art gallery in Aberdeen was extended when a war memorial court was created. (Kavanagh 1994:156)

Saxonwold in 1913,[11] while the gallery was undertaken independently, opening in Joubert Park in 1915 – though both were designed by Edwin Lutyens, thus proclaiming their strong British affiliations.[12]

The Rand Regiments Memorial is in such close proximity to the South African National Museum of Military History that it is probably often assumed to be linked to it, though the museum was established only after World War II, opened in 1947 by Field Marshal Jan Smuts, then Prime Minister. It too was thought of as having a memorial aspect,[13] as we learn from his speech at the time, which rehearses the familiar imperial and ethical values associated with such projects throughout the Empire:

> We are gathered here today to open what may not unfairly be looked upon as a memorial to the greatest united effort our country has ever been called upon to produce. Memorials … serve to remind us of what is past, of great deeds of heroism and sacrifice; they also serve as a pointer and sometimes as a warning to the future.[14]

But there was no specifically commemorative aspect to the museum[15] and, in the decades that followed, the museum possibly seemed to many to be more a storehouse of military technology than a memorial, and much more focused on a British-dominated past than a South African future. In 1975 the museum did expand its mission 'to include the history of all military conflict in which South Africans have played a part',[16] and changed its name from the National War Museum to the National Museum of Military History. But for many years it retained an emphasis on the battles of Empire. Even today the huge collection of World War armaments still dominates, although the museum has extended its displays to include resistance movements that range from Umkhonto-we-Sizwe to the End Conscription Campaign. Its endeavours to transform itself to embrace the inclusiveness of a new South Africa were echoed when the nearby Rand Regiments Memorial was rededicated in 1999 to the men, women and children of all races who lost their lives in the South African War.[17] A Stone of Remembrance was planned with inscriptions to commemorate the deaths of British and Boer soldiers and civilians, as well as the many black men who served as soldiers or non-combatants on both sides, and the black men, women and children who died in concentration camps.[18] The new dedication endeavours to remodel

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[11] The sculpture by Naum Aronson was only installed in 1914.

[12] It might be argued that the strong British emphasis in the art collection that was assembled for Johannesburg would have been a not inappropriate accompaniment to a British war memorial. Certainly both sprang from a similar sense of attachment to Empire. (See Carman 2002)

[13] The combination of museum and memorial for South African war dead is more explicitly pursued in the commemorative museum opened at the South African National Memorial at Deville Wood in 1987 (Borg 1991:127). Another combination of museum and memorial site in South Africa itself is found at the Vroue Monument and the Anglo-Boer War Museum at Bloemfontein. Here the museum was also added considerably later, in 1931, and not conceived as part of the original memorial of 1913.

[14] Speech of 29 August 1947, quoted in http://www.militarymuseum.co.za

[15] It is noteworthy that the extensions to the South African National Museum of Military History include a commemorative display in the vestibule which enshrines an unlit lamp from Delville Wood, and that copies of the friezes from the Delville Wood site are found in the museum's new conference centre.

[16] http://www.militarymuseum.co.za

[17] On 31 May 2002, there was a special ceremony at the memorial to commemorate the centenary of the signing of the Treaty of Vereeniging, at which this wider dedication was further reinforced. The Johannesburg Cenotaph was modified for Remembrance Day 2003 to include the inscription 'The City of Johannesburg honours those who paid the supreme sacrifice in all wars, battles and the armed struggle for freedom, democracy and peace in South Africa.'

[18] It is estimated that some 20 000 black people died, many in concentration camps. Although they finally lost the war, only 7 000 Boer soldiers died as against 22 000 British troops, but civilian deaths amongst the Boers numbered around 28 000. (Saunders & Southey 1998:160)

memory in line with the ideals of a transformed South Africa, amending not only a history shaped by racist apartheid policies but also the divisiveness of white society perpetuated in the opposing monuments erected by Brit and Boer.

This case is a telling example of the way memorials and museums that play a commemorative role do not have a singular significance, frozen in a finite past, but need to accommodate a range of meanings that shift over time. What purports to be collective memory is not a fixed value, particularly perhaps in the colonies with their intertwining of imperial, settler and indigenous histories. While the loyalties of other colonies were possibly more straightforward than the ambivalent allegiances that complicated South African attitudes to Britain at the time of the World Wars, there too there were issues around the relationship to Empire, and the nationalist values embodied in memorials altered as the colonies began to assert independent identities. For example, inscriptions on New Zealand memorials to soldiers who died in the South African War seem to mark a high point of affiliation with the ideals of Empire, but this gradually diminished as the century progressed. The commemoration of World War II saw a shift from monuments to more practical memorials such as community halls that had a direct usefulness to the people of the country, rather than a more abstract adulation of the ideals of a distant British-led war.[19] But even the smallest towns had subscribed to memorials to commemorate the sacrifices of World War I, which was perceived as a testing ground of both loyalty to Empire and emerging New Zealandness. As in other colonies, they drew on the established visual discourse of Empire, with ubiquitous statues on plinths, obelisks and arches, often along classical lines, their imposing forms tempering sadness with a sense of pride. In Auckland one of the early proposals was a monumental Corinthian column to be erected at the harbour, not unlike Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square. As Alan Borg has noted

> The one thing a memorial has to do is to convey some generally recognized meaning about what is being memorialized. If it fails to do so, fails to communicate directly, it rapidly loses all reason for existence. The ancient and classical traditions of symbolism remained widely understood, and indeed had entered popular consciousness through centuries of repetition.[20]

Matching this dependence on traditional forms, the Auckland War Memorial Museum was a Greek Revival building with a portico modelled on the Parthenon. The architects who won the international competition, sponsored by the Institute of British Architects, were Aucklanders who had themselves fought in the war and intended to recall the Greek temples on promontories seen by New Zealand soldiers travelling to the fateful battle site of Gallipoli. The sober dignity of the Doric colonnade also referenced both European museums and memorials.[21] Its commemorative purpose was made explicit in reliefs of the war carved in each metope of the Doric frieze that encircles the building, and the

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[19] This may also represent a more negative and cynical attitude to war, which seems to have been widespread throughout the Empire. For a discussion of New Zealand memorials, see Maclean and Phillips 1990.
[20] Borg 1991:70.
[21] As was said of the winning design for the museum in the *New Zealand Herald* on 21 September 1921, 'Its high purpose demanded a noble and dignified structure worthy to commemorate those who sacrificed their lives for freedom and honour, and suitable to house to the best advantage a complete collection of war trophies, relics and literature and the treasures of the museum.' (Quoted in Cook 2004:86)

inscription of the name of a battle site above each window. Across the entablature of the portico, beneath the dates of the Great War, the words attributed to Pericles proclaimed:

THE WHOLE EARTH IS THE SEPULCHRE OF FAMOUS MEN
THEY ARE COMMEMORATED NOT ONLY BY THE COLUMNS AND INSCRIPTIONS IN THEIR OWN COUNTRY
BUT IN FOREIGN LANDS ALSO BY MEMORIALS GRAVEN NOT ON STONE
BUT ON THE HEARTS OF MEN [22]

In addition, a cenotaph, modelled on Lutyens's design for Whitehall,[23] dominated the Court of Honour in front of the building. As with its British counterpart, it is still the site for annual ceremonies of remembrance, though not on Armistice Day, but on 25 April, Anzac Day. The last survivor of the Gallipoli campaign which the day commemorates died some time ago,[24] and the number of war veterans even from World War II diminishes each year, but the ceremonies continue at this and many other sites, suggesting their national as well as memorial significance. Anzac Day has become tantamount to a national day for both Australia and New Zealand, acknowledged in a public holiday since the 1920s.[25]

The competition for scarce resources which had initiated the combination of museum and memorial in Auckland continued in the building programme, and threatened the completion of the Court of Honour. Shortly before the museum was due to open in November 1929, it was found that there were insufficient funds for the cenotaph, although public outrage forced the hurried repair of that omission. However, the alphabetical inscription of the names of the dead in a Roll of Honour on marble panels in the memorial hall awaited an additional fund-raising effort before this task was completed for Anzac Day 1931.[26] Individual naming followed the practice developed by the British in World War I cemeteries where each name was recorded in the same way, irrespective of rank, race or creed.[27]

Continuing this practice of naming individuals necessitated the building of an additional memorial hall at the Auckland museum after World War II to honour the new dead in another marble Roll of Honour. While this was restricted to the Auckland district,[28] a full New Zealand Roll of Honour was inscribed in leather-bound books at the National War Memorial in Wellington, and another recorded at the fortress-like Army Museum at Waiouru, built in 1978. There tradition and new technology have combined to create an unusual memorial, called 'Tears on Greenstone', or 'Roimata Pounamu' in Maori. Against the

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[22] The words were recorded (and probably amended) by Thucydides in his *History of the Peloponnesian War*. See Cook 2004:91.

[23] To avoid the additional cost of obtaining blueprints of the Lutyens' Cenotaph, the design was copied from newsreels.

[24] The last New Zealand veteran of Gallipoli, Doug Dibley, died at 101 years in 1997 (http://www.lamp.ac.uk/~alh/local/anzac4.html) , five years before the last Australian veteran, Alec Campbell, who was 103 when he died in 2002 (http://english.pravda.ru/world/2002/05/17/28888.html).

[25] The Anzac Day Act was passed in New Zealand in 1920, with the same conditions applied as for Sundays. (Worthy 2001:54ff) Australian legislation of the public holiday took place state by state between 1923 and 1926. (Inglis 1998:1999)

[26] Worthy 2001:71ff.

[27] Women who died in service as nurses are listed separately at the end of the main list. A written Roll of Honour in two leather-bound books records the ranks, regiments and next of kin of each of the dead.

[28] The Auckland district extended from Northland to Gisborne. The Auckland War Memorial Museum Rolls of Honour for later wars in Korea, Malaysia and Vietnam record national lists, as is the case for the South African War.

metaphoric sound of weeping, as water runs over a wall of New Zealand jade, an audio system quietly but continuously intones the names of the dead. In place of an inscribed roll, visitors have access to a database to call up details of relatives and can request an individualised memorial certificate. The museum displays add a more dramatic reading of war, with full-scale dioramas of military action.

When the Auckland War Memorial Museum opened, the war relics were installed in the so-called Hall of War Trophies on the uppermost floor of the museum, alongside the Hall of Memory. The focus of staff expertise on existing collections of ethnography and natural history, housed on the lower floors, meant that there was no active acquisition policy or systematic research of war material.[29] But the duality of collections was maintained when the building was extended in 1960. Some of the additional exhibition space that was added at that time was devoted to the military collection now extended to the recent conflict, with long rows of large-scale armoury facing cabinets for smaller items. And, as the memorial part of the museum no longer focused on World War I alone, the opportunity was taken to install small halls commemorating the New Zealand Wars and the South African War in addition to the World War II sanctuary, creating a complex of chapel-like spaces on the top floor of the museum. But as the museum has developed, there have been complaints that the memorial aspect has been marginalised,[30] and there is a somewhat uneasy relationship between exhibition areas and memorial halls. For example, the solemn dignity of the classical multi-story entrance vestibule, which stretches up to the World War I memorial area and shares its lead light roof with the Coats of Arms of all the British Dominions, seems compromised by the noisy bustle of the enquiry desk, café and museum shop on the ground floor, not to mention the cash desks where those who wish only to visit the memorial halls are obliged to explain why they will not be paying an entrance fee.

Yet one positive outcome of the unusual amalgamation is the distinctively New Zealand flavour it imparts to the Auckland War Memorial Museum. Even if the museum was built to commemorate a European war and drew on a European prototype for its architecture, the museum's natural history displays and superb collections of Maori and Pacific artefacts leave no doubt that this is a New Zealand memorial. The indigenous collections are complemented by the ingenious incorporation of Maori motifs in the classicising columns and friezes on the lower levels of the museum interior.[31] Moreover, the war exhibition, entitled *Scars on the Heart*, developed in the 1990s to replace outdated exhibits and proactively renew the memorial role of the museum, takes a New Zealand perspective which locates the World Wars in a bigger picture, from the New Zealand wars of the nineteenth century to the

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[29] The Auckland War Memorial Museum appointed its first full-time history curator only in 1992. I am indebted to Rose Young who holds this position for sharing with me her research of the early collections and exhibits of this material at the Museum.

[30] From the outset there have been objections from war veterans who, for example, changed road signs reading 'museum' to 'war memorial museum'. More recently objections have been raised to the 'entertainment' and 'commercial' aspects of the museum, and the bright promotional banners for exhibitions mounted between the columns of the portico. There have also been objections about the $5 entrance donation, and Harry Corrin has mounted a one-man campaign of protest. (Worthy 2001:61-62)

[31] These indigenous motifs were not, however, considered suitable for the sober classicism of the memorial hall, as reported in the *New Zealand Herald* 23 November 1929. (Cook 2004:98).[32] Stead notes that the New Zealand government had lost its listing of Maori fallen: an investigation was undertaken by Wiremu Paora of Ngati Whatua o Orakei to reconstitute the list for the Auckland district, which was then included in the Hall of Memory. (2001:15)

country's modest but wide-spread contemporary peace-keeping activities. The fact that the magnificent elevated site chosen for the museum was originally named Pukekawa by King Tawhaio to commemorate the dead of early nineteenth-century wars between the Ngapuhi and Tamui tribes adds yet another layer to the concept of a specifically New Zealand history invested in the museum. And if in recent times Waitangi Day, which commemorates the signing of the contentious Treaty of Waitangi between British crown and Maori chiefs in 1840, might be seen to compete with Anzac Day as the defining moment of New Zealand nationalism, emphasising tensions between Maori and European settlers, both peoples are commemorated in the Museum's rolls of honour making it explicit that they fought together in the same world conflicts.[32]

The Australian National War Memorial is also a museum, although that word was deliberately excluded from its name to emphasise its commemorative purpose.[33] Honouring the war dead of the whole nation, it was erected in the Federation's young capital city of Canberra, and purposefully placed on a site directly in line with the Parliamentary buildings, creating an axis of national pride, later marked by an imposing avenue, Anzac Parade.[34] While World War I monuments were built more rapidly in Australia's state capitals, the larger aspirations of a national memorial contributed to delay its completion. Although temporary exhibitions of the collection were set up in Melbourne and Sydney in the 1920s, the National War Memorial in Canberra did not open until 1941. With World War II underway, the brief of the memorial had by then been extended to include the new conflict, although the first exhibits inevitably focused on World War I. At the opening ceremony, the Governor General rewrote the nationalist fervour of the speech prepared by the Museum to suggest that the Great War now seemed no more than a temporary truce and that further sacrifice was required to finally bring an end to world conflict.[35]

As had been the case at Auckland, competing architects for the Australian War Memorial drew on historical prototypes to create a monument of grandeur, and a number of similar classical temple fronts were proposed. But ultimately the design favoured was Byzantine in style with a cloister reserved for the Roll of Honour. This meant that the domed Hall of Memory beyond the cloister did not have to be so large, providing a contemplative area which commemorated the armed forces in images of stained glass, mosaic and bronze. Together with the cloisters it imparts a sacred character, echoed in the hymns still sung at memorial ceremonies on Anzac Day. And each evening at closing time the building's memorial purpose is affirmed when a bugler sounds the Last Post. The Roll of Honour, which was cast in bronze, was installed only in the 1960s and thus able to list the dead of both wars, in this case by regiment. Even though countries in the southern hemisphere were little affected by the seminal difference of World War II that civilian deaths outstripped those of the armed forces, the assembling of the roll caused endless research and soul-searching, as problems soon emerged on which names to

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[33] An attempt to reintroduce the word 'museum' into the name by a director in the 1970s in order to promote the museum emphasis, was not upheld. (McKernan 1991:287-90)
[34] The more recent Parliamentary building also maintains this axis with Anzac Parade, which is lined today with other memorials, including one recently installed by New Zealand. For a discussion of Anzac Parade memorials, see Inglis 1998:402 ff)
[35] McKernan 1991:4-5.

include. Some of the exclusions have been an ongoing source of debate,[36] and a commemorative sculpture garden now houses memorials to some who were omitted, such as merchant seamen.[37]

Designed specifically as a museum commemorating war from the outset, the Australian War Memorial is uncomplicated by other collections, so that all its exhibitions were integrated with its memorial function, creating greater coherence than at the Auckland War Memorial Museum. Australian war correspondent and historian Charles Bean, who is credited with the idea of the museum, saw the value of records 'rendered sacred by the millions of gallant, precious lives laid down in their making' and recognised their importance 'for future generations to see forever the plain, simple truth'.[38] Systematic collecting commenced during the war, with field officers appointed to oversee the task, and servicemen even issued with labels for their finds. The museum's future director John Treloar, at the time in charge of the Australian War Records Office in London, asked collectors to record the stories of the objects they submitted, because 'a good description transforms a piece of salvage into an interesting relic'.[39] The displays thus had a strongly narrative underpinning, using extended labels and a guide book, and were given distinctive form through the museum's popular 'picture models' conceived by Bean and World War I artists at the front.

The engaging quality of these small-scale dioramas of battles perhaps provides a precedent for high-tech strategies used to simulate the action of combat in later museum displays, but they avoid glamorising the conflicts.[40] Similarly, other displays included not only weapons as trophies and the pristine forms of dress uniforms, but evocative finds from the battlefields such as 'an Australian uniform still caked in mud and taken from a soldier as he emerged from the front line'.[41] A full-scale figure embodying the dirt and depression of trench warfare in today's exhibits keeps alive the idea that war was as much about hardship and suffering as victory. Since its inception, it has been the goal that 'In keeping with the sombre commemorative tone of the Memorial … it should not be seen to be glorifying war or triumphing over the enemy'.[42]

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[36] This is discussed at length by McKernan (1991:227 ff). The chief difficulties related to whether to include those who had not died in action, and those who had contributed to the war effort but were not enlisted in the military forces. It had also been intended to list names by area rather than regiment, to aid people in finding names, but this proved impossible.

[37] I am very grateful to Laura Back of the Australian War Memorial for supplying this information and for generous assistance with the gathering of material for this paper.

[38] The words are taken from an article Bean wrote for the *Commonwealth Gazette* in September 1917, quoted by McKernan 2001:42.

[39] McKernan 2001:44. The team of field officers and war artists worked on the front gathering, recording and photographing, and Bean himself returned to sites like Gallipoli to gather supplementary relics. Treloar was officer in charge of the Australian War Records office in London from 1917.

[40] McKernan recounts that the accurate plan models were sometimes used by returned servicemen to show the families of those who died where their loved ones lay. (2001:23)

[41] McKernan 2001:24.

[42] This quotation is taken from the current Museum website (http://www.awm.gov.au): it represents Bean's idea from the outset and was ratified in the principles outlined in a document on Museum policy in 1953 which stated that 'Exhibits should be chosen to "avoid glorification of war and boasting of victory" and they should also be chosen to "avoid perpetuating enmity … for both moral and national reasons and because those who have fought in wars are generally strongest in their desire to prevent war".' (McKernan 2001:223)

But the intended commemorative tone hardly seems to be maintained in the impressive technical displays of huge military machines and aeroplanes and the dramatic audio-visual effects of the Anzac Hall which opened in 2001. As museum publicity tells us of one exhibit, dramatically entitled *Striking by Night*, it uses 'a stunning integration of objects, light and sound' to simulate an operation over Berlin in December 1943 and offers visitors 'the tension and danger of the mission, as modern technology recreates the search-lights, flares, anti-aircraft fire, and fighter attacks.'[43] Visiting schoolboys clearly relish this full-scale equivalent of computer war games but, like them, it glosses over the reality of war, giving no attention to the human cost of conflict. Even setting aside the question of whether it is ever possible to present war in a judicious and disinterested manner, such exhibits raise the issue of whether the goals of a museum are not inherently in conflict with those of a memorial, more particularly with the increasing expectation that museums should add recreation and tourism to their earlier roles of scholarship, conservation and exhibition, thus contributing to the leisure life of the nation and attracting tourist dollars.

These expectations add further strands to the already complex task of war memorial museums. In addition to grappling with the compromise between national values and personal loss implicit in all memorials that endeavour to present 'war as *both* noble and uplifting *and* tragic and unendurably sad',[44] they have the obligation to try to make sense of conflict through their exhibitions. The idea that war memorial museums can fulfil both emotional and educational roles seems to parallel the philosophy that has prompted so many recent commemorations of the Holocaust to prefer to create museums rather than memorial monuments. The goal of bearing witness as well as recording loss is met by the narrative that is unfolded in their exhibitions, from the major undertakings of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington and the new Holocaust installation at the Imperial War Museum in London, to more modest institutions in such cities as Melbourne, Sydney and Cape Town. To explore the reasons for this wide-spread development is beyond the scope of this paper, but it can be said that they share the fundamental goal of exposing the atrocities of the Holocaust as a means of upholding the rights of all individuals. In the words of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, they 'aim to combat antisemitism and all forms of prejudice and discrimination, and to instill a respect for human rights'.[45] In this sense, they transcend a specifically Jewish history and have immediate relevance whatever their location. Even in Auckland with its tiny Jewish population, a small gallery dedicated to the Holocaust was opened at the War Memorial Museum in 1997.[46]

However moving in its invoking of memory, this installation, like its major counterpart at the Imperial War Museum, is an exhibition not a commemoration. But special museums dedicated to the Holocaust frequently incorporate a memorial hall, paralleling those of the war memorial museums I have been discussing. As with memorial monuments, the meaning of such sites is renewed through the enactment

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[43] http://www.awm.gov.au
[44] Winter 1995:85.
[45] http://www.museums.org.za/ctholocaust
[46] This initiative came from the Krukziener family who had lost relatives in the Holocaust. They suggested and funded the project.

of ceremonies of commemoration, such as those held annually on Anzac Day in Australia and New Zealand. New rituals of memorialisation also underline the continuing significance of war-time sacrifice as part of a national discourse. In 1988 an eternal flame was ignited in the cloister of the Australian War Memorial,[47] and on the seventy-fifth anniversary of World War I in 1993, an 'Unknown Australian Soldier' was interned in the Hall of Memory.[48] New Zealand too is arranging to bring home an 'Unknown New Zealand Warrior' in 2004, although the resting place will be the National War Memorial in Wellington, not Auckland's museum. It is interesting to speculate about these decisions so long after the war they memorialise, particularly for NZ which has reduced its navy and air force and determinedly pursues a non-combative role in world conflict, forthrightly refusing to fight in Iraq, for example, despite alienating her major trading partner, America.[49] At the Australian War Memorial, on the other hand, an exhibition on Australia in Iraq has already been added.[50] Such a museum exhibit serves to legitimise new conflict as part of familiar war narratives of heroism and patriotism, particularly as the host institution is the national memorial.

As 'living memorials' which can remodel remembrance in new exhibits, it might be said that museums have a more proactive role in shaping collective memory than monuments. Exhibitions offer opportunities not only to add new material, but to redevelop and explore new meanings and different emphases, as in Auckland's *Scars on the Heart* exhibition, which acknowledges the history of conflict between the first nation of the country and British colonial power in the New Zealand wars. Because such struggles in Australia were not considered part of the museum's brief to address the history of the country's armed forces, there is no reference to the death of Aborigines at Australian War Memorial other than those who served as enlisted troops.[51] Ironically, the one aspect of the museum that draws attention to Aborigines specifically, is the representation of a man and a woman of the Ngunnawal tribe in the gargoyles of the cloister where the fauna of the area are depicted, which suggests an outdated colonial attitude, and forms an interesting contrast to the Auckland War Memorial Museum's paying homage to Maori culture by integrating indigenous designs into its classicising architecture. The oppression of Aboriginal peoples has received increasing attention at other Australian museums with indigenous displays no longer focused on ethnography alone, but giving attention to Aboriginal history under colonial rule.[52] And the National Gallery of Australia houses a commemorative installation, *The Aboriginal Memorial*, which was a collaborative piece made in Arnheim land for the Sydney Biennale in 1988, the bicentenary of Australia's colonisation. These decorated hollow burial poles like traditional bone coffins, though never intended for ritual use, memorialised numberless Aboriginal deaths under

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[47] Inglis 1998:402.
[48] See Inglis 1998:451 ff.
[49] It was evidently this pragmatic concern that led a reluctant New Zealand to participate in the Vietnam War in the 1960s.
[50] There is also a website exhibition Australians in Iraq 2003, and a war artist Lewis Miller and war photographer David Dare Parker, appointed by the museum, visited Iraq in April 2003.
[51] Inglis gives some attention to these issues (1998:450-51). Laura Back drew my attention to a plaque commemorating Aboriginal people on Mount Ainslie behind the museum, though not connected to it, which is also limited to those who served in the Australian forces.
[52] An aspect of this history which represents the suppression of Aboriginal culture is the story of the Stolen Generation of enforced fostering of Aboriginal children with white families, remembered in exhibitions on this theme at the Melbourne Museum and the National Museum of Australia at Canberra, for example.

colonial rule. At first installed in the courtyard at the NGA, it has been given privileged status in response to grievances about the marginalisation of Aboriginal culture in Australia. Not only is it displayed in the prime site, Gallery One, but the institution has undertaken to display it permanently and never to deaccession it.[53]

An interesting Pacific example acknowledging a history of colonial conflict, although outside the sphere of British influence, is the 1998 Tjibaou Cultural Centre in Noumea, New Caledonia, designed by Renzo Piano to reflect indigenous architecture. French funding of this superb centre, which combines exhibition spaces with media libraries and workshop areas, may be considered reparation for their exploitation of the Kanak peoples of the island in the past.[54] The project was triggered by the 1989 assassination of Kanak leader, Jean-Marie Tjibaou, who had worked to resolve differences with the colonial ruler. Only one of the distinctive conical units of the museum is reserved to commemorate Tjibaou and hence acknowledge resistance against the French directly, but as the promotion of Kanak culture was a key aim of his campaign, the very foundation of the centre may be understood as a memorial to his life and work.

In South Africa, fiscal pressures of orchestrating socio-political change since the first free elections of 1994 have left little funding for new museum ventures to recover the country's traumatic history, and there is no wealthy colonial power ready to accept culpability for the iniquities of the apartheid system. Yet such are the economic expectations of cultural tourism that the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism funded the building of the Hector Pieterson Memorial and Museum in Soweto, which opened in 2002.[55] Its combination of memorial site and corroborating museum narrative honours the role of youth in the resistance to apartheid through Hector Pieterson, who was not in fact the first to die in the June 1976 uprising, but whose memory was imprinted on public imagination through Sam Nzima's iconic photograph. The Apartheid Museum, which opened the same year, was also funded in relation to tourist development, although privately in this case, as a required demonstration of civic mindedness by businessmen intent on obtaining a casino licence in Johannesburg. Perhaps this sponsorship is not altogether inappropriate, in that capitalism as much as colonialism was a founding principle of black exploitation.[56]

The new museum acknowledges its location in Johannesburg: the history it constructs recognises racist beginnings in the founding of the gold industry, and its architectural design concedes its place in an urban mining landscape. (O'Toole and Rose 2002) Appositely, for a museum memorialising the atrocities of apartheid, lessons have been learnt from Holocaust museums, and both the architecture

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[53] See Smith 2001.
[54] It might also be considered a reward for New Caledonia's loyalty in voting to remain under France.
[55] The Johannesburg City Council paid for the interior and exhibitions, and the Standard Bank, which has funded many cultural ventures in South Africa, provided important sponsorship in the form of personnel during the museum's development.
[56] If there is any truth in the claim that the Krok brothers made their fortune through the sale of toxic skin lightning creams, their funding of the Apartheid Museum seems ironic indeed.

and the exhibits are strategised to create an affective experience.[57] Paralleling the issue of death camp identification documents to visitors to the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, here each entry ticket arbitrarily defines visitors as black or white, and consigns them to different entrances. Beyond these, serried ranks of grossly enlarged identification documents displayed in cages provide a material manifestation of the senseless cruelty of racial classification, reinforced by the impassive gaze of the classification board, whose photograph confronts the visitor at the end of the display.

This inflation of reality smacks of theatricality, but is admittedly far more effective than a more archival presentation of actual documents in display cases would be. This museum is not averse to making use of imaginative installations and simulated artefacts, such as the assembly of dangling rope nooses that memorialise 131 political executions. Reproductions of the signage which controlled the day-to-day life of petty apartheid are displayed alongside actual artefacts such as a yellow Casspir armoured vehicle which enforced a more ominous jurisdiction. In this melange of objects, the Apartheid Museum differs from Holocaust museums, where great effort has been expended in acquiring 'authentic' artefacts to display 'genuine' traces of the history they recount, which was disbelieved during the war and whose veracity is challenged even today.[58] In addition, they deploy photographs, recordings and film material to bear witness, and this is the dominant strategy of the Apartheid Museum also. As Nora observes, 'Modern memory is, above all, archival. It relies entirely on the materiality of the trace, the immediacy of the recording, the visibility of the image.'[59]

But while Holocaust Museums and the Apartheid Museum use similar strategies to assert a moral imperative, there is a key difference. Although tracking a relentless path through apartheid history, the Apartheid Museum does not recount traumatic suffering in which the victims seemingly lacked agency, as seems to be the emphasis in most Holocaust centres. Instead it shows how an infamous history was overcome. The first free elections provide an upbeat ending to a shameful story, more like the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem where the museum presentation gives prominence to resistance in the Holocaust and where the attainment of the State of Israel provides positive closure. In that victims become victors, the Apartheid Museum may seem to share something of this agenda and that of war museums, although here it is a civil war that is memorialised and the victors share their newly won human rights with their erstwhile opponents. The enlightened principles enshrined in the new constitution are inscribed on the seven pillars at the entrance to stress this outcome. Such a museum has the potential to expiate the past, [60] and to educate or re-educate South African audiences.

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[57] Annie Coombes (2003) discusses at length the perceived relationship of apartheid's history to the Holocaust, particularly with reference to Robben Island. Her book was written before the advent of the Apartheid Museum, but the points that she makes so eloquently regarding the creation of a master narrative at Robben Island and other sites memorialising apartheid are apposite here.
[58] See, for example, Berenbaum 1993:xv.
[59] Pierre Nora, 'Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Memoire,' Representations* 26 (Spring 1989), quoted in Gillis 1994:15.
[60] A similar intention may be shared by another southern site intended to commemorate political atrocities which was announced this year in Argentina: it is planned that a former naval school in Buenos Aires, which was a major torture centre during the military dictatorship of 1976 to 1983, will become a museum. (news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/Americas/3474987.stm)

It would be presumptuous of me at a conference where many will have far greater knowledge of the Apartheid Museum to pass judgement on what it may or may not achieve. But it does raise interesting questions about museums that attempt to deal with conflict. The advantage that museums claim over memorials is that they do not only commemorate; they also bear witness, explain, educate. The difficulty lies in the fact that democratic principles as much as economic needs require museum exhibits to speak with directness and accessibility to large and diverse audiences, a necessity which may trivialise history. In this, memorials may after all have an advantage over memorial museums, in that their very lack of specificity can more readily accommodate diverse interpretations. All too easily museums can fall into stereotyping – the brave soldier, the selfless martyr, the caring nurse, or, more parochially, the heroic victor, the evil enemy, the tortured prisoner – categories that implicitly or explicitly take sides. In the pursuit of clarity and coherence, the subtleties of history may be lost.

A case in point is the criticism that Helen Suzman has levelled against the Apartheid Museum, objecting that white opposition to state policy has virtually been ignored.[61] A decision to make black resistance to white oppression the master narrative of the museum is an understandable strategy, as is the emphasis on the ANC rather than other resistance movements. But this inevitably dilutes the discourse, and is in danger of merely flipping the coin of apartheid propaganda in the past. It also too easily lends itself to the superficial generalisations of tourist consumption.[62] In presenting a unified narrative, the museum may fail not only to have its foreign visitors engage with the full complexity of apartheid, but to accommodate the nuanced range of memories through which all South Africans might endeavour to come to terms with their past.

It is widely acknowledged that museums construct history and create ideology in ways that can never be impartial, all the more so perhaps if they include the emotive charge of a memorial function. As John Gillis has written, 'Commemorative activity is by definition social and political, for it involves the coordination of individual and group memories, whose results may appear consensual when they are in fact the product of processes of intense contest, struggle, and, in some instances, annihilation.'[63] Yet commemoration promotes a kind of unanimity that is valuable: discussing the memorialising of World War I, Alex King points out that, even if there is not a single agreed agenda, participants 'campaign together against the sheer forgetfulness that withdrew attention from the war completely, and abandoned the search for constructive meaning'.[64] It is in this search for constructive meaning that museums which address conflict and commemoration can play a key role. Their contentious subject matter makes it all the more critical that they acknowledge the current contextualisation and

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[61] Suzman letter to the *Mail & Guardian*, May 31 - June 6 2002, 23. I am grateful to Ruth Lipschitz for bringing this to my attention.
[62] The museum's own publicity advertises it as a 'dramatic emotional journey' and 'a unique South African experience' (http://www.apartheidmuseum.org) and Suncross Tours, to pick a random example, invites its clients to 'Relive the cruelty of the past systems and the struggle for human dignity. This is an emotional encounter, with vivid depiction of an unforgettable era.'
[63] Gillis 1994:5.
[64] King 1999:165.

contestability of their narratives. In commemorating the subjectivity of individual sacrifice as well as broader historical narratives, memorial museums may afford affective personal insights into the multivalent nature of conflict, its contemporary significance, even its expiation. But such idealistic goals may be defeated by the paradox that is at the heart of memorial museums: for how is it possible to promote peace by exhibiting war, or uphold human rights by exposing their violation.

As David Lowenthal reminds us, 'The prime function of memory … is not to preserve the past but to adapt it so as to enrich and manipulate the present.'[65]

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PAPER TITLE: LOOKING AT THE TACITURN EXTERIOR: ON LEGENDARY TOPOGRAPHY, THE META-NARRATIVE OF COMMEMORATION AND PALIMPSEST MONUMENTS OF THE CONCENTRATION CAMPS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR

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Introduction: 'Making visible the activity of memory in monuments'

> By returning to the memorial some memory of its own genesis, we remind ourselves… that it is no more a natural piece of the landscape than we are… I shall attempt to crack its eidetic veneer, to loosen meaning, to make visible the activity of memory in monuments… [to provide a] glimpse of the monument's inner life – the tempestuous social, political, and aesthetic forces – normally hidden from view by a monument's taciturn exterior… By drawing back into view the memorial-making process, we invigorate the very idea of the monument, thereby reminding all such cultural artefacts of their coming into being, their essential constructedness[1]

As this quotation from James E. Young's *The Texture of Memory* points up, it is analytically important to explore the 'tempestuous forces' at work around the 'taciturn exterior' of monuments, in order to 'remind ourselves' that memorials and commemoration result from political processes and are socially constructed, rather than being repositories or representations of 'the facts' in any direct sense.[2] The present discussion is concerned with precisely such a 'reminding', and it endeavours to show something of the artefactual nature of commemorative sites and monuments, their social constructedness and tempestuous history, in relation to a particular commemorative landscape, that of South Africa in the wake of the South African War (1899-1902). The research drawn on is a detailed photographic and video examination and narrative analysis of, to date, thirty-three of the approximately forty-five sites of the concentration camp cemeteries or begraafplase, some of which were later reconstructed as Gardens of Remembrance or Gedenktuine, concerning their structure, layout and organisation, and also the commemorative signs and symbols within and across them.[3] However, the particular analytic concern here is with the strong spatial and visual aspects of this commemorative landscape and the narrative structure of this, with the emphasis very much on looking at and closely interrogating the 'taciturn exterior' of monuments, rather than any supposedly 'inner life' they might have: their structures, surfaces and visual impact, and also the implied meanings they represent. This helps make memory-*making*, the social, political and aesthetic processes involved in making the meanings that monuments become invested with, more visible in an analytical as well as a visual

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[1] Young, 1993:14.

[2] Work on monuments and memorials influencing discussion here includes Young, 1993 and 2002 in particular; also useful have been Borg, 1991; Curl, 2000; Gillis, 1994; Levinson, 1998; Michalski, 1998; Riegel, 1982; Tilley, 1994; Verdery, 1999.

[3] This part of my research has been funded through a research grant from the British Academy; I am pleased to acknowledge its support here. It is also linked to a more extensive project, analysing the workings of public memory – post/memory - as compared with the archival record concerning these camps, reported on in Stanley, 2005.

sense, with the result that the specific monuments discussed here are by no means so 'taciturn' as Young's comment suggests is usually so.[4]

South Africa is of course certainly not the only national state in which 'memory' has been re/constructed for political purposes in promulgating a particular idea of national identity which relies on a mythologised version of the past and which produces a legendary topography which seemingly provides concrete 'proof' of its interpretive version of events. Thus, while the time and place of the things discussed herein are specific and unique to South Africa, I want to underline the point that these are general processes that occur in all state commemoration projects.

Figure 1: Location of the concentration camps of the South African War[5]

The set monuments and memorials which are the subject of discussion here arose from public and (quasi-) state commemoration of the Boer (later Afrikaner) women and children who died in the 'white' concentration camps of the South African War. These concentration camps were the result of the British military 'scorched earth' policy and many unnecessary deaths occurred in them, as the result of a succession of epidemics of measles, diphtheria, typhoid, pneumonia and dysentery, all also sweeping Europe and the Americas at this time with similar devastating consequence.[6] Some black people lived and/or worked in all the so-called 'white' camps, although many seized the opportunities provided by the war and quickly took other kinds of employment. In addition, separate camps for black people were established at the same time as the larger number of 'white' camps,[7] although these were in effect disaggregated in August 1901 to former Boer farms to produce food for British military purchase. However, although many people died in the black camps, neither they nor the black people who died in the 'white' camps were subsequently commemorated and memorialised through the programmes and practices of state commemoration. The wider project, of which this present discussion is a part,

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[4] The major influence on thinking about memory here has been Halbwachs (1992b) on 'legendary topography' and 'history after the fact', with other work drawn on including: Antze & Lambek, 1996; Ashplant et al, 2000; Bal et al, 1999; Caruth, 1995, 1996; Connelly, 2001; Connerton, 1989; King, 2000; Forty & Kuchier, 1999; Freeman, 1993; Fussell, 1975; Gray & Oliver, 2004; Hodgkin & Radstone, 2003; King, 2000; Kuchler & Melion, 1991; Lowenthal, 1985; Misztal, 2003; Nora, 1989; Nora & Kritzman, 1996, 1997, 1998; Radstone, 2002; Ricoeur, 1986; Samuel, 1994; Thompson, 1994; Tonkin, 1992; Williams, 2002. On 'the politics of memory' in Africa generally, see: Werbner; 1998; Amadiume & An-Na'im, 2000; Ranger; 1999; for some of its complexities in South Africa, see: Brink and Krige, 1999; Coombes, 2003; Grundlingh, 1992, 1999, 2001, 2002b; Krog, 1998, 2003; Kros, 1998; Nasson, 2001, 2002; Nuttall & Coetzee, 1998.
[5] Hobhouse, 1902: facing 356. Those under 'Orange River Colony' (ORC) administration were Aliwal North, Bethulie, Bloemfontein, Brandfort, Norval's Pont, Orange River Station, Kimberley, Kroonstad, Springfontein, Vryburg and Winburg. Those under 'Transvaal Colony' administration were Balmoral, Barberton, Belfast, Harrismith, Heidelberg, Heilbron, Irene, Klerksdorp, Krugersdorp, Mafeking, Middelburg, Nylstroom, Pietersburg, Potchefstrom, Standerton, Turffontein, Vereeniging, Volksrust, Vredefort Road with Koppies, and Vryburg. The Natal camps were administered by the Transvaal and were Colenso, Howick, Jacobs and Isipingo, Merebank, Pietermaritzburg, Pinetown and Wentworth. A smaller number under Cape administration were East London with Kabusie, Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage. There were separate black camps at Aliwal North, Bloemfontein, Brandfort, Edenburg, Harrismith, Heilbron, Kimberley, Kroonstad, Thaba 'Nchu, Vredefort Road, and possibly also Krugersdorp. Apart from Kimberley, officially in the Cape although administered by the ORC, and Krugersdorp in the Transvaal, these seem to have been in the ORC. However, there is no accurate list of the many farms that black camp populations were dispersed to after July 1901.
[6] Stanley, 2005 provides a more detailed account of 'scorched earth' and the removals of people to the camps; it also explores ideas about the relationship between visual culture, photographs and memory. On the civilian experience, Spies, 1977 remains key (see also the 2001 edition); see also Brink, 1999; Cammack, 1990; Hanekom & Wessels, 2000; Nasson, 1991, 1999a; Schoeman, 1998; Wessels, 2002. See also Davis, 2001 on late Victorian holocausts.
[7] On the location of the black camps, see endnote 5.

discusses changes in the commemorative mode since the democratic elections of 1994; however, the remit of the discussion here is a more specific one, concerned with state commemoration at a particular 'moment' in time in South Africa, and thus black people are largely absent because they were 'forgotten' – a systematic and deliberate 'forgetting' - within nationalist state remembrance and commemoration.

The map shown as *Figure 1* comes from Emily Hobhouse's[8] *The Brunt of the War* and indicates the wide distribution of the 'white' camps across the landscape, located along the main rail-routes in order to provision their inhabitants. The high death-rates that occurred were exacerbated by administrative and also imaginative inadequacies in dealing with the confinement at close quarters of many children without natural immunities to 'common' diseases, under wartime circumstances where tent-accommodation was in short-supply and food supplies were at privation levels.[9] An undated pamphlet on *The National Women's Monument* by N.J. van der Merwe[10], written for the 1913 unveiling of the *Vrouemonument* (the Women's Monument) in Bloemfontein and translated into English in late 1926, provides a breakdown of fatalities in the camps.[11]

Table 1: Van der Merwe's 'mortality returns'

Women over age 16	4,177
Children aged 16 and under[12]	22,074
Total deaths of women and children under 16	26,251

However, some deaths have been 'forgotten' by Van der Merwe here. These include the deaths of 119 boys 'over 16', and thus the total of 26,370 inscribed on the face of the *Vrouemonument*, shown in *Photograph 1*.[13] They also include those of some 1,670 adult men, whose deaths were

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[8] Emily Hobhouse (1860–1926) was a British pacifist and humanitarian, formerly a volunteer for the Women's Industrial Council in London, who gained public prominence in working for the South African Women and Children Distress Fund. After the war, she returned to South Africa to help develop 'home industries' in devastated farming areas. During World War I she did a range of relief work, particularly in Germany and Austria, concerning the plight of children. Publications include Hobhouse, 1901, 1902, 1923a, 1923b, 1927; see also Fisher, 1971; Harlow, 1999; Roberts, 1991; and especially Van Reenen, 1984 and Balme, 1994.

[9] A related research project to that drawn on here concerns the concentration camp records (reported on in Stanley, 2005), the key archive sources for which are the Director of Burgher Camps Collection, Transvaal State Archives Depot, Pretoria; and the Superintendent of Refugee Camps Collection, State Archives Depot, Bloemfontein.

[10] Van der Merwe, n.d. Nico van der Merwe had been Steyn's secretary and became his son-in-law; as a child, he had been in Bloemfontein camp; he was later a National Party MP, involved in a right-wing group opposing Hertzog, and by 1929 was chairman of the Afrikaner *Broederbond* cultural offshoot, the *Federasie Van Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings* [Federation of Afrikaner Cultural Associations or FAK].

[11] This was translated at the point that Emily Hobhouse's ashes were interred at the Vrouemonument in December 1926. See Van der Merwe, n.d.:9. These figures were also given earlier to Hobhouse by P.L.A. Goldman, Clerk to the Interior in the Union of South Africa in 1914, and were compiled from the camp registers. Goldman's original data included a total of 1,676 'men over 16 residing' in the camps who had died, with the figure for boys a sub-set of this. However, Van der Merwe's version excised the presence and deaths of adult men in the camps, for reasons discussed in Stanley, 2005.

[12] There is much confusion in commentary about boys, in part because children below their fifteenth birthday in the Orange River Colony camps but below their twelfth in the Transvaal ones received a different scale of rations from adults, in larger part because the post-war Boer re-working of the statistics mistakenly detail boys from their sixteenth birthday, perhaps because they became liable for commando duty in the Republics once they turned sixteen.

[13] Van der Merwe, n.d.:7. On the *Vrouemonument*, see Gaitskell & Unterhalter, 1989; Grundlingh, 2002a.

commemoratively excised because contradicting the 'heroic commandos and resolute *volksmoeders*' mythology that the *Vrouemonument* (and cultural entrepreneurs like Van der Merwe and the organisation he later chaired, the *Federasie Van Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings* [Federation of Afrikaner Cultural Associations or FAK]) helped to create, that all loyalist republican Boer men were on commando.[14]

Photograph 1: The Vrouemonument inscription

Around 8-10% of the Boer population died in the camps, so many Boer families across the four settler states of the Cape, Natal, Transvaal and Orange Free State experienced the deaths of people they were related to.[15] Across the South African landscape, the locations of the concentration camps, or rather of their *begraafplase* (cemeteries), became 'sites of memory'[16] around the commemorative activities of, before 1910, the proto-state, and, after Union, the national state. As the above comments about Van der Merwe's apparent precision concerning the concentration camp deaths will have suggested, the memorial-making process did not end once a monument was initially commemorated, but continued within a calendar of commemorative occasions and through later restorations and re-commemorations, which have helped produce the strongly performative quality of South African commemorative time/space. Also there are implicit as well as explicit stories about the commemorated past indicated by the memorial forms present in any one *begraafplaas*; and while these are actually *claims* about the represented past, the material reality of the commemorative site itself acts as seemingly concrete proof, such that a highly politicised nationalist version, a 'history after the fact' in Maurice Halbwachs' sense,[17] came to be understood as instead 'the facts'. In addition, strongly associated as they were with the rise and (seeming) triumph of nationalism,[18] these commemorative sites later underwent a major programme of state-funded 'works' in the *Gedenktuine* or Gardens of Remembrance Programme engaged in by a succession of post-1948 National Party governments, supported by a large amount of recurrent state funding,[19] and also followed by a major state involvement in establishing and maintaining a cycle of commemorative events which took place across these forty-five or so sites. As a consequence, the analysis of nationalist political mythology in South

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[14] This argued around the analytic term of 'post-slash-memory', 'post/memory', in Stanley 2005.

[15] Work on the social aspects of death and mourning influencing discussion here includes: Baudrillard, 1993; Bauman, 1992; Clark, 1993; Derrida, 1995, 1996; Elias, 1985; Freud, 1917/1957; Gillis, 1997; Hallam & Hockey, 2001; Homans, 1989, 2000; Holst-Warhaft, 2000; Humphreys, 1981; Jalland, 1996; Merridale, 2000; Metcalfe & Huntington, 1991; Mitscherlich & Mitscherlich, 1975; Rose, 1996; Verdery, 1991; Walter, 1999; Williams, 2002.

[16] On this influential if problematic term, see Nora, 1989, 1996; Nora & Kritzman, 1996, 1997, 1998; and as counter-balanced by Winter & Sivan, 1999; Winter, 1995.

[17] Halbwachs 1992b.

[18] Not even at the heights of its power was Afrikaner nationalism coterminous with the political convictions of all Afrikaners. However, while the large majority of white South Africans now disavow the politics of the past, many still cherish 'the history' they were taught in schools, have read in textbooks and popular histories, seen on TV, been told about through family memories and reminiscences handed down over the generations, and see this as factual knowledge about the past, rather than one of the results of nationalist myth-making.

[19] In the late 1950s, the National Party government through its Ministry of Internal Affairs instituted a major programme of work for the camp cemeteries, with the *Gedenktuine* or Gardens of Remembrance Programme the major element. This was instituted by the South African War Graves Council and the Central Civilian Graves Committee, presided over by the Ministry of Internal Affairs under J. de Klerk. As Coombes, 2003 comments, the funding arrangements have not changed markedly even a decade on from 1994.

Africa provides an important backcloth to thinking about the visual, spatial and participatory dimensions of commemoration and the practices associated with it, and not just the content of specific memorials.[20]

The result is that the *begraafplase* and *gedenktuine* sites – I use the Afrikaans terms because in some significant respects they differ systematically from 'ordinary' cemeteries and Gardens of Remembrance[21] - commemorating the concentration camp dead have become closely linked and constitute a sealed sub-group or genre of South African War commemoration, which can be usefully analysed around Halbwachs' theorisation of a 'legendary topography'. In addition, each site has strongly 'storied' elements and there is also a meta-narrative constituted across the sites within the legendary topography more generally, in the form of an overall interpretation of the past and the meaning of its events, and these aspects can be helpfully thought about using Paul Ricoeur's conceptualisation of meta-narrative.[22] A brief overview of the range of *begraafplase* and *gedenktuine* now follows, in order to convey something of what these places look like and their differences as well as similarities, with an analysis of their legendary topography and meta-narrative aspects then building on this.

'Onthou!' – the legendary topography of commemoration

Photographs 2 and 3

Belfast and Port Elizabeth, shown in *Photographs 2 and 3*, are major points of contrast. Belfast is closest to an 'ordinary cemetery' and almost melts into the surrounding countryside. It has no commemorative monuments before a 1999 centenary boulder and a 2002 commemoration of black people, no marble blocks with namestones listing the names of the dead, just a few remaining sandstone gravestones. 1940s restorations here provided grave-surrounds but no paths, so the visitor necessarily walks among the dead here. In great contrast, Port Elizabeth *Gedenktuin* is concentrated design and symbolic structure: a 'barbed-wire' enclosure about eight metres in diameter placed on a brick and stone floor shaped like an ox-wagon wheel.[23] A break in the 'wire' leads to a *Rapportryers*[24] commemorative plaque from 1983, but no names of the dead are inscribed anywhere, probably because just fourteen people died here, and there is no indication of where they are interred now. Other defining features of '*gedenktuin*' and '*begraafplaas*' can be indicated by reference to Harrismith, a

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[20] For helpful discussions, see Flood, 2002 on political mythologies; also Akenson, 1992; Cauthen, 1997; Cell, 1982; Du Toit, 1983, 1984, 1994; Moodie, 1975; and Thompson, 1985; on nationalist mythologies in South Africa.
[21] This is discussed in detail in Stanley, 2005, Chapter Eight especially.
[22] The wider analytical project also draws on Vladimir Propp's (1968, 1984) ideas about genre structures around notions of character and emplotment, Mikhail Bhaktin's (1981, 1986) analysis of the chronotope or a time/space continuum, Paul Ricoeur's (1986) conceptualisation of meta-narrative and Maurice Halbwachs' (1992b) theorisation of legendary topography; however, its central component is a radical re-working of Marianne Hirsch's (1997, 1999, 2001) resonant ideas about 'postmemory' in the form of 'post-slash-memory', 'post/memory', so as to insist that memory is never referentially tied to the recall of events 'as they were' but is always already a matter of viewpoint, selection and interpretation. See Stanley, 2005.
[23] The *gedenktuin* replaced a 1950s metal obelisk-like monument and also the *begraafplaas*.
[24] A nationalist youth organisation, formed literally as 'reporters' who took reports to the Voortrekker monument site, associated with the FAK.

begraafplaas which has a '*gedenktuin*-within' at its literal centre, and Irene, a *gedenktuin* which has a '*begraafplaas*-within' at its symbolic centre, shown in *Photographs 4 and 5* respectively.

Photographs 4 and 5

Harrismith *begraafplaas* has camp graves on one side of an entrance, separated from British military graves on the other. The graves have largely crumbled into the grass; at the centre is a stone area some four metres square, the '*gedenktuin*-within', which features commemorative plaques from the 1940s and 1977. To one side is a tower monument with the names of the dead, surmounted by a 1988 *Raad Vir Oorlogsgrafte* or War Greaves Board commemoration. Two painted slates lie in front of the 1977 *Rapportryers* commemoration, deposited there by the nationalist right-wing during 1999 and invoking 'Mothers who lost children / Massacred by the Khakies'.[25]

Irene *Gedenktuin* is inside a large railed enclosure of around two acres. At first sight it looks like a vast and orderly if complicated cemetery. There is a huge block holding marble namestones inscribed with the names of the dead; leading away from it are rows of symbolic graves with symbolic gravestones; in front is a tomb-like structure on a plinth. There are various enclosures with 'real' gravestones cemented into their walls, one near the entrance with four tall pillars before it. There is an undated plaque concerning *Suid Afrikaanse Vrouefederasie* [the South African Women's Federation or SAVF] and *Sentrale Burgergrafte Komitee* [Central Civilian Graves Committee] restoration work; a 1968 and 1981 commemoration by the *Raad Vir Oorlogsgrafte*; and in a separate area is a 1938 memorial and 1988 re-commemoration. The 'graves' here are all identical symbolic ones, with around ten names on each 'gravestone', and the dead are no longer here. This is a '*begraafplaas*-within', a fabricated cemetery within a *gedenktuin* design. At the head of the *gedenktuin*, the tomb-like structure is the likely repository of the remains of the dead, re-interred beneath it and faced by their inscribed names, a kind of absent presence within.

Photographs 6, 7 and 8

Vryburg, Heidelberg and Standerton, shown in *Photographs 6, 7 and 8*, are '*begraafplaas*-like' and have been subject to more restoration activity than meets the eye at Belfast. Heidelberg and Standerton contain features more characteristic of a *gedenktuin*; however, like Vryburg, there are no collective 'names of the dead' in them, so all three are more *begraafplaas*-like in this regard.

Vryburg is small, modest, reserved. Fenced by railings with a turnstile gate, it is space set apart, with 'inside' and 'outside' clearly demarcated. A path leads to an obelisk inscribed '*Eer Ons Dooie*' ['Honour Our Dead'] with some gravestones cemented into its base. In the grass beyond, the original graves

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[25] In full, 'O, weeping like a deluge of rain / for those who deal with sorrow / Why Lord? / Mothers who lost children / Massacred by the Khakies. / This is the land that / belongs to us. / We will remain true to the death.' ['*O, die geweer / soos in stortvloed van reen / van hul wat in smart verkeer / Waarom Heer? / Moeders wat kinders verloor / Deur Kakies uitgemoor. / Dit is die land wat aan ons behoort. / Ons sal getrou bly tot die dood.*']

have been levelled and are symbolically represented by irregularly-placed metal crosses.[26] The remains of the dead are perhaps re-interred beneath the obelisk.[27]

On the road to Heidelberg *begraafplaas*, a monument to its black and white concentration camps was commemorated in 1999. The *begraafplaas* is in a separate area of the town cemetery, its perimeter a low fence with fields beyond. The graves are seemingly 'original' but actually result from restoration work: all nearly identical, in rows, with surrounds filled with crushed quartz or a sandstone slab.[28] A massive cairn has three plaques: a 1927 plaque has a much repeated verse from Visser's 'Rest in peace tender blossoms' poem, a 1949 *Rapportryers* plaque has a picture of the then-just completed *Voortrekker* monument in Pretoria headed '*Eer En Hulde*' ['Honour And Homage'], and a 1977 local Afrikaner Cultural Association plaque has a verse from another Visser poem. The cairn itself is probably a 1938 commemoration.[29]

At Standerton, the *begraafplaas* is in the town cemetery, a separate area with a stone perimeter and railed entrance. Immediately inside it is a cross-shaped path. In the centre is a pavilion-like building, at its back a glass aperture holding an (unlit) oil-lamp. Standerton's 'graves' are highly uniform in size and style and result from 'restoration': small, with slate tops, in neat parallel rows, but with many slates now knocked over or broken. There are *Voortrekker* monument references in the oil-lamp, and the dead have probably been re-interred beneath the pavilion at the centre of the cross. These 'graves' are doubly empty – they have been re-made on and also beneath the surface, a distinctive *gedenktuine* feature.

Photographs 9, 10 and 11

Kimberley, Turffontein and Bethulie, shown in *Photographs 9, 10 and 11*, are 'all *gedenktuin*', but also very different from each other. They share the centrality of design, the collectivised 'names of the dead' are crucial, and the actual remains of the dead are symbolically present but literally 'hidden'.

Kimberley *Gedenktuin* is approached across a gravelled area. About five or six metres square, enclosed by walls, it has an entrance/exit on both front corners. Two spires reach from its centre upwards, symbolising the Afrikaner spirit or the souls of the dead, their base enclosing a triangular crypt. Two marble namestones are set at angles and enfold the back of the *gedenktuin*. Centre-front, the symbol of the *Raad Vir Oorlogsgrafte* commemorates a 1976 dedication and its inscription states '*gesterwe het en hier begrawe*' ['the dead are interred here']. Their remains are at the centre, in the crypt and beneath the spires, enfolded by the walls. Kimberley, like Port Elizabeth, is concentrated

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[26] Similar to those placed by the League of Loyal Ladies on British military graves.
[27] Because of meerkat burrowing and for ease of upkeep.
[28] Some have both gravestones and grave numbers, but over time the latter have been moved and are out of synch with 'their' graves, although the overall effect 'looks right'.
[29] The 1927 plaque is on the cairn because an earlier monument was 'restored' or more likely replaced by it.

gedenktuin, its symbolism writ small. There are contrasting massively monumental examples at Turffontein and Bethulie.

Turffontein *Gedenktuin* commemorates the Johannesburg camp dead and is a huge site of about three or four acres on a hillside, enclosed by railings and a double gateway. Its covered inner entrance has a commemorative plaque from the *Raad Vir Oorlogsgrafte* and gravestones set in its wall. Inside, seven immense connected coffin shapes fan out down the hillside, a cruciform of railway sleepers set into the floor of each. In the first is a monument originally from 1941 by the *Sentrale Volksfeeste Komitee*.[30] The 'names of dead' are collectivised on namestones set into its sides and on two smaller namestones in the ground at front and back. The central 'coffin' has particularly wide walls: the symbolism strongly suggests the dead are re-interred within these, at the literal and symbolic centre.

Bethulie too is 'all *gedenktuin*', a neo-classical form of around two acres, fenced, with a covered gateway and stone floor, on a steep slope. Immediately after entering, placed centrally is an enormous block with marble namestones inscribed with 'the names of the dead' on both sides; before it, a *Raad Vir Oorlogsgrafte* stone commemorates '*die 1731 slagoffers*' ['the 1731 victims']. At each side are 1938 and other commemorations, including a sandstone pyramid and an angel on a pedestal. Down steps lies a much larger area containing rows of tomb-shapes, blank gravestones at each end. Looking back, along the terrace-edge are funerary urns; beneath it is a commemorative stone, and another with verses from the nationalist poets Celliers and Totius. At the far end is a thin metal obelisk and a stone building with many gravestones cemented into its multiple inner walls. There are no clues to where the dead are re-interred, whether beneath the namestones, under the rows of symbolic tombs, or inside the walls covered with gravestones.

There are also 'semi-*gedenktuine*', or perhaps 'semi-*begraafplase*': places with imposing *gedenktuine* fronts and enclosures for the marble namestones, but behind which are *begraafplase* marked to varying degrees by restoration works. Springfontein and Winburg, in *Photographs 12 and 13*, are contrasting examples.

Photographs 12 and 13

Springfontein cemetery is located through railway sidings, along a rough track and out onto the *veld*. About two acres in size with a wire fence, it has an imposing brick entrance, one side marked *Konsentrasiekamp Gedenktuin*, the other British War Graves. Behind is a protected enclosure, a contained and ordered place with the marble namestones cemented into its walls. Outside this is baked red earth, swept by a constant wind, with graves in varied shapes in different areas. At the centre and far end are many rows of identical brick-topped graves, most now with piles of small stones on them; to

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[30] The Central People's Festival Committee; the people's festivals were associated with the Great Trek centenary. Brink & Krige (1999) state the original monument was blown up, with the present version a copy from 1957.

the left front are some small untidy boulders; to front right are British graves in military formation. Interspersed are graves of some nurses, a camp superintendent (William Gostling), some railway workers. There are also 'ordinary' graves, most now with shattered crosses, smashed angels, broken surrounds. At the centre is a 1938 brick pyramid *Sentrale Steen* [Central Stone] commemorating the dead, behind it a pillar commemorating the Great Trek centenary.

Winburg is equally desolate: away from the town, near a tip, with festering rubbish and smouldering fires around its entrance. A zig-zag passageway lined with rubbish leads inside to a brick enclosure holding the 'names of the dead', on a platform above the graves area. This is around half an acre in size, separated from British graves down a sharp slope. The graves all have cement surrounds with a name marked in each, dating from 1940s restorations. There are no commemoration plaques, only an undated *Raad Vir Ooorlogsgrafte* symbol at the entrance. The commemorative action here is instead on the other side of the town and contains no hint of the concentration camps. Thus near the highway is a massive modernist *Voortrekker* monument, its site encompassing the small farmhouse where ex-President Steyn was born, a museum and meeting place.[31] Leading up to the monument are 1938 cement ox-wagon tracks; inside, a 1988 plaque commemorates the monument and the 150th anniversary of the Great Trek; another ponderously explains 'the symbolism' as the onwards and upwards march of *het volk*.

Silent, spectacular and monumental though the *begraafplase* and *gedenktuine* are, there are powerful analytical means of enabling their 'taciturn exteriors' to become voluble, to 'speak' concerning the visible social political and other visual components of the memory-making process involved. As noted earlier, the theoretical ideas drawn on in what follows are those of Maurice Halbwachs on legendary topography and Paul Ricouer on meta-narrative.

While Halbwachs is now best-known for his work on collective memory,[32] this has some important problems. As Susan Sontag comments, "there is no such thing as collective memory… What is called collective memory is not a remembering but a stipulating: that *this* is important and *this*… is how it happened…".[33] And also, in spite of Halbwachs' efforts to avoid the limitations of Durkheimian influences on his thinking, collective memory ends by eliding the contestation that characterises most actual memory-making processes, so that, as Normal Finkelstein points out, it replaces political and analytical categories with "the bland, depoliticized language of 'concerns' and 'memory'…".[34] Understanding state commemoration of the concentration camp dead requires bringing together land, time/space, the agentic power or force of the state, the remembrance and commemorative activities (supportive, oppositional) of groups and organisations, and personal and familial memory-practices.

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[31] The original Voortrekker groups met up at Winburg, thus in part its symbolic importance. However, this was assigned retrospectively around the 1938 centenary events and commemoration of these at Steyn's birthplace.
[32] Halbwachs, 1992a.
[33] Sontag, 2003:85, my emphases.
[34] Finkelstein, 2001:5. There is a useful sociology and history literature which problematises and reworks ideas about collective memory; see, for example, Barthel, 1996; Confino, 1997; Crane, 1997; Hutton, 1993; Kansteiner, 2002; Olick, 1999; Olick & Levy, 1997; Olick & Robbins, 1998; Terdiman, 1993.

Halbwachs' insightful analysis of legendary topography is particularly helpful for this purpose: the idea of a legendary topography indeed is central to his theorisation of how remembrance is socially organised, because:

> We ask how recollections are to be located. And we answer: with the help of landmarks that we always carry within ourselves, for it suffices to look around ourselves, to think about others… it is through… passing from one object to another and from one event to another as if we think of the object and its exterior aspects, of the event and of its place in time and space, at the same time as we think of their nature and significance[35]

The *begraafsplaase* and *gedenktuine* are a group of some forty-five sites forming a 'set', a distinct sub-genre of South African War commemoration concerned with the concentration camp deaths. In a number of powerful ways, including their until recent regular commemorative use on public and state ceremonial occasions in the commemorative calendar, they are closely linked to each other and together form a legendary topography, which Halbwachs theorised around three definitional elements: 'localisation' and its organisation of 'the facts'; the topographical relationship between commemorative landmarks and memory; and a resultant 'history after the fact' which is apparently proven by the materiality of such sites and their repetition of 'the facts'.

Localisation, memory-making and fact-claiming powerfully reinforce each other, resulting in a place (or set of places) being seen to symbolise something larger, with an array of commemorative activity and 'historical facts' organised around this enlargement of its meaning. Commemoratively-resonant places also frequently exist in spatial as well as political, religious or affective relations with other such sites, thereby mapping a shared history onto linked places in an emotionally charged landscape: a legendary topography. And commemorative sites, individual and linked, are all the more powerful when these are the places in which those past events 'actually happened'. Memory of the concentration camps became localised in precisely this way, by being fixed around a group of linked where people died and were buried. The *begraafplase* and *gedenktuine* were sacrilised and thereby gave physical shape to remembrance; and they also came to symbolise a larger meaning when located within a nationalist political framework and its other 'histories after the fact' of the Afrikaner *volk* and its past.

Commemorative sites seemingly make 'the facts' visible in space and place. The crucial elements supporting this referential quality of the monumental are a place, an event and a date (or linked places, events and dates). It is the overlaying of the referential in this material and monumental sense, with the resonant 'it happened *here*', which has positioned the *begraafplase* and *gedenktuine* as key components of the legendary topography of concentration camp commemoration. These places 'where it happened' give concrete expression to the irreducible fact of over 26,000 deaths, and this is seen to prove 'the other facts' inscribed together with this at memorial sites and remembered through public as well as personal commemorative practices. However, over time, as the details of remembrance have changed, so too has perception of saliency concerning 'the facts'. Some of these became more/less

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[35] Halbwachs, 1992:175.

emphasised (thus Slagter's Nek, highly resonant at the time of the 1870s First Language Movement, 'vanished'), others were divorced from some places (the actual camps) and attached to others (*begraafplase*, memorials and monuments, *gedenktuine*), and earlier (1838) and later (1938, 1948) parcels of time became commemoratively attached to 1899-1902.

'The facts' of state commemoration usually contain actual facts, and in the case of the concentration camps of the South African War most certainly do. However, the irreducible fact here of the over 26,000 deaths has been re-ordered and re-shaped by a bitter politics of remembrance, in which over time contentions, interpretations and downright inventions became attached to the core of the irreducibly true. Remembrance is also 'held' at these places in ways that govern personal memory - over time, the 'history after the fact' they enshrine came to constitute a benchmark around which individual memory has often been organised, with the result that discordant personal memory could be displaced by these larger seemingly more authoritative ones, of a 'I must remember the ground glass in the sugar, the poisoned medicines, because the fact is they wanted to kill the Afrikaner *volk'* kind.

Commemoration always involves politics, for "Public monuments do not arise as if by natural law to celebrate the deserving: they are built by people with sufficient power to marshal (or impose) public consent for their erection".[36] But there is another issue here - why did the *begraafplase* become charged sites of commemoration, rather than remaining the places of 'local mourning' they were during and immediately after the war?[37] This might seem obvious, but things are actually not so straightforward. While the remains of many commandos were 'brought in', re-interred in appropriate public places and memorialised, these have not become charged foci for remembrance nor have any marked degree of state commemoration activities been organised around them. One influence certainly came from the *Vrouemonument*, with using the monumental to commemorate the women and children who died gaining general impetus around the commemorative events of 1913. But of greater (and closely linked) influence has been the use of commemoration to help shape nationalist sentiment and its 'history after the fact', of which the *Vrouemonument* became an early and pivotal part. Here the activities of quasi/political cultural groups and organisations, the rise of the National Party, the close relationship between the *Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk* [the Dutch Reformed Church or NGK] and nationalism, and the assimilation of mourning within a political agenda that rewrote the concentration camp deaths into the willing sacrifice of *het volk* for freedom and fatherland, were all involved. This is to focus on 'within-group' factors, but such things were also conceived in relation to those the nationalists saw as 'other' - English-speakers, the African majority, the traitors within - in demonstrating their achievement of power over the land and these 'others'.

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[36] Savage, 1994:135, discussing black commemoration and the US Civil War monument. Levinson (1998:10) comments that "States always promote privileged narratives of the national experience and thus attempt to form a particular kind of national consciousness, yet it is obvious that there is rarely a placid consensus from which the state may draw".
[37] On notions of mourning and vengeance in South African commemoration, see Stanley, 2002a.

Moreover, commemorative places and their uses change considerably over time within a legendary topography. The groups involved experience turnover in membership, and people's beliefs and practices are subject to doctrinal and other shifts. Also the landscape and its landmarks become subject to new uses, appropriations by different groups, and further land acts can reconfigure a legendary topography in significant ways. Place is not invariant, because its meanings and uses shift as these key elements around it change. This has been a feature of commemoration in South Africa already and will certainly continue concerning, for instance, whether black commemoration might shift decisively away from the South African War and its camps, constituting something considerably more than a fragmentation of the meanings accorded the past.[38]

The meanings of the *begraafplase* and *gedenktuine* derived from and imbricated the 'history after the fact' here, with its irreducible core of fact – the more than 26,000 deaths - localised and made material in place, and then defined, organised and enlarged around nationalist beliefs and interpretations. This is "a legendary form of narrative",[39] a history constructed after the fact and projected back onto the past, including by being written, frequently literally so, onto place. Where a set of landmarks is involved, a legendary topography like the *begraafplase* and *gedenktuine*, these diverse localisations in time/space/place support each other through repetition, so that "memory becomes reinforced and multiplies its traces".[40] That is, each gains credence by its relationship to the others, with the stated or implied facts and symbolic references in any one of them gaining conviction by their multiple reappearance elsewhere.[41] This happens powerfully concerning the camp *begraafplase* and *gedenktuine*; and this effect is reinforced by them also being linked to a historical lineage by means of other commemorative monuments placed within or at the perimeters of these places - many of these other monuments look back to Boer history before the war and the camps, while others are markers posited from an Afrikaner future beyond 1899-1902, a commemorative time marked by nationalist possession and control of *ons land*, our land or country in the nationalist sense.

Analytic attention now moves to consider some of the details of the storied elements of these 'localisations' and their repetition across place/space to other commemorative sites in the legendary topography. The focus here is on exploring the meta-narrative, the overall story told and in a stronger sense the message conveyed about the meaning of these charged places and the wider commemorative topography.

On surfaces, stories and meta-narrative: analysing the 'taciturn exterior'

As noted earlier, Susan Sontag has described collective memory as actually a set of 'stipulations' about how public (and usually state) remembrance of the past is organised.[42] In large part the research discussed here has been concerned with the material organisation of memory in these commemorative

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[38] See here the discussion in Stanley & Dampier, 2005 on this.
[39] Halbwachs, 1992b, p.209; he also refers to it, problematically, as 'fictive history'.
[40] Halbwachs, 1992b:220.
[41] This 'adding up' effect is powerfully indicated by stone tablets along the path leading to the Vrouemonument which detail the numbers of children and adults who died in each camp.
[42] Sontag, 2003:85.

sites, focusing on precisely their stipulation of meaning in the stories inscribed on the 'eidetic veneer' of the memorial places and spaces, exploring these in relation to such things as the physical layout and symbolism of each site, the placing and symbolic resonance of specific design elements within them, the placing and phrasing as well as symbolic resonance of memorials and the dedications on these, signs of temporality and the temporal layering of commemoration, and traces of the orderly reworking of the originally disorderly (in political, 'race' and other terms) cemeteries. Using Ricouer's ideas about memory-making's selectivity from among complex and often contradictory social events, the different levels of narrative construction, and the move to abstraction in the constitution of meta-narrative from these, my analysis of the structure, organisation and content of the *begraafplase* and *gedenktuine* and the storied motifs that 'travel' across sites in the topography has identified a number of strong storied narrative elements characterising these, as shown in *Figure 2*. Figure 2 presents in schematic form the various narrative aspects in both the content and structure of commemoration of the concentration camp dead across sites in the topography, with the direction of the arrows indicating directions of influence and impact.

Figure 2: Narrative structure of the begraafplase and gedenktuine

TYPE OF ACTIVITY	NARRATIVE EVENTS AND EMPLOYMENT	LINKED STORIED MOTIFS
Tertiary narratives	Commemorative: remembrance ← → Land acts: Topographical: possession ← → Political: apartheid: control ← →	▪ Europe in Africa ▪ Culture in nature ▪ European commemorative forms ▪ Control of disorderly individual memories → →
	↕	
Abstraction[3]	The state as guardian of remembrance & commemoration	
	↕	
	The history of the Afrikaner volk ← →	▪ Great Trek ▪ First War of Freedom ▪ Second War of Freedom ▪ Concentration camp deaths ▪ Afrikaner national state
	↕	
Secondary narratives	1. Hulde! Remember, do not forget, pay homage ← → 2. Commemorate! The names of the dead ← → 3. Het volk: the right dead, who count ← → 4. Het volk: enclosed, within, at the core ← →	▪ Concentration camps / murder camps / genocide ▪ The dead/willing sacrifice / het volk / ons land ▪ Mothers of the nation / victims of the camps / sacrifice for freedom & fatherland ▪ Homage / tender blossoms / victims of genocide / remember & never forget ▪ British imperialism / Great Trek / 1st War of Freedom / 2nd War of Freedom / Afrikaner national state
	↕	
Abstraction[2]	Tender blossoms massacred by the Khakis	
	↕	
Abstraction[1]	The irreducible fact of more than 26,000 deaths	
	↑	
Memory-making selectivity	↕	
	↕	
Primary narratives	Multitude of complexly related events concerning life and death in the concentration camps ← ←	

From a multiplicity of 'events' in the camps, the selectivity of memory-making immediately impacts on the many different 'tellings of the tale', so that even at the level of primary narration memory is always already 'post-slash-memory', 'post/memory', that is, an after the fact and necessarily selective reworking of what happened. At the first level of abstraction from events, there is the 'irreducible fact'[1] of the more than 26,000 deaths, tied to a second level of abstraction composed by an interpretation of the whys and wherefores of these deaths around the linked ideas of 'tender blossoms', 'massacre' or slaughter, and the agentic force of 'the Khakis'.

The second level of narration involves four inter-connected storied aspects – '*Hulde*! remember, do not forget, pay homage', 'Commemorate 'the names of the dead'', 'Who counts – *het volk*', and '*Het volk* enclosed, within, at the core' – with a number of more strongly storied motifs concerning these discernible across the different commemorative sites of this legendary topography, such that the appearance of any one of them in any of these places invites completion by 'bringing to mind' the others. These storied motifs concern the meaning of the camps as murder camps involving genocide, the dead as having made a willing sacrifice, women as mothers of the nation giving their all, the children as tender blossoms and innocent victims whose 'slaughter' must never be forgotten, and the aggressive force of British imperialism as the historical oppressor of the Boer or Afrikaner *volk* and against which an Afrikaner national state is the bulwark. The third level of abstraction arises from this and concerns the perceived necessary role of the state as the guardian of remembrance and commemoration and, more widely, of remembering the history of the Afrikaner volk in relation to its defining 'moments', seen as the Great Trek of the late 1830s; the 1881 'First War of Independence or Freedom'[2] against Britain, which the Republics won; the 'Second War of Freedom' of 1899-1902 and its severe testing by God in the form of defeat, with its representational parallel in the concentration camp deaths; and the later vindication and gaining control over the national state by the National Party after the 1948 election victory.

The third level of narration is symbiotically related to this dual role of the Afrikaner state and focuses around the land or country in the nationalist sense, with the overlaying if its commemorative with its topographical and political roles in guaranteeing possession and control of *ons land*, our country. The storied motifs here concern the Afrikaner presence as one of Europe in Africa, culture in nature, as demonstrated by its use of European commemorative forms, with disorderly 'others', including the 'other' of repressed or denied memories, legitimately subject to state control.

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[1] See Stanley, 2002b, trading on Derrida's (1995) discussion of secret history as a social dynamis.
[2] *Vryheid*, like 'companion' terms such as *het volk* and ons *land*, do not readily translate into today's idioms – thus while 'independence' is now what *vryheid* is usually taken to mean, this looses all the republican emphasis of 'freedom' (i.e. from the imperialist yoke of Britain).

Figure 3: The meta-narrative of concentration camp commemoration

- not/belonging

- inside/outside

- Europe/Africa

- marking 'ons land'

- possession & control

- 'het volk'/other

- 'laager' approach & enclosure

- order, proper place, hierarchy

- disposal/regimentation of the unruly

the meta-narrative
        of concentration
        camp commemoration
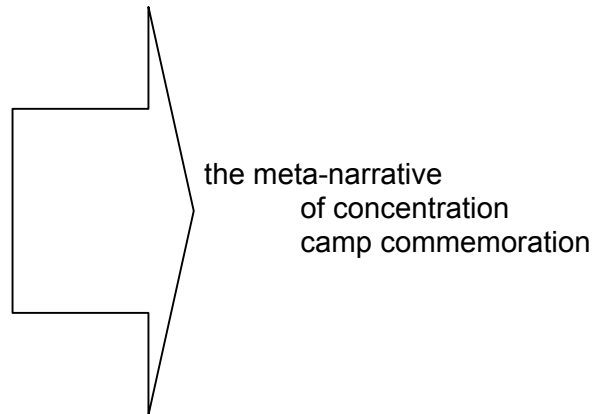
These narrative elements reside within a wider frame, a meta-narrative which has a number of closely articulated dimensions, schematically shown in *Figure 3*. Composing elements of this meta-narrative can be recognised as part of the pattern in whatever topographical location they are encountered in, with the motifs involved being ones which link character and ontological being, social organisation, conformity and deviance, and social structure, power and the state.[3] Here material traces, symbolic references, visual representations, poetic interpretations, are all utilised and their fundamental facticity 'proven' because linked to the irreducible fact of more than 26,000 deaths. While '26, 370' is an artefact marked by massive 'forgettings' so as to produce the right dead, those who count, nonetheless its apparent precision grounds everything else. And indeed, there *is* some certainty here: many people, many more children, died who need not have done, over 26,000 of them. Radiating out from and built upon this are the motifs linked with the second level of narrative of commemoration in the *begraafplase* and *gedektuine*, motifs which have also become 'the facts' by association with the irreducible fact, and with this 'history after the fact' connected with others concerning the Afrikaner past, as shown in Figure 4.

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[3] In Stanley, 2005 these are analysed in some detail using Bakhtin's ideas about the chronotope.

Figure 4: Motifs and linked 'histories after the fact'

- Concentration camps / murder camps / genocide
- Concentration camp dead / willing sacrifice / het volk / ons land
- Mothers of the nation / victims of the concentration camps / sacrifice for freedom & fatherland
- Homage / tender blossoms / victims of genocide / remember & never forget
- British imperialism / Great Trek / First War of Freedom / Second War of Freedom / Afrikaner national state

'The facts' thus encompass both the irreducible fact of more than 26,000 deaths, and subsequent interpretations. These latter are artefactual extrapolations, some of them nationalist inventions, but they are 'taken together' and as a set are apparently proven by contiguity with the core fact, with this in turn proven by the material witnessing of the *begraafplase* and *gedenktuine*, these concretely real places of the dead themselves. The result is that a teleology is at the heart of the meta-narrative of concentration camp commemoration, a system of thinking highly resistant to change because questioning any of the extrapolations is perceived as rejecting the irreducible fact at the core.

While remembrance powerfully attaches itself to place through localisation, nonetheless memories are always, around the ordered surfaces of the *begraafplase* and *gedenktuine*, diverse and competing. Even though made material in monumental form, the processes of coalescence and fragmentation involved in memory-making continue, around commemoration and more generally in relation to remembrance as an activity, as memory-*making*. There are still counter-factual stories to be told by whites concerning, for instance, reluctant or compelled participation in nationalist commemorative practices, local resistances to the *Gedenktuine* Programme and its disinterments, and the desecrations occurring in many of these commemorative sites. There is also a counter-factual story to be told about mourning the concentration camp dead and in particular the more than 22,000 children who died, and it is this to which analytic attention now moves.

The palimpsest monument: Rahel mourning her children 'who were not there'
There is a weaker but still visually present part of the meta-narrative frame of South African concentration camp commemoration concerned with gender matters, in particular regarding the 'proper place' of women.[4] The eidetic veneer, the surface of the monumental and the commemorative, seemingly tells a familiarly gendered story.

Photographs 14 and 15: The Vrouemonument's left- and right-facing side-panels

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[4] Gender is certainly not merely a synonym for women, and what is involved here are gender relations and the social practices constitutive of these, many of which involve men both in regulating notions of femininity and concerning masculinity and its practices and regulation.

As the side-panels by Anton Van Wouw on the *Vrouemonument*, shown in *Photographs 14 and 15*, indicate, women are represented here as passive victims: waiting on their farms, they were removed during 'scorched earth'; they were incarcerated, waited, watched their children die; then they either died themselves or were finally released from their suffering by the activities of men. As on the inscribed face of the *Vrouemonument*, the women who are commemorated were usually named as the dead 'mothers' or 'mothers of the fatherland', rather than the living mothers of deceased children. Other concentration camp monuments tell a similar story, with examples shown in *Photographs 16, 17, 18 and 19*.

Photograph 16: Kroonstad obelisk
Photograph 17: Bloemfontein President Brand 'Hulde' monument
Photograph 18: Nylstroom dedicatory monument
Photograph 19: Harrismith 1999 slates

The scenes etched onto the top of the Kroonstad obelisk in *Photograph 16* tell in more detail the story of waiting, removal and incarceration round its sides that Van Wouw's side-panels allude to. Bloemfontein's President Brand '*Hulde*' monument shown in *Photograph 17* emphasises the need to 'PAY HOMAGE / TO THE VICTIMS OF THE / CONCENTRATION CAMP / … REMEMBER', with the refrain of '*hulde, slagoffers, onthou*', 'pay homage, victims, remember', recurring at many of the sites in this legendary topography. At Nylstroom, too, as in *Photograph 18,* women are inscribed on its dedication stone as 'victims of the concentration camps', as '*slagoffers van die konsentrasiekamp*'. And regarding the slates deposited in 1999 by the nationalist right at Harrismith, shown in *Photograph 19*, one features a verse invoking the weeping of 'Mothers who lost children / Massacred by the Khakies',[5] while the other, dated 1999, is addressed to 'beloved fellow-*volk* (mothers and children)', emphasises remembering and concludes with '*ons vir jou Suid-Afrika*' ['we for you South Africa'], a line from *Die Stem*, the pre-1994 national anthem.[6] The commemorative injunction is to 'Remember our women and children, with the 'our' and 'us' indicating a male 'us', or perhaps the masculine one of the commemorating state (or right-wing proto-state).

However, there are also hints of another story, one largely but not entirely effaced, which concerns the *begraafplase* as places where women mourned for children. This is detectable literally as a palimpsest, that is, something erased but its traces still faintly to be seen on the replacing surface. In commenting

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[5] 'O, weeping like a deluge of rain / for those who deal with sorrow / Why Lord? / Mothers who lost children / Massacred by the Khakies. / This is the land that / belongs to us. / We will remain true to the death.' ['*O, die geweer / soos in stortvloed van reen / van hul wat in smart verkeer / Waarom Heer? / Moeders wat kinders verloor / Deur Kakies uitgemoor. / Dit is die land wat aan ons behoort. / Ons sal getrou bly tot die dood.*']

[6] '*Geliefde Volksgenote / (Moeders en Kinders) / Des 1999 / Ons eer jul nagedagtenis / Dankie vir die groot offers wat julle / saam met die manne gebring het vir / VRYHEID. / Die mens wik, maar God beskik / Dappere helde en heldinne ons sal / julle nooit vergeet nie. / ONS VIR JOU SUID-AFRIKA**. ['Beloved fellow citizens / (Mothers and Children) / Dec 1999 / We honour your memory / Thank you for the great sacrifices that you / made along with the men for / FREEDOM. / Man proposes, but God disposes. / Brave heroes and heroines we will / never forget you. / WE FOR YOU SOUTH AFRICA.'] The national anthem, *Die Stem* [The Voice], was composed by C.J. Langenhoven. 'We for you South Africa' is also carved on the empty tomb at the base of the Voortrekker monument.

on this, again the place to start is the *Vrouemonument*. Descriptions of its commemorative ceremony on 16 December 1913[7] show this attracted a huge crowd of some 40,000 people and suggest it was a very moving occasion. However, at its heart was a state occasion, or rather that of a 'proto-state', a Boer state within the Union. Given the dedicatory purpose involved, to commemorate the women and also children who died, photographs show that this inner ceremony was, perhaps surprisingly, an overwhelmingly male gathering, but which demonstrates how highly politicised the occasion was.[8] Attending to these political processes 'shows' that there is also an excised memorial that lurks unseen at the *Vrouemonument* site, a memorial that could have been but never actually was.

The *Vrouemonument* project started soon after the war as a committee of Bloemfontein women as well as men meeting to organise a 'living memorial', a school or hospital or other practical provision for local children, to commemorate the Bloemfontein children who had died. However, when ex-President Steyn returned to Bloemfontein in March 1905 (he had left for Holland a very ill man in 1902 after peace was agreed), he insisted there should instead be a monument to make a public statement. Consequently another committee was formed in July 1906, chaired by Steyn and composed by powerful Free State male political figures.[9] It then organised a conference in Bloemfontein in February 1907, attended by representatives from the NGK throughout South Africa and also members of *Het Volk*, *Orangia Unie*, the *Afrikaner Bond* and *Het Kongress*. It resolved that a public monument should be erected, to take the form of a commemorative needle or obelisk, with a statue expressing the sufferings endured by the 'Afrikaner woman for her fatherland', with another key term used being '*het volk*'.[10] A design competition was held, with the winning design by Van Wouw being the present monument.

There are different ways of reading these 'behind the scenes' political events. Certainly the assertion of proto-state commemoration over local mourning is on one level understandable, because a part of the nationalist project, an expression of 'bitter-ender' sentiment, and also reflecting the-then uneasy and indeed often antagonistic relationship between Transvaal and Free State politicians. On another level, however, it is clear that the earlier wishes of those most directly involved had been overridden in this monumental outcome, so perhaps these people had over time come to agree that there should be state commemoration rather than a memorial to the local mourning and remembrance of children. However, there are signs elsewhere, visible visual signs, that mothers mourning for children were in fact very

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[7] Dingaan's Day or the Day of the Vow, by this time an annual nationalist commemorative occasion. It celebrated the Battle of Blood River in December 1838, when a small group of Boers defeated a large Zulu army under Dingaan. During the 1920s and 30s, its symbolism was re-worked and around 1938 it became the 'Day of the Vow', when the Afrikaner nation was re-dedicated to God as a 'Chosen People'. See Moodie, 1975; Du Toit, 1983; and Cauthen, 1997 for interesting discussions; also Malkki, 1995, for something similar in a different national context.
[8] It is discussed in some detail in Stanley, 2002b.
[9] The committee involved W.J.C. Brebner, R. de Villiers, C.J. Fichardt, G .Fraser, J.B.M. (Barry) Hertzog, Ds C. Murray, J.P. Steyn, C. Wessel,. These names resonate in the political landscape, the most significant being Hertzog, and were all Free State 'bitter-enders' in opposition to the Botha and Smuts government. Following a speech by Hertzog, then-Minister of Native Affairs, in December 1912 attacking government policy, Botha resigned and then re-formed his ministry to exclude Hertzog; the Natives Land Act 1913 bought off Hertzog's supporters. Thus, while the involvement of these men in the monument project might have been politically 'innocent' in nationalist terms in 1906, by 1913 it had become politically charged.
[10] Van Schoor, 1993:6.

involved in providing early forms of memorialisation in many of the camp *begraafplase*, but this was later excised, overwritten by state forms of commemoration.

Photograph 20: Kroonstad palimsest monument
Photograph 21: Brandfort obelisk
Photograph 22: Turffontein monument

In Kroonstad, a mother's memorial to their dead children was commemorated in its *begraafplase* in 1904. This was later replaced as part of the Great Trek centenary events by a *Heldedekkomitee*, a 'committee to commemorate the heroic dead', and unveiled in October 1936 as part of the more general development of nationalist sentiment and activities around the centenary activities. However, as *Photograph 20* indicates, the palimpsest form of the original remains visible because this has been etched onto one face of the 1936 obelisk, beneath the panels showing scorched earth, removal, arrival and departure commented on earlier. There is also food for thought at Brandfort *Gedenktuin*. Here a mother's memorial from the early 1900s, inscribed with a verse from the nationalist poet Visser ('Rest in peace tender blossoms, / offerings of the storm. / Out of weak mother's tears, / this stone was formed.'), was pulled down at around the same point as Kroonstad's. Its dedicatory verse was, however, re-worked in a more 'modern' form of Afrikaans and used to face one side of the commemorative obelisk erected in the later 1930s.[11] And at Turffontein, a mothers' memorial for their dead children had also been commemorated in 1904, featuring Jeremiah 31, verse 15,[12] concerning Rahel mourning with lamentation and bitter tears for her children 'because they were not'.[13] It was replaced in 1941 by a monument erected by the *Sentrale Volksfeestekomitee*, commemorated on 16 December, Dingaan's Day or the Day of the Vow, with this monument in turn replaced in 1957 when partly destroyed as the result of local intra-nationalist conflicts.

There are further examples, which cannot be discussed because of space constraints, of other effaced mothers' memorials existing now only in a variety of palimpsest way across the *begraafplase* and *gedenktuine* commemorative topography. There is a pattern here, an 'other' story barely traceable upon the commemorative surface, and one which provides some fascinating hints of the "tempestuous social, political, and aesthetic forces" that Young comments about and with which this discussion began.[14] As with the Kroonstad mother's memorial, signs of women's agency were progressively erased from public and state commemoration from the 1930s on. Within the development of the nationalist 'history after the fact', women's wartime agency – something widely recognised at the time of the war -was transmuted to women's victimhood, to women as mothers of the fatherland, waiting for death or to be released from

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[11] '*RUS IN VREDE TERE BLOEISELS, / OFFER VAN DIE STORM. / WANT UIT WEKE MOEDERTRANE, / IS DIE STEEN GEVORM.*'
[12] From the King James Bible: "Thus saith the Lord; A voice was heard in Ra-mah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not." (Jeremiah 21, 15). It continues in verses 16 and 17 with the Lord telling Rahel to stop weeping because "thy work shall be rewarded" and the nation's children delivered "from the land of the enemy".
[13] This is also the subject of a famous poem, 'Rachel', by the nationalist poet 'Totius'.
[14] Young, 1993:14.

bondage by men. As a result, the powerful metaphorical figure of Rahel the mourning mother with her bitter tears, has been largely commemoratively re-inscribed into 'mothers of the fatherland', not an angrily mourning mother in her own right, but instead a hand-maiden to the birth of initially the proto-state and then the nationalist-dominated national state.

Conclusion

There are three sets of comments to make by way of a brief conclusion, so as to draw together some of the main arguments advanced in this discussion. These concern the key terms of legendary topography, meta-narrative and memorial palimpsests.

The concept of legendary topography has great utility in understanding the visual aspects and impact of the charged landscape of concentration camp commemoration in South Africa (and I would propose elsewhere too). Its associated ideas concerning 'localisation' and its organisation of 'the facts', the topographical relationship between commemorative landmarks and memory, and the resultant 'history after the fact' which is apparently proven by the materiality of commemorative sites and their repetition of 'the facts', all have immediate resonance when looking at concentration camp commemorative sites, monuments and memorials and enable the complex 'on the ground' intertwining of the ideological and material, visual and political, local mourning and state commemoration, to be seen more clearly.

Theorising through the lens of legendary topography also permits a much fuller realisation of the particular and crucial part played by the specifically visual aspects of state commemoration in this. it includes, for example, the organisation of particular sites and the physical relationship of commemorative elements within them; the importance of scale, design and perspective; the impact of building materials, enclosures and uses of space; the dominance of local place by these commemorative forms; the physical orchestration of notions of commemorative time within them; and the strongly apparent repetitions from site to site within the legendary topography and their existence as a set of linked land acts which seemingly prove not only the 'irreducible fact' of the more than 26,000 deaths, but also the interpretive extrapolations from these in the form of contentions about meanings and intentions, and within this the nationalist interpretation of the associated 'moments' in the constructed history of the Afrikaner past.

The idea of a meta-narrative is both a conceptual device and also a methodological tool, and it has proved extremely useful in analysing the visual dimensions of commemoration of the concentration camp dead. Using ideas about selection from complex and often contradictory social events, different levels of narrative, and the move to abstraction in the constitution of meta-narrative, a number of narrative elements existing across the *begraafsplase* and *gedenktuine* have been identified and their part in the meta-narrative that exists across sites traced out. Interestingly, what this has demonstrated is that rather than all these elements driving 'onwards and upwards', from a complex social formation, to selectivity, to primary narration, to abstractions within secondary narration, to the final abstraction of

the meta-narrative as a single uni-faceted 'it', there is something much more complex at work in this particular narrative structure.

Firstly, abstractions occur at a number of stages within the narrative process, and indeed it is notable that the only uni-faceted abstractions occur at a much earlier point (as linked abstractions 1 and 1 in *Figure 2*), with the meta-narrative best understood around the close relationship between ideas about the Afrikaner state and the history of the Afrikaner *volk* (abstraction 3) and a tertiary level of narration concerned with '*ons land*', concerning Europe in Africa, land and country, possession and control. Secondly, there are upwards and downwards directions of influence and impact at all stages in the narrative structure, making this a perhaps unusually flexibly-articulated set of narratives and abstractions, but more importantly articulating it as a complicated teleology, so that not only does the entire structure rest on the first and most fundamental level of abstraction, concerning the irreducible fact of the more than 26,000 deaths, but also critically interrogating *any* element becomes tantamount to rejecting the whole. And thirdly, the 'dynamis' here, to use a term of Derrida's to refer to that which provides the dynamic animating the narrative structure, concerns memory and the shaping and orchestration of memory of the past.[15]

Finally, commemorative time involves a perpetual commemorative present – visually and linguistically, '*hulde*' and '*onthou*' are always in the present-tense, always addressed to the person looking at a monument or memorial *now*, at the specific point in time of someone looking at, being in and 'reading' (in both the literal sense and the wider one of interpreting meaning from social texts of different kinds) commemorative sites. In a sense, then, *everything* within the *begraafplase* and *gedenktuine* has palimpsest qualities, because earlier stages of the commemorative 'now' are continually overwritten and incorporated within each new successive stage in the commemorative process. And temporality therein becomes still more complex as a consequence: time, space and place are organised in these commemorative sites in a variety of fascinating ways, with overwritten and incorporated times coexisting with other commemorative times apparently preserved intact; and 'earlier' temporal events (such as 1838) can succeed 'later' ones (such as 1899-1902) in the commemorative present.

The palimpsest memorials briefly discussed here can be seen to have all of these qualities or characteristics in different measures. These are the shadows and hints of past commemorative times, many of which have been overwritten, defaced and almost entirely erased but with some traces mutely present on some part of the surface; while others exist as representational forms shown in a variety of visual forms on what turns out to be the not entirely taciturn exterior of the monumental itself. The visual impact is almost over-powering for as long as the visual gaze remains a reactive one; once it becomes more inquiring and analytical, then the rich complexities discussed herein can be brought into view.

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[15] See Derrida, 1996.

SESSION: CONSTRUCTING IDENTITIES

PAPER TITLE: WHAT YOU SEE IS NOT NECESSARILY WHAT YOU GET: 'CULTURALLY DIVERSE' VISUAL ARTISTS' WORK ON SHOW OUTSIDE THE GALLERY SPACE IN THE UK

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This paper is about visibility and the visual artist. Visibility is an obvious and crucial issue for any artist but it has particular implications for an artist who falls under the umbrella term of 'cultural diversity' – about which more in a moment. Questions of 'how much' visibility are compounded by questions of 'what type' of visibility. To be seen as 'diverse' already involves objectification and a reduction of agency; the label immediately edits the artist's subjectivity and pitches his or her work in contrast to whatever it is diverse from. So my focus in this paper is on how visibility is a complex and un-straightforward issue; how being visible doesn't actually mean you are necessarily really *seen;* how you can in fact be visible but still serve the interests of others rather than achieve your own agency.

The paper stems from an experience I had at a four-day conference in Cardiff, Wales, in the United Kingdom last November.[1] I'm going to tell you about the conference but ultimately aim to draw out some general observations around issues of visibility when a particular kind of artwork is curated outside the gallery environment. So while it might initially seem parochial to talk about a short event that happened many miles away, my hope is that you might feel the general observations have a broader relevance.

Having told you briefly about the conference, my plan is to introduce you to the visual artists who were invited to show their work there. I shall discuss the spaces they were given to show their work and the way their work was received. The work was presented as the work of 'refugee artists'; as such they are considered to be 'culturally diverse' artists in the British arts world. The notion of 'cultural diversity' has very powerful and, for funding purposes, specific currency in Britain, so I shall take some time to discuss it. I shall consider some of the issues that affect how artists' work is viewed (how their work is labelled for example) and touch on some of the difficulties of looking at politically informed artwork. I'll talk about my own visibility at the conference and the power relationship between me as a researcher and the artists I am researching. I shall conclude with some observations that take my discussion beyond this particular conference.

The conference was called *A Sense of Place.* The subheading of the conference was 'displacement and integration: the role of the arts and media in reshaping societies and identities in Europe.' It was instigated by the British Council and it was a 'four-day international event' aimed at

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[1] A Sense of Place. Displacement and Integration: the Role of the Arts and Media in Reshaping Societies and Identities in Europe, November 24-27, 2003, The Old Library, Cardiff, Wales, www.asenseofplace.org.uk

arts and social policy makers, humanitarian aid workers, social and environmental analysts and officers, academics, educators, funders, arts and media practitioners, architects, cultural theorists, and venue managers[2].

Its ambitious scope and the breadth of experience, nationality and field from which the delegates were drawn set it apart from other more academic conferences on the subject of 'refugee issues'. It was a well-funded event, and, with most delegates housed at the same hotel, it provided strong social and networking opportunities with informal discussions starting over breakfast and continuing until late at night. Its central focus addressed issues concerning refugees and asylum seekers within the context of the arts; it set out to 'investigate, question and shed light on 'displacement' and 'integration' in Europe, through the intellectual focus of the arts, culture and media[3]'. It considered how refugees were represented in the arts and in the media (usually negatively, particularly in the latter) and how both the arts and media could in turn affect this representation with more positive stories contextualising refugees' experiences within a broad geopolitical frame and highlighting their achievements and attributes. Representation was seen as crucial in determining the type and degree of integration that displaced people could achieve in the European countries that took them in. Refugee delegates were invited and clearly and consciously involved in the conference. These included visual artists and it was these visual artists – three in number – and their work that interested me in particular.

In a nutshell, what happened to these visual artists was this: they were invited to set up their work before the conference started. They were pretty happy that day with the space that they had been given. One had a large corner of the floor and wall of the main conference hall, so obviously everyone would see her work. The second had a light wall space at the top of the main staircase. She was pleased too because everyone had to come up and down the stairs at least twice a day. The third artist was given an entire room all of her own to set up her work – she felt a bit tucked away but the space lent itself well to her particular work. All three looked forward to the arrival of the two hundred or so delegates from all over the world[4] – knowledgeable folk in terms of the arts and all favourably predisposed to the issues that refugees face. Indeed these were people who were professionally engaged in these issues and so, if there were such a thing as an 'ideal audience', you might imagine that it was about to arrive.

However, the surprising outcome was that although the work of these visual artists was indeed visible to all, in that it was prominently and/or appropriately displayed, it actually ended up achieving a mysterious sort of invisibility. It was there and not-there at the same time. To varying degrees, all three felt that their work somehow 'got lost' as the conference unfolded. It was an uncomfortable and puzzling feeling: how could something be both 'lost' and 'there' at the same time? This paper considers how this might have happened.

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[2] *A Sense of Place* publicity pamphlet
[3] ibid
[4] at least twenty countries were 'officially' represented; displaced people from many more countries also attended but were not all identified in the participants' list which gave delegates' home addresses

A few words first of all on the notion of 'cultural diversity' – a term with world-wide currency, despite its different 'edge' in different countries. In the UK it is coming to be a euphemism for 'not-white'. If you hear about a cultural event that is lauded for its 'cultural diversity', you won't expect to find French or German (or at least *white* French or German) performers or artists there – they would be at an event that was described as 'international'. An event that is described as 'culturally diverse' will include Africans, (or people with African 'antecedents'), or people from the Caribbean or from Asia. Although many of these peoples have experienced colonialism, not all of them have (for example Turkey). The Arts Council, an immensely powerful institution in the UK with millions and millions of pounds of public money in its purse, has a particular focus on 'ethnicities' in its funding policies. In an attempt to redress past years where minority ethnic groups were ignored or overlooked, it now has what it calls 'a particular focus on race and ethnic background'. Its subsidiary organisation (called *decibel*) that specifically champions the cause of cultural diversity has a very strict definition of who a 'culturally diverse' artist is: this is someone with African, Caribbean or Asian (which means from Turkey to the east) antecedents.[5]

I have some problems with this particular slant of focusing on specific so-called ethnic groups. We live at a time when theorists are deconstructing notions of race and ethnicity and highlighting the absurdity of being able to say with any certainty where different peoples begin and end. The cultural theorist Ien Ang has said that 'drawing lines around people is a form of discursive reductionism'.[6] Drawing lines around people has a particular and violent history here in South Africa. Yet this is just what is being done – ironically in the name of *combating* racism – in the UK. To qualify for designated funding, you need to demonstrate your Chinese or African roots to claim membership of the Chinese or African diasporas, for example – processes that are limited and exclusionary. Since in the UK, we are talking about individuals who haven't necessarily come from these countries themselves but whose parents, grandparents or great-grandparents may have, it is to these 'ancestors' that people are turning to prove their 'culturally diverse' credentials. However, looking backwards to one's roots implies a hardening of boundaries with past origins overriding present geographical location.

I am also wary of the relativity of the term 'cultural diversity' – diverse from what and from whom? Defining yourself – or, more to the point, being defined by someone else – as 'culturally diverse' seems to involve a lot of looking over your shoulder, establishing where it was you have come from and then setting yourself in opposition to something that you are not. Presumably that 'something' is the 'mainstream'. As an artist in the UK, you can attract funds under the cultural diversity banner by

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[5] 'decibel is supported in several ways. Arts Council England's commitment to cultural diversity as a key priority for the organisation means that there is a prioritisation for diversity across all funding streams including Grants for the Arts. In addition to this, treasury funds of around £5million have been allocated directly to decibel. These are strategically managed flexible funds comprising a £1million Development Fund, and a £500K Profile fund which will specifically be used to invest in Black and Asian artists, arts administrators and arts companies. The production of the performing arts showcase event, visual arts events, networks, debates, research, profiling and decibel staffing costs make up the balance of this amount.'
(From http://www.decibel-db.org/about/faqs.asp#1)
[6] Ien Ang, public lecture, department of sociology, Bristol University, May 14, 2003

establishing your own niche 'difference', your own particular type of diversity. But this obsession with 'difference' has dangerous undertones. Margareta Kern, who is one of the three artists exhibiting at the conference *A Sense of Place* fled the former Yugoslavia and now lives in London. She is deeply suspicious of what she calls this 'potential for division.' 'It brings back memories of divided Balkans', she says.

> We were at each others' throats for five bloody years because we saw each other as different. And yet we have the same skin colour, the same names, the same language, history, even parents! The potential for division is so crazy that I panic if I even get a sniff of it.[7]

And yet notions of 'cultural diversity' are predicated on division, on identifying difference between us.

What's more, cultural diversity as a term is ill-defined and there is lack of consensus on its use. The fact that the adjective 'diverse' has come to be routinely applied to individuals is indicative of the muddle surrounding its use. Logically only a collection of individuals can be 'diverse'; it is linguistically nonsensical for an individual to be asked about their diversity unless 'diversity' is the new 'ethnicity' (and 'ethnicity' is the new 'race'). Indeed, 'diversity' is just as problematic and elusive a term as 'ethnicity' and 'race' have proved to be. A website, for example, offering 'tips on getting a job interview' includes the question 'should your cover letter reveal your diversity?' (DiveristyInc.Com, 2004b).[8] Since it is a term, therefore, that is so readily and loosely employed, 'cultural diversity' does not lend itself easily to critical analysis. It has been used to refer to women (Mathews, 2003), sexuality (Thurrock Council, 2003; GLADD, 2003), disability (Mayor of London, 2003), morality (Lukes, 2003: chapter 1), speakers of a particular language (Angela Mortimer, 2004),[9] refugees and members of particular ethnic groups,[10] religions and the homeless (Shelter, 2003). It is used both as a noun ('discussing diversity') and as an adjective ('diversity policies', 'diversity training', 'diversity management'). It is described as an ideology,[11] a training programme (Clements and Jones, 2002), an industry,[12] a policy,[13] even a hobby.[14] The number of initiatives, training programmes and projects that seem to be needed to encourage, channel and oversee its development give it distinctly paternalistic overtones. And for an artist to exhibit under the 'culturally diverse' banner is to enter this loaded and confused domain; a lot of baggage gets attached to you in the process.

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[7] Margaret Kern, personal communication, April 2004
[8] http://www.diversityinc.com/public/department33.cfm (Consulted 08/02/04)
[9] Interestingly, none of the languages quoted in this advertisement are European. The implication is that a French, Spanish or Italian speaker, for example, may indeed be a linguist but is not a 'diverse' linguist. A European linguist may represent a statistical minority but this minority does not come under the 'diverse' umbrella. There is a sense that such a linguist nonetheless represents the mainstream. 'Diversity' is not just about numbers, in other words; there is a very definite qualitative aspect to the word too.
[10] Meanings favoured by the Arts Council and decibel, though how 'ethnicities' are defined raises other interesting questions.
[11] See, for example, Wood, 2003. Wood demonstrates that 'diversity' in the US represents an ideal where the social groups that people come from are considered more important than the individual (as such, he argues, it is a profoundly 'anti-American' concept) and that this ideal permeates policies of education, law, business, the arts, education – indeed all forms of human activity.
[12] Become a 'diversity consultant' or 'Shop… for all your diversity needs' at DiversityInc.Com (DiversityInc.Com, 2004a).
[13] "The Arts Council England sees diversity as being at the heart of policy" (decibel, 2002)
[14] 'diversity enthusiasts' can read 'diversity factoids' and learn about 'diversity events' in the DiversityInc Newsletter; register with www.diversityinc.com (diversityinc.com, 2004)

The three displaced, and so-called 'culturally displaced', artists at the conference were Margareta Kern, whom I have already mentioned and who left the former Yugoslavia in 1992, aged 17; Suzana Tamamovic, who also came from former Yugoslavia around the same time and Zory, who fled to Britain from Iran in 1985.

The work of Kern and Zory was very prominently displayed, as I have said – you couldn't avoid seeing it. However, actually looking at it seemed to present different problems. First of all, the conference timetable offered no slot for 'looking'. The programme was rich and packed into a very tight schedule, as is often the case at such events. There was barely enough time to get from one item on the programme to another, let alone to stop and look at the art work on offer. The result was that the artists may have been visible but they were not seen; their voices were there, but they were not heard.

People walked round Zory's work (fig. 1) on the floor and wall of the main hall every day and all day, but they were talking to each other and/or hurrying on to the next presentation. I certainly saw no one linger to absorb and reflect on her difficult and, as she describes them herself, 'dark' pieces. "I don't do 'pretty work'", she had told me and what she has to say does not make for easy listening. And yet, the way her installation was somehow positioned as background to the 'main event' gave it a 'muzak' role that completely emptied out any authorial message. In one way, something 'pretty' would have served this background role better. In another way, although Zory's own meaning was apparently washed out of the work, its very presence suggests it can't have been meaning*less*; it must have served a different purpose, met a different agenda. it was *there*, after all, to be stepped around and noticed even if out of the corner of one's eye. Maybe its meaning in this context was reduced to that of token: it was a peripheral reminder of the serious work we (the non-artist delegates) had come here to discuss, even if (we might assume) we were to be far too busy discussing to attend to the particular details of this individual artist's message. The way Zory's work was both so prominent and reticent at the same time (simultaneously visible and yet paradoxically invisible) was both ironic and unexpected at an event whose specific focus was on the role of the arts.

Kern's installation in the stairwell operated in similar fashion (fig 2). Everyone saw it but very few stayed long enough to really look. She herself described her presence as 'wallpaper' and at least her grid-like photographic installation of head and shoulder portraits was colourful and 'pretty' enough to perform this pleasing background role. But again it was very obviously 'there', its prominent presence demonstrating that whereas Kern's intention and message may have been subverted, it was not deprived of any meaning whatsoever. But if Kern was not giving meaning to her work, then who was? Whose interests did her presence serve? Was funding the issue?

Since 'refugee arts' (not quite the same thing as 'refugee art'[15]) now attracted Arts Council funding, I did wonder a bit subversively whether the very presence of these so-called 'refugee artists' might have

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[15] in a previous paper (Rotas, 2004), I have discussed attempts to categorise 'refugee art'.

served to enable the organisers to attract valuable funding specifically ring-fenced for socially excluded or culturally diverse groups. If this were the case, their overt presence would have been important, but putting aside extra time for delegates to actually look at the work would have been less vital for those planning the programme. And anyway, their prominent positions in the conference environment would have apparently given them an immediate international and appropriate audience, without need for further intervention or encouragement.

Tamamovic's work (fig 3), the third artist, was physically hidden in the building to the extent that people simply had no awareness that it was there. No announcements were made about her presence and there was no written information given about her work in the delegates' pack. Eventually, individual canvassing by a few of us literally leading participants to the door achieved for her work a certain visibility. Ironically, although fewer people were exposed to her work than to Zory's and to Kern's for straightforward reasons of location, those that did find their way to it probably gave it more careful attention than the overwhelming majority of Zory's or Kern's viewers. Entering her room, you left the conference space for something that felt more akin to the gallery environment. There were no other distractions in the room; the only voice to be heard was Tamamovic's.

The writer and cultural critic Kobener Mercer has some insightful observations to make about the visibility of black artists in the 1990s. He pointed out how apparently cool it was suddenly to be black in trendy Britain. But he sounded the alert to anyone who was part of what he referred to as this 'groovy diversity' (Mercer, 1990: 49). The danger was, he warned, that what you might perceive as your own visibility often carried other people's agendas. As a black artist, you risked simply being considered a decorative and commercial enhancement to the mainstream, for example, rather than a potent voice yourself. In other words, just because you're visible, he said, does not mean that you are given your own voice. The notion of visibility has multiple meanings and these were beginning to become only too apparent at the conference.

How much was the way we looked at the artwork affected by it not being in a white-cube gallery environment? Looking at visual art can be a liminal activity, requiring a particular sort of engagement on the part of the viewer. The gallery space provides an environment in which we put our daily activities on hold; we may visit it in the day time more often than in the evening but our visit is usually neither 'work' nor 'play'. We are invited to engage with the work on display with a particular focus and intensity. The building in Cardiff wasn't a dedicated conference hall but it certainly wasn't a gallery. For the duration of the event, its primary purpose was as the former and it very definitely took on the appropriate aura. When you entered the building, wearing your conference name badge, you quite clearly became a delegate and not a gallery viewer, the rows of chairs and the platform with its microphones in the main hall confirming this role. Here was a space whose overall agenda was one of words. As such, the work

of the visual artists present became simultaneously there and not-there; strangely 'ghostly' presences. My own presence as a speaker by contrast was unproblematically visible.[16]

But there was another factor at work here too that related to the type of artwork that was on display. The conference theme embodied an underlying commitment to social change and a key question running through the event was how the arts can work towards achieving this end. The 'resident artists' present were all socially and politically motivated; their art had a message. Zory highlights the experiences of individuals prior to seeking refuge in the 'west'. The bodies she displays are broken or chained; they bear witness to the mental and physical pain that comes from personal lack of freedom, incarceration and torture. Kern focuses on the often stereotypical and pre-judged responses of members of the so-called 'host-culture' to the presence of these traumatised asylum seekers in their midst. Tamamovic draws our attention to the desolation of the daily lives of refugees once they reach the UK, constantly reminded of *absence* by their bleak housing conditions. The empty coat hooks, photo frames, book shelves and dinner plates all speak insistently of the family, friends and possessions they have left behind.

But 'political art' such as this can still be surprisingly problematic in the West. One problematic element possibly stems from memories of the totalitarian use of visual culture in the past which has given rise to a resistance to anything that might be deemed 'propaganda art. Another perhaps is due to traces of the modernist Kantian tradition that argues that art is, or should be, disinterested and disengaged from anything but aesthetic considerations.[17] I say 'surprisingly' because so much of contemporary art in our postmodern, postcolonial world, *is* socially engaged and *is* concerned with political – with a small 'p' – issues. Nonetheless the work shown at *A Sense of Place* was had none of the playfulness, self-consciousness and irony with which postmodernism is so often associated. These were not pieces that drew attention to social and political issues while at the same time making the viewer smile. They were more of the 'art-for-social-change' category (and note the preposition *'for'*) and their reception is, I am suggesting, not altogether straightforward in a culture that views the realms of serious politics and aesthetics as separate loci of attention.[18]

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[16] I am aware of a slippage between seeing and hearing that runs through my discussion – a reflection of the abundance of visual metaphors in our language, the opacity (there it is again) of the visual metaphor and the multiple ways we communicate with each other. The visibility I have been examining rests on assessing the degree to which individuals were able to communicate their message at this particular conference – on their agency. Messages are traditionally 'heard', even if the channel through which they are received is visual.

[17] Thanks due to my friend and colleague Dr Sue Tate for initiating this discussion

[18] *In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida* was a major exhibition of work by Damien Hirst, Sarah Lucas and Angus Fairhurst at Tate Britain from March to May 2004 that received critical acclaim (eg *Art Monthly*, April 2004, no 275, pp 28-29) and probably comes under the first category. A talk at Tate Britain, however, on 'Political Art' (May 12th, 2004) was awkward and uncomfortable, with none of the artists present on the panel (all of whose work could be deemed to be 'socially engaged' by this observer at least) wishing to admit in public that they made 'political art'. In the period between giving this paper at the conference in Pretoria and revising it for publication, I attended a discussion, at Modern Art Oxford, with Emily Jacir, one of the three artists in the exhibition *Wherever I Am* (July 25th – September 12th, 2004). Jacir is an artist whose work focuses on people and issues connected to Palestine. In the discussion, she was repeatedly asked about her 'responsibility' which, 'like it or not', as one questioner put it, she held as a 'Palestinian artist to represent a historical record of Palestine'. She remarked that she was frequently asked this and similar questions about the 'politics' and 'aesthetics' of her work, as though these were two defined and separate issues, whereas for her the two were inseparable. Maybe artwork that manages to incorporate a level of playfulness into its social criticism (no matter how

Whatever difficulties Zory, Kern and Tamamovic might have positioning themselves in a broader postmodern landscape, they were clearly having a hard time getting their message across at the conference, which was an event in itself premised on a commitment to social change. This was an unexpected problem. Indeed, the inadvertent failure of this particular setting to encourage the visual communication of political ideas raises interesting questions about how politically motivated artists communicate at all. Despite the lack of attention that the delegates gave to the visual works in this busy conference environment, in many ways, as I have said, they formed an ideal target audience for the artists. If this knowledgeable and sympathetically predisposed audience did not attend to the artwork, then the underlying issue of how visual art – and particularly politically informed visual art – 'works' is brought to the fore.

Looking at an artwork is a far from straightforward process carrying its own attendant anxieties. In a wonderful paper which he describes as "a meditation on how intrusions of self-consciousness alter, upset or interrupt aesthetic experiences" (Miller, 2002: 71), William Ian Miller reflects on what goes through the viewer's mind when standing in front of a work of art. "When can you say, 'OK, enough' and feel you have paid proper homage?" he enquires. After all, the work itself "stubbornly stays there, available to be admired or studied until the museum closes". "Pass along too quickly and we are disrespectful, linger too long and we look phoney..", as Miller observes (ibid:80). Are there further anxieties, I wondered, in looking at work that has a message, especially when that message involves dislocation, pain and trauma? If the artists are 'artists-in-residence', is the process still more uncomfortable? They might be watching us as we look at their work. At what point *then* might we feel permitted to move away? What is an appropriate span of attention for a visual message that is one of pain? Or anger? Are other delegates observing our reactions? At a conference that lasts several days, you lose your anonymity, gain colleagues and often friends. The conference space is neither public nor private. Does this add another layer of tension to the intensely personal act of engaging with visual artwork? It might just be easier not to look at all.

The conference also made me think about my relationship with the artists who are the subjects of my research and the different types of visibility that we both strive for. I was – and am – researching artists who are also refugees in the UK and I was relatively early on in my research at the time of the conference. Yet I found myself having three opportunities to address delegates over the four day event: my own visibility was quite unproblematic. This highlighted some awkward aspects of the balance of power between us. Maybe this was partly due to the fact that the field of so-called 'refugee art' was so new, I found myself wondering. Part of me was excited at the prospect of being amongst the first cartographers to observe and map out this new territory. Another, more reflexive, part was uncomfortably aware of the language of domination and imperialism that was already creeping into my vocabulary – 'claiming territory' and assuming, however momentarily, that the exercise of cartography

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serious its underlying message) occupies a subtly different space to work that is overtly and directly political; at any rate the latter does not appear to be as unproblematic in its reception and viewing as the former. Thanks to Professor Elizabeth Rankin of Auckland University for stimulating these thoughts.

was a neutral process. That maps are highly political documents, serving the interests of their patrons in a discourse of power, has been ably demonstrated.[19] They are selective, biased and persuasive; to reveal everything that is there, they would of course have to be the same size as the territory they represent. They are therefore ideological documents revealing data that is far from random: the authorial – or curatorial – hand firmly controls what is seen and what is kept hidden from sight. Visibility, in other words, was an issue preoccupying me more and more: my own, 'my' artists who were the subjects of my research and the artists themselves, individuals now exiled in the UK who were totally separate and autonomous from me and whatever agenda I might have.

If I was seeing myself as cartographer, I was clearly involved in a power relationship (weighted in my favour) with whatever or whoever it was that I chose to show on a map. This act of choice that I held (and hold) was a clear demonstration of agency. At the same time, I was of course conscious of the overriding aim of any artist to achieve visibility for his or her work. The conference, in other words, seemed to highlight an uncomfortable tension between my own visibility, and that of the artists I was researching. The discrepancy between the relative ease with which we were all achieving the goal of visibility reflected some awkward aspects around the balance of power between us.

Conferences clearly have their own covert protocols – 'unwritten rules' – that can work in ways that even the most scrupulous organisers might not anticipate. The organisers gave the artists a platform and yet somehow these rules served to deny them the possibility of communicating their voice from this platform at the same time. Conferences are self-evidently words based. Visual arts sit with difficulty in the conference environment. The particular conference I attended certainly benefited from the presence of the artists but more obliquely than was perhaps anticipated. Poetry readings, theatre excerpts and testimonies from displaced journalists all fitted in well with the conference environment. Musical events by 'displaced musicians', in contrast, were scheduled for the evening when they did not compete with any other demands on spectators' attention and when delegates were ready to be entertained in an after-work context[20]. It was the visual material that 'got lost'.

As such, it is impossible to say in this instance how much this was due to the actual logistics of being shown in a conference environment and how much was due to the 'cultural diversity' label that was attached to the specific artists' work that I argue marginalises and objectifies them. It could be that any artist, no matter how well-known or 'mainstream', would find their work un- or at least under-attended if it were displayed as an adjunct to a conference. Nonetheless, at this particular conference, both these factors were in operation and my suggestion is, therefore, that both played a part in reducing the visibility of the prominently displayed artworks.[21]

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[19] The work of the British geographer Brian Harley (1932-91) led the field; see for example Harley, 1988. See also MacEachen 1995 and Black 1997.
[20] Though the 'afterwork' context suggests that these events too may have been considered as 'decorative embellishments to the serious business of the conference', and my thanks to for this observation to Professor Elizabeth Rankin.
[21] Thanks due again to Professor Elizabeth Rankin

Finally, another uncomfortable truth to this paper, revealing perhaps just how insidious and multi-layered the processes that work towards achieving visibility or invisibility are, is that *I* have not offered the artists I discuss any more visibility than the conference did. They are both in and not-in the present paper. I have used them as examples to make my point but actually you, my audience, know very near to as little or as much about their work as you did when I started speaking.[22] And it is their work, as we have already observed, that is the one thing an artist desires above all else to become visible. In this paper, just as I am suggesting occurred at the conference, the work has served someone other than the artists' agendas; *mea culpa*, my own. I have indeed used it for my own ends and built my argument around it.

My more general conclusions from this particular experience centre around the links between seeing, being seen and agency. These links are subtle, insidious and far from straightforward. John Berger famously argued just this point in his book *Ways of Seeing* back in 1972. Are the visible-yet-invisible women of Berger's book now being replaced by the 'culturally diverse' in the current socio-political arena? To be successful, you must be visible, but the reverse is not necessarily an equal truism, as Berger demonstrated: being visible not only does not automatically invoke success, it does not automatically invoke being seen at all. Not only is 'visibility' a complicated notion but so is 'cultural diversity' and their combination demands our particular attention. When artists are labelled as 'culturally diverse' their work fades in and out of focus. When the 'culturally diverse' label is further layered with political messages that include the 'dark' realities of pain and trauma, the whole process of visibility becomes even more problematic. 'Displaced artists' or 'refugee artists' risk being objectified as a new cultural category in the putative field of 'diversity' in the UK and, indeed, throughout the world as distressing numbers of people are displaced from their homes by poverty and/or conflict. Inevitably amongst these huge numbers are talented and often distinguished artists. This being the case, the particular ways their work is looked at and framed by the mainstream deserves critical and immediate analysis, before new 'ways of seeing' become entrenched.

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[22] I am indebted to my partner, Adam Nieman, for pointing this out to me.

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ILLUSTRATIONS:

Fig 1 Zory, 'Outcasts', 2003, faces, feet and hands cast in wax, cloth and pins, 1m x 1.50m, shown at *A Sense of Place*, Cardiff
Fig 2 Margareta Kern, 'Standard Class', 2003, quotes and digital photos mounted on card attached to the wall by velcro, 225 x 190 cm, *A Sense of Place*, Cardiff, November 2003, photograph Margareta Kern. Viewers were invited to 'match' quotes to faces and then check their accuracy, or not.
Fig 3 Suzana Tamamovic, 'People tell me to cheer up, it could be worse,' 2003, *Leave to Remain,* London, 2003. Household objects with Lettraset.

PAPER TITLE: 'PHOTOSHOPPING' FOR FEMININITY: THE FEMININE AS
ALLEGORY OF THE MODERN

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Introduction

"Often in looking at the natural and animal world [artists] joyfully identify themselves with what [they] see and from this happy union create a work of art" (Clark 1956:4). This is the process students of aesthetics call empathy, and, as Kenneth Clark (1956:4) points out, it is "at the opposite pole of creative activity to the state of mind that produces the nude". According to Clark (1956:4), "Disillusion and dismay" are what one feels when confronted with "a mass of naked figures" and not empathy. In this case, the artist does not wish to imitate but to perfect (Clark 1956:6).

The process of perfecting the human figure and, in particular, the *female* form is ostensibly an area of common interest between what may be termed canonical erotic art (such as that referred to by Clark) and contemporary glossy magazines in the *genre* of *Vogue*, *Elle* and *Gentlemen's Quarterly*. In previous papers I have theorised the strategic benefit for glossy men's magazines such as *GQ* in employing the visual tropes established by canonical erotic art (prior to 1940) in order to align themselves with 'high culture' and in this way circumvent an association with pornography, which is often deemed tawdry or tasteless. This paper builds on the assumptions of this former analysis by suggesting that many contemporary glossy magazines draw inspiration from canonical erotic art such as Boucher's *Mlle O' Murphy* (1752), Ingres' *La Grande Odalisque* (1814) and Manet's *Olympia* (1863) that form some of the prime articulators of the trope of ideal nudity. Against this backdrop, this paper investigates the gendering of 'modernity' in *GQ* where it is argued that the 'perfected' female form serves as an allegory of the modern.[1] The feminine motif is not direct: "it is subject to the oblique, the fragment, the interstice between concept and metaphor" (Buci-Glucksmann 1986:220); yet, because of the confines of this paper, this icon will be treated as far more elemental than it really is.

The underlying premise of this paper is to suggest that the 'perfected', plastic skin that is the trademark of the ideal nude (both painterly and photographic) fragments the female body so that it becomes an abstract allegory rather than a 'mere' representation of the 'real'. This, of course, is the point of the 'nude'; namely, to present a glossy signifier as far removed from its referent as technologically possible.

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[1] Although numerous sources deal with the subject, I will, primarily, rely on two sources to position the assumption that the idealised nude, femininity and modernity are inextricably interwoven in the fabric of visual culture: Kenneth Clark's *The Nude. A Study of Ideal Art* and Christine Buci-Glucksmann's *Catastrophic Utopia: the feminine as allegory of the modern*.

Thus, the "body fascism" bemoaned by Linda Nead[2] (1992:77) may, in one fell swoop, be aligned with what Linda Nochlin (1994) has called the metaphor of modernity, that is, fragmentation.

The tradition of idealisation

As a point of departure for this analysis, one might ask what the artist's intention is in idealising or altering the nude, to which Clark (1956:17) answers, "[h]e aimed at producing a figure that would conform to the ideals of his time, that would be the kind of shape men liked to see". The manner in which (male) artists have made the female body conform to the fetishistic ideals of their time has been well theorised by art historians. The more pertinent interest of this paper lies in the textural idealisation of naked skin as allegorical of sublimated and sexualised modernity for, in the "interpretive radicality" (Buci-Glucksmann 1986:220) of perfected skin, lies the unlikely pairing of the modernist interest in progress and the (feminised) sublime.[3]

A fourth century Greek sculpture, such as the *Knidian Aphrodite* by Praxiteles (figure 1), for instance, represents a nude that, not only through the geometrical symmetry of her proportions and posture, but also, in the flawlessness of her skin, reflects the Greek quest for progressive perfection. Her idealised marble skin may be interpreted as a twofold signifier. The opaque whiteness of her body, accentuating the harmony and gentility of her bearing, serves as a clue to her sublime femininity. Yet, the smooth, rounded tightness thereof is also a telling signifier of her constructedness in the modernist sense. A Gothic nude (figure 2) is easily identified by the elongated torso, infantile upper body, pregnant-looking lower body and waif-like ephemeral modesty with which Hans Memlinc's *Eve* is represented (1485). Yet, in this latter case too, the sublime perfection of the first woman as well as the artist's expertise is represented by her faultless white skin. If we were to historically leapfrog over Renaissance and Rubenesque Venuses (figures 3&4), a Rococo Mademoiselle (figure 5) and Romantic Odalisque (figure 6) we will find them all lacking in the area of reality since they are modified in accordance with the sexual whimsy or taste of their epoch, and in each case their skin may be described as perfect, flawless or plastic. In his seminal treatise on the sublime and beautiful, Edmund Burke (1990:sp) comments, "I can recollect nothing beautiful that is not smooth. Smooth leaves in trees, smooth slopes in gardens, smooth streams in the landscape, smooth coats of birds and beasts, and smooth skins in fine women". The application of paint (or the smoothing out of marble as in the Knidean Aphrodite) is a process that by its very plastic nature undermines the textural diversity and peculiarity of skin. The examples are infinite and well documented but the point is simply that the most effective way of transforming a naked model into a sublime nude is to replace that particular attribute of real skin – its imperfection – with the plasticity and smoothness of painterly perfect skin.

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[2] Nead (1992:77) refers to the "perfectability of the body" within contemporary advertising as "body fascism".
[3] Buci-Glucksmann (1986:220) proposes that "the motif of the woman imposes, by its constancy, its persistence and wealth of meanings, all its interpretive radicality". It does not seem too far-fetched to argue the same of the idealised woman's consistently perfect skin.

In spite of the "manifold disguises and the elevated obscurantism of their classical, historical or literary" contexts, all of the nudes just mentioned represent the female body with perfected skin (Parker & Pollock 1981:116). Despite the varying contexts within which the *Knidian Aphrodite* (c.340-330 BC), Memlincs's *Eve* (1485), Botticelli's *Primavera* (1482), Rubens' *Venus at the Mirror* (1613-1614), Boucher's *Mlle O' Murphy* (1752), and Ingres' *La Grande Odalisque* (1814) were created, the common-alities between these images are more obvious than the differences. The classical form and texture of the nude in all of these cases allows for justified and elevated voyeuristic enjoyment of woman's body as a man-made construction. By representing the idealised nude, these paintings support the male/female power relations in terms of the ideological language of western art. Woman is present as the image, but as such is subject to "specific connotations of body and nature" contained within the rhetoric of the nude (Parker & Pollock 1981:116).[4] In other words, by being perfected she is made "passive, available, possessable, powerless" (Parker & Pollock 1981:116). Man, conversely, may be absent from the paintings, but it is "his speech, his view, his position of dominance which the images signify" (Parker & Pollock 1981:116). Parker and Pollock (1981:116) elucidate this point by arguing that the "individual artist does not simply express himself but is rather the privileged user of the language of his culture which pre-exists him as a series of historically reinforced codes, signs and meanings". Flawless skin, as iconic of "the cult of [the] image, the secularisation/sublimation of bodies and the constructedness of the feminine, may, in other words, be an allegory for the modern.

Modernity

As in the moulding and shaping of the female form, the significance of this cultural language to the representation of female skin is related to it being symptomatic of gendered roles in a particular era and society. Real plasticity of skin, for instance, was only convincingly achieved by Edouard Manet in his representation of *Olympia* (1863, figure 7) since it is within this industrialized historical context that women "bec[a]me mass-produced, widely available commodities … [stripped] of their 'natural' qualities … and poetic aura" (Buci-Glucksmann 1986:222). As Christine Buci-Glucksmann (1986:222) explains, the "violent insertion of women into commodity production collapse[d] both material (division of labour) and symbolic differences of sex "since the new status of women in large cities subjected them, by work and urbanization, to a "certain sexual uniformity". According to Buci-Glucksmann (1986:222) this "social dynamic urgently required that the symbolic distinctions between feminine and masculine be redefined, "leading to the oppositional female typologies of the sublimated and ethereal 'lady' (the so-called *Venus Coelestis*) and the more vulgar but materially present prostitute the so-called *Venus Naturalis*).

Olympia's reclining pose is probably drawn from classical models such as Titian's *Venus of Urbino* (1538) and Fransisco Goya's *Naked Maya* (1797) while her confrontational stare is thought to have been inspired by early pornographic photography (Gilman 1985:206). She is, in other words, "the privileged site for a mythological correspondence in which the modern world of technology and the archaic world of the symbol are in play" (Buci-Glucksmann 1986:222). It is her skin, however, this blank

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[4] Parker and Pollock (1981:116) make this point about art in general, but it is here applied to the nude in particular.

space of whiteness and perfect tightness that is the most iconic of her tragic metaphoric status, since this is the signifier of her constructedness or "loss of love" (Buci-Glucksmann 1986:223). Buci-Glucksmann (1986:223) describes the kind of modernity for which *Olympia* is the poster girl as "a loss, an emptiness, a lack: the power of an absence".

In the Walter Neurath Lecture of 1994, Linda Nochlin (1994:23-24) investigates the sense of social, psychological and metaphysical fragmentation that seems indicative of the modern experience: "a loss of wholeness, a shattering of connection, a destruction or disintegration of permanent value that is so universally felt in the [early modernist] period as to be often identified with modernity". In teasing out the Baudelairean notion of modernity, Nochlin (1994) stumbles upon the fragmentation inherent in this experience since it evades, denies and undermines the 'real' in favour of the image. *Olympia* is not a portrait of Victorine Meurend, it is a portrait of what Charles Baudelaire (1964:13) termed "the ephemeral, the contingent, the half of art whose other half is the eternal and the immutable" and Karl Marx (in Nochlin 1994:24) referred to as "all that is solid melt[ing] into air". It is a portrait of dialectical modernity – at once male and female, commercial and 'natural', real and plastic, and herein lies its connection with contemporary commodified femininity.

Gentlemen's Quarterly

As is the case in most contemporary glossy magazines, all of the images in *GQ* are digitally touched up or 'improved'. The difference is that, while in most magazines 'touch ups' are subtly disguised so as not to disrupt the illusion of 'natural' beauty (of the person represented), in *GQ* obvious digital intervention is often a part of the fetish of the image. The 'pinup' image that accompanies the regular "Man's World" feature,[5] for instance, is generally an example of the overt plasticity of the female body in *GQ*. (In this way, *GQ* mimics the assertion of 'artistic licence' as in Manet's *Le Déjeuner sur l'Herbe* and *Olympia*).

The March "Man's World" (*GQ* 2000:56-57) features Daniela Pestova, a Czech super-model exotically positioned on a gold leather and Perspex couch (figure 8). The relevance of this image resides in the constructedness of Pestova within the context of the magazine's wider trope of objectification. Pestova, in this case, is both sexually objectified (through her nakedness and fetishistic gaze) and cloaked in the ennobling veneer of aesthetic construction, particularly evident in the smooth finish of her Odalisque-like back, an obvious reference to Boucher's *Mlle O' Murphy* (1752). Through the combined effect of sexualised display and stylistic 'treatment' (for example, the digital finish of her skin), the objectification and subordination in the image are conflated (camouflaged). According to John Mastro, the product manager of *Playboy*, "quality", presumably meaning airbrushed or 'photoshopped' images and expensive paper, "takes some of the shock off nudity" which, in part, accounts for the plastic finish of her skin (in Dines 1995:255). Pestova's overly aestheticised body and confrontational stare recalls the

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[5] Within the context of *GQ*, "Man's World", is the modern equivalent of the drawing-room – a place for 'gentlemen' to retreat into, a realm that emblazons all things masculine. The by-line reads: "Man's world: girls, cars, sports, business". Each "Man's World" is celebrated with a two-page 'spread' that presumably represents the first of this list of masculine interests.

petrified pose of *Olympia* and the (modernist) "loss of love" that it signifies. In this way, both women stand as metaphors for the ambivalence of modernity in that they are both iconically sexualised and robbed of their personal sexuality. The question of whether Pestova is naked or nude, for instance, is not clear-cut: The familiarity of Pestova as a model is endorsed by the admission (above the image) that she had to "slug a shot of vodka before filming her first commercial". This very human disclosure perhaps implies the understanding that she is indeed naked. At the same time, the unmistakably stylised mien of the image negates any interpretation that 'reads' the image as 'innocent' or 'real', and therefore renders her more nude than naked.

The constructedness of the image is, furthermore, apparent in the lack of explicit 'detail' that seems intended to align the image iconographically with art rather than pornography. The sensationalism of seeing female genitalia up-close has been part of the *genre* of pornography for centuries, but it was only with the invention of photography that this voyeuristic desire manifested in the more mainstream commercial market.[6] The camera, with all its endless possibilities for fragmentation, was remarkably suited to this objectifying function. In 1861, one irate member of the European public noted, "[p]eople do not only sell obscene photographs – they do better than that. They sell them with a magnifying glass whereby you can search for microscopic details" (McCauley in Tang 1999:114-115). Whereas in paintings, drawings and prints an extreme close-up only yields abstract lines and shadow, the photograph tends to reveal more explicit information (Tang 1999:114-115). Unlike these early pornographic photographs, however, the few intimate details of female anatomy found in *GQ* are not 'real', but are airbrushed, and therefore represent the ideal of male fantasy.

GQ does not generally cater for the need to see intimate details, but the manner in which all sexualised images in *GQ* are overtly 'reworked', implies the same objectified, microscopic perspective with which a viewer is 'forced' to see decontextualised genitalia. In this way, the object/subject relationship of pornography is reiterated without the explicit representation of details. Real women (Charlize Theron, Penelope Cruise, Candice Hildebrand, who are not all that real to begin with) are represented with unreal perfection, and are thus no longer 'real', but fetishistically constructed. The object/subject relationship is here enacted in such a way that the subject/painter/photographer/viewer intervenes in the representation of the object, to the point where it becomes an extension of his own effort. The viewer's awareness of this kind of subordination is possibly part of the eventual sex appeal of *GQ*. Like Manet's admission that *Le Déjeuner sur l'Herbe* was a *blague* (joke), the fact that *GQ* announces Pestova's reluctance to be displayed, contrasts blatantly with the contented image of her below this confession. In other words, she is ultimately a male construct, and all the more appealing for it.

By the end of the nineteenth century, writers focussed on prostitution and 'erotica' as examples of the commercialisation of all human relations (Hunt 1991:10). Brooks (1984:143), for instance, notes that

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[6] While Gustave Courbet's *The Origin of the World* (1866) is an apt demonstration of the painter's voyeuristic fascination with female genitalia, unlike similar photographic representations of the 1800s, it is not an image that could be seen by the public at the time.

through the works of Emile Zola and Manet, the female body becomes an explicit signifier for the machinery of commerce and industrialism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Similar to the way in which Zola and Manet related the female body to the capitalist concerns of technology, *GQ* represents the female body as a commercially constructed product. The view of the female body as emblematic of a mechanised and highly sexualised economy has analogies in a variety of other domains (such as in cyberculture or the feminising of electronic hardware), and supports the notion that the constructed 'woman' conventionally signifies abstractions such as (so-called masculinised) technological progress. French philosopher Michel Serres has highlighted the way in which the steam engine became the feminised metaphor for the industrial age, starting in the eighteenth century, and possibly continuing into the early twentieth century (in Hedges 1991:122). For Serres, the metaphor is most apparent in the works of authors, philosophers and artists, such as Zola, Henri Bergson, and William Turner, who are all seduced by the notion of the 'technologised woman'. She is simultaneously sensationally threatening and implicitly powerless, since she is arguably a male myth (and therefore under 'his' control). The manner in which *GQ* currently wraps sexualised representations in a technologised veneer might relate to the nineteenth and early twentieth century notion of the sexualised woman as a symbol of commercial and technological progress. In a feature entitled "Rough Rider", an author writing under the pseudonym of Jane Honda espouses the benefits of having sex on a motorcycle (*GQ* March 2000:109, figure 9). The accompanying photograph demonstrates the constructedness or 'plastic' quality of a model's skin after having been 'touched up.' Once more the model's body seems almost prefabricated because of her Barbiesque skin and, thus, the fetishistic value of the image seems to lie in its technologised constructedness, ostensibly by men for men.

In *Mythologies,* Barthes (1973), postulates that modern-day myths are symptomatic of commonly held beliefs in western society. In accordance with this idea, Inez Hedges (1991:122-123) reflects that Serres could well have included cinema as a new artistic medium brought to fruition by the imaginings of the nineteenth century. Photography and film soon became the primary synthesisers and reflectors of myth and, as such, echoed things such as the unconscious fears of society. The mechanised notion of the feminine is clearly present in films such as Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1926, figure 10), where the female character is represented as a machine or automaton against which the masculine could define itself.[7] The fembot, Maria (played by Brigitte Helm), is an image that in many ways realises *fin de siècle* fears that people would have less and less control over an increasingly mechanised environment. The 'technologised' woman is also said to have represented a union between science and nature – two entities that, since the seventeenth century, had been positioned as binary opposites. Evelyn Fox Keller explains that the escalating authority of mechanical philosophy was expressed in terms of the masculine domination of science over nature, which was traditionally represented as feminine (in Hedges 1991:123). Keller avers that: "The goal of the new science is not metaphysical intercourse but domination … the triumph of those who have been generally grouped together as 'mechanical

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[7] The connection between women and machinery is encouraged in *GQ* through the use of predictable phrases such as "get her motor going" (*GQ* Millennium 2000:83). See Andreas Huyssen's (1986) *After the Great Divide* (in particular Chapter Four, entitled 'The vamp and the machine: Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*').

philosophers' represented a decisive defeat of the view of nature and woman as godly, as of a science which would accordingly have guaranteed to both at least a modicum of respect" (in Hedges 1991:123). Almost eighty years after *Metropolis* was released, *GQ* still constructs the feminine with much the same signification. Through an obviously mediated (stylised and airbrushed) representation, women are not represented as 'real', but as created, improved, perfected, even technologised, and this is probably understood, and even expected, by the viewer.[8] Therefore, in a 'Man's world' she falls into the same category as cars, motorcycles and steam engines.

'TechGnosis' and neurosis

In the glamorous milieu of glossy magazines one is apt to forget that a particular woman's body may, simultaneously, be the object of desire and a site of pain and humiliation. Yet, even these words – desire, pain, humiliation – are too entrenched in the language of sexualised identity to be meaningful beyond the gendered stereotypes they represent. In effect, it is difficult to articulate the mundane materiality of the body in a context where femininity is defined by perfected (commodified) beauty. French psychoanalyst and philosopher, Luce Irigaray, reflects: "In our culture the predominance of the look over smell, taste, touch and hearing has brought about an impoverishment of bodily relations. The moment the look dominates, the body loses its materiality (in Pollok 1988:50).[9]

Clark (1956:71) tenders that prehistoric images of woman are of two kinds, "the bulging statuettes from the paleolithic caves, which emphasize the female attributes till they are little more than symbols of fertility [figure 11], and the marble dolls of the Cyclades, in which already the unruly human body has undergone a geometrical discipline" (figure 12). Following Plato's example, Clark (1956:71) suggests we call these the vegetable and the Crystalline Aphrodite or vulgar *Venus Naturalis* and celestial *Venus Coelestis* respectively. Woman, at this point is, in other words, either represented as awkward, material and vulgar or beautiful, ethereal and celestial. The former is archetypally 'primitive', while the latter is sublimely modern, an icon that Renaissance philosopher Marsilio Ficino described as "a nymph of excellent comeliness, born of Heaven and more than others beloved of God on High … Oh what exquisite beauty!" (in Clark 1956:92). Clark (1956:64) postulates that in contrast to these early prototypes of female representation that reflected a binary sense of the body/spirit dialectic, the latter Classical nudes (such as Praxitiles *Knidian Aphrodite*) served as emblems of the Greek belief in physical and spiritual unity, a oneness of body and spirit. The vulgar and celestial attributes of the *Venus Naturalis* and *Venus Coelestis*, in other words, merge with the passing of time and increased sophistication in iconography – that is, except for the women represented in glossy men's magazines, who seem wholly lacking in any vulgar, vegetable-like qualities. Rather, they are perfected to seemingly imitate the divine attributes of the *Venus Coelestis* alone. The question is what effect the plastification of body and skin - a kind of photoshopped 'sublimation' - may have on women who read *GQ* (or women's magazines like *Elle* or *Marie-Claire* that might employ the same technigues)?

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[8] Within the glamorised context of *GQ,* the "image of the female body that does not conform to the ideals of "body Fascism" is both transgressive and disruptive" (Nead 1992:77).
[9] See Irigaray. 1985 (1977). *This Sex which is Not One*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

While it may be argued that the contemporary idealised or photoshopped nude represents the same sublimation of the flesh or oneness of body and spirit embodied by Praxitiles *Knidian Aphrodite*, for instance, it is unlikely that this signification would be recognised outside of the Classical Greco-Roman world. Since the idealised nude in glossy magazines is generally an aspirational image for female readers, a more realistic assumption is that the jarring disparity between the plastic body of the idealised *GQ* nude and the awkward materiality of the reader's own body may result in a sense of dislocation (alienation or rejection) from her body. The recent explosion of techno-mysticism brings to the fore the concept of techgnosticism as an expression of the (sometimes desirable) alienation that women may experience towards their bodies.

Erik Davis (2000:2) uses the term 'techGnosis' to highlight the "myth, magic and mysticism" of the information age. Although my argument builds on the writings of Davis,[10] I use the term 'techgnosticism' to relate the sense of separation that women may experience from their bodies as a result of the overemphasis on bodily perfection in the media. The vulgar/celestial binary delineated by Clark (1956:64) bears witness to the idea that the body in its raw, unperfected form is deemed vulgar while the artificially constructed version is sublime. The technologised constructedness that pushes women into the trope of objectified perfection, thus, entrenches the elemental binaries of nature/culture, ugly/beautiful, deviant/acceptable, messy/clean and material/sublime. As in the prehistoric Venuses there is no middle ground: if your body does not conform to the symmetrical perfection of the *Venus Coelestis* then you must belong to the taxonomy of the *Venus Naturalis*.

In a sense, the glamorised and enhanced images seen in glossy magazines create the perception of glorification rather than subordination, but to the extent that 'improving' on an image connotes its flawed-ness, glossy magazines present women as imperfect. Again Burke (1990:sp) comments, "perfection [is not] the cause of beauty; for beauty … almost always carries with it the idea of weakness and imperfection."

Conclusion

Glossy magazines aim to sexualise real women such as Daniela Pestova in a way that renders them quite unreal. The very glossy or stylised aesthetic of *GQ*, for instance, lends a sophistication to sexualised representations, but also encourages the perception that women, in their ideal form, are male constructs. Yet glossy magazines are but one manifestation of the much wider phenomena in visual culture of sexualised consumerism and commodified sexual display.

Glamorised objectification is a larger than life reality in contemporary visual culture and, perhaps because of its ubiquitous presence, indicates a society that is more comfortable with the stereotyped simulacrum of the represented than the (unpredictable) reality of the real. The marginalization of the real in favour of the copy, seems to presume that imitation (representation) is innocent, even where it

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[10] See Davis, E. 2000. *TechGnosis: Myth, Magic, and Mysticism in the Age of Information*. London: Harmond.

reinforces and naturalises what it depicts. "Evil, mediocrity", observes Kierkegaard, "is never so dangerous as when it is dressed up as 'sincerity'" (1938:363).

The recent explosion of films, magazines, and television programmes that question the 'real'-ness of human experience and individual control (*Matrix*, *Fight Club*, *The X-Files*, etc.), testify to a society that senses the simulacral nature of popular culture. Even as a marginal indicator of this phenomenon, the plasticity of the female body in glossy magazines is a powerful contributor to a culture that prefers the constructed to the real, whether with relation to culture, gender or sex.

The analogy between canonical art and mass-produced 21st century pin-ups, employed by this paper, is perhaps forced, but it possibly serves to highlight some of the ideology/iconography that informs the 'perfected' plasticity of the female body (skin) in glossy magazines. Like the canonical sculptures and paintings of idealised nudity, glossy magazines strip women of their personhood and transform them into petrified goddesses or love-less whores. For it is here, on the hallowed pages of technocratic high culture, that the feminine serves as allegory for the modern.

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PAPER TITLE: CURATING MULTIPLICITY: DOCUMENTA 11 AS A MODEL
FOR GLOBAL REPRESENTATION
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Documenta 11 – the first new-millennium version of the normative mega-exhibition held every five years in Kassel, Germany – situated itself firmly in the arena of global cultural politics. Continuing a process that started with Catherine David's Documenta X in 1997, it constituted a definitive shift in placing art production beyond conventional limits of the discipline inside a multidisciplinary social and political context. The first non-European artistic director, Nigerian-born Okwui Enwezor (2003:44), explicitly set out not to create an art exhibition, but to "make something else, in spite of the art exhibition". His stated aim for Documenta 11 was for it to function as a "constellation of public spheres" for a global community (Enwezor 2002:54). The catalogue for the exhibition sets the tone with the inclusion of 30 pages of news images before the title page.

For the first time, Documenta was de-territorialized as an institution, by transcending the confines of space and time historically placed on it through the staging of four discursive platforms before the exhibition in Kassel, thereby extending the traditional 100 days of the exhibition to 18 months of doing Documenta (from March 2001 to September 2002). The themes of Democracy Unrealised (Platform 1); Experiments with the Truth (Platform 2); Créolité and Creolization (Platform 3); and Under Siege: Four African Cities – Freetown, Johannesburg, Kinshasa, Lagos (Platform 4) were presented in Vienna, New Delhi, Berlin, St. Lucia and Lagos. These "circuits of research" (Enwezor 2002:49) not only opened up the boundaries of the gallery space, but also expanded the discourse around Documenta. By ensuring the participation of artists and intellectuals belonging to disenfranchised groups, it also re-territorialized "marginal" and displaced voices. According to Enwezor the platforms "question the casual discourse often found in exhibitions" and, more importantly, "offered the opportunity to confront the limits of any exhibition model that tries to simply appropriate the term 'globalization' without the rigorous review of what the 'global' actually is in relation to different spaces of production" (Global tendencies… 2003:159).

Spectacular difference

For Enwezor (2002:43) the "spectacular difference" of Documenta 11 was that its "spaces are to be seen as forums of committed ethical and intellectual reflection on the possibilities of rethinking the historical procedures that are part of its contradictory heritage of grand conclusions". This position has been questioned repeatedly by critics as being neither spectacular nor all that different. Anthony Downey noted that previous curators also critiqued the institutional function of Documenta and that it may not be possible to set a "radical agenda within an art network that, in conjunction with the re-territorialising imperatives of globalisation, is always already being repackaged within the neo-liberal,

and invariably empty, wrapping of multicultural inclusiveness" (2003:89). Documenta 11's multicultural, postcolonial agenda gave Thomas McEvilley (2002:81) a "sense of déjà vu; or rather, it seemed not exactly to usher in a new era but to set a seal on an era first announced long ago".

Yet, the actual exhibition of the work of more than 116 artists and artist groups induced Peter Schjeldahl (2002:95) to describe himself as "a New York art critic who left Kassel feeling uncomfortably marginalized". A European critic, Evert van Straaten (director of the Kröller-Müller museum in Otterlo) admitted the show, which included more artists from Latin America and Africa than in Documentas 1-10, changed his perception of photography, film, video and new media as the media of the dominant Western cultural elite.

Documenta as heterotopia

Documenta could be considered as functioning like Michel Foucault's heterotopias in the sense of being both museum and temporal festival at the same time. Heterotopias are described as "counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted" (Foucault:24). As a lived space with its own discourses linked to a slice in time, the quinquennial Documenta would belong to the class of heterotopias that Foucault (1986:26) terms "heterochronies". As the "museum of a 100 days", the term used by the exhibition's initiator, Arnold Bode, Documenta is an archive of the cumulative history of "contemporary art" for almost half a century. Yet as a temporal exhibition it purports to show cutting-edge work, linked to current narratives. This doubled-up heterotopic spatiality brings complex oppositions into play about the form, function and influence of Documenta.

In a sense Documenta mirrors the bound up forces of homogenization and fragmentation characterizing current globalization: on the one hand the normative significance of the institution for local art practice cannot be underestimated, but, on the other hand, it can produce counter-hegemonic resistance to globalist tendencies. Enwezor, and his team of six co-curators, were at pains not to enact the role of transcultural discoverers of exotic talent in the form of a cultural grand tour, an endeavour succinctly critiqued by the work of Yinka Shonibare, *Gallantry and criminal conversation* (2002). His installation of sexually coupled 18th century figures in period dress from exotic "African" fabric – made in the "Dutch wax" technique, originating in Indonesia – is a symbol of postcolonial identity as a construct influenced by trading routes. The work also comments on the mega-exhibition as purveyor of exotic goods and the art public as modern-day aristocrats on a summer pilgrimage of a must-see destination.

Even if Documenta 11's "rethinking of the historical procedures" and inclusion of marginalized artists are construed by some as a universalising topos, as "The outside is the new inside" (Shatz 2002:41), the attempt at a counter-hegemonic and counter-normative (re)constructing of the historical event has to be lauded. Enwezor (2002:43) stresses: "One claim that can be made for Documenta 11's spectacular difference is that its critical spaces are not places for the normalization or uniformization of all artistic visions on their way to institutional beatification". The showing of those excluded from the museum's illustrious history as active agents in global transmodernities, not only exposes the narratives

bound up in documenta as the site for the production of art history, but also creates a space for viewing art from different and unequal production sites on shifting ground, as it were.

Postcolonial tactical maneuver

In the context of Documenta 11 global representation is inexorably postcolonial. For Enwezor "the postcolonial, as the ethical response to the challenge of the global, should be seen as a kind of tactical maneuver" (Global tendencies… 2003:206). This tactic comprises a twofold attack: decolonization, or "liberation from within" (Enwezor 2002:44) and "making empire's former 'other' visible and present at all times" (Enwezor 2002:45). Co-curator Ute Meta Bauer (2002:103) sees the institution of Documenta, with considerable symbolic influence and financial means at its disposal, as an opportunity to function as a corrective:

> For Documenta 11 in particular this can mean taking up the long overdue challenge to reformulate a history of art that is linear and focused on the West, and this in turn would necessitate that from now on we would have to address artistic positions from all parts of the world and the specific conditions under which they are produced.

Yet this is not "reconstructing history", but rather "reconstructing the present" (Basualdo 2002:59). The neo-colonial present is defined by co-curator Carlos Basualdo (2002:57) as a space of exile and displacement, stating that Documenta 11 was not "celebrating displacement *per se*" but finding "comfort in our own displacement" as exiles.

Platform 3, Créolité and Creolization, specifically explored hybridity, *métissage*, and creolization as a paradigm of transculturation. According to Stuart Hall " 'transculturation' occurs in such a way as to produce, as it were, a 'third space' – a 'native' or indigenous vernacular space, marked by fusion of cultural elements […that] have been permanently 'translated' ''(2003a:30-31). As global stage for a multitude of disciplines, viewpoints, approaches, art works and production sites, Documenta 11 creolized the exhibition space. The inclusion of what Bauer (2002:105) calls "intellectual 'guestworkers' " outside the field of art contributed to "open up the space of in-between, of transition and of passage, a space of diaspora, a 'third space', in order to create "new forms of understanding", or at least "productive misunderstandings". She states further that this conflicted in-between space is also a "space of refuge for approaches and methods, from a variety of disciplines, which are experimental, critical and not orientated around commercial success".

Juxtaposing Western and non-Western thinking

Documenta 11's approach to visual art has been criticised for being didactic, humourless, relentlessly topical, excessively journalistic, literal, protestant, and aesthetically indifferent because of the strong emphasis on time-based documentary-type artwork. Others have praised the curatorial team for its committed ethical stand and attempt to create a practical model to curate multiplicity.

Upon entering the Fridericianum, the central documenta-space, the viewer was confronted in the prime position with the epic work of Hanne Darboven, *Solo for Double Bass, Opus 45* (1998-2000) – an installation of "mathematical music" drawings surrounding a pedestal on which a crystal skull was displayed. On the floor above On Kawara's *One Million Years (Past and Future)* (1970 – present), was presented as an installation, broadcast and performance, read by performers in a glass booth. This theme of epic archiving or classification was continued in the work of Ecke Bonk, *BOOK OF WORDS – RANDOM READING*, a random projection of potentially 350 000 entries from the brothers Grimm's German dictionary. The archive could be interpreted as personal memorial in the work of Chohreh Feyzdjou, an Iranian Jewish exile who died in Paris in 1996. Bearing the label, "Products of Chohreh Feyzdjou", the bottles, boxes, crates and stacked rolls of blackened canvas created a visual space, part general store, part Situationist art shop, permeated by the history of Talmudic scrolls and Holocaust ashes. More than mere festival-type installations, these works created a critical space in which the decoding of signs and the very measure of existence and legacies could be explored.

Fittingly, systemization, impermanence and memory were recurrent themes in the artworks displayed in the Fridericianum, the first building in Europe to be constructed to house a museum (Poinsot 1996:50). By including "reversals" and "omissions" viewers were invited to think about traditional Western classifications. The Indonesian Fiona Tan created a reverse-ethnography of sorts with 200 video-projection portraits of contemporary Germans, based on the "physiognomic archaeology" of August Sander. Her German types, seen through the eyes of an immigrant, brought the experience of self-as-other to a largely European audience on home turf. The South African David Goldblatt offered a time-slice of the white suburb of Boksburg (1979-80) in black and white photographs, portraying black subjects as migrant labourers on the edges of this society. In an adjacent space 1 369 light bulbs lit up the windowless one-room abode of a black man, reassuring him of his presence, in the Canadian Jeff Wall's *Invisible man* (2002), transparency in a light box.

Documenta 11 made the black man, the Asian, the Inuit, the "native" visible. It made African cities and underdeveloped trouble spots visible. In reply to critics who did a multiculturalist headcount of for example the number of gay or female artists in the exhibition, Enwezor (2003:43) stressed that Documenta 11's approach to cultural difference was not that of "tagging artists as a category", or of "commodified, institutionalized versions of difference", but rather an "awareness of certain types of socio-political and cultural disenfranchisement". Other(s), or South(s), were given the space to engage in the same forum with the West/North.

The utopian cities of the Dutch Constant and Congolese Bodys Isek Kingelez were both presented for consideration in the Kulturbahnhof. Constant's *New Babylon* (1956-1974) – a concept of nomadic life based on the expectations of future mechanization – and Kingelez's *Kimbembele Ihunga-(Kimbeville)*(1994) – visionary architecture, built around the naming of clans – applied different rationalities, but arrived at a comparable result. These post-industrial European and postcolonial African viewpoints belong to the same modernity.

Alternative ways of thinking were shown in the work of Georges Adéagbo from Benin and Frédéric Bruly Bouabré from the Côte d'Ivoire in the Binding-Brauerei. Adéagbo applied a kind of poetic logic in the installation *Explorer and explorers confronting the history of exploration" …! The theater of the world* (2002), interspacing his own with found texts to build critical connections between the histories of the world, art and the individual. Compared to the crystal rationality of Darboven, Kawara and Bonk, Bouabré's interpretation of patterns in clouds, orange peel, cola nuts, scarifications and gold weights as symbols of meaning is alien to a Western audience. The differences between the dictionaries of Bonk and Bouabré are reminders of the limits of translatability and the relativity of all signification systems. This idea was brought home to Documenta visitors in another form in the work of Jens Haaning, who's *Turkish Jokes* (1994-2002) were broadcasted in the public space of the main station in Kassel, the point of arrival and departure. Non-Turkish pedestrians were in the dark as to what was being said and who it was addressed to.

Representing global multiplicity

The curatorial team of Documenta 11 approached the different sites of the Documenta event as *rhizomes*, referring to the concept developed by Deleuze and Guattari of open-ended, non-hierarchical networks, fostering manifold connections in diversity or *multiplicité*. For Basualdo (2002:57) "[t]he notion of the magician's encyclopaedia, the labyrinthine and incomplete, a fragile highly temporal encyclopaedia as a way of thinking of knowledge that is transient but at the same time endless, is very like the rhizomatic roots of our conception of Documenta".

However open-ended this approach to global representation, it resonated as strong curatorial direction compared to Francesco Bonami's Venice Biennale of the following year, criticised as pushing multiplicity to the point of incoherence. For Tim Griffin (Global tendencies… 2003:153) "Enwezor's globalism […] was in Kassel linked to the acute value of regionality and difference, where the emergence of the local and particular precluded the possibility of any unifying system or thematic but nevertheless comprised a field of what could be called 'minor knowledges' ". The focus of the mega-exhibition is inherently global, given its transnational circuitry. But even if Documenta 11's agenda was global in intent, it was local in content, leading Jan-Erik Lundström (2003:59) to conclude that "in our time of uncertainty, instability, hybrid and fluid identities, *Documenta 11* was indeed an exhibition of place, of culture's anchorage in space".

The artworks included in Documenta 11_Platform 5 are not of the globalisation-as-period-style variety, of what critic Pamela Lee (2003:166) terms "the aesthetics of passports and Coca-Cola". In a sense Documenta 11 is about that which is fought for and lost in transnationalisation. If the works deal with borders and displacement, they count the human cost of transmigration and conflicted identities. Amar Kanwar's video, *A Season Outside* (1997), about the ritual opening and closing of the India-Pakistan border, presented as a thin white line, comments on issues of individual and national identity. *From the other side* (2002), Chantal Akerman's multi-screen installation of film and video about the border of the US and Mexico, deals with immigration as scapegoat for domestic economic problems, moral decay

and terrorism. The fantasies and realities of migration are poetically explored in Isaac Julien's three-screen projection *Paradise Omeros* (2002).

Pavel Braila's film, *Shoes for Europe* (2002), documents the three hour-long process of changing train wheels from Russian to standard gauge at the Moldavian-Romanian border, demonstrating the inequality of globalisation, as does Ulrike Ottinger's film *South East passage: A Journey to New Blank Spots on the Map of Europe* (2002). The installation of Multiplicity, *ID: A Journey through a Solid Sea* (2002), is a multidisciplinary research project about the sinking in December 1996 of a fishing boat with 283 illegal immigrants on board. The Mediterranean is presented not as space of cultural exchange, but as solid territory of commodified trajectories. The mapping of global flows on the high seas is continued in Allan Sekula's *Fish Story* (1990-1995). The most unusual work about the functioning of global capital was Maria Eichorn's *Limited Company* (2002), a public company founded with the express purpose not to produce any capital gain.

Various artworks deal with local living, in the context of what Zygmunt Bauman (1998:45) terms "the world of the poor, the 'structurally redundant' [for whom] real space is fast closing up", while for the 'globalized' rich "space has lost its constraining quality and is easily traversed in both its 'real' and 'virtual' renditions". According to this view, the people at the top of the global hierarchy live in *time,* and those at the bottom are confined to *space* in which time does not count. Cameroon-born installation artist Pascale Marthine Tayou shows in *Game station* (2002) scenes from Yaoundé on 10 monitors accompanied by headphones leaking cacophonous sound from radio frequencies around the world. The 'local' has no real access to the promise of global exchange through technology.

Some works offer ways of resisting homogenizing forces of globalisation, by reterritorializing identities in what Hardt and Negri (2000:45) calls the "production of locality". Igloolik Isuma Productions, a Canadian Inuit film production company, focuses through a new form of storytelling on the preservation of oral traditions and traditional ways of living. *Nunavut* (Our Land, 1994/95) is 13 half-hour episodes of life in the Igloolik community, mixing fiction with instruction in a soap opera format. The work displayed by Huit Facettes, a collective of Senegalese artists, centre around a rural "sociocultural center of creativity" and how a graphic register for a new alphabet was developed to decorate huts. The Congolese activist collective Le Groupe Amos creates didactic materials for mostly illiterate grass-roots groups in the form of videos, theatre, printed material, paintings and radio broadcasts, of which some debates could be accessed through headphones by the Documenta audience.

Various trouble spots and sites of abjection – possible origins of the paperless, migrating masses – were highlighted. Zarina Bhimji's film *Out of the blue* (2002) is a poignant endeavour to come to terms with the past as an Indian, expelled as a child from Uganda by Idi Amin. The camera records a landscape of brutalized buildings – abandoned barracks, prisons and police cells – yet offers no narrative closure, only a burning metaphor for destruction and loss. Memory and destruction are also addressed by Eyal Sivan's film *Itsembatsemba – Rwanda: One Genocide Later* (1996). He mixed

contemporary footage and photographs of the massacre with Christian inspired radio broadcasts inciting genocide to chilling effect. The installation of Fareed Armaly & Rashid Masharawi *From/To* (2002) maps out differences between cartographic representations of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the experience of Palestinians on the ground, obliging viewers to step over checkpoints and borders drawn on the floor of the Documenta Halle.

Redefining the documentary

It has been estimated that visitors to Documenta 11 had to spend 600 hours (Heartney 2002:87) to watch all the films and videos, of which none was shorter than 20 minutes. This proliferation of time-based artworks and the amount of incorporated text on display were some of the main criticisms against the exhibition. Whereas the inclusion of text were up to artists who worked with non-retinal aspects that cross disciplinary genres, Enwezor (2003:45) explains the longer films were a curatorial choice, intended to change "the viewer's relationship to the time of the exhibition, which is another device we used to elaborate critically".

If the experience of time is used as critical strategy, it does not matter that the audience could not experience all the work equally. The intention was to create an exhibition space that facilitated the non-totalizing curatorial approach to Documenta 11, that there are "no overarching conclusions to be reached, no forms of closure" (Enwezor 2002:42-43). A rhizomatic structure has "multiple entryways" (Deleuze & Guattari 1987:12) and Documenta 11 had likewise "many centres and many edges" (Bauer 2002:106), leaving it up to viewers to choose among the revolving doors. The aim was not the supply of "eye candy", but the "production of knowledge" (Enwezor 2003:44). Co-curator Sarat Maharaj (2002:72) formulated the role of visual art as developing modalities to "enable both 'other' ways of knowing and ways of knowing 'otherness' ", and to furthermore act as "art-ethical processing plants churning out options and potentials for chipping in, action and involvement in the world". These notions of agency, of the artist (or other cultural practitioner) and audience, were present throughout Documenta 11.

If Documenta 11 showed many works produced in what for some is "new media" and for others – mostly American and Japanese critics – "not new enough", this is a function of the possibilities that were opened up by these media. Video travels well and levels the playing field to artists from different parts of the world, facilitating participation when resources are limited. In a sense the space of diaspora is articulated by the video documentary. That these works were seen as a too literal "catalogue of dysfunction and disaster" (Gioni 2002:106) by some critics, created according to Enwezor (2003:44) "an unnecessary opposition between art, which is transcendent and metaphysical, and documentary, which is about the excrementality of the real world."

Journalistic realism was not the aim of the artists participating in Documenta 11. The documentary genre was redefined through the use of metaphor, multiple viewpoints, and fictive and transdisciplinary interventions, as a strategy to question the power of artworks to stimulate ideas and ethical reflections. The issue was not whether documentaries, as some special class of images, could be recovered to

convey unmitigated "truths". "It is difficult", is Alfredo Jaar's (2002:290) understated summary of the artist's position upon confronting the question, "How do I make art when the world is in such a state?" His work for Documenta 11, *Lament of the images* (2002), is as much a metaphor for blindness to mediated information as for erasure. An ante-room with 3 white illuminated texts in black boxes – about the damage to Mandela's eyes in the limestone quarries of Robben Island, Bill Gates' ownership of 65 million photographs stored underground, and the purchase of all satellite images of Afghanistan by the Pentagon – lead to a second room, blindingly lit by a white screen. Ideas about the accuracy and veracity of the documentary were effectively inverted by The Atlas Group's detailed fictive archives about the civil wars in Lebanon of 1975-91.

According to María Fernández (2003:52) Documenta 11 "reintroduces the testimonial potential of images as a subject for reconsideration" and questions "our acceptance of a post-indexical, simulacral era from which there is neither respite nor escape". Ultimately the curatorial focus on the documentary is political : "the political dimension has to deal with the ethics of representation, and the production of an exhibition that tries to privilege the speaking position of the producer of ideas is to me a political action" (Enwezor 2003:45).

Curatorial gains

Stuart Hall (2003b:198) questions whether Documenta 11 will in the long run be seen as "a more permanent break in the regime which governs the international circulation of the artwork", or if it will be labelled as "a moment of the exotic, […] an interlude of 'cultural diversity' ". The appointment of German director Roger Buergel for Documenta 12, the first "indigenous" artistic director to head the institution since 1987, could indeed indicate a "recovery" of sorts. The curatorial correctness achieved by curating in a multicultural team has however been retained for Documenta 12.

Platform 5 visually shifted the Europe/American axis of Documenta in line with the focus on the North-South divide of former colonial powers and developing countries. Enwezor showed an art world with a "new geography of centrality and marginality", to borrow Saskia Sassen's phrase for a new transnational power grid of global cities and the rest. Even if the largely Western audience of Documenta 11 might have approached the artworks with an exotic frame of reference, the curatorial choices precluded any canning, packaging, and shipping for consumption. Portraying artists from what used to be called the "peripheries" as active intellectual agents ensured true global participation, rather than implementing hegemonic constructs of globalism that act as mechanisms of exclusion.

The multiplicity of transdisciplinary and antidisciplinary voices created possibilities of truly shifting borders in contemporary artistic discourse. Documenta 11 thus opened up a space, rather than proposing a model, for the inclusion of a multiplicity of visions. In this Enwezor's Documenta is in step with what Hans Ulrich Obrist (2003:149) sees as an imperative of our time: "[W]e cannot possibly understand today's visual culture without taking into consideration other fields of knowledge. It is not

about a particular kind of transdisciplinary art, it is a more general problem, and a historical relevant one".

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SESSION: AESTHETICS OF TERROR: 9/11 AND AFTER

PAPER TITLE: IRAQ, 9/11 AND ABU GHRAIB: DEATH AND EMPATHY[1]

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*The particular horror of the camps, the horror that convinces us that what went on there was a crime against humanity, is not that despite a humanity shared with their victims, the killers treated them like lice. That is too abstract. The horror is that the killers refused to think themselves into the place of their victims, as did everyone else. They said, "It is **they** in those cattle cars rattling past." They did not say, "How would it be if it were I in that cattle car?" They did not say, "It is I who am in that cattle car." They said, "It must be the dead who are being burned today, making the air stink and falling in ash on my cabbages." They did not say, "How would it be if I were burning?" They did not say, "I am burning, I am falling in ash.*
J.M. Coetzee *Elizabeth Costello.* Vintage, 2004:79

[D]escriptive and narrative languages, those to which we most resort today, are no longer appropriate. They correspond to something or someone who already exists, and is even already in the past, or put into the past by what is said. The task here is different. It is a question of making something exist, in the present and even more in the future. It is a matter of staging an encounter between the one and the other – which has not yet occurred, or for which we lack the words, gestures, thus the means of welcoming, celebrating, cultivating it in the present and the future.
Luce Irigaray *The Way of Love*. Continuum, 2002:viii

Numerous scholars have convincingly argued that in its coverage of the The Gulf War (1991), the events of 9/11 and the ensuing 'Wars on Terror', the media imagines a Western subject who is constituted by its 'separation' from hordes of threatening and phantasmatic 'others'.[2] These 'others' are figured as spatially distant and existentially different from the Western subject. This distance and difference, it is argued, produces mutually constitutive forms of subjectivity that are, however, structured in an asymmetrical relationship. While "symbolically central" (Biressi and Nunn, 2003:7), this geographically peripheral other is turned into an 'Other' who is then construed as an object rather than a subject. Many critics argue that the "dehumanisation and demonisation of this 'Other' is a central aspect of war media management" (Ibid:10), and that the media is, therefore, co-implicated in the normalisation of violence enacted against 'Others'. For instance, Zygmunt Bauman (2001:1) argues:

A bizarre adventure happened to space on the road to globalisation: it lost its importance while gaining in significance […] everything can be done to far away places of other peoples without going anywhere." [3]

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[1] Work in progress: please do not cite without the author's permission.
[2] Cf. Baderoon (2004), Baudrillard (1995), Butler (2002), Chomsky (2001), Giroux (2004), Moeller (1999), Said (1978 [1991]) and Taylor (1998).
[3] This form of dematerialisation is evident in a telling dislocation, Sontag (cited in Chan, 2003:8) reminds us that the U.S. central command, or 'centcom,' for the Afghan war in 2001-2 was actually located in Tampa, Florida. And centcom for the invasion of Iraq in 2003 was in Doha, Qatar.

In reflecting on South African mediations of the globalised media's interpretations of 9/11 Gabeba Baderoon (2004:175), much like Bauman, discusses the role the media plays in 'othering':

> On that day, the small number of television sources of information who deal in international news, CNN, the BBC and Sky News, demonstrated to South Africans the compelling idiom of a globalized mediascape. With the rise of these 24-hour international news organizations based in the United States and Britain, a powerful though unarticulated geography is at work in world news. The logic by which this geography works is through disembodiment and de-emphasis of location. From a symbolic centre, a gaze is aimed with disembodied equanimity at the rest of the globe. Watching the news, an imagined global viewer is situated, at least symbolically, in this unarticulated place. [4]

Susan Sontag (2004) amongst others, has shown how this disembodiment and dislocation, often borne of the media's complicity with the U.S. military machinery, is predicated on and has as its effect the obstruction of empathy between the Western subject and its 'Other'.[5] It is argued that, in producing these events in the form of spectacle, the media sets up a hierarchical subject/object correlation, and that the foreclosure on empathy is a consequence of this relationship. Now while I acknowledge, and take as my point of departure, the argument that, within the prevailing configuration of media systems and discursive networks, the relationship instantiated between self and 'Other' is rarely one of compassion and empathy, nonetheless, I would argue that we need to stretch this analysis in another direction. My sense is that the distance, indifference, and modes of disembodiment the media can produce are not intrinsic to its structures, and that we therefore need to be attentive to its capacity to effect intersubjective relationships. We need to remind ourselves that the subject does not only encounter the media image as a 'representational object' formed within a particular ideological and technological context of production. This mode of 'reading' often completely effaces the affected and embodied aspects of our encounters with images (cf. Landsberg, 2000 and Shaviro, 1994). The act of looking is a tactile affect-laden experience in which subjects might be 'touched' through their eyes and project themselves into objects of contemplation; and are thereby able to cross boundaries to reach, and be touched by, the 'objects' they contemplate.

The purpose of this paper is twofold: to stage, or at least begin to imagine, an intersubjective relationship between subjects shaped by empathy, rather than only distance and indifference; and, to begin to move beyond the ocularcentrism that characterises a great deal of the analysis of the scenography I sketch in this introduction.[6] My view is that because this ocularcentrism privileges a hierarchical subject/object relation at the expense of an intersubjective one, and because its concentration on vision excludes the other senses which influence how we experience, and relate to, the world, it is necessary to think beyond it. I should emphasise that my reading of empathy and

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[4] Many commentators have noted how these scenes form an image-war that shadows, as it instantiates, the Real one (cf. Baudrillard, 1995 and Žižek 2002). I note that in this paper I concern myself with English language Western media and that there are some important variations across this discursive network just as there are within Arab language media. I further note that it is not my intention to efface the distinctions between different modes of address and sites/sights of reception. I acknowledge that of course there are variations; but these are issues that many commentators and scholars already address. I want to open up another set of questions.
[5] Cf. Sontag (2004) and Moten (2002).
[6] Cf. Jenks (1995) for a discussion of the 'ocularcentrism' that characterises Western culture.

intersubjectivity comes from an engagement with questions around images and their reception. To this end, I coax out of the shadows some scenarios within which the media evidences its potential to engender intersubjective relations conditioned by empathy. I do so by tracing the contours of some of the tissue that connects the disappearance of the Iraqi body in television coverage of the Persian Gulf War in 1991, and its recent return in the images of the torture U.S. soldiers meted out at Abu Ghraib prison, to the repressed footage of bodies falling from the World Trade Center (WTC) on the 11th of September, 2001.[7] My paper is therefore written in dialogue with others who have asked: 'How might scenes of violence and death move us?' I explore how this material simultaneously reveals and conceals death, and what affects this operation might yield. This is an exploratory argument that seeks to establish the image's synesthetic potential, and to consider how it might engage the viewer in a form of empathetic identification in the face of the complex encounter with death that television provides in these scenes.

The first part of the paper that deals with the Iraqi body in the context of the Gulf and Iraq wars acknowledges, as it works to develop, politicoethical analyses of this body's 'disappearance' by reflecting on the questions of death and torture. I do not want to over claim a position counter to the politically important and ethically-centred analyses Bauman et al. make, as I would agree that the globalised media does commonly structure distance and indifference between subjects; but I think that in addition to analysing how existing media discourses and systems work, it is also necessary to consider how we might intervene in and change the symbolic and material aspects of systems of domination. So in some respects the paper is speculative as it seeks to imagine a world that perhaps does not yet exist rather than describe one that already does. This is a world that needs to be anticipated, imagined, and induced in the process of its imagining. I argue that this process begins by being attentive to what Brunt (2003) calls "the big leaky moments" in addition to the "smaller caesural ones" within the pervasive web of media representations of war, such as the photographs of torture that took place at Abu Ghraib prison. I propose that if we are attentive to the apertures that the media and political apparatus sutures shut through strategies of disavowal and recuperation, then we might detect moments in which its operations are susceptible to the production of disobedient forms of subjectivity, moments in which subjects do not respond in fixed and programmatic ways. This part of the paper is still located within the field of retinal and ideological analyses of media images of the war. Having lived with this imagery for some time, I found that there was a remainder to these images that I could not think about within the parameters of an ideological reading. Hence the shift to the most speculative realm of the paper in my return to the repressed 9/11 suicide footage. I think that the 'buried' images of people jumping to their deaths from the WTC most strongly demonstrates that images of violence and death do not only encompass ideological meanings and effects. I think that there is something about

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[7] In his account of the U.S. army's report on the events at Abu Ghraib, Julian Borger (2004:1) notes that when asked if the "treatment amounted to torture," Major General George Fay guardedly replied, "It's a harsh word, and in some instances, unfortunately, I think it was appropriate here. There were a few instances where torture was being used." Sontag (2004) emphasises what are the ethical implications of not calling torture what transpired at Abu Ghraib.

these images that refuses the retinal and that this, in turn, compels an engagement with the question of affect.

Death and the Image

For Roland Barthes (cited in Doane, 1990:220), photographs "embalm," they are "haunted by death and historicity." Through being "threatened with the potential trauma and explosiveness of the present," Mary Ann Doane (1990:220-233) argues that, "in its own way, television maintains an intimate relation with the ideas of death and referentiality that Barthes finds so inescapable in his analysis of the photograph."[8] This relationship was enacted on 9/11 in the repetition of the footage of: planes flying into the WTC, and infinitesimal figures falling from its burning towers. This was dead time and the time of the dead, when television appeared to stop time and register our inability to conceive of death's finitude. Doane (Ibid) further notes, "death cannot be contained within the social rhythms of everyday life" and that it "may be death which forms the point of televisual intrigue." And yet, she points out, "contemporary society works to conceal death to such an extent that its experience is generally a vicarious one through representation" (Ibid).[9] She also reminds us that Walter Benjamin traces death's removal from:

> direct perception to the nineteenth Century when bourgeois society ha[d], by means of hygienic and social, private and public institutions realized a secondary effect which may have been its subconscious main purpose: to make it possible for people to avoid the sight of dying. (Ibid)

So although death is ostensibly visible at these catastrophic moments, in most instances, television works to keep it hidden from view: it therefore both conjures, and defers, what it purports to represent. This procedure is apparent in the enforced disappearance of the evanescent and indelible television footage of people who jumped to their deaths from the WTC.[10] In view of the event's unexpectedness,

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[8] Patricia Mellencamp (1990:240) has also identified how television, "capitalizes (sic) on the passage of time as aging and death."

[8] Doane (1990:229) further asserts that catastrophes are also often, "linked to the failure of technology – they always seem to have something to do with technology and its potential collapse." I would add that they are associated with a set of anxieties around technology's reliability and efficacy. We see traces of this anxiety in the exhaustive and ongoing attempts to account for the cascade of multiple technological failures including those of military intelligence, aviation and engineering that transpired on the 11 of September, 2001. Jean Baudrillard (cited in Coulter, 2004:2) reflects on the 9/11 hijackers' strategy that was clearly designed to exploit this anxiety, "a new kind of terrorism has come into being. Terrorists used everything the West takes for granted: money etc… therefore most frightening to the West (sic) they have assimilated and incorporated these aspects of modernity without losing the will to destroy the West." Catastrophe is also always, "tainted with death – so that it might finally be defined as the conjuncture of the failure of technology and the resulting confrontation with death" (Doane, 1990:229). In addition to selecting symbolically- overdetermined targets, the attackers' use of elements of these very technologies to carry-out their assault intensified the perception of the event's magnitude – it is what made it so spectacular and apparently catastrophic. Paul Virilio (cited in Coulter, 2004:3) argues, "It was not only the lessons of Hollywood the terrorists had learned so well, but also those of other high-technology operations originating in Washington D.C." He further notes that the attack reminded him of the, "image strategy of the multimedia presentation of the Gulf War and Kosovo conflicts" (Ibid). For Virilio, then, the attackers were implicated in the very system they sought to destroy and the media, in turn, colluded with the attackers as the footage's repetition, "multiplied the force of their actions" (Ibid). In self-consciously producing their assault as a spectacle, Slavoj Žižek (2002:10) observes that they also appear to have understood that, "The Real, paradoxically, is materialised in spectacle, in its effect."

[9] Tom Junod conducted an extensive investigation into the American media's frantic deliberations around these images and concluded, "In the most photographed and videotaped day in the history of the world, the images of people jumping were the only images that became, by consensus, taboo. All over the world, people saw the human stream debouch from

the number of deaths and the number of cameras trained on the scene, it is remarkable that the media apparatus was nonetheless still able to keep the devastation at bay. The nature and extent of bodily destruction emerged in narrative, rather than pictorial, form – generally sometime after the event. Bodies that are constructed as 'foreign' within a Western media context generally do not enjoy such consideration - an indication of the differential value and treatment that bodies marked as socially different and unequal are afforded in the media. John Taylor also finds duplicity at work in the Western media's procedures with respect to death and its representation. Writing from a British vantage point, Taylor (1998:129) identifies a somatic hierarchy whereby, "(d)eath is rarely seen in ragged human remains unless they are foreign […] reports of horrors overseas concentrate on the essential strangeness of victims, whether they invoke revulsion or invite compassion."[11]

The Iraqi Body Disappears

In the 1991 Gulf War, the need to exorcise the demons leftover from Vietnam by minimising the sight of 'collateral damage,' conspired with the "increasing mechanisation of warfare - the use of technologically advanced weapons which kill at greater and greater distances" (Doane, Ibid) – to absent Iraqi bodies from the battlefield and television set. In its coverage of this war, television therefore structured a deceptive encounter with death. Sontag's (cited in Chan, 2003:9) critique of modern combat's dematerialisation highlights the disproportion that, increasingly, seems to characterise military encounters between the United States (U.S.) and its putative adversaries, "with the merging of modern weaponry and the vision machine on the one side and the blood and guts reality of combat on the other" (Ibid). In a similar vein, Baudrillard reflects on the coverage of the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 as follows:

> Actual violence, the so-called "ugliness" of war, is deferred, or at least edited at all costs; immateriality by mass mediation interrupts the passage to the real materiality on the ground.

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the top of the North Tower, but here in the United States, we saw these images only until the networks decided not to allow such a harrowing view, out of respect for the families of those so publicly dying."

[10] Evans Chan (2003:25) traces the "tight regulation" and expurgation of images of death, particularly American deaths, from the U.S. media to the "backlash of the Vietnam era." Indeed America's difficult history of involvement in Vietnam continues to shape its military and foreign policy. Jean-Luc Nancy (1993:37) also identified a relationship between the Gulf War (1991) and earlier American military interventions, "one must not forget the role played on all sides by the political desire and need to make up for former lost wars (Vietnam and Sinai, although the two cases are quite different)." In an unintentionally revelatory comment General Norman Schwarzkopf constructed a link between 'Operation Desert Storm' and Vietnam in which the Gulf War was imagined as a therapeutic return to the scene of an earlier trauma, "This is not going to be another Vietnam, we're going to wrap this thing up and get you all home as soon as possible" (Schwarzkopf cited in Taylor, 1998:161). It would seem that the ghosts of previous wars continue to hover around the new ones. The U.S. led invasion of Iraq in 2003 has prompted comparisons between this morally ambiguous war and earlier 'just' wars. This comparison was played out in some of the ruminations on the differences between the Iraq War and the two World Wars at the beginning of the Twentieth Century and was precipitated by the June 2004 'D-Day' celebrations to commemorate the battle of Normandy. For example, in his introduction to a selection of letters written by soldiers who participated in this battle, Simon Schama (2004:17) warns against the perils of remembering this battle and war incorrectly, "How the memory craves the reassurance of the Good War, as Studs Terkel called it, while we're in the middle of a really bad one. But if we need to be on our guard against sentimental consolation, we need, at least as much, to resist amnesia." Nancy (1993:37) offered a similar warning while acknowledging in the Gulf War, "The images of the war are part of the war" he was nonetheless reluctant to add his voice to, "those who had not failed to characterise [that] war as spectacular" because he detected a trace of nostalgia for an imaginary 'good war' in certain strains of the critique that had described the war in those terms. Notwithstanding such injunctions against amnesia it would appear that the desire for the morally good war is irresistible.

Yet new strategies are constantly evolving to get viewers closer to the ground – to get viewers closer to the "action".

His comment is borne out by one of the more sustained ironies of the Iraq war: the 'embedded-videophone-journalism' extended the means by which the viewing public was insulated from the conflict's materiality, whilst claiming to bring them into ever more direct contact with it. In Andrew O' Hehir's (2003:5) terms, the new videophone technology "produced a panopticon of nothingness." There were some moments when the seamlessness of the simulacral war was threatened by the interruption of the Real; but the media apparatus stealthily moved to contain the threat of disruption. For example, when *Al Jazeera* broadcast images of dead American and British soldiers. According to Gary Genosko (2004:2), when this material was, "flighted in the U.S. [it] was considered contraband by the Pentagon and quickly disappeared – the real was violently close, too close, evidently, for anyone's comfort zone." This prohibition around showing war's human cost repeats the U.S. military's strategy, and the media's complicity with that strategy, in the 1991 Gulf War. In her critique of military and media collusion in constructing the myth of the Gulf War as a 'clean' war with 'smart' bombs and minimal human devastation, Elaine Scarry (1993:62) reminds us that in the, "brief moment when dead Iraqi civilians were pictured and another when the bruised faces of US soldiers were shown; this caused such turmoil among viewers that the subject had to be put to the side."[12]

In her analysis of television coverage during the Gulf War, Elaine Scarry (Ibid) commented, "there were no bodies of the enemy, no photographs of bodies, no verbal narratives about bodies." Of course this failure to recognise the Other, by not taking into account, and not making an account of, the pain that is inflicted, engenders indifference and impedes empathy. Allen Feldman (1994:406) argues that this procedure translates into a form of "cultural anaesthesia" that, in turn, constructs a hierarchy of sensory perceptions with devastating consequences as was the case in the television coverage of 'Operation Desert Storm' where:

> In order to fuse perceptual dominance with topographic conquest, enemy, oriental bodies were electronically "disappeared" […] Iraqis were magically transmuted into miniscule grains of sand that threatened the American war machine. Here the body vanished was *a priori* the body vanquished. […] Culturally biased narrations, abetted by information technology […] precluded any scream of pain, any stench of corpse from visiting the American Living Room.

Abu Ghraib: The Return of the Repressed

Within this aesthetics of disappearance, where the extent of the injuries to enemy bodies was hidden and forgotten, "the embodied nature of this violence was elided and the viewer was inured from realizing the human-material consequences of the war" (Ibid). And as the 'Iraqbodycount' project

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[12] Susan Moeller (1999) shows that this military/media strategy culminated in an almost instantaneous amnesia that effected a particularly iniquitous distortion of cultural memory. This exclusion from public view of war wounded and dead has been extended from the Gulf War, to the wars in Afghanistan (2001-2002) and Iraq. For obvious reasons, and contra the U.S. administration's practice during Vietnam, Roger Cohn (2004:6) reports,
"There have been no images of the coffins coming home from Iraq. The Pentagon made sure of that last March, on the eve of the war, when it issued a directive prohibiting media coverage of "deceased military personnel" at any military bases."

attests, the media/military operations which Feldman and Scarry catalogued are also evident in the Iraq war.[13] If our knowledge of the wounded Iraqi body, in all its 'threatening' corporeality, was repressed in the first Gulf War, then of course, it returned with a vengeance in the emergence of the digitally produced images of torture from Abu Ghraib prison. The shock to the collective nervous system was the shock of the return of the real woundable Iraqi body in all its fragile materiality: a body that registers pain, a body that bleeds. Elements of the same technology that produced the first Gulf War, in Scarry's (Ibid) terms, as "lavishly beautiful images" whose clean technology of death was at once "vogue-like and high-tech," now revealed glimpses of the process of torture.[14]

Although there had been reports of torture ever since the invasion of Afghanistan and the American Civil Liberties Union had uncovered six hundred torture-related government documents from October 2003 (Welch, 2005), it was only when the Abu Ghraib images came to public prominence that the torture became real. Until the photographs emerged, the U.S. political and media strategy successfully stage managed and recuperated the more disruptive aspects of the media's coverage of the invasion, occupation and 'insurgency.' One of its strategies was to neutralise the disorderly narratives and imagery that occasionally emerged by orchestrating their own spectacles of heroism, patriotism and triumph. This tactic was clearly evident in the Jessica Lynch (Gibbs, 2003) story, the graphic display of Uday and Qusay Hussein's corpses (Hoskins, 2004), the toppling of a statue of Saddam Hussein, footage of a dishevelled Hussein himself in captivity, and the commander-in-chief's 'top-gun-like' appearance on a U.S. battleship when he declared the U.S. "mission accomplished".[15] These events were produced as iconic flash-frames into which vast reservoirs of material history were meant to be integrated and distilled. The Abu Ghraib photographs unsettled these strategies and served as a

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[13] I want to highlight the work undertaken by 'Iraqbodycount.org' a 'human security project' that seeks, "to establish an independent and complete public database of media-reported civilian deaths in Iraq resulting from military action by the USA and its allies." The work of counting the dead is something, they point out, those responsible for the deaths should do, failing that, they should not prevent Iraqis from doing this difficult work themselves. The organisation has taken on this responsibility precisely because, they argue, the U.S. coalition has failed to do so and because they are also preventing Iraqis from doing this work themselves (See also McCarthy, 2004). When I viewed their website the Iraqi death toll was recorded as being somewhere between 11, 717 and 13, 724 – the researchers provide an explanation on the site for the rationale behind the minimum and maximum figures they cite. These figures stood in marked contrast to the number of US deaths – just under 1000 at that time. In making this comparison I do not want to suggest an absurd inversion whereby the Iraqi deaths should somehow take on an importance at the expense of U.S. deaths – this would only serve to entrench the hierarchical logic and calculus I wish to critique. Although Iraqi and American bodies, I have wanted to show, are both hidden from view, the rationale that undergirds their disappearance points to a fundamental lack of equivalence between these bodies (see Baderoon, 2004). Within the prevailing schema, they are accorded differential value and status. On the one hand, American bodies are valuable therefore it would be detrimental to the current U.S. administration to render their soldiers' deaths visible, on the other hand, and I hesitate to be so crude, Iraqi deaths do not seem to matter. In this respect, I concur with Francoise Verges (2004:16) who writes, "we are witnessing a new era of an excess of violence, the fabrication of disposable people on a world scale, whose life or death (sic) don't matter. The message today is that the world will not be shared with them; that they do not count […] we should ask ourselves: who matters, what matters?" I should emphasise that Verges does not indulge in a simplistic anti-American posturing, she implicates, in her critique, all manifestations of 'mass' violence, including genocide.
[14] It is important to note that many of the images have not been brought into the public domain – Welch (2005) estimates that over 1800 images were suppressed, and that there has been a steady stream of subsequent revelations of torture. He describes what is contained in the images that have not been made public, " female prisoners being raped and Iraqi guards raping young boys." Giroux (2004:786) points out that in June 2004, the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* both published additional stories that documented the "use of torture-like practices by American Soldiers."
[15] Dixon (2004) analyses the intertextual associations between media footage of the war and fiction films. Refer to Gibbs (2003) for further evidence of this relationship.

counterpoint to the embedded videophone footage by revealing what that material ultimately covered over.[16]

The photographs invoke, as they stage and shift, other tropes and archives of suffering. The image of a hooded detainee on a box with electrodes attached to his outstretched hands and genitals summons both lynching and crucifixion iconographies and therefore takes on a startling hybrid form. Other images, including the now emblematic photograph of Pfc. Lynndie England dragging a 'leashed' man, depict rather dispassionate soldiers and thereby suggest that these were routine practices.[17] But what distinguishes these photographs from others of this type is the fact that the perpetrators posed with their 'victims', often adopting gloating postures in a self-conscious display of the acts of humiliation and violence they had enacted. As Linfield (2005) argues, "they not only depict cruelty; but celebrate it". By staging torture in this manner, the soldiers make manifest what the U.S. had sought to conceal with the mantle of 'humanitarian militarism'. The images were so unsettling because they unintentionally revealed the racist logics that infuse the Bush regime's 'Wars on Terror' and that underpin its ostensible 'humanitarianism'. Notwithstanding George Bush and Donald Rumsfeld's anaemic attempts to exculpate the U.S. from accusations of complicity in those scenes of torture, this was the continuation of a process that began in an earlier time. As Paul Gilroy (2004:3) argues:

> They were not just instances of porn-soaked American contempt for the sand-niggers and towel-heads, but a small part of the routine functioning of colonial administration which had significant precedents and analogues elsewhere – wherever colonial wars were fought.

For Scarry (cited in Feldman, 1991:114-115), torture, in an act of transubstantiation, "converts body pain into imaginary "insignia" of political power." In her study of torture, she demonstrates that the need for intelligence information is an alibi, "the motive for torture," she argues, "is to a large extent the equivalent of […] fictionalised power." It would seem that the state's materialisation both requires, and comes at the expense of, the Other's dematerialisation. Building on Scarry's insights into state violence and power Feldman (Ibid) notes, "The production of bodies – political subjects - is the self-production of the state":

> *The performance of torture does not apply power; rather it manufactures it from the "raw" ingredient of the captive's body. The surface of the body is the stage where the state is made to appear as an effective material force.* (Italics in the original)

When the soldiers pose in the photographs they make visible the imperial gaze that usually conceals itself. Kaplan (1997:xix) has demonstrated how, "white subjectivities […] can […] be destabilized when exposed to the gaze of the Other, since this is a gaze to which such subjects have not traditionally been subjected." I would argue that the Abu Ghraib photographs show that Western subjectivity can also be

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[16] It is worth highlighting that it was material produced by soldiers, and revealed by a soldier, that brought the Abu Ghraib torture to public attention rather than a journalist's investigation.
[17] Giroux (2004) points out that many of the images were carefully cropped before publication and that the uncropped images depict many 'bystanders'. These photographs suggest that the torture was far more routinised and widespread than various courts martial have concluded.

'destabilised' and unsettled when it is confronted with its own gaze. I think that this is one of the photographs' effects and one of the reasons why they generated such anxiety. It also explains why many immediately sought to innoculate themselves against self-condemnation (North, 2004).

The images also markedly structure the viewer's gaze within the photographs' borders and therefore foreground the ethical demands they make on the viewer. In his philosophical rendering of the self/other relationship Achille Mbembe draws on Emmanuel Levinas's thesis on 'being-for-the-other' to argue:

> My humanity and existence rest in being accountable for the Other's death, recognizing and treating their vulnerability as though it were my own. […] from top to toe and to the very marrow, the human being is vulnerability, he argues. In vulnerability lies a relation to the Other. Indeed, there is no human subject that is not for the Other. This 'being-for-the-other' is, for him, the essence of freedom. […] At the centre of this operation is the face or more specifically, the dialectics of the face and the trace. The face, says Levinas, constitutes a unique opening into the other.[18]

In view of Mbembe's argument it is telling that most of the Iraqis presented in the torture photographs were hooded and that the images were staged in the manner of 'lynching' photographs. This refusal to recognise the Other, by covering the face – the site where difference is made visible, and a transitional space of communion and exchange – is demonstrative, it is both the necessary precondition for, and ironically unmasks, a profound failure of recognition. The refusal to recognise the Other is exemplified by the series of images that illustrate how Iraqis were piled on top of one another to form a 'pyramid' of bodies. These images reveal how the Iraqis depicted in the photographs were denied subjectivity and agency as it is understood within a Western framework. The individual Iraqi body lost its form as it was subsumed by the composite structure made up of multiple bodies. These Iraqis were first deprived of their subject status and turned into bodies. Then their bodies were reduced to 'matter' that didn't matter. The following statement made by a soldier clearly illustrates that the torturers obliterated Iraqi subjectivity by reducing the prisoners to object status, "I remember SSG Frederik hitting one prisoner on the side of <u>its</u> ribcage […] kneeling with <u>its</u> mouth open (emphases not in original)" (cited in Hersh, S. 2004:32).

The Iraqi body's re-appearance was accompanied by strategies of containment and disavowal. Watching Rumsfeld's testimony on Capitol Hill, and having read numerous essays and opinion pieces about the Abu Ghraib prison abuses, one was struck by a further displacement the Iraqi body suffered.[19] Whilst supposedly expressing outrage or concern with the military's conduct, a great deal of this material shifted the critical gaze from the 'Iraqi body in pain' to instead concentrate on what the

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[18] Similarly, the editors of *Theoria* (2002:viii) assert, "Levinas's concept of justice, synchronous with his reformulation of humanism, is based on responsibility and openness to the other. It is equivalent neither to natural law, nor to legislative calculation; but is marked by our pre-intentional relationship to the Other (*being-for-the-other*)." They further claim that Levinas's justice is, "critical and situated in its particularity, yet demanding of an ethical responsibility that extends beyond the immediate vicinity to all Others."

[19] In this regard, Rumsfeld's (cited in McGeary, 2004:26) language in 'assuming responsibility' for what took place at Abu Ghraib is revealing, "I failed to identify the catastrophic damage that the allegations of abuse could do to our operations in the theatre, to the safety of our troops in the field, to the cause to which we are committed." His institutional and instrumental language bears no trace of recognition - no '*being-for-the-other*.'

photographs mean for, and divulge about, America. In many of these reports, there is an almost obsessive concern with how the grotesque images reflect on, or challenge, the moral certainty of ostensibly quintessential American values. This concern tended to eclipse the Iraqis shown to be injured and humiliated in the photographs. I would argue that, in an attempt to quarantine the images, Bush's (cited in Gibbs, N. 2004:60) statement, "This does not represent the America I know," exemplifies the kind of displacement I describe. And in view of Bush's claim, it is perhaps not surprising, then, that this mode of disarticulation is repeated by Nancy Gibbs (Ibid) in her *Time* magazine essay titled, "Their Humiliation and America's." While Gibbs admittedly does point to Iraqi humiliation, she ultimately deflects American responsibility for these acts of torture onto an imagined 'orientalist topography' when arguing that the torturers, "a small group of U.S. soldiers harvested" the values that were "already there." She implies that the 'errant' soldiers were contaminated by an intrinsically un-American impulse to torture that is somehow immanent to Iraqi geography. According to this logic, then, and despite evidence to the contrary, electrically shocking a shackled man's genitals can't really be American and what matters most is American humiliation rather than the 'punishment' enacted through Iraqi bodies. This logic was also evident during the congressional hearings when a number of senators suggested that the U.S. remedy the damage that had been done by tearing down the prison and putting something else in its place.[20]

There is further evidence of the U.S. administration's attempt to remove the Iraqi subject from the scene in its conduct following the Abu Ghraib disclosures. They handled the matter as a public relations problem (Welch, 2005) and paid scant attention to Iraqi suffering. They interpreted the torture as an aberration, and attempted to supplant evidence of the military's routinised use of torture with narratives highlighting the American military's 'humanitarian' interventions. The U.S. administration's 'response' to Abu Ghraib evidences its tendency, "not [to] stoop to feel even if it incorporates and controls a powerful discourse of feeling" (Moten, 2002:194).

The U.S. administration is not the only culprit. Many commentators, lay the blame for Abu Ghraib squarely at the door of reality television, feminism, gay pornography, and even the images themselves.[21] One would expect this kind of argument from Oliver North; but many of the more thoughtful critics, who challenge the conservative analytical position for deflecting the burden of responsibility for torture from the U.S. leadership, share this "iconophobia" and also view the media as an intrinsically corrupting force (albeit for different reasons).[22] For instance, in reflecting on "how pedagogy […] becomes central to understanding the changing political, ideological, and economic

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[20] Hoskins (2004) shows that the bigger the media event, the bigger the displacement.
[21] Sontag (2004) warned that it would, "increasingly be thought unpatriotic to disseminate the new photographs and further tarnish the image of America." This is precisely how key figures both at the centre, and at the periphery, of the political landscape chose to respond to Abu Ghraib. For example, Oliver North (2004) and Senator John Warner both argued that the real issue at stake was that the images would endanger American lives. Cf. Giroux (2004) and Linfield (2005) for an overview of the rhetorical tropes evident in debates around Abu Ghraib in different public spheres.
[22] Cf. Heartney (2004) for an overview and discussion of these arguments and Ignatieff (2004) for a discussion of the 'beheading videos'.

conditions that made the torture at Abu Ghraib possible," Giroux (2004:799) draws on Adorno's essay, 'Education after Auschwitz,' to argue:

> Adorno […] insisted that the global evolution of the media and new technologies that shrank distances as it eroded face-to-face-contact (and hence the ability to disregard the consequences of one's actions) had created a climate in which rituals of violence had become so entrenched in the culture that 'aggression, brutality and sadism' had become a normalized and unquestioned part of everyday life.

Now while I agree with Giroux when he argues that we need to translate Abu Ghraib through the frame of a sedimented history of racism and that the mass media has done little to effect this interpretation, I do not share his view that the media intrinsically precludes empathetic identifications. Notwithstanding the political and media strategies I have thus far identified and critiqued, I would argue that we also need to recognise the moments at which the media has induced an empathetic intersubjective connection between differently constructed, and situated, subjects. The first example to which I draw attention rests at the very heart of the Abu Ghraib scene. It is important to remember that it was an <u>American</u> soldier, 24 year old specialist Joseph M. Darby, who brought to the world's attention the images of torture at Abu Ghraib. After seeing the digitised images, Darby took a considerable risk when he tipped off his superiors and then made a sworn statement that precipitated the public investigation into the U.S. military's policies with respect to torture. The photographs came to light because one 'unruly' soldier recognised that the Iraqis depicted in the photographs were people like himself and that they did not deserve to be treated like non-entities. His was an act of recognition, identification and empathy. Many who became aware of the torture at Abu Ghraib prison by reading newspapers, looking at the photographs and watching television have been outraged and have also empathised with Iraqi suffering. Their knowledge of other photographs, images of war and atrocities did not desensitise them to what the Abu Ghraib images reveal; but prompted a critically engaged reflection on its causes and how they 'tell on' U.S. (and British) military activities in Iraq, as the following example illustrates.

 In reply to the western military/media obliteration of the Iraqi subject, Al Qaeda and its offspring, reduce the Western body to matter that doesn't matter. Al Qaeda, and its doubles, deploy the media to ensure that there is no possibility of an encounter between 'the one and the other' that is moulded by recognition and empathy. In spite of this 'military strategy', I now cite an example which demonstrates that the players in this 'zero-sum game' cannot rely on their actions always having the consequences they would expect. Nicholas Berg, a 26 year old American businessman, was beheaded in Iraq shortly after the Abu Ghraib disclosures. A video depicting his murder was broadcast on the internet. At a press conference in October 2004, Michael Berg, Nicholas's father, announced, "My son Nick will never come home […] and 20, 0000 Iraqis will never go home." He held aloft a sign that read, "I am sorry and ashamed for the tremendous loss my government has caused the Iraqi people." Berg said that it was an act of reciprocity in response to the letters of condolence and apology he received from Muslims after his son's death. The press conference was held to draw attention to the 'Iraq Photo Project' which sends photographs to Iraq of Americans holding handwritten signs apologising for the United States's

invasion and occupation. Many signs are in Arabic and some offer prayers for peace – over 400 groups have participated in the venture.[23] The project began as a response to Abu Ghraib and its director commented, "As more and more people got involved we realised their grief was greater than just the prisoner abuse" (cited in National Catholic Reporter, 2004). This venture demonstrates how an initial empathetic reaction translated into a critical reflection on U.S. foreign policy and military occupation, which, in turn, served as a catalyst for people to use the media to establish contact with Iraqis in ways that undermine the Al Qaeda agenda. And although there have been many attempts to contain the unsettling and nomadic power of the Abu Ghraib images, they nonetheless have irrevocably occluded the war's more stage-managed scenes and continue to circulate as afterimages that shadow and haunt the U.S. military and state.

Falling Bodies

If the torture photographs were an example of the simulacrum's interruption by the Real, then, I want to suggest, the footage of those who jumped to their deaths from the WTC inferno on September the 11th 2001 is another.[24] 9/11 appeared to offer a seeping/leaking contact between the society of spectacles and the shock of 'real' violence even if that contact inverted the assumed relationship between the sign and its referent.[25]

A great deal has been written about the attack's spectacular and aesthetic effects with Slavoj Žižek (2002) pronouncing that we had seen the footage in so many Hollywood films. I want to turn away from questions around the event's aesthetic power to contemplate its affective value. I do so by turning towards another *mise-en-scene* – a scene that formed a visual counterpoint to the movie-like spectacle of the planes slamming into the towers and the buildings collapsing. I am of course referring to the extirpated footage of people jumping to their deaths to escape the WTC inferno. Mikita Brottman (2004:172-173) reminds us what many of us did see:

> This footage of falling bodies, some of them on fire, contains what are perhaps the most
> memorable images of 9/11, many of which were shown live on the morning of the disaster. A man
> and woman jumped in tandem, holding hands. One woman jumped clutching her purse primly to
> her chest. […] People running from the burning towers were apparently told by the police to "just
> run-and don't look back"-as though, like Lot's wife, they risked being turned into a pillar of salt. Its
> is […] significant that, although we may have seen these bodies falling, we never saw them land.

Brottman (Ibid) then notes that:

> After September 12, however, there seems to have been a general agreement on the part of the media that the use of any images containing human beings falling from the towers was inappropriate and distasteful. Footage of the falling bodies has not been shown again in the mainstream media.[26]

Although this footage has 'disappeared', its absence makes those deaths obstinately present. The 'absent' images are, paradoxically, everpresent. We did not "see the bodies land"; yet we know that they reached the ground; and ultimately turned to ash when the buildings disintegrated. The absent images resonate with the retroactive power of suggestion; they suggest what we do not know and cannot fully understand about death. This material's disappearance has translated into something of a lacuna in some of the influential critical evaluations of 9/11's aesthetic and political force.[27] I propose that this oversight is revealing and that a return to these images is warranted because their impact is complex and ramified and cannot only be explained by theories of visual fascination or voyeurism.

The qualitative difference between the two orders of suicide footage we witnessed in the 9/11 coverage is apparent in the comments made to the BBC by a former Al Qaeda operative when accounting for his decision to become an informant, "Seeing the planes flying into the building it was fine. But when I saw those people jumping out of the building I couldn't stand the pain." [28] I suggest that he was probably not the only television viewer to react in this way and that one way to account for his reaction, could be to acknowledge that instead of technology only structuring distance between viewer and image; it might also have collapsed the separation of subject and object, and however fleetingly, may have brought the viewer into a more direct contact with death. Rather than functioning just as surface spectacle, these images, I argue, were palpable – the viewer could affectively and imaginatively share in the horrifying moment when the person about to jump from the burning tower, while still alive, knew that death was imminent. In this respect, television brought us into a relation of affectively induced empathetic recognition with the real people so very far away from most of us who watched it.

These were scenes that had not been rehearsed in Hollywood films, which did not deliver the visual frenzy of laser-like light shows, or the impact of camera-jangling bunker-busting 'Shock and Awe' bombs. These were not the redemptive or heroic images of firemen we came to associate with 9/11. In Simon Critchley's (1997:58) view, "death evades any possible approach; it seems to evade being drawn into the circle of interpretation." And if death is somehow always in excess of signification, then suicide, in particular, is obmutescent, it seems to resist fitting into the narrative and pictorial loops within which we attempt to explain death. The relation of suicide to agency in this instance is especially fraught because, unlike the suicide bomber or hijacker, this was not premeditated suicide – it was provoked by

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[26] Brottman (2004:170ff.) explains that this footage can be found online.
[27] As far as I have been able to establish, when[0] Baudrillard et al. discuss suicide in relation to 9/11, they tend to focus on the hijacker's use of suicide as military strategy. I would propose that it is necessary to disaggregate the two orders of suicide in evidence on that day.
[28] Interview conducted with Frederick Dove on Monday the 15th of March, 2004 on the BBC World Service radio program, *Outlook.*

the hijackers who shifted responsibility and agency for death onto those who were forced into jumping from the buildings.

In describing the scene in lower Manhattan when people on the ground watched their fellow New Yorkers leaping out of the WTC Tom Junod (2003:176) reported:

> No one ever got used to it, no one who saw it wished to see it again. Each jumper, no matter how many there were, brought fresh horror, elicited shock, tested the spirit, struck a lasting blow. Those tumbling through the air remained, by all accounts, eerily silent, those on the ground screamed.[29]

The phrasing here is significant as it points to a synesthetic connection between those who jumped and those who watched. But here the synesthetic response traversed the boundaries of one body to register the impulse's affect, like a contagion, in another body. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why the footage has disappeared: because it has a grasping touch that can wound and re-screening the images would be a form of re-wounding?

Doane (1990:235) identifies an economy of anxiety at work in catastrophe coverage; but adds that this material also, "allows for a persistent disavowal in viewing the bodies on the screen," where, "one can always breathe a sigh of relief in the realisation that, "that's not me – that the character on the screen – dead or alive – is always definitively *other*." I would question this aspect of her analysis and propose that, if we were to accept the image's tactility, then the onscreen figure would not always or inevitably be experienced as totally other. Although I do not quarrel with analyses which demonstrate that: television's repetition of traumatic imagery is voyeuristic; or that it often functions as a form of disavowal (Mellencamp, 1990), I would argue that there is an affective value that such analyses do not take into consideration. [30] I want to imagine the possibility of an affective economy of empathy where the viewer might also have been compelled to say: "for a moment, that was me." The paper is therefore written in the spirit of Brian Massumi's call for culture studies to build on post-structuralism's insights by retrieving the body that senses, the body that is not only imagined discursively.[31] In his reading of a series of neurocognitive experiments, Massumi (2002:25-35) deduces the primacy of the affective in image

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[29] Cf. Brottman (2004) for an analysis of this footage's 'disappearance'.

[30] Mellencamp (1990:24 ff.) holds that, in repeatedly broadcasting traumatic imagery, television produces anxiety and then ameliorates its affects. This anxiety, she contends, is therapeutically dissipated through the televisual repetition of the 'catastrophe' and through the obsessive explanatory narratives that attempt to identify its point/s of origin.

[31] In making this call, Massumi (2002:20ff.) is at some pains to emphasise that he does not want to invoke a naïve realism or empiricism. Massumi's work is informed by, and extends, Gilles Deleuze's conceptualisation of affect. And it is in his formulation of 'virtuality,' Colebrook notes (2002:148), that, "Massumi explores how politics operates through and produces the affects of power and the power of affects." Massumi (Ibid) is quick to deflect the inevitable objection to "talk of intensity" by clarifying that he is not appealing, "to a prereflexive, romantically raw domain of experiential richness – the nature in our culture." He says that is, "precisely what his notion of intensity is not." Intensity, for Massumi, is, "asocial, but not presocial – it includes social elements but mixes them with elements belonging to other levels of functioning. Intensity is incipience, incipient action and expression and the beginning of selection." In his estimation this knowledge means a reworking of how we think of the body- the body exceeds its materiality, "The body is as immediately virtual as it is actual. The virtual, the pressing crowd of incipiencies and tendencies, is a realm of potential. The virtual is a lived paradox where what are normally opposites co-exist, coalesce, and connect […] out of the pressing crowd an individual action or expression *will* emerge and be registered consciously."

reception and argues for a "substantial degree of indeterminacy in affect." He equates intensity with affect; but distinguishes it from emotion – he demonstrates that affect and emotion follow different logics and pertain to different orders.[1] According to Massumi (Ibid):

> affect is a third state that stands between passivity and activity – it is an excluded middle prior to the distinction between activity and passivity […] It is a critical point, a turning point […] where physical system paradoxically embodies multiple and normally mutually exclusive potentials, only one of which is selected […] Affect therefore is synesthetic, implying a participation of the senses in each other: the measure of a living thing's potential interactions is its ability to transform the effects of one sensory mode into those of another (tactility and vision being the most obvious […] example.)

In a similar vein, Steven Shaviro (1994) explores the image's agency by deploying Gilles Deleuze's work on film to argue that cinema can have quite visceral effects on the eye, and that it produces a "cinematic body" by soliciting corporeal and affective responses from its captive audience. Shaviro also wants to understand images in terms which do not rely upon a strict partitioning between subject and object. Following Maurice Blanchot, Shaviro provides us with a radically different articulation of vision in which "the image is not a representational substitute for the lost object so much as it is like a cadaver – the material trace or residue of the object's failure to vanish completely" (1994:17). For Shaviro, filmic images literally assault the spectator – they function like blows or lacerations to the retina and this violence, perpetrated against the eyes, with its physical and corporeal affects, is all the more acute in the case of violent images. Shaviro argues for the spectator's radical passivity in the face of spectacles of violence and masochism therefore forms an organising analytical trope in his thesis on the cinematic body. In view of Massumi's insistence upon the indeterminacy of affect, I do not doubt that: many who viewed the suicide footage might have responded with a masochistically-inflected fascination, in Shaviro's sense: or, that an erotically charged intensity might have co-existed with, or jostled with, multiple values before yet another value, such as disavowal or empathy, might have emerged from the 'pressing crowd' Massumi imagines.

In further acknowledging the image's masochistic potential, I want to refer, briefly, to Leo Bersani and Ulysse Du Toit's Freudian reading of the violence captured in the famous Assyrian Palace Reliefs housed in the British Museum. Their work is of relevance to this discussion because in their quest to account for the manner in which the violence represented in the reliefs "might move us," they explore a number of scenarios around the fascination with violence and the forms representations of violence take. It is their final scenario, which is potentially most productive for my attempt to think an affective economy and politics of empathy. In this part of their analysis they outline Freud's suggestions regarding "sympathetic projection," contained in "Instincts and their Vicissitudes" where he postulates:

> the pleasure of sadism is inconceivable except as a phenomenon of sympathetic projection. The only psychologically intelligible explanation of the sadist's enjoyment of the suffering of others is this: that he is precisely enjoying that suffering. He has introjected the self projected into the suffering position of the other (Freud cited in Bersani and Du Toit, 1985:38).

Drawing on the Marquis de Sade's work, Bersani and Du Toit (Ibid) argue that sympathetic projections are generally assumed to be of value because they inform our "capacity for moral behaviour" via our responses to art. Their rejoinder is to reflect on Jean Laplanche's reading of Freud's work in this area to suggest that, "sympathy always includes a vestige of sexual pleasure, and that this pleasure is, inescapably masochistic" (Ibid). For Bersani and Du Toit (ibid) then, the implication is that, "there is a certain risk in all sympathetic projections: the pleasure which accompanies them promotes a secret attachment to scenes of suffering and violence." Furthermore, they stress that they are "not arguing (absurdly) against sympathy;" but:

> Wish to suggest that the psychic mechanism which allows for what would rightly be called humane or morally liberal responses to scenes of suffering or violence is, intrinsically, somewhat dysfunctional. The very operation of sympathy partially undermines the moral solidarity which we like to think of as its primary effect. Our views of the human capacity for empathetic representations of the world should therefore take into account the possibility that a mimetic relation of violence necessarily includes a sexually induced fascination with violence.

With their caveat in mind and emphasising their proposition that sexualised fascination might only partially undermine "moral solidarity," I have suggested that there might be a slipknot out of this sexualised economy of looking. 'The Iraq Photo Project' attests to the fact that images of suffering can accommodate, rather than categorically preclude, empathy and the solidarity it is able to engender. And in the face of the 9/11 suicide footage many people did not appear to exhibit the glee of having escaped a terrible fate, or the shudder of erotically-inflected voyeurism; but seem to have affectively, imaginatively and empathetically shared in the moment before someone-else's death. I make these comments whilst simultaneously being concerned to avoid the dangers of the easy sentimentality of the "humanitarian view"; or a liberal humanism - the perils of which others have elaborated on.

This is also why I think it is imperative to emphasise the distinction between sympathy and empathy and why we need to think through one of the mechanisms that, under certain circumstances, might enable people to imaginatively and productively project themselves across boundaries. This journey is more difficult and more important ethically, we are continually reminded, if the "I" has not experienced what the other has. This paper was therefore constituted as a gesture that sought to anticipate an intersubjective "encounter between the one and the other" through which they traverse together the distance that separates them.

Luce Irigaray critiques and contests a Western conception of subjectivity because of its "emphasis on looking" (Schroeder, 2005:311). In contradistinction to this ocularcentric form of subjectivity, she proposes a mode of subjectivity that is moulded by touch: a 'touchful' way of being in the world, of seeing and of listening, a 'touchful' way of approaching the other:

> Touch which allows turning back to oneself, in the dwelling of an intimate light. But which also goes to encounter the other, illuminated-illuminating, overflowing one's own world in order to taste

another brightness. In order to give and to receive what can enlighten mortals on their path. (Irigaray 2002:174)

The emphasis on sight, looking and spectacle has often translated into a blindspot at the heart of many of the influential 'visions' of the globalised mediascape: an inability to recognise the media's potential to produce forms of embodiment and modes of subjectivity that counter the suffocating political and image strategies that prevail. As the following comment by Baudrillard indicates (2001:8):

> The spectacle of terrorism imposes the terrorism of the spectacle. And against this immoral fascination (even if it engenders a universal moral reaction) the political order can do nothing […] There is no good use of the media, the media are part of the event, they are part of the terror and they are part of the game in one way or another.

In my view this mode of thinking runs into a philosophical and political *cul de sac*. I think that we need to be cautious about retreating into a Baudrillardean cynicism when confronted with the events this paper outlines. I would therefore align myself with Alison Landsberg (2000:192) who argues that it is not appropriate, "to discuss as merely prosthetic the culture industry's experiences." Landsberg (Ibid) claims that the real has always been mediated through information cultures and through narrative and argues for a recognition that we, "have embarked on […] a new relationship to experience which relies less on categories like authentic and sympathy than on categories like responsibility and empathy." According Landsberg (Ibid):

> we might say that empathy depends less on 'natural' affinity than sympathy, less on some kind of essential underlying connection between the two subjects while sympathy therefore, relies upon an essentialism of identification, empathy recognises the alterity of identification.

Empathy, then, is about the lack of identity between subjects and, as I have argued, it is about traversing distances. Recalling Irigaray, this paper sought to: imagine a 'touchful' way of looking; and conceive of the image's capacity to engender empathy, rather than only distance and indifference, by enabling "subjects to project themselves into objects of contemplation" (Ibid). Of course the challenge is to move from individual empathetic affects to a politics of empathy.

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We live in a culture that is pervaded by images[1] of all kinds in a wide variety of media (Kearney 1988:1). This has not always been the case, however. In fact, most individuals living in today's increasingly history-oblivious postmodern world would probably not be aware of the fact that, incrementally, in the course of more than two millennia (and with the exception of a medieval interlude of widespread illiteracy), the written word was valorized at the expense of images. From the work of a variety of thinkers, including Richard Kearney (1988) and Leonard Shlain (1991 & 1998), it is apparent that the re-affirmation of the value of images is of relatively recent origin. For centuries the imagination as human faculty for the production of images was regarded with a high degree of suspicion by thinkers as influential as Descartes and Spinoza, and it was not until Immanuel Kant rehabilitated the imagination by showing persuasively that it was part and parcel of reason, instead of being somehow opposed to it, that it has gradually come into its own again (Kearney 1988:167-177; Olivier 2002). The present proliferation of images is such that it is difficult to believe that it was ever not the case. And while some commentators, such as Kearney (1988:299-300; 359-361) seem uncertain (if not downright alarmed) about the desirability of this state of affairs - the often suffocating ubiquity of images - regarding the continued creativity of human imagination, others, such as Shlain (1998:429-432), welcome the return of images to mainstream culture as a salutary development. In this paper I would like to focus on the issue of the re-affirmation of the value of the image from the perspectives of Shlain's startling uncovering of a connection between the historical rise of alphabet literacy and, concomitantly, patriarchy, on the one hand, and the place of images – which, at first blush, seems to indicate a negative evaluation - in poststructuralist, Jacques Lacan's psychoanalytical theory of the subject, on the other. Both perspectives give rise to a number of questions, which I shall explore briefly.

Leonard Shlain is a neurologist turned philosopher, whose neurological knowledge has enabled him to discern a number of correlations that would not easily have occurred to anyone without his background. To be more specific: as a neurologist and neural surgeon he knows what human abilities correspond to the functions of the right and left hemispheres of the brain, respectively. Conceptual, logical and mathematical, numerical reasoning, language, abstraction (including the ability to write) and so-called 'objective' judgement all reside in the left hemisphere, while holistic perception and thinking, imagination, musicality and affectivity (emotions) have the right hemisphere as their home (Shlain 1998:17-24). There is also evidence that the latter functions – those of the right hemisphere – are

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[1] While it is certainly the case that the concept, 'image', cannot be reduced to the category of 'visual image' *per se*, for my present purposes I am mainly concerned with the visual, although what I argue here regarding images in this sense would apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to images of all kinds, for example literary 'images' such as those associated with metaphor. In fact, I believe that, despite the hegemony in contemporary culture of *visual* images, what Lacan refers to as the register of 'the imaginary', encompasses images of all kinds. (See in this regard Olivier 2003, 2004.)

significantly 'older' in evolutionary terms as well as ontogenetic (individual developmental) terms than those of the former, including language (Shlain 1991:17; 1998:18-21; Freud 1957:213; Lacan 1977:2). This led Shlain to hypothesise, in his first book (1991), that image-based perception or knowledge preceded (and still precedes, for individuals) concept- and language-dependent knowledge historically among humans, and that it was therefore likely that progressively different, new ways of perceiving the world in *images*, as evidenced in the history of art, preceded novel *conceptual* ways of thinking about the world, as witnessed in the history of science. Putting this hypothesis to the test enabled him to demonstrate persuasively that revolutionary breakthroughs to new ways of *perceiving* the world in fact did precede – sometimes by centuries – corresponding, revolutionary new ways of *conceptualising* the world in scientific theories, specifically in physics. So, for example, he showed that Leonardo da Vinci's revolutionary artistic vision anticipated, and paralleled, the later scientific theories of Isaac Newton, just as the revolutionary and 'subversive' paintings of Manet, Cézanne and Monet anticipated and paralleled, in the 19th century, the relativity-theories of Albert Einstein in the early 20th century (Shlain 1991:69-83; 102-132). The point to emphasize is that the artistic-aesthetic 'visions', as a way of knowing the world, differ in kind from the conceptual, scientific-theoretical way of knowing the world, *but* (as Shlain shows) they can be demonstrated to parallel and correspond with one another.

Art and Physics (1991) paved the way for an even more important contribution to interdisciplinary scholarship: Shlain's second book, *The alphabet versus the goddess – The conflict between word and image* (1998). Here his neurological knowledge of different brain functions put him in a position to look at historical events concerning the rise of literacy and, concomitantly, that of patriarchy and misogyny, with new eyes (Shlain 1998:VII-IX). What he discerned there was nothing short of a revolutionary insight: everywhere, in antiquity, but also in later eras and in different cultures, where first literacy, and then alphabet literacy emerged – displacing fundamentally iconic ways of representing the world – patriarchal social and political relations soon replaced the egalitarian relations that had preceded them. At the same time a transition occurred, in newly literate societies, from goddess-worship to male god worship. Noticing all these startling correlations, a pattern seemed to fall into place that led him to posit certain connections hypothetically. The hypothesis guiding Shlain's research in *The alphabet versus the goddess* was therefore: Thinking about the world and representing it in a fundamentally iconic or image-based register (which is right-brain related; Shlain 1998:5), promote and reinforce feminine values and therefore benefit women's social and political status. Conversely, thinking about and representing the world by means of abstract concepts articulated in alphabet-dependent writing (which is left-brain related), promote and strengthen masculine values and privilege men socially and politically.[2] In his own words (Shlain 1998:VIII):

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[2] He also puts it this way (Shlain 1998:1): '…I propose that a *holistic, simultaneous, synthetic*, and *concrete* view of the world are the essential characteristics of a feminine outlook; *linear, sequential, reductionist*, and *abstract* thinking defines the masculine.' Lest the impression be created that, in essentialist fashion, he regards this distinction as being cast in stone for members of each sex, so that neither women nor men could ever hope to excel at abilities supposedly falling within the ambit of those belonging to the opposite sex, it is important to note that Shlain (1998:1) immediately adds to this 'proposal': 'Although these represent opposite perceptual modes, every individual is generously endowed with all the features of both.' In other words, what he terms a 'masculine' or a 'feminine' view of the world is the result of thousands of years of associating specific qualities with men, and others with women, bringing about prejudices or stereotypes that

We know that in the developing brain of a child, differing kinds of learning will strengthen some neuronal pathways and weaken others. Extrapolating the experience of an individual to a culture, I hypothesized that when a critical mass of people within a society acquire literacy, especially alphabet literacy, left hemispheric modes of thought are reinforced at the expense of right hemispheric ones, which manifests as a decline in the status of images, women's rights, and goddess worship.

Putting his hunch to the test - that these different perceptual modes are not innocent but, when dominant in a society, lead to very different social power-relations between men and women - met with resounding confirmation of the correlations that he had posited in every era and culture that Shlain (1998) investigated, including hunter-gatherer communities dating back to before the agricultural revolution approximately 10000 years ago, Sumerian, Akkadian, ancient Hebrew, Egyptian, ancient Greek, Roman, medieval western, Renaissance, Reformation, Enlightenment, modern and contemporary western, Chinese, Muslim and Indian cultures.

The obvious question that obtrudes itself is: why does there seem to be a connection between those human faculties that have their seat in the right hemisphere of the brain and supposedly 'feminine' values, while the same may be said of left hemisphere-located functions and putatively 'masculine' values? Does this imply a neurological or cerebral determinism? one tends to wonder. Does the predominant use of one of the brain's hemispheres (the right hemisphere) predispose one irresistibly to prioritize women's interests, and *vice versa*? An affirmative answer to these questions seems to entail precisely such a cerebral determinism. Or is the matter more complex? Shlain's research, which draws on a wide variety of sources (such as ethology, anthropology, philosophy, linguistics, history, art-history, anthro-archaeology and palaeontology), uncovers the crucial link between human capacities such as 'objectivity', logical, abstract thinking and understanding these as 'masculine' social *values*, on the one hand, and between capacities such as holistic thinking, imagination, demonstrative affectivity, and positing these as 'feminine' social *values*, on the other.[3] This is the crucial thing – one that exempts one from a cerebral determinism, into the bargain – that it is not the dominance of specific brain- (and therefore mind-) functions, by themselves, that bring about asymmetrical gender power-relations in society, but the dominance of certain gender-oriented values that have been attached to these functions by people (including proto-humans) for millennia. In other words, there is no essentialism

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still exert a strong influence in contemporary society. This has nothing to do with a particular man or woman's capacity to emulate and even excel at those abilities associated with the opposite sex, even if - as Shlain proceeds to show – millions of years of evolution have endowed women and men more generously with certain (different) abilities than with others.

[3] He does this by carefully exploring the different activities of women and men as long ago as in hunter-gatherer communities. Men – the hunters – had to be able to distance themselves from prey that was potentially a totem animal, and approach the task of the kill 'objectively' and dispassionately. If they allowed themselves the luxury of being too emotionally involved with the animal in question to follow through with it, they might die. Moreover, the exigencies of the hunt required tracking skills which entailed a certain 'logic' or reasoning to locate the quarry, with the result that these functions were customarily associated with men's social tasks or 'virtues'. Women, again, as gatherers, had to think holistically to integrate the different aspects of tribal life (looking after children while picking berries and cooking, e.g.) and unlike men, they had no reason to be dispassionate; on the contrary, their 'caring' for the children and the men went hand in hand with lavish display of affection and warmth (Shlain 1998:8-16). He even shows that there is a correlation between certain male optical characteristics (focalization and depth perception), genetically established in relation to their role as hunters over millions of years, as well as between the structure of women's eyes (field- and *Gestalt*-perception), neurologically ingrained in the course of time, and their function as gatherers and child-minders (Shlain 1998:24-26).

involved here, of a neurological-positivistic or any other kind. Nothing is more significant for the present paper than the connection Shlain (1998:7) establishes between feminine values and images:

> Goddess worship, feminine values, and women's power depend on the ubiquity of the image. God worship, masculine values, and men's domination of women are bound to the written[4] word. Word and image, like masculine and feminine, are complementary opposites. Whenever a culture elevates the written word at the expense of the image, patriarchy dominates. When the importance of the image supersedes the written word, feminine values and egalitarianism flourish.

It should be apparent from these words that a complementary relationship between image and (written) word, women and men, is conceivable, even desirable; and indeed, Shlain perceives the contours of such a relationship, with its obvious social benefits for both sexes, emerging in the present, image-pervaded era (Shlain 1998:432). At the same time, however, part of his argument, historically substantiated with massive supportive evidence, is that a historical transition from a mode of perception and thinking that prioritizes images to one that privileges alphabetic writing on a large scale, brings (and brought) with it severe social, political and religious upheavals and suffering.[5] For instance, he shows that the introduction of alphabet literacy to ancient, specifically Athenian, Greek society correlates with clearly identifiable patriarchal practices, in contrast to woman-friendly social practices in largely illiterate Sparta (Shlain 1998:149-156). Especially enlightening are the telling instances of myths – among the Greeks as well as other ancient peoples – that may be read as recording the transition from an image-, woman- and goddess-centred civilization to one that was alphabet-writing-, man- and male-god-centred (e.g. Shlain 1998:45-52; 120-131). Among those cases that serve to strengthen his hypothesis by way of contrast (like the Spartan example, mentioned earlier), is that of Egyptian, hieroglyph-oriented culture (Shlain 1998:53-63), where patriarchy was absent for a long time after its ascendancy in surrounding, alphabet-literate cultures – so much so that women had all the same social privileges as men. The reason, says Shlain, is to be found in the iconic nature of hieroglyphic writing, which does not, like its alphabetic counterpart, strengthen left-hemispheric activity and, concomitantly, masculine values to the exclusion of feminine ones. Another test-case is the usually disparaged, illiterate Middle Ages, between the fall of the Roman Empire and the re-emergence of literacy in the late medieval period. Shlain (1998:261-277) points out that during this so-called 'dark' interruption of literate 'civilization', the fortunes of women in society improved dramatically, as witnessed in the veritable idolization of women and the feminine (for example the figure of the Virgin Mary) in the time where the Arthurian legend is set.

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[4] One may wonder why it is writing or the written word as such, and not spoken language or words, that appears to reinforce masculine values at the cost of feminine ones. The answer is to be found in the high degree of (left-hemispheric) abstraction, largely unaccompanied by holistic (right-hemispheric) brain-activity, required for reading or writing, in contrast to the complementary use of left- and right-hemispheric functions during exchanges in spoken language, where abstraction goes hand in hand with the decoding of visual signs such as facial expression and manual gesture (Shlain 1998:4-7; 17-23; 40-44).

[5] Shlain quotes Sophocles to this effect (1998:1): 'Sophocles once warned, "Nothing vast enters the life of mortals without a curse." The invention of writing was vast; this book will investigate the curse…There exists ample evidence that any society acquiring the written word experiences explosive changes. For the most part, these changes can be characterized as progress. But one pernicious effect of literacy has gone largely unnoticed: writing subliminally fosters a patriarchal outlook. Writing of any kind, but especially its alphabetic form, diminishes feminine values and with them, women's power in culture.'

He also attributes to the rapid spread of literacy after Gutenberg had invented the printing press in the 15th century AD (1454), the subsequent internecine religious wars (with its signal iconoclasm) in Europe as well as the 'witch craze' during (mainly) the 16th century, in the course of which untold suffering occurred (Shlain 1998:323-377). This may sound arbitrary to anyone not familiar with the book in its entirety, but the provision of overwhelming evidence pertaining to this and similar correlations makes for a very persuasive argument.

What is the point? one may wonder. That literacy is 'bad' *per se*? This is clearly not what Shlain is driving at – he admits candidly that, 'For the most part, these changes [the acquisition of literacy] can be characterized as progress' (see note 5 in this regard). Rather, his hypothesis is that the hegemony of alphabetic writing, at the cost of comparable value attributed to images, has promoted a patriarchal – and worse, an invidiously misogynistic – mindset in societies where alphabet literacy and writing developed, and that this explains some of the worst human suffering inflicted on people (especially women) by others in the course of recorded history. Moreover, he shows that, as a corollary, in tandem with the development of the kind of technology – for instance photography – which made it possible to reproduce and eventually transmit images, the social and political position of women in society has gradually improved (Shlain 1998:381-392). This has not been unaccompanied, of course, by reactive (and reactionary) occurrences which are symptomatic of the same kind of disruptive effect on society (of the relatively recent transition from writing-dominance to the increasing circulation of images), as that of the transition from an image-based communication to a writing-oriented mode more than three thousand years ago and subsequently reinforced from time to time. To mention only some such manifestations of the transition to iconicity, accompanied by electronically mediated orality in our own time: Shlain (1998:403-405) provides a compelling argument to clarify the hitherto inexplicable phenomenon of one of the most educated, informed and literarily as well as scientifically literate nations in world history being duped by an Austrian paperhanger and failed artist-*cum*-architect, Adolf Hitler, by focusing on the skill with which he used the radio to manipulate the German people. He argues that Germans would not have been swayed by Hitler if they had only read his speeches instead of listening to them on radio and seeing his image on film. He quotes McLuhan to this effect (Shlain 1998:404):

> That Hitler came into political existence at all is directly owing to radio and public address systems…Radio provided the first massive experience of electronic implosion, that reversal of the entire direction and meaning of literate Western civilization.

The point is that, while the intellectual 'content' of Hitler's speeches is, as Shlain (1998:404) remarks, 'repugnant to virtually everyone', the fact that he was using a new medium for which the highly literate Germans were not prepared, must be understood as a major contributing factor[6] to the relative ease

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[6] Shlain (1998:404) admits that this is not the *only* factor that made the Nazi-horror historically possible. Although he does not elaborate on this, I suspect he is alluding to, among other things, the economic conditions in Germany after the 1st World War, the growing anti-Semitism so cleverly exploited and exacerbated (by linking it with Germany's economic woes) by Hitler and Goebbels, as well as the phenomenon, inseparable from all of these, referred to by Adorno as the 'authoritarian personality' – that is, the personality structure, on the part of many Germans, which required an authority figure of some kind to be able to function at all.

with which they were taken in by him. This constitutes a far-reaching example of the disruptive consequences that the introduction of a new (technological) medium of communication can have on a culture. Another such example of disruptive reorientation, not as catastrophic in its manifestations, but striking nevertheless, is the phenomenon of adult 'attention deficit disorder' (Shlain 1998:409), which is far more prevalent among men (who usually prefer left-hemispheric, abstract logic over the apparent 'immediacy' of concrete, iconic information-acquisition) than among women. This is noticeable in the frequency with which men 'surf' various television channels, preferring to watch several 'at once', instead of seeing a specific programme through to the end – something that is hardly ever encountered on their part when it comes to reading books.

Lest anyone suspect that Shlain,[7] a relatively unknown theorist and philosopher, is assuming far too much regarding the implications of novel (in this case mainly iconic) technologies of communication and 'archiving' (memory or memorization) for human modes of cognition, perception or understanding, one should be reminded that someone with the international stature of Jacques Derrida (and by implication of Freud) is in substantial agreement with him regarding the claim that new technological or technologically mediated modes of communication and cognition affect the human psyche in a thoroughgoing, fundamental fashion.[8] Already in an early essay on Freud's attempt to model the psyche by means of (among other things) the so-called 'mystic writing pad' (Derrida 1978:227-228), he pointed in this direction: 'The machine – and, consequently, representation – is death and finitude *within* the psyche'. Consider what Derrida iterates in this regard in *Archive fever* (1996). Referring back to Freud's attempt at representing the psyche in terms of the 'mystic writing pad', he raises the question, whether the 'psychical apparatus' is 'better represented' or 'affected differently' by contemporary technologies of archivization, such as computerization and electronization (1996:15). He points out that, if the new modes of archivization and communication indeed affect 'the very structures of the psychic apparatus', it would not simply be a question of 'progress in representation, in the *representative* value of the model, but rather of an entirely different logic' (Derrida 1996:15). Derrida leaves one in no doubt, however, where he stands on this question where he elaborates on the probable determining effects of technologies like e-mail, faxes and printers (1996:16-17):

> … the archive, as printing, writing, prosthesis, or hypomnesic technique in general is not only the place for stocking and for conserving an archivable content of *the past* which would exist in any case, such as, without the archive, one still believes it was or will have been. No, the technical structure of the *archiving* archive also determines the structure of the *archivable* content even in its very coming into existence and in its relationship to the future. The archivization produces as much as it records the event. This is also our political experience of the so-called news media.

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[7] Admittedly, although his hypothesis is more far-reaching than some of those figures whose work he appeals to in order to support it, Shlain is following in the footsteps of theorists such as McLuhan and others.

[8] It should be noted, however, that the upshot of Derrida's analysis of Freud's attempt to model the psyche by means of the so-called 'mystic pad', is the uncovering of a tension at the heart of Freud's project. Even as he (Freud) takes the radical step of thinking the psyche in terms of this 'writing machine' (in this way adumbrating *différance*), he subverts his own radical insight by insisting on the (metaphysical) difference between the 'live' or 'spontaneous' psyche, on the one hand, and the 'dead' machine, which 'does not run by itself', on the other. See Derrida 1978:226-227. It was Andrea Hurst, an exemplary Derrida scholar, who reminded me of this.

In other words, to return to Shlain's hypothesis, the technologically mediated iconic revolution that one is witnessing today is not simply an innocuous new manner of transmitting information – it is in the process of re-constituting the very way that we think, cognize, remember and (importantly) value things and people in the world around us. The fact that Derrida and Shlain use different registers to articulate this insight – Derrida the philosophical one of deconstructing Freud's psychoanalytical discourse on archiving and memory, and Shlain the neurological one of brain-functioning – should not blind one to the realization that what they claim is at bottom the same thing, namely that different modes, or technologies of communication, 'reconfigure' the human mind. And, by implication, it enables or makes possible new or different value-associations such as those at issue here.

As anyone could gather from what I have said so far, Shlain is optimistic about the salutary social effects of the re-affirmation of the value of the image in contemporary culture; a culture where, instead of either image or text being hegemonic, they are more or less in equilibrium, is one where gender relations should be such that neither men nor women would be oppressed. He concludes his book with the following observation (Shlain 1998:432):

> I am convinced we are entering a new Golden Age – one in which the right-hemispheric values of tolerance, caring, and respect for nature will begin to ameliorate the conditions that have prevailed for the too-long period during which left-hemispheric values were dominant. Images, of any kind, are the balm bringing about this worldwide healing. It will take more time for change to permeate and alter world cultures but there can be no doubt that the wondrous permutations of photography and electromagnetism are transforming the world both physically and psychically. The shift to right-hemispheric values through the perception of images can be expected to increase the sum total awareness of beauty.

> Long before there was Hammurabi's stela or the Rosetta stone, there were the images of Lascaux and Altamira. In the beginning was the image. Then came five millennia dominated by the written word. The iconic symbol is now returning. Women, the half of the human equation who have for so long been denied, will increasingly have opportunities to achieve their potential. This will not happen everywhere at once, but the trend is toward equilibrium…[9]

Is Shlain's optimism concerning the 'healing' consequences of ever-wider global image-dissemination and -distribution warranted? What the poststructuralist psychoanalytical theorist, Jacques Lacan, has to tell us about the image and humans' sense of identity is instructive in this regard. In the first place, for Lacan the human subject's involvement with the image antedates its entry into language – something that accords with Shlain's claim that thinking in images is older than thinking in terms of (abstract)

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[9] Needless to say, there are many instances where one witnesses reactionary attempts to re-assert the dominance of precisely those values associated with a writing-based culture where images are proscribed, an image-less God is worshipped in dogmatic fashion and women have few, if any rights. The harsh treatment of women in Afghanistan under strict Taliban rule comes to mind (cf. Shlain 1998:424). On the other hand, as might be expected, the rise of images has not been without casualties among those who readily participate in the process either. I recall a discussion by recently deceased Alistair Cook, in his well-known *Letter from America*, where he focused on the puzzling case of Rudolphe Valentino's early death, of a perforated ulcer, at the height of his popularity as a star of early cinema. Apparently Valentino had a meeting with the American writer, H.L. Mencken, in New York not long before this, where he lamented the fact that, because of his massive appeal to women on screen in the image of all manner of romantic heroes, men had begun to label his screen appearance as 'effeminate'. In light of Shlain's insights it seems to me to be plain that it was a case of Valentino – who had emigrated to America as a poor, conventional Italian man – being unable to reconcile the value attached to his screen image by his many fans, later labelled 'effeminate' by outraged husbands, with his traditional self-conception of masculinity. Quite literally, his own 'image' destroyed him.

language.[10] Lacan (1977) singles out the so-called 'mirror stage' in the development of the human infant as the point where he or she enters the 'imaginary order' (realm of images). This entry is far from innocuous, however. The infant, at a time (between 6 and 18 months old) when she or he is still physically uncoordinated, 'misrecognizes' (to use Lacan's term) her or his own mirror image as her- or himself – a misrecognition that is ambiguous in an important sense. On the one hand it fulfils the 'orthopaedic' function of providing the child with a spurious, but indispensable sense of unity and wholeness – without which the subject would be incapable of developing a sense of identity – while, on the other hand, it alienates the subject from him- or herself in so far as the image functions as a kind of 'armour' within which one would, and often does, remain trapped, as it were.[11] It is only by entering language – what Lacan terms the 'symbolic order' – that the child becomes a subject in the true sense, for Lacan, because only then does the universal conceptual order (the order of the signified), attached to the linguistic system of signifiers, give each individual subject a place in society. To be able to say who you are by stating your name, is for Lacan nothing less than traversing what Freud had theorised as the Oedipus complex (or what Lévi-Strauss singled out as the differentiating factor between nature and culture, namely the incest taboo), in this way subjecting oneself to the universalistic laws of society as they are embedded in language. This is what it means to be a subject.[12]

What is important here is that the image with which one identifies to begin with is particularistic (in so far as it functions by resemblance or 'likeness', and not abstractly; Shlain 1998:4-5; 18-23), irreducible, unique, while language – in terms of which one articulates one's name, is abstract and universalistic. Once having entered society by way of acquiring language, the subject – who attained a particularistic iconic identity at an earlier stage – is forever suspended between the imaginary and the symbolic, which are irrevocably imbricated to the extent that the former inhabits the latter as metaphor, metonymy and the like. When one begins to consider the implications of Lacan's theory of the subject for Shlain's work and *vice versa*, what first strikes one is the fact that these two thinkers – whatever their differences in approach – concur on the desirability of image and language (or word), imaginary and symbolic, working together, without prioritizing the one above the other.

Secondly, regarding the connection Shlain posits between the image and women, there may not immediately seem to be any consonant link in Lacan's work. But if one considers something pointed out by one of Lacan's heirs, Julia Kristeva, namely that what she calls the 'semiotic' (as opposed to the

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[10] It is noteworthy that Freud, too, regarded thinking by means of images (what he termed the 'primary process') as being far more primitive than thinking in terms of concepts and language (the so-called 'secondary process'). See Freud 1957:213; as well as Olivier 2000.
[11] Needless to say, this is precisely what happens when someone becomes enslaved to the putative unity, purity or desired collective identity underpinning every ideology and articulated in 'imaginary' terms, precisely, albeit in so far as the imaginary order overlaps and informs the symbolic register. Except for psychosis, there is no better example of being 'alienated' from one's 'identity' – identity in the healthy sense of having a 'self-image' that, instead of suffocating one in its 'armour', is intermittently revised and modified by means of language. In other words, both 'unity' and 'change' function together to produce a 'changing identity', or 'identity in difference'.
[12] See in this regard my essay on 'Lacan's subject: the imaginary, language, the real and philosophy' (Olivier 2004), as well as the further investigation into the implications of Lacan's theory of the subject for the question of the psychotherapist's ethical orientation (Olivier 2004a). These essays provide a more encompassing presentation of Lacan's theory of the human subject.

symbolic) – a sphere of signification where rhythms, textures, grain, materiality, etc., work together to produce meaning at a non-abstract, concrete level – has its origin in the semiotic *chora* (*khōra*), which is closely associated with the mother's body (McAfee 2004:18-20),[13] things fall into place. Just as Lacan's mirror phase – the locus of the imaginary or realm of images – offers the subject a mirage of wholeness, so Kristeva's *chora* designates a place where the subject as infant has not yet attained an identity of its own, nor entered the realm of the symbolic – where, in short, it still enjoys a kind of 'wholeness' or the experience of a quasi-union in conjunction with the mother's body. This seems to me to be a point of rapprochement between Shlain and Lacan where femininity is concerned: as Kristeva enables one to understand, Lacan, like Shlain, offers one a way to connect imaginary wholeness, in terms of the particularistic unitary image, with femininity via the 'wholeness' (note the scare quotes!) that the woman as mother lets the child experience (before she or he even acquires language) – and perhaps not only the child, but the lover, too.[14] If I am right about this, it would seem that the association of women with right-hemispheric values such as holistic, synthetic thought, images and affectivity is anything but arbitrary, and that the correlation uncovered by Shlain between the re-affirmation of the visual (or the return of the image after centuries of valorizing the written and printed word) and the recuperation of women's social and political status consequently has something persuasive about it.

In the third place, on a cautionary note, one should not forget that Lacan's work has also highlighted a possible negative effect relating to the image – one that is all the more urgent to consider in light of the remark by William Irwin Thompson (quoted by Shlain as epigraph at the beginning of his book [1998:1], ironically with literacy in mind): 'Even a positive thing casts a shadow…its unique excellence is at the same time its tragic flaw.' If the image is connected to femininity by way of the 'unique excellence' of 'imaginary wholeness', as argued above, the 'shadow' cast by the image as 'positive thing' is precisely the lure emanating from the image's promise (a problematical one, at that) of wholeness and unity – a tantalizing invitation, from the initial confrontation by the child of its own specular image (which it 'jubilantly' assumes; Lacan 1977:2) to all the subsequent instances of image-identifications which the subject is invited to enact. These may include the 'image' of manliness that a father, a brother, a teacher or film star projects, or that of femininity associated with a mother, sister, film star, singer, and so forth. What is wrong with this, one may object – doesn't Lacan claim that the mirror phase is an essential, if ambivalent stage in the development of the human subject? Indeed, but it will be remembered that it is only one aspect of the subject, namely that of the ego or *moi*, the other being its so-called 'I'- (or *je*-) position as subject of language. While the former, modelled on the image, provides

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[13] It should be noted that the concept of *chora* or *khōra* is borrowed from Plato's *Timaeus*, where it denotes a kind of intermediary non-space or matrix in which things are given their spatial dimensions without the *khōra* itself being spatial. Kristeva (like Derrida) adapts it for her own purposes. See McAfee 2004:18-20.

[14] In this connection it is interesting to note that, for Lacan, the woman is closer to the (unsymbolizable) 'real' than the man, who is more adequately represented in the phallocentric (patriarchal) symbolic sphere than the woman. This would also appear to confirm the 'closeness' of the woman to the (concrete) image, in contrast to the man, who is more closely associated by both Shlain and Lacan with (abstract, conceptual) language or the symbolic than the woman. See Lee 1990:178-186. Needless to say, this does not preclude the possibility – already being actualized in the work of many women scholars, including Julia Kristeva and Luce Irigaray, as well as in that of some men who write in a non-patriarchal manner - of inscribing 'woman' in the symbolic order of language any less than 'man'.

the subject with a (spurious) sense of identity and unity, the latter enables it to engage in a dynamic of 'narrating' its own life-story, thus preventing the image-bound ego from becoming the alienating enclosure that it potentially is (Lacan 1977:2; Olivier 2003:44-50; 2004:3-14). The point is – and this constitutes the negative side of the image – identifying with an image or image-cluster too uncritically is tantamount to ideological[15] blindness. It is language, in its signifier/signified duality, that supplies the means for critical appropriation of the image,[16] much as the latter may satisfy or please or reassure one aesthetically, feministically, culturally and the like.

Anyone who may be sceptical about the *caveat* issued here regarding the image, despite all its salutary properties and social implications elaborated on earlier, would do well to note what Susan Faludi (1999:35)[17] has pointed out regarding what she terms the 'ornamental culture':

> The old model of masculinity showed men how to be part of a larger social system; it gave them a context and it promised them that their social contributions were the price of admission to the realm of adult manhood. That kind of manhood required a society in order to prove itself. All of the traditional domains in which men pursued authority and power – politics, religion, the military, the community, and the household – were societal.
>
> Ornamental culture has no such counterparts. Constructed around celebrity and image, glamour and entertainment, marketing and consumerism, it is a ceremonial gateway to nowhere. Its essence is not just the selling act but the act of selling the self, and in this quest every man is essentially on his own, a lone sales rep marketing his own image…
>
> Ornamental culture has proved the ultimate expression of the American Century, sweeping away institutions in which men felt some sense of belonging and replacing them with visual spectacles that they can only watch and that benefit global commercial forces they cannot fathom.

The re-affirmation of the image therefore appears to be a mixed blessing: while, as Shlain has demonstrated so strikingly, it is in all probability a harbinger of salutary social transformation especially in the area of gender relations, Lacan – while agreeing with Shlain on the complementary roles of the imaginary (the register of images) and language, of holistic, iconically concrete thinking and conceptual abstraction – also issues a reminder that the image poses its own dangers or snares as far as imaginary identification and its attendant ideological delusions of unity and wholeness are concerned. This means, finally, that it is imperative to sustain a stance of critical appreciation and appropriation of the multitude of images populating cultural space on a daily basis in the present era, lest the promise of a healthy complementarity again yield to an unforeseen hegemony.

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[15] I am here using 'ideological' in John Thompson's (1990:7) sense of ideology, namely: '*meaning in the service of power*'.
[16] See my essay on 'Freud and the question of mediated behaviour' (Olivier 2000), where I discuss, among other things, Freud's contention that it is through the 'secondary process' of language and thought that the affective effect of the images constitutive of the 'primary process' at the level of the unconscious (as manifested in dreams) may be addressed, especially in so far as this 'intensity of affect' may otherwise have an enduring, disturbing effect.
[17] These remarks on Faludi's part are part of her sustained analysis (1999) of what she has termed 'the betrayal of the American man' in the book, *Stiffed*, with that subtitle. Her aim was to uncover the grounds – historical, social, psychological – of what she perceived as the 'crisis in masculinity' in present-day America.

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SESSION: THEORY MATTERS
PAPER TITLE: DISCIPLINED LANGUAGE
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I was driven to write this paper through my experiences with the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research (WISER), which was established at the University of the Witwatersrand in 2001.[1] I intend critiquing WISER's programmes in general, and in particular a summer school and two public symposiums that were offered in February, May and June 2004.

I dashed off the abstract for this paper in a fit of pique in February 2004, after I had experienced once too often the inaccessible language of WISER seminars. As the music writer Gwen Ansell says: the occasional word or phrase for which there is no substitute is OK, but language which consists mainly of discipline-specific jargon is like a dog marking his territory by pissing on every single tree.[2] I wish to challenge the over-use of in-speak in public and interdisciplinary forums which, at best, shows insensitivity to those who may not belong to the in-speak discipline and, at worst, is little more than an attempt to mark and preserve one's own territory. WISER is by no means the only offender, and indeed its more recent public engagements have remarkably improved its accessibility. But I have chosen WISER as my focus because I have regularly attended its programmes since it opened, and a critique of them offered a way of engaging with my topic. There are many other discipline devotees operating in publicly-accountable and interdisciplinary spheres who are guilty of jargon, my visual arts colleagues included.

I acknowledge that specialist language and writing within a discipline, like much contemporary art, may not be easy to access. But I also wish to acknowledge – to assert – the right of the average person to understand communications across disciplines, particularly when such communications take place in interdisciplinary forums, or spaces where the public is invited to interact with academia. My frequent experience in academic forums beyond and often within the visual arts, where I have attempted to interact outside my sphere of expertise, has been one of alienation. There is often little mediation or explanation of what is unfamiliar to an outsider, and seemingly no perception that such communication may be important. In public display terms, that means no label, no text panel, no museum guide. A curator would soon be out of a job if that were her standard exhibition policy.

At the same time, and this is the ambivalent crux of interdisciplinarity, the right to understand across disciplines carries within it the right to have the expertise of one's own discipline respected, and vice

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[1] The paper was presented at the conference "Visual Culture Explorations", 9-10 July 2004, Department of Visual Arts, University of Pretoria. A shortened version is published in *Art South Africa*, 3(1), Spring 2004. I am grateful to Sean O'Toole and Deborah Posel for critical feedback on the paper.
[2] Gwen Ansell in conversation 6 July 2004, referring to a musicologists' conference she had just attended in Grahamstown.

versa. I am not advocating a flattening of difference, a dumbing-down of expertise, which happens depressingly often in non-academic forums like the South African Museums Association's conferences. On the contrary, my expectation that I should understand and be empowered to critique, for example, a scientific display or a legal document has the flip-slide awareness that I am not competent to curate the display or draw up the document myself. I often find, however, that the disciplinary independence of art history and visual culture is ignored or sidelined – because, I believe, art objects operate in public spaces. They encourage non-expert and personal interpretation, and they validate judgements by way of purchases. (I know all about it because I own it.) But personal taste and buying power do not necessarily result in theoretical expertise, although they could produce very good collections.

Since its inception, one of WISER's central objectives has been "to create new sites of public conversation and exchange within Wits … to contribute to the process of drawing large and varied audiences back to the campus, to grapple with topical issues", and "to shape WISER as a public intellectual space".[3] WISER organises some of the most exciting seminars and conferences in South Africa, it encourages people beyond Wits to attend its programmes, and its commitment to public engagement reached a new level when it published recently the first number of *The WISER review* (2 July 2004), as a supplement in a weekly newspaper (*Mail & Guardian*). Since WISER opened I have tried to attend as many of its programmes as possible. I have benefited from its superb ongoing seminar series on the origins of contemporary theoretical debates, which began in 2002 for its doctoral fellows but soon attracted a wider audience. I attended some of its Public Positions lectures, which started in August 2003, and a number of its interdisciplinary seminars. And I have attended most of the events offered by WISER during 2004, our tenth year of democracy. But I blew it in February when I decided I was tired of attending seminars where, yet again, I was made to feel like a disempowered outsider who knows nothing. That was when I sent off the abstract for my paper.

My experience with WISER has been that of a supplicant begging for crumbs from the table. I may have learnt much from WISER's offerings, but I have usually struggled to de-code the jargon, perceived this to be a fault within me, and felt too diffident to enter into meaningful interchanges as I might say something utterly stupid. Plus, my particular discipline of the visual arts has been noticeably absent from WISER's forums. The message I kept receiving was that art historians and theorists have nothing of interest or importance to offer, and that any discussions about the visual arts can just as competently be conducted, for example, by a social anthropologist. Only artists and their artworks seem to be of value to WISER. Thus artists of the stature of William Kentridge are invited to contribute to the Public Positions lectures, or to design the WISER offices and publications (Clive van den Berg), or to have their works displayed in the WISER offices (Christine Dixie, Colbert Mashile, Penny Siopis and others). It's great to see such concrete appreciation of the visual arts, and looking afresh at an object without mediation is essential to developing original insights. But all look and no theory severely limits contributions to public intellectual space. Like inviting us to look at a Fahfee game or a poor white

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[3] "Going public" and Deborah Posel's editorial, *WISER* 2003:1, 2, 24.

community without the accompanying analyses, which were offered at the summer school hosted by WISER in February 2004.[4]

The summer school "Risk, rationality and city life" was convened in February 2004 by WISER in collaboration with the Amsterdam School for Social Science Research (with which WISER has a formal institutional partnership), the International Network on Globalization, and the Wits Graduate School for the Humanities and Social Sciences. It was a closed event in respect of paper-givers and contributors, but interested persons like myself were also given access. So I was there by invitation and should not have expected pandering to outsiders. However, as the summer school had announced its intention to promote interdisciplinarity between the social sciences and the humanities, I thought I could have something to offer, with my interest and experience in the Johannesburg inner city, its museums and visual culture. But I and my related disciplines were mute through an exclusion which was not so much intentional as indifferent. My frustration at feeling an outsider in a field to which I thought I could contribute was matched by irritation that the visual arts and recent major cultural events in Johannesburg were ignored. The programme had no papers engaging with Johannesburg-specific issues arising out of the Urban futures 2000 conference, the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, current inner city initiatives such as the development of a cultural arc, or Wits's spatial vision for urban reintegration. Nor did it indicate in an accompanying tourist pamphlet that there were any public art spaces, like the Johannesburg Art Gallery, worthy of a visit.

In reality this was an international summer school that could just as well have been convened in Amsterdam as Johannesburg. So it is perhaps understandable that there was no theoretical input on Johannesburg-specific visual culture. But then how do you explain the inclusion of other non-visual, Johannesburg-specific papers? And the exclusion of visual-arts theorists within the general context of "Risk, rationality and city life"? The interdisciplinarity of the summer school extended no further than interchanges between social anthropologists, sociologists and political scientists, and related theorists who spoke their language. Visual arts had no place in their serious network discussions; they were evidently considered too lightweight to warrant more than a general lecture on Johannesburg buildings,[5] and a coincidental mention during a bus tour of the city. The "risk of interdisciplinarity", alluded to during the week of the summer school and in particular during the wrapping up session, was hardly taken as far as the visual arts were concerned.

Three months later WISER hosted another international programme of colloquia and public lectures: "The promise of freedom and its practice: global perspectives on South Africa's decade of democracy". This formed part of Wits's celebrations of South Africa's ten years of freedom and was funded by the European Union. The range of invited speakers included international scholars like Jean Comaroff and

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[4] Papers delivered by Detlev Krige and Irma du Plessis, respectively "Sweet dreams and golden money: risk, rationality and luck amongst Fahfee runners in Johannesburg" and "'Waiting it out and making it happen': residents' responses to the possibilities and threats of property ownership in former council housing scheme in Johannesburg".
[5] Clive Chipkin, "Presentations on Johannesburg's history, planning and architecture".

Paul Gilroy, former urban activists now in government like Edgar Pieterse, and people engaged in inner city renewal like Graeme Reid of the Johannesburg Development Agency. It was a very good series, succeeding in its intention of shifting the debate on South Africa's ten years of democracy from an inward focus to a wider view, reminding South Africans of the global significance of their recent history.[6] Some of the lectures have been edited and published in WISER's new publication, *The WISER review*, of which the first number appeared as a supplement in the *Mail & Guardian* in early July 2004. This is a significant step in deepening public debates and creating "a new genre of writing in this country, which is intellectual without being exclusively academic".[7]

It seems petty, in view of the success of this series, to carp on about alienating language and marginalised visual arts. But that is the task I have set myself in this critical review of WISER's programmes. And I certainly found the evidence. I sat next to a member of the public who was taking copious notes. When I talked to her I discovered she used to be an editor and found much of the language pretentiously obscure. Her notes consisted mainly of choice samples of jargon. The best sample, she said, one she would hold dear to her heart for the rest of her life, was Jean Comaroff's "metonyms of polity". I notice this phrase has been edited out of Comaroff's published essay.[8]

As far as the visual arts are concerned, my gripe is more serious. They were marginalised yet again, but in an insidious way that seemed to undermine the relevance of critical theory and art history as a distinct discipline (the uncomfortable ambivalence of interdisciplinarity, as I mentioned earlier). An image from the South African National Gallery's current exhibition on ten years of democracy – Tracey Rose's *The kiss* – was analysed by a social anthropologist under the title "Race, class and the promise of an inclusive society".[9] It was a fascinating paper from a different perspective, but it had a disturbing undercurrent akin to tabloid press commentaries on the Tate's Turner Prize nominees. The implication was that specialist art critics and historians are irrelevant; we social science practitioners can manage very well without them. The close working relationship WISER has with the artist Clive van den Berg also seems to cut art theoreticians out of the equation. Van den Berg designed WISER's premises, has artworks installed there, and designed the images for past conferences, the "Promise of freedom" programme and *The WISER review* (July 2004). It is wonderful to see contemporary art accorded such space and respect. But the simultaneous exclusion from WISER programmes of commentaries on art says all too clearly that WISER considers art important, but not the discourses around it.

The final WISER symposium I wish to address, "Townships now" (9 – 11 June 2004), again excluded the visual arts. They were inexplicably absent from the round table discussion on "Cultural Creativity

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[6] The intentions are outlined by Achille Mbembe and Deborah Posel in the editorial, "A critical humanism", *WISER* 2004:2.

[7] Email from Deborah Posel, Director of WISER, circulated 28 June 2004.

[8] Jean Comaroff's public lecture "Reflections on liberalism: citizenship and difference in South Africa" was edited and printed as a joint essay with John Comaroff, "The struggle between the Constitution and 'things African'", *WISER* 2004:6.

[9] The paper was given by Steven Robins, University of Stellenbosch. Tracey Rose's image appears on posters and the cover of the catalogue to the exhibition, *A decade of democracy: South African art 1994-2004 from the permanent collection of Iziko: South African National Gallery* (2004).

and Emerging Trends" which included just about everything else: "Radio, Television, Advertising, Fashion, Music, Architecture, Sexuality, Cuisine & Literature". Elsewhere in the symposium, critiques which approximated those of art theoreticians, such as spatial impressions and imaginings, were made by architects[10] or historians.[11] Others continue to speak for my discipline in the WISER forum. A comment made by one of the invited speakers, Sifiso Ndlovu, has particular resonance in this regard. Ndlovu, a senior researcher at the South African Democracy Education Trust and the principal researcher behind the displays in the Hector Pieterson Memorial Museum, spoke critically of the tendency of scholars to appropriate others' experiences and speak on their behalf. He did not believe, for example, that someone had the right to investigate and describe township life if they did not actually live there and experience it. He also spoke critically of the tendency to sideline people whose first language is not English.

In a comparable way, this could be my criticism of WISER. Critical theory in my discipline, when it is not ignored, is appropriated by others who speak on my behalf. And the language used in public forums is often so specialist as to appear foreign, even to first language speakers. Despite its stated commitment to interdisciplinarity, the WISER forum – at least in my experience – has not dismantled its discipline barriers. At a simple level I see this as a barrier of language, where alienating and abstruse language tends to obscure meaning and act as a ring-fence against outsiders. At a more serious level I see this as a decision by an influential and well-funded research body to engage only those disciplines that it considers relevant. On both levels I do not think WISER has yet fulfilled its interdisciplinary brief.

The true challenge of interdisciplinarity lies in facilitating in-depth interaction – not superficial or banal contact – between disciplines whose individual expertise is respected. This means enabling outsiders to perceive the complexities within other disciplines so that they can also engage with issues on a meaningful level, thereby jointly discovering common ground and goals, and encouraging true interdisciplinary exchange and development. Interdisciplinarity carries the risk of undermining the autonomy of separate disciplines, but that risk has to be taken in order to develop a meaningful common language.

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[10] Anna Cowen, "Artists impressions: public participation processes and imagining the future township" and Noeleen Murray, "Spatial re-imagining: contesting post-apartheid township 'development'".
[11] Gary Baines, "New Brighton", in which he discussed George Pemba's idealist depictions of the New Brighton Township.

PAPER TITLE: FRAMING IMAGES UNDER ICONOCLASH CONDITIONS

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In saying "image" we may have many and frequently divergent things in mind. The term could literally mean almost anything, and we effortlessly slip and slide between them — whether astutely, cunningly, unwittingly or foolishly. As basic category at the very heart of visual theory, visual studies or *Bildwissenschaft* (Bredekamp 2003), "image" (including its cognates in many languages), is entirely polysemic and utterly ambiguous. The staggering diversity of image kinds/classes/types and the inherent ambivalence of any single image, surpass anything we may imagine. This is exacerbated by late modernist *Bilderflut* conditions, the pervasive deluge of images proliferating in the mass media of advanced capitalist societies' culture industries. In addition, the permanently contested and ideologically infected status of this cloud of imagery further complicates the matter. Referring to phenomena emerging from indeterminate yet always fractious intervals and fusions of iconophilia and iconophobia, idolatry and iconoclasm, the neologism "iconoclash" has been coined, among others, to come to terms with this difficult situation.[1]

I will first briefly examine three exemplary cases of image mapping with the object of conveying some idea of the diversity and ambiguity of contested image categories. Rather than taxonomic collections or diacritical systems of imagery, each of these three undertakings in reality assembles an argument for a particular critical position. Nonetheless, they are helpful in outlining the scope of visuality, in discerning certain key features of the "image cosmos". In *Les mots dans la peinture*, Michel Butor (1969: 8) describes paintings as shrouded in a halo of words.[2] My point about an "image cosmos" is that a cloud of imagery similarly acts as an indispensable supplement to every instance of visual depiction (drawing, painting, statue, print, photograph, design, etc.). In conclusion I will briefly sample, at a micro level of embodied vision as it were, the ideological vigilance necessary for negotiating the "image cosmos".

The first example is from J.J. Gibson, a leading twentieth-century perception psychologist. Rejecting a well-established and widespread concept of visual representation (the so-called "arrested image" concept), he developed an alternative idea of "progressive image formation" (cf. Gibson 1971, 1978, 1979). He bases his critique of arrested images on the continuous processing of "information contained in the ambient optic array", immediately accessible in the optic field of sentient beings moving through the visual world, and interacting with the visual world's relatively constant "affordances" (for instance, the horizon, angles, surfaces, gradings). Thus Gibson (1980: xviii) claims that while surfaces have "actually perceived

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[1] Iconoclash refers to the title and subject of the groundbreaking exhibition from 2002 in the Karlsruhe Centre for Art and Media (Latour & Weibel 2002). Iconoclash as both the love and the fear of images is driven by clashing yet intertwined motives, in particular a desire to discard all forms of representation, recognising at the same time its impossibility.

[2] "Toute notre experience de la peinture comporte en fait une considéreable partie verbale. Nous ne voyons jamais les tableaux seules, notre vision n'est jamais pure vision. Nous entendons parler des oeuvres, nous lisons de la critique d'art, notre regard est tout entouré, tout prepare oar un halo de commentaires, même pour la production la plus récente" (Butor 1969:8, cf. also Bätschmann 1977).

affordance meaning"; marks on a surface, on the other hand, may have "referential meaning". In other words, such marks may represent something, provided they originate from a "graphic act" and furthermore (we may add) that they are received in an appropriate "imaginative act".

Gibson (1980: xv-xvii) broadly distinguishes the following ten meanings of the term visual image:

- Solid images — three-dimensional objects like sculptural pieces, statues, models or toys.

- Pictorial images — pictures, paintings, drawings, engravings, photographic prints, projected slides or shadow-casters like low or high relief.

- Arrested images — "many would assume that this is the only kind of image, but it is not", the counter example is progressive screen images like Oriental shadow-play and cinematic images.

- Mirror images — virtual objects or scenes behind smooth reflective surfaces.

- Projected camera images (*camera obscura*) — pictures formed on the inner surface of a dark chamber with a pinhole or lens in the opposite wall.

- Photographic camera images (*camera lucida*) — camera images arrested by a shutter, latent image in emulsion, negative image on film and positive image on another surface.

- Retinal images — "a vague term that covers up the prevalent confusion about vision in physiology and psychology" (Gibson 1980: xvi); an optical image on the inner surface of the dark chamber of the vertebrate eye (false analogy with the *camera obscura*), or a physiological image in the mosaic of photoreceptors of the retina transmitted to the brain (false analogy with a latent arrested image in photographic emulsion).

- Optical after-images — "supposedly the after-sensation of overstimulating the photoreceptors", or of prolonged stimulation of them, with a fixated eye".

- Memory images — "taken to be the trace of an arrested physiological image that has been transmitted to the brain"

- Mental images — "a little-understood kind of experience"; we do not have tiny observers in our heads but, "if not an image, what is the experience to be called?" Dream images, imaginary fantasies, metaphorical imagery, mind's eye images, schemes of thought?

Note the sequence of items in Gibson's catalogue which is designed to make a case against "arrested images" and "retinal images". The latter are widespread category confusions, and by no means confined to psychology and physiology alone. They belong to a body of assumptions that have been

branded as "picture theories of perception" — an ideological construct I will be revisiting in the concluding sections of this presentation.
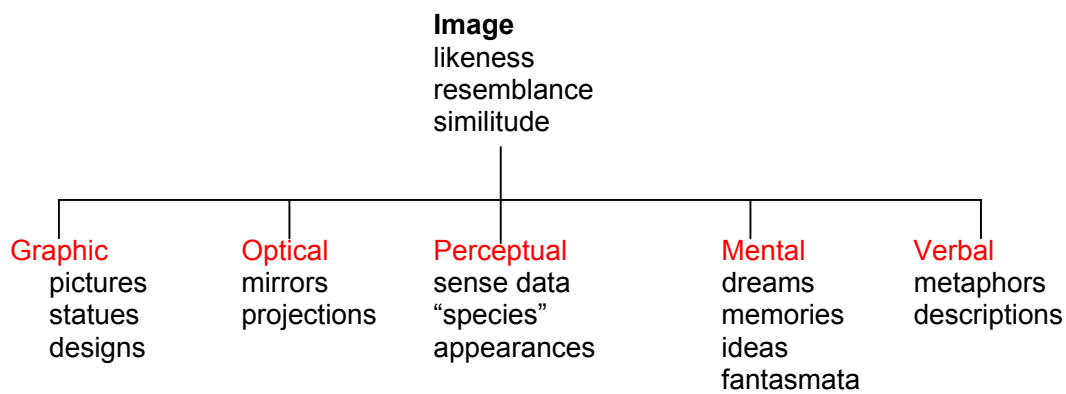
Next, a second example which concentrates on what appears to be a single category — the pictorial image. It is from James Elkins (1999), the prolific critic of semiotic image categories (in particular concerning simplified distinctions between *icon*, *index* and *symbol*). Elkins aspires to grasp the "material trace" of picturing, its "sub-semiotic basis" which resists semiotic classification as signs. His examples and analyses are therefore carefully calculated to torture semiotic categories to the breaking point.

He favours *gramma* as a generic term to designate the common origin and the lasting interlacing of writing, notation and picturing — in this way evidently engaging Gibson's lapidary phrase "marks on a surface". Elkins presses the limits of this single Gibsonian category by investigating some rather perplexing "pictorial image" variants, distinguishing seven areas within "the domain of the image" — including rather exotic species such as allographs/allomorphs, semasiographs, pseudowriting, subgraphemics, hypographemics, emblemata and schemata (Elkins 1999).

Earlier Elkins (1997) explored the notion that "the object stares back", taking image power as the irresistible and uncontrollable hold that some images have on spectators, in other words, an approach in which "affective image" means "compelling image". The cognitive metaphor he chose for the field of visuality ("the domain of images") further reinforces the idea of image power as indefinite yet inescapable dominion over subjects — notably signalling certain affinities of image and ideology. Such ideas regarding compelling, dialectic or clashing imagery and associated forms of human bonding with or rejection of images are indispensable when iconoclash contexts are to be investigated (cf. Farago & Zwijnenberg 2003).

The third example is from W J T Mitchell, a pioneer of visual theory and key figure in a reputed poststructuralist "pictorial turn" in the USA. Formerly a literary scholar, he first developed his ideas from word and image oppositions — from ancient power struggles between verbal and visual processes of signification. Less specialised in the areas of perceptual/optic and graphic/pictorial imagery, his conception of visual representation nevertheless appears to be much broader than those of either Gibson or Elkins. Employing Wittgenstein's "family resemblances" cognitive metaphor,[3] Mitchell (1986: 10) proposes a "family of images" covering the spectrum of visuality in five branches represented in a well-known diagram:

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[3] Carlo Ginzburg (2004) has recently demonstrated that Wittgenstein's "family resemblances" concept itself also derives from a pictorial construct — composite photographic images developed in Francis Galton's search for generalised pictures of certain human types.

Image
likeness
resemblance
similitude

Graphic	Optical	Perceptual	Mental	Verbal
pictures	mirrors	sense data	dreams	metaphors
statues	projections	"species"	memories	descriptions
designs		appearances	ideas	
			fantasmata	

The three examples of image classification passed in review above are not intended to encompass or even to suggest the whole of the "image cosmos" nor are they meant to indicate the countless historical variations on anthropogenic images emerging in visual culture, especially in the recent era of burgeoning electronic imaging. Preliminary conclusions may nonetheless be drawn:

Any human intercourse with images engages the full range of slippery categories distinguished between Gibson, Elkins and Mitchell. Our attention may for a brief period be directed at one image of a specific kind, but any serious and prolonged engagement with a particular image will eventually generate complex connections and interactions — gradual and cumulative as well as involuntary and iterative — between and across all image categories. Divisions made in this regard denote successive phases and emergent stations in imaging processes as well as analogical constellations (conscious and unconscious) of imaging functions structured at various levels (physical, sensory, emotional, semantic, rational, social, etc). Accordingly, the most productive image concepts typically involve passages and interactions across conceptual boundaries. Think for instance of three typical cases: first, "nomadic image" notions comprising continuous movement along linked image catenaries; secondly, contrasting "protean image" notions of flowing transformation, for instance metaphorical terms recently proposed by Mieke Bal (2002) such as "transport, translation, transfiguration" (associated with metaphoric images of the fold, flames, fire), and lastly, the troubling case of "traumatic image" notions of interference, repression, disruption, disturbance and displacement.

It is clear from these typical image notions and from the exemplary mappings of the image cosmos above that ideological and discursive interests do indeed affect imaging processes as well as distinctions between kinds of imagery — sometimes in surprisingly profound ways. However, despite the enormous escalation of representations in modern visual culture, it appears that we have only extremely impoverished image conceptions at our disposal (for everyday processes of visualisation as well as typical "methodological toolbox" components). At issue is the fact that modern Westernised viewers are susceptible to popular but reductive "picture theories of perception" which, in true ideological fashion, have been infecting our very bodies. Martin Heidegger's (1977) account of the condition of modernity as "the age of the world picture" reminds us that we are deeply embroiled in Western ideological culture. In general, we have come to conceive the "image cosmos" one-sidedly on the spatial model of graphic images and, even more

reductively, on one technical variety of graphic image, namely the picture (and, following more recent reversals, sundry irrational spectator responses to pictures).

In the West the picture attained model status as a rationalising agent in the aftermath of the Renaissance. Accordingly, the picture (that is, Mitchell's "graphic image" or Gibson's "arrested image") began "colonising" other image categories — with the picture model extending its influence from left to right in terms of Mitchell's diagram of the "family of images". Inspired by the search for valid scientific knowledge and by a desire for technological control, early modern optics discovered and exploited various mechanical analogies between the human eye and the new optical instruments of scientific observation (such as *camera obscura*, telescope and microscope). On the basis of these mechanical analogies epoch-making connections were established between optical/retinal images and pictures made by human hands.

Such analogies are evidently the topic of this eighteenth-century comparison of the human eye and the *camera obscura* (Figure 1). Johannes Kepler was merely the first of many since the sixteenth century to define the optical image as a reversed or upside-down picture (*pictura*) — thus establishing analogies between optical configurations in the retinal mosaic and perspective design in graphic images or pictures. The picture's expanding scope in "modernising vision" (Levin 1999) during "the age of the world picture" (Heidegger 1977) dilated exponentially — from the composition of paintings to the cartographic system of mapping co-ordinates and the axial system of diagramming, from the registration of camera images to the projection of film images on cinematic screens or television tubes, and from the design of computer graphics to formats of digital imaging on monitor screens. These technological advances are indicative as well of escalating degrees of mechanisation and industrialisation of human vision (cf. Crary 1990).
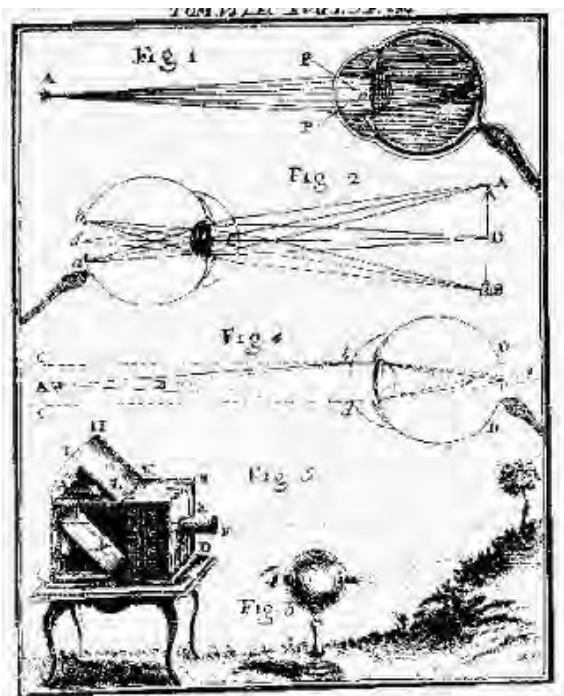

Figure 1: Anonymous. Comparative depiction of the human eye and the camera obscura. Early eighteenth-century book illustration (Crary 1991:49).

The "picturalising" of visuality did not stop with analogies between pictures and eyes. The process continued inexorably till the full spectrum of invisible and inner-bodily images were also modelled on, or reconceived in pictorial terms, readying constellations and networks of embodied imagery for ideological exploitation. Thus the "colonising" process also affected mental and verbal imagery; memory and dream images; metaphors and imaginary images; body images and other eidetic or notional images; symbolic images of self and of others; images of cities, historical and communal destinies, corporate images of societal order; environmental images of landscapes and places … to mention but a few.

Ideological powers shape symbolic forms of human identity, manifesting themselves in iconoclash mode as contesting pictures or quasi-pictorial images of humanity, society, history, the world and the gods or idols. This involves the construction of imaginary fixations whose hypernormative distorting effects are propagated cancer-like by pictorial imagery in the media of visual culture. Typically, such ideological fixations comprise images of "what goes without saying", represented in unquestioned depictions with the power to identify and stereotype; images recurring in mutually reinforcing series or clusters and images which cannot exist together; images with the power to conceal and reveal, images that blind us and images that make us see. The "spiritual blindness" of the sighted aptly describes this ideological impairment of human vision and imagination.[4] Comprising numerous histories of contested images, iconoclash in the end belongs to the domain of *imago* where normative ideological image powers, image values and communal human identities are at stake. Thus images of self-interest and of alien cultures are typically distorted into ideological confrontations with threatening enemy images.

Figure 2: Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), *The artist and his model* (ca 1527). Wood-cut print from *Unterweysung der Messung …* (Nürnberg: Hieronymus Formschneyder [Andreä], 1538).

One of the engines driving the steady "picturalising" of the image world was perspective design and the open-window picture metaphor (Leone Alberti's *finestra aperta*) — as depicted in Albrecht Dürer's renowned wood-cut print of 1527, one of the most regularly reproduced images in the textbooks of visual studies and visual culture (Figure 2). What is at stake in the picture maker's focused concentration and immobilised monocular gaze? A series of charged terms describe the tenor of this "pictured" manner of looking. It may be characterised as instrumentally measured, notionally attentive and concentrated staring, as dissecting (laying bare analytically) and composing (rationally syn-thetising), in other words, exemplifying controlled calculation and objectifying fixation.

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[4] Metaphorically similar to pathologies of vision like "blind spots" and "tunnel vision" examined in Elkins 1997.

Such terms all allude to a way of seeing that has acquired a certain notoriety as "the gaze" — a visual counterpart of the crucial idea that knowledge is power. "The gaze" (as opposed to the mobile "glance") may therefore be taken as an alternative term for the process I have been describing as a "picturalising of the domain of images". Its many aspects are revealed in proliferating variations from recent writings, for instance "notional gaze", "discursive gaze", "disembodied gaze", "male gaze", "voyeur gaze", "colonial gaze", "*flâneur* gaze", "tourist gaze", "despotic gaze", "nostalgic gaze", "paranoid gaze", "logocentric gaze" and "philosopher's gaze".[5]

Representing the shape of logocentrism in the field of visuality, the "gaze" presents a crucial site of ideological power and resistance — seeing that the inhabitants of a globally Westernised and modernised world are at once both the practitioners and the victims of ocularcentrism. The process of "technologised picturalising" is driven by older and more powerful ideological traditions. This is reflected in well-known terms, for instance "the nobility of sight", stretching from the archaic origin of *theoretikos* as eye-witness of epiphany at religious ceremonies to the "the modern hegemony of sight". The cardinal role of visual metaphor in defining the legitimacy of scientific thought's grasp of self-evident truth in Western rationalism's theo-ontological and metaphysical traditions is common knowledge. One merely has to be reminded of the currency and frequency of such (dead) metaphors as "the light of reason", "revelation", "observation", "scrutiny", "insight", "speculation", "supervision", "seeing through something", "point of view", *Wesenschau* or "clear and distinct concepts".

Twisting the Cartesian *cogito ergo sum*, the motto *video ergo sum* ("I see, therefore I am") captures this pervasive trend in a terse formulation. In visual terms it secures the knowing subject's privileged and empowered position over against any object of knowledge. It also preserves logocentrism's seemingly divergent ideals of freely adopted alternative points of view (as opposed to universally valid claims), distanced detachment of observation (as opposed to metaphysical "presence") — all based metaphorically on aspects of human vision.

Ocularcentrism is so deeply ingrained in Western ideological culture that its "postmodern deconstruction", despite obvious anti-ocularcentrist intentions, similarly tends to conceptualise itself in visual terms. Certainly one of the best-known examples is Michel Foucault's notion of the "gaze" as panoptic domination, based on Jeremy Bentham's design for a circular prison building, the *Panopticon*, where a single, invisible and omnipotent sentinel in a central tower keeps watch over the many visible and powerless prisoners incarcerated in the circular array of cells, depicted in a well-known architectural plan and elevation (Figure 3). The disciplining machinery of vigilant panoptic surveillance eventually "colonised" the clinic, asylum, boarding school, military barrack, factory floor, administrative

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[5] Cf. Bryson 1983 & 1988, Romanyshyn 1984, Jay 1986, Olin 1996, Levin 1999.

head-office, archive and museum. For Foucault (1973 & 1980), the Panopticon's asymmetrical power relations visualise the idea of an anonymous "scopic regime of surveillance".[6]
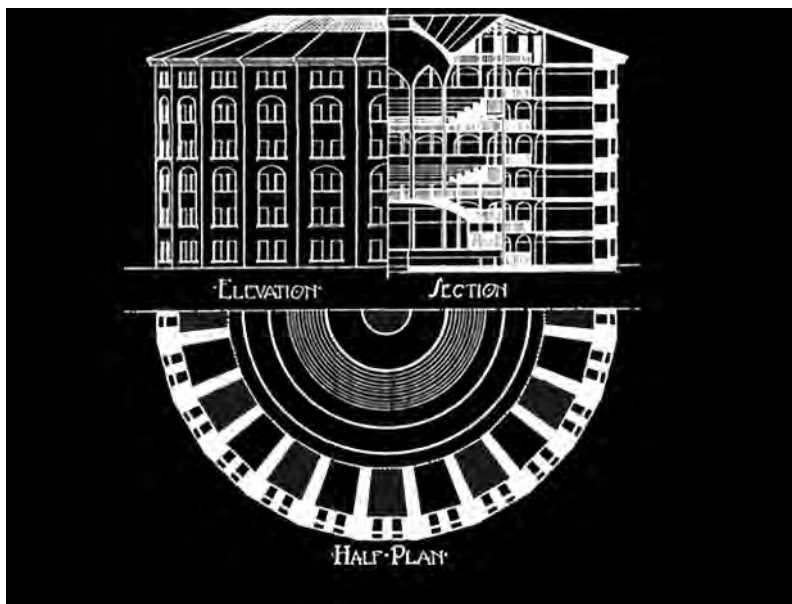

Figure 3: Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), *Panopticon* (1791)

The Panopticon is but one of many striking examples of ideological conundrums brought about by connections constructed between diverse areas in the image world or puzzling interlacing of various phases of image formation. Mitchell (1986: 5-6) designates such self-reflexive connective images as "hypericons" which are difficult to depict as they exist at once in diverse forms of visualisation or distinct branches in Mitchell's diagram of the family of images. Influential examples of such hypericonic image nexuses from the history of Western ocularcentrism include Plato's grotto allegory; empiricist Aristotle's wax tablet or *tabula rasa;* the archer's drawn bow and aimed arrow as medieval image of intentionality; Locke's "dark room" taking human consciousness as *camera obscura*; Goethe's *Dann schließe ich die Augen* ("then I closed my eyes") for the physiological generation of entoptic images (Crary 1990); Karl Marx's inverted *camera obscura* image for false consciousness (Mitchell 1986: 168-172); Wittgenstein's duck-rabbit figure and family resemblances; Sartre's observing and observed *voyeur*; the *Aura* of Walter Benjamin's dialectical images; Richard Kearney's (1987) postmodern "labyrinth of reflecting mirrors" or Martin Jay's (1993) "downcast eyes".

Students of visual theory have an urgent calling of inculcating resistance against ocularcentric "scopic régimes", the critical task of attacking and exposing the ideological constellation of arrested image, picture theories of perception, the steady picturalising of the image world, the gaze and panoptic surveillance. James Elkins's recent sceptical introduction to visual culture (2003) raises awareness regarding the multiplicity of image concepts essential for visual literacy. Among many antidotes available to critical visual theorists (Derrida 1999), I want to emphasise the need to develop dynamic, progressive and action-

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[6] Surveillance entails a dominant and pervasive system that disempowers human subjects at the point of their visual exposure to others, subjecting their visibility to a disciplining, visualising power whose authority is itself of invisible discursive origin and, more importantly, internalised by individuals who become their own overseers — inspecting, guarding and disciplining themselves.

orientated image concepts. Here images are conceived in temporal and human terms as events, both bodily and socially, which involve ideologically-shaped performative acts of the imagination that will open picture categories to visual display rhetoric. I only have time for a few rudimentary ideas about such alternative perspectives with the intention of undoing the pictorial image's rule over the image world, precisely by repositioning it alongside many non-pictorial image categories.

Pictures are not merely passive objects of perception. As quasi-subjects they "look back" at us, returning our gazes. Neither are we merely passive recipients of empirical optical stimuli. We are responsive subjects, touched and moved by pictures, which address us, affectively petitioning our attention. In turn we engage them in imaginative interactions, often interpreting them against the grain. Though inanimate, they are animated by our actions; though silent they "speak to us" when we genuinely engage them. They bodily project imaginary worlds in the eyes of the attentive and responsive observer. Clearly these considerations stem from the fundamentals of a hermeneutic of the image.

I would like to use Alfred Yarbus's (1967) recordings of the saccadic eye movements of picture-viewing spectators to demonstrate what Gibson had in mind with "progressive imagery" (Figure 4). The Yarbus recordings plot optical vision's minute focal area rapidly scanning the marked surface of a picture in search of meaning, in each case hunting down clues to answer a leading question about the depicted subject-matter. They trace fleeting moments of "progressive image formation" in the give-and-take between picture and spectator, plotting the course of one act in a lasting picture-spectator encounter.[7] Together composing the picture as a performative event, countless such sequences of affective moments and interruptions emerge progressively from repetitive actions of "pictorial generativity" — a felicitous term for picture-viewing competences put forward in Flint Schier's *Deeper into pictures* (1986).

Still, mechanical recordings of saccadic eye movements do not register the most telling features of pictorial vision. A number of such invisible but vision-enabling conditions deserve special mention: Pictures and optical fields of vision never coincide. Thus a spectator always sees more than just a single picture — the individual field of vision is permeated by variable actions, frames and contexts of display rather than isolated or arrested images. Spectators project pictorial images in peripheral vision, held indistinctly as emergent wholes or "schematic maps", forecasting and foretelling the eventful outcome of a picture-performance. This coincides with the progressive collection of visual meaning from the imaginative interplay of visual protension and retension in close readings of pictorial detail. Spectators respond to pictures with imaginative collusion, discovering and playing along with imaginary roles which pictures project for prospective viewers, gradually fleshing out the contours of appropriation and critical distance, eventually bonding with, censuring or rejecting the representation.

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[7] Such picture-events are infinite in variety. Run-of-the-mill pictures attract no more than a first cursory glance, passing virtually unnoticed, while certain horrific or repulsive pictures cannot even be seen. Compelling pictures or at times mere arresting pictorial detail may be major incidents leaving the spectator appalled or elated, exhausted or, on extremely rare occasions, in tears, while certain dark or enigmatic pictures may for long refuse communication — confusing, frustrating, intriguing or absorbing their spectators.
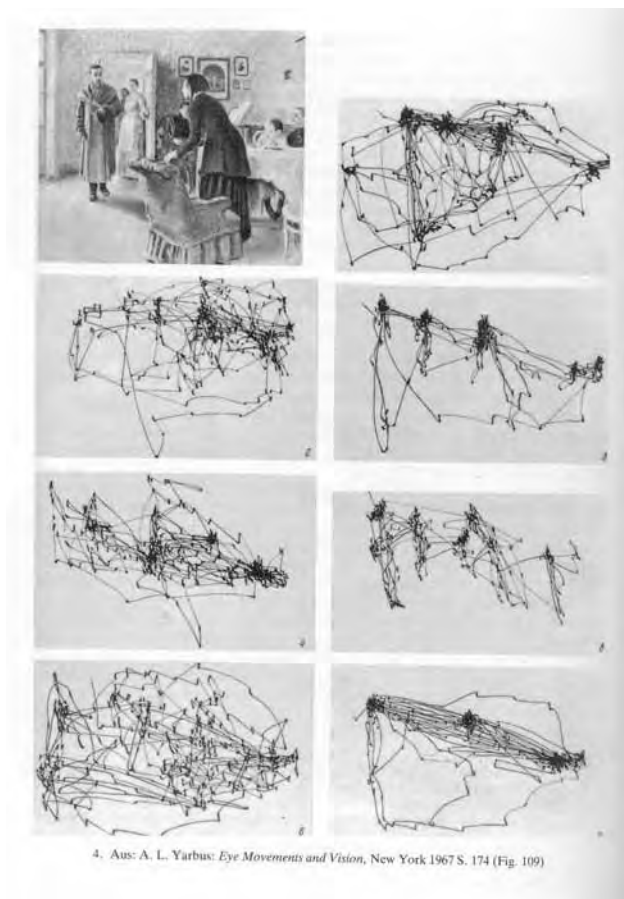
Figure 4: Recordings of saccadic eye movements scanning Ilya Repin's *The unexpected visitor* (1884), figure 109 from Yarbus 1967: 174.

Individual picture-events as such manifest merely one link in submerged chains of imagery of diverse invisible or inner-bodily kinds. When initiating interaction with a picture — this "surface with markings" with imaginary meanings soliciting our attention — we have to be sensitive to ideology-inflected iconoclash conditions resulting from embodied image networks that individual spectators and cultural communities involuntarily contribute to any particular picture's performativity.

This conclusion corroborates that of Hans Belting's *Bild-Anthropologie* (2001) where the image sciences' field of investigation is described as "der Mensch als Ort der Bilder"[8] — the body upon and within which iconoclash, the ideological war of images, takes place day after day. Itself an image, an image bearer and a position of image formation and habituation, the embodied human selfhood may be taken as the destination of imagery.

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SESSION: VISUAL DESIGN

PAPER TITLE: LOOKING "GOOD" – CITIZENS OF A NEW BRAND WORLD

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INTRODUCTION

We live in a man-made world where big organisations play an increasingly important role in the way our environment is shaped. This happens not only with respect to the products and services that contemporary man needs, but also with regard to organisations as man's fellow occupants of this world. The paper starts with a brief overview of 21st century business paradigms, followed by a focus on the role that design plays in the presentation and construction of Woolworths as a responsible corporate citizen.

THE CONTEMPORARY ORGANISATION – A CITIZEN OF THIS WORLD

Douglas Griffin, well-known author in the field of organisational complexity and management, calls large organisations nebulous entities, "as if" these systems can have intention and be ethically responsible (Griffin 2002:2). By law, both the organisation (as the system) and the individual in this system are ethically and paradoxically responsible. The organisation as a system has a culture, shared values, a vision or a common pool of meanings (Griffin 2002:16). People working together in a group are also seen as an entity in the Western World. The word corporation comes from the Latin word "corpus" meaning "body", and this notion of the corporation being "one" is also reflected in the word "organ", from which the concept of organisation has been derived (Griffin 2002:16).

Cultural theorists postulate that organisations can be seen not only as systems, but as *living systems*. The idea of a shared vision becomes the new core of this living system. A shared vision is often found in the brand, which is an abstract creation that replaces the paradox of the individual versus the group. Direction is given to the participants by moving the brand into the core of the organisation; it becomes the new entity, with individuals taking part in something bigger, namely a shared value and common purpose. A cult value is created if this process is taken one step further; a cult being idealisation without any realising and/or challenging of obstacles and conflicts.

CORPORATE VALUE SYSTEMS OF THE 21ST CENTURY

Sustainability is the 21st century business paradigm as a solution to a wide variety of problems on the international agenda (Elkington 1999:20). Sustainability's triple bottom line is a corporate measure of value based on economic prosperity, environmental quality and social justice (Elkington 1999:20). This is an international concept against which "individual businesses and, increasingly, entire economies will be held to account" (Elkington 1999:x). In South Africa the 2002 King II Report on Corporate Governance offers a Code of Practice where the triple bottom line is incorporated into a Code of Corporate Practices and Conduct. It is, however, necessary to briefly clarify these concepts before aligning visual design with the 21st century value systems.

The economic bottom line

The phrase "economic bottom line" has become a metaphor for profitability, but in accounting terms this means the earning figure in the earnings-per-share statement. It is a measure of *economic capital* (total value of assets minus liabilities). In today's knowledge economy, this notion of capital includes physical, financial, human and intellectual capital (Elkington 1999:74-79).

Of importance here in South Africa is the recent implementation of Capital Gains Tax (CGT) that is payable on the disposal of assets that takes place on or after a valuation date set as 1 October 2001. Brand value is considered part of these assets, which poses a particular challenge to accountants in South Africa, since brand value that is collectively built on perceptions and reputation must now be "calculated" as a balance sheet figure.

Of course this is good news for brand builders and the designers of these brands. Design costs were usually seen as general expenditure (e.g. corporate identity design), or sometimes as cost of sales, especially in new product development and manufacturing. Only the design of buildings was seen as contributing to real assets. The new approach towards accounting could move design, together with brand building, to an investment account. Brand experts such as Interbrand Sampson even developed methodologies to brand evaluation. The global business world recently saw how wrong action managed to destroy the value of an organisation when Enron and Andersons' carefully built reputation was reduced to nothing. Unfortunately businesses seem to need scandals before they realise the importance of corporate citizenship (Willmott 2003:362). As has emerged from most studies where this important link has been researched, companies that are good citizens sustain a profitable bottom line, and very view studies have managed to prove it otherwise.

The environmental bottom line

The principle of environmental responsibility lies within the notion of *natural capital*. Two main forms of natural wealth co-exist – the first is constituted by the natural ecosystems that are necessary for maintaining life and the second is made up of replaceable, renewable or substitutable sources. One practical example of environmental management occurs when organisations start looking at their supply chain. Volvo, for example, recently invited their suppliers to an environmental conference, stating that safety and quality, as such, is not enough. Various standards and environmental benchmarks exist, and new metrics for gauging the extent to which an organisation meets its environmental responsibility include the number of public complaints that it receives (Elkington 1999).

The social bottom line

The social bottom line is based on *human capital*. This includes an organisation or a company's employees and external stakeholders such as shareholders, government and society. In the 1995 Values Report issued by Bodyshop, 10 stakeholder groups were identified – extending from suppliers to franchisees and suppliers. To quote Bodyshop's Anita Roddick – "business is primarily about human relationships. We take the view that the more we listen to our stakeholders and the more we involve them in decision-making the better our business will run" (Elkington 1999:139).

One interesting story demonstrating the importance of human capital relates to *karoshi*, the Japanese word for death by overwork. An advertising executive committed suicide after having worked non-stop from 7am till often after midnight for 18 months, with only half a day off in between. After his parents sued his employer, several similar cases followed and companies were forced to bring in "no-overtime days" to enable employees to spend more time with their families and away from work (Elkinton 1999:80).

Socio-economic development, according to Professor Tom Gladwell, requires "poverty alleviation, population stabilization, female empowerment, employment creation, human rights observance…" (Gladwell in Elkington 1999:88). In South Africa, businesses are trying to eradicate the legacy of apartheid through so-called Black Economic Empowerment (BEE). This refers to legislation that sets certain targets for organisations and their supply chains concerning the number of previously disadvantaged persons to be employed, which includes people of colour, people with disabilities and women. Other social issues on the South African agenda include an acceptable, humane way of dealing with HIV/AIDS in the workplace.

The needs of society also evolved from a need for products and services to a need for meaningful experience, with cultural capital becoming increasingly more precious (Norton 2003). According to Norton, people no longer focus on the accumulation of things in order to feel important or experience a sense of belonging, an image that brands used to provide in the 1980s. The nineties saw a shift towards brand experiences, and witnessed a growth in branded environments, for example the Legoland Theme Park and Niketown. Families started to search for quality time, but the designed experiences did not fulfil their ultimate need – meaningful experience. In the late 1990s non-profit organisations constituted the fastest growing sector in the USA. Where do we see South Africa in this context with so many of its citizens surviving hardly above the breadline? Corporate social investment is described by Ron Irwin (2002:311) as a "crucial investment in the very future of [South Africa]". Without a growing and healthy society, business cannot be sustainable.

WOOLWORTHS: A GOOD CITIZEN BY DESIGN

Woolworths may well be considered an example of a triple-bottom-line-driven organisation, as it is "committed to working towards a suitable environment" (quoted from their first sustainability review published in 2003). Woolworths is a South African retailer founded by Max Sonnenberg in 1931 and devoted to selling quality merchandise at reasonable prices. The South African chain must not be confused with the Woolworths stores in the UK and the USA. The local Woolworths decided that unless they are an "actively responsible organisation, they will not remain relevant in this changing world" and formulated a sustainable strategy to give clarity for future direction (Woolworths 2003). By then many similar initiatives had already been in place for many years, with employees and suppliers involved. What is new, however, is a consolidated business focus that, according Brian Frost, non-executive director, is a "never-ending journey, a long and complex route but one where the rewards …far outweigh our substantial investment", in an effort to be a responsible corporate citizen at all times (Woolworths 2003).

Hangerman project– the life cycle of a Woolworths hanger

A clothing hanger is an object that is so much part of consumers' daily lives that very few people are actually aware of it. These days products such as hangers are made in huge numbers, and are therefore also relatively inexpensive. Part of the responsibilities of any organisation is to assess the full life cycle of their products from "cradle to grave". When purchasing clothing from Woolworths, the customer may choose whether or not to take the hanger that the clothes were displayed on. Hangers form part of the Woolworths quality chain – clothes are immediately, after having been sewn and ironed, put onto labelled hangers and transported hanging on rails in specially made containers. Woolworths realised 18 years ago that hangers simply cannot be thrown away and subsequently designed a life cycle process for hangers. Hangers are put in a special container, collected, and sorted for recycling or reuse when customers at till point indicate that they do not want to take the hanger.

What makes this whole process special, is that the sorting, cleaning and re-packing of these hangers are performed by various groups of people with disabilities in various parts of South Africa. One such operation is Orion in Atlantis, Cape Town, an area burdened with particular social problems and poverty. The Woolworths operation creates employment and offers its disabled employees the satisfaction of feeling needed, while also providing a reason to get up every morning. Profits from operations such as the one at Orion are shared with other areas of need in the community such as facilities for children with mental and physical disabilities. But Woolworths did not stop there. All hangers that are not suitable for re-use go to a facility in Houtbay where they are taken apart. The hooks go to the scrap yard and the plastic gets grinded and melted down for new hangers. Pupils at the School for the Blind in Worcester make the original hooks.

This good example of a sustainable life cycle process is, however, not the only reason for the inclusion of Woolworths in the study inclusion in this study. The images in Figure 1 were captured from a Woolworths staff training video that is used to educate and motivate staff about the Hangerman project, and so that every employee who handles a hanger can feel part of this system. By communicating this project, a common ground is created, which contributes to the brand values of Woolworths. Employees immediately feel that they too can make a difference. What is obvious in the video, is the clear communication and narrative style, supported by visual depictions of the process and the people involved. The process is explained further with the help of three-dimensional diagrammatic graphics to employees who could be at various levels of literacy.

Figure 1
The life of a Woolworths Hanger (Copyright Woolworths)

The only critique is that the consumers are not always informed what actually happens to the hangers they refuse. Although the video demonstrates to employees how they should explain what happens to discarded hangers, work pressure at till point might not always allow time for this. Despite the fact that the Hangerman Project is externally communicated on the Woolworths website to audiences by means of the recently released Sustainable Report, a lack of other visible external communications is apparent. This could be the result of Woolworths' firm policy not to use projects such as this for publicity. The Hangerman Project nevertheless makes business, social and environmental sense and has proved – over a period of 18 years – to be sustainable with 175 million hangers already recycled.

Badger friendly - the honey badger story
The second example of Woolworths as a responsible corporate citizen involves an environmental story. Honey badgers occur at low densities throughout South Africa, often outside the formal conservation areas. The honey badger or "ratel" (*Mellivora Capensis*) is a wild animal that is classified as vulnerable in the Red Data Book of Mammals. This indicates that they may become endangered if their numbers continue to decline. Honey badgers do not actually like to eat honey, but they love the larvae of bees found in hives,

with the result that bee farmers try to prevent honey losses by setting traps for and poisoning badgers. Badgers are known for their tenacity and often suffer for days in such traps. In the process they even chew off their own limbs in an effort to escape (Woolworths 2004). Woolworths therefore took the initiative by insisting on buying honey only from bee farmers who do not kill or harm honey badgers. This makes Woolworths' Pure Honey and Creamed Honey the first in South Africa, and probably in the world, to be labelled as "badger friendly".

Figure 2

Left is the Honey badger, in the centre and right - the badger friendly label portraying the partners involved in the Badger Friendly initiative

Beekeepers play an important environmental role, since bees not only provide honey, but through the pollination of crops also sustain the environment. There are over 250 000 commercial beehives in South Africa and the annual cost of repairing one beehive can amount to R50 000 when it continuously falls prey to a larvae-searching badger. The solution is actually rather simple and cost effective. Simply take the hive out of reach of the badger by raising it. Drums filled with gravel, old tyres or metal or wooden structures strong enough to withstand a badger's assault can be used for this purpose.

Regular visits and inspection offer the necessary controls to make sure no badgers are trapped or poisoned on farms that supply Woolworth with honey. The South African Federation of Bee-farmers assisted Woolworths, along with various environmentally concerned organisations and beekeeping bodies, in drawing up the SAFBA Code of Practice. It demonstrates a proactive approach and successful partnerships with various environmental bodies. A label is put onto the lid of each honey jar to inform the consumer that the honey is badger friendly, thus symbolising Woolworths's environmental values.

The above example demonstrates an important point. Sustainability is a dialogue – in this case listening to the problems of bee farmers, talking to informed conservationists, developing and implementing a code of practice and extending the dialogue to the consumer in the form of labelling the end product.

Other examples of Woolworths' procurement policies include independent audits of suppliers to ensure that the latter's employees are managed in a socially responsible way and that the environment is sustained without negative impact (Woolworths 2004).

Eggin on good citizenship - the egg alternative

Woolworths furthermore offers a wide range of alternatives to conventionally farmed eggs – Barn eggs, Free Range eggs, Omega-3 eggs and Organic eggs - all of which are laid by hens that are not kept in cages. Consumers are informed about this development in the form of press releases, television advertising, point-of-sale material and packaging. These messages are displayed in store in the form of shelf talkers, on display boards and are publicised in various magazines. The informed consumer can now make an informed decision about his or her egg purchase. Eggs are also sold in various sizes based on mass, and these sizes are clearly indicated on the packaging on an easily identifiable colour-coded strip, not only stating that the eggs are Jumbo or extra large, but also giving an approximate weight. After purchasing of the product, customer care and safety is further extended by indicating the "best before" date stamped on each individual egg. Finally, the boards used for packaging eggs are made from fully recycled material, while all other components used in the packaging can be recycled.

Figure 3

*Egg packaging and labelling. The Best Before date stamped on each egg can clearly be seen.
(Copyright Woolworths)*

Bagging corporate responsibility - Woolworth's reusable shopping bags

The images portrayed in Figure 4 are used on Woolworths's reusable shopping bags. Various artists, including unknown township artists are given the opportunity to have an artwork reproduced on the shopping bags. The artists are not only compensated for the use of the image, but their contact details are also displayed on the bag. In many cases Woolworths also purchase the original artwork. The bags offer a reusable alternative and are sold in stores at an affordable price.

Figure 4

*Some of the artwork used on the reusable shopping bags. The full range is available on
www.woolworths.co.za (Copyright Woolworths)*

THE ROLE OF VISUAL DESIGN: A BRIEF DISCUSSION

This paper has by no means covered the extent of Woolworths's commitment to sustainability and good citizenship. Instead, the examples presented were selected to demonstrate a variety of activities and products, thereby clearly reflecting a particular values-driven business practice. Non-executive Woolworths director, Brian Frost, sees this commitment as a long and complex route, balancing economic prosperity with understanding and care for the environment and society (Woolworths 2003).

The 21st century business agenda has clearly shifted to new social and ethical dimensions. It also challenges the way design and designers contribute to organisations. This contribution coincides with a general awareness of the strategic role of design by managers, the development of design management as strategic discipline and the upward shift of "brand" and "values" as top management issues. This is not to imply that design played an inferior role in the past. Most of the big organisations such as Woolworths that are taking the lead today as sustainable leaders have spent years developing visual capital in the form of trademarks, identities, environments and advertising campaigns. This included the popular cause marketing campaigns that supported certain causes, and where these causes benefited directly from the associated campaigns. The change is that corporate social investment and sustainability moved away from marketing-led activities on the periphery to the core of a contemporary corporate brand.

Design can make a variety of business strategies visible and tangible. Corporate communication now extends to include triple bottom-line disclosures to a growing amount of stakeholders. Woolworths, for example, identified the following stakeholders: employees, customers, shareholders, business partners (product and service suppliers), communities, the environment, animal welfare groups and government/regulators. Communication today is not seen only as one-way transmission, but rather as active multiple dialogues and participation. Visual communication can include external communications such as sustainability reports, press releases, advertisements and brochures, product labelling, as well as many forms of internal communication. The danger is that these additional means of corporate communication can create an overflow of information, also referred to as "data smog" or "information obesity". The information flow must be well planned and designed so as to be useful forms of communication and not mere promises (Elkinton 1999:327). Designers have the ability to deal with such complex communication needs, because designers possess the abilities to mix the rational, functional and operational with intuition and lateral thinking (Sauthoff 2004).

Design practice is part of the sustainability value chain and the designer as service provider also has to act in a responsible and informed manner. Design solution has to adhere to the design firm's own set of triple bottom line values, as well as to the client's value system. Various design activities and disciplines are involved in rethinking the way things are not only communicated, but designed and produced – for example, designing for re-use or recycling as seen in the Woolworths Hangerman Project, as well as other initiatives to reduce or eliminate packaging.

IN CONCLUSION

Martin Gierke, Caterpillar INC once said, "Show me a company that is obsessed with the objects it creates, and I guarantee you will find one with an extraordinary commitment to design" (Gierke, Hansen & Turner 2002:11). In the author's view, Woolworths is an example of an organisation where financial, natural and human capital is promoted by the simultaneous use and development of visual capital. This visual capital extends far beyond "looking good" and includes every visual component, big or small, an employee's smile, a product or process. A quote from Tom McLaughlin, Sustainability Manager and Manager of the Woolworths Trust, serves as an apt conclusion:

> I think our design style has made Woolworths. Our brand values – honest, simple, natural, trustworthy, healthy, modern and surprising, and how we get things done, are reflected in our stores, our packaging, our marketing and PR. We've recently started sponsoring the Design Indaba and National Design Day (27 Feb), as we believe that design holds the key to our and SA's future (McLaughlin 2004).

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