UC Santa Cruz
Refract: An Open Access Visual Studies Journal

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Voices of Visual Studies

Letter from the Editor

It may come as no surprise that *Refract*'s third volume emerges out of incredibly difficult circumstances in Santa Cruz, California, and beyond. As we were sending out the Call for Papers for this issue titled "Hauntings and Traces," a group of graduate students at the University of California, Santa Cruz began calling for a Cost of Living Adjustment to offset the egregiously low income we are paid as Academic Student Employees, which does not cover the minimal cost of living in an increasingly unaffordable Santa Cruz and San Francisco Bay area. The campaign was not without its problems, creating schisms within the graduate student body and even within *Refract*'s editorial board.

Much of this tension remains unresolved, and one reason is that the COVID-19 pandemic forced the UCSC campus to close for the Spring 2020 quarter. As the *Refract* team was beginning to receive submissions for volume 3, we had to move toward meeting remotely. We no longer had the luxury of checking in with each other as people tend to do when they, for instance, arrive early for a meeting, casually greeting each other and asking "how's it going?" These small, seemingly benign moments are a crucial way the *Refract* board functions. We are editors, students, and scholars, yes. But we are also people. We are stressed, we are often hungry and tired, we have fun weekends that we can't wait to tell each other about, we have pictures of our family that are worth sharing. It is these small moments of humanity, of kindness, of support in all the ways that go unnamed that are missing from *Refract*'s day-to-day operations in the time of COVID-19.

And yet, we kept pushing to continue our work, to contribute to the field of visual studies with critical, robust scholarship. The peer review process was complete and we had begun the stage of revisions and editing when George Floyd was murdered by Derek Chauvin in Minneapolis on May 25, 2020. Along with

Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and so many others,[1] this recent murder of an innocent person of color is just one of many instances of institutionalized racism that intersects with the militarization of the police force, the failings of the justice system, and rampant white supremacy that is bolstered by the Trump administration. Like so many other organizations releasing statements of solidarity with people of color and disavowing white supremacy, the *Refract* team recognized that we needed to act. We needed to take a look at what we envision our journal to be doing, and how we can support people of color, community organizers, and power building at the grassroots level in our everyday operations.

This conversation continues as we maintain our mission to uphold scholarly and artistic inquiry that dismantles institutional barriers and prioritizes diverse voices and subject matter. We are asking ourselves some difficult questions about our own relationship to the University of California, a settler colonial institution that upholds many of the structural inequalities that depend on a militarized police force and extractive and exploitative capitalism, and acts as a gatekeeper to knowledge production and education. In our efforts to do better, we recognize this is a long-term project and cannot be easily reconciled by a simple statement on our website. Some of these conversations are reflected in the statement that opens this volume, while other efforts are less visible but no less imperative for the impact we want to have on the world of academic research, artistic production, and education.

For instance, the table of contents for the current volume was intentionally shaped to include a diverse range of voices from different career stages, who come from different backgrounds and speak different languages, and whose research engages with a multitude of subjects, time periods, and cultures. We worked closely with our contributors during the editing process to create a less hierarchical, more collaborative approach to research, writing, and publication. We are working on making our publication more accessible—not just in terms of open access publishing but also in terms of screen-reader-friendly PDFs and other initiatives to include diverse audiences and dismantle the many barriers to education and knowledge production. This is neither a comprehensive nor a static list of the efforts we are making, and as we continue to publish rigorous, original scholarship, we will continue to question our own privilege and our role in the fight for radical social change.

On behalf of the editorial board, I would like to thank the department of History of Art and Visual Culture (HAVC) and the Arts Division at the University of California, Santa Cruz for their financial support. We are particularly grateful to the former director of graduate studies of HAVC, Professor Boreth Ly, for advocating on our behalf and to the amazing staff in the HAVC department, including

Ruby Lipsenthal and Meredith Dyer. Thanks also to Professors Carolyn Dean, Derek Conrad Murray, and Kyle Parry for serving as our advisory board. Thank you to the team at eScholarship for answering our many questions and for making our open access mission a reality. We also appreciate all the peer reviewers for their time, and Paula Dragosh for copyediting. We are thrilled to include in this issue guest contributors whom we invited to participate in this volume, and we are so grateful for their participation: Christina Maranci; Boreth Ly with Catherine Ries, Michelle Yee, and Christina Ayson Plank; and Katerina Martina Teaiwa. We are also hugely grateful to Michael Conlee, our amazing intern, and to Porter College at UCSC for funding the internship. Thanks to Kate Korroch, the founding managing editor, and all past editorial board members at *Refract* for ensuring our project has lasting power. And finally, we wish to thank the numerous colleagues and mentors who engage with visual studies and have encouraged this project from the start, as well as the amazing thinkers and makers who contributed to this volume.

Finally, as managing editor, I want to acknowledge the incredible team that makes up *Refract*'s editorial board. This journal is a truly collaborative effort, and it would not have been possible without the amazing energy each person brings to the project. Thank you to Leslie McShane Lodwick for always being there for me and for tirelessly stepping up to help the team whenever needed. Thanks to Maureen McGuire and Stacy Schwartz for their incredible work transitioning *Refract* to a new web platform and for making issues of accessibility more at the forefront of what we do. Thanks to Susanna Collinson, Kelsey McFaul, and Matthew Simmons for establishing our long-term vision, seeking funding, and keeping our accounts in check. Thanks to Madison Treece and Rachel Bonner for being the public face of *Refract* on social media and outreach. And thanks to the entire board for dedicating so much time and energy to the editorial process and working with our contributors at every step of the way. Thank you so much, team!

Maggie Wander

Notes

[1] https://sayevery.name/.

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Refract and the University of California

Refract: An Open Access Visual Studies Journal was established in 2017 to create a space for diverse voices across academic disciplines and institutions. To this end, we, the editorial board (EB), chose to not explicitly associate ourselves with the History of Art and Visual Culture Department (HAVC) at the University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC), or with the University of California (UC) more broadly. This was done in an effort to act autonomously as graduate students, who, as the future of academe, sought to work without the direct input, influence, or affiliation of the larger institution in which we work. Stating that we are autonomous was an ideological position meant to provide us with expanded possibilities for experimentation within both visual studies and the world of academe writ large.

Yet this conscious removal has allowed us to "opt out" of the injustices that plague UCSC and the UC today. In this sense, autonomy is an abstraction that refuses to acknowledge the realities of our position—a reality in which we remain nestled within an exploitive, racist, and neocolonial system. We find that such an abstraction no longer (and never) serves *Refract* or the communities that we aim to support through our <u>mission</u>. This letter not only acknowledges our position within the UC but also firmly takes a stand against those actions that we find unconscionable, and in solidarity with those groups that are actively working to dismantle oppressive structures underpinning the world of academe and public education.

Refract's editorial board is composed of PhD students at UCSC, currently from the HAVC and Literature Departments. Our advisory board is exclusively faculty from HAVC. Our scholarship is continually influenced by our respective departments' course requirements, missions, and internal philosophies. While our areas of expertise vary greatly, the diversity of our EB is shaped and limited by

UCSC. At this time, the EB does not intend to solicit members from outside UCSC, though we do hope to represent more arts and humanities departments in the near future.

     Refract is most reliant on the UC through our finances. There is no funding for *Refract* that is external to the UC, and all money we receive is held and distributed by the UC. We routinely take advantage of UCSC's internal fundraising opportunities, such as <u>Giving Day</u>, to solicit money from UC alumni and affiliates. As a nascent journal, our finances are insecure, and we do not monetarily profit from our publication. While we aim to expand our donors and grants outside the UC, we will need to continue using the UC as our "bank." The EB is adamant that no financial gifts influence *Refract*'s content while understanding the precariousness of our dependence on UC money. As Fred Moten and Stefano Harney write in *The Undercommons*, "the only possible relationship to the university today is a criminal one . . . one can only sneak into the university and steal what one can."[1]

     The above illustrates the ways in which *Refract* is not a wholly autonomous entity. We function within the UC and are deeply influenced by it, not only in terms of our scholarship and finances but also by the UC's actions. As both students and employees, we have observed exploitation by the UC and experienced firsthand the callousness of its actions against <u>graduate students</u>, <u>undergraduates</u>, <u>staff</u>, <u>adjunct faculty</u>, <u>communities of color</u>, and <u>Indigenous peoples</u> and <u>lands</u>.

     It is impossible to acknowledge our own position within the UC system without also acknowledging the fact that the UC is a settler colonial institution. UCSC is located on unceded territory of the Awaswas-speaking Uypi Tribe, currently stewarded by the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band. The UC has a history of developing its campuses on sacred, unceded grounds. In fact, the UC is a land-grant institution, which means it emerges out of a federal program that allotted stolen Indigenous land to Union members during the Civil War for the sole purpose of selling that land to fund public universities.[2] Most recently, the UC has contributed <u>$68,000,000</u> to the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) project, set to be built on the sacred Mauna Kea volcano in Hawai'i. <u>The Mauna Kea Protectors</u> have demanded that the UC divest from the project, and we stand with all those who demand the protection of sacred lands.

     We also stand in solidarity with those communities who are marginalized and targeted by the <u>structural inequalities</u> embedded in the UC system. Students of color <u>continue to meet resistance</u> and challenges to UC admission and once there must fight to thrive as students and community members.[3] In this moment of heightened unrest over racial inequality, most notably brought to light by the Black Lives Matter movement, we want to consider our specific position in Santa Cruz, California, and support our immediate community that has been

marginalized by UCSC. For instance, the UC is one of the largest landlords in California and <u>contributes</u> to <u>student</u> <u>houselessness</u>. UCSC has contributed to <u>houselessness</u> in <u>Santa Cruz</u> county at large by influencing market prices for housing. Graduate student employees receive wages that do not meet the increasing cost of living in the county, and last year <u>graduate students</u> at UCSC initiated a wildcat strike for a cost of living adjustment (<u>COLA</u>). This strike <u>received</u> <u>national</u> <u>attention</u> after graduate students participated in a grading strike and were subsequently <u>fired</u> for their actions. Eighteen students experienced <u>physical and emotional trauma</u> at the hands of <u>police</u> during peaceful protest, while the UC spent in excess of $5.7 million to suppress protesters. Currently, in the wake of BLM protests, a coalition of UC students, staff, and faculty is working to get <u>"cops off campus."</u>

While the EB does not represent all the communities who are marginalized and policed by the UC, we stand in solidarity with the <u>Undocu-Collective</u>, <u>Black Student Union</u>, and <u>land defenders</u>. These groups, who represent BIPOC students on our campus, demand a more equitable and just university, which includes a safe learning environment; increased housing guarantees for students who are undocumented, Black, and affiliated with the Disability Resource Center (DRC); the removal of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers from campus; and finally <u>unionization</u> and a <u>living wage</u> for working graduate students across the country.

The EB is dedicated to envisioning a different university founded on the principles of accessibility, equity, justice, and decolonization. This list is, of course, incomplete and ongoing, but it is our starting point. The UC has a long way to go, and the EB recognizes that we do too. No longer will we be silent in the face of the UC's injustices, as silence is complicity. As an academic publishing project, we have been complacent in perpetuating gatekeeping and hierarchies. But we believe knowledge production should be nonhierarchical, and we want *Refract* to reflect this. Therefore, some of our efforts to intervene in structural inequalities include but are not limited to featuring diverse and underrepresented perspectives in our "Voices of Visual Studies" feature; providing paid internships for undergraduates, especially first-generation and BIPOC students; mentoring fellow graduate students through the peer review and editing process; making the journal accessible to people with disabilities; and finally disseminating our work through open access platforms. We will continue to update you on the additional steps we take in the next year, and we welcome your partnership and accountability in this ongoing endeavor.

Thank you,
Refract's editorial board

Notes

[1] Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study*, (New York City, NY: Minor Compositions, 2013), 26.

[2] The Morrill Act was passed in 1862 and granted thirty thousand acres of Indigenous to Union states, which then sold that land to fund "the endowment, support, and maintenance of at least one college" (Morrill Act, sec. 4, para. 7, quoted in la paperson, *A Third University Is Possible* [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017], 26). UC Berkeley, the first of the UC system, is the product of this program, as it was formerly the Agricultural, Mining, and Mechanical Arts College and funded from the sale of Ohlone lands to homesteaders in the area (see paperson, *A Third University Is Possible*, 28).

[3] One of our interventions is to center marginalized voices. Students have been vocal about their personal experiences on social media, in activist spaces, and on campus; we believe them.

Introduction

This volume of *Refract* investigates the power dynamics of (in)visibility through "haunting" and the "trace." A form of way making, the trace offers itself as an object, subject, and action, as both a remnant and a becoming. Haunting similarly defies legibility in that it occupies a discomforting space between something/somebody and nothing/nobody—not simply a vestige of previous realities but an active force that unsettles life-and-death worlds. As a journal of visual studies, *Refract* is drawn to the power dynamics inherent in the zone between the visible and the invisible: a zone that the haunting and the trace both inhabit. This introduction does not seek to define hauntings and traces per se, but hopes instead to offer spaces for their forms to emerge. One starting point is the tension between absence and presence instantiated by the terms *haunting* and *the trace*.

Absences and presences index each other: for something to be absent, something else must be present. This issue of *Refract* is interested in the tensions between the material absence of the trace and the material presence of the haunting. We ask, what might a close engagement with *both* reveal about memory, kinship, historical narratives, and power? How might we employ this principle in the study of visual and material culture? How do we study the materiality of the invisible, the remnant, the always-becoming? How might we locate power in the creation and mobilization of the trace, and how are knowledge regimes formed and deformed by hauntings? And finally, how might these terms be considered in other cultural and historical contexts that operate outside colonial ways of being?

Akira Lippit writes that the trace is an "erasable sign and sign of erasure that erases as it signs and is in turn erased already."[1] The trace therefore gives itself to this sort of enfolding logic—an erasing erasure—because the material form of an absence is difficult to describe, to sense, and to access. Anything material

necessarily has a presence, but in the case of the trace that presence is no longer in the here and now. The agential force that created the trace has already been and gone, such as in Montana Torrey's contribution, "*Floodplain (126)*." This installation explores the material and affective remains of Wiang Kum Kam, an ancient city in northern Thailand that was flooded by the Ping River and subsequently abandoned over seven hundred years ago. Treating the archaeological site not only as a trace of the city but also as a trace of the river path itself, Torrey re-creates the bricks used to construct the city, but renders them weightless by hanging them in uniform suspension. The video of the installation captures the slight movement of the bricks to evoke the movement of water as it flowed throughout the city, a reminder of the past even while its material presence is lost to history.

Seb Wigdel-Bowcott's essay, "Mining Things: Confronting Loss and Flux in the Slate Industry Ruins of Northwest Wales," similarly engages with issues about recovering the past by discussing an eerie encounter at an abandoned slate mining site in Wales. By combining affect theory with Bill Brown's thing theory, Wigdel-Bowcott explores the simultaneity of deeply personal and social facets that go into the remembering and memorializing of the past. By analyzing the ways in which sites of remembrance create a multiplicity of lingering sensations and impressions, the author shows how they defy the odd impulse to create a grand narrative out of their histories.

To further unpack the complexity of historical narratives and memory, we invited Professor Christina Maranci to contribute a photo essay titled "In the Traces: Reflections on Fieldwork in the Region of Ani," which features photographs from recent visits to a few of Armenia's medieval monuments. Maranci describes the traces of the past and markings of the present on the churches and other structures usually off-limits to visitors. Her photographs capture the vicissitudes of time and political and religious change inscribed in and around the buildings. The photographs are both intimate and didactic; they convey the beauty of the buildings and remind us of the lives spent erecting, using, and reusing them since late antiquity.

The contributions by Torrey, Wigdel-Bowcott, and Maranci each engage with the material remnants of history, or what this volume might term the traces, the material absences, of the past. Other contributions deal with memory and belonging as another kind of trace, one that is embodied, affective, and lived even while its material trace is less apparent. For instance, we invited a contribution from Professor Boreth Ly, whose recently published book *Traces of Trauma: Cambodian Visual Culture and National Identity in the Aftermath of Genocide* (University of Hawaiʻi Press, 2020) focuses on contemporary Cambodian visual culture that addresses the lasting trauma of the civil war, secret bombings by the United States,

and the Khmer Rouge genocide. For her contribution to the present volume, Ly was interviewed by three of her PhD students at the University of California, Santa Cruz: Catherine Ries, Michelle Yee, and Christina Ayson Plank. Their thoughtful interview touches directly on the concept of the trace, which encompasses the Khmer word *snarm*, meaning "a scar and footprint," as well as the Khmer concept of *bakshat*, meaning "broken body." In these iterations, the trace is securely situated in local and continental Cambodian theories, but the interviewers open up the conversation to understand how the residue of trauma exists in many facets of contemporary life globally, from Cambodian diasporas to the Black Lives Matter movement to the role of museums and monuments.

The contributions by Maranci and Ly engage with the personal histories and identities at stake in engaging with the past. Other contributors are even more explicit about this, sometimes using their own family photos or genetic data in their work. The multidisciplinary artist Hilary A. Short, for instance, presents two projects that interrogate heteropatriarchal definitions of genealogical relationships. One of the projects, *Bloodlines*, visualizes the artist's own familial data (accessed through Ancestry.com) horizontally in Microsoft Excel to form an oozing bloodline down a long sheet of crisp paper. This visualization disrupts the metaphor of the family tree and seeks to eschew the more familiar arboreal marker in order to destabilize the impulse to organize ancestry visually through heteropatriarchal relations. Instead, Short's visualization links the viscerality of blood with raw data in order to reveal and visualize traces of familial data in our ancestries, as shared through blood, and to problematize the familial bloodline as the mechanism of making kin. How might we revisualize and reimagine making kin in ways that position collectivity and connectivity as superseding biological ancestry?

Ellen Takata, whose series of diaristic reflections titled "My Love to Be Defused: Beginnings of an Ethics of Belonging through Negotiations of a National Socialist Image in Daily Life, from Infancy to Adulthood," interrogates the complexities of collective identities and the problematics of traumatic cultural legacies. Takata's palimpsestic entries chronicle an ongoing internal dialogue with fictional versions of Dr. Paul Joseph Goebbels, Jesus, and mid-twentieth-century German actor Rudolf Schündler, each of whom represents aspects of Takata's personal and familial history as linked to her evolving perceptions (both visual and intellectual) of historical figures in her daily life. In conjunction with the snippets of text, the accompanying images render visible the very impossibility of capturing the intangible, affective cinematic spaces through which she negotiates a sense of belonging. Takata's "conversations" act as a liminal space in which to safely and critically ruminate on our attachments to the visual as a way to position ourselves in relation to others; to question the trace as reappropriated in the present; and to confront

the banality of the monstrous and the ambivalence of familiar aspects of our own identities.

Like Takata, Ana García Jácome considers her own family history in terms of absences and presence. In the photo essay "It's Like She Had Never Existed: The Family Story and the Assembly of Disability," García Jácome meditates on the intersections of disability and Latin American studies, memory, translation, and personal history. Through a collage of narrative and material pieces, including photos, self-portraits, and medical documents, the essay excavates the silence around her aunt's cerebral palsy, her Mexican family's relationship to illness and caretaking, and García Jácome's own disability. The space carved by mobility—between countries, languages, and discourses—causes García Jácome to reflect on disability's private and public lives and its entanglement with the English language, US politics, and UN development initiatives. Conjuring her sister's ghost and unfolding the layered histories of her memory, the artist finds her own traces and the grounds of her artistic practice.

In a different approach to issues of family, memory, and belonging, Whitney Lea Sage renders suburban Detroit through monochromatic ink paintings titled in "Traces, Fragments & Voids: An Artist Representing Detroit's Vanishing Homeland." In the artist's *Homesickness* series, lush landscapes of overgrown foliage crowd aging house foundations or the white space that marks the erasure of built environments. The series meditates on the history of industrialization and suburban migration in the Rust Belt and the material and psychological ghosts they leave behind: empty storefronts, architectural skeletons, scarred plots of land, emotional longing, and nostalgia for place. In a reflective artist's statement, Sage notes that Detroit's Black and minority communities disproportionately shouldered the burden of stereotypical representations of Detroit as a city in decline. Informed by her own coming-of-age and adult nostalgia for the suburbs, her work attempts to hold these misrepresentations accountable and knit conflicting perspectives of outsiders and insiders together through the documentation of site and memory.

For Short, Takata, García Jácome, and Sage, memory and genealogy are continually present, perpetually haunting them through photography, genetic data, the built environment, or an amorphous feeling of belonging. Just as the trace is a material absence, so the haunting is a material presence—a doubling or layering, a thickness of time and space. As Karen Barad puts it, "Hauntings are an integral part of existing material conditions."[2] In turn, Angie Morrill, Eve Tuck, and the Super Futures Haunt Qollective write, "Haunting is a mattering."[3] As the physical sciences have taught us, matter is neither created nor destroyed but only ever transformed. As a "mattering," hauntings and traces are not coming out of (or

disappearing into) "nowhere"; they emerge from something and are constantly being constructed, co-constructed, and de-constructed so as to act with and on the world(s) they possess and cut through. They are transfigured as they come into being and are made (in)to "matter." This process manifests itself as a haunting or trace in various, mutable, and constantly emergent ways.

It is because of this mutable, emergent nature that they have the capacity or potential to bridge past, present, and future as well as to link disparate spaces, places, and structures of feeling to each other. But the transformative character of both hauntings and traces also makes them difficult to identify, name, or locate. Laura Ann Stoler writes, "To be haunted is to be frequented by and possessed by a force that not always bears a proper name."[4] Nevertheless, that force is a kind of power, one that acts sometimes insidiously or invisibly because of its very creation through transformation and continual emergence and reemergence. In other words, hauntings and traces are effects and affects of power.

It is in relation to power that we see the key difference between traces and hauntings: while traces can be (re)possessed, haunting has its own animacy that can never be contained in the service of power. Hauntings are a (re)presence, a "something-to-be-done" or a "rememory," to borrow from Avery Gordon and Toni Morrison.[5] Hauntings may come from what has passed, but they refuse to exit the present tense, as Eve Tuck and C Ree state:

> Haunting doesn't hope to change people's perceptions, nor does it hope for reconciliation. Haunting lies precisely in its refusal to stop. Alien (to settlers) and generative for (ghosts), this refusal to stop is its own form of resolving. For ghosts, the haunting is the resolving, it is not what needs to be resolved.[6]

The trace, on the other hand, *does* have the potential to change people's perceptions, for instance when it is mobilized by those in power to construct national narratives in the service of military control, imperial expansion, or capitalist exploitation (to name a few). Traces can also hope for reconciliation, such as when they are made manifest in monuments, memorials, or archives. For instance, JB Brager's "The Trophy and the Appeal: Colonial Photography and the Ghosts of Witnessing in German South West Africa" is concerned with the racist violence of colonial German photography in South West Africa, particularly as it exists in the present-day archive. The essay discusses how these images circulate as trophies— the pornotropic evidence of racist violence—and appeal, the belief that witnessing violence implores viewers to make it stop. Contemporary antiracist and decolonial discourse demands that these trophy images be continually repurposed for human

rights appeals, yet these images are always haunted by the horrors of German colonization, both insidious and outright. Because of this, the author questions their own archival research, asking whether we should look at all. Instead, Brager implores us to consider new decolonial methodologies of looking that can only be learned from the Herero peoples of South West Africa, who are brutalized in the archive. When forced to be subjugated witnesses to racist violence, they instead refuse to look as an act of resistance. Similarly, when confronted by violence in the archive, scholars may choose to divert their gaze elsewhere and instead scrutinize the perpetrators.

Similarly, in her reflective essay "White Shoals, White Shrouds: Reflections on the Ethics of Looking at Captive Bodies," Axelle Toussaint considers the violence of looking at French colonial photographs of Comorian children. As she outlines her affective response to these images, and her own relationship to their circulation in academe, Toussaint suggests the "shoal" as one way to stop the perpetuation of colonial violence. As articulated by Tiffany Lethabo King, a shoal is a geological formation/place of shallow water that forces paused reflection on both the production of the black body as an object of inquiry and the demand for its visibility. As an experimental feminist decolonial intervention, Toussaint cuts out the Comorian bodies, leaving only a white shoal that traces the outline of their forms. Such a trace forces viewers to reflect on their own bodies, now diverted from the racist image. In this way, the author suggests tracing is a decolonial praxis that disrupts the replication of colonial violence.

The material absence of the trace has the potential to render the hand that wields power invisible and to obscure already marginalized experiences to the void of history. Yet, once created, the trace as a material absence has its own power: a negative force that complicates any containment within a singular, static narrative. Haoran Chang's contribution engages with the multiplicities inherent in public space and how they simultaneously uphold and complicate state narratives. "Photogrammetry and Zhongshan Pavilion: Reconstructing Urban Memory of the Wenxi Fire" discusses how digitalization and 3-D modeling through photogrammetry can offer more complex narratives surrounding memorial sites, where nationalist and political narratives run the risk of obscuring the heterogeneous experiences that structure public memory. The site in question is the Zhongshan Pavilion in Changsha, China, the only surviving building after a devastating fire in 1938 destroyed the city. Chang uses photogrammetry to create digital models of the pavilion and argues that this digitalization enables new stories and new memories to be told through the site.

"Power Geometry in Urban Memory: Reading Taksim Square through the Concept of Representation of Space," by Ceren Göğüş and Asiye Akgün Gültekin,

similarly interrogates the relationship between state power, official memory, and public space. Through an analysis of Istanbul's public Taksim Square, the authors argue that searching for traces in official spatial histories reveals which memories are consistently marked as historical truth and whose memories have been deliberately forgotten. By reading the spatial organization of Taksim Square through its social, political, economic, and cultural layers and relying on the framework of Pierre Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital, the authors treat the public space as a record of both the memories of state power *and* the histories of resistance.

The pieces by Brager, Toussaint, Chang, and Göğüş and Gültekin all engage with the archive and historical narratives as a kind of haunting presence, while the previous contributions capture the absence marked by the trace. But despite their differences, hauntings and traces are not antithetical to each other, and in fact one may take on the qualities of the other. Hauntings, for instance, are noticed at times through material echoes, while traces might be immaterial and in turn do the haunting. Avery Gordon claims that "to study social life one must confront the ghostly aspects of it. Its confrontation requires (or produces) a fundamental change in the way we know and make knowledge, in our mode of production."[7] Thinking with Gordon, we posit that to study the visual, one must confront that which haunts it. Addressing what Gordon calls the "ghostly aspects" of social life, Nicholas Mirzoeff writes,

> When visual culture tells stories, they are ghost stories. . . . The ghost is not a retreat to the margins, whether of art history, aesthetics or cultural studies, but is rather an assertion that the virtual is in some sense real, and the paranormal normal, as what was formerly invisible comes into visibility.[8]

If absence has a material dimension, how does that push the limits of our approaches and methods in the field of visual studies? How can visual studies work alongside art-historical inquiry to explore these new questions about in/visibility? Tara Allen-Flanagan, in "The Face of an Empire: Cosmetics and Whiteness in Imperial Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I," exemplifies such an approach by analyzing the ways in which images of Queen Elizabeth I demonstrate, to an Elizabethan audience, colonial power and dominance through the pronounced paleness of her skin tone. This skin tone was achieved through cosmetics, although the appearance of her pale skin was often ascribed to her inherent and enduring natural beauty. Since many of the material components of the queen's cosmetics originated in colonized lands, their use and display in portraits strongly constitutes an assertion of whiteness-as-power in the New World.

Hana Nikčević similarly pushes the boundaries of art-historical inquiry in "Mere Image: Caravaggio, Virtuosity, and *Medusa*'s Averted Eyes." In this essay, Nikčević explores the reproduced gaze of Medusa in the work of Caravaggio. She outlines the precedent of images of Medusa throughout Italian Renaissance art, especially those images created by Leonardo da Vinci and other contemporaneous artists like Benvenuto Cellini. Nikčević also draws on contemporaneous literature, poetry, and ancient imagery that Caravaggio may have encountered in the homes of aristocrats. Using these sources, Nikčević argues for the significance of Medusa's averted eyes in Caravaggio's rendering, suggesting that they subverted the distinction between referent and representation and, by extension, constitute an assertion of Caravaggio's artistic skill.

In "The Televised Apocalypse," Justin Keever complicates previous readings of Jean Tinguely's *Study for an End of the World No. 2* by pointing to the importance of transience in the televisual, arguing it is only those texts whose forms lack closure that can reveal the traces of nuclear destruction, rather than "freezing" it into a singular, isolated event. Keever asks the reader to consider that images designed to be transient nevertheless "continue to resonate in ways lost when the world is transformed into atemporal objects." In "*Douce Mélancholie*: Sonic Negotiations of Absence in the Works of Susan Philipsz and Félicia Atkinson," Jenny Wu examines the affective potential of sound by bringing the experimental music of Félicia Atkinson into conversation with Susan Philipsz's installation work. Wu highlights how both modes of expression engage the listener as an active, embodied participant, and suggests that sound can function as an index of the absent body to haunting effect. While her interest in what may be termed the presence of absence is familiar to anyone with an affinity for images, her essay draws attention to the sensory experience beyond the visual.

The contributions by Allen-Flanagan, Nikčević, Keever, and Wu all demonstrate the ways in which *Refract* is invested in pushing the limits of visual studies. Not only does the theme of hauntings and traces incite new questions and methodologies in the study of art and visual culture, but our "Voices of Visual Studies" feature also provides a window into the diverse array of scholarship that exemplifies such approaches. This feature appears in each volume of *Refract* to highlight thinkers from the interdisciplinary, amorphous, and emerging world of visual studies. For this third volume, we invited Professor Katerina Martina Teaiwa, whose book *Consuming Ocean Island: Stories of People and Phosphate from Banaba* uses images and visual culture in a way that exemplifies the methods of visual studies. One chapter in the book is made up of what Teaiwa calls "fragments" from her archival research and fieldwork. This "remixing," as she calls it, serves as a methodological tool for exploring the similarly fragmented story of Banaba,

which was mined for phosphate by British, Australian, and New Zealand companies between 1900 and 1980. Since 2017, Teaiwa has been transforming this project into a traveling exhibition/installation in collaboration with the esteemed Samoan Japanese artist Yuki Kihara. Teaiwa's contribution to *Refract* meditates on the continued role of visual storytelling in her research, which for *Refract*'s editorial board exemplifies a visual studies approach that blurs disciplinary boundaries and challenges the very production of knowledge through academic writing.

<p align="center">* * *</p>

Notes

[1] Akira Mizuta Lippit, *Atomic Light (Shadow Optics)* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 54.

[2] Karen Barad, "Troubling Time/s and Ecologies of Nothingness: Re-turning, Re-membering, and Facing the Incalculable," *New Formations* 92 (2017): 74. https://doi.org/10.3898/NEWF:92.05.2017.

[3] Angie Morrill, Eve Tuck, and the Super Futures Haunt Qollective, "Before Dispossession, or Surviving It," *Liminalities: A Journal of Performance Studies* 12, no. 1 (2016): 3.

[4] Laura Ann Stoler, *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 1. https://doi-org.oca.ucsc.edu/10.1215/9780822387992.

[5] Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 179; Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (New York: Knopf, 1987), 36–37.

[6] Eve Tuck and C Ree, "A Glossary of Haunting," in *A Handbook of Autoethnography*, ed. Tony E. Adams, Stacy Holman Jones, Carolyn Ellis (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 642. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315427812.

[7] Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*, 7.

[8] Nicholas Mirzoeff, "Ghostwriting: Working Out Visual Culture," *Journal of Visual Culture* 1, no. 2 (2002): 239. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F147041290200100206.

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My Love to Be Defused: Beginnings of an Ethics of Belonging through Negotiations of a National Socialist Image in Daily Life, from Infancy to Adulthood (Excerpts from Diaries Now Titled, *The Responsibility of Being That Sort of Baby,* **March 24–July 25, 2020)**

Ellen Takata

Preface: Ethics of Belonging, "Defusing" and *The Responsibility of Being That Sort of Baby*

This little piece—consisting of minimally tweaked diary entries and a preface that is "finished" only as an ethical articulation of its historical moment—originally claimed to imitate cinema: by leaving you to your own anticipation of effects and application of references. It also was meant to elicit your tactile and temporal responses as a booklet on paper, for which you would control the pace of realizing its associations with your present surroundings, memories, and received knowledge (surely you have the time!). The format seems less important now, however, for those aspects of experiencing media are as important as always, so I remind you just in case.

Such an approach to media also is central to the ethical practice that I explore across my work, whether personal or professional. I mention this admittedly artificial distinction because it captures my journey of self-judgment in preparing this piece. Briefly, I moved from considering my diaries a personal secret to realizing that they fuel my scholarship and should be shared more transparently. For many years, in fact, I have wished that whatever I do might be considered an attempt to meld daily life with an ethics of responsibility and compassion toward the

past and other people—to engage a range of forms of redress for historical harm (generally: whatever others require of me) as well as affection for aspects of individuals across historical circumstances (whatever I imagine of others). I shall elaborate these ethics before explaining the origin of my diaries, which I have come to call *The Responsibility of Being That Sort of Baby*.

Specifically, I have conceptualized my personal habits into what I call an "ethics of belonging." I define this approach roughly as seeking implications of harm in elements that furnish feelings of safety and comfort that may underlie a sense of belonging in a place or a group of people, in order to "defuse" such feelings. In fact, however, "defuse" is only an approximation of the impossible task that I mean. I indulge in the term partly out of love for wordplay, because it sounds like "diffuse." It encodes the innocent wish behind what you may find my guilt-laden work: my wish that I simply could spread my love. The conundrum is that my love itself is not simple, and I also would not presume such simplicity in anyone else, though I may speak only for myself. I therefore must re-explore, re-explain and update the compassion and justice that my love attempts every day—it always is "*to be* defused" through new attention to the emotions and statements of both those who receive harm and who cause it. My diaries are the main place where my subconscious gives me such impressions and voices, and I respond to them in order to work on myself as well as find new areas of "outside" research.

Before going into detail about my diaries, therefore, I would like to be a bit clearer on my ethics in my particular contexts. My general goal across all my work is to build awareness of past and potential dangers that have arisen (or might arise) when emotions map onto signs and messages in daily life. More specifically, I have been focusing on religions and nationalisms through both my graduate studies and my responsibility for my ancestry, which spans various branches of Christianity as well as German and Japanese identities. In barest terms, my notion of an "ethics of belonging" is just the implementation of a simple principle from my childhood: that love's capacity for self-interest corresponds to its potential to harm others, and that one must guard against *disguising* self-interest *as* love for others.

I call the site of this potential self-deception a "space of belonging." It is a space of emotional safety and comfort that consists of signs and sensations from one's life mapped onto an idea of togetherness. In ideal terms, a space of belonging would originate through growing up in a culture with the capacity to imagine, investigate, and love everyone who ever existed, exists, and might exist in the future. I take a realist approach to my own space of belonging, however, by looking for the deceptions that interrupt that perfection. I may not enjoy feelings of togetherness, comfort, or safety unless I persist in updating attempts to raise my awareness of their own harm (and potential harm). I may critique harmful elements among

my emotional attachments but not deny their hold. Instead, I must move forward *with* my attachments to specific signs and sensations by taking responsibility for finding, hearing, and caring for people harmed by the meanings attached to those elements.

Since the original draft of this piece, for example, I have followed the emotional hold on me exercised by a figure of National Socialism—whom I shall discuss in relation to the origin of my diaries—to increasing affection for an actor who was forced to flee that regime.[1] At the same time, it was not the historical opposition of these two that brought about this development; rather, it was my investigation of the theatrical world that they once occupied *together*. This case may capture best the balancing act of my work: my heart always leans toward people in all their emotions and contexts, so my mind must meet the challenge of "defusing" my heart's openness.

It is for this reason that my heart and mind have agreed on the umbrella term *legacies of harm* to designate that for which I take ongoing responsibility. The term allows me to anticipate my life as a growing range of ways to redress harm and expand affection in response to both history and individuals within it (or in its wake). My redress is for those in legacies of receiving harm, and I look to their words and other expressions to find the modes of redress that they want from me. Conversely, my affection spreads across those in legacies of both receiving and causing harm, and I attempt to control this phenomenon through the ethics of belonging that I have described. In general, the legacies of harm that I currently engage are the same across both my diaries and research: those of World War II and (to a lesser extent) the Asia-Pacific War. I now comment more specifically on how responsibility for the former brought about my diaries.

Although my written diaries are little, commercially available journals and not often illustrated, they are visual—more properly, they are sensory. They create what becomes an intimately symbolic space (a space of belonging) by attaching (and reattaching) ideas to the emotions that arise from what I have seen during the day in relation to memories and history. In this sense, the role of the "illustrations" to this piece (Figs. 1–2) is primarily to "show" the inability to illustrate, the impossibility of clarifying a space of belonging visually at one point in time. They only touch on memories, moods, histories, and (changing) relations to the persistence of these modes. They are all I can show to evoke the space of belonging in which I try to take responsibility for others in relation to what I find to be my past.

When I "watch" my favorite films, for example, I mainly *listen* to them— at least, unless it is possible to see them in theaters, when I would not waste that experience. At present, however, I take only a peek or two in order to compare the little screen to what one conventionally calls "the images in my head" but that

I prefer to call "the spaces where my head puts me." I inhabit these films. They create a comforting sensation that I "belong" in them and am "safe," yet I know that this sensation threatens to separate me from others: by mapping onto an idea of safety as "being myself" or with others "like me." In fact, I might call my *own* ethics of belonging an ongoing rethinking and refeeling of "safety" as a mode of *keeping others safe from me*.

In this way, the need for discovery—and ongoing defusing—of my own earliest space of belonging seems to have "caused" my diaries in 2018. I would not say that I "chose" them. Amid growing anxieties about a worldwide rise in far-right rhetoric and activity, I had had the additional shock of confirming that I shall have an increasingly noticeable limp and accompanying medical problems from something stupid that I could have avoided. I am sorry for the arrogance of that last sentence, which equates the rise on the far-right to "something stupid that I could have avoided"—specifically, my newly diagnosed "flat feet" that, in my past life of athletic self-confidence, I subjected to too much running. Perhaps similarly, my past scholarly life also ran away from the responsibility that I choose now. What happened next thus may seem appropriate: I began to address casual remarks to a suddenly familiar image of National Socialist Propaganda Minister Dr. Paul Joseph Goebbels, who limped on the same side as I do.

I first found myself "talking" to Goebbels as I walked through artificially maintained woodland and tried to dodge the paths of stags without falling down a crevasse. At first, I thought that it was a German Romantic effect of the landscape. In fact, I had read Goebbels's novel about a year before and forgotten.[2] I had thought to seek his novel at all (through only a hunch that it existed) in an ethical crisis as a visual historian—or so I had thought. I had told myself that I had to assess my own ability to avoid harming others by comparing myself with Goebbels: as a fellow person in my fundamental line of work—assessing the emotional effects of images, words, and other sensory and symbolic markers.

My past intellectual framing of my choice to read Goebbels was not a lie. Now, however, I would add that I also was turning to Goebbels to "check" how he had handled our common German Catholic past. I increasingly discover German Catholic vestiges in my own approach to life, and I wanted to investigate *in detail* how I could do the *opposite* of what Goebbels did, despite what I feared might be major similarities in our emotional and practical lifestyles. The more I find of him, in fact, the more I feel that our attention to the effects of communication is exegetical in the more selfishly Christian sense: that we secretly still wish that a divine voice sends signs in order to show that it hears us.

Conversely, my dad—a Japanese Okinawan American Lutheran (lapsed)—early critiqued that selfish aspect of Christianity to me, or so I see it now. I remember

Figure 1 Author's photograph of her drawing from memory of historical footage of Goebbels on television, Cambridge, MA, ca. 1978. Image courtesy of Ellen Takata, March 27, 2020.

his story of deciding not to be a Lutheran minister, which he told me when I was five, teaching me that to be concerned with an omnipotent voice—no matter whose voice it is supposed to be—is to live in the blindness of wanting to be heard instead of wanting to listen. I was not supposed to approach listening greedily as a confirmation that my own prayers had been heard.

This is why I effectively listen to myself in my diaries through different "voices" in order to seek intimate ways to listen to those living with my legacies of harm. Conversely, I grew up in the less intimate terms of "simple" historical accountability, for example, reading Holocaust literature as a teenager and hearing my maternal grandfather's rhetoric from the civil rights movement and other progressive activisms in his longish life.[3] Even at the time, I had had pricks of conscience that my attempt to "take responsibility" in these ways was too shallow. Among other things, I knew that Grandpa himself had had family on both sides of the Civil War and spent World War II in prison as an antiwar protester. When I was little, he was my main model of ethical complications in idealism.

It therefore is to honor the humanitarianism of Grandpa's rhetoric that I also look beyond rhetoric. I follow pricks of conscience toward individual creations by recipients of harm, which allows me to keep a strictly humanitarian ethics

while not so strictly defining individuals within it.[4] At the same time, I hesitate to name those recipients of harm whom I am pricked to find, because I do not want to put them "on the spot" with me.

It is bad enough that they were on that spot without me—some before I was born. The irreverence and didacticism that I allow my diaristic voice (with my fellow perpetrator-types) also is not appropriate for others, and I often wonder if I shall be able to write myself into a better voice. I cannot say now if I can.[5]

Instead, I simply live with the responsibility inherited through an early and vivid space of belonging, which it now behooves me to describe. There is not much to it. Goebbels wears an oil-cloth jacket cut like many that I have owned over the years, starting with my mom's mother's ski jacket. He attempts to hide his limp by acting as though he is trying to shift his posture from relaxing to standing at attention. We and the air around us quiver uniformly within a sort of mustard-yellow halo.

In retrospect, that halo is likely the mustard-yellow body of the TV set that my parents owned from before my birth until I was about two. I imagine now that I saw Goebbels on it as I was learning to walk. Perhaps I sympathized with his unsteadiness through my own. The flickering of the analogue TV may have helped. His image might have been part of a history book advertisement or stock footage in a British comedy. It strikes me now as Allied footage, for would Goebbels have circulated himself as so frail a persona? No—*that*'s what *I* would do! Remember that so that I cannot fool you.

Not fooling you is perhaps half of my responsibility insofar as I resemble Goebbels while trying not to do what he did. This is half the meaning of my diaries' title, *The Responsibility of Being That Sort of Baby.* The other half is not to fool *myself*—both about who I am and who I could be, because the first does not predict the second as rigidly as Goebbels let himself believe.

This is why, I repeat, I do my best to find the voices that have been erased by our fooling people (and ourselves). I also am sorry that this effort is not very evident in the diary entries that follow. Beyond these—as indicated by the recent case that I mentioned—I have been tracing actors from my favorite films to various distances from Goebbels, from him as their prospective "boss." Their experiences range from collaboration in Germany to escape to Hollywood.

Should you choose to read on, you will meet the earliest such actor: Rudolf Schündler, who arose for reasons that my diaries make apparent. I must share one detail left out, however—a "scholarly" discovery that I made as a fan. In 1946, under Allied Occupation in Germany, Schündler jotted down an approach to cabaret that strikes me as akin to an ethics of belonging. He called it "a nice responsibility for future cabarets."[6]

March 24, 2020: Waking Up

Rudolf, wake up! Don't look at me like that—I'm not Goebbels (Goebbels, can you believe he can't tell us apart?).

No, it's not Goebbels this time, I promise. I'm American. Yes, I'm an American who has a long history with Goebbels and knows what he's like, because she happens to resemble him in ways that she constantly tries not to allow in evil directions.

Ah, see, now you get it—thank you for not being confused. You wouldn't believe how many Americans don't get that—that a person trying not to be evil could share so many traits with an evil one.

The younger Americans, especially, don't get it (I mean the ones my parents' age and younger). *Your* generation always understands, which is maddening, because so many of you don't let that understanding change you (in fact, Rudolf, I wonder if you yourself already were sort of a nice person and therefore didn't have the type of transformative denazification that would have been impressive in someone not as nice).

And the other thing, of course, is that the younger generations rarely get it—get that someone trying not to be evil could share traits with an evil person— because they HAVE changed, or, at least, forgotten.

But Rudolf, what else can I say to you, because that was everything! (True, Goebbels, two days ago I told you that everything was the question of how to reconcile love and hate—it is the same thing. I don't have to say it as directly to Rudolf because he already knows.)

Well, I'll think of something. You see my tone already is less annoying because you are here. But no, it's not like Goebbels is gone—he's here too. He always is. Is that what it's like when you've worked under the guy for real? (I don't mean directly, I mean stayed and acted in Germany when he was in charge of acting.) But then again, when you really do know a person when he's alive, perhaps it's easier to reject him in death, because you feel as though you knew him enough.

Yes, Goebbels, that's why I can't reject you—that, and my longstanding ideal of not hating anyone (though, true, rejection is not necessarily hate—*now* you make these distinctions!).

After the Passing of the Morning

Pouring rain, boys, and I missed the police by going out early in the drizzle, still saw people to avoid, got covered in the sharp seeds of burrs like when I was a kid playing on the banks of the Charles in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

You know, Goebbels, I always think that I am not writing this for us— that I wish the living would read it (Rudolf, you are the closest to that, as another person whom I don't consider so much like myself, though, yes, you are dead).

But then I never show them (except those few I've mentioned before, and I'm not sure always that I should have) because I think that I have figured out various things for myself that they might have helped me figure (or might *not* have, more likely, which would be disappointing).

March 25, 2020: Kale Edible Melted (Forgiveness as Consciousness-Raising as Critique)

Rudolf, a friend was kind enough to bring me two bunches of Lacinato kale (not the curly kale we know) from the market—crowded even at 6 a.m.! They were in a bag outside the door when I awoke around eleven, Goebbels, having fallen asleep watching *Rosen blühen auf dem Heidegrab* for the third or fourth time last night, because its message is that one must undergo a curse in order to overcome it, rather than try to avoid it completely (aptly forgiving for the postwar defeated, you've got to admit—these days, we critique that this self-forgiveness might extend to include you, or your work's effects on people—well, so what if it does: that *is* one way of establishing that we don't agree with you all the same).[7]

Forgiveness, Goebbels, can be as consciousness-raising as critique, because it is inherently critical—it acknowledges and understands a crime.

But yes, Rudolf, before watching that postwar film, I also watched Goebbels's horror-comedy (no, not his regime, which, as you know, isn't funny: a film that he allowed to be made under it, called *Freitag der 13*—in 1944, do you remember?).[8] Yes, long before the American *Friday the 13th* which also is not funny, but *Freitag der 13* is a *bit* funny, despite all—especially the butler, perhaps a timeless character (or one who always finds a place with me, anyway—for what is timeless?).[9]

But Rudolf, I must remember that I am trying to freeze one of the bunches of kale so that it will last longer. There was just space for it amid all my roommates' things in the freezer. I never use the freezer, in case the power goes out and everything melts (as tends to happen here when it rains), but kale still is edible when

melted.

After the Passing of the Day

A bright afternoon, boys, no police and no sails on the ocean, though I imagined that I saw breaks in the waves, maybe whales or dolphins—maybe emerging into the absence of people like the deer, turkeys, gray foxes, and coyotes that already were ubiquitous but now even more so. Trying to avoid some elderly on the path, Goebbels, I discovered that my foot is a bit stronger than I thought, bracing it against the earth again as I climbed up by grabbing tree stumps and stones, to the barbed wire by the road, where what appeared to be poison oak caught so strongly on my trousers that it unrolled the bottoms.

March 26, 2020: The Media (My Concern Should Be Other People)

Din of a construction crew outside, Goebbels, I am afraid of the media invading my life further than it already does—no, that's not true. I'm not afraid, I'm an-noyed—sorry it's come to that, the reaction to bombardments that replace one's own concerns with those of other people, and yet, as I used to say to Jesus (yes, I know he's here, I just can't presume to talk to him as you do, or anyway, not now)—shouldn't my concern *be* other people?

Ah Rudolf, yes, the annoyance is that the media itself has a personality that pretends to be everyone. It is a very friendly personality these days, Goebbels, friendly to all its audiences (I shouldn't say "it," for there are many, yet all slip into their own spots, imagining themselves somehow apart from the others—and *that* is the annoyance, though it can be pleasant, I guess, when one is in despair. But yes, *that* would be the reason to be afraid! No, not of the media—don't give your-self so much credit—but of how one sees it).

But yes, I myself am slipping into a sort of spot—reduced to material needs as a sort of weird comfort in deprivation that I still might expect to be remedied, as when my electric towel rack will arrive this weekend, so that I can make things less cold and damp, and when my laundry detergent arrives in two months (well, I exaggerate—a bit over a month) but of course, Goebbels, I have laundry soap now, just hope it is enough.
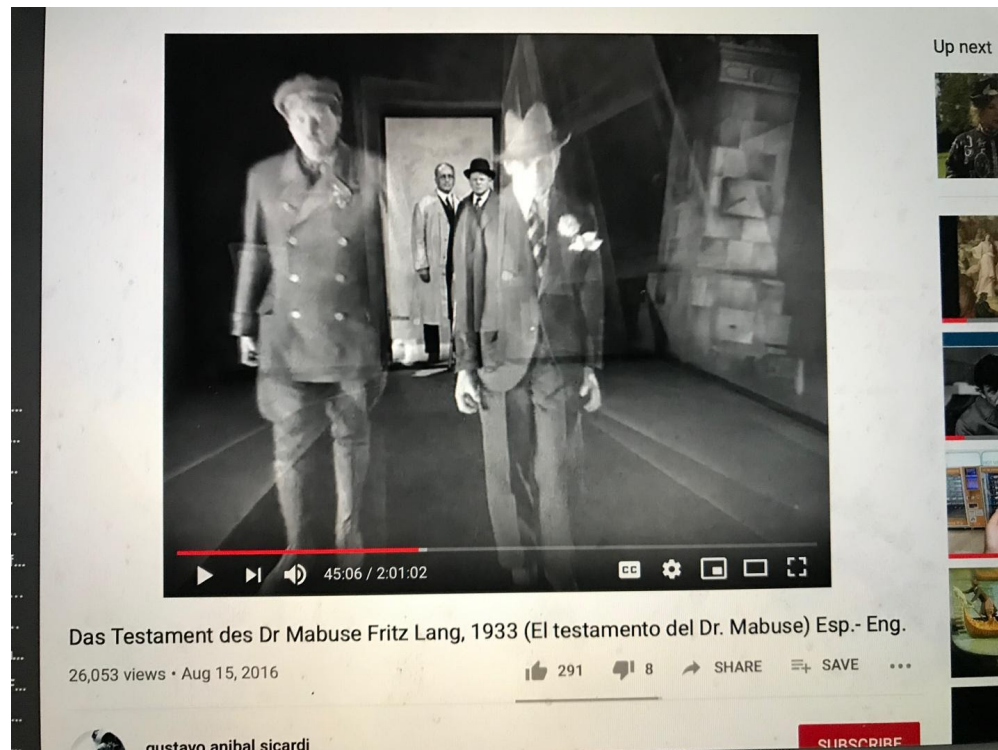
Figure 2 Re-creation of author's re-encounter of "phantoms" in Fritz Lang's Das Testament des Dr. Mabuse (*Nero-Film AG, 1933), accessed via YouTube.com, channel "gustavo anibal sicardi," on March 26, 2020. Image courtesy of Ellen Takata, March 27, 2020.*

After the Passing of the Day

Downpour as soon as I got inside—no sails on the sea (though perhaps a ship), no police. Lovely scent of vanilla and dry sawdust as I crossed the street, and of flame this morning—wonder if these are elements of my perfume that emerge, as desired, to surprise and warm me, as though from somewhere else, but actually from me.

Don't, Goebbels, say that this is what you have been doing—I mean, along with Jesus and Rudolf, of course. I know that you are right, that the three of you have begun to emerge from me to help me, so that I can be responsible in real life. Why, because I "am responsible" even when we play pretend (I hope!).

Going to do the laundry now, the sun shining again through the rain.

Toward Evening

Laundry nearly done. I made goulash except with oatmeal—yes, I should call it *something like* goulash, except with oatmeal. No need to record the recipe here; it is one of those things that will happen again when it must.

March 27, 2020: The Occasion

Boys, I'd never call myself "speechless" (how could I, Goebbels, being so much like you) yet the occasion that you made for me so long ago ought to leave me speechless—yes, in *Das Testament des Dr. Mabuse*.[10] I guess Fritz Lang made the occasion. Really it is all of us who are making the occasion—you don't know the occasion?

Why, Goebbels, it was when you banned that film—critics say because Dr. Mabuse was like Hitler, but that is not my impression.[11] The big, dumb guy in Mabuse's *gang* is like Hitler, and the overwrought, little smart guy in his gang is like you. I took a picture!

Whether or not Lang meant it, he showed what looks today like the two of you as phantoms, appearing to the character of Hofmeister: the tall one musta-chioed in jodhpurs, the small one dressed like James Cagney but with our own, characteristic circles under the eyes.

But *the occasion*, Rudolf, is that the small one was played by you! So: I *didn't* discover you for the first time when you played Robert's father in *Im Lauf der Zeit*, or even faintly in *Suspiria*—I've known you since I saw *Dr. Mabuse* in high school, maybe even sixth grade![12] Must I now see that, I suppose, there is no escape from myself, because, I guess, I don't want to escape?

I do find it satisfying, Rudolf, that Lang should have mapped you and Goebbels onto each other, even by accident, so that you both are mapped onto me.

Also, Goebbels, I'd say it was nice of Fritz (or nice of his subconscious) to blame a magical force of evil for controlling you, rather than suggesting that you controlled the evil. I figure it always goes both ways.

Yes, though I'm not sure if I should, I cannot seem to help but see hate as only one facet of people who hate. It makes it easier to love you without agreeing to most of what you want—then, when (sometimes) you do want things that don't hurt people, I imagine that I could change the rest. But yes, this is in my imagina-tion.

March 28, 2020: A Sail on the Ocean

Boys, yet again I have given away the punch line in my title—not that you don't always already know it, because you are myself. But you *know* that.

Rudolf, I have been considering really sharing this thing—us (me)—with other people, living people, and I have been fretting all day.

Goebbels, *everything* is a potential problem, and there are *no solutions*! How many times have I told you?

But mainly, boys, I think that I was too hard on my fellow Americans— the ones under a century old—for forgetting you, for not getting as close to you as I have. They are to be congratulated for focusing on their own pursuits despite the massive distraction that you provide for people like me, and I do not want them to think that I want to distract them. I suppose I want to let them know that someone is looking after you so that they can do something else.

And yes, I did see it—a sail on the ocean today, though in the rain.

* * *

Ellen Takata researches forms of postwar responsibility for media, memory, and emotion in the German- and Japanese-speaking worlds, largely through what she terms an "ethics of belonging": reading interconnected implications of harm and comfort through histories, literatures, and imageries from (and of) various cultures in legacies of causing and receiving harm. She is currently a PhD candidate at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

Notes

[1] These developments are beyond the scope of the present piece. Briefly, this actor is among my main "personal" interests at the moment. He is Wolfgang Zilzer (a.k.a. "Paul Andor" in Hollywood), whom I also turned out to "know" from visual spaces in my past. Readers might know him from *Casablanca* as the man whose

identity papers have expired, an uncredited role now listed under *Casablanca* on IMDB.com, accessed July 22, 2020.

[2] [Paul] Joseph Goebbels, *Michael: Ein deutsches Schicksal in Tagebuchblättern* (*Michael: A German Destiny in Diary Pages*) (Munich: Franz Eber, 1938).

[3] Among Holocaust-related works that I read in my youth, perhaps the standard for my generation was still Elie Wiesel, *Night*, translated by Stella Rodway, with a foreword by Francois Mauriac (New York: Hill and Wang, 1960); see also *La nuit* (Paris: Éditions de la minuit, ca. 2007). As to my grandfather's remarks—some might be approximated in his postwar papers in the library at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. They may be accessed there under his name, William Karr Hefner.

[4] For example, I have been moved by the variety of individual perspectives emerging from legacies of resistance in the following: *Ganja & Hess* (dir. Bill Gunn; Kelly-Jordan Enterprises, 1973), accessed via KinoNow.com (Kino Lorber), June 22, 2020; *Because I Was a Painter: Secretly Crafted Artworks from Concentration Camps* (dir. Christophe Cognet; Cinema Guild, 2015), accessed via Kanopy.com, November 26, 2019.

[5] As of this writing (July 24, 2020), I indeed have started "talking" to Wolfgang Zilzer in my diaries (see n. 2). I am not sure if he gives me a "better voice," but I am in a more hopeful frame of mind toward my work as a whole. In personal terms, it seems vital that he turned out to be another figure who had lived in my subconscious (from movies in my youth) and "returned" in terms of history. Although I should not need such an affirmation, I'll take it.

[6] In Schündler's original German, the phrase is *eine schöne Aufgabe künftigen Kabaretts*. See Rudolf Schündler, "Während der Zigarettenpause: Gedanken eines Kabarett-Regisseurs" ("During the Cigarette Break: Thoughts from a Cabaret Director"), in *Das literarische Kabarett* (*The Literary Cabaret*) (Munich: Drei-fichten Verlag, 1946), 44.

[7] *Rosen blühen auf dem Heidegrab* (*Roses Bloom on the Moorland Grave*; English title: *Rape on the Moor*) (dir. Hans H. König; König Film, 1952), accessed via YouTube.com, channel "matz kap," March 24, 2020.

[8] *Freitag der 13* (*Friday the 13th*) (dir. Erich Engels; Viktoria Film Verleih, 1944), accessed via YouTube.com, channel "matz kap," March 24, 2020.

[9] *Friday the 13th* (dir. Sean S. Cunningham; Paramount Pictures, 1980).

[10] *Das Testament des Dr. Mabuse* (English title: *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse*) (dir. Fritz Lang; Nero-Film AG, 1933), accessed via YouTube.com, channel "gustavo anibal sicardi," March 27, 2020.

[11] See, e.g., Siegfried Kracauer, *From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of the German Film* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970), 84.

[12] *Im Lauf der Zeit* (*In the Course of Time*; English title: *Kings of the Road*) (dir. Wim Wenders; Wim Wenders Stiftung, 1976); *Suspiria* (dir. Dario Argento; Seda Spettacoli, 1977)—in both cases, my memories refer to seeing these films in theaters multiple times and on dates that I have forgotten.

In the Traces: Reflections on Fieldwork in the Region of Ani

Christina Maranci

I study the medieval Armenian monuments—churches, monasteries, fortresses, palaces, and more—in what is now eastern Turkey (what many call western Armenia). For me, this region is at once the most beautiful, and most painful, place on earth. I am the grandchild of survivors of the Armenian Genocide of 1915–22, in which Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire suffered mass deportation and extermination: a crime that still goes unrecognized by the Turkish state.[1] Scholars have characterized the Armenian monuments in Turkey as physical traces of their lost homeland.[2] While my scholarship addresses these sites as historical and architectural/artistic phenomena, that work does not often capture the moods and emotions I feel when I am there.[3] I hope to offer here a sense of the more personal dimensions of firsthand work with the buildings and their landscapes.

Many important medieval Armenian monuments stand on and around the closed international border between the Republics of Turkey and Armenia. Some of them are accessible to tourists, while others, like the church of Mren, remain forbidden, as they lie within or too close to the military zone. Dated to circa 638, and once part of the princely territory of the Kamsarakan family, Mren became the summer residence of the royal Armenian Bagratids in the tenth century.[4] Once surrounded by a network of buildings, vineyards, and roads, now the church stands alone. Figure 1 illustrates the Armenian high plateau: deforested from antiquity, it is a rocky tableland lacerated by gorges and ringed with mountain chains. Summers are hot and dry, and in winter it snows daily. For me, there is nothing more intoxicating than a morning trip out onto the plateau, inhaling the chilled, highly oxygenated air combined with the heady fumes of benzine.

Figure 1 The Church of Mren, ca. 638 (old Armenian Shirak province; modern Kars region, Turkish Republic). Photo courtesy of Christina Maranci.

One gets to Mren by walking from the nearest village of Karabağ: this is a rough hike down into a valley, through a river, and back up again, for about forty-five minutes. One can sometimes arrange a tractor with wagon hitch from the village (a regular vehicle, and even an all-terrain one, gets torn up driving over the craters seen here). A military watchtower stands on the hills to the south of the church. For these reasons and more, I do not travel alone in the region. Visits to Mren require bravery, stealth, and luck.[5] Figure 1 was taken my third time there, in October 2013, when I went with a working group organized by the World Monuments Fund, the Norwegian Cultural Heritage Institute (NIKU), and Anadolu Kültür, an NGO headquartered in Istanbul.[6] We were a group from all over the world, including Turks, Armenians, Norwegians, and Americans (among others).

In this shot, my Armenian colleague was visiting Mren for the first time. We got to the site late in the day as the sun was setting. It was a race against time to get photographs. Our wagon was too slow for him; he got out and ran. He glances to the right, but seems drawn in the direction of the church. Mren, most often unaccompanied, seems to have risen up to greet him. I was once at an event on cultural heritage, talking about the Armenian monuments of Turkey, when a famous anthropology professor asked me a provocative question: how are these buildings any different from drones used in strikes? I took her to mean that one

Figure 2 Mren in the late afternoon, facing west. Photo courtesy of Christina Maranci.

should privilege human lives above inanimate objects. For me, her question was not only callous but inherently wrong. What about the working teams who quarried and cut the stones of Mren, the builders who designed and made it? What about the noble family who paid for it, the generations of congregations who worshipped within it, and all those now who claim it for their own, but can only watch its deterioration through online images? What about its consecrated ground, its archive of lapidary inscriptions, and the carved and painted faces on its walls, paying homage to centuries of use? Mren is not inanimate; on the contrary, it is overcrowded with lives. I took Figure 2 in late June as the sky was clearing, the sun setting over warm ashlar revetment, playing up the pink and gray stones. With the weather, time of day, and season, Mren changes: it glistens and it preens, it sulks and it smolders.

My hiking boots still have thorns in them from my last "work trip." Studying medieval Armenian monuments inevitably means climbing, sliding, and wading, wildlife and birdsong, and barging in on the daily schedule of animals and their caretakers. The high plateau has been famous since antiquity for its grazing land. Figure 3 illustrates the Monastery of Hoṙomos, just a day's walk from the city of Ani. Hoṙomos was the burial place for members of the royal Armenian Bagratid dynasty (ninth to eleventh centuries).[7] It features some of the most spectacular architecture I have ever seen, as well as an archive of medieval inscriptions. The monastery consists of an upper complex on the ridge opposite this picture and, on

Figure 3 Hoṙomos Monastery, tenth to thirteenth centuries (old Armenian Shirak province; modern Kars region). Photo courtesy of Christina Maranci.

a seasonal island below, a lower complex, the ruins of which appear in the background. In the distance are the ruins of three churches of the tenth and eleventh centuries. The tomb of Ashot III (953–977) survived into the early twentieth century but was subsequently destroyed.[8]

Like Mren, visits to Hoṙomos are officially forbidden. If anyone needed further persuasion, a sign posted on the path to the monastery warns visitors of landmines. When I visited in 2013, I walked with my colleagues in strict single file to the site, barely breathing, matching my footsteps exactly in the tracks of the person ahead of me. Grazing cows offered us reassuring indications of safe ground. When my colleagues and I are in historically Armenian lands, we stare at stone walls, village houses, piles of rubble, and (of course) the ground. Figure 4 shows a handful of ceramic shards from the ancient and medieval city of Bagaran (modern Kılıttašı), near Digor, in the Kars province region.[9] This is an impressively large ruined site built in terraces against a hill. It has never been excavated, but it is mentioned in early Armenian sources as a pagan cult center.[10] Today, the ground of Bagaran is covered in ceramic shards—signs, perhaps, of better times: of manufacturing, trade, busy kitchens, and feasts.

Figure 4 Ceramic fragments from Bagaran (modern Kılıttaš, Kars region). Photo courtesy of Christina Maranci.

Figure 5 shows a photograph of the mosque of the village of Varlı, formerly known as Zepni (Arm. Զպնի), near the town of Digor (Kars province, Turkey). This structure started life as an Armenian church, probably of the seventh century, and was dedicated to the Mother of God (Surb Astuatsatsin).[11] In plans and photographs from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (such as Figure 6), the church appears as a cruciform structure with a south portal, its central bay surmounted first by a dome and then, after its collapse, a pitched roof. The superstructure was destroyed in the mid-twentieth-century and subsequently rebuilt as a mosque. During my visit of 2013, the mosque lay within a lightly wooded area and formed part of a precinct of built structures covered by a single corrugated metal roof. The interior walls and ceiling were sheathed in wooden paneling, possibly concealing inscriptions, sculpture, and/or painted plaster.

Exploring the outside of the church, I discovered the passage of carving seen in Figure 5 (and which I have located on Fig. 6 with a square). The photograph highlights the technique of Armenian medieval wall construction: carefully-cut and squared facing stones (recently patched with cement) sandwiching a mortar core. The engraved marks are easy to miss (particularly now that the area is mostly in shade). There is an Armenian inscription on the stone that reads ԱՅ ԾԱՌԱ ՏԵԱՅՐ ՊԵՏՐՈՍ ("Servant of Lord God, Petros").[12] Above this is a bird, perhaps a dove, its wings outstretched and its tail incised with hatch marks.

Figure 5 The Church of Zeṗni (begun in the seventh century?), now Varlı Köyü Camii (Varlı Village Mosque), Kars region. Photo courtesy of Christina Maranci.

In Armenian literary and visual tradition going back at least to the fifth century, birds are associated with the souls of the deceased.[13] In the Armenian church liturgy, as practiced even today, bird imagery is associated with death and resurrection and invoked in prayers for the repose of souls. In the prayer for the dead, the choir sings of the "supernal Jerusalem," where "Enoch and Elijah live old in age like doves, worthily glorified in the Garden of Eden," then beseeching the "Merciful Lord, have mercy on the souls of those of us who have fallen asleep."[14] While we do not know when the bird was carved into the stone, the imagery harmonizes with the written memorial of Petros.

To the left of this inscription is a sundial, a southern-facing protractor dial divided into twelve sectors marking each of the liturgical hours. At its midpoint was once a metal rod or *gnomon*; its hole is now patched with cement. Medieval Armenian sundials are instruments for measuring time and appear with regularity on Armenian churches.[15] They are important not only for the history of science and astronomy but also for social, liturgical, and theological understandings of time, its passing, and its eventual end. Below and to the right of the dial, a modern visitor has carved the star and crescent of the Turkish flag, quite literally inscribing Turkish authority into the walls of the Armenian church, and offering, perhaps, a final comment on the ephemerality of life. Figure 7 shows a view of the city of Ani, located, like Mren, just within the modern Turkish side of the closed border

Figure 6 The Church of Zepni, from the 1910s, after Samvel Karapetyan, Եղեռն՝ Եղեռնից Հետո *[Another Genocide after the Genocide] (Yerevan, Armenia: Researches on Armenian Architecture, 2015), 73. Photo courtesy of Christina Maranci.*

with Armenia. Ani was a royal Armenian capital in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and a bustling trade city under successive Byzantine, Seljuk, Georgian, and Kurdish rule. By the fifteenth century, the population had dwindled, and by the nineteenth, Ani was a ghost town.

There are ghosts inside and outside the buildings at Ani. Figure 8 shows an untouched photograph of the interior of the eleventh-century church of Saint Gregory "Abughamrents," at Ani, which I took in 2016. The wall is whitewashed, flaking, and might not seem to merit a second glance, let alone reproduction in an essay. But look closer at the center of the image. There is a face: the dark tones of the skin stand out, the columnar neck, the pointed jaw, the nose, the almond eyes. Even closer inspection reveals that below this face are two more creatures in profile: a lion looking to the left, and a bull looking to the right. I wonder whether this is the trace of a tetramorph, as described in the book of Ezekiel, which formed part of a throne vision.[16] Conservation, documentation, and software will, I hope, reveal answers. Until that time, tourists walk in and out of the church, ignoring, for the most part, the creature watching them.

Figure 7 The city of Ani (Kars region), view from the south. Photo courtesy of Christina Maranci.

Figure 8 A ghost at Ani. Photo courtesy of Christina Maranci.

Figure 9 The Church of Saint Gregory "Abughamrents" at Ani, eleventh century. Photo courtesy of Christina Maranci.

Figure 9 shows the exterior of the same church. It is a petite, elegant marker of the eastern edge of Ani. I took this picture while standing in the dry gorge below. This church, relatively well preserved compared with many other buildings at Ani, is usually one of the last monuments that visitors see during their time at Ani, before they leave through the main gates.

As tourists return in the evening to Kars, back to their hotels for a shower and dinner, Ani begins another life. Figure 10 shows villagers from neighboring Oçaklı. A man climbs over the locked side gate of the city, while a woman and small child look on. Why is he entering? Perhaps to fetch animals that have spent the day grazing in the ruins of the city? His feet seem to know well every crevice of the wall; I imagine this is part of his daily schedule.

I admit it: part of me feels resentful. Why is he allowed to live with this city, when I can only go occasionally? Why do I have to go "home," when he can experience the change of seasons with these monuments and know them better than any visitor? At the same time, this image gives me comfort. The man, his family, his neighbors, will keep the monuments company; they will hear and know everything that happens at Ani.

Nighttime in eleventh-century Ani was also lively. Look beyond the gate in the distance, at the ruins: this was the royal palace church of Gagik. It was a

Figure 10 Entering the Kingdom. Photo courtesy of Christina Maranci.

three-tiered, circular structure, with a central dome, and featured a larger-than-life statue of Gagik himself holding a model of the church.[17] At night this church would have resounded with song. Chronicles tell us that Gagik loved to sing the night service—a special liturgical office in the Armenian church sung from night until the dawn.[18] From where the villagers are standing, one would have been able to hear the sounds of singing and watch the church windows glow with light from chandeliers.[19]

One needs at least an entire day to see the monuments of Ani, to walk along its fortifications, and to see its citadel and caves. After visitors enter the main gate, tours usually begin with the cathedral, shown in Figure 11. But this picture, from 2016, was taken at the end of the day. It shows something rare in photographs of the cathedral: the north facade bathed in the early evening light.

So much of what I do on-site involves getting a good shot with the right light, angles, and the most visual information. Photographing architectural monuments can sometimes feel like a forced march toward completion: first a general view, then north, south, east, west; next interior; then inscriptions, sculpture, and painting. What one sees in Figure 11, instead, is a private affair between the cathedral and me. I have taken a backward glance, before leaving, to record the feeling of resting, rather than working, with the monument. I remember trying to capture the light, and the sound of the breeze rustling through the long grasses—as if the

Figure 11 Taking leave. Photo courtesy of Christina Maranci.

city were exhaling after a long day of posing for pictures. For a moment I felt no fear, no anxiety, just the intense softness of the end of the day.

* * *

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Notes

[1] See Taner Akçam, *A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006); Raymond Kévorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011); and Thomas De Waal, *The Great Catastrophe: Armenians and Turks in the Shadow of Genocide* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

[2] Peter Balakian, "Raphael Lemkin, Cultural Destruction, and the Armenian Genocide," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 27, no. 1 (2013): 57–89, https://doi.org/10.1093/hgs/dct001; Heghnar Zeitlian Watenpaugh, "Preserving the Medieval City of Ani: Cultural Heritage between Contest and Reconciliation," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 73 (2014): 528–55, https://doi.org/10.1525/jsah.2014.73.4.528.

[3] See, e.g., Christina Maranci, *The Art of Armenia: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), which also gives an overview of the field.

[4] For a recent, comprehensive, and English-language discussion of Mren, see Christina Maranci, *Vigilant Powers: Three Churches of Early Medieval Armenia* (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2015), 23–112.

[5] For an account of my experiences, and failures, trying to get to Mren, see Christina Maranci, "Symbols of Power and Fragility: Medieval Armenian Architecture," *Modern Greek Studies Yearbook* 32/33 (2016/2017): 43–71.

[6] Anadolu Kültür, founded by the philanthropist and business man Osman Kavala, and a dear friend, has been imprisoned since 2017 on political charges invented by the Turkish state.

[7] For a comprehensive study of this site, see Edda Vardanyan, ed., *Hoṙomos Monastery: Art and History* (Paris: Centre d'histoire et civilization, 2015).

[8] See *oṙomos Monastery*, 64–65.

[9] Samvel Karapetyan, **Եղեռն՝ Եղեռնից Հետո** [*Another Genocide after the Genocide*] (Yerevan, Armenia: Researches on Armenian Architecture, 2015), 78–83.

[10] Moses Khorenatsi, *History of the Armenians*, translated by Robert W. Thomson (Ann Arbor, MI: Caravan Books, 2006), 179.

[11] See Karapetyan, **Եղեռն՝ Եղեռնից Հետո**, 74–75.

[12] I believe this inscription is first published here.

[13] For recent discussion and bibliography of avian imagery in an Armenian funerary context, see Maranci, *Vigilant Powers*, 220–28.

[14] See https://www.stnersess.edu/uploads/2/3/7/7/23772132/the_divine_liturgy.pdf, accessed July 27, 2020. See also Helen E. Evans, "Nonclassical Sources for the Armenian Mosaic near the Damascus Gate in Jerusalem," in *East of Byzantium: Syria and Armenia in the Formative Period*, edited by Nina G. Garsoïan, Thomas F. Mathews, and Robert W. Thomson (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1982), 219.

[15] Christina Maranci, "Sundials and Medieval Armenian Architecture," in *The Armenian Apocalpytic Tradition: A Comparative Perspective; Essays Presented in Honor of Professor Robert W. Thomson on the Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday*, edited by Kevork B.

Bardakjian and Sergio La Porta (Leiden, the Netherlands: Brill, 2014), 553–71, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004270268_025.

[16] This and additional evidence from frescoes will be published by this author in the following study: "Visions of Ani: Software-Recovered Painting from the Apse of the Cathedral and the Church of Saint Gregory 'Abułamrenc,'" *Revue des études arméniennes* (forthcoming).

[17] This statue is now lost, although preserved in archival photographs: <u>see</u> http://virtualani.org/gagikstatue/index.htm, accessed July 27, 2020. The fragment of an elbow most likely belonging to this statue has also been identified: see Giorgi L. Kavtaradze, "The Problem of the Identification of the Mysterious Statue from the Erzurum Museum," *Caucasica* 3 (1999): 59–66.

[18] Step'anos Tarōnec'i (Asolik), *Patmut'iwn Tiezerakan* [*Universal History*], edited by Gurgēn Manukyan, *Matenagirk' Hayoc'*, tenth century, bk. 2, vol. 15 (Antelias, Lebanon: Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia, 2011), 617–829 at 808. For an English translation, see *The Universal History of Step'anos Tarōnec'i*, translated by Tim Greenwood (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 293.

[19] See Christina Maranci, "Sights and Sounds of the Armenian Night Service as Performed at Ani: A Collation of the Archaeological, Liturgical, and Historical Evidence," in *Icons of Sound*, edited by Bissera Pentcheva (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, forthcoming), https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003007463-3.

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White Shoals, White Shrouds: Reflections on the Ethics of Looking at Captive Bodies

Axelle Toussaint

In the winter of 2018, I presented a conference paper on a set of nineteenth-century photographs from the national archive of the French colonies. The series, titled "Types Comoriens" (Comorian types), comprises seven photographs commissioned by the French École Coloniale between 1890 and 1896. The École Coloniale was a French colonial school created in 1889, dedicated to recruiting and training French colonial administrators. The school was instrumental to both the institutionalization of colonial knowledge and the development of French higher education.[1]

The images are full-length portraits of seven young Comorian natives, naked, standing in front of a white background. My essay looked at the beaded strings that the indigenous islanders wore around their waists, which I traced back to an East African puberty ritual called *unyago*. Subsumed in the minutiae of my anthropological analysis, I did not register the violence that had been folded into the photographic frame. Nor did I realize that I, myself, was reenacting the voyeuristic gaze of the colonial photographer by re-producing these images in my conference presentation. For my presentation, I cropped the subjects' naked bodies but decided to show their faces. Even then, this timid gesture seemed insufficient, uncomfortably incomplete.

Seven little heads pinned on the white page of my PowerPoint. Seven faces that I read as sad, angry, and dejected, now floating in white space, brought as offering to an intellectually voracious audience of (mostly white male) researchers, who, ushered in by my neutral tone, my policed words, my rehearsed speech,

craved some sort of visual support, the beginning of a picture that they could then complete in their imaginations. And I delivered it to them. That day, while playing my part as a researcher, I surely failed my political responsibilities as a citizen and as a spectator of these photographs. I failed the ethical demands of the decolonial gaze that I intended to perform, and the memory of these children that I pretended to defend. The present essay is an account of my multiple returns to these difficult, terrible images. It offers a reflection on the ongoing violence of the colonial gaze and the ethics of looking at captive bodies in the archive, as I wonder: How do we remember those whose lives have been "recorded in the act of their annihilation?"[2] How do we attend to the past without committing further violence?

Gathering

My second reading of the "Types Comoriens" series required a radical shift in my understanding of the ontology of photography. I had first considered the seven photographs as material evidence of *what has been* (as Roland Barthes puts it), as a reflection of some past reality, and this line of inquiry had led me to an impasse: it was impossible to determine the subjects' identity, their origins, and whether they had gone through slavery. It seemed that nothing could be said about the past that wouldn't involve further description and reobjectification of the subjects.

I am thankful to Ariella Azoulay for getting me out of this impasse. Azoulay asks us to see photography not as a finite moment in time but as an open-ended event whose political stakes reach out to us, viewers, in the present. The "event of photography," as Azoulay conceives it, is constituted by a series of encounters between a multiplicity of participants: the camera, the person who stands behind its lens (the photographer), whoever faces its lens (the photographed person), and the spectator of photography (who is, today, virtually everyone).[3] Rather than a mere reflection of the relations that have taken place in front of the camera in the past, photography *enacts* a series of relations between its participants. The "Types Comoriens" photographs function as a space of encounter between the photographed subjects, the photographer, me, and you—as you too are invited to look at these images. Through our common condition as spectators, we form part of a universal civil polity that Azoulay calls the "citizenry of photography."[4] For Azoulay, spectatorship is a fundamentally emancipatory practice: each participant to the event of photography contributes to the process of meaning making; each spectator has the power and, further, the *obligation* to intervene, to take action against the unfair and the intolerable[5] by "reconstruct[ing] what was there from both what is visible and what is not immediately manifest, but what can—in principle—*become*

visible in the same exact photograph."[6] I've been thinking with Azoulay because her theory endows the spectators of photography with a responsibility that I was eager to assume, by suggesting that colonial photographs do not simply function as evidence of past injustices but as live battlegrounds, sites where meaning is still—and always—in the making.

Taking up Azoulay's injunction to take part, the present piece is an attempt at a feminist decolonial praxis of looking at captive (as in, captured by the camera) black and indigenous bodies. In it, I attempt to exercise my civil duties of spectatorship by reconstituting the photographic mise-en-scène, making present the figure of the photographer (whose role in the mise-en-scène is often rendered invisible, naturalized within the frame), and attending to the meanings enforced or erased by previous readings. This essay is also an invitation for us, spectators of photography, for you and for me, to reorient our gaze toward the site of its emergence: our bodies and their traces, the colonial baggage that they carry.

Pausing and Feeling

Seven "portraits . . ." Here, the caption already lies. The term *portrait* inscribed by one of the spectators of these photographs, perhaps the colonial administrator, and perpetuated by diligent archival agents, seems inappropriate. I am here in the French colonial and this word, *portrait*, makes me feel sick in my stomach, because it implies a *person*, and of people here I see *none*.

Seven bodies pressed against an empty, emptying background. I am disgusted by the view of this white sheet quickly fixed between a rock and a tree, which sets the stage for the unfolding of the voyeur's desires, disgusted by this clear intention to isolate these seven children as specimens of a "Comorian type," to remove them from the world.

Seven could-have-been-children forced, one by one, to strip off their clothes to allow the gaze of the colonial administrator to carry out its dehumanizing, violating work. My heart aches for the child who holds on to their kanga, holding it tight in their hand, as if it were of their modesty, of their faith, of their humanness, which is being denied to them.

My mal d'archive is not a fever, it's a nausea: I feel sick at the ignominious sight of the subjects' full-frontal nudity, of their clothes lying on the ground in a pile, of this white sheet thrown in a hurry to separate these bodies from the world of the free and the living, to delimit the space of their violation.

I read these images again alongside Hortense Spillers's text "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book." This reading practice allows me to

see that the bodies presented here are pure abstraction, an ensemble of coded signs without material reality. There are two crucial steps in the resignifying process at stake. The first takes place in front of the camera and is constituted by the encounter between photographer and photographed object. The camera operates what Hortense Spillers calls a "theft of the body," turning each of these seven bodies into undifferentiated flesh, reducing them to an "absence *from* subject position."[7] In this transmutation of bodies into flesh, "we lose any hint or suggestion of a dimension of ethics, of relatedness between human personality and its anatomical features, between one human personality and another, between human personality and cultural institutions."[8] Flesh is a visual indeterminacy, a blank canvas onto which a diligent spectator (be they the photographer, the colonial agent, or the archivist) ascribed an identity, picked and chose and named, sometime between now and then: seven "Comorian types," six so-called *jeunes femmes* (young women) and one *enfant* (male child).

Seven bodies suspended in the photographic, culturally unmade at the fall of the shutter. Seven humans turned into objects—a second death.

The attribution of a caption coincides with the second stage of the resignifying process: the body captured by the camera now "becomes being for the captor,"[9] as it is forced to signify ethnicity, gender, and age. This second stage is that of the re/presentation: uncooked flesh is given a cultural flavor as it is prepared for consumption. By dint of the caption, flesh is resignified, flesh takes on meaning as a culturally comprehensible object onto which the spectator's scopophilic desires will latch: seven juvenile indigenous bodies, naked.

White and nonblack scholars themselves cannot escape the pull of this pornotropic logic, regardless of their critical or antiracist intentions: when they produce the black body as an object of inquiry, they "transform black figures and forms into 'captive bodies' under their scholarly gazes and modes of deconstruction."[10] "Working on Blackness is always already an erotic project," writes King. She helps me realize that there is no more picking parts, no heads over bodies, no better or worse: it is all the same undifferentiated, unmade and remade, flesh, and, from this realization, there is no escape. King suggests that "instead of looking to the Black body—whether suffering or in ecstasy—as an object of study, that one attends to or notices their own (white and nonblack) desire(s) for the Black body. Noticing requires one to pause, take a beat, and maybe a breath before proceeding. It requires a slowing of one's momentum maybe even one's pulse and a moment to regroup and reorient."[11] King calls this "conceptual and methodological disturbance" a shoal.[12] Shoals are submerged geological formations that rise near the surface of the water and may "force a vessel to remain off shore—off the littoral— impeding it from reaching its intended destination."[13] Within Black studies, a shoal

requires that we pause and ask: "What are the sensations, feelings, and desires of the white and non-black body that produce the black body as an object of inquiry?"[14]—but also: "What are the sensations, feelings, and desires that lead us to demand its visibility?" The shoal, as King seems to suggest, operates differently according to one's positionality: while it might engage white and nonblack scholars/viewers to face their own desire (sexual or otherwise) for the black body, what exactly does it entail for the black viewer? To me, as I cannot speak for others, the shoal as a space of reflection forced me to look at the bias of my own gaze, and to let myself feel the nausea that these photographs conjured. It also made me face my responsibility toward the archival captives and the dead.

Two years have passed since the conference. I return to the images, reflecting on the ways in which they have worked for me as, perhaps, tokens of my scientific legitimacy. Going farther back in time, I wonder: in what haste did the initial spectator (the colonial agent-photographer) find himself when he tucked that sheet under that rock, when he asked these children to strip off their clothes? It is not difficult to imagine that he, who left no trace of himself but the archival record and its laconic captions, was a man—a white man.[15] Did this man succumb to a sudden pulsion, a photographic frenzy to capture and possess, or were these images the fruit of a more concerted effort, a long-hauled fantasy of mastery and control? Could the same voyeuristic desire that animated his interest for Comorian natives underpin our present demands for the visibility of black bodies—in the media, in black studies, and on the white page of my art-historical presentation?

I knew that I needed to talk about these photographs again, or else they would come back to haunt me. I could not make the sovereign decision to remove them from the public view and deny future spectators their rightful demand to see, nor could I bury these bodies back into the archive. I was still sickened by the same view of them: seven ghostly little heads floating in white space, grimacing their distress at me. But how could I disrupt their pornotroping logic? How could I probe the violence that had been perpetrated against their subjects without committing further violence in the act of looking?

Pause. What if, I wondered, we imagined the shoal as a visual disturbance, one that literally impedes access to the captive black and indigenous body?

Still sickened by the same view of those seven little heads floating in white space, recoiling in my brain long after the PowerPoint had been closed, I decided to take action, cut out the images a second time, cutting it all out this time, until all that is left is a blank space, a white shoal. The shoal mimes the violence of the archive when removing captive bodies from our view; yet, where the archive aims at annihilation, the shoal outlines the contours of the violation. Thinking with King, I foreground the white shoal as an ethical praxis of looking at captive bodies,

a feminist decolonial praxis that requires a diversion and redirection of our gaze back onto itself, an attention to our body—and a refusal of visual analysis-as-usual. As King and Azoulay remind me, looking is a particular experience of embodiment that is inherited, learned, never evident, always political—and a praxis through which we can exercise our capacity for freedom.

Figure 1a Types Comoriens *photographic series, intervened by the author.*

Figure 1b Types Comoriens *photographic series, intervened by the author.*

Figure 1c Types Comoriens *photographic series, intervened by the author.*

Figure 1d Types Comoriens *photographic series, intervened by the author.*

Figure 1e Types Comoriens *photographic series, intervened by the author.*

Figure 1f Types Comoriens *photographic series, intervened by the author.*

Figure 1g Types Comoriens *photographic series, intervened by the author.*

The original records for the "Types Comoriens" photographs are available for consultation on the website of the French Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer at the following links. No matter what you choose to do, to look or not to look, it is reassuring to think that photographs are not finite artifacts generating static effects. Meaning is not fixed, and action is ours to be taken. If you decide to look, will you assume your responsibilities as a citizen of photography?

http://anom.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/ulysse/notice?add=FR_ANOM_8Fi15-165&=&q=&coverage=Comores%2C+Archipel+des&type=Photographie&mode=thumb&page=26&hpp=10&id=FR_ANOM_8Fi15-163[16]

http://anom.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/ulysse/notice?q=&coverage=Comores%2C+Archipel+des&date=&from=&to=&type=Photographie&mode=thumb&page=13&hpp=10&id=FR_ANOM_8Fi15-155[17]

http://anom.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/ulysse/notice?add=FR_ANOM_8Fi15-165&=&q=&coverage=Comores%2C+Archipel+des&type=Photographie&mode=thumb&page=17&hpp=10&id=FR_ANOM_8Fi15-164[18]

http://anom.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/ulysse/notice?add=FR_ANOM_8Fi15-165&=&q=&coverage=Comores%2C+Archipel+des&type=Photographie&mode=thumb&page=17&hpp=10&id=FR_ANOM_8Fi15-153[19]

http://anom.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/ulysse/notice?add=FR_ANOM_8Fi15-165&=&q=&coverage=Comores%2C+Archipel+des&type=Photographie&mode=thumb&page=21&hpp=10&id=FR_ANOM_8Fi15-158[20]

http://anom.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/ulysse/notice?q=&coverage=Comores%2C+Archipel+des&date=&from=&to=&type=Photographie&mode=thumb&page=14&hpp=10&id=FR_ANOM_8Fi15-165[21]

http://anom.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/ulysse/notice?add=FR_ANOM_8Fi15-165&=&q=&coverage=Comores%2C+Archipel+des&type=Photographie&mode=thumb&page=16&hpp=10&id=FR_ANOM_8Fi15-157[22]

Sitting with the Dead

Earlier in this essay, I suggested that the present perfect of photography (photo-graphs as material evidence of *what has been*) should not divert us from *what can be done*, a potentiality granted by our ever-present capacity for freedom. Once we have come to terms with our responsibility as a spectator, what is it that can be done? I am reminded of Saidiya Hartman's warnings about the difficulty of mourning the dead in the archive: "The victor," she writes, "has already won. [The photograph has been taken, the body has been captured]. It is not possible to undo the past."[23] By removing the photographed bodies from the spectator's view, was I not at-tempting to undo the past, annul the violence, to restore a semblance of justice? The white shoals made me pause and feel the nausea that I had initially repressed. I felt the responsibility to make visible the theft of the body materialized on the photographs, by rendering the subjects' bodies materially invisible. But this too seemed incomplete: the white shoals cannot undo the past, nor can they cancel the violence perpetrated against black and indigenous bodies—a violence that has not yet ceased happening. Animated by a desire to redeem my disastrous academic performance, I mistook my own return with that of the seven captives.

Scholars of the black radical tradition have been trying to articulate meth-ods of encountering an unjust and traumatic past that is not yet past. Hartman suggests that mourning, as a public expression of loss and grief, can help us work through the past, once our bereavement is severed from illusions of recovery or redemption.[24] Christina Sharpe proposes a "method along the lines of a sitting with, a gathering, and a tracking of phenomena that disproportionately and devas-tatingly affect Black peoples any and everywhere we are."[25]

"Sitting with the Dead" is my third and last return; it consists of the public performance of symbolic acts of mourning. In the Comoros, women are tradition-ally in charge of the rituals of mourning, the first of which is the covering of the body with a white shroud.[26] For months, I had been pondering how to mourn the multiple violences that I saw at play in the photographs—the violence of French imperialism, of the archive, of the academic conventions of my discipline, and the violence of my own gaze, looking, describing, cutting. After some time, I started seeing the white cutouts not simply as shoals but also as shrouds. I decided to enlarge one of the photographs and paste it to a wall. I brought candles, incense, a bouquet, a loom—the objects associated with mourning in various traditions of which I am a part. For the time it takes for a candle to burn, I sat with the dead. I wished for my body to hold a space for the live memory of the captives and the departed—for a moment there, I felt it made the past more present. The perfor-mance left me physically and emotionally depleted, dazed by the intensity of energy

Figure 2 Axelle Toussaint, Sitting with the Dead*, October 2020, Oaxaca, Mexico. Photograph by Axel Isai Revera Saavedra.*

Figure 3 Axelle Toussaint, Sitting with the Dead*, October 2020, Oaxaca, Mexico. Photograph by Jennifer Breuel.*

Figure 4. Axelle Toussaint, Sitting with the Dead*, October 2020, Oaxaca, Mexico. Photograph by Jennifer Breuel.*

required to manifest and sustain such a sad and painful encounter with a past not yet past. Minutes after the performance ended, the discomfort gave way to a clearer sense of what was and what can still be done, of the limits and possibilities of my traversing the multiple and imbricated temporalities of the archive, as a researcher, a politically accountable participant, and a living body. It felt like a momentary calm, a respite of sorts.

* * *

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Notes

[1] Pierre Singaravélou, *Professer l'Empire: Les "sciences coloniales" en France sous la IIIe République*, Histoire contemporaine 3 (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2011), 36.

[2] Stephen Best, "Neither Lost Nor Found: Slavery and the Visual Archive," *Representations* 113, no. 1 (2011): 159, https://doi.org/10.1525/rep.2011.113.1.150.

[3] Ariella Azoulay, *Civil Imagination: A Political Ontology of Photography* (London: Verso, 2012), 220.

[4] Ibid., 70.

[5] Azoulay is primarily concerned with photographs taken in disaster zones.

[6] Ariella Azoulay, *The Civil Contract of Photography* (New York: Zone Books, 2008), 159.

[7] Hortense J. Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book," *Diacritics* 17, no. 2 (1987): 67, https://doi.org/10.2307/464747.

[8] Ibid., 68.

[9] Ibid., 67.

[10] Tiffany Lethabo King, "Off Littorality (Shoal 1.0): Black Study Off the Shores of 'the Black Body,'" *Propter Nos* 3 (2019): 44–45, https://www.academia.edu/38170503/_Off_Littorality_Shoal_1.0_Black_Study_Off_the_Shores_of_the_Black_Body_.

[11] Ibid., 42.

[12] Ibid., 40.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid., 43.

[15] See Timothy Collier, "L'École coloniale: La formation des cadres de la France d'outre-mer, 1889–1959" (PhD diss., Aix-Marseille Université, 2008). At the time these photographs were taken, women were barred from working in the French colonial administration.

[16] Types Comoriens, Portrait d'une jeune femme, 1890–1896, FR ANOM 8Fi15/163, Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer, Aix-en-Provence, France. Hereafter cited as ANOM.

[17] Types Comoriens, Portrait d'une jeune femme, 1890–1896, FR ANOM 8Fi15/155, ANOM.

[18] Types Comoriens, Portrait d'une jeune femme, 1890–1896, FR ANOM 8Fi15/164, ANOM.

[19] Types Comoriens, Portrait d'un enfant, 1890–1896, FR ANOM 8Fi15/153, ANOM.

[20] Types Comoriens, Portrait d'une jeune femme, 1890–1896, FR ANOM 8Fi15/158, ANOM.

[21] Types Comoriens, Portrait d'une jeune femme, 1890–1896, FR ANOM 8Fi15/165, ANOM.

[22] Types Comoriens, Portrait d'une jeune femme, 1890–1896, FR ANOM 8Fi15/157, ANOM.

[23] Saidiya Hartman, "The Time of Slavery," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 101, no. 4 (2002): 772, https://doi.org/10.1215/00382876-101-4-757.

[24] Ibid., 771.

[25] Christina Elizabeth Sharpe, *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), 13.

[26] Ahmed Chanfi, Françoise Le Guennec-Coppens, and Sophie Mery, "Rites de mort aux Comores et chez les Swahili: Entre islam savant et culture locale," *Journal des Africanistes* 72, no. 2 (2002): 187–201, https://doi.org/10.3406/jafr.2002.1314.

Traces, Fragments & Voids: An Artist Representing Detroit's Vanishing Homeland

Whitney Lea Sage

Figure 1 Whitney Lea Sage, Neighbors, Homesickness Series. *Ink on paper, 13.5" x 17.5", 2018. Image courtesy of the artist.*

Figure 2 Whitney Lea Sage, Family Room, Homesickness Series. *Ink on paper, 7" x 10", 2017. Image courtesy of the artist. Previously published by* Newfound Journal *and* WomenArts Quarterly *and republished with permission.*

Figure 3 Whitney Lea Sage, White Picket Fence, Homesickness Series. *Ink on paper, 13.5" x 17", 2017. Image courtesy of the artist. Previously published by* Newfound Journal *and* WomenArts Quarterly *and republished with permission.*

Figure 4 Whitney Lea Sage, Threshold, Homesickness Series. *Ink on paper, 11" x 11", 2018. Image courtesy of the artist.*

Figure 5 Whitney Lea Sage, Foundation, Homesickness Series. *Ink on paper, 13.5" x 16.5", 2017. Image courtesy of the artist. Previously published by* Newfound Journal *and* WomenArts Quarterly *and republished with permission.*

Figure 6 Whitney Lea Sage, Cottage, Homesickness Series. *Ink on paper, 13.5" x 16.5", 2017. Image courtesy of the artist. Previously published by* Newfound Journal *and* WomenArts Quarterly *and republished with permission.*

Figure 7 Whitney Lea Sage, Single Family Home, Homesickness Series. *Ink on paper, 13.5" x 15.5", 2017. Image courtesy of the artist. Previously published by* Newfound Journal *and* WomenArts Quarterly *and republished with permission.*
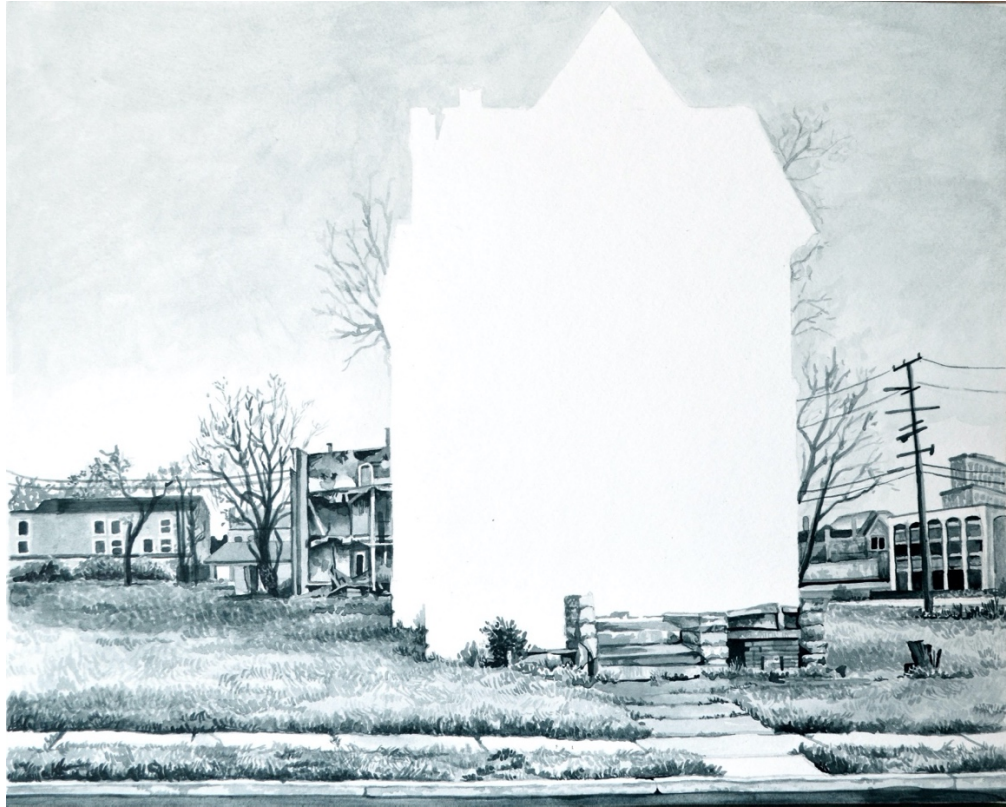
Figure 8 Whitney Lea Sage, Lone Victorian, Homesickness Series. *Ink on paper, 13.5" x 15.5", 2016. Image courtesy of the artist. Previously published by* Newfound Journal *and* WomenArts Quarterly *and republished with permission.*

Artist Statement

I am a native of suburban Detroit, and the rich cultural heritage of midwestern cities and their vital contribution to the formation of American ideals and values is influential to my artwork as well as my identity as an artist and image maker. Industrial cities like Detroit were built around traditions of hard work, remaining free of pretention, and making do with what one has. I see these values mirrored in my work's insistence on laborious processes and accessible subject matter, and my use of mixed media and multidisciplinary approaches. In focusing on Detroit's urban landscape as a subject for artist inquiry, I see it as a place of increasing cultural significance with parallels to national deindustrialization trends that have left behind empty storefronts, ghostly architectural skeletons, and scarred plots of land. Throughout my career I have depicted Detroit as subject matter, not only as a personal crusade for a place I love, but also to create an open dialogue about challenging histories and the problematic lens through which outsiders sometimes view urban communities. Common representations of Detroit in national media often rely on misleading tropes and overly simplistic stereotypes that fall short of exposing the institutional forces at the heart of the city's economic decline. As a corrective measure in representing Detroit, my practice uses visual or written means to provide the audience of my work with oft-overlooked historical contexts to illuminate how corporate abandonment, housing segregation, highway construction, and white flight led to the city's present-day challenges. The Black and minority communities who remained in the city disproportionately shouldered the devastating impact of these practices, and it is these same communities who shoulder the burden of stereotypical representations of urban residents by outsiders.

Having grown up in Farmington Hills, a Detroit suburb, I am constantly forced to confront my own outsider relationship with the city due to the physical and experiential distance of my upbringing. My family moved to Farmington Hills from a rural area of western Michigan and thus experienced a collective and contextual alienation as transplants in an unfamiliar and politically charged region. Like most suburbs surrounding Detroit, Farmington Hills is an affluent, primarily white, and densely populated pocket within a sprawling and diverse, though economically and racially segregated, suburban region. Since we were not from the region originally, my family did not exactly have shared history with our neighboring expat Detroiters, but we did benefit from the resources that came with a suburban zip code. The experience of growing up within a safe, affluent, and insulated suburb whose residents directly benefited from the outward migration of people, resources, and opportunities from the urban core shapes my outsider authorial perspective. While the sprawling nature of metro Detroit's suburbs makes me an

insider in broader geographic contexts, as a suburbanite I constantly walk the line between regional insider and privileged outsider. This is an important line to authentically own in the context of the troubled relationship between city and suburbs due to issues of race, politics, money, and mistrust. Grounding my work in an outsider perspective and often directly targeting outsider audiences, the impulse at the root of my practice is one that seeks to build bridges through exposing prejudices, to acknowledge inequities, and to leverage empathy and our shared humanity as a way to knit back together the fates and relationships of this region.

My work embraces my suburban status, depicting the physical, experiential, and cultural distance of outsiders through its common side effects: stereotyping and emotional ambivalence. Problematic stereotypical tropes of Detroit have been perpetuated regionally, nationally, and internationally and include Detroit as dangerous, lawless, and crime-ridden wasteland; Detroit as postapocalyptic ruin; and Detroit as primitive and uninhabited prairie in need of colonization. In addressing the perpetuation of these problematic tropes, I layer, interrogate, and hold accountable language and images derived from news and media as a way to expose and critique misrepresentations of Detroit. In *Misery Index Series: Greetings from Detroit*, I utilized the criteria of the popular "Most Miserable Cities" click-bait listings to sarcastically exaggerate common tropes of abandonment, crime, misery, and depression associated with the city. In *Composition in "D" Series*, I assembled, through collage, painted fragments of imagery taken directly from popular ruinous photos of the city, decontextualizing, remixing, and producing dramatic and imaginary apocalyptic landscapes. In *Domestic Fragments Series*, I utilized found objects and plaster to create sculptures that both relate to the role of objects as markers of memory and mimic lost artifacts mined from ruins of a fallen civilization.

Across my larger practice, the imagery employed in my work often utilizes architecture as language for discussing urban history, its current challenges, and the hotly contested visions for Detroit's future. As a multidisciplinary artist, I manifest these ideas through works that engage drawing, painting, fibers, sculpture, installation, and community-based practice. What unifies these varied media approaches is a consistent focus on the language of home as an empathetic entry point for the audience. For many, the space of the home and the objects it contains are the root of emotional longing and nostalgia for place. Martin Heidegger writes of humans' shared impulse to build homes, places of dwelling that we become intimately attached to physically and mentally, places we identify with and are able to reflect on past experiences within.[1] The majority of the homes in Detroit's most endangered neighborhoods are recognizable, middle-class, mass-produced architectural types and thus make the work accessible to the shared experiences and latent bodily memory of a wider audience, what Maurice Merleau-Ponty describes

as the "instinctive understanding of where the paths of personal experience intersect with those of others."[2] While the work is rooted in a potentially exclusive and regionally specific experience, through this intersection of memory and experiences it seeks to appeal to many through our collective affinity for belonging and the protective impulse that we share for the people and places we love.

In connecting architecture with people and their lived experiences, my work aims to address the history and current struggles of rust belt communities and the disappearance of a recognizable homeland. Through the recognizable shape of the home, the works stir within the viewer the same emotions of loss and homesickness experienced by the residents of the endangered neighborhoods depicted. The work thus relies on the ability of architectural domestic forms to symbolically connect to the human body and bodily trauma. The creation of visual and physical linkages between architecture and the human form is not new; connections between the two are derived from some of the earliest architectural treatises recorded, including Renaissance thinkers like Leon Battista Alberti and Leonardo da Vinci. In drawing connections between architecture, the portrait, and the mind, Leonardo likened the functions of eyes and windows, describing the human eye as the "window of the soul."[3]

Homesickness Series, an ongoing series of monochromatic ink paintings modeled after tintype photography, frames the facades of individual homes in Detroit as a form of portraiture. If individual depictions of lost or endangered homes can be seen as portraits of the residents they once contained, and if homes are sites and containers of memory, then rendered windows and doors serve as both literal and psychological passageways into the interior of the home and the interior sites of the mind, with its associated lived experiences and memories. In exploring connections between the abandoned home and the human body, Alberti went as far as to make connections between the life cycles of buildings and the life cycles of humans and culture.[4] In *Art and the Home*, Imogen Racz describes Alberti's dismay at the natural decay of buildings and how Alberti saw the failure of architecture as mirroring the failure of humanity.[5] In that way, the cultural, social, and economic distress borne by Detroit's residents can be embodied through the devastating toll on the physical landscape.

Drawing on Alberti's connections between humanity's decline and architectural ruin, my work uses depictions of decaying or lost homes to symbolize the losses of individual, familial, and communal memory that endangered or demolished structures represent. Visually, the inaccessibility or abrupt lack of doors and windows figured in the white voided facades in *Homesickness Series* is emblematic of the inaccessibility of familial and communal memory formed around the site. In addition to illustrating the devastation of generational disinvestment and

abandonment over time, the ruination or harsh absence of the home in these works becomes symbolic of the toll that time and separation can have on memory and community identity. In *Storming the Gates of Paradise*, Rebecca Solnit makes the connection between ruins, absence, and memory explicit, writing that "memory is always incomplete, always imperfect, always falling into ruin; but the ruins themselves, like other traces, are treasures: our links to what came before, our guide to situating ourselves in a landscape of time."[6] Thus the physical removal of homes throughout Detroit and the harsh erasure of the home within my work represent the removal of accessible landmarks of communal memory and history. In this way *Homesickness Series* can be seen as an effort to document what exists, what is disappearing, and what is already unknown in order to communicate, in Solnit's words, that "a city without ruins and traces of age is like a mind without memories."[7]

While my ongoing bodies of work, including *Homesickness Series*, aim to pull viewers into the experience of collective communal grief that the loss of Detroit's neighborhoods represents, the work is charged with my personal longings and loss. The Detroit I physically experienced as a child in the 1980s is an unrecognizably different city from the one captured in books and photographic archives. I have always mourned my inability to reconcile images of crowded parks, bustling street corners, and the densely populated housing districts of Detroit's midcentury heyday with the recovering postindustrial city that it is today. As an experiential outsider, the experience of mourning the devolution of a place you are not from is emotionally complicated given that my lived experience as a suburbanite insulates me from its impact. The stability of the suburbs exempts me from feeling the full weight of homesickness as experienced by those whose homes and neighborhoods have literally disappeared from the soil. My feelings of grief and longing are not rooted in personal experience but instead come from my ability to identify with the city, its identity, and its values and to recognize the important cultural and historical richness of Detroit, a place as worthy of mourning as any other. Borrowing from Merleau-Ponty, who writes of the human process of projecting thoughts and feelings onto places we encounter and identify with, Detroit has become a "homeland of [my] thoughts."[8]

I am part of a generation of required mobility, and geographic detachment from Detroit has intensified my feelings of longing and loss as career pursuits have repeatedly taken me across the Midwest. My deep investment in the story of Detroit for the past two decades and the emotional distress of this detachment can be credited for the melancholic sobriety that permeates my ongoing bodies of work. While the emotional toll of physical distance expressively shapes the work's somber content, it also energizes its production. The process of returning to the

landscape, rendering what remains, and memorializing what has been lost serves as a coping mechanism for my own homesick longing. The process of reengaging the city routinely in the creation of works presents me with an opportunity for return, a return to a meaningful place with a distinct physical character, a rich history, and an identity of shared values. My practice as an artist thus provides me with an opportunity to participate in the telling of the city's story, to knit the conflicting perspectives of outsiders and insiders back together through our shared humanity, and to participate in the documentation of site and memory—what was, what is, and what has been lost.

* * *

Whitney Lea Sage is a multidisciplinary artist from metro Detroit, currently serving as assistant professor of art at North Central College in Naperville, Illinois. Whitney's work has previously been featured exhibitions at the Painting Center, Superfront LA, UICA, and the Muskegon Museum of Art, and will be featured in an upcoming solo exhibition at Ripon College. Whitney's work has been featured in a number of publications including Manifest's *INDA 14*, *WomanArts Quarterly*, *Newfound Journal*, and MoCAD's *Post-Industrial Complex* catalog.

Notes

[1] Martin Heidegger, "Building, Dwelling, Thinking," in *Martin Heidegger: Poetry, Language, Thought,* translated and collected by Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 149, 157.

[2] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (London: Routledge, 2002), xxii. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203994610.

[3] Shirley Neilsen Blum, "The Open Window: A Renaissance View," in *The Window in Twentieth-Century Art*, edited by Suzanne Delehanty (New York: Neuberger Museum, 1986), 9–16.

[4] Caspar Pearson, *Humanism and the Urban World: Leon Battista Alberti and the Renaissance City* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 2011), 26–27.

[5] Imogen Racz, *Art and the Home: Comfort, Alienation, and the Everyday* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2015), 106.

[6] Rebecca Solnit, *Storming the Gates of Paradise* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 352–53. https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520941786 .

[7] Ibid., 354–55.

[8] Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, xi.

Mere Image: Caravaggio, Virtuosity, and *Medusa*'s Averted Eyes

Hana Nikčević

The *Medusa* (Fig. 1) is the only one of Caravaggio's works to which the writer Giovan Battista Marino dedicated an ekphrastic poem.[1] It is thought that Marino saw the work on a 1601 trip to Florence; by that time, the painting had been received in the armoury of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, Ferdinando de' Medici.[2] Collecting a painting in an armoury makes sense, of course, when the painting counts as arms—Caravaggio painted his *Medusa* on a convex shield, and Marino's madrigal engages with just this aspect, addressing the Grand Duke:

> Now what enemies will there be who will not become cold marble in gazing upon, my Lord, in your shield, that Gorgon proud and cruel, in whose hair horribly voluminous vipers make foul and terrifying adornment? But yet! You will have little need for the formidable monster among your arms: for the true Medusa is your valor.[3]

Despite Marino's claim that the "true Medusa" is the Duke of Tuscany's acumen in battle, the poet nevertheless ascribes to Caravaggio's painting the capacity to petrify its onlookers. The "Medusa effect" as an allegory for lifelike sculpture was well known in antiquity—introduced, in fact, by Ovid himself—but the specific way that this conceit resurfaces in early modern poetry extends its meaning to the two-dimensional image, newly exploring the confusion of the boundary between the real and the represented in the practice of image making at large. In

Figure 1 Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, Medusa, *1598, oil on wood, 60 x 55 cm. Image courtesy of Uffizi Gallery, Florence.*

Ovid's tale of Perseus and Medusa, in the first-century CE *Metamorphoses*, Medusa's reflection cannot stun its viewer. In Luigi Groto's 1587 poem "Scoltura di Medusa,"[4] however—the poem thought to be the first in the Renaissance to revive the conceit of Medusa as a sculptor[5]—Medusa's reflection *can* stun the viewer, expressed through the fact that Groto's Medusa is figured as a sculptor of her *own* image: she catches sight of her reflection in a mirror and thus petrifies herself.

Caravaggio's *Medusa* has frequently been commented on with regard to its nature as an image that blurs the line between the real and its representation.[6] I agree with this interpretation, but I would like to suggest that Caravaggio's execution of that theme in this painting is rooted in one formal quality that has thus far gone unconsidered: the *Medusa*'s averted eyes. I propose that Caravaggio likely engaged with the concept of Medusa as a metaphor for virtuosic image-making as measured by lifelikeness, and that he was likely aware, too, of Groto's poem (or simply its conceit, which may precede Groto; we cannot know). I base this suggestion on a number of elements: Caravaggio's known association with Marino; Marino's great interest in Medusa's significance as an allegory of virtuosic image-making, his quotation of Groto's "Scoltura di Medusa," and his suggestion that Caravaggio's Medusa turns its onlookers to "cold marble"; and both men's thematization of their own virtuosity. I suggest, thus, that the *Medusa* thematizes Caravaggio's virtuosity by depicting a Medusa that purports to be equivalent to the

Figure 2 Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, Martha and Mary Magdalene*, 1597/8, oil and tempera on canvas, 100 × 134.5 cm. Image courtesy of Detroit Institute of Arts: 73.268.*

real Medusa's reflection, which, in Groto's conceit, is equivalent to the real Medusa herself; by averting his Medusa's eyes, Caravaggio renders it impossible for a viewer to disprove his Gorgon's—or, rather, his Gorgon-reflection's—power to stun. Groto's introduction of the mirror image that is equivalent to its three-dimensional referent broadened the potential for rendering Medusa's "lifelikeness" in painting: Groto allowed the two-dimensional image to gain in proximity to the real being it represents. Caravaggio thus had only to depict the Gorgon's reflection to produce an image of her that could be equivalent to the "real thing"—perfectly doable in the two-dimensional medium of painting and easily communicated by painting on a shield (Perseus's reflective medium of choice). That Caravaggio's Medusa depicts a reflection is still further supported by the fact that the painting was likely produced in the manner of a self-portrait, rendered with the use of a convex mirror, as depicted in Caravaggio's *Martha and Mary Magdalene* (of 1597/98 and thus contemporary to the *Medusa*) (Fig. 2).[7]

To understand how Caravaggio may have made his representational choices, it is necessary to consider the potential visual and textual precedents to which he could have referred. Theories about this tend to converge around one text: Giorgio Vasari's *Life* of Leonardo da Vinci. Vasari recounts two tales of

Leonardo that are frequently conflated. First, he writes of how the artist's father, ser Piero da Vinci, was asked by one of the peasants on his farm whether he knew of an artist in Florence who could paint on a round shield; Piero transferred the shield to Leonardo, who readied it for painting and then decided that he would adorn the shield such that it would "terrify anyone who saw it and produce the same effect as the head of Medusa." Vasari elaborates:

> To do what he wanted Leonardo carried into a room of his own, which no one ever entered except himself, a number of green and other kinds of lizards, crickets, serpents, butterflies, locusts, bats, and various strange creatures of this nature; from all these he took and assembled different parts to create a fearsome and horrible monster which emitted a poisonous breath and turned the air to fire. He depicted the creature emerging from the dark cleft of a rock, belching forth venom from its open throat, fire from its eyes and smoke from its nostrils in so macabre a fashion that the effect was altogether monstrous and horrible. Leonardo took so long over the work that the stench of the dead animals in his room became unbearable, although he himself failed to notice because of his great love of painting.[8]

This shield, Vasari writes, then made it into the collection of the Duke of Milan. This story is often conflated with the following account:

> The fancy came to [Leonardo] to paint a picture in oils of the head of a Medusa, with the head attired with a coil of snakes, the most strange and extravagant invention that could ever be imagined; but since it was a work that took time, it remained unfinished, as happened with almost all his things. It is among the rare works of art in the Palace of Duke Cosimo.[9]

So, for example, when Avigdor W. G. Posèq suggests that Leonardo's Medusa was "presumably" still in the collection of the Duke of Milan at the time of Caravaggio's early apprenticeship to the Milanese painter Simone Peterzano,[10] he, as Sharon Gregory states, is actually (if unknowingly) referring "to the shield with the dragon or *animalaccio*, for Vasari states that the unfinished Medusa itself was in the collection of Duke Cosimo."[11]

Figure 3 Cornelis Cort (1536–1578), Head of Medusa *, engraving, 334 x 226 mm. Image courtesy of Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, Brussels.*

John Varriano makes the case that Caravaggio's *Medusa* was produced in dialogue with Leonardo's unfinished painting and suggests that the "off-centered stare of the Caravaggio" is "clearly anticipate[d]" in Leonardo's painting—this Varriano determines because he believes that an engraving by Cornelis Cort (Fig. 3) is "uncompromisingly Leonardesque" and based on the unfinished Medusa.[12] Varriano's argument alone is not necessarily convincing, but what *is* suggestive is that the Cort engraving is identical to a circa 1540 drawing of Medusa by Francesco Salviati (Fig. 4). As Mary Garrard writes, "The attribution to Salviati and dating of this unpublished drawing in the Indianapolis Museum is that of the museum curators," noting that the curator Martin Krause pointed out to her the drawing's "relationship to the engraving of Medusa's head by Cornelius [sic] Cort, for which the drawing was undoubtedly the source."[13] Salviati's drawing may, in fact, be based on Leonardo's Medusa—from 1543 to 1548, Salviati worked at the court of Cosimo de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany,[14] who owned Leonardo's Medusa. In this case, Cort's engraving *would*, in being based on Salviati's drawing, preserve the image of Leonardo's Medusa (and the dating of the drawing to 1540 would need to be amended by at least three years).[15]

Figure 4 Francesco Salviati, Medusa*, c. 1540, red chalk on off-white laid paper. Image courtesy of Indianapolis Museum of Art: 47.13.*

There is, however, no evidence that Caravaggio saw Leonardo's painting (or Salviati's drawing or Cort's engraving). Suggesting that it is unlikely that Caravaggio ever laid eyes on Leonardo's Gorgon, Sharon Gregory writes that it seems most likely that the link between Caravaggio's *Medusa* and Leonardo's Medusa is to be found in Caravaggio's own melding of the aforementioned two accounts in Vasari's *Life* of Leonardo.[16] When he painted his *Medusa*, Caravaggio was residing in the household of Cardinal Francesco Maria del Monte; the finished *Medusa* was sent by Del Monte to Ferdinando de' Medici, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, in, most likely, 1598. This connection might suggest that Caravaggio's painting was based on Leonardo's, but Gregory states that it is more likely that Caravaggio referred solely to Vasari's text. Spare though Vasari's description of Leonardo's Medusa may be ("a picture in oils of the head of a Medusa, with the head attired with a coil of snakes"), it gains in significance through occurring after the much more detailed account of Leonardo's experience painting a composite dragon-like creature, "most horrible and terrifying," intended to produce "the same effect as once did the head of Medusa" and, crucially, rendered on a shield.[17] Caravaggio "must immediately have recognized the suitability of the shield support to the subject of the beheaded Medusa," Gregory suggests, noting that conflations of Vasari's descriptions are no mere Renaissance phenomenon—modern scholarship preserves

Figure 5 Andrea del Verrocchio (attributed to), Medusa head, c. 1480, from terracotta relief, Palazzo at Via dell'Arco de' Ginnasi, Rome (now destroyed). Image courtesy of Mary D. Garrard.

the trend, as, for example, when, like Posèq, "Catherine Puglisi asserts that Vasari describes Leonardo's Medusa as 'blowing poison from her open mouth, smoke from her nose, and fire from her eyes'—in fact, this is how Vasari describes Leonardo's *animalaccio*, not his Medusa."[18]

If Caravaggio *did* see Leonardo's Medusa, and Salviati/Cort preserved its appearance and thus allows us to suggest that Caravaggio took his *Medusa*'s averted eyes from Leonardo's image, it must still be noticed that Caravaggio's *Medusa* significantly diverges from Leonardo's model. Leonardo's is alive (her neck is intact), while Caravaggio's is decapitated; Leonardo's looks up, while Caravaggio's looks down—indeed, emphasizing her decapitation. The decapitation alludes to Perseus, explaining the shield and thus indicating that Caravaggio's image depicts a reflection; this notable departure from Leonardo's leads me to suggest that, even if Leonardo inspired Caravaggio's averted eyes, Caravaggio's *Medusa*'s slanted gaze should still be read as a choice on the part of the artist (as opposed to mere transcription from Leonardo) and in its context of representing a mirror image.

Figure 6 Andrea del Verrocchio, Giuliano de' Medici*, c. 1475/1478, terracotta. Image courtesy of National Gallery of Art (Washington, D.C.): 1937.1.127.*

This is also evident in light of the full corpus of visual references that could have been available to the artist. Varriano states that Leonardo's *Medusa* is the first recorded portrayal of the Gorgon in the Renaissance, but certain other images do precede Caravaggio's.[19] A terracotta relief on the Palazzo at Via dell'Arco de' Ginnasi, Rome, attributed to Andrea del Verrocchio and dated to around 1480, depicts Medusa in a frontal scream (Fig. 5); the same artist's bust of Giuliano de' Medici, from the 1470s, sports a similarly screaming Gorgon on his chest (Fig. 6). Michelangelo's Gorgon-head frieze from 1524–34, at the Medici Chapel in the Basilica of San Lorenzo in Florence, directs its many Gorgon gazes at numerous potential viewers (Fig. 7); if Caravaggio saw the ancient (be it Greek or Roman) Tazza Farnese, he would have encountered the same image: a tortured, frontal gaze and a gaping mouth (Fig. 8). Benvenuto Cellini's 1549–72 portrait bust of Cosimo de' Medici includes a Medusa, frontal albeit somewhat calmer, on the Grand Duke's chest (Fig. 9); Cellini's *Perseus with the Head of Medusa* prefigured this calmness, depicting Medusa's head with its eyes nearly closed (Fig. 10). Raphael's *The School of Athens*, from 1509–11, features a Gorgoneion on Athena's shield; although Raphael turns the shield on an angle, Medusa is frontal on the shield itself (Fig. 11).

Figure 7 Michelangelo (executed by an assistant), "Gorgon Head Frieze" (detail), 1524–1534, Florence, San Lorenzo, Medici Chapel. Image courtesy of Mary D. Garrard.

Posèq suggests that Caravaggio was inspired by works from antiquity: in Caravaggio's images, "numerous poses and gestures—sometimes entire configurations—are borrowed from Roman statuary, which at that time was ascribed to great Hellenistic masters."[20] Del Monte, in whose household Caravaggio lived when he painted his *Medusa*, was reportedly "a discriminating collector of antique sculpture."[21] Posèq does not specify whether it is likely that Caravaggio encountered the Tazza Farnese, but he does note that the Tazza and Caravaggio's *Medusa* bear a significant resemblance.[22]

Most depictions of the Gorgon that precede Caravaggio's render her with her eyes looking directly out; if Caravaggio had access to ancient sources, there, too, would he have encountered solely frontal Medusas. It seems, thus, that Caravaggio chose to depict his Medusa with her eyes averted in contrast to the ancient and early Renaissance adherence to frontality; Leonardo's Medusa is the only potential precursor, but—if Caravaggio did indeed see it, and if Salviati/Cort do indeed preserve it—Caravaggio's *Medusa* still differs from that image, and the direction of the eyes is changed. While increased emotional affect was likely the artist's primary motivation,[23] I suggest that, on the basis of Caravaggio's association with Marino, another, additional reason might be identified: Caravaggio averted the eyes of his Medusa in order to communicate his own technical skill, producing an image that maintains its own fiction—that the Medusa depicted can stun—in keeping with a new early modern understanding of the Medusean myth that links the power of her *image* to petrify with artistic virtuosity.

Figure 8 "Tazza Farnese," sardonyx cameo bowl (exterior), 1st C. BCE, Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale. Image courtesy of Mary D. Garrard.

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* offer the earliest account of Perseus beheading Medusa, whose decapitation is enabled by Perseus looking not at Medusa herself but instead at her reflection in a bronze shield supplied by Athena. As per Ovid:

> Now tell us,
> Heroic Perseus, how you slew the Gorgon. . . .
>
> Rough woods and jagged rocks, to the Gorgons' home.
> On all sides, through the fields, along the highways,
> He saw the forms of men and beasts, made stone
> By one look at Medusa's face. He also
> Had seen that face, but only in reflection
> From the bronze shield his left hand bore; he struck
> While snakes and Gorgon both lay slunk in slumber,
> Severed the head, and from that mother's bleeding
> Were born the swift-winged Pegasus and his brother.[24]

Figure 9 Benvenuto Cellini, Bust of Cosimo I*, 1546-47, bronze. Image courtesy of Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence.*

As Caroline van Eck writes, the landscape leading to the Gorgons' home "is described as a statue garden, full of the petrified victims of [the Gorgons'] gaze." The metaphor of the statue garden—and, thus, of the Gorgons as sculptors—is based not solely on this one passage, and on the fact of Ovid envisioning the Gorgons' "grounds" in a way that might coincidentally recall a sculpture garden. Rather, in the later episode wherein Perseus battles Phineus, Ovid describes the victims of petrifaction (effected by Medusa's disembodied head, now wielded by Perseus) in words undeniably evocative of statuary. Van Eck highlights: "Thescelus became a statue, poised for a javelin throw"; "there he stood; a flinty man, unmoving, a monument in marble"; "Astyages, in wonder, was a wondering marble."[25] Referring to Ovid's Medusa as "Pygmalion's dark double," Van Eck states that, of the stories in the *Metamorphoses*, "two among them explore the precarious borders between a lifeless image and the living being it represents, the viewer's desire that an image lives, and fear of its powers: those of Pygmalion and Medusa."[26] The aforementioned Astyages is "in wonder" because he mistakenly brought his sword down on a marble man, "mistaking rock for flesh, for living flesh."[27] If the metric of technical skill in image making is lifelikeness, and it

Figure 10 Benvenuto Cellini, Perseus with the Head of Medusa *(detail), 1545-1554, Florence, Piazza della Signoria. Image courtesy of Piazza della Signoria.*

certainly was in antiquity,[28] Ovid characterizes Medusa's stunning power as that of not simply a sculptor but a singularly accomplished sculptor.

Van Eck theorizes the Medusean myth as an allegory for image making. Of the three (alleged) metaphors of image making present in the Ovidian myth of Medusa, Van Eck writes:

> First, the Gorgon's petrifying gaze, changing living beings into lifeless statues; second, Medusa's figuration on the reflecting mirror of Perseus; and third, *the petrifaction resulting from a confrontation with that mirror image.* These three kinds of figuration, or image making, all thematize the agency of art and the dangers of looking. . . . Underlying these Medusean paradigms of figuration and petrifaction is an uneasy awareness that the relation between a living being and its image is not a matter of harmless distancing or abstraction through representation in another medium. It is an ambiguous, precarious relation, *in which inanimate images turn out to possess the same agency as the living being they represent.*[29]

Figure 11 Raphael, The School of Athens*, detail, 1509–11, Apostolic Palace, Vatican City. Image courtesy of Musei Vaticani.*

The italics are my own, highlighting what are here unidentified as early modern interpretations of the Medusean myth. The second italicized sentence holds true in the case of Ovid's Pygmalion, but it is less convincingly present in the context of Ovid's narrative of Perseus and Medusa. At no point do Medusa's petrified victims (re)gain life in the way Pygmalion's Galatea does; while Pygmalion's narrative explicitly attests to the presence of life in a sculpture, Medusa's narrative only suggests it—what was once alive certainly still bears the formal trace of its erstwhile animacy (recall Astyages's misguided blow), but there is no movement, voice, or reversion to flesh to unambiguously affirm the lingering presence of life. More important, an episode of "petrifaction resulting from a confrontation with that mirror image" is not only absent from the *Metamorphoses* but radically opposed to the events that do occur:

> [Perseus] saw the forms of men and beasts, made stone
> By one look at Medusa's face. He also
> Had seen that face, but only in reflection
> From the bronze shield his left hand bore. . .[30]

Ovid could not be clearer on this point: Medusa's reflection in a mirror does not cause petrifaction. Medusa's gaze is powerful, but Medusa's reflection—her image—is utterly powerless. This is the very crux of the infamous episode of decapitation: the fact that Perseus is able to behead Medusa is a direct result of the fact that her image has no power.

The conceit of Medusa's "functional" reflection, the image with stunning power, as articulated through the Gorgon's self-petrifaction by regarding herself in a mirror—that is, the conceit that actually represents Van Eck's idea of "images that turn out to possess the same agency as the living being they represent"—does, however, occur in early modern poetry, as previously mentioned.[31] The conceit is identified by Irving Lavin and Marc Fumaroli as having most likely originated in an ekphrastic poem from Groto's 1587 *Delle rime*:[32]

> Non è scolptura di colui, che'n sasso
> Cangiava questa, ma Medusa stessa.
> Però tien, chi quà giungi, il viso basso!
> Se di stupor non vuoi cangiarti in essa,
> Mentre a questa parete, il corpo lasso
> Appoggiav'ella, vi rimase impressa
> Che poi, che gli occhi in uno specchio tenne,
> Per se stessa mirar, sasso diviene.[33]

The poem describes a particularly convincing sculpture of Medusa; as translated by Lavin, "This is not a sculpture by him who changed it into stone, but Medusa herself. Looking into a mirror to regard herself, she turned to stone."[34] Fumaroli suggests that this poem was published in 1610, but the poem is included in an edition of *Delle Rime* published in 1587.[35] Evidently, Groto's poem is intended to communicate the sculptor's skill—just as Ovid writes that Medusa's victims as sculptures are mistaken to be real men (confusing "rock for flesh, for living flesh"), so, too, does Groto suggest that the sculpture of Medusa in question is so lifelike that it can only have been made by Medusa's petrifying power itself—thus praising not only the lifelikeness of the sculpture but the lifelikeness of the mirror image, producing a two-pronged but clearly harmonious conceit: the virtuosic artwork and the powerful image.

Lavin and Fumaroli suggest that Groto's poem laid the foundation for Marino's meditations on Medusa included in his 1619/20 *La galeria*, an anthology of poems devoted to artworks. In Marino's first poem about a sculpture of Medusa, the sculpture itself speaks (here translated by Lavin): "I know not if I was sculpted by mortal chisel, or if by gazing into a clear glass my own glance made me so."[36]

Clearly, here, too, the conceit of a Medusa that petrifies herself by regarding her reflection is invoked to praise the sculptor, whose virtuosity is identified on the basis of the lifelikeness of his art; again, however, it is not solely the sculpture that gains agency, but Medusa's reflection. The two-dimensional image of Medusa can now be fully equivalent to the being it represents—if the image in question is a reflection.

La galeria was first conceived in the years in which Caravaggio and Marino knew each other; in Rome, Elizabeth Cropper states, they became friends and admirers of each other's work.[37] *La galeria*, indeed, contains that aforementioned poem about Caravaggio's *Medusa* in particular: "Now what enemies will there be who will not become cold marble in gazing upon, my Lord, in your shield that Gorgon proud and cruel in whose hair horribly voluminous vipers make foul and terrifying adornment?"[38]

Evidently, Marino was familiar with Caravaggio's *Medusa* and ascribed to it, if metaphorically, the petrifying power of Medusa herself. Considered alongside his other poetic treatments of images of Medusa and the fact that those likely took inspiration from Groto's "Scoltura di Medusa," however, the petrifying power of the image might carry greater significance. Marino's other poems that reference Medusa, as illuminated by Cropper, do so in order to engage with the idea of Medusa as an allegory for virtuosic sculpture. In addition to the poem excerpted above, Marino includes one poem about a beautiful sculpture of a woman, writing: "The figure portrayed seems like Medusa to me. The sculpture is made in such a way that it changes the limbs of others. Already, already, I feel myself changing little by little, outside all stone, and inside in flames. . . . And stupor so deprives me of sense that I am almost the statue, and she seems alive." The "Medusa effect" in sculpture, therefore, links lifelikeness with a power to petrify.[39]

Caravaggio's first version of his *Medusa* (there are two, both on shields) is now named the *Murtula* in reference to the Italian poet Gaspare Murtola, who, in a madrigal of 1603, wrote of the painting: "Flee, lest awe of her eyes transfix you, turning you forthwith to stone."[40] Petrifaction as it indicates amazement, then, was undeniably an interpretation applied to Caravaggio's *Medusa*, but I would suggest that, in his painting, Caravaggio hints at the *real* capacity of his image to petrify, engaging with the "Medusa effect" as articulated by Groto and, later, Marino—the image of Medusa so lifelike, so virtuosically rendered, that it retains the power to turn onlookers to stone. If we consider that Groto introduced the conceit of the Medusean reflection with the power to stun but a few years prior to Caravaggio's production of his *Medusa,* and that Marino seems to have known of Groto's poem, deployed its conceit, and been good friends with Caravaggio, it seems, at least, not unlikely that Caravaggio, too, knew of Groto's poem. Furthermore, Cropper states

Figure 12 Red-figure eye-cup, c. 580 BCE; New York, Metropolitan Museum: 14.136. Image courtesy of Metropolitan Museum.

that "Marino's undeniable thematization of his own virtuosity . . . lends support to the view, often expressed but never fully explicated, that Caravaggio also made the expression of the power of his own art into a conscious theme of his painting."[41] My suggestion is that Caravaggio depicts his *Medusa*'s eyes averted—in contrast to nearly all the visual comparanda he might have encountered at the time—expressly to "thematize his own virtuosity" by maintaining the fiction that his painted Medusa possesses the same power to petrify as does the real Medusa. I suggest this in relation to Rainer Mack's theorization of how the ancient, frontal Medusa functioned, a model that Caravaggio seems to have deliberately avoided.

Ancient Greek images of Medusa were, indeed, nearly always frontal. As a singular exception to the contemporaneous pictorial convention of profile views, the method must have been systematic; indeed, it applied in every context of Medusa's depiction. The Gorgoneion on Athena's aegis; a shield device for a warrior; a head clutched by Perseus; a Gorgon midsprint; a pediment sculpture; a tondo or exterior design on a symposiast's cup—in all these cases, Medusa meets her onlookers' eyes (Figs. 12–13 for a kylix and a roof tile).[42] The aforementioned Tazza Farnese similarly offers a direct glare.[43] The standard interpretation holds that these images of Medusa are apotropaic, acting as agents of protection for their bearers;

Figure 13 Terracotta painted gorgoneion antefix (roof tile), archaic, c. 540 BCE, Greek or South Italian or Tarentine; New York: Metropolitan Museum: 39.11.9. Image courtesy of Metropolitan Museum.

this makes sense, of course, in the context of Athena's aegis or a shield device. The breadth of appropriate contexts for the glaring Gorgoneion, however—not just battlefield, but drinking party, too—suggests that its intended effects transcend the inspiration of fear and intimidation (indeed, some have even suggested comic connotations).

In his article "Facing Down Medusa (an Aetiology of the Gaze)," Mack seeks an explanation for the presumably desirable disjunction between the fiction of the ancient Medusean image (its gaze stuns you) and the inherent practice of its making and viewing (its gaze does *not* stun you). Understanding Medusa to be fundamentally a catalyst in the Perseus narrative, Mack suggests that these ancient frontal images communicate Medusa in the context of her definitive role in the context of Perseus's hero narrative: "The hero's critical victory is represented by Perseus's defeat of Medusa."[44] Thus Medusa is not simply a monster: she is a monster to be defeated*,* and she is defeated by way of her opponent, Perseus, claiming the position of the subject, not object, of the gaze—first, by looking at Medusa via a reflection, and then, by taking possession of the Gorgon's head and its petrifying power, using it as his own weapon, his own gaze.[45] As we know, Ovid's is the earliest recorded version that details the defeat: Perseus avoids looking at Medusa

Figure 14 Red-figure pelike, c. 450–440 BCE, attributed to Polygnotos, New York, Metropolitan Museum: 45.11.1. Image courtesy of Metropolitan Museum.

by viewing not her but her reflection in his bronze shield; Medusa becomes an image, and Perseus proceeds to take possession of her agential powers of gazing. This, Mack says, is the impetus behind the "failed" maintenance of the "fiction of the image" in frontal images of Medusa: the viewer is cast as Perseus.

Although not mentioned by Mack, three examples are known to me of nonfrontal ancient Gorgons: a pelike attributed to Polygnotos, a bell krater in Boston, and a hydria at the British Museum (Figs. 14–16).[46] Exceptions though these objects might seem to be, they quite literally prove the rule. If Mack is correct in his interpretation of ancient frontal Medusas, and the frontal composition was, indeed, intended to cast the viewer in the role of Perseus, then these three Medusas with their eyes averted or closed are depicted as such quite deliberately: Perseus himself is depicted in each of these scenes, thus negating the viewer's ability to take on the role of the hero. Perseus's presence (as well as the fact that he or Athena is depicted holding the head, or Medusa is depicted pre-decapitation) also indicates that the Gorgons depicted on these vases are not shown in their role as a reflection triumphantly viewed by Perseus. Instead, these are *actual* Medusas— Medusas with the power to stun. In this case, then, because the viewer cannot assume the role of Perseus, the fiction of the image is *not* negated.

My suggestion, then, is that these ancient vase painters could be said to prefigure Caravaggio, and that it is through Mack's hypothesis about how ancient images of Medusas "worked" that we might understand how Caravaggio's *Medusa* functioned: if the frontal Medusa negates the fiction of its image, a straightforward contrast suggests that the Medusa with eyes averted *maintains* the fiction of its image. In other words, the Medusa with whom you cannot make eye contact is the Medusa whose powers you cannot disprove. Identifying that from Groto's poem

Figure 15 Apulian red-figure bell krater, c. 400–385 BCE, attributed to Tarporley Painter, Boston Museum of Fine Arts: 1970.237. Image courtesy of Metropolitan Museum.

onward, the image, the reflection, of Medusa was newly conceived of as an image that—in Van Eck's words—possessed the same agency as the living being it represented, and noting that this deliberate shift from the powerless image to the powerful image was produced in the context of praising artistic skill measured by lifelikeness, we can interpret the averted eyes of Caravaggio's *Medusa* as follows: in maintaining the fiction of the image, that the Medusa depicted can stun, images of Medusa that deny the viewer eye contact maintain the fiction that their artist is so technically gifted as to have been able to produce an image equivalent to the living being it represents (with, in Caravaggio's case, the mediating function of the mirror, the image found within which is allowed by Groto to be equivalent to the being it represents). As stated above: the Medusa with whom you cannot make eye contact is the Medusa whose powers you cannot disprove, which, in turn, situates the artist as one whose virtuosic technical skill you cannot disprove.

Cropper uses her analysis of the connection between Caravaggio and Marino to arrive at a similar conclusion about Caravaggio's *Medusa*: "Destroying the distance between the model and its copy that representation respects, [Caravaggio] creates a simulacrum comparable to Marino's beautiful statue."[47] In other words, she says of Caravaggio's *Medusa* what Van Eck says that the Medusean allegory suggests of the relationship between the real and the representation: "It is an ambiguous,

Figure 16 Red-figure hydria, c. 460 BCE, attributed to Pan Painter, London, British Museum: 1873,0820.352. Image courtesy of British Museum.

precarious relation, in which inanimate images turn out to possess the same agency as the living being they represent."[48] Cropper subsequently suggests that "Marino's epitaph for Caravaggio" also "expresses this shocking power. Death and Nature, he writes, conspired to kill Caravaggio, the one because he brought the dead alive with his brushes, the other because she was conquered in every image that Caravaggio created rather than painted ("da te creata, e non dipinta"). Caravaggio's figures, even in action, are creations, not imitations; they are statues, models, simulacra."[49] Cropper's interpretation of Caravaggio's intentions is fundamentally equivalent to my own, but the painting's formal qualities on which she establishes her reading differ. I would suggest that this is because Cropper assumes the accuracy of Louis Marin's reading of the *Medusa*—she terms it "brilliant"[50]—which, I believe, is limited precisely in that Marin is not aware of the divergence between Ovid's conception of the Medusean image and the later Groto/Marino understanding (i.e., the powerless image vs. the powerful image).

Marin, in his 1977 *To Destroy Painting*, reads Caravaggio's *Medusa* as an image representing two different moments in the Perseus–Medusa narrative. The first moment is that of what he calls "the story's represented 'content': Medusa is stupefied and turned into a statue by her own reflection. The singular potency of her

own gaze is applied intransitively to herself, reflecting itself and thereby producing its own petrifaction. The first moment represented in the painting, then, is the moment of this singular metamorphosis, the moment when the Gorgon's violence is immobilized in its very expression, imprinting itself on itself."[51] He qualifies this metamorphosis as a transformation of temporality: the "sculptural moment," the "most furtive, infinitesimal instant of time" that is simultaneously "the most permanent moment of all."[52] The second "moment" is the more durational event of the Gorgon's presence on a shield: the "ornamental or decorative moment," when "the mirror, Perseus's defensive weapon, becomes a shield bearing an image of Medusa who is ready to go on repeating her deadly act."[53]

While it might be said that Marin makes profitable use of the *Medusa* as a crucible for thinking through various theories, techniques, and effects related to representation and painting, his explanation of the Medusa as a multitemporal image is unnecessarily convoluted. He suggests that his reading is supported through reference to other contemporary depictions of the Gorgon, as an example of which he offers Annibale Carracci's Farnese Palace fresco of Perseus decapitating Medusa. Marin writes that, in this fresco, "Athena is shown holding up Perseus's shield like a mirror, while Perseus, positioned on one side, looks at the image—but not directly. Holding Medusa's head by the serpents, he aims his blow by keeping track of the head in the mirror."[54] The same issue arises in this interpretation as did in Marin's interpretation of Caravaggio's *Medusa*: in the latter, the shield both produces an image that can petrify *and* functions as "Perseus's defensive weapon," while, in the former, Carracci's Perseus reportedly both does and does not look at the image in the shield. One look at Carracci's painting, however, makes it clear that the complications of Marin's description are unnecessary: Perseus is, very simply, looking directly—indeed, intently—at the shield.

What appears to be the issue is that Carracci's fresco illustrates the Medusa–Perseus episode precisely as it transpired in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, depicting the shield as facilitating the powerless mirror image of Medusa, but Marin is unaware that there are two radically different Medusa–Perseus narratives: Ovid's version and the Groto/Marino version. In the former, the defensive potential for the shield is rooted in the fact that Medusa's image is powerless; in the latter, her image/reflection in the shield can stun. In the case of Carracci's fresco, Marin attempts to read a straightforward depiction of Ovid's narrative as a depiction of the Groto/Marino narrative; in the case of Caravaggio, in assuming that the Groto/Marino narrative is the only narrative, Marin neglects to consider the conditions under which that narrative arose and, thus, how those conditions illuminate what the narrative suggests for contemporaneous representations of Medusa. This is to say: Caravaggio's *Medusa* does not need to depict two separate moments in

order to produce an image that conflates the representation with the real and thus vaunt its creator's representational powers. It is unlikely that Caravaggio's *Medusa* is supposed to represent Medusa when on Athena's aegis, because that Medusa is always frontal and is, presumably, not garishly bloody; she is also not shown at a moment when "her own gaze is applied intransitively to herself," petrifying herself, because she is clearly not looking at her own reflection (to say nothing of the fact that Marin explains that Caravaggio's *Medusa* is still of flesh and not stone because the painting depicts the previously unheard-of moment "between" gaze and petrifaction).[55] Instead, the shield-shaped mount alone allows Caravaggio to conflate the real with the representation, engaging Groto's conceit of the reflection with petrifying power: Caravaggio affects at having reproduced Perseus's shield, with the reflection of Medusa evident within it, and, in averting her eyes, renders it impossible for the viewer to disprove her power to petrify. In this way, Caravaggio conflates the representation with the real: his painting is so well executed, he implies, that he painted a Medusa with the same stunning capacity as the Gorgon's own reflection, which, in turn, is equivalent—thanks to Groto—to the real Medusa herself. Here, indeed, Caravaggio might be seen to conflate Vasari's two accounts of Leonardo's painting: an image rendered on a shield, promising "the same effect as once did the head of Medusa."

<p align="center">* * *</p>

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Notes

[1] Mina Gregori, "Caravaggio's First 'Medusa,'" in *The First Medusa: Caravaggio*, edited by Ermanno Zoffili (Milan: 5 Continents Editions, 2011), 13.
[2] Ibid., 17.

[3] Elizabeth Cropper, "The Petrifying Art: Marino's Poetry and Caravaggio," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 26 (1991): 204, https://doi.org/10.2307/1512912.

[4] Luigi Groto, *Delle rime di Luigi Groto, cieco d'Hadria, nuovamente ristampate, & ricorrette dal medesimo Auttore* (Venice: appresso Fabio & Agostino Zoppini fratelli, 1587), 138.

[5] Marc Fumaroli, "La *Galeria* de Marino et la Galerie Farnese: Épigrammes et oeuvres d'art profanes vers 1600," in *Les Carrache et les décors profanes: Actes du colloque de Rome (2–4 octobre 1986)* (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1988), 174, www.persee.fr/doc/efr_0000-0000_1988_act_106_1_3291.

[6] See, e.g., Louis Marin, *To Destroy Painting* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Cropper, "Petrifying Art"; Hal Foster, "Medusa and the Real," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 44 (2003): 181–90, www.jstor.org/stable/20167613; https://doi.org/10.1086/resv44n1ms20167613; and Michael Fried, "Thoughts on Caravaggio," *Critical Inquiry* 24, no. 1 (1997): 13–56, www.jstor.org/stable/1344158, https://doi.org/10.1086/448866.

[7] The idea that Caravaggio's *Medusa* is a self-portrait is common: see Walter Friedlaender, *Caravaggio Studies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1955), 84; Rudolf Wittkower, *Art and Architecture in Italy, 1600–1750* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1958), 22, 335n10; and Matteo Marangoni, "Note sul Caravaggio alla mostra del Sei e Settecento," *Bollettino d'arte*, no. 5 (1922): 226. Sybille Ebert-Schifferer helpfully suggests the artist's potential use of the convex mirror and that mirror's depiction in *Martha and Mary Magdalene*. Ebert-Schifferer is also one of very few authors who point out that Medusa's reflection cannot (or, rather, originally could not) petrify the viewer. See Sybille Ebert-Schifferer, *Caravaggio: The Artist and His Work* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2012), 104–5.

[8] Jurgen Pieters, "The Gaze of Medusa and the Practice of the Historian: Rubens and Huygens," in *Speaking with the Dead: Explorations in Literature and History* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), https://doi.org/10.3366/edinburgh/9780748615889.003.0003.

[9] Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the most Eminent Painters, Sculptors & Architects*, translated by Gaston du C. De Vere (London: Macmillan and the Medici Society, 1912), para. 10, eBooks@Adelaide, University of Adelaide.

[10] Avigdor W. G. Posèq, "Caravaggio and the Antique," *Artibus et Historiae* 11, no. 21 (1990): 158, https://doi.org/10.2307/1483388.

[11] Sharon Gregory, "Caravaggio and Vasari's 'Lives,'" *Artibus et Historiae* 32, no. 64 (2011): 189, www.jstor.org/stable/41479760.

[12] John Varriano, *Caravaggio: The Art of Realism* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), 24.

[13] Mary D. Garrard, "Michelangelo and the Gaze," *Artibus et Historiae* 77, no. 39 (2018): 227.

[14] Janet Cox-Rearick, "Friendly Rivals: Bronzino and Salviati at the Medici Court, 1543–48," *Master Drawings* 43, no. 3 (2005): 293, www.jstor.org/stable/20444412.

[15] Obviously, this point desires further inquiry. The Indianapolis Museum of Art's online item information for Salviati's drawing of Medusa does not explain the reasoning behind its estimated date, so there is no clarification as to why it is dated prior to Salviati's employment in the court of Cosimo de' Medici. The drawing's link to Cort's engraving is noted, but Leonardo's Medusa is not mentioned. It is not clear, therefore, whether (1) the IMA curators are simply not aware of the potential connection between Salviati's drawing and Leonardo's Medusa or (2) they have looked into the matter and found the connection impossible or unlikely; similarly, it is unclear whether they somewhat arbitrarily dated the drawing to 1540, or whether 1543–48 would be just as plausible. (It was not possible to pursue this within the scope of this essay, but further research will be undertaken.)

[16] Gregory, "Caravaggio and Vasari's 'Lives,'" 172.

[17] Giorgio Vasari, *The Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects* (New York: Random House, 2007), 233, 232, 232.

[18] Gregory, "Caravaggio and Vasari's 'Lives,'" 172.

[19] Varriano, *Caravaggio*, 24.

[20] Posèq, "Caravaggio and the Antique," 149.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid., 158.

[23] Paul Barolsky notes—accurately, I think—that Caravaggio's *Medusa* is significant for its Gorgon's self-awareness (see "The Ambiguity of Caravaggio's 'Medusa,'" *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 32, no. 3 [2013]: 28, www.jstor.org/stable/23392422), https://doi.org/10.1086/sou.32.3.23392422; i.e., Medusa is shown conscious of her death, communicated by the fact that her eyes are averted toward her severed, bleeding neck. This is also true of Peter Paul Rubens's *Medusa* (1618). Considering Maria H. Loh's lens of "early modern horror" ("Introduction: Early Modern Horror," *Oxford Art Journal* 34, no. 3 [2011]: 321–33, https://www.jstor.org/stable/41415621), https://doi.org/10.1093/oxartj/kcr040; the fact that Rubens's *Medusa* was kept behind a curtain to increase its dramatic effect (see Ulrich Heinen, "Huygens, Rubens, and Medusa: Reflecting the Passions in Paintings, with Some Considerations of Neuroscience in Art History,"

Nederlands   Kunsthistorisch   Jaarboek   60   [2010]:   153, https://doi.org/10.1163/22145966-90000758); and Thijs Weststeijn's writing on the "moving image," the quality of *beweeglijkheid,* and the idea of the transmission of a painted individual's passions to the viewer (*The Visible World: Samuel van Hoogstraten's Art Theory and the Legitimation of Painting in the Dutch Golden Age* [Amsterdam: Amsterdam   University   Press,   2008],   182–197), https://doi.org/10.5117/9789089640277; I would suggest that the averted eyes in both Caravaggio's and Rubens's paintings of Medusa could be *fundamentally* attributed to the artists' desires to increase their paintings' effects of horror and affective potentials (if the Salviati/Cort image preserves Leonardo's Medusa, and Caravaggio did indeed see Leonardo's painting, this would also explain why Caravaggio changed the direction of the eyes). It is Caravaggio's specific link to Marino and proposed thematization of his own virtuosity that leads me to suggest that his Medusa's averted eyes *also* communicate his own artistic skill.

[24] Ovid, *Metamorphoses,* as excerpted in Marjorie B. Garber and Nancy J. Vickers, *The Medusa Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 35.

[25] Caroline van Eck, "The Petrifying Gaze of Medusa: Ambivalence, Explexis, and the Sublime," *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* 8, no. 2 (2016), para. 20, https://doi.org/10.5092/jhna.2016.8.2.3.

[26] Ibid., paras. 26, 18.

[27] Ovid, *Metamorphoses,* as excerpted in Garber and Vickers, *Medusa Reader,* 38.

[28] Pliny, for example, praises Praxiteles's son Cephisodotus by stating that, in his works, "the fingers have all the appearance of being impressed upon real flesh rather than upon marble" (*Natural History* 36.4).

[29] Van Eck, "Petrifying Gaze," para. 22.

[30] Ovid, *Metamorphoses,* as excerpted in Garber and Vickers, *Medusa Reader,* 38.

[31] Van Eck, "Petrifying Gaze," para. 22.

[32] Fumaroli, "La *Galeria* de Marino," 173–74; and Irving Lavin, "Bernini's Bust of the Medusa: An Awful Pun," in *Visible Spirit: The Art of Gianlorenzo Bernini* (London: Pindar, 2007), 800, https://publications.ias.edu/node/2252.

[33] Fumaroli, "La *Galeria* de Marino," 174; see also Groto, *Delle rime.*

[34] Lavin, "Bernini's Bust of the Medusa," 800–801.

[35] Groto, *Delle rime,* 138. Mina Gregori, "The First Medusa," also dates the publication of *Delle rime* to 1587.

[36] Giovan Battista Marino, *La galeria del cavalier Marino: Distinta in pitture, & sculture* (Venice: Presso G. P. Brigonci, 1664), 277; Lavin, "Bernini's Bust of the Medusa," 800.

[37] Cropper, "Petrifying Art," 193.

[38] Ibid., 204.

[39] Ibid., 202.

[40] Gregori, "Caravaggio's First 'Medusa,'" 12.

[41] Cropper, "Petrifying Art," 205.

[42] E.g., skyphos, 500–475 bce, Athena with aegis (Berlin, Antikensammlung: 1970.9); amphora, 5th century bce, Gorgoneion shield device (Milan, Museo Teatrale alla Scala: 416); pelike, 5th century bce, Perseus and head of Medusa (Munich, Antikensammlungen: 8725); siana cup, ca. 565 bce, running Gorgon (Oxford, Ashmolean Museum: 1965.120); pediment, Temple of Artemis, ca. 580 bce, Corfu, and eye-cup, ca. 580 bce, Gorgon (New York, Metropolitan Museum: 14.136).

[43] Farnese Cup, 2nd century ce, Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli.

[44] Rainer Mack, "Facing Down Medusa (an Aetiology of the Gaze)," *Art History* 25, no. 5 (2002): 579, https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8365.00346.

[45] Ibid., 571–604.

[46] Three ancient Medusas without frontal gazes: red-figure pelike, ca. 450–440 bce, attributed to Polygnotos (New York, Metropolitan Museum: 45.11.1); Apulian red-figure bell krater, ca. 400–385 bce, attributed to Tarporley Painter (Boston Museum of Fine Arts: 1970.237); red-figure hydria, ca. 460 bce, attributed to Pan Painter (London, British Museum: 1873,0820.352).

[47] Cropper, "Petrifying Art," 204.

[48] Van Eck, "Petrifying Gaze," para. 22.

[49] Cropper, "Petrifying Art," 204.

[50] Ibid., 204.

[51] Marin, *To Destroy Painting*, 136.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid., 138.

[54] Ibid., 137.

[55] Ibid., 136.

It's Like She Had Never Existed: The Family Story and the Assembly of Disability

Ana García Jácome

Figure 1 Coquis, 196?. Photograph of a girl in a field of flowers. She stands slightly bent forward with her arms a little open and looks at the camera with a fearful stare. Image courtesy of Ana García Jácome.

It's like she had never existed. We never go to the cemetery to see her; they never tell her childhood stories or her achievements. The only thing that is known is that she was sick. I only know what she looks like because of the picture in our grandparents' bathroom, where she looks normal, but fearful. Of the several family albums of photographs of parties and picnics, she only appears in two when she was very young and someone is always holding her up, forcing her, pointing toward the camera as if she were not able to find it by herself. The only frequent reference to her name is when someone mentions the room she occupied, which was built specifically for her: the room at the back of the house, the smallest, which after being "the room of Coquis" was "the room of the children," my room. Once I saw a picture of her, already adult, in bed, with all the appearance of a conventional sick person, and I accepted her like that and saved that picture in my imagination, just as everyone else did. But that imagination was an incomplete construction; it did not say that her deterioration, both physiological and within the family history, was caused by cerebral palsy, that the first signs of it were a few months after she was born, that she stopped walking when she was nine or ten years old, that she died the year that I was born. Nor did it say if she felt like everyone describes her or if she had the chance to control her representation in the photos, if she wanted to go out more often and they did not let her, or if she preferred to hide in the backroom. Does that happen in all families that have sick people? Who decides who is a sick person? What would we see in the images if we didn't have the story? What would we find in the story without images? Why does it seem like she never existed? What is it that everyone wants to erase? Why?
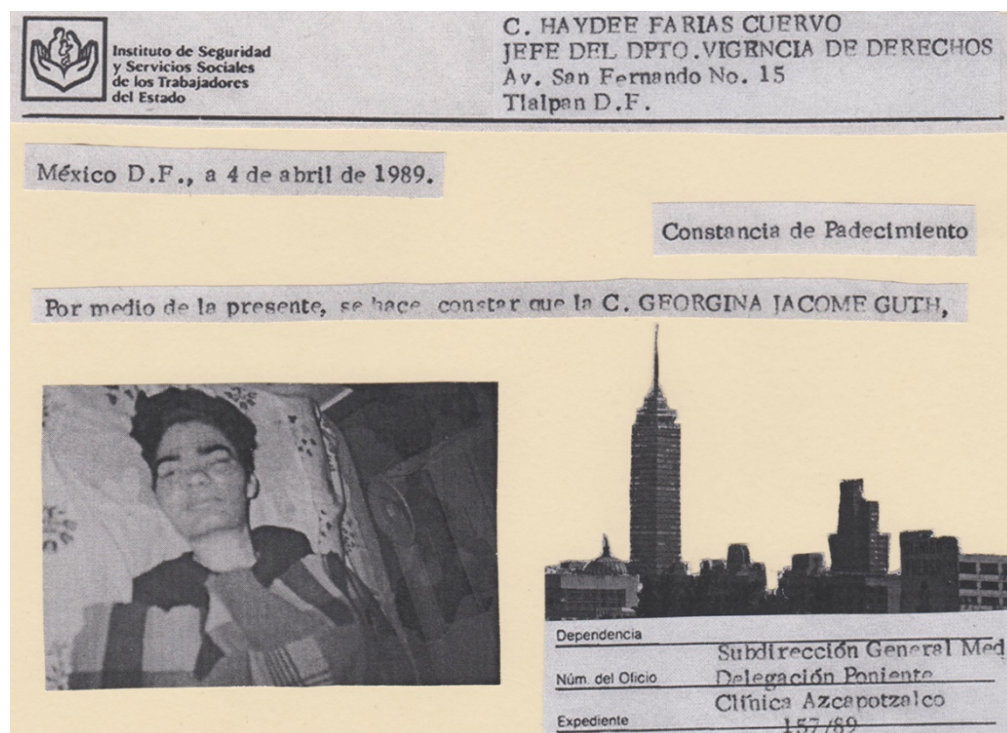
Figure 2 Adult Coquis in Mexico, collage, 2018. *Image description: Collage of pieces of documents with Spanish text and black and white photographs. At the top is a header with a hospital logo and address. Below it on the left, a line reads, "Mexico, April 4, 1989." The next line starts on the right: "Certificate of Impairment." A third line follows with the name Georgina Jacome Guth. At the bottom left is a photo of adult Coquis in bed. At the bottom right is a photo of Mexico City and a file label. Image courtesy of Ana García Jácome.*

In the 1960s in Mexico, there was no concept of disability. Its translation, "discapacidad," is a relatively recent word that started being used during the 1990s under the influence of the United Nations. For over fifty years before that, "inválido," closer in etymology to "invalid" but similar in meaning and intention to "cripple," was the word of generalized use both within the medical institution and outside it in everyday life. In 1953 the Directorate of Rehabilitation was created to care for the country's "cripples," since numbers had risen because of the polio epidemic of 1946. This eventually led to the construction of rehabilitation and special education centers in different states and an innovative hospital in the center of the country. In 1986 the Law on the National System of Social Assistance defined the family as "the cell of society that provides its members with all the elements required by the various circumstances of its development" and therefore makes the family the priority for social assistance provided by the State. This emphasis on the family as the center of the development of all individuals not only makes it a beneficiary of services but also explicitly makes it responsible for the

care and well-being of all its members, including and especially the "cripples." Rather than being a progressive move, this further reinforced caretaking labor as a duty of the family, making it accountable for its disabled members and building a rhetoric of disability as a burden. In addition, it confined disabled people to private lives within the family boundaries, as if disability were a merely personal problem concerning only the people close to the ones who embodied it. However, this insertion of disability in the field of social assistance was a step toward separating the disabled from the purely medical context that had contained them until then. Years later, in 1995 the National Commission for the Welfare and Inclusion of People with Disabilities was created to guarantee the full integration and development of people with disabilities. It wasn't until 1995 that the concept of disability began to be used and until 2005 that the rights of the people with disabilities were explicitly addressed in law: the General Law of Persons with Disabilities.
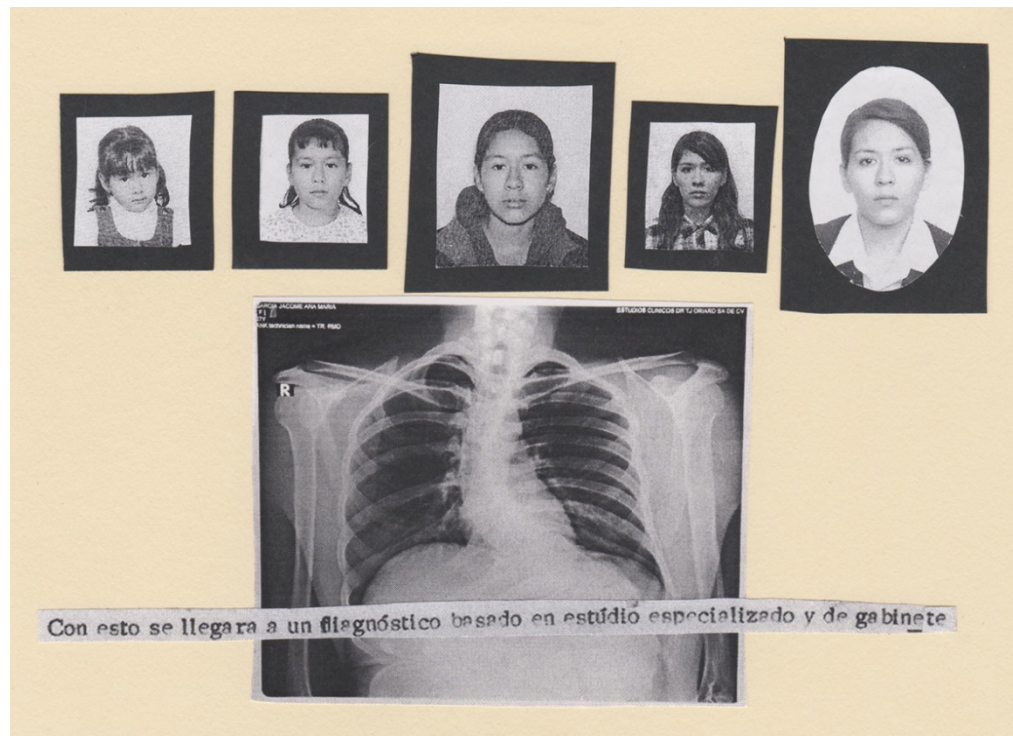
Figure 3 Ana growing up, collage, 2018. *Image description: Collage. Five I.D. photographs are framed in black and aligned horizontally at the top of the collage. The person in the photographs is me at different ages: in the first one I was about 4 years old. In the last one I was 25. At the bottom is an x-ray of my spine overlayed with a line of Spanish text reading, "A diagnosis will be made based on specialized tests." Image courtesy of Ana García Jácome.*

I grew up listening to the family being sorry that someone was sick or had become disabled. "Poor thing, they're screwed." "Life's twists and turns . . ." I learned that the sick and disabled suffer and complicate family relationships. I understood that they become burdens for their families and that they need to be taken care of, but also that we must applaud their inhuman efforts to continue living, because nobody wants to live like that. But as time passed, all this made me more and more uncomfortable. I understood that I fit in that pity and that hollow admiration. I looked like those described, but I didn't feel anything like them. Suddenly every time I heard the family talking about other sick or disabled people, I would only think: was I a burden for the family? Did everyone believe that my life was empty and continuous suffering? Was that how other people talked about me and my family? But above all, how could my family talk like that if they had me there and knew that disability was not like those conventions. But did they know? And besides, before me, Coquis was there.

Figure 4 Coquis at a family picnic, 196?. Image description: three black and white photographs in a row. They all show a young Coquis being held by arms and hands. The faces of the people grabbing her are cut out of the frame. Image courtesy of Ana García Jácome.

I started this project looking for the complete story of Coquis. I had never been so interested in her despite the fact that when I saw her photos I somehow saw myself. The photos did not show her movement or her sounds, just frozen moments. Stillness left a lot of chance for the imagination to assign a feeling to her countenance, to imagine her relationships to others based on their gestures and positions. I could not be certain about the places or the situations that the images showed, but I recognized the hands that held and guided her, that constant watchfulness and overprotection. I guessed the words of the adults in the pictures even though the images were silent. "You come with me." "No, over here." "You cannot." "Be careful." "You're going to fall." I've heard those phrases all my life, I suppose she did, too, and I looked at the photos in hopes of finding a complicity, in hopes of finding something that told me that she also hated them, that she fled from them and insisted on going down the uneven road, falling a thousand times but getting up in all of them, seeking to escape from the constant gaze and words that were aimed only at her. I always wonder if other people that haven't had our same experiences read the images in the same way. I think they don't. Maybe they just find curious details or weird poses. Maybe they are close to some disabled person and recognize the gestures. But I am almost certain that disability can be invisible in still images of the everyday. Sometimes when we don't move, or make sounds, we can pass as abled.

Figure 5 Pap with video camera, 199?. Image description: Color photograph of my grandfather standing inside a house. He is holding a video camera pointed at the photographer and smiling. Image courtesy of Ana García Jácome.

Sometimes I think that what I have been told about her has influenced the way I see the photos. I try to look for strange features that show her difference or reveal that she was not "normal." I try to force that girl from the images to enter a story that is not hers. I wonder if she recognized herself in those photos and in those videos. But recognizing oneself in photos and in videos are two different

experiences. Photographs capture a single moment but leave a lot unseen. Videos, on the other hand, replay scenes with the exact same movement through a space and a time lapse. In photographs, the movement behind the moment depends on memory and imagination, while in videos it becomes the unavoidable reality. This difference makes me think of the terror I felt when I first saw myself in a video that my grandfather had recorded of our vacation. I did not recognize myself in that girl who moved strangely. My body felt normal, but the video made me think that the body on the screen was making an extraordinary effort to take each step. At that moment, all the looks that followed me constantly on the street and everywhere and that I had never understood made sense. From that day on, I anxiously avoided video cameras. I avoided appearing in the frame, and when I couldn't help it I tried to remain motionless, to look normal. Every time my grandfather projected videos of vacations and meetings, I looked forward to any hint of my appearance to leave the room or turn away, or to distract everyone. I did not want to feel that lack of identification with my own image again, although I experienced it all the time. But neither could I escape the documentation of family moments.

Figure 6 Ana with camera, 2016. Image description: Color photograph of me holding a camera up to my face. Image courtesy of Ana García Jácome.

I got my first camera for Christmas when I was eight. Since then I have been accumulating images that have served different purposes throughout my life. I had a phase where I only photographed landscapes without people; later on I photographed objects and then people mostly. When I bought my first digital camera, I photographed everything around me to the point of annoying my family members. I rarely appeared in my own photographs until I had my first cell phone with a camera, but even then in most photos I am hiding behind the lens, as if I'm photographing the action of taking the photograph rather than my portrait. Once in a while I look back at all the photographs and try to identify the feeling that drove the gaze, the needs behind documenting certain things. While most of my early photographs also ended up in the family album, with the typical organizational method of birthdays, vacations, and weekend activities, the later ones were an exercise of awareness of my surroundings and myself.

Lately I look more at photos that I didn't shoot but my family members did. I try to answer the same questions. I wonder if they thought at all about how others would read their stories and the way they were represented. I wonder if it crossed their minds that this set of images would become an archive of stories and memories, whose order and hierarchy of visibility highlights the traditions, family values, and relationships of its members. But the images also show activities, relationships, objects, and poses that allow them to be located in broader contexts like culture, class, or geographic location. The images that we chose to enlarge tell what we value the most, like those wedding pictures of my grandparents and my parents.

The images we chose to frame tell how we want to be looked at by whoever visits our home, like the photos of the places we've traveled to. The images we discard or keep secret or keep safe tell our priorities, like the portraits on my grandma's nightstand, protected by a glass but hidden under the clock and the lamp. Family archives are not only subjective containers of personal stories and memories—they are indexes of trends, contexts, sociopolitical and economic relations. When looking closely at the photographs, you can identify the roles of the family members. Their clothes or objects reveal their epoch, the place they were in, and their social status. Their selection and display show what they want to remember and how they want to remember it.

discapacidad

1. f. Condición de discapacitado. *Percibe una prestación por su discapacidad.*

2. f. Manifestación de una **discapacidad.** *Personas con discapacidades en las extremidades.*

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Figure 7 Definition of "discapacidad," accessed 2019. Image description: Screenshot of the definition of "discapacidad" from the online dictionary of the Royal Academy of Spanish Language.

After listening to the stories that everyone told me about Coquis, I felt that something was wrong. That I was wrong, that we were not the same, that I could not compare my disability with hers or claim her needs and ideal relationships based on mine. That my criticism of the family for not mentioning her should also be a critique of my absence of questions and my assumptions about her existence. And yet, we both fit the same word: disability. A word that names a wide variety of bodies and minds that are somehow different from the standard. A word that despite the connotations of its translation into different languages is also instituted as the "right" one, the one that corresponds with the current societal model that tries to be a little kinder and include those who have been excluded and deemed unworthy. In spite of that, it was a word that didn't appear much in my family's stories. It was an invisible connection between us that other members intuited in my interest in Coquis, but never came to state. It was a word that they avoided and tried to compensate for with other positive words, as if the word *disability* itself could not be positive in any way or context. It was a word that always directed the conversations, despite being mentioned only a couple of times. But it was also a word that was unknown until two decades ago and whose predecessors, "inválido" (invalid, cripple), "lisiado" (lame), "disminuido" (diminished), "impedido" (impaired), were obviously negative. "Discapacidad" was meant to be the word that broke with the conventional language of the past and provided all Spanish-speaking countries with the vocabulary to participate in the international conversation hosted by the UN. But a lot of people still don't know this, and in the everyday the past words still overlap with the new one. Is this because people are so used to the old words that they forget to use the new one, or is it a refusal to accept the new framework that comes with the word? How is the permanence of the past words influencing the rejection of the new word? Or is it that the word doesn't matter, what it names is what they do not want to say?
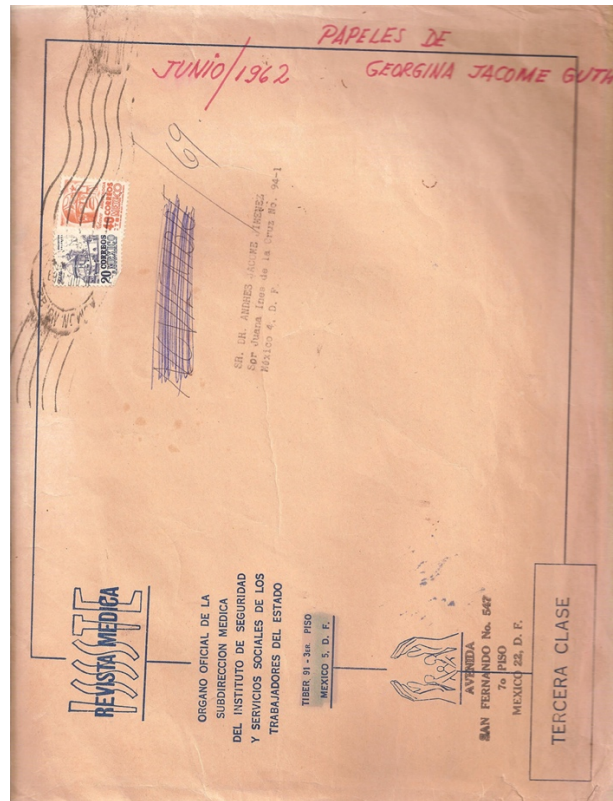
Figure 8 Folder of Coquis' documents, scanned in 2018. Image description: Scanned old folder from a medical magazine. It has two stamps, an address, a handwritten word crossed out, and the printed details of the magazine. On the top of the scan is a red handwritten note: "Papers of Georgina Jacome Guth, June 1962." Image courtesy of Ana García Jácome.

And yet, the photos did not show everything they told me, only a part of it: her frozen childhood, her happy times, when she was able to be part of the outside world. And then she vanishes: it is like she never existed in any other age. There is a part of her missing adulthood partially documented by papers: birth and death certificates, hospital paperwork. It also tells a different story, one that contains words, dates, and names that no one else used, a story that is stored in a different space than the album, like another story, one that should be kept in a more traditional and formal file. But despite this story being an impersonal one, all the administrative documents that form it also tie it to a broader social context; they are what proves her existence and her disability to the State, what makes her eligible for health care and welfare, what grants her certain citizenship status despite her invisibility in society. The documents prove that hers was not an isolated story, that similar but not equal experiences and embodiments exist throughout the country and have their own paperwork but also their own families, photos, and stories.

Figure 9 Coquis and Ana as children, 196?/199?. Image description: Two photographs side by side. On the left is a black and white portrait of Coquis. On the right is a color portrait of me. Image courtesy of Ana García Jácome.

And then, there is my own story, the one I am putting together after breaking apart the others. The one that departs from my own territory or the several geographies that intersect in the territory of my body. My whole experience and knowledge were built at home, by that family that carried the ghost of disability but also by a country that didn't address disability as a separate identity until the 1990s. I learned about my body from the Catholic stories that promised to reward pain, the constant stares that followed me in public spaces, and the bumpy streets that made me stumble every day. But I also learned from observation, from reading, from relating to others and listening to stories that didn't include disability but that helped me identify systems of oppression. When I came across disability studies, I avidly read all those words that provided vocabulary for articulating my everyday thoughts and experiences more cohesively, making them stronger as they were placed in a wider social and economic structure. But the vocabulary was not in my language, and the structure described in those words was somehow not the one that surrounded me. After my first enthusiasm and desire to translate, I spotted the hierarchies of language, citizenship, and education behind the production of knowledge and how its immediate acceptance implied submitting to an English-based academic system that theorized and represented First World experiences. I spotted my own place in those hierarchies as someone privileged enough to access foreign language and then live in foreign land.

Translation seems like the obvious way to take something we admire and share it with others. However, the reading and understanding of the translated content depend on the context and background of the readers as much as they do on the articulation of the pieces, and this is easily overlooked. Now I see my tendency for translation in my first approach to Coquis, as if I from my own disability could translate hers, take her story and put the pieces together from a distance. But as I dig more into her story, I realize that I need so much more knowledge of her surroundings, and the surroundings of her surroundings. Doing this research doesn't allow me to reproduce her story in my own time and my own surroundings but lets me make connections and understand processes. I think of translating languages as a similar process. The experience of disability in a certain language is determined by the geography, culture, and set of regulations and benefits that exist there and that are articulated with that vocabulary. While certain words are instituted as equivalent by international conventions trying to set standards, their connotations in different languages reinforce the complexity of translation.

Translation doesn't take away what has been embodied; it just adds layers. What one does with the accumulation of layers is a different thing. Some choose to bury the deeper ones as past lives left behind. I choose to excavate my past lives and recuperate the traces of my previous selves. By collecting and repurposing images, documents, and experiences I intend to use memory and embodiment as archival strategy. When disabled bodies are absent from history, or contained by institutional language and paperwork, centering their experiences and honoring their memory, making visible all the layers that complicate their existence is the way to claim our place in the present and the possibilities of our future.

Artist Statement

My work explores how disability is conventionally represented and daily experienced, as well as the differences and gaps between the two. The leading threads of my work are disability and narratives. Through fictional narratives, my early projects explore my own body, its shape and movement, and the traces it leaves on the objects and spaces that surround it. My recent work focuses on family stories and looks at how disability is perceived within the household and remembered through generations. This practice is concerned with how disability is historicized and represented by governmental institutions. It departs from archival research and, recuperating the drive of my early projects, intends to make room for the everyday stories and experiences of disability left out of institutional narratives.

Projects like "It's Like She Never Existed" contribute to a growing field that compiles the experiences of disability in the Latin American territories with languages and realities different from the ones mainstream English-based disability studies portrays. My research focuses on my country, Mexico, and on the relationship between history and ways of seeing and naming: how we identify disability by visible markers, how we relate to it, how we name it, how the words and actions toward it have changed over time. The goal of my work is to raise awareness about how words and actions perpetuate oppression, so that the need for counteractions in the everyday becomes clear.

My practice moves between mediums and materials. I use drawing, writing, and photography, but I also edit and re-purpose found materials, as I am interested in weaving together reality with fiction to imagine possibilities. In the end, my work is a collage of different narrative and material pieces, where writing entangles with the visual, where documents are pulled from the everyday and from institutional archives. I bring together all this in videos and publications which both stand alone and coexist in space as installations.

* * *

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**Douce Mélancholie: Sonic Negotiations of Absence
in the Works of Susan Philipsz and Félicia Atkinson**

Jenny Wu

On July 5, 2019, the French composer, poet, and publisher Félicia Atkinson re-
leased an experimental album titled *The Flower and the Vessel*. On September 16,
2019, the Pulitzer Arts Foundation in St. Louis, Missouri, opened the exhibition
Susan Philipsz: Seven Tears.[1] By reflecting on these two contemporary sonic events
through the lens of affect theory, this essay aims to explore the embodied experi-
ence of absence.

Trace

Of the seven works by Turner Prize–winning sound artist Susan Philipsz to visit
St. Louis, one was made specifically for the Pulitzer, while the six others, including
the eponymous work, *Seven Tears* (2019) (Figure 1), had been previously commis-
sioned. Philipsz's ambient and minimal 2019 iteration of *Seven Tears*, whose sound
travels through the Pulitzer Arts Foundation's Main Gallery down to the Lower
South and Lower East Galleries and into the courtyard, is a deconstruction of John
Dowland's *Lachrimae* (1604). Philipsz isolated seven individual notes from Dow-
land's *pavane* and reproduced these notes by rubbing her finger over the rims of
water glasses. Each note was then recorded and projected from one of seven

Figure 1 Philipsz, Susan. Seven Tears*, 2019. Installation View. Pulitzer Art Foundation, MO. Image courtesy of Alise O'Brien, September 16, 2019.*

turntables in the gallery space. For context, Dowland's *Lachrimae* "opens with seven *pavans*," a *pavan* being a slow processional dance originating in Italy. Each *pavan* is a variation of the *Lachrimae* motif—lachrima being Latin for "tear." "The sequence of four descending diatonic notes (A-G-F-E)," writes Anna Sophia Schultz, the curator of Ludwig Forum Aachen, where *Seven Tears* was previously installed, "describes the rise and fall of a tear, forming in the eye, swelling into full size, tipping out of the eyeball, and flowing down the cheek."[2]

Aachen is a German city known for its hot springs, which suffered damage during the Second World War.[3] When *Seven Tears* was installed in St. Louis, the motif of water drew attention to the city's recent flooding, as well as to the perils of climate change broadly speaking.[4] In both cases, the work provided a space and a prompt for the participants' self-reflection.[5] Through sound and reference, *Seven Tears* brings past and present into conversation. Through the work's associations with water—tears, sorrow, and evaporation—it participates in an exchange between cities across the world.

Philipsz's sound installations traffic in minimalist language: the staging is straightforward, the sound calls attention to itself, without being overbearing. The sonic landscape, writes Jacob Fabricius, "makes most people more aware of the

place they are situated in. If not for a day, a month, or a year, then at least the train of thought is broken for a split second."[6] Undergirding the sonic landscape is a dense web of historical associations, but the work's full affect is produced through disassembling these references, through the fragmenting of the past, and through the denial of the whole.

During the seventeenth century, Dowland's *Lachrimae* became popular in English society as a symbol of a "'specifically modern, deliberately cultivated melancholy,' which was labeled a 'fashionable complaint' . . . or 'English malady.'"[7] In *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, Robert Burton "accords music a special role in melancholy, with its particular capacity of 'delivering from and sustaining this ambivalent, wistfully-sweet sentiment.'"[8] Melancholy as "sentiment," or what we now know as "affect," is further described in Schultz's essay as follows:

> Melancholy was triggered by themes such as "mutability and death" and precisely [in *Seven Tears*] it preserves the peculiar ambivalence between sorrow and joy, expressed in phrases like "the joy of grief," "*douce mélancholie* [sweet melancholy]," and "*Wonnen der Wehmut* [the wins of sadness]," which extend across different cultures and centuries.[9]

Using this cultural context as a starting point, I interrogate whether the "melancholia" of *Seven Tears* originates in its internal relations or externally to the work.

A formal analysis of *Seven Tears* might start like this: seven turntables rotate mechanically on seven pedestals, which are dispersed across a gallery with white walls and polished cement floors. Each turntable projects one note. The sound is persistent but hardly louder than the noise one might hear while riding a train. Conversations in the gallery space are still audible. The notes are played on a loop; they have not been manipulated or synthesized. The participant traverses the gallery by walking through or around the scattered turntables and is permitted to step close to the pedestals.

The seven notes projected through the room are G#-A-B-C-C#-D-E, although, immediately the "trace" presents itself: other notes *can* be heard or, more aptly, constructed in the sonic overlaps of the existing notes. The sound is centered on a motif of three notes: the middle A, the middle B, and the middle C. Compact, pitch-wise, but sequentially played, one after another and each one enunciated, given its own full breath—A, then B, then C—signaling a minor scale and keeping mysterious which one (natural, harmonic, or melodic). The A does seem to be the tonic, as the scale always starts anew on the A. No matter at what point in the sequence the participant enters the Pulitzer's Main Gallery, it is evident that the

lingering A-B-C is the grounding motif from which the rest deviates. The deviations come gradually: the D that comes in place of the C, the G# that leads into A. The range of available pitches expands incrementally. First the D, then the lower G#. Or first the G# and then, a long while later, the higher D. Participants, depending on when they begin to listen, are allowed a degree of freedom in their exploration within the space opened up by the work: they may not hear the elusive C# or the high E.

The notes played are within a range of eight semitones, as though confined to a narrow tunnel, but meanwhile, there are overtones at work, a very high B here, a very low C# there, sustained in the gallery space. The C# strikes one at times as a ghostly rumble, at times as an insistence on a major key, a false major within the predominant minor. The E arrives, the highest of the seven notes, to feign a moment of clarity, one that still refuses to disclose the identity of the minor key. The work asks its participants to engage with chromaticism—in other words, notes that do not fit well into an established key signature—rather than with chords. However, the overtones make it difficult to inhibit one's perception of chords.

Sweet Melancholy

A formal analysis can tell us how *Seven Tears* works on a technical level and can reveal the piece's internal relations, but such an analysis insufficiently describes the work that *Seven Tears* performs on the participant. The affect theorist Sara Ahmed's essay "Happy Objects" explores the possibility of a positive—"happy"—experience of melancholy, a positive affect generated by a melancholic environment. The framing of *Seven Tears* is ambivalent because the participant is instructed to read melancholia into an otherwise highly aestheticized space designed to produce a positive affect. Ahmed writes, "Bad feelings are seen as oriented toward the past, as a kind of stubbornness that 'stops' the subject from embracing the future," whereas "good feelings" are associated with movement and openness.[10] If scenes from the past can intervene in the present, it would follow that "bad" and "good" feelings may be triggered simultaneously. In Philipsz's work, traces of histories, and specifically violent histories, which could be relegated to the domain of "melancholia"—that which is already gone, that which can no longer hold power over us[11]—enter the present by way of the uncanny sound.

The authors of "An Ethics of Everyday Infinities and Powers: Félix Guattari on Affect and Refrain," Lone Bertelsen and Andrew Murphie, argue that we do not have to feel a specific emotion—happiness, anger—in order for refrains and "affective modulation" to work on us.[12] They write:

> It is often forgotten that refrains are not just closures but openings
> to possible change. . . . Refrains join with future forces by stitching
> themselves into them. They are able to do this because affects, as
> transitions or passages, are able to link up across senses, across
> events, across "temporal contours," between or within different
> aspects of refrains.[13]

Affect is a slippery concept, one that is difficult to define, though it is often used interchangeably with words like *emotion* and *feeling* to describe the way in which external environments inadvertently get *into* subjects. As a whole, definitions of "affect" require metonymic devices to imitate the workings and behavior of this elusive concept. For Kathleen Stewart, author of *Ordinary Affects*, "Affect is the commonplace, labor-intensive process of sensing modes of living as they come into being. It hums with the background noise of obstinacies and promises, ruts and disorientations, intensities and resting points."[14] "Affect" is a theory based on sensation, oscillation, and innuendo, wherein the body, or its sensing organs, has become both the subject of and the vessel for the workings of art.

In 1980 the German researchers Hertha Sturm and Marianne Grewe-Partsch conducted an experiment that exposed sixty-two Viennese schoolchildren to the film *Bibi Bitter and the Snowman* and recorded their responses. Sturm and Grewe-Partsch's experiment was a watershed moment for what is now known as affect theory. The participants in the experiment were shown three versions of a film in which a man makes a snowman and, upon realizing the snowman will melt, takes the snowman to the top of a mountain and leaves it there.

In the first version, the film contained only noise and music; in the second, a voice described the situation as it happened ("Bibi built a snowman, he lived with the snowman"); in the third, the voice narrated the emotions within each scene ("Bibi was very happy living with his snowman"). The experiment hinged on the distinction between noise and music, voice description, and narrativizing. The data was collected with a dial that the children turned (self-reporting) and with Galvanic skin monitors. In the end, the version with only noise and music won as "the most pleasant," with second place given to the subtler—less heavy-handed—objective description. Furthermore, the study showed a correlation between "sad" or melancholy visual stimulus and positive feelings and enjoyment: "The 'sad' scenes were rated the *most pleasant*; the sadder the better."[15]

Sturm and Grewe-Partsch's findings speak not only to how affect precedes reason but also to the ambivalence of certain affective responses, such as when a subject reports having a positive experience of a negative emotion.[16] We can

consider what these findings mean for contemporary art and its relation to society, politics, and history. The affective potential of noise—of "sound art," as opposed to traditional, language-centered forms of dispensing affect, like a voice telling a story—points to the affective potential of absence. Brian Massumi writes in *Parables for the Virtual*, "Affect holds a key to rethinking postmodern power after ideology"—and what we consider contemporary art has a role to play in these renegotiations—"for although ideology is still very much with us, often in the most virulent of forms, it is no longer encompassing. It no longer defines the global mode of functioning of power. It is now one mode of power in a larger field that is not defined, overall, by ideology."[17]

In the book *Music, Sound, and Multimedia*, Jamie Sexton quotes Brendon LaBelle's definition of sound art as a conceptual practice with roots in futurism and Dada, in which sound "is both the *thing* and a reflection of the thing," while expanding LaBelle's definition to include considerations of materiality, space, and interactivity.[18] I treat sound art, specifically in the gallery setting, as a metonymic device through which to talk about affect, since it is music translated into a spatial medium and mapped onto an environment, which can then "get *into*" a person. It is an embodied experience—participants must walk through or past or around the object producing the sound—and it is a durational experience—participants choose however long they wish to engage with the piece. Only the artist's touch is present, as it is her finger tracing the glasses in the recordings. Sound art is site-specific, not only for the sake of acoustics, as concert halls and cathedrals are also designed for the sake of optimizing the auditory experience, but also because it is necessary for the participant's body to traverse the space through which the sound extends. Writing about the way sound is used "both in and around current art practice," Caleb Kelly, a theorist and sound art specialist, notes that "sound is now an integral aspect of art, from installation to screen-based, performance-based and participatory practices."[19]

Haunting

With artists like Susan Philipsz and, now, Félicia Atkinson, we enter the territory of what has been called "the sonic poetics of absence."[20] Before delving into specific sonic representations of absence, I turn to a popular illustration of absence broadly speaking, credited to Jean-Paul Sartre, the existentialist philosopher. In this illustration, Sartre is looking for his friend "Pierre," with whom he has made plans, at a café. At the appointed time, Pierre is absent from his usual place in the establishment. Sartre describes Pierre's absence as a "haunting" and, moreover, claims

to actually *experience* Pierre's not-being-there as though it were Pierre's presence.[21] I want to take this example one step further and insist on Sartre's melancholic longing for Pierre as a launching point to discuss the slippery, contradictory, and ultimately embodied nature of absence.

Through timing and proximity, Philipsz's *Seven Tears* was put in dialogue with *Earwitness Theatre* (2019), by Lawrence Abu Hamdan, a Beirut-based artist and Turner Prize finalist. The latter work, which was installed next door at the Contemporary Art Museum of St. Louis (CAM) months prior, investigates the Syrian prison of Saydnaya, where inmates were held in compulsory silence. In the prison's oppressive context, a whisper from an inmate would result in disproportionate retaliation by the guards. As such, even a whisper would sound, to the inmates' ears, as loud as an explosion. Visitors at CAM were invited into a pitch-black box installed in the gallery space, into which fear-inducing whispers were fed through speakers, detailing experiences in the prison. Primo Levi, a Holocaust survivor, addresses similar conditions having to do with sound and communication inside the Nazi concentration camps. As Levi writes, "This 'not being talked to' [in the camps] had rapid and devastating effects. To those who do not talk to you, or address you in screams that seem inarticulate to you, you do not dare speak."[22] This speech-based fear had effects on survivors' psyches, triggering, for example, collective nightmares in which loved ones ignore their descriptions of their experiences in the camps. "In short," Levi writes, "you find yourself in a void, and you understand at your expense that communication generates information and without information you cannot live. The greater part of the prisoners who did not understand German—that is, almost all the Italians—died during the first ten to fifteen days after their arrival."[23]

Quite distinct from these stark depictions of absence, *Seven Tears* expresses a void without reproducing a void. The distinct paucity of a visual representation in a piece of sound art like *Seven Tears* could be said to evoke an embodied experience of absence: one hears a sound upon entering the Pulitzer, one rounds the corner, expecting to see the source of the sound, and when one sees the seven identical turntables in the Main Gallery—perhaps this participant has not seen the installation reproduced in promotional materials—the distinct feeling of absence, the realization that one's mood is the by-product of the predetermined operations of *mere* objects, is akin to a feeling of experiencing Pierre's nonexistence in the café.

Artists who treat the subject of historical memory in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have faced the specific challenge of processing traumatic global events, including the Holocaust and the atomic bombs dropped on Japan, through representations of the concept of absence. Georges Perec's 1969 novel *A Void* (*La Disparition*), a three-hundred-page faux-noir written only with words that

did not contain the letter *e*, provides a concrete illustration of how difficult the exact nature of an absence might be to identify when the remaining elements appear innocuously whole. Another of Philipsz's sound installations, *Study for Strings* (2012), worked explicitly through omission to highlight an absence in society. The source text of this installation was Pavel Haas's 1943 *Study for String Orchestra*, an orchestral work composed in a Nazi concentration camp. In 1944 the composer and players were deported to Auschwitz and killed, and the original score was lost. The director, Karel Ančerl, survived and rewrote the orchestral parts by memory after the war.[24] For Documenta 13 (June 9, 2012–September 16, 2012), Philipsz again disassembled the score, producing separate recordings of a cellist and a violist playing their respective parts and feeding the notes through speakers dispersed along train tracks in Kassel. In the "silences between the notes," listeners "sensed a void where there might otherwise have been some other orchestration."[25]

In a 2014 essay, the Danish curator Jacob Fabricius identifies the affect in Philipsz's work on participants as the experience of a "memory 'shift.'"[26] Fabricius writes, "Her starting point is often the interface and tension between subjective and collective memories of popular music, political songs, film experiences, and the environments where they are placed or rather projected."[27] In a 2020 interview for *BOMB Magazine*, Philipsz tells the interviewer, James McAnally, "As you enter the Pulitzer from the street, we mounted a loudspeaker playing *The River Cycle III* (2010) in which I sing "Pyramid Song" by Radiohead. . . . *The River Cycle III* comes out of some of my earliest work with sound when I would infiltrate existing PA systems in the supermarket or bus station with my voice."[28] She goes on to say that her intention for staging these sonic interventions was to trigger collective memories in the involuntary participants of the sonic event.

Elegy

Atkinson's album *The Flower and the Vessel* (Figure 2), released in July 2019, is an eleven-track album recorded during her pregnancy, a record "not *about* being pregnant but . . . made *with* pregnancy" (emphasis mine).[29] While Philipsz's work addresses a collective audience, Atkinson's voice on the album is directed at a private, singular subject. The album is at times uncomfortably intimate, as the participant can hear the artist's lips grazing the microphone.

Track 1, "L'après Midi," borrows its title from Eric Rohmer's film *L'amour l'après midi* (*Love in the Afternoon*) and is a whispered poem with no accompaniment, a monophonic lullaby, in her native French. Philip Sherburne writes, "In the album's opening track, [Atkinson] whispers a poem to her unborn child, meditating

Figure 2. Atkinson, Félicia. The Flower and the Vessel. Record Cover with Track List. Image courtesy of Shelter Press, July 5, 2019.

on the way that her voice travels through her body to her baby's ears," noting that, "at the album's end, she [will plunge] us deep into that amniotic world."[30] Atkinson herself writes, "The voice is a vessel and time is a flower."[31] Thus, in a fashion characteristic of the album, she layers another metaphor onto that which would have already been perceived (the vessel being a womb and the flower being the child growing inside its amniotic waters). The almost erotic intimacy of Atkinson's whispers mirrors the gaze described in Ewa Lager-Burcharth's article "Duchess of Nothing: Video Space and the 'Woman Artist'" that "defines itself . . . in terms of perpetual movement . . . swinging back and forth between two imaginary positions of Mother and Daughter, or, to put it differently, as the look of a daughter who, borrowing her mother's loving eyes, sees herself as alternately the subject and the object of her own gaze."[32] We can apply Lager-Burcharth's film terminology to this sonic situation: Atkinson's recording conjures the subjectivity of the mother while situating the participant within that of the child.

The apostrophe—an address made to an absentee—can be read as an elegiac gesture. The first paragraph of Vladimir Nabokov's autobiography *Speak,*

Memory describes one's past in the womb and one's future in the grave as two states of unconsciousness that may be understood as one and the same:

> I know . . . of a young chronophobiac who experienced something like panic when looking for the first time at homemade movies that had been taken a few weeks before his birth. He saw a world that was practically unchanged—the same house, the same people—and then realized that he did not exist there at all and that nobody mourned his absence.[33]

Regarding the whispers on her album, Atkinson has been asked, "You've been described as an ASMR auteur, would you like to explain . . . what ASMR is and how it works in the context of your music?"[34] Atkinson replied, "In my case, this is not what I am reaching, the ASMR effect. I am interested in whispers as a way to use proximity and intimacy. . . . I started whispering in my recordings because I was recording in my bedroom and I didn't want my neighbors to hear me and I didn't want to record the sound of the street around me."[35] The present essay returns to Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response since the concept raises pressing questions about affective purposiveness; despite the artist's intentions, affect works in such a way that artists cannot actually control how their work is received. For now, consider the whispering as a defensive tactic, Atkinson's way of preserving her art from the public, giving it the privacy it needed to grow. In a way, to whisper is to withhold the voice—a whisper is itself a form of stand-in for an absent voice, or a trace. This whisper can be compared to the bodily trace left in the recordings of the seven notes in *Seven Tears*.

For someone unfamiliar with ASMR, the soft and soothing qualities of Atkinson's voice on the first track of *The Flower and the Vessel* are incidental, or what one might call the participant's own projection onto feminine registers of the voice. For experimental musicians or sound artists, perhaps ideas and emotions are not mutually exclusive, even if "conceptual" means immaterial or idea-centered. *Seven Tears*, for instance, is centered on a concept, but it is not the concept that does the majority of the "work" on the participant. Meanwhile, Atkinson's whisper, which takes on a flat tone reminiscent of the "objective" description of *Bibi Bitter and the Snowman*, might account for the veneer of conceptualism that hides the affective work under its surface.

Consider the instrumental second track, "Moderato Cantabile," as a point of contrast. The sound reclaims its spatiality: details fade in and out, as though played from different corners of a room. A review of *The Flower and the Vessel* by Sherburne notes, "Though the album uses sumptuous sounds like a Fender

Rhodes, marimba, and vibraphone, its essence remains pensive and sometimes unsettling. Many of the record's hushed, interwoven elements guard their identities."[36] An interviewer for *CLOT Magazine* notes, "Félicia's influences and inspiration come from many places, from pioneering Jazz musicians to avant-garde Metal totems."[37] Regarding this track, Atkinson writes, "I would love the listener to slow dance with an invisible friend," as though issuing instructions—suggestions, invitations—for a listening experience.[38]

Finally, I wish to linger on track 5, whose title, "You Have to Have Eyes," can be read, within this sweetly melancholic, preemptively elegiac framework, as a cynical imperative ("You have to be born with eyes, you have to be born healthy with a normal body type"); as didacticism ("You have to look, perceive, be open to the world"); as optimism ("I insist that you be born with eyes—because there is so much to see in the world"). The participant becomes the preconscious child, the object of the direct address, the one whose "mutability and death" is preempted. Only then, the relationship between "mother" and "child" is turned on its head by the voice on the track, which says, "You had to have eyes in the back of your head." The speculative turn undercuts the affect. At 6:20, the accompaniment fades out, and the speaking dissolves into rhythmic whispers of a completely different kind than in track 1, "L'après Midi"; this time sinister and impish, it showcases the versatility of Atkinson's techniques. The repetition of spoken phrases in different registers, ranging from grown woman to young girl, accumulates into a leeching feeling, that of being pursued by a creature with too many eyes.

When asked, "Do you play with affect?" in an interview with Ben Vida for *BOMB Magazine*, Atkinson said, "I believe in art, affection, sensitivity, emotion—but in a cosmic manner. It doesn't have to be human or attached to a specific experience or identity. I feel things when I see landscapes, and then I think about them while I make sound or art."[39] Atkinson goes on to say: "Even if I use some narrative elements in my text, I usually try to carve the narration in a way that keeps it somewhat elusive. . . . I am not playing a role, but I am convoking different voices in my sayings. I believe in that ambivalence."[40]

Philipsz's *Seven Tears*, too, plays with a kind of ambivalence. As a trace, or a fragment of a piece of music that stands as a self-contained whole, the spareness of *Seven Tears* produces in the participant a longing for a whole that is not there and, with respect to that which *is* there, the preempting of its disappearance, its evaporation. The installation invites mutability and death into the ahistorical gallery space—in other words, melancholy is a future-oriented affect. It is the same kind of affect, I would argue, that encompasses our relationships with loved ones

and objects of desire, itself a sort of oscillating device, signaling the absence within presence, and vice versa—in short, preempting an absence within presence.

Purposiveness

To return to the discussion of versatility, particularly that of the different registers of the human voice, I want to take up the challenge of mapping a wide range of whispers and their affective potentiality. Recall, for example, the visceral fear that a participant experiences within the black box of Abu Hamdan's *Earwitness Theatre*, or the fifth track of *The Flower and the Vessel*, which turns on the participant's expectations by transforming the maternal whisper into a monstrous pursuer. As these two examples show, the mere presence of whispering is not enough to qualify a work as ASMR. At the same time, since affect is not a formal quality of an artwork constituted by its internal relations, Atkinson's claiming *not* to be associated with ASMR does not foreclose the possibility of an ASMR effect when encountering her work. Affects cannot be directly transmitted, and auteurs and participants must learn to navigate their "ruts and disorientations, intensities and resting points."[41]

To understand affect in media beyond sound and visuals, Naomi Smith and Anne-Marie Snider published an article in the journal *Emotion, Space and Society* titled "ASMR, Affect, and Digitally-Mediated Intimacy," in which they draw from arguments of affect theorists like Sara Ahmed and Lauren Berlant. In the article, Smith and Snider write, "ASMR (Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response) is the pseudo-scientific term used to describe a 'tingly' physical response that viewers of ASMR videos may experience from watching a combination of auditory, visual and tactile triggers."[42] According to Smith and Snider, ASMR is a technologically mediated affective experience that exists uneasily between embodiment and disembodiment, shaped by the accessibility and portability of uniquely online spaces.

The artistic value of ASMR lies in its combination of visuals and audio, with an emphasis on the audio—picture, for instance, a young woman (auteurs are primarily young women) brushing a cosmetic brush over an amalgam of a silicone ear on a microphone, a half-hearted attempt at mimesis. The participant has some sort of "interest" (as opposed to Kantian disinterest) in the encounter as panacea, but there is also the understanding that what happens on-screen exists separately from the "real world," its current events, or its social structures. Seen through an art historical lens, there are parallels to be drawn with the decades of art since the sixties that emphasizes viewer participation, tactility, de-skilling, democratization, and process.

There are more than enough examples of ASMR techniques, some with more obvious affinities to the whispered first track in Atkinson's album, from which to choose. Typically, the auteur does not include her face in the video, such that the auteur and participant do not exist in a spectacle–spectator relationship but the participant instead acts in tandem with, or even vicariously through, the auteur as she uses her hands to crinkle pieces of plastic or whispers affirming phrases to her "client" in a salon chair. These videos tend to center on traditionally feminine creative acts—writing in a diary, gift wrapping, baking, latte art. The auteur is as "present" as Philipsz's finger running over the lip of the glass, and one can see traces of the auteur in her handwriting, in the particularities of her gesticulations. The web-based medium, which grants the participant not only the ability to control the durational aspect of the work but also the ability to archive, transport, and share the works, challenges the site-specificity of Philipsz's work. Atkinson's and Philipsz's works are already site-specific in different ways. Atkinson goes on tour, whereas Philipsz might install a work next to a body of water— think, perhaps, of the Pulitzer's water court.

An understanding of digitally mediated affect can perhaps help unpack some ontological uncertainties within the field, in a way reconciling older methods of art history with the way we look at art with relation to our bodies. What is also significant is that there is no narrativizing element to ASMR videos, to return to *Bibi Bitter and the Snowman*: ASMR is not like hypnosis, in that there is no one instructing the participant to relax (in most cases, though, there are exceptions); rather, it is simply the gesticulations that "trigger" the response in the participant. There are moments in which the minimalism of Philipsz's work opens the space for affect, so that the participant experiences a bodily reaction and senses purposiveness in the absence.

However, the real test of artistic purposiveness, to bring the conversation back to Immanuel Kant's *Third Critique*, is when the ASMR "effect" detaches itself from the intention of the subject evoking that "effect"—in other words, not when the participant seeks out the sound art, experimental album, or ASMR content but instead when participants claim to be involuntarily triggered by natural sounds in their everyday surroundings.[43] It may be that "watching ASMR videos online" serves to "heighten 'real-life' ASMR experiences, as viewers are now more sensitized to sounds they find triggering . . . outside of the mediated affect created by ASMR YouTube videos."[44] In other words, one might be affected in the same way by an encounter without purposiveness as by an encounter with purposiveness. In such cases, the affective potential of art and the affective potential of nonart are one and the same. Participants can induce in themselves the effects of sound art,

or experimental music, or ASMR in the absence of the artist and the art object, just as Sartre can feel a strange presence in the absence of Pierre.

<p align="center">* * *</p>

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Notes

[1] *Susan Philipsz: Seven Tears*, curated by Stephanie Weissberg, was on view at the Pulitzer Arts Foundation from September 6, 2019, to February 2, 2020.

[2] Anna Sophia Schultz, "An Echo of Melancholy," in *Susan Philipsz: You Are Not Alone*, edited by James Lingwood and Brigitte Franzen (London: Artangel, 2014), 156.

[3] Ibid., 155.

[4] Susan Philipsz, "Sound and Sculpture: Susan Philipsz Interviewed by James McAnally," *BOMB*, January 22, 2020, online text. https://bombmagazine.org/articles/sound-and-sculpture-susan-philipsz-interviewed/

[5] In this essay, I use the term *participants* to denote the viewer-listeners who encounter and engage with sound pieces.

[6] Jacob Fabricius, "Tune in, Drop out, and Tune in Again . . . ," in *The Distant Sound: May 24–September 21, 2014* (Bornholm, Denmark: Art and Theory Publishing, 2014), 17.

[7] Schultz, "Echo of Melancholy," 156.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Sara Ahmed, "Happy Objects," in *The Affect Theory Reader*, edited by Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 50, . https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822393047-001.

[11] Ibid., 50.

[12] Lone Bertelsen and Andrew Murphie, "An Ethics of Everyday Infinities and Powers," in *The Affect Theory Reader*, edited by Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 148, https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822393047-006 .

[13] Ibid., 145–46.

[14] Kathleen Stewart, "Afterword: Worlding Refrains," in Gregg and Seigworth, *Affect Theory Reader.* https://doi/org/ 10.1515/9780822393047-017.

[15] Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 23, https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822383574.

[16] Ibid., 23.

[17] Ibid., 42.

[18] Jamie Sexton, "Reflections on Sound Art," in *Music, Sound, and Multimedia: From the Live to the Virtual* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 85–104, https://doi.org/10.3366/edinburgh/9780748625338.001.0001

[19] Caleb Kelly, ed., *Sound* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011), 13.

[20] Félicia Atkinson, "Félicia Atkinson, on the Sonic Poetics of Absence," interview by Jacobo García López de Araujo, *CLOT*, July 26, 2019, online text. http://clot-mag.com/interviews/felicia-atkinson-on-the-sonic-poetics-of-absence.

[21] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1956). https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203827123 .

[22] Primo Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved* (New York: Summit, 1988), 93.

[23] Ibid., 93.

[24] Barbara London, "Study for Strings," in Lingwood and Franzen, *Susan Philipsz*, 204.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Fabricius, "Tune in, Drop out, and Tune in Again . . . ," 22.

[27] Ibid., 17.

[28] Susan Philipsz, "Sound and Sculpture: Susan Philipsz Interviewed by James McAnally," *BOMB*, January 22, 2020, online text. http://bombmagazine.org/articles/sound-and-sculpture-susan-philipsz-interviewed/.

[29] Philip Sherburne, "Félicia Atkinson: *The Flower and the Vessel*," *Pitchfork*, July 9, 2019.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Félicia Atkinson, "Félicia Atkinson Shares the Stories behind Her Surreal New Album," *self-titled mag.* July 2019.

[32] Ewa Lager-Burcharth, "Duchess of Nothing: Video Space and the 'Woman Artist,'" in *Women Artists at the Millennium*, edited by Carol Armstrong and Catherine de Zegher (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006), 145–67.

[33] Vladimir Nabokov, *Speak, Memory* (New York: Vintage, 1989), 19.

[34] Félicia Atkinson, "Félicia Atkinson, on the Sonic Poetics of Absence," interview by Jacobo García López de Araujo, *CLOT*, July 26, 2019, online text. https://www.clotmag.com/interviews/felicia-atkinson-on-the-sonic-poetics-of-absence.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Sherburne, "Félicia Atkinson."

[37] Atkinson, "Félicia Atkinson, on the Sonic Poetics of Absence."

[38] Atkinson, "Félicia Atkinson Shares the Stories."

[39] Félicia Atkinson, "Words Like Little Stones: Félicia Atkinson Interviewed by Ben Vida," *BOMB*, November 12, 2019, online text. http://bombmagazine.org/articles/f%C3%A9licia-atkinson-interviewed/.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Kathleen Stewart, "Afterword: Worlding Refrains," in Gregg and Seigworth, *Affect Theory Reader*, 340.

[42] Naomi Smith and Anne-Marie Snider, "ASMR, Affect, and Digitally-Mediated Intimacy," *Emotion, Space and Society* 30 (2019): 41, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2018.11.002 .

[43] Ibid., 43.

[44] Ibid., 46.

Floodplain (126)

Montana Torrey

Figure 1 Montana Torrey, Floodplain (126)*, 2018, folded collagraph installation. Image courtesy of the artist.[1]*

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[1] A video recording of *Floodplain (126)* is available for viewing at *Refract: An Open Access Visual Studies Journal* on eScholarship . https://escholarship.org/uc/refract.

Figure 2 Montana Torrey, Floodplain (126) *(detail), 2018, folded collagraph. Image courtesy of the artist.*

Figure 3 Montana Torrey, Floodplain (126)*, 2018, folded collagraph installation. Image courtesy of the artist.*
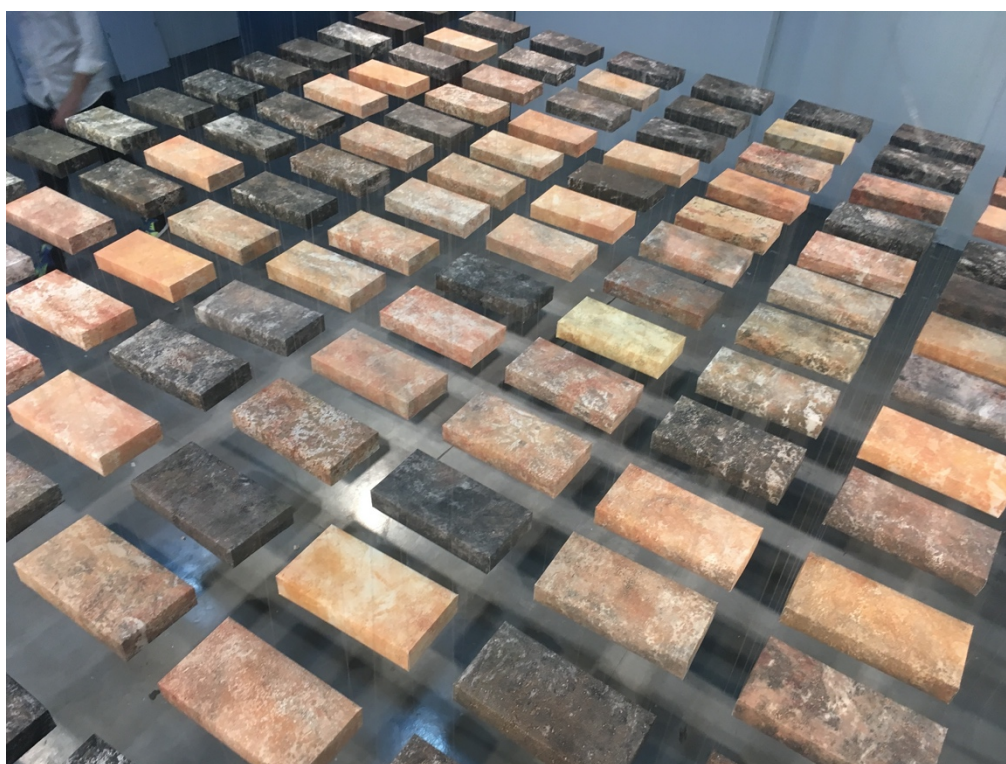

Figure 4 Montana Torrey, Floodplain (126)*, 2018, folded collagraph installation. Image courtesy of the artist.*

Artist Statement

My work explores the intersections between architecture, climate, and the embodied experience of place. In my recent work, I have examined notions of place through architectural reimaginings and overlapping temporalities in order to create a collision of the site's past, present, and future. By combining the static element of architecture with the dynamic element of weather or climatic forces, my work becomes a convergence of histories. I structure a dialogue between the site, material, and an idea, either through direct physical engagement with the landscape or by using metaphorical elements of the landscape contained within the built environment.

In *Floodplain (126)*, I investigated the paleo-flooding of Wiang Kum Kam in the Chao Phraya River basin in northern Thailand. I am interested in the diverse human activities that have existed on floodplains since antiquity. Made of bricks with the very silt and sediment, mud and earth, of the floodplain below, this archaeological site offers a deeper sense of time, of the dynamic cycles of river systems, and of the movement of civilizations. The brick itself is as much a temporal object as it is a spatial one, suspending the alluvial material that took thousands of years to break down, only to become subsumed once again by the river. I exhume these histories as a way to reconstruct the fleeting passages of natural phenomena and the built environment, with the dynamic anthropogenic changes of the Mekong River Delta today.

Floodplain (126) reimagines the archaeological site of the ruined city of Wiang Kum Kam through the lens of its moment of collapse, when the Ping River changed course and caused the severe flooding that eventually led to the city's abandonment over seven hundred years ago. I am interested in how the residual memory of catastrophic natural disasters intersects with the built environment, both past and present. The ruin is suspended in time, physically existing in the present, but perpetually tied to the past, serving as a visual representation of the relentless persistence of time. In my installation, I attempt to excavate and merge the remnants of memory that haunt this site by reimagining the dense bricks that constitute the ruin through folded paper collagraphs to evoke a sense of weightlessness. By utilizing the process of collagraph printmaking, I used the silt and sediment of the Ping River to create the plates from which I printed on paper. This weightlessness is also reminiscent of the bodily experience of moving through water: floating, swaying, shifting, drowning, and rising to the surface as the viewer circumnavigates the printed bricks. *Floodplain (126)* questions how this site/ruin can act as a reminder of the past, and serve as a catalyst to contemplate the imminent threat of global flooding and subsequent mass migrations due to climatic

change, while meditating on the complexities and vulnerabilities of our physical structures and what they reveal to us as they face the test of time.

* * *

Montana Torrey received a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and an MFA from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She has been an artist-in-residence at Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Headlands Center for the Arts, Vermont Studio Center, Catwalk Institute, and the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture, among others. She has exhibited in the US and abroad, including *Mississippi: An Anthropocene River*, *Anthropocene Curriculum*; the Center for Art and Culture in France; D.U.M.B.O. Art Under the Bridge Festival; Paul Robeson Galleries; Doris Ulmann Gallery; SG Gallery in Venice, Italy; and Trükimuuseum in Tartu Estonia. Torrey is currently a lecturer at Chiang Mai University in Chiang Mai, Thailand; she has also taught at Lane College, Moore College of Art and Design, and UNC Chapel Hill. She has been the recipient of many grants and awards, including a Joan Mitchell Foundation Residency Grant, Tennessee Arts Commission Individual Artist Grant, the North Carolina Arts Council Individual Artist Grant and Residency Grant, Skowhegan Fellowship Grant, and a teaching fellowship from the Samuel Kress Foundation.

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Mining Things: Confronting Loss and Flux in the Slate Industry Ruins of Northwest Wales

Seb Wigdel-Bowcott

Figure 1 Rhosydd Quarry level 9, with the ruins of the barracks to the left and the outline of the mill to its right. Image courtesy of the author, August 2019.

Returning to a familiar environment after a prolonged absence has a strange way of pulling features out from their habitualness. This was my experience during a visit to the ruins on level 9 of Rhosydd Quarry, which formed part of a walk with friends on the mountain, Cnicht, and surrounding Cwm Croesor, while on a visit back to the area of northwest Wales where I grew up. The physical traces of the slate industry that had occupied a seamless place among my everyday surroundings now seemed to demand a recognition of a certain out-of-placeness. What I previously understood as the idiosyncrasies of a

landscape shaped by a formerly world-leading national industry, I now saw as geological scars that stand as monuments to an industrial capitalism that exited as aggressively as it imposed itself, testifying to its remarkable ability to reshape environments both physical and social.

There is a powerful sense of a threshold being crossed when reaching the site of the level 9 ruins from Cnicht. The plateau-like micro-landscape formed by the slate waste makes for a stark physical border when stepping off the mountain's exterior and onto its excavated rock. One side of the clearing opens out onto the valley, with the other side enclosed partly by the mountain and the towering waste tips from the quarry's upper levels. The separate structures of the ruins are dispersed along this latter side. The vast open space in front of them is interrupted only by the remains of the stack-yard fencing: thick slabs of slate that stand upright at waist-height like gravestones. Intact archways rest next to walls that have fallen and lodged the pattern of their structure into the earth. Most striking is the sight of the former barracks, two large structures each around forty meters long that stand in parallel at one end of the site, considerably intact compared with the rest of the ruins. The outlines of chimneys, doorways, and windows remain in thick walls made from a motley of carefully arranged slate stones, the sunlight illuminating their various hues of purple, blue, and gray.

A chilling drop in air temperature can be felt near the entrance to the mine, evidence of it having been left open. Together with the various bits of discarded machinery and wagon parts scattered among the ruins, the unclosed entrance produces a sense of sudden abandonment. This combines with the threshold-like experience to create a sense of time having been arrested and enclosed at the site, as if the precise moment of its desertion had been captured in an image. But this feeling of temporal fixity is undercut in turning attention to the interaction of the ruins with their surroundings. The ephemerality of the image becomes clear as the ruins undergo a slow process of decay back into the mountain from which their materials were originally mined.[1]

There is an enigmatic quality to the site that is generated in the interaction between the presence of the past described above and the raw physical immediacy of the barracks. The sprawling scale of the site alludes to the significance of a history that can be felt even as its details remain out of reach, due to the absence of any museal framing or heritage recognition. This absence of historical information creates an indeterminacy of meaning that contributes to the disorienting experience of the site's scale and temporality, but which also created a space of possibility during my visit. This was not a feeling of estrangement from the site's history; on the contrary, these elements amounted to an encounter with an entanglement of historical traces that were making their presence felt. But I felt conflicted by the alternative experience of history that the site offered. My embrace of its unmediated quality risked a valorization of

decay, and it was clear that preservation is needed if the site's history can continue to be experienced at all. I left with a desire for a radically politicized public understanding of the ruins while fearing the kind of apolitical narrative closures that heritage and conservation projects often entail.[2]

In researching the history of the site following the walk, I found that emergency fundraising for a conservation effort had recently been organized to preserve ruins at adjacent levels of Rhosydd and the neighboring Cwmorthin Quarry. In 2015 the volunteer group Cofio Cwmorthin Remembered carried out stabilization work on notable structures in the valley, "capping" them with concrete to prevent their imminent collapse that coming winter.[3] Despite being able to identify a small bit of stabilization work that had been carried out on one of the barracks' chimneys, there was no mention of level 9 in the group's conservation plans, in all probability because the rest of the site has reached a stage of decay beyond the scope of conservation. Alongside this active process of ruination, I was confronted by the absence of a comprehensive written history of Rhosydd Quarry and particularly any documentation of life in its barracks. A recent study by Rhiain Bower suggests that this is part of a wider problem, with records of barrack life in Welsh slate quarries being scarce, and inaccessible and fragmented where they do exist.[4] The lack of records has presented a challenge in trying to piece together a history of the Rhosydd Quarry barracks in this essay and speaks to a general feeling of loss that can be experienced at the site. Considered alongside the uneven conservation of Rhosydd's ruins, questions are raised about the dynamics of visibility and erasure in the preservation of a peripheral, Welsh working-class history that sits at a distinctive intersection between the industrial and the domestic.

These questions have gained added significance while I was writing this essay, during which the UK government has supported a nomination for the northwest Wales slate mining landscape to be considered a UNESCO World Heritage site.[5] The prospect of institutionalized commemoration requires a consideration of the politics of hypervisibility: in making histories palatable and digestible as a tourist activity, heritagization may heighten the dynamic of erasure in level 9's ongoing decay by choosing to highlight the better-known and less remote sites of the slate industry landscape.

Following my experience at Rhosydd, I have been curious to understand how traces of histories can make themselves present at sites of ruination despite the forces of exclusion that make traces of them in the first place. A consideration of this tension between multiplicity and singularity will run through the remainder of this essay as I discuss both the evasive and expressive qualities of the traces I encountered and explore the histories that their presence can help narrate. I also offer reflections on the way that objects and spaces can mediate both productive and destructive responses to the experience of flux, specifically the melancholic role that ruins can come to play in imperial

narratives of loss and decline. At stake is a broader question relating to the material testimony of abandoned sites and discarded objects in the context of disappearing, peripheralized histories. To what extent can neglected spaces and objects "speak" their histories, as well as resist confinement to reductive singular narratives?

"Thingness" and the Temptation of Master Narratives

> Things lie beyond the grid of intelligibility the way mere things lie outside the grid of museal exhibition, outside the order of objects.
>
> — Bill Brown, "Thing Theory"

I begin my analysis with a discussion of how level 9's "thingness" became apparent in my encounter, aiming to establish an understanding of the site's disorienting quality and loaded atmosphere. Thing theory presents itself as a productive lens for understanding my disorientating encounter at Rhosydd because it designates a certain interruption, when the threads holding together a web of meaning break, and heterogenous potential emerges in its place, albeit tentatively.[6] Instead of turning directly to the ideas that inform the content and meaning of objects in our interactions with them, thing theory addresses the "irresolvable enigma" of things, taking as its starting point the co-constitutive encounter between subjects and objects in order to account for the transformative social and ideological effects of our material environments.[7] Bill Brown proposes that objects assert their "thingness" when they disrupt a habitual subject–object relation, destabilizing the habits and expectations that have been established in relation to objects in a given context.[8] "Thingness," then, points to both an opaque, inaccessible void prior to the constitution of this relation, as well as to the "excess" found in objects, when "their force as a sensuous presence" cannot be contained by the parameters of meaning established by their materiality or conventional usage.[9] Ruins, as spaces and objects that inhabit a logic of incompleteness, holding a status as former objects in a sense, are exemplary for thinking and encountering this dichotomy of "latency" and "excess" in things:

> We begin to confront the thingness of objects when they stop working for us . . . when their flow within the circuits of production and distribution, consumption and exhibition, has been arrested, however momentarily.[10]

The way the site on level 9 revealed its "thingness" can be understood as two-fold: first, relating to its general status as a ruin, understood as a place that has lost its original function. This resonates strongly in the material traces of large-scale industry at the site, where the production process has stopped in the most literal sense, but also in the fainter traces of domestic space that linger in the ruins of the barracks. Second, the absence of museal framing at Rhosydd provides a useful way to think a dynamic between ruins, heritage, and thingness. My unfamiliarity with the space was suggestive of the reincorporating quality that heritage framing has by instilling defunct spaces with newly prescribed functions. Level 9 stopped working for me in the sense that it did not fit with any preestablished frame that I had for understanding ruins as heritage and history, and expressed a resistance to any of the attempts I made at placing the site within a neat historical narrative: "On the one hand, then, the thing baldly encountered. On the other, some thing not quite apprehended."[11]

Given the absence of mediation at Rhosydd, I found myself making futile attempts to fill in the gaps, both in the material sense of trying to picture the structures that had been reduced to outlines and in the historical sense of trying to compensate for my lack of knowledge. The ruins seemed to attest to the experience of an end point and the sense of flux that can follow, leading me to picture the people who would have been immediately affected by the closure of the quarry. But the ruins also evoked an epochal sense of flux by functioning as a symbol for the end of industrialization more broadly, and I was looking to them to try to help me make sense of Britain's rapidly changing political landscape in the present.[12]

The intensely remote location of the ruins inevitably summoned a discourse of Wales's position in the UK, alongside an overlapping dynamic between a rural periphery and an urban center, and I was reading the class dynamics of industrialization through this lens. As a literary and historical study of social and economic change, Raymond Williams's *The Country and The City* provides a starting point for thinking through these intersections. Williams insists on the need to understand the dynamic between country and city as an economic relationship central to capitalist development. Their very separate literary depictions have allowed the economic causes of alienation to be obscured by a melancholic mode of nostalgia that pits country and city against each other, creating a past rural idyll that functions as a placeholder for a sense of innocence that has been lost to urbanism.[13]

With regard to class and rurality, Williams details the impact that a peak period of parliamentary land enclosures in the mid-eighteenth century had on class formations in Britain:

> Improvement of the land required considerable capital, and
> therefore the leadership of the landowners. . . . this not only

increased the predominance of the landed interest; it created,
by enclosure and engrossing to make large and profitable units,
a greater number of the landless and the disinherited, who
could not survive or compete in the new conditions.[14]

The emergence of early industrial methods for working the land sharpened existing class divisions and saw much of the landless population become the new industrial working classes.[15] In line with this, Bower and Paul Manning both highlight that the slate industry in Wales was largely a case of English capital being generated by local Welsh labor through exploitative working conditions.[16] The owners of the larger quarries such as Dinorwig were members of an English landowning aristocracy, with smaller operations tending to be investments made by English entrepreneurs.[17] As a result, the mining and quarrying of slate in Wales entailed a "linguistic division of labour."[18] Manning details how these national and class tensions were inscribed into the very language of the industry, with a revealing division discernible between the English (and mostly courtly) terms given to slates that were finished commodities, and the system of Welsh-language terms used to navigate the work of extracting the rock in its raw form.[19]

Despite overlapping in complex ways, I found that this set of binary frames could provide only so much insight in trying to grasp the political and historical dynamics of the ruins during my walk. In trying to make sense of the ruins as a constellation of national, class, and geographic tensions, the fluid and multiple temporalities I had initially been confronted by seemed to harden and recede. Although not necessarily inaccurate, I felt that I was clutching at the nearest inherited discourses that I had available when faced with the unknown, performing a closure of meaning by incorporating the ruins into master narratives, subsequently bypassing nuance and shutting off other, intersecting histories. While acknowledging that any future heritagization would need to carefully consider which subject positions are latently being celebrated in the landscape's recognition as heritage, I also became aware that the absence of museal framing is not necessarily a safeguard against unilinear historical narratives. If we can understand the encounter of "thingness" as a destabilizing experience of uncertainty, the Rhosydd ruins were a reminder of the temptation and conservative impulse of reductive explanations that accompany confrontations with flux.

The encounter with traces of other histories made it clear how little grasp I had of Rhosydd's local history but also of the lives that are connected by the extraction of slate in northwest Wales on a larger scale. To use Brown's terminology, it was an encounter with the site's latency: a sense of concealed

Figure 2 Stack-yard fencing, with the outline of the mill midground and the barracks in the background. Image courtesy of the author, August 2019.

meanings that remained inaccessible, resisting articulation, and a form beyond mere traces. The intelligibility that these traces nevertheless acquired can be understood as an experience of the site's excess, a weighty atmospheric register that ricocheted out as a "sensuous presence." This symbiosis pointed to an absence making itself present that was suggestive of what Margarita Palacios has described as the "material testimony of abandoned objects."[20] In the following section I elaborate on the link established by Palacios between thing theory and affect theory as I attempt to correspond the experience I had at Rhosydd's ruins to a fragmentary written history of the quarry's barrack life.

The Atmospheric Experience of History

Brown describes the experience of a thing's excess as an encounter with "what remains physically or metaphysically irreducible to objects."[21] In wanting to account for the way that this excess can manifest, I follow Palacios's understanding of "the powerful, loud and yet untranslatable" affective registers that find a presence at sites of ruination.[22]

Palacios discusses the politics of memorialization that congregates around ex-detention and extermination sites in Chile, where competing modes of remembrance interact in regimes of visibility and erasure. Her case studies range from small, underfunded efforts to sites of institutionalized memorialization. The critical observation she draws from their comparison is that a

higher level of mediation does not necessarily lead to a more stable guarantor of meaning. Sites with very limited intervention and those where mediation is highly condensed both encourage acts of "resignification."[23] This speaks to an "unbridgeable incommensurability" that inevitably exists between the representation of violence and the event itself.[24] This "incommensurability" is registered through an encounter with a site's thingness and its affective registers, which can interrupt and reframe the interpretation of the site's history. Palacios understands this as an agency of sorts, with spaces and objects of violence being able to convey "truths" that their memorialization, regardless of the level (or complete absence) of museal mediation, is unable to fully conceal.[25]

Palacios utilizes a Deleuzian concept of affect to articulate how sites of violence can signify beyond the limits of their memorial frames. Here, affect is defined as "bodily intensities that are autonomous from conscious perception and language" and aids understanding of the social and political dynamic of emotional and sensory experience.[26] In this respect, affect has a spatial and "atmospheric" public dimension that distinguishes it from the private experience of emotions.[27] But Palacios is keen to stress that this does not mean that affect can be understood as a type of medium that allows for spaces and objects to unproblematically "speak" their truths. Although it is experienced separately from language, conscious feelings, and active thought, the sociality of affect means that its meaning and effects will always be produced in dialogue with these other spheres.[28]

My experience at Rhosydd resembles Palacios's discussion of "faithful failures" in Chile, where ruins convey the weight of their history despite the specific type of erasure that results from an absence or near-absence of memorialization.[29] My visit to the level 9 ruins was telling of an affective experience of loss, cued by various signs that amalgamated in a "hazy" entanglement.[30] The principal node of these signs was the exaggerated physical presence of the barracks, which illuminated the trace of lost domestic space in a setting that is otherwise overwhelmingly defined by the industrial.

Wales became the center of the world's slate industry at the end of the nineteenth century, accounting for 92 percent of Britain's slate production.[31] A demand for workers necessarily followed global demand for slate, and on-site barracks were built at Welsh slate quarries to accommodate quarrymen during the working week who lived as far as twenty-five miles away.[32] Bower details the commute involved for some of these quarrymen, which could start at 3 a.m. on Monday morning and not finish until Saturday evening, when they would return to their families for a day before the working week restarted.[33] Barracks were built at Rhosydd sometime during this peak period of global slate demand, when the quarry employed over two hundred workers and the large mill on level 9 became its hub.[34] The particular remoteness of Rhosydd meant that an atypically large proportion of its workforce stayed in these

barracks, with Lewis and Denton speculating that at its height, as many as 150 quarrymen were living on-site in overcrowded, squalid conditions that were notorious in the industry.[35] The barracks were damp and stuffy, with lice-ridden beds being shared and no sanitation facilities available, drawing regular scrutiny from health inspectors that led to minimal improvement.[36] Illnesses such as cholera, diphtheria, and silicosis were prevalent as a result of these working and living conditions,[37] and together with the regularity of fatal accidents meant that the average life expectancy between 1876 and 1885 for quarrymen in the Ffestiniog area was forty-four years old (compared to fifty-six otherwise).[38]

Despite these harsh circumstances, a strong cultural and educational tradition was able to establish itself in slate quarries by the end of the nineteenth century.[39] On-site chapels and the *caban* became community hubs that facilitated political organization and fostered a literary culture from which several well-known Welsh bards emerged.[40] Manning suggests that the Welsh quarryman became an important figure in Welsh language and culture in this context, operating as "a major ideological exemplar of Welshness in the formation of a distinctive and hegemonic culture of language in nineteenth-century Wales," central as an audience for, and contributor to, a burgeoning Welsh print culture.[41] With the limited written history available, the poetry of barrack-dwelling Rhosydd quarrymen such as Tegfelyn (Edward Lloyd) and Ioan Brothen (John Jones) provides one of the few forms of firsthand testimony that exists for this fragment of history:[42]

> Yn y Barics
> *Hunwn (a blin oedd hynny)—yn fy oer*
> *Anifyrraf lety,*
> *A theimlo brath amal bry'*
> *Ar waelod y budr wely*

> In the Barracks
> *Sleeping (horribly at that)—in my cold*
> *And miserable lodging,*
> *Feeling the bite of insects*
> *At the bottom of the filthy bed.*[43]

The trace of the domestic in the ruins functions as a reminder of the mostly unknown people who lived in the barracks, who despite extreme adversity would have found small ways to claim ownership of that space. The barracks acquire a symbolic function in this respect, serving as a reminder that the industry's decline would have entailed a loss of livelihoods for a generation

caught in the flux of a transitional economic phase, and by extension an estab-
lished way of life for the communities of the "slate towns" that formed around
quarries in nineteenth-century Wales.[44] Many of the towns and villages shad-
owed by slate waste tips throughout northwest Wales are instances of the vast
social infrastructure produced by the industry's promise of work, and have fre-
quently fallen victim to severe degeneration as profitability has made its inevi-
table flight elsewhere.[45]

The atmospheric sense of loss at Rhosydd was also created by the inter-
action of the ruins with the landscape, in being able to observe the slow decay
of the site back into the mountain. The weight of this loss was compounded
by the sense that the site's history has unarticulated elements and a complexity
that has been inadequately understood. The vague grasp I had on the details of
this history, of who exactly lived in these barracks and when, created a poorly
delineated and incomplete object of loss. I could see that a history was poten-
tially being lost, but I was unsure of what it was exactly that I was preemptively
mourning. In trying to make sense of the affective experience that resulted
from the destabilizing encounter with the site's thingness while picturing gen-
erational loss and flux for slate mining communities, questions arose concern-
ing the politics of these affective structures. I recognized loss and change to be
among some of the most frequently and heavily instrumentalized notions
found in contemporary, and specifically reactionary, political rhetoric. What
narratives are drawn on to navigate uncertainty and instability? What is de-
picted as having been "ruined" within these narratives, and what causes are
ascribed to account for their ruination?

In my understanding, the key element that emerges from a consideration
of the sociality of affect is its intimate relationship to power, whereby both
dominant and dissident forms of power can be understood to operate affec-
tively.[46] Despite the qualifications that Palacios makes on this point, it is not
fully elaborated on in the analysis of the case studies in Chile. Palacios's focus
remains on describing the different ways that the excess encountered at me-
morial sites can disrupt the confines of contrasting modes of memorialization.
The image of affect that emerges from this is of a subversive force produced
by hegemonic power as an unintended by-product, escaping its grip and
thereby always facilitating progressive resignifications. This characterization is
understandably tied to a very specific set of case studies, but in wanting to
abstract from Palacios's framework, what feels missing is a discussion of how
the surplus affects found at sites of ruination can also be politically stifling,
leading to reactionary resignifications and identifications.

Sara Ahmed provides a useful theoretical framework for understanding
the sociality of affect in relation to power. Ahmed directs attention to the work-
ings of affective economies, where affect is understood as something that cir-
culates "between objects and signs[, accumulating] affective value over time."[47]

This framework provides added clarification to the spatial quality of affect as it relates to power: "Emotions involve subjects and objects, but without residing positively within them. Indeed, emotions may only seem like a form of residence as an effect of a certain history, a history that may operate by concealing its own traces."[48] This is an account of the density of historical forces that are confronted in attempts to disarticulate certain meanings from the materiality that they become attached to, while still insisting on the possibility of doing so. Specifically, Ahmed's theory of affect is a reminder that the emotional experience of objects and spaces takes place within a social field and has a history, meaning that in given contexts, certain affective experiences will be aligned with the discourses of nation and empire.

In wanting to account for the way dominant forms of power exist affectively, I turn to a discussion of the presence of melancholia in national and imperial discourses and the role that ruins can come to perform within them. The need to consider the relationship between loss, nation, and power brings me back to Raymond Williams, whose insights, along with Ian Baucom and Paul Gilroy, point to the need for an analysis of the lost or tainted object that gets constructed in melancholic narratives.

The Postcolonial Melancholia of Ruins

In *The Country and The City*, Williams outlines a tradition of melancholia in British literature that has developed over several centuries in response to the societal ruptures caused by capitalist development. During the "modernisation of the land" in the eighteenth century, Williams identifies "a conventional structure of retrospect" that emerges in literary depictions of the rural.[49] There is an observable shift away from portrayals of a rural idyll to "a deep and melancholy consciousness of change and loss."[50] Thus a withdrawal to an "unalienated . . . rural past" allows for the construction of a precapitalist innocence that obscures the common cause of alienation in city and country life alike.[51] The logic of this melancholy involves the construction of a lost object that functions as a displaced explanation for the recurring experience of loss. Williams sees in this melancholic impulse both the danger of a socialist critique stifled by an attachment to an "irrecoverable world" and the potential for a reactionary sentiment of belonging that can serve as the basis for an "offensive against democracy in the name of blood and soil."[52]

In diagnosing the legacy of empire in processes of identity formation in postcolonial, War on Terror–era Britain, Paul Gilroy has described melancholia in similar terms, as a contagious, collective refusal and displacement of loss. Gilroy characterizes postcolonial melancholia as a type of national amnesia concerning the brutalities of Britain's empire that allows for feelings of guilt

and complicity to be deferred.[53] In Britain, there is an institutionalized inability to mourn the imperial past, leading to a gaping void in attempts to understand the cause of the loss of stability that has resulted from its decline.[54] Postcolonial melancholia attempts to fill this space, offering misattributions for both the causes and the object of this loss.

Going beyond Williams's analysis of the construction of lost innocence, the lost object that Gilroy identifies as emerging from the imperial knot of nation, ethnicity, and race absolutism is a homogeneous, white British identity. Its homogeneity is secured through a logic of displacement onto the figure of nonwhite immigrants, who "not only represent the vanished empire but also refer consciousness to the unacknowledged pain of its loss and the unsettling shame of its bloody management."[55] This displacement is key to the construction of a pure, white Britain while also positioning it, and the greatness of the nation, as jeopardized:

> In the case of Britain, . . . a refusal to think about racism as something that structures the life of the postimperial polity is associated with what has become a morbid fixation with the fluctuating substance of national culture and identity. In a revealing pattern established by Winston Churchill's influential triangulation of the post-1945 world, the core of British particularity is deemed to be under disastrous attack from three different directions: Americanization, Europeanization, and a nonspecific subsumption by immigrants, settlers, and invaders of both colonial and postcolonial varieties. Behind these multiple anxieties lies the great transformation that quickly reduced the world's preeminent power to a political and economic operation of more modest dimensions.[56]

Like Williams, Gilroy presents melancholia as a mechanism that develops in response to the destabilizing and disorienting experience of change. After the result of the referendum on European Union membership in 2016, Gilroy's diagnosis of contemporary British political culture, with its "obsessive repetition of key themes—invasion, war, contamination, loss of identity,"[57] reads with an added pertinence and is echoed by analyses of the outcome that have taken into account the legacies of empire in contemporary formations of national identity.[58] Ultimately, postcolonial melancholia is a longing for the stable identities that can be found in a time when Britain's prestige and moral values were still unthreatened.[59] In a further act of displacement, stability is now found in the promise of racial identity that postcolonial melancholia contains. Britishness is made synonymous with threatened whiteness, so that "the

melancholic pattern has become the mechanism that sustains the unstable edifice of increasingly brittle and empty national identity."[60]

Alongside the Churchillian construction of past imperial greatness, key to which is a mythological memory of Britain's role in the Second World War, Gilroy also identifies a different and more complex expression of postcolonial melancholia that "turns inward, seeking resources for national renewal in the treasure trove of Englishness."[61] Here, depictions of the countryside are coupled with an imperial logic of race and belonging in a mournful yearning for a lost sense of home and the feeling of security that it provided. Ian Baucom has suggested that a turn to Englishness developed as a response to the threat posed to the racial and cultural homogeneity of Britishness by the elastic quality of its imperial boundaries.[62] An English identity emerged that invested itself in "quintessentially English locales, as its authentic identity-determining locations."[63] Baucom sees here the nodes required for a nostalgic mode of Englishness to emerge that has become a consistent trope in English fiction writing. From these spatial investments in identity there inevitably develops a need to protect these spaces from the corrupting spatial practices of outsiders. Again, the campaign to leave the European Union comes to mind with its contradictory articulation of border anxiety alongside the desire to rekindle imperial prestige.[64]

The access to the past offered by ruins inevitably provides an appeal as objects with which narratives of decline and loss can be articulated. Baucom offers an understanding of how postcolonial melancholia can find expression at sites of ruination, and specifically to the way ruins and a sense of place can become complicit in discourses of nation and empire. In his reading of V. S. Naipaul's *Enigma of Arrival*, the temporal element of ruins becomes key in allowing a past to be constructed that alleviates the anxiety of the unfulfilled promises of the present.

Naipaul's account of arrival in Britain is one of disappointment in being confronted with the fraudulent quality of the idea of England and Englishness that he had been sold while growing up in Trinidad.[65] Having internalized this image, the acknowledgment of its deceit also entails the destabilizing experience of being confronted with the "inventedness of his own identity."[66] According to Baucom, ruins and the concept of decay become mediators for Naipaul's melancholic response to his anxiety. For Naipaul, ruins provide a certain authenticity to the past that allows for the evidence of fabrication to be countered. A decaying country house becomes proof of an original: a surviving fragment of the lost England of his imagination. Melancholia offsets the evidence of fabrication by replacing it with an idea of belatedness. Naipaul's encounter with ruins allows for the establishment of the idea that an authentic England has been and gone prior to his arrival. The access to the past offered by ruins

preserves a fantasy, allowing Naipaul to bury his disappointment and hold on to an identity that was otherwise being exposed as artificial.

But Baucom's reading sees more than a simple nostalgic operation of recalling a past through ruins, with Naipaul's fixation on decay pointing to a further narrative function that is put to work. In valorizing decay as "perfection in itself,"[67] Baucom sees a switch in Naipaul's object of desire, from a lost past to the immortalizing capacity of ruination itself: "[The ruin] accommodates that past but accommodates it by signalling that past's terminus, by marking, in fallen stones, its boundary."[68] Ruins function as "the final page of a national epic, . . . the final utterance in an imperial discourse of cultural belonging."[69] They become objects that provide access to an authentic past, but also become a part of that past by embodying its end point, and hence perform the compartmentalization necessary for nostalgic visitation. The crucial move that Baucom outlines here is that in seeing perfection in ruin, Naipaul secures not only the authenticity of the idea of England he arrived with but also the perfection of its imperial moment.[70]

Baucom ultimately sees an act of refusal in *The Enigma of Arrival*. Naipaul registers that a return to the untainted imperial past is impossible, but rather than allowing for this to lead to an acknowledgment that continuation requires an act of reinvention enabled and preceded by mourning, he opts instead for a melancholic withdrawal into the past, the authenticity and perfection of which has been secured through his particular engagement with ruins.[71] Naipaul's rejection of the future underscores the need to find ways of engaging with ruins that break with postcolonial melancholia's destructive feedback loop of loss. Charlotte Williams's novel *Sugar and Slate* provides direction in this respect, demonstrating how dialogue with objects and spaces can play a part in more reparative responses to experiences of flux and disorientation.

"A Place of Empty Pubs and Chapels and Vacant Stares": The Power of "Things" in Charlotte Williams's *Sugar and Slate*

Sugar and Slate is an autobiographical novel that tells the story of a mixed-race woman of Welsh and Afro-Guyanese heritage who grows up in north Wales, Sudan, and Nigeria and subsequently lives in Guyana and Wales. Williams offers meditations on belonging and inherited memory as she weaves together various place-based memories from her life. It is a story of a search for the

Figure 3 A doorway in the remains of the level 9 mill. Image courtesy of the author, August 2019.

"references" that can help overcome the experience of feeling dislocated from "anything that you are or that you might be."[72]

In the novel, this process of searching out and constructing a history is regularly performed through objects. Food, hair accessories, items of clothing, furniture, and nail polish all become nodes of identity and history at various points; for one character, a trumpet provides a sense of home when place and nationality can no longer be relied on.[73] Places also carry the "physical imprint" of memory and history in *Sugar and Slate*, facilitating "a particular type of re-membering [that is] an all-consuming experience."[74] There is an archaeological metaphor threaded throughout the novel, which depicts the search for identity and origins as a dig for fossils that can uncover the "collective memory lying buried below the immediate moment."[75] The chapter "Icon and Image" begins with Williams's account of accompanying her father on excavation digs in West Africa while he was studying icons sculpted for ritual worship, objects that could articulate a history of the transatlantic slave trade and provide shape to the story of his own origins:

> There's an African proverb that goes, "A thing is always itself and more than itself." It means that even inanimate objects have a life within them. . . . These effigies were objects but at the same time much more than mere objects. They were sym-bols of worlds of meaning; sacred representations of ways of life long gone. . . . The digging took us closer and closer to the

answer that stared back at him from every little metal figure and was buried in the fabric of every metal artifact. Iron. The iron bar was the key to the story that bound us all together.[76]

Through the materiality of these small objects, Williams forges connections between the demand for iron in Africa, industrial development in Wales, and slave labor in Caribbean sugar plantations. The link made between slavery, colonialism, and industrialization is repeated toward the end of the novel, in relation to Penrhyn Slate Quarry in Bethesda, northwest Wales:

> Penrhyn Castle looms on my own horizon now, a monument to my double historical heritage. The twist for me is that this whole empire would not have been possible at all had it not been for the huge fortune Richard Pennant made from what he called his *West India interests*. It was the cruelly driven slaves; men, women and children who toiled and sweated for the huge sugar profits that built the industries in Wales. Out of the profits of slave labour in one Empire, he built another on near-slave labour. The plantocracy sponsored the slateocracy in an intimate web of relationships where sugar and slate were the commodities and brute force and exploited labour were the building blocks of the Welsh Empire. My slate memories and my sugar memories are forged together.[77]

Nineteenth-century British aristocratic wealth was inevitably complicit in a deep complex of economic relationships tied to the slave trade, but there has been a categorical failure in the written record of the Welsh slate mining industry to foreground this dimension of its history in any meaningful way.[78] In the case of Richard Pennant, Member of Parliament for Liverpool and a leading antiabolitionist, wealth generated from the forced labor of enslaved people in inherited sugar plantations in the Caribbean funded the acquisition of the Penrhyn estate.[79] Pennant invested his wealth in the infrastructural innovations of Penrhyn Quarry, which set "the technological and organisational norms that other quarry capitalists would follow as they swept into north Wales in the first decades of the nineteenth century."[80]

Williams proceeds from the above passage by questioning how Pennant's Welshness will be received by the national conscience as his story comes to light. In doing so, she highlights the shifting parameters of Welsh national identity and history more broadly, both engaged in a constant process of rewriting and the possibility for visibility and erasure that exists in this pliability. Like country and city, colonialism and industrialization have acquired distinct and insular depictions in Britain's collective memory.[81] The passage answers to

a need to speak of colonialism and industrialization in the same instance, and as an extension of this, Williams goes on to identify the need for Wales to find a language that can articulate its position in the UK without relying on a borrowed colonized-colonizer discourse. Without appropriate modification, the space needed to facilitate a "recognition of the black man who is Welsh or the Welshman who is black" is erased,[82] and the specificity of Wales's subjugation within the UK remains underformulated.[83] A new narrative is required that can do justice to the nuance of Wales's position as peripheralized but simultaneously entangled in empire through complex spatial and economic relationships, often against its will and other times not.

    Sugar and Slate demonstrates how global stories can be told through the smallest objects while also mediating the construction of personal histories.[84] Williams closes the "Icon and Image" chapter with a poem that details an encounter with souvenirs in "the Africa shop" that sits next to the slavery museum in Liverpool.[85] The poem mirrors the description of her father's archaeological trips that opens the chapter, with Williams looking at the souvenirs to try to make sense of her personal story and its place within a wider history:

> Three hundred years down the ancestral trail
> I stand;
> object and subject, it and other
> me and mine
> . . . .
> Ritually silent, expression denied
> in ebony figures the beings reside.
> The historical signature, the coded motif.
> Behind mask, masquerade
> and mirrors of imagination
> I stand
> face to face with
> Trinket or artifact? Icon? Image?
> Me?[86]

The souvenirs echo the theme of dislocation that runs throughout the novel by extracting and distorting the iconography of sacred objects of worship. They represent "Africa in the mind of Wales," but Williams understands this depiction as an integral part of her story, recognizing that it is hers "to capture and reinvent with time."[87] It is part of the "body map" of her identity: the souvenirs speak to the experience of being estranged from a history but also destabilize notions of authenticity relating to identity, allowing for an acknowledgment that origins and roots require active construction from a "mixed up jumble of things."[88]

Sugar and Slate speaks to the power of objects and spaces as meeting points of intertwined histories: to the power of erasure that they hold but also the potential for reclamation and rewriting that lays dormant in their traces. Spaces and objects can be activated as sites of struggle where the possibility of rewriting history is opened to make space for one's own. In this sense the novel attests to the power of storytelling as a medium for establishing a sense of home, and the ability to construct cultural identities through objects as a response to an "aching fear of disappearance."[89] But Williams stresses that this fear can only be remedied if lingering sentiments of purity are corrupted.[90] By rejecting postcolonial melancholia, the journey toward a sense of home can become a process of constant rewriting that aims for the "integration and reconciliation of [the] contradictory legacies of the past."[91]

Conclusion

> What's distinctive about haunting is that it is an animated state in which a repressed or unresolved social violence is making itself known, sometimes very directly, sometimes more obliquely. I used the term haunting to describe those singular yet repetitive instances when home becomes unfamiliar, when your bearings on the world lose direction, when the over-and-done-with comes alive, when what's been in your blind spot comes into view. . . . Haunting and the appearance of specters or ghosts is one way, I tried to suggest, we are notified that what's been concealed is very much alive and present, interfering precisely with those always incomplete forms of containment and repression ceaselessly directed toward us.
>
> — Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*

> Every place has its own story, or even a proliferation of stories, and every spatial practice constitutes a form of re-narrating or re-writing a place. . . . Spirits or ghosts . . . signify the shared memories that render space . . . habitable as place.
>
> — Maria del Pilar Blanco and Esther Peeren, *The Spectralities Reader: Ghosts and Haunting in Contemporary Cultural Theory*

Rhosydd Quarry's closure was slow and drawn out, beginning in 1930 and not finalized until 1948.[92] After hopes of restarting operations were eventually discarded, a small company moved in to squeeze out any residue of value that remained in the walls of the level 9 mill itself, tearing down its structure to

make roofing slates from its slabs.[93] This final period of work accounts for much of the site's current appearance as a vast clearing, interrupted only by the stark physical presence of the barracks, which would have seemed small next to the mill during its time. It is worth considering the short-term mentality that went into the erection of many slate quarry buildings, which were built quickly in response to evolving demands.[94] The destruction of the mill for vestiges of usable slate is characteristic of a purely functional sentiment toward these buildings that will inevitably be at odds with the kind of value that they may now be imbued with as heritage.[95] Longevity was not a priority and thus heightens the speed of decay and sense of ephemerality that we are now confronted with in trying to piece together a history.

I began this essay with a description of an experience of defamiliarization, the slate industry ruins I grew up surrounded by suddenly seeming out-of-place. What I have come to appreciate through an active engagement with this history is a distinct sense of placeness that develops when this history is considered in its complexity and experienced spatiotemporally. I have engaged with the idea that I was confronted with the "thingness" of the level 9 ruins at Rhosydd, where my relationship to the ruins was unsettled and I was met with the affective presence of historical traces, some of which I have been able to unravel in the above. This includes the slate industry barracks as a key site in the formation of a modern Welsh-language identity, which arose in the context of a seismic experience of change and rupture as industrialization took hold in rural Wales. With regard to the slate mining landscape of northwest Wales more broadly, this also includes histories wherein the ties between slavery, colonialism, and industrialization are intimately woven.

The prospect of heritage status for the northwest Wales slate mining landscape raises questions about the power of framing, with its ability to make certain histories visible while rendering traces of others. This hierarchy of visibility would result from singularity being opted for in place of multiplicity. My reflections on the reactionary political potential of an affective structure of loss have been conducted with this move toward singularity in mind. More explicitly, I have aimed to account for some of the histories that will likely be obscured if slate industry ruins are incorporated into a sanitized celebration of British industrialization.

In a postcolonial context, the ever-evolving narratives of empire have a tendency toward accounts of a great past that hinge on notions of lost or tainted purity. These narratives have responded to imperial decline with a melancholic affective structure that produces feedback loops of loss as national

Figure 4 Moelwyn Mawr from Cnicht. Image courtesy of the author, August 2019.

sentiment, a legacy that is reverberating in contemporary Britain. Heritage has been known to play a part in this project,[96] but this essay has aimed to show that the absence of heritage framing does not necessarily safeguard against the pitfalls of singularity. My encounter with the ruins at Rhosydd demonstrated the attraction of reductive narratives and binary explanations when faced with incomprehension, instability, flux. I hope to have shown that a resistance to this impulse can lead to an establishment of the complexity of overlapping histories that are tied to overlapping temporalities and geographies: the movement of value, capital, physical landscapes and people, both forced and voluntary. This involves the indispensable need to speak about industrialization and empire in the same instance. It is of necessity that the traces of each are identified in the other: only then is it possible to break with the haunting feedback loop of melancholia and begin to work through the flux.

* * *

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Notes

[1] Rhiain Bower, "Baricsio: The Slate Quarrymen's Barracks of North-West Wales," *Journal of Architecture* 23, no. 1 (2018): 158, https://doi.org/10.1080/13602365.2018.1426030.

[2] Laurajane Smith, *Uses of Heritage* (New York: Routledge, 2006). Smith's theorization of the "authorised heritage discourse" (29) addresses the specific type of erasure I refer to here.

[3] "Introduction," Cofio Cwmorthin Remembered, accessed July 31, 2020, www.cwmorthin.com/introduction

[4] Bower, "Baricsio," 141.

[5] Steven Morris, "Welsh Slate Mining Landscape Nominated as World Heritage Site," *Guardian*, January 24, 2020, https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/jan/24/welsh-slate-mining-landscape-nominated-as-world-heritage-site.

[6] Bill Brown, "Thing Theory," *Critical Inquiry* 28, no. 1 (2001): 4, https://www.jstor.org/stable/1344258.

[7] Ibid., 4, 7.

[8] Ibid., 5, 7.

[9] Ibid., 5.

[10] Ibid., 4–5.

[11] Ibid., 5.

[12] Tumultuous parliamentary affairs and the omnipresence of the Brexit negotiations created a pervasive atmosphere of uncertainty in the UK throughout 2019. The referendum on European Union membership in 2016 was weighing heavily on my mind during the walk, specifically attempts to understand the decision to leave in all its complexity.

[13] Raymond Williams, *The Country and The City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 96.

[14] Ibid., 66.

[15] Ibid., 98.

[16] Bower, "Baricsio," 141; Paul H. Manning, "English Money and Welsh Rocks: Divisions of Language and Divisions of Labor in Nineteenth-Century Welsh Slate Quarries," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 44, no. 3 (2002): 486, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417502000233.

[17] "Quarry Proprietors," Slatesite, accessed July 31, 2020, http://www.llechicymru.info/IQP.english.htm.

[18] Manning, "English Money and Welsh Rocks," 484.

[19] Ibid., 506–7.

[20] Margarita Palacios, "The Aesthetics of Memory: Ruins, Visibility, and Witnessing," *Sociological Review* 67, no. 3 (2019): 609, https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0038026118818832.

[21] Brown, "Thing Theory," 5.

[22] Palacios, "Aesthetics of Memory," 604.

[23] Ibid., 615.

[24] Ibid., 610.

[25] Ibid., 611.

[26] Ibid., 606.

[27] Felix Guattari, "Ritornellos and Existential Affects," *Discourse* 12, no. 2 (1990): 67, http://www.jstor.com/stable/41389153.

[28] Palacios, "Aesthetics of Memory," 606.

[29] Ibid., 608.

[30] Guattari, "Ritornellos and Existential Affects," 67.

[31] Bower, "Baricsio," 141.

[32] Ibid., 145, 150.

[33] Ibid., 150.

[34] Michael J. T. Lewis and John Horsley Denton, *Rhosydd Slate Quarry* (United Kingdom: Peter Burgess, 2018), 48.

[35] Ibid., 83, 87.

[36] Ibid., 87–88.

[37] Bower, "Baricsio," 157.

[38] Lewis and Denton, *Rhosydd Slate Quarry*, 41.

[39] Bower, "Baricsio," 153.

[40] Ibid., 145, 150. *Caban* was the quarry's lunchroom.

[41] Manning, "English Money and Welsh Rocks," 483.

[42] Lewis and Denton, *Rhosydd Slate Quarry*, 89.

[43] An *englyn* by former Rhosydd quarryman John Jones, also known as the bard Ioan Brothen, in John William Jones, ed., *Llinell neu Ddwy, gan Ioan Brothen* (Blaenau Ffestiniog: Rhedegydd office, 1942), my translation. *Englyn* is a traditional Welsh verse form.

[44] Lewis and Denton, *Rhosydd Slate Quarry*, 83.

[45] Bower, "Baricsio," 137.

[46] Sara Ahmed, "Affective Economies," *Social Text* 22, no. 2 (2004): 117–39, https://muse.jhu.edu/article/55780. See, e.g., Ahmed's discussion of the affective economy of hate: "In such affective economies, emotions do things, and they align individuals with communities—or bodily space with social space—through the very intensity of their attachments" (119).

[47] Ibid., 120.

[48] Ibid., 119.

[49] Williams, *The Country and The City*, 61.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid., 298.

[52] Ibid., 36.

[53] Paul Gilroy, *Postcolonial Melancholia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 99.

[54] Ibid., 99.

[55] Ibid., 101.

[56] Ibid., 12.

[57] Ibid., 14.

[58] Gurminder K. Bhambra, "Brexit, Class, and British 'National' Identity," *Discover Society*, July 5, 2016, https://discoversociety.org/2016/07/05/viewpoint-brexit-class-and-british-national-identity/.

[59] Gilroy, *Postcolonial Melancholia*, 90.

[60] Ibid., 106.

[61] Ibid., 115.

[62] Ian Baucom, *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire, and the Locations of Identity* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999), 10.

[63] Ibid., 12.

[64] Bhambra, "Brexit, Class, and British 'National' Identity,". Bhambra details the Brexit campaign's toxic knot of war iconography, racism, and a longing for a form of sovereignty that has never existed in Britain.

[65] V. S. Naipaul, *The Enigma of Arrival* (London: Viking, 1987).

[66] Baucom, *Out of Place*, 177.

[67] Ibid., 182.

[68] Ibid., 183.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid., 184.

[71] Ibid., 186–87.

[72] Charlotte Williams, *Sugar and Slate* (Aberystwyth: Planet, 2006), 47.

[73] Ibid., 154.

[74] Ibid., 130.

[75] Ibid., 11.

[76] Ibid., 89–90.

[77] Ibid., 175.

[78] Marian Gwyn, "Wales and the Memorialisation of Slavery in 2007," *Atlantic Studies* 9, no. 3 (2012): 311, https://doi.org/10.1080/14788810.2012.688629.

[79] Chris Evans, *Slave Wales: The Welsh and Atlantic Slavery, 1660–1850* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2010), 69.

[80] Ibid., 70.

[81] Williams, *The Country and The City*, 279: "Much of the real history of city and country, within England itself, is from an early date a history of the extension of a dominant model of capitalist development to include other regions of the world. . . . Thus one of the last models of 'city and country' is the system we now know as imperialism."

[82] Williams, *Sugar and Slate,* 176.

[83] Hywel M. Griffiths, "Water under the Bridge? Nature, Memory, and Hydro-politics," *cultural geographies* 21, no. 3 (2014): https://doi.org/10.1177/1474474013510109. Griffiths provides a succinct overview of the acts of land seizure and displacement that were carried out by the UK government in Wales throughout the late nineteenth and twentieth century (451).

[84] James Walvin, *Slavery in Small Things: Slavery and Modern Cultural Habits* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2016).

[85] Williams, *Sugar and Slate*, 92.

[86] Ibid., 92–93.

[87] Ibid., 93.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Ibid., 190.

[90] Ibid.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Lewis and Denton, *Rhosydd Slate Quarry*, 49.

[93] Ibid., 14, 52.

[94] Bower, "Baricsio," 140.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Smith, *Uses of Heritage*.

Interview with Boreth Ly on Her New Book, *Traces of Trauma*

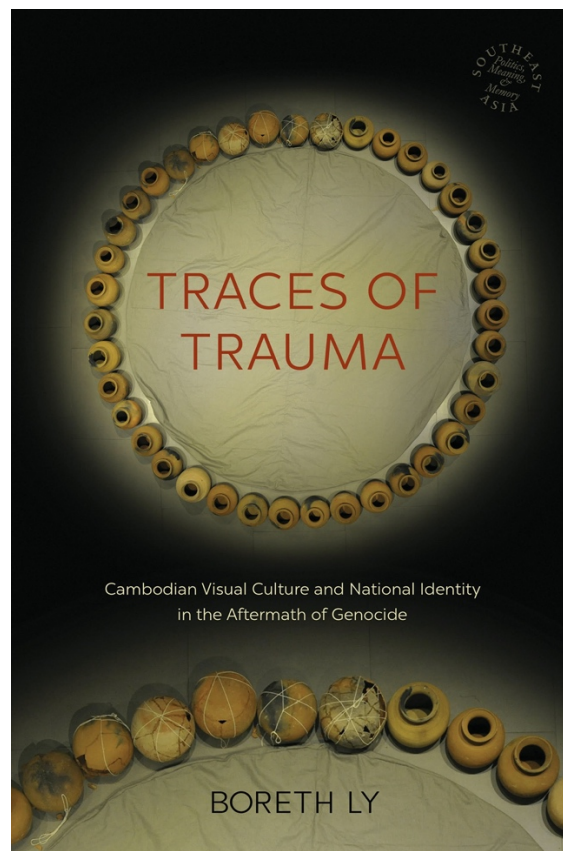Boreth Ly, Catherine Ries, Michelle Yee, and Christina Ayson Plank

Figure 1 Cover of Traces of Trauma: Cambodian Visual culture and National Identity in the Aftermath of Genocide *by Boreth Ly (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2020). Image courtesy of Boreth Ly.*

Boreth Ly's latest book is *Traces of Trauma: Cambodian Visual Culture and National Identity in the Aftermath of Genocide* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2020.) This is a complex book, to say the least. It is not the type of book just anyone could write. Professor Boreth explores how the artistic practices of contemporary Cambodian artists at home and in the diaspora—including installation artists, painters, photographers, filmmakers, poets, and court dancers—give voice to a culturally specific understanding of trauma and how they found ways to live after the civil war, US secret bombings, and Khmer Rouge genocide. Her background, experiences, and intellectual fortitude make her uniquely capable of formulating discreet and meaningful connections across different art forms and objects. We admire the way Professor Boreth can intellectualize and theorize but not erase the emotional anguish that grounds the creation of these works of art. She is not afraid of her humanity. Moreover, she is not afraid to make it personal.

That is why we, Professor Boreth's graduate student advisees, came to work with her at UC Santa Cruz. She emboldens us to ask difficult questions and challenge the status quo. She asks us to test disciplinary boundaries by expanding our perceptions of the visual both materially and experientially. We are encouraged to embrace the fragmentation inherent in all subject matter and to reject the belief that knowledge and knowing are clean, complete, and finished. Professor Boreth's scholarship is founded on the idea that leaving scholarly inquiry open and unre-solved creates pathways for more meaningful and profound understandings. And we agree.

In this way, *Traces of Trauma* is emblematic of our relationship with Professor Boreth. The shattering of traditional notions of what is considered "fine art" in *Traces of Trauma* reveals the culturally specific ways that art and its histories are oftentimes structured. For us, as visual studies students, the book is an innovative example of how visual culture, as a field of inclusive yet critical study, can manifest in a way that not only reveals the arbitrariness of hierarchies but actively works to dismantle them.

While the three of us maintain some similarities in our scholarly approach, we study vastly different subject matters. Yet for all of us, *Traces of Trauma* is a relevant launching pad from which to theorize and approach our respective re-search interests. This book can be used as a comparative study with other histories and cultures as a way to theorize and understand visual culture, trauma, its effects and affects, in both homelands and diasporas.

For instance, Christina Ayson Plank studies contemporary art of the Fili-pinx diaspora. She is interested in the effects of Spanish and American imperialism on the displacement of contemporary Filipinx communities as it relates to issues

of labor. Her work necessitates a fragmentation of Asian American studies in order to explore how an interrogation of race, empire, and labor disrupts an inclusion/exclusion binary. Studying the Filipinx diaspora expands and disrupts nation-state categorizations and American exceptionalism. She is interested in translating this research into a critical curatorial practice.

Catherine Ries studies Islamic art, material culture, performing arts, and gender in Southeast Asia. Her current focus is the theorization of female representations and self-representations in light of changes in Javanese Islam. The impetus of her inquiry stems from her curiosity in materials and materiality, the connections between performance, religious identities, and its expression, as seen through both the lenses of globalization and localization of Islam in Java.

Michelle Yee studies race and representation in American art and considers how notions of Americanness are inscribed in visual production from painting and sculpture to Hollywood movies and stand-up comedy. Her focus on Asian American visual production seeks to interrogate the racial definitions that define "Asian Americanness," an impossible identity that nevertheless finds its marks and its signifiers in the lived experiences of the artists and performers. This focus forces Americanness itself—as a national identity, a way of living, a type of appearance, and so forth—into stark relief, thus revealing its shattered and complex reality.

It takes an intellectually versatile and interdisciplinary scholar to advise students across such diverse areas of focus. Professor Boreth's fierce embrace of interdisciplinary work, and aversion to disciplinary restrictions used to create intellectual boundaries, makes her an adviser who can deftly guide each of us in our respective areas. We believe this comes across in our interview, as we draw our questions from our individual perspectives and scholarly inquiries. The flow of this interview may indeed feel fragmented, but fragments do not mean there is no continuity or connection. By understanding the world through fragments, we are forced to confront the spaces in between, to engage beyond one moment, one object, one event, and think about how the pieces are in conversation with each other—a way to confront the existential implications for any subject of scholarly inquiry and eventually arrive at catharsis.

We are delighted and honored to engage with our adviser about her haunting yet inspirational book. We hope that our questions illuminate the profound reach of her scholarly endeavors and encourage you to explore her inquiries on trauma and visual culture in the Cambodian diaspora. This interview cannot fully express our gratitude for the opportunity to work with Professor Boreth and the concerted effort she puts into forming a meaningful bond with each of us. Our time as her advisees is defined by critical discourse, deep belly laughs, and the kind of conversation that evokes and inspires intellectual inquiry all against a backdrop

of beauty and pleasure. Over the summer of 2020, a year marked by social distancing and digital gatherings, our introduction and this interview unfolded over several collaborative online Zoom meetings between ourselves and Professor Boreth. Even though we cannot be physically together right now, we are grateful for the emails, online meetings, and phone calls that keep us connected. We look forward to the future when we can once again enjoy tea and conversation in her patio garden.

Christina Ayson Plank, Catherine Ries, Michelle Yee: This particular issue of *Refract* is devoted to "traces," and your book is titled *Traces of Trauma*. How do you define *traces* in your particular context?

Boreth Ly: Thank you for these thoughtful and provocative questions.

My book considers local Cambodian understanding and definitions of trauma. *Traces* in this context encompasses a translation of the Khmer word *snarm*, which means both a scar and footprint. Traces also include the Khmer concept of *baksbat*, literally meaning "broken body," leading to the broken spirit or mind. Importantly, my discussion of traces of trauma in Cambodia is grounded in both local Cambodian and continental theoretical understandings of these residues.

CR: The word *traces* suggests the subtle indication of something; *traces* can also refer to origins. Can you expand more on the traces that are left in the archive and how destruction, invisibility, and these vestiges of trauma amalgamate to rewrite historical narratives?

BL: Cambodian artists at home and in the diasporas turned to their personal and collective memories of the atrocities (the American bombing, civil war, and the Khmer Rouge genocide) to remember and address the legacy of trauma. Memory is one of the intangible archives and thus the repository for these obdurate traces. The arts discussed and analyzed in my book are inspired by and made of both collective and personal archives. For example, in her art, Amy Lee Sanford integrated letters that her late father wrote to her adopted white American mother. Likewise, Rithy Panh, a Cambodian French filmmaker who is a survivor of the genocide, relies on his own memory of the historical events as well as making use of the Khmer Rouge filmic archives. Sarith Peou, a Cambodian American poet who is incarcerated in a US prison, recounts his memory of those brutal years under the Khmer Rouge regime. Moreover, Cambodian artists also looked at bomb craters left by the American bombing of Cambodia, scars of the land that are equally potent parts of the national archive.

CAP: Your book analyzes different visual materials from performance, painting, film, and material culture. Can you explain your process in selecting these materials?

BL: Since the subject of my book considers historical and culturally specific ways of understanding trauma, my selection of media and materials was based around two focal points. First, I turned to what Cambodians value most as artistic expressions. In this case, that meant court dance, textiles, sculptures, and poetry, as well as film and photography. Second, since the production of Cambodian arts and culture underwent great interruption and erasure under the Khmer Rouge regime (when many artists were murdered), my choice of artistic materials was limited in the postgenocide period. As I mentioned in the introduction to my book, global contemporary art in Cambodia and the diasporas started in the 1990s, so we are considering relatively new art forms.

CAP and MY: In light of recent events in the United States and the world related to Black Lives Matter, it has become evident that historical traumas are simultaneously both of the past and of the present. How does the Cambodian American experience speak to the relationship between trauma and race?

BL: Even though the historical conditions for these events are different, the legacy of these deeply politicized forms of historical traumas continue to haunt the lives of survivors, perpetrators, and their descendants. As I discussed in my book, one of the difficult challenges for survivors and their descendants is to see the perpetrators of the genocide living and holding high positions in the current Cambodian government. I see a parallel between the commemorative statues and monuments celebrating the racist regime in the United States and the erection of monuments and statues to celebrate members of the current political regime in Cambodia who participated in the Khmer Rouge genocide.

MY: Theories of trauma have always been predicated upon complex temporalities. Similarly, in your last chapter on Cambodian court dance, the simultaneous expansion and collapse of time is evident in this art form, which harks back to a past while also being reimagined for the present and the future. It is contemporary and historical. Can you speak further to the transcendence of static notions of time in both Cambodian court dance and in Cambodian art production more generally?

BL: I think in the West, there is an accepted understanding that history belongs to the past and the exact tenses as precise markers of time are arguably inherent in many European languages (such as the present, past, and future), but in the Khmer language (and I believe in many Asian languages) the measurement of time is not as precise. Moreover, what I was trying to articulate is embodied by what is commonly referred to as "tradition," art forms that are passed down from generation to generation with or without written words. Despite the fact that the Pol Pot regime interrupted artistic traditions by murdering a majority of the nation's artists, Cambodian artists managed to remember and to retrace traditional court dance through the memories and bodies of a few survivors. Court dance is transmitted through the body, using both mental and muscle memories, so it is truly an embodied experience. In addition to memory and the body, Cambodians draw upon ancient arts and legends as inspiration for their arts and dances. In brief, the line drawn between myth, memory, and history is cheerfully blurred.

Clearly, the production and understanding of arts and temporality are different in Cambodian culture. I was academically trained in the discipline of art history, and I had to unlearn in order to relearn. Aesthetically, there is a close relationship between court dance and the visual arts. However, in Euro-American universities, dance belongs to the fields of theater or performing arts departments, and not art history. I had to learn the history and practice of Cambodian court dance in order to write about it and do justice to what Cambodians value as arts. To this end, the interdisciplinary and decolonized space within the History of Art and Visual Culture Department at UC Santa Cruz allows me to carry out this much-needed decolonization of methods and approaches to the writing of arts and visual culture.

CR: Given the Khmer Rouge's rejection of the arts and intellectualism, and that they murdered anyone perceived as belonging to one of those categories, I find it curious that they did not destroy national artistic treasures, such as the collection at the National Museum, ancient monuments, and the Royal Palace. Do you have a theory as to why these monuments were spared?

BL: Indeed, this is a very interesting contradiction. Fortunately, they did not destroy these national treasures. Likewise, neighboring countries such as Vietnam and Laos, with histories of their own communist revolutions, did not eradicate the arts belonging to the previous regimes. Today, this older art and architecture attracts tourists. In the Cambodian context, the Khmer Rouge regime lasted three years, eight months, and twenty days: it was short-lived and only started to produce art that served its own political ideology in 1977, mainly portraits of Pol Pot, the

face of the regime that I discussed in one of the chapters in my book. We know that a colossal statue of Pol Pot was to be placed on top of the hill called Wat Phnom, an important landmark in Phnom Penh with Buddhist temple perched on top. There was a plan to destroy this Buddhist temple and replace it with this monumental statue of Pol Pot. This plan suggests that the regime had intended to replace some of the public monuments and temples belonging to the previous regimes with their own art. I think had the regime lasted longer, one might imagine that the city of Phnom Penh would have looked more like the capitals of North Korea or China, with buildings and statues celebrating its victory and its leaders such as Kim Il Sung and Kim Jung Il and Mao Zedong.

CR: As you mentioned in your book, the Khmer Rouge genocide is a recent traumatic event, meaning there are people alive today who survived this horrific era. There is also a younger generation who did not live the trauma, but instead inherited the trauma. There are similarities between the Khmer Rouge genocide and the 1965 mass killings in Indonesia, not only because they are recent traumas, but because both are autogenocide. Many Indonesians who survived the trauma are still not willing to talk about their experience, mostly perhaps because of suppression during Suharto's regime; this horrific event is still largely absent from textbooks and official history. In Cambodia, is the Khmer Rouge genocide incorporated into the national narratives and history? In general, is there a desire to talk about these events as a method to assuage trauma, or is there a generational divide between those who lived it and those who inherited the trauma? Are the artists in your book who use their work openly as a form of healing representative of the cultural ideology at large, or is that openness more of an anomaly?

BL: This is a provocative question in that it provokes comparison with other atrocities around the world. Even though my book is about historical trauma and its legacy in Cambodia, I hope it will be read widely and comparatively with similar genocides in different parts of the world.

In the post–Khmer Rouge era, Cambodia markets two major tourist attractions: the ancient temples of Angkor and the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and the killing fields. Yes, the history of the genocide is taught in schools in Cambodia, but as it is expected, the "official" version of history is written by the victors, so it is highly politicized. Naturally, there is still a strong resentment and conflict between the perpetrators and their descendants and survivors and their descendants who live in Cambodia and the diasporas. Interestingly, the younger generation of Cambodians (who did not experience the genocide firsthand but were born in the refugee camps or in the US and European countries) are strongly affected by

the trauma that their parents experienced. I think their parents' displacement might be the reason for this experience of inherited trauma, especially some of the younger generation of Cambodian Americans who were born in the refugee camps.

The artists included in my book are those whose lives are affected and changed forever by the atrocities, so they have chosen to address the legacy of trauma and healing in their works. Of course, there are Cambodian artists who have chosen to move forward and address other social issues such as ecology and climate change or attempt to come up with formal innovation such as their own localized versions of minimalism and abstract expressionism. There are also Cambodian women artists who address the issue of gender in Cambodian culture, a topic that I considered in a recent article.[1]

CAP: Your book analyzes the ways Cambodian artists of the diaspora negotiate the history of genocide, displacement, survival, and the resulting trauma. Do you think these histories necessitate a new understanding of Asian America that attends to these diasporic communities?

BL: Yes, absolutely. Arguably, many Americans' initial exposure to Southeast Asia is through the Vietnam War. It was a war that had a great effect on American visual culture, especially film and photography. It is this and other civil wars in Southeast Asia that engendered the emergence of Southeast Asian American artists in the US who are great players in the national and global art world: I am thinking of Dinh Q. Lê, Sopheap Pich, Binh Danh, Amy Lee Sanford, Anida Yoeu Ali, and many more emerging artists from the Hmong and Laotian American communities. These Southeast Asian American artists interrupt the narrative of "Asian American art history" in that they stretch beyond the fight for inclusion; they are creating and exhibiting their work in their respective homelands, diasporas, and global spaces. To wit, they inhabit multiple spaces, and their ethnic and racial identity is not fixed—they are cosmopolitan Asian and American or American and Asian.

However, in the past two decades, there is a tendency in the US to focus on Asian American and diasporic artists in the transpacific region. I think it is important to avoid perpetuating an American imperialism, regionalism, and an Asian colonial settlerism. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to include Southeast Asian diasporic communities in Europe and other continents in our discussion, writing, and exhibition. With the exception of Thailand, all Southeast Asian countries were colonized by European powers. Thus one cannot discuss the Cambodian or Filipinx diaspora without considering diasporic artists in France and Spain. I often imagine a traveling art exhibition by Filipinx diasporic artists from different

diasporas around the world and how it would lend itself for a comparative study of art, labor, migration, and diasporas.

MY: For many scholars of color in the United States, it feels unspoken and yet imperative to maintain a mantle of positive representation because of the continual marginalization of minority narratives. In your book—particularly, in the preface—you are brutally honest in your critique of contemporary Cambodian society, a refreshing positionality that offers a nuanced, antimonolithic consideration of a multidimensional culture. Can you speak to the value—and the risk—of being honest about the societies from which we come? How can scholars of color maintain and build political strength while resisting the tendency to overgeneralize?

BL: Indeed, how to negotiate and nuance this politics of racial and ethnic representations is a great challenge. While it is important to form a political coalition to resist ethnic, racial, and gender marginalization, there is always a sense of nesting "an other within an other"; it is thus necessary to resist any kind of racial generalization and racial and ethnic sovereignty. I think one can embrace what Gayatri Spivak has called "strategic essentialism" and, at the same time, vigilantly resist hegemonic and monolithic racial or ethnic voices. For instance, Southeast Asian Americans are obviously not members of a homogeneous community but are divided between social class and ethnic groups. In brief, not all Asian Americans are a minority model of success.

<center>* * *</center>

Boreth Ly is an associate professor of Southeast Asian art history and visual culture at the University of California, Santa Cruz. She coedited with Nora A. Taylor, *Modern and Contemporary Art of Southeast Asia* (2012). In addition, she has written numerous articles and essays on the arts and films of Southeast Asia and its diaspora. Academically trained as an art historian, Ly employs multidisciplinary methods and theories in her writings and analysis, depending on the subject matter. Last, she authored, *Traces of Trauma: Cambodian Visual Culture and National Identity in the Aftermath of Genocide* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2020).

Catherine Ries is a Ph.D. student and a Eugene Cota-Robles fellow in the Visual Studies program in the History of Art & Visual Culture department at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Her current research focuses on Islamic art, material culture, performing arts, and feminine identity in Indonesia. She is preparing for field research that will lead to a dissertation on female representations in the Islamic courts of Java.

Michelle Yee is a Ph.D. candidate in Visual Studies in the History of Art and Visual Culture Department at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Her dissertation examines race and representation through the visual culture of Asian American artists and performers. Michelle holds an MA in Art History from the University of Connecticut and a BA in Art History and English from Georgetown University. She has taught at Queens College, UC Santa Cruz, and the San Francisco Art Institute. Her writing can be found in *Third Text*, *Panorama*, *Art, Etc.*, and various exhibition catalogues.

Christina Ayson Plank is an emerging scholar, educator, and curator based in San Jose, California. She is a Ph.D. student at UCSC in the Visual Culture Studies department. Her research focuses on contemporary art of the Filipinx diaspora as it relates to issues of neocolonialism, labor, and migration. She received an M.A. in Asian American Studies at UCLA and a B.A. in Art History and Studio Art at Marist College.

Notes

[1] Boreth Ly, "The Politics of the Pot: Contemporary Cambodian Women Artists Negotiating Their Roles In and Out of the Kitchen," SUVANNABHUMI 12, no. 1 (2020): 49-88.

Power Geometry in Urban Memory: Reading Taksim Square through the Concept of Representation of Space

Ceren Göğüş and Asiye Akgün Gültekin

Can memory be manipulated? How far can the will to remember resist the manipulation of the hierarchy? Isolation and exclusion are still useful as disciplinary tools of power. Since this is the case, what role do so-called public spaces serve in memorializing certain isolated histories while separating and thus excluding others? If memory spaces exist in correlation with loss of memory, can searching for traces underneath the layers be the worst enemy of forgetting? How can the search for traces in official spatial histories reveal whose memory is being prioritized as truthful historical account and whose memory has been forgotten? Official spatial histories demand that certain memories are forgotten and thus delegitimized; does this render the readings of spaces as alternative memorialization meaningless? If so, does trying to create memory spaces cause monumentality independent from memory? Does the very act of formalizing spaces of memory create a certain monumentality independent from those who remember it? How will urban geographies, condemned to be symbolic spaces of politics, resist this?

He who has been, from then on cannot not have been: henceforth this mysterious and profoundly obscure fact of having been is his viaticum for all eternity.

—Vladimir Jankelevitch**,** *L'Irréversible et la nostalgie*

Urban space *is* social interaction. In different periods of urban history worldwide, whoever controlled capital constructed the social structure depending on the type of said capital and its symbolic worth. Throughout different periods, from the Middle Ages to the emergence of nation-states and through the era of increasing globalization, the dominance of differential power structures has manifested spatially in cities. Within this construction, monumental spaces have had a very important place, in that they *are* the "hegemonic power, demarcating dialectical relationships between space, power and society."[1]

This is why the analysis of socially constructed codes of the actors who participate in the power struggle over the urban space with representations of their own value system (for instance, nationalist, secular, capitalist), which make up the layered urban memory, could provide the answer to the question "whose memory?"[2] The present essay asks this question through a reading of Taksim Square, which is one of the most monumental spaces in Istanbul. Instead of a nonlinear historical reading, our aim is to read the square through the spatial organization of its social, political, economic, and cultural layers. These layers contain the paradigms on historical thresholds generating different types of capital in the context of Pierre Bourdieu's symbolical capital concept—a form of power that is not perceived as power but as a legitimate demand for recognition, deference, obedience, or the services of others.[3] Symbolic capital is thus based on the validation and recognition of a specific value in a perceptual dimension.

Taksim Square is a controversial symbolic space, which engenders social segregation, and has historically remained closed to certain individuals throughout its long history. Therefore, reading the public square through the representation of these different types of capital will reveal the space as a record of memories.

As a web of social relationships, space is dynamic, not static. This dynamic and relational nature of space is loaded with power, meaning, and symbolism.[4] Power geometry defines the reciprocal relationships it contains. In this heterogeneous space, types of capital (political, economic, and cultural) use their own power geometries to build space by signifying it with their own chosen image. The purpose of this exclusionary approach is spatial-temporal fixation, and these semantic fixations are thus places of social struggle (in the era of nation-states, this was the reflection of objectification of cultural and political capital; in the neoliberal era, the urban space is a form of capital fixation, a secondary circuit of capitalism).[5] By associating these interpretations with historical events, a collective memory is created (just as the nation-state builds itself on historical events that sanctify it with myths, legends, and ceremonies). A cycle of power struggle and resistance takes place in symbolic spaces in a city

Figure 1 Taksim Square. Image courtesy of the authors.

that are charged with different meanings for its residents. Taksim Square, as we explain while recounting its history, is this kind of space. It is a public space meaningful not only for residents of Istanbul but for the whole of Turkey, as the stage of important events that defined the historical arc of the country. Thus the present essay aims to read the power geometry that takes place there in a nonlinear historical way, which would comply with the dynamism of the space. The phases, which triggered the different geometric relations throughout the history of the power struggle on the square, are examined and correlated in the framework of Bourdieu's concepts of capital.

We discuss Taksim Square's transition from one type of capital to another (specifically political capital, through its change from a cemetery to a military area and then to the official, ceremonial area of the nation-state; economic capital as seen through the construction of hotels and because of its proximity to one of the historical cultural centers of the city; cultural capital with and because of its history as a recreational and art center; and finally as a space of resistance with its adoption by the people as a public meeting area) in the ongoing relationality of the historical cycle. We use a nonlinear, cyclical historical reading to show how the state of the social construct's impact on the square changes depending on the dominant capital type. The reality is that these multiple types of capital exist together on the square all the time, but they appear and disappear according to the dominant capital of the time. In the relationship of capital and space, the power geometry is created with memory. The symbolic meaning established in the relationship of object and memory turns the space into the object of the memory construction. Depending on the

strength of the capital, while one memory is brought forth to establish dominance in space, another one is forgotten.

(Whose) Memory Record or Loss of Taksim Square: Through the Urban Space and Power Geometry

There are geometric relationships between place-identity-memory-power and different aspects of capital. Just like the relationship between memory and object, the city is the locus of collective memory.[6] It can be said that urban memories exist because of a reflex of spatial fixation. There is a difference between created urban memories and the ones that spontaneously come into being. Forgetting-remembering happens spontaneously, whereas evoking-effacing are a part of created memory. The memory of the physical aspects of a place represented by urban artifacts is a tangible memory. On the other hand, the presentation of a place, where social relationships and acts take place, *is* an abstract or symbolic memory. This presentation can be understood through the codes and signs of the production of representations of space and spaces of representation, which are mentioned in Henri Lefebvre's urban practices trilogy.[7] The representation of space involves forms of information, planning technics, and the practices used by the state to organize and represent space. The spaces of representation include collective experiences and indicate resistances against the dominating practices of the space. That is to say, the symbolic production of meaning and the meaning developed against it define the power geometry of the production of social space. Doreen Massey develops the concept of power geometry related to globalization process. For different social groups, and different individuals, locations are placed in very distinct ways in relation to these flows.[8] In the present essay, the power geometry concept is used to define the power shift of capital types for gaining dominance in urban space through creating or selecting the memory.

Lefevbre argues that space is produced and reproduced and that is how it represents the area of struggle, like when individuals and groups use various cultural, social, and symbolic resources to protect or rise above their place in the social order.[9] Bourdieu conceptualizes these resources as "capital" when they transform to tools to be used in the struggle for social power relations. He diversifies the concept of capital to include all forms of power: financial capital (money and property), cultural capital (all cultural assets and services including education), social capital (networks of acquaintance and relations), and symbolic capital (legitimacy).[10] Anyone associated with these capital types can coexist with symbolic capital in the areas where power is being constructed. We can liken symbolic capital to the mastery of rhetoric. For example, to create legitimacy, some governments can paint their acts in search of financial capital

Figure 2 Taksim Square, Republic Monument 1970s. Image courtesy of SALT, Kemali Söylemezoğlu Archive.

as a "question of survival" for the country.[11] They rely on a very common tactic, using fear of an external or internal threat to create a support system in public, to legitimize their financial decisions. Language or discourse is the primary tool of legitimization. Like the signifier-signified relationship of the image, the relationship between what is said and concealed in discourse is as effective as the perception of the group. While explaining the areas of power struggle, Bourdieu talks about the "field" (*champ*) metaphor as structuring structure (education, religion, art, state, politic parties, unions, etc. are all fields, in which a dominant capital controls the order and rules of the field's operation to maintain its validity and clout), where a type of capital is distinctively imposed. Sites are, on the one hand, arenas, where products, services, information, or status are produced, put into circulation, and appropriated. On the other hand, they are real places of competition, which actors occupy in their struggle to accumulate and monopolize these different types of capital.[12] The present essay looks at Taksim Square, where prior conflicts turned various resources into capital to construct social power relations.

Taksim Square is a public space that has an important place in urban identity, memory, and the struggle for social power in Istanbul. It is at the intersection of İstiklal, Sıraselviler, İnönü, and Cumhuriyet Streets and Tarlabaşı Avenue, in the district of Şişli Beyoğlu (Fig. 1). It is surrounded by buildings like Maksem (a water distribution center built in the Ottoman era, 1839), the Fountain of Mahmud I next to the Maksem, Taksim Gezi Park (1940), (late) Atatürk Kültür Merkezi (Atatürk Culture Center, 1969), and the Marmara Hotel (1972), each culturally and historically significant sites. The square has

always been a busy urban center—a public transportation hub with dense pedestrian and vehicular traffic. It is also a place that carries geometries of power and represents urban resistance and heterogeneity. It is a place where different political powers have constructed projects in the name of maintaining that power over time.

The history of the square is quite unique as a public space. It is next to one of the oldest residential districts of the city, Pera, on the northern end of Grand Rue de Pera. This district, along with Galata, site of the old Genovese colony and a business and trading center, acted as a city center for minorities with different ethnic backgrounds in the nineteenth century, second to the main power center of the city in the Old Peninsula.

Settlement in this area started in the seventeenth century, when wealthy Europeans began to build their houses and gardens there.[13] The construction of the water distribution building, which gave Taksim (*Taksim* means distribution in Turkish) its name, started in 1732 and was finished in 1839. Around this time, a cemetery for both Muslim and non-Muslim occupants of Pera was established next to the Maksem.[14] In 1806 a military barrack building, Taksim Topçu Kışlası, was built on a part of the cemetery. This was during the time of the renewal and modernization of the Ottoman military system, and the building was a part and a symbol of this change. It also defined the area as a military area. As Aylin Topal puts it, "Authority of the sacred must have exchanged its attributes with the sacred aspect of authority."[15]

A conclusive modernization and westernization movement started in the empire in the nineteenth century. In 1839 these reforms were solidified with an imperial edict known as the Tanzimat Edict, which stated that every individual in the Ottoman Empire, religion and ethnicity notwithstanding, would have equal rights. The newfound privileges that came with this ruling caused the Pera area and its mostly non-Muslim residents to consolidate their wealth rapidly in this century. In 1855, when municipalities were first established as local governments, Pera was the first operating municipal district, largely due to this accumulated wealth, but also because its residents were of mostly European descent.[16] In the next twenty years the gravitational force of this young economic center caused all the empty areas in the district to be filled with residential structures.[17]

In 1864 the Christian cemetery in Taksim was moved and the first public park in Istanbul designed in its place.[18] In the nineteenth century the residence of the Ottoman sultans had been relocated from the Old Peninsula to the shores of Beşiktaş, which in turn stimulated the growth of surrounding areas. The establishment of European consulates in these areas, especially Taksim, was a result of this new geographic power shift and the already European character of the area. The area also became a cultural center with cafés, carnivals, celebrations, and entertainment venues such as the Istanbul Naum

Theater. This, of course, attracted foreign artists to Pera, and the number of hotels increased. Because of all this change and with the establishment of the municipality, it was decided that the cemetery would be moved to a place far away from the city and a park should be built in its place.[19] The park provided the European residents of the area a place to rest, relax, and entertain in the manner they were accustomed to. This was the period in which Pera started to be seen as an entertainment center.[20]

At the beginning of the century, in 1909, Taksim Topçu Kışlası became the scene of one of the biggest riots against the empire. It was led by a part of the military that did not support the westernization of the Ottoman Army. There were rumors that old officers were going to lose their stations to new ones trained in European ways. They were joined by the conservative groups, who were displeased by the change brought by the Tanzimat Edict, especially the distancing of the state from religious rule. This riot, called the March 31 Incident, ended in the bombardment of the barracks by the "new" Ottoman Army, but it also redefined the meaning of the barracks and Taksim.[21] Until this moment, the building was identified with the modernization reforms; from this point, it would be remembered in connection with a conservative riot.

Pera and Taksim were spaces defined by Western ideas and lifestyles throughout the Ottoman era. This would continue also during the early Republic, when the state had internalized these ideals as guidelines for the reforms that would shape the "new" Turkey. The majority of urban planning and constructions focused, understandably, on Ankara, as the new capital of the Republic. Even so, we see that just five years after the establishment of the Republic, Taksim was chosen as the place of a monument, designed by Pietro Canonica, commemorating the Republic, and the name was changed to Square of the Republic (Figs. 2, 3). The monument's design encapsulated all the main ideals behind the construction of the Republic. The founders of Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Ismet Inönü, and Fevzi Cakmak, are depicted on the monument, and they are accompanied by both soldiers and civilians. Atatürk is shown on both southern and northern sides: in military uniform, as a military leader, and in European garb, as a modern statesman. On the eastern and western sides, there are depictions of two women, one veiled, looking toward the sky and smiling; they are a clear symbol of the changing place of women in society. In the same vein, it was important that a female art student, Sabiha Ziya, was chosen to travel to Italy to help construct the monument.

The monument, and the landscape around it, was designed to become the first area in Istanbul for state ceremonies. Its large, formal inauguration ceremony in 1928 reflected this idea.[22] After the street names with foreign origins were banned, the names of the streets around the square were changed, too. Kışla Caddesi (Barracks Street) became Cumhuriyet Caddesi (Republic

Street); Cadde-i Kebir (Grand Rue de Pera; Grand Street) became İstiklal Caddesi (Liberty Street).[23]

The modernization project of the Republic was reflected in the urban planning projects. To this aim, Henri Prost was invited to Istanbul in 1936. He chose to design separate plans for districts, free areas according to the healthy cities principle,[24] instead of one strategic plan for the whole city; the Old Peninsula and Pera were two of these districts.[25] In his proposed plan for Beyoğlu, the whole area from the northern shores to Taksim was supposed to be demolished and rebuilt. Transportation was very important for Prost, so he planned roads to connect Taksim to Dolmabahce, to Kurtulus, and to the Old Peninsula through Halic. Beyoğlu, Taksim, Maçka, and Şişli were designated as main residential areas of the city. One of his proposals was to seize the remains of the cemetery and demolish the barracks to make room for a public park and promenade.[26] Prost's plan was closely connected with the construction of the national identity. With the appropriation of "free areas" (wide squares, parks, and open public spaces for play) and Hausmann-type avenues, this master plan was supposed to play a big role in the secularization of the urban space in Istanbul.[27] Taksim was supposed to be a public space, where women and men would freely come together to spend time and display the theoretical reforms of the Republic to conservative members of the society and to the international community, especially European nations.[28]

The barracks were restored after the March 31 Incident, and its courtyard was used as a football stadium until 1940. That year it was demolished for the construction of the Inönü Promenade, today Gezi Park. The police station on the square was replaced by Istanbul Opera House, renamed the Atatürk Cultural Center in 1943 (Fig. 4). In addition, the Atatürk Library, the Istanbul Radio Broadcasting House, and the Lütfi Kirdar Sports and Exhibition Hall were built around the square; all these buildings, right in the center of Istanbul, embodied the politics and ideals of the Turkish Republic.[29]

After Turkey joined NATO, in 1952 international hotel chains began to be opened around Taksim. The most prominent ones were the Hilton in 1955 and the Intercontinental Istanbul (today the Marmara Hotel) on the square in 1972.[30] The major demographic change of the area happened in 1955. The September 6–7 Incidents, which resulted in violent attacks on the houses and workplaces of the minorities living in Istanbul, forced these groups to abandon their living spaces.[31] The new occupants of the houses left empty around Taksim were the rural population from Anatolia, part of the massive immigration wave of this period.

Like almost all important central urban squares, Taksim Square was used by different social groups to make their voices heard by the ruling power. Before Taksim Square became the center for meetings and protests, the areas used by the public to show dissent (e.g., the protests against the occupation of

Figure 3 Taksim Square, 2003. Image Courtesy of Writers Archive.

the Ottoman Empire by the Allied Forces at the end of the First World War) were Sultanahmet Square, the Hippodrome of the Byzantine Empire (which was the traditional location for dialogue between the emperor and the public), and Beyazid Square.[32] These places are in the Old Peninsula, the governmental center of the time. After Ankara became the capital of the Republic and Taksim Square was reimagined as a centralized symbol of the state in Istanbul, the latter began to be used for public meetings. While in the 1950s political party rallies were organized in the square, in the 1960s it became a demonstration area, especially for students protesting the presence of NATO and imperialism in general. On February 16, 1969, a day known as Bloody Sunday in Turkey, students protesting the arrival of the US Sixth Fleet were attacked by right-leaning counterprotesters. In the ensuing confrontation, two students lost their lives. In the 1970s, it became the workers' movement whose turn it was to use the square.[33] In 1976 the first celebration of May Day in Turkey was held here. In the next year, half a million people are believed to have attended the celebrations, where gunfire was directed from the rooftops on the demonstrators. Through the gunfire and the panic caused by it, 34 people lost their lives and 134 people were injured. These attacks elevated Taksim Square to a kind of sacred place for the political Left in Turkey. In 1978, in spite of the attack, May Day celebrations were held in the square. In 1979 protesters were prevented from going to it, and in 1980, due to the coup, political gatherings were prohibited entirely.[34] In 2007, after clashes with the police, protestors managed to enter the square to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the attack. When protestors tried to do the same thing again a year later, the square was opened for a limited number of organizations in 2009. In 2010 it was opened for the May 1 celebrations, and millions attended.[35] After just two years, with the beginning of the pedestrianization project, the celebrations were prohibited again. The reason given was that the constructions made a meeting that size dangerous. In 2013 public demonstrations on the square were banned indefinitely, because of the possible negative effect on traffic and local business.[36] A new, 673,000-square-meter meeting place, Yenikapı Square, on the shore of Marmara, was built on a filled-in area between Samatya and Yenikapı. In spite of this change, Taksim Square did not lose its place as an important monumental

Figure 4 Atatürk Cultural Center, The Marmara and Republic Monument, 1970s. Image Courtesy of SALT, Harika-Kemali Söylemezoğlu Archive.

meeting space, a memory space in the sense of Pierre Nora, for the Turkish Left and public with all the historical weight lingering in its memory.

We can trace the influence of the early 1980s neoliberal politics on decisions to restructure this urban space. After the 1980s, Istanbul was seen as an object of consumption and marketed as a world city by the state and the local governments.[37] The reorganization of the space to turn Istanbul into an international marketplace started with "a production oriented structure, a financial sector, and tourism oriented urban economy, combined tourism centers, business and shopping centers provided by the Tourism Incentive Law; foreign capital investments and [a] number of foreign-owned shopping centers and hypermarkets in the city."[38] To attract the international companies' interest in addition to airports and business centers, "glamour zones" with good hotels, restaurants, and "world-class culture" were needed.[39] Beyoğlu district, a cultural center since the Ottoman era, was ready to use its varied social and economic resources for these ambitions, and Taksim, as its main square and a transportation hub, became its focal point.

The 1980s and 1990s, which Çağlar Keyder defines as the period in which informal globalization really started to evolve into the neoliberal era it became in the 2000s, were also when individual states started to put globalization-related politics into place.[40] In Turkey, from this point on, the race to become a global city was the government's main aim, and the transformation of the facades of cities was conducted through demolition and reconstruction. The cultural and architectural vocabulary used in these reconstructions was

chosen with a specific cultural code in mind. In Istanbul, like in Turkey in general, this vocabulary was adapted from the architectural styles of old Turkish states like the Ottoman Empire or the Anatolian Seljuk state to create a nouveau historicist style. The renewals in the Pera area consisted of demolishing the existing residential and commercial structures and pathways—the old passages or cinemas buildings—and rebuilding them by combining their land as malls that resembled their original selves from the outside with completely new floor plans inside.[41] This move simply reproduced the European nineteenth-century historicist architecture that already dominated the area.[42]

Sharon Zukin criticizes this kind of commodifying of space as a cultural object for global capital, as turning the cultural spaces into the most effective means of profit.[43] As John Urry puts it, this transformation occurs as the result of touristic strategies of governments in the framework of cultural flows and in connection with capital. History and culture were exhibited to market local aspects and thus appeal to certain touristic expectations.[44] This causes nonofficial accounts of cultural memory to be wiped away and turns it into a place for consumption, which provokes a conflict between economic capital and cultural capital.

In the case of Taksim Square, neoliberal policies, discourse, and practices used in transforming cultural heritage to symbolic capital have all been made visible through civil initiatives, including Emek Bizim (Emek Is Ours), which attempted to stop the destruction of Cinema Emek, or Beyoğlu Kent Savunması (Beyoğlu Urban Defense) and Taksim Platformu (Taksim Platform), which attempted to organize a civil resistance against the rapid urban transformation of the area.[45] There are also the cases of demolition in the Tarlabaşı area next to the square and Emek Movie theater and many other movie theaters and booksellers on Istiklal Street; plans for construction of a mosque (Fig. 5), the demolishment of the Atatürk Cultural Center (Fig. 6), and the obstruction of LGBTQ Pride and Women Day parades fed these worries.[46] While the existence of the square as a memory space, solidified by the social actions of its past, was being erased by these demolitions and reconstructions, it was being rapidly transformed to the arena of an economy centered on tourism and consumption.

In 2011 the Taksim Project, an extensive plan to divert the vehicle traffic in the square underground, was approved. The first objections to the project came from the chambers and civil initiatives. They pointed out that the absence of roads and traffic would create an undefined area, and opposed the rebuilding of the barracks, which spelled the demolition of the park. The component of the project that included diversion of traffic underground was realized, while the demolition of the park to construct the barracks provoked an unforeseen reaction from the public. In May 2013 the news of the impending demolition of the park started to circulate, and a protest framed as a "park-watch" and

Figure 5 Construction of the Mosque with the Republic Monument (in red frame) in front, 2018. Image Courtesy of Writers Archive.

occupation through tents and a concert was planned. The harsh police response to the protesters turned this small protest into a never-before-seen civil resistance that spread throughout Turkey, and for ten days Gezi Park and Taksim Square were occupied by thousands of circulating Istanbulites. The Gezi Park Incident, as it is called, ended with police intervention.[47]

These protests brought the residents of Istanbul with completely different backgrounds, political, economic, ethnic and sexual identities, and grievances together. Malte Fuhrmann describes the Gezi Park Protests as

> the atmosphere of a genuine fête populaire, an uncensored agora, however made it possible for these different visions of the megalopolis not only to coexist, but for new ones to be created. The lack of hierarchy and oppression, the media interconnectivity, and the young age of many protesters facilitated the production of new images through which common visions could be shared, visions which no longer had to necessarily revolve around the past.[48]

For the first time, in a long time, the square had given birth to a process of creation that was original, unique, and unencumbered by the expectations of capital. The municipality of Istanbul after the rule of conservative political parties for twenty-two years changed hands in 2019 to the socialist CHP

Figure 6 Taksim Square, facing the now empty Atatürk Cultural Center, 2019. Image Courtesy of Ilke Tekin.

(Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, Republican People's Party). In February 2020 the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality partnered with the Istanbul Research Center for an Urban Design Competition for Taksim Square. A temporary structure, named "Kavuşma Durağı" (Meeting Point), was designed and constructed in the square on February 15, but the Conservation Board decided that it had to be taken down immediately, an example of the newly established power struggle between the state and the local government over the power geometry in the square.

The architect Korhan Gümüş, comparing this project to many other realized projects allowed by the board that were much bigger in scale and damaging to the integrity of the square and included structural interventions, finds this decision political and relates it to representation politics in public space. He writes,

> There are two types of attitudes in this framework. First is inscribing ones own traces in a space. Taking down Topcu Barracks or building a mosque is in this manner. Second is defining the area as a transportation space, a transfer hub. Every single interference to Taksim until this day has been without an exception alienating or based upon erasing the other from the public space.[49]

As Fuhrmann puts it, it is a never-ending struggle for the "discursive
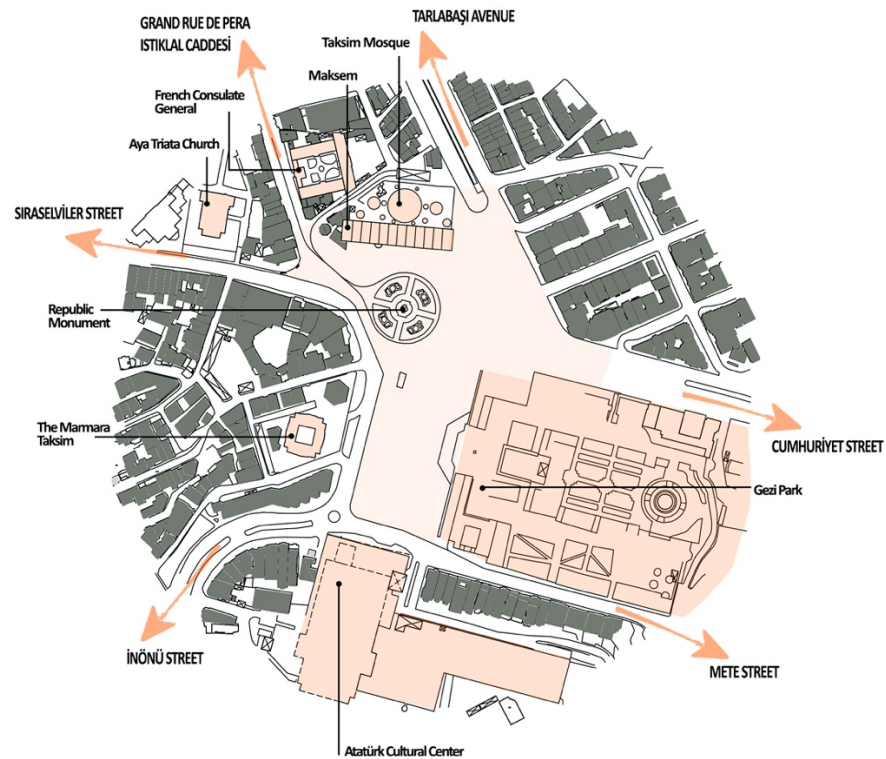
Figure 7 Taksim Square and surroundings. Image courtesy of the authors.

hegemony over Istanbul's past" (Fig. 7).[50]

What started with the construction of a monument of the Republic on the entrance of Grand Rue de Pera, an important part of the history of minorities in Istanbul, and across the barracks, where one of the biggest riots against the westernization of the empire took place, continued with the construction of Atatürk Cultural Center, a symbol of the Republic by name and by function, and destruction of the barracks for a park, which will be part of the secularization in the urban life. Today it continues with the construction of a mosque right next to the monument, in the entrance of the same street, with still-strong visual traces of nineteenth-century European architecture and lifestyle, and with plans of rebuilding the barracks to reintegrate the history of the Ottoman Empire with the square. The destruction of Atatürk Cultural Center and the visual disappearance of the Monument of the Republic because of the huge, undefined space created by the pedestrianization project, on the other hand, erase the traces of the early years of the Republic. The unfortunate thing is that all through this struggle, the square is losing its place in the lives of the public. It is no longer a place to meet, but only an area of transition between others (Fig. 8).

Figure 8 Picture of the pedestrian square from the Kurtulus Direction, 2013. Image courtesy of the authors.

While this essay was being prepared for publication, in March 2020, the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality launched another urban design project competition for a project called "Square for Everyone and Everything." The project aims to organize the square according to contemporary principles to create an urban public space experience that embraces the sensitivities of every faction of the society.[51] The competition invites its participants to a collective thought process for proposals with an approach that is contemporary and values cultural memory. Whether the proposals are going to overlap with the intentions of the competition committee remains to be seen, but one thing is certain: this competition is a bold step as a comprehensive plan for the square, the first one since Prost's.

On the Memory of Place

The philosopher Manuel DeLanda presents a historical process through phase transitions. He likens these transitions to changes of states of matter: solid, liquid, gas.[52] Quoting the physicist, hydrodynamicist, and engineer Arthur S. Iberall, DeLanda states that the move from hunter-gatherer to agriculturalist, and from agriculturalist to city dweller, is not a linear evolution. When the concentration created by the consequences of a period "reaches a critical mass,"

Power Field

Modernism   Republic

Neo-Ottomanism
                                       Secularism

TAKSIM SQUARE

May 1st
Celebrations   Emek Movie Theater   Urban Transformation
                              Pride Parade
Atatürk Cultural Center   Mall Costructions

                          Topcu Barracks
Taksim Mosque   Tourism

            Gezi Park
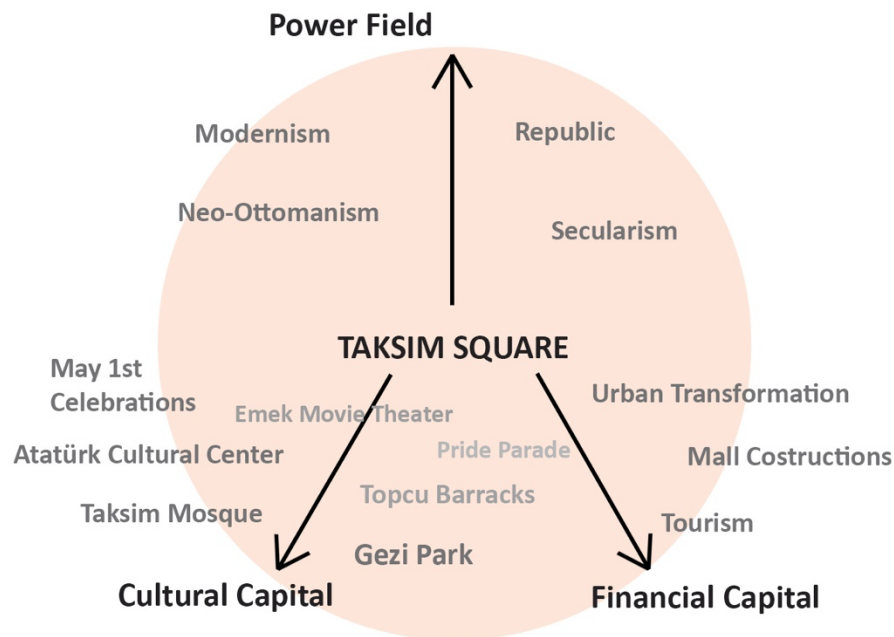**Cultural Capital**   **Financial Capital**

Figure 9 Bourdieu's social places theory applied to Taksim Square. Image courtesy of the authors.

this kind of a change of state is experienced (e.g., the transition from hunter-gatherer to agriculturalist was only possible with the domestication of grain). Every society has its own phases that come about in their own social construction codes and act like a catalyst, just like the phase transitions of power geometry through Taksim Square, with their economic, cultural, political, and social contexts.

Literature on this subject consists of two subcategories, individual and collective memory. In the beginning of the twentieth century, Maurice Halbwachs developed the concept of collective memory in the context of the social framework of memory. According to this concept, societies have memories like individuals, which means that they decode events in definite ways and organize them to serve defined aims. Halbwachs saw the collective memory as an appropriate concept to define a group's methods of creating a common representation of its history.[53] Paul Ricoeur, by contrast, associates the concept of collective memory with a need for others to remember.[54] Collective memory is related to positioning and describing oneself socially and defined by its connection to identity and the sense of belonging. In Halbwachs's argument, remembering in the collective memory is not restricted to individual memory; the completed or re-created recollections are either from the perspective of the society one belongs to or are adapted to this perspective.

Jan Assmann states that memory is always related to other individuals, groups, and politics.[55] Paul Connerton, while examining the concept of

collective memory, answers his own question about how the groups carry and protect the memory, by associating governance defining conditions of the power hierarchy with an aspect of power.[56] The continuity of the memory is established through memorials (religious rituals, political commemoration dates) and physical practices (cultural codes, manner, and attitudes). Assmann judges this creation process as the construction and enforcement of a collective memory by a group, which does not have one, through mnemonic institutions such as monuments, libraries, and archives.[57] At Taksim Square this continuity can be observed by the state ceremonies, like the celebrations for the establishment of the Republic, but also meetings organized by the public like May 1 celebrations or even the New Year's celebrations that bring people together and keep the memory of the square alive.

Pierre Nora states that what we call memory today is no longer memory and belongs to history. He claims that with archiving, the materialization of the memory has surged in a very short time, and behind the spreading of this materialization lies the sense of continuity in memory-identity relations.[58] The appearance of collective memory started with historiography, and its frame became clear during the nation-state era.[59] Hereafter, taught history is cleansed of bad memories and handpicked according to its proximity to the principle of loyalty to the nation by systems implemented by the dominant power, like educational institutions and mass media. This designed history forms the memory; its symbolic tools form the space. After history conquers memory, memory becomes an assignment, a debt to pass down.[60] Because the assignment of memory is politically legitimatized through education and historiography, it is open to exploitation. This assignment, which became one of the tools of domination for the power, can be easily and repeatedly manipulated by it. Collective memory, created by the nation-states through national historiography, ensures the continuation of the identity with invented traditions such as ceremonies and myths.[61] Michel Foucault advocates validating new forms of subjectivity, against the powers defining individuality with discursive and nondiscursive practices. There is not one objective external world but multiple socially constructed truths. Individuality, identity, and subjectivity do not belong in a natural area controlled by political organizations and strategies; they are tools, which make the operations of these kinds of organizations and strategies possible. The imperative to analyze the interference of power in body and action to take a stand against imposed subjectivity can be a guidepost in reading the historical construction in the context of the relationship between power and control.[62]

The concept of memory spaces is attached to discussions of materialization of memory. Memory spaces are defined as places that intercede and help human groups to express the "collective information . . . that belongs to the

past and is the basis of the sense of unity and distinctiveness of the group" in public discourse.[63] Nora says, "There are lieu de mémoire now, because there is no memory."[64] The memory spaces can be places with physical spaces like monuments, libraries, collections, archives, museums, or squares, but they also can be abstract spaces like festivals, anniversaries, memorials, ceremonies, and traditions. Diaries, autobiographies, monuments or mausoleums, testaments, dictionaries, feasts with only symbolical meanings, and pilgrimage places are memory spaces with important parts to play in creating social memory and history.[65] Obviously, Nora does not approach the idea of memory space just as a physical space; on the contrary, he defines them as places, ceremonies, and objects that have gained a symbolic meaning, just as this essay studies Taksim Square with its established physical and symbolic rituals. Memory spaces are the existence of the incarnation of a memory, a sense of a historical continuation, or embodiment, and the remains of conscious memories in a place or an object.[66] Symbolic meanings are reproduced with different contexts in the historical paradigm, which is constructed by the power in the framework of power relations.[67] Power changes the social space with the presentations of its existence and builds spaces of politics and memory, specifically to create order.[68]

Michel de Certeau compares the concepts of place and space:

> While the place is stable, space has action; space is the place, where execution happens. For example, while a street is a geometrically defined place, it turns to a space through the people walking on it . . . what turns a place to space and space to place is the narrative. . . . Therefore, a place or a constructed space cannot contain memory without it.[69]

When these narratives do not have a place in state-sanctioned historiographies, responsibility to ensure that these narratives are not forgotten falls on the shoulders of the public through civic initiatives.[70]

Halbwachs states that collective memory cannot develop outside the spatial frame.[71] There are multiple overlaps and similarities between narratives and built space, and according to Ricoeur, they both create similar records:

> Every new structure, just like intertextual narratives tying in different texts, settles in the urban space.[72] City, as the best place to read the effect of time on space, evokes complex feelings; while a person can feel lost in a city, public space, squares with definite names, beckons him to ritualized memorials and meetings.[73]

According to Aldo Rossi, the city itself is the collective memory of its residents, and, just like memory, it is connected to objects and places.[74]

There are also researchers who completely reject the idea of a place-centric memory. Uğur Tanyeli, for instance, criticizes this discourse for dreaming a historicity innate to place. He claims that a city cannot have a memory, that historicity is a social construct, and defending this kind of memory would not be democratic.[75] He supports his claim by drawing on Guy Debord, who defines place, memory, and city as "prefabricated," or constantly established through images and discourses. Moreover, the impacts of globalization make the existence of spatially specific memory questionable.

What needs to be maintained and what needs to be erased from collective social memory is a crucial discussion for society. Through what means is this mutually occurring impulse to both evoke and efface public memory determined? If memory is the re-creation of the past seen through today's perspective, its editing will be done by those in power. The effacing or covering of that, the remembrance of which is not desirable, is important in the context of the construction of the social. In societies where there are different, conflicting, and competing narratives about history, imposing one narrative creates a state of stress between groups, who accept or reject the dominant narrative, while multiple realities derived from these multiple narratives clash. For the unity of the society, an approach of "democratic recollection policy" that implicitly contains differences and allows the representation of these differences would prevent the polarization.[76] Mithat Sancar explains this as "sometimes to create connections to a distant past, policies combining 'effacing' and 'evoking,' that aim to put the recent past out of the way, might be put into effect. In such cases, endeavours aimed to forget the recent past and to remind the distant past are concentrated on."[77] He places this kind of situation in the confrontations with memory in the context of transitioning from remembering without forgetting. Power is an important stimulant for remembrance.[78] The relationship power has with memory, according to Assmann, is bidirectional; because of the need for an origin, it is retrospective, because of the wish to be remembered, prospective. Everything that happened in history in search of eternity is a part of this.[79] The linear approach to history strengthens power's relation to memory. The phenomena of remembering and forgetting are related to the concepts of repeating and renewing.[80] Cities are the places that materialize symbols of power and are the site of both symbolic power *and* symbolic resistance.[81] That is why the city harbors the geometry of the power struggle.

Conclusion

Which memory should be protected, which one erased, and who will decide? Whose memory is worthy of representation?

The phenomenon of memory encapsulates and experiences forgetting and remembering in a frenetic state, because of changes in urban power geometries. Memory spaces are spaces of strategy, where symbolic capitals invent intentional acts of forgetting and remembering in movements, monuments, histories, rituals, and spaces. In this context, Taksim Square is a memory space containing the power struggles of social, cultural, economic, and political capitals. It is an extremely political public arena where, specifically in the political historical process, revanchist behavior was displayed through constructing and demolishing buildings and monuments, which are symbols of the past and present dominant capital, political or otherwise. In this study, while trying to compile a memory record of the square, it became apparent that it was the scene of contest for all the capital types that Bourdieu conceptualized in power relationships.

Massey defines space in a relational understanding of place as a phenomenon produced by different spatial and social relationships, and the spatial-temporal event shaped by the coming together of stories until this moment.[82] Because of this and through the construction of collective memory, the real aim is spatial fixation and an understanding that power pushes anything that does not belong to this sanctioned memory outside its spatial confines. The redefinition of Taksim Square by erasing its function as a meeting and demonstration space demonstrates this kind of a forcible intervention to the memory of a place.

Taksim Square is an important area of revelation that witnessed struggles of cultural capital in investments in interpretations of Ottoman culture and tourism, financial capital in urban transformation projects and mega projects, and political symbolic capital in the representation of religious and political ideologies, where memory was constantly constructed and erased.

When the pedestrianization project redirected Tarlabaşı Avenue and Cumhuriyet Street traffic underground, it created an undefined, big urban gap around Taksim Square (Fig. 9). One of the most important spaces of social memory became a transit area stripped of the characteristics making it a square. With the constant presence of police barricades and vehicles, the square is permanently in a state of exception that warns visitors to "be on their guard" and creates a socially dead space of heterotopia.[83]

Taksim Square is the representation of social space as defined by Bourdieu's "field" not only in the context of the dominance but also the resistance, in the sense that the existence of the dominant demands the existence of a contrary resisting power in an asymmetrical relationship (when a secular history

is being dictated, a more religious opposition is born; if globalization is dictated, a localist one). While conceptualizing the resources as capital when they become tools of conflict and are used as social power relations, Bourdieu states that field conflict revolves around types of capital like economic, cultural, scientific, and religious.[84] Taksim Square is the spatial arena of the confluence of different fields. It is apparent that the conflicts that took place here, in the context of the examples stated before, were conducted on symbolic and material resources.

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Notes

[1] Aysegül Baykan and Tali Hakuta, "Politics and Culture in the Making of Public Space: Taksim Square, 1 May 1977," *Planning Perspectives* 25, no. 1 (2010): 51, https://doi.org/10.1080/02665430903421734.

[2] The constructed construct expresses Michel Foucault's concept of subjectivity produced through social construction combined with the similar social construction concept Bourdieu used in structuring structures to explain habitat and field. According to this, there is no objective external world. Instead, there are multiple realities constructed socially. Our age, sex, status, and ethnic-political identity are individualities constructed in social standings.

[3] Pierre Bourdieu, *Pratik Nedenler*, translated by Hülya Uğur Tanrıöver (Istanbul: Hil Yayın, 2005), 108.

[4] Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 156.

[5] David Harvey, "The Urban Process under Capitalism: A Framework for Analysis," in *Urbanization and Urban Planning in Capitalist Society*, edited by Michael Dear and Allen J. Scott (London: Routledge, 1981).

[6] Aldo Rossi writes this in relation to Maurice Halbwachs's statement: "When a community interacts with a part of a space, transforms it to its own image, but also surrenders to some material things that resist it and complies with them. Closes itself in the framework it constructs. The imagery of the environment and the constant relationship the community maintains with it, starts to transfuse to the self-image it has about itself" (*Şehrin Mimarisi*, translated by Nurdan Gürbilek (Istanbul: Kanat Kitap, 2003), 124, 125).

[7] Henri Lefebvre, *Mekanın Üretimi*, translated by Işık Ergüden (Istanbul: Sel Yayıncılık, 2014), 95–185.

[8] Doreen Massey, "A Global Sense of Place," *Marxism Today*, June 1991, 25.

[9] Lefebvre, *Mekanın Üretimi*, 62; David Swartz, *Kültür ve İktidar Pierre Bourdieu'nün Sosyolojisi*, translated by Elçin Gen (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1997), 108.

[10] Swartz, *Kültür ve İktidar Pierre Bourdieu'nün Sosyolojisi*, 108–10.

[11] The question of survival statement for big projects, like the last one, Canal Istanbul, has been used often lately in Turkey by members of the ruling elite: https://www.cnnturk.com/turkiye/binali-yildirim-nifak-tohumu-sokmak-isteyenlere-izin-vermeyecegiz.

[12] Swartz, *Kültür ve İktidar Pierre Bourdieu'nün Sosyolojisi*, 167.

[13] Zeynep Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul: Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 30.

[14] Baykan and Hakuta, "Politics and Culture in the Making of Public Space," 53.

[15] Aylin Topal, "Taksim Square: From the Ottoman Reformation to the Gezi Resistance," in *Planning, Appropriation, Rebellion, 1945–2015* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2016), 7.

[16] Baykan and Hakuta, "Politics and Culture in the Making of Public Space," 53; Topal, "Taksim Square," 262.

[17] Çelik, *Remaking of Istanbul*, 42.

[18] Ibid., 69.

[19] Nur Akın, *19. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Galata ve Pera* (Istanbul: Literatür Yayınları, 2002), 148–49.

[20] Ibid., 40–58, 291. Akın references newspapers like *Journal de Constantinople*, *Le Turquie*, and *Le Moniteur Oriental* on the opening of Taksim Garden (Grand Chams) in 1870 and later the entertainment organized for the public in the garden like concerts, lotteries, and plays. These reports show that Taksim and surrounding areas had a very lively entertainment life.

[21] See Sina Aksin, *Turkey, from Empire to Revolutionary Republic: The Emergence of the Turkish Nation from 1789 to Present* (New York: New York University Press, 2007).

[22] Dilek Erbey, "Changing Cities and Changing Memories: The Case of Taksim Square, Istanbul," *International Journal of Culture and History* 3, no. 4 (2017): 205, https://doi:10.18178/ijch.2017.3.4.101; Güven Arif Sargın's research on the relationship between forgetting-remembering and monuments can be consulted at https://gasmekan.files.wordpress.com/2015/08/guvenasargin_e-planningd.pdf.

[23] Baykan and Hakuta, "Politics and Culture in the Making of Public Space," 55. Halbwachs writes that when a street is named Rambuteau, Haussmann, or Pereire, it is not to show respect to these speculators or directors. These names are indicators of origin. There are similar examples in the renaming of the streets in Turkey during the Republican era. (See Nisanyan's "Imagined Geographies.") Names like Etiler or Akatlar are direct references to old Anatolian cultures. Between 1918 and 1939, Turks went through a comprehensive cultural change from the cosmopolitical people of an empire to a people of a republic strongly connected to their Turkish routes in Middle Asia (see Şerif Mardin, "Adlarla Oyun," in *Kültür Fragmanları Türkiye'de Gündelik Hayat*, edited by Deniz Kandiyoti and Ayşe Saktanber [Istanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2005], 127). In this reimagining, Anatolian cultures, including the ones before the Turks' arrival, had an important place. The change in the street names around Taksim Square, though, carries much more simpler but striking references, with names like "republic" and "liberty."

[24] As the World Health Organization explains on its website, "Healthy cities are places that deliver for people and the planet. They engage the whole of society, encouraging the participation of all communities in the pursuit of peace and prosperity. Healthy cities lead by example in order to achieve change for the better, tackling inequalities and promoting good governance and leadership for health and well-being" (https://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/environment-and-health/urban-health/who-european-healthy-cities-network/healthy-cities-vision). WHO initiated the Healthy Cities programme in 1986, but the idea behind it dates back to the mid-nineteenth century.

[25] Murat Gül, *Modern İstanbul'un Doğuşu Bir Kentin Dönüşümü ve Modernizasyonu* (Istanbul: Sel Yayıncılık, 2013), 125.

[26] Ibid., 127–34.

[27] İpek Akpınar, "The Rebuilding of Istanbul: The Role of Foreign Experts in the Urban Modernisation in the Early Republican Years," in *New Perspectives on Turkey*, ed. Elvan Altan Ergut, Belgin Turan Özkaya (London: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

[29] Ipek Akpinar, "The Rebuilding of Istanbul after the Plan of Henri Prost, 1937–1960 [microform]: From Secularisation to Turkish Modernisation" (PhD diss., University College London, 2003), 44.

[29] Malte Fuhrmann, "Taksim Square and the Struggle to Rule Istanbul's Past," *Critique & Humanism* 46, no. 2 (2016): 179.

[30] Ibid., 179.

[31] Çınar Altınçekiç, Hande Sanem, Ergin Berna, and Merve Tanfer, "Tarihsel Süreç İçinde Kent Kimliğinin Mekânsal Kalite Değerlendirmesi Üzerine bir Araştırma (Taksim Meydani)," *Artvin Çoruh Üniversitesi Orman Fakültesi Dergisi* 15, no. 2 (2014): 135.

[32] Baykan and Hakuta, "Politics and Culture in the Making of Public Space," 57; Özdemir Nutku, "Atmeydanı'nda Düzenlenen Şenlikler," in *Hippodrom/Atmeydanı İstanbul'un Tarih Sahnesi Cilt II*, edited by Ekrem Işın (Istanbul: Pera Müzesi Yayını, 2010), 72.

[33] In the 1960s the presence of the American Army in Turkey became one of the more important discussions brought on by the newly awakened Turkish Left. For more about the leftist movement in Turkey (in English), see Chaper 2 in Amy Justin Holmes' book *Social Unrest and American Military Bases in Turkey and Germany since 1945, Social Unrest and the American Military Presence in Turkey during the Cold War.* See also Holmes, *Social Unrest and American Military Bases in Turkey and Germany since 1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), especially pages 44–94. For a shorter read, Carole Williams summarizes the Turkish leftist movement as a whole in her article "1968 and the Troubled Birth of the Turkish Left," https://isj.org.uk/1968-and-the-turkish-left/.

[34] Baykan and Hakuta, "Politics and Culture in the Making of Public Space," 64.

[35] Topal, "Taksim Square," 15.

[36] Fuhrmann, "Taksim Square and the Struggle to Rule Istanbul's Past," 182–83.

[37] John Friedmann's 1986 book *World City* contextualizes this idea, and Saskia Sassen then explains it in detail in her book *The Global City* in 1991.

[38] Erbey, "Changing Cities and Changing Memories," 208.

[39] Fuhrmann, "Taksim Square and the Struggle to Rule Istanbul's Past," 166.

[40] Çaglar Keyder, *İstanbul: Küresel ile Yerel Arasında* (Istanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2006), 31–35.

[41] Like the Demirören Mall, which was built in the place of Deveaux Apartment (1890) and housed the Cinema Saray or the Grand Pera Mall built in place of Cercle d'Orient (1883) and Cinema Emek, one of the oldest movie theaters in Istanbul.

[42] To learn more about the change that the Beyoglu area experienced in the last decade, see Asiye Akgün Gültekin and Ilke Tekin, "Rebuilding of Beyoğlu-İstiklal Street: A Comparative Analysis of Urban Transformation through Sections along the Street 2004–2014," in *METU Journal of the Faculty of Architecture* 34, no. 2 (2017): 153–79, https://doi: 10.4305/METU.JFA.2017.2.12.

[43] Sharon Zukin, *The Culture of Cities* (New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell, 1995), 8–14.

[44] John Urry, *Mekanları Tüketmek*, translated by Rahmi G. Öğdül (Istanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 1995), 208–12.

[45] Emek Bizim (http://emeksinemasi.blogspot.com), Taksim Platformu (http://www.taksimplatformu.com/english.php); Beyoglu Kent Savunmasi can be found in every social media platform.

[46] The reconstruction of Topcu Barracks as an Ottoman cultural building in Inönü Promenade is a reflection of this cultural code. This is a step toward resymbolizing the square, a hallmark of the Republic, in the Ottoman spirit and directing the cultural capital toward here. The mosque being built on the square is a part of this approach, this time aiming for a religious capital. Almost all the conservative political parties have been pledging to build this mosque first thing as soon as they came into power (after a series of court cases in 1968, 1977, and the 1990s and 2000s, finally in 2017 the construction of the mosque has begun).

[47] For more about the Gezi Protests, see the list from Penn Libraries of books, serials, and social media links to visit, primarily in Turkish (https://guides.library.upenn.edu/c.php?g=475979&p=3255411). In addition to the sources cited in the present essay, academic writing collection sites like academia.edu have various articles about this topic to cover the whole spectrum of opinions on one of the biggest unrests of the Turkish history (https://www.academia.edu/Documents/in/Gezi_Protests). See also Cihan Tuğal, "Resistance Everywhere: The Gezi Revolt in Global Perspective," *New Perspectives on Turkey*, no. 49 (2013): 157–72.

[48] Fuhrmann, "Taksim Square and the Struggle to Rule Istanbul's Past," 185.

[49] See https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/forum/2020/02/19/imamoglu-yonetiminin-taksimde-onune-cikan-firsat/.

[50] Fuhrmann, "Taksim Square and the Struggle to Rule Istanbul's Past," 164.

[51] See https://konkur.istanbul/taksim/downloads/sartname_taksim.pdf.

[52] Manuel DeLanda, *Çizgisel Olmayan Tarih; Bin Yılın Öyküsü*, translated by Ebru Kılıç (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2014), 12–13.

[53] Maurice Halbwachs, *Kolektif Hafıza*, translated by Banu Barış (Ankara: Heretik Yayınları, 2017), 50.

[54] Paul Ricoeur, *Hafıza, Tarih, Unutuş*, translated by M. Emin Özcan (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2017), 140.

[55] Jan Assmann, "Communicative and Cultural Memory," in *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, edited by Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH&Co, 2008), 41, https://doi:10.1007/978-90-481-8945-8_2.

[56] Paul Connerton, *Toplumlar Nasıl Anımsar?,* translated by Alaeddin Şenel (İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 1999), 8.

[57] Assmann, "Communicative and Cultural Memory," 111.

[58] Pierre Nora, *Hafıza Mekanları*, translated by Mehmet Emin Özcan (Ankara: Dost Kitapevi Yayınları, 2006), https://dx.doi.org/10.2307/488538. Nora's book *Les lieux de mémoire*, especially its chapters about the history of France, and the third chapter of Benedict Anderson's book *Imagined Communities* discuss the appearance of collective memory in nation-states in detail.

[59] Halbwachs separates collective memory from historical memory completely. Nora does exactly the opposite.

[60] Ricoeur, *Hafıza, Tarih, Unutuş*, 108.

[61] Benedict Anderson explains this in detail in *Imagined Communities*.

[62] Michel Foucault, *İktidarın Gözü*, translated by Işık Ergüden (Istanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 2007), 77.

[63] Jan Assmann and Maria Czaplicka, "Memory and Cultural Identity," *New German Critique*, no. 65 (Spring–Summer 1995): 125–33.

[64] Nora, *Hafıza Mekanları*, 7.

[65] Ibid., 23.

[66] Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," in *Memory and Counter-Memory*, special issue, *Representations*, no. 26 (1989): 7, https://doi.org/10.2307/2928520.

[67] Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History," in *The Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture Reader*, edited by Vanessa R. Schwartz and Jeannene M. Przyblyski (Abingdon: Routledge, 2004): 237: "Lieux de mémoire are simple and ambiguous, natural and artificial, at once immediately available in concrete sensual experience and susceptible to the most abstract elaboration. Indeed, they are lieux in three senses of the word—material, symbolic, and functional. Even an apparently purely material site, like an archive, becomes a lieu de mémoire only if the imagination invests it with a symbolic aura. A purely functional site, like a classroom manual, a testament, or a veterans' reunion, belongs to the category only inasmuch as it is also the object of a ritual. And the observance of a commemorative minute of silence, an extreme example of a strictly symbolic action, serves as a concentrated appeal to memory by literally breaking a temporal continuity. Moreover, the three aspects always coexist. Take, for example, the notion of a historical generation: it is material by its demographic content and supposedly functional—since memories are crystallized and transmitted

from one generation to the next—but it is also symbolic, since it characterizes, by referring to events or experiences shared by a small minority, a larger group that may not have participated in them."

[68] Michael Pesek, "The Boma and the Peripatetic Ruler: Mapping Colonial Rule in German East Africa, 1889–1903," in *Western Folklore,* Western States Folklore Society 66, no. 3/4 (Summer-Fall 2007), 235, 238, https://doi:10.2307/25474867.

[69] Michel de Certeau, *Gündelik Hayatın Keşfi I: Eylem, Uygulama, Üretim Sanatları*, translated by Lale Arslan Özcan (Ankara: Dost Kitapevi, 2009), 217.

[70] It is a common occurrence for organizations focused on urban memory or civil institutions to try to find lost urban traces. There are countless examples just in Istanbul, like the Karakutu (Black Box) group, who organize walks through the city to trace narratives excluded from the formal history or organizations like Taksim Solidarity, Platform of Emek Is Ours, Beyoğlu City Defense, and Chamber of Architects, who aim to protect urban memories they deem in danger of being lost.

[71] Halbwach, *Kolektif Hafıza*, 153.

[72] Ricoeur, *Hafıza, Tarih, Unutuş*, 171.

[73] Ibid., 172.

[74] Rossi, *Şehrin Mimarisi*, 125.

[75] Ugur Tanyeli, *Yıkarak Yapmak: Anarşist Bir Mimarlık Kuramı İçin Altlık* (Istanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2017), 273.

[76] Mithat Sancar, *Geçmişle Hesaplaşma: Unutma Kültüründen Hatırlama Kültürüne* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2007), 56–57.

[77] Ibid., 56–57.

[78] Jan Assmann, *Kültürel Bellek Eski Yüksek Kültürlerde Yazı, Hatırlama ve Politik Kimlik*, translated by Ayşe Tekin (İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 2015), 78.

[79] Ibid., 79.

[80] Ibid., 107.

[81] Sumaiyah Othman, Yukio Nishimura, and Aya Kubota, "Memory Association in Place Making: A Review," Procedia–Social and Behavioral Sciences, ASEAN Conference on Environment-Behaviour Studies, "Cultural Sustainability in the Built and Natural Environment," Hanoi, Vietnam, 19-22 March 2013: 557. https://doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.08.384.

[82] Doreen Massey, "A Global Sense of Place," *Marxism Today*, June 1991, 30.

[83] For more about heteropia, see "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" (https://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/foucault1.pdf). In this text the term is used in the context of the segregation and integration of the spaces.

[84] Swartz, *Kültür ve İktidar Pierre Bourdieu'nün Sosyolojisi*, 174.

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Bloodlines, Kinship

Hilary A. Short

> Genealogy does not pretend to go back in time to restore an unbroken continuity that operates beyond the dispersion of forgotten things; its duty is not to demonstrate that the past actively exists in the present, that it continues secretly to animate the present, having imposed a pre-determined form to all its vicissitudes. Genealogy does not resemble the evolution of a species and does not map the destiny of a people. On the contrary, to follow the complex course of descent is to maintain passing events in their proper dispersion; it is to identify the accidents, the minute deviations—or conversely, the complete reversals—the errors, the false appraisals, and the faulty calculations that gave birth to those things that continue to exist and have value for us; it is to discover that truth or being do not lie at the root of what we know and what we are, but the exteriority of accidents.
>
> —Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History"

> I gave you my *blood*.
>
> —My mother

Bloodlines

Bloodlines is a 228-inch-long installation made horizontally in Microsoft Excel and then rotated 90 degrees to create a dripping or oozing effect down the wall. It

Figure 1 Hilary A. Short, Bloodlines, *2020. Image courtesy of the artist.*

began as an inquiry into naming and the organizational hierarchy of the family tree. The tree serves as a symbol of nature, an inherited organizer used to display relational hierarchies of time and power, enacted subsequently through myriad metaphors. If the medium is the message, the tree is the medium that validates the family as a natural hierarchical entity positioned in linear time. The tree is, and has been, an omnipresent symbol for how we order and understand relationships—

tying together "nature" and "order" in our collective understanding of the family.[1] Contemporary genealogical practices carried out on websites like Ancestry.com uphold hetero status markers of the family vis-à-vis patrilineal threads while privileging records of white lineages. Documents, or "records," serve as archival evidence in this online database—thus archival evidence reflects social ties and social hierarchies. In this way, using Ancestry.com to gather family data and Excel to hold said data is revealing what was always there—the tree as disassociated from, but disingenuously carrying forth, our belief that nature is unquestionable.

To explore other ways to situate relations,[2] I accessed my family "records" through a free trial on Ancestry.com and revisualized them in Excel. Instead of privileging the patrilinear social networks of marriage and children, like in a family tree, year 0 becomes cell A on my Excel spreadsheet, and each filled-in row comes to represent each individual's lifetime. This is then tipped on its side to signal the movement of blood and the ways that the fantasy of documented ancestry often obscures "the accidents, the minute deviations," of the heteropatriarchal family structure.

By taking the family out of the tree, what might we learn about who upholds whom? *Bloodlines* destabilizes the goal of the family tree to organize humans into heteropatriarchal relation with each other. Rather, this visualization confronts the taught desire to rank and categorize—we cannot so easily reduce or deduce humanity into an organized network. *Bloodlines* does not "give" us data.

Passed-down narratives of my family tree are "verified" by Ancestry.com, a business that asks us to "discover" and "explore."[3] But I, as "discoverer" and "explorer," am confined by who has been documented and placed online, and in what ways. I dutifully "collect" my grandparents (born in the 1920s or 1930s) through their certificates of birth and death. The next generation back (born around 1900) instantly becomes harder to locate; perhaps their database resides in Italy. Within these records, my bloodlines dictate my family tree, and my family tree dictates my bloodlines.

In *Bloodlines*, you can see where the bulk of these records lie as they thin out the higher and farther left you go. Dutiful dyads multiplying backward through time reach stasis as people become unavailable to "collect." My own life, released from under the inflexible branch of my parents, typically positioned under them in perpetuity, now begins in column BXL.

The family marks time, or we mark time through family. Our tools for genealogical research, in "the sense of taxonomizing or organizing people into stable relationships with one another,"[4] upholds the fantasy of ancestry even though
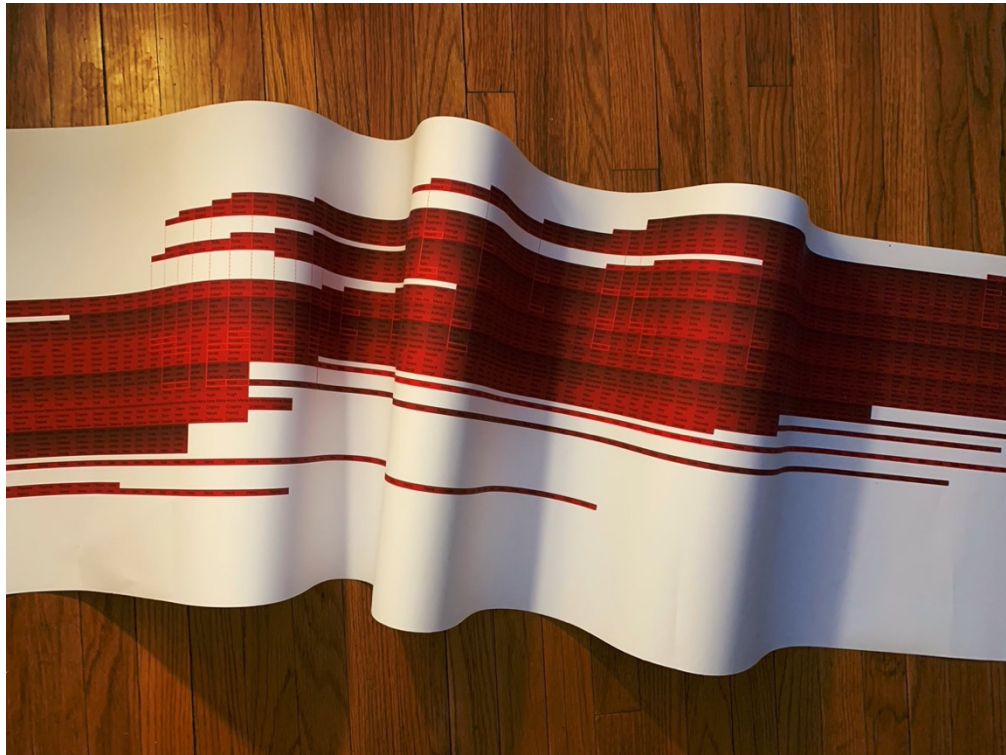
Figure 2 Hilary A. Short, Bloodlines *(detail), 2020. Image Courtesy of the artist.*

we may know, or have an inkling, that it is not as straightforward as is presented to us. That inkling is left unresolved, and we are left only to wonder.

In *Bloodlines*, the fantasy of ancestry is put on display—the blood drips down the wall as a representation of how we consider this fantasy of time, of family. *Bloodlines* is not an archive. At the same time, the family tree is individualized. All of this blood has been coursing through time to get to me, the "discoverer" of my blood, the "explorer" of my ancestry. And yet, this individualization denies collectivity outside the family unit; kith are not searchable on Ancestry.com. Instead of thinking of our direct "bloodlines" as lineage, why not consider the family "tree" as more of a system that itself has a lineage, passing down heteropatriarchal time as a regulatory marker for our kinship ties?

Figure 3 Hilary A. Short, Kinship, *2020. Image Courtesy of the artist.*

Kinship

> Kin is a wild category that all sorts of people do their best to domesticate. Making kin as oddkin rather than, or at least in addition to, godkin and genealogical and biogenetic family troubles important matters, like to whom one is actually responsible. Who lives and who dies, and how, in this kinship rather than that one? What shape is this kinship, where and whom do its lines connect and disconnect, and so what? What must be *cut and what must be tied if multispecies flourishing on earth, including human and other-than-human beings in kinship, are to have a chance?*
>
> —Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble*

Kinship is an A1 poster depicting "spheres of memories"—memories associated with "inherited" objects—tethered to physical points around my home, which is drawn as a blueprint. Each sphere is surrounded by a fuzziness, as a translation of uncertainty and precarity around truth and knowledge. In *Bloodlines*, the "document" or "record" carries forth the archival evidence of the state. Here, in a domestic space, familial objects take on that role. Emanating from them (the objects) are stories; memories of passed time and past relations, and I am their captive subject. Objects like these are passed down through bloodlines enforcing genetic logics of inheritance and pulling them, discontinuously, into affective and temporal relations between the original owner and the current one.

The system of the blueprint, much like the system of the family tree, functions as a system to systemize systems (and it matters).[5] A blueprint is flat and has a technical language: it defines space and delineates between what is inside (unproductive/family) and what is outside (productive/work). Rather, my apartment walls as represented in *Kinship* are gradations—allowing seepage from one room to the next as well as from the inside to the outside (and vice versa), complicating the legacy of the industrial-age separation that subordinated women in unproductive spaces and condemned them in productive ones. The blueprint is also utilized metaphorically, as something that can be found in one's DNA, in order to fulfill one's destiny. However, our destinies are predetermined by these systems (which systemize systems) that dictate rules and roles.

Atop the blueprint, but behind the "spheres of memories," is the phrase "biology does not define kinship, kinship does not entail ownership."[6] Normalized preferences for biological attachments uphold heteropatriarchy as the ultimate family-forming method. This, in turn, dictates rules of inheritance—ownership is being passed down as well as the object itself. As an inheritor, a family member, I am being given not only the object but the responsibility to preserve biological

definitions of ownership. The phrase (atop the blueprint, behind the spheres) breaks these definitions, opening up a productive space of discomfort in an unproductive space, the domestic space, in order to redefine kinship.

Biological attachments are not neutral. To examine the precarious definition between ownership and object, the objects in my home have been abstracted into disembodied "spheres of memories." Within the blueprint, they remain tethered to the real space in which they physically inhabit. Further, the abstracted emotional space they inhabit is translated through a fuzziness that emanates from them. The fantasy of ancestry is present here as well—I am stuck in imagined relations with previous owners, and I may or may not be able to unstick.[7] Many of these "spheres of memories" are accompanied by the passed-down narratives, which is a part of the inheritance. Unlike genealogical research carried out on Ancestry.com, I alone contain the knowledge and ability to verify this truth. The precarity of my ability to hold (both the abstracted memories and the physical objects) is a direct reflection on my ability as a worthy inheritor.

How might we "trouble" these narratives and attempt to break ourselves from these attachments? To break from these definitions? Can we *un*stick ourselves from these kinship objects? Can we *un*inherit legacies? Whether it is the tree in *Bloodlines* or the blueprint in *Kinship*, the systems that we use to organize our families have their own lineages that regulate our kinship ties. Leaving definitions unresolved and uncomfortable ("bloodlines do not give us data," "bloodlines are not an archive," "biology does not define kinship," "kinship does not entail ownership") opens up possibilities to redefine what has become normalized under the matrix of oppression (settler colonialism, heteropatriarchy, white supremacy, and capitalism). In this space of discomfort, we can begin to reimagine and redefine contemporary kinship beyond biology.

<center>* * *</center>

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Notes

[1] See Laboria Cuboniks, *The Xenofeminist Manifesto: A Politics for Alienation* (London: Verso, 2018), 15: "Anyone who's been deemed 'unnatural' in the face of reigning biological norms, anyone who's experienced injustices wrought in the name of natural order, will realize that the glorification of 'nature' has nothing to offer us—the queer and trans among us, the differently abled, as well as those who have suffered discrimination due to pregnancy or duties connected to child-rearing. XF is vehemently anti-naturalist. Essentialist naturalism reeks of theology—the sooner it is exorcised, the better."

[2] The shift in definition for "relatives" is what Donna Haraway calls one of her favorite factoids: "'Relatives' in British English were originally 'logical relations' and only became 'family members' in the seventeenth century" (*Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* [Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016], 103).

[3] Ancestry.com website, accessed May 21, 2020.

[4] Orit Halpern, *Beautiful Data: A History of Vision and Reason since 1945* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 108.

[5] Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble*, 101: "It matters which stories tell stories, which concepts think concepts. Mathematically, visually, and narratively, it matters which figures figure figures, which systems systematize systems."

[6] Sophie Lewis, *Full Surrogacy Now: Feminism against Family* (London: Verso, 2019).

[7] Sara Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 44. "Good and bad feelings accumulate 'around' objects, such that those objects become sticky. Objects become ambivalent in the conversion between negative and positive feeling states: 'happy objects' can become 'unhappy' over time, in the contingency of what happens, which is not to say that their happiness no longer persists as an impression, available as memory."

The Trophy and the Appeal: Colonial Photography and the Ghosts of Witnessing in German South West Africa

JB Brager

> However the image enters / its force remains within / my eyes.
>
> —Audre Lorde, "Afterimages"

> The sentiment of the country has been appealed to, in describing the isolated condition of white families in thickly populated negro districts; and the charge is made that these homes are in as great danger as if they were surrounded by wild beasts.
>
> —Ida B. Wells, "Lynch Law in America"

> This is Black life in the wake; this is the flesh, these are the bodies, to which anything and everything can be and is done.
>
> —Christina Sharpe, *In the Wake*

To work with images of atrocity is a fraught project. Sedimented constructs shaped through racist and settler colonial violence continue to define the production and consumption of the visual, as well as memory practice and scopic politics. These retinal sedimentations must be looked at plainly and addressed openly, to name

the ways in which history and identity shape the function of the eye. I turn to the understudied visual archive of German colonialism in southwestern Africa, with an emphasis on colonial photography, with the aim of tying the visuality of colonial violence in German South West Africa to broader studies of colonial photography and images of racial violence, and the ways in which these images circulated as discourse. I am particularly concerned with the location of witnessing, and how things look differently from different positions—what I refer to through the concept of parallax—and the effects of this on visual consumption. Images of violence travel, through a visceral witnessing that can be grotesquely pornographic—in the words of Claudia Rankine, "the dead body as an object that satisfies an illicit desire"—or evidentiary.[1] I use viscerality in this context to think about a methodology of witnessing that attends to embodiment, experience, and feeling. The resignification of images, however didactic and captioned, depends on the eye and the gut of the viewer—the transhistorical viewer is not a passive or innocent witness. This is especially important in the context of the pornotroping tendency of white supremacist culture to fetishize the image, particularly of Black injury and death, and the ability of images of violence to retraumatize survivors.[2]

I refer to these different functional iterations as the trophy—the pornographic capturing of violence by the perpetrator or titillated bystander—and the appeal—the fervent belief that if only what was happening was made visible, those who saw it would have to make it stop. These two operations oftentimes coexist within the same photograph. Whether the photograph functions as trophy or appeal depends largely on the gaze of both the photographer and the audiences who circulate and view the photograph. For those of us invested in both visual culture and decolonial praxis, these disjunctures of looking, as well as the incommensurability of the gaze from different positions, are frustrating to say the least. Because the photograph is a medium that is easy to reproduce, indeed, meant to be reproduced, the context in which images are viewed may shift quickly. The failure of the *camera as objective witness* has particular implications for the image as a site of ethical demand and the *photograph as evidence* in making human rights claims. The circulation of image as appeal represents a trap of visibility that extends from slave portraits to body cams.[3] Visual scholars such as Ariella Azoulay assert that images contain their own injunction, a demand to the viewer for justice, or action.[4] The concern with this belief is that it assumes or requires a shared positionality between the author and the reading audience. For example, Marianne Hirsch critiques the violence of the Nazi gaze in Holocaust photography, but fails perhaps to consider what other fascists might be looking at in the image, for what purpose.[5] The location of witnessing—how the identity of a spectator shapes that individual's consumption of the image—is central to my argument about the possibilities of

looking at images. In other words, the power of evidence, or lack thereof, is often dependent on the idea of a shared site of looking, or lack thereof. The same image may circulate as trophy or appeal, or an image can circulate as both at once depending on who is looking. I conceptualize this phenomenon through the idea of parallaxis, meaning the difference in the perceived position of an object viewed along different lines of sight, in order to consider what happens when we look at things from different positionalities. The parallactic gaze is a way to understand the spectator's participation in making meaning in visual texts. Thinking through parallaxis here requires a careful look at intimacy and ownership in the consumption and production of images, particularly those of physical harm and damage done against Black and brown bodies, and a refusal of the fetishistic spectacle and ownership explicit in the white gaze. To see differently is to imagine differently, with material implications. The excision of anti-Blackness is in many ways a visual project. If the present moment is a continuation of a regime in which Blackness is antithetical to humanness, and the eye is the purveyor of that truth, then we must learn to look differently.

The height of European colonial power coincided with the first photography boom, allowing settlers as amateur photographers to document their lives like never before, with a verisimilitude that seemed to represent an uncorrupted reality. The timing of these developments supported the ascent of anthropological photography as well as what might retrospectively be described as the genre of atrocity photography. Photographs taken as trophies by the colonial photographer are recast as evidence through human rights regimes created after the images, and through present-day postcolonial and antiracist demands. Some are intentionally repurposed by activists, and the trophy is amended as appeal.[6] The visual archive of German South West Africa is usefully placed in a larger history of photography both as a colonial apparatus and as a technology of picturing the scopic regime of the human as physiognomically European.[7] While often dismissed because of the relatively short period in which Germany was a colonial power, the horrors it perpetrated in South West Africa occurred in a broad landscape of colonial "extermination," as mass murder and genocidal ideology proliferated not only in German colonies but also in British, Belgian, and Italian colonial projects, and certainly in the United States as a settler colony. Writing from a US context, I consider what is particular to photographs in thinking about processes of racialization in colonial contexts; both the United States and German South West Africa represent sites of settler colonialism invested in relational and circulating ideologies, subjugated Black labor forces, and Indigenous genocide. This is not to dismiss the particularities of each of these sites or to collapse anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racisms in the United States, but to note their resonances and mutual scaffolding. Many of

the histories of German South West Africa fail to contend with anti-Blackness and settler colonial ideologies as part of the bedrock of Western modernity—thus the Herero and Nama genocides are treated as an aberration rather than part and parcel of the project of colonialism. Additionally, the Herero and Nama genocides largely remain ghosts within German memory and scarcely noted in the United States, in contrast with the ubiquitous memorialization of the Holocaust. The photographs that I look at here primarily come from the photographic collections of the Prussian Secret State Archive in Berlin and some secondary sources—especially Wolfram Hartmann's collection of colonial photography. I also draw from the 1918 Blue Book, a British report on the atrocities of German rule in South West Africa. The Blue Book exists both as a document of German colonial atrocity and as an erasure of British colonial harm. Furthermore, the report was quickly hidden away after the capture of German South West Africa by British South Africa in World War I. It was "destroyed [in 1926] with the aim of achieving reconciliation within the white settler community."[8] However, the book was recovered and published in 2003 as *Words Cannot Be Found: German Colonial Rule in Namibia— an Annotated Reprint of the 1918 Blue Book*.[9]

In 1884 Germany, under the Second Reich, colonized the region that is now Namibia—"an enormous section of Africa stretching from the Orange River, in the south, to the Kunene River in the north."[10] This area was and is home to many Indigenous peoples, including the Ovambo, Herero, Nama, Kavango, Damara, Lozi, San, and Tswana nations. German South West Africa became Germany's largest colonial holding in terms of number of settlers by 1903. In the course of this settler colonial project, the German military and colonizers committed what has been described as the first genocide of the twentieth century.[11] In 1904 the Herero people rose up against colonial rule and were defeated. In the aftermath, between forty thousand and seventy thousand Herero people were killed or died as a direct result of German genocide—about 80 percent of the Herero population. This was followed by another failed uprising and mass killings of the Nama nation, in which about 50 percent of the population died.[12] At the onset of the genocide in German South West Africa, the German general Lothar von Trotha "declared the Herero inhuman, proclaiming in the 2 August 1904 Berliner Lokalanzeiger that 'no war may be conducted humanely against nonhumans.'"[13] In addition to direct killings by both colonial troops and individual settlers, the Herero and Nama were forced into the desert to die by thirst and starvation.[14] Survivors were rounded up and sent to forced labor and concentration camps—Konzentrationslager—such as the Shark Island camp in Lüderitz Bay.[15]

Looking at historical images through the lens of visual and critical media studies makes clear the foundational role of the visual in conceptualizing the

human and categorizing who is marked as nonhuman. I do not reproduce any of the images from the archive here, as I recognize the contradiction in my work, in which looking at the photographs reproduces the dynamics I theorize. There is a push and pull that I ultimately discuss here through the language of the trophy and the appeal. Looking can reproduce the harm of nonconsent and retraumatize those who must look. At the same time, images provide powerful evidence useful in the process of reparation. By not showing the images, but nevertheless engaging them, I think through how to represent evidence of violence without reproducing violence, even as I am implicated. Moreover, I write from the complicated positionality of being a white Jewish American descended from Holocaust survivors, who were wealthy, ownership-class Germans before the rupture that the Third Reich represented for assimilated German Jews. I do not know what my grandparents' position was on Second Reich German colonialism, but they undoubtedly benefited from it before being classified themselves as racial inferiors and deported to camps. As a third-generation American, I both carry this familial trauma and benefit from the United States' own brand of white supremacy.

Memory and Genocides

The dominant idea that there is a separation between German colonialism under the Second Reich and the Third Reich is dependent on a view of history as episodic instead of continuous. Against historical forgetting, I develop a visual genealogy of German settler colonialism in South West Africa that recovers the traces not only in the historical archive but in cultural memory, in that figural palimpsest, that "field of . . . documents that have been scratched over and recopied many times."[16] A visual language of racialized codes links colonial history to later Nazi expansionist and racial policies—including anti-Blackness in eugenicist work and the camp system—that carried from South West Africa to Germany. In South West Germany, this included the presentation of Black Africans as uncivilized, criminal, inhuman—key to this imagination was the frequent imaging of Black people who have had extraordinary violence done to their bodies. These racist visual codes were in conversation with racial science and popular racist imagery that was being produced across the colonial West at this time, especially in the United States in the aftermath of Reconstruction.

In collective popular memory practice and policy alike, the differential treatments of the Herero genocide and the Shoah represent a deep failure to contend with the ongoing effects of the history of German South West Africa in present-day Namibia, Germany, and the Herero and Nama diaspora. The failure to

contend with both anti-Blackness and anti-Indigenous settler colonialism at the core of Nazi ideology both indicates and enables a willful omission of Black people from post-Holocaust memorial or reparation work globally, which rarely includes an engagement with anti-Black racism. Scholars who contend with historical violence and the Holocaust in particular must attend to the ideological travels from the Second to the Third Reich, and the ways in which events in the German colonies shaped German identity in the metropole.[17]

Scholars including Jürgen Zimmerer, Benjamin Madley, Sven Lindquist, and Enzo Traverso have tracked the ideological and genealogical routes from the Shark Island camp to the camp at Auschwitz.[18] Work has been done, largely in a European academic context, to connect the nascent ideology and genocidal practices of German South West Africa under the Second Reich to the Nazi ideology and systematic genocide of the Third Reich. However, this work often fails to contend with the thread of anti-Blackness that remains unbroken through both regimes. For example, Madley argues that German South West Africa was the "incubator" for later Nazi ideology and practices, and that the Nazi regime borrowed the language of racist policies around interracial sexual relations from the Second Reich's anti-Black colonial projects.[19] The Herero genocide was not merely a practice round for the Holocaust. Madley also fails to contend with the specificity of anti-Black racism, the continuing colonization of South West Africa, and the experiences of Black victims and survivors of the Nazi regime.[20] The colonization of Africa and German anti-Blackness did not disappear after the Herero genocide. Furthermore, they were not simply replaced by antisemitism and a focus on Slavic land for the project of Lebensraum.

Alexander Weheliye identifies and critiques this common tendency toward elision. For example, he critiques Giorgio Agamben for leveraging the "colonial prehistory of concentration camps" only to argue that the camps' true telic significance becomes apparent when they are annexed into the legal state of exception during the Third Reich. Nevertheless, the effects of colonial eugenics carried out in South West Africa during Germany's colonial period were not confined to this locale, but, more crucially, helped establish German bourgeois society during colonialism and after.[21]

The visual culture that came out of the colony and circulated to the metropole was key in cohering the figuration of the German as imperial master, in which national pride is based on conquest and colonial opportunity. Scholars such as Steinmetz and Madley point out that "South West Africa's first German governor, Heinrich Goering, was the father of the Nazi Reichsmarschall Hermann Goering" and that "the majority of German Namibians were enthusiastic Nazis during the 1930s and 1940s."[22] Yet these claims seem to operate on a conception of

generations as separate iterations rather than constructed demarcations within the overlapping and ceaseless stream of time. Key ideologues of Nazi Germany, most notably the anthropologist Eugen Fischer, did in fact directly develop the racial beliefs they would later circulate within Germany while in the colony. Fischer, who served as chair of the anatomy department at Freiburg University beginning in 1918 and director of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Anthropology, Human Heredity, and Eugenics in Berlin from 1927 to 1942, traveled to German South West Africa in 1908 and conducted a study published in 1913 as *Die Rehobother Bastards.* This study described the mixed-race children of Germans and Africans—largely German men and Khoisan, and later Herero, women—as "bastards" and was seminal in the burgeoning field of eugenics not only in Germany but in the United States and Britain.[23] *Die Rehobother Bastards* drew on photography as a method of visual "evidence" of racial degeneration through miscegenation. Many of the photographs were taken by Fischer himself.[24] Also in 1913, Fischer suggested that African prisoners sentenced to death be sent to Germany alive, to better preserve the soft parts of the body for scientific study.[25]

Nazi racial ideology against Jews both played on existing European antisemitism, built on German anti-Blackness as produced by colonial racial science, and continued via racist propaganda against primarily French troops of African origin during World War I and during the occupation that followed. Anti-Black propaganda proliferated as the Nazis gained power—a propaganda slide from circa 1933 depicts two well-dressed women in makeup with their arms around each other—one is Black, one is white. The text reads: "Das Ergebnis! Der Rassestolz Schwindet" (The result: Racial pride fades).[26] In 1928 Fischer began a comprehensive ethnological survey of Germany, toward, he claimed, preserving a distinct German race. As Nazis were building their racial propaganda machine, an ideological and rhetorical line was drawn from the Rehoboth Bastards to the "Rhineland Bastards," the children of German women and Black African troops stationed in Germany during World War I. In April 1933 "Hermann Göring ordered that the local authorities collect information on their numbers and whereabouts," and in 1937 "the Nazi regime consulted Eugen Fischer . . . Special Commission No. 3 was formed by the Gestapo," with Fischer and Wolfgang Abel from the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute on the board. "The commission's task was to identify and sterilize the Rhineland children . . . by 1937 almost four hundred, all in their teens, had been forcibly sterilized."[27] The Kaiser Wilhelm Institute, with Fischer at its helm, was at the center of Nazi racial politics and was directly involved in the Nazi genocide of Jews and Roma-Sinti; Fischer's images from South West Africa were used in the institute's propaganda materials. In one educational slide from 1936, a portrait of a Black woman in profile is juxtaposed with an image of a blonde, light-

skinned woman. Both are mixed race—the caption on the slide reads "Baßtard-frauen aus Südwe.rafrika; die eine ähnelt dem europäißchen, die andere dem hot-tentottißchen Erßcheinungsbild" (Bastard women from South West Africa; One resembles the European, the other the Hottentot).[28]

     The concealment of and inattention to the archive of Black German and Indigenous Herero and Nama history that I describe is increasingly being countered by Afro-Germans and allies. Namibian historians and institutions collect oral histories that describe the experiences of those directly affected by German colonization.[29] In Berlin, this is evidenced by community involvement in Coco Fusco's performance of material from the Blue Book, protests of Herero skulls at the Charité Museum, the push to change street names celebrating colonization, and an ongoing grassroots "people's history" movement that gives postcolonial tours of Berlin and of the German History Museum.[30] Only as recently as October 2016, the German History Museum ran its first exhibit on the history of German colonialism, titled *German Colonialism: Fragments Past and Present*, which made stark the previous absence of colonial histories while signaling a potential shift in the treatment of German colonialism in the metropole.[31] However, the visual archive remains thoroughly colonized.

The Colonial Album

In looking at photo albums from German South West Africa, pictures that appear to show no overt violence at all are nevertheless marked by the colony's genocidal history. In previous studies of German colonialism, images are often presented as illustrations of historical fact rather than texts in their own right. They are presented as obvious or marginal, and they are removed from their original context. The effect is that images appear to be random, or the intent of their juxtaposition is lost; an image of exceptional violence, such as a lynching, may exist in the same album as jovial moments of everyday life, such as coquettish portraits of German soldiers having a naked swim party. Included in the Prussian Secret State Archives in Berlin are what appear to be souvenir albums compiled for sale to the public, and more personal snapshot albums. I consider individual photographs as texts and read the album as an artifact. Colonial albums present an archival challenge: sometimes their provenance is not documented, and it is unclear who assembled them or for what purpose. Photographs in the archive are often preserved in a more haphazard manner than official or formal documents and often have less metadata. Because of the overall lack of information and care given to each photo album, questions arise: Who is its creator? Has it been assembled randomly, or

constructed purposefully as a mode of preservation? In what ways has the album been amended since its original assembling?

It is possible to infer, based on the colonial presence in the late nineteenth and very early twentieth century, that the albums I encountered at the Prussian Secret State Archives belonged to members of the Schutztruppe, the volunteer colonial forces. This is made more likely because the albums reside in German archives and contain a proliferation of images of men in uniform. On sight, it is difficult to place the specific dates of many of the images beyond a general range of years, and in some cases, this range is the full span of Germany's brief colonial reign. The colony of German South West Africa, as a site of visual production, only produced colonial images because the photographers were always colonizers: German and later British soldiers, administrators, settlers, missionaries. Joachim Zeller writes, "Questions about African self-representation during the war simply do not arise."[32] This is read both as an indictment about the attention of scholars and as a dearth in the archive—cameras were not available to Indigenous Africans, and little work has been done to imagine or analyze the resistant modes of self-representation practiced by Africans in front of the camera. The camera remained in the hands of the colonizer as a weapon of colonization; the German and the African alike were captured only by the settler's gaze.

The colonial albums contain photographs of men and women in German-style clothing who are likely African Christians, Ovambo or San, in addition to numerous snapshots of white German men in and out of uniform. These images are present in the same albums as images of Herero and other groups of Indigenous African people wearing traditional dress or whatever has been afforded to them—sometimes burlap sacks, in the camp system and the servitude that preceded and followed the Konzentrationslager. Images of Indigenous Africans are often on the same page or in the same image as hunting trophies. One page of an album features four photographs: a leopard tied by its feet and hanging from a wooden pole carried by two men; a pile of antelope surrounded by German officers; two officers flanking five dead wildebeest strung from a tree; and a photograph of Herero men lined up for the camera.[33] Such juxtapositions liken people to literal trophies or objects of fascination. These images coexist in beautifully bound photo albums. In one gray, cloth-bound, arts and crafts–style album with gold metallic and floral design details from circa 1904–9, photographs include the aforementioned images of naked German officers relaxing, one posing in just his military cap beside a swimming hole.[34] These images are not visibly captioned. It is possible that the caption has faded or is written on the back of the photograph, but upon examining them in the archive there is no textual index. The image must speak for itself, or the researcher must infer or invent a narrative.

Photographs of atrocities by German colonial officers or settlers were circulated, like the skins of leopards or horns of antelope, as trophies. These same photographs were later used to disparage Germany's behavior in the colonies. As in the United States, lynching postcards were circulated not only in the colony but in Germany. One postcard depicts German soldiers "packing skulls into crates, for export to university collections and race scientists in Germany."[35] A 1907 German war chronicle details, horribly, that "Herero women have removed the flesh [from the skulls of murdered Herero people] with the aid of glass shards."[36] This is presented as gendered labor—it reads as perhaps a kind of abject maternal labor, within a racial logic in which the "desire that engenders future" is denied, and reproduction can only ever be that of *things*.[37]

Perpetrators have long recorded their own violence against dehumanized others, a visual calculus that extends beyond the case of German South West Africa. Lynching photographs from the United States also contend with the transnational logic of Black suffering and death captured and circulated as spectacle. In all cases, the atrocity photograph performs multiple functions; it moves between trophy and appeal, between the economy of perpetrator pleasure and the calculations of humanitarian demand.[38] Representation and identification in the space of atrocity photography are complicated by positionality. The Herero saw images of the genocide against them in German homes and British colonial courts—certainly these images have been seen and are used as evidence by Herero making claims in the present moment. For spectators who might also be victims, the image might be a reminder that they are still living, but under threat of death. Indeed, the threat of death or the status of having been always already marked for death is a function of control.[39]

The 1904–9 album, with its gold metallic details and naked German officers, includes a photograph of an African man with a chain around his neck in front of a whitewashed brick wall. The links of the chain are looped over his arm. While his hands are clasped, they do not appear to be bound, and he holds his hat in his hands. A German officer in uniform stands next to the man. The officer's hands are on his hips, and he looks directly at the camera. The African man, who remains chained, looks at the ground. On the left side of the photograph, a corrugated metal door stands open. A Black child leans slightly against the door, one hand to his chin as if in contemplation, looking at the scene. Compositional details mark these photographs as different from biometric images collected in police albums or the eugenicist portraits of Eugen Fischer. The colonial album is marked by histories of classification but also exceeds them.[40] The child in the image is identifiable as Bambusen—a position of servitude forced on African male children, enabled by genocide—by his mix of military and nonmilitary dress.[41] Thousands of the

Herero orphans of the gallows and the camps became servants to the murderers of their parents, in an intimate, colonial-patriarchal mode of relating. The Bambusen were frequently photographed sitting at the feet of their German enslavers. They were, through the genocidal destruction of lineage and family ties, bereft of names but for the one they were given by the conqueror, as well as identity or culture beyond the German uniforms they had been dressed up in.[42] With the expansion of the photographic frame to include other witnesses, like the Bambusen, there is an attention to composition over classification that nevertheless traffics in the aesthetic languages of these classificatory images—the racial lexicon of the scientist enters the lens of the amateur.

Shadows and Traces

In one box of loose photographs at the Prussian Secret State Archives, I find, first, an image of a caged leopard and then an image of a Herero woman.[43] Unlike the albums, there is no sense of purposeful juxtaposition, but in both photographs, the leopard and the woman are literally cast in the shadow of a German photographer, identifiable by the outline of his military cap. Sitting in the archive, I read the shadow cast over the subject as the metaphorical, violent settler gaze of the photographer. The proximity of this shadow gaze looming over both the leopard and the woman evokes the approximation of Blackness and animality. In the imaginary of Africa as exotic, he saw the woman and the leopard as the same. The Herero woman in the photograph looks back at the photographer, squinting with sun or feeling. She holds her wrap to her body. Regardless of the real details of her life, in the photograph, she is trapped within the historical narrative of German colonial genocide.[44] She is subject to the logic of the perpetrator's camera, whether or not she is in imminent danger.

Photographs of Herero and other Indigenous African women are framed through the gaze of colonial desire. This violating gaze can also be read in photographs of Herero male youth, and in the literal ownership of the bodies of Bambusen. In an analysis of photographs taken in the twentieth century by the Malian photographer Seydou Keïta, Teju Cole writes,

> The difference between the images taken by colonists or white adventurers and those made for the sitter's personal use is especially striking in photographs of women. In the former, women are being looked at against their will, captive to a controlling gaze. In

the latter, they look at themselves as in a mirror, an activity that always involves seriousness, levity, and an element of wonder.[45]

Many of the images of women in the colonial albums are with German officers. In one, a blonde bearded German man is surrounded by four smiling African women in long skirts, aprons, and head wraps. A small African child, mostly naked, looks up at the man. The German man's hand is in his pocket. The women are close enough to touch him, and their bodies overlap in the image. In another set of two photographs placed side by side in an album—the same album as the hunting photographs—a German man in uniform and an African woman wearing a head wrap and long white dress stand near each other. They look like shy lovers in the empty landscape. They both face the camera and smile, but with a cautious distance between them. Her arms wrap around her own waist, his hands are on his hips. The next photograph is only of the woman; she stands sideways but faces the camera, smiling but with one hand over her mouth, evoking shyness. Two small African girls, also in light-colored dresses and head wraps, play in the dirt behind her.[46]

The relationship between the man and the woman can only be read through the lens of colonial race relations; while consenting miscegenation was disciplined and policed in German South West Africa as well as in Germany, the 1918 Blue Book documents cases of sexual violence against Herero women and reports, "Evidence of violation of women and girls is overwhelming, but so full of filthy and atrocious details as to render publication undesirable."[47] Endemic sexual violence is also heavily a part of the Herero oral history and collective memory of the genocide and the broader colonial period.[48] In one of the few surviving photographs from the Shark Island concentration camp, a man identified as Dr. Gühne is posed, in an echo of the (superficially) more light-hearted album images, in military uniform and at the center of a group of Herero women.[49] The image echoes other photographs of German men in uniform taken with African women. However, in the Shark Island camp photograph, the women's physical and emotional distress is visually legible; in another from Shark Island, a young girl clutches the remains of a clearly torn-off dress between her legs. In all the images of Herero women with German men, questions of consent and the gaze are at play, but they are particularly exposed in these carceral images. David Olusoga and Casper W. Erichsen write,

> As in all the camps, rape was common on Shark Island, and the sexual exploitation of Herero women was not merely accepted—it was actively celebrated. . . . many pornographic and semi-

pornographic images [were] taken of African women by German
soldiers during the war. Some were made into postcards and sent
to Germany or otherwise distributed in colony.[50]

Images of sexual violence and coercion circulated as trophies, then were documented in the Blue Book as appeal—now, reading these more and less apparently violent images together, I am struck with the thought that the best we might do is to dispose of these colonizer's photographs, to not look at these women through the lens of German lust and repugnance for the sexualized and dehumanized black body.[51] It is a perpetation of violence in and of itself, to not be able to look away.

Tina Campt writes of ethnographic photos in a South African archive: "Viewed in their historical and institutional context, they witness a transliteration of beauty into racialized cultural categories."[52] The contestations of these transliterations are on display in these images that simultaneously evoke intimacy and violence in the context of anxiety about miscegenation and the impossibility of consent—not only in the concentration camp but in the carceral conditions of forced labor that constituted the colonial farm.[53] One photograph, printed in a collection of colonial photography and originally taken between 1909 and 1915, shows a German man and an African woman together on a bed in the troop's quarters.[54] He lies flat, she is raised up on an arm, they both look at the camera. The corrugated metal walls around the bed are home to two large illustrations of the faces of white European women, perhaps clipped from an advertisement.[55] They smile from the walls, the absent presence of white femininity. The juxtaposition of the Black woman on the white German soldier's bed and the painted white woman on his wall presents multiple contestations around race, gender, and sexuality in this colonial space. There were comparatively few German women in the colony, although some missionaries came with their families, and a campaign was sponsored by the German Colonial Society to transport white German women to South West Africa in response to concerns about miscegenation.[56] As suggested by the image of the German soldier and the African woman in the white dress, and by photographs like those collected by Wolfram Hartmann in *Hues between Black and White*, transracial romantic intimacy and sexual exchange—via coercion, transaction, or mutual interest—was captured casually in photographs. The images presented by Hartmann show, for example, African women arm in arm with or on the laps of German men, and family portraits of married German men and African women with their children—before or in defiance of the 1905 ban. While it is certainly possible to imagine consensual interracial relationships in the colony, these too had to exist under the threat of German anxiety about these relationships. The majority of the women pictured in the earlier colonial albums are

African—the scarcity of white women in the colony makes the logic of white femininity more jarring in colonial German visual culture.[57] In a familiar racist trope, one propaganda illustration depicts two Herero men dressed as farmworkers and brandishing a rifle and club, assaulting a German woman who cowers dramatically. She has one hand over her brow and the other raised toward the men in a gesture of pleading and ineffectual self-defense. A shadowy mass of threatening Hereros approach in the distance.[58] The lack of white women in the colony, much less the lack of violence against white women in the colony, necessitated caricature over photographic documentation. The fictional, savage, and predatory African men are in stark contrast to the often-chained or starving, very human African men in the colonial albums. In contrast to the many images of seemingly complacent African women with German men in colonial albums, many Germans outside the colony believed that Herero women in particular "often mutilated and 'roasted' flesh from the corpses of German soldiers." In one letter to a German-language newspaper, a man named Karl Brehmer wrote, "One will hardly wonder that the soldiers cannot be constrained from killing such bestial creatures."[59] As with all racial grammars, German South West Africa's is rife with contradictions, which all lead to the same place: the white colonizer's aspiration for ultimate control over the lives and bodies of Indigenous Black people as well as the land.

In the album containing the photos of the woman in the white dress, the second-to-last album I looked at in the State Archives, I also found a photo of a Black man being hanged by white men. The album begins in 1905 and was purchased from Kodak in Berlin.[60] In the colonial album, the photograph of the lynching party is on the same page and facing photographs of a swimming hole, an African woman and child in traditional dress, cattle, and mining (it looks like the subjects are panning for gold). The presence of this image in the album, among these other photographs, suggests a quotidian aspect to the execution—it is a normal event. This was the first photograph of a hanging that I came across while conducting my own archival research. Even though I was expecting to encounter such images, after hours of flipping through photographs I was unprepared for the affective impact of an imprint of such blatant violence. In attending to the historical context and the possibility of close reading this photograph, I have to contend with the nagging presence of my position as an embodied spectator as well as a researcher. Viscerality, in this context, operates as a methodology of witnessing, experiencing not only the wave of feeling associated with this evidence of colonial and racialized murder but also the relationship between "embodiment and documentation" and the "fleshiness, or experiential dimension, of the text."[61] I have to contend with the extent to which my body is the site where I have registered these questions, that I am looking at these images again and again, because I

feel something: What is the desire that led to this documentation and preservation in the archive? Is the perpetrator's photograph driven by a perverse or pornographic desire? What shapes my viewing of this image, and through the image as conduit, the interaction between my embodied self and the lively and dead bodies in the photograph? Who am I when I look at this image, and what would it mean to instead look away? Who am I when I can't look at this image, and what does it mean to look anyway?

The original caption, written in white ink, indicates that the scene is of an execution for the murder of farmers (*Strafgericht an einem Farmermörder*).[62] The use of *Strafgericht*, which translates to "punishment" but is often used to describe criminal courts, suggests legal legitimacy of the killing, in contrast with the unequivocal *mörder*—murder. The gallows, a large, sturdy structure, appear to be a permanent or semipermanent fixture in the landscape. The photograph is taken from some distance away, the desolate and rocky ground rises up in the foreground and the wooden gallows fills the image, although the camera is angled to show two German men observing. One, heavily mustached and wearing a suit, bow tie, and hat, stands with his hands folded behind his back. The other, in a heavy coat and slacks and wearing a cap, holds a mug and appears to be midconversation or laugh. Two more white men in pants and shirtsleeves, one almost entirely obscured behind the construction of the gallows, appear to be moving bricks. A dog saunters through the frame. A German officer in uniform, his tall leather boots reflecting the light, stands below the body of the hanged man. The officer has one hand on the man's feet and the other raised to his torso, as if to steady the dead man's body for the photograph, under direction from the photographer. He does not look at the camera. Instead, his face is turned slightly away, his head inclined toward the hanged man's leg, his cap almost touching the body. I read this figure as concentrating on the task of holding the body still.[63] This macabre labor places the German officer in the photograph but not of the photograph; he is both a perpetrator caught in the act by another perpetrator and a prop, so that the body will not blur in the image but will be reproduced faithfully.

When I first encountered this image and in subsequent readings, my eye has always been drawn elsewhere; I have been unable to focus my gaze at the center of the composition, to look closely at the body of the lynched Black man. I have looked at hundreds of atrocity photographs, the horrors accumulate, and in the desire to look away, I risk blurring this man into a universal and universally Black victim, against the individuality and specificity of his life and death. In the desire to look, I risk affirming the white logic of the dead black body as "spectacle for white pornography."[64] I make myself look: the distance of the photographer and the contrast in the image obscures the victim's features so that his face appears

in silhouette, almost flattened into a paper cutout portrait. He is a young Black man wearing the worn European-style shirt and slacks of a laborer. His hands are tied behind his back and his feet are bare, and possibly bound. He hangs from the gallows by what looks like wire, as opposed to twisted rope. A European transport driver during the Herero genocide in South West Africa testified in the Blue Book that,

> the hanging of natives was a common occurrence. . . . No trial or court was necessary. Many were hanged merely on suspicion. . . . The Germans did not worry about rope. They used ordinary fencing wire, and the unfortunate native was hoisted up by the neck and allowed to die of slow strangulation. This was all done in public, and the bodies were always allowed to hang for a day or so as an example to the other natives.[65]

The hanged black body, in public space and circulated in reproduced image, operated as a warning and a conditioning. These actions and the circulation of their images tore apart communities and family structures. Unlike many lynching photographs from the United States, the frenzied or jubilant mob is not so much a feature of execution photographs from South West Africa. Instead, there are often Germans standing in the margins or in rows or groups as an audience. Insomuch as mass killing operated to subjugate, in addition to decimate, dysgenic populations, the spectacle of the lynching, both in the United States and in South West Africa, was partly for the satisfaction of the perpetrator. Such spectacles were also, and perhaps even more so, meant to "educate" the survivors.

In the 1905 photograph of the hanged man, there is no indication that the image was reproduced, but it was nevertheless public, as photographs taken of lynchings by professional and amateur photographers alike circulated commercially as part of a cottage souvenir industry. These images allowed white Americans and Europeans to participate in an imagined community of racial domination, cohering white identity through the images of violence against the black body. Photography was fundamental to lynching as publicized mass death that was meant to function as a mode of necro and biopolitical control.[66] I scrutinize the perpetrators in this image, caught in the act.[67] The eye focuses not on the black body undone but on the white bodies that are implicated.[68] The photograph resonates visually with a lynching photograph taken in 1935 by white Mississippian O. N. Pruitt. In it, a white man kneels before the bodies of lynching victims Bert Moore and Dooley Morton to hold them steady, his face turned away from the camera and fully obscured by the brim of his hat. The image, originally printed as a postcard,

was reproduced by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in 1965, amended with only the indictment "MISSISSIPPI."[69] These two photographs are not from the same place or time but from within the same ideological scaffolding. The perpetrator or bystander is eager to assist the photographer in documenting the act, to hold the victim's body steady, in these white supremacist memento mori, to make the aftermath and product of racist violence clearly visible to those who would witness it. The brutal, lurid image must be crisp, the man in the photograph is only concerned at the quality of the product—that is, the photograph as weapon of racial discipline—not that he might be implicated. There are no consequences in the present: indeed, the idea that there could be is unknowable, and the future feels assured, and white.

In my initial observations, while visiting the archive, of the 1905 *Strafgericht an einem Farmermörder* photograph, I did not notice two more figures in the image. They appeared at first as more of the barrels and bricks that surround them. I zoom in on a digital scan of the photograph after returning to the United States and notice that two African women sit with their backs to the gallows, facing the wide open expanse of desert and shrub that fades into the sky. They are barely silhouettes, a swatch of light fabric next to dark, an obscured but dark-skinned face, one looking down, the other looking at her companion. Women were subject to particular gendered violences under German colonial occupation; among them, the burden of being surviving witnesses. I return to the devastating 1907 chronicle that describes the incarcerated Herero women removing the flesh from the bones of murdered Herero men, women, and children so that the remains could be sent to researchers and museums in Europe and the United States.[70] This ghastly labor—the making of humans into specimens, the witnessing of the "educational" murder—given to Herero women is a perversion of the maternal, the destruction of desire, futurity, reproduction in the mode of generations. But these two women turn their backs to the scene. I want to pay attention to these witnesses, those who refuse to look, these survivors who barely appear, who are looking at something else. This is a mode of intentional parallactical viewing—to pull one's eye to the nearly imperceptible figures hiding in an image. I end with these two women; having noticed them, my eye is drawn endlessly to them. Against the additional violence of the settler gaze, this is the oppositional mode of self-representation practiced by these women in front of the camera. The perpetrator steadies the victim's body for scrutiny; the intended subjugated witnesses withhold their look. To read their turned backs as an act of resistance offers us a gift, a methodology through which we might imagine a different visual lexicon and practice of refusal, as part of a crucial antiracist and decolonial struggle.

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Notes

[1] Claudia Rankine, "The Condition of Black Life Is One of Mourning," *New York Times*, June 22, 2015, https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/22/magazine/the-condition-of-black-life-is-one-of-mourning.html?_r=0. Zeb Tortorici, in "Visceral Archives of the Body," defines viscerality as the "experience of intense and highly mediated bodily feelings or affective responses that manifest themselves through conflicting corporeal and emotive reactions," following Elizabeth Freeman's "haptic historiography" and Tina Campt's "haptic temporalities." I extend this definition in relationship to Alexander Weheliye's heuristic habeas viscus—viscus here as the Latin root of viscera, the internal organs, the gut, or, as Weheliye interprets it, the flesh. See Tortorici, "Visceral Archives of the Body: Consuming the Dead, Digesting the Divine," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 20, no. 4 (2014): 407, https://doi.org/10.1215/10642684-2721375 and Campt, *Listening to Images* (Durham,   NC: Duke   University   Press,   2017),   72, https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822373582.

[2] Hortense Spillers coins the term *pornotroping* to describe the external imposition of meaning on the Black body, particularly the suffering of bodies of Black women for the pleasure of white people. See Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book," *Diacritics* 17, no. 2, https://doi.org/10.2307/464747 special issue Culture and Countermemory: The "American" Connection (1987): 73. Weheliye, in *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822376491, focuses on pornotroping as the element of bare life that is literally naked, the deep sexualization that is paired with subjugation.

³ In the documentary *13th*, the activist Cory Greene, speaking about photos of police violence, says, "We don't need to see pictures to understand what's going on, it's really to . . . speak to the majority of masses who have been ignoring this. . . . But I also think there's trouble of just showing black bodies as dead bodies too" (dir. Ava DuVernay; Kandoo Films, 2016).

⁴ Ariella Azoulay, *The Civil Contract of Photography* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008).

⁵ Marianne Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

⁶ For example, the NAACP used postcard images taken by perpetrators and bystanders of lynching victims in antilynching campaign posters—in one 1935 circular, which features smiling white children among other figures surrounding a murdered Black man identified as Rubin Stacey, the NAACP amends the image with text. They write, "Do not look at the Negro. His earthly problems are ended. Instead, look at the seven WHITE children who gaze at this gruesome spectacle. Is it horror or gloating on the face of the neatly dressed seven-year-old girl on the right?" Accessed online via Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, *Yale University*, http://brbl-dl.library.yale.edu/vufind/Record/3833735. The text goes on to imagine the psychological impact on the aforementioned white children. It is fairly clear that this campaign was aimed at a white audience.

⁷ *Scopic regime* as a term was introduced by Christian Metz in *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975).

⁸ Jeremy Silvester and Jan-Bart Gewald, *Words Cannot Be Found: German Colonial Rule in Namibia—an Annotated Reprint of the 1918 Blue Book* (Boston: Brill, 2003), xiv. This has particular resonances with the exposure of Britain's own colonial archives and colonial atrocities—though a later example, the court case that revealed evidence of the Mau Mau encampment in Kenya comes to mind. Blue Book refers to the type of report rather than a proper title; therefore I do not italicize it.

⁹ Silvester and Gewald, *Words Cannot Be Found*.

¹⁰ Benjamin Madley, "From Africa to Auschwitz: How German South West Africa Incubated Ideas and Methods Adopted and Developed by the Nazis in Eastern Europe," *European History Quarterly* (July 2005): 35(3), 451. https://doi.org/10.1177/0265691405054218

¹¹ This label has been contested partly because of a lack of documentation (particularly in comparison to the massive bureaucratic archive of the Holocaust) and the context of colonial war—some historians argue that genocidal intent must be proved even in the presence of genocidal acts. The label does not contend with

ongoing settler colonial genocides that predate but continued into the early twentieth century.

[12] The Nama, notably, were referred to by colonists as Hottentots—there is a proliferation in eugenicist writing and imagery of particularly salacious and sustained attention to the Hottentot as racial mythology, especially the figure of the Hottentot woman as subject of hypersexualized racial stereotyping. See, e.g., Siobhan Somerville, "Scientific Racism and the Emergence of the Homosexual Body," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 5, no. 2 (1994): 243–66, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv11smx6p; Laura Briggs, "The Race of Hysteria: 'Overcivilization' and the 'Savage' Woman in Late Nineteenth-Century Obstetrics and Gynecology," *American Quarterly* 52, no. 2 (2000): 246–73, https://doi.org/10.1353/aq.2000.0013.

[13] Madley, "From Africa to Auschwitz," 442.

[14] A tactic of expulsion and pursuit through hostile environment that predates but evokes the Armenian genocide.

[15] Jeremy Sarkin, *Colonial Genocide and Reparations Claims in the Twenty-First Century: The Socio-Legal Context of Claims under International Law by the Herero against Germany for Genocide in Namibia, 1904–1908* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2009).

[16] Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, edited by D. F. Bouchard (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977), 76.

[17] I think about ideological and codes as traveling, as following routes—the routes of enslavement, colonization, diaspora. I am beholden in this spatial conceptualization to M. Jacqui Alexander's methodology of revealing the ideological commerce between seemingly distinct histories—deliberately jumping sites to connect seemingly ruptural events. See Alexander, *Pedagogies of Crossing: Meditations on Feminism, Sexual Politics, Memory, and the Sacred* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822386988. Naomi Klein also offers a useful example of connecting case studies to build a history of the present, not via comparatives or geographic bounds, but through an ideological rubric. Klein writes, "In the attempt to relate the history of the ideological crusade that has culminated in the radical privatization of war and disaster, one problem recurs: the ideology is a shape-shifter, forever changing its name and switching identities" (*Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* [New York: Picador, 2007], 14).

[18] Jürgen Zimmerer, *From Windhoek to Auschwitz: On the Relationship between Colonialism and the Holocaust* (London: Routledge, 2018); Madley, "From Africa to

Auschwitz"; Sven Lindquist,*"Exterminate All the Brutes": One Man's Odyssey into the Heart of Darkness and the Origins of European Genocide*, translated by Joan Tate (New York: The New Press, 1997); Enzo Traverso, *Origins of Nazi Violence*, translated by Janet Lloyd (New York: The New Press, 2003).

[19] "It is not surprising that Nazis deployed vocabulary nearly identical to German South West African Rassenmischung laws and associated Reichstag debates when they criminalized marriage and sexual intercourse between Jews and 'Aryan' Germans. Linguistic connections indicate wholesale borrowing" (Madley, "From Africa to Auschwitz," 439).

[20] Scholars who write on Black Germans under the Nazi regime often focus specifically on this period—see, for instance, Tina Campt, *Other Germans: Black Germans and the Politics of Race, Gender, and Memory in the Third Reich* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.17684.

[21] Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus*, 36.

[22] George Steinmetz and Julia Hell, "The Visual Archive of Colonialism: Germany and Namibia," *Public Culture* 18, no. 1 (2006): 173. https://doi.org/10.1215/08992363-18-1-147

[23] In 1933 the *New York Times* ran an article about Fischer that praises his work as a boon to science and its aid to anthropological research—"Despite its connection with the 'national resurgence,' it is a truly scientific study"—while reassuring readers that the Reich was not about racial superiority, only purity. The article mentions Fischer's research on "crossings between whites and Hottentots in German South West Africa," which it praises as a classic. The article further positively compares Fischer's argument about race and national identity "to that advanced in the United States for preserving national parks free from outside plants, for keeping them in their natural state." This aligned with existing isolationist and eugenicist views in the United States.

[24] Reinhart Kössler writes, "The German term of 'Bastard,' as its English equivalent, carries a derogatory meaning that is absent from the ethnonym of Baster which is employed by the community themselves" (*Namibia and Germany: Negotiating the Past* [Windhoek: University of Namibia Press, 2015], 276, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvh8r4d4).

[25] "Among the German rank were a large number of medical officers who facilitated the shipment of preserved body parts like brains, penises and noses to Germany. By 1906 research on cadavers was endemic. According to German medical statistics a total of 778 autopsies were conducted in the concentration camps" (Casper W. Erichsen, *Modern Genocide: The Definitive Resource and Document Collection*,

edited by Paul R. Bartrop and Steven Leonard Jacobs [Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO], 1058). In a response to a request by the anthropologist Felix von Luschan, a German lieutenant named Zürn wrote, "In the concentration camps taking and preserving the skulls of Ovaherero prisoners of war will be more readily possible than in the country, where there is always a danger of offending the ritual feelings of the natives" (quoted in Reinhart Kössler, "The Saga of the Skulls: Restitution without Recognition," in *Namibia and Germany: Negotiating the Past* [Windhoek: University of Namibia Press, 2015], 277).

[26] USHMM Collections 1996.A.260 Photograph #17608, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC.

[27] David Olusoga and Casper W. Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust: Germany's Forgotten Genocide and the Colonial Roots of Nazism* (London: Faber and Faber, 2010), 307.

[28] These images were accessed by the author at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum archives. The juxtaposed images, taken by Fischer, and the caption on the slide express a deep racial anxiety around passing.

[29] See, e.g., Uazuvara Ewald Kapombo Katjivena, *Mama Penee: Transcending the Genocide* (Windhoek: The University of Namibia Press, 2020) as well as the oral history project published as Casper W. Erichsen and Larissa Förster, *What the Elders Used to Say: Namibian Perspectives on the Last Decade of German Colonial Rule* (Windhoek: Namibia Institute for Democracy, 2008).

[30] Coco Fusco presented a performance at the Sophiensaele Theater in Berlin in March 2017, of testimonial material from the "Words Cannot Be Found" 1918 Blue Book publication *Report On the Natives of South West Africa and Their Treatment by Germany*. Silvester and Gewald (2003). See also Werner van Bebber, "Where the Streets Have Bad Names," *Handelsblatt Global*, November 26, 2017, https://global.handelsblatt.com/politics/where-the-streets-have-bad-names-851040; Kössler, "Saga of the Skulls"; Campt, *Other Germans*; and Fatima El-Tayeb, *European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011).

[31] *German Colonialism: Fragments Past and Present*, Contemporary And, 2016, https://www.contemporaryand.com/exhibition/german-colonialism-fragments-past-and-present/.

[32] Jürgen Zimmerer and Joachim Zeller, *Genocide in German South-West Africa: The Colonial War (1904–1908) in Namibia and Its Aftermath* (Monmouth, UK: Merlin, 2008), 317.

[33] The proximity of African men and animals, especially dead trophy animals, in these images, is usefully read through the lens of work on Blackness and

animalization, the intersections of critical race theory and animal studies. See Che Gossett, "Blackness, Animality, and the Unsovereign," Verso Blog, September 8, 2015, http://www.versobooks.com/blogs/2228-che-gossett-blackness-animality-and-the-unsovereign.

[34] My photo documentation of this archive was lost along with my phone in 2015, but from my notes and recollection, there was at least one full page of photographs from this swim party. While there is no explicit evidence of homosexuality in these portraits of homosocial comradery, for general and related reading on colonialism and sexuality, see Robert Aldrich, *Colonialism and Homosexuality* (New York: Routledge, 2002, https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203930175); Arthur N. Gilbert, "The 'Africaine' Courts-Martial: A Study of Buggery in the Royal Navy," *Journal of Homosexuality* 1 (1974): 111-22, https://doi.org/10.1300/J082v01n01_09; Nayan Shah, *Stranger Intimacy: Contesting Race, Sexuality, and the Law in the North American West* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520950405; and Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203699546.

[35] Steinmetz and Hell, "Visual Archive of Colonialism."

[36] Madley, "From Africa to Auschwitz," 437.

[37] Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe," 1987.

[38] The desire for images to act as evidence of or in the face of atrocity is captured in Georges Didi-Huberman's *Images in Spite of All: Four Photographs from Auschwitz* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), as well as Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

[39] On the quality of "still living," see Leigh Raiford, "Photography and the Practices of Critical Black Memory," *History and Theory* 48, no. 4 (2009): 121, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2303.2009.00522.x.

[40] Lorena Rizzo, "Shades of Empire: Police Photography in German South-West Africa," *Visual Anthropology* 26 (2013): 328, https://doi.org/10.1080/08949468.2013.804701. In 1912 the "central government in Windhoek issues a directive" regarding new and specific standards for arrest, which included "fingerprinting . . . and Bertillonage, i.e., a standardized anthropometric description combined with a portrait photograph and a . . . spoken portrait" (336).

[41] In one photograph, from an album circa 1905–07 (IV Nr. 32), eight Germans in military uniform stand, one holding two dogs on a leash. Five Herero youth squat

in front of them, three in military caps. The names of the German men, but not of the boys, are labeled under the image. Steinmetz discusses the "partial similarity" of these children to the German soldiers—a mimetic training in which they were given German names, parts of German uniforms to wear, and were indoctrinated into military sociality while remaining servants to those who killed their families and communities. See George Steinmetz, *The Devil's Handwriting: Precoloniality and the German Colonial State in Qingdao, Samoa, and Southwest Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 212, DOI: 10.7208/chicago/9780226772448.001.0001.

[42] Orlando Patterson, in the context of US chattel slavery, describes natal alienation as the "alienation of the slave from all formal, legally enforceable ties of 'blood'" and from all "'rights' or claims of birth" (*Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982], 7, 5).

[43] Prussian Secret State Archives, IX. HA Bilder SPAE VII Nr. 2157, Photo 14, Photo 56. Photo #56 captioned "[obscured word] Schönheit D.S.W.A," Prussian Secret State Archives, Berlin, 2015.

[44] In my work on selfies, I attend to the disruption of the perpetrator gaze; in Holocaust photography, this is defined by photographs of Einsatzgruppen firing squads; in one photograph on display at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "the barrel of the executioner's rifle protrudes into the shot . . . the gun and the camera occupy the same space in the landscape. As Hirsch points out in *The Generation of Postmemory*, the spectator unwittingly occupies the 'Nazi gaze,' in which 'the photographer, the perpetrator, and the spectator share the same space of looking at the victim' and the victims 'are shot before they are shot'" (JB Brager, "Selfie Control," *The New Inquiry*, March 17, 2014, https://thenewinquiry.com/selfie-control/).

[45] Teju Cole, *Known and Strange Things* (New York: Random House, 2016), 129.

[46] From the album GStA PK, IX. HA, SPAE, IV Nr. 41 Deutsch-Südwestafrika, Enthält u.a.: Otawi; Outjo; Tsu-meb-Mine; Rietfontein; Grootfontein; Namutoni; Waterberg, ca. 1904–1909, Prussian Secret State Archives, Berlin, 2015.

[47] Silvester and Gewald, *Words Cannot Be Found*, 121.

[48] Herbert Jauch, Lucy Edwards, and Braam Cupido, "Inequality in Namibia," in *Tearing Us Apart: Inequalities in Southern Africa* (Johannesburg: Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa, 2011), 185; Donald G. McNeil Jr., "Its Past on Its Sleeve, Tribe Seeks Bonn's Apology," *New York Times*, May 31, 1998, http://www.nytimes.com/1998/05/31/world/its-past-on-its-sleevetribe-seeks-bonn-s-apology.html.

[49] A German lieutenant named Düring brought a roll box camera to Shark Island in 1906 while stationed in South West Africa. Out of the images taken by Düring—the Sam Cohen Library of the Swakopmund Scientific Society in Swakopmund, Namibia holds several albums with photographs by him—"only five of Düring's photographs of Shark Island are known to have survived" (Olusoga and Erichsen, *Kaiser's Holocaust*, 212).

[50] Olusoga and Erichsen, *Kaiser's Holocaust*, 213.

[51] I use the phrase *black body* here to specifically point to a material dehumanization that denies personhood; the lust and repugnance I describe here is not about Black people, it is about the body made flesh. A number of scholars have written about anti-Black racism and the paradox of white sexual desire, especially Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe." See also Michele Wallace, "The Imperial Gaze: Venus Hottentot, Human Display, and World's Fairs," in *Black Venus 2010: They Called Her "Hottentot"* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2010), 149–54. The story of the Hottentot Venus is an extraordinary illustration of the subject of the black body as source of fascination, spectacle, and illicit desire, as well as disgust in the white gaze.

[52] Campt, *Listening to Images*, 50.

[53] Miscegenation was illegal under a colonial law passed in 1905 in German South West Africa (Deutsch Südwestafrika DSWA), and similar laws were introduced, though not passed until November 26, 1935, within Germany. See Madley, "From Africa to Auschwitz," 438.

[54] "A German man and a local woman on his (?) bed in the troops' quarters. (Basler Africa Bibliographien, Photoarchiv, Album unbekannt, 1909–1915)," published in Wolfram Hartmann, *Hues between Black and White: Historical Photography from Colonial Namibia 1860s to 1915* (Windhoek: Out of Africa Publishers, 2004).

[55] Although I do not contend with colonial advertising in this project—as David Ciarlo does in *Advertising Empire: Race and Visual Culture in Imperial Germany*—"Neither the growth of German colonial sciences, such as anthropology, after the 1870s nor the beginning of direct German colonial rule in 1884 had much impact on commercial articulations within the German metropole. The construction of a racial—and ultimately racist—imaginary of colonialism in Germany . . . flowed not from the established ideologies of race science or colonialism but rather from the new connections of commerce" (215). Ciarlo tracks the appearance of the visual markers of minstrelsy, originating in a US context. However, the postcard or advertising trade card as colonial fetish object appears in this project—e.g. the distribution of colonial images from Namibia as commodity items, the pinning of a

German advertisement to the barracks wall in a photograph. See David Ciarlo, *Advertising Empire: Race and Visual Culture in Imperial Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvjghw4v.

[56] The society "allocated money for selected unmarried women's free ship passage to German South West Africa, where they would work as domestic servants for colonist families until bachelor colonists married them. Women in Germany who were already engaged or married to German colonists were also to receive free passage. . . . By 1907 it had given free passage to 111 unmarried German women." Yet Lorna Wildenthal quotes the colonialist economist Moritz J. Bonn as saying, "When discussing the high numbers of mixed-descent children born outside marriage, 'the main cause of bastardization in Africa was not the absence of white women but the presence of black ones'" (Wildenthal, *German Women for Empire, 1884–1945* [Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001], 91, https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822380955).

[57] For more on the roles of white German women in the colonial context, see Daniel Joseph Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad: Cultural Policies and National Identity in Namibia* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2002); See also Hans Grimm's *Südafrikanische Novellen* and scholarship on his work, including Sara Lennox, "Race, Gender, and Sexuality in German Southwest Africa: Hans Grimm's Südafrikanische Novellen," in *Germany's Colonial Pasts*, edited by Eric Ames, Marcia Klotz, and Lora Wildenthal (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 63–75; Maureen O. Gallagher, "Fragile Whiteness: Women and Girls in German Colonial Fiction, 1900–1913," *Women in German Yearbook* 32 (2016): 111–37, https://doi.org/10.5250/womgeryearbook.32.2016.0111; and Gunther Packendorf, "Of Colonizers and Colonized: Hans Grimm on German South West Africa," *Social Dynamics* 12, no. 2 (1986): 39–47, https://doi.org/10.1080/02533958608458405.

[58] Zimmerer and Zeller, *Genocide in German South-West Africa*, 186.

[59] Silvester and Gewald, *Words Cannot Be Found*, xxiv.

[60] Prussian Secret State Archive, GStA PK, IX. HA, SPAE, IV Nr. 36.

[61] Tortorici, "Visceral Archives of the Body," 408; Amber Musser, *Sensational Flesh: Race, Power, and Masochism* (New York: New York University Press, 2014), 23, DOI:10.18574/nyu/9781479891818.003.0001.

[62] Thank you to Nil Uzun for helping me decipher twentieth-century cursive handwriting.

[63] I am reminded of the 1910 lynching photograph taken by Mississippian O. N. Pruitt, in which a white man in a hat kneels before the bodies of two hanged men

to hold them steady, his face turned away from the camera. See Raiford, "Lynching, Visuality, and the Un/Making of Blackness," 29, https://doi.org/10.1215/10757163-20-1-22.

[64] Rankine, "Condition of Black Life."

[65] Silvester and Gewald, *Words Cannot Be Found*, 120.

[66] Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics," translated by Libby Meintjes, *Public Culture* 15, no. 1 (2003): 1140, https://doi.org/10.1215/9781478007227

[67] See here the series *Erased Lynchings* by Ken Gonzalez-Day, who presents historical photographs of lynchings that have been manipulated to remove the image of the victim. The photographs, then, are without violence, uncanny particularly because some of them are iconic, as the viewer recognizes the absence and knows that there is meant to be something going on. Significantly, many of these images include white participants and spectators at the lynchings, which are left in the image, and become, with the victim absented, the focal point of the image.

[68] As a media practice, this archival implication links with calls to focus our contemporary smartphone lenses on police, to document evidence of violence, rather than sharing retraumatizing images of the killings of Black people or capturing images of protestors that might be used as surveilling evidence by the police.

[69] Berkley Hudson, "O. N. Pruitt's Possum Town: The 'Modest Aspiration and Small Renown' of a Mississippi Photographer, 1915–1960," in "The Photography Issue," special issue, *Southern Cultures* 13, no. 2 (2007), https://doi.org/10.1353/scu.2007.0016: 52–77; Leigh Raiford, *Imprisoned in a Luminous Glare: Photography and the African American Freedom Struggle* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

[70] Daniel A. Gross, "The Troubling Origins of the Skeletons in a New York Museum," *New Yorker*, January 24, 2018, https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/thetroubling-origins-of-the-skeletons-in-a-new-york-museum.

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Photogrammetry and Zhongshan Pavilion: Reconstructing Urban Memory of the Wenxi Fire

Haoran Chang

Figure 1 Photogrammetry model of Zhongshan Pavilion. Image courtesy of the artist.

In line with the government's scorched-earth policy, on November 12, 1938, a devastating fire was started in the city of Changsha, China. This military strategy calls for the intentional burning and destruction of all valuable resources, such as buildings, food, and transportation infrastructure, to prevent the invading enemy

from utilizing them. During the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945), the governor of Changsha followed instructions from the Nationalist government to execute this scorched-earth policy. Yet officials mistakenly initiated the fire too quickly and destroyed the more-than-three-thousand-year-old city. In this fire, thousands of people lost their lives, and the majority of the city's buildings were destroyed. Referred to today as the Changsha Fire of 1938, or the Wenxi Fire, this event left Changsha one of the most damaged cities during World War II, alongside Stalingrad, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki.[1]

Zhongshan Pavilion is one of the few architectural structures that survived the 1938 Wenxi Fire. As technology widely applied in cultural preservation, photogrammetry can play a significant role in preserving this structure for future generations. Yet this project intends to further the conversation about the role of photogrammetry in memory preservation by considering the Zhongshan Pavilion as a heterogeneous site. The resulting virtual 3-D model opens new potentialities in challenging historical narratives that are told in the singular voice (the state's) as presented at the physical site in Changsha. Rather than following the path of criticizing digitalization as an extension and magnification of fragmentedness and rootlessness, the constructed virtual 3-D model of Zhongshan Pavilion may expand the fixed and structured memory preserved in the physical location and bring vitality to the preservation of multiple memories in a new kind of public space.

A Brief History of Changsha and the Wenxi Fire

Changsha is the capital of Hunan Province in the south-central part of China, which has a more than three-thousand-year history and has been active since the Han Dynasty (206 BCE–CE 220). However, because of the Wenxi Fire, there are only few old architectural structures found in the city today. At the beginning of the Second Sino-Japanese War, the government was still reluctant to carry out the scorched-earth policy, considering the significant sacrifice of destroying the city. But by the end of 1938, the government decided to execute this strategy because Japan took ownership of the valuable resources of the lands it conquered. At that time, the Japanese Army executed the "Three Alls Policy," the campaign for "kill all, burn all, loot all."[2] A telegraph signed under the name of vice director of the Bureau of Investigation and Statistics, Jiang Zhongzheng, revealed that the Japanese raped women, stole valuable antiques, and plundered food. It was therefore necessary, he concluded, to execute a scorched-earth policy to prevent this from happening again. On October 21, 1938, the city of Guangzhou was successfully invaded by the Japanese Army, and the Chinese Army withdrew to Wuhan four

days later. By November, the Japanese Army decided to slow down the speed of its invasion, intending instead to reconnect the railway between Wuhan and Guangzhou in order to disrupt the supply line between eastern and northwestern China. To achieve this goal, the Japanese Army targeted Changsha, which crucially controlled transportation across the Yangtze and Xiang Rivers and Donting Lake. Additionally, Changsha is a stop on the Canto-Hankow railway, which makes Changsha a key location in terms of military strategy.

At the beginning of November 1938, the Japanese Army started its assault in northern Hunan.[3] On November 11, the Japanese Army attacked Liuyang, a city ninety-three miles away from Changsha. The failure to defend Liuyang aroused panic and chaos in Changsha. The following day, the governor of Hunan province, Zhang Zhizhong, received a telegraph from Jiang Zhongzheng to implement the scorched-earth policy if Changsha was besieged. After receiving the telegraph, the governor of Hunan province called on the garrison commander, Feng Ti, and the director of the security department in Changsha, Quan Xu, to prepare in case the city failed to defend itself against the Japanese Army. According to Feng Ti's diary, November 12 was the day of memorializing the birthday of Sun Zhongshan, and there was a torch parade in the city.[4] That night, Zhang Zhizhong dispatched the commander Xu Kun, and three soldiers, as one group out of a hundred to initiate a fire in the city. Xu Kun told the soldiers to wait for the signal—another fire at a different location—before beginning their own.

As told by Feng Ti, coincidentally on the same evening, a city hospital accidentally caught on fire. The soldiers saw this fire without realizing that it was an accident, and they mistakenly believed that the scorched-earth policy had already been started. They used gasoline and matches to ignite the fire, which lasted the entire day and was not extinguished until November 16, four days later. The consequence of the fire is significant. Changsha became one of the most damaged cities during World War II, alongside Stalingrad, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki.[5] This city, whose history can be traced back to South Zhou Dynasty three thousand years ago, was almost destroyed because of the fire, including the majority of its old architecture.

The governor, Zhang Zhizhong, claimed that he did not know who gave the orders for initiating the fire, and said that it must be the responsibility of another department, such as the Bureau of Investigation. Contrarily, the biography of Dai Yunong claims that the director of the Bureau of Investigation, Dai Li, was actually framed by Zhang Zhizhong. After the fire, Guo Moruo, the famous scholar and official of the Chinese Nationalist Party, wrote a letter condemning Zhang Zhizhong for starting the fire.[6] Zhang Zhizhong denied the denouncement from Guo in a written response. According to the official documents after the fire,

the reason for it being set was that the government officials believed the rumor that the Japanese Army had been near Changsha. Feng Ti, Xu Kun, and Wen Zhongfu were executed for the fire. However, the execution of Zhang Zhizhong, the main figure in the fire, was waived and he was merely dismissed.

Zhongshan Pavilion: Place and Memory Preservation

The Wenxi Fire burned down the whole city, leaving few traces. But this historic event remains embedded in the community's collective memory through documentary film, written memoir, and archival images. Yet these externalized memories are not widely distributed, and this significant historical event is still not well known, even to people born in Changsha. Unlike individual memory, the forms mentioned above are independent of individual experience and instead create a collective memory preserved by external objects. They are not shared experiences of each individual, yet they are preserved in the public space and formed as public memory. Public memory is constantly reassessed and revised with continual conversations in the public space.[7] Nevertheless, the temporal public memory is not nebulous; it always occurs in the place.[8]

Place plays a significant role in facilitating the construction of memory and remembrance in that it subtends memory, "being the ground and resource, the location and scene of the remembering we do in common."[9] Externalized memories are unstable, changing with and adapting to the needs of the present.[10] Contextualizing the past by making a linkage to a place and/or site can anchor the fluidity of the past and represent historical "facts." While the past has a temporal dimension, and thus operates beyond three-dimensional space, a place associated with the past can become more stable over time and allow people to have a sustained connection to a collective memory. The relative stability of place can help anchor history and make it timeless.[11] Additionally, the physical act of returning to a particular place can create a sense of nostalgia for that past. In Gaston Bachelard's *Poetics of Space*, memories are preserved through the lived experiences between interior spaces and personal and emotional responses. Indeed, home is not just the place of living; it is also a place in which to dream.[12] Not merely a physical space, it is also a spiritual one in that we can feel, touch, smell, and look at the space and make a psychological connection between the present physical space and the remembered past.

Constructing a place, such as building monuments and preserving historic districts, can promote certain perspectives of the past while erasing others.[13]

Figure 2 Photograph of Zhongshan Pavilion in the first-floor exhibition (originally from People's Club 民众俱乐部, *ca.1930). Image in the public domain.*

Making place plays a significant role in retrieving memory in a way that not only recalls but also reconstructs the past, thus accounting for why we remember and forget at the same time. The affiliation between place and memory is neither linear nor binary, since memory itself is not fixed. The psychologist Dan McAdams writes, "Stories are not merely 'chronicles,' . . . Stories are less about facts and more about meanings. In the subjective and embellished telling of the past, the past is constructed, history is made."[14]

Considering the significance of place in memory preservation, I focus on the role of architecture in preserving the memory of this historic fire. With the extensive destruction caused by the fire, there are not many architectural structures in their original forms. One of the most significant surviving architectural structures is arguably Zhongshan Pavilion, a five-story, Western-style, square-shaped clock tower completed in 1930. Originally a three-story, concrete building, the pavilion featured an electronic clock mechanism imported from Germany. At the back of the bell tower, an elliptical pool was surrounded by a lawn. In 1932 a public education center with a reading room and a recreation space opened on the lower floor, an office and classrooms on the second floor in the attached building, and a teahouse on the third floor.[15] As a memorial to Sun Zhongshan, the first president

and founding father of the Republic of China, who was frequently referred to as "Father of the Nation," the clock tower was named the Zhongshan Pavilion.

Although Zhongshan Pavilion is a significant architectural structure and witness to the area's history before and after the Wenxi Fire, I would like to argue that the heterogeneity of this building can hardly preserve a singular past. My thinking on heterogeneity borrows from Michel Foucault's concept of heterotopia to describe a space that is not homogeneous and singular. In his well-known essay "Of Other Spaces," Foucault distinguishes heterotopia from utopia to describe "counter-sites" that are embedded with dualities and paradoxes. At the beginning of the essay, Foucault uses the mirror as an example of a heterotopic space because of the way individuals in front of it occupy their body while that body is reflected in the mirror. The multiplicity of space described by heterotopia is a "floating piece of space, a place without place."[16] Zhongshan Pavilion is a heterotopic space because of its changing functions through time, the way it has been subsumed into the current cityscape, and the multiple forms and cultures it embodies. The multiplicity of Zhongshan Pavilion mainly reflects two principles discussed by Foucault: the third principle that the "heterotopia is capable of juxtaposing in a single real place, the several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible," and the fourth principle that heterotopia are "most often linked to slices in time," rather than to the accumulation of time.

First, the Zhongshan Pavilion contains different functionalities in different historic periods. In the 1930s, before the Wenxi Fire, it was used as a public education center. Although the building's skeleton survived the fire, the pavilion has been through substantial changes in recent decades. After the 1950s, the pavilion was run by the local public library. In 1960 Changsha Library was officially established, and the pavilion became one of its satellite spaces.[17] In 1966 the Cultural Revolution began, and the library was suspended. After the Cultural Revolution, the building still belonged to Changsha Library, and the space was utilized as a children's reading room.[18] Since the Zhongshan Pavilion is at the center of downtown, an increasing number of stores and temporary buildings opened around it in the 1990s. Surrounded by several stores, such as a karaoke bar, a bakery, and clothing stores, the pavilion remained the tallest building in this area. Crowded by the commercial stores that were temporary structures, in the 1990s the pavilion lost its functionality in this urban landscape, no longer offering standard time or serving as a memorial to the "father of the nation."

In 2002 the government spent thirty million RMB refurbishing the Zhongshan Pavilion, cleaning up all the commercial stores around the building. However, the structure was severely damaged because of poor preservation over the years, and the German electronic clock had disappeared. The reconstruction

Figure 3 Zhongshan Pavilion in 2017. Image courtesy of the author.

was finished in 2007, and in 2011 the pavilion was refurbished once again. Today, the first floor of the pavilion is a small gallery space. The other floors of the building are closed to the public: ostensibly, the second floor is used as a meeting place for local government officials, and the top floor remains closed. With investments by the local government in refurbishing the building, Zhongshan Pavilion is now a tourist and political site that embodies the government's effort to educate its citizens in patriotism.

Although the pavilion was refurbished in the 2000s, it is still competing with the surrounding cityscape and its many commercial stores, loud sounds, and numerous advertisements. On the southeast side of the pavilion lies a big shopping mall that includes a cinema, food court, and many different international fashion chains, such as Zara, H&M, and Coach. Under the pavilion, there is an underground shopping street, named Jin Man Di, which can be translated into English as "Gold Is Everywhere." On the southwest side of the pavilion, there are many small restaurants. The domination of commercial spaces overshadows its memorial function. With the loud noise of traffic and promotional sound in the city's downtown area, the sound of standard time announced by the Zhongshan Pavilion can no longer be heard. The clock tower does not function as a timekeeper due to the loud noise and the wide availability of other time-keeping mechanisms. The style of the architecture is in contrast to the surrounding environment, which

Figure 4 Photogrammetry model of first-floor exhibition space in Zhongshan Pavilion. Image courtesy of the author.

isolates the pavilion from the crowded cityscape. Zhongshan Pavilion, submerged within the larger cityscape, disappears with the obscure memory of its past. The history, with the overwhelming modern city scene, is hardly to be heard, seen, and felt in the crowded urban space.

Paul Connerton discusses the phenomenon of losing track of history in his book *How Modernity Forgets*. The city of Chicago, for example, is the railway nodal point of flowing merchandise from the West and East.[19] The assemblages of products from different places make Chicago a site where different ecosystems converge. In the context of fast-paced urbanization in China, Connerton's example provides a useful metaphor for explaining the situation at Zhongshan Pavilion. Like the convergence of different railways in Chicago, the assemblage of style and functions surrounding the pavilion conceals or subsumes its history.

Moreover, the pavilion contains various forms and cultures in a single site with an unresolvable and complicated relationship. In terms of architectural style the pavilion is Western, but the interior exhibition narrative contradicts this (fig. 4). Tour guides have to pass a written test assigned by the government before introducing the "relevant" history of Sun Zhongshan and this building, and Zhongshan Pavilion has been claimed as a local "Red Tourism Site" for its promotion of the historical significance of Chinese communism. According to Jennifer A. Jordan, the preservation of urban memorial spaces is highly associated with the land use and land ownership.[20] As a socialist country, China's land ownership and land use are very different from Western countries. Article 10 of the

1982 Constitution states that land of the country must be owned by the state in urban areas, while the land in rural and suburban areas must be owned by the state or local collectives.[21] Therefore, the curation of the exhibition is led by the local government. In the exhibition, the preface that introduces Sun Zhongshan quotes Chairman Mao, the founding father of the People's Republic of China:

> In memory of the revolutionary forerunner Mr. Sun! In memory of his clear-cut standpoint as a democrat who fought with the reformists in the Democratic Revolution preparatory period. He was the leading Chinese Democratic Revolutionist in this combat. In memory of his great achievement in overturning monarchy and establishing the republic in the Revolution of 1911. In memory of the first Chinese Nationalist–Communist Party cooperation, the great achievement in developing from the Old Three People's Principles to the New Three People's Principles. He left a rich legacy of political thought. Apart from a small group of reactionaries, the modern Chinese are the successors of Mr. Sun's revolutionary cause. We have finished Mr. Sun's unfinished democratic revolution, and develop it into Communism revolution. We are finishing the Communist Revolution.[22]

The rest of the exhibition introduces the major political contributions by Sun Zhongshan from the beginning of 1900 to his death, including a fraction of modern history in Changsha in the context of other historic moments for the Chinese Communist Party during that period. Western invaders and feudalism are framed as targets that have to be dismantled before establishing a democratic and independent country. The narratives establish an opposition between China and the West, the old and the new, and the democratic and the hegemonic. This binary narration in Zhongshan Pavilion echoes the opposition between victim and perpetrator identified by Dominick LaCapra in written accounts of the Holocaust after World War II.[23] LaCapra discusses two different ways of writing trauma: acting out and walking through. Acting out is the tendency to repeat something compulsively after the trauma. Walking through is when individuals distance themselves from trauma. Setting up clear targets and binaries in response to the trauma, faced by people being exploited by invaders and a feudalistic government, can be considered an instance of "acting out." Establishing a binary between Western invaders and the Chinese simplifies the complicated relationship between China and the West. Victimizing the people in the city can be considered a defense

mechanism against the trauma caused by the invasion and a hegemonic government, and this is one example of "acting out" in writing history. This also justifies the necessity of establishing a new democratic and independent country to overcome the trauma faced by the citizens in Changsha.

This exhibition is curated with an underlying logic of nationalism and the fight for liberation from foreign invaders. The first-floor exhibition establishes a binary relationship between the native and the West in that establishing a democratic country is to defend Western invaders successfully. Nevertheless, the original intention of constructing this building was to show the advancement of modernity. For instance, Zhongshan Pavilion was initiated by people who had Western educational backgrounds. The mayor of Changsha in the 1930s, Ji Yu, was a political figure who graduated from the University of Illinois and had worked for Michigan Railway Station as an engineer.[24] He led the urban landscape design in Changsha, including inviting the architect to design this Western-style clock tower and surrounding areas. The clock was imported from Germany, and it served as the mechanism for regulating and presenting time in the center of the city; in this way, it was integral to the construction of this social space and its identity.[25] Zhongshan Pavilion functioned not only as a work of architecture but also as the symbol of modern culture and science, which was perceived as cultural advancement or progress. Yet this contradicts the widespread characterization of this historic period as one in which the Chinese resisted the invasion of the West.

The superiority of Western politics and science is also mentioned in the exhibition narrative. For instance, Sun Zhongshan learned from Western democracy and proposed the Nationalist revolution guideline, *Three Principles of the People*. The three principles were nationalism, democracy, and livelihood, and this guide remains one of the most important political heritages from Sun Zhongshan. Zhongshan Pavilion is therefore embedded in the complicated relationship between China and the West in modern Chinese history, with an abundance of rejections and acceptances of Western civilization simultaneously. This paradox manifests in the Zhongshan Pavilion, which does not exclusively promote a negative or positive view of the relationship between China and the West, causing multiple narratives to coexist in one site.

Zhongshan Pavilion cannot be seen as a utopic space that is linear, consistent, and complete. Rather, it is a space of fragmentation. In constructing a collective memory of the pavilion, one might get lost in the multiple, often contradictory, narratives that are created about the structure's history and its continued existence in a growing cityscape. Such mystification prevents people from thinking about the history and origins of the site, impeding the public from having a consistent, collective memory. Since the complex history of Zhongshan Pavilion has

been concealed in this assemblage space, the building's function in preserving the memory of Wenxi Fire cannot be maintained. Not only because the exhibition provides limited information about the building and the Wenxi Fire, but also because the multiplicities of forms, functions, and its relation to the surrounding environment render the pavilion as a "counter-site" with an inherent heterogeneity.

The failure to preserve the history of the Wenxi Fire is also related to the difficulty of accessing the site and the problem of its "age-value." Zhongshan Pavilion is now in the center of a traffic intersection, and there is no underground passage or pedestrian access. Lacking convenient access, the building becomes an isolated site surrounded by busy traffic and consumer culture. Zhongshan Pavilion therefore offers limited access to the public. Since the pavilion was not preserved well in the past, it has been renovated and refurbished several times in recent years. Once refurbished, the building loses its *age-value*, a term Aloïs Riegl defines as "rooted purely in its value as memory . . . [which] springs from our appreciation of the time which has elapsed since the work was made and which has burdened it with traces of age."[26] The natural look of "oldness" is embedded in this so-called age-value to which it is complementary and on which it depends. It is true that the Zhongshan Pavilion looks different from the surrounding modern architecture; nevertheless, there is an increasing number of pseudo-classical buildings whose styles are historic but constructed in recent years. The building's style is hard to ascribe to the age-value. The age-value is beneficial in making an emotional connection to the public, which can facilitate preserving the memory of the past. Since the pavilion lacks this age-value, it is hard for the public to make a direct connection between the architecture and history.

Photogrammetry in Producing Digital Place and Memory

Zhongshan Pavilion, as a heterotopic space, makes the preservation of collective memory unstable. In this project, I use photogrammetry to digitalize Zhongshan Pavilion, transforming physical architecture into virtual data that can be represented in an immersive virtual environment. The process of reconstructing Zhongshan Pavilion, metaphorically, responds to the site as a spatial heterotopia. Photogrammetry is one of the most prominent technologies in transforming physical objects and places into virtual 3-D models by leveraging spatial computation technologies. According to the geodetic scientist Toni Schenk, photogrammetry can be defined as "the science of obtaining reliable information about the property's surfaces and objects without physical contact with the objects, and of
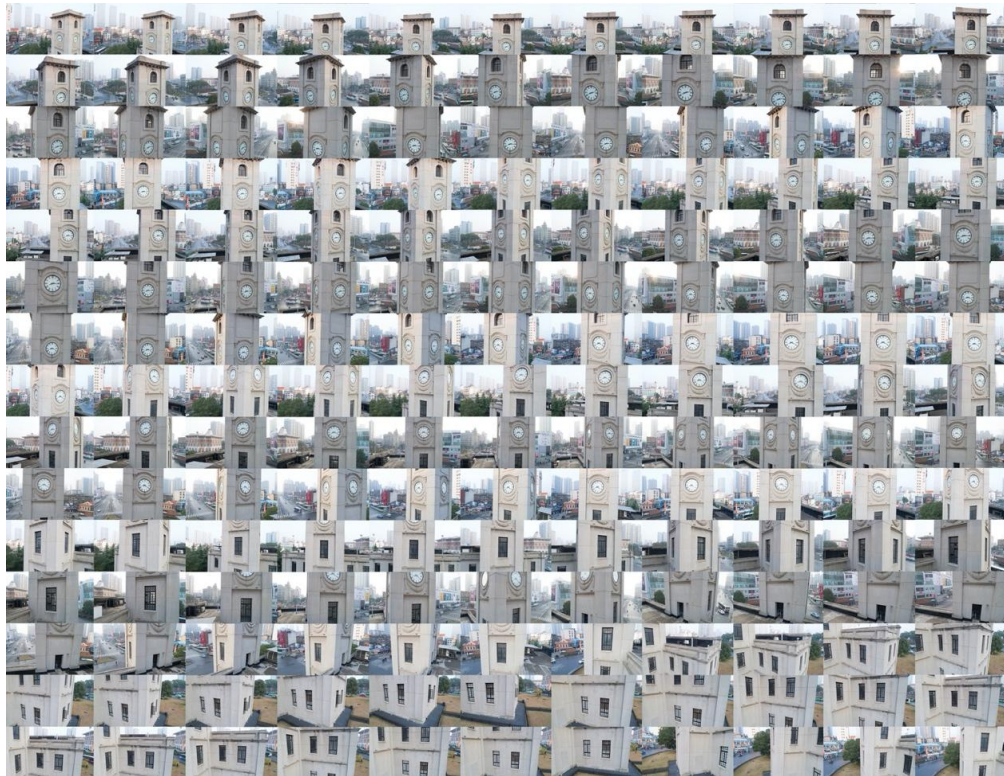
Figure 5 Some images collected after flying the drone. Image courtesy of the author.

measuring and interpreting this information."[27] There is an input and an output in implementing photogrammetry: the input is the information acquired in the form of photographic images, and the output is the photogrammetric product obtained through the process, such as maps, orthophotos, and 3-D models. One of the basic concepts of photogrammetry is using the principles of perspective to align the images to construct a dimensional scene by acquiring information from the physical space.

In January 2018 I went to Changsha, China, and captured digital images of Zhongshan Pavilion using a DJI Phantom 4 drone. To get the highest-quality images, I used raw image files in the process of taking the photographs. After obtaining all the images by flying the drone around the building, I used Adobe Lightroom to lower the contrast of the images and increase the clarity for optimizing the output. In this project, I took about four hundred images for reconstructing the digital model of Zhongshan Pavilion. All the edited photos were exported to Agisoft Metashape, a specialized software that performs photogrammetric processing of digital images.

As a technology that constructs 3-D assets, photogrammetry is based on real objects connected to two 3-D spaces: the physical one and the virtual one. In

Figure 6 This picture is captured in the Agisoft Metashape, which demonstrates how the images are stitched together. Image courtesy of the author.

using photogrammetry to make virtual models, the "real" objects are transformed into flat digital photographs. Then the information is combined by the software to compose a virtual model of the "real" object, and this virtual model can be used in many different ways in the future. In implementing photogrammetry, 2-D images form a bridge between physical and virtual dimensional spaces. Photogrammetry thus disrupts the binary relationship between 2-D and 3-D spaces. Memory also connects two different spaces in a similar way. Our brain captures "reality" and stores it in such a way that "reality" is transformed into a virtual construction that can be manipulated. Photogrammetry, in this sense, more than a tool in memory preservation, can be considered the externalization of the memory.

Digitalized objects can be utilized to form different narratives with various digital media such as video, digital photo, and 360-degree film. From "real" to "virtual," the construction of our memory is like the process of transforming a physical object into a virtual model with photogrammetry. Hundreds of images are stitched together by algorithm in constructing the virtual 3-D model. From hundreds to one: this process echoes how memory is constructed from the transformation of multiple fragmented moments into one singular form. In the case of the Wenxi Fire, its history has been told in many different ways. For instance, there is not a single answer to who should be blamed for initiating this mistaken fire. The first-floor exhibition space constructs a particular narrative promoted by the local government, which ignores many other perspectives of the building's history. The Wenxi Fire is briefly mentioned, while the exhibition about Sun Zhongshan can

Figure 7 Dense cloud generated by Agisoft Metashape based on the images before generating mesh. Image courtesy of the author.

only be presented in an abridged version in this small space, highlighting the relationship between the Chinese Nationalist and Communist Parties. Zhongshan Pavilion, a site embedded with many histories, memories, and stories of the city, is reformed and represented with a singular and homogeneous narrative.

Although the virtual 3-D model is stitched together as a singular form, this project reveals the site's inherent heterogeneity. The embedded multiplicity within the virtual model is coherent to heterotopic physical architecture discussed above. The internal conflict of the cultural forms and changing functions of the site are part of the physical Zhongshan Pavilion. There is not a consistent and singular form, in either the physical or the virtual Zhongshan Pavilion, just like the memory preserved in fragmentation without an anchored place.

Other than the metaphorical significance in memory preservation and reconstruction, photogrammetry also has a practical significance. Photogrammetry technology has been widely applied to many fields. Other than being used extensively in landscape surveys and mapping, which was the original intention for this technology, in more recent years, photogrammetry has been used as an alternative way to construct 3-D models and has been applied in many different fields, such as cultural heritage preservation, game design, and archaeology. Photogrammetry has many practical significances in cultural heritage preservation. First, compared with the traditional methods of cultural preservation, which use hand drawing and photographs in documenting different angles, digital photogrammetry is more efficient in that archaeologists do not need to come back and forth between the documents and site to correct the information, and the data can be acquired in real time. With the innovation of digital technology, digitalization of historical architecture becomes more attainable with limited budgets and time. The structure can be documented with photogrammetry in comparatively high-fidelity quality.
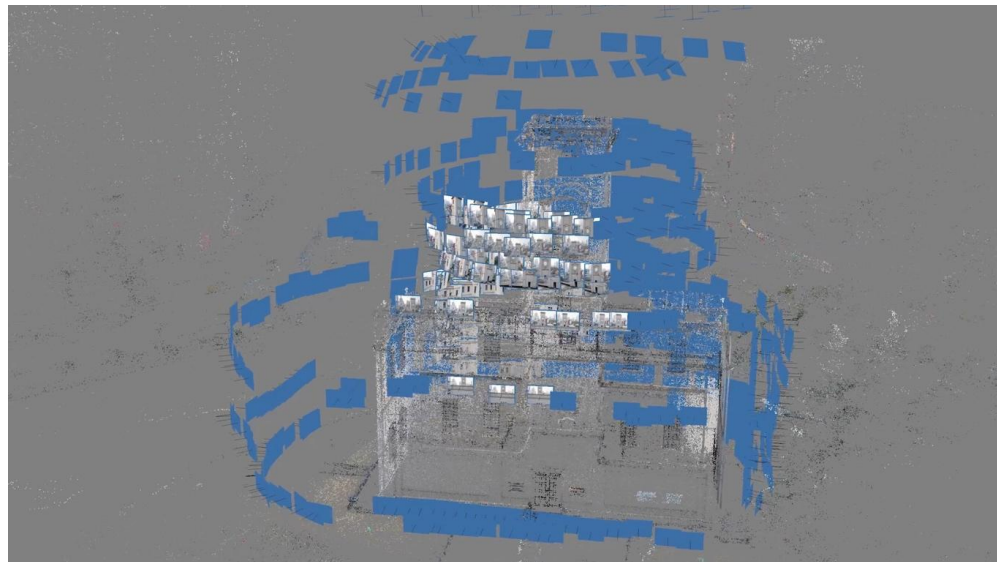
Figure 8 The final result of the 3-D model captured in the Agisoft Metashape. Image courtesy of the author.

Digital preservation can thus play an even more significant role in restoring damaged architecture. For example, in 2019, the Notre Dame Cathedral was damaged by a fire, and the wood latticework roof and iconic spire collapsed. We cannot see the original version of the cathedral anymore because of the damage caused by the fire. Yet the cathedral has been preserved by photogrammetry technology and can be seen and remembered in the digital space. Some companies have done digital preservation by scanning the Notre Dame Cathedral before the fire, and one of them is Art Graphique Patrimoine, a French company specializing in 3-D digitization and modeling of cultural heritage monuments, whose data have been used for the restoration project. Another game company, Ubisoft, the creator of popular video game franchise Assassin's Creed, spent hundreds of hours studying and scanning the Notre Dame Cathedral to develop an essential part of the game. Fire may destroy the building, but the memory continues in the digital world, a collective space shared by different people.

Photogrammetrying architecture can also effectively solve the age-value and accessibility problems of historic buildings. In constructing the photogrammetry model of Zhongshan Pavilion, physical architecture is transformed into a digital version, which allows people to represent and retell the memory of the fire by sharing digital versions with others who cannot visit the site in person. The original form and appearance can be preserved with the photographic materials attached to the 3-D model. It is also available to people in the future who may witness changes to its appearance. The memory that has been externalized into a

3-D model can be transmitted from one generation to another, allowing collective histories to be represented and retold. The comparative literature scholar Marianne Hirsch coined the term *postmemory* to describe the concept of the relationship that specific generations have with powerful experiences that preceded their birth. She uses this concept to analyze how photographs and family spaces transmit memory, facilitating the construction of "postmemory."[28] Virtual objects can become this "postmemory," similarly transmitting from one generation to another. The "old-ness" presented in the virtual form has a closer connection to the past, triggering the sense of nostalgia, which is important in transmitting "postmemory" because it can preserve the traces of the past with perceived fidelity. Virtual objects also allow an easier access to "postmemory" among numerous people, which facilitates its distribution. Photogrammetry 3-D models have the potential to maintain the memory's age-value and to increase the collective's access to that memory.

Some may argue that photos and videos can also preserve the appearance of the building. The difference between the flat and dimensional presentations is that the 3-D environment has more agency because the 360-degree model enables people to interact with the site in ways otherwise inhibited by its location and function. Digitalizing a physical structure transforms physical space into virtual reality, yet it holds the potential to be equivalent to its physical iteration. With the implementation of the virtual 3-D model of Zhongshan Pavilion with expressive media, such as VR or AR technologies, people can feel the architecture's presence through its size, texture, and the relation to their body. People can understand the proportion of the architecture in relation to their own body, instead of through their imaginations. The physical interaction between people and the virtual 3-D model allows people to have a more physical connection, instead of purely through the sense of the visual or ocular. The immersiveness brings people into a dimensional space, which cannot be achieved through flat photos and videos. The placement of the virtual Zhongshan Pavilion 3-D model in a virtual immersive world, to some extent, has the equivalent effect on people as it would in "real life." Moreover, the virtual 3-D version of Zhongshan Pavilion becomes the anchor in memorializing this building by reproducing narratives through expressive media. For instance, people can use the model to reproduce stories that may differ from those presented by the government in the exhibition space. The digital version of Zhongshan Pavilion functions as more than a digital replica. Rather, it is an archive, one that is constantly expanding in virtual form. The expansion of photogrammetry 3-D model breaks the singular narrative and, compared with the physical site, it embraces the heterogeneity of Zhongshan Pavilion in a different way that is more democratic to people in the reconstruction and representation of collective memory.

Repositioning Memories with Photogrammetry

Unlike cultural preservation projects, reconstructing a 3-D model of Zhongshan Pavilion in this project creates more than just an architectural model for heritage preservation. This project also exposes the fragmented and rootless nature of memory preservation. In constructing the photogrammetry model, I chose the medium quality in building dense cloud before generating the mesh of the 3-D model in the software because of the constraints of my computer and for efficiency. In professional and commercial projects, photogrammetry 3-D models are generated from the information captured by the laser scanner and cameras combined with high-end equipment. Yet, in this independent artistic project, with limited budget and time, I captured only the lower resolution of the building instead of being completely loyal to the physical architecture. This partiality reflects how memory is represented and retold in the process of construction. The reproduction of memorial space is closely related to the ownership and the authority facilitating the preservation project. As mentioned before, the Zhongshan Pavilion is refurbished by the local government, and the land and architecture are owned by the government. Zhongshan Pavilion is deemed a key cultural relic and is therefore owned and used by the government. Because of this particular government's role in constructing the memorial site of Zhongshan Pavilion, the narrative constructed is largely based on the government's interests.

In this independent photogrammetry project, the 3-D model of Zhongshan Pavilion I created is free to download on Sketchfab, one of the major 3-D model websites. The open-access nature of this digital 3-D model of the pavilion enables the narrative to be represented differently. As discussed above, the narrative in the first-floor exhibition space of the pavilion focuses mainly on the opposition between the native and the foreign, and between democracy and feudalism, for the purpose of constructing a patriotic education site. This narrative curated in the first floor recontextualizes the memory around the building. How the Wenxi Fire of 1938 was initiated, why the government tried to execute the scorched-earth policy, and how this fire was started as a mistake are not preserved in this space. Zhongshan Pavilion as a physical memorial site is repositioned in an artificial narrative. The background of the 3-D model is like a green screen, and it can be replaced by any virtual space. Therefore, the Zhongshan Pavilion can be repositioned in different environments for creating different narratives. The context of the digital model can be easily manipulated with the convenience of digital tools. Photogrammetry models can be situated in different contexts and offer new

meanings detached from the original historic circumstance. This repositioning gesture puts into question the notion that memory is authentic and instead suggests that it can be manipulated to match the context in which it is being used.

The practice of repositioning is very prominent in emerging spatial computational media, such as virtual reality, augmented reality, and mixed reality. For instance, users can use an AR program, such as Spark AR by Facebook, and bring the Zhongshan Pavilion into their lives. Users can interact with the virtual Zhongshan Pavilion in real time, while more advanced users can bring the pavilion assets into game engines, such as Unity or Unreal Engine, and make their own VR projects.

One example of repositioning Zhongshan Pavilion in VR is my *Hymn to the Fallen*. In this VR project, audiences can fly through different spaces that are infused with photogrammetried buildings, archival images, video footage of the Wenxi Fire, and interviews with survivors. In this multilayered space, Zhongshan Pavilion is used as a trace or witness of the fire, but the narratives are formed by multiple, heterogeneous contexts and experiences. My 3-D model of the pavilion is repositioned in this artistic VR project for retelling and reproducing a nonlinear memory of the Wenxi Fire. Because I published the model online for free, other people may use the model for their own purposes. They can reposition the structure in their own virtual environment, which cannot be controlled by me or the state. Utilizing the 3-D model in this way is different from the memory reproduction in the physical site of Zhongshan Pavilion. In this photogrammetry project, the hundreds of images converge together as one singular 3-D model, and this singular form can be repositioned by people who can create their own moments with many possibilities.

Virtual is not the opposite of the real. In Pierre Levy's book *Becoming Virtual*, virtuality is a potentiality: "The virtual is by no means the opposite of the real. On the contrary, it is a fecund and powerful mode of being that expands the process of creation, opens up the future, injects a core of meaning beneath the platitude of immediate physical presence."[29] The digitalized 3-D model of Zhongshan Pavilion is more than a simple mimic; instead, it opens doors in reproduction. These new possibilities enable new stories, new memories, and new identities surrounding the pavilion. This photogrammetry project is more than a critique of the failure of memory preservation of Zhongshan Pavilion. It opens a new approach in retelling and reproducing narratives about the past in an immersive environment. This new space is not fixed and structured; rather, it is an expansion of the physical site. The virtual 3-D model provides the vitality of memory preservation in differentiation from the singular voice promoted in the physical site. Repositioning is not the enemy of memory preservation but instead offers other forms

and energies in representing the past. The Wenxi Fire of 1938 is not well known even to people born in the city. This is not because the memory is not preserved in the collective space but because its heterogeneity is obscured. Photogrammetry not only provides an opportunity to archive and preserve the architectural structure but also has the potential to energize the vitality, heterogeneity, and potentiality of memory construction.

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Notes

[1] *Wen* means the date of the day based on the Dai Ri Yun Mu (代日韵目), which is a dating system used in the telegraph since the Qing Dynasty in China; *Xi* means evening in Chinese.

[2] John Fairbank and Merle Goldman, *China: A New History* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1998,) 320.

[3] Wei-chen Yang, "Revisiting the Case of the 1938 Changsha Blaze Incident," *Academic Historica* 33 (2012): 42.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid., 36.

[6] Zhongchi Tan, *Changsha History* (Changsha: Hunan Education Publisher, 2013), 962.

[7] Edward Casey, "Public Memory in Place and Time," in *Framing Public Memory*, edited by Kendall R. Phillips (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2004), 29.

[8] According to Edward Casey, social memory is in the internal circle of public memory, while collective memory is in the external circle; in this essay, I rephrase it as public memory, rather than distinguishing the differences among them.

[9] Casey, "Public Memory," 22–23.

[10] Karen Till, *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 14.

[11] Ibid., 24.

[12] Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, translated by Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon, 1994).

[13] Brian Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 7–20. https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226558868.001.0001 .

[14] D. P. McAdams, *The Stories We Live By: Personal Myths and the Making of the Self* (New York: Morrow, 1993), 28.

[15] "The Story of Zhongshan Pavilion as 'Standard Time'" (中山亭'标准钟'的故), xinhuanet.com, last modified June 21, 2013, http://www.hn.xinhuanet.com/2-013-06/21/c_116234341.htm.

[16] Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics* 16 (Spring 1986): 27. https://doi.org/10.2307/464648 .

[17] Jianyong Liu, "The Must-See Exhibition: I Have Stared at You for Eighty-Six Years" (这个展览值得看：它已经注视我们86年了), *Chenbao Weekly Magazine*, last modified October 19, 2016, http://chuansong.me/n/996645145053.

[18] Haibo Liu, "The History of Zhongshan Pavilion and Zhongshan Memorial" (长沙中山亭、中山纪念堂小史), txhn.net, last modified June 26, 2012, http://txhn.net/hnfw/xzcsjy/changsha/201206/t20120626_18253.htm.

[19] Paul Connerton, *How Modernity Forgets* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 45. https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511627187 .

[20] Jennifer A. Jordan, *Structures of Memory: Understanding Urban Change in Berlin and Beyond* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), 11.

[21] Xian Fa (1982) (P.R.C.), Xinbian Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Changyong Falü Fagui Quanshu (2014), 1, English translation available at Westlaw China (by subscription).

[22] Translated by the author.

[23] Dominick LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), 24.

[24] Xiaodong Ouyang, *Hunan Old Streets* (Changsha: Hunan Wenyi, 2012), 100.

[25] Wu Hung, "Monumentality of Time: Giant Clocks, the Drum Tower, the Clock Tower," in *Monuments and Memory, Made and Unmade*, edited by Robert Nelson and Margret Olin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 107.

[26] Aloïs Riegl, "The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin," translated by Kurt W. Forster and Diane Ghirardo, *Oppositions*, no. 25 (Fall 1982): 21–51.

[27] Toni Schenk, *Introduction to Photogrammetry* (Columbus: Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Geodetic Science, Ohio State University, 2005), 8.

[28] Marianne Hirsch, "The Generation of Postmemory," *Poetics Today* 29, no. 1 (2008): 103–25. https://doi.org/10.1215/03335372-2007-019 .

[29] Pierre Levy, *Becoming Virtual* (New York: Plenum Trade, 1998), 16.

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The Televised Apocalypse

Justin Keever

On the evening of April 4, 1962, between 10:30 and 11:00 p.m., "The End of the World" was broadcast on NBC. Not the real end of the world, of course—we are all still here, for the time being—but a kind of parodic representation of postwar apocalyptic imaginaries that took the form of several machines, made of junk and consumer objects collected in and around Las Vegas, annihilating themselves. All the while, David Brinkley narrated the spectacle, his voice inflected with a dry irony to match the absurdity of the self-immolating junk sculptures. This is the scene of Jean Tinguely's *Study for an End of the World No. 2*, a kinetic artwork whose auto-destruction at Jean Dry Lake in the Mojave Desert was recorded by cameramen on March 21, 1962, and broadcast as an episode of the NBC program *David Brinkley's Journal*, titled "The End of the World," two weeks later. The entire program did not simply consist of the destruction of the artwork, however: the episode followed the creation and destruction of the piece, documenting the work of Tinguely and his partner, the artist Niki de Saint-Phalle, as they gathered discarded objects from dumping sites around Las Vegas and purchased objects from shops in the city itself. These objects would be used to construct self-destructive machines, which were transported to the desert to meet their explosive end in front of a camera-wielding audience. The assemblage of junk consisted of a water tank from which a stick would protrude and retract in an overtly sexual fashion, a spinning sign made to look like the horn of plenty, an air conditioner attached by wire to a wagon loaded with dynamite, a refrigerator loaded with feathers, a toilet seat, an armchair, and more. All of these bits of junk were assembled into small individual towers, which, when filmed at a distance and from the perspective from

which they were filmed for the television episode, heavily resemble the appearance of radio towers aside a radio telescope (Fig. 1). NBC commissioned Tinguely to produce one of his "suicide machines" for television—the artist had produced and destroyed two other such devices prior to *Study No. 2.*[1] *Study No. 2* is not an artwork on television; rather, it is an artwork produced *for* television. Broadcast television, specifically, is an irreducible component of the artwork's totality, for it is a format embedded in the material form of the transient machine. We could say that *Study No. 2* is site-specific, as long as *David Brinkley's Journal* is as much a part of that site as Jean Dry Lake in the Mojave Desert. Perhaps it would be even more accurate to suggest that NBC and Brinkley are as much authors of *Study for an End of the World No. 2* as Tinguely. The goal of the present essay is to treat *Study No. 2* as a broadcast, to understand what the transient textuality of television is doing in this work's critique of nuclear spectacle. As such, my aim is to approach *Study No. 2* as a work of combined authorship at multiple sites. The goal here is not to add Brinkley to Tinguely, but to understand *Study for an End of the World No. 2* as both artwork and television episode, simultaneously. As such, the work is site-specific in the sense that it was specific to both Jean Dry Lake and to NBC Network, from 10:30 to 11 p.m. on April 4, 1962.

Pamela Lee has written about *Study for an End of the World No. 2* as an allegory for the broadcast network, and Emily Eliza Scott has responded to that reading by emphasizing the sculpture's site-specificity. The aim of this essay is to hold both of these arguments together and to understand how the properties of the television medium—properties that Lee's analysis actually elides—do not detract from the work's meditation on the effects of nuclear testing on the American Southwest but actually *enhance it*. It is through the transient textuality of television, a kind of textuality characterized by a lack of closure, that the lingering effects of nuclear radiation are expressed. Together, Tinguely and Brinkley stage a drama of kinesis and residue, seizing on television's transience as a way to represent the invisibility of the lingering effects of nuclear detonation: that the only sort of text which can accurately represent the persistence of nuclear destruction is a text which lacks closure.

This essay turns first to an art-historical understanding of television, in Lee's analysis of *Study No. 2*. Her analysis is wholly based on the work's context as a televised event, but it does so with no small amount of disdain for the program on which the work is featured and for the medium of television itself. Her skepticism of television is not unjustified or unique within the discipline of art history.[2] Lee's disdain informs the tone and content of her analysis, following Martin Heidegger's fears concerning the way in which television facilitates the "abolition of every possibility of remoteness."[3] This preoccupation sets immediate limits on

what Tinguely's *Study No. 2* can mean: television's apparent capacity to annihilate distances in space and time is the totalizing paradigm for Lee's reading of Tinguely's televised apocalypse. Lee's analysis locates the apocalyptic in what she puts forward as the essential qualities of the television medium, and does so by way of the transience of Tinguely's suicide machine. Transience and the apocalyptic anxieties undergirding the medium of television are superficially where this essay's analysis will land, but *how* we get there will leave us with a very different understanding of the terms *transient* and *apocalyptic*, as well as their interrelation. The task of this essay is to locate the meaning that emerges if television is treated as a conversational partner in a dialogic creation of meaning, rather than a malevolent network that absorbs its content and orients it toward a single dominant operation of collapsing the world into a single instantaneous system, that is to say, to think of television as a potential "site" for a site-specific artwork. The aim here is to think of what emerges through the synthesis of television studies and art history, the synthesis of Tinguely and Brinkley.

To borrow an Althusserian line of thought, behind the word *transience* lies multiple possible concepts, and while Lee is interested in "speed," this essay lands on "impermanence." To explain the significance of that subtle shift, we must begin with a brief summary of Lee's argument. Lee begins by situating Tinguely within the broader movement of postwar kinetic art. Kinetic art, or kineticism, was an artistic practice that coalesced in the midfifties and ended in the latter half of the 1960s and can be broadly summarized as abstract, nonrepresentational art that was either literally or virtually in motion: it was technological art that encouraged a sense of play and humor, and in doing so "seemed to crystallize the phenomenal experience of viewing art as material and embodied."[4] As noted by Lynn Spigel, this participatory ethos in art developed contemporaneously with broadcast television, which itself put forth an aesthetic of kinetic liveness and participatory address.[5]

Kineticism was ultimately a rather brief and loosely organized movement, and the briefness of this movement of movement, this sense of kineticism being resolutely "of its time," leads Lee to argue, via the work of the social critic Alvin Toffler, that transience was kinetic art's fundamental quality.[6] In 1970 Toffler argues that information in the latter half of the twentieth century is a "'kinetic image' moving with blinding speed in and out of consciousness . . . the transience of late twentieth century life as presented by ephemeral images of instant food, instant communication, and instant cities," which all underscore "the speed with which cultural information was reproduced, distributed, internalized, and rendered obsolete."[7] Toffler argues that the kinetic artwork allegorizes this condition of speed

and ephemerality by creating maximum variability, and thus maximum transience, in its form.[8]

Building on this assessment of kineticism in general, Lee then walks her readers through Tinguely's case: one of her first focuses is Tinguely's 1959 work/performance *Manifesto for Statics*, in which the artist hired a small airplane to fly him over Düsseldorf. From the plane, Tinguely dropped 150,000 leaflets on which the manifesto was printed:

> For Statics: Everything moves continuously. Immobility does not exist. Don't be subject to the influence of out-of-date concepts of time. Forget hours, seconds and minutes. Accept instability. LIVE IN TIME. BE STATIC—WITH MOVE-MENT. For a static of the present moment. Resist the anxious fear to fix the instantaneous, to kill that which is living. Stop insisting on "values" which cannot but break down. Stop evoking movement and gesture. You are movement and gesture. Stop building cathedrals and pyramids which are doomed to fall into ruin. Live in the present; live once more in Time and by Time—for a wonderful and absolute reality. March 1959[9]

Lee reads these words as being "a reformulation of the classic Heraclitean dictum that the only thing that remains constant is change," then notes that air currents blew the leaflets away from their targeted city and out toward the countryside.[10] Lee reads this work/performance in terms of the kinetic image, arguing that the mass dissemination of pamphlets that Tinguely attempts evokes the phenomenon of information processing, and marks a turn in Tinguely's oeuvre that Lee frames as being entirely about automation.[11]

Automation, in Lee's story, is a synthesis of mechanical process, particularly machine manufacture, with computer-based processes. According to Lee, automation accelerates production beyond human capability, collapsing the time of labor into something so quick it resembles instantaneity.[12] Lee cites Marshall McLuhan on the effects of this collapsing of labor under automation: the collapse of labor time under automation is followed by a collapse in culture and technology, art and commerce, work and leisure.[13] Lee locates this total cultural collapse in the television medium, analyzing the framing of Tinguely's suicide machine in *Study for the End of the World No. 2* against the backdrop of the vast wasteland of the desert as "the world reduced to the flatness of the television image itself" (Fig. 2), a visual embodiment of Samuel Weber's analysis of television as literally "distance seeing": that TV "is not an actual overcoming of distance and time but the illusion of

making that collapse immediate and available to a general audience."[14] For Lee, this quality of television is what gives the medium its apocalyptic valence: "In Tinguely's study, the at once implosive and explosive force of the bomb was allegorized by the radical compression of time and space that is television."[15]

Lee reads *Study No. 2* in straightforwardly oppositional terms, as an apocalyptic unveiling of the world-truth of a global network that disseminates information at such a speed as to facilitate the collapse of the space of the globe (as well as apocalyptic global collapse). In Lee's story, Tinguely's televisual artifact is determined by the medium of broadcast television while also taking that medium as its object of critique. *Study No. 2* is not televised art per se; it is art about television (and the globalized, automated societal condition that television represents). Two kinds of meaningful specificity are lost in this reading. The first is the erasure of the site of the sculpture itself. This erasure has been accounted for in the literature: Emily Eliza Scott examines the work in an attempt to relocate the site of Jean Dry Lake in an article that I discuss later. The second is, ironically, the televisual text.

Lee's analysis implicitly relies on a phenomenology of television experience that is not unlike that of Herbert Zettl's, a vision of television that "lives off the instantaneousness and uncertainty of the moment."[16] Zettl's phenomenology posits that the use of a scanning beam rather than a projector to create the television image means that the television image is always in motion (even when it appears static), and as such the television image is "event dependent," "a reflection of the living, constantly changing present."[17] While Lee's televisual analysis is not based in the materiality of the television image itself as Zettl's is, and is therefore a more measured and far less ideologically infected analysis, they share a focus on instantaneity as being the fundamental quality of the television medium. Lee treats televisual images as "flashes," as bursts of light lacking content: the "quick cuts" of the episode create a "popping and flashing of images," the information society is marked by "televisions flashing the news of the world in real time."[18] The visuality of television is buried in the rhetoric of the flash, the medium reduced to an assaulting form sans content: TV is, for Lee, pure spatiotemporal collapse, pure speed.

The quality of transience that Lee associates with kineticism and postwar information society is buried in this dynamic of speed. Lee builds off Toffler's notion of transience, which is essentially synonymous with instantaneity. Transient information "moves with blinding speed in and out of consciousness."[19] I do not mean to contest the speed of information society: things have only accelerated since Toffler's writing. My goal, rather, is to shift our view of the word *transience*, to reveal a different aspect of that term that is not reducible to instantaneous speed. We can take transience to mean "impermanence," a subtle shift that nonetheless

effectively captures a quality of the television medium as it once was: a medium characterized by a mode of exhibition in which texts march forward with time, where discrete texts exist but are lost in the steady progression of the schedule, where preservation *as a text* is never a given. This is the condition of the television medium prior to home media, prior to comprehensive internet archivization. This condition of spectatorship is conversant with the auto-destructive capabilities of Tinguely's *Study No. 2*: this is the exhibition experience of the broadcast schedule, which does not compress time but structures it; it makes a particular sort of normative clock time *felt*. I argue that Tinguely's *Study No. 2* and *David Brinkley's Journal* seize on the forward motion and implied transience of the television broadcast to allegorize not the radical spatiotemporal compression of the bomb but the ways in which the nuclear bomb's effects *linger*.

Act I: Laboring in the "Wasteland"

With these stakes in mind we can finally turn to the episode itself. The first act of the episode of *David Brinkley's Journal* follows Tinguely and de Saint-Phalle as they scavenge junkyards and Las Vegas stores for the materials for the suicide machine (Figs. 3–5). Scott reads *Study No. 2* as being engaged with the specificity of the Nevada desert: she argues that the program establishes its relationship to the land in its opening moments. Scott notes that these two settings establish the work's structuring geographic dialectic, wherein "the desert is depicted as a wasteland of American consumerism both in terms of being a literal dumping ground for outcast objects and in terms of Las Vegas's shimmering vacuousness as an engine and end product of capitalism."[20] This dialectic is emphasized by Brinkley's narration, in which he notes that the "gaudy newness" of the Las Vegas cityscape inspired Tinguely to enter a toy store and purchase new toys as material for his sculpture.[21] The consumer goods to be found in Vegas are already refuse. This wasteland of American consumerism of course also acts as the literalization of Newton Minow's characterization of television as a "vast wasteland" of cultural detritus: the staging ground of Tinguely's *Study No. 2* is a wasteland in a yet another dual sense, both geographic and televisual, material and imagined.[22] The wasteland of American consumerism is built into the "ground" of the land itself and the "ground" of the television form that supports the content of the episode itself.

Moreover, in the opening minutes of the first act we witness a representation of human labor and curation that directly contradicts Lee's thesis about the centrality of automation and acceleration. The opening scenes of Tinguely scouring a junkyard for his sculpture's material do not occur merely, as Lee says, in "the

first frames of the broadcast"; rather, we spend roughly three minutes of the twenty-two-minute episode watching Tinguely pick pieces of trash from the refuse scattered through desert, walking the chosen refuse back to the truck where de Saint-Phalle waits patiently, observing Tinguely with a barely discernible grin. The pace is deliberate, the camera tracking Tinguely's movement of the material from junkyard to the truck in a manner that emphasizes the physical and mental effort of Tinguely's curation: he and the truck are framed in long shots that emphasize the enormity of the space in which the artists work, and the camera's movements are utilitarian, tracing the movement of metal and porcelain objects from the desert to the truck.

The desert looms large in the background in these initial scenes, reminding us that, of course, *Study for an End of the World No. 2* did not simply take place on television: the broadcast was a recording of an event that demands reflection on its conjoining to and separation from its broadcast, an event that took place two weeks prior in the Nevada desert, in Jean Dry Lake. Scott notes that in 1962, the landscape of the Nevada desert was a politically charged geography; that the dry lakebed which served as the location for *Study No. 2* was a double for Yucca flat, "a nearly-identical looking playa on the NTS [Nevada Test Site] some ninety miles north that had served as ground zero for dozens of atomic tests, many of which were relayed to the public via the mass media . . . throughout the 1950s."[23] Tinguely's *Study No. 2* does not simply call on the image of the nuclear bomb to meditate on the speed of information processing on the global tensions that emerge as a result. It is, rather, a meditation on the nuclear-political discourse that surrounds the specific site of the Nevada Desert, as well as the mass media's relationship to that site within that nuclear discourse. Scott points to the way in which Tinguely's choice of Las Vegas trash that would constitute his self-destructive sculpture—particularly his scavenging of a ruined doll, a choice that is emphasized just before the show travels to Las Vegas proper—allows his sculpture to evoke the "doom towns," simulacral towns populated by mannequins, that were obliterated during the highly publicized atomic bomb tests of the 1950s.[24]

Act II: The Dry Lake, the AEC's Representational Strategies, and the Violent Production of Laboratory Space

The second act of the episode begins with the initial construction of the various components of the sculpture in the parking lot of the Flamingo Hotel, the absolute secrecy of which leads Scott to liken Brinkley's coverage in this sequence to the "profiling of an artistic Manhattan Project." This second act begins with a negative

repetition of the labor that opens the episode, with a sequence where Tinguely empties the truck alone, throwing the collected trash into the parking lot. The heavy metallic thud with which most of the materials land in the asphalt emphasizes the manual physicality of Tinguely and de Saint-Phalles's work. This emphasis on manual labor is further emphasized by a brief scene of Tinguely and other laborers unloading a massive water tank covered in a blue tarp, and a sequence in which Tinguely builds a motorized pulley. The latter sequence is especially noteworthy because here, the episode contrasts the automaticity of Tinguely's suicide machine with the manual labor required to achieve that automaticity. This is not to say that there is a coherent subtopic of labor being addressed by Tinguely and Brinkley; however, the attention to the human labor of production undercuts Lee's story of spatiotemporal compression and automation: there is a human slowness to the episode, which is emphasized by Brinkley's narration that Tinguely works from 6 a.m. to midnight over the course of four days.[25]

Eventually, the walls concealing the construction project come down, and the episode shifts focus to the reactions of bystanders who have come to observe. In this portion of the program, an onlooker relays what we may take to be Tinguely's ethos: "Everything in motion eventually will destroy itself."[26] In this statement we can hear echoes of Tinguely's *Manifesto for Plastics* that links the manifesto explicitly to the notion of transience: the artist's earlier imperative that people take on the quality of movement and gesture is given a teleology: all that moves will destroy itself. Transience here is presented as a condition of life—to an extent, all that exists are suicide machines, marching toward death or dissolution under the weight of time. The second act concludes with the initial construction of the device and the transferral of the sculpture to the Jean Dry Lake. Here is another moment wherein the land is defiantly reinserted into televised spectacle. Brinkley narrates the journey, describing how "finally the whole vast, clanking, rattling work of art was loaded into a flotilla of trucks and hauled out into the desert, close to yucca flats where the atomic energy commission is testing nuclear bombs underground" (Fig. 6).[27] Brinkley's narration performs several functions here. Most noticeably, he draws attention to the significance of the site of destruction in a way that makes its role in the nuclear-industrial context clear, despite the invisibility of underground tests. Brinkley's narration thus contextualizes Tinguely's sculpture as an act of making visible the ongoing nuclear experimentation occurring at the site, experimentation that persists beyond the spectacle of publicized testing. Moreover, the program makes evident the tremendous importance of the specific site to the work through the spectacle of labor undergone in moving the machine from the city to the desert. The movement of the convoy is a major event in the program, an image of collective effort on the part of the artist and television crew to transfer

the artwork to its intended site. This effort is emphasized as being beyond the artist: Brinkley narrates, listing the full cargo of the convoy: "loaded trucks, the sculptor, his assistant, a generator to make electricity to run the motors and set off the explosions, an electrician, 7 maintenance men from the motel, and the sheriff."[28] Spectacle for Tinguely and Brinkley becomes a way to narrativize the return to the site, of deploying the television program's form to emphasize the significance of the site that nuclear tests did their best to expunge.

The specificity of the Nevada desert is in turn an evocation of *publicized* nuclear testing, that is, the above-ground nuclear tests that took place in the NTS, which were made open to the press by the US Atomic Energy Commission (AEC). As argued by the political geographer Scott Kirsch, the representation of these tests by the mass media was part of the AEC's public relations campaign, whose goal was to normalize the atom bomb in the minds of the continental American public, to insert its spectacularity into the everyday and make nuclear weapons routine.[29] The role of the mass media in this PR campaign was to circulate images of nuclear explosions to perform the dual action of aestheticizing their power and in doing so disconnect the nuclear tests from the geography on which they take place. We can situate these photographs within the AEC's larger strategy of isolating testing sites, a strategy that Elizabeth DeLoughrey critiques in an article on the ways in which the AEC suppressed knowledge of the extensive damage done to the natural ecosystem and indigenous population of the Marshall Islands during the United States' Pacific nuclear tests. The AEC conceptualized Pacific Islands as closed ecological systems that could be made to function as isolated laboratories; such conceptualization hinged on the erasure of the islands' indigenous population and local ecosystem, an erasure achieved via curated aerial surveillance films that were produced after the islanders had already been displaced.[30] The conceptualization of these islands as isolated, distant ecosystems provided an ideological justification for using the islands as a laboratory space and for the horrific violence that ensued under Pacific nuclear testing: the erasure of the islands' indigenous population concealed the intent of the AEC to use the indigenous populations as test subjects, intentionally exposing the Rongelapese population to radiation without their knowledge. The effects of this exposure were, of course, disastrous, leading to intense radiation burns and severe birth defects, as well as accumulation of lethal levels of radioactive isotopes in local food sources.[31]

The AEC's strategies of normalizing the bomb which Kirsch identifies involve capturing the bomb in fixed, isolated images which elide the persistent effects of nuclear radiation. These photographic reproductions of nuclear tests as static images of explosions create what Kirsch calls "the imagined bomb: perpetually frozen as an object to be observed, investigated, and (thus) experienced."[32]

The effect of freezing the bomb in an image is, for Kirsch, the elision of the atom bomb's afterlife. A "timeless, two-dimensional snapshot" fails to acknowledge the lasting impacts of radioactive agents that spread through and linger in environments and bodies long after the bomb has gone off. The freezing of the bomb in a photograph is a strategy of erasure, which elides the bomb's lingering effects on the geography. Kirsch argues that the integration of photography with telegraphy and the mass media heighten the objectification of the world (which had already occurred in the enframing action of photography), widening the gulf between the viewer and the "real world" by geographically separating the photographed spectacle from its local context.[33] The contradiction of distance and visual availability that Kirsch identifies in the AEC's photographs is mirrored in the aforementioned aerial surveillance footage of the Marshall Islands, which DeLoughrey argues produces a paradoxical area that is both "distant and primitive" but also touched by modernity in a way that makes the islands conceivable as testing sites.

Moreover, when Kirsch notes that the practice of Western landscape is tied up in imperial and scientific processes of organizing the world by enframing, he is identifying another way in which the AEC perpetuates the "myth of isolates," which DeLoughrey is critiquing.[34] By reading the AEC's photographs of nuclear detonation through the analytic lens of "enframing" (i.e., "the overlapping imperial and scientific processes of organizing the world into objects which could be observed, represented, and objectively known"[35]), Kirsch reveals how the AEC's attempt to normalize the nuclear bomb is being attempted via a move to isolate the moment of the bomb's detonation as a single event with a definite end. Kirsch writes that in the medium of photography, "the observer/producer was so detached from the object-world as to be seemingly erased from its landscape," and as such photographic representations bore a false, ideological neutrality.[36] This detachment of the producer of the photographic image from the photograph produced exacerbates the aforementioned reification of the event of the nuclear bomb's detonation. The literal enframing of the mushroom cloud by the objective lens of the camera ascribes a unity to the event of the bomb's detonation that belies the persistence of radiation at the site of the detonation and in the bodies of those present for the detonation. The goal of the AEC's photography is to erase the avisual from nuclear detonation, to deny the presence of the invisible waves that penetrate the spectator of the detonation: to deny that the nuclear detonation makes spectators into victims.

Scott's writing on Tinguely's sculpture performs some reparative work on this front, emphasizing the site-specificity of the sculpture as a way to address how the use of the Nevada desert for nuclear testing is based in the American frontier myth of colonizing its western landscape.[37] The rationalization of land in

the case of nuclear weapons is almost parodic: in nuclear testing, the land itself is bombed into submission, the heat and radiation of the repeated explosions causing the horizontal expanses of the Nevada desert "to look more and more like a laboratory—clinical, bleached, and synthetic. The obliteration of any life forms in the vicinity of ground zero ironically lent an air of hygiene."[38] The atom bomb transforms the natural ecosystem of the desert into a sanitized, scientific space.[39] Trevor Paglan would call the production of scientific landscape the production and reproduction of oblivion, that the state was producing a "nowhere."[40] Here, again, we see the strategies that DeLoughrey takes note of in the Marshall Islands: the production of a laboratory space in nature, with Paglan's nowhere resembling the craters, the "anti-islands" that the AEC produced in the Pacific.[41] This production of a scientific landscape—the open-air laboratory of nuclear testing—can in retrospect be understood as a construction of a "zone" or geography of sacrifice: what Valerie Kuletz describes as landscape that has been deemed expendable and set aside for "weapons testing and development, uranium mining, and military training" as part of a pattern dubbed "nuclear colonialism."[42] The designation of zones of sacrifice for nuclear testing are part of the ongoing and active processes of "expropriation of native lands and the displacement of North America's indigenous population" that characterize the United States' longer history of internal colonialism.[43] In nuclear testing we can see the way in which the technology itself is involved in the ideological project of erasure—erasure of both the indigenous population and the desert ecosystem. The nuclear bomb produces its own laboratory in the space that has been predesignated as its laboratory: the loss of life (or loss of capacity to sustain life) that the bomb causes is named in advance of the bomb's detonation as a condition of the landscape in which the bomb will be tested. As Kuletz notes, this designation of zones of sacrifice occurs via the reinstantiation of settler discourse within environmental science discourse, as bioregions are placed within hierarchies of value based on their productive capacity: deserts are designated relatively unproductive, within this schema, a designation that then permits their sacrificial status.[44] The nuclear bomb, in its testing, creates the laboratory that has been erected rhetorically to justify the testing of said bomb. The nuclear bomb serves a tautological, ideological function that is an extension of the mechanics of settler colonialism: the creation of a wasteland that colonists claim has always been there.

In all these descriptions of the AEC's treatment of the land for nuclear testing, we can hear echoes of televisual discourse: the separation of the event from its geographic specificity. What Kirsch refers to as the transformation of "a place to a spectacle or exhibition" occurs through the very global collapse permitted by the speed of the kinetic image that concerns Pamela Lee.[45] Lee's focus on the

global network of mass media leads her to conclude that Tinguely is *only* reproduc-ing the tactics of the AEC: that by circulating images, he is erasing the site his work takes place on, re-presenting it as placeless spectacle. I argue that while Lee is cor-rect to associate Tinguely's sculpture with the despatializing force of the nuclear bomb, in limiting her analysis of the medium of broadcast television to its ideo-logical immediacy, she misses a critical aspect of Tinguely's (and Brinkley's) cri-tique. Though Lee does not cite Zettl, in her focus on the speed and spatiotem-poral compression of television, she implicitly takes Zettl's ontology of television-as-immediacy to be the only possible aesthetic function of the broadcast medium. Writing in 1985, the television scholar Jane Feuer critiqued Zettl's ontology as an industrial fiction rather than a material essence of the broadcast medium.[46] Feuer goes on to critique the idea of televisual "flow," a notion of television's liveness described by Raymond Williams, who argues that the immediacy of television re-sults in the broadcast becoming a never-ending sequence where separating out individual texts is impossible.[47] Feuer amends this idea, arguing that fragmentation is central to television, that the televisual text is best described not by the immedi-acy of "flow" but by "segmentation without closure." The reification of the bomb in photography as described by Kirsch and the isolation of closed ecosystems as described by DeLoughrey is an ideological effect reproduced by the television broadcast, if we take television's aesthetic of ideological liveness to be the sum total of what the broadcast image is or can be. That is, if the television image of the nuclear bomb is event-based, immediate like Zettl claims, then the televised explosion is another kind of isolation, reducing the bomb's detonation to the closed-off temporality of the event. The reduction of nuclear detonation to an isolated event is an intentional rhetorical strategy to erase the avisual consequences of the atom bomb: the ways in which the United States' Nevada nuclear tests left the region's indigenous population to suffer from an increase in cancer deaths, miscarriages, radioactive contamination of plant and animal life, and the potentially disastrous aggravation of earthquake faults.[48] This is to say nothing of the spread of irradiated material through the atmosphere, which would disseminate as rainfall across the United States, causing extensive damage agricultural damage.[49] As De-Loughrey notes, "The body of every human on the planet now contains strontium, a man-made byproduct of nuclear detonations."[50] The extensiveness and the in-visibility of the lingering traces of nuclear detonation are deliberately erased in the enframing of the AEC's public representation. What I argue is that *Study for an End of the World No. 2* / "The End of the World" does not enframe nuclear detonation. Rather, the episode and the artwork seize on the lack of closure in the broadcast television text as identified by Feuer in an attempt to conceive of a representation

of nuclear detonation that does not freeze the detonation into a single, isolated event, to overcome the AEC's representational logic.

Act III: Ambiguity at the End

To discover how the artwork and episode accomplish this, I turn to the program's third act, which contains the actual placement and destruction of the sculpture. We witness the arrival of the police, who come to oversee the explosion, and Brinkley narrates the arrival of reporters from "the biggest collection of reporters since they held the atomic bomb tests out here 15 years ago."[51] The accrual of officials and reporters for the *Study*'s destruction becomes an integral part of the parodic replication of the nuclear tests. Brinkley goes on to narrate the already overt symbolism of the work's components: "The horn of plenty was to symbolize the destruction of the world's plenty, and the big overstuffed chairs symbolize comfort and ease. It was to catch fire."[52] The "cheap symbolism" (to borrow Lee's word choice) of details such as this one melts away when the destruction of the work begins: the specificities of what is in the sculpture get lost in the form of the work overall, which, as was mentioned at the beginning of this essay, resembles that of radio broadcast equipment. And, of course, this form exists only in the context of its transience, its existence always contextualized by its eventual destruction by dynamite and fire. The destruction of the *Study* (Fig. 7) is the climax of Tinguely's critique of the AEC's "mediated atomic tests": for Scott, Tinguely seems to lay bare the spectacularization of past nuclear tests through the "double absurdity" of staging his own slapdash reproduction of a televised nuclear test.[53] A media spectacle packaged as neutral public information is reproduced overtly as spectacle, pointing to how prior televised tests themselves functioned as fictions, whose mass distribution removed their geographic specificity, which Tinguely and Brinkley attempt to reinsert.

Scott's analysis, however excellent, does not acknowledge the common transience shared between the *Study* and the television program on which it is broadcast, a link made overt in the broadcast's closing moments. Brinkley's narration anchors the whole story of the construction and destruction of *Study No. 2* until the very end, after Tinguely's machine is destroyed. Brinkley narrates one final time: "The artist strode happily in to admire his work, hot smoking scraps of metal in a scene of triumph, lying under an odor of gunpowder."[54] After this final line follows roughly thirty-seven more seconds of broadcast, which end with Tinguely walking away from the scene into the sunset, carrying bits of junk collected from ground zero (Fig. 8). After the staging of the end of the world, the program's

fixity of meaning, supplied by Brinkley, gives way to ambiguity, to uncertainty. This ambiguity lays bare the quality of "segmentation without closure" that constitutes Feuer's revision of Williams's televisual "flow," in a manner that finds its double in Tinguely's sculpture. The self-immolation of *Study No. 2* dramatizes a new kind of textuality that imagines art objects not as fixed and permanent but as transient things, moving toward the ether as surely as humans are marching toward death, and as surely as broadcast television episodes will fade into the next segment on the network's schedule. Transience in this episode of *David Brinkley's Journal* is the subjection of art to time, a rejection of permanence. The apocalypse being staged here is also an apocalyptic loss of static textuality, the recognition of an epistemological shift that is registered in the television spectatorship.

Traces of Violence: Permanence and the Nuclear Epoch

Lee's notion of apocalypse is defined by the collapse through speed. The instantaneity of the worldwide distribution of information, generated through the acceleration of automation, is an apocalyptics of proximity, the foreclosure of the distance supposedly necessary for criticality that threatens art and life itself. There is always much to fear in the dominance of networks, and so I do not wish to question the political relevance of Lee's claim. However, while we remain tirelessly skeptical of networks and the hierarchies that remain within them, it is imperative that we not valorize configurations of subjectivity that are themselves instantiations of domination. There is an epistemological shift that is not reducible to speed at work in the particularities of the television text "The End of the World" / *Study for an End of the World No. 2*. Rather, the work is seizing on the textual specificity of broadcast television to reveal the limits of closed textuality, the limits of objecthood in art. A nuclear detonation cannot be contained, and Tinguely and Brinkley's intervention in the representation of nuclear detonation is to not try to.

Tinguely's *Manifesto for Statics* suggests such an interest in openness. Upon examining the text of the *Manifesto* more closely, there are a few lines that seem remarkably televisual: "Immobility does not exist . . . accept instability. Live in time. Be static—with movement."[55] The imperative to "be static with movement" is not simply a playful contradiction of stasis and motion: it also calls to mind televisual static: the persistent movement of the visual noise of a TV tuned to a dead channel. There is a certain optimism to Tinguely's manifesto, an imperative to embrace movement in a way that mirrors the rhetoric and enthusiasm of Zettl. My claim is that Tinguely's text has to do less with instantaneity—as Lee argues—and more to do with fixity: less to do with *speed* and more to do with *capture*. That

is, the anxiety over the potential inability of humans or technology to capture, to enclose things, is the anxiety Tinguely is grappling with. Moreover, Tinguely's position on that anxiety is not to be anxious about it but to *embrace* the inability of humans to capture all that is. His imperative is to forego monuments and homogeneous clock time in favor of an ontology of becoming.

In his discussion of the radical destructive potentiality of the nuclear epoch, Jacques Derrida places nuclear war within the domains of rhetoric and literature.[56] Nuclear war, says Derrida, is a mode of warfare that only exists as a signified referent, a kind of war that has no precedent, has never occurred, is a non-event—and if it ever occurred, it would occur only in the name of a name—the bombs would be dropped in service to a concept that would not survive the usage of those bombs.[57] Moreover, the nuclear capability that is the ground of the Cold War generates a logic of deterrence which makes the Cold War fundamentally a war of rhetoric: both sides attempting to dissuade the other from direct violence via the stockpiling of apocalyptic munitions. Adopting the language of militaristic accumulation, Derrida notes further that implicit in the constitution of what we call "literature" is the building of an archive, a "stockpiling" of texts and a positive law of authors, names, titles, and so on.[58] What is completely new in the nuclear epoch is that this archive of literature, in its totality, is now under threat:

> Now what allows us perhaps to think the uniqueness of nuclear war, its being-for-the-first-time-and-perhaps-for-the-last-time, its absolute inventiveness, what it prompts us to think even if it remains a decoy, a belief, a phantasmatic projection, is obviously the possibility of an irreversible destruction, leaving no traces, of the juridico-literary archive—that is, total destruction of the basis of literature and criticism.[59]

The nuclear epoch is, then, the "historical and ahistorical horizon" to which literature belongs, the epoch that in its threat of total destruction reveals the radical precarity and historicity of literature.[60] It is this exact historicity that *individual texts* so frequently elide. The ahistoricity of individual texts is visible in the images of nuclear detonation that Kirsch critiques. The central crime of the PR spectacle of nuclear testing was the way in which atemporal images of the bomb erase the lingering effects of fallout: the extended temporality of invisible destruction that is removed from public consciousness by representing the bomb as an event, given its unity through the enframing lens of the camera.

However, the final actions of Tinguely in *David Brinkley's Journal*, carrying scrap from the bomb site with no narration, suggests an extended temporality that

goes beyond the event time of the sculpture's destruction. The televised apocalypse as narrativized in these final moments of uncertainty is not simply loss, not apocalypse without revelation. What takes place in these closing moments calls on the unique openness of the broadcast image as a form of critique. The lack of resolution in the ending of the episode suggests that transience does not imply closure: debris from the bomb site lingers and is being moved from Jean Dry Lake to an unknown elsewhere. In its initial context, this image was inserted into the flow of the broadcast, integrated into a televisual becoming that points to the persistence of radiation in nuclear testing *via* the persistence of analog video signals that characterizes the method of broadcasting. The ambiguity of the end of the episode calls on Feuer's description of the televisual text as "segmentation without closure." What occurs in the parodic reimagining of the media spectacle of test detonations of nuclear devices in "The End of the World" / *Study for an End of the World No. 2* is the transfiguration of the waves of the broadcast into the waves of the bomb. The episode, the segment, cannot contain the full implications of the blast and does not attempt to, instead emphasizing the openness of the medium of broadcast television. Transient textuality, here, is not a textuality whose time simply ceases. Rather, it is a textuality subject to the forward march of time, where transient segments are embedded in the persistence of the invisible broadcast signal. This lack of closure in broadcast television is allegorized by Tinguely leaving the bomb site, guiding audiences toward an uncertain future point where the memories of *Study No. 2* are carried from the bomb site. Any superficial enframing of the *Study*'s auto-destruction is undone by the dual force of the transience of the segment and the persistence of the broadcast. As such, what Tinguely and Brinkley stage is a medium-specific *failure to enframe*, a utilization of the broadcast wave as a metaphor for that which defies the limitations of the frame.

Tinguely's removal of debris from the bomb site to an unknown space allegorizes broadcast *as medium*, broadcast as a permeating transience that is necessarily conversant with the invisible traces of nuclear detonation. The irony of this reading of this episode of *David Brinkley's Journal* is, of course, that this original version of the text is no longer accessible as such: the episode has been archived, its contents can be cited with timestamps that relate only to the time of the video itself and bear no relation to any broadcast schedule. The episode is preserved on two DVDs at the Museum Tinguely in Basel, Switzerland, and the NBC News Archives in New York retain color and black-and-white copies of the episode.[61] With both of those resources being inaccessible to me, I watched the episode as an embedded video on a Wordpress blog dedicated to Burning Man.[62] The version I watched was in color, with an NBC News watermark splashed across the center of the frame for the entirety of the episode. I verified its legitimacy as the episode

in question by matching descriptions from Scott's and Lee's respective analyses to the MP4 file I had found. Perhaps this essay's attempt to shift the conversation around Tinguely's sculpture to center the medium of broadcast television emerges from this condition of illicit viewing, where the lack of access to Tinguely's work is felt not only as a consequence of its self-destructive nature but due to the self-destructive nature of broadcast television. The analysis undergone here is an analysis of a text that in its originary transience can only be traced: the episode "The End of the World" of *David Brinkley's Journal* exists now only as recorded, itemized text, its original form lost to time because it was specific to the medium of the televisual broadcast. The effort here has been to rediscover its relation to transience and to think through that relation as a potential site of criticality and a way of relating television to a site, *and to think of television as a site*, rather than taking for granted television's collapse of space-time. The transient textuality of television comes to allegorize what Derrida calls the "being-for-the-first-time-and-perhaps-for-the-last-time"[63] of nuclear war while also speaking to the longue durée of its radioactive aftermath through the persistence of the broadcast signal, a connection made clear through the synthesis of Brinkley's and Tinguely's respective practices. Transience as represented by Tinguely and Brinkley invites the possibility of seeing lingering effects of images that are no longer accessible, the suggestion that events which have "ended" continue to resonate in ways lost when the world is transformed into atemporal objects. *Study for an End of the World No. 2* suggests that everything in motion may destroy itself, but there will always be debris, material and mental.

The very inaccessibility of *David Brinkley's Journal* in its originary broadcast format attests to what continues to be at stake in considering representations of nuclear destruction, particularly in the context of nuclear testing: the question of historicity and effect. I posit that nuclear bombs are machines of erasure; that the ironically hygienic destruction affected by nuclear detonation—the eradication of local ecosystems to produce a flat "scientific space," as described by Paglan and Scott—gives nuclear weapons an explicitly antihistorical function that is imbricated with the practice of American internal colonialism, which similarly perpetuates itself via the strategic elision of cultures and ecosystems. Writing on the destructive avisuality of the nuclear bomb, Akira Lippit notes that the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki left behind dark stains of "seared organic and inorganic matter," atomic shadows, which are "more photographic than photographic images. . . . There can be no authentic photography of atomic war because the bombings were themselves a form of total photography that exceeded the economies of representation, testing the very visibility of the visual."[64] The site of nuclear detonation cannot be represented through photographic images because atomic blasts

are sites of two kinds of invisibility: the absolute visibility of the light of the blast itself, and the total transparency of the radiation that remains.[65] The inability of the nuclear blast to be represented, its fundamental avisuality, speaks to its logic of destructive erasure. All at once, the nuclear blast threatens the total destruction of literature (and therefore the total destruction of representation); it sanitizes land in a way that erases the traces of what was there, leaving only shadows; and it destroys in ways that cannot be located on a visual spectrum. Summarizing Derrida's notion of the trace, Lippit defines a trace as "an erasable sign and sign of erasure that erases as it signs and is in turn erased already."[66] The nuclear bomb, then, can be understood as a trace-machine: a mechanism that produces signs of erasure in the shadows it leaves behind, erasing life as it signs those shadows, erasing its own persistence in the form of radiation.

What Tinguely and Brinkley bring us to, brought us to, could once bring us to but cannot any longer, is the latter form of erasure, the invisible persistence of the bomb in the site of its detonation. The medium of broadcast television, in its invisible persistence, was brought to bear on the subject of the nuclear bomb, the lingering radiation and its effect on zones of sacrifice in the American Southwest expressed through the becoming of the televisual image.

As a final note, though, it is worth thinking about speed. The speed of information has only increased since the publication of Pamela Lee's *Chronophobia* in 2004, and as information continues to accelerate, it is difficult not to see the relationship between speed and enframing. Both are tactics of forgetting, both resist the thinking of duration, of consequence. It is in the name of remembering that I put the argument in this essay forward. Television does not allow us to distance-see: television does not teleport us to distant places. The synthesis of the broadcast signal, the televisual image, the auto-destruction of Tinguely's sculpture, and the chosen backdrop of Jean Dry Lake does not allow the audience to see the lingering effects of nuclear radiation on a specific site. What it does is remind us that nothing ever really ends, that the consequences of state violence reverberate through time. Especially when it becomes harder to see.

* * *

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Notes

1 Emily Eliza Scott, "Desert Ends," in *Ends of the Earth: Art of the Land to 1974*, edited by Philipp Kaiser and Miwon Kwon (Los Angeles: Museum of Contemporary Art and Prestel, 2012), 68.

2 For a demonstrative example of such skepticism, see David Joselit's critique of broadcast television's closed circuit as the "birth and rebirth of the commodity" in *Feedback: Television against Democracy* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010).

3 Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, translated by Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 163.

4 Pamela M. Lee, *Chronophobia: On Time in the Art of the 1960s* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), 95.

5 Lynn Spigel, *TV by Design: Modern Art and the Rise of Network Television* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 174.

6 Lee, *Chronophobia*, 103.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid., 104.

9 Quoted in ibid., 106.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid., 109–14.

12 Ibid., 109.

13 Ibid., 110.

14 Ibid., 144.

15 Ibid., 153.

16 Herbert Zettl, quoted in Jane Feuer, "The Concept of Live Television: Ontology as Ideology," in *Regarding Television*, edited by E. Ann Kaplan (Frederick, MD: Greenwood, 1985), 13.

17 Zettl, quoted in Feuer, "Concept of Live Television," 13.

18 Lee, *Chronophobia*, 141, 153.

19 Ibid., 103.

20 Scott, "Desert Ends," 73.

21 "The End of the World," *David Brinkley's Journal*, New York, NBC, aired April 4, 1962, Television, 4:00.

22 Minow, Newton N. "Television and the Public Interest," *Federal Communications Law Journal* 55, no. 3, Article 4. (2003). https://www.repository.law.indiana.edu/fclj/vol55/iss3/4.

23 Scott, "Desert Ends," 76.

24 Ibid., 72–73.

25 "End of the World," 7:33.

26 Ibid., 10:40.

27 Ibid., 11:09.

28 Ibid., 11:36.

[29] Scott Kirsch, "Watching the Bombs Go Off: Photography, Nuclear Landscapes, and Spectator Democracy," *Antipode* 29, no. 3 (1997): 231, https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8330.00045.

[30] Elizabeth M. DeLoughrey, "The Myth of Isolates: Ecosystem Ecologies in the Nuclear Pacific," *Cultural Geographies* 20, no. 2 (2012): 176. https://doi.org/10.1177/1474474012463664

[31] Ibid., 178.

[32] Kirsch, "Watching the Bombs Go Off," 245.

[33] Ibid., 241.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Scott, "Desert Ends," 69–70.

[38] Ibid., 78–79.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Trevor Paglan, quoted in Scott, "Desert Ends," 79.

[41] DeLoughrey, "Myth of Isolates," 171.

[42] Valerie Kuletz, *The Tainted Desert: Environmental and Social Ruin in the American West* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 5. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315538839

[43] Ibid., 3.

[44] Ibid., 13.

[45] Kirsch, "Watching the Bombs Go Off," 245.

[46] Feuer, "Concept of Live Television," 14.

[47] Ibid., 15.

[48] See Kuletz, *Tainted Desert*.

[49] See Keith Meyers, "In the Shadow of the Mushroom Cloud: Nuclear Testing, Radioactive Fallout, and Damage to U.S. Agriculture, 1945 to 1970," *Journal of Economic History* 79, no. 1 (2019): 244–74, https://doi.org/10.1017/s002205071800075x

[50] DeLoughrey, "Myth of Isolates," 179.

[51] "End of the World," 14:00.

[52] Ibid., 14:45.

[53] Scott, "Desert Ends," 82.

[54] "End of the World," 20:43.

[55] Jean Tinguely, quoted in Lee, "Study for an End of the World," 106.

[56] Jacques Derrida, "No Apocalypse, Not Now (Full Speed Ahead, Seven Missiles, Seven Missives)," *Diacritics* 14, no. 2 (1984): 24, https://doi.org/10.2307/464756.

[57] Ibid., 30–31.

[58] Ibid., 26.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid., 27.

[61] As Scott notes, "Our window onto the piece is therefore limited to Brinkley's episode, a handful of photographs and press accounts, several drawings Tinguely

made of his ephemeral sculpture, and a few correspondences he sent from Nevada to his contacts back in Europe" ("Desert Ends," 68).

[62] Whatsblem the Pro, "Burning Man, 1962: Jean Tinguely Blazes the Trail," *Burners.Me: Me, Burners and The Man*, October 17, 2013. https://burners.me/2013/10/17/burning-man-1962-jean-tinguely-blazes-the-trail/

[63] Derrida, "No Apocalypse, Not Now," 26.

[64] Akira Lippit, *Atomic Light: Shadow Optics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 94–95.

[65] Ibid., 95.

[66] Ibid., 54.

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The Face of an Empire: Cosmetics and Whiteness in Imperial Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I

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When Queen Elizabeth I entered her fifties, she grew reluctant to sit for any more portraits. The final three portraits that she sat for—the *Armada Portrait*, *The Ditchley Portrait*, and the *Oliver Miniature*—painted between the mid-1580s and her death in 1602, portray the queen with a smooth, white face and bright coral lips and cheeks. The style of painting the queen's face as seen in these last portraits was canonized as a pattern for future artists to follow when painting the queen during and after the last years of her reign.[1] In the Elizabethan era, the English government often attempted to control how the queen was depicted in artwork; in 1596 the English Privy Council drafted a proclamation that required portraits of the queen to depict her as "beutyfull [*sic*] and magnanimous" as "God hathe blessed her."[2] In both art-historical scholarship and popular culture, the queen's whitened skin and rouged lips and cheeks in her official portraiture are often cited as evidence of her vanity and waning looks. However, as I explore in this essay, the use of cosmetics in the early modern era was associated not only with narcissism but with England's colonial efforts. By considering discourses about her status as a symbol of natural beauty and the racist associations with makeup application, I argue that the legibility of makeup on the queen's face in imperial portraits and preservation of this motif as a pattern can be read as a symbol of her imperial and racial domination in the Americas and in England.

      The importation of foreign goods is inextricably linked to Queen Elizabeth I's attempts to establish colonies in the Americas—when English merchants and travelers returned from their trips overseas, they brought cosmetics products

Figure 1 Unknown Artist (formerly attributed to George Gower), Elizabeth I–The Armada Portrait*, c. 1588. Milton Keynes, Woburn Abbey. Image courtesy of Wiki Commons, accessed November 27, 2019.*

with them. In the Elizabethan era, critics linked the application of cosmetics with ethnic stereotypes and a prejudiced disdain for foreign products and peoples.[3] In his 1596 account of an expedition to Venezuela, Sir Walter Raleigh, a favorite of the queen and an early agent of colonization, writes about finding a variety of berries in Trinidad that produced a pleasing color when applied to the skin.[4] In the same year, the queen sent an open letter to the mayor of London calling for the deportation of every Black individual in England—an unprecedented grouping of individuals based on their skin color rather than geographic origin.[5] The queen's belief that only people with light skin belonged in England complicates readings of her application of white face powder and imported cosmetics as merely a reflection of her vanity. Because depictions of the queen were based on the face patterns employed in the *Armada Portrait* and *The Ditchley Portrait*, whose creation coincides with Britain's attempts to permanently colonize America, it is worthwhile to consider how the legibility of makeup in her portraits serves as a symbol of imperial domination.

Figure 2 Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger, Queen Elizabeth I–The Ditchley Portrait*, c. 1592. National Portrait Gallery, London. Image courtesy of National Portrait Gallery, accessed November 27, 2019.*

This essay begins by examining how Roy Strong's treatment of the queen's cosmetic use and his idea of the Mask of Youth came to define how scholars continue to interpret her face as the result of her vanity. I then analyze early portraits of the queen that were painted while she was still of childbearing age, and compare them with later portraits that intentionally desexualized her body in order to prohibit readings of her body as feminine. I examine the presence of cosmetic application in portraits of the queen at different points in her life to argue that, although she wore makeup throughout her reign, it appears particularly artificial due to the stylization of her face in the *Armada Portrait* and *The Ditchley Portrait*. I then discuss how recent scholarship in the field of English literature addresses the queen's face as a site of potential symbolism and consider how these readings reflect the propagandistic nature of royal portraiture in the Tudor period. Finally, I turn to Kim F. Hall's analysis of the connection between race and cosmetic application in the early modern period and suggest that tracing a material history of Elizabethan cosmetics can help inform readings of the queen's cosmetic use in her later imperial portraiture.

In 1588 the queen sat for the *Armada Portrait*, which reimagined her victory over the Spanish Armada as a luxurious tableau. She sits with her right hand resting

Figure 3 Isaac Oliver, Elizabeth I of England–The Oliver Miniature*, 1592. Unknown collection. Image courtesy of Wiki Commons, accessed November 19, 2019.*

over the American continent on a globe while, behind her, Spanish ships are stranded in a desert and lost at sea (Fig. 1). Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger's 1592 portrait of the queen, known as *The Ditchley Portrait*, depicts her standing on top of England on a globe—the earth's curvature is visible next to the massive skirt of her jewel-encrusted gown. She is stylized as a cosmic entity who controls both the land beneath her feet and the celestial skies surrounding her (Fig. 2). The *Oliver Miniature*, an unfinished portrait made in 1592 by Isaac Oliver, an artist working in Nicholas Hilliard's studio, functions as a face pattern: only the queen's facial features and hair color are shaded in over an opaque blue background, and her clothing is lightly sketched in and left uncolored (Fig. 3).[6] When compared with the *Oliver Miniature*, the queen's face as it appears in the *Armada Portrait* and *The Ditchley Portrait* is highly stylized and mask-like. These two large-scale portraits include symbolic images of her imperial domination and function as testaments to the queen's military strength. Another difference between the large portraits and the *Oliver Miniature* is the legible presence of makeup in the former works: her lips and cheeks are rendered in bright coral color while the rest of the skin on her face is uniform in its pallor. Queen Elizabeth I was considered an icon of beauty throughout her youth, and, as time passed, gossip of her using cosmetics to hide her changing face emerged among her critics and peers.[7] Nevertheless, while portraits of Queen Elizabeth I have served as a rich site of inquiry for art historians to analyze how her gender, religion, and self-fashioning manifested in

Figure 4 Attributed to William Scrots, Elizabeth I when a Princess*, c. 1546. Windsor Castle, Royal Collection Trust. Image courtesy of Royal Collection Trust, accessed November 17, 2019.*

art, images of her face have often been overlooked as potential sites of symbolism.

Discourses about the queen's face often conflate how her face actually looked while she was alive with how her face was depicted in her portraiture. The presence of this conceit in recent scholarship can be attributed to the influence of the most widely cited source on portraits of the queen, Strong's *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*, originally published in 1963 and republished in 1987.[8] In the introduction to his landmark catalog, Strong compares *Elizabeth I when a Princess*, an early portrait completed in 1546–47 of Elizabeth at about thirteen years old (Fig. 4), to *The Ditchley Portrait*, painted when the queen was in her early sixties. He notes that, in the younger portrait, "the pallor of [Elizabeth's] complexion is relieved only by her fair auburn hair and her eyes, which still possess a childlike innocence."[9] In *The Ditchley Portrait*, however,

> [t]he cheeks once filled with the bloom of youth have become
> sunken and rouged; the eyes have the penetration of one for
> whom life has been an unceasing battle of wits; the lips are thin
> and mean; the face wrinkled, almost haggard, in appearance; in

> short the young girl has become the great Queen whose genius
> has guided victoriously the destinies of a people for over thirty
> years.[10]

When Strong writes that the queen's cheeks have been rouged in *The Ditchley Portrait*, he refers not only to the color of the paint on the canvas but to the application of red makeup, known as rouge, to her cheeks. He claims that the representational shift in tone between these portraits demonstrates how the image of the queen became more stylized and less representative; as her influence spread, she was increasingly depicted as a symbol of England's power rather than an individual woman.[11] There is a fundamental issue, however, in his reading the presence of red cheeks in the queen's later portraits as evidence of her applying rouge to her actual face; in the same chapter in which Strong highlights how her late portraiture was stylized, he uses said portraiture to make assumptions about her real-life appearance.

Strong's comprehensive iconographic analysis of the most prominent portraits of the queen set a precedent as to how images of the queen are viewed and written about today. He claims that Hilliard's studio was commissioned by the British government sometime in the 1590s to create an official face pattern for the queen that "totally ignored reality and instead gave visual expression to the final cadences of her cult in which the poets celebrated her seemingly eternal youth and beauty."[12] Strong thus states that *The Ditchley Portrait* became the "official face-pattern" for portraits of the queen, although in portraits that followed this pattern "the features are considerably rejuvenated and softened, indicating a response to the obligatory Mask of Youth face-pattern which was soon to be imposed by the government."[13] Strong then explains that "sometime about 1594 a government decision was taken that the official image of the Queen in her final years was to be of a legendary beauty, ageless and unfading."[14] While there is certainly visual evidence that the faces in these late portraits were used as patterns by artists, Strong does not provide any more clarification about the 1594 governmental mandate that definitively called for the creation of a Mask of Youth—nor does he expand on what it entails.[15] While the debate surrounding the circulation of images of the queen began in 1563, when the government first discussed trying to control the production and dissemination of her image, there is later evidence of the queen and her government policing the appearance of her portraits more generally, as seen in the Privy Council of England minutes from 1596:

> A warrant for her Majesty's Serjeant Painter and to all publicke
> officers to yelde him their assistance touching the abuse

committed by divers unskillfull artizans in unseemly and im-
properly paintings, gravinge and printing of her Majesty's per-
son and vysage, to her Majesty's great offence and disgrace of
that beutyfull and magnanimous Majesty wherwith God hathe
blessed her, requiring them to cause all suche to be defaced and
none to be allowed but suche as her Majesty's Serjant Paynter
shall first have sight of.[16]

Louis A. Montrose observes that the strong wording of the 1596 act compared
with earlier, more vague drafts "may be due at least in part to the growing dis-
junction between the political ideal of the Queen's beauty which was abstract and
timeless—and an artistic project of 'natural representation' that more sharply ob-
served the realm of the senses."[17] Regardless of the exact nature of the English
government's attempts to police images of the queen, Strong's poetic treatment
of her face and his idea that the queen used cosmetics as tools to disguise her
aged face and create a Mask of Youth have continued to dominate popular and
academic narratives regarding her use of makeup.[18] There is room for new inter-
pretations of the queen's cosmetic application as representative of themes beyond
vanity and aging.

In her early portraits, the queen's skin is matte and blends naturally from
one part of her face to the other. In the *Armada Portrait* and *The Ditchley Portrait*,
the queen's skin is divided into reflective planes that mask any texture that may
be present beneath them. While Strong reads this mask as the result of govern-
ment mandates outlawing any reference to her aging face, there remains telling
evidence of aging in the deep indents under her eyes and prominent nasolabial
folds—the cosmetics on her face do not completely succeed in masking her mor-
tality.[19] In *Elizabeth I when a Princess*, the skin of Elizabeth's face and lips are a pale,
uniform color that matches the skin of her neck and hands. The young princess
holds a book in her hand and stands in front of another before large red curtains;
she is situated within an entirely plausible interior setting. In images after Eliza-
beth's coronation, her eyebrows are plucked, as is her hairline, to create the illu-
sion of a larger forehead. Her skin is smooth and white; her lips are small and
pursed. In the *Darnley* portrait from 1575, the queen holds peacock feathers in
one hand, her lips bright red and her cheeks flushed with color (Fig. 5). In Hilli-
ard's *Phoenix Portrait* from the same year, Elizabeth's face is completely smooth,
and her lips are a pale coral red (Fig. 6). In these two portraits, wherein Elizabeth
can be read as wearing makeup, shadow lends dimension to the sides of her face.

Figure 5 Unknown artist, Queen Elizabeth I – the 'Darnley' Portrait*, c. 1575. London, National Portrait Gallery. Image courtesy of National Portrait Gallery, accessed November 20, 2019.*

In the 1585 *Ermine* portrait by William Segar, artificial blue veins are painted onto her hands to highlight her whiteness,[20] yet her face is depicted more naturally—the contours of her face are subject to a shadow that outlines her cheekbones and jawline (Fig. 7). However, there is no evidence of real skin texture or naturalistic shading in the final two large-scale portraits that the queen sat for: the *Armada Portrait* and *The Ditchley Portrait*.

While scholarship on the queen's dual role as monarch and woman has established new ways to think about depictions of her face and body, the specific racial implications of her cosmetic use in her later portraits have not yet been addressed. In the *Armada Portrait*, her skin is as white and smooth as porcelain—her under-eye area consists of a glowing plane of white that extends to her temples. Her skin is devoid of texture, ensuring that only the color added by makeup (red lips, red cheeks, white skin, forehead veins) remains. In *The Ditchley Portrait*, the queen's face is entirely devoid of color except for her cheeks and lips; her skin is so white that it appears gray and corpse-like next to her cream-colored dress. English literature scholars have recently begun to address the lack of existing studies on the queen's cosmetic use and facial appearance by analyzing contemporary early modern texts. In her pioneering study of the queen's face and

Figure 6 Associated with Nicholas Hilliard, I, c. 1575. London, National Portrait Gallery. Image courtesy of National Portrait Gallery, accessed November 20, 2019.

Elizabethan beauty standards, Anna Riehl notes that "among the numerous explorations of Elizabeth's monarchical body . . . there have been no studies focused on the queen's face."[21] She challenges the "pervasive notion in scholarship that the Elizabethans viewed portraiture as a means to assert various aspects of the sitter's identity mainly through the setting, leaving the face essentially outside the system of signification" by referencing early modern texts that highlight the face as a site of legibility about an individual's interior state.[22] Riehl cites John Davies's 1599 "To Her Picture," a poem that bemoans how the artist of a portrait of the queen fails to capture her beauty, as an example of how Elizabethans may have viewed the queen's face as more of a symbol of her rule rather than a faithful representation of her lived appearance.[23] Riehl argues that, because texts that described the queen's appearance were likely written to appease her by hyperbolizing her beauty, or perhaps satirizing it, they cannot be used as evidence of her actual appearance.[24] Riehl has also noted that scholars tend to use textual and visual depictions of the queen as heavily made-up as evidence of her copious application of cosmetics, yet Riehl uses the lack of unbiased evidence about this alleged cosmetic use to argue that the queen may have never worn makeup at all.[25] While Riehl goes on to analyze portraits of the queen in tandem with descriptions of her face in order to posit what the queen may have actually looked

Figure 7 William Segar, The Ermine Portrait*, c. 1585. Hatfield Hertfordshire, Hatfield House. Image courtesy of Wikipedia, accessed November 20, 2019.*

like in real life, I consider how the clear inclusion of makeup in these portraits, regardless of whether it was worn in real life, serves a symbolic function in the imperial portraits.

In the early sixteenth century, the House of Tudor, the ruling family of England and Ireland, adopted the continental European method of using royal portraiture to reaffirm the power of the monarchy. These images provided "compelling visual evidence for the consolidation of the powers of the dynastic state, and for the highly personalized nature of the political process."[26] In the wake of the Protestant Reformation in the 1530s and the splitting of the Church of England from the Roman Catholic Church in 1534, Henry VIII, head of the House of Tudor and the orchestrator of the split, used royal portraiture as a key method to refashion himself as both a king and a spiritual leader.[27] Throughout the reign of the next three Tudor monarchs—Edward VI, Mary I, and Elizabeth I—the throne attempted to control the public perception of the royal family by disseminating portraits that bordered on propaganda. For Elizabeth I, the reassertion of monarchical power through portraiture not only established her legitimacy as an unmarried Tudor monarch but also reinforced her control over the popular narratives surrounding her reign. Although Queen Elizabeth I ruled from 1558 until

Figure 8 After Hans Holbein, Portrait of Henry VIII*, c. 1536-7. Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool. Image courtesy of Wikipedia, accessed December 1, 2019.*

her death in 1603, she never married and produced no heirs; her virginity came to represent her ability to rule England without being hindered by her gender.

While her makeup application, as seen in her late portraits, conforms to traditional beauty routines of the day, and often her beauty is written about as a model to emulate, Elizabeth was often credited as the inspiration for cosmetic trends rather than an adherent. Riehl notes that there are few texts from the Elizabethan era that explicitly refer to the queen's makeup use—her beauty is said to be natural.[28] This is due partly to the conflation of the body of the head of the kingdom ("the natural body") with the kingdom itself ("the body politic"). For example, when the queen came down with smallpox in 1562, she was said to be free of any scarring. She herself propagated this myth, as she was keenly aware of the duality she served as both masculine ruler and feminine body: as Riehl says, "[The queen] figures both as an object of scrutiny and representation, but an object whose privileged position of power lends her the awareness of the masculine values according to which her face is being regarded and figured."[29] In the *Armada Portrait*, however, the plausibility of her natural coloring comes into question. Andrew Belsey and Catherine Belsey note how, in this portrait that "presents the

Figure 9 Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger, Ellen Maurice, *1597. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, accessed December 5, 2019.*

Queen as an emblem of majesty," her "face is pale and perhaps slightly unearthly."[30] They note how the inclusion of rich clothing and a symbolic setting is comparable to Hans Holbein's propagandistic portrait of Henry VIII (Fig. 8).[31] A crucial difference in portraits of Elizabeth in comparison to her predecessors is the complete stylization of her body in an attempt to assert her masculinity as ruler. In the 1570s, once the queen was in her forties, her virginity became canonized and incorporated into her official image. In the *Armada Portrait* and *The Ditchley Portrait*, the natural body of the queen is manipulated to the point of caricature— her waist is long and small, her shoulders inhumanly wide. The Belseys argue that the manipulation of her body in these two works may be a reaction to how, in the sixteenth century, the female body was considered weak and submissive; because Elizabeth ruled the British Empire as a Virgin Queen who took on the image of the man, her earthly body had to be subdued:

> The "Armada" portrait proclaims the sovereignty and the right
> to rule: the splendour of her appearance, her vision and her

Figure 10 Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger, Anne of Denmark*, 1611-14. Milton Keynes, Woburn Abbey. Image courtesy of Wiki commons, accessed December 4, 2019.*

> self-control are evidence of the majesty and the authority
> which (sic) inhere in the person of the Queen. But the painting
> also declares the magnificence of her realm: England's wealth
> and maritime prowess are evidence of its authority in the
> world, of national sovereignty divinely indorsed.[32]

The queen's right to rule is thus correlated with the subduing of her sexuality and the enhancement of her surrounding accoutrements. Strong and the Belseys analyze this symbolism in the background, objects, and clothing in the *Armada Portrait* and *The Ditchley Portrait* to argue that they represent a period of imperialist propaganda. Continuing in this vein, the cosmetics legible on the queen's face can likewise be read as symbols of imperialism due to the queen's colonial project and the racial connotations of cosmetic use in the early modern period.

Early modern beauty standards in western Europe called for high foreheads, smooth white faces, blushed cheeks, and small red lips. Books on cosmetic use by women in the Elizabethan era make continuous reference to the expectation for every woman to mimic the appearance—and especially the fairness—of the queen.[33] The queen was famous for her natural white skin, which is commonly thought to have been enhanced through the use of white paints, such as Venetian

ceruse, as she aged. Aileen Ribeiro explains that, while cosmetics alluded to serums crafted from natural ingredients like plants and herbs, paint referred to "the mineral substances, often poisonous, which were applied to the skin and which could dramatically change the appearance of those wearing them."[34] However, while there is no shortage of writing by men in the Elizabethan era about the falseness of face painting, any reference to the queen's own use remains strictly in the realm of cosmetics, not paint. This distinction is important, as Ribeiro says: "Most writers dealing with women's beauty (and even critics of female appearance) made a clear distinction between cosmetics, which were usually approved of, and paint, which was condemned."[35] This refusal to imply that the queen's appearance was the result of paint is seen in this popular recipe for cosmetic water, a sort of lotion, that she was said to use:

> A "*cosmetick* water" or cleansing lotion used by Elizabeth had its ingredients in two new laid eggs with their shells, burnt alum, powdered sugar, borax, poppy seeds beated up very finely with a "pint of water that runs from under the wheel of a mill." Once made, the preparation would keep for a year: "it is a very *good cosmetick*; it whitens, smooths and softens the skin: use it, like that Queen, but 3 times a week."[36]

The recipe is clear that this solution is a cosmetic, not a paint—the queen does not mask her face, she enhances it. However, this discourse stands in stark opposition to readings of the queen's later portraits showcasing cosmetic use. Her beauty, which other women were expected to emulate, was not without problematic connotations. As Romana Sammern notes, the feminine ideal of white skin, red lips, and red cheeks was understood since the Ovidian era; however, writers only began to acknowledge women painting their faces to conform with these beauty standards in England in the mid-sixteenth century.[37] Critics of women appearing artificial or acting against God by applying cosmetics rarely extended this critique to the queen herself due to governmental pressure; yet, as Frances E. Dolan states: "In associating [cosmetics] with prostitutes and servants, polemicists . . . delicately refrain from censuring women at the top of the social scale, although those women—especially Queen Elizabeth—may have initiated the use of cosmetics and made it fashionable."[38] The trend of women applying white ceruse to the face and neck, rouge to the lips, and red powder to the cheeks—as well as the critique of this practice—was thus popularized during the Elizabethan era.

Cosmetics and paints were criticized for more than their assumed association with female vanity, however. In her 1995 book *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England*, Kim F. Hall states that discourses surrounding the luxury of beauty and, in particular, fairness, reveal how the application of cosmetics became tied up with racial discourse in and after the Elizabethan era.[39] She notes that by the mid-seventeenth century, dark skin and the application of "paint" became conflated; this was partly due to the foreign origin of many beauty products: "Male writers continually accuse women of hiding their 'blackness' under the fair disguise of cosmetics and worry that female vanity will feed the market for foreign ornaments."[40] Dark skin became associated with both the foreign other and the unattractive woman—as something to hide, to cover with makeup. While Hall explores the racial connotations of cosmetics application that occurred in English discourse shortly after the queen's death, she does not explicitly discuss how the material history of imported cosmetics factors into discussions of the queen's projected whiteness during her reign. In a later article on teaching race and gender in Shakespeare at the college level, Hall discusses how the tension between light and dark in portraits of Queen Elizabeth I reinforces her, and thus England's, whiteness. Hall links the visibility of the queen's use of cosmetics in *The Ditchley Portrait* not with their status as imported materials but with the symbolism of her clothing: "The whiteness of her bejeweled dress and 'cosmetically enhanced' features combine in the Ditchley portrait to evoke virgin purity and Christian grace and thus associate Elizabeth with 'the good.'"[41] According to Hall, because of the symbolic function of imperial portraiture, it is the values associated with the queen's white skin and ornate clothing that are indicative of those of the nation she presides over. However, as the use of cosmetics and paint to lighten the skin in Elizabethan England was criticized for being unnatural and deceitful, cosmetically enhanced skin would not have had the same associations with purity and Christianity as unenhanced skin. While the artificial whiteness of her skin as it appears in her portraits is evinced by its resemblance to popular makeup styles of the day, the foreign origin of its materials reveals a more tangible connection between depictions of the queen's cosmetic application and her imperial mission. The best ceruse, a white lead-based pigment, came from Venice; blusher was colored with red brazilwood from the Americas; and cochineal, a new source for red rouge, was brought to England from Mexico via Spanish trade routes in the mid-sixteenth century.[42] Traces of these foreign goods, obtained through colonial trade routes that were often forged by the British government, are visible on the queen's face in her later portraits that make explicit her role as colonizer.

While the queen's "natural" beauty served as an inspiration for these cosmetic trends, she escaped accusations of face painting during her lifetime. Her face in later portraits was symbolic of her own rule and power; even though her corseted waist and luxurious fashion in *The Ditchley Portrait* was re-created by Gheeraerts in portraits of other Elizabethan court ladies and royals, the texture and coloring of the sitters' skin is still visible despite the presence of their bright red makeup (Figs. 8–9). The queen's mask-like white face was unique to her own portraiture, and, although other women may have mimicked her beauty at the time, their faces were not stylized to the same degree as hers was. While cosmetic use by Elizabethan women under the influence of the queen has been discussed at length, the colonial politics associated with applying white face powder has often been applied to women in general rather than the queen herself. In early modern England, the legible application of white face powder and red on the cheeks and lips reflected the spoils of colonial missions and the exploitation of enslaved labor. Elizabeth's face in the *Armada Portrait* and *The Ditchley Portrait* exists alongside a clear and established message of imperial domination; as the monarch, her portraits were not subject to the same early modern narrative regarding vanity that was applied to portraits of court ladies. When discussing the implications of cosmetic use in her portraiture—especially her alleged use of whitening paints—her official policies about appearances and skin color must also be considered.

Queen Elizabeth I actively sought to control the Americas and beat the Spanish by being the first European nation to establish a permanent colony; John Dee, the queen's adviser, is credited with creating the term *The British Empire* and advocating for colonization in the Americas. The first English colony in America was established in 1584, and although this first settlement was abandoned by 1590, it was a precursor for the founding of Virginia only decades later by Queen Elizabeth's successor, James I of England.[43] The *Armada Portrait* celebrates both the queen's dominion over continental European powers and the Americas—a theme reinforced in *The Ditchley Portrait* four years later.[44] *The Ditchley Portrait* was painted as a gift to the queen's champion, Henry Lee of Ditchley, in a chiaroscuro style—a new aesthetic for portraits of the queen that favored stylized forms over realistic representation. While the *Armada Portrait* is notable for its landscape orientation, *The Ditchley Portrait* is notable for its size; it is the largest portrait of the queen painted during her lifetime.[45] The poem inscribed on the right side is largely illegible due to overpainting. The Belseys note the imperial symbolism that pervades the composition, seen in the celestial sphere pendant by her left ear, and claims that she is represented as ruler not only of Britain upon which she stands but of the cosmos as a whole.[46] Evidently, the masking of the queen's face that

occurs near the end of her reign coincides with her stylization as a symbol of imperial England.

Beyond serving as visual commemorations of the queen's role as head of the kingdom, the events following the completion of the *Armada Portrait* and *The Ditchley Portrait* reveal how the queen saw Blackness as a threat to English whiteness. From 1596 to 1601, the queen sent a series of letters to the mayor of London calling for every Black individual in the country to banished:

> WHEREAS the Queen's majesty, tendering the good and welfare of her own natural subjects, greatly distressed in these hard times of dearth, is highly discontented to understand the great number of Negroes and blackamoors which (as she is informed) are carried into this realm since the troubles between her highness and the King of Spain. . . . These shall therefore be to will and require you and every of you to aid and assist the said Casper van Senden or his assignees to taking such Negroes and blackamoors to be transported as aforesaid as he shall find within the realm of England; and if there shall be any person or persons which be possessed of any such blackamoors that refuse to deliver them in sort aforesaid, then we require you to call them before you and to advise and persuade them by all good means to satisfy her majesty's pleasure therein.[47]

The war between England and Spain, and the defeat of the Spanish Armada by the British in 1588, as seen in the *Armada Portrait*, saw an increased number of people of African descent hired to work as privateers.[48] Her statement reveals how England's involvement in wars with Spain to fight for control of the Americas and subsequent colonization attempts affected the ways in which individuals of African descent and their skin color were seen by the population at large. The distinct language used by the queen exemplifies how she grouped individuals together based not on geographic location but on skin color—a move Emily C. Bartels notes was an "attempt to put into place a race-based cultural barrier of a sort England had not seen since the expulsion of the Jews at the end of the thirteenth century."[49] While this call for deportation was entrenched in the political and economic issues of the day, as the group she refers to initially included enslaved individuals that the English had captured from a Spanish colony in the Americas, Elizabeth's statement posits individuals of African descent as inferior to those of European descent.[50] Ironically, this whiteness was enhanced through

the application of pigments acquired through foreign trade and the early colonization of the Americas.

Elizabeth's statement conflates two different groups based on the color of their skin—a political move that must be considered alongside popular contemporaneous discourses regarding race and visibility. As Hall notes, in Elizabethan England, people from different backgrounds were not typically thought of as belonging to the same racial group based on skin color alone; narratives about geographic origin and class permeated these discussions.[51] This statement thus serves as an outlier; according to Hall, Elizabeth's failed policy to expel individuals based on their skin color highlights how the white queen could not attempt to remove Black individuals from a kingdom they already inhabited: "The attempted banishment of difference and the maintenance of England's borders through figurations of Elizabeth as the pure and fair national body only helped to produce a void of English whiteness that her successor, himself a foreign other, could not fill."[52] At the same time that she was trying to expel people from England based on the color of their skin, Elizabeth's subjects were traveling to the Americas and returning with materials that were used to alter her own.

In her 2011 article "Inventing Whiteness: Cosmetics, Race, and Women in Early Modern England," Kimberly Poitevin argues that women who applied white makeup to their faces in early modern England performed their race in what she calls the act of whiteface: "Since a number of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century theories explicitly linked cosmetic practices to racial difference and since many of the products women applied to their skins were foreign products, women who used make-up also encoded anxieties about race-mingling and cross-cultural contact in their complexions."[53] While Poitevin calls attention to how the mixture of foreign materials in English cosmetics was a heated topic in early modern debates over whiteness and beauty, she does not consider how the queen's own makeup application and enhanced whiteness may have factored into these discussions.[54] Poitevin only briefly refers to queen's cosmetic use as it relates to aging despite later making important connections between racism and Elizabethan cosmetic culture: "Certainly Queen Elizabeth's use of cosmetics was legendary in her time—it is believed she began using them most heavily after a bout with smallpox in 1562—and as she aged, they helped her create the iconic mask-like image she is known for today."[55] Nonetheless, Poitevin's ideas regarding discourses about whiteness and the inclusion of foreign materials in cosmetic products are crucial in understanding how, if we read the queen's face in her late portraits as sporting cosmetics, this use signified more than just an aversion to displaying old age—it also displayed the material results of her colonial efforts.

Although the queen and her government attempted, in vain, to control the dissemination of images of the monarch from 1563 until her death, unofficial reproductions of her face remained widespread and popular.[56] Individual studios would keep fabric face patterns based off miniatures for small-scale works and *The Ditchley Portrait* for larger images in order to create mass amounts of portraits of the queen in order to comply with her government's strict regulations about the preservation of her beauty and power.[57] However, as I outlined here, the final face type that was copied in works of the queen after her death held important racial implications. The scope of the present essay only scratches the surface of the symbolism of cosmetics in royal portraiture. There is certainly more work to be done on the topic of the queen's makeup in portraiture in the field of art history that can build on the scholarship already published by scholars of English literature. I hope that, by distinguishing between the makeup application of the real woman as she existed and the symbolic queen of her later imperial portraiture, I have provided new insight into how the legibility of cosmetics on Queen Elizabeth I's face in the *Armada Portrait* and *The Ditchley Portrait* can be interpreted as being symbolic of England's colonial projects.

* * *

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Notes

[1] Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987), 140.

[2] Louis A. Montrose, "Idols of the Queen: Policy, Gender, and the Picturing of Elizabeth I," *Representations*, no. 69 (Autumn 1999): 149n4, https://doi.org/10.2307/2902957.

[3] Kimberly Poitevin, "Inventing Whiteness: Cosmetics, Race, and Women in Early Modern England," *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 11, no. 1 (2011): 75, https:// doi.org/10.1353/jem.2011.0009. Poitevin cites Frances E. Dolan, Kim F. Hall, and Farah Karim-Cooper as having previously discussed this phenomenon.

[4] "Sir Walter Ralegh [*sic*] found 'divers berries, that die a most perfect crimson and Carnation' in Trinidad, remarking that 'for painting, all France, Italy, or the east Indies, yield none such: For the more the skyn is washed, the fayrer the cullour appeareth.'" For more discussion of the links between imported cosmetics and early English colonization efforts, see Poitevin, "Inventing Whiteness," 75.

[5] Emily C. Bartels, "Too Many Blackamoors: Deportation, Discrimination, and Elizabeth I," *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 46, no. 2 (2006): 306, https://www.jstor.org/stable/3844644. I use the term *Black* in this essay to refer to individuals of African descent whose geographic displacement and heritage has been lost or ignored by surviving sources. I engage with the term as defined by Kim F. Hall in the introduction to *Things of Darkness*: "'Black' encompasses the peoples of the African diaspora without having to make attributions of nationality and culture that have been erased from historical records or do not obtain in the early period. . . . Rather than negotiate such tangled thickets in this space, I adopt the simple, albeit problematic, nomenclature: 'black'" (*Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995], 8).

[6] Strong, *Gloriana*, 16.

[7] Aileen Ribeiro, *Facing Beauty: Painted Women and Cosmetic Art* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011), 82.

[8] Strong, *Gloriana*, 10. Strong's catalog builds on Freeman O'Donoghue's 1894 book *A Descriptive and Classified Catalogue of Portraits of Queen Elizabeth*, which groups paintings by their shared iconography rather than their chronology.

[9] Strong, *Gloriana*, 10.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid., 12.

[12] Ibid., 147.

[13] Ibid., 140.

[14] Ibid., 20.

[15] For a comprehensive list of portraits that incorporate the *Armanda Portrait* and *The Ditchley Portrait* as face patterns, see Strong, *Gloriana*, 132–41.

[16] Montrose, "Idols of the Queen," 149n4.

[17] Ibid.

[18] For examples of scholars who mention Strong's Mask of Youth as evidence of the queen's vanity in her old age, see Anna Riehl, *The Face of Queenship: Early Modern Representations of Elizabeth I* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 62; S. P. Cerasano and Marion Wynne-Davies, "'From Myself, My Other Self I Turned': An Introduction," in *Gloriana's Face: Women, Public and Private, in the English Renaissance*, ed. S. P. Cerasano and Marion Wynne-Davies (Hertfordshire, UK: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), 14; Patricia Berrahou Phillippy, *Painting Women: Cosmetics, Canvases, and Early Modern Culture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 135; and Romana Sammern, "Red, White, and Black: Colors of Beauty, Tints of Health, and Cosmetic Materials in Early Modern English Art Writing," *Early Science and Medicine* 20, nos. 4–6 (2015): 400, https://doi.org/10.1163/15733823-02046p05.

[19] Farah Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics in Shakespearean and Renaissance Drama* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 62.

[20] Carroll Camden, *The Elizabethan Woman: A Panorama of English Womanhood, 1540 to 1640* (London: Cleaver-Hume, 1952), 176.

[21] Anna Riehl, *The Face of Queenship: Early Modern Representations of Elizabeth I* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 9n30. Riehl notes that while Queen Elizabeth I's cosmetic use is mentioned in books on early cosmetic culture by other scholars of English literature, it is not discussed in-depth.

[22] Riehl, *Face of Queenship*, 124.

[23] Ibid., 125. The poem she cites reads as follows: "But here are colours red and white, / Each lyne, and each proportion right; / These Lynes, this red and whitenesse, / Have wanting yet a life and light, / A Majestie, and brightnesse."

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid., 59.

[26] Montrose, "Idols of the Queen," 108.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Riehl, *Face of Queenship*, 62.

[29] Ibid., 3.

[30] Andrew Belsey and Catherine Belsey, "Icons of Divinity: Portraits of Elizabeth I," in *Renaissance Bodies: The Human Figure in English Culture c. 1540–1660*, edited by Lucy Gent and Nigel Llewellyn (London: Reaktion Books, 1990), 12.

[31] Belsey and Belsey, "Icons of Divinity," 14. The original work by Holbein was lost in a fire; a reproduction is cited.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Sammern, "Red, White and Black," 398. For further examples of how women applied makeup at Elizabeth's court, see Ribeiro, *Facing Beauty*, 76–101.

[34] Ribeiro, *Facing Beauty*, 78.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Neville Williams, *Powder and Paint: A History of the Englishwoman's Toilet, Elizabeth I– Elizabeth II* (London: Longmans, Green, 1957), 28. Williams quotes an Elizabethan era recipe for "Queen Elizabeth's cosmetick water."

[37] Sammern, "Red, White, and Black," 400.

[38] Frances E. Dolan, "Taking the Pencil out of God's Hand: Art, Nature, and the Face-Painting Debate in Early Modern England," *PMLA* 108, no. 2 (1993): 231, https://doi.org/10.2307/462594.

[39] Hall, *Things of Darkness*, 85.

[40] Ibid., 90. This rise in discourse about skin color and foreign cosmetics occurred in the decades after Queen Elizabeth I's death, when posthumous portraits of the queen were being produced and England's colonial efforts increased.

[41] Kim F. Hall, "Beauty and the Beast of Whiteness: Teaching Race and Gender," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 47, no. 4 (1996): 463.

[42] Ribeiro, *Facing Beauty*, 85.

[43] Strong, *Gloriana*, 133. Strong mistakenly claims that the colony of Virginia had been founded by 1588, when in fact the colonies established by Sir Walter Raleigh in the Americas in 1584 disappeared by 1590. It was only in 1607, four years after Queen Elizabeth I's death, that the first permanent colony was established in Jamestown by her successor. For a timeline of Virginia's early settlement, see Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Roanoke: The Abandoned Colony* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Allanheld, 1984), 132.

[44] Strong, *Gloriana*, 135.

[45] Ibid., 137.

[46] Belsey and Belsey, "Icons of Divinity," 23.

[47] Bartels, "Too Many Blackamoors," 316. An undated Privy Council minute of 1596–1601.

[48] Ibid., 306.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid., 319.

[51] Hall, *Things of Darkness*, 89.

[52] Ibid., 176.

[53] Poitevin, "Inventing Whiteness," 59.

[54] On discussions surrounding race and beauty in the Elizabethan era, see Hall, *Things of Darkness*, 126.
[55] Poitevin, "Inventing Whiteness," 62.
[56] Belsey and Belsey, "Icons of Divinity," 21.
[57] Strong, *Gloriana*, 147.

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**Visualizing Banaba: Art and Research about a
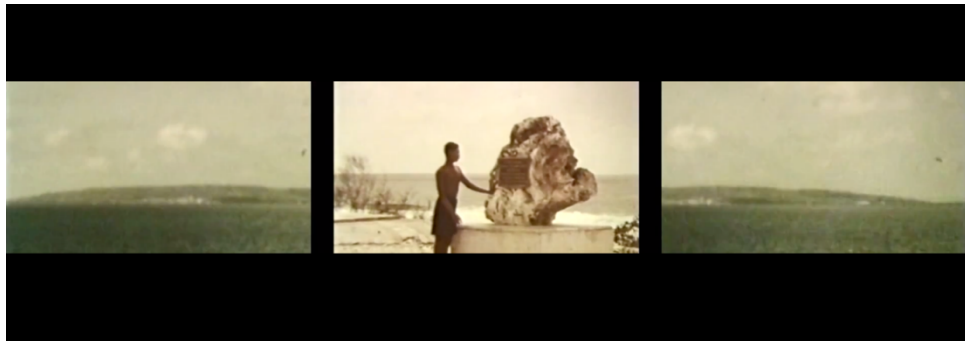Diffracted Pacific Island**

Katerina Martina Teaiwa

Figure 1 Screenshot from Mine Lands: for Teresia *in* Project Banaba *by Katerina
Teaiwa. Image courtesy of the author.*

For over twenty years I've been imagining and producing my Pacific research
and scholarship through the performing and visual arts while regularly resisting
publishing about most of that process. While discussions of method are there
in my 2002 PhD thesis, much of this lack of reflection on the methods is a
matter of time and energy and also a resistance to the norms of scholarly dis-
cipline and career strategy—avoiding top journals, refusing to play the publis-
hing game, while being regularly inundated with requests to contribute to pub-
lishing and editorial endeavours. However, this has left a gap in my own work
on methodologies and in sharing approaches with early career scholars in Pa-
cific studies and other fields.

My book, *Consuming Ocean Island: Stories of People and Phosphate from Ba-
naba*,[1] about the impact of British, Australian, and, New Zealand phosphate
mining on one of my ancestral homelands, felt like a mission to Mars.

Figure 2 Google Map of the Pacific Highlighting the Location of Banaba in Kiribati. Image courtesy of Google, INEGI, 2002.

Prolonged sitting, writing, reading, rewriting, and editing are static embodied processes unnatural to human design. And while I'm so pleased the book has been taken up in several anthropology, history, Pacific studies, and Indigenous studies classrooms, the chapter I love most is the one that reviewers and editors had almost nothing to say about. Titled "Remix: Our Sea of Phosphate," it consists of textual and visual fragments from books, journal articles, ethnographic film, and archives.[2] Elsewhere, I have written about my interest in Indigenous remix and how apt it is for Banaban lands, choreographies, histories, and displacement.[3] My goal has never been to produce a neat and well-synthesized master narrative of what happened to Banaba, also known as Ocean Island, but to appropriately present our two-and-a-half-square-mile (six-square-kilometer) ancestral island that was broken, crushed, dried, bagged, and hauled off in ships "in pieces." The remixed forms of research and storytelling about Banaba are in line with the multisited, multisensory, empirical, material, social, and political elements marking the interaction and mutual interference between Banaba and twentieth-century British, Australian, and New Zealand colonial, imperial, agricultural, and food security projects.

Project Banaba

My ongoing creative work on *Project Banaba* converts twenty years of ethnographic, archival, and visual research on the island into a contemporary art installation that is essentially a Banaban montage that accounts for how the island has been diffracted and remixed. It was originally commissioned in 2017 by Carriageworks cultural precinct in Sydney and then traveled to MTG gallery in Hawkes Bay, Aotearoa New Zealand, in 2019. It is currently being prepared for Te Uru Waitakere contemporary gallery in Auckland for 2021 with the support of Yuki Kihara, a curator, long-term collaborator, and celebrated Samoan Japanese artist. Each of these locations is relevant to the Banaban story as historical centers of phosphate business operations or fertilizer manufacturing.

A small number of concepts have guided the research and art and continue to remain relevant: *te aba* referring to both land and people; *kainga* referring to home, the social networks and practices associated with home as a place that "feeds"; and montage, diffraction, and remix. These last three were selected less as ideas to track and unpack genealogically in various disciplines than as ways to see, experience, and construct historical and contemporary Banaban worlds, and knowledges about them.

The dispersed nature of the island through an industrial process and the many Indigenous, political, and economic stakeholders involved in the mining and associated agricultural supply chains meant that the island became different things to many different groups. British, Australian, and New Zealand political and agricultural stakeholders held and enforced power over the Pacific stakeholders, and during World War II this led to the brief involvement of devastating Japanese military powers and the eventual displacement of Banabans from their home of over two thousand years. They returned in the 1970s to occupy the island while a parallel lawsuit against the company and the Crown drew much global publicity, resulting in the end of mining operations and a small out-of-court settlement. The island, now incorporated into the Republic of Kiribati, remains unrehabilitated, the mining debris scattered across the pinnacle-riddled surface, while most of the six thousand or so Banabans live on Rabi Island in the north of Fiji and throughout a growing Pacific diaspora.

Diffraction, rather than refraction, as an approach to Banaban histories, works for me because of the numerous geopolitical, economic, agricultural, and Indigenous interests in an island that functioned as a major natural resource from 1900 to 1980. While refraction speaks to the change of direction when a wave meets a new medium through which it is transmitted, diffraction results in the spreading of waves because of *interference* with various patterns emerging that can reinforce or cancel out each other. Donna Haraway helped

Figure 3 Project Banaba *consists of three parts. This view shows the three-screen projection* Mine Lands: for Teresia *and elements of the textile-based installation* Body of the land, body of the people *that features images and text from the archives. Another section is called* Teaiwa's Kainga*, a photo reef of everyday life on Rabi Island punctuated with black-and-white archival images of fertilizer production. Image courtesy of Jacqui Manning, Carriageworks, 2017.*

bring this term out of physics, describing one of its effects as the recognition of heterogeneous histories and the recording of interference, interaction, reinforcement, and difference.[4] Banaba can be viewed either as that "new medium" that causes new patterns and heterogeneous histories to emerge or as the wave itself encountering the interference of colonialism and agricultural imperialism, resulting in the dispersal of the wave in multiple directions. Banaba travels and is remixed through the fertilizer industry and spread over farms across Australia and New Zealand that produce other materials consumed by plants, animals, and humans. Those phosphate waves are still flowing through Australian and Aotearoa New Zealand ecosystems.

    Project Banaba was on exhibit at MTG Hawke's Bay Tai Ahuriri gallery about five minutes down the road from the large Ravensdown fertilizer plant at the center of an ongoing controversy about the use of phosphate from Moroccan-occupied Western Sahara. Morocco's OCP is currently the world's largest producer of rock phosphate and was established in 1920, the same year that the British Phosphate Commissioners consolidated their interests in the Pacific. Ravensdown has manufactured a wide variety of phosphorus- and nitrogen-yielding fertilizers for decades from Pacific sources. During the exhibition launch, the chair of the Napier City Council said he was stunned about this

*Figure 4 Ravensdown at Hawke's Bay, Aotearoa New Zealand. Images courtesy of Kate-
rina Teaiwa.*

history. He said that aside from employees most people in the region had no
idea of the global and historical implications of activities at the plant. Most
people did not realize that New Zealand had been consuming Nauruan and
Banaban phosphate for decades, multiplying their agricultural outputs while
also polluting both Pacific and New Zealand environments, and displacing the
Banabans.

Yuki's co-curator for *Project Banaba* at MTG, Jess Mio, helped make a
short film about the exhibition, and we attempted to get some footage near the
Ravensdown phosphate plant. As we pulled up to a fairly public intersection
to get a closer look at the buildings, an employee in a high-vis vest appeared
out of nowhere, asking what we were doing. Jess pointed to our Napier Council
vehicle, but the employee pointed at every patch of grass surrounding the in-
tersection and said, "That belongs to Ravensdown, that belongs to Ra-
vensdown and that belongs to Ravensdown. No filming any buildings without
permission." So we crossed the road to the very public beach and took all
manner of footage and pictures of Ravensdown.

Many Māori and Pacific Islanders who visited the exhibition also un-
derstood the Indigenous spiritual, material, and cultural implications of extract-
ing Banaban land because our identities and values are deeply rooted in land-
scapes that are seen as sentient and ancestral. Banabans are born of the rock,

Figure 5 Aerial Top-Dressing Stamp, circa 1960. New Zealand Post Museum Collection, artwork by J.C. Boyd, produced by Harrison & Sons Ltd. Image courtesy of Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

and our ancestors are part of those rocks. So spreading Banaba across Aotearoa is, as the Māori curator, Te Hira Henderson, proclaimed at the opening of *Project Banaba*, one of the most shameful things he's ever heard of, the worst thing you can do to Indigenous people—take their bones and spread them across other people's lands and eat them. This iconic image of a New Zealand crop duster spreading Banaban and Nauruan phosphate fertilizer across hill country was a key motif that I replicated throughout the show.

   Project Banaba thus utilises visual and layered storytelling to share the historical and contemporary impacts of colonialism and extractive industries on small islands, and the long-term consequences of environmental destruction and Indigenous displacement. Any research on current or future solutions to the world's greatest environmental, climate, or pollution problems cannot ignore the role of colonialism, imperialism, and the appropriation of natural resources by powerful countries to fuel damaging and unsustainable consumption and lifestyles. Technical solutions alone cannot address unequal structures of power and historical injustices that must be faced to bring back balance between human societies and their environments. As Simon L. Lewis and Mark A. Maslin write in *The Human Planet*: "The Anthropocene began with wide-

Figure 6 Project Banaba *at MTG Hawke's Bay Tai Ahuriri, 2019. This view shows textile work that was added to* Project Banaba *when it traveled to Aotearoa New Zealand. Land from the Sky deconstructs the 1960 top-dressing stamp and brings it into conversation with Banaban voices and queries about where their land has gone. Image courtesy of MTG.*

spread colonialism and slavery; it is a story of how people treat the environment and how people treat each other."[5] The stories of Banaba, now mostly buried in archives, farmlands, people's memories, Facebook groups, and academic texts, can continue as cautionary tales of social and environmental devastation and injustice for the wider world through mediums such as public art exhibitions.

* * *

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Notes

[1] Katerina Teaiwa, *Consuming Ocean Island: Stories of People and Phosphate from Banaba* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015).

[2] Ibid.

[3] Katerina Teaiwa, "Culture Moves? The Festival of Pacific Arts and Dance Remix in Oceania," *Dance Research Aotearoa*, no. 2 (2014): 2–19. https://doi.org/10.15663/dra.v2i1.27 .

[4] Donna Haraway, *Modest__Witness@Second__Milennium.FemaleMan©__Meets__ OncoMouse™: Feminism and Technoscience* (New York: Routledge, 1997). https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203731093 .

[5] Simon L. Lewis and Mark A. Maslin, *The Human Planet: How We Created the Anthropocene* (London: Pelican, 2018).

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