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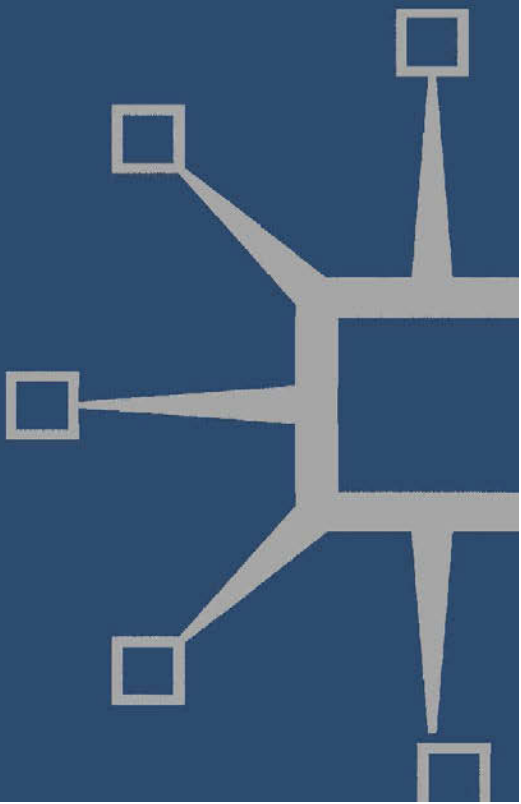
Geography and Memory

Explorations in Identity, Place and Becoming

Owain Jones
Joanne Garde-Hansen



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The nascent field of memory studies emerges from contemporary trends that include a shift from concern with historical knowledge of events to that of memory, from 'what we know' to 'how we remember it'; changes in generational memory; the rapid advance of technologies of memory; panic over declining powers of memory, which mirrors our fascination with the possibilities of memory enhancement; and the development of trauma narratives in reshaping the past.

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Introduction

Owain Jones and Joanne Garde-Hansen

> You have to begin to lose your memory, if only in bits and pieces, to realise that memory is what makes our lives. Life without memory is no life at all [...] Our memory is our coherence, our reason, our feeling, even our action. Without it we are nothing.
>
> (Louis Buňuel, *Memoirs*, cited in Wood and Byatt, 2008, Preface)

> Memory [...] is what qualifies us as emotional creatures, psychozootica or however one describes them. [...] there is no way in which we can escape it. The only thing that you can do, and that most people seem to be able to do very successfully, is to subdue it.
>
> (W G Sebald in conversation with Eleanor Wachtel, 2007, p. 56)

It remains one of the greatest unknown lands for science to explore: that of the detailed working of the brain and questions of consciousness (language, thought, deliberate action) in relation to unconsciousness, emotions, affect and memory. How these processes, how memory in particular, shape us in our ongoing 'becoming' is a matter of mystery. We feel that geography, and related disciplines, have their role to play in this venture, and that exploring the processes and implications of memory and geography is a demanding and exciting venture.

This book walks with that challenge and seeks to map the relationships between geography and memory along three critical pathways: identity, place and becoming. Separated into these interweaving parts, the book produces frameworks through which memory and geography are performed. Taken as a whole, the chapters seek to open

up the sub-disciplines of geography (human, political, cultural and physical) into a dialogue with those other disciplines that are carried within and by memory studies (media, the arts, heritage, psychology, psychotherapy, politics, sociology and cognitive science).

In focusing upon the three thematic dynamics of identity, place and becoming, which head up the sections, we are not seeking to build a prescriptive framework, but rather, a means to 'organize' the relationship between geography and memory into an accessible framework for exploring more deeply the role of (land)scape, environments, objects and places in terms of memory, remembering, archives, commemoration and forgetting.

We seek to explore how the geographic enterprise of 'becoming identities in places' is a performative construction/practice in which ongoing memories play a pivotal role. Relationality, mobility and process are fundamental here, and, against 'settled' notions of place and identity, we move towards the idea of 'becoming', as identities in and of places are always being unmade and remade in a complex interplay with the (remembered), (settled) past and the novel events of present moments.

Consequently, we have selected these three headings as a way of managing the diverse and rich experiences of (individual) memory and also to represent the three key registers through which we wish to see geography and memory combine and move. As a whole, the book reflects the ways that memory, geography, place, identity and becoming form filigrees of connections and disconnections in lived experience. This experience requires the book to be interdisciplinary, and with this in mind we have drawn together academic, literary, artistic and therapeutic approaches that seek to multi-modally and polylogically explore memories of geographies and/or the geographies of memories.

We have not forgotten that memory is a matter of ethics (Margalit, 2004); formed both through collective memories which address, or otherwise, sufferings and injustices, and how we live with each other and each other's past lives. However, the underlying focus of the book is on personal, private memories rather than the more frequently studied 'popular', 'collective', 'social' or 'cultural' memories which often are considered at large aggregate scales, as in nations, ethnic groups or diaspora. Although an over-sharp distinction between 'private' and 'personal' memory and 'collective'/'cultural' memory should be guarded against, we feel that the former do merit much more attention within the memory interested disciplines. This is not least because of the role of the individual brain in being the nexus of memory, and also because, in the end, collectives of memory are woven out of the myriad narratives of individual histories which are lived from within.

This perspective allows us to start with personal identity and consider memory in relation to space, affect, emotion (love/loss), materiality, ageing, embodiment, environment and sustainability, with far more attention to the particularities and nuances of individual 'becoming'. Yet, before we are able to make these supposedly neat separations into our three dynamics, we need to explore some of what we see as the theoretical bodies of knowledge upon and around which geographies of memory and the memories of geography circulate. In what follows, we unpack a range of literature which has explored the intimate entwinements of space, place, landscape, affect, emotion, imagination and identity, to provide the reader with a useful foundation before setting out into one or more of the exploratory chapters we have brought together.

Geography and/for memory studies

Memory studies is a burgeoning field of enquiry drawing upon a range of social science, arts and humanities disciplines, including geography, landscape studies, sociology, cultural studies, media studies, heritage and museum studies, film studies, psychology and history. Sage's launch of the *Memory Studies* journal in 2008 paved the way for the emergent field of memory studies as particularly relevant to the twenty-first century, as scholars reflect upon and evaluate human lives, histories and geographical positions in postcolonial, post-industrial (or new industrial), globalizing cultures/economies in an era of ecocide (Guattari, 2000). Within this field there has been, quite rightly, a focus on the traumas of modern history (slave trades, colonialisms, genocides, military conflict) and a focus upon collective, public and social memories in these and other contexts. Yet, given memory's fundamental role in individual, family and other small collectives, and the always-present aspects of space, landscape and place within the memories of such (and vice versa), there is a sense that these 'smaller scale' dynamics of geography and memory remain under-represented and less-considered within both memory studies, geography and other disciplines. There is a growing richness in geography in this area (Jones, 2011), but it still has some way to go to match the volume of work on 'larger scale' memory narratives.

In attending to this matter, this edited collection opens up for scrutiny the many specific sub-areas that merit further, focused exploration in theoretical and substantive terms: such as the geographies of different types of memory practice, and how they are tied up with issues such as the environment, sustainability, mobility, ageing, dwelling,

conservation, region, war, resilience, regeneration and globality. The emphasis (at all times) on the personal should not be read as static and fixed, but as understanding memory as 'multi-directional: as subject to ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing and borrowing; as productive and not [purely] privative' (Rothberg, 2009, p. 3). Thus, in engaging memory studies with geography we do not present the contributions in this book, nor our separation of them into 'identity', 'place' and 'becoming', as a form of 'competitive memory', whereby a zero-sum game is played between private and public accounts of the past, or when one memory practice/dynamic dilutes or delegitimizes another (Rothberg, 2009, p. 3). Rather, we are cognizant that when drawing memory studies and geography together, this should be done without ignoring the contexts of history, politics, policy and economics (both collective and personal) that have and can engage in practices that destroy the connections between identity, place and becoming.

Hence, we seek to address the need in memory studies for more work on the personal connections that the individual makes between identity, place and becoming. Geography, to some extent, has (understandably) focused on collective schema (cultural, shared, public, popular, national, and so on) and how these are materialized in contesting/ed ways in places and landscapes as tension and/or competition with other collectives. However, memories of who we are now, who we were, who we wanted to become, are wrapped up in memories of where we are, where we were, and where we will be (would like to be). This makes the connections between geography and memory inseparable but also dynamic and very slippery. To anchor on the individual is vital to our approach to geography and memory because it is within personhood that memory is productive (even if it is memories produced and sustained by the collective memories of history, nation, state, city, landscape and environment). Personhoods and the memorable places they inhabit are often explained/represented in terms of consumption, industry, individuality and capitalism by mainstream accounts. Yet, these are drivers of competition between my memory practices and yours. With new discourses of sustainability, creativity, sharing, openness and affect – emerging out of non-representational geography (NRG), sociology and cultural studies – we have the possibility of making new connections between what it is possible to do experientially and politically.

Therefore, the study of memory produced in this collection is traced through the affective/emotional turn that has occurred in parts of geography and the social sciences. From a specifically cultural geography perspective there has been a movement towards new conceptual and

empirical emphases upon the performative and embodied practices of everyday life through non-representational theory (NRT) (Thrift, 2008; Anderson and Harrison, 2010). As NRG is very much about practice and process at the bodily level, memory systems at the level of the organism must be vital. There is more on the non-representational turn in the next section, but suffice to say here, the essays in this book propose a challenge for NRG to engage more fully with memory's role in the affective, performative practices of everyday life, in ways that can address the complex ecologies of memory (Jones, 2011; Tolia-Kelly, 2010) and forgetting. In folding (individual) memory more fully into new performative approaches to identity, place and becoming, it is necessary for the chapters of this book to draw upon non-representational approaches. We can begin with the peformative production of (individual) identity, move through to the increasing contingency of place, and arrive at the more open-ended futurity of 'becoming' with all its possibilities, risks and fears.

Care, risk, fear, responsibility, contentment, self-control, anger, shame, desire and hate can be articulated in relation to memory as new forces for exploring geographic accounts away from social constructivist accounts. Such re-emphasis upon affective personhood addresses the context of local, national and global calls for individual and connected practices that are creative, sustainable, open, shared and express a right to be recognized as having a memory (thus an identity, a place and the right to become). UNESCO's convention on the destruction of cultural heritage through acts of war (for example, the Buddhas of Bamiyan in Afghanistan) to the destruction of lived-in places during urban 'regeneration' (for example, the Roma of Sulukule, Turkey) engenders an implicit 'right to memory' (Reading, 2011). This right can be articulated in different modes, through different dynamics and with different practices that resonate personally. These rights are being performed every day by persons and communities hitherto silenced by traditional representative strategies. Whether we are experiencing a global memory boom (Huyssen, 2000, p. 31); a proliferating digital culture of archiving and forgetting (Mayer-Schonberger, 2011); 'diffuse memory' (Hoskins, 2010); or a continued erasure of memories and histories at nation-state level, we need to anchor memory studies in identity, place and becoming.

Thus, in seeking to extend the engagement with memory studies within geography, we acknowledge that the latter sits in a phenomenological tradition that stands in some tension with the approaches to geography and memory presented in this book. Yet, there is much to

be considered within the interrelationships between individual memory (that which is practised within the neural networks of the individual), and what is variously called public, social, cultural or collective memory (that which is strung between people, objects, texts, media and across time and space). In this respect, our collection seeks to extend geographic engagements with memory so as to extend memory studies' focus on the themes of space and place so that we understand personhood as an intersection of these registers. This crossover has already begun in the work of Hoelscher and Alderman (2004), Foote and Azaryahu (2007), Rose-Redwood et al. (2008) and, more recently, in *Becoming Places* by Dovey (2010) in which place and memorialization in the form of national monuments are positioned as fundamental to identity formation.

From the pioneering work of Maurice Halbwachs (1992) and within most memory studies literature thus far, there has been a focus on public, social, shared, collective memories, as these are such powerful life-, space-, place-shaping forces.

> Whether one refers to 'collective memory', 'social memory', 'public memory', 'historical memory', 'popular memory' or 'cultural memory', most would agree [with Edward Said] that many people now look to this refashioned memory, especially in its collective forms, to give themselves a coherent identity, a national narrative, a place in the world.
>
> (Hoelscher and Alderman, 2004, pp. 348–349)

A recent overview of memory in geography (Johnson and Pratt, 2009) refers overwhelmingly to various forms of collective memories, particularly those revolving around national identities. As we have already stated, an overly sharp distinction between collective memories and individual memories is probably untenable, but we do feel the need to attend more fully to the specific, intimate, private (and at times banal) memories of individuals and families. It is possibly this focus on collective and cultural memories that has confined memory to the margins of NRG. Each of us bears freights of memory bound up with the domestic spaces and collectives we grew up in (for example, Dillon, 2006). Thus, there are ecologies of memory that exist between the public and the private, between larger histories and those of families and individuals, between memory functions, material, texts, images and senses (Tolia-Kelly, 2010). Yet, for interests in memory to 'fit' within NRGs, then more intimate, relational, performative bio-cultural approaches are needed.

This book offers a number of suggestions about, and examples of, how that 'fit' might be performed.

Memory and/for non-representational geography

Non-representational/emotional/affective approaches in geography (for example, Anderson and Harrison, 2010; Dewsbury et al., 2002; Harrison, 2007; Lorimer, 2005; McCormack, 2007; Pile, 2009; Thrift, 2008, 2004a, 2004b), grew out of a dissatisfaction with representational approaches because the latter drove too big a gap between the object of study and the process of study, and because they missed not only the bulk of everyday life in practice, but also its richness and its key registers, which are critical to politics, ethics, culture and economy. This book calls for memory to be drawn more fully into these approaches as a counter to non-representational and performative approaches that tend towards 'presentism' (that is, a reification of the present moment in practice in intellectual, political and ethical terms, and a view of the present moment as a pure event). As these kinds of approaches rightly stress, the present is full of possibilities for 'becoming' (including events of political and ethical promise), but these are not purely spontaneous uprisings, rather they spring from all the trajectories moving into the present and forming its specificity, in relation to the openness of the moment. Some of these trajectories will be sadness, damage, injustice and other burdens; others will be skill, happiness, joy, hope or love – our sum experience of spatial life, which always exists in the present through memory.

In his wonderful article 'Steps to an Ecology of Place', Thrift (1999), drawing upon Derrida (1991), talks of memories as a 'world of cinders', and as a 'register of experience that cannot be escaped' (Thrift 1999, p. 315). But 'cinders' is surely not quite the right term? Cinders are the cold, dead, inert, incombustible remains after a fire. We feel that 'embers' is a better metaphor, for embers retain a residue of heat, and life, and if they are disturbed – perhaps just collapsing or shifting, or being poked, or blown upon, or fanned by a breath of wind – they can burst back into renewed life. Also, are memories wished away by Thrift as 'that which cannot be escaped'? We cannot wish memories away or escape them anymore than we could the body. We are, quite literally, made of memories. They, in their various interconnecting forms, are the tissue of identity and the 'fuel' of becoming.

In Thrift's (2008) more fully developed account of NRT (which we stress we support fully), memory seems to remain underplayed in

relation to its close cousins: imagination, emotion and affect. This relative neglect of memory is evident elsewhere in NRG. Pile's (2009) comprehensive consideration of affective/emotional geographies and NRG includes lengthy ruminations on (un)consciousness, thought, language and so on, but memory barely features. However, it should be noted that Pile does address memory in other work (Pile, 2005). Similarly, in other key expressions of NRG (Anderson and Harrison, 2010; Harrison, 2007, 2008; McCormack, 2007), 'affect', 'emotion', 'body' and 'self' are key themes, whereas memory is at best a ghostly presence. (For exceptions regarding NRG and memory see Anderson, 2004; Lorimer, 2006).

Memory makes us what we are, and along with emotion/affect it forms the interrelating foundational processes of our ongoing lives (Damasio, 1999). We are conglomerations of past everyday experiences, including their spatial textures and affective registers. Memory should not be seen (simply) as a burden of the past, rather it is fundamental to 'becoming', and a key wellspring of agency, practice/habit, creativity and imagination, and thus of the potential of the performative moment that so interests NRG. Importantly, in relation to thinking about 'becoming' and its potentialities and openness, memory is inextricably linked to imagination and creativity (Greenfield, 1997).

Much is made of the present moment of practice in NRG. After all, the present is where life is actually lived – the ever-moving front of 'becoming' with all its material, embodied, relational, affective, performative richness and possibility.

> This is a world between potential and determination, between what has happened and what could, a world captured in the tension of its present tense of becoming, a not yet enacted moment where we meet and greet ourselves in the affect that inspires action.
>
> (Dewsbury et al., 2002, p. 439)

NRG focuses upon practice, performativity and affect as they unfold, not only because that is 'where life happens', but also because present moments of practice are very complex timespace 'events' where meanings and values are constructed, and, importantly, are rich with ontological, political and ethical potentials. (These are the politics and ethics of NRT.)

Our concern, is to counter NRG's creep towards a form of 'presentism', and the *relative* neglect of the trajectories of the past-into-present which are always in place through various interconnecting ecological,

corporeal, material, cultural, economic and memorial flows. Dodgshon (2008, p. 303) discusses how NRG has focused upon 'the geographies of the moment' and the 'present of the now' (citing May and Thrift, 2001, p. 37), and how Deleuzean-inspired scholars such as Dewsbury (2000) have sought to see the present moment as the zone of creative proliferations of possibilities. The 'presentism' that this risks is to load all the source of the richness and potentiality of the present moment in practice onto the very fact that it is the frontier, or the living space, of 'becoming', and to devalue the fact that 'each present carr[ies] syntheses of all the past within itself at various levels of contraction' (Dodgshon, 2008, p. 304). This then is not about the values of the present moment in practices (or NRG geographies), but rather about the source of that potential and the extent to which the present moment is seen as a 'pure' event – pure in terms of being free of the past and thus free to be different. In a sense that is an understandable, utopian, dream. But utopia is, in one reading, 'no place' and we are always in place – and in flows of time, including memory.

It is this theoretical framework of becoming that holds the chapters in section three of this book, which we shall address in more depth in the section Introduction. For now, though, it is necessary to understand that it is on this point that NRGs can stray towards a kind of 'presentism', where the event is taken as pure – in isolation from temporal trajectories – that we are focusing. It is the notion of life in (its extreme) present tense that this collection seeks to challenge by focusing upon memory in terms of becoming (and/for NRG). Once opened up to scrutiny, the present moment in practice becomes a complex, affective terrain. Thrift (2008) has highlighted the moment of 'raw life' (the small lag between initiation of action and consciousness of action) and all the political, ethical, disciplinary and even commercial import it has. But the richness and potential of the present moment in practice comes from what flows into it from previous moments, materially, through the body and, more importantly for this book, through memory of one kind or another. Opening up the implications of memory in individuals, families and communities presents profound challenges in conceptual and methodological terms. Thus, each chapter in this collection is methodologically approaching the study of geography in the 'after' (as a memory of a performance) as much as in the present moment (see Dirksheimer and Helbrecht, 2008, on such a methodology).

At this point it almost goes without saying that this book takes as its starting point that memory is a key means by which the present is practised. Our dealings with(in) the present rest upon our always-at-work

memories and stocks of experience to script our responses and actions. Hunter (1964, pp. 14–15) proposed that

> memory [...] contains one common thread of meaning [...] what the person does and experiences here and now is influenced by what he [sic] did and experienced at some time in his past. When we talk of [...] memory we are [...] drawing attention to relationships between past and present activities. These relationships arise out of a fundamental characteristic of human beings.

Not surprisingly, some work in geography has come to deal with memory at this more personal level, addressing how our spatial relations are not merely relations between current body and current space, but a hyper-complex entanglement of past/present spatial relations. In his exploration of an 'ecological–economic' experiment in reindeer herding in Scotland, Hayden Lorimer (2006) explores a number of 'registers of memory': photographic, textual, embodied, oral, human and non-human. Lorimer (2007, p. 6) concludes, in a brief review of memory as cultural rhythm and cycle, that 'evidently, memory functions by different modes, whether it is carefully orchestrated or floods over us, whether it is felt to inhabit commonplace actions, treasured sites or discarded goods'. Memory is also always bound up with place, space, the body, practice and materiality. It is of geography and geography of it.

Time and space: Memories of geographies and geographies of memories

Anderson (2004) talks of the moment when someone chooses to play a record from his or her music collection, stating 'to play music incorporates the momentary performance of an intentional act of discretion' (p. 6). This is clearly true in part, but the degree of intentional discretion is open to question, or rather, the relationship between conscious choice and all the unconscious processes that are framing and forming that choice are more murky and complex than we know and probably can know. Why do we choose what we choose? The choice rises up from the unconscious memory interacting with the affective/emotive resonances of the moment. The workings of such a complex process are – at best – very obscure.

So we do not just 'live in the moment', but in a progressing compendium of interacting lived moments. Memory fragments space and time, states Mels (2004), and builds us from those reworked fragments.

This view does not deny the progression of physical time through which, say, bodies grow and age (think of dendrology). But it takes a Bergsonian–Deleuzian notion of duration in/through time in different ways by differing materials and beings. Pasts persist as virtual fields, which may or may not fold into the present. Memory is a key form of such timespace travel, along with materiality and (sensed) embodiment. We are scattered in timespace through memory and other vectors. As Ingold (2000) says of 'taskscapes': they 'have a temporal aspect. In the present [...] they are experienced as a muscular engagement but [they] also involve retentions of the past, as experience and memory; and projections into the future, as hopes, aspirations' (cited in Pearson, 2006, p. 219). Bergson (2004, p. 170) points out that 'perception is never a mere contact of the mind with the object present; it is impregnated with memory-images which complete it as they interpret it'. With this in mind, the chapters collected here engage in different ways with the materiality of memories of geography and/or geographies of memory to move more specifically towards a notion of affective becoming.

Damasio (1999) has stated that affective becoming does make us transient entities of the present moment, and yet, at the same time, we have an 'autobiographical self', 'a nontransient collection of unique facts and ways of being of systemised memory' (1999, p. 17). We are thus becoming creatures of spatial remains. Our spatial relationships of the moment are shaped by previous (spatial) experiences. Memory (of one kind or another) is then a fundamental (geographic) aspect of becoming, intimately entwined with space, affect, emotion, imagination and identity. Understanding the nature of time and the relationship between past, present and future is a daunting challenge that human knowledge has made little impact on thus far. In dealing with how we live in time and space, memory is clearly central and its consequences uncertain. 'Past and present might be concurrent or not, might stop and start with the erratic spasms of the mind, of memory,' states Schwartz (2007, p. 14).

As we have stated above, which is central to this book, geographical work is emerging which deals with memory at the more personal and individual level. This work, as also represented by the chapters, is trying to address how our spatial relations, our spatial lives, are not merely present relations between our bodies and their current spaces, but a fantastically complex entanglement of self, past spatial relations and memory in current life. Other work also seeks to explore the complex and fractured relationships between past, present, material traces and place (DeSilvey, 2006; Lorimer, 2006; Lorimer and McDonald, 2002; Tolia-Kelly, 2004). This shares an interest with work that explores how

memory is mediated through performance and art intervention (Till, 2005; Bosco, 2004; Pinder, 2001) in order to understand how the self is a contingent practice. Here, outcomes result from collaboration between individuals, groups and objects (all of which can occupy the past as much as the present) and an exchange between individual and collective memories (Papoulias, 2003). Many of the chapters we present also understand the geographies of memories and memories of geographies as just such a contingent practice that is collaborative. We seek a particular focus on the entanglements of materiality, memory, time, place and practice (DeSilvey, 2007), which stresses the performative and affective but which sees such processes as 'time deep'. This depth can be articulated in many registers (physical, ephemeral, virtual, neural). Edensor (2005) has considered the affective materiality of being among industrial ruins; Pile (2005) and Till (2005) have considered how ghosts (and memories as ghosts) can haunt cities as spectral traces.

All this work explores ecologies of memory as an emergent contingent element of similarly practised selves. These are then developing NRG-type reflections on practices of self but stressing the embeddedness in time through materiality, body and memory, rather than embeddedness in present, flat, space. This chimes with NRG's focus on the practice and the performativity of the affected and affecting body. Collective memories are vital, but in the end they are lived out in individualized contexts of everyday lives of bodies moving through the time and space of affective life.

Cues for presenting the filigrees of memory/self/place/practice offered in the chapters of this book can also be found in literature, theatre and performance studies. For example, Heddon (2008) explores a number of autobiographical, performance-based 'autotopographies', which delve into past-self-in-place. Mike Pearson's (2006) work explores memory and past life in landscape through a series of performances of geographical narratives of a personal history in home, family, locality and region. Dillon (2006) charts the entangled memories, emotions and domestic spatialities of a remembered family home after the death of a parent. Prosser (2005) offers an alternative account of how photographs interplay with memory, time and loss. Focusing on film and various forms of literature, King (2000) explores autobiographical texts to explore how self is constructed through narrative and memory and the relationship between the continuous passing of self into oblivion as it fades into the past with the persisting self through time. Benjamin (2006) explores the geography of memory of an urban childhood, particularly the domestic spaces in and of the home. His account stresses objects, spaces and

the flow memory, more than the conventional structure of chronological life events. Baxandall's (2010) episodic approach is similar, and both are closer to Heddon's idea of autotopography rather than autobiography. What is distinctive about these works is that they are attempts to grapple with the uniqueness of individual (geographic) memory and the complexities of revisiting other spaces and times which remain with(in) us as we live on.

Mantel (2003) questions geological metaphors of memory (that is, memory as layers or strata). She offers a more geographic metaphor, 'memory is like St. Augustine's spreading limitless room. Or a great plain, a steppe, where all the memories are laid side by side, at the same depth, like seeds under the soil' (2003, p. 25). Although we appreciate this geographical imagination of memory, we do not feel such a static, spatial metaphor is adequate. As the chapters in the book show, and other work cited above, we feel memory has a living, shifting timespace dynamic, perhaps formed of living, convulsing, labyrinthine entanglements of many virtual (living) landscapes in unconscious memory stores, which are often dark (as in not illuminated by conscious recollection) and thus unmapped and unmappable. They are subject to the fluidity of emotional/affective convection currents (and more violent disturbances) as we live on, and they might re-enliven in relation to, and combine with, current practice. The spatio-temporal weirdness of memory can be glimpsed in moments of reverie (Bachelard, 1960), in flashes of involuntary memory which twist space–time (Game, 1991, 2001), and in certain episodes of madness where people become overwhelmed by, and lost within, contortions, distortions and/or loops of memory (Philo, 2006).

Many of the chapters collected here demonstrate that movement through chronological time and Euclidean space is scrambled, with our earliest memories becoming recent memories once they are called into consciousness, and refreshed and rescripted in relation to the present. Memories are living landscapes seen obliquely and from an always-moving viewpoint of ongoing life. Through this book, we suggest memories are always in parallax, sliding over each other: distant memories can seem to stand still, like a far-off hill seen from a moving train, making a backdrop to whatever the closer foreground has to show as it rushes by. Yet, of course, it is the perceiver who is moving through the moment as the near past and more distant past make us into an animated 'selfscape'.

We feel that geography can help begin to map parts of these animated selfscapes and open up the tracings of the spatial remains that make us. It can help trace out the legacies of the past we carry through memory as

we practise the present and enter the future. Such tracings are not to tie us to any fixed past. They are, or can be, a creative (therapeutic) process of affective mapping:

> [t]he affective map is not a stable representation of a more or less unchanging landscape; it is a map less in the sense that it establishes a territory than it is about providing a feeling or orientation and facilitating mobility. [It suggests] something essentially revisable; when it works, it is a technology for the representation to oneself of one's own historically conditioned and changing affective life.
>
> (Flatley, 2008, p. 7)

It bears saying again that memory is a vast and complex subject. When paired with geography, that complexity is exponentially compounded. We do not claim to offer a comprehensive account or prescriptive agenda here. Rather, we seek to open up multiple trajectories of thinking and also to 'collide' some of those trajectories to see what occurs.

We will end this Introduction with these final observations. It must not be underestimated how 'deep' memory is and over what kinds of time cycles, and subsequently what scales of geography, it can range over in the context of the self. In his memoir, J G Ballard considers how he came to write his most celebrated novel *Empire of the Sun*, which was based on his childhood experience of being in a prisoner of war camp.

> It was [...] nearly forty years since I entered Lunghua Camp, and soon my memories would fade. Few novelists have waited so long to write about the most formative experience of their lives, and I remain puzzled why I allowed so many decades to slip by. Perhaps, as I have often reflected, it took me twenty years to forget Shanghai and twenty years to remember.
>
> (2008, p. 248)

Ginzburg (2010) suggest that many writers use autobiography to 'tame the past' (p. 10). Perhaps we all seek to create a 'tame' past through remembering (and forgetting), perhaps this is how a successful (tame) identity is maintained. Ginzburg praises Baxandall's (2010) treatment of memory for not seeking to do this. Baxandell deploys an 'episodic' method of working with memory, which admits it as having a partial, dynamic, and spatially and temporally non-coherent nature. He puzzles about the links and distances between his past self and now self. Importantly, for us, he seeks to connect memory and affect. The 'vignettes'

of the past which form his memory 'seem charged with affect of some kind' (p. 39). He concludes:

> I do not share the view that when we recall our selves we see them as from outside. My experience is that memories are not often directly of oneself but of what the self perceived or felt: footprints of the self. The identity is distributed through memory, nor simply represented. (2010, p. 21)

It is worth noting that 'method acting' (the Stanislavski system) employs the practice of 'affective' or 'emotional memory' – a deliberated attempt by those rehearsing and then performing roles to seek out and relive past affective/emotive states in their own lives that might be relevant to the performance in question. They are deliberately, and with practise and training, accessing past affective states lodged somehow in the memory (and through the body). The thing for us to remember is that those past affective states, lived in particular places and times, are still smouldering away within us (as embers), and influencing, be it knowable or otherwise, our ongoing 'becoming'. Such becomings in memory are at once close but obscure, sort of '[a]round various corners in a periscopic sort of way' (Sebald, in Wachtel, 2007, p. 37).

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Part I

Identity

Owain Jones and Joanne Garde-Hansen

> It is within the 'ordinary' processes of memory that the self is continuously created and destroyed.
>
> (King, 2000, p. 12)

As has been set out in the main Introduction, this book seeks to show how memory is inherently geographic in two senses: that of being of past spaces and places as well as past times, and in terms of the prompting and practice of memories by and in current space. In each of these senses, memory is the 'cornerstone of the mind' – 'it is more than a mere function of the brain, as it encapsulates individuals' inner resources for interpreting [...] the world around them' (Greenfield, 1997, p. 146). Thus, it is also the cornerstone of identity (which is taken to be an ongoing, performed, relational construction).

This brings individual memory much more to the fore than has been hitherto considered in a range of disciplines, as we are quite literally formed of past practices in past (passed) places and spaces. How memory folds into the practice of ongoing identity is in complex interplay between the space and practice of the present and the spaces and practices of the past. Family life, work life, and all their spatiality and materiality (both past and present) are complex and anticipatory in the practice of identity. There are inevitably growths, transitions, losses, bereavements and joyous highlights when through memory's input, ongoing everyday life and identity become particularly powerful, traumatic and poignant.

Contextually, we are living in a 'memory boom' (academic, cultural, commercial), where we are surrounded by and interpreted by memory technologies and practices: archiving, social networking, media nostalgia, copying-culture, ubiquitous witnessing, memory in film and

literature, genealogy 'crazes' and the memory banks of surveillance, to name but a few. Many are living in a mediatized culture where, 'at an individual level, the personal and the public are [...] interwoven via digital technologies that mediate so much of the everyday, yet which also extend the continuous present out to edges of the personal and collective horizons of time/space' (Garde-Hansen et al., 2009, p. 24).

It is within this technologized, code-based and virtual context that many now practise object-focused and artefactual lives. While Thrift (2004) has posited a 'technological unconscious', and Hayles identified, 'everyday habits initiated, regulated, and disciplined by multiple strata of technological devices and inventions' (2006, p. 138), the chapters in this section consider memory in terms of material objects, texts (narratives), images, landscapes and practices (of ongoing self). If, as Hayles attests, 'the unconscious has a historical dimension, changing in relation to the artefactual environment with which it interacts' (Hayles, 2006, p. 138), then this environment is considered here to be both very private and very present.

John Horton and Peter Kraftl's chapter, 'Clearing out a Cupboard: Memory, Materiality and Transitions', concerns the clearing out of cupboards during house moves that follow bereavement. Memories are entangled with/in life's ordinary, immediate and residual materiality, which is tangible, individual and localized and not (simply) networked, collective and/or virtual. The cupboards function as quantifiable records of geographies of life courses that are both ordinary and unique. Emptying a wardrobe, packing a suitcase, filling a charity shop bag, leaving home, moving house or living-on after bereavement – this chapter focuses upon the small acts of clearance which are, basically, central to so many life-course transitions.

At its most basic, memory, too, is a process of encoding and storing records of experience which can be retrieved or which re-emerge in subsequent practice. This sequence occurs both voluntarily and involuntarily, but importantly, is overwhelmingly the latter, and it is also highly intricate. By approaching their research through the methodology of autoethnography, Horton and Kraftl show up this intricate re-emergence of memories when unpacking and packing cupboards as 'life moves on'. Towards this end, they have three chief, related foci. Firstly, they encounter the haunting memories and emotions occasioned by such tasks. Secondly, the capacity of a cupboard-full of a life's materiality to stir up an excessive, messy, fallible complex of memories, stories, associations and reflections motivates their theoretical and methodological enquiry. Thirdly, the small practices of sorting, keeping,

hiding, remembering and forgetting occasioned and revealed by this kind of event show up how human lives try to understand themselves. In so doing, Horton and Kraftl contend that the banal act of clearing out a cupboard might prompt much broader reflection upon memories and lives through recent performative and non-representational developments within cultural geography.

While Chapter 1 deals with the routine construction of identity at home, Chapter 2 takes us out of the home and on a cross-cultural journey which encounters two different but connected places: Montana, USA, and Cornwall, UK. As do the authors of Chapter 1, DeSilvey, in 'Copper Places: Affective Circuitries', turns to Kathleen Stewart's *Ordinary Affects* (2007) for inspiration (thus emphasizing the potential of bringing affect and memory together more fully). Through the copper mining industry that connects these two places in terms of past and present, and the everyday world of travel and work, DeSilvey explores memory as salvage in the context of industrial heritage. It is DeSilvey's vignettes, or episodes, of personal and affective encounters with the past in the present and the present in the past through mining, landscape and the mineshafts left behind, which offer new understandings of how our identities form with(in) place, landscape, family, social networks, and heritage and technology networks on a daily basis with memory fully at work (in one way or another). These haunt her experience and replace the documentary certainties of the narratives of heritage industries with a more erratic and creative notion of how heritage is produced as lived geographical memory work. In DeSilvey's work, personal experience of past places becomes a space of intuitive and private curation, which preserves some of the affective and intimate textures of places and materials.

Following DeSilvey's autobiographical self exploring the lived geographies of specific places, Avril Maddrell's chapter, 'Mapping Grief and Memory in John Banville's *The Sea*', considers a literary representation of bereavement and how this opens up the idea of 'mapping grief'. Grief is a certain, and very powerful, form of memory. It is, or can be an affective state of 'becoming'. As Maddrell discusses and shows in her reading of Banville's prize-winning novel *The Sea,* there are distinctive geographies always at work within memory as grief. Bereavement is at once an everyday, universal experience, and a moment of profound individual disjuncture. It forms a challenge to identity (perhaps that is a key part of its power). It impacts on our understanding of and relation to particular spaces, creating individual and collective geographies of loss and remembrance. Maddrell explores the ways in which grief is

'mapped' out through space and time via memory, exploring as she does so, the ways in which remembering and forgetting, emotion and affect, place and body interrelate in the experience of individual bereavement. Damasio's (1999) 'autobiographical self' and lived geographies of the bereaved are examined through the fictional case studies in the novel that offer therapy through autobiogeography: a writing of the self into the landscape.

Judith Tucker's chapter, 'Brooding on Bornholm: Postmemory, Painting and Place', offers the final instalment of personal memory, personal experience and private representation of the connections between geography and memory through the author's art practice (Tucker is an artist-researcher). Tucker explores the meeting of personal memory, social history and a beach landscape from her family's past and her present. It is written from a practitioner's perspective, and it proposes a progressive relationship with a particular place through the processes of drawing and painting. Here, Tucker considers the implications of her series of drawings exploring the beaches of the Baltic Island of Bornholm. In this instance, she develops her ideas in relation to Karen Till's (2010) notion of a haunted archaeology or 'spectral traces'. For Tucker, Bornholm has a very specific mix of tourist idyll and a history of strategic military importance, and traces of genocide. During the 1920s and 1930s it was seen as an alternative to the Mediterranean by German tourists; later it was occupied by the German military relatively early in the Second World War, and served as a lookout post and listening station. Importantly, for Tucker's project, several concrete coastal installations were built during this period and these remnants of the Third Reich have become neglected and sit in close proximity to holiday homes. It is Tucker's consideration of the remnants as both an uncanny double of the homes away from home and, in Edward Casey's (2000) terms, as 'unresolved remainders of memory' that draws together geography and memory through personal/family experience. Through these explorations, both the apparently benign beaches themselves and the drawn representations of these beaches emerge as tense, contested sites where linear memorial narratives are disturbed. Through art practice and personal and critical reflection, Tucker 'works' at her identity through an engagement with all the filigrees of memory and history in this place.

The four chapters in this section chart both routine and more dramatic instances when identities are being constructed at home, at work, and through a range of practices in a range of spaces. The emphasis in each chapter is upon identity formation and the sustainability of

those identities through memory and place practices during moments of transition (moving house, bereavement) and movement (travel and tourism). In each case, the chapters deal with different types of 'unresolved remainders of memory' that, as Karen Till has recently claimed, 'fall outside of the supposed lucidity of consciousness and exist beyond the formal realms of commemoration and narrative' (Till, 2010 [online]).

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1

Clearing out a Cupboard: Memory, Materiality and Transitions

John Horton and Peter Kraftl

Introduction

This chapter is about moments in life when – perhaps in the course of leaving home, or moving house, or living-on after bereavement – we find ourselves clearing out a cupboard, sorting through its contents, sifting through shelves full of a life's materiality. We reflect upon some personal memories and emotions occasioned by such a task: sometimes haunting, sometimes odd, sometimes joyful and sometimes banal. In particular, we will suggest that small practices with/around material things and memories are central to doing, resolving and dealing with major life-course events and transitions. The chapter has a fourfold structure. Firstly, we outline some key conceptual frames of reference, which direct attention towards complex intersections between memories/affects, material objects and geographies of life-course transitions. Secondly, we locate the chapter within social scientific experiments with longer-standing methodological traditions of autoethnography and memory work. Thirdly, at the heart of the chapter, we present three autoethnographic vignettes: cataloguing the contents of three particular cupboards and narrating something of the circumstances in which they were cleared out. We use these very particular, situated, individual reflections as points of departure to consider broader ways in which material things are folded into the timing of lives, biographies and memories. Finally, we open out some concluding questions about the ways in which memories may be unearthed, recast or (re)made in/through encounters with material objects, in/through particular life-course events.

Frames of reference: Childhood, affect, materiality

Three lines of research and theory have been touchstones in our research. Although these lines of work have emerged and developed somewhat disparately, we contend that there are numerous points of possible connection between them, and that these connections demand closer consideration of the material and affective geographies of memories, childhood and life courses. Our first frame of reference is some recent work on memory carried out by geographers concerned with childhood, youth and 'growing up'. For geographers like Philo (2003), considering memories and emotions is a way of exploring 'lines of connection residing in the continuity of psychic materials from childhood through into adult life' (p. 15). These 'lines of connection' and the complex ways in which they affect, shape or haunt us are crucial in the development of identities across the life course (Jones, 2003/2008). We suggest that this body of work has been exemplary in seriously considering the importance of memories – and related emotive materialities, landscapes and happenings – in and for geographies of growing up (that is to say, *all* human geographies). While highlighting this importance, however, Philo and Jones have always already demonstrated a kind of critical humility and vulnerability in their considerations of memory. They explicitly acknowledge and implicitly demonstrate the complexities of interconnections between memories and everyday social/cultural geographies: what Jones calls the 'deep', 'stunningly complex', always 'conjoined territories' of memories, emotions, selves, spaces (2005, p. 205), and the ultimately 'unreachable' 'otherness' of past and childhood experiences (p. 29, also 2001/2008). In so doing, this line of work has opened a space in which understandings of childhood, youth and life-course transitions have been enlivened – and, we would argue, extended – via experimentation with creative and autoethnographic styles of research/writing and encounters with non-representational theories (for example, relating to bodies, affects and materialities). Our second frame of reference is recent social scientific work on emotions and affects (Bondi et al., 2005; Williams, 2001), and particularly the always-bodily nature of emotions/affects: that is, how consideration of emotions/affects necessitates a blurring of long-standing conceptual divides 'between the mind and body [...] between actions and passions [...] between the mind's power to think and the body's power to act, and between the power to act and the power to be affected' (Hardt, 2007, p. xi). As others have noted, this blurring likewise demands acknowledgement of the always-corporeal/affective nature of memories and, for

example, the challenges posed by 'bodily memories' and 'involuntary memories': memories sparked by everyday sensory/spatial experiences and events, and/or memories which catch us unawares, which are pre-cognitive or pre-prepositional (Jones, 2003, p. 27). We have found recent explorations of quotidian affective experiences particularly important in this context. For example, work such as Kathleen Stewart's *Ordinary Affects* (2007) might be read as implicitly directing attention to the complex presence and significance of memories within everyday lives. Stewart defines 'ordinary affects' as:

> the varied, surging capacities to affect and be affected that give everyday life the quality of a continual motion of relations, scenes, contingencies and emergences. They're things that happen. They happen in impulses, sensations, expectations, daydreams, encounters and habits of relating, in strategies and their failures, in forms of persuasion, contagion, and compulsion, in modes of attention, attachment and agency, and in publics that catch people up in something that feels like *some*thing.
>
> (2007, p. 2)

Memories are crucially and complexly involved in this 'something that feels like *some*thing', in/through particular spaces, moments and contexts. Two further comments by Stewart (2007) are instructive here. Firstly, Stewart (2007, p. 3) describes the process through which ordinary affects 'pick up density and texture as they move through bodies, dreams, dramas and social worldings of all kinds'. Memories are surely but complexly important in this process. As part and parcel of this, memories similarly 'pick up density and texture' through bodies, situations and spaces: and as we suggest below, doing this demands consideration of the presence and importance of material objects. Secondly, Stewart reflects upon the 'significance' of ordinary affects and counsels against a social scientific urge towards representation and interpretations of meaning. For,

> their significance lies in the intensities they build and what thoughts and feelings they make possible. The question they beg is not what they might mean in an order of representation, or whether they are good or bad in an overarching scheme of things, but where they might go and what potential modes of knowing, relating, and attending to things are already somehow present in them in a state of potentiality and resonance.
>
> (Stewart, 2007, p. 3)

Indeed, Stewart (2007) calls for social scientists to resist or 'slow the quick jump to representational thinking and evaluative critique long enough to find ways of approaching the complex and uncertain objects that fascinate us because they literally hit us or exert a pull on us' (p. 4). We suggest this critique of social scientific codifications of affective experiences can again be extended to the consideration of memories, and countless contexts in which memories/affects are significant. That is, we would advocate such a 'slow', non-representational sensibility for any work on the geographies of memories for understanding identity. Moreover, we suggest that such methodological slowness can – via a willingness to dwell upon inchoate complexity and detail – often precipitate critical reflection on the long-standing ways of knowing and writing the topic at hand. Running through this chapter, for example, is a sense that dwelling upon details, memories and affects associated with particular life-course events leads us to reflect critically upon broad social scientific theorizations of life-course transition.

Social scientific research and theory considering the importance of material objects (Latour, 2000) constitutes our third frame of reference for this chapter. Material objects are important in the constitution of memories, and memories and emotions are frequently attached to specific objects. For example, countless anthropological studies have explored social practices, customs and rituals through which emotions and memories are (re)produced: crucially, these studies plainly reveal that this sociality may consist not only for humans, but also for non-human others, material artefacts, spaces and/or landscapes (Svašek, 2005 and 2007). Rituals and practices associated with particular life-course events – especially around death, bereavement and remembrance – have been a major concern here. The recent work of human geographers working in this latter context (Maddrell, 2009; Maddrell and Sidaway, 2010) is important here. Maddrell and Sidaway (2010) call attention to the ways in which the experience and expression of death and bereavement is invariably complexly distributed across spaces, '-scapes' and material objects. For example, they note how grief may occur across,

> the cemetery, crash site or war memorial [...], the body as space, [...] the domestic space of the home [...or] other quotidian spaces [which may] interpellate us, often unawares, speaking to us of loss and consolation. These can be the everyday micro-spaces of the chair, vehicle or bathroom shelf. Or the more public spaces of the park,

> social club or school [...] the seat in the bar, the sports club, place of worship or workplace.
>
> (Maddrell and Sidaway, 2010, pp. 2–3)

Central to this body of work, then, is a sense of the efficacy and use of spaces and material objects in constituting or dealing with memories. In this chapter, we reflect upon this efficacy in relation to a range of particular life-course events.

Domestic excavation as autoethnographic practice

In the remainder of this chapter, we present three autobiographical vignettes, which – though written at different times, by two different authors – detail a similar kind of material practice: clearing out a cupboard. These vignettes have a curious, ambivalent status. They relate to incidents which, like many major life-course events, are both extraordinary and everyday-universal (Maddrell and Sidaway, 2010, p. 1). The events evoked in the following vignettes were, on the one hand, deeply individual (being personal stories of events which were utterly situated and, moreover, extraordinary within the contexts of the authors' lives). On the other hand, they were also commonplace, inasmuch as many events of cupboard-clearance are surely undertaken every day by many people, in/of many life-course events, at least in the contemporary West.

Our practice has been informed by a rich seam of geographical and social scientific research, which has experimented with the interrelated methodological traditions of autoethnography (Butz and Besio, 2004; Daniels, 2004; O'Byrne, 2007) and memory work (Haug, 1992; Small, 2010). We have been especially influenced by attempts to deploy these techniques to focus upon childhood memories, and in so doing reflect upon 'childhood' more broadly (Cook, 1997; Jones, 2003, 2005; Kuhn, 1995). Such methods have been critiqued: for producing inchoate, context-specific, self-indulgent 'navel-gazing' (Humphreys, 2005); or perhaps for valorizing particular, privileged memories and childhoods (Philo and Swanson, 2009). However, for us these pitfalls are outweighed by five key benefits.

Firstly, autoethnography and memory work afford glimpses of the complex, detailed ways in which memories, affects and materials intersect with/in life courses and particular contexts. In so doing, such work reveals the importance of easily effaced details and complexities in human geographies more broadly. Secondly, in our reading, such

methods have been used particularly successfully in the context of work on remembering childhoods, and the constitutive, social, connective function of memories therein (Brannen, 2004). Thirdly, such work pushes the boundaries of traditional academic representation: slowing that aforementioned 'jump to representation'. For example, we note that many examples of autoethnography involve lengthy 'diary-style' reflections on past happenings or experiences, and – ostensibly – little direct 'analysis' (for instance, Cunningham, 2004; Melina, 2008). Such an approach may appear frustrating but, fourth, we suggest that autoethnography and memory work are important precisely because of the new demands they place upon and the fresh connections they may forge with readers. Autoethnographic writing is frequently characterized by its capacity to *affect* the reader, to lay out sufficient detail of the author's everyday life to spark connections with readers and subsequently afford hitherto unacknowledged aspects of broader cultural, social or political processes. Fifth, and perhaps most importantly, research that has used autoethnography and memory work has been significant in fostering a spirit of experimentation, contemplation and methodological slowness. We would not advocate only ever using autoethnography and memory work as research methods in any given context, but in our experience they have been important in the senses listed above. If nothing else, they have proven useful as a means of pausing to notice everyday details, complexities, absurdities, poignancies, subtleties and injustices in the contexts of broader projects.

In this chapter, our particular contribution to the autoethnographic genre is to focus upon the performative agency – the power – of material things within autobiographical narratives. So we will recount three instances of cupboard-clearance, starting with the list-like details. Each of us writes in the first person in the following three vignettes (the first two are written by John Horton, while the third is written by Peter Kraftl), before we finish the chapter with a collaborative conclusion. In the process, we pause to consider how memories may be unearthed, recast and (re)made in and through practices with/around material objects during particular life-course events.

Three cupboards

Cupboard 1: Leaving home, memories 'unearthed', September 2004 (Author 1)

Consider cupboard 1 and its densely stacked contents (Figure 1.1): an inflatable banana, balanced on a mug containing felt tip pens, perched

Figure 1.1 Cupboard 1, just prior to the events described in this chapter
Source: Author.

on a bucket full of toy cars, piled against a thousand photocopied academic papers and the 1986 *Guinness Book of Records*, and several hundred other individual items (Figure 1.2). The first weekend of September 2004. A notionally momentous day: preparing – finally – to 'move out', to start a 'real job'. In practice, this entails piles of stuff, hundreds of bits and pieces. Sorting through things with my mother. Sorting into piles of stuff to chuck away, stuff to recycle, stuff to go a charity shop, stuff that I will take with me, stuff that will go back into the cupboard. We sit around, drinking cups of tea, falling into laughter at the stuff we unearth and the stories each thing prompts us to retell.

Writing about memory, in the context of children's geographies, Jones (2005) memorably points towards the 'strange geographies which occupy us all, which hover between the then and the now, [...] these

One inflatable banana, one mug containing felt tip pens, one bucketful of toy cars, two juggling balls, one biscuit tin containing 200+ badges, 1000+ photocopied academic papers, one pencil case containing novelty erasers, 100+ football match programmes, one bucket and spade, 20 board games, three calculators, two money boxes, The *Guinness Book of Records* (1986), *Picture Stories from the Bible* (1943), *Dictionary of English Synonyms and Antonyms* (1963), one bag containing curious pebbles and fossils, one pile of *BBC Wildlife* magazines, one box containing *Star Wars* figures, one empty Russian jam jar containing paper clips, *Blue Peter* annuals 17–24 (1980–91), one kettle, one iron, one football, one handmade wooden sign for the milkman, one bottle decorated with plaster/shells, Brown Ted, Yellow Ted, Rabbit, Tiny Ted and Mickey Monkey, one box containing school exercise books and university notes, one lab coat, one Cub Scout uniform and neckerchief, etc.

Figure 1.2 List of contents of cupboard 1

hybrid ecologies of the self and their emotional register' (p. 210). These complex, strange ecologies become vivid and visible in the act of sorting through a cupboard full of a life-so-far's stuff. In particular, this kind of task directs attention to the ways in which material objects – however banal or peculiar – can be central and agentic within our 'strange geographies' of memory. Specifically, too, this kind of cupboard-clearance illustrates how practices involving sentimental or playful contemplation of particular material objects are often central to the doing of many socio-cultural processes. Such play with objects and memories is frequently constitutive of life-course transitions and familial bonds (Rose, 2010). Elsewhere, analogous practices of small-scale object-oriented memorialization are noted to be central to other socio-cultural geographies: for example, to diasporic identities (Tolia-Kelly, 2004), tourism (Ramsay, 2008) or post-socialist transitions (Burrell, 2008). In each of these contexts, social scientific research has called attention to the capacity of objects to evoke memories and prompt narratives.

Certainly, this evocative, narrative capacity animated my mother and I as we emptied cupboard 1, reminiscing about each object in turn. Certainly, too, I feel this capacity now as I reflect on Figure 1.2. I *want* to recall and tell the story of each object in its turn. I could easily fill this chapter with potted biographies (Appadurai, 1986) of this kind: the chain of events which led to a Russian jam jar being filled with paperclips; the reason my 1986 *Guinness Book of Records* was special; the journeys and experiences souvenired by my childhood badge collection, and so on. However, to do only this would valorize a particular conceptualization of memory as a linear, neat 'unearthing' or 'accessing'

or 'retrieval' of the past. Instead, I suggest that Annette Kuhn (1995) provides a more sensitive account of the memory practices ongoing around the cupboards featured in this chapter when she describes the capacity of minute domestic material objects to spark 'radiating web[s] of associations, reflections and interpretations' through messy, ongoing encounters (p. 4). Certainly, this seems an apt way of accounting for the complex, muddled, juxtaposed, interrelated ways in which all that stuff was piled in that cupboard, there and then: a bible from 1943, next to an inflatable banana, next to piles and piles of cultural geography papers from the 1990s, next to everything else; an assemblage of objects almost spectacular in their contingency and perhaps in the privileged, culturally specific life-course they betray.

Returning to the event of cupboard-clearance – only child 'leaves home' – I confess that as we sat there then, there was a sort of longing to wallow in nostalgia (facilitated, of course, by the luxury of leisure time), to go back, to forestall the passage of time, to maybe defer the imminent change in my life. The practice of sorting through material things, playing with memories, remembering and reminiscing (whatever they mean in cognitive/practical terms) can thus play a significant, almost ritual, role in the (re)constitution of relationships and formations such as 'family'/'home', perhaps especially in dealing with changes therein. This constitutive role has been most extensively theorized in relation to bereavement.

Cupboard 2: Living on, memories recast, August 2001 (Author 1)

August 2001, the day after the funeral: a hurried act of cupboard-clearance (Figure 1.3), necessitated by the arrival of new tenants to my late grandparents' council house the following day. Another cupboard full of objects: slippers, tobacco, empty beer cans, several shirt/tie gift sets bought as gifts but never opened, a scrapbook full of clippings about

One pair of slippers, one tin of tobacco and rolling papers, one unfinished mug of tea, one hand-written timetable for taking tablets, two empty beer cans, several shirt/tie gift sets (unopened), several 78 rpm vinyl records, one medal hidden in a sock, the *Reader's Digest Repair Manual* (1975), *Clough: the autobiography* (1995), 1 pile of postcards, one scrapbook, one envelope (on bedside cabinet) containing photographs (Figure 1.4), one envelope (sealed, hidden) containing £30, one envelope (sealed, hidden) containing photographs, etc.

Figure 1.3 List of contents of cupboard 2

Figure 1.4 One envelope (on bedside cabinet) containing photographs
Source: Author.

local boxers and wrestlers, money hidden in an envelope, several photographs of friends and family (including one of me – Figure 1.4), and, hidden at the bottom of the cupboard, four photographs in a sealed, yellowed envelope – quite shocking sepia photographs, with the titles handwritten on the back – 'at war 1943' and 'firing squad 1943'. Looking at these last objects knocks the wind and words out of us.

There is now a large social scientific literature about memory, grief and memorialization, and as Hockey et al. note, material objects frequently have a performative/agentic role in this kind of context: they describe 'the inanimate' as 'mediating' an ongoing relationship between the deceased and those who knew them (2003, p. 138). They note how after a death,

> mundane objects of everyday usage such as perfume, wallets, shoes and hats [...] rendered use-less with the loss of their previous owner, their persistent materiality can obtrude into a present where they cannot easily be incorporated into a new scheme of things, nor can they be thrown away.
>
> (Hockey et al., 2003, p. 141)

When clearing out a cupboard, hitherto banal material objects can act as pointed memorials to absence (the half drunk cup of tea), as reminders of the previously taken-for-granted everyday (the worn-out slippers next to a favourite chair). Indeed, sorting through possessions of the deceased – and sharing stories, reminiscences, jokes even – may be a productive way of dealing with bereavement. For the clearing of a cupboard can entail a range of small tasks of memorialization: shredding traces of burdensome memories (paperwork relating to tablets, hospital visits); salvaging hopeful memories and tokens of happily remembered times (nice that he kept an envelope of family photographs within arm's reach, even at the end); dwelling on cheering memories ('daft old bugger', says dad affectionately, recalling his father's enthusiasm for wrestling extravaganzas at the old town hall); physically and metaphorically sorting through the stuff of a lifetime, making sense of objects and memories; removing all reminders of his life, in time for the next resident's arrival.

Again, a process of sifting through things – thereby memories – can become a way of binding together and mutually supporting people experiencing a significant life-course event. But the performativity of material things in this context can be unsettling, revelatory, shocking and distressing. Clearing out a cupboard can unsettle and recast one's memories in ways which can be relatively minor and wistful (so he was, secretly, drinking all along), or profoundly haunting (why did he take those photographs? Why would he never speak about his time at war? How on earth did such a gentle man deal with such memories?) As such, clearing out a cupboard can be constitutive of new, sometimes troubling, memories: none of us is likely to forget the day we cleared out that cupboard and found those photographs.

Cupboard 3: Moving house, memories (re)made, January 2008 (Author 2)

Figures 1.5 and 1.6 show items boxed up on the day of 'the move', as my wife and I bought our first house. The 'story' of the above-listed items is such that during the move, at the old house, important items were packed first, neatly, carefully into boxes marked accurately – their contents, their location. In the process, others were chucked out, often with little thought. But then there was a middle category – odd bits and pieces which, in an increasingly irate and desperate atmosphere (the rush to just finish, to just 'get out') were thrown together into boxes and marked 'desk stuff' or 'odds and ends'. We (my wife and I) were just not sure if they mattered or, if they did, what it was about them that

Figure 1.5 Cupboard 3
Source: Author.

Boxes marked 'certificates', 'utilities – old house', 'car', one high-visibility jacket, three coats (size, small), a telephone (circa 2004), a floral umbrella, five cassette tapes, one marked 'funky and mellow tape', a tattered piece of Christmas wrapping paper, an unidentifiable wire with plug, an unopened box marked 'desk stuff' (barely legible), a bag containing old slippers, three plastic hangers, a table plan for a wedding in 2005, etc.

Figure 1.6 List of contents of cupboard 3

mattered. And we just could not bring ourselves to throw them out. At that fraught point – this classic life-course transition, as sociologists would have it – all of this *stuff* was just so overwhelming, so suffocating, that we failed to make any meaningful connection, to remember why it mattered; indeed, the only thing left was to throw odd assortments into boxes and mark them 'stuff', so that we could forget about them and delay the decision for when the new home (and we) were 'sorted'.

Unfortunately, this decision has remained a delayed one. The meaning of these items – the memories and/or uses they might evoke – has remained behind a set of wooden doors. At the new house, many of

these items were simply left in boxes (like the unopened box); others were emptied out of boxes and chucked into this cupboard 'to be sorted out at a later date'. This cupboard – and all it stands for in our house, occasionally the butt of in-jokes or fraught conversations about 'sorting it out' – evokes a number of points about 'growing up', about memory, and about the framing of the contents of a cupboard like this as 'just stuff'.

Firstly, increasingly, the kinds of events recounted in this chapter – the death of a family relative or buying one's first home – are being articulated as moments within the life course, wherein the home (as space, as idea) plays a central role. Material things are, it is argued, fundamental to making a 'home', constituting 'the relationship between domesticity and self-identity' (Garvey, 2001, p. 49). As Hand and Shove (2004) have demonstrated, the complicity of material technologies (kitchen appliances in their research) as 'orchestrating concepts' around the home is part of the very organization of 'domesticity'. They argue, though, that much work has suggested that new kitchen technologies (cookers, fridges and the like) are simply assimilated into the existing assumptions and routines of family life at different stages in a family's life story. However, they suggest that material technologies do more than this: that, as new technologies appear in people's everyday lives, those assumptions and routines also change, sometimes re-orchestrating what families even mean by the term 'kitchen' (Hand and Shove, 2004). In other words, material things have agency: they actively change the identities and everyday experiences of domesticity over time, albeit in often unremarkable ways. So, material things might accompany significant life-course transitions (like moving house); but, especially when experienced as collections of 'stuff', they may also instigate small-scale lifestyle changes that may or may not be classed as 'transitions' at all. And they live on in the minds, memories and in-jokes of a household long after the 'event' of moving house. Thus, material things continue to have effects within the ongoingness of everyday lives (Horton and Kraftl, 2006). In our house, the stuff in that cupboard acted as a constant reminder – both of our transition to home-ownership and of our inability to catalogue and sort meaningful (memorable) stuff from that which did not matter.

Secondly, though, one might interpret the 'stuff' in the author's cupboard as a material reminder of the emotional difficulties entailed in actually making a life-course transition. As Gregson et al. (2007, p. 684) argue, 'whilst moving [house] generates excess, discarding goods here is enacted with similar degrees of care and concern, guilt and anxiety. It might look carefree, but actually it is not.' Gregson et al. argue in

particular that it is because many objects embody relationships between people (family or friends) that the process of discarding goods is so difficult. In the process, some objects are thrown away (with difficulty), others given to charity shops or to family members. Thus, objects gain more meaning as they are embedded in new relations (of charitable care or kinship, for instance).

However, I'm not convinced that the objects in my cupboard are constitutive of some form of loving relation. Indeed, they hold a status in our house somewhere between the constitution of everyday domesticities (Hand and Shove, 2004) and the objects carefully discarded while moving house (Gregson et al., 2007). Their status is rather more ambiguous and ambivalent. For, on the one hand, locked away in a cupboard, they rarely figure as part of the 'orchestrating concepts' (Hand and Shove, 2004) of our daily lives; nor even, really, as notable elements of our identities, as Garvey (2001) has it. On the other hand, these objects have (still) not been fully discarded. They are hidden from view, perhaps, and rarely – if ever – used. But they are still there. Moreover, as the process of moving became more and more fraught, we began to become care-less – to care, less – about the material things we were throwing into boxes. That was not to say that they did not matter at all (that category of stuff was confined to black bin bags and taken to the rubbish dump). We thought that they might matter – but we could not remember why or how. Perhaps we cared a little for them – but not that much. Their utility to us was similarly ambiguous, such that these objects have remained un-discarded but simultaneously pretty much absent from the concerns of daily life. The material objects in this cupboard can then – unlike John's (author 1) two cupboards, and unlike the process charted by Gregson et al. – be characterized by both ambivalence and by a very specific kind of forgetting. That is, we consider that they might have some kind of meaning (or use), but the memories concerning those material things have short-circuited. Forgetting (but sensing a significant memory) is, then, as vital as remembering (Connerton, 2008) when it comes to stuff left in cupboards.

Thirdly, coming back to this stuff reminds me at least of the uneasy agency of non-human agents in our lives. The process of listing – a discursive move made by Bruno Latour (2005) in his *Reassembling the Social* – is one which, for me, threw into sharp relief the taken-for-granted 'stuffness' of the cupboard. As Latour argues, to apprehend the most quotidian of objects from an estranged vantage point (here he is talking specifically of an 'expert' gaze) is to make it matter, again, or differently:

> even the most routine, traditional, and silent implements stop being taken for granted when they are approached by users rendered ignorant and clumsy by *distance* – distance in time as in archaeology, distance in space as in ethnology, distance in skills as in learning.
>
> (Latour, 2005, p. 80)

I would argue that my experience supplements Latour's analysis as the autoethnographic lens of the 'academic' (me) is turned back onto the intimate materials of my own domestic life. Here, it was in the moment of encounter, the writing of the list for this chapter – in opening the cupboard doors – that I was unsure what it was I took for granted about this cupboard, whose contents I had ostensibly forgotten (and whose meaning had, previously, also been all-but-forgotten). Certainly, though, despite being in a cupboard in a room I use every day, the moment of opening the cupboard was one in which the kind of distance that Latour evokes was opened up. This was a moment of distancing and estrangement from what had been familiar figures of my past daily life. To view it anew, nearly two years after closing the cupboard door, was an uncanny, unsettling and defamiliarizing experience. Suddenly – and subsequently, in the process of reflection and writing for this chapter – I had become an archaeologist of my own life, digging backwards into disjoined and partly formed 'stuff'-memories and 'stuff'-feelings. Yet, this 'stuff' – this assemblage that obstinately faced me when I opened the door – evoked new, emotion-laden memories: of the intensity of 'the move' and our ongoing inability to deal with all that stuff.

Latour's exposition of 'distance' is useful, then, in the one sense that it accurately describes the odd, almost comic, effect upon myself of seeing the objects there *again*. But, in another sense, Latour's formulation is equally redolent in the effect of reading, not just writing, the kinds of lists presented in this chapter. For, a feeling of uncanny distance (mingled with a strange sense of familiarity) is precisely the same feeling I have upon reading John's lists (cupboards 1 and 2). Although I have never seen any of his objects, I feel both a sense of generational acknowledgement (with toy cars, tins of pens, badges from my own childhood) and an uncanny alienation because I do not recognize, remember or register the meaning of all of these objects to their owner(s).

Memories, life-course transitions, identities and, especially, the very ongoingness of domestic life are then made of this anonymous, amorphous, ambivalent 'stuff' as much as they are of material signifiers for 'orchestrating concepts' and carefully considered processes of divestment. The memories held within each object are distant, uncertain,

various in texture and quality, even just plain forgotten. More specifically, though, when they occasionally re-emerge in the course of our everyday lives – in opening a cupboard – they are a reminder of our (or, at least, my) inability to effectively process and manage stuff at key, life-changing moments of transition. Thereby, those objects are evocative of newer, clearer memories of the more recent past. They are, quite simply, a source of annoyance for 'just being there'.

Conclusions

An effect of writing an autoethnographic piece is that it becomes difficult, if not undesirable, to attempt to tie together its various strands into a coherent conclusion. Indeed, this truism also holds for any process of remembering, which as Philo (2003) and Jones (2003) remind us is always already intermingled with context-specific, contingent processes of imagination and embodied feeling. Therefore, we would like to signal four points that act both as possible conclusions and as potential points of discussion for research on space, place, memory and identity.

Firstly, we have tried to open out and specify just some of the multiple ways in which the truism that material things evoke memories and emotions operates in and of everyday lives. One key emotion, bubbling under the surface of this chapter, has been that of the suffocation that material objects and memories might cause. We might question, for instance, when we are overwhelmed with a cupboard full of objects following the passing away of a close family relative, how we will ever manage to bring ourselves to sort out that cupboard. We might question whether the practice of patiently sorting through those objects can help or hinder the grieving process and whether it might begin or undermine the process of memorialization upon death. More straightforwardly, there is the feeling of suffocation that is caused by sensing that one is drowning in 'stuff'. We might begin with good intentions – to carefully catalogue, pass on, or throw away material things when moving house. But when there is more, and more, and more, perhaps we might just defer that decision, grow tired and throw it all in a cupboard: those memories can just wait, until later. Consider also, the hopelessness, stress and frustration that comes with knowing that that cupboard is *still* full of stuff. It is hardly surprising, then, that we so often shut, or choose to avoid opening, these cupboard doors. Indeed, although this chapter was initially intended to reflect upon materialized acts of memory, the act and habit of forgetting (throwing things in cupboards, generally not

opening those cupboards, perhaps periodically 'decluttering') recurs in our vignettes (Connerton, 2008).

Secondly, we want to draw attention to how the act of clearing out a cupboard is a moment of encounter that is spatial in nature and that, by nature of its spatialization (its 'opening out' in multiple senses) is a moment of exposure and vulnerability. There is a sense in which sorting through a 'lifetime's worth of stuff' is a process of literally laying out, laying bare and laying *to* bear a lifetime past. It is a moment when our assumed identities are exposed, vulnerable and up for review. There is a sense in which material objects found unexpectedly – beer cans, photographs – might profoundly trouble or unsettle our memories, our commonly held histories and accepted biographies, rather than prop up either the smooth flow of everyday life or the continuous narratives that implicitly undergird our senses of identity. So the process of clearing out a cupboard can bring us into closer, more intimate, contact with bundles of memories or it can open out a kind of distance between ourselves and the people or events they evoke. Finally, there is a sense in which the process of taking a photograph of a cupboard full of one's own odd stuff, listing it and writing it up for publication is an uncanny experience. There is the conceptual distance of a reader who might pick upon and reanimate certain objects in an alternative way that may be uncomfortable – perhaps judgemental, perhaps dispassionate. To spatialize memories through material things – to open them out – can feel like over-exposing oneself, as much as it is enchanting, humorous and thought-provoking.

Thirdly, we acknowledge that the kinds of experiences recounted in this chapter are geographically, socially and historically specific. We have suggested elsewhere (Horton and Kraftl, 2006; also Philo and Swanson, 2008) that the ability to attend to and make meaningful *any* banal, everyday, embodied experiences of ongoingness is highly situated in time and place, and highly conditional upon particular kinds of (classed, gendered, raced, sexualized) identities and norms. Indeed, the kinds of attachments listed in this paper are perhaps most indicative of everyday negotiations of contemporary consumer cultures, experienced in English middle-class nuclear families. Here are displayed examples of the rather esoteric 'stresses' caused by material privilege. These caveats notwithstanding – whether or not contained within the dark recesses of a cupboard, material things accompany significant life-course transitions in many other geographical and social contexts. Here, then, as much as attending to the specificities of our own cupboards, we have

intended to draw out the modes of feeling (suffocation and vulnerability, for instance) that afford material things an ambivalent place in remembering our lives. For, material things may leave us a little uneasy as much as nostalgic; and they may render us over-burdened or feeling distant from certain memories as much as intimately reminiscent of practices, people and places past.

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2
Copper Places: Affective Circuitries

Caitlin DeSilvey

Signal failure

The frequent UK rail traveller is well-acquainted with 'signal failures' – delays can last minutes, or hours, and create domino stoppages down the line. These are moments of dead time, irritation, unwelcome adjustment of schedules and connections. In September 2010 the BBC reported a spike in copper thefts on the railways: thieves were stealing the signalling cables, risking their lives to sell the stolen copper on the recycled metals market. The thefts severed the circuits that send electricity and information along the rail network, exposing the usually hidden infrastructure that underpins the system.

Global industrial demand for copper reached unprecedented levels by the end of the decade, driven largely by China's investment in electricity transmission networks. There appeared to be a direct correlation between the increasing value of copper and a rising accident rate in parts of the copper mining industry – a trend which was especially pronounced at private operations (like that of the San Esteban company at the San José mine in Chile, where a 2010 accident trapped 33 men for 69 days). Signal failure dead time: an empty moment in-filled with loose memory, and musing on other lives, other places, economic imperatives and material consequences.

Copper places

I write the beginning of this chapter while sitting in an apartment on the sixth floor of the Metals Bank building in Butte, Montana. Out of the window to the east the city streets end abruptly at the rim of a mile-wide pit, a decommissioned open mine-working that is gradually

filling with acid mine drainage. The Beaux Arts high-rise where I am staying is a reclaimed ruin – largely vacant for decades, it was renovated into upscale condominiums and offices a few years ago. Beginning in the 1880s, Butte's copper wired the USA for electricity and generated massive wealth from what came to be known as 'The Richest Hill on Earth'. A century later, when operations ceased in the main Berkeley Pit, the town suffered an extended period of decline (LeCain, 2009). Now, in 2011, the streets gleam with silver historic plaques, flower beds grace capped waste dumps, a system of paved paths weaves through the reclaimed landscape, and the head-frames that once transported miners and materials in and out of the earth are lit each night with festive strings of red bulbs. When I lived in Missoula (the university town 120 miles west, down the Clark Fork River valley) in the 1990s I visited Butte often, snagged by its raw charm and its rough edges. Heritage-led reinvestment has filed off those edges in the old uptown core; the patchy neighbourhoods of decrepit workers' cottages, weedy lots and fenced-off mine shafts are changing too, though more slowly.

I am only back in Montana for a short visit; I now live in Cornwall, at the southernmost tip of the British Isles, though not as far from Montana as one might assume. Half a century before Butte emerged as the world leader in copper production, Cornwall's copper industry attracted equally superlative nomenclature. The 'Richest Square Mile on Earth' developed around copper mine workings at Gwennap, near Redruth, where hundreds of shafts yielded ore for use in military and mechanical manufacturing, and Cornwall's booming industry spurred innovations in mining technology that spread across the world. At the height of the boom, the town of Redruth was one of the wealthiest towns in England, but it is now gradually recovering from a period as one of the most deprived; and on the high street, discount chain stores occupy retail space behind Baroque facades. Cornwall's mining landscapes have undergone a transformation much like Butte's: many of the granite engine houses have been consolidated and conserved, cycle paths trace the former mineral tramway systems, and local museums enthusiastically interpret the industrial past.

UNESCO designated the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site in 2006; in the same year, the National Park Service designated Butte and neighbouring Anaconda as what may be the most extensive National Historic Landmark District in the USA. Copper connects these landscapes. Industrial demand for the metal's conductive and ductile properties generated twinned histories of intensive extraction and eventual economic decline. They are also linked by migrations of labour, technology and

culture (witness the travelling Cornish pasty) and by their contemporary re-inscription at the hands of a memory industry that promises to restart stalled economies by capitalizing on potent pasts. In both places, heritage reinvestment is accompanied by the activities of a thriving remediation sector, established to manage and moderate (if not eradicate) the copper industry's toxic residues. Informal sideline cultural industries focus on the aesthetic attractions of the post-industrial sublime, producing art photographs of contaminated landscapes and abandoned structures and other interventions by artists and cultural workers.

I want to talk about something else that connects these places, though perhaps less explicitly. During his travels through China in 1974, Roland Barthes commented: 'I don't know how to look at – I resist looking at – what presents itself as watchable, what I cannot surprise' (Barthes, cited in Wood, 2009, p. 11). The shared elements of history and heritage that I sketch out above are more or less legible and open to interpretation. The past, in both Cornwall and Butte, is mined as a resource and represented in forms that advance various social and economic agendas. In this chapter, I want to explore aspects of the placed past that are not so easily packaged and polished. Residual memories of copper – and the ecologies and cultures its extraction created – are sedimented into the texture and structure of both of these landscapes. But I have come to think that these memories become legible only through encounter, a momentary alignment of person and place. In Barthes' terms, they must be 'surprised'.

It is these encounters I want to write about in this chapter – the remainder, the elements of experience not reducible to the narrative structures that heritage requires. The significance of these encounters may be immediately recognizable, or may take years to fall into place. A moment of recognition may arise through an experience that is deliberately sought out, or, more often, emerge obliquely, while one's attention is focused elsewhere. These moments may register as sense that 'something' happened in a particular location, or as an uneasy imbalance – a sense of something being not quite right. An inscrutable collection of mugs hangs by wires on a section of chain-link fence surrounding a closed mine yard. I notice for the first time a depression at the edge of a familiar path, heaped with fresh hedge trimmings and waste. A flat section of lightly wooded land between the open pit workings seems oddly placed, until I detect the traces of streets and sidewalks, a faded spatial imprint of the neighbourhood that was cleared to make way for the mines. In this chapter, I attempt a connective

autoethnography of these two landscapes, going back to 'past terrains and past encounters' (Jones, 2005, p. 206) to understand how copper's trace on these landscapes maps into my memories, and seeps into my present.

I have struggled with finding a way to work through this material. The response I am interested in is often affective rather than intellectual, and the encounters I want to communicate are slippery and underdetermined, not easily captured on the page. Their expression requires a form of 'landscape writing' that remains attentive to the fine web of 'connections between biography, history, culture and landscape' (Wylie, 2007, p. 206). This form, however, must remain open enough to respect the quicksilver quality of affective experience – articulation of that which lies at the edge of representation, the 'shifting mood, tenor, colour, or intensity of places and situations' (ibid., p. 214). Kathleen Stewart's concept of 'ordinary affects' comes closest to getting at what I want to do here. In her book of the same name, Stewart experiments with a form of writing that attempts to 'approach the intensities of the ordinary' (2007, p. 5). She presents an 'assemblage of disparate scenes': each scene 'is a tangent that performs the sensation that something is happening – something that needs attending to' (ibid., p. 5). The 'something' is rarely named, and the emphasis is on the potential, rather than the proven. 'The potential stored in everyday things is a network of transfers and relays. Fleeting and amorphous, it lives as a residue or resonance in an emergent assemblage of disparate forms and realms of life' (ibid., 2007, p. 21), she explains. It is this 'residue of resonance' that I am after, and I track it in my own set of speculative stories, with a particular attunement to the chemical trace of Cu (atomic number 29).

My interest in a specific aspect of placed experience sets my project apart from Stewart's, for there is no apparent filter on her critical attention, and she cultivates a generous receptivity to her subject, wherever it might appear. She also seems keen to allow her accounts to free-float in the present moment, untethered by explicit historical content though receptive to a private past. 'The affective subject is a collection of trajectories and circuits,' writes Stewart, 'you can recognize it through fragments of past moments glimpsed unsteadily in the light of the present like the flickering light of a candle' (2007, p. 59).

As will become clear, my approach is more intentional and directed than Stewart's. The scenes and speculations that follow are drawn from a retrospective gleaning of my placed memories, cut through with more recent experience, sometimes inflected through scraps of historical knowledge and sometimes not. There is a magpie-like messiness to these accounts as a result, a wilful blurring of the boundaries between

registers of personal memory and public memory, heritage and history. This cross-contamination is, I would argue, necessary to a project that seeks to track the emergence of affect in moments of both immediacy and retrospection. As Jacob Bull and Mike Leyshon observe, 'individuals are always encountering their own lives, in places and in moments [] sensory experience [is] interwoven with memories of past events' (Bull and Leyshon, 2010, pp. 126–127).

But we are also always encountering other lives, and the material traces they left behind. Memory and affect emerge in place; this process of 'becoming' is intensely intersubjective: 'the material assemblages that generate affective moments become remembered, and shaped, by embodied references, which in turn reconfigure our notions of self and identity' (ibid., pp. 127–128). Landscape asserts an agency of its own in these processes, conducting memory along circuits of potential (but never confirmed) significance, activating recollection through feedback loops and serial connections.

A word on language: in the passage quoted above, Stewart describes the affective subject as a 'collection of trajectories and circuits'. Related metaphors of circulation and transmission appear again and again in her writing: we encounter transfers, relays, signals, connections, flows. This kind of conceptual wiring appears frequently in other work on affect, and in fact has sparked energetic debate in geography, as metaphors of 'pipes and cables . . . relays and junctions' (Thrift, 2004, p. 452) are variously critiqued as being impersonal, masculinist and technocratic (Thein, 2005), or reductive, overly engineered and 'inadequate to [their] object' (Pile, 2010, p. 16). It is not my intention to weigh in on either side of this debate, but to occupy a space somewhere between. For the writing I do in this chapter, these material metaphors have a literal, as well as a conceptual, relevance – using Stewart's 'affective circuitry' (Crang, in Fannin et al., 2010, p. 923) to perform a transitive history of the copper-clad circuitry that wires our contemporary world seems particularly apt, a practice of materialized immanent theory. As Derek McCormack pointed out in response to one critical comment about his choice of metaphor (and as is made evident in the opening sequence to this chapter), lines, pipes and cables are '*of* rather than separate from the world' and 'do not [necessarily] distance us from life as it is lived, but allow us to become caught up in, apprehend and amplify the rhythms of its diverse and moving materialities' (2006, p. 332). In the writing that follows, I interrupt the circuits and flows of affect to connect them into temporary, episodic nodes of potential meaning, allowing for transfers of significance between registers of experience, and taking seriously the conductive properties of landscape itself.

Trapped

On an overcast August day a friend and I take our three-year-old sons for a visit to Levant Mine, on Cornwall's north coast, to see the restored beam engine under steam. Levant was the last Cornish mine to turn from copper to tin, at the beginning of the last century. The boys acknowledge the steam engine, but reserve their enthusiasm for the long underground tunnel that led miners to the shaft where they would descend to the mine workings. The shaft at the end of the tunnel is dripping and dark, behind an iron grill. A sign posted there tells us about the disaster that occurred in 1919, when the 'man engine' lift failed and sent 31 men to their deaths. We talk about the event in low voices, but the boys pick up on the story and insist on details. For days afterward my son shares his news with whoever will listen: 'Some men died in the mine.' A week later an 11-year-old girl, exploring the cliffs on a north-coast beach while on holiday, falls down an abandoned shaft from the Wheal Leisure copper mine workings. My son overhears me talking to my husband about the accident and the girl's death from her injuries. The questions go on for days: 'A little girl fell down the mine?'; 'What happened?'; 'Where was her mum?'; 'What did her dad say?'; 'How old was she?' 'Where was it?' When we see the friend who accompanied us to Levant he shares the news with her. Some days later the trapped miners are discovered alive in the San José copper-gold mine in Chile. When the Radio 4 presenter says, 'the miners are trapped down the mine', my son mishears him. He turns to me: 'They said, "Jemima is trapped down the mine".' Jemima is the name of an 11-year-old girl in one of his favourite BBC programmes. I try to explain that Jemima is fine (and only imaginary anyway), but he insists, and I fail to convince him otherwise.

Geese

During a spell of unsettled, foggy weather in November 1995, a flock of migrating snow geese lands in the Berkeley Pit. When the fogs lifts, 342 carcasses are recovered from the contaminated water. Necropsies find their oesophaguses and stomachs lined with burns and sores from exposure to high concentrations of copper, cadmium and arsenic; the company that owns the pit initially denies that the water is responsible for the deaths. The news draws intense interest from the local press and environmental groups, advocating for a clean-up of the damaged Clark Fork River headwaters. A few days later, the two-and-a-half-year-old son of friends accompanies me on a hike into the Bitterroot Mountains.

Night falls earlier than we expected, and we hike out in the gathering dusk. The small boy starts up a random refrain: 'We're going to Butte; Butte is a long way away.' In February I travel with others in a school bus to attend a memorial gathering for the geese in Butte's Knights of Columbus Hall. A woman named Lily conducts a pipe ceremony, standing in for a group of Cree elders held up by a snowstorm outside Browning. As we listen to people offer their respects to the dead birds, chunks of plaster fall from the ceiling in the chilly room. Three-hundred and forty-two folded origami geese hang in the air, and someone draws our attention to the thousands of miles of flooded shafts, drifts and adits that lie beneath us, slowly draining into the pit.

Absence

In 1824, a Cornish copper 'adventurer' builds a tramway to carry ore and materials along the valley of the Carnon River, from the rich workings at Gwennap to wharves on the River Fal. The tramway bed now forms a cycle path through a valley of stunted scrub, punctuated by the ruins of mining sheds, shafts and chimneys. In late summer, I pack my son onto the back of the bicycle for an outing, and we stop by the edge of the path to eat blackberries. I notice a barren slope, an open scar of loose reddish earth, a few hundred yards from the path. As we eat berries, straggling cycling families pass us, heading up the valley. I think about what they are seeing, or not seeing, and my own focus on the loose chain, the hungry child, the puddle up ahead. Later, reading around on the history of the area, I realize that the slope was scoured of vegetation in 1992 when a plug set to hold back acid mine drainage in abandoned tin and copper workings failed, releasing more than 5 million gallons of contaminated water into the creek. At the time, ecologists assumed that the release would have a severe effect on the estuarine ecosystem, but this didn't turn out to be the case – because the river was already barren. One study, conducted several years later, made the following statement: 'Since it is impossible to kill something which is absent, the outflows from Wheal Jane did not produce a demonstrable biological impact in the Carnon River' (Younger et al., 2005, p. 144). It is impossible to kill something which is absent. Half a mile down the river the river flow runs red, and oxidized silt clogs the reeds.

Inversion

When I visited Butte in the past my gaze was often drawn to the unoccupied spaces in the upper floors of its ornate downtown buildings.

Many of the windows were boarded shut, and trapped pigeons fluttered against the dingy glass at others. Businesses struggled on in their street-level premises under the stacked layers of dead space, the hollow husks of rooms built in more prosperous times. The vacancy of these interstitial ruins mirrored the abandonment of the mine workings below the surface of the city. Butte's downtown district, erected with earnings from mining ventures, can be seen as an 'inverted minescape' (Brechin, 1999), which replicates the below-ground timber frameworks in above-ground steel and glass. The seven-storey building where I am staying on this visit was probably the tallest structure between Minneapolis and Spokane when it was constructed by copper king Augustus Heinze in 1906. Heinze hired architect Cass Gilbert (who would go on to design New York's Woolworth Building) to draw up the plans, which included a copper-plated entry and a marble-lined lobby. I have a photographer friend who documented the building's gutted spaces in the late 1990s. I invite her up to see where I am staying and she is stunned by the transformation of the space. Earnings from the copper mines built these structures; the collapse of the mining industry emptied them; and now the mines are filling these spaces again, transitively, as people who can afford to buy $200,000 condominiums and caviar at the reopened Hennessy Market consume their rich history and hang it on their walls. My rented apartment is full of nostalgia-kitsch decor (photo transfers of Butte's faded signage and picturesque urban decay are pasted on lampshades, coasters, cutting boards and trivets); white noise machines stand on both bedside tables to drown out the noise from the bars below; the refrigerator dispenses ice, crushed or cubed, on request. The rooms housed a lawyer's office in the past, and faded gold gilt letters are still visible on the window in the second bedroom, in mirror writing: DLEIFSRAS.P.OEG. I have trouble writing in this space – the view is distracting, and the only table is four feet off the ground, with a tottery bar stool – so I find a desk in a quiet corner of the public archive (located in a renovated firehouse) and return every day to work. On my last visit I have a conversation with the archivist and she asks where I have been staying. 'Oh,' she says, 'the desk you've been sitting at belonged to Mr Sarsfield. It used to be in his law office.'

Container

I find the stoneware bottle in the disturbed soil at the base of the ruined chimney stack, in the rough ground north of our village. It is about three and a half inches high, with straight sides and a flared rim. The bottle is

dingy and clogged with soil, but a rinse in my sink at home reveals an uneven orange glaze, and the mark of the potter's thumb on the shoulder of the small vessel. The bottle was exposed when someone recently brought in heavy machinery to scrape back the earth around the chimney stack and along the upper edge of the field where it stands. They are building new homes nearby, the development – Wheal Vyvyan – is named after the former mine workings, themselves named after the local family that owned them. I wonder what the bottle once held. The chimney stack where I found it is all that remains of a granite structure that would have housed a steam engine; the rest of the building was salvaged for stone building material a long time ago. So the bottle may have been connected to the operations of the engine house, somehow, though as an object it seems more domestic than industrial. I can't fill the emptiness of the bottle, any more than I can get my imagination to fill in the emptiness of the old shafts and adits that pock this landscape. I know that they are there. I scan the forest floor for scrubby hollows and indentations when I am out with my son, and draw him away from areas that seem suspect. A peculiar form of attention takes hold in these moments – my appreciation of the woodland walk undercut with a muted awareness of potential danger. I read local history accounts – the eighty men who worked underground raising 8000 tons of copper ore, the deepest shaft reaching 55 fathoms 'from grass' – but the landscape remains inscrutable, the surface impenetrable, its depth and dimensions flattened by time.

Downstream

Butte's copper mines were driven hard up against the Continental Divide into the richest veins of ore, and from uptown Butte it is downhill all the way to the Pacific. To get to the interstate that takes you west you drive down Montana Street. Just past a couple of casinos, but before the interstate on-ramp, the perceptive observer might notice a strange black mass on the right. If you slow to get a closer look you may note the sign on the bridge ahead, 'Silver Bow Creek'. You'd have to pull over in the casino's gravel parking lot to inspect the formation more carefully, but if you did you'd see that the blackish-red mass forms an artificial canyon for the creek, and that it appears to be made of a metallic substance, once liquid and now congealed in drips and slabs. Wild mint grows thickly along the side of the creek at the base of the sheer canyon walls. Follow the creek's flow 100 miles downstream and you'd end up at the confluence of the Clark Fork and Blackfoot rivers,

where the flow, until a few years ago, stilled in a broad reservoir behind a hydroelectric dam. I spend an afternoon at the reservoir in the company of two fathers and their daughters, one a toddler and the other a teenager, in the late 1990s. We bring along a canoe and a kayak, to explore the still, willowy channels, the old farmland flooded by the building of the dam in 1906. We all know that beneath the waters of the reservoir the trapped river sediments hold a century's accumulation of heavy metal and arsenic contamination from the upstream industry; no one mentions it. The toddler sits in front of me in the kayak and trails her small fingers in the cool water. When we swim we are careful not to let the water pass our lips. We end the afternoon in Harold's Club, the Milltown bar where poet Richard Hugo used to spend his time: 'I forget the names of town without rivers/A town needs a river to forgive the town' (Hugo, 1984, p. 343).

On landscape conductivity

Each of these stories, I hope, maps an affective circuitry of what it (sometimes) feels like to live in these places, and remain attentive to their complex and (unevenly) contaminated pasts. I hesitate to name the emotions that surface in these accounts – ambivalence and pleasure, epiphany and anxiety, guilt and indifference? There are others. The writing, to return to Stewart,

> tries to cull attention to moments of legibility and emergence, to moments of impact (instead of to stable subjects)... to the vitality... in the jump or surge of affect (rather than in the plane of finished representations), and to the still life – the moment when things resonate with potential or threat.
>
> (Stewart, 2005, p. 1027)

A 'resonant moment' is, of course, a deeply contingent and subjective thing. In the accounts I sketch out above I find resonance where others would detect only coincidence, or incoherence. The connections I make often rely on my familiarity with the places I'm writing about, or my pursuit of historical context that will make the pieces fall into a sensible relation with each other. Resonance, in other words, is often a willed, rather than a chance, occurrence; the more you know the more you see (but a fresh eye can also be revelatory).

As I try to end this chapter I'm sitting back in my office in Cornwall. I write these words on a computer with circuit boards and other

components that contain close to a kilogram of copper. The electricity that powers the computer and the lamp on my desk is carried through copper wires, through a system of copper-dense switches and relays. As I write about the affective circuitry that binds my individual memory to two particular landscapes, I'm held in the silent net of a literal circuitry that would not exist without the mines that provide the copper to create and maintain it. I don't know exactly what to make of this, except to say that maybe what I have been trying to do in this chapter is to work against a certain kind of cultural 'signal failure'. In the small stories I tell, I imagine a role for the receptive researcher as a kind of junction or relay, a point of contact and emergence for the background current of residual landscape memory. A momentary 'charge' brings the past and the present briefly into alignment, and then flickers out.

There is a flicker here of Walter Benjamin, of course: 'to articulate the past historically does not mean to recognize it "the way it really was". It means to seize hold of a memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger' (Benjamin, 1999, p. 247). The memories that 'flash up' in this telling are not the ones that tend to be shared in more formal curations of public memory. They are messy and sometimes lethal, shadowed by loss, seeping into the present to unsettle certainties about 'then' and 'now'. Residual landscape memory – holes in the ground, toxic waters, broken towns – wires directly to individual experience, the landscape acting as a conductor and conveyor. Memories do not emerge as discrete entities, but as bundles of potential connections, linked by 'associative pathways' (DeSilvey, 2007) that find their analogue in the affective electrical and chemical circuitry of the mind. In the moment of charge and connection, practices of public and collective remembrance are short-circuited, bypassed into irrelevance.

It is possible to experience such moments of recognition in a formal site of memory, but in places where the past is made legible the potential for instability and uncertainty is minimized, if not excised. As I suggested earlier, often this kind of encounter can only be surprised – which raises questions about how one goes about doing this kind of work. Connective autoethnography is probably more a mode of attention than a method, a way of being in the world that remains open to the possibility of contact. In the accounts I relate here, it also, critically, requires exposure – exposure to potential meaning, but also exposure to potentially toxic environments. To borrow a term from Tim Ingold, the researcher in this mode operates with a kind of post-industrial 'sentient ecology' – a set of 'skills, sensitivities and orientations' that brings him or her into an intuitive and ethically grounded relationship with a home

place (Ingold, 2000, p. 25). The ethics here is an ethics of connectivity, of implication and adjacency. The story of the trapped Chilean miners intrudes, and insists on a recognition of the copper industry's displacement of exploitation – the same old story warped across time and place (Finn, 1998). There is no 'magical closure' for this story, only the 'patchy and material' work of thinking things through, keeping busy 'just trying to imagine what's going on' (Stewart, 2007, p. 5).

Dust

On a visit to Butte with two friends, down a gap-toothed street at the southern edge of uptown, we come across an open door and a hand-painted sign advertising the presence of the Dumas Brothel. We're invited inside, and given a tour of the premises. The owner takes us down to the cellars, where a row of one-room 'cribs' faces out onto the back alley. He explains that he's only recently opened these rooms up. The room we enter is just large enough to hold a bed and a woodstove, both dusted with grime. The single window is still boarded over, but in the light of a bare bulb you can clearly make out a worn path where the linoleum pattern has been rubbed out through repetition. The path leads from the window (waiting), to the stove (warming), to the bed (working); the feet of the iron bedstead have worn clear through to the rough floorboards. Years later I attend a public meeting in the town of Opportunity, where the conversation is all about the dust that carries over from settling 'ponds' full of smelter tailings, soon to hold the contaminated sediments from the Milltown reservoir as well. In the discussion, the dust seems almost animate. A county representative talks about 'fugitive dust' – escaped particles that elude the mitigation measures at the waste repository. Residents of the town talk about being afraid to work or play outside on windy days, or disturb the layers of ancient dust in their attics. I listen, and am reminded of the room in Butte, of surrender and sacrifice.

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3

Mapping Grief and Memory in John Banville's *The Sea*

Avril Maddrell

Introduction

Bereavement is both an everyday, universal experience and a moment of profound individual disjuncture (Maddrell, 2009a, 2009b; Maddrell and Sidaway, 2010). As Liz Stanley has noted, 'the "work" of mourning has a resounding impact on the lives of those who experience the death of someone loved', which she describes as '. . . that intense work of the soul, that gradual rearrangement of boundaries which must occur when a loved one is lost' (2002, p. 2).

This chapter uses a powerfully evocative fictional account of bereavement in John Banville's (2006) novel *The Sea*, to analyse the lived geographies of the bereaved through that 'rearrangement of boundaries'. It explores the ways in which remembering and forgetting, emotion and affect, place and body interrelate in the experience of individual bereavement, and are experienced in and expressed through the materiality of place, the 'more-than-representational' (Lorimer, 2005), mind, personhood and emotion.

For good reason, studies of mourning practices and associated representational forms within the humanities and social sciences have tended to focus on particular spaces and places, and I will draw on my own and others' place-based studies. However, the primary focus here is on what I have coined 'Mapping Grief' (Maddrell, 2009a, 2009b, 2010), that is, the ways in which an individual's experience of bereavement changes their relation to particular spaces and places and how this becomes a dynamic internal map of shifting patterns of emotion and affect, both painful and comforting. This internal map is closely tied to memory, which includes those memories consciously retained, the wilful or unconscious protective act of 'forgetting', and the experience of being ambushed by memories apparently long forgotten.

Mourning and memory, remembering and forgetting

Humans have a vast memory capacity which leads to the development of autobiographical memory: 'an aggregate of dispositional records of who we have been physically and who we have usually been behaviourally, along with records of who we plan to be in the future' (Damasio, 2000, p. 172). The latter is crucial to bereavement because the death of another changes who we will be in future, as parent, child, spouse or mentee. As Damasio puts it, 'memories of the future we anticipate for the time that may lie ahead carry a large weight in the autobiographical self of each moment' (2000, p. 225). Thus, ongoing identity (becoming) is, in part, shaped by memories of anticipation working from the past into the future, but the performance of the present, and ongoing projection of that identity, can be ruptured by another's death. The script written by anticipatory memory is ripped up.

Liz Stanley (2002, p. 3) argues that 'in a fundamental sense [,] mourning and remembrance remain symbiotically linked for as long as memory lasts'. Derrida states more starkly that, 'mourning is interminable. Inconsolable. Irreconcilable. Right up to death', yet it 'interrupts itself interminably' (1996, pp. 172, 192) in what Stanley (2002, p. 3) describes as a dynamic 'economy of exchanges'.

A key part of this economy of exchanges within memory is the act, or process, of forgetting. And forgetting, like remembering, is an obscure and complex process not simply in the charge of the conscious mind. Damasio (2000, p. 28) argues that 'sometimes we use our minds not to discover facts but to hide them', to screen out elsewhere and 'elsewhen'. This suggests that memory can be likened to a regulated game of hide and seek, where some memory pathways are clear and passage along them untrammelled, while others are consciously or subconsciously blocked or obscured – what Yeagher (1996, p. 1) describes as 'the enigma of what gets forgotten, or hidden, or lost in the comforts of ordinary space'. This is a process which is part of – or entangled with – the affective. As Nayak and Jeffrey (2011) note:

> the affective realm is pre-discursive: affects are not simply brought into being in a single individual but are assembled in relation between bodies, objects, sounds, movements and encounters… affects are composed through worldly interactions.
>
> (2011, p. 289)

Emotional and affective responses can be generated by any number of triggers, and many of these can take us by surprise as we are interrupted

by someone, something, some sight, or other sensory experience which opens a door on some past affective state. Just as a favourite sound or smell might evoke, or even transport us back to, our childhood, the same memory superhighway can deliver us directly back to experiences of loss and bereavement. But, to stress a key point, Damasio makes it clear that such processes are obscure to the knowing and controlling mind:

> there is good evidence in favour of the covert nature of emotional induction (43)... We DO NOT need to be conscious of the inducer of an emotion and often are not, and we cannot control emotions wilfully. [] The actual cause may have been the image of an event, an image that had the potential to be conscious but just was not because you did not attend to it while you were attending to another [47]. Or it may have been no image at all but rather a transient change in the chemical profile of your internal milieu, brought about by factors as diverse as your state of health, diet, weather, hormonal cycle, how much you exercised that day.
>
> (Damasio, 2000, pp. 43, 47–48, emphasis as original)

I will turn to John Banville's Booker Prize-winning novel *The Sea* in more detail below, but here I draw on one extract to exemplify this point; when Anna's cancer-induced bald head evokes for her husband Max, the memory of a bird's nest that was later destroyed, much to his distress.

> I can still see the gorse, I can still smell the buttery perfume of its blossoms, I can recall the exact shade of those brown speckles... *I have carried the memory of that moment through a whole half a century*.
>
> (Banville, 2005, pp. 159–160, my emphasis)

As Stanley eloquently articulates:

> sometimes the borders to 'there and then' are open wide in flood-gate fashion and grief becomes raw anew, while at other times the borders are closed, memory fades and loses its raw edges, and the landscape of the mind attends to the 'here and now'.
>
> (Stanley, 2002, p. 3)

This triggering can be prompted by formal markers such as birthdays, or by everyday spaces, practices and objects associated with the deceased, such as toiletries on the bathroom shelf, or the arrival of the daily paper, or some other quotidian trigger which invokes the person or past (Maddrell, 2009a, 2009b, 2010).

> By occurrences of sudden unplanned and often unwilling remembrance, triggered by the flotsam and jetsam that come serendipitously into the mind, to conjure up sharp memories of someone now dead . . . raw bleeding jagged feelings of loss and grief well up.
>
> (Stanley, 2002, p. 3)

Memory can be closely tied not only to corporeal senses, but also corporeal performance, through embodied experiences or practices:

> it is not simply the case that the body retains the past in a dormant manner. Rather it is the case that such a past is actualized when the body performs specific actions peculiar to that past, conferring a sense of spatial and temporal unity in the present.
>
> (Trigg, 2009, p. 90)

It can be further argued that memory is not simply responsive, but also itself inherently dynamic (Gutman, 2009), as is both an individual's self-identity and their experience of grief and mourning. These sometimes complex and elusive experiences of loss, remembering and forgetting can be mapped within and onto lives, as well as cultural expressions such as music, graffiti, poetry and prose. Here, Banville's novel *The Sea* is interrogated as a means of using fiction to explore these interconnections between the death of loved ones, memory and living with loss.

The Sea

'They departed, the gods, on the day of the strange tide.' So John Banville's *The Sea* opens, and the reader is immediately aware of something unusual, unnatural even, being remembered. The 'Gods', 'the family Grace', are 'more than natural' people, and the 'strange tide' an unnatural event, giving a sense of unease if not actual foreboding. The unusually high tide (presumably late summer's Spring tide) is accompanied by a strange stillness, and the birds are set preternaturally white against 'the spectacle of that vast bowl of water bulging like a blister, lead-blue and malignantly agleam' (p. 3).

The reader is also given a sense of the watershed character of this moment for Max, an indication of its impact on the rest of his life: 'I would not swim again, after that day . . . [6 lines] . . . I would not swim, no, not ever again' (pp. 3–4). There is also a hint of despoliation: 'the waves were to deposit a fringe of soiled yellow foam along the waterline'; and the refrain of unnaturalness can also be found in reference to the

drowned villages lost to the eroding coastline and the description of the girl's swimsuit left on the sand 'like something thrown up drowned, out of the sea' (p. 29). These are all hints of the forthcoming tragedies to be folded into Max's life and very personhood, but these are memories of these moments from beyond those tragedies. The constructive role of memory (in relation to bereavement) is exposed.

The town where his parents rented a holiday chalet by the dunes is called 'Ballyless' (near Ballymore) and could be anywhere in the north of Ireland. It is simultaneously a non-place and a universal place; the specificity of location is not important, but the detail – the topography – is. The social geography of class, and the physical features such as the bridge, the railway, the café, the beach and the Cedars – the house which represents the focal point or epicentre of this visitation by the 'Gods' and his own return. As Max notes: 'things endure while the living lapse' (p. 9). This can be seen as exemplifying Bondi et al.'s assertion that emotions 'coalesce around and within certain places' (Bondi, Davidson and Smith, 2005, p. 3); but this coalescence may be less a product of memory's 'inhabitation' of that place than the place acting as a catalyst to memory, facilitating engagement with the more-than-representational aspects of memory and loss.

Why did he go back? He who described himself as having 'come back to live in the rubble of the past' (p. 4). Anna, his wife, has died. Some months after he can no longer remain in their home – he does not feel haunted as such, but a sense of a surly presence within the house makes it impossible for him to stay. This suggests that the return that is the central narrative of the book represents what is referred to in bereavement literature as the 'geographical cure' – a physical, spatial removal from the place associated with loss, along with the idea that a trip 'down memory lane' might offer some brief respite from his present grief, that a place of the past might also be a place of consolation. But Max has returned to the Cedars, he tells us much later, 'precisely so that it should be a mistake, that it should be hideous, that it should be, that I should be [,] inappropriate' (p. 149). The experience of one trauma has drawn him to the place which epitomizes death and embodies childhood trauma.

Furthermore, Max may have escaped the material space of his own home and its myriad associations, but while grief and its liminal qualities may be triggered by places, ultimately it is tied to the person rather than the place. Grief blurs timespace: 'mourning [ ] can refuse the divide between the material and the immaterial, between the past and the present' (Stanley, 2002, p. 2). Grief is non-linear.

> Attending to death and mourning means giving up on that conventionalised, successive, and linear way – 'life-death-mourning-life' – of thinking about them. It means instead, grappling with the 'life in death and death in life' trails of mourning across the lives of those who remember, and for whom traces and echoes of the name of the person who now never answers, continue to sound and reverberate.
>
> (Stanley, 2002, p. 8)

Max's adolescence and young adulthood were punctuated by the deaths of friends and parents, and now in later life, with the death of his wife Anna, who had been the continuous presence after all those other deaths: 'everyone seems to be younger than I am, even the dead' (p. 35). During Anna's terminal illness the couple 'sought escape from an intolerable present in the only tense possible, the past' (p. 99) – memory was a refuge from the brute reality of the present. Continuing this *modus operandi*, grief for Anna takes Max back to the most significant place of his childhood and his most seismic and formative experience of bereavement, when holiday friends, twins Chloe and Miles Grace, swam out to sea (deliberately) and drowned (possibly deliberately). The sea is both a particular place and a metaphor; the cause of grief and a place where catharsis is sought. Going to the sea represents a certain absenting from the present life on land, a muffling; the sea offers 'a special quality to the silence at night', the silence of the sickroom – 'a place like the place where I feel that I am now, miles from anywhere and anyone' (p. 71). In returning to Ballyless in his state of emotional undoing, Max has shown what Trigg (2009, p. 90) describes as 'a tremendous faith in the power of a place as a source of unity'.

Although the current crisis is his acute grief at the loss of his wife, Max returns to this pivotal place from his life before her, acknowledging that he is prodding the past like a sore tooth. Ballyless is the only place he could be at this point in time and he describes himself as having been travelling towards it for years: 'the past beats inside me like a second heart' (p. 13). The character thereby demonstrates 'the dynamic persistence of an event that continues in spite of the absence of its original containment: in effect conceding the power of place as fused with a haunted undercurrent' (Trigg, 2009, p. 91).

Hetherington (2003, p. 1942) suggests that through the physical contact of *praesentia*, place is experienced 'not as meaning and representation but as contact and confirmation'. While there is little emphasis on the haptic here, being *in place* is central, the confluence of

place-temporality (Wunderlich, 2010) allows Max to touch his past in a way in which past and present losses interweave and speak to each other. As Massey has argued, space is a sphere of contemporaneous plurality, 'always under construction . . . a simultaneity of stories-so-far' (2005, p. 9). This gives a sense of the liminal or threshold qualities of particular place-temporalities, something held in common with the experience of grief:

> liminality can refer to a state or process experienced through bereavement, *and* the designation of a significant place which is associated with the deceased and is perceived as a permeable place, a borderland which affords a sense of 'ongoing contact'.
>
> (Maddrell, 2009a, p. 678)

That liminality relates to the intersection of meaningful place and the autobiographical self, which is made up of a core of stable, invariant factors such as name and age, but grows and shifts with new experiences when that self is 'partly remodelled' (Damasio, 2000, p. 174). In this rewriting of self we 'constantly propitiate the selection of "drafts" that accord with a single unified self' (Damasio, 2000, p. 225), so we have to rewrite self in the light of a major event such as bereavement.

The Sea is Max's soliloquy of remembrance, a deft weaving of the multiple stories which irrupt in this timeplace, and which constitute the significant relationships and losses of his life. After the break-up of his parents' marriage, his absent father was evoked by English postmarks on envelopes, bearing cheques or birthday cards, sent from the successive motorway sites where he worked. Significantly expressed in the present tense, Max describes how the place names 'provoke in me a confusion of feelings that includes a sticky sort of sadness, anger or aftershock, and a curious yearning that is like a nostalgia for somewhere I have never been to. Watford. Coventry. Stoke' (p. 198). He does not need to travel to these places, their very names stir up his adolescent need for his father. The memories resurface; the names are effective and affective, in the past and present.

Always a part of the process of remembering the deceased – notably through funeral eulogy, obituary or memorial (Maddrell, 2009b) – the significance of biography has gained wider currency within death studies in recent years. This includes the impact of bereavement on the identity of the autobiographical self, as well as the storying of the deceased. Academic and therapeutic literature on bereavement has explored the role of narrative within mourning, notably in the work of Tony Walter

and Robert Neimeyer. Walter (1996) identified the significance of creating a 'durable biography' (oral or written) for the deceased, not only as means of retrospectively storying their life, but also as a form of sense-making of a loved one's death. Here Max struggles with the simultaneous sense-making of the deaths of both Anna and the twins, and a reworking and reordering of his own biography, including that of his self-disparaged work and his relationship with his daughter. For Max, exploring the recent and distant past is again like the probing of a sore tooth, painful but compelling to the point of addictive necessity; but the process and pain combine to blur his sense of time and tense: 'the truth is, it has all begun to run together, past and possible future and impossible present' (p. 96). Ultimately his past memories and present experiences blur in the confluence of his own present mixed-up self.

Miss Vavasour, Max's landlady at the Cedars guesthouse (once the holiday home of the drowned twins), transpires to be the only other living member of the knot of people around the twins at the time of their death. The two have a clear (if unarticulated) sense of community, of shared history and experience, but Max cannot bring himself to interrogate her about the past. Latterly Miss Vavasour volunteers information about the now-dead Grace parents, and her relation to them and to the house. While this clarifies – rectifies – some aspects of the youthful narrative, it leaves others unresolved. Even confronting his memories and trauma, past and present, in this timeplace cannot make sense of tragedy.

Max nearly completes a circle of tragedy in this place by almost killing himself in the sea in a drunken stupor, which would have been the ultimate spatial fix/geographical cure for bereavement; but he is rescued from the 'littoral', the liminal space of the tidal shore, neither sea nor land, to live again in a reordered life. But while he has been (re)mapping his own life and losses, his daughter, free of his controlling influence, has undergone her own boundary shifts and resolutions and become engaged to be married. Memory and mourning can displace other activities and priorities (McLoughlin, 2010) and ultimately Max must accept the new topography of their relationship, reconfigured during his absence from home.

In this mire of confusion, Max's narrative reworks the past in retelling the interwoven stories of the life and death of Anna and the Grace twins (principally Chloe), and confronts himself – or perhaps it is more that he *reveals* himself to himself through his now-permitted revisiting/remembering. In this re-storying he finds a way to carry on, perhaps pivotally in his honesty with himself, notably in his account about

the moment of Anna's death. His first detailed account of shared last moments (p. 238) is replaced by the final revelation on the penultimate page: 'Anna died before dawn. To tell the truth, I was not there when it happened' (p. 263). Having stepped outside the hospital for a breath of fresh air, he recalls a solitary moment of isolation in the sea at Ballyless and being moved by a sudden surge in the sea, in which he captures in metaphor that monumental moment when some everyday occurrence shifts the ground under one's feet, the affective seismic shift:

> As I stood there, suddenly, no not suddenly, but in a sort of driving heave, the whole sea surged, it was not a wave, but a smooth rolling swell that seemed to come up from the deeps, as if something vast down there had stirred itself, and I was lifted briefly and carried a little way towards the shore and then was set down on my feet as before, as if nothing had happened. And indeed nothing had happened, a momentous nothing, just another of the great world's shrug's of indifference. A nurse came out then to fetch me, and I turned and followed her inside, and it was as if I were walking into the sea.
>
> (p. 263)

For Max, the sea – this specific slice of the sea, its tide and shore and locale, its history – is location, metaphor, cause and key, if not cure. It is a place of confluence of youthful rites of passage: first romance, first sexual encounter, first witnessing of death. A return to this place is necessary for Max to retrace and remake his autobiography, allowing him to (re)order his memory, life history, sense-making and sense of self as he faces this new rite of passage to widowhood. With the eloquence of sparse prose, Banville evokes not only characters and place, but more significantly articulates the neglected narrative of living with loss: how the death of another can provoke a renegotiation of self-identity, how one bereavement can call up others, and how the negotiation of memory can impinge on, and make possible, the everyday act of carrying on.

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4

Brooding on Bornholm: Postmemory, Painting and Place

Judith Tucker

Preface: The waiter

As is his custom the waiter smiles charmingly at the tourists, greeting them and teasing them over breakfast. Outside the windows of the airy dining room the landscape that they have come to enjoy is bathed in sunshine and the summer wind rustles the coniferous trees, planted at the end of the nineteenth century, separating the beach area from the more cultivated area and providing shelter for the wooden summerhouses. He has been welcoming tourists for the last 60 or 70 years. He, the town and the trees were all significantly smaller then. In those days, the 1920s and 30s, the well off, fun-loving metropolitan tourists arrived on the pleasure steamers from Berlin, usually landing in Allinge-Sandvig and perhaps staying in the grand houses, hotels or more modest guesthouses they had built. He had been a very strong swimmer then – the tourists would throw coins for the local boys to dive down for; he often retrieved them. Today, he is looking for the solo British tourist; he has a question to ask her, something that has been preying on his mind, after yesterday's conversation. Unusual, actually, that's she's British, the first he has had in his guesthouse; plenty of Danes, a few Poles nowadays, and many Germans, although it is noticeable that they, like him, are getting older now. There she is, with her bag of paints and her computer, drinking coffee. 'Good morning,' he says, 'you know, I was wondering, I wanted to ask you, what happened to the people in that photograph you showed me yesterday?' This chapter considers how and why I came to research, draw and paint in landscapes where my

mother's family once holidayed and what the implications of this activity might be. Written from an art practitioner's perspective, it explores the relationship of memory and place in three different kinds of landscapes: photographic landscapes in my family album, the contemporary dune landscape of the Danish island of Bornholm, and my own practice of landscape painting. It investigates what unresolved remainders might be discovered in these landscapes. It speculates whether and how the practice of painting might be employed in an affective understanding of memory and place. This chapter is a development of my earlier work stimulated by pre-war holiday photographs. It draws on Marianne Hirsch's notion of postmemory and is informed by the work of Jørgen Bærenholdt, Karen Till and Avery Gordon.

Introduction

I have a particular interest in the unresolved remainders of human activity in landscape. Through drawing and painting I search out traces of past lives that might not be immediately obvious. The images I make depict man-made structures in relation to landscape. In my drawings and paintings neither the chosen motif nor the landscape take precedence, the two are in dialogue. Indeed, David Crouch reminds us that that nowadays landscape is not usually considered to be simply 'countryside', but 'it can also include broadly the assemblage of landforms, concrete shapes . . . serendipitous collections of things. Implicitly included are our own bodies that are now enlivened into the 'landscape' (Crouch, 2010, p. 105). This view of landscape resonates with my concerns. Travelling to a particular place, making work on location and then developing this material back in my studio has always been a fundamental feature of my painting practice; however, the selected locations have changed considerably during the last few years. I have moved from making images generated by visits to the British coast to images triggered by continental resorts. As the twentieth century drew to a close and the events of that century were reflected upon, I came across a wave of cultural commentators considering the notion of transposition in relation to the children of Holocaust survivors: that is, the ways in which traumas that have been experienced by one generation might be transmitted to the next – a 'second generation memory' (Epstein, 1997; Hirsch, 1997; Hoffman, 2005; Karpf, 1997; Wardi, 1992). This work has personal resonance for me as my mother and grandmother were refugees from Hitler's Germany. Through a consideration of how

their experiences as refugees might have impacted on me, I reassessed my landscape painting practice. I came to understand that the way in which I purposefully distanced myself from the original location and then attempted to connect across that distance in the studio was significant. Having understood this I wished to deal more directly with these issues. Most of us have leafed through our family albums trying to imagine life before we were born, knowing that the people and places in these images have changed or have disappeared completely. In my case, there is an added frisson to this, as these albums are some of the few possessions that came with my mother and grandmother to Britain. The choice of locations for my three recent series of work was, in a way, not mine but my German Jewish grandmother's, as using her interwar holiday snaps as stimuli I made fieldwork visits to the same places. Through the catalyst of investigating an intimate family history, of visiting the resorts where my family once holidayed, I found that there is inevitably a link to a wider cultural context and to external events. The first series, *Resort*, was developed after visiting the seaside town of Ahlbeck in northern Germany. I employed the motif of the strandkorb (a special beach chair, typical of this region, that provides protection from the Baltic winds), which featured prominently both in the 1930s photographs and on the present day beach. One aspect of these chairs is that they bring a private world into the public realm: they complicate notions of inside and outside by inviting a consideration of the domestic in the wilderness. In contrast, the second series, entitled *Tense*, takes a lido in a forest as its starting point. In this series of paintings I combine elements of my own family's experience as Jews in Germany during the 1930s, with a consideration of the lido as a place of collective memory and notions of the relation of the private in public and the wider social context are developed further. In the third and final series, *Spectres on the Beach*, which is the one under consideration in this chapter, I have become engrossed with the ways in which familiar, everyday, tourist landscapes and sites of trauma might interconnect. The significant difference is that this time, for my most recent body of work, the setting is a Danish rather than a German resort – this has meant a different nuance for this body of work. The Danish island of Bornholm was popular with German tourists in the interwar years. My grandmother's album contains some yellowing photographs inscribed simply on the back 'Bornholm 1928'; it is these that motivated this work. Bærenholdt reminds us that 'tourism and photography are modern twins and that vacationing is the single event where most snapshot images are made' (Bærenholdt, 2004, p. 69), and another prevalent coupling, since Barthes' influential writing on the *punctum* in Camera Lucida, is that of death and photography (Barthes, 2009).

The coupling of photography with both tourism and death is apposite for my project. Initially, the choice of holiday snapshots as the catalyst for my work was to emphasize the everyday and ordinariness of assimilated, Jewish, pre-war lives, rather than depicting Jews only as victims. My intention in emphasizing the everyday was to avoid a fetishization of sites of trauma. In retrospect this seems naïve, since many places are sites of conflict as well as tourist destinations, and indeed tourist destinations themselves have altered with the growth of 'dark tourism' or thanotourism. I have noted that it is precisely through making paintings and drawings of resort landscapes that I have become very aware that in certain landscapes pleasure and horror seem to be inextricably intertwined (Anderson et al., 2010).

I am mindful of Barbara Bender and Margot Winer's assertion that 'landscapes contain the traces of past activities, and people *select* the stories they tell, the memories and histories they evoke, and the interpretive narratives they weave to further their activities in the present-future' (Bender and Winer, 2001). And also of Pearson and Shanks' invocation to record and represent the grain and patina of place and landscape 'through juxtapositions and interpretations of the historical and the contemporary, the political and the poetic, the factual and the fictional, the discursive and the sensual' (Pearson and Shanks, 2001).

This chapter takes the form of a selection of juxtaposed narratives, or perhaps, more accurately, vignettes – both visual and verbal – which the beaches of the island of Bornholm have triggered. These diverse scenes or 'snapshots' operate in an accumulative way to open up themes of memory, postmemory and haunting in relation to place. In congruence with the uncertainty and complexity of these themes, what emerges is inevitably both speculative and ambiguous.

Haunting and postmemory

My turn to the family album was in part stimulated by Marianne Hirsch's concept of postmemory. Postmemory considers the ways in which one generation might be shaped more strongly by what happened to the preceding generation than what might have actually happened to them (Hirsch, 1997). Drawing on the wide post-Freudian literature of trauma, Hirsch elucidates this inter- or trans-generational memory thus:

> postmemory describes the relationship that the generation after those who witnessed cultural or collective trauma bears to the experiences of those who came before, experiences that they 'remember'

> only by means of the stories, images, and behaviours among which they grew up.
>
> (Hirsch, 2008, p 106)

While Hirsch emphasizes the imaginative, projective and creative investment needed by the second generation (Hirsch, 1996), it is also clear that such activity is not intended to usurp the primary traumatic experience, rather, the creative acts are motivated by a desire to understand, recover and perhaps even to repair. As a landscape painter I considered the *caesura* between the site of experience in the landscape, working at a distance in the studio, and the experience for the audience of mediated landscapes in a gallery setting might be an unconscious playing out of an inherited restlessness or longing to be elsewhere. Visiting sites of photographs in my family album is a more conscious working through of these issues.

For Hirsch, family photographs are a vital ingredient of her psychoanalytically informed thinking of how we might 'remember' traumatic events that took place before we were born (Hirsch, 1997). These material fragments indexing past lives and places invite us to speculate what it must have been like then and there, even though that attempt might ultimately be futile. Hirsch develops this theme in the following way: 'When we look at photographic images from a lost past world, especially one that has been annihilated by force, we look not only for information or confirmation, but also for an intimate material and affective connection' (Hirsch, 2008, p. 116). I find the combination of carefree leisure and suggestions of death inherent in the deferred viewing of these holiday photographs powerful. More recently, Hirsch has refined her thinking to clarify and consider the differences and the relationship between those who are literally second generation and a more general, wider generation of postmemory (Hirsch, 2008). She terms these two types of postmemories as 'familial' and 'affiliative'. This move resonates with the ways in which my own visual exploration of Bornholm exploits how family history can intersect with the wider cultural, social and political scene. If the photographs in family albums can be considered to contain the residues of past lives, then what of the reality of the places they depict, or indeed places in general? The geographer Karen Till has been interested in the concept of what she has termed 'spectral traces' (Jonker and Till, 2009). She considers how we may come into 'contact with past lives through objects, natures, and remnants that haunt the contemporary landscape' (Till, 2010, p. 2). In an approach to place that is both forensic and informed by psychoanalysis, she enquires

how and why these residual marks have been created, left and remembered. She considers that these remnants and traces acquire meaning once they have been discovered and interpreted, and to this end is very interested in the affective role of the creative arts in this understanding. Till's work on spectral traces is informed by the work of Avery Gordon, particularly *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (Gordon, 2008), which offers an extended analysis of haunting which is, again, concerned with the effects of the past in the present and also the marginal, the overlooked and repressed. The work I produce, and that is discussed below, operates through somewhat different spatial registers to those of Till. I seek to explore spectral traces that link different 'episodes of landscape' between the spaces of the holiday in 1928 and my visit in 2010. This work involves relationships between paint, photography, postmemory and place and considers how these might contribute to a sense of self.

Gordon discusses a willingness to follow ghosts; she suggests 'it is about putting life back in where only a vague memory or a bare trace was visible to those who bothered to look' (Gordon, 2008, p. 22). The scenarios which follow could be conceived of as both following and connecting with ghosts. Hirsch and Spitzer offer a 'reparative' reading of their photographs. In their terms, such 'a reading would leave ambiguities unresolved, providing an expanded context for a more affective knowing' (Hirsch and Spitzer, 2006). The work I have made in connection with *Spectres on the Beach* explores how painting and drawing both from the photographs and the locations might contribute to a kind of more affective knowledge of both geography and (post)memory.

Most of us have experienced the way in which revisiting places evokes memories of events that took place there. For many this is extended to a further, seemingly irrational, expectation that we might understand, empathize or even perhaps 'remember' events from the life of another by occupying the same space. Driven by this irrational desire, I went to Bornholm.

Tarmac and concrete

It's my first afternoon on Bornholm; actually, it's probably more like early evening, an early summer evening with pale, clear skies and a surprisingly warm wind. I can smell the warm tarmac on the road, the birds here seem to be very noisy, only an occasional car passes me on the road through the village. I stop to photograph the steep eaves of the houses with their timber-frames and thatched roofs. I notice the newer houses with

bright terracotta-coloured roofs, and peer into the small shops and cafés, I exchange smiles with other walkers. I've decided to walk straight to the beach at Snogebæk, one of the places suggested by my informal online advisors; I know that there is a pier here. When I see it I think that it's possible that the 1920s photograph was taken here, but the concrete and metal of the pier looks much more recent than the structure in the photograph in my hand; of course, it might well have been rebuilt. I walk down the beach, looking at more seabirds of all sorts, at rocks, at how the water seems perturbed, no doubt a projection, and while the colour of the sea further out appears to be a rich blue, closer into the shoreline the sand underneath gives it a dull metallic, brownish-purple undertone. I turn round to look again at the pier from where I think the photographer (my grandfather, my great uncle?) in 1928 might have stood, but I can't be certain. Unsure of this I walk on looking for the lumps of concrete that I have seen and read about in advance. I sit down near a rough concrete lozenge, emerging from the sand, whose shape echoes a nearby red-painted summerhouse. I retrieve my sketchbook and begin to draw.

Swimsuits and cannons

The sort of photographs that triggered the choice of location for *Spectres on the Beach* are familiar to most of us. Held in position on the pages of family albums by yellowing photo corners, these grainy, black-and-white images depict half-remembered or totally unknown relatives in dated swimwear. The series of snapshots relevant here are of two young couples.

They appear crouched near rocks, perched on a cannon, or posing in front of a distant pier, smiling, pouting, laughing and cuddling. The landscape in which they are holidaying is a combination of rocky shoreline and flat expanses of sand. The photographs reveal that it is often windy – hair is ruffled and in some images even stands upright, skirts blow, and in some the rocks are clearly being employed as a windbreak. The skies are cloudless but it is not so warm, as often, rather than swimsuits, richly patterned woollen sweaters and singlets are worn. These photographs are simply marked 'Bornholm 1928' on the reverse, the handwriting very neat, in what is perhaps a Suetterlin-influenced script, the colour of the ink now faded to sepia. I make some drawings from these photographs; this means looking very carefully at the expressions on the young peoples' faces. People often smile in holiday photos, perhaps sending good memories into the unknown future; this becomes all the more poignant when we know with

hindsight what that future was. I remember this photograph was out for years in my grandmother's London bedroom before, one day, it was put away into the album, without comment. I speculate with dark thoughts: perhaps they chose a Danish resort because of the rising anti-Semitism in Germany. Potentially for them, this coastal landscape represents more than Sommerfrische; (the literal translation of this German word for vacation is 'summer fresh') and perhaps, the fresh air they are breathing here is also that of tolerance. As early as the 1920s, Jews were unwelcome visitors in German resorts.

There is not enough visual information in the photographs to pin down precise locations. In advance of my visit I placed the photographs on a number of social network sites devoted to Bornholm asking if anyone recognized the places. I had the widest range of suggestions covering almost the whole island. Each person making a suggestion sounded absolutely certain. The inconclusive task of searching for these particular places became a valuable, if now hidden, aspect of the project as it is the affect of the second-hand, displaced and mediated experience of the second generation in which I am interested. This quest that was destined to fail became, for me, almost a cipher for postmemory, loss and absence. It also ultimately allowed me some freedom of choice as to where to focus my fieldwork and allowing for precisely the kind of imaginative investment which I understand Hirsch to consider as consistent with postmemory. On my visit to Bornholm it seemed every rock was familiar, that every pier must be that one. However, of course, these beaches had continued to exist and change as the histories of the second half of the twentieth century unfolded.

Four views, one place

I've been walking, drawing, painting and photographing on Bornholm for a week now. Today I decided to take a break, and I joined the coachloads who come to the gleaming white Bornholm Art Museum. I've dutifully trudged with them down the well-trodden path to the, rather unexpectedly small (at least to my eye), rocks at Helligdomsklipperne, and I have now turned away from the architect-composed vistas of the sea, trees and shoreline, inventively framed by obliquely angled gallery windows. Two particular artworks have caught my attention. The first is an oil painting from the mid-nineteenth century. There are pale pink and light ochre ruins of a distant castle, their colour enhanced by being offset against the complementary blues and purples of the cloudy sky. These ruins are framed by a

pairing of large, dark trees in the middle ground. These painted representations of ancient gnarled oaks have deep-green foliage on most branches but the artist has chosen to include some dead, leafless branches. Two of these bare, twisted branches seem to gesticulate towards the ruins. Perhaps they were young saplings when the castle was active and have witnessed whatever bloody battles have taken place there. In the middle ground are a group of well-dressed people, earlier tourist-artists perhaps? In top hats, they admire the scene. They, in turn, are observed from the rocky foreground by a labourer, and in the gallery space I look at them all. The second, contrasting, work is a diptych consisting of two black-and-white photographs framed one above the other. In the lower image, a lone, dark, windswept woman stands staring out to sea, her stylish raincoat buckled tightly round her waist; it's windy and some of the fabric of the coat is flapping behind her and her short, neatly cropped hair is blown upright. The image is cropped, there are only breaking waves and sand visible in the composition, and no sky or horizon is included. In contrast, the image above contains only sky, large clouds, perhaps cumulus, with a shaft of light catching one of them; in the bottom-right-hand corner flutters a small swastika on a flagpole.

A tourist landscape, a military landscape, a drawn landscape

Griselda Pollock eloquently reminds us that when we consider landscape, what we see is as much culturally and socially determined as is it an objective analysis of a particular place. She writes: 'The paradox of landscape is that it is both what is other to the human subject: land, place, nature, and yet, it is also the space for projection, and can become therefore, a sublimated self-portrait' (Pollock, 1997, p. 25). As can be seen through the four very varied descriptions outlined in the section above, the landscape of Bornholm is no exception to this and so has been through several incarnations. Bornholm, as a tourist destination, in parallel with the other European coastal resorts, grew in popularity after the Industrial Revolution, in particular after the expansion of the railways and ferry services. Preceding this period, as Jørgen Baerenholt notes, 'Bornholm's "wild" and "rough" landscapes and seascapes were little praised.' It was in 1865, at the height of interest in Romanticism, when German tourists discovered Bornholm. The island was seen as a substitute for the Alps – 'Denmark's Switzerland' (Jensen, in personal communication, 2010). Later on, around 1880, after improvements in transport, the focus turned to the seaside. Making a pertinent link between geology, industry and tourism, Baerenholt points out that the

distinctive geology of Bornholm contributes to this, since Allinge owes its tourism to the development of granite quarries by German businessmen (Bærenholdt, 2004). In the interwar years, German tourists saw the beaches of Bornholm as an alternative to the Mediterranean or a more exotic version of their own Baltic resorts. Nowadays there is an emphasis on wildlife and nature conservation.

However, tourists were not the only travellers who went to these beaches. Bornholm has long been an attractive venue for artists. This interest became intensified in the nineteenth century in line with a wider European aesthetic interest in the sublime. One of the best known of the Danish artists of the period is Anton Kieldrup, whose painting of Hammershus is described above. In the early part of the twentieth century, the Bornholm school of early modernists developed and by the mid-1930s the island was also a haven for the avant-garde, including the Hungarian photographer Judit Karasz, who worked on Bornholm during the German occupation and whose black-and-white photographs caught my attention in the Bornholm Museum.

The island of Bornholm is not alone in being a mixture of tourist idyll and a place of military importance; many islands have been vital for defence. Since it is situated in the Baltic, Bornholm has a particular military significance. The formidable ruins of the medieval Hammershus castle and the contents of the Bornholm defence museum attest to this long-standing military history. During the Second World War Bornholm was occupied by German troops, and shortly afterwards by the Russians. During this period, and to some extent during the Cold War, it became a useful surveillance point due to its position (Baerlein, 1944). After the Second World War large quantities of chemical weapons were dumped in the Bornholm Basin. Further noxious deposits were later made by the East Germans, and these may still have some environmental impact (Sanderson et al., 2011). All this demonstrates how landscapes of pleasure can be disrupted or haunted by traces or remnants of past violence (Jonker and Till, 2009), so concomitantly become dangerous places. Brett Kaplan considers the paradox of the glories of the Obersalzberg landscape above ground and its antithesis below ground: the infamous complex of subterranean bunkers. He writes that the space of the 'functions as an archaeological landscape layers of conflicting, paradoxical history resting within, on top of, between one another' (Kaplan, 2010). I am intrigued by the intertwining of places of pain and places of pleasure. Bearing this contradiction in mind, the seemingly innocent photograph of my grandparents perched on a cannon might be considered to exemplify this duality.

Concrete

Importantly for my project there remain on Bornholm, largely in the dunes, several concrete coastal installations that were built during the German occupation. These have become the subject of my paintings. They might be seen as a counterpoint to the earlier military ruins at the other end of the island at Hammershus, which has long been a subject for both tourist and artist. The former are largely overlooked marginal structures and fragments. Some are lumps of concrete barely indistinguishable from the rocks – these are the remains of a U-boat station. In the dunes, set back in the woods, among the picturesque holiday homes nestled in the trees, are larger more complete concrete structures – one is a rocket launcher. These remnants of the Third Reich have become neglected and sit in close proximity to holiday homes, and this juxtaposition serves as the catalyst for my work in which the remnants operate as an uncanny double of the homes away from home. I first encountered them on YouTube and was struck by the way in which tourists were playing games on these military remains. These types of unresolved residues of past violence disrupt the present, precisely in the ways that Till outlines, as conduits that might trigger contact with past lives (Till, 2010). The rocket launcher, which was never used, put me in mind of the stories of the so-called Scandinavian ghost rockets, one of which is supposed to have crashed on the island in 1946. These ghost rockets were seen in post-war Europe and there is still debate about whether these were the result of meteorite storms or whether they may have come from Soviet-occupied East Germany. What intrigues me is the following suggestion in Marquis Childs' column 'Washington Calling' (Anon, 1947). Writing in 1947 he remarks that these sightings of spectral rockets were considered to have been a kind of collective neurosis:

> Psychologists do not, of course, discount the remarkable suggestibility of the human mind in periods of great stress. Before the rise of Nazism with its sinister accompaniment of mass hypnosis, we like to think we were living in an age of reason and could not be touched by spells and hysteria that formerly swept whole populations. (1947)

For me, the relation between the solid concrete remains and these stories of collective ghosts is intriguing and paradoxical. This relation also has echoes of Hirsch's work on the familial in relation to the wider collective, imaginative investment required of affiliative postmemory. While Hirsch might be considering the cultural after-effects of traumatic

rupture, it seems to me that this kind of imaginative investment can also apply to places.

Reinforced concrete as a building material came into its own in the early part of the twentieth century. Concrete might be utilitarian and military, but it is also much used in creating places of pleasure: lidos, piers, swimming platforms and hotels. The surfaces of the concrete of the rocket launcher and U-boat station still bear the indexical traces of the wood from which they were cast, the material itself tracing the tangible world, preserving residual memories of the materials from which they were cast and the people who were involved in making them. In addition, the surfaces are worn and weathered, and have been marked by visitors. A sense of the uncanny is highlighted by these traces of later human presence in these abandoned remains. For me, marked surfaces of the bunkers call to mind the powerful scene in Alain Resnais' documentary film *Night and Fog*, with the camera lingering over the scored concrete of the gas chambers and the impact of the voiceover intoning: 'The only sign – but you have to know – it is this ceiling, dug into by fingernails. Even the concrete was torn' (Resnais, 2011). My practice references the indexical nature of photography and also, since they image concrete, the indexical qualities of the casting process. Although these are images mediated through the medium of paint, I will be considering the significance of this form of mediation in the following sections.

Look at the light through the trees

In the open-plan gallery space daylight floods in through the floor-to-ceiling corner windows as well as through other, higher, apertures. It's a silvery light, clear but not dazzling, this is March in the UK after all. The clear, very pale, blue sky and the bare, yet to become-leafed, branches move in the wind and make their presence felt inside the space. As it is March the shadows are long and the light on the grey gallery floor looks slightly pink. The paintings and drawings on exhibition in the space might almost have been painted specifically for the space, yet it's quite obvious that they emanate from elsewhere, they are not local. There are richly textured monochrome drawings appearing at first glance to be rocks but on further inspection incorporate geometric forms and striations that are not quite organic. There are also images of concrete among trees, the skies in the paintings are a pale, glittery silvery blue, the trees have acid-green leaves, and the marked and scored concrete surfaces appear a dusky pink. The dramatic lighting in the drawings and the paintings has a filmic quality. The images of the

rough concrete act as a screen for the light and shadows to fall upon – critical here is the relation of the concrete to the trees; in some the landscape is evident as shadows of branches and shifting, dappled light playing across the surface. The works inside and outside are problematized: feral foliage is growing inside and outside the structures; there are paths through but we cannot see where they lead; there are enclosed areas and open areas. This sense of ambiguity is further enhanced by the complexity of the paintings' and drawings' surfaces: they are dense and richly textured, reflecting and shimmering in the different lights. The paintings seem to shift and change when one moves around the gallery, sometimes appearing pink, phosphorescent-green, silvery and iridescent. While using a photographic, and to some extent a perspectival, space in the paintings, this illusion is also subverted. There are different distances created throughout the works: on the whole there is a 'drawing in' then a 'pushing out'. In the case of the paintings this is because of the uncertainty of the glazes and iridescent pigments; in the case of the drawings it is because of the richly textured surfaces. The surfaces operate both as enticement and sometimes as a screen preventing one from seeing. The sort of drawn and painted space both implies distance and yet is also a little claustrophobic. The focus on surface implies that there is something below the surface. Through their subject matter and the processes used to make them, the paintings and drawings complicate and investigate notions of permanent from impermanent, urban from rural, materials from surfaces, figures from ground, inside from outside. For example: from afar the images cohere, the surface at first appears 'sealed' or uniform, but on closer inspection this uniformity is disturbed, fractured and broken up by layers of glazes, some of which appear only in certain lights. The light in the works seems to come from both behind and in front. In some images there is a sense of looking on in a sense of looking out: there are doors, passages and windows in the deserted spaces. There is a sense of narrative but no protagonists in evidence – an empty stage – has the action already happened or is it about to? The scale and purpose of the depicted architectural structures is uncertain. Is this a wall? A city? A habitation? Is this a real, remembered or imagined place? This work depicts a place and is then placed in a gallery and so it also places the viewer.

Illusion and material

One of the compelling paradoxes of painting is that it is both illusion and material. Grant Pooke has recently summarized this discussion:

'Painting is a reflexive and meditative practice which dramatizes an on-going tension between the materiality is the actual pigment and the fictive depth or space it represents' (Pooke, 2010). In addition to this, much painting in the twenty-first century, including my own, embraces and evidences a clear knowledge of photography; the reasons for doing this might vary. The very visceral, corporeal, material nature of paint is in stark contrast to photography. I have speculated whether this transformation from the ghostly to the corporeal may be a way of moving from melancholia to mourning (Anderson et al., 2010). This transformation also acknowledges distancing from the place of direct experience and emphasizes the impossibility trying to connect across that distance. This opens up the possibility of thinking of the work in terms of secondary experience and in relation to postmemorial affect.

Conversations with ghosts

This chapter explores affective ways of remembering, imaging and imagining Bornholm and is accretive in its effect. This way of writing is not only analogous with my cumulative practice of drawing and painting, but must be considered in relation to that practice. David Crouch emphasizes the importance of relationships in our consideration of landscape: 'The emergent landscape evoked in any one location may bear traces of other, earlier experiences there and elsewhere, merging the ways in which landscape happens, relationally' (Crouch, 2010). This could be equally true of experiencing paintings in a gallery. As Pooke clarifies: 'This continual instability as to what painting is or might be necessarily renders any encounter with the medium a discursive and ultimately open ended one' (Pooke, 2010). Both my practice and this chapter make use of the psychoanalytically informed view that relationships leave residues. Like many others, I consider that relationships might be with places as much as with people. I would argue that visual investigations actually become a kind of interrogation of place: operating as a journey to the past through an embodied investigation in the now. I also return to the notion of haunting and am mindful of Tim Edensor's pertinent assertion that 'haunting is not thus merely a psychological projection but is as imbricated in the relationships between people and places . . . and the performances which are required to negotiate them, and it is thus always partly phenomenological' (Edensor, 2005, p. 836). Drawing and painting on location, of

course, is rather more than 'partly' phenomenological. Iain Biggs offers another, related, way in which landscape might be more than a space for projection: echoing Bender and Winer's comments that I cited earlier, he argues that landscape might almost be considered to be in conversation with us:

> [landscapes] are saturated with the sedimented traces of innumerable pasts deposited over lifetimes. In consequence they can become powerful psychic echo-chambers that catch the 'objective' questions we bring to them and subtly bend or change them, bouncing them back to us full of strange reverberations and unexpected resonances.
>
> (Biggs, 2010)

Biggs seems to suggest that through a phenomenological experience of being in a particular place and through what might be embedded in its very materiality, landscape might almost 'answer back'. In a parallel move, Hirsch and Spitzer invoke Paul Celan's longing for a deep listening, a 'hearing deep with your mouth', a bearing witness for the witness, a 'deep active listening that leads not just to response but to the listener's own proclamation' (Hirsch and Spitzer, 2010), and even, perhaps, they argue, to an act of repair. For me, and others, drawing and painting offers one way of first 'deep listening' and then having the kind of conversations to which Biggs refers. Neither the experience of being in a place nor the process of drawing and painting can be over determined. It is a question of a negotiation between the medium, the place and myself. It is the time taken to make these images that forges a memory allowing not only a strong sense of the place on my return but also might offer one way, in Till's words, to accommodate ghosts. It is not only the subject matter, but also the processes involved in making these paintings and drawings that can be considered as residue. These are residues of various encounters in the landscape and residues of past lives. Though this work I exploit both how we might be inhabited *by* our histories, memories and experiences (our own and those of others), and the ways in which places also bear traces of others, both visible and invisible. The paintings and drawing become a place between these psychic traces and the actual traces in the landscape.

Postscript

> *So what did happen to those young people in the photograph? One of the men died in an allied bomb raid in Berlin during the war and the other,*

a doctor, died in 1931 from an illness he contracted in the Berlin hospital in which he worked. His girlfriend escaped to America and the other, my grandmother, fled to England, taking with her a photograph album.

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Part II

Place

Owain Jones and Joanne Garde-Hansen

> And as in the game wherein the Japanese amuse themselves by filling a [] bowl with water and steeping in it little pieces of paper which [] when they come wet, stretch and twist and take on colour and distinctive shape, become flowers or houses or people [] so in that moment [] the good folk of the village and their little dwellings and the parish church and the whole of Combray and its surroundings [] sprang into being [] from my cup of tea.
>
> (Proust, 1996, p. 55)

The previous chapters show some of the innovative ways in which geography and related disciplines/practices have begun to engage with memory as a central aspect of everyday life practice (see also Atkinson, 2007; Dodgshon, 2008; Johnson, 2005; Legg, 2007). There has also been a renewed focus on a range of spatial registers/processes in relation to memory, such as national identity and race (Pred, 2004; Tolia-Kelly, 2010); its memorialization and contestation (Legg, 2005; Mitchell, 2003; Till, 2003); memory and cities (Crang and Travlou, 2001); historical landscapes (Della Dora, 2008); tourist landscapes (DeLyser, 2003); and place and memorialization (Hoskins, 2007; Mitchell, 2003). Given the violent (post)colonial experiences of modern history, and associated conflicts, slaughters, displacements, diasporas and migrations, it is not surprising that work has focused on certain key events and their fallout, such as the slave trade, the Holocaust and the break-up of the British Empire (Blunt, 2005). The geopolitics of war (Curti, 2008) and their accompanying geomemories are painful, fraught and ongoing. James Sidaway (2009) usefully summarizes the 'enormous literature' on memory and war. In this we are offered pointers on 'the

wider relationships between memory, performance, monuments, political transformation, and public space' (Sidaway, 2009, note, p. 19). Now being added to these studies of war, memory and history is a litany of troubled, displaced, remembered and forgotten lives due to environmental- and climate-change-driven loss and displacement (see Cannavò's 2008 treatment of Hurricane Katrina).

Place (broadly defined), then, represents a very powerful and important intersection of memory and geography. Places can be, in one (common) sense, reasonably considered as relatively stable, identifiable and known physical spaces, for example, a city, a district, a house, a defined landscape, and many small-scale spaces, such as a room, or even a corner of a room. They may be one of Horton and Kraftl's cupboards, DeSilvey's mines, mineshafts and mining landscapes, Maddrell's seascapes, or Tucker's haunted beaches. Yet, places also have to be seen as ongoing temporal processes where all manner of things combine in unique unfolding formations which remain interconnected to the wider world in terms of flows and connections in and out. Recently, some geographers have been keen to portray places/landscapes as temporal processes as much as they are spatial entities (Amin and Thrift, 2002; Massey and Thrift, 2003), with distinctive patterns forming out of intersecting passages of all manner of human and non-human traffic. If anything, memory becomes more critical still in weaving such places together.

Places are then as much about time as space, and as much about topology (networks) as topography (contiguous space). Memory plays a crucial role in both these formations of place and interconnects them. Memory forms one of the key ways in which places are temporal entities, but also underpins their spatial identity. Senses of place, belonging and dwelling all rest on memory within location. Displacement and diaspora, 'topicide' and 'domicide' (Porteous and Smith, 2001) are processes where the memory of place is challenged and/or set against what has changed and what has been lost. Places are also arenas where the differing memories of individuals, families and larger social groups fold together in a range of ways.

Notions of being-in-place are powerful, even fundamental, to everyday life (Casey, 1993). And memory is centrally important to just about all ideas of place (Creswell, 2004) and landscape. Both are based upon some notion of knowable (remembered) physical space that is distinguished from that around it by having a unique configuration – a city, district, park, house or vista: a place where something special happened (first kiss or the death of a loved one).

Yet something of the bypassing of place and memory is evident in recent (deservedly) influential (non-representational-related) writings on landscape, such as Wylie (2005, 2009) and Sebald (1998). These writings offer rich performative and (post)phenomenological accounts of being-in-landscape, opening up embodied practices (walking, climbing, sitting, looking and engaging with the immediate materiality, and with history). In some ways they offer hidden histories and connectivities of the landscapes and the conceptual milieu that walkers carry with them. But what is striking about the articles is that the landscapes are not previously intimately and/or habitually known to the writers. They come to these places as strangers. This does not devalue these accounts, for the strangeness and the immediacy of landscape is key. But we feel that these works would have had to be markedly different if these were familiar places to the writers through their own memories – maybe as landscapes of childhood or as walked with a lover in previous times. Most people live and work in landscapes familiar to them and thus their immersion in them is temporal and memorial as well as performative, embodied and spatial. As Raymond Williams (1985, p. 72) says:

> The landscape takes on a different quality if you are one of those who remember. The scenery is [...] never separate from the history of the place, from the feeling for the lives that have been lived there.

Therefore, as Saramago (2009, p. 13) stresses, when considering a known landscape we are never just in 'the precise moment when the landscape lies in front of us' but are strung out in time through 'memory and modes'.

In Chapter 5, Elisabeth Roberts demonstrates how the mode of photographing a beachscape shapes, and is inherited by, a family. The sharing of a framed photograph of a very specific place (only meaningful to the family in question) becomes a mode of exchange between family members and consolidates (in this case) relationships. Roberts' 'Family photographs: memories, narrative place' introduces key ideas around the temporal and spatial malleability, and visual and synaesthetic elements, of memory that are produced by sharing a place. Family memories and narratives about particular places are constitutive of our sense of self, even as each of these things is constantly reworked, half forgotten, retold and blurred. In sum, the photographic encounter provides a productive moment to engage particularly with the visual elements of the relationship between memory, narrative, place and self. Through personal interviews that use current photos of different

places, Roberts moves away from the family as producing a collective memory and embraces individual experiences and practices in order to better understand how memories continuously shape, and are shaped by, ordinary places.

Less everyday, but still keen to emphasize the tensions between personal and collective memory in the inheritance and production of place, Iain Biggs' chapter, 'The Southdean Project and Beyond – essaying site as memory work', reflects upon a six-year research/art project and offers the Methodology of practice-led research to understand the criss-crossing of cultural memory and archaeology in the Scottish Borders region. Following Casey's (1993) ideas about experimental living within a changing culture, Biggs uses material traces of a parish's history and archaeology alongside narratives, cultural artefacts and cultural memories in order to show up the potential that creative practice and performative research has in articulating personally and spatially located interrelationships between memory, landscape, culture and identity.

The time-deep approach in Biggs' chapter is reciprocated in Chapter 7, ' "The Elephant Is Part of Us and Our village": Reflections on Memories, Places and (Non-) Spatial Objects' by Marc Redepenning. Here weirdness and reverie take the form of the curious death of an elephant in the late 1850s in a small village in Thuringia, east Germany. The elephant, Miss Baba, was the main attraction of a mobile menagerie, when the sick and suffering animal passed away in the village of Niederroßla. The village's identity as the place of this elephant is deeply incorporated into the biographies of the villagers (that is, in local memorials, on houses' facades or in decorations). The self-description of the villagers is very often is centred on the elephant as a silent object, but it is also celebrated at a feast, the Elefantenfest, that takes place once every 25 years. Redepenning's understanding of the uniqueness of place as deeply embedded in the interacting histories of the event and memories of villagers, draws on in-depth interviews with local inhabitants in relation to the 2007 feast. He explores how the elephant is figured as a unique object that gives continual meaning to people who are still suffering in some degree from German post-reunification challenges, such as out-migration of young people, decline of local jobs and commuting to the old federal states. Here, individual memory is in a larger longer history of memory which gives a place (a local community) an ongoing and defining characteristic.

The final chapter in this section takes us from Germany to Virginia, USA. Here, terri moreau and Derek H Alderman, in 'Graffiti Heritage: Civil War Memory in Virginia' scratch beneath the surface of The Battle

of Brandy Station in Virginia, the location of the largest cavalry battle during the American Civil War, to discover a rich history of war graffiti. The station building of their place-based research was occupied at different times by both Northern and Southern troops and used as a hospital to mend the wounded soldiers. Northerners and Southerners literally left their marks on Brandy Station through inscriptions on the building's walls. Now known as the Graffiti House, it has been added to the National Register of Historic Places and volunteers work hard to preserve the civil war graffiti and weave stories about the individuals who left their marks. Visitors with civil war heritage are welcome to leave their marks as their ancestors did. Chapter 8 interrogates these inscription practices in their creation of a materialized place-memory through cultural agglomeration of the visible layers of connection and commentary.

In the chapters in this section, memories of changing habitations – of a past significant (personal/family) rural landscape, of a village's changing relationship with a strange past incident, and of past national conflict which projects material traces into local memorial landscapes and contemporary lives – are all considered. The emphasis here is on place, location and commitment to the landscape through personal articulations of public memory.

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5

Family Photographs: Memories, Narratives, Place

Elisabeth Roberts

Introduction

At Christmas my brother-in-law gave my parents a framed photograph comprising three images of beachscapes (Figure 5.1). At first glance, I thought this was a strange choice of gift. The images were attractive but seemed generic. Although he is a keen photographer and had obviously taken the pictures himself, I could not help wondering why he had chosen them. My mother was also unsure how to respond and my sister intervened, prompting my parents to look closely at the individual photographs. It became apparent they had been taken at a particular beach – the figures of my parents could be identified in the background of one, and the striking 'dragon's teeth' that run the length of the beach dominated another. Our reception to the gift changed as the images gained meaning through being tied to this specific place: a place that held considerable significance within the family.

At least three generations have now come to invest this place with special meanings, of being together with family, as a place of childhood, but also somewhere ashes have been and will be scattered. With this photograph, my brother-in-law was able to enter into this symbolic world of shared family memories, stories and, most importantly, pleasures associated with 'togetherness', thereby ingratiating himself into the family's cohesive myths. I am not suggesting this was done at a conscious level, but rather that this is one way photographs can supplement and produce – 'in the moment of sharing' (Kuhn, 1995, p. 22) – family stories, memories and families themselves. The example here also highlights that photographs, the taking and display of, are always in-place, of a place and making a place. Even the photographed self is emplaced, even if only in a memory.

Figure 5.1 Photograph of three images of beachscapes, Friog, Wales
Source: Author.

In this chapter, I consider the particular role of photographs – the taking of, the looking at, displaying and talking about – and their relation to memory, in contributing to narratives of self, family and place. I argue photographs and the practices that surround them create spaces where personal and family identities are constituted, negotiated and revised. These photographic enactments have been seen to consolidate family relationships and contribute to shared experiences of place (Hallman et al., 2007; Rose, 2003). More broadly, memory and photography have been linked in terms of family narratives with photographs acting as ways of remembering but also as producing memory (Hirsch, 1981; Kuhn, 1995; Sandbye, 2000). Through memories and stories drawn out from photographs, family 'myths' are developed through which individual family members understand themselves and their relation to places and others. Current literature finds memories and narratives of self to be emergent through being '*in* place' and deeply tied to the materiality and physicality of place (Basu, 2005; Della Dora, 2008; Harrison, 2007; Pile, 2002). The materiality and situated aspect of photographs themselves is increasingly recognized as important to the way in which we view them (Della Dora, 2009; Rose, 2003; Tolia-Kelly, 2004). It is less clear,

however, what happens when place is represented in a photograph. The relationship between the viewing self and time has been explored in some detail (Barthes, 1993; Bergson, 2004; Deleuze, 1989), but the question of place is less developed. Does a different type of immersion or emplacement occur when looking at photographs of place and what types of memories are involved in this process?

The relationship between photographs and family stories about place provides a vivid illustration of the figuration of memory developed in this book as emergent, constitutive and multidirectional; autobiographical yet simultaneously negotiable, partial, intersubjective and embodied. Memory, in this chapter, forms part of imaginative geographies where individual and collective (family) memories are immanent and entwined. I examine this intertwining more closely, inspired by recent autoethnographic research which embraces creative writing, especially autobiographical forms (Bochner and Ellis, 2000; Gannon, 2006; Richardson, 2000). I narrate three personal photographic encounters as productive moments to engage particularly with this theory. My family photographs were taken at a recurring holiday destination called Friog on the Welsh coast that, as the encounter which opened the chapter describes, is the source of considerable stories and a place of 'family myth'. In what follows, I offer a sense of this memory-place, Friog, and the 'memory work' (Kuhn, 1995) undertaken as a particularly apt method to explore multidirectional memory and the relationship between photographs and family narratives of place.

Memory work

Friog is a village on the Irish Sea occupying a central position in Cardigan Bay, mid-west Wales. Next to it is the small rundown beach resort of Fairbourne. With the completion of the Cambrian Coast Line and Barmouth Bridge, which crosses the Mawddach Estuary roughly an hour's walk north, it was designated as a holiday destination for factory workers from the Midlands in the late 1800s. The caravan sites at Friog are separated from the two-mile sandy beach by only a single-lane road and the raised concrete wall and dragon's teeth were built in the Second World War as a defence against German invasion. Between the road and the cliffs is a line of mismatched chalets, with views out to sea. Originally built for soldiers, their replacements are now used as holiday homes. This site of uncountable family holidays is particularly meaningful for each family member individually but is also impossible to disassociate from family and togetherness.

To better explicate this intermingling of family and personal memory, and thus identity, through our shared notion of Friog, informal memory work was undertaken, predominantly by myself, in liaison with family members together and individually. This memory work forms the autobiographical memory-stories introducing the chapter's sections. They segue into the more theoretical discussions that follow, acting as catalysts for analysis and the development of ideas. Before I move on to discuss why this approach to memory is most appropriate, especially in relation to family photographs and narratives of place, I would first like to give a sense of the shared nature of the place and the imaginative geographies created through our inherited family narratives. Here are some excerpts:

> *As a small child we used to stay in the chalets, Morawellen and the one at the opposite end. We started to go there as a family as my mother had been to stay during the war with her sister, my Auntie Florence, and her husband Arthur. I remember my mother Gladys saying that they went on the train from Chester to Morfa Mawddach, the nearest station along the old railway line.*
>
> (Philip)

> *When I first started going there I didn't think it was a very pretty place, the dragon's teeth and the concrete wall are not very attractive, but when the sun is shining and the sea is blue and you can see all the surrounding mountains really clearly, then it is quite a majestic sight. You can see Cader Idris and a whole range of mountains in Snowdonia.*
>
> (Jane)

> *I have strong feelings for Friog tied very much to the people who I have shared it with. I get quite emotional about it, it's been part of my childhood, part of my relationship with nana and grandpa, part of my relationship with the sea and the coast and the mountains.*
>
> (Helen)

Even these short quotations powerfully acknowledge that the meaning of this place is bound to the people that it has been shared with, and that storying our memories is a social activity through which the meaning of place is produced.

Following the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, many theorists have come to see memory as collective: 'an expression and active binding force of group identity' (Hoelscher and Alderman, 2004, p. 349).

To date, this social memory has been understood variously as national, historical or popular, often focusing on top-down 'grand narratives' where powerful elites control what is remembered and forgotten (Booth, 2008, p. 301) or public debates, resistance to, and 'conflicts around notable monuments or commemorations' (Della Dora, 2008, p. 218). As such, they are less interested in how individual or personal memory figures in the collective one. However, the method for this chapter is based on the premise that:

> the personal memory of an individual is perceived as enmeshed within a whole, ultimately indivisible from its contextual webwork, yet personally unique and situationally distinctive. As such, a focus on the personal remembrance of an individual can provide insights into memories and meanings beyond that of the individual.
>
> (Booth, 2008, p. 300)

In this sense, the 'personal is political' (Radstone, 2005) as 'memory work' follows leads in intertextual webs (Kuhn, 1995) and closely examines the environmental (the places of memory) and contextual (including objects like photographs) cues that memory is dependent on. Memory work originated as a feminist, group method involving collective analysis of autobiographical written memories. The main precept is that because the self is socially constructed through reflection, memories provide researchers with data with which they can engage, even converse (Onyx and Small, 2001). Recent autoethnographic work adopts the method, starting with 'highly personal accounts that draw upon the experience of the author/researcher for the purposes of extending sociological understanding' (Sparkes, 2002). Importantly, written into this autobiographical writing is the acknowledgement that a 'fully aware, or fully intentional author' is an impossibility (Gannon, 2006; Wall, 2008), yet we understand our experience through creating narratives of self (Fivush and Haden, 2003; Heddon, 2008; King, 2000). An approach that 'disputes the normally held division of self/other, inner/outer, public/private, individual/society, and immediacy/memory' (Sparkes, 2002) seems pertinent to examine the role of photography at the intersection of individual memory and family narratives of place. By combining visual theory and memory studies with cultural geographies I am emphasizing the relationship between photography and place, and the role of associative and immanent memories as forming families' imaginative geographies. Such geographies begin with family photography.

Figure 5.2 Photograph of author as a baby wearing sun hat and sitting in a washing-up bowl, Friog, Wales
Source: Author.

For example, there is a photo of me as a baby wearing only my sun hat sitting in a washing-up bowl of water outside the chalet the family used to own at Friog (Figure 5.2).

I cannot possibly remember this at a personal level because it occurred at such a young age, but the photograph is recalled often (possibly because I look so ridiculous/cute) and so I feel as though I remember it – in contemporary Euro-American societies, autobiographical memory emerges at around three-and-a-half years of age (Pillemer and White, 1989 in Nelson, 2003). I have much the same feeling with many of the memories I have of this particular 'childhood' place. Stories that others relay and photographs I have seen inform my own memories and are intermingled as mine. Through conversations reminiscing over past events and episodes, we collectively recall ourselves as a family. Thus, photographs, alongside memories and stories, are not only inherited through generations of families and communities, but families 'create themselves through memory practices like photography; by defining their memory, they define themselves' (Tebbe, 2008, p. 201).

To explore how family photography practices are tightly woven with personal/collective understandings of memory, self and place, three

connected arguments from interdisciplinary literature will be successively developed. First, memory's role in storied experience. Second, place as constitutive of our memories and stories. Latterly, the disruptive, transportive quality of photographs. The significance of places, and how photography takes part in family performances of place, illustrates that photographs – a form of prosthetic memory – operate at the juncture between personal and collective memory in the way they are remembered, storied and inherited in families. How we view photographs is inextricably linked to our personal memories and our shared narratives. The significance of places, and how photography takes part in family performances of place, illustrates that photographs – a form of prosthetic memory – operate at the juncture between personal and collective memory in the way they are remembered, storied and inherited in families. How we view photographs is inextricably linked to our personal memories and our shared narratives.

Narrative selves

Memory, as an 'activity we perform constantly without being aware of it' is an integral part of our experiential selves, little considered until it fails us (Schouten, 2006, p. 272). Maintaining a consciousness of the past is 'essential to maintenance of purpose in life, since without memory we would lack all sense of continuity, all apprehension of causality, all knowledge of our identity' (Lowenthal, 1985, p. 103 in Gough, 2004, p. 238). One significant way this is possible is through the creation of narratives of self which enable a 'continuity of consciousness' to be maintained (Lury, 1998, p. 105). In theories of subjectivity, the self is increasingly recognized as continually reconstituted, rearticulated and refigured with each new experience (Belsey, 2003; Butler, 2005; Hall, 2004). In other words, a sense of self can be found in the continual evolution and re-articulation of our selves. This means memories are equally reworked and rearticulated. But there is some debate over the extent to which memory itself takes an autobiographical and/or narrative form (Nelson, 2003).

Remembering through narratives seems to suggest that memory is only experienced through (universal or shared) language, to the extent that 'we narrate to ourselves in an episodic, sometimes semiconscious, but virtually uninterrupted monologue' (Brooks, 1984, p. 3 in Basu, 2005, p. 137). Yet, not all everyday memories are retained in our self-stories. As I show later, they can sometimes disturb the chronology of these autobiographies. Memories are also understood to be embodied, fragmentary and episodic. Never a 'completed work', they are an

ongoing montage of 'scraps' given meaning through narratives (Boric, 2002) but are not necessarily remembered only through a conscious narrative structure. Narrative in this sense actually blocks true 'remembering' (Barthes, 1993; Nelson, 2003). For example, 'episodic memories', which describe an individual's re-experience of the past, are likened to the immersive quality of reveries and involuntary memory, relying on a conscious sense of an 'extended self' in time and space (Nelson, 2003). Likewise, re-memories occur when scents, sounds or sights (like photographs) 'metonymically transport you' to a family place you may never even have been (Tolia-Kelly, 2004, p. 316). These types of memory (returned to later) are embodied, sensory, immersive and, significantly, have a vivid visual aspect, and it is, of course, the visual dimension that primarily links photography and memory. It is Haverkamp (1993, p. 266) who argues that the photograph performs the metaphor of the mind's eye, and like memory it is an apparatus that provides us with a saturated visual reconstruction of the past. Yet, there can be no unmediated vision when referring to the past (Wolfreys, 2007, p. 23), and photographs can be consistent with our memories or they can disrupt and challenge how we remember things. They may even cause us to remember things that did not happen (Wade et al., 2002) sparking memories that do not belong to us (Barthes, 1993; Tolia-Kelly, 2004).

Photographs are, thus, more than illustrations or supplements to our narratives, as they prompt, play against and trouble memories (Hall, 2006). They are vital mechanisms to memory, becoming 'charged' with it (Tolia-Kelly, 2004). Understood through, as well as constituting (becoming or substituting) our memories, they often prompt memories that may not otherwise be recalled (Rose, 2003, p. 13). It has been argued that people find it difficult to remember at all without mementos like photographs to objectify their memory (Gough, 2004). As a 'technology of memory outside the brain', photography gives individuals:

> the capacity to 'remember', not simply by providing storage space outside the brain but by stimulating our neurological storage processes in particular ways; in this manner, we have become genuine cyborgs with what several authors have called 'prosthetic' memories.
> (Olick, 1999, pp. 42, 343)

Landsberg describes these prosthetic memories as 'not strictly derived from a person's experience' but 'nevertheless experienced with a person's body as a result of an engagement with a wide range of cultural technologies' (2004, p. 26). They operate at the overlap between

collective narratives and autobiographical selves as points at which both can be reworked, highlighting the fragile, even fictional, construction of our memory-stories and how they inform our 'sense of self'. Thus, photographs also affect the way we understand ourselves and the places we occupy.

Place-memories

Photographs and stories are performances in which the physicality or materiality of a memoried place is strengthened and brought into focus as a distinct and shared place; that is, the same place for everyone. Simultaneously, it exists on the individual level as a different place for everyone, and multiple places too. In the sunshine, Friog is very different from when it is raining. But mutual and shared narratives bring place into a coherent identity. Thus, places become 'charged' with memory and are constituted through shared memories and stories. Malpas (2009), in fact, equates the unfolding of memory to the unfolding of place, noting how memories orient us. Pile (2002) equally stresses that place is not merely a backdrop for memory and narratives of self but is constitutive of them. Space (or place) is reformulated as 'an ongoing product of interconnections, open and unfinished, a heterogeneity of practices and processes, "a simultaneity of stories-so-far" ' (Massey, 2005, p. 107). Memory is then 'nuanced and affect laden, connecting people whose lives have been shaped by common place-specific experience' (Kearns et al., 2010, p. 733). We experience place as 'an intertwining of ourselves with that place; an intertwining of memories, both personal and collective, with the physicality of place' where memory is infused with physicality and place with mentality (Creswell, 1994 in Booth, 2008, p. 299). One way that place and memory are interlaced is through situated 'bodily repetition and the intensification of everyday acts' (Connerton, 1989 in Hoelscher and Alderman, 2004, p. 350). Memory is an embodied or routinized activity, where, after Bourdieu, 'the subject who acts and the subject who perceives the act function within the same inherited frames, their behaviours constituting a form of corporeal remembering' (Counsell, 2009, p. 2) linked to the place it is enacted. Such ritual-based performances are not only at a national or memorial level, though, as every family practises its own 'mundane' rituals, remaking their relationships and group identities through anniversaries or returning to the same place for holidays. In my holiday place, Friog, one set of routines is replaced by another more pleasurable set. We might understand this particular relationship to place by thinking of it as (an extension of) home, a place of familiarity created

through ongoing family relations and routines (Bhatti et al., 2009; Tolia-Kelly, 2004, p. 324). Heddon (2008) further suggests that a sense of place (as familiarity, nostalgia) *is* a sense of past, which makes 'home' the site-specific collections and enactment of families' memories. Holiday practices are ritualized and repeated (albeit with difference), particularly through photography, and as such produce a sedimentation of place.

Photographing family places

Although photographs are only ever fragments of events and stories, acting more as a 'junction between personal memory and social history, public myth and personal unconscious' (Hirsch, 1981, pp. 13–14), they are an important aspect of the ways that families reconstruct past events, identities and places. The family photograph has been largely theorized as a work of editing the messiness of real life into an outward presentation of a coherent and happy familial unit (Chalfen, 1987; Van Dijck, 2007; Bourdieu, 1990, p. 26 in Rose, 2003; Slater, 1995). These comprise family rituals of which the taking of photographs forms an important part, consisting of 'firsts' (first birthday, tooth, steps, and so on) and other key events such as weddings and holidays (Rose, 2003). For Hallman et al. (2007), photography provides opportunities for families to enact, while also capturing, their family experience, as these images often depict a 'shared experience' of place and operate under a 'family gaze'. The 'familial gaze' is a term coined by Marianne Hirsch (1981) as 'the set of visual interrelations that constitute both the subjects and the viewer of the photographs as members of the family group' determined by the ideology of the family (Long, 2003, p. 10).

Families do not just take photographs of the beach or the zoo, but these places are also produced as family spaces through the photographs being taken. Similarly, the display of family members in photograph frames arguably turns a house into a home, while social media like facebook and Flickr allow us to present an outward image of coherence, togetherness and happiness. Through such virtual sites, accessible from anywhere, viewing and display does not necessarily happen in the home, and with the increasing mobility and dispersal of families they offer a unique family space, enabling 'empathy at a distance' (Garde-Hansen et al., 2009, p. 11).

However, the materiality of sifting through albums and packs of old photographs might provide a different kind of recollection as site-specific signs that metonymically transport you to faraway places or where the physicality and emotional resonances of past places are brought close to home. As Van Dijck (2007) notes, the 'concrete content'

of a shoe box of photographs and memorabilia is very different from its digital form. Most significantly here, photographs are forms of shared memory; whether on the Internet or through discussions between family members, each performs a reiteration of place and the people in it. Photographs and memories are collectively and individually informed and reworked. Family photographs and the memory-stories constructed around them offer a particularly illuminating example of this, as I discovered in my own memory work of Friog.

Theorists of collective memory have paid relatively little consideration to the types of inherited memory and shared narratives produced by families. As Tebbe notes, we 'have yet to fully engage in the dynamics of family and personal memory' (2008, p. 197). Redressing this neglect, Nelson argues that individual memory (autobiographical) serves a 'cultural function, through shared narratives, producing mythic structures that have served as the cohesive glue of cultural groups' (2003, p. 127). Personal and collective memories are 'held within a fusion of cultural myths' (Booth, 2008, p. 299) and families, after all, 'are cultures, or *minicultures*' (Goodall, 2005, p. 508), so narratives, likewise, can act as family glue (although they can also be a point of contention and rupture). As a form of 'narrative inheritance' (Goodall, 2005, p. 497) these memories constitute family myths, as 'intersubjective remembrances' and 'imaginative geographies' (Booth, 2008, p. 30). It is the 'intermingling of myth and memory that sustains every family' and, in turn, constitutes the individual (Figes, 2008, p. 123). Individual memory, then, is 'subject to ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing, and borrowing' (Rothberg, 2009, p. 3). This conceptualization makes it difficult to ascertain whether the memories ascribed to childhood photographs are independent of family cues and suggestions (Olick, 1999, pp. 334–335). This uncertainty is highlighted in my sun-hat baby photograph that the section began with.

Photographs are a talking point, providing an opportunity to share memories. It is through acts of quibbling and forgetting that families are able to reconstruct past events together. Through asking each other questions like 'what year did this happen?' and 'where exactly was that?', individual memories are drawn on and potentially troubled by the contradictory recollection of a different family member. Chronology is significant in this kind of shared storying, but in reality the past merges and individual occasions may lose their clarity to become 'general events' which 'give an impression of how things used to be, intensifying the nostalgic quality of the process of looking back' (Schouten, 2006, p. 276) and cause a 'condensing' of place (Casey, 2000).

For example, at Friog there is a sense of import in sharing stories about what this place was like previously and on noting the gradual (or abrupt) changes that happen with each visit. Keeping a record of these changes and passing on stories is a way of sharing that cements relationships. Further, these stories, I suggest, continually remake this place. I cannot remember being at the chalet where the sun-hat photo was taken. It is a sort of inherited or borrowed memory and, in fact, my grandparents bought a different chalet further onto the beach when I was still a baby. But it has been part of the holiday itself to remember such events, with the chalet itself, among other places, acting as prompts to remember photographs and stories. Therefore, memory can be understood as produced and renegotiated through our own and collective storying, particularly about photographs which, themselves, have been described as intertexts interwoven with autobiographical and shared narratives. The types of memories that disrupt these, mentioned tangentially to this point, now become the focus.

Affective memories

I recently rediscovered a particular photograph of my mother taken approximately ten years ago on a beach in New Zealand (Figure 5.3).

In the black-and-white portrait she is paddling in the surf, her trousers rolled up. She is smiling directly and openly at the camera (and viewer). Her posture and gaze is totally relaxed. I can clearly situate this photograph within the wider chronology and geography of the holiday. We had just been sandboarding at Ninety Mile Beach, North Island. Afterwards, we got back on the organized coach tour, a sojourn from the backpacking road-trip we were undertaking. Yet, it is not this particular context that makes the photograph significant or explains the 'emotional register' in which I viewed it. The liveliness – almost movement – of the figure, and the vividness of my recollection, seems strange juxtaposed with the still, vast and deserted background of beachscape. Although I had skimmed past many images, it was this photo that caused me to stop and made an impression. In this instance, the photograph is, again, not merely supplementary to narrative or illustrative of existing memories but is performative in its own right, producing new meanings. I realized that it is the combination of my mother and the beach, this familiar, nostalgic seaside motif that contains these effects. This was our last holiday as a family, and perhaps to see my mother on the beach will always, on some level, return/transport me to Friog.

Figure 5.3 Photograph of author's mother on a beach in New Zealand
Source: Author.

Indeed, such photographs might lack any conscious meaning and instead affect me bodily. Rose notes that '[i]mages are encountered through a number of registers that far exceed the discursive: the bodily, the sensory, the psychic and the emotional' (2004, p. 551). Memory is shown as an important part of a viewer's response to an image beyond what they represent (Rose, 2003). Able to materialize memory in the present, this photograph creates 'the affective tenor of an "illogical" new "space-time category", this "conjunction between the here-now and the there-then" ' (Barthes, 1993 in Rose, 2003, p. 14). It gives 'an appearance up close, even though what appears in it may be far away' geographically and temporally; a photograph's 'aura' is 'triggered by its being in

our hands, in front of our eyes' (Haverkamp, 1993, p. 273). Memory is 'imagined and remembered through the body' (Bhatti *et al.*, 2009, p. 71), taking the shape of 'interactions between haptic perception, the senses, tactile experiences, and movement' (2009, p. 72). In multiple ways, then, my family photography 'allows [for my] tactile contact with the family past' and places of family togetherness (Tebbe, 2008, p. 201). Indeed, photographs are latent with 'affordances' and the potentiality for enacting the types of embodied and place-memory discussed earlier. 'Affordance' is meant here as a 'potential movement', 'pre-performance' or intensity where the act of looking can 'exert a pull, drawing the body forward into a movement the body already feels itself performing before it actually stirs' (Gibson in Massumi, 2004, p. 324).

The New Zealand beach photo generates and contains traces of other beach memories, childhood memories and intertexts. The photograph occupies both a 'generic' and a 'particular' beach-place, operating through unique temporal and spatial malleability. It affects the feel of a place, a sense of being-in-place, through the memory of place. I am metonymically transported to a general yet specific 'place', virtual but simultaneously material, and real through the sensations it invokes. Pictorial representations, through their presence as material objects, can be charged with memory, and have the capacity to take us out of place and occupy multiple places. And although still photographs, which seem to freeze time and fix what they depict as past, seem counterposed with personal, episodic memory or reverie (which involve a sense of an extended-self in time and immersed in place), particular photographs can powerfully evoke memories of a past environment or scene. Different images will produce this sensory immersion for different people, consuming and taking them 'outside action', or the present, to a different 'time-space' (Jones, 2005). Site-specific enactments of memory, including those of taking, displaying and looking at photographs are, then, 'heavily grounded', interacting with the materiality of that place (Della Dora, 2008, p. 218). Furthermore, when a photograph produces a place, and prompts or interrupts memory, we become immersed in 'different possible worlds' (Clarke and Doel, 2007, p. 590) or imaginative geographies through the materiality of our own.

My beach photo acts as a 'momentarily immobilizing encounter' where I am simultaneously transfixed and transported – a moment of enchantment (Bennett, 2001, p. 104). At first, I was not able to assimilate the sensory and embodied memories I experienced into the narrative of the New Zealand holiday. My viewing is affected by more than this recollection, but by a wider assemblage of meanings, relations, contexts,

tonalities and intertexts, both personal and collective. The memories evoked by a photo 'do not simply spring out of the image itself, but are generated in a network, an intertext of discourses that shift between past and present, spectator and image, and between all these and cultural contexts' (Kuhn, 1995). Photographs, then, speak to our 'transubjectivity' (Bhatti et al., 2009, p. 66) as they occupy a strange place between the objective material and the social, psychic and sensory. The image, here, is 'neither a "brute reality" nor a subjective "representation", but something in between: something that lives in a vibratory space of relationality' (Bhatti et al., 2009, p. 66). This vibratory space describes how the ordinary and everyday can take on personal significance and be experienced as extraordinary, disruptive, uncanny or enchanting (Armstrong, 1992; Barthes, 1993; Bennett, 2001). Photographs can sit on shelves, comforting but unnoticed and be *like*-ed by friends online, but rarely disrupt and transform the act of self-narrating and memorializing in this immediate and immobilizing way. My mother's photo is uniquely animated by embodied place-memories. These are not conscious, deliberate memories, sifted through to recall, but are those 'just there': cups of tea *al fresco*, cornflakes at the chalet, massive jellyfish, speedboats made in the sand, the smell of seaweed, the feel of the stone wall, and counting the carriages on the trains as they come round the side of the mountain. These are my memories sedimented into the particular feel of Friog.

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6

The Southdean Project and Beyond – 'Essaying' Site as Memory Work

Iain Biggs

Introduction

This chapter offers a reflective account of the production of my artist's book *Between Carterhaugh and Tamshiel Rig* (Biggs, 2004). This book is one outcome of my Southdean Project, engaging with a physical site just north of the English–Scottish border and with a fictional site central to the traditional Borders ballad *Tam Lin*, which deals with fairy capture, love and magical transformation, all framed within the context of an early medieval quasi-pagan Borders culture. These two sites are important because one belongs to a physical archaeological heritage that is rapidly being lost while the other paradoxically continues to exist within the fictional context of the ballad.

In what follows, the introduction locates the chapter in relation to both the circumstances that initiated the project and a position exemplified by Yi-Fu Tuan's *Place, Art, and Self* (2004a). Section one then establishes the relationship between song and Paul Ricoeur's conception of 'traditionality' and memory that underwrites the function of *Tam Lin* as a model through which the project engages with place. The work of Geraldine Meaney (2010) and Jane Bennett (2001) is referenced to set out how *Tam Lin*, as both subject of and model for the book, as a process of 'deep mapping' engaged with 'at-home-ness', is able to intervene in social processes of memory and forgetting. Section two advances this account by discussing memory work as a form of deep mapping conceived of as an 'essaying' – a term linked to the sociologist of culture Janet Wolff (1995) and the philosopher of place Edward S Casey (1993). Section three deals with issues of memory, material site and

imaginal place as reflected in the specifics of the Southdean Project as memory work, focusing on the tension between two sites: Tamshiel Rig, an archaeological site near Southdean (exemplifying the discrepancy between authoritative cartographic representation and physical erasure of a site), and Carterhaugh, a fictional place still summoned into existence through each performance of the *Tam Lin* ballad. I conclude by reiterating the nature of the particular space of deep mapping as analogous to Peter Bishop's 'interdiscursive space' (Bishop, 1992, p. 6) and its focus on a particular inflection of the intersection of geography, memory and place as the provisional site of an 'at-home-ness' always caught in the play between being and becoming.

Beginnings

As a child I never visited Southdean, located just north of the English–Scottish border, but spent a good deal of time in similar places. My childhood memories – one vital source out of which identity is constructed – only became entangled in the landscape and history of Southdean by chance. In the late spring of 1999, I heard Fairport Convention's version of the old 'supernatural' (Reed, 1991) Borders ballad *Tam Lin* for the first time in almost 30 years. (I had first heard *Tam Lin* as a student and it had powerful associations with leaving behind an unusual and difficult childhood and adolescence.) At the time I was looking at maps while planning a trip to the Borders region. Thinking about Carterhaugh in the song prompted a journey over Carter Bar, where the A68 crosses the English–Scottish border at the top of Redesdale in the Cheviot Hills, to explore Carter Burn and Tamshiel Rig in the former parish of Southdean. Visiting Southdean with *Tam Lin* in mind prompted further investigation of both place and song and led to my reimagining of Tamshiel Rig, an archaeological site in the parish, in the context of the narrative of *Tam Lin*. This generated an imaginal space tensioned between the historical Tamshiel Rig and the fictive Carterhaugh.

This chapter reflects upon my creative entanglement, through researching and making the artist's book *Between Carterhaugh and Tamshiel Rig: A Borderline Episode* (2004), in that imaginal space. (This was the first of a number of works in what came to be the Southdean Project.) In the process I rediscovered the provisional nature of identity, the contingency of the conceptual categories that name and divide us from other beings and possibilities. The book uses a 'what if' creative play to open up what the poet Don McKay calls 'wildness': 'the capacity

of all things to elude the mind's appropriations'; a quality that allows us to experience 'the momentary circumvention of the mind's categories' (McKay, 2001, p. 21). Seen with hindsight, my concerns relate to those of David Crouch's *Flirting with Space: Journeys and Creativity* (2011), to Karen Till's work on spectral traces (Jonker and Till, 2009; Till, 2008, 2010) and to Jane Bennett's *The Enchantment of Modern Life: Attachments, Crossings and Ethics* (2001). A further convergence, implicit in my use of metaphors of weaving and meshing below but not developed here, is with the work of Tim Ingold (Ingold, 2000, pp. 339–348; 2011, pp. 63–94). The Southdean Project is the first stage of a larger endeavour called Debatable Lands, which is ongoing since 1999. This chapter is the last of a set of three reflecting on aspects of the bigger project (see Biggs, 2010a, 2010b for the others). This shifts the focus to the Debatable Lands on either side of the English–Scottish border, northeast of Carlisle, and the passing of a vernacular song tradition westward to the USA. It focuses on the Southdean Project and *Between Carterhaugh and Tamshiel Rig* as an imaginative engagement with personal memory, various historical sites in Southdean and the quasi-pagan matrix out of which *Tam Lin* emerges. Both sites and song are rich in complex historical, social and cultural residues and resonances. My study has resonated with Jane Bennett's examination of a 'quasi-pagan' enchantment (Bennett, 2001, p. 12) and pointed to possibilities for a re-narration and expansion of senses of self, where narrative is used to situate self in relation to past and present experience. This relates directly to the uses of memory in relation to a psycho-social sense of at-home-ness – the complex process by which we have a sense of being located in the world.

In relation to at-home-ness, the project contests a particular position within cultural or humanistic geography associated with the geographer Yi-Fu Tuan (1977, 2004a, 2004b). This claims that we anticipate home as being recognizably consistent whenever we return to it after an absence, that this consistency is fundamental to identity and that, correspondingly, our pleasure in music is linked to our sense of at-home-ness. This is because music converts time into a form of atemporal presence that 'places' us by invoking corporeal or natural temporalities based on rhythmic cycles that reduce our anxieties about linear time. This process is assumed to follow from the fact that we frequently return to valued pieces of music 'to be exposed to a presence, to be in the midst of a magical place that provides us with nurture, self-knowledge, and inspiration' (Tuan, 2004a, pp. 49–53). Arguably, however, such claims fail to take into account the tensions introduced by the improvisational elements in jazz, for example, and in the constant production of variations typical

of old vernacular or 'folk' songs. While we may enjoy a good deal of music for precisely the reasons Tuan offers, we may also be moved in other ways by a partial disruption that invites us to acknowledge the tension between 'holding on' to a sense of belonging and place within the homely and familiar and an invitation to experience becoming that requires a 'going further'.

Song: 'traditionality' and memory

The Southdean Project assumed that this tension between 'holding on' and 'going further' is present in each performance of *Tam Lin* as that of 'traditionality'. This is understood as 'a dialectic between the effects of history upon us (which we passively suffer) and our response to history (which we actively operate)' (Kearney, 2004, p. 62). The matrix of historical, social and cultural residues and resonances that make up *Tam Lin* activate just those processes by which traditionality is played out in relation to personal and social memory. Consequently, the song both performs and contests the location of memory at various levels and in a variety of registers, enabling the attentive listener to renegotiate the relationship between 'being' and 'becoming'. In doing so it can potentially influence the ongoing construction and understanding of identity and belonging. This process of renegotiation can be approached from two distinct theoretical perspectives. Firstly, by following the implications of Geraldine Meaney's discussion of the social dynamics implicit in the relationship between James Joyce's *The Dead* and the traditional folk ballads *The Lass of Aughrim* and *Lord Gregory* (2010). And secondly, via Jane Bennett's thinking through of Deleuze and Guattari's work on sound in the context of the enchantment of modern life (Bennett, 2001, pp. 166–168).

Geraldine Meaney draws attention to the complex relationship between contemporary 'texts' (of all kinds) and traditional vernacular songs that continue 'to be sung and so to change' (2010, p. 135). Particular to such songs is their double ambiguity. They 'never knew or have known borders', yet are constantly identified with particular places by singers and audiences; and, while offering 'not a relation to authenticity or originary trauma, but to life and change' (ibid., pp. 137–138), they also serve to authenticate particular and highly specific memories. As such they act as foci for forms of collective memory through which notions of identity are renegotiated. This allows Meaney to argue that such songs mediate between lived experience and governing social codes, rather than seeing them as part of a conservative folk culture that

reinforces existing social regulation or, alternatively, as a potentially liberating remnant of an earlier and more 'authentic' culture that critiques contemporary values. This mediation erodes the distinctions between personal and social memory, making them more permeable by bringing into play values excluded by the dominant culture, in that songs become 'sites' or 'places' where the usual distinctions between personal and social memory are blurred.

Jane Bennett, in her discussion of enchantment, draws on Deleuze and Guattari's reflections on a process inherent in the rhythmic nature of singing a familiar song. She pursues their theme by which song is configured as a certain fragile sheltering, a space of at-home-ness that creates a border between the homeliness of the familiar and the unfamiliar (2001, p. 167) and one that may be negotiated via change or improvisation. Arguably, *Tam Lin* is particularly potent in this respect because the uncanny elements in its lyrics suspend the listener between thought and body, consciousness and unconsciousness, the visible and invisible. What is clear from Bennett's discussion is that the intersection of social memory as captured in certain forms of 'archaic' song – namely those that vividly carry spectral traces of cultural values other than our own – along with our sense of place, can serve as a 'trigger' for liminal experience in ways that are consistent with Bishop's work already referenced.

A comparative study of ballads from Papua New Guinea and the Scottish Borders by Pamela Stewart and Andrew Strathern draws attention to their similar function in each culture and suggests how the dynamic between being and becoming is played out through the evocative function of works of art. Both sets of ballads serve as 'popular performance art', share the same fundamental components, and describe a world other than that of ordinary life events and yet expressive of its nonconformist or unconventional aspects. Simultaneously descriptive, prescriptive and challenging, ballads in both traditions contain 'anti-authority components' and 'celebrate counter-legitimacies in an area of competing or contested legitimacies' (Stewart and Strathern, 1997, p. 15). The study concludes with a call for 'discussion of the ways in which vernacular ballads may reflect and help constitute cultural representations and patterns as well as giving room for the expression of "counter-legitimacies" ' rooted in 'linguistic and narrative forms continually reshaped by the knowledge and the wishes of their singers and their listeners' (Stewart and Strathern, 1997, pp. 14–16). These songs and the uses made of them open up the possibility of 'feeling beyond the materially-constituted and beyond the socially-constructed' (Crouch,

2010, p. 125) and so of mediating the passage back and forth between socially determined modes of being grounded in the past and moments of becoming. In short, they open up other, more fluid ways in which we may sense ourselves as being placed in the world.

Memory work: Deep mapping as 'essaying'

The term 'essay' derives from the French *essai* – a trial, attempt, or essay – which is in turn derived from the Latin *exagium*, a weighing or 'weighing-up'; a 'to putting to proof' or 'testing the mettle of', relating the term back to 'assay' – to try, endeavour or strive. The book was worked through as an essaying/assaying in this sense, an interweaving of both 'subjective' (creative) and 'objective' (scholarly) strategies evocating a new interlacing of specific memories, places and identities. For a fuller discussion of the concept of 'essaying' used here (see Biggs, 2010a).

I understand the deep mapping that produced *Between Carterhaugh and Tamshiel Rig* as an 'essaying' (Biggs, 2010a) that enables a re-weaving of a sense of 'place in its orthodox form' with regard to its relationship to personal memory, identity and history (Cresswell, 2004, p. 53). Deep mapping as an essaying of place intervenes in the ways in which memory as constitutive of personal and social belonging and identity is experienced, understood, evoked and performed. This is in order to relocate or re-place conventional senses of at-home-ness (see also Blunt and Dowling, 2006; Crouch, 2010; Greverus, 2002; Kwon, 2002; Malpas, 2008; Stewart & Strathern, 2003).

This reconfiguring of at-home-ness is attempted in *Between Carterhaugh and Tamshiel Rig* in terms of rearticulating the mesh of relationships between the quasi-pagan ballad *Tam Lin*, specific physical sites, personal and cultural memories, and the question: 'How do individuals negotiate the temporal and spatial sites of becoming and being subjects, in and through processes of memory and forgetting?' The artist's book *Between Carterhaugh and Tamshiel Rig* evokes a subjectivity that is an interweaving of being and becoming, a paradoxical process that, while the product of specific historical divisions between public/private, external/internal, factual/fictive and social/ individual, is still rooted in attachment, intimacy and in particular places and bodily memories that cannot be reduced to such socially defined categories.

Practically speaking, *Between Carterhaugh and Tamshiel Rig* engages with, narrates and evokes 'place' in temporal depth by intermeshing a multiplicity of voices, information, impressions and perspectives so as to create a new, provisional quasi-pagan sense of at-home-ness. The

book attempts to interweave image and concept so as to work *in* and *with* that 'curious space between wonder and thought' vital to 'a knowledgeable and impassioned engagement with the world' in which 'there is no single Disciplinary (in an academic sense) voice' (Harrison et al., 2004, p. 7). It does so by using deep mapping – 'a mixture of narration and scientific practices, an integrated approach to recording, writing and illustrating the material past' (Pearson and Shanks, 2001, pp. 64–65) – to intervene in the process of 'time-mapping' by which values are constructed and located through remembering and forgetting, mediating between site, spectral traces of past lives that haunt particular places, and current senses of identity.

I shall now demonstrate exactly how the book *Between Carterhaugh and Tamshiel Rig* produced this deep mapping. It took as a starting point, 'katachrestic' conjunctions (Pearson and Shanks, 2001, p. 131) of altogether disparate elements. Michael Shanks (2010) has used the term katachrestic on his web pages to refer to 'the forced juxtaposition of evidences that have no intrinsic connection' relating to 'metamorphosis or decomposition' intended to produce 'amalgams or connections [...] where there probably should be none'.

The katachrestic conjunctions in this case were: *Tam Lin* understood as a culturally and geographically problematic narrative, site-based observations made through field walking and related performative work, and in-depth archival and other research focused by and on the former parish of Southdean. This material was put into play using different media – drawings, reconfigured maps, photography and collage – and a range of typographical and presentational strategies focused on inviting the reader to explore and enter into the liminal relationship between the fictive site of Carterhaugh and the physical site of Tamshiel Rig. The catalyst for conjoining these two sites was the personal memories associated with *Tam Lin*, a song that had (and in some cases still has) particular resonances for myself and my peers from the early 1970s. This working through eventually generated a transformative experience; one that the book seeks to re-enact for its readers by bringing into consciousness a range of forgotten, suppressed or unexamined cultural values and presuppositions.

Retrospectively, this process can be described as oriented by a desire to test two significant assertions. The first is implicit in Barbara Bender's statement that landscapes 'refuse to be disciplined' and they subvert our disciplinary oppositions 'between time [History] and space [Geography], or between nature [Science] and culture [Social Anthropology]' (Bender quoted in Massey, 2006, p. 34). This claim is understood in the context

of Griselda Pollock's discussion of landscape as a cultural construction set over against the human subject, yet simultaneously 'a space for projection that can become a 'sublimated self-portrait' (Pollock, 1997, unpaginated). The second is Edward S Casey's claim that 'if a position is a fixed posit of an established culture, a place, despite its frequently settled appearance' then it 'is an essay in experimental living within a changing culture' (Casey, 1993, p. 31). I understand Casey as provocatively questioning how the process of essaying – a process of both personal and social becoming – can temporarily transform site into place (as locating an always provisional at-home-ness) and, in doing so, reconfigure identity. By testing these two assertions through the creation of the book, I aimed to bring together particular indicative qualities of memory and place in such a way as to demonstrate the interdependence of self and society, the psychic and its outsides, the symbolic and the material.

The Southdean Project owes a considerable debt to the sociologist and cultural theorist Janet Wolff (Biggs, 2010a), who advocates engaging with 'the autobiographical and the memoiristic' in ways that allow 'the fragment or the concrete detail' to serve 'as a legitimate focus in social analysis' and thus grant 'access to cultural histories' (Wolff, 1995, p. 3). Wolff's argument is that the artful presentation and exposition of such material may offer potent counter-examples able to interrupt academically taken-for-granted theoretical positions. Thus, she legitimized my need to explore autobiographical material relating to issues of class and culture, rendered specific by the tensioning of urban and rural values in my childhood and adolescence. In these respects, the practice of essaying site as memory work derives in different ways from the work of both Wolff and Casey. However, as the Southdean Project progressed, I increasingly extended my use of essaying as Wolff presents it. This involved using visual and time-based media within an ethnographically inflected deep mapping process, one capable of engaging with and evoking the interweaving of memory, place and identity as informed by the concrete specificities particular to the location and temporalities of Southdean. This allowed me to locate the parish and its catalytic function in my own reflections on identity within larger social contestations around heritage and the functions of social memory.

Memory: Material site and imaginal place

I now turn to the specifics of the Southdean Project as memory work. In following up the coincidence described in the introduction, I discovered that the cartographic representation of Tamshiel Rig is

entirely inaccurate. Despite the authoritatively detailed representation on the large-scale map, initially I could find no physical trace of the site on the ground. Such minimal traces as I eventually found were already being erased by ongoing forestry activity (and by March 2011 had disappeared entirely). What in 1946 was arguably the most complete archaeology of a late Bronze Age farm site in Britain, now only exists on the cartographic record. This discrepancy – between the authoritative cartographic representation of the site and its physical erasure (evidence to my mind of an enactment of social forgetting) – suggested an imaginative space that has a number of analogies with our relationship to remembered places and resonates closely with significant personal experiences. Furthermore, the ambivalent status of Tamshiel Rig – caught between the instrumental concerns of government-led reforestation and archaeological concern with heritage – offered a significant counterpoint to Carterhaugh as an extant, if wholly fictional, place summoned back into existence through each performance of *Tam Lin*. In this respect the work as a whole might be said to enact the continuous and unending contestations by which value is mediated through remembering and forgetting.

Between Carterhaugh and Tamshiel Rig uses this tensioned counterpoint as a catalyst for examining personal and historical memories, understood as existing simultaneously in multiple (or polyvocal) dimensions. Tamshiel Rig 'speaks' as part of a historically and archaeologically rich and significant network of physical sites, including that of a ruined early medieval church, within the former parish. Located as it is right on the English–Scottish border, the parish includes a dense pattern of sites and narratives dominated by the violent contestation of national borders and local power groupings over a period of some 500 years. Saturated with a variety of conflicting histories – including those evoked by *Tam Lin* – the former parish invited creative reverie on various levels, many of which in turn have a degree of metaphorical resonance both for an autoethnography of a particular childhood, adolescence and early adulthood and a rethinking of pressing contemporary social issues. In this respect readers are invited to consider possible analogies between the characteristics of 'adolescence' in the development of both personal and social identities.

The fictive yet extant Carterhaugh, central to the lyric narrative of *Tam Lin*, appears to evoke a quasi-pagan culture that looks back to prehistory. The tensions with contemporary presuppositions evoked by this fictive place, particularly when counterpointed with the failure of cartographic 'authority' to locate Tamshiel Rig accurately as a material reality, animated the creative process of memory work. They enabled

a relocating, refracting and reflecting on memories resonant with historically specific social tensions across a range of temporalities, linking the personal with the social, the rural with the urban, and local with international values and practices. The book *Between Carterhaugh and Tamshiel Rig* articulates these by conjuring into being an unstable and resonant arena or site in which personal memories are interwoven; an ancient and uncanny narrative fiction ultimately grounded in pagan practices and geographical, ethnographic and historical fact. This process of interweaving precisely replicates an essaying in experimental living within a changing culture.

This working process is analogous to that described by Griselda Pollock, for whom landscape painting is the pictorial representation of 'a space that is neither geographical nor physical', its empty centre 'always the spectator, the human consciousness' as reflected in an 'exercise of formal invention' (Pollock, 1997, unpaginated). This space is both literally and metaphorically charged – that is, it is saturated with values, memories, histories and desires – and so can make sensible deep-seated and unconscious presuppositions. The Southdean Project aimed to bring a heightened heuristic dimension, through the deployment of geographical, historical and ethnographic material, to the evocative power of landscape art as Pollock understands it.

Thus, *Between Carterhaugh and Tamshiel Rig* wagers that this creative process can begin to reshape the present – taken as always saturated with memory – through wilfully entangling its reader/viewer in the actively liminal and evocative 'place' of the book, a 'what if' space in which issues of both personal and cultural identity can be essayed/assayed. Something of what is involved in the process of 'what if' play, with its use of pagan themes that blur the distinction between human and non-human being, is indicated by Jane Bennett's comments on Deleuze and Guattari's notion of 'becoming animal' (Bennett, 2001, p. 51). Bennett reminds us that children, not yet subject to the internalization of excessive categorizations, may retain some sense of 'emerging out of an overrich field of protean forces and materials', only some of which are manifest in their current, human form (ibid., p. 51).

The book *Between Carterhaugh and Tamshiel Rig* proposes that this sense of 'emerging out of an overrich field of protean forces and materials' is the confluence of an at-home-ness with becoming, one that can be generated through the tensioned specifics that structure the dynamics of the book. As such it seeks to advance what Peter Bishop refers to as a rapprochement between depth psychology and geography 'after

modernity', a rapprochement that depends on entering an 'interdiscursive space' also identified by diverse thinkers such as Richard Kearney (1991), Henri Corbin (1969) and Gaston Bachelard (1964). Following Bishop I want to reinstate the importance of imagination to understanding place through deep mapping and to reconsider the value of psychologizing beyond its sometimes naïve use in psychogeography. In this context, I have since the late 1990s been 'advocating a turn to polytheistic' or, in Bennett's terms, to a quasi-pagan perspective as a way of thinking that counters the deeply engrained presuppositions of traditional Western iconophobia with its fear of the image's sensuality, polyvalency and indeterminacy or radical ambiguity (Bishop, 1992, p. 10). The quasi-pagan material unearthed through the study of the ethnographic background of *Tam Lin* enabled a paralleling of the polytheistic social psychology articulated by Helene Shulman and Mary Watkins (2008), thus enlarging the potential of deep mapping as an evocation of imaginative memory work employing both arts and academic practices.

In concluding this section I should make it clear that I remain committed to the entirely fictive status of Carterhaugh, despite the best efforts of Sir Walter Scott and promoters of Borders heritage to claim otherwise. Yet simultaneously, that contested 'wood', 'meadow', or 'pool' (the particular nature of Carterhaugh as a site remains tantalizingly unclear) specifically grounded personal memories and histories linked to particular upland regions. Equally, the location of Tamshiel Rig in relation to historical accounts of long-term fluctuations of climate change and land use, of Borders violence, official neglect, occupation, of plagues and frequent famine that has reduced the former parish to its present near-dereliction, in no way reduces its imaginal resonance. It was precisely in this rich confluence of tensioned sites, factual material and testimonial imagining, and of personal memory and cultural and historical fact, that the project unfolded. That it did so for its author as an emotional event in ways that parallel those David Crouch associates with a process of encounter that entails 'belonging and disorientation [...] emotion, becoming and the negotiative tensions of "holding on" and of "going further" ' (Crouch, 2010, p. 68), might be taken as one validation of the project as a whole.

Conclusion

A contemporary singer can constantly adapt her performance of *Tam Lin* for different contemporary audiences because it lacks any original

referent to place it once and for all. The narrative varies from version to version, with lines or whole verses shared with other ballads (a characteristic also found in early Blues music), thus constantly inviting us to remember other versions. The lyric may be sung to different tunes or instruments, have different starting and end points, different place names, differently named key characters, significant variations in action and moral tenor, employ shifts between Scots and English terms, and so on. As a result, any version of the ballads will, when sung, carry within it powerful resonances of other narratives signalled by these variations and borrowings. Listening to *Tam Lin* we are less able to 'hold on' to the more or less familiar repetition that we experience with other forms of popular music, but instead we find ourselves uncertainly located within a web of stories, memories and references that meld and metamorphose into each other, inviting us to 'go further'. In this context it is significant that Paul Ricoeur writes of narrative identity as 'the sought-after place of this chiasm between history and fiction' (Ricoeur, 1994, p. 114, n. 1). The Southdean Project utilizes just this aspect of the ballad to catch its readers/viewers within a fluid, shifting matrix of possibilities that includes an active sense of presence, absence and remembrance. Because this quasi-pagan ballad shares presuppositions with those of magic – as Marina Warner and Jane Bennett understand it (Bennett, 2001; Warner, 2002) – a book that uses this strategy invites a form of provisional and open at-home-ness at odds with that predicated on the unique, individual integrity of identity in the Judaeo-Christian tradition that feeds into our contemporary 'possessive individualism' (Leach, 2007). It points instead towards a reconsideration of 'animism and metempsychosis, to a vision of personal survival through dispersed memory, in life and in death, rather than in Freud's unconscious, and its hopes for potential individual integration' (Warner, 2002, pp. 208–209).

As indicated above, the Southdean Project reflects on two assertions by Edward Casey and Barbara Bender. These coincide both with Massey's understanding of 'space as a simultaneity of stories-so-far' (Massey, 2005, p. 9) and, I suggest, relate to Paul Ricoeur's concept of a 'narrative identity' that exists in the space between our ability to narrate our own stories and our inability to be the authors of our own lives (Ricoeur, 1991, p. 32). In this context, the space of innumerable identity narratives-so-far that make up the undisciplined landscape – one that escapes reduction to dualistic categories – becomes that 'sought-after place' where the two great classes of narrative (history and fiction) may be productively interwoven as distinct but mutually informing strands of deep mapping as a factually informed poetic imagining of our place

in the world that is both other than the human subject – as land, place, nature – and a space for projection: 'a sublimated self-portrait'. However, given the nature of memory, this 'self-portrait' is not (or not simply) 'personal', but corresponds to the understanding that underpins James Hillman's insistence that our deaths are not solitary but rather involve us joining the matrix of ancestor beings (human and otherwise) that 'inhabit our nightworld of dreams, the complexes we speak with, the invisible guests who pass through our lives'; that is, ecologically speaking, the entire meshwork of beings that 'are with us all along' (Hillman, 1992, p. 127).

One aim of this chapter has been to suggest that deep mapping can provide a space that is neither geographical nor physical. With this absent yet potent centre, there is always the reader/viewer/listener as a multitudinous consciousness reflected in a formal interweaving that creates a highly charged liminal field – one analogous, that is, to Peter Bishop's 'interdiscursive space' (Bishop, 1992). Throughout, the focus of my concern remains with a particular inflection of the intersection of the themes of this book – those of geography (including its all-important temporal dimensions as captured by Massey's notion of space referenced above); personal memory (particularly but not exclusively as this intersects with local histories, as mediated through the ethnographic excavations of material latent in *Tam Lin*); and place as, in Casey's terms, a lived experimental essaying within a changing culture that is the provisional site of our at-home-ness as persons always caught in the play between being and becoming.

Images and extracts from the book *Between Carterhaugh and Tamshiel Rig*, discussed in this chapter, can be found at http://www.land2.uwe.ac.uk/essay18.htm, and material from a second, related, work – *8 Lost Songs* – at http://www.land2.uwe.ac.uk/lostsongs.htm.

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7

'The Elephant Is Part of Us and Our Village': Reflections on Memories, Places and (Non-) Spatial Objects

Marc Redepenning

Introduction

This chapter contributes to small and strange geographies – geographies that aim to describe the unusual and grotesque stories of everyday life that occur in ordinary places. It points to the relevance of researching those objects and events which appear exotic and 'far' to us in social terms even if they are 'near' and 'close' to us in spatial terms. To illustrate this interest, I will explore how the strange death of an elephant called Miss Baba, in the late 1850s, still affects memory and identity in a rural village in Thuringia, eastern Germany. The death of this particular elephant can be regarded as a unique event which facilitates the construction of difference and distinctiveness for the local inhabitants towards the 'outside'. Hence, the elephant is turned into a kind of myth to express and communicate the identity of the villagers.

Alongside this, I also analyse the relevance of a particular set of objects within everyday life. In adopting a systems-theoretical point of view, a distinguished understanding of the term 'object' is promoted. It is argued that the production and maintenance of objects is a crucial element in the reproduction of social collectives and social memory and for social ordering as such (Esposito, 2002; Luhmann, 1997, p. 644). Objects, then, provide orientation for people because of their tenacity and permanence (in terms of repeatable and generalized usages). But for the object to work and function as part of social memory it must be cared for. This is, following an intervention by Dirk Baecker

(2003), a cultural act as emphasized in the Latin origin of the word *cultura*.

Therefore, my general aim is to point to this set of complex cultural acts and enactments that create and remember objects and which put them in 'their' proper place. To be a bit more precise: what I am interested in here is the 'technical' dimension of organizing and calculating objects, which marks an important but often neglected component of space-related research on memory and identity.

The particular absent/present object I am talking about here is the dead elephant mentioned above. Employing the difference present/absent as some kind of epistemological 'tool' seems promising as today the elephant is absent (it is dead) as a physical and material object, although its preserved skin and skeleton are kept in nearby regional museums in Gotha and Jena. At the same time, the elephant is an important component of the local geography – and therefore present: representations (as garage paintings and so on) of the elephant are found in the whole village and create a distinctive local geography (for similar arguments see Wolch, 2002). And the animal is present by celebrating a feast to remember the strangeness of its death. This feast, the *Elephantenfest*, will be discussed in more depth to explore the manifold connections between objects, memory, identity and place; and how to make something which is absent, present (again).

Finally, I will explore the ways in which within the above mentioned cultural acts of (con)figuring the elephant, a particular semantics of representing the rural is enacted. I will call this particular semantics the 'simple and authentic rural'.

1857, The elephant and a strange death

The fact that an elephant shows up in the middle of the nineteenth century even in rural Thuringia was not unusual at that time. Miss Baba was the key attraction of a travelling menagerie. A look into the history of these menageries shows that they served as a common and important alternative to zoological gardens (Baratay and Hardouin-Fugier, 2000). Zoos were intended to be a 'school for the moral renovation of society' (Rieke-Müller, 1995, p. 470). They followed an educative mission and were addressed as such by the emerging and rapidly growing bourgeois culture at that time. Travelling menageries did not have this self-imposed educational mission. They were much more oriented towards the popularization of biological knowledge and maintained the traditional fairground atmosphere (Rieke-Müller, 1994). Hence they

depended on an audience that, firstly, did not reject the places in which the travelling menageries showed their animals and, secondly, was able to reach these places quickly.

One of these menageries was owned by Gottlieb Kreutzberg. During a tour in February 1857, a tragic incident happened. Miss Baba should have been carried from the city of Apolda to Buttstädt – a small town 15 kilometres to the north – where the next exposition would take place. The transfer of Miss Baba took place during the night to protect the elephant from the prying gaze of rural folks. Additionally, the animal was kept behind a wooden frame; a complex construction that had to be carried by the elephant itself. The animal, during these transfers, was treated as some kind of secret to secure and even enhance its attractiveness for the next exposition. However, Miss Baba did not reach Buttstädt. Shortly after leaving Apolda, the animal collapsed and died in the village of Niederroßla. The cause of death was determined two years later by a regional court in Weimar. It stated that the animal died from having eaten frozen sugar beets in Apolda. The reason the whole case was taken to court was that the owner accused several local inhabitants of killing the poor animal (Zimmermann, 1988). But what exactly happened to suggest that people from Niederroßla had killed Miss Baba? An accusation that required a court to settle the affair.

After eating those frozen sugar beets, the elephant became weaker and slower. Thus, staff from the travelling menagerie removed the wooden cage which protected the animal. The elephant at once became visible. While we can assume a kind of nervousness on the side of the menagerie's staff about the moribund elephant, we can also assume a downright curiosity on the side of local inhabitants. Given this situation, a local legend says, a 'clutch of alcofrolic people from the local choral society tampered the elephant [...] with sticks and stacks' (Burg- und Heimatverein Niederroßla e.V., 2007, p. 17) to push it out of their territory. They did not succeed, for Miss Baba died on a bend in the road which today is referred to as the *Elefantenkrümme* (the elephant's bend). In 1932, a memorial stone was erected at this particular place (Figure 7.1). These activities served as the cause for stipulating compensation, by the animal's owners, for financial losses caused by the killing of Miss Baba. The local choir members in turn belittled and trivialized their acts by defining them as a kind of tickling. In the end, things turned out well for the villagers. The court decided that the aforementioned actions did not cause the elephant's death. It identified after-effects of the frozen sugar beets as the real culprit.

It is almost obvious that this strange story became a firm basis for other villages to mock the entire community of Niederroßla as the

Figure 7.1 Photograph of the 1857–1957 memorial stone placed on the bend in the road where Miss Baba the elephant died, Niederroßla, Germany
Source: Author.

'elephant-ticklers' and to stimulate disrespectful perspectives on the villagers. But more importantly, the story of Miss Baba's strange death became successively also the basis around which the local community could calibrate their distinctiveness. The elephant soon became an integral part of the village's self-description. The death of Miss Baba turned out to be a local *Schlüsselereignis*: a multilayered event that literally steps out of line (Waldenfels, 2004). Because of its radical divergence from the flow of everyday life it serves as an anchor point for generating attention and local identity.

To keep this strange story of the dying elephant alive after 150 years it has to be transferred from an interactional social memory (which encompasses a period of about 70 years) to a symbolically based social

memory to protect it from being forgotten (Assmann, 2002, p. 48). Following Assmann, this kind of memory does not rely on the biographical experiences of observers who witnessed the event. Instead, it relies on the symbolic organization and staging of the event by people who have had no direct experience with it or were not directly involved. Bygone events are marked and worked up through the use of symbolic figures, for example myths. The longer the event dates back, the more easily the mythologization of the event can be performed successfully.

A myth allows a reiterated renewal of being astonished about oneself and one's own history (Luhmann, 1997, p. 648). Yet a myth must continually be applied and maintained – hence it demands work to reproduce it. This is why a myth must be 'refreshed' and restaged at regular intervals. By being present as spatially and temporarily 'near' (as a present experience at a local place) it allows us to draw a relation with what is being regarded as the pristine event. The mythical representation of the bygone event *today* must be a robust one: if this does not work well the myth might collapse when it is not able to provide a plausible interpretation of the historical event for today's realities (Luhmann, 2000, p. 192). The solidarity and community to be produced by the myth would correspondingly decrease.

Work to mythologize an event and work to maintain this myth might take place in multitudinous forms but always requires particular objects, which in some way materialize and present the myth. In Niederroßla, this work on materializing and presenting the myth of the elephant is, firstly, expressed in the visual integration of elephants into the local geography, reminding people what has happened 'there' and 'then'. Secondly, the elephant is the heraldic animal of the municipality (since May 1993) and, therefore, an official icon. Thirdly, the myth of Miss Baba's death is fostered by a feast, which has been euphemistically labelled as 'arguably [the] most bizarre public festival in Germany' by regional newspapers (see Mitteldeutsche Zeitung, 17 May 2007). This deserves a closer look.

A feast for the elephant

Feasts refer to non-ordinary events; thus to unique and preservable moments. A feast can be regarded as one opportunity to facilitate the implementation and the re-actualization of a myth. Furthermore, it is argued that the performance of feasts contributes to the strengthening of a community and to the actualization of group identity (Assmann, 2009, p. 139). In the village of Niederroßla, the elephant's feast follows

the rhythm of Christian jubilee years. Thus, it takes place once every 25 years. But the fact of it being a rare event can be read as evidence for its extraordinary social significance: the huge interval between the feasts preserves the distinctiveness of each feast. The feast does not run the risk of becoming a normality that takes place at (too) short intervals. In Niederroßla, the feasts were celebrated in accordance with the historical date in February until 1932. After 1932, the festive nature diminishes and gives place to – at least as one possible interpretation – certain forms of inauthentic staging that replace and obfuscate the historical event of elephant-tickling and the death of Miss Baba. In 1957, the feast was deferred to the month of June, thus decoupling it from its former bond with the historical event. At the same time it seems as if the commemoration of the strangeness of the event loses itself in an ordinary and inauthentic staging. This becomes visible in the feast's supporting programme: it is a standardized programme of an international and 'dumb' entertainment potpourri that enacts a place of what could be considered trivial and gross culture – for example, a 70s/80s party with an ABBA revival band, a dancing evening with the *Pfundskerle aus Tirol* (the Bricks from Tyrol), the Radio Top 40 Show, or a Skat (card game) evening. The exceptionality of Miss Baba's death would be absorbed and marginalized by such interchangeable activities that activate the cliché of what is disrespectfully regarded as a *Dorffest* ('village fête').

At this point a quite conservative observation made by Niklas Luhmann proves insightful. Luhmann points to the relevance of feasts both as processes of remembering and of social ordering. He also discusses the consequences of decoupling both:

> Feasts prove to be a cause for narrating myths, legends, genealogies and adventures in ancient days – provided that this is about well-established and familiar ideas. But if the function of remembering and conforming is dispensed, the familiar forms of objects lose [...] their obligation; and feasts will lose their form and degenerate to occasions for individual escapades.
>
> (Luhmann, 1997, p. 644)

This critique attests to the elephant's feast in Niederroßla as a decoupling between the actual activities during the feast and its function to remember and confirm a myth that is socially well grounded. It can also adapt to the still powerful imagination that feasts should amplify 'social ties and at the same time unleash all those desires that were detained by collective disciplines and by the necessities of everyday work' (Lefebvre,

1977, p. 204). This, the myth and community generating function of the feast, would recede behind an organized and calculated 'formulation of a play' as well as behind the aspiration for a 'spectacular visualisation of the world' (Lefebvre, 1972, p. 92). The passing criticism on forgetting the social origins of the feast and the complaints about its 'impureness' are still alive in recent conservative reflections on the rural. Every further staging, this criticism warns us, is a threat for community as an important common good.

What is important to note is that this criticism is organized along a complex distinction which relates the spontaneous and provincial feast to the above-introduced semantics of the rural as 'simple and authentic'. The feast is usually strictly separated from the ultra-organized and calculative urban spectacle (see Garat, 2005, for a critique on such thinking). In this respect, the outlined modification of the elephant's feast could be understood as a threat to the simple, pure but authentic commemoration of the elephant and the reproduction of community (*communitas*) by its turn towards rational organization, calculation, lack of memory, staging and spectacle (Turner, 2008, p. 124).

In contrast to this customary perspective, the remainder of this chapter tries to show how the long-term oriented preparation of the feast and its organization, calculation and the enactment of hierarchies also facilitates the re-impregnation of memory and the enactment of community. This has been too-often omitted in literature concerning place, memory and identity. One reason for this might be the unobtrusiveness of these practices, which are often performed covertly: preparing the feast is simply less visible (and for the researcher harder to observe), and it creates less attention and vibrancy than the celebration of the 'hot' and proper feast. For now, let's turn the attention to the 'cold' side of preparing the feast and try to make visible a silent and seemingly invisible realm in which the perpetuation of memory and the self-assurance of community are organized.

The preparation of feasts as the construction of objects

It has already been noted that the creation of objects is important for building memory. For example, Elena Esposito emphasizes that each attention to the mechanisms of memory must be aware of repeated and repeatable objects that are central for producing and reproducing memory and identity. These particular objects must be stable and enduring enough that an identity might evolve around them. In addition, they must be recognizable and identifiable as 'this' and not 'another' object

(Esposito, 2002, p. 24). To accomplish these tasks successfully, objects should not have a too rigid or fixed identity because this would significantly limit their application in different situations. Thus, they are in need of 'fluid' characteristics that allow for slight changes in appearance, but these changes must not be too abrupt. This would endanger the broader recognizability of the object. The fluidity of objects facilitates memorization and thus the formation of social memory. If these terms are fulfilled, memory can perform its work to repeat the to-be-reminded objects much more easily across space and time.

Each repetition of the object is not a perfect one but always a slightly different one as several social theories, like those succeeding the strand of actor-network theory or newer positions within systems and form theory, now emphasize (Baecker, 2005; Law, 2002; Luhmann, 1997). For example, Niklas Luhmann argues that each repetition is slightly changing the corresponding object because the repetition usually takes place in different contexts (Luhmann, 1998, p. 107). This is why repetition produces a fluid identity but never an unchanged and once-and-for-all fixed identity. Because of its fluid form this particular identity is much more adaptable and effective than a fixed identity. An object circulates between different social contexts and might appear in different shapes to meet the distinct requirements of particular times and spaces (Redepenning, 2006, p. 73).

To understand this more fully, a look at the preparation of the elephant's feast in 2007 reveals how the village's inhabitants are working on shaping and performing Miss Baba and thus refining her as a 'present' object. This particular work encompasses quite heterogeneous intellectual and technical work that permanently rearranges the elephant. Elephants made of plush were collected, cleaned and if necessary repaired to serve as an 'orderly and clean' representation to be given away to children visiting the feast, as one interviewed participant described it. The assembling and disassembling of the marquees, which hosted evening events, had to be organized; different governmental approvals must have been obtained. People painted their house walls and fences, planted new flowers to make the village a nice and well-manicured place. They behaved very much like the common imagination of the rural as simple and authentic informs us.

A large part of the feast's preparation in 2007 was devoted to a pageant as the highlight of the whole elephant's feast. The aim of the pageant was to represent and stage the village's history – and to celebrate this history. During the pageant, the staging of the historical passage of the Kreutzberg-Menagerie and the drama of Miss Baba served

as climax within this highlight. For this, local villagers brought two living elephants from an 'elephant yard' at Plantschow (Mecklenburg-West Pomerania) to Niederroßla after having seen a documentary about the yard on television – again some evidence of how the ordinariness and serendipity of everyday activities contributes to fix ties between memory, place and identity for extraordinary activities.

There is not enough room here to list and discuss all of the Miss Baba objectifications that were being rendered prior to the 2007 feast. However, I will describe the construction and enactment of the parade float which was built for staging the passing of the Kreutzberg-Menagerie. This should provide insights as to what extended technical and calculatory work was deployed. One local retired engineer made several computer-aided designs which served as blueprints for the parade float. These construction plans are part of the technical work on the to-be-memorized object. But they do not just tell of calculating and measuring the object alone. They also enact a particular spatial setting. One plan, which was proudly presented and explained during one interview, offered a diagram where people should be positioned in relation to the parade float. This plan discloses a meticulously prepared micro-geography in which the fixed localization of each person in relation to the float produces some kind of rigid network space – a space that nevertheless travels within Euclidian space while the float moves on (Thrift, 2004). In this interview, both the engineer and his wife insistently pointed to the necessity of linking and positioning human beings to the materiality of the float to guarantee a controlled overview favoured by the organizers – an insightful example of ordinary biopolitics. That, they argued, is the only way to know who is where at what time or who is leaving his assigned place to reposition an errant person.

> This is the plan of our pageant. It's about who is sitting where on it. And this one [another plan is shown] is the plan for another group to know where everybody has to go in relation to the pageant . . . I want to know where everybody exactly moves along during the parade. From the very beginning, I want to tell them: this way, that way . . . Well, organization is simply the warp and the woof (*das A und O*).
>
> (Interview, 20 April 2009)

Apart from such surveillance-influenced aspects, all of the plans document the huge amount of work that was invested in the feast for the

pageant to be successfully performed. It is preserving and presenting the object of Miss Baba to keep the overall myth alive and thus part of cultural geographies of remembering.

Why this amount of work and the individual efforts for an event that not only promises no individual benefit but also demands major investments, which in return were neither compensated in monetary nor in other material terms? In another interview, two months before the feast took place, one of the responsible organizers tried to explain the great willingness of the villagers to engage in the feast:

> In the end it is like . . . , because it is a traditional feast that has been carried out by our fathers and forefathers and it is strictly connected with the village that one simply has to organize it today. There is a forthright obligation to do it.
>
> (Interview, 25 April 2007)

There is a moral obligation that is derived from observing the activities of the village's forebears. This obligation in the first instance creates a bond between the ancestors and the people living in the village today to keep the feast alive as part of the local identity. The individually felt and socially communicated tradition of the feast stills this moral obligation and assures the bond between today and yesterday. One of the central elements in assuring this bond is the permanent renovation of an object: in this case, the elephant that died in the village more than a century-and-a-half ago. In addition to this 'obligation towards the past', one can identify the issue of competition as a second force in keeping the feasts, and thus the memory of Miss Baba, alive. The staging and commemoration of the elephant must be done 'better' than during past feasts. Some interviewees emphasized that there is a 'real threat' to do the job better than the last generation did:

> Well, he [one of the responsible organizers in 2007] was already in the organization committee in 1982. And then he talked to us at the fire brigade in 2004 or so when the organization of the feast started. There he said: 'We said after the last feast in 1982 that we have to do the job better the next time, in 2007'. We don't want to have the fear of compromising ourselves that we can't do it. Not that people will say: Only he [the former organizer in 1982 is mentioned] can do it and no one else . . . So, this goes very much into private affairs. You simply have the ambition.
>
> (Interview, 24 June 2007)

Therefore, the villagers seek to outdo the previous organizers. This difference should be recognized by the local (and wider) audience as a 'job done better' that deserves full commendation. The absent/present elephant does not only earmark the opportunity to make the history of the village present; it also enables the possibility of comparing the 'us' today with their 'forefathers' to see what has changed over time and what has remained stable.

What becomes obvious is that the strength in the reproduction of Miss Baba lies exactly in the fact that there are no specifications as to how it should be made present. Each re-envisioning, each work on the object, allows the re-impregnation of memory because of the repetition of the object – be it manual, artistic or technical. Miss Baba has become a local heritage, ready to be used in quite different social contexts. The fundamental contingency and openness to reproduce the elephant as an individual object in different contexts leads to the particular fluidity of objects as discussed above. Miss Baba is coined as a culturally important fluid object, which allows different contributions from quite different people. Its importance 'obliges' people to engage in the feast's preparation. The cultural significance of Miss Baba also manifests itself, for example, in the fears and hopes as to whether the individual contribution for the feast to function is successful in the end.

> In the beginning you are quite sceptical. We talked about it at times: We will see how it will be. At the beginning, you are a bit reserved and observing the whole scene . . . But then, at some time, you are starting up and then you think: now I am going to join in. That's what happened to almost all people.
>
> (Interview, 24 June 2007)

> If you have a feast, you are getting a lot of people helping if you ask them. They then say: Okay, I accept that as an obligation and from now on we are responsible. That's because the whole thing has to work and that we don't make a fool of ourselves because somewhere something goes wrong. (Interview, 20 April 2009) . . . In the beginning all have been very sceptical: Will everything work? Is it too much for you to manage? You have to do this and that and so on. But once you notice the first achievements and see: ah, this group made some progress and that group is also quite successful you say: well, now it is up to us to do our part in preparing and organizing the feast. Well, you motivate each other very much.
>
> (Interview, 20 April 2009)

The place of Miss Baba and the rural

But Miss Baba is not anywhere; it is somewhere. Miss Baba is in a particular village and this village distinguishes itself from other villages and spaces. The Elephant is *here* and not *there*. It is part of the village and part of the social and individual memory of its inhabitants. But how are identity, place, memory and rurality drawn together by the inhabitants of Niederroßla? Firstly, it is remarkable how often the villagers implicitly or explicitly use the space-related distinction *here/there* in conjunction with the elephant. One example:

> Ah, the story of the elephant. Yes, it makes the people of Niederroßla indeed a bit proud. We have something very special here, something no other village has . . . Without the elephant we would have been a normal village like all the other villages. (Interview, 20 April 2009) . . . We call ourselves the elephant ticklers or *Kitzelbacher* and all those villages around us do know that.
>
> (Interview, 8 April 2008)

Secondly, the deployment of the distinction *here/there* points to the designation of a specific local feature. 'Here' in the village the elephant died, and not somewhere else, 'there'. It becomes an object of that particular space. Thereby space is constructed as a container into which things and objects can be placed. Inventing and creating such a container-space permits the villagers to make things and objects present and to construct nearness and sameness within that particular container (Mol and Law, 1994). Thirdly, Miss Baba is to be protected. As a deceased object, which by and by became a local heritage and cultural asset, Miss Baba can only be preserved and fostered in terms of representation. This is documented in the above-described heterogeneous work to represent the elephant: the memorials, the images and sculptures of the elephant on houses and in front gardens and, finally, the elephant's feast. Above all, it is not just *an* object but *the* object which accounts for and expresses the distinctiveness of the village and which gives this place a unique feature.

In this context, a second distinction becomes significant (see quotes above): *same/other* (similarity/difference). The death of the elephant has supplied the village with the possibility of creating a kind of distinctive 'sameness'. In appropriating the elephant and its particular history, a singular boundary is established which explicitly separates the village from other villages. It is then almost ironic that this boundary

towards other villages and spaces that is rendered possible by the death of Miss Baba is founded upon the fact that both the same and the other are almost paradoxically merged within the elephant. The localization and memorization of the elephant melt the exoticism of the far and the other (and indeed, in 1857 an elephant was some kind of exotic otherness for rural folks) with what is near, familiar and same (that is, the elephant as a *local* and place-bounded myth). With each reference to the elephant, the distinction *same/other* gets blurred at the very same time it is used and enacted by the villagers because the elephant is both: same and other (for the ordinariness of such blurrings and foldings of boundaries see Mol and Law, 2005, p. 640). Interestingly, these strange geographies and local cultures of memory destabilize one significant spatial truism (Callon and Law, 2004), that the *other* is always far away and the *same* always near.

Yet the exoticism of the elephant alone cannot guarantee the originality and distinctiveness of Niederroßla. In addition, the distinctiveness of the village is produced through the particular mode of deploying the semantics of the 'simple and authentic rural' (see above). The drama of the elephant is always strongly connected with the narration of rural folks doing elephant-tickling and thus a narration of rural and vernacular oddity. The villagers draw on a particular semantics of the rural which tends to emphasize freedom, authenticity and carnivalesque behaviour. Mikhail Bakhtin has caught this semantics in the phrase of the 'idyll of rural and crafting work' (Bakhtin, 2004). The idyll broaches the issue of a behaviour that is authentic and not corrupted by sophisticated cultural conventions, etiquette and modern civilization:

> [T]he deep humanity of idyllic man himself and the humanity of his human relationships are foregrounded, as is the *wholeness* of idyllic life, its organic link with nature, with special emphasis on the unmechanized nature of idyllic labour; and finally, there is a highlighting of *idyllic objects* as objects not severed from the labor that produced them, objects indissolubly linked with this labour in the experience of everyday idyllic life. At the same time, the narrowness and isolation of the little idyllic world is emphasized.
>
> (Bakhtin, 2004, p. 233, emphasis in original)

The world of the rural idyll with its easy, pure, direct but also quite coarse local cultures is presented as counterpart to the abstract urban world of the city in which isolation between people, egoism and aspiration of monetary benefits prevails. This semantics of the rural, although

Lefebvre here pejoratively observes a 'philosophical partiality for the authenticity which is hidden underneath the artistic and inauthentic' (Lefebvre, 1972, p. 58), is used implicitly in Niederroßla as a reference frame and resource for legitimizing its local distinctiveness. It is the unquestioned prerequisite to found and rationalize the distinctiveness, the wackiness (again, a term used in self-descriptions) of the villagers and the grotesque moments of the Miss Baba story. Using the words of David Bell (1997, p. 94), this particular rural is deployed to productively turn the (too often in negative terms thought of) association of the 'rural' as archaic and antiquated into some kind of self-ensuring resource.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that this seemingly grotesque story and the strange self-descriptions of the Niederroßla villagers might have relieving effects. The use of strange, funny and grotesque elements can be seen as one possibility 'to escape the false "truth of this world" in order to look at the world with eyes free from this "truth"' (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 49). This, to conclude, is the rationale behind Miss Baba's death as enacted by the people of Niederroßla.

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8

Graffiti Heritage: Civil War Memory in Virginia

terri moreau and Derek H Alderman

This chapter is the result of a random occurrence. While researching elite control over public space and the depiction of graffiti inscriptions as 'bad' or deviant social practices (moreau and Alderman, 2011), we came across a site that views graffiti as a culturally significant form of heritage. The Graffiti House, located in Brandy Station, Virginia, USA, is devoted to preserving the historic graffiti of American Civil War soldiers (both Confederate and Union) who once occupied the house, while also encouraging new graffiti by heritage tourists who may connect with these soldiers. Seeking to advance an understanding of the relationship between place and memory, we reflect on how these Graffiti House inscriptions are catalysts for reinforcing a (pseudo)national memory and contemporary belonging through individual connections to place. Places of memorialization often undergo critical reading, with scholars treating them as cultural texts. Yet, the process of literally writing memory and identity through graffiti has received limited attention. By focusing on inscriptions at Brandy Station, we point to the role of tourists in authoring heritage sites and how this authoring is characterized by a fluid layering of meanings that speaks to the idea that place, memory and identity are in a process of 'becoming'. Approaching the chapter from this perspective fits in with broader discussions on geography and memory in this book. By zeroing in on 'place' within this broader discussion, we are able to illustrate place connections through individual memory.

The Brandy Station Foundation (BSF), headquartered at the Graffiti House and in partnership with the Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT), seeks to preserve the 'Civil War-ness' of Brandy Station, Virginia. A brief background explains the importance of the American Civil War. From December 1860 through to the spring of 1861, 11 Southern states

seceded from the United States of America (USA). Commanded by President Jefferson Davis, the newly formed Confederate States of America (CSA) opposed the leadership of President Abraham Lincoln and the Northern Union government. The ensuing Civil War (1861–1865) tore the USA in two and claimed more than 600,000 casualties. Even though the American Civil War only lasted four years and it occurred 150 years ago, the collective memory of this event, 'America's most destructive war' (Foote, 2003, p. 123), remains fresh in the minds of many Americans and deeply embedded within the nation's landscape of monuments, memorials, museums, historical re-enactments and preserved structures. The pseudo-national Confederate identity displayed at the Graffiti House, while staged by the BSF and narrated through docents' (volunteer museum tour guides) tales, is also constituted and narrated through the individual inscriptions of daily Civil War tourists. Graffiti House visitors transform and add meaning to the site by way of creating a multi-authored and co-constructed place of remembrance.

We begin by giving some contextual information regarding the importance of the Graffiti House (Figure 8.1) as a place of memory; and the greater discursive and theoretical backdrop within which it sits. Following this, we look at the placement and history of the Graffiti House. Then, we consider the Graffiti House, in terms of memory, identity and heritage, as a place for cultural agglomeration and symbolic accretion, as a remnant landscape, and as a place to express social exile. To this end, we consider the implications of the Graffiti House as a place of memory.

Brandy Station as a place of memory

Brandy Station, Virginia, is part of a larger heritage industry built upon battlefield tourism in general and specific to the Civil War (Cameron and Gatewood, 2000; Dunkley et al., 2011; Foote, 2003; Gatewood and Cameron, 2004; Gold and Gold, 2003; Hall et al., 2010; Hanink and Stutts, 2002; Hanna, 2008; Holguín, 2005; Seaton, 1999). Through this tourist economy, we can investigate the manifestation and representation of heritage narratives and national and regional memory on and through landscapes. These narratives keep landscape heritage alive and provide entry into stories of the past shaping our present memories. They are not static but shift, often slowly, to adjust to present ideologies. As Johnson (1996) stresses, heritage is framed by the politics of today. At the Graffiti House and other places of remembrance, historic graffiti provides a window into how people relate to and identify with the past and how heritage is a performance of the past in the present (Hague,

Figure 8.1 The Graffiti House
Source: Photo by E Arnold Modlin, Jr.

2001). The modern inscriptions of visitors at the Graffiti House are individualized connections to a personal past. Visitor inscriptions represent a (pseudo)national memory of the Civil War and a present need for belonging enacted through the site. Hence, the Graffiti House acts as a place-memory catalyst, and in our research we unpack how memory is a political tool of the present tapped into individually and how the Graffiti House, as a remnant place to connect to Civil War memory, is in a unique position to shape this narrative.

While the Graffiti House invites visitor participation from tourists who identify with both sides of the conflict (Southern/Confederate and Northern/Union), not all Civil War memorial sites in the South are as welcoming to such diversity of memory and identity. The authors have experienced this during visits to other Civil War heritage sites when trying to clarify similarities and differences of memory representation across the South. For example, Bentonville in North Carolina is a similar place of remembrance to the Graffiti House, receiving National Historic status in 1996. The Battle of Bentonville was the largest in North Carolina (19–21 March 1865) and took place immediately before the Confederacy surrendered. Both Bentonville and Brandy Station have

nationally historic battlefields where important battles of the Civil War took place. Both also have recognized historic houses that were used as makeshift hospitals. Yet, memory making at Bentonville is focused explicitly on Southern memory while the Graffiti House 'is a memorial to all Civil War soldiers' (BSF brochure). Northern or Union remembrance is not 'allowed' at Bentonville. Surprisingly, while the site is staged and narrated by the State of North Carolina, there is a hidden multi-authorship at work. When the employees of Bentonville proposed bringing in a monument to honour fallen Union soldiers, to complement the one already at Bentonville for the fallen Confederate soldiers, the workers received threats from the community. These threats were so serious in nature that state workers decided to forgo putting up the planned monument, fearing it would be a target for defacement (authors' personal conversation with employee). Therefore, Bentonville becomes a place for forgetting and silencing the Northern side of the struggle.

The Brandy Station site represents a significant counterpoint to the larger landscape of public monuments and memorial practices that revolve around Southern identity and Civil War heritage. There are few places of memory in the Southern US that bring the remembrance of the Union and the Confederacy together so closely in the same geographic and interpretive space. There is a long tradition of Confederate memorials being used to maintain and, in fact, further inflame regional animosities and secessionist sentiments, in effect framing the Civil War not as a struggle to preserve slavery but as the noble 'Lost Cause' that set Southerners apart as a people with a special identity. Indeed, these memorials rarely mention the more than 4 million enslaved African-Americans freed by the Civil War, albeit to what was an imperfect freedom. Today, collective memory of the Civil War remains divided simultaneously along racial and spatial lines. To illustrate this lasting divide, Webster and Leib (2001) examined South Carolina's refusal in 1996 to remove the Confederate battle flag from the state capitol building. Opponents to public display of the Confederate flag suggest that it is a symbol of hate and the celebration of a rebel government regime that sought to preserve slavery and white supremacy. The pro-flag supporters argue that the CSA flag represents their heritage and that removal is 'cultural genocide' (2001, p. 278). For both sides a victory means 'significant sway over the memorialization and celebration of the region's history in the future' (Webster and Leib, 2001, pp. 271–272). Highlighting this divide was the refusal of the US Senate to renew the United Daughters of the Confederacy insignia patent, which contains the Confederate flag

(Webster and Webster, 1994). In both of these cases, those identifying with Confederate symbols lost out to varying degrees, perhaps increasing the apprehension of losing Southern white heritage, or as Webster and Webster point out, taking on an 'under siege mentality' (1994, p. 134). With attacks against Confederate remembrance (displays and belonging) from 'outsiders' – in a spatial sense non-Southerners and in a racial sense non-white Southerners – the Civil War memorial landscape of the American South proliferates and maintains 'spaces of difference' (moreau, 2010).

A quick examination of the CWPT can verify this exponential landscape development. Founded in 1987, well over a century after the end of the Civil War, the CWPT lists 55,000 members with 2009 revenue at nearly $20 million. With language that demands immediacy to preserving the 'hallowed grounds' of the Civil War, the CWPT is dedicated to 'Saving America's Civil War Battlefields' (CWPT, 1987, np). The CWPT's website display of members, participants and tourists stresses the white heritage of the American Civil War landscape. While white, and typically Southern, sacrifice and heritage are exhibited at these places, the historical struggles of slaves and their descendants are often unmentioned. In addition, Northern or Union heritage is couched as an aggressive movement against Southern culture and identity (that is, the term 'Northern Aggressors'). Both representations, of slaves and Northerners, illustrate how many Civil War places of memory facilitate a silencing of identities as well as being highly charged political sites.

DeLyser (2003), in her work on the 'Ramona' landscape of California, illustrates how highly controlled social memories of the past shape the present. She is sensitive to the practices, pilgrimages and personal stories of individuals in making the past visible through the memorial landscape; an approach that somewhat guides our study. Hence, museums, memorials and monuments are not just simply containers for collective memories, but are places to engage individually and actively in recalling and reconstructing memory through the lens of the present. Specifically, Wills (2005) finds in places like memorials, contestation over who and what and how to remember, revealing the political nature of memory and history. As he notes, 'commemorative activities often incite heated battles over who or what we ought to remember and the correct ways to remember and interpret the past. Such struggles over the representation and interpretation of the past reveal the politics of memory and history' (2005, p. 111).

Southern spaces of Civil War remembrance often represent and narrate the history of Confederate economics, battle strategies, and white

soldiers. While the process may seem innocuous, contestation is often hidden behind the display. In terms of the American South, and in particular Natchez, Mississippi, Hoelscher (2003) teases out how cultural and regional memory creates and maintains group identity and how remembrance of the ante-bellum South and the Civil War is also important in shaping the future of race relations in the USA. He further drives home the point that, 'By examining this important display of regional memory, I hope to shed light on whom Natchez whites imagined themselves to be and on the memories and performances that helped them make their collectiveness-their whiteness-authoritative, all-encompassing, and real' (2003, p. 660). By maintaining a Confederate identity, social and spatial divisions remain in place, further reinforcing how the regional memory of the past is remade into a political present. In line with this argument, Hague et al. (2005) stress that Southern heritage increasingly highlights the importance of whiteness; and illustrated through Confederate identity it is a Southern white identity. They declare, 'Arguing that people of European descent, particularly Anglo-Celts, are at the centre of Southern US culture and population necessarily downplays the presence, impact and rights of other ethnic groups and peoples' (2005, p. 160).

Added to this complexity is that Southern Civil War memorials are proliferating at the same time as the Confederate identity is 'under threat'. The Southern landscape 'officially' begins to reflect and project Confederate memory (Poole, 2004) and belonging in order to 'defend' this heritage. Confederate memory is meant 'to embody a deeply conservative ethos that celebrate[s] the past as a model for the present' (Poole, 2004, p. 53) and 'root[s] identity, ideology, and moral virtue in blood and soil' (Poole, 2004, p. 95). Traumatic and nation-altering events such as wars are part of national memory; and the Southern landscape of remembrance through memorials, monuments, museums and re-enactments are manifestations of memory representation (see, for example, Foster, 1988; Savage, 1997). Thus, while studies of Southern heritage commonly highlight commemorative rivalries and the tensions of presence and silence, we (re)consider the Brandy Station Graffiti House, positioned within a Civil War landscape of memory, from an alternative approach. We supplement the more traditional approaches mentioned above with a fresh investigation into a complex landscape of pseudo-national identity representation, Civil War memory and Southern heritage.

Firstly, we suggest that the Graffiti House enables an investigation into how memory and identity can be materially inscribed in and performed

through place-based processes, which are twofold. The process of cultural agglomeration, a term meant to signal the layering of cultural inscriptions onto vernacular-profane places, captures how soldiers from the past layered their inscriptions onto and sometimes in reaction to earlier markings. This is not to be confused with the term used in planning practices (see, for example, Stern and Seifert, 2010). And the process of symbolic accretion (Dwyer and Alderman, 2008), a term meant to signal the inscribing of meaning onto sacred places like museums and memorials, recognizes how contemporary visitors layer their own personal memories and identities onto the larger landscape of inscription at the Graffiti House. Secondly, Brandy Station, as place, allows us to ruminate on how memory works through connection, that is, connecting the present to the past through cultural heritage and connecting the past to the present by individual and (pseudo) national memory. Thus, we seek to understand how expressing memory instils meaning into a remnant place of heritage and landscape of identity. Thirdly, an examination into the idea of the lost or gained identity through heritage and memory highlights the creation of remnant places of memory; and how the socially exiled can connect through these places to their heritage and constructed identity. Entangled geographies of memory, heritage and identity, including topics that deal with place inscription or war, are already well researched (Alderman and Modlin, 2008; Alderman and Ward, 2008; Alderman et al., 2012; Alderman, 2002; Azaryahu, 1996; DeLyser, 2003; Forest and Johnson, 2002; Hague et al., 2005; Hague, 2001; Hoelscher, 2003; Hoskins, 2007; Johnson, 1996; Maddern, 2008; Webster and Leib, 2001; Webster and Webster, 1994; Wills, 2005). By approaching Civil War memory through place to spatially practice symbolic accretion, to temporally connect the present and past, and as an in-place tool in sustaining a socially exiled identity, we may gain new insights into the entanglement of identity, memory and heritage. Before proceeding into the analysis, a brief history posits the importance of the Graffiti House as a unique American Civil War place.

Placement and history of the Graffiti House

Built in 1858, the Graffiti House was owned by CSA Major James Barbour, who also owned the Beauregard Mansion named in honour of CSA General Beauregard. Originally, as the Brandy Station train depot, the Graffiti House was in a unique place due to its border position between the North and the South during the Civil War. It is located in Northern Virginia (during the war a CSA state), near the border

with Maryland (a Union state) and Washington DC (the Union capital). Because of its liminal location and rail access, the Graffiti House was controlled at different times by Union and Confederate soldiers and was a major strategy point for supplying troops and transporting goods for the war effort by both sides. Not only was the house a headquarter location for battle strategy, but the upper floor of the two-storey building became a makeshift hospital for wounded soldiers. At a dramatic point in history, on 9 June 1863, the Battle of Brandy Station was the largest cavalry battle during the Civil War with more than 20,000 foot soldiers and 17,000 cavalrymen.

In 1993, the Brandy Station house gained prominence and historical value again in the narrative of the Civil War. A previous owner discovered graffiti messages at the site during house renovations (docent information). The graffiti was that of Union and Confederate soldiers who had inscribed the walls during their occupations. The house became a marker of 'Civil War-ness' and therefore worthy of preservation. The BSF purchased the house in 2002. Restoration has since uncovered Civil War inscriptions that date back as early as 1863. Previously, both floors were covered in soldier inscriptions, but the lower-level inscriptions were 'erased' by previous owners. The remaining upper-level inscriptions are currently and methodically being uncovered from layers of plaster, documented, and then archived (see website at http://www.brandystationfoundation.com/). The process of uncovering the graffiti is slow and painstaking so as to avoid damaging the original inscriptions, and updates on newly documented inscriptions are noted on their website.

In 2005, the BSF was able to get the Brandy Station train depot house added to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), as the Graffiti House fulfilled two of the NRHP's criteria: 'Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history' and 'Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important to prehistory or history' (BSF, 2010, np). Today the Graffiti House is a museum of American Civil War memory. In addition to its border position and incorporation of both Northern and Southern narratives about the Civil War, what also separates the Graffiti House from many other Civil War museums and places of representation is that the BSF encourages visitors to leave inscriptions. The visitor inscriptions are located on the hallway walls of the lower level of the house and kept separate from the Civil War inscriptions remaining on the upper level. The BSF uses the lower-level long hall-passage as the space for visitor inscriptions, presenting the white walls as a canvas for modern graffiti

and lining up images of state flags along the top of the corridor. While the soldier inscriptions are territorially layered on top of each other, the visitor inscriptions keep a respectful distance from nearby writings and are also spatially separated by state. This is not to say that the visitor inscriptions do not add depth to the museum as a place of memory connection. Indeed, this expressive practice taps into and offers connection through the act of writing and marking and creates another memory connected to place, heritage and identity (Figure 8.2).

The Graffiti House moves forward the discussion of Civil War heritage, identity and memory by opportunistically using its liminal location between the North and South as a place to discuss both 'sides'. The Graffiti House is important in illustrating how multiple and competing layers of memory and identity become inscribed, quite literally, into the same place. Yet, the place inscription process is not limited to the past; it is ongoing since the site's managers provide visitors a wall upon which to write their own graffiti messages – often statements that make ancestral connections to the soldiers who once inhabited Brandy Station as a place of the Civil War. The old and new messages on the walls of the Graffiti House provide tourists insight into the lives and identities of Confederate and Union soldiers, and are a means of performing their own personal identities and private memories related to

Figure 8.2 Civil War Trail and National Register Signs
Source: Photo by E Arnold Modlin, Jr.

Civil War heritage. This represents past cultural agglomeration by way of the inscriptions authored by Civil War soldiers and presents symbolic accretion by way of the inscriptions authored by visitors who consume the tourist-heritage landscape of the Civil War. This place, as a remnant landscape, connects past and present by shaping and reinvigorating identity, memory and heritage. In terms of a socially exiled Confederate identity, and CSA as an imagined community, this place offers momentary lapses into Confederate belonging. These in-place lapses allow for individuals to positively express and be encouraged by docents to connect with a Confederate identity in a supportive environment. In current social and political climates, claiming a Southern Confederate identity raises alarms, but places like the Graffiti House nurture Civil War heritage without fear of reprisals.

Past cultural agglomeration and present symbolic accretion

As pointed out above, cultural agglomeration and symbolic accretion are two ways in which the Graffiti House stands out in the overall American Civil War memorial landscape. Interestingly, while the site brings Union and Confederate memories together, there is a controlled spatial separation of the original and modern expressions. In an effort to connect the present to the past, the cultural agglomeration is on the upper level of the house. Cultural agglomeration is the layering of cultural inscriptions onto vernacular landscapes. At the time of the Civil War, this house was not the 'hallowed' site it is today, but a place of battle strategy, mobility and convalescence. Cultural agglomeration is displayed through the graffiti inscriptions made by the Civil War soldiers. Both Union (Northern) and Confederate (Southern) troops left their marks, writing on top of and adding to each other's inscriptions. The graffiti markings include signatures, names of military units, jabs at the opposing army, notations of battles and drawings. These markings are a dialogue of wartime rivalry, banter between competitors, joking at each other's expense while simultaneously marking their territory.

On the ground floor of the house, the BSF encourages visitors to inscribe the inside walls of the passageway between rooms in an effort to connect visitors to their ancestors and hence their heritage. Dwyer and Alderman discuss how 'memorials undergo symbolic accretion over time as different historical meanings are layered onto them, thus challenging the notion that these symbols have a final, established meaning' (2008, p. 5). In essence, as this book suggests in the final section, places

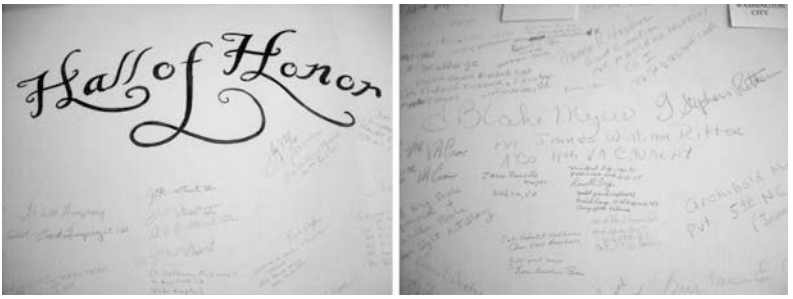

Figure 8.3 'Hall of Honor'
Source: Photo by E Arnold Modlin, Jr.

of memory are always in a process of 'becoming' rather than being fixed entities. Symbolic accretion at the Graffiti House, materially through the modern graffiti inscriptions and socially through the docent tour and BSF literature, illustrates how places of memory shift in meaning. Through this process of transformation we can see politics playing a role in narration.

The lower-level visitor inscription passageway is labelled the 'Hall of Honor' (Figure 8.3). When we visited in June 2008, we also examined the visitors' logs. At that time, the Graffiti House had received more than 10,000 visitors from over 18 countries. There were approximately 160 visitor inscriptions on the walls. Today there will be many more, as we have noted the BSF promoting new inscriptions in their recent newsletters. Upon examining the visitor inscriptions, several themes emerged, as the selected inscriptions illustrate:

- 88% of visitor inscriptions identified a particular soldier who fought in the Civil War:

  Archibald McMillan
  Pvt. 5th NC Cavalry
  (James T. Heg)

  Sharon Edwards
  Pvt Ben Crawford
  1st VA Cavalry

  Charles Griffith Moler
  Co "D" 12 Virginia Cavalry
  Holly J. Neavear

Lyman Richard Comey
Captain Henry Newton Comey
Company E
2nd Massachusetts Infantry

- 62% of visitor inscriptions claim a specific relation to an identified Civil War soldier:

  Pvt. Allen Woodell
  2nd NC Battalion
  Greatgrandson
  Vance Creech

  Jody Ellis Haddox
  Great Granddaughter of Alfred Ellis
  10th VA Cav.

  ADJ. William B.
  Phillips 2nd PA
  Greg Taylor
  great-great grandson

  Samuel Wilson
  1st PA Calvary
  great-great grandson
  William Hoffman

  – of which approximately 34% of the modern inscriptions were made by females
  – of which approximately 64% of the modern inscriptions were made by males
  – 2% of which gender is unable to be determined
  – 6% of male visitors shared the same name as the Civil War soldier they inscribed relation to:

  James Glen
  Pvt James Glen
  Cobbs Legion Co C
  White County Sharpshooters

  Charles Beresford Walters II
  Pvt. Charles L Walters
  Company D Calvary Cobb's Legion GA
  Albany GA.

Lt. Col. James Huston
82nd New York Inf.
2nd NY SM
John W. Huston
James A. Huston

Daniel Wilson Jones
2nd. N.C. Cavalry
by Timothy A. Jones
Daniel A. Jones

- 12.5% of visitors who inscribed the 'Hall of Honor' are relatives of the Civil War soldiers who also authored inscriptions on the upper floor walls:

Jerry Hall
Great-great-great . . . nephew
Gen J.E.B. Stuart

Colonel J. E. Farnum
70th New York Inf.
Edward + Kelley Jr.
Amanda F. Farnum

Lisa Marshall Headley
1st cousin 3X removed
Lt. James Marshall
Co E 12th VA

William "Bodie" Catlin III
Lt. Thomas Marshall
Co E 12th Va. Cavalry

- 23% of the visitor inscriptions offered extra information beyond naming and claiming particular Civil War soldiers:

John E. Woll
4th US Art
Battery E
Summit Sation [*sic*] PA
Darrell Griffiths

Winchester VA.
Great Great Uncle

John was kicked in groin
while here in
winter of "64".

Phillip Carper
35th Va. Battalion Cav.
Had his horse shot out
from under him and suffered
a sabre wound. Captured and
sent to Point Lookout Md.
Paul Hammond
Great Nephew

Pvt. James W Barden
Co H. 1st NC Cav
Goldsboro NC.
My great- grandfather
survived the war +
returned home April 1865.

In memory of Solomon King
18th Regiment, Co. H who
valiently [*sic*], throughout the war,
fought for the U.S. Government
Ronald D. Berkebile
Great-great-great grandson
Janet L. King
Great-great grand daughter

These tourist inscriptions, what the BSF labels '21st century graffiti', add a visible multi-authored element that is absent from other Civil War museums and battlefield sites in the Southern US. This 'graffiti' encouragement relinquishes some elite control over the space and narration of memory, making it more accessible as a space of individual emotional connection. Yet, this is limited by the BSF through monitoring the inscription practice in terms of who should connect to this past and an encouragement of a specific type of inscription. The encouragement is meant for visitors with Civil War heritage that can be connected directly to Brandy Station, Virginia, via Civil War occupations, encampments and battles. Through the wall inscription process, visitors individually enact a socially constructed memory, drawing upon a personal identity that is melded to the Civil War as a point in time, a space of separation and, for some, a heritage that is in 'danger' of being lost.

Connection to the past and present by way of a remnant landscape

Connecting the present to past heritage and connecting the past to present memory instils meaning into a remnant landscape that aids in identity construction. The term 'remnant landscape' is primarily used in the academic context of biology and ecology (Corbett and Anderson, 2006; Lindenmayer et al., 2000). In this respect, remnant landscapes are holdovers of habitats, wildlife and vegetation that are encroached upon by human action. While the term 'remnant' can work well as a visually engaging adjective, we think it offers insight into the shifting practices of place heritage and individual practices of place as material, and thereby tangible, retainers and reminders of connections to socially constructed identities. Appropriating the term for research centred on social and cultural perspectives, Lamme (re)considers remnant landscapes as historically and socially important landscapes to an area (2008, p. 366). Remnant landscapes, then, are those seen as having 'merit' that leads groups to preservation efforts (2008, p. 366), and highlight the impact of the present on the past. The BSF and the CWPT are such groups working to preserve Brandy Station as a place and landscape of historical and social 'merit' to the South due to its Civil War past. Added to this idea of the physically remnant Southern landscape, Coleman illustrates how the South's identity is linked to a 'remnant coloniality', highlighting the impact of the past on the present (2010, p. 209) and engaging memory as a current political tool. Remnant landscapes physically make available the memory connection illustrated by Aristotle as 'when someone grasps the significance of something that he sees' (in *Poetics*, 1996, p. 26). Remnant landscapes collapse time and accentuate spatiality as the place of memories' needs. Therefore, by considering remnant landscapes as more than shreds of bygone times, these tangible places trigger memory and proffer themselves as outlets of connection. This connection emphasizes how collapsing time works to plug into identity by way of the present to the past through heritage and the past to the present through memory.

As we have argued, the Graffiti House connects the past and present with a (pseudo)national memory of the Civil War and Southern heritage. At the Graffiti House, time folds, it spatially succumbs via this connection, and the spatiality of the place is a pinpoint and a catalyst for tapping into memory. Maddern, while examining these types of connections to Ellis Island immigration, notes: 'Through the material objects and spaces of Ellis Island, the dead and the living find a sense of connection' (2008, p. 372). The geography folds the temporal separation

into a meeting place. Visitors can see the (Aristotelian) memory on the walls. They can connect to ancestors and ideas in ways not visually possible at other Civil War sites. With these past material inscriptions as aids, visitors can imagine the banter, the war, the loss. Layered onto this memory engagement, visitors can add to this place of memory through their own inscriptions. This symbolic accretion reinvigorates identity from a place anchored to a point in time, reinforcing a socially constructed and separated Northern and Southern heritage. This memory connection, through the Graffiti House as a remnant landscape, offers remnants of identity and heritage that maintain division within the USA today.

Exile memory

The particular division mentioned above is now considered in terms of exile. Firstly, though, a consideration of the Civil War and its placement within the division between past and present is needed. The American Civil War had a winner (the North) and a loser (the South). Therefore, Civil War memorial sites as remnant places of identity can work as a reminder and reinforcement of the two fighting sides. Both 'sides' connect to the Civil War as a defining time in US history. For visitors identifying with the North, it is a reminder of triumph and the resulting reformation of a united country. Civil War memorial sites can therefore work to reify a gained and united US identity. For visitors who identify with the South, these same types of places remind them of the Lost Cause. As a result of being part of the losing side, and also the conservative and racialized ways in which Southern identity is framed, Confederate belonging and identity are often hotly contested. Yet, places like the Graffiti House allow for and continue an expression of Confederate belonging. Today, regional tensions remain, especially for Southerners, and we have seen the rise of a highly politicized neo-Confederate vision of memory and identity that continues to keep the fires of secession and resistance burning (Hague et al., 2009; Jansson, 2009). With Confederate identity raising political battles, some Southerners are still 'fighting' to hold on to a Southern Confederate identity.

Memory is political and is a tool of today's (re)shaping how and what we remember of the past. In examining Cuban-American exile identity, Sugg investigates literature that expresses how 'representations of place shape constructs of identity, selfhood, and community that can be understood as commentaries on the ways that space and

sexuality and cultural memory and national histories become inextricably imbricated in Cuban-American imaginaries' (2003, p. 462). Unlike Cuban-Americans, who are physically exiled from place, Southern memory is still physically connected to place. The term exile can be appropriated here to highlight a socially, culturally and politically exiled identity and 'threatened' heritage. As with Cuban-Americans, the CSA is an 'imagined community', as Benedict Anderson defines nation as 'an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign' (1991, p. 6). Hence, places of Civil War preservation, those 'hallowed grounds', offer places of Confederate belonging, shared memory and individual enactment of identity. Remnant Civil War landscapes become places of memory where 'Confederate exiles' on an individual scale can connect to their heritage and identity.

To further illustrate this connection and elucidate on the socially exiled Confederate memory, some visitor inscriptions proudly display direct links to CSA soldiers. Further highlighting the importance of Confederate memory and belonging, some of these inscriptions are connected to CSA leaders. For example, some visitors inscribed their direct relation to J E B Stuart, who is one of the most well-known generals of the CSA. In doing so, these visitors are directly expressing and enacting a Confederate belonging. Likewise, other visitors to the Graffiti House acknowledge Robert E Lee, the CSA Commanding General, as a family relation. Both men are also noted in inscriptions made by their descendant namesakes. To pass on and proudly carry the name of these CSA generals illustrates the continued importance of memory and Confederate belonging in the South, and the Graffiti House is a place to express this controversial identity. Sugg stresses how 'memory is seen to have a deep relationship to space, as well as to identity' (2003, p. 464), and how space in turn 'authenticates' identity (2003, p. 465). The CSA, as an imagined community, expresses an increasingly socially exiled belonging in terms of considering the USA as a whole. While remaining physically attached to Southern space, expressing a connection to Confederate identity is most certainly highly contested, at times spawning court cases and at other times violence.

For example, the Ku Klux Klan, originally formed in 1866 in Pulaski, Tennessee (Parsons, 2005) and often simply referred to as the KKK, is a far-right extremist group in the USA that overtly uses Confederate symbols in advocating white supremacy (Poole, 2004). As an extremist group, the KKK has been investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation for violent and terroristic activities that target African-Americans and other minorities (Cunningham, 2003). The KKK continues to persist

today and its activities still stir up controversy (Cunningham, 2008; Gibson, 1987; HLR, 2000, 2004; JBHE, 2004a, 2004b).

Conclusion

Civil War heritage is strong in the South and Confederate Civil War soldiers are cherished as fighters for the Lost Cause. They are made into vessels of (pseudo)national memory and representatives of strong Southern ideals. As a remnant landscape of memory, the Graffiti House in Brandy Station is unique as a container of Civil War identity and heritage. Firstly, it was and still is located in a liminal border space between the North and the South. In wartime, this geographical border position relegated the Graffiti House as a place changing in occupation but unchanging in purpose. It remained a place to strategize battle plans, a place of mobility of goods and soldiers, and a place of injury, sickness and convalescence. Secondly, the cultural agglomeration on the upper floor of the house, displayed by the drawings, banter and territorial markers of occupying soldiers, temporally folds space to emphasize the geographical implications to place identity and heritage through visual memory. Thirdly, the symbolic accretion encouraged by the BSF reinvigorates a separate and 'endangered' identity through shared memory and heritage connections that are embedded in current racial and spatial tensions in the American South. As a multi-authored site, the modern inscriptions work to further illustrate a divisive connection maintained in the USA today. Fourthly, positioning places as connections of remnant landscapes, a point in time becomes the contemporary socio-political anchor from which tensions are expressed. These remnant landscapes act as memory catalysts reaffirming cultural identity and heritage. Lastly, the Graffiti House, as a remnant and unique landscape of the American Civil War, works as a container to express and (re)gain a socially exiled identity and heritage through (pseudo)national memory connections.

Northern soldiers have inscribed the walls and Northern visitors make their marks connecting to a Union government. Yet, the Graffiti House reifies both Confederate and Union identity, memory and heritage, but this reification works to maintain the spatial division of a separate South, a 'lost South' and 'Northern aggression'. It also reifies racial division since one of the main contestation points in the war resulted from the question of economic health for the South, which relied on slave labour. At Brandy Station, the memory of the individual soldier and the shared memory of visitors are pushing for a naturalized

public memory that continues to express a tension of loss and reinforces a (pseudo)national Confederate identity. The modern inscriptions of visitors reflect intimacy, whether real or perceived. These inscriptions individualize this socio-cultural memory into personal heritage. Visitors imagine their ancestors and connect to this personal history through the act of inscribing this house of memory. Certain stories passed on from one generation to the next emerge on these walls. Glimpses of time are sedimented and made tangible through the soldiers' inscriptions.

While anomalous among Civil War museums, the Graffiti House is not the only heritage site promoting historic graffiti. For example, Natural Bridge, Virginia, is marketed as such a site: 'Legend holds that young George Washington surveyed the Natural Bridge site for Lord Fairfax. Landmarks remain of the work and on the wall of the bridge where he carved his initials' (NBV, 2009, np). When moreau visited Natural Bridge in June 2008, she saw a vast array of graffiti dotting the landscape from George Washington's time to the present day. Even beyond the US, sites of memory encourage visitor inscription to add layers of meaning and connection, as one site moreau visited in 2008 illustrates. While not permitting visitors to write on the walls, docents at 19 Princelet Street, an immigration museum in East London, encourage visitors to fill out luggage tags that connect to their experiences at the museum. These luggage tags become part of the exhibit by being placed in an open suitcase.

Overall, graffiti is often dismissed or trivialized; neglecting its larger historical importance as a form of expression and the contemporary role it plays in the construction of personal and group identity. Our work at the Brandy Station Graffiti House connects with the examples above and illustrates the value of thinking about how places of memory and identity are constantly in a process of being (re)written (literally) and how this authoring is important for connecting the past and present, people and place, the personal and the national, and in our case the North and the South. In light of the fact that 2010 began a five-year celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, the inscriptions at Brandy Station will become even more important in understanding the changing place of Civil War memory and Confederate identity in the USA.

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Part III

Becoming

Owain Jones and Joanne Garde-Hansen

> The patterning and layering in his books [W G Sebald] closely resembles the Penelope-like embroidering and unravelling of the weavers [] His material is memory, not thread, but the result is the same, a work of art that vanishes almost as soon as it appears.
>
> (Franklin, 2007, p. 143)

The term 'memory', of course, covers not one simple process but a whole set of complex interrelating processes (Foster, 2009). We hope that the preceding chapters have shown, in various ways and through various registers, that there are many ways in which this complexity is articulated in individual geographies in and between everyday places past and present. We have seen examples of key forms of interacting memory – short term, long term and sensory. Yet, as Foster (2009) shows, these in turn can be divided into sub-systems: for example, long-term memory entails procedural memory (skills) and declarative memory (facts – somatic and episodic). Within these processes there is a ceaseless traffic between the conscious and unconscious (Schacter, 1989; Tulving, 1993) which is, in part, how affective 'becoming' is generated. How does memory operate in the process of 'becoming' in place? There are many questions to consider; for example, what status does a retrieved memory have in the mind's eye – does it stop being memory and become thought? We generally do not, and cannot, deliberately control memory process in either the laying down of information or in its retrieval and/or re-emergence. Memories well up out of the depths of the unconscious and/or work away as (dis)enabling background. They are not static information, but are reworked in the light of current practice, and at the same time shape that practice.

Taken as a whole, our book has sought to emphasize that memory is intimately entwined with many other functions: with that of the body in Chapter 2 by Caitlin DeSilvey (see also Weiss, 1999), emotions (grief) and the senses in Chapter 3 by Avril Maddrell and Chapter 4 by Judith Tucker (see also Jones, 2005) and creativity in Chapter 6 by Iain Biggs. As already stated, memory is a key aspect of creativity. As Thorpe (2009, p. 1) puts it: 'for the poet or the artist, "the past" is much what "nature" is [. . .] the raw stuff which he [sic] uses'. The potentialities of the present rest upon creative forces flowing through time and not simply on the indeterminacy and openness of the present moment. If 'becoming' is seen as an intrinsically creative process – which it should be – then the role of memory not only needs consideration, but also practice and craft in how this happens. This goes for 'everyday life', artistic practice and for research too.

Memory renders our relationships with others, timespace, information and materiality as complex, multidimensional and non-linear. Memories are spatially and temporally complex; or even weird, as we saw in Redepenning's research of the elephant in the village in Chapter 7. Dreams are vital-to-life forms of memory which become extraordinary travels in timespaced events. Another way of appreciating the centrality of memory to life-going-on is to read clinical accounts of those who are unfortunate enough to have damaged memory functions and the profound dysfunctionality this brings (Brok, 2003). Knowing who you are is built upon remembering the travels you have made both physically and mentally.

With this in mind, Part III of this book seeks to confront how memory of the past and past places (both distant in time and/or space – and recent in time and/or space), continue to shape and reshape our practices of identities and place. In a sense, Part III seeks to counterbalance Parts I and II in stressing that while memory helps create relatively stable performances of identity and place, these are never settled but are ongoing, anticipating the future, the event and the open-endedness of narratives of self in the world. For example, James D Sidaway's chapter, 'Geopolitics and Memories: Walking Through Plymouth, England', interrogates the recent non-representational theoretical literatures through walking and writing about an urban section of England's South West Coast Path. Sidaway's approach picks up multiple threads which offer themselves as he traverses the changing landscape; these threads range from the local and the geopolitical to the deeply personal, and they all interweave and speak to each other of loss and violence and other emotional and ethical registers, shifting between

geographical and temporal scales and perspectives. Security and insecurity of self, family, community and even nation emerge as master keys to how topography is lived through the 'becoming' practice of walking and through memory.

Between life and death lie periods of trauma, and in 'A Domestic Geography of Everyday Terror: Remembering and Forgetting The House I Grew Up In', Belinda Morrissey returns to a childhood identity and a childhood place in order to map out how her ongoing 'becoming' bears burdens of traumatic past memories. Her chapter exposes the remembrances of her childhood home to understand the geography of the mental space she occupies through the lens of complex post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The inability to 'know' about one's life, due to random memory loss, is possibly the hardest of the many desperate tasks facing those with complex PTSD, for without it they lack a systemized autobiographical memory, remaining always becoming and never certain. This tracing of the literal and mythic geography of the physical (Morrissey's home) onto the psychological (her repeated trauma) is vital because without her childhood home there is only ever 'becoming'. Geography and memory, thus, form both the blanks and the certainties upon which complex PTSD is founded.

The repetition and return that haunt survivors of trauma is also played out in a subtle mix of novelty and routine in the repeated practices of life in Ariel Terranova-Webb's 'Moving Through Memory: Notes from a Circus Lot'. Here, stress comes from not repeating and not reiterating the procedural and skilled memories of circus workers. According to Terranova-Webb, whose parents were circus workers, the US circus today moves and exists in relatively the same way it did two hundred years ago. This relative consistency is created through a combination of collective and personal memory. Memory enacted, forgotten and revised throughout the season in the face of expected and unexpected obstacles thrown in the circus' path. Terranova-Webb's chapter draws upon six months of ethnographic work with the Kelly-Miller Circus in the 2008 season, investigating the work that memory does to keep the circus moving. In exploring the ways in which memory is manipulated, embodied and transferred in the daily life and performance of the circus, she becomes a researcher in and of this place, drawing upon memory skills and exploring the right to call on her experiential and familial circus memories.

This right to claim memories as fundamental to what individuals and collectives have been and could be in the future is central to Hamzah Muzaini's chapter, 'Making Memories Our Own (Way): Non-State

Remembrances of the Second World War in Perak, Malaysia'. Muzaini interrogates the salience of the Second World War for Malaysia as its events were and are inserted into the nation's memory and public memoryscapes long after Malaysia's independence in 1957. As Malaysia continues to become a nation with a history, Muzaini is mindful of how the nation has been exclusive in the way it has represented the war, with a tendency to sideline, if not erase, elements considered irrelevant, if not antithetical, to the promulgation of the event as an important part of the nation's history. Focusing upon Perak, a Malaysian state that saw much action during the war, Muzaini covers one facet of the war that has generally been 'silenced' within official narratives: that of the experiences of ordinary Perakians during the event. Drawing upon the testimonies of locals, Muzaini explores the quotidian or subversive narratives that have been silenced by dominant representations within the state. Through narratives not as fixed as more conventional memoryscapes are inclined to be, the Perakian memories (through bodyscapes, objectscapes and alternative landscapes) disallow Malaysia from becoming its dominant historical narrative.

Finally, Gareth Hoskins' chapter, 'Lobotomizing Logics: A Critique of Memory Sports and the Business of Mapping the Mind', brings a different approach to thinking about geography and memory. Hoskins notes that much work on the intersections of geography and memory explore historic landscapes, heritage sites, museums, monuments, plaques, markers and street naming. In fact, the publication of the chapters in this book also follows these known pathways, with some deviations (for example, Terranova-Webb's circus and Morrissey's complex PTSD). The inclusion of material that begins to explore mental mapping is a deliberate call for geography and memory to become more that the sum total of their parts. The geographies associated with recall as an individual technical practice or skill have been largely ignored (by geographers, if not psychologists and anthropologists). Thus, Hoskins examines how the ambiguous concept of memory is stripped down, delineated and made measurable as competitive recollection – a particular form of mnemonic enterprise licensed by the World Memory Sports Council with a set of rules and standards enforced by an international guild of mind sports arbiters. In focusing upon the preparations for the World Memory Championships, Hoskins considers how the techniques, strategies and routines employed by competitors come into conflict with the foreclosed categories, vocabularies and criteria used by the adjudicators to evaluate mnemonic feats. Central to Hoskins' thesis is the notion that key to the effective retrieval of vast quantities of random digits,

words and symbols is the concept of 'elaborative encoding', which holds that the more meaningful something is, the easier it is to remember. Techniques of recall consequently employ a range of geographically contingent cultural meanings and associations that include The Journey Method and The Roman Room System. This final chapter seeks to extend geographical study into the field of individual memory by examining participants' use of these imaginative spacings. It also reflects on how competitive recollection, as one form of personal memory, works to map the overlapping terrains of the mind, brain, body and self.

Covering memories of geography and geographies of memory that often fall outside the drawing together of geography and memory – circus lot work, complex PTSD, non-state remembrance and World Memory Championships – this final section shows how the mix of personal, political and community become inevitable legacies of memory which stay with us in our 'becoming'. More than that, we show how geography and memory is freshly reconstructed in the ongoing business of 'becoming' by opening itself out to creative explorations of hyper-complexity and acknowledgement of the unknown and unknowable, the affective, the imaginative and the ghostly.

In fact, if the scholarship presented here is showing memory itself to be a fundamental aspect of 'becoming', it is also being presented as just such a hyper-complex, mostly unknown and unknowable, set of processes stretched through space and time, the body and a range of material artefacts, texts and places. 'People [are] rather ill-defined constellations [...] "not confined to particular spatio-temporal coordinates, but consist of a spread of biographical events and memories of events, and a dispersed category of material objects, traces, and leavings" ' (Thrift, 2008, pp. 222–223; citing, Gell, 1998, 222–223). 'The present is clearly burdened with all our temporalities' (Dodgshon, 2008, p. 300). People are assemblages of past spatial practices and memories of those practices, which are in turn creatively folded into the practices of the present and the possibilities of the future. Much is made of the (present) moment in the affective/non-representational geographies that underpin the studies of geography and memory in this book. That it is an ever-moving front of 'becoming' in actuation, with all of its possibility, materiality, embodiment, relations, affect, performativity and richness. In *The Feeling of What Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness*, Antonio Damasio states that affective 'becoming' *does* make us transient entities of becoming and yet, at the same time, one has an 'autobiographical self' – 'a nontransient collection of unique facts and ways of being of systemised memory' (1999, p. 17).

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9

Geopolitics and Memories: Walking through Plymouth, England

James D Sidaway

> So it's all there in the breath of the stones. There is a geology of time! We can take the bricks in our hands: as we grasp them, we enter it. The dead moment only exists as we live it now.
>
> (Sinclair, 1988, p. 112)

A revolution in landscape

This chapter is about an evening's walk along the section of Britain's South West Coast Path that runs through the city of Plymouth. Reflections on that walk embody how geopolitics affects us and how the repercussions and memories of war and death are folded into the textures of an everyday urban fabric. Through a variety of tracks and inspirations from geographical and other writings, I argue that this has implications for how other landscapes, places and paths might be understood.

The experience of walking a section of Britain's South West Coast Path forms the point of departure for what has quickly established itself as a key paper (Wylie, 2005a) in fostering shifting styles of academic writing about landscape. Wylie's paper explores meanings and experiences of a coastal landscape: a subjectivity and spatiality derived from walking. With antecedents in several decades of humanistic geography and immersed in more recent work on performance and the critical rethinking of the essence of being in places, Wylie (2005a, p. 234):

> details various affinities and distanciations of self and landscape which emerge in the course of walking a fairly wild, lonely and demanding stretch of the Path. The paper thus works within a

> particular narrative and topographic frame: it tells the story of a single day's walking . . . 4th July 2002.

In a lively exchange, Blacksell (2005, p. 519) admired Wylie's poetics and enthusiasm, while pointing out that:

> Had it been rooted more securely in the wider literature on the coastal landscape, particularly relating to the South West Peninsula, and had it made more explicit reference to some of the political realities surrounding access to the countryside, then it would have been far easier to relate to its general case.

Wylie (2005b, p. 522) responded with a defence of talking about landscape 'in the spirit of recent geographical experimentations with format, narrative and modes of address'. Wylie considers affect and perception in particular, arguing that these are domains that are 'more-than-subjective'. Underpinning this are key epistemological principles: notably against the conception of individuals as discrete subjects, a refusal of any *a priori* separation of subject and object, perceptions and facts, mind and matter.

With all this in mind, my chapter considers what happens to these principles when the walking and writing are done on an urban section of the same path? How might they then be pushed in some other directions? The existence of other ethnographic-style work on ways of walking can be found in the collection in Ingold and Vergunst (2008) and Middleton (2009). A more explicitly geopolitical account of walking in the 'vanishing landscape' of Palestine as the territory is overwritten by Israeli colonization (Shehadeh, 2007) and Amato's (2004, p. 2) authoritative history of the way that walking 'is joined to a time, condition, society and culture' of the walker(s), plus critical literature on strolling in urban space, all open up possibilities and politics. In the latter vein, texts under the label of 'psychogeography' have foregrounded the politics and experiences of walking in Western (most often British and other European) cities. The original situationist pyschogeographies by Debord and his comrades in 1950s and 1960s Paris have been popularized in the writings of the British author Iain Sinclair and subject also to occasional synthesis and academic treatment (Coverley, 2006; Murray, 2007; Solnit, 2001).

In turn, this work (and practice) draws on other sources and inspirations, including Benjamin and de Certeau and a long history of literary and scholarly works on urban modernity (among them the figures of Poe, Baudelaire, Joyce and Simmel). All this has inspired some

contemporary geographers (Bonnett, 1989; Fenton, 2005; Pinder, 1996, 2001; Wunderlich, 2008). And at their best, the writing, art and practice inspired by this are also alert to the power of the state and capital in defining the meaning and experience of the urban. Half a century of critical urban and economic geography excavating the urbanization of capital form a vital backdrop; the story of all lives and cities everywhere, however these are filtered and refracted through ('personal') lenses of perception. As it proceeds, the chapter wrestles with finding an adequate voice. Basing it around the experience of walking invokes (and is informed by) the literatures briefly surveyed above.

When I walked, I planned to write something afterwards that could be a mode of critical geopolitics and I have since been encouraged in this task by Müller's (2008) careful reconsideration of geopolitical discourse as language and practice and by the collection on critical geopolitics and everyday life by Pain and Smith (2008). However, the narrative here is deliberately eclectic and also draws on other work; shifting scale and perspective along the way. My purpose is to bring these literatures into closer and productive dialogues. The chapter therefore aims to illustrate how geopolitics affects us; to illustrate how the repercussions of military violence are folded into the texture of everyday urban life in a provincial English city, and thereby how we are constantly touched by multiple overlapping tragedies operating at different scales and yet intensified in certain sites.

This is done through the device of recounting an evening's walk along a section of the South West Coast Path in Plymouth (made on 6 December 2006); negotiating spaces of capital, sovereignty and militarism. Since the walk, the question of who I walked with, and how their life and death became entangled with these, has become central. Military geography and security/insecurity emerge as master keys to how topography has been shaped and the paper draws a series of connections between landscape, life and death, and military activities, both near and far.

Grounding

The 630 mile (1014 km) South West Coast Path, which was established in stages through the 1970s and completed in 1978, now appears as a green line on maps produced by the UK's national mapping agency (the Ordnance Survey) and forms the object of a series of National Trail Guides commissioned by a UK state agency charged with rural conservation and development, as well as forming the subject of an illustrated history (Carter, 2005). As that history notes at the outset, the origins of the network that became the coastal path were primarily strategic,

insofar as in the eighteenth century they formed the routes for patrols seeking to control smuggling and to reserve the benefits of trade and taxes for the Crown.

This strategic and fiscal history is the condition of possibility for the path. Without this, it would not have come into being. Thus, while Blacksell (2005) was justified in stressing the complex of state agencies which today govern and maintain the path, we might push such references to the state a little further and deeper. That is among my purposes here, in an account that rests on a walk along a section of the path made in the course of a single evening: 6 December 2006.

This urban section of the path was selected in part to contrast with the walk narrated by Wylie (2005a). My walk was made late on a winter afternoon from Plymouth's Barbican and Sutton Harbour, alongside the docks of the Cattewatter, across the Laira Bridge, ending at what has become a park within a suburb of Plymouth: Hooe Lake. This section of the path becomes the Plymouth Waterfront Walkway. One of the published accounts of walking the entire path largely bypasses Plymouth, with only brief comment on the searchlights sweeping the naval dockyard and the city centre being full of tattooed sailors as the battle over the Falklands/Malvinas was waged: 'So many great voyagers had set sail from here: Cook, Darwin, Drake, The Pilgrim Fathers, now grey warships slipped through the black water; this city waited for news from the Falklands more than any other' (Wallington, 1986, p. 164). Yet as an official guidebook notes:

> This route [of the costal path through the city] was developed by Plymouth City Council and is the only stretch of the South West Coastal Path to run through a city. Along the route, marked by acorns on white hoops painted on lampposts, you will come across sculptures, poetry, industrial relics as well as passing through some of Plymouth's most interesting areas.
>
> (Le Messurier, 2006, p. 82)

But once away from the start on the afternoon of the walk, these areas were almost deserted.

The walk

> One thing the walk certainly does is put us back into our bodies, in the simplest and most ordinary way.
>
> Routh (2007, p. 144)

The walk began at Plymouth's Barbican. This is the harbourside tangle of streets where – in the 1930s – a waterfront monument to the crew and passengers of the Mayflower was built. The Barbican is a celebrated place of departures: the Pilgrim Fathers, Captain Cook, the Tolpuddle Martyrs deported to Australia. Today I quickly pass the tourist information office and museum and, leading down into the water, the 'Mayflower steps', bearing their plaques and the remnants of the (now annual) laying of wreaths on 11 September (outdoing those long-enacted on 4 July), proclaiming Anglo-American solidarity. That enduring and fateful alliance (and the military-economic presence that it enables) will be in my thoughts and evident in the views as the walk proceeds. And mindful of transatlantic alliances, as I was on the day of this walk, it was only five years later that I realized I had walked in the port city of Plymouth on the eve of the 65th anniversary of Japan's attack on the US fleet at Pearl Harbor.

What is most visible the afternoon of the walk, however, is the impact of capital and state immediately around the harbour. The area is gentrified. Waterfront apartments, galleries, bars and restaurants, yachts (a marina was developed here in the early 1970s) and the two hefty wind turbines that provide part of the power for a National Marine Aquarium (part-owned by an investment trust controlled by the Al Maktoum family – the rulers of Dubai) form the view.

There are still some active port buildings, a customs house (bearing the European Union's starred blue banner) and fishing boats. This latest phase of (re)development in Plymouth reworks earlier ones, including the late 1940s and early 1950s redevelopment of the city on a Second World War blitz site where more than a thousand lives had been lost.

I begin the walk away from the Barbican (leaving those restaurants and cafes where I often go after work to dine with my family or with colleagues and friends), via a pedestrianized swing bridge: courtesy of the Sutton Harbour Company. Sutton Harbour was the core of Plymouth before it began to grow into a major naval port. And when it did, military use became entangled with commercial uses. For example, I know that HMS Amethyst (renamed Frigate 116 after the war) was broken up here after being decommissioned on 19 January 1957. Amethyst had sunk Unterseeboot 1276 in February 1945 off the coast of Ireland; a minor skirmish in the battle of the Atlantic, but one that led to 49 German men ending up in a war grave of a depth-charge-pierced submarine beneath 75 metres of water. Amethyst is more famous (and the subject of a 1957 British movie) as the protagonist in the April 1949 'Yangtse incident', when F116 was en route from Shanghai to the British

embassy in the republican capital of Nanking when it fell to the People's Liberation Army. Twenty-two British sailors were killed.

The Second World War had ended four years before this incident, but the aftermath in China (and elsewhere in East and Southeast Asia) was now drawing the UK (back) into conflict with the forces of revolution; the entanglement of the Cold War, the rise of Asian and African nationalisms, and the management of British imperial decline were under way. Indeed, insofar as the Second World War contained within it a number of conflicts, such incipient Cold War and revolutionary wars were integral to its dynamics. It is in this context, for example, that Dick's (2003) groundbreaking history of the Javanese city of Surabaya details how British troops had to fight their way into the city, which had fallen into the hands of Indonesian nationalists who declared independence before the British and Dutch arrived. After Japan's surrender, furious and vengeful battles ensued; all this in 1945–1946, after the Second World War had ended. Hundreds of British (and British-commanded Indian) troops, and many thousands of Indonesians, died:

> A city that had without much damage survived the invasion and surrender of Japan was shattered by a British army … Its newly won Independence was bloodily extinguished by a European power that was not its colonizer and soon withdrew … The only party to benefit were the Dutch, who after November 1946 were able to reoccupy Surabaya as a battered, deserted and cowed city.
>
> (Dick, 2003, p. 84)

Surabaya never would recover its former primacy in the East Indies. It has faded from maps and global consciousness, no longer the sugar and shipping centre of the early twentieth century, when it invariably appeared as a node on world maps. Surabaya's relative decline, already well under way by the 1930s, was greatly compounded by the ruin of 1946 and would be reinforced through a further bloodbath when Suharto came to power (with decisive CIA support) in the mid-1960s, and the large-scale Indonesian communist party base there was smashed.

Plymouth too has been shattered, by aerial bombardment in 1941. More than 60,000 houses were destroyed, over a thousand people were killed. Only fragments of the pre-war city remain: significantly, this includes many of the fortifications. In Plymouth, as in Surabaya in 1946, the foremost victims were civilians. In an article published at that time in *The National Geographic*, Klemmer describes how from March 1941:

> life in Plymouth took on the characteristics of a battlefield. Sirens were going most of the time. The bombers came by night; and in the daytime, when the harassed city was catching its breath, reconnaissance planes would shoot across the Channel to gloat over the handiwork of the night before and to plot new terror for the night to come.
>
> (*The National Geographic*, February 1946, p. 212)

Plymouth physically embodies these conflicts and my encounter with the landscape was prompting me (and has even more so since) to relate them to a host of wider thoughts about war, loss and recovery.

I also had in mind a literature on the geography of destruction from elsewhere in Europe. Among the essential references are Blacksell's (1968) doctoral thesis, *The Effects of Bombing on the Urban Geography of the Eastern Ruhr*, and the writing of W G Sebald (2003) on the destruction with its grounding in Benjamin, Adorno and Horkheimer (see Jackman, 2004), which was originally published in German in 1999 with the title *Luftkrieg und Literatur*. Sebald was also fascinated with landscape and loss and latterly has provided Wylie (2007) with inspiration.

Today, however, the guidebook to the path simply invites walkers to: 'Take some time to explore the Barbican, the old part of Plymouth, with its shops, cafés and art galleries' (Le Messurier, 2006, p. 82). The harbour is full of yachts and a diminishing, but significant, fishing fleet. There are warnings and disclaimers, a reminder that access is regulated. I am then back on a public road, on one side a children's playground (I am always on the lookout for such places, where I might take my youngest daughter to play) and flats originally constructed by a state agency and now largely sold off. But right opposite are new apartments – visibly larger, more secure and obviously much more costly – built for immediate sale-for-profit by a private developer in the 1990s. These spaces are tangible features of the wider socio-spatial polarization in Plymouth. But I am quickly away from this. There is no more housing redevelopment, but there are other forts. The view opens up: land, towers, ships and sea. This contrast reminds me of Crowden's short account of the genealogy of landscape:

> The word landscape has an interesting pedigree. For a start it is foreign and has nothing to do with farming. It was first used in England in 1598. The term 'land-skip' originated in Holland as a painter's term to differentiate between 'landscapes', portraits and 'sea scapes'. These Dutch artists did far more than just record the landscape around

> them: they defined it . . . They gave the natural world a status that had not previously been accorded to it. Paintings up to this point had usually been either religious or personal portraits.
>
> (Crowden, 2005, p. 65)

But I am now looking at what is closer to hand. As the official guidebook to the path notes here:

> Traffic is now left behind as the Coast Path winds its way above the docks of the Cattewater to re-emerge in an area full of warehouses and factories. This is the industrial side of Plymouth; not the most picturesque area, but it was here at the mouth of the Plym that the city's name originated, and it was from here that Sir Francis Drake set off around the world in 1577.
>
> (Le Messurier, 2006, p. 82)

Guidebooks famously foreground the 'picturesque', an ideology that was devastatingly criticized by Barthes in the late 1950s (the English translation is 1972) in his critical reading of the Blue Guides. For Barthes the continual stress on the picturesque on the part of the Blue Guides robbed landscapes of their complex and contested social relations (and obscured the way that they are class-ridden products). Since then, Pile and Thrift have noted how guidebooks have proliferated, especially those to cities:

> Some of the guidebooks; Baedeker, Michelin, The Rough Guides, have become institutions in their own right, provoking Second World War air raids and wars over their judgements. More than this, guidebooks have organised city life and have become constitutive of much of what modern cities are and how both visitors and more permanent inhabitants perceive them. These guidebooks 'order' the city in specific ways.
>
> (Pile and Thrift, 2000, p. 309)

However, the guide I carry is organized around a line, a path, forward movement, with few pauses or detours. Here, the coast path guidebook marks sites and worldly histories in spite of them not being conventionally picturesque. Today, though, the sites of world history making have mostly moved elsewhere.

Lots of the industry is derelict, forms of what Anderson et al. (1983) mapped as 'redundant spaces'; no longer profitable as sites of production

and circulation in a new geographical configuration of capital and thus largely devalorized and visibly decaying.

I pass warehouses, old boatyards and newer scrapyards, second-hand car dealers. And there are fences and razor wire. The manholes and drains are larger, though; the underground infrastructure that Kaika and Swyngedouw (2000) term as obscure but central infrastructures, a 'phantasmagoria of urban technological networks'. They are also often directly strategic. As I walk, within view again are military communication towers. Thirty years ago, the journalist Campbell (1982) documented the extensive UK network of these towers, and also of bunkers, tunnels and 'civil defence' networks. Since then (notwithstanding the eclipse of the Cold War), the privatization of infrastructure, combined with digitization and development of the Internet, have multiplied the networks and complicated the state and capital webs in which they are connected.

All that is less disguised here. I step on a manhole, briefly reflecting on what is below, along the line of Graham's words:

> The expanding subterranean metropolitan world consumes a growing portion of urban capital to be engineered and sunk deep into the earth. It links city dwellers into giant lattices and webs of flow which curiously are rarely studied and are usually taken for granted.
>
> (Graham 2000, p. 271)

Even without the occasional acorn sign and pointer, there is no way I could stray far from this path (sometimes now a road). It is an enforced segregation. Twice I become aware that I am under camera surveillance. Here the way of seeing and walking and being seen are evidently rather different from what Wylie has described on remote rural sections of the coastal path. A few roads cut through; some bear street signs with the European flag (a signifier of regional development aid). There is one point where I pass a security guard; at the gate to one of the wharves. He says something about it being windy tonight and I respond in agreement and push on, twice across a railway line. But it seems unused. It too is derelict. What is evident is a military landscape, both relic and active.

There is a point in the narration of his walk when Wylie (2005a, p. 241) pauses at a stone and plaque commemorating a sunken First World War hospital ship that lies 20 miles offshore from a remote headland. He cannot quite pin down why the words on the plaque have such an affect when he pauses there, noting that 'these words for some reason affected me deeply'. The observation and the affect it registers are

symptomatic of a subterranean geopolitics, for like Wylie at that point, I too am here very aware 'of being on an island, of being on an aqueous globe, an earth encircled by a world of ocean'. But not just any island; one that hosted the capital of a global empire bound by command of the seas (Mackinder, 1902).

Behind me there is a citadel, built after the English civil war to garrison and overlook the rebel (parliamentary) town of Plymouth. It is still a military citadel. Beyond the citadel, where Madeira Road that flanks it opens into public land, are the war memorial and lighthouse on Plymouth Hoe. The citadel blocks all but the top of these from sight. But I think of the thousands of names – from around the Empire – inscribed at the memorial's base. Two warships are offshore. Further off there are forts and artillery towers, now mostly converted to other uses (one is a gym/leisure club), but also twin huge military radio antenna towers with flashing red lights. I look forward: out to sea. For a moment, the depth, ecology and geological history of the seas and Plymouth's role in charting these cross my mind (Gibbard, 2007; Southward, 1980; Southward and Roberts, 1987). A helicopter rattles overhead. There is a chronological layering of defensive and strategic landscapes here. Below are wharves that were vital parts of the Allied invasion marshalled in 1944, en route to the World War's western front in France.

The whole landscape is overwritten by this military past and presence, analogous to the way that the granite mass of Dartmoor is itself fundamental to the topographical structure of Devon (Hoskins, 1954, pp. 14–15) and the limestone this yields to the forts, barracks, wharves, and castles that punctuate Devonshire coasts. Construction of these began in earnest in the sixteenth century with the need for a naval base, to counter Spanish/Catholic maritime power, on the western approaches to England. London and the ports of the south-east were too distant to counter the threat of larger and faster fleets sailing out of Spanish ports. Later, the wars with France and, in the late nineteenth and halfway into the twentieth century, rising German military power made and remade the landscape here – or rather it shaped the coast/port-scape as a strategic one. The epicentre of Plymouth's military engineering activity long ago moved across to the western fringes of the city, along the Tamar estuary at Devonport. Devonport now hosts Devonport Management Limited (DML), sold in the mid-1980s by Margaret Thatcher's government.

At the time of my walk, the core of DML – where nuclear-powered and nuclear-armed submarines are serviced – was run by a business linked to US Vice President Dick Cheney. I subsequently read about vast cost

overruns and a history of controversies over safety at the yard (particularly for the workforce, whose numbers have been regularly downsized over the past three decades), and also how many other lucrative British military contracts – for barracks, tank transport and other infrastructures of warfare – were now being awarded to the same US company. A few weeks before my walk, the British government had made an extraordinary request to suspend trading its DML shares on the New York Stock Exchange, given the strategic issues at stake and the fact that DML was up for sale again. In June 2007 it was acquired by Babcock International Group, which also owns the naval dockyards at Rosyth in Scotland and runs the Clyde Submarine Base at Faslane. DML (along with Faslane) are the sites where the submarines that carry the UK's weapons of mass destruction are periodically berthed and serviced. Future generations of nuclear missiles, which the British government has announced will be developed to replace the current fleet bearing US-manufactured Trident missiles, may therefore not need to come so often to Plymouth. The longer-term role for DML is uncertain.

Meanwhile, however, the reinvigoration of the UK military/industrial complex – and with it other new deployments made from Plymouth (by the Royal Marines to Afghanistan, for example) – has become caught up in the latest phase of imperialism: the neoconservative-fuelled wars of the junior Bush presidency and their recasting by Barack Obama. But this section of the walk, overlooking the estuary of the river Plym, which is known here as the Cattewater, brings mostly relics of earlier imperial moments into sight. Soon I am crossing the wide (it suddenly becomes an estuary just upstream) Plym, on the Laira bridge. There is some public art on a wall near a small boatyard and a marine supply shop that is being built, including a poem: *Plymouth Delta Blues*. And there is a wharf for the aggregates that are mined nearby and shipped away for construction industries. There is no one else walking here tonight and nothing at the wharf. But, I have often seen a boat loading here – registered in Limmasol – when I have crossed the bridge by bus in the day. Then the path is suburban. Oreston and Hooe. Bits and pieces of villages that became Plymouth's suburbs.

The guidebook suggests a detour, an alternative to the main path that here runs alongside roads (marked by red acorns on lamp posts). I take it: the sunken track of a former railway line. There is more vegetation, but because it is winter, and since this stretch of old railway forms a wide path, it is not an obstacle. I think of flora, taxonomies and biogeographies. And I recall a comment by David Harvey: something about never being far away from 'nature' even in the largest city. Harvey charts how

the production of space accompanying the urbanization of capital yields a 'second nature' (Harvey, 1996; Smith, 1984). Finally, there's another housing development under construction, near the water again, and I stumble down to Hooe Lake. This shallow expanse of water is formed from a stream that was dammed to create a scenic site here, but it spills into a tidal inlet that forms a small harbour. Around the corner here is a water treatment plant. This is not far from where I live, so I have walked around here with my daughter; on a few short circular walks from home we have already explored this area of park, coast and path. There is an old quarry; it is clear that I have passed along the edge of several others. These were the source of vast quantities of limestone, some for domestic construction but most for making fortifications; building the breakwater (which commenced in 1812) out beyond the Hoe, to protect the entrance to Plymouth sound, required 41 million tons of stone and took 29 years (Hoskins, 1955). Beyond it, the sea is often still quickly treacherous. A few weeks after my walk, two US sailors drowned after being washed overboard from the deck of their nuclear-powered submarine as it sailed from Plymouth. At some point this lake became a place to abandon old boats, and a few wrecks are one-quarter submerged (it is high tide).

It is almost dark by the time I reach the lake and I am a bit uneasy. But as the light fades, reassuringly there are a few walkers about. This is a park, near houses, and people come out to walk (mostly with dogs) in the evening in a way that hardly happens around the Cattewater. I pull away from the path to walk back to the road and the end of the walk. As I do, there is a pedestal with a sign about how the South West Coast Path here intersects the north-to-south Devon path.

I know from an account of the buildings of Devon (Cherry and Pevsner, 2004) that the house once here was demolished between the wars; clearly a time of massive economic turmoil that rendered such estates uneconomic and produced the political convulsions that would lead to a heightened and increasingly mechanized military phase in Plymouth's defensive role. Drake's name crops up often around here. Although I have not checked the facts, I was told by someone we met on one of those earlier short walks with my daughter that Drake had stayed at the house. Back in the city centre, a new shopping mall called Drake Circus, up the hill from Sutton Harbour and the Barbican, opened in 2006 not long before my walk.

I have often walked around here with my daughter on weekends and we have looked at the boats moored on the lake. The modern house I rent with my family is nearby, built on a former military fuel depot, but

overlooking the Coombe and beyond to the red lights on the military communication towers. I go home. 'Why did you walk home?' they ask, 'why didn't you get the bus?'

Reflections

> Who you walk with alters what you see: the view the prospect.
>
> (Sinclair, 2005, p. 6)

Choosing to walk an urban port location has rendered the strategic-military underpinnings of the coastal path very obvious. But other moments of strategy underpin the path's history throughout the peninsula; and not only the South West Coast Path. Throughout the UK (and of course way beyond), paths and trails make use of relict strategic infrastructures – from the roman roads on East Anglia's isotropic plain that are incorporated into the Peddars Way to Wade's military roads that cross the peri-arctic plateaus of Rannoch Moor en route to Glencoe on the West Highland Way.

They all negotiate contemporary capital (often 'landed') and geopolitics too – even if that is seldom so immediately and visibly evident as here in Plymouth. A military landscape is hardly ever very far away in the UK. In her pioneering account, *Military Geographies*, Rachel Woodward is surely right in claiming that 'the baseline and backroom activities' that structure armed conflicts have received far less scholarly attention than those conflicts themselves:

> Military geographies are everywhere; every corner of every place . . . is touched, shaped, viewed and represented in some way by military forces and military activities . . . Military geographies are representational as well as material and experiential. Military maps and information systems name, claim, define and categorize territory. Infantry and artillery and armoured regiments analyze terrain. Spy planes and satellites scan us from above, watching. Military geographies surround us, are always with us.
>
> (Woodward, 2004, pp. 3–4)

The choice to foreground these has been made explicit here, like Crowden (2005, p. 67), who notes how his time in the army taught him much about landscape: 'As a soldier you view landscape in terms of defence and cover, movement, concealment and vantage points. Your life depends on it.' Indeed, as Schama (1996) and Gold and Revill (2000)

signal, the rise of the idea and aesthetics of landscape are as linked to the culture of defence as much as (or as well as) with the ideology and practice of ownership and accumulation.

Today we might supplement texts, maps and what might be called 'ground-level' figures with satellite photos (freely available at low resolution from Google Earth, for example; though higher resolutions are reserved for military uses – MacDonald, 2007). Higham's (2006) account of 'Landscapes of defence, security and status' in the lavishly illustrated volume on the south-west in an English Heritage-sponsored series on England's landscapes, contains just such an aerial image of Plymouth, depicting most of the area I walked through. Higham has added a yellow dot at each point where there are coastal fortifications around the city. There are about 30 dot symbols. Higham is quick to point out that:

> This is not a 'real' map of Plymouth's fortifications in any particular period, but a cumulative depiction starting in the later medieval period and ending, for convenience of illustration, in the mid-19th century.
>
> (p. 107)

However, convenience of illustration is also a complex political manoeuvre. There are plenty of fortified and secured buildings in Plymouth that are unmarked – notably the facility for servicing nuclear-armed submarines on the Tamar. Although I kept well away from the dockyard and naval base (around which the path is neatly diverted), what meets the eye and shaped my walk are the spaces of capital and sovereignty. My narration of walking and landscape had to attend to social relations and mediations of property and access, industrialization, deindustrialization, consumption, gentrification and geopolitics. But that is not to say that it is reducible to them. For although this paper has explored such political geographies – via an account of a single evening's walking – because I have also worked and lived some of the time before and since in Plymouth, sections of the path are regularly traversed, with family, with friends, or alone. There is, therefore, always more than one shadow on the path. The path around Sutton Harbour is part of the city, so without aiming at walking the path per se, I will find myself frequently on or near to it. The restaurants and routes around the Barbican mean that this accidental, everyday encounter with the path and areas alongside it are inevitable, unless actively avoided. Among those whom I have walked with there is my daughter Jasmin Leila, who was killed suddenly and unexpectedly just five weeks after

the walk narrated here. I was on a bit of the path with her on the day of her tenth birthday party, a month after I had set out from the same place with another purpose; to make the walk that yields this paper. In the spirit, therefore, of negotiating geopolitics, but also in the context of the slipperiness of geographical representation (and here the term 'more-than representational' seems particularly apt in evoking personal geographies), we might consider how sites on the path invoke elegy: the public, emotive, display (often through formulas, rituals and sites of remembrance) of 'private' grief. As Kennedy (2007, p. 2) has explored in a history of elegy and the different ways in which the term is used, these now find expression in a vast range of texts and cultural activities: 'loss may, in fact, be inextricable from our general experience'.

The vast concentration of war memorials on Plymouth Hoe and a set of memorials to others lost since at sea just above the Mayflower steps where the walk began are places where such elegiac acts frequently happen. These sites and acts merge geopolitics, memory, action and the city. Moreover, it is clear that such memorialization, which purports to make things more permanent, serves also to show just how fleeting and subject to erasure they sometimes are. As an alternative mode of memorialization, the sort of geopolitically informed encounter with affects and meanings developed through walking, reading and reflection might therefore be a means to view simultaneously the local, landscape, personal, public and global through the processes that (over time) produce and bind them.

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10

A Domestic Geography of Everyday Terror: Remembering and Forgetting the House I Grew Up In

Belinda Morrissey

My father drank to a schedule: at 5 p.m. every day he drove into the small town where we lived and drank until closing time at 10 p.m. When he was out of the house, my mother, brother and I would try to live a 'normal' life: we'd eat dinner, watch TV, chat. At around 10.20 p.m., we'd see the lights on the living room walls made by my father's car as he drove home and everyone would tense. Then, we'd wait for the closing of the car door. If it slammed, my brother would instantly go to bed. My mother and I would wait. There was nowhere for us to go. My father would appear, furious, if he'd slammed the door. He might throw the plate of food my mother had prepared for his dinner at her as an opening gambit. If he'd been drinking beer, he'd generally scream, push my mother around, throw things, and eventually go to bed. If he'd been drinking rum, however, life was very different. Then, he'd be colder, quieter; his eyes would glitter; my mother would get out of the way a lot faster. I'd hide out in a corner, or pretend to be asleep on the couch, and try to work out how to get out too. I'd hear him in the office, taking a shotgun from the rack, hearing the jingle of the ammunition as he collected it, the jolt as he loaded it. He was going hunting. Walking right by me, so I could smell the rum and pray he didn't hear me breathe, he'd start calling out to my mother, 'Joycey, Joycey, I'm coming to get you. Where are you? Where have you gone? I'll find you.' He'd walk up the stairs to the top floor of the house because you could get a great view of the outbuildings from there. I could hear the scrape of the chair he'd drag from their bedroom as he'd set it up just outside and settle the gun onto the ledge running around the verandah.

It's time to find my mother. NOW. I have to be really quiet or he'll hear me. In these moods, he's got super sensory hearing. He was trained in the Second World War. I sidle to the back of the house. But this house is so old it creaks with every move I make. I have to remember which floorboards don't creak so much. Now I'm outside. I run swiftly to the side of the house he's on because I know my mother's in one of those outbuildings, only 50 feet away. I have to get to her. I can't stay here with him. I'm just moving past the fence line when the first shot rings out. It's surprisingly close. I drop to my knees in the shadows. Then, without thinking, without ever having been taught, I do what I've done since I was a toddler: I lower myself onto my stomach and inch along really slowly, so I don't look like much at all. Still, at least three shots shimmy by me before I make it to the shed. One comes so close I can feel the whistle shave my ear. I dodge around in the dark for a couple of precious minutes before my mother says, 'I'm over here, and then, 'what are you doing here? You should be in the house.' 'I was scared,' I say, but she brushes it off, insisting, 'He's not after you, it's me he wants.' 'I can't help myself, I point out, 'yes, but if he shot me, I'd still be dead.' Mum is always in good humour it seems, so she laughs, and says, 'Well thank God he's drunk, 'cause when he's sober, you know he's a crack shot. That man can shoot anything.' I have no time to take comfort in her words, however, because this night, he's followed me. He's such a big man, and he's so drunk, but he's so quiet. He's crept up on us and we heard nothing, felt nothing, until I hear my mother yelp in fear as the barrel of the gun presses into her cheek, and he says, 'I told you I'd find you'. My body becomes a knot of twisted nerves as I turn and see him grinning in the dark. Without thinking, I throw myself at his legs, knocking him off balance and allowing my mother to run to the car. She's already driven it halfway down our mile-long driveway before I manage to untangle myself from my father's clutches and jump in beside her. I have never been sure whether she meant to wait for me or not. Certainly, I will never ask. The vertiginous drop between knowing and not knowing is far too dangerous for me to ever attempt this kind of reconciliation with my past.

Introduction

When I close my eyes and try to remember my childhood, I get extremely anxious. For, to me, to engage in this process is literally to 're-member', to give my past life arms and legs, to let it walk around,

talk, live. I can't do this. I can't produce what Russell Meares and others have called an 'autobiographical memory' (2000, p. 37), which stores a sense of a life history from early childhood, starting from around the age of four. Instead, I can only provide a jumble of sensory impressions. None of them are dated; I can't even place very specific memories of just one event. I simply don't know quite when things happened. My usual response when asked to nominate an age when an event took place is to state, 'about ten'. This answer only works for so long with partners, friends and therapists, before they get suspicious. The problem for me is that if I vary the response, I will almost certainly forget which age went with which memory and so become unstuck and, ultimately, unmasked as a fraud who can't even remember her own life. It is unbelievably frustrating that almost no one realizes that, for me, the past is like a finely woven shawl which has large rents torn through it, so there are really more holes than cashmere, but just enough thread to hold it together if one doesn't pull at the garment but treats it with infinite care.

The story with which I opened this chapter is an amalgam, developed as a therapeutic narrative, representing events which happened repeatedly in my childhood until I turned 16. My father shot at my mother and myself on average at least a couple of times a month. He also physically attacked my mother and my brother. I was hurt too if I got in the way, so I guess I suffered 'collateral damage'. I attacked my father with knives, loaded guns and thrown objects, over and over in an attempt to get him to stop hurting my mother. I didn't even speak to him, apart from the most basic of communications, from the ages of five until 18. My mother regularly abandoned me in the house with my father; I don't remember a single instance when she actively rescued me. I learnt from a very early age that I had to look out for myself. My brother was kind to me, but he couldn't protect me from my father any more than my mother could. He was too busy trying to save himself. Indeed, I think he thought I'd be in more danger if I stayed with him, and that may well have been the case.

Everyday trauma

This chapter is about everyday trauma; trauma that happened so repeatedly it felt normal. The Greek origin of the word 'trauma' referred to a bodily wound, and indeed in current medical discourse, it still does. Now, however, largely thanks to Sigmund Freud, the term also relates more closely to a wounded mind. The term's transfer to wounds of the psyche was made complete by 1885 when Rouillard's medical

thesis on trauma included a chapter on 'traumatisme morale', or psychic trauma (Hacking, 1996, p. 76). Over time, two schools of thought have come to dominate studies of psychic trauma. The first, mimetic, theory holds that because the trauma is so overwhelming, it never becomes part of the victim's memory system. Instead, the victim enacts the trauma unwittingly, through flashbacks, nightmares and repetitive actions. No real access to the cause of the victim's distress is available, except through hypnosis, because the memory of the trauma is laid down so deep. The second, anti-mimetic, theory, argues that the victim is essentially aloof from the trauma as it unfolds, and that s/he remains a spectator throughout the trauma, strangely detached from the action (Leys, 2000, p. 298). Cathy Caruth, a strong advocate of the anti-mimetic theory, describes this aloof reaction as created by something that 'seems oddly to inhabit all traumatic experience: the inability fully to witness the event as it occurs' (Caruth, 1995, p. 7). Indeed, '[m]any trauma survivors report that they automatically are removed from the scene: they look at it from a distance or disappear altogether, leaving other parts of their personality to suffer and store the overwhelming experience' (van der Kolk and van der Hart, 1995, p. 168). Thus,

> [c]entral to the very immediacy of this experience [...] is a gap that carries the force of the event and does so precisely at the expense of simple knowledge and memory. The force of this understanding would appear to arise precisely, in other words, in the collapse of its understanding.
>
> (Caruth, 1995, p. 7)

Ruth Leys argues that these two schools of thought, rather than remaining antithetical with each other, instead often appear in tension within the work of the same theorists, suggesting that perhaps the interplay of the two approaches provides the best conceptualization of the experience of the trauma victim (2000, pp. 299–300). Certainly, in my own experience, her theory rings true. Through the therapeutic process I have developed a narrative memory of the trauma I experienced. However, even as I speak/write the trauma, there are always parts of the experience that remain unnarrativizable; moments of terror that cannot be articulated except, perhaps, through a scream; moments of confusion, horror and rage that are incapable of transference to a page. The trauma victim is capable of aloofness – watching from above as it were – and an avalanche of emotions so distressing they must be blocked at all cost, particularly so madness does not result. Only in the marriage of the two

theories can any rendering of trauma be found. For the trauma victim at once remembers and resolutely does not remember; both narrates a story of trauma and is reduced to fragmentary glimpses of the past; both remains aloof from the action and is so absorbed within it that all personality dissolves.

Complex post-traumatic stress disorder

In my case, my problems with memory, accompanied by inexplicable flashbacks and terrifying nightmares which featured events that felt so familiar I knew I was recalling some traumatic event, meant that I found functioning in the world extraordinarily difficult. For a very long time I had no idea what had created a person such as me. I was shunted around from doctor to doctor, given supposed remedies for my headaches, my stomach aches, my depression, my agitation, my anxiety, even sometimes for insomnia. I was told I was depressed, I was bipolar, I had borderline personality disorder, I was clearly distressed and 'just needed a break'. Finally, three years ago, I was diagnosed with complex post-traumatic stress disorder (CPTSD), combined with Bipolar II. This is not a heartening diagnosis, but it is one I can see the point of. It does explain me to myself, and that's worth everything, for the criteria of CPTSD fit me like a glove.

The first criteria is that one has to have experienced a history of subjection to totalitarian rule over a prolonged period of months to years, and this can include survival of domestic battering relationships in childhood (Herman, 1992, p. 121). I am using Judith Herman's book *Trauma and Recovery* (1992) extensively throughout this section as she invented the term 'complex post-traumatic stress disorder', and aided the authors of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual III*, which first included the diagnosis 'post-traumatic stress disorder' (PTSD).

Then one needs to have alterations in affect regulation, including, in my case, chronic suicidal preoccupation, self injury and explosive anger. My suicidality shares the same irony as that experienced by all survivors of child abuse in that 'the very "threat of annihilation" that defined [the trauma] may pursue the survivor long after the danger has passed' (Herman, 1992, p. 50). Self injury, far from being a manipulative activity, serves the purpose of terminating feeling through a jolt to the body. The need to cut, to bleed, is a form of self soothing, and is most often found in those whose abuse began early in childhood (Herman, 1992, p. 109). The eruptions of explosive anger to which I am subject have developed from an inability to modulate intense rage, and oscillate dramatically

between fury on the one hand, and on the other, an intolerance of violence and cruelty in any form (Herman, 1992, p. 56). The same issues permeate my intimate relationships which, due to my deep distrust, are characterized both by withdrawal from intimacy and a desperate search for it (Herman, 1992, p. 56).

I also experience amnesia for traumatic events, dissociative episodes, depersonalization and derealization, and I relive experiences, often through flashbacks. Especially as a child, I had strong senses of helplessness, shame, guilt and self-blame, as well as feelings of defilement and stigma. I grew up knowing I was different from other people, and was so utterly alone that I believed not another soul could possibly understand, or would want to, what I went through at home. I also perceived the perpetrators in my life as possessing total power over me, which wasn't entirely unrealistic. Perhaps the most damaging part of my experience was the injunction, enforced by my mother, that I not tell anyone of the terror we lived through at home. For traumatized children, writes Herman, already 'feel utterly abandoned, utterly alone, cast out of the human and divine systems of care and protection that sustain life' (1992, p. 52). The inability to speak of trauma due to situations where

> telling and even thinking are forbidden' can mean that recollections are construed as 'catastrophic for self or others' and 'memory may be sequestered in a virtual (mental) space that is asocial'; a space that closes in on itself through the conviction that no telling will be possible.
>
> (Herman, 1992, p. 52)

This leads to dissociation which is basically 'the sequestration of memory in a virtual space shaped by the social demand . . . to remain silent . . .' (Kirmayer, 1996, p. 189). Thus, trauma produces two different types of memory: mental memory and bodily memory. These differentiations are vital because, without them, PTSD loses its distinctiveness (Young, 1996, p. 97). Mental memories include intrusive memories and re-experiences of the trauma, symptomatic efforts to avoid circumstances that might trigger memories, and emotional numbing. Bodily memories are signalled through explosive violence, hyper-vigilance and irritability (Young, 1996, pp. 96–97).

It is not in the least uncommon for people with CPTSD to be misdiagnosed or not to be diagnosed at all for a very long time. For one thing, Judith Herman only identified the condition and invented the

term in 1992 and it still hasn't been accepted in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual III*, although it seems it will appear in the 2012 edition. Secondly, as Herman writes:

> In general, the diagnostic categories of the existing psychiatric canon are simply not designed for survivors of extreme situations and do not fit them well. The persistent anxiety, phobias, and panic of survivors are not the same as ordinary anxiety disorders. The somatic symptoms of survivors are not the same as ordinary psychosomatic disorders. Their depression is not the same as ordinary depression. And the degradation of their identity and relational life is not the same as ordinary personality disorder.
>
> (1992, p. 2)

Indeed, due to the heterogeneity of the disorder, CPTSD has been likened to psychiatry as syphilis used to be to medicine – its extreme ability to mimic every personality disorder makes it extraordinarily difficult to diagnose, let alone treat (Herman, 1992, p. 3).

Childhood trauma, then, is most frequently associated with the idea of mental wounding, yet, both psychological and physical trauma continue to haunt 'survivors' in various complicated ways. However, the inability to 'know' about one's life is possibly the hardest of the many desperate tasks facing those with CPTSD. In many ways, CPTSD is like walking in a darkness so deep you can't even see yourself, then suddenly, a strong light is shone on a scene of such violence it makes you recoil, hide your face; but before you can gain your bearings, fit the scene into any sort of context, the light has moved on, the scene is gone.

Strangely, though, these memories, or flashbacks, never change; they are exactly the same every time. Even the telling of them is precise; not a word out of place. When asked to speak of traumatic events, those who suffered them will recite them 'like a script' (Meares, 2000, p. 83). This is because, as Russell Meares observes,

> [p]eople construct stories in states of trauma which have the effect of making form and meaning out of an inchoate emotional and perceptual state . . . [The story] is made in isolation and shut off from the domain of discourse. No discrepant information can enter into it. It is a system of 'facts'. These facts do not have the progressive, sequencing, changing, and open features of the narratives of the self. The facts are retold in a repetitive, changeless way. It is a recital

> governed . . . by 'invariant organising principles' . . . its stunted form is not really a narrative at all.
>
> (2000, p. 83)

Laurence Kirmayer agrees with this description of 'traumatic narratives', stating that:

> traumatic experience is not a story but a cascade of experiences, eruptions and crevasses, a sliding of tectonic plates that undergird the self . . . Reconstructions of traumatic memory involve the building up of a landscape of local coherence to better manage or contain it, to present it convincingly to others, and, finally, to have done with it.
>
> (1996, p. 182)

This idea of stunted memory in relation to trauma can be traced back to Pierre Janet, who claimed, as Meares does, that: 'strictly speaking, then, one who retains a fixed idea of a happening cannot be said to have a "memory" . . . it is only for convenience that we speak of it as "traumatic memory" ' (cited in Herman, 1992, p. 37).

The place of memory

> *The memory of my home is laid down deep, somewhere in my semantic memory (Meares, 2000, p. 36). It was a huge place: a massive room, which had been a ballroom in earlier, grander times, was a dining/living room by the time of my arrival; a large, long kitchen ran off that, at the top of which was the original log cabin built 200 years before and which was now the office. The rest of that floor housed only the bathroom and the laundry. Upstairs there were six bedrooms, the three across the front as big, if not bigger, than most people's lounge rooms, the ones along the side were a more ordinary size. I lived in the middle bedroom in the front, next to my parents' room. My room, although containing every luxury, felt more like an anteroom: it had seven doors, if you counted each of the French doors separately. Consequently, it had no privacy, and was certainly nowhere to run to when things got bad, as they frequently did. The whole house, top and bottom, was surrounded by wide verandahs, and my room also led onto a back landing with a flight of stairs to match the other two running from the main floors. There were too many exits and entrances in that house, too many places to hide, too many places to be caught. I didn't miss it when we*

left, although my family had lived there for several generations. I've never been back.

According to Caruth, 'the traumatized . . . carry an impossible history within them, or they become themselves the symptom of a history that they cannot entirely possess' (1995, p. 5). The only way I have of 'knowing' my history is to know it through place: my childhood home. This idea is not new. Indeed, it dates back to pre-modern times. For example, Australian Aboriginal beliefs concerning conception considered that the child's identity was determined by her or his place of birth (Swain, cited in Malpas, 1999, p. 3). The idea that there is some basic tie between place and a person's identity persists among other early cultures across the world as well, and endures within contemporary culture. Jeff Malpas observes that 'the examination of the human through humanised and humanising place' is found in the work of poets and novelists 'from all parts of the globe and in relation to all manner of landscapes and localities', from Marcel Proust to Patrick White to Toni Morrison; from William Faulkner to Salman Rushdie to William Wordsworth to Seamus Heaney (1999, pp. 6–7). Philosophers too have canvassed the importance of place in the production of identity. Martin Heidegger, for example, conceived the concept of human existence as 'being-in-the-world', which explicitly ties the individual to her or his surroundings (1962). Maurice Merleau-Ponty agreed that human experience is grounded in the concrete, thus placing crucial importance on place (1962). Gaston Bachelard explored the same theory in *Poetics of Space*, in which the idea that the self could be discovered through an investigation of the places it inhabits was central. In his terms, the life of the mind itself is given form in the places and spaces in which a person lives, and those places also shape and influence memories, feelings and thoughts (1969). Donald Davidson further explored this notion when he argued that the mind is actually constituted through its interaction with its surroundings; there is no contrast between the world of the mind and the external world. Rather, he insisted 'we must understand ourselves as already 'in' the world if we are capable of understanding at all' (cited in Malpas, 1999, p. 12).

The space of memory

I spent my childhood running. Fleet-footed, shoeless, I ran: around the house again and again, over to the shearing sheds, the horse paddocks, the house where our Aboriginal caretaker lived, the deep creek behind the house,

> *the weir five miles away through the bush. At others, I rode on horseback, always silently urging the animal on, faster, faster, trying to out-gallop my brother, inevitably with notable lack of success. For long periods, I climbed, up trees and the scaffolding under high tank stands, to perch and read my endless supply of books. I was an inveterate reader, and so was my brother. We'd both been known to have been so engrossed in our books while out droving sheep back to the yards that we'd missed the moment when one group of the daft creatures decided to head off in another direction, thus costing us time and patience in herding them together again. As a little girl, I was out in all weathers: my mother's main advice was merely not to wear metal in an electrical storm lest I become a conductor. This was an important message, as I adored wild tempests of all kinds, the more dramatic, the better. Nothing could keep me inside when pieces of galvanized iron were being torn from the roofs of the outbuildings, and trees were split smoking down the middle by single, extraordinary flashes of lightning. I really did spend my childhood running. I was the consummate escape artist: except that I had nowhere to escape to and too much to escape from.*

My home offered nothing but extremes: this is the paradox encountered by CPTSD survivors who must learn to accommodate them in order to develop any sense of safety at all. For, without my memories of the freedom found in running, riding and reading, I would be unable to encounter my home in any way at all. These memories, while amalgams like the memory of my father's violence, are vital in allowing me access to the place and space of memory. For, if I hated the sheep and cattle station I lived on, I also loved it desperately. If I detested the violence, I also adored the liberty. The very things that permitted the trauma in our lives were also, already those that provided the beauty. The formation of my identity in that crucible of fear and joy can never be divorced from the diagnosis of CPTSD, but it can occasionally transcend it.

This interconnection of place and identity is made evident when one considers *how* we remember. As Malpas, following Poulet (1959) and Proust (1932–34), notes: 'one recalls, not just the person, but person *and* place, and both as part of the same image, part of a single remembrance' (1999, p. 176). So, the ordering of our experience, our histories, is not just temporal, but spatial: 'the past cannot be pried away from the place' (Malpas, 1999, p. 180). Memories are constantly caught up in our own embodiment of the past, through the things, smells, objects and places that made them uniquely our own. This connection with place is particularly evident when we attempt to remember childhood memories (Malpas, 1999, p. 182), which depend so capriciously on our

ability to glimpse the far away, the half-buried minutiae of events and people from long ago. Interestingly, for abused children, place and space become even more important in that, for many such children, the places and spaces in which they hid to escape violence and fear provide their only link with feelings of safety; a sense of place thus holds more security for these children than the adults in their lives who were meant to protect them (Herman, 1992, p. 100). So a sense of place and space as the only safety available can persist throughout such children's lives, clearly linking place and space with identity.

Certainly, when I think of safety in my childhood, the first images I see are the sheds I hid behind, the dog kennel I ran to, the tank stand and trees I climbed, the sheep I mustered. Moreover, it is only through my memory of these places and spaces that I can truly encounter the fear and the horror of my childhood. Jeff Malpas observes in this context that:

> Particular places enter our self-conception and self-identity inasmuch as it is only in, and through our grasp of, the places in which we are situated that we can encounter objects, other persons or, indeed, ourselves.
>
> (1999, p. 177)

I come face-to-face with my five-year-old self every time I think of the dog kennel I hid in. I can relive the shattering of my psyche as my mind races in too many directions at once; I can view my face too frozen and terrified to cry; I can feel the comfort of my only friend and protector at that time – the dog who lived in the kennel. It is only through my memories of place that I am able to access this particular experience; without such a 'prompt' the memory I made in that place would not exist, but equally without the place I may have had no chance to make such a memory at all. I am bound to that place as one that held both torment and a desperate hope, the horrible contradiction of a child destined to grow up with CPTSD. In this sense, then, it is important to understand memories of place and space as allowing for particular 'narratives of action'; certain landscapes are marked out through our memories as having certain narrative possibilities (Malpas, 1999, p. 186). In this way, we understand the meaning of places in our past: 'the very possibility of understanding or of knowledge resides in locatedness and in a certain embeddedness in place' (Malpas, 1999, p. 189). For, as Simon Schama has written, 'the landscape in which we find ourselves, and through which we are defined, is thus as much a part of what we are, of our

minds, our action and our selves, as is the food we eat and the air we breathe' (Schama, cited in Malpas, 1999, p. 189).

Living with memories of trauma

In my house, the stairs on the back landing still hold all their creaks which alerted my father to my presence when I tried to sneak down them late at night. The verandahs still hold the whisper of our footsteps as we ran up one set of stairs and down another, weaving and winding into the night. My bedroom, pretty with its deep-blue carpet and yellow-and-white curtains, felt more like Central Railway Station than a private girl's room, with my parents rushing in and out, trying to get to or away from each other. My brother's room, in the quieter geography of the side rooms, had real privacy, and yielded up treasures like records I wasn't allowed to buy but that I could hear on his old player in the secrecy of his bed. The ancient laundry with its deep stone tubs still sighs over the time when my father took it into his head to rub raw eggs into my mother's hair; an event which gave me nightmares for years. The acres and acres of land around us were enough to get lost in, and yet never enough to avoid my father. The trees in which I read were beautiful, but unnoticed. The horses gave me as much freedom as I was allowed, yet I took their gift for granted, as, I am ashamed to say, I did the love and quiet aid given gently by Bill, our caretaker. All those outbuildings, holding bits of machinery, bags of feed, stuff, each with their own little porch and creaky doors could have come straight off the set of some B grade horror flick. Finally, I come to the kitchen. This is the place where the most violent of the indoor fights took place. This room, where knives were drawn regularly, where china smashed and fires burned, is the cauldron of the house. I can see myself, a little girl, jump from a standing start onto the back of my father, hands around his neck, knife in my hand, trying to stop him attacking my mother. My fingers feel the slight trickle of his blood. My mother and brother scream at me to stop, to get down, that 'he's not worth it'. My father laughs at me as I slide to the floor. I am filled with murderous rage so many times throughout my childhood that it feels as though I am permanently angry. The kitchen, where we made meals, and played board games, and I learnt to bake packet cakes, haunts me relentlessly. Out of all the places in my personal geography, it remains the most awful of places and, paradoxically, also productive of some of my best memories held in that house. I can never 'fix' the kitchen. This was the geography of the everyday terror of my childhood, so real that I can still feel and touch it. The walls and floors and ceilings are not responsible for what happened within them, but they are imbued with the force of

> *those emotions; they are soaked with the lineament of madness and sorrow. I may not remember my story well. I may be entirely unable to put names to faces for most of my childhood and a large part of my adulthood, but in remembering my home, I am always and forever that lost child.*

This traumatic narrative, constructed around my family home, the one solid that structured it, was extraordinarily difficult to produce. The problems I encountered in attempting to narrate my childhood were compounded because I, like many abused children, lived in a family which profoundly limited my ability to tell my story, even to myself, due to an intense 'need to keep up appearances and preserve secrecy' (Herman, 1992, p. 100). However, the therapeutic goal in aiding those with CPTSD is precisely the opposite of all my childhood had taught me. This goal, 'to set time moving again by bringing traumatic memories . . . within the orbit of conscious life' requires a recreation of 'the narrative flow of history' or, in other words, a story of the trauma (Kenny, 1996, p. 160). The very task of framing a memory, a remembrance, is not, as Lambek and Antze point out, 'to frame a mere description', but rather 'to signal a speech act' (1996, pp. xxiv–xxv). For memory narratives do not merely describe events, but 'are acts of commemoration, of testimony, of confession, of accusation' (Lambek and Antze, 1996, p. xxv). Most importantly, they situate the narrator in relation to events of the past in the present: 'the I of the speaker in the present [is] identified with, if not identical to, the I of the actor in the past' (Lambek and Antze, 1996, p. xv). Yet, of course, the I in the present is in fact quite different to the I of the remembrance; indeed, in autobiographies of childhood, the child can feel quite alien at times as they persist in a time and space isolated from subsequent events and experiences which have had a formative impact on the person telling the story.

Moreover, historical accounts produced in a therapeutic setting are now widely recognized as narrative constructions (Spence, 1982, cited in Kirmayer, 1996, p. 177). This does not mean that the narratives are false, in the sense of 'recovered memories'. Rather, the necessity for narrative construction indicates the dual nature of the traumatic memory: on the one hand there is the recall of the aloof observer, while on the other there remains the speechless terror of the victim whose utterances can never enter the symbolic realm. Further, it is important to recognize that memories themselves are not time and date stamped, offering themselves up in logical, linear sequence. Instead, the production of a memory narrative, the making sense of the images which haunt both conscious and unconscious life, requires narrative structure to provide

a temporal sequence for memory (Kirmayer, 1996, p. 176). Research suggests that memories which fit cultural templates for narrative, and which have receptive audiences, are most likely to be fully accessed. As Laurence Kirmayer observes:

> it is a paradox of freedom that the moral function of memory depends on the constraints of social and cultural worlds to provide a limited range of narrative forms with which to construct the coherent stories of our selves.
>
> (1996, p. 193)

Using the narrative models available to us, then, we combat the inevitable oblivion of childhood, the forgetting that is as much a part of our experience of the past as is remembrance. We require stories of our past to give us a sense of continuity, precisely because we do not have unmediated access to our pasts. Narrations such as mine, then, are always already 'creative distillation[s] and transformation[s] of past experience, a poesis' (Terdiman, 1993, cited in Lambek, 1996, p. 244). I will never envisage our house in any other way but saturated with the history of violence, terror and abuse. For me, the place reeks of my unhappy history, while at the same time preserving my narrative so that I might, at last, make some sense of it all.

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11

Moving Through Memory: Notes from a Circus Lot

Ariel Terranova-Webb

Introduction

Chesterland, Ohio, 28 July 2008.

It is 7.30 a.m. A travel-worn motorhome sits at the edge of an empty field. A small crowd, complete with the accessories of spectators: chairs, tables, cameras, cups of coffee, is gathered near one corner of the field. They chat among themselves and shift to keep off the morning chill. The occupant of the motorhome appears and walks across the field which, on closer inspection, does not seem to be completely empty. Little green flags and red Xs mark the grass. These minor blemishes are the first blocks in the building of a circus. A convoy of house trailers arrive and begin to take what appear to be random positions on the field.

Down the road, out of the early morning fog, comes a red semi-truck and trailer. The bright yellow letters down the side proclaim that Kelly Miller Circus has arrived. By glancing at the green and red blemishes and houses on the field, the driver of the truck knows, generally, where he will park today. A lifetime spent with numerous circuses, and previous seasons on this field in particular, has taught him how to read the flags and Xs in this 'empty' field. However, he must wait. He cannot proceed onto the field until his memory, built on experience, is confirmed and he is motioned into place by the gestures of either Lot Supervisor or 24-Hour Man. These two men, responsible for the entrance, layout and exit of the show, will determine which memories direct today's circus rebuilding and accompanying performances. Finally, the driver is pointed towards a position he recognizes, but it is sited slightly differently from where he remembers from seasons past in this field. Rain is predicted.

In a travelling circus such as Kelly Miller, every morning is a ritual performance of recalling and purposefully forgetting experiential and secondary memories to allow the circus to become yet again, in yet another town. In the coming pages, I present this ritual of 'pulling on' – a phrase referring to the numerous acts involved in arriving at, and setting the stage upon, whatever space is provided for the circus on any given day – to argue for the place of forgetting in performances of memory and 'becoming' (Connerton, 2008; Roach, 1996). This ritual, which I witnessed and participated in more than 150 times during a five-month ethnography with Kelly Miller Circus during their 2008 season, also works to illustrate a concept I call 'stable mobility', which argues for the stabilizing, yet flexible, processes of mobility performances. In this chapter, I work with a similar concept of memory that is lived and practised over and over, but never completely 'accurately' restored (Nora, 1989). By presenting this ritual over three different days and locations, I wish to highlight the ways in which memory is manipulated, embodied and transferred in Kelly Miller's rebuilding and 'becoming', which is 'consistently enacted in the same way, but with differing results' (Schechner, 2003, p. 50) each day.

In the theme of repeatedly becoming the same, yet subtly different, circus each day, I employ Richard Schechner's theory of performance as restored behaviour, or twice-behaved behaviour (Schechner, 1985), and the memory performance work of Mike Pearson (1995, 2006) and Michael Shanks (Pearson and Shanks, 2001). While my research on Kelly Miller Circus is primarily concerned with its processes of movement and maintenance, performance and memory are integral to the analysis. As I outline shortly, the circus is a place continually haunted by its past, present and future performances. Every day sees the seamless simultaneity of past and present experienced (Till, 2005) in the daily recreation of Kelly Miller Circus in yet another town. The particular approaches to performance and memory used here refer not only to theatrical performances but also mundane everyday performances (Schechner, 1985) or material performances of memory (Pearson and Shanks, 2001). These theories and understandings of performance are reliant on the ability to recall (sparked by a physical act, material, sound or smell) in order to restore and re-enact a performance specific to its stage. Additionally, this is an understanding of performance that accepts that each behaviour does not have a single inventor but is authored by collectives (Schechner and Appel, 1990). A collective can be a few 'in the know' actors, but also a line of individuals through history, or one individual through their lifetime, repeatedly restoring a particular behaviour but changing

it subtly each time so that the behaviour referenced in each restoration is the one that came immediately before (Schechner, 2003). However, no performance (or memory) can be accurately recorded or repeated due to the way in which it is recalled, and this is where forgetting takes an important role in the act of 'becoming'.

Nora tells us that memory takes root in the concrete, in spaces, gestures, images and objects (1989, p. 9). The receptacles of memory that form the scene described above – a field, a directional gesture, a green flag – trigger the recall of specific memories and the restoration of related behaviours. Pearson and Shanks call these repositories of memory 'traces' (Pearson and Shanks, 2001, p. 9). Traces can be anything from scars, to photos, costume pieces to a smell, a hand-drawn map or a shared anecdote which spark a memory and enable individuals and collectives to recall and restore their own performances in relation to the present (Pearson and Shanks, 2001, p. 28). Throughout this chapter, I present a series of traces, both material and intangible, with a view to illustrating the way that both memory and the act of forgetting assist Kelly Miller Circus in the transformation from a collection of vehicles to a seemingly immobile performance village (and back again) day after day.

While memory and forgetting prove integrally important to the daily material becoming of Kelly Miller Circus, they also serve as the primary means of maintaining a living tradition and 'recorded' history. Throughout, I show the multiple roles of memory to 'preserve' the past but also 'maintain' the present and ensure a future (Legg, 2007; Nora, 1989; Roach, 1995) through descriptions of rituals, individual narratives and personal experience. However, I begin by presenting a description of Kelly Miller Circus, its past, present and a general daily timeline, to provide context and set this mobile community apart from similar travelling communities and their memory processes (for similar discussions on Gypsy/Traveller communities see Hetherington, 2000; Kabachnik, 2009; Shubin, 2010; Sibley, 1995). In the descriptions and narratives presented here, I identify the players through their job title, with the exception of direct quotes. This is not to suggest that a job title is more important than the person, or defines their identity, especially as most circus members hold numerous titles. Particular jobs come with particular power, responsibility and experience, not apparent when using a name, so I am thus providing additional context to the descriptions and discussion. I conclude this chapter by relating a personal experience with the memory performance of storytelling and how I learned to embody a fluid, yet directed, relationship with memory and forgetting

in my attempt to become a practical member of this circus and of the US circus tradition.

Kelly Miller Circus

Kelly Miller Circus is a US 'mudshow'. In a historical context, this means it travels by road and not rails (Fox and Parkinson, 1969). Practically, it operates, performs and lives in the external elements. By this I mean weather, which usually translates to mud. The current show originally opened under the title Al G. Kelly & Miller Bros. Circus in 1936 under the management of Obert Miller with the help of his sons, Dores and Kelly. This version of the show operated until 1969, when its equipment and animals were sold to another mudshow circus run by a younger Miller known as 'D R'. During this time, it had shown that mudshow circuses could survive while the larger rail-bound shows were quickly disappearing (Carson, 1969; Stevens, 1954). It existed in this form (as equipment and animals under another title) until 1984, when the title Kelly-Miller Bros. Circus was revived by David Rawls, a third-generation performer, with the help of D R. In 2007, the show was bought by John Ringling North II, the last member of the US circus tradition's greatest family dynasty (Davis, 2002). In all its incarnations, Kelly Miller Circus has continued to winter in Hugo, Oklahoma, and is recognized as a standard within the US circus community, with a reputation for quality acts, clean lots (referring to both litter and crime) and reliable paydays.

In 2008, its 70 employees come from at least seven countries and represent at least three circus family dynasties originating in Europe and the US. Most employees are generational circus performers (meaning their parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, and so on, were also circus performers or workers) or have spent most of their lives working for circuses (and this circus in particular). With the exception of the crew, most members travel, live and work with their family; immediate and extended. The ring performance in the 2008 season includes clowns, acrobats, aerialists, tigers, elephants, horses, dogs, jugglers and equilibrists, ranging from the height of the tent to the mat in the ring. Outside the tent, 18 show vehicles and 20 house trailers will travel approximately 11,000 miles across 16 states and two time zones. These 38 vehicles carry everything the show needs to be almost completely self-sufficient, providing housing, power, food, performance space, office, mechanic and school. Kelly Miller Circus depends on its host location for water and waste disposal (although it can supply this for a few days

when needed), and occasional hay and diesel fuel delivery. During the 2008 season (March to mid-November), the show set up in 215 towns and performed 470 times to approximately 380,000 people. In that time it took five days off, only two of which were also free from driving.

A hypothetical typical day starts at 5.30 a.m. when the show wakes and begins its drive to the next town. The first vehicles arrive by 7.30 a.m. and by 11 a.m. the show is set up and goes to lunch in its cookhouse tent where school is just ending. On a weekday, the first performance is at 4.30 p.m. Each performance is about two hours in length with an hour added to the front end for crowd entertainment on the midway and seating in the tent. This means that performers, crew and office staff are ready by 3.30 p.m. Any outings to town for groceries, laundry, repairs or leisure, and any rehearsals in the tent, are completed between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. The last show ends at 9.30 p.m. By 11 p.m. the entire show is packed up into the 38 vehicles and pauses until the next morning when it will start the process again. On weekends, the first show is moved up to 2 p.m., with the last show ending at either 6.30 p.m. or 7 p.m. This allows for 'time-off' in the evening, which is usually filled with stories swapped over communal meals.

Kelly Miller Circus moves and exists in relatively the same way it did 75 years ago and the way circuses in the US have been operating for the past 200 years (Carson, 1969; Davis, 2002; Hammarstrom, 2008; Talbert, 2007; Wilkins, 1998). This relative consistency is maintained through the living, reliving and evolving of everyday practices and rituals informed by routinely recalling and forgetting. The 'pulling on' ritual briefly described at the beginning of this chapter illustrates how arriving at the same field played last year does not necessarily mean the ritual is performed in the same way. Conditions are inevitably different; rain is predicted. A different calendar date, different weather conditions, different trucks, different acts and performers with different needs, different animals and a different daily schedule all work to determine what will be forgotten in this ritual, what will be remembered and how it will all fit together for this day (for a similar discussion about 'catching' island ferries, see Vannini, 2011b). This is how it has always been in the life of a US mudshow circus.

The numerous processes at work in Kelly Miller Circus are part of a larger, historical bundle of processes perfected over generations of trial and error. The memory enacted by this particular circus is one of movement and performance processes specific to Kelly Miller but which also allow the past to break into, and inform, the present (Cresswell, 2010). Kelly Miller Circus, and many like it currently touring the US, exists

and persists through continual performances of memory. Not in the sense of museums, halls of fame, or archives preserving the history of the circus (although these do exist – see Davis, 2002, for a comprehensive list) or in the sense of a traditional or old-fashioned way of life. Kelly Miller Circus endures through performance of memory in which memory is approached as a living record of history 'in permanent evolution [...] susceptible to being long dormant and periodically revived' (Nora, 1989, p. 8). Despite this strong connection to history, the memory currently maintaining this circus is a present one. In other words, it is a memory used daily with personal activities and communal incidents remembered and enacted in creative ways based on immediate circumstances. To develop this further, let us return to the ritual of 'pulling on' – the multiple acts of arriving at and setting the stage upon the space provided for the day – described above, 24 hours later.

Pulling on – a present memory

Middlefield, Ohio, 29 July 2008.

It is rare for Kelly Miller to stay in any town longer than 24 hours. By 7.30 a.m. the following day, there is little trace of the living circus that occupied the field described at the start of the chapter. An arrow on a telephone pole, a poster, two rings worn into the grass, maybe some sawdust shavings; this is all that is left behind physically. The host town sees the circus as a singular event with no knowledge of what came before their town and what will come after. Each town will remember the circus tent and the colours, smiles, animals, smells, perhaps a clown. However, the circus sees each town as just another day in a string of days with full knowledge of what happened here last season, what happened elsewhere yesterday, what must happen today and what all those experiences mean for tomorrow. To Kelly Miller Circus each town's name comes to refer to the story (the lesson) of that day: good crowd, frustrating layout, weather delays and mud. Middlefield's story is one of water and a familiar change. A common story, as evidenced by Chris's explanation of the day's eventual layout, but one that is also specific to 29 July in the 2008 season of Kelly Miller Circus.

> Ideally the generator [truck] goes on the animal side [of the midway] backing into the bandwagon. That's the long jiggers, right now we're using the tigers [trailer] to catch the short jigger. Cookhouse on opposite side [from bandwagon] and pole truck on the back [opposite front door], but today in order to work the forklift, the pole truck is here

> and the cookhouse is on the back. When it's wet it is important to get it [cookhouse] on the solid, because it can pull everyone else off.
> (*Chris Beckett (24-Hour Man), 29 July, Middlefield*)

The morning re-enactment of the 'pulling on' ritual sets the tone for the rest of the day. What happens here in the next hour will determine which personal and collective memories are recalled and how they will be enacted throughout the course of the day. In a community of about 70 people (all will participate in this ritual), the two men directing the vehicles this morning are also directing the memory enacted. They take two different views of the field and the arriving circus vehicles: 'Chris gets us on. I have to get us off tomorrow.' This is how Tavo Perez (Lot Supervisor) explains the complicated compromises that take place every morning. Today, like yesterday and so many days this season, it is going to rain. Lot Supervisor remembers that this field goes soft in the presence of water. Last season it was the water from the elephants' daily bath. This year there will be significantly more water. They could position the show as 24-Hour Man laid out based on current conditions and last year's re-enactment, but after it rains this evening the vehicles will not pull off the lot in the morning without a fight (Figure 11.1). This could affect next year's contract if the field is destroyed. Changes are made.

As we follow this ritual through two progressions we begin to see how past, present and future circumstances direct the performance of the 'pulling on' ritual. It is the same pattern of behaviour enacted each morning, but today this particular day's ritual is different from 'usual' but different in a usual way. 'The basic function of ritual is to restore behaviour. The meaning of individual rituals is secondary to its primary function, which is a kind of collective memory-in/of-action' (Schechner, 1985, p. 113). These two particular descriptions of two particular days' re-enactment of the same ritual illustrate the fluidity of memory, which directs the individual and collective recall and restoration.

For memory to be lived and present in our lives, in order for it to be stable, it must be gone over and over through time (Nora, 1989, p. 12). The subtle differences in these re-enactments of a particular ritual in the overall memory performances of Kelly Miller Circus show how recalling memory again and again does not mean that it is recalled in the same way each time or for the same reason. Just that it is recalled (for a similar discussion, see Deleuze, 1973).

As noted earlier, the circumstances of 'pulling on' will never be the same and thus the ritual will never be performed the same way twice.

Figure 11.1 Westfield NY, 22 July 2008. Kelly Miller returned to this field the following season. However, due to these ruts, in order to return they had to set up on a neighbouring car park. A concrete stage presents another series of subtle and not-so-subtle changes to every ritual performed throughout the day
Source: Author.

This inevitable 'failure' of circumstances opens the possibility for play, or improvisation, in each restoration (Vannini, 2011b). These two days present an illustrative account of how memory may be recalled in fluid, creative and subtly different ways. However, the necessity of forgetting to the 'successful' completion of this ritual is not as readily apparent in these consecutive days. To discuss the selective discarding, or forgetting, process of collective and individual memory, and its role of ensuring the continued restoration of 'pulling on' memories and related ritual performances, I take you back to a day much earlier in the season. The 'pulling on' ritual restored here recalls very specific memories for the circus at large, as well as each individual, throughout the day. The resulting

events of this morning's ritual also introduce the role of storytelling to the daily restoration and overall maintenance of Kelly Miller Circus.

Just one day – a forgetful memory

Mommoth Springs, Arkansas, 14 April 2008.

Memories set the stage for present and future performances, which are similar, but never quite the same performance twice. But not everyone accesses the same memory when looking at a green flag in a field. For the spectators that regularly gather to watch the circus arrive, the green flags and painted Xs mean nothing, most likely they are not even registered as part of the unfolding performance. Frequently, traces of memory and past performances only apply to the people that can decode them during a certain point in time (Pearson and Shanks, 2001) (Figure 11.2). For example, a municipal field with a particularly steep incline will evoke very different memories for the townspeople gathered to watch the circus arrive and for the circus itself.

Earlier in the season, Kelly Miller travelled through the Ozarks and steep inclines became a common situation to overcome during the pull on. Building the circus on an incline is not preferable, but it is also not unknowable. Already this season, the show encountered the problem in Rhome, Texas, on 24 March and countless times before in

Figure 11.2 Greenville PA, 27 July 2008. The forgetful performance of positioning a truck that routinely gets stuck in the mud – in a muddy field – is preserved through this trace of the truck's tyre
Source: Author.

previous seasons along this route. Additionally, there is a chance of frost overnight. Today, 24-Hour Man and Lot Supervisor recall a variety of memories in order to direct vehicle placement. They will also forcefully forget particular memories to recall and enact the appropriate combination of memories for this day and its circumstances; specifically, the preferred layout of the overall circus and the generator truck in particular. Today, the continually repeated pattern of behaviour, or ritual performance, of 'pulling on' will occur in a way that references that same performance of yesterday, but which is specific to today's stage of an inclined field (and so will also reference a day three weeks ago in Rhome) and the possibility of frost, which the show has encountered frequently in the past weeks. Frost creates the possibility that the generator will run all night. This is unusual, especially on a lot with a steep incline, which normally requires the show to relocate to level ground immediately after the last performance.

The restoration of any performance will always be different from the preceding performance referenced. Conditions will always be different and so the behaviour is inevitably altered for the current conditions, while still referencing and restoring the integrity of the 'original' behaviour (Schechner, 1985). As Roach states, 'To perform in this sense [a social process of memory and forgetting] means to bring forth, to make manifest, and to transmit. To perform also means [...] to reinvent' (Roach, 1996, p. xi). The daily reinventions, or improvisations, in the ritual of 'pulling on' are facilitated through a living, working memory full of half-remembered, or selectively forgotten, events. Memories of earlier performances accumulated over seasons about inclined lots; responses to current weather at other lots; the needs of the vehicles, materials, animals and humans in freezing weather; the needs of the show in order to 'perform' – all these inform today's improvisation. Memory in Kelly Miller Circus is one tempered with experience, based on chance and imagination, continually 'decaying' and being restored as needed (DeSilvey, 2006). This fluid, yet consistent, relationship with memory gives the people of Kelly Miller seemingly innate knowledge about how to approach any conceivable, and sometimes inconceivable, obstacle to their daily performances.

Today, the Generator truck pulls into a different, but recognizable, position from usual. Each change in vehicle placement minutely changes each individual's daily routine, but this one in particular will cause significant changes to these routines. Earlier, Chris explained that the ideal position for the generator truck is backing into the bandwagon (this is for the physical stability of the tent as well as morning 'pull off'

ease). However, on many days it backs into the 'front door'. Today it backs into the bandwagon, but it is a less than ideal situation for the performers and crew. Usually, when the generator backs up to the bandwagon there is a significant amount of space between the 'back door' of the tent and the roar of the generator. Today, due to the possibility of running the generator all night, all the vehicles are positioned a bit tighter to allow for the heavier, shorter power cords to be used so heaters can operate overnight. These seemingly minute changes to vehicle positions may not mean much to the reader, but to the circus it means that there is no buffer between the roar of the generator and the 'back door' of the tent. It means that the music cues from inside the tent will be obliterated. It means that the usual routines of house and work that go on throughout the show between the tent and house trailers will be directed purely by memory. Additionally, the steep incline forces particular acts to retire for the day, changing the usual order of acts and related cues.

How many dishes can I wash before I head out the door to 'work'?
How many dishes are subtracted when coats and boots are involved?
How did I prepare last time we played on a hill?
Which chores can wait because there will be power all night?
How much time does this add in between my preparation for the next act?
When is my next act in this new order?

These questions are traces that will direct the performances of preparation today. These traces force the recall of numerous earlier performances with corresponding elements, but also force the forgetting (or discarding) of non-relevant elements of those performances. These are less than perfect conditions, but they are not unusual, and it is just for one day.

This phrase, 'It's just one day', is a trace of memory and performance that cues a particular act of forced forgetting as well as restoring particular performances. Whenever a particular day seems overly challenging, presented in these three days as varying weather and 'unusual' layout, the people of Kelly Miller Circus say 'It's just one day' and restore particular performances relating to cold weather, tight layout, mud and uncertain cues. This could be the use of 'mud' costumes and props, or leaving household chores to non-show times in order to be on hand at the 'back door' earlier than necessary, just in case. 'It's just one day' means that they only have to deal with these conditions for one day.

Tomorrow they will move to another town and away from these trying conditions. Today's particular performances triggered by frost and altered truck positioning will be forgotten with a new day, a new lot and a new set of staging conditions. This is a hallmark of a present memory in which performances are remembered and restored in the present and promptly forgotten, or better yet, filed away until needed again. 'Memory is life [...] it remains in permanent evolution, open to a dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of its successive deformations, vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation, susceptible to being long dormant and periodically revived' (Nora, 1989, p. 8).

Throughout the day, 'It's just one day' will be heard continuously on the lot of Kelly Miller Circus, accompanied by a shrug of shoulders or an exhausted shake of the head. When the day is over and they gather for a meal and a drink to say farewell to a difficult day, the conversation will take a particular pattern. It begins with a discussion of what went wrong today: the 'pulling on', changes to performance, weather conditions and then what should have been done in the face of these challenges (because there is always a 'better' way). This will lead to stories of similar events earlier in the season or last season. Finally, as the food disappears and there are more empty bottles than full, the stories will be of similar events experienced, or heard of, years ago on a different show. A looseness with 'truth' also occurs, but this is expected and is a hallmark of circus history, celebrated (Davis, 2002) and lamented (Stoddart, 2000). However, these people are nothing if not entertainers and no matter how far back they go, or how much they elaborate, the stories will always relate to the initial complaint of the evening.

What is remembered and recalled in these evenings illuminates the role of forgetting in the maintenance of circus memory, performance and tradition. If talk is of daily routine and operation, the stories are of difficult drives, lots or the inevitable problems of a trailer as a house. If talk is of performance in the ring, the stories are of good acts and ringmasters and how they continually delivered quality performances despite various daily disruptions – an ability highly prized in the community. The selective recall of seemingly positive and negative memories is telling of how the circus is lived and re-lived. Stories of easy drives and good lots do not teach or prepare for the daily challenges of living in a circus. Stories of demanding drives, bad lots and leaking houses provide memories to recall, build on and reuse when faced with yet another uphill drive (a particular bane of the circus vehicle) or a rainy day. Accumulated memories are the basis for skills and modes of behaviour, and what we choose to remember and forget allows us to

learn from past experiences (Bergson, 1962). Good, or easy, drives are not remembered perhaps because they do not create a skill to deal with the constant element of change in circus life.

All of these stories and experiences are boiled down to one story, one performance: 'It's just one day.' Difficult days are quickly forgotten with this phrase in order to move on to the next day, but they are not completely wiped from memory and may be partially recalled to deal with the next set of trying circumstances. This fluid and partially improvised memory, which is recalled and 'forgotten' in a piecemeal way, sets the stage for current and future performances, which are never quite the same but always recognizable. What is forgotten is just as important as what is remembered because the act of forgetting can facilitate the ability to know which performances and memories should be recalled and which are best left to memory. Through selective remembering and forgetting, Kelly Miller Circus teaches itself how to keep moving and performing. The stories I was privileged to hear during my time on the road are best left to the gatherings in which they were told. However, I will tell a story of my own to illustrate how 'circus memory' is created. It is the story of how I learned to perform 'It's just one day' and became part of the Kelly Miller memory performance for a while.

Restoring one day – becoming a memory

In my first few months with Kelly Miller Circus I heard 'It's just one day' almost daily, and it drove me insane. I joined this travelling circus to learn, experience and observe how it managed to be a stable place and community while also maintaining its continual process of being mobile and becoming temporarily immobile. For the first six weeks I was holding on for dear life. My training for this life consisted of a lifetime of stories from my parents about their time in a circus (which proved only partially helpful in practical terms) and a daily schedule rundown from Office Manager the day before the season began (much like the one I provide here). The first two days of the season went fairly smoothly. I learned how to interpret the slight hand gestures of Lot Supervisor directing me how to reverse a motorhome into a seemingly impossible space after a brief tutorial (when he realized I had no idea what he was doing), and I figured out when to get food from the cookhouse (I also lost my jacket and discovered a fairly serious leak in my motorhome). Beyond that, I was lost. I 'observed' these people going about fairly intricate and intertwining tasks with no discussion between them and my 'participation' at this point was fairly limited.

Figure 11.3 Frisco TX, 21 March 2008. 'Learning the ropes' refers to learning how to live and work in the circus. It is said to come from learning how to secure the ropes of the tent. Due to local restrictions, the circus could not drive stakes into the car park. In this town, the tent was completely secured by the surrounding vehicles; another common, yet specific, change to ritual enacted through memories of similar circumstances
Source: Author.

They all just *knew* what to do in every situation (freak lighting storm, no water, no power, extremely steep hillside, flash flood) and I was literally taking notes, desperately trying to learn the ropes and develop similar resilience (Figure 11.3).

For the first three months of the season it seemed to rain every day. Every day was another day of mud, leaking house and tent and bizarre vehicle positioning. Every day when I complained about the mud, the water, the cold, I was given 'It's just one day' in response. 'But it's not! It's every single day! It's one rainy, muddy, crappy parking, freezing tent, leaking house day after another!' I finally replied. I did not understand the calm and simple response in the face of one miserable day after another and was seriously reconsidering my research plan.

Then, on 19 May in another wet and muddy field that was Avella, Pennsylvania, with another storm predicted for the evening, I found myself shrugging and saying 'It's just one day' to Prop Boss as he

lamented mopping the ring mat yet again. He gave an exhausted smile and a shake of the head and repeated this phrase back to me. I did not register the importance of this moment until much later after I had left the circus. At that moment, which had stuck in my memory for no apparent reason, I had finally gained enough memories and related behaviours of my own to be able to decode this trace of 'It's just one day' and restore the related performance myself. I was recalling my own memories of how many dishes I could wash before my cue and the most effective method of keeping relatively mud-free. I had learned to restore my daily performances, tempering them as memory directed, and then file them away for future retrieval.

The secret of 'It's just one day' is that it is both a recall of previous performances and a performance of forgetting. It is one that settled communities could learn from as they too face environmental challenges and disruptions to routine. This personal anecdote illustrates the way a living memory works not only to teach daily skills but to maintain a way of life and this place of Kelly Miller Circus. My parents were in a different circus at a different time, but our similar, yet subtly different, memories speak to the generations of maintained rituals and routines of the US circus mentioned at the start of this chapter. These are performances of memory repeatedly restored over seasons and generations by people that are able to decode the traces offered up by yet another muddy field. This is how a collection of stories about hard days caused by difficult drives, weather or layout, gathered over years of collective experience, is distilled into a phrase that is passed between members as a way to commiserate and cope.

'It's just one day' offers a way to forget the not-so-romantic aspects of circus life while also hinting at, and ensuring, the restoration of that life. What I have tried to convey here is that while the circus necessarily changes daily through its physical movement and a continual process of remembering and forgetting, it also stays very much the same. It may only be one day in a particular field with a particular weather pattern, but each day is basically a copy of the one that came before with slight variations. They are restoring the same place and performances over and over in basically the same way again and again. However, as this chapter conveyed, it is not a simple matter of just remembering what happened yesterday and repeating the performance. Kelly Miller Circus is produced each day by the very careful restoration and alteration of prior behaviours informed by the very particular conditions of each day and location, which offer traces for very particular memories. It repeatedly transforms from trucks bearing the name Kelly Miller Circus to this rich

place of Kelly Miller Circus through a lived and improvised memory. It is in a constant state of becoming a circus through its performances of mobility (Vannini, 2011a), with a memory that is produced through constant rearrangement (DeSilvey, 2010). That is not to say that the version of Kelly Miller presented by 38 heavily laden vehicles is not a facet of that rich place, but that it is another story for another time.

Performances and inevitable improvisation in the circus are facilitated through a living and working memory full of 'half-remembered' or selectively forgotten events. It is a memory that allows one to believe that it is just one day, while banking experiences to help get through the next. This living, present and forgetful memory teaches which performances to restore and which are best left to memory. Personal and collective memories recalled, enacted, forgotten and revised throughout the season in the face of expected and unexpected obstacles maintain Kelly Miller Circus. The daily movement through memory performed by the people of the circus ensures that they will keep moving down the road. Through memory, the show will go on.

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12

Making Memories Our Own (Way): Non-State Remembrances of the Second World War in Perak, Malaysia

Hamzah Muzaini

Introduction

> In Malaysia . . . , [t]he ghosts (read: memories) of the war are very much alive. Suffering, hardship, resistance, torture, horror and terror – these are the evergreen memories that the war calls up in the public imagination.
>
> (Cheah, 2007, p. 47)

As catalyst to the birth of Malay nationalism, the Second World War (1941–45) may be considered a salient episode in Malaysian history, greasing the wheels for the nation to gain independence from British colonial rule in 1957. Yet, it was only recently that the war was inserted into national historiography. Even then, criticisms have emerged of how the government has been highly selective in its portrayal of the event, obscuring (if not erasing) elements seen as irrelevant or against the elevation of the war as a vehicle of nationhood (Ahmad, 2006; Blackburn, 2007). One aspect prone to neglect are the stories of those who went through the war as civilians (vis-à-vis as combatants). Far from being mere bystanders in the clash between Commonwealth Allied forces (consisting mainly of soldiers from Britain, Holland, Australia, New Zealand, India, Malaya [including Singapore] and the USA) and the Japanese, however, the lives of these individuals were still very much affected, most keenly through hardship and the loss of loved ones (Kratoska, 1995).

Also pushed aside are stories of the Chinese, who fought the Japanese (as part of irregular forces) but were later branded as traitors due to

their support for the Communist cause in post-war Malaysia (Cheah, 2003). Still, as Cheah (2007) indicated in the above statement, this has not meant local accounts such as these are lost given their continued perpetuation in the 'public imagination' via memoirs, movies and other popular media. Less considered are other means of and spaces for remembering these accounts that exist within homes and other more private realms.

This chapter concerns such non-state remembrances in Perak, northern Malaysia. After briefly foregrounding the war as it took place within the state and how narratives of local war experiences may be perceived as officially marginalized, it draws on in-depth interviews with 60 individuals (33 civilian war survivors and 27 descendants of deceased war civilians) to investigate how Perakians have sought to retain more quotidian (or subversive, as the case is with former Communist sympathizers) recollections of war, usually omitted from the state's representations of the event.

The in-depth interview method was instrumental in not only retrieving impressions about public forms of memorialization, but also in excavating more sensitive responses and private memories/forms of remembrance that do not reside in open domains. Respondents were recruited informally through word of mouth and the snowball method. Interviews were primarily conducted in Malay and later transcribed and translated. To protect the identities of those whose views may land them in trouble with the authorities, only pseudonyms are used (with their respective ages and towns of residence within parentheses).

This is followed by an interrogation of their motives for salvaging the memories as they have. The chapter shows that while there are locals who are incensed at their stories being disenfranchised within state narratives, many are in fact keen for public silence to be maintained where their own personal war stories are concerned, primarily in an attempt to maintain agency over how their stories are interpreted. In the case of the Chinese, in particular, keeping silent is also a strategy of survival, not only in the light of the Communist legacy attached to their ethnicity but also fear that their own war stories may be unfairly treated by a predominantly Malay-Muslim government that privileges the rights of Malays over other ethnic groups. Thus, this adds to Cheah's (2007, p. 57) findings that 'while the Malaysian government is anxious to exorcise the ghosts of the World War II, the issue of Japan's past keeps recurring within the public sphere'. As the chapter shows, aspects of the war officially elided may live on in domains that are also very ordinary and domestic.

In relation to memory, geographers have made significant inroads towards understanding how aspects of the past are, for various reasons, materially emplaced and/or spatially narrated over time and thus kept within the living present, as well as the issues and politics commonly inherent in such practices (Hoelscher and Alderman, 2004). This chapter contributes to the already burgeoning scholarship in two ways. Firstly, it highlights how publicly forgotten (war) memories may find sustenance not only in the form of high-profile counter memoryscapes (although these too exist in Perak), but also via ones not necessarily made visible or even intended to serve any particular commemorative purpose (Kusno, 2003). Memoryscape is taken here to refer to the various ways in which recollections of the past are translated in, over and through space. As such, it includes battlefield sites, museums, commemorative services, monuments, as well as in the form of objects and the embodied.

This, therefore, shifts focus away from (the more studied) bounded spaces of memory, so as to, as Atkinson (2007, p. 521) puts it, 'think more fluidly about the ways that social memories are constituted throughout society *at different scales and in mundane, everyday places'* [my emphasis]. Indeed, while there are now scores of works looking at less orthodox sites of memory – such as within the home (Tolia-Kelly, 2004), on the streets and other banal spaces (Atkinson, 2007; Hebbert, 2005), and around the city (Crang and Travlou, 2001) – there is still scope to 'shift [the] gaze[s away] from a social memory captured within officially sanctioned museums, monuments and heritage sites' (Atkinson, 2007, p. 523).

Secondly, the chapter suggests how such non-state remembrances may not necessarily be intended as alternatives to sites of state or public forgetting, but the need to privately remember on their own terms. Given that many of the individuals here are impervious (if not resistant) to any kind of wide or collective expressions of their war stories, the geographies of memory that emerge are intimate (sometimes embodied) parts of the rememberers and their environs. Here the past is kept alive, to use Nora's (1989, p. 13) phrase, not through *lieux de memoire* (or sites of memory), which rely entirely on 'the materiality of the trace, the immediacy of the recording and visibility of the image', but through *milieux de memoire*, 'unspoken traditions, in the individual body's inherent self knowledge, in unstudied reflexes and ingrained memories' (see also Legg, 2005). Thus, contra-conventional forms of memoryscapes are frequently aimed towards achieving fixity in place, closure in narrative and a 'distanciation' between individuals and their memories (Lambek and Antze, 1996). The memoryscapes studied here represent individuals

and communities merely seeking to remember the past 'their own way': to make their memories their own.

Exclusion: Dominant memoryscapes

The state of Perak (Figure 12.1) saw some of the most intense Second World War 'action' in Malaysia. Composed of long meandering rivers, high mountains and dense jungle, it became a strategic location not only for the Japanese to achieve concealment as they made their rapid advance south, but also for Allied forces to organize ambushes against the unsuspecting enemy. (The Japanese landed in southern Thailand and northern Malaysia, their eventual destination being Singapore – the British's so-called 'impregnable fortress' [Hack and Blackburn, 2004].)

The extant geography is also why Perak became the main base of operations for informal guerrillas – like the Malayan Peoples Anti-Japanese Association (MPAJA) and Force 136 (Akashi, 1995) – to assist Allied forces against the Japanese, via intelligence activities and pin-prick attacks launched from deep within the jungle (Chapman, 2006). Thus, some of the most notable battles in the Malayan Campaign took place here (Chye, 2002). Given many of those with the informal guerrillas were volunteers from local communities, it also meant the Japanese were hard on Perakians, implementing punitive measures such as *Sook Ching*

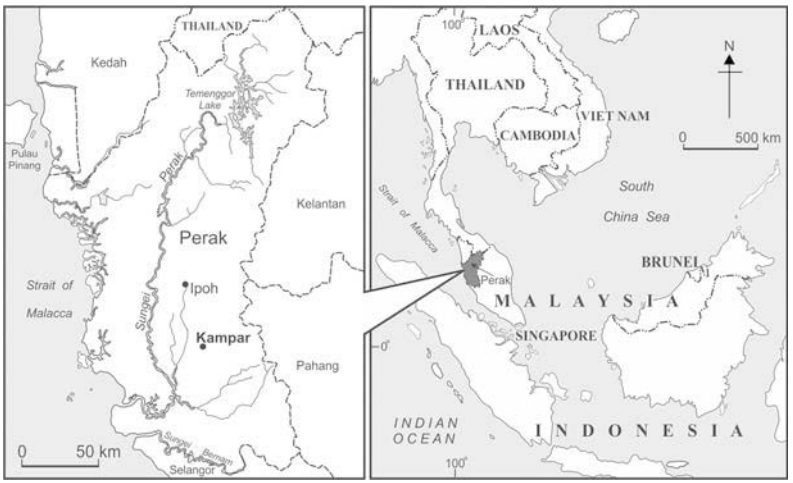

Figure 12.1 Map: Location of Perak, Malaysia
Source: Author.

('to purge'), which saw many locals (especially the Chinese) massacred. While Malays and Indians in Perak were largely spared – given the enemy attempting to win over their hearts and minds; a different tack from the one adopted for the Chinese – life for them was still a daunting and difficult experience (Ahmad, 2003).

Post independence, not much was done in Perak to officially mark the war. Aside from residual memory sites from colonial times – such as the Commonwealth War Cemetery in Taiping (see Figure 12.2), and cenotaphs (in Ipoh and Taiping) dedicated to the First and (later) Second World Wars – there was not much of a reminder that Perak was home to some of the fiercest battles fought and, even less, where its inhabitants suffered. This is a microcosm of the 'black-out syndrome' happening in Malaysia, then, where the war was seen as too problematic to serve the construction of the nation (Cheah, 2007) for four key reasons. Firstly, there were collaborations during the war between the Japanese and prominent Malaysians (who later played key roles in national politics in Malaysia), which gave rise to the Japanese being seen by some as the liberators of Malaya from Western clutches rather than the enemy (Ahmad, 2003). Secondly, given that the races were differentially treated by the Japanese, war remembrance was perceived as

Figure 12.2 Commonwealth War Cemetery and Memorial in Taiping
Source: Author.

potentially igniting ethnic tensions within the country. Thirdly, showcasing Japanese war atrocities could jeopardize Malaysia's good bilateral ties with Japan (Cheah, 2007). Finally, many members of the MPAJA also belonged to the Malayan Communist Party (MCP), who later attempted a coup – against the British and then the postcolonial government – to establish a Communist state. This meant that glorifying their war contributions went against their subsequent label as traitors to the nation (Ban and Yap, 2002). Given such muddy interpretations of the war, a complex geopolitical relationship with Japan and the sensitive need to maintain ethnic harmony within the country, it was felt that memories of the war should be suppressed rather than highlighted: a stone best left unturned.

By the turn of the century, however, the Perak state changed its stance; involving itself in practices of publicly marking the war, although these still occupy a marginal place within the state writ large. Many remembrances are located outside major cities, rendering them relatively inaccessible to the public. Moreover, even as there is arguably a slant towards acknowledging local war experiences now, such as via streets named after native war personalities – like Sybil Kathigasu (a local Eurasian known for her anti-Japanese activities) (Figure 12.3) – and,

Figure 12.3 Side road in Ipoh named after Sybil Kathigasu, a war personality
Source: Author.

more recently, the conduct of a memorial service to honour indigenous peoples involved in the war (*New Straits Times*, 14 June 2008), most others tend to privilege those who participated as active combatants. This elides the stories of ordinary men and women who went through the war as civilians or even those who were involved with the MPAJA (due to their associations with the MCP). This does not mean these stories have been totally forgotten; many of them have found a voice in popular publications, movies and documentaries (*The Star*, 2 May 2010). Beyond these non-state public platforms there are others where marginalized memories have found sanctuary, a plethora of alternative geographies of memory that are more personalized and less bounded in space, less fixed in the way they are interpreted and constantly in the state of 'becoming', never settled. It is to exemplars of these that this chapter now turns, followed by the motivations behind them. In the process, it also highlights how they are not always prompted by the need to counter official amnesiac practices or to 'make known' what the state may have been trying to suppress. Rather, they can simply be attempts to ensure that their memories remain 'their own'.

Sanctuary: Alternative memoryscapes

It is most interesting that when my respondents were asked how a visitor to Perak might learn about the war, only a few made references to state-sponsored or even the more populist memoryscapes that have emerged over the years. Rather, many pointed to what they refer to as *orang-orang lama* (literally: 'people who have lived a long time') or those who have gone through the war. According to Opah (79, Slim River): 'White people go to museum [to learn about the war] . . . people here go to the *orang-orang lama*'. Thus, rather than (Western) more conventional approaches to remembering the past through externalized, material and disembodied scaffoldings of memory, the civilian war survivors – with their own memories by virtue of having 'witnessed' the event first-hand – themselves become the historical resource of choice. Indeed, even as the state is selective in championing a particular version of the war, the *orang-orang lama* have always been around and sharing their stories, especially those pertaining to the everyday lives of the locals. As Rashid (72, Kampar) highlights:

> No matter what the state does, [local] war stories have always been passed down . . . at the market, at home, the food centre. We talk

> about our own [war experiences] all the time. What *we* saw, what *we* went through, what *we* did.

As such, not only do war civilians represent the living embodiments of what may have been officially sidelined, they are also responsible for passing on their personal experiences of war, particularly to those who know them. This ensures that accounts of what happened (to them) do not end with their demise but are passed on to future generations; not through (text)books, museum displays or ceremonies that are highly public, but orally through what Opah (69, Slim River) refers to as 'simple storytelling'. That way, local war narratives remain largely and mainly within private geographies of the home and other quotidian spaces.

Personal war memories have also found refuge in things. On many occasions, I was introduced to the colourful world of these objects – including, but not limited to, photographs, diaries, ration cards, personal and official documents, spent cartridges, hairpieces, jewellery – that bear the touch of war. Moin (78, Slim River), for instance, has a *rehal* (an item used to hold the Quran) that was damaged by gunshot (Figure 12.4). According to him, 'I keep these things to remind me of those years when our lives were difficult and how vulnerable we were to dying at any time' – an indication of how people sometimes project lives onto objects not only as reminders of the self (Mehta and Belk, 1991) but also of the (war) past (Saunders, 2003). These objects are also reminders of important lessons. Rashid (72, Kampar), for one, keeps kitchen items (from the war years) so that he can use them to remind not only himself but also his children of how 'we were poor once [during the war], especially when they do not appreciate what they have' today. Thus, objects, as concrete connectors between the present and the past, the living and the dead (Saunders, 2003), are not only memory triggers and aids to storytelling but also serve as *memento mori* for the self and for passing down moral lessons. All of which go towards salvaging personal (and mundane) stories of war that have been officially overlooked and give rise to an object-centred geography of remembrance that is very private but, didactically, highly functional and satisfying. Unlike the usual objects in a museum or those used during memorial ceremonies (such as wreaths and wooden crosses), the ones highlighted here are also not especially emplaced, many of these are items still being used by the rememberers on a day-to-day basis.

Another non-state remembrance is the grave markers dedicated to remembering the (subversive) war past. At a Chinese cemetery near the Old Salak Village, 15 kilometres north-east of the state capital Ipoh

Figure 12.4 Photograph of a Quran receptacle with a gunshot mark, owned by Moin
Source: Author.

(Figure 12.5) for example, there is a mass grave for those killed during a Japanese *Sook Ching* at the village. It has an epitaph – along with the names of those involved – that says: 'Built by the Chinese community of Pasir Salak on the 35th year of the Republic of China to remember the Chinese who died in the war.' There is also a grave memorial in Temoh, located eight kilometres south of Kampar (Figure 12.6). Marked by three red stars, an identifying marker of the MCP, the epigraph writes: 'The Temoh community built this monument to mark the three local martyrs [with names inscribed] on the 35th year of the Republic of China.' There are of course many such markers around, established to honour memories of, as Jiang (80s, Ipoh) puts it, 'those not good enough for [the state]

Figure 12.5 An MCP mass grave found in Temoh
Source: Author.

to remember', many of whom are former members of the MPAJA. Poorly tended, they are not widely known of and in cases highly shrouded in secrecy due to their subversive affiliations with the MCP. It was only through the narratives of local people that they were finally identified and located, even then with much difficulty.

Thus, the lack of any official physical marker erected by the Perak state to remember the (quotidian or subversive) experiences of locals during the war is inversely matched by non-state remembrances set up within home domains or communal spaces by Perakians. For them the memories of what happened during the war – of loved ones lost, depravity felt and autonomy diminished – have left such an impact that they would rather have the memories kept in mind than forgotten, especially in the face of state erasures (see Lim, 2000, for similar in the Malaysian state of Johore). This shows that even as the state writes local war stories out of its depictions of the event, these have continued to find sanctuary in the embodied words and actions of surviving war civilians, objects kept from the war and other more obscure sites. Far from the fixed narratives and 'externalized' nature of more conventional spaces of memory, such as in the forms of monuments and memorial ceremonies, alternative

Figure 12.6 Mass grave memorial at Old Salak Village
Source: Author.

memoryscapes are also intricately interwoven with everyday lives and practices, deeply parochial and intensely personal. These are somewhat routinized and have become very much an integral part of the locals' reality and existence. Yet, even if Perakians were given the chance to have their stories remembered publicly by the state, many, interestingly, are not very keen.

Keeping the 'silences'

Many respondents remarked that alternative memoryscapes are necessary given that the state has not been too interested in the stories of the civilians who went through the war, especially those related to how they lived their lives on an everyday basis. As Hassan (84, Taiping) avers, 'If [we] do not remember what we went through, nobody will . . . [The state] is not interested. For us, the stories are the same, all boring.' This reflects the salience of local recollections (and memory transmissions) in less public spaces in terms of overcoming the propensity of the state to publicly exclude more mundane stories of war. They are also doubtful that even if their stories were to be made public that it would

interest other locals, particularly the younger generation who, as Hassan continues, 'like to play computer, and hang around doing nothing [and] not interested in history'. Rather, like many others, Hassan prefers to keep his stories 'within the family, where I know they will be interested in my stories'. This indicates the belief that, as time passes, personal stories would no longer have mass appeal, where alternative spaces of memory, catering to only an intimate group, suffices vis-à-vis sustenance through a more public telling of their personal war recollections.

A second narrative is the perceived public need to suppress memories of the war (thus confining them to within the community) out of fear of getting into trouble with the government, particularly due to the associations between rememberers (or the remembered) and the MCP. According to Ban and Yap (2002), the Malaysian government has always had a 'no tolerance' policy with regard to individuals who were initially celebrated as 'war heroes' (as part of MPAJA) but later, reverting back to their Communist sympathies, turned against the nationalist government and were branded 'enemies of the state'. Given that many were Chinese, as opposed to the largely Malay nationalist government, also lent an ethnic complexity to the issue, making it easier to forget rather than risk threatening the fragile plural Malaysian society. Official disdain for the MCP is still clearly evidenced today by the banning of two of Amir Muhammad's movies, *Lelaki Komunis Terakhir* (2006) and *Apa Khabar Orang Kampong* (2007). Both have plots that centre on the post-war communist insurgency and the standing exile of Malayans who chose to leave Malaysia rather than renounce their communist sentiments after independence. There was also public outcry over memorials unveiled (in 2003 and 2005) at a cemetery in Nilai (outside Kuala Lumpur) to honour those who gave their lives as members of the MPAJA (Blackburn, 2007). Thus, these have served to make memories linked to the MPAJA perilous and best kept under wraps.

Set in this context, publicly remembering the war for these respondents may lead to two possible repercussions. Firstly, it may re-ignite old enmities and re-stoke negative memories of communal clashes common during the war years and after. As Hassan indicates:

> Many people here [in Perak] are Chinese and supporters of communism. While the communists were seen as heroes during the war [under MPAJA], after the war, they became traitors. I don't think they should [publicly] remember the war because it might lead to race problems. As it is, Chinese and Malays friendly only a bit [sic].

The other repercussion centres on the perils of remembering these events from the point of view of former Communist supporters who may find themselves on the wrong side of the law, facing reprisals for publicly remembering the MCP. According to Kwok, a caretaker of a clan house in Perak that actually takes care of, on behalf of its members, a number of unnamed ancestral tablets within the organization in memory of former MCP members:

> We have to be careful. We cannot put their names up there because they were communists before. The families have to remember them quietly so the government does not find out. I hope you will be careful when you write up about us.

This also explains why the grave markers described above seem to be untended, visited only occasionally by those in the know and, even then, without much pomp, primarily out of fear that such practices may draw unwanted attention not only to the memorials but also locals with vested interests in them. The need to remember hangs not only on the coattails of perceived reprisals from the state, but also on the threat of losing the ability to dictate how the war is to be marked and memories of its dead honoured. As Kwok puts it, 'if the government finds out, not only will we be in trouble but we will never be allowed to remember the way we want'. Collective silence with respect to the memorials (and the subversive histories they may evoke) is therefore seen as necessary for loved ones (and former comrades) to keep memories of the war and those who lost their lives in the process alive.

Adding another layer of complexity to the issue, there is also fear here, particularly voiced by many within the Chinese community, that leaving the task of managing their war memories to the authorities – of a predominantly Malay-Islamic nation, no doubt – may lead to war stories, experiences and contributions associated with the Chinese becoming sidelined if not totally erased. As Vincent (82, Taiping) vehemently puts it:

> If the government does [the remembering], it will just focus on Malays! Everything [in Malaysia] is focused on Malays! It is not fair because the war was hardest for the Chinese. Many of the Malays were friends with Japanese. Since government is Malay, if they remember the war, they will only remember good things about the war.

This is of course symptomatic of the problem of race within Malaysia, due to the general practice of granting Malays special rights within the country, not only in terms of geographical claims to land and access to economic opportunities but also what constitutes as national history (Kaur and Metcalfe, 1998). As a result, many in the Chinese community have always felt themselves as second-class citizens in the shadow of Malay supremacy. In the context of war commemoration, this tension has translated into concern that if the war were to be remembered by the state, it would be done at the expense of the Chinese side of the story. This highlights how geography and national imperatives sometimes influence the extent to which certain memories may be perpetuated, marginalized or erased altogether (Johnson, 1995). As such, many would rather risk their memories becoming obliterated on their own terms than have to deal with (yet again) having their history officially sidelined. At the least, by producing their own memoryscapes, even if these are accessible only within the community, they can be sure that their side of the story is not compromised. This again reinforces the salience of alternative memoryscapes – embodied, object-centred, private – that have emerged (and been carefully kept) within the domestic and other less-public domains.

The final narrative with reference to why locals have shown a preference for more private forms and spaces of memory making vis-à-vis a more public platform (by the state or other dominant actors) focuses on the sentiment that the memories of the war are too varied to ever be collectively remembered and that the Malaysian government would not be able to do a good job even if it were to try. According to Seng (78, Taiping):

> If you make it too simple and say everybody went through the same, then people will be unhappy. If you do not say much, then people will think 'then for what are we doing this!' Then the people [who went through the war] will feel as if their experiences are not appreciated. Isn't it better if we all do our own remembering?

Scholars have pointed out how collective remembrances often privilege some visions/versions of war and downplay others (Muzaini and Yeoh, 2005). Given the impossibility of remembering everything, any attempt to remember is bound to miss things (Legg, 2007). It is these selective state memory practices that have made locals sceptical of the state's ability to do it in an acceptable way, underscored by concern that once

surrendered to state manipulation, personal stories may not be personal anymore. As Opah (69, Slim River) says: 'If you let the state do it, then *my* story, *my* family story become the state's story. Nobody will know it was *our* own stories. It will be every Malaysian's.' Here, Opah is against the nature of official memory that 'encrypts and forecloses the meaning of historical and contemporary events within a singular point of view' (Legg, 2005, p. 181), or to generalize such that to be 'included' means losing control over personal memories folded into grand narratives and thus diminishing the particularity of individual narratives. Keeping her story private therefore allows Opah to maintain agentic control over her own memories. Given how dominant memory making often demands the surrendering of ownership over one's personal accounts of the past, this ultimately raises questions as to whether resultant geographies of collective memorialization – such as by or in the name of the nation – may even be seen as necessarily representative of the lot whose stories they claim to speak for.

To provide another example, Fatimah (47, Gerik) relates her reason for not wanting the war dead to be memorialized by the state or through more public memorial platforms:

> The Malays are buried as Malays and not as soldiers. If you go to a Malay cemetery here, they are not separated according to whether they went to war. When we pray for them, we pray for them as Muslims, not as soldiers. Nobody is special. When you die, you are equal in the eyes of [God]. Nobody is special. Not like the Whites.

This represents her resistance against official forms of commemoration, perceived as running against local practices and religious sensibility. Given individuals who died during the war hail from all religious denominations, there is then the necessary inclination for state memory making practices to 'democratize' death to ensure that everyone may relate to it, regardless of their personal beliefs. Doing this gives rise to egalitarian memoryscapes that appeal to all but none specifically, in some cases not even allowing for private forms of remembrances to take place (Muzaini and Yeoh, 2007). In this light, Fatimah thus prefers to remember those who died during the war within more private spaces of memory where 'I am able to remember [them] the Muslim way' and where locals are allowed to perform remembrance in accordance to rituals with which they are most comfortable, again flagging up the importance of maintaining private forms of memorialization as a manner of exercising more agency, and to be in line with the

requirements of another collective (in this case a religious one) that transcends geographical (or national) spatial/symbolic imaginings.

Conclusion

This chapter has been concerned with non-state remembrances of the Second World War in Perak, particularly those located in domestic and small-scale communal settings. Specifically, it has shown how these have become sanctuary to quotidian or subversive narratives of the event often obscured or expunged from more dominant representations within the state. It argues that, far from being forgotten, officially marginalized memories can continue to survive (if not thrive), not only in the popular media (Blackburn, 2007) but also in a manner not as high-profile, over spaces not as bounded, and through narratives not as fixed, as more conventional memoryscapes are inclined to be. In fact, some of the ones found in Perak (along with the memories they evoke) are fragmented, some shrouded in invisibility, that knowledge of and about them may be the privilege of only a few. Nevertheless, such memoryscapes, reminiscent of what Hebbert (2005, p. 592) refers to as the 'accumulation of memories from below, through the physical and associative traces left by interweaving patterns of everyday life', as opposed to an expression of 'group identity from above', are no less powerful in overcoming dominant exclusions. They may still contest forgetting, but in ways that are not at all confrontational; subverting domination but from the shadows.

In further unpacking the issue, this chapter has also demonstrated that the situation is more than just a matter of keeping alive memories that are officially suppressed. In fact, the desire for the locals to keep to the tradition of maintaining their own memoryscapes (in silence) masks myriad reasons. This includes the fear of embarrassment (should their personal stories not be of much interest to the public), perceived state reprisals for remembering subversions (or subversives), distrust that the Perak state would be able to represent (and become a mouthpiece for) their stories in an appropriate manner, and the desire to remember in ways that are more in line with preferences and socio-cultural practices. Most of all, through these non-state remembrances locals are thus able to exercise their own agency in terms of not only who or what should be recalled from the past but also how this should be done. They may not be well known or spectacularly ritualized, but no doubt they remain troughs of personal war recollections that are deeply implicated in the lives and very being of the locals. This allows them to bring to mind

the war past and, more importantly, to make memories 'their own'. Not aligned with others (or the state), locals also ensure that their stories are always far from being consciously manipulated. Thus, constantly evolving and always 'becoming'.

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13

Lobotomizing Logics: A Critique of Memory Sports and the Business of Mapping the Mind

Gareth Hoskins

> The lineaments of the world we live in are both seen and shaped in accordance, or by contrast, with images we hold of other worlds – better worlds, past worlds, future worlds. We constantly compare the reality with the fancy. Indeed, without the one we could neither visualize nor conceptualize the other.
>
> (*Geographies of the Mind*, Lowenthal, 1976, p. 3)

> . . . elements of what we call language or mind penetrate so deeply into reality that the very project of representing ourselves as being mappers of something language independent is fatally compromised from the start.
>
> (*Realism with a Human Face*, Putnam, 1990, p. 28)

Introduction

In the penultimate stages of the sci-fi adventure film *Flash Gordon* (1980), Ming the Merciless attempts to erase the memory of brilliant scientist Dr Hans Zarkov using a kind of cognitive hoover. 'We're going to empty your memory as we might empty your pockets, doctor,' growls General Kala, Ming's ruthless assistant. Zarkov's head is held steady with a steel clamp while a laser probes his memories and projects them onto a screen. Scenes from Zarkov's former job, the death of his wife, his childhood and images of parents are all played back as they are being wiped. After the ordeal Zarkof is an automaton: a man without memories able, then, to service Ming's hyper-galactic colonial ambitions, at least for a while . . .

Flash Gordon is not the most sophisticated cinematic exploration of our long fascination with memory, but its hammish erasure scene is

useful because it makes our overly convenient understanding of memory all the more easy to apprehend. We too often conceive of memory as if it were a movie in the brain that, with the right equipment, can be physically located and made available for manipulation.

In this chapter I discuss how this familiar way of thinking about memory emerges and voices suspicion about the authorities gained from its contemporary reiteration. In the many academic disciplines that take memory under their purview (psychology, psychiatry, anthropology, neuroscience), memory is typically given the status of a material object that can be lost, found, stored, retrieved, targeted, subdued, erased or enhanced (Lambeck, 1996). I examine the pursuit of memory sports to argue, along with others (Casey, 1987; Hacking, 1995; Sacks, 1993), that the presumed certainty surrounding memory's objectification and ultimate intelligibility is a result of the languages and technologies we use to investigate it. We should be concerned, therefore, not with the accuracy of one particular model of memory over another, but with how models of memory themselves serve to reinforce the interests of their originators.

Memory sports is a global pursuit growing in popularity. It is licensed by the World Memory Sports Council, regulated by an international guild of mind sports arbiters, and involves a series of mental tests designed to objectively measure a competitor's memory under strict exam-style conditions. Memory sports is also part of an expanding commercial enterprise targeting the fields of business, education and therapy with memory enhancing routines available for purchase in the form of instruction manuals (O'Brian, 1994; Buzan et al., 2009; Foer, 2011; Pridmore, 2011) or acquired through direct contact with 'grandmasters of memory' at competitive events, coaching workshops, executive training programmes and alternative education initiatives.

The fallacy of memory as an object

Despite our pervasive conceptions, memory is not a singular discreet or objectively measurable thing. Our sense that it is derives from a number of questionable foundations that emerged during the Enlightenment, including: Cartesian ways of dividing the body and the mind, notions of the sovereign subject linked to the birth of the nation state (Boyarin, 1994, pp. 1–38) and the theory of possessive individualism. It is necessary, therefore, to consider how our conventional understandings of memory become taken for granted, to appear as if 'natural' and obvious. It is necessary to consider the institutional forms and social relations

surrounding memory's investigation, definition and articulation in different fields. How and why has memory become the subject of so much scrutiny, and how does its professional explication work to legitimate authorities, validate particular ideological positions, and support particular commercial interests? As I will demonstrate, memory sports is one arena where our common-sense knowledge about memory (what it is, how it works and what it does) is constructed, in part, to generate revenue by positioning memory at the centre of a discrete, autonomous, private self that can be invested in and improved.

Memory sports is one component in a broader industry of memory enhancement. It is an industry that has been growing exponentially over the last few years. A general concern with mental fitness and mental deterioration has created huge demand for technologies and systems that claim to target memory, either to maintain its functioning or expand its capacity. New pharmaceuticals that profess to encourage the activity of memory receptors, optical stimulators that excite neural pathways, and audio CDs that integrate the brain's left and right hemispheres are a few of the innovations developed alongside the more familiar brain-teasing electronic games, like Nintendo's *Brain Age* software, and hundreds of self-help books which associate a good memory with various desirable qualities in a person, such as confidence, optimal wellness and an increased earning potential at work. But the notion of memory as a straightforward object or index of the self is questionable.

The logic of lobotomy

Memory is best understood as a diffuse and collaborative process that is intrinsically geographical, and geographers have a fairly well-established reputation for critical engagement with it. They have long recognized the important role that memory plays in the production of objects and landscapes as memorial (Atkinson and Cosgrove, 1998; Harvey, 1979; Johnson, 1995; Peet, 1996), and have illustrated how memory informs our experience of place (Hoelscher and Alderman, 2004; Jones, 2005; Atkinson, 2007).

In addition, the philosophies of Bachelard (1958), Benjamin (2002), Deleuze (1991, 2004) and Bergson (1991) have inspired geographers to examine the spatial as not merely the source, or result of memories, but as a crucial component in the embodied practice of recollection itself. And yet, there has been very little scrutiny (by geographers, if not psychologists or anthropologists) on the spaces associated with recall as a mundane technical practice performed by an individual (although, see

Anderson, 2004); the kind of personal memory we rely on everyday to remember shopping lists, phone numbers, peoples' names, and where we might have left our keys.

This kind of personal memory, and the way we have come to commonly understand it, is driven in at least three ways by the geographical. Firstly, any kind of articulation of memory involves the delineation of boundaries such as interior/exterior, personal/social, as well as the construction of relations between the mind, brain, body and self. Thinking and speaking about what memory is, therefore, means mapping a series of territories that tend to reinforce conceptions of ourselves as autonomous persistent subjects. Secondly, memory as it is practised requires invoking place either as a result of recall (where was I when I last had my keys?), or as an explicit strategy to aid recall, as the example of memory sports will illustrate. Finally, the geographical functions as a proxy for the understanding of memory per se. Despite extensive and wide-ranging effort, no one has been able to adequately explain exactly what memory is. We have therefore been forced to substitute the question of 'What?' with the question of 'Where?'. There has been, in the sciences of memory, for example, a perpetual push towards finding memory's exact spatial coordinates – its physical position in the brain (Kandell, 2007; Schacter, 1996) – resulting in an epic endeavour of cognitive mapping that reads like a school geography textbook with hemispheres, regions, networks and zones. This search belies a conceit that there is indeed something singular called memory to be known and that knowing it ultimately entails discovering its location.

I explore all three geographical aspects of personal memory in my examination of memory sports to highlight a central point about epistemological distancing. To think and talk about memory, we conceive of it as separate, we remove ourselves from it and undertake a kind of self-imposed lobotomy. I take this insight from Gillis, who puts the dilemma succinctly: 'Identities and memories are not things we think *about*, but things we think *with*. As such they have no existence beyond our politics, our social relations, and our histories' (1994, p. 5).

The spaces of the store

The notion that a memory might occupy a physical or metaphorical location reaches back to ancient Greek philosophy and endures today in the most high-tech brain imaging research. In *The Theatetus* (ca. 360 BC), Plato's dialogue examining the nature of knowledge, he suggests initially that the mind is like a wax tablet becoming constantly overlaid

by new experiences, and remembering involves mentally searching for the correct imprint. Much later, Locke (1995) page. 97 [Orig. 1690], in the seventeenth century, adopts a similar spatial understanding of the mind, naming it as a 'tabula rasa' or blank slate, and states that memory 'is as it were the storehouse of our ideas . . . a repository to lay up those ideas' (Book II, Ch. 10, pp. 1–2). So, too, Decartes's more mechanical hydraulic theory of nervous action implicates storage when theorizing memory's function as a system of pumps:

> When the mind wills to recall something, this volition causes the little [pineal] gland, by inclining successively to different sides, to impel the animal spirits toward different parts of the brain, until they come upon that part where the traces are left of the thing which it wishes to remember; for these traces are nothing else than the circumstance that the pores of the brain through which the spirits have already taken their course on presentation of the object, have thereby acquired a greater facility than the rest to be opened again the same way by the spirits which come to them; so that these spirits coming upon the pores enter therein more readily than into the others.
>
> (Quoted in Lashley, 1950, p. 454)

The storage metaphor has persisted throughout Western thinking (Draaisma, 1995) with memory being compared variously to a filing system, a roll of film, or a computer's hard drive. Memory's conflation with storage exerted considerable influence on its laboratory study by shaping experimental paradigms (Koriat and Goldsmith, 1996), and has been carried through in all sorts of cultural productions. One rendering is featured in the well-known story 'A study in Scarlet', which is outlined by Sherlock Holmes:

> I consider that a man's brain originally is like a little empty attic, and you have to stock it with such furniture as you choose. A fool takes in all the lumber of every sort that he comes across, so that the knowledge which might be useful to him gets crowded out, or at best is jumbled up with a lot of other things so that he has a difficulty in laying his hands upon it. Now the skillful workman is very careful indeed as to what he takes into his brain-attic. He will have nothing but the tools which may help him in doing his work, but of these he has a large assortment, and all in the most perfect order. It is a mistake to think that that little room has elastic walls and can distend to any extent. Depend upon it there comes a time when for every addition

> of knowledge you forget something that you knew before. It is of the highest importance, therefore, not to have useless facts elbowing out the useful ones.
>
> (Conan Doyle, 1887, p. 19)

Memory sports shares the spatial logics of this storage model and provides solutions to its limited capacity through proprietary techniques and training routines that offer to upgrade Holmes's little attic into a sort of super annex.

The secrets of memory sports

The sport of memorizing began formally on 26 October 1991 in London's Athenaeum Club with the contest Memoraid under the direction and sponsorship of two key figures: Tony Buzan, a best-selling author of mind-mapping books and founder of a global network of Buzan Centres that offer the chance for 'individuals and businesses to achieve success through techniques in mental literacy' (ThinkBuzan.com); and Raymond Keene, a chess grandmaster, events organizer and previous company director of Mind Sports Olympiad Ltd, and Brain Games Network PLC. Since 1991, the World Memory Championships has held global contests annually with the number of competitors, extent of international media coverage and level of corporate sponsorship increasing year on year. National qualifying championships are now hosted annually in the USA, India, the UK, South Africa, Singapore, China, Japan, Australia and Mexico, with the winners gaining admission to the World Memory Championships, held previously in London, Kuala Lumpur, Bahrain and Guangzhou, China.

The World Memory Sports Council, founded in 2004, is the event's governing body. It formalized the 'mind sport of memory' by establishing ten disciplines scored using a counting system based on decathlon track and field events. The ten disciplines (spoken numbers, one-hour cards, historic and future dates, binary numbers, random words, abstract images, names and faces, hour number, speed number and speed cards) seek to isolate and objectively evaluate an individual's 'pure memory skill' through measurements of capacity, veracity and speed of recall. This requires some awkward assumptions for convenience; principally, stripping the units of information requiring recall of their cultural value and language-specific-meaning to avoid 'pure memory' being contaminated by knowledge absorbed during a participant's lifetime.

The wow factor associated with competitors' amazing accomplishments rests therefore on the appearance, to the uninitiated, that the units recalled are without meaning or underlying logic. It is easy, after all, to remember all the numbers in sequence between one and one thousand or to remember the letters of the alphabet in order or reverse order; less easy to remember four packs of shuffled cards, 180 random words, or 'π' to 50,000 places. In efforts to isolate pure memory skill through its ten disciplines, memory sports promotes a notion of memory as a 'natural' phenomenon outside culture that can be identified and consistently assessed. The irony, however, is that the very method employed by competitors to recall strings of 'neutral' information involves the imposition of cultural value through elaborative encoding; a practice which remains hidden from view.

When we accept the notion that the more meaningful something is, the easier it is to remember, retrieval of a list of binary numbers, for instance, becomes less of an impossible feat and more a task of cultural inscription using proprietary mnemonic techniques. Systems available include: 'person, action, object', 'the major system', 'supermemo', 'the Leitner System', 'mind maps', 'the wardrobe system', 'the self enhanced memory matrix' and 'the total retention system'; many of them trademarked, and many underpinned by the method of loci, an ancient imaginative routine that facilitates the orderly recollection of abstract things.

The method of loci is based upon spatial relationships. It is outlined in classical Greek and Latin texts on rhetoric with the originator often claimed as the poet Simonides, the sole survivor of a roof collapse that crushed attendees of a banquet in Thessaly. Simonides was able to identify each of the unrecognizable dinner guests by creating a vivid mental image of their seating locations and naming them one by one. Four hundred years later in Imperial Rome, the technique was still regularly employed by lawyers and politicians. The rhetorician Cicero (106–43 BC) describes Simonides, discovering that:

> Order was the luminous guide to memory, and that those, therefore, who wish to cultivate this faculty should have places portioned off in the mind, fixing in these several compartments certain images to represent the ideas they wished to remember; thus the order of places would preserve the order of ideas, and the symbols would suggest the ideas themselves.
>
> (Cicero, quoted by Harvey Wood and Byatt, 2008, p. 188)

In *The Art of Memory* (1992), Yates describes how the same principle of imaginatively spacing the mind played a crucial role in communication

during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance period where memory theatres or memory palaces were invoked as mental architectures to deposit and fix vast amounts of facts (see also Carruthers, 1990; Spence, 1984).

The method of loci's adoption in memory sports involves a competitor's construction of their own memory theatre, usually in the form of a path, containing clear and discrete stations which can each hold units of information at intervals along the route. For competitors, recollection requires mentally walking along the path, encountering each station in turn, and using the station to trigger the desired piece of information, be it a card, number or word, which is then written down on an answer sheet, handed to an arbiter for marking, and then entered into a database.

This method becomes most effective when stories of the mental journey are composed with strong emotional attachments – a strategy emphasized in 85 BC in the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, one of the oldest surviving Latin texts on the use of rhetoric in public life. In online instalments of the guide 'How to become a Memory Champion' it is brought up to date. Step one instructs you to 'imagine your stories before your inner eye, imagine it, hear it, feel it, to see your stories come alive'. Step three instructs: 'Use your emotions! What you should do is fill your stories with emotions. Be happy or sorry for any living creature in your invented tales. Feel empathetic for everything that's happening in your mind as long as you are memorizing data' (MemorySports.com). The emotions invested here are strategically employed to create intense visual impressions. They are constructed as distinct from memory, something that involves a relation with memory but is ultimately separate from it. In this framing, memory is the rationale logical outcome, while emotion is its non-rational subordinate.

The business of competitive recollection

To position memory as an isolatable neurobiological activity secondary to emotion and potentially divorceable from social context has been critiqued by many geographers in their consideration of affect (Papoulias and Callard, 2010; Thein, 2005). It is more productive to think of memory as diffuse and collaborative; not confined to particular spatial coordinates residing in the brain, or even the person, but rather as a transpersonal process entwined with the world of objects, stories, emotions and affects as well as political and institutional contexts (Anderson, 2004; Bloch, 1996; Gell, 1998; Lorrimer, 2006). This tangled and ambiguous definition, however, runs counter to the broader

pursuit of memory sports as a commercial enterprise that gains authority and expertise through the pretence of memory's accurate calculation. It would hinder the marketing of its grandmasters as performers of superhuman feats where gestures to the mysterious and psychic proliferate in publicity shots for book tours and television appearances. When represented in the public sphere, expert memorizers often adopt a particular posture: staring wide-eyed directly at the camera, or straining in concentration with knuckles against foreheads, or index fingers pushed against temples, as if performing some kind of mental magic. The use of packs of cards in some of the events, and hushed talk of secret memory tricks that can be used to amaze friends, make comparisons with stage magic all the more tempting.

This image of memory sports as super-psychic or paranormal runs alongside the more wholesome athletic analogy which functions to secure mainstream legitimacy, sponsorship and advertising revenue. The recent commercial expansion of memory sports into the sectors of training and learning consultancy (Maximum Recall Pte. Ltd.) and state education (Inspire Education Ltd.) is a testament to the rhetorical force of athleticism.

The notion of remembering as an athletic pursuit is cultivated most obviously by the adoption of the term 'sport' and by the way organizers and practitioners narrativize competition. Participants compete in mental marathons, are awarded Olympiad medals, and through a rigorous training regime, exercise their brain as if it were a muscle. In his coverage of the 2003 World Memory Championships, for instance, founder Tony Buzan asks: 'Who says that mind sports don't have the same appeal as physical sports? Looking at the competitors as they left to freshen up and rest, you could see how physically exhausting the day had been for them. Memorizing is harder work than you might realize. With only a mere 500 points separating the 1st and 5th places there was still everything to play for' (worldmemorysportscouncil.com).

Remembering as a sporting endeavour is also suggested as a way of attracting larger audiences to competitions. Chief arbiter of the World Memory Sports Council, Phil Chambers, mooted that 'One of the ideas is to have a little Ben Pridmore [a world memory record holder] running along a track as he enters his binary digits. So the character progresses along the track and immediately if he enters a wrong digit he falls over and has to pick himself up and carry on' (Memory-sports.com, 12 June 2009).

The legitimacy of memory sports is further affirmed by strategic comparisons with the fields of anatomy and health. Buzan employs

this language when pitching his own mnemonic system by equating remembering with weightlifting:

> Using Mind Maps for example, helps with creativity as it presents ideas in a brain friendly way that inspires new ideas. Working on memory techniques makes the brain more capable in every other area in the same way that working out in a gym builds muscles.
>
> (Buzan, 2007, p. 16)

The idea of the brain as a muscle resonates with our conventional understanding of memory as an object that can be acted upon. In a piece written for the World Memory Sports Council's annual report, Tim Bean, founder of the Institute of Physique Management, employs a different metaphor that shares similar rhetorical objectives:

> Think of your brain as interfacing with your body in much the same way an electrical outlet functions inside the wall of your home. When you want to turn a light on you plug in a lamp, and the electricity transfers from the house's circuitry into the lamp. . . . A balanced brain creates and receives electricity in a smooth even flow.
>
> (Bean, 2007, p. 163)

Drawing on this and other insights in mental training, Bean offers 12-week physique management programmes, executive performance courses, and 'the latest information on products and events in the fields of weight loss, anti-aging and optimal wellness' (Iopm.co.uk).

Tony Buzan himself offers a three-day 'licensed instructor pathway' course for £3200 (plus tax) at venues in Cardiff, Tokyo, Orlando and Dubai, to those looking to build a new career or transform their professional or personal life.

The tendency to embellish memory sports as a pathway to success is stretched further in its promise to enable the brain to exceed brute biological possibilities. In a written contribution that marked the 'coming of age of the mind' (Buzan, 2007, p. 9), Chris Day draws comparison between a memory sports competitor and middle-distance runner Roger Banister:

> With the human body designed as it now is, a one-minute mile is patently not possible. However, in the realm of the mental, as was recently proven by the quantum leap in card memorization, there are, believe it or not virtually no limits . . . Hence, where the body,

> seen in a quasi-manichean dichotomy, may be restricted, the mind is free to soar to infinity.
>
> (Day and Chambers, 2007, p. 29)

This is a highly saleable commodity and one affirmed by eight-times World Memory Champion, author and motivational speaker Dominic O'Brian, who notes:

> To the cynic, the memorization of random decimals, binary numbers and playing cards is little more than a pointless exercise. To me, it has opened up my mind and exposed the truly limitless nature of the human brain. It has given me the confidence and belief that I can learn anything if I put my mind to it and that is very comforting and reassuring.
>
> (O'Brian, 2007, p. 26)

As a set of pragmatic techniques, memory sports has utility. The problem comes with its commercially motivated embellishment into a totalizing framework that makes grand promises about personal achievement based on a therapeutic expertise claimed through memory's narrow calculability. Analogies to muscles or domestic electrical circuits are appealing but they also rely on memory's impossible objectification; a mapping of memory as if it were an enhance-able appendage or physical prosthetic that can be purchased. We must be cautious of those memory metaphors and the promises that emerge from them; just as we should be cautious of the metaphors from more established scientific disciplines in their claims to know memory. Cosgrove tells us that: 'Scientific discourse has always been metaphorical . . . but has proclaimed a privileged 'truth' for its metaphors or models of representing reality' (1990, p. 345).

The science of memory

One vehicle through which memory sports constructs a sense of its own technical expertise is the in-house publication *Synapsia*, 'The International Brain and Intelligence Journal', which issued regular volumes between 1989 and 1998 covering topics such as brainwave theory, speed reading, mental mapping and multiple intelligence. Its subject matter suggests some divergence from more formally accepted scientific studies of memory, but the two fields overlapped when Dr Eleanor Maguire invited memory sports champions to participate, as research subjects, in an experiment involving neuroscience imaging at University College

London. Maguire sought to establish exactly which brain circuits were responsible for spatial memory by comparing memory sports participants with London Taxi drivers. In the published research (Maguire et al., 2002), fewer structural changes in the brain were found in memory sports participants because 'their brain doesn't have to change to accommodate a large map of London in their head; the memory champions just need to memorize a couple of routes in detail' (Maguire, 2008, p. 277).

Beyond the stated intentions of the experiment, the research is a manoeuvre to establish authority, illustrating how knowledge about memory is the outcome of different disciplinary regimes. It also shows how the investigative technologies we have available work to define the very thing we are looking for (Casey, 1987). For example, in the scalpel-based experimental psychology of the 1950s, investigating memory entailed correlating different categories of knowledge with broad areas of the brain (Slater, 2005). Moving through the 1960s and 1970s, the resolution increased with a search for the engram – a one-to-one correspondence between a portion of the brain and a particular conscious thought (Thompson, 1976). Recent technological developments in magnetic resonance imaging and positron emission tomography now allow computer visualizations of the brain in operation, tempting us to anticipate a version of the laser mind probe featured in *Flash Gordon*.

But establishing correlates between detectable physical changes in the brain and the realm of mental images is something of a chimera since the two occupy different epistemological registers. Our anatomical understanding of the brain, no matter how precise and sophisticated, tells us little about the self without asking us to look the other way during a fantastical epistemological leap. Neurologist and theorist Antonio Damasio attempts such a leap by asserting that the autobiographical self has a neuro-anatomical foundation explained by convergence zones:

> The key elements of our autobiography that need to be reliably activated in a nearly permanent fashion are those that correspond to our identity, to our recent experiences, and to the experiences we anticipate in the future. I propose that those critical elements arise from a continually reactivated network based on convergence zones which are located in the temporal and the frontal higher-order cortices, as well as in the subcortical nuclei such as those in the amygdala.
>
> (Damasio, 1999, p. 221)

The flesh to thought correspondence (the notion that a particular piece of the brain tissue can be understood to directly correspond with a particular imagined thought) is asserted here in a way that reaches past the metaphorical. When Plato argued that memory is like a wax tablet upon which experiences are imprinted, or when Locke suggested that memory 'is as it were the storehouse of our ideas' (Book II, Ch. 10), they were drawing analogies. Damasio's explanation seeks to do more than this. In the process, the mind, the self and memory are reduced to albeit complex components of a machine, 'a self regulating system of homeostasis' (2004, p. 30) in Damasio's words. This is an exercise in biological essentialism that conceives of memory as if it were independent of ideologies, belief systems and the disciplinary paradigms that have consistently presumed to isolate memory as a discreet object of study, as if memory exists apart from our attempts to know it.

Conclusion

In the many assertions of expertise about memory, memory sports included, the mind is invariably something we think 'about' rather than think 'with'. It is at once distanced from the self like a tool that can be honed through techniques and therapies. And, at the same time, it is contained within the self as a possession of the individual.

The point is not to dispute any of these models of memory as inaccurate or contradictory but to think about what those models do; to think about how the enterprise of knowing memory as something singular, and indeed knowable, works to serve particular commercial or disciplinary interests.

In the last 10 years or so there has been a move within studies of memory to recognize the importance of practice (Olick and Robbins, 1998). Drawing on Geertz (1973), Papoulias has termed this 'the de-psychologisation of memory and its redefinition as social process' where 'the marketplace may have replaced the head as the privileged spatiality through which memory is imagined' (2003, p. 115). The analysis of memory as a 'social', 'cultural', 'collective' or 'public' entity, a phenomena observed by Durkheim (1912) and further developed by Halbwachs (1926), has done much to expand our understanding of how memory functions beyond the individual. And yet these approaches have proceeded with hesitancy and a misplaced concern about uncritically reproducing super-organic notions of memory. Johnson, in her article 'Locating Memory', for instance, qualifies a historical review of public remembrance practices with the caveat '. . . at its most basic level,

memory can be said to operate at the scale of the individual brain' (2005, p. 168). Similarly, Boyarin cautions: 'It is worth restating the commonsense notion that the "place" of memory at the most material level remains the individual brain' (1994, p. 23). Such shorthand recourse to anatomical purity or biological foundation risks perpetuating authorities that should be challenged and turns personal memory into a no-go area for geographical research. It forgets just how much the familiar idea of memory as something contained absolutely within the individual relied in its origins upon extra-personal frameworks now hidden. Most importantly, it discourages what this chapter has been trying to achieve: a critical examination of personal memory and the confidences claimed by its objectification. We should be suspicious about any claims to know memory in isolation since it is provisional, dispersed, collaborative and thoroughly entangled in our attempts to define it.

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A Memoir: (On Terra Firma)

14

Surfaces and Slopes – Remembering the World-Under-Foot

Hayden Lorimer

As a lifelong long-distance runner my encounters with topography are forever a bare-knuckled affair. Changes of surface and slope are met with short jabs and clenched fists – left, right, left, right; as though tattooed with 'LOVE' and 'HATE'. And where swinging fists lead, pounding feet immediately follow. Earthly landings: occurring in countless thousands. Each footfall making an impact, imparting force and weight, finding in return, support from beneath, maybe a bit of 'give' or yield, and the means for locomotion, pushing onwards. What might we make of the runner's passionate exchanges with the ground beneath? And of wild swings in sentiment, where fatigue is the trigger switch transforming 'topophilia' into 'topophobia'? In this essay-memoir, I consider the long-distance runner as a highly accomplished sensualist, as someone who comes to know the variety of the world according to the feeling of differently textured terrains – bare rock, sand, soil, concrete – and the kinds of ecology that grow through them. Since, by my reckoning, an appreciation of what is underfoot – as much as what is overhead – alters runners' moods. In short, the experience of running is underscored by surfaces. Taken by this measure, it seems only reasonable to rank runners as well-schooled students of terra firma, using feet and legs as sensory devices.

I know this because running is my preferred way to set foot in new places. I reckon it is an exploratory practice, an opportunity for orientating and inveigling. It is possible to imagine such knowledge amassed and compiled as an atlas of memories. Surfaces and slopes might be indexed by region, country and continent, but just as easily categorized according to land use, or the patterns and lines left by a lifetime of interloping. As much as there might be stretches of country that can induce in me a powerful yen or sense of belonging, there are, too, unnumbered

surfaces, forms, textures and gradients to which I have become deeply attached and on revisiting find a real rapport. Less scenic, more sensed. Not constant, but variable. Old acquaintances; settled all about here. Not much found around there. Here naturally occurring; there entirely fabricated. Here sodden and lacklustre; there jarring and shocking. Here allowing me to coast along; there just a slog. Here pure revelry; there virtuous sufferance. But everywhere, to run the full gamut of emotions, I am dependent on a sensing body, moving overland.

Leafing through this atlas of remembered surfaces, I might pick out a medley of terrains. There is the spine-tingle and earth-shatter of a scree slide; the winter drag of stubble fields; the odd experiment bare foot, in wet grass or as a long shore drift; the past times of peat hags making legs feel spring-loaded, or the lopping high-steps demanded by heathery hillsides; the magical box-fresh bounce encased in new footwear; the cyclical hypnotism induced by the athletics track; and, the unforgiving rubberized rip of the gym treadmill. Some surfaces are harder to put a name to or easily place; still impacted in memory, but inchoate and thinned out.

It is not only changeability, or difference, in surface that can register as remarkable. Uniformity and regularity can have a startling effect too. A few years ago, while holidaying on an island in the Baltic Sea, I found a run of 12 kilometres that was utterly unwavering. At least, that's how it appeared on the map. Not a curve or a bend, nor any up or any down: just the straightest of lines, made by a minor road. And it looked that way when I arrived at the spot, early one morning. The run, in its entirety, seemed visible, defined by principles of perspective: a vanishing point, the rising sun, the painted dashes marking the midpoint of the metalled surface and the tall conifer trees that bordered its verges. Some while after setting off, a queer kind of dizziness came over me. The squared-off scene blurred at the edges, and I lost resolution too. If my legs were running then my head was swimming. The going was so unvaried, the destination so distant, and the running so constant, that the whole experience caused me to wobble and sway. I stopped, planted my feet, looked around, closely studied the camber of the road, the rough guttering, the dry ditch, downscaling in an effort to put the world back on its axis. A pair of cranes passed overhead, pale-white, wing tips near enough as touching, following the line of the road, unaffected it seemed by any funny turn. Up and running, mine recurred, a thousand-yard stare further on, and it never properly shifted. Discombobulating stuff. Possibly open to differing interpretation. But a powerful reminder nevertheless that it is in our bodies that we live out our lives. It is that very thesis which underpins phenomenology as a philosophy of human

experience. And in phenomenology there is much to commend; as a body of thought exploring our physical feelings of being it can certainly help shape understanding of the sensational surfaces and slopes encountered while out running.

Slopes are, of course, in the simplest terms, kinds of surface set at an angle from the horizontal, but they do generate a different intimacy, and interrelation, between runner and world. The way up a long hill needs to be searched out, steadily, most surely. On occasions, it amounts only to a painful protest march. But I know I have found the quality of movement when everything tunnels, and patterns of thought are trimmed back enough to become single-minded. The gradient helps this happen of course, as though disinclined to let attentions wander. My field of vision shortens to the next few steps only; looking far ahead of oneself can prove overwhelming. Gradually, the experience of ascending is encapsulated. That is, sensations close down to small matters, only of most immediate concern: feet placement, control over breathing, stride length, rhythm and pace. To become so absorbed by effort, there can come a point where it all becomes effortless. The gradient is ever present, but proves no real impediment to passage, paradoxically even becoming an energizing force, propelling the body upward. Rare moments these: when the soles of the feet seem to just sing off the surface. Atmospherics undoubtedly matter too. A little sun on the back does no harm or a strong wind giving full sail. But it is mass and movement that transform into a fabled lightness of being. Up, up. Higher, higher. Ascension can be remembered intensely. Mostly by obvious things, the richness of substances found closest up. So, it is tar bubbling in the midday heat, mixing with pine resin, to scent the air, that stand-in for all 20-odd hairpin bends of a Mediterranean mountain road. Or, it's the long, irregular staircase of boulders and bed of railway sleepers winding like a high-level highway towards the top of a favourite northern hill. At the summit, all possible earth is limited to the substratum directly underfoot. Only an aerial world remains. Here, and by many other combinations of slope and surface, is where running happens as a truly terrestrial kind of attachment.

Other atlas excerpts must chart changes in surface with turnings of the season. A good fall of snow confers to any run a thrilling sense of event. Old familiarities, en route and underfoot, are rendered uncanny. Progress on up-slopes becomes a pigeon-toed affair. Steepest gradients require a switch to stiff-legged 'telemark' style, where mini-steps bite for greater grip. On down-slopes, feet splay, first open-toed, then curl instinctively, pawing for reassurance. The rules of the road are reversed. Streets can be temporarily reclaimed as wide thoroughfares for more

carefree cantering. New running country is opened up too. Suburban places, ordinarily out of bounds, are occasionally pitched back into play. At the first sign of snow properly beginning to settle I find myself drawn to golf courses. One in particular is hard to resist.

The links of Royal Aberdeen rank highly among those who enjoy a good walk spoiled. Home to the world's sixth-oldest club, admirers number not just antiquarians of the ancient game, but those who revel in traditional golfing challenges to be set along a narrow, raised strip of sand dunes, edging the sea. Flat ground never extends very far here. It's a links layout formed of berms and hillocks, long draws and sudden drops, all the makings for sporting cradles and graves. The landscape is forever sloughing away and slanting off, gathering in hollows, lifting to crests. Even the fairest ways to progress are pitted with pot-bunkers, fringed by gorse and jagged sea grasses. Landscaping on such a grand scale requires most careful green-keeping, of course. But if the sporting heresy can quickly be forgiven, then landforms and earthworks truly come into their own when wintry conditions leave them deserted of golfers, and of golf. The restless nature of the topography is perfectly formed for slaloming adventures, inviting playful choices and nimble changes of running route, all done 'on the fly'.

I last felt this magnetism when snow lay thickly across the old year and the new. Heavy showers, falling daily, regularly refreshed the top layer. Chill temperatures sharpened it up, keeping things crystal-tipped. I kept making a return, a trespasser eager for discovery, possibly for something akin to the pure experience that is commonly sought in the quiet poetics of snow. You see, to my eyes, the course had become a sculpture park of whitened surfaces and a setting of choice for self-experiment. Squinting through the salt sting and low-angled opalescence, conditions were perfect for all kinds of visual distortion: in scale, distance and depth of field. The erasure of hard lines and colour contrasts gives to things a general appearance of shallowness, and is the cause of fairground effects on the running body. Snowy ground that registers to the eye as crisp and even can materialize all too suddenly, or arrive late, with . . . a split-second time delay. It drifts knee-deep, then for expanses is firm and hard-crusted. At first under-prepared, legs buckle up and bow, spring and step fall out of sync. It is knockabout stuff, somewhere between carousel and big dipper. When body position is thrown, shape must shift, so that the balance is re-jigged, just to allow the next step to fall. There is a biomechanical explanation for such a loose-limbed assembly of kinetic intelligence. Uncertainties in surface and irregularities in its resistance set off sensory receptors – science calls them

proprioceptors – of which a runner's deliberating thoughts know precious little at the time, and that transmit information first through nerve endings within muscles, tendons and joints. Acts of recovery and preemptive repositioning trigger instinctively, flickering between eyesight, cerebellum and moving body.

Seen at a distance by solitary dog-walkers and families out sledging, my stuttering progress must have looked comical and curious. Further out along the course, where fellow travellers petered out, winter features took on appropriately wilder formation. I scanned the scene, as might a landscape photographer. The course's surfaces and shapes were windblown, a mountain panorama in miniature: serrated edges, hanging cornices, deep clefts, long whalebacks and great scalloped corries. This waking dream reconfigured local geography, leaving it bewitched, outlandish. Golfing country passed convincingly for the high rolling plateau of the Cairngorm Mountains. I watched my self-image: a moving shadow cast on snow, a faithful companion and a conjoined twin, a long shanks figure thrown out in the late afternoon light. By this warping vision it was possible to rove widely over great tracts of the massif: limbs effortlessly eating up the ground, swallowing mountainsides up whole. The physical flattery existed only in distortion, a portrait by self-deception.

Greater realities exist in altered states. Given my full and undivided attention, the shadow figure to be seen in outline form was not quite the runner version of me that I have long come to expect. Not an uninflected reproduction. There was something more there than first met the eye. This was an inkblot, staining the snow's white canvas: a Rorschach form, a recognition exercise, a shaded likeness. A someone, who in visible appearance, moved in the shape, and with the gait, of my father. The hunch of effort yoked around the shoulders, holding all else upright, quite unmistakable and an inheritance from the person with whom I first began my running days as a child. What is still his appears also now to be mine. An ancestral style of movement is a startling sort of inheritance; the acknowledgement of its appearance in mid-life perhaps less so. All this made for a strangely private interlude, a solitary experience, but one alive to intimacy and close company; akin to an early morning 'double take' when facing the bathroom mirror.

Moment-to-moment, from point-to-point, it is the substance of mind-altering surfaces that the runner seeks and, in my experience, very often finds.

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