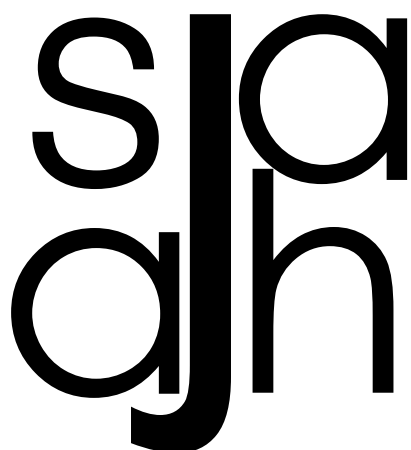




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Editorial: Ruination as metaphor and process: ideals, damage, and the passing of time

We invited submissions from a range of fields, in particular, architecture, art history, geography, landscape architecture, media studies, urban design, and the visual arts on the theme of ruination. This theme was considered meaningful because experiences and conceptions of art and architecture through ruination have shaped social and cultural realities throughout time. Realities captured, transformed, or erased through ruination intrigue us since the artifact communicates realities in which our role as agents are always in question. The temporal horizon of reality is the stage of human memory where we, at times, feel a sharp sense of loss. Underpinned by gradual entropy and sudden catastrophes in nature, the fragility is due, in particular, to the transience of cultural constructions or to the traumatic disasters of human actions. Ruination as an expression of time-specific mental constructs on the one hand, and unfolding experiences on the other, emerges as a metaphor and method for understanding the paradoxical nature of how humans in and throughout time relate to their environments.

Notwithstanding the rather general guidelines, the submission of articles accepted for publication are thematically focussed. Their great variety of themes collected in this issue attest to the fact that creativity also generates the shadow of destruction with the passing of time.

The editors wish to thank all the contributors for contributing to this special issue.

Estelle Alma Maré (editor)
Rudolf Bitzer (guest editor)

History, ruin and sacrament: the breaking of images and the breaking of the bread

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The current renewed interest in the phenomenon of iconoclasm (a form of ruination) is a symptom of the re-thinking of the image in a medium-aware milieu. When the medium is attacked in iconoclastic acts, images endure and circulate more vigorously. In this article the focus is on the ambiguous historical moment of destruction; on the impending blow; on the hammer or sword in mid-swing – on the breaking of images as a moment of the dissemination and endurance of historical meaning. The metaphorical power of the ruin to evoke not only loss, but also completion or fulfilment, is exploited here to intimate a systematic distinction between allegory and symbol. Through the performative interpretation of a number of art works which stage ruination, destruction, deterioration or violence, the historical processes of the emancipation, transformation, translation and re-mediation of images is related to conflicted understandings of the meaning of history. I endeavour to show how diverse beliefs about the mystery of the meaning of history are related to the ways in which the world is made to signify in nuanced artistic ways, either allegorically or symbolically.

Key words: Allegory, Symbol, Ruin, Sacrament

Geskiedenis, ruïne en sakrament: die breking van beelde en die breking van die brood

Die hernieude kontemporêre belangstelling in die verskynsel van ikonoklasme ('n vorm van ruïnering) is 'n simptoom van die heroorweging van die beeld in 'n medium-sensitiewe omgewing. As die medium aangeval word in 'n ikonoklastiese handeling, oorleef beelde en sirkuleer dit meer drasties. In hierdie artikel is die fokus op die dubbelsinnige historiese oomblik van vernietiging; op die voorgename slag; op die hamer of swaard terwyl dit swaai – op die aftakeling van beelde as die oomblik waarin historiese betekenis oorleef en versprei word. Die ruïne se metaforiese vermoë om nie alleen verlies nie, maar ook volheid en voltooiing te suggereer, word hier gebruik om aspekte van 'n sistematiese onderskeid tussen allegorie en simbool te laat deurskemer. Deur die performatiewe interpretasie van 'n paar kunswerke wat ruïnering, vernietiging, aftakeling of geweld voorstel, word die historiese prosesse van die vrymaking, transformasie en re-mediasie van strydende beelde, verbind aan konflikterende insigte oor die betekenis van die geskiedenis. Ek onderneem om aan te toon hoe uiteenlopende aannames oor die geheimenisse van die betekenis van die geskiedenis, nou verbonde is aan die genuanseerde maniere waarop kunswerke of allegoriese of simboliese betekenis genereer.

Sleutelwoorde: Allegorie, Simbool, Ruïne, Sakrament.

A spectrum of nuances lies between the ruin's ability to prompt a sense of loss and transience, on the one hand, and hopes of completion, future fulfilment, ultimate sense, or redemption on the other. Whereas the back of Walter Benjamin's Angel of History (Arendt 1999: 249)¹ is turned to the future in melancholic contemplation of the immanence of the hurled rubble of history, the ruin may also launch thoughts on potential historical sense and the meaningful contiguity of past, present and future. These disparate cultural strands associated with the meaning of the ruin are not oppositional, but constitute possible traditions among others, of making sense of history beyond the suffering and disconnectedness of catastrophic lived history.

It may be asserted that the postmodern concentration on loss and on the lack of the real is linked to its predilection for allegory. With allegory, according to Paul Ricoeur (1967: 16), a translation takes place between a signifier and its meaning, and once this hermeneutic process has been performed, the disguise is rendered useless and can be discarded: "In other words,

allegory has been a modality of hermeneutics much more than a spontaneous creation of signs". Ricoeur (1967: 16) introduces, on the other hand, the concept of donation where the symbol is concerned. The symbol is "donative" in that it precedes hermeneutics and presents, evokes or suggests its meaning "in the opaque transparency of an enigma" rather than by translation. The "cosmic ground" (Ricoeur 1967: 11) of symbolism is opposed to allegory which is hermeneutically produced meaning. Allegory is not premised upon the assumption that things are meaningfully sustained in their contingency. In the postmodern era allegory is promoted in the face of the loss of faith in inherent meaning which is presupposed by the symbol. Jörn Rüsen in a recent book *Meaning and representation in history* (2006: 40) admits that "There is hardly anything as outdated as reflecting on the sense of history..." In my following interpretations of images from various eras I endeavour to show how beliefs about the mystery of the meaning of history are related to the ways in which the world is made to signify artistically in diverse and nuanced ways, as allegory or symbol. This article endeavours to make an oblique contribution to current debates on the crisis of re-presentation when the principle that art is a secondary response to, or an aesthetic encounter with, a meaningful world which was there first, is questioned. By highlighting nuanced differences in the understanding and modes of artistic signification of the meaning of history over centuries, current understandings of history are interrogated.



Figure 1
Abraham ben Jacob. *Abraham and the idols*, from *Haggadah*
 (Amsterdam, Solomon ben Joseph, 1695). New York Jewish Theological seminary. (Mochizuki 2008: 118).

A seventeenth-century print in a Jewish *Haggadah* (Amsterdam, Solomon ben Joseph, 1695) (Mochizuki 2008: 118) depicting Abraham in the act of an iconoclastic attack (Figure 1) introduces my argument. The illustrated passage from the *Haggadah* is an expansion of the contents of Genesis 11 and relates how Abraham who was left in charge of his father Terah's idol shop, mocked the idolatrous clients and eventually destroyed the idols in a fit of rage. In the print Abraham is shown at the moment of the separation from his ancestors on the basis of his faith in a promised future. The violent act in the narrative is performed as a deed of transformation and reorientation towards the future. In recent research on iconoclasm destruction as a creative act or

as a transitional moment in the process of image-making is given more thought (e.g. Mochizuki 2008: 118 - 121). In this article I explore two diverse ways in which images are argued to be ever renewable, adaptable and transformable – on the grounds of either a picture’s presumed nature as a manifestation of absence, invisibility, incompleteness, insufficiency and lack (as allegorical meaning), or on the grounds of the power of the image to make “donative” or given meaning return in ever new ways (as symbolic meaning) in approximation of ultimate fulfilment. I focus on the changeability and proliferation of images as either a constant (allegorical) deferral of meaning or the comprehension of future (symbolic) redemption, as I endeavour to compare, contrast and analyse the processes of signification at work in selected art works struggling with questions about the meaning and mystery of history and the relationship between materiality and transcendence.



Figure 2
Andrea Mantegna. *St Sebastian*.
(Ca. 1470-80. Canvas, 255 x 140 cm. Musée du Louvre, Paris. (Web Gallery of Art)).

My first example of the association of the ruin with human suffering and the mystery of the meaning of history is from the Renaissance (Figure 2) when the ruin first appeared as a fully developed pictorial motif (Barasch 2006: 218). In Andrea Mantegna’s *St Sebastian* (ca. 1470-80) the martyred saint, eyes raised heavenward (Figure 3), is strapped to the ruin of an Antique Corinthian column and arch from which vegetation sprouts in several places. Growing plants on ruins (not necessarily Antique ruins) suggesting regeneration and rebirth most often appear in narrative representations of events related to the Incarnation, like Nativity scenes and scenes of the Adoration of the Magi where it refers to the succession of the Law of the Old Testament by the new Christian faith.



Figure 3
Andrea Mantegna. *St Sebastian*.
 (Detail. Ca. 1470-80. Canvas, 255 x 140 cm. Musée du Louvre, Paris. (Web Gallery of Art)).



Figure 4.
Andrea Mantegna. *St Sebastian*.
 (Detail of a fragment of a sculptural foot. Ca. 1470-80. Canvas, 255 x 140 cm. Musée du Louvre, Paris. (Web Gallery of Art)).

However, Mantegna exploits with typically painterly means, the motifs of fragmented relics of Antique sculpture and of architecture overgrown with vegetation, to thicken the meaning of his historical narrative. The pregnant moment of the narrative is the martyred saint's invisible transition from life to death i.e. the imperceptible moment of the passage of his soul to eternal life, when his wounded body becomes a corpse. The martyr dies in *imitatio Christi* and will receive a restored glorified body in the life hereafter. The wounded body of the saint is paralleled with the damaged ruins, the medium of which is harmed while the works continue to exist in the imagination of the spectator, just as the soul of the martyr is transported into eternity. With the self-conscious pictorial eloquence which the medium of painting had acquired during the Renaissance (Krüger 2001: 59ff.), Mantegna opposes the deterioration and damage of Antique sculpture to the after-life it attains through its remediation into the medium of painting. This painterly performance of the *paragone* debate is expanded in the placement (Figure 4) of a painted fragment of a sculptural foot which had been neatly cut from a life-size statue, right next to the painted bare feet of the martyr. The relic of the damaged statue contrasts with the integrity of the body of the martyr to juxtapose pagan decline with Christian triumph.

Mantegna succeeds in fictionalizing the painted sculptural ruins into an aesthetic experience to act out and pictorially deepen the meaning of the historical narrative so that the meaning of

the image as image is performed in the medium of painting. The incomprehensible passage from life to death is acted out as the essential paradox of all images - of making visible the invisible. The painting functions as an eye-opener of spiritual vision and the painterly performance of the painting's image-ness is in resonance with the theme of the mystery of the meaning of time and history. Human suffering, bodily damage and the deterioration of sculpture and architecture are given meaning through the history of redemption, the *Heilsgeschichte*, because ultimately the breaking of the body of the Saviour constitutes the meaning and redemption of history. Although Christ's incarnation has been the justification for image-making for many centuries, it is the abject damaged body of the crucified Christ which exemplifies the redemption of history. After this example the abject and self-negating portrayal of the suffering body of the martyr is iconoclastic in spirit and meant to train the eyes to see beyond the image (Koerner 2004: 12).

Thus, in Mantegna's painting the mediating function of the image is conceived of in terms of a dualistic separation between the spheres of materiality and immanence on the one hand, and invisible transcendence on the other. The ruins and the wounded body of the martyr are metaphors of the lack and loss of this world which needs mediation in order to participate in a transcendent world which can be understood spiritually. In this respect the painting can be compared to the Roman Catholic transubstantiated Eucharistic wafer which mediates between dualistically opposed carnality and spiritual understanding. History and time are understood to emanate from God, but earthly history and transcendental time or eternity, are understood to be separate.

This dualistic (symbolic) conception of the relationship between matter and transcendence in the process of signification in Mantegna's work can be contrasted to a Protestant conception of their (symbolic) unity. If Mantegna exploits the themes of destruction, negation and replacement to turn his *St Sebastian* into a spiritual eye-opener in the medium of painting, this function is transformed by Rembrandt. I refer to Rembrandt's painting (Figure 5) of an episode in Abraham's life a number of years after his destruction of the idols, his arm raised once again, in *The angel withholding Abraham from sacrificing Isaac* (1635). Rembrandt rendered this bewildering instant of averted violence in different media a number of times in his oeuvre. A comparative discussion of this painting in the Hermitage and a drawing (Figure 6) - which probably comes after the painting (Schwartz 2006: 346) - in the British Museum, *Abraham withheld from the sacrifice of Isaac* (ca. 1635), divulges the intensity with which Rembrandt meditated upon the varied nuances and implications of this episode.

I argue that Rembrandt's introduction of another element in the rivalry among the arts, apart from the *paragone* between sculpture and painting as in the case of Mantegna, suggests a different approach to the transcendent meaning of history. The invisible voice of the angel proclaiming the will of God is the crux and imperceptible catalyst of Rembrandt's composition in my analysis. The Word of God becomes embodied in the voice of the Angel and Abraham is seen to hear and react to it. The visual noise in the area above the angel's head and right hand, at the top left in the drawing - the excessive and animated strokes in red chalk which denote the angel's right wing - (Figure 7) initiate the impression of vigorous spiral forward-movement continued in the three bodies seemingly tiered in space as a result of the distribution of patches of light and shade. These repetitive chalk lines may inversely be read as re-directing the eye in continuing spiral movement from the lower front of the picture plane - from Isaac's body, through the touching bodies of Abraham and the Angel - beyond the top edge of the picture from whence the speaking Angel (by whom all action in the painting is instigated) supposedly hails. The visual noise, movement and light perform the animating Voice of God entering like a breath or wind (*Odo*) to initiate Abraham's *peripeteia*.



Figure 5
Rembrandt. *The angel withholding Abraham from sacrificing Isaac.*
 (1635. Canvas, 193 X 133cm. St Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum. (Schwartz 2006: 344)).

Abraham's *contraposto* posture, face turned towards the Angel and each arm connected in this forward- and reverse-spiral movement, acts out his conversion in the presence of the proclamation of God's Word. Abraham's soul is moved by listening to the Voice as he is interrupted from performing a human sacrifice.



Figure 6
Rembrandt. *The angel withholding Abraham from sacrificing Isaac.* (Unsigned, undated, ca. 1635. Black and red chalk, wash, 19.4 x 14.6 cm. London, British Museum).



Figure 7
Vigorous spiral forward-movement continued in the three bodies seemingly tiered in space. Rembrandt. *The angel withholding Abraham from sacrificing Isaac.* (Unsigned, undated, ca. 1635. Black and red chalk, wash, 19.4 x 14.6 cm. London, British Museum).

When we now return to the painting we notice that the blinding, bleaching light which accompanies the Angel, and which falls from left and right in the painting and the drawing respectively, is concentrated upon Isaac's body in each. The white light renders his swaddled body corpse-like, pre-figuring the body of Christ to whose sacrifice Isaac's body has pointed allegorically since early Christianity. In the painting a successive symbolic replacement of Isaac's body is performed by the rendition in paint of his pale body to resemble an opaque bread-like substance which draws attention not only to the materiality of paint but also to the significance of bread as sacrament and body of Christ who instituted the Eucharist. Through the transfigurative power of painted light, paint is transformed to remind of bread. Thus the materiality of paint is symbolically exploited to open the eyes spiritually, just as the physical presence of the Eucharistic bread points to a reality that we cannot grasp fully.

Whereas Mantegna couched his historical narrative of the transition of the soul in the *paragone* between painting and sculpture, Rembrandt's exploitation of the rivalry between speech (Word) and image according to the *ut pictura poesis* formula enables him not to only to translate the invisible voice in visible terms, but also to perform in the medium of painting the function of the image as a site of reconciliation between the material and the transcendental worlds, as in the Protestant Eucharist. What is revealed is the process of symbolic transformation of physical reality through spiritual vision, rather than the mediation between two dualistically separated spheres, as in the Mantegna painting. The act of painting becomes the metaphor for the breaking of the bread comparable to the liturgical performance of the protestant Eucharist, where through the eyes of faith the materiality of the created world is related to the Creator. Abraham as the Father of Faith to the faithful spectator is transformed by the Voice of God, and acts out the constant renewal and conversion of the faithful through the proclamation of the Word in specific contexts, just as the bread is continuously broken in liturgical performances of the Eucharist to proclaim that in Christ everything holds together. In an old established reformational tradition which Calvin follows (Devries 2002: 15) preaching is understood to be a sacrament. Abraham is portrayed as acting out the new meaning which history has attained and which is gradually revealed in the *Heilsgeschichte* or history of redemption. The unfolding of a history of redemption (represented by the references to Isaac's body, Christ's body and the substance of bread) is shown to be an effect of human conversion and decision-making on the strength of the proclaimed Word. For this reason Paul Ricoeur calls this Biblical outlook on history the rediscovery of history as a crisis (1965: 84, 85).

In Søren Kierkegaard's (1985) philosophical meditation upon Abraham's faith in *Fear and trembling* (1843) the narrator Johannes *de silentio*'s very name brings the opposition of silence and voice into play. The pseudonym of the not so silent author of the treatise, John the Silent, suggests that genuine faith cannot be put into discourse. Abraham's silence and inability to inform the affected parties, Isaac, Sarah and Eleazar about his intended action, is repeatedly invoked in *De Silentio*'s fourfold description of the events. Kierkegaard aims with the treatise to demonstrate how impossible it is to understand Abraham's deeds according to Hegelian principle of *Sittlichkeit* or 'the ethical life'. No language, he claims, suffices to explain or justify Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son in defiance of all human ethical standards or the Hegelian 'universal' well-being of society as a whole. From the Enlightenment perspective Abraham's faith in the hidden meaning of his deed remains incomprehensible: "Anyone who saw this would be paralysed... Anyone who saw this would become blind", (1985 (1843): 55) Johannes *de silentio* exclaims.

However in Rembrandt's visual interpretations of this episode from the life of the Father of Faith, he puts into action the eloquence of the concrete materiality of creation (paint and

bread) to point to a transcendental reality on the basis of the illuminating and vivifying power of the incarnation. He gives protestant substance to the artistic rivalry between word and image, or sight and sound, which had been based on the revival of the Horatian *ut pictura poesis* formula since the Renaissance. Whereas Catholic authors in the Low Countries abided by the neo-Platonic priority of sight and image, Protestants gave precedence to the ear and the proclamation of the Word on the strength of St Paul (Emmens 1981: 69). In Rembrandt's drawing and painting Isaac's covered face remains empty; Isaac remains blind and deprived of the mutual gaze of human recognition. But this vacuum is exploded and filled with transforming meaning at the entry of the Voice or breath of God in the form of the Angel whom Abraham faces. The materiality of Isaac's opaque body in paint, like the sacramental bread, thus becomes the very site of both the convergence of light and the dispersal of the spiritual power of the Word. Matter is thus reconciled with a transcendental world rather than exploited as a mediator between materiality and transcendence, as in Mantegna's painting. This testifies to a difference in nuance in the understanding of the meaning of history.

Another area which draws attention through visual noise where meaning is thickened in both drawing and painting is the central space around motif of the free falling knife. In the Hermitage painting the suspension between father and son (Bal 1991, Held 1991) of the beautifully wrought curved knife of multi-coloured metal against the backdrop of an atmospherically receding landscape is staged, because it has a foil in the finely filigreed and bejeweled sheath strapped to Abraham's hip. The suspension of the beautiful artefact for a critical moment in the painting may have the narrative function of conveying averted violence, but on the other hand the almost fetishistic isolation of the crucial tool conveys its importance as a self-reflective image of human work. As such the knife introduces an array of layered meanings related to the artist's craft, *poiesis* in the sense of human cultural production, but also of the poetic work of compressing, augmenting and transforming the world into art, the making of art history, the transmission of traditions, the practise of art history writing and the sense or meaning of history.

I will confine myself here to the fact that the knife directs attention to my self-aware art historical interpretation of all the images I have discussed so far. The rethinking of the image which is currently taking place in image theory and art history has spawned a proliferation of performative viewings of so-called meta-pictures and self-aware images arguing about their own existence and history, as images and media. The vogue is to interpret images allegorically in order to demonstrate their ability to self-produce self-reflectively, emphasizing the power of the human mind to hermeneutically produce images which constantly migrate (Belting 2005) among various media. In this process the "donative" or given meaning of a richly symbolic world could be downplayed. I have exploited this current trend of performative viewing of self-theorizing images, but have highlighted the historical depth of this medium-awareness as an aspect of all artistic images. Whereas the increased self-awareness and the theoretical relevance of art in the modern era is often portrayed as typically modern and in compensation for the dwindling interest in the spiritual function of images, I want to rather inversely emphasize that modern art's theoretical self-revelation does not exhaust its meaning, but that this self-theorization is related to fundamental shifts in notions about the spiritual sense of history.

My interpretations of works highlighted varied nuances and struggles in understandings of how materiality is seen to symbolically harbour transcendental meaning. We have witnessed Abraham, arm raised in the violent act of iconoclasm, as portrayed in a Jewish *Haggadah*, and we have witnessed how his arm raised in the averted act of human sacrifice was re-presented and appropriated by Rembrandt, to reveal a transformation or conversion of the understanding of history, a modification of what motivates from the depth of the past and the discovery of a

new memory. In the raised arm of Abraham the breaking of images and the breaking of the bread are linked. The ambiguous historical moment of destruction; the impending blow, is shown to be the moment of the dissemination and endurance of historical meaning. The ruin has the metaphorical power to evoke not only loss, but also redemption.

In my interpretation of the next two respectively modern and postmodern works by Barnett Newman and Gerard Richter, I analyse the allegorical processes of ruination (as opposed to the symbolic processes discussed above) by means of which the given meaning of history is refused and shattered. However, I conclude with the discussion of a postmodern work which reintroduces the cosmic surcharge of inexhaustible meaning which is the basis of all symbolism (Ricoeur) and which links the symbolism of all cultures - an installation by Pippa Skotnes staging ruination and deterioration, as well as translation and transformation. Through the interpretation of these contrasting processes of allegorical and symbolic signification, the historical processes of the ruination, transformation, translation and re-mediation of images is related to conflicted understandings of the meaning of history.



Figure 8

Barnett Newman. *Stations of the cross, Lema Sabachthani*.

(14 panels. 1958. Oil on canvas, 198.1 x 152.4 cm each. National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.).

The black and white ash tones of the entire cycle of fifteen paintings by Barnett Newman *The Stations of the cross* (1958) (Figure 8), together with the unanswered question of the subtitle: *Lema Sabachthani* (Why hast Thou forsaken me?) links the Crucifixion with Old Testament sacrifice, as well as with the catastrophic history of the twentieth century (cf. Saltzman: 2005: 37ff.). Mark Godfrey (2004:40) argues that the audience is meant to identify with the despair and loss experienced by survivors of the Holocaust. It could be argued that Newman's use of stark and empty abstract formats is an iconoclastic act against representation, acknowledging that the extent of human suffering referred to is beyond representation or even beyond our senses and exceeds our capacity to capture it in our imagination. It is only in their minds that the audience can transcend the ambiguity and catastrophe of concrete history, as in the Kantian sublime. In viewing the painted cycle the spectator has to move from painting to painting as if in secular ritual procession remembering Christ's human suffering on the way to the cross. The cycle refers the moved and moving audience back to itself to experience the sublime of ineffable and incomprehensible human agony. By reducing Christ's suffering to the sublime human experience of pain and anguish, any transcendental sense of the contiguity of past, present and future is iconoclastically rendered useless and discarded. An allegorical trans-lation is hermeneutically produced as lack and loss are contemplated, back turned to the future, as Benjamin's Angel of History does, when neither humanistic Progress, nor an understanding of the mystery of the meaningful contiguity of history remains an option.



Figure 9
Titian (Tiziano Vecellio). *Annunciation*.
 (c. 1535. Oil on canvas, 166 x 266 cm. Scuola Grande di San Rocco, Venice. (Web Gallery of Art)).



Figure 10
Gerhard Richter. *Annunciation after Titian*.
Second version. (1973. Oil on linen, 125 x 200cm.
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.).

In Gerhard Richter's postmodern work the changeability and proliferation of images is suggested to be a constant allegorical deferral of meaning. His five versions of copies of Titian's *Annunciation* (c. 1535) (Figure 9) produced during the 1970's (of which the second is reproduced here) (Figure 10) manifest his fascination with this process. His choice to reproduce the *topos* of the *Annunciation* - the depiction of that imperceptible moment of the gift of God's presence to humankind - is significant. The swirling movement of the entering angel in both Titian and Richter is acknowledged by the slight movement of the Virgin's hand suggesting that she is stirred, but not protesting and is consciously offering her body as receptacle of divine conception (Krüger 2001: 46ff.). While movement and the sound of the Angel's voice are captured in the stillness of clouded and blurred paint in Richter's painting, the obvious theme is the paradox of the manifestation of the invisible in the visible. It pushes to the borders of what can be seen with the naked eye. But in this sense the painting thematizes its own insufficiency. Richter explains about his copies: "To start with I only meant to make a copy", "...simply because I liked it so much". "Then, my copy went wrong, and the pictures that finally emerged went to show that it just can't be done anymore, not even by way of a copy. *All I could do was to break the whole thing down and show that it's no longer possible* [My italics]." (Storr 2003: 104). In order to partake of an invisible spiritual sphere an endless progression of reproductions and representations are needed in compensation for the original lack of meaning and the inadequacy of its manifestations in the sense of the Lyotardian "melancholic sublime". For Richter the ineffable can be conceived but its significance can never be understood.



Figure 11

Pippa Skotnes. Horse skeletons with inscriptions. *Lamb of God* Installation. 2004 – 2009. (National Museum of Art, Lithuania; Cultural History Museum, Oslo, Norway; Centre for the Humanities, Michigan University, USA; Michaelis Gallery, Cape Town. (Skotnes 2009). <http://www.cca.uct.ac.za/curations/?lid=142>.

I conclude my interpretations of images with three skeletons of horses, inscribed with hand-written texts, embossed and gilded, like the covers and pages of medieval manuscripts - the central objects of an installation by the contemporary South African artist Pippa Skotnes, titled *Lamb of God* (2002) (Figure 11) (Skotnes 2009). These horse skeletons have also been exhibited separately, and were recently shown at the Everard Read Gallery in Johannesburg, as part of the exhibition *The Horse. Multiple Views of a Singular Beast*, curated by Ricky Burnett.

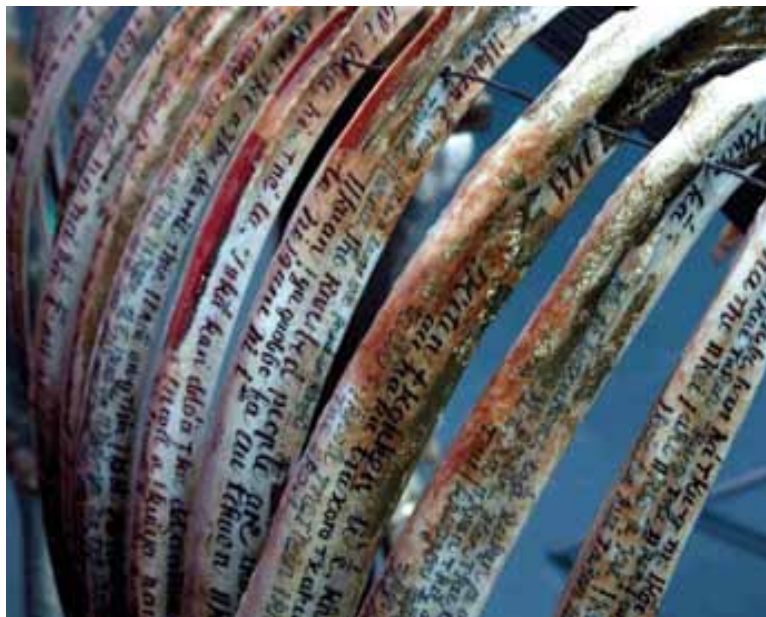


Figure 12.

Pippa Skotnes. Horse skeletons with inscriptions. *Lamb of God* Installation. 2004 – 2009. National Museum of Art, Lithuania; Cultural History Museum, Oslo, Norway; Centre for the Humanities, Michigan University, USA; Michaelis Gallery, Cape Town. (Skotnes 2009). <http://www.cca.uct.ac.za/curations/?lid=142>.

Each skeleton, held intact by its spine (Figure 12), resembles a book and the three volumes exhibited together are related in their diverse contents by the life, work and experiences of the artist. One skeleton is inscribed with texts related to her father's experiences in the Second World War, the second to her Roman Catholic upbringing as a result of a promise made by her father during this time, and the third is inscribed with texts from the 1870's by Lucy Lloyd and Wilhelm Bleek transcribed from oral accounts in the now obsolete Bushman language of their *IXam* teachers. The main part of this legacy of texts is held at the *Centre for Curating the Archive* at the University of Cape Town where Pippa Skotnes has contributed a great deal to expose and investigate the archival resources.

In the horse skeletons Pippa Skotnes embraces enigmatic ruins; fragments of the cosmos; the materiality of dead bones, in which the mystery of the passing of time is condensed. By inscribing it, she releases an infinite symbolic discourse, linked in its mythic, symbolic and poetic roots. She starts out with a full anthropocosmic symbolism (Ricoeur) of several layers of experience. The inscribed bones not only refer to the western medieval heritage of reliquary shrines and pilgrimage routes – a heritage of images “before the era of art” (Belting 1990). But that western memory and understanding is complicated and transformed by the introduction of parallels among image understandings manifest in popular legends regarding the magical powers of the Roman Catholic Eucharist (fragments of which are inscribed on the bones of one horse), and image understandings in *IXam* culture, manifest in transcribed texts on another skeleton. In her inaugural lecture as Professor of Fine Arts at the University of Cape Town, titled *Real Presence*, Skotnes (2009: 32) compares these popular legends and practices surrounding the Roman Catholic Eucharistic doctrine of transubstantiation, with *IXam* experiences of the “contraction of time implied in many of the[ir] narratives and the perceptions of a continuous present”. This comparison rekindles the mythic dimensions of symbolism - what Paul Ricoeur (1967: 11) has called the “cosmic ground” of all symbolism - and reshapes, complicates and thickens western memory based on the opposition of near and far, or western and non-western cultures. The rolled up copies of archival texts in phials attached to the spines, not only reference the history of the process by which classical literature has been transmitted from the ancient world to the present, from oral tradition, to written roll, to codex (Weitzman 1947), but the phials also connote the remnants of magical practices in medieval religious devotion. Thus the rediscovery of mythic dimensions of western thought transforms the understanding we have of ourselves in relation to other cultures. It not only reveals the common basis of the symbolic traditions of diverse cultures, in a meaningful cosmos, but also suggests how this meaningful surcharge has found diverse traditions of signification, related to diverse beliefs about the mystery of the meaning of history.

Notes

- 1 “A Klee painting named ‘Angelus Novus’ shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel

would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress.” (Arendt 1999: 249).

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From ruination to renewal: The critical value of a proto-crystalline regime in German expressionist cinema

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In *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* and *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, Gilles Deleuze maintains that cinematic time-images first emerged after World War Two against the backdrop of the ‘any-space-whatever’ reflected in Italian neo-realism, and because of the corresponding crisis of the action-image, which occurred around this time. In this regard, in *Cinema 2*, Deleuze distinguishes the organic regime of the movement-image from the crystalline regime of the time-image, through an explication of the four crystal states of the time-image – namely those found in the films of Max Ophüls, Jean Renoir, Luchino Visconti and Federico Fellini. However, only three years after completing his two-volume work on film, Deleuze made a radically self-reflexive suggestion that time-images might exist in pre-World War Two cinema; that is, in cinema *before* the advent of Italian neorealism and its ‘any-space-whatever.’ Arguably, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that German expressionist films of the 1920s were the cinematic domain that Deleuze had in mind as the home of such prototype time-images, and in this article, evidence for this is explored and proto-time-images in films by Robert Wiene, Paul Wegener and Friedrich Murnau are identified. Moreover, the critical value for contemporary film theory of establishing the existence of such a proto-crystalline regime, and of linking it with the ‘any-space-whatever’ that resulted from the ‘death of God’ in the late 19th century, is also investigated.

Key words: German expressionism, Italian neorealism, movement-image, time-image, ‘any-space-whatever’

Die kritiese waarde van ‘n proto-kristalmatige regime in die Duitse ekspressionistiese film

In *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* en *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, voer Gilles Deleuze aan dat filmiese tyd-beelde die eerste keer na die Tweede Wêreldoorlog begin gebruik is teen die agtergrond van die “enige-ruimte-wat ookal” (‘any-space-whatever’) soos weerspieël in die Italiaanse neorealisme, en vanweë die ooreenstemmende krisis van die aksie-beeld wat rondom hierdie tyd voorgekom het. In hierdie verband, in *Cinema 2*, onderskei Deleuze tussen die organiese regime van die beweging-beeld en van die kristalmatige regime van die tyd-beeld, deur middel van ‘n verduidelik van die vier kristalstadia van die tyd-beeld – naamlik in die films van Max Ophüls, Jean Renoir, Luchino Visconti en Federico Fellini. Drie jaar na die voltooiing van sy tweedelige werk oor film het Deleuze egter ‘n radikale selfrefleksiewe voorstel gemaak dat tyd-beelde wel in die film van voor die Tweede Wêreldoorlog mag bestaan het; dit wil sê, in films *voor* die aanbreek van die Italiaanse neorealisme en die opvatting oor die “enige-ruimte-wat ookal.” Daar bestaan genoegsame bewys om te veronderstel dat die Duitse ekspressionistiese film van die twintigerjare die filmdomein was wat Deleuze in gedagte gehad het as die bron van sulke prototipe tyd-beelde, en in hierdie artikel word dit ondersoek en veral die proto-tyd-beelde in die films van Robert Wiene, Paul Wegener en Friedrich Murnau geïdentifiseer. Voorts word die kritiese waarde vir eietydse filmteorie van die vasstelling van ‘n proto-kristalmatige regime en die koppeling daarvan aan die opvatting van “enige-ruimte-wat ookal” as gevolg van die ‘dood van God’ in die laat-negentiende eeu ook ondersoek.

Sleutelwoorde: Duitse ekspressionistiese film, Italiaanse neorealisme, aksie-beeld, tyd-beeld, ‘enige-ruimte-wat ookal’

The passing of time comprises the nebulous phenomenon around which Gilles Deleuze’s *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* and *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* are orientated. While *Cinema 1* is dedicated to an exposition of how movement-images provide an *indirect* image of the passing of time, in *Cinema 2* the emergence of time-images and their provision of a *direct* image of such passing are explored in detail. Deleuze explains that movement-images comprising of perception, affection and action-images – or images through which viewers see not only what the characters in a film see, but also both how they are affected by what they see,

and how such affect translates into action – became severely problematized after World War Two. On the one hand, this was because there emerged after the war a pervasive incredulity toward the possibility of effective agency, as the devastation of the war had shattered the traditional cultural sensory-motor schemata of those who survived the war. As such, they found themselves situated within an ‘any-space-whatever,’ where the direction and orientation of their future actions were severely problematized.¹ On the other hand, contemporaneous factors “internal to art, to literature and to the cinema in particular,”² resonated powerfully with the disorientation of such prevailing cultural sentiment, and therefore received endorsement as apt expressions of the *zeitgeist* of the era (Deleuze 2004: 209-210).³ Significantly, in *Cinema 1*, Deleuze privileges Italian neorealism over the various other forms of cinema that emerged around this time, because of the incisiveness with which it penetrated and represented the post-war situation. That is, unlike many other forms of cinema that were contemporaneous with it, neorealism was for the most part devoid of action-images, and contained instead a proliferation of opsigns and sonsigns, or images and sounds which confronted the characters but to which they could not respond, because they could not fully comprehend them (Deleuze 2004: 215-219).⁴ Yet, accordingly, this incomprehension and corresponding paralysis did not result in stasis, but rather in intensified ontological introspection, the eventual consequence of which was the emergence of time-images, or cinema that provides direct images of the passing of time. In effect, such time-images reflect not the triadic operation of perception–affection–action that is characteristic of movement-images (Deleuze 2004: 65-68), but rather the interface that constantly occurs between the virtual world of the past, and the actual world of the present. As Deleuze explains in *Cinema 2*, in terms of this interface, a virtual past that is always present with us (for example, our personal and social history, and the myriad of idiosyncratic and intimate connections that we have made between them), is selectively recalled to negotiate with an actual present, which is always in the process of passing (Deleuze 2005: 66-69, 76-80). And it is the imagistic thematization of the nuances and subtleties of this complex interface that comprises the profound intuitive ambit of cinematic time-images.⁵

In what follows, Deleuze’s intimation that time-images involve direct representations of both the *constant* passing of time, and the *variegated* speeds with which time passes, will be explored. In this regard, it will be advanced that the actual/virtual interface of the four crystal states of the time-image that Deleuze points out in *Cinema 2* – namely those reflected in the films of Max Ophüls, Jean Renoir, Luchino Visconti and Federico Fellini – range, respectively, from (1) proximal stasis because of the domination of the actual by the virtual, through either (2) sudden/partial or (3) gradual/systemic destabilization of virtual hegemony, to (4) rapid creative interplay between the actual and the virtual.⁶ After this, Deleuze’s suggestion, in his 1988 Preface to the English edition of *Cinema 2*, that time-images might exist in pre-World War Two cinema, will be engaged with, in relation to Deleuze’s treatment of German expressionist films in *Cinema 1* – treatment which indicates that he had such cinema in mind when he later suggested the possibility of earlier time-images. Next, possible proto-time-images will be identified in Robert Wiene’s *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920), Paul Wegener’s *The Golem* (1920), and Friedrich Murnau’s *Nosferatu* (1922) as well as his later film *Faust* (1926). In short, it will be advanced that each of these four films houses a prototype of one of the four crystal states of the time-image, mentioned by Deleuze in *Cinema 2*. However, understandably, such proto-time-images cannot be considered in isolation from the thematic orientation of the films in which they occur, which include, respectively, the terrifying tyranny of men who play God, recourse to chthonic forces via occult practices, the frightening encroachment by nefarious supernatural powers upon a protestant bourgeois domain, and the rejection of faith in Christianity. And it will be argued that thematization of such aspects is important, because they situate the films not only

against the backdrop of the ‘any-space-whatever’ of post-World War One Germany, but also against the backdrop of an earlier (and more profoundly disorientating) ‘any-space-whatever’ – namely that which derived from the ‘death of God’ in the late 19th century. Finally, the relevance for contemporary film theory of such a reappraisal of the history of the crystalline regime will be considered. This will be done via an examination of Friedrich Nietzsche’s proclamation of the ‘death of God’ in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, along with his allusion to the transformation of subjectivity made possible by this event, in relation to the three orders of time advanced by Deleuze in his *Difference and Repetition*.

Organic and crystalline regimes

In *Cinema 2*, Deleuze makes the distinction between the *organic* regime of the movement-image on the one hand, and the *crystalline* regime of the time-image on the other hand. In terms of this distinction, the organic regime has four defining features. Firstly, it represents things that exist independently of the film (for example, houses, forests, mountains, rivers, etcetera). Secondly, it is orientated around the linkages – causal, logical, etcetera – that connect such things. Thirdly, it is dependent on (traditional) cultural sensory-motor schemata to lend coherence to its cinematic narratives. And fourthly, its focus falls on events that are possible, historically speaking. In contrast, the crystalline regime differs from the organic regime point for point. Firstly, it represents things that neither exist independently of the film (for example, characters’ memories, dreams, interpretations, etcetera), nor exist as something immutable within the film – insofar as they can be dissolved, changed or contradicted as the film proceeds. Secondly, it is orientated around virtual linkages, and their linkage, in turn, with actual phenomena from which they are indissociable, with the consequence that narrative patterns become highly unstable, fluid and protean. Thirdly, it is dependent on the disintegration of (traditional) cultural sensory-motor schemata, because their dissolution gives rise to opsigns and sonsigns,⁷ which comprise the backdrop against which direct time-images emerge. And fourthly, its focus falls less on what is possible, and more on what is *impossible*; in other words, co-existent realities that are incompatible with one another but nevertheless indissociable. This occurs in cinema that thematizes how – in terms of Bergson’s schema of time⁸ – while certain truths/events of the past cannot but continue to comprise the condition of the possibility of certain truths/events of the present, they are nevertheless, for some or other reason, negated or rendered redundant by the latter (Deleuze 2005: 122-127).⁹

As such, a good metaphor for the organic regime might be a window, which affords the viewer a vision of a world that, although beyond their immediate locality, is still recognizable as a possible domain of existence. Moreover, in this domain, existence is governed by relatively stable sensory-motor schemata and causal/logical linkages, so that effective action – in relation to independently existing phenomena – remains a given. In contrast, a good metaphor for the crystalline regime – one which Deleuze himself employs in his discussion of its dynamics – is that of a mirror; a mirror in which the characters of a film are observed concomitantly losing and finding themselves.¹⁰ Accordingly, this virtual mirror contains all the reflections of a past that always remains contemporaneous with an actual passing present – the passing of which flows into the mirror interminably. Consequently, in such cinema, the viewer does not always encounter actual – or even possible – domains of existence, nor can they rest assured that events will follow either a causal/logical pattern or the imperatives of any sensory-motor schemata. More importantly, such cinema concerns not the transformation of the world through effective action, but rather the transformation of the characters’ (and, for that matter, the viewer’s) subjectivity.

This transformation occurs through an encounter with direct time-images and the emergence of the associated insight into the constant, dynamic constitution of the individual – as a point of interface between a constantly deepening virtual past and a perpetually passing actual present.

In this regard, Deleuze advances the importance of crystals of time, in which the ever widening circuits of the organic regime – which sought to represent the world – are rejected, and “the smallest circuit that functions as internal limit for all the others” is pursued, namely the “point of indiscernibility [or]...the coalescence of the actual image and the virtual image” (Deleuze 2005: 66-67). Such “exchange or indiscernibility...follow each other in three ways in the crystalline circuit: the actual and the virtual[;]...the limpid and the opaque; the seed and the environment” (Deleuze 2005: 69). To simplify things: the performance of any actual activity is only afforded through a coexistent virtual double of the experience. On the one hand, this virtual double comprises the gateway through which the actual present rushes into the repository of the virtual past, and contributes to its constant deepening. On the other hand, this virtual double also constitutes the intercessor through which, from out of the depths of the virtual past, the relevant memories become limpid (at the expense of others that become opaque) in order to pass into the actual present – as virtual seeds which will crystallize the actual environment, by responding to its requirements. Moreover, as such crystallization gives rise in turn to new requirements, so the process of such actual/virtual interface reoccurs, in perpetuity.

Yet, such a perfectly balanced, reciprocal exchange between the actual and the virtual is the exception rather than the rule. This is because, while we seldom encounter simple actual situations to which we can respond, we all too often encounter the virtual responses of others, which comprise mirrors – narrative, visual, rhetorical, etcetera – in which we simultaneously lose and find ourselves. Indeed, when a perfectly balanced, reciprocal exchange between the actual and the virtual is achieved, it is usually so extraordinary that it often becomes the stuff of legends. Arguably, the most common of these today – presumably because of the popularization of Buddhism in recent years – concern the quasi-mythical masters of Zen. These figures, because of their consummate meditative skill and long years of ascetic practice, are believed capable of addressing the requirements of any actual situation with exactly the right virtual measure, and in a way that recognizes but does not fall prey to the virtual mirrors of others.¹¹ In this regard, while books such as Eugen Herrigel’s *Zen in the Art of Archery* precipitated popular Western interest in the ‘mysticism’ of such balanced actual/virtual exchange, works like Robert M. Pirsig’s *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* followed and announced the universality of such experience, along with its modern applicability. In recent years, moreover, this relative trickle of texts has developed into a raging torrent, within which the Zen of *everything* – from golf to guitar playing, and from parenting to stand-up comedy¹² – has become the latest cash cow to be exhaustively milked by the marketing machines of consumerism. However, it would be an exaggeration to say that the widespread contemporary fascination with Zen is solely the consequence of effective advertising campaigns. Although such campaigns have no doubt played their part in engendering such fascination, it is also possible that it derives significantly from the powerful allure of the idea of a balanced exchange between the actual and the virtual. This idea remains attractive because, as Deleuze points out via his discussion of the four crystal states of the time-image in *Cinema 2*, a profoundly unbalanced exchange is more characteristic of the human condition.

As Deleuze intimates, in relation to the time-images reflected in the films of Max Ophüls, Jean Renoir, Luchino Visconti and Federico Fellini, the actual/virtual interface can range in speed, respectively, from (1) proximal stasis because of the domination of the actual by the virtual, through either (2) sudden/partial or (3) gradual/systemic destabilization of virtual hegemony, to (4) rapid creative interplay between the actual and the virtual.

To begin with, in Ophüls's films, one encounters virtual mirrors that are so encompassing that they dominate the actual/virtual interface, and force the actual to become submerged in the virtual, through enclosing the actual too tightly within an all-embracing virtual scope. When this occurs, the actual can no longer present the virtual with a series of challenges, because the power of the virtual is such that it remains blind to the nuances of such challenges, and responds to them only formulaically – as though all possible answers were given in their entirety in advance.¹³ The greatest manifestation of such an actual/virtual arrangement, and the most troubling because of its consequences, is of course political fanaticism. In terms of this, the dictates of a past-orientated virtual (meta-)narrative are blindly deferred to, in a way that eclipses rather than addresses the nuanced requirements of any actual situation at hand. Historically, on a national level, such an actual/virtual arrangement became dominant in Germany and Italy during the late 1930s and was instrumental in precipitating the Second World War, which was articulated as a 'righteous' reclamation of Aryan heritage and Roman glory, respectively.¹⁴ Thus, it is perhaps entirely fitting that, after discussing the incomprehension and corresponding paralysis within the 'any-space-whatever' that followed the war, which was succinctly reflected in Italian neorealism, Deleuze advances the films of Ophüls as the first of the four crystal states of the time-image. This first crystal state, which is the product of intensified ontological introspection against the backdrop of the opsigns and sonsigns of Italian neorealism, provides a highly salient imagistic thematization of the actual/virtual dynamic that makes possible the great tragedy of political fanaticism – and for that matter, even the smallest private obsession. Accordingly, "Ophüls's images are perfect crystals...Crystalline perfection lets no outside subsist: there is no outside of the mirror or the film set, but only an obverse where the characters who disappear or die go, abandoned by life which thrusts itself back into the film set" (Deleuze 2005: 80-81). This is clearly the case in Ophüls's *La Ronde* (1950), the narrative of which revolves around the fleeting sexual encounters of an array of characters, all of them orchestrated by the *meneur de jeu* (Anton Walbrook). This character, not found in Arthur Schnitzler's *Reigen* (1903), the play on which the film is based, both directs the actors that surround him – as though he is operating outside of the narrative – while simultaneously constituting an additional character *within* the narrative, namely the all-comprehending narrator who addresses the audience directly. As such, because he advises the actors how to play their roles while playing a role himself, there are no actual wings into which the actors can escape from the virtual hegemony of the narrative. On the contrary, it is precisely when they begin to approximate such an escape that they encounter the *meneur de jeu*, who directs them back to centre-stage. Accordingly, "the actual image and the virtual image coexist and crystallize; they enter into a circuit which brings us constantly back from one to the other; they form one and the same 'scene' where the characters belong to the real and yet play a role" (Deleuze 2005: 80-81). Similarly, this submersion of the actual in the virtual comprises the most salient theme of *Le Plaisir* (1952), Ophüls's cinematic articulation of three short stories by Guy de Maupassant, namely *The Mask*, *Madame Tellier's Establishment*, and *The Model*. Firstly, in *The Mask*, an old man, Ambroise (Jean Galland), is dominated by the memories of his glamorous youth to such an extent that they compel him to mimic them. To this end, he dons a rubber mask that disguises him as a young man, and attends a popular ballroom, where he dances exuberantly with young women, until his age undermines his ambitions and he collapses from exhaustion. At this point, a doctor (Claude Dauphin) is obliged to skilfully remove the mask adhered to Ambroise's face, and to escort the semi-delirious man back home to his aged wife, Denise (Gaby Morlay). Yet, although she thanks the doctor for his trouble, she also explains that her husband is incapable of resisting the power of the virtual past, with the consequence that, upon his recovery, he will again don the mask and dance at some or other ballroom until he collapses. Moreover, she expresses concern that his persistent inability to free himself from his memories will ultimately kill him, because of the physical

strain it places upon his heart. The doctor, realizing there is little he can do, departs, leaving the man to his fate. In short, while the adherence of the mask to the old man's face constitutes a metaphor for the coalescence of the virtual and the actual, the doctor's resignation intimates the insurmountable power of the virtual mirror that holds the old man captive. In turn, this theme of virtual captivity is continued in the second tale, namely *Madame Tellier's Establishment*, which concerns a bordello in a Normandy port, run by Julia Tellier (Madeleine Renaud). On the one hand, the respect the men extend to Madame Tellier and the prostitutes who work for her derives from the service her establishment provides them, namely the opportunity to discard the concerns and responsibilities of their professions and families, and to once again experience the freedom and sensuality of their increasingly distant youth. On the other hand, the prostitutes find themselves uncomfortable *without* the attentions of the men, because the latter provide them not only with income, but also with psychological security. This is because their age and tenderness recall paternal figures who either exited the lives of the young women at some earlier point, or from whom they have become distanced over time, emotionally or geographically. In this regard, the overarching power of the virtual past emerges when Madame Tellier closes the bordello for one night to attend – along with all her employees – the first holy communion of her niece in the country. While the men's actualization of their virtual pasts is thereby temporarily denied by the departure of the women, the women's actualization of their virtual pasts becomes analogously problematized by the absence of the men. Consequently, while the men become increasingly frustrated, irritated and irrational because of their attachment to virtual pasts they can no longer actualize, the women for the same reason experience anxiety and emotional distress in the country. In particular, in their case, such disquiet persists until the substitute paternal presence of God, conjured up by the ritual of communion in Church, brings overwhelming relief that reduces them to tears, and impels them to hasten home after the service, to resume their occupation – much to the relief of their patrons. Yet, it is not only the distant virtual past that can dominate the actual present, because the recent virtual past can prove no less seductive and disempowering, as is communicated through the third tale, namely *The Model*. This concerns the alternating inability of two lovers, the artist Jean Summer (Daniel Gélin) and the model Joséphine (Simone Simon), to excise themselves from the virtual mirror provided by the other, in which they find themselves lost and held captive. To begin with, Jean is captivated by the beauty of Joséphine when he encounters her at a studio, a captivation that increases when she begins to model for him and to inspire his work, leading to its success. However, after reaching a creative plateau through her, Jean becomes increasingly frustrated with their relationship, while Joséphine now finds herself captive of all the virtual images he has produced of her, because they have powerfully elevated her social status and enhanced her self-esteem. Unable to let him go, she locks him in at home with her, an action which results in a terrible domestic dispute. During their confrontation, her frustration at her inability to escape the virtual mirror in which she is caught manifests itself clearly, first, in her destruction of a painting Jean had made of her, and second, in her shattering of the mirrors that line the wall of their room, in which she encountered yet another virtual image of herself in association with Jean. However, although Jean collaborates with her in this and effects the complete destruction of all the actual mirrors in the room, their destruction does not lead to her liberation, because the virtual mirror to which the actual mirrors allude remains intact and inviolable, and continues to hold her captive. Exasperated, she later throws herself from his apartment window, breaking her legs and paralyzing herself for life. At this point, Jean once again finds himself held captive within a virtual mirror, insofar as her paralysis comprises a virtual reflection of his past selfishness and callousness. Haunted by this virtual past he remains with her out of guilt, for the rest of his life. In many ways, in Ophüls's following film, *The Earrings of Madame de...* (1953), both distant and recent pasts combine to inform the tragic narrative, insofar as an array of competing virtual mirrors – for which the

multi-faceted diamonds of the earrings constitute a metaphor – vie with each other for hegemony, and ultimately destroy the characters of a love triangle. In short, the earrings are not only linked to the distant past of Comtesse Louise (Danielle Darrieux), insofar as they were a wedding gift from her husband, General André (Charles Boyer); in addition, her secret sale of them to pay off her clothing/jewellery debts also reflects her captivation within a more recent virtual mirror, namely her infatuation with her own beauty. In turn, while the General's secret repurchase of them serves to protect his family name from scandal, and thereby indicates the power that the virtual mirror of his social status has over him, his presentation of them to his mistress, Lola (Lia Di Leo), also reflects his captivation within a more recent virtual mirror, namely the confirmation of his power provided by her affections. Through her subsequent sale of the earrings to pay off a gambling debt – a consequence of her own captivation within the virtual mirror provided by the casino – they land in the hands of Baron Fabrizio (Vittorio De Sica), who finds himself incapable of resisting any object of beauty. This inability leads him not only to purchase the earrings, but also to become lost within the virtual mirror provided by Comtesse Louise, to whom he gives the earrings and with whom he embarks on a love affair – an affair that leads to his murder at the hands of General André and the concomitant death of Comtesse Louise. In effect, all three main characters are lost through their constant deference to virtual mirrors that are too encompassing, and which hold them too powerfully, such that in the narrative “there is only a vertigo, an oscillation” (Deleuze 2005: 82) and, in effect, proximal stasis. Arguably, the proximal stasis of such oscillation is communicated most powerfully through Ophüls's *Lola Montés* (1955), in the narrative of which the previous sexual exploits of Lola Montés (Martine Carol) are played out nightly as a circus attraction, with Lola as the star of the show. As such, her present is only ever a reflection of her past – a past that is repetitively mirrored in her present, in perpetuity.

In contrast, in the films of Renoir and Visconti, there occurs, respectively, a sudden/partial and gradual/systemic destabilization of virtual hegemony. That is, in Renoir's films, the dominance of virtual mirrors – such as those found in Ophüls's films – becomes problematized through the introduction of a ‘depth of field.’ This presents the virtual mirror with such broad actuality that *something*, no matter how small, escapes reflection within its confines, and thereby opens up a crack in its hegemony. As Deleuze explains, “in Renoir, the crystal is never pure and perfect; it has a failing, a point of flight, a ‘flaw.’ It is always cracked. And...something is going to slip away in the background, in depth, through the...crack” (Deleuze 2005: 82).¹⁵ Because of this, there is a progression of sorts from Ophüls's films to those of Renoir, insofar as the latter do not simply provide a salient imagistic thematization of the actual/virtual dynamic that makes political fanaticism and personal obsession possible. Rather, they go further by visually thematizing the first tentative step that leads toward the undoing of such an actual/virtual dynamic, and, by implication, to the dissolution of such virtual hegemony. Arguably, such ‘depth of field’ is both thematic and formal in Renoir's early films. For example, in *Partie de Campagne* (1936), although the virtual hegemony of bourgeois *mores* evidently demarcates the present and canalizes the future of Henriette (Sylvia Bataille), insofar as her arranged marriage to Anatole (Paul Temps) occurs, and their uneventful life together continues for years, their relationship always remains tepid in comparison with her fleeting love affair with Henri (Georges Saint-Saens). This brief meeting in the countryside, around which the bulk of the narrative of the film is centred, remains the moment in her history that such bourgeois *mores* can neither excise nor eclipse, and her periodic remembrance of it affords her a lifelong escape route from the mediocrity of her relationship with Anatole; an escape into the realm of emotion and desire. Similarly, in the *Grand Illusion* (1937), the French officers Marechal (Jean Gabin) and Rosenthal (Marcel Dalio) become subject to the virtual hegemony of German nationalism after their capture during the

First World War – a hegemony which is not only militaristic in orientation but also historical and cultural, insofar as they are transferred to prisons progressively deeper within the German interior. However, through a concatenation of unforeseen events, chance encounters, and personal predispositions, all of which betray the limitations of such virtual hegemony, they eventually manage a narrow escape to Switzerland. At a formal level, such limitations are emphasized through the deep focus of the final shot, where some German soldiers watch their prey escape over the mountainous border into the neutral neighbouring country – a border too vast to ever police with great efficacy. Because of this, Deleuze advances that a certain degree of playfulness exists in Renoir's films, a playfulness that derives from the spaciousness afforded by the crack in the crystal. Accordingly, "everything happens as if the circuit served to try out roles...until the right one were found, the one with which we escape to enter a clarified reality" (Deleuze 2005: 83). This is very much the case in *The Rules of the Game* (1939), in which those who accept the playfulness of relationships win, while those who contravene this 'rule' – through becoming captivated by the virtual hegemony of one lover – lose and must pay a price that varies from dismissal to death. In this regard, on the one hand, the Marquis Robert de la Cheyniest (Marcel Dalio), at whose La Colinière estate the narrative plays out, is a winner because he maintains the requisite distance from both his wife Christine (Nora Grégor) and his mistress Geneviève de Marras (Mila Parély). On the other hand, Marceau (Julian Carette), Schumacher (Gaston Modot), André Jurieux (Roland Toutain), are all losers within the context of the narrative, because of their inability to practice sufficient circumspection in their respective love relationships; in effect, for their inability to find and adopt a role through which they can both love and maintain their freedom. That is, while Marceau and Schumacher are dismissed from service by the Marquis, because of their inability to temper their desire and jealousy, respectively, André is accidentally shot and killed when his obsession with (and suspicion of) the Marquis's wife Christine leads him outside of the chateau at night. Therefore, rather than submissiveness to, and inadvertent complicity with, any virtual mirror, in Renoir's films one finds an actual experimental and revolutionary orientation, which grows steadily and seeks ultimately to flee successfully from virtual hegemony. As Deleuze puts it, in Renoir's films the most important "question [is:]...where does life begin? Time in the crystal is differentiated into two movements, but one of them takes charge of the future and freedom, provided that it leaves the crystal" (Deleuze 2005: 85). This is very salient in *The River* (1951), the narrative of which unfolds alongside a river in Bengal, India, and concerns the relationship between three young girls, Harriet (Patricia Walters), Valerie (Adrienne Corri) and Melanie (Radha), all of whom fall in *and out of* love with new arrival, Captain John (Thomas Breen). Not only do the girls discover 'life' and grow to maturity, through finding pathways that lead them out of their temporary captivity within the virtual hegemony of Captain John – pathways that are a combination of their own initiative and the ultimate departure of the Captain. In addition, Captain John also discovers 'life' beyond the virtual hegemony of the war through which he both lost a leg and gained acclaim for heroism – a virtual hegemony from which he seeks to escape by coming to India, and which continues to haunt him on the banks of the river, until freedom from it allows him to return home to America. Indeed, the river itself is not only the 'lifeblood' of all the people of the town in which the narrative is set, but also demarcates the limits of any virtual hegemony, insofar as the continual renewal and endless flow of the river erodes the power of the past to hold anyone captive for too long. This is neatly illustrated when Valerie and her family overcome the virtual hegemony of sorrow caused by the death of her young brother, Bogie (Richard Foster), from a cobra bite. That is, such overcoming reflects the flow of time through the river, and ultimately allows the family to embrace the emergence of new life, when Valerie's mother (Nora Swinburne) later gives birth to a girl. Similarly, albeit on a lighter note, the narratives of both *The Golden Coach* (1952) and *French Cancan* (1952) thematize success in the wake of the

sudden/partial destabilization of virtual hegemony. In the case of the former, set in a remote town in South America in the 18th century, the actress Camilla (Anna Magnani) ultimately frees herself from her infatuation with the social prestige that derived from her ownership of a golden coach – purchased originally by Viceroy Ferdinand (Duncan Lamont) and given to her as a token of love – which enables her to donate the much-coveted vehicle to the Church. In the case of the latter, which depicts the birth of the famous Moulin Rouge, it is the young Cancan dancer Nini's (Françoise Arnoul's) final ability to free herself from the virtual hegemony of both her boyfriend Paulo (Franco Pastorino), and her boss Henri Danglard (Jean Gabin), which leads to the success of the show, and indeed to the consequent genesis of this landmark of French culture. That is, while, on the one hand, Paulo's conservatism threatened to inhibit her career, insofar as he considered her dancing disreputable, on the other hand, her infatuation with Henri also stood to limit her potential, insofar as it rendered her fragile and immature. Thus, in all the narratives of these films by Renoir, freedom and triumph are facilitated via an exit made possible through the sudden/partial destabilization of virtual hegemony.

In Visconti's films, the dominance of virtual mirrors is also problematized; however, in this case, it occurs through the introduction of 'decay' as a motif¹⁶ – decay that facilitates the gradual/systemic destabilization of virtual hegemony.¹⁷ According to Deleuze, this decay emerges most saliently in Visconti's films in relation to "the aristocratic world of the rich," the anachronistic discourses and idiosyncratic preoccupations of which render it "a synthetic crystal...outside history and nature, [and] outside divine creation" (Deleuze 2005: 91).¹⁸ That is, while in *Ludwig* (1972), the character of King Ludwig II (Helmut Berger) is distanced from the world by his profound aestheticism – which causes him to squander his material wealth supporting Wagner (Trevor Howard) and building palaces – in *The Leopard* (1963), Prince Fabrizio Corbero of Salina (Burt Lancaster) remains detached from the contemporary world of politics out of allegiance to the *mores* of the old nobility. Similarly, in *Death in Venice* (1971), the character of Gustav von Aschenbach (Dirk Bogarde) is unable to fulfil his audience's demand for specious musical enjoyment, because of his fidelity to the pursuit of artistic truth via a rigorously modern style of composition.¹⁹ Yet, despite their beauty and grace, not only are "these crystalline environments...inseparable from a process of decomposition which eats away at them from within." In addition, such decomposition is often simultaneously accelerated through the new constellations of power that form through history, and which "are not interested in penetrating the secret laws of the old world, but aim to make it disappear" (Deleuze 2005: 91-92). That is, in *Ludwig*, the rotting of Ludwig's teeth coincides not only with the onset of madness in his younger brother, Prince Otto (John Moulder-Brown), but also with the renewed aggression of Prussia, which threatens to drag Ludwig's kingdom of Bavaria either into war or into submissive alliance. In *The Leopard*, the profound and irremediable decay of the old world of the aristocracy becomes evident not only through the mystery illness that begins to plague Prince Fabrizio Corbero toward the end of the narrative, and which causes him to reflect on his approaching death – along with the decomposition of his noble world – through the medium of an oil painting that depicts the last moments of an old and sick nobleman. In addition, it is also powerfully communicated from the outset of the film, when the Catholic devotions of the Prince and his family are shattered by the discovery of a dead soldier in the orchard of their estate; a fatality of the fighting caused by the arrival of Giuseppe Garibaldi's troops, who bring with them liberal and progressive ideas. Similarly, in *Death in Venice*, the cholera that steadily debilitates Gustav von Aschenbach is contemporaneous with the presence of the young boy Tadzio (Björn Andrésen) with whom he becomes infatuated; a relationship which ultimately reveals to him the utter pointlessness of his previous high-minded elision of all sensuality from his music.²⁰ Therefore, the tragedy of Visconti's films derives from the inability of the main characters to

intuit the new dynamics and power of such encroaching history in time, with the consequence that, although they do ultimately realize what might have saved them, always this “revelation... arrives too late” (Deleuze 2005: 93). In *Ludwig*, the character of Ludwig only realizes how his excesses have alienated him from his people *after* he is declared insane and forced to abdicate – at which point he loses the requisite power to make amends. In *The Leopard*, Prince Fabrizio Corberio only realizes the ethical hollowness of the nobility surrounding him when he is too old and too ill either to escape from their ambit, or to change his world through political involvement. Indeed, the Prince’s realization of this is rendered all the more poignant through his final statement that there is *no* salvation for him apart from birth in a different time; an admission that for him it is *de facto* too late. Similarly, in *Death in Venice*, Gustav von Aschenbach has his suspicions of cholera in Venice confirmed only after he has become so infatuated with Tadzio that he cannot leave for the safety of his home country, and instead finds himself compelled to stay – and die – on the beach, mesmerized by the young boy.²¹ So, although the proverbial *coup de grâce* may arrive suddenly for the ‘aristocratic’ world in question, such a blow is only ever the culmination of a long, slow process of decomposition, involving the gradual/systemic destabilization of the virtual hegemony that initially dominated the subjectivity of the ‘noble’ characters in these films by Visconti.

Finally, Fellini’s films are characterized by rapid creative interplay between the actual and the virtual; that is, there is none of the virtual hegemony that one encounters in Ophüls’s films, and hence also an absence of the preoccupation with escaping from, or exploring the decline of, such hegemony, characteristic of Renoir’s and Visconti’s films, respectively. Rather, in Fellini’s films, “the crystal [is] caught in its formation and growth, related to the ‘seeds’ which make it up...[and] which incorporate...the environment and force it to crystallize” (Deleuze 2005: 85-86). Arguably, this is most apparent in Fellini’s films *Roma* (1972) and *Amarcord* (1973). In effect, the narratives of both of these films concern finding oneself, one day in the present, remembering how one *used* to re-member the past, in ways that transformed the world around one, and ultimately led to one finding oneself, one day in the present, remembering how one *used* to re-member the past, in a manner that continues to be just as transformative.²² That is, what one remembers of such (childhood) re-membering is as imperfect as such (childhood) re-membering of an earlier past was; yet, the virtual seeds that emerge cause a crystallization of the actual environment of the present, no less than they did the actual environment of one’s distant childhood. As such, in Fellini’s films, “the question is no longer that of knowing what comes out of the crystal and how, but, on the contrary, how to get into it. For each entrance is itself a crystalline seed, a component element” (Deleuze 2005: 86).²³ Two scenes from *Roma* and *Amarcord*, respectively, which Deleuze himself refers to (Deleuze 2005: 86, 89), provide further clarification of this dynamic. In *Roma*, the crossing of the Rubicon river (or rather stream) by the school boys and their teacher is a memory *of* childhood re-membering of Julius Caesar’s approach to Rome in 49 BCE. Such childhood re-membering of the historical event was imprecise and largely an excuse for fun; yet, it nevertheless transformed the actual environment, insofar as teacher and students alike took off their shoes and playfully marched through the water. Similarly, the memory *of* such childhood re-membering is imprecise and conflated with a host of other memories, which together make up the narrative of *Roma*; yet, it nevertheless transforms the actual environment of the present, insofar as it comprises part of the answer to the pressing question: What is Rome? In turn, in *Amarcord*, the dancing and musical miming of the school boys in the falling snow outside the big hotel, after the holiday season has ended, is a memory *of* childhood re-membering of the dance steps of the past season, and the playing of musical instruments that had accompanied them. Once more, such childhood re-membering of the activities of the recent summer was imprecise and largely for the purposes of amusement;

yet, it nevertheless transformed the actual environment, both through the patterns the boys traced in the snow as they danced, and via the falling snow that their bodies concomitantly deflected. Similarly, the memory *of* such childhood re-remembering is imprecise and conflated with a host of other memories, which together make up the narrative of *Amarcord*; yet, it nevertheless transforms the actual environment of the present, insofar as it comprises part of the answer to the pressing question: Who am I? In this regard, both the questions ‘What is Rome?’ and ‘Who am I?’ are *actual* questions, as it were, which emerge only through growing maturity, an appreciation of mortality, and the related desire to comprehend more fully what it means to have inhabited such an historic space, and what it means to have lived. In this way, in Fellini’s films, “the two aspects, the present that passes and goes to death, [and] the past which is preserved and retains the seed of life, repeatedly interfere and cut into each other” (Deleuze 2005: 89), with the consequence that the actual/virtual interface is characterized by rapid creative interplay.²⁴

The possibility of proto-time-images in German expressionist cinema

As already mentioned, only three years after completing his two-volume work on film, Deleuze, in his Preface to the English edition of *Cinema 2*, made a radically self-reflexive suggestion that time-images might exist in pre-World War Two cinema. That is, he maintained that “we must look in pre-war cinema, and even in silent cinema, for the workings of a very pure time-image which has always been breaking through...or encompassing the movement-image” (Deleuze 1988b: xiii). To be sure, this call for a critical reappraisal of the historical schema of film transformation that he had recently advanced in *Cinema 1* and *Cinema 2*, was neither uncharacteristic of Deleuze’s work in general, nor unexpected in relation to these two volumes in particular. That is, not only did Deleuze always assert that the concepts he created and employed were only ever works in progress; utilized when they proved useful but discarded as soon as their redundancy became evident.²⁵ In addition, already in *Cinema 1*, he posed the question of whether the crisis of the action-image – out of which time-images emerged – should be construed as something new, or whether it should be regarded as “the constant state of cinema” (Deleuze 2004: 209). Understandably, if the five features of this crisis are construed as constant, nagging elements of critical and self-reflexive cinema – from the very inception of film until the present²⁶ – then there would indeed be no reason to dismiss the possibility that prototype time-images could have been precipitated before the advent of Italian neorealism. Moreover, although this was to remain more or less implicit until Deleuze’s above mentioned statement in the Preface to the English edition of *Cinema 2*, there is arguably sufficient evidence to suggest that, throughout both *Cinema 1* and *Cinema 2*, German expressionist films of the 1920s were the cinematic domain Deleuze suspected as the home of such proto-time-images.

To begin with, in Chapter Three of *Cinema 1*, Deleuze juxtaposes the organic montage composition of the American school, the dialectical montage composition of the Soviet school, the quantitative montage composition of the pre-war French school, and the intensive montage composition of the German expressionist school (Deleuze 2004: 30-58). However, the one important difference between the first three and the last is that, while the first three emerged within strong economies and were fuelled by corresponding optimism, the last was a product of a shattered economy and deep pessimism. That is, the American school was situated within the positive context of growing capitalist wealth,²⁷ the Soviet school was informed by the positivity of communist idealism,²⁸ and the French school was intertwined with a positive appraisal of industrial speed and movement.²⁹ In contrast, after the First World War, Germany was plunged into a nightmare of poverty, political unrest, hyperinflation, unemployment, and serious food

shortages,³⁰ and it was out of such dire socio-cultural and politic-economic conditions that the intensive montage composition of the German expressionist school emerged. Deleuze acknowledges as much when he asserts that “a dark swampy life into which everything plunges, whether chopped up by shadows or plunged into mists[.]...*the non-organic life of things*, a frightful life, which is oblivious to the wisdom and limits of the organism, is the first principle of Expressionism” (Deleuze 2004: 52). Moreover, Deleuze comments on the power of the shadows within German expressionism to fragment reality and render space indeterminate, or an ‘any-space-whatever’ (Deleuze 2004: 114-115), and he even situates German expressionism at one end of a continuum in this regard, while he places Italian neorealism at the other end. Admittedly, in terms of this, he advances the *formal* features of German expressionism as constitutive of a different type of ‘any-space-whatever’ to that found in Italian neorealism, which drew its inspiration from the ‘any-space-whatever’ of post-World War Two Italy – involving shattered cities and broken communities – and the related crisis of the action image (Deleuze 2004: 124). Yet, these formal differences notwithstanding, as is evident from his above discussion of the first principle of expressionism, the inspiration for and the metaphorical value of the ‘any-space-whatever’ of German expressionism were not unlike those of the ‘any-space-whatever’ of Italian neorealism. That is, both types of film derived from and communicated the concerns of a devastated world, pervaded by trauma, incomprehension and deep anxiety over the future. In fact, Deleuze himself indicates that the distance between these two forms of cinema, as far as the issue of ‘any-space-whatever’ is concerned, is actually very small. This occurs when he takes great care to dissociate and render distinct certain moments of dense opacity in Visconti – which according to him denote “the twilight of the gods” – from the shadows of German expressionism (Deleuze 2005: 92), because the latter, which similarly express a loss of faith in divine providence, could easily be confused with the former.

This close relationship between Italian neorealist cinema and German expressionist film is arguably compounded even further by the level of introspection reflected in the latter, which reaches such intensity that proto-time-images become possible. That is, the level of introspection which Italian neorealism precipitated in later films, and which, in turn, made time-images possible in cinema after World War Two, is already contained – telescoped as it were – in certain German expressionist films, which reflect both such introspection and, following this, proto-time-images. To be sure, these proto-time-images lack the sophistication of the four-fold crystalline regime found in the films of Ophüls, Renoir, Visconti and Fellini, discussed earlier. Nevertheless, in their own way, proto-time-images in Robert Wiene’s *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920), Paul Wegener’s *The Golem* (1920), and Friedrich Murnau’s *Nosferatu* (1922) as well as his later film *Faust* (1926), can similarly be understood as tentative early reflections upon the actual/virtual interface. As will be discussed, they too range, respectively, from (1) proximal stasis because of the domination of the actual by the virtual, through (2) sudden/partial and (3) gradual/systemic destabilization of virtual hegemony, to (4) rapid creative interplay between the actual and the virtual.³¹

A proto-crystalline regime in German expressionist cinema of the 1920s

In Robert Wiene’s *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920), it is through the coalescence of the two stories that comprise the narrative that a proto-time-image emerges. The first story concerns the character of Dr. Caligari (Werner Krauss) and his somnambulist, Cesare (Conrad Veidt), whom he keeps under hypnosis and employs as a murderer; in short, he exhibits Cesare as a psychic at fairs, where he prophesies the imminent death of those he will soon murder. In

this regard, two characters, Francis (Friedrich Feher) and Alan (Han Heinrich von Twardowski), visit the fair in Holstenwall and Alan – after having his fate pronounced by Cesare – is murdered by the latter that very evening. However, after some initial confusion, Caligari's designs are revealed, in particular through the death of Cesare, after the somnambulist attempted to abduct Francis's fiancé, Jane (Lil Dagover). It also emerges that Caligari is the director of the local insane asylum, and the story ends with his incarceration in his own institution. The very brief framing story, though, which precedes and succeeds the first story, renders the latter the account of a madman – namely Francis – who is in an insane asylum, where he both narrates the first story to an older inmate and populates it with characters drawn from those around them. Most importantly, Francis derives the characters of his fiancé Jane and Cesare from fellow inmates, and Caligari from the director of the asylum, who, upon learning more about Francis's delusion, has him restrained and promises to cure him. As Siegfried Kracauer indicates, a great deal of tension was caused by Robert Wiene's decision to include the framing story.³² Yet, arguably, the hypothetical economic rationale behind his choice is less important than the hyalosign or crystal-image it produced. In this regard, the framing story is crucial, because through it, the first story or Francis's delusion emerges as neither a recollection sequence/flashback (mnemosign) – because it has never actually taken place – nor a dream sequence (onirosign), because Francis *consciously* narrates it to a fellow inmate, and for that matter, to the audience. As Deleuze points out in *Cinema 2*, both mnemosigns and onirosigns comprise circuits related to the past, in terms of which one searches the past – either pointedly (mnemosigns) or diffusely (onirosigns) – in a way that is clearly discernible from the actual present, which precipitated such recollection or allowed for such dreaming in the first place (Deleuze 2005: 46-49, 54-56). In contrast, in Francis's delusion there is coalescence of the actual and the virtual, insofar as the actual people with whom he is incarcerated, and the actual director who cares for them, have all become indiscernible from the characters in the virtual mirror of the narrative he has produced, and within which he has become lost. Indeed, this point is powerfully endorsed in the second part of the framing story, just before the denouement of the film. Here, Francis points out another inmate who bears a resemblance to Cesare, but identifies him *as* Cesare, and even warns the older inmate – who up until this point has been listening to his tale – not to ask Cesare about his future, because if he did Cesare would prophesy his death and then murder him. Similarly, he approaches a female inmate who resembles his fiancé Jane, and pleads with her to *finally* marry him. This woman, seated on a wooden chair that resembles a throne, and wearing a tiara, gazes off into the distance and laments the fact that, because she is royalty, she is not free to pursue such a relationship with him. Her response is deeply poignant because, through it, one realizes that she – no less than Francis – is trapped in a delusion that derives from the coalescence of the actual and the virtual. That is, the actual people with whom she is incarcerated, along with the various actual apparatuses at hand, have all become indiscernible from the characters and accoutrements of a virtual mirror, the narrative of which she has produced, and in which she has become lost. The consequent proto-time-image within Wiene's *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* bears an uncanny resemblance to the time-images in Ophüls's films, and Deleuze's description of the latter could easily serve as an account of the former. To clarify, Deleuze's statement concerning Ophüls's films, namely that in them “the actual image and the virtual image coexist and crystallize; they...form one and the same ‘scene’ where the characters belong to the real and yet play a role” (Deleuze 2005: 80-81), neatly sums up the effect of the framing story in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. Similarly, the fact that in the framing story Francis encounters Cesare in the asylum *after* the latter has already died in terms of the narrative of the first story, adumbrates what Deleuze advanced about Ophüls's crystal images. In short, he maintained that they “are perfect...[and] let...no outside subsist: there is no outside of the mirror or the film set, but only an obverse where the characters who disappear or die go, abandoned by life which thrusts itself

back into the film set” (Deleuze 2005: 80-81). Indeed, in this regard, the character of Caligari in many ways prefigures the *meneur de jeu* in Ophüls’s *La Ronde*. Just as the *meneur de jeu* both directs the actors that surround him – as though he is operating outside of the narrative – while simultaneously constituting an additional character *within* the narrative, so too Caligari both directs Francis within the asylum, while simultaneously constituting the central character around which the narrative of Francis’s delusions is orientated. As such, Caligari as director, notwithstanding his apparent professionalism and kindness, can never cure Francis, because he could only ever do so on the basis of his authority over Francis, which haunts the latter and drives him mad. Consequently, on account of the constant deference within the asylum to the all-encompassing virtual mirror of Caligari’s power, “there is only a vertigo, an oscillation” (Deleuze 2005: 82), and hence proximal stasis comparable to that found in Ophüls’s films.

In contrast, in Paul Wegener’s *The Golem* (1920), there occurs a sudden/partial destabilization of virtual hegemony through the introduction of something akin to a ‘depth of field.’ That is, like the ‘depth of field’ in Renoir’s films discussed earlier, it also presents the different virtual mirrors that dominate at different moments in the narrative, with such broad actuality that *something* escapes reflection, and thereby allows for a crack in their hegemony. In short, the narrative of *The Golem* concerns the various attempts by Rabbi Loew (Albert Steinrück) to save the Jews of the Prague ghetto from the misfortune foretold in the stars. Although this misfortune manifests itself in the decree of Emperor Luhois (Otto Gebhür) that the Jews be evicted from the ghetto, Rabbi Loew prepares for the negative event by constructing the Golem (Paul Wegener), and imbuing him with life, through a combination of secret rites and magical incantations performed under an auspicious constellation of stars. Subsequently, through impressing the emperor with his new creation, and through saving him and the members of his court from certain death, Rabbi Loew has the decree revoked, and thereby spares the Jews from homelessness. However, although he manages to wrest the ‘shem’ from the Golem’s chest, and thereby renders him inanimate again, before he can destroy the Golem – which he is obliged to do as the Golem has already begun to resist his authority – the power of the Golem is co-opted by Famulus (Ernst Deutsch), Rabbi Loew’s assistant. While the latter returns the ‘shem’ to the Golem’s chest and uses him to defeat his rival for the affections of Rabbi Loew’s daughter, Miriam (Lyda Salmonova), soon thereafter Famulus loses control of the Golem, who revolts against his authority, sets fire to the ghetto, and escapes its confines. Outside the main gate of the ghetto, however, the Golem encounters not only freedom, but also a group of ‘Aryan’ children at play, and is drawn toward them, only to have the ‘shem’ plucked from his chest by an inquisitive small girl (Loni Nest), which effectively leads to his demise. As such, what Deleuze explains about Renoir’s films, namely that their crystals are characterized by “a failing, a point of flight, a ‘flaw’ [or a]...crack,” through which something always slips away (Deleuze 2005: 82), comprises an apt description of the dynamics of the crystal operative in Wegener’s *The Golem*. In this regard, the virtual hegemony of, firstly, the emperor over the Jews of Prague, secondly, Rabbi Loew over Famulus, thirdly, Famulus over the Golem, and finally, the Golem over the ‘Aryan’ children, are all successively problematized. That is, firstly, the virtual hegemony of the emperor over the Jews of Prague, which derives from both secular and sacred history, becomes problematized by the ‘depth of field’ of the night sky. This is because the star constellations not only foretell of an impending calamity that will befall the Jews, and thereby forewarn Rabbi Loew so that he can prepare for it by creating the Golem, but also comprise the key through which the former gauges the auspicious moment during which to bring the Golem to life – a feat which leads to his ingratiation with the emperor. Accordingly, star constellations comprise the crack through which the emperor’s virtual hegemony is suddenly/partially destabilized, insofar as, through them, part of his power slips away into the hands of Rabbi Loew, who is thereby

able to wield sufficient influence over the emperor to have the decree for the Jews' eviction from the ghetto revoked. Yet, secondly, the virtual hegemony of Rabbi Loew over Famulus, which derives from his knowledge of magic and Jewish lore, becomes problematized by the 'depth of field' of Famulus's desire for Miriam. Although, to begin with, he unquestioningly does the bidding of Rabbi Loew, Famulus's desire later causes him to reject his servility and to pursue personal fulfilment, by returning the 'shem' – which Rabbi Loew had only just managed to remove – to the Golem's chest, in order to bring the Golem back to life to defeat his rival for Miriam's affections. Accordingly, Famulus's desire comprises the crack through which Rabbi Loew's virtual hegemony is suddenly/partially destabilized, insofar as, through it, part of his power slips away into the hands of Famulus, who succeeds in orchestrating the death of his rival. However, thirdly, the virtual hegemony of Famulus over the Golem, which derives from the earlier spell that gave the latter life, becomes problematized by the 'depth of field' of the Golem's growing personality. This empowers the Golem to override the limitations imposed upon him by the incantation and to pursue freedom; in this regard, after killing Famulus's rival, the Golem revolts against Famulus's authority by setting fire to the ghetto and breaking down the main gates. Accordingly, the Golem's growing personality comprises the crack through which Famulus's virtual hegemony is suddenly/partially destabilized, insofar as, through it, part of his power slips away into the hands of the Golem and allows him to effect his escape. Finally, the virtual hegemony of the Golem over the 'Aryan' children, which derives from the combination of his strength and newfound independence, becomes problematized by the 'depth of field' of an 'Aryan' child's inquisitiveness. That is, although the Golem takes an interest in a group of 'Aryan' children at play just outside the gates of the ghetto, and affectionately picks up one small girl, the inquisitiveness of the latter ultimately proves to be his undoing, insofar as it impels her to pull the 'shem' from his chest, which immediately robs him of life. Accordingly, the 'Aryan' girl's inquisitiveness comprises the crack through which the Golem's virtual hegemony is suddenly/partially destabilized, insofar as, through it, part of his power slips away into her hands, so that she is able to wield influence over him. Consequently, Deleuze's statement concerning Renoir's films, namely that within them "everything happens as if the circuit served to try out roles... until the right one were found...with which we escape to enter a clarified reality" (Deleuze 2005: 83), also emerges as a particularly apposite description of the rules governing the slippage of virtual hegemony within Wegener's *The Golem*. This is, of course, not to advance that the ultimate 'clarified reality' belongs to the virtual hegemony of the 'Aryan' children, although such an interpretation is possible.³³ In this regard, the representations of the children do seem to adumbrate the focus on German children in certain of Leni Riefenstahl's films,³⁴ and certain of the young 'Aryan' children of the 1920s did ultimately become the Nazi soldiers of the 1940s. However, if there is one thing that *The Golem* 'clarifies' about reality, it is that the wielding of virtual hegemony is only ever a transient exercise, destined to be lost through an irremediable 'depth of field' which surrounds it, and which contains cracks that suddenly/partially destabilize virtual hegemony, and cause power to slip into the hands of another. As such, even if one does choose to read the film as culminating in the virtual hegemony of the 'Aryan' children, it would be important to remember that their wielding of such power could only ever be a temporary arrangement – as history ultimately proved. This is not least because the question that plagues Renoir's films also plagues *The Golem*, namely the "question...[of:] where does life begin? Time in the crystal is differentiated into two movements, but one of them takes charge of the future and freedom, provided that it leaves the crystal" (Deleuze 2005: 85), via an exit made possible through the sudden/partial destabilization of virtual hegemony. And as discussed above, such exiting of the crystal remains something ultimately unavoidable.

In turn, in Friedrich Murnau's *Nosferatu* (1922), there occurs a gradual/systemic

destabilization of virtual hegemony through the introduction of ‘decay’ as a motif, which in many ways performs a similar function within the narrative to the motif of decay in Visconti’s films, discussed earlier. The narrative of *Nosferatu*, which borrows heavily from Bram Stoker’s novel *Dracula*,³⁵ is very well-known; in short, it involves the character of Hutter (Gustav Von Wangenheim) travelling to Transylvania to finalize the sale of a large property – opposite his own in Misburg – to one Count Orlock (Max Schreck), who unbeknown to him is Nosferatu the vampire. Nosferatu then not only proceeds to feed off Hutter, but also, after encountering a photograph of Hutter’s wife, Ellen (Greta Schroeder), becomes obsessed with her and leaves for Misburg, to take up residence in the house opposite hers. Meanwhile, as Hutter races home with, among other things, a small book he discovered at an inn in Transylvania that details not only what Nosferatu is, but also how he can be destroyed, Nosferatu travels by ship to the same destination. During the voyage, however, he feeds off the crew and kills them all, so that the arrival of his ship at Misburg is understood as heralding the outbreak of plague, to which the town responds in strategic disciplinary fashion,³⁶ under the watchful medico-scientific gaze of Professor Bulwer (John Gottowt). Soon afterward, the character of Knock (Alexander Granach) – a local devotee of Nosferatu – is apprehended after escaping from the insane asylum, while Ellen reads in Hutter’s book how to destroy Nosferatu. Accordingly, she then lures Nosferatu to her and keeps him feeding on her until dawn, at which point he is caught in the rays of the morning sun and disintegrates. As such, the motif of decay in Murnau’s *Nosferatu* functions in a manner akin to the motif of decay in Visconti’s films, insofar as decomposition plagues “the aristocratic world” of Count Orlock, which is rendered “a synthetic crystal...outside history and nature, [and] outside divine creation” (Deleuze 2005: 91), by the anachronistic discourses and idiosyncratic preoccupations which characterize it. Indeed, if one takes into account the relationship between Bram Stoker’s novel *Dracula* and Murnau’s film *Nosferatu* – as one is obliged to do – the appropriateness of Deleuze’s above description to the latter is further augmented by the historical figure upon whom Stoker based his narrative, namely Vlad Dracula. In short, Vlad Dracula, who ruled Wallachia, Romania, in the latter half of the 15th century, and who regularly meted out the punishment of impalement not only to captured Turkish soldiers, but also to his own Christian subjects for the slightest moral infraction,³⁷ emerges as a tragic aristocratic figure not unlike the characters found in Visconti’s films. Like them, he became lost in a virtual mirror – one composed of extreme, unforgiving, puritanical moralism and a penchant for excessive cruelty – which, although it afforded him power in the short term, in the long term progressively alienated him from others, and led to both the death of his loved ones and his own brutal demise. Related to this, although the character of Nosferatu does not readily command sympathy in a manner akin to the main characters in Visconti’s films, such as the youthful King Ludwig II, he can nevertheless be understood as the *final* product of a tragic fall into a hegemonic virtual mirror, which alienates him from the world. In this regard, Nosferatu might be said to prefigure the older King Ludwig II – replete with rotten teeth and an insatiable appetite for young life³⁸ – while at the same time comprising a stranger and more terrifying synthesis of man and devil, through his preternatural status as ‘undead.’ Yet, while Nosferatu for centuries defied decomposition through consuming the lifeblood of the living, such that he came to haunt their dreams, the corollary of this is that he was also always haunted by the prospect of decomposition; and like in Visconti’s films, this prospect progressively becomes a reality through the changes ushered in by modernity. This is because it involves not only the “process of decomposition which eats away at...[him] from within,” and which he keeps at bay through consuming the blood of others. In addition, it also entails the decomposition of his virtual world, brought about by the new constellations of power that form through history, and which “are not interested in penetrating the secret laws of the old world, but aim to make it disappear” (Deleuze 2005: 91-92). That is, the year 1838, in which the narrative of Murnau’s

Nosferatu unfolds, is within the period of the great democratic movements and reactionary responses in Europe, in relation to which violence erupted repeatedly,³⁹ before social reform was begun.⁴⁰ Moreover, this period was also the era of capitalism, photography, increasing literacy, the disciplinary organization of society, and the reification of scientific medicine, the combination of which sounded the death knell for *Nosferatu*'s aristocratic traditions. In short, it is into the rapidly changing world of the 19th century – profoundly hostile to all that he represents – that Count Orlock/*Nosferatu* is precipitated by economic necessity, insofar as he is forced to integrate his wealth into the capitalist economy to avoid its steady diminishment. As mentioned, this takes the form of his investment in the property opposite Hutter's home in Misburg. However, through his contact with Hutter, he is also drawn into the virtual world of the latter, via the photograph of Ellen,⁴¹ which erodes his own ancient virtual world that for centuries has spiralled in on itself, and leads toward his obsession with her, and his related journey to Misburg. Ultimately, his demise in Misburg is, for two reasons, inexorable; while, unlike in the feudal era, the disciplinary organization of society now allows for a formidable, collective response to the kind of threat he poses,⁴² industrial printing and increasing literacy levels have also led to the wide availability of booklets that describe his nature *and* vulnerabilities. That is, while through the former, Knock, his devotee in Misburg, is apprehended after his escape from the insane asylum,⁴³ it is the booklet in the hands of Ellen that ultimately leads to his demise, in the manner already described. Indeed, even if he were to have survived her strategy, he would no doubt have been captured at some point and analyzed as an anomaly of nature, under the auspices of 19th century medical science. Arguably, this much is indicated by the ambiguous disappointment of Professor Bulwer at the door of Ellen's room, after she has died and after *Nosferatu* has disintegrated – disappointment that might derive just as easily from the loss of a young woman's life, as from the loss of a fascinating prey in the form of *Nosferatu*. As such, just as the main characters in Visconti's films fail to intuit in time the new dynamics and power of encroaching history, such that, although they do ultimately realize what might have saved them, this "revelation...arrives too late" (Deleuze 2005: 93), so too, *Nosferatu* succumbs because of the changes of modernity. Like Visconti's characters, though, his failure in this regard is quite understandable, because the encroaching history to which he falls prey is largely the product of slow, almost imperceptible alterations within the social and technological fabric of life, and it is ultimately these that gradually/systemically destabilize his virtual hegemony.

Finally, in Friedrich Murnau's *Faust* (1926) – as in Fellini's films – the actual/virtual interface is characterized by rapid creative interplay. Consequently, there is none of the virtual hegemony that one encounters in Wiene's *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, and also a corresponding absence of the preoccupation with escaping from, and exploring the decline of, such hegemony, found in Wegener's *The Golem* and Murnau's *Nosferatu*, respectively. In short, in the narrative of *Faust*, the character of Faust (Gösta Ekman) is caught up in a wager between the Archangel Gabriel (Werner Fuetterer) and Mephisto (Emil Jannings), in terms of which, if the latter can obtain the allegiance of Faust, he will win the world. In this regard, he is given the freedom to alternately torment and tempt Faust, whose moral righteousness Gabriel has faith in, and he begins by augmenting the plague in Faust's town, until the old man loses his faith in God's mercy, burns his books (including his Bible), and summons Mephisto through the black arts. Mephisto then not only grants him the power to heal the sick, but also offers to return to him his youth, which Faust progressively embraces, until the detrimental effects of his choice become apparent to him. These emerge most saliently through the ensuing poverty and ostracism of the young woman, Gretchen (Camilla Horn), with whom Faust produces a child and who he then abandons, and the related death through exposure of their child, which leads in turn to Gretchen being sentenced to death. At this point, Faust not only rejects his youth, but also (as

an old man once more) joins Gretchen as she is being burned at the stake. As such, because his final choice and act involved deep repentance and love, Gabriel wins the wager with the devil and the world is spared from damnation. Yet, although the story of *Faust* is relatively simple, arguably, its cinematic representation by Murnau involves a number of complex features that effectively comprise proto-time-images, which portend those found in Fellini's films. These are evident, firstly, in the scenes that deal with Faust's attainment of youth, and secondly, in those which concern the suffering of Gretchen. That is, firstly, when Mephisto offers an aged Faust his youth again, this offer occurs through a series of reflections – in liquid and a mirror – in which Faust's old countenance is transformed into his erstwhile youthful face. These are of course not actual reflections, but rather virtual reflections, insofar as the features of his old face, which he actually sees in the mirror, are virtually complemented and smoothed over, as it were, by the remembered features of his youthful face. For this to occur, Faust is obliged to dive into the virtual past, so to speak, and to seek and make limpid the features of the young face he encountered in mirrors long ago, while simultaneously rendering opaque the very recent memory of the old face he has just seen. Moreover, what becomes limpid in this way is neither a dream (onirosign) – because Faust is awake – nor simply a recollection (mnemosign), insofar as it advances beyond the latter by becoming a virtual seed that ultimately crystallizes the environment of Faust's body. This crystallization occurs when Mephisto covers the aged Faust with a sheet – thereby rendering him opaque – and then removes the sheet to render limpid the young Faust. Yet, importantly, the old Faust is not thereby erased; on the contrary, he is only rendered opaque, because he continues to exist in virtual form in a small mirror, which Mephisto places in his pocket for future use. In this regard, later, when the young Faust has begun to enjoy life, Mephisto renders the virtual reflection of the old Faust limpid again, as a threatening spectre above the young Faust's head. Here it comprises the virtual seed that crystallizes the environment of the relationship between Mephisto and the young Faust, insofar as the latter, in order to keep his youth in perpetuity, pledges his allegiance to the devil. However, although Faust thereby obtains a new lease on life and the opportunity for power, pleasure, and love, ultimately, these achievements are indissociable from an array of negative consequences. And these haunt Faust to the point where he, again, dives into the virtual past, to render opaque the memory of his young face while simultaneously making limpid his old countenance; as before, the latter is not merely a recollection (mnemosign), because it advances beyond that by becoming a virtual seed that crystallizes the environment of Faust's body. In the last instance, this allows Faust the opportunity – as an old man once more – to join Gretchen at the stake. As such, what Deleuze asserts about Fellini's films, namely that within them “the crystal [is] caught in its formation and growth, related to the ‘seeds’ which make it up [and]...which incorporate...the environment and force it to crystallize” (Deleuze 2005: 85-86), is also true of Murnau's *Faust*, at least in a rudimentary way. Secondly, after everyone has rejected Gretchen for her relationship with Faust – a relationship which resulted in the death of her mother and brother – she finds herself in a state of utter destitution, after giving birth to the child she conceived with Faust. At this point, alone and starving in the snow at Christmastime, she finds herself remembering how she *used* to re-member the past, in ways that transformed the world around her, and ultimately led to her finding herself, in the present, remembering how she *used* to re-member the past, in a manner that continues to be just as transformative. In this regard, in relation to Gretchen's suffering – like in Fellini's films – “the question is no longer that of knowing what comes out of the crystal...but...how to get into it[, because]...each entrance is itself a crystalline seed, a component element” (Deleuze 2005: 86). That is, Gretchen experiences a memory *of* childhood re-membering of the birth of Jesus, which under the auspices of Christian pageantry involved, among other things, the recollection of a beautiful cradle, radiantly illuminated. In this regard, the spectral nature of the cradle that appears before her in a snowdrift indicates that what she

remembers of such (childhood) re-membering is as imperfect as such (childhood) re-membering of an earlier past was. After all, the conditions of the birth of the historical figure of Jesus were very different to their later representation in terms of Christian pageantry. Nevertheless, just as such childhood re-membering – however imperfect – transformed the world around her, through lending progressive impetus to the Christian religious discourse, in terms of which she was later condemned for her relationship with Faust and forced into her current predicament, so too, her memory *of* such childhood re-membering transforms her current world further. This is because she places her baby within the snowdrift before her (which she misapprehends as the above mentioned cradle) where the child dies, and for this crime she is subsequently arrested and condemned to death. As such, the virtual seed that emerges from such remembering causes a crystallization of Gretchen's actual environment of the present – to the detriment of her child and herself – no less than other virtual seeds crystallized the actual environment of her distant childhood, in ways that ultimately prepared for her such a fate. Thus, in a manner akin to Fellini's films, in Murnau's *Faust*, "the two aspects, the present that passes and goes to death, [and] the past which is preserved and retains the seed of life, repeatedly interfere and cut into each other" (Deleuze 2005: 89). The result of this is that the actual/virtual interface is characterized by rapid creative interplay.

Time-images, the 'death of God' and contemporary film theory

Arguably, together, the above four German expressionist films adumbrate the four-fold reflection upon the actual/virtual interface that occurs later in the films of Ophüls, Renoir, Visconti and Fellini. However, in this regard, Wiene's *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, Wegener's *The Golem*, and Murnau's *Nosferatu* and *Faust*, nevertheless also entail more of a *repetition* than a point of genesis; and what they repeat are the consequences for subjectivity of the 'death of God' first advanced by Friedrich Nietzsche in his book *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

To be sure, Wiene's, Wegener's and Murnau's respective films are not devoid of originality; on the contrary, the 'any-space-whatever' of post-World War One Germany, which comprised the historical backdrop against which these films emerged, did inflect certain thematic and formal aspects of these films in very particular ways. It is precisely for this reason that they are readily recognized *tout court* as films that exemplify German expressionist cinema. However, there exists an additional thematic element within all four films that indicates another trauma – one prior to the 'any-space-whatever' of post-World War One Germany – as a genetic point; namely the 'death of God' announced in the late 19th century. That is, while Wiene's *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* concerns the terrifying tyranny of men who play God, and while Wegener's *The Golem* concerns recourse to chthonic forces via occult practices – because of a loss of faith in God – Murnau's *Nosferatu* and his later film *Faust* concern, respectively, the frightening encroachment by nefarious supernatural powers upon a protestant bourgeois domain, and the rejection of faith in Christianity. Admittedly, this is not very surprising; after all, the post-World War One context was not the first occasion on which the idols of Europe had fallen, opening up an 'any-space-whatever' in which their erstwhile dominance could be disinterestedly reflected upon. Less than half a century before, Nietzsche's proclamation of the 'death of God' in his *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*,⁴⁴ was neither the product of idiosyncratic fantasy nor the result of a proclivity for blasphemy, but rather a fair appraisal of both the orientation of modern society around the secular and prosaic, and its concomitant rejection of the sacred and sublime. And while it fell to others, most notably Michel Foucault, to elaborate later on the details of the historical transition to modern banality,⁴⁵ it was Nietzsche himself who responded

immediately to the related ‘any-space-whatever’ that opened up in the late 19th century, not with incomprehension and paralysis, but with radical innovation. In this regard, “Of the Three Metamorphoses” in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, which details “how the spirit shall become a camel, and the camel a lion, and the lion at last a child” (Nietzsche 1969: 54), is arguably the most succinct expression of the ontological transformation thematized in Nietzsche’s *oeuvre*. Moreover, that this transformation preoccupied Nietzsche personally in his later years is solidly evinced by his reiteration of its dynamics not only in his Preface to *Human, All-Too-Human*,⁴⁶ written in 1886 after his completion of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* the previous year, but also in the Foreword to his last book *Ecce Homo: How One Becomes What One Is*, written in 1888. While even the subtitle of the latter work points toward such ontological transformation, from the outset of the text Nietzsche advances his enmity toward any ‘idols’ or ideals which stand to block such an unfolding of possibility. According to him, “reality has been deprived of its value, its meaning, its veracity to the same degree as an ideal world has been fabricated...The *lie* of the ideal has hitherto been the curse on reality [and]...through it mankind itself has become mendacious and false down to its deepest instincts” (Nietzsche 2004: 4). The importance of Nietzsche’s enmity should not be underestimated, because it is the very spark that ignites the fire of problematization, which is the first step that sets the wheel of the great ontological transformation in motion.⁴⁷ In terms of the “three metamorphoses of the spirit” detailed in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, the first metamorphosis involves the camel as the “weight-bearing spirit in which dwell respect and awe...who takes upon itself all the...heaviest things.” However, “in the loneliest desert the second metamorphosis occurs: the spirit...becomes a lion, it wants to capture freedom and be lord in its own desert,” and in the interest of doing so, it negates its duties and asserts instead its independence. Yet, while the lion *is* able “to create freedom for itself,” what lies beyond its capacity is the ability “to create new values.” For this, the third metamorphosis of the lion into the child is still required; “the child [who] is innocence and forgetfulness, a new beginning,...a sacred Yes” (Nietzsche 1969: 54-55).

Deleuze, in *Difference and Repetition*, elaborates upon the importance of the above schema of ontological transformation in relation to the new ‘third’ order of time that opened up in the 19th century. According to him, the 17th century philosophy of Descartes, although it is construed as the birth of modern philosophy, still operated in terms of a first order of time, insofar as time – as something in which all exists and unfolds – was guaranteed by God. Thus, the stability and integrity of the self continued to be confirmed as it had been throughout the Middle Ages, because the soul comprised the enduring aspect of the self, the immortality of which lent an underlying constancy to identity. As such, through “reducing the Cogito to an instant and entrusting time to the operation of continuous creation carried out by God,” Descartes’s philosophy constituted a manifestation of the ‘weight-bearing spirit’ of the *camel*. This was because the virtual hegemony of the Christian Church and its associated first order of time were shouldered by, and inscribed within, this new philosophy, rather than contested and rejected. However, in the 18th century philosophy of Kant, a second order of time became operative, which derived from “the speculative death of God [and]...the fracture of the I” – this fracture was the consequence of such death because in its wake the identity of the I could no longer be guaranteed. As Deleuze explains, this fracture was temporarily addressed by Kant through “a new form of identity – namely, active synthetic identity,” in terms of which sensibility – comprising of the intuitions of time and space – in conjunction with the judging faculty of understanding, produced new synthetic knowledge for a relatively stable identity.⁴⁸ Yet, while this constituted, at least to some extent, a manifestation of the ‘spirit of freedom’ of the *lion*, a third order of time was always implicit in this second order of time. In terms of this third order, “time itself unfolds...instead of things unfolding within it,” and it is in relation to such unfolding time that the self emerges

as a constant ‘work in progress,’ as it were. Under the auspices of the ‘spirit of creation’ of the *child*, it becomes a perpetually transforming dynamic, the transformations of which are the very means by which time passes; time measured not chronologically but in series orientated around ‘overcoming.’ That is, in terms of this third order of time, when confronted with an obstacle, “there is always a time at which the imagined act [of overcoming it] is supposed ‘too big for me.’” However, when this is followed by “a becoming-equal to the act” there occurs the concomitant transformation of the self *and* the passing of time, because, what the self becomes equal to through performing the act is necessarily unequal to what the self was before, when it still supposed the act to be too great to accomplish. And it is for this reason that the self, after accomplishing the act, becomes something radically new and finds “a common descendent in the man without name, without family, without qualities,...the already-Overman” (Deleuze 1994: 86-90). As such, the dynamics of this third order of time *repeat* the ‘history of time’ as it proceeded from the first through the second to the third order. That is, the dynamic creativity of the third order of time, as communicated via the three metamorphoses of the spirit in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, is predicated not on a forgetting of the first and second orders of time, but rather on a constant remembering of them – and indeed on their *repetitive* compression and articulation as a series in relation to any act of ‘overcoming.’ And it is this *repetitive* critical reflection on the ‘history of time’ that makes a radically indeterminable future possible.

Deleuze also says of this ‘already-Overman’ that his “scattered members gravitate around the sublime image” of the passing of time through ‘overcoming’ (Deleuze 1994: 90). Arguably, in cinematic terms, the earliest forms of such a ‘sublime image’ occur in the time-images of the proto-crystalline regime reflected in the films of Wiene, Wegener and Murnau. Firstly, there occurred a reflection upon the ‘weight-bearing spirit’ of the first order of time in Wiene’s *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, via a reflection of proximal stasis that derives from the domination of the actual by the virtual. Secondly, there occurred a reflection upon the ‘spirit of freedom’ of the second order of time, via a reflection of both the sudden/partial destabilization of virtual hegemony in Wegener’s *The Golem*, and the gradual/systemic destabilization of virtual hegemony in Murnau’s *Nosferatu*. Thirdly, there occurred a reflection upon the ‘spirit of creation’ of the third order of time, via a reflection of the rapid creative interplay between the actual and the virtual in Murnau’s later film *Faust*. In short, while the ‘death of God’ in the late 19th century opened up a new third order of time, these German expressionist films of the early 20th century provided concordant imagistic thematization of the new way in which such time passes, via the four states of a proto-crystalline regime.

The significance for contemporary film theory of identifying such a proto-crystalline regime now emerges, along with the reason for Deleuze’s insistence on the importance of such an investigation. That is, the crystalline regime found in Ophüls’s, Renoir’s, Visconti’s and Fellini’s respective films involves reflections on time that are synonymous with those of the proto-crystalline regime found in the films of Wiene, Wegener and Murnau – reflections on time which are strongly Nietzschean in orientation. Yet, via Deleuze’s *Cinema 1* and *Cinema 2*, the crystalline regime is not only situated historically in films that emerged *after* the Second World War, but also positioned theoretically as the inadvertent result of the opsigns and sonsigns of Italian neorealism. Consequently, insofar as the crystalline regime is thereby rendered the confluent product of unfortunate international conflict and post-World War Two directorial aestheticism, its profoundly philosophical orientation – and indeed its intimate connection with philosophical developments from the 17th to the 19th century – is obscured. This obfuscation, in turn, has led to limited emphasis being placed on time-images in contemporary film theory, insofar as they have become construed as merely another technique of ‘critical’ cinema or yet

another feature of ‘art’ cinema, rather than as *the* cinematic image of *our time*. However, the identification of a proto-crystalline regime, situated historically in the first rather than the second half of the 20th century, and positioned theoretically as a *repetition* of Nietzschean reflection on the ‘history of time,’ allows the critical value of the time-image for contemporary film theory to become conspicuous. In short, through the identification of such a proto-crystalline regime, the role of time-images as an imagistic thematization of the third order of time that emerged in the 19th century, becomes clear. Moreover, in clarifying the relationship between Nietzschean reflection on time, on the one hand, and the later crystalline regime found in Ophüls’s, Renoir’s, Visconti’s and Fellini’s respective films, on the other hand, the proto-crystalline regime also prepares the way for the time-images of the 21st century. That is, through allowing for a fuller appreciation of the philosophical inheritance contained within the time-image, the identification of a proto-crystalline regime stands to engender the continuous development of this critical legacy through cinematic reflection on time; reflection that is crucial if a radically indeterminable future is to remain possible.

Notes

- 1 Pervasive doubt in the viability of any new and ambitious designs, which offered alternatives to such shattered traditional cultural sensory-motor schemata, also derived from the fact that it was precisely the new and ambitious designs of demagogues like Hitler and Mussolini which had led to the horror of World War Two and the misery of its aftermath.
- 2 Deleuze advances analogous problematization as “the constant state of cinema,” insofar as, “at all times[,]...the cinema’s potentialities...have caused directors to wish to limit or even to suppress the unity of action, to undo the action, the drama, the plot or the story and to carry further an ambition with which literature was already permeated” (Deleuze 2004: 209-210).
- 3 With regard to cinema, Deleuze describes the new image that emerged as “dispersive” rather than “globalizing or synthetic,” in which “linkages, connections, or liaisons are deliberately weak,” and in which “the sensory-motor action or situation has been replaced by the stroll, the voyage and the continual return journey.” Moreover, these images are not only composed of “anonymous clichés,” but also orientated around a belief “in a powerful concerted organisation...which has found the way to make [such] clichés circulate” (Deleuze 2004: 211-214).
- 4 In *Cinema 2* Deleuze advances that “a pure... optical or sound situation becomes established in what we might call ‘any-space-whatever’ [Here,]...sensory-motor connections are now valid only by virtue of the upsets that affect, loosen, unbalance, or uncouple them: the crisis of the action-image...[T]he optical and sound situation is, therefore, neither an index nor a synsign [but]...a new breed of signs, *opsigns* and *sonsigns*” (Deleuze 2005: 5-6).
- 5 Deleuze’s idea of the time-image is indissociable from his reading of Henri Bergson’s philosophy. In terms of this, “the past and the present do not denote two successive moments, but two elements which co-exist: One is the present, which does not cease to pass, and the other is the past, which does not cease to be but through which all presents pass...Not only does the past coexist with the present that has been, but...it is *all* our past, which coexists with each present” (Deleuze 1988a: 59).
- 6 It is interesting to note that the four crystal states of the time-image that Deleuze points to in *Cinema 2*, in many ways correspond with the four signs that Deleuze proffers as a hermeneutic key through which the dynamics of Marcel Proust’s *In Search of Lost Time* may be approached – namely “worldly signs,... deceptive signs of love, sensuous material signs, and...the essential signs of art” (Deleuze 2000: 14). In order to help clarify the dynamics of the four crystal states of the time image, this correspondence will briefly be commented upon during the course of the article.
- 7 See note 4.

- 8 See note 5.
- 9 For example, at a macro level, the ‘problem’ of *impossibility* often plagues new political regimes, when they seek to negate a previous political regime, while simultaneously inhabiting the politico-legal structures – and on occasion even the buildings – of the former administration. Similarly, at a micro level, a private experience of impossibility indicates self-transformation, insofar as, while the emergence of a new constellation of concerns may be experienced as incompatible with one’s previous concerns, such new concerns are always predicated upon their predecessors. That is, these predecessors comprise the condition of their possibility and – according to Bergson – do not pass but remain present, interminably.
- 10 “The circuit itself is an exchange: the mirror-image is virtual in relation to the actual character that the mirror catches, but it is actual in the mirror which now leaves the character with only a virtuality and pushes him back out-of-field” (Deleuze 2005: 68).
- 11 It must be stressed that what is being referred to here is not traditional Japanese Zen, but rather the modern, international, form of Zen, which emerged out of the 20th century meeting of Meiji period intellectuals with Western Buddhist enthusiasts. As Robert Sharf points out in “The Zen of Japanese Nationalism,” this modern, “iconoclastic and antinomian,” “ahistorical, transcultural [and]...popular conception of Zen is not only conceptually incoherent but also a woeful misreading of traditional Zen doctrine, altogether controverted by the lived contingencies of Zen monastic practice” (Sharf 1995: 107). Nevertheless, this form of Zen is increasingly being embraced around the world, and a possible reason for this is that it is understood as holding out the promise of a balanced, reciprocal exchange between the actual and the virtual; a balance otherwise so difficult to achieve.
- 12 See Parent, J. 2002. *Zen Golf*. New York: Random House; Peretz, J. 2003. *Zen and the Art of Guitar*. California: Alfred Publishing Company; Costello, J. & Haver, J. 2004. *Zen Parenting: The Art of Learning What You Already Know*. Maryland: Robins Lane Press; and Sankey, J. 1998. *Zen and the Art of Stand-up Comedy*. New York: Routledge.
- 13 See note 6. Such proximal stasis corresponds with the first of the four signs that Deleuze identifies in Proust’s text, namely the “worldly... empty signs” that indicate “time wasted.” In short, such virtual hegemony, “from the viewpoint of thought,...appears stupid. One does not think, and one does not act,...one [only] makes signs” (Deleuze 2000: 6, 14, 24), formulaically and unimaginatively.
- 14 In this regard, on the one hand, “the Nazi party and state...rall[ied] the German *Volk* around myths old and new...[in which t]he opposition of Aryan and Jew was thematized as essential. Inscribed in their nature from time immemorial, it could end only in Armageddon” (Lincoln 1999: 75). On the other hand, Italian “Fascist symbolism, as it developed in the 1920s, located the Roman legacy at its core and depended heavily upon *romanità* for its coherence,” or, the glorification and adoption of imagery, motifs and gestures that derived from ancient Rome, along with the obligation to continue the ‘civilizing’ mission of the latter (Stone 1999: 207, 208-220).
- 15 See note 6. Such sudden/partial destabilization of virtual hegemony through the introduction of a ‘depth of field’ corresponds with the second of the four signs that Deleuze identifies in Proust’s text, namely the “deceptive signs of love” that indicate “time lost.” In short, while “to love is to try to explicate, to develop these unknown worlds that remain enveloped within the beloved,” this endeavour is always doomed to fail through the ‘depth of field’ of the beloved. This is because in this ‘depth of field’ there are always other worlds that either remain undetected or inspire jealousy when glimpsed, because they involve a “*possible world* in which others might be or are preferred” (Deleuze 2000: 7-8, 14, 24).
- 16 There is good reason to consider this as progression. Renoir was Visconti’s mentor (Düttman 2009: 2; Steimatsky 2004: 205-206), and Visconti himself readily acknowledged the great influence of Renoir’s work on his own films; however, he also hinted that his own films contain something new. In this regard, he advanced, “Renoir had an enormous influence on me. One always learns from someone. One invents nothing. Or yes, one does invent, but one is enormously influenced...Renoir...taught me...and this brief contact with him was enough” (Visconti quoted in Durgnat 1974: 215).
- 17 See note 6. Such gradual/systemic destabilization of virtual hegemony through ‘decay’ corresponds with the third of the four

- signs that Deleuze identifies in Proust's text, namely the "sensuous material signs" that "afford us the means of regaining time" (Deleuze 2000: 14, 24). In this regard, at the end of Chapter One of Part One of *Swann's Way*, the memories of Combray that return via waves of recollection to the narrator – when he tastes the piece of madeleine – is a good case in point (Proust 2001: 48). Through it, the narrator discovers how the present, although lived outwardly in terms of a virtual socio-cultural mirror that informs the expectations of one's age, gender and class, is always susceptible to intermittent and unexpected erosion when flooded by layers of the past. Such flooding occurs in response to a sensuous material sign, which brings "joy" that inspires "further...mental effort" that, in turn, allows "the sign's meaning [to]...appear.... Combray for the Madeleine" (Deleuze 2000: 12).
- 18 In many ways, this definition by Deleuze draws heavily on Visconti's *The Leopard* (1963); in particular, on the explanation of the 'separateness' of the world of the wealthy and its incomprehensibility to the lower classes, given by the character of Father Pirrone (Romolo Valli) to the peasants in a tavern. In this regard, while his status as priest allows him to play the role of hermeneutic mediator between the two strata of society, in effect, the definitive factors that he discusses comport with the four dynamics described by Deleuze almost point for point.
- 19 Indeed, even when Visconti orientates the narratives of his films around non-aristocratic characters, they too emerge as clinging obsessively to certain ideas or principles, which distance them from the world around them. In this regard, while in *Bellissima* (1951) the character of Maddalena Cecconi (Anna Magnani) cannot relinquish the idea that her daughter Maria (Tina Apicella) will become a film star, even though the child is still very immature, in *Rocco and His Brothers* (1960), the character of Rocco Parondi (Alain Delon) is unable to let go of the high moral principles he learned in his village in Lucania, even though they rapidly emerge as anachronisms in Milan.
- 20 Similarly, in *Bellissima*, Maddalena Cecconi steadily loses all of her limited financial means in an effort to prepare her daughter Maria for stardom, only to encounter the historical forces of prejudice and elitism in the laughter of the film director and his colleagues, when they view her daughter's screen test. In turn, in
- Rocco and His Brothers*, the integrity of Rocco's family is not only subject to internal decomposition though the increasing arrogance and cruel self-absorption of his brother Simone (Renato Salvatori), who rapes and eventually murders the character of Nadia (Annie Girardot) for her involvement with Rocco. In addition, its integrity is also steadily eroded from without by the financial difficulties of living in Milan, the conscription of Rocco, the pressures of the social elite with whom his brother Vincenzo (Spiros Focás) is involved, and the schemes of the criminal underworld.
- 21 Similarly, in *Bellissima*, Maddalena Cecconi only realizes the importance of letting her daughter Maria remain a happy child, once the possibility of such happiness has been destroyed by the bankruptcy of the family, brought about by Maddalena's expenditure on the gamble of her daughter's stardom. In turn, in *Rocco and His Brothers*, Rocco dreams of returning to his village in southern Italy only once such return has been rendered impossible, on account of his family's integration into the network of Milanese life.
- 22 See note 6. Such rapid creative interplay between the actual and the virtual corresponds with the fourth of the four signs that Deleuze identifies in Proust's text, namely the "essential signs of art" that "give us a time regained, an original absolute time that includes all the others." Although "the final revelation of 'time regained' is announced by a multiplication of [such] signs" at the end of *In Search of Lost Time* (Deleuze 2000: 11, 14, 24), arguably, we already encounter its adumbration in *Swann's Way*. In this regard, early in Chapter Two of Part One of *Swann's Way*, the narrator remembers how through books he used to re-member fictional worlds on Sunday afternoons in Combray, in ways that transformed the world around him, and gave birth to the very preoccupations that continue to inform his current search for lost time – a search which, moreover, *continues* to transform him. Indeed, the "crystalline succession" (Proust 2001: 86) to which the narrator refers at this point, may even comprise a possible origin of Deleuze's "crystalline regime" (Deleuze 2005: 122).
- 23 Elena Theodorakopoulos provides support for this through her wonderful description of Fellini's *Roma*, when she advances that in the film one encounters "the city's own fabric and history, Fellini's dreams and experiences of it, and its cinematic and spectacular past [via]...

- the complete absence of any linear or cohesive routes through the city... We never get a full grasp of the city... [r]ather it is a collection of fragments, or moments, in which, as in a dream, the protagonists move about freely” (Theodorakopoulos 2007: 355-361). Many of these features are refined further and articulated with greater complexity in Fellini’s following film *Amarcord*. “Amarcord – a word that, in the dialect of Fellini’s native Rimini, means ‘I remember’ – is rich with memory, desire for memory, memory of desire... In any event, the viewer recognizes the fundamental verity of the film: that memory is the only place toward which life heads certainly” (Cardullo 2008: 44).
- 24 In many ways, Fellini’s earlier films, *La Dolce Vita* (1960) and *8½* (1963) – which also involve rapid creative interplay between the actual and the virtual – prepared the way for *Roma* and *Amarcord*, albeit in each case through the medium of an identifiable character played by Marcello Mastroianni. That is, in contrast to the quasi-mystical, ‘free’ interplay between the present and the past in *Roma* and *Amarcord*, in *La Dolce Vita*, such interplay is partly anchored to the character of Marcello Rubini (Marcello Mastroianni). On the one hand, he is burdened by the monotonous imperatives of the *present*, which derive from his relationship with Emma (Yvonne Furneaux) and her expectations of him. On the other hand, he is drawn toward the profound sensual and aesthetic *history* of Rome – which both surrounds the members of the hedonistic social group he becomes involved with, and is re-membered, as it were, through their words and gestures. Torn between Emma and the latter group, he struggles to become a great writer; however, his endeavour to capture the essence of this history is undermined interminably because he is, effectively, an expression of the very history he tries to capture – a history that is always in constant reflective formation. In *8½*, such rapid creative interplay between the actual and the virtual is taken a step further, by being refined around the aesthetic ambitions and personal history of the director Guido Anselmi (Marcello Mastroianni). In short, the latter’s attempt to make a film is constantly interrupted by memories and the reappearance of acquaintances from the past, all of which deflect the orientation of his present project in either implicit or explicit ways. After the subsequent ‘free’ interplay of *Roma* and *Amarcord*, Fellini returned to the use of an anchoring character in films such as *City of Women* (1980), where the character of Snàporaz (Marcello Mastroianni) encounters the
- actualization – in the form of discursive compression – of the virtual history of discrimination against women. In short, he finds himself obliged to re-member and respond to this virtual history, because both his initial sexism and his subsequent disempowerment comprise important components of *its* continuous formation.
- 25 For Deleuze, “doing philosophy is [about] trying to invent or create concepts... which... express an event rather than an essence” (Deleuze 1980: 25), with the result that changing circumstances require a constant creation of new concepts. Thus, philosophy is not about “monitoring or reflecting another... discipline [because]... truth isn’t something already out there we have to discover, but has to be created in every domain... There’s no truth that doesn’t ‘falsify’ established ideas[; consequently,]... the production of truth involves a series of operations that amount to... a series of falsifications” (Deleuze 1985: 125-126), and this process is interminable.
- 26 See notes 2 and 3.
- 27 As Ross Collins points out, America “end[ed] up reaping huge economic benefit from the war[, which facilitated]... a historic shift in world power and influence from the Old World to the New” (Collins 2008: 67-85). Indeed, while “in the United States there was boom and prosperity, with the beginning of widespread ownership of cars and consumer durables,” in the years “from 1919 to 1929 [it also]... exported \$12.9 billion of capital... to Europe” (Maddison 1989: 52).
- 28 In the wake of the Russian Civil War, there occurred a progressive “consolidation of Soviet power” from 1924 onward (Lovell 2009: 81), and the associated new sense of focus and direction in the country had a marked effect on Soviet cinema. This is clearly evinced through the work of “Eisenstein and other Russian directors of the 1920s, who were ideologically committed to the revolutionary order” (Chapman 2005: 146).
- 29 Arguably, such cinematic focus was at least partly a consequence of the “industrial growth in the 1920s” that occurred within France, and which “was accompanied by large scale technical changes and by a reorganization of production methods which became more and more openly capitalistic” (Caron 1979: 257-258). See also Kemp, T. 1972. *The French Economy, 1913-39: The History of a Decline*.

New York: St. Martin's Press.

- 30 See Bessel, R. 2002. *Germany After the First World War*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; and Ritschl, A. 2005. "The Pity of Peace: Germany's Economy at War, 1914-1918 and Beyond." In: Broadberry, S. & Harrison, M. (eds.). 2005. *The Economics of World War I*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- 31 Arguably, this orientation was both contemporaneous and thematically consonant with certain aspects of German sociology, architectural theory and art. For example, in Georg Simmel's 1903 essay "The Metropolis and Mental Life," he similarly advances a crystalline regime, insofar as he distinguishes the depth of emotionality and historical association within the pre-urban life of the 17th century, from the 18th century rejection "of all...historical bonds in the state and in religion," and asserts that this comprised an important step toward the 19th century metropolis, and its related mental ills. In relation to the latter, he cites the new "money equivalence," along with its associated compensatory intellectualism, pervasive alienation and blasé attitude, as generating an historically shallow society, in which "all things lie on the same level." Within this new context, the penetration of memory into the past – in the manner described by Proust – becomes an increasingly difficult task, and hence an ever more rare occurrence (Simmel 1903: 51-54). Indeed, perhaps because of this rarity, it became all the more revered and the subject of architectural fantasy, particularly after World War One when, because of "the war-crippled economy...most architects had little option but to dream their designs." This situation gave rise to intensive experimentation, as evinced by, among others, "Wassily Luckhardt's drawings of gargantuan faceted monoliths meant to advance the religious unification of humanity" (Schulze 1996: 65-66). These "crystalline structures" comprised "moral beacons of a shining future" (Wise 1998: 12), insofar as they opposed the shallowness, complacency and apathy of the metropolis decried by Simmel. In short, Luckhardt "insisted that an essential element of architectural composition should be... movement," and he envisioned his buildings as freeing deep dynamic forces so that the unification of humanity would be achieved through a constant balancing of these moving energies – rather than via their arrival at a point of stasis (Szalapaj 2005: 12). It can scarcely be missed that Luckhardt's proposed 'Monument

of Labour' both reintroduces depth – albeit inversely – into a flattened landscape, and facilitates movement within such depth. Analogously, within art, the *Creative Forces* series of etchings by Wenzel Hablik, for example, entails a similar reintroduction of the density of time and the contemplation of the crystalline possibilities harboured therein. In this work, "the crystal is...a symbol of a unifying principle inherent in [not only] the inorganic but also the organic world" (Welter 2002: 160), and this principle is, arguably, *time*. That is, the time of the imagination and geological time meet in the crystal, because while the production of the latter through geothermal forces comprises the condition of the possibility of the former, the endless oneiric expansion of the former comprises the teleological fulfilment of the latter. In other words, our organic history is traced back into the deep history of the inorganic, while the inorganic contains within it evocative seeds that allow for the fulfilment of that history, through imagination. In short, for Hablik, "the study of natural phenomena, especially...crystals, for their intrinsic laws of form and structure would inspire new possibilities of expression" (Proudfoot 1994: 77). Consequently, because crystalline regimes such as these were operative in German sociology, architectural theory and art of the early 20th century, the contemporaneous presence of a thematically consonant crystalline regime within German expressionist cinema, is not at all surprising.

- 32 As Siegfried Kracauer explains in "From Caligari to Hitler," while the original story of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* was written by Hans Janowitz and Carl Mayer, Robert Wiene – as director – situated it within "a framing story which introduces Francis as a madman...Janowitz and Mayer...raged against the framing story [because]...it perverted...their intrinsic intentions. While the original story exposed the madness inherent in authority, Wiene's *Caligari* glorified authority." Yet, Wiene nevertheless followed through with his design, supposedly to avoid alienating the masses in a way that would jeopardize the economic viability of the film (Kracauer 1947: 186-188).

- 33 According to Omer Bartov, "What is most important to recognize about this early venture into cinematic stereotypes is the extent to which it reflected existing notions about Jews, further popularized them among ever-larger audiences, and provided models for their depiction that generations of filmmakers with very different goals and agendas have employed"

- (Bartov 2005: 3). Similarly, Lester Friedman maintains that the fact that Aryan children destroy the Golem is of comparable significance, as the other face of the same anti-Semitic coin; indeed, he suggests that “this Aryan sensibility is only slightly removed from overt anti-Semitism where...evil is more openly defined as Jewish and the cure more drastic” (Friedman 2004: 89).
- 34 In Leni Riefenstahl’s *Triumph of the Will* (1935), among some of her other Nazi propaganda films, “shots of Hitler are intercut with shots not only of enormous crowds but of individuals, especially children, laughing and smiling” (Devereaux 2006: 349). In effect, such children comprised symbols of innocence and racial purity, and constituted the embodiment of hope in a brighter Aryan future.
- 35 As Joshi points out, this involved more than mere cinematic allusion to the novel; as such, when “Murnau and Prana Films released *Nosferatu* in 1922, based on *Dracula* but without requesting permission from Stoker’s Estate[,]... Bram Stoker’s widow Florence Stoker won a copyright infringement suit against Murnau, and all copies of *Nosferatu* were ordered destroyed” (Joshi 2010: 93).
- 36 As Michel Foucault advances in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, the measures put in place from the late 17th century onward to combat the plague, which involved observation, supervision, division and recording, comprised “a compact model of the disciplinary mechanism.” In short, the humid chaos of the plague was met with a cold order of analysis, predicated on “a political dream of the... penetration of regulation into even the smallest details of everyday life.” This dream was progressively realized in the 18th and 19th century in “the formation of...disciplinary society” (Foucault 1991: 192-198, 209).
- 37 See Florescu, R. R. & McNally, R. T. 1989. *Dracula: Prince of Many Faces – His Life and Times*. Boston: Backbay Books; McNally, R. T. & Florescu, R. 1994. *In Search of Dracula: The History of Dracula and Vampires Completely Revised*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company; and Trow, M. J. 2004. *Vlad the Impaler: In Search of the Real Dracula*. Great Britain: J. H. Haynes & Co.
- 38 King Ludwig II’s growing abuse of his power to satisfy his homosexual desires is increasingly thematized in Visconti’s film *Ludwig*.
- 39 In short, “the Napoleonic conquest of Europe... completely dislocated the established order... The map was redrawn, the ancient royal families had lost their domains, and the people of Europe were openly demanding democratic reforms... Time and again the flag of rebellion was raised. In 1821, again in 1830, and yet again in 1848, the barricades were thrown up in Belgium, Germany, Poland, Austria, Hungary, Italy, Bohemia, Spain, Portugal, and especially in France” (Baradat 1994: 152-153).
- 40 Admittedly, “the revolution of 1848 may not have the same significance as those of 1789 or 1917, but its lasting repercussions belie the impression of its short-term failure. One of the major achievements of the revolution was the abolition of feudal rule in the countryside. In particular, most of the Hapsburg lands experienced a modernization of their agrarian constitution. As for Germany, it is now generally agreed that its political parties had their origins in the revolution” (Evans and Pogge van Strandmann 2002: 8).
- 41 Admittedly, Murnau appears to have taken some liberties with chronology here. As Mary Warren Marien points out in *Photography: A Cultural History*, Nicéphore Niépce, Henry Fox Talbot and Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre all contributed to the development of photography between 1826 and 1837 (Marien 2006: 9-13, 17-18); however “the official date for the start of photography is considered to be 1839.” This was because “the long exposure times required left the achievement of portraits... in the realm of the utopic” until at least the 1840s (Koetzle 2005: 7-9). Nevertheless, notwithstanding the unlikelihood of Hutter possessing a portrait photograph of his wife in 1838, the development of photography was well underway at this time, and this invention, moreover, was soon to have a radically democratic effect on images, as Walter Benjamin points out in “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” (Benjamin 1999: 212-216).
- 42 See note 36.
- 43 The asylum itself is an important feature of the disciplinary landscape; it was not only a domain of normalizing surveillance in which “everything was organized so that the madman would recognize himself in a world of judgment that enveloped him on all sides” (Foucault 1967: 214). In addition, it was also a site where “judiciary and psychiatry join[ed] hands” (Foucault 1977: 209) to effect the transformation of anomalous individuals into docile, disciplinary

subjects. Understandably, because he comprised even more of an anomaly than his disciple Knock, the incarceration of Nosferatu within some asylum would have been inevitable, had he escaped Ellen's trap.

- 44 In "Zarathustra's Prologue," Zarathustra, upon meeting with and departing from a devout old man, remarks to himself, "Could it be possible! This old saint has not yet heard in his forest that *God is dead!*" (Nietzsche 1969: 41).
- 45 See notes 36 and 43. For more on Nietzsche's influence on Foucault, see Kelly, M. G. E. 2009. *The Political Philosophy of Michel Foucault*. New York: Routledge; Healy, P. 2005. *Rationality, Hermeneutics and Dialogue: Toward a Viable Postfoundationalist Account of Rationality*. Hampshire: Ashgate; and Olssen, M. 1999. *Michel Foucault: Materialism and Education*. Westport: Bergin and Garvey.
- 46 Although the metaphors of the camel, lion and child do not feature explicitly in the Preface of *Human, All-Too-Human*, their trace is nevertheless palpable in Nietzsche's reflections on the "free spirit." Accordingly, these free spirits proceed beyond their constraints via "a violent, dangerous curiosity," and, after enduring "the desert of...experiment," finally emerge as capable of comprehending the answer "to the

riddle of [the great] emancipation" (Nietzsche 1886: 8-12); an answer that – like the "sacred Yes" of the child (Nietzsche 1969: 55) – contains no pessimism.

- 47 Foucault presents a succinct philosophical, rather than mythopoetic, description of this process in "Polemics, Politics, and Problematizations," when he advances that "thought is not what inhabits a certain conduct and gives it its meaning; rather, it is what allows one to step back from this way of acting or reacting, to present it to oneself as an object of thought and to question it as to its meaning, its conditions, and its goals. Thought is freedom in relation to what one does, the motion by which one detaches oneself from it, establishes it as an object, and reflects on it as a problem" (Foucault 1984: 117).
- 48 "What Kant saw so profoundly in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, at least at one point[, was]...the manner in which the speculative death of God entails the fracture of the I, the simultaneous death of rational theology and rational psychology. If the greatest initiative of transcendental philosophy was to introduce the form of time into thought as such, then this pure and empty form in turn signifies indissolubly the death of God, the fractured I and the passive self" (Deleuze 1994: 87).

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Stone cladding as artificial ruin for triggering nostalgia

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In observing recent journals, one notices the frequent use of stone cladding on building projects and associated advertisements, as a demand for a variety of stone cladding types. This article explores the idea of stone cladding (natural or synthetic) as a trigger for an inaccessible past. In light of Karsten Harries' thoughts on "mold and ruins", stone cladding as an artificial ruin for providing psychological comfort against the terrors of space and time is considered. It is the first part of this paper that reminds of the promise of creating architecture as Platonism of permanence and order as opposed to the temporality of chaos. Moreover the nostalgia for the imagined utopia that existed prior to what Mircea Eliade terms "the terror of history" is highlighted as indicative of the desire for spatial and temporal ruins. Furthermore the paper selects some past and present South African architectural examples whereby the will to identify with the idealized natural landscape is attempted through the idiom of stone. The stone cladding is shown to become the anti-architectural device that deconstructs itself towards the organic in an attempt to reconcile with nature, albeit in a picturesque way. Finally a critique of approaches to stone cladding ruination which attempt to oppose time is presented and contrasted with buildings which embrace decay and thereby do return to nature.

Key words: nostalgia, artificial ruin, Platonism of permanence, anti-architectural device, picturesque reconciliation

Klipbekleding as kunsmatige ruïne vir die versnelling van nostalgie

Deur waarneming van onlangse tydskrifte, is die gereelde gebruik van klipbekleding op bouprojekte en gepaardgaande advertensies, opgelet as 'n verskeidenheid van klipbekleding tipes. Hierdie artikel ondersoek die idee van klipbekleding (natuurlike of sintetiese) as 'n sneller vir 'n ontoeganklik verlede. In die lig van Karsten Harries se gedagtes oor *mold and ruins*, is die bekleding van die klip as 'n kunsmatige ruïne vir die verskaffing van sielkundige troos, oorweeg teenoor die verskrikkinge van ruimte en tyd. Dit is die eerste deel van hierdie skryfstuk wat herinner aan die belofte van die skepping van argitektuur as 'n Platonisme van permanensie en orde in teenstelling met die tydelikheid van chaos. Boonop word die nostalgie vir die gewaande utopie wat bestaan het voor wat Mircea Eliade noem *the terror of history* uitgelig as 'n aanduiding van die begeerte vir ruimtelike en temporale ruïnes. Verder kies die stuk sommige Suid-Afrikaanse argitektoniese voorbeelde van die hede en die verlede waardeur die wil om te identifiseer met die geïdealiseerde landskap deur die idioom van klip gepoog is. Die klipbekleding is getoon, al is dit in 'n skilderagtige pad na die wording van die organise, as die anti-argitektoniese toestel wat dekonstrueer in 'n poging om te versoen met die natuur. Ten slotte word 'n kritiek van die benaderings tot klipbekledingruinasie wat poog om tyd te verset aangebied in teenstelling met geboue wat vervalling omhels en sodoende wel terugkeer na die natuur.

Sleutelwoorde: nostalgie, kunsmatige ruïne, Platonisme van permanensie, anti-argitektoniese toestel, skilderagtige versoening

The nature of ruins, as Louis Kahn said, is "the physical remains of an obsolete building, a building which in this ruinous condition can speak of itself, no longer obscured by its original use or function". This description, paraphrased by Fred Scott (Scott 2008: 95) "assume(s) a separation between function and being; between the temporal and the timeless" with the common result of ruination being a loss of enclosure and incompleteness. The ruin, continues Scott, "is something in process, belonging to the past, present and future" (Scott 2008: 96). In the same vein, Harries states that it is "In the moment of aesthetic appreciation (that) linear time is abolished as past and present appear to fuse" (Scott 2008: 96).

The attraction with ruins can be found predominantly in paintings where ruin architecture interlaces with that of the landscapes furnishing aestheticians with examples of the picturesque.

Yet what is usually represented in built artificial ruins of the eighteenth century is often related to a Greek temple or a medieval church (Harries 2000: 243-244). However in the South African built context one could argue¹ that the Conical Tower in the Elliptical Temple of the Zimbabwe ruins (figure 1) has particularly been inspirational for example in the work of Norman Eaton (figure 2).

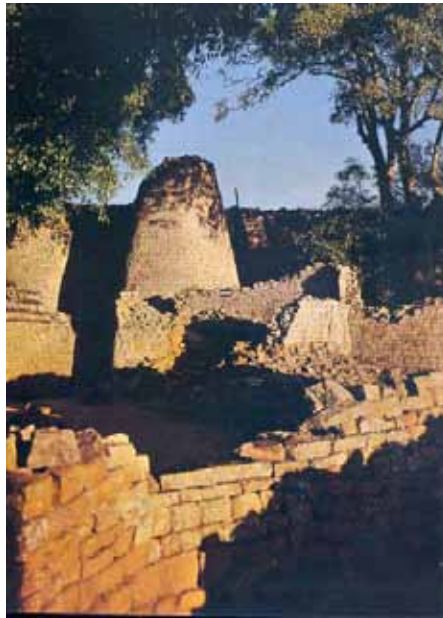


Figure 1
Conical Tower in the Elliptical Temple of the Zimbabwe ruins
(source: Bruwer 1965: ii).



Figure 2
Norman Eaton, Greenwood Village, The Willows, Pretoria, c. 1950
(source: Harrop-Allin 1975: 81).

Previously reference was made to ruins as physical remains with no obstruction of original use or function, in fact uninhabitable. On the other hand buildings in essence can be understood to be a domestication of space making space habitable as place (Harries 1982: 59). Through building, the intention is to substitute nature with crafty construction as a shelter or comfortable dwelling. Yet a dilemma unfolds in the habitability of architecture with straight lines as Hundertwasser might confirm². Human beings remain fascinated by impermanence finding Platonic order

stifling and lifeless, preferring the organic over the inorganic (Harries 2000: 240-241).

Exemplification

A vacant office building designed by Wynand Claasens is situated on a corner in Hatfield, Pretoria (figure 3). It is only the two street facades that are clad in stone as a deliberate picturesque motif or counter-image to its supporting structure of so-called permanence. Of interest here is that this building has never been inhabited and stood vacant for several years now. The mentioned façades could arguably be considered not only as an artificial ruin but perhaps also as Hans Sedlmayer would put it, “the bad conscience of architecture”. Moreover Harries quotes Sedlmayer’s claim that: “the picturesque appears as the mortal enemy of the architectonic” (Harries 2000: 245). Harries perhaps reinforces the claim here of the Hatfield building as artificial ruin, in that “the building deconstructs itself; and something of the appeal of ruins resurfaces, and transforms in contemporary architecture’s fashionable deconstructive impulse” (Harries 2000: 242).



Figure 3
Wynand Claasens, Office Building, Hatfield, Pretoria
(photograph: author).

In this sense what follows is illustrated (figure 4) as a contemporary house and garden in Bronberg Estate, east of Pretoria with “distinctive lines and curves”. The house designed by Thomas Gouws architects is arranged within four stone clad curves that form a fragmented - hence ruinous- incomplete cylinder. The architect is quoted: “The whole design process, of house and garden together, was a deliberate attempt to blur the boundaries between indoors and outdoors; to treat them not as competing spaces but as extensions of each other; and to keep the people who live there continuously in touch with nature via the garden, the stream and the natural plant life of the immediate environment” (Van Rooyen 2007: 113). Evidential in the illustrated example, is that the notion of stone cladding as artificial ruin, albeit surface deep, allows the illusory intertwining with that of the landscape and garden. It is in this sense that one ventures to say that by belonging together, both house and garden could be said to express a desire or nostalgia, to rediscover in organic nature lost divinity and humanity’s true home.



Figure 4
Thomas Gouws, House, Bronberg Estate, Pretoria East
 (source: Van Rooyen 2007: 111).

In extension, in an article (Bunn 1998: 95) on the monumental use of stone, David Bunn refers to Herbert Baker's use of roughly dressed stone as a fascination with the picturesque pre-industrial style. Yet the African stone is an archaic material that can be revealed as a will-to-order by craftsmen. Thus, as Bunn puts it, in the idiom of stone we find expressed a search for an older language of rough rule that has already traced itself in classical and medieval ruins. Baker's renowned houses on Parktown ridge in particular, use hammer roughly dressed *koppie* stone coaxed out of the rock of the site, (without pointing to emphasize the organic). The houses appear to be intrinsically related to the landscape. Bunn's argument is that Baker "enables a metonymic association between settler identity and natural landscape" (Bunn 1998: 95-96), albeit only evident in the layer of stone cladding which is in juxtaposition with the architectonic habitable interiors.

If Baker follows Roman, Babylonian or Phoenician fallen empires as precedents for his Parktown ridge and Westcliffe houses (Bunn 1998: 96), then Johann Slee's Westcliffe houses with stone cladded bases revealing the architectonic supporting structure on the upper floors are as further related examples of interest in this investigation. The architecture here is said to combine the past (Baker) and the present (modern). The stone cladding is intended to anchor the house firmly to the earth and tradition. It was the *Visi* magazine (Myburgh Chemaly 2008: 63) that posed the question: "What is it with Johann Slee and stone?" His answer: "Fifteen years ago, I started to build stone houses in Westcliffe, Johannesburg. I went all over looking for the right stone and finally found it in Lesotho. Now everyone wants stone and everything gets cladded in stone. That's the really sad thing about trends..." The question now arises: Why is stone cladding as observed in South African architecture so desired? Based on the argumentation and exemplification thus far, the position hopefully is becoming clear with regards the possibility of stone cladding being an artificial ruin in a nostalgic way. A further question then is: Why the nostalgia?



Figure 5
Herbert Baker, Stonehouse, Parktown, Johannesburg, 1902
 (source: Viney 1987; photograph: Alain Proust 1987: 199).



Figure 6
Johann Snee, House Herman, Westcliffe Johannesburg
 (source: Snee 2000: photograph Ryno).

Nostalgia

In paradise, a bounded garden, there was no need for building. Building had to wrest place from space through domestication. Harries concludes that “every house may be considered an attempted recovery of some paradise” (Harries 1982: 59). Hermeneutic writers like Joseph Rykwert have inquired into the origin of architecture and agree on the notion of our need to control the environment. This need they say arose through the biblical act of mankind being banished (the fall) from an Edenlike paradise. The belief that a paradise once existed as our true home and that after the fall the natural world is a space of unfriendliness and homelessness requiring our need to control and remedy its deficiencies, still persists (Rykwert 1997: 13).

Building requires the transformation of chaos into cosmos with the help of platonic non-organic geometry (dubbed perennial Platonism by Harries) that allies itself with the help of technology in the 20th century machine aesthetic. Yet all the building and planning hasn't been able to provide the desperately sought security. Technology ironically increases rather than diminishes the terror of natural space. This is noticeable in the replenishing of natural resources and the feared repercussions thereof. Genuine dwelling (and here one refers to Heidegger's *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*) demands the destruction of an architecture in favour of ruins.

If one might imagine paradise been about a home rather than a house (that had been lost due to the fall) then the dwelling in the sense of a building cannot be remembered. Therefore the collective memory of home in the paradisiac sense kept alive by legends and religions, as Joseph Rykwert might suggest, is rather a state than an object (Rykwert 1997: 13-14). What humankind recalls is an idealized past. The state or condition of fallen humanity on the other hand is one of terror. That terror is both of space/nature and time/temporality. Man is essentially vulnerable, prone to decay and mortality and therefore him/herself in a constant process of ruination ever since birth.

How does humankind cope with this terror of space and time? Religious man unlike historical or modern man, says Mircea Eliade, defended themselves against the terror of time "by periodically abolishing it through repetition of the archetypes and a periodic regeneration of cyclical time". Therefore ahistorical societies, which still exist today, live always in an atemporal present. As mentioned previously, building attempts to deal with the terror of space and time through a will-to-order. Eliade reminds us that despite fabricating a linear history and the constant new beginnings, historical man is saturated with nostalgia for the myth of an eternal return (Eliade 1991).

Nostalgia can be defined as 'homesickness' or a 'longing for something far away or long ago'. Huyssen explains that the word is made up of the Greek *nostos* = home and *algos* = pain and speaks of some time; something in the past that is inaccessible. Moreover Andreas Huyssen lets us know (Huyssen 2006: 4) that temporality and spatiality are, as a necessity, allied in the desire for the nostalgic and that the architectural ruin, in particular, exemplifies the trigger for that space/time nostalgia. He says it is in the body of the ruin that the past is both present in its residues and yet no longer accessible, making the ruin an especially powerful "trigger for nostalgia". Furthermore he substantiates that nostalgia since the European 17th century has developed into a modern disease per se.

Yet Huyssen stresses the present 21st century, albeit in the northern transatlantic, obsession of preservation, remakes and retrofashions (like stone cladding) that deny the ruinations of space and time. Shown (figure 7) is an artificial ruin which imitates a Roman bridge in Stone Garden, Buckinghamshire, England. Likewise the inauthentic ruins of modern man can be seen as the reflective nature of nostalgia and/or what Charles Maier pronounces in Huyssen's article: "nostalgia is to memory like kitsch is to art". (Huyssen 2006: 5).



Figure 7
Artificial Roman bridge ruin in Stone Garden, Buckinghamshire, England
 (source: Enge 1991: 209).

Being and becoming

Allow me to briefly weigh up a 20th century authentic stone ruin with a 21st century stone clad artificial ruin in order to understand the former; in light of *being* and the latter; of *becoming* a trigger for nostalgia. The common ground is that both are situated in the terror of space and time of South Africa.

In the first case shown here illustrated is the derelict Coromandel House in Mpumalanga designed by Marco Zanuso in the 1970's. Interestingly the article referred to is aptly titled 'Paradise Lost' by its writer Nick Plewman (Plewman 2011: 75). Nevertheless what is of relevance is Plewman's description of the house as homage to the vast farm landscape under the terror of the South African raging sun. Zanuso's design deals with this terror by domesticating or taming space by creating an artificial environment complete with air-conditioning as a "refuge from the heat and glare". The terror of space provokes the building but at the same time the building as defense against the terror of space was intended from its inception to provide defenses against the terror of time. Plewman goes on to describe the design of "massive walls of hewn stone" (not stone cladding) arranged parallel to one another with rough stone buttresses struck to sheer sharp face that appear to connect the greatest strivings of human endeavour back to the earth and environment that can never quite be tamed (Plewman 2011: 76-770).



Figure 8
Marco Zanuso, House Press (Coromandel), Mpumalanga, 1974
 (source: Plewman 2011: photograph: Dook 2011: 74).

The building intended for comfortable habitability is now neglected, unfurnished and uninhabited for over twenty years and a ruin. Any attempt at preserving a ruin is a peculiar habit says Scott (Scott 2008: 96). Preserving a ruin, he says, is as for a corpse. The process of preservation thereby intervention is itself ruination of the ruin. Instead of importance is that the ruin tells us, as Kahn suggests (mentioned in the opening sentence of this article) how it is made. Any cladding and ornamentation are the first to go through mould and wrot. I quote Hundertwasser's manifesto on this topic from Harries: "We must strive as rapidly as possible for total uninhabitability and creative mouldering in architecture" (Harries 2000: 242). The idea is to let the building merely *be* and in so doing not unlike anhistorical or traditional man embrace the atemporal present.

Now let us briefly visit the South African Institute of Architects Merit Award winning Stone House in the Mooikloof Estate designed by Johann Slee. Therein the house is said to have its origins in the earth built with the *ysterklip* quarried from the site as 200 mm thick stone cladding attached to a domesticated perennial Platonic building of straight lines. The stone clad walls, as the architect confirms (Myburg Chemaly 2008: 59) were inspired nostalgically by a ruined stone kraal wall that unites with the land it sits on. One cannot help thinking that another ruin, the Zanuso house, could also have acted as reference. Nevertheless what is of importance here is that we could see the stone cladding as an attempt to deconstruct by virtue of its roundness of edges an anti-image built against the majority of the dwelling which seeks to provide protection and comfort from the vast Mooikloof landscape beyond.

The shelter, one could say, controls the environment in an attempt to banish feelings of temporality. However the stone cladding is slightly schizophrenic in nature: On one hand the stone cladding is so neatly built and uniform it reflects the will-to-order and on the other hand it wishes to represent an idealized even romanticized past that redeems it from the tyranny of time. The stone cladding allows this triggering of nostalgia to *become*.



Figure 9
Johann Slee, Stone House, Mooikloof, Pretoria, 2007
 (source: Myburgh Chemaly 2008; photograph: Dook 2007: 63).

Extrapolation

If one can accept that every building (or human) decays and is subject to mortality from inception (or birth) then every building is in a process of inevitable ruination. It is in this sense that one

can then say that both the organic stone cladding and the perennial platonic inorganic structure that supports it are therefore both in a state of ruination before the building works actually start. Their difference perhaps lies in what they represent. If both the stone cladding and the architecture it intends deconstructing continue decaying and return to the landscape, how can the stone cladding isolated be considered as the ruin to remind us nostalgically of a lost past or a paradisiac landscape?

It is arguably difficult or maybe impossible, (excluding hypnosis perhaps), to physically regress back to birth. Likewise the nostalgia to return to some Eden is unattainable. In this light this paper questions contemporary historical man's persistence with comforting images of domestication and permanence whilst simultaneously attempting to return, somewhat *instrumentally* through tools, or triggers of desire (i.e. stone cladding or fragmented relics) to an idealized place not subject to the terror of space and time.

In concluding I refer to an addition to the ruined Rice Storehouse in the Tochigi Prefecture in Japan by the architect Kengo Kuma. His philosophy is to 'erase architecture' or a return to the anti-architecture through architecture. He employs stone fused both as cladding and supporting geometric structure. The Oyo stone he specifies does not have the imagined qualities of stone's strength, rigidity, weight and permanence. Instead it is weak and blends easily into the environment through rapid decay (Bognar 2009: 8-9). What matters here, is an embracing of ruination as a welcomed hint beyond the current obsession of stone as an artificial cladding for triggering nostalgia.



Figure 10
Kengo Kuma, Chokkura Plaza and Shelter, Takanezawa, Tochigi Prefecture, 2004-6
(source: Bognar 2009: 149).

Notes

- 1 Although Harrop-Allen (1975: 120) tells us that Eaton's work and specific reference to the "Zimbabwe forms of the 'village' at the Greenwood House...was entirely in keeping with its context" and "not the result of premeditated and holus-bolus importations of African forms", Bunn [1998] describes Eaton's referencing for the Greenwood village forms of "Conical stone towers...with stone huts and ceremonial stone gateway" as: "... the impression of a miniature Great Zimbabwe".
- 2 Harries elaborates on Hundertwasser sentiments with regards the "morally unendurable...uninhabitability of functional utilitarian architecture". To quote Harries : "No one has inveighed more passionately against ...perennial Platonism than the Viennese painter Hundertwasser."

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Sources of new ornamental plants: the importance of heritage plants and plant relicts from historic places and old gardens

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Mankind has enjoyed a long historical relationship with plants, using them as objects of beauty, sculpting gardens into a form of art and fashioning them into expressions of philosophical belief. From the 1970s onwards there has been a remarkable resurgence in worldwide interest in ornamental plants which resulted in renewed efforts to search for and develop new ornamental plants. This trend is continuing to this day. Apart from collecting new indigenous plants from the wild, other important alternative sources for new ornamental plants exist and were researched by means of a literature review followed by a survey questionnaire sent out country wide to ornamental plant growers in South Africa. Botanical gardens, plant collectors, specialist nurseries, heritage plants and relicts from old gardens and historic places, fashion revivals, new applications for known plants, the rediscovery of species previously neglected by the horticulture industry and new cultivars of existing ornamental plants, are all recognised as sources for new ornamental plants in South Africa and internationally. The conservation of botanical gardens, old and historic gardens and plant collections of note has become important in South Africa, not only because of their historical value, but also as genetic resources for the future. The results of the survey confirmed that there is a revival of interest in heritage plants and old cultivars, and was voted as an important source for new plants by 73% of ornamental plant growers in South Africa.

Keywords: ornamental plants, South Africa, indigenous plants, horticulture, heritage plants

Nuwe sierplantbronne: die belangrikheid van erfgoedplante en plantrelikte in geskiedkundige plekke en historiese tuine

Die mensdom het 'n lang geskiedkundige verband met plante, deur hul gebruik as pragobjekte, deur die verfyning van tuinskeppings tot 'n kunsvorm en as die versinnebeelding van filosofiese oortuigings. Sedert die 1970s was daar 'n merkwaardige herlewing in die belangstelling in sierplante en dit het opnuut gelei tot 'n soeke na en die ontwikkeling van nuwe sierplante. Hierdie tendens duur tot vandag toe voort. Benewens die insameling van nuwe inheemse plante vanuit die veld, bestaan daar etlike belangrike alternatiewe bronne van nuwe sierplante. Botaniese tuine, plantversamelaars, gespesialiseerde kwekerie, erfgoedplante en plantoorblyfsels in ou tuine en op geskiedkundige plekke, mode-herlewings, nuwe aanwendingsmoontlikhede vir reedsbekende plante, die herontdekking van spesies verwaarloos deur tuinboukundiges en nuwe kultivars van bestaande sierplante is almal erkende bronne van nuwe sierplante, hier te lande en wêreldwyd. Die bewaring van botaniese tuine, ou en historiese tuine en beduidende plantversamelings het in Suid-Afrika in belangrikheid toegeneem, nie alleen vanweë hul geskiedkundige waarde nie, maar ook as bronne van plantgene vir die toekoms. 'n Onlangse meningspeiling onder sierplantkwekers in Suid-Afrika het getoon dat 73% van respondente glo dat 'n herlewing in die belangstelling in erfgoedplante en ou kultivars 'n belangrike bron van nuwe plante kan ontsluit.

Sleutelwoorde: sierplante, Suid Afrika, inheemse plante, tuinboukunde, erfgoedplante

The purpose of this article is to examine the various sources of new ornamental plants and to demonstrate their relative importance for the future cultivation of such plants in South Africa. The data used for this task have been collated through a review of relevant sources in the academic and technical literature. The authors collected further data and information to aid

in the identification of plant sources by visiting a number of relevant institutions and by attending specialised events that had a bearing on this study. The study revealed a wide range of important plant sources, namely: New plants from the wild, botanical gardens, plant collectors, specialist nurseries, plants cultivated as part of fashion revivals and the re-introduction of plant species, heritage plants and relicts from old gardens and historic places, finding new applications for existing plant species and those neglected by the horticulture industry, as well as new cultivars of existing ornamental plants (Middleton, 2011).

A country-wide survey was conducted by the authors among 151 South African ornamental plant growers of which the majority were situated in the Gauteng, Western Cape and Kwa-Zulu Natal provinces, in order to confirm the validity, or otherwise, of previously identified plant sources and to determine their relative importance as alternative sources. Responses were received from 65 participants in the survey and were subjected to a statistical analysis, which generated the quantitative data used in determining the relative importance of each of the identified sources of new ornamental plants.

An examination of the statistically analysed data may lead researchers to reach further conclusions and detect further trends which could support the authors' recommendations and justify further investigations into this and related fields of horticultural studies.

South Africa's indigenous flora, with its rich diversity, is regarded as a major source of new ornamental plants the world over. On the other hand, Brits, Selchau & Van Deuren (2001: 165) contend that relatively few species with commercial potential remain in the wild.

They point out that natural resources are finite and that the botanical diversity of any region, however richly endowed, has its limits. According to them, these limitations further compound the challenges faced by private growers wishing to introduce new cultivars to markets at home and abroad. The cited particular constraints faced by growers include distant markets, the absence of a culture of market-oriented cultivar improvement, difficulties in accessing legal and technical resources, as well as a lack of marketing experience.

Historical background

Plants have formed part of the human existence since time immemorial. This enduring bond between mankind and plants has flowered into a profound human appreciation of plants as objects of beauty and of gardens as works of art. Almost all of us seem to have an intrinsic yearning for contact with nature. Plants exercise a strong, positive influence on human behaviour (Kaplan & Kaplan 1989: 173; Harris 1992: 11; Lohr & Relf 1993: 106). Ornamental plants bring aesthetic, physical and psychological enhancements to our surroundings and add economic value to them. In a world that is increasingly becoming urbanised, plants very often provide an important link with the natural world.

According to Simpson & Ogorzaly (2001: 419), the cutting of flowers and foliage for personal and ceremonial use dates back to prehistoric times. Excavations of Palaeolithic burial sites from the early part of the Stone Age from 750,000 up to 15,000 years ago, have shown that placing sprigs of flowers around corpses were important features of the burial rites of the ancients.

The development of gardens, however, had to wait until humans abandoned their nomadic lifestyles and started settlements. Once these settlements were established, the early humans

could engage in agriculture, animal husbandry, and, more importantly for our purposes, the lay out gardens, the planting of flowers and trees and tending to them. Horticulture thus became a cornerstone of civilisation and urbanisation, the former developing hand in hand with the latter. Indeed so strong was the link between horticulture and civilisation, that the two concepts almost became synonymous, and remain so to this day. Conversely, it is virtually inconceivable that human beings should settle in any one place without engaging in some form of cultivation (Burchett 1995: 81; Simpson & Ogorzaly 2001: 402).

Horticulture should be understood as an expression of the human desire not only to improve the quality of life but also to ensure survival. This may include everything from producing a steady, secure supply of selected and improved fruits, vegetables and other crops, to the creation of beauty, concentrated in a given location, in the form of a garden as a work of art (Burchett 1995: 81).

Gardens throughout history have been designed and used for a variety of practical and spiritual purposes (King 1985:1; Burchett 1995:81) which include:

- Cultivating plants for food and medicine.
- Providing pleasure and enjoyment of beauty, colour, shade and fragrance.
- Displaying wealth and well-being.
- Contrasting wilderness with order, by imposing order upon untamed nature.
- Satisfying intellectual needs by collecting rare and unusual plants.
- Creating idealised landscapes to create symbols and allegories of religious and philosophical beliefs, aesthetic values and as a form of visual art.

Gardens enjoy a unique status among the other forms of art, because of the living, earthy and spatial qualities they bring to our daily reality (Miller 1993: 178). Ross (2008: 175) argues that the greening of art through ecological art works, such as gardens and landscaped areas, is the result of an interdisciplinary approach based on collaboration across many disciplines and biodiversity. Furthermore, these works of art are inevitably subject to the natural processes and cycles occasioned by the passage of time; and so they provide new ways to fuse art, science, nature and life into unique syntheses of expression, while conveying to the beholder a heightened awareness of nature's fragility.

Due to the variety of values attributed to plants, gardens matter to people for different reasons while they have also played distinct cultural roles and served as representations over the ages. In a simplistic sense, the enjoyment of nature and of art is drawn together in a garden; however Cooper (2008: 150) identifies garden appreciation as a special human phenomenon distinct from both the appreciation of art and the appreciation of nature. Gardens of bygone ages frequently expressed an image of paradise for the people who created them, such as Islamic gardens. Consequently, the historical development of gardening styles often paralleled that of the philosophical thinking of civilisations (Simpson & Ogorzaly 2001: 402).

Over the ages gardens have also taken on significant cultural roles and have served as representations of cultural identity, aspirations and achievement. Apart from enjoying gardens as manifestations of ordered nature, their cultural benefits allow us to marvel at them as a particular form of art.

The Chinese began cultivating food and medicinal plants in enclosed garden areas four centuries before the Egyptians. Although both the Chinese and Egyptian gardens were carefully designed, the visual effect of Chinese gardens differed completely from those found along the Mediterranean. The Chinese were the first to create true pleasure gardens and by 190 BC they were constructing extensive parks and public gardens. The Chinese conceived landscaping as a fine art form, interrelated with poetry and landscape painting, and considered the plants they used as symbolic, rather than architectural objects (Simpson & Ogorzaly 2001: 409).

The first true Western gardens were planted in ancient Egypt. Egyptian interest in botany and gardens is well recorded on wall paintings and in hieroglyphs drawn as early as 2200 BC. The Egyptians independently developed the concept of the garden as an enclosed space, and they surrounded their houses with garden walls to keep out intruders and provide protection from the desert winds. The geometric, stylised forms of the paths and planting beds were consistent with the formal architectural style of other forms of Egyptian art. In their search for plants to use in their gardens, the Egyptians mounted the first known plant-collecting expeditions (Brickell 2001: 159, Simpson & Ogorzaly 2001: 402-403).

The Egyptians' concept of formal gardens gradually spread to Syria and Persia in the Middle East and to parts of the Western world. In Persia, autocratic rulers ordered their subjects to plant groves of trees that became pleasure gardens and hunting preserves. These gardens were the forerunners of modern public parks (Simpson & Ogorzaly 2001: 403).

The Roman Empire lasted long enough for the development of a distinctive style of garden art. The Romans drew much inspiration for their gardens from the tales brought back by their soldiers from other parts of the Empire in Europe, Asia Minor, the Middle East and North Africa (Simpson & Ogorzaly 2001: 405). The Roman Empire was predominantly an urban civilisation, and most of its citizens lived in large city apartment buildings. Their inhabitants brought nature into this new urban world by planting window boxes and painting flowers on courtyard walls. Wealthy Romans had their gardens designed to suit the grounds of their villas outside the city and, for the first time, city planners incorporated greenbelts in urban design.

Plants and ideas brought to Europe by explorers of the New World, Asia and Africa had a great impact on 17th century gardens. The wealthy began to maintain large private gardens in which they displayed new plants and animals. Public gardens such as the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew are legacies of this era. For the most part, however, exotic plants in these gardens were like rare animals in zoos (Simpson & Ogorzaly 2001: 406).

The Cape of Good Hope remained a largely unexplored botanists' paradise until 1772 when three notable men arrived at the Cape in search of botanical treasures. They were Messrs Masson, a Scot from Aberdeen sent by Kew, and two Swedes, Sparrman and Thunberg. Their work marked a changing point in the annals of South African flora, while the new plant acquisitions from the Cape helped to propel Kew to a position of pre-eminence in the botanical world. In the years following their arrival, other botanists working in the Cape started sending seeds and cuttings direct to Kew Gardens and so it became the main centre for the propagation and hybridisation of South African plants during the 17th and 18th centuries (Lighton 1960: 2).

The influx of new plants in Europe reached a peak in the 19th and early 20th century with the arrival of thousands of new species from China, Japan, North and South America, Africa and Australasia (Brickell 2001: 160). The Victorians became experts in cultivating potted plants. While the house plant fervour of the Victorian era cooled off in the early part of the 20th century, hundreds of new hybrids started to appear. In the 1930s the African violet rose to fame, and

the post-war 1950s saw house plants flourishing in many homes (Simons & Ruthven 1995: 20).

Many momentous changes in the worldwide development of horticulture started to occur in the mid-1960s and beyond. Several new ornamental plant cultivation companies were established, especially in the field of cut flower production (Cadic & Widehem 2001: 76). These changes came about after a long hiatus during the Second World War and the ensuing years of post-war reconstruction. Thereafter the changes in horticulture tracked changes in consumer demand resulting from rising living standards, especially in Europe, from the 1970s onwards. During this time there was renewed interest in new ornamental plants, especially in pot plants. These trends triggered a fresh search for and the development of new plants for markets in these increasingly prosperous regions (Von Hentig 1998: 65).

Heritage plants and relicts from old gardens and historic places

According to Brickell (2001: 161), the importance of historic gardens and those of old settlements as sources of genetic plant material has only been realised comparatively recently. This has given rise to a movement to conserve botanical gardens, old and historic gardens, including some private gardens, gardens belonging to corporations and other bodies, as well as gardens of note. Apart from the significant legacies bequeathed to us by these gardens, whether cultural, spiritual, recreational, aesthetical, or functional, they have also provided safe havens for the preservation of neglected or forgotten plant species across the world. According to Brickell (2001: 161), several old cultivars and species survived only thanks to these gardens.

There is a clear need to promote the *ex situ* conservation (conservation away from of the plant's natural location) of ornamental plants in national and international collections. Up to now considerable attention has been paid to the conservation of cultivated plants yielding food for human and animal consumption and other economically important crops.

The emphasis of the agriculture and horticulture industry has been on conserving primitive cultivars, which represent the core of genetic diversity, and which show promising potential for successful cultivation. Regrettably, there are no organisations at present which review and publish comparable conservation policies for ornamental plants (Brickell, 2001: 161).

Garden plants of the genus *Clivia* that had not been genetically improved before 1990 are now considered to be heritage plants (Fisher 2005). Such plants may still be found among old plant collections, old gardens, people of note who collect clivias, growers of note, nurseries of note, habitats the exact location of which are no longer known or which have been destroyed, and plant materials confiscated from illegal collectors, especially if the exact location of their origin cannot be determined.

Clubs and organisations collecting certain plants, like *Clivia* species, should be encouraged to keep registers for recording the heritage plants they find. They should also record those distinct features and characteristics of the plants in their possession, which growers elsewhere may want to pursue through cultivation programmes (Fisher 2005).

A good example of how old gardens could provide sources of “new” ornamental plant material is the historic gardens on the shores of Lake Maggiore in Northern Italy. For example, *Camellia japonica* was brought to Italy around 1760, but the plant only became popular in the 19th century. Many Italian nurserymen started cultivating camellias at that time as trade in the plants and flowers had become a lucrative business. In her study of these old cultivars, Remotti

(2002: 179) focussed on rediscovering forgotten ones, setting guidelines for their phenotypic characterisation and for re-introducing them to commercial use.

One of the reasons for conducting floricultural research is to safeguard cultivar variability. Declining genetic variability among some highly cultivated species is a major problem at present. Some plants which have disappeared carried features and characteristics that had been the result of many unique genetic improvements over long periods of time and which cannot always be replicated. Their disappearance constitutes an irreparable loss to overall genetic plant diversity. By the same token, the successful development and cultivation of new introductions depend on sound genetic variability. The adverse consequences of genetic erosion are self-evident and they assume an even more alarming significance with regard to those species which have given rise to a very large number of new cultivars through intensive genetic improvement programmes (Remotti 2002: 179).

The survival of those *Camellia japonica* cultivars for more than a century in the historical gardens of Northern Italy demonstrates the hardiness of these plants and their adaptability to the strict selective requirements according to which they had been cultivated. These old plants therefore represent a true botanical heritage, they became adapted to their local climatic conditions and disease resistant. Even if these cultivars may not all be suitable for the ornamental plant market of today, they could be used as a source for extracting valuable characteristics in genetic improvement programmes (Remotti 2002: 187).

According to Leszczynska-Borys (1995: 252), ornamental plants are plentiful in the gardens of rural ethnic communities in Mexico and they are widely used during community festivals. Many of their cemeteries are adorned by an abundance of flowering plants. These communities are the depositaries of precious indigenous knowledge about the plant species found in that country: one must therefore assume that should this valuable, but still largely untapped font of knowledge be opened up sometime in the future, it could provide a most useful resource in the development of new plant varieties for ornamental horticulture (Leszczynska-Borys 1995: 259).

As a result of her study of old roses in the Cape, Fagan (1988: 7) identified old cemeteries and old towns as potential sources of rose species and cultivars dating back to 1657 until 1910. She comments that

“Cape gardeners have always been as fashion conscious as rosarians in other parts of the world and have eagerly followed the changing shapes set by the prize-winning show roses. While the older varieties were edged out by new kinds, however, they continued to find a refuge in the simple cottage gardens of small mission villages, in old graveyards, country lanes and tucked-away towns and farms, where I found them when I started my search for old roses.”

The same may apply to the hitherto unexplored treasure troves of old cultivars of other ornamental plants, as well as indigenous plant knowledge here in South Africa and in other parts of the world

Botanical gardens, collectors and specialist nurseries

Botanical gardens and specialised plant collectors constitute a rich source of plant material, which can be used for cultivating new ornamental plant crops (Halevy 1999: 408). Individuals, societies and (usually small) specialist nurseries often cultivate rare plants which are not normally available to the public, commercially or otherwise. In South Africa it is particularly true in the case of some indigenous plants which are only cultivated by local growers with a special interest

in plants found in their own regions. The cultivation of such relatively rare indigenous plants is usually focussed on special types of plants such as herbs or succulents.

Botanical gardens and seed banks contain up to one third of the world's stock of vascular plant species. Botanical gardens are usually rich sources of many kinds of plants, because they often contain plant species collected from all over the world. Some botanical gardens and seed banks have therefore started to draft guidelines for genetic resource utilisation (Dove 1998: 1273).

Plant utilisation is a core activity of the South African National Botanic Gardens (NBGs). The NBGs were given a mandate in terms of the Forestry Act of 1984 "to promote the conservation of, and research in connection with, southern African flora" and furthermore to investigate the economic potential of indigenous plants and promote their utilisation (Eloff 1987: 123).

The Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden is famed for its horticultural knowledge and expertise. When the Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden was established in 1913, plants were primarily cultivated for economic purposes and by 1933 the Garden already contained 222 economically valuable species. This endeavour was later scaled down, because of other, higher priority objectives imposed on the Garden. Nonetheless, the Garden has over the years continued to increase its cultivation of indigenous plant seeds, as well as cut flowers, and continues to supply them to local and overseas markets.

During the late 1980s the NBGs resumed, as one of their core functions, the task of identifying indigenous plants which may have economic, horticultural or medicinal value. Although hybridising has never been a priority of the NBGs, the selection of superior plant forms continues afoot, with many excellent forms of indigenous plants being cultivated at Kirstenbosch and at other botanical gardens. With its world-renowned floral diversity, horticulturalists from abroad regularly visit South Africa to source and collect plants (Eloff 1987: 125).

Although some South African plants are propagated and hybridised fairly easily, the cultivation of most of the approximately 30 000 species of indigenous plants are more difficult. Horticultural research programmes and trials will have to be continued in order to ensure a steady supply of exciting new introductions to the horticulture industry in South Africa and abroad (Powrie 1998: 2).

The work of horticulturists at South Africa's eight National Botanical Gardens is steadily expanding and they have so far built up a knowledge base and cultivation guidelines on more than 2 200 species. This figure of over 2 200 species still make up less than 10% of the South African flora, which means that relatively few plants in our vast flora kingdom are currently being purposefully cultivated. Powrie (1998: 4) observes that many of the new plants she lists in "Grow South African Plants" are fairly new to cultivation and have not been subjected to extensive suitability trials in varied and potentially adverse climatic conditions.

The NBGs enjoy the advantage of their horticulturists and supporters often going on field trips which allow them to collect plants with exceptional qualities, as well as their seed and cuttings. These specimens are then later to be used for testing. Eloff (1987: 125) proposed that one should inquire what is needed, what is available, can it be cultivated, how valuable is the plant, and how does one market the plant to maximise its benefits, in order to help ensure that plants are utilised successfully.

Kirstenbosch sells surplus plants direct to the public. Other NBGs hold annual, monthly

or even daily plant sales. Eloff (1987: 128) anticipated that the South African botanical gardens and Kirstenbosch in particular, will in future evaluate, select, develop, and where feasible, grow and market plants with horticultural, medicinal and economic value. A seed bank has been established at Kirstenbosch in order to conserve genetic diversity and to make seed available for cultivation in other botanical gardens and in nurseries. Plants and flowers cultivated at Kirstenbosch that are otherwise unobtainable from commercial nurseries are offered for sale to the public on site (Eloff 1987: 128).

Fashion revivals and re-introductions

Fashion and fashion trends are important phenomena of the human existence. It is therefore small wonder that some ornamental plants gain or lose their fashionable appeal over time. As fashion cycles go, some plants, once out of favour, may sometimes become fashionable again. During the 1960s and 1970s aloe species collected from the veld were very much in the vogue, as were the many new hybrids or crosses developed by collectors and hobbyists. This fashion trend declined during the 1970s and 1980s, but the 1990s saw a notable revival of interest in aloes. These plants are usually intended as horticultural fashion statements, complementing modern architecture or adorning landscaped environments, or used as collectables for pot plants. The stark beauty of their often strange and inspiring architecture makes them suitable accent plants in a variety of settings. *Aloe barberae* has again become widely available and is commonly used as accent plants. Other aloe species and hybrids are increasingly being used in general gardening.

Aloe hybrids are quite common and most aloes interbreed easily. Hybrids are often more beautiful than their parents. They often grow more rapidly, flower sooner and produce more striking flowers than either of their parents. This phenomenon is known as “hybrid vigour” and this makes some of the hybrids highly sought-after (Van Wyk & Smith 1996: 22). The renewed public interest in aloes, combined with the ease with which they can be hybridised, renders them ideal for commercial cultivation programmes.

Sansevieria trifasciata was a favourite pot plant during the Victorian era, because it could withstand the toxic fumes emitted by coal fires and gas lamps (Simons & Ruthven 1995: 13). These plants started losing their appeal, because of increased competition from new plant varieties from all over the world and they were gradually replaced by other plant types.

Notwithstanding its earlier decline in popularity, there has been a resurgence of interest in *Sansevieria* since the 1990s. The beautiful architectural lines of their leaves perfectly match and complement contemporary architecture and interior design. With the increase in high-density living in many parts of the world, and hence, smaller living spaces, the indoor pot plant market seems assured of steady growth well into the future.

In Africa, as in many other parts of the world, the economic value of certain plants is sometimes determined by their medicinal and fibre applications in traditional practices. Overexploitation of such plant resources may lead to the extinction of some species, as has been the case in Zimbabwe where certain *Sansevieria* species have now vanished (Takawira & Nordal 2002: 189). Horticultural cultivation may therefore provide the only safe means through which some of these endangered wild plant species will be able to survive and thrive.

Horticultural neglected species

A good example of a species that has previously been neglected by the horticulture industry is the genus *Plectranthus*, which grows naturally in the understory of the subtropical forests in the South-Eastern parts of our country. Little or no cultivation improvements of the genus had been undertaken until fairly recently. Although the genus had been known to horticulturalists for a long time, the arrival of the first distinctive varieties of flowering pot plants, developed by a private South African grower, occurred only comparatively recently (Brits *et al.* 2001: 166)

The ensuing cultivation programmes focused on developing a variety of compact plants with large and floriferous flower types and beautiful foliage. Foliage characteristics that were improved through the cultivation programmes included foliage texture, shape, colour and fragrance. The research and development to achieve these improvements were undertaken by a group of specialist nurseries in South Africa, Europe, Japan, the USA and Australia (Brits *et al.* 2001: 167).

New cultivars

New cultivars are another major source of new ornamental plants (Brickell 2001: 160). Some genera, for example perennials such as *Pelargonium* and *Gerbera*, have undergone intensive cultivation programmes and selection over many years, with the result that today there is a bewildering choice of “novelties” of such genera available in the market. For instance, more than 35 million geranium plants (also known as *Pelargonium*) from about 250 cultivars are sold in the United States every year, both as bedding and potting plants (Anon 2003: 26).

In South Africa, the Agricultural Research Council (ARC) is responsible for much of the horticultural crop and technology development of a number of indigenous vegetable, flower and medicinal plants. Genebanks have been established, cultivar development is being undertaken and training for crop production is being provided by the ARC.

Despite the worldwide economic importance of the floriculture industry, strategies for developing new cultivars lag behind the more advanced ones devised for agricultural crops (Debener 2001: 121).

Ornamental plants offer a virtually limitless gene pool from which “novel” target genes can be extracted. Among the first genes transferred to ornamental plants other than marker genes, were genes for the modification of the colours of flowers, genes for the modification of ethylene biosynthesis of phyto-hormones, and genes for strengthening the plants’ defences against fungal pathogens.

The most common qualities that gene transfers seek to achieve are enhanced disease resistance, better stress tolerance, delayed senescence, improved post-harvest performance, the induction of novel colours and altered plant architecture. The results of these projects have also boosted technological developments, such as the advent of genetically modified plants, which will strongly influence ornamental plant cultivation in the foreseeable future.

According to the growing number of publications dealing with the application of molecular methods in ornamental plant genetics and cultivation, strategies for cultivation are already beginning to change which in turn are opening up new possibilities for the creation, selection and use of genetic variety in plant cultivation. This means that over the coming decades there will be a steady acceleration in the rate at which strategies for ornamental plant cultivation will

be adapted in line with new discoveries and new techniques (Debener 2001: 124).

Further excellent sources of new ornamental plants are induced mutations or those occurring naturally, such as variegated plants and multi-coloured flowers, stunted growth forms which may be regarded as unnatural, but which remain attractive to the human eye. These irregular plant forms should be registered as new cultivars.

Variegated forms are good examples of plant mutations that have ornamental value. It is generally accepted that variegation refers to foliage which bears white or cream markings owing to the absence of the green pigment chlorophyll. While viral infections inhibiting the formation of chlorophyll sometimes cause variegation, the more regular types of variegation are more commonly the results of mutation (Bradley 1993: 328).

While some viruses have no weakening effect on plants, they sometimes produce prominent white or yellow spots or blotches on dicotyledonous leaves and stripes on monocotyledonous leaves. Many of these specimens are highly desirable as ornamental plants.

Well-known or even lesser-known ornamental plants found in the wild which display unusual leaf colouration and unusual growth forms can contribute to the diversification and the extension of their use as ornamentals. Such plants may even provide a genetic source for hybridisation with other species.

A good example is *Cordyline australis* (New Zealand cabbage tree), which is extensively grown in temperate climates as garden and landscape subjects and as container plants. Discoveries of new specimens with unusual leaf colourisation and growth forms have resulted in an increase in the plant's ornamental use (Harris 2001: 188).

"Freak" plants, which often occur when plants are propagated in nurseries, remain an important source of ornamental cultivars. For instance, a single variegated plant, propagated by cuttings, could provide the stock for a stable new cultivar. This is, however, a very slow method of propagation as it can take up to 50 years to produce a large enough stock of the new plant to warrant its commercial launch (Harris 2001: 189). It is, moreover, difficult to produce uniformly variegated plants through tissue culture propagation, because of the tendency of plants so produced to revert, to some greater or lesser extent, to their normal leaf type.

Many dwarf conifers are the result of mutation (Bradley 1993: 329). Mutations of *Pinus halepensis* (Aleppo pine) are good examples of where witches' broom-like mutations have led to the introduction of new ornamental plants. In its normal state the tree produces both male and female flowers, while in its mutated state as witches' broom only females flowers reach full bloom. The occurrence of witches broom is not the result of parasitic activity, but is caused by genetic and, therefore, hereditary factors. Witches' broom provides a suitable source for the cultivation of progeny from which new cultivars can be selected (Vrgoc 2002: 203).

New applications for known plants

It is possible that old, familiar and well-known garden plants can find completely novel applications in ornamental horticulture. The potential of such new applications is amply demonstrated by certain types of trees being converted into successful indoor container plants. Forest tree seedlings in their young stage are obligate sciophytes (shade plants) and as such they are well adapted for low light environments. A good example is *Trichilia dregeana* (Forest mahogany) that has in the last 15 years been introduced as an indoor foliage container plant

(Middleton 1998: 77).

Some new ornamental cultivars have been derived from plants traditionally grown as agricultural crops and which have gained popularity as cut flowers, such as *Helianthus annuus* (sunflower), *Gossypium hirsutum* (cotton) and *Carthamus tinctorius* (safflower). There is also a trend to use some garden and landscaping plants, mainly woody or herbaceous perennials, for the production of cut flowers like the *Hypericum* species (Halevy 1999: 408).

Results and conclusions

The results of the authors' survey show that there are several alternative sources of new ornamental plants, besides obtaining new indigenous plants from the wild in South Africa.

Below is a list of sources of new ornamental plants that can be exploited in future, ranked in descending order of importance. The percentage of respondents concurring with each of the ratings listed in the survey questionnaire is indicated in brackets.

- New indigenous plants from the wild (92%).
- New cultivars of existing plants (85%).
- Fashion revivals and the reintroduction of previously neglected plants (both 84%).
- Specialist nurseries (80%).
- Botanical gardens and their nurseries (79%).
- Renewed interest in heritage plants and old cultivars (73%).
- Collectors of unusual plants (59%).
- New applications for existing plants (58%).

It can be concluded that growers in South Africa continue to regard indigenous plants gathered from the wild as the most important source of new ornamental plants, even though several other alternative sources are available. New plants from the wild are particularly important to the market, because they are adapted to cope with specific climatic conditions and soil types.

There are many indigenous plants well known to botanists and horticulturists, but which are not yet freely available in the trade. These plants should be made available to the public and promoted in the media.

New cultivars of existing species are another key source of new ornamental plants, especially if new varieties have improved horticultural performance properties.

The “recycling” of old plants is an additional source of new ornamentals. The use of indigenous plants in South Africa can be further enhanced by turning to heritage plants and garden relicts as sources of genetic material, by re-introducing old cultivars, by making improvements to previously neglected varieties, and through finding new, imaginative uses and locations for existing plants.

The conservation of botanical gardens, old and historic gardens and plant collections of note has therefore become important in South Africa, not only because of their historical value

as symbols of philosophical precepts, religious beliefs, aesthetic values and as a form of art, but also as genetic resources for the future.

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“Men are as great as the Monuments they leave behind”: Wilhelm O Meyer and the (Rand Afrikaans) University of Johannesburg, Kingsway Campus

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The article covers the exclusion of an architect from further work on his *magnum opus*. At issue is an agreement reached after a successful collaboration over almost eight years, breached before it could take effect. The discussion is centered on the scrutiny of the explanations given, and comments on the consequences for the campus environment in the light of Edmund Bacon's principle of the 'second man'.

Key words: Johannesburg, modern university architecture, Wilhelm O Meyer, Jan van Wijk, second man.

“Menschen sind so groß wie die Denkmäler, die sie hinterlassen”: Wilhelm O Meyer und die (Rand Afrikaans) Universität Johannesburg, Kingsway Campus.

Dieser Artikel berichtet vom Ausschluss des Architekten Wilhelm Meyer von weiterer Arbeit an seinem Hauptwerk, dem Campus der Rand Afrikaans University, heute University of Johannesburg, nachdem er an dessen Planung und Realisierung bereits acht Jahre lang erfolgreich gemeinsam mit einem Kollegen Jan Van Wijk gearbeitet hatte und beide diese Kooperation fortführen wollten, von Seiten der Auftraggeber jedoch auf der alleinigen Beauftragung Van Wijks bestanden wurde.

Der Diskussion liegt die genaue Prüfung der im Zusammenhang mit diesem ungewöhnlichen Vorgehen gegebenen Erklärungen zugrunde. Zudem werden unter Berücksichtigung von Edmund Bacons 1974 in seinem Buch *Design of Cities* vorgestellten Prinzip des 'zweiten Mannes' die Folgen kommentiert, die diese Vorgänge für die Ausgestaltung des Campus in Johannesburg nach sich zogen.

Kennwörter: Johannesburg, moderne Universitäts-Architektur, Wilhelm O Meyer, Jan van Wijk, zweiter Mann.

Neo-classicism came into its own under Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821) who used it extensively for monumental architecture intended to embody the grandeur of imperial France. However, only a fraction of the projects proposed for famous old cities could be realized in the eleven years between Napoleon's coronation in 1804 and the battle of Waterloo in 1815. In Paris these included the two triumphal arches, Arc de Triomphe and Arc du Carroussel at the Louvre, the church La Madeleine, the column on Place Vendôme, the Exchange, and several urban schemes like Rue de Rivoli (Kostof, 1995: 573). These projects were urban in scale and some involved extensive demolition.

Napoleon's favourite architect Pierre-François-Léonard Fontaine summed up the approach: "The Emperor hated to seek the beautiful in anything other than that which was large" to which the theorist Quatremère de Quincy added "it is natural for man to admire size, which is always related in his mind with the idea of power and strength". To these Napoleon added the qualification: "Men are as great as the monuments they leave behind" (Kostof, 1995: 574). The article will examine how this applies to Rand Afrikaans University (RAU), since 2005 known as Kingsway campus of the University of Johannesburg.

Job accomplished

In 1967 Prof Gerrit Viljoen (1926-2009) accepted the appointment as inaugural rector and with that, the task of establishing, planning and overseeing the building of the new university, both the institution and its campus, at Auckland Park, Johannesburg. RAU was to be custom-designed for an educationally disadvantaged student community, yet be of monumental significance and

conducive to life and education, and it had to be realized in the shortest possible time.

After almost eight years since the commissioning of the architects, the campus, built on a scale unprecedented in South Africa since the Union Buildings (1910-13) (Chipkin, 1993: 318), was officially opened on 24th May 1975. That was the end of the arranged collaboration between Wilhelm O Meyer (1935-2006), who at the age of 31 had been appointed for the design, and Jan van Wijk (1926-2005), aged 40, for the execution. Breaking with protocol, the proud rector sought permission from the chancellor to first welcome the architects to convey his admiration for the “magnificent campus” which based on his personal experience “ranked among the foremost campus designs of the post-war period” and he went on to reveal that the project had set an example of financial probity as it had fared favourably with the only comparison, the standards of the University Grants Committee (now Higher Education Funding Council for England) (*RAU Amptelike opening*: 20-21).



Figure 1

View from a female student residential tower block south-eastward over the completed RAU campus. In the foreground the dining complex serving the students' village with Phase 1 male residences at left and a further female tower block at right. Photo: D Goldblatt, 1975.

Monuments and ruins

Meyer replied first and explained that architects could do little more than provide a framework or vessel which people, education and knowledge in time must fill. He then publicly thanked Van Wijk for his positive contribution to the collaboration as well as his strong support of Meyer's leadership, which was so effective that, in fact, the distinction in functions actually became superfluous. He concluded by telling the assembly of guests that the campus was no monument as "monuments serve a commemorative function" but, strangely, added that "Visually speaking the complex holds the potential to become a wonderful ruin" (*RAU Amptelike opening*: 34-37). In turn Van Wijk commented on the magnitude of the challenge and thanked the fellow professionals (*RAU Amptelike opening*: 38-39).

One may question what prompted Meyer to compare his *magnum opus* with a monument or ruin. But, his was not the only such analogy. British architect-writer Theo Crosby (1925-1994), who was visiting his country of birth after a self-imposed absence of 28 years, applauded RAU and extolled it among its typology, when he wrote "The new university, just completed, is splendid: far better than any British equivalent, perfectly modern, logical but with a sense of place and, in the corridors, a Piranesian grandeur" (Crosby: 1976, 75).

Whether a "ruin" or a "Piranesian grandeur", Louis Kahn, from whose master class of 1960-61 at the University of Pennsylvania Meyer had emerged with distinctions in all subjects, is said to have inspired his students with: "Great architecture should leave behind great ruins".

Success as the foundation

Meyer and Van Wijk delivered what their client had expected and which a year later, in the inaugural round of the bi-annual national awards programme of the Institute of South African Architects (ISAA) their peers acknowledged as being "reflective of exemplary architecture" (1976). Another year later the supportive patronage of RAU was honored with the first ever Patron of Architecture award of ISAA for "its achievement in the building of a new university campus on a scale and design calibre without comparison in South Africa, and for the understanding and encouragement of its chosen professional team for the creation of an harmonious environment, conducive to life and education" (1977)¹. Clearly, the varied intellectual and functional ideals of client and architects had been metamorphosed in a symphony.

With such outcomes from the collaboration solemnized by the commission dated 25th August 1967, Meyer and Van Wijk entered into a gentlemen's agreement whereby any further work at RAU would be carried out collaboratively. The architects and all consultants to the project lodged the original working drawings with RAU, after which staff were re-deployed or released and the collaborating practice ceased.

Professional afterlife

Meyer was given permission to provisionally continue with his practice at 30 Twickenham Ave on the eastern periphery of the campus, whereupon RAU demolished the temporary office annex, a municipal condition of its construction, and unconscionably, the attached historical villa, which in no way hindered development and could well have served an institutional use.

Van Wijk gradually weaned himself from his Johannesburg office at Northcliff and reverted to his Pretoria base which he had been running concurrently, literally picking up where

he left off, and he soon relocated the city centre office to the dedicated new building, Condenda, in suburban Waterkloof Ridge (*Architect & Builder*, Feb 1979).

Unlike Van Wijk, as the design architect Meyer had had little choice but to dedicate virtually all his energies to RAU. While the experience had armed Meyer with the requisite expertise to be commissioned for university planning and building, except for the Germiston Civic Centre won in competition in 1973, the practice had no steady architectural client-base to depend upon. Besides, in the wake of the Soweto Uprising, a year after the official opening of RAU, the economy of the late 1970s was not propitious. For 1975-76, the record shows that Meyer had resorted to residential architecture, development plans for tertiary institutions and some academic buildings² (Emanuel, 1994: 641).

Thus Meyer and Francois Pienaar (b.1941), Kahn-graduate of 1966-67 and partner since 1970, had nothing to lose in entering the competition for the National Library of Iran in 1977. Coming 3rd from some 600 entries in 87 countries was a huge achievement but brought no work, besides Iran was toppling, the Shah went into exile and the project was consigned to the refuse bins of history (*Planning & Building Developments*, 1978: Mar/April, 61-67).

It was in this context that a few months after the official opening ceremony a telephone call from Van Wijk requesting a meeting with Meyer raised expectations³. Instead, that was a portent. Van Wijk came to inform Meyer that he had accepted a solo appointment for an additional student residence complex at RAU, which became known as Phase 2, and he had done so at the express wish of the client, he explained. What else could he do, he countered in exasperation. The collaboration over eight years of unrelenting pressure, and which had successfully concluded with a gentlemen's agreement on future work at RAU, now parted in enmity. For Meyer, the timing only exacerbated the news for he had shed his commissions to colleagues Glen Gallagher and Bannie Britz to focus exclusively on RAU and was now scratching for work.

Perplexing

The joint appointment had been concluded, RAU was under no obligation to extend the original collaboration and, certainly, the gentlemen's agreement was in no way binding on the client body. However, there was also no reason for not replicating a successful collaboration, irrespective of the magnitude of the next phase of development.

That Van Wijk could neither be relied upon to hold his promise nor convincingly argue the case for the implementation of the agreement may not be an altogether fair conclusion and it should be born in mind that there was no compunction for Van Wijk to inform Meyer. Van Wijk had the decency to personally communicate what must have been a very difficult decision even if there may have been some prevarication in communication.

But, after the praise heaped on the architects as highly as rector Viljoen had done at the opening ceremony, the instruction for Van Wijk to proceed independently of Meyer is indeed difficult to accept, and various explanations for the solo-appointment have been sought.

Male residences at RAU and PUCHO

According to RAU inaugural registrar Ritzema De la Bat, once when together with rector Viljoen, he drove to Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education (PUCHO), they

suddenly saw ‘their design’ on ‘Potch’ campus! The concept had been developed for RAU, and the application on another campus constituted an ethical breach. They felt betrayed. After some consternation, they reconciled themselves to the fact that although the design had been mutually developed, it remained the architect’s copyright (De la Bat, 2001: interview, 25 October).

The commission at PUCHO resulted from Grupel’s Court, an apartment building Meyer had built in Pretoria, 1966-7, which had caught the attention of a PUCHO council member who initiated Meyer to be considered for the new student residences (Meyer, 2001: interview comm 28 Sept). The timing of the approach fell between the approval of the 3rd *esquisse* for RAU on 17th June 1968 and the issuing of the detailed spatial brief for proceeding in November, five months later. The practice could not lie idle thus Meyer sought permission from Viljoen to accept the PUCHO male residence commission.⁴ But, to emphasise the point, the allegation as articulated by De la Bat does not rest on non-disclosure, it censures the replication of a design concept developed for and with RAU being applied at PUCHO, which, while perhaps distinguishable to architects, might not be to others.

The designs for the male students’ residences for both RAU and PUCHO were being developed simultaneously during 1968-9 and in the same office space at Twickenham Ave, each with a dedicated project architect, Silvio Buffler and Maarten Coetzee respectively, yet under the design control of Meyer. Naturally synergies and similar design concepts would have surfaced as they were after all both developed for white Afrikaner male students on Afrikaans universities and were of common construction and building materials, yet each was different as conditioned by the particularities of its site. But, the decision to exclude Meyer from RAU Phase 2 could have been based on more than the similarity of the designs.

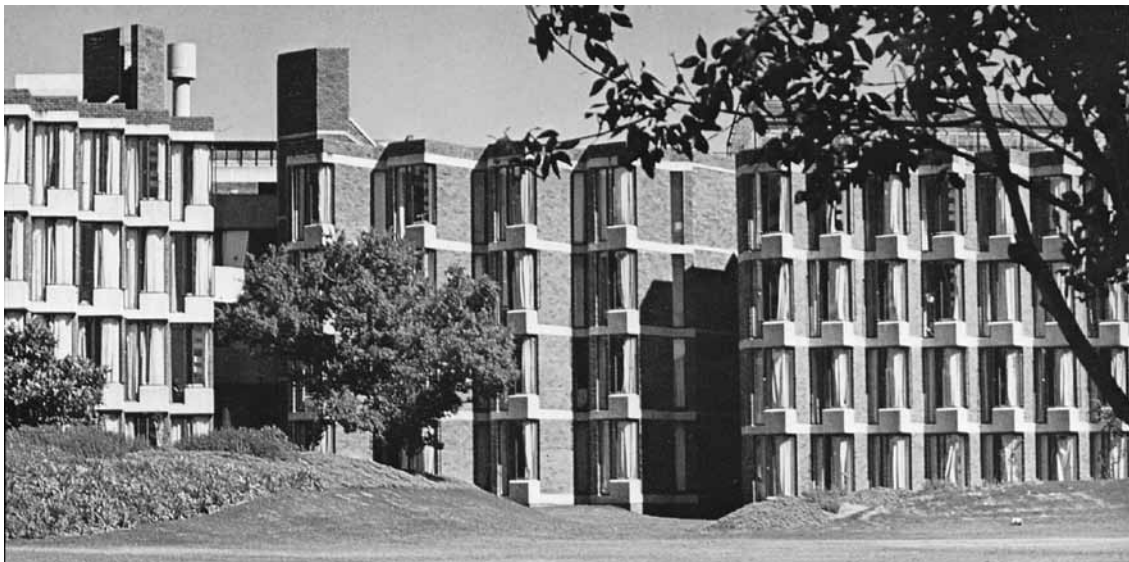


Figure 2
RAU male residences with study carrels facing the common outdoor space of the residence complex.
Photographer unknown (Co-Arc Architects).

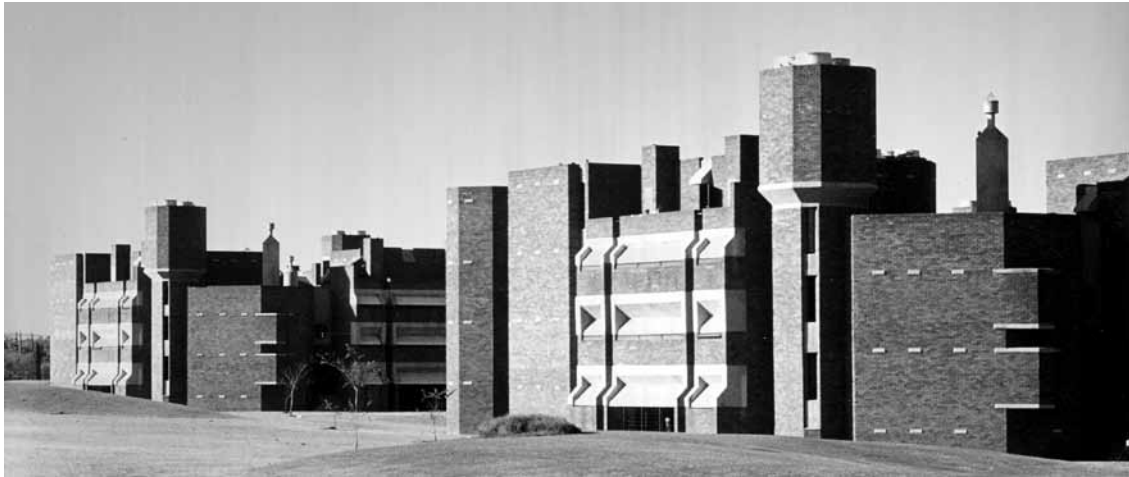


Figure 3
Rear view of male residences at Potchefstroom. Architect: WO Meyer, 1968-71.
Photographer unknown (Co-Arc Architects).

Appeasement

A reason advanced by Meyer's partner Tony Olley (1928-2011) was that while staff of the Van Wijk office had been involved in the designs of components, as per the terms of the commission, all the work was developed under the design leadership of Meyer and later also of Pienaar. The commission for the Phase 2 residences was an appeasement to the office of Van Wijk which had been denied independent design input⁵. Besides, this was a small commission when judged by the magnitude of the new campus.

Afslaan

True, the design of the permanent campus was entrusted exclusively to Meyer. But, RAU had begun operating a temporary campus on the site of a disused brewery in Braamfontein in 1968. While some students of the inaugural cohort could be accommodated provisionally in the residences of a neighboring institution, RAU urgently needed temporary residences⁶. The site for the male residence in Auckland Park was bounded by Hampton Ave on the south and Ripley Rd (now Ditton Ave) on the west, near but not on the permanent campus and thus outside the ambit of the brief with its division of professional responsibility.

Despite being identified on the drawings by the collaborating practice, Afsaal, the name given the temporary residence, was, in fact, carried out entirely by Van Wijk with Cas Nel (b.1942) as project architect. Nel was well equipped for the task as he was then working on his M.Arch thesis by research⁷ which sought to evaluate correlations between building designs and social group-formations. It was supervised by an architect and a psychologist and used three male residences at the University of Pretoria as its case studies, and concluded that the detached, small-scale grouping of units around courts was indeed a socially more conducive concept for group formation. With such implication for the design, Nel investigated a commensurate construction and delivery mode.

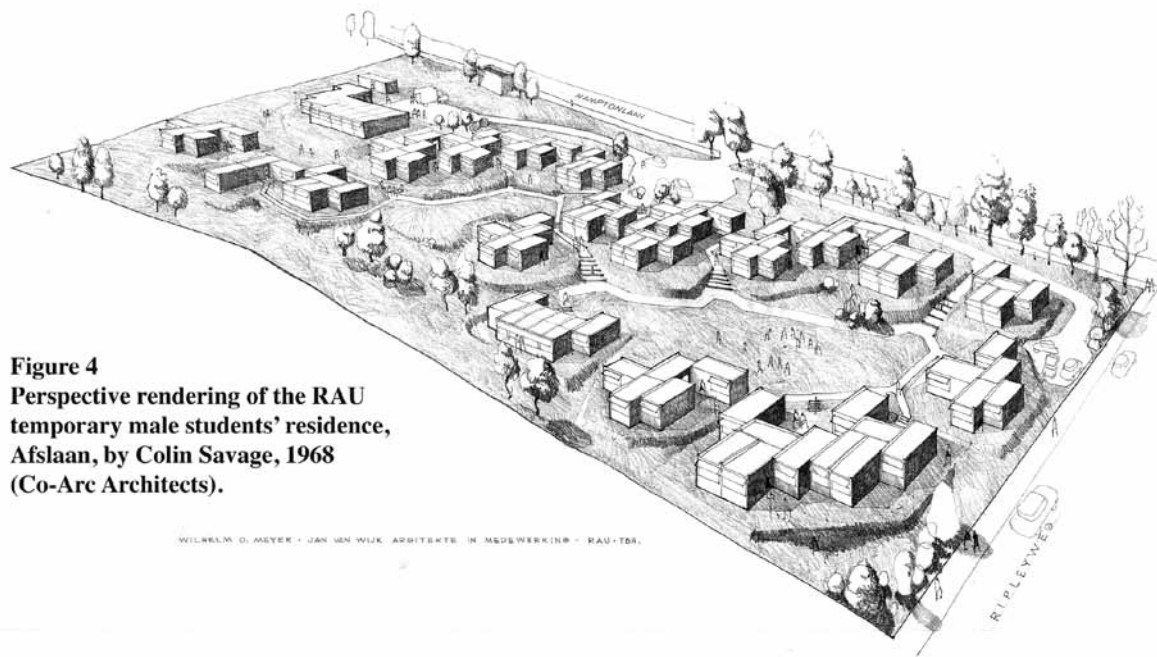


Figure 4
Perspective rendering of the RAU
temporary male students' residence,
Afslaan, by Colin Savage, 1968
(Co-Arc Architects).

The late 1960s was a period of architectural fascination with pre-fabrication and industrialised factory or system building, and a paradigm for housing by such techniques was Habitat at Expo '67, Montreal. This housing scheme of piled concrete boxes and roof terraces evoked an image of a Mediterranean village, and both the alleged expediency and the informality held wide appeal and brought fame to its Israeli architect Moshe Safdie. It was within these principles that Nel looked to the standard prefabricated concrete garage for motor vehicles to accommodate 144 male students. The prefabricated units were moved to site by truck, lifted and lowered into place by cranes, and completed in time for the new academic year beginning 1969. Afsaal proved a popular residence, informal with hardly a feeling of being an institutional building⁸.

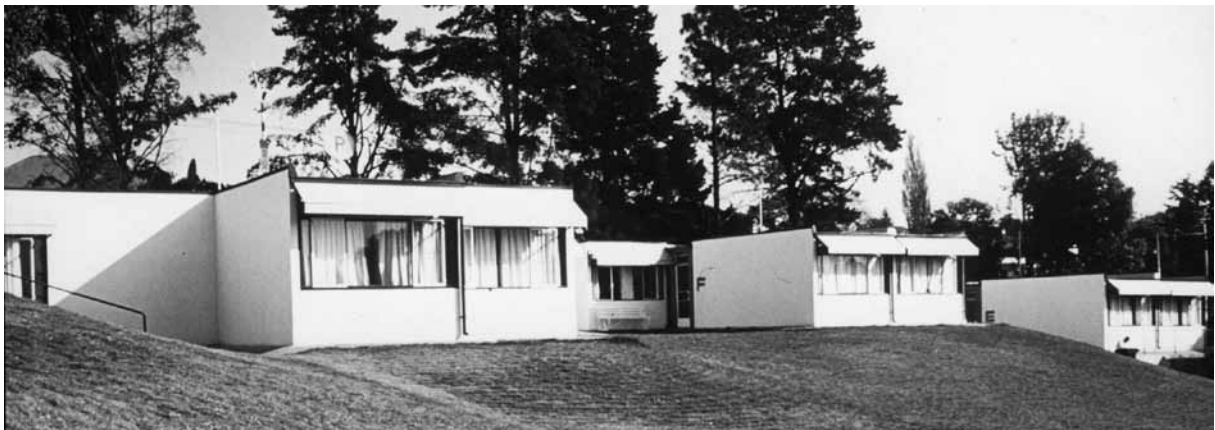


Figure 5
Afsaal, temporary RAU male residence complex, 1969.
Photographer unknown (Co-Arc Architects).

RAU Phase 1 Student Residences

The residences on the permanent campus designed by Meyer consisted of groups of four-storey buildings for males assembled around north-facing outdoor spaces and 16-storey tower blocks for females. There had early on been a concern about the spatial design of the double-

study bedrooms, and a full-size wooden mock-up was built and subjected to scrutiny on the Braamfontein campus before being approved. Nevertheless, the male residences were built 1969-71; the female towers mid-1972 - mid-1975 (Olley, 1976: 38).

On enquiry De la Bat conceded that while the estimates were reasonably accurate, an unforeseen demand for student residential accommodation had arisen due to the effectiveness of the RAU publicity office and the branding of the modern university (2011: e-mail of 20 April). There was thus a need for additional residential accommodation soon after moving onto the permanent campus, and any serious client would first take stock of the existing before commissioning any extension. A post-occupancy evaluation of sorts had been conducted by RAU for we read of research which revealed that students “responded negatively to the uniform and inflexible room layout of the existing hostels” (*Architect & Builder*, May 1979: 16).



Figure 6
Interior of a male study-bedroom, Phase 1. Note the step into the study carrels.
Photo: Dotman Pretorius.

Aspects of user dissatisfaction and the popularity of Afslaan could have been formulated in a revised brief put jointly to Meyer and Van Wijk, but it is evident that the charisma of the Kahn graduate had eclipsed. Whether or not the decision to exclude Meyer is traceable to architectural shortcomings, to disagreements during the eight-year collaboration, or for other reasons⁹ is not clear, but it is evident that had Van Wijk refused the solo-commission, this would most likely have gone to another architect.

In sum, the decision was probably based on giving Van Wijk some of the architectural potency denied him, and a closing explanation by De la Bat “that not all of RAU should look alike” (2001: interview, 25 October).

Phase 2 Residences

The first interesting thing to note is that while Nel’s thesis findings were germane to the concept of Afslaan, not Nel but Hans Wilreker (b.1943) was appointed project architect for the Phase 2 residences. The site is between the original residences and the western boundary of the campus, which was reserved for a duplication of the former.

The publication of Phase 2 residences, which were designed to a similar brief as Phase 1, gives away the approach. None of the buildings is higher than three storeys; all students retain a strong sense of contact with the earth; the low profile of the complex humanises it, encourages group interrelation and eliminates the need for lifts (*Architect & Builder*, May 1979: 16).

Inherently, a lower development will cover more surface area, thus the outdoor spaces are smaller for males but obviously larger for females otherwise accommodated in tower blocks. But, what should be mentioned is that the plans of the original male residences are single-loaded so that every study-bedroom looks onto the outdoor space, the common space of the complex, and that the vast majority is north-facing. In Phase 2, units are double-loaded, and face both inward and outward with orientation a lesser consideration.

However, following on from the student evaluation of “uniform and inflexible room layout(s) of the existing hostels”, for Phase 2 the publication cites that it was “decided to develop a basic room design which would lend itself to a variety of sizes, applications and furnishings... [to]...allow each student to arrange the living space to suit personal tastes and requirements... for which a range of modular furniture was especially designed”. The degree of choice is, of course, laudable, but human comfort is always tempered by orientation.



Figure 7
View from a female student residential tower block southward over the Phase 2 residential complex
(Architect & Builder, May 1979: 21).



Figure 8:
Interior of a study-bedroom, Phase 2
(Architect & Builder, May 1979: A15).

While the development of Phase 2 is both lower and looser, one might have hoped for a consistency of building materials. The original residences have load-bearing walls of red clay bricks, while the whole of Phase 2 was built with an exposed concrete frame and concrete block-work in-filling, the material assigned the academic buildings. Fortunately RAU had in place a landscaping programme so that what on completion might have appeared as an affront has since receded in the greenery.

Second Man

It would have been unnatural and indeed unusual for the architect of the vision for the campus to have seen through its completion, but what is difficult to accept is the timing for the exclusion so soon after such successful collaboration. The more relaxed design criteria of Phase 2 could have been the brief for a continued professional collaboration. Unfortunately such is the reality of professional appointments and what happened at RAU happened.

But whichever architect would have succeeded Meyer, he or she would have been subjected to the phenomenon which renowned planner and author Edmund Bacon coined the ‘principle of the second man’. As Bacon explained “Any really great work has within it seminal forces capable of influencing subsequent development around it, and often in ways unconceived of by its creator”. To illustrate, Bacon took Brunelleschi’s Founding Hospital in Florence the façade of which found expression in the Piazza della Santissima Annunziata, whether or not Brunelleschi intended this to be so. From this example Bacon formulated his principle: “it is the second man who determines whether the creation of the first man will be carried through or destroyed” (Bacon, 1974: 108-109).

Pilots leave the ship

An inherent problem of a huge commission is that it demands the full attention of the architect who is usually forced to turn away approaches by established clients and at the conclusion of the major project, has to re-establish a general practice.

However, being sidelined for a single residence complex is one thing. What no one could then have known was that the Phase 2 residence complex would become the prelude for an architectural hegemony which lasted for nearly three decades. Until recently, all subsequent architectural work on the RAU campus was awarded solely to the practice of Vennootskap Jan van Wijk Ingelyf¹⁰ or its successors in title!

What is more, by 1978 Registrar De la Bat had already returned to his home territory in Paarl and joined KWV and a year later Viljoen opted for politics, first as Administrator General of South West Africa (now Namibia) then as South African Minister of Education and finally the chief negotiator of the National Party with the African National Congress. With those departures, Meyer’s “framework for development” was without champion, certainly with neither the fervor of the originators nor the spirit.

While additions should be interpolated with reference to the originally approved concept, the literal approach of completing a plan decades after its preparation violates most of the precepts of campus planning¹¹. Meyer had proposed a ‘framework for development’ which underpinned the academic brief and this was approved. As he explained, it is “extremely important that the university is not limited by a forced adaptation to a fixed master plan. The object is to find

a framework within which a coherent pattern of orderly growth can occur with the greatest flexibility for future variations, adjustments and unforeseen changes” (RAU *Ontwikkelingsplan* 2.2.1). This approach is distinct from a master plan, and distinguished the planning of RAU.

At 40 Meyer who had literally given to RAU the youth of his professional life, was permanently excluded from further development on his *magnum opus*. While it did take some time, there were many other opportunities and successes, but nothing ever matched the prestige of his leviathan, and one is reminded of what he told guests at the opening ceremony when he mentioned the potential for RAU to “become a wonderful ruin”- unwittingly of his own career.

Commemorative function

Even the most revered campuses have over time been subjected to the ‘principle of the second man’ which has perhaps more often than not destroyed the creation of the first. For example, at the University of Virginia, the model for all historical campus plans in South Africa, Stanford White of the renowned historical US practice McKim, Mead & White, blocked off the vista at the southern end of the lawn with his own building in 1897-9, a vista which its architect by avocation, Thomas Jefferson, had so carefully designed to reach to the distant view. On other campuses the intervention might not be quite so drastic but perfunctory building can set in motion a slow and insidious process and it is said that most post-war universities have succumbed to “ad hoc-ism” where localized building needs have been met without concern for maintaining the ethos of the original plan (Fawcett, 2001: 45).

At RAU the two generating factors, the forum and the concourse are also the lasting themes. While there is a pocket of excellence, the outer perimeter has been developed at a compactness and density irreconcilable with the original which is probably unsustainable, but nothing has diminished either the iconic architectural power of the forum or the “Piranesian grandeur” of the concourse. What is more, the fundamental planning principles and some of the educational ideals of Viljoen as interpreted by Meyer are still holding up, probably because the design was not for advantaged but for a less prepared student community.

With the termination of the architectural collaboration in the manner described, not surprisingly, RAU was never comprehensively published. Olley compiled two articles, one during the construction of the laboratories, the other on completion but both convey mainly logistical information. Only the German magazine *Detail* featured the architecture, and, interestingly, it names as the architects Meyer and Pienaar (1979, May-June, 333-340).

Despite the limited exposure, RAU did play a part in the reconsideration of university architecture internationally, and at least five recent international architectural publications have not forgotten the achievement¹². This fact recalls the assertion by Meyer at the official opening of the RAU campus, namely that “Monuments serve a commemorative function”. To that Napoleon might have added the qualification “Men are as great as the monuments they leave behind” and signed off with “it were better not to have lived at all than to leave no trace of one’s existence behind”.

Notes

- 1 *Die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit word vereër met die Instituut van Suid-Afrikaanse Argitekte se Beskermheer van die Argitektuur-toekenning vir sy prestasie in die bou van 'n nuwe universiteitskampus op 'n skaal en van 'n ontwerp en caliber sonder gelyke in Suid-Afrika en vir sy begrip en aanmoediging aan sy gekose beroepspan vir die skepping van 'n harmonieuse omgewing, bevordelik om in te leef en te leer.* 28 April 1977.
- 2 In order to focus on RAU, Meyer had effectively handed the commission for academic buildings on the campus of Potchefstroom University for Higher Christian Education (PUCHO), now North-West University, Potchefstroom campus, to Bannie Britz.
- 3 It is as difficult to establish the precise date of the meeting as it is to fix the date of the commission. In his entry in *Contemporary Architects*, Jan van Wijk lists in his Works: "1974. Rand Afrikaans University, student housing, phase II, Johannesburg" (Emanuel, 1994: 997). That would have meant that the project was commissioned before the completion of the campus which is corroborated by Paul Kotze, Adjunct Professor of Architecture at the University of the Witwatersrand, who spent his 'year out' in 1975 in the practice of Jan van Wijk in Northcliff working on Phase II. However, Cas Nel, who informed the author that the records had been destroyed, writes "We did implement my [thesis] findings in the second phase student housing which our own office did in 1976" (2007: facsimile 25 July). Considering that the completed project was published in May 1979 (*Architect & Builder*), for the purposes of this article it has been accepted that the commission was awarded after the official opening of the RAU campus in May 1975.
- 4 An unsolicited explanation given the author (Meyer, 2001: pers comm. 28 Sept).
- 5 This explanation was communicated to the author by Francois Pienaar (2001: facsimile, 25 Sept).
- 6 Alongside Afslaan, RAU erected a female residence, Skoonveld. For this, RAU appointed structural engineer Konstant Bruinette of the practice Brunette Kruger Stoffberg & Hugo. "Ons het dit direk met KB hulle en die bouer gedoen sonder 'n argitek (in 4 maande)" (De la Bat, 2011: e-mail 17th April). A subsequent message qualifies the timing: "Het in Augustus besluit op 'n tydelike koshuis en die staalstruktuur met gasbeton panele was middel Desember [1978] klaar" (De la Bat, 2011: e-mail 20 April). However, on enquiry by Cas Nel, Bruinette conceded that the design had been sub-contracted to Daan Kesting (Nel, 2007: facsimile, 31 July).
- 7 Nel, CJ (1970) *Groepvorming as Faktor in Manskoshuisbeplanning. 'n Argitektoniese sielkundige Ondersoek* (Group Formation as a Factor in the Planning of Male Student Residences. An architectural and psychological Investigation). Unpublished thesis for the degree M.Arch, University of Pretoria.
- 8 Afslaan was later relocated and despite the permanence of the pre-cast concrete boxes and the informal and rustic environment foreign to the usual concept of a university residence, the complex was demolished in 1998 when the site was sold and developed with higher density student accommodation (Nel, 2008: facsimile, 8 July).
- 9 According to Wilkins, I & Strydom, H (1978), the *Afrikaner Broederbond (AB)*, a secretive organization founded in 1918 to promote the economic and political interests of Afrikaners, was directly responsible for the establishment of RAU (*The Super-Afrikaners*. Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball). However, the names of neither RAU architect Meyer nor Van Wijk are included in the appendix. As the development of the RAU Phase 2 residences fell within the period of AB-chairmanship of RAU rector Viljoen, 1974-80, it is possible that membership might have been a consideration in the solo appointment.
- 10 On the retirement of Van Wijk the practice in Johannesburg became known as Nel Wilreker Partnership. In 2009 it was restyled SNOW Consultants Inc.
- 11 The layout of the buildings of the Engineering Faculty with a pathway radiating from a knuckle of the academic centre and parallel fingers of accommodation on the diagonal might be seen as an extension in acknowledgement of Meyer's original development plan or 1st *esquisse*, but is domestic in scale and material.
- 12 Ching, F & Jarzombek, M (2007) *A Global History of Architecture*; Muthesius, S (2002) *The Post-War University*; Frampton, K &

Kultermann,U (Eds) (2001) *World Architecture 1900-2000. A Critical Mosaic: Central and Southern Africa*; Elleh,N (1996) *African Architecture*. To this list should

be added the inclusion of RAU in Phaidon *Atlas of 20th Century Architecture* currently being compiled.

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Interpretative violence and Jacques Derrida's professed love of ruins

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In this paper I examine two texts by Jacques Derrida, written at the beginning of 1990s, his "Force of Law: The Mystical Foundation of Authority" and *Memoirs of the Blind: The Self Portrait and Other Ruins* written on the occasion of the exhibition Derrida curated at the Louvre. In the first text Derrida claims that deconstruction is justice because it is associated with the quest for reinterpretation of all criteriology, including all rules, associated with law. He goes on to explain how implementing the law in the name of justice is a violent procedure and necessarily entails at times a reinterpretation at other times a suspension or even destruction of law. I analyze his reading of *Memoirs of the Blind: The Self Portrait and Other Ruins* in the context of the preceding arguments about the force of law. Placing blindness at the origin of all drawing, favoring memory and not perception and arguing that sight and eyes are meant for crying, rather than seeing, Derrida promotes a violent reversal of values in art theory, in the name of justice. Promoting the marginal and the repressed is a result of an interpretative violence: Derrida puts at the highest rank of values criteria which are in a state of ruin, after years of repression and marginalization. Our filiations with them are consequently impure, contaminating, negotiated, bastard and violent. However, the ruin is not meant as a negative thing but as an index of mortality and an object of love.

Key words: interpretation, violence, law, art, ruins, Jacques Derrida

Ερμηνευτική βία και η αγάπη του Jacques Derrida για τα ερείπια

Στο κείμενο αυτό εξετάζω δύο κείμενα του Jacques Derrida τα οποία συντάχθηκαν στις αρχές του 1990, αφενός το «Ισχύς του νόμου. Η μυστική θεμελίωση της εξουσίας», αφετέρου το *Μνήμες τυφλών. Η αυτοπροσωπογραφία και άλλα ερείπια* που γράφτηκε με αφορμή την έκθεση που επιμελήθηκε ο Derrida στο Λούβρο. Στο πρώτο κείμενο ο Derrida ισχυρίζεται ότι η αποδόμηση είναι δικαιοσύνη διότι συνδέεται με το αίτημα για επανερμηνεία όλων των κριτηρίων και κανόνων που σχετίζονται με το νόμο. Ο Derrida εξηγεί πώς η εφαρμογή του νόμου στο όνομα της δικαιοσύνης είναι μια βίαιη διαδικασία που αναπόφευκτα συνεπάγεται τότε μια επανερμηνεία του νόμου τότε μια αναστολή και καταστροφή του. Προβάνω σε μια ανάλυση του κειμένου του *Μνήμες τυφλών. Η αυτοπροσωπογραφία και άλλα ερείπια* βασιζόμενος στις αναλύσεις του Derrida για την ισχύ του νόμου. Θεωρώντας την τυφλότητα ως την καταγωγή του σχεδίου, ευνοώντας την μνήμη έναντι της αντίληψης και προβάλλοντας το επιχείρημα ότι η όραση και τα μάτια δεν είναι για να βλέπουν αλλά για να κλαίνε, ο Derrida ουσιαστικά επιχειρεί μια βίαιη ανατροπή των μέχρι τώρα αξιών στη θεωρία της τέχνης, στο όνομα της δικαιοσύνης. Προάγοντας ό,τι μέχρι τώρα ήταν στο περιθώριο και είχε υποστεί καταπίεση είναι το αποτέλεσμα μιας ερμηνευτικής βίας: ο Derrida βάζει στην κορυφή, αξίες και κριτήρια που είναι σε κατάσταση ερείπιου μετά από χρόνια καταπίεσης και περιθωριοποίησης. Οι ίδιες οι σχέσεις μας με τις αξίες και τα κριτήρια αυτά, δεν είναι ως εκ τούτου αμιγείς αλλά είναι μολυσματικές, διαπραγματεύσιμες, μπασταρδεμένες και βίαιες. Ωστόσο το ερείπιο δε νοείται αρνητικά αλλά ως δείκτης θνητότητας και ως αντικείμενο αγάπης.

Λέξεις κλειδιά: ερμηνεία, βία, νόμος, τέχνη, ερείπια, Jacques Derrida

Meaghan Morris claims that "we live in an obscene world of 'hypervisibility: the terror of the all-too-visible, the voracity, the total promiscuity, the pure concupiscence of the gaze.'" (Jay 1994: 544, footnote 6). Reality has been transformed into images, Fredric Jameson asserts and Scott Lash contends that reality is "a figural, as distinct from discursive regime of signification" (Jay 1994: 544). At the same time, thinkers like Emmanuel Levinas and Jean Francois Lyotard advocate "an ethics of blindness" as Martin Jay states in his seminal *Downcast Eye: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth Century French Thought* (Jay 1994: 543) wherefrom all the previous citations originate. One way to read Jacques Derrida's *Memoirs of the Blind: The Self-Portrait and Other Ruins* (henceforth MOB) (Derrida 1993) is to examine this long exhibition catalogue essay in the broader context of its intellectual production, in which

Martin Jay allows us quite a valuable insight. Putting Derrida in context is a very useful way of approaching his work whose density and complex rhetoric makes it famously difficult to read.

However, this is not the course I shall follow here in this paper. I am more interested in an immanent reading which will give me the opportunity to clear my own standing and comprehension with regard to the aforementioned text by Derrida which I plan to examine together with his "Force of Law: 'The Mystical Foundation of Authority'" (henceforth FOL) (Jacques Derrida, 1992). It is not only that both texts were originally written in the years 1989 and 1990 and thus encourage this joint examination. It is also and more importantly, perhaps, that for many Derrida scholars, these two texts mark a turn in his career towards an explicit thematization of an ethicopolitical agenda, which, according to him, has always been there, in his work, anyway. I shall begin by examining a number of subjects from both MOB and FOL for my task is to examine how they bear on Derrida's work and elucidate the structural role they occupy in his thinking. It becomes therefore clear that I am interested in Derrida's method of thinking and writing.

The subjects I would like to dwell upon are violence, particularly that violence which relates to interpretation and the ruin and more concretely Derrida's professed love of ruins, i.e. of metaphors. I think that it is important to indicate at the outset that for Derrida, violence and ruin along with several other important notions of his work under consideration, like justice are not themes upon which reflection rests for a while but occupy a structural role in his work, that is to say, they contribute to its genesis and articulation. Derrida thus claims that deconstruction does not seem to foreground justice as a theme (Jacques Derrida 1992: 7). He gives a great emphasis to the fact that this is only seemingly so. For, in fact, many texts as well as many discourses on double affirmation, the gift, the undecidable etc., concern justice, even if they do not name justice as such (Jacques Derrida 1992: 7). It is very interesting that despite Derrida's general precaution against thinking of themes, namely against that thinking which only superficially dwells upon issues and ignores their great ramifications and consequences in the very writing itself, towards the end of the essay FOL, he returns to the theme of responsibility. Such a return is interesting because Derrida is fully aware that this return may seem like a contradiction and this is the reason why he makes sure that the reader does not miss it, by putting it in brackets "(yes, the theme)" (Jacques Derrida 1992: 63). My understanding is that while he counters thematic readings, in the superficial sense mentioned before, he does not exclude themes when these mean an explicit encounter with an issue, like responsibility. However his strategy of denial and espousal of thematic readings at the same time, needs to be further qualified but I hope to do this at a later stage.

Reversal as a deconstructive strategy

The strategy that Derrida follows in MOB is that of reversal. Reversal is a prominent deconstructive strategy and of course it is not the only one. According to his FOL:

Deconstruction is generally practiced in two ways or two styles, although it most often grafts one on to the other. One takes on the demonstrative and apparently ahistorical allure of logico-formal paradoxes. The other, more historical and more anamnestic, seems to proceed through readings of texts, meticulous interpretations and genealogies (Jacques Derrida 1992: 21).

Indeed, Derrida's gesture in MOB follows both ways or styles while grafting one on to the other. It suffices for a moment to consider the facts: one of the greatest museums of the world, the Louvre, an enormous depository of artworks celebrating vision as the noblest of human

senses and the privileged way to aesthetic admiration and knowledge, asks Derrida to curate an exhibition. He responds by proposing an exhibition about memory and blindness, rather than perception and vision. He furthermore claims that the eye is destined to weep and not to see because tears and imploration obviously blur vision (Derrida 1993: 126, 122, 127). Finally, he examines all those cases in which blindness plays an important role in the production of drawing: either because the hands and fingers direct drawing and produce a tactile image (Derrida 1993: 9), or because some draftsmen aim at capturing the condition of sight which is invisible (Derrida 1993: 16) or even because the intoxication of the pencil or the brush amount to a frenzy that makes the draftsman look at the lines and not at the model and thus distracts him/her from vision (Derrida 1993: 36, 48). Derrida supplements his analysis by proclaiming that “the fidelity of faith matters more” than the fidelity of representation (Derrida 1993: 30). “And faith is blind. It sacrifices sight” (Derrida 1993: 30).

Derrida obviously reverses the logic and form of the museum convention to the extent that usually museums tacitly privilege vision and perceptual knowledge to the detriment of blindness, memory and faith. These latter are arguably ascribed a secondary status in the institution of any fine art museum. Derrida’s logico-formal reversal creates a paradox for what was hitherto marginalized suddenly comes to the fore, is given a voice and is assigned a place. Nietzsche has been famous for the reversals to which his thinking aspired, the most celebrated of which must perhaps be the reversal of Platonism (Nietzsche 1990: 31, 32).¹ However Derrida’s reversal does not aim at putting what was previously marginal in the center and casting aside in the margins what was hitherto in the center. His reversal is one that seems to aim at dissemination, at a diaspora of voices without aspirations for hierarchical replacements. According to Derrida:

This question [of the rhetoric of the trait] does not aim at restoring an authority of speech over sight, of word over drawing, or of legend over inscription. It is, rather, a matter of understanding how this hegemony could have imposed itself (Derrida 1993: 56).

Therefore Derrida’s strategy of reversal aims at a greater understanding and at an increased consciousness about hegemonic regimes. It would however be wrong to assume that Derrida’s deconstructive reading does not aspire to something more consequential than an increased understanding. For, according to Derrida,

They [people like Stanley Fish, Barbara Herrnstein Smith, Drucilla Cornell, Sam Weber and others] respond, it seems to me, to the most radical programs of deconstruction that would like, in order to be consistent with itself, not to remain enclosed in purely speculative, theoretical, academic discourses but rather (with all due respect to Stanley Fish) to aspire to something more consequential, to change things and to intervene in an efficient and responsible, though of course always very mediated way, not only in the profession but in what one calls the *cit  *, the *polis* and more generally the world. Not, doubtless, to change things in the rather na  ve sense of calculated, deliberate and strategically controlled intervention, but in the sense of a maximum intensification in progress, in the name of neither a simple symptom nor a simple cause (other categories are required here). In an industrial and hyper-technologized society, academia is less than ever the monadic or monastic ivory tower that in any case it never was (Jacques Derrida 1992: 8, 9).

Derrida’s reversal of museum values is the product of an interpretative violence: what was previously neglected suddenly and by an interpretative coup de force comes to the fore and acquires a voice. I would like to argue that this reversal takes place in the name of justice. For Derrida, by this reversal apparently deconstructs the museum apparatus, its concomitant values and established hierarchies. Deconstruction is justice and justice is “the possibility of deconstruction” (Jacques Derrida 1992: 15). Precisely because Derrida attempts to address the other, i. e. memory rather than perception, belief rather than knowledge, blindness rather than

vision, that is those values situated at the very opposite end of established museum values, this is the reason why his attempt takes place in the name of justice (Jacques Derrida 1992: 17). I think that the question is neither to bring to the center what was hitherto marginalized, nor to leave it in its margin but rather to change the concepts of the margins and the margins of the concepts towards the direction of a more open society.

The impossible totality of the ruin as the agency of deconstruction

The question of the subject of deconstruction, who is that who deconstructs, has always been intriguing for those studying Derrida's writings. Although Derrida, in the entirety of his late writings, always and persistently comes back to this question, the two texts under consideration treat the problem in a different way. In MOB, a performative together with a theoretical answer are furnished while in FOL the subject of the agency of deconstruction is treated on the level of the text alone. In MOB the text is organized as a dialogue between two voices, the one more conspicuously narrative than the other, the other casting doubts, asking questions and offering remarks and objections. It seems that the first is a man's voice and the second a woman's. Then, Derrida refers to the many blind men in history and to the subject of tears that is usually attributed to women in art history (Derrida 1993: 5, 17, 18, 127). By siding with tears and claiming that eyes are there to weep rather than see, by stating that "only man knows how to go beyond seeing and knowing because only he knows how to weep and this is what distinguishes him as rational animal (Derrida 1993: 126), Derrida makes a gesture towards women in his essay: he grants to their condition a priority for humanity.

Furthermore, Derrida's intimations about his accident that almost blinded him and took place at the time when he had to write his essay (Derrida 1993: 32) for the Louvre as well as his several memoirs involving his family, his mother, his jealousy towards his brother's talent in drawing (Derrida 1993: 37) make clear that the person who is writing is a contingent person who feels pain, hunger and sleep, is torn by passions and goes to the bathroom. The subject of writing, the agency of deconstruction is therefore not a transcendental ego: it is rather an ordinary person like most of us. Derrida's autobiographical strategy was inaugurated by Søren Kierkegaard who rejected Hegel's systemic totality and abstract spirituality in favor of the incommensurable truth of the individual. I think that Derrida consciously aligns himself in the Kierkegaardian tradition of indirect communication with his reader which however makes this reader directly involved in his thinking.

Besides sexual difference and autobiography, providing the coordinates of the agency of deconstruction, Derrida introduces one further strategy. He attempts to reflect upon the animal in itself but most importantly upon the Aristotelian designation *animale rationale*, ζῷον λόγον ἔχοντα, which has steadily been exerting a very long fascination on him throughout his texts. There are several indications from Greek mythology that the question of the animal, its ontology and its relation to humans has been a perennial issue for thinking. This is apparently the reason why the Greeks devised creatures in between the states of animalism and humanity, like Gorgons and Cyclops that Derrida mentions (Derrida 1993: 56) but also Medusas, Sphinxes and Centaurs. In his reading of Martin Heidegger's famous dictum from *Being and Time* that man alone dies and animals only perish (Heidegger 1962: 291), Derrida asks how Heidegger infers such a conclusion after having argued that each and everyone of us dies on his own and there is no access to the other's death (Derrida, *Aporias*, 1993: 75, 76). Furthermore, Derrida continues, one does not have a proper access to the animal world in the first place and is therefore obliged in both cases, in the death of a human and in the death of the animal to be based on indications

alone. If this is indeed so, then we also have several indications that animals as well die, that they are capable of death, like humans (Derrida, *Aporias*, 1993: 75, 76). By this argument, Derrida blurs the distinction between animalism and humanity. And yet, in MOB, Derrida brings up the difference between animals and humans again, pushing this time not to the direction of contact but to the opposite end of separation. He thus claims that animals have sight and not a gaze, as humans have (Derrida, *Aporias*, 1993: 75, 76). Furthermore, he states that only man, apparently in contrast to animals, knows how to go beyond seeing and knowing because only he, knows how to weep (Derrida, *Aporias*, 1993: 126). Finally, in FOL Derrida claims that justice concerns only humans and not animals and what

we confusedly call “animal,” the living thing as living and nothing else, is not a subject of the law or of law (*droit*). The opposition between just and unjust has no meaning in this case. As for trials for animals (there have been some) or lawsuits against those who inflict certain kinds of suffering on animals (legislation in certain Western countries provides for this and speaks not only of the rights of man but also of the rights of animals in general), these are considered to be either archaisms or still marginal and rare phenomena not constitutive of our culture. In our culture, carnivorous sacrifice is fundamental, dominant, regulated by the highest industrial technology, as is biological experimentation on animals-so vital to our modernity. As I have tried to show elsewhere, carnivorous sacrifice is essential to the structure of subjectivity, which is also to say to the founding of the intentional subject and to the founding, if not of the law, at least of law (*droit*), the difference between the law and law (*droit*), justice and law (*droit*), justice and the law here remaining open over an abyss (Jacques Derrida 1992: 18, 19).¹

But who is finally we? Derrida claims that “we men, means we adult, white male Europeans, carnivorous and capable of sacrifice” (Jacques Derrida 1992: 18). The human subject, including the subject and agency of deconstruction is “preferably and paradigmatically the adult male, rather than woman, child or animal” (Jacques Derrida 1992: 19). And yet, precisely because the human subject is a ruin i.e. in a state of a ruin, it leaves open space for other voices to express themselves through its worn out conceptual basis and those voices are exactly those of woman, animal, and child, the latter not being thematized in the texts under consideration.

I think that the question of the animal remains open by Derrida in the texts under consideration, for he seems to wish to maintain and cancel the separation between humans and animals, at the same time. What remains is “the reverberation of several voices” (Derrida 1993: 64) more in Derrida’s MOB, less in FOL. What is also interesting is that some of these voices may not be human. The agency of deconstruction in Derrida is a fragmented and contingent individual, conscious of the other and dependent on her/him, to the point of lending her/his voice to women and animals. Therefore, the agency of deconstruction is an open totality. But any open totality lacks integration and specificity precisely because its openness defies its total character. As a consequence, it would be more correct and closer to Derrida’s spirit, to say that the agency of deconstruction is “an impossible totality” (Derrida 1993: 68). This is precisely how Derrida defines the ruin, as an impossible totality. The agency then is a ruin.

The ruin, as the specter, are terms to which Derrida returns now and again. What they have in common is their intermediary status between fiction and reality, between memory, delusion and perception, between past and present. They have an undecidable ontological status and a strong transitional character. All those concepts which belong to the philosophical apparatus and deconstruction finds wanting, incomplete and precarious, are in a state of ruin. However, the ruin is not solely something coming after the fact, after a certain philosophical apogee in 19th century or at some other time as much as it is true that Derrida alludes to this very employment of ruin. Derrida privileges the more structural concept of the ruin that he situates at the origin of all things (Derrida 1993: 65). “For the incompleteness of the visual monument comes from the

eclipsing structure of the trait” (Derrida 1993: 68). The trait, the sign of all things, human and inhuman, withdraws or retreats without being sensible or intelligible (Derrida 1993: 55). What I think that Derrida means is that the trait is both sensible and intelligible but neither purely sensible nor purely intelligible. The condition of the trait calls for and forbids representation, i.e. it places representation within certain limits. Therefore in Derrida’s universe, in his cosmos, navigation is not solely a matter of perception and knowledge but also a matter of memory and faith.

I do not see the ruin as a negative thing. First of all, it is clearly not a thing. And then, I would love to write, maybe with or following Benjamin, maybe against Benjamin, a short treatise on love of ruins. What else is there to love, anyway? One cannot love a monument, a work of architecture, an institution as such except in an experience itself precarious in its fragility: it hasn’t always been there, it will not always be there, it is finite. And for this very reason I love it as mortal, through its birth and its death, through the ghost or the silhouette of its ruin, of my own-which it already is or already prefigures. How can we love except in this finitude? Where else would the right to love, indeed the love of right, come from? (*D’où viendrait autrement le droit d’aimer, voire l’amour du droit?*) (Jacques Derrida 1992: 44).

In conclusion, the ruin is a metaphor. However, Derrida’s metaphorical way of expression has caused a lot of turmoil and has been considered an anathema by established, academic philosophy. As mentioned in Derrida’s *Margins of Philosophy*, metaphors, since they admittedly cannot be exorcized by philosophical discourse, ought to be multiplied, so that we may finally sort them out and evaluate them for what they are (Derrida 1982: xvii). Besides this explanation however, metaphors encourage interpretation and capture the reader’s attention as they promote a freer and less rigid philosophical style, akin to literature. Metaphors also allow the reader a greater liberty in interpretation than what is usually permitted in philosophy. Metaphor therefore and the taste of it, contribute to Derrida’s Kierkegaardian indirect communication with the reader. Thus Derrida’s interpretative violence does not aim to restrict the viewer but honors as well as addresses her/his individual capacity for interpretation.

Notes

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| 1 | It is Gilles Deleuze who actually coined the phrase <i>reversal of Platonism</i> and whose reading makes explicit Nietzsche’s polemic against Plato (Deleuze 1969: 292-307). | Heidegger. If indeed there is no privileged access to the animal world by us, humans, there is no way in which we can defend Derrida’s theses that animals do not have a gaze, that they do not know how to weep and more importantly that justice does not concern them. It is difficult not to address to him the very question that he, himself, addressed to Heidegger: how does he know? |
| 2 | It is however difficult to accept these last qualifications of Derrida regarding the separation between humans and animals, if one takes seriously his own critique against | |

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Potshards of Zig-Zag cave at Port St Johns, Eastern Cape, South Africa

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Ceramic pots which once were whole and in use by peoples many centuries ago have, in most instances along the Eastern Cape coast of southern Africa, become fragmented and buried below consecutive layers of sand, soil, vegetation, and leftovers of people's lives. Yet, such potshards also pop up and become revealed as coverings move and peoples disturb resting places. Their omnipresence in parts of the archaeological landscape of this region has led several writers to record their presence and speculate as to various significances during the past century. This article, with reference to some ideas of ruination, takes a look at ceramic artifacts excavated at Zig-Zag and Umgazana caves in and near Port St Johns [with contextualization mainly from the likes of PW Laidler (1929), as well as from EC Chubb, G Burnam King and MA Mogg (1934); and from J Schofield's researches in the 1930s] as part of a process aimed at further establishing a setting for the visual arts milieu of contemporary rural potter Alice Gqa Nongebeza, who works in that area.

Key words: First-Millennium Agriculturist potters, ceramics praxis, bonfired ceramics, prehistoric southern African potshards, pots and potters of Pondoland.

Iintsalela zoMqolomba i-Zig-Zag eSajonisi, kwiphondo leMpuma Kapa eMzantsi Afrika

Iimbiza zeselamikh i ezazingaphazamisekanga kwithuba elingaphambili kwaye zisetyenziswa ngabantu kwiinkulungwane ezininzi ezigqithileyo, kumaxa amaninzi ezinye zazo ugugutha ngonxweme lweMpuma Kapa kumazantsi eAfrika zaphasalaka zangcwabeka ngaphantsi kwemigangatho emininzi yesanti, umhlaba, izityalo kwakunye neentsalela zokuphila kwabantu. Kunjalo, ezintsalela ziyavela kwaye zibonakale njengokuba izinto ezizigqumileyo zisuka kwaye nabantu beluphazamisa uchwangco lweezondawo. Ukubakho kwazo kwindawo ezithile kulomhlaba walengingqi ukhokelele ababhali abaninzi ngokubhala ngobukho bazo benze namaqashiso ngokubaluleka kwazo okwahlukaklukaneyo kwinkulungwane egqithileyo. Eliphepha, ngokumayela neembono zeentsalela, liza kuthi lijonge kwiintsalela zeselamikh ezombiwe kwimiqolomba yaseZig-Zag naseUmgazana eSajonisi nakufuphi neSajonisi [igxile ikakhulu kubantu abafana no-PW Laidler (1929), kunye nesuka ku EC Chubb, G Burnam no-MA Mogg (1934) kwakunye nakumaphando athe enziwa ngu-J Schofield ngeminyaka yo-1930] njengenxalenye yenkqubo enjongo ikukuseka nokuphuhlisa ngokupheleleyo indawo yenkcubeko esiyibonayo kwelishesha siphila kulo ngomxongxi wodongwe wasemaphandleni u-Alice Gqa Nongebeza, osebenza kulangingqi.

Amagama amaqatshelwe: Abaxongxi bezolimo kwinkulungwane yokuqala, ukutshintshatshintsha nokujonga kokusetyenziswa kodongwe, iselamikh etshiswe emlilweni, iintsalela kumaZantsi eAfrica phambi kwenkcubeko, abaxongxi bodongwe neembiza basemaMpondweni.

Themes of ruin and ruination got me thinking about, amongst other things, my life and associated hopes and dreams, some of which have and are coming together, and of others which have become modified and / or collapsed with the passing of time. One of my many optimisms as a young adult was that I could subsist largely off the land and the fruits of my labor in a remote place and live happily ever after. I should have known better. In the process of finding that out I settled in a small Eastern Cape village called Rhodes, in the Eastern Cape Witteberge on the border of Lesotho and, with help, transformed a ruined mud brick dwelling into a home while also working as a potter on a kick wheel and firing with old engine oil because the nearest ESCOM power lines ended more than 60 km away in Barkly East. Our home, in Sauer Street, still stands, but the studio was sold about 20 years ago and has become a ruin (figure 1).



Figure 1

Left: Our Rhodes village home that we fixed up from being a ruin in the mid-1970s.

Right: The Rhodes village studio in which I became a potter during the 1970s, now a ruin after having been sold about 20 years ago (Photographs: the author, 2011).

It was during the decade from the mid-1970s that, with our young family, we used to occasionally trundle over the mountains at Barkly Pass and Satan's Nek to Engcobo, and then head for holidays at pristine coastlines such as those of Port St Johns in Pondoland, which is when my interest in pots and potters of that region was kindled. In those days, when much of the trip was on gravel roads, we usually stopped off at a favorite place in the shade of some large trees to view and sometimes purchase pots being sold alongside the R61 between Mthatha and Port St Johns. It has turned out that this spot at the Mthlala turn off ($31^{\circ}37'40.77''S$; $29^{\circ}22'42.52''E$) in the Tombo area is close to the home of octogenarian potter Alice Gqa Nongebeza (figure 2).

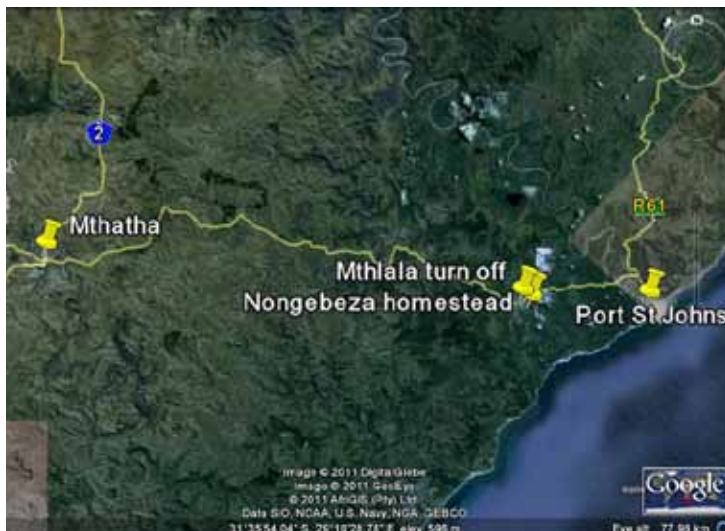


Figure 2

Left: Google Earth map showing proximity of Nongebeza homestead and Port St Johns (accessed on 18th June 2011).

Right: Alice Gqa Nongebeza (Photo: John Costello, 2010).

I am not sure whether some of the pots purchased at the Mthlala turnoff, and in Port St Johns, on these trips were made by her or not, but it did transpire that we were destined to be introduced properly in the late 1980s, by which stage I was working at the Ikhwezi Lokusa Pottery in Mthatha. Our early connection as fellow potters has developed since then, thereby contributing to my ongoing interest in both participating in and documentation of her contemporary ceramics

praxis (Steele 2007, 2009, and Steele *et al* 2010), and to this paper's effort at further partial contextualization of that setting by looking back further into the past to get some sense of what has been written and recorded by some researchers and archaeologists about early ceramics in the Port St Johns area.

Potshards in the archaeological record, as with early buildings, are things that started out as ideas which were acted upon using raw materials that were altered to create something such as a vessel or structure which occupied space and fulfilled certain aesthetic and other functions. Likewise, surviving pieces of pots and architectural traces from past times nowadays hint at initial shape and design, these parts of original wholes now taking on new "lives" as at least partial "texts about the past" (Ankersmit 2005: xiv).



Figure 3

Top left: Coarse clay potshards on the beach at Shelly Beach at West Bank, and at Kayser's Beach, bottom left, near East London (photographs: the author, 2004).

Above: Illustrations of potshards from Canasta Place, at East London, thought to have been made by First-Millennium Agriculturist [EIA] potters, c. AD 790-857 (Nogwaza 1994: 105).

Potshards of prehistoric and unknown origins can be found in abundance (figure 3) in the Eastern Cape, both just lying about amongst the perpetually moving coastal sand dunes such as at Shelly Beach on West Bank (33°02'35.24"S; 27°36'42.65"E) and at Kayser's Beach (33°12'35.24"S; 27°36'42.65"E) near East London, as well as at documented prehistoric coastal sites such as at Canasta Place (32°40'10.52"S; 28°29'05.79"E, Nogwaza 1994) in East London, and at Mpame (32°04'58.88"S; 29°04'12.66"E, Hall & Vogel 1980; Cronin 1982) on the Wild Coast towards Port St Johns. Potshards at the latter two sites have been dated to between approximately AD 769 and 874 (Binneman 1996a: 30). Similarly dated prehistoric ceramics, often also featuring deeply engraved Kalundu Tradition (Binneman 1996a) geometric designs, have likewise been excavated at (figure 4) the First-Millennium Agriculturist village sites -also known as Early Iron Age sites, cf Steele 2001- of Kulubele (32°25'00"S; 27°52'00"E, Binneman 1996a) and

Ntsitsana (31°04'00"S; 29°12'00"E, Prins & Granger 1993), quite close to East London and Mthatha respectively.

Of various early writers who showed a fascination for pots and potshards of this region it is Percy Laidler (1929), a medical officer of health stationed in East London during the 1920's and 1930s, who is credited with having written the first "typology of southern African archaeological ceramics, a ... comprehensive classification of southern African pottery, both ethnographic and archaeological" (Sadr 2008: 104). It turned out, however, that Laidler (1929: 779) did not have much success in finding potentially prehistoric ceramics in the Port St Johns area, reporting that in this region he found "only a single small shard of squared lipped neck with incised string pattern. It is 5mm. thick at the lip and rapidly increases [in thickness] to 1 cm. at 2cm. depth". He also observed of this shard, which is regrettably not even illustrated, that the clay "body has a coarse natural admix, and the surface has a red burnish".

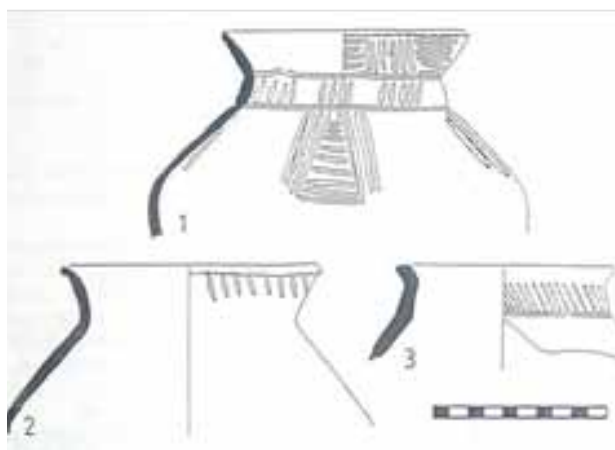


Figure 4

Top left: Google Earth map, accessed 17th June 2011.

Left: Examples of Ntsitsana ceramics (Prince and Granger 1993: 160).

Above: Examples of Kulubele potshards showing some different engravings (Binneman 1996b: 72).

The next publication of note which made mention of ceramics in the Port St Johns area came from Chubb, Burnham King and Mogg in 1934. They reported on what is probably the first relatively carefully documented archaeological excavation undertaken for the area near which Alice Gqa Nongebeza presently lives. They, in what Robin Derricourt (1977: 5) has described as a "well ordered dig", investigated the layout and contents at a cave (figure 5) located at the mouth of the Mngazana River (31°41'33.69"S 29°25'16.65"E), situated just slightly south of

Port St Johns, access in those days requiring a journey inland then back towards the coast of “20 miles [32.2km] by road from Port St Johns to the Umgazana Trading Store, then a journey of three miles [4.8km] by boat down the river” (Chubb *et al* 1934: 245). It is interesting to note that the journey to Umgazana Trading Store from Port St Johns would probably have been via Tombo and the Mthlala turnoff, and that in fact Umgazana River Mouth is only a few kilometres as the crow flies towards the coast from the Nongebeza homestead.



Figure 5

Above: Entrance to the cave at Umgazana River Mouth, situated in Quaternary Dune (photograph: John Costello, 2011).

Right: Stone tools illustrated included

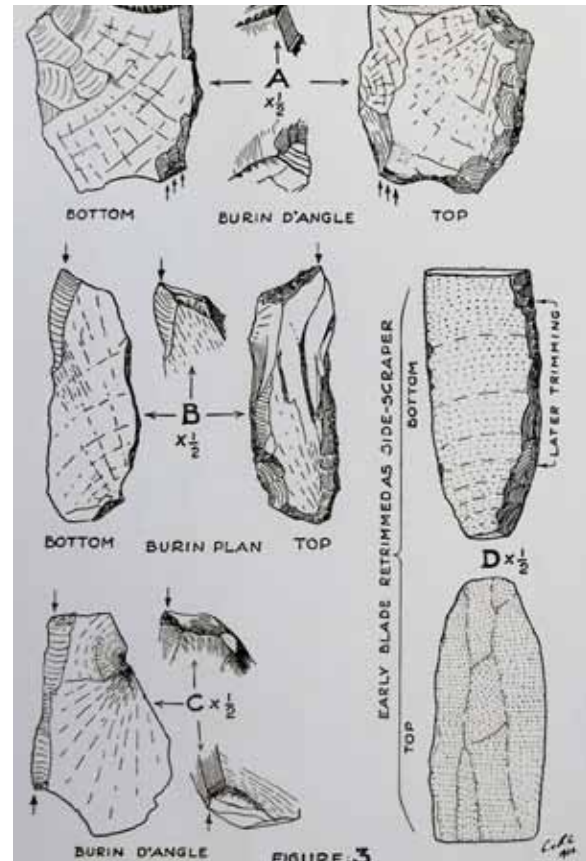
“A: Much worked double-ended *burin d’angle*, showing hollow secondary trimming immediately adjacent to the burin below.

B: *Burin-plan* and side-scraper combined.

C: Double-ended *burin d’angle*.

D: Broken Mossel Bay type blade retrimmed as a side scraper”.

Drawings are by C van Riet Lowe, signed and dated 1933 (Chubb, Burnam King, and Mogg 1934: 266).



Chubb *et al* (1934: 247) described the cave as being situated “on the seashore ... facing south-east and the floor of its entrance is only 7 feet [2.1m] above present high water at spring tides”. The authors also commented that “the cave is a funnel shaped aperture ... 20 yards [18.3m] wide at the entrance” and “is 7 yards [6.4m] wide at 17 yards [15.5m] from the entrance” with a floor that “slopes up from the entrance”.

Excavation results revealed “abundant evidence of prehistoric occupation” (Chubb *et al* 1934: 245-262) as indicated by extensive stratigraphy as well as by presence of stone and bone tools, human burials including that of “a very young child”, and lots of potshards in the upper levels of the deposits. These ceramic fragments are described as “shards of coarse black pottery, containing grit ... forms represented are spherical, with round, or slightly flat bases”. Other useful observations include remarks about engravings, seen to only have been placed “around the rim ... [consisting] of simple forms impressed before baking”. It was also noted that among excavated ceramics “there are no lugs on any of the shards, but one has a conical

hole that has evidently been bored into it after the pot was baked”. There are, regrettably, no further comments pertaining to ceramics, nor any illustrations thereof, despite that excavated stone tools, for example, were extensively discussed and depicted, thereby showing that those researchers did not regard presence of ceramics potshards at this site as being of much interest at all.

John Schofield, writing a few years later in 1938 was, however, much more meticulous about recording ceramics and deliberately set out to rectify that omission after having announced (1938: 327) that “it is important that all finds of pottery ... should be fully described”. He went on to provide an excellent example of exactly what he meant by this in the form of a carefully drawn to scale documentation of what he had seen upon inspection of material lodged at the Durban Museum by Chubb, Burnham King, and Mogg, from both the Umgazana and Zig-Zag caves (figures 6 and 7), the latter site at Port St Johns being, in the 1970s, only “accessible at low tide” (Derricourt 1977: 128).



Figure 6
Supposed locality of Zig-Zag cave, south of the lighthouse at the Umzimvubu River Mouth at Port St Johns (Map: John Costello, 2011).

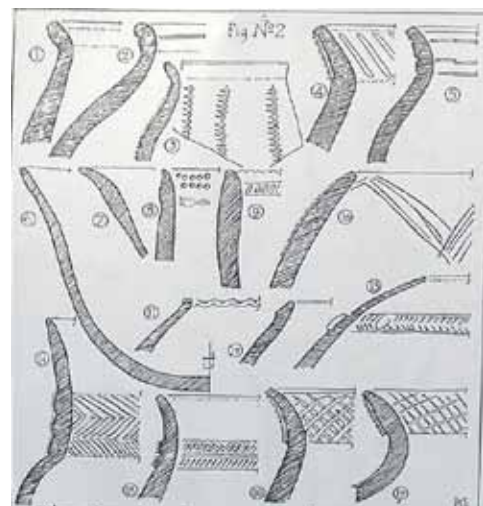
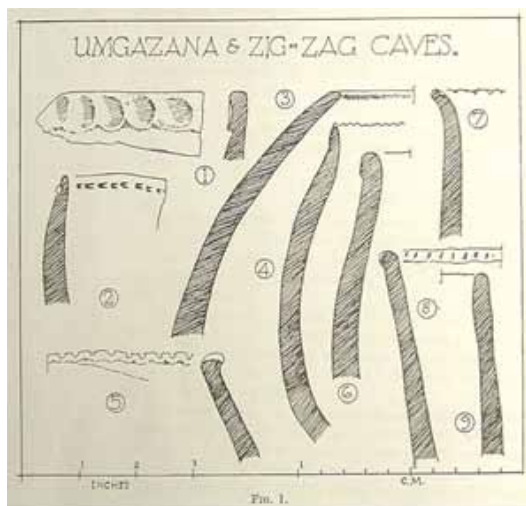


Figure 7
Left: Schofield's illustrations of Umgazana and Zig-Zag cave ceramics (1938: 328), which can be compared with examples, right, of what he described as "Natal coastal pottery" (1937: 1005).

Derricourt (1977: 128) has noted that in the 1970s the Zig-Zag cave was known locally as “Mbogintwini”, which he said could be found to lie about “1 km by path along the coast from Cape Hermes, south of Port St Johns. After a bay of large cobbles ... is a series of rocky protrusions into the sea ... between which lies the small cave”. This description of how to find the site fits with that of John Costello, a local resident of Port St Johns, who in discussions (2011) was of the opinion that the Zig-Zag cave itself has become a ruin, and has largely disappeared, hinting thereby also to ideas of aspects of “nature as ruin” as explored by Ginsberg (2004: 201-220). Costello maintains that Zig-Zag cave is disappearing because the coastline itself is friable and subject to high impact oceanic conditions (in conversation, 2011).

With regard to ceramics excavated at Umgazana and Zig-Zag caves Schofield (1938: 327-332) has indicated, referring to his illustrations of 1938, that items 1-4 originate from Umgazana cave, and 5-9 from Zig-Zag cave. He confirmed observations by Chubb *et al* (1934) of impressed decoration located on or near rims, and was able to reconstruct vessels #3 and #4 which he described respectively as a “large Spherical Pot” and a “small-shouldered Bowl”. He also described other shapes coming from Umgazana cave as being of three main types, firstly “Circular Dishes - the sides slope towards the center at an angle of about 45°”, as well as, secondly, a type he called “Beaker Bowls - the sides are more or less vertical, #1, and it would appear that the bases were flat”, as well as, thirdly, a type he called “Spherical Pots - of large size and similar to modern wares”. Schofield (1938: 327-332) also commented that Zig-Zag cave ceramics were “similar to those from Umgazana but with a greater preponderance of beaker bowls, some of which were of large size”.

John Schofield also made some general observations regarding the Umgazana cave ceramics assemblage including that “the pottery is exceedingly rough, but some attempt has been made to obtain a smooth surface” (1938: 328), as well as that there are several notable “features ... such as the notched edge of #4, and the stylus impressions of #2” (1938: 329), and that there is little to distinguish these from some “wares found on other coastal sites in Natal” (1938: 328), although the latter feature a much higher percentage of strongly everted necks as well as deeply engraved geometric designs applied to wet clay prior to firing.

It has been confirmed by Karim Sadr and Garth Sampson, in their authoritative survey of 2006 pertaining to available radiocarbon dates for archaeological sites and artefacts in southern Africa, that no reliable dates have, even long after initial excavations took place, been ascertained for items from either Umgazana or Zig-Zag caves. Yet it has by now become clear that extensive stylistic differences in ceramics praxis and shape was at least a partial indicator of possible differences in eras and peoples responsible for creation of such works. It thus became noted with a reasonable amount of certainty that the Umgazana and Zig-Zag caves assemblages stood in direct contrast to such South Coast Basin ceramics (figure 8) as were, for example, documented for sites closer to Cape Town, as have been illustrated in Rudner 1979, among others. This was clear because Umgazana and Zig-Zag caves assemblages just did not feature “any trace of ... internally reinforced lugs, [nor] thin well-burnt ware, and ovoid forms” (Schofield 1938: 328).

This point has stood the test of time, and unlike the Zig-Zag cave, still stands as firmly as it did in those early days of archaeological assessments of prehistoric ceramic types present in the southern African landscape. Several significances emerge from Schofield’s observation on the absence of thin walled fibre tempered well-burnt ware in these assemblages, including that Umgazana and Zig-Zag works cannot be associated with earliest southern African ceramics, dating to approximately “2000 years ago”, such oldest ceramics being of a “thin-walled and smooth surfaced” style (Sadr & Sampson 2006: 235), perhaps even locally and independently

invented in southern Africa by “autochthonous hunter-gatherers ... [perhaps living] in the upper Karoo region of South Africa” (Sadr & Sampson 2006: 247).

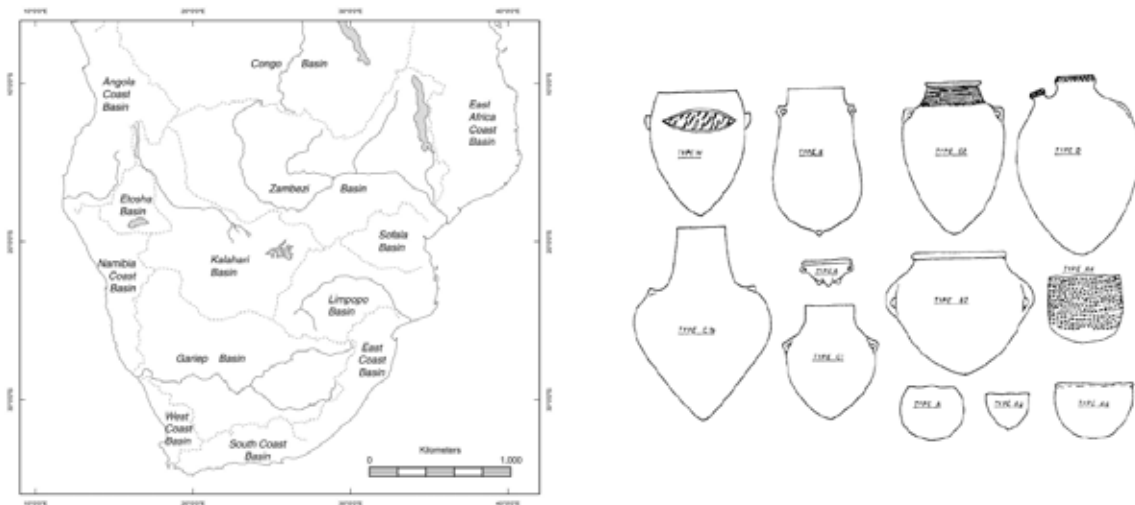


Figure 8

Left: Greater southern Africa showing East and South Coast Basins respectively (Sadr 2008: 107).

Right: Illustrations (Rudner 1979: 11, 13) of Khoikhoi ceramics from mainly southerly East and South Coast Basin regions. These vessels are usually of a thin-walled, fibre-tempered type (Sadr & Sampson 2006: 248), sometimes featuring internally reinforced lugs.

Also, by way of further contextualising the Port St Johns area ceramics, it turns out that Gavin Whitelaw (in press: 137), archaeologist and chief curator of the Human Science Department of the Natal Museum, has largely confirmed Schofield’s classifications, and thereby indicated association of Umgazana and Zig-Zag thick walled coarse surfaced assemblages with farmers northwards both along the coast and inland in the East Coast Basin.

In essence, Whitelaw’s (in press: 136, 137, citing also Huffman 1982, 2001; Kuper 1982; Guy 1987; Whitelaw 1994, 1994/95; Greenfield & Van Schalkwyk 2003) reconstruction is that early farmers first entered present day KwaZulu-Natal and then Eastern Cape spaces “in the mid-fifth century AD” and that archaeological evidence indicates that such “farming societies have been patrilineal and hierarchical, with status defined in terms of concepts such as age and gender”. He has also suggested that ceramics and other evidence points to “earliest farmers belonging to the Urewe tradition”, with other “Kalundu tradition” (figure 9) farmers following “in mid-seventh century”, settling throughout both “the coastal and bushveld regions of KwaZulu-Natal and further south, reaching the western limits of summer rainfall probably by 750AD” (Whitelaw, in press: 137).

Of direct relevance to situating the ceramics of Umgazana and Zig-Zag caves within this big picture is to first note (figure 10) that there is an absence of vessels with strongly everted necks featuring deeply engraved geometric designs of the style characteristic of Kalundu Tradition ceramics previously seen to be evident on potshards excavated at Eastern Cape sites such as Canasta Place, Kulubele, and Ntsitsana. Whitelaw (in press: 137) has also usefully added, in this regard, that out of Urewe Tradition ceramics a sub-branch type known as “Blackburn” emerged by the “mid-eleventh century ... [this] facies being associated with the earliest Nguni speakers in southern Africa”. Blackburn ceramics (Beater & Maud 1963, Davies 1971, Robey 1980) are characterized by “Rim notching, spaced motifs, chevrons, punctates and appliqué” type surface treatments (Huffman 2007: 157).

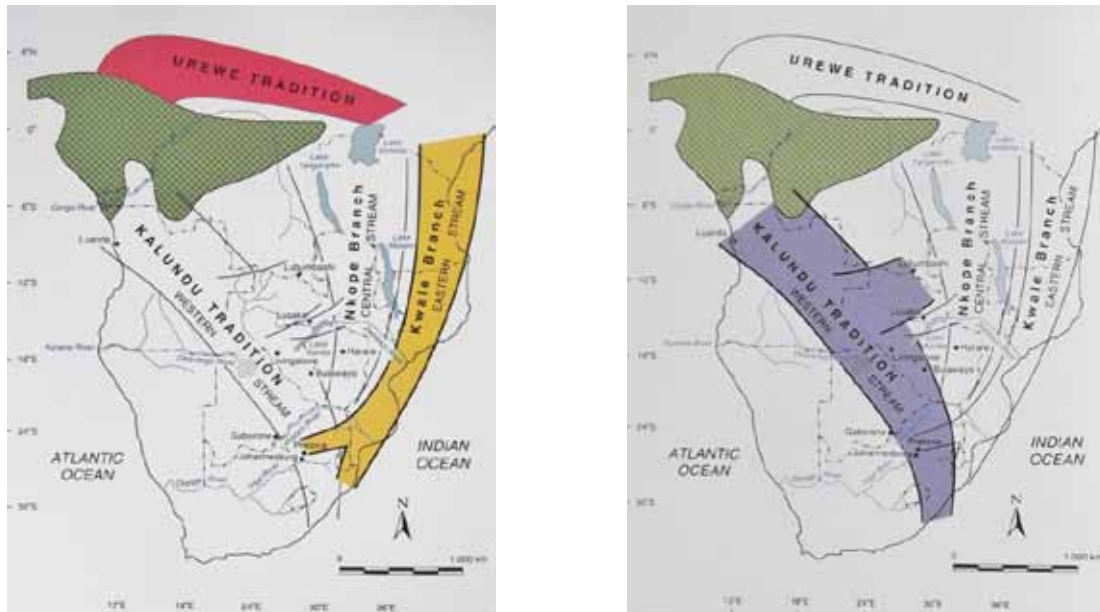


Figure 9

Gavin Whitelaw (in press) and Tom Huffman (2007) agree that prehistoric southern African thick walled coarse surfaced ceramics are usually associated with farmers moving into present day KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape, earliest “Urewe Tradition ... farmers of the mid-fifth century ... being followed by Kalundu Tradition farmers ... in the mid-seventh century (Whitelaw, in press 136, 137).

Presence of ceramics respectively attributed to such farmers has been graphically represented, above left and right, by Tom Huffman (2007: 122, 212).



Figure 10

Left: Examples of Kalundu Tradition (Huffman 2007: 306 showing Msuluzi style) ceramics of a similar style to have been seen on Canasta Place, Kulubele, and Ntsitsana potshards.

Centre: Examples of Blackburn style ceramics (Huffman 2007: 157).

Right: Examples of Moor Park style ceramics (Huffman 2007: 161).

Moreover, Whitelaw (in press: 137) maintains that “Blackburn develops into the Moor Park facies (figure 11), which in KwaZulu-Natal has dates of 1300-1650/1700 ... [and that] Umgazana Ware resembles ... for the most part Moor Park” type of ceramics, key features of which include “punctates, rim notching, and appliqué” surface treatments (Huffman 2007: 159-161, referring

also to Davies 1974, Derricourt 1977, Mazel 1997, Pistorius 2001, as well as to Whitelaw 2000 and 2001). Thus, despite that “Umgezana Ware was originally known only from the Pondoland coast” (Whitelaw, in press: 137) it has more recently been shown to be stylistically linked to ware further north, and furthermore, Whitelaw (in press: 137) has also pointed out (figure 12) that Simon Hall (1986) has “recovered shards with Moor Park-like lip notching from north of Grahamstown ... dating to the fifteenth century”, thereby stretching connections southwards from Port St Johns as well.

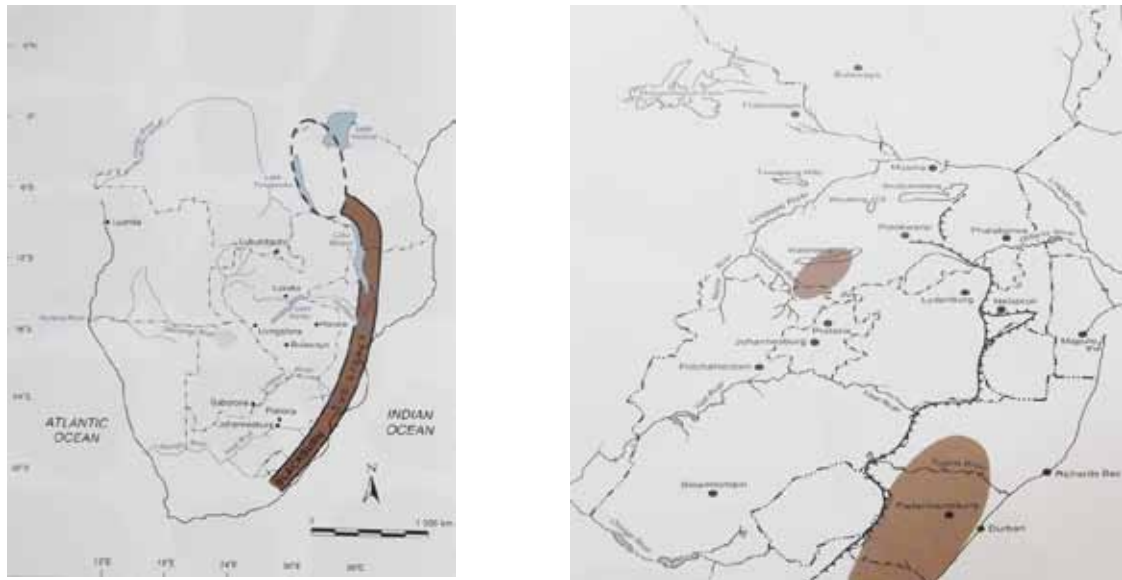


Figure 11

Left: Map showing presence of Blackburn style ceramics (Huffman 2007: 154).

Right: Map (Huffman 2007: 159) showing presence of Moor Park style of ceramics, which is thought to have developed out of the Blackburn style (Whitelaw in press: 137).

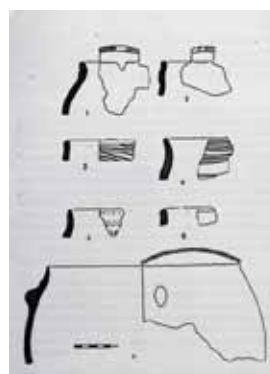
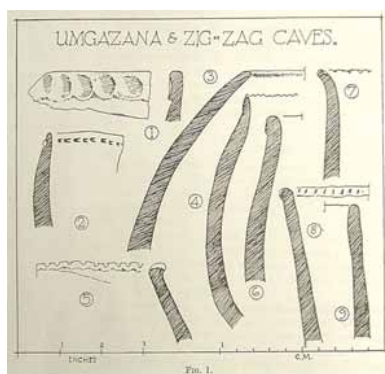


Figure 12

Far left: Schofield's (1938: 328) illustrations of potshards from Umgezana and Zig-Zag caves, which can be compared with examples, centre left, of Moor Park like ceramics featuring lip notching – items 1 and 2 from Welgeluk, and 7 from Adelaide- that were excavated by Simon Hall (1990: 253), north of Grahamstown.

So, in conclusion then, it comes to mind that creative deeds are such that, when working with clay or most other media, any combination of actions can arise, influenced by a vast variety of factors. As it turns out it would seem that creative acts engaged in by potters who created the Zig-Zag and Umgezana vessels may well have been influenced by, amongst other factors, certain conventions pertaining to shape and placement of particular engraved motifs, thereby linking them to other early farming societies in the region.

Furthermore, these Zig-Zag and Umgezana potshards evoke in me a sense of awe at the presence of quite a deep history of potters working in the Port St Johns region. They also hint at “phosphores of interconnectedness” (Manton Hirst in conversation, 1999), thereby evoking

in me sensations of linkage with both past as well as with contemporary practitioners such as Alice Gqa Nongebeza by virtue of shared tactile and other sometimes pleasurable, as well as sometimes challenging, experiences of some smells, sights and feelings associated with clayworking activities such as at times of clay collection, preparation, shaping and bonfiring. Be that as it may, it is pertinent that Alice Gqa Nongebeza and a few other potters in this area such as Debora Nomathamsanqa Ntloya and Nontwanazana Dunjana (figure 13), without necessarily in any way being directly descended from the early potters of Pondoland, are creatively using local natural resources and bonfiring in much the same way as was practiced many centuries before.



Figure 13
Matriarch contemporary potters of Pondoland in the Port St Johns region, left to right: Alice Gqa Nongebeza, Debora Nomathamsanqa Ntloya, and Nontwanazana Dunjana (photographs: the author, 2009).

Acknowledgements

Special thanks go to archaeologist Gavin Whitelaw, of the Natal Museum, for patiently fielding my many questions and giving me access to as yet unpublished documentation vital to gaining a view of current perspectives on prehistoric ceramics from the Port St Johns region. The financial assistance of Walter Sisulu University, and University of Fort Hare in the form of a Govan Mbeki Bursary, are also acknowledged. All views expressed are my own.

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The spatial patterns of Tswana stone-walled towns in perspective

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Contemporary authors on African urbanism regularly repeat reports by early European travellers of large Tswana settlements with populations of approximately 20,000, apparently the same size as Cape Town at that time. These settlements, called agro-towns, unlike Mapungubwe and Great Zimbabwe, are mostly described in academic publications, while very few architects know what they really looked like. This article applies quantitative analysis to the plans of the ruins of certain distinctive Tswana stone-walled homesteads and villages by exploring the physical attributes such as size, shape, geometries, spatial patterns and land-use intensities. Sizes are subsequently compared with those of pertinent frontier towns of that period, as well as those of Great Zimbabwe, which are widely recognised and undisputed as urban entities. The purpose of the investigation is simply to enhance the understanding and appreciation of Tswana settlements, vis-à-vis contemporaneous European towns and those of the Shona some time earlier.

Key words: Tswana, agro-towns, stone-walled ruins, Molokwane, bilobial dwelling, *kgotla*

Die ruimtelike patrone van Tswana klipmuur dorpe in perspektief

Hedendaagse skrywers oor Afrika stedelikheid herhaal gereeld verslae deur vroeë Europese reisigers van groot Tswana nedersettings met bevolkings van ongeveer 20,000 inwoners. Hierdie nedersettings word agri-dorpe genoem, maar anders as Mapungubwe en Groot Zimbabwe word hulle meestal in akademiese publikasies beskryf en baie min argitekte weet hoe hulle regtig gelyk het. Hierdie artikel pas 'n kwantitatiewe ontleding toe op die planne van enkele kenmerkende Tswana klipmuur wonings en nedersettings, deur fisiese eienskappe soos grootte, vorm, geometrie, ruimtelike patrone en grondgebruik-intensiteit te ondersoek. Oppervlakte word daarna vergelyk met dié van noemswaardige grensdorpe van daardie tyd, sowel as met dié van Groot Zimbabwe wat algemeen en onbetwis as 'n stedelike entiteit aanvaar word. Die doel van die ondersoek is eenvoudig om die begrip en waardering van Tswana nedersetting teenoor Europese dorpe van daardie tyd, en teenor dié van die Shona ietwat vroeër te versterk.

Sleutelwoorde: Tswana, agri-dorpe, klipmuur-ruïnes, Molokwane, tweelobbige woning, *kgotla*

The popular perception of traditional African settlements remains the evenly spread dispersed homesteads of thatched rondavels and cattle enclosures that still dot the hills in some parts of the Kwazulu-Natal midlands and Eastern Cape. However, ruins of stonewalled settlements, particularly those of the Tswana in the north-western part of the country, provide evidence that large, compact villages and towns existed in pre-colonial times, specifically during what is known as the Late Iron Age (AD 1300-1840).

Both Mapungubwe (AD 1220 to 1300) and Great Zimbabwe (AD 1300 to 1450) were large settlements. Graham Connah (2004: 159) claims a population in the range of 3,000 to 5,000 inhabitants for Mapungubwe, and 11,000 to 18,000 inhabitants (citing Huffman) for Great Zimbabwe, prompting him to suggest that "Great Zimbabwe had a population sufficient for it to be called a town or even a city" (Connah 2001: 236). Less well known, large compact Tswana villages, called agro-towns – the focus of this article – were built in the 18th and early 19th centuries. Reverend John Campbell, who visited Kaditshwene (near Zeerust, also known as Kurrreechane) in 1820, reported a population of 16,000 to 20,000, apparently more than that of Cape Town at the time. Robert Moffat similarly estimated that the town of Barolong at Pitsane had over 20,000 inhabitants.

The ancestors of the Tswana people moved, via East Africa, into the present South Africa at about AD 1300 (Huffman 2010). They were a semi-sedentary, agro-pastoral and hunting society who rapidly populated parts of present-day Gauteng, the Northwest and eastern Free State Provinces. They cultivated sorghum, beans and gourds, as well as maize. However, cattle herding was at the centre of their culture to the extent that a characteristic settlement configuration, called the Central Cattle Pattern, developed. In the 1820s, during the period of the *difaqane*, Mizilikazi effectively destroyed the established Tswana urbanism and way of life in South Africa.



Figure 1
Pre-colonial dynamics: Migration routes of the Bantu speakers vis-à-vis urban entities
 (drawing: the author, derived from several maps in McEvedy 1995).

Today a quarter of the Tswana live in Botswana and the rest in South Africa. According to the 2001 census, Setswana is spoken by 8.2 per cent of the population; the same percentage as English (www.southafrica.info/about/people/population). Although Setswana speakers are now spread throughout South Africa, the Tswana are still the most numerous in the north-northwest of the country, an area comprising approximately 138,000 sq km or about 11 per cent (the area of the Republic of South Africa is 1,219,912 square kilometres) of South Africa, which has traditionally been the land of the Tswana. The case studies described in this article are located in this region.

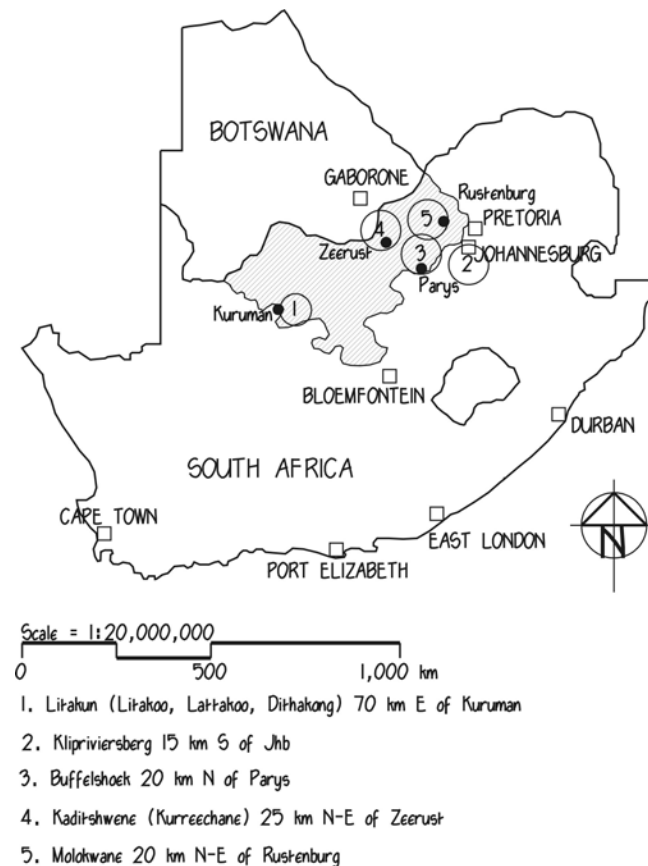


Figure 2

The land of the Tswana in South Africa, with Botswana added (drawing: the author).

Sources of information

Plans of the case studies were derived from a substantial number of stonewalled settlements surveyed and recorded not only by eminent archaeologists, including Jan Boeyens (2011, 2000), Thomas Huffman (2010, 2007), Mark Anderson (2009), Julius Pistorius (1996, 1992) and Tim Maggs (1976), but also by the doyen of South African vernacular architecture, James Walton (1956). More recently, Franco Frescura (1987, 1985, 1981) described some of the settlements in architectural terms and attempted a taxonomic analysis.

During the early 19th century, Samuel Daniell (1801), William John Burchell (1812) and Samuel Watson Fenning (1840) produced vivid graphic and written accounts of Litakun near present-day Kuruman. In fact, Burchell's book entitled *Travels in the interior of southern Africa, Volume 2* (London: Longman, 1824), devoting 242 of 619 pages to Litakun, is probably the most extensive and scholarly account of Tswana customs and constructions. Litakun, however, was not a stonewalled town and the beautiful imagery cannot be compared with the evidence on the ground.

On the other hand, Kaditshwene, whose stonewall ruins were located by Jan Boeyens, was visited by John Campbell in 1820 and his depictions of the chief's compound and the interior of his hut are well known. It is puzzling and unfortunate, therefore, that other large and contemporaneous agro-towns such as Molokwane and Marothodi, both short distances from Kaditshwene, were not similarly recorded.

Architects are not trained to interpret these ruins. Site visits are nevertheless hugely informative, especially in the company of archaeologists, anthropologists and historians. With their narratives informing imagination it is possible to understand the town as it once was, to understand the scale and extent, and to relate to the ecological and physical context. Many stone walls are still intact, revealing the construction consisting of two faces of stacked stones with a rubble infill about one metre wide and varying in height between 1.5 and 2.0 metres.



Figure 3
Part of the stonewalling at Molokwane (photograph: the author).

Research for this article relied mostly on the analysis of drawings. Selected settlement layout plans were redrawn on computer, allowing a quantitative analysis in terms of physical attributes, such as size, form, spatial organisation and land-use intensities, based on the mapping and measurement thereof.

Whenever a settlement pattern has been consistently used, the question of ideal space versus real space becomes pertinent; however, that argument is beyond the brief of this article. It rather attempts to contextualise the Tswana spatial patterns through comparative analyses with historical precedents and contemporary urban theory.

Case study 1 – Litakun

As mentioned, Litakun had no stonewalling but, rather, screens and fences of reeds and wooden stakes. Interestingly, there are stone walled ruins nearby, referred to as Dithakong, but in spite of

recently substantiated Tswana linkages, the inhabitants of Litakun told 19th century visitors that they had no idea who had built them.

At Litakun, huts, like those of all the Tswana at that time, had thatched conical roofs supported by verandas over cylindrical mud walls, today colloquially referred to as rondavels. Litakun was the Batlaping capital; however, Maggs (1976: 279) notes that it was moved three times in 20 years. When Samuel Daniell visited the place in 1801, the population was estimated at between 10,000 and 15,000 inhabitants. However, William Burchell reported 5,000 inhabitants in 1812. Regrettably neither Daniell nor Burchell captured the essence of the Central Cattle Pattern in their imagery, although it is quite clear that homesteads were clustered rather than aggregated, each consisting of a number of huts surrounded by a screen. Burchell's view from the entrance into Litakun illustrates the size and spread of the town. He described it as a collection of little villages each centred on a chieftain and spread over an area roughly measuring 2.5 by 3.2 km.

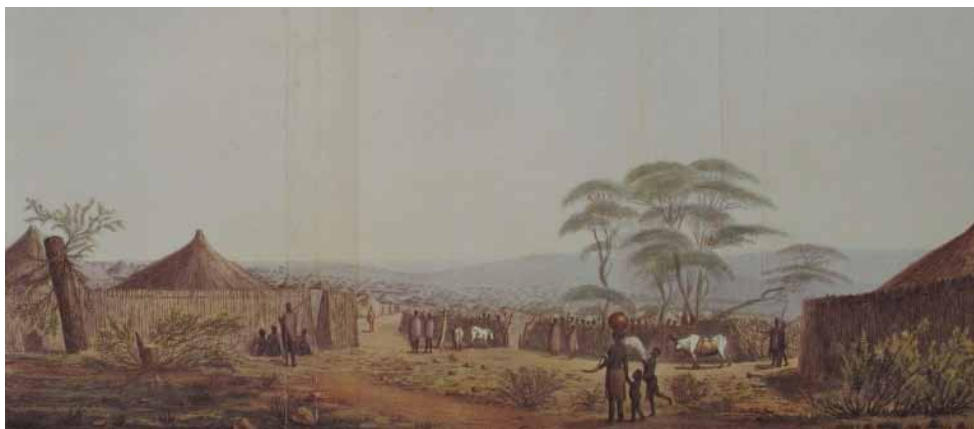


Figure 4
Entrance into Litakun by William Burchell, 1812.



Figure 5
Homesteads by Samuel Daniell, 1801.

Burchell is credited as being the first person to survey and record a bilobial homestead, so characteristic of Type Z settlements. Not all huts were bilobial but all had outer circular fencing defining two courtyards with two radial walls. Huts were generally 2.5 to 4.0 m across while the chief's hut had a diameter of approximately 5.0 m. The roofs of the larger houses were approximately 8.0 m in diameter and the space formed by the veranda, between the poles and the wall, provided shaded space (Walton 1956: 52-57). Burchell was also the first to note the difference between the semi-private front lobe (he called it the “public section”) and the private rear lobe. The wall inside the doorway that obstructed the view to the interior of the hut is also significant; this is not a standard configuration.

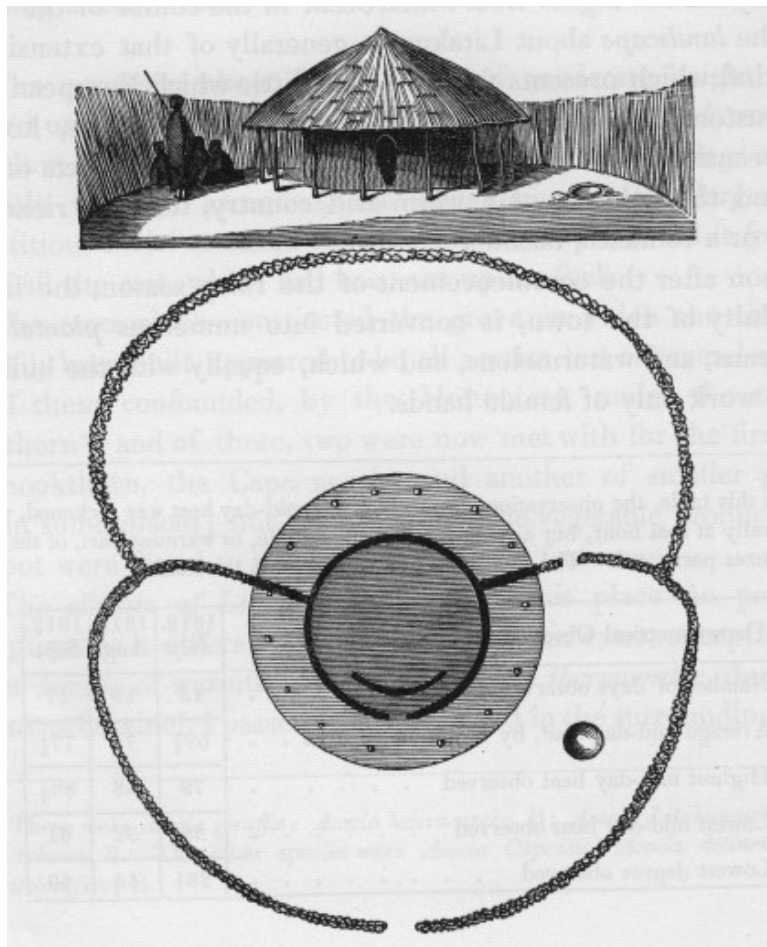


Figure 6
William Burchell's engraving of a bilobial homestead, 1812.

Samual Watson Fenning visited Litakun in 1840-1, obviously being spared the ravages of the Difiqane (being too far southwest), and depicting him and his companions in formal conversation with the village chief. It is notable that these homesteads were closer together than those in Daniell's and Burchell's times and that the village elders were dressed in European clothes. The cattle enclosure also featured more prominently.



Figure 7
Litakun by Samuel Watson Fenning in 1840-1 (from Gordon-Brown 1975: 118).

Case studies 2 and 3 – Buffelshoek and Klipriviersberg

With no data other than the narratives, sketches and paintings of visitors, it is impossible to investigate spatial patterns or relationships in Litakun. The remains of stonewalled settlements, on the other hand, provide an inert and measurable setting for doing so, even though much of the stonewalling has collapsed. There is absolutely no evidence, however, that stonewalling was the dominant or even the preferred construction method. In areas with a scarcity of trees, the Tswana had no choice. Furthermore, even with an abundance of trees, clearing a space strewn with rocks and building walls with them, such as at Molokwane, was certainly expedient where a large number of cattle and people have to move about.

The first stonewalled settlement units – each a homestead for an extended household and its livestock – were built approximately 500 years ago in the present Free State. Viewed from above, the typical homestead resembles a fried egg (Huffman 2007: 33). Graham Connah (2004: 164) writes that settlements were composed of “as many as a hundred of such units, possibly containing up to 1,500 people” and that “these early settlements were widely spaced compared to latter ones, suggesting that the overall population was still small”. Gradually the surrounding walls were increasingly shaped in a series of scallops – forming the rear courtyards of bilobial homesteads featuring veranda huts – and by 1750 these had culminated in the distinctive Type Z and closely related Molokwane type settlement pattern, resembling a sunflower from above (Huffman 2007: 38). In spite of certain variations, Maggs (1976: 40) writes that “the bilobial pattern is generally predominant. The dwellings form a fringe around the central group”. This type of dwelling developed north of the Vaal River and is increasingly prevalent northwards.

An early version of such a settlement unit, near Potchefstroom on the road to Parys, was described by Walton (1956: 47) as consisting of “circular family units separated from each other by a distance of a hundred yards or more”. Another example is Klipriviersberg, 15 km south of Johannesburg. Fortunately the whole site has been surveyed and described (Huffman

2007: 38) as a large pastoral Tswana community of some 19 settlements, dating from about the year 1500. The linear form of the village is distinctive; it is not clear whether the layout simply followed the contours of the koppies on which it was built or whether the homesteads enfronted a spiralling cattle path as at Buffelshoek, as depicted below. Walton (1956: 47) observes that “each homestead has an approximately circular scalloped outer wall with a single entrance”. Adjacent homesteads were now only 10 metres, or even less, from one another. This Tswana community was, like many others, destroyed by Mzilikazi.

Another informative example is that of Buffelshoek situated 20 km north of Parys. Deriving his information from a Master’s thesis by Michael Taylor at Wits in 1979, Frescura (1981: 146-151) recounts that Buffelshoek was constructed by the Tswana about 1750, but was destroyed and deserted around 1822. Since it consisted of three adjacent settlement units, Frescura thought that it must have been occupied by more than 120 people and that “the immediate region must have supported between 3,000 to 4,000 people”. He suggests that the spiralling cattle paths allowed residents to check on their property as they were brought in for the night. His own interpretation is that K1 was built first, followed by K3 as the household grew while also accumulating more cattle, and finally by K2 which was never finished. Frescura, nevertheless, cautiously notes that “the extent to which the three settlements coexisted is not known”.

Finally, the illustration includes a plan of a settlement unit at Molokwane, the final case study considered here, as a comparison, portraying the Type Z walling in its final form. Molokwane will be discussed further on, but it should be noted that the unit is about the same size as K2 and K3 at Buffelshoek, and considerably larger than those recorded at Potchefstroom and Klipriviersberg. It could be that later homesteads accommodated not only one extended family, but became an extended household with unrelated families who were most probably followers of the headman.

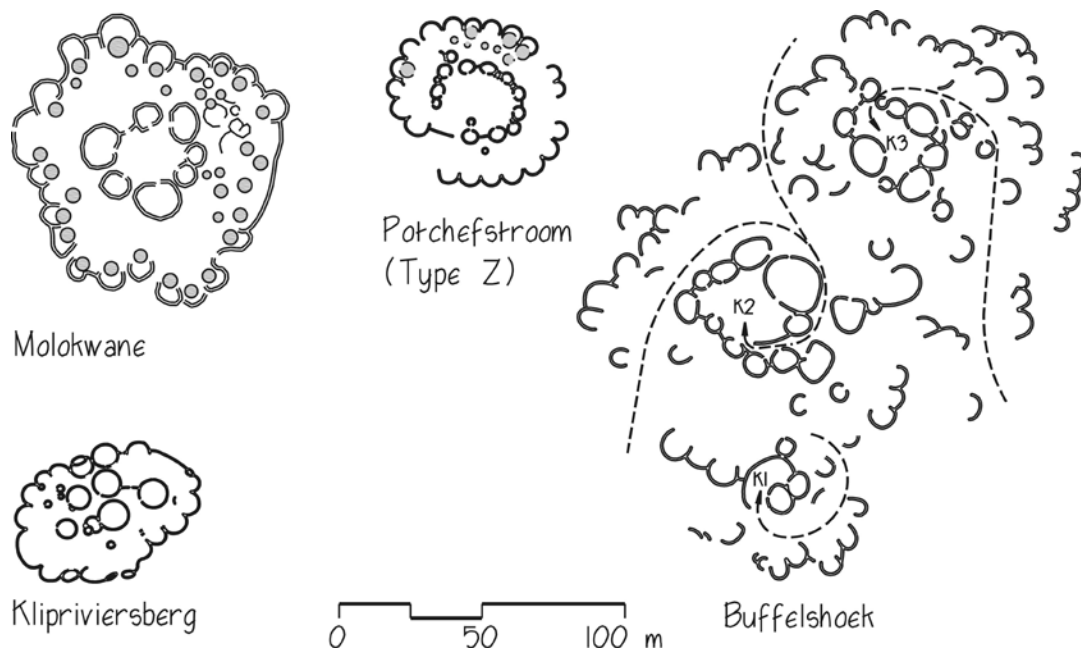


Figure 8
Tswana homestead patterns (drawing: the author. Molokwane after Huffman 2007: 40; Potchefstroom and Klipriviersberg after Walton 1956: 48, 49; Buffelshoek after Frescura 1981: 149).

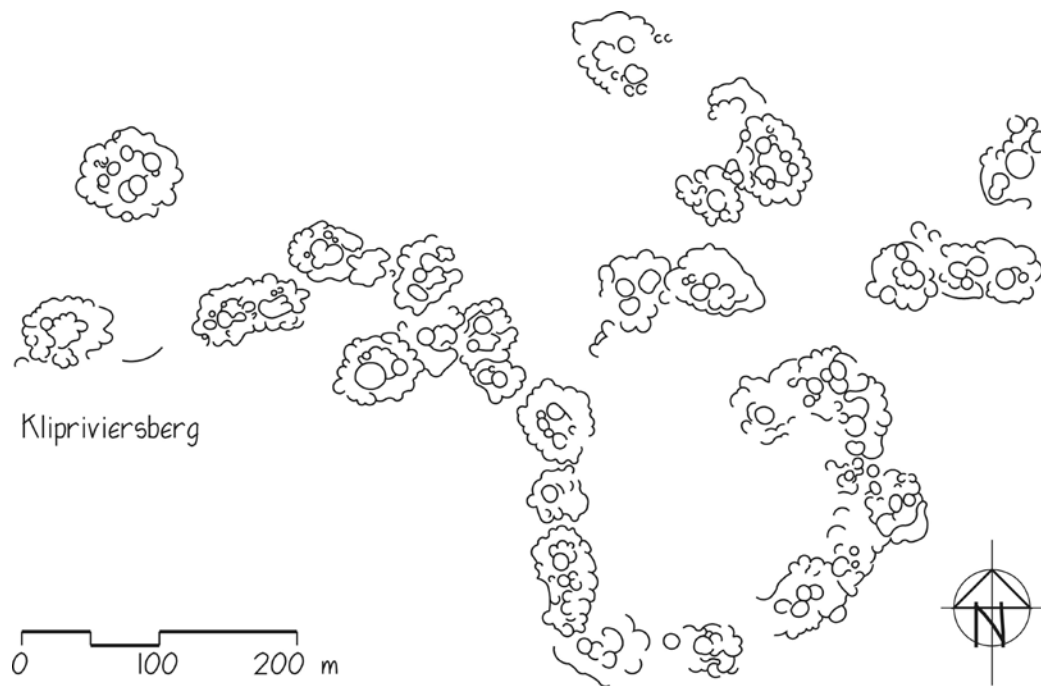


Figure 9
Klipriviersberg village (drawing: the author after Walton 1956: 49).

Historical perspective

The first stonewalled settlements were built by the Bafokeng (who later migrated north and are still living near Rustenburg) in the Free State between the 15th and 17th centuries (Huffman 2007: 33). These were early manifestations of the Central Cattle Pattern, which evolved relatively rapidly into what archaeologists call the Type Z pattern and its derivatives. These were built mainly in the 18th century and survived into the first half of the 19th century. Type Z typically consisted of a core surrounded by an intervening space and, at the edge “a loose circle of bilobial households” (Huffman 2007: 41). Whereas the central complex was the exclusive domain of men, the ring of huts and their courtyards (called *lolwapa*; single: *lapa* or *lelapa*) were the domain of married women. The dwelling, this ensemble of huts and courtyards, is also referred to as *malapa*. This pattern was extremely consistent throughout this period, although examples are found 500 km apart.

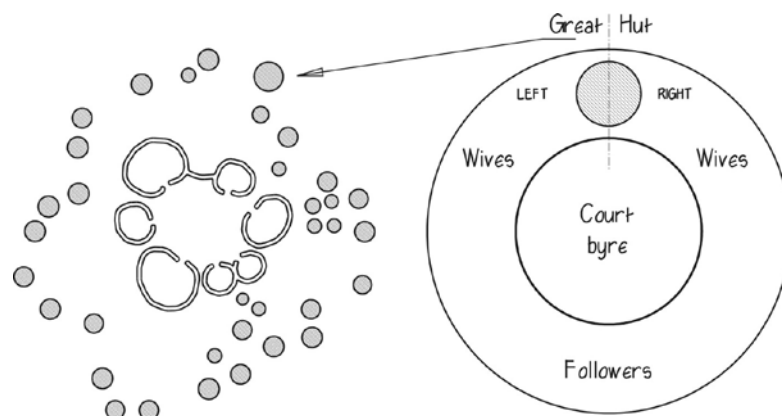


Figure 10
The Central Cattle Pattern (drawing: the author after Huffman 2007: 25, 29).

When setting out a settlement, the position and orientation of the chief's dwelling, his courtyard and the core containing the *kgotla* (plural: *makgotla*) and cattle-pens are first determined. The compounds of the wives are then located to the left and right of the chief, facing the core, followed by those of relatives and finally those of the followers on the opposite side (Maggs 1976: 277). The resulting shape is roughly circular or oval.

The homestead of an extended household, the settlement unit, is called a *kgoro* in Setswana, which is clustered to form a settlement or ward, called *dikgoro*. Maggs (1976: 277) asserts that wards were "relatively self-sufficient and probably more cohesive than the town as a whole". He adds that "if a settlement should split up, as was frequently the case in the earlier nineteenth century, the cleavage would tend to pass between wards, rather than through them".

Wards can be independent villages (hamlets would be more appropriate), but later on were usually clustered to form a village, *motse* (plural: *metse*) (Pistorius 1992: 1). The agro-towns are also *metse*, but they consist of several villages each. Their stone-walled ruins are called mega sites by archaeologists.

The *kgotla* is unquestionably the most important place at every settlement level, and the head or chief of a homestead, a ward or a village, had a *kgotla* where he presided when disputes had to be litigated, or decisions affecting the welfare of his people had to be taken. The level of authority was also aligned with the urban scale, with the heads of the homesteads settling family disputes, and the chief meting out judgement for severe transgressions.

Case study 4 – Kaditshwene (Kurreechane)

Although well documented and reasonably illustrated, until recently, archaeologists could not agree on the location of Kaditshwene. Jan Boeyens (2000) claims to have determined the exact location based partly on an analysis of the geography depicted in Campbell's sketches and watercolour of the town, clearly depicting the settlement on a high hill. In the early 19th century, Kaditshwene was a capital of the Bahurutshe. The dispute over its locality erupted not only because the Bahurutshe built numerous stone-walled complexes in the area, but also because, around 1830 or so, Nguni-ised Tswana communities, as well as Mzilikazi himself, built stonewalled settlements in the vicinity of present-day Zeerust, but not in the Tswana type Z pattern. A significant aspect of Kaditshwene is that, unlike the other communities discussed in this article, the inhabitants mined, melted and worked iron, trading the products (hoe blades and spear points) with other communities.

Like Fenning, 20 years later at Litakun, John Campbell showed Kaditshwene as comprising homesteads consisting of several fenced-off huts clustered in relatively close proximity. From the aerial photograph of the ruins it is now possible to distinguish the distinct geometry of the Type Z pattern, the scalloped fringe of each homestead and the core complex in the centre.

A significant contribution by Campbell was his illustration of Chief Senosi's homestead and the interior of his personal hut. Whereas Tswana huts usually had a diameter of no more than four metres, his was at least 10 metres across – spanning too far for the usual construction methods and requiring an intermediate ring of timber poles to support the roof structure. The interior plastering, colours and graphic motifs are also revealing.



Figure 11
Kaditshwene by John Campbell in 1820
(from Anderson 2009: 13).



Figure 12
Veranda houses at Kurreechane in the Marico Valley as depicted by John Campbell, 1820
(from www.kaditshwene.com).

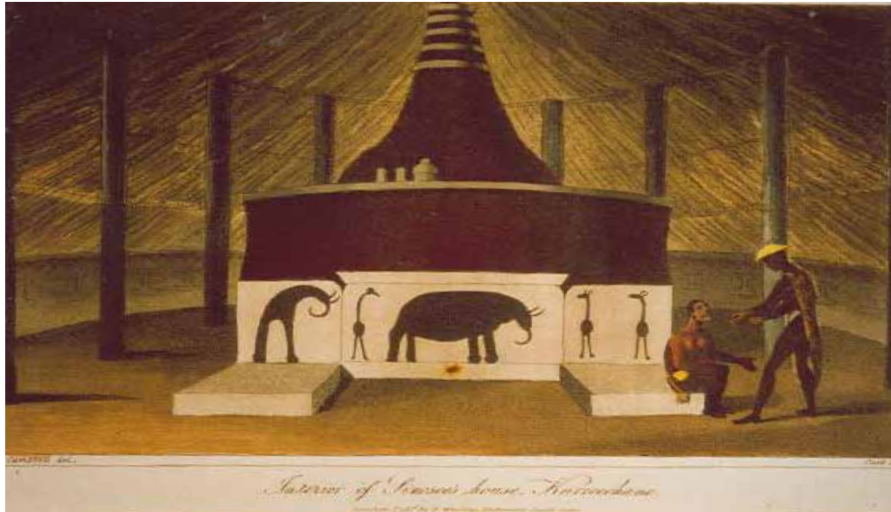


Figure 13
Interior of Chief Senosi's house, documented by John Campbell in 1820
 (from www.kaditshwene.com).

Boeyens himself (2000) suggests that Kaditshwene constitutes the interface between historical depictions and descriptions, oral history and archeological surveys, obviously making it an ideal case study for comprehensive analysis. There are, however, a number of problems. Firstly, a site plan of all the ruins comprising the town does not seem to exist. Secondly, Campbell's painting of Chief Senosi's compound shows a solitary, tranquil rural homestead with a round footprint, and unquestionably not the dense, scalloped pattern on the arial photograph and the surveyed site plan. The historical observations and the current evidence simply do not match. Thirdly, because Kaditshwene was an iron-manufacturing town, its layout, the central core in particular, may have become distorted and is not a representative example.



Figure 14
Portion of the Kaditshwene ruins from the air
 (from www.kaditshwene.com).

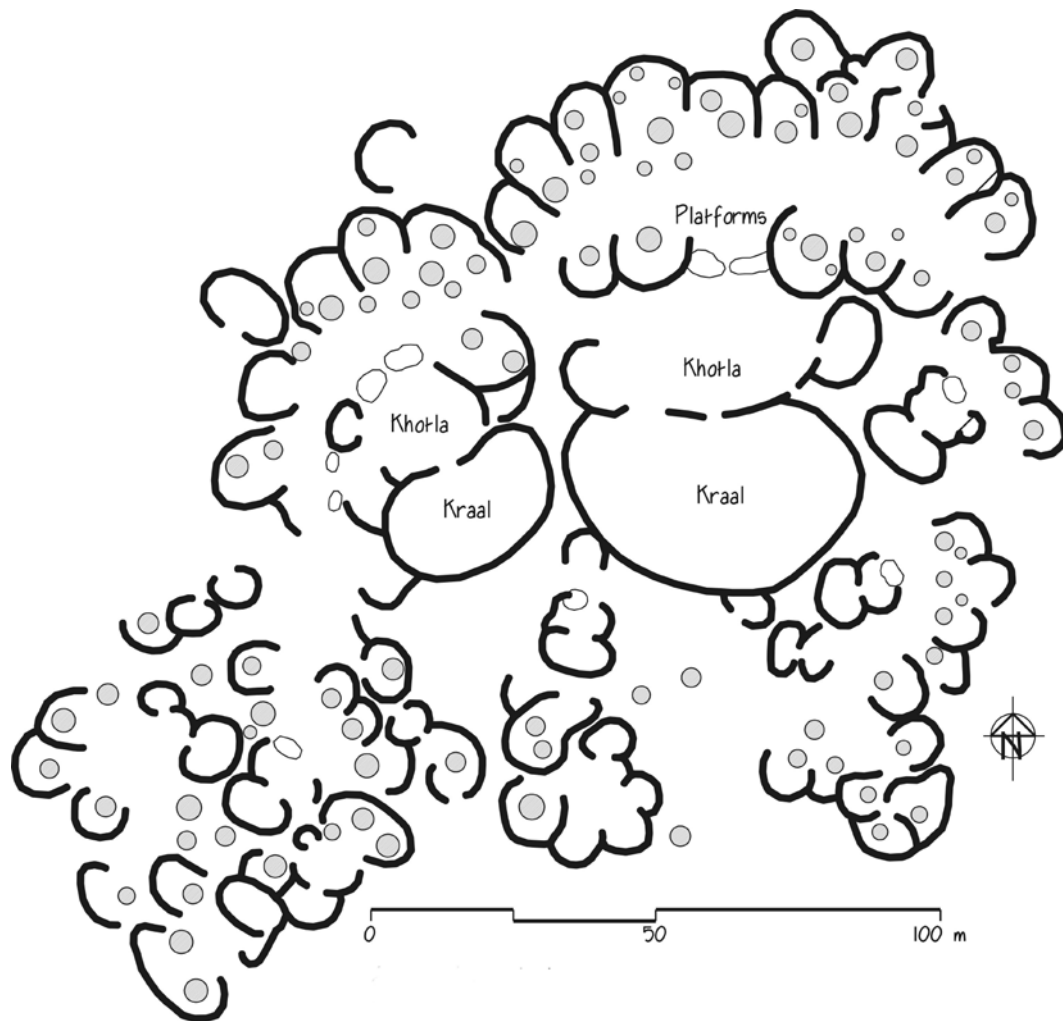


Figure 15
The main ward in Kaditshwene as surveyed by Jan Boeyens
(drawing: the author after Boeyens and Plug 2011: 4).

Case study 5 – Molokwane

Kaditshwene is one of four stone-walled Tswana agro-towns in the Magaliesberg-Pilanesberg-Marico Valley region. The others are the Tlokwa settlement of Marothodi directly west of Pilanesberg, Boitsemagano, approximately 40 km south-east from Marothodi, and Molokwane, located only nine km south of Boitsemagano and approximately 25 km west of present-day Rustenburg. The latter two were built by related Bakwena Bamodimosana communities.

They are all located in a strip of mixed bushveld (featuring a variety of Acacia tree species), with a mean summer rainfall of between 400 and 600 mm and a temperate climate with temperatures in a range of 18° to 26°C (Anderson 2009: 47, 53). Molokwane, the subject of the analysis that follows below, is situated approximately 90 km south-west of Kaditshwene.

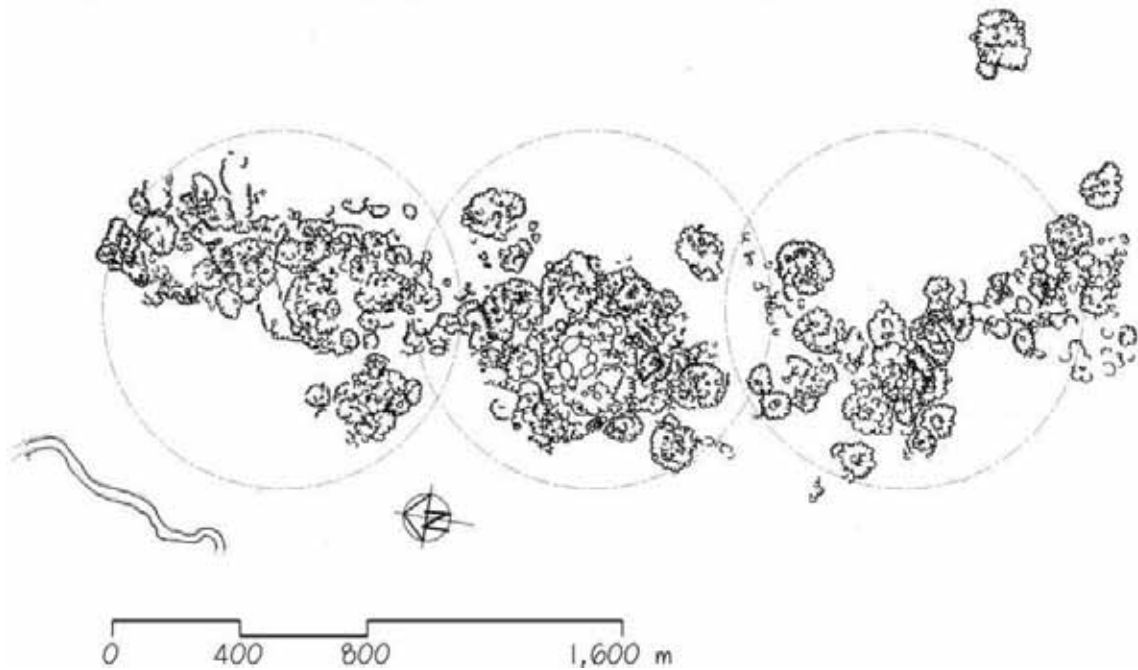


Figure 16
Molokwane (plan derived from Pistorius 1992: 5;
aerial photograph from Huffman 2007: 42).

It was chosen for analysis because it is the only site where the plan of the site was still available in its totality, it was the largest and most compact of the stone-walled agro-towns, and Julius Pistorius (1992, 1996) had surveyed and described both one of the smallest (SEL 1) as well as the largest (SEL 2) settlement units in considerable detail. Since the site is not overgrown and – nearly 200 years after its demise – grass inside the perimeter is still of a different species from that outside, showing up in a lighter shade of green on satellite imagery, the edges and even the stonewalls inside are still clearly identifiable, allowing scale and size to be checked against the data found in literature.



Figure 17
Satellite image of the Molokwane ruins
(from Google Earth).

The site was apparently first occupied around AD 1650 and built up by the Bakwena over the next 170 years, until it was abandoned in 1820 (Pistorius 1992: 57). Pistorius estimated the population to be around 10,000-12,000 in the early 19th century, and today, it is probably the largest stone-walled archaeological site in South Africa, covering an area of approximately 4-5 km², measuring 3.0 km from north to south and 1.5 km from east to west (Pistorius 1992: 17).

Unlike the frontier towns of the period that were first laid out and then filled in, most vernacular settlements, such as those of the Tswana, were organic, and grew incrementally by addition. The edges expanded as the towns grew. For that reason it is meaningful to commence analysis with the smallest building block.

SEL 1 is located on the south-western edge of the southernmost village. Described as “a commoner Kwenā *kgoro*” (homestead), Pistorius’ survey of SEL 1 is particularly helpful since he also located the huts (according to their stone-paved floors). His descriptions (1992:60-69) of the constituent elements are concise and authoritative. Interestingly it had only one quite inconspicuous entrance for humans, flanked by what could have been reception areas for visitors. A separate entrance for animals (cattle, calves, sheep and/or goats) led via a stone-walled lane across the intervening space surrounding the central kraal complex into their stockades. The spatial relationships between the cattle kraal, the *kgotla* and the *malapa* of the chief represent, as Pistorius (1992: 62) notes, “the fundamental spatial characteristics of the *kgoro*”. Other male activities in the inner kraal complex include milking, slaughtering (also ritual), leatherworking, repairing tools and weapons, and informal meetings. Headmen and chiefs were buried beneath the cattle-pens.

The *kgotla* was the primary, formal forum where judicial, political and administrative affairs were debated. It was patently not a public space where only a few men – elders and

selected advisors – were allowed to enter through the small, low entrance. The walls were the highest, at 2.0 m, in the settlement, indicating a desire for secrecy or at least privacy and seclusion. In front of the *kgotla* is a secondary gathering space partly defined by platforms and a large stone monolith. The said area was the setting for judicial and ritual events that could be attended by a larger audience, with the platforms possibly serving to allow more spectators to view the proceedings.

Pistorius identified 16 huts. The scalloped walls obviously formed the rear of the *malapa*, while the fronts of the *malapa* were probably demarcated by reeds or wooden fencing. He did not attempt a reconstruction, but simply asserted that the “general features” of the excavated huts are similar to those illustrated by Burchell and Campbell, and noted specifically that “Charles Bell’s illustration of early Batswana huts near the Magaliesberg and Molokwane, probably shows what the huts of SEL 1 looked like”. As noted, this outer fringe of dwellings was reserved for female activities, which will be described in more detail in the discussion of the typology of bilobial dwellings. Note that the huts of the headman (*kgosana*) and his headwife are contained within the same scallop on the eastern side.

The plan below is of course misleading since, while this *kgoro* is located on the western fringe of the village, it is not isolated with only 10.0 m separating it from the *dikgoro* to the west. The spaces between the *dikgoro* form an intrinsic part of an elaborate system of circulation consisting of narrow footpaths for people and somewhat wider lanes for animals. Starting with the intervening spatial ring between the *malapa* and the inner complex, which not only served as a buffer between the male and female territories, but was also exclusively used for the circulation of people and stock. Not only was there, as Maggs (1976: 282) describes, a network of footpaths between the various *dikgoro*, but also, the paths would radiate outwards from the *motse* to places to where the women worked the fields and fetched water and wood, as well as to cattle posts and neighbouring villages.

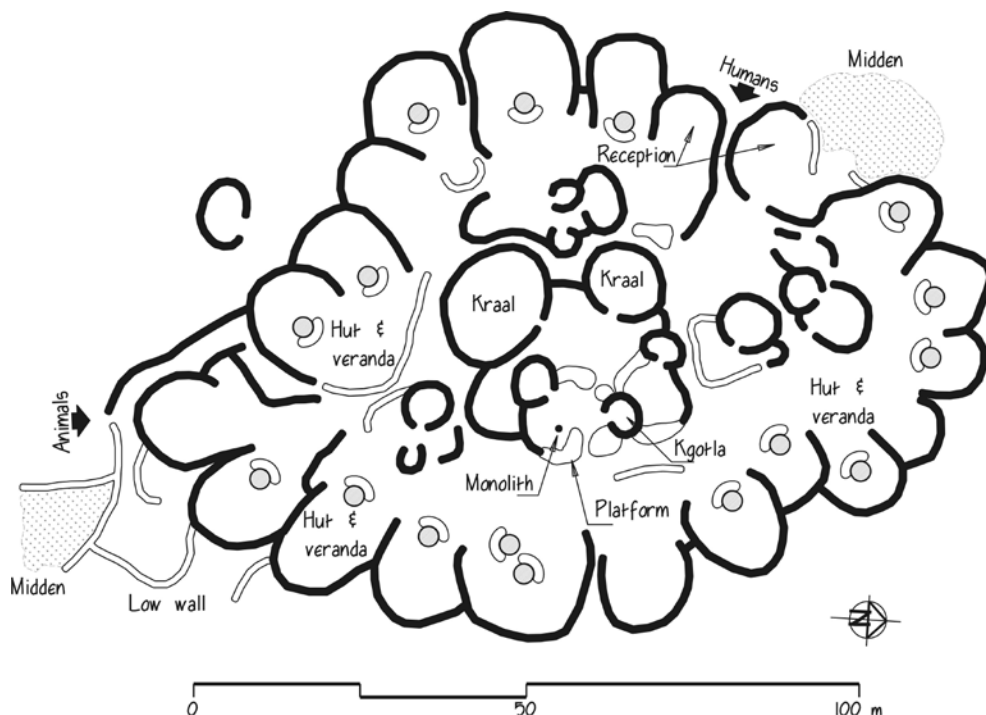


Figure 18
A settlement unit known as SEL 1 at Molokwane
(drawing: the author after Pistorius 1992: 18).

Like SEL 1 above, SEL 2, the homestead of the chief, called a *kgosing* (*kgosi* means chief in Setswana), very clearly retains the general layout pattern of the settlement unit with an inner kraal complex, the interstitial space and the scalloped fringe. There are, however, a number of significant differences.

The first difference is that SEL2 was built according to a substantially larger scale, prompting Pistorius (1996: 145) to call it a “super *kgoro*”. While SEL 1 has a footprint of 0.8 ha, SEL 2 measures 5.3 ha. Whereas the *kgotla* in SEL 1 is 15 m² and cannot conceivably accommodate more than eight people, the *khosi’s kgotla* was 113 m² and could comfortably accommodate up to 60 people. The space inside the scallop occupied by the headman in SEL 1 has an area of 226 m², while the *kgosi’s* dwelling is situated in a 1,700 m² scallop. Secondly, SEL2 contains more specialised spaces. Apart from the usual *kgotla* and its associated courtyard, the chief also has a private chamber and an inner sanctum. The ancestral graveyard is currently a dedicated place. Thirdly, there are three entrances; although, it is not clear from Pistorius’ annotated plan which of these are used for humans and which for animals. Interestingly the *kgosi’s* rear *lapa* has its own discreet entrance.

There can be no clearer evidence of socio-economic stratification and the manifestation of the unequal distribution of power and wealth than this comparison. The *kgosi* simply possessed substantially more of everything – cattle, wives and children, close family, followers, even space in terms of floor area and the number of dedicated facilities.

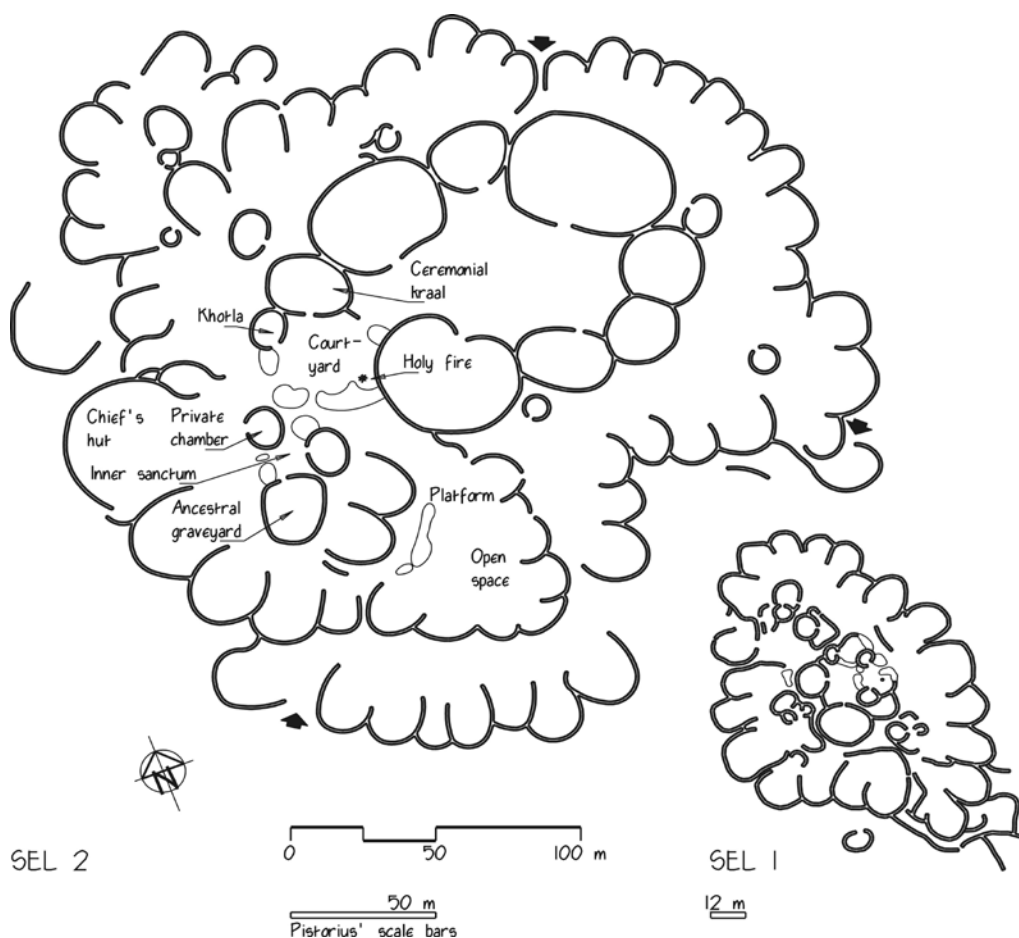


Figure 19
SEL 2, the *kgosing* at Molokwane, compared to SEL 1
(drawing of SEL 2 by Philip Lourens for the author after Pistorius 1996: 146).

The bilobial house – courtyards and verandas

Whereas the central core with its *kgotla* and cattle-pens is shared with the Sotho, the distinguishing feature of the Tswana homestead is the fringe of bilobial dwellings whose rear *malapa* are formed by the distinctive scalloped stone wall forming the outer edge. Frescura (1981: 26) recognises that the Tswana bilobial dwelling sets out to outline a territorial statement. He adds (1981: 154) that “the construction and planning of the Iron Age bilobial dwelling shows a very high degree of sophistication despite the limitations imposed by materials and technology”.

The bilobial dwelling is not a family dwelling but the territory of a wife. The front courtyard is a semi-public outdoor space used for cooking, eating and socialising, while the rear courtyard is used for storage, fowl roosts and what Maggs (1976: 281) calls “rough housework”. The hut itself is used for sleeping and cooking (in inclement weather), while the veranda provides shade during the day.

Frescura’s drawings are particularly helpful. Dwelling (a) was originally sketched by Burchell at Dithakong in 1815. Dwelling (b) was redrawn after a reconstruction by Maggs during excavations at Doornberg (Maphororong) near Kroonstad. Dwelling (c) is derived from a reconstruction by Taylor who surveyed Late Iron Age settlements on the northern edge of the Vredefort Dome near Vereeniging. It is estimated that the latter two date from ca. 1750.

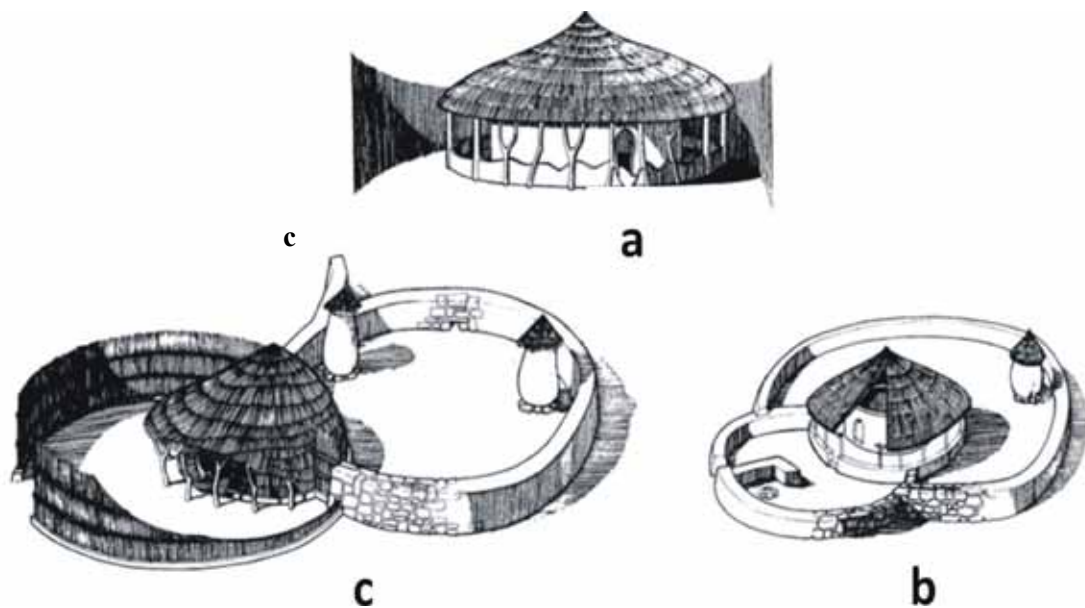


Figure 20
Bilobial homesteads
(from Frescura 1981: 156).

Composition of Molokwane

Pistorius (1992: 59) suggests that “the ground plan and layout of the *motse* is not based on geometric considerations but on a conceptual model considering mainly symbols of status, rank and rules of precedence”. Even when a village resettles in another locality, the orientation, relationships and relative positions between the various elements are retained. He points out (1992: 59) that Tswana towns were customarily located along rivers and was the reason the

layout of three linear divisions developed, with the *kgosi* occupying the central division, while the adjacent divisions are called “upper side” and “lower side” respectively, or more precisely, “upstream” or “downstream”.

It is generally assumed that vernacular settlements grow organically and incrementally in an unplanned manner. However, from the above it is clear that just as the layout of individual units conformed to a conceptual model, so the spatial organisation of the settlement with its ordered three zones did not evolve haphazardly, but must have been the result of an uniform vision and standardised, sequential process of unfolding space and composing the *motse*.

Vernacular urbanism and architecture are firmly rooted in the idea that solutions developed over a long time – typologies tend to evolve until they find their most rational, logical and simple form for a given situation and context. Amos Rapoport considers the vernacular tradition, in general, to be the “direct and unselfconscious translation into physical form of a culture, its needs and values” (1969:1-2). He argues that socio-cultural factors determine the form of vernacular buildings, and that climate, materials, construction and technology are modifying factors. Toyin Huntar (1981: 36), the eminent Nigerian architect and scholar, argues persuasively in his book entitled *Traditional African environments: The science, the history, the thought processes*, that culture, as the embodiment of a way of life, organises both social behaviour and space, made manifest as physical territory.

The Tswana urban model, therefore, was shaped not only by “status, rank and rules of precedence”, but by a range of factors, internal as well as external, including strict farming practices, precise demarcation of gender roles, and conventions of social interaction. The function of the *kgotla* and the coherence of the ward constitute two additional factors. Three criteria were considered to put Tswana urbanism into perspective: size, population and spatial organisation.

Size

Maggs (1976: 318) states that the Tswana “live in much larger and more compact settlements, usually of several thousand inhabitants, whereas the Sotho tend to live in small, loosely arranged villages of a few dozen to a hundred or so people”. The Sotho settlement pattern conformed to the predominant indigenous pre-colonial settlement landscape of sub-Saharan Africa, that of dispersed rural villages – a homogeneous pattern of homesteads consisting of mud and thatched huts around outdoor living spaces. This was how the people lived for millennia. Their guardian institutions were so successful that an outstanding and admirable achievement of African village society was that social harmony prevailed without centralised authority (Davidson 1967: 169).

Why did the village morphology undergo a transition from widely spaced homesteads, to an arrangement where homesteads are much closer to one another as at Klipriviersberg, to the large, dense, aggregated urban artefact of Molokwane? Initially, this transition occurred certainly because of pressure on good grazing land, arable soil and water supplies, and probably as protection against cattle raids from neighbouring communities, but later – actually as early as 1780 according to Huffman (2010) – unquestionably, as a defensive measure against attacks during the *difaqane*. All of these could have culminated in the emergence of ideological control by strong chieftainships, as described by Pistorius (1996: 161).

Huffman (2007: 17) declares succinctly: “Size in particular involves politics”. The comparison below is revealing in two aspects – they are all inhabited by communities with

centralised judicial and administrative control, and they all fit into an ellipse of 1,200-800 m, but more often in a circle with a diameter of 800 m. The inevitable question is: In what way are these phenomena significant or relevant?

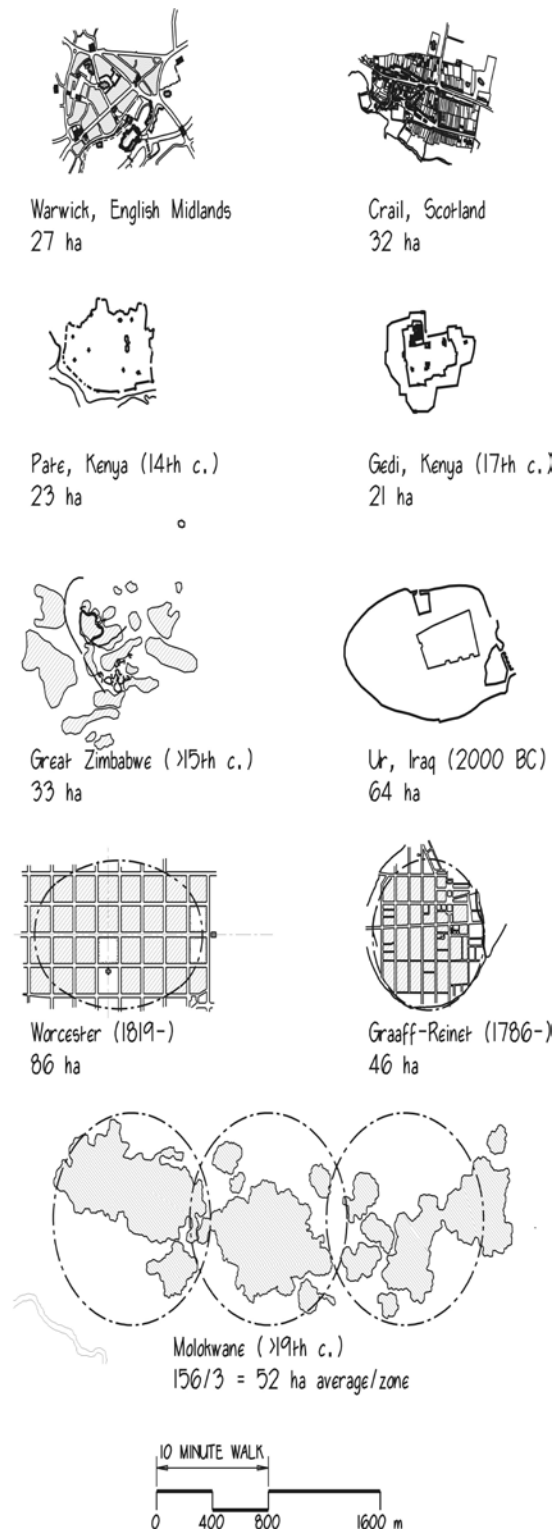


Figure 21
Molokwane compared
(drawing: the author).

Those dimensions seem to have been widely applied as urban templates in pre-industrial times. Ur in present-day Iraq, one of the first cities, fits the ellipse. The Greek and Roman colonial towns of Priene and Timgad, dating from the 4th c. BC and AD 1st c. respectively, both loosely fit into a circle of 800 metres across. Current urban theory would classify that as a comfortable five minute walk (400 m) from centre to edge. Cliff Moughtin (*Urban design: Street and square*, 2003) writes that “an urban form, such as a medieval town, usually has a maximum total dimension of 800 m can be seen as a whole from a critical distance of 1,5 km and therefore still retains a human scale”. Even Le Corbusier (*The city of tomorrow and its planning*, 1929) explained that the medieval cities so admired by Camillo Sitte are rarely more than 800 m across.

Whereas Moughtin’s precepts of association and cognitive legibility may be relevant, it is of course quite inconceivable that those dimensions were adopted to achieve walkability – villagers had to walk extraordinarily long distances daily to herd cattle, work fields and fetch water. The sizes were more likely determined by thresholds imposed by communications and socio-economic considerations, a field of study in which Ronald Fletcher (2002, 2009) specialises. In the early 20th century, however, those dimensions emerged again as part of urban planning theory, and have intermittently remained so ever since. In fact, although it might be totally irrelevant, it was irresistible to compare the urban entities discussed in the article with contemporary concepts of size.

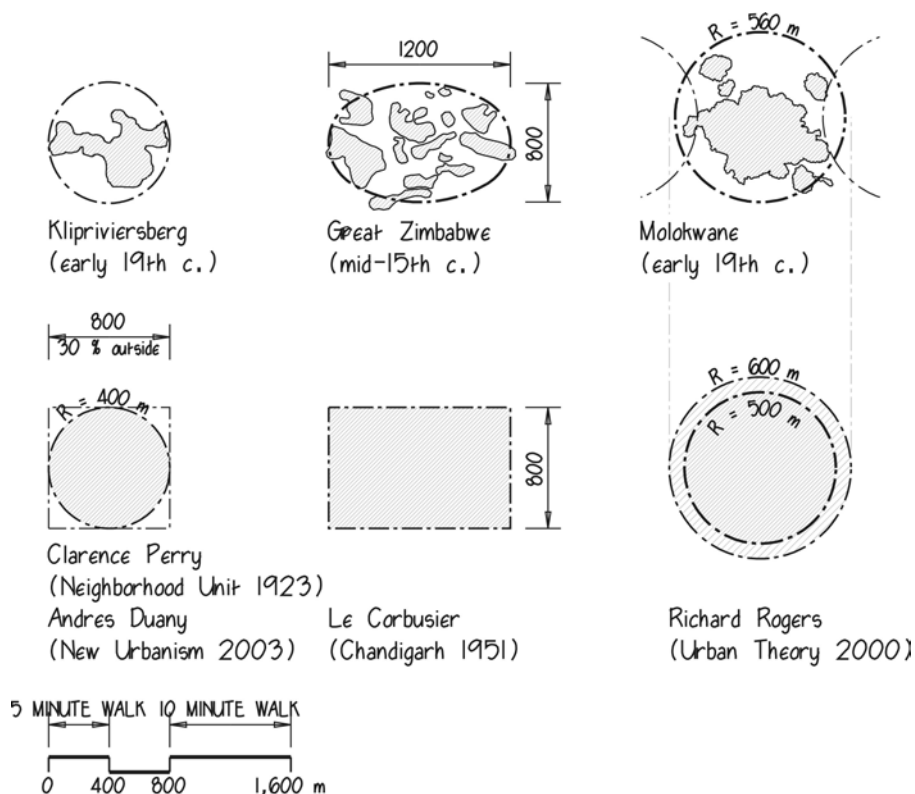


Figure 22
Comparison of neighbourhoods
(drawing: the author).

Population

Pistorius clearly derived his 4-5 km² area for Molokwane by simply multiplying 3.0 km (north to south) by 1.5 km (east to west). A more exact measuring of the space enclosed by stonewalling, the footprint, gives an area of 156 ha. SEL 1 comprised 16 huts and a footprint of 0.8 ha. Huffman's example consisted of 24 huts on a footprint of 0.7 ha. If the average of the number of huts per hectare is extrapolated, Molokwane as a whole – measured as 156 ha – yields an extrapolated total of 4,260 huts.

Calculations of a population size will always be speculative and tenuous. Alex Willcox (1988: 116) used an occupancy ratio of five persons per dwelling to calculate the population of Litakun. Maggs (1976: 266) assumes a more reasonable three people per hut. Using Maggs' norm, Molokwane must have had a population of 12,780, a figure that aligns comfortably with Pistorius' estimate of 10,000-12,000 people. Since Molekwane is by far the largest site, these rough calculations cast doubt on the claims repeated in numerous publications that Tswana agro-towns had populations exceeding 20,000, larger than Cape Town. Cape Town had a population of about 12,000 in 1754 that had increased to 20,000 in 1840. Assuming constant growth, that would mean a population of approximately 16,000 by 1800, the decade in which the Tswana towns were first reported on. In addition, Cape Town occupied approximately 265 ha in 1826, one-and-a-half times the footprint of Molokwane four years earlier.

The persistent claims of a population of 20,000 are, therefore, extremely unconvincing and a statement of “approximately 10,000 or slightly more” is arguably more realistic. The claim that Tswana agro-towns had more inhabitants than Cape Town had at that time cannot be substantiated and is equally unjustifiable.

Referring back to Figure 21, it should be noted that medieval cities usually also had populations in the 8,000-12,000 range (Geis 1981). In fact, the eminent urbanist, Léon Krier (1998: 128) based his *Les Quartiers* (urban quarter), or city within a city philosophy, on the pattern of historic European urban cores, propagating urban quarters of around 30-40 ha for a population not exceeding 10,000. The figure 10,000 appears regularly in literature on urban history. For example, Lamu, the quintessential, compact Swahili town had approximately 10,000 inhabitants in the 19th century. Furthermore, not only are Christopher Alexander and his collaborators adamant that 5,000 to 10,000 inhabitants occupying about 30 ha are the proper range for a community (1977: 71-74), but the *Rural poverty report 2001* released by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) found that a rural community commonly consists of approximately 5,000 to 10,000 people.

Spatial organisation

The organic shape of SEL 2, the *kgosing* of Molokwane is obviously geometrically the exact opposite to Worcester's uncompromised grid, suggesting that they cannot be meaningfully compared. Both, however, share a codified plan layout, with conventions for circulation routes and the relationships of dwellings with them, as well as for the relative location of sacred, judicial and administrative institutions, and the allocation and demarcation of property.

The domed hut of the Neolithic Middle East gradually gave way to the square and rectangular room, which became the norm everywhere except in most of sub-Saharan Africa. In fact, Rapoport (1969: 25, 77) points out that the choice of circular forms may be symbolic, adding that some indigenous African languages do not have a word for “straight”. The fact

remains that delineating spaces as round forms could have been either the result of a fundamental metaphysically-inspired choice, or simply the most pragmatic and appropriate geometry for conditions at that time.

Rounded spaces are intrinsically fractal at all scales and are not affected by the constraints and limitations imposed by Cartesian geometries. They offer nearly unlimited flexibility to respond to different social structures (monogamous households are more compact than polygamous ones), economic activities (spatial relationships to crops, granaries, cattle kraals and livestock pens) and external threats such as predatory animals and human raiders (the integration of protective fencing and enclosures). Not only homesteads and wards, but also the villages and clusters of villages, can be contracted, expanded and clustered to form a range of urban typologies – molecular (Potchefstroom and Buffelshoek), linear (Klipriviersberg) or carpet (each zone at Molokwane), and then assembled again (the whole of Molokwane *motse*).

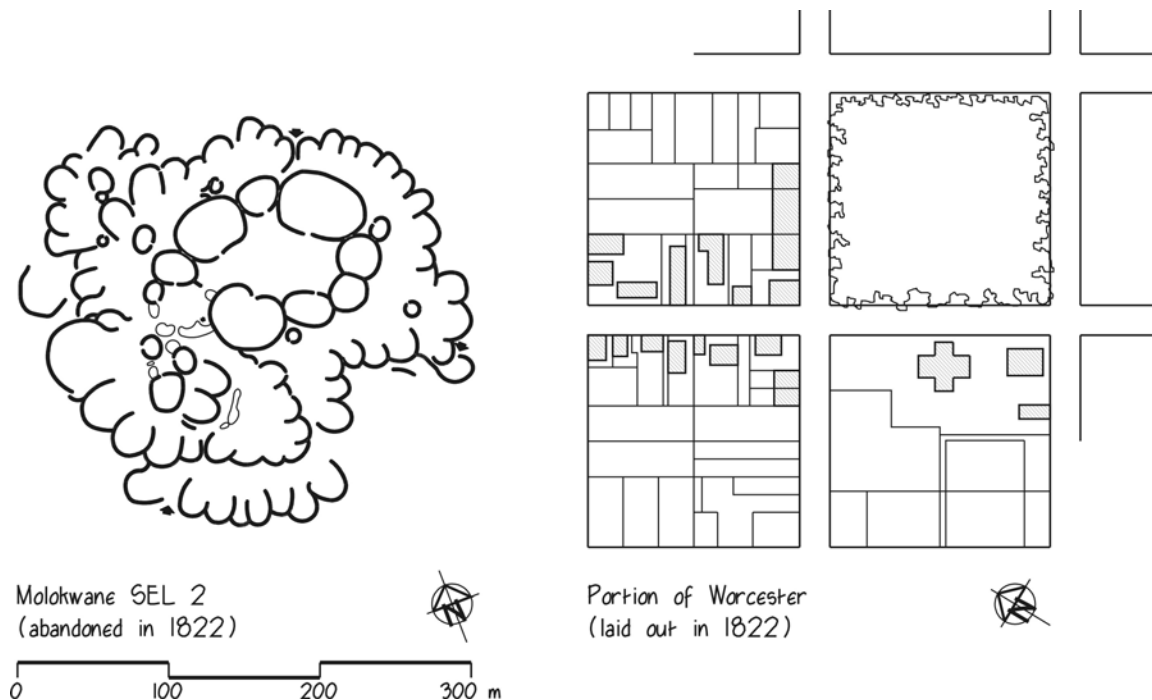


Figure 23
Molokwane SEL 2 and a fragment of Worcester compared
(drawing: the author).

Conclusion

Even a superficial scrutiny of Molokwane and the precedents confirm that Tswana spatial patterns were codified and responded to immutable farming and social practices, as well as ways of inhabiting territory on all scales that dictated geometry, spatial relationships and distribution of functions and families. In other words: There was an economic, social and ecological logic applied to the patterns. Not only are the hierarchy of spaces from public to semi-public to semi-private and private areas and the system of paths that connect them apparently particularly enduring, but also, the relative locality of elements, whether an entrance gateway, a cattle kraal, the chief's hut, the *kgotla*, the ceremonial courtyard, individual dwellings or the women's cooking areas. The hierarchy of space regulates not only movement, but also the relationship between the constituent components in the settlement. The resulting spatiality also impacts on how members

of the community and even members of a household interact. Finally, although the geometry is organic, the spatial patterns did not allow agro-towns to develop uncontrolled, and in terms of size, population and spatial organisation, they largely conformed to pre-industrial urban entities.

The scale and spatial complexity of these patterns offer important insight into traditional Tswana settlement concepts before European interference. In addition, the value of these patterns is that they challenge (and should encourage) architects and planners to reassess the social and historical appropriateness of the predominantly Eurocentric building and urban typologies currently entrenched in policies and practice.

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Geology and ruin as settlement generators in Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur

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When choosing a site for their colonial towns the Greeks favoured places that resembled the geological context of their native country, because they could adapt their familiar water management and town-planning practices to the suit these conditions. This paper proposes that when the Romans annexed these settlements, they often built on the ruins of the earlier Greek settlements and that the same can be observed in Greek and Roman settlements in what is today Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur. When Roman authority crumbled (476AD) and the region was invaded by Barbarians, only the more massive Roman monuments withstood ruination and subsequent Provençal architecture was designed to resist attack. This paper further investigates how some towns and structures were built on the ruins of Roman ramparts and how in others the geology was used to determine the position of settlement. It contributes to the existing body of knowledge of Roman ruins in Provence by suggesting geology and ruin as settlement generators.

Key words: Ancient Greek town-planning, Roman colonial settlement, defensive architecture in Provence, geological placemaking, settlement on ruins

Geologie en ruine as genereerders van nedersetting in Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur

Toe die Grieke terreine vir hul koloniale dorpe oorweeg het, het hulle voorkeur gegee aan plekke wat met die geologiese konteks van hul moederland ooreengestem het, omdat hulle die bekende beginsels van dorpsbeplanning en waterbestuur by hierdie toestande kon aanpas. Hierdie artikel stel voor dat toe die Romeine hierdie nedersettings beset het, hulle gereeld op die ruïnes van vroeëre Griekse nedersettings gebou het en dat dit ook by die Griekse en Romeinse nedersettings in wat vandag Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur is, waargeneem kan word. Toe Romeinse gesag verkrummel het (476 nC) en die area deur Barbare ingeval is, het slegs die meer massiewe Romeinse monumente die vernietiging weerstaan en Provensale argitektuur is ontwerp om aanvalle af te weer. Die artikel ondersoek verder hoe sommige dorpe en strukture op die ruïnes van Romeinse vestings gebou is en hoe ander se posisie deur die geologie bepaal is. Dit dra by tot die bestaande liggaam van kennis oor Romeinse ruïnes in Provence deur geologie en ruïne as nedersettingsgenereerders voor te stel.

Sleutelwoorde: Antieke Griekse dorpsbeplanning, Romeinse koloniale nedersetting, argitektuur van verdediging in Provence, geologiese plekmaking, nedersetting op ruïne

Provence was settled first by the Greeks and then by the Romans. Geology was the determining factor for the Greeks when choosing a site for their colonial towns and when the Romans annexed Greek towns, they built on the ruins of Greek settlement or were attracted by a similar favourable geology. When these Roman structures fell into ruin, later Medieval fortifications were often built on the earlier Roman structures and again a favourable geology was the settlement generator. This article proposes to investigate this process of settlement and ruination by focusing on what is today Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur. It proposes to contribute to the existing knowledge of Roman architecture in Provence by investigating the Greek origins of Provence, which includes how Greek town-planning principles from the 5th Century BC were applied to colonial towns. It further hopes to contribute to the theme of ruination by investigating geology and Roman ruin as settlement generator in subsequent Provençal defensive architecture. This is done through interpretation of examples of such structures and towns visited in 2010.

Colōnia

Research on how spaces in the motherland influenced colonial place making, inevitably leads back to the question of how pre-colonial landscapes were changed by the introduction of colonial

powers. As a precedent one has to consider the ancient colonial powers of Greece and Rome to see how they shaped the social and cultural realities of the area.

Although the term *colōnia* is found in Latin for the first time, the act of colonisation can be traced back to ancient Egypt. The area considered in this study is today called Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur and is one of the 27 regions of France, the former French province of Provence.



Figure 1
French regions of France today with Provence in the southeast.

The Greeks

The story of Provence takes us back some three thousand years ago when the coastal area was in the hands of Phoenician navigators. Their commercial and naval activity greatly influenced the area until the Greeks colonised the coastal region around 600BC. Marseilles, which is the oldest city in France, was founded by the Greeks and was known as Massilia. The colony grew thanks to the rock-sheltered harbour and close proximity to the mouth of the Rhône. As the wealth of the Massiliotes increased, they acquired extensive lands around the town and numerous colonies were established along the coast. These include Narbonne, Antibes, Nice and Monaco and inland towns were settled at Glanum (Saint-Rémy de Provence) and Mastrabala (Saint-Blaise). MacGibbon (1888: 5-8) tells us that the language, civilisation, art and culture of these Massiliote towns were entirely Greek and gave a Grecian character to the first enlightenment of Southern Gaul.

According to Crouch (2004) the Greeks chose sites for their colonial towns that resembled the geological context of their native country, confident of their ability to adapt their familiar town-planning and water management practices to suit these conditions.

In the world of the Greek frontier, geography affected every step of daily life. The political organisation was one of city-states, a decentralised pattern that developed naturally and was well suited to the geography of the Greek mainland. On the coast of Asia Minor and its nearby islands, this proved an unstable form of organisation because the cities could not cooperate effectively to avoid conquest (Brumbaugh 1970: 9-10).

Greek town planning

Greek town planning began in the great age of Greece, the fifth century BC but the two chief

cities of Greece failed to embrace the new movement. Both Athens and Sparta, the rival of Athens, remained completely untouched by it. Passages in Greek literature often speak of the streets of Athens as narrow and tortuous, unpaved, unlighted, and more like a chaos of mud and sewage than the usual Greek road. In Sparta conditions were worse.

Neither public nor private buildings were admirable and the historian Thucydides referred to the meanness of the town (Haverfield 1913: 9-10). Nevertheless, the art of town planning in Greece probably did begin in Athens. The architect to whom ancient writers ascribe the first step, Hippodamus of Miletus (c. 407 BC) who has been dubbed the “Father of City Planning” (Haverfield 1913: 10), seems to have worked in Athens and in connection with Athenian cities, under the auspices of Pericles.



Figure 2

Map of Piraeus by Kaupert (1881) with the recording of ancient remnants
(source: <http://www2.rgzm.de/Navis2/Harbours/Athen/Piraeus/PiraeusAbb3.htm>).

Aristotle tells us that Hippodamus planned Piraeus, the port of Athens. The Hippodamian, or grid plan, was introduced for the first time in Piraeus and became the basis for subsequent Greek and Roman cities (Haverfield 1913: 10). A characteristic of Greek town planning was that the grid was often rigidly imposed over the topography, creating steep streets and steps. The site of the amphitheatre was typically chosen for its position on the slope of a hill so that only the seats had to be carved out (Figure 6).

Glanum and Priene

Although only traces of Greek town planning remain in Marseilles (*Jardin des Vestiges*) and Antibes, Glanum contains the ruins of several villas in Hellenistic style organised along a grid imposed on the geology. Glanum was first settled by a Ligurian tribe around a spring in a narrow gap in the Alpilles mountains. It sits in a narrow valley sloping up from the north to the higher

southern end.

When choosing a site for a settlement the ancient Greeks considered hillside, river, defence, natural hazards and human enemies. The city wall, streets and houses all followed the grid. Aristotle and Hippocrates recommended that houses be built on south-facing slopes. The grid stepped to follow the slope. Public spaces and public buildings were created on levelled slopes. At Glanum the villas are all that remain of the Greek influence and Roman settlement on the ruin of earlier Greek settlement often disturbed the original town plan, especially in the south of France, because the Romans did not leave one Greek settlement untouched.



Figure 3

The House of Antes, a Hellenistic-style residence with a peristyle of Tuscan columns and a basin to capture rainwater, Glanum (source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glanum>).

The town plan of Priene, a little town off the east coast of the Aegean, has also been ascribed to Hippodamus. It is worth mentioning here, because excavations have revealed the town plan without changes by later Roman interventions and it demonstrates how the Hippodamian grid was applied over the geology in the layout of a Greek colonial town (Figures 4 and 5) (Haverfield 1913: 10). The grid is a rational (or cultural) construct and the Greeks copied the grid as design system, probably because it was what separated civilisation from barbarism. Haverfield (1913: 6) argues that ancient remains that show long straight lines or several correctly drawn right angles date from a more civilised age.

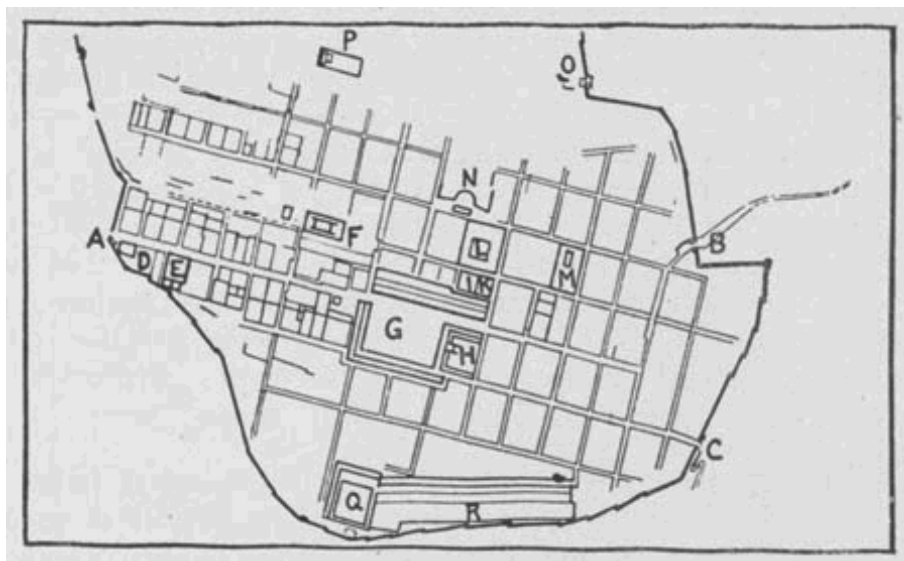


Figure 4

Priene, Asia Minor – a planned city from the 4th century BC. The grid street plan was laid out across a hill, and all buildings were aligned accordingly (source: Sulman 1921: 3).



Figure 5
An artist's view of how the small ancient city of Priene in Asia Minor occupied its hilltop site
 (source: Sulman 1921: 3).



Figure 6
Priene: The outdoor theatre stepped on the slope with curving seats. The stadium is on level ground below the town. The geology determined the settlement. Layered rock and natural springs lead to fountains and the aquaduct.

The Romans

The Massiliotes were rivals of the Carthaginians and joined the Romans in their Punic wars against Carthage. They provided the Romans with ships and became their allies. In 154 BC the Ligurian tribes of South Gaul rose against the Massiliote colonies and the latter turned to their Roman allies for assistance. It was the first introduction of the Roman Legions into Gaul. The Romans therefore came to Provence in the 2nd century BC to protect the people of Marseille against tribal threats (MacGibbon 1888: 8). During the civil war however, Massilia supported the cause of Pompeii, literally positioning them against Rome. Pompeii was defeated and Caesar besieged and conquered the town. Massilia was then Romanised and lost her colonies, but she still retained her letters and arts, and her schools continued to flourish under the Roman Empire (MacGibbon 1888: 9).



Figure 7

The Roman Province of Gallia Narbonensis around 58 BC
(Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gallia_Narbonensis).

It should be noted that the Latin word ‘*provincia*’ is a military expression, indicating that a certain region was a general’s responsibility. The first provinces were ill defined and it was only during the late republic that provinces started to have clearly defined borders.

In about 120 BC the Romans had settled in their new favourite ‘*Provincia*’, building roads (*Via Domitia*, built to connect Rome with the Pyrenees) and towns, each with its forum, temples, triumphal arches, amphitheatres, theaters, baths and aqueducts. Roman towns were built at Cavaillon, Orange, Arles, Fréjus, Glanum (outside Saint-Rémy-de-Provence), Carpentras, Vaison-la-Romaine, Nîmes, Vernègues, Saint-Chamas and Cimiez (above Nice). The geology influenced the choice of site in each case. The Roman province, which was called *Gallia Narbonensis*, for its capital, Narbo (modern Narbonne), extended from the Alps to the Pyrenees (figure 7).

The architectural style used for these structures was imported from Rome, but in many buildings and sculptures of the early centuries, a strong Greek feeling may be detected (MacGibbon 1888: 9). Roman veterans populated the towns Arles and Fréjus at the sites of older ruined Greek settlements. What attracted them was the same favourable geology, but they established a new Roman order within the older ruined reality.

It is a peculiarity of all the Greek and Roman colonies, as compared with those of modern times that they were established in cities. All life and movement of the ancient world were centred in the cities. The land was cultivated by bands of slaves led out from the towns. The Empire, with its stronger grasp and centralised control, with its multitude of functionaries, all appointed by and in constant relation with a central will, alone enabled the existence of Rome to be continued for some centuries (MacGibbon 1888: 9-11).

The Roman roads that linked these cities necessitated hilltop fortifications. These outlook posts that guarded the road grew into little towns and sprouted from the rocks in the interior of Provence. Again settlement was generated by geology. During the second and third centuries, South Gaul gradually became Romanised and by 8 BC Emperor Augustus’ influence rendered Provence entirely Roman, politically and also culturally.



Figure 8

By the year 50 BC the whole of Gaul had been subdued by Julius Caesar (source: Goscinnny & Uderzo 1974: 3).

The decline of the Roman Empire – Medieval architecture

After the fall of Rome (476AD) and as Roman authority crumbled in Provence, the region was flooded with invaders: Visigoths in the 5th century, Franks in the 6th century, Arabs in the 8th century and raids by Berber pirates and slavers. MacGibbon (1888: 11) tells us that:

when the Empire finally decayed and fell, the old municipal principle again came to the front. As the colonies had been founded in cities, so when the Imperial system gave way, the city again asserted itself and in Southern Gaul, where the barbarians had been civilised, municipal authority prevailed and each town became an independent little State. The natural tendency of these municipalities was to detach themselves and to watch jealously the proceedings of their neighbours. This municipal principle is a leading characteristic of the Middle Ages in Italy and Southern Gaul, and distinguishes these countries from the Northern provinces. Traces of it are still very apparent in Italy and Provence and contribute greatly to the picturesque character of these provinces.

Because of the repeated invasions, Provençal architecture including monasteries, towns and castles, were surrounded by walls and towers designed to resist attack and even the bishop's residence in Fréjus resembled a fortress. Only the more massive Roman monuments withstood ruination. The Roman ramparts fell into ruin and defensive settlements were built on top of what remained of Roman stone structures (Figure 9).



Figure 9
Antibes, gateway and two round towers showing a Roman base and Medieval walls
(photograph: the author).

Hilltop fortifications

Already in Roman times, hilltop fortifications were built to guard the Roman roads. As mentioned above, little walled villages developed, some with a castle, cathedral and fountain, while the fertile valleys were cultivated with vineyards and olives. This organisation continued through the Middle Ages and the geography of the Provençal hinterland determined the settlement. To illustrate this, the hilltop castle of Lacoste is chosen, because the geology that determined the settlement is very visible, it fell into ruin and the ruins are generating a contemporary program of re-use. The castle resembles a fortress and is surrounded by a moat. It sprouts from the rock and the stone town lies below it, leading down to the rich farmlands in the valley.



Figure 10
Lacoste castle overlooking the Luberon valley
(photograph: the author).



Figure 11
Lacoste castle moat carved from layered rock
(photograph: the author).



Figure 12
Lacoste castle
(photograph: the author).

The Marquis de Sade inherited this castle from his grandfather in 1716, but only stayed in it for seven years. The building originally had 42 rooms, a theatre and a chapel. The castle was pillaged during the French Revolution and finally demolished in 1816, with its hewn-stones being sold piece by piece. Pierre Cardin bought the ruined castle in 2001 and it is being restored to house a museum and gallery.



Figure 13
Bust of the Marquis de Sade
(photograph: the author).

The heritage

From the Cote d'Azur to the hills of Provence and beyond, the Romans left a rich heritage. It is worth mentioning the following structures, chosen specifically for this argument because geology and/or ruin played a role in the choice of site, because in their ruined state they were used for a different purpose in Medieval times and because contemporary adaptations have given them new meaning.

The Roman aqueduct of Pont du Gard (1st century AD)

The aquaduct was built during the time of the Emperor Claudius and is one of the most impressive examples of Roman civil engineering. Geological restrictions were overcome by the structure and geology was the design generator of the Pont du Gard. Constructed fifty meters above the river Gard, it is the highest existing Roman aqueduct. The aqueduct carried water a distance of fifty kilometers.



Figure 14
Pont du Gard, 1st century BC. (Augustus era)
(source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pont_du_Gard).

The Triumphal Arch of Orange, Vaucluse, (20 BC)

The arch was probably built to honour veterans in about twenty BC, during the time of Emperor Augustus, and was later dedicated to the Emperor Tiberius. It was designed to show travellers to the new Roman province the superiority and power of Rome. Such a massive building was too tempting as a fortress to be passed over in the Middle Ages and we accordingly find the ruined arch re-used as a fortress by Raymond des Baux, who played an important part in this country in the thirteenth century.



Figure 15
The Triumphal Arch at Orange, Vacluse (20 BC)
 (source: MacGibbon 1888: 46).

The Roman theatre in Orange, Vacluse (1st century BC)

The theatre was constructed by the Emperor Augustus in the early 1st century BC and is the best-preserved Roman theatre in Europe. It was closed by the authorities of the Christian church in 391 because of its “barbaric spectacles,” and not re-opened until the 19th century. In the Middle Ages the ruins of this theatre, as often happened with the massive buildings of the Romans, was converted into a fortification, and formed an outwork of the castle erected by the Duke of Orange on the summit of the hill above. Today it is the home of music and theatre festivals.

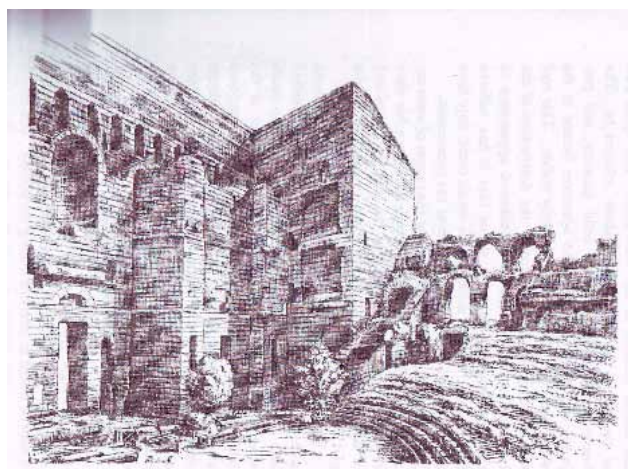


Figure 16
The Roman Theatre in Orange, Vacluse (1st century BC)
 (source: MacGibbon 1888: 46).

The triumphal arch at Glanum, (10-25 BC)

This arch near the Greco-Roman town of Glanum, just outside Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, shows Roman soldiers leading away defeated prisoners. It was constructed between 10 and 25 BC, some time after the Romans had conquered the town. Glanum was destroyed in 260 AD by the Alamanni, a Germanic tribe, as the Roman Empire began to crumble.



Figure 17
The triumphal arch at Glanum (10-25 BC)
(<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glanum>).

The amphitheatre in Arles, (2nd century AD)

This structure was built in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD, when Arles was the capital of Roman Provence. It was used to show combating gladiators and other spectacles. It has a diameter of 102 meters, and could hold twelve thousand spectators. The “Château des Arènes,” as the amphitheatre in Arles was called, was in its ruined state, almost entirely invaded and choked up with the houses of the poorer inhabitants until 1825, when it was resolved to clear out the building, — a work which required six years for its accomplishment. The structure is now in course of restoration.



Figure 18
The Roman amphitheatre at Arles (2nd century AD)
(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arles_Amphitheatre).

Maison Carrée, Nîmes (16-19 BC)

In 121 BC the Romans founded Nemausa (today Nîmes.) The Maison Carrée in Nîmes, was built in 16-19 BC (the Augustus era) and is one of the best-preserved Roman temples in the former Roman Empire. Etruscan and Greek elements were combined by the Romans. The temple is raised on a podium with a flight of steps, which is Etruscan. The deep portico and the *cella* (a room at the centre of the building) stretch the full width of the temple. The portico is hexastyle (six columns in front), prostyle (there is a porch on one side) and pseudoperipteral (has freestanding columns on both ends but engaged on the sides) (Christensen 1964: 98).

The Romans used trusses so it was possible to span wider distances than the Greeks. This improved structural technique resulted in improved interior spaciousness. Their temples were like museums for exhibiting marble statues taken from Greece. The Romans preferred the Corinthian order, marble columns and entablatures. Refinement may be due to contribution from early Greek settlers (Christensen 1964: 97).

Maison Carrée escaped certain ruination and survived intact because it was converted into a Christian church in the 4th century AD. It was built according to the principles of Vitruvius, the chief theorist of Roman architecture. In the early 19th century, it was chosen as the model for the church of the Madeleine in Paris.

The original intention for the building was ruined, however, because in the eleventh century it formed the council chamber of the municipal body; and at a later time it was degraded into a stable, when the flutings of the columns were grated off to allow carts to pass between them. It then became attached to an Augustinian Convent, and was used as a mausoleum and place of burial. More recently it was occupied as the Hall of meeting of the revolutionary tribunal, and still later as a corn market. Now it has been put in good order and contains the local museum of antiquities.

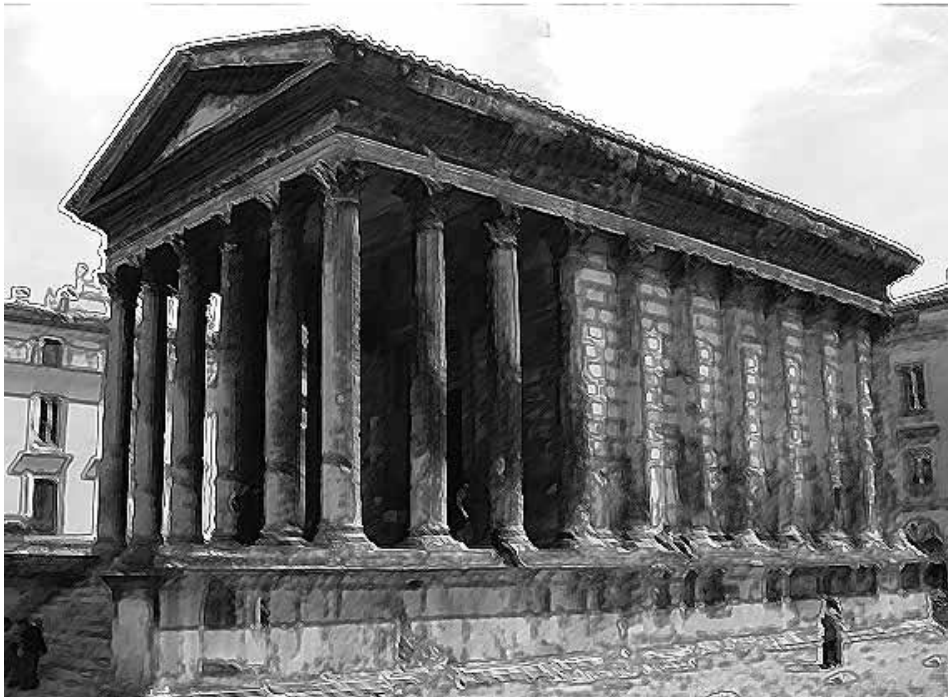


Figure 19
Maison Carrée, Nîmes (16-19 BC)
(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maison_Carrée).

Two epochs

The architecture of this region belongs to two entirely distinct epochs: the Roman period and the Medieval period. In the North of France there are less Roman remains, probably because before the fifth century Roman civilisation was not so advanced in Northern as in Southern Gaul and consequently the towns were not as richly adorned. Also the destruction from the invasions of the Barbarians in the North was far worse than in the South (MacGibbon, 1888: 33).

The *Porte l'Ourme* in the old village of Goult is an example of how Roman and Medieval architecture have intertwined. The buildings sprout from the rock, showing that geology influenced the choice of settlement (Figure 20). Once the principle entrance to the fortified village, *La Porte l'Ourme* is curious in that the internal façade is Roman (Figure 21) and the external is Gothic (Figure 22).

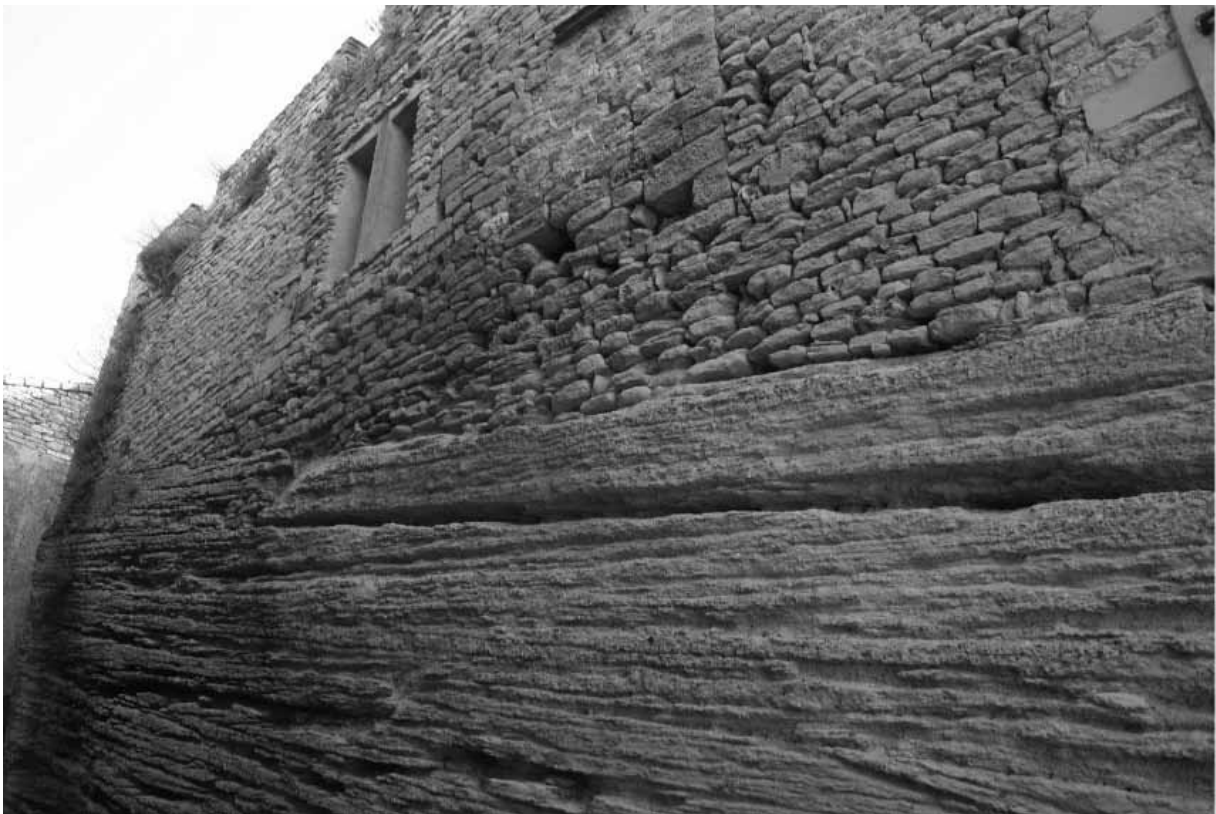


Figure 20

**Goult: layered rock ramparts signal the old fortified village,
with buildings that literally seem to sprout from the rock (photograph: the author).**



Figure 21
Internal Roman façade
(photograph: the author).



Figure 22
External Gothic façade
(photograph: the author).

Conclusion

Geology determined settlement by the Greeks in the coastal areas. The Romans settled on the ruin of the Greek colonies and expanded into the interior using similar geological settlement criteria. The ruins of the Roman Empire became the foundations of Medieval settlement. Building programs changed during the Middle Ages and are still being adapted to contemporary situations. Examples of layered rock covered with a Roman stone base, topped with a Medieval structure that houses contemporary programs demonstrate that these artefacts communicate realities in which our role as agents are always in question.

This article contributes to the existing body of knowledge of Roman structures in Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur by providing a historical and geological context for Roman colonial settlements in the area through an investigation of earlier Greek colonial settlements and town-planning principles. It further adds geology and ruin as considerations for settlement generation and comments on re-use of ruined structures through the ages. The article identifies the need for further study on Roman colonial town-planning principles, in Provence as well as other colonies of the Empire.

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The role of photography, place and memory in gallery and museum design

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The relationship between photography and the way place is interpreted through photographers is discussed, with reference to phenomenological theory, especially the work of Norberg-Schultz. Peter Zumthor's interpretations on memory in terms of architecture are included to establish a link between photography and architecture, especially in terms of memory. The work of photographers Alfred Duggan-Cronin, Francki Burger and Nomusa Makhubu serves as specific examples on how photography can be linked with architecture. This is discussed in terms of galleries and museums and how these building types can be designed in terms of photographic and phenomenological paradigms.

Key words: photography, memory, place, identity, museum, gallery, design

Die rol van fotografie , plek en herinnering in die ontwerp van gallerie en museums

Die verhouding tussen fotografie en die manier hoe fotograwe plek interpreteer word ondersoek en beskryf. Fenomenologie dien as metodiese en teoretiese invalshoek; spesifiek die fenomenologie van Norberg-Schultz. Die verband tussen fotografie en argitektuur word duideliker in die lig van Peter Zumthor se interpretasie van die rol van die geheue in argitektuur. Die werke van fotograwe soos Alfred Duggan-Cronin, Francki Burger en Nomusa Makhubu dien as voorbeelde om die argument te verduidelik. Hierdie voorbeelde word bespreek in terme van die gallery- en museum tipologie en hul ontwerp onder die samreel van die intellektuele modelle van fotografie en fenomenologie.

Sleutelwoorde: fotografie, geheue, identiteit, plek, museum, gallery, ontwerp

Architects, photographers, artists and novelists have addressed the issue of landscape and place, and the connection it has to identity. Almost every aspect of contemporary life has been altered, enriched and defined by photography, and when it is used to study landscape it can become a powerful tool in our understanding of a place, its identity and meaning. The specific relationship between architecture, place and photography is explored in this essay as well as how these factors influence gallery and museum design specifically.

The extent to which our existence depends upon images in a world bound together by visual communication is undeniable: photographs are often credible sources of illustrating the past as well as a widely accepted communication device in the present, and can be an important reference for future generations (Booth & Weinstein 1977: 3). Photography is embedded in almost every aspect of our visual culture (Campany 2003: 11) and in the South African context the documentation and interpretation of the landscape is relevant especially since our identities are closely linked to our surroundings.

Phenomenology is defined by David Woodruff Smith (2011: online) as the study of structures of consciousness as experienced from the first-person point of view. The central structure of this experience is its intention, that it is being directed toward something, as it is an experience of or about an object. An experience is directed toward an object by virtue of its content or meaning - which represents the object - together with appropriate enabling conditions But Merleau-Ponty (in Casey 1997:238) describes it as a philosophy for which the world is always there before reflection begins, as an inalienable presence, with all its efforts concentrating upon achieving a direct and primitive contact with the world; endowing that contact with philosophical status. Phenomenology is the study of our being in the world, and photography can be an aid in gaining this understanding.

A photograph can capture the sense of a place in its most true visual form. J.H. van den Berg (in Pallasmaa 2005: 115) has remarked that poets and painters are born phenomenologists, but Juhani Pallasmaa (2005:115) also regards novelists, photographers, and film directors as such. It is when one combines the way a photographer captures the idea of a place with the considerations of architecturally displaying the phenomenological notion of the *genius loci* or 'spirit of place', championed by the architect and educator Christian Norberg-Schulz (Porter 2004: 12), that one discovers the link between photographic paradigm and architecture. Every image or memory needs a physical setting, a space where it took place. This means that photography has an inherent phenomenological quality and so gains new significance in the South African context where identity and landscape are intertwined.

Martin Heidegger (Casey 1997: xiii) also affirmed the significance of place as he discussed the destiny of modern technological culture. Certain devastating phenomena bring with them, as an aftershock, a new sensitivity to place. Precisely in its capacity to eliminate all perceptible places from a certain area, the prospect of nuclear annihilation heightens awareness of the fact that these places are irreplaceable, since they have singular configurations and unrepeatable histories. This is also significant in South Africa, because places such as District Six, were erased, although not through bombs, but by bulldozers.

Swiss architect Peter Zumthor (2010:95) mentions the importance landscape (or place) has for him, saying that not only does nature feel close to him and larger than him at the same time, but landscape also gives him the feeling of being at home. The fact that he sees it as home is significant; it forms part of his identity and gives him a connection to history. He goes on to say:

Landscape also contains history. People have always lived in landscapes and worked in landscapes. Sometimes the landscape suffers from having us live and work in it. Nonetheless, for better or for worse, it is there that the history of our involvement with the earth is stored. And that is probably why we call it a cultural landscape. So along with feeling that I am part of nature, the landscape also gives me the sense of being connected to history. (2010: 95)

Heidegger (in Casey 1997:262) also emphasises the importance between place and history, stating that the *polis* is the historical place (*Geshichtstatte*), the there in which, out of which, and for which history happens. Thus every significant space is a place and scene of history.

Norberg-Schulz states (in Nesbitt 1996: 421) that man builds what he has seen in order to visualise his understanding of nature, in essence expressing the existential foothold he has gained. The same is true of photography: it is a means of capturing the essence of a place in a certain moment and becomes an aid to memory, especially in the sense that the acts of seeing and photographing have been made to seem fused into one (Campany 2003: 168). It is through this fused action that it becomes part of the way a place is internalised through memory.

If the purpose of architecture is to make a site become a place, to uncover the meanings potentially present in the given environment (Norberg-Schultz in Nesbitt 1996: 422), then photography can capture the essence of a place at a certain moment; contributing to the human need for an existential foothold. Zumthor (2010: 11) writes that buildings can be witnesses to the human ability to construct concrete things. Through this construction both an existential foothold and understanding of place is gained.

Designing a new museum in a complex context is difficult and to create a building that speaks of its site and context in a poetic way even more so. Capturing the sense of place is elusive and photography may be the way to ease this process.

Photographers also attempt to capture the sense of place in their images. The importance of photography to architecture lies in the fact that photography mechanically repeats that which can never existentially be repeated. It captures a moment and place accurately and it thus makes sense to have a tool that works from reality bringing with it more reality (Morales in Cros 2003: 476).

A photograph of the site and the building creates new instances for memories to be linked to; also helping to strengthen the existential foothold, by documenting the physical building in a way that triggers memories of the space. The double use of photography in a variety of contexts, used as an element to both show and depict, sets the use of this medium clearly apart from the use of other pictures (Gaut and Lopes 2001: 616) such as sketches or paintings. Photography is unique in its capturing of a truth, a specific instance. There is more to a photo than just the presented image.

Architecture is a combination of the everyday, the known site, yet it can reveal more about the place, its history and its meaning. Each visitor will bring their own personal interpretation to a building and will have their own unique experience, even though the elements of the context may be familiar and known. Zumthor (2010: 42) describes the presence a building can have in connection with its location:

When I come across a building that has developed a special presence in connection with the place it stands in, I sometimes feel that it is imbued with an inner tension that refers to something over and above the place itself. It seems to be part of the essence of its place, and at the same time it speaks of the world as a whole. When an architectural design draws solely from tradition and only repeats the dictates of its site, I sense a lack of genuine concern with the world and the emanations of contemporary life. If a work of architecture speaks only of contemporary trends and sophisticated visions without triggering vibrations in its place, this work is not anchored in its site, and I miss the specific gravity of the ground it stands on.

Zumthor reveals the importance of understanding and the need and concern an architect should have for a site, so that a newly designed building may fulfil its purpose of creating an existential foothold, and not merely become some contemporary element just placed on a site. Photography can be a method to gain this understanding. The South African context and landscape is filled with ambiguity and through photography these ambiguities may become clear and tangible for the architect.

The importance of photography in furthering the understanding of a place or revealing new interpretations, is explored by South African photographer Francki Burger. She reinterprets place and history by undertaking a journey through the imagery of the past, all the while searching for aspects of her own identity and need for belonging. She searches for traces and footprints of cultural identity, especially that of the Afrikaner, in the landscape (Van Bosch 2011: 7). Architects can gain understanding by investigating the sites, with the same sense of urgency and need to understand its history, but also to the memories associated with it, even if these memories are unclear and ambiguous.

Memory

Memory plays a powerful role in forming identity and is an influence in both architecture and photography. It is a leading factor in architectural design, since all awareness of the past is founded in memory, existing buildings are used as precedents and so memory is often used as an initial concept. The manifestation of architecture can itself provide a kind of knowledge through

which the past remains accessible as it is also crucial for a sense of identity (Porter 2004: 17). Thus architecture and memory are inextricably linked.

Photography can also achieve the same links to the past by strengthening certain memories or revealing new layers of the history of a site. Yet memory is not easily defined, since it is always selective, with timely tactical lapses (Gausa 2003: 428). The past is also viewed through the lens of the present. Elizabeth Grosz (in Porter 2004:116) said that: “Memory is the present’s mode of access to the past. The past is preserved in time, while the memory image, one of the past’s images or elements, can be selected according to present interests”. Memory is a form of interpretation in itself.

Because a photograph combines that which everyone sees and knows with the emotional manifestation which is personal to every observer; the photographic image resembles reality, but does not necessarily represent it. Before photography there was nothing that served the same function, apart from memory (Wilken 2009: 22). The ideal landscape of memory does not resemble true reality either, identity is strongly linked to place, and that can become idealised in the mind’s eye; but a photograph may serve as a link to reality if not truthfully representing it.

The *camera obscura* as most basic form of photography shares these characteristics with memory. The image one sees through a *camera obscura* is known to be a depiction of reality, but is blurred and inverted, as memory can also become tainted and unclear. Contemporary photographers create a new sense of blurring or ambiguity to the image and the way it describes a place, through different methods.

In this sense one can once again refer to Francki Burger’s work as well as to that of Nomusa Makhubu. Burger explores the layers of meaning beneath the immediate viewing and physical surface of the photographic image. With the re-photographing and superimposing of historic and present landscapes, Burger’s photos are filled with history and memory (Van Bosch 2011: 7). This brings forth a new interpretation of a known landscape, a blurring of what one thinks the site is, much as a new building may bring new meaning and a new sense of place with it.



Figure 1

Francki Burger, *Veld 1*, 2005, Hand-printed fibre based silver gelatin print, 30cm x 30cm,
(source online: <http://www.franckiburger.com/fineart4.html>)



Figure 2

**Francki Burger, *Veld VIII*, 2005, Hand-printed fibre based silver gelatin print, 30cm x 30cm,
(source online: <http://www.franckiburger.com/fineart4.html>)**

Makhubu similarly juxtaposes herself with historic photographs in various self portraits, reinterpreting historic material in terms of her own memory and experience (<http://www.photographersgalleryza.co.za/photographers/makhubu-nomusa>). She ‘blurs’ her contemporary identity with the identity of her forebears, indicating the inherent ambiguity that lies within the search for identity in South Africa.

The difficulty of understanding a sense of place in the current context is evident. Designing buildings in this context is thus inherently complex as well. Through the use of photography this can be made simpler for architects, serving as a touchstone for the design that follows. But designing a building simply on the basis of ‘memory’ cannot lead to good architecture. What one can attempt is to interpret a site and through this bring its history and memory into presence.

Berger states that the camera records appearances through the medium of light like the eye, but unlike the eye, fixes the set of appearances which it records, much like memory. Memory preserves an event from being covered and therefore hidden by events that come after it. It holds a single event (Wilken 2009: 22). Yet this event is an individual experience. Architecture, by capturing the essence of a site or place can in turn hold a memory, the place wherein it took place. But this remains a personal experience that will vary with each visitor to the site.



Figure 3

Nomusa Makhubu, *Lover*, 2007, Digital print on Fabriano, 100cmx70cm,

(source online: <http://www.photographersgalleryza.co.za/nomusa-makhubu/self-portrait-project/lover.jpg>)

Zumthor (2010: 41) explains the importance of the ‘memory’ of a site when designing:

When I concentrate on a specific site or place for which I am going to design a building, when I try to plumb its depths, its form, its history, and its sensuous qualities, images of other places start to invade this process of precise observation: images of places that I know and that once impressed me, images of ordinary or special places that I carry with me as inner visions of specific moods and qualities; images of architectural situations, which emanate from the world of art, of films, theatre, or literature.

He attempts to find his own understanding, his own experience and works from within this very personal realm. Rather than trying to create something universal, he creates a building that has resonance in his own memory. That process he believes can have an effect on others as well. Perhaps the only way to design a meaningful building is to take this very individual approach.

Steven Holl (in Porter 2004:6) mentions that architecture fixed in a place and space in time can evoke a more profound connection through memory and through the architectural inscription of historical traces on a site. Of course the problem of individual interpretation in design and photography cannot be ignored. But through the use of both a greater understanding may be gained.

The work of Alfred Duggan-Cronin is significant in this sense. Worked in a De Beers mine compound in Kimberley around 1897, he became interested in photography; and photographed the indigenous people of Southern Africa, undertaking at least 18 expeditions (Hart 2007: 68). His subjects were photographed from a scientific point of view, but the subjects have since become more than just samples of anthropological data. The images have become captured memories as well, although not intended to be emotionally driven these photographs have acquired a new emotional meaning in post-colonial, post-apartheid South Africa.

There is a link between the scientific and emotional. These photos do not capture an event but rather portray a way of thinking, as well as serving as documents of past cultures. Meanings change over time and these images have a hybrid, changing potential. Cros (2005: 511) mentions that reality is not always what you think you see. Von Meiss (1991: 27) also states that perception is not neutral. That what we see is continually compared to situations we previously experienced, memory forms the testing ground.

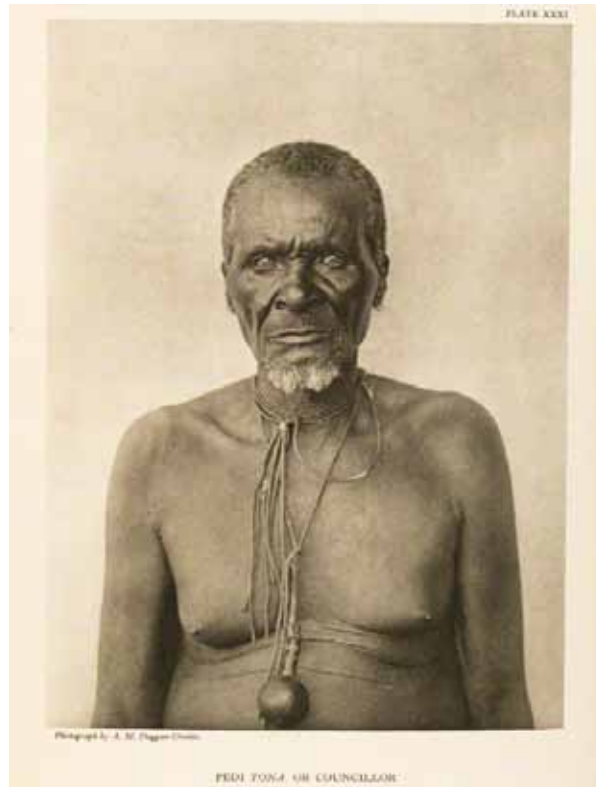


Figure 4
Alfred Duggan-Cronin, *Pedi Tona or Councillor*, 1928, Photograph,
(source: Duggan-Cronin 1928: plate XXXI)

When the viewer experiences space in terms of memory and physicality, the *genius loci* becomes apparent and the viewer does not just look, but *sees* and absorbs and experiences the place (Wilken 2009: 23). In a sense the ‘image’ becomes blurred and its essence is revealed rather than what is blatantly obvious.

If the visitor’s gaze is focused on an element, if only for a brief moment, a truth might be revealed to them. In this sense a site may be documented both photographically and architecturally, as Duggan-Cronin did with the people he photographed, by designing certain spaces in a way as to focus the visitor’s gaze. A building can also bring a sense of place into presence much as the photograph brings its subject into reality. A photograph can bring into presence, not only the captured moment but also new associations and interpretations of it. It creates the choice of interpretation and is thus more than mere representation. Photographers explore the nature of their medium and thereby reveal aspects of the world. (Gaut and Lopes 2001: 614) Architects can do the same. Certain aspects of a site can be made to be seen as more important, or its impact accentuated and other elements can be downplayed. Views can be framed or discarded much like a photographer decides what subject to photograph.

The emotional resonance a photograph can have is also proven in the case of the Monument Dutch Reformed Church in Bloemfontein. Even though the church had not had an active congregation for a number of years, the partial demolition and reuse of the building still evokes a sense of loss and many people in the surrounding areas photographed the process, as way of trying to establish a moment in time to aid their own memories. As time passes new elements, new meanings and experiences are revealed (Wilken 2009: 22) on a site as memory plays a more and more important role as events recede further into the past.



Figure 5
Wanda Verster, *NG Kerk Monument*, 2011, Digital Photograph
(by author)

Galleries and Museums in terms of Place and Memory

New additions to buildings will bring with it new connotations and experiences. Since the invention of photography it has been used as a tool of classification and ordering (Campany 2003: 168). Of course photographs have historical value. They support the study and interpretation of history and any photograph becomes a visual artefact the moment after it is made, although it is not always valued as a historical treasure (Booth and Weinstein 1977: 5).

Gaston Bachelard (in Porter 2004: 48) states simply that space has a history. But this again touches on the important role memory plays in terms of design that one cannot deny the past of a certain site or existing building even if it seems unimportant.

Tadao Ando also bases his design process on a phenomenological way of looking at a site. He appreciates the sense of place much like Zumthor, conscious of the influence architecture can have saying that the presence of architecture – regardless of its self-contained character –

inevitably creates a new landscape. He advocates the necessity of discovering the architecture which the site itself is seeking (Ando in Nesbitt 1996: 461). He is in fact then seeking to bring the essence of the site into presence, not responding to - but finding the true sense of place by the addition of architecture.

The architectural pursuit implies a responsibility to find and draw out a site's formal characteristics, along with its cultural traditions, climate, and natural environmental features, the city structure that forms its backdrop, and the living patterns and age-old customs that people will carry into the future. Without sentimentality, I aspire to transform place through architecture to the level of the abstract and universal. (Ando in Nesbitt 1996: 461)

As mentioned, the design of a gallery can be done in such a way as to frame aspects of the site. These frames can focus the attention of a visitor on a certain aspect of the truth of the site. When a gallery is designed with openings in the journey, with open air spaces or courtyards, moments are created where one can reflect on the exhibitions or where one can dwell on memory.

The concept of imagination is usually attached to a specific human creative capacity or to the realm of art, but our imagination forms the foundation of our very mental existence and of our way of dealing with stimuli and information. It is through imagination that memories and experiences are understood and we may be equally moved by something evoked by the imagination as by anything that is actually physically encountered (Pallasmaa 2005: 130).

That which is evoked by the building or photographs viewed when moving through it can have a great impact on the visitor. The act of perceiving the environment becomes part of the experience. The physical, emotional, visual and even spiritual journey has to be taken into account. Spaces for reflection and movement are needed as well as a choice between them to facilitate the mental journey. Since the visitor's own imagination will contribute largely to the way they experience the site; the personal contribution of a viewer cannot be ignored.

The impact of the art of architecture derives from the ontology of inhabiting space; architecture's task is to frame, structure, and give meaning to our being in the world. We inhabit our world, and our particular way of inhabitation obtains its fundamental sense through constructions of architecture." (Pallasmaa 2005: 132)

Architecturally the distinction between galleries and the environment has led to cocoons. It is easier to safeguard and monitor these sealed buildings, but the experience is no more enjoyable than that of visiting a shopping mall. This does not need to be the norm (Correa 1999: 332). Cocoons in turn do not necessarily need to denote negative experiences; it can become spaces where one can intensely experience memories. Galleries are not designed as separated entities without purpose. Serenity, silence and a sense of holiness are factors that influence and cause this type of design. However the intended serenity or silence of museum spaces may be lost with large crowds. Modern museums need to perform many roles and this creates the problem of serene space versus the needs of hordes of tourists.

The role of the museum is both aesthetic and didactic, both temple and forum (Saieh 2010: online). Combining the temple and forum may not always be possible and one or the other may be the only solution, choosing either the temple or the forum, either the white cube or the artwork.

A museum has the potential to open a discussion on how people were viewed in the past and how photography was used as both scientific tool and artistic medium. Thus it follows, that the manner in which the art is displayed and experienced is an essential part of the dialogue between time, art, and the individual (Ante 2005: 5). This does not necessarily mean that the

artwork type of building, boldly seeking controversy and discussion is the only answer. A building can provide opportunity for dialogue through different means, such as the juxtaposition between old and new.

Architecture is a way of understanding and interpreting reality and as such takes certain information, processes it and returns it in several possible meanings, projecting an image made of multiple visions, distortions and suggestions. This is the result of a reflection on reality, a mental process. In other words, the result of a reflection on reality is the reflection of another reality, projected through a filter of experiences, potential needs and moods (Cros 2003: 511). In this sense a museum may reveal aspects of the reality and history of the site through the possibility of interpreting photographs. “The gaze holds hidden experiences, knowledge and expectations.” (Von Meiss 1991: 27) The building holds opportunities for one’s ‘gaze’ to reveal this.

The gaze is a glance that relies essentially on language and its histories, and ends with the meaning of words and things. The gaze is the eradication of ‘true’ stories, perhaps to make entrance into the present. Thanks to the gaze, space clears itself of time, it moves to its ‘outside’. Space, thus visualized, is a radical transformation of time; it is as though what we check upon visualizing a photograph, where, on the fringe of narration, we presence the radicality of its figures. (Morales in Cross 2003: 252)

If one can provide instances where the gaze reveals new experiences, where architecture and photography are combined to create a meaningful space and when the architect understands the site in this way, then one might be able to design in the way that Zumthor (2010:65) suggests:

The strength of a good design lies in ourselves and in our ability to perceive the world with both emotion and reason. A good architectural design is sensuous. A good architectural design is intelligent.



Figure 6
Peter Zumthor: Kolumba Museum- Köln, Germany
(online Woodman, E. 2010: <http://www.core.form-ula.com/2007/12/17/2074/>)

He achieves much of which he mentions in the Kolumba museum in Köln, Germany. The building is multilayered, contemporary but sensitive to the timeline and context that it resides in. The new seems to grow out of the medieval remnants. The various fragments on the site are united through the use of material and attention to detail. These fragments include pieces of the Gothic Church, stone ruins of Roman and Medieval periods as well as the chapel for the Madonna of the Ruins by Gottfried Böhm (Cilento 2010: online).

The use of grey brick integrates the remnants of the ruin's facade into a new face for the contemporary museum. Articulated with perforations, the brick work allows diffused light to fill specific spaces of the museum, creating as the seasons change, a peaceful yet ever-changing space (Cilento 2010: online). The space has a quality similar to what one's memory might conjure up, incomplete pieces of a past structure becomes part of a new understanding, a new layer on the site. The historical ruins gain new significance through the reinterpretation of the addition.



Figure 7

Peter Zumthor: Kolumba Museum interior- Köln, Germany
(online Vasquez, J. 2010: <http://www.archdaily.com/72192/kolumba-museum-peter-zumthor/>)

A courtyard space provides a secluded space for contemplation, a place where one can make sense of memories and new experiences.



Figure 8

Peter Zumthor: Kolumba Museum Courtyard- Köln, Germany
(online Vasquez, J. 2010: <http://www.archdaily.com/72192/kolumba-museum-peter-zumthor/26-custom/>)

It is when a building is sensitive to its surroundings but not overly so, that a strong reinterpretation brings new meaning and significance to a site. The dialogue initiated between the past and present, the previous place and the new place provides an opportunity for contemplation and new understanding. Although seemingly cold and dissociated from its context, the museum enters into a discussion, between that what was and that what will be and in so doing integrates itself into its site, not merely sitting on top of a ruin, but providing new significance to it.

Conclusion

In a complex and multi-layered context, photography can serve as a way furthering understanding of the meaning of a specific site or a larger landscape. Architects need to be sensitive to the nature and meaning of a site and this can be made easier through the use of photography and its various incarnations. When one then designs a building that is very closely linked to these ideas, the use of photography can serve as part of the design process, not merely to document the site, but to understand it, both in terms of its physical nature and its metaphysical qualities.

Phenomenologically speaking, each site has a unique identity - a true sense of place. This can be interpreted and documented through photographs or remembered in the mind's eye. Memories and photographs will in turn help to strengthen or even change a specific site's identity. It is then through architecture that all these elements can be brought together in a meaningful way. As an architect one must then attempt to bring a coherent vision through these elements.

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The dialectic of ruin

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This article focuses on the ambiguous aspects of ‘ruin’ in its different appearances –as visible material phenomenon and as concept or idea. The word ‘ruin’ implies the dialectic of passivity and action; the specific and universal, and the merging of past and future in the present. I apply the abstract and physical idea of ruin to the European political sphere of the past century. The meanings of ‘ideology’ and ‘dialectic’ are placed in perspective with the physical destruction of the Berlin wall. Within days after the event, chunks of wall were for sale in the USA: wrapped in velvet satchels and stacked under Christmas trees, this became part of the American Christmas shopping experience. The material and symbolic value and meanings attached to ‘ruin’ is explored in light of the Berlin Wall. In some ways the symbolic meaning of the ruined wall can serve as a metaphor for the ambiguity of our existence and its similarities to ‘ruin’.

Key words: Berlin wall, dialectic, ideology, rationalisation

Die dialektiese aspekte van ruïne

Die artikel fokus op die dubbelsinnige karakter van die ruïne: enersyds as ‘n fisiese artefak en andersyds as ‘n idee of ‘n konsep. Die woord ‘ruïne’ impliseer die dialektiese verhouding van aktiwiteit en passiwiteit; van die spesifieke en die universele, asook die samevloei van verlede en toekoms in die teenwoordige. Die idee van die ruïne word hier weergelê in die lig van die Europese politieke geskiedenis van die afgelope eeu. Die val van die Berlynse muur dien hier as fisiese en simboliese verwysingspunt om die betekenis van ‘dialektiek’ en ‘ideologie’ in die konteks bloot te lê. Die verskillende betekenisse van die ruïne mag dalk as analoog dien om ons eie bestaan te interpreteer en beter te verstaan.

Sleutelwoorde: Berlynse muur, dialektiek, ideologie, rasionalisasie

Standing on the pavement in ‘downtown’ Philadelphia I read the note that accompanied the piece of ‘Berlin wall-for-Christmas’ in my hand:

“The Wall is Gone! And from this rubble rose a new symbol for tomorrow,
An icon for future generations; the Berlin Wall . . . dismantled.
History is a look backward, a reconciliation of times and lives gone by.
Now we are faced with the glowing view before us. It is the stuff of dreams.
It is the blue sky that sails just out of view.
Grip the artifact and in your hand is the past and future.
Let your fingers wander slowly across its battered surface.
You can tell the balance of our lives.
You can feel the struggles and the triumphs, the grief and the joy,
the hope and the fulfilment.
You can feel the distant tremor of tomorrow’s
history gently unfolding in the palm of your hand.”

In Philadelphia, crowds of spectators gathered around television displays in shop fronts to witness the drama unfold halfway around the world. This situation itself was like a scene from a movie. My question with regard to the Berlin wall is how were people affected by the Wall’s [known as *die Mauer* in German (Rottman 2008: 4)] presence and its subsequent absence? In other words, what was the relation of human beings with the Wall as a cultural construct and its demolition? In this article I suggest that there is a parallel between the dialectic on the material

and conceptual levels; a dialectic that entails a relation between the past and the present (and future), and between the specific and the universal. This dialectic also foreshadows an alleged parallel between the dialectic of political history and of the history of certain artefacts, notably the infamous Berlin Wall, with the implication that – given the meaning of the dialectic – a past can never be fully erased, and continues to haunt the present.²

Contemporary professional historians criticise those of the 20th Century for de-personalising the major events of the era. The narrative ‘story-telling’ nature of history is marginalised in favour of an objective stance. The proliferation of new technologies and sources and inventions might have added to the preference for a ‘scientific’ worldview. Upon reflection, we have to focus on the confluence of ideas, sources and events between 1914 and 1949 in order to understand the rest of the 20th century and especially our present era (Outhwaite 2006: 273-4).

1914 - 1949

After the First World War the Soviet Union arose in the 1920’s as the socialist society as proclaimed by Marx. Under the leadership of Lenin, the following Marxist goals were successively attained: a) private property was abolished; b) organised religion was abolished; c) class structures were abolished; and d) the transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat. A whole economic reform occurred in this era of the Russian communist experiment.³ I think the fascination with Marx’s texts is the complexities and various possible interpretations and misinterpretations thereof. Marx’s ‘prophetic’ ideas on inevitable overthrow of a capitalist system through revolution were fulfilled by the Russians a few decades later. By relinquishing private ownership of the instruments and modes of production, the ‘ideal’ state of equality actually succeeded for a time in the USSR under Lenin. For the next 75 years the effects of communism played a major role in world history. (Outhwaite 2006: 274).

I do not claim anything more than a superficial understanding of these complex political dynamics however, my interest in these historical events lies in the dynamic powers and forces unleashed by ideas and concepts. Merleau-Ponty aptly stated that “an act or a thought once expressed has the power to outlive itself” (Merleau-Ponty 1970: 392). The fact that an ideology that propagated a utopia became a reality –albeit momentarily- keeps historians, theorists and intellectuals (studying politics, economics or other principles of power relations) occupied. In the case of Lenin’s appropriation of Marx’s philosophy, theory and practice coincided. The Soviet Union’s firm belief that the future of humankind lies in Socialism by means of the Communist Party, led to the unbridled, forceful expansion of Communism under Stalin. Let us have a look at the concept of the dialectic before we return to the Berlin Wall.

The dialectic

The dialectic, whether that of Hegel, Marx, and/or the Frankfurt School, contains the crucial element namely, “sublation” (*Aufhebung* in German) which means that in every successive stage of the dialectic the previous stages are cancelled, but simultaneously lifted up to a higher level of development, and preserved in altered form. For Hegel, The Absolute / universal spirit moved people to perceive the contractions in the governing ideas of the age. By means of the dialectic between an idea and its opposite (or contradiction), people could reach a new understanding “and move human history ultimately to culminate in a Christian state.” (Maurer 2008: 14). Marx turned Hegel’s notion of the dialectic around to claim that the ultimate truth is not in the Spirit, but in practical, material existence. Material forces and relations to production would move

people to become aware of the contradictions of their material existence, and that awareness would culminate into revolutionary transformation (Maurer 2008: 14).

When I reflect back on the situation in Philadelphia in 1989, I recognise the irony of being in the heart of the capitalist world, doing Christmas shopping and buying a piece of structure that symbolised the destruction of relations and lives of a past era. The commoditisation of the remnants of the Wall in the guise of gifts that symbolised the collapse of a past oppressive regime while simultaneously representing an open future (in the present) showed the dialectic of the past era embedded in an artefact, which has a different meaning for me today than it had twenty years ago and forty years ago for an East Berliner.

Political conditions in East and West Germany, especially in occupied Berlin after the Second World War right through the 1990's are extremely well recorded and extensive: audio-visual, photographic, biographical and other means of documentation are prolific. Media and communication technologies greatly enhanced the impact of the 'fall' of the Berlin Wall, which marked a new way of looking at the world. Spectators around the world watched the drama of the Wall via 'live' television broadcasting. On 9 November 1989 the final moments of General Honecker's East Berlin were recorded in history for future generations.

The Wall

The 206km long Berlin Wall (1961-1989) notes a long and violent history that stretches over a century. The Berlin Wall and the Intra-German border (IGB) marked the symbolic and physical possibilities of small and powerful ideologies; firstly, as a cultural product this radical device had the dual purpose of excluding and 'keeping in' (Rottman 2008: 5,29). Secondly, this barricade (and for that matter the Great Wall of China and other barriers such as the wall between Israel and Palestina built in 2002) represents the lengths to which human beings went to forcefully employ or defend their ideologies (Bevan 2006: 133). The barrier would inevitably lead to the topographical and physical ruination of buildings, networks and the city as a whole. In Berlin, even sewer lines were blocked off by East German soldiers to prevent escapes to West Berlin. The Wall's appearance destroyed human lifeworlds and meaningful existence for countless people.

The orientation of the defences and footings of the Berlin Wall demonstrated that the East bloc's intention with their so-called "'anti-fascist protection rampart' to secure peace" (Bevan 2006: 158, Monghani 2008: 130, Maier 1997: 158) had in reality been designed to prevent escape to the West.⁴ As the physical metaphor for the Iron Curtain, not only Europe was divided (MacMahon 2003: 178, Manghani 2008: 95-99, 118) but the East / West ideological systems were associated with on a global phenomenon. New fortifications and rebuilding, expanding and upgrading of the IGB and the Berlin Wall took place on a constant basis. More than thirty thousand East German border patrol and security soldiers were employed. By mid-1970's, the German Democratic Republic (GDR/ East Germany) spent an average of five hundred thousand US dollars per year on securing the IGB. Notwithstanding, an average of 3000 East Germans escaped to the West via West Berlin on a yearly basis (Rottman 2008: 16-43).

The Berlin Wall's demolition in November 1989 happened as fast and unexpected as its construction had happened in the early morning hours of 13 August 1961. This moment overtly signified the Western final blow to the Soviet Republic's communist ideology - the victory of freedom over oppression and of reclaiming the privacy of family and home in everyday life. However, the process of re-unification of the inhabitants of the former East Germany and West

Germany, and more specifically Berlin proved to be difficult and complicated. Shortly after the fall of the Wall, many East Germans felt especially dislocated.

“A regime had disappeared. With it a framework of inculcated collective values—cultivated by constraint to be sure, but nonetheless pervasive—had been abandoned, pronounced irrelevant, cancelled. What East German party members and intellectuals referred to as ‘our republic,’ with its implicit distinction from ‘their republic,’ no longer existed. But the differences between East and West persisted.” (Maier 1997: 285-6).

Today, an indented line across road surfaces and pavements with a small dated copper strip would be the only physical reminder of the position of the Berlin Wall. Today, the void left by the absence of the Wall is the monument of its past existence. The fact remains that the physical eradication of the Wall did not imply its erasure from Germans’ and humankind’s memory. Its absence accentuates the Wall’s non-presence as much as active forgetting is the intentional ‘non-remembering’ of something. The integration of the past into the present (in order to adapt to the new experience of freedom) took a long time following the physical eradication of boundaries, exclusions and divisions. Returning to ‘normality’ (with the question, ‘what is normal in Germany with its political history’?⁵) cannot be easy, especially when the topology of war used to be where you currently live: bullet and shrapnel marks on many buildings and ruins serve as a constant reminder of the visible past in the present.

Andreas Huyssen wrote about the specific “politics of wilful forgetting” in East Berlin, following the fall of the Berlin wall. Actions such as renaming streets, the dismantling of monuments to socialism and the debates about which buildings should remain or be demolished were all, according to Huyssen, part of the tactics of power and humiliation. Much of it led to predictable conflict and drove East Berliners to a state of nostalgia for the former GDR (or German Democratic Republic / West Germany) that led to rekindling a support-base for a ‘revamped’ communist party in the 1990’s. (Huyssen 1997: 60-2). Bernhard Schneider (in Scott, 2008: 206-7) noted that politicians and authorities wanted to overcome (as quickly as possible) the horror of the ruination of the city and the “shame of the Gate’s isolation behind the Wall.” (Scott 2008: 194-6).

Schneider condemned the uncritical way in which reconstruction and designs for new buildings were handled and reviewed. The politicians believed in recalling better times before Pariser Platz and surrounding areas’ destruction and ruination. On the one hand one can understand the city authorities’ reaction to eradicate from memory the visible horrors of war and destruction in the city. Schneider continued that the authorities may have viewed this act of “ignoring the apocalyptic history of the sixty-five years since 1933” as being a necessary “way of destroying the destruction” (Scott 2008: 207), which had been impossible to accomplish, since the dialectic of history shows the past ever remaining part of the present and future.

Conclusion

History cannot be ‘actively’ ignored by erasing physical remnants of war in enforcing or defending ideological goals. Some theorists believe that ideology had reached its end after the Cold War had ended.⁶ Wars will be waged to defend ideas. Insane means to defend rational ideas will prevail as long as ideologies of progress or improvement with the goal of a utopian future exist. The past century’s wars were waged by means of a clash of arms with definitive defensible physical and ontological boundaries. Large scale migration and technological and cultural globalisation marks this century as one in which boundaries seem to fade on many

levels. For Samuel Huntington, civilizations will ultimately clash on religious level: the USA has been at war with the Middle East since 2001.

The ruination of one ideology gives way to its counter through revolution and war. The remnants of the division line in Berlin are constant reminders of what Paul Ricoeur termed “the political paradox” which means that

“politics defined by reference to power...poses the problem of political evil. There is a problem of political evil because there is a specific problem of power. Not that power is evil. But power is one of the splendours of man that is eminently prone to evil. Perhaps in history it is the greatest occasion for and the most stupendous display of evil. The reason of course is that power is....the vehicle of the historical rationality of the State”,

which represents the collective Will (Ricoeur 2007: 254-6).⁷ What we can learn from the dialectic of ruin in which the past is a constant presence; that totalitarian insanity contained its own demise and inevitably returned to normality. In order to be mindful of our present and future, we have to remain mindful of others regardless of the commensurability of different ideas. If Merleau-Ponty is correct⁸ in that a) culture is the sedimentation of people into things and that b) the body of the other person is the first object of culture, we cannot but take responsibility for our past, our present and our future on both physical and metaphysical levels.

Notes

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| <p>1 I wish to thank the two anonymous reviewers for their constructive criticism and useful advice to greatly improve the content and structure of this article.</p> <p>2 Adapted from a succinct summary by one of my reviewers, of my intentions with this article.</p> <p>3 Refer to Stites (1989) for detailed descriptions of life in Russia during the rime of the Revolution and before Stalin’s reign. Revolutionary art and phenomena such as mini-utopian experiments were at the order of the day. The intention was to promote the notion of egalitarianism by means of festivals, parades, and events such as conductor-less orchestra performances, monographs and questions afterwards.</p> <p>4 Bevan (2006: 158) notes that, since more than 3 million people had already fled the GDR between 1945 and 1961, as well as the nature of the fortifications, size, form and width of the Berlin wall was such that it was quite obvious that its design was rather to prevent further escapes to West-Berlin than to withstand military attacks on East Berlin from the West.</p> | <p>5 Caroline Pearce (2008: 50-3,78-9, 214-16) focuses on collective and individual memories of Germany’s ‘double past’ of Nazism as well as West Berlin’s isolation in a surrounding communist-occupied East Germany. Her main question is, what is normality and what does it mean for groups, individuals and Germany as a whole? Pearce believes it is because of its specific history, Germany is more sensitive than other countries not to repeat injustices of the past in the future.</p> <p>6 Cf 2005. New Keywords: A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society. Tony Bennett, Lawrence Grossberg, Meghan Morris (eds). New York: Blackwell. s.v. <i>ideology</i>.</p> <p>7 Ricoeur’s concept of the political paradox was explicated by Prof. Ernst Wolff (Dept of Philosophy, University of Pretoria) in a Political Philosophy course lecture, August, 2011.</p> <p>8 Cf. Merleau-Ponty (1970: 130,348)</p> |
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A lifetime in ruins: the farm life of blacks on the Mpumalanga Highveld

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The ruin of the homestead represents place making and an understanding of the layered landscape where former labour tenants resided. Ruins comprehend narratives which deal with the socio-political circumstances of the time, such as displacement and the subsequent loss of house in the case of former labour tenants. Presently labour tenants and their descendants who registered land claims activate life histories through the mnemotechnic capacity of the ruin of the homestead, graves, and domestic and agricultural space. Ruins also carry sentiments of kinship and identity. The degree to which the ruination of house and homestead has taken place impacts directly on the quality of memory. Case studies will illustrate how this affects the calling up of the past.

Key words: ruins, homestead, kraal, labour tenants, mnemotechnic, memory, land, landscape, dating, Ndebele

‘n Leef tyd in ruïnes: die plaaslewe van swartes op die Mpumalanga Hoëveld

Die ruïne van die woonstede verteenwoordig die gedagtes van plekmaking en gelaagdheid van landskap waar toenmalige plakkerdiensbodes gewoon het. Ruïnes omvat naratiewe wat te doen het met sosio-politieke omstandighede van die tyd soos verskuiwing en die gevolglike verlies van huis in die geval van sulke plakkerdiensbodes. Tans aktiveer hierdie mense en hulle nasate wie grondeise geregistreer het hul lewensverhale met behulp van die mnemotegniese kapasiteit van die ruïnes van die woonstede, grafte, huishoudelike en landbouurimtes. Ruïnes dra ook sentimente van verwantskap en identiteit. Die mate waartoe ruïnering van huis en woonstede plaasgevind het, impakteer direk op die kwaliteit van geheue. Gevallestudies illustreer hoe dit die herroeping van die verlede beïnvloed.

Sleutelwoorde: ruïnes, woonstede, kraal, plakkerdiensbodes, mnemotegnies, geheue, grond, landskap, datering, Ndebele

The concept of ‘ruins’ implies sad beauty, majesty, glorious memory, tragedy, loss and historical import” (Mah 2000: 399). The ruins of the African homestead and cattle enclosures represent a multiplicity of voices and identities. Firstly, homestead ruins represent a sense of space and place making, and an understanding of the layered landscape where people resided. Secondly, ruins represent layers of memory which narrate inter-community relationships and relationships with neighbours and landowners. Many of these narratives deal with the socio-political circumstances of the time, such as displacement and the subsequent loss of house as in the case of former labour tenants. In the present time, former labour tenants and their descendants who registered land claims engage and activate life histories through the powerful mnemotechnic device of the remains of the homestead, cattle enclosures, graves, and domestic and agricultural space.

I argue that the ruin as a tool engages and amplifies senses of seeing, touching, tasting and the olfactory. The ruin simultaneously reifies a sense of kinship, community and lost community as well as notions of tribal identity. The degree to which ruination or the degradation of house and homestead have taken place impacts directly on the quality of the product of memory. The scale of degradation of the natal house and homestead ruin also inform us on the issue of a changed landscape. Case studies will illustrate how this affects ”calling up” of the past.

Another conversation on the power of the ruin is encompassed in the regularity of past visits to the remains of the natal homestead. To many black Africans, the ruin and the grave serve as powerful media through which ritual libations are performed. I will argue that the ruin serves as a means to integrate the tangible and intangible domains of heritage.

The African settlement and ruin as a romanticised and mystified entity

Pioneer travellers) and adventurers who reported on African architectural phenomena simultaneously engaged with ruin architecture at the time as early as the sixteenth century. The first reports in the West on house and shelter ranged from semi-scientific and objective reports to Western prejudice. A few individual Europeans reported on their encounters and discoveries of African society and its built culture. Oliver (1971: 2-4) argued that much of our databases on dwellings, including vernacular architecture emanating from the contributions of self-taught amateurs, are a result of these first encounters. Such were the comments of travellers like Dapper who in 1686, upon his travel to Benin, stated that the houses and villages were equal to those of the Dutch as far as cleanliness was concerned. The Swedish naturalist, Andrew Sparrmann, recorded in 1785 that "Hottentot" houses were neat and inartificial in their construction argued Oliver (1971: 10). He contends that the early databases of these pioneers have become indispensable inventories on Khoekhoe and San settlements. Campbell's (1822) descriptions and sketches on the Hurutshe (Tswana) citadel of Kaditshwene provided a solid base for archaeological and historical contributions of Boeyens (2000: 3,11,12). A photograph entitled "Un village des montagnes" by the missionary Casalis (1930[1859]: 348) of a (Ba) Sotho dwelling provided us with invaluable insight on the physical appearance of early houses.

Other adventurers, for example, were less complimentary. Oliver (1971: 8-9) indicated how Rene Caille in 1830 visited Timbuktu and found a city consisting of "nothing but a mass of ill-looking houses built of earth" and likewise followed Clapperton, in 1857 who found the city of Kano largely disappointing. He also quoted Sir Richard Burton who portrayed the African building as follows: "Circularity (he argued) was a result of barbarians' deficiency in inventiveness" (Oliver 1971: 9). The irony of these early travelogues was that they still contained more detail on African architectural forms than their colonial administrator successors were to deliver in the 1800s and early 1900s (Oliver 1971: 11).

The ruin and remains of the African shelter also gave rise to speculation, imagination and fabrication on its origins and place in world history. In cases where the living representatives or reliable oral traditions were unable to provide factual information, travellers and their colleagues back in Europe speculated on the origin identity of such 'lost' civilisations.

In Southern Africa the origin of the Zimbabwe ruins gave birth to several popular speculations but, conversely, also to an extensive and ongoing scholarly discourse over decades (Huffman 2007: 362-407). Myths and legends which supported so-called mystical or lost cities and civilisations such as Alan Paton's "Lost city of the Kalahari" (only published in 2005) in particular, triggered a world of imagination. "King Solomon's mines" (Haggard 1886) is another example. The urge to discover and succeed often triggered pilgrimages to mystical places - ruins - perhaps in search of the Centre as Eliade (1996: 196) argued or to indulge in ritual passage through portals (gates, corridors) crossing new thresholds as Van Gennep (1996: 532) argued. Cohen argued that pilgrimage and tourism into the Other "restitute[d] him, physically and mentally, for the performance of his ordinary roles" (1992: 53). Mythological ruin sites, such as 1600 century slave courtyards in West Africa, the Glastonbury ruins and Stonehenge, the archaeological site of Great Zimbabwe, and others provide regular impetus or discovery along the schemas which the authors above suggested. Whether myth follows imagination and divine intervention, or the reverse, what we know is that adventurers often capitalised on such legends.

Even localised myths in the white community often do not escape the popular media. Near Roosenekal in Mpumalanga, South Africa "Die Huisgenoot" magazine in the late 1950s

reported on pots filled with diamonds guarded by ancestral spirits which were hidden in the Mapoch's Caves in Mpumalanga (Van der Walt 1952: 22,23,42). Fed by the local Ndebele oral tradition on the Namrhali oracle, this further mystification by white locals comes as no surprise (Van Vuuren 1992). Alongside ancient or unidentifiable stone and earthen ruins, stone circles and fortifications, natural phenomena also did not escape the mythical imagination: bottomless rivers and pools, dangerous caves, treacherous mountain passes, and so on. New found discoveries of ruins always seemed to be spurred on by a quest to locate the centre of governance, of the ruling class and of past royal dynasties. The "re-discovery" of the Mapoch Caves in the late 1960s was of regional importance and the site was declared a National Heritage site in 1969. It was not until 1998 that the first full-scale archaeological study (including excavation) on two Ndzundza-Ndebele sites was conducted (Schoeman 1997). It is the ruins of ordinary Ndebeles, however, which became marginalised despite their powerful narratives. These were the ruins which I have walked as an anthropologist since 1978 and whose testimonies will be discussed (Van Vuuren 1993).

What causes the ruin of settlement and shelter? In colonial Africa and South Africa, a number of causes of ruination require our attention; the ruination of the Ndebele settlement requires special attention.

The cause(s) of the ruin in South Africa

The earthen house of the Ndebele of South Africa evolved through three major typological stages: a pre-colonial grass (beehive) dome, followed by a cone-on-cylinder ("rondavel") type, and the current square and rectangular shapes. These developments should not be seen in terms of precise datable stages, but rather as succeeding stages which often overlapped as earlier types were gradually phased out (Van Vuuren 1993: 51). The settlement layout of the Ndebele homestead changed considerably over time. The pre-colonial model (the grass dome) was similar to other Nguni (Zulu, Xhosa and Swazi) patterns, which archaeologists term the "central cattle pattern" (CCP) (Huffman 2007: 25). This pattern, which is typical of the patriarchal and bovine order, consisted of a cattle byre (kraal) in the middle surrounded by the homes of wives and children, storage huts and similar facilities. The houses of the wives of the polygamous male head were usually arranged in order of rank and seniority (Van Vuuren 1983: 49-51).

The layout patterns changed considerably after 1883 (the Mapoch War), particularly as a result of the introduction of large courtyard walls (*iirhodlo*) and square and rectangular house forms (called *iirhaesi*: derived from "house") (Van Vuuren 1983: 44-45; Meiring 1955: 26-35). The cattle kraal (*isibaya*), now four-cornered in shape, still occupies a central position, but the general layout resembles an elongated "n" shape. The pattern, although still in existence in rural areas, has largely disappeared. The influence of western building technology on the Ndebele earthen house became visible during the decades of labour tenancy on the farm. Apart from the quadrangular shape of the house windows, doors, nails and wire were regularly used, as well as modern thatching techniques.

The earth building technology (EBT) of the Ndebele displayed a variety which is evident in wall and floor construction. Compare Houben and Houben (2000: 5) in this regard. The choice of earthen application depended largely on the availability of natural resources around the building site. Since 1883 this choice of site was mostly determined by the farmer landowner as will be discussed later. The house ruins which I encountered since 1978 exhibited clear differences in terms of their durability. Apart from the duration of the period of ruin certain

earthen technologies outlive others. Walls built from wicker (or wattle and daub) disappear to the extent that little evidence is left which could determine the width and often the height of walls. Earth and stone walls display a somewhat longer life lifespan, providing the stone were not recycled for other purposes. Rammed earth (*pise le terre*) walls display a remarkable duration in life time. On a recent visit to the remains of a Ndebele homestead on farm Zeekoegat in the Middelburg district the entire homestead complex consisting of some eight houses were markedly intact. Most of the walls were on the original height. The encroachment of natural vegetation was the only cause for collapse of other walls such as the outer courtyard walls (*iinrhodlo*).



Figure 1
Example of a collapsed stone wall
(source: photograph by the author).



Figure 2
Remains of an earth- and- stone wall on the farm Doornpoort, Stoffberg
(source: photograph by the author).



Figure 3
Profile of a rammed earth wall on the farm Zeekoegat
 (source: photograph by the author).

What forces cause the displacement of humans and thus the production of the ruined shelter? The forces of human displacement are either natural (floods, fire, drought) or of a human nature (war, political interventior). Humans who relocate voluntarily experience lower levels of stress and trauma. A number of factors contributed to involuntary resettlement or displacement in South Africa.

War portrayed both an internecine and colonial nature. The Mfecane upheaval was marked by the dislocation and annihilation of thousands of indigenous people and the destruction of movable and immovable property over almost the entire Southern Africa. Worse than in the ancient and medieval city there were little left behind in terms of grotesque stone architectural heritage. The Ndzundza-Ndebele were also caught in the wave of destruction of the Mfecane and they nearly annihilated by Mzilikazi's forces around 1822. Under Mabhoko they redesigned elements of their original settlement architecture, and built protected villages and fortifications in the impenetrable mountainous area in the Steenkampsberg. Here they successfully weathered onslaughts from the Swazi and the Boers on two occasions and the Ndzundza-Ndebele rose to a regional force. In 1883, they finally surrendered after a protracted war against the Boers (Van Vuuren 1992: 118-123, Van Jaarsveld 1985: 237, Delius 1989: 234-5). The stronghold of Erholweni was partially destroyed with explosives to prevent re-grouping efforts by the Ndzundza, commonly known as Mapoggers by whites in the region (Van Vuuren 1992: 124-130). The aftermath of the war is important to this discussion. The entire conquered Ndebele community was split into small families and indentured on white owned farms on the Highveld between 1883 and 1888.

This Diaspora had a significant long-term impact on their settlement pattern and architecture, and the sociocultural fabric and relationships with white people. Serious constraints were imposed on the settlement of indentured labourers after 1883. It was decreed that no Ndzundza settlement 'kraal' would be permitted in the heartland area. Despite recommendations that families not be separated, this did occur. The number of homesteads per farm (no more than five) was determined by the Squatters Act of 1883. Delius, however, argues that the presence of

four or more families per equal number of clustered Boer families secured the survival of the three generational Ndzundza homestead (Delius 1989: 234).

In colonial Africa, and under the guise of development, major population displacements occurred globally and in Africa. The construction of the Kainji dam in the Niger River in northwest Africa in the 1960s saw the displacement of 44 000 indigenous people. Similar displacement has been caused by the damming of the Zambezi River since the late 1950s. On both sides of the Zambezi River in present Zambia and Zimbabwe, some 38 000 people were displaced. The worst of this displacement for this riverine Gwembe Tonga community was not only physical loss of house, but also resettlement in an alien climate and soil (Colson 1971: 1-4). To this day, this community has been unable to come to terms with their resettlement.

The political history of the ruined village in South Africa has become a fruitful arena for interdisciplinary discourse over decades. There was a range of legislative powers which controlled the settlement, employment and mobility of black people in South Africa from the late 1800s. Some of these were the ZAR Resolution 359 of 1891, Resolution 1004 of 1903, the Squatters Law No 21 of 1921, the Crown Land Disposal Ordinance of 1903 and the Land Settlement Act (No 12 of 1912). After 1910, four sets of legislation were promulgated to control labour tenant and squatters, namely the Native Land Act (No 27 of 1913), the Masters and Servants Act (No 26 of 1926), the Native Service Contract Act (No 24 of 1932), and the Native Trust and Land Act (No 18 of 1936) (Van Vuuren 2010:11) Section 26 (10) of the Native Trust and Lands Act regulated the conditions for residence of Natives (black people) on land outside the so-called scheduled of Native areas or Released Native areas. Such a native must be a registered owner of such land, a servant of the owner of the above land and a registered labour tenant. The conditions of residence and settlement were not regulated by the Act. Stemming from their earlier historical disposition as indentured labourers, 20th century Ndebele labourers were in no condition to decide on settlement and residence. By and large the farmer determined the location of a new homestead (*umuzi*) or “kraal”, the size of the homestead (which was determined by the size of the family and the number of potential labourers, access to natural resources such as water and firewood, the number of livestock permitted, as well as grazing and planting conditions).

Ndebele labour tenants experienced regular disagreements with their landlords and they were often engaged in serious conflicts over livestock. White owners accused their black tenants of having too many head of cattle and trespassing on their grazing land¹. In the majority of current land claim cases which have come to my attention, conflict over grazing land caused most tenants to either relocate voluntarily or to be evicted.

Notwithstanding the post-1883 restrictions on settlement size, it appeared that the landlords on some farms permitted or did not have control over or knowledge of the existence of sizable clustered homesteads. Called *abakhelwane* (neighbours), these homesteads often consisted of three generational homesteads under the control of a male head, known as the *umnomuzi*. Madlephu Sindane (80) who was born on the farm Zeekoegat and left in 1968 displayed a vivid memory of the seven neighbouring homesteads around him as well as the present whereabouts of the descendants of those families (in genera). On farms such as Rooikraal, Waterval, Wonderboom and Zeekoegat in the Middelburg district, the existence of such vicinages was visible during site visits and on aerial photographs which date back to the early 1950s. Petros Mahlangu of the farm Rooikraal (near Groblersdal) explained that the homesteads were some distance (2 to 4 km) away from the white farmhouse and that some farmers hardly bothered to familiarise themselves with the ‘statte’² of their black neighbours. On the nearby farm, Kruisrivier, Linah Mahlangu’s

oral testimony in 2007 produced a clear grid) of both the identity and position of homesteads of her former neighbours over a period of 50 years. She also offered vivid recollections of the whereabouts of the present descendants. During our walkabouts, most labour tenants knew exactly who their former neighbours were, and often when and where they resettled. Such a memory is never activated by accident; neither is it coincidental.

Vansina (1985: 176-178) describes the accuracy of the memory (system): “It will put these (data) in sequential order which resembles an expression of measured duration, but in fact it is a creation of memory: the epoch. It places events or situations in one time frame or another and sometimes transposes them which constitutes an anachronism.” Finnegan (1992: 114-115) dispenses with the idea of rote memory, which is mystified, romanticised and “kicks in” when needed.

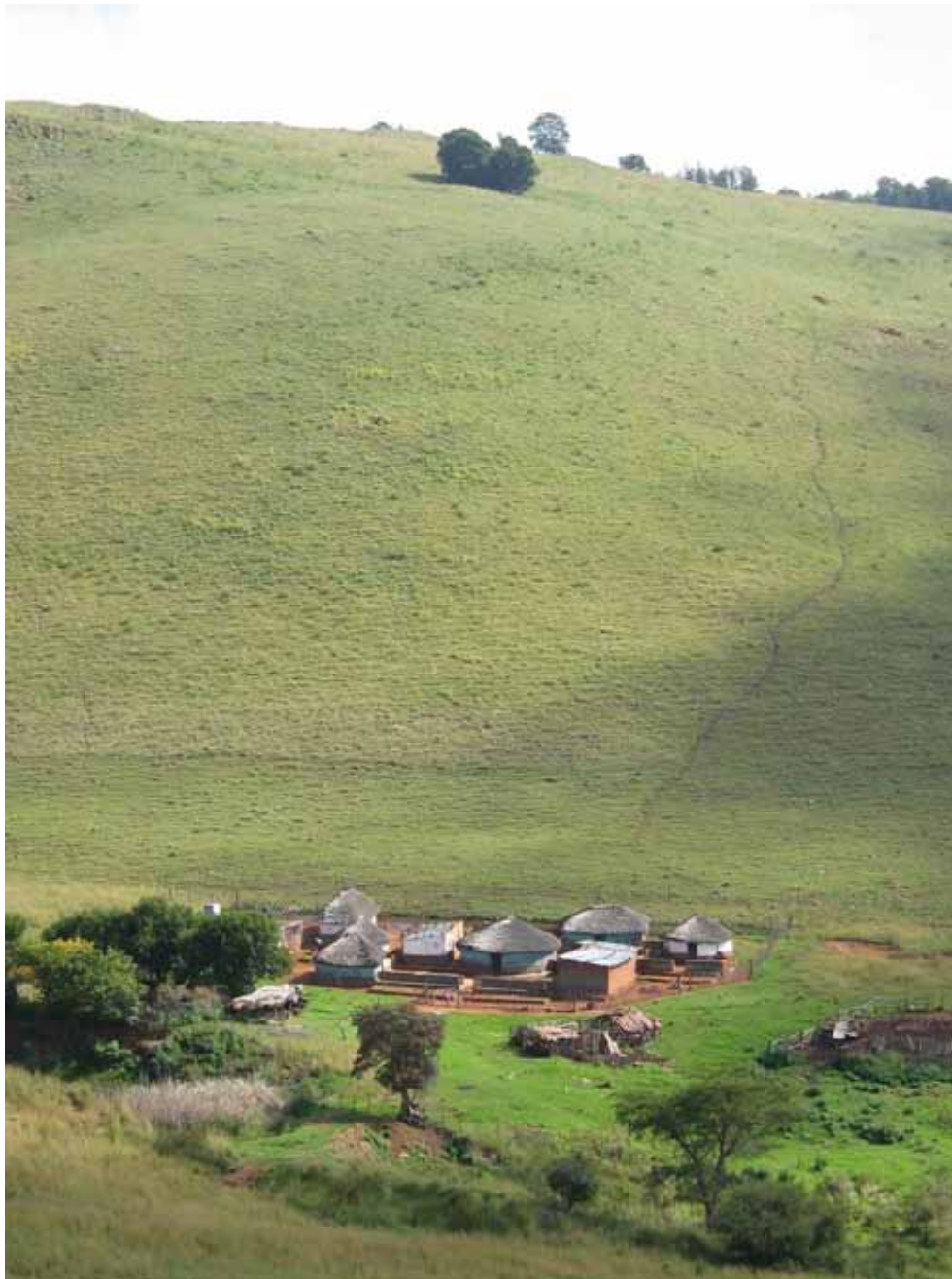


Figure 4
The landscape around a Ndebele homestead near Stoffberg. The footpath above links to that of a neighbouring homestead on the same farm (source: photograph by the author).

The application of Chapter 4 of Act 38 of 1927 provided for the removal of labour tenants from farms. All large-scale evictions of labour tenants in terms of the 1936 Act and its various upgrades were documented and archived. The above Act was comprehensively amended in 1968 and the labour tenant system was abolished in Middelburg and Tzaneen under Government Notice 1335, Gazette 1830. In 1969, labour tenancy was abolished in 25 of the 85 districts in the former Transvaal. By 1970, it was abolished in 41 additional districts in the former Transvaal, 23 districts in the former Natal and in all of the former Orange Free State districts. It was a move to abolish the status of squatters and replace the system with permanent labourers. As a result, thousands of black people left the farms in fear of becoming “illegal squatters” and facing eviction. Most former black labour tenants on farms were evicted as individuals or in small groups and they subsequently left for the homelands in search of land. The abolition of labour tenancy caused some 141 219 people to relocate between 1970 and 1979 (The SPP Reports 1983: 120-121).

What do Ndebele labour tenants remember of the period of tenancy on the farms and how do they construct these events?

Ruin as memory: homestead, graves and fields

This memory of land and its human products and produce needs to be understood in the historical context of loss of land and former territory in the colonial and apartheid period. The discourse on memory and its manifestations in phenomena such as land, place and object, among others, has developed into a considerable scholarship in recent decades (Casey 2000; Connerton 1989; Cubitt 2007, Ermscher 2004; Halbwachs 1980[1925], Jiminez 2003, Nora 1989; Schama 1996; Wertsch 2002). Likewise, the debate on land and land restitution in South Africa has enjoyed considerable attention since the 1990s (eg James 2007, 2009; Claassens & Cousins 2008; Spiegel 2004). These insights have been influential in the ensuing discussion.

Mathako Mthombeni once took me to his natal homestead on the slopes of the Tantesberg. The detail of his memory of the settlement was such that I could compile a drawing which included the exact positions of his grandfather’s three wives’ houses, the position of the courtyard (*isirhodlo*), the remains of the cattle kraal and the six graves of kin, the granary, the midden of the ash heap, as well as the location of the neighbours Kabini, Skosana and Sibiya (Mahlangu) (Van Vuuren 1983: 56). He walked through the tall *iqunga* (Tamboukie grass) to a few peach trees behind the Sibiya homestead and laughingly related how as young boys, they stole old Sibiya’s peaches soon after dark. He also showed me the snuff boxes and a kettle on the grave of his grandfather, Saka, where they *phahla*-ed (venerated the ancestors) meaning) before the initiation of that year. Mthombeni walked across the linked overgrown settlements with ease and pointed to landmarks, footpaths, fields and gardens, and related a range of stories (see later) he remembered while growing up there. He left the site after 1955, but paid regular visits in the company of his *ukgari* (father’s eldest sister). His family was evicted shortly before 1962. Mnemonic devices or aids manifest in markers and objects in the landscape, as does song, praise and music (also see Vansina 1985: 44-46). A landscape “develop[s] mnemonic connotations of an associative kind” over time, saved in individual or shared minds and “preserved in oral story telling” (Cubitt 2007: 192-193, 196,).

The Mahlangu family, who settled on the Rooikraal farm near Groblersdal, took me to their natal homestead. The walk to the remains of the homestead, which took less than 20 minutes, was along a path through dense Bushveld. Along the way, the family spokesperson

Petrus pointed to footpaths which lead to the neighbouring homesteads of the Sithole, Sibiya and Mtsweni families who apparently do not visit their ancestral graves. The graves of six members which included the founder, April Mahlangu, were fenced and adjacent to the now almost invisible cattle kraal. Some had recent headstones, others were engraved in cement and a few consisted of heaped stones. There were no identifiable homestead remains. There was also a stone on the site which was used for dressing thongs as well as grinding stones and the remains of a broom. Mahlangu had no recollection of the position of the homesteads other than the order of homesteads of the wives of his grandfather. As a result of frequent visits and fortunate good relationships with previous and present owners, the Mahlangu family remained in ‘contact’ with the landscape to a large extent.

Others are not so fortunate, due to difficulties in accessing the farm or absence of knowledge on the location of the site. This is often caused by the untimely death of relatives who had close links with the site. Others simply lost interest or had no desire for ritual contact with the natal homestead. A further factor is change and transformation in landscape. The example of the Thaga family comes to mind; this family lodged a claim for the Bloempoot farm. Koos Thaga (aged 60) was born on the farm where his parents and grandparents worked as labour tenants for a numbers of white owners. In their claim documentation they allege that they were there before the white people worked the land. Koos left the farm at a relatively young age (20 years) to settle in the neighbouring trust land under the local chief. They allegedly received a “trekpas”³ from the owner. Koos never returned to the farm and he claims that his family was denied access by the owner. In 2008, he and a few elders accompanied the author on two occasions to the site of the homestead and the graves. He struggled to locate the site of the homesteads of both his father and that of his mother’s people. The first homestead now consists of an orchard and a new access road to the processing shed runs across the site. His mother’s grave is now barricaded by a game fence, and a group of graves are now split by this fence and an access road. He never knew the location of his grandfather’s grave, as his parents never showed it to him. Most of the six graves on the site are unmarked. The Thaga experience echoes Spiegel’s experience with land claimants in St Lucia, KwaZulu-Natal. He found it difficult to recognise former settlement attributes in a landscape where all recognisable landmarks were wiped out by a modern plantation, in what he termed a ‘bodily amnesia’ (2004: 6).



Figure 5
Remains of a homestead on the right which was split by a fence and a dirt road
(source: photograph by the author)

John Mghidi's family who claimed land on a farm in the Witbank district of Mpumalanga struggled to access the exact location of their ancestral graves as a result of the gross intervention of open-cast mining on the farm. In this case it was not the direct impact of earth removal which changed the landscape around the original homestead and family cemetery, but the secondary interventions brought about by new access roads, site offices, pump stations, and so on. Even after we crisscrossed the areas around the presumed homestead, they were unable to find any recognisable cues. In such cases, the potential of the mnemotechnic capacity of objects and objects in context with the self-created landscape disappeared or [diminshed] and had no function. In comparing the un-intervened landscape of the bush (wilderness) with the cultivated forest, Spiegel (2004: 7) argued that the wilderness, although seemingly impassable, represents the recognisable moment in bodily memory and not the passable and accessible forest "where memory is still traceable".

The human body often serves as a source of inspiration for orientation, direction and measurement. "Where I stand now, Sothakazi explained, my father's first wife was on the left, ngebunene⁴ (right hand sector) uNaMtsweni. At the back over there was the isibuya (cooking space/kitchen). This house later collapsed and it was rebuilt behind over there where the trees are now. Behind me was the cattle kraal. On the left was uNaSkosana the second wife she died early. Look at the foundation; it was an *iqathane* "(Ndebele type of cone-on cylinder house).⁵ This notion of embodiment in space is not uncommon in Africa as Tilley (1999: 45) reminds us: "Human metaphors in architecture are grounded in the use of the body as a model for comparable structural, decorative and symbolic forms". In the same vein, spatial orientation and direction stemming from the bodily metaphor are reflected in architecture. In this case as Casey (2000: 189) argues, the body serves as a pivotal point of reference in landscape. The human body puts us in touch with memory and place, and becomes a mnemotechnic device in landscape. Spiegel, while writing about his St Lucia project (2004: 8), contended that landscape needs both memory and "parts of the body", and it is not autonomous without it.

Ruins are not the sole tangible repository of/for memory, but also areas of cultivation such as vegetable gardens. The location and size of ploughed fields (*amasimu*) were essentially determined by the arrangement that labour tenants had with the landowner. These were in close proximity to the homestead and Ndebele labour tenants relied largely on summer crops such as maize, potatoes (on the Highveld) and sorghum⁶. On a number of occasions, white farmers allowed their workers to use the farm tractor and some provided seed. The ploughing activities also should not have interfered with that of the landowner⁷. Around the homestead a variety of crops were planted: pumpkin, various types of spinach (*imbuyane*, *irude*), tomatoes and non-edibles such as gourds (*indranyane*, *ikhapa*) for use as containers. Ndebele men and women who grew up in the Stoffberg region and the Middelburg Highveld, and who have since resided in KwaNdebele, repeatedly expressed the desire to return to the fertile soils, good pastures and high rainfall of these regions. Liesbet Sibiya was such a case. She explained: "At KwaMadlayi we could eat all round the year and we always had enough for storage. Here in Matshirini (KwaNdebele) everything is scorched by the sun! We cannot grow amadranyane (gourds), or amabele for beer, and the farm had springs and we always had enough beer for the *iqhude* (initiation)".⁸ Upon approaching the remains of his grandfather's homestead Mathako grabbed a fistful of soil and said: "Look at this 'fat' earth. Its smells good not like that barren sandy soil at KwaSimu (KwaNdebele); and what's more, when it rains here you smell the earth and grandfather would say: we'll plant tomorrow!" These memories are vivid and engage the entire sensual cortex, sense of smell, hearing, view, touch, and so on. Franklin (2002: 186) contends that landscape evokes a multiplicity of senses: the oral, storytelling, olfactory and social exploration.

The Zulu term, *ukuzwa*, is descriptive and all-encompassing: “to hear, listen, taste, smell, sense, live, be alive” (Dent and Nyembezi 1969: 519).

Johannes Ndobela, en route to the grave of his founding ancestor, explained that he needed to pass the waterfall in order to collect water and that this water would provide him with insight and vision once we were at the site. On another occasion *imbongi* Sokhulumeni explained that he never visits the ancestral land without his staff, as without them, he will not be able to recite (the praises) as he did on many occasions (Van Vuuren 1993: 37). Sorhulumende Mthombeni had the habit of collecting a plastic bag of soil from around his ancestral homestead before returning home. Mjezi Mabhena, on the two occasions we visited the archaeological remains of the Manala royal settlements, picked up two stones (not artefacts) from the site in order to “show the people back home where he came from”. The capacity of objects as mnemonic instruments in some of the cases above can be viewed as enhancing and heightening. Objects, however, have to have a lingering capacity; they have to create a sense of permanency of memory back home. The water and the staff, in contrast, were mediums of enhancement and enlightenment. Both water and staff were tools of access to specific files of memory, an “ability to disseminate” (Cubitt 2007: 195). The generative capacity of the ruin as a mnemonic entity also manifests on the level of EBT. Much of our knowledge base on EBT processes and material usage emerge during site visits. The range of choices of which earthen processes to use, what natural resources were available, the problem of restrictions in terms of material and spatial layout of the homestead only come to light upon such site visits (Van Vuuren 1983: 62-68). The life history of the ruin eventually deals with more than the social history of its residents.

On the farm Zeekoegat near Loskopdam, the Sindane family paid regular visits to their ancestral homestead and graves which they abandoned in 1968. Although the ruins are mostly overgrown, the vegetation around the graves seemed under control during our visits early in 2011. On the graves of the founder Nesana Sindane, objects such as plastic snuff boxes, a porcelain cup and an enamel bowl were found which are used as vessels during ritual libation. The Sindane family explained that they have been visiting the graves at least once annually. Earlier we saw the example of the stone which was used by the Mahlangu family to dress thongs. The categories of immovable items which are drawn from the landscape may be cultural or natural. Jiminez (2003: 140) argues that objects and things are created in conjunction with space and place making, for example: a ceramic vessel conveys a specific message in its capacity and position as a beer container in the interior of a house. The house and the vessel, its contents and its position in the house exist as a result of social life. Nevertheless, there is another dimension to the memory capacity of object places such as graves and memorials. James suggests that the ancestor motif has become strong among land claim communities with a concern to be buried close to the ancestors, as this will “re-establish communion with them in the death”. ‘Graves have become very important as”sites for the concentration of social memory” (James 2009: 7)



Figure 6
Grave of the Kabini family on the farm Doornpoort
 (source: photograph by the author).



Figure 7
Grave of the founder of the Bhuda homestead
 (source: photograph by the author).

Mnemonics in the landscape around the homestead are powerful repositories of content and meaning, providing, it seems, that they obtain the status of regulae exposure to the human min]. If the landscape fades into obscurity for the human memory and it is not exposed to repetitive exposure, mnemonics have little effect. Once the mnemonic landmarks disappear, the memory almost becomes completely disempowered. The ruins of the homestead and the graves of the residents interlock the memorised past with the present as far as the ritually significant genealogical link is concerned. There is concern among those families who fail to secure this interlock.

Time and the ruin

Elsewhere it was argued that most rural settlements in the Ndebele community can be reasonably accurately dated. See Van Vuuren (1993, 2010). This sense of time and dating of the year of origin of a homestead or house, its development and its abandonment have proved crucial in the dating of architectural form, usage of earthen material, EBT processes and, in particular, the social history of events. The Ndzundza-Ndebele allocate 15 regimental names (*iindanga*) in a fixed cycle to males who are initiated every 4 years. The cycle repeats itself after approximately 60 years. It is possible to back date each regimental date of installation to at least the 19th century. In reaction to the question: *Uwendangabani?* ('What is your regimental name?'), an initiated Ndebele man will answer: *NgiliGawu*. He thus identifies his age group category as Gau (1935, or in the earlier cycle 1893) as well as his approximate year of birth, 1915. Women generally marry men of more or less their age. Men remember their own *indanga* names as well as those of the members in their male lineage. Ndebele women also associate themselves with the regimental names of their husbands for comparative purposes. Almost all initiated men and women have the ability to remember the regimental names (*iindanga*) of kin, in-laws, friends and neighbours across the entire social network. The memory grid of regiments spans both vertically and laterally.

Number and regimental name	1 st cycle	2 nd cycle	3 rd cycle	4 th cycle	5 th cycle	6 th cycle	7 th cycle	8 th cycle	9 th cycle
1 Duba		1556	1616	1676	1736	1796	1856	1915/7	1975
2 Dlowu		1560	1620	1680	1740	1800	1860	1919	1979
3 Dlhari		1564	1624	1684	1744	1804	1864	1923	1982
4 Nyathi		1568	1628	1688	1748	1808	1868	1927	1985
5 Rudla		1572	1632	1692	1752	1812	1872	1931	1989
6 Gawu		1576	1636	1696	1756	1816	1876	1935	1993
7 Dzibha		1580	1640	1700	1760	1820	1880	1939	1997
8 Thula		1584	1644	1704	1764	1824	1886	1943	2001
9 Dlaza		1588	1648	1708	1768	1828	1888	1947	<u>2005&6</u>
10 Rhasa		1592	1652	1712	1772	1832	1892	1951	2009
11 Duku		1596	1656	1716	1776	1836	1896	1955	(2013)
12 Sinya	1540	1600	1660	1720	1780	1840	1899	1959	
13 Phoko	1544	1604	1664	1724	1784	1844	1903	<u>1962&3</u>	
14 Phaswana/Rhorha	1548	1608	1668	1728	1788	1848	1907	1966	
15 Nghana	1552	1612	1672	1732	1792	1852	1911	1970	

The underlined dates explain the double installation of the same regimental name as a result of the death of a king during the same year of the regular installation. The second installation is much smaller in number of initiates and it carries the notion of ritual and symbolic cleansing.

This type of data and its application pose exciting possibilities. Regimental dates (e.g. Duku, or Liduku or Amaduku) provide us with a calendar which can be spliced into place, settlement and house, historical events and life-histories. Within the landscape and life of the Ndebele farm labourer the life-history of a single house (and its ruin), homestead and grave can be dated - the biography of any resident including the trauma of eviction and displacement, socio-cultural events of the past, change of ownership of the farm, cataclysmic events such as prolonged droughts, fire and floods and memorable regional events. The following two case studies will illustrate the argument. In an interview with the late Bova Klaas Skosana in 1985 he related that the little town of Stoffberg “came to a standstill” while they as young men were attending their male initiation ritual. The first light aeroplane landed in a clearing not far from the initiation enclosure and almost everybody in town assembled around the plane and the pilot. He was initiated in the Gawu regiment during the winter of 1935. The landing took place a few days after their circumcision, in May 1935.

In 1994 a request came to the author to assist the Legal Resources Centre (LRC) with an investigation of a case where a farm worker, John Skosana, faced eviction from a farm near Draaikraal, Roossenekal in 1994. During interviews the above dating grid was applied to recall events, dates and age. His evidence was as follows: “My father Abram came here in the summer after they, the *Maduba*, went to the mountain. He was buried just after the *Amadzibha* went to the mountain. The *ipetjhana* stayed here until the death of.... Mayisha died then, I remember. Later the farmer said we must go ...I think this was before the *Marhorha*, my brother’s son I had to take him”. When regimental dates are spliced into the text, the adapted account reads as follows: “Abram built this homestead during the summer months of 1915 (*Duba* regiment was initiated) and passed away approximately before April 1939 (*Dzibha* regiment was initiated. Initiation lasts from April and July). Abram’s youngest brother (the *iphetjana*) stayed on until 1962 (The death of king Mayitjha II). The farmer evicted them sometime before 1966 (Phaswana regiment was initiated)”. The approximate dates of birth of men could be determined by subtracting twenty years from the initiation date, which meant that Abram was born around 1905. The homestead was thus occupied for approximately 51 years from 1915 to 1966. During fieldwork unravelling the social life and life history of the remains of rural homesteads was particularly rewarding.



Figure 8
A grinding stone helped locating the former homestead of the Matjhiyana family

The type of memory which is invoked and activated here, as illustrated above, does not emerge automatically as Ndebele men and women walk the land of their ancestors. However, it has the ability to emerge on a cognitive level and also away from the physical landscape. Nevertheless, the conscious drawing of the date “files”, as embedded in individual and collective memory, seems to complement a person’s individual recollections during site visits to the ancestral land.

Invention and innovation of memory and landscape

Memories of labour tenants undergo change and adaptation. For the quest for an identity - tribal, national, postcolonial, nation building - these reinterpretations aim to evoke notions of equality, superiority and a “first people” presence, that is, the urge to be layered at the bottom as the founders. The instrumental recognition and re-appropriation of labour tenants’ memories are now caught up in the land reform process in South Africa. James (2009: 11) remarked that “Land in South Africa has become a ‘text’ which has become rich with symbolic meanings, and its restoration has become a fulcrum both for contestation and for some convergent interpretations between cosmopolitan and localist ideas about the nature of citizenship”.

The oral databases which emerge from the memories of elders have become prone to manipulation on various fronts. Firstly, there is evidence that local politicians of the ruling party get involved in the claiming process (James 2007: 91). The officialdom in the Regional Land Claim offices in the various provinces act on behalf of some claimants (James 2009: 2) and help them to “fill in the form” and “what to write” as Piet Mghidi explained: “They said we must meet in Groblersdal and they will tell us what to fill in. They also said we should not claim as family but under Mabhoko” (the Ndzundza chief)⁹. Petrus Sindane reiterated the above and added that they were advised to rather claim as a community. This also raises the question as to what extent memory is manipulated, event and land imagined. Claimants for the farm Kafferskraal near Groblersdal mobilised themselves under an emotionally charged entity called *Sibuyela ehkhaya* (“We return home”) community, while another claimant family near Groblersdal chose to be the *Abeswa bakaNyai* community or the “Descendents of Nyai Mahlangu”. In Middelburg, the Matjhiyane family selected their prose name (*isinanazelo*) to become the Amaphofu community. On Zeekoegat the claimants chose a place name for a nearby “kloof” called KoDiye as name for their collective yet invented community. These inventions fall into the context of what James (2009: 6) terms the “re-engagement with the glorious African past” and a “self-conscious reworking of history”.

If such a land claim is challenged in the Land Claims Court, the memories of claimants on events after 1913 are challenged to the extreme. Oral evidence finds itself weighed against in the hard core literate world of legal jurisprudence. During the land claim case for the Kafferskraal farm in the Groblersdal district in September 2002, the advocate for the defence intended to put to test Mbulawa Mahlangu’s knowledge of the 1918 Beaumont Commission and whether the late chief Jafta Mahlangu told the commission of his wish to settle on the Blinkwater farm. For the purpose of our discussion, Mahlangu’s answer was significant: *Angilwazi lokhu* (“I don’t know about this”), and “It did not reach my ears”. His statement conveyed the message of authenticity of oral information which he received from his ancestors. Elsewhere the same Mbulawa accredited the elders for his knowledge of tribal history and how he walked the ancestral land (Mahlangu 1987).

Ermscher (2004: 38) argues that landscape materialises as a mental construct, which changes over time; landscape thus emerges as a “living canvas”. A single landscape “gaze”

might engage a plough, a ruined homestead (called *amarubhi*), a peach tree or a footpath and recall powerful memories.

Conclusion

The ruin of the artefact house manifests as a kingpin in the repository of memory. We have seen that human memory needs the ruin in order to culminate into a heightened experience of the memorized past. This past encompasses events, people, places and objects in both the cultural and natural landscape. The ruin thus does not only disseminate the tangible domain of the memorial past but also the intangible. Memory of landscape engages the ruined house and homestead and vice versa. Ruin is both artefact and agency and it presents itself as a vehicle which has a certain unpredictable carrying capacity.

To Westerners, the ruin is an end and the end goal is its preservation. To Africans, I contend the ruin manifests as an abstractification of the artefact ruin. The ruin does not decree as a physical artefact and on site in itself. Its design, construction and material are secondary scripts. For Africans - such as ordinary citizens from the Ndebele community who endured arduous decades of labour tenancy - the ruin becomes a means to an end, a primary script (symbolic). While the Western tradition often focuses on the preservation and conservation of the ruined site, Africans are ostensibly less concerned with the former. The oral or written text of the ruin for the West implies the reconstruction of the artefact; for Africans, the reconstruction hinges on the text and how various early oral narratives are weaved into the artefact. This process provides fruitful grounds for imagination, innovation and inventions of additional texts. In this sense the ruin as mnemotechnic object needs only to be “more or less there” regardless of its state of visible decay or almost non-existence. The Western heritage tradition is obsessed with reversing the process of decay, to intervene, to restore and reconstruct, and to gather as much data to support the restoration process. African ruins are presented as ephemeral, their oral texts not, and the texts are constantly open to reinterpretation and innovation. Around the ruin news myths and legend are often created as add-ons or substitutes of earlier ones.

In South Africa within the controversial arena of land restitution, the ruined residences of farm workers on rural farms present two sets of diverse sentiments and orientations. To the white farmer, the homestead of black workers represented the cultural ‘other’ and included notions of primitiveness, outside the white household, the *umuzi* was an ephemeral and temporary (of earthen material) phenomenon - a “stroois”, and it had to be built on a distant part of the farm. Since 1994 the dimension of fear has set in and many farmers have become unwilling to allow ritual libations in view of looming or potential land claims on their properties. The ruin and the grave have thus turned into a symbol of insecurity, political instability and loss of power on the part of the whites. To claimants, former labour tenants and their descendants, the ruin has become a symbol of hope.

To black farm workers and labour tenants such as the Ndebeles of the Mpumalanga Highveld, the ruin represented a number of socio-cultural institutions. On the social level, the ruin echoes kinship, family, household, social networks, child rearing, generation and the lifecycle. On the religio-ritual, level the ruin brings memories of rites of passage, cosmology, a god and ancestors and spiritual well-being. In the domain of identity the ruin evokes sentiments and memories of identity of kinship and family, for example: “we the Kabinis” regionalism (e.g. the people of KwaMaza) and of course ethnic Ndebele identity - Ndzundza-Ndebele or simply Ndebele. As a politicised artefact, the ruin and the homestead of the past carries the oppression

of the past: labour tenancy, apartheid, forced labour, racism, displacement. After 1994 this turned into hope, security of tenure, restitution.

Finally, we can argue that a paradigm shift towards the profound meaning of the African house and homestead needs to take place by institutions that involve themselves in the land restitution debate. These ruins are not 'impressive' and 'grandiose' in the visual sense but they beg attention in terms of respect, recognition and preservation. As far as preservation is concerned the time has arrived for provincial heritage agencies to acquaint themselves with the ruins of ordinary people.

Acknowledgements

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Notes

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|---|--|---|---|
| 1 | Livestock limitation was a major issue in Betterment schemes in South Africa. | | peripheral). orientation, is convincing. Symbolically, the left/right dichotomy often accounts for the categories of left (evil/female) and right (good/male), and front (the living world) and rear (the ancestral world) (Kuper 1980:14). |
| 2 | From 'stat' indicating an African homestead or village. | | |
| 3 | The 'trekpas' was a written or oral notification that the labour tenant and/or family received instructing them to leave the farm. | 5 | Personal communication: Jan Sothakazi Mahlangu, Waterval, 1979. |
| 4 | This dualism in orientation is not uncommon in the South African homestead, particularly among Nguni-speaking communities such as the Zulu, Swazi and Xhosa (Kuper 1980). The left/right-hand dichotomy varies in terms of the position of the body, that is, whether or not it faces the entrance of the homestead. In the Zulu and Swazi communities, left/right dichotomy is the opposite from the Ndebele (Kuper 1980:9). Kuper's (1980:15) suggestion of a dichotomous orientation, that is, a diametric (left/right) and concentric (inner / | 6 | Aerial photographs are useful in the study of land use patterns on farms. However, most of these date to the early 1950s and occasionally to the late 1930s. |
| | | 7 | Personal communication: S Mtsweni S 1990. |
| | | 8 | Personal communication: Liesbet Sibiya, Middelburg, 1980. |
| | | 9 | Personal communication: Piet Mgidi, 2009, Roosenekal |

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A Marxist view of ruination: José Saramago's fictional version of the construction of Dom João V's monastic complex at Mafra, Portugal

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The subject of this article is the monastic complex at Mafra, Portugal, commissioned by Dom João V (King John V, 1689-1750). An overview of the historical circumstances of the building project is followed by José Saramago's fictive version in his novel. Saramago describes the cause of the ruination of the Portuguese nation as the king's egotistical desire for the largest monastic complex in Christendom. Saramago's critique of the coerced labour required to construct the extensive edifice is discussed in terms of Marxist labour theory.

Key words: monastic complex at Mafra, Dom João V, Marxist labour theory, José Saramago

'n Marxistiese beskouing van ruïnering: José Saramago se fiktiewe weergawe van die konstruksie van Dom João V se monastiese kompleks by Mafra, Portugal

Die onderwerp van hierdie artikel is die monastiese kompleks te Mafra, Portugal, wat vir die opdraggewer Dom João V (koning Johannes V, 1689-1750) gebou is. 'n Oorsig van die geskiedkundige konteks van die bouprojek lei die bespreking in van José Saramago se fiktiewe weergawe daarvan in sy roman. Saramago beskryf hoe die koning se egotistiese begeerte om die grootste monastiese kompleks in die Christendom te besit, die Portugese volk geruïneer het. Saramago se kritiek op die aanwending van gedwonge arbeid vir die uitgebreide bouwerk word in terme van Marxistiese arbeidsteorie bespreek.

Sleutelwoorde: monastiese kompleks te Mafra, Dom João V, Marxistiese arbeidsteorie, José Saramago

This article starts like a fairy tale and ends with a harsh Marxist critique.

A long time ago, on the Iberian Peninsula there were two absolute kings who built themselves memorials in the form of monastic complexes cum palaces. The first was the sixteenth-century Spanish king, Filipe II (Philip II, 1527-98), who built the Monasterio del Escorial, and the second was Dom João V (King John V, 1689-1750) of Portugal who, in the eighteenth century, ambitiously rivalled the Spanish model by commissioning the largest monastic complex in Christendom at Mafra, Portugal.

The historical facts

King Philip's monumental monastic complex comprised a palace, a basilica, a pantheon for the Spanish kings, a library and an extensive monastery, situated in the town of San Lorenzo de Escorial, 40 kilometres outside Madrid (figure 1). It was designed by the Spanish architect Juan Battista de Toledo (1515-67) who was educated in Italy, in collaboration with the Italian architect Juan de Herrera (1530-97) who was previously employed at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. The monastery of San Lorenzo de Escorial, constructed during twenty years from 1563 to 1584, was finished within the king's lifetime and occupied by him. It is designed in an austere late Mannerist style that suited the taste of the reclusive and seriously religious patron who nevertheless collected paintings by the Venetian painter Titian Vecellio's (1488-1576), as well as works by various other northern and southern Renaissance artists.



Figure 1
A view of the Monasterio San Lorenzo del Escorial, Spain
(photograph: the author).

The other king, John V of Portugal, endearingly called “The Magnanimous”, had vowed at the beginning of his reign in 1706 to fulfill his father’s wish that a basilica be built for the Franciscans, the most destitute of Portuguese friars. Furthermore, John’s desire for an heir motivated him to empty his kingdom’s coffers to build a basilica and convent at Mafra, intended to honour his superstitious vow to the Franciscans that if the seemingly barren Queen, Dona Maria Ana Josefa of Austria, bears him an heir he will reward them with a basilica and convent, as part of an edifice that would also comprise a palace and auxiliary functions. Eventually the lavish edifice, the Real Palacio e Convento de Mafra, was built at a town north of Lisbon (figure 2). The construction was only completed in 1750, the year of the death of the king, while many details had to be finished by his successors and their architects and artists.



Figure 2
A view of the West facade of the Real Palacio e Convento de Mafra,
showing the belltowers and turrets (photograph: the author).

It is on King John’s monastic complex at Mafra that this article will focus. First, an overview will be given of the historical facts regarding its design, construction and dimensions, as well as a brief description of its exterior and interior. This overview is followed by José Saramago’s fictional version and overt critique of the royal patron’s reckless megalomania to possess the largest and most elaborate monastic and palatial complex in Christendom.

The Portuguese crown, at the instigation of John V, spent a vast sum of money to purchase land east of Mafra at Alto da Vela, so called because it is situated at an altitude of 234 metres. It was clearly a hazardous building site for an enormous masonry construction in the time of unmechanised labour.

The plans for the monastic complex were drafted in Rome under the direction of the Marquis of Fontes by illustrious architects: Carlos Gimac, Carlos Fontana, Tomazzo Mattey, Filipe Juvara and Antonio Canevari. The resident architect-engineer was João Frederico Ludovice (died 1752), a Bavarian who had initially trained as a goldsmith but learnt the craft of building construction in Rome.¹ He needed fortitude to cope with the demands of his patron who continually changed his royal mind about the dimensions of the convent: from 13 friars it was upgraded to 40; then to 80, and finally, in 1728 Ludovice was ordered to expand the convent to house 300, plus the Patriarch with his ministry. The king was able to order the expansion since Portugal came into the possession of the riches from its colony, Brazil,² and his aim was clearly to rival the Escorial in size and architectural splendour.

When the foundation work for the monastic complex was complete the King, in the presence of the Patriarch and his court, laid the foundation stone on 17 November 1717. It is recorded that by 1729 47,836 men were working on the project to meet the deadline the king had set for the consecration of the basilica: on 22 October 1630, his 41st birthday. Unfortunately the work was behind schedule on the great day, but the king nevertheless consecrated it with his usual flair for pomp and splendour – obviously at great cost to the state. The same year the work force was enlarged to 52,000, comprising 45,000 civilians and 7,000 soldiers (Da Gama 1985: 15). The total construction that was an enormously labour intensive undertaking was basically completed after 33 years. The massive stone edifice, covering an area of four hectares was well built and resisted the 1755 earthquake. Structural materials included fine timber from Brazil, while marble was quarried locally at Pero Pinheiro. Between 1728 and 1735 the complex was lavishly decorated with works of art, mainly from Italian origin. Worth mentioning are the 58 Carrara marble statues embellishing the facade and the two carillions cast in Antwerp and Liège. The religious paintings, ceiling decorations, precious books, various artefacts and liturgical objects are too numerous to mention.

Like the Escorial the Real Palacio e Convento de Mafra comprised a basilica, an extensive convent, a royal palace, a state room, a library and auxiliary functions, all in one almost square edifice covering an area of four hectares, comprising two sections and four facades (figure 3). The main facade that faces West, is 232 metres long (figure 2). Situated in the main section are the basilica (figures 4, 5 and 6), state room (figure 7), sacristy and vestry, the two belltowers, the royal palace with its two turrets, sick wards, the friar's refectory and antechamber, the cemetery chapel and two cloisters. The minor section comprises the main part of the convent, kitchens, library (figure 8), the boxtree garden and a part of the palace on the top floor. There are altogether 800 halls and rooms, 300 cells, 4500 doors and windows, 154 staircases and 29 patios.³

Was this monastic complex a gift to the Franciscans? To the Portuguese nation? Or a memorial to King John's megalomania? Different answers can be given, but José Saramago's was that the patron of the monumental building, King John V, caused the ruination of his nation by spending the state's wealth and labour force on a single project.



Figure 3
An aerial view of the Real Palacio e Convento de Mafra
(photograph: free internet).



Figure 4
Facade of the basilica of the Real Palacio e Convento de Mafra
(photograph: the author).



Figure 5
Interior of the basilica of the Real Palacio e Convento de Mafra
(photograph: the author).



Figure 6
Dome of the basilica of the Real Palacio e Convento de Mafra
(photograph: the author).



Figure 7
State room of the Real Palacio e Convento de Mafra
(photograph: the author).



Figure 8
Library of the Real Palacio e Convento de Mafra
(photograph: the author).

José Saramago's Marxist critique

José Saramago, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1998, died on 18 June 2010 at the age of 87. His novel, (1982), translated from the Portuguese as *Blindness*, is one of his major literary works.⁵ It deals with a wide ranging group of characters in early eighteenth-century Portugal, from the king, obsessed by his building project, the *Real Casa da Misericórdia*, to lowly labourers who are victims of the project.⁶ Saramago's version of the building of the Mafra complex is enlightening in its fictivity and clearly inspired by a Marxist ethic.⁷ He presents the construction of the Mafra complex as a tragedy for the Portuguese proletariat and the ruination of the country. As a communist and atheist Saramago was obviously an anti-royalist. Consequently, he represents the king as an immature idiot and the friars for whom the convent is built as undeserving immoral bigots.

According to Saramago's fictive version João V is a quintessential nincompoop who assumes that he is a great king because he wields power and possesses riches. Actually he spends his time on trivia. He routinely passes the time by assembling the blocks of a miniature Basilica of St. Peter's in Rome under the admiring gaze of his mindless courtiers. When not so occupied, he debauches his manhood by being unfaithful to his queen and impregnating countless nuns to produce a "horde of bastards" with his royal semen (Saramago 2001: 3). However, João's greatest desire is for an heir to his throne, which leads him to believe superstitiously that if he vowed to build a convent for the Franciscans who had been petitioning for it for almost a century, then his seemingly barren wife would become pregnant. Thus, it is Franciscan virtue and surely also their forgiveness for the king's "excessive self-indulgence" (Alves de Paula Martins 2001: 42) that "God rewarded by granting that the Queen should become pregnant". This weird logic motivates the narrator to conclude that "the Portuguese dynasty and the Franciscan Order will profit from the assured succession and the promised convent" (Saramago 2001: 42).

The king's sexual depravity and megalomania even find subconscious expression as a dream in which he sees "the Tree of Jesse sprout from his penis, covered with leaves and populated by the ancestors of Christ, and even of Christ Himself, the Heir of All Kingdoms, then the tree will vanish and in its place will appear the tall columns, bell towers, domes and belfries of a Franciscan convent..." (Saramago 2001: 10). The narrator cynically assesses the king's nocturnal heresy by stating that "Portugal has been well served by imaginative monarchs". While, in artists, imagination evokes creativity, João's carnally inspired imagination forebodes dire consequences for his realm.

The construction of the monastic complex in Portugal, inspired by the king's megalomania, changed his mentality for the worse. Instead of continuing to play with his building blocks like a child and visiting his wife twice a week "with burning zeal, eager and excited at the thought of this mystical union of his carnal duty" (Saramago 2001: 7), he becomes dissatisfied with the miniature of the Roman basilica that had been his plaything for many years and obsessed by a desire to possess a full-scale replica of St. Peter's in his realm, for his personal use. Even while the Franciscan convent is under construction at Mafra he summons his architect who is fully engaged there "and bluntly informed him, It is my will that a church be built for my court like that of the Basilica of Saint Peter in Rome, and as he uttered these words, he looked at the architect with the utmost severity" (Saramago 2001: 264). For once an underling confesses honestly that he cannot oblige the king: "I may be an architect of renown, and as presumptuous as the next man, but I know my limitations..." (Saramago 2001: 265). As the king's ambitious dream about a full-scale St. Peter's vanishes into thin air, he orders that the convent at Mafra be enlarged to accommodate not eighty, but three hundred friars, which means that another part of the mountain site has to be blasted away and levelled at enormous extra cost and obviously extra

labour. This new undertaking is ordered as the treasurer of the realm announces to João: “If Your Majesty will permit me to speak frankly, I am of the opinion that we are facing bankruptcy...” (Saramago 2001: 268). And worse still, it soon after transpires that the enlarged convent cannot be built without an enlarged workforce. The king’s solution to the problem is to order the rounding up of all adult men, the able-bodied, “or otherwise” (Saramago 2001: 279), throughout the country to join the already prodigious workforce of thirty thousand men. Fifty thousand more men, recruited from farms and other labours, are thus forced into slave labour.

His totally egotistical disposition motivates the king to bemoan the possibility that he may not be alive when the basilica is eventually inaugurated – regardless of the ruination he causes to his land. Somehow, a quotation from Solomon’s wisdom enters the king’s anguished mind when he meditates on his mortality: “Vanity of vanities, Solomon once declared, and Dom João V repeats these words, All is vanity, to desire is vanity, to possess is vanity.” The unenlightened king, however, solves Solomon’s dilemma by convincing himself that to overcome vanity “does not mean to have achieved modesty, much less humility, it is, rather, an excess of vanity” (Saramago 2001: 274). João’s megalomania as the patron of the monastic complex is self-defeating because “it seems incredible, that thirteen years of constant toil should have produced so little, the church unfinished, the convent rising to the second floor on two wings of the projected building, but the rest barely to the height of doorways, and only forty cells ready for occupation whereas three hundred are needed” (Saramago 2001: 315).

After scanning through Saramago’s narrative of the fictive king’s Mafra project, it is clear how profoundly the novelist despised the man for his stupidity and abuse of his absolute power. The novelist exaggerated John V’s failings, weaknesses and the ruination he wreaked. Why?⁸ The answer is that as a Marxist and self-declared communist he had a tragic view of royalty and religion. Furthermore, the novel reveals the profound Marxist insight that “Value in art [also architecture] for the enjoyment of a few rests on an extraction of value from the material livelihood of the great mass in society” (Harrington 2004: 18).

Marx’s critique of the “alienation”⁹ of the labourer a process of dehumanisation for the benefit of modern capitalism is projected back into history in Saramago’s novel.

Marxist labour theory

Karl Marx (1818-83) is best known as “a revolutionary communist, whose works inspired the foundation of many communist regimes in the twentieth century” (Wolff 2003: 1). The essence of his labour theory focusses on capitalist exploitation of the proletariat who are alienated from their creative, productive work and endeavour, which activity should be spontaneous and uncoerced. Alienation was, as James Scanlan (1976: 133) explains,

in Marx’s eyes a monstrous perversion of the true human essence. That essence, as we know from the , consists in creative, productive activity: the true life of man in a life of free production, of transforming or “working up” – to use a favourite expression of Marx’s –his environment in accordance with his own, conscious conceptions. Emanating from man’s own inner or natural needs, such productive activity is spontaneous and uncoerced.

However, it is precisely, according to Saramago’s representation of the construction of the Mafra complex, by means of forced labour and coercion that John V pursued his aim to immortalise his reign in a lasting monument. Saramago relates how the king ruthlessly exploited and alienated the proletarian labour force that eventually consisted of more or less all able-bodied Portuguese men who experienced the work into which they were conscripted for an indefinite

period of service as a curse – “a torment” in Marxist terms. Harsh treatment of the recruited workers obviously lead to abscondation or death. Consequently the king’s ambition to possess largest monastic complex in Christendom resulted in the ruination of Portugal – the state and its people.

Coda

After various vicissitudes since its inception, the well-preserved Mafra complex became a tourist attraction, now called the Palácio Nacional de Mafra. Few visitors may remember that João V emptied the state coffers to achieve immortality by means of architecture that was – besides promiscuous sex – his great passion.

Saramago’s version of Dom João’s architectural enterprise raises theoretical questions about great buildings dedicated to the rule of egocentric despots or tyrants that usually end in the ruination of the state and the death of many workers. The great wall of China is the supreme example. Two recent examples also spring to mind. First, Saddam Hussein’s 600 roomed palace built on top of the ruins of Nebucadnezzar’s Babylon. Second, the unfinished Palace of the Parliament in Bucharest, the largest public building ever built, that has 1,100 rooms, commissioned by the communist tyrant Nicolae Ceau_escu as the seat of his political and administrative power.

Finally, a recent quotation from the architect Renzo Piano (in Luscombe 2011: 52) sums up the contemporary assessment of past and present structures of megalomaniac proportions built for the glory of a ruler: “I never loved [the pyramids]. To kill people by making them work so hard just to celebrate one man? I admire them, but with a kind of sadness.” True, we may still admire the renamed Palácio Nacional de Mafra, but with a kind of sadness.

Notes

- 1 For information about Ludovice see Smith (1936) and Engass (1968).
- 2 Platt (2004:161) explains: “[T]he extraordinary wealth of John V (1707-50) ... originated in ... Brazil.” Platt (2004: 162) continues: “One consequence of ... absolutism – in Portugal as in Russia – was the launching of huge programmes of royal building. It was a Bavarian goldsmith-turned-architect, João Federico Lodovice (d. 1752), trained in Rome, who built John V’s Convent-Palace at Mafra, north of Lisbon: ‘a second Escorial’, wrote the French physician, Charles-Frédéric Merveilleux in 1726, ‘[where] three-quarters of the king’s treasure and the gold brought by the fleets from Brazil have been metamorphosed into stone’.”
- 3 For the most complete description of the Mafra complex, see Da Gama (1985).
- 4 The English translation of the title of Saramago’s novel as misleads the reader to believe that it deals with the love story of two important but subsidiary characters and not with the construction of the *memorial do convento*, as implied by the Portuguese title.
- 5 When Saramago’s novel, was published in 1983, it was immediately acclaimed as one of his major works and received the prize of the PEN Club of Portugal. For an insightful analysis of the novel against the background of the history of Portugal, see Preto-Rodas (1987).
- 6 See Maré (2005).
- 7 This exceptional man’s novels, among which *Memorial do convento* (translated as *Baltasar & Blimunda*) is one of the most important, unambiguously express his view of life that he summarised in a few words: “I have leftist convictions.” Saramago’s pessimism and atheism have their roots in his severely deprived childhood. In 1967 he joined the Portuguese Communist Party to resist António de Oliveira Salazar’s totalitarian regime.

Without apology he remained a member of the Communist Party all his life, mainly because he recognised in globalisation a new totalitarian system. He was also convinced that the world would be a better place without religion. Christianity and communism alike were responsible for violence against humanity. However, Saramago repeatedly wrote about religion, as is evident also in the novel referred to in this article, especially in the case of the king and the queen's bigoted obsession with religion. Worse still, the king's megalomania

that caused the enslavement of his nation to accomplish the building project at Mafra may be interpreted as a symptom of capitalism that Saramago condemned as severely as religion.

8 See Maré (2010).

9 Marx first articulated his concept of alienation in his *Economic Manuscripts of 1844*, published in Marx (1975).

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