

Emergence

Faculty of Humanities Postgraduate Research Journal

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Emergence Volume III: Preface

Welcome to Volume III of *Emergence*, the University of Southampton's Faculty of Humanities postgraduate research journal. The primary function of the journal is to showcase a selection of papers which were given at this year's Humanities Postgraduate Connection (HPGC) Annual Conference, titled 'Memory and Myth: A Tradition in the Reception and Creation of Reality'. This year we are also delighted to be able to expand on this remit by including a paper from Matt Leggatt, who has been kind enough to create an additional work which was inspired by the conference.



The theme of the 4th Annual HPGC Conference provided the presenters with an opportunity to examine how the concepts of myth and memory intersected with their own research. This premise has produced a diverse collection of articles, each of which deals with a unique facet of this expansive topic. Having had the pleasure of overseeing the editing of these papers, I can say for certain that the excellence of the conference is reflected in this edition of *Emergence*.

The first five articles examine the methods used to construct memories (both living and recorded), and the manner in which this process is influenced by social, political and historical factors. Matt Leggatt's '9/11 and the Cost of Remembering' provides an analysis of the symbolic significance of 'Reflecting Absence', a memorial (currently under construction) for the victims of the September 11th attacks on the World Trade Centre. By examining the planned memorial in the wider context of US popular culture, he investigates the manner

in which the memory of the 9/11 attacks have been manipulated in order to serve subsequent government agendas. Elena Caoduro's article 'Fluid Memories: Cultural Rememberings of the 2005 London Bombings' also explores the construction of memories in the wake of a terrorist attack. However, Elena focuses on the strategies which have been employed by both individuals and wider society to ameliorate the trauma caused by the 7/7 bombings. A key aspect of her article is a discussion of the manner in which media produced 'memory objects' (such as photos, video and audio) were redeployed following the attack. Images which were once used to relay the horror of the event were repurposed to demonstrate the healing of physical and emotional scars. While both articles assess the cultural consequences of terrorist brutality, their contrasting conclusions are a reminder that remembrance and healing do not always go hand in hand.

'Creating a Tradition of Collective Amnesia' by Sarah Shawyer continues this theme of memory construction, but instead of focusing on its consequences, she examines the manner in which living memory is translated into history. Her article investigates the treatment of the armed struggle between Jewish military organisations and the British in Mandatory Palestine by the *Jewish Chronicle*. She uses the coverage of this conflict over the subsequent sixty years to reveal a complex set of cultural and political narratives which govern what is remembered and what is not.

The final two articles which fit into the broader category of memory construction are linked by their shared intent of challenging accepted histories. 'Duality: History and Memory in the Narrative of Norwood' by Lawrence Cohen explores the tension between document-derived history and accounts based on distant memories. His research on the history of the Jewish Orphanage at Norwood explores the implications which the personal recollections of the (now adult) children have for official histories of the institution. Peter Girdwood's article 'On the Edge of History' demonstrates a similar mistrust of official history by questioning the validity of Greek and Roman descriptions of the Etruscans and Celts. He argues that such depictions are evidence of the self-mythologizing Roman tradition which portrays other civilisations through politically and culturally contingent stereotypes. These accounts have continued to influence the manner in which

we view these civilisations, making it all the more necessary to understand the attitudes which informed the works of Roman and Greek authors. Both Lawrence and Peter go beyond recognised histories in order to expose the underlying factors which shaped them.

The final three contributors explore the uses of mythology, each utilising a different definition of the term in order to gain insight into their chosen topic. Marilyn Mallia's article 'The Myth of Baucis and Philemon: a New Reading of George Sand's *Indiana* (1832)' argues that Sand's novel incorporates elements of Greek myth, an understanding of which is vital for a proper analysis of the text. She examines how Sand uses the story of Baucis and Philemon (taken from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*) to challenge the inequality of the institution of marriage, and also to provide alternatives to patriarchal models of relationships. In a similar vein, 'The Myths of the Crystal Palace' by Esther Fernandez-Llorente looks at the manner in which the 1851 'Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations' co-opted classical mythology to signify the superiority of Victorian British civilisation. However, Esther also draws upon Roland Barthes' work on the functions of myth in modern society to examine the methods by which this process took place. She argues that a key aspect of this was the manner in which objects and artefacts were detached from their original contexts, thereby removing their existing connotations and becoming a surface upon which new meanings could be inscribed. Both articles demonstrate the contrasting purposes to which mythology can be put, be it through literary allusion or symbolic redefinition.

Mike Witcombe's approach in 'Home Run or Strike Out? Reimagining Baseball in Philip Roth's *Great American Novel* and Michael Chabon's

Summerland marks a departure from those used in the previous two articles. Instead of examining how mythology is deployed to further a pre-existing agenda, he argues that both novels use baseball as a device to explore the myths and narratives that pervade American culture. The game is shown to be a means of transmitting beliefs and values between generations, and as a way of expressing otherwise unarticulated attitudes to familiar institutions such as home, childhood and parenthood.

The impressive breadth of scope and vision displayed by all of these articles is astounding, as is the variety of research interests which are accommodated by a single faculty in a single institution. However, collecting them together in a single journal is a reminder of their shared objective of applying critical thought to texts, events and discourses in order to reveal meanings, beliefs and attitudes which would have otherwise remained unappreciated. I hope that the reader will find this edition of *Emergence* not only an introduction to the excellent research carried out at the University of Southampton, but also a demonstration of the potential of interdisciplinary co-operation.

I would like to thank everyone who has been involved in the writing and production of *Emergence*. This volume represents the combined efforts of eight contributors and a significant section of the HPGC, all of whom have given up their time in order to bring this edition into being. I would also like to thank Dan Varndell and Chris Penfold (previous editors of *Emergence*), both for establishing and developing the journal in the past, and also for their advice and encouragement in the present.

James Osborne
Coordinating Editor, *Emergence* 2011

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Humanities Postgraduate Connection

Open to all Humanities postgraduates, the HPGC is an organisation run by students, for students. Our members strive to create opportunities to socialise with colleagues, assist with career development, engage in academic debate and encourage networking. In order to achieve these aims, the HPGC has a lively social and cultural events calendar, holds thought-provoking seminars led by current students, organises a dynamic annual conference, and publishes this academic journal, *Emergence*.

Events held over the past year have included a Welcome Social, an American Thanksgiving, Chinese New Year celebrations, and frequent countryside walks. Topics of our recent seminars have included tips and suggestions on how to survive postgraduate life and organise a conference, current research issues, such as how the world is evolving around us with regards to multiculturalism, and practical tutorials on funding and organising research trips.

Our most recent annual conference, titled 'Memory and Myth: A Tradition in the Reception and Creation of Reality', was held on the 1st of April 2011. It showcased a wide range of stimulating research and vigorous discussion on the ways in which the two concepts are utilised, manipulated and addressed in today's society. Acknowledging that our perceptions and beliefs are subject to experience and environment, we strove to explore how memory and myth both represent and create the past and present. Our panels addressed the

production of social memories, appropriations of mythology, transmutations of the past and the rethinking of cultural nostalgia.

Our journal, *Emergence*, has expanded from a proceedings of the annual conference to include other work in the Humanities that explore similar themes. While many of the papers presented at this year's conference have been incorporated into the current edition, other students were invited to contribute, providing them with the opportunity to engage with the HPGC and develop their skills as academic researchers.

The HPGC continues to flourish thanks to the diverse interests, skills and personalities of the postgraduates who participate in the seminars, events, conference, and journal. We invite you to join us in the coming academic year and enjoy all that the HPGC has to offer. If you would like to partake in any activities, or become a member of the committee and contribute your own ideas, look out for our emails, or visit our webpage, Facebook page, or follow us on Twitter (details of which can be found below). We look forward to meeting you in the coming year!

Those of us in the HPGC would like to thank one person in particular for helping to create and maintain our organisation. The tireless efforts and sound advice of Dr. Eleanor Quince, Postgraduate Employability and Skills Tutor, has enabled the HPGC to become the thriving community it is today.

Katie Merriken
Chair of HPGC Committee

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9/11 and the Cost of Remembering

Matt Leggatt
English and Film



Rendering of 'Reflecting Absence': The 9/11 Memorial currently under construction at the former site of the World Trade Center (visualisation by Squared Design Lab, 9/11 Memorial).

When thinking about myth and memory, one must consider not only the cost of forgetting, but also the cost of remembering. Is the War on Terror the necessary cost of remembering? 9/11 has become a generation-defining moment not through necessity, but by mass consent. Certainly within academia we have, almost without question, accepted the 'post 9/11' discourse; a discourse which sees radical differences between the world prior to 9/11/2001, and the world we now inhabit. As David Simpson argues, 'The event has been and will be made to mark a new epoch, and as such it is already generating a mythology and a set of practices of its own.'¹

By describing the BP oil spill crisis in the Gulf of Mexico as an 'environmental 9/11',² President Barack Obama was guilty of the same kind of rhetoric as his predecessor. Whilst he was undoubtedly attempting to elevate the gravity of the situation in the minds of the public, using the comparison in such a baseless fashion devalues it. It is an example of the signifier of 9/11 being used in a utilitarian way by the US government as a means of manipulating the strong feelings of

pain and loss that many still feel in response to the event. There is no doubt that, in the case of 9/11, it is not simply an act of remembrance but also of reinterpretation. 9/11 has, in effect, already been mythologised.

'Reflecting Absence' is the huge memorial project currently under construction on the former site of the World Trade Center. In 2003, the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation launched a global competition to design the memorial. The competition received 5,201 entries from artists and architects around the world. As the name suggests, the winning memorial design is certainly sombre. To this extent, the architect has resisted the temptation to eulogise the dead, but the language of loss and absence used to describe the memorial is also a retreat, or a recoiling, from the event itself. An examination of the language used in the proposal shows us just that: 'This memorial proposes a space that resonates with the feelings of loss and absence that were generated by the destruction of the World Trade Center.'³ 'Reflecting Absence' consists of two pools of water situated where the towers once stood, described as: 'large voids, open and visible reminders of

1. D. Simpson, *9/11: The Culture of Commemoration* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006), p.16
2. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10307782> [accessed 14/6/2010]

3. <http://www.wtcitememorial.org/fin7.html> [accessed 5/6/2010]

the absence.⁴ These pools are surrounded by an arrangement of trees forming small clearings and groves.

The scale of the loss is something that the architect, Michael Arad, felt it important to convey through his designs. There is a sense that the destruction of 9/11, and the deep outpouring of emotion which followed, is somehow unattainable; that it cannot be assimilated into consciousness. This is also to be found in Arad's description of the experience which the memorial would offer:

At the bottom of their descent, they find themselves behind a thin curtain of water, staring out at an enormous pool. Surrounding this pool is a continuous ribbon of names. The enormity of this space and the multitude of names that form this endless ribbon underscore the vast scope of the destruction. Standing there at the water's edge, looking at a pool of water that is flowing away into an abyss, a visitor to the site can sense that what is beyond this curtain of water and ribbon of names is inaccessible.⁵

The designs themselves may hold a sense of beauty, peace, and respect, but it is the concept which is troubling. 'Reflecting Absence', both in its name and its design, seems to suggest a void which can never be filled. It demands that we are somehow indebted to loss. By reflecting the absence we are not able to deal with it and move on. But in the case of the 9/11 memorial, are we mourning the absence of bodies or the absence of buildings? Whilst the names which appear on the memorial are representative of the human damage caused, it is the fact that the waterfalls are effectively the sunken footprints of the former World Trade Center towers that suggests an ambiguity as to what we are mourning. Then there is the case of the temporary memorial.

In the immediate aftermath of September 11th, and before an official memorial could be built, six designers worked together, creating a \$500,000 tribute to the World Trade Center. This temporary memorial consisted of 88 searchlights pointed towards the sky to create the illusion of two 'phantom towers' looming over the Manhattan skyline.⁶ The memorial proved so popular, in fact, that when it was finally removed, many

4. Ibid

5. Ibid

6. W.W. Dixon, *Visions of the Apocalypse: Spectacles of Destruction in American Cinema* (London: Wallflower Press, 2003), p.37

complained: 'they had become accustomed to the phantom towers, as if they represented an actual structure.'⁷ The idea that these were ghostly towers personifies the buildings in such a way as to question whether it was the buildings themselves, those massive monuments to wealth and success, which became the objects of grief in the days after 9/11. There was, perhaps, something comforting in the towers of light, a sense of that indestructibility that was lost the day the towers, in their corporeal form, collapsed, and that has since been replaced by the reality of the brittle nature of peace, freedom, democracy, and capitalism itself inside the United States. As Jean Baudrillard poetically describes, the collapse of the towers was not the end for them, but rather part of their transformation:

...although the two towers have disappeared, they have not been annihilated. Even in their pulverized state, they have left behind an intense awareness of their presence. No one who knew them can cease imagining them and the imprint they made on the skyline from all points of the city. Their end in material space has borne them off into a definitive imaginary space. By the grace of terrorism, the World Trade Center has become the world's most beautiful building - the eighth wonder of the world!⁸

But it is surely war, not beauty, that drives the memory of the World Trade Center today.

The sense of grief without an end, which is so clearly articulated by 'Reflecting Absence', is concurrent with the same principle as the War on Terror. Just as the war can have no end, since terror itself is an abstract concept and therefore not a force to be defeated, neither too can the absence be made into presence, since our attempts to do this meet with reflection. Both the continual cycle of the waterfalls and the 'endless' ribbon of names continue the theme of an unanswerable absence. The 9/11 memorial is the perfect example of the desire *not* to move on, *not* to forget, but to keep fresh the memory of the attacks so that it can be evoked whenever required, and for whatever purpose is required of it.

It is not just through the symbolism of the memorial that these ideas are disseminated to the public at large. The rhetoric surrounding 9/11 has been extended to all areas of news, culture, and

7. Ibid

8. J. Baudrillard, *The Spirit of Terrorism* (New York: Verso, 2002), p.48

authority. Words like 'liberate' replace 'conquer' in the vocabulary of the military, and the word 'terror' is being used to justify the occupation of, and interference in, countries and regions. Culture has been mobilised in order to facilitate the transition to an outwardly aggressive foreign policy. After September 11th, the media became saturated with a lexical rhetoric, largely jingoistic, surrounding the day. Simpson describes how terms such as 'sacred ground', 'ground zero', 'shock and awe', 'infinite justice', 'enduring freedom', and 'freedom tower', all helped to shape the new culture that would arise in response to the attacks.⁹ Furthermore, he argues that the description of the dead of 9/11 as 'heroes' is not only a state employed term designed to provoke an aggressive national pride, but that it is also simply wildly inaccurate. Those who died that day would not have thought of themselves as dying for any cause in particular, especially not in the name of American capitalism or globalisation.¹⁰ However important it is to honour the dead, especially those wholly innocent people who died in the tragedy that was 9/11, to imply that they died for a cause, for a purpose, to attempt to give meaning to their deaths in this manner, reinforces the idea that they are casualties of war. But these were not combatants, and their deaths should not be falsely portrayed in this way:

These deaths were not for the sake of freedom, even for *our* rather circumscribed version of that concept... [They have been] paraded to legitimate more deaths elsewhere - the deaths of others as innocent as themselves.¹¹

Immortalising these innocent people as casualties who died a hero's death has not only given (false) meaning to their murder, but also a false meaning to the actions of those who committed the crime. It has lent a power to the cause of the terrorists and it has been used to 'legitimate more deaths elsewhere'.

The War on Terror has been couched in such a way that it is perceived by many as a war for freedom and, furthermore, a war against evil. In his book, *The Abuse of Evil*, Richard Bernstein describes how the term has been grossly misused since 9/11 and the dangers he associates with this 'abuse'¹². Such a binary opposition as is presented by the

9. Simpson, p.17

10. Simpson, pp.48-49

11. Simpson, p.47

12. For a full discussion of the impact of the term evil, see R.J. Bernstein, *The Abuse of Evil: The Corruption of Politics and Religion Since 9/11* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), p.10

term 'evil' oversimplifies the complex political and socio-economic climate which is at the source of today's terrorist threat. The term is a particularly emotive one, making it difficult to analyse in any objective fashion: 'It is an abuse because, instead of inviting us to question and to *think*, this talk of evil is being used to stifle *thinking*'¹³ To express the opinion that terrorists are evil is to imply that they are motiveless, driven by an innate hatred and an unfathomable will to destroy. A similar view is expressed by Spotteswoode in Trey Parker's scathing puppet comedy, *Team America: World Police*

SPOTTESWOODE: "I hate to break this to you Gary, but some people out there want you dead. They're called terrorists, Gary. And they hate everything about you."

GARY: "Why? What did I do to them? I'm just a Broadway actor."

SPOTTESWOODE: "It's not who you are, Gary, it's what you stand for. And every single minute, of every single day, the terrorists are planning new ways to kill you and everyone else who lives in a free country. The only thing standing in their way is us."

Whilst many works of popular culture have tended to support increased militarisation and promote a culture of fear, there have also been examples of texts which have scrupulously denied the claims of government and in turn ridiculed them. Amongst the conspiracy theories suggested by texts such as *Fahrenheit 9/11* and the internet movie sensation *Zeitgeist*, the popular tract of *Team America* stands out as one of the most interesting satirical attacks on US foreign policy and cultural attitudes.¹⁴ *Team America* operates within this 'simplistic duality' of the terrorist as 'other' (the evil to America's good), in order to attack it and display its inherent falseness. But whilst the film may highlight the dangers of stereotyping, fear mongering, and the politics of both left and right, it is notable most for its non-conformity at a time when the party-line is so often toed:

The post-September 11 era in the United States has been a time of great political conformity. The news media have played a central role in defining the boundaries of reasonable opinion, emphasizing national resolve and unity, legitimizing a discourse

13. Bernstein, p.11

14. *Fahrenheit 9/11*. Dir. M. Moore. USA. Fellowship Adventure Group. 2004; *Zeitgeist* Dir. P. Joseph. USA. GMP. 2007; *Team America: World Police* Dir. T. Parker. USA. Paramount Pictures. 2004

that likens dissent to a soft form of treason, and spreading fear, including routine references to the color-coded “terror alert” level on the cable news channels.¹⁵

As William Hoynes so carefully describes in his article, ‘Embedded’, the impact of the news media on shaping public opinion in these delicate matters is undeniable. Hoynes claims that the high number of ‘embedded’ journalists bringing coverage from the front line of the Iraq war was part of a broader scheme designed to increase public support for it. Just as the 9/11 footage reshaped the event into a kind of fictional movie, the ‘embedded’ journalists have turned news of the recent conflicts into a live action movie which

15. W. Hoynes, ‘Embedded: The News of War and the War Over News’, in *Popping Culture*, ed. M. Pomerance & J. Sakeris, (Boston: Pearson, 2010), p.245

cannot help but glorify its content.

When the powerful forces of culture, the media, and government come together in such a way as occurred following 9/11, the subsequent shift in discourse can create an ideological tidal wave that sweeps away opposition, fortifying the binary relationship between good and evil, us and them. What we have been left with after the attacks is not a stronger sense of global unity, as some might claim, but an unanswerable absence. Constantly bombarded by the reminder that, since 9/11, we live in a very different, very dangerous, world; constantly told that a world of evil exists which we must find the resolve to defeat: the threat will never be over. This is the cost of remembering 9/11: the cost of war, and the cost of terror. The cost of remembering 9/11 is that we will never again be allowed to forget.

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Fluid Memories: Cultural Rememberings of the 2005 London Bombings

Elena Caoduro
Film

Introduction

On the 7th of July 2005, four bombs detonated on the London transportation system, killing 52 people plus the four suicide bombers, and injuring about 700 commuters. The London bombings amplified the feelings of fear, suspicion and disbelief that developed as a consequence of the earlier attacks on US soil on the 11th of September 2001, and in Madrid on the 11th of March 2004. There is no doubt that all of these attacks were heavily mediated in the immediate aftermath, thereby providing coherent narrative frameworks to make sense of the violence.

In this article I shall consider various cultural practices, whose discourses are mediated through different technologies, in order to further understand the creation of new meanings by objects of cultural memory. Taking as specific case studies Davinia Douglass' pictures and the London Bombing Memorial in Hyde Park, I will broadly outline the peculiar media ecology of the 7/7 attacks, and shed light on the ongoing process of working through the trauma of terrorism. I shall suggest the possibility of fluid memories that leave a certain margin of flexibility in their interpretation and, at the same time, give closure and restoration to the previous condition. This article ultimately aims at reading how cultures reinterpret traumatic events to establish their identity and orientate their future. It is my argument that the 'interpretative flexibility' offered by these objects provides a palliative function against post-7/7 anxiety but, on the other hand, they respond to the urgency of shifting from mourning to back-to-normal state.

The context

According to Steven Brown and Andrew Hoskins, 'insecurity seems a particularly late modern malady'.¹ The increasing feeling of uncertainty is a key characteristic of late modernity and terrorism certainly contributes to the constant state of anxiety of the present day. Zygmunt Bauman even argues that we live in a state of

'liquid fear', where societies are actually governed by global terror in its multiple forms; nuclear fear, political violence, biological and natural disasters, and such like.² Mass media reflect the propinquity of terror by reporting terrorist atrocities and filtering propaganda material from the terrorist organisations, but their control and censorship rarely alleviate the spreading of fear. Moreover, media play an important role in the memorialisation process, since in our media-saturated era they become active producers of memory objects, namely iconic pictures, videos and audio recordings. In fact, as Nancy Wood argues, 'media now function as the key vectors of cultural memory, and the most proliferating source of images and narratives of the past'.³

Differently from previous attacks, the London bombings saw a rapid circulation of images recorded by survivors and rescue teams, which were later picked up by mainstream media. In minutes, hours and days mobile video recordings, photographs and audio files proliferated, submerging the websites of the main newspapers and broadcasters with pieces of the so-called 'citizen journalism'. This element differentiates the 2005 London bombings from the attacks at the World Trade Centre in 2001. Specifically, camera phones with better resolution, more availability of wireless hotspots, 3G technology and the increased velocity of dissemination, contributed to the circulation of more grassroots information and, thus, memories. For instance, the picture taken with Alex Chadwick's phone camera was recycled in many news websites and daily papers; the image of commuters leaving a derailed train through a smoke-filled tube tunnel even became one of the greatest news images of the last 100 years according to *The Guardian*.⁴ Amateur short films made by tourists in Manhattan and audio recordings shaped to a certain degree the unfolding memory of 9/11; the telephone calls

1. S. Brown & A. Hoskins, 'Terrorism in the New Memory Ecology: Mediating and Remembering the 2005 London Bombings', *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, 2: 2 (2010), p.89

2. Z. Bauman, *Liquid Fear* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006). See also Z. Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000) for an extensive understanding of changes in late modernity.

3. N. Wood, *Vectors of Memory* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 1999), p.9

4. Brown & Hoskins, p.97

of people blocked in the towers or on the United 93 flight remain central to the way we remember that event. It is only later, however, with mobile technological advances, that it became a much more widespread phenomenon or, as Steve Brown and Andrew Hoskins have argued, it generated a new memory ecology.⁵

Photographic Recollections in the Present

Nevertheless, one of the most iconic and recurrent images of the London bombings comes from traditional media, namely from a professional photographer of the Associated Press. The picture shows Davinia Douglass being shepherded from Edgware Road tube station, with a gauze mask covering horrific burns; it was widely published at the time in newspapers such as *The Independent*, *The Times* and in the tabloids. The image was often displayed in association with the pictures of train wreckage and the exploded bus of Tavistock Square, or together with the picture of John Tulloch's bloodied face. Chosen because of the sensationalistic logic that runs the media, these images demonstrate on the one hand how vulnerable we are. On the other hand, they show the manner in which the media insinuates itself into the collective process of sharing and articulating what will become the object of memory.

This photograph is of particular interest because of its re-use in a more recent context, during the 2010 anniversary of the attacks when Douglass decided to be interviewed and recount her story. On this occasion, her picture was not associated with images of the attack or the aforementioned survivors' pictures. The July 2005 picture was followed by three other photographs taken during different phases of Douglass' recovery, which show the slow healing of her burn marks. The last one of the series published five years after the attacks reveals her remarkable physical healing: almost no scar tissue is visible on the left side of her face, which was initially scorched by the fire surge that engulfed her carriage. By framing the image within the context of the anniversary and the process of recovery, the act of memory becomes an act of working-through the trauma and calming the anxiety post 7/7.

The act of remembering the suffering of others through this picture relates to what Marianne Hirsh defined as 'postmemory', a space of remembrance where the traumatic experience or its memory is adopted by others as one's own.⁶ As much as the first picture represented

death and terror, so the new contextualisation says 'I am alive and I have survived'. The last picture of Douglass underlines the palliative and restorative potential of the first one, which was initially characterised as traumatic and hence in need of empathic viewers. In its recuperation of a foregoing order and normality, the image positions itself along the Werenotafraid.com phenomenon, a website which groups pictures of Londoners that give testimony to the will of living without fear after the terrorist attacks.⁷ Whereas viewing the 2005 picture becomes an act similar to witnessing trauma, the 2010 photographic series attempts to limit the traumatic memories without making them go away. In fact, the sign and symptoms of trauma remain, as they are caused by a source being driven underground, but the group of pictures accentuates the possibility of a life without fear rather than after fear. These cultural objects, however, are not subordinate to a sole memory, but leave space for interpretation. In a sense, they become fluid memories (liquid using Bauman's terminology) adapting to new contexts in the light of the present.

Monumental Memories

The London bombings also remain a unique traumatic event with regards to the rapidity of the commemorative practices associated with it. After just four years, the effort to honour the victims of the attacks produced an official memorial established in London's Hyde Park on the 2009 anniversary. Architects Carmody Groarke, in consultation with the families of the victims, designed the memorial consisting of 52 stainless steel cast pillars, each one representing one of the victims. The memorial to the fallen has minimal accompanying text to provide a discursive framework. Each pillar lists the date, time and location where each victim was caught in the bombings, and they are grouped into four clusters to remember the four explosions. A further separate plaque reads: 'In memory of those killed in the London Bombings, 7 July 2005', and lists their names in alphabetical order.

The 7/7 Memorial follows a dominant tendency in recent monumentality, where abstraction becomes the common denominator for the commemoration of victims of atrocities and wars. According to Brown and Hoskins, the archetype for this kind of commemorative architecture is Maya Lin's monument to the Vietnam War

5. Brown & Hoskins, p.2

6. M. Hirsh 'The Generation of Postmemory', *Poetics Today*, Spring (2008), p.103

7. See www.werenotafraid.com and C. Weber, 'An Aesthetic of Fear: The 7/7 London Bombings, the Sublime, and Werenotafraid.com', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 34: 3 (2006), pp.683-710



The London Bombing Memorial in Hyde Park, July 2011, photographs by Elena Caoduro.

Veterans in Washington, DC.⁸ The abstract construction is constituted of a bold cut into the ground with the names of the veterans inscribed into black granite, which reflects the surrounding landscape. Whereas Lin's striking tribute was controversial at that time for the lack of pompous majesty and nationalistic or militaristic symbols, more recent examples find their strength exactly in this minimalism and in the lack of images of war. The London Bombings Memorial bears more resemblance to other contemporary memorials, which turn to abstraction; for instance, the various installations in the Berlin Jewish museum.

James E. Young, who coined the term 'countermonuments', recognises the problem of how to do justice to loss and give these dramatic events perpetual remembering.⁹ He also claims that this new kind of memorial embodies an inner contradiction.¹⁰ On the one hand, they are still seen as 'an essentially totalitarian form of art or architecture', but on the other hand, their abstraction makes them disappear, challenging previous ideas of monumentality.¹¹ The monument in Hyde Park belongs to this tradition and allows visitors to walk around and lay flowers, letters and tributes in no obvious designated area, giving extreme freedom to the work of remembering. The space is carefully arranged to encourage visitors to do the work of recollection without the support of a fixed narrative or set of images and words. Therefore, I suggest that the 7/7 Memorial provides some openness to interpretation.

8. Brown & Hoskins, p.100

9. J.E. Young, *At Memory's Edge: After Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000)

10. James Young in an interview with Adi Gordon and Amos Goldberg at Yad Vashem, Jerusalem on 24th May 1998, retrieved from www1.yadvashem.org/odot.../Microsoft%20Word%20-%20203659.pdf (accessed 15 April, 2011)

11. Ibid

Personal and collective memories cohabit in the same space, which is at the same time individual (there is a pillar for each victim) and cultural (the monument is a work of art for the whole community).

In summary, the memorial constitutes an attempt to satisfy the need for integration of the traumatising event of the past, leaving liquid memories to take form according to the individual visitor's experience. The dynamics of remembering and forgetting of the London bombings operate continually through personal recollections and commemorative rituals, like the annual ceremonies and special events around the memorial. However, as Andreas Huyssen has noted for Germany's recent obsession with monuments and memorials, 'the more monuments there are, the more the past becomes invisible, the easier it is to forget: redemption, thus through forgetting'.¹² Hyde Park hosts several other memorials, the Holocaust memorial, 'A Walk for Diana', the Diana Memorial, The Norwegian War Memorial and several others. There is, therefore, the actual risk of engulfing the memory of 7/7 in the proliferating 'memory boom' of our postmodern society, which can only be avoided by an active work of personal memory. Moreover, it could be argued that the memorial was a premature act. Some families did not know at the time the details of the death of their loved ones; investigations and hearings were still underway especially regarding the delays in rescuing. Hence, only the future will tell whether the memorial becomes a victim of the 'seduction for monumentality', in which the monumental migrates from real to mediated image, from material to immaterial, and ultimately into the

12. A. Huyssen, 'Monumental Seduction' in M. Bal et al (eds), *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1999), p.205

digital realm.¹³

Conclusion

Traumatic experiences cannot be fully remembered nor forgotten by the community who experienced them. They enter the collective subconscious, a cultural substrate, before re-emerging in multiple forms: cultural objects, traditions and myths. As Aleida Assmann argues, however, memory is not an anchor for salvation against time, but is the most reactive sensor of its flowing.¹⁴ Scars require remembering, continuity and commitment. Therefore, the two case studies analysed

13. Ibid

14. A. Assmann *Ricordare Forme e mutamenti della memoria culturale* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2002), p.15

demonstrate the possibility of fluid memories, which are not static but are instead able to evolve, leaving a certain degree of 'interpretative flexibility without in any way compromising the tragedy'.¹⁵ In the course of this article I have shown how different media, including a series of photographs and a monument, frame the terrorist attacks with their own open narrative. All these memories exist in a continuum of cultural memory. Davinia Douglass' picture and the Hyde Park memorial also reveal how cultural memorisation is therefore an activity occurring in the present, in which the past is continuously modified and rewritten as it shapes the future.

15. Brown & Hoskins, p.103

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Creating a Tradition of Collective Amnesia: The Reception of Knowledge Within the *Jewish Chronicle* Regarding the Armed Resistance Against the British in Mandatory Palestine

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This article will analyse the reception of knowledge within the *Jewish Chronicle's* coverage of the armed resistance against the British in Mandatory Palestine between 1944 and 1947, arguing that it created a tradition of 'collective amnesia'. It will begin by outlining a brief history of Palestine during the years of Mandatory rule, before discussing the *Jewish Chronicle* in more depth.

Under the governance of Britain since 1917, Palestine was home to both an Arab and Jewish population, each of whom desired self-determination, and both of which had been promised it by the Balfour Declaration. During the years of Mandatory rule, the Jewish Agency represented the Jewish community in Palestine and had a military arm known as the *Haganah*. The *Haganah* was the sole armed organisation amongst Palestinian Jewry until 1931, which saw the establishment of the *Irgun Zvai Leumi*. The *Irgun* was a body of Revisionist Zionist Jews who actively sought to establish a Jewish state, with free immigration, on both sides of the River Jordan. They subsequently separated from the *Haganah* over political differences in their shared desire for a Jewish national home. The *Irgun* considered the *Haganah* to be too passive and the *Haganah* regarded the *Irgun* as too extreme. During the Second World War, both organisations pledged allegiance to the ruling government of Britain and ceased their campaign for an independent Jewish state. As a consequence, a proportion of Jews in the *Irgun* who disagreed with such a ceasefire left the organisation and formed a new movement called the *Lehi* in 1940. The *Lehi* believed that they held no allegiance to the British Government and continued their active campaign for a Jewish national home throughout the war, even seeking possible co-operation with the Nazis. In 1944 the *Irgun* also resumed operations against the British. Following the end of the Second World War, there was a brief period of co-operation between all three organisations from 1945 to 1946, which came to an end with the bombing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem in 1946. The armed struggle against the British in Mandatory Palestine finally drew to a close with the establishment of Israel in 1948 and the withdrawal of British troops.

Established in 1841 and continuing to be published to the present day, the *Jewish Chronicle* possesses an established tradition of being the self-proclaimed 'organ of Anglo-Jewry'. The *Jewish Chronicle's* coverage of the struggle against the British in Mandatory Palestine between 1944 and 1947 has not been sufficiently analysed by historians. This article will help counter this scholarly absence by examining how the *Jewish Chronicle* presented the activities of the two main organisations involved in the anti-British struggle, the *Irgun* and the *Lehi*, between 1939 and 2009. It will explore the use of myth in such coverage and illustrate the process by which the *Jewish Chronicle* reflects the realities that concern Anglo-Jewry, describing how they culminate in the creation of 'collective amnesia'. It will commence, however, by arguing that absence does not signify 'collective amnesia', but the presence of lived memory.

The first retrospective article detailing the *Irgun* was published in October 1957. The earliest one mentioning the *Lehi* was published in September 1954. However, there is a twelve-year gap until the next mention of the *Lehi* in the *Jewish Chronicle*. The absence of any coverage relating to the *Lehi* directly in the intermediate years between 1954 and 1966 could suggest the presence of collective forgetting by the *Jewish Chronicle* and, to a certain extent, the Anglo-Jewish community whose viewpoint it considers itself to inform and reflect. To substantiate, Vinitzky-Seroussi and Teeger state: 'Collective memory is generally understood to entail the narration and representation of the past, while collective forgetting is antithetically thought to be a silencing and muting of the past'.¹

Vinitzky-Seroussi and Teeger expand on the historiography of memory and forgetting by declaring that, subsequently, 'What can be heard, seen and touched has become the cornerstone of memory'.² That memory has undergone a process

1. V. Vinitzky-Seroussi & C. Teeger, 'Unpacking the Unspoken: Silence in Collective Memory and Forgetting', *Social Forces*, 88: 3 (2010), p. 1103

2. Ibid

of materialisation is especially evident in Nora's research on sites of memory. In his key thesis, Nora emphasizes the production of manufactured, as opposed to organic, memory by proclaiming 'we speak so much of memory because there is so little of it left'.³ Similarly, Jonathan Boyarin believes that absence cannot be equated with forgetting, as the relationship is not one of two opposites but, instead, one of direct proportion.⁴ Furthermore, Yerushalmi argues that employing justice and forgetting as autonyms should replace the use of memory and forgetting as opposites, as 'Strictly speaking, peoples, groups, can only forget the present, not the past'.⁵ Subsequently, 'When we say that a people 'remembers' we are really saying that a past has been actively transmitted to the present generation and that this past has been accepted as meaningful'.⁶

Thus, if the above theoretical arguments are applied to the *Jewish Chronicle's* coverage of the armed resistance against the British in Mandatory Palestine, it could be suggested that the seeming reluctance of the newspaper to print coverage relating to the *Irgun* between 1948 and 1957, and the *Lehi* from 1948 to 1966 (excluding September 1954), may be due to the fact that its memory was still 'lived' or 'organic': one that was yet to be replaced by a constructed memory. If such events were still part of the lived memory of the community, regardless of whether they were repressed due to being assigned low levels of contemporary significance, then representation through a constructed memory was not required. Furthermore, whether or not this memory was considered meaningful would influence its later transmission as a constructed entity to future generations.

Support for this theory could be found through the fact that Zionism and the relationship between Britain and Israel was a key topic of interest within the Anglo-Jewish community throughout the 1940s and 1950s. Events debating these issues frequently occurred amongst the pro-, non-, and anti-Zionists within the Anglo-Jewish community during the period concerned. Furthermore, when articles did start to appear on the *Lehi*, they were either obituaries or book reviews. Thus, such articles were motivated by either the death

3. P. Nora, 'Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire', *Representations*, 26 (1989), p.7

4. J. Boyarin, *Storm from Paradise: The Politics of Jewish Memory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, c1992), pp.1-2

5. Y.H. Yerushalmi, *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982), p.117

6. Yerushalmi, p.109

of the source of 'natural' or 'organic' memory, or by the creation of a constructed memory that also signalled the erosion of the 'lived' group memory. It is also significant that such a memory only possessed enough cultural importance to be transmitted to the next generation as an incidental piece of life history or potentially entertaining literature, and not on its own greater socio-political merit.

The reasoning behind the absence of articles detailing the *Irgun* appears to possess a slightly different motivation. Although it can be assumed that the gap between publication of articles at the time of the events and those that followed is also due to the presence of lived memory, when those articles do appear their motivation is somewhat altered. Once articles detailing the *Irgun* begin to be semi-regularly published, they seem to be prompted by either the achievement of former *Irgun* members in Israeli politics (notably former *Irgun* leader Menachem Begin who was Israel's sixth Prime Minister), or by the appearance of new evidence relating to the events of the period in question. Thus, the inclusion of these articles appears to have been motivated by the fact that refusing to acknowledge such information would be perceived as deliberately aiding the construction of 'collective amnesia'.

According to Vinitzky-Seroussi and Teeger, such an occurrence signals the presence of 'covert silencing' in the realm of memory, as discussion relating to a particular event is only occasioned when it has become socially and politically unacceptable not to remember it.⁷ However, such remembrance is often superficial in nature and lacks sincerity, as it is frequently combined with another ulterior purpose.⁸ For example, articles that deal with the early memory of the *Irgun* also contain a contemporary message to readers. The memory of one particular incident, frequently Deir Yassin (the notorious attack by *Irgun* and *Lehi* forces on a Palestinian Arab village in 1948), is used to improve the memory and contemporary image of one personality, often Menachem Begin.

That the *Jewish Chronicle* encourages the misremembering of events relating to the *Irgun* and the *Lehi* is especially evident through its use of myth. Despite publishing articles stating that there is new evidence to the contrary, the *Jewish Chronicle* sporadically insists on supporting and replicating the traditional historiographical divide between the *Haganah*, the *Irgun* and the *Lehi*. In this discourse, which is present in much

7. Vinitzky-Seroussi & Teeger, pp.1115-1116

8. Ibid

of the established secondary literature on the subject, the *Haganah* even during the period of the United Resistance Movement, are portrayed positively, the *Irgun* negatively, and the *Lehi* even more critically. Despite declaring its intention to uncover 'What really happened at Deir Yassin', an article published in 1984 substantiates the established perspective by replicating such positions, as does an article published in 2006.⁹

Scholars agree that the use of myth within a society offers insight into the concerns of that particular socio-political environment. Thus, it could be suggested that throughout the articles analysed, a concern for the perception of both Israel's past and present is revealed. In order to not condone terrorism, whilst also not condemning the struggle and outcome of the Jewish desire for independence, it was necessary for the *Jewish Chronicle* to categorise those involved into varying degrees of acceptability. Furthermore, according to Yerushalmi, modern Jews base their past on myths.¹⁰ Therefore, if this is applied to coverage of the struggle for Jewish independence in the *Jewish Chronicle*, a desire within Anglo-Jewry to justify the reality of both their present and their past appears evident.

Concurrently, such coverage also reveals the realities that concern Anglo-Jewry, in particular challenges to the legitimacy of Israel and the issue of 'dual identity' (the interplay between Britishness and Jewishness). It is through the portrayal of a patriarchal relationship between Britain, the parent, and Palestine, the child, that the *Jewish Chronicle* seeks to dissolve any tension regarding the issue of 'dual loyalty'. This is achieved through the employment of child-like language, particularly with reference to the *Irgun* during the 1970s and 1980s. An article published in June 1977 states that Ben-Gurion was 'misled' over the intentions of the *Altalena*, an *Irgun* arms ship, in 1948.¹¹ Furthermore, an article published in August 1981, detailing the King David Hotel explosion in July 1946, is entitled the 'Irgun's bombing blunder', thus diminishing the significance and intent of the act.¹² The importance of the use of such language is that it creates a defensive portrayal of both the *Irgun* and the *Haganah* during the struggle for Israeli independence. This is achieved through the deliberate employment of language that implies an immature state of affairs; with actions

being taken that are not really properly thought through, or whose intent is misconstrued. Those who perpetrate such events are portrayed as naughty school children who are not playing by the proper rules of engagement of the British Empire, with the latter acting as the long-suffering but ultimately fair parent. This portrayal can be seen as an attempt to rebuff the internalised negative view held by Britain regarding the situation in Palestine. Much of the secondary literature on the subject not written by former *Irgun* or *Lehi* members presents the Jews and the Arabs as behaving equally badly by squabbling not only with each other, but also amongst themselves. Furthermore, the British are presented as having let down both the Jewish and Arab populations of Palestine by allowing the situation to escalate into a full civil war.¹³ Such approaches repeat the patriarchal parent and child dialectic.

Any remaining concerns regarding the issue of 'dual identity' and the legitimacy of Israel are further illustrated through the creation of a narrative that places the armed struggle against the British in Mandatory Palestine within a wider discourse, including the fight against the Arabs, the Holocaust and the Second World War. It is through the portrayal of the founders of both the *Irgun* and the *Lehi* that this narrative becomes especially apparent. In an article published in June 1991, *Irgun* founder David Raziel is positively remembered, as opposed to the apolitical obituaries of other former *Irgun* and *Lehi* members, due to the fact that he died fighting the Nazis in 1941.¹⁴ Similarly, in a 'Letter to the Editor' published in April 1996, *Lehi* founder Avraham Stern is also excused from judgement. It states that:

As for the Nazi-Lehi connection, it should be recalled that every Zionist leader sought in some way to save Europe's Jews from the expected horrors, including working with - and in some cases, helping - Nazi Germany. None of them really succeeded.... If Stern had managed in 1941 to create an opportunity to save Jewish lives, the judgement of historians may have been different.¹⁵

As a consequence of this amalgamation of the two narratives - the Second World War and the

9. *Jewish Chronicle*, 20/01/1984; *Jewish Chronicle*, 10/03/2006

10. Yerushalmi, p.99

11. *Jewish Chronicle*, 10/06/1977

12. *Jewish Chronicle*, 14/08/1981

13. N. Rose, *A Senseless, Squalid War: Voices from Palestine, 1945-1948* (London: Bodley Head, 2009); J. Bowyer Bell, *Terror out of Zion: Irgun Zvai Leumi, Lehi, and the Palestine Underground, 1929-1949* (New York: Avon, 1978)

14. *Jewish Chronicle*, 07/06/1991

15. *Jewish Chronicle*, 12/04/1996

fight for Jewish independence – any possible tension with regards the issue of ‘dual loyalty’ is relieved, as both parties are portrayed as being on the same side. Furthermore, such linkage provides the narrative of Jewish independence with added legitimacy, as the implication is that both conflicts possessed equal moral validity. This suggests that not only was the *Jewish Chronicle* concerned about the possible accusation of ‘dual loyalty’, but that it also had reservations about any potential challenges to the legitimacy of the creation of Israel, and thus wanted to avoid such an occurrence. Additionally, the adoption of such a narrative reveals the specifically Jewish nature of the memory presented by the *Jewish Chronicle*. To elaborate, Spiegel explained how, for Jews, the Holocaust put to rest a progressive view of history that was replaced by a medieval approach to the past.¹⁶ Consequently, Rosenfeld argued that analysis of Yerushalmi’s *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory*, indicated that all subsequent events were to be understood through pre-existing paradigms, of which the Holocaust

16. G.M. Spiegel, ‘Memory and History: Liturgical Time and Historical Time’, *History and Theory*, 41: 2 (2002), p. 150

was the most influential.¹⁷

Ultimately, the politics of memory operational in the *Jewish Chronicle* support the notion that ‘collective amnesia’ is created through its coverage of the armed struggle against the British in Mandatory Palestine. However, this is not indicated by the lack of such coverage in the immediate years following the establishment of the state of Israel; during this period the events concerned are still part of ‘living’ or ‘organic’ memory. Rather, ‘collective amnesia’ is constructed through the presence of articles that employ myth and covert silencing in the realm of memory.¹⁸ Subsequently, it is evident that the deliberate use or avoidance of certain terminology by the *Jewish Chronicle* in its coverage of the struggle for Jewish independence indicates an awareness of the sensitivity of the subject within and outside of Anglo-Jewry. This is particularly apparent regarding the issue of ‘dual loyalty’, whilst also revealing the socio-political dimensions of the ‘collective amnesia’ created by the *Jewish Chronicle*

17. G.D. Rosenfeld, ‘A Flawed Prophecy? Zakhor, the Memory Boom, and the Holocaust’, *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 97: 4 (2007), p. 515

18. Vinitzky-Seroussi & Teeger, p. 1114- 1116

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Duality: History and Memory in the Narrative of Norwood

Lawrence Cohen

History

This article examines the role of memory as a source of knowledge through the recollections of the orphans from the Jewish Orphanage at Norwood, an institution for orphaned children established by the Anglo-Jewish community. It functioned for 85 years until its closure in 1961, although the origins of a Jewish child care institution, the Jews' Hospital located in East London, date from 1795.

Norwood history is important for the children, for Anglo-Jewry and for British society. Without such an account there is an important gap in the history of institutional life. It was a complaint that has come from the scholars, as the former children call themselves, that led to the demand for a history of Norwood to be written. At the time of the centenary celebrations in 1895, 'An Old Boy' expressed his regret that 'the Committee have not availed themselves of the opportunity to compile a full and complete history of the Institution, and all its worthies for a hundred years'.¹ The inclusion of the children themselves as worthies was inconceivable at that time.

The absence of a proper account has left the field open to uncritical historical judgements. In a major study of Anglo-Jewish philanthropy, the author asserted that 'by late Victorian standards, Norwood was an exemplary enterprise providing facilities and services far superior to any other of its kind', but there is no indication of what these standards were and what they meant for the orphans.² Expressing not dissimilar comments in 1973, and referring to the post-war period, the secretary of Norwood claimed in a radio interview that the Institution 'has gone down almost into Anglo-Jewish folklore as an institution, in the nicest sense, with a small 'i'.³ Such comments expose the gap in the Norwood narrative but it is also a lacuna in the history of the Anglo-Jewish community and, in a wider context, the social history of the residential child care movement.

The writing of Norwood history stood at a

1. 'Reminiscences of an Old Boy: 1869-75', *Jewish Chronicle*, 26/4/1895, p.14
2. E. Black, *The Social Politics of Anglo-Jewry, 1880-1920* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988), p.187
3. *Newsletter*, Norwood Old Scholars Association, 30 (Mar 1973)

standstill until 1956 when *The Norwood Story* was written by Edward Conway (later expanded into *The Origins of the Jewish Orphanage*). It was the first serious attempt to publish a history of the institution. Conway was Headmaster of Norwood in the 1950s, and while there examined the impact of institutional life on the welfare of the children. He concluded that the success or failure of any institution like Norwood must depend entirely on the people who administered it.⁴ It never occurred to him that it also depended on the people who were administered - *the children*. But then as the Headmaster his professional interest was supporting the institution.

In 1995, on the occasion of the bicentenary, *What About the Children? 200 Years of Norwood Childcare* was published by Norwood Childcare and the London Jewish Museum. The book is a piece of celebratory literature on Norwood history.⁵ It is an interpretation of two centuries of Jewish child care based on archives generated by governors and staff. The archived sources were written at the time. However, another novel non-traditional source is the personal recollections of scholars - their memories. It is oral history based on the lived experiences of children at the orphanage.

The inclusion of memory as history was initiated in 1981 by Riva Krut who wrote a short unpublished article titled 'History of Norwood Orphanage'. She adopted an innovative approach - interviewing scholars. She found from her interviewing two 'dominant tendencies'.⁶ Firstly, 'there was a terrific amount of guilt attached to anything which might harm the reputation of Norwood', and this protectiveness of an institution to which they were so attached was a factor the historian had to weigh in the balance.⁷ The second tendency was revealed in the phrase, 'Oh, I could tell you some stories' which she never gets to hear or she does but they are carefully balanced.⁸ During the

4. E. Conway, *The Institutional Care of Children: A Case History* (University of London: PhD, 1957), pp.382-3

5. R. Burman (ed), *What About the Children? 200 Years of Norwood Child Care 1795-1995* (London: Museum of Jewish Life & Norwood Child Care: 1995), p.60

6. R. Krut, *History of the Jewish Orphanage* (London Jewish Museum: MS Article, 1980-1), p.11

7. *Ibid*

8. *Ibid*

course of the interview, 'there [were] occasionally moments where an account that had been carefully constructed hit an obstacle and something that had been hidden then breaks the surface'.⁹ It drew attention to the potency of a hidden history that could only be exposed in the recollections of the scholars. Her oral history work was carried on by the Jewish Museum in the 1990s when it conducted a series of interviews of scholars.

In her work, Krut incorporated memory as a component in the duality of an historical narrative. That component on its own was important to the scholars who took upon themselves, a few years after Norwood closed, to publish a newsletter in which their own personal perspective on institutional living was told for the first time. The recollections are the children speaking for themselves albeit decades later and are there as one scholar put it, 'to reassure ourselves from time to time that we have a history, a past'.¹⁰ The newsletters, interview tapes and transcripts, and a number of autobiographies are an oral history that adds to the traditional approach of historical research. Entering into an understanding of their personal recollections relies on them and provides a version of events and details not officially recorded.

Memory as an historical source is exemplified by the story of the *Norwood Rebellion*, which is entirely based on personal recollections. The rebellion was a revolt by the older boys against the Norwood management in 1921 because of poor diet and harsh discipline. The source of the rebellion is based on the recollections of six scholars written between 1969 and 2001.¹¹ They provide a version of events absent in any official document or newspaper. The picture portrayed is based on memories recollected five to eight decades after the event. The opportunity for bringing them to light was the publication of the *Newsletter* by the Norwood Old Scholars Association.

The end of the old institution in 1961 created a discontinuity between the absence of its physical presence and the endurance of its memories. The *Newsletter* provided a continuity - a means to memorise the past. The logo that appears on the front page is the picture of the orphanage. 'Reinstating the environment in which an event has been experienced' for the *Newsletter* reader

invites an entrance in to the memories it held.¹² The photograph picked by the Association served to reinstate an *institutional* memory but for the individual scholar it was a *personal* invite.



NOSA Newsletter Logo

Traditionally, the historian's research has been document-biased as voiced in the adage that 'the historian works with documents. There is no substitute, no history'.¹³ Much of Norwood's history is based on such contemporary material. What is left out is the evidence of the children and for that reason it does not provide a total history. The corpus of available material is expanded from contemporary documents finite in the extent of their preservation by the inclusion of oral history, the scholars' recollections, open-ended as a living source. The importance of oral evidence is that it is a source of information on deviancy, counter-institutional culture, personal relationships, individual behaviour and revolts not covered by other sources. Without it the Norwood Rebellion would not have been known to have existed. Its authenticity as a real event in the memory of scholars has determined the authenticity of personal recollections as a source in its own right, a source which refutes the adage and the historian's reverence of the document.

The various descriptions of the rebellion by the scholars - *Kam's Rebellion*, the *Great Rebellion*, *Kahn's Rebellion* and the *Norwood Rebellion* - contain different accounts in which details of the event, the motives for rebelling, the boys who were involved and even when it took place are inconsistent, and for that reason a precise account will never be known. Devoid of reference in official minutes and reports, the existence of the rebellion was denied by the authorities. It immediately disappeared into obscurity to remain a hidden yet significant piece of Norwood

9. R. Gildea, *Marianne in Chains: In Search of the German Occupation* (London: Macmillan, 2003), p.11

10. *Newsletter*, NOSA, 23 (Jun 1971)

11. *Newsletter*, NOSA, 15 (Dec 1969); 26 (Feb 1972); 82 (May 2001); London Jewish Museum Interview Transcript, Tape 40, 1981

12. A. Baddeley, *Essentials of Human Memory* (East Sussex: Psychology Press, 2007), p.183

13. P. Thompson, *The Voices of the Past: Oral History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p.183

children's history until the scholars narrated their own recollections of the event in the hazy light of distant memories. The childhood repository of the boys' deviant behaviour has become accessible to the historian and only now can the rebellion be pieced together.¹⁴

What the historian has to judge is the degree of distortion in oral accounts and one way of dealing with it 'consists in studying the largest number of cases [available]'.¹⁵ Providing as much detail as possible in recollections may introduce 'the kind of sensory and perceptual associates' that can be taken as evidence that an event has been remembered rather than invented.¹⁶ The seven accounts of the rebellion have been sufficient to construct an historical narrative.

The documentary value of an event is an exercise in which the historian

must provide us with the key which transforms the crude document into an historical source and must give us the reasons why plausibility is attributed to one part of the history and doubt to another.¹⁷

The key is the themes - the rebellion, counter-culture, corporal punishment, deviance - and the placing of individual actions in an historical narrative. This paper places the one known strike within the wider realm of oral history. Its plausibility derives from the comparative evaluation of the recollected accounts and the wider context of counter-institutionalism.

Oral evidence, unlike archived documents, is the product of scholars' living memories. Psychological research shows 'all memory, whatever age it's laid down or recalled, is unreliable' and over time gets less accurate.¹⁸ One way memory is unreliable is that it is not chronologically organised and this explains the different dates given for the revolt. 'Personal time is notoriously at odds with public history' and this has meant memory has been dismissed.¹⁹ The historian J.H. Plumb in 1969 wrote the 'past' that is constructed through memory is a 'created ideology' and not 'true history'

- memory and history were seen as incompatible.²⁰ But almost thirty years later the duality of history and memory was seen quite differently. The historian David Lowenthal recognised '[memory] no less than history is essential to knowing' - memory makes history itself possible.²¹

Recognising the subjective in individual testimonies is a challenge to 'the accepted categories of history'.²² The subjectivity in oral histories 'is certainly not to say that we are working with memories of a false past'²³. A high proportion of the rich detail in recollections remains objectively valid and verified by other sources and provides 'the only good evidence we have from an undocumented, hidden world'.²⁴ A lot of the details are consistent in scholars' accounts such as the canings mentioned in many of them - caning was part of the disciplinary regime. The main evidence for the rebellion is the scholars' accounts, but a critical analysis of them has been utilised to demonstrate its authenticity.

The invitation by the Association for scholars' recollections allowed the scholar as an adult to reflect where Norwood stood in his or her personal history. The Headmaster, Marcus Kaye, asked leavers to write a letter of thanks. Such letters were constrained in their criticism of the institution. The scholars were expected to carry the banner of Norwood and uphold the name of the institution when they left. Some have been selectively preserved in the Headmaster's scrapbook for the years 1913-15. The act of writing a letter implied an avowal of the life at Norwood. One scholar, Maurice Levinson in his autobiography *A Woman from Bessarabia* wrote that he resisted writing a letter because in his personal history it denied him being a person.²⁵ The refusal to write a letter excluded the possibility of Kaye pasting it in his scrapbook as evidence of how good Norwood was for the children.²⁶ Levinson's account forms part of the life story of Norwood without which his side of the story would be untold.

An article appeared in the *Jewish Chronicle* in 1974 entitled 'They Asked for More and Got it' in which a number of scholars expressed criticism of Norwood. It was contradicted by a former teacher

14. Thompson, pp.154-5; R. Basso, 'Myths in Contemporary Oral Transmission: A Children's Strike' in R. Samuel & P. Thompson (eds), *The Myths We Live By* (London: Routledge, 1990), p.61

15. J. Peneff, 'Myths in Life Stories' in Samuel & Thompson, p.41

16. Baddeley, p.320

17. Peneff, p.45

18. K. Sabbagh, *Remembering Our Childhood: How Memory Betrays Us* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p.194

19. Samuel & Thompson, p.7

20. G.S. Wood, 'No Thanks for the Memories' *The New York Review*, Jan (2011), p.2

21. Ibid

22. Samuel & Thompson, p.2

23. Samuel & Thompson, pp.5-6

24. Ibid

25. M. Levinson, *A Woman from Bessarabia* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1964), p.62

26. Two scrapbooks are in the archive at Southampton University.

Sol Taylor and the Association, claiming 'the article gave a very unfair picture of life at Norwood'.²⁷ For them 'it was a good Institution and made so by the people who administered it'.²⁸ The article's author replied, 'I gave a fair and undistorted account of what it was to be brought up in Norwood *from the child's point of view*'.²⁹ Taylor was criticised as showing only 'the teacher's side [which] left out the humanitarian part of school life which is just as vital as the educational side'.³⁰ The article opened up a dispute over what was the 'authentic version' of Norwood experience. There were two memories being fought over - one institutional and another by the individual scholars. At the level of an institution in historical imagery, a picture has been formed in which memory becomes part of the real life account and Norwood becomes a good institution.³¹ But the historical narratives related by many scholars remember it was not 'good enough' for them.

The recollections rely on a remembered experience but for some scholars there was an absence of memory. Sidney Kaye, who went to Norwood in 1933, wrote that 'for a long time I preferred to block out the past'. It was meeting another Norwood boy that helped him to remember the forgotten years.³² The Newsons, in their research on young children, examined the importance of memory in the development of the young child. They found

the child relies on his parents' role as a memory bank to which he can refer for evidence of himself as an individual with a history...[It is] through his store of memories...recollecting past experiences ...[that] establishes him as a person with a

27. *Jewish Chronicle*, 22/11/1974, Colour Supplement, pp.68-75; *Newsletter*, NOSA, 26 (Jan 1975)

28. *Ibid*

29. *Ibid*

30. *Newsletter*, NOSA, 37 (Apr 1975)

31. Peneff, p.45

32. *Newsletter*, NOSA, 97 (Sept 2008)

past...In contrast, the child who is deprived of parents may in fact have...no one to confirm whether these memories are in fact correct or figments of the imagination.³³

Their research shows that the institutional environment can impede the social function of memory in the child. The deprivation for some scholars resulted in permanent memory loss.

For scholars who recorded their memories there was the need to find a balance between correct fact and imaginary figment. A picture taken in 1912 of smiling girls balanced on two sides of a see-saw captioned 'Norwood girls at play' in the bicentennial book projects an institutional memory.³⁴ For the scholar the act of writing a recollection is 'a work of conviction, memorization and clarification', an avowal of what Norwood personally meant. Indeed, as one resident wrote of his experience in another institution, it 'enabled me to close a chapter in my life'.³⁵

This paper has examined the institution as it affected the children. It has looked at oral sources and the words of the children themselves. Their memories raise issues of authenticity - of oral evidence as a source, the content of oral evidence, 'inauthentic memory' and conflict over the 'true' memory. Despite limitations they reveal a counter-culture of deviance and expose a piece of lost history - the Norwood Rebellion. For scholars, its importance is that 'its memory will live on in history'.³⁶ This article opens a door for historians to enter into the inner workings of the institution. Through scholars' recollections they can reveal a history that creates a new reality of Norwood.

33. J. & E. Newson, *Seven Years Old in the Home Environment* (Middlesex: Pelican, 1978), p.444

34. Burman, p.32

35. Peneff, p.45; J. Adams & G. Coll, *The History of Shirley Oaks Children's Home* (London: Deptford Forum, 1999), p.100

36. *Newsletter*, NOSA, 36 (Jan 1975)

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On the Edge of History: How the Modern Reception of Etruscans and Celts has Been Shaped Through a Roman Reality

Peter Girdwood
Archaeology

As the Italian archaeologist Massimo Pallottino would have it, 'In many of its aspects, we are forced to regard and study the civilization of Etruria as if it were a prehistoric civilization although it belongs fully to historical times'.¹ It is hard to imagine anyone making a similar remark about the Etruscans' contemporaries either in the Po Valley or north of the Alps. These two areas, which seem in the material record to share much in common, have been studied in different ways within distinct sub-disciplines of archaeology. As is suggested by Pallottino's words, there is a qualitative difference in how historic and prehistoric cultures are understood and investigated. Similarly, I argue, there is a notable difference in what is expected of the achievements of these cultures. Much of this ties into the primacy given to written sources, particularly those from Greece and Rome. This paper examines the images these sources have produced of two of Rome's near neighbours, the Etruscans and the Celts, and what they tell us about the necessities of Roman politics.

Sources

Some of the most comprehensive written sources we have for these cultures are not Latin but Greek.² Classical Greece was home to an ethnographic tradition that attempted to characterise alien societies in a way that Rome, at least in the early days, did not. Central to much of this Greek work was the underlying assumption of the difference between Greek and Barbarian. This was a neat reflection of a well-established and recognised pattern of binary oppositions common in Greek philosophy, such as left and right, evil and good, crooked and straight.³ This system can clearly be seen at the heart of many Greek ethnographies in which Greek and non-Greek customs were contrasted⁴. In turn, our Roman sources seem to pick up many of the same ideas and tropes deployed in Greek literature. For example, many aspects of Roman descriptions of Etruscans, from their wealth and luxurious lifestyles, their 'decadent

softness',⁵ their perceived cowardice and their apparent eastern origins, can all be found in earlier Greek accounts. The reason for these similarities has been partly attributed to Rome's desire to ingratiate itself with the Greek cities of southern Italy and, later, with the Greeks further east. By defining themselves as diametrically opposed to their neighbours, much as the Greeks did, Rome created an allusion to cultural similarity.

Whilst Roman sources, like those of the Greeks, are clearly defined by self against other, they take on a far more overtly political aspect. Many of the best known Roman authors date back to the late republic or draw directly on sources from that time. With the expansion of citizenship and the crystallisation of the idea of Italia in this period, regional identities took on a new significance, becoming a stick with which to beat those in high office⁶, or an argument for or against extending the franchise to particular groups.⁷ Beyond this, it is worth remembering that much of Roman history has its origins in family history, passed down from generation to generation and recorded with the intent of glorifying ancestors, reflecting that glory onto present generations, and legitimising claims to positions of authority and power. Still further, at a communal level, these histories served to explain Rome's advantaged position within Italy and beyond, and why it had rightfully risen to a position of pre-eminence. The expansion of Roman hegemony over the peninsula led to the creation of the belief that Rome was a special case within Italy, strongly stressing the idea that Rome was the only true city in the region.⁸ This played a key role in how Rome defined both itself and the other peoples it encountered.

The Etruscans

Concerning the Etruscans, the general picture within Latin sources is somewhat ambivalent. Although considered soft and decadent, they were

1. M. Pallottino, *The Etruscans* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975), p. 153

2. J.H.C. Williams, *Beyond the Rubicon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 22-35

3. P. Cartledge, *The Greeks: A Portrait of Self and Other* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 14

4. Cartledge 1993, p. 71

5. M.B. Bittarello, 'The Construction of Etruscan 'Otherness' in Latin Literature', in *Greece and Rome* 56: 2 (2009), p. 212

6. Bittarello 2009, pp. 219-30

7. Williams 2001, p. 126

8. E. Dench, *From Barbarians to New Men: Greek, Roman, and Modern Perceptions of Peoples from the Central Apennines* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 74-5



Etruria, Gaul and their relationship to Rome. Exact boundaries of Gallia are somewhat arbitrary and were fluid over time to fit Roman ideas of Italy. Although Etruria is shown here as a region bounded by the rivers Tiber and Arno, Etruscan 'Influence', material culture and colonies stretch far beyond these borders including a large amount of activity in the Po Valley.

generally respected for, among other things, their skill as augurs and diviners. They appear in Virgil's *Aeneid*, fighting mainly with the bow,⁹ suggesting both their rumoured oriental origins and an association with hunting. Unlike the Romans, they are not real soldiers but hunters, more closely associated with the predatory beasts of the forest than their morally upright neighbours. Simultaneously, they are noted for their love of luxury and effeminacy; they are cowards, afraid of a good fight, who, according to Livy, were known to have attempted to hire Gauls to fight the Romans for them. Notable politicians of the late republic and early empire, such as Augustus' close adviser Maecenas, were of Etruscan origin and were tarred with the twin brushes of softness and untrustworthiness.¹⁰ Propaganda against such figures probably did much to reinforce these stereotypes. In comparison to the Etruscan morality tale of urban excess, the Sabines and other Latin peoples besides the Romans are often presented as shining examples of rural Italic virtue.¹¹ They in turn, it should be noted, are alternatively portrayed as simple country bumpkin types next to the more civilized Romans. As ever, 'varying cultural needs produce diverging

cultural representations'.¹²

Being on Rome's immediate borders, the Etruscans played an important part in Roman mythology from its very beginnings. Yet, over time they were increasingly side-lined, as can be seen in the changing role of the Etruscan settlement of Caere in the Gallic sack of Rome.¹³ As well as Etruscans being implicated in numerous ways for bringing Gauls to the gates of Rome, Caere's role in ensuring Rome's survival is diminished over time. Early accounts portray Caere as the refuge to which the vestal virgins fled, enabling Roman ritual practice to continue uninterrupted. It also provided key military support for the final defeat of the Gauls. In later versions, however, Caere plays a decreasing role, and is eventually largely written out of the story. A powerful, self-important Rome did not need to be saved by its by now weak Etruscan neighbour of negligible importance.

The Celts

One key element that could not be written out of the tale of the sack of Rome was the Gauls: a group who would play a continuously important role in the Roman psyche. The exact composition of this group is actually quite hard to pin down. 'Celt' or 'Gaul' are terms generally applied more or less interchangeably, referring to peoples identified in the ancient sources as Keltoi, Galatai or Galli.¹⁴

9. Bittarello 2009, pp.214-6

10. Bittarello 2009, pp. 220-3

11. E. Dench, 'Sacred Springs to the Social War: Myths of Origin and Questions of Identity in the Central Apennines' in T. Cornell & K. Lomas (eds). *Les Gender and Ethnicity in Ancient Italy* (London: Accordia Research Institute, 1997) pp.43-51

12. Bittarello 2009, p.212

13. Williams 2001, p.148

14. Williams 2001, pp.6-7

Ancient authors appeared to have assumed, at a relatively early stage, that the Keltoi or Galatai of the Greek works were the same as the Galli encountered by the Romans. This assumption was quite an obvious one to make, given the prevailing model of how the peoples of the world were organised. As far as the Greeks were concerned, only two groups of people existed on the northern edge of their known world: Scythians to the north and Keltoi to the west. This model was largely adopted by the Romans, and although in the late republic a third category was recognised, which expanded the ethnographic map to include Galli/Keltoi in the northwest, Germans in the north and Scythians in the northeast, it remained largely stable.¹⁵

As already mentioned, the key event in the formation of the Roman image of the Gaul was the sack of Rome, traditionally dated to 390 BC, the recovery from which in many ways formed a new foundation myth for the city. Many of the details of the sack have clearly shifted and been embellished over time, the story gaining in symbolic importance. Of all the barbarian peoples, Gauls were always to hold a special position of fear in Rome. Although not sharing the physical softness of the Etruscans, Gauls were typified by a weakness of character; a fickleness that made them thoroughly untrustworthy. Debates in the first century BC over exactly where the northern border of Italy should be drawn and whether or not to give the people of the Po Valley (essentially Gallic peoples) Roman citizenship, took on a strong political flavour in which the moral fibre of the proposed citizenry played an important role.¹⁶ Much like the case of the Roman politicians of Etruscan origin, old stereotypes were re-appropriated and reinforced through political necessity.

Origins

How then did these distinctions affect our enduring image of these past societies and how we approach them? Firstly, I wish to look at the question of origins. Although not in vogue in archaeological circles, the issue of origins has been of great significance in studies of the Etruscans.¹⁷ Both the non-Indo-European character of the Etruscan language, and the existence of literary sources claiming the Etruscans originated somewhere

in the east, have supported this.¹⁸ The problem here is that these features have been noted as if they are somehow exceptional to the Etruscans. There are other ancient languages in the area that also do not fit the Indo-European family, such as Raetic.¹⁹ The Etruscans are even less exceptional in potentially possessing an origin myth outside of Italy. Samnite myths claim origins from an early Spartan colony²⁰, whilst the Venetii of the northern Adriatic coast and the Romans themselves claim origins from ancient Troy.²¹ Etruscan otherness is stressed in order to further myths of Roman exceptionalism within Italy. Seemingly too close to Rome, the Etruscans are somehow painted as foreign interlopers, whilst Rome remains a sole example of a home grown Italian city.

Tales of Etruscan origins in the east also fit neatly with their stereotyped image, featuring many of the tropes more commonly associated with the eastern barbarian than with those of the west or north. They are very much the Easterners of the West. This all draws on the celebrated mystery of the Etruscans. The image of these masters of strange cultish ritual, speaking an exotic impenetrable language, is further reinforced by origins shrouded in the orient, whilst their many elaborate and well preserved necropoleis suggest a morbid obsession with death.²²

The origin of the Gauls of the Po Valley has also been a topic of debate. Roman history contains several stories of Gauls invading northern Italy, and there is some discussion over when exactly this occurred and whether this constituted one invasion or numerous waves. Once again, a key uniting theme is that the people in question came from outside of Italy, in this case having moved from the far side of the Alps. Evidence for these migrations has been sought in the archaeological record and indeed potentially found, with the appearance of material culture in the Po Valley that correlates closely with that found north of the

18. M.E. Moser, 'The Origins of the Etruscans: New Evidence for an Old Question' in J.F. Hall, *Etruscan Italy: Etruscan Influences on the Civilizations of Italy from Antiquity to the Modern Era* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1996), p.29

19. J. Penny, 'The Etruscan Language and its Italic Context' in J. Swaddling and P. Perkins (eds). *Etruscan by Definition* (London: British Museum Press, 2009), p.90

20. Dench 1995, pp.53-61

21. R. Laurence, 'Territory, Ethnonyms and Geography: The Construction of Identity in Roman Italy' in R. Laurence & J. Berry (eds). *Cultural Identity in the Roman World* (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 104-5

22. The dominance of the necropoleis in archaeological dialogues has as much to do with differential survival as the focus of Etruscan society. See G. Barker and T. Rasmussen, *The Etruscans* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), p.232

15. G. Woolf, 'Saving the Barbarian' in E.S. Gruen (ed), *Cultural Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean* (Los Angeles: Getty, 2011), p.255

16. Williams 2001, pp.109-110

17. G. Barker & T. Rasmussen, *The Etruscans* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), pp.43-4

Alps.²³ Interestingly though, this new material, representative of the La Tène culture of Celtic Europe, appears south of the Alps at about the same time as its appearance north of the Alps. New practices also seem to coexist with a number of older traditions of the area, such as mortuary custom. This confuses the picture and makes the large scale invasion hypothesis hard to support. It is worth asking why the issue of Gallic migration was important to Roman writers, particularly those of the first century BC. With the politically significant question of the extension of the franchise to populations north of the Apennines, the right of the existing Gallic inhabitants to reside on that land, not to mention the land's status as part of Italy, became increasingly important issues.

Urbanism

Similarly, the question of urbanism bears closely on issues of legitimate occupation of the Po Valley. We are used to thinking of the Etruscans as an urban people. For example, Roman sources tell us that the ritual for the foundation of new Roman colonies was based upon Etruscan rites.²⁴ The existence of Gallic towns, on the other hand, seems to have somewhat confused Roman historians. Despite noting particular occasions of Gallic foundations, there is a general denial that the Gauls built any towns at all. The non-urban nature of the Gauls was a key element of the Roman justification for expansion into the Po Valley. The Etruscans had built cities there, but were too decadent to defend themselves when the Gauls invaded over the Alps. In turn, the Gauls had destroyed what civilisation they found and squandered the potential of the land, proving themselves equally unworthy of such prime fertile territory.²⁵ Only the Romans could bring civilization to the land, and also have the strength to hold on to it. As a result, in Etruria a relatively small number of urban or proto-urban sites are seen as indicative of the nature of its society. With their town building credentials not in doubt, we expect to identify Etruscan settlement sites as urban. Conversely, we are told by the Romans that the Gauls did not dwell in cities; in fact, they destroyed the Etruscan cities of the Po plain when they invaded northern Italy.²⁶ For this reason, the Celtic peoples to the north of the Roman world are rarely considered to dwell in urban or even proto-urban settlements.

23. R. Häussler, 'At the Margins of Italy: Celts and Ligurians in North-West Italy' in G. Bradley et al (eds), *Ancient Italy: Regions without Boundaries* (Exeter: Exeter University Press 2007), pp. 53-56

24. A. Böethius & J.B. Ward-Perkins, *Etruscan and Roman Architecture* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970)

25. Williams 2001, pp. 80-1

26. Williams 2001, pp. 100-13

Demonstrably, Roman attitudes have had a direct impact upon the manner in which the archaeology of these two areas is characterised.

The question of what makes a settlement site 'urban' has not been extensively problematized.²⁷ Etruscan central places tend to lack many of the traits used to classify towns elsewhere in the classical world. There is very little in the way of convincing evidence of public spaces within the walls, no definite agora or forum as we would expect in a Greek or Roman town.²⁸ What characteristically urban features they do possess, they seem to share with other major Celtic settlement sites such as the Heuneburg in Baden-Württemberg, southern Germany. Concepts of urban and rural are problematic in their application to these societies. There is an assumption things are either done the Roman way or not at all.

Roman Identities?

The question that has so far gone unasked is: in the period before Roman expansion, did these peoples even consider themselves as single ethnic groups with a shared identity? The chances are, particularly in the case of the Celts, that this was not the case. The picture created is one of Romans, Italians, non-Italians and how they came to find their place within an expanding Roman Empire. All of these groups seemingly gained form, firstly in the construction of Roman identity, and subsequently in the creation of Italia as a distinct if never entirely bounded concept. Although the stereotypes created are rarely entirely negative, they present the other ethnic group as something different, something that cannot be fully comprehended, that can never be understood and never truly be trusted. They continue to shape the way we think of these peoples, and have significantly influenced our vocabulary in defining them and our agendas in researching them. This is the legacy of Rome's own self-mythologizing historic tradition, and in turn the advantaged position of Roman literature within modern western society.²⁹

27. B. Trigger, 'Determinants of Urban Growth in Pre-Industrial Societies' in P.J. Ucko et al, *Man, Settlement and Urbanism: Proceedings of a Meeting of the Research Seminar in Archaeology and Related Subjects Held at the Institute of Archaeology, London University* (London: Duckworth 1972) and R. Osborne, 'Urban Sprawl: What is Urbanization and Why Does it Matter?' in R. Osborne & B. Cunliffe (eds), *Mediterranean Urbanization 800-600 BC* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005)

28. M. Bentz & C. Reusser, *Marzabotto: Planstadt der Etrusker* (Mainz am Rhein: von Zabern, 2008)

29. C. Stray, *Classics Transformed: Schools, Universities, and Society in England, 1830-1960* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998)

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The Myth of Baucis and Philemon: A New Reading of George Sand's *Indiana* (1832)

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Modern Languages



Jean-Bernard Restout's 1769 painting, 'Baucis and Philemon Offering Hospitality to Jupiter and Mercury' (Courtesy of Le Musée des Beaux-Arts, Tours).

The myth of Baucis and Philemon is 'one of the best-loved stories'¹ in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and has been appropriated and transmuted by a number of writers, including Goethe, Proust and Beckett.² The source of its attraction is its portrayal of a love which endures in old age until death, as embodied by the kind and virtuous couple in Ovid's story. The second important element in the myth is the utopian dénouement, which presents Baucis and Philemon harmoniously tending the gods' temple. In a tradition of mythology that often deals with aggression and conflict, this story stands out in having 'the sort of kindly warmth which some of Ovid's readers would like to find in more of his myths [...]'.³ However, the utopian space of the couple is envisaged as needing a third party to dynamise it, giving rise to the third key element in the myth, namely what the Greeks call *xenia*: entertaining the stranger who may turn out to be a god in disguise and who dispenses a

reward for hospitality.⁴ By offering shelter to the disguised Zeus and Hermes, Baucis and Philemon are rewarded with exemption from the flood that the gods unleash upon their inhospitable neighbours. They are also allowed to die at exactly the same moment.

My claim in this paper is that all of these mythological elements are present in George Sand's *Indiana*, a novel which both extends and complicates these three themes of the harmonious couple, utopia and *xenia*.

First of all, the virtuous couple in 'Baucis and Philemon' is paralleled in *Indiana*'s final solution, which presents a harmonious dyad. The novel tells the story of its eponymous heroine, a young, beautiful creole from the Île Bourbon married to the much older and brutish Colonel Delmare. The ill-matched couple live on a country estate in France—with Indiana's cousin Ralph. In spite of a number of tribulations, and the seductions of the aristocratic cad Raymon, the novel ends with Indiana and Ralph as the idealised couple, living in their 'Indian cottage' in a secluded part of the

1. M. Gamel, 'Baucis and Philemon: Paradigm or Paradox?', *Helios* 11 (1984), p.117

2. See S. Agusta-Boularot, *Dictionnaire Culturel de la Mythologie Gréco-Romaine, Sous la Direction de René Martin* (Paris: Nathan, 1992), p.59

3. G.K. Galinsky, *Ovid's Metamorphoses: An Introduction to the Basic Aspects* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1975), p.197

4. See T. Hsiu-chih, 'The Stranger's Friendship on the Battlefield: The Performance of Xenia in the Iliad', *Humanitas Taiwanica*, 69 (2008), p.185-229

island of Bourbon. This utopian ending, which has earned Sand accusations of sinning against the norms of the nineteenth-century realist genre,⁵ is a further link to mythology, the domain of *invraisemblance*. Sand presents this utopian space as an open one, as Ralph and Indiana dedicate themselves to freeing slaves and caring for the poor. They also offer shelter to a young man, who turns out to be the story's narrator.

The question of hospitality is, in fact, present throughout the novel. Ralph, initially perceived as a rather colourless character, is accepted within the Delmare household and turns out to be a benign presence for Indiana, incessantly watching over her. By the end of the novel, he is revealed to be a god in disguise, the saviour who offers his pure and unconditional love to Indiana.

The Politics of the Ideal Harmonious Couple

The 'well-matched and worthy pair'⁶ in the Ovidian myth are a humble couple who have grown old together in a house which, though poor, constitutes a haven for them. This endorsement of simplicity is also present in the Sandian couple, who, isolated from civilisation, renounce pretentious ostentation and instead cherish 'the wit that comes from the heart'.⁷ Even though Ralph and Indiana are not depicted in their old age, we are told that this happy outcome is the result of a long process, a metamorphosis, whose duration is rendered ambiguous by the temporal indeterminacy and sense of timelessness that characterises utopia.⁸

A radical aspect of what Vareille terms Sand's 'anarchising utopia'⁹ is her depiction of equality within relationships. The *Liberté Egalité Fraternité* revolutionary credo was still far from being implemented within the politics of the married couple in 1832 France. Article 1124 of the Civil Code instituted by Napoleon assigned women the same legal status as children and the

5. See M. Hirsch, 'Questions à Indiana', *Revue des Sciences Humaines* 42: 165 (1977), p. 117

6. A.E. Watts, *The Metamorphoses of Ovid: An English Version* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1980), p. 186

7. G. Sand, *Indiana*, trans. S. Raphael, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 265-266

8. Ralph highlights the difficulty of this psychological journey of opening oneself to the other: 'I had been excessively mistrustful of myself for thirty years and it wasn't in one day that I could have a firm hope of pleasing and being loved' (Sand, *Indiana*, p. 269). This is a strangely ageless couple who tell us, 'All our days are the same; they are all calm and beautiful' (*ibid.*)

9. K. Wingard Vareille, *Socialité, Sexualité et Les Impassés de l'Histoire: L'évolution de la Thématique Sandienne d'Indiana (1832) à Mauprat (1837)*, (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1987), p. 69

insane.¹⁰ Interestingly, Sand goes beyond this patriarchal setup by positing as her ideal model of the couple a union which incorporates and synthesises different kinship ties. Hence, Ralph tells Indiana: 'Now it is I who am your brother, your husband, your lover for all eternity.'¹¹ This original configuration, rather than tapping into fears of incest, transfigures it into an egalitarian arrangement, a symbolic 'levelling out'¹² in which male and female coexist and fuse in a union which preserves their dignity. This notion of reuniting opposites finds a perfectly illustrative image in the Baucis and Philemon myth: the intertwining oak and linden trees, symbols of the duration of conjugal love, into which the old couple are transformed at the moment of their death.¹³ Similarly, in bringing together a creole woman and a morose Englishman, Sand reunites differing geographies and temperaments. The Île Bourbon setting further underscores this theme, since it is situated between Africa and the Far East, thus fusing characteristics of East and West. In fact, Sand, whose words 'have now and then a strange prophetic ring'¹⁴, seems to have designated this utopian setting with singular foresight, since the French Revolution of 1848 led to the island's change of name, to the highly apposite *La Réunion*.¹⁵

However, this *réunion* is portrayed by Sand to stand outside the possibilities offered by marriage, since Ralph and Indiana are presented as an unwedded childless couple. This is a radical reconfiguration of the family unit, a basic component of utopias. Such an outlook is consistent with Sand's belief that the institution of marriage is no longer sacred, and has been thoroughly perverted by patriarchy.¹⁶ It is thus unable to offer the equality and openness upon which the model polity is

10. D. Holmes, *French Women's Writing 1848-1994* (London: Continuum International Publishing, 2000), p. 6

11. Sand, *Indiana*, p. 259

12. Wingard Vareille, p. 421

13. F. Hageneder, *The Meaning of Trees: Botany, History, Healing, Lore* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2005), p. 172 & 206

14. A. Repplier, *Points of Friction* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1971), p. 243

15. Such creative imagination is what enables the poet to be what Hugo terms 'l'homme des utopies' (literally the man of utopias). See K. Biermann, 'George Sand et Victor Hugo: Deux Visions 'Parallèles' de la Révolution', in D. A. Powell (ed), *Le Siècle de George Sand*, (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1998), p. 30

16. Bénédict in Valentine, for instance, argues that 'il n'est point d'inconvenance plus monstrueuse, d'usage plus scandaleux que la publicité qu'on donne au mariage.' G. Sand, *Romans 1830* (Paris: Presse de la Cité, 1991), p. 289, and Lansac himself in *Valentine* feels that 'cette chaste et sainte institution du mariage s'était horriblement souillée', Sand, *Romans 1830*, p. 344

predicated.

The Utopian Space as Open and Welcoming

The main characteristic of the utopian space investigated by both the Ovidian myth and Sand's novel is its open and welcoming nature. The harmony in the Baucis and Philemon household stems from its lack of social distinctions:

No master there, nor man, where only they
Were the whole house, to order and obey.¹⁷

In spite of their poverty, the couple welcomes the two weary travellers and offers what little they have. This is also true of Ralph and Indiana, since the gender equality they espouse extends to a wider egalitarian ethos, as exhibited in their slave-liberating enterprise. Also, their servants are considered friends: 'they share our joys, we tend their ills'.¹⁸ These benign practices, however, attract the onslaughts of the not-so-virtuous neighbours, who, as in Baucis and Philemon's story, are inhospitable. Indiana and Ralph are subject to malicious gossip by the envious inhabitants of the island.

Secondly, Ralph and Indiana offer shelter to a young man caught in a violent storm which evokes the mythic flood in the Baucis and Philemon story. Interestingly, this guest turns out to be the story's narrator, who appears out of nowhere, and is unconditionally welcomed: 'before I had opened my mouth to ask for shelter, the owner of the house had silently and solemnly made a welcoming gesture,'¹⁹ thus conforming to the ancient rule of hospitality that one must not ask for the identity of one's guest. Ralph and Indiana also impart their own story to their guest as a parting gift, thus giving the new arrival what Derrida calls 'all of one's home and oneself.'²⁰ The parting gift is a standard ritual in mythical practices of *xenia* where the relationship is a horizontal one.²¹

In allowing a third person to come in and dynamise the couple by supplying a differing perspective, Indiana and Ralph demonstrate Sand's ideal of the porosity of the home space, which should be engaged with otherness. This ideal corresponds closely to what Derrida calls the structure of thirdness (tertialité), which 'interrupts the

complacency of the duality'²² and 'intensifies and in a sense exalts'²³ the relationship of the couple. In highlighting the greater love of the couple, 'thirdness' constitutes an essential component of the utopian space, and is rewarded by divine protection. Ralph and Indiana's cottage, like that belonging to Baucis and Philemon, is exempted from the flood, 'protected by a rampart of cliffs leaning over it and serving as an umbrella.'²⁴

The Question of Xenia

This acceptance of thirdness leads us to examine the question of '*xenia*', the ethical code of hospitality, and its possible rewards or dangers. This benevolent practice was so important for the Greeks as to be protected by Zeus himself, referred to as Zeus Xeinius. *Xenia* was highly valued by the Ancient Greeks since 'traveling to various places by sea and meeting with people from different places' led them to cultivate 'a profound understanding and experience of being a stranger in a foreign land'.²⁵ The dynamics between guest and host have also been analysed by Derrida, who points out that the French word *hôte* can mean either guest or host. This polysemy perfectly encapsulates the dual roles of the fascinatingly ambiguous Ralph, first shown as a permanent guest within the Delmare household. His status depends on Delmare's finite and conditional hospitality, regulated by Ralph's ritualised oath (Greek: *orkos*) to always behave as a brother-in-law towards Indiana.²⁶ This highly controlled hospitality is highlighted by Delmare's portrayal as 'the conjugal Argus', who 'wearie[s] his eagle eye'²⁷ in attentive scrutiny of Ralph and Indiana. He requires several months of careful observation before according his trust. Delmare thus functions as a Kantian host who 'sets up his relationship to the one who is in his house as a matter of the law', so that the guest always 'remain(s) a foreigner'.²⁸

However, Ralph is no ordinary guest, since he turns out to be a god in disguise and the Messiah which Indiana has been waiting for all along. His full-length portrait in her room is an apt symbol

17. Watts, *The Metamorphoses of Ovid: An English Version*, p. 184

18. Sand, *Indiana*, p. 270

19. Sand, *Indiana*, p. 263

20. J. Derrida and A. Dufourmantelle, *Of Hospitality, Anne Dufourmantelle Invites Jacques Derrida to Respond* trans.

R. Bowlby (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), p. 77

21. See J. Griffin, *Homer on Life and Death* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1980), p. 27

22. J. Derrida, *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas*, trans. P. Brault & M. Naas (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), p. 32-33

23. H. de Vries, 'Derrida and Ethics: Hospitable Thought' in T. Cohen, *Jacques Derrida and the Humanities: A Critical Reader* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 186

24. Sand, *Indiana*, p. 263

25. Hsiu-chih, p. 191

26. '...a sacred promise' from which he is liberated only by Delmare's death. See Sand, *Indiana*, p. 255

27. Sand, *Indiana*, p. 17

28. Derrida and Dufourmantelle, *Of Hospitality*, p. 71. The narrator in *Indiana* tells us that Delmare's 'only conscience was the law; his only morality was his right', Sand, *Indiana*, p. 89

of his ubiquity and benign protection. Raymon is quick to seize upon the power of this male gaze, as he observes that 'he watches over her, he protects her, he follows all her movements, she is his at any time.'²⁹ When in danger, Indiana instinctively flees to his portrait 'as if she had put herself under the protection of that solemn personage'.³⁰ In addition, he later rescues her from a suicidal impulse to plunge into the Seine. Other critics have pointed out the divine-like powers of this enigmatic character; Vareille tells us that 'he incessantly watches over her like an occult and tutelary divinity'³¹, a 'bon génie', while Haskett finds that Ralph 'proves to be a type of Christ, filling the roles of brother, friend, mentor and guardian angel, and becoming, when she is finally at death's door, her saviour.'³² His role in tempering domestic discords is unremitting and, even at night, 'the hidden influence'³³ is still at work.

The elaborately constructed disguise of this god-like presence, the 'triple wall of ice'³⁴ Ralph erects around himself, is shed only when they are at the brink of death, at the edge of the sublime, terrifying ravine. In this final epiphany, which parallels the gods' revelation of their identity in the Baucis and Philemon myth, an 'extraordinary change' takes 'place in Ralph's soul and appearance'³⁵, and 'the veil that concealed so much virtue, nobility and power fell away completely.'³⁶ In the final section, the narrator is 'overawed' by his first encounter with Ralph, leaving such 'an ineffaceable impression' as to appear to him in his dreams like an 'extraordinary destiny'.³⁷ In spite of his aura of grandeur, Ralph still proves to be an excellent practitioner of *xenia* in welcoming the narrator, as previously discussed.

However, this ideal example is contrasted by two bad practices, namely Delmare's aggressiveness towards trespassers, and Raymon's Ixion-like ingratitude towards his hosts. Opting for the double-edged practice of hospitality does not necessarily warrant a positive outcome since, as Derrida points out, 'for this relation to be what it is - a relation [...] and not any programmatic exchange of moves - there must be at least the

29. Sand, *Indiana*, p.68

30. Sand, *Indiana*, p.142

31. Wingard Vareille, p.60

32. K. Haskett, 'Spirituality and Feminism in George Sand's *Indiana*', *Journal of Christianity and Foreign Languages* 9 (2008), p.54

33. Sand, *Indiana*, p.198

34. Sand, *Indiana*, p.255

35. Sand, *Indiana*, p.242

36. Sand, *Indiana*, p.246

37. Sand, *Indiana*, p.265

possibility that the relation to the other will pervert itself.'³⁸ Like Plato's word *pharmakon*, 'hospitality' is multivalent, causing 'oppositions to waver and oscillate.'³⁹ *Pharmakon*, while generally meaning 'drug', can refer to either a healing remedy or its exact opposite, a poison. In a similar manner, hospitality has the potential to be either galvanising or destructive.

Delmare's aggression is reflected in the opening of the novel in which, upon being told of the presence of an unknown man in his grounds, he threatens: 'I'll kill like a dog any man that I find prowling round my land at night'. Patriarchal laws are complicit with this policy: 'If you knew the law, Madame, you would know it authorizes me to do so'.⁴⁰ The law which Delmare follows is thus inimical to the law of hospitality which should gain precedence. Delmare's credo is '*Everyone for himself*'⁴¹, an outright denial of engagement with otherness. He incarnates Derrida's phallogocentric 'familial despot, the father, the spouse and the boss, the master of the house who lays down the laws of hospitality'⁴². He is the patriarch who controls access to the gothic castle, and whose domestic tyranny makes 'everybody tremble, wife, servants, horses and dogs.'⁴³ Delmare's inward-looking and possessive attitude results in Raymon's bloody injury, and another injury suffered by Indiana in a much later episode, in which he kicks her on the forehead with the heel of his boot. In each case, an unholy imprint is left by this inhospitable practice.⁴⁴

Hospitality can also degenerate into parasitism, through the guest which Derrida qualifies as 'wrong, illegitimate, clandestine, liable to expulsion or arrest.'⁴⁵ Raymon indeed constitutes such a guest. He first infiltrates the Delmare grounds in order to carry out his secret liaison with Indiana's servant, and later even has carnal relations with her in Indiana's room, her 'inner sanctum',⁴⁶ on her white, virginal bed. This gross breach of hospitality rules is conceived in

38. T. Cohen, *Jacques Derrida and the Humanities: A Critical Reader* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p.188

39. W. Brogan, 'Plato's *Pharmakon*: Between Two Repetitions', in H.J. Silverman (ed), *Derrida and Deconstruction* (London: Routledge, 1989), p.9

40. Sand, *Indiana*, p.20

41. Sand, *Indiana*, p.87

42. Derrida and Dufourmantelle, *Of Hospitality*, p.149

43. Sand, *Indiana*, p.15

44. The wife's status is analogous to that of a guest, for marriage and *xenia* were parallel social institutions. See P. Roth, 'The Theme of Corrupted *Xenia* in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*', *Mnemosyne*, XLVI:1, 1993, p.3

45. Derrida and Dufourmantelle, *Of Hospitality*, p.61

46. Sand, *Indiana*, p.68

mythic terms. Raymon is explicitly compared to Ixion,⁴⁷ the archetypal transgressor of *xenia*, who after being invited by Zeus to the table of the gods, repays this hospitable gesture by growing lustful for Hera. Similarly, Raymon makes use of the Colonel's invitation in order to renew his seduction of Indiana. Poetic justice is served when Laure, the woman Raymon marries by the end of the novel, proves to be a phallic mother, whose exertion of dominance renders him a permanently inadequate guest within the house he had earlier transgressed.

Conclusion

The Baucis and Philemon myth, presented by Ovid as an edifying tale of piety and its reward, sets

47. Sand, *Indiana*, p.65

forth a number of topoi recurrently appropriated by a number of authors. In George Sand's fresh take on the classic story, its implications are politicised to offer an alternative to the failed patriarchal model of relationships. In rewarding the open and outward-looking couple, Sand is already anticipating her later endorsement of Pierre Leroux's humanitarian socialism and his view of triplicity, which she transposes onto the politics of the couple that goes beyond the dyad. La Réunion, as the chosen place of this harmonisation, reinforces the idea that diversity can still be united into a oneness of ethos.

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The Myths of the Crystal Palace

Esther Fernandez-Llorente

English



The Transept of the Crystal Palace, Seen From the Entrance.
Image Credit © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Myths Under Glass

The 1851 'Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations', to give it its full title, exhibited over one hundred thousand objects from around the world. They were shown in a massive temporary glass building, covering over eighteen acres of Hyde Park: the Crystal Palace. Many, often conflicting, agendas and ideologies produced the Crystal Palace but, when it opened on May 1st 1851, the dominant ideology was undoubtedly that of liberal free trade in the context of British industrial and imperial dominance. As one of the scheme's principal architects, Sir Henry Cole put it:

A great people invited all civilised nations to bring in to comparison the works of human skill. It was carried out by its own private means, was self-supporting and independent of taxes and the employment of slaves which great works had exacted in ancient days.¹

1. Quoted in H. Hobhouse, *The Crystal Palace and the Great Exhibition: Art, Science and Productive Industry: A History of the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851* (London, New York: Continuum, 2004), p.xix

Objects from all over the globe were now co-opted into serving the myth of benign British industrial and imperial dominance. The Great Exhibition is an example of the process by which objects were turned into myth. What was achieved by placing these objects under glass for observation? What effect did glass have on the mythologising process at the Great Exhibition?

The word 'myth' derives from the Greek 'mythos' or 'word'. Roland Barthes defines myth as 'a type of speech'², but to Barthes myth is an essentially parasitic culture in which the myth drains the original meaning from an object or image in order to support the myth itself. In *Mythologies*, he uses the revealing metaphor of glass to suggest this:

The Meaning [of the original subject] is always there to present the form...[the myth]...is always there to outdistance the meaning. And there is never any contradiction, conflict or split between the meaning and the form: they are never at the same place. ... if I am in a car and I look at the scenery through the window, I can at will focus on the scenery or on the

2. R. Barthes, *Mythologies* (London: Vintage, 2000), p.109

window-pane. At one moment I grasp the presence of the glass and the distance of the landscape; at another, on the contrary, the transparence [sic] of the glass and the depth of the landscape... the glass is at once present and empty to me and the landscape unreal and full.³

That Barthes should use glass to describe the difference between form (myth) and meaning demonstrates how glass sets apart and rarefies the object that it screens or encloses. To focus on the glass is to render what is behind it somehow 'unreal'. Barthes emphasised that, 'myth itself hides nothing; its function is to distort, not to make disappear.'⁴ Thomas Richards describes this combination of rarefication, protection and distortion produced by myth and glass at the Crystal Palace:

The view of the Crystal Palace that the Victorians liked best was the view from a distance. From a distance it could be seen as a purely magical object. A building begotten not made. ... Unless you got very close, you could not see in and catch a glimpse of the thousands of commodities that it contained ... indeed most Victorian engravings represent the outside of the building as if it were opaque rather than transparent.⁵

It is certainly true that many visitors preferred to focus on the décor of the Crystal Palace rather than the exhibits it was created to hold. From the front pages of *The Times* to the letters of Charlotte Brontë, the building, inside and out, was consistently compared to the landscape of *The Arabian Nights*. The combination of glass, the giant crystal fountain, light, greenery and statuary is reflected in contemporary imagery; less the 'workshop of the world' than a mythical landscape of fantasy and spectacle.

One literal but dramatic example of the transformative power of glass in the context of the Crystal Palace is revealed by the changing image of Hyde Park's elm trees during the Exhibition. There was a vast public outcry against cutting down any trees in Hyde Park to accommodate the Crystal Palace ('Albert spare those trees!' a *Punch* Cartoon begged in 1850⁶). The Crystal Palace's designer, Joseph Paxton, produced an admirably

pragmatic solution; incorporating the trees in to the design of the building with a vast arched transept. The Crystal Palace was, after all, based on the design of a giant greenhouse. It became a telling example of how encasing an object in glass could transform its image.

Before the Crystal Palace, the elms of Hyde Park had a decidedly British and conservative symbolism, if the members of fashionable society who sauntered under their branches thought of the trees as having 'meaning' at all. Such trees were a feature of the British countryside and a little piece of pastoral in sooty London. Significantly, many contemporary images of the Crystal Palace, such as those in *Tallis's History and Description of the Crystal Palace*, suggest that it sat amid rolling hills and wooded countryside. However, the landscape that the groups of trees in Hyde Park most closely echoed was the park of a British country house. Furthermore, these elms in particular, had a political symbolism. They were part of Hyde Park's 'Rotten Row' of trees, a haunt of fashionable society, whose name was a corruption of 'Route de Roi', a route of the kings out of the city.

Enclosing one particular elm in glass at the centre of the Crystal Palace in the great transept however, focused attention on the 'meaning' of the tree in its new context. The elm's image as part of a pastoral idyll, with echoes of eighteenth-century classical design, was transmuted into being part of an exotic and profoundly 'other' visual spectacle. Newspapers vied with each other to describe and mythologise the scene of the centre of the Crystal Palace. *Sharpe's London Magazine* described it thus:

Here are large and leafy European trees proudly extending their huge branches under the transparent roof; there a thicket of palms and bamboos which speak of the East, a giant crystal fountain whose limpid waters rise to an extraordinary height and sparkling in the sunshine descend noisily into the basin beneath ... In the first moment of amazement you behold at the same time, in the midst of these confused sounds, carpets from the East, arms from India, a European Park with its woods and rivulets and an innumerable army of equestrian statues around you.⁷

In this chaotic image, a plethora of symbols are co-opted to serve the myth of the Crystal Palace. Like all good mythical landscapes, this one transcended

3. Barthes, pp.123-4

4. Barthes, p.121

5. T. Richards, *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising and Spectacle 1851-1914* (London, New York: Verso, 1991), p.23

6. *Punch* 19 (1850), p.10

7. *Sharpe's London Magazine*, 14 (1851), p.250

geographical boundaries and realities, with elms, palms and bamboo all occupying the same space. Outside, the elm had stood for British grandeur and a pastoral idyll, under glass it became disruptive of the categories both of the nationalist and the naturalist. This exotic image, the very incongruity of giant trees in an exhibition space, emphasised the uniqueness of the Crystal Palace. Yet even as its conjunction with palm and bamboo made it part of an exotic and ethereal image, the towering elm still represented the heights of European civilisation. The myths co-opted to serve the purposes of the Great Exhibition were European as well as those of the 'exotic' orient. The 'equestrian statues' alluded to classical culture, but also to the martial spirit of the Roman Empire; colonisation and culture.

Barthes always said that myth was a 'second order semiological system'⁸, in which the complete meaning of the first system (the text, image or object) became the raw material of the second system (the myth itself). At the Crystal Palace, myth itself had that double structure. Myths of old empires and civilisations were all brought together to serve as the raw material for the myth of the new world order.

Myths and Maps: Navigating the Great Exhibition

The use of mythologies at the Great Exhibition hints at the difficulties organisers had in communicating their huge aims. While the organisers of the event used old mythologies to create a new one, the largely bemused general public was using them, literally and mentally, to navigate the Crystal Palace. Ultimately, practical constraints meant that the Exhibition was laid out not according to the processes of production as Prince Albert had hoped, but along national and imperial lines, with a second classification system for the different classes of goods. With Canada's stand next to that of Birmingham and leather goods, for example, the effect for the observer was chaos. Individual stands contained little information; even price tags had been banned. Collective sales of catalogues numbered in the tens of thousands compared to the millions who viewed the exhibition. We can assume, therefore, that the majority of visitors entered the Exhibition largely uninformed and were left to make sense of the visual spectacle as best they could.

In the absence of a logical explanation of the processes of production, mythology provided a comforting narrative for the middle and upper classes to navigate the exhibition. It is surely

8. Barthes, p.114

significant that the central aisle of the Great Exhibition was lined with mythological and historical statuary. The upper classes were quick to colonise this central area as the place to see and be seen, rather than look at the more industrial exhibits. There is something intensely symbolic about the image of fashionable society clinging to mythical statuary, understood, rather dimly by many, to be connected with power, culture and refinement, rather than attempting to grapple with the complexities of the modern world scattered across the vast building. It is true that a few pieces, such as Kiss's *Amazon*, represented new techniques in casting and metalwork. However, they and their subject matter might well be thought to be odd things to place so centrally in an exhibition dedicated to international industrial progress if one did not believe in the centrality of mythmaking to the process and ethos of the Great Exhibition. The central positioning of a statue of Victoria and Albert opposite that of Venus and Cupid at the Exhibition, for example, implicitly presents the royal couple as givers of world peace and love. The mythology of Venus and Cupid presents Venus as the personification of love and Cupid as the deliverer of it. The juxtaposition of statues at the centre of the Exhibition implies that Victoria is the figurehead of this event, and Albert (who was far more involved in the setting up of the Exhibition) is the active worker. Mythology is used not only to imply peace, love and bounteousness, but to explain the roles of monarch and consort, so complicated by Victorian gender roles.

Mythologizing the Empire

The Great Exhibition was a place where nationalism could be subsumed by myth. In *Mythologies*, Barthes deconstructs the image of an African man in French army uniform saluting under the French flag.

[He]...who salutes is not a symbol of the French Empire: he has too much presence, he appears as a rich, fully experienced, spontaneous, innocent, *indisputable* image. But at the same time this presence is tamed, put at a distance, made almost transparent; it recedes a little, it becomes the accomplice of a concept which comes to it fully armed, French imperialism...⁹

The Great Exhibition saw a multitude of objects from other parts of the world co-opted into serving the myth of British colonial and industrial power. Nowhere is this clearer than in the *Official Catalogue of the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations*. The list of articles from

9. Barthes, p.118

'Western Africa' tells a tale of appropriation of objects and meaning.

2) Messrs Foster and Smith: Zebes or cotton robes from Sierra Leone ... knife from Gambia, grass cloth from Sierra Leone, table mats from Gambia, leather pouch containing extracts from the Koran ... the glass obtained by melting European beads.

...

5) Trotter, Capt H D (RN): Various articles of African growth and manufacture, chiefly from ... places on the banks of the Niger between three and four hundred miles from its mouth... From Samia Aduga, raw silk, can be had in ... the Haussa country ... Lime, material made of bones turned in to ashes, mixed with water and dried in the sun, used by those who spin thread to keep their fingers dry.¹⁰

Within the text there is a terrible irony in the care taken to state the European owners of the objects and an eloquent silence about their previous owners. Within these descriptions there is at least a vivid sense of another mode of life, of sophistication and ingenuity. But very few visitors to the Exhibition would have seen a catalogue. The version quoted above did not even come out until August of 1851, when the show had been running since May. Within the context of the Great Exhibition, these objects tell another tale entirely. The table mats from Gambia, as objects, reflect life in Gambia. Their construal as a British myth explains why emphasis is put on the quite precise geographical locations and not on the original owners. They serve to prove the ability of the British to get anywhere, procure anything and bring it back in triumph to reflect British power and glory. Denuded of its everyday context of use, it becomes, within the exhibition, insignificant. That very insignificance demonstrates the omnipotence and omnipresence of the British who can obtain it.

The stand of Indian exhibits was similarly used. As the *Illustrated London Exhibitor* put it: 'India, the Glorious, glowing land, the gorgeous and the beautiful; India the golden prize contended for by

Alexander of old.'¹¹ The image presented of India, particularly of the fantastic Koh-i-Noor diamond, then the largest in the world, was of a civilisation that had a sophisticated culture but which was weak: 'a prize' for the taking. The jewels in a Sikh chief's coat, for example, were both admired for their beauty and mocked for their effeminacy.¹² India was always 'the jewel in the crown' of Britain's empire, but the ruthlessness with which her civilisation was relegated to the picturesque and exotic represented something important about the nature of myth itself as well as colonialism. Once enclosed in the glass of the Crystal Palace for exhibition, the meanings of objects within their original culture and context became redundant. Their function was to demonstrate the power and ingenuity of Britain for bringing them there. If other countries and other cultures could be relegated to the realm of myth and exoticism, then the realm of the practical, the industrial, the political, could be left for Britain to bustle in.

The context of the Crystal Palace, the fantastic elements and the centrality of classical statuary in particular, created a structure within which the myths and fragments of old empires glorified the new. The vast chaos of the Exhibition, stemming from its confusing layout, its complex classification system and its aesthetic of fantasy, rendered the objects within it less representatives of other cultures than fragments of them. Hats, knives, steam engines and statues mixed together became shorn of their individual cultural identities in this glass forcing house of British cultural and imperial identity. However unusual, interesting or beautiful the exhibits were, their main message was that the British had caused them to be placed there. They became contributions to the myth of British industrial and imperial omnipotence.

10. *Official Catalogue of the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations, Third Corrected and Improved Edition, 1st August 1851* (London: Spicer Brothers, 1851), p. 166

11. The *Illustrated Exhibitor* quoted in L. Kriegle, 'Narrating the Subcontinent in 1851: India at the Crystal Palace', pp. 146-170 in L. Purbrick (ed), *The Great Exhibition: New Interdisciplinary Essays* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 146

12. 'All this lavishing of wealth upon mere articles of dress, upon that of a soldier too, strikes us as a notable instance of "wasteful and ridiculous excess."' *Tallis's History and Description of the Crystal Palace*, 3 vols. (London: John Tallis and Co., 1851), p. 31

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Home Run or Strike Out? Reimagining baseball in Philip Roth's *The Great American Novel* and Michael Chabon's *Summerland*

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Oft-forgotten novels by otherwise celebrated authors, Philip Roth's *The Great American Novel* (1973) and Michael Chabon's *Summerland* (2003), are linked by their use of baseball to explore a vast array of mythologies and narratives. *The Great American Novel* is written in the manner of an alternative history, in which an ageing sportswriter describes the destruction of a fictional baseball league. *Summerland*, in contrast, shows an 11-year old boy entering into a fantasy world dominated by baseball-playing fairies in order to rescue his father from the clutches of the villainous Coyote. Baseball becomes the locus of meaning for both texts, tied to a perception of childhood that has remained critically underexplored. The novels thus employ a sense of narrative playfulness to question whether the pursuit of baseball corrupts relationships with one's elders or enables them in the first place.

Roth's book ends disastrously and Chabon's ends well - an important point, given the comments that the authors have made about the sport of baseball itself. In an early essay, Roth speaks of baseball as something connected to his childhood that has since been tarnished or lost. He describes childhood memories of going with his father to watch the Newark Bears play in nearby Ruppert Stadium, a 'green wedge of pasture miraculously walled in among the factories.'¹



Ruppert Baseball Stadium, New Jersey
(photo by NJ Baseball, used with permission).

Chabon has a similarly idealised nostalgic view, stating that despite the untimely demise of his father's team, the Washington Senators, 'baseball is still a gift given by fathers to sons.'²

The theme of patrimony motivates and drives the narratives of these novels. In *Summerland*, the 11-year old Ethan Feld is reunited with his father, forming a closer union which starts when Ethan expresses an interest in playing as a catcher, his father's old position. In *The Great American Novel*, the 1943 'Ruppert Mundys' (the focal characters of the text) have a single competent player, whose father has sent him to the team in a failed effort to teach him humility. In both novels, male generational conflict forms part of baseball, and characters are frequently involved in futile attempts to modify stifling traditions.

The Baal family in Roth's novel provides a representative example of such themes. Base Baal, the eldest, is exiled for using rural baseball tactics in the major leagues; he tries to get a player 'out' by throwing the ball at his crotch. His son, Spit Baal, fares little better, fleeing to Nicaragua after attempting to deploy a urine-soaked baseball mid-game. Finally, we meet John Baal, an ex-con who refuses to play sober and who is eventually exiled for supposed communist leanings. Their mothers are barely mentioned at all; indeed, most of the supposed 'mothers' we meet in Roth's text are prostitutes. In Chabon's text, maternal absence becomes a repeated theme, and one which the central character confronts directly in a dream sequence close to the end of the book.

There is much in these novels that invites the reader not to take them too seriously. Despite this, both texts contain elaborate descriptions of fictional baseball games, reminiscent of high-quality sports journalism. Word Smith, narrator of *The Great American Novel*, regularly provides league tables, batting averages and score sheets, gently parodying baseball's love of statistics whilst providing 'evidence' for his narrative. *Summerland* even has its own fictional

1. P. Roth, *Reading Myself and Others* (London: Vintage, 2007), p.221

2. M. Chabon, *Manhood for Amateurs* (London: Fourth Estate, 2009), p.123

statistician in the form of Professor Alkabetz, whose exhaustive descriptions are often used to summarise games within Chabon's narrative. The highly regimented way of rating the abilities of players and teams is indicative of the importance of rules and regulations to the drama (and hence history) of the sport itself. Little wonder that in both novels, such rules become a primary source of generational conflict.

The *Great American Novel* features only a single (heavily accented) Jewish family, including Isaac, a child prodigy who believes that baseball is being played incorrectly, and that certain unspoken conventions need to be changed. Chief among these is the removal of the sacrifice bunt, where one player deliberately attempts to get 'out' in order to distract opponents from a fellow player. In *Summerland*, Spider-Rose, a juvenile princess, is more direct in her assault on the rules. She goes against the will of her mother, siding with the evil Coyote to enact the Designated Hitter rule, whereby a pitcher due to bat can be replaced by another player. As a consequence, Spider-Rose is sent to prison, where she meets the novel's protagonist (Ethan) and joins his improvised baseball team.

Such moments significantly complicate a model of baseball-as-patrimony. Neither of these characters regard baseball as a gift to be cherished, but rather as an idea to be improved, even if both require adults to enact their schemes. Moreover, both rebellions turn the regulations and structure of baseball against themselves by taking them to their logical extreme. In Isaac's case, we see an excess of statistics; for example, he works out that dropping the sacrifice bunt will directly (and exactly) result in an extra sixty-two runs per year.³ Spider-Rose's argument is similarly dependent on logic, albeit of a more childlike variety. She argues that baseball is 'boring' in places, and that her rule adds variety to replace the predictable.⁴ Improved efficiency and variety, however, are not in the remit of baseball, whose consistent depiction as a national religion in both texts prevents it from having the pliability of a myth.

These generational conflicts serve a moralistic purpose of sorts, but are prevented from resembling fables through an awareness that a rigorous system can be as oppressive as it can be comforting. By doing so, the novels challenge the traditions and assumptions of baseball by

3. P. Roth, *The Great American Novel* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1973), p.296

4. M. Chabon, *Summerland* (London: Fourth Estate, 2003), p.247

placing insurrectionary voices in the mouths of children. The place of the narrators between the perspectives of adulthood and childhood (and between conformity and rebellion) is carefully maintained.

Writing on the baseball novel, Timothy Morris queries the reluctance to discuss childhood, arguing that:

No other popular genre is so continually concerned with putting away childish things as is the baseball novel...one could say that the genre is determined to disillusion children. Adult baseball fiction is darker, more disturbing and more sinister than is other adult genre fiction.⁵

Chabon and Roth's novels seem to support this, but have different means of demonstrating the disavowal of all things childish. In both novels, rejecting the input of younger voices seems to exacerbate existing problems. Chabon, however, is willing to delay the disillusioning for as long as possible. Spider-Rose's rebellion takes place within the context of a culture structured around the rules of baseball, so it does not come as much of a surprise that her rebellion ends up corroding the very culture she sought to improve. Emblematic of its importance to *Summerland*'s culture, the baseball field itself begins to decay, ending up 'grey and lifeless, a kind of scab upon the earth.'⁶ Yet scabs, as any child knows, eventually heal. Thus Chabon has the field repaired thanks to the bumbling efforts of the children and outcasts of his central 'team'. There is no such luck for the child-genius in Roth's book. His team attempts to follow both his orders and those of the official (adult) management team, and they end up confused and indecisive. The players may even represent the conflicted position of Roth himself, torn between a childish nostalgia and an adult cynicism.

Childhood influences many peripheral themes in the novels, an example being the concept of 'home'. The novels constantly associate a sense of home with a sense of loss - Roth's team wanders the league pining for its lost stadium, whilst even Chabon's hardy heroine, the tomboyish Jennifer T., gets homesick for her native ballpark.

Jennifer T. refuses to be identified by her last name - but despite this, it continues to be used

5. T. Morris, *Making the Team: The Cultural Work of Baseball Fiction* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), p.2

6. Chabon, *Summerland*, p.249

in the 'official' accounts of her games. Her surname comes to represent the inevitability of generational conflict, usually involving her ne'er-do-well father, Albert. In comparison to Albert, who 'did not seem to live anywhere at all'⁷, Jennifer lives in a ramshackle house owned by three elderly aunts. Although her baseball gear is spotless, the house itself is dilapidated and archaic. The novel reinforces the separation between the two environments, which Chabon utilises to question the link between the domains they represent. Having been initially depicted fleeing from her drunken father, Jennifer comes to tacitly acknowledge that her ability to escape is enabled by the knowledge of those in her home:

She missed the dirt and the smell of the grass at Ian 'Jock' MacDougal Regional Ball Field. She missed... the scratchy cheeks of her Uncle Mo, and even the three ancient and irritable ladies in their enormous recliners.⁸

Jennifer's homesickness does not extend to the place she actually lives in. Her home is not mentioned until after her local ballpark; the home field has become the more important symbol. These competing ideas of 'home' determine the manner of Jennifer's familial reconciliation. Albert is created in the image of the supportive father watching from the stands - 'a dad with his boy - I know the type'⁹, as Roth summarises the stereotype. Chabon resolves the competing ideas of 'home' by recreating them in a familiar form; Roth's refusal to reconcile the two ideas plays an equally important narrative role.

Roth is suspicious of home as a stable category. His entire novel focuses on a 'homeless' team. Roth gives few details of Mundy Park itself, describing instead its conversion into a military camp. The park becomes a myth, for which its immediate physical realities become less important than its symbolic implications. Roth does not dismiss the desire for home - rather, he places it at the centre of his novel. For example, the Mundys realise how drab their away strip looks compared to their vibrant home outfit, and the pathos generated by their grief should not be dismissed as mere rhetorical playfulness on the part of Roth.

Gil Gamesh, a former star pitcher and 'the enraged son of a crazed father'¹⁰, exemplifies baseball's connection to notions of home in the novel, but

also reinforces the idea that the contrast between the two may lead to violence. Sitting in his now-abandoned childhood home, Gil describes how he came to baseball after his father taught him to throw stones at those bullying him for having a foreign accent. Viewing this as a parody of the 'rags-to-riches' ideal of the American dream seems to overly simplify the passage. Neither text argues that familial homes are unimportant. Rather, they depict worlds in which home, as corrupted on the baseball field, reflects a deeper corruption rooted in family conflict.

One of the more abstract ways in which generational conflict is explored is through the role given to books themselves. Roth discusses baseball as 'the literature of his boyhood.'¹¹ This link between books, boyhood and baseball is found over the course of Roth's text, intersecting in themes of generational conflict, but he seldom links them in the plot of the novel itself. For Chabon on the other hand, plot can reconcile these three terms with ease since he uses the fantasy universe in his narrative to make the connections explicit.

Chabon links literature and baseball by making books the key to self-sufficiency for his child characters. The two protagonists, Ethan and Jennifer, are given books as gifts to aid them in their quest, by characters who are aware of the Summerland world, but not directly implicated in their adventure. Ethan receives *How to Catch Lightning and Smoke*, a collection of romanticised insights elaborating on the role of the 'catcher'. The book helps orientate him to his new position, and also enables him to defeat a giant who has challenged him to a game of catch. Jennifer reads the *Wa-He-Ta Handbook*, a guide from a defunct children's organisation based on Native American folklore. Knowledge gained from this book allows her to embrace a certain sense of innocence, and also to free a companion locked in the giant's lair during Ethan's victory on the baseball field. Books are portrayed as both plot device and character development tools in a gently meta-fictional way, which has the effect of sanctifying literary predecessors. In plot terms, book knowledge may even suppress generational rebellion by enabling the characters to attain a position in which resolution with wayward fathers is possible. On this note, it is worth pointing out that Wa-He-Ta stands for Wonder, Hopefulness and Trust, traits that Chabon accuses contemporary American culture of neglecting.

In *The Great American Novel*, classic texts are constantly referenced, as is a vast amount of

7. Chabon, *Summerland*, p.69

8. Chabon, *Summerland*, p.265

9. Roth, *The Great American Novel*, p.31

10. Roth, *The Great American Novel*, p.280

11. Roth, *Reading Myself and Others*, p.222

baseball fiction. On a superficial level, this can seem to give the novel an undue tension, hence the tendency of those writing on Roth to view the novel as a prelude to his better experimental fiction. However, this glosses over the significance of his references, particularly in the prologue to Roth's work. In this section, Roth's narrator confronts several of his supposed competitors, whilst introducing his topic in a deliberately awkward and rambling manner. For example, the scarlet letter that lends Nathaniel Hawthorne the title of his famous book turns into the stitched letter on a baseball shirt.¹²

Word Smith's prologue constantly references father-son relationships, introducing his own father in an incongruous but important aside that states that 'a boy's illusions about his father are notorious.'¹³ The narrator contends with issues of patrimony before handling its symbolic incarnations (the literary predecessors that have influenced his book), but never allies the two.

12. Roth, *The Great American Novel*, p.49

13. Roth, *The Great American Novel*, p.44

All three elements that form the theme of inter-generational relationships in Chabon (books, boyhood and baseball) are visible, but they seldom intersect, thus generating a narrative tension. Given the tone of Roth's book, this should be expected. The sons in Roth's text are prevented from reconciling with their parents, usually by being murdered gruesomely before they get the chance; those without obvious parental issues seem to die from more normal causes. Paternal conflict, it seems, never turns out well.

The ways the novels address the issue of generational influence is, as I have tried to argue, not as simple as a happy or sad ending may suggest. Neither moralistic nor rebellious, both novels work by adopting a subversive, ludic perspective through the medium of baseball. The placing of narrators between paternal and childhood perspectives may thus echo the position of the authors themselves, placed between an older generation that inspired their love of baseball and a younger generation getting, for better or worse, acquainted with it for the first time.

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