

The Violence of Things

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Things and their images can carry complex, pre-verbal meanings that derive their valency from not being spoken. For example, the rich public archive of Buddhist iconography in Sri Lanka may, simultaneously, convey the principles of non-violence and also the trauma of recent extrajudicial killing. Similarly, the extreme violence of crucifixion is celebrated as religious art or a mark of forgiveness, but may also evoke memories of conquest and genocide.

In her *On Violence*, published in 1969, Hannah Arendt insisted that, rather than being an extreme manifestation of power, violence has an independent instrumentality. This insight, which has remained undeveloped in subsequent work on materiality, has provocative implications for the material world of things.

Understanding how the material archive is central to the instrumentality of violence leads, in turn, to appreciating how the archive interacts with the performance of public life.

“Professor Martin Hall on the violence of things”: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2014-03-14-professor-martin-hall-on-the-violence-of-things>

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Power and Violence

In her painting, made in about 1620, of Judith Slaying Holofernes, Artemisia Gentileschi depicts a scene from the Old Testament in which Israel is saved by the beheading of the Syrian general while he is drunk. The picture's immediate vitality is in the raw technology of violence as Judith and her maidservant use all their strength to exert the leverage and sharp steel of the sword to cut through the flesh, sinews and vertebrae of Holofernes' neck.

Despite its prevalence through art, the archive and almost every aspect of our lives, violence remains under-theorized. And despite the fact that the artefacts of violence are part of every aspect of the archaeological archive, from the earliest stone implements to the forensics of our everyday world today, there is not yet an archaeology of violence as a theoretically-informed sub-discipline (González-Ruibal and Hall, in press).

My point of departure is a perceptive observation made by Hannah Arendt in her 1969 book, *On Violence*. Writing at a time when the prevalence of violence was again attenuated – from police responses to anti-war protests to the prevalent fear of nuclear Armageddon – Arendt observed the general assumption that violence is an aberrant outcome of the use of power. While power and violence are always connected, the ways in which they work together is not self-evident,

and requires analysis. Arendt saw the form of the connection between power and violence as “instrumentality”

While noting the invariable connection between power and violence, Arendt disputed the assumption that violence is simply an outcome of extremes in the exercise of power, a taken-for-granted: “the implements of violence, like all other tools, are designed and used for the purpose of multiplying natural strength until, in the last stage of their development, they can substitute for it” (Arendt 1969). Transposed into a different register, this becomes an eloquent definition for artefacts from handaxes to ploughs, sailing ships and the steam engine: tools “designed and used for the purpose of multiplying natural strength until, in the last stage of their development, they can substitute for it”. From this, it follows that there can be an archaeology that focuses on the instrumental relationship between power and the artefacts of violence, whether sword and spear, fortifications and battlefields, or the technologies of warfare, policing, terror and interrogation in our own times.

In this paper, I offer a schema for such an archaeology of violence, following the theoretical critique of coloniality through Fanon, Ngũgĩ, Mbembe and Mignolo. My essential point will be that, if an archaeology of violence is not to fall victim to the experience economy of entertainment, it must be grounded in an ontology of our present condition. In this respect, “southern theory” is of key significance to the north and the west (Comaroff and Comaroff 2012).

Back to Artemisia Gentileschi’s painting. The use of the instrumentality of violence – the sword – to multiply and exceed the limits of natural strength gives the picture an immediacy that transcends four centuries. But there is a more substantive relationship between the deployment of power and violence that constitutes the painting itself as an artifact in an archaeology of violence; part of what Benjamin (1968) would call its “aura”. Gentileschi has painted herself as Judith and her former teacher, Agostino Tassi, as Holofernes. Tassi had abused his position as mentor to rape Gentileschi but had been exonerated by the courts. Gentileschi, forced into a marriage of convenience, returned Tassi’s violence against her through the medium of her art (Garrard 1991).

The dominant conventions of the archaeological archive actively work against the inclusion of both sword and painting in what Latour (1999) would call a common system of references. Artefact typologies disassociate objects from one another while disciplinary boundaries define what can, and cannot, be put in a common interpretive frame. There is a vast material archive of violence that spans more than a million years of humanity: stone tools, swords, knife blades, arrowheads, gunflints, bullet casings, bayonets, cannonballs, battlefields, fortifications. There is also a global ossuary of the mutilated bones of victims and perpetrators. But these material traces are invariably taken to be the uncomplicated detritus of history; to appropriate Donald Rumsfeld’s phrase, “stuff happens” (Danner 2014). And Gentileschi’s painting, understood as an artifact in a complex association of power and violence, would not generally be permitted within the disciplinary domain called “Archaeology”.

How this stripping away of viscerality happens through the language and processes of archiving is shown in the story of Britain's premier excavatee of the moment, Richard III, killed at Bosworth Field in 1485, rediscovered under a car park in 2012 and subject to a still-running High Court case between the cities of Leicester and York. From the start, the language of revelation is detached, forensic and unemotional:

"Large hole underneath back of skull. The largest injury is this hole where part of the skull has been completely sliced away. This could only have been caused by a large, very sharp blade wielded with some force. Whilst it is not possible to prove exactly which kind of weapon caused this injury, it is consistent with a halberd or something similar. An injury like this would have been fatal.

Wound on right base of skull. A second potentially fatal injury, visible in the same photograph, is a jagged hole at the top of the image (i.e. the right side of the skull). A sword or similar bladed weapon has been thrust through the bone. Close examination of the interior of the skull revealed a mark opposite this wound, showing that the blade penetrated to a depth of 10.5cm".
(<https://www.le.ac.uk/richardiii/science/osteologyskull.html>)

Richard III's death would have been as painful as the end that Artemisia Gentileschi willed on Agostino Tassi. But the classificatory conventions of analysis and the archive wash away the blood and pain (Bowker and Star 1999).



We can understand what's happening here by turning to Latour's insistence that knowledge is made and communicated in the continuum of "world" and "word", to be understood as the connections – references – that join together objects, texts, interpretations and actions as a circulating system. Such systems of references are "passed over" repeatedly and compulsively as we seek to deepen our understanding by both generalizing from particular instances, and by reducing the complexity of individual circumstances to their essential features (Latour 1999). There is currently no generally acknowledged system of reference that allows for an archaeology of violence that builds on the epistemic analysis of the relationship between violence and power. At the same time, the

still-dominant “science narrative” of archaeology as a disciplinary field actively prohibits the associations of objects, texts and interpretations that are needed to construct new knowledge of this kind.

Decoloniality

Creating the conditions for a circulating system of references – for an archaeology of violence – requires an appropriate epistemological framing. Turning again to Richard III, the conceptualization of discovery and interpretation – of making meaning – is distanced and detached:

“Saturday 25 August 2012. The project begins with the digging of Trench 1, which is 1.6m wide and runs for 30m approximately north-south in the Social Services car park. Before digging begins, a CAT scanner is used to identify any live electrical cables under the ground so they can be avoided. At first, ground beneath the car park appears to be very disturbed. Brick and concrete wall footings for buildings dating back over the last 100 years have to be removed to reach the medieval archaeology underneath”
(<https://www.le.ac.uk/richardiii/archaeology/25august.html>)

This is what Walter Mignolo (2011) calls “zero point” epistemology – the assumption of an analytical position that is “above” and “outside” the immediacy of the subject. Similarly, when Artemisia Gentileschi’s painting was shown by the Art Institute of Chicago in 2013, this was within a universalist frame badged as “Art and Virtue”:

“One of the most famous and skilled painters of the Baroque era, Artemisia Gentileschi was centuries ahead of her time. Among the first women artists to achieve success in the 17th century, she brought to her work an electric sense of narrative drama and a unique perspective that both celebrated and humanized strong women characters. Rediscovered by feminist art historians in the past few decades, Gentileschi has inspired a spate of books, both scholarly and popular, and a number of films. But it is the sensational painting *Judith Slaying Holofernes* (c. 1620) that epitomizes her career. The Art Institute of Chicago, in collaboration with the Foundation for Italian Art and Culture (FIAC), is thrilled to present this stunning work, an exceptional loan from the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, for its first display in Chicago”

<http://www.artic.edu/exhibition/violence-and-virtue-artemisia-gentileschi-s-judith-slaying-holofernes>)

Rather than allowing the hubris of this kind of detachment, Mignolo insists that “we are where we do and think” – a biopolitics that associates all intellectual work in its matrix of relations of power: “to dispel the myth that there are global needs but only one (diverse) center where knowledge is produced to solve the problem of every body, and to contribute to breaking the Western code, I began to argue (in seminars, articles, lectures) that the anchor of decolonial epistemologies shall be ‘I am where I think’ and better yet ‘I am where I do and think;’ as they become synonymous. What that means is not that you ‘think where you are;’ which is common sense, but that you constitute yourself (‘I am’) in the place you think. And that place is not, in my argument, a room or office at

the library, but the ‘place’ that has been configured by the colonial matrix of power” (Mignolo 2011)

Of help here is that what Mignolo calls the “colonial matrix of power” is everywhere; the framing tradition that connects his conceptualization back to Fanon’s seminal *The Wretched of the Earth* (Fanon 1963). In this “epistemology of decoloniality” modernity, as the founding platform for northern and western economic dominance and claim to “zero point” authority over knowledge, is defined by its ever-present shadow of colonial violence – for Mignolo, the “dark side”. This, in turn, shapes the political dynamics of our contemporary world – contesting tendencies that include a drive for “re-westernization”, “de-westernization” on what Mignolo sees as the re-assertion of the “first nomos”. Together these are “polyvalent ways of thinking and living” and all within a common matrix (Mignolo 2011).

This insistence on interdependency allows for an archaeology of violence that counters the constant and systematic detachment and distancing that is performed by the conventions and mechanisms of the archive. Rather than the detached “zero point” spaces of the art gallery where the traces of Artemisia Gentileschi’s violation and agony are on display, or of the laboratory where the evidence of Richard III’s fatal injuries are laid out forensically, we have Chicago and Leicester, two cities in which the instrumentality of varying forms of violence are ever present:

Chicago, 28 August 1968: “On the streets of Chicago, antiwar protesters massed in the downtown area, determined to force the Democrats to nominate McCarthy. Mayor Richard Daley responded by unleashing the Chicago police force. Thousands of policemen stormed into the crowd, swinging their clubs and firing tear gas. Stunned Americans watched on TV as the police battered and beat protesters, reporters, and anyone else in the way. The protesters began to chant, “The whole world is watching. The whole world is watching.” (<http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/riots-in-chicago-fracture-the-cold-war-consensus>)



Leicester, 10 August 2011: "Groups of youths have attacked buildings in Leicester city centre as violence continued in several towns and cities across England. One nightclub owner has described how gangs of youngsters smashed windows and looted shops. The disorder was focused on areas including Highcross Street, Granby Street and Market Street. Thirteen people have been arrested on suspicion of offences such as criminal damage, burglary and violent disorder. Stores at the Highcross Shopping Centre and around the cultural quarter are among those to have been damaged. Leicestershire Police said large numbers of officers, along with the force helicopter, had been deployed to combat the disorder and disperse those causing damage".

(<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leicestershire-14470914>)



Rather a sword and a maidservant, the instrumentality of violence is now batons, shields, teargas, guns and helicopters. While the political contexts and the deployments of power are obviously quite different, each set of words and images begins to establish a context in which the art gallery or the archaeological excavation can be interpreted. In exhibiting world art, Chicago claims a civility in distinction with a long history of periodic violence. In fighting York's claims over the skeleton of Richard III, Leicester seeks to strengthen and deepen a historic legacy that will have considerable economic benefits in terms of inward investment and the hospitality and tourism sectors, particularly in the aftermath of the urban riots the year before Richard was unearthed.

In Mignolo's epistemology, the key distinction is not now between the "zero point" superiority of the northern and western interpretation of the world and the postcolonial periphery, but between the claims of "humanitas" over "anthropos". Within coloniality, "space went hand-in-hand with people inhabiting it. Land and people became 'packaged' by imperial global linear thinking and the invention of the humanitas and anthropos. Anthropos doesn't refer literally to the native barbarians of the sixteenth century or the naked primitives of the eighteenth, but to every instance in which people, institutions, and disciplines where knowledge is managed and controlled, defines humanitas and uses the definition to describe the place they inhabit. Since humanitas is

defined through the epistemic privilege of hegemonic knowledge, anthropos was stated as the difference—more specifically, the epistemic colonial difference. In other words, the idea was that humans and humanity were all ‘human beings’ minus the anthropos. Anthropos, then, is as much the barbarian or the primitive as the communist, the terrorist, all those who can be placed in the axis of evil, and those who are friends of the Devil. Illegal immigrants and homosexuals are today within the realm of the anthropos. The domain of humanitas is substantial with the management of knowledge and of global linear thinking—the lines have been traced from the perspective of humanitas, and it is in the humanities where the control of knowledge resides” (Mignolo 2011).

In this insistence on a single, overriding matrix rather than privileging humanitas over anthropos, violence is ever-present, albeit taking different forms. For Mbembe, it is the violence of the postcolonial state and the phenomenology of its violence:

“that state of deprivation or apparent non-actuality called death. By focusing on the violence of death, I want to look at the forms through which it is accomplished, the manner in which it embraces all substantiality—indeed, to the point where it has penetrated almost everywhere and virtually nothing escapes it, since to a large extent, it has become the normal state of things ... what does it mean for one who has been enwrapped, or has enwrapped himself /herself, in the pure terror of the negative, been consigned to the work of a slave, to give himself/herself a premature death, a death without apparent meaning—whether that death be suicide, or homicide, or genocide? ... Violence insinuates itself into the economy, domestic life, language, consciousness. It does more than penetrate every space: it pursues the colonized even in sleep and dream” (Mbembe 2001).

For Žižek it is the “end-time” of advanced economies, expressed in the violence that engulfed cities across Britain in August 2011, including Leicester, “impotent rage and despair masked as a display of force, envy masked as a triumphant carnival” (Žižek 2012).

Ontology

Conceptually, then, resetting the epistemological frame, as the tradition of thought from Fanon to Mignolo does, reconnects the instrumentality of violence (its materiality and mechanics, whether sword, cannonball or police baton) with the analysis of power (whether in early seventeenth century Florence, in the antiwar movement of the late 1960s or in urban riots across Britain in 2011). This is key association between distinct concepts of violence and power was what Arendt meant when she looked across the same world of the 1960s as Fanon but from within a dominant and militarized state increasingly battered by protest movements and the kind of violence that had broken out in Chicago the year before her book was published.

For the practice of archaeology, though, there is an evident trap here; the commodification of violence as entertainment. This can be called the “Jorvik Syndrome”, after the highly successful Jorvik Viking Centre in York, now running for some 30 years and offering an archaeologically-validated, immersive

experience of the violent world of a thousand years ago. And whatever the outcome of the current High Court case, we can expect a spectacular reconstruction of the violent world of the late fifteenth century in either York or Leicester.

The realignment that is required by Mignolo's concept of decoloniality is achieved by insisting on, as a starting point, an ontological connection: "I am where I do and think". We are, evidently, not in the world of Richard III and can only associate with it through informed fantasy. This leads to an archaeology of entertainment rather than to an archaeology of violence. In contrast, recent archaeological practice in Latin America has shown how "we are where we do and think" can establish the basis for a new approach (Hall 2010, González-Ruibal and Hall in press).

Between 1920 and 1990, fifteen Latin American countries had authoritarian regimes: Argentina (1966-1973, 1976-1983), Bolivia (1964-1982), Brazil (1964-1985), Chile (1973-1990), Dominican Republic (1930-1978), Ecuador (1963-1966), El Salvador (1931-1982), Guatemala (1921-1986), Haití (1957-1990), Honduras (1963-1971, 1972-1982), Nicaragua (1936-1979), Panama (1968-1989), Paraguay (1949-1989), Peru (1968-1980) and Uruguay (1973-1985). In most cases, military juntas usurped civil systems of government on the basis of "states of emergency", suspending civil rights and instituting sets of repressive measures, including censorship, exile, detention, torture, disappearance and murder. Following the collapse of the juntas, a wide range of archaeological work has shown how specialized technologies were developed and deployed to serve the ends of state violence, and how archaeology can trace and reveal evidence for resistance (Funari, Zarankin and Salerno, 2010).

It is impossible to imagine, for example, a "neutral" excavation of the site of Club Atlético in Buenos Aires, where over a thousand detainees were tortured and murdered in 1977 (Zarankin and Niro 2010). Many of the relatives of los desaparecidos still seek closure through the recovery of evidence of death and any archaeological interpretation will be incorporated into histories of vital importance to those still living. As Pedro Funari, Andrés Zarankin and Melisa Salerno observe subjectivity needs to be explicitly recognized for its role in interpretation. These are Latin American archaeologists and intellectuals writing about a period that had a profound effect on their families and themselves, in some cases using the memory of their own experience of detention and torture in their reading of the past. Here is Claudio Niro writing about his own detention and experience of the instrumentality of violence:

"9 May 1976, I arrived at Vesubio, a clandestine center of detention located at Camino de Cintura and Richieri highway (Mantanza Department). Four individuals following Suárez Mason's orders got me off a Ford Falcon. I was hooded and my hands were tied at my back. Meanwhile, the individuals insulted me and hit me, forcing me into a room. Once inside, they made me stand against a wall with my legs wide open. Several torturers kicked my testicles once and again. This procedure was called "ablande". It was intended to intimidate the prisoner before getting him or her into the torture room ... "Cuchas" were small

rooms where four or five people stayed hooded, handcuffed and leg-ironed to walls and other prisoners. Once in the “cuchas”, kidnappers forced us to take off our clothes and wear brown uniforms they had previously handed us in. This procedure made us lose -along with our clothes- all traces of an exterior life” (Zarankin and Niro 2010).

Zarankin and Niro’s account of archaeological research at Club Atlético sets out a powerful methodology for investigating clandestine detention centres more generally. Club Atlético was located in the Federal Police warehouse’s basement on Paseo Colón Avenue, Buenos Aires and processed an estimated 1 500 detainees while it was operative in 1977. Floor plans were reconstructed from the accounts of survivors, cross-referenced with each other, configured using analytical techniques derived from urban geography and then tested against the results of archaeological excavation. From this could be established the mechanisms of repression and de-humanization: the central torture chamber and the surrounding holding cells where prisoners were kept hooded, and in handcuffs and leg irons.

The point of ontological connection, then, needs an association with contemporary issues of social justice if it is to avoid re-creating the “zero point” arrogance that Mignolo identifies. In the tradition of Fanon, Ngugi, Mbembe and others, an archaeology of violence requires a recognition of the ineluctable connection between the postmodernity of the north and the west, and the underlying legacy of violence. And this takes the argument, inexorably, towards Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo Bay.

Bring up the Bodies

While each of the Latin American juntas of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s had its own characteristics, there was broad co-ordination of repression by a group of military regimes through a covert agreement known as Operation Condor. In this, they were supported by the United States government, which provided advice, communication facilities and intelligence support and, at times, active assistance with covert operations (Feitlowitz 1998, Dinges 2004, Klein 2007, Mazz 2010):

“Condor was a Cold War-era covert network of U.S.-backed Latin American military regimes in Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay, later joined by Ecuador and Peru in less central roles. The secret Condor apparatus enabled the militaries to share intelligence--and to seize, torture, and execute political opponents across borders. Condor agents also assassinated key opposition leaders around the world” (McSherry 2005:1). The discovery of the “terror archives” in Paraguay in 1992 provided evidence of some 50 000 murders, 30 000 disappearances and 400 000 detentions by the security services of the participating countries (Hall 2010).

There is a direct line of continuity between Operation Condor and the methodologies employed by, and on behalf of, northern and western states following September 2001 and the Gulf War. One consequence of digital technologies has been to render obsolete the containment and sanitization of

violence that Foucault identified as definitive of modernity (Foucault 1979). We now know an ever-increasing amount about the details of the instrumentality of violence and its relationship between the dispositions of power. Given the communication technologies of the time, Hannah Arendt had to observe these relationships directly when she formulated her concept of the banality of violence in reporting on Adolf Eichmann's trial in Jerusalem in 1961 for the *New Yorker*. Today, as Howard and Hussain (2013) put it in their study of the role of digital technologies in popular protest across the Arab world, "in almost every country in the region, mobile phone cameras became small, personal weapons against authoritarian rule". Their point can be extended more generally. When it comes to the deployment of violence, the modern nation state has almost nowhere to hide.

The images of violence in Abu Ghraib, which came into general circulation in 2004, make Mignolo's point about the extension of anthropos to include any category of person perceived to be an enemy of established power. These are images beyond any specific description in Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*, or in Mbembe's detailed analysis of the personalized violence of postcolonial regimes.



Taken together with the written sources that are increasingly available as digital fragments leaking from state security apparatuses, the instrumentality of contemporary violence at its direct interface with the human body is increasingly evident. This, I suggest, is an ontological point of connection that is equivalent to Artemesia Gentileschi's response to her rape by Agostino Tassi, or to Claudio Niro's archaeology of his own detention and torture at Vesubio. The record of violence at places such as Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo Bay invalidate the "zero point" assumptions of coloniality.



As with Arendt's now classic *The Banality of Evil*, first published in 1963, the instrumentality of contemporary violence is mundane, repetitive, unimaginative and terrifying (Arendt 1994). This is evident through disassembling one long fragment, published in full by *Time* on-line; the Interrogation Log for "Detainee 063", whom we now know was Mohammed al-Qahtani, implicated in the terrorist attacks of September 2001 (Time 2014; see also Danner 2014).

Detainee 063 was questioned almost continually from 23 November 2002, when he was brought to Camp X-Ray at Guantánamo Bay, until 11 January 2003, when the published fragment of the log ends. Sleep was usually for a maximum of 4 hours, irregularly dispersed. Interrogation techniques were a combination of loud music and humiliation and occasional direct violence. The instrumentality of violence – its archaeology – was applied with a set of simple props: hoods, a metal gurney, a swivel chair, a video player, the American flag, pictures of 9/11 victims, soft pornography, and found objects in the interrogation room, such as an empty carton and a latex glove:

Day 1: 0225: The detainee arrives at the interrogation booth at Camp X-Ray. His hood is removed and he is bolted to the floor. 1035: The detainee is awakened and secured in chair.

Day 5: 1000: Control puts detainee in swivel chair at MAJ L's suggestion to keep him awake and stop him from fixing his eyes on one spot in booth. 2110: 9/11 Video was played for detainee. He became very agitated and violent. He tried to kick the DVD player and assault SGT M. MP had to restrain detainee.

Day 6: 0635: Detainee placed in swivel chair. As control talked about victims' pictures on wall, MPs rolled detainee to each picture. 2200: SGT M taped pictures of the 9/11 victims on detainee's body

Day 10: 1030: Control began "birthday party" and placed party hat on detainee. Detainee offered birthday cake - refused. Interrogators and guards sing "God bless America". Detainee became very angry.

Day 11: 2040: Detainee hooded and taken to new primary interrogation booth that was decorated with photos of 9-11 victims, the U.S. flag, flags of coalition forces in the global war on terrorism, and red lighting. Detainee was subject to loud music for 20 minutes. 2100: Hood was removed and U.S. National Anthem was played. 2105: Detainee's head and beard were shaved with electric clippers. Detainee started resistance when beard was shaved and MPs had to restrain. Shaving was halted until detainee was once more compliant. Photos were taken of detainee when the shaving was finished.

Day 18: 0000: Interrogation team entered the booth and played the national anthem. Detainee was made to stand and put his hand over his heart

Day 19: 0001: Detainee stood and faced the flag for the national anthem. He showed less resistance towards facing the flag than on previous days. 0100: Detainee began to cry. Detainee was reminded that no one loved, cared or remembered him. He was reminded that he was less than human and that animals had more freedom and love than he does. He was taken outside to see a family of banana rats. The banana rats were moving around freely, playing, eating, showing concern for one another. Detainee was compared to the family of banana rats and reinforced that they had more love, freedom, and concern than he had. Detainee began to cry during this comparison.

Day 24: 0400: Showed detainee banana rats standard of life vs his standard of life in his wooden booth. Compared his life in a wooden booth to the life he could have with his brothers in Cuba. 0630: Detainee was instructed to clean room. Interrogator told detainee that he will not be allowed to leave trash all around and live like the pig that he is. He picked up all the trash from the floor while hands were still cuffed in front of him and interrogator swept the trash towards him. He was told that it is his responsibility to make sure the room is kept clean and he would have to clean it daily.

In combination with these props, medical and hygiene technologies are deployed on the detainee's body: intravenous drips, enemas, naked searches and shaving:

Day 3: 0400: Woke detainee and corpsman took vitals. Corpsman advised SGT R that detainee must take oral liquids within one hour or detainee will be given IV solution. SGT R provided SGT A with a bottle of powdered Tang mixed with water in order to provide electrolytes. SGT A advised detainee that he must drink bottle or he'll get another IV. She offered the incentive of morning prayer if he drank. Detainee refused. 0445: Corpsman tried several times to get IV into the detainee without success. The corpsman stated that the detainee's dehydration was causing his veins to roll in his arm. The corpsman succeeded in getting a IV in the top of the hand but the IV stopped flowing. The corpsman retried the IV in the hand but was unsuccessful. The doctor was called to make a trip to perform an assessment. 0645:

Doctor attempted to put in IV and was unsuccessful. The doctor left to get more supplies. 0730: Doctor arrived and ran an IV by putting in a temporary shunt to allow continuous IV. 0745: When SGT R entered the booth the detainee reached for the IV. The guard stopped him and he reached again. The guards stopped him and cuffed his hands to the chair so he couldn't reach the IV. The detainee bent over and bit the IV tube completely in two. The guards strapped him to a stretcher and the corpsman attached a new IV. The detainee struggled through the entire process, but could no longer reach the IV. 0915: Detainee requested to go to the bathroom but was given an opportunity to use a bottle instead. He was told he will not be unstrapped. 0940: Detainee was given three and one-half bags of IV. He started moaning and told the MPs he's willing to talk so he can urinate. 1000: Detainee again said he has to go to bathroom. SGT R said he can go in the bottle. Detainee said he wanted to go to the bathroom because it's more comfortable. SGT R said "You've ruined all trust, you can either go in the bottle or in your pants." Detainee goes in his pants. 1115: Detainee requested to use the restroom. When offered a bottle he said that he wanted to go outside. Control told him he could not, he would have to use the bottle. Detainee agreed. As preparations were being made control was talking about his behavior and how to get off the gurney, detainee urinated in his pants. 1340: Detainee began crying hard spontaneously. Assessment – Detainee has a greater deal of animosity toward SGT R. He is beginning to understand the futility of his situation. He has to understand that his antics will not stop the interrogation at all. We feel he is slowly realizing that he will not outlast the battle of wills. He is much closer to compliance and cooperation now than at the beginning of the operation.

Through this long process, then, the material world of the interrogation cell at Camp X-ray is used continually and systematically in an attempt to break down the humanity of the detainee to a point at which 063 sees himself as less than a banana rat, his bodily functions controlled and regulated by medical technology. The objective is to create a form of limbo, between life and death, in which the detainee will be completely compliant. Here, it is instructive to compare the interrogator's record of her reflections back to 063 with Primo Levi's reflections on the "demolition of a man" in Auschwitz:

Unnamed interrogator, Camp X-ray Guantánamo Bay, 2002. Day 20, 0515am: "Detainee was asked if he could remember when he last he felt love? When he last laughed? Last felt Happy? When he last felt like he was worth something? Interrogators compared lifestyle difference between Camp Delta and Camp X-ray. Camp Delta – Could live in a cell and communicate with others; could read if he wants to, practice his religion if he wants to; could laugh with others, could write and receive letters, could sleep when he wants to; drink when he wants to; move around freely in his cell when he wants to; use the bathroom when he wants to and at least feel like a human being with normal emotions. Camp X-ray- live in a wooden box with no communications and constantly reminded of his low level of self worth; unable to laugh and only be laughed at; unable to write or receive letters; unable to read; unable to choose when he sleeps, drinks or go to the bathroom; unable to move around freely; unable to practice his religion when he wants to; unable to feel like a human being; the only feeling he knows at camp x-ray is the hate he brought with him".

Primo Levi, Auschwitz 1944: “Then for the first time we became aware that our language lacks words to express this offence, the demolition of a man. In a moment, with almost prophetic intuition, the reality was revealed to us: we had reached the bottom. It is not possible to sink lower than this; no human condition is more miserable than this, nor could it conceivably be so. Nothing belongs to us any more; they have taken away our clothes, our shoes, even our hair; if we speak, they will not listen to us, and if they listen, they will not understand. They will even take away our name: if we want to keep it, we will have to find ourselves the strength to do so, to manage somehow so that behind the name something of us, of us as we were, still remains” (Levi 1987: 33).

Faultlines

This ontological limit case – the re-emergence of violence as a spectacle of digital images and words, breaking out of the modernist institutions of prison and asylum – can serve as a starting point for an archaeology of violence within an epistemology that recognizes that coloniality has rendered violence universal – the “dark side” of modernity (Mignolo 2011).

The interrogation log for detainee 063 - Mohammed al-Qahtani – shows how the instrumentality of violence is applied directly to the body in a part of the world in the north and west. In turn, these actions and their digital record are part of a far wider system of circulating references that make meaning in the sense identified by Latour. They give particular meanings to places; in the cases here, from early seventeenth century Florence to Guantánamo Bay today.

Just as, though, coloniality is the ever present “dark side” of claims to humanitas in Mignolo’s epistemology, so is the artefact of violence the shadow to which art responds. And while there is nothing to redeem the banality of evil in the Camp X-ray interrogation log, Artemesia Gentileschi’s rage against her violation resulted in a painting that shines across four hundred years.

This pairing of violence and art is evident in the city, in the “performance spaces” that Ngũgĩ sees as essential in holding established power to account. For Ngũgĩ, performance spaces are ever present, even when empty: “the performance space of the artist stands for openness; that of the state, for confinement. Art breaks down barriers between peoples; the state erects them” (Ngũgĩ 1998: 68).

Ngũgĩ frames the performance space in the context of postcolonial Nairobi in the 1970s; it applies in any city today. This is the creativity that Edensor sees in ruins, “disordered and messy sites” that stand against “the increasingly smooth, highly regulated spaces of the city. Occurring in the back roads and interstices of the urban fabric, ruins deride ideals which champion the virtues of seamlessness” (Edensor 2005:53). These material lines of fracture can be understood as “faultlines” (Hall 2012).

The idea of faultlines is well expressed in Friedrich Engels’ first impressions of Manchester and Salford, when he first walked these streets in December 1842, when he arrived aged 22 as an understudy at the Salford mill owned by his father. “The town itself”, he wrote, “is peculiarly built, so that a person may live

in it for years, and go in and out daily without coming into contact with a working-people's quarter or even with workers, that is, so long as he confines himself to his business or to pleasure walks". Engels attributed this to the combination of "unconscious tacit agreement" and "outspoken conscious determination" to keep separate the parts of the city intended for middle class use from the areas reserved for working class housing.

This faultline is clear in Engels' account of his walk from the Cathedral and Long Millgate – older houses "whose former inhabitants have removed with their descendants into better built districts" – and down into the courts and lanes: "irregular cramming together of dwellings in ways which defy all rational plan" where "even the shops and beer houses hardly take the trouble to exhibit a trifling degree of cleanliness"; "filth and disgusting grime"; "a privy without a door, so dirty that the inhabitants can pass into and out of the court only by passing through foul pools of stagnant urine and excrement". The nadir is the river, "a narrow, coal-black, foul-smelling stream, full of debris and refuse", "a long string of the most disgusting, blackish-green, slime pools ... from the depths of which bubbles of miasmatic gas constantly arise and give forth a stench unendurable even on the bridge forty or fifty feet above the surface of the stream" (Engels 1892: 45, 48-53).

There are no longer "slime pools" or "miasmatic gas". But retracing Engels' walk from the "Old Church" to the banks of the River Irk is to follow a contemporary faultline that displays Edensor's disorder and mess of the ruin – the fissures in the formal facades. Near the Cathedral – Engels' "Old Church" and the heart of the commercial city today - the artifice of heritage is impeccable in the neat facades of Cateaton Street, the imposing commercial architecture of the Triangle and the playful reconstruction of the Printworks as a complex of cinemas, bars, restaurants and clubs. Long Millgate, ten minutes towards the river, is outside fashionable Manchester; a functional mix of office buildings and bill boards behind Victoria Station. Further still along Engels' route, in Dantzic Street, is a ubiquitous urban wasteland of car lots and brownfield sites. And Warford Street, which abuts the river, is an unwanted corner of waste bins, rubbish and urban debris (Hall 2012).



This urban faultline, then, is between the imperative for order and control by the city's establishment of institutions and interests and the counter-tendency to fracture and dissonance. Expressed in an archaeological register, this is to contrast waste management with rioting. The objective of the Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority is "zero waste" and seeking to attain this includes a "waste experience", a half day tour of a landfill site, a Material Recovery Facility and a Mechanical and Biological Treatment Centre, enhanced by interactive games and videos (GMWDA 2012). Rioting, in contrast, is to create extreme disorder and damage to the material substance of the city (Guardian 2011). In Žižek' (2011) phrase, this was "abstract negativity", "zero-degree protest, a violent action demanding nothing". Here is one of many accounts:

"we had total control of the precinct. There's a massive police station there, and they couldn't do anything. It was ours for a day. Salford was more like a party atmosphere. Everyone was stood around, drinking... smoking weed, having a laugh. I became involved in the riots in Salford because it was a chance to tell the police, tell the government, and tell everyone else for that matter that we get fucking hacked off around here and we won't stand for it" (unemployed man, aged 22, Salford. Guardian 2011: 20).

Urban faultlines can be seen as heterotopias – unstable zones in the city that can generate both violence and creativity, unpredictably (Foucault 1986; Hetherington 1997). For Edensor, "ruined space" is "ripe with transgressive and transcendent possibilities", "opportunities for challenging and deconstructing the imprint of power on the city" (Edensor 2005: 4). These are versions of Ngũgĩ's performance spaces; whether filled with activity or waiting for something to happen, the creativity in urban faultlines matches their latent violence.

The instability along these frontiers between orderly narrative and transgressive disorder is expressed in The Ancoats Peeps, a project coordinated by Dan Dubowitz (www.ancoatspeeps.com; Dubowitz 2011). This has included the construction of Cutting Room Square, the first public square to be built in the area, which is centred on five towers each with images from the cutting rooms from the adjacent Royal Mills. These images present the decomposition and disorder behind the gentrification of urban regeneration economics. In Dubowitz's account: "a fire had wrecked the roof and now mature trees were growing in the space. In the pattern room the plasterwork had long since been washed away exposing the brickwork but the patterns, made of a waterproof velum, remained vivid, hanging from the walls. The patterns and the patina of the brick walls almost merged in the light of dusk and so I went back to photograph this space on midsummer's day and had to wait until late in the evening for dusk. While I waited I was aware not only of butterflies and birds but also of a rabbit" (www.ancoatspeeps.com).



Complementing Cutting Room Square are the "peeps" – brass eyepieces set into walls that offer a glimpse of a space that has been walled up for some time, but is also unstable in its content. No explanation – narrative – is provided and it is never quite clear what is being seen: industrial fragments, surfaces, close details of parts of machinery (Dubowitz 2011).

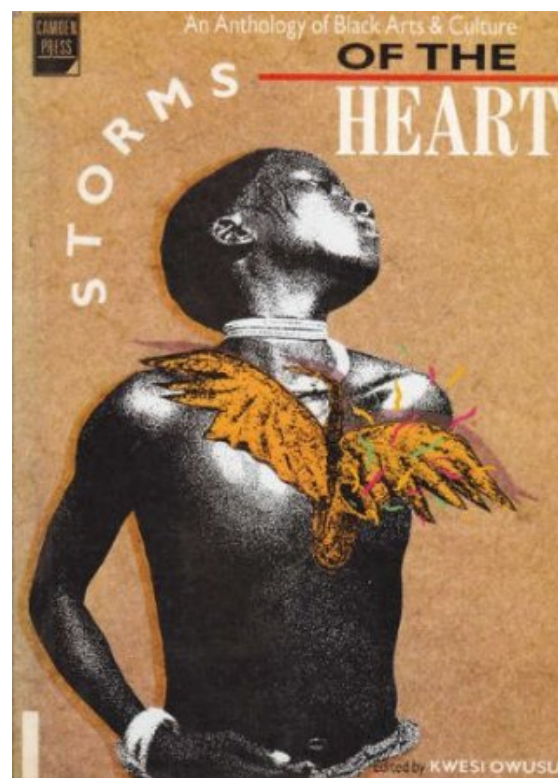
Conclusion: Archive and Repertoire

The schema that I've set out here for an archaeology of violence is founded in the instrumentality of artefacts, whether they are implicated in fifteenth century British warfare, twentieth century juntas in Latin America or the interrogation and torture that is part of the apparatus of the contemporary security state. For such an archaeology to offer anything much more than illustration and props for the entertainment industry, this instrumentality must always be seen as an integral part of the dispositions of power, providing an epistemic frame. I have argued here for "southern theory", since an understanding of coloniality and decoloniality shows how violence, and therefore its archaeology, is endemic everywhere; it is its technology and means of deployment that varies, not its presence or threat of application.

This insistence on prevalence – on an ontology that invariably connects academic practice with its political context – denies us the serenity of the “zero-point” assumption of abstract, analytical, authority; “we are where we do and think”. As a consequence, writing an archaeology of violence must, in one way or another, be part of Ngũgĩ’s “performance spaces”, even if this is passive, implied and latent. Here, Diana Taylor’s conceptualization of the relationship between archive and repertoire is particularly helpful. For Taylor, archival memory is documents, maps, texts, bones, videos and of course artefacts, mediated by political and social processes. Repertoire is the manifestation of archive, “enacting embodied memory: performances, gestures, orality, movement, dance, singing” (Taylor 2003: 20).

Here, to end, are three repertoires that challenge coloniality, where perceptions and performances based in decolonial thought and creativity have engaged with the fissures of the northern city.

The first is a collective of artists, performers and intellectuals from Africa and Asia, working in the London borough of Camden in the 1980s and publishing the first anthology of Black British art and performance, *Storms of the Heart* (Owusu 1988; Ngũgĩ 1998).



And here is a Pitika Ntuli, setting out the materiality of this world, and the play between violence and inspiration in the everyday objects of the city:

“To be an artist is to be especially aware and appreciative of one’s environment. To be able to utilize it creatively. I use my environment both physically and

metaphorically. What is my environment in Britain, in London? It is the media whose lips drip racism, violent cartoons, shit and petrol bombs through letter boxes, the ever contracting boundaries of progress for Black people and Black culture, punctuated by occasional meadows of love. Scrap yards, skips, derelict buildings, my rose gardens. I salvage weapons of war against ugliness. I attempt to humanize objects, exhaust pipes, gearboxes, saucepans; curses, insults, appreciation, grey clouds, monotonous terraces, odd patches of colour in parks, human touch, frustration and hopes ... my raw materials" (Ntuli 1988: 215).

The second is a performance by Coco Fusco and Guillermo Gómez-Peña, designed to challenge the dominant narrative celebrating the quincentennial of Columbus's claim of possession of the Americas in 1992:

"Enacting rituals of "authentic" daily life such as writing on a laptop computer, watching TV, making voodoo dolls, and pacing the cage garbed in Converse high-tops, raffia skirts, plastic beads, and a wrestler's mask, the two 'Amerindians' rendered a hybrid pseudo primitivism that struck a nerve. Interested members of the audience could pay for dances, stories, and Polaroids. Guilt, molestation, confusion, and letters to the humane society were among audience responses. Nearly half the visitors that saw the cage in Irvine, London, Madrid, Minneapolis, and the Smithsonian in Washington D.C. believed that the two were real captives, true natives somehow tainted by the detritus of technology and popular culture" (Johnson 1993).

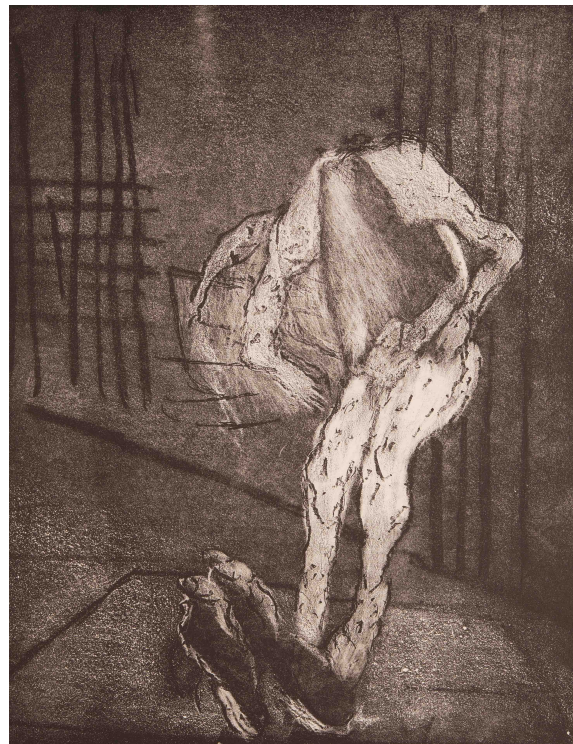


By locating their cage and staging their performance in the monumental centres of power and formal heritage in cities across the world, Fusco and Gómez-Peña challenged the assumptions of the museum and archive through an unsettling association with imprisonment and punishment (Taylor 2003).

The third challenge is from Albert Adams, denied a place at the Michaelis School of Fine Art at the University of Cape Town in 1952 on the grounds of race and exiled to London, where he studied at the Slade and eventually settled. As part of

the system of “circulating references” that make meaning in the world and join together words, texts, images and objects, Adams spent his first Christmas in Britain with the family of a fellow art student in Salford, and the contents of Adams’ London studio when he died in 2006 are now part of the archive at the University of Salford. For Adams, there was a direct connection between the brutality of his experience of coloniality in Cape Town and his abhorrence of the images of torture that began to leak from the US military and security services after 2004.

Here is one of Albert Adams’ last works titled, simply, “Abu Ghraib”.



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