

Scales of Memory: Reflections on an Emerging Concept

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THIS SPECIAL SECTION OF THIS ISSUE OF *AHR*, ENTITLED *SCALES OF MEMORY*, EMERGED from a conference held at The Australian National University in collaboration with the Network in Transnational Memory Studies (NiTMES). ‘Scales of Memory’ alludes to the increasing use of the concepts of ‘scale’ and ‘scularity’ in memory studies—of which we say more below.

As numerous scholars have argued, the task of memory studies today is to develop new conceptual and theoretical frameworks to study memory practices, icons, symbols and texts as they move across the interlocking scales of the local, national and global (De Cesari and Rigney 5). NiTMES, led by Utrecht University and funded by a Dutch Research Council Grant and participating institutions, is a research platform that seeks to facilitate and inform this shift in memory studies by developing new concepts and frameworks to interpret cultural memory formations beyond the nation-state.¹ NiTMES is particularly interested in exploring ‘the role of media and the arts in the transnational production of “travelling” narratives and commemorative practices, and how these effect social mobilisation within and across national borders’ (<<http://nitmes.wp.hum.uu.nl>>). The network comprises a group of scholars (Ann

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Rigney, Aleida Assmann, Astrid Erll, Rosanne Kennedy, Michael Rothberg and Barbara Tornquist-Plewa) who have met regularly from 2013 to 2015. Each year, they convened two conferences at participating universities, which brought together established and emerging scholars in cultural memory studies. Four of the six conferences were in Western Europe (Utrecht University, Konstanz University, Lund University and Goethe University), one was in the United States (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign), and one in Australia (The Australian National University). The Australian conference brought to the fore some critical issues relating to both the directionality and scales of memory. Not least it helped to highlight some assumptions that underpin the notions of 'global' memory, 'transnational' memory and 'cosmopolitan' memory—and to remind us of their noticeably northern hemisphere orientation and resonances.²

Many of the dominant concepts and models for memory studies have emerged from Europe, and are grounded in European case studies; or they have come from Britain or the United States (Erll 5; Kennedy and Radstone). Although not all of the papers that were presented are included in this collection, the Canberra conference assembled speakers who have studied memory practices in a range of sub-national, national and transnational sites, including Indigenous Australia, Northern Ireland and Asia, as well as Europe and North America, and across a range of texts and contexts, including film, literature, graphic arts, public acts of remembrance, museums and human rights. There were presentations on Australian-Chinese artist John Young (see for example Barnes, Lo and Young), on artists working in the demilitarised zone between South and North Korea (Black), on the Japanese and transnational memory politics of the Korean comfort women (Morris-Suzuki), on national and local memory politics in Timor Leste (Kent), and on Joshua Oppenheimer's film, *The Act of Killing*, about the massacre of suspected communists in Indonesia in the period 1965-1966 (Kennedy 2016). Although the issue of 'provincializing European memory' was not explicitly on the agenda in Canberra, as it was later in the conference held at the Goethe University in Frankfurt (see <<http://nitmes.wp.hum.uu.nl/frankfurt-conference-provincializing-european-memory>>), taking Australian and Asian cases, archives and texts as a focus, as many of the presenters in Canberra did, helped to underline the continuing significance of location and place in memory cultures (see Radstone).

² For example, the concept of 'cosmopolitan memory' is grounded in a case study of Holocaust memory in Germany, Israel and the United States. Holocaust memory is selected as a 'paradigmatic case' of the relation of memory and modernity. The events of the Holocaust are considered to be a 'tragedy of reason or of modernity itself' (Levy and Sznajder, 88). We suggest that taking Holocaust memory as a founding paradigm orients cosmopolitan memory, from its origins, towards a 'global north' modernity and temporality.

Over the past few decades, memory studies scholars have developed methods for studying memory on the intimate scale of the personal and familial, and on the broader scales of the local, regional and national. Since the 1980s, and Pierre Nora's influential concept of 'lieux de mémoire', much of cultural memory studies research was driven by interest in national memory and collective identity. Focusing on the nation, often taken as the natural or self-evident horizon for the study of commemorative practices and memory cultures, assumes a homology between geographical territory, collective identity, and the imagined community. Not surprisingly, commemorative practices aimed at forging a collective narrative and national identity generated counter-memories that sought to acknowledge the shadow-side of national memory, those events that were repressed or cast into oblivion. The era of globalisation and new digital technologies has, however, expanded the speed, the reach, and the scale of memory practices; events are now transmitted instantaneously, as they happen, to global publics, who may develop a 'prosthetic memory' (Landsberg) of happenings taking place at a distance. Moreover, global media contribute to consolidating memory around iconic images and events such as the Holocaust, thereby producing a 'cosmopolitan' memory that is deterritorialised (Levy and Sznajder, 88). Daniel Levy and Natan Sznajder contend that this cosmopolitan memory, decoupled from the territory of the nation and collective national identity, may facilitate collective memories and a sense of belonging that transcend national and ethnic boundaries (88). In this global era, characterised by all of the above forces, as well as mass migrations of refugees, workers and capital, an apparent consensus has emerged that it is time to move memory studies beyond 'methodological nationalism' (Beck and Sznajder; Amelina; for an alternative view, see Cheah). As Chiara De Cesari and Ann Rigney argue, 'the national has ... ceased to be the inevitable or preeminent scale for the study of collective remembrance' (2). It is, then, the potentially global reach of memory today that makes the issue of scale a significant one within the field.

The need to sharpen our understanding of the relations between the multiple scales of memory has emerged within the broader context of the transnational turn in the humanities. In memory studies, the term transnational is sometimes used interchangeably with transcultural. There are, though, some subtle differences (Moses and Rothberg; De Cesari and Rigney; Bond and Rapson). Transnational tends to be used to figure the move away from the nation-state as the privileged frame for analysing memory formations, whereas transcultural is typically used to refer to the exchange or movement of cultural forms, symbols and media. Nevertheless, both terms cultivate an analytic optic that seeks to capture flows and interactions at a level that is not contained within or constrained by the nation or the national. In memory studies, attention to the transnational and transcultural dimensions of remembrance and other commemorative practices has encouraged scholars to develop methodological

approaches that study connections, networks, and entanglements. As part of these new directions and theoretical debates in memory studies, the concept of scales of memory has been introduced. De Cesari and Rigney argue, for instance, that the critique of methodological nationalism propels a questioning of ‘the idea of scale and of the unspoken hierarchies of scale implicit in our research practices.’ Transnationalism, they propose, ‘allows us to grasp the *multi-scalarity* of social-cultural processes and the fundamental “mutual construction of the local, national and global” in the contemporary world (Glick Schiller 23); as well as the proximity of the intimate and the global (Pratt and Rosner)’ (italics in original; De Cesari and Rigney 5).

Our aim in this collection is, then, to engage with the concept of scale. In the first place, we are interested in its usage to signify an overlapping and sometimes nested series of memory communities of different sizes and significance. While several of the essays demonstrate that the nation-state remains a key player in memory culture, at the same time attention is drawn to the ways in which memory cultures work at levels above, below and beyond it, such as localities and cities, or facilitate the formation of transnational mnemonic symbols, communities and global publics. The particular case studies of archives, practices and texts presented here invite further interrogation of the idea of the ‘mutual construction’ of the local, national and global (Glick Schiller), and attention to the asymmetries of scale. ‘Mutual’ implies a kind of equality—a certain give and take, or influence, that runs in both directions. To what extent does the evidence provided in these studies point to the ‘mutual construction’ of memory across multiples sites and scales? What asymmetries in scale do these cases reveal? Although ‘off-centre’ locations such as Australia and Ireland incorporate global symbols and icons to give meaning to local and national memory, do local memory practices, and their meanings, in turn feed back into cosmopolitan memory in visible and transformative ways? Is directionality all one way rather than bi-directional or multi-directional (Rothberg)?

As is often noted, the transnational is a capacious term, often used without precision (see for example Cheah). As several of the articles in this issue indicate, the European Union advocates a memory culture that is underpinned by a political, legal, bureaucratic and institutional infrastructure, and specific historical conditions, and creates a mediating layer between the national and the global which is unique to the European Union (see for example: Rigney; Tornquist-Plewa, this collection). The field of memory studies would benefit from more nuanced distinctions between European transnationalism, other regional transnationalisms, and terms such as ‘global memory’ (Assmann and Conrad), ‘cosmopolitan’ memory’ (Levy and Sznajder), and ‘global memoryscapes’ (Phillips and Reyes). The location of Australia also raises the question of cosmopolitan memory anew: the concept of cosmopolitan memory

assumes that a memory consolidated and circulated through global media becomes localised and takes on site-specific meanings, which in turn re-energise or inform cosmopolitan memory cultures. Yet, some of the presentations at the conference did not subscribe to this view, providing a much more dialogical sense of the co-production of the local and global, national and transnational, familial and universal than the trope of 'domestication' or 'localisation' suggests (see especially Rigney, this collection).

This brings us to two other ways in which this collection of essays engages with the idea of 'scales of memory'. In the second place, we are interested in evoking the idea of scales to bring out the centrality of memory to processes of law, adjudication and justice, and to the national and transnational projects these processes support. As van Rijswijk argues, harm is a central concern of the law, and the law's responses to harms are 'animated by metaphor and narrative, from the conceit of the scales to neo-religious promises of reconciliation and redemption' (313-14). Particular imaginaries of memory produce particular legalities, defining whose suffering counts, and determining the responsibilities of the state and international community (van Rijswijk 314). Human rights, apology, and transitional justice discourses, in particular, are significant not only for their legal effects but for their role in national and transnational memory cultures. A number of the articles included here—those by Barnes, Lewis, Nugent, Rigney and van Rijswijk—are concerned, implicitly and explicitly, with memory work that intersects with or documents the pursuit of justice in aesthetic and quasi-legal texts and contexts, and the inter-relation of law and state that is produced through these adjudications of harms.

A third aspect of scales of memory emerged during the conference. While scale is often thought of one-dimensionally, as crossing spatial and horizontal borders, another dimension represented in this issue is that of the temporalities of memory, and especially of deep time. The concept of deep time has particular purchase in the context of Indigenous scales of memory in Australia, which precede written history, and which through the notion of 'country' extend offshore to encompass the sea and its creatures. The Anthropocene and all that it signifies is emerging as an important and challenging area for new research in memory studies, and denotes a scale which exceeds the global and extends to the planetary. Given the origins of memory studies in concepts such as personal and collective memory and identity, the concept of the Anthropocene presents significant challenges to the field of memory studies. As Erll has cogently argued, memory studies has been configured as *cultural* memory studies. All memory practices are mediated through frameworks of language, and can thus be considered cultural (Erll 6). The Anthropocene pushes the question of scalarity in other directions—away from the horizontal plane registered by cultural and human flows across borders to the vertical scales of geology, earth and deep

time. How are the remains of the deep past, which ‘surface’ and ‘circulate’ in contemporary contexts, mobilised in cultural processes of claim-making, reconciliation, and re-remembering communities and personhood in charged colonial and post-colonial contexts? In this collection, questions like these are explored through a rumination on and conversation about the film *Message from Mungo*, which tells a multi-vocal story about the politics surrounding ‘Mungo Lady’, whose bones surfaced in the sands of an ancient lake in the 1960s and the finding of which helped to push back the date of human occupation of the continent to 40,000 years or more. We end with a roundtable discussion about the film that serves to extend our scope into much wider temporal and spatial scales.

Memories on the Move: Activism, Agency, Mobility

In an era of globalisation, mobility, including the mobility of memory, has become a central issue. Aleida Assmann and Sebastian Conrad argue that in a global age it is ‘impossible to understand the *trajectories* of memory outside a global frame of reference (italics added; Assmann and Conrad 2). ‘Trajectories’—signifying ‘the path followed by a projectile flying or an object moving under given forces’—points to what has emerged as a new field of scholarship within memory studies: the study of how memory travels across borders of all sorts. Memory studies has recently been energised by a range of concepts and approaches (for example, multidirectional memory, travelling memory, transcultural memory) that track the dynamic and mobile nature of practices of remembrance (see Rothberg; Erll; Bond and Rapson). In an influential survey article, Astrid Erll contends that the concept of ‘travel’ is fundamental to understanding memory processes in an era of globalisation, and further, is an enabling condition of memory. She proposes a transcultural approach as the basis for a third stage of memory research, which would succeed the earlier stages grounded in approaches developed by Maurice Halbwachs (on collective memory) and Nora (on sites of memory). Returning to Aby Warburg, a founding figure in memory research who focused on ‘the movement, the migration or travel, of symbols across time and space’, Erll defines transcultural memory as ‘the incessant wandering of carriers, media, contents, forms, and practices of memory, their continual “travels” and ongoing transformations through time and space, across social, linguistic and political borders’ (11). ‘Transcultural memory,’ she suggests, is a ‘research perspective ... which is directed towards mnemonic processes unfolding across and beyond cultures’ (9). A ‘transcultural lens’ would bring into visibility the significance of cultural formations that exceed the nation-state, such as world religions, global sport, music culture and consumer culture (8). Erll’s suggestive proposal has helped to seed important work on the travels of memory, including the ways in which mnemonic symbols, images and icons cross borders of all sorts to give meanings to events distant in time and place.

Ann Rigney argues that memories of civil activism, which look both to the past and the future, have been an under-researched area of memory studies. Taking Bloody Sunday as a case study, she demonstrates the rich potential of activist memory for memory studies, especially its dual orientation to the past and the future. The latter is particularly significant given the concern that memory studies has been too focused on the past at the expense of the future (Huysen; Gutman et al.). In 'Differential memorability and transnational activism: Bloody Sunday, 1887-2015', Rigney identifies 'Bloody Sunday' as an event-type that links a number of civilian massacres in a transnational network of significance and affect. In Northern Ireland, Bloody Sunday, the name given to the police massacre of civilians at a civil rights march in Derry in 1972, has become a site-specific symbol. It has been mediated and remediated through a range of cultural forms, and has particular significance in national memory. Rather than approach Bloody Sunday within a national frame, with a focus on the politics of remembrance in Northern Ireland, she takes a transnational diachronic and synchronic approach, demonstrating that 'Bloody Sunday' has also operated as a travelling mnemonic symbol that crosses national borders, and is a potent transcultural icon. As a moniker of a particular 'event-type', 'Bloody Sunday' reaches back at least to 1791 Paris, and in more recent times, connects events in places as distant and distinct as Northern Ireland, Paris, Amritsar, Istanbul, Selma, Chicago and Vancouver. Identifying multiple cross-references in which local, national, and international frameworks were brought into play, she argues that as a mnemonic symbol Bloody Sunday enables 'the ongoing transfer of a multi-sited, specifically *urban* memory that connects one city to another through the shared experience of state violence against an active citizenry' (Rigney, this collection).

Rigney's innovative concept of 'differential memorability' raises a timely question regarding the reach and scale of cultural memory: what features, she asks, 'give some local events a greater transnational resonance than others?' Why do some events—such as civilian massacres—have greater geopolitical reach than others, and become part of a broader transnational dynamics of remembrance, while other events are remembered and commemorated on local, regional, and national scales, or fade into oblivion? Why has Bloody Sunday—as a specific event type—become iconic in memory culture? She argues that 'slow violence' (Nixon) is not narratable in the way that civilian massacres involving state officials are. Drawing on Peter Brooks' influential study of the aesthetics of melodrama, she identifies the fundamentally melodramatic figures, such as the 'interrupted feast', that produce the heightened meaning and affective charge of representations of Bloody Sunday. Analysing several photographs of Bloody Sunday events, Rigney identifies a tension between the civilian protestor as an

agent of change and a victim of state repression, which creates affective intensity.

Constituting an archive of activist memory—‘memory of a cause and memory with a cause’—is, Rigney argues, an imperative for the field. Maria Nugent continues this project in her article ‘On buses: Still photographs, travelling memories and transnational histories of civil rights activism in Australia and North America’. Arguing that photographs are an exemplary form of ‘portable memory’ and a form that invites interpretive intensity, Nugent tracks the memory work that photographs do in interconnected worlds, as they cross national and cultural borders. In bringing together a photograph of Aboriginal activist Charlie Perkins from 1963 with an iconic photograph of African-American activist Rosa Parks from 1956, she creates a productive transnational frame that allows for an exploration of the similarities and differences in the symbols, vocabularies and iconic moments through which civil rights movements for African Americans and Aboriginal Australians have been enacted and remembered, and through which the political legacies of Perkins and Parks have been transmitted to future generations. By placing roughly synchronous photographs of Perkins and Parks in dialogue with each, she raises questions ‘about the scale and reach of histories, memories and image-making practices’ (Nugent, this collection.) In both cases, the now-iconic photographs were staged: in the case of Parks, retrospectively, and in the case of Perkins, prospectively—anticipating a legacy that he had not yet achieved.

Significantly, both portraits were taken on a bus—an artefact of mobility—which has a significant history in American and Australian civil rights movements. The bus, Nugent contends, is ‘a *carrier*, not of people only, but also of meanings, associations and memories’ (Nugent, this collection). As she convincingly demonstrates, the later photograph of Perkins takes on meanings associated with Rosa Parks’ protest against segregation on public transport in the southern United States, even though buses in Australia were not segregated, or at least not formally. Exploring the remediations of the Perkins and Parks photographs in contemporary politics, she shows how these images of activists on buses, with their accrued and mythic meanings, have been used by political actors in the present—to claim a political legacy in the case of US President Barack Obama, and to make an intervention into instances of racism on buses in the case of Australian citizen-activists today. Drawing on the visual archive of civil rights activism, these new photographic re-enactments look to legacies of the past to intervene in the present and anticipate the future.

Rosanne Kennedy continues the exploration of mobility in Australian memory cultures, as refracted through and shaped by transnational currents across multiple scales—from the regional to the national and transnational, and to deep

time. In her article, 'Mobilities, Orbits, Scales: Kim's Scott's *That Deadman Dance* as Transcultural Remembrance', Kennedy approaches the novel, which tells a story of early contact between the Noongar inhabitants and British settlers during the period of colonial whaling on the south west coast, as an act of transcultural remembrance and a meditation on Indigenous and settler routes and roots. Informed by oral and written histories and archives, Scott brings an Indigenous conception of mobility and country to the project of imagining early contact on the maritime frontier. Kennedy proposes that the concept of 'orbiting', which Scott borrows from Noel Pearson to describe an Indigenous mode of travel that includes return to country as an essential component, not only provides a frame for analysing the thematics of mobility in the novel. It also, she argues, challenges the presumed dichotomy of roots and routes, in which Indigenous people are considered to be rooted rather than mobile. Additionally, it suggests an Indigenous twist to the concept of 'travelling memory' (Erl). The novel, Kennedy suggests, also introduces temporality as another scale of memory. Through its imaginative figuration of the whale as kin, the novel moves from the time of social history (colonial contact) to the temporality of the 'longue duree'—associated with the deep time of Indigenous habitation of the continent and with the sea and its creatures. She examines how the Indigenous claim to ownership grounded in deep time—asserted by the character Bobby Wabalinginy—is challenged by the emergence of a settler colonial memory economy that asserts ownership through a material culture of commemoration. She links the novel's reflections on the settler colonial memory economy to the treatment of human remains, which resonates with some of the themes canvassed in the film *Message from Mungo* (see Roundtable, this collection).

Cosmopolitan Memory, European Transnationalism

While the first three articles are concerned with the travels of memory—the migrations and mobilities of symbols, vehicles, people, and mnemonic texts and legacies—the next two articles address the issue of the interlocking scales of memory through an exploration of the relative significance of local, national and transnational institutions and actors in shaping (trans)national memory cultures. Whereas the articles by Rigney, Nugent and Kennedy take as their starting points Ireland or Australia—which from a European perspective might be considered provincial—the articles by Törnquist-Plewa and Graefenstein return to continental Europe, and to issues raised by the European Union's efforts to produce a unified European memory and identity (see Rigney). In 'Cosmopolitan Memory, European Memory and Local Memories in East Central Europe', Barbara Törnquist-Plewa reports on a team project that investigated the forces shaping memory work today in a number of Eastern European cities that had a multi-ethnic heritage, but as a result of large-scale expulsions, pogroms and genocides had experienced a significant transformation in their

populations. Assuming that the fall of communism had created the political and social conditions for liberalising memory practices in Eastern European cities, the team aimed to discover how the current citizens remembered the city's 'lost' populations and ethnic diversity, as well as how they responded to and treated the material cultural heritage that remained, such as synagogues and cemeteries. Although 'a range of memory actors with their own agendas about what should be remembered, how and why' emerged after 1989, the research revealed that the European Union (EU) was a 'normative power' in shaping local memories (Törnquist-Plewa, this collection). The EU promoted self-identified European values (freedom, democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, minority rights and cultural pluralism), and provided practical economic and institutional support and incentives to achieve its aims. The research team observed that the EU bypassed the scale of national governance, and instead targeted its memory initiatives at subnational levels such as city councils. Despite some opposition from nationalistic-minded memory actors, who viewed commemoration and restoration of displaced communities as a sacrifice of national interest and a submission to more powerful neighbours, local elites sought to conform to global and European trends.

Perhaps the most interesting finding, however, concerns the limited effects of EU memory politics in producing deep transformation. Törnquist-Plewa's research team confirmed the success of the EU in achieving its memory agenda through outward signs such as monuments, museums and restorations, and through cultural heritage tourism. In the cities investigated, however, the team was able to find only a small number of art works, memorials and sculptures, mostly by individual and grassroots community groups, that exhibited cosmopolitan values and revealed a deep engagement with 'lost' communities. Drawing on Marianne Hirsch and Leo Spitzer's fruitful concept of 'small acts of repair', Törnquist-Plewa regards these artworks as rare instances of a reconciliatory spirit amidst a largely indifferent public. Thus, while there might well be greater visibility of sites of commemoration which is consistent with EU norms and values, this material culture risks producing a nostalgic and commodified form of memory which is profitable and expedient, rather than a transformative mode of memory-making involving a felt and ethical engagement with the past. A question hovering over the discussion is whether these conjunctions of local interests and cosmopolitan impulses is 'memory without consequences' or 'memory without affect'? (Törnquist-Plewa, this collection). What does this say about Levy and Sznajder's argument that cosmopolitan memory would potentially seed a universal respect for human rights?

In 'After the Nation-State: Memory Work at Mauthausen Memorial in (Trans)national Perspective', Sulamith Graefenstein takes the Mauthausen Memorial in Austria as a case study for interrogating relations between the

scales of the national and the transnational in the context of memory politics in the EU. Her focus is a recent revision of the pedagogical strategies at the site. The Memorial aims to create an interactive experience that engages visitors—many of whom are school-groups—with the past on a personal level, so that they will consider how racism lives on in the present, rather than teaching them established truths about the Holocaust. Graefenstein analyses documents detailing the revision of the museum’s pedagogical strategy from two different periods: an earlier, nationalist period, and a later period in which the EU was formative. While the earlier strategy took as its task educating a national citizenry, and was informed by principles of civic education, the more recent strategy was informed by EU memory politics and policies. These included the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, which promotes global expansion of Holocaust remembrance with the aim of securing respect for human rights and peace in an increasingly unstable Europe. Graefenstein concludes that the nation-state continues to be a dominant force in shaping national memory, despite the pressure to conform to cosmopolitan memory imperatives championed by transnational bodies such as the European Union. Approaches that seek to circumvent the nation-state by taking the transnational as a starting point for the study of memory practices risk, she argues, ‘over-determining the impact of transnational influences or underestimating the political and social power that nation-states still hold’ (Graefenstein, this collection). Even in today’s age of accelerated globalisation, it is the nation-state, she contends, that plays a major role in the creation of memory culture—initiating rituals of public commemoration, setting up memorials, financing museums, and conceiving of educational agendas.

With Jo Piavanini’s essay— ‘9/11 and Transnational Memory: Seamus Heaney’s “Anything Can Happen”’—the focus shifts from the relation between local, national and transnational memory to a consideration of poetry as a form uniquely suited to producing a cosmopolitan memory of a global event. Taking Heaney’s poem as a case study, Piavanini contends that poetry can subtly challenge the nationalist ideologies that emerged in the wake of 9/11 and that supported the ‘war on terror’. Poetry, which borrows from a range of cultural traditions, is a transcultural genre with portability, which makes it ready for travel, and, as such, it is a commemorative form that circulates readily. ‘Anything Can Happen’ was written in response to an understanding of 9/11 as an event with global as well as national repercussions. Basing his poem on a translation and mediation of a Horatian ode, which points to a deeper history and memory of conflict, Heaney begins from a cosmopolitan rather than national perspective. ‘A Horatian ode is an apt choice for a “public” poem’, Piavianni contends, ‘as it highlights the intersection of the deep past and the present. Temporality can be understood as another type of scale, one that is dynamic and non-linear’ (Piavianni, this collection). Taking up Jahan Ramazani’s concept of ‘geopoetic

oscillation’—a term he uses to describe ‘the ease with which poetry can travel across time and space’—Piavianni considers the ‘travels’ of Heaney’s poem, which has been translated into 23 languages, and adapted as a piece of choral music. As she demonstrates, multiple social scales have shaped the remediation and reception of the poem in differing national and cosmopolitan contexts.

Scales of Justice: From ‘Small Acts of Repair’ to ‘Modest Scales of Witness’

Although the relationship between justice and memory is implicit in several of the essays collected here, those in the final section examine this relationship more explicitly. In each of these essays, the issue of the archive—presenting ‘hidden’ archives, confronting the evidence of the archive, reframing archives, and producing missing archives—is central to the quest for memory and justice in quasi-legal processes and in documentary film. In these essays, which examine scenes in which perpetrators and otherwise ‘implicated subjects’ (Rothberg 2014) are confronted with incriminating archives from the past, the interlocking scales of the intimate, the personal and the national emerge as particularly significant. In “‘The Image of a Quest’: The Visual Archives of Rithy Panh’, Leslie Barnes explores the multiple ways in which Cambodian director and writer Panh uses documentary film to create a visual archive of the missing evidence of the Cambodian genocide. His ‘multifaceted project of memorialisation’ includes several documentary films, co-authored narratives, and the Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center, which aims to recover and preserve the images and sounds of Cambodian memory and to train the next generation of Cambodian archivists and filmmakers. Building on Derrida’s observation that ‘there is no political power without control of the archive, if not memory’, Barnes analyses the relationship between the archive and memory in Phan’s cinematic oeuvre. She argues that he goes beyond the idea of the archive as a record or storehouse to interrogate, cinematically, the place of the archive in producing and legitimating knowledge about the past in the present, which has specific implications for imagining the ‘Cambodian community in the future’ (Barnes, this collection.) Barnes contends that Pahn’s attention to the archive as a ‘lieu de mémoire’ is evident in the opening scene of *Bophana*: ‘the camera is trained on a pile of papers stacked on a small table. This one pile–gathered somewhat haphazardly in worn folders, tied shut with string, notations in marker and ink scattered across the surfaces—stands in for the thousands of photographs, confessions, arrival and processing forms, and torture and execution orders that made up the archival organisation of the Khmer Rouge’ (Barnes, this collection). In contrast to the systematic administration of mass extermination by the Khmer, Panh uses this archival record to ‘give voice and return humanity to one individual’—the woman for whom the film is named, executed for writing love letters to her husband, a Khmer Rouge cadre. In focusing on a single, personal story, the film tracks across multiple interlocking scales—from the national to the intimate.

Anticipating an analysis further developed by Alison Lewis (this collection), Barnes explores Pahn's use of documentary techniques to stage a confrontation between a torturer and a victim in *S21: The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine*, his best-known and most controversial documentary. While a dialogue between torturer and victim takes place at Tuol Sleng, previously an interrogation centre and now a genocide museum, instructions on torture techniques are read from archival documents. Barnes contends that Pahn apparently aims to 'create a situation in which mutual recognition between the victim and the torturer, the enemy and the ally, and the past and the future might be possible' (Barnes, this collection).

Returning to the European context of post-Communist Germany after reunification, Alison Lewis considers the various discourses and grammars available to nations and their citizens struggling to come to terms with a compromised past which involved many present day citizens. How best to forge a path of reconciliation to the future, in a context in which some citizens betrayed others—including friends, family and lovers? Lewis argues that transitional justice provides a more promising language and idiom than heavy-handed legalistic approaches. Introducing the suggestive concept of 'modest scales of witness'—which resonates with Hirsch and Spitzer's 'small acts of repair'—she contends that literature and film 'lend themselves to a reckoning with the past on a small scale—often through their focus on biography and illuminating individuals' experiences of dictatorship' (Lewis, this collection). Documentary film, in particular, has the unique capacity as a visual medium to stage and record 'a scene of reading'—a scene in which someone who was involved in perpetrating state surveillance is confronted with files from the Stasi archive. The documentary filmmaker can use compromising archives to prompt and elicit responses, both from the perpetrator and from viewers, which might not emerge in other, more confrontational or legalist contexts such as trials. She illustrates her argument with an analysis of Annekatriin Hendel's *Traitor to the Fatherland*, which offers an example of 'the more modest, personal scales of memory' that may help to produce understanding and empathy, if not reconciliation, on a small-scale in the context of transitional justice in Germany. Although her essay focuses on the story of one writer-informer, she frames her analysis through the large scale transnational and national justice projects that often emerge in the wake of regime change.

In her article, 'Introducing Complicity into the Australian Imaginary', law and literature scholar Honni van Rijswijk continues these reflections on testimony, complicity and the archive, but returns to the context of national memory in Australia. Observing that the collective memory of the Stolen Generations has been founded on images of Indigenous suffering, she argues that the recent Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse ('the

Commission') offers an alternative imaginary. Demonstrating the value for memory studies of opening new archives, she takes the Commission's public hearings, held in October 2014, into alleged sexual abuse committed at the Bethcar Children's Home in New South Wales as a case study. Analysing scenes of testimony in which representatives of the law are called as witnesses, and confronted with their past responses to plaintiffs of child sexual abuse, she argues that the Commission creates the space in which white Australians are encouraged to identify with the shame of the witness rather than the suffering of the victim. Through staging such testimonial scenes, the Commission goes beyond positioning white Australians as compassionate witnesses and instead potentially enables them to see themselves as complicit in perpetrating harm. As such, the Commission's case studies have the potential, van Rijswijk maintains, to become allegories of 'new forms of memory and responsibility in Australia'. Opening out the question of scales to incorporate justice, she contends that in settler nations such as Australia, white Australians are called on to recognise overlapping sovereignties and laws with Indigenous peoples. What, she asks, 'would responsibility look like in reference to a wider framework of law, one that meaningfully engaged with the Aboriginal sovereignties and laws operating on this land, but not yet recognised by the state?' (van Rijswijk, this collection).

Multi-scalar perspectives on Indigenous and settler memory

One of the highlights of the symposium was the screening of Andrew Pike and Ann McGrath's film, *Message from Mungo* (2014), which brought another dimension to the concept of scales of memory, and to the development of a multi-scalar research perspective. The film takes the scales of memory into deep cultural and geographic history, while also bringing contemporary politics of reparation into play. On the one hand, the film drew attention to Lake Mungo as a contested 'site of memory' in Australia—a site that has particular significance to Aboriginal people, who have inhabited the area around the lake for over 40,000 years. Within the space of the film, Lake Mungo emerges as a place of interlocking scales—the deep and distant past and the recent past of living memory and now. The film produces and documents memory-making as it shows various stakeholders—Aboriginal people, archaeologists, land managers and others—recalling events and changes that have occurred within lifetimes as well as ascribing meanings to the enduring materiality of deep time, as embodied by Mungo Lady herself. The interlocking scales that play out in the film work to unsettle conventional notions of the accrual of knowledge and the progression of time in a linear way. Remembering the past in the present via old bones works to create new spaces for thinking about history, place, self and other in contemporary Australian cultural life.

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