

THE ARTIST IN TIMES OF WAR

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Statement

This volume is presented as a record of the work undertaken for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney.

Summary

The works made and words written for this candidature function as an argument against war and the belief in its inevitability. While the art works support the argument, they have often also inspired it. I contend that attitudes to war must recognize and take into account the physical, cultural and emotional damage done to societies. In an Australian context, it seeks also to unshackle national identity from an exclusive militarist tradition. The written element does this, firstly, by introducing differing attitudes towards war within society: militarist, realist and pacifist. Attitudes of artists towards war are then represented by the highlighting of particular artists to suggest some common themes in the arts with regard to war. There follows a realistic reappraisal of the Australian military (particularly the First AIF) in order to suggest a reasonable attitude towards the significance of war on society rather than that currently held in Australia. The Dutch Second World War diarist Etty Hillesum is then used to exemplify the state of the civilian in war, a dimension not present in many current Australian perceptions of war. The final section deals particularly with the nature of the ANZAC Tradition within Australia. It looks at its origins in the attitudes of the colonial period and discusses its exclusive nature and narrow scope in seeing war as a drama played out by men in uniform rather than a destructive force affecting every corner of society. It points out the importance of indigenous and migrant histories of war which currently occupy so little space in our perception of nationality. Lastly, it concludes that, historically, artists have supported and still support the currently held views of national identity and its links to the ANZAC Tradition.

Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	1
Chapter I: An Argument for Peace.	4
Chapter II: The Artist's Response to War.	37
A. Tableaus.	37
<i>TABLEAU 1: The Limit of Inspiration.</i>	39
(Piero della Francesca / Max Beckmann)	
<i>TABLEAU 2: Instructions for Utopia.</i>	58
(Diego Rivera / Yoko Ono)	
<i>TABLEAU 3: Histories.</i>	76
(Gordon Bennett / Tony Albert)	
<i>TABLEAU 4: Victims and Consequences.</i>	101
(George Gittoes / Ben Quilty)	
B. The Soldier and the Civilian.	128
1. Dispatches. (<i>Australian attitudes towards the military and war</i>)	128
2. The Civilian in War: Etty Hillesum.	201
Chapter III: The ANZAC Tradition, National Identity and Multiculturalism.	231
The ANZAC Tradition, Nationality and Exclusion.	231
A Reason for Going to War: The Anzac Tradition and the Hegemon.	237
ANZAC, Moral Distancing, Multiculturalism.	246
Conclusions.	265

Appendices.

Appendix 1: Art, artist and audience: Problems and Solutions.	272
Appendix 2: Technical Notes.	281
Appendix 3: Two Poems.	291
Appendix 4: <i>from</i> The Iliad: The consequences of Hector's death.	293
Appendix 5: Etty Hillesum Cycle: Quotations from: The diary and letters of Etty Hillesum.	297
Appendix 6: List of Works created as part of the PhD Research.	311
Appendix 7: Catalogue of Works Exhibited.	313
Appendix 8: List of Works Exhibited.	321
Bibliography.	323

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List of Illustrations

	Page
Figure 1. Honoré Daumier, <i>L'empire c'est la paix</i> , 1870. Gillotype on newsprint. 22.9 x 18.50 cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.	5
Figure 2. Piero della Francesca, <i>The Legend of the True Cross Cycle</i> , 1447-51. Fresco, San Francesco, Arezzo, Italy.	40
Figure 3. Piero della Francesca, <i>The Legend of the True Cross Cycle, the battle against Maxentius</i> [?], 1447-51. Fresco, San Francesco, Arezzo, Italy.	43
Figure 4. Piero della Francesca, <i>The Legend of the True Cross Cycle, the battle against Chosroes</i> , 1447- 51. Fresco, San Francesco, Arezzo, Italy.	44
Figure 5. Max Beckmann [?], _____, 1915 (destroyed). Fresco, Wervicq, France. https://sites.google.com/site/genealogievanelslande/03-d-16de-17de-eeuw-nrs-f-y-ca-cj/b-joos-van-elslande-berten-nr-g-ca , last viewed 28 Aug 2016.	46
Figure 6. Max Beckmann, <i>The Grenade</i> , 1915. Etching (state), 43.5 x 28.8 cm.	51
Figure 7. Max Beckmann, <i>The Grenade</i> , 1915. Etching (state), 43.5 x 28.8 cm.	51

Figure 8. Mark Visione, <i>Breakdown (Beckmann in Wervicq) (portrait study)</i> , 2016. Drypoint (with dremel), 24.5 x 26 cm. Collection of the Artist.	54
Figure 9. Mark Visione, <i>Breakdown (Beckmann in Wervicq)</i> , 2016. Drypoint (with dremel) and collagraph , 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the artist.	56
Figure 10. Mark Visione, <i>Breakdown (Beckmann in Wervicq)</i> , 2016. Drypoint (with dremel) and collagraph , 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the artist.	57
Figure 11. Diego Rivera, <i>Indian Warrior</i> , 1931. Moveable fresco, 74.9 x 58.3 cm. MOMA, New York, USA.	65
Figure 12. Yoko Ono, <i>Cut Piece</i> , 1964. Performance.	68
Figure 13. Yoko Ono, <i>Play it by trust</i> , 1966. Sculpture/performance.	69
Figure 14. Mark Visione, <i>Náufragos</i> , 2017. Collagraph, chin collé, drypoint and overprinting, 98 x 76 cm. Collection of the artist.	74
Figure 15. Gordon Bennett, <i>Poet and Muse</i> , 1991. Oil and acrylic on canvas, 170 x 225 cm. Private collection. Photo: Richard Stringer. © The Estate of Gordon Bennett.	80
Figure 16. Tony Albert, <i>Yininmadyemi (Thou didst let fall)</i> , 2015. Sculpture, height: 7 meters, Hyde Park, Sydney, Australia.	85
Figure 17. Mark Visione, <i>The Lotus Eaters</i> , 2017. Collagraph and drypoint, 80 x 168 cm. Collection of the artist.	96

Figure 18. Mark Visione, <i>The Lotus Eaters</i> , 2017. Collagraph and drypoint, 80 x 168 cm. Collection of the artist.	97
Figure 19. Mark Visione, <i>The Lotus Eaters</i> , 2017. Collagraph and drypoint, 80 x 168 cm. Collection of the artist.	98
Figure 20. George Gittoes, <i>Soundtrack to War</i> , 2005. DVD cover, documentary film.	106
Figure 21. George Gittoes, <i>Rampage</i> , 2006. DVD cover, documentary film.	106
Figure 22. George Gittoes, <i>Rampage</i> , 2005. Still, documentary film.	107
Figure 23. Ben Quilty, <i>Trooper Luke Korman</i> , 2012. Aerosol and oil on linen, 190 x 140 cm. Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia.	114
Figure 24. Ben Quilty, <i>Trooper M. after Afghanistan</i> , <i>no. 2</i> , 2012. Oil on linen, 170 x 180 cm. Collection of the artist.	119
Figure 25. Mark Visione, <i>The Betrothed Ones</i> , 2017. Drypoint and collagraph, 152 x 98 cm. Collection of the artist.	123
Figure 26. Ben Quilty, <i>Dresses for Soulaf</i> , 2016. Installation. Collection of the artist [?].	125
Figure 27. Mark Visione, <i>The Betrothed Ones</i> , 2017. Drypoint and chine collé, 152 x 98 cm. Collection of the artist.	127
Figure 28. N.g., <i>Group of Australian soldiers of the 9th Light Horse, Egypt, 1917</i> [?]. Private collection.	172

Figure 29. Mark Visione, <i>The Horseman</i> , 2015. Collagraph, 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.	173
Figure 30. Mark Visione, <i>The Endless Plain</i> , 2015. Collagraph, 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.	174
Figure 31. Egyptian, Ramses III, <i>Hands-of-Libyan-soldiers-counted-at-Medinet-Habu</i> , 12 th Century BCE.	175
Figure 32. Mark Visione, <i>The Bottle and the Boot</i> , 2016. Collagraph, 44.5 x 35.5 cm. Collection of the artist.	176
Figure 33. Mark Visione, <i>Larrikin (after Giotto and Piero della Francesca)</i> , 2016. Collagraph and drypoint, 35.5 x 44.5 cm. Collection of the artist.	177
Figure 34. Mark Visione, <i>Larrikin (after Giotto and Piero della Francesca)</i> , 2016. Collagraph and drypoint, 35.5 x 44.5 cm. collection of the artist.	177
Figure 35. Giotto Bondone, <i>Saint John the Apostle from The Lamentation of Christ</i> , 1303-05. Fresco, Capella degli Scrovegni, Padua, Italy.	178
Figure 36. Piero della Francesca, <i>Battle between Heraclius and Chosroes (detail)</i> , 1452-66. Fresco, San Francesco, Arezzo, Italy.	178
Figures 37. Mark Visione. <i>Seated Man</i> , 2016. Collagraph and etching, 49.5 x 37 cm. Collection of the artist.	179
Figure 38. Mark Visione, <i>The Big Dust Up I (First Version)</i> , 2016. Dry point and collagraph, 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the artist.	181

Figure 39. Mark Visono, <i>The Big Dust Up I</i> (Second Version), 2016. Dry point and collagraph, 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the artist.	182
Figure 40. Mark Visono, <i>The Big Dust Up I</i> (Third Version), 2016. Dry point, collagraph and folding, 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the artist.	183
Figure 41. Mark Visono, <i>Self-portrait study- The Big Dust Up I</i> , 2016. Collagraph, 26 x 24.5 cm. Collection of the artist.	184
Figure 42. Mark Visono, <i>The Big Dust Up II</i> (First Version), 2016. Dry point and collagraph, 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the artist.	184
Figure 43. Mark Visono, <i>The Big Dust Up II</i> (Third Version), 2016. Dry point and collagraph, 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the artist.	185
Figure 44. Mark Visono, <i>Shirkers on the Beach, 1915 I</i> , 2015. Collagraph, 6 x 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.	187
Figure 45. Mark Visono, <i>Shirkers on the Beach, 1915 II</i> , 2015. Collagraph with ghost print, 6 x 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.	189
Figure 46. Mark Visono, <i>Self-portrait study for 'Shirkers, 1915'</i> , 2015. Collagraph, 24.6 x 22.5 cm. Collection of the artist.	190
Figure 47. Mark Visono, <i>The Cove</i> (First Version), 2016. Collagraph, 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.	191
Figure 48. Mark Visono, <i>The Cove</i> (Second Version), 2016. Collagraph, 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.	191

Figure 49. Australian War Memorial, <i>Lieutenant General Sir William Birdwood swimming at Anzac Cove, May 1915</i> . [AWM G00401].	192
Figure 50. Mark Visione, <i>The Bathers</i> (First Version), 2016. Collagraph, 49 x 32 cm. Collection of the artist.	192
Figure 51. Mark Visione, <i>The Bathers</i> (Second Version), 2016. Collagraph, 49 x 32 cm. Collection of the artist.	193
Figure 52. Mark Visione, <i>Evacuation, December 1915</i> , 2016. Etching and collagraph, 8 x 49.3 x 39 cm. Collection of the artist.	195
Figure 53. Mark Visione, <i>The Invader</i> , 2015. Collagraph, 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.	197
Figure 54. Mark Visione, <i>The Legacy: The Sorrow of Priam and The Sorrow of Andromache</i> , 2016. Collagraph and drypoint, 2 x 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.	199
Figure 55. Mark Visione, <i>The Legacy: The Sorrow of Priam and The Sorrow of Andromache</i> , 2016. Collagraph and drypoint, 2 x 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.	199
Figure 56. Mark Visione, <i>Etty: 4 portraits</i> , 2015. Collagraph, 4 x 20 x 15 cm. Collection of the artist.	211
Figure 57. Mark Visione, <i>Etty and the Angel</i> , 2015. Collagraph, +/- 180 x 275 cm (25 prints – 5 x 5 different images). Collection of the artist.	212

Figure 58. Rembrandt van Rijn, <i>Jacob Wrestling with the Angel</i> , c.1659. Oil on canvas, 137 x 116 cm. Gemäldegalerie, Berlin, Germany.	214
Figure 59. Eugene Delacroix, <i>Jacob wrestling with the Angel</i> , 1857-61. Fresco, 758 x 491 cm. Saint-Suplice, Paris, France.	214
Figure 60. Paul Gauguin, <i>Vision after the Sermon</i> , 1888. Oil on canvas, 72.2 x 91 cm. National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh, Scotland.	215
Figure 61. Mark Visione, <i>Wrestling with angel</i> , 2015. Etching and collagraph, 40 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.	215
Figure 62. Mark Visione, <i>Angels</i> , 2015. Collagraph, 40 x 20 cm. Collection of the artist.	216
Figure 63. Mark Visione, <i>Study for 'Kampfbereit'</i> , 2015. Collagraph, 29.2 x 24.5 cm. Collection of the artist.	217
Figure 64. Mark Visione, <i>Kampfbereit (Ready for the Struggle)</i> , 2015. Collagraph, 43 x 59 cm. Collection of the artist.	218
Figures 65. Mark Visione, <i>Wrestling</i> , 2015. Collagraph, 43 x 59 cm. Collection of the artist.	219
Figure 66. Mark Visione, <i>Thomas á Kempis</i> , 2015. Collagraph, 59 x 43 cm. Collection of the artist.	220
Figure 67. Mark Visione, <i>'Mijn Lichaam' (My Body)</i> , (large version), 2015. Collagraph, 59 x 43 cm. Collection of the artist.	221

Figure 68. Mark Visione, <i>Op de Hei (On the meadows)</i> , 2015. Collagraph 39.2 x 98.5 cm. Collection of the artist.	222
Figure 69. Mark Visione, ' <i>Bonger is Dood!</i> ' (' <i>Bonger is dead!</i> '), 2015. Collagraph, 49.5 x 39.5 cm. Collection of the artist.	223
Figure 70. Mark Visione, ' <i>Bonger is Dood!</i> ' (' <i>Bonger is dead!</i> '), 2015. Collagraph, 2 x 49.5 x 39.5 cm. Collection of the artist.	224
Figure 73. Mark Visione, <i>Gehuld in een wolk (Enveloped in a Cloud)</i> , 2015. Collagraph, 49.5 x 39.5 cm. Collection of the artist.	225
Figure 74. Mark Visione, <i>Study for 'Prayer'</i> , 2015. Collagraph, 16 x 15 cm. Collection of the artist.	228
Figure 75. Mark Visione, <i>Prayer (First Version)</i> , 2015. Collagraph, 49.4 x 39 cm. Collection of the artist.	228
Figure 76. Mark Visione, <i>Prayer</i> , 2015. Collagraph and etching (state), 39 x 49.4 cm. Collection of the artist.	229
Figure 77. Mark Visione, <i>Prayer</i> , 2015. Collagraph and etching, 39 x 49.4 cm. Collection of the artist.	229
Figure 78. Mark Visione, <i>Nonna (Granma)</i> , 2015. Collagraph, 98.5 x 39.2 cm. Collection of the artist.	257
Figure 79. Mark Visione, <i>Mum</i> , 1959. Drawing on lined paper, 30 x 20 cm. Collection of the artist.	257
Figure 80. Mark Visione, <i>My brother's love</i> , 2003. Collagraph, 50 x 40 cm. Collection of the artist.	257
Figure 81. Mark Visione, <i>Mum</i> , 1959. Drawing on lined paper, 30 x 20 cm. Collection of the artist.	257

Figure 82. Mark Visione, <i>Mum</i> , 2003. Collagraph, 50 x 40 cm. Collection of the artist.	257
Figure 83. Mark Visione, <i>Three graces</i> , 2017. Collagraph, 98.5 x 39.2 cm. Collection of the artist.	258
Figure 84. Mark Visione, <i>How a cat learns</i> , 2015. Collagraph, 46 x 57 cm. Collection of the artist.	258
Figure 85. Edward Thorndike, <i>Cat's Puzzle Box</i> , 1913.	259
Figure 86. Mark Visione, <i>Poor Souls</i> , 2004. Collagraph, 50 x 200 cm. Collection of the artist.	260
Figure 87. Mark Visione, <i>Love over War</i> , 2016. Collagraph, 3 x 37 x 24 cm. Collection of the artist.	261
Figure 88. Mark Visione, <i>The Bee-keepers</i> , 2017. Collagraph, stamp. 48 x 76 cm. Collection of the artist.	263
Figure 89. Mark Visione, <i>Pity</i> , 2003. Collagraph. 40 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.	264
Figure 90. <i>after</i> Pieter Breughel the Elder, <i>Bee-keepers</i> , 1565 [?](detail). Drawing, 19.1 x 29.5 cm. British Museum, London.	264
Figure 91. Mark Visione, <i>Master drawings on the studio wall: 2 x 'Shirkers on the Beach'</i> , 2016.	283
Figure 92. Mark Visione, <i>Master drawings on the studio wall: Part of 'Bonger is dood!'</i> , 2016.	283
Figure 93. Mark Visione, <i>Mijn Lichaam (My Body)</i> , 2016. Detail of print from textured contact paper. Collagraph.	285
Figure 94. <i>Prayer</i> , 2015. Original image.	286
Figure 95. <i>Prayer</i> , 2015. Plate under reconstruction with new master drawing.	286

Figure 96. <i>Prayer</i> , 2015. Final print.	286
Figure 97. Stage in the creation of <i>Etty and the Angel</i> , 2015.	288
Figure 98. Stage in the creation of <i>Etty and the Angel</i> , 2015.	288
Figure 99. Mark Visione, <i>from Shirkers on the Beach - 1915 I</i> , 2015. A two-plate print.	289
Figure 100. Mark Visione, <i>from Shirkers on the Beach - 1915 II</i> , 2015, with the second colour plate 'ghost printed'.	289
Figure 101. Mark Visione, <i>The Big Dust Up</i> , 2016. A three-plate etching.	290
Figure 102. Mark Visione, <i>The Big Dust Up</i> , 2016, with overprinting and folding.	290

ABSTRACT

An investigation of the relationship between the artist and the phenomenon of war raises a number of questions concerning the nature and function of art and society, and the link between them. Arguing that war is a fundamental negative and that peace and its maintenance is not merely a goal or consequence of war, but a desirable state in and of itself, in this thesis it is considered how and why artists have responded to both through their work. Through an analysis of attitudes towards war (most particularly in Australia), it is asserted that the experience of war may lead to differing levels of acceptance of it generally and in the arts. It contends too that concepts such as community, service and sacrifice, while having an important social value, are often used to manifest political power and, through them, justify war. I maintain that, in Australia, attitudes towards war rarely include its civilian dimension and that, through the celebration of Anzac, national identity itself is currently defined by military involvement in war. It is suggested that this has its origins in unresolved issues from a colonial past and a hegemonic reluctance to accept a multicultural present. Historically, Australian artists may be seen to have supported that traditional view of national identity. The promotion of balanced interpretations of the past and cosmopolitan values now is offered as a pacifist alternative. In an Australian context, it is argued that this more cosmopolitan attitude towards war might be encouraged by the addition of indigenous, migrant and civilian- and gender-inclusive histories into a celebration of national identity, these currently lacking in ANZAC Day celebrations. These beliefs are supported by a selective investigation of the work of artists directly linked to the ideas of war and peace, through the candidate's response to those investigations, and through a description of the candidate's work and practice.

Key Words: Realism, Just War Theory, multiculturalism, ANZAC, civilian, sacrifice, hegemony.

Introduction.

This thesis presents an argument against the societal value of war and against its inevitability, and, in particular, rejects concepts of national identity defined by it.

Chapter I: *An argument for peace* outlines the differing attitudes towards war held by militarists, realists and pacifists. Although not mutually exclusive, it discusses also the different relationships between war and politics, the military and civilian society. It concludes by introducing art's and the artist's place within this structure. Although it agrees that and explains why in society there is a common acceptance of war, this section gives a strong and reasonable argument for a rejection of those beliefs and for a non-violent attainment of peace.

Chapter II: *The Artist's Response to War* is divided into two subsections. The first, ***Tableaus***, investigates how some artists have responded and are responding to the subject of war. Because the thesis's focus is on artists' responses to war as a phenomenon rather than as a particular event, it concentrates on motives and attitudes rather than offering an historical overview. Each of the four tableaux presents a comparison of two artists, usually concentrating on one key art work from each. Generally, artists were chosen as vehicles indicating particular societal attitudes rather than for their individual or culturally and historically specific views. The second, ***The Soldier and the Civilian***, considers attitudes towards war and

the military (particularly in Australia), and forms an argument for a more realistic and pragmatic attitude towards the nature and history of Australian involvement in armed conflict (***Dispatches***) and for the inclusion of civilian histories into society's perception and responses towards war. This latter is done through an investigation of the writings of the Dutch World War II diarist Etty Hillesum. Each subsection includes descriptions of the candidate's studio responses to the topics.

The third part, ***The ANZAC¹ Tradition, National Identity and Multiculturalism***, further considers the position of the ANZAC Tradition within Australian society and how artists generally have responded to it. It argues that ANZAC's position as a source of national identity has rarely been approached critically in the visual arts even though it may be considered as exclusive rather than inclusive. The section is accompanied by a studio response that considers the link between war and national identity.

The ***Appendices*** include a brief analysis of the ownership of meaning in the visual arts, which may be seen as a necessary consideration when pairing artistic production with arguments connected to it.

The work made in the context of this PhD candidature can be seen as a continuation of interests and character of my professional artistic career.

¹ ANZAC = Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. That is, the name given to the initial expeditionary force from Australia and New Zealand who fought in the Dardanelles Campaign (1915) during World War I and celebrated as the origin of the Australian military tradition and a primary source of Australian national identity. The 25th April (ANZAC Day) is a public holiday in both countries.

First, it derives from a delight in drawing, and drawing the human form. It follows that, while having used diverse media throughout my career, the work undertaken during this candidature consists of figurative intaglio prints and that is the main technical concern of my practice. However, a particular appraisal of print-making historically within the context of war and peace has been avoided. Print-making specifically is not the concern of this thesis, and there was a strong avoidance of focusing on and passively supporting the idea of print-making as an auxiliary activity to techniques like painting and sculpture. Further, print-making's reproductive character has made it a tool for ideologies – in the past for religious beliefs and, more recently, for political propaganda. The reproducible nature of print-making played a minor role in the studio component of my work, and a distinction was also recognized between that peace promoted by propagandist posters and pacifism. As in my artistic practice generally, works focus on the intimate (direct personal relationships) and universal concepts perceived in culture and cultural change. The space and forms created are symbolic rather than following a particular Western tradition of representation, while influences are drawn from Greek red and black figure vases, monumental Egyptian and Pre-Colombian sculpture and, in particular, Japanese Heian scrolls (*emaki*) and the aesthetic of *aware*² associated with them. Earlier post-graduate studies concerning the psychology of children's drawing and the idea of the *leitmotif* in Western opera lead to considerations of warfare and morality in Homer's *Iliad*. These led naturally to the concerns of this thesis.

² The concept may be explained as finding beauty in transience or, perhaps, a sense of gentle sadness.

Chapter I: An argument for peace.

The original title of this thesis – ‘The Artist as Peace-maker’ – ascribed to artists as a social group insights and responses which they seldom demonstrate, but did suggest the optimism and goals which the thesis still maintains. Although the indiscriminate nature of war has always been known, it has not merely been accepted but, rather, it has been commonly greeted with enthusiasm and excitement. Enemies are identified and dehumanized with little regard for memory of the past or truth. The moral values by which a community lives are put aside and ideology and beliefs in ‘progress’ justify any act. Although the destructive nature and consequences of war are known, these are too rarely the themes of artists. Historically, when artists have approached the subject of war in their work, they have overwhelmingly chosen to portray the heroism or the suffering and sacrifice of the soldier. Often too, the representation of war is the engine of group identification and belief. The artist’s response to war has been no different than that of society in general. Visual artists who have represented war as a societal evil and sought reasons for its manifestation have been rare exceptions to this rule.

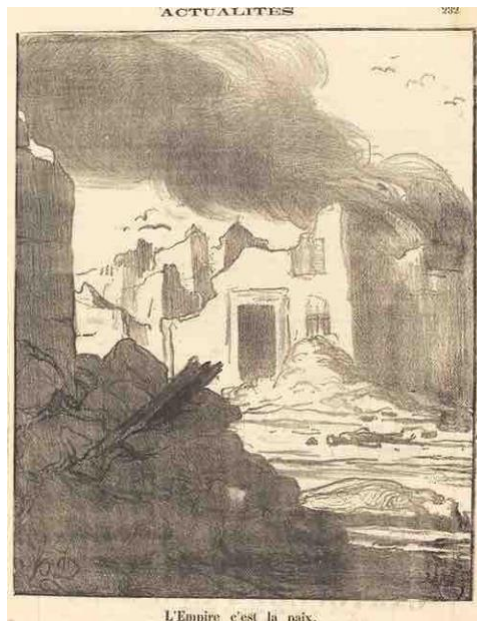


Figure 1. Honoré Daumier, *L'empire c'est la paix*, 1870.
Gillotype on newsprint. 22.9 x 18.50 cm. National Gallery of Art,
Washington D.C.

Rather than this being good reason for dismissal of the topic, an investigation of war's place in the mind of society and in that of the artist may, possibly, lead to fruitful reflections concerning personal and group identity, why war is used to solve problems, what the consequences of this are and why alternatives should be sought.

With war, it could be argued that it is common for people not just to have opinions, but rather to have strong convictions about it. These convictions are based, among other things, on individual and collective perceptions concerning human nature and interpretations of the past and present. Further, they often define expectations of the future. There is dispute about the causes of wars, the justness and unjustness of their conduct and war's role in society. There is debate about historical detail

and consequences. Yet often, the possibility of an end to war and the maintenance of peace in the world (as concrete goals) are not part of any perceived rational argument. However, for the good reasons outlined in this thesis, there is and has been a strong opposition to the phenomenon of war and a desire for a world not just without it, but for a world characterised by the benefits of peace. Crucially, I, like the delegates at the Australian Peace Conference held in Melbourne in 1937, oppose strongly the idea that 'war is inevitable and reject the fatalism and inaction fostered by such teaching.'³ This thesis puts forward the argument that wars (all wars) have a negative impact on our reality and considers what artists' attitudes towards war have been, and what they have and have not done, are doing and could possibly do to promote peace through their work.

The Militarist.

As has been pointed out, attitudes towards war vary greatly and it is in no way to be thought that universally war is seen as a negative in the world and without any value. Militarists and militarist societies (including those without military governments) identify clear benefits from war: the development of a strong sense of community, both on an intimate level as well as on a broader nationalist level; a manifestation of valuable, noble ideals such as valour and glory, and the concepts of service and sacrifice for the greater good, these

³ Carolyn Rasmussen, cited in Lake et al., *What's Wrong with Anzac?: The Militarisation of Australian History* (University of New South Wales Press, 2010), 78.

linked to that sense of community mentioned above; a belief that war stimulates positive social change and promotes advances in science and technology; and, importantly, a belief that war is a necessary experience (especially for males) in order to achieve a realization of self both in an individual and communal sense. Given that war involves the destruction of property and the killing of individuals – not as promoted aims but, rather, as consequences which are impossible to avoid - it may be argued that the values attributed to war by those who see it as not only unavoidable, but also worthy are only available to the ones who survive it. War does not select as its victims those lacking in strength, valour or intelligence. It is not ‘the good’ or the most fit who survive war. If the militarist believes that war functions as the mechanism of eugenics in society, then this is a failed experiment. Similarly, the economic, educational and cultural consequences of war have most often been disastrous for both vanquished and victor alike. Ultimately, if one looks for valour, glory, mateship, love of country, altruistic service and sacrifice, then arguably there are better, more constructive sources of these than war and such emotions and responses to the world can be seen in and of themselves as no justification for the existence of war.

The Realist.

Some realists share the militarists’ beliefs in the value of war. Indeed, from the battlefield, the soldier’s view is often a realist one:

To put it very basically, I'd got through another day without being seriously hurt or killed, and we'd eliminated thirteen men who were hell-bent on doing that to us.⁴

However, 'realist' describes a broad group within which attitudes vary greatly. The political advisor and legal historian, Philip Bobbitt, for example, in a detailed outline of the development of states and their interactions, suggests that states generally aim to protect the integrity of their borders and to act in the best interest of their own citizens (rather than in the interests of all). He also points out that a state strives to 'aggrandize itself to the limit of its power'⁵ and, while it tries to do this 'by means of peace because peace is the most propitious climate for the growth of commerce'⁶, it can be argued that this aggrandizement may also lead to war.

Ultimately, the realist position generally is best exemplified by what has come to be known as the Melian Dialogue. Thucydides records that, during the Peloponnesian War, Athens laid siege to the island of Melos. Melos had been populated in the past by colonists from Athens's enemy, Sparta, but the island had acted neutrally during the war. During a meeting between the two opposing sides, the Athenians offer to end hostilities if the Melians will submit to the will of Athens. The Athenian ambassador comments that, given

⁴ Mark Donaldson, *The Crossroad* (Sydney: Macmillan, 2013), 269.

⁵ Philip Bobbitt, "The Shield of Achilles. War, Peace, and the Course of History," (London: Penguin, 2002), 519 and 20.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 527.

the difference in power between the two forces, the Melians have no choice but to submit because 'right, as the world goes, is only in question between equals in power, while the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must.'⁷ This example suggests the argument that realism (more so than militarism and pacifism) is not just a philosophical attitude that can be applied to hypothetical situations. These beliefs exist in the real world and are acted upon. Realism is a form of calculated pragmatism that operates outside the concepts of right and wrong, good or evil. It values power (its application, maintenance and increase) above collective and individual human life and its worth both socially and culturally. Melos refused to submit. The consequences were extreme, but not unique. All adult men were executed. The women and children became slaves. The island itself was resettled with Athenian colonists. As Clausewitz points out, in war 'a principle of moderation would be an absurdity.'⁸ Towards the end of the war given in the example above – a war which Athens ultimately lost – these new colonists were removed and the Melians who had survived returned.⁹

⁷ Thucydides, "The History of the Peloponnesian War," Project Gutenberg, accessed June 17, 2015, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/7142/7142-h/7142-h.htm#link2H_4_0019.

⁸ Carl von Clausewitz, "Book 1- on the Nature of War," trans. J.J. Graham, *On War* (Clausewitz.com, 2004), accessed May 12, 2015. <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/BK1ch01.html#a>.

⁹ In a sense, the realist belief is represented in Orwell's '1984' by O'Brien's description of a present and future reality:

'... always there will be the intoxication of power, constantly increasing and constantly growing subtler. Always, at every moment, there will be the thrill of victory, the sensation of trampling on an enemy who is helpless. If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face — for ever.' George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, (Project Gutenberg Australia, 2008), accessed October 23, 2016, <http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks01/0100021.txt>. Part 3 Chapter 3.

And yet, the world view presented in the Melian Dialogue can not be seen as a true or a complete reflection of the nature of conflict. Historically, the weak have not merely 'suffered what they must', but, rather, have sought alternatives when fighting a much stronger enemy. In a contemporary setting, this situation is described as 'Asymmetric Warfare'¹⁰ and has generated tactics such as the improvised explosive device and, more significantly, acts of terror against both combatants and non-combatants. In an Australian context, for example, the military historian John Connor observes that around 1800 the Darug people of the Hawkesbury used tactics of well-organised raids on corn crops and homesteads, rather than attacking English soldiers and settlers in a direct way. The colonial authorities chose to see this as criminal activity by a subject people rather than a war waged on both sides for the possession of the land and the dominance of culture¹¹. What remains clear about the consequences of the Melian Dialogue and Asymmetric Warfare is that they both dismiss the value of ethical behaviour when compared to military victory. For the strong, the power to act is sufficient justification while, for the weak, moral beliefs and even moral right do not always lead to moral action. Furthermore, the application of those beliefs exemplified in the Melian dialogue and the response found in Asymmetric warfare

¹⁰ 'Asymmetric Warfare' may be described as conflict between a force of significant strength and potential (usually a nation state, but also, often, a world power) and a much smaller political unit (often not a nation state itself, but rather a unit which is hard to define in terms of locus, size and ideology).

¹¹ John Connor, "The Frontier War That Never Was," in *Zombie Myths of Australian Military History*, ed. C. Stockings (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press Ltd, 2010), 17.

has serious implications for the way in which conflicts can be seen to be and are resolved. In the eyes of the powerful, the weak are often seen as desperate and fanatical, and their actions are criminal. For the weak, the strong disregard ethical concerns in favour of their own desire to maintain and increase power and control. With the enemy, no dialogue is possible.

The term 'realist' generally suggests the rejection of the idealism which typically characterises the perceptions of both militarists and pacifists. Often there is the Hobbesian belief in the violent nature of humanity and its will for power combined with a necessity for social structures and a sense of responsibilities within those structures. Each structure works for its own advancement both internally and externally. An absence of (or incomplete presence of) agreement between structures may lead to war. Here war is not seen as a necessity. Indeed, it may be argued that for the realist, peace is at least preferable to war. Often peace is the goal of war and a strong defence force seen as a way to avoid war. Yet, although the realist sees war as fundamentally inevitable, something that will not just disappear, this does not preclude searching for peaceful solutions to conflict situations and potential conflict situations. More often, the realist stance is used to justify war preparedness. However, it has been argued that we can not prevent war and prepare for it at the same time¹².

Consequently, although the realist accepts war as a phenomenon, that acceptance is not unequivocal. The realist

¹² Attributed to Albert Einstein. See "E. Einstein", Shmoop, accessed May 3, 2016, <https://www.shmoop.com/quotes/cannot-simultaneously-prevent-prepare-war.html>.

seeks moral justification for war. Just War Theory has developed over many centuries¹³. It consists of two areas: the justification for going to war in the first place (*ius ad bellum*) and the acceptable conduct of those involved in warfare (*ius in bello*). With regard to the former, amongst other criteria, only a 'legitimate authority'¹⁴ may declare war, there must be a 'just cause' such as self-defence or a perceived injustice¹⁵, all other alternative courses of action must be exhausted, there must be the possibility of a positive outcome and the war must be able to be fought according to *ius in bello*. This has been argued to mean that civilians should not be harmed, combatant prisoners treated respectfully and actions should be seen to have clear positive outcomes¹⁶. According to Just War Theory, all of these criteria should be met for a war to be justifiable or justified. So far, it can be argued that such a war has never occurred. If one uses the Iraq War (2003-2011) as a recent example, there are serious uncertainties about the real nature and seriousness of the threat posed by Saddam Hussein's regime, the true reasons why the USA and her allies waged the war in the first place and whether or not there were diplomatic alternatives possible. Furthermore, during the process of the war, civilians were killed and injured and prisoners mistreated. Similarly, even the unambiguous evil presented by Nazism in Germany as well as the militarism of both fascist Italy and Japan at that time, do not make World War II justifiable within the confines of

¹³ First given that name by Stanislaw of Skarbimierz (1360-1431) in *De bellis justis*.

¹⁴ Nigel Dower, *The Ethics of War and Peace* (Cambridge UK: Polity Press, 2009), 81.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid., 81-2.

Just War Theory. This is because, amongst other events and policies, bombing campaigns on both sides, which consciously and indiscriminately targeted and killed hundreds of thousands of civilians, prohibit us from accepting it as a 'just' war.¹⁷

However, Just War Theory is not a set of rules or internationally accepted laws under which political bodies are allowed to act. Rather, it describes a moral framework that can be accepted or rejected completely or partially.

At the same time, the idea of 'justice' itself raises further problems. All the parties involved in a conflict may be able to clearly justify their involvement. Therefore, firstly, who decides the identities of 'the just' and those who should be confronted? Often the world turns to international law and organizations such the United Nations. But often the solutions offered tend not to be durable and nations act in self-interested dressed up and paraded as altruism. Ultimately, 'the just' can be synonymous with the most powerful acting with indiscriminate arrogance rather than benevolence. Secondly, how can we be sure that those who embark on a just cause will keep to this course? Moreover, in their choice of whether to act or not, 'the just' have repeatedly been selective. That is, at times 'evil' has been confronted and at other times it has not. This, too, implies action based on self-interest rather than justice. Indeed, not all unjust situations necessarily demand and have demanded the violent confrontation of war. At the end of World War II, the eastern half of Europe came under the political and social

¹⁷ See A.C. Grayling, *Among the Dead Cities: Is the Targeting of Civilians in War Ever Justified?* (London: Bloomsbury, 2007).

control of the Soviet Union. In the next forty-five years, capitalists and communists came close to war on a number of occasions – a war with possible cataclysmic consequences for the whole world and particularly for what would have become the nuclear battleground of Europe. In those years, too, many in the east of Europe suffered under regimes which limited freedoms, restricted movement and choice, and kept populations at a standard of living far below that of their western neighbours. Many were killed or imprisoned for their beliefs. However, even the unjustifiable cruelty of the post-war decades in Eastern Europe may be seen as preferable to the military alternative.

It may be argued that, for the realist, one of the strongest justifications given for war is that sense of progress woven into our histories and philosophies. 'The enemy' represents the barbarism and violence of the past that must be eliminated violently now in order for society to reach some just, harmonious and eternally peaceful future. Weaker societies regarded as too primitive can be pushed aside, eliminated or assimilated in the name of that golden future.

The Pacifist.

Those pacifists, then, who categorically oppose the use of violence and the phenomenon of war, may sometimes be seen to have a tacit acceptance of repression. Similarly, for example, if World War II is seen as unjust, does this signify acceptance of Nazism? Has then, for example, opposition to war in Iraq

(and elsewhere) meant implied support for repressive regimes? It is suggested that, by their opinions and inaction, pacifists turn their backs on 'the truths by which we live'¹⁸, that is, the truths for which 'our' soldiers die and are prepared to both kill and die. In answer to this, Mahatma Gandhi stated

Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means the pitting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant.¹⁹

Meanwhile, much of what is written on war and peace does not discuss 'peace as a sustainable world reality' as if it is a possible option. However, pacifists do oppose repressive or totalitarian regimes and indeed are not, by their beliefs, excluded from doing so. Furthermore, pacifism is often linked to global concerns such as economic inequalities and the state of the environment. Most particularly, pacifism involves a sincere concern for human rights and a questioning of the reasons for all types and levels of violence within society.

Before using violence as a solution, the pacifist academic, Nigel Dower suggests that questions should be asked and answered:

Is the policy or action proposed such that it advances human well-being generally and is not discriminatory in favour of our nationals or at the expense of others who

¹⁸ Brendan Nelson, Sexton, A., "As of Today..... Alex Sexton," ed. Australian War Memorial (n.g.).

¹⁹ Mahatma Gandhi, 1920, cited in J. Gittings, *The Glorious Art of Peace (from the Iliad to Iraq)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 3.

are not our nationals? or: ... Can it be seen as advancing or protecting our own society's interests in a way that can be justified from a global point of view (as being a reasonable defence of our interests)?²⁰

Inherent in this is that the promotion of peace is not the promotion of a particular system of beliefs not universally shared (that is, it is not dogmatic). Also, the promotion of peace should ultimately itself be undertaken peacefully and positively²¹.

If peace is to be promoted, what, then, makes it preferable to war? Indeed, if war is also inevitable, an unavoidable part of who 'we' are, then why should we undertake the consequently impossible task of ascribing it to the past? Christopher Coker, for example, claims that

war is not pathological, any more than it is socially dysfunctional, and it most certainly is not just a bad idea that we can cash in for a better one, peace. It has played such a central role in the human story because it is embedded in our cultural evolution²²

and that, without an understanding of this,

you will be left crassly blaming its historical prevalence on the fact that our ancestors were too stupid to grasp its cost, or too naïve in thinking it 'glorious', or too blinkered to understand its consequences.²³

²⁰ Dower, 15.

²¹ 'Fighting for Peace is like screwing for virginity', attributed to George Carlin. "Goodreads," accessed March 15, 2016. <http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/70343-fighting-for-peace-is-like-screwing-for-virginity>.

²² Christopher Coker, *Can War Be Eliminated?* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2014), xii.

²³ *Ibid.*, 24.

However, historically, philosophers and historians have asked themselves why political and military powers have not questioned its unacceptably high cost, never weighed up a concept like 'glory' against the human misery war causes nor considered that objectives can be achieved in non-violent and non-destructive ways. As for a lack of consideration about the consequences, often this consideration is dismissed because of desires for personal gain rather than shared 'interests'²⁴. Beliefs regarding war's inevitability are important but they do not necessarily define our attitudes to war nor justify it. In his correspondence with Einstein, Freud makes very clear his belief in that inevitability because of what he describes as man's unavoidable aggressive tendencies. Consequently, he asks why war should be opposed. His answer addresses the arguments of both the realist and the militarist:

because every people has a right over their own lives and war destroys lives that were full of promise; it forces the individual into situations that shame humanity, obliging them to murder fellow human beings against their will; it ravages material amenities, the fruits of human toil, and much besides. Moreover wars, as now conducted, afford no scope for acts of heroism according to the old ideals and, given the high perfection of modern arms, war today would mean the sheer extermination of one of the combatants, if not of both. This is so true, so obvious, that

²⁴ Bobbitt, 522.

we can but wonder why the conduct of war is not banned by general consent.²⁵

If war is bad, then arguments about its cultural or even biological inevitability²⁶ do not diminish the value of promoting peace. The anthropologist, Margret Mead argued in 1940 that war was an invention of mankind and, as such, a better alternative would be found. She continues:

Propaganda against warfare, documentation of its terrible cost in human suffering and social waste, these prepare the ground by teaching people to feel that warfare is a defective social institution. There is further needed a belief that social invention is possible and the invention of new methods which will render warfare as outdated as the tractor is making the plow, or the motor car the horse and buggy. A form of behavior becomes outdated only when something else takes its place, and in order to invent forms of behavior which will make war obsolete, it is a first requirement to believe that an invention is possible.²⁷

Indeed, there are many valid reasons for believing that war is and has been detrimental to life on this planet and endangers its future survival.

²⁵ Alfred Einstein and Sigmund Freud, "Why War? (1933)," in *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, ed. M. Kaes (University of California Press, 1994).

²⁶ This argument was refuted by the Seville Statement on Violence published by UNESCO in 1986. For the full text see <http://ringmar.net/politiskaideer/index.php/seville-statement-on-violence-1986/>, accessed January 25, 2017.

²⁷ Margret Mead, "Warfare Is Only an Invention - Not a Necessity.," in *The Dolphin Reader*, ed. Douglas Hunt (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1990), 421.

War is a win-lose phenomenon. Right at the beginning of 'On War', Clausewitz makes this clear when he defines war as 'an act of violence to compel our opponent to fulfill our will'²⁸, and this in the extreme because (as has already been stated) it is impossible to be moderate when involved in war.²⁹ Further, the destruction it brings may touch both vanquished and victor alike. Considering the effects of World War II, John Keegan emphasises that,

In every major combatant country, except the United States, years of unproductive military expenditure and of under-investment in the civilian economy, often no investment at all, condemned the people who welcomed the peace to a new round of economic self-denial in the cause of repairing the war's self-inflicted wounds³⁰.

This material destruction caused by war extends further to the heritage of nations. That is, it is cultural as well as economic. Often, victory may be seen to be made possible through the demoralization of populations. This has involved a conscious attack on civilians and culture as much as on combatants and economic infrastructure. Similarly, victory can mean the imposition of belief systems alien to the vanquished and their culture. Both these consequences of war regularly involve the destruction or theft by the victor of artifacts central to the cultural worth of the enemy. Although iconoclasm is not always a product of war, it too has regularly heralded a coming conflict

²⁸ Von Clausewitz. Book 1, Chapter 1, Definition.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ John Keegan, *War and Our World* (Vintage, 2011), 12-13.

and repeatedly acted as a symbol of an enemy's lack of humanity or of shared values. The attack on and destruction of human environments makes the damaging of their cultural reality unavoidable – this, even more so as a consequence of the aerial bombings of the last 100 years. Yet, regardless of our beliefs or affiliations, retrospectively, events such as the destruction of the Mostar Bridge in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1993) or the Buddha's of Bamiyan in Afghanistan (2001) are seen as great losses for humanity generally.

While buildings can be rebuilt or replaced, fortunes made over new and it is hoped that masterpieces will keep on being made, the human price of war is not to be recouped. Through military drill, training and the experience of the battlefield itself, soldiers are dehumanized to the point where they are prepared to kill other human beings based on commands rather than as a response to a threat or animosity. Dower points out that 'a soldier is expected not to exercise independent moral judgment' and, consequently, is 'often left with various forms of trauma and other psychological problems.'³¹ According to Robert Graves, repetitive drill makes a soldier more proficient and, as a consequence, he and his comrades have a higher chance of survival³². Yet, for the individual soldier, this attitude is not an unqualified one. Victoria Cross recipient Mark Donaldson suggests this when he states:

³¹ Dower, 123.

³² Robert Graves, *Goodbye to All That* (London: Cassell, 1957).

We're trained to achieve military objectives, which in effect means trained to take human lives, but this is never as simple or straightforward as it sounds.³³

Still, it is the training of soldiers and the effect of propaganda on both them and civilians which lead to the enemy being seen as less or other than human. Deaths in combat of comrades and family members further incite hatred and the desire for revenge on both sides, the events of a war itself justifying its own continuance for its direct participants. This loss is visited upon the families of the dead. Military casualties have a profound effect upon civilian societies. They may damage the capacity of an individual family and a nation to function successfully both socially and economically. Further, given the indiscriminate nature of war, as has been suggested earlier, war leads to civilian casualties. Because victory demands extreme measures, war often directly targets the lives of non-combatants and their environment. Also, even when this may not be the case, strategic goals regularly do not differentiate between military targets and the consequences they involve for civilians. For example, lethal drone attacks by the US military in Pakistan have targeted *suspected* terrorists. Consequently, the BBC reported in 2013 that of the 3,640 people killed in such attacks at that date, 890 had been civilians³⁴.

³³ Donaldson, 264.

³⁴ "Pakistan Drone Strike Kills Seven in North Waziristan" *BBC*. accessed June 16, 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-22820208>.

War, as Christopher Coker claims, may be ubiquitous and an engine for change³⁵. However, it has taken much more from the world than it has given to it, and is and has been the source of human misery and the maintainer of inequalities in the world throughout time. If it is present throughout history, then it remains ultimately an unwelcome guest. At the beginning of our recorded history, Herodotus puts these words of advice into the mouth of the captive king Croesus:

no one is so senseless as to choose of his own will war rather [than] peace, since in peace the sons bury their fathers, but in war fathers bury their sons.³⁶

War on an intimate and a universal level is a scourge, and as the anthropologist Lawrence Keeley argues, while its presence is traceable in the earliest of human societies, we should eliminate it³⁷. As a consequence, pacificism - that is, the active promotion of peace – may be a motive for the artist and the source of possible meaning for the works she/he creates. Therefore, understanding the meanings of ‘war’ and ‘peace’ and how they operate within societies may suggest the power of the individual (and the limits of that power) to influence our attitudes towards these concepts.

³⁵ Coker, 6.

³⁶ Herodotus, "The History," MacMillan and Co., accessed May 15, 2015, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2707/2707-h/2707-h.htm>.

³⁷ Lawrence H Keeley, *War before Civilization, the Myth of the Peaceful Savage* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 24.

Politics.

Above all else, war is a political act. The pacifist, Nigel Dower defines war as 'killing violence organized in a military form by political units directed against other political units'³⁸, while for a realist like Bobbitt,

War provided the means by which consensus was achieved in the past. Peace resolves issues that war has defined, winnowed and presented in a way that is ripe for resolution.³⁹

And,

War, like law, sustains the state by giving it the means to carry out its purposes of protection, preservation and defense.⁴⁰

War here is a process of social evolution – political, historical and (very importantly for Bobbitt) legal. Because the world has no ruler and there is no internationally agreed upon morality, laws and beliefs are tested through interaction (including, when and where necessary, war) and ratified through peace (conferences). The evolution is seemingly endless as new political forms rise and recede. War is regarded to be as necessary as peace.

The objections to war that a pacifist like Dower makes are that it involves pain and death to individual human beings while also

³⁸ Dower, 5.

³⁹ Bobbitt, 777.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 780.

severely damaging the fabric of the societies involved. Bobbitt and others see cycles of war and peace as representing societal progress. While both Bobbitt and Dower see war as political, the pacifist sees no overall worth in this.

War can not be undertaken by an individual alone. It may be argued that this is the difference between war and other forms of violence. It must be agreed upon. Others must be won over to its value or righteousness. Moreover, in a modern context, war involves delegating. That is, those who choose to go to war do not generally go to the war themselves. Also, according to John Gittings, Tolstoy comments that 'war is based on a confidence trick: that wars are started by individuals with pretensions to exercise power, but the reality of such power is a fraud' because the effort in fact is made by the common people. Political justification does not negate moral responsibility for what Tolstoy sees as a crime.⁴¹

The soldier Alfred de Vigny, predating Tolstoy's comments above, pleads that

It ought never to be possible that a few adventurers, suddenly assuming dictatorial powers, should be able to transform four hundred thousand honourable men into assassins, by laws which are as fleeting as their authority.⁴²

All too often this has been the case.

⁴¹ Gittings, 169.

⁴² Alfred de Vigny, *The Warrior's Life* (London: Penguin Classics, 2013), 50.

The Military.

The position of the soldier within society is a special one and our acceptance of war is, in many ways, dependent upon our perception of that relationship. For example, in Australia, war is interpreted and appraised primarily through the experiences of Australian soldiers and their families and not regarded as something experienced by society generally even though it is central to the Australian idea of nationhood.

The soldier is linked to society by a number of attributes and concepts. The political essayist Barbara Ehrenreich suggests that the idea of the warrior developed from a time when primitive humans competed with wild animals for food, for dominance and, ultimately, for existence⁴³. This real significance of the warrior as assurance for the group's continued survival is, perhaps, a strong reason why the soldier and war itself are described in religious terms. It may also be an explanation for the enthusiasm with which war is very often initially greeted⁴⁴. At the centre of this enthusiasm is the soldier. In the age of the standing army, what motivates men and

⁴³ Barbara Ehrenreich, *Blood Rites: Origins and History of the Passions of War* (Henry Holt & Company, Inc., New York, 1997), 22.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 13-14. The Austrian author Stephan Zweig describes this moment of popular enthusiasm for war – in this case, World War I – in colourful detail. He returns to Austria in the first days of the war:

“To be perfectly honest, I must confess that there was something fine, inspiring, even seductive in that first mass outburst of feeling. It was difficult to resist it. And in spite of my hatred and abhorrence of war, I would not like to be without the memory of those days.” Stefan Zweig, *The World of Yesterday*, trans. Anthea Bell (University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 2009), 246.

women to join the military? Employment and life-style are arguably high priorities. The idea of service to the community, most particularly, is underlined and is the origin of the respect shown to them. Through injury or, ultimately, death, that service becomes sacrifice – a religious act.

However, to what degree can military service and choosing to participate in warfare be seen as altruistic? In the world of politics and recruitment this concept of service is often not a nuanced one, military personnel more likely to be seen building schools and hospitals than in violent combat. The soldier's attitude is somewhat different. Mark Donaldson gives a number of reasons why people choose to enlist. He himself saw it as a chance to prove himself⁴⁵, a link to his father's nature, history and practical attitudes, and a desire to 'protect and fight' in response to the murder of his mother some years after his father's death⁴⁶. He recognizes that many other of his fellow soldiers had also experienced difficult times in their youth.⁴⁷

Possibly more direct are the comments found in an ABC TV program concerning Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), where the wounded veteran Lee Sarich sees service as growing from his anger at a childhood characterized by

⁴⁵ Donaldson, 118, 205.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 113.

⁴⁷ 'I was in the SAS for a few years before I realized that a lot of us had hardship or some big trauma in our backgrounds. One guy had seen his father murder his mother when he was six years old. Another saw his girlfriend die in a car accident. It makes a certain sense that big things like this, if they don't kill you, can shape you into a person who wants to take on the particular challenges of life as an elite soldier.' *ibid.*

abuse.⁴⁸ Two hundred years earlier, the post-Napoleonic soldier Alfred de Vigny asked '...what difference is there between a murderer and me?'⁴⁹, and later continues,

How many murders are there in a big battle? – This is one of those questions in which reason loses herself and has nothing to say. – It's war that's to blame, not us.⁵⁰

For De Vigny, this innocence in battle is a consequence of service in a military sense.⁵¹ Yet both soldiers, Sarich and De Vigny, seem to have a desire to 'reconcile duty to conscience'⁵². Furthermore, beyond duty and obedience, one associates war with honour, bravery, glory and the particularly Australian concept of mateship. While these are products of

⁴⁸ 'But you know, my- you know, the whole sort of services thing for me: it start - when I was, like, um, like 16 I wanted to be a gangster, you know? That, that- yeah, that was like my- you know, like seriously. And um...

You know, 'cause the-the home that I grew up in was just f***in' shithouse, you know what I mean? Like, a lot of violence. I was adopted and the family I was adopted into was just f***in' woeful, you know? And like violence and sexual ab-abuse and all that sort of stuff.

And so from about 16 I thought the legitimate option is joining the Army. I- it's almost, ash- I'm ashamed to admit it, you know, but I thought the legitimate option is joining the Army. I can f***in' kill people and, um, it'll, it'll be OK. You know, I'll get f***in' medals, I won't go to f***in' jail.

Fast forward: it was, like, 10 years later that I... I still had that idea about wanting to join the Army and, um, and it was different. It was about being of service. You know, it was, it was kind of like, um... I don't know, like a noble, legitimate, um, you know, job and, ah, and I felt very good about it. About... It wasn't just about killing people and, you know, being f***in' angry: it was actually about being able to be, um, of service, you know, to-to the community in-in a way that I was able to do. Yep.' "Bringing the War Home," Four Corners. ABC, 2015.

⁴⁹ Vigny, 157.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 165.

⁵¹ 'But military obedience, at once passive and active, receiving an order and carrying it out, striking with blind eyes, like Fate in the ancient world!' *ibid.*, 22.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 49.

war, they are neither particular to it nor a justification for it. Only in highly militarized societies would this be the case.

In Australia, war and battle are seen as a rite of passage both for the individual and the nation. Although this is not unique in the world, in Australia, martial prowess, sacrifice and nationalism form a religious unity that is beyond criticism. Strangely, while this, arguably, reflects post-colonial Australia's experience of war, it may be seen as a rejection or an ignoring of contemporary Australian multiculturalism. War (through the ANZAC Tradition) and national identity are so closely associated with each other, that a critical investigation of the first would unavoidably signify a reappraisal of the second. Discussing Australia's involvement in the conflict in Afghanistan, the journalist Kevin Foster clearly describes the Australian public's attitude towards the war:

For an Australian audience, the fate of the Afghans and their country is of little moment and the fighting there matters only in as far as it provides a platform for deeds of valour and sacrifice that showcase essential national qualities.⁵³

In Australia, popular interest, promoted through the desires and attitude of politics and the media, limits the idea of war to the experiences of soldiers serving the will of their country and justifiably to the suffering of their families when that 'service' becomes 'sacrifice' through injury or death. Having said this, it

⁵³ Kevin Foster, *Don't Mention the War (the Australian Defence Force, the Media and the Afghan Conflict)* (Clayton, Victoria: Monash University Publishing, 2013), 71.

is sadly ironic that regularly the circumstances of the returned soldier are greeted with indifference by those who originally sent them off to war.⁵⁴

The Citizen and the Civilian.

As war is a political act, Immanuel Kant proposes that in order to achieve 'Perpetual Peace' what are needed are republican governments. This is because:

In a republican system, it must be the citizens, who are all legally on a par, who decide 'War or no war?', and in answering that they have to contemplate all calamities of war, in which they would have to

- fight,
 - pay the costs of the war out of their own pockets,
 - painfully repair the devastation war leaves behind,
- and,
- load themselves with a heavy national debt that would embitter peace itself and could never be amortised because of constant further wars.

Faced with all that, it is utterly natural for them to be very cautious about getting into such a dangerous game.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ In the U.S.A. the case of the 'Bonus Army' at the conclusion of World War I and in Australia, the limit of care shown to soldiers returning from service with PTSD (this cause taken up by the artist Ben Quilty) are two contemporary examples amongst many.

⁵⁵ Immanuel Kant, "Towards Perpetual Peace," 7.

Here Kant suggests that, amongst other reasons for choosing not to go to war, there are severe consequences for non-combatants and the world in which they live. As has been mentioned earlier, 'just war' means that there should be no consequences for civilian populations – something which has been impossible to achieve. It could be argued, also, that another consequence of Kant's beliefs would be that the concept of 'sacrifice' would be connected more clearly to those who choose war, their reasons and the war's outcomes. Historically, this has not happened and, seemingly contradictorily, 'sacrifice' has been used as a defence against criticism of war.

The term 'citizen' implies a two-way sense of responsibility between the individual and the state. The policy of the state should reflect the beliefs and desires of its citizens. The actions of the state should be in the best interests of its citizens. The citizen lives according to the laws and customs of the state and identifies with it on a moral and emotional level. This contract between the citizen and the state, between the individual and the collective (and, particularly, those who govern it) is a general one. Confronted by the idea of the common good, this collective perceives the individual's desires and beliefs as being of secondary importance. The goals of the state and the military's sense of mission are not necessarily dependent on societal consequences. The global threat used by nuclear powers since 1945 is a clear example of this. The circumstances, events and conclusions of war cut across the

quality of life and the rights of the individual. Indeed, war suspends many of those morally agreed upon laws by which peaceful individuals live together. The citizen, choosing or compelled to wear a uniform in times of war, acts from a 'sense of adventure'⁵⁶, altruistic love of country, a hatred of the enemy and perceptions concerning self-image and sexual maturity⁵⁷. This being the case for all opposing forces, the civilian may share the soldier's sense of adventure and love of country and he/she has repeatedly been their victim. For the civilian, war extends beyond the battles. Its effect extends beyond the armistices and treaties.

Indeed, while governments avow that the aim of a war is to protect and maintain their society, its character and the individuals who constitute it, wars nevertheless have far-reaching consequences for those citizens. In *Killing Civilians. Method, Madness and Morality in War*⁵⁸, the scholar in humanitarian ethics, Hugo Slim catalogues those consequences and gives examples of them from a broad sweep of history. Beyond the ramifications of war listed by Kant above, and beyond the death and injury of non-combatants in war, Slim lists the dispersal and personal impoverishment of populations, famine and disease, and sexual violence and exploitation as by-products of war. Paradoxically, belligerents have even argued that the killing of civilians may be justified by

⁵⁶ Alan Moorehead, *Gallipoli* (MacMillan, South Melbourne, Vic., 1975), 80.

⁵⁷ Bill Gammage, *The Broken Years: Australian Soldiers in the Great War* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1990), 9-11.

⁵⁸ Hugo Slim, *Killing Civilians. Method, Madness and Morality in War* (London: Hurst 2007).

a desire to make sure that civilians are never killed in war⁵⁹. In fact, Slim gives a whole raft of reasons why civilians are targeted in wars and how this is justified. Most importantly, he points out that often the 'noncombatant' status of the civilian is questioned. For example, in times of war, civilian populations are expected to support their government and military in whatever way they can. Not to do so is often considered a crime. Further, the economic and social interconnectedness of all societies means that it is impossible to be isolated totally from the general war effort. However, regularly this argument and its violent consequences suggest an insane logic with their nature embedded in manifestations of power and psychosis rather than reason.

After the generals and politicians have shaken and washed their hands, after those soldiers who survive have returned to camp, lain down their weapons and been demobbed, there is still war. Rationing in Great Britain may be used as a simple example of this. The rationing of various food and non-food items (sugar, meat, butter, petrol, etc.) during the Second World War continued on in differing degrees until it was completely stopped in 1954. More seriously, the Spanish Influenza pandemic which broke out in 1918 at the end of World War I is linked by a number of factors to the war itself. It can be argued that the illness spread, and was allowed to spread, by the international and unhygienic nature of the agglomeration of troops and by secretiveness and censorship

⁵⁹ Ibid., 152ff.

on the part of governments in revealing weaknesses in and threats to their power. It killed between 50 and 100 million people worldwide. The war had killed approximately 9 million combatants and 6 million civilians. Civilian histories of wars can not be marked by the dates of the beginnings and cessations of hostilities.⁶⁰

Given that society lives in a continual state of war (or, at least, its possibility), are there – indeed, can there be – civilian histories of war? Secondary sources take many forms. As has already been suggested, populations are expected to support their leaders in times of war and, more often than not, they do. We find this in Stefan Zweig’s remembrances of his experiences of the first half of the Twentieth Century which have a personal as well as a generally historical dimension.⁶¹ His fiction, too, gives us insights into the consequences of war. It is embodied in the post-World War I poverty and desperation of Christine, and Ferdinand – the damaged and bitter returned soldier whom she meets – in ‘The Post-Office Girl’. He argues

‘I don’t have a trace of moral scruple, when it comes to the state I feel completely free. It’s committed such horrible crimes against us all, against our generation, that

⁶⁰ Another example of historical as well as aesthetic significance is the work of the then young Japanese photographer Toyoko Tokiwa who documented the interactions between the inhabitants of Yokohama and members of the occupying US military force after the conclusion of World War II, this presented in her book *Kiken na adabana* (‘Dangerous toxic/fruitless flowers’), published in 1957.

⁶¹ Stefan Zweig, *The World of Yesterday*, trans. Anthea Bell (University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 2009).

we have a right to anything... Now that it's behaved like a hoodlum, we have a right to be hoodlums too.'⁶²

The state has failed us, acted criminally. Consequently, we are absolved of our responsibilities to it.

'The Post-Office Girl', it should be remembered, is a fictional account.⁶³ However, it and the details of its author's life may be seen to emphasise the effect of war on the noncombatant.⁶⁴ It echoes, too, this mood of post-war betrayal suggested when Freud asks if 'what we call our civilization is largely responsible for our misery'?⁶⁵ It is also suggested in Gramsci's concept of 'Cultural Hegemony' where capitalist societies are seen to be willingly controlled and directed by a suprapolitical elite.⁶⁶ Indeed, it should be remembered that social groups willingly support and participate in violent conflict where the possibility of death and destruction is high and the individual enemy has generally never committed any direct offence towards those participating. Often, a belief in a particular ideology and a belief strong enough for the soldier to kill for that ideology lies at the heart of such decisions. Repeatedly this readiness has a religious nature and war itself offers the hope of a harmonious and moral society in a peaceful future or eternal glory in the afterlife of the soldier sacrificed in and through war.

⁶² *The Post-Office Girl*, trans. Joel Rottenberg (NYRB, New York, 2008), 235.

⁶³ Similarly, contemporary feminist or pacifist interpretations of Aristophanes's play *Lysistrata* do not necessarily reflect the aims of the author or mood of the time.

⁶⁴ The book was finished around 1930, and published posthumously. After having survived the Great War, his position as an Austrian Jew in the decades which followed forced Zweig into exile. His journey finally led him to Brazil where he completed his reminiscences of cultural life in Europe during his lifetime – 'The World of Yesterday'. It was published in 1942, the same year in which he and his wife committed suicide.

⁶⁵ Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, ed. M. M. R. Khan, trans. J. Riviere, vol. 17, The International Psycho-Analytical Library (London: The Hogarth Press, 1972), 23.

⁶⁶ See pp. 235-40.

Besides the documentation of war through political and military records, the diaries (and, more recently, blogs) of both soldiers and civilians are an important primary source through which one may define war. It is interesting to note that the 2015 exhibition of diaries of Australian servicemen at the National Archives of Australia has a similar title ('Life Interrupted. Gallipoli Moments') to the World War II diaries of Etty Hillesum, a Jewish woman living in Amsterdam during the German occupation of the Netherlands when they were first published in 1981: *Het verstoorde leven - Dagboek van Etty Hillesum* (The Interrupted Life – Diary of Etty Hillesum)⁶⁷. This simple similarity in titles used to represent diaries in different countries written at different times may be an indicator of differing and similar interpretations of what war constitutes.

The militarist, the realist, the pacifist: visual artists have been all and any of these. Rather than one of these beliefs explaining how artists think and function, the work of any particular artist at any particular moment may shed light on the meaning of one or more beliefs concerning war. However, Australian art history in particular has been dominated and is dominated by artists who have supported strong, established social convictions promoting a militarist national identity. This

⁶⁷ Author's translation.

has meant that art has been made, interpreted and supported publicly and privately which strengthens and promotes a belief in militarist ideals and the ANZAC Tradition. An alternative attitude would involve questioning the reputation of the Australian military and giving it a more realistic, human and truthful face than that currently presented. An alternative attitude would involve focusing on the experience of the civilian in war as a central part of how war itself is defined, and how it is defined in Australia. This alternative attitude would question current beliefs concerning nationality and Australian self- and social-image. It might be a truer reflection of who all Australians are and who they will become. However, historically both nationally and internationally the majority of those artists who have gained prominence have not sought out alternatives. The following section of the thesis investigates the preoccupations of a selected group of artists whose works shed light on their and society's attitudes towards war. The section also re-examines the perceptions of the Australian military tradition presented as its national ethos. Further, it uses the Dutch diarist Etty Hillesum as an example of the civilian in war, a real and continual reality that plays a negligible role in Australia's perception of war.

Chapter II: The Artist's Response to War.

A. TABLEAUS.

Introduction: Argument and Method.

It is often argued that war is simply part of human nature and, therefore, inevitable. After his detailed cataloguing of violence against civilians and the reasons for it, Hugo Slim, with some degree of resignation, concludes with the (limited) hope that his book 'may help people to recognize the ideologies that drive deliberate civilian suffering so that they can anticipate them, undermine their logic and act against them in the wars which are to come.'⁶⁸

Fortunately, there is enough scientific evidence and philosophical argument to suggest that war may not be an unavoidable part of our collective futures.

Still, historically, artists have chosen war and (on occasion) peace as their subject. While, artists may be seen as an identifiable group within many societies, individually, their character, beliefs, motivations and goals reflect those of the community in which they live as much as that of their profession. An investigation of artists, their attitudes and works

⁶⁸ Slim, 296.

may help to define more general perceptions of both war and peace.

The following series of tableaux should not be seen as an historical overview of the representation of war and peace through time. Rather, it is an investigation of the motives of the artists discussed both as individuals and within the context of their societies with regard to these themes. Choices have been made based on ideas and attitudes rather than on a purely art-historical perspective. So, for example, any investigation into points where art and concepts of peace and war intersect involves some degree of selection. Works such as Goya's series of etchings, *Disasters of War* (1810-20) or Picasso's *Guernica* (1937) are not only inspirational for the artist, but may also be seen as central to society's perception of this field. However, their inclusion here would not do justice to the body of literature already dealing with these particular works, nor would their particular exclusion weaken or change the character of the argument presented. In a different way, the etchings dealing with the consequences of war by Jacques Callot (1592-1635), while implying that war is catastrophic for noncombatants, seem cautionary advice for the soldier *in bello* rather than a particular argument for or against peace or war.

The artists and work here are presented from the perspective of war and peace, rather than as a general investigation of the artist and her/his oeuvre.

TABLEAU 1: The Limit of Inspiration.

Piero della Francesca, *The Legend of the True Cross Cycle*, fresco, San Francesco, Arezzo (Italy), 1447-51[?]

Max Beckmann, *Untitled*, fresco (destroyed), Wervicq (Belgium/France), 1915

Although separated by hundreds of years of societal and artistic change, comparisons between the Italian Renaissance artist Piero della Francesca (1415-92) and the German Expressionist Max Beckmann (1884-1950) reveal a number of important similarities including a desire to represent themselves in their paintings, an obsession with space and volume combined with a preference for dramatically populating their foregrounds, and, lastly, a genius for theatrical narrative.

With regard to war, the attitudes of Piero and Beckmann may be partially explained through an examination of two frescoes. In the middle decades of the fifteenth century Piero painted a fresco cycle in the church of San Francesco in the Tuscan town of Arezzo. In 1915, while he was a medical orderly with the German army, Max Beckmann painted a fresco – now lost – in an old textile mill which had been converted into a bath house in the small town of Wervicq which straddles the French/Belgian border. While Piero's fresco cycle in Arezzo has been the subject of much scholarly consideration and, although affected by time, wilful damage and restoration, it is still to be seen *in situ*, what we know of Beckmann's fresco

comes only from his letters during this period in his life and one photograph whose validity is uncertain. However, the works both suggest an acceptance of war based on a sense of community and moral right. For Piero, that validity is found in the Church. For Beckmann, arguably, the fresco marks a moment of change and development in not only the appearance and structure of his work, but also in meaning crystallised by his war experiences.



Figure 2. Piero della Francesca, *The Legend of the True Cross Cycle*, 1447-51. Fresco, San Francesco, Arezzo, Italy.

The subject of Piero's Arezzo frescos is 'The Legend of the True Cross' – that is, the history of the wooden cross on which Jesus Christ was crucified. It is a common theme found in images in a number of churches and manuscripts throughout Europe. Artists have chosen to illustrate different scenes from the legend and to recreate the story to suit the location and the mood of the time in which the work was undertaken. It mixes the real and believed, the miraculous with the historical. Like many works of art, regardless of era, the frescoes in Arezzo were commissioned. Here the patrons were the Bacci family – probably most particularly the humanist Francesco Bacci⁶⁹. Further, this commission, being for the walls behind the altar in the church of San Francesco, fell within the context of the expectations of the Franciscan order. Piero himself probably took the work over from another artist (Bicci di Lorenzo). Consequently, it can be argued that the overall structure, choice of subjects illustrated from the legend and the general meaning of the work were in no way wholly in the hands of the artist. However, that meaning suggests a collective concept shared by the artist with the community in which he/she lives. The cross is the central and identifying symbol of Christianity and 'The Legend of the True Cross' can be said to suggest 'an image of the Cross "growing" in the world'⁷⁰. The growth of the tree from the mouth of the buried Adam, the use of the wood in

⁶⁹ although Vasari mentions that brothers Luigi and Carlo Bacci are portrayed in the scene where the heretic Chosroes is executed. See Vasari, G. "Lives of the most eminent painters, sculptors and Architects," accessed December 10, 2016. https://archive.org/stream/livesofmostemine03vasauoft/livesofmostemine03vasauoft_djvu.txt.

⁷⁰ Barbara Baert, *A Heritage of Holy Wood. The Legend of the True Cross in Text and Image*, trans. L. Preedy (Leiden, NL: Brill Academic Publishers, 2004), 380.

the time of Solomon, the disappearance and discovery of the cross in the time of the Emperor Constantine, its later loss to non-Christians and its final violent recovery and return to Jerusalem are a clear metaphor for the history of the dominance of the Christian church in Europe and beyond.

Further, Laurie Schneider⁷¹ sees the composition of the cycle as a metaphor for the holy city, Jerusalem. The frescoes are painted in three tiers and with specific reference to the lowest tier – that is, that closest to the congregation – she argues that the city is represented on a foundation divinely inspired and militarily defended. Such speculation invites inquiry into theories of social order and government.⁷²

The bottom tier contains two battle scenes on walls opposite each other with, in between, two smaller scenes of the Annunciation and the Dream of Constantine. These central themes give reason to the violent battles and justify their unusual presence in a religious setting⁷³. The Annunciation marks the moment that God through Jesus manifests himself on Earth for the purpose of salvation from sin. In the scene representing Constantine's dream, that purpose and goal

⁷¹ Laurie Schneider, "The Iconography of Piero Della Francesca's Arezzo Frescoes," *The Art Quarterly*, 32 (1969), 43.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Indeed, it is interesting to compare Piero's battle scenes to those 3 scenes of the battle of San Romano painted by Uccello around the same time. San Romano was a battle of contemporary significance and the paintings were made for a more private setting. With regard to this, Steffi Roettgen notes that, in the case of the Arezzo frescoes, it would be incorrect to argue that 'somehow the religious imagery was only a pretext for the depiction of actual events or for glorifying contemporary rulers.' Indeed, this would have been seen as sacrilegious. (see Roettgen, *S. Italian frescoes: The Early Renaissance 1400-1470*. Translated by R. Stockman. New York: Abbeville Press, 1996, 231) In Arezzo, Piero's battle scenes are symbols of the victory of the Church over non-believers outside time.

become a political reality. On the night before a crucial battle, in his dreams, the then pagan emperor Constantine is visited by an angel who, showing him the image of the cross, tells him 'In hoc signo vinces' (*By this sign you shall conquer*) and the following day Constantine wins an unlikely battle. There is debate concerning which of Constantine's battles is depicted. It may be the Battle of the Milvian Bridge (near Rome) fought against Maxentius, which consolidated Constantine's imperial rule or, more likely, a later battle against the barbarians. Either battle would indicate the manifestation of the power of God through the Catholic Church in both a spiritual and political sense – God's work as good work. With regard to the story of the 'True Cross', Constantine's position is important because it is he who initiates the search for it.



Figure 3. Piero della Francesca, *The Legend of the True Cross Cycle, the battle against Maxentius* [?], 1447-51. Fresco, San Francesco, Arezzo, Italy.

The second battle scene involves its final possession by the church after it had been found, lost, found again and stolen. The pagan King Chosroes, having taken the cross, proclaims himself 'God'. The Christian Emperor Heraclius defeats him in battle and has him executed, reclaiming the cross for Christianity.



Figure 4. Piero della Francesca, *The Legend of the True Cross Cycle, the battle against Chosroes*, 1447-51. Fresco, San Francesco, Arezzo, Italy.

Piero's part in the choice of passages from the story is unclear as is his say in the overall structure. The commission was already begun and both patrons and priests had both their goals and restrictions. There is, however, a strong unifying composition that extends beyond the individual scenes which Piero painted and makes of them visually a harmonious whole. Arguably, this reveals the artist's hand compositionally. The order of the scenes does not always reflect the chronology of the story they represent, but the choice of the scenes for the

lowest tier has a logic to it already suggested. The battle scenes too would possibly have had a similar effect on the congregation as a contemporary action blockbuster movie. These battles represent Christian victories on an abstract and real level in a time of uncertainty when the power of the church was under threat⁷⁴. The artist here has an overriding professional responsibility to his clients and that reflects the faith of the Church's congregation. The concept and consequences of war are not questioned. Christian victories here represent a collective and individual prosperity and are linked to a faith strong enough to distinguish enemies from friends and to place a differing value on each.

If Piero's fresco cycle in Arezzo has been a topic of academic interest and debate for centuries, then Max Beckmann's lost fresco made during World War I may be considered to have a value similar to that of any art work of which there is little or no record. As has been stated, our only knowledge of the fresco Beckmann painted in Wervicq comes from the letters the artist wrote at this time and a single, possibly dubious, photograph⁷⁵.

⁷⁴ for example, Constantinople had fallen to the Ottomans in 1453.

⁷⁵ Rudy van Elslande, "Genealogie Van Elslande", accessed November 12, 2016.

<https://sites.google.com/site/genealogievanelslande/03-d-16de-17de-eeuw-nrs-f-y-ca-cj/b-joos-van-elslande-berten-nr-g-ca>.



Figure 5. Max Beckmann, _____, 1915 (destroyed). Fresco, Wervicq, France.

<https://sites.google.com/site/genealogievanelslande/03-d-16de-17de-eeuw-nrs-f-y-ca-cj/b-joos-van-elslande-berten-nr-g-ca>, last viewed 28 Aug 2016.

Any analysis of Beckmann's letters should take into account that they can not be seen as purely private correspondence made public. Beckmann wrote them knowing that they would probably be published at that time in the magazine '*Kunst und Künstler*'. As the horrific nature of the conflict became quickly apparent, there was less public interest in such correspondence and after July 1915 they were no longer published.

The history of the town of Wervicq/Wervik itself gives an insight into how populations deal with the reality and consequences of war. Situated in the heart of what has long been used as an enormous battle field in Western Europe, through the centuries,

the town has repeatedly been plundered, destroyed and built up again. On the 4th of March 1915, Beckmann writes,

The thunder of the guns lasts all day long and it's amazing to see how people become accustomed to them [...] Love, petty arguments, business and ambition go on just as they did earlier, even though death sings its wild song only a few kilometres away.⁷⁶

This attitude of lives continuing in a war environment can be recognized too in the diary of Etty Hillesum written just a few decades later. For the artist Beckmann, however, the war represented an artistic opportunity.

Continually, his letters reveal that collective enthusiasm shown by populations for war and for those who go off to fight. Loyalty to a greater power and justness of cause combine with (to elaborate on Orwell's words) the thrill of future victory. Beyond this, for Beckmann, there is personal and artistic growth. On the 11th May 1915, he writes,

It's good for me that there is a war now. Everything I did previously was no more than an apprenticeship. I'm still learning and growing.⁷⁷

As a medical orderly, he seems to have had some freedom. At least within the context of his letters, besides his duties, he spends much time travelling about and sketching – twice he tells us that because of this he is arrested on suspicion of spying. Also, there was time to plan and complete the fresco.

⁷⁶ Max Beckmann. *Self-Portrait in Words : Collected Writings and Statements, 1903-1950*, trans. B. Copeland Buenger, R. Heller (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), 147.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 169.

On the 27th of March 1915, he tells us that he has been commissioned by the chief medical officer to 'decorate' a 'bathing establishment'⁷⁸. His plan is to 'transform the bathhouse, a huge textile mill, into an Oriental bath, with desert and palm trees, oases, and the battles of the Dardanelles.'⁷⁹ Given the date, the battles referred to were the naval engagements of March 1915 which were a great Turkish victory, rather than the costly and equally unsuccessful allied land invasion of the Gallipoli Peninsula begun the following month. The choice of subject is significant. The Turkish victory would be seen also as a German victory and this is combined with an exoticism that suggests Berlin cabaret and the songs of Kurt Weill in the following decade rather than the battlefields of the Western Front. The war becomes a source of inspiration, but not necessarily the subject of that inspiration. An earlier letter from the Eastern Front suggests this. The sound of the battle leads to considerations of form, composition and colour. However, the subject is not solely the battle itself, but something more abstract:

It's as if the gates of eternity are being ripped open when one of these great salvos echoes towards you. Everything suggests space, distance, infinity to you. I wish I could paint this sound. Oh, this immensity and terribly beautiful profundity!⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Ibid., 153.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 142-3.

By the 30th of March – only three days later – Beckmann has given up his initial plans and decides to ‘paint what surrounds me’⁸¹. That is, he paints the town, its river and cathedral, its inhabitants and, most particularly, the soldiers stationed there. His letters repeatedly mark his excitement at his engagement with the unfamiliar technique of fresco painting⁸². On the 1st of May, he reports that the fresco is finished and we read no more of it. Yet still, what he describes is not political and not the war, but rather a harmony of form, colour and contour. However, it should not be thought that his direct experience of the war did not stimulate an emotional and philosophic response beyond the possibilities for his own art. He does say that, for him, ‘the war is a miracle, even if a rather uncomfortable one. My art can gorge itself here.’⁸³ Added to this, most particularly, he recognizes the reasons for the general excitement of war that contrasts so strongly with what he sees as the basic emptiness and aloneness of human existence:

Whatever would we poor humans do if we did not create some idea such as nation, love, art, and religion with which to cover that dark black hole a little from time to time. This boundless forsakenness in eternity. This being alone.⁸⁴

He argues that for him – for ‘the artist’, arguably – all emotions need to be felt and expressed and understood ‘to their fullest extent’. While this is not necessarily a possibility generated by

⁸¹ Ibid., 155.

⁸² For example, *ibid.*, 159.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 173.

war, it is still the artist's task to engage with its significance completely:

Everything is life, wonderfully changing and overly abundant in invention. Everywhere I discover deep lines of beauty in the suffering and endurance of this terrible fate.⁸⁵

Indeed, for both artists, war is an exceptional experience but it is not seen as exceptional that it occurs. Rather this seeming inevitability is regarded as an opportunity for the individual, and especially for the artist. War is often promoted and consumed as a rare chance to do something tangibly meaningful. For the artist, war is a source of inspiration which, vitally, has as much to do with its form as with its content. It functions as a focusing symbol for values and beliefs commonly held. Matthias Eberle suggests that Beckmann believed the war would end the 'vile commercialism and egoistic competition'⁸⁶ surrounding him and 'saw life as a conflict out of which a better, more vital humanity would emerge, a new social order out of chaos.'⁸⁷ Beckmann's experience of war – its lack of morality and disregard for human life – provoked a questioning of the meaning of that struggle. By the summer of 1915 he had suffered a physical and mental breakdown and, was sent to Strasbourg to recuperate, and did not return to the front again. Changes in the appearance of his work reflect a new attitude. Gone is the realism that suggests

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Matthias Eberle, *World War I and the Weimar Artists: Dix, Grosz, Beckmann, Schlemmer* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 76.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

the work of contemporaries such as Lovis Corinth or Oskar Kokoschka and even link him back to Delacroix and Géricault. Many works still have physical violence as their theme and there is always the idea of the victim present. The desire for linear perspective and any clear sense of cause and effect are absent as early as 1915⁸⁸.



Figures 6. and 7. Max Beckmann, *The Grenade*, 1915.
Etching (two states), 43.5 x 28.8 cm.⁸⁹

Space and time are symbolic. Somewhere between cabaret, torture and love-making, strongly defined figures interact in claustrophobic spaces where foreground and background seem to push through each other. This sense of struggle having no meaning beyond that it is humanity's lot is carried into the reality of the inter-bellum years where the artist could find little reason in the street battles fought between rival

⁸⁸ Ibid., 91.

⁸⁹ Note the similarity between the soldiers on the right in Figure 5 and in Figure 7.

political groups in the cities of post-war Germany. Eberle remarks,

After the war, Beckmann came to look upon violence as absurd, however justified.⁹⁰

Yet, this was the same man who had gone off proudly and bravely to war half a decade before. In a lithograph from 1919, his son playing war games with toy weapons receives a quick reprimand from his father (*The Family* 1919, Lithograph, 75.5 x 45.8 cm) and one may imagine Beckmann wondering why the son would play at something that had given the father so much anguish. Perhaps, the lesson is one that has to be learnt individually and repeatedly. This would be the same man, too, whose artistic voice would be taken from him by changes in politics and culture which forced him into exile⁹¹.

While such views of war's inevitability have never been universally held, they have always been strongly enough supported for armies to be assembled and weapons put in their hands. The combatants in Piero's battles strike out at each other without thought and, in the melee, there seems as much calmness as emotion. The figures are fragmented and friend is indistinguishable from foe. The violence is acceptable as a simplistic symbol of good over evil collectively – in this case, the Church over paganism. It is not a representation of pain, death and destruction wielded by the abstraction of power.

⁹⁰ Eberle, 99.

⁹¹ See *Max Beckmann: Exile in Amsterdam*, ed. Bayerische Staatsgemaltesammlungen Munchen (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz Verlaue, 2007).

Beckmann's excitement at the power of war to generate ideas and inspiration because of the absolute nature of our emotional response to its environment is tempered by the ruin he found in conquered towns and countryside, by the mortal anonymous danger he saw on the battlefield and in hospitals and by his own loss of family to the war. Indeed, this engagement with war leads to a physical and mental breakdown, and a reconsideration of his work and function as artist. Ultimately, for Piero and Beckmann the limit of war's inspiration is that it functioned as symbol and source of energy rather than as subject. Importantly, while in Piero's work struggle and victory has a purpose, a meaning and an identifiable goal, it is Beckmann's direct experience of war that makes him question whether there is a meaning to be found in that struggle, and makes him rather seek that meaning alone within his own soul.

Studio response: *Breakdown (Beckmann in Wervicq)*.

Beckmann's lost fresco functions as the starting point for an artistic response to the preceding tableau.

Based on the master drawing for the final work, and using drypoint (dremel and needle) and collagraphic techniques on an acetate plate, a small portrait study of Beckmann was completed and, in different states, printed.



Figure 8. Mark Visione, *Breakdown (Beckmann in Wervicq - portrait study)*, 2016. Drypoint (with dremel), and collagraph, 24.5 x 26 cm. Collection of the Artist.

The variations of the larger image were made using the same techniques and, on occasion, include a second colour plate.

In the final work, Beckmann is placed sitting in front of an imagined interpretation of the fresco he had initially planned to make. A paint brush clamped between his teeth, he sits on a box over which is draped his medical orderly jacket. The background, like Homer's 'Shield of Achilles'⁹², represents a world of peace and one at war. Both idealised, the world of peace is characterised by pleasure and tranquillity, and that of war by courage and action. The artist can be seen to be motivated by the collective ideals of society, the daily experience of the artist himself and the beliefs, desires and directions of others. The choice of his pose – his low balanced stance, but with the paintbrush between his clenched teeth - aims to suggest both his strength and his coming mental breakdown. In defence of an oriental cabaret, the artist and Turkish soldiers oppose an unknown attacker.

⁹² Homer, "The Iliad", Poetry in Translation, 2009, accessed November 12, 2016.
http://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Greek/Iliad22.htm#anchor_Toc239246425.
Lines 478-608.



Figure 9. Mark Visione, *Breakdown (Beckmann in Wervicq)*, 2016. Proof. Drypoint (with dremel) and collagraph, 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the Artist.



Figure 10. Mark Visione, *Breakdown (Beckmann in Wervicq)*, 2016. Proof. Drypoint (with dremel) and collagraph, 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the Artist.

TABLEAU 2: Instructions for Utopia.

Diego Rivera (1886-1957), *Indian Warrior*, 1931. Moveable fresco, 74.9 x 58.3 cm. MOMA, New York, USA.

Yoko Ono (1933-), *Play it by trust*, 1966.
Sculpture/performance.

The Mexican painter Diego Rivera and the Japanese/US artist Yoko Ono are unlikely subjects for comparison. While Rivera arguably represents the culmination of a European tradition stretching back at least to Giotto combined with an emphasis on the representation of post-colonial left-wing ideology and a strident independence from the political and historical character that underpins that European tradition, Ono represents something new and something that has remained new. Her work is not only post-World War II. It is, more importantly, anti-political and anti-ideological. However, it is on the basis of this dramatic difference that a comparison of the two artists may be valuable for an understanding of artists' and society's attitudes to war, and, more particularly, peace.

Indeed, there are some important similarities between the two artists. Both Rivera and Ono may be described as international artists with a fundamentally cosmopolitan outlook. Before he began his cycle of monumental frescoes, Rivera had spent a decade in Paris assimilating the new styles and attitudes present there. Learnt from his Parisian housemates, he could speak Russian and in the 1920's spent almost a year working

in Stalin's Soviet Union. His own artistic style is characterised by a rejection of both the propagandist nature of Soviet Socialist Realism and the elitist character of the contemporary avant-garde. Rather, he chose a dramatic, understandable and didactic style that links him back to the fresco painters of the Quattrocento. In Mexico, he maintained his international connections with both Europe and the United States. Ono's cosmopolitan attitudes, on the other hand, can be traced back to the accident of her birth and family life. Because of her father's work with a major Japanese foreign exchange bank, Ono spent around half her childhood in the United States, returning to Japan with her mother and brother just before Japan entered the Second World War. Her trans-Atlantic life continued through her university years, and this combined with her studies made the transition into the cosmopolitan world of the avant-garde a not particularly drastic one. Decades later, that idea of internationalism welded to pacifism is inseparable from the public's perception of her. It stands in stark contrast to the strident nationalism of Rivera's works grounded in the belief of a golden future gained, if necessary, through violent ideological struggle.

'Instruction' is central to both artists' work – Rivera for his work particularly post-1920, and Ono for almost her whole oeuvre. With regard to Rivera, his American frescoes (in Mexico and the USA) function as lessons and encouragements for an historically and ideologically (as well as literally) illiterate population in a similar way to how Italian Renaissance fresco painters painted the stories from the Bible and the lives of the

saints as well as the history of towns and cities to a population who generally could not read or, at best, had little access to books. Ono, on the other hand, places the actual creation of her works in the hands of her audience through generally simple instructions. These directions often have an intimate or humorous character. Often, too, they are impossible to achieve in the real physical world and take the form of 'what if' instructions. These and other instructions have been described as utopian – notably, 'War is Over! (If you want it)'. Here the description 'utopian' suggests that ending violent political conflict is as unattainable as turning a white room blue just by wanting it to change its colour or by imagining it. This raises the issue of what art is as well as what its function or functions might be. In art, the limits are only in our mind. For Ono, at least, this may be true for life also. Further, Ono suggests that we may be able to change the world for the good by positive and sincere wishes. It is the audience's participation in the creation of Ono's art that may be the nature of its attractiveness. It can be argued that to describe it in any detail is to attack its repeatable and ephemeral nature, to damage its humour and to qualify the artistic freedom of the artist's and the audience's creative act. To describe it is to presume what it was, is and will be. The opposite is true of Rivera's frescoes. The technique of fresco painting itself has a character that links it to physical work. Here the artwork is inseparable from the building not in the way an architectural drawing is linked to the building it represents, but rather in the way walls or bricks, its component parts and materials are the building. A fresco itself is divided up into sections called 'giornate' that each, in a

purely practical way, represent the sum of a day's work. The images Rivera painted represent Mexico and its people geographically, historically and, ultimately, ideologically. Heroes and villains could be, usually, clearly identified. Enemies took an unequal share of wealth and made the honest worker suffer because of that greed. The achievements were the results of labour and the rewards were the fruits of that labour and the right to it. Therefore, Rivera's central works, social lessons, were undertaken in public places, generally accessible to all.

However, for both Rivera and Ono there is a utopian goal – an end to struggle and a world characterized by peace and harmony. It could be argued that Yoko Ono's thought-based art where we can wish for a golden future is a product of a leisured society, mass culture and something totally new – youth culture - where continual physical labour is not the daily routine for many, where free time and an income beyond our daily needs are the norm and art itself often does not necessarily have a physical dimension. While many of Ono's instructions require volition and a physical action on the part of the audience to complete the art work, many of them too involve only a wish or even the act of doing by not doing (possibly associated with the Taoist idea of '*wu wei*'). Often, the works and ideas are carried along by the media and the same mechanism that functions in advertising⁹³. Rivera, on the other hand, takes on the role of spokesperson for a poor nation - proud and with a long, if

⁹³ Rachel Kent, "War Is Over! (If You Want It): Yoko Ono," (Sydney: Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, 2013), 19.

disunified, history – emerging from an era of colonial, then dictatorial rule and a decade of crippling and bloody civil war. Beyond any artistic goals, the message of the content of his frescoes is for the Mexican people. He sees action through struggle (and class struggle) as the route to be taken to achieve a workers' paradise. The goal may be peace, but his argument implies that progress must be won through hard work and a preparedness for violent confrontation. A consideration of particular works may give a broader understanding of the artists' attitudes towards peace and war.

In the history of modern art, something special happened in 1920. In Mexico, the civil war had ended and general Álvaro Obregón had been elected president. The rector of the National Autonomous University of Mexico, and later Minister of Education in the Obregón government, José Vasconcelos had a vision of the nation's future achieved by universal non-religious education and characterized by an awareness of and pride in its history and traditions. At the time, at best, 35% of the Mexican population was literate⁹⁴. In Paris, Diego Rivera had spent a decade working and immersing himself in the culture and politics of the avant-garde. At this moment, Vasconcelos offered Rivera the chance to spend time in Italy in order to study the frescoes of the Renaissance, his time there paid for by the Mexican government. Vasconcelos's goal was to encourage the establishment of a school of muralists that would create an image of Mexico's past, present and future that

⁹⁴ See "Education for All Global Monitoring 2006", UNESCO, accessed January 25, 2017 http://www.unesco.org/education/GMR2006/full/chapt8_eng.pdf.

would be understandable for its mostly illiterate population by the commissioning of works for the walls of public buildings open to the Mexican population. However, it is important to note that he did not prescribe what the muralists were to portray and, indeed, he and Rivera, for example, did not share the same political beliefs. What they did share was a love and a belief in their homeland and a desire to present its history and people honestly and understandably. In response, Rivera's reasons for accepting were, arguably, political, professional, personal and aesthetic.

As has been already stated, Rivera saw the work of the avant-garde as inaccessible to the general population. He wanted to create work that not only reflected his left-wing beliefs but that would also 'nourish this esthetic sense of the masses.'⁹⁵ That is, he believed in a proletarian need for beauty and sought to make images that had a symbolic value without compromising that beauty. With regard to draughtsmanship, composition, technical invention and an empathetic understanding of nature and the human form and psyche, Italian frescoes from Giotto to Tiepolo – and most particularly those of the Quattrocento – are confronting to any artist. They are demonstrations of genius, both collectively and individually, by which those artists who follow after can gauge the value and strength of their own work and the level of their own technical expertise, depth of invention and, ultimately, their understanding of the world intimately and universally. Consequently, they can have a self-questioning

⁹⁵ *Diego Rivera: Murals for the Museum of Modern Art*. New York: Museum of Modern art, 2011, 27.

function for the artist. Rivera's time in Italy was probably brief (Bargellini argues that Rivera was in Italy from December 1920 to March 1921⁹⁶, while others suggests it may have been as long as 17 months!⁹⁷), but it added an understanding of space in public places and story-telling to the lessons learned from the pre-Colombian art of his homeland, Cézanne, the Cubists and history's other draughtsmen.

A decade later he had completed a number of fresco commissions including those in the Secretaría de Educación Publica and the Palacio Nacional in Mexico City and the Palacio de Cortés in nearby Cuernavaca. These works are representative of his mature fresco style – strongly drawn harmonious almost-sculptural compositions that balance symbol with history. His fame as an artist was such that at the end of 1931 the newly established Museum of Modern Art in New York dedicated a retrospective exhibition to his work. Because it was felt to be of central importance that the show should represent Rivera as above all a muralist, he painted 5 transportable frescoes of Mexican subjects in New York prior to the opening and another three of New York during the Depression which were exhibited from January of the following year. Four of the five Mexican themed panels were derived directly from the frescoes painted in Cuernavaca and in the Secretaría de Educación Publica in Mexico City, and all have

⁹⁶ Clara Bargellini, "Diego Rivera En Italia," *Anales del Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas* 66 (1995), 96.

⁹⁷ Laurence P. Hurlburt in *Diego Rivera : A Retrospective*, ed. Linda Downs (London: W.W. Norton, 1987), 47.

as their focus justice and injustice, linking them back to the recently concluded civil war. While describing the panel representing the revolutionary Emiliano Zapata, Anna Indych-López notes that Rivera himself was in Europe during those years and that led to an at times unrealistic idealization:

His absence also served as a motivation to mythologize the Revolution and its leaders in a way that those who witnessed the brutality could not.⁹⁸

Indych-López gives the example of one of the other great Mexican muralists, Orozco, who represented Zapata 'as a more tragic and ambivalent leader'⁹⁹.



Figure 11. Diego Rivera, *Indian Warrior*, 1931. Moveable fresco, 74.9 x 58.3 cm. MOMA, New York, USA.

⁹⁸ Leah Dickerman, Anna Indych-Lopez, "Diego Rivera : Murals for the Museum of Modern Art," (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2011), 80.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

Arguably the most violent of these images made for MOMA is that known as *Indian Warrior or Knight of the Tiger*. Extremely foreshortened (suggesting the work of Uccello), an Aztec warrior wearing a jaguar skin (the detail is faithful to the illustrations found in Mexican codices) sits astride a heavily armoured Spanish conquistador, striking him in the neck with an obsidian knife. The truncated legs of other figures behind the pair suggest a bigger scene – indeed, that presented in the Cuernavaca frescoes. Up until this moment, it would have seemed inappropriate to paint such a scene in the social realist style. Social realism was embedded in the European tradition. Within that tradition was the firm belief that Europeans were the winners and indigenous people – albeit it tragically – were history's losers. In Mexico, Nineteenth Century realist paintings had accentuated independence from Spain but had portrayed the Indians as perpetual victims. In this image, the Indian is triumphant. This act from colonial times suggests a contemporary victory of the people through struggle. Cultural identity and fighting for the rights of all justify violence, signify progress and lead to social harmony and peace.

For Ono, peace is not the product of a bloody ideological struggle. The reasoning is simple: because war is bad, we must stop participating in it. Doing this (universally) means that war as a phenomenon will no longer exist. She offers clear reasons, too, for a rejection of violence in order to achieve the goal of peace – especially what might be called a political peace:

‘And why am I not joining the violent revolutionaries?

Then I realized that destruction is not my game. Violent

revolutionaries are trying to destroy the establishment. That is good. But how? By killing? Killing is such an artless thing. All you need is a coke bottle in your hand and you can kill. But people who kill that way often become the next establishment after they've killed the old. Because they are using the same method that the old establishment used to destroy. Violent revolutionaries' thinking is very close to establishment type thinking and ways of solving problems.'¹⁰⁰

Ideologies – race, religion, nation, political belief – are used to fight and win wars. However, the motivation and the goal of wars – as is suggested elsewhere in this thesis – is the maintenance or increase of power and control. Ono, through her work, does offer more than just wishes. She offers a mechanism for achieving peace: absolute cosmopolitanism where differences are not the criteria for negative judgement and belief does not imply or identify both allies and enemies. The importance of what we have in common is suggested in her 2006 work 'We're all Water' – 118 water-filled glass bottles labelled with people's names. In *Cut Piece* (1964)¹⁰¹, where the audience is invited to cut pieces of the artist's clothing from her, there is a sense of danger and sacrifice, but not in the context of warfare.

¹⁰⁰ Yoko Ono. *Half-a-Wind Show - a Retrospective*, ed. I. Pfeiffer, M. Hollein (Munich: Prestel, 2013), 186.

¹⁰¹ The date given is that of its first presentation. The work is repeatable.



Figure 12. Yoko Ono, *Cut Piece*, 1964. Performance.

Here ‘the artist must give the artist’s ego to the audience’, also, perhaps, expressing Ono’s belief that aggression can be reduced through presenting oneself as vulnerable rather than strong and invincible¹⁰². Also, pivotally, because the game chess is so often used as a safe bloodless metaphor for war, her sculpture *Play it by trust* indicates her rejection of the resolution of conflict through violence by removing the identification of ‘the enemy’ from that metaphor.

¹⁰² Kevin Concannon, "Yoko Ono's Dreams," *Performance Research* 19:2 (2014), 104.



Figure 13. Yoko Ono, *Play it by trust*, 1966.
Sculpture/performance.

The work is made up of two chairs and a table set between them with a chessboard with all-white squares. Similarly, there are two sets of all-white chess pieces opposing each other. For her 2013-14 exhibition in Sydney, Ono made a new version of the work echoing the character of the Sydney Opera house, which is situated opposite the Museum of Contemporary Art on Sydney Cove¹⁰³. However, its fundamental meaning remains unchanged. The audience here is invited to play in the same way that people are invited to play games of chess in public and private spaces across the world. Here, however, the concept of an opponent is blurred as ownership of pieces becomes uncertain and strategy loses purpose. Subject and object become inseparable and loss and victory indistinguishable.

¹⁰³ Kent, 54-6.

It may be argued that such an attitude is utopian, unrealistic, unattainable and simply naïve; that it does not take into account geo-political and economic attitudes and necessities; that, as a defence, wars and the armies that wage them are how evil in the world is opposed. In answer, Ono's work suggests that, through these and similar arguments, war itself has been misrepresented to us. For Ono, peace, through cosmopolitanism, unites us. Indeed, it is war that clearly divides us. For Ono, geo-political and economic necessities all too often have caused the face of peace as well as the inhuman, violent and destructive face of war to be ignored. Ono rejects the idea of war as an integral part of progress. For her it is cultural and, more significantly, social stagnation. What she offers as an alternative to war is not just peace, but a humorous and especially creative peace that suggests a rich future.

However, a comparison of Diego Rivera and Yoko Ono raises the question of why two artists, both with an international outlook, should express such clear and divergent attitudes towards the concepts of war and peace through their work. Arguments based on character, life experience or zeitgeist, for example, are always debatable as individuals with similar profiles may not share the same attitudes. It is, however, worthwhile to consider these initial criteria. Biographies of Ono argue that her war-time experiences in Japan were influential in shaping her post-war attitudes¹⁰⁴, while her entry into the world

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 21.

of international art and music coincides with the years of conflict in South East Asia and the end of the colonial era in general. The Vietnam War may be seen as a watershed moment with the rise of popular and youth culture with a technology to unify them internationally. This spelt an end to the unqualified belief in 'my country, right or wrong' and instead encouraged, conceivably, a pragmatic cosmopolitanism that critically considered the nature of wealth and progress in the developed world and the poverty of those excluded from it. Here change was uncoupled from political ideology.

Half a century earlier, Rivera's new world would be achieved by class struggle and, while that struggle was an international one, in his murals it hinged on an identification with the people of Mexico and their particular history and character. This means an acceptance of violent struggle and a belief in the justice involved in that struggle – especially in those countries suffering from colonial oppression or where they had recently liberated themselves from it. In a sense, it follows Bobbit's argument given in 'The Shield of Achilles' that the development of cultures and nations functions through unending cycles of war and peace-making. Rivera's attitudes, however, were not defined by his experience of war. As has already been stated, he spent almost the whole of the Mexican civil war outside the country, and Dickerman points out that

His emergence in the 1920's as a leader of the muralist movement – despite his lack of revolutionary credentials – left him vulnerable to criticism from rivals: "Only a fool like Rivera who was in France during the Mexican

Revolution can carry on about the Revolution,” sniped his compatriot and fellow muralist José Clemente Orozco.¹⁰⁵ Unlike many of his German and French colleagues, he had little involvement with the First World War either, occasionally leaving Paris for southern France and Spain. In 1918, too, he rejected the opportunity to visit the recently created Soviet Union.

Here, it could be argued that our acceptance of war is inversely proportional to our experience of it. Certainly, for the realist the rejection or acceptance of war, like war itself, is a political act even if the goal is an idealistic one and the attitude teleological.

¹⁰⁵ Leah Dickerman, "Leftist Circuits," in *Diego Rivera: Murals for the Museum of Modern Art* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2011), 15.

Studio Response: *Náufragos* (Castaways).

‘*Náufragos*’ (Castaways) functions as a questioning response to this tableau dealing with Diego Rivera and Yoko Ono’s attitudes towards war.

A number of unique proofs were made using different combinations of three acetate plates employing various colours combinations and inking/wiping techniques. Drypoint and collagraphic techniques had been used to construct the plates. Some of the prints were overprinted and a *Chine collé* technique was also introduced to add details and repeat patterns to the final image. The suggestion of water was created by using details from the neo-classical drapery of the print *Three Graces* (2017)¹⁰⁶.

Time distorted, the scene represents a beach somewhere on the American coast in the 1500’s. A tribe of Indians gather there. The central figure is Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca¹⁰⁷, a castaway from the time of Spanish colonial history. He and a handful of other survivors were stranded on a beach, made slaves by the local Indian tribe and over a period of years traded from one tribe to another until they finally returned to Mexico City, the capital of the Spanish colony of New Spain.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Figure 83.

¹⁰⁷ literally ‘Cow’s Head’ in Spanish.

¹⁰⁸ The account of his experiences, sent to the Spanish king, gives a detailed account of the lives, customs and language of the peoples with whom he lived. Also, they tell of his capacity to ‘faith-heal’ the ill - a ‘gift’ which kept him alive as a valuable commodity. Further, his writings include a plea to end the cruel practices of the Spanish rulers towards the indigenous population.

Now washed up on the beach, the tribe find the half-drowned figures of the (predominantly) Twentieth Century artists Diego Rivera and Yoko Ono.



Figure 14. Mark Visione, *Náufragos*, 2017. Collagraph, chin collé, drypoint and overprinting, 98 x 76 cm. Collection of the artist.

Rivera and Ono may be seen, through their work, as offering contrasting views of society and the place of war in it.

Generally, Rivera suggests that belief in societal progress whereby, through struggle, social harmony is ultimately achieved. War facilitates change and is, therefore, however painful and destructive, part of that process. In this, Rivera represents that view held generally by governments and the communities they represent. In contrast, Ono's art and statements seem anti-ideological, while, at the same time they so often rely on the participation of the audience to act both subversively and magically, both logically and outside the world of possibility. Consequently, given that war is the evil everyone knows it to be, don't take part in it. Yes, it is argued in reply, but war is inevitable and ultimately a manifestation of progress.

In this temporally playful metaphor, the 'savages' on the beach are presented with alternative routes for their future. However, the 'savages' (consciously or not) have made those kinds of choices many generations previous, the idea of 'the primitive' itself often being a dimension of power and right within the concept of progress. The print suggests that the choice on so many occasions has been what is often described as the realist one. The presence of Yoko Ono on the beach suggests that an alternative does exist even if it may sometimes be considered as magical and unlikely as Cabeza de Vaca's supposed power to cure the ill.

TABLEAU 3: Histories.

Gordon Bennett (1955-2014), *Poet and Muse* 1991 170 x 225 cm oil and acrylic on canvas. Private collection.

Tony Albert (1981-), *Yininmadyemi (Thou didst let fall)* 2015, height: 7 meters, sculpture: painted aluminium, black marble, steel, granite and iron, Hyde Park (Sydney), Australia.

Gordon Bennett and Tony Albert have been identified and, indeed, have often identified themselves as Indigenous Australian artists. However, the significance of their work, with regard to conflict in particular, extends beyond a purely Australian context. It indicates a Western attitude towards History and the consequences of that attitude, and offers possible responses to it. The Just War Theory discussed elsewhere in this thesis¹⁰⁹ gives arguments why war should be justifiably undertaken and how combatants should behave during violent political conflicts. Still, beyond these arguments, there exists a sense of social and historical evolution and progress that inevitably should lead to an ideal, harmonious and especially peaceful world. To achieve that, evil must be opposed, and, for the good of all, laws imposed. In this way, too, war has been and is justified. An investigation of the words and work of Bennett and Albert raises questions with regard to the nature and consequences of the imposition by a dominant

¹⁰⁹ See p. 10ff.

culture of their particular cultural imperative which lies at the heart of the prosecution of war.

The humorous title of Bennett's 'Manifest Toe'¹¹⁰ cloaks the seriousness and eloquence with which he explains his existence as an artist. Here Bennett gives autobiographical details, indicates influences and methods, and, most importantly, presents the philosophical journey his work embodies. Immediately, he sees his practice as a manifestation of questioning and as driven by freedom¹¹¹. He states,

Freedom is a practice. It is a way of thinking in other ways to those we have become accustomed to. Freedom is never assured by the laws and institutions that are intended to guarantee it. To be free is to be able to question the way power is exercised, disputing claims to domination.¹¹²

The freedom he sought was found through his art when he left the 'institutionalised racism'¹¹³ with which he was confronted in the workplace and when he went to art school. It was the freedom to question what it meant to be Australian:

¹¹⁰ Gordon Bennett, Ian McLean, *The Art of Gordon Bennett* (Roseville East: Craftsman House, 1996).

¹¹¹ Ibid., 10.

¹¹² Ibid., 11.

¹¹³ Ibid., 25.

The dominant myth of Australia was the history of exploration and colonization; the spirit of the explorer, the pioneer, and the settler was a spirit all Australians could share in. Such was the unproblematic sense of national identity I was taught to believe in. This Australian identity that so effectively colonized my mind and body was presumed to be a white experience; informed as it was by the colonial diaspora of an essentially Western culture.¹¹⁴

It can be argued that this sense of identity found its apotheosis in the Twentieth Century through ANZAC. At least, Bennett here implies that Australian multiculturalism as a synonym for Australian identity has not always extended to indigenous Australians and there is the suggestion that others too may be excluded. Although Bennett asserts: 'Aboriginality is no life raft for me'¹¹⁵, he also realizes that what he was learning about his aboriginality were 'judgements based on an assumed [Western] cultural superiority'¹¹⁶. His response was to appropriate Australian history and to present it again in a way that encouraged the viewer to question it. This questioning of racial stereotypes, structures of power and assumed beliefs about society and progress leads inevitably to considerations of (national) identity. Further, beyond a purely national context, it questions the acceptance of the altruistic nature of concepts such as 'voyages of discovery' and 'exploration and settlement'. It questions and suggests alternative

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 23.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 32.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 31.

interpretations of the nature, meaning and consequences of 'Progress'. Western dogma has allowed no place for 'primitive' races and cultures unwilling or unable to accept it. Bennett points out this Western model where Aboriginal culture, for example, would simply disappear and, as Ian McLean concludes, a new society could be born¹¹⁷. However, McLean argues that this has deep consequences for Australians' ability to manifest their own identity

because non-Aboriginal Australians have failed to negotiate an indigeneity or subjecthood for themselves because they are not reconciled with their colonized others, the indigenous peoples of Australia. Aborigines have been made the invisible unconscious of an Australian subjectivity which does not know itself.¹¹⁸

McLean further argues that Bennett does this not to negate totally Australia's colonial past, but, rather, to help create an environment where a valuable and meaningful future is a possibility¹¹⁹. That possibility seems an uncertain one. Here, according to McLean, a multicultural identity is presented as a goal, rather than a reality already achieved, by coming to terms with the oppression of indigenous Australians and the repression of the cultures of Euro-Australians (and, by extension, all Australians, regardless of their original culture).

In the first half of the 1990's, Bennett made a number of paintings that included the idea of 'The Inland Sea'. The inland

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 100.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 65.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 78.

sea itself was an antipodean El Dorado - signifying arable land rather than gold – of colonial times. After Europeans had crossed the mountains that divided the coast from the interior in Eastern Australia, the presence of many rivers flowing westward led to the (erroneous) assumption that there was an enormous interior sea in the middle of Australia that gave the promise of limitless fertile land to the new colony. Many explorers set out to look for this inland sea. None found it and some lost their lives searching for it. Its presence is suggested in Bennett's 1991 painting *Poet and Muse*, a detail of which is used again in the later painting *Explorer and Companion (The Inland Sea)*, 1993.

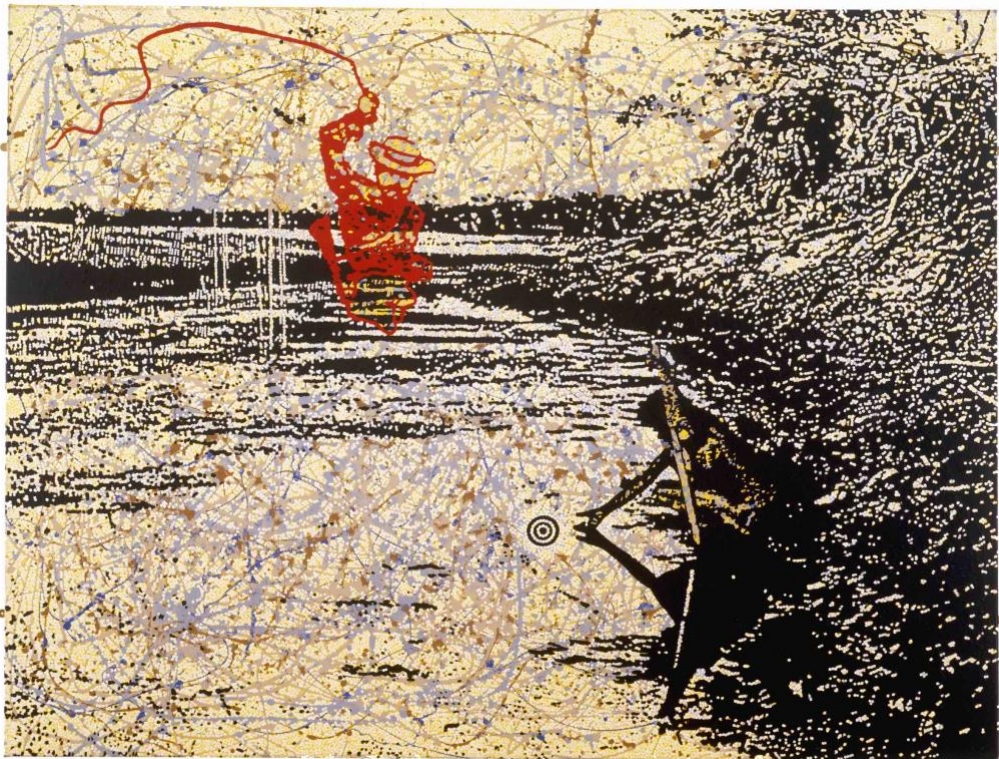


Figure 15. Gordon Bennett, *Poet and Muse*, 1991. Oil and acrylic on canvas, 170 x 225 cm. Private collection. Photo: Richard Stringer.

© The Estate of Gordon Bennett.

In the latter painting a crouching Aboriginal figure seems to be reaching out to aid a drowning European man whose face and hand only are visible above the water. McLean suggests that this may be an allusion 'to the extent to which Aborigines saved European explorers'¹²⁰ as well as to the darker interactions between Europeans and Indigenous Australians. Here the explorer is drowning in a fictitious but metaphorical sea. 'Poet and Muse' suggests other possible meanings for that metaphor. Over a field of Pollock-like gestural colour¹²¹, Bennett has painted in high contrast a vast river or marshland. The image seems soundless. In the right foreground the same Aboriginal figure that is later found in *Explorer and Companion (Inland Sea)* crouches and reaches out a hand into the motionless water. Just to the left of centre in what would be the middle ground of the space, Bennett introduces the upper half of a figure – a white colonial, with moustache and hat, brandishing a bull whip like a character from a poem by Henry Lawson or Banjo Patterson. Being painted in scarlet red, he seems a disconnected, yet dominant, intruder in the scene. The image implies the question, 'Who is the poet and who the muse?' but the artist has no desire to give a clear answer. Here

¹²⁰ Ibid., 86.

¹²¹ 'In this early series where Gordon appropriated Jackson Pollock's painting style - he was making a connection between the action of the paint flicking and the colonisers whip, and subsequent body scarring from such actions. These 'welts' are visible on the painted 'black' sections of the painting - in particular the back figure in the foreground, though not easily seen in the photographed image. ' Leanne Bennett, 'Gordon Bennett copyright permission and supply of jpg', email, 16 August 2017.

colonization and its aftermath represent a missed opportunity to learn, grow and create. In this scenario, the inland sea is not a mistaken assumption, but rather the potential to imagine and an expression of hope.

It can be argued that Bennett's art seeks, by remembering the past, to resolve issues of difference rather than developing a platform for confrontation.¹²² He rejects violence and represents it in his work to present the viewer with a truer reality of Australia's colonial past,

and perhaps to foster empathy and understanding of contemporary issues that affect all of us as human beings.¹²³

While it is not then surprising that he was reluctant to glorify those who had resisted the colonisers, he justifiably wonders,

In a country that reveres the "fallen warrior" in monuments right across the land, why should it be that Australians who bled on their own soil be excluded?¹²⁴

Tony Albert sees Gordon Bennett as his artistic, political and, spiritual mentor even though they never met. Shortly after Bennett's death in 2014, Albert wrote that Bennett had an 'Aboriginal voice that could be universally understood'¹²⁵. Albert wrote a series of letters to Bennett, the last one shortly before Bennett's death in 2014. In an earlier letter from 2010, Albert

¹²² Terry Smith, "Australia's Anxiety," in *History and Memory in the Art of Gordon Bennett* (Birmingham: Ikon Gallery, 1999), 10.

¹²³ Bennett, 53.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 53-4.

¹²⁵ Tony Albert, "Tony Albert on Gordon Bennett," *Art Asia Pacific*, no. 90 (2014): 25.

was saddened by the ‘number of young Australians keen to demonstrate their xenophobic views’¹²⁶. His comment was general and the racism he identifies could, imaginably, be similarly against new Australians as indigenous Australians. Like Bennett, Albert’s work offers a critique of Australian society and the racism easily found there. Stating his deep sense of social responsibility, he has often employed racist memorabilia in works such as *‘ASH on me’* (2008, NGA, Canberra), using these racially highly insensitive artefacts – such as ‘aboriginal-motif ashtrays’ - to reject an Australian ‘Jim Crow’ mentality. This use of ‘aboriginalia’ has been carried through into works dealing with Indigenous Australians’ service in the armed forces – he himself has acted as an official Australian War Artist¹²⁷. However, Lisa Slade’s claim that

Albert’s figures are larger than life – imitating the monumentalizing role of memorials the world over – in a physical aggrandisement that amounts to hagiography in the status we accord all soldiers’¹²⁸

may be regarded as an exaggeration. Rather, Albert’s stated aim is to ‘overturn this history of non-recognition’¹²⁹. Perhaps the most well-known of these works is the monumental *Yininmadyemi (Thou didst let fall)* of 2015.

Commissioned by the City of Sydney and unveiled during the year of the centenary commemoration of the ANZAC landings

¹²⁶ *Tony Albert*, (Paddington NSW: Dott Publishing, 2015), 50.

¹²⁷ Since the First World War, countries including the UK, Canada and Australia have officially employed artists to record the activities of their military in the field.

¹²⁸ Lisa Slade, "Trench Art Sappers and Shrapnel," *Artlink*, no. 35:1 (2015): 20.

¹²⁹ *Tony Albert*, 64.

in Turkey during World War I, the work is found in Hyde Park (Sydney) only about 50 meters from the earlier built war memorial¹³⁰. It is composed of 4 seven-meter-tall standing bullets and three lying cartridges, while next to them is a life size indigenous carrying container with curved sides (a *coolamon*) made in iron. A plaque at the bottom of one of the lying cartridges explains that

this memorial ... pays tribute to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have defended our country [Australia].

Indeed, Melanie Kembrey of the Sydney Morning Herald points out that these 'diggers' who

risked their lives on the battlefield although they were not classed as citizens, were denied the vote and could not access the same benefits as returning white soldiers¹³¹

– one more example of the concept of 'Terra Nullius' that was applied to this country by the first European colonizers, and one which remained (and, arguably, remains) deep in the psyche of white Australia.

¹³⁰ Built in 1934.

¹³¹ Melanie Kembrey, "Tony Albert's 'Confronting' Tribute to Indigenous Diggers Unveiled in Sydney's Hyde Park," *Sydney Morning Herald*, March 31 2015.



Figure 16. Tony Albert, *Yininmadyemi (Thou didst let fall)* 2015. Sculpture, (height: 7 meters), Hyde Park, Sydney, Australia.

However, while the work singly should be seen within the broader context of the artist's oeuvre suggested above, it does indicate the priorities of Australian society and many in the art world. Also, it leads to questions that may be asked about our capacity to interpret works as aesthetic objects rather than political or sociological documents. Last, *Yininmadyemi (Thou didst let fall)* encourages us to consider how the possible meaning of a work of art may vary according to who perceives it.

Like so much of the relationship between the individual (or family) and the ANZAC Tradition, *Yininmadyemi (Thou didst let fall)* too pivots on a personal story and pedigree: in this case, the war experiences of Tony Albert's grandfather, Eddie who was captured and threatened with death by Italian troops

during World War II. This link between the present generations and the loss or service of a family member in the past has created a sense of entitlement with regard to who may speak and who must remain silent when discussing nationhood and the ANZAC Tradition. The artist's concerns are with indigenous empowerment, recognition and, ultimately participation – here, participation in the Australian myth of nationhood through the blood and sacrifice of battle.

Indeed, Albert is clear about the meaning of the sculpture. As has already been stated, the goal is to reverse that non-recognition of indigenous Australians who have served in the armed forces. He continues,

I want to empower our people, and give them a voice, when for so long they have been silenced. This is not a memorial that glorifies war. It is a monument to honour Aboriginal servicemen and women who for so long were subjected to profound racial discrimination despite their bravery.¹³²

The Australian War Memorial suggests, however, that there has been recognition for Indigenous Australians in the armed forces throughout the Twentieth Century¹³³. This is supported by Noah Riseman's essay¹³⁴ describing the lives of three publicly celebrated Aboriginal soldiers from the First World War (Douglas Grant), The Second World War and Korean War (Reg

¹³² *Tony Albert*, 64.

¹³³ Australian War Memorial, "Indigenous Australian Servicemen," accessed October 10, 2016 <https://www.awm.gov.au/encyclopedia/aborigines/indigenous/>.

¹³⁴ Noah Riseman, "Aboriginal Military Service and Assimilation," in *Aboriginal History*, ed. S. Konishi (Canberra: ANU Press, 2015).

Saunders) and the Vietnam War (Phillip Prosser). Both agree that within the armed forces indigenous soldiers were treated equally and fairly and encountered little racial prejudice. Rather, it was the political and social life outside service that manifested itself as racist. The position of Aboriginal Australians as subjects of the Crown, but with few and varying rights, meant that acceptance into the armed forces was not always legally possible and that these soldiers were (at least up to and including the Second World War) fighting for a country that they rightfully considered their homeland but which itself did not fully recognize them as citizens with rights as well as responsibilities. Outside military service, regardless of their 'bravery', they were subject to direct racial abuse and social exclusion. More importantly, Riseman suggests a further issue that is central to the work of Gordon Bennett. The armed forces were seen as a portal for Aboriginal assimilation into white society. This issue of assimilation, which implies the eventual disappearance of Aboriginal Culture as opposed to integration, occupied Grant, Saunders and Prosser to varying degrees in their civilian lives. For example, Grant worked for full citizenship for Indigenous Australians, but, because he had been brought up in a white family, he had little to do with Aboriginal society or culture. For him, assimilation was a positive choice. It was the prejudice he encountered in his daily civilian life that Riseman suggests led to Grant's alcoholism and internment in Callan Park Mental hospital.¹³⁵ Saunders too was represented by the media as the 'model' of the assimilated Aboriginal, but there

¹³⁵ Ibid., 162. The current site of Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney [2018].

was no mention of the discrimination he encountered in daily civilian life¹³⁶. As for Prosser, according to Riseman, he took advantage of all that the military offered him - education, skills and income. By the 1960's and 70's, too, political activism had forced society and politics to think differently about assimilation¹³⁷. Prosser's civilian involvement with the Aboriginal Community may be characterized by self-empowerment and cultural diversity. What these three men share is an experience of discrimination that qualifies the nature of concepts of assimilation. Here assimilation signifies the taking on of that sense of Australian identity that Gordon Bennett feels had 'colonised my mind and body'¹³⁸. On its own, it is not the identity of Indigenous or Migrant Australia.

The danger inherent in Albert's sculpture *Yininmadyemi* (Thou didst let fall) is that it represents a supposed desire of Indigenous Australia to buy into that non-inclusive tradition that Bennett sees as originating in exploration and settlement, and which, it may be argued, extends through two centuries of cultural and social disenfranchisement and culminates in the celebration through ANZAC of that cultural dominance. While Albert's sculpture does represent a plea that the ANZAC Tradition be more inclusive, *Yininmadyemi* (Thou didst let fall) does not question the validity of the ANZAC Tradition as a tradition that all Australians can relate to and that is truly appropriate to Australia. It does not confront the culture-

¹³⁶ Ibid., 165.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 171.

¹³⁸ Bennett, 23.

destroying nature of war which post-colonial white Australia has so luckily not experienced, but which is so much a part of indigenous Australian history with all the consequences of the decades that have followed. Indeed, the meaning of *Yininmadyemi* itself is dependent on the explanation written on the plaque found on one of the supine cartridges. Without this, and with its proximity to the unambiguous War Memorial in Hyde Park, the bullets suggest an aggressive meaning linked to bravery, mateship, glory and, ultimately, sacrifice, rather than a solemn remembrance of Indigenous participation in the armed forces. It may be that Albert's general practice challenges and subverts mainstream and traditional portrayals of Australian Aboriginal culture and people'¹³⁹ but here it does not question the ANZAC Tradition as something all Australians should identify with. Rather, it asks for the inclusion of indigenous Australians in it, while leaving the tradition itself robustly intact. A more forceful integration of the coolamon into the composition of the sculpture – a larger version of the coolamon to match the oversized bullets, possibly, with the bullets placed on it - would underline more strongly the sculpture's identification with Indigenous Australia. If, as Albert strongly maintains, being an artist gives him the opportunity to communicate the historical truths that the education system, the media, and society as a whole, denied me as a child¹⁴⁰ then he is ideally placed to create a monument to and for the victims of the Australian colonial wars – an idea rejected by the

¹³⁹ Sasanki Tennakoon, "Review: Tony Albert -Rewriting History," in *Raven* (2015).

¹⁴⁰ *Tony Albert*, 65.

Australian War Memorial and the RSL¹⁴¹, but called for by many Australian historians.¹⁴² However, it is not enough for an artist to simply state that a work does not glorify war when the context and appearance of it may lead the viewer to think otherwise.

The unknowing viewer coming across *Yininmadyemi* (Thou didst let fall) in its setting in Hyde Park, Sydney could imaginably interpret it as an Oldenburg-esque sculptural object whose disproportionate size might suggest a poetic daydream about society, culture and history – the meaning being dependent on the daydreamer. Such may be the nature of culture wars in affluent countries. Elsewhere in the world, conflicts about culture are being won and lost violently while the weak, at least as Thucydides argued, suffer what they must.

The Western belief in Progress and an ideal end to History has been and is being used as a justification for many acts – both good and bad. That dominance of Western culture and its sense of absolute right to define systems of society and belief for everyone is being questioned through war. The art of Albert and, most particularly, Bennett identify a human need for a rich and broad truth about our own identity. The search for this is an historical one which values diversity and an acceptance of that

¹⁴¹ RSL = Returned and Services League of Australia. That is, an organization that supports those who have served in the Australian military in a variety of ways.

¹⁴² One such a monument does already exist: 'The Aboriginal Memorial' (1987-88) by the Ramingining artists, a work of 200 'bone coffins' - one for each year of colonial occupation – in the collection of the National Gallery, Canberra. See Djon Mundine, "The Aboriginal Memorial to Australia's Forgotten War," *Artlink*, no. 35:1 (2015).

diversity. As Bennett points out, the questioning nature of creativity assures that diversity, while the freedom of action defines it. Two hundred years of repression and abuse, and a social and political belief in the insignificance of a culture to the point where its extinction is expected and actively worked for has been answered by a rich, nuanced and truthful analysis of that past through art. Most importantly, here a critical analysis of the past – past attitudes and past wrongs – serves to bring about contemporary and future reconciliation and change. Here, beyond the personal involvement and significance of the act, the artist functions as peacemaker.

Studio Response: 'The Lotus Eaters'.

from The Odyssey. (Homer)

"I was driven thence by foul winds for a space of nine days upon the sea, but on the tenth day we reached the land of the Lotus-eater, who live on a food that comes from a kind of flower. Here we landed to take in fresh water, and our crews got their mid-day meal on the shore near the ships. When they had eaten and drunk I sent two of my company to see what manner of men the people of the place might be, and they had a third man under them. They started at once, and went about among the Lotus-eaters, who did them no hurt, but gave them to eat of the lotus, which was so delicious that those who ate it left off caring about home, and did not even want to go back and say what had happened to them, but were for staying and munching lotus with the Lotus-eater without thinking further of their return; nevertheless, though they wept bitterly I forced them back to the ships and made them fast under the benches. Then I told the rest to go on board at once, lest any of them should taste of the lotus and leave off wanting to get home, so they took their places and smote the grey sea with their oars."¹⁴³

¹⁴³ Homer, "The Odyssey", accessed March 15, 2017.
<http://classics.mit.edu/Homer/odyssey.9.ix.html>. Book IX.

from The Frontier War that never was. (John Connor)

The Myth began because the British Government refused to define Australian frontier conflict as 'war'. To do so would undermine the basis on which the British had laid claim to New South Wales and their subsequent Australian colonies. The British did not sign treaties with the local people, did not acknowledge their land ownership, and argued that all aborigines had automatically become subjects of the British monarch. The British Government had to view Aboriginal armed attacks as the criminal acts of misbehaving British subjects. If they accepted these actions were 'war', they would also have to accept the fact that the Aborigines were sovereign peoples who were defending their lands.¹⁴⁴

from The Secret River. (Kate Grenville)

... There was the corn patch, such a brilliant green it was sickening. Beside it a tree stood silver in death, and from one of its branches a long sack hung heavy on the end of a rope.

In the first glimpse Thornhill thought it was a scarecrow put there for the birds, then that it was a beast hung up for butchering. A catspaw of wind sent the boat tinkling across the water towards the bank. He felt the eyepiece slimy with his sweat. The burden hanging there was not a scarecrow or a hog, but the body of a black man. Puffy

¹⁴⁴ Connor, 11.

flesh bulged around the rope under his armpits, the head lolled. The face was unrecognisable as a face, the only thing clear the yellow corn stuck between the pink sponge that had been the lips.¹⁴⁵

‘The Lotus Eaters’ can be seen as the representation of that lost opportunity invisible to colonialism that may be discerned from the work of Gordon Bennett. Indeed, it seeks to represent those repeated lost opportunities that often seem to define interactions between cultures.

Frequently, colonialism seems monolithic, uncompromising. Here progress defined by economic and technological dominance is a medium and justification for cultural, racial and ideological repression. Yet, regardless of the details, Bennett and his work suggest that what he perceives as an impasse in identity for both indigenous and non-indigenous Australians can only be overcome by confronting the past and moving forward together. Consequently, his argument relies on memory – what we remember, what we have forgotten, what we choose to remember and what we choose to forget. It is memory too that has been placed at the centre of Australian identity. Australia may be seen as the land of ‘Lest we forget!’. Memory links us to the ANZAC Tradition. Homeric references, so often made when referring to ANZAC¹⁴⁶, here link the ‘Odyssey’ to the

¹⁴⁵ Kate Grenville, *The Secret River* (Melbourne Vic.: The Text Publishing Company, 2011), 104.

¹⁴⁶ See p. 160.

lotus-eaters who forgot their homeland and lost their desire for action through eating the lotus fruit, giving this work its title.

Indeed, it is the sharing of food, an act symbolic of friendship, community and the peaceful resolution of problems, that is used as a metaphor for the resolution in the future of those shared problems that have grown from the past.



Figure 17. Mark Visoni, *The Lotus Eaters*, 2017. Collagraph and drypoint, 80 x 168 cm.
Collection of the artist.



Figure 18. Mark Visione, *The Lotus Eaters*, 2017. Collagraph and drypoint, 80 x 168 cm.
Collection of the artist.



Figure 19. Mark Visione, *The Lotus Eaters*, 2017. Collagraph and drypoint, 80 x 168 cm. Collection of the artist.

The image itself has its origins in the wars fought on the Hawkesbury River (near Sydney) between the area's indigenous inhabitants and the recently arrived British settlers mentioned by the historian John Connor and used by Kate Grenville as the subject of the novel 'The Secret River'¹⁴⁷.

On two multiple-colour plates, in turn, images of a seated aboriginal, marine and white settler were constructed and printed using different techniques leading to a series of triptychs. Here conversation and a meal shared is suggested as an alternative to conflict.

In her essay 'Settlement or invasion? The coloniser's quandary.', Larissa Behrendt adds an important qualification to that monolithic concept of colonisation¹⁴⁸. She outlines the attitudes and responses of one of the early colonists, William Dawes and his positive and constructive relations with Indigenous Australians. She describes his approach as being one characterised by 'mutual respect and knowledge exchange'¹⁴⁹. Here the individual, has the right or maybe even the responsibility (and, certainly, the capacity) to look critically

¹⁴⁷ Although authors mention that much of the conflict centred on the growing of corn in the area, the word 'corn' may here be used generically rather than simply meaning 'maize'. In the print, maize is used as a recognizable and repeated motif.

¹⁴⁸ Larissa Behrendt, "Settlement or Invasion? The Coloniser's Quandry," in *The Honest History Book*, ed. D. Stephens and A. Broinowski (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press Ltd, 2017), 225-39.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 236.

at political decisions supposedly made for and by the group. This attitude led Dawes into conflict with those in power in the new colony and meant that his stay in New South Wales was brief. Like Behrendt, Australians may wonder about 'what might have been.'¹⁵⁰

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

TABLEAU 4: Victims and Consequences.

George Gittoes (1949-), *Soundtrack to War* (2005) and *Rampage* (2006). Films, production G. Dalton.

Ben Quilty (1973-), *Trooper M. after Afghanistan, no. 2*, 2012. Oil on linen, 170 x 180cm. Collection of the artist.

Opinions and attitudes change. This is as true for artists and their work as it is for those who seek to understand them. Much of the literature concerning contemporary artists still making art and, either through that work or their own words, commenting on the world around them may be seen as (self-) promotional. Exhibition catalogues and critiques (good or bad) are part of an active artist's practice and this is particularly the case with artists such as George Gittoes and Ben Quilty who, each in their own way, have justifiably captured an important place in contemporary Australian art circles often and sometimes controversially through their choice of conflict and war as their subjects. Both have drawn inspiration from and given nuanced meaning to the socio-political landscape rather than seeking this in the boundless spiritual wealth of Australia's natural environment, Gittoes with an internationalist attitude while Quilty's work arguably has, at times, concentrated on an analysis of a particularly Australian identity and, via this, to a more universal questioning of existence and contemporary morality. Both are passionate about moral rights and wrongs that transcend the transitory nature of politics and history and, crucially, have constructed an oeuvre based directly on an

empirical knowledge of their subject matter. Quilty has overtly emphasised his fascination with concepts of masculinity and male rites-of-passage. This also is often implied in the work of Gittoes. Both artists, too, have stressed their opposition to war, and have sought it out in order to confront it and translate it into art. Differences in methods, products and the conclusions and consequences they have (and have not) drawn suggest how artists and society in general interface with the reality of war.

George Gittoes has stated clearly,

‘Australia is a complacent society – a little too isolated and comfortable; I see it as my role as a contemporary artist to challenge that complacency, and if raising questions, baring tragedy and passion makes the art audience a little uncomfortable, so be it.’¹⁵¹

However, many of Gittoes’s paintings may be seen to have the same effect on an audience as do the daily images of war projected into homes world-wide via television news programmes – generally, disgust and sadness followed by that audience’s return to their peaceful environment. The reasons for it are difficult to fathom, the level and extent of the violence is unacceptable and, certainly in contemporary Australia, unimaginable. But war is distant and the time frame uncertain. This real violence merges seamlessly with the fantasy of film violence and is justified in the same way – good opposing and vanquishing evil. We are reminded, ‘Lest we forget!’ Yet here the reality of war seems more about forgetting than

¹⁵¹ Gavin Fry, *George Gittoes* (Sydney: Craftsman house, 1998), 26.

remembering. In the same way that the endless pageant of violence and destruction deserves a more concrete response from television audiences, Gittoes's powerful yet often personal and intimate images have an important place in any argument for peace. Although at times thankless, Gittoes's task is an important one that 'art can bring social hope and political change'¹⁵².

In 2015 Gittoes was awarded the Sydney Peace Prize and it could be assumed that he would be a primary example of an artist working for peace through his work. However, art is a question-asking activity and does not offer clear philosophical answers. Whilst the way those questions are asked is important, the questions themselves may sometimes be of a greater value. Gittoes's practice has involved a wide variety of media. He is a prolific and capable drawer with a capacity to develop those drawings into forceful paintings that balance aesthetic goals with a violent and political presence. Much of his drawing has its origin in his diaries where text vies with image. If one can talk of such defined categories, at times descriptions of his practice would identify him as photojournalist rather than a 'fine artist'. Since his days as an important part of Sydney's Yellow House in the 1960's and 70's, collaboration has been a strong element in his practice and one that is in sharp contrast to the loneliness of the painter's studio. Indeed, it may be that his most meaningful work has been in the area of film from his collaborations with Gabrielle Dalton to his more

¹⁵² Rod Pattenden, "Love City Jalalabad: George Gittoes in Jalalabad," *Art Monthly Australia*, no. Summer (2013/14): 25.

recent incarnation in the Yellow House, Jalalabad in Afghanistan. Indeed, it is the communication and collaboration (especially through his film projects) with those directly affected by conflict where Gittoes has chosen to find himself that seem to be most valuable with regard to both his aims and his avowed promotion of peace. Gavin Fry argues that Gittoes 'has always been repulsed by war and conflict yet inspired by the resilience of the human spirit in all its trials.'¹⁵³ If this is indeed the case, he has also been attracted to war in as far as he has obsessively sought it out and desired to experience it at first hand. If, too, he has been inspired by the human spirit's ability to survive, through his collaborative efforts especially in Afghanistan now, he has been a source of inspiration and hope in situations of conflict and threat. To place himself in situations where he felt he could best manifest himself as an artist as well as do the most 'good', Gittoes, while maintaining his independence, developed a strong connection with the Australian Army that allowed him into warzones and places marked by human catastrophe not usually accessible. Here there is a similarity with Quilty in that through this contact with soldiers and from the work that came from it, Rod Pattenden argues, he could investigate 'the suffering and torment of soldiers in twenty-first-century warfare.'¹⁵⁴ The 'Realism for

¹⁵³ Fry, 21.

¹⁵⁴ Rod Pattenden, "George Gittoes: I Witness," in *George Gittoes: I Witness* (GyMEA NSW: Hazelhurst Regional Gallery and art Centre, 2014), 21. Note the 'The Realism of Peace' exhibition which toured all Australian states and territories with the support of the Australian army. See Fry, 25.: 'The realism and directness of the paintings left none in any doubt of their message and they did much to inform Australians of the good their people were doing in many parts of the world. The Army had invested heavily in the project and

Peace' exhibition¹⁵⁵ covers a series of UN initiatives where the Australian military were involved as peacekeepers, and Gittoes acknowledges that on occasion soldiers have had a pacifying impact on conflict and have even saved lives – such as with the presence of the Australian military at the Kibeho massacre in Rwanda in 1995. However, more often in Gittoes work, the man in uniform is the predator and source of violence, the cutting edge of a political act. Overwhelmingly, Gittoes identifies the civilian as the victim of war and even though working closely with the military, the images in the 'Realism for Peace' exhibition predominantly show intimate moments which reflect his direct contact with non-combatants. Beyond the markings of race, place or religion, Gittoes has documented the physical violence done to unarmed human bodies and the environments in which they live.

An analysis of the companion films *Soundtrack to War*¹⁵⁶ and *Rampage*¹⁵⁷ may give an insight into Gittoes's interface with war and also suggest more general attitudes to war held by soldiers and civilians as well as those of artists who present them in their work.

exhibition curator Deborah Hart was able to produce a substantial catalogue to document the exhibition.'

¹⁵⁵ Deborah Hart, *The Realism of Peace. George Gittoes* (Darwin: Museum & Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, 1995).

¹⁵⁶ George Gittoes, "Soundtrack to War," (2005).

¹⁵⁷ "Rampage," (2006).

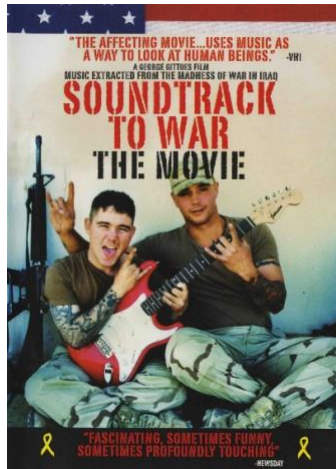


Figure 20. George Gittoes, *Soundtrack to War*, 2005. DVD cover, documentary film.

In *Soundtrack to War*, Gittoes interviews US soldiers of the Iraq invasion force and Iraqis living in Baghdad about the music they listen to and the music they make. In the subsequent film *Rampage*, Gittoes follows one of the American rappers he met in Baghdad (Eliot Lovet – ‘Li’l E’) back to his home in Brown Sub, a poor area on the fringes of Miami, to see how he and his family live there.

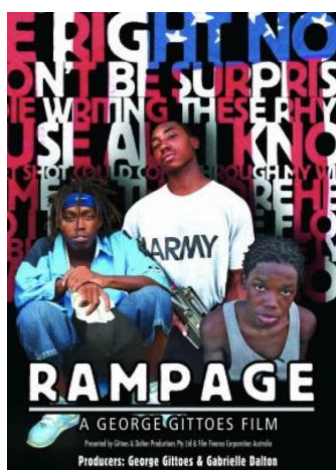


Figure 21. George Gittoes, *Rampage*, 2006. DVD cover, documentary film.

While in some of his films – such as *Love City Jalalabad*¹⁵⁸ – documentary flows seamlessly into B grade fantasy, action and romance, ‘Soundtrack to War’ and ‘Rampage’ can be considered as being purely documentary. However, the intrusion of what may be called either an artistic purpose and vision or, quite simply, the artist’s ego is continually present. In *Rampage*, for example, it leads a Sydney DJ to ask if ‘...by shining a light on the Lovet family, you’re endangering them?’¹⁵⁹.



Figure 22. George Gittoes, *Rampage*, 2005. Still, documentary film.

During the shooting of the movie, Eliot’s brother Marc is murdered by a rival gang probably, as Gittoes himself suggests, because of the attention paid to the family¹⁶⁰. Gittoes admits that his presence in Brown Sub may have led to Marc’s

¹⁵⁸ "Love City Jalalabad," (2013).

¹⁵⁹ "Rampage," 131'10".

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 59'24".

death and that this is the problem with documentary film making. That is, real lives are at stake. Indeed, in *Love City Jalalabad* he twice endangers not only his own life, but also that of his cast and crew first by filming men and women actors together in a busy Afghan market¹⁶¹ and later by sending a group of colleagues off to reconnoitre the situation for future adventures in the mountainous Tora Bora region¹⁶². As with similar incidents in the Iraq and Miami documentaries, this suggests a sense of action as moral right. When Gittoes's companion Hellen Rose asks in *Love City Jalalabad* why an angry Afghani crowd is attacking their Jalalabad home (the Yellow House) when they are really there trying to help Afghanis¹⁶³, she mimics the comments of US soldiers in Iraq who believe they are trying to do good for the country whilst continually being under fire.¹⁶⁴ Indeed, war seems to promote this concept of absolute good and bad, especially in the mind of the soldier in action. It is reflected in the soldier and author James Brown's comment that soldiers visit 'violence on those who deserve it.'¹⁶⁵

However, Gittoes still maintains an objective view of the world he presents. Valuable works of art, his films are open to interpretation. With regard to attitudes towards war, they are important documents about its physical environment and the

¹⁶¹ "Love City Jalalabad," 17'30".

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 70'50".

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 77'50".

¹⁶⁴ For example, "Soundtrack to War," 31'30".

¹⁶⁵ James Brown, *Anzac's Long Shadow: The Cost of Our National Obsession* (Collingwood VIC: Redback, 2014).

mindset of those who inhabit it. If countries are motivated to accept and go to war because of notions of national pride and moral right, then, at least with regard to the soldiers interviewed by Gittoes in *Soundtrack to War*, this is strongly the case with those participating in it. Repeatedly, soldiers express a sense of national pride and moral right as absolute justification of and ultimate absolution for their actions. Heavy Metal music (encouraged by Psy Ops – Psychological Operations) motivates the soldier going into battle, and various genres besides – Country and Western, R&B, rap – are seen as a way of dealing with the horrors of war. Importantly, Gittoes presents the environment of war as self-contained. Context and reference lie within the daily experience. Criticism is vague and guarded. One soldier on his second tour of Iraq voices his disillusionment with the war¹⁶⁶ but is unclear why and explains that with music he can create an environment in a world where ‘you have no control’.¹⁶⁷ Later, a female soldier states her support for the country and western group The Dixie Chicks and their lead singer Natalie Maine.¹⁶⁸ The group had recently been critical of The US decision to attack Iraq and were consequently ostracized from the music world. While the soldier’s comment shows support for the group’s action, there is no suggestion that it has an influence on her professional attitude. Similarly, in *Rampage*, the returned soldier Eliot engages in an aggressive rap argument with a friend who is

¹⁶⁶ Gittoes, "Soundtrack to War," 67'30".

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 73'50".

critical of the war and sees Eliot as 'Bush's bitch'¹⁶⁹. The loyalties expressed by the US soldiers are echoed in the words and behaviour of the ghetto residents in *Rampage* – Brown Sub is a more dangerous than Iraq and without the sense of security and stability associated with the military. Political justification and more general cosmopolitan justification for the war is not present. Its meaning is intimate – both individually and collectively. Similarly, for the civilian Iraqis Gittoes portrays, political rights and wrongs are unimportant. Living in the ruins of their world, they have a desire for peace. That is, not a particular political peace, but one in which their homes are not broken and there is not the threat of violence. Similarly, in *Rampage*, Eliot's younger brother Denzel (Demo) sees success as a rapper as a way of escaping with his family from the violence of Brown Sub. The significance of Gittoes's films is that they make clear that participation in war either by choice or circumstance creates a self-justifying environment which, like its cause, changes often because of political decisions made elsewhere. Participants – both soldiers and civilians – must either wait and endure or attempt in some way to escape.

The art historian Bernard Smith noted that Gittoes has said that he is driven to make art through a sense of compassion. The comment leads Smith to muse on the differences between figurative and abstract art. Quoting Keats's lines from *Ode on a Grecian Urn* where the poet describes Truth as being synonymous with Beauty, Smith suggests that 'Truth' here may

¹⁶⁹ "Rampage," 32'45".

be substituted for 'morality'. A further substitution might lead us to use 'spirituality' rather than 'beauty'. Smith argues that while both figurative and abstract art can present the viewer with ideas of beauty, figurative art – in this case, Gittoes's art – allows us greater consideration of morality.¹⁷⁰ Artists do not have to choose between morality and beauty. However, Gittoes does not always make 'beautiful' works of art and he does often suggest a choice between war and peace, and questions our repeatedly bland acceptance of the unjust and violent world his works present. For Darren Jorgensen, this is a plea for an art which is amongst other things politicized:

Art has the world as its playground, a world that necessitates taking sides in the ongoing struggle for peace.¹⁷¹

Gittoes seems to make art to finance the making of his art, and the meaning of that art has a constancy. While this may not suggest one obsessive goal, it does point to a sense of consequence with which his activities are imbued. Here art aims again to change the world. In a sense, that goal may be arguably the end of the need for compassion through the manifestation of peace.

¹⁷⁰ Bernard Smith, "George Gittoes: Morality and Art," in *George Gittoes: I Witness* (Gymea NSW: Hazelhurst Gallery and Art Centre, 2014), 13.

¹⁷¹ Darren Jorgensen, "George Gittoes and the Social Turn in Afghanistan," *Artlink*, no. 36:1 (2016): 31.

In 1993, Gittoes accompanied the Australian military presence to Somalia in their attempt, with other nations, to restore some kind of order there. Fry quotes from Gittoes's diary,

'It was clear from our earlier briefing that trouble was expected tonight. The magic word CONTACT keeps being repeated by the Diggers [Australian soldiers]. They see themselves as a virgin group until they have a contact. Most of their friends in other DELTA patrols have had contacts and this is beginning to weigh on their minds. They feel a pressure to see how they will perform in action. This is the ultimate peer pressure. Every man keeps looking at the gate which keeps them from the night outside and also from their destiny.'¹⁷²

This extract from Gittoes's writings suggests notions of those especially male rites of passage that Ben Quilty places at the heart of his art and that are so readily found (and recognized) in war situations. The job at this moment is not a humanitarian one and actions are no longer based on an identifiable sense of altruism, and the physicality of war is not clearly defined by morality. This is in no way a uniquely Australian manifestation. However, it is the mateship present in such situations that has come to be seen as a central tenet of Australian identity. In a similar way, often it is the idea of mateship that defines our attitude to (and acceptance of) war.

¹⁷² Fry, 23.

Quilty's own investigations into masculinity, and particularly Australian masculinity, are not without a high degree of self-analysis and self-criticism. At the same time, the seriousness of his subject matter is made attractive and palatable by the luxurious virtuosity with which he manipulates paint and by his and his work's 'cheek and good humour'.¹⁷³ Early works which may be seen as representing 'hoon' culture use the Torana – his and his adolescent and post-adolescent friends' vehicle of choice – as the symbol of not only freedom and 'potent male sexuality'¹⁷⁴, but also of social irresponsibility and a search for real meaning and purpose made unclear by 'drugs and alcohol, and complete debauchery and destruction'.¹⁷⁵ The artist presents himself as the archetypal larrikin. For Quilty, too, his 2012 'portrait' of a destroyed bushmaster military vehicle seen in Afghanistan marks an end to that absence of consequence suggested but not necessarily qualified by his expressions of youth culture, and signifies an acceptance of both real consequences and a sense of mortality ultimately associated with it. Most particularly, his portraits – self-portraits, portraits of friends and historical figures, portraits of his son Joe – represent a search for identity rather than an explanation of it. His portraits of Australian soldiers done as an official War Artists in Afghanistan and his written and spoken comments on these works and their meaning may be seen to define this search.

¹⁷³ Michael Desmond, "Ben Quilty: God's Middle Children," 2007, accessed March 23, 2017, <http://www.benquilty.com/text.php?text=20120316135303>.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ "War Paint." *Australian Story*. ABC, 2012, 4'45".

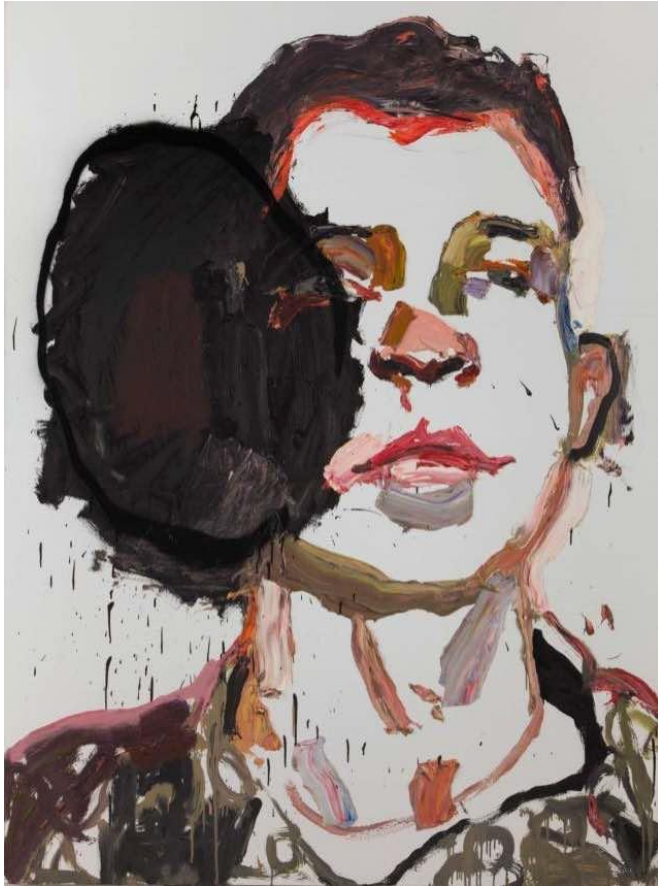


Figure 23. Ben Quilty, *Trooper Luke Korman*, 2012. Aerosol and oil on linen, 190 x 140 cm. Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia.

However, beyond that investigation of masculinity, his work based on his Afghan experiences and his description of it presents a number of important contradictions and highlights the complexity of our perception of war, the complexity of our expression of that perception and the ability of human beings to compartmentalize their thoughts in such a way that our beliefs and understanding do not always tally with war's consequences.

On a general level, Quilty is very specific about his interpretation of the brief that he undertook as an official war artist in Afghanistan:

... my job wasn't to ask questions about Australia's involvement in a war far from our own calm shores, and it wasn't to climb a fence and shout my views on the age-old act of combat. It wasn't to explore the local struggle of the Afghan people and it wasn't to comment on the political decisions that result in the placement of young people in danger.¹⁷⁶

Whilst it is uncertain whether these restrictions were imposed by those who sent Quilty to Afghanistan or by the artist himself, he states clearly what he aimed to do:

My job was to tell the story of the Australian men and women who were at war in Afghanistan.¹⁷⁷

But, as he points out, this is not without wider-ranging consequences as, on an existential level, he hopes the work gives 'an insight into broader questions of mortality and the effect of conflict on those who are in the way of it.'¹⁷⁸ Politically and historically too, for Quilty, this military presence represents the hope of progress:

¹⁷⁶ Lauren Webster, "Ben Quilty after Afghanistan," ed. Australian War Memorial (Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 2014).

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

If you are a believer in democracy then the futures of people like these [Australian soldiers] are our responsibility.¹⁷⁹

Indeed, Quilty sees war as both damaging and inevitable.

Consequently,

if their story is told and they are helped back into society before the next brutal round of engagement begins then their children will live happy and possibly peaceful lives – and so will ours.¹⁸⁰

Indeed, Quilty's paintings, exhibited together under the title 'After Afghanistan', are portraits of psychologically broken men and women - broken by war. The artist's lavish use of paint does nothing to hide the PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) of his sitters. Rather, it emphasizes it. This reality is reinforced by numerous interviews with both the artist and his sitters.¹⁸¹ For Quilty their state is given greater drama by comparisons of these young role models with memories of his own misspent youth, an analysis of which, as has been stated above, has been a primary leitmotif of his work. If Quilty's work has aimed at recognising the shortcomings of society's (and particularly Australian society's) ability to develop and exhibit meaningful and valuable rites of passage for the difficult transition from youth to maturity (especially in male culture),

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 8.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ See "War Paint." Australian Story. ABC. September 3, 2012 and "On the War Path." Australian Story. ABC. March 25, 2013, and Lowy Institute for International Policy, 'After Afghanistan' - Ben Quilty and James Brown. Podcast audio, September 11, 2014. <http://www.lowyinstitute.org/news-and-media/audio/podcast-after-afghanistan-after-afghanistan-ben-quilty-and-james-brown>.

then in Afghanistan, in the Australian military, he sees his own and, possibly, society's redemption. Unlike Shakespearian tragic heroes, they have not fallen from grace because of some fatal flaw. The tragedy which Quilty has painted has as its core an unavoidable confrontation with violent conflict. Quilty argues:

The darkest shadows of human nature require profound sacrifice, and extraordinary demands are made of our young people.¹⁸²

In this thesis it is argued that believing in the inevitability of war in itself encourages future wars and investigating alternative rites of passage especially for young males might prevent those wars from happening. An idealization of the military and a belief in the altruism of both active participants in war and the power brokers who choose violent conflict as the means for resolving disagreements makes of war's inevitability an absolute certainty. The soldiers Quilty meets in Afghanistan offer him through their actions and attitudes a meaningful and noble alternative to the abuse and egotism he recognizes in his own life at a similar age. The VC winner, Mark Donaldson, presents a history in his autobiography which contradicts this.¹⁸³ The details of his life before the military are made up of cycles of violence, petty crime and alcohol abuse. His acceptance into the army is seen as a salvation, and one which he shares with many of his comrades¹⁸⁴. As has been

¹⁸² Webster, 7.

¹⁸³ Donaldson.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 17.

mentioned elsewhere in this thesis, Donaldson too confronts the reality of violence of the battlefield and rationalizes it within the context of his job. In Quilty's paintings and most of the catalogued drawings from Afghanistan, as often is the case in TV recruitment videos, few of the soldiers carry weapons¹⁸⁵. It is the Australians who are being attacked while they do their work of rebuilding the country. Further, they do this in spite of the mistakes and misbehaviour of their US and Canadian allies¹⁸⁶. Of the soldiers he met and painted, he says that

...they're a pretty informed, well-behaved, honourable young people, people, completely drug and alcohol free ... doing something for a greater good. For a third world country.'¹⁸⁷

With some degree of irrationality, Quilty states emphatically of his 'After Afghanistan' works that

The men and women depicted in this catalogue are all anti-war.¹⁸⁸

The decision to become a soldier would involve a high level of belief in the resolution of conflict through violence. Regardless of the veracity of Quilty's beliefs¹⁸⁹, he identifies the victims of

¹⁸⁵ in one drawing an Afghan military policeman does carry a gun.

¹⁸⁶ Lowy Institute for International Policy, 22'00", 25'30".

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 46'30. That good behavior does not extend to critics of Quilty's work as he tells the following anecdote: one of the first Afghanistan paintings exhibited in the Archibald prize received a negative review from a journalist in a Melbourne newspaper and a commissioned officer from the second commando unit rang Quilty and offered to 'get him'. See *ibid.*, 51'23".

¹⁸⁸ Webster, 8.

¹⁸⁹ for example, with regard to drug use in the military, see: Oakes, Dan. 'Three soldiers on steroids given marching orders', 2010. <http://www.smh.com.au/world/three-soldiers-on-steroids-given-marching-orders-20101115-17udz.html>, and with regard to education in Afghanistan see Anand, Gopal. 'The war through Afghan eyes.' Podcast. RN: Late Night Live, 2014. <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/latenightlive/the-war-through->

war as the soldiers who take part in it and his paintings reflect this from the weight of responsibility shown on the face of the commander, Air Commodore John Oddie to the contorted body of Trooper M.

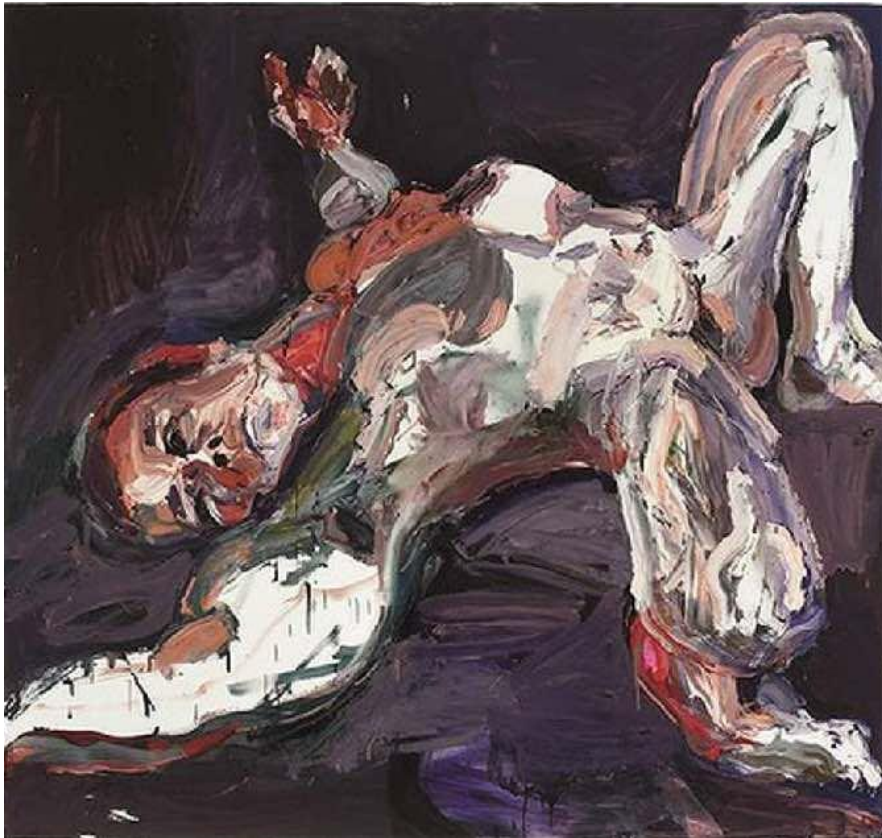


Figure 24. Ben Quilty, *Trooper M. after Afghanistan, no. 2*, 2012. Oil on linen, 170 x 180 cm. Collection of the artist.

The soldier identified as Private M, saw the process of sitting for Quilty as 'therapeutic'¹⁹⁰ and suggests that the paintings

afghan-eyes/5900272. Disturbingly also, in July 2017, the ABC reported on the death of Afghani civilians caused by Australian special forces, the 'planting' of weapons on bodies and a general 'decay of ethical and moral values' in Dan Oakes and Sam Clark, "Death in Kandahar," ABC News, accessed July 11, 2017 <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-07-10/elite-australian-soldiers-accused-of-covering-up-killing-of-boy/8466612>.

¹⁹⁰ "War Paint," 2014".

show the scars of the PTSD from which he suffers.¹⁹¹ In this, Quilty's work differs from much of the art commissioned by the Australian War Memorial which has concentrated on military history, battlefield glory and selfless sacrifice for the nation. In 'Trooper M. after Afghanistan, no. 2' (2012), accent is placed on the soldier's staring face, perhaps attempting to come to terms with his experiences and emotional responses. The naked body is sketched in, the arms and legs are unconvincingly foreshortened and the torso seems emasculated. The head's strong gaze compared with the body's insubstantiality suggest the soldier's exhaustion after repeated tours of duty overseas. The figure's vulnerability and aloneness is emphasized by the surrounding darkness. Indeed, that all the Afghanistan figures have been painted individually suggests a different facet of the soldier beyond that sense of mateship so often portrayed and so important to an Australian identity. Further, it differs in one other crucial way from most of the art undertaken by official Australian war artists. Without its title and its place within the context of the other works of the 'After Afghanistan' series, the painting itself does not indicate the sitter's profession and the reason for the anguish suggested by the artist's handling of the paint, the cramped composition chosen and the vulnerability indicated in the pose. This is true of all the catalogued studio portraits done of the soldiers after Quilty's return from Afghanistan. When James Brown, in his prologue to the book 'ANZAC's Long Shadow: the consequence of our national obsession', suggests this painting

¹⁹¹ "On the War Path," 16'00".

‘is just ambiguous enough to host a swirl of emotions – fear courage, hope, horror – in equal measure.’¹⁹², he is possibly responding as much to context as to content. It may be argued that beyond any aesthetic value given to these portraits, a essential function of them is, as M. suggests, as therapy and catharsis for both artist and sitter.

Regardless of the conduct of the war and the conduct of those who choose to participate in it, soldiers have always returned home physically and mentally damaged by it. Like the organization ‘Legacy’, Quilty rightly concludes that those soldiers in need of help deserve and should receive it and he has agitated for greater governmental support.

However, while Quilty’s portraits from Afghanistan as a whole present something not often dealt with in Australian art, that is, the soldier psychologically damaged by war¹⁹³, his conclusion is not that war should be avoided, but that soldiers returning home suffering from PTSD is the consequence of war for Australia. The consequences are deeper in Afghanistan. Quilty suggests this when he acknowledges his limited contact with Afghanis with different views from pro-West ones and maintains that Australia should accept refugees as a consequence of our armed forces being involved in a war there.¹⁹⁴ Given Quilty’s more recent visits to Syrian refugee camps with the Australian writer Richard Flanagan around

¹⁹² Brown, 5.

¹⁹³ The ‘Angry Penguins’ group of the 1940’s perhaps being a notable exception.

¹⁹⁴ Lowy Institute for International Policy, 42’30”.

2016 and the stated profound effect it had on both men, a logical step might be to look beyond the effect of war on those prosecuting it, to its societal effects and root causes. It may be strongly argued that such investigations lay outside Quilty's brief in Afghanistan, self-imposed or otherwise. However, such compartmentalisation does suggest a degree of moral pragmatism and a fundamental belief in war's inevitability.

It is as profoundly untrue to say that soldiers are anti-war as it is to say that wars are fought to stop war. However, artists do not make statements. Rather, they ask questions. Both Gittoes and Quilty ask potent questions, particularly about the effect of war. In Quilty's case, it must be acknowledged that Australia has a professional military force. Beyond the arguments about why they are sent into battle, they have chosen to do so. His work 'After Afghanistan' looks at the real psychological consequence for those men and women, but does not consider why that choice is made or what the consequences are for the countries where wars are fought or for the people who live there. It may be argued that all these aspects are impossible to separate without some level of self-delusion. In his work, and particularly in his films, Gittoes, while recognizing war as a unique environment in itself, does regularly make that connection and encourages the viewer to consider how and why wars are fought and how conflict can be opposed without the resort to violence. For both artists, the creative process is offered as one that heals wounds and builds bridges.

Studio Response: *The Betrothed Ones (Consequences)*

The Betrothed Ones (Consequences) was made in response to recent work by Ben Quilty.



Figure 26. Mark Visione, *The Betrothed Ones*, 2017. Drypoint and collagraph, 152 x 98 cm. Collection of the artist.

The 'After Afghanistan' series chooses the Australian soldier today as its subject and portrays him/her as a victim. In doing this, on the one hand Quilty removes most cultural, historical and military references from his sitters (especially in the studio portraits) and, on the other, implies, through this, questions about what the nature of altruistic sacrifice really is. An accusing finger is pointed at 'the politician' because of a perceived indifference to the damage caused by war to those who serve. Yet, this consideration of the nature of 'sacrifice' has no historical or cultural dimension beyond how it impacts on the individual soldier. There is, perhaps, a suggestion in these works and Quilty's statements about them that PTSD is something other than the inevitable result of violent conflict. Or, rather, that because war is inevitable, politicians should do more to help soldiers suffering from its unavoidable consequence - PTSD.¹⁹⁵ Although Quilty argues that his job 'wasn't to ask questions about Australia's involvement in a war far from our own calm shores'¹⁹⁶, his recognition that it was 'a profoundly important cultural barometer of the most ancient and darkest part of humanity – war'¹⁹⁷ would suggest that it involves considerations of war generally and its particular place in an Australian context. A subsequent work qualifies those expectations.

¹⁹⁵ This thesis has already suggested that the soldier returning from war has often been met with indifference by his politicians. See p.28.

¹⁹⁶ Webster, 7.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 8.

In *Dresses for Soulaf*, Quilty seems unavoidably confronted by his subject – the Syrian refugee crisis. Leaving the traditional world of oil painting, he appropriates his objects from the detritus of the tragedy (the phoney lifejackets sold for exorbitant prices to the desperate refugees, discarded blankets) and extravagant symbols of hope (here, the wedding dresses made by the refugee Raghda Alwari).



Figure 25. Ben Quilty, *Dresses for Soulaf*, 2016. Installation. Collection of the artist[?].

However, the showy wedding dresses of the world of the Middle Eastern refugee do not always function as a symbol of hope and Raghda Alwari is not the only refugee making these dresses. The wedding dress is a surprisingly important economic item in the world of the displaced. Trade continues in a world ill-defined by peace or war. Here the refugee is the clear victim and the aid-worker not always a welcome intrusion. In the world of the refugee, the wedding dress may be a symbol of the child bride, married off to ensure the family's survival.

This may be Soulaf's future fate.¹⁹⁸ In a wider context, often the wedding dress as symbol and art work has been used to underline the mistreatment of women – amongst these, in Lebanon to oppose laws that allow rapists not to be charged if they marry their victim and in China to draw attention to the issue of domestic violence.¹⁹⁹

'The Betrothed Ones' (Consequences) presents two supine figures: a male dressed as a soldier²⁰⁰ and a woman wearing a bridal dress. It is uncertain whether they are awake, sleeping or dead. The outline of the figures is visible through their clothes. The title suggests a future marriage. However, the work asks how they are connected. This stems from an initial question: in what way are Australian soldiers in Afghanistan connected to a Syrian woman refugee making wedding dresses in Lebanon? This thesis argues that the connection is war and, in this particular case, that connection is not merely an abstract one.

This sense of consequence was not apparent in Quilty's work, nor, truly, does it need to be. However, this thesis also argues that to solve the problem of the refugee through the use of the soldier is an unlikely and painful scenario. The actions of the soldier create the world of the refugee. Because, as has been

¹⁹⁸ Rania Abouzeid, "A Wedding Dress in Za'atari," *The New Yorker*, 29 October 2013, accessed April 24, 2017, <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/a-wedding-dress-in-zaatari>.

¹⁹⁹ "Lebanon Rape Law: Wedding Dresses Hang in Beirut Sea Front Protest," BBC News, accessed April 24, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39680838>.

²⁰⁰ The soldier's face suggests images of the Aztec god Xipe Totec, used here to question the nature of 'sacrifice' in complex societies.

argued, morality is absent from war, its consequences too are immoral. To apportion blame and punish wrong-doers seems merely the prerogative of the victors.



Figure 27. Mark Visione, *The Betrothed Ones*, 2017. Drypoint and chin collé, 152 x 98 cm. Collection of the artist.

B. The Soldier and the Civilian.

Frequently, Australian identity is described through manifestations of the military, and this, most particularly, through the ANZAC Tradition. However, it is reasonable to ask how inclusive this is. At best, indigenous and migrant histories of the experience of war are of secondary importance and any critique of the military has, on occasion, been seen as un-Australian.²⁰¹ An investigation of the behaviour of the Australian military (especially the first AIF that is the source of the tradition) and into Australian foreign policy of the following century might lead to more balanced considerations of the role of the military in defining national identity. Similarly, investigations into civilian histories of war would give a necessary breadth to Australians' definition of what war really means for society.

1. DISPATCHES. (*Australian attitudes towards the military and war*)

Through Australian eyes, war and nationality are linked profoundly to the experience of the military and the population's image of their armed forces. This is expressed through the repeated affirmation of what has come to be known as the ANZAC Tradition. This can be seen as another dimension of those militarist beliefs which interpret war as being not only

²⁰¹ See, for example, Dan Oakes, "It's Not 'Un-Australian' to Investigate the Actions of Special Forces in Afghanistan," accessed 28 October 2017. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-10-26/not-unaustralian-to-investigate-special-forces-in-afghanistan/9085648>.

inevitable, but also central to national identity and concepts of mature virtue. It can be argued that these beliefs have as a consequence that they both encourage war to be seen as the manner in which conflicts are resolved, as well as creating a strong moral insensitivity to the real social and cultural damage caused by war.

The ANZAC Tradition is an idealisation of the military. It is often as blind to the military's faults, failures and fallacies as it is to the soldiers' own humanity. War causes soldiers to respond to its realities with fear and self-loathing that have many times lead to self-harm²⁰², alienation and suicide²⁰³ during service and after it. War as the suspension of that moral behaviour accepted in times of peace may 'cost men's humanity too'²⁰⁴. A further consequence is atrocities on and off the battlefield²⁰⁵. In war, the very virtues that are supposed to be manifested through it are repeatedly negated. War damages all its participants, willing or otherwise.

This thesis argues that a consideration of the effect of war on civilians and non-military society is central to how we perceive and react to war and our ultimate acceptance of it. Therefore, it is important to note that the Dardanelles Campaign which gave birth to the ANZAC Tradition had only a limited direct effect on local civilian populations. Beyond unsubstantiated accusations

²⁰² Peter Stanley, *Bad Characters: Sex, Crime, Mutiny, Murder and the Australian Imperial Force* (Millers Point N.S.W.: Pier 9, 2010), 90.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 150.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 132.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 125, 32.

of Allied attacks on Ottoman medical facilities, the peninsula was sparsely populated and inhabitants appear to have been evacuated. However, it has been argued that the Allied threat of and the subsequent campaign against Turkey precipitated the 'Armenian Genocide' which involved the death of between 800,000 and 1,800,000 civilians²⁰⁶.

For the artist wishing to propose peace both as an alternative to war as well as an attractive state in and of itself, a more critical – but still realistic – attitude towards the military and their inclinations is valuable. Such a critique should not be seen as applicable to the Australian military exclusively and, often also, it is both difficult and unhelpful to separate military from political attitudes and beliefs. However, it is possible to identify areas of concern which artists may choose to confront in their work. These areas include concepts of race and racial superiority, issues with regard to respect and, connected to these, what may be called an invader mentality and the problems of cultural uncertainty and the attempt to negate it through the tradition of 'the heroic'.

Race.

A belief in the righteousness of the cause appears to be inherent in the activity of war. For example, Alex Danchev,

²⁰⁶ Tim Mayfield. "'Never Again' Applies to More Than Just Gallipoli ," 2015, accessed April 24, 2017 <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-04-22/mayfield-'never-again'-applies-to-more-than-just-gallipoli/6412110>.

writing about the abuses and torture perpetrated at Abu Graib prison during the Iraq conflict, points out that the coalition perceived itself as a 'force for good' and that the conflict was a battle for civilization. Any criticism of Western actions was a support for barbarism²⁰⁷. Participation in war involves dehumanising our enemy. However, this attitude can extend beyond the strict context of political and military action.

When examining pre-World War I Australia, Bill Gammage describes it as being more egalitarian and democratic than Europe. However, there was a clear limit to the definition of this equality:

...they did not want a brotherhood of man in Australia – they refused to embrace those who were not of their race. and,

...when they referred to race, they meant a union of colour, and their most determined attachment was to a white Australia.²⁰⁸

There was a belief that an excess of non-white labour would create difficulties for the new country and the fear of an Asian invasion was common. Furthermore, as the historian, Suzanne Brugger points out, in 1914-15, when Australians left for the war,

the natural suspicions of all men towards members of alien groups were specially heightened by constant and unavoidable references to the menace such groups

²⁰⁷ Alex Danchev, *On Art and War and Terror* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 222.

²⁰⁸ Gammage, 2.

offered to their way of life. In such circumstances as these, hostility rather than sympathy became the conscious as well as the instinctive response to the foreigner.²⁰⁹

Also, the war reaffirmed that loving connection to the mother country based on race and civilization. The link to England can not be underestimated, especially when considering Australians going to war in 1914-15. Many soldiers were born in England and military experience before World War I was most likely to be in the British army. It is not surprising that the cover-image of CEW Bean's 'Anzac Book'²¹⁰, which is a compilation of stories, poems and illustrations written by those serving at Anzac Cove, should show a wounded but defiant ANZAC posed before a Union Jack, and that the book also includes contributions from soldiers from British regiments. That connection existed from the earliest colonial times where there was a tacit and overt acceptance of British racial superiority, a superiority which perceived the indigenous population (regardless of their own will) automatically as subjects rather than citizens²¹¹. On this note, it is also important to point out that Alan Moorehead suggests that the British underestimated the Turkish commitment to defending their homeland during the Dardanelles campaign and that this

²⁰⁹ Suzanne Brugger, *Australians and Egypt, 1914-1919* (Carlton Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1980), 31.

²¹⁰ *The Anzac Book*, (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2010).

²¹¹ See Connor, 10-28. and Brugger, 30.

‘incorrect and patronising’ attitude may have contributed to British failure in that campaign²¹².

This sense of superiority based on race was extended to other populations in other places. For example, in her detailed account of Australians in Egypt during the period 1915 to 1919, Brugger notes that,

As they [the Australian military] remained in Egypt, and when boredom and resentment grew with delay before entering combat, frustrations would increasingly be taken out upon the inferior race which did the waiting.²¹³

As has been suggested above, in Egypt, the barriers created by differences of custom and language, the low level of hygiene, the availability of cheap labour and prostitution led to an absence of respect on the part of the ANZACs. Egypt was seen as a society where egalitarianism was not prized in the same way as it was in Australia. Egypt was characterized as an immoral place lacking in shame and decency, where the people were lazy and cowardly and cruel²¹⁴. The responses of the troops stationed there ranged from the use of words like ‘Gypso’ and ‘nigger’ found in the diaries and letters of the Australians to cruel acts of violence. While often the soldiers may have seen themselves as merely responding to a perceived injustice they themselves believed they had experienced, the actions suggest a right based on a racial as

²¹² Moorehead, 71-2.

²¹³ Brugger, 28.

²¹⁴ Ibid., 41.

much as a moral order. These tensions may be seen to have culminated in 1915 in the events known as the first and second 'Battle of Wazzir', also known as 'The Big Dust-up' – serious rioting of Australian and some New Zealand soldiers in the red-light district of Cairo.²¹⁵

Again, discussing the behaviour of ANZAC troops in Egypt, Michael Tyquin suggests that,

political cultural niceties and the almost universal respect for human rights that we take for granted today were not part of the social inheritance of Australian Diggers. They were nurtured in an imperial Anglo-Saxon mould that gave expression to the White Australia policy.²¹⁶

However, that attitude may be considered to have continued far beyond 1915. In his review of Australian war literature, for example, Robin Gerster suggests that it is apparent in Australian POWs attitudes towards their captors. While during World War II Japanese guards are described in subhuman terms²¹⁷, the same is not true of German guards in North Africa. Gerster further adds that the position of the prisoner is seen as tragic, giving John Halpin's book 'Blood in the mists' (1934) as an example of

the defensive, almost cringing, posture assumed by the ex-prisoner under the cultural dictatorship of a national

²¹⁵ Gammage, 50.

²¹⁶ Michael Tyquin, "Keeping the Peace - Egypt 1919," *Journal of the Australian Armoured Corp Association (NSW Branch)* March 2011, no. 461 (2011): 1.

²¹⁷ Robin Gerster, *Big-Noting: The Heroic Theme in Australian War Writing* (Melbourne: Melbourne university Press, 1987), 144, 228-35.

war ethos so aggressively supportive of a heroic view of battle. Surrender to the enemy entailed more than personal entrapment: it meant the renunciation of one's claims of manhood.²¹⁸

A further element of race concerns the Australian self-image and that self-image in war. That image was created and solidified as much on Anzac Cove and in books like 'The Anzac Book' as it was in the poems of Banjo Patterson and Henry Lawson. The archetype of the bushman – 'self-sufficient, resilient, courageous'²¹⁹ – found its apotheosis on Gallipoli. The bushman and also the city larrikin are both morphed into a symbol of sublime manhood:

... mateship, loyalty, physical courage, self-sacrifice, irreverence of authority, and so forth – were informally but systematically codified into a national legend about Diggers. It was also a legend of idealized Australian masculinity – the quintessential male with all the necessary warrior attributes attached.²²⁰

From ANZAC, the idea that Australians were naturally good at being soldiers developed. In his 'Official History' of the first AIF, CEW Bean sounds all the key notes of being Australian – the effect of the Bush and 'wide open spaces' on health and physique, mateship, morale (rather than ethics), a crucial

²¹⁸ Ibid., 143.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 17.

²²⁰ Craig Stockings, "'There Is an Idea That the Australian Is a Born Soldier...'," in *Zombie Myths of Australian Military History*, ed. C. Stockings (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press Ltd., 2010), 94.

connection between battle and sport²²¹ and the importance of bravery over loss of life.²²² As if Australians were giants or gods, they were often described in superhuman terms, especially when compared to the diminutive stature of the Tommy:

but it was the physical appearance of the Dominion soldiers – Colonials as they were then called – that captivated everybody who came to Anzac, and there is hardly an account of the campaign which does not refer to it with admiration and even a kind of awe. ‘As a child,’ Mackenzie [the British author] wrote, ‘I used to pore hours over those illustrations of Flaxman for Homer and Virgil which simulated the effects of ancient pottery. There was not one of those glorious young men I saw that day who might not himself have been Ajax or Diomed, Hector or Achilles. Their almost complete nudity, their tallness and majestic simplicity of line, their rose-brown flesh burnt by the sun and purged of all grossness by the ordeal through which they were passing, all these united to create something as near to absolute beauty as I shall hope ever to see in this world.’²²³

Gammage notes that the initial requirements for enlistments in the First World War were quite high – for example, men had to be at least 5’6” – and only later were these minimum

²²¹ It could be argued that the militarist sees sport as a metaphor for war, while the pacifist sees it as an alternative to war.

²²² Gerster, 76-82.

²²³ Moorehead, 132.

requirements relaxed in order to fill the spaces left by the dead and wounded:

Those who sailed against Turkey were the fittest, strongest, and most ardent in the land.²²⁴

Ultimately, in the chapter “*There is an idea that the Australian is a born soldier.*” in ‘Zombie Myths of Australian Military History’²²⁵, Craig Stockings rejects the popular racial idealization and offers practical reasons for victory and defeat. He ascribes Australian successes in North Africa in World War II, for example, to good training and leadership rather than that suggested innate ability. Similarly, he refuses to blame racial inferiority or national characteristics for Australian losses in Greece and on Crete in 1941.²²⁶

While such comments continue to be debated and often rejected, it may be asked if, for the artist, it is possible to separate representations of war from nationalism, militarism and even racism. Certainly, given this strong connection to beliefs in white racial superiority and Western value systems, and its historical links to the European invasion of Australia and its violent confrontation with indigenous culture, justification may imaginably need to be sought by artists representing indigenous Australia when they seek to take part in the ANZAC

²²⁴ Gammage, 9.

²²⁵ Stockings.

²²⁶ Ibid., 113.: “Ethnicity is never an answer. Australian national character did not change in Greece, but battlefield outcomes did. In battle soldiers die by fire and steel, not by vague conception of race and culture. No enemy was ever ‘mateshipped’ to death; no objective taken by ‘larrikinism’. Anzac is a social construct – a legend – and an inadequate lens through which to view and interpret real historical events.”

Tradition and gain recognition for the participation of indigenous Australians in the Australian military.

Respect.

The issue of respect (or, rather, the lack of it) is not one consigned to a past history characterized by the White Australia Policy or dominated by empire. Sydney's major newspaper, the Sydney Morning Herald suggests the necessity of instructions in respectfulness for Australians visiting battle fields by carrying a lengthy article on it in October 2016, the author suggesting that 'normal' behavior should be controlled because of the special significance of the battlefield and because others might object.²²⁷

As has already been suggested, the concept of respect has played an important role in defining the Australian military.

²²⁷ In it, the author, the journalist Jimmy Thomson gives some advice to the Australian would-be battlefield tourist. Under the title 'Rules of Engagement: Tips for better battlefield tourism', he suggests some of the following:

'Mind Your Language

Don't use racist slang, or anything that may be perceived as such when you are talking about locals, and don't loudly relate stories you've heard of excesses on either side.'

...

'Show Sensitivity

Remember that lives were lost on both sides of battles so don't complain when, for instance, you find a Buddhist memorial urn at Long Tan Cross [Vietnam].

'Be Respectful

If your tour guide wants to take you to a memorial for local fallen, go as a mark of respect, at least to your guide.

'Mind Your Step

Remember that you may be literally walking on someone's grave. These are not places to stop and drink, smoke or sunbathe. The dead can't be offended but their living relatives may well be.'

Jimmy Thomson, "Back to the Battlefields," *Sydney Morning Herald*, October 15-16 2016.

Although it raises some moral issues, it is probably not surprising that the military lacks respect for their enemy. However, historically, the Australian military has been seen to have shown little respect for rank within their own army or the military of other nations or for non-combatants. Beyond those reasons given above – a sense of racial, national and professional superiority – there are other reasons for this absence. Gammage suggests that, at least during the First World War, Australian soldiers were undisciplined because they maintained a civilian attitude to their task even beyond 1918.²²⁸ He states that there was petty crime, disobedience, violence and destruction of property and even gives this as a reason for their battlefield success. He argues simply that

Australian success in battle was largely attributable to that same unrelenting independence which so regularly offended law and authority²²⁹

, and, in a sense contradicting Stockings²³⁰, that

...mateship was a chief cause for the effectiveness of Australians in battle, for officers and men judged each other by the test of action, and proficiency there erased almost any weakness elsewhere.²³¹

Ultimately, respect was not just given. It had to be earned. This could be earned by officers, allies, foe and civilians. It could be earned on the battlefield or through some other form of contact.

²²⁸ Gammage, 234.

²²⁹ Ibid., 241.

²³⁰ See footnote 223.

²³¹ Gammage, 247.

However, the decision rested with the individual or the group rather than with the rules of any larger political structure.

The ANZAC of the first AIF seems to have seen himself as a civilian in uniform with little time for rank and the implications and details of military hierarchy. In 'Goodbye to All That', Robert Graves's memoirs of his involvement in the first World War, he repeatedly mentions that sense of tradition combined with discipline, order and rules – sometimes to an irrational degree – which affect positively on a unit's performance in battle and their chance of survival²³². Whilst the ANZACs of 1915 stood at the beginning of a tradition that would certainly grow in importance, Moorehead suggests that for them war was 'an extension of the pub brawl, and it had an element of rioting, of street fighting, of instant physical revenge.'²³³ This does not indicate a lack of training, preparedness or self-discipline on the part of the AIF, but rather a difference of attitude in battle. (Likewise, Graves lists numerous 'crimes' committed by the soldiers under his command that differ little from examples given by authors discussing the Australian military²³⁴). Ultimately, the indifference of Australian troops to such actions as saluting and their right to less discipline²³⁵ are ascribed by Gammage to 'the habit of free men'²³⁶.

²³² Graves, 72ff.

²³³ Moorehead, 118-9.

²³⁴ See, for example, Stanley.

²³⁵ Gammage, 98-9.

²³⁶ Ibid., 35.

One dimension of this habit has been that Australian forces have been critical of and condescending to their allies. Indeed, Gerster even notes that there are literary references which indicate that during World War I the Australian Light Horse considered themselves superior to the infantry²³⁷. Frequent comments about the comparatively inferior quality of British troops at this time are found in Gammage²³⁸. More recently, criticism has also been directed at other nations. For example, Mark Donaldson suggests that the US military in Afghanistan has had an unprofessional attitude, stating,

They [the Americans] had a different way of thinking. We approached contacts with, we hoped, calm professionalism, whereas the Americans got very amped up. They were incredibly brave, willing to take a risk to get a reward, but much more exuberant about the whole thing than we were. It had been a perfect ambush in that environment, and back at the FOB the Americans were high-fiving a whooping. We were just quietly pleased with having carried out another job in a professional way.²³⁹

Further, while discussing his time as a war artist with Australian troops in Afghanistan, the artist Ben Quilty, in a podcast interview produced by the Lowy Institute²⁴⁰ criticized the US destruction of traditional opium crops there. Later, he describes a hockey match between two Canadian teams that descends into violence. With so many armed spectators and players, the

²³⁷ Gerster, 46.

²³⁸ Gammage, 97ff, 213ff.

²³⁹ Donaldson, 4.

²⁴⁰ Lowy Institute for International Policy, 41'40".

incident was a volatile one. A group of correctly uniformed Australian soldiers moved through the crowd and escorted the artist to safety. While such examples may be in varying degrees true, they also suggest a belief in a moral and professional superiority possessed by the Australian military.

Whilst criticism of one's allies may be seen as unusual, it may seem logical that armies are lacking in respect for their enemies. It is common for nations to dehumanize their enemies. Without the benefit of looking back in time from a distance characterized by a lack of involvement, it is perhaps difficult to understand the allies' hatred of Germany at the outset of World War I, a hatred which in some ways increased as the war descended into stalemate. Robert Graves notes that the 1914 training manual in the UK which stated that 'the soldier's ultimate aim was to put out of action or render ineffective the armed forces of the enemy' was later changed to tell troops 'that they must HATE the Germans, and KILL as many of them as possible'²⁴¹. Indeed, the state of war implies a total lack of respect for the enemy and, as a consequence, respect on a personal level becomes irrelevant. Only respect in a military sense which is won or experienced on the battlefield has validity. Moorehead describes this process at Gallipoli. He states that the Australians in 1915 saw the Turk as a 'monster' and 'a sinister fanatic'²⁴². High numbers of Turkish deaths after the kind of senseless attacks common to both sides during the Dardanelles Campaign were greeted with hilarity by their

²⁴¹ Graves, 195.

²⁴² Moorehead, 120.

Australian foe²⁴³. However, after a truce was agreed so that the dead of both sides could be buried, the Australian attitude changed and that previous disrespect generally disappeared²⁴⁴ - note Bean's sympathetic poem 'Abdul' in 'The Anzac Book'. However, this lack of respect for the enemy is not exclusive to a time or place. It is found in Mark Donaldson's ambivalence towards his enemy in his autobiography²⁴⁵. In Afghanistan, he prefers to show his esteem for the man of action, a police officer who deals with his enemy swiftly and mercilessly and is prepared to suffer the consequences²⁴⁶. His attitude towards his opponents there is more complex and more outspoken:

As far as respect as fighters go...Yes I do respect them. They live a difficult life and do know how to fight hard. As far as making a personal kind of peace...It's too early to say. While I like the idea, I don't know if we have that level of mutual respect that soldiers would have had in a traditional war. The dirty tactics the insurgents employ are hard to get over. A lot of the Talibs we came across were pieces of shit, to put it politely, and I don't feel any remorse whatsoever for what happened to them. If you saw how they treated their women and their families and how they barged into communities that didn't want them but weren't strong enough to kick them out, how they threatened and intimidated kids into fighting for them, how they beheaded and mutilated people – no, it didn't worry

²⁴³ Ibid., 122.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., 129.

²⁴⁵ Donaldson, 414ff.

²⁴⁶ Ibid., 366-7.

me if they died. I didn't hate them, but over time I worried less and less if I had to kill one of them.²⁴⁷

Many historians have recounted the relationship between Australian troops and the civilians they have encountered. Because Australians have fought wars in relatively distant lands, they have seen themselves as liberators and bringers of the benefits and values of modern Western society. However, there are numerous episodes (especially in World War I) in which behavior has been characterized by a mob mentality and by a sense of superiority based on those benefits and values. Bean, Gammage, Moorehead and Stanley all list incidents of 'indiscipline'. Gammage notes that bad behavior was already seen on the transport ships sailing to Europe in the first months of the war²⁴⁸ and, in the case of Egypt, as late as 1919 Australian troops showed little respect for the local population in their suppression of the post-war Egyptian independence movement.

While it can be argued that too often there has been a lack of respect shown to friend or foe by the Australian military, there is one area where the demand for respect is absolute. As Marilyn Lake states,

To write about what's wrong with Anzac today is to court the charge of treason. And much besides.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 414-5.

²⁴⁸ Gammage, 43.

²⁴⁹ Lake et al., 1.

This suggests that a number of topics may not be discussed: the behavior of the military, why we go to war or should go to war and what that means for our future. It means that who we are and what we find important as Australians is not debatable. It may mean that there can be no tradition of 'Australian-ness' beyond or outside the ANZAC Tradition. It means that the service and sacrifice of members of the military can not be examined without being disrespectful to them. In 'Big-Noting', his account of Australian war literature up to the Vietnam War, Robin Gerster outlines the main elements of the tradition. Besides the concepts of 'proud racial superiority', the heroic man of action and 'stoical acceptance' of conditions²⁵⁰, he notes, not surprisingly, that censors during the war 'debarred accounts which depicted war horrors'²⁵¹. This can not be seen as absolute. For example, not completely sanitized, CEW Bean in his incarnation as the editor of 'The Anzac Book' presented a balanced selection from the offerings sent to him. While the negative and the depressing were rejected, the book does include photographs of graves as well as contributions that portray the hardships and dangers of life on Anzac Cove. However, Gerster further notes that between the wars, despite the reality of the First World War, war literature in Australia continued to concentrate on the 'excellence and uniqueness' of the AIF and that little criticism was permitted. He voices a common concern also amongst military historians that many authors were 'more concerned with the reputation of the fighting prowess of the first AIF than with historical

²⁵⁰ Gerster, 31.

²⁵¹ Ibid., 24.

exactitude'²⁵², and, not unexpectedly, memoirists tended to include examples of daring and strength while forgetting 'instances of cowardice, desperation and despair'²⁵³.

There is a quasi-political nonacceptance in Australia of any criticism of ANZAC and the ANZAC Tradition. Consequently, after Robert Graves's "Goodbye to All That" was published in 1929 it was objected to by the RSL²⁵⁴ because Graves accused Australian (and Canadian) soldiers of atrocities during the conflict in Europe²⁵⁵. More significant, perhaps, was the suppression in 1927 of sections of a British history of the Dardanelles campaign. In it Cecil Aspinall states that large numbers of Australian troops returned to the beach on the day of the Anzac Cove landings, and that these 'shirkers' or 'stragglers' had caused the Australians to fail in reaching their objectives against relatively weak Turkish defences. Before publication, CEW Bean, whose first volumes of the 'Official History' of the first AIF had already been published, wrote to Aspinall asking him – based on his own experiences on Gallipoli – to amend these passages. Meanwhile, the offending sections of Aspinall's text had been leaked to the Australian press and had caused an uproar. Regardless of the real situation on 25th April 1915, - and Bean himself does mention the incidents recounted - the sections were amended. With reference to the controversy, Alistair Thomson argues,

²⁵² Ibid., 126.

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 118.

²⁵⁵ Graves, 154.

The problem with national histories which generalize about national achievements and character is that they smooth out these contradictions and make them unspeakable. On the whole Charles Bean had too much integrity to consciously manipulate history in the national interest. More influential was his intense investment in the Australian soldiers, which shaped his perception of their actions that he saw positive behavior as typifying national character and negative behavior as aberrant. In his histories he did not deny or ignore this aberrant behavior –such as straggling – but defined it away as insignificant, unmanly and un-Australian.²⁵⁶

Given the above, it may be seen as surprising that, according to the social historian, Raden Dunbar, Bean himself in early 1915 fell foul of the public, the media, politics and the military in Australia because in a 'long and quite cautious article'²⁵⁷ he had criticized the behavior of the troops stationed in Egypt. Dunbar notes that Bean 'was threatened with tarring and feathering, was told he "would stop a bullet" sooner or later, and became the target of a witty mock-doggerel poem of ten verses that was published in a Cairo newspaper.'²⁵⁸ The troops maintained their right to behave the way they wanted to behave, but would accept no criticism of it to the point that such actions and events were perceived as never having taken

²⁵⁶ Alistair Thomson, "Stragglers or Shirkers: An Anzac Imperial Controversy," *Working Papers in Australian Studies*, no. 67 (1991): 7.

²⁵⁷ Raden Dunbar, *The Secrets of the Anzacs : In the Untold Story of Verereal Disease in the Australian Army, 1914-1919* (Brunswick, Victoria: Scribe Publications, 2014), 24.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 25.

place. Possibly in response, Bean wrote '*What to Know in Egypt: a guide for Australasian soldiers.*' – a helpful booklet touching on the geography, history and society of Egypt.

Because of his 'Official History' and 'The Anzac Book', CEW Bean is often credited with creating the ANZAC Tradition. On 25th April 1915 Australia's nationhood was tested, affirmed and defined. The ANZAC Tradition becomes as much about being Australian as being Australian is about the ANZAC Tradition. A national identity is created on an invaded beach and perpetuated and preserved within a militarist tradition that prizes heroism, glory and sacrifice. In a sense, the altruistic and tragic nature of service and possible sacrifice in war has been fused to a pride in martial strength and action when neither should be of themselves justification for war.

A century has passed. With regard to respect for and criticism of this ANZAC Tradition, in the chapter 'What have you done for your country?' in the collection of essays 'What's wrong with Anzac? The Militarisation of Australian History', Marilyn Lake gives us an insight into the contemporary character as much as into the content of the debate. In a lecture (later a newspaper article and a radio broadcast) in 2009, she made the seemingly reasonable suggestion that

it was time to move on from such imperial myths and proclaim ourselves a free and independent republic, enshrining not militarist values, but the civil and political

values of equality and justice, which in an earlier era had been thought to define a distinctive 'Australian ethos'.²⁵⁹ She goes on to suggest, amongst other concepts, multiculturalism with real equality for indigenous and newly-arrived Australians and gender equality as concrete traditions as well as desirable goals as being valuable components of our national identity. In response, there was strong support. However, there was also opposition that gives an insight into the popularity of ANZAC. For some, more than martial prowess, it extended to all 'justice, freedom and peace'²⁶⁰. For others, criticism was an offence and an insult. Most importantly, the right to have an opinion about ANZAC and, by association, to being Australian for many is dependent on heritage:

... the cult of Anzac is now creating two classes of citizen in a process that ironically reflects the divisions opened up in World War I. At that time, lines were drawn between 'enlisted men' and those stigmatized as 'shirkers'. This has now been re-cast as a division between those who themselves or whose relatives went to war – and thus have the right to speak – and those who haven't earned this right and must remain silent.²⁶¹

This attitude where ANZAC is placed beyond criticism (at least for many) has its origins in the beliefs already found in World War I and is significant in that it today still defines war as a purely military experience:

²⁵⁹ Lake et al., 2.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 5.

²⁶¹ Ibid., 23.

In thus seeking the esteem of men, Australian soldiers remained to a degree responsive to their civilian backgrounds. But they knew another world, in which the cause of their fighting was less important than the manner of their daily lives. From long experience in a cruel war they derived a new outlook, which confirmed the worth of their old attitudes towards mateship and discipline, but which included a host of new values. Before the fighting ended they regulated their course by processes alien to civilians, and adopted standards which later set them apart from those who had not fought in the war.²⁶²

World War I's significance for these soldiers was that it forged an unbreakable bond of mateship between those who survived and also, in a cultural dimension, with those who had died and would die in the future.

As a consequence, the voice of many who have experienced war as non-combatants is denied. Australia as a people, without extensive direct experience of war on its soil, may be seen to have taken on the fighting soldier's ethos. It can be argued that beyond the image a nation has of itself, that image also has consequences for the nation with regard to broader attitudes and actions both nationally and internationally.

²⁶² Gammage, 231. Again, echoing Baudrillard's sentiment that the Gulf War will not take place, is not taking place and did not take place, in a sense, for the First AIF, World War I as a political, historical, social and perhaps even physical even did not take place.

‘Forward Defence’ or The Invader Mentality.

According to Marilyn Lake, many of those who supported her above-mentioned critique of the ANZAC Tradition commented on their dislike of Australia always fighting ‘other people’s wars’²⁶³. However, while discussing the issue of ‘Forward Defence’, the diplomatic and military historian, Peter Edwards points out that

Military strategy is an important part, but only a part, of a grand strategy, which ideally should give a coherent summary of the way a nation intends to deploy its hard and soft assets – including its diplomatic, trade, aid, intelligence, cultural and other resources, as well as its armed forces.²⁶⁴

Given Australia’s geographical position, its large land mass and low population, Edwards argues that Australia has needed considerably stronger allies who are perceived as being ‘like-minded’²⁶⁵. His monograph “Strategy. Learning from history. Some strategic lessons from the ‘Forward Defence’ Era” traces how this policy has functioned for Australia through the Malayan crisis, the period of confrontation with Indonesia and the Vietnam War. He also recognizes the opposing argument that relying on allies involves a loss of independence while not necessarily always delivering that safety hoped for, and the fighting of wars that have little to do with Australia’s own

²⁶³ Lake et al., 6.

²⁶⁴ Peter Edwards, "Learning from History : Some Strategic Lessons from the 'Forward Defence' Era," ed. Australian Strategic Policy Institute (Barton, ACT: ASPI, 2015), 6.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

security. He concludes that, regardless of the policy choices, they are aimed at avoiding rather than promoting conflict.²⁶⁶ However, the policy of 'Forward Defence' raises a number of issues concerning Australia's (both people and government) attitudes towards war. 'Forward Defence' may be defined as dealing with possible threats to national security at an early stage in their development and certainly before they represent an actual conflict on Australian soil. In a contradictory sense, therefore, the aggression inherent in the notion of 'Forward Defence' is justified by the universally held belief that each state has the right to defend itself against aggression. It may be seen to have both a geographical and an ethical element.

Australia since post-colonial times has been uniquely lucky to have generally avoided the ravages of war on its home soil. No army has invaded it and fought here, and the damage done to Sydney, Darwin and Broome during World War II may be described as comparatively limited. Even though Australian fears to the contrary at the time were quite reasonable, in the chapter 'Dramatic myth and dull truth: Invasion by Japan in 1942' in 'Zombie Myths of Australian Military History', Peter Stanley argues that during the Second World War there was no real plan for the Japanese to occupy the Australian mainland and that the battle around Kokoda did not stop a Japanese invasion.²⁶⁷ Indeed, the 'hypothetical effectiveness', the

²⁶⁶ Ibid., 7.

²⁶⁷ Peter Stanley, "Dramatic Myth and Dull Truth: Invasion by Japan in 1942," in *Zombie Myths of Australian Military History*, ed. C. Stockings (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press Ltd., 2010), 116-39.

geographical rationale behind having a policy of 'Forward Defence' in any era can only be judged by that policy's failure and the consequences of that failure. The war in Vietnam, offered by Edwards as an example of a strategy based on 'Forward Defence', did lead to military and political defeat. However, this defeat did not lead to an attack or threat of an attack on Australia's territorial integrity. Rather, participation in the war itself, its nature 'in bello' and the ignominious evacuation may be seen to have caused a change in Australian attitudes towards its faith in its own government and the military where nationalism became less important than moral right and justification. Subsequent history suggests that such changes are not to be considered permanent. Indeed, time is also an important element when considering 'Forward Defence'. Edwards states that in 1953 'military commitments would only be what [the then Prime Minister] Menzies called the "near north"'.²⁶⁸ More than 60 years later, the concept of distance on the planet has changed and this has been accompanied by changes in conflict in a similar way that, for example, the wheel, artillery or the airplane changed conflict and our sense of space. It may be argued that strategically, certainly in an age of nuclear weapons, drone warfare and acts of terror both in and outside 'war zones', concepts of 'near' and 'far' have lost much of their significance. During the current era, representatives of the Australian military have been on active service much further from home than the 'near north'.

²⁶⁸ Edwards, 7.

If, then, arguments for 'Forward Defence' based on considerations of geography and the integrity of borders are difficult to justify, then maybe a strategy based on concepts of good and evil offer a more cogent justification. As Edwards points out - and this seems logical – we choose not only strong, reliable allies but also ones who share our views. In the case of Vietnam, Australia could be seen to be 'fighting for democratic values against communist aggression, rather than lending support to American imperialism.'²⁶⁹ The ultimate lack of popular support for involvement in Vietnam stemmed, it can be argued, from the belief internationally that the conflict was indeed a manifestation of US imperialism and that the Vietnamese resistance (not aggression) represented one more example of valid nationalism in a post-colonial age where Western powers were reluctant to give up their sovereignty over places that supplied both cheap labor and resources that helped maintain their own wealth. Fear generated by slogans such as 'The Yellow Peril', 'the Red Peril' and 'the Domino Theory' have echoes from Australian colonial times and resonate still in the 21st Century. A belief in right rather than ideals of equality and peace, and a continual preparedness to maintain the status quo through violence if necessary inform the concept of 'Forward Defence' and link it to the belief in racial superiority that has characterized the tradition that many see represent us. Ultimately, it may justify an invader mentality. Why do civilians join the army in wartime or in peace? Gammage lists the reasons for those enlisting one hundred

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 9.

years earlier: on a personal level, there is a sense of adventure, notions of masculinity and sexual maturity, simple loneliness, no job and family trouble²⁷⁰; for many the martial values of duty, honour, courage and self-sacrifice were and still are important²⁷¹; duty to country and empire and ideas of race played a role too²⁷². These reasons contain a degree of altruism. However, it can be perhaps perceived more clearly in the words used by Brendan Nelson, the director of the Australian War Memorial, in a monograph that accompanied the sculpture 'As of Today...' by Alex Seton. The work shows 41 folded flags beautifully sculpted in pink Australian marble and represents the 41 Australian servicemen who had at that point died during the long years of conflict in Afghanistan. At military funeral services, a flag is draped over the casket and later presented to the dead serviceperson's family. In the forward to the monograph, talking of the 41 casualties, Nelson writes (and the sentence is given importance by being isolated in one paragraph):

These men gave their lives in defence of the truths by which we live.²⁷³

It could be argued that given that allied troops invaded Afghanistan (and the same is true for the Dardanelles in 1915), these men really gave their lives attacking the truths by which

²⁷⁰ Gammage, 11.

²⁷¹ Ibid., 284, 191.

²⁷² Ibid., 284.

²⁷³ Nelson, 1.

(rightly or wrongly) the people of Afghanistan live. It was the Turks on the ridges, not the ANZACs on the beaches, who were defending their homeland. 'The truths by which we live' are given as a justification for aggression rather than defence. It may be asked if these truths are worthwhile killing for. And yet, the soldier in Afghanistan is described by the artist Ben Quilty as a liberator²⁷⁴ who has brought electrical power and water to a primitive landscape and builds schools now attended by children (especially girls) who previously remained uneducated. Allied soldiers and their bases are under rocket attack and children are tragically killed by Taliban missiles. The autobiography of the SAS soldier Mark Donaldson VC might give a more complete view of what could be described as the sharp edge of Australia's continued involvement in Afghanistan. Yet, here too, justification for aggression is given through a criticism of the enemy's culture and society that is also seen to form a moral threat to the superior attitudes of Western society – the invader as savior at home and abroad²⁷⁵. What the detailed truth of that involvement may be remains, according to Kevin Foster, something that the ADF and Australian government wish to keep vague²⁷⁶. However, Foster suggest that the public's ignorance and disinterest is defined by our militarist traditions.²⁷⁷

²⁷⁴ Lowy Institute for International Policy, 10'40".

²⁷⁵ Donaldson, 144ff.

²⁷⁶ Foster, introduction.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., 71.

Yet it can be argued that the Afghan conflict as a facet of 'Forward Defence' can be justified as a response to the attacks on New York on 9/11 and as part of the ongoing international 'war on terror'. In this sense, again, it functions as a defence of the truths by which we live. However, terror is not an organization or an identifiable enemy. Terror is a strategy of war. It may be seen to follow naturally from von Clausewitz's argument that

he who uses force unsparingly, without reference to the quantity of bloodshed, must obtain a superiority if his adversary does not act likewise. By such means the former dictates the law to the latter, and both proceed to extremities, to which the only limitations are those imposed by the amount of counteracting force on each side.²⁷⁸

Similarly, it acts as an affirmation and an answer to the lesson of the Melian dialogue which states:

right, as the world goes, is only in question between equals in power, while the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must.²⁷⁹

It affirms that in war, the parties operate beyond the concept of right and wrong. However, the implication that the weak have no choice but to suffer is not valid. Historically, the weak have found ways to combat the powerful. Because those who prosecute war operate in a moral vacuum and because to use force sparingly would, according to Clausewitz, be absurd if the goal is victory, the use of terror is a strategy available to both

²⁷⁸ Von Clausewitz. Book 1, Chapter 1, Utmost use of Force.

²⁷⁹ Thucydides, 5.84. See also p. 7ff.

strong and weak. Such tactics transcend the ideological. In recent history, the powerful have repeatedly targeted civilians during bombing campaigns, used torture and have subjected the world to the threat of nuclear war. The weak have inserted random violence directed against non-combatants living in generally peaceful communities into our daily lives. The mind set of both sides implies that the acts of one side need only to be justified by the actions of the other. Further, as a strategy, terror transcends place and makes 'Forward Defence' an absurdity. It demands changing circumstances rather than a battlefield and a battle for victory. And yet, in the West, the media and politics assume that condemnation of the terrorists is a justification of Western dominance in and of itself. Not to support Western dominance, consequently, is to support 'the terrorists' (in this case, anti-Western militant Islam). The choice offered is between different kinds of conflict and the seriousness and significance of 'terror' itself is dependent on where and to whom it happens.

An attitude of aggression represented as defence is in no way unique to any one nation or era. However, with regard to Australia, it may be linked to the origins of the nation and how it now sees itself. The University of New South Wales has recently (March 2016) tried to correct what it has seen as an error in usage lasting 200 years. In its Indigenous Terminology guide they have stated that Australia was 'invaded, occupied and colonised' rather than 'discovered' and 'settled'. Even though the changes are a suggested guideline for spoken usage rather than a rule, the guide has been controversial. It

has been both supported and attacked by politicians and the popular press²⁸⁰.

As 'Ius ad bellum' (just reason for going to war), countries like Australia have chosen 'Forward Defence' as an excuse for violent aggression for gain and indiscriminant cultural domination. It has been presented, for example, through the rhetoric of nationalism and underpinned by concepts of democracy, international law and moral right. Most importantly, it argues that dispute is resolved through violence and that war is inevitable. If, however, as suggested here, 'Forward Defence' is an invalid policy (at least, in the case of Australia) geographically, historically and ethically, perhaps it may be argued that there are alternatives to violence in the resolution of disagreement.

Indeed, if the policy of 'Forward Defence' is merely used to give a sense of moral justification to acts of violent aggression with few direct or immediate ramifications for a nation, then this has serious consequences for the true meaning of the 'sacrifice' of the soldiers of that nation – a concept central to the idea and ritual of Anzac. The problematic validity of 'Forward Defence' begs the rarely asked question 'why and for whom were these soldiers sacrificed?'

²⁸⁰ See "University Tells Students Britain 'Invaded' Australia." BBC News , accessed April 2, 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-35922858>.

The Heroic Warrior and the Cultural Cringe.

It is not surprising to find the poem 'The Trojan War, 1915' (written by Arthur H. Adams) amongst the accepted contributions to 'The Anzac Book'²⁸¹. The classical reference illustrates the rule found in much of the writing about ANZAC and subsequent exploits of the Australian military rather than an exception to it. The ANZAC Tradition is characterized by a representation of manliness through brave and noble deeds, glory and sacrifice. The argument is that this successful manifestation of martial spirit allowed the young independent nation of Australia to demand a place beside the other nations of the world and most particularly beside Britain. For the creators and propagandists of ANZAC like CEW Bean, or the journalist Keith Murdoch who at the time described the beach where so much and so many had been lost as 'the sacred shores of Gallipoli'²⁸², this was the meaning of the landings on the 25th of April 1915 and of all the years of war that have followed it. Beyond the battle for Troy, Adams's poem strongly links the Dardanelles to the defence of the motherland. In England, ideas of heroism, patriotism, glory and tradition found their voice and personification in the poet Rupert Brooke, who himself died on his way to serve in the Dardanelles.²⁸³ This was seen as both the inheritance and the future of the ANZACs. Further, those who transformed events into a

²⁸¹ *The Anzac Book*.

²⁸² Quoted in Peter FitzSimons, *Gallipoli* (North Sydney, NSW: Random House Australia, 2014), 560.

²⁸³ See Appendix 3.

nationalist tradition portrayed the ANZACs as the descendants and the modern reincarnations of the heroes who fought and fell and triumphed in relatively nearby Troy²⁸⁴.

It may be argued that, needing true validation for a national identity, the association of that identity with what was seen as an intrinsically European event richly anchored in both history and culture was needed.

In contrast, an exhibition of patriotic French World War I prints exhibited in Cambridge UK in 2014, in a simple way, gives one illustration of the different view of World War I found in Europe²⁸⁵. This style of print illustrating French military successes had been popular since Napoleonic times. However, this series began in 1914 but stopped abruptly with an image from an event which occurred in the month before the ANZAC landings (March 1915). A possible reason for this is given by the exhibition reviewer:

... with the stalemate on the Western front, the news was becoming depressingly similar and souvenirs of the conflict less and less appropriate.²⁸⁶

Similarly, as is mentioned elsewhere, during World War I Max Beckmann and other well-known German artists were asked to contribute letters from the front to the magazine *Kunst und Künstler*. However, after the July 1915 edition, there was little interest in such news and the letters were no longer

²⁸⁴ Moorehead, 132.

²⁸⁵ Michael Murray-Fennell, "Oh! What a Lovely War: 'La Grande Guerre' at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge," *Country Life*, June 25 2014, 146-7.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 147.

published.²⁸⁷ It would be more than three years later that a peace was agreed upon.

In the literature of the war and post-war period, writers in Europe were questioning the very ideals that Australian writers at the same time were forging into a national identity based on martial prowess, stoicism and humour in the face of adversity. In 'Dulce et decorum est...', for example, the poet and soldier Wilfred Owen strongly questions that link made between a sense of national pride and duty and death in battle.²⁸⁸ The Latin quote used is from the Roman poet Horace: 'It is sweet and proper to die for one's country.'²⁸⁹ Seeking to undermine any connotations of Roman imperial glory, Owen calls it simply 'the old lie' and concentrates on what war represents in the mind of a very different soldier than that portrayed by both Brooke and those defining the ANZAC tradition around that same time and in the decades following. In Owen's poem, the poet identifies himself as one of the soldiers, but here youth is transformed, aged, poor and decayed rather than, as in Brooke's poem, eternally nourished by the motherland. A gas attack by the unseen enemy is described in detail and the reader is warned against the propagation of ideas of glory. Graves states clearly,

²⁸⁷ Max Beckmann. *Self-Portrait in Words : Collected Writings and Statements, 1903-1950*, 145.

²⁸⁸ See Appendix 3.

²⁸⁹ 'Dulce et decorum est / Pro patria mori.'

patriotism, in the trenches, was too remote a sentiment, and at once rejected as fit only for civilians, or prisoners.²⁹⁰

Therefore, while Europe suffered a physical and nervous breakdown during these war and post-war years, Australia was experiencing an epiphany of identity centred around ideas of martial masculinity:

Exploits in battle rid the country of its colonial inferiority complex – in the crude, primitive sense of the adolescent's attaining adulthood through a crucial test of strength – and replaced it with the cocky 'superiority complex' admitted by the A.I.F. memoirist G.D. Mitchell. Hence the certain swagger which runs through Australian war prose, transmuting the unpleasant particulars of modern combat into an epic model of national achievement.²⁹¹

where, for the soldier,

Indifferent to contemplation, he revels in action.²⁹²

Gammage remarks that even in times of adversity the ANZACs came to terms with the situation by 'remaining true to King, country and their own ideals of manhood.'²⁹³ Furthermore, as has been pointed out, fused with the ideal of the independent, hardy and brave bushman was that of the heroic warrior fighting and victorious in single combat, like the heroes of 'The

²⁹⁰ Graves, 157.

²⁹¹ Gerster, 15.

²⁹² Ibid., 20.

²⁹³ Gammage, 71.

Iliad'. Similar associations are rarely made to the historical traditions of Turks or Egyptians whose cultures may have seemed both foreign and inferior, the myth-makers less certain of the character of empire and the heroic in these intellectually more distant cultures. Most particularly, in contrast, the concept of 'the heroic' is questioned at this time in Europe. Gerster remarks that Australian war literature generally asserts that a soldier's survival on the battlefield is dependent upon his own exertions²⁹⁴. For the European, in war, rather than a confrontation between two foes, death had taken on a random quality, where it comes anonymously, hidden, unexpected to both 'the hero' and 'the coward' indiscriminately. This randomness was apparent already in the Nineteenth Century and earlier²⁹⁵, and can be seen in Tolstoy's depiction of the Battle of Borodino in 'War and Peace' where many casualties were caused by artillery barrages rather than direct contact between the armies. Similar to what is found in Tolstoy, the characters in Remarque's 'All Quiet on the Western Front', Paul and both his comrades and foes are victims used and discarded by politics and history. Here the enemy is given back his human face, and enemies share a common fate.²⁹⁶

'The heroic' as in some way a worthy aspect of war was already rejected by Europe during World War I because of the daily horror presented to soldiers, civilians and their

²⁹⁴ Gerster, 127.

²⁹⁵ See Voltaire, *Candide*, trans. T. Cuffe (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 7-8.

²⁹⁶ See, for example, Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, trans. B. Murdoch (London: Vintage, 1996), 153-9.

governments. With it, the idea of sacrifice for king and country lost its value for some, at least temporarily, as those who ruled were seen by many as in some way responsible for choosing war and the death and mutilation of a generation and their world. Whilst its newly gained independence was not in danger, Australia lost a significant percentage of its population because of its participation in World War I. Yet that experience became the locus for a national identity based on martial prowess and selfless sacrifice for the nation.

Australian soldiers have not enlisted for purely altruistic reasons. In battle, they have shown both bravery and cowardice. In difficult situations, they have shown humour and stoicism and have also suffered from low morale. Regardless of any consequences, the Australian military's job is not a humanitarian one of improving infrastructure and raising levels of education but rather to win victories demanded by policy. On occasion, they have committed atrocities and repeatedly treated civilians brutally. At times, they have acted nobly and at times they have not. In all this, they differ little from the military of other nations at any time. Yet the soldier through the ANZAC Tradition is central to the Australian national self-image.

This difficult-to-understand collective mental process is important because it suggests our perception of and reactions to relationships nationally and internationally. Such a national self-image retains elements of racial superiority first expressed

during the colonial period. It implies a preference for war as a vehicle for social evolution elsewhere and its exclusive nature pointedly turns its back on the concept of a multicultural Australia.

In his epilogue to 'The Broken Years', Bill Gammage argues that after World War I even though militarist values and even beliefs about racial superiority diminished in importance, those who had hoped to build an egalitarian social paradise in Australia had been defeated or divided, while the military and conservative elements within society owned the ANZAC spirit and through it controlled social life²⁹⁷. It could be argued that a century later that is again the case and may remain so. However, conceivably, a true commitment to multiculturalism offers Australia alternatives to current ideas concerning national self-image and its place in the world.

²⁹⁷ Gammage, 285.

Studio Response: DISPATCHES (Alternatives to the Heroic: a series of Intaglio Prints)

‘Dispatches’ is the term usually given to official messages within the military as well as to similar reports sent by journalists, often from conflict zones. Militarily, to be ‘mentioned in dispatches’ signifies a brave action on the part of a soldier.²⁹⁸

It would be unreasonable to argue that in the visual arts in Australia there has been no critique of ANZAC, the Australian military tradition or their association with militarist ideals. Only a small percentage of work created at any time is known publicly and there may always be a gap between the intended meaning of a work and that perceived by others. Nevertheless, there has been no rejection of war as societal choice like we find repeatedly in the work of Yoko Ono. There has been none of Käthe Kollwitz’s identification of the civilian as the victim of war. Little Australian war art has gone beyond the portrayal of the terror and misery of the soldier to link blame and consequences to the politics of the society that not only permitted, but also promoted it as we see in the work of Otto Dix and George Grosz. Perhaps, George Gittoes has come closest to doing this in his work. However, he may be regarded as an internationalist and only occasionally occupies a place at the nexus of the Australian art world. Also, in the military sense, in the work of Ono, Kollwitz, Dix and Grosz a real sense of the ‘enemy’ is absent. The identification of the enemy implies the

²⁹⁸ Discontinued in the Australian military after 1991.

possibility of war. With regard to this, Gittoes's work is ambiguous, often suggesting a realist morality that identifies good versus evil and is willing to fight violently for a cause. This absence of criticism may also be related to the depth and speed with which art and artworks are appropriated and given meaning by society. A brief investigation into the ANZAC works of Sidney Nolan may give, at least, an insight into the mindset of a century of art-making. From around 1955 onwards, this seminal painter of Australian history, began choosing Gallipoli as his subject – the landscape, the ANZACs, the campaign. In 1978, he donated 252 works from the series to the Australian War Memorial, and dedicated them to 'his brother and all Australians killed in war'²⁹⁹. The works' aesthetic value is disputed, the art critic John McDonald noting the artist's 'notorious inconsistency'³⁰⁰. Its meaning and significance is generally agreed upon. Its link to the heroes of Troy is repeatedly underscored³⁰¹, yet critics still draw back from describing them (the Anzacs and the works) as heroic. Rather there might be a suggestion of sacrifice in the face of brutality. In his speech at the opening of the exhibition of the series at the Australian War Memorial in 2009, the writer Michael Veitch stated,

Here are none of the grave or heroic images of Ellis Silas and George Lambert. Nolan's genius is his ability with a

²⁹⁹ John McDonald, "Sidney Nolan: The Gallipoli Series," *Sydney Morning Herald*, October 17 2009.

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

³⁰¹ See Australian War Memorial, "Sidney Nolan/ the Gallipoli Series", accessed April 12, 2017, <https://www.awm.gov.au/exhibitions/nolan/themes.asp>. and G. Johnson, "Sidney Nolan's Gallipoli Paintings," <http://leonardcohenonhydra.com/Gallipoli-Paintings.htm>.

few disturbing brushstrokes and distressed colours, to convey so much more of the stripped reality, the warped vigour, the odd and random violence. Nothing is pretty, nothing is epic, but it is all so terribly terribly real.³⁰²

Ultimately, for those analysing the works, they, most particularly the portraits, are seen to be aiming

to define the Australian national character. They provide timeless images of the ANZACs: the young and the old, the innocent and the war-weary, the bushman and the city-dweller.³⁰³

In Australia, often nationality manifests itself through the image, mind and action of the soldier. Further, the message given by public monuments and the popular press in Australia reinforces that sense of pride in military achievements and respect for service and sacrifice, and may be considered as, at the very least, the starting point for a consideration of national identity. However, a reasonable critique of the tradition and a plea for the cessation of the resolution of conflict through violence by the creation of anti-heroic images and works that suggest that if indeed war is the evil it is almost universally perceived to be, then a rational consequence of a response to those evils involves the alternative of peace, rather than wars fought in order to stop wars, may assist in changing attitudes towards war readiness and a self-image based on militarism.

³⁰² Australian War Memorial, "Speech by Michael Veitch at the Launch of "Sidney Nolan: The Gallipoli Series" Exhibition", accessed February 18, 2017 <https://www.awm.gov.au/talks-speeches/veitch-nolan-book-launch/>.

³⁰³ "Sidney Nolan/ the Gallipoli Series".

The cycle of prints in this section of the thesis attempts to offer such a message. It could be argued that the works in the 'Dispatches' series present an overly negative image of the Australian military. In answer to this, the images are all based on historically verifiable incidents and attitudes. Also, they are arguably negative to a lesser degree than many representations of Australians at war may be seen as overly positive. Last, they were made with sympathy and respect for all those who have undergone the mental and physical damage caused by war. Because this cycle of works seeks to run parallel to the course of mainstream Australian war art, with exception of the works concerning *The Big Dust Up* (2016) and *The Legacy* (2016), the civilian in war rarely features in these images. However, perhaps like other artists who have looked elsewhere than to the heroic and to nationalism, the soldier is portrayed as a participant, willing or otherwise, in a personal and collective ordeal.

EGYPT

In preparation for the military campaigns against the Turks (who had sided with Germany during World War I), from the end of 1914 onwards thousands of Australian and New Zealand troops arrived in Egypt. Although a good deal has been written about the Anzacs in Egypt, because of the mainly negative nature of much of that history, it has not become a noticeable part of the mythology surrounding Anzac.

The Horseman (2015)

It has been argued that the most romantic images in Australian military history is that of the Light Horsemen. They wore riding boots, a belt of cartridges over their shoulders and a pluck of feathers in their hats. They were famously involved in one of the last great cavalry charges in history at Beersheba (now in southern Israel) in October 1917.³⁰⁴

After the armistice, the Light Horse were ordered to remain in Egypt to help suppress the 1919 revolution for independence from the British. Brugger notes that there was an expectation amongst the Egyptian political elite that the Australians, from a land which had recently gained their independence from the British, would be sympathetic to the Egyptians' own desire for

³⁰⁴ In October 2017, the charge at Beersheba was re-enacted by a group of mounted Australians. The event was witnessed by both the Australian Prime-Minister (Malcolm Turnbull) and the leader of the opposition (Bill Shorten). It may be asked that, beyond an expression of militarist nationalism and a celebration of the romance of war, were the events of both 1917 and 2017 of such significance that they warranted a journey to Israel by Australia's two most senior politicians? The event was reported enthusiastically by the Australian media.



Figure 28. N.g., *Group of Australian soldiers of the 9th Light Horse, Egypt, 1917[?]. Private collection*

independence. The Australians, however, remained loyal to the mother country and their anger at having to remain was directed against the Egyptians³⁰⁵. Conflict generates its own morality and its own set of rules, unacceptable in times of peace. Atrocities were committed on both sides and attitudes were confirmed rather than dispelled³⁰⁶.

³⁰⁵ Brugger, 98.

³⁰⁶ Ibid., 104-5.



Figures 29. Mark Visione, *The Horseman*, 2015.
Collagraph, 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.

The Horseman attempts to remove the romance and glory from the image of the Light Horseman. He becomes a transient shadow riding a colossal horse - anonymous, aloof and threatening. The background he traverses (*'The Endless Plain'*) is a field of hands. Represented in ancient Egyptian wall reliefs, in battle the Egyptians severed and collected the right hands of their enemy's fallen dead, probably in order to count the number killed more easily. Australians in Egypt did not make the same respectful link to the ancient world power as they did with Gallipoli and the heroes of Troy and Greece. Yet, behind

the Light Horse's glamour and its adventurous mentality their task in battle was the same as any body of soldiers – to count as many hands as possible.



Figure 30. Mark Visione, *The Endless Plain*, 2015. Collagraph, 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.



Figure 31. Egyptian, Ramses III, *Hands-of-Libyan-soldiers-counted-at-Medinet-Habu*, 12th Century BCE.

The Big Dust Up (2016)

‘The Big Dust Up’ is the name also given to ‘The Battle of Wazzir’ – a serious riot of Australian and New Zealand soldiers in the red-light district of Cairo in April and then again in July 1915. Australian historians have repeatedly used the incidents to highlight an absence of (self-) discipline amongst the ANZACs and to indicate attitudes of racial superiority. Quite simply, Gammage says that it was ‘not heroic’ and showed the worst in the Australian character³⁰⁷.

³⁰⁷ Gammage, 50.

The Big Dust Up: Studies.



Figure 32. Mark Visione, *The Bottle and the Boot*, 2016.
Collagraph, 44.5 x 35.5 cm. Collection of the artist.

The Bottle and the Boot is a group study for the larger work and shows two drunken soldiers attacking an Egyptian man lying on the ground before them. The link between alcohol and violence here also suggests a contemporary Australian problem.



Figure 33. Mark Visione, *Larrikin (after Giotto and Piero della Francesca)*, 2016. Collagraph and drypoint, 35.5 x 44.5 cm. collection of the artist.

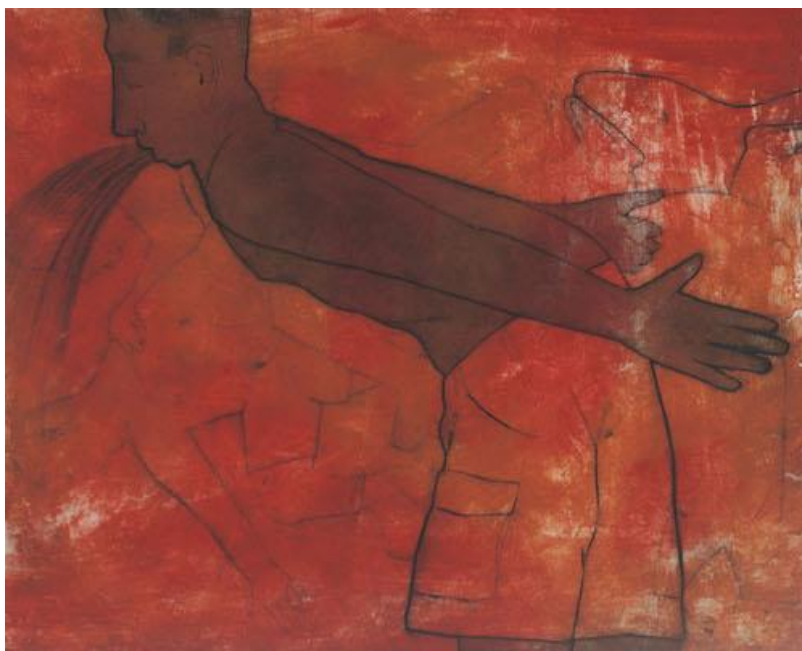


Figure 34. Mark Visione, *Larrikin (after Giotto and Piero della Francesca)*, 2016. Collagraph and drypoint, 35.5 x 44.5 cm. collection of the artist.



Figure 35. Giotto Bondone, *Saint John the Apostle* from *The Lamentation of Christ*, 1303-05. Fresco, Capella degli Scrovegni, Padua, Italy.

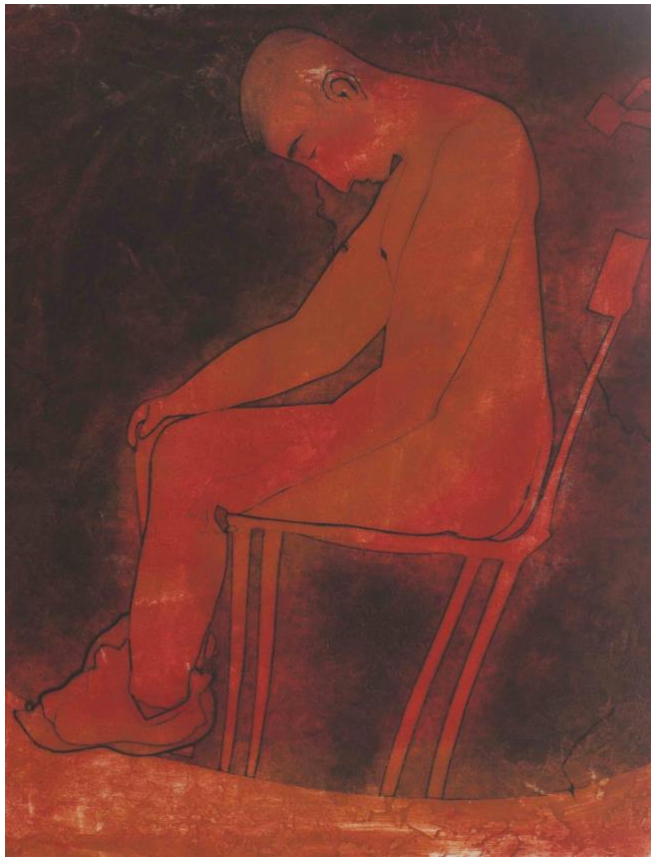


Figure 36. Piero della Francesca, *Battle between Heraclius and Chosroes (detail)*, 1452-66. Fresco, San Francesco, Arezzo, Italy.

Although there may be similar figures in other cultures, the 'larrikin' is an acknowledged facet of the Australian character and used, in a sense, as a term almost of endearment and certainly with a level of acceptance of noise and bad behaviour. Often enough, that bad behaviour crosses the acceptable moral limitations placed on physical violence and speech. The larrikin is young or at least behaving as if he were young. Larrikins are almost always male.

The larrikin is without culture – perhaps even anti-cultural. Here works by Giotto and Piero della Francesca are used as ironic sources. Giotto's figure of Saint John in the crucifixion scene in the fresco cycle in Padua may be seen as the paradigm of grief in Western art. As such, he represents too our empathetic

nature. In action, the larrikin is lacking in empathy. He greets the world with humorous contempt. Sympathy and empathy are reserved for mates. In the figures of Piero there is a particular introversion as if the characters populating his paintings are considering their place in history. On a human, personal level, they are philosophical. The larrikin lacks this dimension of consideration beyond effect and without action. With it, he ceases (for the moment) to be a larrikin.



Figures 37. Mark Visione. *Seated Man*, 2016. Collagraph and etching, 49.5 x 37 cm. Collection of the artist.

The image *Seated Man* is an allusion to the around 60,000 Anzacs who contracted venereal diseases in Australia or

overseas during the First World War³⁰⁸. Most notoriously, many infections were contracted in the brothels of Cairo and France and to such a degree that it was feared that VD would affect the fighting potential of the ANZACs. As Stanley points out, 'Visiting a brothel was not an offence, but catching VD was.'³⁰⁹

The high rates can be seen as a natural consequence of the Anzac's disregard for military discipline in a world of vague morality and with an uncertain future.

The image suggests an illustration on a Greek red-figure vase linking it to the heroes of Troy and, in this case, the (mock-) heroic. A soldier sits with his pants around his ankles and investigates his genitalia. Behind him, a hand anachronistically offers the unfortunate soldier a condom.

The Big Dust Up: Large Works.

The Big Dust Up I and *The Big Dust Up II* imagine the scene during the riot on the street and in the surrounding building respectively. The attention to historical detail attempts to mimic the dioramas and history paintings of the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, while choice of inconsistent scale and multiple perspectives suggest the monumental institutionalised art of Egypt and Mexico. As with the *Shirkers on the beach*

³⁰⁸ Stanley, *Bad Characters: Sex, Crime, Mutiny, Murder and the Australian Imperial Force*, 228. and Dunbar, vii.

³⁰⁹ Stanley, *Bad Characters: Sex, Crime, Mutiny, Murder and the Australian Imperial Force*, 31.

series, a small self-portrait is included in the melee and a self-portrait study was made.



Figure 38. Mark Visione. *The Big Dust Up I* (First Version), 2016. Dry point and collagraph, 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the artist.



Figure 39. Mark Visione. *The Big Dust Up I* (Second Version), 2016. Dry point and collagraph, 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the artist.

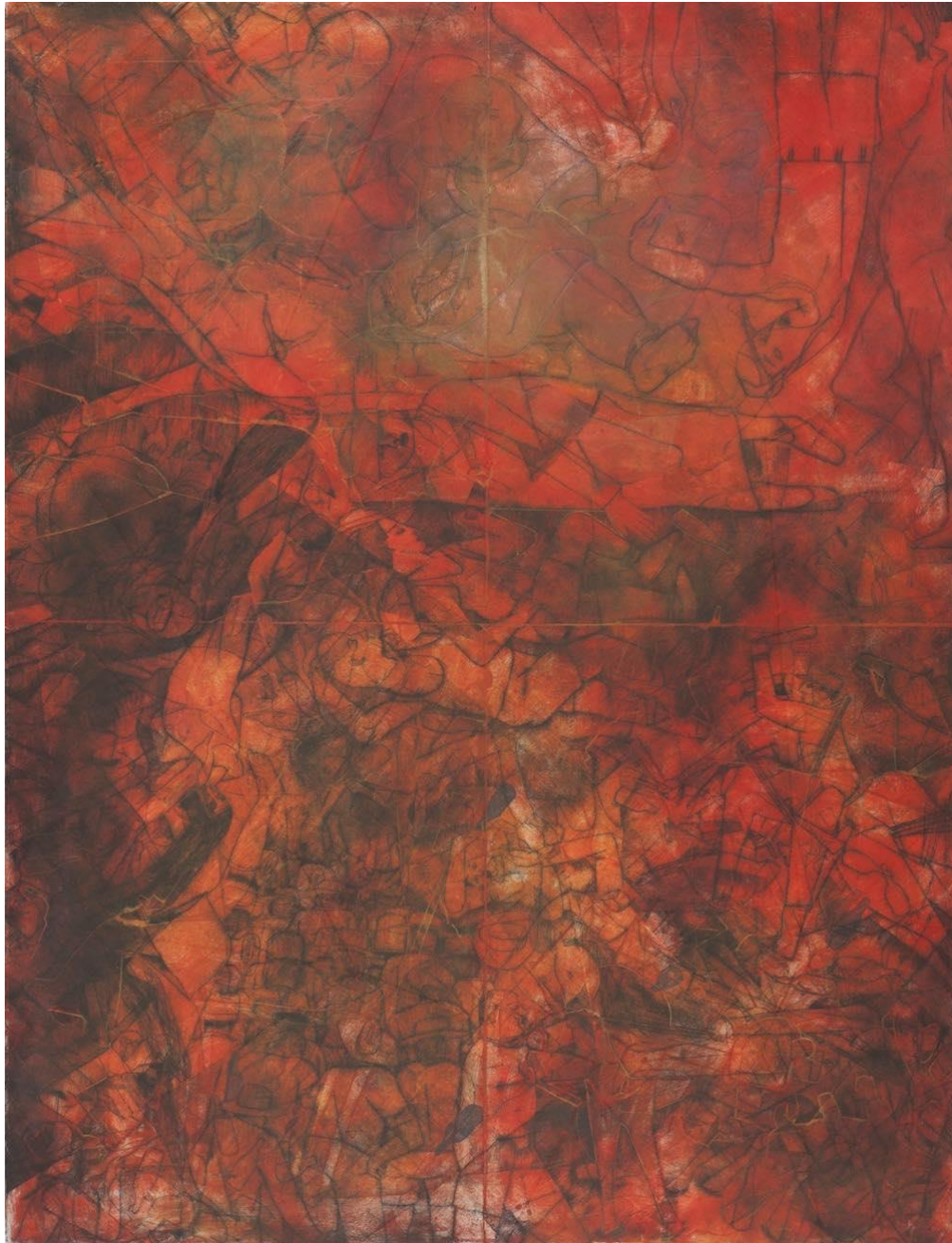


Figure 40. Mark Visione. *The Big Dust Up I* (Third Version), 2016. Dry point, collagraph and folding, 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the artist.



Figure 41. Mark Visione, *Self-portrait study- The Big Dust Up I*, 2016. Collagraph, 26 x 24.5 cm. Collection of the artist.



Figure 42. Mark Visione, *The Big Dust Up II (First Version)*, 2016. Dry point and collagraph, 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the artist.

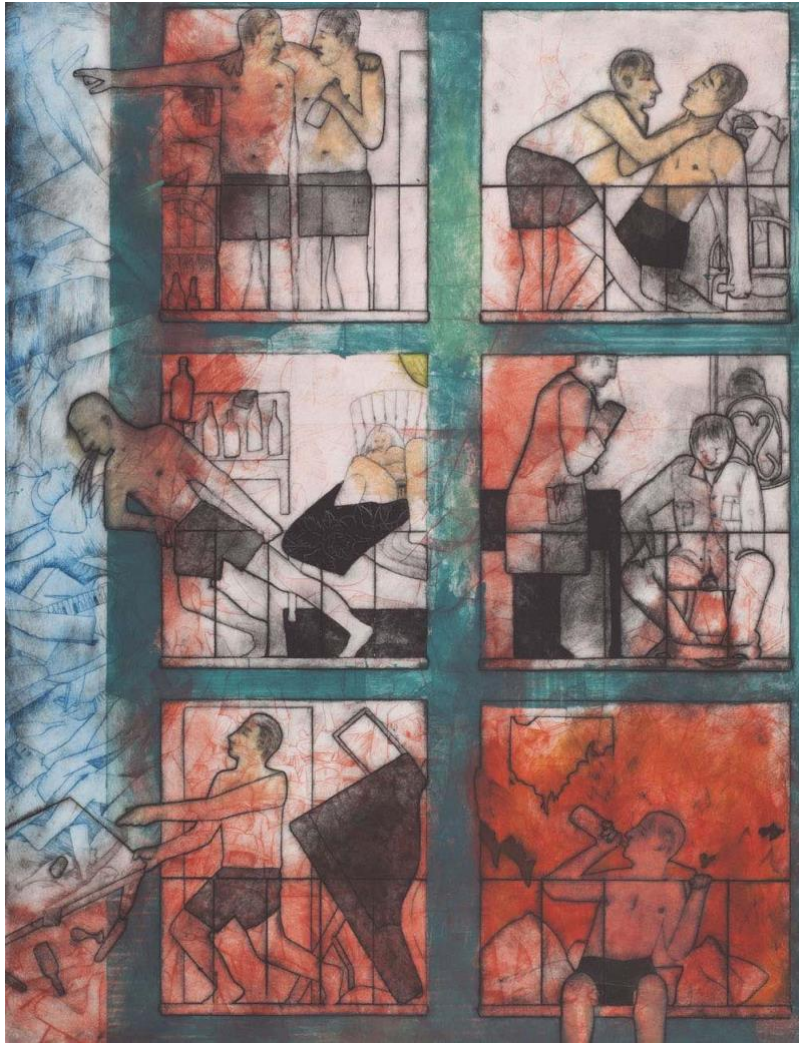


Figure 43. Mark Visione, *The Big Dust Up II* (Third Version), 2016. Dry point and collagraph, 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the artist.

THE DARDANELLES

On the 25th April 1915, British and allied soldiers, including ANZAC (that is, Australian and New Zealand) troops, landed on the Dardanelles Peninsula hoping to threaten or possibly capture the Turkish capital, Istanbul overland. The terrain was disadvantageous and they met strong and committed opposition. The campaign was a failure and in December 1915 troops were withdrawn.

Shirkers on the Beach, 1915 (2015)

Following the 'British understatement of Australian military success'³¹⁰ during World War I, the last straw for Australian media and historians came in 1927 when the draft of an official British report shown to them stated that, on the day of the landings, unwounded Australian soldiers, under the stress of battle, had returned to the beach.³¹¹ The incident is telling as it indicates the sensitivity of those who may be seen to represent Australian society to anything that they might construe as criticism and this to the point where the myth is more important than historical fact.

'Shirkers on the Beach, 1915 I' and *'Shirkers on the Beach, 1915 II'* are each a series of 6 images printed from the same two matrices. Each separate image represents a change in either colour, construction, inking or all three. The second

³¹⁰ Thomson, 1.

³¹¹ See pp. 144-5.

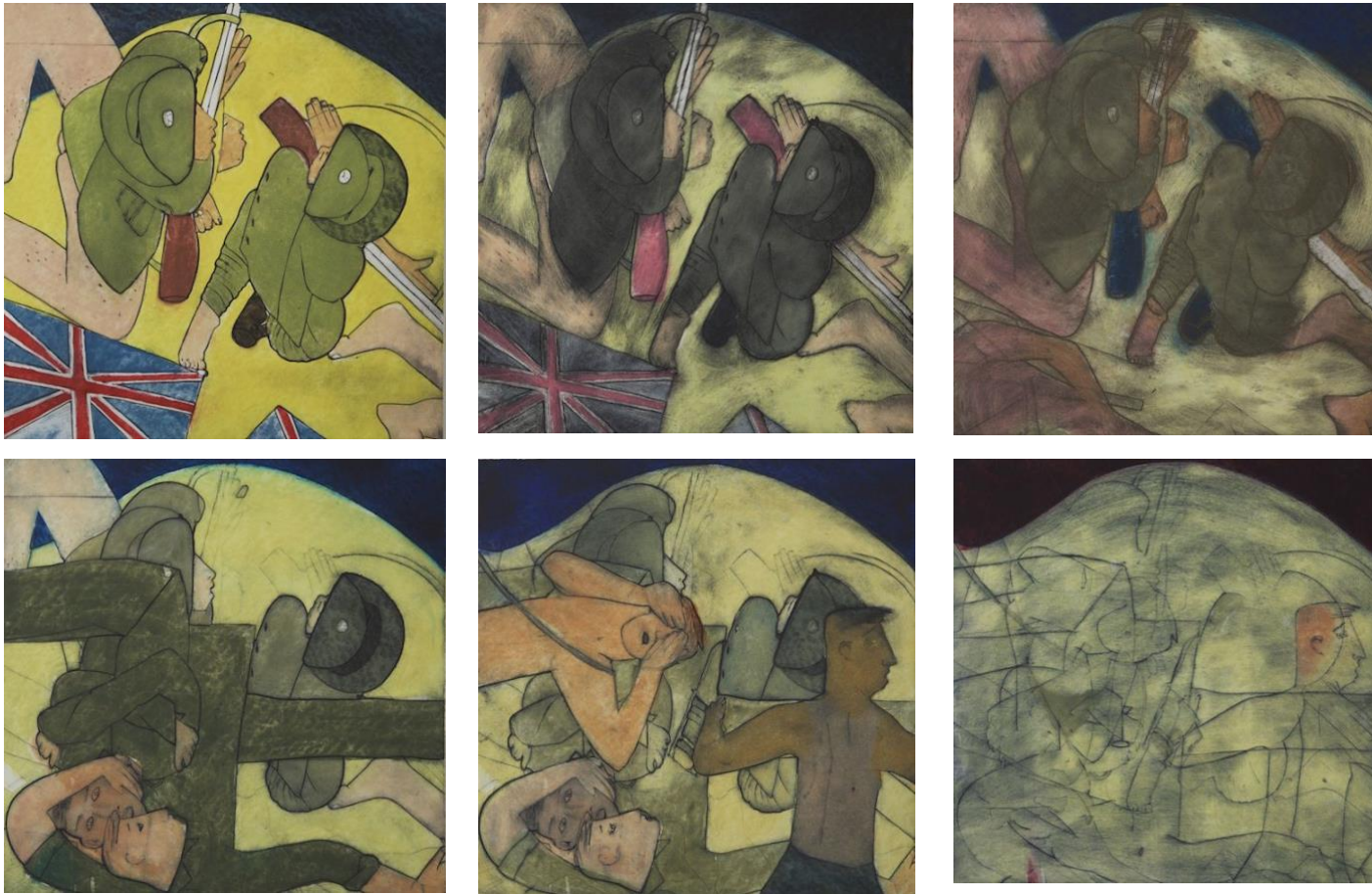


Figure 44. Mark Vione, *Shirkers on the Beach*, 1915 I, 2015. Collagraph, 6 x 50 x 50 cm.
Collection of the artist.

series involves 'ghost printing', that is, printing the colour plate without re-inking it, in combination with the key plate.

The initial images show soldiers who have returned to the beach (Anzac Cove) with weapons but without their full uniform. The Union Jack acts as a marker suggesting why the soldiers are there as well as linking them back to the Australian and New Zealand flags. It also echoes the illustration of the wounded soldier in front of the Union Jack used for the cover of 'The Anzac Book'³¹². Quickly the flag is replaced by the filling up of the beach by more soldiers showing different states of distress. The last image shows the beach empty again. The drypoint marks left after the various stages of constructing the series act as a metaphor for both memory and the physical residue of the Dardanelles campaign.³¹³ The lines function for the artist as a visible reminder of the creative process that also parallels that selective sense of memory connected to ANZAC – heroism, stoicism and humour in the face of adversity and (especially) comradeship. It is these emotions which define war in Australia rather than fear, damage or even trauma and waste through sacrifice. This too is remembrance related to the experience of the soldier in war (and their families' sense of history and possible loss). The definition of what war is and what the consequences of war are in Australia concerns the military with no reference to the civilian experience.

³¹² Australian soldiers, indeed, did not fight under an Australian flag (Union Jack plus Southern Cross) until their involvement in Western Europe.

³¹³ See Appendix 2.

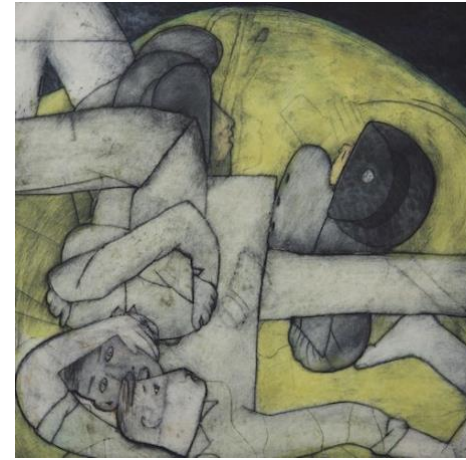


Figure 45. Mark Visione, *Shirkers on the Beach, 1915 II, 2015*.
Collagraph with ghost print, 6 x 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.

In the fifth image of the series, the artist has introduced a self-portrait, suggesting an identification with ‘the shirkers’ on the beach suffering the pressure and irrationality of battle and their understandably less-than-heroic response to the situation. A separate version of the self-portrait (below) completes the series.



Figure 46. Mark Visione, *Self-portrait study for ‘Shirkers, 1915’*, 2015. Collagraph, 24.6 x 22.5 cm. Collection of the Artist.

'The Bathers'(2016)

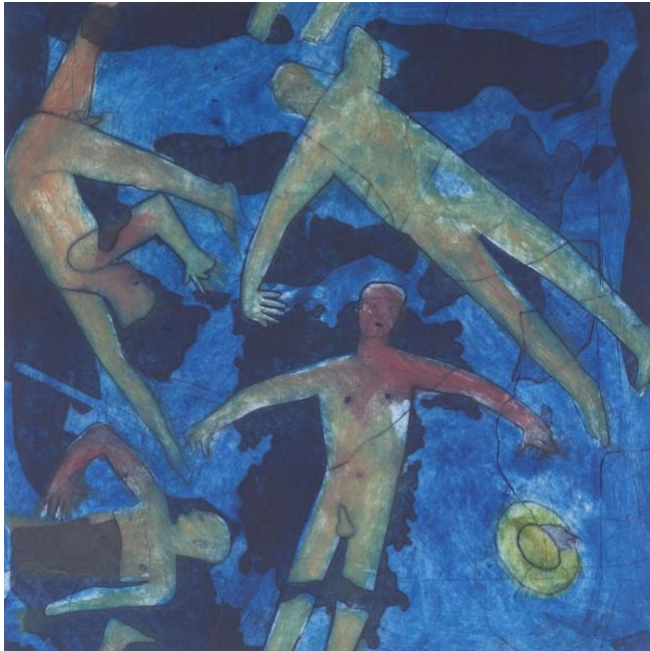


Figure 47. Mark Visione, *The Cove (First Version)*, 2016.
Collagraph, 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the Artist.



Figure 48. Mark Visione, *The Cove (Second Version)*, 2016.
Collagraph, 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the Artist.

Swimming was a common occurrence at Anzac Cove in 1915. Even the commander of the Anzac forces, William Birdwood swam regularly.



Figure 49. Australian War Memorial, *Lieutenant General Sir William Birdwood swimming at Anzac Cove, May 1915*. [AWM G00401].

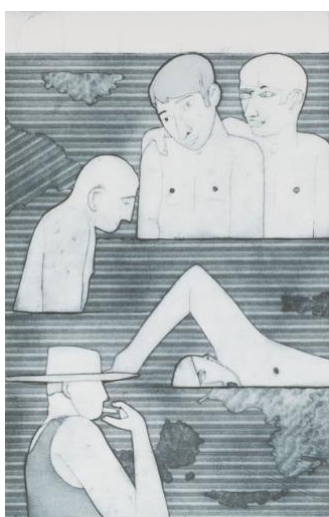


Figure 50. Mark Visione, *The Bathers* (First Version), 2016. Collagraph, 49 x 32 cm. Collection of the Artist.

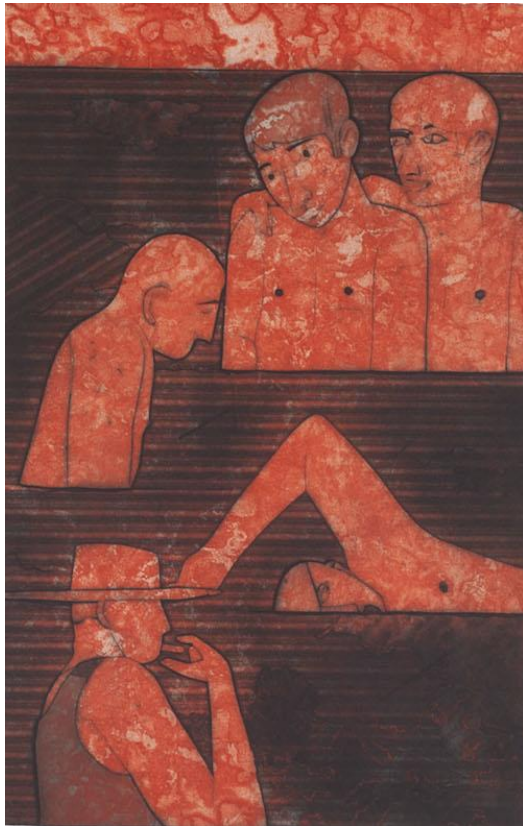


Figure 51. Mark Visione, *The Bathers* (Second Version), 2016. Collagraph, 49 x 32 cm. Collection of the Artist.

Sniped at by the enemy from the cliffs above the beaches, there was always the chance of wounding or death. Quite often it is the nonchalant attitude and behaviour of the soldiers, rather than combat itself that is central to the importance placed on ANZAC. Such details and anecdotes are used to justify destruction and loss. This thesis does not argue against undeniable heroic nonchalance. Rather it argues against the destructive insanity of the circumstances and the evil choice made by others that place the soldier in such a situation.

Evacuation, December 1915

Even the most superficial investigation of the Gallipoli campaign confronts the reader with the geography of the peninsula: high cliffs and treacherous gullies pushing endlessly into the interior, wisps of beaches and a changeable sea. All this made it a death trap – a situation not just obvious in hindsight, but one possibly ignored because of an incorrect belief in the superiority of the aggressors. Much of the admiration for allied troops (as well as the Turkish defenders) is because of how they lived and fought in this physical environment. However, war only becomes its own justification in the mind of the militarist. The act of sacrifice is initiated by the politician and the soldier's nobility is directed by circumstance.

After months of bloody stalemate and an unsuccessful push supported by reinforcements in August, it was decided to withdraw all allied forces from Gallipoli. This occurred in December. Casualties were expected to be high, so the success of the evacuation with a very low loss of life has come to be seen as one of the great achievements of the campaign.

Evacuation, December 1915 shows a thin slice of the beach at Anzac Cove after the troops have departed. Depicted are damaged stores, graves, the carcasses of horses and donkeys executed and left behind, and a damaged jetty pushing out into the sea.

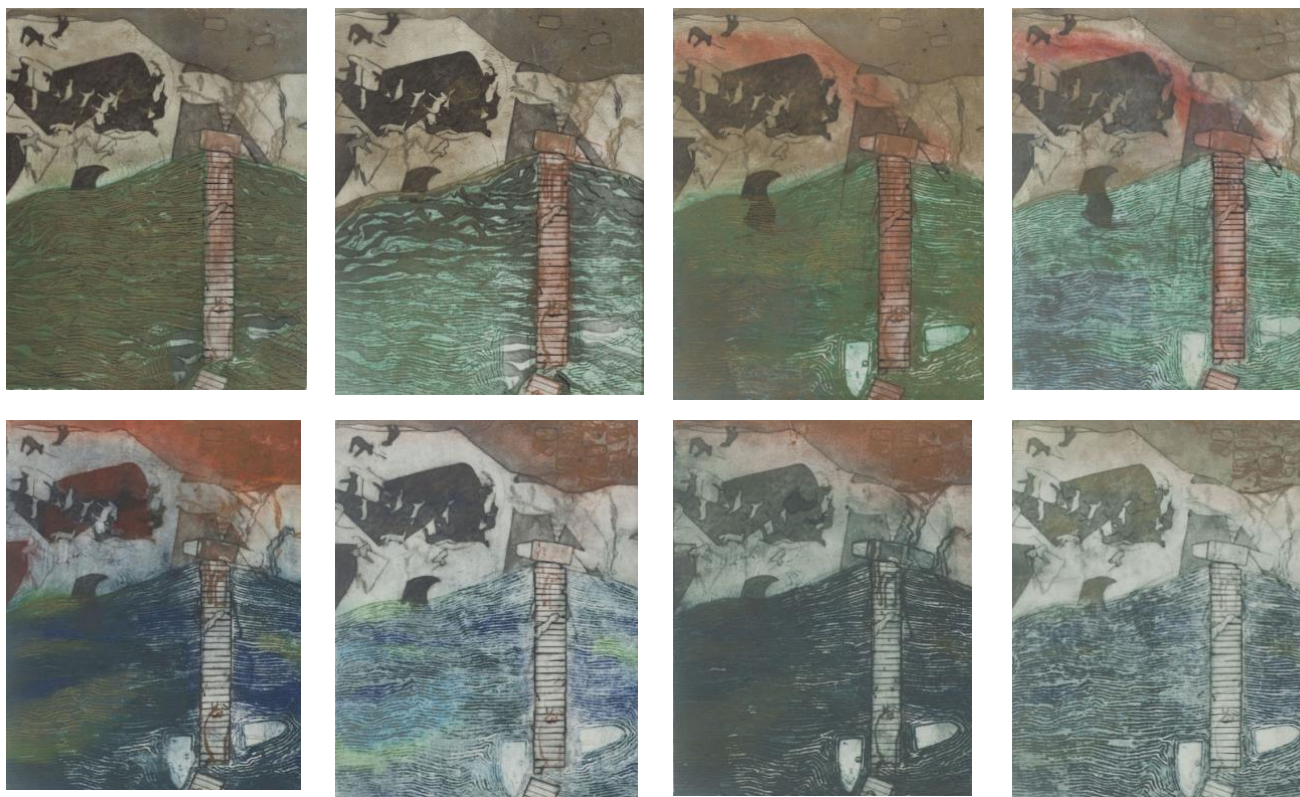


Figure 52. Mark Visione, *Evacuation*, December 1915, 2016.
Etching/collagraph, 8 x 49.3 x 39 cm. Collection of the artist.

The image is constructed using two plates: one heavily open bitten zinc plate and a collagraphic plate. Eight different prints were taken using surface revisions and variations of colours on both plates to achieve differing visual effects. The artist's intention was to imply the emptiness and futility of the military exercise on the Dardanelles that had cost so many lives. For the artist, this does not preclude the goal of creating an image which on an abstract level may be considered beautiful.

The Invader.

In *The Invader*, an artistic response is offered to the concept of 'Forward Defence'³¹⁴. The image is based on the Mexican nationalist image of an Aztec warrior in a jaguar suit dispatching a Spanish knight, painted by Diego Rivera in the 1930's³¹⁵. Rivera's work represents the violent defence of the nation.



Figure 53. Mark Visione, *The Invader*, 2015. Collagraph, 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.

In *The Invader*, the image and roles are reversed, with the Australian invader killing the Turk defending his homeland.

³¹⁴ See Edwards. See, also, pp.149-55.

³¹⁵ See Figure 11, and p. 57ff.

The Legacy.

The Legacy: The Sorrow of Priam and The Sorrow of Andromache.

The Legacy illustrates the consequences of death in battle for the family of the fallen. The death of Hector in Homer's 'The Iliad' is used as the paradigm.³¹⁶ The work is made of two images presented as if they were illustrations on the base of a Greek red figure vase. The first image shows the grief of Hector's father and mother, Priam and Hecuba. The second represents the distress of Hector's wife Andromache and the burning of Hector's clothes. Both images show the body of Hector being attacked by dogs while dragged behind Achilles's chariot around the walls of Troy. Much of 'The Iliad' concerns itself with respect and protection for the body of a fallen ally and the drive to defile it by the enemy.

Through content and title, an attempt has been made to place the work within an Australian context. The figure of Priam – father of Hector, but also King of Troy and archetypal patriarch - has been modelled on the figure of Dad Rudd from the *Dad and Dave / On Our Selection* movies from the 1930's where Dad Rudd holds a similar position in the Australian familial hierarchy. The title, *The Legacy*, refers also to Legacy Australia³¹⁷, an organisation which since 1923 has cared for the

³¹⁶ See Appendix 4.

³¹⁷ See *Legacy Australia*, <http://www.legacy.com.au/>.



Figures 54. Mark Visione, *The Legacy: The Sorrow of Priam and The Sorrow of Andromache*, 2016. Collagraph and drypoint, 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.



Figures 55. Mark Visione, *The Legacy: The Sorrow of Priam and The Sorrow of Andromache*, 2016. Collagraph and drypoint, 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.

dependents of military personnel who have suffered injuries. Death and injury is the direct consequence of war (for both

combatants and non-combatants) and Legacy Australia exists because these consequences have a damaging effect on society. It is interesting to note that the promotion of peaceful conflict resolution and attempts to limit the involvement of the Australian military in combat are not part of their brief.

2. The Civilian in War: Etty Hillesum.³¹⁸

So often war is recorded in terms of its military or political processes. The rise and fall of nations and empires (often precipitated by conflict) seem to be seen to mark humanity's progress towards a higher state of being. Wars are fought and won by 'the good', the rhetoric used to spur on the combatants and justify the casualties varying little regardless of time, place or enemy. However, this interpretation of history often does not take into account either the greater value of peaceful resolution to a dispute or the damage and suffering inflicted on non-combatants and their societies. Both combatants and civilians may offer us a more balanced record of war and its effects through their diaries and may even directly or indirectly suggest alternatives to violent change, this leading us to question war's inevitability. In the West, possibly the most well-known war-time diary is that of the teenager Anne Frank, a Jew hiding with her family in occupied Amsterdam during World War II. For so many reasons, her record is both unique and valuable. Perhaps, most importantly, her writing underlines the supreme importance of each individual's life regardless of the events playing out around us. At the same time, also in Amsterdam, an adult diarist, Etty Hillesum, was recording the thoughts that were important to her. Hillesum's diary gives us insights into the consequences of war on the lives of civilians and repeatedly offers us alternatives to the violence that the political choice for war creates.

³¹⁸ References to the writings of Etty Hillesum refer to the original Dutch text here translated by M. Visione.

The diaries and letters of Etty Hillesum were first published in a limited form in Dutch in 1981 and the translation into English appeared in 1999. They cover the period from March 1941 until her deportation to Auschwitz in September 1943. At the age of 29, she died in Auschwitz on the 30th November 1943.

Etty had moved from Deventer, where her family lived, to Amsterdam around 1933 in order to study law and languages. She was still living there when Nazi Germany invaded and occupied the Netherlands in May 1940. At the time of the diaries, she taught Slavic languages to private students. Unlike her younger contemporary, Anne Frank, Hillesum did not go into hiding. Rather, she took the chance of possible deportation and later worked for 'De Joodse Raad' (the Jewish Council), which, from 1941 onwards, represented Jewish society in the Netherlands in its contact with the German occupation and the pro-German Dutch government. Later, Hillesum chose to do the same work in Wersterbork, in central Holland – the transit camp for Jews before they were sent to the extermination camps in Eastern Europe. Like all Jews living in Nazi controlled areas, there were severe limitations placed on many aspects of her life. She mentions them anecdotally in her diaries. A clearer list of the restrictions is given by Anne Frank:

Jews have to wear a Star of David. Jews have to turn in their bikes. Jews aren't allowed on the tram, Jews can't ride in cars any more, Jews are only allowed to do their shopping between 3 and 5 p.m., and then only at Jewish

shops which have a sign saying 'Joods lokaal' [Jewish place]. Jews aren't allowed on the street after 8 p.m. nor to sit in their gardens or those of friends. Jews are not allowed in theatres, cinemas or other places of entertainment. Jews may not play any sport in public, they may not visit the swimming pool, tennis courts, hockey grounds or other sport areas. Jews may also not visit Christians in their homes. Jews must go to Jewish schools and still many more similar restrictions.³¹⁹

However, for both Anne and Etty, the oppression suffered by those living under the Nazi occupation is not the major theme of either of the diaries. Also, the relatively spontaneous nature of a diary means that a clear thesis may only be construed by the reader. Etty does refer repeatedly to the occupation and its consequences. The oppression of Jews in the Netherlands was particularly harsh as the Dutch authorities worked diligently to carry out the wishes of their Nazi bosses, and the consequences were often fatal. She reflects on daily abusive interactions in terms of the general nature of humanity and the individual coming to terms with their own life³²⁰. However, repeatedly the nature of the German occupation means the destruction of both the individual and the society. For example, Etty tells emotionally of the suicide of one of her old professors (the famous Marxist criminologist W.A. Bonger)³²¹ and the

³¹⁹ Anne Frank, *Het Achterhuis* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Contact, 1947), Saturday June 20 1942, 5, translation: M. Visione.

³²⁰ See, for example, Etty Hillesum, *Het Werk* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Balans, 2012), 268-9.

³²¹ *Ibid.*, 54-6.

imprisonment and murder of others³²². She remarks on the consequences,

Again arrests, terror, concentration camps, the indiscriminate removal of fathers, sisters, brothers. One looks for a reason for living and asks if there even is one. But this is a business that can only be decided between god and one's self. And perhaps every life has its own meaning and it takes a whole life-time to discover what that is. Now at least I've lost the links between things and life, and have the feeling that everything happens by chance and that one must disconnect emotionally from everyone and distance oneself from everything. Everything seems so threatening and ominous and there is that great sense of helplessness.³²³

However, much of her diary is devoted to her personal life – her friends and, most particularly, her lovers. Of central importance is her relationship with Julius Spier whom she calls 'S.' in her diary. Etty came in contact with him shortly before she begins her diary. A Jew, Spier came from Germany to live and work as a psychologist / chirologist in Amsterdam. Etty met him through friends and shortly after became his patient, and then his lover. One of his psychological practices was to physically wrestle with his patients and, in Etty's case at least, this led to a romantic relationship. Consequently, Etty questions the ethical nature of his action and her own response, and considers her

³²² Ibid., 80ff.

³²³ Ibid., 65.

sense of independence and worth as a woman. Her writing shows emotions such as disgust, love and desire, professional mistrust and spiritual adoration for S. in more or less equal amounts. Early on in her diary, Etty explains her need for him: he would bring order to her inner chaos.³²⁴ Ultimately, she regards Spier as a spiritual guide and, by the time of his death (by natural causes) in September 1942, it has been argued that she feels strong enough to continue on the course of her life without him.³²⁵

It is this spiritual journey linked to her response to the world around her (especially, but sometimes also in spite of, the war) that is the main preoccupation of her writing. She explains,

I rest in my self. And that 'my self', that deepest richest point where in I rest, I call "God".³²⁶

Her 'God' is not specifically a Judaic god and her symbolism has that same broad cultural sense that can, perhaps, be found in the words of Bob Dylan or Leonard Cohen. Etty's diary entries can often be seen as moral conversations with herself, a kind of self-analysis. While she remembers herself as 'the girl who could not kneel'³²⁷, often she records her times of prayer, kneeling, sometimes with S.. Because of the strong image she

³²⁴ Ibid., 6 and 549.

³²⁵ However, while her letters around this time (to Osias Korman, for example) show a clarity and acceptance of S.'s death, her diary entries, perhaps under the pressure of a possible abortion, harder restrictions on Jews by the authorities and the death of S. itself, present a stream of consciousness arguably expressing intense and troubled emotion.

³²⁶ Hillesum, 549.

³²⁷ Ibid., 580.

has of herself as a sexual being, a regular theme is the attempt to reconcile the concepts of profane and sacred love, ‘the battle between body and soul’³²⁸. She concludes that it is difficult to have the same good relationship with both God and your abdomen [onderlichaam = genitalia]³²⁹. It is significant that both the intimate and the universal find a place in the inner (and outer) response to the continual threat of her world. It might be argued that much of what she writes is driven by fear – fear for herself and her family, and fear for her society. Yet, her choices and conclusions transcend concepts of right or wrong or good and evil. By the beginning of the war, she had left the left-wing political circles of her earlier university years. Her position is anti-ideological, cosmopolitan. She looks, for example, for ‘one decent German’ as reason enough not to express hatred for that whole nation.³³⁰ She seeks to create a ‘battleground’ within herself where the problems of our age are fought out in her thoughts³³¹, while later, offhandedly, she argues that her lack of interest in the details of the war comes from the fact that she has already experienced one world war and finds all ‘the rebelliousness, rejection, passion, debates, justice, class war, etc.’ difficult to take seriously the second time around.³³² At the same time, she sees atrocity upon atrocity piling up. It is her inner life that keeps her calm. For Etty, to be humiliated, you must choose to feel humiliated and that remains a choice an

³²⁸ Ibid., 4.

³²⁹ Ibid., 74.

³³⁰ Ibid., 19.

³³¹ Ibid., 67.

³³² Ibid., 190.

individual can make³³³. Acceptance of the fact that the society in which she lives has as its goal the total extermination of the Jews allows her to continue living³³⁴.

Given the responses by the doctors in the camp in Westerbork that she mentions in her letters, her idealism in practice was often seen as verging on mental instability caused by her reaction to so heavy a burden.

Like Anne Frank, Etty does not present herself as a pacifist. The defeat in war of the Germans is an event that would mean the end of her and other's oppression. Rather, she is passive in that the idea of her using force or violence to change her circumstances or achieve goals seems not to be an option she would consider. In a world that appears to have moved as far away from such a view as possible, her perspective is fundamentally cosmopolitan in that she believes in 'the moral equality of all human beings'³³⁵ and tries to behave according to that belief. The Dutch state and the Nazi occupiers identify her as a Jew and therefore, however innocuous, an enemy. But this is not the reason there is little sense of nationalism in her writings.

German is the language of art (as is Russian) and the one she uses most often when recording her conversations with S., not the language she identifies with the oppressor. However

³³³ Ibid., 457ff.

³³⁴ Ibid., 486.

³³⁵ Dower, 10.

suicidal this may be, she refuses to identify the individual with the group. While recognising that evil must be opposed, she sees hate as damaging her soul. In a sense for Etty, the situation has changed, but the world has not. There is no new set of values and responses needed for Etty to live out her life. This may lie at the centre of any debate about war and peace. The realist argues that in a state of war new rules apply and, in order to survive, we fight or flee with little regard for the ethics of peace and peacetime. To live according to the ethics of peace while there is a state of war is to suffer any possible consequences, and this is the source of hopelessness and fear that is also recurrent in Etty's writing. In this sense, it can be argued that Etty symbolises the state of the non-combatant in war.

Studio Response: The ETTY HILLESUM CYCLE.³³⁶

This thesis argues that any discussion which concerns war must acknowledge its negative effect on society and the individual. It may be argued that, particularly in Australia, because of the nation's participation in war and the relative safety in which its society has experienced it, this non-military dimension of war has been neglected and war perceived and defined through the eyes and mind of the soldier and, indirectly, by the soldier's family. This perception has also predominantly manifested itself in the visual arts in Australia. Focusing on the civilian experience of war elsewhere offers a possible broadening of the Australian attitude towards war and may allow a questioning of that coupling of military values with national identity. Consequently, the writings of Etty Hillesum may offer a rich source for such considerations. However, even though Hillesum saw herself as chronicler of the history of her times³³⁷, that history is a personal one³³⁸. In a sense, the war serves as a backdrop to her daily life and the response to it. In a similar way to many of the diary entries of Anna Frank, Etty is preoccupied with her relationships with friends, family and lovers.

³³⁶ See Appendix 5 for the original Dutch text of translations from the diaries and letters of Etty Hillesum. Translator: M. Visione.

³³⁷ Lotte Berger, "Etty Hillesum En Hélène Berr. Reflecties Op Het Nazikwaad En De Moed De Eigen Koers Te Varen.," in *Etty Hillesum in Weerwil Van Het Joodse Vraagstuk*, ed. K. Smelik, *Etty Hillesum Studies* (Antwerp-Apeldoorn: Garant, 2016), 103.

³³⁸ This is especially so in the earlier published and incomplete editions of her diaries and letters. See Etty Hillesum, *Het Verstoorde Leven* (Bussum: De Haan/Unieboek, 1981).

The studio work made in response to Hillesum's writings reflect this. While there was a conscious choice of subject, it was only on completion of the works presented that their generally intimate tone was recognized. In this, they exemplify the overall concerns of this candidate's artistic career. What may be considered historical, cultural or universal themes are played out as a backdrop to the nuances of the relationships between individuals.

At the same time, these works attempt to present Hillesum's questioning nature, her optimistic cosmopolitanism, her rejection of hate³³⁹ and the altruistic character of her actions³⁴⁰. These manifest themselves as much physically as inwardly through intellect and emotion. Finally, it should be remembered that Etty's diaries and those of many others known and unknown were written under the real threat of sentences of death where no crimes had been committed. Importantly, too, Etty's experiences of war in many ways are likely to seem familiar to migrants and their families who identify themselves as Australian.³⁴¹

³³⁹ See Berger, 90ff.

³⁴⁰ Jurjen Wiersema, "Studente Hillesum En Professor Bonger. De Democratie Zal Overwinnen.," *ibid.* (Granat), 48,49.

³⁴¹ For a semi-fictional example see Anna Funder, *All That I Am* (London: Penguin Books, 2011).

The Etty Hillesum Cycle: Description of Works.

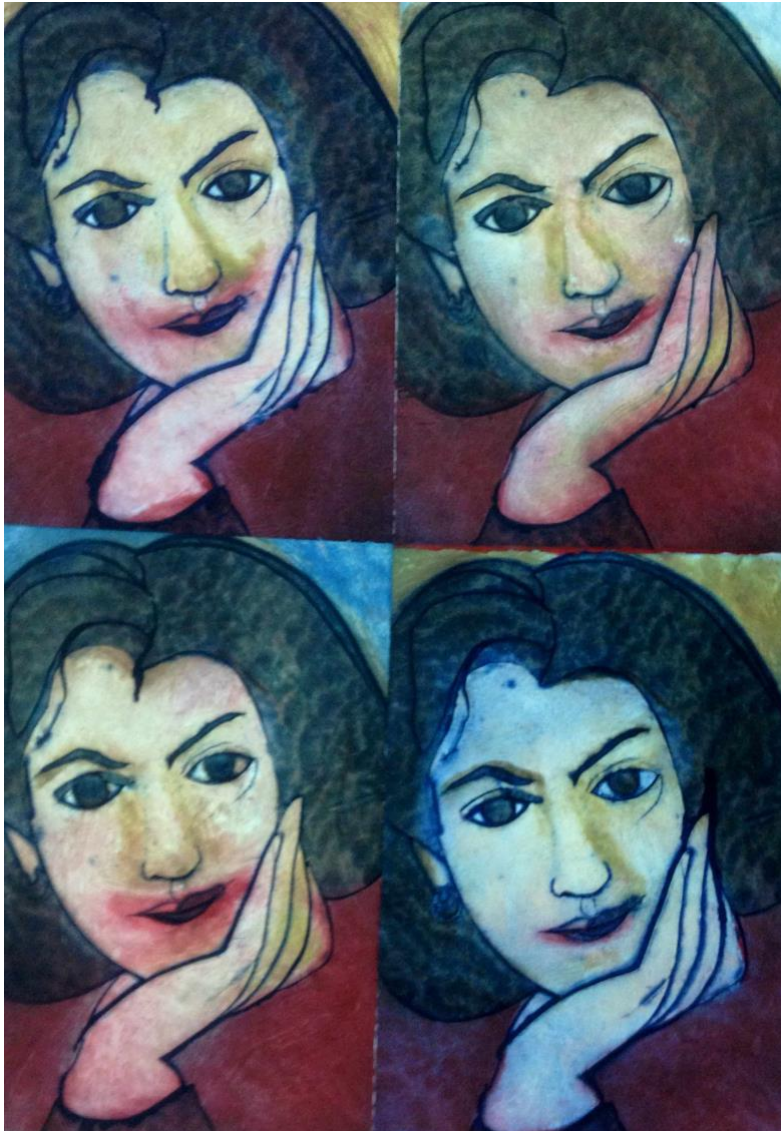


Figure 56. Mark Visione, *Etty:4 portraits*, 2015. Collagraph, 4 x 20 x 15 cm. Collection of the artist.

Done at the beginning of the cycle and based on photographs of Etty Hillesum, these portraits were an attempt to familiarise the artist with the subject and her appearance. Four 2-plate proofs were printed using varying colour plates.

Etty and the Angel.

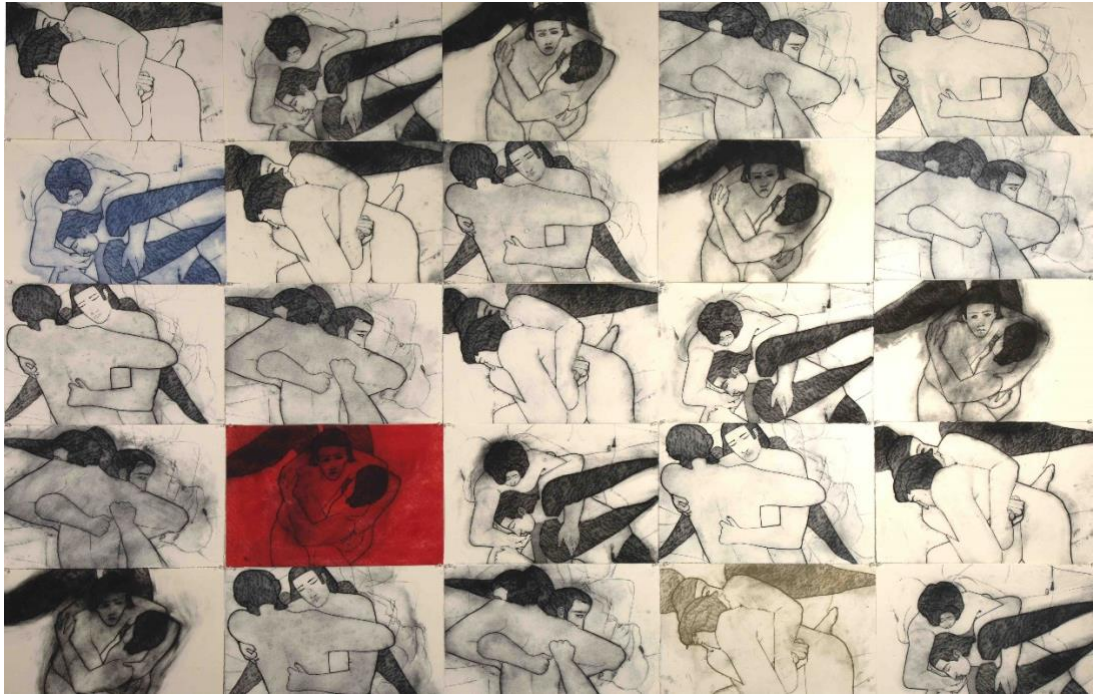


Figure 57. Mark Visione, *Etty and the Angel*, 2015. Collagraph, +/- 180 x 275cm (25 prints – 5 x 5 different images). Collection of the artist.

At the beginning of her diary, Etty Hillesum identifies the struggle between the material and the spiritual world as central to the life of her lover (S.) and herself. Even though this is played out in their case against the backdrop of the German occupation of the Netherlands, the war in Europe and its consequences, it remains cerebral and emotional. It is mirrored in the physical world. However, rather than that reflection being in the conflict of nations, we find it in S.'s professional practice as a psychologist of wrestling with his clients, and, in particular, with his female clients. Even though with Etty the 'therapy' does reach its erotic inevitability and the wrestling leads to a physical

as well as a spiritual relationship, Etty recognises the political incorrectness of this and is critical of S. because of it.³⁴² Still S. acts as a spiritual guide for Etty, and her wrestling becomes an independent inner dialogue (rather than a physical one) that allows her to consider her place in the world and her response to it.

For the artist, the idea of wrestling becomes a rich metaphor for Etty's thought processes, inward- and outward-looking questioning and decision-making. Its physical and potentially violent character underlines the cerebral and ultimately nonviolent and cosmopolitan nature of the process. Similarly, the pivotal concept of combat and war that, as Clausewitz argues, the victor subjects the vanquished to his will is supplanted by a desire for self-knowledge combined with a striving for harmony with those who would wish to do us harm. Consequently, the biblical story of Jacob wrestling with the angel offers us a narrative that transcends the victor-vanquished scenario and emphasises the value of being aware of one's self. The story itself is a reasonably simple one, even though the names of people and places here are rich in symbolic meaning. Interpretations are many. Jacob, a patriarch of the Jews, is returning to the land of Canaan. One night he meets a mysterious figure and they wrestle. The figure is identified as man, god or angel. That remains unclear. They fight all night. Neither triumphs over the other. Eventually, the figure blesses Jacob and re-names him Israel ("He who

³⁴² Hillesum, *Het Werk*, 72ff.

struggles with god”) and departs. In the context of Etty’s diary, the link is to the persona to whom she addresses many of her comments, questions and problems, whom she identifies as her most inner self or God. Art-historically, this link extends to a long tradition of image making with ‘Jacob wrestling with the angel’ as subject matter. Beyond being simply bible illustrations within the Judaeo-Christian tradition, in their representations of this subject, artists have included or suggested such aspects as loving embraces (Rembrandt), a sense of physical violence (Delacroix) and the dichotomy of having religious experiences in the material world (Gauguin).



Figure 58. Rembrandt van Rijn, *Jacob Wrestling with the Angel*, c.1659. Oil on canvas, 137 x 116 cm. Gemäldegalerie, Berlin, Germany.



Figure 59. Eugene Delacroix, *Jacob wrestling with the Angel*, 1857-61. Fresco, 758 x 491 cm, Saint-Suplice, Paris, France.



Figure 60. Paul Gauguin, *Vision after the Sermon*, 1888. Oil on canvas, 72.2 x 91 cm. National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh, Scotland.

This biblical and art-historical aspect acted as the inspiration for an illustration of Etty's 'dialogues' that are so central to her diary and, consequently, her cosmopolitan world view. Initial etched and collagraphic images of the wrestling were inspired by Delacroix and the medieval bronze plaques on the gigantic doors of the church of San Zeno in Verona.



Figure 61. Mark Visione, *Wrestling with angel*, 2015. Etching and collagraph, 40 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.



Figure 62. Mark Visione, *Angels*, 2015. Collagraph, 40 x 20 cm. Collection of the artist.

However, ultimately (in Figure 57), slightly more contemporary inspiration was found in the photographs of wrestling men taken by Eadweard Muybridge in the 1880's. The work was made using the collagraphic techniques described elsewhere and on only one acetate plate. Each image was constructed and, with some variations in colour, printed five times. When the printing was complete, most of the contact plastic used to create the image was removed, and a new image was created and printed on the same plate. As much of the cutting of the contact plastic was done on the plate itself, each image contains a memory of the previous images through these 'drypoint' lines. This process generated five individual images, printed five times each. Consequently, the final work is made up of 25 images grouped together in a 5 x 5 construction.³⁴³

³⁴³ See Figure 57.

Kampfbereit (Ready for the Struggle), *Wrestling*, *Thomas á Kempis*, *Mijn Lichaam (My Body)* and *Liefde op de Hei (Love on the Heath)*.

The 'struggle' which Etty names here is a sexual one. Amongst the cocktail of feelings which Etty has for S. are lust and love. For the researcher investigating the effect of war on civilian populations, the diary of Etty Hillesum may initially disappoint as it predominantly presents the reader with an intimate record of a love affair. Etty's nature and the character of the diary form make reflection and self-reflection, especially in a spiritual sense, unavoidable. Besides the occasional incident, her life remains relatively unchanged compared with that of Anne Frank. Yet both writers concentrate on their emotional lives and how that affects them mentally and physically. Moreover, for both writers, the war does have consequences, the same consequence – a violent death at a very young age in circumstances of fear and degradation.

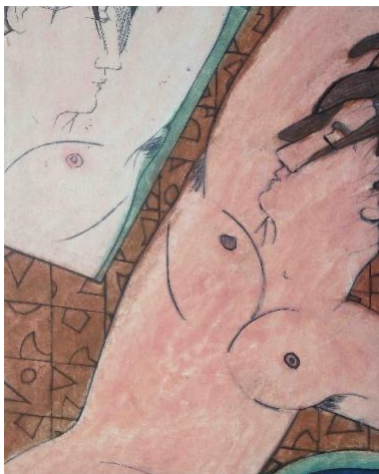


Figure 63. Mark Visione, *Study for 'Kampfbereit'*, 2015.
Collagraph, 29.2 x 24.5 cm. Collection of the artist.



Figure 64. Mark Visione, *Kampfbereit (Ready for the Struggle)*, 2015. Collagraph, 43 x 59 cm. Collection of the artist.

War throws up barriers and obstacles and its ramifications involve the possibility of death. This is true for both soldier and civilian. Rather than describing both Etty and Anne as innocent or naïve, they may be regarded as representatives of the civilian in times of war, living life as normally as possible despite its insanity. Indeed, *Wrestling*, *Thomas á Kempis*, *Mijn Lichaam (My Body)* and *Liefde op de Hei (Love on the Heath)* have, as their subjects, moments and issues in Etty's relationship with S. which could be interpreted outside the context of war. Their significance, perhaps, resides in Etty's fate. For example, in *Liefde op de Hei (Love on the Heath)*, she remembers a moment of romance (recorded earlier in her

diary) in a letter written only weeks before she is transported East to an extermination camp.



Figures 65. Mark Visoni, *Wrestling*, 2015. Collagraph 43 x 59 cm. Collection of the artist.



Figure 66. Mark Visione, *Thomas á Kempis*, 2015.
Collagraph, 59 x 43 cm. Collection of the artist.



Figure 67. Mark Visione, '*Mijn Lichaam*' (*My Body*), (large version), 2015. Collagraph, 59 x 43 cm. Collection of the artist.



Figures 68. Mark Visione, *Op de Hei (On the meadows)*, 2015. Collagraph 39.2 x 98.5 cm.
Collection of the artist.

'Bonger is Dood!' ('Bonger is Dead!') and *Gehuld in een Wolk*
(*Enveloped in a Cloud*)



Figures 69. Mark Visione, *'Bonger is Dood!' ('Bonger is dead!')*, 2015. Collagraph, 49.5 x 39.5 cm. Collection of the artist.



Figure 70. Mark Visione, '*Bonger is Dood!*' ('*Bonger is dead!*'), 2015. Collagraph, 2 x 49.5 x 39.5 cm. Collection of the artist.

The German occupation of the Netherlands at the beginning of World War II had a catastrophic effect on Dutch society.

Besides the executions and imprisonments, and the persecution of minorities, J. Wiersma, in his article concerning the relationship between Hillesum and W.A. Bonger, writes of a suicide epidemic.³⁴⁴ Etty's old professor, the sociologist and criminologist Bonger was one of the victims of this. While he was a moderate opposed to extreme ideologies, Bonger linked criminality to the egotism generated by the capitalist system and a society defined by class.³⁴⁵ He opposed imprisonment and the death penalty. Wiersma argues that for Etty, their chance meeting presented her with a choice: either to fight for victory over the forces of evil or to help those who needed it

³⁴⁴ Wiersema, 42.

³⁴⁵ Ibid., 45-6.

now so as to preserve what had been created before³⁴⁶. She chose the latter.

The image of Etty and Bonger is built over the print *Gehuld in een wolk* (Enveloped in a Cloud). The earlier matrix is turned 180° and only the central window is retained. The earlier print's sense of safety – however ephemeral – is replaced by loss and grief. The figure of Etty is based on that of St. John in Giotto's frescoes in Padua.³⁴⁷ The final image is made of two different states placed next to each other, one inverted.



Figure 73. Mark Visione, *Gehuld in een wolk* (*Enveloped in a Cloud*), 2015. Collagraph 49.5 x 39.5 cm. Collection of the artist.

³⁴⁶ Ibid., 48.

³⁴⁷ See p.176, Figure 35.

Indeed, *Gehuld in een wolk* (Enveloped in a Cloud) marks a moment of false-security for a Jew on the streets of occupied Amsterdam. She alludes to the gods of classical mythology manifesting themselves in other forms, the cloud here possibly referring to Zeus's rape of Io. In Etty's thoughts she revels in the public freedoms usually denied to her and momentarily casts off the threat that the street represents to her.

Prayer.

Much of Etty's diary is devoted to her prayers. In fact, her entries can be seen as her half of the dialogue that she has with 'god' during prayer. While lying within the Judaeo-Christian realm, her prayers are of a general spiritual and moral nature, rather than being part of or directed through an identifiable dogma. She prays alone in her bedroom. She prays together with Julius. This is the nature of her diary rather than it being a detailed account of the war years. Similarly, these 'prayers' sometimes take the form of a moral debate. She considers above all the nature of relationships and finds it difficult to reconcile Sex and God, the material and the spiritual. Often, prayer itself has been juxtaposed with action. In Etty's case, prayer functions as an analysis of her actions. The demands she makes are not made to an all-powerful being, but rather to herself. In her work for the Jewish Council and at the camp in Westerbork she tries to actively do good. Furthermore, her god is not the wrathful Old Testament one, and it is unimaginable that she would join the Resistance or use violence. Almost desperately, she looks for good – even in the German occupier seeking to eliminate the Jews.



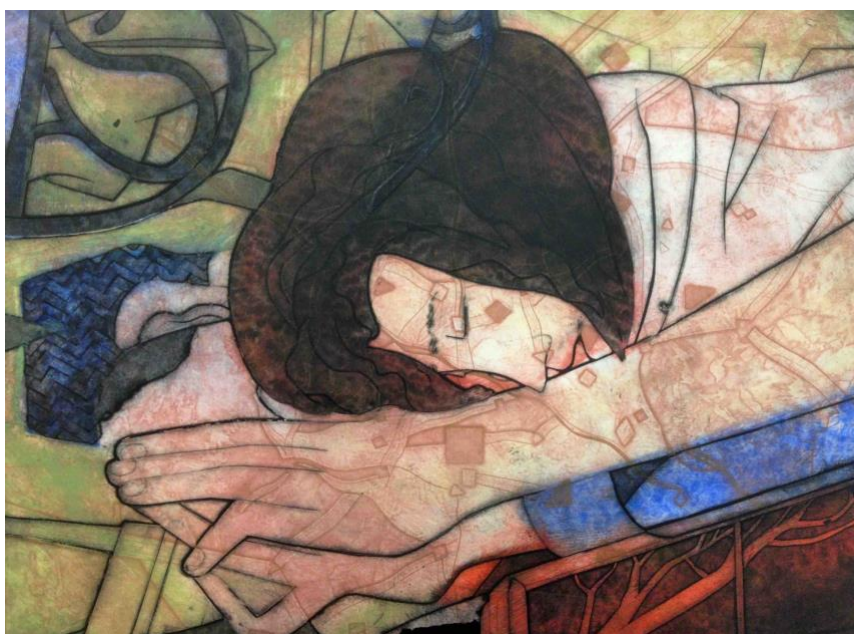
Figure 74. Mark Visione, *Study for Prayer*, 2015.
Collagraph, 16 x 15 cm. Collection of the artist.



Figure 75. Mark Visione, *Prayer (First Version)*,
2015. Collagraph, 49.4 x 39 cm. Collection of the
artist.



Figure 76. Mark Visione, *Prayer*, 2015. Collagraph and etching (state), 39 x 49.4cm. Collection of the artist.



Figures 77. Mark Visione, *Prayer*, 2015. Collagraph and etching (final state), 39 x 49.4 cm. Collection of the artist.

As has already been stated, Hillesum's history is not unique. Such stories are inherent in war's existence and must be confronted and accepted by the realist who believes in its inevitability. Importantly, too, such histories form a certain part of Australia's national psyche, even though this is hidden, unrecognized. These histories, civilian histories of war, are part of Australian national identity at least as much as any uniformed history.

Chapter III: The ANZAC Tradition, National Identity and Multiculturalism.

The ANZAC Tradition, Nationality and Exclusion.

The decision to go to war may be seen to be political, and, for many nations, it is through the experience of war that the nation and a national identity are formed, defended and manifested. This, in turn, influences attitudes towards and acceptance of war itself. In Australia, too, the ANZAC Tradition can be seen as the medium through which Australians identify themselves and with their nation. However, the nature of this link, the reasons why it exists and how it is maintained are difficult to define.

Most importantly, the ANZAC Tradition can not be seen as having its origins in aspirations of national independence and as a response to repression or domination. Indeed, if the desire for independence had grown strongly from the earliest colonial times onward, then also a filial bond within the colony for the motherland had not diminished. This bond, too often characterized by a sense of white racial superiority, had been nurtured by poets, journalists, historians, politicians and educators on either side of Australian independence and is still present more than 100 years after the event. As has often been argued, Australian participation in war demonstrates a sense of duty and responsibility towards allies rather than an expression of national belief and self-belief - war as an act of supplication. In Australia, the event by which the nation defines itself is not

an action of independent nationalism, but rather one of continuing duty and respect to a colonial past, the colonial parent and dominating allies.

For a tradition by which a whole nation identifies itself, ANZAC is a particularly military phenomenon. Whilst the character of ANZAC is sought in the self-reliance of the bushman and the attitudes of the city larrikin, the origin of ANZAC is directly associated with the experiences of soldiers fighting in the Dardanelles campaign and the Western Front during the First World War. Any reference to the Anzac spirit reflects back to these men. Therefore, on a human level the Australian soldier's experience of war (that is, in World War I) created an ethos that can be argued to have been taken on ultimately by the whole nation. Although this sense of identity manifests itself through events and behaviour (and misbehaviour) elsewhere both in battle and away from it, its nature and strength are fully revealed towards the end of World War I by Australians fighting in France. Bill Gammage indirectly suggests a number of elements that have gone into defining ANZAC. Most importantly, the reality of the battlefield (certainly, by 1918) transcended any concepts of romance, adventure and even patriotism. Emotionally, Gammage writes, the soldiers 'abandoned hope of life or happiness'³⁴⁸ and their world had become exclusively the 'next battle or next leave'³⁴⁹. This world was totally separate from the civilian world they had left behind in Australia, and it was felt that that civilian world could not

³⁴⁸ Gammage, 221.

³⁴⁹ Ibid.

understand them or the world in which the soldiers lived. Gammage relates that in the last months of the war eight battalions of Australian soldiers which had been severely depleted in battle were to be disbanded and the troops possibly reassigned to new battalions. The soldiers refused to disband and said they would rather go into battle with suicidally low numbers (but with their mates) rather than have those links with the men they had shared so much be damaged ³⁵⁰. On a group and, possibly, on a personal level the soldiers had turned inwards and, it may be contested, inadvertently found a crucial meaning to their lives and situation not offered by altruism, adventure or nation. This event is not unique, and Hugo Slim argues that it is inherent as a response of the soldier to war:

In groups, men urge each other on and, in war, they will kill for one another. Indeed, most studies show that this is the main reason why men kill – not for their country, not for a cause but for the men they have come to love around them in the fight. ³⁵¹

These soldiers - at the time considered mutinous, but not punished nor forced to disband by the military authorities – turned inwards. War lost its historical and physical nature and became a manifestation of mateship and a sense of responsibility that they as individuals in a group owed to each other. We find this sense of ‘not letting a mate down’ in CEW Bean’s writings on Gallipoli in his ‘Official History’. By 1918, the

³⁵⁰ Ibid., 231.

³⁵¹ Slim, 239.

war itself and all that it meant is of considerably less significance. Indeed, it suggests a past echo of Baudrillard's assertion that the Gulf War 'will not take place', is not really taking place and 'did not take place'³⁵². In his three short articles, Baudrillard saw the Gulf War as symbolic rather than real, paradoxically blurred by an overload of information and consumerism, and characterized by the posturing of power and examples of destructive technological excellence. His tract argues that war stops becoming the thing itself and instead becomes a mechanism for the maintenance of the status quo. In an Australian context, the definition of 'what war is' is derived from the experiences of soldiers (and their families) rather than from a more complete and non-military appreciation of its reality. On the home-front in Australia, this has led to a moral distancing from what war truly entails and it has only become significant in as far as it underlines martial values seen as being synonymous with national character.³⁵³

A concept that the soldiers felt the civilian world they represented in war could not comprehend and with whom they could not share, the soldiers' sense of connected identity was taken on by the nation as a whole and used to identify what it meant and means to be Australian. This has had consequences for the perception of what war is and how it is responded to, as well as how Australians perceive themselves.

³⁵² Jean Baudrillard, "The Gulf War Did Not Take Place," (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995).

³⁵³ Foster, 71.

Gammage's argument strongly implies that as a focus of national identity, Australia's ANZAC Tradition is an exclusive rather than an inclusive one. For those soldiers on the Western Front in 1918, Gammage suggests that it signified their inability to come to terms with civilian life and that theirs was an experience that their countrymen and women would not be able to understand. Further, as a phenomenon with its origins in war and the military, it can be considered a predominantly masculine tradition. At times, the sincere inclusion of nurses, female workers on the home front and mothers, sisters and sweethearts waiting for the return of their men from the battlefield may seem like an afterthought. Women, of course, should be part of the history, but seem not to be part of the tradition.

The inclusion of Indigenous Australia within the ANZAC Tradition remains an ambiguous one. The Australia of the original ANZACs believed, perhaps obsessively, in the supremacy of the white race and Australia would continue to do so for many decades after. This was the belief of many Australian citizens and those who represented them and was expressed nationally and internationally in word and deed. Until the 1960's, Indigenous Australians were not considered citizens and their right to join the military was unclear. Still, Indigenous Australians did join and fight in the Australian military, their presence seen as a sign of assimilation into white culture. Further, the relationship between Indigenous Australia and ANZAC has been highlighted through the debate concerning the country's colonial history known as the 'History

Wars'. Regardless of the correctness of historical details and the seeming absence historically of respect for culture and society, ANZAC has been presented as the important and positive receptacle of national ideals and character, while the confronting of unresolved issues from the colonial period that still define Australia in many ways and, conceivably, limit that same realization of Australian national identity has often been pushed aside as 'black armband history'. Importantly too, the effect of war on Aboriginal society in Australia is not one purely of the battlefield.

Similarly, the civilian significance of war is embedded in Australia's migrant histories, but finds no place in the ANZAC Tradition. Currently around a quarter of the population of Australia was born overseas. This is not a unique situation, and has been a feature of Australian history since white habitation of the continent began. As migrants and the children of migrants, those Australians do not just carry family histories very often scarred by war. The migration itself has often been a consequence of war and directly alludes to that civilian dimension of war ignored by the ANZAC Tradition.

A Reason for Going to War: The ANZAC Tradition and the Hegemon.

If ANZAC is an exclusive rather than an inclusive tradition, how and why does it function as that focusing point of identity within a broader Australian society? Although admittedly in an arguably different context, Baudrillard reminds us that:

The real victory of the simulators of war is to have drawn everyone into this rotten simulation.³⁵⁴

Indeed, a common argument is that ANZAC is 'not about war'. A highly meaningful element of this Australian perspective is grounded not in the reality of combat, even when the combat involved is the gritty futility of First World War trench warfare, but rather in the relationship between the soldiers themselves. Australia is not unique in holding military traditions of which they are proud. However, it is significant that in Australia these traditions are used not only to define what war is but also to define who Australians are as a nation. Neither pride in Australian military traditions nor a sincere sense of empathy for those who, for whatever reason, have served and suffered for their country explains ANZAC's popularity and its position as giving the defining criteria for what it is to be Australian.

Countless numbers of causes for war have been enumerated³⁵⁵ as have reasons for the use of and rejection of violence on all

³⁵⁴ Baudrillard, 59.

³⁵⁵ See Stephen van Evra, *Causes of War: Power and the Roots of Conflict*, ed. R.J. Art, Jervis, R., Walt, S.M., Cornell Studies in Security Affairs (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999).

levels³⁵⁶. However, again, these enumerations do not fully explain a population's initial enthusiasm for war on its declaration nor, more particularly in the case of Australia, the choice of war and the country's participation in it as the reference point for national self-identification. The popularity of the phenomenon of ANZAC has not been constant since the events of 1915-18. Historians have argued that the interbellum years when the physical and societal consequences of the Great War were most apparent and the 1960's and 70's which were characterized by a rejection of not only the conservatism of the previous decade but also of the unquestioning nationalism and subservience to the new ally, the USA, inherent in Australian participation in the Vietnam War were clear low points.³⁵⁷ Yet, it can be argued that on a fundamental level, however contradictorily, ANZAC has been a generally agreed upon focus for national identity. An interpretation of Gramsci's idea of 'cultural hegemony' might supply an explanation for this.

The Italian political and social philosopher Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) expressed many of his arguments in his 'Prison Notebooks', written during his imprisonment by Mussolini's fascist government from 1926 until his death. Gramsci's interpretation of the concept of 'cultural hegemony' may be seen to have been proposed as a solution to the problem of

³⁵⁶ See Steven Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: A History of Violence and Humanity* (Penguin, 2012).

³⁵⁷ See, for example, both Lake et al. and Carolyn Holbrook, *Anzac, the Unauthorised Biography* (New South, 2014).

why Western democracies had not developed naturally into communist states as Marxist theory had predicted. In a broader sense, it also strongly implies that there is a ruling power within society, especially capitalist society, that is not the same as that represented by political power. Given this, it is not then surprising to find that in their introduction to a selection of writings from Gramsci's prison notebooks, the editors and translators, Quentin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith state that around the time of Gramsci's imprisonment,

It was still widely believed by communist leaders that the ruling class might decide that the fascist option was too costly, and switch to a social-democratic alternative.³⁵⁸

Here Hoare and Nowell Smith seem to imply that 'the ruling class' at that moment was not ultimately Mussolini's totalitarian regime. But, rather than suggesting some kind of conspiracy theory, Gramsci presents the hegemon as the mechanism for social compliance, possibly, within any state and, in a sense, it is an emotional mechanism rather than a purely political one. Gramsci's distinction between 'hegemony' (leadership) and 'domination' (rule) is central and arguably rings true beyond his own time and place.³⁵⁹ Gramsci tries to define who this 'ruling

³⁵⁸ "Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci", ElecBook, accessed March 10, 2017, http://courses.justice.eku.edu/pls330_louis/docs/gramsci-prison-notebooks-vol1.pdf. 22.

³⁵⁹ 'The aspect of the modern crisis that is deplored as a "wave of materialism" is related to the so-called "crisis of authority". If the ruling class has lost consensus, that is, if it no longer "leads" but only "rules" – it possesses sheer coercive power – this actually means that the great masses have become detached from traditional ideologies, they no longer believe what they previously used to believe, etc. The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born: in this interregnum, morbid phenomena of the most varied kind come to pass.' Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*, trans. J.A. Buttigieg, vol. II (New York: Colombia University Press, 1996), 32-3.

class' is. Here there is an implication that in the capitalist state economic power is assumed. But his definitions are unavoidably nebulous. He identifies 'the press in general'³⁶⁰ and goes on to say,

Everything that directly or indirectly influences public opinion belongs to it: libraries, schools, associations and clubs of various kinds, even architecture, the layout of streets and their names. The position that the church has maintained in the modern world cannot be explained without knowledge of the incessant and patient efforts it makes to ensure the continuous development of its particular sector of this material structure of ideology.³⁶¹

It should be noted, too, that this hegemony is not imposed upon a society. Rather, it is,

The "spontaneous" consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is "historically" caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production.³⁶²

As a consequence, groups that do not 'consent' break both the laws of government and the moral law of the people. Further, this consent functions internationally through the 'world-wide

³⁶⁰ Ibid., 52-3.

³⁶¹ Ibid., 33.

³⁶² *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*. 145.

hegemony' of 'the European cultured classes'³⁶³ as well as transcending all divisions within societies. For Gramsci, hegemony is not just an idea but rather 'praxis' – in a sense, action in the real world. Its breadth is suggested by Kramer's statement referred to by Buckel and Fischer-Lescano in their article considering Gramsci's concept of hegemony in relation to 'Global Law':

The decisive thing was for the hegemonic group to represent a theoretical self-perception, a 'philosophy', which must not be just the exclusive possession of a restricted stratum of intellectuals, but has to become a *Weltanschauung*, manifested implicitly in art, the economy, politics, and, specifically, in law too, in all 'molecular' and collective expressions of life.³⁶⁴

However, hegemony does not offer economic, social or political equality. Rather it offers social order based on an ethical structure created and propagated by the ruling class.³⁶⁵ At the same time, it involves society's acceptance of subordination³⁶⁶ and an inability to distinguish between the values of the individual and 'the beliefs of the dominant culture'³⁶⁷. Ultimately, as has been suggested earlier, it is a description of power within societies that does not necessarily correspond to political power. As such, it could be argued that it is not dependent on

³⁶³ Ibid., 810.

³⁶⁴ Sonja Buckel and Andreas Fischer-Lescano, "Gramsci Reconsidered: Hegemony and Global Law," *Leiden Journal of international Law* 22 (2009): 441-2.

³⁶⁵ See David Durst, "Hegel's Conception of the Ethical and Gramsci's Notion of Hegemony," *Contemporary Political Theory* 4 (2005), 175-191.

³⁶⁶ Ibid., 181.

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

the nature of government at a particular time in a particular place. Hegemony, then, emanates from and relies on consent rather than coercion and, therefore, represents not necessarily change, but, at its best, stability and, at its worst, stagnation and self-destruction³⁶⁸.

In Australia, when seen in reference to Gramsci's writings, ANZAC may be interpreted as a mechanism and a representation of cultural hegemony.³⁶⁹ Despite its exclusive and contradictory nature, it serves as a focus of national identity that must not be disputed³⁷⁰. While spoken of in quasi-religious terms, it has been used to justify political policy, to forgive bad behaviour and to sell beer³⁷¹, and then only with the permission of the Minister for Veterans' Affairs. Even Gramsci's seemingly banal comment regarding hegemony being present in 'the layout of streets and their names' can be applied to the Australian reality.³⁷² Those elements of society listed by Gramsci and those commented on in his writings as preserving and promoting cultural hegemony are used in the manifestation

³⁶⁸ In this sense, it may be seen as related to what Etty Hillesum calls '*systeem*', i.e. that fatal mechanism sometimes out of our control that can build up societies as well as destroy them. See K. Smelik, "'Dat Merkwaardige Bemiddelingslichaam'. Etty Hillesum En De Joodse Raad.," in *Etty Hillesum in Weerwil Van Het Joodse Vraagstuk*, ed. K. Smelik, Etty Hilllesum Studies (Antwerp-Apeldoorn: Granat, 2016), 67-8.

³⁶⁹ See also Gammage, 285.

³⁷⁰ See Lake et al., 1ff.

³⁷¹ See 'Raise a glass campaign', *Legacy*, accessed January 9, 2017, <http://www.legacy.com.au/RaiseAGlassAppealArchives>

³⁷² In Sydney, to travel from the current (2017) site of the Sydney College of the Arts (University of Sydney), one crosses the Anzac Bridge. To go from the main campus of the University of New South Wales into Sydney's CBD, one travels down Anzac Parade. The Hume Highway linking Sydney to Canberra, the nation's capital, forms part of 'The Remembrance Driveway' where every rest area is named after a Victoria Cross winner (all male, of course) whose exploits are described on a plaque presented there.

of ANZAC in Australian society – the media, religion, the wider judiciary, private and public associations and corporations. Crucially, education has been used to reinforce the central position of ANZAC. Lake argues that through the Department of Veterans' Affairs, a vast array of education material has been disseminated to primary and secondary schools nationwide.³⁷³ With some justification, she remarks,

Whether it is the job of the federal Department of Veterans' Affairs to prescribe school children's understanding of national history is surely debatable. Whether it should link these history lessons to the definition and promotion of national values is more questionable still.³⁷⁴

It should be remembered that the power/hegemony gained through and represented by ANZAC exists in Australian society through consent – albeit, Gramsci would argue, hard worked for by the ruling classes – and artists, as part of that society, have participated in that consent. As artists, through their work, question the nature and structure of their world, it may be expected that they would consider the nature and validity of a fundamental aspect of the cohesion in which they live. However, this questioning may sometimes be considered a critique or even criticism, and, as has already been suggested, criticism of Anzac is tantamount to treason.³⁷⁵

³⁷³ Marilyn Lake, "How Do Schoolchildren Learn About the Spirit of Anzac?," in *What's Wrong with Anzac?* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press Ltd, 2010), 137ff.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 138.

³⁷⁵ Lake et al., 1.

Generally, the artists examined in this thesis, Australian or not, have participated in the status quo and their work gives us insights into the society in which they live and, particularly, personal and broader societal responses to the reality of war rather than a critique of the society which allows it and the reasons why it does so. In an Australian context, Tony Albert's sculpture '*Yininmadyemi* (Thou didst let fall)'³⁷⁶ harks back to an earlier (but not so distant) era when Indigenous Australian culture was supposed to assimilate and disappear into Australian European culture. As a plea for recognition of Indigenous Australians' part in the Anzac tradition, it ignores the use of Anzac as (amazingly) the positive version of Australian history in the face of the painful reality of its colonial past. Similarly, the Afghanistan works by Ben Quilty offer no critique of the Anzac tradition and its place in Australian society. Rather, Quilty's representation of the Australian military has its conceptual origin in his investigations into Australian masculinity. His paintings of the Australian soldiers he meets in Afghanistan continue a representational tradition of nobility and heroism that for Australia began on the beaches of the Dardanelles but omits the broader nature of war. However, here the soldiers too are the victims. That is, they are the victims of PTSD and of an uncaring government. Still, the ANZAC Tradition remains unchanged and war itself is interpreted and presented as a noble exercise in humanitarian assistance.

It is worth noting Yoko Ono's apparent indifference to

³⁷⁶ See p. 82-9.

hegemonic influence. If war is the evil it is universally described as, then the individual should avoid participating in it. Most importantly, this is a rejection of the inevitability of war promoted within societies. This belief in the inevitability of war is essential to validations of the ANZAC tradition. Essential to ANZAC too is a particular belief in Australia's historical narrative, a narrative where actions are justified by notions of progress. It is this historical narrative linked to ANZAC that Gordon Bennett confronts in his work. Bennett's work argues that the promotion of a European centred history of Australia has left unresolved issues from its colonial past and leaves Australian identity – both indigenous and non-indigenous - incomplete. Gramsci argues that confronting hegemony involves 'the progressive acquisition of the consciousness of one's historical identity'.³⁷⁷ For Australia to progress, Australians need an honest awareness of their past and the nature and scope of the ANZAC tradition may have to change.

Historically, artists have given definitions of the nature of their societies and questioned how those societies have manifested themselves in the world. Too rarely, perhaps, have they questioned that communal urge to go to war, how such an idea is presented to society and why war presented as inevitable is not questioned. It may be argued that this is because although artists are an identifiable group within society, as part of that society also, they are not immune to possible hegemonic influences.

³⁷⁷ Gramsci, II, 33.

ANZAC, Moral Distancing, Multiculturalism.

The general absence of this kind of critique of society in mainstream visual arts historically in Australia may be ascribed to the central position of ANZAC as the focus of national identity and to what Lake describes as 'the militarization of Australian history'³⁷⁸, especially through educational institutions. This acceptance of war has, again, historically been linked to 'moral distancing'. Distancing plays an important part in the prosecution of war. Moral and cultural distancing involve 'the process of systematic desensitization in which soldiers are taught that killing is an act of justice' and 'the dehumanization of the enemy in preparation for inflicting harm or death.'³⁷⁹ Significantly, this distancing extends to civilian populations, helping to define their awareness and acceptance of war generally. Distance and time may be seen to create a buffer to our perception of war and lower the priority which is given to the human suffering of those we do not know, those who have died in the past and those who are far away. It may further be argued that in Australia that moral distancing may be connected to the experience of the society generally. Since the colonial period, damage to society and infrastructure has been relatively (that is, relative to, for example, Europe or the Americas) limited. Geographically and politically, Australia has

³⁷⁸ Lake et al., 139.

³⁷⁹ Stuart Wright, "Martyrs and Martial Imagery: Exploring the Volatile Link between Warfare Frames and Religious Violence.," in *Dying for Faith: Religiously Motivated Violence in the Contemporary World*, ed. M. Al-Rasheed, M. Shterin (London: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 19.

rarely been threatened or attacked in its modern history³⁸⁰. It could then be argued that this peaceful history of post-colonial Australia allows a generally military perception of war because Australian society, institutions and infrastructure have rarely been directly and never seriously damaged by it.

This is the view given to us by ANZAC, the view that represents Australian history and Australian identity. It is a reasonable view if one ignores the millennia of aboriginal habitation, the colonial period and the civilian histories of all Australians. It is a reasonable view if it is not considered with reference to Australia's socially and politically avowed multicultural nature. A multicultural character is important for Australia as its history has often been characterized by cultural distancing, where ignorance of and lack of respect for other cultures has allowed an easier justification for and acceptance of behaviour ranging from disinterest and racist language, through humorous game-playing to overt aggression.³⁸¹

How this reveals itself in the world of the visual arts in Australia is difficult to judge. Entries in exhibition catalogues and critiques found in newspapers and magazines cover a broad range of attitudes and topics and, at the same time, can never give a complete response to all 'professional' work made at any particular moment. Similarly, they do not necessarily represent

³⁸⁰ Stanley, "Dramatic Myth and Dull Truth: Invasion by Japan in 1942." in Lake et al, *What's Wrong with Anzac?: The Militarisation of Australian History* (University of New South Wales Press, 2010), argues that this, indeed, has never been the case.

³⁸¹ This wide range of responses, for example, being shown by the Australian military in Egypt between 1914 and 1919.

the motivation and thoughts of the artist during the creative process. Further, as has been argued elsewhere in this thesis, the artist does not exclusively own the meaning of his own work³⁸². However, an analysis of a recent exhibition that arguably has 'war' as its central theme may give insights into those attitudes held by some Australian artists and those who, through that recent exhibition, have responded to their work.³⁸³

The exhibition in the Art Gallery of South Australia entitled 'Sappers & Shrapnel: Contemporary Art and the Art of the Trenches'³⁸⁴ focuses on the 'trench art' of Sapper Stanley Keith Pearl made during the First World War and works made by a group of prominent contemporary Australian and New Zealand artists responding broadly to the theme of war. Trench art may be described as any object made from the detritus of war. Its significance resides in the origins of its component parts 'rather than [in] how well it was made and in what shape'³⁸⁵. However, the exhibition itself and the catalogue that accompanies it are broader in both aesthetic quality and political intent than this definition might suggest.

The exhibition presents a perspective on Australian culture that at times is both insightful and seemingly contradictory. On the one hand, there is a recognition of the violence of Australia's

³⁸² See Appendix 1.

³⁸³ Lisa Slade, "Sappers & Shrapnel: Contemporary Art and the Art of the Trenches," ed. P. Curtin (Fisherman's Bend, Vic.: Thames & Hudson, 2016).

³⁸⁴ 11 November 2016 – 29 January 2017.

³⁸⁵ Nicholas J. Saunders, "Sapper Stanley Keith Pearl," in *Sappers & Shrapnel: Contemporary Art and the Art of the Trenches*, ed. P. Curtin (Fisherman's Bend, Vic: Thames & Hudson, 2016), 14.

colonial past and the consequences of this for its multicultural present. Here, unlike in many quarters of Australian society, although the problems and their origin are not resolved, they are clearly acknowledged. On the other hand, the association of national identity with a military and militarist tradition is repeatedly reaffirmed. Repeatedly too, but certainly not exclusively, the experience of war is defined as directly that of the 'individual soldier'³⁸⁶ and, indirectly, that of the soldier's family.

For many of the artists and contributors to the exhibition catalogue, the colonial wars continue and are discussed in the present tense. Genevieve Grieves asserts, 'there is so much that continues to be wilfully forgotten'³⁸⁷, while in the work '*Tjituru-Tjituru*', the Tjanpi desert weavers choose prams and similar containers to represent the artists' fears for the next generations of Anangu, offering, in symbolic form, safety and sanctuary for the children of the future.³⁸⁸ Many of these objects contain nothing, 'their occupants stolen by colonisation; the intervention; ongoing violence; poverty; and substance abuse.'³⁸⁹ For the artist Brett Graham, its origin in the subjugation of Indigenous peoples on both sides of the Tasman

³⁸⁶ Ibid., 15.

³⁸⁷ Genevieve Grieves, "Tony Albert," in *Sappers & Shrapnel: Contemporary Art and the Art of the Trenches*, ed. P. Curtin (Fisherman's Bend, Vic.: Thames & Hudson, 2016), 41.

³⁸⁸ Lisa Slade, "Tjanpi Desert Weavers & Fiona Hall," in *Sappers & Shrapnel: Contemporary Art and the Art of the Trenches*, ed. P. Curtin (Fisherman's Bend, Vic.: Thames & Hudson, 2016), 170.

³⁸⁹ Ibid.

Sea qualifies that sense of the ANZAC spirit³⁹⁰, a belief which brings into question many other statements found in the exhibition's catalogue. Lisa Slade calls Graham's work a response to this argument. However, it is not a riposte, Slade detailing how Graham's work identifies the geographical locations of tragedy and oppression around the world. While the violence generated by the events that have their origins in a colonial past still manifests itself through societal problems now, there is still no questioning of those militarist traditions that are the generators of such problems nor a plea for a reappraisal of national identities so strongly based on those traditions.

It is the strength and value of ANZAC that is stressed in the catalogue. Saunders states that Pearl's works are 'a largely unacknowledged source of Australian national identity forged in the First World war, which to date has understandably largely stemmed from ANZAC actions on Gallipoli in 1915'³⁹¹, while Baden Pailthorpe affirms that 'both the official narratives and the under-acknowledged histories of Australia are frequently defined by our involvement in military conflict' and the Australian War Memorial itself is described as 'the nation's official "guardian of memory"'³⁹².

When we enter these spaces we immediately feel a different atmosphere – it is unique and it imparts a sense

³⁹⁰ "Brett Graham," in *Sappers & Shrapnel: Contemporary Art and the Art of the Trenches*, ed. P. Curtin (Fisherman's Bend, Vic.: Thames & Hudson, 2016), 78.

³⁹¹ Nicholas J. Saunders, "Sapper Stanley Keith Pearl," *ibid.* (Fisherman's Bend, Vic.), 15.

³⁹² Baden Pailthorpe, "Baden Pailthorpe," *ibid.* (Fisherman's Bend, Vic.), 139.

of gravitas. We adjust our mood and our behaviour accordingly. We become instinctively disciplined and respectful. This is because mythology is ultimately, like art, a deeply aesthetic experience.³⁹³

Using the language of a different era, Pailthorpe argues that the 'two [Australian?] national ideals' are 'the body of the hero and the mind of the military.'³⁹⁴ Similarly, while discussing Tony Albert's work, Genevieve Grieves maintains that 'Australian narratives of war – particularly of the ANZACs at Gallipoli – are highly valued national myths and speak of valour, bravery and courage'³⁹⁵, and Tony Albert argues through his works and writing for the inclusion of Indigenous Australia into a tradition that Brett Graham believes finds its origins in what are regarded as the crimes of Australia and New Zealand's colonial pasts.

As has already been suggested, much of the exhibition centres on the experience of the soldier and, by extension, his family. For example, the platted hair in the work of Olga Cironis is seen as signifying 'the interwoven relationship between the civilian left at home and the soldier at war.'³⁹⁶ Similarly, the appearance of Dada artworks which may have influenced Fiona Hall's haunting work 'All the King's Men' is ascribed to 'the stunting trauma experienced on the front'³⁹⁷. As Ryan

³⁹³ Ibid., 141.

³⁹⁴ Ibid.

³⁹⁵ Grieves, 43.

³⁹⁶ Kerry Neale, "Olga Cironis," in *Sappers & Shrapnel: Contemporary Art and the Art of the Trenches*, ed. P. Curtin (Fisherman's Bend, Vic.: Thames & Hudson, 2016), 52.

³⁹⁷ Ryan Johnston, "Fiona Hall," *ibid.*, 90.

Johnston in his piece on the work does go on to suggest, the Dadaists at least equally strongly represent a creative response to the absolute failure of European society. With regard to those works made with the Tjanpi weavers, the art critic John McDonald notes the works' sense of 'childhood innocence' and muses that 'One thinks of the young men who went to war never to return.'³⁹⁸ The works exhibited by Ben Quilty exhibit a different face of war, although one connected to many of the preoccupations found in the catalogue. In Australia, the civilian consequences of war exist in the clouded debates concerning our collective colonial past and those consequences in the present. It may be argued that there is no place or time for the hero or 'valour, bravery and courage'³⁹⁹ for those trying to escape war. Or, perhaps, a different kind of hero may be needed. While discussing Quilty's work, the writer Richard Flanagan identifies the perpetrators of the crimes to which he and Quilty and their art are testament – Daesh, ISIS, the Russians, the Assad regime – as if, again, their violent elimination would change the world. It may be that each artist involved in this exhibition could identify an enemy. However, they might agree that recognising victims and caring for them ultimately holds a deeper significance.

The artists involved in 'Sappers & Shrapnel: Contemporary Art and the Art of the Trenches' generally have left the militarist tradition by which many Australians proudly identify themselves

³⁹⁸ John McDonald, "Hung, Drawn Slaughter," *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 21-22 2017, 13.

³⁹⁹ Grieves, 43.

intact. In this, they have followed in the footsteps of the majority of those making public art in Australia for the last century. Beyond an often-held belief in martial values, war has been seen as inevitable and the battlefield a space where bravery, strength and moral right win the day. Although they have posed no threat to Australia, its enemies have been identified (by others), engaged and overcome.

Cultural attitudes in Australia have changed, and this has been made part of its reality through government policies. As well as policies and programs aiming to connect the original inhabitants of the land with the state, the Australian government has robust multicultural policies in place to integrate new arrivals. Through the government's Department of Social Services (DSS), 'The Multicultural Access and Equity Policy' has been developed for government departments and agencies, creating a code ensuring the functioning of all Australians in a multicultural environment. Specifically included are 'migrants with different backgrounds and migrant stories' and 'refugee and humanitarian entrants.'⁴⁰⁰ Organs such as the Australian Multicultural Advisory Council (AMAC) have been set up⁴⁰¹ to give advice on 'overcoming intolerance and racism in Australia' and 'issues relating to the social and civic participation of migrants in Australian society.' However,

⁴⁰⁰ "The Multicultural Access and Equity Policy Guide.," ed. Commonwealth of Australia (Department of Social Services) (2015), 5.

⁴⁰¹ See "Australian Cultural Advisory Council", Australian Government, accessed January 16, 2017, <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/settlement-and-multicultural-affairs/publications/australian-multicultural-advisory-council-amac> (The AMC's latest tenure ended in December 2017).

ANZAC still holds the echo of that white supremacist Australia of a century ago. While ANZAC is seen as a symbol of identification for all Australians, it has also been used as a rallying point for right-wing anti-immigration parties. Also, ANZAC has been offered as the positive example of Australian history by politicians unable or unwilling to come to terms with all that is still unresolved in Australia's indigenous and colonial past. The digger, the bushman, the city larrikin amongst others (all ultimately manifestations in a world characterized by Empire and white male privilege) may be important parts of the Australian psyche, but, in a post-'White Australia' era, they do not always represent the face and soul of contemporary Australia.

In the Australian government's recent policy statement regarding Syrian and Iraqi refugees and the extension of its Humanitarian Programme, it states:

It is important to remember that these people are seeking refuge from situations of conflict and trauma that many Australians would find hard to imagine.⁴⁰²

That is true only in so far as the fact that these refugees too will shortly be Australian citizens and join all those others who have predominantly civilian experiences of war (some first-hand and all, it can be argued, through the generations of family) that

⁴⁰² "Syrian/Iraqi Settlement Crisis", Australian Government, viewed January 16, 2017 <https://www.dss.gov.au/settlement-and-multicultural-affairs-programs-policy/syrian-iraqi-humanitarian-crisis>.

have little to do with the attitudes towards war and national significance found in the ANZAC Tradition.

Studio Response: Being Australian.

Nonna, 2015, 98.5 x 39.2 cm, collagraph

Three Graces, 2017, 72 x 61cm, collagraph

How a Cat Learns, 2017, 46x 57cm, collagraph

Investigations into the nature of war tend, in an Australian context at least, to lead to considerations of national identity. While such considerations are often subjective, they may have more general implications. Post-colonial Australia has thought rarely about the consequences of war on non-combatant populations and their infrastructure. These consequences, it is argued, happen in more violent, less harmonious societies. Such perceptions might logically lead to a critical examination into Australia's pride in the prowess of its military. That is, why should such a peaceful country place so much emphasis on how good they are at 'soldiering'?

Yet the civilian population of Australia, even those without any real military tradition within their family and while being excluded by many from participation in any dialogue around ANZAC, does have knowledge of war and its implications. For example, *Nonna* (2015), that is 'Grandma' in Italian, is a representation of a slice of this candidate's family history. In Naples, on Easter Sunday 1942 my grandmother died during the bombing of the city. She is shown baking a cake for her daughter's birthday. Below her, around a year after the event,



Figure 78. Mark Visione, *Nonna (Granma)*, 2015. Collagraph, 98.5 x 39.2 cm. Collection of the artist.

my father is seen reading a letter relating the details of her death. As an enemy internee working on a Victorian country property, he lies on his bed in the shed that is his home.



Figure 79. Mark Visione, *Mum*, 1959. Drawing on lined paper, 30 x 20 cm. Collection of the artist.

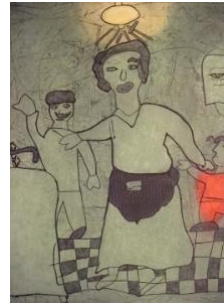


Figure 80. Mark Visione, *My brother's love*, 2003. Collagraph, 50 x 40 cm. Collection of the artist.



Figure 81. Mark Visione, *Mum*, 1959. Drawing on lined paper, 30 x 20 cm. Collection of the artist.



Figure 82. Mark Visione, *Mum*, 2003. Collagraph, 50 x 40 cm. Collection of the artist.

The female figure is based on two of the candidate's childhood drawings of his mother and collagraphs based on these, executed around 2003.

Three Graces (2017) asks what it means to be Australian and suggests some answers. The upper part of the image shows three rugby league players in a tackle, the football morphed into a Fabergé egg – the archetypal 'collectable'. The underbodies of the footballers are taken from Canova's marble statue *The Three Graces* in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

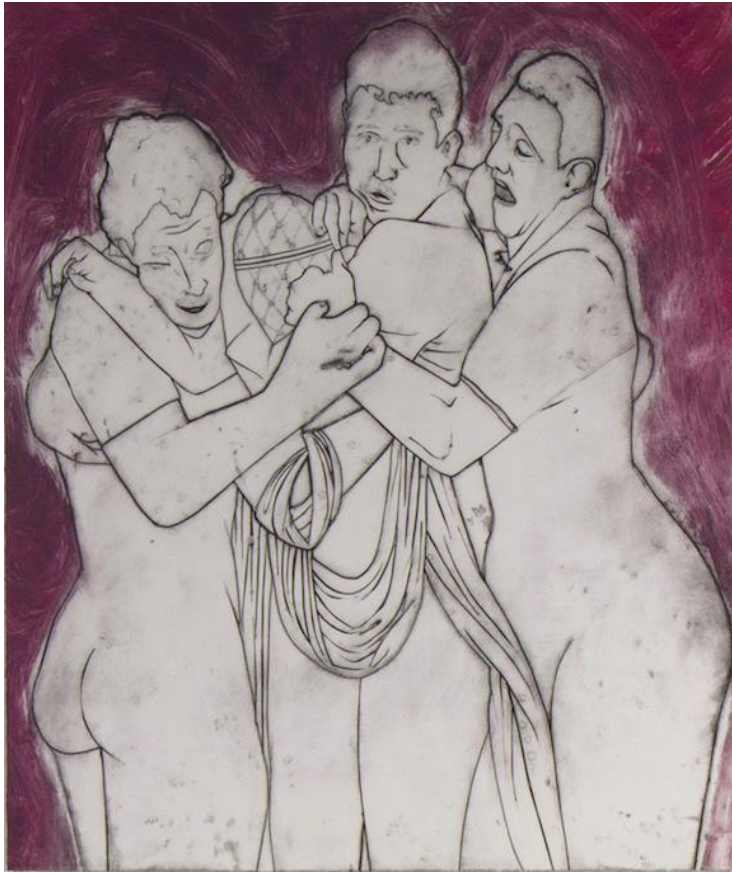


Figure 83. Mark Visione, *Three graces*, 2017. Collagraph, 98.5 x 39.2 cm. Collection of the artist.



Figure 84. Mark Visione, *How a cat learns*, 2015. Collagraph, 46 x 57 cm. Collection of the artist.

How a Cat Learns (2017) considers society's apparent awareness of the reality of war learnt through history and the media, and our acceptance of it and its inevitability.

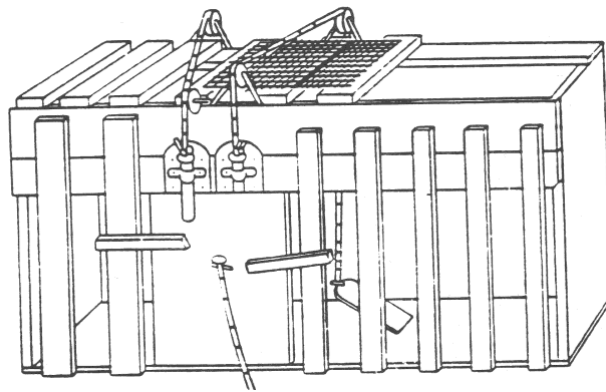


Figure 85. Edward Thorndike, *Cat's Puzzle Box*, 1913.

The lower half of the image shows a stylised version of a box used by behaviourists to study how cats learn.⁴⁰³ The cat will struggle randomly to get out of the box and, eventually accidentally open the door that releases it. When the test is repeated, the cat very quickly knows how to escape. The work suggests that if war is the trap it is often portrayed as, then humans seem slow at releasing themselves from it. The upper half of the image echoes the lower half with the box being replaced and mimicked by the iconic Sydney Harbour bridge to indicate context.

⁴⁰³ John Branford, Ann Brown and Rodney Cocking, *How People Learn. Brain, Mind, Experience, and School* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1999), Box 1.1, 7.

Studio Response: Peace.

Love over War, 2016, 3 x 37 x 24 cm, collagraph

The Bee-keepers, 2017, 48 x 76 cm, collagraph, stamp

Reasons have been given why the destruction of war is chosen over peaceful pursuits. Populations are primed for war by politics and the media. When and if war is seen to end, the survivors return to what remains of their lives. Love and peaceful altruism are offered here as both a cure for the cycle of violence and as an alternative to it.

Love over War (2016) flows on from the candidate's collagraph *Poor Souls* (2004), whose subject is taken from a photograph of a then recently discovered mass grave of World War I British soldiers buried arm-in-arm. Only the bones and boots remained.



Figure 86. Mark Visione, *Poor Souls*, 2004, Collagraph, 50 x 200 cm, Collection of the artist.

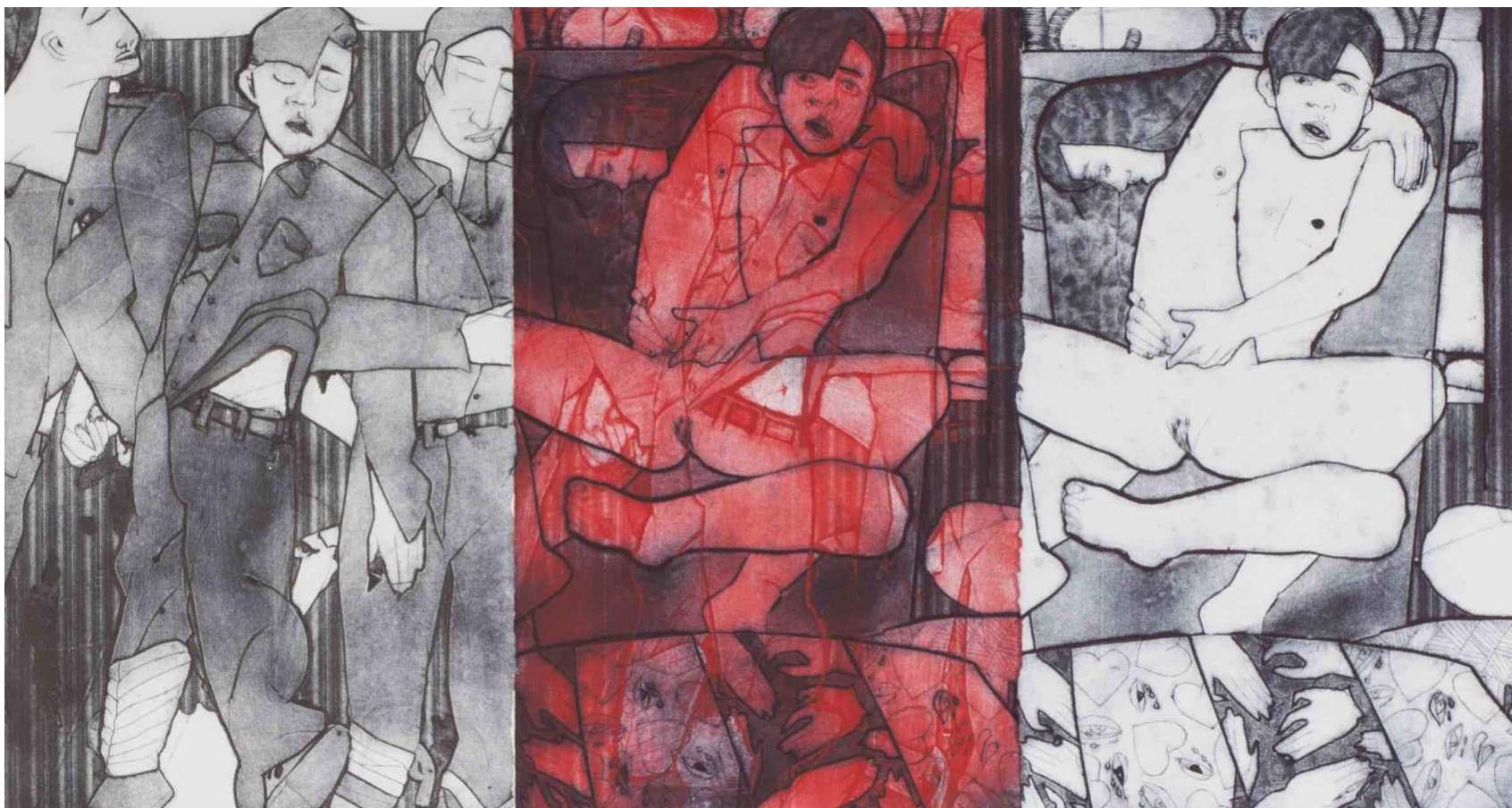


Figure 87. Mark Visione, *Love over War*, 2016, Collagraph, 3 x 37 x 24 cm.
Collection of the artist.

In *Love over War* three of these men are given flesh again and (in the same pose) the central figure is placed in an embrace with a lover. While the theme is arguably erotic, the candidate attempts to suggest not only eros, but also philia, storge and agape.

The collagraph *The Bee-keepers* (2017) adds to the theme of love that of peaceful work. It is often stated that it is difficult for the artist to represent the idea of peace without doing it through representations of its opposite. The keeping of bees, when perhaps not undertaken on an 'industrial' level, can be seen as a harmless and productive activity. The beekeeper is involved in the lives of the bees in a pastoral way where, generally, while the product is pleasurable, economic rewards are limited.⁴⁰⁴ The task suggests 'affection' universally.

The two figures' feet rest on each other's shoulders, forming a diamond shape, possibly a mouth. While the form is dynamic, they seem at rest. Love is a possible undertone. With regard to peace, it may be a necessary one.

⁴⁰⁴ This suggests Bernard Mandeville's poem 'Fable of the Bees' (1705), an early economic tract that suggests the value of a high-consumption society. The thesis suggests that societal morality and ideas concerning progress may lie at the heart of our acceptance of war.



Figure 88. Mark Visione, *The Bee-keepers*, 2017, Collagraph, stamp. 48 x 76 cm.
Collection of the artist.

The composition and figures are based on the candidate's work *Pity*,



Figure 89. Mark Visione, *Pity*, 2003, Collagraph. 40 x 50 cm.
Collection of the artist.

and the figures are clothed in the style of Breughel's drawing of bee keepers.

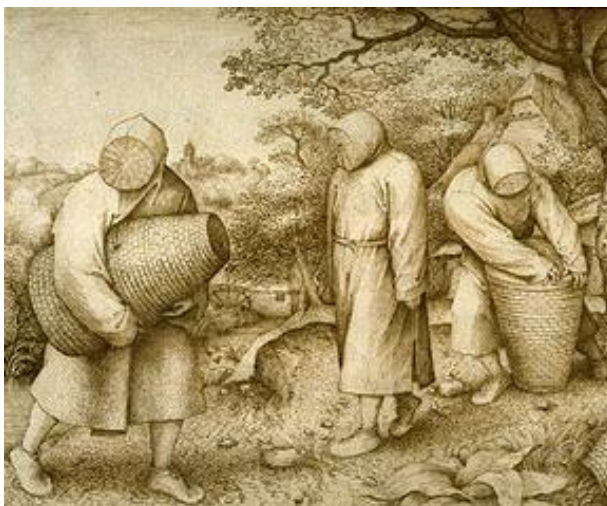


Figure 90. *after* Pieter Breughel the Elder, *Bee-keepers* (detail),
1565 [?]. Drawing, 19.1 x 29.5 cm, British Museum, London.

Conclusions.

A broad number of perspectives from differing disciplines have been considered in this thesis. Regardless of standpoints, war remains ubiquitous and true peace must necessarily be universal when achieved, and maintained by peaceful agreement and social change, and not by violent coercion, no matter how well-intentioned. In spite of what we know of it, tomorrow there will be war. That is, beyond the direct suffering and destruction it brings, despite our experience of war historically, and our exposure to it and its ramifications daily through the media, there is a societal acceptance of its inevitability. The pacifist is in the minority. The realist view prevails. War's declaration is met usually with enthusiasm, sometimes with resignation. Concepts wrapped in social cohesion and underpinned by a sense of historical progress outweigh reasonable responses to war's reality and consequences.

In the visual arts, the pacifist appears to be as much of an exception to the rule as in any other quarter of society, art manifesting the beliefs and desires of that society more often than opposing them. When added to this that the artist does not control the meaning of an art work, what it ultimately signifies may be dependent on the beliefs and desires of the society in which it appears at any given moment.

This thesis has not only argued against the inevitability of war, but, also, has investigated its tragic consequences for the soldier, the artist and, in a sense, society as a whole. While the

thesis has taken a cosmopolitan attitude, it has also looked at attitudes in Australia where national identity is closely associated with militarist traditions and rhetoric. Such attitudes have been seen to negate Australia's avowed multicultural nature through perceiving war almost exclusively through the eye and the character of the soldier. Further, that soldier himself is seen as the paradigm of altruistic virtue. With few exceptions, this attitude has been supported by Australian artists for over a century. While the ANZAC Tradition has its origins in Victorian racial superiority - a dimension often expressed in the attitudes and actions of Australian soldiers – and has been used as the positive alternative to the misdeeds of the colonial past and the often awkward nature of our multi-racial present, even artists whose work centres on examining Australia's indigenous/non-indigenous present and past draw short of looking critically at the origins, meaning and consequences of the country's military traditions – this to the degree for some indigenous artists of seeking recognition as participating in that tradition which had so often defined their fragile otherness in their own land. These issues have, in Australia and elsewhere, been dealt with regularly by writers of both history and fiction – and these writers have been attacked for it. However, visual artists have been reluctant to look with any degree of reasonable criticism at the Australian military in their work. This written thesis and the candidate's studio responses have attempted to fill this lacuna⁴⁰⁵.

⁴⁰⁵ See, for example, *Dispatches* pp. 126-198.

The art works made for this thesis were created with the belief that the circumstances of an artist's life, and ideas found in the world inform the art work. However, they are not the art work itself or the justification for it, and may not be used as a defence of its quality. That is, a good cause is not a justification for or defence of mediocre work. The works indicate aesthetic as much as intellectual or political goals.

The works presented were created using low-tech, non-toxic intaglio print-making techniques developed by the candidate over many decades. The PhD candidature itself has caused the development of new attitudes towards both image making and printing⁴⁰⁶.

Generally, the works are a meditation on artists' responses to war historically. In particular, they are pacifist and critical reactions to Australian militarist attitudes to war and self-image, and a recognition of the importance of the position of the civilian and civilian society in considering our responses to war. In those works linked to the tableaux, an attempt has been made to distill the significance of each comparison. For example, the image of Beckmann suggests the reasons for a population's initial enthusiasm for war – to preserve a harmonious community and to experience the excitement of it – as well as its psychological consequences. Yoko Ono offers an alternative to concepts of progress based on ideology. *The Lotus Eaters* presents a peaceful alternative to the resolution of

⁴⁰⁶ See Appendix 2.

conflict through violence, while *The Betrothed Ones* suggests those links and consequences that reveal the expansive significance of war. The Etty Hillesum cycle presents the life of the non-combatant in times of war dealing with unchanged moral issues while living with the possibility of death. The works dealing with the First AIF – those soldiers who fought in World War I – tries to give a more realistic image of those men, showing their humanity and weaknesses as well as their nobility and nonchalance rather than that idealization so often linked to Australian national identity. Indeed, this thesis, beyond that rejection of the inevitability of war, strongly questions the linking of Australian national identity with the Anzac Tradition. In a multicultural Australia this is a reasonable criticism and might lead one to ask why those who look critically at Anzac have been so mercilessly vilified.

The process of this PhD has raised a number of issues. First, it has led to a deep consideration of ideas of moral right and progress. Such ideas have allowed the strong to justify pushing aside the weak and have validated acts which, outside the context of war, may be universally considered criminal. Further, they blur the possibility of true peace by promoting methods of responding to war that perpetuate it. While social cohesion and the protection of lives and property are promoted by such manifestations as the ANZAC Tradition, 'the War on Terror' or strategic strikes, they do nothing to end the choice for war. Similarly, the underlying tragedy of programs to support and resettle refugees, treat civilian and non-civilian casualties or to combat the medical, social, cultural and psychological

consequences of war is that they do not mitigate war itself, but, rather, force the truly socially responsible to deal with those consequences repeatedly.

Last, the idea of 'sacrifice' must be considered. In any debate about war, and particularly when considering the ANZAC Tradition in Australia, 'sacrifice' is used to silence any form of criticism of the military. Indeed, an opposition to war in itself is often seen as a denial of the value of that sacrifice for homeland and loved ones suffered by the soldier. Historically, sacrifice (sometimes human sacrifice) has been used to appease an angry god or to ensure the physical or moral survival of a community. Often, such sacrifices have had little basis in reality, being simply constructs to support a power structure or belief system. This thesis, based on the arguments of Australian historians, argues that post-colonial Australian society – its physical existence or its broad system of beliefs – has never been under threat. This begs the question of who should be held responsible, then and now, for the senseless loss of life of Australian soldiers in wars in which their homeland was never threatened. Arbitrary and violent death transformed into altruistic sacrifice might be the hegemon's greatest achievement. The stratagems for power of the few have disinterestedly defined the condition of the many. Sacrifice needs good reasons. It is valid to question the altruism of the soldier and society in war. However, a continual appraisal of the altruism of those who send the soldier off to war is of greater importance.

There is no compulsion for the artist to choose peace over war. Even such a choice may be obliterated by interpretation, time and critical opinion. Artworks ask questions, without having to answer them. Yet historically, artists have responded to violent conflict. Their responses reflect the diversity of society rather than the beliefs of a particular identifiable group. This thesis has argued that too often this has been done in a fervour of nationalism where implications and consequences have been left unconsidered.

It is unacceptable to make recommendations about what artists should or should not do. Comments, however, are possible about the meaning and implications of their work. With few exceptions, artists for a myriad of reasons have, when it comes to war, supported and promoted the ethos of societies. That has particularly been the case in Australia where the ANZAC Tradition and institutionalized militarism - nationality linked to martial prowess - has, to say it mildly, had the upper voice.

Societies confronted directly or indirectly with the horrors of war have chosen to accept its inevitability. Alternatives are perceived as naïve and irrational. Still, this thesis leads logically to the belief that nations (if need be, unilaterally) should announce a declaration of peace, disband their military and use those revenues saved to develop their and the world's infrastructure. This should be done regardless of imagined repercussions. What war brings is known. What might the consequences of peace be?

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Art, artist and audience: Problems and Solutions.

When considering how artists approach the concepts of peace and war in their work, there are two problems that need to be considered. First, the question 'who owns the meaning of a work of art?' must be answered. That is, does the artist creator of the work have the right (exclusive or not) to define what a work means or is interpretation open to everyone? The second problem involves our interaction with art. An audience can enjoy images of violence (often organized violence) within an art work and also not necessarily identify with a moral code that promotes such actions. Our responses to art do not have to correspond to our beliefs and desires in our daily lives and in our world generally. Consequently, what role does violence (and, most particularly, war) in art play in our concept of peace and war in the real world?

While different arguments are used to suggest how the meaning of art works can be explained, few of them ascribe the ownership of that meaning to the artist alone. Where Danto famously uses the example of Picasso painting a tie blue to assert that it is the artist's intent and an awareness (also of an audience) of the cultural and temporal context in which he or she is working which distinguishes a work of art from other types of production⁴⁰⁷, it is less clear what a particular art work means and who gives and can give it that meaning.

⁴⁰⁷ Discussed and critiqued, for example, in Richard Lind, "The Aesthetic Essence of Art," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 50, no. 2 (spring) (1992): 117.

The art historian Erwin Panofsky developed iconography as a system for examining works using various criteria in order to reveal the meaning of a work of art. Panofsky further developed this tool into a method for investigating why an artist created a particular work and by extension how a particular culture functioned - iconology. This suggests that meaning should be looked for in the stakeholders involved in the creation of a work - for example, in the art historical context of the Renaissance this implies both the artist and patron as well as other societal forces. While this is helpful in locating meaning in the mind of the artist (at least to some degree), iconography remains an art historical process after the fact of creation, not necessarily and always reflecting the motivation or creative processes of the artist.

Like Panofsky, Jerrold Levinson⁴⁰⁸ locates meaning within the context of the art work's creation. If the context changes, then it follows that the art work's meaning changes too. He compares his 'contextualism' to 'relativism' where

what an artwork means, what aesthetic content it possesses, what aesthetic value one may accord to it, are all relative to individual perceivers and classes of perceivers.⁴⁰⁹

However, the locus of meaning lies not with the artist. Indeed, 'what the artist means, in whole or in part, may very well be

⁴⁰⁸ Jerrold Levinson, "Aesthetic Contextualism," *Postgraduate Journal of Aesthetics* 4, no. No.3 (2007): 217.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

clearer to well-placed others than to him or her.⁴¹⁰ For Levinson, meaning equals 'the choice of a particular historically and culturally situated individual working in a particular medium'⁴¹¹, but not necessarily the artist.

Writers such as Kolak⁴¹² and Best⁴¹³, both with intentionalist views, argue that many interpretations of a work are possible, with Kolak also agreeing with Levinson that 'a community of readers and critics' may overrule 'a creator's considered intent' and stressing rather 'the intent of the audience'⁴¹⁴.

Ultimately, too, an understanding and use as subject matter of Jung's archetypes does not suggest that the artist has any right to the ownership of meaning in the work he or she creates.

For Jung, archetypes are creations of our collective unconscious as opposed to our personal unconscious. They appear in our conscious world mainly through dreams and this without any empirical knowledge of them. Jung gives the example of Leonardo's 'Saint Anne with the Virgin Mary and Christ Child' - earlier used by Freud to suggest a complex he found in Leonardo stemming from his having two mothers - seeing it as a representation of a dual-mother archetype, an archetype of which he gives numerous other examples⁴¹⁵. It is significant that the use of the dual mother either because of a complex or as an archetype happened for the artist

⁴¹⁰ Ibid., 7.

⁴¹¹ Ibid., 8.

⁴¹² Daniel Kolak, "Art and Intentionality," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 48, no. No.2 (1990).

⁴¹³ David Best, "Intentionality and Art," *Philosophy* 56, no. 217 (1981).

⁴¹⁴ Kolak, 160.

⁴¹⁵ Carl Jung, "The Concept of the Collective Unconscious," accessed August 17, 2015, <http://bahaistudies.net/asma/The-Concept-of-the-Collective-Unconscious.pdf>.

unconsciously and not because of a specific meaning the artist wished to express. Even so, it may be possible for an artist to create a language of meaning for their work based on archetypes generated originally by our shared unconscious. However, this would not exclude a work from divergent interpretations. Nor, at the same time, would it act as a limit to the freedom of an artist's image-making potential.

Consequently, there is a strong argument suggesting that the meaning of an art work can not be said to reside exclusively in the hands or mind of its creator.

Yet the distinction between interpretation and intent is an important one. Art is a question-asking process and, arguably, meanings ascribed to an art work function as answers (in varying degrees valid or not) to the artist's initial question(s).

Whilst meaning can not be ascribed solely to the artist, both the process and the art work represent the conscious and unconscious life (personal and collective) of the artist and the artist's interactions. The artist wishing to promote sustainable peace, for example, is both motivated by and working towards this goal. At the same time, the works created for this goal remain open to interpretation, meaning being ascribed to a work (repeatedly) after its creation. There is no compulsion for the artist working in his/her studio to agree with these interpretations. Indeed, artists are motivated by a myriad of elements, not even always apparent to the artists themselves. Furthermore, there is an uncertain relationship between art and reality. One may be a representation of the other, but they are not interchangeable. For example, a murder that happens in the narrative of a play, even though it may refer to a real event,

is still not a crime. Indeed, the representation of violence in art and our response to it are not identical to violence in the real world and our responses to it. Explanations for our love of violence in art range from interpretations of catharsis to a cry for us to escape the boredom and monotony of our everyday lives. Aristotle points out that poetry and history are not the same medium,

..the function of the poet is not to say what has happened,
but to say the kind of thing that would happen..⁴¹⁶

and that emphasis on poetry may, perhaps, be extended to all the arts, while what is said here of history may also be applied to philosophy. In one sense, art has a cathartic function. In another, one can recognize that art exists to entertain. These aspects of art encourage the artist to portray the excitement of war. As one of Thomas Hardy's characters suggests, 'War makes rattling good history; but Peace is poor reading'⁴¹⁷, although, as Gittings points out, it should be remembered that Hardy puts these words into the mouth of a 'malign spirit' and that it was not Hardy's own view.⁴¹⁸

Nevertheless, children (especially boys) have owned toy soldiers and played war games since ancient times.⁴¹⁹

Photographic images of the dead on US Civil War battlefields devalued ideas of honour and glory, but still sold well.⁴²⁰

⁴¹⁶ Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. Malcolm Heath (New York, N.Y; London: Penguin Books, 1996), 16.

⁴¹⁷ "Thomas Hardy", Wikiquote, accessed August 12, 2015, https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Thomas_Hardy#The_Dynasts_.281904-1908.29.

⁴¹⁸ Gittings, 16.

⁴¹⁹ Significant here, it can be argued, is a lack of intent to truly injure in such game playing.

⁴²⁰ Vicki Goldberg, "Death Takes a Holiday, Sort Of," in *Why We Watch*, ed. Jeffrey Goldstein (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 44-5.

Representations of battle in the visual arts have been met with excitement and enthusiasm just as populations too have welcomed declarations of war even though that positive attitude may be short-lived. Many reasons have been given for our enthusiasm for violence (particularly war) in the arts and a detailed analysis of those reasons lies beyond the scope of this thesis. Yet, as a pacifist, one must consider and confront this apparent enthusiasm.

Clues deduced from human evolution may help. Zillmann, an academic media theorist, argues, for example, that the direct or indirect experience (through story-telling) of the successful procurement of food was an exciting occurrence⁴²¹. Protective vigilance, too, may be a residue from earlier times, which links us to violence through excitement. Also, as Goldstein points out, this attraction may be 'a way to fill the void left by diminishing opportunities to experience the real thing.'⁴²² Indeed, it might simply be a response to the boredom of daily routines. Similarly, catharsis, seen here as the pleasurable emotional response to tragedy and fear manifested in art, may form at least part of that response.⁴²³ It is, perhaps, interesting to note that McCauley mentions the ancient Sanskrit text, the *Natyasastra*, in which it is suggested that the sense of grief experienced through the drama allows the individual to

⁴²¹ Dolf Zillmann, "The Psychology of the Appeal of Portrayals of Violence," *ibid.*, 192.

⁴²² Jeffrey Goldstein, "Why We Watch," *ibid.*

⁴²³ Alan Paskow, "What Is Aesthetic Catharsis?," *the Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 42, no. 1 Autumn (1983).

perceive his/her own experiences as comparatively less serious.⁴²⁴

It may also have links to gender responses. The 'snuggle theory', for example, argues that violence in the arts allows male and female viewers to safely act out 'traditional' gender roles. It also points to the importance of the group in such responses⁴²⁵.

The response to war in the arts (and also in the real world) may further be linked to our place within the group. Our response often suggests a moral judgment about a situation. Indeed, the representation of violence in art often involves a narrative in which there is a sense of justice being done and the social order being validated or restored⁴²⁶. Writing within the context of fiction and with regard to the viewer, Zillmann argues that sometimes even disproportionate violence used by the virtuous is found acceptable when society is seen to be threatened.⁴²⁷ Ultimately, war involves the affirmation of the group and, in the arts, that affirmation occurs at a safe distance.

While McCauley, making a distinction between responses to documentaries and non-documentary film⁴²⁸, connects that 'safe distance' with the viewer identifying the violence as fictional, it may also be applied to a moral or a simply geographical distancing from violence. It is here that a link may

⁴²⁴ Clark McCauley, "When Screen Violence Is Not Attractive," in *Why We Watch*, ed. J. Goldstein (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 160-1.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, 151 and Dolf Zillmann, "The Psychology of the Appeal of Portrayals of Violence," *ibid.*, 97.

⁴²⁶ Mark Lacy, "War, Cinema, and Moral Anxiety," *Alternatives: global, local, political* 28, no. 5: 633.

⁴²⁷ Zillmann, 204.

⁴²⁸ Clark McCauley, "When Screen Violence Is Not Attractive," *ibid.*, 144.

be suggested between our enjoyment of fictional violence and our attitudes towards violence and particularly institutionalized violence, such as war, in the real world. Mark Lacey, in his analysis of three film dramas which share the theme of war, states quite simply:

distancing populations and participants from the consequences of violence makes it easier to make people indifferent.⁴²⁹

Here the distinction between the individual as the member of a film audience (one who is perceiving a work of art) and the individual reacting to events in the real world is not made.

Consequently, the actions and inventions of the artist have an implication in the real world and entertainment has moral consequences outside the film theatre or the art gallery. Lacey identifies contemporary bureaucracy which destroys a sense of moral responsibility in the individual through the division of tasks, and 'virtual war' which spares combatants, strategists and citizenry from the reality of death and the pain of war as creating this moral distance. With the reservation that the medium of film itself has a distancing effect, Lacey cites Richard Rorty's belief that

the popular culture of liberal democracies can play an important role in cultivating "other respecting" citizens, contributing to more ethical global politics.⁴³⁰

In their attitudes towards and representations of war, artists do have a choice. Artistic media can be and have been used to promote the violent aims and actions of the state or the political

⁴²⁹ Lacy, 612.

⁴³⁰ Ibid.

unit, and to 'suppress moral anxiety'⁴³¹. Plus, the attraction and excitement of the artistic representation of violence must be recognized. However, the artist, through cosmopolitanism, a rejection of exclusive attitudes towards nation or tribe, a questioning of the nature of the reality of consequences of war and the development of a sense of direct responsibility in the viewer can confront the power motives of the politician and the realist world-view of the soldier.

⁴³¹ Ibid., 616.

Appendix 2: Technical Notes.

General.

The art works made in the context of the studio component of this PhD candidature may generally be described as intaglio prints. That is, using various techniques, an image is created on a matrix. Etching ink (usually oil-based) is applied to its surface, the excess ink being then removed. The ink on the matrix is then transferred onto a dampened sheet of etching paper using the pressure of an etching press and the print, which is a mirror image of that initially created on the matrix, and is then allowed to dry, usually under pressure. All print-making techniques were initially and historically attractive because of the image's reproducibility. The print made (and makes) art works directly accessible to a broader public and represented a financially available alternative to, for example, the fresco or oil painting. In society, partly because of its reproducibility, its function has been political and educational too. However, for each artist print-maker, each technique is seen to have a particular character – or raft of aspects – which appeals to that particular artist, and the image's reproducibility may be seen now more as an option rather than an artistic and social imperative.

Like all aspects of society, print-making and print-making techniques have continually undergone developments and changes. The greatest changes, perhaps, have occurred during

the digital revolution of the past decades with that reproducibility and variety becoming virtually limitless. Certainly, the societal changes have led to an expansive dialogue about what 'print-making' is. It could be argued that this has focused the printmaker's attention (regardless of medium) on the meaning and character of the image. Regardless of this or, perhaps, because of it, the print-maker generally remains idiosyncratic in the face of a multitude of available techniques.

It is in this spirit of technical uncertainty and adventure that the works for this PhD have been undertaken. Many of the techniques used here are at least partially unique to the artist-candidate and have been developed over an artist's practice of many decades. The development and application of these unique techniques have been explained elsewhere⁴³². However, an explanation of how these techniques apply to the body of work created during this PhD may be regarded as necessary.

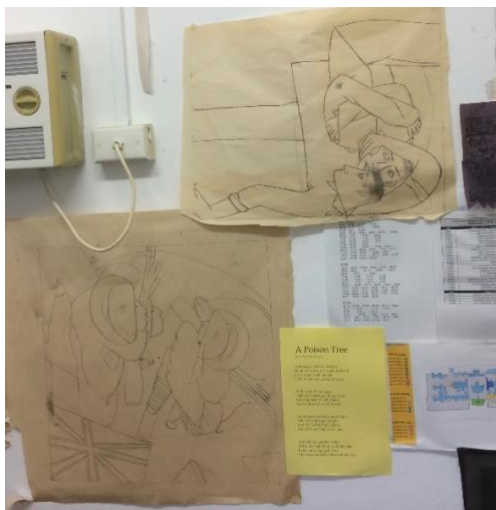
Techniques and the Matrix.

Some of the works created in connection with this PhD candidature have partially been made using a number of traditional etching techniques. These include hard- and soft-ground etching, aquatint, open-biting and drypoint using both a

⁴³² Mark Visione, "Etching Behind the Plate," *Imprint* 33, no. 3 (1998). and "Princesses and Pirates (an Investigation into Gender Differences in the Drawings of Young Children for the Practicing Artist)" (University of New South Wales, 2013).

traditional etching needle and a dremel power tool. However, the overwhelming majority of the works were made using a simple collagraphic technique on acetate plates.

The matrix for intaglio printmaking can be a plate of any material dependent on the techniques the artist wishes to employ. As many of the prints made in the context of this PhD are printed from multiple plates, the transparent nature of the acetate facilitates easy registration.⁴³³ As the artist, too, works from a master drawing, the matrix's transparency allows this master drawing to be placed beneath the matrix while the artist creates the image.



Figures 91 and 92. Mark Visione, *Master drawings on the studio wall: 2 x 'Shirkers on the Beach' and part of 'Bonger is dood!'*, 2016.

⁴³³ 'Registration' here refers to the integration of different colours and lines on different plates into one single readable image.

Constructing the image.

Generally, the technique allows artists to work in a fashion with which they feel comfortable. There are no rules and artists can create an image that reflects their own nature, rather than the nature of the technique. The link between the written thesis and the studio work implies a goal that may seem more prescribed than is always artistically desired. As a consequence, each print undertaken began with a master drawing which was the starting point for the construction of the image on the plate. However, the creative process, including the character, meaning and appearance of the image, continued on into the construction and printing process of the image.

The tools used to construct the image on the plate are a scissors, a scalpel or Stanley knife and (if required) sandpaper. The image is constructed using 'contact paper', that is, plastic sheets backed with an adhesive layer and a paper backing. This product is usually used to cover shelving, to protect book covers or to make glass opaque. The quality of the product is important for the success of the work. Most particularly, if the adhesive layer is not strong enough, this will cause problems when printing.

The process is a simple one: the contact paper is cut to approximately the right size and applied to the surface of the matrix. Following the master drawing, a scalpel is used to cut the contact plastic to the exact shape required. The line

achieved in this way is similar to an etched 'open-bite' line, with its thickness dependent on that of the contact paper layer applied to the matrix. This action is repeated until the image is complete. Tone can be achieved in a number of ways. First, contact paper comes in a number of styles not all of which are glossy. Any structure in the surface will print and this converts any style of contact paper into a handy roll of 'aquatint' for the artist. Second, if extra tone is needed, sandpaper can be used to create this by roughening surfaces.



Figure 93. Mark Visione, *Mijn Lichaam (My Body)*, 2016.
Detail of print from textured contact paper. Collagraph.

The nature of the product allows the artist to quickly make changes, corrections or repairs if needed. The nature of the product, too, allows the layers of contact paper to be removed from the matrix with reasonable ease. Consequently, on completion of a print, the matrix can be reused. What do remain are the cut marks where the contact paper has been cut to shape on the matrix. These print as 'drypoint lines' on subsequent images. They may be removed using the traditional method of scraping and burnishing. However, they may also be left strategically visible in subsequent prints as a kind of

‘memory’ in the plate. Indeed, during the general process of the studio work, matrices were reused and recycled, and portions of earlier images present as remnants on an already-used matrix were reincorporated into new images.



Figure 94. *Prayer*, 2015. Original image.



Figure 95. *Prayer*, 2015. Plate under reconstruction with new master drawing.



Figure 96. *Prayer*, 2015. Final print.

This description of process has been left as simple as possible, not out of a desire for secrecy or exclusivity, but rather as an encouragement for artists to discover the possibilities of such an easy technique for themselves and in their own way.

Valuably, the technique of construction does not need to involve any of the acids, solvents, powders and gums traditionally associated with intaglio print-making and so potentially damaging to the artist's health.

Inking the plate.

The plate is inked up in the same way as an intaglio plate would be inked up depending on the goals of the artist. Effort must be made to ink up all lines, whilst at the same time it should be noted that care must be taken as the surface is more fragile than that of a normal intaglio plate and more delicate shapes may be damaged or lost in inking and wiping.

Printing.

The printing of the image is not dependent on the technique described above. Yet a number of points should be noted. A refusal to print editions of any of the images was not based on the fragility of the matrix. Some matrices were printed unchanged and repeatedly (but in different ways or in different colours) in order to create a variety of the same image or to create larger multiple images.



Figures 97 and 98. Stages in the creation of *Etty and the Angel*, 2015.

Most prints have been ‘bleed printed’. That is, the image is printed on paper which is slightly smaller than the size of the matrices.

Some images were partially ‘ghost printed’. That is, a plate was printed a second time after an initial print, but without inking up the plate. This creates a lighter tone or shadow rather than a strong line or colour in the print.



Figure 99. Mark Visione,
from Shirkers on the Beach -
1915 I, 2015. A two-plate
print.



Figure 100. Mark Visione,
from Shirkers on the Beach
- 1915 II, 2015, with the
second colour plate 'ghost
printed'.

Some prints were folded and run through the press while the ink was still wet, creating a denser, repeat pattern on the surface.

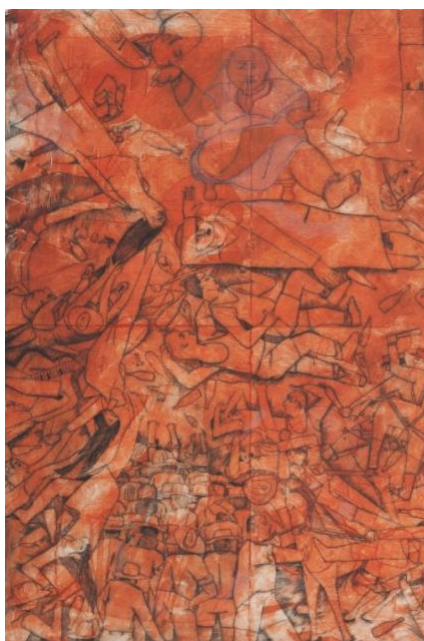


Figure 101. Mark Visione,
The Big Dust Up I, 2016. A
three-plate etching.



Figure 102. Mark Visione,
The Big Dust Up I, 2016,
with overprinting and
folding.

This collagraphic technique is not without its limitations. Most notably, the fragility of the matrix during the printing process offers serious challenges. On the other hand, the technique may speed up the creative process and makes changes and repairs simple – processes which for the artist using more traditional techniques are both laborious and time-consuming. Further, its non-toxic character is a considerable benefit to the print-maker. The technique can be mastered quickly by both student and master alike, while, especially for the student, it offers a clear and comprehensive introduction to all stages of intaglio printmaking from idea to print in an attractive time-frame and in a relatively safe environment.

Appendix 3: Two Poems

Dulce et Decorum Est

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs,
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots,
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots
Of gas-shells dropping softly behind.

Gas! GAS! Quick, boys! — An ecstasy of fumbling
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time,
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime. —
Dim through the misty panes and thick green light,
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams before my helpless sight,
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams, you too could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,

Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues, —
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie: *Dulce et decorum est*
*Pro patria mori.*⁴³⁴

The Soldier

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam;
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.⁴³⁵

⁴³⁴ Wilfred Owen, "Dulce Et Decorum Est," Poetry Foundation, accessed July 16, 2016, <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/46560>.

⁴³⁵ Rupert Brooke, "The Soldier," Poetry Foundation, accessed July 16, 2016, <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/poems/detail/13076>.

Appendix 4: *from* The Iliad (The Consequences of Hector's Death).

'Seeing her son's hair fouled with dust, Hecabe, his mother gave a great cry, plucked the gleaming veil from her head, and tore her hair. His father Priam groaned in anguish, and a wave of grief spread round them through the city, no less than if all of lofty Ilium were on fire. The old man could scarcely be restrained in his frenzy, as he made for the Dardanian Gate. He groveled in the dust, imploring those around, calling each man by his name: 'Friends, let me be, despite your care. Let me go out from the city alone, to the Achaean ships. I will see if that man of violence, devoid of shame, respects old age and my weight of years. He has a father, Peleus, as old, I think, as I am, who begot him and raised him to be a bane to Troy, though to me above all others he brings sorrow, killing so many of my sons in their prime. Yet despite my grief for the others, I mourn this one above all, with a bitter sorrow that will send me to Hades' Halls, this Hector. If he could but have died in my arms! Then I and his mother, who to her sorrow bore him, could have wept and wailed our fill over his corpse.'

So he wept, and the people added their tears. Now, among the women, Hecabe raised loud lament: 'My child, how wretched I am! Why should I live on in suffering now you are dead? You were my pride of Troy, night and day, a saviour, greeted as a god, by every man and women in this city, surely

their great glory while you lived. But now death and fate overtake you.'

Hecabe wept, but Andromache, Hector's wife, as yet knew nothing, no one had even told her that her husband had stayed outside the walls. She was at work in an inner room of the lofty palace, weaving a double-width purple tapestry, with a multicoloured pattern of flowers. In all ignorance she had asked her ladies-in-waiting to set a great cauldron on the fire so that Hector would have hot water for a bath, when he returned, never dreaming that far from all thought of baths, he had been brought low by Achilles and bright-eyed Athene. But now the cries and groans from the wall reached her, she trembled and the shuttle fell from her hand. She called to her ladies-in-waiting: 'Two of you come with me. I must know what is happening. That was my husband's noble mother I heard, my heart is in my mouth and my legs are numb. Some evil afflicts the House of Priam. May such news stay far from me, but I fear to my sorrow lest great Achilles has cut brave Hector off from the city, and quenched the fatal courage that possessed him, for he would never stay safely in the ranks, but must always charge ahead, yielding to none in daring.'

So saying, she ran through the halls, her heart pounding, beside herself, and her ladies followed. When they came to the wall, where the men were thronging, she rushed to the battlements and gazing out saw Hector's corpse being hauled from the city, the powerful horses dragging it savagely towards the hollow ships. Darkness shrouded her eyes, enfolding her, and she fell backward, senseless. From her head fell the bright

headdress, the frontlet and netted cap, the plaited strands, and the veil that golden Aphrodite had given her when Hector of the gleaming helm had led her from Eëtion's house, having paid a princely dowry for his bride. Her husband's sisters and his brother's wives crowded round her, and supported her in her dead faint.

When she revived and her senses returned, she lifted her voice in lament, to the women of Troy, crying: 'Oh, Hector, alas for me! It seems we were born for this, you in Priam's palace, here in Troy, I in Thebe below wooded Placus, in Eëtion's house. He it was who reared me from a babe, unlucky father of an ill-fated child. How I wish he'd never engendered me! Now you are gone to the House of Hades under the earth, but I remain cold with grief, a widow in your halls. And your son, the child of doomed parents, our child, a mere babe, can no longer give you joy, dead Hector: nor can you give joy to him.

Even if he survives this dreadful war against the Greeks, toil and suffering will be his fate, bereft of all his lands. An orphaned child is severed from his playmates; He goes about with downcast looks and tear-stained cheeks, plucks his father's friends by the cloak or tunic, till one, from pity, holds the wine-cup to his lips, but only for a moment, enough to wet his lips but not his palate. And some lad with both parents alive strikes him with his fist and drives him from the feast, jeering at him in reproach: "Away with you, now! You've no father here." So my child will run in tears to his widowed mother, my son Astyanax, who sat on his father's knee eating the rich fat and the sheep's marrow, and when he was sleepy and tired of play,

slept in his nurse's arms in a soft bed, his dreams sweet. Now, with his dear father gone, ills will crowd on him. Astyanax, that is Lord of the City, the Trojans call him, since you Hector were the great defender of the gates and the high walls. Now by the beaked ships, far from your kin, the writhing worms will devour your corpse, once the dogs have had their fill, your naked corpse, though in your house are all the fine, finely-woven clothes that women's hands can fashion. All those I will burn in a great fire, since you will no more wear or profit by them, as a mark of honour shown you by the men and women of Troy.'

So Andromache spoke, in tears, while the women joined in her lament.'

- the Iliad (Book XXII, 405-515)⁴³⁶

⁴³⁶ Homer, *The Iliad*.

Appendix 5: Etty Hillesum Cycle: Quotations and their translations⁴³⁷ from:

The diary and letters of Etty Hillesum.

Etty Hillesum, *Het Werk*, Uitgeverij Balans, 2012.

Kampfbereit. (Ready for the Struggle)

“Vrijdag 21 maart, ‘s morgens half 9. Eigenlijk wil ik nu helemaal niets opschrijven, want ik voel me zo licht en stralend en blijmoedig van binnen dat ieder woord daarbij vergeleken loodzwaar lijkt. Maar toch heb ik me de innerlijke vrolijkheid vanmorgen moeten veroveren op een onrustig en gejaagd kloppend hart. Maar na me helemaal met ijskoud water gewassen te hebben, ben ik zo lang op de grond in de badkamer blijven liggen tot ik helemaal rustig was. Ik ben geworden wat je noemt ‘kampfbereit’ en heb een zeker sportief en opwindend plezier in de ‘Kampf’.”⁴³⁸

“Friday 21st March [1941], morning 8.30. Really, I don’t want to write anything, because I feel so light and beaming and cheerful inside that any word I could add would feel as heavy as lead. But then I’ve had to win the battle for that inner happiness this morning from a nervous and agitated heart. But after I’d washed myself all over with ice-cold water, I stayed lying on the bathroom floor until I was completely quiet. I’d

⁴³⁷ Translations: Mark Visione.

⁴³⁸ Hillesum, *Het Werk*, 41.

become what you call 'kampfberreit' [ready for the struggle] and I've got a certain sporty and excited pleasure in that 'struggle'."

Thomas á Kempis.

"Maar nu was er bv. die Zondagavond, ik geloof het was de 21ste April; het was voor het eerst dat ik een hele avond bij hem was. We spraken, d.w.z. hij sprak over de Bijbel, later las hij iets voor uit Thomas à Kempis, terwijl ik op z'n schoot zat, dat was alles nog goed, er was nauwelijks erotiek, maar een hoop menselijke en vriendschappelijke warmte. Maar toen later was zijn lichaam plotseling over me en was ik lang in zijn armen en toen pas werd ik treurig en eenzaam, hij kustte m'n witte dijen en ik werd steeds eenzamer. Hij zei: es waar schön en ik ging naar huis met een loodzwaar, bedroefd en eenzaam gevoel."⁴³⁹

"But now there was, for example, that Sunday evening, I believe it was the 21st of April [1941]; it was the first time I stayed with him for the whole evening. We spoke, that is to say he spoke about the Bible, later he read aloud from Thomas à Kempis while I sat on his lap, still all good, hardly erotic, but a lot of human and friendly warmth. But then later his body suddenly covered me and only after I lay in his arms for quite a

⁴³⁹ Ibid., 58.

long time did I become sad and lonely, he kissed my white thighs and I grew lonelier. He said: es waar schön [That was good] and I went home feeling distressed and lonely.”

Mijn Lichaam. (My Body)

“Maandagmorgen [24 maart? 1941], half 10. ... Wanner hij soms even met zijn grote warme hand langs mijn gezicht strijkt of soms met dat onnavolgbare gebaar van hem even heel vluchtig met de vingertoppen mijn oogharen aanraakt, dan krijg ik achteraf wel eens de opstandige reactie: wie zegt je, dat je zo maar mag, wie geeft je het recht om aan mijn lichaam te komen? Ik geloof, dat ik ook weet, waar de oorzaak hiervan zit. Toen we de eerste keer worstelden was het prettig, sportief, wel even overwachts voor me, maar ik was direct ‘im Bilde’ en dacht: O, dat hoort zeker bij de behandeling. ... Ik was toen natuurlijk wel erotisch getroffen, maar hij was zo zakelijk, dat ik me gauw weer herstelde. ...

“Maar bij de tweede keer worstelen was het heel anders. Toen werd ook hij erotisch. En toen hij op een gegeven moment boven op mij lag te kreunen, eventjes maar, en de oudste stuiptrekkeingen te wereld maakte, toen kwamen er oergemene gedachten in mij opstijgen, zoals vergiftigde dampen uit een moeras, zoiets van: leuke manier van je patiënten behandelen heb jij, zo heb je er zelf ook nog plezier

van en je wordt er nog voor betaald op de koop toe, al is dat ook niet veel.

Maar de wijze waarop zijn handen naar mij grepen tijdens dat gevecht, de manier zoals hij in mijn oor beet en mijn gezicht omspande met z'n grote handen tijdens dat worstelen, dat alles maakte me volkomen dol, ik voelde iets van de geofende en boeiende minnaar, die achter al deze gebaren zat. Maar ondertussen vond ik het ook intens gemeen, dat hij misbruik maakte van de situatie.”⁴⁴⁰

“Monday morning, [24th March? 1941], 9.30 am. ... Sometimes when he strokes my face with his big warm hands or sometimes with that impossible to imitate gesture of his, he ever so lightly brushes my eye lashes with the tips of his fingers, then often afterwards I get this rebellious reaction: who says you can do that, who gives you the right to touch my body? I think I know where this reaction comes from too. When we wrestled for the first time, it felt nice, sporty, even though unexpected for me, but I was ‘im Bilde’ [in the picture] straight away and thought: Oh, that must be part of the therapy. ... Of course, it was an erotic feeling then, but he was so business-like that I quickly recovered again. ...

“But the second time it happened, it was completely different. It was erotic for him then too. And when at a certain moment he was lying on top of me moaning, just for a moment, while he

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid., 47.

was making the oldest movements known to man, nasty primeval thoughts came into my head, like poisonous gases rising out of the marshes, like: you've got a nice way of treating your patients, you can even enjoy yourself and you get paid for it too, even though you don't get much. But the way his hands held me during that fight, the way he bit my ear and covered my face with his big hands as we wrestled, it all drove me crazy, I felt something of the practiced and captivating lover who sat behind all these gestures. But, at the same time, I also found it extremely underhanded that he abused the situation."

Liefde op de Hei. (Love on the Heath)

"Die middag op de hei. Hij met de bewogen geode kop in de verte starend en ik: Woran denken Sie jetzt? En hij: an die Dämonien, die die Menschheit quälen. (Dat was na dat ik hem had verteld hoe Klaas z'n dochter half dood had geslagen omdat ze geen vergif voor hem had meegenomen.) Hij zat, onder de overhangende boom en mijn hoofd lag in zijn schoot en toen zei ik opens, d.w.z. ik zei het niet, maar het brak opeens naar buiten: Und jetzt möchte ich so gern einen undämonischen Kuß haben. En toen zei hij: Den müssen Sie sich dann selber holen. En toen stond ik bruusk op en wilde net doen of ik niets gezegd had, maar opens lagen wij daar in de hei, mond aan mond, ik lag daar aan hem te dringen, ik weet niet hoe lang. Zo een zoen is niet alleen lichamelijk, behalve iemands onnozele mond probeer je z'n hele wezen in je op te zuigen. En daarna zei hij: Das nennen Sie undämonisch?

“Maar wat heft die zoen nu in onze verhouding te betekenen? Hij zweeft zo in de lucht. Hij doet je verlangen naar de hele man en toch wil ik de hele man niet. Ik houd helemaal niet van hem als man, dat is het gekke, of is het die verdomde geldingsdrang iemand te willen bezitten? Lichamelijk te willen bezitten, terwijl ik hem geestelijk bezit, wat toch veel belangrijker is? Is het de verdomde onhygiënisch traditie, dat, wanneer 2 mensen van verschillende sexe in nauw contact met elkaar omgaan, ze op een gegeven moment menen, dat ze elkaar ook lichamelijk te lijf moeten?”⁴⁴¹

c. Van een brief aan Henny Tideman (Westerbork, 18 aug 1943):

“Op onverklaarbare wijze zweeft Jul de laatste tijd boven deze heide, hij voedt mij dagelijks verder op. Er zijn toch wonderen in een mensenleven, mijn leven is een aaneenschakeling van innerlijke wonderen, goed om dit weer eens aan iemand te zeggen.”⁴⁴²

“That afternoon on the heath. He, with that good troubled head of his and me asking: Woran denken Sie jetzt? [What are you thinking about now?] and he: An die Dämonien, die die Menschheit quälen [About the demons that torment humanity]. (That was after I’d told him how Klaas had beaten his daughter half to death because she hadn’t brought any poison for him)

⁴⁴¹ Ibid., 76.

⁴⁴² Ibid., 682.

He sat under an overhanging tree and my head lay in his lap and then suddenly I said, that is I didn't say it. It just burst out: Und jetzt möchte ich so gern einen undämonischen Kusz haben [And now I'd really like an un-demonic kiss]. And then he said: Den müssen Sie sich dann selber holen [Then you'll have to come and get that yourself]. Then I stood up abruptly and acted as if I hadn't said anything, but then suddenly we were lying there in the heather with our lips together, with me lying there pressing against him for I don't know how long. A kiss like that isn't just physical, except that you're trying to suck up someone's whole being through their stupid mouth. And afterwards he said: Das nennen Sie undämonisch [You call that undemonic]?

"But in our relationship, what does that kiss even mean? He just floats in the air. He makes you want the whole man, and yet, I don't really want the whole man. I don't really love him at all as a man, that's the funny thing, or is that just that egotistical desire to own someone? To physically own him, while I own him spiritually, which is much more important. Is it that damn unhygienic tradition that when two people of different sexes come in close contact with each other, at a certain moment they just have to have physical contact?"

From a letter to Etty's friend Tideke (Westerbork, 18th August 1943):

"In a way I can't explain, recently Jul [Julius Speyer] floats over the heath here, every day he teaches me more. There really

are wonders in everyone's life, my life is a chain of inner wonders, good to be able to say this to someone again."

Bonger is Dood! (Bonger is Dead!)

"Dinsdag 25 maart [1941], 's avonds 9 uur....

...Bonger dood, Ter Braak, Du Perron, Marsman, Pos en v.d. Bergh en vele anderen in en concentratiekamp enz.

Ook Bonger is onvergetelijk voor mij. (Vreemd, door het sterven van v. Wijk komt dat plotseling weer allemaal bij me boven.) Einige uren voor de capitulatie. En plotseling de zware, logge, dadelijk herkenbare gestalte van Bonger, die daar langs de IJclub schoof, een blauwe bril op en de zware, originele kop terzijde, gericht op de rookwolken die daar vanuit de verte boven de stad heersten en afkomstig waren van de in brand gestoken petroleumhaven. En dat beeld, die logge gestalte met de kop schuin geheven naar die rookwolken in de verte, zal ik nooit vergeten. En in een spontane opwelling rende ik, zonder jas, de deur uit, achter hem aan, haalde hem in en zei: Dag prof. Bonger, ik heb veel aan u gedacht in deze laatste dagen, ik loop een eindje met u mee. En hij keek me van terzijde aan door die blauwe bril en had er geen idee van wie ik was, ondanks de twee tentamens en het jaar college, maar in die dagen waren de mensen zo vertouwelijk met elkaar, dat ik daar vol vriendschap naast hem bleef wandelen. Het gesprek herinner ik me niet precies. Er was die middag net die vluchtrage naar Engeland en ik vroeg: vindt U het zin hebben om te vluchten? En toen zei hij: de jeugd moet hier blijven. En ikke: gelooft U dat de democratie zal winnen? En hij: die zal zeker winnen; maar het zal gaan ten koste van enige

generaties. En hij, de felle Bonger, was zo weerloos als een kind, bijna mild en ik kreeg plotseling de onweerstaanbare behoefde mijn arm om hem heen te slaan en hem te leiden al seen kind en zo, met mijn arm om hem heen, liepen wij langs de IJscclub. Hij leek ergens gebroken en zo door en door goedig. Alle hartstocht en felheid waren uitgeblust. Het hart loopt vol wanneer ik er aan denk, hoe hij toen was, de bullebak van college. En bij het Jan Willem Brouwersplein nam ik afscheid, ik ging plotseling voor hem staan, nam een van zijn handen in mijn twee handen en hij liet zo goeiig die zware kop wat zakken en keek me aan door die blauwe glazen, waardoorheen ik zijn ogen niet kon zien en zei toen, het klonk bijna plechtig komisch: Tot genoegen! En toen ik de volgende avond bij Becker binnenliep, was het eerste wat ik horde: Bonger is dood! Ik zeg: dat is niet mogelijk, ik heb hem gisterenavond om 7 uur nog gesproken. Waarop Becker: Dan bent U een van de laatsten geweest die hem gesproken hebben. Om 8 uur had hij zich een kogel door het hoofd gejaagd.”

...

“En Bonger is niet de enige. Een wereld is bezig afgebroken te worden. Maar de wereld zal verder gaan en ik ga voorlopig nog mee, vol goeUitgeverij de moed en goede wil. Maar wij blijven toch een beetje berooid achter, maar ik voel me vanbinnen nog zo rijk dat de berooidheid nog niet volledig tot me doordringt. Toch moet men goed contact houden met de tegenwoordige werkelijke wereld en daarin zijn plaats trachten te bepalen, men mag niet alleen leven met de eeuwigheidswaarden, dat zou ook kunnen ontaarden in struisvogelpolitiek. Volledig leven,

naar buiten en naar binnen, niets van de uiterlijke realiteit opofferen terwille v.h. innerlijke en ook niet andersom, zie hier een schone taak. En nu ga ik een onnozel verhaaltje uit de Libelle lezen en dan naar bed. En morgen moet er weer gewerkt worden, aan het wetenschap, aan het huishouden en aan mezelf, er mag niets verwaarloosd worden en men mag zichzelf ook niet te gewichtig vinden en nu goedenacht.”⁴⁴³

“Tuesday, 25th March [1941], evening 9 o’clock...

... Bonger dead, Ter Braak, Du Perron, Marsman, Pos en v.d. Bergh and many others in a concentration camp etc..

“Bonger is also unforgettable (Strange, because of the death of van Wijk, suddenly everything comes back to me.) A few hours before the capitulation. And suddenly that heavy, wooden, clearly recognisable form of Bonger slipping past the ice skating club, wearing a blue pair of glasses and the heavy, unique head looking sideways, directed towards the clouds of smoke that from the distance dominated the city and came from the petroleum harbour that had been set on fire. And that image, that wooden form with the head to one side looking towards the smoke clouds in the distance, I’ll never forget. Forgetting my jacket, a spontaneous impulse made me leave the house and run after him, and reaching him I said: Hello Professor Bonger, I’ve thought about you a lot these last few days. Can I walk along with you a bit? And he looked at me from one side through those blue glasses and didn’t have the

⁴⁴³ Ibid., 55ff.

faintest idea who I was, in spite of two exams and a year of college, but in those days people were so trusting of each other, that, full of a feeling of friendship towards him, I kept walking. I can't remember our conversation exactly. That afternoon everyone seemed to want to escape to England and I asked: do you think fleeing is a good idea? Then he said: young people have to stay here. And me: do you think Democracy will win? And he: I'm sure it will win, but that will cost a few generations. And he, that fierce Bonger, was as helpless as a child, almost mild, and suddenly I had the irresistible need to put my arm around him and to lead him like a child and so, with my arm around him, we walked past the skating club. He seemed to be broken in some way and through and through good. All the passion and fervour were extinguished. My heart fills up when I think of how he was then, the tyrant of the college. And at the Jan Willem Brouwersplein I said goodbye, suddenly I stood in front of him, took one of his hands in both my hands and he lowered his good and heavy head and looked at me through his blue glasses through which I could not see his eyes and then said, it sounded almost funnily solemn: It will be a pleasure to see you again! [Tot genoegen!] And then the following evening I walked in to Becker's, the first thing I heard was: Bonger is dead! I say: that's not possible, I only spoke to him last night around 7. To which Becker replies: then you're one of the last ones who talked with him. At 8 o'clock he shot himself in the head.

...

"And Bonger is not the only one. The world is destroying itself. But the world will keep on going and I'm still going along with it,

full of good courage and good will. But we're left a little miserable by it all, but I feel so rich inside that the misery hasn't yet worked its way into me. But one still has to keep in contact with the real world and in it try to find one's own place, one can't just live by eternal values, that could lead to putting your head in the sand. Live fully, inside and out, give up nothing of the outer reality for the sake of the inner one and nothing the other way around either, this is a pure task. And now I'm going to read a silly story from the Libelle⁴⁴⁴ and then to bed. And tomorrow there's work to do, in science, on housework and on myself, nothing should be neglected and one shouldn't take oneself too seriously and now goodnight."

Gehuld in een wolk. (Enveloped in a Cloud)

"23 augustus 1941 zaterdagavond ... En ik constateerde met een zeker genoegen, dat ik mezelf een goed gezelschap ben en dat ik heel goed met mezelf kan opschieten. ... En toen ik gistermiddag achter de kaas van S. aanging en door dat mooie stuk Zuid liep, voelde ik me als oude god, gehuld in een wolk. Zo zal het wel ergens in de mythologie voorkomen: een god, die zich voortbeweegt, gehuld in een wolk. Dat was een wolk van m'n eigen gedachten en gevoelens die me omhulde en vergezelde en ik zat zo warm en besloten en veilig in die wolk. En nu heb ik een verkouden hoofd en zitten er niets dan gevoelens van onlust en onbehagelijkheid en afkeer in me."⁴⁴⁵

⁴⁴⁴ A popular Dutch magazine first published in 1934 and still being published.

⁴⁴⁵ Hillesum, *Het Werk*, 95.

“23rd August 1941, Saturday evening and I realized with a certain satisfaction that I’m a good companion for myself and that I really get along with myself quite well. ... And I still had that following day. And yesterday when I went looking for cheese for S. and I was walking through a beautiful part of the southern suburbs [of Amsterdam] I felt just like an old god, enveloped in a cloud. You’ll probably be able to find that in some old myth: a god out walking, enveloped in a cloud. That was a cloud made up of my own thoughts and feelings that shrouded me and accompanied me and I was sitting so warm and private in that cloud. And now I’ve got a head cold and the only feelings I have are of revolt and unpleasantness and disgust.”

Prayer.

“Maandagmiddag 5 uur [december? 1941] ...

... Vanochtend, in de grauwe schemering, in een aanvechting van onvrede, vond ik mezelf opeens op de grond, geknield tussen Han’s afgehaalde bed en m’n schrijfmachine, in elkaar gedoken, m’n hoofd op de grond. Een gebaar soms om vrede af te willen dwingen. En toen Han binnenkwam en wat verbaasd dat tafreel aanzag zei ik, dat ik een knop zocht. Maar dat laatste is niet waar.”⁴⁴⁶

“Monday afternoon 5 o’clock [December? 1941]...

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid., 207.

.... This morning, in the grey half-light, with a feeling of discontent, suddenly I found myself on the ground, kneeling between Han's bed which had been moved and my typewriter, immersed in myself, my head on the ground. Some kind of gesture perhaps to force peace. And when Han came in and was confronted with the scene, I said I was looking for a button. But that last thing I said isn't true."

Appendix 6: List of Works created as part of the PhD Research.

TABLEAUS: Studio Responses:

1. *Breakdown (Beckmann in Wervicq) (portrait study)*, 2016. Drypoint (with dremel), and collagraph, 24.5 x 26 cm. Collection of the artist.
2. *Breakdown (Beckmann in Wervicq)*, 2016. Drypoint (with dremel) and collagraph, 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the artist.
3. *Náufragos*, 2017. Collagraph, chin colle, drypoint and overprinting, 98 x 76 cm. Collection of the artist.
4. *The Lotus Eaters*, 2017. Collagraph and drypoint, 80 x 168 cm. Collection of the artist.
5. *The Lotus Eaters*, 2017. Collagraph and drypoint, 80 x 168 cm. Collection of the artist.
6. *The Lotus Eaters*, 2017. Collagraph and drypoint, 80 x 168 cm. Collection of the artist.
7. *The Betrothed Ones*, 2017. Drypoint, 152 x 98 cm. Collection of the artist.
8. *The Betrothed Ones*, 2017. Drypoint and collagraph, 152 x 98 cm. Collection of the artist.
9. *The Betrothed Ones*, 2017. Drypoint and chine colle, 152 x 98 cm. Collection of the artist.

DISPATCHES: Studio Responses:

10. *Shirkers on the Beach, 1915 I*, 2015. Collagraph, 6 x 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.
11. *Shirkers on the Beach, 1915 II*, 2015. Collagraph with ghost print, 6 x 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.
12. *Self-portrait study for 'Shirkers, 1915'*, 2015. Collagraph, 24.6 x 22.5 cm. Collection of the artist.
13. *The Cove (Second Version)*, 2016. Collagraph, 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.
14. *The Bathers (First Version)*, 2016. Collagraph, 49 x 32 cm. Collection of the artist.
15. *Evacuation, December 1915*, 2016. Etching and collagraph, 8 x 49.3 x 39 cm. Collection of the artist.
16. *The Horseman*, 2015. Collagraph, 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.
17. *The Endless Plain*, 2015. Collagraph, 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.
18. *The Bottle and the Boot*, 2016. Collagraph, 44.5 x 35.5 cm. Collection of the artist.
19. *Larrikin (after Giotto and Piero della Francesca)*, 2016. Collagraph and drypoint, 35.5 x 44.5 cm. Collection of the artist.
20. *Seated Man*, 2016. Collagraph and etching, 49.5 x 37 cm.
21. *The Big Dust Up I (First Version)*, 2016. Dry point and collagraph, 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the artist.
22. *The Big Dust Up I (Third Version)*, 2016. Dry point, collagraph and folding, 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the artist.
23. *Self-portrait study - The Big Dust Up I*, 2016. Collagraph, 26 x 24.5 cm. Collection of the artist.

24. *The Big Dust Up II* (Second Version), 2016. Dry point and collagraph, 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the artist.
25. *The Invader*, 2015. Collagraph, 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.
26. *The Legacy: The Sorrow of Priam and The Sorrow of Andromache*, 2016. Collagraph and drypoint, 2 x 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.

The Civilian in Times of War: Etty Hillesum Cycle: Studio Responses:

27. *Etty: 4 portraits*, 2015. Collagraph, 4 x 20 x 15 cm. Collection of the artist.
28. *Etty and the Angel*, 2015. Collagraph, +/- 180 x 275 cm. Collection of the artist.
29. *Wrestling with angel*, 2015. Etching and collagraph, 40 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.
30. *Angels*, 2015. Collagraph, 40 x 20. Collection of the artist.
31. Study for '*Kampfbereit*', 2015. Collagraph, 29.2 x 24.5 cm. Collection of the artist. Collection of the artist.
32. *Kampfbereit (Ready for the Struggle)*, 2015. Collagraph, 43 x 59 cm. Collection of the artist. Collection of the artist.
33. *Wrestling*, 2015. Collagraph 43 x 59 cm. Collection of the artist.
34. *Thomas á Kempis*, 2015. Collagraph, 59 x 43 cm. Collection of the artist.
35. '*Mijn Lichaam*' (*My Body*), (large version), 2015. Collagraph, 59 x 43 cm. Collection of the artist.
36. *Op de Hei (On the meadows)*, 2015. Collagraph 39.2 x 98.5 cm. Collection of the artist.
37. '*Bonger is Dood!*' ('*Bonger is dead!*'), 2015. Collagraph, 49.5 x 39.5 cm. Collection of the artist. Collection of the artist.
38. '*Bonger is Dood!*' ('*Bonger is dead!*'), 2015. Collagraph, 2 x 49.5 x 39.5 cm. Collection of the artist.
39. *Gehuld in een wolk (Enveloped in a Cloud)*, 2015. Collagraph, 49.5 x 39.5 cm. Collection of the artist.
40. Study for '*Prayer*', 2015. Collagraph, 16 x 15 cm. Collection of the artist.
41. *Prayer*, 2015. Collagraph and etching, 39 x 49.4 cm. Collection of the artist.

The ANZAC Tradition, National Identity and Multiculturalism: Studio Responses:

42. *Nonna (Granma)*, 2015. Collagraph, 98.5 x 39.2 cm.
43. *Three graces*, 2017. Collagraph, 98.5 x 39.2 cm. Collection of the artist.
44. *How a cat learns*, 2017. Collagraph, 46 x 57 cm. Collection of the artist.
45. *Love/War*, 2016. Collagraph, 3 x 37 x 24 cm. Collection of the artist.
46. *The Bee-Keepers*, 2017. Collagraph, 48 x 76 cm. Collection of the artist.

Miscellaneous:

47. *Pierre Bezukhov at Borodino*, 2016. Collagraph, 50 x 50 cm.
48. *War! – Saturday morning!*, 2017. Collagraph, 25.5 x 24.5 cm.
49. *Sacrifice*, 2018. Collagraph, 29.5 x 21 cm.

Appendix 7: Catalogue of Works Exhibited.

TABLEAUS: Studio Responses:

1



Breakdown (Beckmann in Wervicq)
(portrait study), 2016. Drypoint (with
dremel), and collagraph, 24.5 x 26 cm.

(Fig.8, p.53)

2



Breakdown (Beckmann in Wervicq),
2016. Drypoint (with dremel) and
collagraph, 98 x 75 cm.

(Fig.10, p.56)

3



Náufragos, 2017.
Collagraph, chin colle, drypoint and
overprinting, 98 x 76 cm.

(Fig.14, p.73)

4



The Lotus Eaters, 2017.
Collagraph and drypoint, 80 x 168 cm.

(Fig.17, p.94)

5



The Lotus Eaters, 2017.
Collagraph and drypoint, 80 x 168 cm.

(Fig.19, p.96)

6

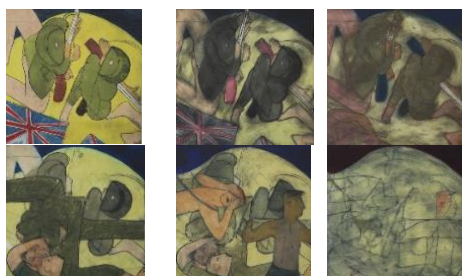


The Betrothed Ones, 2017.
Drypoint and collagraph, 152 x 98 cm.

(Fig.25, p.121)

DISPATCHES: Studio Responses:

7



Shirkers on the Beach, 1915 I, 2015.
Collagraph, 6 x 50 x 50 cm.

(Fig.44, p.185)

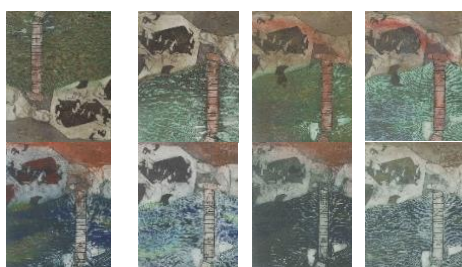
8



Self-portrait study for 'Shirkers, 1915',
2015. Collagraph, 24.6 x 22.5 cm.

(Fig.46, p.188)

9



Evacuation (December 1915), 2016.
Etching and collagraph, 8 x 49.3 x 39 cm.

(Fig.52, p.193)

10



The Horseman, 2015.
Collagraph, 50 x 50 cm.

(Fig.29, p.171)

11



The Bottle and the Boot, 2016.
Collagraph, 44.5 x 35.5 cm.

(Fig.32, p.174)

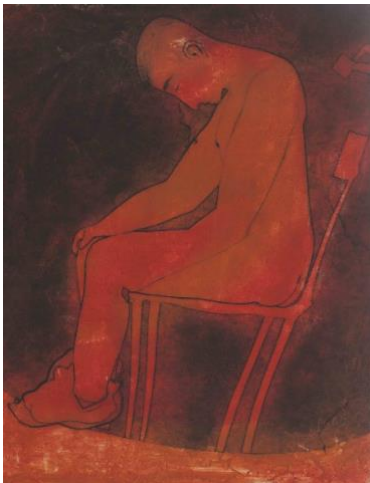
12



Larrikin (after Giotto and Piero della Francesca), 2016. Collagraph and drypoint, 35.5 x 44.5 cm.

(Fig.34, p.175)

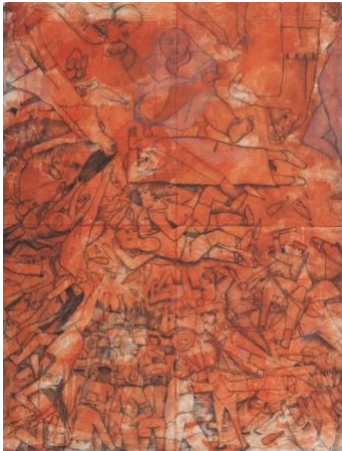
13



Seated Man, 2016.
Collagraph and etching, 49.5 x 37 cm.

(Fig.37, p.177)

14



The Big Dust Up I (Second Version), 2016. Dry point, collagraph and folding, 98 x 75 cm.

(Fig.39, p.180)

15



The Big Dust Up I (Third Version), 2016. Dry point, collagraph and folding, 98 x 75 cm.

(Fig.40, p.181)

16



Self-portrait study - The Big Dust Up I, 2016. Collagraph, 26 x 24.5 cm.

(Fig.41, p.182)

17



The Big Dust Up II (Third Version), 2016. Dry point and collagraph, 98 x 75 cm.

(Fig.43, p.183)

18



The Invader, 2015.
Collagraph, 50 x 50 cm.

(Fig.53, p.195)

19



*The Legacy: The Sorrow of Priam and
The Sorrow of Andromache*, 2016.
Collagraph and drypoint, 2 x 50 x 50 cm.

(Figs. 54 & 55, p.197)

The Civilian in Times of War: Etty Hillesum Cycle: Studio Responses:

20



Study for '*Kampfbereit*', 2015.
Collagraph, 29.2 x 24.5 cm.

(Fig.63, p.215)

21



Kampfbereit (Ready for the Struggle),
2015.
Collagraph, 43 x 59 cm.

(Fig.64, p.216)

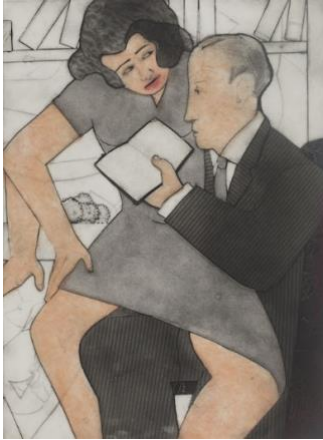
22



Wrestling, 2015.
Collagraph, 43 x 59 cm.

(Fig.65, p.217)

23



Thomas á Kempis, 2015.
Collagraph, 59 x 43 cm.

(Fig.66, p.218)

24



'Mijn Lichaam' (My Body), (large version), 2015.
Collagraph, 59 x 43 cm.

(Fig.67, p.219)

25



Op de Hei (On the meadows), 2015.
Collagraph 39.2 x 98.5 cm.

(Fig.68, p.220)

26



'Bonger is Dood!' ('Bonger is dead!'), 2015.

Collagraph, 2 x 49.5 x 39.5 cm.

(
Fig.70, p.222)

27



Gehuld in een wolk (Enveloped in a Cloud), 2015.

Collagraph, 49.5 x 39.5 cm.

(Fig.73, p.223)

28



Prayer, 2015.
Collagraph and etching, 39 x 49.4 cm.

(Fig.77, p.227)

The ANZAC Tradition, National Identity and Multiculturalism: Studio Responses:

29



Nonna (Granma), 2015.
Collagraph, 98.5 x 39.2cm.

(Fig.78, p.254)

30



Three graces, 2017.
Collagraph, 98.5 x 39.2 cm.

(Fig.79, p.255)

31



Love over War, 2016.
Collagraph **3** x 37 x 24 cm.

(Fig.83, p.259)

32



The Bee-Keepers, 2017.
Collagraph, 48 x 76 cm.

(Fig.84, p.261)

Appendix 8: List of Works Exhibited at Gaffa Gallery, Sydney.

TABLEAUS: Studio Responses:

1. *Breakdown (Beckmann in Wervicq) (portrait study)*, 2016. Drypoint (with dremel), and collagraph, 24.5 x 26 cm. Collection of the artist.
2. *Breakdown (Beckmann in Wervicq)*, 2016. Drypoint (with dremel) and collagraph, 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the artist.
3. *Náufragos*, 2017. Collagraph, chin colle, drypoint and overprinting, 98 x 76 cm. Collection of the artist.
4. *The Lotus Eaters*, 2017. Collagraph and drypoint, 80 x 168 cm. Collection of the artist.
5. *The Lotus Eaters*, 2017. Collagraph and drypoint, 80 x 168 cm. Collection of the artist.
6. *The Betrothed Ones*, 2017. Drypoint and collagraph, 152 x 98 cm. Collection of the artist.

DISPATCHES: Studio Responses:

7. *Shirkers on the Beach, 1915 I*, 2015. Collagraph, 6 x 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.
8. *Self-portrait study for 'Shirkers, 1915'*, 2015. Collagraph, 24.6 x 22.5 cm. Collection of the artist.
9. *Evacuation, December 1915*, 2016. Etching and collagraph, 8 x 49.3 x 39 cm. Collection of the artist.
10. *The Horseman*, 2015. Collagraph, 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.
11. *The Bottle and the Boot*, 2016. Collagraph, 44.5 x 35.5 cm. Collection of the artist.
12. *Larrikin (after Giotto and Piero della Francesca)*, 2016. Collagraph and drypoint, 35.5 x 44.5 cm. Collection of the artist.
13. *Seated Man*, 2016. Collagraph and etching, 49.5 x 37 cm. Collection of the artist.
14. *The Big Dust Up I (Second Version)*, 2016. Dry point, collagraph and folding, 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the artist.
15. *The Big Dust Up I (Third Version)*, 2016. Dry point, collagraph and folding, 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the artist.
16. *Self-portrait study - The Big Dust Up I*, 2016. Collagraph, 26 x 24.5 cm. Collection of the artist.
17. *The Big Dust Up II (Second Version)*, 2016. Dry point and collagraph, 98 x 75 cm. Collection of the artist.
18. *The Invader*, 2015. Collagraph, 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.
19. *The Legacy: The Sorrow of Priam and The Sorrow of Andromache*, 2016. Collagraph and drypoint, 2 x 50 x 50 cm. Collection of the artist.

The Civilian in Times of War: Etty Hillesum Cycle: Studio Responses:

20. *Study for 'Kampfbereit'*, 2015. Collagraph, 29.2 x 24.5 cm. Collection of the artist. Collection of the artist.
21. *Kampfbereit (Ready for the Struggle)*, 2015. Collagraph, 43 x 59 cm. Collection of the artist. Collection of the artist.
22. *Wrestling*, 2015. Collagraph 43 x 59 cms. Collection of the artist.

23. *Thomas á Kempis*, 2015. Collagraph, 59 x 43 cm. Collection of the artist.
24. *'Mijn Lichaam' (My Body)*, (large version), 2015. Collagraph, 59 x 43 cm. Collection of the artist.
25. *Op de Hei (On the meadows)*, 2015. Collagraph 39.2 x 98.5 cm. Collection of the artist.
26. *'Bonger is Dood!' ('Bonger is dead!')*, 2015. Collagraph, 2 x 49.5 x 39.5 cm. Collection of the artist.
27. *Gehuld in een wolk (Enveloped in a Cloud)*, 2015. Collagraph, 49.5 x 39.5 cm. Collection of the artist.
28. *Prayer*, 2015. Collagraph and etching, 39 x 49.4 cm. Collection of the artist.

The ANZAC Tradition, National Identity and Multiculturalism: Studio Responses:

29. *Nonna (Granma)*, 2015. Collagraph, 98.5 x 39.2cm.
30. *Three graces*, 2017. Collagraph, 98.5 x 39.2 cm. Collection of the artist.
31. *Love/War*, 2016. Collagraph, 3 x 37 x 24 cm. Collection of the artist.
32. *The Bee-Keepers*, 2017. Collagraph, 48 x 76 cm. Collection of the artist.

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