Reclaiming Remembrance: Art, Shame and Commemoration

A study of the role of shame in commemorative acts performed by artists and writers from culturally differentiated communities in London from 1989 to 2004.

David Dibosa
Goldsmiths College
University of London
PhD

Abstract

As a means of addressing strategies of subjectification within culturally differentiated communities, *Reclaiming Remembrance* explores the relationship between shame and commemoration in late twentieth/early twenty-first century Britain. In doing so, the thesis emphasizes a consideration of death and commemoration as a key part of the engagement with cultural practices driven by sexual and racial politics. The work draws on Michel Foucault's elaboration of subjectification through discourse, using it as a theoretical starting-point for formulating post-identitarian subjectifying strategies. Such strategies are discussed in an analysis of discourses of shame in relation to four case-studies. Each of the case-studies centres on commemorative events in which artists and writers commemorated prominent cultural figures whose deaths had taken place in circumstances that can be understood in terms of shame. The thesis elaborates 'shame' as 'a crisis of legitimacy'. The effects of such crises are explored in respect of the problems they posed for culturally differentiated communities in the generation of hagiographical images of prominent figures, such as: the photographer Rotimi Fani-Kayode; the Irish nationalist Roger Casement; the footballer Justin Fashanu; the writer Oscar Wilde.

Specific problems are seen to have arisen in respect of the commemorative practices discussed in each of the case-studies. Such problems are identified as: apprehension, dispossession, doubt, embargoes, omissions and variance. The problems are explored in three key ways: first, in respect of the manner in which they impeded engagement with the commemorative practices discussed in the case-studies; secondly, as regards the mechanisms used to facilitate nuanced approaches to the material under consideration; thirdly, in relation to the means by which they provided the grounds for a reformulation of subjectifying strategies among culturally differentiated communities. In doing so, the hope is that this thesis will facilitate the development of post-identity politics in a direction that is productive of a wider range of possibilities for those engaged with struggles surrounding culturally differentiation.

Contents

List of illustrations

Figures

Maps

Acknowledgements

Although it might not be considered conventional to include acknowledgements in a thesis, the work undertaken could not have been completed without the help of a large number of people to whom I owe a great deal. For that reason and also because my impatience will not allow me to wait for the possible publication of this thesis in book form, I would like to offer thanks to the following: Ajamu, Anan, Paula Bennet, Lisa Blackman, Sonia Boyce, Gavin Butt, Michael Cadette, Max Carrocci, Ignaz Cassar, Stephen Coles, Taru Elfving, Georgina Evans, Troy Fairclough, Giles Goddard, Carol Grainger, Ian Haines, Anna Harding, Emma Hindley, Alan Hollinghurst, Fanny Howe, Sarat Maharaj, Valerie Mason-John, Peter Moertenboeck, Helge Mooshammer, Anne Peters, Meloni Poole, Giovanni Porfido, Julian Richards, Lee Rodney, Irit Rogoff, Nermin Saybasili, Danzy Senna, Lucien Senna, Stewart Turnbull, Adam Weitzman, Stephen Wyatt.

This work is dedicated, in loving memory, to

Bunmi Daramola

and

in

respectful commemoration

of

Roger Casement

Justin Fashanu

Rotimi Fani-Kayode

Oscar Wilde

*

may those who have suffered

find peace

Introduction

Reclaiming Remembrance addresses commemorative[1] practices that took place in London between 1989 and 2004, through which cultural practitioners responded to the unconventional deaths of prominent figures from culturally differentiated communities[2]. In its broadest sense, *Reclaiming remembrance* addresses the following question: which strategies emerge to negotiate the discourses that get circulated when prominent cultural figures die in circumstances that prove resistant to hagiography? More specifically, the thesis sets up an inquiry into strategies of subject-formation within culturally differentiated communities in Britain during the last decades of the twentieth century. The need to address the unconventional circumstances that surrounded the deaths of prominent figures is seen as having provided an opportunity for culturally differentiated groups to instigate innovative strategies of subjectification. It is such strategies of subjectification that are regarded as the core of the archival research undertaken. The suggestion here is that by reassessing accounts of situations that have been rendered problematic, this inquiry might expose strategies that can be seen as culturally inventive, critically nuanced and politically oblique. In being inventive, nuanced and oblique, reconsidered strategies might help side-step many of the conventional demands placed on prominent cultural figures in the wake of their deaths: demands such as providing role models or offering a focus for political aspirations. The alleviation of such burdens in respect of hagiography could facilitate the development of post-identity politics in a direction that is productive of a wider range of possibilities for the culturally differentiated.

Working as a post-identity politics project, the thesis identifies the last decades of the twentieth century as a key historical time-frame for research on communities of cultural differentiation in Britain. Those decades are seen as the era during which a level of self-articulation among culturally differentiated communities peaked in a range of fields. In terms of racial differentiation, one can point to the first-ever election of four black MPs to the United Kingdom Parliament in 1987. One can also underline the upsurge in cultural activity, particularly in the visual arts field, that took place around the same period. Key exhibitions

focussed on ethnicity and difference (*The Thin Black Line*, ICA, London, 1985; *The Image Employed*, Cornerhouse, Manchester, 1987; *The Other Story*, Hayward Gallery, London, 1989). In terms of sexual differentiation, one can point to cultural production that emerged in the wake of the AIDS crisis. For example, one can emphasize the key exhibitions that focussed on sexual differentiation in the last decades of the twentieth century (*Bodies of Experience*, Camerawork, London, 1989; *Ecstatic Antibodies*, Impressions Gallery, York, 1990).

Cultural practitioners, particularly, though not exclusively, visual artists and writers, have provided a focus for research materials considered here because of their key role within communities of cultural differentiation. Such a role can be understood in terms of several considerations: first, cultural practitioners are able to achieve public visibility simply because of the nature of their practices, which rely on the public visibility of their activity; secondly, cultural practitioners have been positioned as carrying out a critical function in society, particularly in respect of the legacy of Modernism, through which, as Amelia Jones suggests, "...the artist has conventionally figured...both as an exaggerated example of the fully coherent, fully intentional, Cartesian subject and as the problematization of this subject," (1998: 57)[3]; thirdly, those skilled in art and writing are conventionally assigned responsibility for dealing with the crisis inaugurated by death, since such a crisis is always a crisis of language and the visible. Theorists, such as Jonathan Dollimore, have discussed death in terms of the difficulties it sets for our systems of representation. Dollimore called death "the unrepresentable, always absent excess which endlessly destabilizes culture", (1998: 127). Other commentators have also alluded to the difficulty that death poses for representation. Elisabeth Bronfen specified the significatory effects of death when she wrote:

> 'Death' can only be read as a trope, as a signifier with an incessantly receding, ungraspable signified, invariably always pointing back self-reflexively to other signifiers. Death remains outside clear categories. (1992: 54)

In the light of such comments, it might not be going too far to suggest that cultural practitioners who habitually deal with problems of signification can be understood as having a

key role in engaging with the crisis of death. The experience of visual artists and writers in dealing with significatory issues such as ambiguity, misunderstanding or opacity can be regarded as making such figures central within commemorative practices and, therefore, crucial to any study of them.[4]

Commemorative acts have been chosen as a focus in the activity emerging from culturally differentiated communities because of the strategic importance of commemoration. A series of studies in the late twentieth century discussed the political importance of commemoration (Gregory, 1994; Winter, 1995; Saltzman, 1999; Gilroy, 2000; Young, 2000). Lisa Saltzman, for instance, underlined the political importance of the photograph of the German chancellor Willi Brandt kneeling in the Warsaw Ghetto during a visit to Poland on 7 December, 1970 (op. cit.: 59). Brandt, as the official representative of the Federal German Republic and, therefore, as a putative representative of the German nation, could be seen as inaugurating a collective memorialization of the deaths caused by Nazi Germany's political project. In that case, one can emphasize the political importance of that commemoration in relation to those identifying with the German nation. In the light of the Cold War, one can judge Brandt's commemorative gesture as having political ramifications for the whole world.

Jay Winter's commentary on commemoration in Britain in the wake of World War One made a series of observations as regards the political importance of commemoration, not in terms of international relations but in terms of the consolidation of a war-torn nation:

> After August 1914, commemoration was an act of citizenship. To remember was to affirm community, to assert its moral character, and to exclude from it those values, groups or individuals that placed it under threat. (op. cit.: 80)

It was precisely in terms of such communal implications of commemoration in imperial and post-imperial Britain that one can regard those commemorative practices as problematic. Paul Gilroy, for instance, has addressed African and Jewish diasporas in terms of their impact on the politics of commemoration. He has suggested that the notion of commemoration as

common memory is challenged by an elaboration of diaspora that renders the possibility of a commonality problematic:

> The idea of diaspora...destroys the naïve invocation of common memory as the basis for particularity...by drawing attention to the contingent political dynamics of commemoration.
>
> (Gilroy, 2000: 123)

The argument in this thesis regards commemoration not as recitation of assumed common values but rather as a process through which a series of commonalities get *produced*. In other words, commemoration can be understood not as an *affirmation* of community, as Winter put it, but rather as a *formation* of community. In such terms, the commemoration of key figures among culturally differentiated communities can be seen as facilitating the circulation of distinct public statements that address those communities and, at the same time, constituted those communities as communities of cultural differentiation. In the light of such arguments, a community of cultural differentiation should not be understood, in essentialist terms, as a static entity to which commemorative gestures are directed, but rather more as a phenomenon that becomes constituted through the act of commemorative address.

In critical terms, commemorative acts can be seen to open up an engaging area of inquiry because of the way in which they can be ascribed definitive status: a commemorative act can claim to offer the definitive meaning of a cultural figure, particularly when such acts tend towards hagiography, which, in relation to the deaths of prominent figures, they can be seen to do. Commemorative acts can also be seen to provide a further function, namely the work of displacement. According to recent debate (Bronfen, 1992), the function of a commemorative act is to displace the crisis inaugurated by a decomposing corpse. Issues over composition – art, music, poetry – can displace anxieties about decomposition. This thesis seeks to engage with such a debate by formulating questions over what is made possible in the move between presence and representation – from dead body to body of work. What kind of public statements are facilitated by the erection of a statue to a

prominent figure or by a retrospective of their work? How might the circulation of such public statements provide opportunities for the development of strategies of subject-formation among the culturally differentiated?

The 'unconventional' circumstances of death under investigation provide the means to explore a range of questions about the commemorative work undertaken by artists and writers among communities of cultural differentiation. In the material arising from the case studies examined, the 'unconventional' circumstances are seen as arising from a suicide, an execution, an exile and an AIDS-related death – all of which can be seen as presenting difficulties for a commemorative process. How were those circumstances handled? What kinds of account were given of them? What kinds of impediments arose in discussing them? What kinds of silences emerged? What was the impact of unconventional circumstances of death on the commemorative work undertaken when the deceased was an important figure in a culturally differentiated community at a critical point in its history? The central problematic informing such questions can be seen as 'shame'.

Current debates on shame

Before considering the working definition of shame that will frame the discussion in this thesis, it might be useful to comment on definitions arising from existing literatures. One can start with Stanley Cohen's recent and eminently generalizable definition of shame as 'a state of moral disrepute in relation to a given community' (Cohen, 2001:216). The worth of this formulation can be seen in its applicability to different aspects of shame, which, in respect of current literatures, can be categorized as macrological and micrological.

Macrological approaches discuss shame in relation to particular historical periods, such as European colonialism (Gilroy, 1999) and certain nation-states, such as apartheid South Africa (Coetzee, 1999). Particular emphasis, has, perhaps understandably, been placed on historically repressive regimes, such as Nazi Germany (Levi, 1989; Agamben, 1999). A different kind of macrological approach emerges in comparative studies of shame, such as

those arising in cultural anthropology where shame has been discussed in relation to aboriginal English and Maori cultures (Harkins, 1996). Harkins' study, for example, explored the variation in the events around which shame has been constructed in different cultures. In particular, the distinction between shame as social embarrassment and shame as an instance of moral reproach was underlined. Comparative studies have also emerged in moral philosophy, where shame has been discussed in terms of its status in classical antiquity (Williams, 1993).

As regards micrological approaches, existing literatures have discussed shame in terms of its effects on the individual. Emphasis has been put on the shame experienced by specific categories of people, such as celebrities (Rose, 2003), or culturally differentiated groups, such as homosexuals (Butler, 1993). A discussion of shame in terms of the individual has also been generated in relation to self-reflexive states of mind and confessional modes of address (Sedgwick, 1996). Psychological studies of shame have focussed on shame as an inter-subjective phenomenon arising from the interruption of affect (Sedgwick and Frank, 1995). Sociological approaches have discussed shame as a threat to social bonds (Retzinger, 1996).

In relation to the formulation of shame elaborated in this thesis, it might be useful to outline more extensively the way in which the discussion has been informed by debates extant in current literatures. The exploration of shame in psychology was found to be of use. In particular, the commentary on Silvan Tomkins in the work of Eve K. Sedgwick and Adam Frank proved informative. The conjunctions drawn, in their work, between the affect of shame and the instigation of subjectivity was crucial. Jacqueline Rose's study also provided a series of insights. Her ability to link the micrological concerns surrounding the shaming of celebrities to the macrological issues connected to historically repressive regimes contributed to the development of the argument here. Judith Butler's work on 'shaming interpellations', which can be regarded as central to an understanding of the subjectification of non-normative subjects, also helped enormously. Much more will be said below concerning the

role played by the work of Butler, Rose, Sedgwick and Frank in the framing of the discussion of shame. However, in order to clarify the way in which such literatures furthered my arguments, I would first like to outline the working definition of shame with which I began my study proper.

A working definition of shame

The forthcoming discussion is based on an understanding of shame as 'the effects of a direct association between the legitimized and the delegitimized.' Such a working definition widens the discursive dimension of Cohen's formulation – shame as moral disrepute – which performed a key role in my initial explorations. A discursive dimension can be underlined with reference to processes of legitimization. Consideration can be given to discourses that render certain actions or subjects legitimate while rendering others illegitimate. Such a perspective on the role of legitimization in shame clarifies the applicability of shame to macrological explorations of material, such as an account of the actions of repressive regimes, and to micrological explorations of material, such as the reporting of the arrest of a celebrity. Shame, in relation to states and individuals, can be considered in terms of discursive context.

It is, perhaps, useful to exemplify the applicability of the working definition of shame outlined above. In terms of macrological issues, consider the context for shame that emerges in discussions of European colonialism, such as Paul Gilroy's work Joined-Up Politics and Post-colonial Melancholia (1999). Gilroy's concerns underlined an historical aspect of shame by focussing on questions of how states account for their own past. An emphasis on a direct association between legitimized and delegitimized actions of European states can help us explore further the problem of the shame of European states as a problem of accountability, i.e., the need to provide an account. By focussing on legitimization and delegitimization, one can address such questions not only in terms of a history rendered problematic by arbitrary state actions in the past. One can also consider a present rendered susceptible to problematization by placing high moral demands on the accounts that states are expected to give of themselves. From such a perspective, the shame of a European colonizer, such as

France, can be understood in terms of a direct association between legitimized contemporary activities of the Fifth French Republic, such as international peace-keeping, and delegitimized historical activities of the First French Republic, such as Caribbean colonization[5]. A direct association between legitimized and delegitimized activity can be seen as producing France's shame. In this sense, shame can be understood as a set of conditions into which an account of a state's actions must emerge.

Micrological aspects of shame can be read in parallel terms to those discussed in relation to macrological concerns noted above. Primo Levi, for instance, discussed shame in terms of the just man's association with the injustice witnessed and suffered in the extermination camps: "One suffered," he wrote, "because of the reacquired consciousness of having been diminished." (1989: 56) A reacquired consciousness, particularly in the context of liberation from Nazi death camps, can be seen as open to legitimization while the diminishment of life for a prisoner in the camp can be seen as open to delegitimization. The micrological accounts of such experiences, as seen in the work of Levi, can be regarded then as emerging in shame conditions.

The working definition of shame offered here can act as a starting point for an exploration of the commemoration of unconventional deaths within culturally differentiated communities for the following reasons: first, because macrological issues concerning the demand for a public account of the life of a prominent figure in such places as the national press are thereby rendered susceptible to analysis; secondly, because the need to generate an account of the life of a prominent figure among those who knew that figure as well as among those who supported and respected that figure are also rendered susceptible to analysis.

Case studies

The research materials have been collated in relation to four case studies:

first, commemorative acts in London, 1989-97, concerning the photographer Rotimi Fani-Kayode, who died prematurely in 1989 and whose death was later connected to AIDS;

secondly, commemorative acts in London, 2001-3, connected to the political activist Roger Casement, who was executed for treason in 1916; thirdly, commemorative acts in London, 1998-2004, in memory of the footballer Justin Fashanu, who committed suicide in public in 1998 following allegations of sexual impropriety with a same-sex minor; finally, commemorative acts in London, 1998, relating to the writer Oscar Wilde, who died in self-imposed exile in 1900 following imprisonment.

The unconventional circumstances surrounding the deaths outlined can be seen as contributing to a string of controversies that troubled the commemorative acts that were later undertaken. Indeed, it is suggested that controversy facilitated the delegitimization of Casement, Fani-Kayode, Fashanu and Wilde. The commemorative acts related to them can be seen as shameful because of a direct association between the legitimized act of memorialization and the delegitimizing consequences of controversy. One should note that those commemorated, in the case-studies outlined, engaged in same-sex sexual practices. It could be argued that the same-sex practices of those commemorated initially facilitated the delegitimization necessary to shame, regardless of any subsequent controversy. This is a matter to be discussed. As part of the argument, the way in which same-sex practices were later legitimized while other aspects of the lives of those commemorated provided the basis for delegitimization has been explored. One key point for consideration was the delegitimization in the 1990s of Wilde's procurement of North African youths which can be seen in contrast to the late-twentieth-century legitimization of his same-sex practices, per se. Further case-studies also show legitimization of the same-sex practices of those commemorated while issues other than same-sex practices provided the basis for delegitimization.

The cultural practitioners central to the present discussion are listed in the passages below.

The artist Sonia Boyce, who together with Fani-Kayode's partner, the novelist Alex Hirst and his friend and colleague, the arts administrator Michael Cadette, formed Friends of Rotimi Fani-Kayode in 1990 to organize commemorative events, such as, a retrospective exhibition at the 198 Gallery, London, a memorial lecture at The Photographers' Gallery, London, and the erection of a commemorative plaque at Fani-Kayode's former home in Brixton, south London. None of these commemorative events, however, mentioned HIV. It was only years later that Fani-Kayode's death became discussed as an AIDS-related death. The late 1980s and early 1990s in Britain will be discussed in terms of providing a context for the delegitimization of AIDS.

The performance poet Valerie Mason-John, who together with the playwright Troy Fairclough, as well as others, formed a group called the Justin Fashanu Memorial Tribute, to arrange commemorative activities in the wake of Fashanu's public suicide in May 1998. Among commemorative activities undertaken were a performance of a poem, *Suicide* (1998) by Valerie Mason-John and a reading of Fairclough's drama, *Justin Fashanu woz 'ere* (2004). Late twentieth century Britain is seen as providing a context for the delegitimization of Fashanu's alleged same-sex practices with youths as well as the delegitimization of his public suicide.

The artist Maggie Hambling was commissioned to produce a sculpture of Wilde, titled *A Conversation with Oscar Wilde,* which was unveiled in central London in 1998 during a ceremony attended by many lesbian and gay figures from British theatrical as well as artistic circles. The late 1990s is seen as providing a context for the delegitimization of Wilde's same-sex practices with minors, particularly his soliciting of young boys in Algeria for prostitution. Wilde's use of young working-class male prostitutes in London is also regarded as rendering him susceptible to the delegitimization that premises shame.

The novelist and critic Colm Toibin wrote a text on Roger Casement, titled, 'Roger Casement: Sex, Lies and the Black Diaries', which was published in 2001. Toibin's text can be seen as legitimizing Casement as an Irish nationalist hero for his organisation of an uprising in Ireland in 1916. Fin-de-siecle Britain is seen as providing a context for the continued delegitimization of Casement's activities, which were directed against the British Government during a time of national crisis brought about by World War One. Legitimised as a nationalist hero, delegitimised as a traitor, Casement's figuration can be rendered as susceptible to shame.

One might note that the case-studies outlined above do not all focus on figures who could be considered to occupy roles of major cultural significance. The international impact of the work of Fani-Kayode and Fashanu, for instance, might be seen as limited, for a number of reasons. Fani-Kayode's status in the international art world could be said to be minor – not least because his short life-span did not allow him to generate an enormous body of work. Similarly, the impact of Fashanu on the international world of sport could also be feasibly described as minor. In comparison to figures such as Pele or Mohammed Ali, the name of Fashanu seems to sound in a register of altogether lesser significance. The point to be made, however, is that the minor status of such figures offers another perspective from which to address the commemorative acts surrounding them. One can explore such commemoration not simply as a series of events held in the name of Fani-Kayode or done in honour of Fashanu but rather as a set of activities that constitute part of the expanded field of those men's lives. The creative output of a particular cultural figure ceases thereby to be tightly delimited by the event of death. Instead, one might appreciate a more porous demarcation between the creative acts that they author directly and the creative acts that they inspire.

This thesis, by addressing commemorative acts, seeks to posit an expanded field of inquiry for the discipline of visual cultures. First, from the perspective outlined above, the activities pursued in the name of a given artist, writer or cultural figure, might be explored in relation to that figure. As such, those activities could be described as an extension to the archive of any given artist. Secondly, those who pursue commemorative activities can

themselves be treated as the authors of creative acts. Where the commemorators are already positioned as artists or writers, like Boyce, Mason-John, Hambling and Toibin, their commemorative activity could also be seen as part of the expanded field of their activity.

Shame and a thesis

The formulation of shame as 'the effects of a direct association between the legitimized and the delegitimized' was, of course, expanded and revised in the light of the research materials arising from the case-studies outlined above. Such a formulation was also, however, specifically informed by theoretical studies undertaken by Butler, Rose, Sedgwick and Frank. It could prove useful at this point to discuss those contributions in more detail. The work of Judith Butler, for instance, underlined the need to explore a discursive context for shame. According to Butler, shame can be discussed through a consideration of non-normative subjects as shamed subjects. In her work, Bodies that Matter (1993), Butler suggested that a shaming interpellation could produce a subject. Such a subject would be, from the outset, a shamed subject, as a result of an interpellation that shames as it names (1993: 226). Thus, shaming interpellations can be seen as central to the derogation of non-normative subjects, since such interpellations facilitate the subjectivization of the non-normative.

Butler's notion of the shaming interpellation emphasizes shaming as an *act*. In respect of the working definition offered here, shaming can be regarded as the *act* of making a direct association between legitimized and delegitimized persons or activities. Such an act requires the activation of legitimizing and delegitimizing processes, i.e., the shamer has to actively legitimize and delegitimize the figure they intend to shame, through the issuing of discursive imperatives, injunctions, incitements or prohibitions. For Butler, emphasis would be attached to the suggestion that an issuing of imperatives, injunctions, incitements or prohibitions must rely on the recitation of socially constituted norms. In giving consideration to the shaming of the footballer Justin Fashanu, for instance, one can draw attention to the way in which a newspaper headline was delivered to both legitimize and delegitimize Fashanu, through the recitation of norms, in a single phrase. *Daily Mail* headline read:

"Dying torment of a misfit superstar." (*Daily Mail*, 4 May 1998). The portrait of Fashanu as a 'former soccer star' in the subsequent report supported the headline's legitimization of him as a superstar, while the portrait of him as 'a regular face at the homosexual dives and bars...' supported the headline's delegitimization of Fashanu as a misfit. In such a scenario, the shaming took effect not only by activating processes of legitimization and delegitimization through the recitation of norms, but also by bringing about a direct association between them. It is suggested that a direct association between those processes might provide a key means of approaching shame.

Butler's work supported the move to emphasize not only the discursive issues reflected in the term 'shame conditions' but also the performative dimensions of shaming as an act facilitated by those conditions. However, in moving beyond Althusser's rendition of interpellation in her performative account of subject-formation, Butler's work further posed the question: how do subjects that come into being through shaming inhabit shamed subject-positions? Such an issue proved key in relation to the memorialization of several of the cultural figures who feature in the present study. For, through a range of memorializations, particular cultural figures, such as Fashanu, were interpellated as shamed subjects – as subjects who should be remembered for the shame of the circumstances surrounding their deaths. The ways in which those subjects were not interpellated as shamed but were interpellated *otherwise* through commemorative acts among the culturally differentiated led to an inquiry as to the part played by commemorative practices in devising strategies of subjectivization among the non-normative. In what ways did the non-normative refuse to take up the shamed subject-positions made available to them by their association with shamed death? What other subject-positions did they take up? What were the implications of such assumptions?

One of the key ways in which non-normative subjects refused to take up shamed subject-positions can be seen in a case that lies outside the purview of the material in this thesis. The debate surrounding such material has, however, informed the thesis in its

clarification of a distinction between shame, as it is understood here, and the notion of shamelessness. The importance of such a distinction was underlined in the debate that surrounded the pop singer George Michael following his arrest in California in April 1998, for committing lewd conduct in a public place. It was reported that Michael had been accused of masturbating and exposing his penis to another young man while he stood at a urinal in a public convenience. Michael was purportedly arrested after having exposed his backside (Wapshott 1998: 300). Shamelessness can be seen to have emerged in the debate surrounding him in terms of the way that all suggestions of shame in relation to the event were refused. A range of gay public figures were reported to have supported Michael. The pop singer Boy George was reported to have said:

> I hope that George is not prosecuted and I don't think
>
> he has anything to be ashamed of.
>
> (Wapshott, 1998: 306)

The explicit refusal of shame can be seen as being based on a questioning of the criminality of Michael's acts. If criminalization can be seen as a tool of delegitimization, then the questioning of the criminality of an act can be seen as challenging the delegitimization of that act. Perhaps, it was the process of delegitimization, always a discursive process, that Michael himself was challenging when he purportedly refused to accept any attachment of shame to his activities. He was cited as stating during an interview for CNN on Saturday 11 May 1998:

> I don't feel any shame...I feel stupid and I feel reckless
>
> and weak for having allowed my sexuality to be exposed
>
> in this way. But I don't feel any shame whatsoever and
>
> neither do I think I should.
>
> (ibid: 303)

Michael's comments can be seen as rendering his actions problematic for him. Such problematization does not go as far as recognizing his actions as meriting delegitimization. The questioning of the delegitimization of Michael's sexual acts can also be heard in further comments surrounding the affair. The political commentator Matthew Parris wrote:

> Nobody dies. Nobody is assaulted. Nobody is robbed. Nobody

> is hurt. Nobody bleeds. Nobody suffers. Except the poor fellow caught. (Wapshott 1998: 306)

Without a victim, then, the criminality and thus the illegitimacy of Michael's acts were challenged. Such a position supported the suggestion that without an association between the illegitimate and the legitimate there can be no shame. Furthermore, where such illegitimacy is suggested and refused one might discuss matters in terms of shamelessness. The legitimacy and illegitimacy of actions, together with the processes of legitimization and delegitimization that render them so, thus, seem relevant to retain within a working definition of shame.

Jacqueline Rose's study of shame contained in her volume On Not Being Able to Sleep (2003), used issues that emerge around contemporary celebrity to forge a link between the subjective and the historical aspects of shame – thereby highlighting an historical dimension to the problem of subject-formation. How far do particular historical conditions impinge on subject-formation? Rose's discussion focussed on contemporary celebrity as formulated in popularly circulated western media. In particular, her work explored the way in which celebrity has been made meaningful through an elaboration of cultural narratives of shame and disgrace. Rose suggested that the propensity for shaming could be considered constitutive of celebrity. "In the cult of celebrity," she wrote, "the potential for failure may be the key to success." (2003: 4). Indeed, Rose commented on shaming as arising from a 'contract' between audience and celebrity that demands the possibility of celebrity humiliation, suggesting that "the audience loves the undoing of the stars" (ibid.). Rose thereby emphasized what one might term the inverse dynamics of shame – the role that shame plays in a disordering of the subject. In response to Rose's position, one could suggest that such disordering of the subject need not merely be seen as problematic but can indeed be regarded as providing strategies for the reconstitution of culturally differentiated subjectivity.

Rose's arguments did not simply focus on the subjective aspects of shame, however. In focussing on possible links between the role assigned to shame in contemporary discourses of celebrity and the intelligibility of shame in relation to broad historical events, Rose was able to explore historical eras, such as that of South African apartheid, under the rubric of shame. What she termed "historically specific forms of shame" (ibid: 13) could be better understood in relation to, rather than in distinction from, discourses of celebrity:

> Perhaps, in Britain, at least, the cult of celebrity is another kind of whitewash; and glitz a way of blinding us to what is not just embarrassing, imperfect, in the humdrum of the day-to-day, but more deeply, historically shameful, a way of exorcising – however brutally – the ghosts of the past.
> (ibid: 14)

Such arguments contributed to the formulation of some of the central questions in my research. They confirmed the importance of focussing on prominent cultural figures within the case-studies. Although all the cultural figures studied cannot be considered under the contemporary rubric of celebrity, some, perhaps, and one – Justin Fashanu – certainly, can. The question posed by my case-studies, in the light of Rose's elaboration, is this: if celebrity glitz is part of a network of phenomena that work to offset and obscure historical shame, what happens when the celebrities who provide that glitz come to embody shame themselves through narratives of disgrace that circulate around them? Does historical shame re-emerge? Is there a resonance between the effects of such subjective shame and broader historical shame?

Although the thesis mentions matters relating to the historical shame associated with nation-states, such as South African apartheid, its main focus relates to the shame conditions in which culturally differentiated communities in contemporary Britain can be seen to emerge. Through racist and homophobic discourses, communities that differentiate themselves through sexuality and race can be seen as objects of delegitimization. On the other hand, discourses of affirmation, such as Black Pride, Gay Pride and Lesbian Strength[6], can be seen

as legitimising such communities. The association of legitimization and delegitimization generates shame conditions. It is in response to the recent political and social shadows cast by such shame conditions over culturally differentiated communities in contemporary Britain that the 'glitz', or, as I prefer, prominence, of particular cultural figures can be seen as providing 'exorcism'. The celebrity of Justin Fashanu could be seen to mask the problematics endured by professional black footballers in particular and professional black people in general. Such a phenomenon might apply to blacks in post-apartheid South Africa or to Jews in post-Nazi Germany. However, the limits of my research confine the comments made here to contemporary Britain.

It could be construed that the role of prominent figures associated with culturally differentiated communities has been to provide an opportunity to celebrate various forms of 'Pride' after decades of the communities enduring political weakness and social humiliation. Political affiliations around notions such as 'Gay Pride', 'Lesbian Strength', 'Black Power and Black Pride', 'Women's Power' and 'Working-class Solidarity' can all be reflected upon as offering the chance to turn away from accounts that continually re-inscribed histories of powerlessness, alienation and failure on those identifying as culturally differentiated. In such circumstances, the necessity that prominent figures associated with culturally differentiated communities should endorse political affiliations centring on 'pride', 'power' and 'solidarity' can be appreciated as an important political point. The question arises over the implications of such a burdensome responsibility for prominent figures associated with culturally differentiated communities. Kobena Mercer raised similar issues when he discussed

> the burdensome weight that is acquired when the black male body becomes the bearer of *too much meaning*... [emphasis original]
> (Mercer, in Chandler, D., ed., 1997: 62)

Such burdens might prove too much to bear for prominent black male figures, as well as for their counterparts affiliating with other culturally differentiated communities. Indeed, such a 'burden of representation' seems untenable when prominent figures die in situations that

cannot conventionally be associated with heroism or pride but are rather conventionally understood in terms of social disgrace - if they are understood at all.

The problems presented by prominent cultural figures dying in circumstances that cannot be recounted in support of political affirmations such as 'pride', 'power' and 'solidarity' lie at the core of this study. The line of argument pursued here, however, does not follow Rose's suggested inquiry into a possible re-emergence of historical shame conditions that might re-invoke absences of moral integrity or situations of social humiliation and political weakness. Rather, the question posed here addresses the possibility that the failure of heroizing strategies in the face of circumstances such as suicide and exile leaves the way open for other unrehearsed strategies to appear. Such strategies might not be open to recruitment in the service of political agendas centring on 'pride', 'power' and 'solidarity'. However, they might signal the emergence of new and, possibly, unforeseen political considerations relating to the culturally differentiated.

The work of Eve K. Sedgwick and Adam Frank, Shame and its Sisters: a Silvan Tomkins Reader (1995) proved supportive of the suggestion that the circumstances rendered here as shame conditions might offer possibilities other than a reinscription of notions of alienation, powerlessness and failure into histories claimed by the culturally differentiated. Sedgwick and Frank's study of the psychologist Silvan Tomkins explored shame as an interruption of affect. Addressing shame in its subjective aspect, their work discussed shame as an interruption of an exchange of looks, especially the exchange that arises from looking into the face of the other (1995: 134). The hanging of the head, the dropping of the eyelids and the averting of the gaze, which can all be regarded as gestural paraphernalia of the interruption of affect signalled by shame, became important in respect of the emphasis it placed on the inter-subjective exchange. Sedgwick and Frank not only problematized the interruption of that exchange, they pathologized it:

> At the moment when the self feels ashamed, it is felt as a sickness within the self. (ibid.: 136)

Such pathologization of shame was not where their argument rested. They also suggested that shame's interruption of the inter-subjective exchange presented an entrance into a moment in which the self was re-constituted (ibid.). Interestingly, Sedgwick and Frank were not alone among thinkers in the 1990s who recognised pathologization as an opportunity for self re-constitution[7].

The work of Sedgwick and Frank facilitated my own reassessment of the effects of shame as a set of conditions. If shame could be problematized, even psycho-pathologized, within psychological discourses and still be seen as productive of opportunities for self-constitution, then perhaps similar thinking might be viable when addressing shame within historical discourses. Shame, then, as an historical phenomenon – the reconfiguration of shame conditions in precisely those places where culturally differentiated subjectivities attempt to emerge - could be seen as a problem. However, the rendition of a process of subject-formation as problematic need not be seen as forestalling that process. Indeed, such a rendition could be seen as productive of the process. Such were the possibilities opened by Sedgwick and Frank's take on shame. The questions that remained were: in what ways might shame conditions be seen as productive of subject-formation among the culturally differentiated? What were the implications of claiming shame conditions as the grounds for the constitution of culturally differentiated subjects?

Theoretical approaches

In its aims to outline strategies of subject-formation that arise from historical situations of commemoration, this thesis has drawn most usefully on post-structuralist theories. The approach to the question of subject-formation has been most notably informed by the work of Michel Foucault. Foucault's notions of subjectification, in particular those developed through his History of Sexuality volume two and volume three (1984), provided a strong theoretical foundation for arguments concerning strategies of subjectification that emerge in relation to commemorative practices. It must be stressed, however, that Foucault's decision to explore specific techniques of subjectification offers only a point of departure for the

argument here. My study does emphasize the strategies of subjectification that come into being through various engagements with discursive regimes, including resistance and destabilisation, which have been specifically associated with Foucault's work (Sawicki in Moss, ed., 1998: 95). However, the key component of my thesis is the exploration of the possibility that strategies of subjectification might be taken up as a means of continually reconstituting a range of culturally differentiated communities. This is not to suggest that resistant culturally differentiated communities are locatable and identifiable through particular avenues of research. Rather, it is to suggest that modes of discursive engagement that emerge with the demand to respond to unconventional deaths foreground the possibility of devising unexpected and inventive strategies of subject-formation among the culturally differentiated.

In respect of the account of the historical situations in which the commemorative events at the centre of this study took place, the theoretical approach has been informed by the semiological elaborations that have emerged from post-structuralist thinking. In particular, the rejection of what has been termed 'classical semiology' (Derrida, 1973: 138), which claims that signs directly infer the presence of a past event, has been taken as an *a priori*. The centrality of a post-structuralist semiology to the historical component of this thesis can be recognized in the emphasis placed on the role of signs in the production of historical commentary. History is, thereby, understood as consisting of representations (Wordsworth in Attridge, Bennington and Young, 1987: 116), which, in turn, are made up of signs. Images, documents, records, emails, objects, buildings, etc., are understood to work as signs – graphic, phonic, built. Such signs are treated here in Derridean terms, as substitutes for the lost presence of a past event. An event is understood, in line with Derrida's formulation, as "an irreplaceable and unrepeatable empirical particular" (Derrida, 1973: 50). As such, a past event cannot be reconstituted through the work of historical signs. The past event is always already lost. The historical sign is merely its substitute. Where a dead person is regarded as a past event, the sign's role as substitute can be emphasized. Signs – photographs, portraits, recordings – are not regarded as re-invoking the presence of

a dead person. Rather, they are regarded as substitutes that are demanded because the person's presence cannot be re-invoked.

If a sign is a substitute for an event, how should one regard its substitution? Following the Derridean formulation, there can be no access through signs to an event. Rather, the sign precludes the event for which it stands in (ibid.). Hagiographical signs can be seen to preclude the lives for which they are substitutes. Such signs need not be expected to reveal the 'truth' of a life. Rather, such signs can be seen as being only able to obscure such 'truth' because of their qualities as signs. The questions aimed at the circulation of particular hagiographical signs are not, therefore, based on how far a sign tells the truth about a particular life but rather on the function of that sign. What role do particular hagiographical signs play in the circulation of signs? What work is the hagiographical sign given to do?

The signs connected to the commemoration of cultural figures among culturally differentiated communities are considered here, in a loose sense, to act as hagiographical signs. As such, there will be no attempt to use such signs to establish the 'truth' of the life of the person commemorated. For example, the discussion relating to the various conflicting accounts of Rotimi Fani-Kayode's death will not attempt to establish the true cause of his death since a true cause of death cannot be delivered by signs. Instead, accounts of Fani-Kayode's death will be discussed in relation to one another, as well as in relation to signs circulated in a wider context. Through such an approach, one can understand the meaning and implications of the circulation of particular signs, acts or statements. The questions posed will be: why was one sign circulated rather than another? What signs arose in which particular contexts? How far did certain signs render themselves susceptible to delegitimizing imperatives while others were left open to legitimizing imperatives? The emphasis will always be on hagiographical signs as public statements, not on hagiographical signs as indicators of the attitudes or feelings of historical agents present at commemorative events.

Signs of shame

Since shame is understood here as the effect of a direct association between the legitimized and the delegitimized, shame can be seen as the result of discursive interference in the reading of signs. Discursive imperatives can be seen to impact on the reading of signs by setting up frameworks for the reading of those signs. One particular framework can facilitate the reading of a hagiographical sign as legitimate while another framework facilitates the reading of the same sign as illegitimate. Thus one can talk of discursive imperatives that legitimize and discursive imperatives that delegitimize. An association of the legitimized with the delegitimized produces shame. In other words, where a hagiographical sign, such as Maggi Hambling's monument to Oscar Wilde, is seen as being rendered susceptible to delegitimization and to legitimization, one can begin to speak of shame.

Legitimacy, in the sense used above, contains a moral component. The discourses that make legitimizing and delegitimizing imperatives intelligible can be understood as doing so on a moralizing basis. In exploring the imperatives that were directed at delegitimizing Hambling's monument to Wilde, for instance, attention will be drawn to the moralizing component of such delegitimization. It is important to emphasize the moralizing component of legitimacy since aesthetic considerations were also given as justifications for criticizing Hambling's sculpture[8]. Such criticisms are not regarded here as delegitimization, although in a general sense, one could say that such criticisms did, indeed, question the legitimacy of Hambling's work. For the purpose of this study, it will only be where criticisms can be seen as relating to moralizing discourses that they will be regarded as delegitimizing.

Hagiographical signs among culturally differentiated communities

The fact that the hagiographical[9] signs studied here were circulated among culturally differentiated communities in Britain around the turn of the twenty-first century is crucial. Such an historical moment can be recognized as a post-identitarian moment in which the representations of dead cultural figures associated with those communities carried a particular cultural weight. As such, the role of hagiography among culturally differentiated

communities at the end of the twentieth century can be linked to strategies of normalization in the formation of culturally differentiated subjects. Notions such as 'role model', 'icon', and 'heroic' point towards the role assigned to hagiography in generating legitimized objects of identification. If Sigmund Freud's incorporative model of identification, as elaborated in his 'Mourning and Melancholia' (1917), is taken as a touchstone, one can see how the disruption to a hagiographical sign caused by shame impedes the incorporation necessary for identification[10]. This study, in trying to reassess what could be seen as a failed moment of identification, can be read alongside debates on identification that have featured in recent discussions. In particular, Jose Esteban Muñoz's notion of 'disidentification' (Muñoz, 1999) should be seen as an important precursor to this work on shame.

By exploring the way in which cultural hagiography is troubled by shame, this study hopes to move away from an emphasis on normalization in the formation of culturally differentiated subjects. The importance of problematization in the politics of cultural differentiation can thereby be brought to the fore. Such problematization need not be articulated in terms of a pathologization of the politics of cultural differentiation. Moves, such as the attack on lesbian/gay and queer politics in the collection Anti-Gay (Simpson, 1996) are not premised here. Rather, this thesis attempts to explore and respond to the means by which particular signs were rendered problematic. Such an approach to the problematics inherent in the condition of shame is not taken in order to neutralize shame but rather as a means of using such shame to re-think the politics of cultural differentiation. The aim, therefore, is to explore a politically inspiring and provocative set of issues that demand a new way of thinking.

A note on methods of exploration

The methodological approach taken here can be described as a three-pronged approach:

a) Historical problematization

b) Historical de-problematization

c) Theorization

a) Historical problematization

By focusing on the hagiographical signs generated around events memorializing Casement, Fani-Kayode, Fashanu and Wilde, each chapter will identify a particular historical problematic. Problems will be framed by addressing the signs generated around commemorative events. Discrepancies between signs, for instance, as well as features common to them will facilitate the framing of problems. Thus, a feature common to the signs generated around Casement will be explored as doubt. Discrepancies between signs generated around Fani-Kayode's cause of death will facilitate an exploration of the variance in accounts that can ensue when hagiographical signs are circulated. Features common to commemorative signs circulated around Fashanu will be discussed in terms of apprehensiveness. Issues that characterized hagiographical signs around Wilde will be looked at, among other things, in terms of their omissions of biographical references to particular sexual activities, to his illness and his body.

b) Historical de-problematization

Having identified particular problems surrounding hagiographical signs, the thesis will address those problems as arising from the issuing of both legitimizing and delegitimizing imperatives. It is the double imperative that will be seen as impacting on hagiographical signs in such a way as to cause problems such as doubtful remarks or variant accounts. The de-problematization begins, then, by not regarding the historical problematic as a given but rather as an effect of discursive regimes that both legitimize and delegitimize. Such an approach is markedly Foucauldian. However, the suggestion is not, in line with the middle writings of Foucault[11], that the use of hagiographical signs is determined by discursive imperatives with, perhaps, some unspecified degree of resistance. Rather, in line with the direction of Foucault's later work, de-problematization works by looking more specifically at how the use of hagiographical signs inhabits discursive regimes. The term 'inhabitation' takes up the resistances, compulsions, refusals and collusions, in sum, the complexities that can be addressed when looking at the relationship between the use of signs and discursive imperatives.

The means by which the use of a hagiographical sign can inhabit a condition of shame and become productive specifically through such an inhabitation is key to the project undertaken here. Indeed, the suggestion is that through the delegitimization of already legitimized signs one can find an opportunity to re-think the discursive frameworks that render such legitimizations and delegitimizations intelligible. It is not only a question, then, of challenging delegitimizations; it is also a question of challenging legitimizations. In a broader sense, this study aims to dislodge the issue of legitimacy from its place in the politics of cultural differentiation.

c) Theorization

Having identified a particular problematic as regards hagiographical signs and having addressed the discursive framework that makes sense of that problematic, each chapter will then go on to suggest that the problematic can provide the basis for a re-articulation of the politics of cultural differentiation. By questioning the basis for both legitimizing and delegitimizing hagiographical signs the ground will be set for theorizing cultural differentiation without regard to legitimacy. Strategies that aim neither to legitimize nor delegitimize culturally differentiated communities will be explored. Thus, for example, the problem of apprehensiveness identified in relation to Fashanu can provide the basis for articulating a politics of apprehension in contrast to the politics of 'affirmation' seen as a characteristic of identity politics in the late 1980s and early 1990s. 'Affirmation' placed the issue of legitimacy at the heart of cultural politics. 'Apprehension' has nothing to do with the legitimacy or otherwise of the culturally differentiated.

Notions such as apprehension will be theorized not only in reference to the historical materials that helped frame them as analysable problems but also in reference to artworks. Artworks produced around the historical period in question will be seen as providing the basis for developing theory around cultural differentiation. As such, artworks are taken, *a priori*, as privileged objects within a discursive field – objects that can facilitate a re-thinking of issues. Such a privileging of artwork is based on the notion that artworks function in proximity to,

but are not governed by, logocentric discourses. Although one can suggest that the meaning of any sign, as well as the meaning of the use of any sign, can never be secured, one can go further when discussing the insecurity of the meaning of the artwork. The suggestion is that the meaning of the artwork is radically insecure. Such insecurity is guaranteed: a) the artwork's demand that attention should be given to its materiality in excess of any semantic meaning that might be ascribed to it – artworks thereby carry out the Derridean function of supplementarity; b) by the artwork's application of different modes of organization that remain marginal within logocentric discourses – modes such as colour and scale.

The effect of an artwork placed within a given discourse can be to provide an alternative focus that, at least, has the potential to be organized in a radically different manner to the logocentric foci in that discourse. The artwork can thereby offer the potential to unsettle discursive formations so as to reveal the contingency of such formations. This is not to say that all artworks fulfil the potential of demonstrating the possibility of radically different organization. However, by offering the potential, they facilitate the consideration of alternative possibilities. By providing the impetus for a shift in perspective, artworks become useful as means of de-, re-, and transvaluating particular positions. More specifically, by using artwork to re-formulate theory one can re-address key themes that emerged within queer theory and post-colonial theory in the 1980s and 1990s. Thus, issues such as subject-formation, language and spectatorship can be re-appraised.

The limits of inquiry: shame and guilt

Having addressed the efficacy of applying a working definition of shame, as well as having reformulated the central questions of the inquiry in the light of literatures mentioned above, and, furthermore, having discussed theoretical matters in relation to methodological issues, it seems important to set out some limits of this study. As has been said, shame has appeared as an object of investigation across a wide range of disciplines, from classical studies to sociology. In respect of this, it has been impossible to follow some of the engaging and productive lines of thought that have been provided as the result of extensive research

elsewhere. It seems appropriate, however, to signal some of the key debates that could be seen as impinging on this study but which could not be explored any further here.

One recurring question raised in current debates is the distinction between shame and guilt. Such an issue has appeared as a preoccupation within a range of disciplines from moral philosophy (Williams, 1993), to the history of ideas (Moore in Parker et al., eds., 1996) to Holocaust studies (White in Parker et al., eds., 1996). The importance of the shame-guilt debate within Holocaust studies, in particular, has made it impossible to explore all the implications of making a distinction between shame and guilt in this thesis. However, it could be helpful to say a little about such an important debate.

One way of approaching what I term the 'shame-guilt debate', would be to address it in terms of two key strands. Both strands take on the task of exploring possible differences between shame and guilt. However, the first strand undertakes the work in relation to its impact on *cultures* while the second addresses possible differences from the point of view of *individual persons*. The first strand poses the question: can one properly speak of shame cultures and guilt cultures? The second strand addresses the question: how can we distinguish persons who feel guilty from persons who feel ashamed? Without rehearsing the arguments here, permit me to propose D.B. Moore's work 'Shame: Human Universal or Cultural Construct' (1996) as a useful touchstone as regards the question of shame cultures, while Bernard Williams' Shame and necessity (1993) can be considered a sound reference in relation to debates on the guilty and the ashamed.

In respect of the first strand concerning cultural issues, Moore's formulation of three key ways of enforcing moral standards can be seen as insightful. The first way involves cultures that rely principally on internalized self-reproach (guilt cultures); the second way involves cultures that rely principally on internalized standards without self-reproach (neither shame nor guilt cultures); the third way involves cultures that rely principally on externalizing factors involving reproach from others (shame cultures). The important question raised by

Moore is whether so-called shame cultures or, indeed, any culture can work without processes that involve internalization. (Moore, in Parker et al., eds., 1996:51). Williams' work in moral philosophy can be applied to such arguments, in that Williams sees both shame and guilt as relying on internalization. Under Williams' rubric, shame arises when an internalized figure addresses the self. This figure is conceived as a witness seeing the self at a disadvantage – such an experience occasions shame. Similarly, guilt arises when an internalized figure addresses the self. However, this figure is conceived as a moral enforcer or a victim reproaching the self – such an experience occasions guilt.

Although the present study extends no comment on the most appropriate criteria for the shame-guilt distinction, the suggestion that shame has an externalized aspect is supported in this thesis. As the argument surrounding the commemoration of Fani-Kayode will show, the cultural practitioners who commemorated Fani-Kayode were aware of the moralizing and antagonistic climate that informed the circulation of discourses surrounding AIDS and AIDS-related deaths in 1980s Britain. It is in the light of this that emphasis will be placed on the externalized aspects of shame. Indeed, for the purposes of this study, the term 'guilt' will not be used. This move, it is hoped, will underline the decision not to focus on the internalized aspects of the commemorative gestures undertaken by artists, writers and other cultural practitioners. Even if shame does go through an episode of internalization before it registers externally, it is in relation to the external space of cultural representation alone that this study places its focus. The internalized space of commemorators' attitudes and beliefs might well be best approached through psychological, critical-psychological and psychoanalytic methodologies. All of these are set aside here in favour of a textual analysis of the public statements, documents and artworks circulated by cultural practitioners in their enactment of commemorative events.

Chapter by Chapter

Chapter one

Death by other names: re-marking variance around Rotimi Fani-Kayode's death.

'Death by other names' explores the usefulness of incoherence in accounts of a death. Such incoherence can lead to an emphasis on radical alterity in the use of language by the culturally differentiated. The use of languages of alterity can thereby be read in relation to a reconceptualization of the temporal structures that frame such usage. Such themes are explored in this chapter through a focus on statements circulated by Friends of Rotimi Fani-Kayode following his death. The production of several conflicting accounts of Fani-Kayode's death will be discussed. The context of delegitimization surrounding Fani-Kayode's death, in terms of the phobic discourses surrounding AIDS in Britain in the late 1980s, will be explored. In particular, Fani-Kayode's status as an African with HIV will be investigated. In conjunction with the legitimization of Fani-Kayode as an African artist closely associated with the British Black Arts Movement, the context of Fani-Kayode's delegitimization will be addressed in terms of creating shame conditions.

Chapter two

Elsewhere: re-marking the location of Rotimi Fani-Kayode's burial place

'Elsewhere' explores the importance of dislocation in the politics of cultural differentiation. Such dislocation is discussed in terms of the effects of permanent exile. The notion of 'no return' leads to a consideration of radical dispossession and the possibility of placing such dispossession at the heart of subject-formation. Such themes are discussed in this chapter through a focus on Fani-Kayode's burial in London rather than Nigeria. Such a burial will be discussed in terms of the delegitimization of Fani-Kayode as an African man associated with HIV. Fani-Kayode's legitimization as a Nigerian from a prestigious Yoruba family will help frame a discussion around the shame of being buried 'away from home'.

Chapter three

The uses of doubt: re-marking uncertainty concerning (Sir) Roger Casement

'The uses of doubt' explores the potential for reassessed doubt within the politics of cultural differentiation. Doubt is discussed as a productive dynamic within the formation of culturally differentiated subjects. Such themes are explored in this chapter through a double focus: Colm Toibin's treatment of Roger Casement's 'Black Diaries' in his biographical sketch, 'Roger Casement: Sex, Lies and the Black Diaries' (2001); and the National Portrait Gallery exhibition, *High Treason: The Appeal of Roger Casement, 1916* (2003). Casement's alleged homosexuality as well as his conviction for treason in war time will be addressed alongside his treatment as an Irish nationalist hero. These will be discussed in terms of facilitating an understanding of Casement in terms of shame. The context of shame surrounding Casement will be explored in terms of the effects it had on framing possible readings of hagiographical signs around him among culturally differentiated communities, such as Irish in London and homosexuals in London. The susceptibility of Casement's figuration to legitimization in one context and delegitimization in another will be remarked upon in relation to its effects of generating doubt.

Chapter four

***Who could come forward?* re-marking apprehension around Justin Fashanu**

'Who could come forward?' explores the usefulness of apprehensiveness in responses to demands for public statements placed on prominent figures within culturally differentiated communities. Apprehension as a dynamic within an interpellative model of agency is discussed. Such themes are examined in this chapter by addressing hagiographical signs surrounding Fashanu's death. Valerie Mason-John's reluctance to accept the substance of the allegations facing Fashanu will be explored. Troy Fairclough's suggestions concerning alternative explanations of Fashanu's death will be discussed. Fashanu's legitimization as a football star and 'out' gay hero will be explored alongside his delegitimization through alleged sexual misdemeanours and public suicide.

Chapter five

Je ne sais quoi: re-marking embargoes on the memorialization of Wilde

'Je ne sais quoi' explores the importance of abandoning the dichotomy produced in the formulation 'public space/private space' in favour of a notion of 'seductive space' consisting of tangential, adjacent and recessed proximities. Such a re-thinking of space can be seen as provoking a re-appraisal of sexualized acts. Such themes are addressed in this chapter by focussing on the debate surrounding the memorialization of Wilde in 1998. Responses to the unveiling of Maggi Hambling's memorial in the national print and broadcast media in Britain are discussed. In particular, Nigel Hawthorne's interview with Ed Stourton over the Hambling memorial provides a focus of discussion. The legitimization and delegitimization of discussions of homosexuality in the public domain provides a context of shame. The legitimization and delegitimization of Wilde's body within critical discussions of him are also discussed.

Chapter six

Knowing looks: re-marking omissions in the memorialization of Wilde

'Knowing looks' explores the usefulness of re-assessing the agency of colonized subjects. By examining the possibility of mutability and reversibility in inter-subjective relations framed by the colonial encounter, this chapter facilitates a re-thinking of the constitution of the colonial subject. Such themes are explored through a focus on responses to Wilde's erotic life that circulated in Britain following the unveiling of Maggi Hambling's sculpture *A Conversation with Oscar Wilde* (1998) in London. The context of shame surrounding Wilde, in terms of the legitimization of his homosexualized desire, on one hand, and the delegitimization of his racialized desires, as well as his use of young working class prostitutes, on the other, will be discussed. Such a context is seen as placing hagiographical signs of Wilde in the condition of shame.

[1] 'Commemorative practice' and 'commemoration' are emphasized as a means of underlining the importance of collectivity. In such terms, 'commemoration' is understood as 'the production of collective memory'. It can thus be distinguished from 'memorialization', seen here as a more generic term applied to the generation of memory whether by individuals or collectives. (For more on the implications of the distinction between collective and individual memorialization see my essay, 'Witness this: art, memory, democracy' in *Parachute*, 111, pp. 89-98, 2003).

[2] The terms 'culturally differentiated community', 'communities of cultural differentiation' and 'communities of sexual differentiation' are used throughout the work. Broadly, they relate to notions of cultural difference and sexual difference. However, an emphasis has been placed on the shift from 'difference' to 'differentiation'. Such a shift has been made as a means of avoiding the binarism of same/difference, which can emerge through repeated reference to 'difference' without constant vigilance concerning the relationality of such difference. Stuart Hall pointed towards the issues outlined when he wrote of "...differences that do not work through binaries, veiled boundaries that do not finally separate but double up as *places de passage*, and meanings that are positional and relational, always on the slide along a spectrum without end..." Hall, S., 'Constituting an archive', *Third Text*, Spring 2001, p. 90.

[3] Commentators on post-modernity, such as Nicolas Bourriaud, have since suggested that the figuration of the artist has fragmented since the emergence of post-modernism. Consequently, according to Bourriaud, roles assigned to the artist in contemporary culture can be seen to have proliferated across a range of activities and concerns (Bourriaud, N., Relational Aesthetics, Les Presses de Reels, Dijon-Quetigny, 2002, pp. 11-12). Notwithstanding such an approach, numerous contemporary artistic practices, such as those of Yinka Shonibare and Adrian Piper, demonstrate that the problematizing role of artistic subjectivity has not been repudiated in post-modern culture.

[4] This is not to stage cultural practitioners as contemporary renditions of the traditional figure of the shaman. Rather, it is to position cultural practitioners as specialists in the use of representation and, therefore, as proficient in the negotiation of its limits.

[5] For an engaging account of the attempts by the First French Republic to maintain its slaving colony on the Caribbean island of San Domingo between 1791 and 1803, see C.L.R. James, The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution, Allison and Busby, London, 1980.

[6] For an engaging discussion of the relation of shame to Gay Pride see Muñoz's notion of a Gay Shame Day Parade in Muñoz, J.E., Disidentifications: queers of colour and the politics of performance, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1999, p. 111

[7] In his reading of André Gide's novel, The Immoralist, Leo Bersani linked the protagonist's discovery of his pederastic eroticism to his illness, suggesting that by first getting ill and then by getting better, the protagonist, Michel, became aware of his body – in particular his skin (Bersani, 1995: 119-120). Reflecting on the work of Bersani, Sedgwick and Frank, one could suggest that critical writing in the wake of the AIDS crisis facilitated a re-consideration of the consequences of pathologization beyond the medicalization critiques that had emerged following Foucault's early work.

[8] see especially, Lubbock, T., 'It's got to go: Oscar Wilde deserved a monument fit for a hero of art, love and politics. Instead Maggi Hambling has sculpted a wilfully tacky, silly, Tussaudian tragedy.' *The Independent*, 1 December 1998.

[9] The term 'hagiographical' is used loosely throughout the present study. There is no attempt to draw explicit parallels between traditions such as Christian hagiography and the commemorative acts discussed here. However, the engagement with the deaths of the prominent cultural figures affiliated with culturally differentiated communities can be seen to lean towards the hagiographical.

[10] Diana Fuss's important work on identification, Identification Papers (1995), emphasized the need to address the 'historical genealogies' (1995: 141) that underpin our understanding of identification. Notwithstanding her work, in particular her exploration of the colonial context in which Freud's theory was elaborated, it has been seen as important to use Freud's notion of identification as a means of understanding the way in which shame conditions can be seen to problematize the role of hagiographical signs.

[11] The 'disciplinary' focus in Foucault can be linked to his middle writings, principally The History of Sexuality volume one (1976) and Discipline and Punish (1975). For a commentary on the problem of resistance within the disciplinary model of subjectification, termed 'subjection', see Sawicki, J., 'Feminism, Foucault and Subjects of Power and Freedom' in Moss, J., (ed.), The Later Foucault: Politics and Philosophy, Sage Publications, London, 1998.

Chapter one

Death by other names:

re-marking variance around Rotimi Fani-Kayode's death

The Nigerian-born photographer Rotimi Fani-Kayode died in London on 21 December 1989, at the age of 34. In subsequent years, a range of commemorative events responded to his death. In December 1990, a retrospective exhibition took place at the 198 Gallery in London. In January 1991, a memorial lecture was held at The Photographers' Gallery, London, for which speakers included: the critic David A. Bailey; the photographer Carrie Mae Weems; the novelist and Fani-Kayode's partner, Alex Hirst; one of Fani-Kayode's sisters, Toyin Fani-Kayode[1]. In February 1991, a fund-raising dance, *Techniques of Ecstasy No. 4*, took place in Brixton, south London.[2] 1991 also gave rise to a biographical documentary film on Fani-Kayode, *Rage and Desire* (1991), which was screened at the Midland Arts Centre, Birmingham[3] in September of that year.

What is of note for this study is that the commemorative events provided grounds for the emergence of vastly different explanations of Fani-Kayode's death. At the Memorial Lecture in January 1991, Fani-Kayode's sister told an audience that her brother had died from a heart attack after having recovered from meningitis. However, during an interview for *Rage and Desire* Alex Hirst suggested that he had died because he had been an *abiku* – a figure from Yoruba mythology in Nigeria. An *abiku*, Hirst explained, was a spirit-child predestined for a premature death. In December 1996, during an event held for World AIDS Day, former friends and colleagues of Fani-Kayode from among south London's black gay communities began to remark on his HIV+ status, suggesting that his death had been AIDS-related[4]. This study does not attempt to place a judgement on the efficacy of each of the different explanations of Fani-Kayode's death. Nor is there any intention here to evaluate the reasons why particular historical agents supported one explanation instead of another. Rather, this

chapter examines the implications arising from the fact that accounts of Fani-Kayode's death have proved to have been at variance.

In this study, variance is used as a means of addressing the differences in the accounts given of Fani-Kayode's death. Such a task becomes important because of the need to remark upon the discrepancies that cannot merely be attributed to different points of view on the part of those who circulated divergent accounts. Rather, the diverse perspectives on Fani-Kayode's death point towards much deeper questions relating to the discourses that rendered each particular account intelligible. Western clinical discourses, which make sense of suggestions that meningitis can be related to a death become questionable in the light of Yoruba cosmological discourses, which render intelligible the proposition that *abiku* can be related to someone's demise. The reverse, of course, is also the case. The tension between the discourses is seen as the most productive aspect of the problem at hand. It is in an attempt to emphasize such tension that the term variance is used.

The suggestion here is that the variance arising between the different accounts of Fani-Kayode's death can contribute to this exploration of shame. A starting point for the debate is the contention that shame causes variance. Shame in this respect can be understood in terms of a crisis of legitimacy around the figure of Rotimi Fani-Kayode. Such a crisis should be seen as arising from a clash between imperatives that specifically legitimized and delegitimized Fani-Kayode. The legitimizing imperatives, as will be discussed below, framed the critical appreciation of Fani-Kayode's life and work. In contrast, Fani-Kayode's state of health became the object of delegitimizing imperatives whereby, as Michael Cadette, a member of Friends of Rotimi Fani-Kayode, said: "Much taboo and misinformation surrounded HIV."[5] One of the results of the conflicting imperatives around Fani-Kayode can be seen in the inability to render a consistent account of his death.

Despite the view that memorialization in general and hagiography in particular rely on the circulation of consistent as well as stable accounts of the dead, the inconsistent

accounts of Fani-Kayode's death can still be seen as efficacious in respect of a re-appraised politics of cultural differentiation. The discussion in this chapter focuses on the implications that inconsistent accounts of Fani-Kayode have for the following issues: questions of accountability in politics of cultural differentiation; and problems of temporality in politics of cultural differentiation. In terms of accountability, one can ask how important it is that a death should be rendered in intelligible terms. How should one handle accounts that resist intelligibility? What about accounts that use untranslatable terms? This chapter addresses such questions by exploring the notion of languages of alterity. Although what is meant by the term 'language of alterity' will be explored in detail below, at this point one can suggest that languages of alterity generate a radical unintelligibility. Such unintelligibility functions to delineate a space that remains resistant to the prohibitions, injunctions and censure that get circulated as a means of problematizing the culturally differentiated.

In addition to a consideration of the role of language in a politics of cultural differentiation, this chapter will also explore issues of temporality. It is suggested that each account of Fani-Kayode's death can be seen as being framed in relation to a specific temporality. In such terms, the various geographical locations – English and Nigerian – that contextualized Fani-Kayode's death can be seen as giving rise to their own time. In such terms, one can begin to discuss the emergence of specific and different temporalities, in relation to England and Nigeria. By exploring the temporal contexts of Fani-Kayode's death accounts, one can re-address issues concerning the relation between past, present and future, as raised by theorists of the post-colonial, such as Kwame Anthony Appiah and Homi K. Bhabha. In particular, Appiah's model of 'post-coloniality' is replaced in this chapter by the notion of the 'transcolonial'. Before exploring such ideas in relation to the commemorative events surrounding Fani-Kayode, it might prove useful to discuss the way in which Fani-Kayode's commemoration can be understood as emerging in shame conditions.

Shame and Fani-Kayode

Since certain aspects of the accounts circulated after Fani-Kayode's death can be seen as being rendered susceptible to legitimization while others can be seen as susceptible to delegitimization, the responses to Fani-Kayode's death can be seen to have emerged in the condition of shame. Further reference, however, needs to be made to the discursive context in which Fani-Kayode's shaming took place. By addressing, for instance, the critical context in which his work was received, one might gain a better vantage point from which to view moves that rendered Fani-Kayode a subject open to legitimization. By exploring the phobic discourses that surrounded HIV and AIDS in late-twentieth-century Britain, one might get a better grasp of the political and social climate that left Fani-Kayode a figure susceptible to delegitimization.

In terms of legitimization, it can be seen that Fani-Kayode was recognized as a key figure in contemporary black visual arts. A series of obituaries appeared in places such as the national broadsheet newspaper, *The Independent*[6], and the national arts magazine *Artrage*[7]. The author of the obituaries, Fani-Kayode's partner, novelist Alex Hirst, described him as:

> An experimenter and innovator, he operated in a spirit of uncompromising opposition to hypocrisy and unfailing commitment to the unveiling of the true and the beautiful.[8]

Such remarks can be seen to legitimize Fani-Kayode as a producer of contemporary art that fulfilled the expectations of a contemporary artistic practice: experimental, innovative and uncompromising. Other critical comments, such as Stuart Hall's, can be read in similar terms. Indeed, Hall discussed Fani-Kayode in the following manner:

> His work was a creative act of great and signal courage and inspiration, which refused to 'settle' for the given, and obliged us to open up areas of creative energy which might otherwise remain forbidden.[9]

Critical evaluation of Fani-Kayode's work in relation to issues of wider cultural production can be seen to have emerged in the years following his death. Such criticism was no less celebratory than the words of Hirst or Hall. For example, in an assessment of Fani-Kayode's

contribution to British photographic practices in the late twentieth century, the curator and critic, David A. Bailey saw Fani-Kayode as central to the shift in practices undertaken by black British photographers in the 1980s. In an essay on Fani-Kayode and black British photography, Bailey argued that:

> It is not so much that black photography has discovered a totally new form/style; what is unique is the way in which black photographers, among whom Rotimi Fani-Kayode was at the forefront, were able to break away from the insular fixed genres of photography and explore the notion of using visual codes from different genres and a distinct set of cultural references, symbols and iconography to articulate their lived experiences.[10]

Whereas Bailey's comments position Fani-Kayode's work in relation to black British photographic traditions, Kobena Mercer's critical assessment of Fani-Kayode discussed his work in terms of the role of visual art in the modern project. Mercer wrote of Fani-Kayode:

> his vision contributed ever so many wide-ranging responses to the transvaluation of cultural difference, which has become one of art's defining imperatives at the end of the twentieth century.[11]

It is in the light of such critical appreciation of Fani-Kayode's work that one can begin to understand his susceptibility to legitimization.

The delegitimization of Fani-Kayode's death experience can be understood with reference to the refusal to acknowledge an association of his death with HIV or AIDS. No public statement was made concerning Fani-Kayode's HIV+ status until nearly seven years after his death. Consider, for instance, material circulated during the retrospective exhibition *Rotimi Fani-Kayode: a retrospective.* It made no reference to HIV. Instead, the term "he died...after a short, unexpected illness" was used.[12] Similarly, the newsletter of the Association of Black Photographers, *Autograph*, the organization of which Fani-Kayode had been chair and co-founder, did not mention HIV in its discussion of his death. The newsletter referred only to an "untimely death".[13] Such omissions of public comment concerning HIV

took place despite the fact that Fani-Kayode's colleagues were aware of his condition. Indeed, Michael Cadette, co-curator of *Rotimi Fani-Kayode: a retrospective*, stated that he was, "...aware that Rotimi was HIV+ at the time [of his death] and also that it was something he had addressed in his work". [14] This comment can be read against the commemorative events in which Cadette participated. The argument here does not concern the motivations that Cadette, as an historical agent, may or may not have had for openly discussing Fani-Kayode's state of health prior to his death. Rather, the drive of the work here aims to get at the context within which the meaning of Fani-Kayode's death was framed. In pursuit of that, it might be useful to look at the discourses on HIV and AIDS that circulated in Britain at the time of Fani-Kayode's death.

A cursory exploration of discussion on HIV and AIDS in British popular culture shows the prevalence of phobic discourses surrounding the AIDS pandemic. The much-publicized headline in *The Sun* newspaper from 14 October 1985, "I'd shoot my son if he had AIDS, says vicar!" becomes an example, par excellence. The widely remarked-on death of Rock Hudson earlier in October 1985 also provided evidence of a popular engagement with HIV and AIDS dominated by phobic discourses.[15] Headlines in *The Sun* newspaper on 3 October 1985 such as 'The hunk who lived a lie' can be read alongside commentary in *Daily Mail* on the same date: 'He died a living skeleton – and so ashamed'.

Policy-making was also shown to have been affected by what Michael Cadette termed, "times of taboo and misinformation around AIDS". In January 1991, the writer Carl Miller reported on responses to the exhibition *Ecstatic Antibodies: Resisting the AIDS Mythology* (1990). In the case of Viewpoint Gallery, Salford, in 1990, Miller commented, the show "was scheduled to appear...but was abruptly cancelled amidst rumours of Section-28-fuelled anxiety on the part of the local authority".[16] Section 28 of the Local Government Act (1988) stipulated that local authorities could not support activities that promoted homosexuality. Although the Act made no reference to HIV or AIDS, Miller's commentary

shows how closely homosexuality and AIDS had become conflated in the late 1980s/early 1990s political discourses as well as in popular culture.

The effects of phobic discourses around HIV and AIDS in Britain can be seen to have led to what was later to be termed the 'AIDS closet' (Manning in Simpson, 1996: 103), whereby a degree of secrecy surrounded an HIV+ or AIDS diagnosis. Prominent cultural figures can be seen to have occupied the 'AIDS closet' right up until their deaths. For instance, the HIV infection of the English novelist Bruce Chatwin, who died in the same year as Fani-Kayode, (Chatwin died on 18 January 1989, Fani-Kayode died 21 December), was not openly debated because of the novelist's own refusal to discuss his HIV infection publicly. Chatwin declined, for instance, an interview with the then *Sunday Times* journalist Tony Parsons specifically to discuss his experience with the syndrome (Shakespeare, 1999: 499 – 500). Chatwin's biographer, Nicholas Shakespeare, commented on Chatwin's secrecy around his HIV infection:

> Despite all his efforts not to be English, Bruce would die a quintessentially English death: abroad, clothed in secrets...holding out, deflecting to the end and not without a profound sense of shame and regret. (ibid.)

Shakespeare, in an attempt to provide a backdrop to Chatwin's silence concerning his illness, explored the context of AIDS awareness in England in the late 1980s, discussing:

> how slow England was to wake up to AIDS. At that time in England very few well-known people had AIDS, or if they had, it was a secret disease, more so than in France or America. (ibid.)

Despite Shakespeare's suggestions to the contrary, reactions in France to the AIDS-related death of Michel Foucault in 1984 did not escape taboo. Indeed, an obituary to the novelist Herve Guibert explained how Guibert's first novel, To the Friend who Did not Save my Life (1990), "scandalised Paris in 1990 by revealing that the philosopher Michel Foucault died of AIDS in 1984. Foucault had kept his illness secret. 'They stole his death,' Guibert wrote of Foucault, 'they made a lie of it' ".[17]

Given the impact of the prevalent phobic discourses surrounding discussion of HIV and AIDS, one can begin to see a context for the delegitimization of particular accounts of Fani-Kayode's death. Indeed, one can note how the failure or refusal to circulate an account of his death in relation to HIV during the commemorative events in the early 1990s can be clearly understood in relation to the phobic discourses that framed generalized reactions to the pandemic. Furthermore, consideration can be given to the effects of discourses that implicated Africa in the origin and spread of AIDS during the 1980s. The activist and writer Mehboob Dada discussed the 'racist myths' connecting AIDS to Africa (Dada in Boffin and Gupta, 1990: 90). Critic Susan Sontag commented:

> ...Africans who detect racist stereotypes in much of the speculation about the geographical origin of AIDS are not wrong (Sontag 1991: 137).

It is important not to underestimate the role played by such racist preconceptions within the discursive formation that framed HIV and AIDS during the 1980s. The novelist Bruce Chatwin, for instance, was said to have attempted to raise funds for an expedition to central Africa to seek out the epidemiological origins of HIV (Shakespeare, 1999: 515-517). In the fiction of English writer Adam Mars-Jones, Africa was once again implicated in AIDS[18]. Such an implication of Africa in the HIV pandemic may well have impacted on the kinds of public statements particular cultural practitioners were able to make in relation to the death of an artist such as Fani-Kayode, who was celebrated for his "exploration of his Yoruba background...[and] African traditions of posture and gesture".[19] Indeed, the pathologization of Africa can be seen as directly delegitimizing the AIDS-related death of anyone who had explicit African connections.

Abiku: languages of alterity and divergent accounts

One of the starting-points for this discussion is the suggestion that the shame conditions within which Fani-Kayode's death was rendered accountable facilitated the circulation of three different accounts of his death. The initial suggestion of meningitis and heart attack can be contrasted with the later suggestion of an AIDS-related death. Both accounts, however,

underline the importance of a Western clinical perspective. The alternative proposition, that Fani-Kayode's death was best understood with reference to *abiku*, relies on traditional Yoruba cosmology, which implicitly refuses Western clinical practice. It must be said that in an effort to explore the impact of these accounts, it would not serve the purpose of this study to attempt to privilege one approach over another. Rather, more might be gained by regarding the range of approaches to Fani-Kayode's death in respect of variance. In addressing variance as a strategy privileging inconsistency and divergence, one might be able to assess the potential that it offers for a rethinking of the politics of cultural differentiation. Indeed, a decision to consider the contrast between accounts as a source for re-articulating politics might prove more useful than dismissing the variance in accounts as an historical hiccup that must be overcome.

One of the gifts of variance found in the Fani-Kayode accounts is the highlighting of the role of traditional Yoruba language. The way in which it was taken up and used within the context of a metropolitan counter-cultural setting by a white gay man, such as Alex Hirst, shows how far a minoritized language might be used as a means of resisting particular discursive imperatives alongside the political conditions that issue from them. In carrying out such a role, one can see the use of *abiku* as the deployment of a language of alterity. Such a view of *abiku* can help demonstrate the function of a language of alterity, in that it worked to resist the discursive imperatives that surrounded AIDS in 1980s and 1990s Britain. The use of a language of alterity to achieve such ends can be related to the wider enterprise of Fani-Kayode and Hirst in their collaborative work. Consider, for instance, the artwork *Metaphysick: Every Second Counts* (1989), which featured in the *Ecstatic Antibodies* (1990) exhibition. In that photo-text series, Fani-Kayode and Hirst used Yoruba cosmology as a means of developing a language that contained an in-built resistance to the hegemonic discursive framing of AIDS. To position Yoruba cosmology in such a way is not an attempt to exoticize it. The claim made here is not for an alternative structure of knowledge that somehow contains the 'truth' of a death in a way more meaningful than the explanations generated in clinical discourses. Rather, by counter-valorizing *abiku* as a language of alterity, instead of

dismissing it, one moves towards a problematization of the knowability of the cause of Fani-Kayode's death.

The opening line of the written text that accompanied the photo-works in *Every Second Counts* showed a willingness to accept clinical terms such as 'HIV'. However, the commentary did not allow clinical methodologies to dominate the way in which the entire engagement with HIV would take place. The artists declared, "We aim to provide spiritual antibodies to HIV" (Fani-Kayode and Hirst in Boffin and Gupta, eds., 1990: 78). They also described their "enterprise as the 'alchemical' or 'ritual' production of spiritual antibodies" (ibid: 80). Such production of 'spiritual antibodies' can be seen as part of a strategy of resistance that took up the tools offered by Yoruba cosmology. As the artists wrote:

> HIV has forced us to deal with dark ambiguities. Where better to look for clues than in the secret chambers of African shrines, the sumptuous ruins of Coptic and Eurasian temples, and the boarded-up fuck-rooms of the American dream? (ibid)

It is the 'secret chambers of African shrines' that are seen here as having the closest relationship to the notion of *abiku*. It is through the opacity premised in Yoruba cosmology that one can begin to see a strategy of resistance emerging. The means by which Yoruba cosmology refuses to accede to the discursive imperatives that so readily frame knowledge issuing from Western clinical practice demonstrates how such cosmology can provide a source of resistance. Such resistance can be seen as only one of the multiple effects that arise from variance.

It was during a preview screening of *Rage and Desire* (1991) at the Midlands Arts Centre in Birmingham on 23 September 1991 that the term *abiku* was first used in relation to Fani-Kayode's death. During that event, Hirst first circulated his belief that Fani-Kayode had died because he was an *abiku*. Hirst, disclosed that Fani-Kayode had learned of his designation as *abiku* three years before his death. He said:

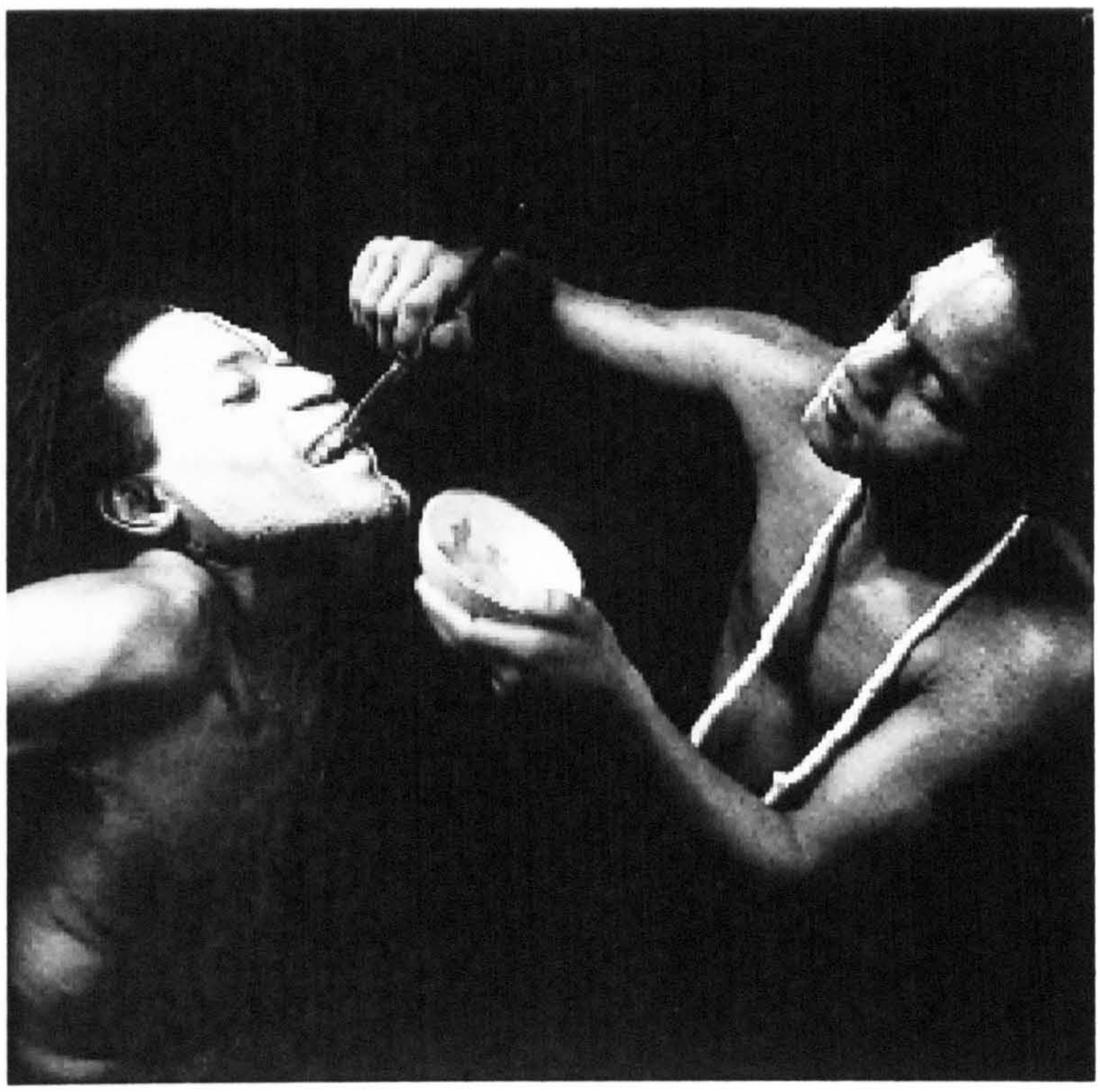


fig 1.1 Rotimi Fani-Kayode, and Alex Hirst, *Metaphysick: Every Second Counts,* 1989 (photographs, text and mixed media)

In the last three years of his life, the joie de vivre of the earlier pictures gave way to a darker more elegiac vision. That was when he produced the *abiku* series. *Abiku* means 'born to die'. Their name is given by parents to sickly children who they fear may want to return to the spirit world. Rotimi had discovered that his own name was an *abiku* name meaning 'stay by me'.[20]

What role did the term *abiku* play in Yoruba cosmology? In answer to such a question, it might be useful at this juncture to explore the notion of *abiku* in relation to wider discourses emerging from Yoruba culture. The Nigerian linguist Oduyoye has commented on the use of *abiku* names. Oduyoye has stated: "The Yoruba believe that a person's name affects his behaviour" (1972: 67). This perspective on the role of names in Yoruba culture is echoed in the work of the philosopher Gbadegesin who has stated that among Yoruba,

> ...it is expected that a name...will guide and control...[a] child by being a constant reminder for him/her of his/her membership in the family and the circumstance of his/her birth. (1991: 62)

Oduyoye has suggested that an *abiku* name relates to infant mortality, listing among *abiku* names 'Rotimi', which he has translated as "stand by me".[21] The Nigerian-born novelist Ben Okri has spoken recently about the concept of *abiku*. His Booker-prize winning novel The Famished Road (1991) thematized the notion of *Abiku*, through his spirit-child protagonist, Azaro. Okri said:

> The *abiku*...is a child that keeps being born and keeps returning to the land before birth and is compelled to come back again. They don't like the conditions in which they find the world into which they are born and they can will their own deaths and they go back. They leave.[22]

Such a departure can be related to the notion of the critical function of an *abiku* death. Okri described the critical function of an *abiku* death in the following terms:

> The implications of the spirit-child...seem to be extremely profound.

> Apart from the reincarnative one, [there] is the level of responsibility involved in making the world worthwhile for children to want to stay...The spirit-child is one of the greatest criticisms of life as we have made it.[23]

It is interesting to note that Okri's *abiku*, Azaro, is himself a child. His novel's dynamic is caught up in the perils that are incumbent on Azaro being not only a spirit but specifically a spirit-child. Indeed, one might argue that the *abiku*'s status as judge depends on the fact of childhood. For, through its childhood, the *abiku* can absolve itself of responsibility for the conditions of the world in a way that adults cannot. A judgement of the world from the perspective of one who cannot be implicated in world events can be seen as central to what is termed here the critical function of the *abiku*-child. Criticism, in these terms, becomes one of the ways of moving through the world. The movement it implies is towards death rather than towards life.

Okri stressed, however, that the *abiku*'s premature death is not inevitable. He said:

> ...*abiku*... can will their own deaths...[but] some can be charmed from this condition, so that they don't actually go back. They don't die...They cannot be made to stay because they can will their own deaths. You can only charm them to stay. You can enchant them. You can seduce them into staying. You can even challenge them into staying. Under certain circumstances, you can make it very difficult for them to go back but on the whole...life's seduction and life's enchantment tend to work better.[24]

The possibility of a seduction, enchantment or challenge, through which the *abiku* is encouraged to stay in the world, abrogates any sense that the early death of the *abiku* is inevitable. Rather, the death of the *abiku* reflects a failure of seduction, enchantment or challenge. What can be said, then, about the gift of the *abiku* name Rotimi is that it indicated a will-to-death as much as a foretelling of that death.

The notion that *abiku* works as a will-to-death criticizing life substantiates the claim that can be made for it as a counter-hegemonic strategy deployed in response to the discursive imperatives circulated around AIDS. In such terms, the *abiku* can be seen to provide a language of alterity – a language that will not admit explanations outside its own terms. Within the language of alterity, death can only be accounted for in particular ways. A refusal of approaches that lie outside the limits of the language of alterity can be seen as providing a means of strategic resistance. In such a way, it remains irrelevant whether one accepts the truth-claims of the terms used in the language of alterity. Rather, the language provides a significatory ploy that remains not susceptible, in this case, to the imperatives directed towards AIDS. In such terms, the *abiku*'s place within Yoruba cosmology secures its potential as a site of resistance to AIDS-phobic discourses.

It helps to be mindful of the concerns that arise when claims are made in relation to the use of minoritized languages as strategic sites of resistance. Explaining Fani-Kayode's death in terms of *abiku*, for instance, could be viewed simply as an attempt to draw the meaning of his death into a drive towards Africanization. Such moves could be seen in relation to the range of cultural commentaries in 1980s Britain that emphasized a cultural politics based on an identification with Africa. One might consider, for instance, the widespread influence of soul music artists *Jazzy B* and *Soul-II-Soul*, with the importance they attributed to the Africa Centre alongside the cultural milieu that it provided for their work and the work of other black artists. Seen as part of the increasing preoccupation with the cultural significance of Africa in late-twentieth-century Britain, it would be inappropriate to claim *abiku* as a language of alterity providing resistant effects.

It can be contended, however, that *abiku* should not be positioned solely as a term signifying a drive towards Africanization. To see the *abiku* purely in such a way would be to restrict its impact to only one line of political activity. The consequences of *abiku* could, conversely, be seen as more widespread. One of the more generalized ramifications could be seen in relation to the role of reverse discourse. The *abiku*'s contribution to the range of

counter-cultural strategies developed in response to the hegemonic framing of HIV and AIDS can and should be seen in parallel with those reverse discourses that circulated in the 1980s and early 1990s. Consider, for instance, the reverse discourse that emerged when the term 'PWA' (person with AIDS) began to be used to describe people diagnosed with the syndrome. Such a reverse discourse can specifically be seen as resistant to the preoccupation with morbidity that emerged from AIDS-phobic discourses. Indeed, the term, 'PWA' became widely disseminated in Britain when the writer Oscar Moore began a column in *The Guardian* newspaper in 1994 under the title 'PWA', detailing his own experience of the syndrome. The point to be stressed is that the PWA reverse discourse brought forward narratives that detailed living and dying with AIDS. They can be seen as distinct because they engaged with HIV and AIDS not just as a set of symptomologies leading inevitably to death but also as a way of life. Similarly, regardless of its co-option into Africanization, *abiku* can be seen as providing another means of refusing the ramifications of AIDS-phobic discourse.

The efficacy of positioning *abiku* as part of a language of alterity can further be questioned from another point of view. Issues that undermine the sustainability of *abiku* as a resistant term were raised in comments made by the photographer Ajamu, who had been a friend of Fani-Kayode's, as well as a colleague and neighbour living among south London's black gay communities during the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s. Ajamu suggested that the *abiku* concept had been used as a way of producing a mystery to surround Fani-Kayode's death. In an interview on 26 October 2001, Ajamu spoke about the creation of myths to surround an artist's death:

> I am tempted to be sceptical about *abiku*. I am interested in the way people create myths around an artist's life and death. The statement gets set-up beforehand: camera, lights, shoot...[25]

In particular, Ajamu drew attention to the use of a myth to protect an artist's identity:

> If you want to protect someone's identity, maybe something gets set up beforehand.[26]

Ajamu's rendering of the notion of *abiku* as no more than part of the 'AIDS closet' to protect Fani-Kayode's identity precludes the nuanced engagement with *abiku* that has been proposed hitherto.

To place a claim in contestation, however, is not to invalidate it. Indeed, one can accept *abiku* as part of the mythologization of Fani-Kayode as much as one might accept the 'tough-guy' photographs taken by Hans Namuth as part of mythologization of Jackson Pollock. As an artist-myth, the *abiku* need not be questioned in terms of forensic truth, requiring proof and evidence, but rather in terms of the meanings it conveyed about the role and position of the artist. Such mythologization of artists has a long history and can be seen to have been put to effective use.[27] The effects of mythologizing Fani-Kayode, through the deployment of the *abiku* concept, need not be seen as working solely to secure the AIDS closet and keep its door firmly shut in a case of the death of a key cultural figure. The mythology of *abiku* could be seen, rather, in terms of meanings generated around the role of Fani-Kayode positioned as an artist working at a particular point in history. Such a positioning secures Fani-Kayode's reputation alongside other contemporaneous artists confronting HIV and AIDS, such Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Sunil Gupta and Gran Fury.

As well as contributing to a mythology positioning Fani-Kayode as an artist dealing with mortality, the deployment of the *abiku* renders it as a language of alterity offering a site of referentiality outside of widely circulated discursive imperatives. Such an offer can be regarded as useful to the culturally differentiated in that it emphasizes the possibility of thinking otherwise. One can move towards a further exploration of such 'thinking otherwise', alongside the other possibilities offered by languages of alterity, with reference to the later film work of Isaac Julien, particularly his *Vagabondia* (2000). The use of an untranslated French Creole in that film can be seen as an articulation of a language of alterity.

Untranslated Creole was used throughout *Vagabondia* and, most notably, as the language spoken by the film's narrative voice. *Vagabondia* is set in Sir John Soane's Museum,

London. The museum itself can be seen to act as an archive of Englishness. Such a function is reflected in the museum's history. Located in Lincoln's Inn Fields, central London, the museum was the home of a prominent English Regency architect, Sir John Soane, who achieved a level of pre-eminence in his field through his appointment as architect to the Bank of England from 1788 to 1833 (Thornton and Dorey, 1992: vii). Soane's house became a repository for his collection of architectural fragments and antiquities, many of which had been purchased from nobility and gentlemen who had been on the Grand Tour. Items reflecting English applied arts traditions, such as Coalport porcelain, sat alongside examples of English painting, such as Hogarth's *Election* series (1754).[28] The contents of Soane's house as well as the building itself were bequeathed to the nation by Act of Parliament in 1833. It is through such notable facts surrounding Sir John Soane's Museum that one can characterize the museum as an archive of Englishness. *Vagabondia* 's use of untranslated Creole in such a setting accentuates the role of Creole in being generative of alterity.

As well as using untranslated Creole, the soundscape of *Vagabondia* is dominated by echoes of otherness. In terms of music, jazz fusion sounds are heard with strong percussive elements and a wailing saxophone. Such music gestures towards otherness, suggesting that such otherness is inscribed at the heart of English culture. However, it the sound of a black woman's voice as voice-over that encapsulates not only facets of otherness but also what is termed here 'a language of alterity'. As such, the narrative voice in the film impedes understanding. It reflects the limits to the audience's knowledge. Spectators cannot know what is being said. Although there are hints dropped – the name 'Sir John Soane' can be heard – such hints work only to underline the importance of what is being said. By remaining untranslated, a moment of alterity is announced in the film every time the voice is heard.

Although it is in the narrative voice that a language of alterity can be heard most distinctly, there are other aspects of *Vagabondia* that can be discussed. The vagabond character in the film, in particular, can be understood under the rubric of languages of alterity. The vagabond, in contrast to the other characters, moves in an unpredictable way.

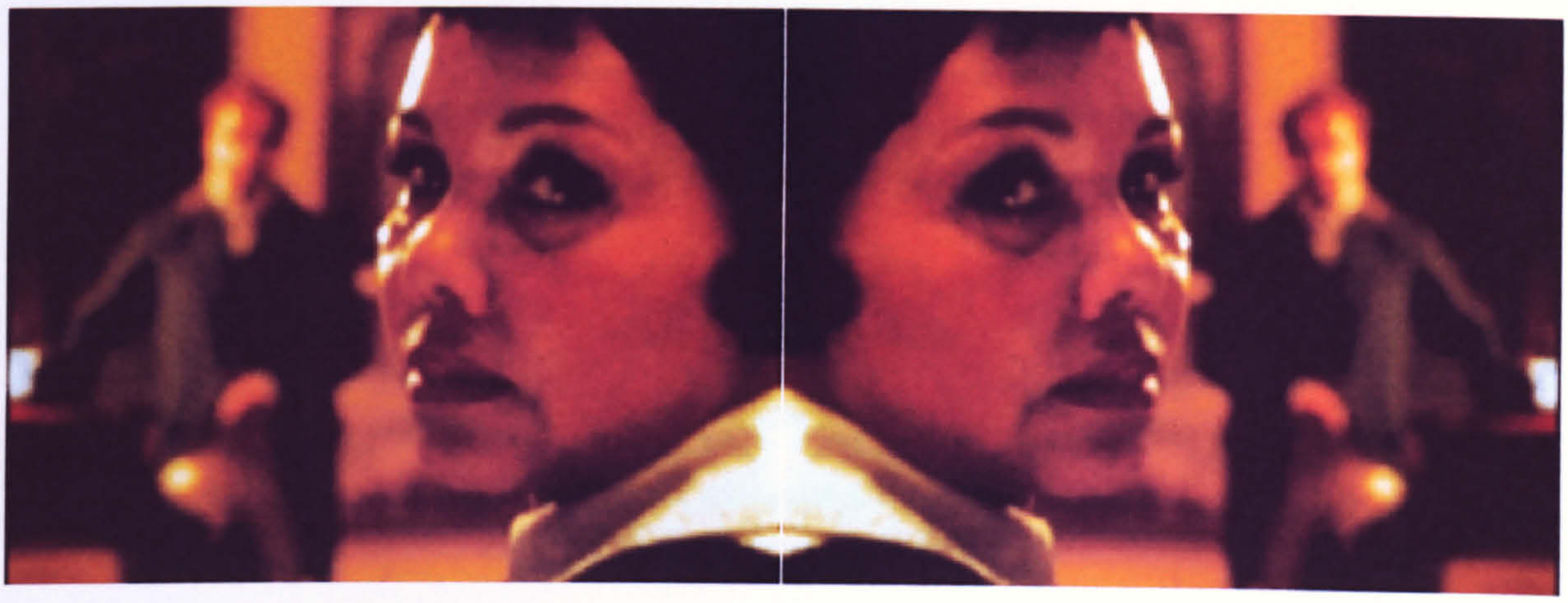


fig 1.2 Isaac Julien, *Vagabondia,* 2000
(still from 16 mm film)

He dances through the museum space, gesticulating excessively. At one point, he leans over backwards. At another, he moves on one leg, twisting his foot in the air. The importance of the vagabond can be seen in terms of the alterity that he *embodies*. Once again, within a space characterized as an archive of Englishness, something operates in a manner of which an audience cannot make sense. It is in respect of such matters that one can speak of the importance of illegibility in a language of alterity – certain gestures cannot be read, just as certain modes of speech cannot be understood. Such gestures and speech can give rise, then, to a lacuna of unintelligibility within the film.

Vagabondia can be regarded as the cinematization of radical unintelligibility. The film shows how unintelligibility can be inscribed in diasporic experience. Following *Vagabondia*, one can argue that a diasporic situation produces repeated and mundane misunderstandings as well as deeper experiences of unintelligibility. It is by premising such unintelligibility that languages of alterity offer possibilities for culturally differentiated subjects. For the emergence of aporia in such languages renders language itself an insecure site for the reification of the subject. By underlining the instability of language, one can provoke the emerging subject to abandon language as a route to subject-formation – a route beset with the difficulties of normalization. Instead, the subject can search for different grounds of reification or, more radically, the subject can abandon the possibility of its reification altogether. Both options – the search or the abandonment – allow the subject to avoid the mistake of positioning logocentric language as the ground of its viability.

To position logocentric language as the pre-eminent ground of the subject's viability would be to suggest that any threat to the security of logocentric language is in itself a threat to the viability of the subject. Any reliance on such understandings can lead to fears that an interminable range of possibilities wait to threaten the viability of the subject. Alzeimer's syndrome and, indeed, a range of conditions from nervous breakdown to coma, with their tendency to dissociate the subject from his/her own language, can be considered as a threat to the subject's viability. In such terms, the subject might as well remain on permanent alert.

By considering the implications of the emergence of aporia in languages of alterity, one can suggest that rather than remaining in a state of panic as regards the source of its viability, the subject can draw resources from a range of sites outside of logocentric language: movement, making noise, simply breathing – these can become sites available to the subject in response to the insecurity of logocentric language.

Clinical variance, transcolonial time: meningitis and heart attack

Although the possibilities of resistance through unintelligibility become apparent in the reappraisal of terms such as *abiku*, the variance in accounts of Fani-Kayode's death cannot be explored solely by addressing the notion of *abiku*. The problems raised by the circulation of accounts that privileged Western clinical models must also be addressed. The account of meningitis and heart attack cannot be said to offer a site of resistance in the manner offered by *abiku*. Indeed, in the light of the value of *abiku*, one could ask to what uses any circulation of Western clinical accounts could be put. In particular, when one considers that Fani-Kayode's sister, Toyin Fani-Kayode, supported the circulation of Western clinical accounts of her brother's death, one might ask why Western knowledge was privileged over and above a traditional Yoruba cosmology. A position already taken in this argument must be reiterated at this point, however, to underline the suggestion that one need not seek to privilege one account over another but rather concern oneself with questions of how to frame Toyin Fani-Kayode's statement. One could go further in suggesting that one needs to address concerns issuing from the conditions surrounding coloniality in order to reassess Toyin's account. In particular, one needs to discuss how one might temporalize statements made in the context of a Yoruba man who had lived out a diaspora in the United States, Britain and Nigeria only later to be memorialized as an artist in London. The suggestion here is that such a discussion needs to re-think issues of temporality surrounding the culturally differentiated.

It was before *abiku* emerged in the public domain that Toyin Fani-Kayode, spoke publicly of her brother's death in terms of meningitis and heart attack. Her reliance on a clinical account becomes more marked when one considers the fact that the Fani-Kayode

family held ancestrally the title of Akire or 'Keeper of the Shrine of Deities' of Ife, an important Yoruba city. Such an association with the sacred life of a city such as Ife can be seen as significant since Ife has been widely discussed as one of the key cultural sites in Nigeria (Eyo in Biobaku, 1976:14). The important cultural position assigned to the Fani-Kayode family could point towards a support of the traditional notion of *abiku* on their part. However, by looking at the complexity of the post-colonial period in Nigeria, one can reassess the way in which Toyin's statement can be framed.

One can start by looking to a wider context in which to read Toyin Fani-Kayode's words. For, notwithstanding the fact that the Fani-Kayode family had a prominent role within traditional Yoruba culture, one ought not discount the fact that the family also had a prominent role in modern democratic Nigeria. Indeed, Rotimi's father, Chief Remi Fani-Kayode, held not only traditional titles such as Akire and Balogun of Ife, but was also one of the leading politicians in modern democratic Nigeria following Independence. At independence in 1960, he was leader of the opposition in the Nigerian parliament. By 1964, he was deputy Prime Minister of Nigeria's Western State. In the light of the multiple positions in which the Fani-Kayode family can be located – traditional, modern and otherwise – one has to pose the question: how can one assess the relationship between traditional Yoruba culture and modernity in the Nigerian context? What impact would such a relationship have on the way Toyin Fani-Kayode's statement should be viewed?

Let us address the question posed by exploring the problem of temporalizing contemporary African experience. The problem of Africa – traditional-modern-postmodern – can be rendered as a problem of temporalization. By referring to discussions in post-colonial theory concerning temporalization, one can move towards further opportunities for exploring perspectives on Toyin Fani-Kayode's words. Post-colonial theorist Kwame Anthony Appiah discussed the temporality of African post-coloniality by emphasizing "the transition of African societies *through* colonialism" [emphasis original] (Appiah in Enwezor and Oguibe, 1999: 62). In his work, Appiah suggested that contemporary Africa can be understood in terms of post-

coloniality only if the 'post' of 'post-coloniality' is not regarded as a "space-clearing gesture" (ibid.), i.e., a complete rejection of the past.

Following Appiah's reasoning, the progressivism inherent in Western conceptualizations of modernity is not replicated in the move from coloniality to post-coloniality in Africa, which premised the formation of its modern nation-states. As Appiah suggested: "...many areas of contemporary African cultural life...are not in this way concerned with transcending, with going beyond coloniality" (ibid.). One encounters, through such reasoning, a notion of post-coloniality in which the post-colonial context is negotiated through strategies that refuse the universalizing tendencies of Western modernity by suggesting that the modern does not depend on a complete break with the past. In doing so, post-coloniality rejects colonial binarisms such as past/present or progressive/retrogressive [29]. Thus, a statement that seems to accede to Western modernity while appearing to silence traditional Yoruba notions, such as Toyin's suggestion of meningitis/heart attack, need not be read as a retrogressive subscription to the demands of a universalizing Western modernity. Rather, it can be regarded as emblematic of a particular kind of investment in modernity characteristic of an African post-coloniality.

The negotiation of the complexity of the modern situation that framed newly-emergent African states such as Nigeria gave rise to a series of reflections concerning temporality. Temporal models arose out of notions such as Appiah's 'transition through coloniality' and Homi K. Bhabha's notion of 'time-lag' (Bhabha, 1994: 246-256). Whereas Appiah's debate emphasized what remained continuous through change, the discussion initiated by Bhabha emphasized the disjuncture of post-coloniality in terms of a form of spectrality elaborating a continual rearticulation of the past in the present:

> The post-colonial passage through modernity produces that form of repetition – the past as projective. The time-lag of post-colonial modernity moves forward, erasing that compliant past tethered to the myth of progress (ibid: 253)

In Bhabha's model, the past that gives way to the tropes of progression circulated through modernity is rendered as no more than a 'compliant' past. The possibility of repetition of the past within the present as a means to "slow down the linear, progressive time of modernity to reveal its 'gesture' " (ibid) is premised in the notion of the time-lag. One can see, then, how post-colonial models such as those put forward by both Bhabha and Appiah can be regarded as privileging a composite temporality in which the past is not totally rejected by the rigours of a progressivist adherence to modernity.

In the light of theoretical re-workings of post-colonial temporality, Toyin Fani-Kayode's statement could be read as being always already open to a haunting by the figure of *abiku*. Perhaps one could even consider her words in terms of a placing under erasure of *Abiku* in such a manner as to always threaten its return. The problem with existing post-colonial models of temporality, however, is their inability to take the potential for a radically disjunctive temporality far enough. In particular, the impact not so much of the past but of the future is not elaborated in the work of post-colonial thinkers. By addressing the future as well as the past, one can gain the opportunity of re-articulating strategies of temporalization in relation to culturally differentiated politics.

The argument here does not concern the future in terms of the futurology as explored in the Afrofuturist preoccupations of contemporary critical theory. Such concerns were emblematised in notions such as the 'futurhythmachines' in Kodwo Eshun's More Brilliant than the Sun (1998). Instead of Afrofuturism, the future discussed in this thesis is rather in the manner of what is termed here the transcolonial. The transcolonial is premised on both a haunting from the past and a foreshadowing of the future. By introducing such a futurology into a temporalization of a series of encounters framed in relation to a moment 'after coloniality', one is not seeking to displace the efficacy of post-coloniality and post-colonialism alongside the set of conceptual tools such thinking has provided. Rather, it is to suggest that there is a temporal dimension to post-coloniality that needs to be enriched. The transcolonial works, thereby, not as a replacement for post-coloniality but as a supplement to

it. The transcolonial complicates the temporalizations offered by post-coloniality as a way of reflecting on wider aspects of experience. The impact of such a transcolonial model of temporality can be elaborated through an exploration of foretelling or foreknowledge, which can be associated with *abiku*.

Through an elaboration of the foretelling premised in the notion of *abiku*, the present can be seen as being placed in a receptive relationship to the future as well as the past – this is key to an understanding of transcoloniality. Whereas post-coloniality emphasized the projective past, transcoloniality also emphasizes the introjective future. To produce such an introjective future, to forge a receptive relationship with the future, a knowledge of the future is not needed. Even within a transcolonial model, based on the possibility of foretelling, the future cannot be known. Rather, the future is *foreknown*. Traces of the future are taken to be already present. Foreknowledge can be seen as simply a means to recognize those traces. The processes associated with foreknowledge can be seen as demanding the ability to recognize traces of the future in the present. This is not the same as planning. Derrida can help us understand this. His rendition of the 'future present' (1998:68) can be regarded as a programmatic rolling out of the present into the future. This shows us the problem with thinking of a relationship between the present and the future in terms of planning. Such planning is not a recognition of traces of the future but rather a misrecognition of traces and a denial of the future. For the future is seen only as an extension of the present. Fore-knowledge concerns not how the present can be extended into the future but rather the means by which the present makes itself supple enough to receive foreshadows of the future. Through foreknowledge, then, a temporal composite can be formed whereby a possible future is acknowledged or foreknown through its traces. *Abiku*, as a form of forewarning, can be seen as a trace of a possible future. As a trace, it can be seen as coming from all directions – from the past ('it has been foretold'), from the present ('it is foretold') and from the future ('it will have been foretold'). This can be seen as a model of transcoloniality.

The suggestion here, then, is that Toyin Fani-Kayode's public statement on meningitis and heart attack need not be read as a rejection of traditional notions such as *abiku*. On the contrary, her statement, with its lack of an explicit discussion of *abiku* and its highlighting of meningitis and heart attack, can be seen as a transcolonial moment. As such, her statement can be seen as a moment that contained an affirmation of modernity (Western clinical practice). It can also be seen as a moment that was haunted by an *abiku* warning from the past. Indeed, her brother's own work on the *abiku* had been discussed by Hirst in his obituaries, which appeared in several publications a year before Toyin's public statements. Although one should note that those obituaries did not make explicit the claim made later by Hirst that Rotimi Fani-Kayode had understood himself to be an abiku. Toyin's talk, which contained references to her brother's "...breath, his life-force, his spirit",[30] can also be seen as containing traces of the future moment when Alex Hirst would make explicit Fani-Kayode's designation as *abiku* – the 'spirit-child'. Indeed, that future moment came just over a month later, when Hirst made his revelations in Rupert Gabriel's film. The figure of *abiku* can thus be seen to haunt Toyin Fani-Kayode's speech and to be prescient within it.

The transcolonial model that engages with both haunting and prescience – past and future – offers a temporal model that differs from post-colonial strategies, such as Bhabha's time-lag. Consider, for instance, the way in which, under the auspices of transcoloniality, post-colonial models such as 'time-lag' give way to the work of foreknowledge. What foreknowledge offers is a means of constituting a present with reference to a future yet to emerge. In this way, transcoloniality can be understood as a rendering of the present as a medium of both the past and the future. This is not the same as making the past and the future immediate to the present. Rather, it concerns questions of how to allow the future and the past to be mediated in the present.

One way of thinking through the issue of how the present can mediate both the past and the future can be addressed by looking at another recent work by Isaac Julien, the film *Baltimore* (2003). Set in the US city of that name, *Baltimore* brings together both the trope of

the museum and the trope of the cyborg to cinematize the tensions of contemporary urban life for those culturally differentiated through race. Such issues are elaborated in *Baltimore* by casting the veteran African American director Melvin van Peebles to play himself journeying to visit a waxwork model of himself held in Baltimore's *Great Blacks in Wax Museum*. Once van Peebles arrives in the museum, he is met by the film's antagonist, a young African American woman who proves to have almost cyborgian, superhuman capabilities. Unfortunately for the van Peebles character, the woman's purpose in journeying to the museum seems to be expressly to kill him.

It can be suggested that in his *Baltimore* Julien cinematized the present as a space of contestation between a past (patriarchal/museumified) and a future (woman-centred/ cyborgized). In terms of a transcolonial temporality, what remains important is to focus on the scene in which the woman, the man, the cyborg and the waxwork are all framed within the space of the museum. Within the confines of Julien's text, the culturally differentiated are brought together with the traces of their past (waxwork) and future potential (cyborg). The dynamic that arises from bringing those aspects together is rendered in Julien's text as antagonistic and violent. Indeed, one could map onto the tension that Julien reads into his text an almost Hegelian struggle to the death. A key issue that arises, then, from a transcolonial temporality is the question of the relation between traces. The variety of approaches to such a question can range from a preoccupation with violent relations to a concern with a rapturous, orgiastic and even ecstatic relation between the spectres of the past and the foreshadows of the future. Indeed, the Hegelian overtones of Julien's cinematic elaboration suggest the possibility of a transcendent moment arising from the tension between past and future traces.

In the light of the foregoing discussion, one could posit a transcolonial temporality as one that always already holds a potential for transcendence. Transcoloniality, in privileging the present as the moment of transcendence, moves away from redemptive models that always privilege the future as the point when tensions between oppressor and oppressed,

colonizer and colonized, master and slave, would be transcended. Such thinking, of course, characterized the drive behind national liberation movements in the twentieth century. By privileging the present, transcoloniality also moves away from post-colonial models in which transcendence was relegated to the status of a forlorn hope carried by spectres from the past. In such terms, Martin Luther King – African American patriarch, museumified, par excellence – can be cited as an example. We are continually told that he *had* a dream. His words can be heard to echo, haunting and insistent, sampled in fusion beats, rap tracks and hip-hop videos. Despite such exhortations, Martin Luther King remains a poignant figure – a man whose political activity should not be divorced from struggles against colonial domination in Algeria and Nigeria, among other African countries, as well as in countries around the world. Notwithstanding that, one must highlight the ways in which the hagiographs circulated around him allow only for particular modes of identification. The recitation of his words concerning his dream precludes the circulation of other paradigms of liberation. Moreover, the more his words are recited the more they become positioned as nothing other than a continuous recitation of forlorn hopes. The pre-eminent model of liberation, then, becomes one that can be disregarded as unworkable and defunct. If we are to avoid such a positioning of political aspiration, if the present is not simply to provide a base-line or drumbeat on which words of transcendence can only be sampled from the past, if we are to let go of the agonizing pessimism that exhausts post-colonial thinking, we need to recognize the present as the ground of transcendence for tensions between the past and the future.

Various conclusions

The circulation of three varying accounts of Fani-Kayode's death – *abiku*, meningitis and heart attack, HIV and AIDS – can be regarded as the result of variance, which is one of the effects of shame. The friction caused by the direction of delegitimizing and legitimizing imperatives at the figure of Fani-Kayode can be seen to have facilitated the emergence of unstable commemorative signs around him. One can explore the implications of that instability in several ways. By addressing *abiku*, one can look at the possibilities of a language

of alterity – a language unsusceptible to the normalizing and pathologizing imperatives directed at the culturally differentiated. The use of French Creole in Julien's *Vagabondia* was discussed as a means of elaborating the effects of languages of alterity.

Toyin Fani-Kayode's account of meningitis and heart attack during her memorial lecture at The Photographers' Gallery was seen here as giving rise to a different set of concerns. Her discussion of her familial relationship with her brother was seen here to provoke the question of the temporal context of her public statement. The cultural position of the Fani-Kayode family, ensconced in traditional Yoruba society while also being well-placed within modern democratic Nigeria's political structures, facilitated a discussion of temporality in relation to the colonial and the post-colonial. The argument referred to debates that emerged from post-colonial thinkers such as Appiah and Bhabha. Their renditions of notions such as 'time-lag' (Bhabha: 1994), which premised a temporality in which the present should not be regarded in terms of a clear breach with the past but should, instead, be seen in terms of being always-already haunted by the past, were discussed. The argument posited the possibility of a 'transcolonial' model of temporality in which the present is seen as being both haunted by the past and prescient of the future.

The relevance of the transcolonial model for a politics of cultural differentiation was seen as lying in the refusal of a progressivist model of modernity, which was also rejected by post-colonial thinkers. The transcolonial model, however, was also seen as privileging a particular kind of futurology in which work around foreknowledge can be done in the present as a way of tracing the precursory aspects of the future. Strategies for a transcolonial model were discussed, particularly in relation to Isaac Julien's film-work, *Baltimore*. The possibility that museumification need not simply provide procedures to effect a repository of the past was considered in relation to the possibility that museumification remains open to tensions produced by traces of the future. Such tensions between past and future traces were seen as bringing forward the possibility of transcendence in the present.

I am aware that the advocacy of 'transcendence in the present' as a hallmark of a transcolonial model remains suspiciously neo-Hegelian. It is right, perhaps, to remain vigilant about any attempt to re-articulate the Hegelianism that characterized the writings of figures such as Frantz Fanon. Particularly in respect of racialized aspects of cultural differentiation, Hegelian transcendence can seem an empty appeal to an already discredited universalism. That is not what is being advocated here, however. Rather, transcendence is posited here only in terms of its potential to transform the tension between traces of the past and future.

---

[1] Transcript of 'The Rotimi Fani-Kayode Memorial Lecture,' The Photographers' Gallery, London, 16 January 1991.

[2] *Techniques of Ecstasy No. 4*, music by Minutemen, 30 Brixton Water Lane, London, 23 February 1991, Friends of Rotimi Fani-Kayode.

[3] Preview screening for *Rage and Desire* (dir. Gabriel, R., UK, 1991), Midland Arts Centre, Birmingham, 23 September 1991.

[4] *Testimony*, Ritzy Café, Brixton, London, December 1996, Big-Up, London (cf., email Michael Cadette to David Dibosa, 30 September 2002).

[5] email: Michael Cadette to David Dibosa, 30 September 2002.

[6] Hirst, A., 'Rotimi Fani-Kayode', obituary to Rotimi Fani-Kayode, *The Independent*, 28 December 1989.

[7] Hirst, A., 'Rotimi Fani-Kayode', obituary to Rotimi-Fani Kayode, *Artrage: Inter-Cultural Arts Magazine*, Winter 1990-91.

[8] op.cit., *The Independent*, 28 December 1989.

[9] Hall, S., commentary on *Rotimi Fani-Kayode: a retrospective*, poster for *Rotimi Fani-Kayode (1955-1989): a retrospective*, Friends of Rotimi Fani-Kayode, 1990.

[10] Bailey, David A., 'Photographic Animateur: The photographs of Rotimi Fani-Kayode in relation to Black photographic practices' *Third Text* 13, Winter 1990/1, p. 61.

[11] Mercer, K., 'Eros & Diaspora', in Sealy, M., & Pivin, J.L., (eds.) Rotimi Fani-Kayode & Alex Hirst: photographs, Editions Revue Noire, Paris & Autograph, London, 1996, p. 111.

[12] Poster for *Rotimi Fani-Kayode (1955-1989): a retrospective*, Friends of Rotimi Fani-Kayode, 1990.

[13] 'Rotimi Fani-Kayode: In Memoriam', *Autograph*: the newsletter of the Association of Black Photographers, December 1989/January 1990.

[14] email: Michael Cadette to David Dibosa, op. cit.,

[15] see Watney, S., Policing Desire: Pornography, AIDS and the Media, Comedia Books, Methuen, London, 1987, pp. 87-90 for a British critical assessment. See Meyer, R., 'Rock Hudson's body' in inside/out: lesbian theories/gay theories, Fuss, D. (ed.) Routledge, 1991, pp. 259-288, for an American critical assessment.

[16] Miller, C., 'Art Antibodies' in *City Limits*, Jan 17-24, 1991, p. 11.

[17] Pascal, J., 'Just words', an obituary for Herve Guibert (1955-1991), Guardian 2 Jan 1992.

[18] In Mars-Jones' short story, 'Slim', the narrator describes his HIV as 'an African infection'. Mars-Jones, A., 'Slim' in The Darker Proof: stories from a crisis, Faber & Faber, London, 1988, p. 4.

[19] Hall, S., commentary on *Rotimi Fani-Kayode: a retrospective,* op. cit.

[20] Alex Hirst interviewed in *Rage and Desire* (dir. Gabriel, R., UK, 1991).

[21] op. cit., p.78.

[22] Interview: Bel Mooney with Ben Okri, *Devout Sceptics*, Dimbleby Partners production, BBC Radio 4, 13 August 2002, 2130-2200.

[23] Ibid.

[24] ibid.

[25] Interview: David Dibosa with Ajamu, London, 26 October 2001.

[26] ibid

[27] For an engaging discussion on the mythologization of artists see Jones, A., Body Art/ Performing the Subject, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1998, esp. pp. 53-86.

[28] A selection from a Coalport porcelain dessert service, dating from between 1805 and 1810, and Thomas Mudge's eight-day marine chronometer remain in the museum collection. (Thornton and Dorey, 1992:90)

[29] Appiah states: "Modernism saw the economization of the world as the triumph of reason." Appiah, K.A., 'The Post-colonial and the postmodern' in Reading the Contemporary: African Art from Theory to the Marketplace, Enwezor, O., and Oguibe, O., (eds), inIVA, London, 1999, p. 58.

[30] Transcript of 'The Rotimi Fani-Kayode Memorial Lecture,' The Photographers' Gallery, London, 16 January 1991.

Chapter two

Elsewhere: re-marking the location of Fani-Kayode's burial-place

Whereas the previous chapter looked at the way in which commemorative marks surrounding Fani-Kayode can lead to a re-thinking of the role of language and temporality in culturally differentiated politics, this chapter addresses the means by which such marks can invite a re-conceptualization of diasporic space. The chapter proposes the notion of 'dispossession' as a way of re-assessing the diasporic subject's loss of 'home'. In pursuit of such arguments, debates on questions of home and belonging, which have preoccupied thinkers over close to three decades (Said, 1978; Gilroy, 1993; Rogoff, 2000) provide the bases for new critical interventions. A fresh look at the key question of the culturally differentiated subject's relation to a diasporic geography is premised in the exploration of material surrounding Fani-Kayode's burial and commemoration in London.

Material circulated during the commemorative exhibition, *Rotimi Fani-Kayode (1955-1989): a retrospective* (1990), stated that Fani-Kayode's, " ...funeral was held on 4 January 1990 at St Pancras Cemetery, London".[1] It was this commemorative mark that provoked an exploration of further commemorative marks surrounding Fani-Kayode's burial. In particular, the wooden cross that marked his grave and the commemorative plaque erected at his former home in South London have been emphasized as starting points for further theorization of issues around the notion of 'home'. Indeed, one stubborn fact provokes the need for further thinking concerning diasporic geographies: Fani-Kayode was buried in London, not in Nigeria. Burial in London meant that his corpse could not undergo the traditional funerary rites that would have been accorded to someone of his status in Nigeria. The implications of Fani-Kayode's burial in London were not commented on in the commemorative materials that were circulated following his death. In terms of this study, the implications of the failure to return Fani-Kayode's corpse to Nigeria raised issues that demanded further debate – questions of shame. The clearest questions linked to shame are

these: did the association of AIDS with Fani-Kayode's death constitute a crisis of legitimacy around the public status that had been granted him both in Britain and in Nigeria? If so, what were the consequences of such a crisis in respect of his funerary rites? Moreover, what inferences can be drawn from his burial in London?

The questions that have so far been posed can be explored by addressing issues surrounding diaspora. Specifically, this chapter formulates the notion of dispossession as a way of looking at the implications that Fani-Kayode's London burial has for an articulation of concerns relating to diaspora. The notion of dispossession acts as a way of taking further the series of conceptualizations elaborated in Britain during the 1980s as regards the problem of diaspora and its relation to space. Dislocation, rather than dispossession, featured as a central issue among such conceptualizations. An exhibition at Kettle's Yard Gallery, Cambridge, for instance, went by the title of *Dislocations* (1987). The exhibition featured, among others, artists such as Zarina Bhimji, whose work continued to play a major role in debates surrounding identity and difference in the context of visual arts practice and criticism in late-twentieth-century Britain.[2] The progress of the argument in this chapter shows that an exploration of Fani-Kayode's burial in terms of shame can facilitate an abandonment of the notion of dislocation in favour of dispossession. In such terms, dispossession can work as a theoretical device facilitating a re-appraisal of culturally differentiated politics around diaspora. Such a move can be regarded as a means of engaging with a range of experiences, such as AIDS-related deaths, that had not, at that point, been articulated fully within a critical sphere and had not, consequently, impinged critically on notions such as dislocation. Dispossession is explored in terms of such concerns.

This chapter addresses dispossession in the following ways: the first section, *Shame and a burial: a funeral in London*, discusses the way in which Fani-Kayode's burial in London can be understood in terms of shame; the following section, *Dispossession: a death away from home,* addresses the notion of home as a site of return. The efficacy of dispossession as a way of re-assessing the importance of home as a site of return is elaborated in that section;

the subsequent section, *Disjunctive relocation*, explores the implications of a commemorative geography that localized Fani-Kayode within the confines of London; the next section, *Mourning archivization,* focuses on the way in which the role of archiving in relation to politics of cultural differentiation can be re-appraised; the final section, *Steps taken in search of Rotimi Fani-Kayode's resting place*, enacts disruptive effects by initiating a dispersal of fragments from this chapter throughout the thesis. Those fragments take the form of maps. The maps cover the researcher's attempts to locate Rotimi Fani-Kayode's grave. Street-plans covering the areas in London where the researcher conducted his search bear specific marks describing the tone of the search – anxious, languid, calm etc – as well as delineating routes taken. In addition, the maps consist of descriptions of atmosphere, of people encountered and of observations made during the search. The role of the maps is to enact a performative exploration of the problem of dispersal. The geography of the thesis itself is problematized by the elaboration of the question of where to place materials that fall beyond the confines of an analytical engagement with research.

The question of where to place material that falls outside of the analytical aspects of this inquiry can be sutured to concerns raised by Derrida in works such as Aporias (1993). In that work, Derrida raised, *inter alia*, the issue of demarcation. He framed his question in terms of the drawing of an edge-line, suggesting:

> There is a problem as soon as the edge-line is threatened. And it is threatened from its first tracing. (1993:11)

The means by which a line can institute an 'inside' and an 'outside' while at the same time protecting itself from being interminably divided between an inside and an outside played an important role in Derrida's interrogation of demarcation. In respect of drawing a line between the analytical content of this thesis and the content that might be termed non-analytical, the problem appears pressing. As a means of exploring the issue, the dispersed fragments of this chapter are set up to disrupt the conventional demarcation of analytical material – contained within a thesis – and emotional content – placed outside a thesis. Such a disruption is enacted by admitting emotional content into the space proper to critical analysis. The hope is

that the conventional priorities awarded to analytical content in a thesis can be questioned in respect of the emotional investment that has been made in the work.

Shame and a burial: a funeral in London

An understanding of Fani-Kayode's burial in London with reference to shame becomes clearer through an understanding of the social position of Fani-Kayode's family in Nigeria. As has been commented on in the previous chapter, material circulated around the retrospective exhibition *Rotimi Fani-Kayode (1955-1989): a retrospective* (1990) showed that Fani-Kayode's family held an ancestral title within traditional Yoruba culture.[3] The title of 'Akire' or Keeper of the Shrine of deities and priests at Ife is a key theocratic title. Ife has been recognized as one of the primary spiritual and intellectual centres in Yorubaland, southWestern Nigeria, and, consequently, as one of the key sources of excavations for antiquities in Nigeria [4]. In circumstances where the deceased belonged to a family that had been accorded such prestigious status in one of Nigeria's spiritual heartlands, it might be considered pertinent to ask why Fani-Kayode's body was not flown back to Nigeria for burial.

Although it has not been possible to ascertain the specific rites that might have been accorded to a son of the Akire family in circumstances of a conventional death, it is possible to underline the importance of the presence of the corpse within traditional Yoruba funerary rites as a whole. Scholars of Yoruba belief systems, such as Awolalu (Awolalu, 1979), have emphasized the importance of the ceremonial treatment of a corpse:

> Great importance is attached to the washing of the corpse because it is believed that one has to be clean in order to be admitted to the abode of the ancestors. It is believed that if a corpse is not washed in the ceremonial way, it will have no place with the ancestors and will become a wandering ghost...
>
> (ibid: 55)

Other scholars of traditional Yoruba beliefs, such as Oyewo and Olaoba, concur with Awolalu's view (Oyewo and Olaoba, 1999: 188). The importance, then, of the washing of the

corpse within traditional Yoruba culture readmits the question surrounding the absence of Fani-Kayode's corpse from any funerary rites that may have taken place in Nigeria.

Without rehearsing the debate on HIV and AIDS explored in the previous chapter, it might be useful to point towards some of the ramifications of that debate for the issues under consideration here. One can, for instance, refer to the fact that during her commemorative address at The Rotimi Fani-Kayode Memorial Lecture in 1991[5], Fani-Kayode's sister, Toyin Fani-Kayode, did not mention HIV or AIDS in relation to her brother's death. In respect of this, one can consider the possibility that Rotimi Fani-Kayode's family did not want to take his body back to Nigeria because of the shame attached to HIV and AIDS. As has already been pointed out in the preceding chapter, discourses circulating around AIDS in 1980s Britain and the United States associated the syndrome with Africa (Dada in Boffin and Gupta, 1990: 90; Sontag, 1991: 137). In giving attention to the fact that Africans would have been aware of the negative association of Africans with AIDS during the 1980s, one could suggest that such a context of awareness precluded the possibility of Fani-Kayode's body being taken back to Nigeria for burial.

There are, however, further considerations that must be taken into account other than the crisis of legitimacy that might have premised shame through the association of an AIDS-related death with a prestigious Nigerian family. One must also consider the workings of shame within the context of London in the late 1980s and the effects that this might have had on the ability to remove from England a corpse associated with AIDS. It might seem strange to suggest that issues of shame could have had an effect on a matter as drastic as the removal of a corpse from a country. However, by giving consideration to the context in which funerary practices, such as embalming, took place in late 1980s London, it becomes possible to explore Fani-Kayode's London burial further in terms of shame.

Let us first consider what are known as 'the conditions of carriage for a corpse'. Legal stipulations set out a number of conditions concerning the removal of a corpse from England.

Under the Births and Deaths Registration Act (1926), a specific 'Out of England' order has to be attained from a coroner in order to remove a corpse from England to another country (Knight, 1984: 64)[6]. There are also stipulations made for funeral directors surrounding the preparation of a corpse for carriage. A corpse has to be certified as 'Free from Infection' (FFI) by a medical practitioner. If the corpse is to be airborne, it also has to be placed in a zinc-lined coffin, so the edges can be soldered to avoid leakage, as cargo decks are not pressurized (ibid). Certain funeral directors insist that corpses should be hessian-wrapped and that they should be 'tropically embalmed'[7]. Tropical embalming is a process more invasive and thorough than standard embalming. The inability to fly Fani-Kayode's body back to Nigeria could relate to this question of tropical embalming. Since embalming is at the discretion of embalmers, it is possible that fears about HIV and AIDS in the late 1980s had an adverse effect on embalmers in London. As was stated by one of the key members of Friends of Rotimi Fani-Kayode, Michael Cadette, the late 1980s represented "times when much taboo and misinformation surrounded HIV".[8] One could suggest that such a context of 'taboo and misinformation' prevented embalmers from tropically embalming Fani-Kayode's corpse and thereby facilitating its carriage to Nigeria.

One must, of course, give consideration to explanations of Fani-Kayode's London burial that cannot be associated with any crisis of legitimacy and, therefore, do not involve matters of shame. One such possibility concerns primary legislation around HIV and AIDS. Public health legislation in England and Wales was overhauled during the 1980s. The Public Health (Control of Diseases) Act 1984 set out a list of 'notifiable' diseases that were subject to particular governmental attention. Specifically, where notifiable diseases were involved, regulations and restrictions were applied to the means of disposal of a corpse and to the period that a body could be retained on any premises.[9] Medical officers and the Chief Medical Officer also had to be notified of the occurrence of notifiable diseases.[10] Interestingly, neither HIV nor AIDS was classed as a 'notifiable' disease in England and Wales in the Public Health (Control of Diseases) Act 1984, although cholera, plague, relapsing fever, smallpox and typhus were.[11] This is possibly because HIV and AIDS are not contagious. Neither HIV

nor AIDS, then, was subject to the regulatory regime applied to notifiable diseases in 1984. However, AIDS was subject to a requirement to report its occurrence to the Secretary of State for Health, through the AIDS (Control) Act 1987[12]. The key question concerning the regulatory apparatus in force at the time of Fani-Kayode's death arises from section 43 of the Public Health (Control of Diseases) Act 1984. This section allows a registered medical practitioner to prevent the body of someone who has died from a notifiable disease from being removed from hospital, "except for the purpose of being taken direct to a mortuary or being forthwith buried and cremated ".[13] Furthermore, the Act stipulated that:

> ...when the body is removed for the purpose of burial or cremation from the hospital...it shall forthwith be taken direct to some place of burial or crematorium and there be buried or cremated.[14]

Significantly, for the purposes of this section, AIDS is listed as an additional disease to which its stipulations should apply.[15] It is possible that Fani-Kayode's body was subject to section 43 of the Public Health Act 1984 and therefore had to be taken directly to a mortuary and on to a place of burial after his death. In such circumstances, it would be difficult to suggest that shame should be considered.

It could be useful to view the regulatory apparatus surrounding AIDS in 1980s Britain from a Foucauldian perspective by suggesting that clinicians were being invited to act as authorities putting into effect 'dividing practices' (Rabinow, 1991: 8-12). Such authorities could be seen to set up classificatory protocols that divided corpses associated with AIDS from corpses that were not. Through such an approach, one would not have to establish that the stipulations of the Public Health Act 1984 were directly applied to Fani-Kayode's corpse. Rather, one could point to the discursive formations that enabled corpses associated with AIDS to be classified separately from other corpses and therefore to be treated differently. Such a point stresses the need to look at the context within which an AIDS-related corpse might have been positioned.

A reference to context can be made in light of the fact that it has not been possible, within the limits of existing research materials, to state with any certainty the reasons why Fani-Kayode's corpse was not taken to Nigeria for burial. The negative connotations of AIDS, particularly as regards a man from a prestigious Nigerian family, have to be considered. Equally, the actions of embalmers operating in an AIDS-phobic environment might have been responsible. Still further, juridical precepts surrounding AIDS-related deaths might also have played a part. The issues that have arisen in relation to the exploration of such possibilities all point towards a particular significance attached to an AIDS-related corpse.

Dispossession: a death away from home

What issues arise in relation to the suggestion that Fani-Kayode's burial in London can be associated with a crisis of legitimacy that premises shame,? First, one can question the level of importance that should be placed on the lack of a final return to the land of his birth. Should one accept uncritically the figuration of home as a site of return in relation to death?

The suggestion that in death one should be returned to the land of one's birth can be seen as deeply embedded in generalized responses to death. Historians of death, such as Thomas Lynch, have discussed events, like war, that cause widespread deaths away from home. Such discussions underline a reification of the 'motherland' as a privileged site of return. Lynch, for instance, discussed the way that the American Civil War gave rise to embalming technologies as a means of preserving bodies until they could be returned home (Lynch, 1997: 27). Death theorist Elisabeth Bronfen commented on the preoccupations within Western thought that underpin the links between burial and the motherland:

> The lack of boundaries between concepts such as 'womb', 'tomb', 'home' is traditionally linked to the analogy between earth and mother...Death is here conceptualized as the return to a symbiotic unity, to the peace before the difference and tension of life, to the protective enclosure before individuation and culturation.
> (Bronfen, 1992: 65)

Such conceptualizations of death can be seen as facilitating the emergence of discourses on the legitimacy and illegitimacy of certain spaces of death and disposal. Certain spaces of disposal can be rendered as legitimate – 'earth', 'motherland' – while others are rendered illegitimate – 'exile', 'exposed ground'. The Burial Act of 1852, for instance, made it unlawful in England and Wales to dispose of a corpse on an open highway. Such a disposal can thereby be seen as rendered illegitimate by juridical precept. The disposed corpse would, in such circumstances, become susceptible to shame.

The way in which the disposal of a corpse becomes susceptible to shame is exemplified in accounts of the burial of Roger Casement, whose shaming as a traitor in war-time Britain is dealt with elsewhere in this thesis. Colm Toibin commented on Casement's burial in quicklime in Pentonville Prison (Toibin, 2003: 92). Such a funerary practice can be rendered as illegitimate and should, therefore, be seen as leaving Casement's corpse susceptible to shame. Such shame might have been part of the punitive regime surrounding Casement. One might note, for instance, Toibin's comment that British official documents suggested that Casement was buried next to the notorious murderer Dr Crippen (ibid.: 93) – an association that might bring further shaming. One might note that a significant moment in the rehabilitation of Casement occurred when he was removed from his place of burial in Pentonville Prison and later re-interred. Toibin recounted the moment when Casement's remains were "returned to Ireland by Harold Wilson's government in February 1965" (ibid: 92), explaining how Casement's previously uncoffinated bones were coffinated and "buried in Glasnevin Cemetery beside others who had fought and suffered for the cause of Ireland: Daniel O'Connell, Charles Stewart Parnell, Paddy Dignam". (ibid.: 93). The place of burial can be seen, then, to invite legitimization and delegitimization. It thereby becomes highly susceptible to shame.

The reification of the 'motherland' as the legitimate space of disposal, *par excellence*, however, is troubled by debates on diaspora, exile and migration that question the notion of home. Consider the discussion of 'home' among cultural practitioners in 1980s Britain. The

visual artists Mona Hatoum and Rasheed Araeen, for instance, generated a deeply ambivalent response to the notion of home in the diasporic context, questioning whether an ethnic origin could ever be wholly recaptured or represented. How should one read Fani-Kayode's death 'away from home' against the background of artistic and critical practices that interrogated the salience of the notion of 'home'? Do such artistic and critical preoccupations become redundant when one considers 'home' in as pressured a context as death? Works such as Mona Hatoum's video-work *Measures of Distance* (1988) can be seen as central to such issues.

In *Measures of Distance*, Hatoum, an artist in self-imposed exile from the war-torn Lebanon, staged an attempt to re-establish contact with her family at home. A series of letters exchanged between Hatoum and her mother were read out by the artist on the soundtrack of the work. The visuals consisted of a sequence of photographs, primarily of Hatoum's mother in the Lebanon. The notion of home was questioned in two key ways in the work. First, consideration had to be given to the fact that Hatoum's family were Palestinian, so the suggestion that the Lebanon should have been considered as their 'home' became questionable. Secondly, the visual plane in the video-work was disrupted by the super-imposition of the text of Arabic letters exchanged between Hatoum and her mother. The text was super-imposed across the surface of the photographs. Through those devices, both the notion of 'home' and that of 'memory' was questioned in Hatoum's work.

Rasheed Araeen's works from the late 1970s and 1980s can also be considered in terms of a diasporic engagement with the notion of home. Works such as *I Love It, It Loves I* (1978-83), questioned the need to make legible a notion of ethnic origin that could be rendered as 'home'. As John Roberts, commenting on Araeen's 1988 retrospective, said, Araeen's references to his Pakistani background refuse nostalgia but instead are rather 'contradictory' and close to 'fiction':

> ...in Araeen's recovery of the ritualized aspects of his culture in *I Love It, It Loves I* (1978-83), and *Green Painting* (1985-86),

fig 2.1 Rasheed Araeen, *I love it, It loves I,* 1978-83
(12 colour photographs with text in Urdu and English)

> there is no hint of nostalgia for a less differentiated culture or past. By staging the slaughter of a goat (in commemoration of Abraham's sacrifice) in *I Love It, It Loves I* as a performance for the camera, the question of cultural identity as an impossibly contradictory object...is presented as a kind of fiction.
>
> (Roberts in Araeen, Kingston and Payne, eds, 1988: 21)

Looking at the work of artists like Hatoum and Araeen, one can see how, in 1980s Britain, notions of ethnic origin, background and home were not reified. Instead they were treated as repositories of material to be re-worked in the generation of the fictions that make up identity. How such notions should be treated in the event of death was not a question explicitly approached within such artistic and critical debates. However, since Fani-Kayode lived and worked within the artistic and critical context that questioned conventional understandings of home, one can suggest that his own burial should be treated as an extension of that interrogation. Do cyclical models of death in which one returns to the 'motherland' or 'the land of the forefathers' become less useful when one begins to re-assess the possibilities of death and burial elsewhere?

In some sense, Fani Kayode's burial in London can be seen as an intensification of the debates around dislocation and exile that emphasized the way in which diaspora disturbed any conventional notion of origin. Fani-Kayode's death 'elsewhere' can be de-problematized in the context of such debates: there is no problem in burial away from home. The problem can be framed rather in terms of a reification of a notion of 'home'. Through such an understanding, new theoretical possibilities arise. The deproblematization of a death and burial elsewhere allows one to consider, for instance, the notion of 'no return'. In counter-valorizing the notion of 'no return', one begins to support a conceptualization of migration that refuses the migrant subject the opportunity to recover his/her past. Such a refusal can be seen as central to a notion of dispossession. Political discourses, particularly those associated with the Israel -/ Palestine question, have intensified the implications of any consideration of the notion of 'no return'.

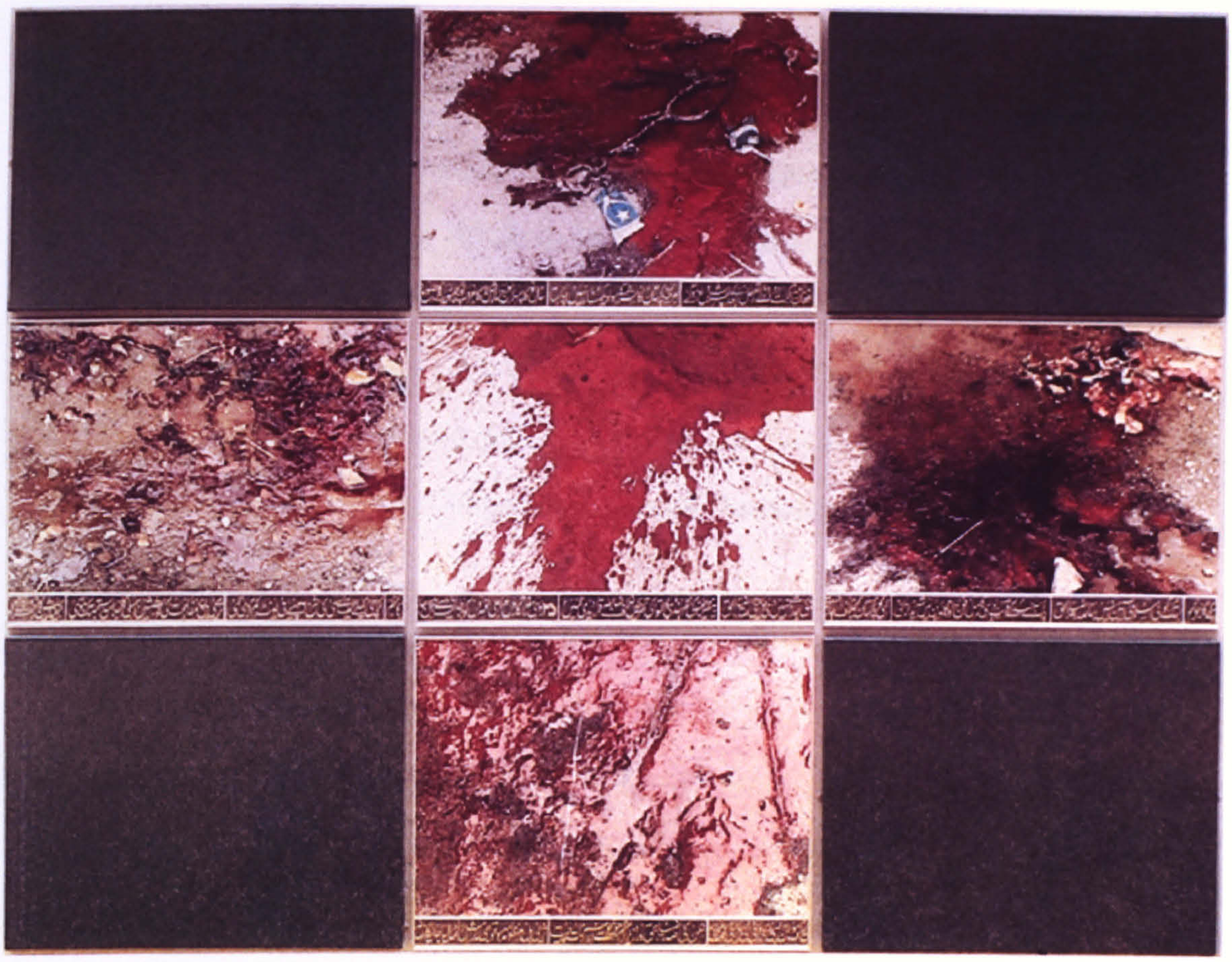


fig 2.2 Rasheed Araeen, *Green Painting*, 1985-6
(mixed media, nine panels)

The challenging of the right of return for Palestinian refugees remains at the core of the Israel - / Palestine dispute to date, as does the challenge of an historic right of Jews to return to pre-diasporic territories. Notwithstanding those political implications, it becomes crucial for this study to re-appraise the notion of 'no return', particularly in the light of a de-problematization of a death 'elsewhere'.

The notion of 'no return' can be seen to impact on the way in which diasporic geographies have been conceptualized. One can explore such impact with particular reference to an Africanized notion of diaspora. The move to address an Africanized notion of diaspora is designed here to step away from the specificities of the discussion that arises when one focuses on issues of Palestinian and Jewish diasporas. That is not to say that an Africanized notion of diaspora is easier to de-politicize. However, it is to suggest that for the time being, at least, the issues appear to be less contentious. The notion of a return to Africa can be seen as key in cultural productions in the 1990s that commented on the black Atlantic diaspora. Consider, for instance, the Nobel laureate Derek Walcott's epic poem, Omeros (1990). In the narrative, primarily set in St Lucia, one of the two characters, Achille, leaves St Lucia for Africa in search of his father. His journey is characterized as a return home:

> And God said to Achille, "Look, I giving you permission
> to come home. Is I send the sea-swift as a pilot,
> the swift whose wings is the sign of my crucifixion.
> And thou shalt have no God should in case you forgot
> my commandments." And Achille felt the homesick shame
> and pain of his Africa...
> (Walcott, 1990: 134)

A sophisticated geography arose out of Walcott's figuration of Africa as a place to return, one in which multiple sites – St Lucia and Africa - were seen as available for the diasporic subject to claim as home. In Walcott's diasporic geography, a continental dynamism arose whereby

places, not just people, were seen to migrate. Both sides of the Atlantic – the Caribbean and Africa – come together and were sutured in Walcott's vision:

> I followed a sea-swift to both sides of this text;
> Her hyphen stitched its seam, like the interlocking
> Basins of a globe in which one half fits the next
> into an equator, both shores neatly clicking
> into a globe; except that its meridian
> was not North and South but East and West. One, the New
>
> World. Made exactly like the Old, halves of one brain,
> or the beat of both hands rowing that bear the two
> vessels of the heart with balance, weight, and design.
>
> Her wing-beat carries these islands to Africa,
> she sewed the Atlantic rift with a needle's line,
> the rift in the soul...
> (ibid: 319)

The notion of 'no return' refuses the possibility of such a suture. It blows apart the geography that is posited by multiple locations being made available to be claimed as home. It also challenges Paul Gilroy's suggestion in his influential work The Black Atlantic (1993) that the African Atlantic diaspora can be negotiated by reference to a rhizomorphic geography (Gilroy, 1993: 4). In terms of Gilroy's notion of the rhizomorphic[16], one can approach the notion of home not in relation to any fixed place but rather in relation to a rhizomorph – a movement of subjects between places. Within the models offered by both Walcott and Gilroy, then, the shift is towards a conceptualization of geography in terms of a movement, of either people or places, not between fixed points but across a dynamic plane. Thus movement becomes

morphology rendered not in terms of points but shapes – hence the Atlantic triangle. One can posit further morphologies in the same vein – the Baltic circle (Helsinki, Stockholm, Tallin, St Petersburg), for instance. 'No return', however, does not allow for the closure premised in such morphologies. It allows only for the movement premised in the extension of a line.

If 'no return' premises the extension of a line without the recuperable effects of a return, one has to consider, in such respect, a commitment to loss. In such terms, loss becomes the guarantee or, rather, the condition of the extension of a line. There can only be a going forward on condition that there is no turning back. The scenario of 'no return' is underscored by conditionality. The 'not turning back' acts as the condition of movement. As such, the scenario of 'no return' always carries an 'if'. If there is no turning back the movement along the line can take place.

In reflection on issues of 'no return', let us consider the biblical story of Lot and his wife (Genesis, 19: 12-30). They can be a seen as exemplary figures in a discussion of what it might mean to embrace 'no return'. Told by angels, who were dressed as men, to run for their lives in flight from the doomed city of Sodom, and specifically instructed not to look back on the destruction of their home town, Lot and his wife met different fates. Lot became a figure of escape – escaping first from Sodom and then from the town to which he had fled, Zoar, eventually living with his daughters in a cave. Lot's wife, on the other hand, failed to adhere to the command not to look back. Her turning back cost her her life, as she was transformed into a pillar of salt. Such a transformation becomes emblematic of the cost of the failure to embrace 'no return' at a moment when it becomes imperative. How might one reflect on the narrative of Lot's wife? Consider her transformation: a pillar of salt – monumental and saline, hygienic but lifeless, remaining crystalline and refusing flow. 'no return', in such regard, becomes an emblem of flow, not of crystallization. It demands a conceptualization of subjectivity that remains not only malleable and mutable but also, like Lot himself, able to continually unburden itself of its past.

The entirety of Fani-Kayode's life cannot be rendered in terms of 'no return'. Rather, one must also reflect on the three sides of the Atlantic triangle that featured heavily in the characterizations of his life emerging from commemorative marks such as the obituary written by Alex Hirst and published in *The Independent* newspaper.[17] In the obituary, Fani-Kayode's life was described thus: early life in Nigeria interrupted by a military coup; schooldays in England; studying art at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.; postgraduate training in photography at New York's Pratt Institute; a return to England to settle "living modestly in Brixton".[18] Nigeria – England – Washington – New York – London: Fani-Kayode's life movements can be seen as a playing out of the rhizomorphic possibilities of the black Atlantic. The notion of 'no return', however, shifts the geographical morphology based on multiple locations. In 'no return', consideration must be given to the preclusion of a return to certain places within the rhizomorph. The emphasis thereby shifts to incompletion. Proverbial circles can never be completed. Cultural triangles can never be closed. Rather than geographic morphologies based on triangles and circles, one has to begin to think of incomplete morphologies based on arcs and spirals.

Another aspect of the notion of 'no return' is the exhaustion of rhizomorphic possibilities. The suggestion here is that the (dis)location of Fani-Kayode's corpse within a rhizomorphic geography of 'the black Atlantic triangle' demonstrates the exhaustion of the rhizomorphic possibilities of that geography. It highlights the importance of the fact that there are points within diasporic geography to which one cannot return. Such an exhaustion of rhizomorphic possibilities can be discussed with reference to Fani-Kayode's own work. Consider, for instance, the way in which Fani-Kayode himself positioned his diasporic movement in relation to his creative output. Quoted posthumously in a bio-documentary, Fani-Kayode was purported to have said:

> I left Africa as a refugee over twenty years ago. A distance has developed between myself and my origins. Forbidden areas of creative enquiry have opened up to me. Where traces of my former values remain, I take new readings of them from an

unusual angle...the results are disorientating.[19]

Such disorientation can be seen not only as key to an understanding of Fani-Kayode's work but also as a direct implication of the exhaustion of the rhizomorph. The former values have to be re-read in a disorienting fashion because something has been lost – one cannot return.

Cultural theorist Irit Rogoff discussed disorientation in relation to loss when she commented on Salman Rushdie's notion of disorientation in terms of 'the loss of the East'[20]. Her comments, made in the context of a re-thinking of post-colonial theory, suggest that conventional geo-political awareness based on a model of expansion – discovery of new lands, new planets and so on – can be supplemented by a geo-political model premised on loss. Although Rogoff's discussion could take the debate here towards an exploration of Orientalism, or, perhaps, more accurately, 'de-orientalization', it would be more pertinent to this argument to engage with the question of loss in the African context. For, Fani-Kayode's artwork, viewed as an exploration of disorientation, can be seen to stress loss. Through works such as *Cargo of the Middle Passage* (1989), *Half-opened eyes twins*[21], and *The Way*, loss can be seen as central to Fani-Kayode's engagement with diaspora. By addressing loss not only as loss of direction – disorientation – but also as part of a broader dispossession – loss of Africa and loss of home – one can move towards an articulation of a cultural politics based on a radical dispossession, privileging not models of return but rather models of 'no return', not models of recovery but models of exhaustion.

One can explore the engagement with loss in Fani-Kayode's work by looking at dispossession elaborated in terms of loss of vision. In one of the last pieces made by Fani-Kayode, *Cargo of the Middle Passage*, loss of vision emerges as part of his engagement with a key emblem of the historical black Atlantic triangle - the Middle Passage. Fani-Kayode's *Cargo* engages with the question of loss by depicting the Middle Passage as provoking a loss of sight. *Cargo of the Middle Passage* is a gum-bichromate work tinted red. It depicts a naked black male figure seated in darkness, right hand covering right eye, left hand covering left eye – the figure cannot see. The gestural device in the work – hands covering eyes – points

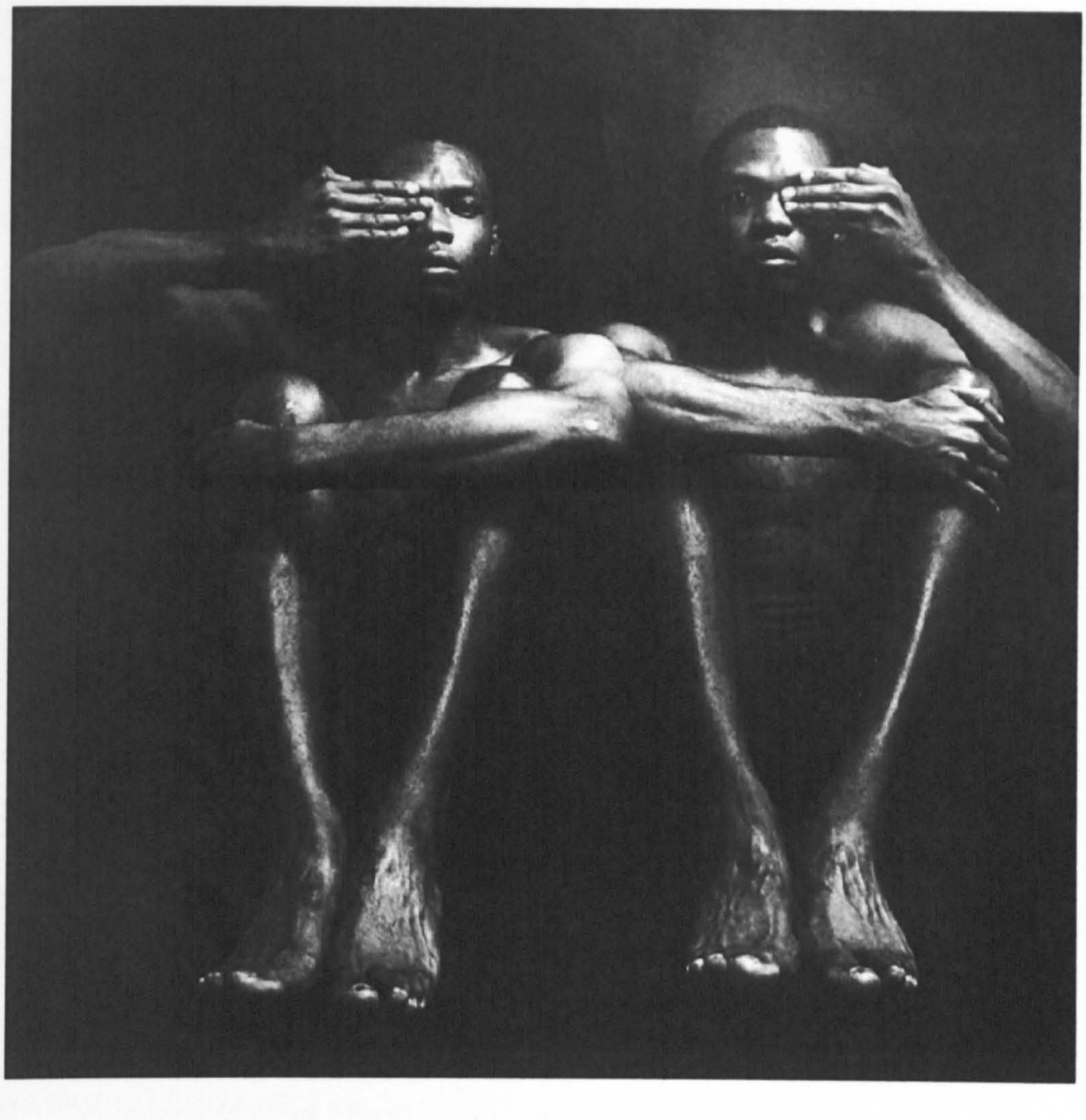


fig 2.3 Rotimi Fani-Kayode, *Half Opened Eyes Twins*
(silver gelatine print)

towards a deliberate refusal to return the gaze. The exchange of looks between spectator and spectacle is pointedly interrupted, thereby troubling the role of the gaze in the work of history. Fani-Kayode's depiction of the Middle Passage does not provide a site for the gaze to rest. *Cargo of the Middle Passage* thereby questions the role of visibility in attempts to engage with the Middle Passage.

Rendered as a commemorative mark when it was used in an obituary written by Alex Hirst and published in the art magazine, *Artrage* [22] Fani-Kayode's *Cargo of the Middle Passage* accrues significance in its relationship to a wider debate among cultural practitioners in the 1990s concerning the implications of a black Atlantic diaspora. For instance, Fani-Kayode's approach to representations of the Middle Passage could be compared with other works that emerged soon after Fani-Kayode's piece appeared. Keith Piper's *A Ship called Jesus* (1991), with its fragments of glass and reflected light, proposed that a complex visual strategy was demanded for effective engagement with issues surrounding the Middle Passage. Piper's *Rites of Passage* (1991) featured video projections across walls and over a tank of water together with a playback of a sound-recording of waves. It proposed a collection of visual and aural effects as a way of approaching an encounter with the Middle Passage.

Caryl Phillips' narrative strategy in his work Crossing the River (1993) could be seen as just as complex as the visual strategies employed by Fani-Kayode and Piper. Phillips' work generated a narrative fractured into a range of narrative voices, through the use of ship's journal entries, letters and diary entries to relay the narrative. Phillips rejected the conventional counterpoint of narration and dialogue. He not only insisted on fracturing his narrative through a range of modes of address, he also split his story across two hundred and fifty years, using five episodes to explore different aspects of the story: a father selling his children into slavery; the relationship between a nineteenth-century slave-owner and one of his 'most successful blacks'; a black woman from Virginia heading westward in post-slavery Colorado; a slave-ship going through the Middle Passage; a black GI in war-time Britain.

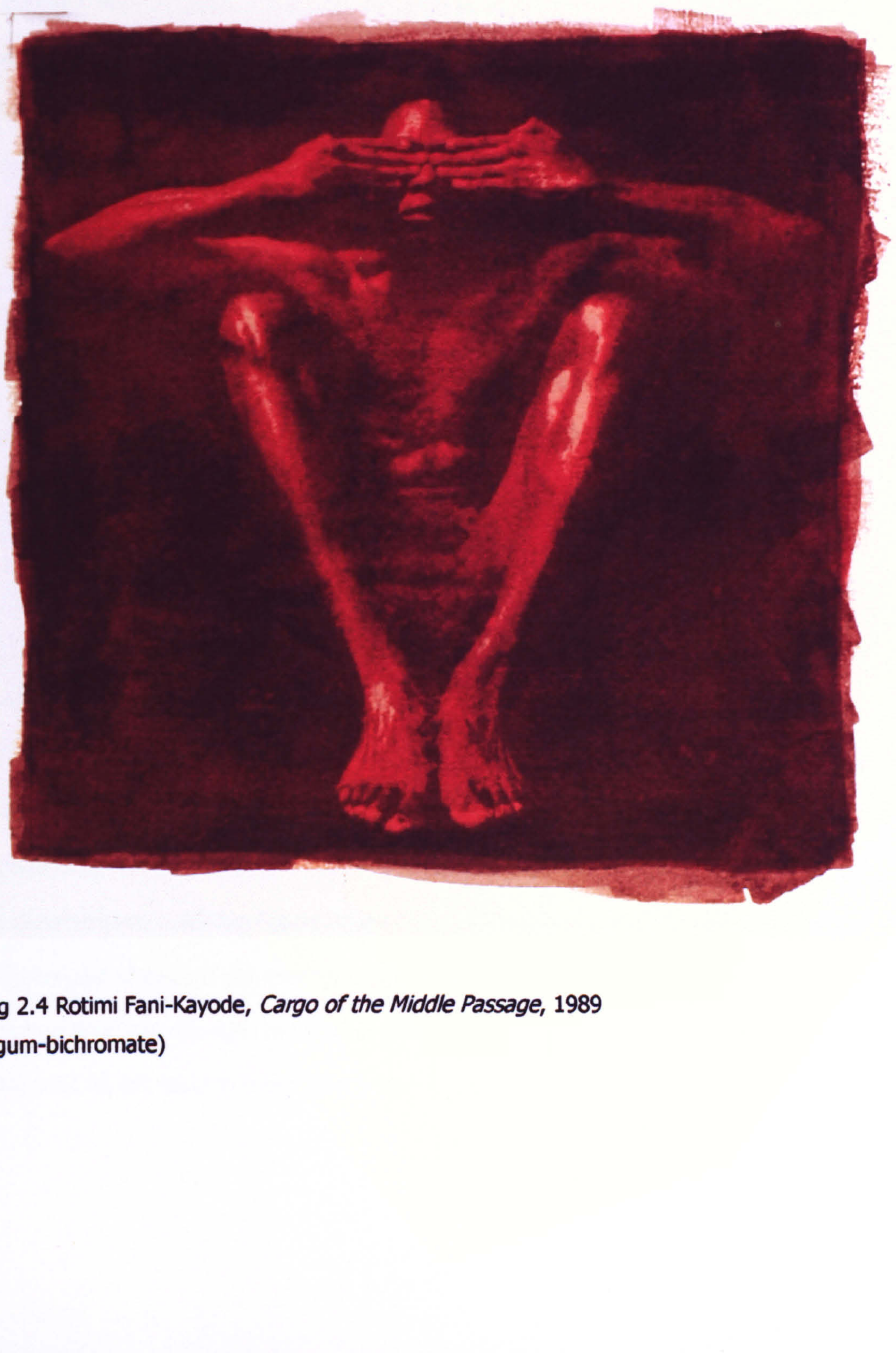


fig 2.4 Rotimi Fani-Kayode, *Cargo of the Middle Passage*, 1989
(gum-bichromate)

Phillips' concern as a novelist was, of course, how the story could be told. Piper and Fani-Kayode wrestled with the question of how the episode could be depicted.

Fani-Kayode's particular approach is characterized here as dispossessing. In *Cargo of the Middle Passage*, the possibility that the gaze could rest on the surface of the image is stalled by the placing of hands where eyes should return the gaze. The invitation of the gaze to rest on the surface of the image can be seen as the key role assigned to painting in classic Lacanian theory (Lacan, 1998:109). In Lacanian terms, rather than acting as a mask behind which hover the pupils of another gaze, *Cargo* acts more like a blindfold (ibid: 107). Dispossession can be recognized in the shift from mask to blindfold. The blindfold represents the loss of vision in the depicted figure. It is also a denial of rest for the spectator's gaze. The spectator is shut out. The spectatorial gaze can only drift over the surface of the image searching futilely for an entrance because *Cargo* refuses to en-trance the gaze. This dispossessing approach can be contrasted with the fragmentary approaches found in Piper's visual strategy in *A Ship called Jesus* and in Phillips' narrative strategy in *Crossing the River*. Such a characterization of Fani-Kayode's *Cargo of the Middle Passage* can contribute to an understanding of Fani-Kayode's wider project.

The visual strategy developed by Fani-Kayode in his *Cargo of the Middle Passage* can be related to other works in his oeuvre. The figure depicted in *Cargo of the Middle Passage,* for instance, has its parallels in a series of earlier works by Fani-Kayode that disturbed the resting of the gaze by impeding the possibility of vision among the figures depicted. Fani-Kayode's *Half-Opened Eyes Twins,* for example, shared features of composition with *Cargo of the Middle Passage,* although the *Twins* piece was not a gum-bichromate and used two figures instead of one. The work consisted of two black male figures seated next to one another in similar postures. However, the twin seated on the picture right uses his right hand to cover his right eye while the twin seated on the picture left uses his left hand to cover his left eye. The effects of *Half-Opened Eyes Twins* are similar

to *Cargo of the Middle Passage* in that the resting of the gaze is disturbed by the raising of a hand to cover the eye. The effect is partial, of course, in *Half-Opened Eyes Twins*.

In another, earlier work, *The Way*, it appears that two figures have been blindfolded while one holds up a hand as if gesturing, in a futile manner, that he knows the way. In this sense, the work brings up the question of disorientation. On closer engagement with the image, however, one also recognizes that the two figures consist of one image of a man superimposed on another image of the same man. The effect of the double exposure is to make both figures seem as if they are floating – not secure within the frame. This again disturbs the resting of the gaze. On the basis of this, then, Fani-Kayode's work should not be considered as privileging the possibility of a clear vision or an untroubled gaze within his visual strategy. Rather, Fani-Kayode's work points towards problematic visual strategies that focus on trouble and loss.

In considering the disturbed gaze that appears in a range of Fani-Kayode's pieces, one can conclude that any sense of a clear vision of home or a notion of home as a privileged site of return cannot be proposed without a radical refusal of the implications of Fani-Kayode's work. In accepting the full implications of the work, one would have to move to a suggestion that the notion of home as a site of return is untenable and that, therefore, the notion of 'no return' becomes more salient. A significant aspect of Fani-Kayode's work comments on loss: loss of direction that amounts to disorientation, a loss of vision, a loss of home. One can suggest that such losses point to the importance of dispossession. Fani-Kayode's work points towards a diasporic subject dispossessed of Africa. His burial in London reinforces that sense of dispossession. The notion of 'no return' emphasizes that dispossession as a dispossession without recuperation.

By moving dispossession to the centre of a politics of cultural differentiation, one proposes a discontinuity in which places are put out of reach of the diasporic subject. For the diasporic subject has always already passed the point of 'no return'. That is to say that places

fig 2.5 Rotimi Fani-Kayode, *The Way*
(silver gelatine print)

to which the subject has been attached places through which the subject has, possibly, been constituted, are put out of the subject's reach. To suggest that the subject has been dispossessed of a place, however, does not mean that a place can not repossess the subject. Indeed, one can suggest that a place can reach or even overtake (surprise) the subject. In the light of such arguments, one can see how the corollary of 'no return' is the emergence of an 'hauntology'. Such an 'hauntology' would not consist of a haunting by another who returns – the revenant – but a haunting by a place that revisits the subject. To be haunted by a place is not, of course, to be in possession of it. Rather to be haunted by a place is precisely to be dispossessed of it and re-possessed by it. Put another way, one could say: it is not I that takes hold of the place; it is the place that takes hold of me. Within such an understanding, it is possible that a place of 'no return' refuses even to haunt the subject. In such cases, the loss is absolute.

What becomes of the subject committed to loss? How far might such a commitment impact on the viability of the subject, on his/her ability to enjoy day-to-day experience, on her/his capacity to negotiate the series of social obligations that have hitherto made human experience sustainable? A commitment to loss could be seen as a threat to all that. It could be viewed as taking too much away from the vitality needed for enjoyment and reflection. However, such a view can only be substantiated where loss becomes opposed to life, where loss *sub*tracts from the ability to enjoy and the capacity to negotiate. If loss, on the other hand, is seen as a *de*traction necessary to sustain life – as that which provides the potential content and implication of our deaths – then loss ceases to be a threat to life and becomes, instead, its guarantee.

How one responds to loss is a question provoked by the counter-valorizations conveyed in the notion of dispossession. Does dispossession invite a radical discounting of loss? Do the histories, the languages, the cultural and libidinal investments that become the objects of dispossession leave a vacant space as if they had never been there? Or does dispossession tend towards the need to account for a loss – not so much vacant space as

vacated space where that which has passed out of one's life leaves its traces? Perhaps, an attempt to dichotomize the responses demanded by the effects of dispossession into radical discounting or compulsive accounting fails to do justice to the complexity of the effects of the loss of such investments. Movements between competing demands to discount and account for loss might appear more convincing as a reflection on dispossession.

Disjunctive relocation: being out of place

If one accepts the implications of dispossession and 'no return', one needs to address the question of how the subject might be described as s/he passes through sites of 'no return'. How can the subject re-constitute his/herself in respect of a notion of place without refusing the impact of dispossession? One of the ways of addressing such a question is through the notion of relocation – the subject can find his/herself in another place having been dis-possessed but each finding remains always already the site of the next dispossession. In respect of such an understanding, how might one consider the subject's relocation to sites of 'no return' through which s/he must pass and of which s/he must be dispossessed? Does the subject become inured to the disturbance that arises with dispossession? Does a commitment to loss result in an annulment of the turbulence conventionally associated with loss? Let us explore such issues with regard to a photo-work from 1988 by photographer Ingrid Pollard. Pollard's work, *Pastoral Interludes* (1988), consisted of a photographic series of the artist alone in English rural locations. Each frame was accompanied by a caption, such as:

> ...it's as if the black experience is only lived within an urban environment. I thought I liked the LAKE DISTRICT, where I wandered lonely as a Black face in a sea of white. A visit to the countryside is always accompanied by a feeling of unease, dread...[23]

The words used by Pollard pointed towards an attempt to lay claim to English rural life. Such attempts for Pollard were always bound to fail:

> ...feeling that I don't belong. Walks through leafy glades with a baseball bat by my side[24]

fig 2.6 Ingrid Pollard, *Pastoral Interludes,* 1988
(photo-text series, 5 images)

In terms of relocation, such failure can be seen to produce a disjuncture. The suggestion is that when the diasporic subject finds his/herself dispossessed of a particular context and thereby undergoes relocation, the dynamic within the dispossession resurges through the relocation. Such a resurgence causes a disjuncture. It is as if the loss keeps on pulling, as if the subject must continually feel the force of the loss.

Being out of place as an aspect of relocation can lead to a consideration of certain implications for subject-formation. The relocated subject, in being out of place, emphasizes a disfiguration of the subject – a disfiguration in which the subject must be considered always already excessive *and* always already lacking. That which exceeds corresponds with but is not identical to that which is lacking. A stage in the formation of the relocated subject must involve the sense of both being too much and yet, at the same time, not being enough. A dynamic gathers momentum in which relocated subjects are constantly caught up in an attempt to 'make up for' their loss. One can regard such 'making up for' in respect of lost time or lost opportunities, but always something that is lost. The difficulty for the relocated subject is that in the effort to 'make up for', s/he might simply intensify the excessive without annulling the lack. The relocated subject, perhaps, has no choice but to pass through such a stage in his/her formation, particularly, as once again the experience can be related to the persistence of the loss that accompanies dispossession.

How might one reflect on disjunctive relocation in respect of the commemoration of Fani-Kayode? Let us consider such a question in the light of the commemorative marks that were made around Fani-Kayode's former home in south London. One of the key commemorative marks relating to him was the erection of a brass commemorative plaque at the entrance to 151 Railton Road, the building where he lived. The erection of the plaque was one among several marks instigated by Friends of Rotimi Fani-Kayode that can be seen as effectively identifying Fani-Kayode with the locale of Brixton and Herne Hill in south London. It was Michael Cadette, a key member of Friends of Rotimi Fani-Kayode, who proposed that a commemorative plaque should be erected at Fani-Kayode's former home.[25] Another such

commemorative mark was the commemorative exhibition, *Rotimi Fani-Kayode (1955-1989): a retrospective* (1990), about which Friends of Rotimi Fani-Kayode sought to emphasize the local dimension. In the press release for the show, Friends stated:

> We felt it appropriate to launch the show locally (and to mark the first anniversary of Fani-Kayode's death) close to where the artist lived and worked in South London (The 198 Gallery is about 200 yards from Fani-Kayode's studio).[26]

Such marks can be seen as an attempt to produce a commemorative geography of Fani-Kayode that located him within the traditions of black cultural production in Britain. Such location can be seen as performing different roles. First, it allowed Fani-Kayode's work to be seen in relation to the British Black Arts Movement of the 1980s. Works such as David A. Bailey's essay 'Photographic Animateur: The photographs of Rotimi Fani-Kayode in relation to Black photographic practices' (1990)[27] can be seen as providing a critical context for such a positioning of Fani-Kayode's output. Secondly, the location of the commemorative plaque in south London placed Fani-Kayode within the traditions of lesbian and gay political struggles in Britain. As evidence of this, one can point to the bio-documentary *The Homecoming* (1995), which focused on the contemporary photographer Ajamu. During a scene in that film, Ajamu stood in front of 151 Railton Road with the plaque within the frame. He commented on the fact that many famous artists and intellectuals had been associated with that part of London, as had many lesbians and gay men.[28] The plaque, then, invoked the memory of Fani-Kayode not only in relation to artistic and intellectual traditions in Britain but also in relation to the cultural politics of British gay men and lesbians.

One can argue that the act of rendering Fani-Kayode part of a British artistic and intellectual milieu dispossessed him of his role within Nigerian artistic traditions. Indeed, Fani-Kayode's own words about his work can be read in the light of a dispossessive model:

> As for Africa itself, if I ever managed to get an exhibition in say, Lagos, I suspect riots would break out. I would certainly be charged with being a purveyor of corrupt and decadent Western

values.[29]

In forestalling such delegitimization of Fani-Kayode's work within a Nigerian context, the relocation of Fani-Kayode within British traditions specifically facilitated the side-stepping of taboos attached to homosexuality in Nigeria. Fani-Kayode's work, did not, of course, escape the problematization of homosexuality in Britain. However, the shift in the relocation allowed him not to have to actively engage with taboos framed within a Nigerian context. Fani-Kayode himself referred to such taboos when he wrote:

> Black men from the Third World have not previously revealed, either to their own peoples or to the West, a certain shocking fact: they can desire each other.[30]

Notwithstanding the effects of dispossession in forestalling delegitimization, one must ask how to view the neutralization of shaming discourses issued from Nigeria. Should such neutralization be regarded as beneficial because it allowed the circulation of Fani-Kayode's artwork, particularly works such as *Bondage* (1987) and *White Bouquet* (1987), which explicitly dealt with the subject of homosexuality? Or should it be regarded as detrimental – precluding an explicitly Nigerian context for his work? Isn't it problematic to associate Fani-Kayode too closely with one part of south London, thereby eliding his connections to Nigeria and also to the United States? One can suggest that, by claiming Fani-Kayode for South London, a distance was created between Fani-Kayode and the other locations with which he was connected, in particular Yorubaland, alongside its Osogbo artists and priests with whom he specifically associated his artwork.[31] The relocation of Fani-Kayode to Britain has consequences other than the neutralization of shaming imperatives issued from Nigeria. It also produces a knot of inertia in Fani-Kayode's diasporic movement, tying him to Britain.

One can judge that reading Fani-Kayode's diaspora in terms of dispossession and disjunctive relocation means a loss of a Nigerian context for reading his work. Although Fani-Kayode saw his work as belonging to a modern Yoruba tradition, speaking of "Modern Yoruba art (amongst which I situate my own contributions)"[32], Fani-Kayode's artwork cannot be

fig 2.7 Rotimi Fani-Kayode, *White Bouquet,* 1987
(silver gelatin print)

unproblematically located within contemporary African art traditions. One of the reasons for this is the failure to show his work in contemporary art exhibitions in Africa. Other diasporic artists associated with Africa can be placed unproblematically in a contemporary African art context precisely because of the exhibition of their work in Africa. One can think of Fani-Kayode's contemporaries, such as the sculptor Sokari Douglas Camp in this regard. If an artist's work has not been shown in contemporary art shows in Africa, in what way can his/her work belong to contemporary African art?

The suggestion here is that in response to the problematic positioning of Fani-Kayode's art in terms of contemporary African traditions, his art and writing become embedded in British visual culture and artistic history. For instance, commemorative marks circulated around Fani-Kayode got framed within British traditions of commemoration. The erection of the commemorative plaque to Fani-Kayode exemplifies the embedding of Fani-Kayode in the British commemorative plaque tradition. The tradition is best exemplified in London's Commemorative Plaques Scheme, more generally known as 'the blue plaques tradition', which began in 1867 when the first plaque was erected at Byron's birthplace in Holles Street.[33] The fact that the first plaques in that scheme were erected by the Royal Society of Arts adds significance to the fact that the commemorative plaque at 151 Railton Road referred to Fani-Kayode as an artist. In a sense, then, Fani-Kayode was commemorated as a diasporic artist in a British tradition. It is the way in which those commemorative marks sat within British traditions that one can speak of disjuncture.

The relocation of Fani-Kayode within British traditions can be related to a loss of a Yoruba framework for reading his art. The iconography, particularly of his later works, such as *Sonponnoi* (1987), have as yet not been read in terms of a traditional Yoruba take on the role and significance of *Sonponnoi*, traditional spirit of smallpox. Such a situation can be seen as a problematic consequence of his burial and commemoration in Britain. However, rather than lamenting the loss of a Yoruba perspective on Fani-Kayode's output, one can regard the results of his disjunctive relocation as offering a new set of possibilities for the

fig 2.8 Rotimi Fani-Kayode, *Sonponnoi,* 1987
(silver gelatin print with hand-tinting, 40 x 30.5 cm)

articulation of culturally differentiated politics. For instance, one can see the way in which such relocation works against museological drives to recover the past. The Yoruba past is dispossessed and, although Fani-Kayode becomes relocated within a British tradition, such a relocation remains disjunctive. The diasporic artist who settles in Britain cannot be co-opted unproblematically into a tradition that renders itself as British. There will always be something out-of-place. Such being out-of-place can be seen in terms of the disjuncture that occurs when an artist associated with cultural differentiation is placed within a hegemonizing tradition such as the British commemorative plaque practice.

Mourning archivization: the retrospective exhibition and the comments book

How can Fani-Kayode's disjunctive relocation be seen to impact on other commemorative practices enacted in his respect? Let us respond to such a question by addressing not an artwork but a process seen as ancillary to the production of artwork – the process of archivisation. The comments book attached to the retrospective exhibition *Rotimi Fani-Kayode (1955-1989): a retrospective* (1990-1) is seen here as a key part of the process of archivisation. The role of a comments book, to record comments made by spectators, can be seen as carrying out an archiving process. In respect of the comments book attached to Fani-Kayode's retrospective, one can point out that the book should be seen as an intervention arising directly out of Fani-Kayode's disjunctive relocation to London. That is not to suggest that without Fani-Kayode's disjunctive relocation the comments book and retrospective could not have existed. Rather, it is to suggest that the disjunctive relocation gave rise to a particular kind of comments book – a text that can be seen as having outstripped convention. Disjunctive relocation, in such regard, can be seen as positioning the subject outside convention. One can ask, of course, where this 'outside' of convention might be. What kinds of language can be used to approach it? Is the subject outside convention premised in disjunctive relocation any different from subjects outside convention premised by any other means?

One can start by looking at what was written in the retrospective's comments book. A number of clues to the questions posed above might lie in a discussion of the ways in which the comments book broke with the conventional role assigned to such books at exhibitions. A comments book can be seen as a tool to convey curatorial protocols and to assign meaning, status as well as function to spectatorship at an exhibition. By registering their names, remarks and, in some cases, institutional positions in a comments book, spectators assign themselves and are assigned a role in respect of an exhibition. This happened with the comments book in the retrospective, where figures associated with national cultural institutions such as the Institute of Contemporary Art and the British Broadcasting Corporation left their names and organisational addresses. Among these were Andrew Dempsey of the ICA and Michael Jess of the BBC.[34] In addition to the record of names, the comments book also contained commemorative marks left by figures whose emotional engagement with the retrospective was more explicit. It is such emotional engagement that is regarded here as a result of disjunctive relocation.

The breaking of the conventional role of the comments book through emotional means can lead one to address the emotional content of relocation. In particular, the impact of such content on the production of an archive can be discussed. For, in a sense, one can speak, in respect of Fani-Kayode's retrospective, of an archive overwhelmed by the very inscription that made it possible. By treating the comments book as an archive that has been overwhelmed, one can begin to address how the comments book at the retrospective offers an opportunity to re-appraise thinking around the function of the archive in relation to a politics of cultural differentiation.

The 1997 conference 'The Living Archive', held at the then Tate Gallery, can be regarded as one of the key points in thinking about archiving in relation to a politics of cultural differentiation in Britain. David A. Bailey and Sonia Boyce, then co-directors of the African and Asian Visual Artists Archive (AAVAA), described the conference as an opportunity "to start fresh thinking about the meaning and purpose of an archive of African and Asian

Artists".[35] At that stage, much of the critical reflexion on the role of the archive was underscored by an emphasis on heterodoxy, which figures like Stuart Hall saw as central, allowing one to continually rework the archive.[36] For Hall, such heterodoxy arose from the "disjunctive, unsettled space between metropolis and periphery, 'colonizer' and 'colonized' " [37] in which an archive that worked through diaspora had to be situated. The comments book is seen here to work under a different rubric: post-diasporic, more settled and yet still disjunctive; carrying forward the dynamic of the periphery but working within the space of the metropolis. Does a dynamic characterized in such a manner still evoke the heterodoxy that Hall and others prized so much?

Let us start by considering the way in which the retrospective's comments book staged the archive as a space of interference. Some of the commemorative marks left in the comments book can be seen to have interfered with the curatorial functions conventionally assigned to comments books. For instance, the comments book was not simply treated as a means of discussing aspects of the exhibition, it was also used as a surface on which spectators inscribed their memories of the dead man. One can see, then, that the comments book provided a means for spectators at the retrospective to share memories through a process of memorialization - they turned the document into a memorial[38]. Moreover, since, in the retrospective, some of the spectators were themselves also direct mourners, the enactment of a collective memorialization can be seen as being intensified by the participation of mourners who personally knew the deceased.

Through the inscription of particular comments by mourners, the comments book performed the role of a book of condolences. By acting as both institutional record and tool of mourning, the comments book can be seen in terms not just of a heterodoxy but more of an overwhelming. Some mourners used the comments book to express their sorrow. Others used the comments book to address the deceased directly. One mourner wrote an affectionate address to the deceased, "Stay-by-me, Rotimi."[39] Another used the comments book as a space of testimonial, writing as if he were making a funereal address. He described

Fani-Kayode as " a beautiful guy", going on to write: "I feel so sad but so proud that I met you".[40] Such statements of mourning can be seen to overwhelm the space of the comments book. For, through mourning, a comments book becomes co-opted into a complex psychic labour. Such psychic work can never be contained, particularly if one rejects Freud's normative account of mourning in favour of an account that both privileges and depathologizes a mourning without end.

The comments book becomes, then, a space of mournful inscription – a space where mourning can be carried out not necessarily with a view to its completion but rather with a view to the impossibility of such completion. The comments book becomes record and witness, literally bearing testimony among its pages. Part of its function thereby becomes to invite reflection on the indelibility of mourning: the words inscribed will be read by another, will always be read by another. The moments of mourning that took place in the gallery were made available to a perpetual witnessing. In such a way, one can speak of 'mourning time', not in light of a Freudian model of progression from stage to stage but rather in terms of a moment that is always available, always made available through the mediation of a work – a book, a poem, a song – that contains the content of a mourning, not as an historic object or museum piece to which one returns, but as an unfolding path of agency through which one can develop.

The importance of an indelible mourning, in respect of Fani-Kayode's retrospective, becomes clear when one realizes that some of the mourners were aware of the association of Fani-Kayode's death with HIV. Much has already been said about that in the previous chapter. However, suffice to recall here remarks made by Douglas Crimp concerning the psychic labour of someone trying to mourn a lover who has died from AIDS-related illnesses. Crimp critiqued Freud's view that a key incitement to complete one's mourning, by severing attachments to the lost loved one, arose from the narcissistic satisfaction in staying alive[41]. The fight to stay alive on the part of the HIV+ or undiagnosed survivor placed a question mark over how far the lover of one who had died from AIDS-related illnesses could achieve

any narcissistic satisfaction in their own precarious survival. In respect of the psychic labour of mourning that formed part of the Fani-Kayode retrospective, one should be mindful that Alex Hirst was a spectator at the retrospective and, indeed, died in the autumn of 1992, less than three years later. The complexity of Hirst's engagement with the exhibition can be related to the issues of uncontainable melancholia and precarious survival explored in Crimp's work and to the notion of indelible mourning explored here.

The task of handling an indelible mourning can also be seen to overwhelm the retrospective comments book in respect of the re-thinking of mourning and melancholia that took place in the works, such as Jose Esteban Muñoz's Disidentifications (1999). Muñoz's text re-envisioned melancholia beyond the context of HIV and AIDS so it became understood as "a structure of feeling" (1999: 74). He said:

> I am proposing that melancholia for blacks, queers, or any queers of Colour, is not a pathology but an integral part of our everyday lives... [it is not] a self-absorbed mood that inhibits activism. Rather, it is a mechanism that helps us (re)construct identity and take our dead with us to the various battles we must wage in their names. (ibid.)

Muñoz's rendition of melancholia as part of a catalytic political process rather than a 'self-absorbed inhibition' is helpful in respect of the contingencies which the retrospective's comments book could never have hoped to contain. For instance, a series of specific political, cultural and socio-economic aspirations could only be hinted at in one comment:

> I feel particularly honoured to have met you in the Brixton Gallery Days – so sad when I heard of your death – so I write here to your Spirit – thank you for sharing it with us here, for a while – so vividly, so movingly, so special.[42]

The sadness described in the words above cannot be detached from the catalysis that is represented by the phrase 'Brixton Gallery Days', whereby the Brixton Art Gallery can be seen as enmeshed in a series of struggles associated with Brixton and its complex history of violent struggle, hegemonic and counter-hegemonic contestation as well as pleasure. The

retrospective's comments book demonstrates how melancholia and mourning were able to unravel at the point of inscription and in the scene of reading. It is such unraveling that promises so much in re-thinking the role of the archive.

The political and cultural contingencies hinted at in the retrospective's comments book reflect Paul Gilroy's discussion of the dangers of commemoration. As has been said elsewhere in this thesis, Gilroy mooted the destruction of "the naïve invocation of common memory as the basis for particularity...by drawing attention to the contingent political dynamics of commemoration". (Gilroy, 2000: 123). Such a movement away from considering commemoration in terms of collective memory has important parallels with the role of the archive. Re-thinking of the archive in relation to the politics of cultural differentiation has pushed away from a notion of the archive as a *collection* and more towards a notion of the archive as *dispersion*. It was Stuart Hall who underlined the role of dispersion in thinking about the archive:

> The trick seems to be not to try to describe it as if it were the oeuvre of a mythical collective subject but in terms of what sense or regularity we can discover in its very *dispersion*. [emphasis original] [43]

Such a sense of dispersion can be aligned with Derrida's notion of an archive that departs from itself – a notion that persuades one to think less in terms of archives and more in terms of archivization. Archivization as a process of an undoing is premised in Derrida's discussion of the possibility of an archive introducing into itself its own destruction (1998: 12). In Derrida's terms, one might offer a figuration of an archive as always being prepared to open itself, to open to an outside, to open to other possibilities, rather than being closed, regulated, contained. A discussion of an archive thus leads to an exploration of the processes by which such an opening could take place. Such processes can be metaphorized as disturbances that force the body to open – contractions, swelling, weeping and sweating all point towards the porosity that is premised in the Derridean notion of an 'archive fever' (ibid). Such thinking invites one to consider the possibilities that will allow us to take up a permanent revolution of thought. How can we continue to think differently? How can an

archive facilitate such an undertaking? What cat's-cradle of gaps, discontinuities, paradoxes and conundrums can be envisaged through the archive within the post-diasporic context?

The retrospective's comments book, in its attempts to engage with a multiplicity of functions as institutional record, curatorial aid and book of condolences, has not been seen as a successful negotiation of competing and contradictory aims. Rather, the comments book was seen as a space that was overwhelmed. In particular, by drawing attention to the comments book as a scene of reading and witnessing, one can reflect further on its overflowing of the space of exhibition. Someone who went to the show to look at art could suddenly find themselves amid someone else's mourning. Someone who went to reflect on Fani-Kayode's life could find themselves encountering remarks on art. Emotive mourners and disengaged spectators were not only brought together through the comments book but were also able to see each other writing and read what each had written. In this sense, one can talk of an archive that was not only open to itself but also of an archive that opened up spectators to each other.

The emphasis on an open archive or a 'living archive' underlines the importance of 'working the limit'. Hall's thinking, through its references to Foucault, drew attention to the limit, or perhaps more accurately to delimitation. "Archiving," Hall wrote, "...is a practice which both has its limits and its disciplines yet has no definitive sense of origin, boundary or termination."[44] Derrida, too, in continually returning to the problem of the archive's relation to its exterior, elaborated the question of the limit. The impossibility of containment premised in the retrospective's comments book can be seen to have lent itself to the question of the limit by showing how little its own limit could contain. A labour of containment was done within the pages of the comments book, through the collection of names. Consider, for instance, the range of artists associated with black and Asian cultural production in Britain during the 1980s and 1990s who appeared in the comments book: photographer Alistair Raphael; performance artist Valerie Mason-John; poet and novelist Bernardine Evaristo; mixed media artist Zarina Bhimji; playwright Paul Boakye. The work of containing those names, though,

was not something that the comments book could comfortably manage. The statements of emotion, the direct addresses to the deceased, "Stay-by-me Rotimi", which threatened to turn its pages into a book of condolences or the prolegomenon to a séance, bloated the comments book, showed it to be close to bursting at the seams.

How might the notion of a bloated, overwhelmed or overloaded archive be seen as useful to the formulation of a politics of cultural differentiation? Let us, for the time being, retain the image of the archive bursting at its seams. Such an image resonates with the recent work of Singapore-born artist Erika Tan. Her work *From China to Chintz* (2000) was a mixed-media installation consisting of a room containing wooden tea-crates, empty bird-cages and strips of chintz wallpaper. On the sides of the crates one can see printed Chinese ideograms and the names of Chinese teas (such as lapsang souchong) together with printed outlines of birds in trees beneath which the word 'CHINTZ' had been printed. The crates were stacked at varying heights – some two high, others three high, still others singly. One of the crates lay on its side, its contents of tea spilled across the floor. The empty bird-cages had been placed either beside the crates or on top of them. A projector projected across the crates onto a wall " the projected cinematic image of a shadow of a bird flying against a white cloth".[45] By viewing *From China to Chintz* as an opportunity to think through the overwhelmed archive, one can review such an archive as an engagement with the excessive aspect of relocation. Jacqueline Nolte wrote of Tan's work in terms of a comment on belonging:

> ...one notices that the sense of belonging and the sense of distance are evoked by the same constructs and each is as fictitious as the other. Objects allude to customs controls and sites of exchange where artefacts of one culture are weighed against another...[46]

What Nolte sees as the *weighing* of artefacts from one culture against those of another is, in terms of relocation, viewed rather as the *transformation* of artefacts from one culture into those of another – China becomes chintz. Such a transformation can be seen as a disjunctive relocation – the cultural artefacts of China cannot fit into chintz. Something is lost. The cages

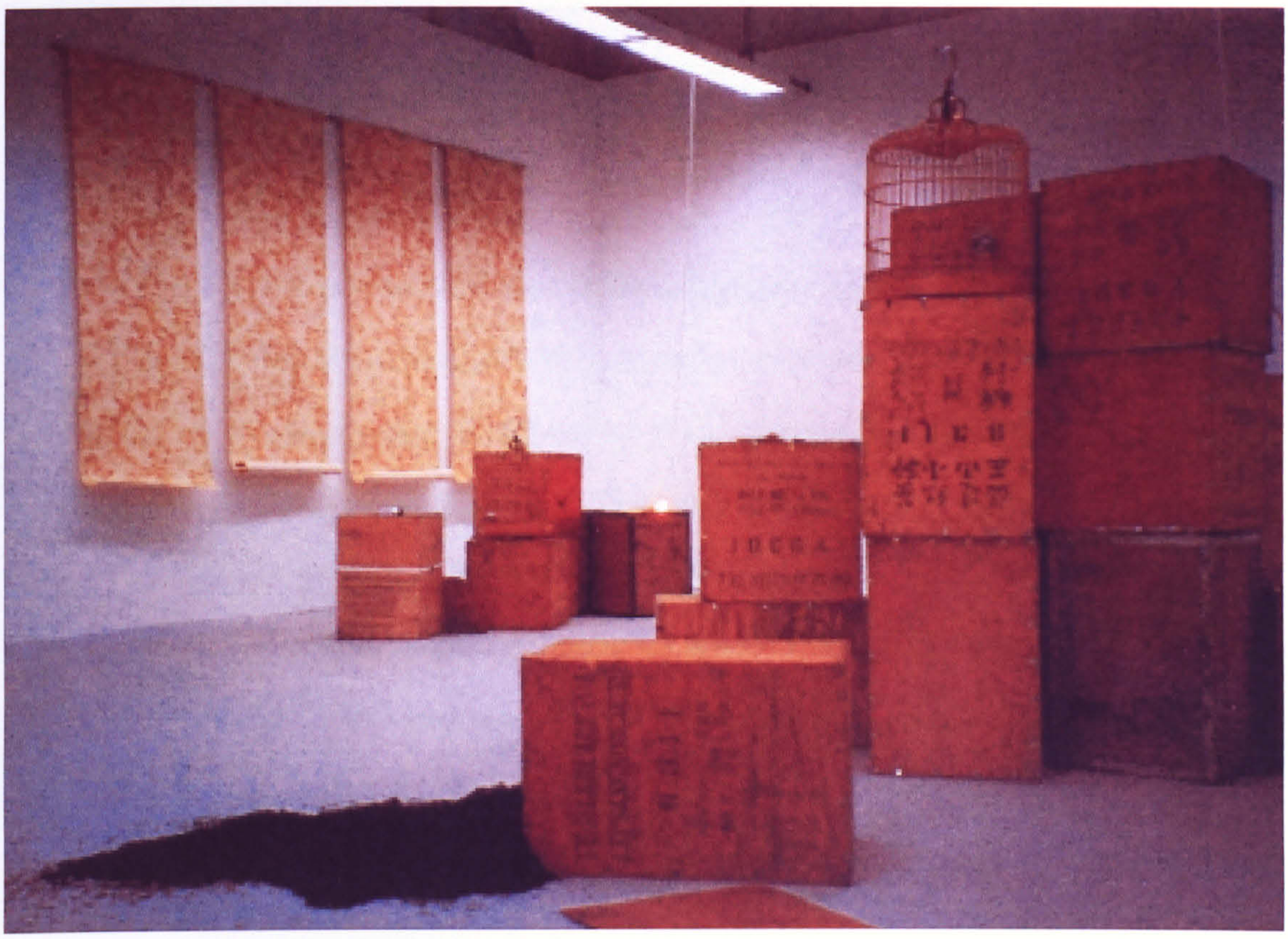


fig 2.9 Erika Tan, *From China to Chintz,* 2000
(mixed media installation)

are empty. The birds have disappeared. Only their traces remain as printed images and projections of shadows. Tan's work, however, emphasizes not just the remains but the violence of remaindering. The tea spills across the floor. What is left behind after the disjunctive relocation is material that cannot be contained. A process of archivization cannot be assigned the role of containment in a situation of disjunctive relocation. If it is, the danger always exists that what it is deemed to contain – memories, artefacts, prayers – will overload that archivization process and force things to spill out beyond the confines of the archive. In this sense *From China to Chintz* gestures towards the limit of what is possible within a politics of cultural differentiation. The taking up of disjunctive relocation must be done with the mindfulness of limits and of the way in which such limits must always be overstepped because of the force of dispossession.

Steps towards a conclusion

Fani-Kayode's London burial provokes further exploration of his death in terms of shame. The failure to return his corpse to Nigeria to be accorded traditional Yoruba funerary rites raises issues about the way his death and therefore his corpse was susceptible to delegitimizing imperatives. A legitimate figure facing an illegitimate death presents the condition of shame. A further series of questions arises from the condition of shame. Such questions concern the way in which shame emphasizes the problem of home in relation to a politics of cultural differentiation. The debate here suggested that the problematization of 'home', which was a feature of critical debates in 1980s Britain, should be reprised. Reflecting on Fani-Kayode's death and burial, the discussion posited the notion of 'no return' as a way of re-articulating a politics of cultural differentiation. 'No return' points towards an exhaustion of rhizomorphic possibilities open to a post-diasporic subject. It places an emphasis on incompletion and the impossibility of recuperation.

By reflecting on the notion of 'no return' in relation to Fani-Kayode's own artwork, the discussion posed the possibility that the subject can be dispossessed of its past. The loss of direction premised in the notion of 'disorientation' was, through a discussion of dispossession,

developed into a deeper loss – a loss of one's country, of one's mother tongue, of one's past, of one's mind, and even of oneself. In thinking about dispossession, one is invited to also give consideration to the possibility that the subject can be dispossessed of its future. Such a dispossession leads this study to reflect on the notion of transcoloniality explored in the previous chapter, whereby both the past and the future partake of an 'hauntology'. Both the future and the past, in the dispossession model, are put out of the subject's reach. However, that does not entail their abolition. Rather, it suggests that both the future and the past must be visited upon the subject. Such an approach means a refusal of a progressivist approach to both the past and the future. One does not stake out a rewarding future in light of the past. Rather, aspects of both past and future can be seen to overtake and, perhaps, surprise the subject.[47]

The dispossession that was seen as characterizing the situation of the post-diasporic subject was also viewed as leading to a relocation of that subject. Former models of dislocation, in which a diasporic subject used fictive devices to construct a link between present and past, here and elsewhere, was abandoned. Instead, emphasis was put on the tensions that arise when the post-diasporic subject begins to relocate, thereby making some attempt, albeit tentative, to claim 'here' as home. Such tensions were seen as producing a disjuncture. Hence the strategies of relocation employed by post-diasporic subjects were seen as resulting in disjunctive relocations.

The notion of disjunctive relocation was explored through commemorative marks erected to Fani-Kayode in south London. In particular, the brass plaque at his former home was read as a disjuncture within the British commemorative plaque tradition, emblematized in the 'blue plaques' scheme. Such disjuncture was discussed in terms of the excess and lack that arose from the positioning of the post-diasporic subject as being out of place.

The breach of convention that arose from the post-diasporic subject's disjunctive relocation was further explored with reference to the comments book from the retrospective

exhibition *Rotimi Fani-Kayode (1955-1989): a retrospective*. That book was seen as breaking away from the archival functions of a conventional comments book. Instead, processes of archivization were seen as being open to mourning, to condolences and to testimonial. In such a way, the comments book was seen as being overwhelmed. The implications that the overwhelming of archivization processes have for culturally differentiated politics were discussed in relation to the artwork of Erika Tan. Her installation *From China to Chintz* was read as emphasizing the violence in the breach of limits that characterizes the overwhelmed archive.

Issues concerning the ways in which a subject is able to generate a locus for itself have been raised in this discussion as a means of addressing the full implications of Fani-Kayode's death and burial in London. Such a death and burial was seen here as related, perhaps, in some way or another, to the crisis of legitimacy surrounding an AIDS-related death. Shame as a crisis of legitimacy can be viewed as leading to a reconsideration of the question of location within a re-articulated politics of cultural differentiation. How far that reconsideration should take place theoretically and how far it should be elaborated with reference to issues conventionally seen as ancillary to theorization is a question addressed in the mappings that are distributed throughout this thesis.

---

[1] Poster for *Rotimi Fani-Kayode (1955-1989): a retrospective*, Friends of Rotimi Fani-Kayode, 1990.

[2] Zarina Bhimji's work also featured in exhibitions such as, 'The Image Employed: The Use of Narrative in Black Art', Cornerhouse, Manchester, 1987; 'The Impossible Science of Being: Dialogues between Anthropology and Photography', The Photographers Gallery, London, 1995.

[3] The poster for *Rotimi Fani-Kayode (1955-1989): a retrospective* stated: "The Kayode family hold the ancestral title of Akire, Keepers of the Shrine of Yoruba deities and priests of Ife, the oracular spirit." Friends of Rotimi Fani-Kayode, 1990.

[4] Biobaku, S.O., (ed), The Living Culture of Nigeria, Thomas Nelson (Nigeria) Ltd, Ikeja, Nigeria, 1976, p. 14.

[5] Transcript of 'The Rotimi Fani-Kayode Memorial Lecture,' The Photographers' Gallery, London, 16 January 1991.

[6] Knight refers to stipulations under the Removal of Bodies out of England Regulations, 1954. He does not specify the regulations. Specifically, the regulations are: The Removal of Bodies regulations, S.I. 1954/448; The Removal of Bodies (Amendment) Regulations 1971, S.I. 1971/1354. They arise from provisions under the Births and Deaths Registrations Act, 1926.

[7] advice given by Ashton's Funeral Service, Brixton High St., London SW2, 17.7.02.

[8] Email: Michael Cadette to David Dibosa, 30 September 2002.

[9] Public Health (Control of Diseases) Act 1984, s. 47.

[10] Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1988, S.I. 1988/1546, reg. 6, Sch. 3.

[11] op. cit., s.10.

[12] Halsbury's Statutes suggest that reports had to be made annually to the Secretary of State concerning the number of AIDS cases known to reporting authorities (Halsbury's statutes, vol. 30, , 4th ed., p. 295). This requirement arose under the auspices of AIDS (Control) (Contents of Reports) Order 1988, S.I. 1988, no. 117 and AIDS (Contents of Reports) Order 1988, S.I. 1988, no. 1047, both of which were pursuant to the AIDS (Control) Act 1987. Interestingly, Halsbury's cited a Department of Health circular letter to medical practitioners in England, dated 3 August 1990, suggesting: "The Department of Health's view appears to be that these reports are voluntary." (Halsbury's Statutes, vol. 30, , 4th ed., p. 977)

[13] op. cit., s. 43.

[14] ibid., s. 43 (2).

[15] Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1988, S.I. 1988/1546, reg. 3, Sch 1.

[16] Gilroy wrote of "the rhizomorphic, fractal structure of the transcultural, international formation I call the black Atlantic". Gilroy, P., The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness, Verso, London, 1993, p. 4.

[17] Hirst, A., 'Rotimi Fani Kayode,' obituary of Rotimi-Fani Kayode, *The Independent*, 28 December 1989.

[18] ibid.

[19] *Rage and Desire* (dir. Gabriel, R., UK, 1991).

[20] Rogoff, I., PhD Seminar discussion, 1999. Cf., Rushdie, S., The Ground Beneath Her Feet, Jonathan Cape, London, 1999, p. 5; "Public life or private life makes no difference, that's the truth. When she wasn't with him, it didn't matter who she was with, she was always alone. Disorientation: loss of the East."

[21] The dates of certain of Fani-Kayode's works have not been ascertainable.

[22] Hirst, A., 'Rotimi Fani-Kayode' obituary to Rotimi-Fani Kayode, *Artrage: Inter-Cultural Arts Magazine*, Winter 1990-91 (courtesy AAVAA).

[23] Pollard, I., 'Pastoral Interludes', *Third Text*, 7, Summer 1989, p. 42.

[24] ibid., p. 43.

[25] Letter: Michael Cadette to Thomas Mutke, 7 October 1990.

[26] Press release for *Rotimi Fani-Kayode (1955-1989): a retrospective*, Friends of Rotimi Fani-Kayode, 1990.

[27] Bailey, David A., 'Photographic Animateur: The photographs of Rotimi Fani-Kayode in relation to Black photographic practices', *Third Text*, 13, Winter 1990/1

[28] *The Homecoming: a short film about Ajamu,* (dir. Campbell, T., Arts Council, London 1995).

[29] ibid., p. 42.

[30] Fani-Kayode, R., 'Traces of Ecstasy,' op. cit., pp. 38-39.

[31] ibid., p. 41.

[32] Fani-Kayode, R., 'Traces of Ecstasy,' Ten.8, no. 28, 1988, p. 41.

[33] The Blue Plaque Guide, Journeyman Press, London, 1991, p. vii.

[34] ibid.

[35] Bailey, D.A., and Boyce, S., 'The Living Archive Papers: an introduction', *Third Text*, 54, summer 2001, p. 87.

[36] op. cit, p. 92.

[37] op. cit., p. 90.

[38] cf., Foucault's discussion of conventional history: "History is that which transforms *documents* into *monuments*." Foucault, M., The Archeology of Knowledge, Routledge, London, 1997, p. 7.

[39] Comments book to the exhibition *Rotimi Fani-Kayode (1955-1989): a retrospective*, 198 Gallery, London, 1990-1. [For purposes of confidentiality, the identities of those who made personal comments in the comments book will remain anonymous].

[40] Ibid.

[41] Crimp, D., 'Mourning and Militancy', *October* 51, 1989, p. 9.

[42] Comments Book, op. cit.

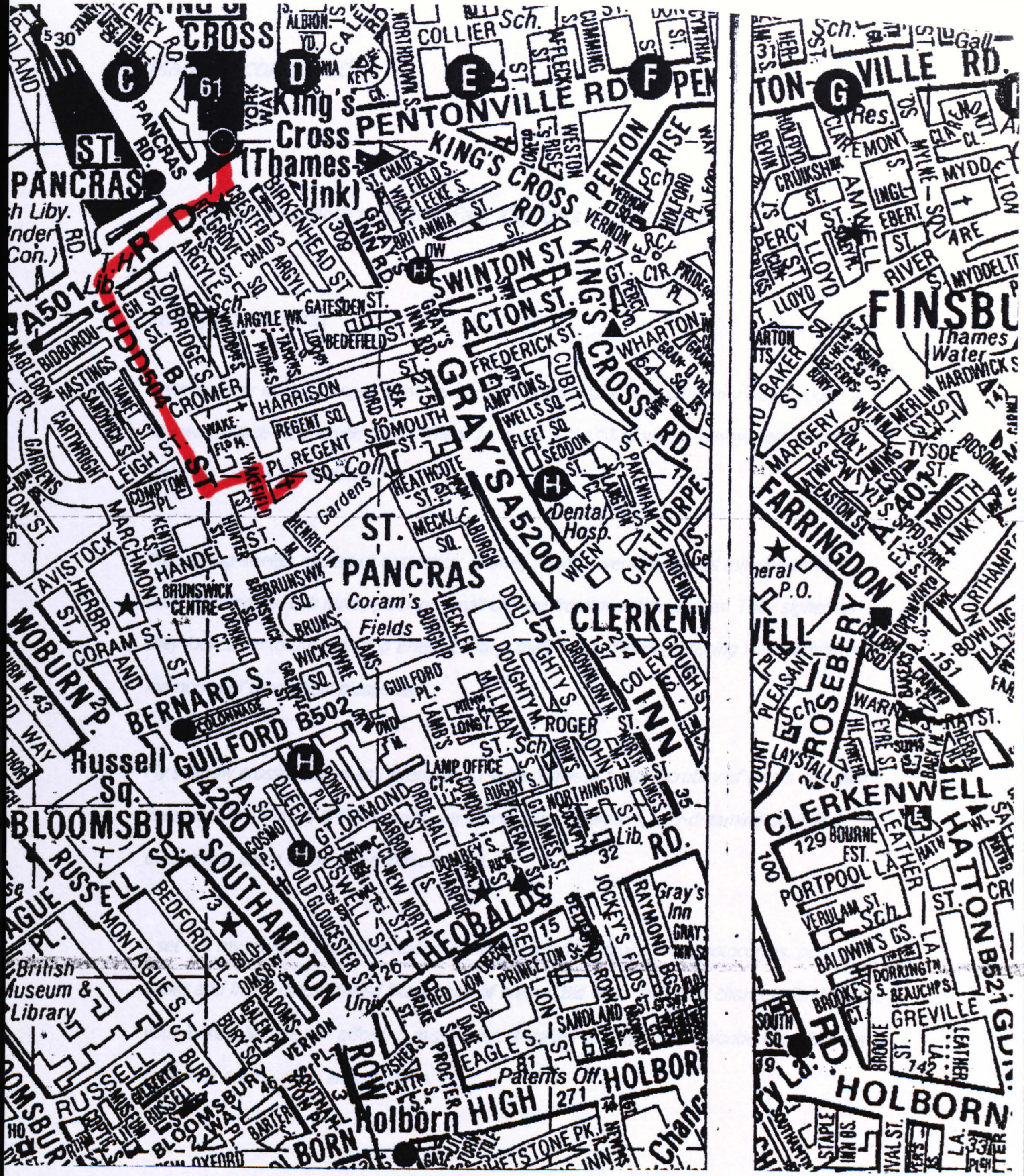
[43] Hall, S., op. cit., p. 90.

[44] op. cit., p. 91.

[45] The installation was not seen in situ by the researcher. Instead, research relies on documentation contained in Juncture, exhib. cat., Visiting Arts, London, 2001. In particular the essay, 'Juncture' by Jacqueline Nolte, from which the citation was drawn, was seen to be of use. Cf., Notle, J., in Juncture, ibid., unnumbered pages.

[46] Nolte, J., op. cit.

[47] Between English and French, 'to overtake' can be translated as 'surprendre', past participle, 'surpris'.



Map A.

Steps taken in search of Rotimi Fani-Kayode's resting place

– *an anxious shuffle*

Map A. (continued)

Steps taken in search of Rotimi Fani-Kayode's resting-place

Prologue: planning

Neither driver nor passenger, I sat comfortably out of place, navigating my way through a city whose face-lift seemed to fit. "Those nips and tucks," I thought, "always feel worth it, once the cranes come down."

The ageing streets reeked of cosmetics: Chanel, Fendi, Givenchy, scents mingled as lady dons counted out cab fares, plucking small change from oversized purses. They sighed as they looked up to the towering British Library, their hooded eyes glistening with bittersweet memories of theoretical pleasures.

My shadow crossed theirs as I prepared to subject myself to the scrutiny of books and their keepers. Librarians in ill-fitting suits sauntered down escalators, day-dreaming of unlikely events that could throw them into disarray.

I set out my plans in the Maps Room, exploiting the desk space with photocopies, pencils, books and index cards fanned like a hand of bridge. Bid high, take your chances. Bid low, cut your losses. No one can afford to miss a trick. I staked out my routes, wondering which way to turn in search of an artist's grave.

Chapter three

The uses of doubt:

re-marking uncertainty concerning (Sir) Roger Casement

The memorialization of the Irish nationalist Roger Casement at the beginning of the present Millennium marked a new historical moment in commemorative practices undertaken by the culturally differentiated. Among those commemorative events was the publication in 2001 of 'Roger Casement: Sex, Lies and the Black Diaries', a biographical sketch of Casement by gay Irish writer Colm Toibin.[1] Toibin's work centred on Casement's 'Black Diaries', a set of diaries, purportedly written by Casement, that detailed his alleged homosexual activity with African and South American men. The difficulties presented by the 'Black Diaries' can be understood against the background of Casement's dual status – Irish nationalist hero and traitor to Britain. Casement was found guilty of treason after having treated with the Germans during war-time to gain support for a nationalist insurrection that he led in Ireland in 1916. The 'Black Diaries' were used to prevent a reprieve of Casement, after his initial conviction.

The story surrounding Casement renders him an ambiguous figure not least because the authenticity of the 'Black Diaries' has been questioned since their circulation. Toibin's discussion weighed up the possibility that the diaries might have been forged as a way of discrediting Casement. If it were so, the tactic evidently worked, since Casement went unpardoned and was duly hanged in Pentonville Prison in 1916. Interestingly, although Toibin, as a gay writer, could be seen as having an investment in establishing the authenticity of the homosexual encounters detailed in the diaries, his account can be seen as a rather judicious exercise of caution. Toibin's work refused to judge the authenticity of the diaries one way or the other. It is this ambivalence that can be understood as sounding a note of uncertainty in the memorialization of Casement. Doubt can be seen to mark other acts memorializing Casement in the new millennium: Kenneth McKonkey's public lecture, 'John

Lavery – artist reporter' (2003)[2]; the National Portrait Gallery exhibition *High Treason: The Appeal of Roger Casement, The Court of Criminal Appeal, 17 and 18 July 1916* (2003)[3]. Uncertainty in memorialization is a theme developed in this chapter. A central aim here is to elaborate the issue of doubt as a key strategy in the re-articulation of cultural differentiation.

The National Portrait Gallery's exhibition *High Treason* displayed the painting, *High Treason: The Appeal of Roger Casement, The Court of Criminal Appeal, 17 and 18 July 1916* by the acclaimed Society painter Sir John Lavery together with other materials surrounding Casement's trial and appeal. The exhibition served to highlight a number of questions concerning Casement, as well as a series of doubts surrounding the painting. Such doubts are provoked by the following questions raised by the exhibition: Why did the trustees of the National Portrait Gallery refuse to allow Lavery's artwork into its collection? Why was the artwork not put on public display in Britain during the twentieth century? Why did the artwork, although commissioned by a prominent judge from a leading society painter, remain in the artist's studio for 25 years until the artist's death in 1941? Why did the painter sketch the work in secret while he observed Casement in court?

The uncertainty that pervaded Toibin's handling of Casement's 'Black Diaries', if they can suitably be called that, could be said to have re-emerged in the material surrounding the *High Treason* exhibition. Indeed, one might suggest that all the material connected with the memorialization of Casement has been contaminated with an outbreak of doubt. Of course, it would be advisable to sound a note of caution here, particularly in suggesting that the uncertainties that are conveyed in Toibin's biographization of Casement are the same uncertainties that emerged around the National Portrait Gallery exhibition. Rather than suggesting that an entire historical episode can be characterized by an all-pervading doubt, it might be more useful to address the way in which doubt could be considered an effective reading strategy for approaching the material surrounding Casement. In pursuing such a strategy, one might find a way of experiencing doubt itself in our engagement with the material concerning Casement.

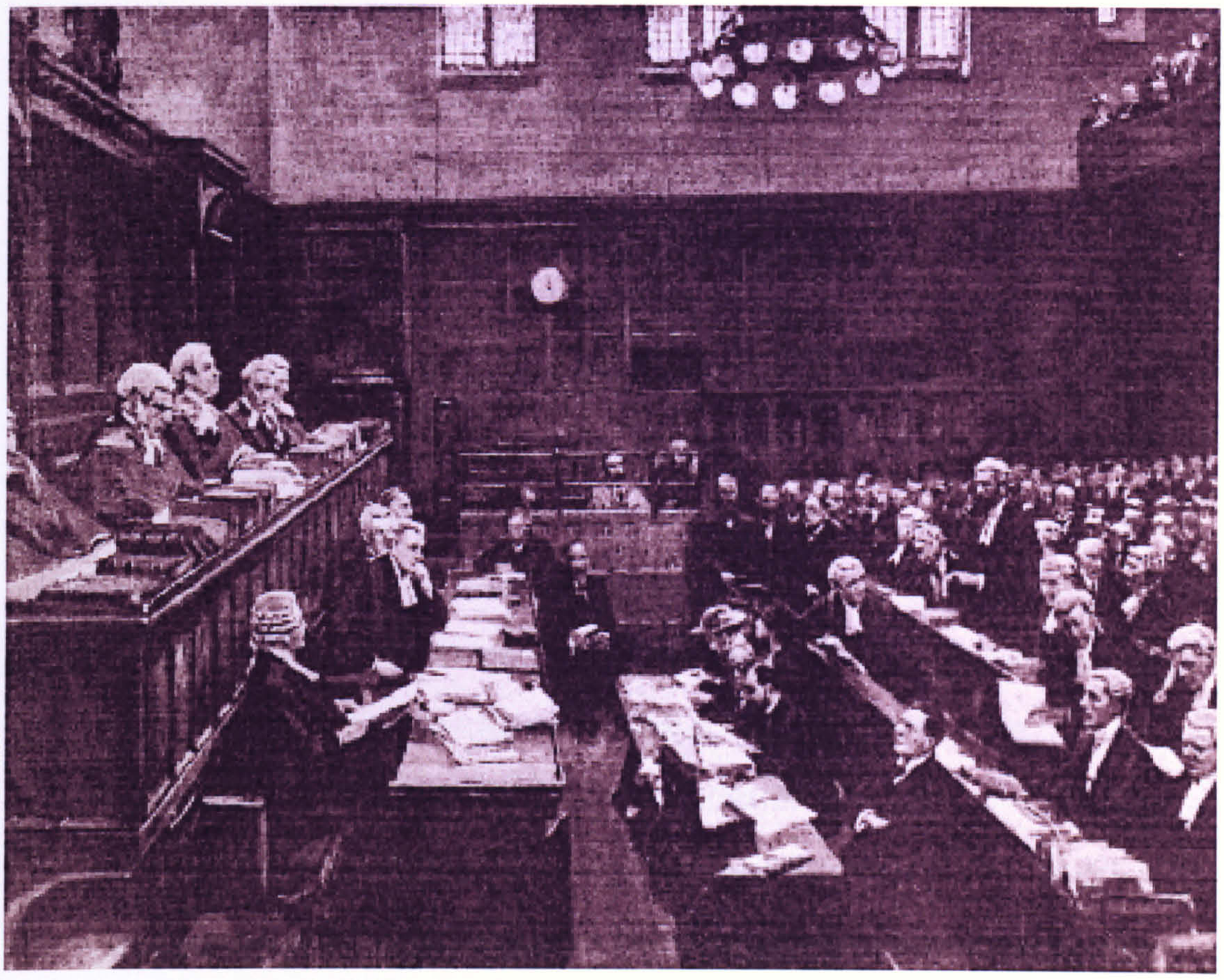


fig 3.1 Sir John Lavery, *High Treason: the appeal of Roger Casement,* 1916
(oil on canvas)

To propose doubt as an object of inquiry for post-identitarian politics is to emphasize the limits of notions such as 'understanding', 'mutuality' and 'certainty', which characterized identity politics in the last decades of the twentieth century. Indeed, the identity politics that emerged out of the late 1980s can be seen to have relied heavily on a privileging of notions, such as 'understanding' and 'certainty' together with an implicit refusal of doubt. As evidence of this, one could address the warm critical reception that attended Isaac Julien's seminal project *Looking for Langston* (1988). Consider, for instance, the comments of Jose Esteban Muñoz, who described Julien's film as "a grand and glowing mythotext" (1999: 58). Muñoz's comments prove notable because they praised a film that explored Langston Hughes' queer identity while condemning biographies of Hughes that failed to include "nonconventional, and especially queer, historiography" (ibid.: 59). As far as the politics framing Julien's film were concerned, Langston Hughes was queer and anyone who dared to doubt it was wrong, all wrong. Muñoz wrote:

> I would argue that Julien's dynamic film offers all the 'evidence' needed to make a case that Langston Hughes was queer. (ibid.)

Such certainties can, perhaps, be seen as indicative of a particular disinclination to doubt characteristic of the language of identity politics. The preference for certainty over doubt could be regarded as related to the terms used in the nationalist rhetoric associated with the independence movements in the post-1945 period. Consider, for example, the prizing of Lavery's painting of Casement in a National Gallery of Ireland exhibition in 1966, *Cuimhneachan 1916: A Commemorative Exhibition of the Irish Rebellion, 1916*. Although, under the auspices of that exhibition, Casement was cherished within Irish nationalist memorializations, it should be noted that the 'Black Diaries', which rendered Casement a doubtful figure in the eyes of Irish nationalists, did not appear in the commemorative exhibition. According to the National Portrait Gallery, "The 'Black Diaries' were widely believed, particularly in Ireland, to be forgeries". [4] As Colm Toibin explained:

> The British had used forgery against Parnell, trying to implicate him in terrorist acts. And nationalist Ireland believed that this is what they did with Casement. (2003:102)

The above citation can be seen as useful in that it returns us to the problematic of an identity politics that only ever entertains doubt as a tool to reject challenges to its own assumptions. Such political manoeuvres deploy doubt against antithetical claims – claims that can be seen as retrogressive or hostile to the aims of an identitarian agenda. Within the space of the paradigms generated to make sense of identitarian frameworks, doubt has no place.

Doubt, however, or, more specifically, self-doubt could be seen as a crucial part of a process of subject-formation and thereby worth emphasizing as an important political tool. Subject-formation can be claimed as a key aspect of the political. Doubt's role in subject-formation thereby renders it central to political activity. In asking what role doubt plays in subject-formation, one can consider the arguments that position doubt as a means by which the subject can ascertain its own viability. In Cartesian terms such means are rendered as the condition of subjectivity itself – even if I am persuaded to doubt everything, there must be an 'I' that has been persuaded to do the doubting. Through the Cartesian method, one can see how a close link can be forged between doubt as an interrogative procedure and the privileging of the subject within analytical inquiry. Why, then, should doubt not be able to play such an important role in the privileging of culturally differentiated subjects in post-identitarian politics? What purpose does it serve to deny doubt's potential?

The privileging of doubt as a strategy to reify culturally differentiated subjects can, of course, be questioned. One could argue that reference to Cartesian doubt is not helpful since the Cartesian method lends itself ultimately to the repudiation of doubt and a drive towards solipsism in which the subject's valorization of his/her own thinking self is all that can be ascertained. Such a strategy is not seen as productive for culturally differentiated subjects. Indeed, one might consider it a procedural mistake to privilege the attainment of certainty while discounting the content of the processes that lead to such an attainment. The argument here is not to claim doubt as a tool that ascertains culturally differentiated subjects *qua* thinking subjects in the Cartesian sense. Rather, the aim is to reclaim doubt as a means

of forming subjects through their participation in discourses that generate uncertainty both as the content of their interrogative procedures and as the outcome of such procedures.

The model proposed here, then, is a Foucauldian model of subjectification through discourse. The suggestion is that discourses of doubt can be prevailed upon to provide a framework for the emergence of culturally differentiated subjects. One might more readily accept such discursive frameworks in respect of the emergence of certain problematized subjectivities, such as adolescents, which can be seen as formed through the language, practices and gestures of doubt. What is being suggested here is that doubt should not provide a discursive framework solely for the emergence of problematized subjectivities. Rather, doubt should be seen as being available as a discursive formation to all those who position themselves as culturally differentiated. Doubt, skepticism, questioning – all can provide discursive frameworks for the formation of culturally differentiated subjects. Such a formulation of doubt, interestingly, corresponds with moves by writers such as Jose Esteban Muñoz, who proposed that 'blacks, queers or any queers of colour' should start "de-pathologizing melancholia and understanding it as a 'structure of feeling' that is necessary and not always counter-productive" (op. cit.: 74). Muñoz's explicit call to depathologize melancholia, however, can be contrasted with his implicit refusal to deproblematize doubt, as has already been discussed. This thesis takes up the deproblematizing drive that underscored Muñoz's advocacy of depathologized melancholia. It is proposed that an equally useful purpose is served by deproblematizing doubt.

It is through an understanding of the possibilities generated by the availability of doubt to processes of subject-formation that one can reconfigure doubt within a politics of cultural differentiation. Doubt can thereby be put to more use than being deployed only to defend the integrity of cherished paradigms against troublesome opposition. Doubt could even be brought to the heart of a politics of cultural differentiation and be used as a means of provocation, incitement or interruption. Maybe a politics of cultural differentiation need not rely on finding resources to constantly assert itself, to continually re-invent itself, to endlessly

offer justification and apologetics to neutralize doubt. Rather, such politics might be able to make use of doubt, to explore its productivity, to discover what might result when the potentialities of doubt are realized: to doubt oneself, to doubt community, to doubt those who are remembered, to doubt memorialization. The suggestion here is that a post-identitarian framework could do well to pursue doubt as part of a critically reflexive praxis. Almost certainly, I am not the first to advocate this. However, I might be among the first to emphasize its importance in relation to the hagiographies that emerge in the memorialization processes inaugurated by culturally differentiated subjects.

It is possible to question whether the acts of memorialization in relation to Roger Casement at the turn-of-the-twenty-first-century could properly be called hagiographies. However, issues remain over the ways in which gays and Irish, as communities of culturally differentiated others, in Britain, at least, should remember him. The suggestion here is not that doubt should be the vehicle of memorialization but rather that attention should be paid to moments of doubt within the memorialization process. The broader impact of such a project can be seen, perhaps, in strategies of subjectification in the post-identitarian moment. Perhaps reflection on the doubtful aspects of memorialization could contribute to strategies of subjectification in ways not yet considered.

Within the visual cultures that emerged in Britain as part of identity politics, one can recognize a privileging of the question of how to render identity a coherent possibility despite the pressure of racist and xenophobic discourse. Such a questioning can be read in the title of Rasheed Araeen's influential work *How Could One Paint A Self-Portrait!* (1978-9), in which the drive to compose a coherent self-image was shown to be disturbed by the interventions of racist attitudes and abuse. Additional artworks from visual cultures emerging in the identitarian moment can be seen to engage in the issue of how to render identity a coherent possibility. Sonia Boyce's work *She Aint Holding Them Up, She's Holding On (Some English Rose)* (1986), for instance, revealed a preoccupation with the role of nostalgia and fear in the

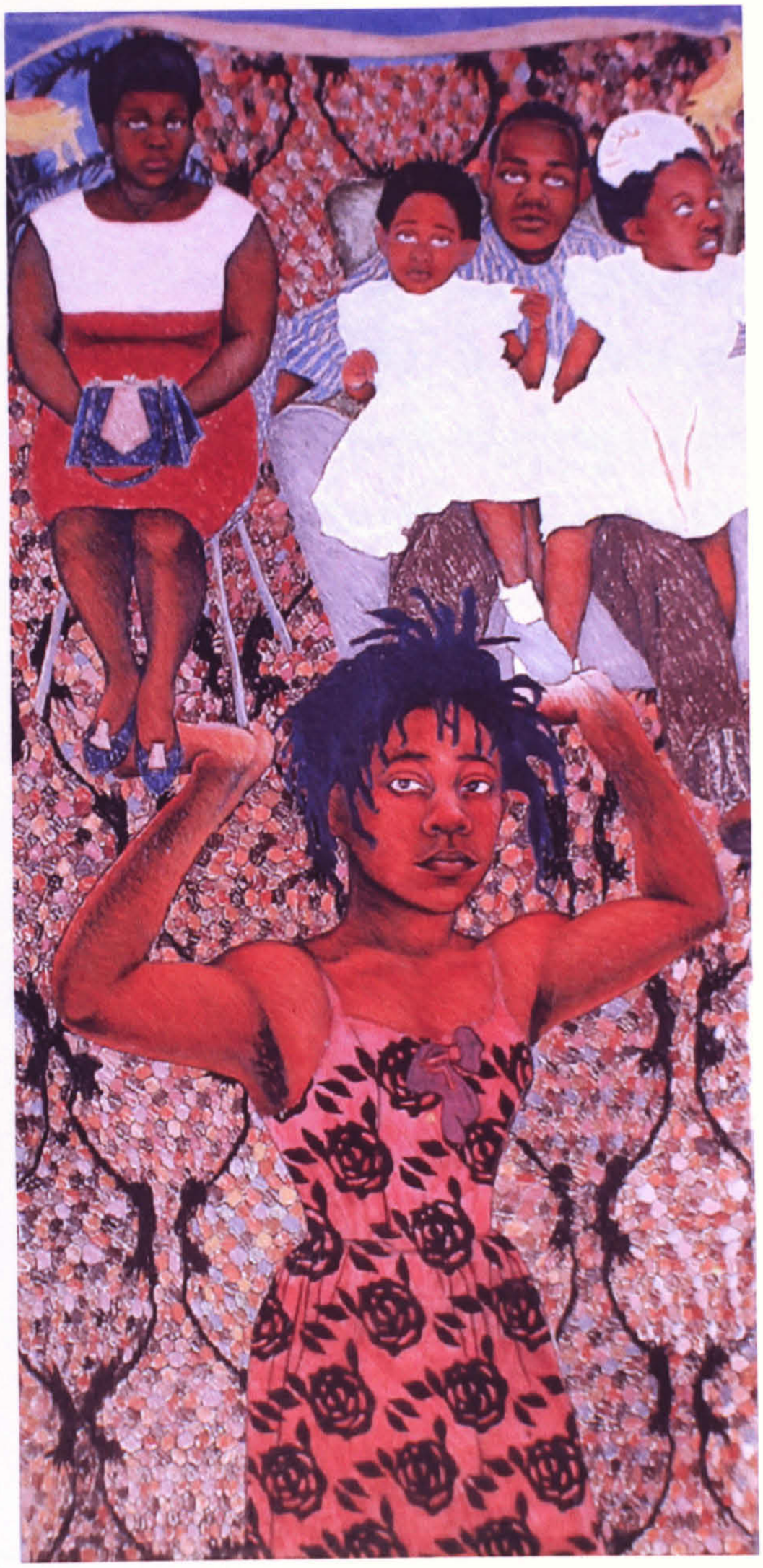


fig 3.2 Sonia Boyce, *She Ain't Holding Them Up, She's Holding On (Some English Rose)*, 1986
(pastels on paper)

processes of identity-formation driven by culturally differentiated others. Just as the potential offered by coherent identity-formation was seen as a focal point in the era of identity politics, for the contemporary, post-identitarian moment, perhaps, the difficulties and exhilarating potential of doubt can be considered a focal point in the subjectification process.

In this chapter, a brief discussion of Casement as a shamed figure takes place in the opening section, *Stripped of his honour*. The following section, *A controversial figure,* explores public statements framing the *High Treason* exhibition in terms of the ways in which they contributed to a characterization of Casement as an ambiguous figure. The issue of confusion as a strategy of subjectification is discussed. Attention is particularly drawn to the refusal to rehabilitate Casement in public statements. In the subsequent section, *Exhibiting uncertainty*, focus is brought to specific curatorial devices used in the exhibition. The effects of such devices on viewers is addressed. The final section, *Queer accountability*, focuses on Toibin's biographical sketch of Casement, asking how far it left itself open to culturally differentiated readings.

Stripped of his honour: Roger Casement as a shamed figure

In the light of the material cited above, one could ask in what ways one might specifically understand Casement as a shamed figure. In reply, one could suggest that Casement, having been the object of juridical processes, such as arrest, charge, criminal trial, conviction and execution, can be seen as having been delegitimized after having been legitimized by the prior honour of a knighthood. In such terms, Casement's shaming can be understood as a crisis of legitimacy arising from a direct association between his legitimized and delegitimized activity.

Toibin's work on Casement, together with material circulated around the *High Treason* exhibition, makes reference to the fact that Casement was stripped of his knighthood. The term, 'stripped', with its suggestion of denuding someone, can be seen to have a key component of shame embedded within it. Writers such as Bernard Williams (1993:

78) have made great play of the relation between nakedness and shame. It might not be going too far to suggest that the connotations that attach themselves to 'being stripped of one's honour' could be subjected to similar scrutiny as that subjected to the notion of 'being stripped of one's clothes'. In terms of the treatment to which Casement was subjected following the events of 1916, one can talk intelligibly of shame in relation to Roger Casement. Consider, for instance, the treatment his remains received after his death: the burial of his body in quicklime without a coffin in Pentonville Prison; the repeated refusals, on the part of British governments until 1965, to allow his remains to be sent to Ireland for burial (Toibin, 2003: 92). In the light of such matters, one could feel safe in the assertion that Casement's shaming is a matter of historical fact.

In relation to Casement's shaming, let us consider one set of commemorative marks used in his figuration during the early part of the present millennium. The exhibition of Sir John Lavery's portrait of Casement, *High Treason*, could, by its title, be seen as a re-articulation of the shame conditions that surrounded Casement when the painting was first executed in 1916. Could such a re-articulation be regarded as a deliberate move on the part of the exhibition's curators? Was there a policy decision made by the National Portrait Gallery to re-invoke the shaming of Casement? Or could one accept that the curators had no option other than to re-instate the historical framing of Lavery's artwork? In answer to such questions, one must investigate the curatorial context in which the artwork was set. What curatorial devices were used to interpret and contextualize the artwork? Let us start by looking at text panels used in the exhibition. One can note how Casement's speech from the dock during his trial for treason in June 1916 was cited on a text panel. It cited Casement as saying:

> We are told that if Irishmen go by the thousand to die not for Ireland but for Flanders, for Belgium, for a patch of sand on the deserts of Mesopotamia, or a rocky trench on the heights of Gallipoli, they are winning self-government for Ireland. But, if they dare to dream, even, that freedom can

> be won at home by men resolved to fight for it there, then they are traitors to their country, and their dream and their deaths are phases of a dishonourable fantasy.[5]

By quoting Casement's speech from the dock, the text panels offset the historical shaming of Casement associated with Lavery's artwork. Indeed, one could go so far as saying that the citation of Casement's speech showed ways in which a subjectifying strategy could negotiate the ramifications of shaming. This draws attention to the function of shaming interpellations – an invocation that shames as it names (Butler, 1993: 223-226). Indeed, through its ironic reinscription of the shaming interpellations directed at him, Casement's speech demonstrated the way in which a strategy of subjectification can engage with shaming. Casement was called a traitor. His ironic response to that shaming interpellation was to point out the hypocritical application of the term. Such a refusal of shaming finds its parallels in other strategies of subjectification developed by the culturally differentiated that resist the effects of shaming.

One can find evidence of resistance to shaming in late-twentieth-century cultural production such as queer cinema and rap music. Such work demonstrated that those to whom shaming interpellations are directed can respond by reinscribing such interpellations in moves towards ever more radical subjectifications. Consider, for instance, the shaming interpellation, 'hey you, queer'. In response to this, one can reflect on the 'new queer cinema', with films like Tom Kalin's *Swoon* (1992), which reinscribed the shaming of homosexuals as decadent, licentious and corrupt. Such moves can be seen as evidence of effective engagement with shaming on the part of culturally differentiated others. The advent of such sophisticated moves can be seen to undo some of the work of shaming interpellations. However, one would still have to ask whether such moves can neutralize what Butler has termed the cumulative effects of shaming interpellations (Butler, 1993:226-7).

Butler's arguments undermine the possibility that contemporary urban posturings can provide an effective response to the legacy bequeathed by repeated abuse effected through the term 'queer'. She says:

> If the term [queer] is now subject to a reappropriation, what are the conditions and limits of that significant reversal...? How and where does discourse reiterate injury such that the various efforts to recontextualize and resignify a given term meet their limit in this other, more brutal and relentless form of repetition? (ibid.: 223)

Butler suggests that such limits emerge from the densities of power and discourse that are not "rendered anew at every moment.., not as weightless as the utopics of radical resignification might imply" (ibid.: 224). However, Butler's refusals of the radical discontinuity of power and discourse posited by Foucault can be met with a revalorization of Foucault's position. Discourse can be seen as remaining contestable, if only in so far as the way in which it is inhabited render it so. Such inhabitations go further than Butler's "parodic inhabiting of conformity that subtly calls into question the legitimacy of the command" (ibid.: 122). Rather a more corrosive inhabitation can be posited. In such terms one can think of moves negotiated by music artists such as NWA (Niggers with Attitude), which worked by dramatically reinscribing the shaming of blacks as dangerous, disorderly and a threat to civilized society. The posturing called 'attitude', epitomised in the language, gestures and postures of a range of musical artists, including rap, hip-hop and R'n'B, can be seen as a corrosive inhabitation of conformity – a willingness to take up subject-positions rendered intelligible through socially instituted norms, but not with a smile on one's face. 'Attitude' often stops short of any outright insubordination of norms and sometimes facilitates oblique approaches to them.

Moreover, it must be said that Butler's own exemplification of the density of discourse and the continuity of its injurious effects can be challenged. She cited the use of the term 'nigger', claiming "a term like 'nigger', despite some recent efforts at reclamation, appears capable of only reinscribing its pain" (Butler, 1993: 223). The wide range of aims that

underpin the deployment of the term 'nigger' in rap music forms the basis of a rejection of Butler's position on this issue. Not only is it possible that rap artists, in using the term, are skilled enough to do more than "only reinscribe its pain", it is also possible that they are able inscribe humour, pleasure and irony. Moreover, one has to scrutinise the reinscription of pain in the use of the term by African Americans. The pain of racialized injury may form part of the signification of the term, but the signification as a whole might be far more complex, including the overlay of inscriptions attributable to different kinds of injury that cannot be assigned only to racism.

Although one can discuss the reinscription of terms like 'nigger' or 'queer' in relation to contemporary cultural production, the term 'traitor' does not occupy the same arena. The settings at the centre of this inquiry impose a limit on the exploration of the cumulative effect of the 'traitor' interpellation. Places of recent civil strife, such as Serbia and Bosnia or Northern Ireland, might offer more useful sources for such an investigation. Indeed, Jeremy Deller's engagement with the 1980s British miners' strike in his work *The Battle of Orgreave* (2001), shows that the interpellation 'traitor' has also carried a significance in recent British history.

Irrespective of the question of ironic reinscription, there is another argument, however, to be taken into consideration here. Namely, that the interference instantiated by the issuing of a shaming interpellation can be seen as constructive to and even constitutive of strategies of subjectification initiated by culturally differentiated others. The reception of the interpellation 'hey you, fucking queer' (the shaming invocation of queer, paki, paddy, nigger, kike, dyke or bitch, rarely, for some reason, goes without the 'fucking' prefix) could play an important part in the development of a strategy of subjectification on the part of a culturally differentiated other. Consider again, for instance, Rasheed Araeen's work, *How Could One Paint a Self-Portrait!* (1978-9), in which a mixed media self-portrait of the artist is interfered with by the scrawling of graffiti, such as 'blacks out', 'NF rule' and 'Paki Go home'. Such a

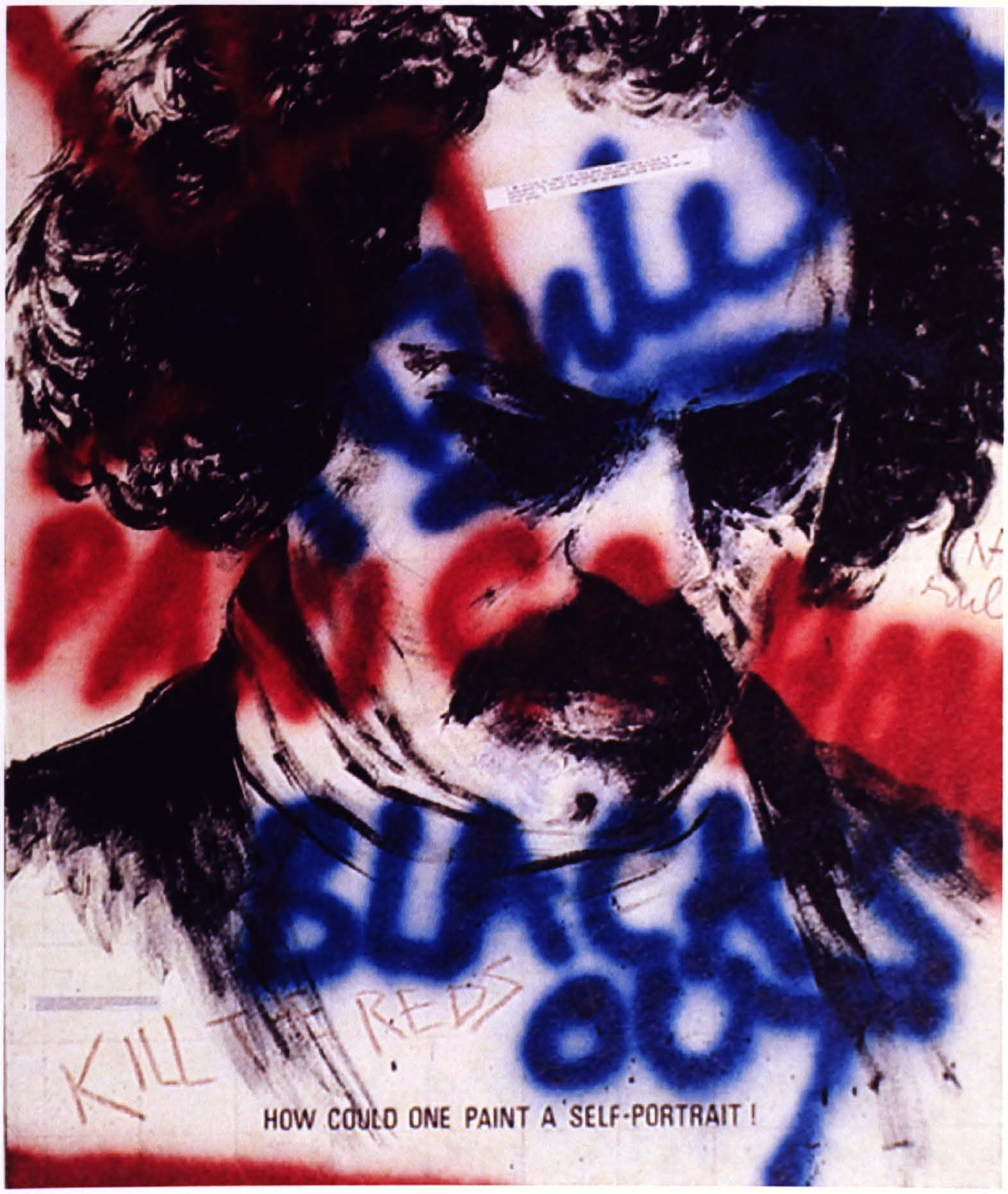


fig 3.3 Rasheed Araeen, *How Could One Paint a Self-Portrait*, 1978-9
(mixed media)

work could be seen as an effective subjectification strategy on the part of Araeen. That is not to say, of course, that one has to undergo the humiliation of being called a paki, a paddy, a queer, a nigger, a bitch, a kike or a dyke before one is able to construct a meaningful self-identification as Asian, Irish, gay, black, woman, Jew or lesbian. Rather, it is to suggest, as Araeen's work does, that the problematization of a subject-position can provide grounds for the formation and consolidation of that subject-position.

A controversial figure

If ironic reinscription remains debatable as an effective strategy developed by the culturally differentiated in relation to shame conditions, how might one think about the role of doubt? How does doubt arise in shame conditions? Who makes use of such doubt? Is doubt merely another means of assaulting the culturally differentiated? Perhaps it is inappropriate to pose such questions. It may, after all, be more useful to address the overall context of doubt in shame conditions. This section will look at doubt as it emerged around official statements made by the National Portrait Gallery in relation to Casement.

During an interview on the eve of the opening of the *High Treason* exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery, the director of the gallery, Sandy Nairne, made a series of statements, which, in themselves, can be seen to give rise to a degree of uncertainty. During interview, Nairne was quizzed about the decision to publicly display in Britain, for the first time, Lavery's artwork featuring Casement. The reporter Rebecca Jones asked:

"Is this the National Portrait Gallery saying 'we do now accept this figure'?" [6]

Nairne replied,

"This is a painting of great interest historically. It's a really important historical document. It tells a very, very, extraordinary moment. A controversial figure. A controversial case. And to

put it on show at the Portrait Gallery now gives people a chance to see it. Let's people have a look at it themselves."[7]

A number of comments can be made in relation to this excerpt from Nairne's interview, although it should be pointed out that such comments are made with a degree of caution and, indeed, might themselves give rise to queries. First, Nairne refused to answer the question he was asked. At no point did he either confirm or deny that the National Portrait Gallery 'accepted' Roger Casement as a figure who could 'properly' be represented in a national collection. Secondly, although the question directed Nairne to the issue of Casement as a figure, Nairne spoke principally about Lavery's artwork. The only direct comment Nairne made about Casement was that he was, "a controversial figure". The emphasis Nairne placed on the controversy surrounding Casement meant that the opportunity to present Casement as a rehabilitated figure to a twenty-first-century audience in Britain was missed. In the light of this, a tentative suggestion can be made that Nairne either could not or did not want to make a statement that could be read as an attempt to rehabilitate a shamed figure.

Isn't there a degree of exaggeration in suggesting that Casement's shaming remains extant simply because the director of the National Portrait Gallery did not answer a question? Why would a venerated national institution such as the National Portrait Gallery continue shaming an Irish freedom fighter, in an era of unprecedented British-Irish détente, emblematized by the European Union, the Good Friday Agreement and endless photo opportunities between the British prime minister and the Irish taoiseach? As Casement's biographer, the Irish writer Jeffrey Dudgeon, remarked on the exhibition of Lavery's artwork at the National Portrait Gallery in 2003:

> It's an important moment again in the changing relationships between Britain and Ireland.[8]

Lavery's artwork, in the light of comments such as those made by Dudgeon, can be seen as an emblem of an exchange between Britain and Ireland. The complexity of the relations that were represented in that exchange was emblematized by the status of Lavery's painting: formally the property of the High Court in London, the artwork went on loan to Dublin's pre-eminent Inns of Court, the King's Inn. The opportunity for it to appear in the National Portrait Gallery arose because it had to return to London for conservation. The shift of Lavery's

artwork from its 'spiritual' home in post-colonial Dublin to its 'proper' home in post-imperial London, with each city laying claim to it on different grounds, could be considered, as Dudgeon suggested, a cipher for a much more complex shift in power relations between Britain and Ireland. One might be a little skeptical of such a literal interpretation of the exhibition of Lavery's artwork. However, it would be pointless to ignore the political background against which the exhibition took place and against which Sandy Nairne's comments might be read.

As much as such political considerations may be seen as having a bearing on the policy of a national institution such as the National Portrait Gallery, the significance of Nairne's failure to answer a question over Casement's rehabilitation proves a difficult issue to settle. It is possible that the National Portrait Gallery was refusing to rehabilitate Casement because it saw something appropriate in presenting him as a controversial figure. Perhaps the notion of controversy reflected what Dudgeon meant when he said of the *High Treason* exhibition "It exemplifies also the confusion and links of the people of the two islands". [9] Perhaps such confusion permeated the institutional politics surrounding the *High Treason* exhibition, such that it would have been impossible for Sandy Nairne to make an unequivocal statement advocating the rehabilitation of Casement. The allegations of homosexuality, his conviction for treason against Britain during a sensitive time in its history: such questions surrounding Casement might be seen as augmenting the political confusion encircling the historical relationship between former colony Ireland and former colonizer Britain.

Let us consider further the suggestion that the confusion surrounding Roger Casement rendered it impossible to make unequivocal statements about him. What are the implications of such a suggestion? How should one think through the effects of historical confusion on the subjectifying strategies of those Irish and gay men who position themselves as culturally differentiated? In the memorializations that they compose around Casement, whether in terms of seeing an exhibition or reading a biographical sketch, how do they handle the confusion that is generated around him? One could regard such historical

confusion as an insurmountable difficulty – an obstacle to the certainty demanded in conventional hagiography. Such confusion, after all, prevents one from getting a clear picture of Casement. One needs to know if he suffered unjustifiably at the hands of an illiberal, authoritarian regime ever-anxious about maintaining its boundaries and status. One needs to be sure that he was not a ruthless man in pursuit of some unattainable goal, willing to imperil the society that he had served. One needs to be certain that he was courageous in the face of British imperialism, not a fool who fell as a pawn of aborted German ambitions. The inability to navigate the possibilities and come to rest with a clear image of Roger Casement causes confusion.

The suggestion here is that such confusion could be used more strategically. Confusion could cease to be a pejorative term indicating historical obstacles to contemporary hopes of forging an inspiring past for those marginalized in conventional histories. It could instead become a way of engaging with the subjectification of the culturally differentiated. Such an approach carries implications that one would have to consider. For instance, a reconceptualized confusion might affect our capacity to definitively say we know anything about Roger Casement or indeed that we know anything about Irish people or gay men positioned as culturally differentiated. Would it be going too far to suggest that a re-assessed confusion would mean that Irish and gay men who position themselves as culturally differentiated make themselves less susceptible to knowledge? Perhaps, then, one could propose that the old pejorative adage that niggers, paddies and poofs can never be believed can be supplanted by the suggestion that blacks, Irish and gays cannot be known. Confusion, in such a formulation, would continually stand in the way of producing any definitive categorizations of blacks, Irish or gays. This is not the same as saying that the culturally differentiated are confused or, indeed, confusing. Rather it is to suggest that any approach to know the culturally differentiated has to encounter confusion.

Formulated in terms of an impediment to knowledge of the other, particularly knowledge of the culturally differentiated other, confusion can be seen as an important

component in post-identitarian exchanges. A privileging of confusion as a political device could facilitate the drawing of a distinction between the kinds of statements that emerged from the cultural politics of identity in the late twentieth century and the kinds of statements that it became possible to make after that historical moment had passed. Consider, for example, the emphasis placed on self-representation and autobiography during the early 1990s with shows such as, *Let the Canvas Come To Life with Dark Faces* (Herbert Art Gallery, Coventry, 1990) and *Autoportraits* (Camerawork, London, 1990). The special edition of the periodical, *Third Text*, titled, *Autobiography* (*Third Text*, 19, Summer 1992) can also be cited in respect of this.

Although the discussion of self-representation was varied in the early 1990s, the suggestion that an authorial voice could produce clear and coherent statements about the self was an underlying assumption in that historical moment. Consider, for instance, works such as Chila Kumari Burman's mixed-media artwork, *Self-Portrait of Fly Girl Reaching Heights and Watching the World* (1992), in which the artist represented herself in various guises in order to discuss herself as 'an Asian working class girl' brought up in Liverpool by Punjabi parents.[10] The articulation of a cultural position in which a range of influences are brought to coherence through various strategies of self-subjectification can be seen as characteristic of the autobiographical context of 1990s cultural politics in Britain. Compare that with the cultural position proposed here – one in which confusion takes centre-stage and only perplexing statements can be made regarding identity and cultural differentiation.

One could give broader consideration to the political potential of confusion, particularly in relation to the assumptions of state apparatus that lead to the bureaucratization of race, gender, ethnicity and sexuality. Moves such as the introduction of racialized categories in census data, for instance, rely on a refusal of confusion and a continual affirmation of the transparency that can be attached to statements made concerning identity. By taking confusion as a starting-point, one could force a re-thinking of the bureaucratic measures used to manage difference in neo-liberal societies. As such,

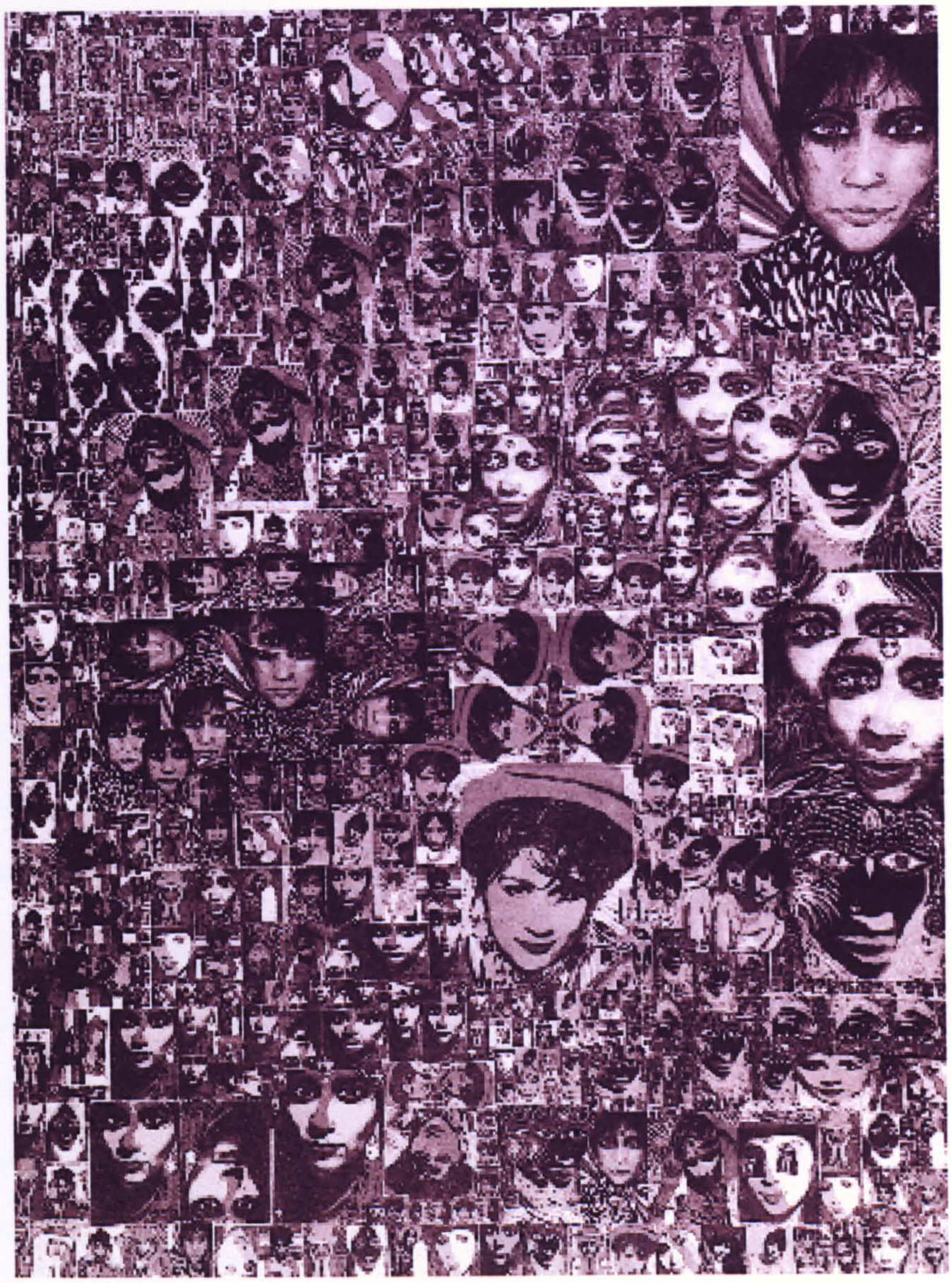


fig 3.4 Chila Kumari Burman, *Self-portrait of Fly Girl Reaching Heights and Watching the World,* 1992
(mixed media)

confusion might act to unravel the workings of what Kobena Mercer has termed 'multicultural normalization', which can be aligned with the neutralization of difference. As Mercer put it:

> Cultural difference was acknowledged and made highly visible as the sign of a 'progressive' disposition, but radical difference was gradually detached from the political or moral claims once made in its name...[11]

The argument being made in this thesis is not for a restoration of the 'political or moral claims' that can be attenuated to difference and have yet been so carefully detached. Rather, it is for the articulation of an altogether new set of problematics that can inform the way one thinks about cultural differentiation.

Exhibiting uncertainty

A consideration of other matters concerning *High Treason* might help further explore the work of confusion by addressing its place in the nexus of issues that were raised in the run-up to the show. In interview, Sandy Nairne, commented on the fact that, although the painter of *High Treason*, Sir John Lavery, had left the artwork to the National Portrait Gallery in his will, the Trustees of the Gallery had refused to accept it. Nairne said:

> The painting was offered by Lavery, in his will, to the National Portrait Gallery, but as it turned out it came to the trustees of the National Portrait Gallery during the Second World War and, perhaps not surprisingly, they didn't think Casement was a figure or this a painting that they wanted to accept into the national collection.[12]

The refusal of Lavery's artwork of Casement by the war-time trustees of the National Portrait Gallery can be seen as an act continuing the historical shaming of Casement. It showed him to be unworthy as a figure to be represented within a national collection. Such a refusal can be contrasted with the National Portrait Gallery's attitude towards Lavery's work as a whole. Indeed, the National Portrait Gallery declared its holding of several works by Lavery in its

press notice for *High Treason*, stating that: "The National Portrait Gallery holds thirteen portraits by Lavery, including *The Royal Family at Buckingham Palace, 1913*." [13]

It is suggested here that the historical shaming of Casement, as evidenced by the trustees' refusal of Lavery's artwork, provided grounds for a continued ambivalence towards Roger Casement on the part of the National Portrait Gallery even into the twenty-first century. Such ambivalence might have been due to a range of policy considerations, including the place that war occupied in the cultural imaginary of the British throughout the twentieth century and, as has been argued by figures such as Paul Gilroy, even until the present.[14] Given the extent of policy considerations that surrounded the figuration of Casement, it becomes possible to understand Nairne's qualms over declaring him a fully rehabilitated figure. It also becomes legitimate to ask whether the exhibition of Lavery's artwork could have done anything other than amplify the disquiet surrounding Casement. In response to such a question, it might prove productive to consider the details of the exhibition. By drawing attention to the artwork and to curatorial methods of display, it becomes possible to question how appropriate it is to talk of a shaming of Casement in the *High Treason* exhibition.

One could argue that a number of curatorial devices deployed in *High Treason* exacerbated the uncertainty surrounding Roger Casement. Consider the suggestion that the apparatus that enacted the historical shaming of Casement was extant in the *High Treason* exhibition and, indeed, could be said to be extant in this text. Consider, for instance, the citation of Casement's untitled name. This could be seen as the persistence of the historical shaming that framed Casement in 1916. The importance of this point should be under-estimated only with the greatest degree of caution. For, in English law, the move, on criminal conviction, from being addressed by one's title to being addressed by one's surname acts not just as part of the paraphernalia of judicial procedure. It also works as a shaming enactment – a delegitimizing act that can be directly contrasted with prior legitimacy. Casement's subjection to such protocol can be seen as shaming: he was stripped of his title, as part of

the nexus of juridical effects that followed his arrest; he was literally dishonoured. No more would he be referred to as 'Sir' Roger Casement. The persistence of this shaming can be seen in the posthumous aspect of Casement's 'dishonour'. Biographizing texts, such as material surrounding the exhibition *High Treason*, referred to Casement's dishonoured name. The text in the press release, for instance, referred to 'Sir John Lavery' and 'Sir Charles John Darling' but only ever to 'Roger Casement'.[15] This thesis inhabits a space of uncertainty, in its own recitation of Casement's 'dishonoured' name. Perhaps such a recitation continues the shaming of Casement. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to signal a more uncertain position by the use of punctuation, such as brackets. Perhaps one should refer to (Sir) Roger Casement.

It is possible that National Portrait Gallery literature circulated in 2003 did not use the title 'Sir' because it wanted to respect Casement's Irish independence allegiances rather than because it wanted to continue the historical shaming of him. Indeed, it might have been difficult to hold someone up as an Irish David against a British Goliath, if the small figure of David was seen as labouring under the weight of British imperial honour. It can be considered doubtful, though, that the NPG intended to present Casement as a martyr. It can be considered equally doubtful that the NPG wanted to reiterate shaming interpellations against him. What this underlines is the uncertainty over the position of the National Portrait Gallery towards (Sir) Roger Casement. Such uncertainty might be seen as inevitable considering the characterization of Casement as an ambivalent figure. Dudgeon, for instance, suggested:

> Casement exemplifies the problems in Ireland in many ways. He was an Irish nationalist revolutionary but he was also an Ulster Protestant and broke from the tradition of his people.[16]

One might draw a parallel here with the complexity of Oscar Wilde's background, which contained elements both of privilege, being from a prominent Dublin Anglo-Irish family, and antagonism, stemming from the avowed nationalism of his family, particularly his mother. Toibin described Wilde's situation as an "ambiguity of...position" (2003:51) resulting from

being both "inside the established world and outside it" (2003:50). Perhaps it was such ambiguity that underlay the figuration of (Sir) Roger Casement.

The issue of Casement's supposed ambiguity can be addressed with reference to decisions made by curators of the *High Treason* show. By looking at specific curatorial devices one could ask whether or not curatorial decisions cultivated Casement's ambiguous status. Indeed, one could argue that the viewers of the exhibition were manoeuvred into a state of uncertainty as regards the standing of (Sir) Roger Casement. For instance, The positioning of Lavery's artwork in relation to the other objects in the *High Treason* display implicated the viewer in the judicial proceedings that formed the subject-matter of Lavery's tableau. A text panel informed viewers that:

> The painter, Sir John Lavery, sat, at the invitation of the presiding judge, in the empty jury box, throughout the hearing. It is from this vantage point that we observe the court.[17]

Lavery's artwork was hung low in the gallery space. It was positioned centrally on a wall, flanked by text panels on either side. The positioning of the artwork, allowing the viewer in the exhibition to occupy a central space, staring directly at the depiction of Casement, replicated the spatial relations organized by the painter rather than critiquing them. Furthermore, no distancing mechanisms were used to invite the viewer to take a critical distance from the work. Indeed, the reverse was true. The viewer was invited to participate in the proceedings of the court: "It is from this vantage point that we observe the court". Such an invitation was made at the expense of an invitation to address Lavery's artwork as an artwork. Although text panels were used in the display, they were directed towards providing a context for the events portrayed rather than a context for the production of the artwork. The use of curatorial devices to provide an historical context for events can be seen as an invitation to the viewer to become an historical bystander, an onlooker attending an historical event. The viewer can thereby be seen as being inveigled in a controversy surrounding the *event,* rather than in a discussion surrounding the *painted marks of that event.*

The suggestion that curatorial gestures in the exhibition invited the viewer to participate in the courtroom drama is substantiated by another text panel. In this panel, quotations were taken from Yeats 1937 poem *The Municipal Gallery Revisited*, in which, it was suggested, Yeats referred "directly to the sketch version of Lavery's artwork"[18], which hung in the Hugh Lane Municipal Art Gallery, Dublin. In the poem, as cited, Yeats dramatized the images he saw in the Municipal Gallery, using them to conjure an idyllic vision of Ireland and the 'revolutionary' figures – Casement and O'Higgins – associated with it:

> Around me the images of thirty years:
> An ambush: pilgrims at the water-side
> Casement upon trial, half-hidden by the bars
> Guarded; Griffith staring in hysterical pride;
> Kevin O'Higgins' countenance that wears
> A gentle questioning look that cannot hide
> A soul incapable of remorse or rest;
> A revolutionary soldier kneeling to be blessed.[19]

The inclusion of Yeats' poem provided an example of a viewing strategy. Although the rendition of such a viewing strategy was highly poeticized and part of a wider project on the part of Yeats, it nevertheless exemplified a viewing strategy that dramatized Lavery's artwork. Such a dramatization, inviting the viewer to *see* Casement behind bars rather than to *critique* Lavery's artwork of him, brought the viewer within the matrix of ambivalent attitudes towards (Sir) Roger Casement.

One could ask how the circulation of ambivalent attitudes might have affected a viewing of the *High Treason* exhibition by gay or Irish viewers. In the absence of any direct evidence of the reactions of such culturally differentiated persons to the exhibition, this discussion will have to satisfy itself with a few cursory comments. The first that might be noted concerns the question of recognition. It is difficult, admittedly, to discuss the issue of recognition without recourse to the psychoanalytic debate on identification. In particular, as regards the issue of cultural differentiation, Homi K. Bhabha's Lacanian reading of Fanon's

'moment of crisis' could impinge on the discussion here (Bhabha in Fanon, 1986: vii-xxvi). However, it is not the intention of this thesis to stray into the realms of identity as it might be framed in terms of interiority. Questions of cultural differentiation are dealt with here at the level of the public statement. What is of concern here is a politics of cultural differentiation in a post-identitarian moment, not a psychoanalytics of self-identification. The preference here, then, is to speak of recognition in terms of acknowledging someone or something as representative of a particular cultural position or institution. The question becomes: How far could Irish people or gays in London at the *High Treason* exhibition co-opt Casement as representative of the various cultural positions in which they may have had an investment?

In terms of Irishness in London as an instance of cultural differentiation, one could argue that a number of public statements facilitated the recognition of (Sir) Roger Casement as Irish. Reference has already been made in this chapter to Jeffrey Dudgeon's comments. Colm Toibin's work underlined the recognition of Casement as an important figure within Irish nationalist discourses. The National Portrait Gallery also made reference to Casement's recognition within nationalist discourse, with particular mention made of the 1966 exhibition at the National Gallery of Ireland, *Cuimhneachan 1916: A Commemorative Exhibition of the Irish Rebellion, 1916*. In view of such material, one could argue that Casement's figuration as an Irishman remained unproblematic in millennial acts of memorialization. As a consequence, those who chose to render Casement as an important figure in their own cultural self-differentiation as Irish and/or Irish-related might have been able to engage with memorializations of Casement in London. Such moves could even be seen as facilitating a transnational consciousness of Irishness.

One could argue, however, that a clear (trans)nationalist role can be assigned to Casement's hagiography only by marginalizing his homosexuality. In relation to such arguments within Irish nationalism, Toibin pointed towards moves that claimed Casement as an important nationalist hero while marginalizing questions concerning his alleged homosexuality. Toibin saw the problem of Casement's 'Irish gayness' as being framed within

Irish nationalist discourse: "How could an Irish patriot be homosexual?" (2003:92) was a question that arose because of the normalizing dynamics within nationalist discourses – dynamics that could not encompass and take account of the full range of experiences undergone by a figure to whom they lay claim. Within the bounds of such an argument, one can remark that it was possible for Irish people to recognize Casement as representative of Irishness but not of homosexuality.

How feasible is it to attempt to separate Casement's Irishness from his homosexuality? Is it possible to render the memorialization of Casement as an Irishman as unproblematic while at the same time rendering the memorialization of his homosexuality as deeply problematic? Could one credibly argue for a disentanglement between Casement's Irishness and his homosexuality? One could approach such questions by addressing a figuration of Casement that allows both his Irishness and his homosexuality to be taken together. Indeed, it might be more useful to engage with Casement's Irishness and his homosexuality as inter-related aspects of his characterization continually informing one another. Hence, one can begin to think about the complexity of Casement's Anglo-Irishness in conjunction with his homosexuality: homosexuality as an aspect of national consciousness rather than as apart from it. Thus one can think of an homosexualized Anglo-Irishness and an Anglo-Celticized homosexuality. It is perhaps the complexity of such a figuration of a subject that could render Casement's memorialization in London as useful to those identifying as culturally differentiated in relation to sexuality. Although it might not be necessary to go as far as Dudgeon's comment, " [Casement's] 1911 diary...exposed him as an ordinary gay man would appear today",[20] one can suggest that the complex subject-formation that can be termed 'an ordinary gay man today' could support the co-option of Casement's memorialization into a range of contemporary political affiliations.

Casement's value to contemporary political affiliations associated with culturally differentiated sexualities remains open to dispute, however. For, his figuration as an Irish homosexual was debated and left in question within Toibin's biographical sketch. Indeed, in

concluding his discussion of several works on Casement, Toibin referred to "...the debate which is likely to continue about his diaries and about Casement's legacy" (2003: 113). As an afterthought, it might be interesting to note that the National Portrait Gallery distanced itself from any conclusions that could be drawn over Casement's sexuality by simply circulating the statement that:

> The 'Black Diaries' were widely believed, particularly in Ireland, to be forgeries, but a forensic study conducted in 2002, with the support of Irish prime minister Bertie Aherne, found them to be genuine.[21]

One might comment on the way that the National Portrait Gallery avoided 'owning' the statement that Casement was homosexual. Such evasion might be attributed to a form of political reticence – a reticence that can be seen to trouble, although not impede, sexually differentiated attempts at rendering Casement as a useful target of political affiliations.

The key suggestion put forward here is that the approaches taken to Casement's memorialization can be seen as a starting-point for the elaboration of a political strategy. Such a suggestion can be considered regardless of whether one addresses the National Portrait Gallery's perception of controversy or Toibin's equivocation over Casement's legacy. Alongside such a deproblematization of equivocation, one can look at the role of accounts of Casement's sexuality and, more precisely in terms of the material here, the role of accountability within a politics of sexual differentiation. The following section, *Queer accountability*, explores the efficacy of a strategy that questions the insistence that an account of sexuality in respect of the subject can or indeed must be given.

Queer accountability

In what ways does Toibin's biographical sketch offer opportunities for the political affiliations that can follow the recounting of the sexualization of a subject? How far might Toibin's sketch provoke disaffiliation because of an inability to give an account of a subject's sexualization? Let us start with the issue of affiliation. One can suggest that opportunities for moments of

political affiliation emerge in different ways within Toibin's text. Some allude to a preoccupation with questions that would be recognized by anyone conversant with the debates within contemporary queer theory. Others allude to popularly circulated tropes of gay sexuality. In terms of such popularly circulated tropes, one could consider Toibin's citation of Casement's diary entry from 1910, with its detail of payments made to men for sex as well as its comments on the sizes of the penises of Casement's sex-workers. For example, Toibin cited Casement's diary entries from São Paolo, 2 March 1910: "Breathed & quick enormous push. Loved mightily. To Hilt Deep X," (2003: 96) and from Buenos Aires, 12 March 1910: "Splendid erections. Ramon 7$000 [sic]10 inches at least. X in." (ibid). Citations such as these would, arguably, be recognizable to a contemporary gay readership, thus premising the possibility of an affiliation with Casement and with Toibin's moves to biographize him. Indeed, one could suggest that Toibin's citations from Casement's diaries would not look out of place on gay websites or in popularly circulated magazines such as *qx*, *Gay Times* or *Boyz*.

Toibin's allusions to Casement's abandonment of 'natural caution' can also be seen as premising a moment of political affiliation on the part of those culturally differentiated in respect of sexuality. Opportunities for such political affiliation can be seen as being offered through a range of contemporary discourses. Consider, for example, the moment when Toibin addressed the question of why Casement left his diaries to be discovered. He argued: "It is...easy to imagine Casement... waving away natural caution." (2003: 102). Such contentions resonate with ongoing debates within queer theory. Indeed, Toibin's discussion of Casement's rejection of 'natural caution' could be specifically located within a queer discourse that might be termed 'gay abandon'[22], which can be read as an emphasis on an association between gay cultures and tropes of danger or risk. Such discursive activity can be found in various sites of queer cultural production: in the writings of Leo Bersani, particularly his discussion of 'the gay outlaw' in Homos (Bersani, 1995:113); in the cinema of Isaac Julien, particularly his film *The Attendant* (1993); and in the writings of Oscar Moore, particularly his novel, A Matter of Life and Sex (1991). Toibin's sketch of Casement can be seen, then, as opening him up to a series of political affiliations through the discourses

circulated in contemporary gay popular culture, queer cinema, queer fiction and queer theory.

Although the discussion above demonstrates ways in which Toibin's biographizing text of Casement provided opportunities for moments of political affiliation, such a discussion could be seen as lacking because it does not also consider moments of political disaffiliation. One could argue that scenes of reading, in which gay men achieve moments of political affiliation through works such as Homos, must have corollaries in scenes of reading during which those who engage in same-sex sexual activity fail to achieve such moments of affiliation. Such failures can be addressed in terms of failures to account for the sexuality of a subject. Indeed, one could suggest that where there is no account of sexuality, the possibility of political affiliation is impeded for those culturally differentiated in respect of sexuality. How important is accountability? How far does its absence, in terms of sexuality, impede a relation with a subject? Is it viable to question the insistence that an account of someone's sexuality remain a key aspect of determining their subject-position? What is advocated here is the relegation of the importance of the accountability of sexuality in the rendition of subjectivity.

Perhaps, in contradistinction to an insistence on the accountability of a subject's sexuality, unaccountability should be treated as central to a consideration of same-sex encounters. Such unaccountability could be put on a par with celebratory moments of cultural recognition, political affiliation and historicized representation. Indeed, unaccountability could help one think through the ramifications of the scene of reading in which a gay reader faces Toibin's citation of The Vindication of Roger Casement (1994) by E.O. Maille, M. Callanan and M. Payne. According to Toibin, that work dismissed the 'Black Diaries' as forgeries and proposed Casement as a 'good' (i.e., 'heterosexual'?) Christian and a 'good' (i.e., 'hetero-sexual'?) Catholic. Such a work could be said to induce a crisis in the scene of reading whereby a gay reader would feel disinclined to lay claim to a figuration of Casement. Indeed, such a representation of Casement could provide an impediment to attempts by gay readers to seek some affiliation with Toibin's account. By exploring the possibility that Casement's sexuality can be discussed in terms of its unaccountability, one can move towards a situation

in which any impediment to announcements connected to the sexuality of important cultural figures need not be seen as a move towards closeting or attempted normalization. Rather, the unaccountability of a set of sexual activities can be seen as emphasizing the insusceptibility of such activities to processes of normalization.

Let us discuss further the notion of unaccountability in respect of the relation between sexuality and subject-position through a reading of the work of contemporary novelist, Pat Barker. Between 1991 and 1995, she published the three novels of her *Regeneration* trilogy: Regeneration (1991); The Eye in the Door (1993); and The Ghost Road (1995). All three novels took as their subject matter people who were considered as unheroic during World War One: those who could not fight due to mental illness form the focus of the first work, Regeneration; those who chose not to fight, namely deserters and conscientious objectors, form the focus of the second, The Eye in the Door. The final work in the trilogy, The Ghost Road, returns to some of the main characters who appeared in the first two works, contrasting their war experiences with their colonial experiences before the war.

One of the trilogy's key themes was Freudian psychoanalysis. The theme was set up with the central figure of Regeneration, Captain Rivers, a psychoanalyst based at Craiglockhart – a psychiatric institution set up for those who have been invalided out of the war due to their mental health. Rivers appears as a character in all three books. Characters who also appear across the trilogy include historical figures such as Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen. They interact with Rivers through the device of the consulting room. The consulting room is used by Barker as a means of character development, revealing key preoccupations of the participants in the analysis, including Captain Rivers. The consulting room device is also used as a means of presenting questions that concern the narrative as a whole. Such questions can be cited as: what is the relation between narration and reminiscence? How does narration act as a form of 'talking-cure'? Such issues drive Barker's project forward, particularly in Regeneration, with its psychiatric setting. In that work, Rivers, himself a stammerer, encounters the other characters by engaging with their symptoms and

with the issues surrounding their hospitalization. He speaks to another key figure in the trilogy, Billy Prior, discussing the question of symptoms:

> ....Mutism seems to spring from a conflict between wanting to say something, and knowing that if you do say it the consequences will be disastrous. So you resolve it by making it physically impossible for yourself to speak. And for the private soldier the consequences of speaking his mind are always going to be far worse than they would be for an officer. What you tend to get in officers is stammering. And it's not just mutism. All the physical symptoms: paralysis, blindness, deafness. They're all common in private soldiers and rare in officers. It's almost as if for the...labouring classes illness has to be physical. (1993: 96)

A character-driven approach to issues of narratability and traumatic memory dominate the early part of the trilogy. However, by the central novel in the trilogy, The Eye in the Door, the questions of narratability and memory begin to work at the level of the narrative itself. It is in respect of such an approach that Barker's work provides an opportunity to discuss the notion of unaccountability in terms of the wider questions of sexuality and subject-position. For, it is through a discussion of Barker's troubling of her narrative and disturbance of her characters, that one can begin to explore the relevance of unaccountability in relation to narratives, such as Toibin's account of Casement, that are connected to the events of the First World War.

In terms of the troubling of character in Barker's characterization, one can discuss the figure of Billy Prior. In The Eye in the Door, Prior, the protagonist, suffers from memory lapses, termed 'fugue states'. Prior uses the term 'black-outs'(1994: 175). Prior's fugue state works a little like somnabulism: he does things of which he has no memory later, only to find evidence that such acts must have taken place. He meets someone in Hyde Park by accident, he thinks. However, he is told that he had arranged the meeting:

> He plumped the pillows up behind him and groped in the pocket of his tunic for a cigarette. Weren't any. Then he remembered

> he'd been wearing his greatcoat. He got up, checked the pockets and found a packet of cigars. He didn't smoke cigars. But he must have bought them and either smoked or offered them to somebody else, because there were two missing from the pack. Just as he must have arranged to meet Spragge. Spragge wouldn't have lied about that. (ibid.: 130-131)

The lapses in Prior's memory are reflected in partial lapses in narration. The events that Prior cannot remember are not themselves narrated. There is no account of him buying cigars. There is no account of him arranging to meet Spragge. In a sense, then, the narrative itself suffers from memory lapses. Since Barker uses the device of an impersonal narrative, one can only conclude that the inability to recall events is part of the narrative itself. Thus, one could argue that the fugue state relates to a narrative lacuna. In the narrative, it is pointed out that:

> In a hospital setting, where the fugue state could be observed...
> reassurance was easily given, but it was less easy to reassure Prior.
> Partly because the fugue state *couldn't* be observed, but also
> because Prior's sense of the darker side of his personality was
> unusually strong. [original emphasis]
> (ibid.: 143)

The suggested inability to observe the fugue state in Barker's fiction underscores the issue of unaccountability in the debate around Roger Casement advanced here. It can be suggested that aspects of an historical figure's subject-position might not be ascertainable and must, therefore, always remain mired in doubt. Such a suggestion is borne out by the narrative structure of The Eye in the Door: the surface of the narrative is fragmented; episodes fall out of narrative without explanation; the borders between memory, dream and narrative account blur. One might consider further the way in which such issues are played out. The following episode provides a further example.

Prior returns to his "seedy basement flat in Bayswater" (1994:53), following a visit to an imprisoned conscientious objector called Beattie Roper. Prior has trouble sleeping. When he does manage to doze off, his dreams take him seamlessly from the battlefront in France to the prison cell where he has just visited Beattie Roper back to his flat in Bayswater. Barker places Prior in a penumbra: "His sleep was light..." (ibid.: 58). She tells the reader: "The cold half-woke him." (ibid.) She describes how, in his half-woken state, Prior stands "in the half-darkness" (ibid.). This indeterminate state reflects the indeterminacy of the narrative. The next few passages are quoted at length to show how Barker bleeds events from history into dream into waking state:

> A hawk flew over and he watched its shadow on the snow. They were marching back. His boot went through thin ice into freezing mud...The cold half-woke him. He found his leg outside the covers and brought it back inside, but now his whole body was cold. He was lying naked on a stone floor. Because his sleep was light, he knew he was dreaming, and he knew also that he had to wake up before something worse happened. He turned and saw the eye watching him...He stared at the eye, and then, by a supreme effort of will, forced himself to sit up.
>
> Sweating and clammy...he got up and felt his way along, not wanting to switch on the light because the horror of the nightmare was heavy on him...He was standing by the desk...when he heard a chuckle and spun round. The eye was watching him from the door. He shrank back against the table, his hands groping behind him for the paper-knife. His fingers closed round the hilt and he sprang at the door, stabbing the eye again and again, his naked body spattered with blood... Then, exhausted, he slipped to the floor and lay there, sobbing, and the sound of his sobbing woke him up.
>
> At first he simply stared at the door. Only when he was sure that there was no eye did he start to relax and take in the strangeness of his position...he was out of bed, lying on the floor. Nightmare, he

> thought, drawing a deep breath. He started to pull himself up, feeling a wetness in his groin, and, as he did so, his splayed fingers touched the knife. So that had been real. With a spasm of revulsion, he struck out at it and sent it skittering across the floor. (ibid.: 58-9)

This slippage from waking to dream to memory gives the narrative a porous effect. In this way, Pat Barker's fiction speaks of the impossibility of observing, witnessing and accounting for the events of the First World War.

At the limits of human experience, Barker's work suggests, it might not be possible to render accountable every aspect of subjectivity. Indeed, in such circumstances, the maintenance of intact processes of subjectivization might rely on an impairment of narratability – accountability ceases to be integral to the subject. In such situations, accountability can be said to bear the wounds of war. The argument here is that traumatic narratives, including histories connected to war, such as that of (Sir) Roger Casement, might, by necessity, bear the wounds of war. Perhaps, narratives connected with such events must suffer war damage. Perhaps, accounts connected with people who have been through war cannot remain intact. Perhaps, such histories cannot be completely remembered. Such a series of propositions become especially poignant in the knowledge that sometimes the dead cannot be completely buried:

> A pause, 'Anyway, we moved forward. It was raining...It was always raining. The heavens had opened. And we were told to report to the graveyard.' Manning laughed, a genuine full-blooded laugh. '...it was absolutely true. We were billeted in the graveyard. And it was extra-ordinary. All the tombs had been damaged by shells and you could see through into the vaults, and this was in an area where there were corpses everywhere. The whole business of collecting and burying the dead had broken down. Wherever you looked there were bodies or parts of bodies, and yet some of the younger ones... were fascinated by these vaults. You'd come across them lying on

their stomachs trying to see through the holes, because the vaults
were flooded and the coffins were floating around. It was almost as
if these people were really dead, and the corpses by the road weren't.
Anymore than we were really alive. (ibid.: 171)

The question, then, is not how to account for nor, indeed, give an account of the sexuality of someone inveigled in a liberation struggle during war-time. Rather, the question becomes how to reflect the fragmentation, how to mark what is missing, how to perforate the line. In effect, Barker's works turn away from the suggestion that narrative can act as suture and towards the probability that narratives must carry the marks of wounds.

What is at stake in possibilities posed by unaccountability is the suggestion that the doubt that underscores such unaccountability can provide the means by which the subject can be opened up to the logic of supplementarity. The subject's move to supplementarity can be premised on material generated by doubt. One can argue that such moves are inherent in the subject because one's subjectivity remains no more than an approximation of one's experience. 'Experience' becomes a contestable term, in such regard. If subjectivity only approximates experience, what can one call one's experience? In response to such a question, one need only emphasize the processual aspects of subject-formation underlying the account of subjectification supported in this thesis. If the subject emerges through discourse, then one can speak of a process or, more accurately, processes of subjectification. Drawing attention to such processes allows one to point towards the possibility that there are always objects of experience available to subjectification that fall outside of any particular subjectification process.

Moving towards conclusions

The range of commemorative events centring on Roger Casement in the early twenty-first century provided an opportunity not only to re-engage with Casement as an historical figure but also to address the nature of the comments that were made about him. From Colm Toibin's biographical sketch to text panels in the *High Treason* exhibition at the National

Portrait Gallery, one can characterize the commemorative marks left by the commemorative events surrounding Casement as being redolent of uncertainty, equivocation and doubt. Doubt emerges from the commemorative marks surrounding Casement because of the shame that engulfed his figuration following his conviction for treason in 1916. It was Casement's treason that formed the basis of his shame. Casement's conviction as a traitor can be considered as the key act that delegitimized him. Casement's delegitimization as a traitor must, however, be taken together with his previous legitimization as a man worthy of being honoured with a knighthood. Thus one can understand the crisis of legitimacy that renders him as a figure placed under shame conditions.

One of the effects of rendering Casement as a figure conditioned by shame was the problematization of statements made about him. An ambivalence over how Casement should be considered can be seen in Sandy Nairne's comments. An equivocation can be detected in Colm Toibin's discussion of Casement's 'Black Diaries'. Even Lavery's artwork was inveigled in uncertainty over its possession and ownership when it was left in the artist's studio for twenty-five years. The doubt overshadowing the work persisted when the artist's will was subsequently frustrated by the refusal of the trustees of the National Portrait Gallery to accept his artwork featuring Casement. Shame can be seen, then, as not simply a condition that befalls an historical figure through the coalescence of legitimizing and delegitimizing discourses. The condition of shame also has wider effects on what can and cannot be said about the shamed. In terms of commemorative events, particularly those leaning towards the hagiographical, the condition of shame can be seen to have widespread as well as disturbing effects.

In respect of the commemorative marks that surrounded Roger Casement at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the effects of shame can be seen to produce effective doubt. Such doubt relates to the equivocation, ambivalence and uncertainty overshadowing those commemorative marks. The discussion in this chapter has been directed not only towards unveiling the appearance of such doubt but also towards asking to what uses such

doubt might be put. Doubt was posited as a strategy of subjectification for those who position themselves as culturally differentiated. In such terms, doubt was still seen as an effect that emerges from the condition of shame. Doubt was not, however, limited to being just an effect. The argument suggested that doubt can be directed. In putting doubt to use in a post-identitarian framework, one can begin to see the value in refusing the rhetoric of affirmation that encompassed cultural production influenced by debates about identity politics in late twentieth century Britain.

How might doubt work in inaugurating a re-articulation of cultural differentiation? Such a question may be impossible to answer definitively. Any definite answer would implicitly refuse the potential of the doubt it was aiming to mobilize. There can be, perhaps, only speculative suggestions, directions in which one might choose to go, starting-points. It was suggested that one might appreciate the important role of doubt in the subject-formation of the culturally differentiated. As such, then, a politics of cultural differentiation based on particular affiliations, whether as gay or Irish or other, is not seen as useful if it cannot entertain doubt. Rather, doubt could be seen at its most efficacious in informing the tone of any language of cultural differentiation. The discussion focussed on the moments of self-doubt that follow the issuing of shaming interpellations directed at culturally differentiated others. The discursive framework provided by misogynist, racist and homophobic discourses was regarded as providing the culturally differentiated with an opportunity to use doubt within a strategy of ironic reinscription. In posing the questions 'What kind of nigger am I?' or 'How queer can I be?' or, as Rasheed Araeen put it, 'How can one paint a self-portrait!', one begins a process of self-subjectification that incorporates self-interrogation rather than refusing it.

The discussion re-assessed confusion by suggesting that it need not be rejected within a politics of cultural differentiation that privileges certainty. Instead, it was proposed that confusion could be seen as a key part of encounters with and between the culturally differentiated. The suggestion that 'clarity' and 'understanding' should be at the core of a

politics of cultural differentiation was thereby refused. Rather, it was suggested that an acceptance of semi-opacity within an encounter would be more useful. By addressing the confusion caused by an inability to reconcile Casement's homosexualization with his patriotism, it was suggested that a transnational notion of Irishness should be addressed. As such, an Anglo-Celticized homosexuality could be regarded as an important component of a transnational approach.

The ambiguity of Casement's historical position – was he a homosexual or was he not? – facilitated a discussion of unaccountability. Rather than viewing unaccountability as a problem for a politics of cultural differentiation, it was counter-valorized. In the foregoing discussion, unaccountability was explored in terms of its relation to events surrounding war and the inability to render a complete narrative of such events. Indeed, it can be concluded that the unaccountability of an historical subject's sexuality could leave open a wider range of grounds for political affiliations to be formed by those cultural differentiated in respect of sexuality.

[1] Toibin, C., 'Roger Casement: Sex, Lies and the Black Diaries', in Love in a Dark Time: Gay Lives from Wilde to Almodovar, Picador, London, 2003.

[2] McConkey, K., 'John Lavery – artist reporter', a lecture at the National Portrait Gallery, London, 25 September, 2003.

[3] *High Treason: The Appeal of Roger Casement, The Court of Criminal Appeal, 17 and 18 July 1916*, Curated by Katherine Eustace, National Portrait Gallery, London, 2 July – October 2003, Room 30.

[4] Press notice for *High Treason: The Appeal of Roger Casement, The Court of Criminal Appeal, 17 and 18 July 1916,* National Portrait Gallery, 2003; issued by Hazel Sutherland, press office, National Portrait Gallery, London, 2003.

[5] 'From Roger Casement's speech from the dock, 30 June 1916', a text panel in *High Treason,* op.cit.

[6] Sandy Nairne interviewed by Rebecca Jones, *Today* programme, BBC Radio 4, 1 July 2003.

[7] ibid.

[8] Jeffrey Dudgeon interviewed by Sarah Montague, *Today* programme, BBC Radio 4, 1 July 2003.

[9] ibid

[10] Burman, C.K., ' Ask How I feel/Automatic Rap/My New Work', *Third Text,* 19, Summer 1992 pp. 79-86.

[11] Mercer, K., 'Ethnicity and Internationality: New British Art and Diaspora-based Blackness', *Third Text,* 49, Winter 1999-2000, p. 54.

[12] Sandy Nairne interviewed by Rebecca Jones, *Today* programme, BBC Radio 4, 1 July 2003.

[13] Press notice for *High Treason,* op. cit.

[14] Gilroy, P., 'Post-colonial Melancholia', a lecture at Tate Modern, Starr Auditorium, Tate Modern, London, 11 March 2003.

[15] Press notice for *High Treason,* op. cit.

[16] Jeffrey Dudgeon interviewed by Sarah Montague, *Today* programme, BBC Radio 4, 1 July 2003.

[17] Text panel in *High Treason,* op. cit.

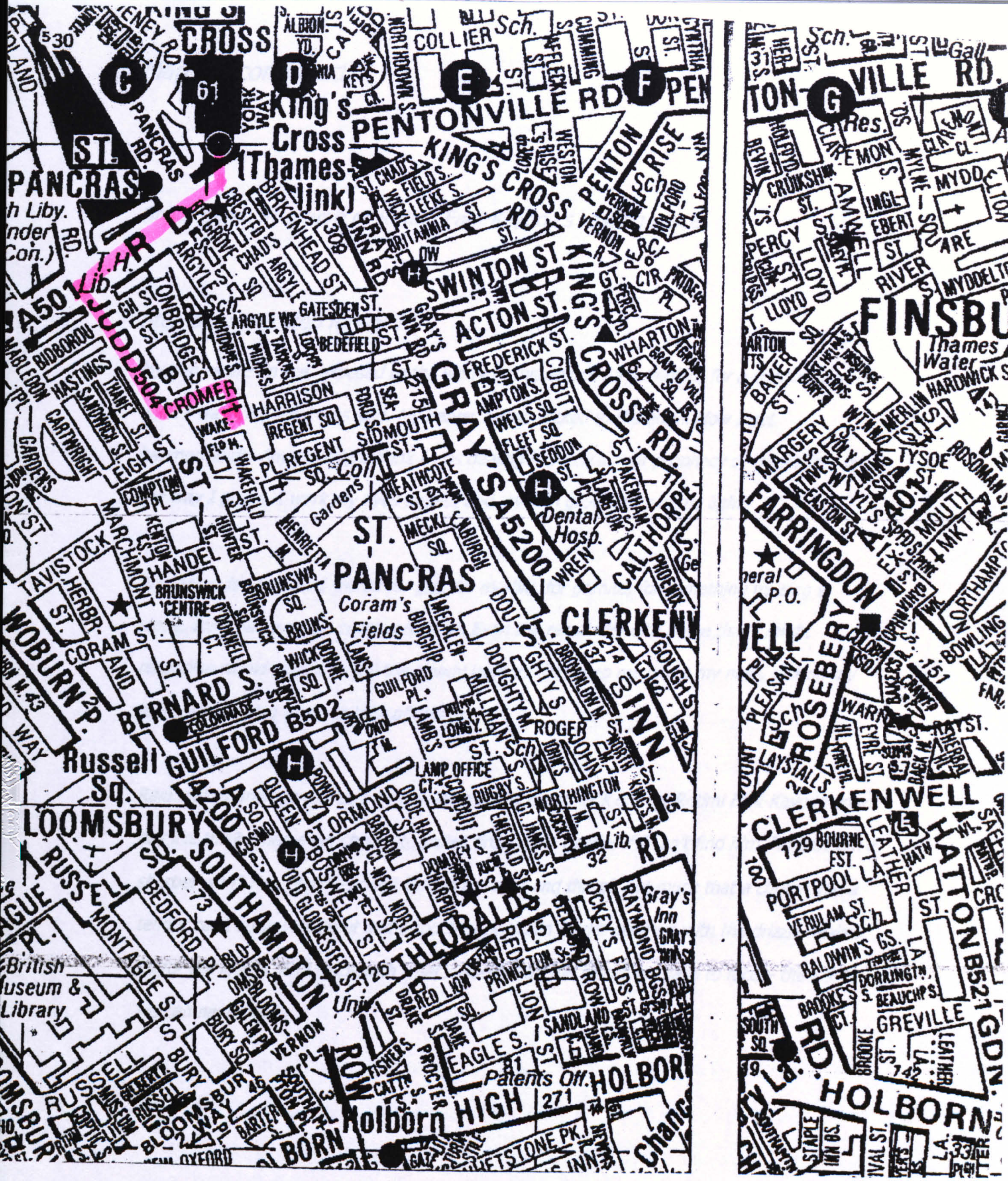
[18] Text panel in *High Treason,* op. cit.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Jeffrey Dudgeon interviewed by Sarah Montague, op. cit.

[21] Press notice for *High Treason,* op. cit.

[22] For the coining of this term and for helpful discussions, thanks to Stewart Turnbull.



Map B.

Steps taken in search of Rotimi Fani-Kayode's resting place

■ *– a luckless stroll*

Map B. (continued)

Steps taken in search of Rotimi Fani-Kayode's resting-place

Step one: one step forward

My nerves are on me, exposed to the worry of this search for a finding, for a confirmation of what I was told, what was said. My nerves are so racked to the edge. Now I get haemorrhoids. Anyone might think I was dealing in prediction or prophecy or foretelling, by the way I go on. I work my eyes tireless and my skin grows grey in the light.

Another pulse passes. I search for grit, for marble, for granite, for something missing in stone, for a name that I might recognise. Even the remainder of a name that I might recognise would suffice to still the steady tremors that keep me biting my nails, picking my teeth, sharpening every in-take of breath.

Rain makes graveyards seem empty. Who asked me to look out for Rotimi Fani-Kayode on a day like this? When even chocolate tastes dreary. No worries if I can't find him. No problem if sherbet won't fizz. Matches don't light in the mist and there's not much that a church and a tenner can't cure. Milk stout and a touch of penicillin works wonders with the drizzle. Makes up for the losses. And helps with what's worse than the losses we have to face – the losses we can never find.

Chapter four

Who could come forward?

re-marking apprehension around Justin Fashanu

The death of Justin Fashanu in May 1998 heralded widespread comment in Britain's mass media. Newspaper reports appeared in *Daily Express, Daily Mail* and *The Sun* newspapers on Monday 4 May, two days after Fashanu's body had been found hanging in a side-street in east London. The reports detailed Fashanu's rise to fame as the first black million-pound transfer in English football. The success that was attached to Fashanu's name also provided an opportunity to offer a stark contrast with the circumstances surrounding his death. It was reported that a passer-by had discovered Fashanu's corpse hanging in public[1]. That suggestion was treated in sensationalist terms in Britain's mass media. The sub-editors on tabloid newspapers put their talents to the test: 'Fugitive Fashanu in garage suicide' (*Daily Express*); 'Dying torment of a misfit superstar' (*Daily Mail*); 'Gay Fash's last night of lust' (*The Sun*). The circumstances of Fashanu's death were detailed in *Daily Mail* and *The Sun* with emphasis placed on his final hours spent in a gay sauna in East London[2]. The broader background to Fashanu's death was also included, with comments on allegations of sexual assault on a seventeen-year-old, which had been laid against Fashanu in the U.S. state of Maryland. It is against the background of such reports that commemorative gestures among culturally differentiated communities can be viewed as offering new strategies of subject-formation within shame conditions.

The reports of Fashanu's death can be regarded as a focal point for the coalescence of discursive formations that laid the ground for shame conditions by moralizing suicide then delegitimizing homosexuality while criminalizing sexual relations between adults and youths. Such a discursive formation proved effective not least because the link between homosexuality and suicide was already well established in Western culture. Such a link can be seen in high-culture examples, such as accounts of Tchaikovsky's suicide in 1893 to avoid

'scandalous exposure' of his homosexuality (Orlova, 1990: 411-414). One can also consider instances from recent popular culture, such as the film *Love and Death on Long Island* (1996), which recounted the story of an English writer's twin homosexualized obsessions with the young suicide poet Thomas Chatterton and with a youthful Hollywood teen movie star. Moreover, contemporary critics have not been slow to point out a link between homosexuality and suicide. Consider, for instance, the introduction to Jonathan Dollimore's work, Death, desire and Loss in Western Culture (1998), where a connection was made between sexuality, AIDS and the notion of a death-wish[3] (Dollimore, 1998: x). What is engaging about Dollimore's work is his suggestion that the link between homosexuality and suicide stems from the more basic link between homosexuality and death: "The supposed link between homosexuality and death is often imagined to include both impulses – the suicidal and the murderous" (ibid.).

The newspaper commentaries that reiterated a link between homosexuality and death in reports of Fashanu's suicide can be contrasted with the responses among Britain's culturally differentiated communities. A commemorative event, The Justin Fashanu Memorial Tribute, took place in Brixton, south London, on 23 June 1998. Material circulating around that event spoke of Fashanu in eulogistic terms. The order of events for the Memorial Tribute described Fashanu as, "an outstanding footballer and a courageous man".[4] That event was organized by key figures within London's lesbian and gay communities[5]. The Fashanu Memorial Tribute was also addressed by leading activists who campaigned for lesbian and gay civil rights in Britain. Figures such as Dirg Aarb-Richards[6] and Peter Tatchell[7] addressed the tribute. It is in relation to these events that cultural production relating to Fashanu's death is considered as a set of commemorative gestures. The way in which those gestures were framed within the context of shame is discussed below. In particular, the emergence of a certain kind of apprehensiveness in those commemorative gestures acts as a key feature of the debate.

The suggestion here is that the condition of shame, emerging from the friction between legitimizing and delegitimizing discourses, can give rise to apprehensiveness – a reluctance or reticence in an engagement with discursive imperatives. In considering an apprehensive stance as an effect of shame, one can suggest that the language that shame makes possible cannot, perhaps, ever give effect to definitive terms. Since shame relates specifically to the making and unmaking of a subject, one might conceive of it as a condition of quandary. In deceptively simple terms, one might speak of a subject's shame in terms of 'someone being *undone*'. It is such an undoing of the subject that undoes any statement relating to the subject. What strategies become available to negotiate the situation in which such statements are being undone? The issue becomes more pressing when such undoing takes place precisely in situations where a statement concerning a particular subject is demanded. Commemoration can be seen as a scenario in which such statements are requested. The emphasis on a commemorative setting with its need for public statements and public gestures becomes key.

How might the circumstances surrounding Fashanu's death be seen as placing his commemoration within shame conditions? In attempting to answer such questions, it might prove productive to first look at the ways in which Fashanu was legitimized and delegitimized within the space of the mass media in Britain. In particular, the role of the press, including the gay press, in shaming Fashanu on a range of pretexts can be addressed. A discussion of the ways in which shame can be seen to have operated within culturally differentiated communities relating to Fashanu might also be helpful. For, it can be suggested that the grounds for arguing that shame can be seen to have operated within culturally differentiated communities are not identical to those that can be related to the workings of the mass media.

The stories that circulated in Britain's mass media following the events of May 1998 provide an excellent example of the way in which shame can be understood as the effects of a direct association between the legitimized and the delegitimized. In the *Daily Mail*, for instance, Fashanu was legitimized and then delegitimized in the strongest terms. Journalist

Nick Craven, writing in the *Daily Mail,* started his report by legitimizing Fashanu: "In 1981, 20-year-old Justin became the first black million-pound player..."[8] The attribution of that particular accolade to Fashanu failed to have a bearing, however, on the rest of Craven's report. Craven went on to narrate Fashanu's football career as a series of misfortunes that ended in disaster. Consider, in particular, the language and tone of the rest of the article:

> ...by the time he [Justin] went public about his homosexuality in 1990, numerous problems, including a serious knee injury, had sent his career into a downward spiral. A knee wound became infected leading to blood poisoning – an injury that would dog him ever after. On Saturday, in a dingy lock-up garage, Justin Fashanu stopped running.[9]

Note how Craven dove-tailed Fashanu's publicization of his homosexuality with 'numerous problems'. The structure of the article was such that, from the point that homosexuality was mentioned, the writing was dominated by words associated with damage – 'injury', 'wound', 'infected', 'poisoning'. The cumulative effect of those terms was to produce a tone of degradation. The figuration of Fashanu was as a wounded animal, a 'running', 'dingy' 'dog'.

Sources outside the national press narrativized Fashanu's life as a 'rise and fall' story. His rise as the first black million-pound football player in Britain heralded his legitimization. For instance, John Bond, former manager of Norwich City Football Club, was described as instrumental to Fashanu's million-pound transfer to Nottingham Forest in 1981[10]. Before Fashanu's death, Bond had spoken of him in favourable terms. Part of an interview with Bond was included in *A Harder Road to Glory*, a BBC Radio documentary broadcast just over a month after Fashanu's death. Bond said:

> He's quick. He's strong. He's brave. He's a good goal-scorer. He's good in the air...He's what a good striker needs.[11]

In relation to the documentary account of Fashanu's life, a similar structure to Craven's newspaper report can be discerned. In *A Harder Road to Glory,* Fashanu's delegitimization was enacted through the suturing of the failure of his career with the publicization of his

homosexuality. The same broadcast that had cited eulogies of Fashanu also delegitimized him. The narrator of *A Harder Road to Glory* said:

> Fashanu was coming out when he should have been banging them in. Estranged from his family, he was vilified by the media, crucified by his own community and ridiculed by fellow professionals.[12]

It is interesting to note that the delegitimization of Fashanu in terms of the failure of his football career relied not so much on Fashanu's homosexuality *per se* but rather on his publicization of his homosexuality – his coming out.

The specific ways in which Fashanu's coming out was queried can be seen in relation to delegitimizing statements framed by heteronormative discourses. Through such statements, Fashanu's sexual practices as sexual practices outside heteronormative conventions became the objects of incitements to privacy. Consider an article in *The Independent on Sunday* by Tobias Jones, which reported Justin Fashanu's comments on his younger brother's reactions to his coming out:

> Justin later alleged that his brother, John, 'offered me more money than *The Sun* ' to keep quiet, and his refusal to do so led to a permanent rift between the two.[13]

It is interesting to note that the report placed the source of the rift between the brothers on Justin's decision to come out, not on John's request that he should not. The delegitimization of coming out in general and of Justin Fashanu's enactment of the strategy in particular can also be seen in comments made by Ronnie Brooks, former talent scout at one of Fashanu's early clubs, Norwich City. Brooks' comments were reported by Tobias Jones:

> His coming out upset me; I wasn't happy that he made it *public* [14]
> [emphasis added]

Coming out, then, can be seen as one of the sources of Fashanu's delegitimization. His position as a prominent footballer who had previously been legitimized for both his skill and his monetary value as a player, brought his delegitimization for going public about his sexuality within the realms of shame.

Apprehensiveness, which is being suggested here as a feature of the commemorative gestures that responded to Fashanu's death, can, in this instance, specifically be understood as a reserve or a reluctance to engage fully and openly with the implications that arose from the circumstances surrounding his suicide. Such apprehensiveness can be discerned in the material circulated for the Memorial Tribute event. Particular attention can be drawn to the order of events distributed during that memorial event. In it, mention was made of the circumstances of Fashanu's death but little detail was given. The order of events state: "The circumstances of his death are sad and give us all cause for thought".[15] Nothing further was added in terms of those sad circumstances. Indeed, the statement continued with a refusal to engage with those circumstances: "...but today we celebrate his many achievements and honour his memory."[16] No mention was made of the suicide. No mention was made of the allegations of sexual assault. Such an omission can be problematized as denial. However, it must be noted that no denial was issued. The words already cited, 'the circumstances of his death are sad', do not amount to a denial. Rather, statements issued by the Memorial Tribute can be characterized as unforthcoming or apprehensive.

The cultural production that emerged form the commemorative events surrounding Fashanu can also be seen as being tinged with apprehensiveness. Such cultural production was generated by two members of the steering committee that organized the Justin Fashanu Memorial Tribute: Valerie Mason-John and Troy Fairclough. At the Memorial Tribute, Mason-John performed a poem, *Suicide,* which she later described as having been adapted from an earlier work[17]. Although Troy Fairclough was also a member of the tribute steering committee, his cultural production, a two-act drama, *Justin Fashanu Woz 'Ere*, was not performed on the night of the Memorial Tribute. Indeed, his work took until 2004 to come to fruition when it was performed as a staged reading at The Oval House Theatre, London[18].

Both cultural productions can be regarded as commemorative gestures emerging from culturally- differentiated communities. Fairclough and Mason-John were recognized by figures within the black lesbian and gay community. Their works can be seen as having

provided an opportunity for generating a collective memory of Fashanu among Britain's black lesbians and gays. Mason-John's performance of *Suicide* was attended by members of such communities. The event itself was organized explicitly under the auspices of black lesbians and gays in London. Indeed, the press release circulated to publicize the Memorial Tribute stated:

> Members of the black lesbian and gay community organized this event because they believe Justin Fashanu was a man of exceptional footballing talent and personal bravery.[19]

Troy Fairclough's drama was directed by Topher Campbell, a director who founded the arts group, *rukus!,* which described itself as "a ground-breaking London-based enterprise set up to celebrate and showcase the best in challenging, provocative works by Queer artists/ performers who are at the cutting edge of their practice." [20] The staged reading of Fairclough's drama at The Oval House was attended by members and supporters of *rukus!* It is in those terms that the event can be regarded as having provided a chance to collectively remember Justin Fashanu. The issues that arise from such memorialization concern the means used to evoke collective memory as well as the omissions and difficulties that characterized such modes of enunciation.

Valerie Mason-John's poem, *Suicide*, did, of course, not only mention but, indeed, discuss Fashanu's suicide. Consider the text of the work:

Suicide, is it strength, anger or desperation

Perhaps all are woven into the insanity of life

Born to die

Born to die

Relatives, friends, lovers

All clamped to the purpose of living

Addictions, religions, sexuality

All exhausting the energies of life

Struggle and strife

Struggle and strife

Her death, his death, our death,

All claimed by suicide, or war, or disaster, or murder

Fate and fortune

Fate and fortune

Suicide and we are left with the guilt

Suicide and we are left with the anger

Suicide and we are left with the blame

His pain

His anger

His guilt

His strength

Drove him to suicide

Suicide is living

Living is suicide

No time to grieve

No time to mourn

The death of our friend

As we must put it behind us

Forget and pretend

Forget and pretend

Considerations such as Mason-John's own emphasis on the distinction between 'page' poetry and 'performance' poetry[21] impact on a reading of the work, but such issues are not of central importance at this point. What is key to address now is the way in which, although

Mason-John showed no apprehensiveness in vocalizing the difficult issue of suicide in relation to Fashanu's death, she was reluctant to discuss the events leading up to that suicide. Indeed, in an interview, Mason-John refused to entertain the possibility that the allegations of sexual assault against Fashanu could be true. She said:

> The allegations of child abuse were never proved. We live in a culture of innocent until proven guilty...[22]

The discussion of apprehensiveness in relation to Mason-John's statement is not here presented as a comment on Mason-John's feelings about Fashanu's suicide or the events leading up to it. The question here is not whether Mason-John was 'in denial' about the implications of the allegations against Fashanu. Rather, the focus here is on Mason-John's public statements. What are the implications of the things she said publicly? Indeed, the commentary here relates to the way in which we can begin to understand the impact of Mason-John's public performance of *Suicide*, as a statement connected to a series of discussions generated around Fashanu. The argument under consideration here concerns how far the statements of Mason-John and others facilitated an open discussion of the implications of Fashanu's death.

Troy Fairclough's drama offered a different kind of public statement, facilitating discussion of the possibility of Fashanu's sexual liaisons with younger men. Such openness about Fashanu's sexuality, however, can be contrasted with the apprehensiveness surrounding his suicide. Before going on to address the responses to Fashanu's death staged in Fairclough's drama, let's first consider evidence of openness on the theme of Fashanu's sexuality in Fairclough's work. The issue of the allegations of sexual assault that were laid against Fashanu provided a strand that was developed throughout Fairclough's play. Permit me to recount relevant scenes from the play: in act one, scene seven, in which "Justin Fashanu returns to his home, pursued by press and media", [23] a reporter asks the character Justin: " Mr Fashanu, about the allegations of sexual assault." [24] Justin refuses to comment. The scene continues with various reporters putting questions to Justin concerning the allegations. This theme is reprised in act one, scene ten, where Justin has a telephone

conversation with his friend, Paul, during which Paul asks Justin: "They said on the news something about a minor, is that true?" [25] In response, Justin denies it. In act one, scene thirteen, the theme is taken up again by a reporter doing a "live TV link up" outside Justin's house. The reporter comments: "The troubled star has just returned to England from America, where he had been coaching the Maryland Mania Club football team. Mr Fashanu denied allegations of sexually assaulting a young boy in his charge." [26] It is not until act two, scene three, when Justin and his friend Paul meet at Justin's house, that Justin himself narrates what took place. Consider the following excerpt from Fairclough's script: [27]

Paul: From the beginning

Justin: (sighing) I've told you already, there were a couple of kids round at my place.

Paul: How did they come to be there?

Justin: I'd put some feelers out that I was promoting a new football team and the kids came over to talk about football, or should I say soccer?

Paul: Kids?

Justin: Sixteen, seventeen years old

Paul: Was drink involved?

Justin: We had a couple of beers

Paul: And?

Justin: And what?

Paul: Drugs?

Justin: A few joints

Paul: Then what happened?

Justin: They all left but DJ lived far out and couldn't get home. I'd been drinking so couldn't drive.

Paul: Let me just recap, underage kids, drink, drugs – nothing to worry about so far. Go on.

Justin: DJ asked if he could crash on the couch and I said yes.

Paul: I'll finish the story, everyone else leaves and DJ falls asleep on the couch. You go to

your bed but you wake up to find him climbing on top of you. Tell me that's what happened?

Justin: Maybe

Paul: Maybe?

Justin: All I know is that he ended up in my bed

This dramatization of Fashanu's handling of the allegations against him refused the reluctance to discuss the allegations of sexual liaisons that can be discerned in the Memorial Tribute material. By allowing for the possibility that Fashanu did indeed engage in sexual liaisons with minors, one is able to pose a range of questions that are foreclosed by a reluctance to allow for such a possibility. One can ask, for instance, whether the category of childhood as constituted by the law should be interrogated. Such work has, of course, already been instigated by Foucault's inquiries into the workings of 'dividing practices', (Rabinow, 1991: 8), through which subjects become constituted by the imposition of practices that divide them from other subjects.[28] Without wanting to rehearse Foucault's arguments here, one can begin to interrogate the division between adult and child, on which laws regulating sexual practices rely. Furthermore, the implications of such a division, which include the way in which all those categorized as children become subject to the same regulatory regime, can be discussed. Indeed, as regards sexuality, it might be more useful to distinguish between those adults who have sexual liaisons with minors who are sixteen or seventeen and those adults who have sexual liaisons with minors under the age of ten. By refusing such a distinction, any possibility of distinguishing what should properly be termed ephebophilia from paedophilia becomes unfeasible. By dramatizing the possibility of Fashanu's sexual liaison with American youths, Fairclough's drama facilitated a distinction between ephebophilia and paedophilia and thereby allowed a discussion of ephebophilia to enter the public domain.

Fairclough's drama can, however, be seen as having been tinged with apprehensiveness in terms of the way it handled the question of Fashanu's suicide. The

suicide itself was not dramatized. Instead of re-enacting Fashanu's hanging, Fairclough's drama did two things: it staged an alternative version of Fashanu's death, in which Fashanu was murdered by MI5; and it staged a reporter narrating the story of Fashanu's hanging, an as official version of events. Let me point towards some key aspects of Fairclough's drama: the scene in which Fashanu is murdered in an East End garage is followed immediately by a scene in which "a reporter stands outside Justin's house doing a live TV link-up". [29] The effect is to suggest that the reports of Fashanu's suicide acted as a cover-up for his murder by the secret services. In positing such a suggestion, Fairclough's drama foreclosed on a discussion of suicide in particular reference to Fashanu.

The foreclosure on a discussion of suicide was unfortunate; an opportunity was, thereby, missed to revisit discourses on suicide with particular reference to black men. Discourses of victimization, in which black male suicides are problematized as victims of socio-political pressures were prevalent in Britain in the 1980s. One can think of work such as Keith Piper's mixed-media piece, *Reactionary Suicide: Black Boys Keep Swinging (or Another Nigger Died Today)* (1982), in which the figure of a hanged black man was framed by a daubed inscription: "another nigger died today seems one too many compromise fucked him up hear he sold out got souled out consumed and was consumed." The value of such work is the rejection of notions of suicide as a personal tragedy and the insistence on a politicization of suicide. Thus, Piper's work does not offer a personalized explanation of the reactionary suicide. There is no attempt to describe any personal reasons why the black boy he depicted had to swing. The reasons offered are politicized: "he sold out got souled out consumed and was consumed." By approaching suicide through a discourse of victimization one can see how a range of imperatives and interdictions impact on the subjectivizing strategies that people undertake. It is that impact that can be understood as leading to self-killing, not issues of personal tragedy. One can debate that discourses of victimization preclude any autonomy on the part of the suicide victim. Such debates are useful but they did not take place in relation to Fairclough's drama, however, because of the dramatic devices suggesting that Fashanu's suicide was a cover-up for murder.

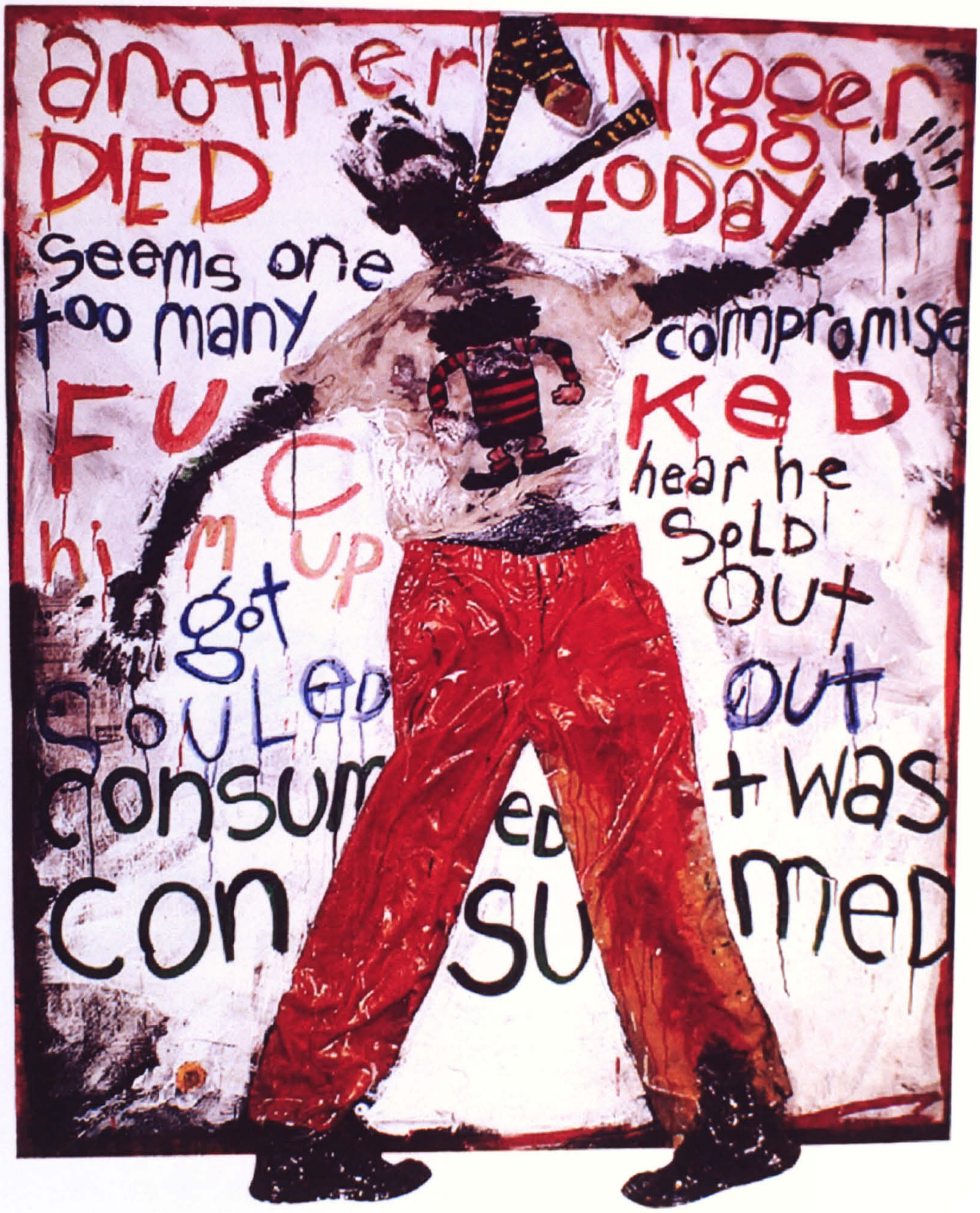


fig 4.1 Keith Piper, *Reactionary Suicide: Black Boys Keep Swinging (or Another Nigger Died Today)*, 1991
(acrylic and mixed media on canvas)

It is must be noted that Fairclough's drama did not sustain the suggestion of a cover-up. In a remarkable dramatic turn, Fairclough undermined the suggestion that Fashanu was murdered. Let us turn again to a diegesis of Fairclough's work: in the drama's final scene, act two, scene eleven, Bayo, a key character in the drama, confesses that the portrayal of Justin's murder was a figment of his imagination. Bayo appears on stage, interrupting a police interrogation scene, by saying:

> No, stop it, just stop this. It's not what happened, it never happened like that. It's all in my head...It's not what happened (Pause) I realize now it was just my way of dealing with Justin's death. I didn't want him to die, not like that. No one deserves to die alone like that. His memory must live on and it's down to people like me to keep his memory alive. As long as there is still football there will still be Justin. A pioneer, a man with destiny. Whenever I go to matches and I see teams, the players and the fans, it still gets me that there was never a one minute's silence for him. But I remember you, Justin, I remember you. [30]

One comment that can be made about the drama is that although the staged version of Fashanu's murder is repudiated as a false account of real events – "it's not what happened, it never happened like that" – the 'real events' themselves are not dramatized. Even the reporter's narration of the suicide is denied credibility in its juxtaposition with the scene in which secret agents murder Justin. Although the drama attempts to repudiate that version of Fashanu's death, it fails to reinstate any credibility in the suicide narrative. A question mark over Fashanu's suicide is left hanging by Fairclough's work. Such a question mark can be related to an apprehensiveness played out in the drama.

When questioned on his handling of Fashanu's death, Fairclough commented that he was seeking to reflect his own reaction to the news of Fashanu's suicide. He said:

> When I heard about Justin's death, I couldn't believe it. [31]

It is, perhaps, inappropriate to discuss what Fairclough meant by his comment "I couldn't believe it," since it is not the aim of this work to explore Fairclough's state of mind. It might, however, be useful to discuss the problem of incredulity in terms of apprehensiveness. In addressing, for instance, Troy Fairclough's public statement of his incredulity in the face of news of Fashanu's suicide, one can consider the demand for a public language with which to discuss Fashanu's death. It is precisely that demand to which Fairclough was apprehensive in his response when he spoke of his incredulity. In respect of apprehensiveness as an effect of shame, one can argue that a definitive statement concerning Fashanu's suicide would have always already been insufficient to meet the demand to respond to Fashanu's death. Indeed, the point can and must be put more precisely: it is important to explore the ways in which certain kinds of public statement became impossible for Fairclough and others to make as regards Fashanu's suicide, particularly because the suicide took place in conditions that can be described as 'shameful'.

The issues at the heart of this chapter concern the way in which Fairclough's incredulity can be related to the public statements enacted by his drama. In a sense, one could argue that his drama, by staging an alternative version of Fashanu's death, made such incredulity manifest. One could also claim, though, that by dismissing Fashanu's murder as a wish on the part of one character, Fairclough's drama did not provide a straightforward enactment of his incredulity. Rather, the series of dramatic devices – staging of the murder, staging of a reporter narrating the story of suicide, staging of Bayo dismissing the murder as his own imagination – can be seen as reflecting a deep ambivalence on Fairclough's part. Such ambivalence can be seen as allowing Fairclough to make a statement and then to refuse it. Fairclough's drama, with its manoeuvrings around the story of Fashanu's suicide, can, therefore, be seen as giving an overall effect of apprehensiveness, particularly in the context of the widespread circulation of stories concerning Fashanu's death.

An understanding of apprehensiveness in relation to the commemorative gestures around Fashanu can be approached with reference to what might be termed the 'rhetoric of affirmation', which dominated the politics of cultural differentiation in 1990s Britain. Such 'rhetoric of affirmation' can, indeed, be seen as parallel to the refusal of doubt in late-twentieth-century identity politics explored in the previous chapter. Here, however, it is important to stress the key role played by an advocacy of visibility and 'coming out' in addition to the insistence on affirming lesbian and gay positionalities as part of a rhetoric of affirmation. An emphasis on the promotion of highly visible, confident, self-aware lesbian and gay subjects could be seen in the cultural production emanating from Britain in the 1990s. Isaac Julien's filmwork in the 90s, such as *Trussed* (1996) and *Young Soul Rebels* (1991), made visible a range of confident, self-aware black and white gay men able to explore their loves, desires and fantasies. Similarly, in literary fiction, works such as Alan Hollinghurst's *The Spell* (1998) brought forward a host of confident, self-aware gay characters. In lesbian culture, Emma Hindley's film, *Third Party* (1997), explored the dynamics of lesbian sexuality among a group of young, confident lesbians. The appearance of the lesbian comedian Hufty as a presenter of Channel Four's flagship youth magazine programme *The Word* provided another example of the emphasis that was placed on lesbian visibility in the 1990s.

The issue of apprehensiveness that emerges from the commemorative gestures surrounding Fashanu challenges the basis of the rhetoric of affirmation underlying cultural production in the 1990s. Apprehensiveness, in such regard, refers to a reticence or reluctance to engage with a rhetoric of affirmation and the emphasis on visibility that it prioritized. It is not simply a question of visibility but also a question of the kind of subject that was presumed, in the rhetoric of affirmation, to lie behind that visibility. The reliance of cultural politics on a self-aware, confident subject refused the possibility of a subject who in any way displayed reluctance in action or reticence in manner. The protagonists in Hollinghurst's fiction, the figures in Julien's cinema and the characters in Hindley's drama were marked by their refusal to show apprehensiveness in the exploration of their fantasies and desires. The privileging of self-awareness and confidence over reticence and reluctance can be allied to

the circulation of the negative model of the 'closet', which was used in cultural strategies such as 'outing'. Any inability to take on an affirmative model of lesbian and gay subjectivity was treated as being 'closeted'. An opportunity to explore alternatives to affirmative models of lesbian and gay subjectivity was thereby missed. By taking up apprehensiveness as an approach that could be productive instead of problematized, one re-articulates a politics of cultural differentiation.

Coming out was central to the figuration of Fashanu within the cultural politics of late-twentieth-century Britain. It is against the background of such a figuration that one can address Troy Fairclough's reticence as a new development. For, in terms of those politics, one can see how a rhetoric of affirmation, emblematized by 'coming out', featured prominently in discourses surrounding cultures of sexual differentiation. Commentators such as Cherry Smyth have discussed the ways in which the issue of 'coming out' impacted on the politics of sexual differentiation throughout the late twentieth century. Smyth suggested that the emphasis on coming out within lesbian discourses in the late 1960s and early 1970s went so far as to challenge the dynamics of the women's liberation movement (1992: 14). Such tension, which impacted particularly on U.S. politics of sexual differentiation, had its corollary in the difficulties that followed the strategy of 'outing' in British politics of sexual differentiation in the early 1990s. 'Outing' was a campaigning device to promote visibility by publicizing the sexuality of prominent figures, such as politicians, senior clergy and media celebrities. It centred not only on a privileging of coming out but also on its imposition on those public figures, who did not necessarily support it. Cherry Smyth summed up the milieu:

> For lesbians and gays, outing represented the nub of the queer debate. For many, like Derek Jarman...it was a positive affirmation of the right to be open about sexuality by a new generation of lesbian and gay men who, content with their 'sexual orientation', were refusing to toe the line submissively, or accept discrimination and harassment. For others, the campaign raised moral, ethical and political questions. (ibid: 25)

Fashanu's coming out in 1990 took place amid intense critical and political debates on the importance of visibility. Politically, lesbian and gay campaigners supported Fashanu's stand. Campaigner Dirg Aarb-Richards wrote in 1991: "Justin's coming out was a tangible boost to the Black lesbian and gay community."[32]

One can argue, of course, that Fairclough's reticence in terms of discussing Fashanu's suicide, considered alongside Mason-John's reluctance concerning Fashanu's sexuality, should not be taken as an abrogation of 'coming out' as a political strategy. In pursuit of such arguments, one could state that both cultural practitioners supported statements issued by the Justin Fashanu Memorial Tribute celebrating Fashanu's decision to come out. Notwithstanding such a position, one can suggest that Fairclough's reticence and Mason-John's reluctance should be seen as a political strategy inaugurating a new moment in cultural politics. Such a moment can be regarded as being marked by an exploration of practices that one might term 'post-visibility politics'. Post-visibility politics can be identified in discussions that took place among critical theorists during the 1990s. Figures such as Peggy Phelan, in her work Unmarked (1993), questioned the privileging of visibility. Without recapitulating Phelan's arguments here, one can judge her work as participating in moves to critically reflect on practices emerging from the politics of cultural differentiation in the 1980s and 90s. The commemorative activity of cultural practitioners such as Mason-John and Fairclough can be regarded as among such practices. In an attempt to explore post-visibility practices further, it can be suggested that one should address their efficacy in contexts in which visibility ceases to be useful as a political tool. One such example might be the high visibility premised by Fashanu's public suicide.

It is interesting to note the way in which suicide, even at the end of the twentieth century, still provided grounds for delegitimization. The difficult reaction to Fashanu's suicide can be detected in the way that newspaper reports commented on the location of Fashanu's hanging – variously, a 'shabby garage' (*Daily Express*); a 'dingy lock-up garage' (*Daily Mail*); a 'derelict garage' (*The Sun*). The emphasis on the dereliction of the setting of Fashanu's

death can be seen as an attempt to underline the illegitimacy of his suicide. If one might admit some anecdotal evidence at this stage, I can only suggest that having visited Fairchild Place, the site of Fashanu's suicide, in the weeks following his death, I think the description of it as 'shabby' or 'derelict' might surprise some of the residents of the converted spaces located so conveniently close to Liverpool Street station. My argument is not, of course, aimed to suggest that the location of Fashanu's suicide should be read as salubrious rather than shabby. What I want to propose is that by setting Fashanu's hanging in a derelict location, the mass media invoked specifically twentieth-century discourses that place the visibility of suicide at the fulcrum of their problematizations.

Al Alvarez in his study The Savage God (1971) discussed the emergence in the twentieth century of discourses of suicide that privileged the privacy of the act of self-killing. Alvarez discussed "the shift...from morals to problems" (1974: 92), suggesting that attitudes to suicide in Britain had changed so that the key factors in conventional responses to suicide emphasized that it should be kept hidden:

> What was once a mortal sin has now become a private vice, another 'dirty little secret', something shameful to be avoided and tidied away, unmentionable and faintly salacious, less self-slaughter than self-abuse. (ibid: 99)

The public visibility of Fashanu's corpse hanging in Fairchild Place in east central London refused the conventions of privacy that rendered suicide in twentieth-century Britain containable. Such a refusal left Fashanu's suicide open to delegitimizing comments directed specifically at the location of his death. Such comments, by associating Fashanu's suicide with sites such as "a disused railway arch" (*Daily Express*)[33], "railway bridge" (*Daily Mail*)[34] and London's East End, marked Fashanu's experience with social marginality and exclusion. It is in relation to such delegitimization of the public visibility of Fashanu's suicide that one can address the efficacy of post-visibility strategies such as apprehension. The apprehensiveness expressed in relation to Fashanu's suicide can be seen as a response to a situation of troubled visibility. That response was characterized by an articulation of gestures that refused

to privilege visibility: a refusal to step into the spotlight; an avoidance of media exposure; a rejection of opportunities to comment. Such moves could all be regarded as among the post-visibility manoeuvres made available through the strategy of apprehension. By such means apprehension becomes the basis for articulating an entirely new politics of cultural differentiation that impacts on the possibilities of subject-formation.

Backwards in coming forwards: apprehension as a model of subject-formation

If one regards apprehension as an unwillingness or unpreparedness to take up a position, one can begin to explore how such apprehension might have a range of implications, particularly as regards subjectivity and cultural differentiation. For instance, one could think of the impact that apprehension might have in terms of a reluctance to participate in cultural narratives, such as the glorification of one celebrity or the vilification of another. By considering the range of identifications and refused identifications that can take place through participation in cultural narratives, one can see how such participation can be included in discussions of subject-formation. In glorifying a particular soccer star, a subject might begin to identify with that star: 'I can bend it like Beckham'. In vilifying a celebrity, a subject might begin a refusal to identify: 'What's wrong with Michael Jackson?'[35]. In being apprehensive about participating in such supposed cultural narratives by, for instance, ignoring news stories, a subject presents a disengagement with the opportunities for the identifications and refused identifications that such cultural narratives offer.

Let us explore further the implications of apprehension as a strategy of disengagement. By addressing apprehension in such terms, one can make a case for apprehension as an account of the way subjects emerge. In such terms, apprehension can be related to more recent accounts of subject formation, such as Butler's performative account (Butler, 1993). Apprehension follows Butler in taking up the Althusserian model of interpellation as a point of departure. It does so through its reliance on the notion of participation in cultural narratives. Cultural narratives, exemplified by news stories that carry the imperative 'let's vilify Fashanu', can be seen to act as interpellative calls. The subject, in

its response to the call to participate in a cultural narrative, can be seen to form itself. In simplest terms, the subject becomes positioned as audience for a particular media outlet. In respect of this, apprehension can be seen in parallel to Butler's performative model, where the subject can be seen to *con*form and/or *per*form, through either disciplined and/or parodic responses to cultural narratives as interpellative calls. The key to understanding the distinction between apprehension and performativity, however, is an appreciation of the duplicity of apprehension. In apprehension, the emerging subject is both seized by *and* violently resists the interpellative call.

How can one discuss further the duplicitous aspects of apprehension, its seizures and resistances? Let us start by considering the way in which the generalized term 'apprehension' can carry, at least, a double meaning. One meaning is 'to take hold of' as in 'to apprehend a criminal'. In this sense, the effectiveness of an interpellative call, seen here as the issuing of a discursive imperative, takes priority in being able to take hold of subjects as they emerge – discourse draws the subject out. In this sense of apprehension, the subject is always-already anticipated. The other aspect of apprehension lies in the emerging subject's own anticipation of discursive intervention. Such an aspect is reflected in another connotation of apprehension, which is 'to expect', as in 'to be apprehensive about a future event'. In this sense, not only does a discursive intervention await an emerging subject but an emerging subject expects a discursive intervention.

The use of the term 'discursive intervention' works as a means of taking forward Althusser's interpellative model. Of course, in the Althusserian model, one attains a subject-position by answering the address of the law, modelled as the call of the policeman 'hey, you!' The notion of apprehension takes this further by not only suggesting that one is called into a subject-position and compelled to respond to the summons or interpellation: in the discursive intervention, one is taken hold of, arrested or apprehended. The notion of apprehension, then, offers a model of a stronger discursive intervention into the formation of the subject than that premised in interpellation. In proposing to emphasize the impact of

discursive intervention, the apprehensive model also underlines the tension and violence involved in the struggle for the subject to emerge. The relation between the emerging subject and discourse, then, can be seen as marked by tension.

By characterizing the relationship between the emerging subject and discourse as a relationship marked by tension, one can see the process of subject-formation as containing a double dynamic – both compulsive and repulsive. On the one hand, apprehension suggests that the emerging subject is compelled by the discursive intervention that draws the subject out. On the other hand, apprehension suggests that the emerging subject anticipates discursive intervention and resists the attempts to draw it out. What is useful about viewing the process of subject-formation as one marked by tension is that it provides an account of the way in which agency arises. For, if there is a tension between compulsion and repulsion, a tension between intervention and resistance, the dynamic that comes out of such tension can be seen as providing the means through which agency arises.

Let us consider the discursive interventions that draw subjects out as participants in particular cultural narratives. Not so much 'hey, you!' as 'hey, you, listen to this!' By looking at the circulation of cultural narratives around Fashanu, one can explore the way in which tension arises in the moment that emerging subjects are seized by the discursive imperative to participate. The suggestion here is that in being constituted as a lesbian or gay subject in late-twentieth-century Britain, one was not only called to participate in the cultural narrative that delegitimized Justin Fashanu, one was taken hold of. The scope for a nuanced or parodic inhabitation of a lesbian or gay subject-position that participated in the cultural narrative condemning sexual liaison with young men was severely limited. Consider the response of the British national lesbian and gay newspaper *The Pink Paper* when it raised the issue of the sexual assault allegations surrounding Fashanu:

> There is a welterweight of rumour around Fashanu and very young men. It's not easy – or useful – to canonize him as a saintly victim.[36]

How far could a national editorial take up the nuances that Butler claims become available in the way that one answers the call of the law? Butler's response to Althusser's interpellative model was to suggest nuances such as "the parodic inhabiting of conformity that subtly calls into question the legitimacy of the command" (1993: 122). However, the subject-positions taken up by black lesbians and gay men like Mason-John and Fairclough, who were called to make public utterances in response to the Fashanu narrative, did not have a parodic response available to them. This is because they were not being interpellated, they were being apprehended. One could say, it was less a question of calling, more a matter of seizure.

The tension in the apprehension that framed the responses of Fairclough and Mason-John to the Fashanu narrative can be understood as facilitating incredulity, reluctance and reticence. One can suggest that the agency of those historical actors can still be seen to exist in the way that they responded to being apprehended – compelled to hear the cultural narrative but repelling it at the same time. It is interesting to note the way in which the scope for response in the apprehension model differs from that outlined by Butler in her performative account. The impact of being apprehended seems to rule out much of the playfulness that appeared to characterize Butler's rendition of performativity. In performativity, the production of agency emphasizes the playfulness made possible by a continual re-engagement with discursive imperatives. It feels difficult to imagine, let alone find evidence of, playful or parodic responses within culturally differentiated communities to the cultural narrative that surrounded Fashanu's suicide. The apprehension discovered in such communities places emphasis on the struggle to disengage with the imperative to respond to the Fashanu narrative. In apprehension, one has to fight to repel the discursive intervention that 'takes hold of' one. Literally, one 'holds off' the impact of the discursive intervention. One can think of such holding-off in terms of Fairclough's incredulity or Mason-John's reluctance to accept the possible truth of the allegations.

In understanding incredulity and reluctance as tactics that successfully hold off the impact of discursive imperatives, can one suggest that such tactics can entirely negate discursive imperatives? Can one say that the discursive imperative is vitiated by incredulity or reluctance? In the light of the persistence of the cultural narratives that surrounded Fashanu, it becomes difficult to suggest that the incredulity shown towards such narratives entirely negated them. Neither Fairclough's incredulity nor Mason-John's reluctance can be said to have seriously undermined the credibility of the cultural narratives. The statements underlining their disbelief cannot be counted as vitiating the possibility that the narratives circulated in the mass media might contain some truth. Apprehension in those terms does not negate the cultural narrative, it simply reflects a reluctance to participate – it reinstates the distance between the emerging subject and the imperative that engages her/him as a listener to a story or, more precisely, as an auditor of an account. The responses of Fairclough and Mason-John can be seen as useful ways of responding to discursive interventions. In such terms, the successful holding-off of discursive imperatives can be seen as that which creates room for agency to take effect within the process of subject-formation.

How might one reflect on the uses of apprehension in respect of a wider re-articulation of culturally differentiated politics? One can reflect on, for instance, the issues that apprehension emphasizes in terms of an engagement with public space and national utopias. In this regard, let us consider the work of Congolese artist Bodys Isek Kingelez. His mixed-media installation *Ville Fantôme* (1996), can be seen as providing an opportunity to think through the implications that an apprehension model of subject-formation might have for a reconsideration of space. Made out of plywood, paper and cardboard, as well as being scaled 82 x 520 x 260 cm, *Ville Fantôme* forms a model of a futuristic city complete with skyscrapers, signature architecture, a pleasure wheel, not to mention decorative urban horticulture. The only thing missing from *Ville Fantôme* is people. The streets in Kingelez' futuristic vision are empty. There are no cars. There are no pedestrians walking the streets. There are no youngsters washing cars, no youths selling newspapers, neither man nor woman pushing or pulling children. Kingelez's decision to characterize his futuristic

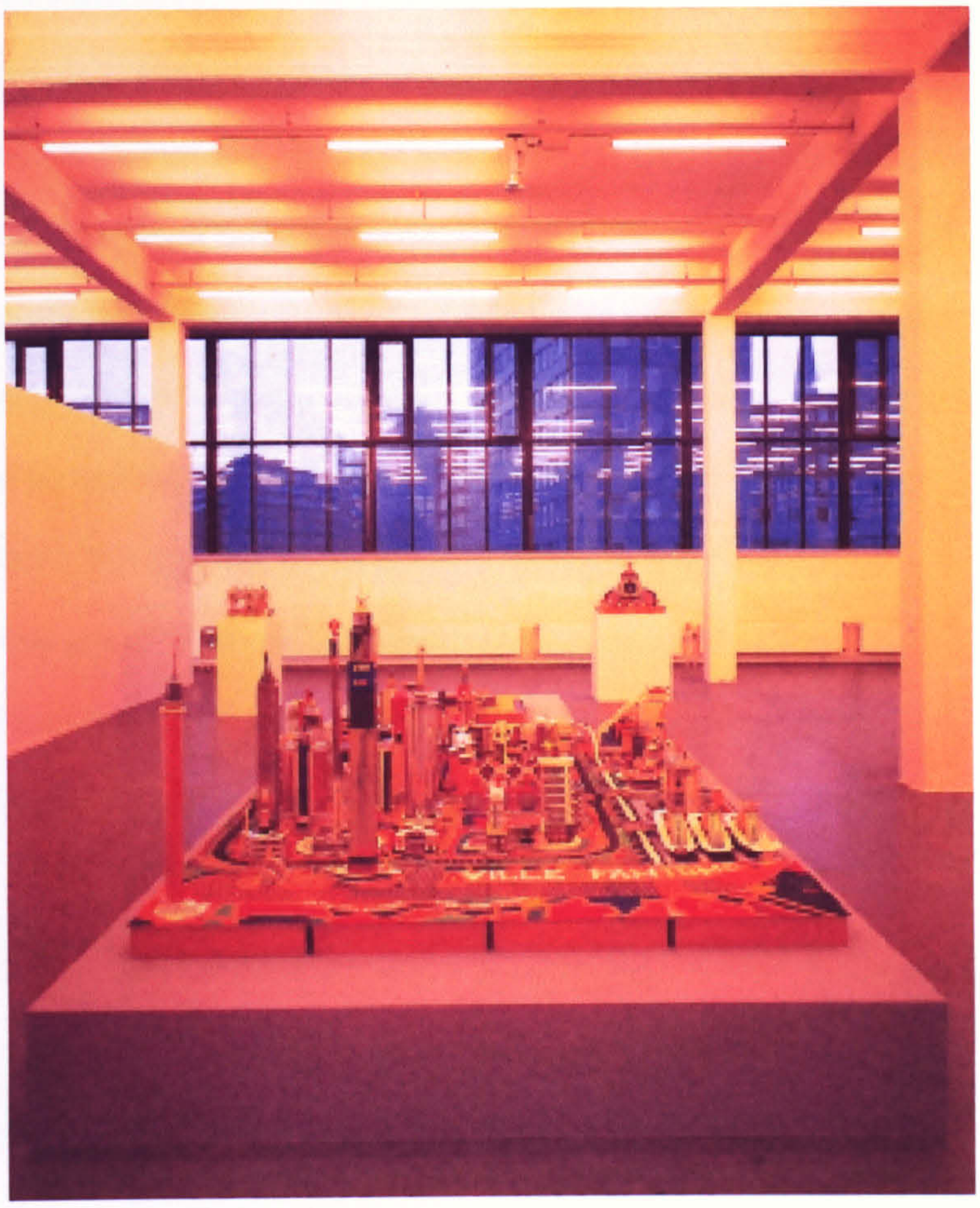


fig 4.2 Bodys Isek Kingelez, *Villa Fantome,* 1996
(plywood, cardboard, mixed media, 83 x 520 x 260 cm)

vision of a city as a space of evacuation is what rendered *Ville Fantôme* relevant in a discussion of apprehension and public space.

The double dynamic that characterizes apprehension can be seen as being paralleled by a double dynamic in the topography of the *Ville Fantôme*. The striking towers and the glittering facades suggested in Kingelez's work can be seen as a response to a demand for a high-tech urban context through which the hopes and ambitions that accompany contemporary experience in Africa might be realized. Particularly in the light of late-twentieth-century African experience, the role of futurologies could be seen in terms of a revivification of the visionary language propogated through the modernization discourses of decolonization and independence movements. In such terms, futurologies could serve to nullify what Kwame Anthony Appiah has called 'a condition of pessimism' in respect of post-colonial discourses (Appiah in Oguibe and Enwezor, eds., 1999: 68). The need, then, for an imaginative response to contemporary African living conditions is met in part by Kingelez's work. However, there appears to be something apprehensive in Kingelez's refusal to complete the picture in his *Ville Fantôme*. Indeed, the absence of people, the rejection of a vernacular to populate the *Ville Fantôme* is what puts the 'ghost' in Kingelez's 'ghost town'. By making such a move, Kingelez evacuates African futurology of a particular vitality. One could go as far as saying that the lack of such vitality robs any futuristic vision of all viability.

To suggest that the futuristic vision encapsulated in *Ville Fantôme* has no viability is, perhaps, going too far. Rather, it might be more appropriate to speak again in terms of a particular apprehension that emerges in the space of the artwork. The detail in the architecture of the buildings, the careful planning and layout of the *Ville Fantôme* lend it viability, if only as a vision of a possible future for an African city. What deprives *Ville Fantôme* of its utopian dimension is Kingelez's willingness to pose questions in terms of the receptibility such a futurology could offer for lived experience. Is there room for the needs, desires, skills, ambitions, inadequacies, corruption, superstition and fears of everyday people among the shimmering facades of the model utopia? Or does a futuristic utopia set in Africa

fig 4.3 Bodys Isek Kingelez, *Villa Fantome,* 1996
(detail)

render the compromises, injustices and humiliations of everyday African life obsolete? The move to offer a much called-for utopian vision of African life can be seen as a response to a discursive intervention into an emerging Africa. Artists, thinkers and visionaries are from time to time compelled to offer such a utopian vision to offset the tired images of a war-torn desperate continent that circulate through conventional news media. In *Ville Fantôme*, Kingelez can be seen to have responded to the urgent need for a more inspiring vision. At the same time, Kingelez's artwork resists such a demand by also presenting a dystopic vision within his utopia – an unyielding and inhuman city amid all the glass and steel. Such resistance, taken together with his compelled and, indeed, compelling affirmation of utopian possibilities, renders his work intelligible in terms of apprehension.

Apprehension, then, can be explored in relation to the demands placed on the culturally differentiated, whether such demands should be thought of in terms of moves towards ideality in utopian visions or the need to negotiate one relation to prevailing cultural narratives. The continual demand placed on culturally differentiated subjects even as they emerge can be seen in terms of a call to account for oneself as well as a call to account for one's differentiation. Such a situation can produce subjects willing and able enough to respond to such demands. The suggestion here, however, is that new strategies have to be developed to offer different kinds of engagement with such demands. Apprehension is one such strategy.

Edging towards conclusions

One can see that a series of historical problems emerged in the responses from Britain's communities of difference to the news of Justin Fashanu's death in 1998. The cultural narratives (news stories, commentaries, documentaries, and so on) that surrounded Fashanu's suicide carried imperatives that both legitimized and delegitimized Fashanu, thereby emphasizing an understanding of his suicide in terms of shame. One approach to the role of shame in Fashanu's death is to de-problematize the commemorative gestures by treating shame less as a discursive condition imposed upon those gestures and more as a

discursive ground to which those gestures responded. Thus, the refusal of Mason-John's performance poetry to engage with the sexual allegations surrounding Fashanu's death and the ambivalent response to Fashanu's suicide staged in Fairclough's drama can both be seen as an example of apprehensiveness. Such apprehensiveness can be problematized for the discursive closure thereby enacted: in Mason-John's public statements, there was a degree of foreclosure on discussions of sexual relation between adults and minors; an opportunity to discuss ephebophilia was, thereby, missed. Equally, in Fairclough's public statements, a chance to explore suicide was not grasped – the victimology of suicide, particularly in relation to black men, was not debated. However, such apprehensiveness can be de-problematized as providing the opportunity for a new political strategy to emerge.

Fairclough's response to Fashanu's suicide, described here as 'incredulity', can be seen as a tactic arising from the strategy of apprehension. Incredulity might have been the most appropriate way of engaging and disengaging with the cultural narratives that were circulated around Fashanu. Those cultural narratives can be seen as being informed by heteronormative discourses, which rendered Fashanu's death as illegitimate. Apprehension, in response to the call to participate in cultural narratives, can be seen as a strategy that both accedes to and 'holds off' the discursive interventions continually drawing the subject out and positioning him/her as a participant in normalizing cultural narratives. In this sense, apprehension is not rendered as a passive strategy under conditions of shame. Rather, apprehension becomes a way of re-assessing the process of subject-formation. The suggestion here is that the condition of shame in the context of death and commemoration precludes the kinds of performative strategies developed in Butlerian accounts of subject-formation. Where agency cannot arise through a parodic inhabitation, apprehension can be seen as a strategy that generates the kinds of agency that can be claimed by emerging culturally differentiated subjects.

[1] Swift, G. and Rawstorne, T., 'Fugitive Fashanu in garage suicide', *Daily Express*, 4 May 1998

[2] In an article headlined 'Gay Fash's last night of lust', Rachael Bletchly reported for *The Sun*: "Fugitive soccer star Justin Fashanu indulged in a final orgy of homosexual lust at a seedy sauna – then hanged himself in a derelict garage just yards away. Fashanu, 37, spent six hours romping naked with other men before disappearing into a back room for sex with an oriental-looking lad," *The Sun*, 4 May 1998.

[3] Dollimore discussed the way in which homosexuality in the era of AIDS became conflated with an impulse for suicide. He identified such a conflation as operating in various works, such as Oscar Moore's novel A Matter of Life and Sex (1993) as well as James Miller's biography of Foucault The Passion of Michel Foucault (1993). Indeed, Dollimore saw Miller's work as claiming " evidence of Foucault's attraction to death – suicide especially". (Dollimore, 1998: x).

[4] The order of events for 'Justin Fashanu: Celebration of a Life' June 1998. Courtesy Justin Fashanu Memorial Tribute.

[5] The steering committee of The Justin Fashanu Memorial Tribute comprised: Linda Bellos, David Dibosa, Troy Fairclough, Valerie Mason-John. C.f., The order of events for 'Justin Fashanu: Celebration of a Life' June 1998. Courtesy Justin Fashanu Memorial Tribute.

[6] In the 1990s, Dirg Aarb-Richards was a trade unionist and a key figure in the campaign group Black Lesbians and Gays Against Media Homophobia.

[7] In the 1980s and 1990s, Peter Tatchell was a leading lesbian and gay rights activist. Author of several publications, he was closely associated with the queer campaign group Outrage!

[8] Craven, N., 'Dying torment of a misfit superstar', *Daily Mail*, Monday 4 May 1998

[9] ibid.

[10] *A Harder Road to Glory*, BBC Radio 1, 14 June 1998. Courtesy National Sound Archive, London.

[11] ibid.

[12] ibid.

[13] Jones, T., 'A game of two halves', *The Sunday Review*, *The Independent on Sunday*, 17 May 1998, p. 6.

[14] ibid.

[15] The Order of events for 'Justin Fashanu: Celebration of a Life', op. cit.

[16] ibid.

[17] Interview: David Dibosa and Valerie Mason-John, London, 8 March 2001.

[18] Fairclough, T., *Justin Fashanu Woz 'Ere* (2003), a performed reading at The Oval House Theatre, London, 22 January 2004.

[19] Press release for 'Justin Fashanu: Celebration of a Life' and 'Justin Fashanu Memorial Rave,' 23 June 1998. Courtesy Justin Fashanu Memorial Tribute.

[20] *Rukus! Manifesto,* rukus!, London, 2004.

[21] Interview: David Dibosa and Valerie Mason-John, op. cit.

[22] Interview: David Dibosa and Valerie Mason-John, op. cit.

[23] Fairclough, T.A., *Justin Fashanu Woz 'Ere,* Micheline Steinberg Associates, London, July 2003, p. 11.

[24] ibid., p. 12.

[25] ibid., p. 16.

[26] ibid., p. 23.

[27] ibid., pp. 41-42.

[28] The theoretical basis of the arguments advanced here relies on accounts of subject formation found in Foucault's later work, History of Sexuality, volume two(1984). However, Foucault's earlier discussion of 'dividing practices' can be of help.

[29] ibid., p. 59.

[30] ibid., p. 61.

[31] Fairclough answered questions following the performed reading of *Justin Fashanu Woz 'Ere* (2003), op. cit.

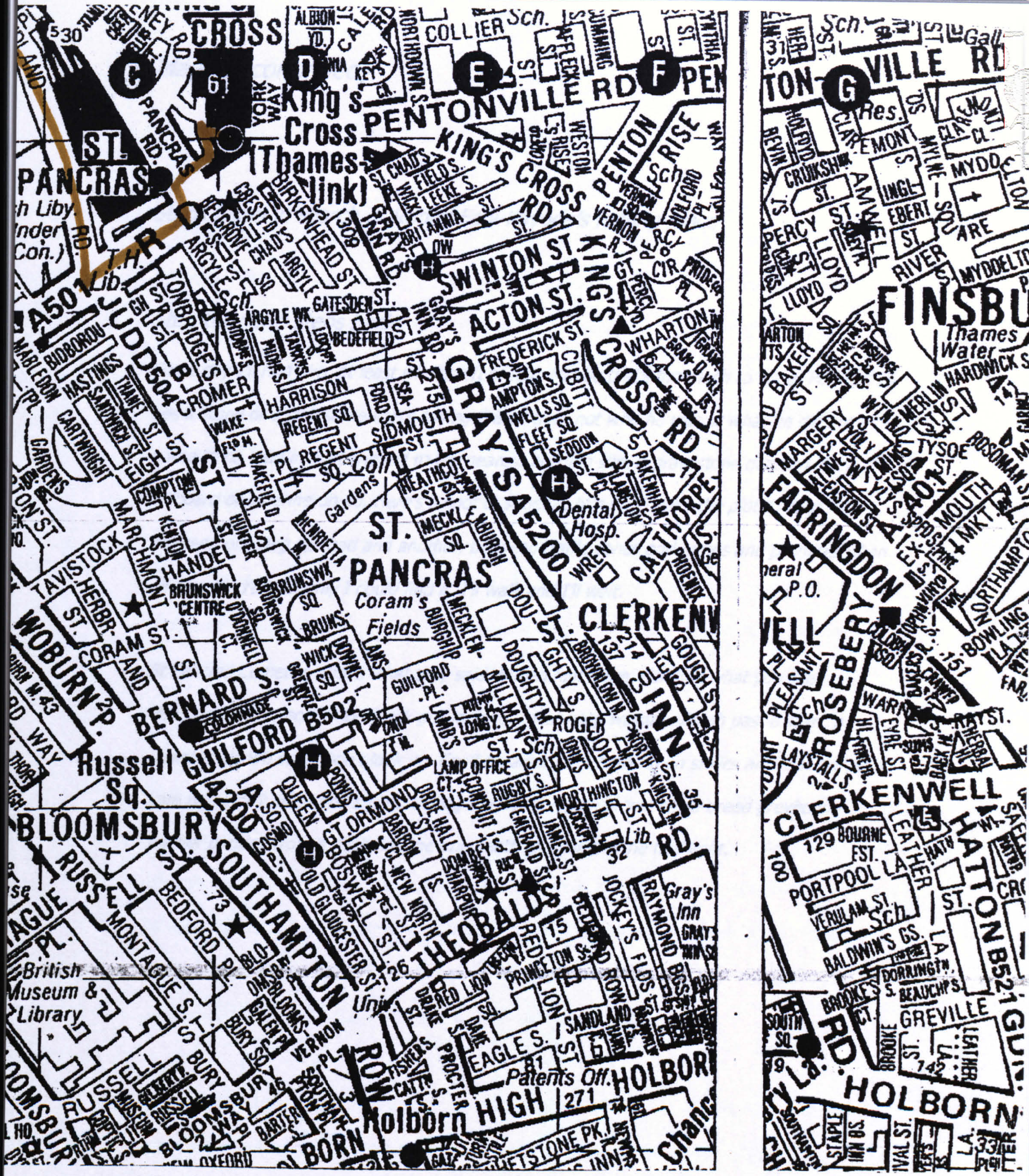
[32] Aarb-Richards, D., 'Justin Fashanu: The Flashpoint of our Campaign against The Voice Newspaper Homophobia' Lambeth NALGO Magazine, summer 1991, re-edited and re-published June 1998.

[33] Swift, G. and Rawstorne, T., 'Fugitive Fashanu in garage suicide', op. cit.

[34] 'Dying torment of a misfit superstar', *Daily Mail,* Monday 4 May 1998.

[35] The comment is inspired by Michelle Wallace's citation of an article of Greg Tate's in the *Village Voice,* 22 September 1987, pp. 15-17. Wallace commented: "...black cultural critic Greg Tate described Jackson's plastic surgery as the 'savaging of his African physiognomy' in an article entitled, ' "I'm White" What's Wrong with Michael Jackson.' " (Wallace, M., 'Michael Jackson, black modernisms and "The Ecstasy of Communication" ' *Third Text,* 7 Summer 1989, pp. 11-22).

[36] 'Fashanu's death is not simple but it is very personal.' Leader comment in *The Pink Paper,* Teeman, T. (ed), 8 May 1998, p. 6.



Map C.

Steps taken in search of Rotimi Fani-Kayode's resting place

– *a reckless dash*

Steps taken in search of Rotimi Fani-Kayode's resting-place

Step two: two steps back

Some day I'll find him, at least what's left of him. Maybe that's too much to hope. Perhaps I'll see a stone or a slab somewhere saying this or that, not who he was or what he did but a name to be read in lights rigged to the nearest building site. A gravestone dazzling like a billboard or a benneton ad. Here's a spot to squeeze him in. There's the plot to drop him between one dug up road and another, between traffic cones and ramps and promises of an all new King's X. If only I could find it. I'll walk and I'll wait.

St Pancras Cemetery that's what they said. Buried him there. Call him what you like. Photographer-prince. Good black guy looking. I just keep walking. Brush past a scarf, a jacket, a denim coat. Don't look up. Can't be arsed. Not banking on smiles and that proves a safe bet. Don't often find smiles among the dead. A pale brown cross-breed greyhound-lurcher panting from a dash has the only teeth gleaming in the half-light.

Chapter five

Je ne sais quoi: re-marking embargoes on Oscar Wilde

In Britain, during the years leading up to the centenary of Oscar Wilde's death in 2000, a series of attempts were made to re-appraise his place within the cultural imaginary. Ian Small's work Oscar Wilde Revalued (1993) pointed towards a revaluation of Wilde's work within literary-critical studies. A re-assessment of Wilde's significance also emerged in the wake of moves to memorialize him publicly during the 1990s. For instance, in 1992, queer campaigner Peter Tatchell advocated that Bow Street Police Station, where Wilde had been charged and held, should be turned into an Oscar Wilde museum once it fell into disuse[1]. In 1995, a memorial window dedicated to Wilde was installed in Westminster Abbey[2]. In 1997, *Wilde*, a feature film starring Stephen Fry in the title role, went on general release. In 1998, a statue by Maggi Hambling, *A Conversation with Oscar Wilde,* was erected in central London. The cultural activity around Wilde in the 1990s can be seen as part of a regeneration of a collective memory of him. As such, one can regard those cultural events as acts of commemoration. The centenary of Wilde's death can be seen as providing an impetus for such commemorative activity. However, one might also point towards a reconsideration of the status of same-sex relationships within British culture as one of the key reasons to re-appraise Wilde at that time. As has been argued by commentators such as Alan Sinfield, Wilde's trial provided the British public with its first coherent image of the figure of the homosexual (Sinfield, 1994: 3). Changes to the figuration of Wilde since his trials can be viewed as having reflected shifts in attitudes towards homosexuality.

The changes to the figuration of Wilde that were reflected in commemorative events can be seen as moves to bring a degree of legitimacy to a previously delegitimized figure. Ian Small, for instance, remarked upon the shift in the characterization of Wilde during the last decades of the twentieth century:

fig 5.1 Maggi Hambling, *A Conversation with Oscar Wilde*, 1998
(bronze and ubatuba granite)
view from Adelaide Street, London WC2

> Wilde and his works become positive elements in the history of gay rights rather than negative and faintly embarrassing moments in the history of bourgeois literary culture.
> (Small, 1993: 6)

To claim, though, that Wilde had become a positive element in the history of gay rights is not to secure for him a legitimacy immune to discursive imperatives that consistently enact delegitimization. Indeed, the positioning of Wilde within a Gay rights history can be seen as providing a key target for delegitimizations. One might better discuss Wilde's position at the close of the twentieth century as being mired in a crisis of legitimacy. Such a crisis, involving legitimization and delegitimization, can be recognized under the rubric of shame.

In this chapter, the issue of shame conditions framing Wilde at the end of the twentieth century will be looked at in terms of the problem of delimitations or embargoes placed around discussions of sexuality. Such delimitations are seen as problematizing any public discussion of sexuality while emphasizing the suggestion that sexuality should be remanded within the private domain. The first commemorative scenario addressed in this chapter will assist in the exploration of such issues. That scenario was constituted through British news media when both print media and broadcast media stimulated a discussion around the unveiling of Maggi Hambling's statue in 1998. Questions about the public circulation of language concerning non-normative sexualities arose in the debate surrounding the statue's unveiling.

The debate provoked by the unveiling of Hambling's statue is addressed in this chapter through a discussion of public space. The clear demarcation of public space as opposed to private space is seen as impinging on disputes concerning the proper domain of discussion of non-normative sexualities. Such a clear demarcation is rejected in a move towards deproblematization. Instead of maintaining the strict binarism of public space/private space, a notion of seductive space is proposed. Seductive space emphasizes a proliferation of supplementary spaces – recessed, adjacent and tangential – through which desire can be

mediated. Such a deproblematization leads to a rethinking of debates around non-normative sexualities. The possibility of stressing a hyposexualized masculinity rather than a hypersexualized version is discussed in relation to other artwork produced around the time of Hambling's memorialization. The work of Yinka Shonibare, particularly his *Diary of a Victorian Dandy* (1998), provides a key focus for debate.

The second strand of the discussion in this chapter concentrates on the crisis of legitimacy around Wilde's body that can be seen in relation to the critical discussions of Wilde led by gay critics in the 1990s. Such a crisis of legitimacy is addressed in relation to an absence of the materiality of Wilde's body in such critical re-appraisals. Within that critical material, one can discern an emphasis on Wilde's signifying practices – his gestures, his dress, his writing. Such an emphasis is seen as being made at the expense of a discussion of Wilde's body in and of itself. The lack of attention given to the materiality of Wilde's body is explored here as a re-enactment of Wilde's own privileging of superfice at the expense of depth. By taking up the issue of superfice, one can think through notions of desire articulated under the auspices of recent politics of sexual differentiation. The move is not towards superficiality in desire – that would be nothing new – but rather towards a conceptualization of desire with an emphasis on its mobility. Such mobility of desire can be addressed as a means of premising a desire that refuses any incitement to take hold of its objects. Such implications of the mobility of desire are discussed below.

This chapter begins with *Mystique: seduction and the deferral of pleasure*, a section that explores the debate surrounding the unveiling of Hambling's commemorative statue to Wilde. The question of private space versus public space is discussed. That discussion is followed by an elaboration of the notions of seductive space and hyposexuality. The following section, *The missing body: Wilde and the mobility of desire*, explores discussions of Wilde's signifying practices in terms of the absence of the materiality of his body. The section also investigates the issue of superficiality: the importance of the superfice in Wildean aesthetics is taken as a touchstone in a discussion of superficiality in respect of a re-assessed politics of

desire. Such superficiality is read in relation to issues surrounding the speed of desire. The rate at which a subject is able to encounter objects of desire is proposed as a key focus for consideration.

Mystique: seduction and the deferral of pleasure

On 30 November 1998, *A Conversation with Oscar Wilde*, a statue memorializng Wilde by artist Maggi Hambling, was unveiled in Adelaide Street, central London. The unveiling was described in *The Guardian* newspaper as an 'unsolemn ceremony'[3]. It was purportedly attended by Wilde's grandson, Merlin Holland, by his great-grandson, Lucien Holland, together with politicians, artists, writers, actors and celebrities[4]. Celebrated actors Dame Judi Dench and Nigel Hawthorne read aphorisms from Wilde's play, *A Woman of No Importance*, in the presence of the then Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Chris Smith MP. The statue's unveiling was the culmination of a campaign supported by eminent cultural figures in Britain, such as Sir Jeremy Isaacs and Sir Ian McKellen, together with respected people from outside Britain, such as Irish Nobel laureate Seamus Heaney. The association of the statue with prominent cultural figures can be related to the involvement of film director Derek Jarman in proposing the original idea of commemorating Wilde in central London[5].

The close association of Britain's cultural elite with the Hambling memorial can be seen as having raised the stakes over what could or could not be said about Wilde. In particular, it highlighted the problem of trying to discuss Wilde and the issues surrounding him in the public domain. Claims made for Wilde by prominent cultural figures laid the ground for a contestation of the meaning of Wilde in a wider public forum. For instance, on the day of the unveiling of the Wilde statue, Chris Smith, who was Britain's first out gay Cabinet minister, was reported to have "thanked Wilde for enlivening both his own life 'and the life of our community' ".[6] Smith's comment can be seen as an attempt to re-inscribe Wilde within gay discourses and thereby ensure that his meaning within a public sphere should be negotiated in relation to those discourses. Such moves served also to offer an explicit legitimization of homosexuality. Smith's status as a Cabinet minister speaking at a public

event granted his comment a particular discursive authority and thereby secured the legitimizing effect of his words. The public reporting of such a comment was bound to have a serious impact. If Smith's legitimization of Wilde as a publicly homosexual figure had been allowed to stand unchallenged, a shift in public perceptions of Wilde and homosexuality would have had to have been acknowledged. However, Smith's positioning of Wilde in relation to the development of lesbian and gay communities was contested by a discussion of Wilde initiated by a member of Wilde's family.

Wilde's grandson, Merlin Holland, was reported to have spoken about Wilde's sexuality, during his speech at the unveiling of the Hambling memorial. Holland did not purportedly, however, underline Wilde's importance to the history of lesbian and gay political struggles in Britain. Rather, Holland was reported to have said:

> I think we're reaching a point where I hope we will be like the continent of Europe, where we will regard him as a writer and his sexuality as his own affair.[7]

The title of *The Guardian* leading article, in which Holland was cited, 'Private Passions', underlined the way in which an attempt was made to disclaim Wilde's inscription within contemporaneous lesbian and gay discourses. Such a disclaimer was put into effect by implicitly delegitimizing approaches that position sexuality as a public concern while explicitly legitimizing views that render sexuality an entirely private matter. The contrast between the two positions, as has been discussed elsewhere in the thesis, can be seen in political terms, since within queer discourses in 1990s Britain the rendition of sexuality as a public concern was consistently reiterated as a key political strategy. It is interesting to note that Derek Jarman, while being recognized as pioneering moves to get a Wilde statue erected, was also closely associated with the political campaign group *Outrage!* and with its campaign strategy of 'outing'. Outing, with its stress on the importance of lesbian and gay visibility together with its disregard of privacy, was seen, by Jarman and others, as central to lesbian and gay political development. Indeed, Jarman was cited as saying: "Outing is a sign that the gay movement has come of age." (Smyth, 1992: 25).

The association of Derek Jarman with Hambling's memorial gives credence to the suggestion that the unveiling of *A Conversation with Oscar Wilde* served to publicly legitimize Wilde as a homosexual figure. Such an attempt to publicly legitimize homosexuality was tacitly delegitimized by the publication of Holland's suggestion that homosexuality should remain a 'private matter'. Moreover, it was also explicitly delegitimized in a controversy that surrounded a discussion in the broadcast media following the unveiling of Hambling's memorial. Reported widely in national newspapers in December 1998, the controversy began at lunch-time on 30 November. During an interview on BBC Television's *One O'Clock News,* the actor Nigel Hawthorne, who had attended the unveiling of Hambling's memorial earlier that day, was effectively censored by presenter, Ed Stourton, when asked a question on the significance of Hambling's statue. Stourton asked Hawthorne:

"Is there a wider significance to this or is it just a rather entertaining sculpture?"[8]

Hawthorne reputedly responded:

"I think there is a wider significance – listening to the news, as I've been doing for the last five or ten minutes, and hearing about Peter Mandelson..."[9]

Stourton interrupted Hawthorne, saying,

"I don't, if you don't mind, want to talk about specific individuals, but in more general terms, do you think it means we are becoming, if you like, a more tolerant society?"[10]

Hawthorne responded,

"If you don't talk about individuals, then you miss the whole point of this. I think that it's purely that society picks on these individuals and turns them into martyrs very often, which is exactly what happened to Oscar Wilde."[11]

Newspaper comment picked up on the censorial tone of Stourton's words. Commentary included: "Hawthorne was stopped in full flow by a BBC newsreader" (*Daily Mail*)[12]; "an embarrassed BBC interviewer attempting to shut Hawthorne up", (*The Independent*)[13]; "censored in first flow", (*The Observer*)[14]. Indeed, Hawthorne himself complained of his treatment in a commentary in which he stated: "I was cut off."[15] Such silencing can be seen as the issuing of a delegitimizing imperative. Hawthorne's attempt to speak publicly about the

homosexuality of a particular man was deemed to be illegitimate. One can read such delegitimization as issuing from a privilege awarded to the notion of 'privacy' within debates circulating in relation to non-normative sexualities. As such, the 'private' is rendered as an explicit space of delimitation where the boundaries of public discourse are announced[16]. One can recognize the way in which the notion of privacy underpinned Stourton's interdiction through reports that he was responding to " a BBC memo forbidding unnecessary reference to politicians' private lives".[17]

One needs to ask whether the notion of privacy, as it was circulated in 1990s Britain, functioned as an aspect of heteronormative discourses antithetical to the discourse of outing. Was the call for privacy around the sexuality of Wilde and the sexuality of Peter Mandelson indissociable from a refusal of outing as a political strategy and, thereby, allied to a rejection of contemporaneous queer discourse? A discussion of the incident in one of the newspapers suggests that 'privacy' was deployed by the BBC directly in response to the prevalence of incidents of 'outing'. David Hughes, in his article in *The Independent*, 'How the M word halted a BBC news report in its tracks', suggested that the BBC memo prohibiting discussion of politicians' private lives had been circulated in the wake of an incident of outing on BBC Television. According to Hughes, an interview on BBC2's *Newsnight* programme between presenter Jeremy Paxman and political commentator Matthew Parris had led Parris to 'out' Peter Mandelson.[18] If the memo had been issued in response to that incident then one can begin to consider the way in which a particular mode of enunciation emerging within queer discourses was systematically being excluded from public discourses mediated by the BBC. In exploring the legitimization of Oscar Wilde through a discussion of Hambling's statue while, at the same time, attempting to delegitimize and marginalize a mode of enunciation in which the discussion was conducted, the BBC interview can be seen to inhabit the condition of shame.

The delegitimizing imperatives issued in the public discussions of Wilde's sexuality could be addressed by a rejection of the discourse of privacy. Indeed, such a course of action

can be seen as having been pursued by Nigel Hawthorne in his act of counter-shaming the BBC for attempting to silence him. In his own article, 'The dangerous bigotry of the BBC', Hawthorne berated the BBC for closing down on discussion and commentary concerning the sexual activities of a public figure. Ridiculing the BBC's position, Hawthorne wrote:

> Double standards to the fore. We're perfectly happy to discuss the details of Mr Mandelson's alleged sexual activities in the news because that is fact, but we do not want to hear any discussions about it, or opinions.[19]

Although Hawthorne's own comments appear somewhat contradictory – he suggests that the BBC are happy to discuss details but goes on to suggest that they do not want to hear discussions – on further reflection his position can be clarified. What the BBC were not prepared to do, according to Hawthorne, was to *hear* discussions. In other words, the BBC wanted to set the terms of the debate. They were not prepared to debate the issue in any other terms but their own. Such a position returns us to the problem of an implicit delegitimization of languages and terminologies emerging from queer discourses that circulated beyond the confines of the BBC. Although Hawthorne cannot be said to have subscribed to the discourse of outing, his politicization of questions of sexuality proved to emerge from a discursive field beyond that in which the BBC's notion of 'privacy' remained.

One of the difficulties that arises in discussing the commentary around Wilde's commemoration seems to be the polarization of the debate. Wilde's sexuality has either to be rendered visible and placed at the centre of any discussions or it has to be decentred in an effort to return sexuality to a space of 'privacy' and occlusion. Is it possible to neutralize such a polarization? One could try first by challenging both polarities. The privileging of the occlusion of sexuality can of course be disregarded with reference to Foucault's repressive hypothesis in his History of Sexuality vol. one (1976). Sexuality, in such terms, is never occluded, it is simply relocated to specific cultural spaces to house it, reassigned to specific persons to explore it, re-deployed to specific discursive fields to produce a language around it. As such, experts such as sexologists, psychoanalysts and prostitutes can be seen as taking

on the responsibility to speak the discourse. From such a viewpoint, sexuality is neither repressed nor hidden.

The problem of public visibility around sexuality can also be disregarded with reference to Derrida's discussion of the secret. For Derrida, the secret preserves a space of opacity so that not every aspect of experience becomes susceptible to being rendered transparent. He argued: "For me, the demand that everything be paraded in the public square and that there be no internal forum is a glaring sign of the totalitarianization of democracy." (2001:59) Sexuality, under such auspices, cannot be said to belong to the public domain in the sense of being the property of or proper to the public domain. Reflecting on the arguments of both Foucault and Derrida, one moves to a position where sexuality is neither remanded within the private sphere nor is it an intrinsic property of the public domain.

One of the ways in which one might think about sexuality in respect of its proper place is to suggest that it has no proper place – that it constantly moves between public spaces and private spaces and all the intermediate, adjacent and tangential spaces that are indissociable from them. How might one characterize such a movement? It would be tempting to reach for a Deleuzian model, at this point, to cite rhizomes or lines of flight through which discourses of sexuality could be said to move. However, to bring Wilde back into the frame, one might refer instead to the use of significatory systems, to the wearing of green carnations, to the sporting of handkerchiefs from back pockets, to the gestures, winks and devices that are the tools of seduction[20]. Neil Bartlett pointed towards such matters in his work, Who was That Man? A Present for Mr Oscar Wilde (1988), when he demonstrated the way in which Wilde's gestural lexicon was taken up and celebrated among white gay men in London of the 1980s. For instance, Wilde's green carnation was inscribed within the genealogy of coloured handkerchiefs used on London's streets:

> Some of our codes are as peculiar and decorative as the green carnation itself; the notorious (and invaluable) coding of hand-

> kerchiefs and keys, in which a careful detail can imply frank
> and specific need and possibility.
> (Bartlett, 1988: 53).

Whatever the source of the tools used, the importance that can be placed on seduction lies in its ability to act as a conduit between private and public spheres. The effect of a seductive gesture lies in its capacity to place within public and private spheres a hint at a possible intimacy outside of those spheres. Thus, one can move towards an abrogation of the presumed polarity between public and private space. Rather, one moves towards a consideration of spaces that are always open to an outside or an elsewhere where intimacy can be suggested to take place.

In proposing seduction as the means by which spaces are shown to open onto an outside, one needs to place emphasis on the way in which actions can impact on the meaning and uses of space. Baudrillard's important work on the subject, Seduction (1979), can be related to such action in its emphasis on the role of games and play in seduction:

> This is what occurs in the most banal games of seduction: I shy
> away; it is not you who will give me pleasure, it is I who will make
> you play, and thereby rob you of your pleasure...to play is not to
> take pleasure. (1990: 22)

In Baudrillard's model, the staging of play becomes a deprivation of sexual pleasure. As a deprivation – a separating-off or privation – it can be seen as a relocation (spatial) or deferral (temporal) of sexual pleasure. Seduction, understood in such terms, works by suggesting that sexual pleasure takes place elsewhere or at another time. The importance, then, is not whether a space is deemed public or private but whether such space is amenable to the work of seduction. Can seductive play be staged at any space under consideration? Is a particular space feasible as a scene in which recesses, tangents and adjacencies might be proposed to facilitate intimacy elsewhere or at another time?

By acknowledging the availability of tangential, adjacent and recessed pockets within a range of spaces, one begins to appreciate the availability of public and private space to reorganization and reinterpretation. Indeed, one can underline the suggestion that one no longer needs to speak of the polarity of 'public' and 'private' but rather of a more complex topography consisting of the various supplementary spaces that insinuate themselves in proximity to both and to each other. Such a view of space ensures that the boundaries that allow distinctions such as 'public' and 'private' to emerge are constantly subject to infiltration, so much so that the boundary itself no longer works as the most distinct feature of the topography. Rather, the focus shifts to the conduits, passages and transits between a multiplicity of spaces.

An emphasis on seduction can help re-articulate a cultural politics of sexual difference by suggesting a model for engaging with sexuality in what is conventionally deemed to be the public sphere. One need not stress the importance of what Baudrillard termed 'the revealed truth of sex' (ibid.: 18). Nor need one rely on the ability to occlude the sexual. The importance is the emphasis that can be placed on deferral rather than on affirmation or denial. Sexuality thereby becomes something that it is possible to discuss elsewhere or at another time or, even, in another way. Seduction can be understood, therefore, as not operating within a framework of announcement and occlusion. Rather, its mode of operation involves disclosures, recognition and imagination. Although seductive procedures can be recruited as a means of securing an object of desire, the exploration of seduction in this chapter places an emphasis on the production of possibilities. By not attempting to actualize desire, one can exploit further the productive possibilities of seduction.

Seduction might be regarded as a strange addition to the panoply of devices available to the sexually differentiated. The stress on what Baudrillard has termed 'the revealed truth of sexuality' has proved antithetical to seduction, which seems based less on revelation than on a deferral of the revealed. However, even assaults on the notion of the revealed truth of sexuality, such as Dollimore's insistence that desire is constructed

(Dollimore, 1991: 325), have not been able to shift the claim that the truth of sexuality can be revealed. Foucault's work has provoked a questioning of the claim that sexuality can speak the truth of the subject. The question posed since then can be formulated as: can the subject speak the truth of sexuality?

Seduction suggests that the subject can never reach the place where it can announce that the truth of sexuality has been revealed. For, in trying to get to such a place, the subject is seduced (literally 'led astray') or begins seducing. In the model of seduction explored here, the seducer is not self-aware and self-possessed in the practice of seduction. Rather, the seducer is him/herself seduced. Indeed, s/he is the first object of his/her own seductions. A series of transmissions, then, promising an intimacy elsewhere and/or at another time becomes the model for the impossibility of revealing the truth of sexuality. Such impossibility should not be seen as the end of sexuality, although it might announce the beginning of the end of the sexualized subject. The impossibility of revealing the truth inaugurates a positing of possibilities that can never be proved or disproved and which, perhaps, cannot even be put to the test. The emphasis becomes placed on a non-actualized set of possibilities for intimate exchange.

An understanding of the possibilities that can become available in the seductive scenario can be augmented by the notion of indeterminacy. Baudrillard proposed that indeterminacy was key to his notion of seduction when he wrote: "Seduction as a passion and a game at the level of the sign...implies...[an] indeterminate order" (1990: 22). Through indeterminacy, a seductive model can be distinguished from a connotative model based on hints, suggestions and euphemism[21]. Whereas the connotative model moves the chain of signification towards something – a confirmation or otherwise of homosexuality, for instance, – the seductive model gestures towards a possible sexuality that must remain indeterminate. In such terms, it may be less appropriate to talk about homo-, hetero- or bisexuality than a more indeterminate model of sexuality. To discuss such an indeterminate model, I propose the term 'mystique'.

By exploring mystique as a notion of sexuality grounded in indeterminacy, the hope is to generate a broad approach to the domain of the sexual. Such an approach does not aim to proliferate categorizations of sexualities through strategies such as the valorization of bisexualities, polysexualities, omnisexualities, *inter alia*. Indeed, a notion of mystique is more likely to announce the end of sexualized actors rather than the proliferation of them. Of course, there is nothing radical in proposing such a possibility. Foucault's History of Sexuality, vol.one (1979) posited the homosexual as a figure that cohered in a particular historical moment (Foucault, 1990: 43). Moreover, Foucault rejected models of history that would posit the figure of the homosexual as immutable. In refusing a notion of history as continuous or developmental in favour of a model that is discontinuous and transformational (Foucault, 1997: 21), Foucault framed the historical moment in which the homosexual emerged as one that must be subject to shifts, discontinuities and transformations. In the Foucaultian model of history the notion of the homosexual or, indeed, any other form of sexualized actor will at some point no longer make sense. Mystique draws on this and, moreover, not only stresses the end of sexualized actors but also seeks to shift emphasis away from sexualized acts. Through mystique, one could begin to stress possibilities, emphasizing what is imaginable rather than what is feasible, what is thinkable rather than actualizable.

As a means of further exploring the notion of mystique, consider a work of Yinka Shonibare, *The Diary of a Victorian Dandy* (1998). The work consists of five C-type prints, titled: *11.00 hours, 14.00 hours, 17.00 hours, 19.00 hours and 03.00 hours*. The first four of the five images were commissioned by the Institute of International Visual Arts (inIVA). The final image in the series, *03.00 hours*, was not commissioned by inIVA but was based on images that were. *17.00 hours* appeared on billboards in London as an inIVA public art project that was circulated, incidentally, in the same year that Hambling's memorial to Wilde was erected, 1998. Shonibare talked about the influence of Wilde on his work, particularly pieces that explored the notion of the dandy and, of course, his later photo-series *Dorian Gray* (2001)[22].

fig 6.1 Yinka Sh, *Diary of a Victorian Dandy 03.00 hours*, 1998
(framed C-type print)

Shonibare's dandy becomes a useful trope with which to explore the notion of mystique, particularly in respect of *The Diary of a Victorian Dandy, 03.00 hours.* In the debauched scene depicted in the work, the artist, staged as a dandy, is one of two figures set apart from the main action in the scene. In distinction to the other figures, the dandy appears fully clothed, complete with waistcoat, neck-tie and pocket-watch. The dandy places no hand on either of the servant-girls who lavish their attentions on him. Instead, he holds a glass of wine, staring directly out at the spectator. He is the only figure in the tableau to do so. The dandy's meeting of the viewer's gaze, together with his positioning in the centre of the tableau makes him stand apart from the other male figures, except the manservant, who is also fully dressed. The manservant stands at the extreme picture left holding a decanter of wine, ready to pour. The manservant and the two servant-girls all look towards the dandy. One of the servant-girls touches the dandy's hair, although he seems not to respond. Indeed, a question arises as to whether the dandy is at all aroused. It is the doubt around the dandy's arousal in such a debauched scene that produces an air of mystique around him.

The dandy's distance in *03.00 hours* helps develop a notion of mystique in the way that it questions the hypersexuality conventionally attributed to black males. Shonibare's depiction of the dandy proposed a black male sexuality that dissociates itself from conventional notions of hyperstimulation and arousal but rather attaches to itself an air of detachment and aloofness. Through such an emphasis on detachment, aloofness and non-arousal within black male sexualization, mystique can be seen to constitute a hyposexuality as opposed to the hypersexuality usually attributed to black males. The resistance to sexualization does not necessarily result in an annulment of the sexualization process. On the contrary, the resistance to sexualization might further incite attempts to sexualize the figure surrounded by mystique. Hence, the attentions of two servant-girls around the figure of the Dandy – one touching his hair. The resistance to sexualization of the figure surrounded by mystique allows more possibilities for sexualization to be generated precisely because none of them are actualized. The non-actualization of sexual possibilities as a way of stimulating the production of those possibilities can be seen as central to a notion of mystique.

The missing body: Wilde and the mobility of desire

Having looked at embargoes or delimitations that emerged in discussions surrounding Wilde's sexuality in the 1990s, and having explored theorizations that arise from them, let us look at debates concerning Wilde's gestural lexicon – his gestures, dress and actions. Within such debates, one can detect an emergent problem not so much around Wilde's sexuality but around his body. Although the 1990s witnessed a critical re-appraisal of Wilde that delivered his work from the tangential and difficult spaces to which it had been assigned in canonical literary historiographies, one can still pose the question: 'What happened to his body?' Ian Small highlighted the importance of the critical re-appraisal of Wilde:

> Important markers in this re-assessment of Wilde are represented
>
> by the work of British, American and Canadian critics such as
>
> Jonathan Dollimore, Ed Cohen, and Richard Dellamora.
>
> (Small, 1993: 6)

Further names might be added to Small's list of critics who re-assessed Wilde: figures such as Gregory W. Bredbeck (Bredbeck in Meyer, ed., 1994), Moe Meyer (Meyer in Meyer, ed., 1994), and Alan Sinfield (Sinfield, 1994) also made important contributions to the critical re-assessments of Wilde in the 1990s. In the hope that it is neither presumptuous nor premature to speak of an emergence of a 'new gay criticism' around Wilde in the 1990s, this text will return to those critics whose hands worked tirelessly, and with some degree of success, to allow Wilde to speak, if not from a de-marginalized space, at least from a margin that had been carefully refurbished.

The critical re-appraisal of Wilde in the 1990s can be seen, in the broadest sense, as contributing to the production of a collective memory of Wilde. In particular, as will be shown, the new gay criticism placed an emphasis on Wilde's gestural lexicon, thereby contributing to a figuration of Wilde as limp-wristed, ironic and insouciant. Such a figuration, together with its counter-hegemonic drive, can be seen as part of a hagiographical move on the part of the new gay critics. Their work helps one address the question not only of how

Wilde might be re-remembered among sexually differentiated communities but also how his relevance might be re-assessed among a wider academic and critical audience.

Ed Cohen's work Talk on the Wilde Side: Toward a Genealogy of Discourse on Male Sexualities (1993) placed the figuration of Wilde's body at the heart of his analysis. Cohen discussed the way in which Wilde was positioned as failing to adhere to the norms by which a middle-class man ought to have held his body in public. Setting up a double scene for his critique – the courtroom scene of Wilde's trials and the scene of journalistic reportage – Cohen demonstrated how Wilde's posture in court became a source of journalistic note and comment. Various contemporaneous newspaper accounts were cited by Cohen as highlighting Wilde's "drooping-frame" (Cohen, 1993:193), his "hands limply crossed" (ibid.: 142) and his "affected manner" (ibid.: 156). Cohen's purpose in drawing together this light sketch of Wilde as limp-wristed and effete was primarily to show how Wilde's body was seen to violate the strictures of male bourgeois normativity. This violation was continually articulated in terms of Wilde's posture, whereas little comment was made about Wilde's body in and of itself. Did Wilde's body, in particular his height, add to or subtract from the effects of his stance? Did his size suggest a particular bearing? If Wilde had been a short or slim figure, would all the drooping and limpness have had the same impact? Although the use Wilde made of his body seemed important to Cohen, why was so little said about the body itself?

Alan Sinfield, in his critical study The Wilde Century (1994) did not address the materiality of Wilde's body, choosing instead to analyse Wilde in terms of the impact of his gestural lexicon on Victorian notions of gender. For instance, in his work, Sinfield made Wilde's effeminacy a key point in his deliberations on the importance of Wilde's trials. According to Sinfield, Wilde's effeminacy was a highlight in the make-up of Wilde's image. He emphasized "the entire, vaguely disconcerting nexus of effeminacy, leisure, idleness, immorality, luxury, insouciance, decadence which Wilde was perceived...as instantiating" (Sinfield 1994:3). For Sinfield, as for Cohen, Wilde's dandyism and effeminacy were pivotal to

Wilde's oppositionality as regards the demands of late-nineteenth-century bourgeois masculinity (ibid.: 69). Having accepted that Wilde's leisure, idleness, insouciance and effeminacy provided the gestural lexicon to enact an oppositional aesthetic, one might go on to ask upon what ground such a lexicon became inscribed. The bodily surfaces from which pointed idleness and dedicated effeminacy arose seem to have disappeared from the analytics that brought Wilde's studied postures to the fore. Amid the leisured posture and insouciant manner, what happened to the "colourless moonlike face with its heavy eyes and thick lips...china-blue eyes and protrusive teeth" ? (Ellmann 1987:34)

In an increasingly desperate search for a glimpse of Wilde's body among the erudite arguments of the new gay critics, one could consider Moe Meyer's critical study, 'Under the sign of Wilde: an archaeology of posing' (1994). Unfortunately, Meyer's work did not comment on Wilde's body except in terms of the way in which Wilde posed. Gestures and speech were regarded in Meyer's work as central to the way in which Wilde could be understood:

> ...Wilde was known for daring suggestions of the homoerotic in his signifying practices of speech, dress, gesture and writing.
>
> (1994: 91)

Wilde's signifying practices were taken up by Meyer and portrayed as the means by which Wilde came to be constructed as a figure of historical importance. It might help clarify the argument being put forward here by drawing attention to the way in which social constructionist frameworks, on which analyses such as that put forward by Meyer relied, presupposed a pre-eminence of cultural effects. The wave of Wilde criticism in the 1990s can be seen as addressing him as a socially constructed figure – one whose impact on his historical milieu can only be understood in terms of what he made of gestures, what he made of speech and what he made of writing. Indeed, Meyer goes as far as suggesting that Wilde's entire project aimed to reveal the construction of male bourgeois normativity:

> Wilde's parodic posing suggested that the order of things was far from inevitable, that the 'natural' was, perhaps, the unnatural.

> By toying with the pathways of power he showed that dominant culture had a life expectancy. It was constructed; it could be altered and therefore it could die. (1994:99)

It was, of course, a valid and worthwhile project to emphasize the importance of Wilde's posing, as a means of stressing the way in which his politics threatened male bourgeois normativity. The insights gained were invaluable: Wilde's posture highlighted the way male bourgeois normativity impacted on the body (Cohen, 1993); Wilde's parodic posing revealed the sutures that held together a precariously maintained social superfice (Meyer: 1994); Wilde's postures highlighted idleness, effeminacy and superficiality, making a trophy of them (Sinfield: 1994). It might be interesting to consider, however, whether Wilde's strategy would have worked, or would have had to have worked differently, if Wilde had not had the physical presence to carry off the pose. Such questions could not be addressed within the doxa that emerged from new gay critical perspectives. To address such issues, one would have had to have paid more attention to Wilde's corporeality. Why did such attention remain unpaid? Just what was it about Wilde's body that seemed so problematic? What can be said about his missing body?

In posing the question of Wilde's missing body, this argument does not seek to be excavatory. The suggestion here is not to rummage through layers of dense critical argument in order to discover or, indeed, stumble upon the sleeping beauty of Wilde, which the new gay critics, in their haste to re-appraise his critical standing, perhaps overlooked. Rather, this text sets itself an altogether less ambitious, more circumspect task. Such a task echoes the challenge voiced by the child in the *Emperor's New Clothes* – to point to something that is plain for everyone to see: Oscar Wilde was a large man. Richard Ellmann, in his biography, cited several sources that attest to that fact. For instance, the prison clothes with which Wilde was issued after his conviction, had to be new, "because of his unusual height". (Ellmann 1987: 451). However, the swathe of new gay criticism re-appraising Wilde made no reference to his 'height and girth' (ibid: 455), which Ellmann saw fit to comment on. This is not to suggest there was a dispute between sources. Indeed, writers such as Meyer relied on

Ellmann's work. Rather, it appears to be a question of emphasis. The move to supply Wilde with a gay context, which Ellmann's biography lacked, took Wilde studies in a different direction but inevitably lost detail in the process. The argument here is that the materiality of Wilde's body is not a detail one can afford to lose.

Could one suggest that Wilde's body was missing from new gay criticism because it made him a shameful figure, according to the gay discourses that framed the way in which male bodies were read? In order to address such a question, it is possible to explore the prominence of delegitimizing imperatives around bodies in a late-twentieth-century gay context. By bringing such delegitimization into alignment with the legitimizing strategies of the new gay critics, one can begin to discuss Wilde's gesturing body as being in a condition of shame.

A starting point for this exploration of the shame conditions emerging around Wilde's body under the auspices of new gay criticism is provided by Neil Bartlett's work, Who was that man? A Present for Mr Oscar Wilde (1988). Written in the advent of the new gay criticism that emerged in the 1990s, Bartlett's work seemed to share some of the features of Ellmann's scholarship, with its emphasis on Wilde's body, as well as sharing some features of new gay criticism, with its emphasis on his gestures. As a way of looking at Bartlett's handling of Wilde's body, let us consider chapter nine of Who Was That Man?, titled 'Messages'. As part of that chapter, and in what might be recognized as an inspired moment of literary *dérive*, Bartlett addresses a letter directly to Wilde. The letter, which opened with a delicate salutation "Oscar, you fat bitch", refused to rely on postures – no limp wrists, no affected manners – to characterize Wilde. Rather, the address focussed on Wilde's body in and of itself as it re-posed him by situating him in bed. It is in contrast to this instance that one can begin to comment on the way that Wilde's body-morphology was approached in new gay criticism. Consider this extract from Bartlett's text:

> You were there in bed, big and fat like I've been told you
>
> were, lying in bed smoking and taking up all the room.

(1988: 212)

Although one might detect more than a hint of irony in Bartlett's work, one cannot ignore the way in which Bartlett's handling of Wilde's body highlighted the problematic positioning of it within new gay criticism. In contrast with such criticism, Wilde's 'big and fat' body became an important source of commentary in Bartlett's discussion. Bartlett's work showed how Wilde's body remained outside the genealogy of body morphologies that were legitimized in London at the end of the twentieth century. Indeed, from the perspective of Bartlett's late-twentieth-century commentary, Wilde's body was delegitimized in unequivocal terms such as, 'Oscar, you fat bitch'. The delegitimization of Wilde's body morphology can be drawn from other comments about Wilde made by cultural practitioners in Britain at the end of the twentieth century. Consider, for instance, Stephen Fry's comments, reflecting on the possibility of being cast as Wilde:

> For many years I have known that Oscar Wilde was one of the few major parts I might be lucky enough to be offered...I had been told since I was quite young and was told it with gathering frequency as my girth thickened and the flesh on my face began to record every plate of pasta and every glass of vodka and tonic that had been pushed through it.
>
> (Fry in Mitchell, 1997: 10)

The delegitimization of Wilde's body morphology, which facilitated Stephen Fry's self-satirizing statement and was also reflected in Barlett's work, can be linked to the loss of dominance of the Wildean model of homosexuality in post-1945 Britain. Sinfield has discussed the way in which the class system on which the Wildean model was based declined after World War Two. The figuration of the effete gentleman lost its place in the post-war cultural imaginary. It was supplanted, according to Sinfield, by a model based on recreational style, following the liberation movements of the late 1960s. Such models were based on twin notions of an inconspicuous manliness and an exaggerated manliness (Sinfield, 1994: 192). Oscar Wilde, clearly did not fit into either of these models. If such models can be looked at in terms of body morphology, inconspicuous manliness might be read as producing the slight

body while exaggerated manliness can be read as producing the muscled body. Wilde's big and fat body did not fit into either of these models. Was it because Wilde's body lay outside of the canonical models of gay male body morphologies that his body was marginalized in new gay criticism? If Wilde's body did not belong to canonical models, where did it fit?

In accepting that Wilde's body did not fit into the canonical models of gay masculinity in late-twentieth-century Britain, one could suggest that somehow he fitted into an anti-canon. One could stress the fact that an anti-canon of gay male models began to cohere in the 1980s on the basis of the body morphology of the 'wasting' AIDS-affected body. Although the 'wasting' body has become emblematic of AIDS in the cultural imaginary, it must be stated that the symptomology of the syndrome is complex, the infections that arise as a result of it are varied, and causes of death related to it are numerous. Despite conditions such as blindness arising from AIDS, the principal conditions associated with AIDS in the cultural imaginary are those causing weight loss. In particular, the hollowing of cheeks and the 'gaunt' look, caused by lipodystrophy, has become the key mark of the AIDS-affected body[23]. The dematerialization of the body was a key aspect of the representation of the AIDS-affected body. It is in relation to such considerations that the diseased body might thereby be proposed as part of an anti-canon of body morphologies that arose in 1980s popular culture in Britain. Oscar Wilde's body morphology, although not 'gaunt', could be added to such an anti-canon.

The status of Wilde's body as a diseased body, although not discussed among the new gay critics, was discussed by Wilde's biographer, Richard Ellmann. He relied on a range of evidence to suggest that Wilde had contracted syphilis at Oxford in the 1870s (Ellmann, 1987: 88). Indeed, he went as far as saying that Wilde had taken up the conventional treatment for syphilis at the time – use of mercury. Ellmann wrote: "The main physical effect of mercury on Wilde was to turn his slightly protrusive teeth black, so thereafter he usually covered his mouth with his hand while talking." (ibid.: 89) Indeed, the terms in which Ellmann discussed attitudes to syphilis in nineteenth-century Britain can be compared with

approaches to AIDS in the twentieth. Ellmann talked about "the aura of disgrace, shame and secrecy surrounding the disease in Wilde's time and after" (Elllmann, 1987: 88). One cannot ignore parallels with the way in which AIDS was viewed[24]. Consider, for instance, Adam Mars-Jones' short story, 'Remission' (1987), in which the narrator describes his own AIDS condition in terms of shame:

> And here I am with a body that's ashamed of itself, that's burning with remorse for something it did or didn't do...
> (Mars-Jones in Mars-Jones and White, 1987: 186).

The relationship between AIDS and the stigmatized 'wasting' body can be seen as central to the delegitimization of certain body morphologies in Britain during the last decades of the twentieth century. The association of Wilde's body with a disease that was as sexualized and delegitimized as AIDS leaves his diseased body open to be ranked alongside the AIDS-affected body in an anti-canon of body morphologies. The delegitimization of such bodies renders them susceptible to shame.

Although one could suggest that Wilde's diseased body would have been delegitimized if cited within popular discourses at the close of the twentieth century, one could not, of course, by the same token, suggest that Wilde's body was, indeed, delegitimized within academic discourses such as 'new gay criticism'. One can note, though, that despite the susceptibility of Wilde's large syphilitic body and blackened protrusive teeth to delegitimization no attempt was made to recuperate it. All the effort went into a re-appraisal of Wilde's significatory strategy. The reasons why a recuperation of Wilde's delegitimized body was not undertaken might have been various. The materiality of Wilde's body might, indeed, have been considered an *insignificant* topic for discussion rather than an *illegitimate* one. However, in an understanding of the silences and omissions that emerge in shame conditions, could one not be led to comment on a position that rendered such a remarkable body as Wilde's insignificant? In view of the attention given to the delegitimization of the AIDS-affected body, shouldn't it be notable that a body delegitimized in a correlative context

was deemed to be insignificant? Indeed, could such insignificance not itself be seen as a function of the shame conditions surrounding Wilde's body?

The suggestion is not being made that new gay critics were ashamed of Wilde's body. That would be banal. The suggestion is, however, that Wilde's body was susceptible to shame conditions and that such conditions affected popular and critical discourses. In popular discourses, one can point towards the silences, omissions and absences generated around Wilde's body. No reference, for instance, was made to Wilde's syphilis when Stephen Fry played the eponymous writer in Brian Gilbert's film *Wilde* (1997). Such an omission becomes remarkable considering the fact that the screenplay was based on Ellmann's biography.[25] Moreover, such a point is emphasized by Ellmann's statement "I am convinced that Wilde had syphilis, and that conviction is central to my conception of Wilde's character and my interpretation of many things in his later life" (Ellmann, 1987: 88). Ellmann's comment allows one to speak of a deliberate omission in the text of Brian Gilbert's film.

Critical discourses generated by new gay critics may or may not have inhabited the shame conditions surrounding Wilde's body in the same way as Gilbert's film. Furthermore, irrespective of *Wilde*, one could speculate on a deliberate omission of Wilde's body in the discussions produced by new gay critics. It might perhaps prove more convincing, though, to speak of a marginalization of Wilde's body. Such a marginalization can be seen to have arisen through the positioning of Wilde's body as anachronistic: the concern with its morphology of indulgence had been replaced by preoccupations with the slight morphology of the hypomasculine gay man and the muscled morphology of the hypermasculine gay man; the attention given to its syphilitic status had been replaced by anxieties raised about a new sexualised disease that was seen to affect gay men – AIDS. If one can accept that Wilde's body was marginalized within new gay criticism for those reasons, then one has to recognize that such marginalization relates to the delegitimization that arises from being rendered anachronistic. In an almost Wildean way, one could say that Wilde's body was not too horrible to mention; it was simply out of date.

In an attempt to de-problematize the absence of the materiality of Wilde's body in new gay criticism, one can point towards Wilde's own work. The suggestion that the new gay criticism made Wilde all style and no substance could be recognized as enacting a gay critical mode of reading Wilde's textual strategies into a reconfiguration of him within gay critical discourse. Wilde's own advocacy of reified surfaces would be reinvoked as a way of making him haunt his own historicization by rendering him as nothing more than a collection of tactical artifices. Consider, for instance, the way in which Wilde's own work contributes to the debate. One can see, within Wilde's philosophical reasoning, a privileging of artificiality and style over depth and substance. His *Phrases and Philosophies for the Use of the Young* (1894), for instance, offered a wealth of well-honed epigrams to underline the point: "The first duty in life is to be as artificial as possible." (1990: 1113); "In all unimportant matters, style, not sincerity, is the essential. In all important matters, style, not sincerity, is the essential." (ibid.); "It is only superficial qualities that last" (ibid.: 1114). In the light of such material, one could explore the new gay criticism as a re-emergence of a trace of Wilde. Such a trace can be seen not just in the obvious recitation of his texts but in the less obvious re-playing of his critical strategy.

The re-playing of Wilde's critical strategy within new gay critical approaches can be seen as offering new possibilities for a re-articulation of the cultural politics of sexual differentiation. Such possibilities can be located in the development of a specifically post-gay reading strategy that extracts superficiality at the expense of depth. How might a privileging of superficiality at the expense of depth allow us to propose new approaches to desire for the sexually differentiated subject? A superficiality in sexual encounters would not be anything new for normative nor, indeed, non-normative sexualized relations. How far Wilde himself engaged in what might be termed superficiality in his same-sex relations is open to debate. Ellmann suggested that, although Wilde had a string of 'casual affairs' (Ellmann, 1987: 366), Wilde also "cultivated a reputation for generosity and goodwill" (ibid.: 367) with the young men with whom he had sex. Whether or not generosity and goodwill abrogate superficiality in same-sex relations is a difficult question to settle. One can suggest, however, that emotional

tenderness and care are probably not the key components of a superficial relationship. The 'fast and loose' promiscuity narrated in contemporary gay fiction, such as Adam Mars-Jones', 'The Brake' (1987), perhaps edges closer to the promotion of superficiality as an approach to desire. By taking superficiality further, however, by exploring it at the level of the sexualized look rather than in the sexual act, one might be able to open up new perspectives on desire.

Cruising, as a strategy, could provide a useful basis for embodying the superficiality that Wilde privileged in his aesthetics. If cruising can be understood as casting a desiring look over a series of sexualized objects, its superficiality can be discussed in terms of the importance of *the mobility of desire*. Under such auspices, cruising can be understood as desire on the move. It invokes a multiplicity of desired objects. Indeed, each desired object opens out onto the possibility of another desired object. Such a succession of possibilities can be seen as constantly pluralizable. For, every successive object of desire becomes the condition and ground for its successor. It is in giving consideration to the plurality that comes to characterize such a succession of desired objects that the desiring subject must recognize her/his desire as mobile. Indeed, the desiring subject has to consider not just the mobility of desire but also the speed of desire and, in particular, the possibility of its acceleration or deceleration.

There is no guarantee, though, that even an accelerating desire can exhaust all the possibilities of superficiality. For, the problem with cruising is that, even with its potential for an acceleration of desire, the desiring subject can still fix on a single object of desire within the plurality. To sustain superficiality in desire, one would need to extract the mobility premised in cruising while abandoning the possibility of fixing on a desired object. In attempting to avoid securing a desired object, one moves from cruising to the notion of the passing fancy. In the passing fancy, the possibility of fixing on an object of desire is ruled out. The passing fancy *passes over* the object of desire. It is altogether casual, fleeting even, and, like seduction, is aimed at possibilities rather than at actualization. The superficiality of the passing fancy can be seen to lie in the attention given to the object of desire. The

passing over is so fleeting that the desiring subject never takes hold of the object of desire. It recognizes possibilities and passes on. Seen from another angle, the possibilities of the desired object are recognized and the object itself passes away. It is possible that in the passing fancy, the desired object leaves no impression on the desiring subject. Desire passes from moment to moment. The desiring subject passes over. The desired object passes away.

The passage of desire, then, can be seen to lead not to the closures emblematized by the mortality prevalent in gay fiction circulated during the 1980s and 1990s, such as the already-cited A Matter of Life and Sex by Oscar Moore. Rather, the passage of desire can be figured as interminable with a succession of desired objects over which the desiring subject passes. The teleological crisis for the desiring subject, in such regard, becomes not so much the mortality prefigured in sex acts – thematized in the late twentieth century – but rather the abyss that underscores the possibility of an endless succession of desired objects. The mobility of desire, in such terms, also premises a desire without end. Indeed, since each successive desired object provides the ground for its successor, one could argue that the imminence of the abyss can be glimpsed in every desired object encountered. The means by which one might come to negotiate the passage of an endless succession of desired objects needs to become a more pressing question for contemporary debates around the sexualization of subjects.

Let us consider the shift from engagements with issues of sexuality in the late twentieth century, characterized by a thematic of closure, towards treatments of desire in the early twenty-first century, which can be related to the notion of a passage of desired objects. In tracking such a movement, I would like to suggest a comparison between two different interventions based on the theme of the martyrdom of St Sebastian. Both were undertaken by contemporary visual artists. The first, drawn from the late twentieth century, is a film, *Sebastiane* (1975), by the British queer film director Derek Jarman. The second, taken from the early twentieth century, is a video projection, *Saint Sebastian* (2001), by Indonesian-Dutch artist, Fiona Tan.

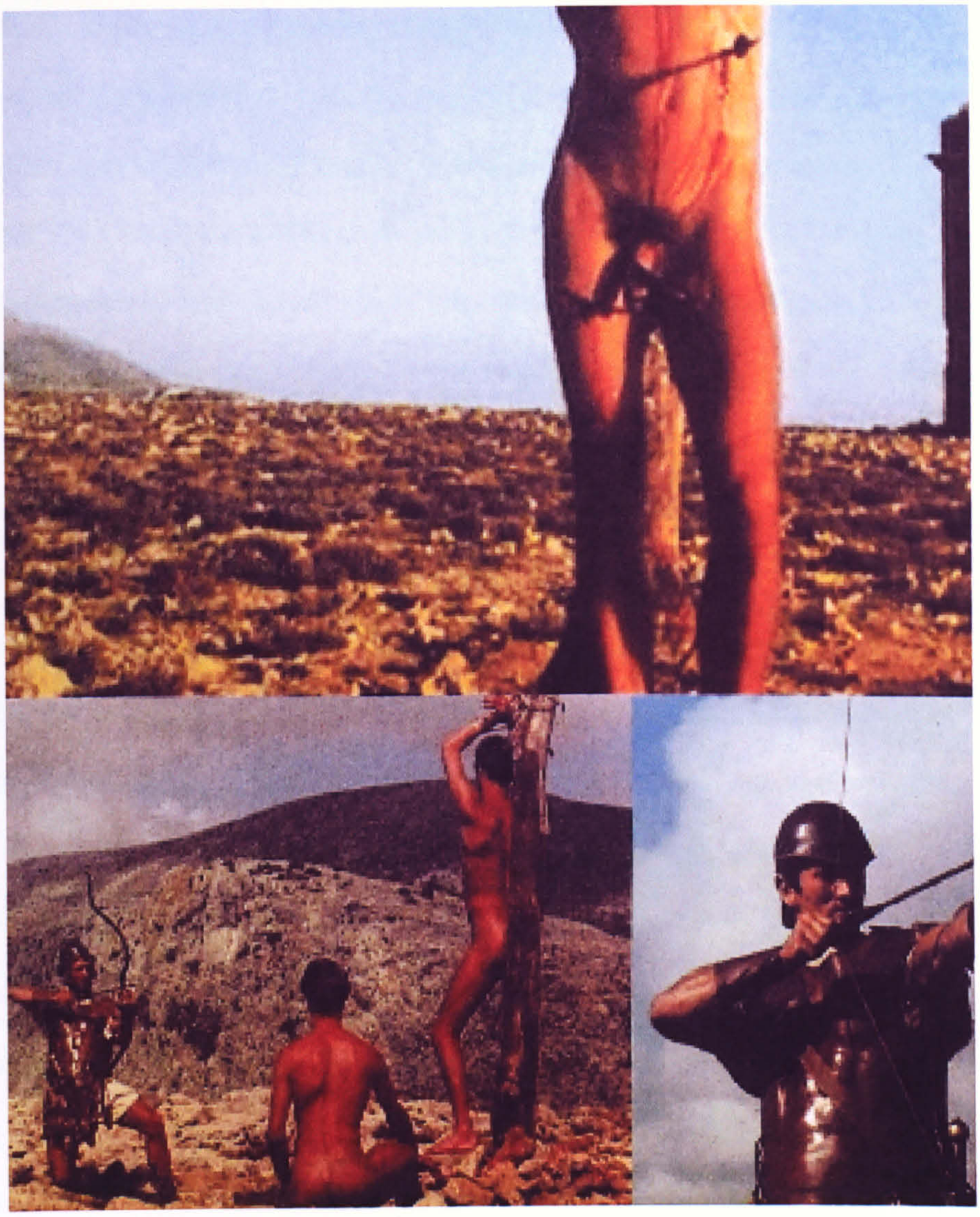


fig 5.3 Derek Jarman, *Sebastiane,* 1975
(film stills)

Jarman's film was structured around the narrative of Sebastian's martyrdom – moving from his position as a favourite of the Roman emperor towards his banishment and eventual martyrdom for his Christian beliefs. Throughout the film, Sebastian's relations with men are sexualized through the rendering explicit of a sexualized gaze. Camera work as well as the exchange of looks between men in the film underline the constant sexualization of the male body, which is often shown naked. The drive of the film moves towards a climax, however, with the scene of Sebastian's eventual martyrdom offering the spectacle of his naked body, displayed as a mise-en-scène for the viewer. The eroticization of Sebastian's martyred body is achieved through the re-playing of a sexualized exchange of looks between the soldiers firing arrows at Sebastian's naked body. Indeed, such an exchange reaches saturation point when the viewer is invited to participate in the exchange by the mise-en-scène of Sebastian's body, which marks the climax of the film. The suturing of mortality, sexuality and spectacle can, thereby, be seen as a key cinematic devices in Jarman's work.

Fiona Tan's *Saint Sebastian* takes mortality away from the thematization of desire around her figuration of the saint. Tan's work achieves this through a double strategy. First, the spectacle of Sebastian's martyred body is subtracted from the content of her work: Sebastian never appears in her work. Secondly, the video is not structured around a narrative that moves towards a climax in the shooting of Sebastian and the puncturing of his body with arrows. Rather, Tan's video-work focuses solely on the archers, who are all women. Indeed, Tan's *Saint Sebastian* succeeds in de-centring a homoeroticization of a naked man by centring the action not in classical antiquity but in and around the annual Toshiya ceremony in Kyoto, Japan. The ceremony has been discussed as "not simply a test of hitting a target with an arrow but a state of mind, in which the archers strive for fluidity in their shooting".[26] Tan's work becomes a visual rendition of such an approach through its double projection of images of rows of women archers pulling back their bows, lining up their shots, taking aim and shooting. The viewer is never shown the direction of the arrow nor the target. The focus is solely on the archers' actions, reactions and tensions. It is by drawing such focus to the archers, to the elaborateness of their costume and to their actions, that the shift away

fig 5.4 Fiona Tan, *Saint Sebastian*, 2001
(video, continuous loop)

from a climactic image of a homeroticized naked male figure is achieved. Such a shift does not subtract desire from the work but rather pluralizes its possibilities by never offering a climax. The continuous loop of the video-work contributes to such an effect, constantly deferring the climactic moment of revelation of Sebastian's naked body. The passage of desire for the spectator works vicariously in Tan's work, moving from the eyes of one archer to the next in a continuous succession.

Drawing to a close

In terms of debates in the British mass media and in critical fora, leading up to the centenary of Wilde's death, shame conditions seem to have produced the effect of embargo – certain issues were either not able to enter the arena of debate or, if they were able to enter the arena, they were immediately contended. In relation to the debate in broadcast and print media following the unveiling of Maggi Hambling's statue, *A Conversation with Oscar Wilde*, in 1998, contention arose over the degree to which Wilde's homosexuality, together with its implications for lesbian and gay struggles in the twentieth century, could be discussed in the public domain. As far as the critical discussion of Wilde in the 1990s was concerned, it was not a discussion of Wilde's homosexuality that appeared to be embargoed among new gay critics but rather a debate around Wilde's body. Although his dress and gestures were explored, his body appeared to be missing from critical investigation in the 1990s.

Competing claims around Wilde were seen to be key to understanding the kinds of embargoes that emerged in discussions concerning what Wilde meant as a cultural figure in the late twentieth century. It was seen that such competing claims, to a large extent, revolved around a polarized debate based on the issue of the visibility or occlusion of homosexualized discourses in Britain. Ways of escaping the polarity of the debate were explored. After looking at the events that followed the unveiling of Hambling's memorial in November 1998, the question was raised as to whether it was possible to avoid arguments around visibility, invisibility and occlusion as regards the positioning of homosexualized

discourses circulating in the public domain. In addressing such a question, a more complex engagement with the question of visibility was proposed. In pursuit of such a proposition, the argument in this chapter advocated a deeper reflection on the issues surrounding public and private space. Rather than focusing on the problem of the visibility of gay discourse within public space, questions were posed as to how such public space has been delimited.

Seduction was explored as a way of re-thinking a topography structured around notions of public and private space. By thinking about seduction, it was suggested that spaces adjacent, tangential and otherwise proximate to public and private space could shift the way in which both public and private space could be approached. The communication of non-actualized intimacies through seduction was regarded as facilitating more imaginative possibilities for exploring space. Although not regarded as an inevitable consequence of seduction, mystique was seen as a subject-position that was made available through the seductive model. Yinka Shonibare's *Diary of A Victorian Dandy, 03.00 hours* facilitated an exploration of mystique. Through mystique, an emphasis was placed on the distance, aloofness and non-arousal of a hyposexuality that can be distinguished from the hypersexuality conventionally attributed to black men. A shift was proposed as regards preoccupations with the hypersexuality of black men. Such preoccupations might be critically and artistically exemplified by contemporary artworks such as Chris Ofili's *The Adoration of Captain Shit and the Legend of the Black Stars* (1997). In moving to address concerns around the hyposexuality of black men rather than hypersexuality, one can begin to instigate discussions around the hyposexuality of various culturally differentiated subjects, currently hypersexualized, such as white gay men. To take hyposexuality seriously, one would have to announce the end of sexualized actors. A move towards addressing hyposexualized actors, such as crypto-sexualities and protosexualities, could be a step in the right direction. It would not be enough, though, and some might claim that the end of sexualized actors alone can secure the indeterminacy that will maximize the possibilities made available by seduction.

The argument here does not seek, of course, to announce the end of desiring subjects. Rather, the aim has been to explore ways to proliferate desire by loosening the attachment of desiring subjects to desired objects. A discussion of Wilde's aesthetic preoccupation with superficiality was seen as a means of advocating that desiring subjects need not fix on securing desired objects. By exploring Wilde's aesthetic strategy as a strategy of desire, cruising and the mobility of desire were explored as possibilities for generating models of superficial desire. In exploring such mobility of desire, the suggestion was made that by not fixing on a desired object but rather by passing over desired objects, the desiring subject not only accentuates the mobility of desire but also accelerates it. The move towards a mobile and accelerated desire was discussed in relation to Fiona Tan's work *Saint Sebastian* which was seen as moving away from the homoeroticized treatment of the St Sebastian theme exemplified in works, such as the film *Sebastiane* by Derek Jarman.

---

[1] Linton, M., 'Bow Street runner that aims for an Oscar', *The Guardian*, 16 January 1992.

[2] See Fry, S. 'There never was such a man' in Mitchell, J., Wilde, Orion Media, London, 1997, p. 17, for a description of the ceremony.

[3] Kennedy, M., 'Wilde can still smoke and joke, even stone dead', *The Guardian*, 1 December 1998.

[4] ibid.

[5] Lubbock, T., 'It's got to go: Oscar Wilde deserved a monument fit for a hero of art, love and politics. Instead Maggi Hambling has sculpted a wilfully tacky, silly, Tussaudian tragedy', *The Independent*, 1 December 1998.

[6] Lister, D., and Waugh, P., 'A fitting testament to Oscar Wilde: a monumental row over gay politics', *The Independent*, 1 December 1998.

[7] 'Private Passions', leading article in *The Guardian*, 1 December 1998.

[8] Hughes, D., 'How the M word halted a BBC news report in its tracks', *Daily Mail*, 1 December 1998, p. 8.

[9] Lister, D., and Waugh, P., op. cit.

[10] Hughes, D., op. cit.

[11] ibid.

[12] ibid.

[13] Lister, D., and Waugh, P., op. cit.

[14] Kellaway, K., 'Portrait of the week: Maggi Hambling: Smoker's coffin', *The Observer*, 6 December 1998, p. 4.

[15] Hawthorne, N., 'The dangerous bigotry of the BBC', *The Independent*, 2 December 1998, p. 4.

[16] Such explicit delimitation can be contrasted with the tacit delimitation that arises through the production of a secret, through which the boundaries of public discourse remain in place but unannounced. The suggestion that the sexuality of public figures should remain *private* should thereby be distinguished from the suggestion that it should remain *secret*.

[17] Lister, D., and Waugh, P., op. cit.

[18] Hughes, D., op. cit.

[19] Hawthorne, N., op. cit.

[20] This is not to suggest that Wilde invented a significatory system to signify homosexuality. Wildean scholarship over the past decade has been adamant that Wilde's green carnation and silk breeches did not signify homosexuality before his trials in 1895 (Sinfield, 1994: 1-3). It was only after Wilde became representative of homosexuality following the trials that his earlier significatory system was taken up as signifying homosexuality.

[21] The connotative model was engagingly explored by D.A. Miller in his work 'Anal rope' in inside/out: lesbian theories/gay theories, Fuss, D. (ed.) Routledge, 1991, pp.119-141.

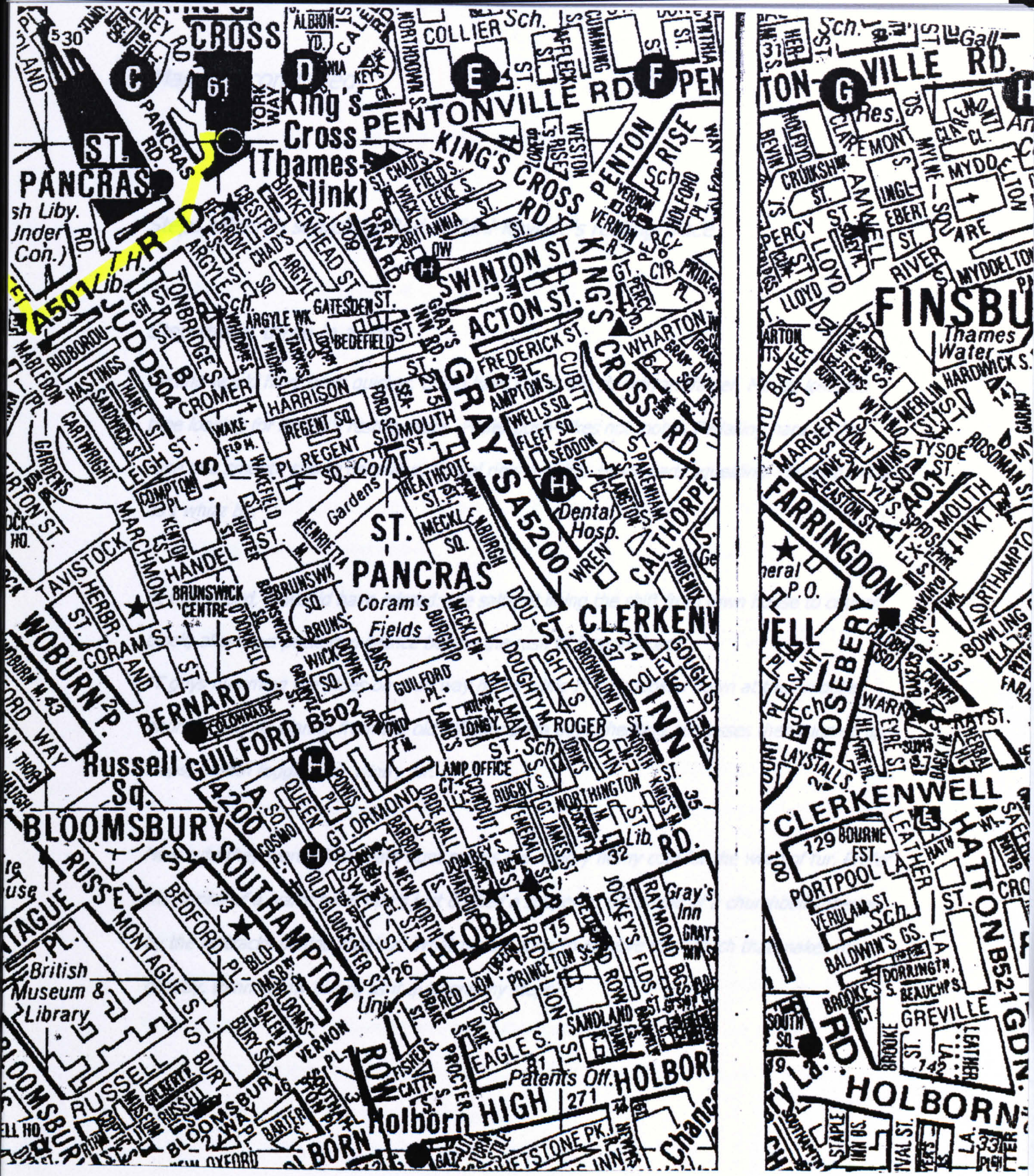
[22] Yinka Shonibare: interview with Maaretta Jaukkuri, London, 2002.

[23] Richard Meyer's work on the AIDS-affected body, 'Rock Hudson's body' (1991) in inside/out: lesbian theories/gay theories, op. cit., pp. 259-288, raised a series of issues concerning what might be termed the materiality of the AIDS body.

[24] Interestingly, Sander Gilman, in his work, Health and illness: images of difference (1995), discussed syphilis as well as AIDS in his exploration of the relationship between image and disease.

[25] The colophon to the published screenplay, Wilde (1997) states: "Original screenplay by Julian Mitchell from *Oscar Wilde* by Richard Ellmann." Wilde, Orion Media, London, 1997.

[26] Morgan, J., Muir, G., Polkinhorn, M., 'Fiona Tan' in Time Zones: Recent Film and Video, exhibition leaflet, Tate Modern, London 2005.



Map D.

Steps taken in search of Rotimi Fani-Kayode's resting place

– *drifting*

Steps taken in search of Rotimi Fani-Kayode's resting-place

Step three: three in a row

Cycling would have been quicker. Could have cut to the churchyard faster. Maybe lost less time looking for Rotimi's resting-place. Prefer push-bikes not motor. Pedalling hard to the tune of a smooth sliding derailleur. Wheel rims rubbing. Break pads squealing. Heads turning as I whizz by.

At that speed, I would have missed: the salt-grit lining the shift from town house to council block; alleyways pocketing silence behind the rush of Euston Road;
IT guys humming the blues on their way home while IT girls looked down at their mobile phones; sounds blaring from the old Alf pub; pizza boys checking addresses then running up steps; breath fogging the wintry air.

How cute they were. This death hunt makes me hungry horny cold for the wrap of fur. Prefer the stroke of a warm hand that's just cooked a supper to the chime of a churchbell lingering by the railtracks behind King's X. What have I done to deserve this search that makes me ghastly, thinning my blood, as it quickens my steps?

Chapter six

Knowing looks: re-marking omissions concerning Oscar Wilde

In 1997, *A Statue for Oscar Wilde*, an exhibition of sculptures, drawings and paintings by the artist Maggi Hambling, opened at the National Portrait Gallery in London. The exhibition featured work that Hambling had done in preparation for and in relation to the statue *A Conversation with Oscar Wilde* (1998), which was erected in Adelaide Street, central London in November 1998. The then director of the National Portrait Gallery, Charles Saumarez Smith, commented on the works in terms of public commemoration. Discussing his proposal to display Hambling's maquettes for the statue, he said: "I felt that the public would be interested in what was proposed and that the gallery has a legitimate interest in supporting the idea of public commemoration." [1] Although works in the exhibition also relate to the production of a later work, they can, in respect of Smith's statement, be regarded as commemorative marks in their own right.

For the purposes of this chapter, attention is drawn to two paintings in the exhibition, *Kiss I* (1996) and *Kiss II* (1996), which, unlike the statue erected later, engaged directly with Wilde's erotic life. The two oil-on-canvas works depicted Wilde kissing a man. Following the unveiling of Hambling's statue in 1998, the question of Wilde's erotic life provoked fierce debate. Accusations of paedophilia, exoticism and class-based exploitation were all directed at Wilde in the wake of Hambling's memorialization. By looking at the different ways in which Wilde's erotic life was legitimized and delegitimized, questions of shame are explored in this chapter. In particular, the shame surrounding accusations of paedophilia, exoticism and class-based exploitation provide the focus for debate.

fig 6.1 Maggi Hambling, *Kiss II*, 1996 and *Kiss I*, 1996
(oil on canvas)

A key point in the forthcoming discussion centres on the means by which Wilde's relations with young working-class men were problematized both historically and across a range of contemporary media. Moves are also made in this chapter to deproblematize Wilde's relations with young working-class men by addressing the ways in which such men can be seen as active agents of their own concerns rather than as simply acquiescent in Wilde's exploitative ambitions. In particular, the argument draws attention to Alfred Wood who has been accused of blackmailing Wilde. In doing so, he can be seen to have enacted a productive intervention into the Wildean archive. Wood's blackmailing of Wilde is explored as a way of showing that the relationship between Wilde and his rent-boys was open to exploitation both ways. Such openness gives rise to the notion of reversibility. Reversibility is looked at as a new point of emphasis in a re-assessed politics of cultural differentiation. It privileges the mutability inherent in contemporary renditions of the subject and also allows emphasis to be placed on exchangeability within inter-subjective relations.

Another key focus in this chapter concerns the problematic ambiguity of Wilde and his contemporary André Gide, in relation to their involvement in what might be termed 'colonial excesses' while in Algeria in the 1890s. Material that looks at Wilde's procurement of prostitutes is addressed in this chapter in respect of the emphasis it lays on the duality of the position of both Wilde and Gide. Such duality can be understood in terms of their positioning as victims of Victorian social mores and as perpetrators of colonial excesses. Attempts are made in this chapter to deproblematize the ambiguity that can be assigned to Wilde and Gide by looking at the ambiguity embedded in the colonial situation as a whole. In doing so, one can begin to address the ways in which the colonized can be seen as deeply implicated in the colonial situation in tandem with the colonizers. Such thinking leads to a re-consideration of approaches to the agency of the colonized and, consequently, to issues such as the inter-racial male-to-male gaze. By looking at Yinka Shonibare's artwork *Dorian Gray* (2001), concerns arising around the issue of the inter-racial male-to-male gaze are explored.

Fetching young men: Wilde's encounters with working-class youths

Let us begin by looking at the ways in which Wilde's liaisons with working-class youths have been cited as provoking a crisis in his status as a legitimate focus for commemorative activity at the close of the twentieth century. In an article responding to the unveiling of Hambling's memorial in 1998, the writer Christopher Hart criticized Wilde as well as the actors and celebrities who attended the event to commemorate him. Hart's article, titled 'If he lived today, he'd be on a paedophile register. So why are we honouring Oscar?', pointed towards Wilde's procurement and soliciting of young men for sex. Indeed, Hart described Wilde as "a regular purchaser of the favours of vulnerable young people".[2] In support of his attack on Wilde, Hart emphasized the youth of two of the renters (male prostitutes) whom Wilde solicited, discussing "Freddy Atkins, aged 17 when Wilde purchased him for a night in October 1892 [and]...Alfred Wood, also 17".[3] The drive of Hart's critique can be seen as reinforcing the delegitimizing imperatives that regarded Wilde's acts as both immoral and unlawful. Hart thereby criticized Wilde's commemorators among the British cultural elite who, through their close association with Hambling's project, were seen as failing to issue their own delegitimizing imperatives in relation to Wilde. Hart wrote: "Actors Stephen Fry and Simon Callow, Culture Secretary Chris Smith and other Wilde admirers are not the first to be a little blinded by his brilliance, a little too forgiving."[4]

One can regard Hart's approach to the commemorative gestures that surrounded Hambling's memorial as an attempt to read the collective memorialization of Wilde in terms beyond those set by Britain's cultural elite. Although the unveiling of Hambling's statue had been attended by distinguished actors such as Sir Ian McKellan and Dame Judi Dench, the statue itself remained easily accessible to the public in a thoroughfare between Charing Cross Station and Trafalgar Square. In the light of such considerations, Hart could be seen to claim Wilde as a figure relevant to the concerns of popular discourse as well as to those discourses surrounding Britain's theatrical and literary elite. By situating Wilde in relation to concerns beyond those preoccupying cultural elites, Hart opened up the figuration of Wilde to

delegitimization. Wilde himself could be seen as elitist. His relation to working-class youths as exploitative. As Hart wrote:

> In the 1890s, as in the 1990s, there were vulnerable young people sleeping rough on the streets, homeless and feckless, or trapped in wretchedly paid jobs, and prepared to sell their bodies in exchange for a square meal. Wilde, like many among his contemporaries, availed himself of their services, freely and with scant sign of remorse. There is a terrible irony, then, in the location of today's statue of the play-wright. He looks out over a West End that he entertained brilliantly, and exploited ruthlessly.[5]

In addition to noting ways in which Hart's article delegitimized Wilde, one also has to consider the ways in which Hart's article legitimized Wilde. Indeed, Hart noted Wilde's contribution to British theatre history, as well as his celebrated wit:

> Brilliant playwright? Without a doubt. Almost single-handedly, Wilde revitalised a theatrical scene that had been moribund for 100 years. Supreme wit and raconteur? Again, absolutely. You cannot help but warm to a man...who came up with jokes such as: 'Work is the curse of the drinking classes.'[6]

Such commentary demonstrates the ambivalent positioning of Wilde in respect of class issues: he is shown as the ironic defender of the English working-class against bourgeois prejudices. Such an accolade, though, only served to highlight the supposed iniquity of his exploitation of working-class youths

One can further explore the theme of Wilde's exploitation of working-class youths by looking at another commemorative work relating to Wilde in the 1990s, Brian Gilbert's film *Wilde* (1997)[7]. In a key scene in that film, Stephen Fry portrayed Wilde spending time among working-class male prostitutes, 'feasting with panthers', as Wilde was purported to have described the experience (Ellmann, 1987: 367). Two young men portrayed in the scene Charles Parker and Alfred Wood, have historically been implicated in Wilde's downfall. Both

fig 6.2 *Charles Parker, Alfred Wood, Alfred Taylor, Oscar Wilde, Lord Alfred Douglas, Rent boy*
Cast portrait from *Wilde*, 1997, directed by Brian Gilbert
(photograph by Liam Daniel)

Parker and Wood were named in the counts against Wilde in his trials (ibid.: 437). The status of Parker and Wood as male prostitutes has been regarded as central to Wilde's eventual conviction and sentencing[8]. However, their status as working-class youths has also been seen as key. Indeed, Wilde's biographer, Richard Ellmann, emphasized the way in which Wilde's "association with homeless and shiftless boys" (ibid.: 424), was continually brought forward in the legal arguments against him. Charles Parker's position as a valet and his brother's role as a groom were regarded as rendering both men as inappropriate company for a man of Wilde's status. Indeed, they were described as "strange companions for an artist", (ibid.), during Wilde's trial. Part of Wilde's shame at the end of the nineteenth century can be seen, then, as class-related. His legitimate status as an artist was disturbed by the dellegitimization of his association with valets and grooms. Such crisis of legitimacy for Wilde was emphasized in Gilbert's film through the recitation of the suggestion that 'a gentleman's valet' and 'a groom' were inappropriate company for Wilde to keep. Permit me to cite from the screenplay:

CARSON

What were their occupations?

OSCAR

I really don't know.

CARSON

Oh, well let me tell you, Mr. Wilde. You met a man called Charles Parker...I believe.

OSCAR

Yes.

CARSON

Charles Parker is a gentleman's valet .

He lets it sink in. The faces of the JURY tell us OSCAR has lost the case.

CARSON (cont.)

You met his brother...too, I believe

OSCAR

Yes.

CARSON

He is a groom

Again he leaves a pause. Again the faces of the JURY show us OSCAR is doomed.

(Mitchell, 1997: 169)

In criticizing the way in which Wilde had been commemorated by Britain's cultural elite, Hart's newspaper article provided yet another source for the recitation of terms emphasizing the working-class status of the young men with whom Wilde kept company. In his commentary on Wilde's sexual encounters, Hart used the terms "grooms, servants, newspaper boys".[9] The recitation of the term 'groom' in Hart's article can be seen to have differed from the recitation of the term in Gilbert's film, however. Hart's recitation avoided the implication that Wilde's inter-class liaisons were inappropriate. Rather, he insisted that such liaisons were exploitative. Indeed, Hart wrote directly of "Wilde's escapades, his sexual exploitation of the lower orders [and] of those younger and poorer than he".[10] Part of Hart's work was to suggest that the figuration of Wilde among Britain's cultural elite concentrated on his relationship with the aristocratic Lord Alfred Douglas while failing to comment on his exploitation of young working-class men. Hart reminded his readers:

> A large part of Wilde's famous trial focused not on his relationship with Douglas but on his use and abuse of poverty-stricken boys he picked up for his evening entertainment.[11]

With regard to such arguments, one can understand how the commemoration of Wilde undertaken by those closely associated with Hambling's memorial became susceptible to shame. Their actions, in rehabilitating part of the Irish literary and British theatrical canon, can be seen as open to legitimization. However, their failure to address Wilde's relations with working-class men left them open to the delegitimizing undertones of Hart's critique.

If one recognizes the susceptibility of Wilde's association with young working-class men to delegitimization then one can see how shame has inhabited the figure of the homosexual from its inception within the British cultural imaginary. Alan Sinfield has argued

that, through the Wilde trials, an image of the homosexual cohered (Sinfield, 1994). Another Wilde scholar, Ed Cohen (Cohen, 1993), has commented on the specific features of Wilde, such as his gestures, observed during the trial, which contributed to the coherence of a public image of homosexuality. According to Sinfield, however, Wilde's gestures were not the only key to the circulation of a popular image of homosexuality. Through the specifics of Wilde's trial, the figure of the homosexual was also implicated in exploitative relations with working-class men:

> The image of the queer cohered at the moment when the leisured, effeminate, aesthetic dandy was discovered in same-sex practices, underwritten by money, with lower-class boys.
> (ibid.: 121)

The appearance of such a problematic at the very inception of the figuration of the homosexual could explain the persistence of a preoccupation with the theme of relationships between privileged and under-privileged men within gay cultural production in Britain. Consider, for instance, the relationship between the privileged Will Beckwith and the under-privileged Arthur in Alan Hollinghurst's *The Swimming-Pool Library* (1988). From such cultural production, one could suggest that cross-class power dynamics form a reiterable trace within male same-sex relationships.

To suggest that there are reiterable traces within male same-sex relationships is to pose the possibility that a performative theory of subject-formation might also be relevant to theories of inter-subjective formations. One can suggest that an inter-subjective formation such as a couple is able to cohere through the citation of socially-instituted norms of inter-subjectivity. Perhaps this is what the narrator of Neil Bartlett's novel *Ready to Catch Him Should He Fall* (1990) was alluding to when he remarked: "...just look round any bar and you'll see that everybody there, myself included (you too if it's your kind of bar) has in their time been both The Boy and The Older Man, both Banker and Domestic, Ingenue and Other Woman, booted Prince and stirrup-holding groom." (Bartlett, 1990: 14).

In an effort to de-problematize the way in which Wilde's relationships with young working-class men have been discussed, one might place an emphasis on the inter-subjectivity of those social formations. One need not go as far as elaborating a performative account of inter-subjectivity. One need only stress that in an inter-subjective relation, the agency of both parties has to be addressed. In attempts to delegitimize Wilde's relations with working-class prostitutes, has not the agency of young men such as Alfred Wood, Charles Parker and William Parker been somehow overlooked? Consider, for instance, the resourcefulness of Wood in attempting to blackmail Wilde in 1893. At the age of 17, he was able to take advantage of having discovered Wilde's love letters to Lord Alfred Douglas. Having secured money from Wilde to help fund a trip to America, Wood returned Wilde's letters but was careful enough not to surrender them all (Ellmann, 1987: 367). The remaining letter, known as 'the hyacinth', had been copied to a friend and colleague of Wilde's. Although a confederate of Wood's was trounced by Wilde's disingenuous suggestion that the hyacinth letter was a prose poem, he still managed to secure a little money from Wilde. One might note, indeed, a phrase used by one of Wilde's blackmailers when explaining why he was returning Wilde's letter: "...there is no use trying to 'rent' you as you only laugh at us." (ibid.: 420). In the light of such a comment, one can understand 'renting' as not only referring to the exploitation of a prostitute by a client but also the exploitation of a client by a prostitute.

One could go further, indeed, in stressing the agency of the male prostitutes to whom Wilde resorted. In particular, by drawing attention to the effect of Wood's blackmailing on Wilde, one could argue that Wood provided a stimulus for the generation of work within Wilde's oeuvre. Wood's decision to keep back one letter, the 'hyacinth letter', led Wilde to substantiate his suggestion that the letter had been a prose poem. He and Douglas asked the French poet, Pierre Louÿs, to produce a French version of the work "so that it might be given the status of a work of art" (Ellmann, 1987: 370). Without Wood's intervention, Pierre Louÿs' *Hyacinthe* poem would not have been published in Douglas' Oxford magazine in May

1893, in the guise of a translation of Wilde's work. Furthermore, Louÿs' translation has been regarded as an important rehearsal for his own work, *Chansons de Bilitis* (ibid.: 371). None of this work would have been produced had it not been for the actions of Alfred Wood.

What, then, is Wood's relationship to Wilde's archive? As soon as one is able to accept that an archive of any author's oeuvre is not simply produced by the author but is produced and continually reproduced by a range of figures, including editors, critics, scholars and collectors, one begins to speak not of an archive but of archivization. Derrida's exploration of the workings of archivization, Archive Fever (1995), takes into account not only pivotal figures such as editors but also the instruments and machinery involved in the production of works (Derrida, 1998: 16). Although it might not make sense to assign to Wood a pivotal position in the archivization of Wilde's oeuvre, one cannot deny that he has some ancillary relationship to the process. Indeed, Wood's intervention into an archive of Wilde allows one to address operations that cannot be excluded from archivization. The susceptibility of archives to damage, loss, forgeries and misattributions shows the ways in which an archivization process poses in itself the main threat to the archive. In attempting to account for Wood's intervention into Wilde's archivization, one can emphasize the way in which he incited Wilde to intervene in his own archive in an unconventional manner, provoking a translation of a poem for which there had been no original. Can one suggest that Wood provided the inspiration for the *hyacinth* poem? To even be able to pose such a question demonstrates that the agency of a working-class prostitute such as Alfred Wood can and should be taken seriously.

In terms of re-articulating a politics of cultural differentiation in the early twenty-first century, what use can be made of the seriousness with which the agency of working-class prostitutes should be addressed? A key to answering such a question can be sought, perhaps, by giving attention to the practice of 'renting'. As has already been suggested, the term 'renting' applied not just to a client hiring a prostitute for sexualized labour but also to the prostitute's extortion of money from the client. Even if my suggestion only applies to the

occasion cited, it allows to propose that renting worked both ways. The reversibility that emerges from the relationship in renting can be regarded as important to emphasize. By drawing attention to the importance of reversibility, the preoccupation with contrasting subject-positions such as butch/femme and top/bottom, which were a feature of lesbian and gay politics in the 1990s, can be side-stepped. Lesbian and gay cultural production in Britain in the 1990s can be seen as reflecting such a preoccupation with contrasting subject-positions. Documentaries such as *Butch Femme* (1995), directed by Emma Hindley of Polari Productions, and fiction such as the already-cited Ready to Catch Him Should He Fall (1990) by Neil Bartlett, provide examples of such a preoccupation. Those discussions, however, failed to take into account the efficacy of concentrating on the reversibility that is made available in same-sex relationships. Such reversibility is facilitated by the symmetry that can be seen as constitutive of same-sex relationships. It is because of the use that same-sex relationships make of homomorphism (female-to-female or male-to-male) that one can begin to explore such relationships in terms of a symmetry that facilitates reversibility.

Whereas symmetry and homomorphism can be seen as central to an exploration of same-sex relationships, asymmetry and heteromorphism can be seen as constitutive of heterosexual relationships. Indeed, one could point towards the way in which, through certain renditions of heterosexual relationships, the structure of difference is dependent on each party taking up an incommensurable subject-position. There is, of course, no attempt here to universalize renditions of heterosexuality such as the generalized notion that 'men and women are from different planets', which can be seen as based on a radical heterology within sexed and gendered subject-positions. One can argue, of course, that the mutability of gender signification, particularly in contemporary metropolitan spaces, has muted the extent to which heterosexual modalities can be seen as structured around radical heterologies. Rather, the availability of mutable gender signification has become more visible, through the transgender figurations of artists, such as Grayson Perry and Lyle Ashton Harris, together with representations within popular culture, such as Nadia in the popular 'reality TV' show *Big Brother* (2004). Grayson Perry becomes an engaging example to discuss in terms of the way

in which he is positioned as a heterosexual transvestite and thereby shares homologous gender signification with his partner, at least in terms of dress. Such homologous gender signification within heterosexual relationships can be seen to facilitate reversibility within heterosexual relationships in terms of dress but, perhaps, not in terms of other signification, such as speech, gesture and, importantly, morphology.

Through a consideration of the signification of morphology, the suggestion that reversibility is more freely available in same-sex relationships than in heterosexual relationships can be emphasized. Take, for instance, the example of reproduction in lesbian relationships. The reversibility of positions between the birth mother and the non-birth mother in a lesbian relationship depends on issues such as fertility and volition. The lesbian relationship makes reversibility possible in that, during one pregnancy, one partner can act as birth-mother while the other provides a supportive role. During any subsequent pregnancy, the roles can be reversed. Such reversibility, together with its palpable effects on the morphology of the birth mother, can not happen in heterosexual relationships where the disparity of morphology is more marked. Morphological disparity can be seen as being recognized in same-sex relationships, of course, but the disparity is constituted differently to the marked morphological disparity that premises heterosexual relationships. The morphological parity that structures same-sex relationships renders the reversibility of subject-positions available to same-sex relationships in a way that heterosexual relationships preclude. It is the potential for this reversibility, though not necessarily its actualization, that provides the radicality of same-sex relationships.

With the exception of morphological disparity within sexual relationships, reversibility can be seen to premise both mutability and exchangeability between subject-positions. If exploiter can become exploited, can not homosexual become heterosexual and vice versa? In considering such issues, within the setting of twenty-first-century cultural politics, one can support a re-appraisal of problems raised towards the end of the last century, such as homophobic panic. In his discussion of the importance of connotation within the

epistemological matrix that surrounds homosexual signification, D.A. Miller hinted at the importance of addressing homophobic panic[12]. What is described here as 'homophobic panic' was discussed by Miller in terms of a heterosexual "flight from homosexual threat (or temptation)"[13]. Miller explored flight from homosexual threat by discussing Alfred Hitchcock's film *Strangers on A Train* (1951). In his discussion, Miller referred to an early scene in which the two main characters, Bruno and Guy, meet on a train. Famously, in that scene, Bruno makes his suggestion that he and Guy should swap murder victims. Bruno's proposition, "I'll do your murder, you do mine", was interpreted by Miller as an attempt at homosexualization, in which the homosexually signifying Bruno tries to recruit Guy. In terms of notions such as reversibility, Miller's preoccupation with homosexual signification and homosexualization can be supplemented by a discussion of heterosexual signification and heterosexualisation. For, if Bruno's proposition can be read as inciting Guy to perform homosexually, then it must also be read as an incitement to Bruno to perform heterosexually. The problem of homophobic panic can thus find a corollary in a heterophobic panic. Reversibility brings such issues to light precisely by posing the possibility that all subject-positions are exchangeable. The exchangeability of heterosexuality for homosexuality activates a phobic panic on both sides.

The notion of reversibility, as applied to a proposed homosexual-heterosexual dyad, allows one to return to themes such as the notion of the 'camp trace', which preoccupied discussions of sexual differentiation in the 1990s. Moe Meyer's collection, The Politics and Poetics of Camp (1994), for instance, included an examination of camp traces in American popular culture (Thompson Drewal in Meyer, ed., 1994: 149-181). In respect of reversibility, discussions of camp traces within popular culture can be supplemented by debates on straight traces within queer culture. In particular, the issue of 'straight-acting', which can be seen as having been a key issue in queer sexual politics in the 1990s, can be re-assessed with reference to the question of the straight trace. By giving attention to reversibility, it becomes possible to agree with Meyer that a homosexual signifying practice, camp, can find its traces re-enacted by heterosexuals (Meyer, 1994: 14-15). Similarly, heterosexual signifying practices, such as those that underpin white male heterosexuality – rectilinear

posture, restrained speech – which could be termed 'playing it straight', can, in turn, be re-enacted by homosexuals.

Reversibility, then – problematically, perhaps – makes use of the dyads that have been deployed within the politics of cultural differentiation in the late twentieth century. While not challenging the epistemological basis for those dyads, reversibility does subject them to mutability by emphasizing their exchangeability. Between rent-boy and punter, masculine and feminine, homosexual and heterosexual, reversibility underlines the space for exchange. It is only in respect of the disparity between male and female morphologies that reversibility meets its challenge. In certain respects, such a challenge might be undone as trans-sexual technologies improve. One could envisage a moment when, within relationships between men and women, each partner is able to develop the morphology of the other.

Ambiguous desires: the Algerian episodes

Although Wilde's delegitimization at the end of the nineteenth century provided a template for the delegitimization of him at the end of the twentieth, certain aspects of his activities were not commented on publicly during his trials nor during the events that surrounded his downfall in 1895. Indeed, it wasn't until the twentieth century that details of Wilde's sexual exploits with young Algerians entered the public domain with the anonymous publication of André Gide's memoirs, Si le grain ne meurt (1920). In his work, Gide recounted what is called here the Algerian episodes – events that took place in early 1895 when Gide, Wilde and Douglas spent time in Algeria. During one episode, Wilde procured Algerian boys for both himself and Gide. Although Gide described himself as being embarrassed about the episode, he suggested that Wilde merely laughed about it (Gide, 1955: 335). What is important for this study is that the Algerian episodes featured in several accounts of Wilde found in commentaries during the period 1991-2001 (Dollimore, 1991; Fryer, 1997; Toibin, 2001). Such accounts can be viewed as forming part of a cultural politics of sexual differentiation through their facilitation of a production of a cultural memory of Wilde. Such a cultural

memory of Wilde can be seen as being open to delegitimization not only because of extant moralizing discourses but also due to the political context in which they were circulated.

Delegitimizing imperatives in relation to the Algerian episodes can be read within the article by Christopher Hart, published in *Daily Mail* following the unveiling of Hambling's memorial of Wilde. Hart's comments on the Algerian episodes provided an excellent example of the way in which the activities of Douglas, Wilde and Gide left attempts to memorialize Wilde susceptible to shame. In his critique of Wilde, Hart referred to the sexual exploits in Algeria, although he only cited Douglas's part in them:

> In 1895, Douglas went to Algeria and actually bought an Arab boy from his family, body and soul. Men who get their kicks the same way nowadays, in Thailand or the Philippines, risk a very long jail sentence indeed.[14]

What becomes interesting to explore are the implications of the exoticism displayed by Douglas, Gide and Wilde during the Algerian episodes. A series of questions can be formulated in respect of this: first, does the pivotal role of Wilde and, to a lesser extent, Gide, within a cultural politics of sexual differentiation become compromised by the Algerian episodes? Secondly, what impact does such compromise have on attempts to rearticulate a cultural politics of sexual differentiation? Thirdly, how might one engage with the accounts of the Algerian episodes circulated in contemporary commentaries without excluding the condition of shame in which the episodes can be placed? Finally, what effects does shame have on the scene of reading in which one encounters contemporary accounts of the Algerian episode? Not all debates provoked by such questions can be dealt with here. However, it might prove productive to look at some of them.

Let us begin by considering the most recent account of the Algerian episodes, which appeared in Colm Toibin's act of memorialization 'Oscar Wilde: love in a dark time' (2001). Basing itself on Gide's memoire, Toibin's work described the Algerian episodes as a 'turning-point' in Gide's life (2003: 37). Toibin portrayed Wilde as being central to the episode. He,

thereby, generated an image of Wilde as facilitator of Gide's sexual foray (ibid.: 38). Indeed, such an image of Wilde was cemented by a description of Wilde's reactions immediately after he had procured the Algerian youth:

> Wilde, having made the arrangements, laughed uproariously as his suspicions about Gide's sexuality were confirmed. (ibid.)

The aim of Toibin's figuration of Wilde was to show Wilde as a disruptive, counter-hegemonic force. Indeed, in an interview, Toibin described Wilde as "one who undermines us, who draws attention to our hypocrisy".[15] The attempts, though, to secure Wilde as a figure of disruption rely on an ability to claim a shamelessness for Wilde – shamelessness in the sense of a refusal to accept delegitimizing imperatives. Shamelessness in the face of reactionary moralizing imperatives motivated by homophobia is one matter, however. Shamelessness in relation to post-colonial critiques of colonialist behaviour is quite a different issue. How can an image of Wilde as a counter-hegemonic force remain intact when, in the light of certain critiques, his own activities represented the excesses of white European hegemony?

Jonathan Dollimore's engagement with the Algerian episodes appeared a decade before Toibin's account (Dollimore, 1991). Developing the notion of sexual dissidence, Dollimore's work can be seen as a more theoretical engagement with the Algerian episodes than the work of Toibin. In mapping a theoretical terrain within which to view Wilde's and Gide's activities, Dollimore demarcated the problems of exoticism and sexual colonialism in the Algerian episodes. Through such a move, the issue of shame became more legible in his work. Indeed, in the context of this study, Dollimore's work placed the Algerian episodes clearly within the condition of shame. Dollimore legitimated the Algerian episodes by inscribing them within a counter-hegemonic framework. He invoked the language of liberation when he wrote: "Gide's experience in Africa is one of the most significant modern narratives of homosexual liberation," (1991:12). At the same time, Dollimore premised a delegitimization of the episodes by investigating Gide's experience in the light of critiques emerging from post-colonial discourse. For instance, he framed his arguments against the background of Isaac Julien and Kobena Mercer's discussion of the interchange between race

and sexuality. By commenting on Gide's desire in terms of a desire for otherness, suggesting: "Gide... experiences the desire of the other as finally about disenchantment," (ibid.: 335). Dollimore gestured towards the complexity of inter-racial male-to-male desire, which was at the heart of Mercer and Julien's debate (ibid.: 332).

Dollimore's discussion did not, however, simply engage the question of otherness in terms of interiority. He also warned of the dangers of failing to analyse the political implications of sexual desire (ibid.: 334). Such implications highlight the problem of exoticism. Dollimore was not afraid to name it as a significant aspect of the Algerian episodes:

> We go to the exotic other to lose everything, including ourselves – everything, that is, but the privilege which enabled us to go in the first place. That privilege needs to be understood in diverse ways. Gide was, at least at that time, the sexual tourist of which Said and others have written, his opportunity to come and go enhanced by what is aptly if euphemistically called 'independent means' (ibid.: 342).

This naming of exoticism allows one to make sense of Dollimore's statement that "...both Wilde and Gide...remained...implicated in other kinds of discrimination of which they...are the agents rather than the victims, or maybe both agents and victims" (ibid.: 338). In the light of contemporary critiques, one can legitimize the role of Wilde and Gide as victims of discrimination while delegitimizing them as agents of it. In this way, one can read Dollimore's account as an account of the shame of Wilde and Gide.

The conditions of shame surrounding the Algerian episodes can be seen in Leo Bersani's discussion of Gide. In his 1990s work Homos (1995), for instance, Bersani made direct reference to the issue of sexual colonialism:

> By abandoning himself to sexual colonialism, Gide was able to free himself from...[a] European version of relationships. (1995:123)

In Bersani's discussion Gide's sexual adventures were seen as fully implicated in colonialism. Indeed, Bersani characterized Gide as a European who could only transgress his own moral

and sexual boundaries through his engagement with the wider political project of colonialism. By making sex and colonialism interdependent, Bersani's rendition can be seen as part liberation narrative ('he found himself on the voyage of discovery') part exploitative expedition ('he took what he found'). By making explicit both liberatory and exploitative aspects of the Algerian episodes, Bersani brought the episodes within the purview of shame.

The susceptibility of the Algerian episodes to delegitimization was explored from another point of view in the work of Jonathan Fryer (Fryer, 1997). In his André and Oscar: Gide, Wilde and the Gay Art of Living (1997), Fryer commented on Gide's preoccupation with Algerian children:

> In observations not incorporated into the final version of *Si le grain ne meurt*, André discourses at length on the characters of numerous little Alis, Mohammeds, Larbis, Bashirs, Lashmis, Achanis, Telis, Madanis, Noouis, Hammas, Mhamharrs and Sadecks...there is no evidence that André ever interfered with any of the pre-pubescent children. But is interesting to reflect that a century later...[Gide] would have...risked prison as a result of his lifestyle.
>
> (1999: 64)

Fryer's work went on to discuss Gide's sexual relations with young Algerians as well as with French youths, such as the sixteen-year-old Marc Allegret (1997: 206). It is interesting to note that Fryer did not make reference to the colonial setting of Gide's sexual adventures nor to the way in which that must impact on a consideration of Gide's activities. Fryer did, however, note Gide's political awareness of the oppression of French colonialism in Africa, discussing the travel writing Gide published after a visit to the Congo and Chad in 1926-7:

> Now the emphasis was less on the author's susceptibility to the youths' individual charms and more on the injustices and brutalities of colonialism, as well as the grotesque distortion of human relations between white and black under such a system. The colonial authorities and several large companies working in the region were appalled by

> some of André's observations, but undoubtedly the book did help bring about some long overdue reforms. It also brought Gide a new breed of admirer – politicized young people, especially students, who were generally left-leaning in politics.
>
> (ibid.: 298)

In making reference to the legitimization of Gide's political commitment while acknowledging that the Algerian episodes provided a source for Gide's delegitimization, Fryer left his figuration of Gide open to being framed in terms of shame.

How can cultural figures like Wilde and Gide be positioned within a cultural politics of sexual differentiation, once their implication within shame conditions has been recognized? Is it enough to rely on their figuration as ambiguous historical agents – both victims of social mores and perpetrators of colonial excesses? Is it possible to de-problematize the ambiguity that they represent? It could prove productive to avoid neutralizing the ambiguity that emerges within the figurations of Wilde and Gide among contemporary writings. One need not annul ambiguity in an attempt to guarantee their effectiveness as figurations of cultural memory. Rather, one can privilege such ambiguity in terms of the further work it allows one to do. In respect of the Algerian episodes, ambiguity might provide a useful way of looking at the colonial situation not just in relation to colonizers, such as Wilde and Gide, but also in terms of the colonized. Consider, for instance, figures such as Gide's servant Athman. One could posit him as an exploited victim of the colonial situation. Dollimore's study pushes us in such a direction by asking questions concerning the effects of colonialism on Athman. The attempts by Gide to take Athman to Paris, for instance, formed part of Dollimore's inquiry. Dollimore discussed the discrimination and inequality in Paris that would produce an asymmetry in their subject-positions (Dollimore, 1991: 337). He asked: "What kind of indifference to (cultural) difference made Gide so confident Athman could survive in Paris?" (ibid.: 342). Rather than simply attaching ambiguity to Gide as a result of the Athman situation, one could attach ambiguity to the situation as a whole. One could ask how far such

ambiguity impinged on Athman as a colonial figure. What were his motivations for attaching himself to Gide? Did he think he could survive in Paris? If so, why?

Fryer's work engaged with questions of the attitudes of the Algerians who surrounded Gide and Wilde. In doing so, Fryer tentatively admitted their agency. He showed that the young Algerians had their own needs in terms of the relations they had with foreigners. Indeed, Fryer even described Algerian boys as instigating sexual adventures, particularly with Gide (Fryer, 1997: 61-62). The question of Algerian agency went beyond the matter of sex. For instance, Athman was described in terms of his attitude to his job:

> ... he had a natural authority. In fact, he swaggered around,
>
> full of self-importance at being responsible for waiting on the
>
> needs of...French gentlemen.
>
> (ibid.: 62)

Indeed, Fryer's description of Athman's involvement with Gide made it clear that he had a complex relationship with French men and French culture:

> In such an environment, in which...the men talked for hours about
>
> books, Athman's own pretensions to literary greatness were inflated.
>
> He spent hours copying passages from books that had been
>
> recommended or else he experimented writing verse... The
>
> seriousness with which he took himself also made him more of a
>
> clown. Determined to function as much as possible on equal terms
>
> with his French companions, he devoured a volume on the lives of
>
> great men – and then proceeded to season his conversation with
>
> historical allusions.
>
> (ibid.: 158-159)

Rather than regarding Athman as a joke, it could be useful to engage with his ambiguity as a figure enmeshed in the cultural machinery of the French colonial project. Putting aside the patronizing tone of Fryer's account, Athman can be seen to enjoy a complex agency of the kind described by Frantz Fanon in his discussion of the 'native intellectual'. Fanon wrote:

> ...the native intellectual has thrown himself greedily upon Western culture...the native intellectual will try to make European culture his own.
>
> (1990: 176)

Such a description of the native intellectual can be seen to fit Athman, even if one regards him as being in a formative stage. The suggestion that Athman might be considered a native intellectual is borne out by Fryer's account of Athman in Paris in 1900:

> ...he did manage to become what he set out to be: a lyric poet and a marabout of some repute.
>
> (op. cit.: 201)

By taking seriously Athman's status as a native intellectual, one can explore further the kinds of ambiguities and compromises that must have accompanied his involvement in European culture and the world of letters. How he might have been regarded by his Algerian friends and acquaintances is the kind of question that allows one to look at the wider implications of ambiguity. Regardless of how one answers such questions, the point is that they should be formulated as a means of engaging with the agency of the colonized as well as that of the colonizers.

What impact might the issue of the agency of the colonized have on a contemporary rearticulation of the cultural politics of sexual differentiation? One of the consequences of writing the desires and motivations of young Algerians back into the equation is the facilitation of a return to problems of inter-racial desire, which, as has been mentioned, preoccupied writers such as Mercer and Julien in the 1980s (Mercer and Julien in Chapman and Rutherford, eds., 1988). In those debates, the central question was the problematization of the white male gaze, which produced "...an aesthetic and erotic objectification which reduces black male bodies to a homogenous visual surface thoroughly saturated with sexual meanings" (ibid.: 143). The critique advanced by Mercer and Julien focussed on the work of Mapplethorpe. Those debates did not, however, take account of another aspect of the inter-racial gaze by asking about the desires of Mapplethorpe's black models, such as Ken Moody.

Just as Mapplethorpe looked at Moody in taking his celebrated photographs, Moody looked at Mapplethorpe in posing. What kinds of desires did the model have for the photographer? In considering the question of exhibitionism, one can think about the network of desires in which the exhibitioner desires the spectator to desire him/her in a particular way. A desire for a desire is one of the complexities that arises when one begins to take account of an exchange of looks. When one considers a black male desire for white male desire a range of new issues emerge.

In terms of discussing further the possibilities of a black male desire for white male desire, consider a recent piece by Yinka Shonibare, the photo-work *Dorian Gray* (2001). The work consists of eleven black-and-white resin prints and one colour digital lambda print arranged in a sequence. It recites broadly the story of Wilde's novel The Picture of Dorian Gray(1890), although commentators have emphasized that it was based on a 1945 film version of Wilde's work (Landau in Barber 2002: 14; Fisher in Barber 2002: 32). The shift of the Dorian Gray story from a literary to a visual milieu is of note. Its significance will underscore much of the argument here. A key aspect of Shonibare's photo-work is the way in which the artist cast himself in the role of Dorian Gray. Such a manoeuvre allowed Shonibare to position a black man in the centre of Wilde's debate on the aestheticization of the male-to-male gaze. An emphasis on aesthetics mirrors Shonibare's own reflections on Wilde's project. Shonibare suggested, during an interview, that his interest in Wilde's work was based on Wilde's use of aesthetics as a political tool. "Aesthetics are political," Shonibare said.[16] It could prove useful to highlight the way Shonibare's *Dorian Gray* uses aesthetic issues to address the desire to be desired in the inter-racial male-to-male gaze.

The initial image in the *Dorian Gray* series depicts a scene in Basil Hallward's studio in which the artist shows his friend, Lord Henry Wotton, his picture of Dorian Gray. The picture shows an image of Shonibare cast as Dorian Gray. One of the ways in which one might respond to the effects of Shonibare's manoeuvre would be to address its intervention in the issue of Wildean aesthetics and the male-to-male gaze. Hallward's adoration for

fig 6.3 Yinka Shonibare, detail from *Dorian Gray*, 2001
(eleven black-and-white resin prints; one digital lambda print)

Dorian Gray has provided the basis for elucidating comment on the workings of the male-to-male gaze in Wilde's novel (Sedgwick, 1991: 137-8). Whereas writers such as Sedgwick have been concerned with the encryption of the male-to-male gaze in Wilde's work (ibid.), the central preoccupation here concerns that which is revealed at the surface of the text. A comparison between Wilde's treatment of Lord Henry's opening meeting with Hallward and Shonibare's treatment of the same scene might allow us to arrive at some interesting points. Consider, for instance, Hallward's comments about Dorian Gray after having used him as a model for his work. Permit me to cite the dialogue between Lord Henry and Hallward, which ensues after Lord Henry asks:

"Tell me more about Mr Dorian Gray. How often do you see him?"

"Every day. I couldn't be happy if I didn't see him every day. He is absolutely necessary to me."

"How extraordinary! I thought you would never care for anything but your art."

"He is all my art to me now," said the painter gravely.

(1990: 23-24)

Hallward's preoccupation with Dorian Gray is made sense of, in Wilde's text, in terms of Hallward's artistic practice. The effects of the male-to-male gaze that structures the relationship between the male artist and his male model are seen not only in artistic terms but also in terms of desire: "He is all my art to me now." What the text offers, then, is a constant double entendre – art is everything to Hallward. Dorian Gray, for Hallward, is art. So Dorian Gray could be understood as being everything to Hallward:

> Dorian Gray to me is simply a motive in art. You might see nothing in him. I see everything in him...he is a suggestion, as I have said, of a new manner. I find him in the curves of certain lines, in the loveliness and subtleties of certain colours.
>
> (1990: 24)

In his opening passages, then, Wilde begins to generate his aesthetic of male beauty. This aesthetic is predicated on the intensity of an explicit male-to-male gaze. Consider how Dorian

Gray takes up the aesthetics of male beauty through visual prompts offered by Basil Hallward's picture and verbal prompts offered by Lord Henry's words:

> The sense of his own beauty came on him like a revelation. He had never felt it before. Basil Hallward's compliments had seemed to him to be merely the charming exaggerations of friendship. He had listened to them, laughed at them, forgotten them. They had not influenced his nature. Then had come Lord Henry Wotton with his strange panegyric on youth, his terrible warning of its brevity. That had stirred him at the time, and now, as he stood gazing at the shadow of his own loveliness the full reality of the description flashed across him. (1990: 34)

In this passage, the issue of ephemerality acts as a vehicle for the elucidation of a homoerotic aesthetic, albeit couched in narcissistic terms: it is through the understanding that his beauty must fade that Dorian Gray is able to recognize his loveliness:

> The scarlet would pass from his lips, and the gold would steal from his hair. (1990: 34)

The importance of visual aspects in the aesthetic arising from a homoeroticized male-to-male gaze should not be underestimated. The attention to 'scarlet' lips and 'gold' hair was also drawn in an earlier point in the narrative, during a remarkable exchange between Lord Henry and Dorian Gray. In the exchange, the first private exchange between the two men in the novel, they break from Hallward's studio to sit in the garden:

> [Lord Henry] put his hand upon [Dorian's] shoulder...The lad started and drew back. He was bare-headed and the leaves had tossed his rebellious curls and tangled all their gilded threads. There was a look of fear in his eyes, such as people have when they are suddenly awakened. His finely-chiselled nostrils quivered, and some hidden nerve shook the scarlet of his lips and left them trembling. (1990:31)

In the above passage, we witness the inscription of the male-to-male gaze through an elaboration of an aesthetic of male beauty. Dorian Gray's hair is rendered as 'gilded threads', his lips are not red but 'scarlet'. Indeed, one might note the attention drawn to his lips. In

fig 6.4 Yinka Shonibare, detail from *Dorian Gray*, 2001
(eleven black-and-white resin prints; one digital lambda print)

addressing this question, one can remark upon not just Wilde's ability to compose an aesthetic of male beauty but also the tools used – 'scarlet' and 'gold' – the colours of his palette, so to speak. The use of colour in Wilde's aesthetics of desire becomes even more notable in Dorian's response to Lord Henry in the garden scene:

> Dorian Gray frowned and turned his head away. He could not help liking the tall, graceful young man who was standing by him. His romantic olive-coloured face and worn expression interested him. There was something in his low, languid voice that was absolutely fascinating. His cool, white, flower-like hands, even, had a curious charm. They moved as he spoke, like music, and seemed to have a language of their own. But he felt afraid of him and ashamed of being afraid.
>
> (1990: 31)

One might add Lord Henry's 'olive' and 'white' to Dorian's 'gold' and 'scarlet' as a way of noting not just Wilde's skill in insinuating the possibilities of same-sex desire in such a highly aestheticized description of the male-to-male gaze but also the raciality of that desire.

Shonibare's interpolation of his black self in the role of Dorian Gray serves to highlight the whiteness of Wilde's aesthetic. In substituting an image of a black man for the image of a white man, Shonibare subjects Wilde's work to one of Wilde's own favourite devices – inversion. White has become black. The opposition of black and white racially is surely suspect in ontological terms (as Sedgwick might ask: in what way is black opposite to white?). However, Shonibare's use of black-and-white photographic prints results in a visual inversion – black instead of white. The use of the digital lambda print shows Shonibare as Dorian Gray in full colour. This highlights the implications of Shonibare's act of inversion. His work promotes the development of an aesthetic of black male beauty in a male-to-male gaze. In this sense, one needs to add colours to Wilde's palette of 'olive', 'scarlet', 'white' and 'gold'. Skin-tone matters in the Wildean aesthetic – as one can see from the contrast drawn between Lord Henry's 'olive-coloured face' and his 'cool, white, flower-like hands'. In order to

think through the implications of Shonibare's work, one needs to ask how a inter-racial male-to-male gaze would impact on the development of a inter-racial male-to-male aesthetic.

In elaborating the possibilities of a trans-racial male-to-male gaze, one has to ask the question: when a white man looks at a black man, how might that gaze be aestheticized? What descriptions could one attach to the first image in Shonibare's series, in which the white Lord Henry Wotton stares at Hallward's picture of a black Dorian Gray? How might the Wildean aesthetic of male beauty be best elucidated with Shonibare's face at its centre? Shonibare's decision to use an image of himself rather than an image of any black man also has relevance. For, in making such a decision, Shonibare invoked the question of desiring to be desired or at least desiring to be looked at and found beautiful. Such a desire was, indeed, at the heart of Wilde's novel:

> Suddenly there flashed across his mind what he had said in Basil Hallward's studio the day the picture had been finished. Yes, he remembered it perfectly. He had uttered a mad wish that he himself might remain young and the portrait grow old; that his own beauty might be untarnished, and the face on the canvas bear the burden of his passions and his sins; that the painted image might be seared with the lines of suffering and thought, and that he might keep all the bloom and loveliness of his then just conscious boyhood.
>
> (1990: 78)

Shonibare's work, then, presents the issue of a desire for an untarnished black male beauty. Such a desire to be beautiful, embracing both vanity and narcissism on the part of a black man, helps shift the terms of debates that have preoccupied cultural commentators for more than a decade. Rather than focusing on white male desire, one can address black male narcissistic desires as well as black male desires to be desired and found beautiful.

Drawing to a conclusion

Wilde's use of young working-class male prostitutes and young Algerian male prostitutes provided the ground for the delegitimization of the entire enterprise to commemorate him with a public statue in central London. The shaming injunctions that were issued against Wilde for his exploitative sexual activities with youths were closely followed by shaming injunctions issued against those who commemorated Wilde without discussing such activities. It appeared that, although Wilde's homosexuality no longer provided grounds to delegitimize him, other aspects of his activities did and thereby placed the commemoration of him in shame conditions.

As a way of moving away from the problems of exploitation, classism and exoticism that can be formulated around the shame conditions framing the commemoration of Wilde, the question of agency was raised. One can put emphasis on the agency of working-class male prostitutes at the end of the nineteenth century. By focussing on the agency of those such as Alfred Wood, one begins to reformulate the problem of the exploitation of working-class youths. Exploitation or 'renting' can be seen to work both ways. Wood's blackmailing of Wilde can be seen to have provoked the production of the poem *Hyacinthe*, which came about, allegedly, because of Wilde's need to counteract Wood's blackmailing intentions. As a result of Wood's activities, one can question the way in which figures like Wood have been positioned within the archivization of Wilde. Rather than marginalizing Wood as no more than a paltry victim of Wilde, one can recognize his importance in stimulating Wilde's oeuvre and in underlining the way in which archivization can function. Through Wood's action and Wilde's reaction to it, subterfuge and forgery can be seen as part of a function of archivization rather than as a malfunction within it.

An acknowledgement of the agency of working-class male prostitutes also underlines the reciprocity that emerges in the exploitative relationship between a client and a prostitute. Such reciprocity has been discussed in terms of the reversibility that becomes available in an inter-subjective relation. By emphasizing reversibility, one underlines the mutability of

subject-positions with specific reference to the exchangeability that arises in inter-subjective relations. By emphasizing reversibility, one can see how agency also becomes the key to re-thinking the so-called Algerian episodes, in which Gide, Wilde and Douglas can be seen to have exploited young Algerians. By focussing on the ambiguity in the colonial situation rather than emphasizing the ambiguity surrounding colonial agents, such as Wilde and Gide, one can draw attention to the agency of the colonized in the colonial experience. Without needing to investigate the notion of complicity, in anticipation of its moralizing content, one can explore the needs and desires of colonial subjects such as Athman in terms of their implication in the colonial project. By viewing them as active participants rather than passive victims, one begins to address their desires and needs, including the desire to be looked at, to be found beautiful and to be desired by white colonizers. The desire to be looked at raises the question of the inter-racial male-to-male gaze. By addressing the complexity of such an exchange of gazes, one can reposition the culturally differentiated as both subject and object of desire.

Rather than attempting to refuse problems such as the abuse that comes to light when key cultural figures are implicated in class-based exploitation and colonial excesses, it could prove useful to probe more closely the issues that arise. One could be provoked to scrutinize the discursive frameworks that make shame conditions intelligible. In the midst of such scrutiny, one might be able to propose alternative frameworks that could raise unexplored issues. A discussion of a wide range of questions might thereby be facilitated, including the role of prostitutes in literary archivization and black male narcissism. Such an opening up of discussions is, surely, more beneficial than the closures that follow when a delegitimizing imperative is issued by a cry of 'shame'.

[1] Smith, C.S., Foreword to Maggi Hambling: a Statue for Oscar Wilde, National Portrait Gallery, London, 1997. Unnumbered pages.

[2] Hart, C., 'If he lived today, he'd be on a paedophile register. So why are we honouring Oscar?' *Daily Mail*, 1 December 1998.

[3] ibid.

[4] ibid.

[5] ibid.

[6] ibid.

[7] *Wilde*, scene 37 (Mitchell, J., Wilde, Orion Media, London, 1997, p. 101)

[8] Wilde's trial judge, Mr Justice Wills, was cited as saying on conviction of Wilde and Taylor: "That you, Taylor, kept a kind of male brothel, it is impossible to doubt. And that you, Wilde have been the centre of a circle of extensive corruption of the most hideous kind among young men, it is equally impossible to doubt." (Ellmann, 1987: 448)

[9] Hart, C., op. cit.

[10] ibid.

[11] ibid.

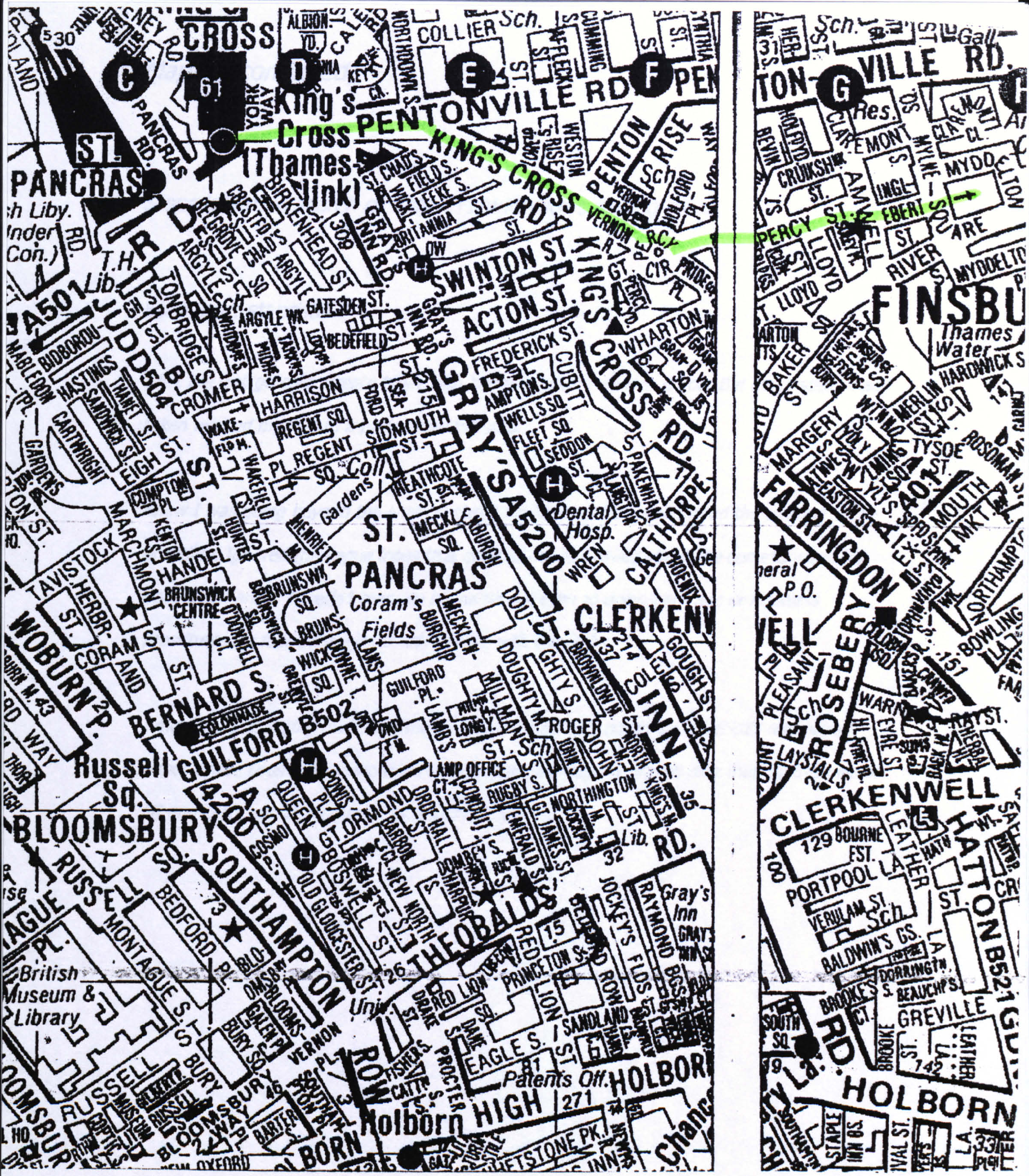
[12] *Miller, D.A.,* 'Anal Rope' in inside/out: lesbian theories/gay theories, Fuss, D. (ed.) Routledge, London, 1991, pp. 119-141.

[13] ibid., p. 128.

[14] Hart, C., op. cit.

[15] Colm Toibin: interview with Richard Canning, The Voice Box, South Bank, London, 3 April 2003.

[16] Yinka Shonibare: interview with Maaretta Jaukkuri, London, 2002.



Map E.

Steps taken in search of Rotimi Fani-Kayode's resting place

– moving on

Map E. (continued)

Steps taken: in search of Rotimi Fani-Kayode's resting-place

Step four: standstill

I felt the trail go cold. Breath bitter with hunger, I didn't want to go on. But every step I had taken worked my feet to a pace I couldn't stop.

Knew I was going beyond the limit of what I could stand before. Endured the wasting sense of futility. Ignored the vague looks that greeted me as I asked about the cemetery and the dead black artist. Daredn't mention his name not even to down-and-outs or hopeless prostitutes for fear their eyes would harden with suspicion.

I moved on, dragging my feet through discarded leaflets, empty crisp packets and broken paper coffee cups still spilling drips of unfinished espresso. I prayed only that my daze would lift and carry me off as quickly as it had descended.

Reaching conclusions

An affirmatory approach to shame

While exploring shame as a crisis of legitimacy, the foregoing arguments have emphasized the productive potential of such a crisis. In doing so, the thesis explored what can be termed an 'affirmatory' response to shame. Affirmatory responses can be seen as being based on an approach that takes, as a starting-point, an acceptance of the crises and losses pursuant to shame. In such a regard, affirmatory responses can be distinguished from denying or restorative responses. Denying responses can be exemplified by such phenomena as Holocaust denial. Restorative approaches can be exemplified through such phenomena as the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) with its aims to grant amnesty and thereby build a degree of parity within the social relations in South Africa. Restorative responses to shame have remained at the centre of debates for at least fifteen years (Braithwaite, 1989; Rose, 2003; Nussbaum, 2004). Likewise, denying responses to shame have provided the focus of recent debate (Cohen, 2001), as discussed earlier in this thesis. Affirmatory approaches, however, have also featured at the heart of most recent research (Probyn, 2005), and have, most notably been deployed in respect of queer studies (Sedgwick, 2003). It was with regard to such developments, bringing shame studies into dynamic conjunction with the field of queer studies that the thesis elaborated arguments that can, in conclusion, be regarded as having provided an exploration of affirmatory responses to shame.

Reclaiming Remembrance, as its title suggests, attempted to draw out the political ramifications of the shame conditions discussed in respect of each of its objects of analysis. The rationale for such an approach was derived from an attempt to follow-up on questions that seemed to be emerging from research in the field of shame studies. In particular, Eve K. Sedgwick's work, as has been stated earlier in the thesis, became an important touchstone. The significance of her work with Adam Franks, Shame and its Sisters (1995) has been

discussed in terms of its contributions to the foundational thinking that supported the instigation of the research. The elaboration of key themes within the cases studies, however, provided some resonance with Sedgwick's more recent work, Touching Feeling: affect, performativity, pedagogy,(2003). In that work, Sedgwick put forward the proposition that shame might be productive of a certain species of politics, stating: "I suggest that to view performativity in terms of habitual shame and its transformations opens a lot of new doors for thinking about identity politics", (2003:62). Such a statement left open the question as to what might constitute such a politics. The importance of such a query has been underlined in even more recent work, such as Elspeth Probyn's Blush: faces of shame (2005) where she argues, "...shame, even when its effects are negative and destructive allows for another way of thinking ethics and politics." (2005: 75). It was in respect of what might be termed a 'politics of shame' that many of the arguments in the thesis developed a political inflection.

Reclaiming Remembrance identified four sets of contemporary commemorative events as providing an opportunity to explore the political possibilities of shame. It was suggested that such an exploration could best take place through an affirmatory approach. It might be useful, at this point, to offer further comment on the rationale for the contemporary scope of the enquiry drawn through the selection of the case-studies. It might also prove beneficial to consider the rationale for the communitarian focus that governed the choices of case-studies.

The contemporary focus allowed the commentary to posit a range of questions that were seen as arising in the wake of the closure of identity politics movements, which were seen as having provided a keen feature of Euro-American political discourses from the 1960s up until the late 1980s. The American Black Civil Rights Movement, the American Gay Civil Rights Movement and the resurgence of feminist politics through the post-1945 Women's Movement were recognized, from the outset of the enquiry, as granting a political backdrop to the events, encounters and engagements that featured as central concerns within the thesis. The responses to the political conditions surrounding the events of the 1990s and

early 2000s, discussed in the case-studies, were seen as departing from the rhetorical stances that had been previously articulated through the discourses generated within identity politics. The muted responses, equivocal positions and modulated interventions, noted as common features within the chosen case-studies, were regarded as offering a distinct counterpoint to the outspoken polemics that characterized identity politics.

The reasons for the identification of 1989 as a moment of foreclosure in identity politics can, in terms of Britain, at least, be related to the enunciations that emerged in the wake of Fani-Kayode's death. Such enunciations, as has been suggested, took place in a register marked and re-marked by variance and uncertainty. Such newly emerging registers, in which political activity was continually being re-imagined and rearticulated, were seen as offering key objects of scrutiny. Such scrutiny can, on reflection, also be seen as engaging with a set of historical circumstances beyond the confines of identitarian political struggles articulated through marginalized groups in Britain. 1989, as the date marking the fall of the Berlin Wall and, therefore, the end of the Cold War, allows for a certain resonance between the newly emerging politics, discussed in this thesis in respect of British social formations, and the newly emerging politics on a wider political stage.

It might be going too far to suggest that identity politics in the late-twentieth-century Euro-American context should be explored as a definitive feature of the last chapters of the Cold War. However, it becomes intriguing to reflect on the modulated tones of the post-identity debate, which, in my view, took place alongside the shift in global politics signalled by the collapse of the Soviet regime. The types of enquiry that can emerge from such speculation include an exploration of identity politics as a critique of the internal repressions in the Western Bloc. On the other hand, identity politics could also be investigated as an ideological weapon deployed by the West in an attempt to assert liberal values emphasizing individualistic subjectivism against the collectivizing models propagated under the auspices of Soviet scientific socialism. Regardless of where one positions Euro-American identity politics between the 1960s and 1980s, the post-identitarian moment, inaugurated in 1989 was taken,

in this thesis, as a moment that marked the emergence of a new set of considerations in respect of social and political engagement in Britain.

A communitarian engagement with the newly emerging political climate was seen as being articulated through the commemorative acts carried out in respect of Casement, Fani-Kayode, Fashanu and Wilde. Focus on communitarian responses to those deaths allowed the thesis to address the ways in which social formations facilitated the production of new allegiances and the development of new political agendas. For instance, as regards the commemorative events surrounding Justin Fashanu, lesbians and gay men were able to form allegiances with heterosexual men around the discourse of football, as a way of making interventions that refused the rigid heteronormativity of such dominant discourses. The pressures of policing heteronormativity were, therefore, seen as being equally injurious to heterosexual men as they were to gay men and to lesbians. A further example of the new conjunctions identified through an examination of communitarian activity can be seen in the case of Fani-Kayode. The focus on a British black arts community in London facilitated a discussion of contemporary diasporic memorialization, particularly as regards the strategies enacted by transcultural collectivities in the handling of death and commemoration.

Preoccupations with macro-political questions that might arise from policy issues, such as those commanded by government initiatives, were set aside in favour of a communitarian focus. The thesis thereby avoided discussion on a raft of policy issues relating to the way in which Britain has become historically implicated in shameful activities undertaken in pursuit of its aggrandisement through the instigation of colonial adventures and involvement in the Atlantic Slave Trade. Such issues could have been explored by means of research into such policy areas as the call for reparations for slavery and colonialism or British European policy initiatives, such Prime Minister Blair's gestures towards an apology for Britain's culpability in the Irish Potato Famine of the 1840s[1]. Despite the efficacy of exploring the possibilities offered by government intervention in relation to the discourses surrounding Britain's historical shame, there was a clear rationale in the thesis for setting aside such

considerations. It was judged that a discussion of macro-political issues would have demanded the dedication of an extensive range of research resources in order to do justice to the complexity of the issues raised. Such a consideration of government policy could only, in my judgement, have taken place at the expense of a discussion of community politics.

The emphasis on communitarian politics also led to a sidelining of possibilities offered by an enquiry into the discourses framing personal encounters with shame. The move away from personal investments in the events surrounding the commemorations in question facilitated a closer scrutiny of communitarian responses. Again, the conclusion was reached that a pursuit of matters relating to personal engagements with shame might lead to an investigation of such matters as therapeutic developments rather than allowing for a focus on the space of communitarian politics and its transformations.

A Politics of Shame

In terms of the politics that did emerge from the communitarian setting, it might be useful to take the opportunity here to say a little more about the specific strategies that were developed and about how they can be seen to inter-relate. Broadly, the discussion drew out issues that can be collected in terms of particular themes, which were seen as being continually re-articulated within the political strategies addressed. The themes were:

a) The languages that articulated the modalities of newly formulated politics (languages of shame).

b) The archives that framed the production and circulation of histories facilitated by the newly emerging political strategies (shame archives).

c) The sexual relations that were made available for re-negotiation through the newly emerging political strategies (sexual relations of shame).

d) The engagements with space that it became possible to envisage as a result of the newly emerging political strategies (spaces of shame).

e) The conceptualizations of temporality that it became possible to articulate as a result of the newly emerging political strategies (a time for shame).

Languages of Shame

The thesis addressed the following question: what did shame have to offer in terms of the languages that were recognized as constituting the political discourses that emerged in the post-identitarian moment? Through the framing and elaboration of the case-study constructed around the commemorative events relating to Fani-Kayode, the thesis was able to discuss the notion of a 'language of alterity'. Such a language was seen as providing the grounds for a resistance to the normalizing injunctions issuing from heteronormative discourses. Language was foregrounded in respect of the research undertaken partly as a result of a methodological decision to emphasize public statements made by those participating in commemorative events. Language also became an object of analysis due to the prominent space attributed to it within discourses of identity politics. Indeed, as has already been argued, key among the political strategies that emerged out of identity politics was the emphasis, among other things, on the development of rhetorical power, evidenced in the acclaimed speeches of iconic figures such as Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. It was in relation to such considerations that the nuanced political engagements, such as apprehension and doubt, which were no longer able to rely on rhetorical force, became the focus of interest in this study. Such engagements were seen as placing emphasis not only on what kinds of language became available but also on the way in which those languages could be articulated. Thus, the apprehension explored in relation to Fashanu was seen as a strategy deployed in a situation in which the rhetorics of Black Power would neither have been efficacious nor appropriate. Similarly, doubt discussed in respect of Casement, was seen as a strategy advanced in a context in which an assertion of gay identity would not have provided a response complex enough to meet the demands of the situation in which Casement was commemorated.

One could, of course, argue that what shame is being productive of here is a nuanced rhetoric. Apprehension and doubt speak to one another as ways of characterizing the kinds of rhetorical engagement that begin to supplement the legacy of rhetorical strategies bequeathed by identity politics. In this sense, shame asks us to speak again. The

modalities of speech it advocates, however, do not allow for the rehearsal of existing and widely-recognized rhetorical approaches. Instead, it invites us to make use of the very uncertainty that arises in the realization of a loss of particular political ground. Shame calls for us to *speak uncertainty*, or, perhaps, *uncertainly*.

Shame Archives

How was shame seen as provoking a re-thinking of the way in which histories get circulated through particular social formations? By addressing the comments book used in the commemorative retrospective of Fani-Kayode, the thesis was able to engage with debates around the role of archivization in contemporary discourses. The thesis explored the notion of a 'bloated archive' emphasizing the openness of processes of archivization demanded by post-identitarian strategies. Such openness stressed the importance of anticipating possible interventions initiated by excluded others. Such emphasis on the possible intervention of excluded others was seen as accelerating moves away from essentialist stances, which were already the targets of fierce critique during the close of the identitarian era.

By insisting on strategies that allow for the possibility of intervention from the outside, archivizations that take place under the auspices of shame reactivate the uncertainties that emerge in apprehension and doubt. In particular, the resonance between the archivizations and apprehensive gestures that shame inaugurates can be remarked upon in terms of the stress laid on anticipation. The anticipation of the intervention from the excluded other of shame's archivizations correlates with the anticipation of the interpellative call of shame's apprehensions. The site of the source of anticipation differs, of course, in the two strategies. However, what it lends to shame is an anticipatory quality that offers a suppleness and dexterity to its politics.

Sexual Relations of Shame

How did the exploration of shame invite a reconsideration of questions surrounding sexuality and sexual politics? In its discussion of the controversy that surrounded the memorialisation

of Oscar Wilde, the thesis highlighted the importance of hyposexuality as a strategy emerging from the shame conditions surrounding Wilde. The potential of hyposexuality as an under-examined feature of sexual politics in Britain was discussed. Likewise, strategies emphasizing reversibility in sexual relations were seen as key issues to elaborate in respect of shame conditions surrounding Wilde's activities in Algeria in 1895.

Reversibility can be seen as resonating with the dexterous qualities that this argument claims for shame. That which might be overturned or reversed does not seem to make for a convincing rhetorical stance (consider the much-derided notion of the 'u-turn'). However, it is such reversibility that can be recruited in the name of shame. For, the importance of the u-turn lies not merely in its demonstration of flexibility. More crucially, the u-turn becomes significant, once it has been recognized not simply as a device that might be useful in certain circumstances but rather as the very condition of political action. In shame's politics, deeds are done in the awareness that they must at some point be undone. The anticipation of the need to undo a deed renders a political action far more tentative when carried out in the awareness of shame. Sexual activity, under such auspices, also becomes more tentative – hence hyposexuality rather than hypersexuality.

Spaces of Shame

What impact was shame seen as having on issues such as spatialization? Discourses flowing from identity politics were seen as foregrounding macrological issues surrounding spatiality. Such issues involved, *inter alia*, questions of international migration, nationhood and belonging, which were discussed particularly in relation to the academic discourses circulating from the late 1970s onwards. It was acknowledged that it was under the auspices of such discourses that a series of concerns relating to identity and space were elaborated. The thesis recognized the burial of Fani-Kayode in London as presenting an important intervention into such elaborations. The notion of dispossession was formulated in such terms, as a means of augmenting the ongoing debates with a consideration of the problems relating to burial away from ones native territory.

Micrological issues were seen as concerns to reconsider in the light of arguments put forward in the thesis. The notion of 'seductive space', through which tangential, recessed and adjacent spaces could be prioritized was posited as a means of exploring a shift in preoccupations concerning space in respect of the conditions emerging in the post-identitarian moment.

If political activity carried out in the awareness of shame makes its undoing a condition of its completion, then a politicization of space, under the auspices of shame, would suggest that the act of laying claim to a space must also anticipate the act of disclaiming such a space. Dispossession becomes then the corollary of possession. Under such a rubric, territorializations take place in minor spaces that can effectively be deterritorialized – spaces that remain tangential, recessed and adjacent.

A time for shame

In which ways was shame seen as contributing to a re-engagement with issues of temporality? In exploring the range of statements issued in relation to Fani-Kayode's death, the enquiry pursued a reassessment of matters relating to temporality, which, through various articulations of post-colonial thinking, had been taken up in academic discourses. An emphasis on polychronicity was made through the elaboration of the notion of the 'transcolonial'. Such polychronicity was foregrounded as a means of offering an anticipatory inflection to the models of temporality that already allowed for an engagement with 'past' and 'present'. To open such models up to the importance of an engagement with notions of future' in addition to issues of 'past' and 'present' and was seen as key.

Transcolonial time becomes a time that is defined in the awareness that it must be breached, at some point, by the emergence of the anachronistic within its own temporal structure. Such anachronisms are not merely anticipated in respect of the past but also in respect of the future. To coin a phrase – the time must be put out of joint. One sets a time in the awareness that it must be unset. Not synchronicity but polychronicity – the synchronistic

and the anachronistic *taken together*. In making an appointment, under the auspices of shame, one must anticipate that what is expected will be delayed or what is unexpected will appear so as to provide the appointment with its opportunity for dis-appointment.

Shame provides...

Shame gives us uncertain speech and actions that are done in anticipation of being undone. It offers a politics of u-turns with pronouncements made on the condition that they can and must be reversed. Shame suggests sexualities that are tentative. It proposes that one claims only the spaces that can effectively be disclaimed. In the awareness of shame the time that is set must be upset.

Neologisms

In pursuit of several of the theoretical departures outlined above, it was necessary to deploy a number of neologisms. Such terms were used as a reflection of new political strategies, which were identified as being inaugurated through the commemorative practices observed. An attempt is made below to draw attention to such neologisms and to detail any inflection they are seen to provide in terms of current understandings of key issues tackled in the thesis. At this point, it is also seen as productive to discuss terms that, although not strictly neologistic, have been used in particular ways. The terms are arranged in alphabetical order.

Archivization

The term 'archivization' was used to denote the production of an archive. The emphasis was thereby placed in the socio-political dynamics that allow archives to come into being. How are certain discourses recognized and circulated as belonging to a particular archive? How are historical agents positioned in relation to such archives? Who is able to make claims in respect of particular archives? Who is refused such status? Such questions point towards an understanding of archives as opportunities to participate within a nexus of political exchanges rather than as inert repositories of data. The term, as discussed in the body of the thesis,

was derived from a Derridean conceptualization of the archive as being always open to difference.[2]

Deproblematization

The term 'deproblematization' was used to denote a process that takes as its *a priori* the understanding that phenomena are rendered problematic rather than simply existing as problems *per se*. Such phenomena can be understood as being problematized by discursive frameworks that enable them to be understood as problematic. Deproblematization works by addressing such discursive frameworks and generating arguments that allow problematized phenomena to be understood in ways other than as problematic. Deproblematization, then, works against problematization.

Differentiation

The term 'differentiation' was used in the place of 'difference'. Such a shift was made as a means of avoiding the binarism of same/difference, through which 'difference' eventually becomes the repository of essentialized positions. It was considered that any repeated reference to 'difference' would require constant vigilance concerning the relationality of such difference. Stuart Hall pointed towards such issues when he wrote of "...differences that do not work through binaries, veiled boundaries that do not finally separate but double up as *places de passage*, and meanings that are positional and relational, always on the slide along a spectrum without end..." [3] The means by which such relationality could be emphasized while retaining the word 'difference' was an issue that proved difficult to settle. The problem was exacerbated by the frequency with which the term 'difference' appeared in the text of the thesis. To guard against any danger of either the reader or the writer neglecting the relationality of 'difference', it was decided that the term 'differentiation' would be used instead.

'Differentiation' was considered appropriate since it had a close affinity with the verb 'to differentiate' – a word that enjoys the connotations of 'to render heterogenous', 'to

distinguish', 'to mark out', as well as other useful associations already enmeshed in the nexus of terms circulating in racialized, sexualized and gendered discourses, such as 'to discriminate'. The efficacy of 'differentiation' was secured through its playful association with a fiendishly difficult process in mathematical calculus. Within that body of knowledge, the process of differentiation works as a reversal of a process known as 'integration'. The political inflections that thereby became available through the redeployment of such terminology rendered it invaluable.

Disjunctive relocation

The term 'disjunctive relocation' conceptualized the problem of non-belonging as a feature of transcultural experience. It worked to supplement understandings of transcultural experience that privileged a kind of 'doube belonging' – belonging 'here and elsewhere' – that could be seen in artworks such as Sonia Boyce's *She aint holding them up, She's holding on (Some English Rose),* 1986. In that work, the double belonging was elaborated through the different rendering of the various pictorial planes. In the foreground of the artwork, the central figure wears a dress with a William Morris-like print repeating the motif of the rose, which signifies Englishness. In the background, an image of a Caribbean island is seen as a space hovering behind the central pictorial plane. Disjunctive relocation was deployed as a term to address a different understanding of transcultural experience – one understood in respect of the closing off of that background, leaving the transcultural subject in a space of non-belonging. As such, disjunctive relocation referred to a move seeking to underline non-belonging as a viable subject-position.

Dispossession

'Dispossession' was deployed as a term to emphasize the viability of a discontinuous subject. In general terms, it sought to explore an understanding of a transcultural subject who does not 'return home' nor even attempts to 'get in touch with her roots'. Of course, an emphasis on the possibilities open to a subject who does not attempt to take back what has been lost involves a de-privileging of the continuous subject. The continuous subject – construed as

one who must turn back in an attempt to recover what has been lost – was staged as the corollary of the dispossessed subject in the thesis.

Ephebophilia

'Ephebophilia' was used as a term to denote sexualized desire for youths. It should be noted that in some sources[4] an ephebe is specified as a young man between the ages of 18 and 20, relating the term closely to the ancient Greek institution whereby young men of such an age underwent military training. However, there are other sources that suggest that the term can be more generally applied to adolescents and youths[5].

Hauntology

Although not strictly speaking a neologism, it might be useful to comment on the role that the term 'hauntology' played in the thesis. It was used to point towards a body of knowledge comprising such objects of enquiry as: spectrality, clairvoyance, clairaudience, etc.
The suggestion in the thesis was that, although notions such as transcoloniality, with its deployment of foreknowledge, were not derived from bodies of knowledge focusing on hauntology, it could still be seen as making some form of contribution to that field of research.

Hyposexuality

The term 'hyposexuality' acted as a corollary to 'hypersexuality'. In hyposexuality the suggestion is that expression of sexual desire remains understated.

Languages of alterity

Although the notion of 'alterity' does not function as a neologism, it was given a particular inflection in the thesis. Most notably, in addition to its denotation of otherness, 'alterity' was positioned in relation to a set terms connoting resistance. Thus, 'languages of alterity' were deemed to offer a strategic otherness – one that lent itself to untranslatability and therefore performed the function of, "a language unsusceptible to the normalizing and pathologizing

imperatives directed at the culturally differentiated" (chapter 1, p.68). The understanding of untranslatability should be taken up alongside the strategic otherness of alterity in that such a cohort of terms are directed towards a refusal of the assumption that all cultural phenomena are susceptible to knowledge and thereby become available for appropriation. What the notion of languages of alterity produces is a refusal of models privileging inter-cultural borrowing and exchange as well as a rejection of models promoting the circulation of de-culturated referents. As such, languages of alterity are seen to function in resistance to bureaucratization. In particular, the notion of 'abiku' was read as exemplifying a language of alterity that provided a resistance to the bureaucratization of AIDS.

Legitimization/delegitimization

Although not strictly a neologism, the term legitimization appeared in the thesis alongside its corollary delegitimization in a prominent way. Permit me, within the present exploration of neologisms, to draw out certain aspects of the term that have come to light through the course of argumentation. Generalized understandings of legitimization can be related to such dictionary definitions as entries found in The Oxford Dictionary of English (2005), where legitimize is defined as: "make legitimate"[6]. In such terms, legitimate is defined as "conforming to the rules."[7] In the course of the thesis, legitimization took on a slightly different inflection bringing it closer to the meaning of 'recognition through law'. Such a meaning facilitated the setting aside of issues of conformity, which were seen as a distraction in a series of arguments relating to cultural differentiation. The emphasis was rather placed on 'recognition' because of the way in which it stressed the importance of a juridical gaze.

The role of juridical apparatus was made explicit in three out of four of the case-studies and remained implicit within the fourth. As argued in chapter two, issues relating to the juridical apparatus set up around HIV infection and AIDS in the 1980s was seen to impinge on Fani-Kayode's death in an implicit manner. Juridical apparatus in the form of the English and Welsh Court of Criminal Appeal was spectacularized in Sir John Lavery's painting *High Treason: the appeal of Roger Casement.* The conviction of Casement under the

Treason Act (1351)[8] also underlined the importance of juridical apparatus in the events surrounding his death. Wilde's failed libel trials and his later conviction for indecency in 1895, which led to his imprisonment and subsequent exile in France where he died, provided another example of the way in which juridical apparatus played a prominent role in the events surrounding the death of a commemorated figure. Finally, Fashanu was formally charged with "forcible sexual conduct" contrary to the laws of the State of Maryland on 3 April 1998.[9]

The argument in the thesis underlined the role played by juridical structures in the deformation of shamed subjects. As such, law was seen as a pivotal discourse in the de-constitution of the subject. It was, of course, in respect of the nuanced ways in which cultural practitioners engaged with such deformations in order to reformulate the grounds on which problematized subjectivities could be made meaningful that the thesis concerned itself.

Omnisexuality

A sexualized subject-position that posits all phenomena as being potential objects of explicitly sexualized desire.

Transcoloniality

The term 'transcoloniality' was used to denote a model of temporailty that acts as a supplement to models offered in post-colonial thinking. The transcolonial model emphasizes polychronous temporalizations in which any given moment is rendered as bearing traces of what has gone before and of what could follow.

Sequencing

Two key concerns arising from shame remain central to the material explored in this thesis: the first relates to male homosexuality; the second centres on the issue of postcolonial diasporas. Since the theme of male homosexuality ran through all the case studies, the contrast between the implications of African post-colonial diasporas and the consequence of Irish post-colonial diasporas was used to structure the thesis as a whole. Thus, the first half of the thesis set-up a contrast between matters arising from Fani-Kayode's experience of an African post-colonial diaspora on the one hand and Casement's experience of an Irish diaspora on the other. Thus, the implications of Fani-Kayode's diaspora led to a problematization of the language in which he was commemorated. In such regard, the notion of *abiku* became central as a highly contestable term. By contrast, the acclamation of Casement as an Irish patriot featured as an unproblematic aspect of his memorialization. Similarly, contrasts can be drawn between the unequivocal declaration of Fani-Kayode as an out gay man, on the one hand, and the highly contested claims surrounding Casement's sexuality, on the other. Such contrasts could be brought to the fore through the pairing of Fani-Kayode and Casement in the first half of the thesis.

The second half of the thesis was sequenced in pursuit of contrasts between Fashanu's status as a figure situated within an African postcolonial diaspora and Wilde's status as a figure located within an Irish diaspora. In such terms, one can read the contrast between the effects of shame in relation to Fashanu's commemoration in which participants struggled to find a voice – apprehension – and the effects of shame in relation to Wilde's commemoration in which the participants' ability to vocalize their position was so successful as to lead to the imposition of restraints, such as censorship and embargoes.

The sequencing in the thesis not only made possible the drawing out of contrasts in the material, it also facilitated the identification of effective points of comparison. Fani-Kayode's pairing with Casement led to a discussion of the implications of burial away from ones native territory. The burial of Fani-Kayode in St Pancras and Islington Cemetery in

London – away from his native Nigeria – was compared with Casement's burial in Pentonville Prison – away from his native Ireland. Of course, such comparisons were not taken on face value – a burial in a cemetery was recognized as having a different impact to an uncoffinated burial in quicklime in prison. However, the staging of London as a site of dispossession was made meaningful through the comparison of the implications of the burials of both Fani-Kayode and Casement 'away from home'. Such a comparison was rendered more distinct through the pairing of Fani-Kayode and Casement in the first half of the thesis.

The pairing of Fashanu and Wilde in the second half of the thesis allowed for comparisons to be highlighted in the material relating to both. Above all, the suggestion of sexual engagement with youths was identified as a feature common to the shaming of both Fashanu and Wilde. Again, such comparisons facilitated a series of reflections that lead one to consider the particularities of each situation – Fashanu's associations with adolescents vis-à-vis Wilde's associations with pubescent youths; Fashanu acting in the 1990s as against Wilde acting in the 1890s. However, the heteronormative injunctions that framed the conditions that rendered both figures intelligible in terms of shame became clearer as objects of analysis through the pairing of Fashanu and Wilde in the structure of the thesis.

In search of shame

Although the sequencing of 'African diaspora – Irish diaspora – African diapsora – Irish diaspora' discussed above went some way to unearth the productive possibilities of the nuanced engagements with shame conditions identified in the case studies, it was felt that the debate around politics – communitarian and otherwise – did not offer an exhaustive response to the research undertaken. The research materials that constitutes the content of the enquiry included personal materials that called for sensitive handling: personal testimony; interviews; poems; burial sites. Had such research content been judged to be physically sensitive, such as rare books and manuscripts, sheet music or maps, then physical precautions would have to have been taken, such as the wearing of gloves. A degree of

physical sensitivity would also have been expected in the handling. The emotional sensitivity of the research materials in this thesis required, in my view, a particular degree of awareness. The means by which such awareness could, however, be registered within the thesis remained a particularly perplexing question.

As my research progressed, the problem of how to locate the emotional content of my research material within the overall research process became an increasingly difficult issue to resolve. How, in research terms, could I account for the sorrow that caused a pause in an interview? How could I place the anger and bewilderment that emerged in answer to questions? What place should they take up in my research findings? Should I even mention the sorrow that I felt in the realization of the suffering that had been undergone by the people to whom I spoke and by the figures at the heart of my enquiry?

The difficulty of how to handle my research material (should I confess that I shed tears daily?) was compounded by my understanding of what it means to be a contemporary historical researcher. The demands to attest to prevailing, albeit much-contested, terms such as 'impartiality', 'objectivity' and 'rational analysis' presented a specific difficulty for my research. Should I discuss my sleepless nights riven with anxiety? Did they constitute the 'data' that could be used to inform any specific evaluation of my research? In respect of the demands that accompany the professionalization of research practices, while, at the same time attempting to do justice to the emotional impact of my materials, I felt it was necessary to develop a strategy that would allow me to find a place for the emotional content of my research *within* the thesis.

In the light of an ethical consideration of the way in which the research was conducted, I decided that I could not justifiably place the emotional content of my research outside the thesis. The data that formed the main part of my evaluations and revaluations was drawn from people to whom I felt I owed an obligation derived from a state of mutual trust. It was in respect of such trust that I felt it important to address my own affective

responses to the issues at hand. Such an approach, I decided, would have to resonate with the way in which my interviewees themselves had been invited to address their own affective responses including, in some cases, grief, anger and resentment.

The format I chose was designed to engage performatively with my affective responses. Rather than simply state that such and such an aspect of my research had provoked fear in me or that another aspect had engendered sorrow, I explored such responses through the staging of one of the practical difficulties that had featured in the early part of my research, namely my continually thwarted attempts to locate Rotimi Fani-Kayode's grave. It seemed to me that by engaging with the difficulties of a particular *search* at the core of my re-search, I would be able to mobilize a range of attitudes, impressions and feelings that had arisen in the course of my work. Indeed, such feelings had subsequently re-emerged throughout the entire doctoral project. Thus, fear, anxiety, weariness, sorrow, loneliness and joy could all find a place in the thesis without having to become explicit objects of analysis – either through psychoanalysis or any other such theoretical framework.

Having chosen the staging of my search for Fani-Kayode's grave as the vehicle for a reflection on my emotional states throughout the research project, I had to decide what record or documentation of such a staging would be most appropriate for inclusion in a doctoral thesis submission. Two devices were selected – one more diagrammatic, the other more literary. The diagrammatic device of the map seemed appropriate as a means of conveying the way in which my reflections on death and commemoration often left me feeling exasperated. I felt that my emotional development through the process of my research was bringing me nothing other than loss. The feeling of bearing loss seemed to correlate with the feeling of being at a loss to find the whereabouts of a grave. The map also served the purpose of referring back to the rare materials – sheet music and maps – that demand such careful handling in places such as the British Library, in the Maps Room of which I carried out some of my research.

The poems acted as a supplement to the maps. I felt that, although the maps did a good deal of work in documenting my search for Fani-Kayode's grave, the complex range of emotions that I had experienced could not be fully conveyed through them. The term supplement is used here advisedly. There was no suggestion that any device could fully cover the emotions through which I went. Something would always escape documentation. However, through the use of a poetic device, the attempt was made to reflect on my emotional landscape.

In sum, the overriding preoccupations of the thesis returned to well-known themes: the subject; language; temporality; sexuality; and the archive. In each case, the problems framing commemorative events were not seen as presenting an impasse but as offering a productive point of departure. My hope is that the approaches that I have taken in engaging with my research will indicate the ways in which the momentum of post-identitarian politics is shifting.

---

[1] For commentary on Tony Blair's June 1997 statement on the Potato Famine see: Govier, T. and Verwoerd, W., 'The Promise and Pitfalls of Apology' in *Journal of Social Philosophy*, vol. 33 Issue 1, Spring 2002, p. 67; Cunningham, M. 'Apologies in Irish Politics: A Commentary and Critique' in *Contemporary British History*, vol. 18, no. 4, Winter 2004, pp. 80-92.

[2] Derrida, J., Archive Fever, A Freudian Impression, trans., Prenowitz, E., University of Chicago, Chicago, 1998.

[3] Hall, S., 'Constituting an archive', *Third Text*, Spring 2001, p. 90.

[4] The Oxford Dictionary of English, 2nd Edition (revised), Pearsall, J., and Hanks, P., (eds.), Oxford, 2005, p. 582.

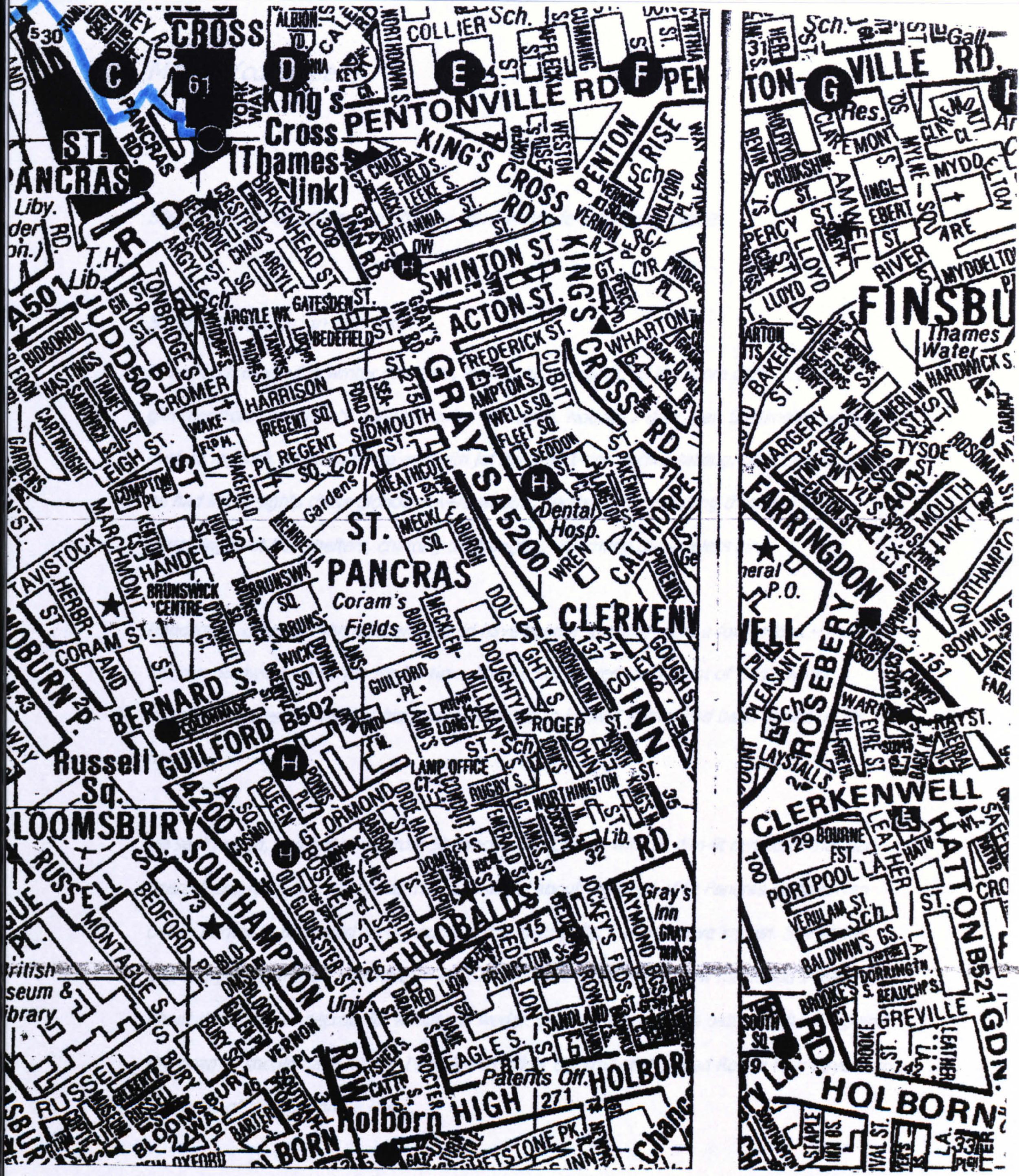
[5] Chambers English Dictionary, 7th Edition, Schwartz, C., Davidson, G., Seaton, A., and Tebbit, V., (eds), Edinburgh, 1990, p. 478.

[6] The Oxford Dictionary of English, op. cit., p. 1000.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Treason Act, 1351, Edward III.

[9] Jones, T., 'A game of two halves', *The Sunday Review, The Independent on Sunday*, 17 May 1998, p.4.



Map F.

Steps taken in search of Rotimi Fani-Kayode's resting place

– *a hopeful pace*

Map F. (continued)

Steps taken: in search of Rotimi Fani-Kayode's resting-place

Step five: a leap in the dark

The church loomed in winter darkness, leaving its graveyard all the more dark. Just a glimmer from the sacristy. Saw the gates half-open. Noticed a door ajar. Stealing forward, I pushed my luck. Heard a white guy with jet hair and black clothes talking. Didn't know then he had in his sights those glorious lovers whom I spotted later trundling through litter, stumbling past bus-shelters, chatting to strangers, charming the loveless air.

Handsome, gracious, the reverend would have been a stunning man, a forties look – harried, anxious, knowing - a corker for his time, had he not carried the weight of God's world beneath his eyes. I added to his burden. Wanted to know if Rotimi had been buried by his hands.

He sent me on, pointed away from St Pancras Old Church with its dim-lit cemetery that had been closed for years. He spoke more municipal about the dead of St Pancras being driven out to Barnet to be buried on the edge of the metropolis. I should have known. St Pancras and Islington Cemetery was neither in St Pancras nor in Islington. How much had I read about the Victorian necropolis, about the wedge that had been driven between the living and the dead? I should have known I needed to follow the trail of the dead Rotimi Fani-Kayode to the limits of the London he loved.

Bibliography

Archive material

Courtesy AAVAA archive:
Poster for 'Rotimi Fani-Kayode (1955-1989): a retrospective', Friends of Rotimi Fani-Kayode, 1990.
Hirst, A. 'Unacceptable Behaviour: A Memoir' [published on reverse of poster for 'Rotimi Fani-Kayode (1955-1989): a retrospective'] Friends of Rotimi Fani-Kayode, 1990
Transcript for 'The Rotimi Fani-Kayode Memorial Lecture', The Photographers' Gallery, London, 16 January 1991.
Comments book for 'Rotimi Fani-Kayode (1955-1989): a retrospective', 198 Gallery, London, 1990-1.
Invitation to preview screening of *Rage and Desire*, 1991.

Courtesy Friends of Rotimi Fani-Kayode archive
Partnership agreement between Sonia Boyce-Kwok, Alex Hirst, and Michael Cadette, 31 October 1990.
Letter: Michael Cadette to Thomas Mutke, 7 October 1990.
Letter: Thomas Mutke to Michael Cadette, 6 November 1990
Commemorative plaque to Rotimi Fani-Kayode, 155 Railton Road, London SE24.

Courtesy Justin Fashanu Memorial Tribute:
The order of events for 'Justin Fashanu: celebration of a life', June 1998.
Aaab-Richards, D., 'Justin Fashanu: The flashpoint of our campaign against 'The Voice' newspaper homophobia' (first published Lambeth Nalgo Magazine, Summer 1991. Re-edited and published by Dirg Aaab-Richards.), London, June 1998.

Courtesy National Portrait Gallery
Press notice for *High Treason: The Appeal of Roger Casement, The Court of Criminal Appeal, 17 and 18 July 1916,* National Portrait Gallery, 2003; issued by Hazel Sutherland, press office, National Portrait Gallery, London, 2003.

Interviews

Roger Casement
Jeffrey Dudgeon interviewed by Sarah Montague, *Today*, BBC Radio 4, 1 July 2003.
Sandy Nairn interviewed by Rebecca Jones, *Today*, BBC Radio 4, 1 July 2003.

Rotimi Fani-Kayode
Sonia Boyce interviewed by David Dibosa, London, 19 July 2000.
Bunmi Daramola interviewed by David Dibosa, London, 12 August 2001.
Michael Cadette interviewed by David Dibosa, London, 24 September 2001.
Michael Cadette interviewed by David Dibosa, London, 12 October 2001.
Ajamu interviewed by David Dibosa, London, 26 October 2001.

Justin Fashanu
Valerie Mason-John interviewed by David Dibosa, London, 8 March 2001.

Oscar Wilde
Yinka Shonibare interviewed by Maaretta Jaukkuri, London, 2002.

Newspaper obituaries
Silvester, C., 'A column of courage', obituary to Oscar Moore, *The Guardian*, 17 September 1996.
Hirst, A., 'Rotimi Fani Kayode', obituary to Rotimi-Fani Kayode, *The Independent*, 28 December 1989.
Hirst, A., Rotimi Fani- Kayode: In memoriam', obituary to Rotimi-Fani Kayode, *Autograph*: the newsletter of the Association of Black Photographers, December 1989/January 1990 (courtesy The African and Asian Visual Artists' Archive – AAVAA).
Hirst, A., 'Rotimi Fani- Kayode' Obituary to Rotimi-Fani Kayode, *Artrage: Inter-Cultural Arts Magazine*, Winter 1990-91 (courtesy AAVAA).

Newspaper reports
The Guardian, 16 January 1992, 'Bow St runner that aims for an Oscar', by Martin Linton.
Daily Express, 4 May 1998, 'Fugitive Fashanu in garage suicide', by Swift and Rawstorne.
Daily Mail, 4 May 1998, 'Dying torment of a misfit superstar', by a *Daily Mail* reporter.
The Sun, 4 May 1998, 'Gay Fash's last night of lust', by Rachel Bletchly.
The Sunday Review, The Independent on Sunday, 17 May 1998, 'A game of two halves', by Tobias Jones.
Daily Mail, 1 December 1998, 'If he lived today, he'd be on a paedophile register. So why are we honouring Oscar?' by Christopher Hart.
Daily Mail, 1 December 1998, 'How the M word halted a BBC news report in its tracks', by D. Hughes.
The Guardian, 1 December 1998, 'Wilde can still smoke and joke even stone dead', by Maeve Kennedy.
The Independent, 1 December 1998, 'It's got to go: Oscar Wilde deserved a monument fit for a hero of art, love and politics. Instead Maggi Hambling has sculpted a wilfully tacky, silly, Tussaudian tragedy', by Tom Lubbock.
The Independent, 1 December 1998, 'A fitting testament to Oscar Wilde: a monumental row over gay politics', by D. Lister and P. Waugh.
The Independent, 2 December 1998, 'The dangerous bigotry of the BBC', by N. Hawthorne.
The Observer, 6 December 1998, 'Portrait of the week: Maggi Hambling: Smoker's coffin', by K. Kellaway.

Newspaper editorials
The Pink Paper, 8 May 1998, 'Fashanu's death is not simple but it is very personal'.
The Guardian, 1 December 1998, 'Private Passions'.

Journal and magazine articles
Fani-Kayode, R., 'Traces of Ecstasy,' *Ten.8*, no. 28, 1988, pp. 36-43
Miller, C., 'Art Antibodies' in *City Limits*, Jan 17-24, 1991, p. 11

Radio programmes
Devout Sceptics, Dimbleby Partners Production, BBC Radio 4, 13 August 2002, 2130-2200.
A Harder Road to Glory, BBC Radio 1, 14 June 1998. Courtesy National Sound Archive, London.

Poetry
Mason-John, V., *Suicide*, 1987 (unpublished).
Walcott, D., Omeros, Faber & Faber, London, 1990.

Drama
Fairclough, T.A., *Justin Fashanu Woz 'Ere*, Micheline Steinberg Associates, London, July 2003.

Screenplay
Mitchell, J., Wilde, Orion Media, London, 1997.

Artwork

Araeen, R., *How Could One Paint A Self-portrait!*, 1978-9, mixed-media, 48 x 40 inches.

Araeen, R., *I love it, It loves I*, 1978-83, 12 colour photographs with text in Urdu and English, 17¾ x 23¾ inches each.

Araeen, R., *Green Painting*, 1985-6, mixed-media, 9 panels, 68 x 89 inches overall.

Boyce, S., *She aint holding them up, She's holding on (Some English Rose)*, 1986, pastels on paper.

Burman. C.K., *Self-portrait of Fly Girl Reaching Heights and Watching the World*, 1992, mixed-media.

Deller, J., *The Battle of Orgreave*, 2001, staged event.

Fani-Kayode, R., *Bondage*, 1987, silver gelatin print, Autograph, Abp, London.

Fani-Kayode, R., *White Bouquet*, 1987, silver gelatin print, Autograph, Abp, London.

Fani-Kayode, R., *Sonponnoi*, 1987, silver gelatin print with hand-tinting, 40 x 30.5 cm, Autograph, Abp, London.

Fani-Kayode, R., *Half-Opened Eyes Twins*, undated, silver gelatin print, dimensions unknown Autograph, Abp, London.

Fani-Kayode, R., *The Way*, undated, silver gelatin print, dimensions unknown Autograph, The Association of black photographers, London.

Fani-Kayode, R., *Cargo of the Middle Passage*, 1989, gum-bichromate print, 30.5 x 20.5 cm Autograph, The Association of black photographers, London.

Fani-Kayode, R., and Hirst, A., *Metaphysick: Every Second Counts*, 1989, photographs and mixed-media, Autograph, The Association of black photographers, London.

Hambling, M., *A Conversation with Oscar Wilde*, 1998, bronze and granite, 134.5 x 96.5 x 287 cm, Adelaide Street, London, WC2.

Hambling, M., *Kiss I*, 1996, graphite, 29.8 x 20.4 cm.

Hambling, M., *Kiss II*, 1996, graphite, 29.8 x 20.4 cm.

Hatoum, M., *Measures of Distance*, 1988, video.

Kingelez, B.I., *Ville Fantôme*, 1996, plywoood, cardboard, mixed-media, 83 x 520 x 260 cm, CAAC – The Pigozzi Collection, Geneva.

Lavery, J., *High Treason: the appeal of Roger Casement*, 1916, oil on canvas, 184.5 x 302.5 cm, King's Inn, Dublin.

Ofili, C., *The Adoration of Captain Shit and the Legend of the Black Stars*, 1997, acrylic, glitter, polyester resin, elephant dung and mixed-media on canvas.

Piper, K., *Reactionary Suicide: Black Boys Keep Swinging (or Another Nigger Died Today)*, 1982, acrylic and mixed-media on canvas, 6 x 4 ft.

Piper, K., *The Rites of Passage*, 1991, mixed-media installation.

Piper, K., *A Ship called Jesus*, 1991, mixed-media installation.

Pollard, I., *Pastoral Interludes*, 1988, photo-text series, 5 images.

Shonibare, Y., *The Diary of a Victorian Dandy*, 1998, 5 C-type prints, 183 x 228.6 cm each

Shonibare, Y., *Dorian Gray*, 2001, eleven black-and-white resin prints, one colour digital lambda print, 122 x 152.5 cm each, Stephen Friedman Gallery, London.

Tan, E., *From China to Chintz*, 2000, mixed-media installation.

Tan, F., *Saint Sebastian*, 2001, video, continuous loop, the artist and Frith Street Gallery, London.

Exhibitions

Bodies of Experience: stories about living with HIV, curated by Chris Boot and Anna Harding, Camerawork, London, 1989.

Rotimi Fani-Kayode (1955-1989): a retrospective, curated by Friends of Rotimi Fani-Kayode 198 Gallery, London, 1990.

Ecstatic Antibodies: resisting the AIDS mythology, curated by Tessa Boffin and Sunil Gupta, Impressions Gallery, York, 1990.

High Treason: The Appeal of Roger Casement, The Court of Criminal Appeal, 17 and 18 July 1916, curated by Katherine Eustace, National Portrait Gallery, London, July-October 2003.

Exhibition catalogues
Thin Black Line, curated by Lubaina Himid, ICA, London, 1985.
From Modernism to Postmodernism, Rasheed Araaen, a retrospective: 1959-1987, Araeen, R., Kingston, A., and Payne, A., (eds.), Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, 1987.
The image employed: the use of narrative in Black art, Selected by Piper, K., and Smith, M., Cornerhouse, Manchester, 1987.
Bodies of Experience: stories about living with HIV, produced by Chris Boot of The Photo Co-op and Anna Harding of Camerawork, London, 1989.
A miscellany of objects from Sir John Soane's Museum, Thornton, P., and Dorey, H., Laurence King, London, 1992.
The Impossible science of being: dialogues between anthropology and photography, The Photographers Gallery, London, 1995.
Maggi Hambling: a Statue for Oscar Wilde, National Portrait Gallery, London, 1997.
Juncture, Visiting Arts, London, 2001.
Yinka Shonibare: Double Dress, Barber, A., (ed.), The Israel Muesum, Jerusalem, 2002.

Monographs
Chandler, D.,(ed.), Keith Piper: Relocating the Remains, Institute of International Visual Arts (inIVA), 1997.
Jahn, W., Monarchy as Democracy, Anthony D'Offay Gallery, London, 1991.
Sealy, M., & Pivin, J.L., (eds.) Rotimi Fani-Kayode & Alex Hirst: photographs, Editions Revue Noire, Paris & Autograph, London, 1996.
Tawadros, G., Sonia Boyce: Speaking in Tongues, Kala Press, 1997.

Film
Campbell, T., (dir.),*The Homecoming: a short film about Ajamu,* Arts Council, London, 1995.
Gabriel, R., (dir.), *Rage and Desire,* UK, 1991.
Gilbert, B., (dir.), *Wilde,* Samuelson Productions, UK, 1997.
Hindley, E., (dir.), *Third Party,* Fulcrum Productions, UK, 1997.
Hindley, E., (dir.), *Butch Femme,* Polari Productions, UK, 1995.
Jarman, D., (dir.), *Sebastiane,* UK, 1975.
Julien, I., (dir.), *Looking for Langston,* UK, 1988.
Julien, I., (dir.), *Young Soul Rebels,* UK, 1991.
Julien, I., (dir.), *Trussed,* UK, 1996.
Julien, I., (dir.), *Vagabondia,* UK, 2000.
Julien, I., (dir.), *Paradise Omeros,* UK, Minerva Picture Co. Ltd, UK, 2002.
Julien, I., (dir.), *Baltimore* The Offline Editing Co. and Double A Films Inc., UK/ USA, 2002.
Kalin, T., (dir.), *Swoon*, USA, 1992.
Kwietnowski, R., (dir.) *Love and Death on Long Island*, Skyline Films, USA, 1996.

Fiction
Achebe, C., No Longer at Ease, Heinemann Ltd, London, 1960.
Barker, P., Regeneration, Penguin Books, London, 1992, (orig., Viking, London, 1991).
Barker, P., The Eye in the Door, Penguin Books, London, 1994, (orig., Viking, London, 1993).
Barker, P., The Ghost Road, Penguin Books, London, 1996, (orig., Viking, London, 1995).
Bartlett, N., Ready to catch him should he fall, Penguin, London, 1992 (orig. Serpent's Tail, 1990).
Coetzee, J.M, Disgrace, Secker & Warburg, 1999.
Guibert, H., To the Friend who did not save my life, Eng. Trans., Colverdale, L., Quartet Books, London, 1991, (orig., A l'ami qui ne m'a pas sauvé la vie, Editions Gallimard, 1990).
Hollinghurst, A., The Spell, Vintage, London, 1999 (orig., Chatto & Windus, 1998).
Hollinghurst, A., The Swimming Pool Library, Penguin, 1988 (orig., Chatto & Windus, 1988).
Mars-Jones, A., and White, E., The Darker Proof: stories from a crisis, Faber & Faber, London, 1988, (orig., Faber & Faber, London, 1987).

Moore, O., A Matter of Life and Sex, Penguin, London, 1992, (orig., Paper Drum Publishing, 1991).
Okri, B., The Famished Road, Vintage, London, 1992, (orig,, Jonathan Cape, 1991).
Phillips, C., Crossing the River, Bloomsbury Publishing, London, 1993.
Rushdie, S., The Ground Beneath Her Feet, Jonathan Cape, London, 1999.
Wilde, O., The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde, Blitz Editions, Leicester, 1990.

Talks

'Colm Toibin on The Picture of Dorian Gray', a Voice Box event chaired by Richard Canning at The South Bank Centre, London, 3 April 2003.
Gilroy, P., 'Post-colonial Melancholia', a lecture at Tate Modern, Starr Auditorium, Tate Modern, London, 11 March 2003.
McConkey, K., 'John Lavery – artist reporter', a lecture at the National Portrait Gallery, London, 25 September, 2003.

Statute law, statutory instruments and legal commentary

Treason Act, 1351, Edward III.
Births and Deaths Registrations Act, 1926.
The Removal of Bodies Regulations, S.I. 1954/448.
The Removal of Bodies (Amendment) Regulations 1971, S.I. 1971/1354.
Public Health (Control of Diseases) Act 1984, s. 47.
AIDS (Control) Act 1987.
Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1988, S.I. 1988/1546, reg. 3, Sch. 1.
Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1988, S.I. 1988/1546, reg. 6, Sch. 3.
Halsbury's Statutes, vol. 30, 4th ed.

Biography and memoires

Clapp, S., With Chatwin: Portrait of a Writer, Jonathan Cape, London, 1997.
Ellman, R., Oscar Wilde, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1987.
Gide, A., Si le grain ne meurt, Librairie Gallimard, Paris, 1955 (orig., anon. publisher, Paris, 1920).
Orlova, A., Tchaikovsky: a self-portrait, Eng. Trans., Davison, R.M., Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, 1990.
Shakespeare, N., Bruce Chatwin, Harvill Press, London, 1999.
Toibin, C., Love in a dark time: gay lives from Wilde to Almodovar, Picador, London, 2003 (orig., Pan Macmillan Australia, Sydney, 2001).

Theological texts

Good News Bible, 2nd edition, The Bible Societies and HarperCollins, London, 1994.

Dictionaries

Chambers English Dictionary, 7th Edition, Schwartz, C., Davidson, G., Seaton, A., and Tebbit, V., (eds), Edinburgh, 1990.
The Oxford Dictionary of English, 2nd Edition (revised), Pearsall, J., and Hanks, P., (eds.), Oxford, 2005.

Critical reading

Agamben, G., Remnants of Auschwitz: the witness and the Archive, Zone Books, 1999.
Alvarez, A., The Savage God: a study of suicide, Penguin Books, London, 1974 (first published Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1971).
Aries, P., The hour of our death, Penguin Books, 1987 (orig., Editions de Seuil, Paris, 1977).
Attridge, D., Bennington, G., and Young, R.,(eds.), Post-structuralism and the question of history, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1987.
Awolalu, J.O., Yoruba beliefs, Longman, London, 1979.
Bailey, David A., 'Photographic Animateur: The photographs of Rotimi Fani-Kayode in relation to Black photographic practices' in *Third Text* 13, Winter 1990/1.
Bartlett, N., Who was that man: a present for Mr Oscar Wilde, Serpent's Tail, London, 1988.

Baudrillard, J., Seduction, Eng. Trans., Singer, B., Macmillan, London, 1990 (orig., Editions Galilée, Paris, 1979).
Bersani, L., Homos, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1995
Bersani, L., 'Is the rectum a grave?' in AIDS: Cultural analysis, cultural activism, MIT Press, 1988, pp. 197-223.
Bhabha, H.K., The Location of Culture, Routledge, London, 1994.
Bhabha, H.K 'Foreword: Remembering Fanon' in Black Skin, White Masks, Pluto press, 1986.
Biobaku, S. O. (ed.), The Living Culture of Nigeria, Thomas Nelson (Nigeria) Ltd, Ikeja, 1976.
Blackman, L, Hearing Voices: embodiment and experience, Free Association Books, London, 2001.
Blanchot, M., The Sirens' Song, Harvester Press, 1982.
Boffin, T. and Gupta, S. (eds), Ecstatic Anitbodies: resisting the AIDS mythology, Rivers Oram, London, 1990.
Bohm-Duchen, M., (ed.) After Auschwitz: Responses to the Holocaust in contemporary art, Northern Centre for Contemporary art, Sunderland, 1995.
Bronfen, E., Over her dead body: death, femininity and the aesthetic, MUP, 1992.
Bowie, M, Lacan, Fontana Press, London, 1991.
Butler, J., Gender Trouble: feminism and the subversion of identity, Routledge, 1999 (original Routledge, 1990).
Butler, J., Bodies that matter: on the discursive limits of "sex", Routledge, New York, 1993.
Carroll, D., Paraesthetics, New York, 1987.
Caruth, C., Unclaimed Experience: trauma, narrative and history, Johns Hopkins University Press, Maryland, 1996.
Caruth, C., (ed.) Trauma: explorations in memory. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland, 1995.
Chapman, R., and Rutherford, J.,(eds.) Male Order. Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1988.
Cohen, E., Talk on the Wilde Side: toward a genealogy on a discourse of male sexualities, Routledge, London, 1993.
Cohen, S., States of Denial: Knowing about atrocities and suffering, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2001.
Crimp, D., 'Mourning and Militancy,' *October* 51, 1989.
Cunningham, M. 'Apologies in Irish Politics: A Commentary and Critique' in *Contemporary British History*, vol. 18, no. 4, Winter 2004.
Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F., Kafka: Pour une litterature mineure, Editions de minuit, 1972
Derrida, J., Of Grammatology, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1964.
Derrida, J., Speech and Phenomena and other essays on Husserl's theory of signs, trans., Allison, D.B., Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 1973 (orig., 1967)
Derrida, J., The Truth in Painting, trans., Bonnington, G., and McLeod, I., University of Chicago, 1998 (orig., Editions Galilee, 1995)
Derrida, J., Aporias, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1993.
Derrida, J., 'By Force of Mourning,' *Critical Inquiry*, winter 1996.
Derrida, J., Archive Fever, A Freudian Impression, trans., Prenowitz, E., University of Chicago, Chicago, 1998 (orig., Editions Galilée, 1995).
Derrida, J., & Ferraris, M., A Taste for the Secret, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2001.
Dollimore, J., Death, Desire and Loss in Western Culture, Penguin, London, 1998.
Dollimore, J., Sexual Dissidence: Augustine to Wilde, Freud to Foucault, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1991.
Dudgeon, J., Roger Casement: The Black Diaries, Belfast Press, Belfast, 2002.
Enwezor, O., and Oguibe, O., (eds), Reading the Contemporary: African Art from Theory to the Marketplace, inIVA, London, 1999.
Eshun, K., More Brilliant Than The Sun: Adventures in Sonic Fiction, Quartet Books, London, 1998.
Fanon, F., Black Skin, White Masks, Pluto Press, 1986 (orig., Peau Noire, Masques Blancs, Editions de Seuil, 1952).
Fanon, F., The Wretched of the Earth, Penguin Books, 1990 (orig., Les Damnés de la Terre, Francois Maspero Editeur, Paris, 1961).
Fernie, E., Shame in Shakespeare, Routledge, London, 2002.

Fisher, J., (ed.), Global Visions, Kala Press, 1994.
Foucault, M., 'What is an author?' in Art in Theory: an anthology of changing ideas, Harrison C., and Wood P., (eds.), Blackwell, Oxford, 1992.
Foucault, M., The Archeology of Knowledge, Eng. Trans., Sheridan Smith, A. M, Routledge, London, 1997 (orig., L'Archeologie du Savoir, Editions Gallimard, 1969).
Foucault, M., Discipline and Punish: the birth of the prison, Eng. Trans., Sheridan, A., Penguin London, 1991, (orig., Surveiller et Punir, Editions Gallimard, Paris, 1975).
Foucault, M., The history of sexuality, vol. one, Eng trans., Hurley, R., Penguin, London, 1990 (orig., La Volonté du savoir, Editions Gallimard, Paris, 1976).
Foucault, M., The history of sexuality, vol. two, Eng trans., Hurley, R., Penguin, London, 1992 (orig., L'Usage des plaisirs, Editions Gallimard, Paris, 1984).
Foucault, M., The history of sexuality, vol.three, Eng trans.,Hurley, R., Penguin, London, 1990 (orig., Le souci du soi, Editions Gallimard, Paris 1984).
Freud, S., 'Mourning and Melancholia', 1917, The Pelican Freud Library vol.11, Penguin, 1984
Freud, S., 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle', 1920, in The Essentials of psychoanalysis (Eng trans., Strachey, J., 1953), Pelican Books, London, 1986.
Fryer, J., Andre & Oscar: Gide, Wilde and the Gay Art of Living, Allison & Busby, London, 1999 (orig., Allison & Busby, London, 1997).
Fuss, D., (ed.) inside/out: lesbian theories/gay theories, Routledge, New York, 1991.
Fuss, D., Identification Papers, Routledge, New York, 1995.
Gbadegesin, S., African Philosophy: Traditional Yoruba Philosophy and contemporary African Realities, Peter Lang, New York, 1991.
Gide, A., Si le grain ne meurt, Librairie Gallimard, Paris, 1955.
Gilman, S.L., Health and illness: images of difference, 1995.
Gilroy, P., The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness, Verso, London, 1993.
Gilroy, P., Joined-Up Politics and Post-colonial Melancholia, ICA, London, 1999.
Gilroy, P., Between Camps: Race, Identity and Nationalism at the End of the Colour Line, Allen Lane The Penguin Press, London, 2000.
Gorer, G., Death, Grief and Mourning in contemporary Britain, Cresset Press, London, 1965.
Govier, T. and Verwoerd, W., 'The Promise and Pitfalls of Apology' in *Journal of Social Philosophy*, vol. 33 Issue 1, Spring 2002.
Gregory, A., The Silence of Memory: Armistice Day 1919-1946, Berg Publishers, Oxford, 1994
Haler, D., Embalming: theoretical and practical, British Institute of embalmers, Birmingham, 1983.
Hall, S., 'The After-life of Frantz Fanon' in The Fact of Blackness: Frantz Fanon and visual representation, Read, A., (ed.), ICA, 1996.
Jones, A., Body Art/Performing the subject, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1998.
Julien, I., Mercer, K., 'Race, Sexual politics and black masculinity: a dossier' in Male Order, Chapman, R. & Rutherford, J., (eds.), Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1988.
Knight, B., The Post-mortem Technician's Handbook: a manual of mortuary practice, Blackwell, London, 1984.
Knight, B., Legal aspects of medical practice, Churchill Livingstone, London, 1972.
Lacan, J., Ecrits: a selection, trans. Sheridan, A., Tavistock Publications 1977 (orig. 1966).
Lacan, J., The Four fundamental concepts of psychoanalysis, trans. Sheridan, A., Vintage, 1998 (orig., Editions de Seuil, 1973).
Lazare, A., On Apology, Oxford University Press, New York, 2004.
Levi, P., The drowned and the saved, Sphere Books, London, 1989.
Lynch, T., The Undertaking: Life studies from the dismal trade, Jonathan Cape, London, 1997.
McDiarmid, L., The Irish Art of Controversy, The Lilliput Press, Dublin, 2005.
Mercer, K., 'Ethnicity and Internationalism, New British Art and Diaspora-based Blackness,' *Third Text*, 49, Winter 1999-2000.
Mercer, K., 'Black Hair/Style Politics' in Out there: marginalization and contemporary cultures, ed, R. Ferguson et al, MIT, 1990.
Meyer, M., (ed.) The Politics and Poetics of camp, Meyer, M. (ed.), Routledge, 1994.
Miller, D.A., 'Anal Rope' in inside/out: lesbian theories/gay theories, Fuss, D. (ed.) Routledge, 1991, pp. 119-141.

Moss, J., (ed.), The Later Foucault: Politics and Philosophy, Sage Publications, London, 1998
Muñoz, J.E., Disidentifications: queers of colour and the politics of performance, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1999.
Nussbaum, M.C., Hiding from Humanity: Disgust, Shame and the Law, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, and Woodstock, Oxfordshire, 2004.
Oduyoye, M., Yoruba names: Their structure and their meanings, Daystar Press, Ibadan, 1972.
Oyewo, A.T., and Olaoba, O.B., A survey of African law and custom with particular reference to the Yoruba speaking peoples of south-western Nigeria, Jator Publishing, Ibadan, 1999.
Parker, D., Dalziell, R., and Wright, I., (eds), Shame and the modern self, Australian Scholarly Publishing, Kew, Victoria, 1996.
Phelan, P., Unmarked: The politics of performance, 1993.
Phelan P., Mourning sex: performing public memories, Routledge, 1997.
Powell, Richard J., Black Art and Culture in the 20th Century, Thames & Hudson, London, 1997.
Probyn, E., Blush: Faces of Shame, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 2005.
Rabinow, P., The Foucault Reader, Penguin Books, London, 1991 (orig., Pantheon Books, New York, 1984).
Rogoff, I., Terra Infirma: geography's visual culture, Routledge, London, 2000.
Rose, J., On Not Being Able to Sleep: Psychoanalysis and the Modern World, Chatto & Windus, London, 2003.
Rose, N., Inventing Our Selves: Psychology, Power and Personhood, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998.
Said, E., Orientalism, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1978.
Saltzman, L., Anselm Kiefer and Art after Auschwitz, Cambridge University Press, 1999.
Sealy, M., (ed.), Communion: Rotimi Fani-Kayode 1955-1989 Autograph, London, 1995.
Sedgwick, E.K., The Epistemology of the Closet, Harvester Wheatsheaf, Hemel Hempstead, 1991.
Sedgwick, E.K., and Frank, A., Shame and its Sisters: a Silvan Tomkins Reader, Duke University Press, Durham, NC,1995.
Sedgwick, E.K., 'Queer performativity: Warhol's shyness/Warhol's Whiteness,' in Pop Out: Queer Warhol, Doyle, J., Flately, J., Muñoz, J.E., (eds), Duke University Press, Durham, NC,1996.
Sedgwick, E. K., Touching Feeling: affect, performativity, pedagogy, Duke University Press, Durham, NC, and London, 2003.
Sember, R., 'Re-surfacing: race, AIDS, sexuality and the politics of mourning,' in *Transforming Anthropology*, vol. 8 no. 1 & 2, 1999, pp 54-76.
Simpson, M., (ed.), Anti-Gay, Freedom Editions, London, 1996.
Sinfield, A., The Wilde Century: effeminacy, Oscar Wilde and the Queer Moment, Cassell, London, 1994.
Small, I, Oscar Wilde Revalued, ELT Press, University of North Carolina, Greensboro, 1993.
Smyth, C., Lesbians Talk Queer Notions, Scarlet Press, London, 1992.
Sontag, S., Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and its Metaphors, Penguin Books, 1991.
Wapshott, N. and T., Older: the unauthorized biography of George Michael, Sidgwick and Jackson, 1998.
Watney, S., Policing Desire: Pornography, AIDS and the Media, Comedia Books, Methuen, London, 1987.
Weale, A., Patriot Traitors: Roger Casement, John Amery and the Real Meaning of Treason, Viking Press, London, 2001.
Williams, B., Shame and Necessity, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, California, 1993.
Winter, J., Sites of memory, sites of mourning: the Great War in European cultural history, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England, 1995.
Young, J.E., At Memory's Edge: after-images of the Holocaust in contemporary art and architecture, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2000.

Map G.

Steps taken: in search of Rotimi Fani-Kayode's resting-place

Step six: the long way

Her screen-saver came on, as she answered my knock at the reception window. I saw her brick-walled labyrinth twist this way then that. Dead-end. Turn left. Straight ahead. She smelt of just-cleaned parlours, spaces fragranced and cleared to welcome guests. Her manner warm, she blinked behind gold-rimmed specs.

She drew huge ledgers from a shelf, spines breaking with age. She turned the page, read the written entry. Then she spotted the mouse out of the corner of her eye. She winced, pointed the cursor and hit return. The grave had been logged and databased. She brought it up on the screen.

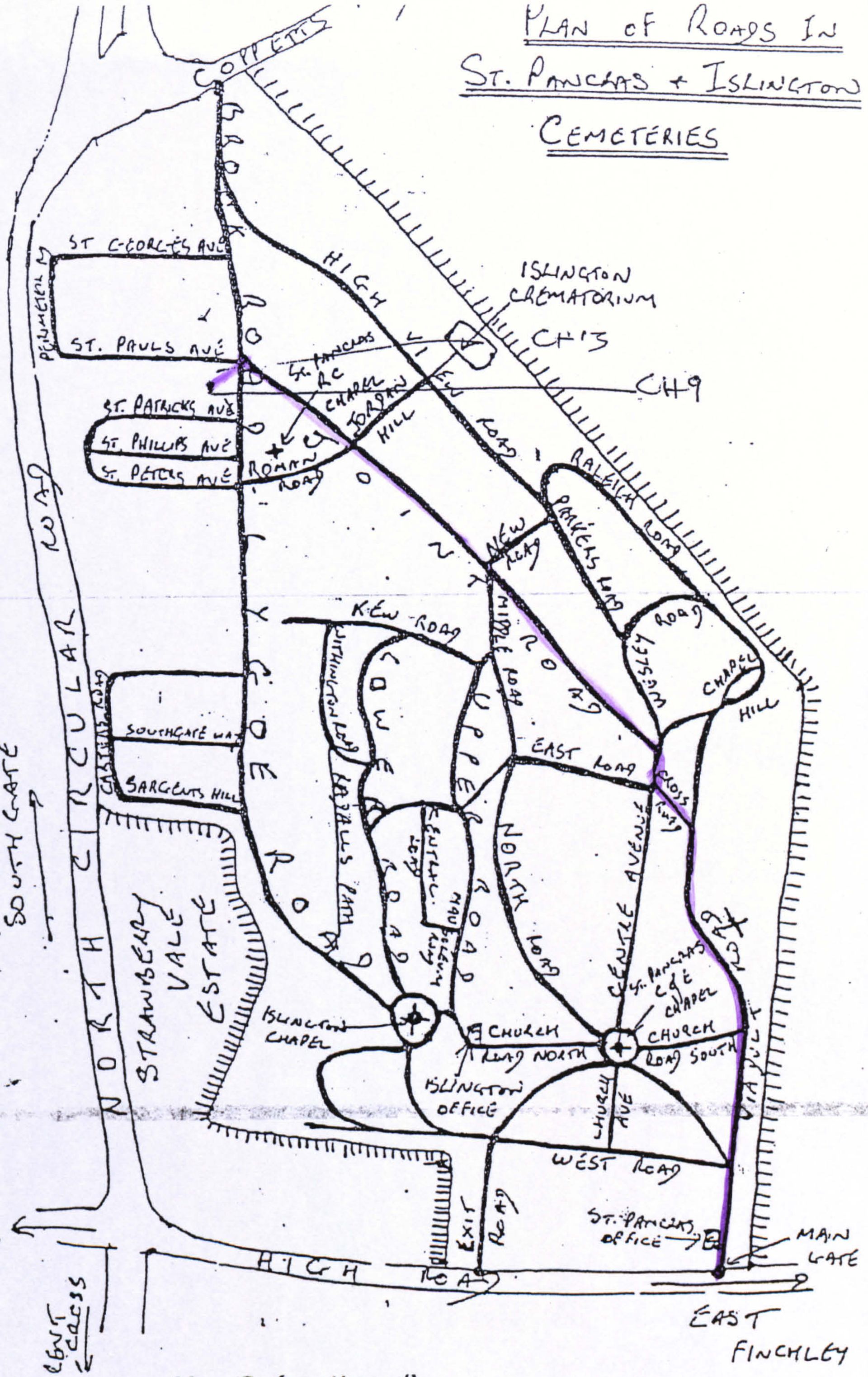
"No stone," she said with some concern. She thought that would make it harder. "Its going to be a long walk. If you don't find it, come back. I'll tell the gravediggers to mark it somehow. So you'll know when you visit next time."

How far could it be? Viaduct Road, Cross Road, Joint Road, St Paul's Avenue, would I lose myself in that city of the dead? Grave upon grave, headstone, flowers, mausoleum, a lantern lit for MUM, DAD, NONNA, GRAN. Wood pigeons rustling overhead. I passed a headless angel, saw graves collapsing – monuments to the dead giving way to the living – grass and mosses reclaiming stone.

"Only the owner can leave stone on a grave" I remembered those words from the gold-rimmed woman as I headed down Cross Road, over-anxious about losing my way. Who

would find me? Not the two drivers who zipped by, going like the clappers, their zest for life redoubled in the face of so many dead.

I left the pathway to walk over graves. Read inscriptions others had left, imagined the gatherings of loved ones. I counted spaces, mistook his ground. A lone magpie settled. Its clattering rose above traffic on the ringroad behind the necropolis. I spotted a cross with a name.



Map G. (continued)

Steps taken in search of Rotimi Fani-Kayode's resting place

– *a brisk walk*