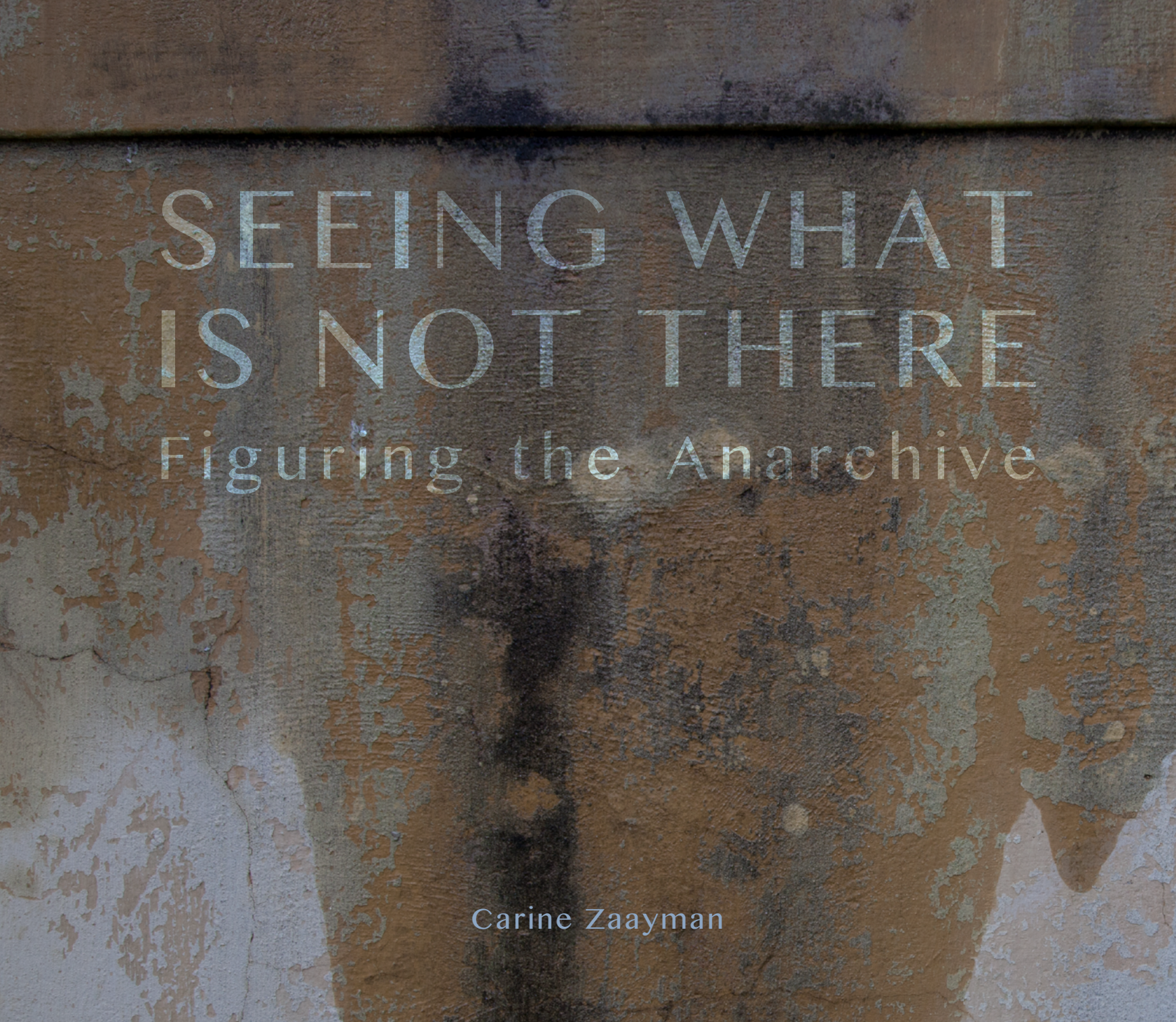

# SEEING WHAT IS NOT THERE

## Figuring the Anarchive

Carine Zaayman

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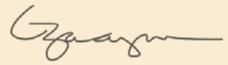

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# SEEING WHAT IS NOT THERE

## Figuring the Anarchive

Thesis Presented for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
in the MICHAELIS SCHOOL OF FINE ART
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

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Carine Zaayman

# CONTENTS


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Previous Page:
A sketch of De Kelders in the southern Cape by Anne.
Left: A cairn at the top of Table Mountain.

# PREFACE

My maternal grandmother took her own life shortly before my birth. While driving me to my frequent dance lessons when I was a young child, my mother often spoke to me about her. She was still angry at her emotionally distant, self-involved mother, one so entangled in the tendrils of her own unhappiness that she could not offer genuine emotional care to her child. But my mother also told me something that I later realised was most extraordinary: she said that she often thought of me as her own mother who had, in a way, come back and been given a second chance at life.

Listening to my mother, I was unsettled: I felt a great deal of empathy, but to my shame it was not for her (this developed as I grew up) but for my grandmother. In the stories she told to me, by means of her justifiably conflicted and painful memories, my mother maintained that she could not understand why her mother had acted as she had; but I thought I could. I believed that even through the screen of my mother's unhappy words, I recognised myself in the stories of my grandmother and believed that she might indeed be alive within me. My mother could not convey to me how her mother had felt, but I thought I could imagine it.

As scholars, we frame our research in (largely) rational terms, carefully motivating—as I shall in this thesis—the reasons for our choice of subject matter, framing discourses and their relevance to contemporary scholarly work. Yet something within us as researchers compels us to return unconsciously, often by circuitous routes, to certain stuff. I use the word intentionally—"stuff"

Left: Installation detail from the *Remnants and Ancestors* exhibition.

is imprecise, amorphous and difficult to untangle. Like faces in clouds, we find our stuff in many places and are drawn to it without our conscious, rational knowing.

Prefaces are written at the end of a text but read at the beginning. I did not set out to extrapolate my experiences of my mother's stories into my scholarly work, but I now see how powerfully those conversations with my mother shaped this project. These conversations stimulated my desire to connect with a past reality that was left out of the narrative told to me. This thesis tackles our relationship with the past, a past often presented to us through narratives of pain. The present always shifts, and often we feel the need to find something in the past other than that which we can access through the stories we are told. While it has become clear to me that my interest in the subjects of this thesis has been influenced by my personal memory and that my insight gained through it is simply the result of living within a particular set of conditions, I find these themes reflected in the society of which I am a part, a society in deep distress about its painful past.

During the writing of this thesis, students at my institution were in protest. Symbolically central to their grievances was the statue of Cecil John Rhodes that still occupied a commanding space on the campus in 2015, but the concerns of the protest were deeper. Throughout, students and staff vociferously criticised what they argued to be the colonial legacy of the university, identifiable fundamentally in the nature of its curricula and intellectual life, in addition to prevailing discriminatory attitudes and the practical functioning of the institution. For me, there can be no clearer indication of our persistent preoccupation with the complex, painful and violent past of this country and the compassion with which it needs to be addressed.

In parallel, when I first came across the stories of Krotoa (a Khoekhoe woman from the early Cape Colony who is one of the subjects of this thesis), she was virtually unknown to the general public. But over time, I saw my own deepening and intensifying interest in her echoed around me in numerous creative productions (notably a feature-length film) released during the time I researched and wrote this thesis. The search for a connection with the past is not mine alone: it has shown itself to be a vital component of our lives, as South Africans, and the structures in which we dwell. This thesis has been profoundly moulded by my society's and my own tangled investment in the pasts that shape the milieu in which these struggles occur.

Below: A section of the skyline of the Castle of Good Hope.

# ABSTRACT

Absences in archives render as impossible access to the fullness of the past. Yet, within the post-apartheid sociopolitical milieu, demands are made of the slivers of evidence in colonial archives to yield more than they contain, to provide material from which counter-colonial narratives may be fashioned. I understand these demands as pressure exerted on archives. In this thesis, I consider this pressure in relation to historical narrations of the lives of two women from the colonial period of the Cape: Krotoa and Anne.

Krotoa was a Goringhaicona woman who acted as an interpreter between the Dutch and the Khoekhoe in the early colonial period at the Cape (from 1652). I examine extant literature on Krotoa to show the various ways in which authors have responded to the pressure on the archives in which she appears and how they have dealt with absences within them. I then discuss a number of instances in the archives to demonstrate that the imprint of absence is clearly visible in these archives.

Anne was a Scottish noblewoman who lived at the Cape from 1797 to 1802. I investigate the literature about Anne to show how scholars have responded to the pressure on her archive primarily by overlooking the absences within it. I then consider two aspects of Anne's archive to demonstrate that it, too, bears the imprint of absence.

In contrast to approaches to absence that seek to fill in the gaps in archives, I argue that paying attention to the imprints of absence enables us to begin to grasp something of absence in its own right, that is, the negative space of an

Left: A section of the Castle of Good Hope.

archive that constitutes a form of absolute absence. I have named this absolute absence in archives the “anarchive”.

Identifying the imprints of absences as indicative of the anarchive has led me to instantiate the anarchive through figuration. This is achieved via visual art methodologies in which I systematically avoid reconstruction and instead convene an archive of photographs whose subject, and the curatorial rationale behind their display, is emptiness and transience. My figuring situates the anarchive centre stage and proposes engagement with it as a means of escaping the constraints of archives. When the full extent of the anarchive is brought into view, the limitations of archives are sharply delineated and their ability to control our understanding of the past is rendered absurd.

Right: A section of the Castle of Good Hope.

# INTRODUCTION

*For my own part, I will consider myself content with my work if, in attempting to locate the place and theme of testimony, I have erected some signposts allowing future cartographers of the new ethical territory to orient themselves. Indeed, I will be satisfied if this book succeeds only in correcting some of the terms with which we register the decisive lesson of the century and if this book makes it possible for certain words to be left behind and others to be understood in a different sense. This is also a way—perhaps the only way—to listen to what is unsaid.*

Giorgio Agamben, from the introduction to *Remnants of Auschwitz* (1999: 13–14)

**Left: Zaayman, C. 2012. *Remnants and Ancestors I.***

## Seeing What Is Not There

This thesis is born from melancholia, a thwarted desire to access a past to which I have access only through archives. Although our knowledge of the past is largely predicated on archival documentation, most of the population of the Earth, and of my country, is absent from archives (apart from the barest of details concerning births, deaths and, in some instances, marriage.) Against this overwhelming absence, archives can be understood as all but bare. How then do we, as scholars, artists—*people*—deal with the absences within them, the losses of lived lives and past realities?

Melancholia, Sigmund Freud (1957: 250) contended, is a sustained state of unresolved mourning. The pertinence of his argument to clinical practice may be contested, yet the unyielding nature of melancholia serves as a conceptual framework whereby one might explore dynamics of loss and its cultural expressions. For instance, in her exploration of slave-related narratives by African American authors, Éva Tettenborn (2006: 102) employs the term "melancholia" to describe a response to slaves' disenfranchisement:

> More specifically, contemporary African American literature has portrayed characters with different, melancholic minds as figures who are not to be pathologised but who must be read as subjects engaged in acts of political resistance to dominant versions of memory and historiography.

In Tettenborn's formulation, even though melancholia can be understood as the result of the inability of someone to conclude the process of mourning, it can also manifest as resistance to a dominant narrative from which his or her subjectivity is excluded:

> Thus, the slave's resistant melancholic demand for the renewed presence of those lost in his or her life inscribes at once the subjectivity of the slave as well as the subjecthood of those lost but remembered, all in the absence of black citizenship. Moreover, the slave's transgressive, persistent and purposeful melancholic recounting of those lost may be the only way to acknowledge the losses ignored by white historiography and to ensure that those lost regain their full subjecthood. (Tettenborn 2006: 111–12)

In this thesis, I diverge from the assertion that subjecthood can be reclaimed in this manner. Nevertheless, if melancholia can be used to describe a longing for what is absent from dominant historical narratives, then it may return us to archives, and, if the absence originates in the archive itself, the loss is not easily recouped. What is more, that which is grieved for in the melancholic state is not necessarily a known object, as Freud (1957: 245) suggests:

> In one set of cases it is evident that melancholia too may be the reaction to the loss of a loved object. Where the exciting causes are different one can recognise that there is a loss of a more ideal kind. The object has not perhaps actually died, but has been lost as an object of love (e.g. in the case of a betrothed girl who has been jilted). In yet other cases one feels justified in maintaining the belief that a loss of this kind has occurred, *but one cannot see clearly what it is that has been lost*, and it is all the more reasonable to suppose that *the patient cannot consciously perceive what he has lost either*. This, indeed, might be so even if the patient is aware of the loss which has given rise to his melancholia, but only in the sense that he knows *whom* he has lost but not *what* he has lost in him. (Emphases added.)

In South Africa (among other post-colonies), the absence of the majority of the population from the archives is constitutive of a present crisis: the absence is in the first instance evidence of the oppressive effects of colonialism, while in the second instance it precludes people from establishing a history of their own outside of the colonial narrative. Such a lack of meaningful connection to the past can be experienced as trauma.

Margaret Iversen (2004: 47)[1] defines the traumatic as "an experience that has failed to achieve a representation, but on which, nonetheless, one's whole existence depends." It is in this vein that the absences in archives can be understood as traumatic—they do not, and cannot, have representation but nevertheless shape the lives we live.

While I recognise that archives function as repositories, my thesis is more fundamentally centred on a consideration of the ways in which archives function as sites with generative potential, and I hold up to scrutiny the ways in which archives are employed to construct historical narratives. In his article "The Archival Sliver: Power, Memory, and Archives in South Africa", Verne Harris (2002: 65) employs the metaphor "sliver of a window" to challenge the idea that archives "preserve" the past:

> So archives offer researchers a sliver of a sliver of a sliver. If, as many archivists are wont to argue, the repositories of archives are the world's central memory institutions, then we are in deep, amnesic trouble.
>
> A notion common in archival discourse is that archives reflect, or provide an image of, process, the event, the action. Stated more crudely, the idea is that archives, mirror-like, reflect reality. My archival "sliver of a window" offers a direct challenge to this metaphor.

As Harris contends, if archives are seen to be the repositories of memory, their slightness presents a problem. Absence troubles the generative function of archives: inasmuch as archives are places where material is both stored and ordered, they are also the sources that are repeatedly returned to in order to gain "knowledge" of the past. This return is an action driven by desires to make sense of the present (how did we arrive at this state of things?), in addition to the desire to facilitate visions of the future, whether in terms of identity formation of various kinds, calls for restorative justice or to establish a sense of belonging within the present physical and discursive landscape. Mining archives as fountain-of-fact, provider-of-evidence may occur continually, but its yields are similarly consistently disputed—not solely by and among historians, but also by those for whom the stakes are highest, that is, by those for whom the need for identification, justice and belonging are most pressing and real. Archival yields are contested knowledge.

In this context, absence of archival presence has proven to be profoundly frustrating and angering and produces trauma. When archives seem not merely to exclude a person or a group, but to be actively against them by preventing them from establishing a continuum with their ancestors, their only recourse may be found in the critiques of archival formation. The very reason archives are populated as they are, archival scholarship tells us, is a consequence of the conditions of their formation. For example, the relative lack of documentary evidence of pre-colonial life in colonial archives is due to the inherent bias in the outlook, interests and actions of the colonists who authored the archives. But even after such important and valuable arguments have been digested, we are still left with the absences that the formation of colonial archives set in place. We are confronted by the realisation that such loss is permanent. What then, are we to do with this loss, these absences? What roles do they play in archival work that is intent on addressing present iniquities?

When archives are used as the foundation of historical narration, absences in them determine to a large degree what can and cannot be voiced when the past is narrated. Various scholarly and other writers have, most often in an unconscious manner, attempted to fill the gaps in archives imaginatively in their narrations to produce reconstructions of the past. Reconstructions, however,

demand coherence—they have forms. Various scholars have reflected in meaningful ways on the effects that the form of historical narrations have on the relationship between the present and the past.

Hayden White's contribution to this deliberation, for instance, has been to highlight the ways in which History as an academic discipline is moulded by methodologies that produce claims to "truth" (seeking of evidence and verifiable fact) but is seldom reflexive on the narrative structures that shape historians' output:

> But it is precisely because the narrative mode of representation is so natural to human consciousness, so much an aspect of everyday speech and ordinary discourse, that its use in any field of study aspiring to the status of a science must be suspect. For whatever else a science may be, it is also a practice which must be as critical about the way it describes its objects of study as it is about the way it explains their structures and processes. (White 1984: 1)

White's challenge to the discipline of History is founded on his recognition that historiography is a narrative endeavour and on his insistence that the "imaginary" plays a crucial role in the production of historical narrative, which complicates its claims of truthfulness:

So, too, with respect to narrative representations of reality, especially when, as in historical discourses, these representations are of "the human past." How else can any "past," which is by definition comprised of events, processes, structures, and so forth that are considered to be no longer perceivable, be represented in either consciousness or discourse except in an "imaginary" way? Is it not possible that

Left: Zaayman, C. 2012. *Remnants and Ancestors II.*

> the question of narrative in any discussion of historical theory is always finally about the function of imagination in the production of a specifically human truth? (White 1984: 33)

White's work alerts us to the instinct to conform to narrative structures in reconstructions of the past, and to find "imaginary" means to flesh out factual evidence so as to give it life. Frank Ankersmit argues that White's consideration of the *form* of historiography is significant, because it foregrounds the distinction between historical narration and historical reality. He suggests that White's writing "[testifies] to the respect that we owe to historical reality itself" (Ankersmit 1998: 182).

Historian Greg Dening similarly reflects on the form of historical narrative and argues for a "poetics of history", namely the understanding that the force of a historical narrative relies on the qualities of its telling, its narrative appeal and how it resonates *within the present*:

> So histories in our poetic are not just the stream of consciousness about the past but that knowledge made dramaturgical in its forms of expression. Histories are fictions—something made of the past—but fictions whose forms are metonymies of the present. Histories are metaphors of the past: they translate sets of events into sets of symbols. But histories are also metonymies of the present: the present has existence in and through their expression. The present—social reality, the structures of our living—has being through representation of the past in coded public forms. We read or hear histories in this double way. We know in them both a present and a past. (Dening 1996: 37–38)

Dening contends that telling the stories of the past is not only shaped by narrative structures, but also that these structures are tied to the time in which the narrations are produced.

White's and Dening's explorations make apparent that the forms of historical narration are manufactured. The artifice involved in telling the story of the past is apparent in the use of poetic devices that speak to the present at least as much as to the past. It is critical to bear the constructedness of historical narrative in mind when considering absence in the archive, because narrative is only possible *post facto*. Narrative, by its very nature, elides absence in favour of coherence and relevance.

The question my thesis poses in relation to the narrative impulse of historiography is, What can happen when we relinquish the coherence of narrating what is (fragmentally) present and attempt to deal with absence directly? Consequently, I explore various kinds of absence in this thesis. We have access to only the slivers of slivers of slivers of lives, and, as I demonstrate, these slivers have been made to stand in for what has been completely lost. I posit that not only do we need to engage with the content of the archives, but also that we must position absence centrally, as constitutive of archives. Thus, in this text, I do both: I undertake engagement with specific archives and I instantiate absence through scholarly and artistic methodologies. The melancholia from which this thesis was born moves me to bring into focus the absent and unsayable past that persists, formlessly, in the unconscious of people in the present and bears down on our lived experiences. My argument is driven by the desire to find means whereby such absence may be brought into view *as absence*.

In this thesis I engage the effects in the present of archival presences and absences through two specific cases, namely those of Krotoa and Anne, whom I introduce more extensively later. Moreover, I seek to examine the generative potential of the archive in terms of absence through the lens of artistic practice. I argue that the methodologies of art, bringing with them variegated languages of representation, are a productive means whereby to explore and express this

conjunction of issues: the need to have the past speak to the present as well as to deal with its inevitable absences and silences.

Throughout this thesis, then, in various ways, I am attentive to absences within the archives under discussion, as well as to how those absences have shaped contemporary responses to, and interpretations of, them. I investigate the archives in which Krotoa and Anne appear in order to establish the motivations for and thrust of the archives, and also to see how the absences manifest. I argue that these absences should be brought into view, because their effect on historical narration needs to be acknowledged, and, finally, because they prompt us to meditate on the loss that occurs when life is translated into archive.

The central problem this thesis addresses can be formulated as follows: every archive is troubled by the fact that not enough material has been deposited within it to answer all the needs of every person or group that draws on it after its formation. Moreover, what has been collected only exists because of the regulatory "law" of an archive. To correct for this bias, one must either find the omitted information elsewhere or invent it. However, no matter how much one looks, one can never recover the fullness of a life or a moment in time. And no invention can be sufficiently dislodged from its own time to fill the space of the past. Finding more information, or conjuring it up, can only flesh out the archive to a limited extent. Ultimately, the question remains—unless we recognise the absence, how will we know what the loss is? What is more, how can these absences be figured so that we recognise them *as absence*? To address this central problem, I tackle these sub-questions: a) How, why and where do the absences manifest in the archives in which Krotoa and Anne appear? b) What are the effects of slight or apparently substantial presence on the visibility of absence? c) What artistic strategies are available or may be co-opted to represent absence *as absence*?

My argument proceeds along the following steps: in chapters one and two, which focus on Krotoa and Anne respectively, I endeavour to answer the first two sub-questions by exploring the archival material available about both women, as well as the various narratives based on these archives in the forms of scholarship and fiction. In the first chapter, I demonstrate the pressure brought to bear on the archive in which Krotoa appears to yield as much as possible in order to allow authors to fill in the gaps and voice the silences. This pressure has resulted in flattened representations of Krotoa's story in present-day representations, where she has become a proxy for all those absent from the archives of South Africa's colonial past. I consider extant literature on Krotoa, including historic, fictional and scholarly examples that have responded to the pressure on the archive by producing reconstructions of Krotoa's life primarily

**Left: Zaayman, C. 2012. *Remnants and Ancestors XI.***

to answer the needs of their presents. Subsequently, I provide a reading of excerpts from the primary source of information on Krotoa (the journals of the Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie—the VOC), in which I focus on the writing in terms of the language employed to represent Krotoa. I argue that the language indicates that she had to navigate the uncertainty and unknowingness of her present with guile, but that today we have no access to how *she* understood the circumstances of her life as they developed. Through this analysis, I demonstrate how the fullness of Krotoa's historical presentness is, by its very nature, unrecorded, but that this absence has nevertheless left an imprint on the archives in which Krotoa appears, and that this absence exceeds the potential for reconstruction.

In chapter two, I provide an overview of the extant literature about Anne and argue that her intellectual milieu, as well as the creative influences on her memoirs, have not been given adequate attention. Due to the particular pressure on her archive, this has resulted in a flattened-out assessment of Anne's production as relatively straightforward "reportage". From the perspective of my artistic practice I provide a different reading of Anne's archive, focused firstly on the fact that she was engaged in a deliberate process of constructing and editing her archive and, secondly, on the style of her writing and the appearance of her memoirs. I argue that these aspects demonstrate that in this archive the self has been worked into literary representation. In fact, while the fullness of her archive initially screens us from absence, the self-conscious literariness of the writing in her memoirs hides or masks her presence rather than makes it manifest. In this way, I show that Anne's archive also bears the imprint of an absence that exceeds the grasp even of self-representation.

In the third chapter I argue that recognising the imprints of absence in the archives in which Krotoa and Anne appear leads us to reflect on absence in its own right. I then develop the scholarly framework particular to this thesis, to enable the centring of the inevitable silences that haunt archives. I argue that the negative space of an archive constitutes a form of absolute absence, which I term the "anarchive". By employing the figures of the ruin and the remnant, I demonstrate how the utilisation of figuration can help conceive of the extent of the absence that is the negative space of archives. The ruin is a figure with a peculiar "wholeness", in that its form is constituted by an interplay between presence and absence and is thus a useful metaphor whereby to understand the relationship between presence and absence in the archive. Following the work of Giorgio Agamben, I employ the figure of the remnant to explore the ways in which imprints of absence (such as those I found in the archives where Krotoa and Anne appear) are what remain of the fullness of the past in the present.

Having conceptually posited absolute absence, I then present the methodology developed throughout this project by which I figure the anarchive. I outline this methodology in chapter four, beginning with how I employed walking in the sites where Krotoa and Anne lived as a means to reflect, in an embodied manner, on absences in the archives. During my excursions, I photographed the seemingly insignificant, fleeting features of spaces and captured a few of the present moments that make up the majority of lived experience. I then rephotographed the photographs for two reasons. Firstly, the rephotographs enabled me to focus on transient elements such as light and atmosphere, which render present moments singular. Secondly, by rephotographing the photographs, I aimed to signal a distance from the actual moment of the original photographs and to amplify the fact that the photographs are representations of moments, divorced from their actuality. Versions of these photographs

have been curated into this thesis as a means of visually marking absence and instantiating the anarchive.

## Be-longing

This thesis is firmly embedded in the Cape—in its past and my present. When I was in primary school during the apartheid era, South African history was imparted in textbooks and in the classroom as having "begun" in 1652. This mythology of the "founding" moment has been widely condemned by contemporary South African and international historians alike. In her article "South Africa—'The Myth of the Empty Land'" (1980), for example, Shula Marks criticises as expedient justification for the persistent unequal distribution of land propagation the concept that what is now South Africa was essentially unoccupied territory before the arrival of European colonisers. In contrast, Marks provides a detailed overview of the histories of people living in the southern region of the African continent from the Early Stone Age onwards.

In the *New History of South Africa* (2007), edited by Herman Giliomee and Bernard Mbenga, more emphasis is placed on the history of South Africa prior to colonialism by positioning southern Africa as "one of the few regions of the world where humans [and their antecedents] have lived continuously for nearly two million years" (Giliomee and Mbenga 2007: 5). The contributors draw attention to the archaeological evidence of human settlement from the Middle Stone Age at Klasies River and Border Cave, as well as to the rich heritage of rock art around the country (ibid.). Giliomee and Mbenga continue on this subject, writing that

> [a] little more than 2 000 years ago former hunter-gatherers in Botswana adopted domesticated sheep and cattle from the Iron Age people of West and Central Africa. These new herders, the Khoikhoi, migrated southwards to the Cape coast about 2 000 years ago. (Ibid.)

Giliomee and Mbenga's overview of South African history emphasises that colonisers arrived not to empty land but to an environment with a rich history of human activity:

> When 90 Europeans [led by the incumbent commander, Jan van Riebeeck] in the employ of a Dutch company [the VOC] established a refreshment post at the Cape in 1652, some 75 000 Khoikhoi and San lived scattered over what is today the Northern Cape, Western Cape and Eastern Cape. A colony based on Slave and Khoikhoi labour left the surplus white population little choice but to settle deep in the interior. (Ibid.)

The Cape remained under Dutch control until 1795, when Britain was at war with a Napoleon-led France, which had by then taken control of the Netherlands. Fearful that the French would monopolise trade routes to the East, Britain

Right: View over Table Bay from the slopes of Table Mountain.

secured the Cape as a temporary measure and returned it to the Netherlands (at the time called the Batavian Republic) after the Treaty of Amiens instated a cessation of hostility between the warring forces. The Cape continued to be under Dutch control until 1806, when war once again broke out in Europe, and the British re-established control over the colony. The Cape remained a colony under British occupation until it was joined with three other provinces to become the Union of South Africa in 1910, which eventually gained independence from Britain in 1961. However, by this time South Africa had already instituted a system of racial segregation known as apartheid (written into law in 1948). While apartheid was officially dismantled in the 1990s following the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990 and the first democratic election in 1994, the devastating effects of racial domination and oppressive economic policies are still strongly felt in the country and fuel much tension.

The argument put forward in this thesis is bracketed by two particular moments in South African history, namely the Dutch settlement and the first British occupation, as very briefly outlined above for context. This is not, however, to situate these moments as the most important in the history of South Africa. Instead, they are the backdrops against which were played out the two lives on which this thesis is centred. Moreover, I approach these phases of South African history as constitutive parts of the legacy of colonial occupation in South Africa, and in this thesis I explore how these moments of the colonial past have been narrated publicly and interpreted from a present-day perspective. I do so through the lenses of the lives of Krotoa and Anne.

Krotoa was a Khoekhoe woman who acted as a translator between the people of the first Dutch settlement at the Cape and the resident Khoekhoe people. Lady Anne Barnard was a Scotswoman who lived at the Cape during the first British occupation, from 1797 to 1802. My choice of these subjects is founded in both personal and intellectual interests, and it is impossible to separate the two neatly. Being alive within this moment in South Africa necessitates a deep reflection on how the past shapes our lives, but no simple, deterministic reflection will do. The archives in which Krotoa and Anne appear, both of which subjects offer perspectives on colonial occupation at the Cape, productively contribute to an examination of the legacies of colonialism within the fraught present.

My initial interest in the figures of Krotoa and Anne came about because of my interaction with the landscape of the Cape rather than because of an encounter with the archival documents or a reading of the published histories. I became aware of the various sites that are associated with Anne when I consulted hiking guides for the Cape Peninsula, shortly after relocating to Cape Town. As a newcomer in the Cape landscape, I felt an overwhelming sense of sublime awe and alienation. The scenery, replete with impressive natural beauty and the palpable palimpsest of colonial and apartheid history, is a formidable, if discomforting, presence in the daily routine of Capetonians. I launched into the landscape, embarking mostly on extended walks and meanders through the many different environments the Cape offers. In one such early meander, I encountered a ruin known as “Paradise” on the slopes of Table Mountain. A rusted plaque relates its history: the colony’s main woodcutter first resided there while keeping an eye on timber production, and it subsequently functioned as a post for the commando that patrolled the mountain during the time of the early Dutch colony. This plaque informs visitors that “Lady Anne Barnard” also briefly occupied the house.

I noticed various other references to Anne in guidebooks and anecdotal histories of the Cape, most of which centred on her being the first recorded woman to have climbed Table Mountain. Because of these anecdotes, I started

feeling an affinity for Anne, who, also as an import, I imagined undertook such "adventures" to familiarise herself with her environment by physically moving through the landscape, as I was doing. In many respects, Anne became of interest to me because she was alien, a colonial visitor, and yet her presence at the Cape is memorialised not only in the naming of sites such as "Lady Anne Barnard's Cottage" (a name by which "Paradise" is also known) and "Lady Anne Barnard's Bath" (in the Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, also on the mountain) but also in colloquial mythology—Anne's name seems to arise routinely when anyone speaks of the history of the Cape.

What is more, as a South African who was classified "white" under apartheid, I am deeply aware that my presence in my country is predicated on the legacy of colonial occupation and apartheid, and any sense of my *belonging* is precarious. I was curious to explore the biography of one person who acted in the service of the colony, but whom, I suspected, as a woman was not herself unequivocally empowered by it. Mostly through reading her published diaries and biographies (to which I refer in chapter two) I embedded myself in what was known about her life. My reflections on the relationship between Anne and the Cape landscape resonated with my own ambivalence about my position and heritage in this place at this time.

This was my concern as I worked towards my first solo exhibition dealing with the material that has since sustained and complicated my scholarly and artistic activities.[2] In keeping with my initial connection with Anne as traveller, in this exhibition I focused mostly on the journey Anne undertook in May 1798 to the interior of the Cape colony.[3] I employed her journey as a structuring device for the exhibition by retracing her journey and documenting the sites mentioned in her journal, for example the Moravian mission station in Genadendal. Thus, the solo exhibition *The Secret Adventures of Lady Anne Barnard (and Other Diversions)* was born in 2009. I produced ten large-scale prints: digital collages made from photographs I had taken at the various sites Anne is known to have visited. I combined these with various drawings and texts.

During this time, however, I also became curious about what Anne did not write down, and what we did not know—something I explored by placing text within the work. I inserted images of written correspondence on either side of the prints. On the left hand side of each print, I placed quotes from Anne's published writing. On the right, I placed text that I had written myself—imaginary letters that meditated and expanded on the content of her original letters and also offered conjecture into Anne's thoughts.[4] In the publicity for the exhibition, I hinted that it exposed "new" correspondence by Anne (although I did make it clear that these texts were imagined by me). The tone of the imagined letters was far more intimate and self-reflective than those she actually penned. Through the inclusion of the imaginary letters, I invited viewers to engage with Anne as a subjectivity, not an impermeable historical token. In order to achieve this, I intertwined some stories from my own life with that of Anne's in the writing of the letters.

The exhibition further employed the properties of the letter/page as physical object as the central organising device of the installation. With the application of vinyl lettering, I turned two walls of the gallery into "pages", where I reproduced a fragment taken from Anne's diary on one wall and the following quote from Gilles Deleuze, Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco's article "Literature and Life" (1997: 225) on the other:

> To write is certainly not to impose a form (of expression) on the matter of lived experience. Literature rather moves in the direction of the ill-formed or the incomplete … Writing is a question of becoming, always incomplete, always in the midst of being formed, and goes beyond the

matter of any livable or lived experience. It is a process, that is, a passage of Life that traverses both the livable and the lived. Writing is inseparable from becoming.

Drawing attention to the unformedness of life and writing as this quotation does, and through the insertion of details from my own life, I aimed to situate Anne as an open figure, inviting viewers to imagine her present, like themselves, in the landscape. I was, and remain, persuaded by Stephen Greenblatt's (1988: 1) sentiment:

> For those who love literature, the fictional representation of life can feel more "lively", more intense, than other kinds of textual trace such as historical documents or supposedly factual accounts, and may even come to feel more "real" in some important, lived sense than what is often called "real life". Such intensity lies behind, for instance, the way in which readers may identify themselves with a particular character from a literary work.

My exhibition did not, however, wholly achieve what I had set out to do. Informal feedback from visitors to the exhibition revealed that the insertion of a great deal of text in a visual display made for unsatisfactory viewing, and that the imagery of the sites as they exist in the present did not by themselves evoke the interplay between past and present for which I had hoped.

For this exhibition, however, I also produced a video work in which my feet were filmed as I walked up Table Mountain. This strategy was more satisfying in speaking to absence than the invented letters, because instead of conjuring up "content" (of thoughts), I was able to evoke the embodied presence of a figure in the Cape landscape. I began my first exhibition wanting to fill the gaps, but I realised that I could not. And so walking became the strategy for the next iterations of my work. I wanted to put my feet (and, by extension, my viewers' feet) into the spaces where Krotoa and Anne had lived.

Even if the strategies I employed in *The Secret Adventure of Lady Anne Barnard* proved to be of mixed success, they nevertheless started the process of which this thesis is the latest manifestation, not only reflected in its subject matter but, more pertinently, in my preoccupation with the challenge of representing the present of the past.

Looking back at these works now, after years of deepened study into Anne's archive and further reflection on the nature of archives, I am still most consistently drawn to the textual elements of the documents—that is, what clues or evocations of a subjectivity might be gleaned from them. My own texts, set in conversation with Anne's, were a means to explore the question "What did *not* make it into the archive?" While it may be a seemingly simple question, I was not so much interested in what she might have left out by accident or about which, from a contemporary perspective, one might wish she had elaborated on (greater details on slavery and Khoekhoe lives, for example). Instead, in the knowledge that the journals were produced not as a private endeavour but were intended for—albeit limited—circulation, I was intrigued by what she might have excluded, knowingly and unknowingly, from her own writing—those details and personal reflections that one does not readily share with an audience. These specificities in and of themselves might be of little historical value, but they would evoke a more vivid image of a woman *alive*, someone who had lived in her own present,

Above: Zaayman, C. 2009. *De Kelders*. From the exhibition *The Secret Adventures of Lady Anne Barnard.*

unaware of how the future might judge her. Through these imagined texts, I wanted to explore something about a historical presence that was *lost* to the present—a desire that became increasingly feverish in the work I produced for my next solo exhibition as part of this thesis.

During the time that I was at work on my first exhibition, the sense that Anne had in some ways prefigured my own presence in the Cape and South Africa led me to regard her as kind of metaphorical "ancestor". Because of this heightening of my interest in my ancestry, I began to look up my actual family line in a document that my father's cousin had recently compiled. At the very inception of the family tree, it was stated that the *stam vader* (progenitor) was Daniel Zaaijman, who married Pieternella van Meerhoff, the daughter of "Krotoa Eva de Cochoqua" (Zaayman Family n.d. 2). That Krotoa held this position in the family's genealogy was not general knowledge among my relatives, and it prompted reflection by certain members of the family on the way they thought about their relationship to the country.

Above: Zaayman, C. 2009. *Veld.* From the exhibition *The Secret Adventures of Lady Anne Barnard.*

Discovering that I am directly descended from Krotoa through the line of her daughter, Pieternella, was both an exciting and a complicating experience, because I had simply accepted that, as a "white" South African, I was overwhelmingly a European import. The truth is, of course, that many "white" South Africans have mixed heritage of some kind. The myth of racial purity that permeated right-wing thought and came to a head in the early twentieth century has been debunked. But in my case, I could trace my connection to the Khoekhoe and to a very specific and key figure in the early colonial history of the Cape—Krotoa.

This doubly-coded genetic inheritance, of European and Khoekhoe, prompted a shift in my understanding of my own heritage[5] but also altered the direction of my research. Reflecting on the symbolic roles that Anne and now Krotoa occupied in the legacy of my presence in the Cape, I was prompted also to consider the ways in which artists, writers and filmmakers have employed these women as symbolic signifiers, and how their names are used in the present

milieu—that is, how my genetic and symbolic ancestry is positioned today. In addition, while exploring the archives in which these women appear, I became aware of the ways in which absence haunts them both.

An additional reason for focusing my attention on Krotoa and Anne in this thesis is the various congruencies in how they were positioned in their respective milieus. Neither Krotoa nor Anne were particularly powerful figures: they did not draft policies, nor were they in a position to enforce laws. Both were ineligible for positions of command due to their sex, but both relied on their diplomatic skills to gather information, negotiate between disparate parties and influence those with authority. Diplomacy was their power, and, because of their actions in this area, their stories and actions have been recorded and are often revisited.

Notwithstanding certain correlations between their respective positions, the archives related to Krotoa and Anne are decidedly dissimilar. As a Khoekhoe woman, Krotoa's life was marked by dispossession and oppression. Whatever we know of her now we know only through the words of those complicit in her dispossession and oppression. Anne, on the other hand, left behind a great deal of writing, narrating not only her own life but also those of the people with whom she came into contact. She is the author of her own history—up to a point.

In this sense, the histories of Krotoa and Anne offer polarised examples of archival formation, a polarisation perpetuated by how the archives in which they appear are generically employed in the present: Krotoa as postcolonial heroine to be venerated and Anne as colonial agent to be relegated to the past in the ideological landscape of a post-apartheid South Africa. In considering these contrasts, questions concerning the nature of absence in the archive, played out across the range of relative fullness and sparseness, can be addressed. Despite the inevitable limits to their agency (due to their sex and, for Krotoa, additionally due to her race), Krotoa and Anne nevertheless secured a degree of visibility within the archives. This was a crucial consideration in my choice to explore these archives, because they present instances of marginality, or *limited visibility*, and thus the play of absence and presence can be productively explored in each. Contemporary discourse about colonial archives often draws attention to lost voices, those sidelined from the written narratives of history. In distinction, these women have a presence in official documents, even though their fate was to be marginalised; they are thus in some senses exceptional. Although their (marginal) presences stand in contrast to the many whose lives are entirely unrecorded, it is this *specificity* of presence, their exceptional status, that shapes my exploration of their stories in the thesis that follows.

## Archival Discourses: Text to Object/Image

As this is a PhD within the discipline of Fine Art, my argument is presented in both written and visual forms. As such, my methodology has been informed by both scholarly and artistic impulses and has afforded me invigorating opportunities for interdisciplinary contact. Central to my scholarly research has been an exploration of the range of writing and artistic practices that critically engage the idea of "archive".

As this thesis recognises the problems of employing archives as foundations for historical narration, it is positioned as part of a scholarly arena of critical investigation that presents a theoretical, conceptual and methodological challenge to a number of fields in terms of the foundation of their modes of knowledge production. Michelle Caswell (2016: 6) terms this arena "archival studies". Tracing the intellectual history of "archival studies", Caswell (ibid.) writes that:

> [A]rchival studies is deliberately chosen here as a larger umbrella term that broadly encompasses the cultural, social, political, technical, and



Left to right: De Kelders in the Western Cape, Berkeley Square in London and the Melville Monument in Edinburgh.

scientific aspects of the study of archives. It is a field defined by its object of study, rather than its methodology, so that it includes a wide range of methods from the scientific, the social scientific, and the humanistic.

In South Africa, the effects of the past within the present constitute, as I have asserted, not only a complex issue, but one that informs present-day debates on public and private life. What are the effects on the contemporary sociopolitical milieu of the colonial archival sources from which the past has been narrated? As archives provide not only the "raw material" for the construction of historical narratives, but already guide possible interpretations of the material, revisiting the past involves unpacking the archive. One of the key texts in which this question is tackled is *Refiguring the Archive* (2002), edited by Carolyn Hamilton, Verne Harris, Michele Pickover, Graeme Reid, Jane Taylor and Razia Saleh. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (begun in 1996), a major but flawed series of hearings in post-apartheid South Africa intended to address human rights violations committed during apartheid, is a recurring subject within the volume. Throughout the volume, the authors grapple in a variety of ways with the notion of "archive", from its composition to its privileges and its technologies. Achille Mbembe, for instance, writes of an inherent "silencing" in writing about the past:

> [T]he historian is not content with bringing death back to life. S/he restores it to life precisely in order better to silence it by transforming it from autonomous words into a prop on which s/he can lean in order to speak and write beyond an originary text. It is by the bias of this act of dispossession—this leaving out of the author—that the historian establishes his/her authority. (Mbembe in Hamilton et al. 2002: 25)

Ann Laura Stoler (in Hamilton et al. 2002: 86), in her essay "Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance", addresses the shifting perspectives on archives and their function in historiography: "If one could say that archives were once treated as a means to an end by students of history, this is no longer the case today." She then traces the "move from archive-as-source to archive-as-subject" (ibid.), claiming that

> [i]n cultural theory, the "archive" has a capital "A", is figurative, and leads elsewhere. It may represent neither a material site nor a set of documents. Rather it may serve as a strong metaphor for any corpus of selective forgettings and collections—and as importantly, for the seductions and longings that such quests, accumulations and passions for the primary, originary and untouched entail. For those inspired more directly by Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge*, the archive is not an institution but "the law of what can be said", not a library of events, but that system that establishes statements as events and things, that "system of their enunciabilities". (Stoler in Hamilton et al. 2002: 87)

It is worth noting that the *Refiguring the Archive* project encompassed Fine Art, as it also staged as part of its "medley of interrelated events" (Hamilton et al. 2002: 8) an exhibition entitled *Holdings: Refiguring the Archive*, curated by Jane Taylor.

The criticality with which the archive has been reconsidered in *Refiguring the Archive* by a variety of disciplines, including Fine Art, illustrates that artists have contributed in significant ways to the discourse on the archive. Artists draw on archives with a marked critical distance from their subject matter, that is, in ways that explore and complicate conceptions of "fact", "record", "knowledge", "history" and, in a self-reflexive gesture, "representation". Of course, work marked by such critical distance is not the purview of artists alone but also informs research by sensitive historians. Nevertheless, artistic negotiations of archives have typically been informed by hermeneutic or interpretative considerations, reflecting as much on the ways in which meaning is made as on the archives on which they draw.

Hal Foster addresses the inclinations of a significant number of contemporary artists to make use of archives or reference archival practices in the creation of their work as a means to comment on the production of historical "truths". In his article "The Archival Impulse", Foster (2004: 3) observes an "archival impulse at work internationally in contemporary art". While he argues that this impulse is not new, citing Alexander Rodchenko and John Heartfield as progenitors, he suggests that there is in the present moment "an archival impulse with a distinctive character of its own … enough so to be considered a tendency in its own right" (ibid.).

The main body of his article focuses on the work of artists Thomas Hirschhorn, Tacita Dean and Sam Durant, but he first attempts an articulation of what might be considered to be the constitutive characteristics of this contemporary archival impulse. He posits that:

> In the first instance archival artists seek to make historical information, often lost or displaced, physically present. To this end, they elaborate on the found image, object and text, and favor the installation format as they do so. (Foster 2004: 4)

In Foster's estimation, the archival impulse is one in which artists draw on often obscure, but extant information, and aim to offer access to the past in physical exhibitions comprising found objects, images and text. Crucially, in Foster's assertion, archival works distinguish themselves from the notion of "database"—another notion popular in contemporary art, in which artists seek to perform particular kinds of interactivity (often social or informational)

Below:
Hirschhorn, T. 2000. *Jumbo Spoons and Big Cake* (Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal N.d.).

or provide "platforms" for these. The deep reason for drawing this distinction, Foster (2004: 5) suggests, is that archival art manifests materially, fragmentally and "call[s] out for human interpretation".

For Foster, another characteristic that distinguishes archival-orientated art, is that

> [t]he work in question … draws on informal archives but produces them as well, and does so in a way that underscores the nature of all archival materials as found yet constructed, factual yet fictive, public yet private. Further, it often arranges these materials according to a quasi-archival logic, a matrix of citation and juxtaposition, and presents them in a quasi-archival architecture, a complex of texts and objects. (Foster 2004: 5)

Foster here addresses how artists, when engaging with archives in their practice, do not replicate the methodologies of either the historian or the archivist. These artists (and I include myself in this group) neither draw on existing archives to produce a narrative of truth or actuality nor earnestly preserve and catalogue those materials with which they work. Instead, artists both draw on and construct archives, interpret material and set it up for interpretation.

Artists tend to be the dramaturges of archives in that they research and reflect on archival material but then *stage* that material, making it the subject of the work rather than its "source". These artists are in the main interested in exposing the practices that give rise to the nature of archives and the way in which meaning is harvested from them by others. Their modality is profoundly engaged with the openness of archives, their incomplete and fragmental nature, in a manner that exceeds the mandate of either the historian or archivist.

Jacques Derrida's perspectives on archives have had a significant influence on contemporary art concerned with the dynamics of memory. The exhibition *Archive Fever: Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art* (2008), curated by Okui Enwezor at the International Center of Photography in New York, explicitly alludes to Derrida's seminal contribution to the arena of critical engagement with archives. The exhibition focused primarily on the photograph as archival document, stating in the press release:

Below left:
Dean, T. 2000. *Aerial View of Teignmouth Electron, Cayman Brac 16th of September 1998* (Tate N.d. a).
Below Right:
Durant, S. 1995. *Abandoned House #1 (Case Study #22)* (Tate N.d. b).

> One of the most compelling issues explored by artists in recent years centers on the nature and meaning of the archive, that is, how we create, store, and circulate pictures and information. This widespread investigation examines the archive as both a conceptual and physical space in which memories are preserved and history decided. (Villareal 2008: 1)

A similar meditation on archive and memory in art can be found in *The Archive* (2006), edited by Charles Merewether. As a collection that includes an essay by Derrida, among others (and also Hal Foster, Giorgio Agamben, Susan Hiller and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak), the volume offers a fragmented but wide-reaching survey of the ways in which Derrida's thoughts on archives have found resonance with pertinent concerns in the visual arts.

As an artist intimately engaged with archives, Christian Boltanski often works in the mode of the dramaturge. Though noted for his oblique references to the Holocaust, he has received criticism for not directly naming the Holocaust in relation to his work (Bergman-Carton 2001:3). However, a pictorial reconstruction of the Holocaust is not central to his work so much as is a visual evocation of loss and an intimation of violence by working archival material and the materials of archival practice into exhibition form. His is not an *oeuvre* of commemoration as conventionally understood, but rather an intervention into how the memory of the Holocaust is publicly circulated.

In his installations, Boltanski invokes the archive through the use of photographic images and tacit and overt references to museum display and archival holdings. In this way, Boltanksi employs the language of the museum and/or archives, turning our gaze on the structures and dynamics operating within them—one can see this clearly in one of his early works, *Vitrine of Reference* (1971). Boltanski's work is primarily focused on the past and often displays mementos of the dead—photographs and objects alike.[6] Similarly, the photographs in his work function as mementos, as Abigail Solomon-Godeau (1998: 8) observes:


> But it was really when Boltanski started intensively working with vernacular portrait photographs that the elegiac aspect of his production, and its aura of aestheticized melancholy became a defining if not trademark feature of his work … the intersection of the spectral and funereal associations of photography itself, its ghostly play of absence and presence, in tandem with

**Above: Boltanski, C. 1974. *Vitrine de Reference.* (Widewalls N.d.).**

Boltanski's ambivalent invocation of historical circumstance.

The presence of absence is often palpable in Boltanski's *oeuvre*, a clear example of which is his *Missing House* project (1990), located on Grösse Hamburger Strasse, Berlin. In this public work, Boltanksi inserted plaques on the walls of two apartment blocks that flanked an empty space, where another block had stood, destroyed by aerial bombardment in 1945. The central space, where the commemorated residents used to live, is completely empty—a tangible absence.

Boltanksi extended the *Missing House* project in his *Grösse Hamburger Strasse* exhibition in Berlin (2013). He constructed the exhibition around photographs collected for his *Missing House* project, including a series of images taken of children who attended a local Jewish school. These photographs are not captioned, however, and do not function as illustrations to accompany the narrative of a life. Instead, gallery visitors were presented simply with the *image* of a person and were required to respond

Right: Boltanski, C. 1990. *The Missing House.* (Awayfromthe chapel 2016).

Above: Boltanski, C. 1990. *The Missing House.* (Knudsen N.d.)

to the image rather than a precomposed biography. In this way, Boltanski's production can be seen as exemplary of an artistic mode of working archives, turning archival material into the subject of the work and drawing attention to the openness of their possible meanings and interpretations.

## Textual-Visual Methodologies

This thesis is located in the arena of artistic reflection on archives. In the production of this thesis, I was accordingly guided by the self-reflexive analysis of how the term "research" is applied to the visual arts (including art historical and practice-based endeavours) as articulated in the volume *What is Research in the Visual Arts? Obsession, Archive, Encounter* (2009), edited by Michael Ann Holly and Marquard Smith. The book followed an eponymous conference held in 2007 at the Clark Art Institute in Massachusetts. In his introduction, Smith (2009: xvii) argues that the work *Shedboatshed (Mobile Architecture No2)* (2005) by Simon Starling embodies artistic practice as research:[7]

> For Starling, *Shedboatshed* … as an artistic and poetic response to globalization, involved a process of translating one object or substance into another. His works are also, says Starling, "the physical manifestation of a thought process" and, says the architect and writer Paul Shepheard, "evidence of action having taken place." This material and conceptual "transforming" takes a long time to figure out. These works speak of that figuring out: they speak of the time of research, the time of making, the time of contemplation—and of the power of chance, accidents, and luck. Because of this, for me, more than any other artwork of late, Starling's *Shedboatshed* as a work of art somehow both *embodied* and *evidenced* its research, its process, its research methodologies, the morphologies of thinking around it, the economy of its labor, the ecology of its unmaking and remaking, the recycling of its materials, the circuitousness of its journey, and the site-specific and site-responsive nature of its display.

Smith's argument pivots on the idea that art-as-research should both evidence and embody research—that is, its form should be recognisably the result of the research. In view of Smith's reasoning, art-as-research calls for a thesis that is not only a report on research but is also a manifestation of that research in physical form in the report itself.

This thesis, through a set of actions, gives form (albeit fleeting) to absence. In the body of text, I argue for the presence of absence, and this is instantiated in the visuals. Through my methods as both scholar and artist, I recognised the need to acknowledge absence *as absence*. The absences in archives elicited in me the desire to make artworks that could embody those absences, to give them form and context. The letters I invented for Anne Barnard (in the *Secret Adventures* exhibition) are explicit examples of this impulse. However, throughout the production of my early work, I became increasingly aware that reconstruction could not assuage my melancholia over archival absences. I realised that instead I needed to make the absences themselves my focus. I thus embarked on a different process, the results of which can be seen in the visual component of this thesis.

On these pages, the reader will encounter illustrative material that pertains to references made within the text—these are supportive images. In addition, images are presented here that were produced for the mid-thesis exhibition *Remnants and Ancestors: Anarchives of Krotoa and Anne* (about which I elaborate in chapter two). However, the other images, square in format and dispersed throughout the text without caption, are not secondary to the textual argument, nor simply in service to it, but are a means whereby I aim to instantiate absence visually. (The reader will only be able to see these images in the digital version of the thesis.) The landscapes and environments in these images are the places where Krotoa and Anne lived, taken during my travels, when I physically placed myself "in their shoes". Landmarks indicating precisely where the photographs were taken are less important than the atmospheric indicators: a shade of afternoon light, a duck floating by on a pond, a sense of chill after a rainy afternoon, the relentless South African midday sun. These indicators, though presented in image form, speak to a physical experience of being-in-a-place at a *particular moment*, a place that changes from day to day as people and animals pass through it, as trees grow and seasons shift. Being present in a space involves all these sensations and observations, a "nowness" populated with things that will be different even in the next moment.

Moreover, photographs are taken from a specific position within a landscape. In order for them to exist, my camera had to occupy space, and thus

they provide a point of perspective, a place from whence someone is looking out. As they were taken recently, my images cannot "depict" the experiences of Krotoa and Anne but can evoke experiences they might have had in their own "presents". These experiences cannot be captured in image, word or document, however: the photographs are ultimately only proxies for my experiences, which are, in turn, only proxies for those of Krotoa and Anne. By explicitly featuring twenty-first-century spaces, it should be clear that my photographs do not pretend to reconstruct the physical realities of Krotoa's and Anne's lives, but in effect draw attention to the reality that this is *not* their time—they are absent from the images. Krotoa and Anne are not reconstructed in these images, but their absence is the implicit subject of the photographs.

A challenge of employing artistic practice as research methodology is the difficulty facing the researcher who is also an artist—both to produce artistic work that responds to the questions raised by critical investigation and to make the argument that these works perform their intended function. As artworks have wide-ranging audiences as well as frameworks of reception, they elicit various and, at times, contradictory responses—be they sympathetic, antagonistic or even indifferent. It is therefore not possible to employ the methodologies of artistic production (particularly those of the visual arts) to produce a particular effect. In this case, however, my work, as it developed, raised questions that the discursive component must heed and profoundly guided the argument posited in these pages. Here, I position the creative methodology as informed by but also informing the discursive argument. The creative work included in this thesis is intended to demonstrate a way of staging the past other than through historical narration.

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I made a number of strategic choices in the writing of this thesis that bear clarification. I refer to Anne not with the customary epithet of "Lady Anne Barnard", but rather as "Anne" or, when necessary, "Anne Barnard". Anne's noble birth is of course significant to her life story, but in contemporary times the title "Lady" is often employed with some degree of romanticism or diffidence, which I wish to avoid. In addition, while Anne is routinely known by her extended title, Krotoa is almost always referred to exclusively by her first name or as Krotoa-Eva—despite her marriage, by virtue of which she should arguably be referred to as either Krotoa, or Eva (van) Meerhoff. I do not wish to perpetuate a colonial hierarchy here, but would show a degree of congruency as regards their appearances in the archives. In addition, I do not want to maintain the privileging of European naming by using a name for Krotoa that she would not have used for herself (Krotoa-Eva). I similarly do not want to use "Eva" (although she did call herself by this name in certain contexts)—not only because it is a European renaming, but also because the name carries Biblical overtones that confer on Krotoa a primitivism of sorts, as a kind of primal, originary maternal figure.

Stephen Gray (1978: 46) provides the context for nomenclature and its associated symbolism in his article "The Hottentot Eve: A Myth in South African Literature", when he writes that "[n]evertheless, Eva is indelibly part of that general myth of the Hottentot Eve, about which cling all the attractions and repulsions of attitudes to the inhabitants of the continent itself." It is illuminating that Gray (ibid.) further notes "[t]hat Eva herself has not become the source of a legend is a comment on how limiting the dominant views of South African history tend to be". Clearly, things have changed in South Africa, as reflected in local historiography; there is at present perhaps no more legendary figure from the Dutch colonial past than Krotoa. Furthermore, in view of the declared intention of this thesis to regard the past not in terms removed from the present, but

specifically to bring the presentness of the past into view, the use of first names appeals to me more.

One of the thorniest issues of terminology that I have faced has been how to refer to the group of people with whom Krotoa identified, those whom I refer to in this thesis as Khoekhoe.[8] Employing their individual names, I have tried to be as specific as possible to distinguish the various groups of people who lived within the Cape, for example by indicating that Krotoa was considered to be a member of the Goringhaicona, described as a group of outcasts or drifters from other groups (Schoeman 2009: 12). However, again I am faced with the pronouncements of an unsympathetic archive, where the names of people were transcribed phonetically, without consistency or real understanding. As Andrew Smith (1998: 37) explains in his short text "Khoesaan Orthography", "for most African languages the correct orthography is a colonial construct, since very few were actually written down prior to colonial intervention". He continues:

Published dictionaries first appeared in the mid-nineteenth century. In *A.B.Z: Kannis* (printed in Cape Town in 1845) kho-in is translated as "men" or "persons"; in *Vocabularder Namaqua-Sprache* (published in Barmenin 1854) koib is "a man"; and in Tindall's *A Grammar and Vocabulary of the Namaqua-Hottentot Language* (printed in Cape Town in 1857) khoip means "a man" and khoi-khoip, "a Hottentot". Kördnlein (1889: 209) continued this spelling with khoi-khoin (repeated in Rust 1969: 238), meaning "people". Hahn (1881) dropped the final -n and his spelling Khoikhoi has tended to be used by academics, especially since Elphick's (1977, 1985) seminal work. It is interesting to note that Meinhof (1930:86) used two spellings: Khoe-khoe-n-a meaning "Hottentoten", and Khoi-khoi-n, "the Nama". Another version is that found in the Van Riebeeck journal entry for 31 October 1657 (Thom 1954:170): Quena. This is basically the same word using the accusative plural form. (Ibid.)

Smith explains that his own preference is for “Khoekhoen”, as that is the appellation used by modern-day Nama speakers, but acknowledges that general disagreement exists regarding this question. I am not entirely swayed by this argument, however, especially when speaking about Krotoa’s people, as they themselves were not Nama, and any contemporary nomenclature is entangled with the colonial archive.

The obdurate hurdle facing any consensus on this matter, however, is that, as Smith explains, the name by which the people living in the southern and western regions of South Africa called themselves is simply that of “people”, rather than an ethnic group or tribe (there were other differentiated names for these). Once a proper noun is employed, or, in this case, when a word becomes co-opted as a proper noun, it inevitably reduces the *a priori* humanity with which the people regarded themselves—*as people*. Throughout this thesis, and for the purposes of consistency, I have used the word Khoekhoe in order to conform to general contemporary academic usage. I declare, however, that I use this term advisedly and with some reservation, in cognisance of the problem of using a word that really means “people” to refer to a specific grouping.

Previous page: A section of the Castle of Good Hope. Right: Hikers on the top of Table Mountain

# Introduction Endnotes

1. Iversen is here exploring the Surrealist's usage of found objects and their relationship to the unconscious.
2. This exhibition preceded the thesis. I refer to it here because it provides a background to developments in the creative work produced for this thesis.
3. Anne and Andrew Barnard departed for a tour of the Western Cape interior in May 1798. One of the three large journals produced by Anne deals with this journey in particular, namely the "Journal of a months [sic] tour into the interior of Africa", reproduced in *The Cape Journals of Lady Anne Barnard*, edited by AM Lewin Robinson with Margaret Lenta and Dorothy Driver (1993: 291–425).
4. An example of such an invented letter reads as follows: *The sea is calm today, and still. The shipless horizon brings no word. Here on the shore I stand, by myself and more alone still. The quiet winds touch me not & the spray washes only my feet. Once I was… Once I planned on writing you a long letter. A letter that was a bit silly and gay, that was happy and that would make you happy. I even began it many times over a long journey, and, for a while, I saw your face and not the world besides the wagon. But the words touched you not and touched me too much. And, besides, they were all a bit ungainly. So I brought them all here. Here on the beach is where we drop words and memories from our hands for the beach walkers to find. No better day for it than this one; a flood of words cannot unsettle the still waters here. I will lie down by the sea today, lie down by its side quietly and whisper a soft word in its ear.*
5. Such heritage by no means simply constitutes a right to "belonging" in South Africa. As I have heard so-called "coloured" commentators state, Krotoa's child Pieternella was co-opted into European society and as such became part of the oppressive class in South Africa.
6. See, for instance, his *Inventory of Objects Belonging to a Young Man of Oxford* (1973). For this work, Boltanski arranged by letter that the belongings of an ordinary person, recently deceased, be documented and displayed in the Museum of Modern Art, Oxford.
7. Simon Starling dismantled a found shed on the banks of the Rhine River and transformed it into a boat, which he used to transport the remainder of the shed to Basel. In Basel, he reconstructed the shed according to its original form for the exhibition *Cuttings*. After the exhibition, he once more reconfigured the shed as a boat, sailed it back to its original site and reconstructed and reinstalled it there as the shed.
8. I am guided in this matter by linguist Matthias Brezinger, who, in private correspondence with Professor Pippa Skotnes, recommended the term.

**Left: Zaayman, C. 2012. *Remnants and Ancestors XI*.**

CHAPTER ONE

# Krotoa

*Furthermore, it appeared that the chief was not altogether satisfied with the interpreter Eva, since she caused us so much inconvenience by making us undertake these fruitless trips backwards and forwards. He had sent the message that he had no use for a wagon to bring him to the fort, as he could not bear the jolting, nor could he ride upon an ox in the manner of his people, so we should wait until his health improved, and that of his child as well, it would seem. When he was better he would come by easy stages. Presumably Eva had mentioned the wagon chiefly for her own benefit so that she would not have to travel on foot, and in other matters too she had added to the messages which Oedasoa had asked her to convey by interpretation.*

*(Thom 1952: 85)*

*riding on a shining ox*
*high above the shoulders of men*
*the long grass touching my feet*
*I am the chief's sister*
*everyone knows my mission*
*I am the young one, the clever one*
*sent to meet the strangers*
*I am the pointed spear*
*flung into the heart of the enemy*
*I will return to these grasses*
*trailing their secrets like the entrails*
*of the captured impala*
*I have been blessed by Heitsi-Eibib*
*I have been covered in the perfumed fat of the chief's pot*
*sitting in the sun I ride*
*into the heart of the enemy*

*(Press 1990: 51)*

On the 24th of September 2015, the *Cape Times* reported an incident that had occurred in the centre of Cape Town. According to the article, the city arrested a group of nine "Khoisan" activists for destroying a bench erected to honour Krotoa in 2012: "Rock Girl [the company who had designed and manufactured the bench] partnered the City to erect the Safe Space bench three years ago in honour of legendary Khoisan descendant Krotoa van Meerhoff, after whom the square where the bench was is named" (Peterson and Wolf, 2015). A day earlier, an article in the *Cape Argus* sported the headline "Khoi Go on Rampage: Eight Arrested for Damaging Bench 'Honouring' Princess Krotoa". Expanding


Previous page: Zaayman, C. 2012. *Remnants and Ancestors V.* Right: The Krotoa bench in Cape Town (Visi 2013). Opposite: Cover image of Trudie Bloem's *Krotoa, Eva van de Kaap* (1999), the same image that was used in illustration of the *Cape Times* article.

on the incident, an article that followed reported that "the bench was erected in honour of the Khoisan Princess Krotoa". It stated that "[a] member of the group, Philida Moses, said all she wanted was for her people to be recognised and Krotoa acknowledged as their 'queen and icon'" (Olifant, 2015). Intriguingly, the quotation marks in the headline of the *Argus* article are applied to the word "honouring" but not to "princess", nor is the statement that Krotoa was a queen or princess in any way queried or qualified. Krotoa may be an icon in the present, but the terms "queen" and "princess" are questionable.[1] Moreover, the name "Krotoa van Meerhoff" mixes her European and Khoekhoe names. She was known to the Khoekhoe as "Krotoa" (the accepted transliteration of her Khoekhoe name !Goa/gõas) and as "Eva" or "Eva (van) Meerhoff" (her legal name after she married Pieter van Meerhoff) by the Dutch. This article and the event on which it reports are exemplars of how the little factual information that exists about Krotoa is confuscated when her story is narrated. They further reveal the wellspring of emotion and desire that motivates how she is represented in the present day.

Equally significant, however, is the illustration that accompanied the *Cape Times* article. The image is presented simply as though it were an actual portrait of Krotoa, and it would appear to suit one contemporary ideation of her perfectly. With bare shoulders, the sitter's young face stares at us with a mixture of sadness and vulnerability. What we see is not a woman in control of her own fate but an infantilised image of a "native" young woman, perhaps a fitting poster-child for the plight of oppressed colonial subjects. The earliest usage of the image I could trace is to PW Laidler's

*Growth and Government in Cape Town* (1939: 493), where it appears as a poor reproduction in black and white, unattributed and simply captioned "Eva". Despite the provenance of this picture not being disclosed in Laidler's text, it has been used, similarly unqualified, in countless subsequent articles and websites as *the* image of Krotoa.[2] It most likely gained a foothold as a portrait through its appearance on the cover of Trudie Bloem's novella, *Krotoa-Eva: The woman from Robben Island* (1999), but the precise lineage of the image is not germane here. The use of the portrait nevertheless signals a persistent and compelling unconscious desire for there to *be* an image of Krotoa, when, in fact, none exists. In our media-saturated environment, it is difficult to accept that an image or portrait of someone is not available; when a particular image is adopted as such a portrait, there is little incentive to question its usage. This image and the articles that appeared in the Cape Town newspapers in September 2015 are but a few examples of the pressures exerted on the archives to provide a coherent sense of Krotoa's person. This pressure shapes Krotoa's image into the present day, an image that is typified by the now-ubiquitous grainy portrait, which is replete with invention and has lost connection with its origin.

## Finding a Partial Presence, Along the Grain

Within the arena of the critical investigation of archives, much work has been done to address the understanding that a multitude of omissions necessarily attend any archive. Most of this work has focused on what has been left out of the archives, lost during the course of time or ignored as an effect of power structures extant at the time at which an archive was established. The familiar problem of absence manifests in a revealing way when one considers Krotoa. Though a marginal figure in the archives, Krotoa is nonetheless present as a colonial subject—a Khoekhoe woman—who possesses a voice of some kind.

In order to establish the play of presence and absence related to Krotoa's appearance in the archives, one must establish the grain of these archives, and their context and purpose thus require some elucidation. My approach to the overview of the archive in which Krotoa appears is informed by Anne Laura Stoler's (2009: 3) method of reading along the grain; that is, to come to grips with the intent behind establishing an archive and how the documents within an archive can be understood to further those intentions.

In 1602, six private East India companies merged to form the Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie. Seventeen representatives from these companies (the Here XVII, or "Gentlemen XVII") managed the central governing of the company, which focused on the spice trade with the East Indies, especially Batavia (present-day Jakarta), but also Persia (present-day Iran), India, Ceylon (present-day Sri Lanka) and Siam (present-day Thailand) (Schoeman 2006: 17). It was the VOC that, by a somewhat circuitous route, established a Dutch settlement at the Cape.

As Martin Hall (1993: 178) suggests, "European colonization of southern Africa was to some extent accidental and, to a large degree, incidental." He notes that in the period succeeding the rounding of the African continent by Portuguese explorers at the end of the fifteenth century to the early seventeenth century, Europeans showed little interest in the Cape. According to Hall (1993: 179), during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries Table Bay served as an anchorage for European ships. In 1615, a small, short-lived penal colony was established on Robben Island. The *Haarlem*, a Dutch East India Company ship, foundered in Table Bay in 1647. Its crew spent nearly a year at the Cape, where they grew vegetables and traded with the Khoekhoe for cattle. On the basis of their positive reports of this experience, and because the death toll of Company employees on the ships travelling to the East was extremely high, the

Here XVII ordered the establishment of a refreshment station at the Cape. Jan van Riebeeck volunteered to head this enterprise, and this limited VOC presence was the foundation of what is now Cape Town (ibid.).

It should thus be clear that a colonial settlement was not the explicit intention of Van Riebeeck's company at the outset, but that a refreshment station was to support the mercantile activities of the VOC between the Netherlands and their various posts. Hall (ibid.) notes that while the Cape settlement was initially not especially large or productive, in 1657 the Company allowed some of its employees to farm on the banks of the Liesbeeck River. Leonard Guelke (1976: 29) puts the numbers at 150 *vrijburgers* in 1679—settlers from the Netherlands who were not in the service of the VOC and were allowed to farm. This small settlement developed into a colony slowly, and the early years of the Dutch presence at the Cape were thus shaped more by commercial interests than colonial expansion. Moreover, the colonial occupation was initially not that of the nation of the Netherlands but of a mercantile company.

As was ordered by the Here XVII, the commanders of the settlement at the Cape—Van Riebeeck and his successors, including Zacharias Wagenaer—kept meticulous records of the everyday activities, trades and events of the settlement. Such detailed records can be seen as part of a system whereby the Company sought to maintain control over their economic interests and investments in a distant territory. The archival material generated by the company employees, written in Dutch, is today kept in the Rijksarchief in The Hague and in the Western Cape Archives and Records in Cape Town. From 1952 to 1958, HB Thom published an edition of the transcribed and translated texts of these journals. The California Digital Library hosts a number of volumes online under the collection *Précis of the Archives of the Cape of Good Hope* (1896–1901, 1901 & 1902). As Thom (1952: xxxv) indicates in his introduction to the Van Riebeeck journals, it was not essential that the commander himself wrote all the text, and the physical writing, transcription from dictation and copying were likely performed by other people in the colony. Nevertheless, while Thom (1952: xxxviii) reminds us not to think of the journals as a personal text penned by an individual, he also states that the narrative is largely presented from Van Riebeeck's perspective and was likely to have been controlled by him.

Though generated in the course of business, these records now form the major source of historical information on what would become the Dutch colony at the Cape of Good Hope. Simon Pooley (2009: 5) enumerates Van Riebeeck's journals as follows:

> The *Daghregister* (daily journal) kept by the VOC administration at the Cape is a significant source for environmental historians of this early period of European settlement, in particular the records of the first decade of settlement. The Thom edition published in three volumes as *Journal of Jan van Riebeeck* … amounts to 1 283 pages of entries (excluding all editorial matter), translated from 2 400 pages of manuscript in the Cape Archives (checked against other surviving manuscripts).

If the grain of these documents may be understood as reports on the aspects that impacted the commercial interests of the Company, it follows that they were not intended to be impartial documentation of the intricacies of the social and political landscape of the early Cape Colony. Nevertheless, having been shaped by trade, one can observe the apparent expression of the priorities and ideals of the Dutch settlers.

In her article "A Genre of their Own: Kiliaen van Rensselaer as Guide to the Reading and Writing Practices of Early Modern Businessmen" (2008), Donna Merwick offers a reading of the archival documents authored by Dutch merchant

Kiliaen van Rensselaer (1586–1643). Merwick argues that the keeping of records during this period reflects not only the details of transactions and events but is also expressive of the ways in which those involved with the mercantile activities (especially as concerns the Dutch East India Company and the Dutch West India Company) were engaged in the fashioning of their identities as traders, as valuable employees of the company:

> Why is it that the men and women of seventeenth-century New Netherland left an archive where understandings of reality and self-realization were largely worked out in account books, business correspondence, official reports, notarized papers, and records of local judicial proceedings that were actually the operations of courts merchant? …
>
> An answer is offered by considering the degree to which the reading, writing, and archiving practices of seventeenth-century merchants—Dutch entrepreneurs but also early modern businessmen and business-women generally—contributed to a distinctive form of self-fashioning, one outcome of which was an equally distinctive kind of gratification. …
>
> Clearly, the articulation on paper of debt, denial of credit, betrayal of a partner, or a deal gone wrong was not pleasurable. But even these instances of misfortune did not necessarily cancel out gratification because, for a merchant, such satisfaction was related to a considered dedication over time to a career commitment that held the merchant within systems of social affiliation of which genre was, importantly, the expressive dimension. (Merwick 2008: 671–2)

Taking Merwick's point, the VOC records can be seen as driven by VOC representatives' desire to be noted by their employers as successful, hard-working and worthy of promotion, possibly comparable to how people today might present themselves on their curriculum vitae or on professional networking sites such as LinkedIn. Van Riebeeck and his successors were focused on presenting themselves in the best possible light, explaining away failures by appealing to circumstances beyond their control and emphasising any gains made on behalf of the Company.

This stated purpose of the VOC records means that Khoekhoe people appear in the archives only if and when their paths intersected with the Company's concerns. Such appearances are rare and noteworthy, not least because a Khoekhoe person would have to have been remarkable (or useful or dangerous) to warrant mention in the journals. Krotoa was one such person.

Historians speculate that Krotoa was born around 1642.[3] She was sister to the wife of the powerful chief of the Cochoquas, Oedasoa, but for reasons unknown she joined her uncle (Autshumao) as part of a band of beachcombers who lived in the Table Bay area and its northern surrounds along the West Coast. Autshumao had already had a host of dealings with Europeans before the arrival of Van Riebeeck's ships, and he could converse in Dutch, Portuguese and English. While some of his history is known, almost nothing of Krotoa's life before the arrival of Van Riebeeck at the Cape has been documented, and, in order to trace precisely the information available on Krotoa for present-day historians and writers alike, it is thus necessary to follow her appearances in the journals of the commanders.

By means of a study of these journals, historian Richard Elphick presents a summary of the early colonial period at the Cape in *Kraal and Castle* (1977). His text has formed the cornerstone of most extant narrative reconstructions of Krotoa's life. Since the ambit of his book is the entirety of the early settlement, Krotoa only makes her first appearance in chapter five, where she is introduced as "Harry's" (Autshumao's) niece (Elphick 1977: 104).

At the time of the arrival of Van Riebeeck and his crew in 1652, the Goringhaiconas (the name Krotoa's people called themselves) did not possess any materials or livestock in which he would have been interested. As a result, the endeavours of the Goringhaiconas in relation to the arrival of the Dutch were centred on establishing themselves as indispensable mediators in trade and negotiation, especially with the Khoekhoe inhabitants of the Cape.

At around age nine or ten, Krotoa (Elphick refers to her as "Eva") served in Van Riebeeck's household at the fort and stayed with the family[4]—at first on a temporary basis, but later permanently—and received religious instruction from Jan's wife, Maria de Quellerie (Elphick 1977:107).[5] It is further stated in the journals that at around age fifteen, Krotoa, though claiming to have a "Dutch heart" (ibid.) left the fort and travelled to the interior for reasons not known to the Dutch. Elphick speculates that as she was at the age of puberty, she had left to "undergo the ceremonial prescribed for every girl of her age" (ibid.). He suggests that Krotoa first tried to visit her mother's family (the Goringhaiqua), but, after being rejected, attacked and robbed by members of this group, she sought refuge with her "sister", the wife of Oedasoa (ibid.).[6]

Krotoa was one of three pre-eminent interpreters between the Europeans and the Khoekhoe, together with Autshumao and Doman (a preeminent Goringhaiqua man in the early settlement). In this period, Krotoa's position as an in-between figure becomes evident, as she was not only a person who interpreted but, more precisely, was someone who no longer belonged completely to either group, Khoekhoe or European. It is important to note, however, that Krotoa has a degree of visibility in the archives due to her in-between status as translator and negotiator for the Dutch in their dealings with the Khoekhoe. Numerous present-day reconstructions focus on her in-between status, with telling titles such as *Krotoa-Eva* (1999) by Trudie Bloem and *Krotoa, called "Eva"* (1990) by Vertrees Malherbe. The appellation of in-betweenness is often employed as a means to situate her as dispossessed by the Dutch, robbed of her "native" identity yet denied access to and acceptance within the Dutch social milieu. With reference to Krotoa's indeterminate sense of belonging, Elphick (1977: 109) recounts the tension that existed between Krotoa and Doman of the "Saldanhars" (the Goringhaiqua), who resisted trade with the Dutch and were profoundly hostile to their plans to settle and expand.

Elphick (1977: 201) notes that after Krotoa left the Van Riebeeck household, "she spent more and more time in the company of sailors from the ships, and by November 1663 she had borne two illegitimate children of European patrimony". The final notes on Krotoa in his text concern her marriage to Pieter van Meerhoff, a Dutch surgeon and friend of the commander, in 1664. Shortly after the wedding, she became the first Khoekhoe person to be baptised. From 1665 to 1668, Krotoa and Pieter lived on Robben Island, where he was employed as superintendent. With Pieter she is said to have had three children. During a slaving mission to Madagascar in 1668, Van Meerhoff was killed; Eva was now alone in a hostile environment, lacking both the protection of marriage to a European and the official status of interpreter.

It is not at all clear whether Van Meerhoff fathered the children to whom Elphick referred. Interestingly, this fact is fudged in many contemporary fictionalised accounts of Krotoa's life, where it is perpetually implied that Pieter fathered all Krotoa's children, as though to expunge a "blemish" of what may appear to be unsavoury behaviour for a figure with such symbolic significance. Elphick attributes the decline of Krotoa's stature in the colony to the departure of Van Riebeeck and his family and to the fact that she was no longer indispensable as an interpreter. The new commander, Zacharias Wagenaer, was unfavourably disposed towards her, and she ceased to be considered an honourable

member of the colony. Due to her increasing dependency on alcohol and her erratic behaviour (possibly a result of this dependency), she was banished to Robben Island on numerous occasions after Van Meerhoff's death. Krotoa had an undisclosed number of children during this time, but she eventually lost custodianship of them all. She died in July 1674 (Elphick 1977: 201–3).

Documentation of Krotoa's life is in the main to be found in the VOC commanders' journals from the mid-seventeenth century and most extensively in those of the first commander, Jan van Riebeeck. Krotoa is also briefly mentioned in the writing of Willem ten Rhijne, a VOC doctor and botanist, in his work *An Account of the Cape of Good Hope, and the Hottentotes, the Natives of that Country* (1742).[7] These are the only sources contemporaneous with her life, so Krotoa's presence in the archives is predicated from the outset on her role as translator and negotiator. Accounts of how she performed these functions understandably constitute the bulk of her appearance in the archive, but this focus leaves a large amount of information unrecorded, such as the particulars of her life outside of the trading interests of the journals. The lack of information on various aspects of her broader life has frustrated historians and writers who wish to gain a fuller understanding of Krotoa.

## A Fragmented Life Told and Retold

There has been a marked increase in interest in the figure of Krotoa in the past twenty years in both scholarly and popular publications. Although Krotoa's biography is today rehearsed publicly (notably in the *Krotoa* feature film of 2017), her appearance in the archives is sparse. Despite the scarcity of information about her, scholars have laboured in various ways to collect the facts of her life to reconstruct it. Likewise, artists and writers have seized on the little information that is known to offer their own imaginative, fleshed-out versions of her biography.

Seeing that my concern in this thesis is, in part, to understand the effects of the pressure on archives, I must trace the various ways in which Krotoa's story has been circulated. However, in view of the sparseness of Krotoa's appearance in the archives, I am moved not only to trace how her life has been narrated but also to consider how authors have dealt with her archival absences.

The first appearance of Krotoa's narrative outside of the VOC journals is to be found in Laidler's (1939: 38–49) account of the early Dutch colony, in his entry under "Women". However, the journals of Van Riebeeck, translated and annotated for publication from 1954 to 1958 by HB Thom, are the most prominent sources employed by scholars. The date is instructive: Thom, a noted historian during his life, was embedded within apartheid ideology, and his edition of the Van Riebeeck journals confirms the expected bias: Thom's focus is explicitly on Van Riebeeck, and his commentary on Krotoa is not only sparse but profoundly prejudiced.

The pejorative tone of Thom's text is echoed in a *Huisgenoot* article of 1942 entitled "Uit die Biografie van 'n Hottentotin; 'n Eksperiment in Beskawing"[8] by DB Bosman, which draws its facts from the VOC journals on the Cape Colony. In this article, the author suggests that Krotoa, as a Khoekhoe, considered her people's way of life the best, and, while the Dutch may have viewed her "relapse" into barbarism retrograde, it was for the Khoekhoe the most natural thing in the world (Bosman 1942: 7). Bosman concludes that Krotoa's "downfall" is evidence that the "civilising" endeavour is ultimately doomed (ibid.). While present-day texts on Krotoa hardly ever cite the *Huisgenoot* article, they comment on the particularly dismissive attitude towards Krotoa and the Khoekhoe during apartheid, which they explicitly reject.

Krotoa's characterisation in Marie Kathleen Jeffreys's series of articles for *Drum* magazine (1959–1960) is notably distinct from the early pejorative works. As Meg Samuelson and Natasha Distiller (2005: 28) argue, Jeffreys (who worked as an archivist in the Cape Town archives repository) wrote about "Krotoa-Eva" in a much more sympathetic light, as an installment in a longer series of articles in which she mounted a critique against apartheid through a consideration of colonial history. Samuelson and Distiller draw correlations between Jeffrey's sympathetic portrayal of Krotoa as a kind of mother-of-the-nation and post-apartheid texts that do the same. However, until Samuelson's rediscovery of Jeffreys's work in the early 2000s, her writing has seldom been cited.

Historian Richard Elphick's *Kraal and Castle: Khoikhoi and the Founding of White South Africa* (1977) is also more sympathetic to Krotoa than either the Bosman or Thom texts. As I intimated in previous references to this work, Elphick's book has functioned as a key reference for everyone who has written about Krotoa in the 1990s, in fiction and non-fiction genres alike. In his text, Elphick surveys the history of contact between the Khoekhoe and the European (especially Dutch)

colonists at the Cape during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries (focusing on the period from 1652 to 1713), when most of the Khoekhoe resident in the south-western Cape were eradicated by a small-pox epidemic. He provides an exhaustive overview of what was recorded of the Khoekhoe during the early colonial period, collated from an extensive collection of material that included the Dutch East India Company archives. Outlined in this survey are the political dynamics between different groups of the Khoekhoe, such as (among many others in the complex sociopolitical landscape of Khoekhoe society at the time) the Cochoqua, the Namaqua, the Goringhaiqua and the Goringhaicona. The latter group was referred to by the Dutch as "Strandlopers" or "Watermen" and included Krotoa in their fold. Elphick also explores the debate about the origins of the Khoekhoe and the relationship and differences between the Khoekhoe and the San (Elphick 1977: 3-42).[9]

Perhaps one of the reasons Elphick's book has remained a central text in contemporary studies of seventeenth-century history of the Cape, even from a post-apartheid perspective, is that, despite being published in 1977, it was not written from within the apartheid nationalist

ideology.[10] *Kraal and Castle* is a revised version of Elphick's doctoral dissertation, which was submitted to Yale University in 1972 (Elphick 1977: xii), and thus represents a viewpoint that is perhaps less steeped in the racial discrimination that marked this period in South African society.[11]

While the narrative keystones established in Elphick's text have remained largely intact in subsequent tellings of Krotoa's story, they cannot be considered as fully descriptive of the salient events and concerns in her life. For example, in Elphick's text we have no insight into the love affair between Krotoa and Pieter—remarkable though it must have been. In addition, we know almost nothing about Krotoa's relationship with her mother and "sister" or how she experienced her alienation from the people with whom she grew up. What were Krotoa's thoughts about the mountain, the backdrop against which her life was played out, the sandy dunes of the West Coast, where ships on the horizon heralded enormous change in her life—about her children, whom were taken from her shortly before her death? Krotoa's humanity is all but obscured in an archive in which only her effect on the concerns of the colonial powers is preserved.

Previous page:
A beach on the west coast of the Western Cape province.

Vertrees Malherbe, a South African historian specialising in colonial history, drew heavily on *Kraal and Castle*, as well as on HCV Leibbrandt's *Precis of the Archives of the Cape of Good Hope* (1896–1901, 1901 & 1902) and Jan van Riebeeck's journals,[12] for her short volume entitled *Krotoa, Called "Eva": A Woman Between* (1990). This publication, together with Karen Press' children's book, *Bird Heart Stoning the Sea: Krotoa's Story* (1990),[13] are the first publications that focus exclusively on Krotoa. Malherbe's work, however, is the first to attempt a coherent biography. The date is instructive, as it corresponds with the transitional phase of South Africa into its democracy. After these publications there appears to be an upsurge in interest in Krotoa in both historical and academic fields, and in creative writing and the visual arts in particular. This suggests that Krotoa's story resonated with post-apartheid ideas and narratives—particularly the desire to reclaim identities apart from and extant prior to colonial occupation.

Even as Krotoa became increasingly prominent in South African scholarship and literature, however, the sparseness of her presence in the VOC archives present obstacles to authors who would reconstruct her life story. In her author's note, for example, Malherbe (1990: ii) describes her project thus:

> This account is an historian's attempt to present the details and assess the meaning of an individual's life. But the reader will certainly detect many gaps. There is clearly the need—for an anthropologist perhaps—to place Krotoa in context as a woman in Khoikhoi culture first, and as a transplant in the culture of the European colonists.

*Krotoa, Called "Eva"* was the first to foreground Krotoa's gender as an important element in her story and calls for an analysis of her life story from this perspective. In this way, Malherbe argues that Krotoa's identity as a woman and as a Khoekhoe is fundamental to any study of her life.

Malherbe (1990: ii) further highlights the challenge of Krotoa's archival absences in her introduction to *Krotoa, Called "Eva"*:

> Questions have occurred to me which I have felt unable to address. For example, what did her marriage mean in terms of her status in the eyes of the Khoikhoi and of the Dutch? What would have been the impact on Krotoa herself? Can we tease out an explanation, or assume proof, from her denunciation as a drunkard and a prostitute during the last, widowed years of her young life? Researchers in the field of women's studies will produce yet other questions than these.

The body of Malherbe's text never attempts to answer the questions posed in the introduction, nor does she carry over the emotive tone conveyed in writing

such as “the last, widowed years of her young life” in the biography. The author instead limits herself to a fact-based and almost stuttering account of what can be gained from the limited material available.

There is an undertone of suspicion even, with which she approaches these sources, as is apparent in this passage: “In October 1657 we are told that ‘Eva’, who was ‘aged 15 or 16’ and ‘beginning to speak Dutch well’, questioned some visiting ‘Saldanhars’ on Van Riebeeck’s behalf” (Malherbe 1990: 14). Such a multitude of quotation marks signals the self-conscious distance Malherbe sets up between herself and Van Riebeeck’s words. It is clear that Malherbe is painfully apprehensive about using the colonial archive to retell a story intended to lay bare some of the problematic aspects of the colonial record itself.

Despite the profound unease she displays at her inescapable dependence on colonial documents and their very language, Malherbe does not explicitly fill the “many gaps” she identifies with imaginative musings or creative interpretation that exceed the limits of her sources. This is perhaps due to what she thinks is “permissible” for an historian, which is how she labels herself from the outset. Nevertheless, she offers suggestive phrases, such as “[w]e can only guess at Krotoa’s feelings when her Dutch family of ten years’ standing left the Cape” (Malherbe 1990: 44), and “[w]e can only guess at Krotoa’s feelings from an incident which occurred on her way back to the Cochoqua camp” (Malherbe 1990: 33). Rather than offering the reader an interpretation from her own perspective, she invites us to enter a moment of private imagination and projection, which serves to draw us obliquely into the realm of emotion.

Karel Schoeman’s *Kinders van die Kompanjie* (2006) provides an in-depth overview of the first half-century of the Dutch colonial occupation of the Cape. This lengthy book, produced as a popular rather than scholarly or historical text (Schoeman 2006: 6) and lacking footnotes or in-text referencing, comprises the biographies of thirty-five individuals who acted in some capacity at the Cape. Schoeman (ibid.) states that he specifically wanted to present to his readers, in biographical format, stories that would have been less familiar to them than the well-trodden tales of Van Riebeeck and company. He states that he wanted to provide fresh interest and insight into the period. The book contains one chapter dedicated to Krotoa, which, together with six others focusing specifically on Khoekhoe figures who were her contemporaries,[14] was translated from the Afrikaans (with minor corrections and additions) and republished as *Seven Khoi Lives: Cape Biographies of the Seventeenth Century* (2009).

Despite being an experienced archival researcher, Schoeman (2006: 6) writes that he relied primarily on published texts for these biographies. He cites as his main sources the journals of Cape commanders Jan van Riebeeck and Zacharias Wagenaer, as found in Leibbrandt’s *Precis of the Archives of the Cape of Good Hope*, and Malherbe’s *Krotoa, Called “Eva”*. At the centre of Schoeman’s publication is his declared desire to bring into public consciousness an understanding and appreciation of the history of South Africa, although he does not himself offer any critiques or critical perspectives.

Schoeman’s texts, though perhaps less hesitant in tone than Malherbe’s, also make apparent the limits of what can be known about Krotoa through the colonial archive. Noting how Krotoa has been employed in transitional and post-apartheid South Africa, he writes that:

> In the course of the large-scale revolutions and re-evaluations that began to take place in South Africa in all fields towards the end of the twentieth century, the historical figure “Eva/Krotoa” was transformed from a caricature “Hottentot“ into an icon and touchstone of political “correctness“. Between these two extremes, however, she has rarely received much attention as an individual human being and it is difficult to

> repair this omission and recover or reconstruct an identity from the stray contemporary references in Van Riebeeck's journal and similar sources. (Schoeman 2009: 15)

It is significant that someone as intimately familiar with the South African colonial archives as Schoeman can be this candid about the challenges of trying to access any notion of Krotoa as a *human being* (as well as her co-option into post-apartheid narratives) through the unsympathetic and biased way she has been represented by her colonial contemporaries. Schoeman admits that Krotoa's life cannot be sufficiently understood with reference to the colonial archive, but also that any other text on "her people" can only offer generalised information that will not help us to locate her within that social context. Yet Schoeman does not take up the challenge of attempting to address the omissions he has identified, instead remaining staunchly tied to a discernible "truth", as far as such a truth can be established through historical documents. In his foreword to *Kinders van die Kompanjie*, for example, he writes:

> *Tewens is dit opvallend, in elk geval wat die sewentiende eeu betref, hoe interessant die meeste van die lewens wat so toevallig herontdek is by nadere beskouing blyk te wees, en hoe kleurryk en meer as lewensgroot die betrokke persone. Elkeen van hierdie individue, sou mens wou sê, sou die onderwerp vir 'n roman kan bied, was dit nie dat die werklikheid op sigself interessant genoeg is om geen verromantisering benodig nie … Die lewensverhale van hierdie mense … berus op historiese navorsing en is deurgaans "waarheid", geen fiksie or versinsel nie.* (Schoeman 2006: 5-6)[15]

While Schoeman's biography of Krotoa thus explicates the limits and the gaps of the archive, he refrains from venturing into imaginative conjecture, claiming simply that the "truth" is interesting enough in itself.

Distinct from the factually based syntheses of Krotoa's story discussed up to this point are those texts that aim to tell Krotoa's story imaginatively. In these texts, authors routinely draw on the little information that is available to imagine the rest of the picture, at times aiming to be faithful and at others embracing fantasy. Such works emerged largely in the 1990s and onwards, at the time when South Africa officially abandoned its policy of apartheid. The surge of Krotoa's popularity during this period (which continues into the present time) is arguably due to a collective desire to tell the story of oppression suffered by many under colonial rule and, by extension, under apartheid. But these narrations face a challenge: seeing that the pre-eminent sources from which information on Krotoa is drawn were written for purposes other than the chronicling of her life, there is very little—disjointed—information available. The sparse nature of Krotoa's appearance in the VOC journals conflicts with the desire in post-apartheid South Africa to bring her into the contemporary imagination. Authors of historical fiction and artists have responded to this challenge by producing semi-fictional reconstructions.[16] These authors take the fragments from the archives and attempt to construct from them a fuller picture, and, in this reconstruction, they tend to model Krotoa in terms that render her representative of oppressed colonial subjects in general.

The conception of Krotoa as an "in-between" figure is a key element in the use of her narrative as proxy for lost pasts in historical fiction. Such stories dwell on how Krotoa was forever travelling between the Khoekhoe and the Dutch, suggesting in response that she felt lost and unmoored, belonging in neither society. However, it should be remembered that Krotoa's "in-between" status is precisely why she is known today and is what makes her so distinctive.

A prime example of a work expressly concerned with Krotoa as an in-between figure is *Krotoa-Eva: The Woman from Robben Island* (1999), a historical

fiction by Trudie Bloem. Krotoa's in-between status is immediately conveyed by Bloem's reference to her subject as "Krotoa-Eva", a signifier of her identity as doubly-coded subject. Moreover, the novel itself manifests as an in-between text: between history and fiction and between the archive (through her reliance on Elphick's *Kraal and Castle* and Thom's edition of Van Riebeeck's journals and later studies of Khoekhoe culture such as George Stow's *Native Races of South Africa* (1905) and Gabriël Nienaber's *Hottentots* (1963)) and her imaginative reconstructions. On the back cover we read that Bloem has

> worked as a librarian at the Johannesburg Library, the South African Library and Cape Provincial Education Library, as an editor, translator and indexer … [S]he researched Krotoa's life over many years, making copious notes … finally writing this book.

The notion that the author is an authority on already published material is reaffirmed by various strategies within the text: the use of dates that mark the start of every chapter (positioning it within a specific period); the addition of maps that situate the narrative in an actual locale (Bloem 1999: 5–6); the inclusion of a glossary of Dutch and Khoekhoe words (Bloem 1999: 227–8, 238) that allows the author to employ a vernacular tone; an extensive list of what are called "Characters", such as Autshumao, Doman and Oedosoa (Bloem 1999: 229–37), which contains historically accurate facts on these figures; and a bibliography (Bloem 1999: 239). Collectively, these devices have the effect of situating the narrative as a "truthful" or at least historically accurate one and serve to underscore the historical foundation of the narrative, as such information is not conventionally found in works of fiction. Bloem's text is itself an in-between work, constrained by slivers of archival presence yet attempting to collate those slivers into a credible reconstruction of Krotoa's life.

Intriguingly, Bloem includes in her narrative what appear to be extracts of letters written by Pieter van Meerhoff (Bloem 1999: 140–2; 187–8; 203–14). These letters are not referenced, however, and thus lack the markers of provenance. No other information is given concerning their origin, leaving the reader to infer that they are an invention by the author. Although written in a style that invokes the register of the seventeenth century, they seem somehow too intimate and salacious to credibly be included in the Company's archives. Moreover, if these extracts are authentic and exist in an extended form in the colonial record, they would likely have been used by authors before Bloem. A sample extract from one such letter reads, "How can I explain to you the sincere affection which I have come to feel for Eva? Not one woman have I seen who surpasses Eva in shapeliness of form and sweetness of expression and manner" (Bloem 1999:2–7). They are likely a literary device intended to supplement our image of Krotoa and Pieter's relationship and create a convincing realism by invoking a sense of intimacy and affect.

Unlike the "factual" biographies of the historians, Bloem's text focuses from the outset on imagining Krotoa's subjectivity by articulating her thoughts and experiences in the manner of a novel. In fact, it is as though Bloem sets out to answer some of the questions posed by Malherbe concerning what Krotoa would have *felt* about the dramatic events of her life. The first sentences of the text demonstrate how strikingly different the tone of this narrative is from that adopted by Elphick, Malherbe and Schoeman:

> She becomes aware of the pain in her chest and the cold, and thinks: I did not die. She remembers being carried by two men, and hearing somebody say, "Put the drunken slut in here. She won't last through the night." (Bloem 1999: 7)

With these words, Bloem immediately situates her text as being from Krotoa's perspective. Moreover, the contemporary reader cannot help but be disturbed by the words of Krotoa's jailers ("drunken slut"). In this way, Bloem's text is a strategic appeal for outrage against the injustice and violence embodied in Krotoa's story.

In 2000, popular Afrikaans author Dalene Matthee published her "*historiese roman oor Pieternella en Eva-Krotoa*",[17] entitled *Pieternella van die Kaap*.[18] The narrative of this book focuses mainly on Pieternella, Krotoa's daughter. By narrating her memories of her mother, Pieternella tells Krotoa's story in parallel with her own. It is clear that Matthee, similar to earlier authors, relied heavily on archival material (the VOC documents from the period of commanders Van Riebeeck and Wagenaer), the help of archivists (such as Dan Sleigh, who two years later himself produced a text in which Krotoa features)[19] and the volumes of Elphick, Malherbe and Thom. The characteristic depiction of Krotoa as an in-between figure is powerfully exemplified in Pieternella's description of her mother's role as translator:

> *Tweekopvrou. Wat tussen Hottentot en Hollander moes gaan staan sodat die vee en die krale stilletjies kon wegkom om weggesteek te word…*
>
> *Boodskapdraer.*
>
> *Van Oedasoa na mynheer Van Riebeeck.*
>
> *Van mynheer Van Riebeeck na Oedasoa.* (Matthee 2000:176)[20]

As played out in the narrative, Pieternella's psychological journey is essentially that of her maturation from early adolescence to her marriage to Daniel Zaaijman, childbearing and womanhood and is reflected in her physical journey: her departure from the Cape to live in Mauritius and the ultimate return of the Zaaijmans to Cape Town. Throughout, Pieternella reflects on her "mixed" origins and consistently finds herself as an outsider to the Dutch community.

By way of illustration, consider the following passage, in which she converses with a Dutch woman in Mauritius:

> *Verskoon, ek vergeet, hulle sê jou ma was ook 'n Hottentot—was sy? Ja. Gelukkig het jy darem min van die swart geërf! Ha-ha-ha. Gelukkig is jy baie witterig, maar mens kan sien nie heeltemal nie. Hottentotte is nie swart nie. Hoe dan? Jy sal nie verstaan nie.* (Matthee 2000: 310)[21]

As is evident from this passage, Matthee's writing is typified by a simplified, colourful and vernacular use of the Afrikaans language. The effects are exaggerated in this novel, primarily to establish the childlike innocence of Pieternella and a character unblemished by colonial polemics:

> *Daar was 'n tamboer, sy naam was Arent. En sy vriend, Frans Cuiper, 'n soldaat. Toe dros hulle. Hulle het geweet hulle gaan in vreeslike moeilikheid beland, maar hulle dros sowaar. "Onnosele goed," sê haar ma.* (Matthee 2000: 93)[22]

In *Pieternella van die Kaap*, Matthee's writing strongly evokes the short phrasing and plain, direct speech of a child. Her comments regarding both Krotoa and the Dutch appear to be those of a child observing, but not understanding, the actions of adults.

In contrast to Bloem's academically-informed authorial voice, Matthee's tone is more naive, in step with her other celebrated texts, *Kringe in 'n Bos* (1984) and *Fiela se Kind* (1985). The result is that this reader finds herself relating Pieternella and Krotoa to other fictional characters in Matthee's *oeuvre* who function as vehicles of a particular kind of naïve idealism. It is not my purpose to mount a critique of the entire novel here but rather to highlight that in her language and metaphors, Matthee attempts to invert the prejudices within the very grain of the archives from which she draws, to use Krotoa and Pieternella's naiveté as a foil to Dutch corruption. This inversion is nonetheless still primarily bounded by the limits of that which is contained within the VOC archives.

Matthee can only refute the silences of the archive by weaving more myths and elaborating on existing obfuscation.

Dan Sleigh's *Eilande* (2002)[23] is perhaps the most popular fictionalised literary account of Krotoa's life and that of her daughter, Pieternella. The story is told from the viewpoint of seven men, each of whom had a particular connection to Krotoa or Pieternella. As a seasoned archivist, Sleigh is highly knowledgeable on the history of the Cape. He is consequently able to fill his text with details of the colonial period with a breadth of scope reminiscent of the epic genre. The following passage, written from the viewpoint of Pieter van Meerhoff (called Peter Havgard in the text), reveals how much the book relies on telling the story by means of what is ostensibly "observation":

> *Hy kon sien hoe Eva los raak van Van Riebeeck en sy vrou, die gewoontes, die hoflike taal van die groot huis, en die godsdiens wat sy daar geleer het. Sy het meer gedrink, en soms gevloek. Dít het sy by hom geleer. Soms wou sy net die Koina taal praat, met hom en al die ander. Hy het vermoed dat sy die Van Reebeecks se guns verloor het. Sy was nou alleen tussen vreemdelinge.* (Sleigh 2002: 151)[24]

By employing this strategy, Sleigh avoids having to present Krotoa from "the inside", possibly because he is aware of not only the temporal distance between him and the character, but also of the disparity between them as regards gender and race. However, the book does not distance itself from what are evidently its subjects, Krotoa and Pieternella, and because of the empathy his male characters demonstrate, Sleigh invites the reader to respond similarly.

Even while implicitly acknowledging the limits of what can be known about Krotoa, Sleigh attempts to give form to her as a person by imaginatively providing the perspectives of various observers. Perhaps as can be expected, however, a reconstructive impulse is nevertheless at work, and the novel still attempts to tell the story of Krotoa and Pieternella, filling gaps left by the absences in the archive by drawing on the information available about the period as a whole.

Above: Putter, A. 2011. Still image from *Secretly I Will Love You More* (Glyphs Acts of Inspiration 2013).

In his video installation *Secretly I Will Love You More* (2011), Andrew Putter takes a position that is radically different from that of much of the earlier narrations of Krotoa's life. The work is a video installation featuring the portrait of a woman, depicted in a style based on Dutch Baroque. The woman in the video portrait sings what we are told is a "Khoi Khoi lovesong-lullaby, celebrating her love for Krotoa, her adopted Khoi Khoi daughter", in the Nama language (Putter in Pather 2007: 166).[25] The work is presented alongside a note that informs the viewer that the woman is Maria de la Quellerie (Van Riebeeck's wife), and that she is singing a lullaby to Krotoa, whom, according to the artist, she had adopted.

In this video installation, Putter deliberately skews the truth, defying existing archival information by suggesting that a particularly intimate and loving relationship existed between Van Riebeeck's wife and Krotoa. There is no evidence of such an intimate relationship, and Putter's work can even be considered to be contrary to the little archival evidentiary material that is in existence. His is perhaps the most far-fetched interpretation of Krotoa's archival fragments, but still an interpretation that focuses on presenting a creative *reconstruction*, albeit fictive, and, significantly, one that (self-consciously) constructs a myth. The catalogue entry for the work reads:

> For thousands of years the Khoikhoi lived a rich life on the fertile peninsula where Cape Town now stands. In 1652, a tiny group of colonists arrived at the Cape, tasked with setting up a refreshment station for Dutch

ships sailing to and from the East. The Khoikhoi soon found themselves subservient to these new visitors. By 1700, the lives of the Khoikhoi were so changed that their ancient culture was extinguished. But hidden in the larger story of domination and enslavement are counter-tales of mutual enthrallment between the Khoikhoi and the Dutch. Shortly after her arrival at the Cape in 1652, the Dutch woman Maria Della Quellerie adopted a Khoikhoi girl-child: the enigmatic Krotoa. This artwork is a celebration of their relationship. Here, Maria Della Quellerie sings a gentle Khoikhoi lullaby to a sleeping Krotoa. The lullaby is full of the characteristic clicks still found in Nama, a Khoikhoi language spoken in present-day Namibia. We catch Maria in a moment of deep realisation, singing of her profound connections with this strange daughter; the subversive love between a mother and her child, and the exhilarating potential that exists between two people facing each other across incommensurate cultural universes. (Putter in Pather 2007: 166)[26]

Putter's piece was a hugely popular entry for the Spier Contemporary Award exhibition in 2007 and received a great deal of media attention. It was one of the few works in the exhibition that the popular press and artworld insiders praised unambivalently. Moreover, it was included in the exhibition *Personal Structures* at the Palazzo Bembo at the 2011 Venice Biennale. The success of *Secretly I Will Love You More* shows that Putter's strategy of invention was well-received by his audiences.

The inconsistencies between Putter's work and the information available in the VOC archives are not simply "mistakes" or generalisations. Putter self-consciously adjusts the known facts of Krotoa's narrative to invite his viewer to engage sympathetically with Krotoa and the Dutch, but also to imagine a past different from the overwhelmingly violent and oppressive colonial history with which we are familiar and which we take to be true. The clue to his intent is in his statement that "hidden in the larger story of domination and enslavement are counter-tales of mutual enthrallment between the Khoikhoi and the Dutch". Putter is trying to break open the conventional conception of colonialism as a mechanical programme of domination. Perhaps this is why the work achieved such popularity: *Secretly I Will Love You More* offers the promise, or the fantasy, of an escape from the moral implications of the colonial legacy—among the detrimental effects of colonialism, Putter seems to say, prevails a sliver of tenderness, of love. This sliver may not have changed the outcome of events, but it dramatically affects how we can conceive of that period and our inheritance of its legacy. What is more, within the more permissive structures of Fine Art practice, where conventional notions of "truth" *per se* are not a dominant aspiration, Putter's invention is testament to the power of his imagination to speak to public consciousness.

Unlike Schoeman, Matthee, Sleigh and Bloem, Putter does not limit his imagination to the colonial archive—he defies it. The question of what he presents in its place arises, though. Ostensibly, what Putter presents is a fiction, a fantasy in which the love between a European mother and a Khoekhoe "daughter" can overcome racial and cultural divides, as though to suggest a kind of innate "sameness" among all people. By inserting the notion of equality and tolerance in Krotoa's story, Putter endeavours to stir the same admirable sentiments in his post-apartheid viewers. Breaking free from the constraints of the archive that limited earlier narrators, Putter alerts the viewer to possibilities that might otherwise not be considered. The ambiguities of his representation, as it concerns the "facts", make us aware that the archive as it stands is very sparse and replete with absences, and that we do not, for example, really know what the sentiment between Krotoa and Maria was.[27]

## Word Made Flesh: Krotoa(s) for the Present

The fictional representations of Krotoa are understandably replete with invention and symbolism. What is further discernible, however, is the extent to which these inventions have become absorbed into the public imagination and have become part of the archive. In this regard it is interesting to note that as late as March 2015, the Wikipedia entry for Krotoa did not cite any factual historical texts on Krotoa, but made use instead of Sleigh's *Eilande* as a source (Wikipedia contributors 2015).[28] One can argue that Wikipedia is hardly a scholarly resource, but it does serve as an information gateway for many millions of users. Krotoa's public profile is thus in some profound way shaped by a fictionalised version of her life, albeit one founded in history.

Further evidence of the growing, though unmoored, myth of Krotoa can be found in recent memorialisations of Krotoa. In 2012, the South African Post Office issued a stamp to commemorate her. At the launch of the stamp at the Castle of Good Hope, the Griqua Church Choir sang in her honour, and the chair of the Khoi and San Active Awareness group recited a prayer and praise-song for Krotoa, accompanied on a bow by musician Khoi Khonnexion (Glen Arendse). An interpretative dance solo was also performed. In all of these performances, the emphasis was clearly on commemorating Krotoa as an ancestor—genetically as well as metaphorically—in terms of dispossession, a status with which many coloured people identify to this day. Later the same year, the then-mayor of Cape Town, Patricia de Lille, unveiled Krotoa Place, a small courtyard in the centre of the city on the site of the first fort built by Van Riebeeck, now named in honour of Krotoa. At the unveiling ceremony, the Griqua Church Choir sang once again, and in the speeches at the unveiling, frequent reference was made to Krotoa as the "mother" of the coloured people of South Africa. She was praised too for her supposed desire to unite the Dutch and the Khoekhoe. This sentiment is echoed in De Lille's (2012) statement:

> The work she achieved in that brief life represents all that we are trying to achieve in our great city … Her work showed that seemingly separate traditions only need a simple bridge between each other in order to create understanding … Let Krotoa Place be a symbol of our lasting commitment to changing this city into a Cape Town that we all own.

While lip service is paid to the legacy of a historical figure in these public commemorations, little more than the most basic elements of her story are relayed. Krotoa's story is instead made to function as a morality tale for contemporary concerns about race, restitution and civil cohesion.

However, the original archival material has been all but abandoned by the narratives that circulate in popular discourse; scholars are also at odds as they consider Krotoa's symbolic significance in post-apartheid South Africa. In her article "Was Eva Raped? An Exercise in Speculative History" (1996), for example, historian Yvette Abrahams offers a different position to the benevolent commemorations discussed above. She suggests that "[Krotoa] was aptly named 'first woman' because her experience of colonialism was later to be repeated by thousands of Khoisan women" (Abrahams 1996: 3). She continues, "I cannot see Eva as 'a woman between'. She was most certainly a Khoisan woman, and one whose life was inseparable from the fate of her people" (ibid.). Abrahams argues not only that Krotoa should be considered *only* in terms of her Khoi origins, but that her life story is emblematic of the oppression suffered by Khoi women under colonial rule in general. Abrahams eschews what she calls "empiricist" history, as performed by Malherbe et al., in favour of "speculative

history" and offers a reading of Krotoa's existence in the archives as one in which she was forcefully kidnapped from her "people" and lived in sexual subjugation under Van Riebeeck. In Abrahams's text, the use of Krotoa-as-emblem is very apparent, and her speculative history is shaped primarily by the injustices of the twentieth century.

Considering these competing interpretations of Krotoa's life, I suggest that contemporary perspectives of "Eva", though stemming from postcolonial, post-apartheid desires, are as much enmeshed in myth and fantasy as was the renaming of Krotoa to "Eva". In many senses, these are simply new clothes spun from the self-same mythical threads that the Dutch wove around her to deal with her alterity. What takes precedence in twentieth- and twenty-first-century retellings is Krotoa's role as an in-between figure, interpreter and, later, wife of a Dutch man and mother of mixed-race children. The difficulties of her later life are taken as evidence of the injustices suffered by colonial subjects at the hands of colonial powers. Ironic though it may be, narratives that would cast her as hero—"a rainbow mother" or the first "true South African"—are themselves founded on information gained obliquely through a mining of the colonial archive.

Some scholars have, however, been critical of the way in which Krotoa's story has been pressed into service in present-day political discourse. For example, in her article "Eva's Men: Gender and Power in the Establishment of the Cape of Good Hope, 1652–74", Julia Wells (1998: 418) critiques Krotoa's casting as a victim in the literature:

> Virtually all of the representations of Eva construct her as a helpless victim of vicious culture clashes. Today's racial consciousness, laced with assumptions of inevitable African/European hostility, is often read back into the historical record. Frustratingly large gaps in that record leave room for a wide range of interpretations, depending heavily on the subjectivities of the historian.

Wells (1998: 421), like Abrahams, suggests that there may have been a sexual relationship between Van Riebeeck and Krotoa, but, unlike Abrahams, Wells (1998: 436) reads this not as subjugation but as "an especially close and sensitive, possibly sexual, relationship". Wells (1998: 432) also provides one of the only sustained explorations of the relationship between Krotoa and her husband, Pieter, suggesting that it is through Eva's contacts (especially Oedasoa) that Pieter was able to broker (an ultimately fragile) peace between the Namaqua and Cochoqua. In her analysis of Krotoa's life story, Wells cautions against drawing parallels between Krotoa's story and the present and advocates positioning Krotoa within her own context: "Her life reflects the rapidly changing nature of early colonial contacts" (Wells 1998: 437).

As regards the recent representations of Krotoa in popular texts and the public sphere, Meg Samuelson offers insightful commentary on Krotoa in her book *Remembering the Nation, Dismembering Women?* (2007). Key to her approach is her avoidance of a reconstruction of Krotoa's biography. Instead, she closely analyses the ways in which Krotoa's image, or myth, functions in present-day, post-apartheid South Africa. Her study focuses on a number of women from the country's past "who have been mediated through the mists of time to take their symbolic place as mythic figures in our present" (Samuelson 2007: 2).[29]

In Samuelson's judgement, there has been a dramatic shift from the pejorative tenor of the VOC journals to the uncritical celebration of the post-apartheid literature. Samuelson traces this shift in focus of representations and commemorations in post-1990s literature of Krotoa from her *voice*, that is, her role as translator, to her *womb*, as a kind of "rainbow mother". Samuelson has consequently critically engaged with how these histories, and especially

the fictional retellings, position Krotoa as a figure that South Africans, notably white South Africans, can hark back to as a progenitor, a woman in whose womb indigene and colonial genes mixed.[30]

The power of this shift, whereby white South Africans can claim a heritage that locates their ancestry within pre-colonial South Africa and defies the "purity" strictures of apartheid, is that white South Africans may thereby hope to achieve a legitimised place in contemporary South Africa. It is worth noting, however, that the co-opting of Krotoa's narrative within discourses seeking to locate a lineage for white citizens within South Africa prior to the arrival of Van Riebeeck is an argument made relatively recently, since the 1990s (though less so today). If one were cynical, one might suspect a degree of expedience within this claim for legitimacy. However, Krotoa's potency as political signifier is not limited to white concerns, as other political activists—for instance, the Goringhaicona Khoi Khoin Indigenous Traditional Council—have also employed the events of Krotoa's life as both symbolic of colonial oppression and as a means to claim belonging in, if not ownership of, the Cape landscape.

I contend that the development and circulation of Krotoa's symbolic significance in the public consciousness is the result of frustration with the silences and absences in the archive and in the face of the need to address the unequal legacy of colonial domination. The extensiveness of the need for redress manifests as pressure that fuels this symbolic production with varying regard for the limits of what can be known. Krotoa's public narrative, as it circulates today, has become a site of symbolic conflict. The destruction of the Krotoa memorial bench cited at the beginning of this chapter is a clear example of this: claims are made about Krotoa being a princess that represents all Khoekhoe, for example, in order to confront an object intended to memorialise her life. Both the construction of the bench and its destruction were intended to "restore" dignity to Krotoa, but they are at odds with what such restoration entails. As part of a response, or perhaps even as a corrective, I believe it is necessary to rethink how we might deal with the limits of what can be gleaned from the archive in which Krotoa's life is (very partially) recorded. Krotoa's appearance in the VOC archives is subjected to pressure in the present, and *because* of the silences in her archive there is ample space for inventions that respond to the pressure. However, I take a different route in my response to the pressure on the archive by asking, What might transpire if we confront these absences for what they are—irrecuperable loss?

## Reading Again

In the remainder of this chapter, I provide readings of selected instances in which Krotoa is mentioned in Van Riebeeck's journal. In particular, I consider the qualities of the language used to represent Krotoa. I provide an analysis of Krotoa's appearance in Van Riebeeck's journals by reading them along the grain, in contrast to much post-1990 literature, both scholarly and fictional, in which authors attempt to understand Krotoa from the inside by reading these colonial documents against their grains and to counter their embedded prejudice. In this regard, I draw on Ann Laura Stoler's *Along the Archival Grain* (2009), which presents a thought-provoking intervention into scholarly methodologies for interpreting archival material. As she states in her introduction:

> This book is about the force of writing and the feel of documents, about lettered governance and written traces [of] colonial lives …
>
> Grids of intelligibility were fashioned from uncertain knowledge; disquiet and anxieties registered the uncommon sense of events and things …

In these chapters Dutch colonial archival documents serve less as stories for a colonial history than as active, generative substances with histories, as documents with itineraries of their own. (Stoler 2009: 1)

Stoler's argument informs my reading of Krotoa's appearance in the journals, especially her assertion that archival colonial documents are not to be understood simply as the traces of colonial ideology and activity. Instead, the documents carry in their language evidence of the uncertain, shifting and contesting forces at work at the time and their effect on the people who created them.

Being persuaded by the thrust of Stoler's argument, my contention is that the expressive qualities of the writing in the journals signal something about the "presentness" of their moment, as, in the present, the future is not yet known and the outcome of events is not yet manifest. In this "presentness" there is no resolution of the disagreements, suspicions and alliances that are active in the social sphere of the settlement. The writing, which happens in its own present, is expressive of this uncertainty, even if simply by virtue of the authors not knowing the future. Consequently, I suggest that studying the expressiveness of the journals' language allows us to contemplate the "presentness" of those appearing in the text, even if it cannot be reconstructed through it. Consequently, the passages I have chosen to explore in this way are those that have prompted in me the strongest sense of Krotoa as a thinking, feeling human being, or those that on the surface seem to offer tantalising suggestions of Krotoa's presentness.

Right: The three volumes of the Journal of Jan van Riebeeck.

Krotoa's first appearance in the VOC journals (as Eva, the name by which she is referred in these volumes) is in Van Riebeeck's entry of 28 January 1654, at the time of the fort's construction. The author mentions her as belonging to a group of "natives" and describes her as "a girl who had lived with us and had been given the name of Eva" (Thom 1952: 208). We hear nothing more of her until about two years later, on January 12, 1656, when Van Riebeeck recounts information about Autshumao imparted to the Dutch by Krotoa. In describing her, Van Riebeeck writes that "[t]his girl, who is clad in clothes, has lived for some time in the commander's house, where she has also learnt Dutch" (Thom 1954: 4). Further in the journal it is noted that

[t]he commander spent the day entertaining the Saldanhars and questioning them about various things through the medium of a certain girl, aged 15 or 16, and by us called Eva, who

> has been in the service of the commander's wife from the beginning and is now living here permanently and is beginning to speak Dutch well. (Thom 1954: 170)

Although Van Riebeeck's text at this point does not offer a specific opinion of Krotoa, the editor of the volumes, HB Thom, is quick to add a note asserting that "she was not very accurate in her statements" and that "we shall find her telling many tall stories regarding the inhabitants of the interior" (ibid.). The relative truthfulness of Krotoa's words becomes a refrain throughout her appearances in the journals and presents an intriguing indication of Krotoa's thinking at work: manipulating the "truth" requires guile, but it also entails a shielding of part of one's mind. Having concealed the substance of her thoughts from the Dutch, Krotoa consequently also withholds it from the archival record.

A further example of the inaccessibility of Krotoa's thoughts occurs in relation to information about the Chobonas conveyed by Krotoa to Van Riebeeck. During his stay at the Cape, Van Riebeeck was particularly interested in establishing where a group of people referred to as the Chobonas might be found, as he believed they were the richest and most powerful of all the indigenous peoples of Southern Africa and was keen to trade with them. According to Thom (1954: 170), the Chobonas were the amaXhosa, although some commentators have suggested that this is unlikely (McDonald 2014: 391). Eva's information regarding their chief, Chobona, described as an emperor or king, is recorded in Van Riebeeck's journal on the 31st of October 1657 (ibid.). (This record is also the first instance in which Krotoa's role as interpreter is mentioned.) Krotoa's stories about who the Chobona were is, however, complicated by the events of 15 November 1657. Van Riebeeck writes on this date that there seems to have been a disagreement between Autshumao and Krotoa concerning her report on the Chobona:

> While we had the said interpreters Eva [Krotoa], Harry [Autshumao] and Pieter with the Chaijnouquas, we again showed the latter some gold and pearls and inquired about the situation of the Chobona, but as soon as we mentioned this, Harry, on hearing the name, seemed to rave and to become quite mad, saying it was not his duty to run after the Chobona … Our interpretess Eva accordingly changed the conversation, for Harry, who had winked at Pieter to tell him that they should speak with one voice, angrily and contemptuously spat on the ground and trod on the spittle whenever Chobona was mentioned. (Thom 1954: 184)

This entry is instructive in that it provides a record of Van Riebeeck's acknowledgement that there is information to which he is not privy and, consequently, neither is the reader. This entry thus exemplifies the deep-rooted limitations of Van Riebeeck's journal and the subsequent impossibility for a present-day reader to fully comprehend the intricate politics of the various Khoekhoe individuals and groups. One might infer that Krotoa is hiding something or is, at the very least, keen to avoid the topic of the Chobona for some unknown reason. Her intentions and her sense of the "truth" of the matter are of course absent from the records, and the reader becomes acutely aware of such an absence.

On the 21st of June 1658, Van Riebeeck relates that during the previous night, several of the company's slaves had apparently "run away" (Thom 1954: 286). Van Riebeeck and his men believed that some Khoekhoe had aided the escape. The Dutch wanted Doman, the other key interpreter for Van Riebeeck, who had

recently returned from a journey to Batavia, to convince the Khoekhoe to search for the missing slaves. Doman, however, was not inclined to do so. The diaries suggest that Van Riebeeck did not trust Doman any more and that he turned to Krotoa instead. For her part, Krotoa, whom the commander had "called … alone into his office" (Thom 1954: 286), told him:

> "I tell you straight out, *Mijnheer* Van Riebeeck, Doman is no good. He told the Hottentots everything that was said in *Mijnheer*'s room the day before yesterday. When I told him it was wrong to do so, he replied: 'I am a Hottentot and not a Dutchman, but you, Eva, try to curry favour with the Commander, etc.'" (Ibid.)

Van Riebeeck's use of direct quotation to convey Krotoa's words is striking in this passage, as it is uncommon for a Khoekhoe person to be quoted directly in the journals.[31]

One can only speculate as to why Van Riebeeck (or whomever authored the entry) made this choice, but its effect is dramatic: it vividly calls into the imagination the scene described. As a contemporary reader informed by postcolonial discourse, I am of course immediately sceptical of the accuracy of these quotations. The direct quotation here has the effect of distancing the Dutch from the conflict between Krotoa and Doman, and the way in which this entry is phrased makes it easy to assume that the conflict between these two key translators was somehow inevitable. By using direct speech, Van Riebeeck disavows his and the Dutch's role in bringing about conflict between not only Krotoa and Doman, but also among the Khoekhoe groups.[32] Furthermore, Van Riebeeck does not reflect on the influence of the Dutch presence on the dynamics between the various Khoekhoe groups, despite the issue between Krotoa and Doman pertaining directly to these dynamics. Doman questions Krotoa's loyalty to the Khoekhoe and asserts that she wants to "curry favour" with the Dutch instead.

However, the direct speech also—and more pointedly—powerfully evokes a speaking subject. In order to paraphrase, a writer must generally be confident that she understands, for the most part, the meaning and implication of a speaker's words. By contrast, quoting directly suspends the speaker's words, which may indicate the degree to which a writer wishes to abdicate responsibility for what is being said or even a lack of control over how the words should be understood. Alternatively, direct speech may also be used when an author wishes to bring the full force of the original utterance into a text. In all these instances, direct quotation interrupts the authorial voice, introducing an element that is ostensibly external to the narration. In this instance, the direct speech signals that we do not and cannot know the motivation behind Krotoa's words. We have instead the absence of a full understanding of her presence.

It is telling that Van Riebeeck does not offer her sanctuary or protection because of her professed loyalty to him. His attitude is predictable to some degree and reflects the ingrained sense of superiority assumed by the Europeans. Nevertheless, what is absent from the record here, and is signalled by the use of direct speech, is precisely the ways in which Krotoa had to mentally navigate between the worlds of the Khoekhoe and the Dutch *through her speech*. This passage serves as a powerful exemplar of the peculiar play between absence and presence that characterises Krotoa's appearance in the archives: on the surface it seems that we at least have a record of certain moments in her life, some of her presence, her very voice quoted directly. Yet it is in these

very words that a reader is made aware of how little of the "true" Krotoa may be gleaned from the archives.

The spectre of Krotoa's unknowable thoughts offers a further, beguiling invitation to imagine what Krotoa might have hoped to achieve by allying herself to Van Riebeeck. Was hers a calculated lie to maintain her position as a go-between? By focusing on the injustices suffered by the Khoekhoe and by positing Krotoa as a representative of these victims, contemporary perspectives largely ignore the lure of *belonging* that was offered by the Dutch, as well as the opportunity to cultivate powerful allies, that Krotoa might well have experienced. When considering these possibilities, it is worth remembering that Krotoa was sixteen years old at this time and had lived close to half her life in the Van Riebeecks' household.

The conflict over the missing slaves to which I referred earlier constitutes a critical juncture in Krotoa's narrative, as it is the first record in the diary of Krotoa being regarded with suspicion by other Khoekhoe. Our inability to gain a sense of Krotoa's true loyalties or plans is made pointedly apparent at this juncture. Taking sides, or appearing to be loyal to a specific group, held grave implications for Krotoa either way.

If the Khoekhoe stole from the Dutch, the arrangement between them was that the latter would capture and take hostage some of the Khoekhoe people and retain them until the stolen items were returned. From the diaries, it appears that some Khoekhoe agreed to this arrangement, in particular Krotoa (Thom 1954: 286) and Doman (Thom 1954: 289). While Van Riebeeck does make record of some unhappiness on the part of the Khoekhoe regarding this arrangement, he writes with a sense of righteousness, as though this strategy was nothing less than appropriate. The taking of hostages became the default strategy for dealing with all manner of disagreements. In their desire to find missing slaves, the Dutch took a number of Khoekhoe hostage to compel their compatriots to reveal any knowledge of the whereabouts of the slaves, and perhaps even to find them.

Doman became very agitated at the arrest of Peter Schacher, a member of his group, who was detained to induce the Khoekhoe to surrender escaped slaves. Doman blamed Krotoa for Peter's incarceration and, according to Van Riebeeck, stated that he "wished to destroy her at once" (Thom 1954: 289). Van Riebeeck claims that he supported Krotoa against Doman: "She immediately denied the charge and, *though the charge was true*, we confirmed the denial" (ibid., emphasis added). His sentiments towards Doman are also interesting here, particularly in light of the accusations levelled against Krotoa by Doman. Van Riebeeck notes that:

> Anthony [Doman], however would not cease accusing Eva, and he has proved in everything, and particular in this case, that he is not to be trusted, and that we should be on our guard against him. (Ibid.)

The precariousness that attended Krotoa's (and, in this instance, Doman's) role as interpreter is evident in a passage dated 1 July 1658:

> The result is that they have to be satisfied to remain in captivity until we recover the slaves or know what has really become of them. This made the interpreter Doman hang his head and seem much depressed, as also Eva, who said that the Hottentots would kill her if we did not release Schacher, the son of the chief of the Kaapmans. She was told to keep within the fort, and that if anyone harmed her, the Commander would have him captured as well. (Thom 1954: 295)

By aligning themselves with the Dutch in the taking of hostages, Krotoa and Autshumao probably wished to secure their own survival and even prosperity.

While Van Riebeeck may have assumed that their plans to make the Khoekhoe useful collaborators was a success, he may have failed to recognise that he and his people were also being used by the various Khoekhoe groups.

Conflict between various groups of Khoekhoe is evidenced by Doman's accusation that Autshumao stole cattle from the Dutch, while Autshumao levelled the selfsame accusation against Doman. On Wednesday 3 July 1658, the dispute over the stolen cattle and the hostages taken by the Dutch came to a head. On this day, Doman was brought before Van Riebeeck, who asked whether Doman stood by his claim that Autshumao was responsible for the theft of the cattle. Harry was brought in to face the charges, while Schacher (from the Kaapmans) had already been arrested. Doman nevertheless attempted to lay the blame on Autshumao and exonerate the Kaapmans of all charges. Krotoa intervened, and her strategy could not have been more different from Doman's. Instead of denying the charges, she admitted that the Goringhaicona had stolen the cattle but also explicitly implicated Doman's people. Van Riebeeck relates her words thus (again using direct speech):

> [B]ut Eva said: "I shall tell the whole truth. Harry admits that his people stole the cattle and murdered the boy, but the Kaapmans also shared in the stolen cattle; indeed, after Harry had had the cattle for a few days, the Kaapmans … stole them from him. (Thom 1954: 297)

For the remainder of July 1658, the journals are dominated by conflicts between the Dutch and the Khoekhoe over the stolen cattle and the hostages, and, as a result, the clash between Krotoa and Doman intensified. On 7 July 1658, Van Riebeeck recorded that Krotoa had conveyed to him the intention of the Kaapmans to align with various other groups to attack the Dutch.

Writing about these events, Van Riebeeck again used direct speech to record Krotoa's words:

> "Take care, *Mijnheer* Van Riebeeck, Doman lies and cajoles (meaning to say deceives) you, but I shall tell you the truth, for I overheard Schacher myself. If *Mijnheer* releases Harry and allows him to live at the fort with 4 or 5 milch cows, his people will always assist you against the Kaapmans." (Thom 1954: 305)

Krotoa's stature in the colony, and consequently the journals, during this time is founded on her pivotal role in negotiations.[33] However, while most present-day commentators focus on her so-called in-between status as it concerns her role as interpreter, the events of this month revealed that she experienced no small measure of anxiety in this role. An example of this anxiety is evident in a diary entry from 18 September, 1658, when Van Riebeeck notes that:

> Not one of the natives, however, is interceding for Harry except his niece, the interpreter Eva, who lives in the Commander's [Van Riebeeck's] house and who is continually begging for her uncle as Esther did for Mordecai. (Thom 1954: 340)

Krotoa's emotional state was intimately intertwined with her having to negotiate between the Khoekhoe and the Dutch, of being in-between, which is itself epitomised in her travels between the two groups. In September 1658 Krotoa and Doman endeavoured to visit relatives inland. When Van Riebeeck writes of their plans, he also describes how she changed her European clothes for "hides". Changing clothes has since become one of the central images of historical narration to signal Krotoa's status as an in-between figure, indicating that she understood the need to conform to the requirements of the distinct groups of people with whom she interacted:

> When Eva reached the matted hut of Doman … outside the fort, she at once *dressed herself in hides again and sent her clothes home* [to the fort]. She intended to put them on again when she returned to the Commander's

> wife, promising, however, that she would in the meantime not forget the Lord God, Whom she had learnt to know in the Commander's house; she would always speak of Him and endeavour to learn, etc. (Thom 1954: 343, emphasis added)

Krotoa's eagerness to ingratiate herself strategically with Van Riebeeck is remarkable, as she simultaneously demonstrates her support for the plans of both the Dutch and the Khoekhoe groups respectively. She promises to return to the Dutch and remain faithful to her Christian religion, while at the same time removing the trappings that mark her affiliation with the Europeans and their religion—her colonial dress.

Van Riebeeck notes the success of Krotoa's negotiations, albeit through the reports of Doman (Thom 1954: 349). On 2 October 1658, the positive regard held by the Dutch of Krotoa is shown to have strengthened when Van Riebeeck notes that through Krotoa's efforts three cattle, one calf and twelve sheep arrived at the fort from the "Hottentots". The favour Krotoa curried with the Dutch during this crucial time also affected her relationship with Doman, as revealed in the journals:

> We received news that the interpreter Eva was at present with the Cochoquas and doing her best to induce them to come here with more and more cattle; to this even her greatest enemy, Doman has to testify. He, seeing the success of her efforts on our behalf, pretends to return with the strange Hottentots who keep arriving, with whom he has now twice come here, in an attempt to make himself as agreeable as the oft-mentioned interpreter. (Thom 1954: 349)

A generally peaceful state was maintained at the Cape in October 1658, with Autshumao on Robben Island, Krotoa with the Cochoquas and Doman at the settlement of the Kaapmans. This lasted only until Doman became belligerent again and reportedly stated that "Eva was speaking nothing but evil against us" (Thom 1954: 359). Even so, Van Riebeeck was not swayed by Doman, trusting that Krotoa's intentions were sound. But do we know the truth of the matter here? Was Krotoa indeed aiding the Dutch by establishing positive connections with the Cochoquas, or was she perhaps finding herself a new "home" among them? Though it is perhaps unlikely that she actively campaigned against the Dutch, one cannot help but speculate that she may in some way have enjoyed her time with the Cochoquas—not least because she was apparently none too eager to return to the fort.

The ambiguity of Krotoa's actions and the consequent difficulty we face in knowing her loyalties are powerfully revealed in her actions as a go-between. If we relinquish any preconceptions we have of Krotoa as an innocent victim of circumstance, it is not outside the realm of possibility that she was presenting herself to each party involved in as positive a light as she could at this time, intuitively understanding what each party wanted and how they envisaged her role. Krotoa may in fact have been sincere in her devotion to the Dutch, but I find it more likely that she understood that the *appearance* of loyalty was necessary to remain under their protection and to continue to enjoy status in their society. Similarly (though of this there is no record), she may have understood too well that the Cochoquas would require a comparable assertion of loyalty, or why else would they trust her? If Doman attempted to ruin her credibility with the Dutch, it is not inconceivable that he would have tried to do the same with the Khoekhoe groups, thus compelling Krotoa to assure them of her loyalty. At the very least, the situation in 1658 leads me to believe that Krotoa would have been under pressure from a number of sides and would have to have handled the situation with delicacy and shrewdness.

Moreover, her position was constantly in flux and she could never be sure of it, so she had to continually negotiate and remanoeuvre it. Krotoa's in-between status is thus not in itself a sufficient descriptor of her being. Instead, it should be accompanied by a recognition that she was attempting to exert some agency over her fate by *presenting* herself in various ways to the different parties. We do not know what her actual loyalties were, nor to what extent she felt she belonged to any of the groups among which she moved. Instead, we have on record how she presented herself—her persona rather than her person.

Krotoa's position in relation to the various parties at the Cape became increasingly complicated and had finally unravelled by the time of her death. Her attempts to favourably manipulate her position with Van Riebeeck had begun to arouse suspicion, and she was held in ever-diminishing regard by successive commanders after Van Riebeeck's departure, none of whom afforded Krotoa the same power or regarded her with any affection. By the time of her death, Krotoa was widowed, her children had been taken from her, and she had fallen into disrepute. Despite her demeaned stature at this time, Krotoa's death was not only reported but also extensively recorded in a journal entry. Schoeman (2009: 41) remarks on the emotional tone of the entry:

> On Sunday 29 July 1674 the Journal in an especially striking long passage described how the wind, which had been raging for two days, suddenly abated, "struck dumb and banished from the world", and "the furious waves of the sea were changed into tranquillity".

This passage marks Krotoa's final appearance in the journals:

> This day departed this life, a certain female Hottentoo [sic], namely Eva, long ago taken from the African brood in her tender childhood by the Hon: van Riebeeck, and educated in his house as well as brought to the knowledge of the Christian faith, and being thus transformed from a female Hottentoo almost into a Netherland woman, was married to a certain Chief Surgeon of this Residency, by whom she had three children still living, and some others which had died. Since his death however at Madagascar, she had brought forth as many illegitimate ones, and for the rest, led such an irregular life, that for a long while the desire would have existed of getting rid of her, had it not been for the hope of the conversion of this brutal aboriginal, which was always still hovering between. Hence in order not to be accused of tolerating her adulterous and debauched life, she had at various times been relegated to Robben Island, where, though she could obtain no drink, she abandoned herself to immorality. Pretended reformation induced the Authorities many times to call her back to the Cape, but as soon as she returned, she, like the dogs, always *returned to her own vomit*, so that finally she quenched *the fire of her sensuality by death* [*door de lijdelycke doot*], affording a manifest example that nature, however closely and firmly muzzled by imprinted principles, nevertheless at its own time triumphing over all precepts, again rushes back to its inborn qualities. (Leibbrandt 1896–1901: 209, emphases added.)[34]

As Schoeman points out, the conjunction of the storm and Krotoa's death in this entry might strike the contemporary reader as poetic and, if read as such, could inspire an affective response. However, the writing itself is also particularly emotive. The phrases "brutal aboriginal" and "returned to her own vomit" are disturbingly disparaging and bring into consciousness an emotion the author presumably felt while writing the entry. We cannot see her accurately through

his words, but we can intimate the weightiness of her presence in the early Cape colony. Moreover, the phrase "the fire of her sensuality" conveys an altogether palpable sense of a living human being, embodied and present, even if we—as we must—distrust the tone of the description. We are tantalised by the impact she must have made to elicit such an emotional response.

The report of her death is a sterling example of how, though the substance of Krotoa as person is absent from the writing, we are reminded that we do not know enough about her to reconstruct her presentness. Despite the offensive vocabulary of the passage, we are confronted by a very tangible *imprint* of what is absent from the archival text. The examples explored in the journals—her guile, being quoted in direct speech and the uncertainty of her loyalties—are all imprints of her absence. However, these imprints can only suggest potentialities or perhaps invite us to speculate; they cannot offer us actualities.

It may be possible, for example, to imagine more agency for Krotoa than she has so far been credited with in many contemporary narrations, as we are alerted in the journals to the treacherous territories she inhabited and had to navigate. We can imagine a deliberateness to her actions rather than thinking of her as being helplessly afloat on the sea of colonial activity. We might also intimate that in the present moments of her life she considered and planned for uncertain outcomes, while lacking any real insight into how she might have regarded these possibilities. Even in her death, Krotoa made an impact, inspiring the journal's author to reflect on her life and impact on the developing colonial society.

Regardless, whatever sense one might be beguiled into making of Krotoa's actions, only an imprint is available to us in the archives, not the actuality of her presentness. The imprint itself cannot be observed directly, however, and can only be discerned by the shape of the material from which it is constructed. While one cannot glean any definitive knowledge as to Krotoa's inner thoughts, her presentness can be strongly felt through the language of the journals, particularly through the use of direct quotation. It is ironic that the report of (supposedly) direct speech might alert one to absence, but it is a compelling evocation that she *was* present and powerfully reminds us of how little of that presentness can now be accessed. Even when looking specifically for the indicators of presence, only imprints are to be found.

It is also important to keep in mind that this imprint refers to a singular individual. I have aimed to demonstrate that Krotoa had a conspicuous existence in the early Cape Colony, which is evident in the vividness with which she is portrayed. I have in my mind the palpable sense of running my fingers over the grain of the VOC documents and discovering impressions therein whenever I encounter a section on Krotoa.

The specificity of her appearance provides us with a glimpse of the distinctiveness of her character, a distinctiveness whose fullness is now lost to us. When we consider her exceptional life and think about what is absent from her archive, just as Samuelson argued that we cannot reduce her to her womb, we similarly cannot dismiss specificity in favour of a generalised view of Krotoa as a token of oppressed people. Centring the specificity of the absences for an understanding of Krotoa's life is to resist the flattening out of her narrative, and the pressure exerted on the archives in which Krotoa appears drives the elision of this specificity. Contrarily, to acknowledge

that the absences are unique, that the imprints are particular, is to acknowledge that they cannot be filled by the presence itself, as her actual presentness cannot be restored.

I have found an interplay of presence and absence in the VOC journals when Krotoa is mentioned. This is perhaps not surprising, as scholars who work with archives regularly encounter and become aware of absence. In Krotoa's case, the archival absences are especially provocative and have frequently been utilised in historical narration—as argued in this chapter—in service of imaginative reconstruction to answer the needs of the present, notably of post-apartheid South Africa. These reconstructions evidence the pressure exerted on the archive, namely the need within the present to have the archive speak to it, and they seize on the absences as opportunities for imagination and ways to bend the narrative—if unconsciously—to the ends of our present.

Despite all her struggling and crafty negotiation, Krotoa failed to acquire the power that could sustain her position—but she did not, and could not, know it at the time. One might be moved, as I am, by this ultimately futile struggle, and such a response is intensified when Krotoa's anxieties and uncertainties, as intimated in the archive, are considered. Knowing how Krotoa's story ended provides us with a different perspective on her life than she could have had at the time. I thus consider her struggle not for the purpose of outlining the significance of her whole life story to us in the present. Instead, when I contemplate Krotoa's struggle in *her* present moment, largely unvoiced as it is in the archives, I find it delineated as an imprint of absence.

But while absence resonates throughout the archive, it does not speak alone; as one recognises the imprint of absence, one must also acknowledge what is lost. We encounter absence when engaging with the archive, but we do the archive a disservice if we do not listen to the resonance of absence, or when we silence absence with our own inventions. The difficulty, then, is in centring the absence so that its effects on the archive can be apprehended.

To this end, I wish to return to two images that were presented at the beginning of this chapter. The first is the "portrait" of Krotoa, the wide usage of which is, I argued, the result of the need for an image of Krotoa even in—particularly in—its absence. It emerged as a consequence of pressure on the archives, to fill a gap in the extant archival material. However, if we position absence in the archive in which Krotoa appears as an imprint rather than a gap, we are moved to consider a different figuration than that of a portrait.

In place of a portrait I offer *Remnants and Ancestors V* (from my exhibition at the Castle), which shows an interior wall in the Castle of Good Hope; in the wall is an arched recess. Far more than any "portrait", this image encapsulates my understanding of Krotoa's presence in the VOC journals. The wall is a physical object in the world and, like the physical documents and information contained and recorded in archives, is a "positive" space. The recess is ostensibly empty space and, like the absences in archives, is a negative space. The emptiness of the recess is not limited to that part which,

if filled, would yield a seamless wall. The absence extends much further: the space that constitutes the absence of “wall” comprises the entirety of the room in which the wall exists, and beyond. It is the entirety of the space surrounding and contained by the wall— the building and everything else that is tangibly present. If we were to “fill” this absence of wall, we would have to fill all of this space. This is, of course, an impossible task, but so too is the task of “filling” the absences in the archives in which Krotoa appears. If the archival absences that relate to Krotoa are understood as imprints, figuring these absences is not a matter of “filling in”. Instead, we require a shift in seeing, a figuration that makes manifest the extent of absence.

# Chapter One Endnotes

1. There is of course another way to look at this, namely that the epithet "princess" is a self-conscious reclamation or honorific intended to convey respect. The article itself does not reflect on this.
2. See, for instance, the page about Krotoa on the South Africa History Online website (South African History Online 2019) and the web-based Cape Town Museum's entry for Krotoa (Cape Town Museum 2018).
3. In *Seven Khoi Lives* (2009), for example, Karel Schoeman notes that Van Riebeeck's journal refers to Krotoa as being about fifteen or sixteen years old in 1657. It is an interesting thought that this makes her an exact contemporary of Isaac Newton.
4. The nature of Krotoa's role in the Van Riebeeck household is not precisely known and has over the years been a source of speculation. It is another silence that has invited writers to imaginatively embellish it.
5. Although it is today commonly assumed that Krotoa was the only Khoekhoe girl to be taken into Van Riebeeck's home, Elphick's (1977: 177) description suggests otherwise: "Khoikhoi women were taken into Dutch homes from the very beginning and were trained as domestic servants. Van Riebeeck had several such maids, of whom Eva was the best known."
6. Elphick remarks that it is unlikely that this woman was really her sister, but rather that Krotoa most probably did not use the word "siste" in the way it was understood by the Dutch.
7. Ten Rhijne's (1742: 770) entry on Krotoa reads: "Whilst I tarried there, I had the opportunity to talk sometimes with three women of the Hottentotes; one named Eve, was a civil person, and would discourse very rationally; as she was well versed in the Dutch and Portuguese languages, so I learned from her divers secrets relating to this nation."
8. "From the Biography of a Hottentot Woman; An Experiment in Civilisation" (own translation).
9. Elphick's distinction relies on the notion that the Khoikhoi were mostly agricultural communities, while the San were hunter-gatherers. Elphick's account is far more detailed than I am able to convey here, however.
10. Elphick does not state his political or theoretical biases outright and refers to himself throughout the text as simply a "historian".
11. The book evidences a number of meticulous distinctions between terms, definitions and what can be considered historically accurate, as opposed to simply being a consequence of colonial and racist myth-making. For example, Elphick (1977: xv) establishes early on that he uses the term "Khoikhoi" rather than the pejorative term "Hottentot", a word he unpacks quite early on as being problematic for a number of reasons. He also attempts to outline the effects that colonial occupation might have had on the Khoikhoi, their systematic decline under increasing European domination and possible reasons for their ultimate decimation. Moreover, his project itself can be seen as an attempt to understand the role the Khoikhoi played at a certain point in history, but also how they fundamentally shaped the emergence of a colonial settlement that prefigures contemporary South African society and its complexities. Such a project (though not stated outright) presented a challenge to the purist mythologies that were dominant at the time.
12. Malherbe refers to the journals edited by HB Thom in the 1952–1958 publication.
13. This collection of poems is contained in the volume *Bird Heart Stoning the Sea; Krotoa's Story; Lines of Force: A Small Murder Mystery* (1990).
14. The other figures are Doman, Sousoa, Oedasoa, Ngonnemoa, Sara and Dorha.
15. "It is always remarkable, regarding the seventeenth century at least, how interesting, by closer inspection, most of the lives that have been incidentally rediscovered seem to be, and how colourful and larger-than-life these figures appear. One can argue that every one of these individuals could be the subject of a novel, were it not for the fact that the reality is in itself interesting enough not to need romanticisation … The stories of these people's lives … are founded in historical research and is throughout 'truthful', not fiction or imagination." (Own translation.)
16. Andrew Putter's video installation entitled *Secretly I Will Love You More* (2007) and Lien Botha's exhibition at the Castle of Good Hope, *Krotoa's Room* (1995), are notable examples of this.
17. "Historical novel about Pieternella and Eva-Krotoa" (own translation).
18. In 2009, an English translation of the novel by Malcolm Hacksley was published as *Pieternella, Daughter of Eva*.
19. Dan Sleigh is also the author of *Eilande* ("Islands").
20. "Two-headed woman. Who had to stand between Hottentot and Dutchman so that the livestock and beads could quietly be taken away and hidden … Messenger. From Oedasoa to Mr. Van Riebeeck. From Mr. Van Riebeeck to Oedasoa." (Own translation.)
21. "Sorry, I forget, they say your mother was also a Hottentot—was she? Yes. Luckily you did not inherit much blackness! Ha-ha-ha. Luckily you are quite pale, but, one can tell, not completely white. Hottentots are not black. How so? You wouldn't understand." (Own translation.)
22. "There was a tambour [drummer], his name was Arent. And his friend, Frans Cuiper, a soldier. Then they deserted. They knew they would be in a lot of trouble, but they deserted anyway. 'Idiots,' says her mother." (Own translation.)
23. A translation by André Brink, entitled *Islands*, was published in 2004. It was widely circulated and favourably received by international critics.
24. "He could see how Eva was growing distant from Van Riebeeck and his wife, the habits, the courteous language of the large house and the religion she had learned there. She drank more and sometimes swore. She learnt that from him. Sometimes she wanted to speak only in the Koina tongue, to him and all the others. He suspected

that she had already fallen out of favour with the Van Riebeecks. She was now alone among strangers." (Own translation.)

25. It is worth nothing that the Gorinhaicona did not speak Nama (which was spoken most notably in the Richtersveld area) as their native tongue, a language associated more with Northern Cape and Namibian speakers.
26. The English translation of the lullaby sung by Maria in the video is provided in the catalogue as follows:
    Do not fear me little one—
    Welcome into our home!
    How beautiful you are,
    little shiny one, with your woolly hair, smelling of sweet buchu.
    Your differences from me makes you so precious!
    Your smallness belies your significance.
    Meeting you has changed us forever.
    I will love you as I love my own children:
    Secretly I will love you more.
    The warm summer wind blows and it makes me dream.
    I dream of your people and my people changing each other.
    Welcome into our home precious child
    (Pather 2007: 166).
    The Nama lyrics are given as:
    *"Ta !ao ti ǂkhariro—*
    *//Kore //kare-he sida oms !nâ.*
    *Mati koses a exa naparas !abuxa /ûn/kha*
    *ǂkhon buxuba rahâm.*
    *Sa !kharasasib ge.*
    *//n_tikose sasa ra !gom/gausa kai.*
    *Sa !kharisib ge ra sa !gom /gausasiba ra ǂhûmi kai.*
    *Sasa /hau-us ge sida huka-/gui ra /khara/khara.*
    *O ta ni /namsi ti oâna ta /nam khemi:*
    *ǂGan!gâsa se ta ni /namsi !nasase.*
    */Gamsa //khanab di ǂoab ta !gom tsî ra //habo kai te.*
    *//Hawo tara o ti khoin tsî sa khoin xa ra în /khara.*
    *//Ore //hares sida oms !nâ !gom/gausa /_oa*" (ibid.).
27. Karen Press's collection of poems, entitled *Krotoa's Story* (1990), is another creative reworking of Krotoa's life. It is largely "voiced" from Krotoa's perspective and is laudable for its imaginative play with Krotoa's interior world instead of attempting a reconstruction of the exterior details of her life.
28. The entry was subsequently greatly expanded and now includes numerous references to scholarly texts that focus on Krotoa.
29. The other women featured in Samuelson's text are Nongqawuse, Sara Bartman and Winnie Mandela.
30. As Samuelson (2007: 19) notes, various white South Africans have laid claim to Krotoa as ancestor, including former president FW De Klerk and journalist Max du Preez.
31. Another instance of Krotoa's words being reported directly can be found in the entry for 3 July 1658, where Krotoa intervenes on behalf of her uncle and agitates against the Kaapmans. While Doman is attributed with one line of quoted text, Krotoa's entire argument is quoted at length, and it is noted that she spoke in Dutch (Thom 1954: 297–8): "Eva then asked: 'If the Kaapmans wished to appear so honest, why did they not return the cattle to the Commander? They are as great thieves and rogues as Harry's people, for as soon as anything had been stolen they plotted together and then shared the booty. To give Harry all the blame would certainly not be right.' These words were spoken by the interpreter Eva in Dutch."
32. More information on these conflicts can be found in Elphick's *Kraal and Castle* (1977).
33. See, for example, an entry in the journal from 20 September 1659, in which Krotoa is instrumental in negotiating the return of stolen livestock to the Dutch from her uncle Oedasoa, while convincing Van Riebeeck to forgive the theft (Thom 1958: 133–4). And on 8 December 1659, the journal records that Krotoa was representing the same uncle to "interview the commander [Van Riebeeck]" (Thom 1958: 160–1). Krotoa's prominence as ambassador for Oedasoa is apparent in an entry from 18 January 1660: "The Kaapmans also said that the commander kept Eva at the fort, and that Oedasoa allowed her to stay there so that she could go to and fro as his agent in order that she might find out what was happening at the fort and discover our plans" (Thom 1958: 176). The journal entry for 28 September 1660 records that "Eva appears to be on good terms with everyone except the Kaapmans, who are jealous of her, for they think that she reveals too much about their actions and of this country's state of affairs. This is quite true, for we should be ignorant of many things without Eva, though she has been caught telling untruths occasionally" (Thom 1958: 266). These entries demonstrate the ease of movement that Krotoa had established between most groups at the Cape, and that the Dutch valued her information but were perhaps wary of her deceptions.
34. The commander at the Cape at the time of Krotoa's death, and implicit author of this entry, was Isbrand Goske.

CHAPTER TWO

# Anne

*I meet the genealogist in the sprawling Woltemade cemetery in Cape Town under a cluster of tall trees. Massive pylons buzz overhead with electric energy. She gestures to a non-descript patch of graves. I am looking for the gravestone of Andrew Barnard, Anne's husband, who died at the Cape in 1807. Until now, no one seemed to know where it was. I understood, from Dorothea Fairbridge's memoir, that Anne commissioned the gravestone in London, had it shipped to the Cape to be placed on Andrew's grave at the Dutch Reformed Cemetery in the centre of Cape Town. But the graves were moved in the early twentieth century to the Woltemade site and records do not indicate where in its vast plot the stones now lay. Only the genealogist could offer this small clue: the "very old" ones are* here. *As we walk on the gravestones, (they are now serving as stepping-stones between other graves) my eye falls upon a fragment of a phrase engraved into one of them. It reads: "*His afflicted widow*..." The lettering is different from the other stones—their forms more exaggeratedly rendered. This is Andrew's stone, I know, because Fairbridge had recorded the inscription when she visited it in its previous location. In fullness it read, "His afflicted widow, who at a distance deplores her loss, has erected this tablet as a mark of her liveliest sorrow. Colonist! Drop a tear to his memory. He sought the welfare of your country and he loved its inhabitants." (Fairbridge 1924: 332)*

**Left: Zaayman, C. 2012. *Remnants and Ancestors VI.***

When I visited Balcarres, the Scottish castle where Anne Barnard was born and raised, I had the opportunity to view in person the three volumes of her Cape journals, the production of which she had overseen herself. Until this time, I had accessed Anne's writing solely through published material. Upon seeing the journals, I was struck by the attention and care with which Anne assembled them. Approximately A3 in size, the scale of the volumes is immediately impressive, and they are meticulously bound in brown-green leather accented with gold inlays. Their neat, ornate script is laid down on thick paper. Impressive detail and graceful drawings adorn the pages. Her family has lovingly preserved the journals and kept them in the family's private collection.

The frontispiece of each volume is illustrated. One of the illustrations is a portrait of Anne and another that of her husband.[1] A third shows a wreath encircling the name "Louisa"—the nom de plume Anne assumed while writing her journals. This page came as something of a surprise to me: I was impressed by how the delicate and precise drawing seemed to glow on the page, and I swiftly felt justified in having travelled to Balcarres. In all the material I had read before coming to Balcarres, no reproduction of this image exists. Yet in the physical form of the Balcarres volumes, the emblem takes pride of place, and its preservation was clearly important to the author. The delicacy of the watercolour rendering and the sensitivity with which the rays of light are made to emanate from the heraldic inscription testify to the skill of its production. In the face of the prominently placed


**Right:**
**Frontispiece to a volume of Anne's memoir.**

drawing, I wondered why it has been left out of the publications of Anne's writing. The emblematic inscription is a device whereby Anne represented herself, but it has been neglected by others in the telling of her story.

Contrary to the popular mythology built up around Krotoa, as explored in the previous chapter, Anne's present-day reception is far less celebratory. As can perhaps be expected, Anne is not generally regarded as an illustrious heroine in post-apartheid South Africa, and her story is generally considered as part of the colonial legacy of the Cape, which is currently subject to much timely critique. Moreover, in other ways, Anne's archive could not be more different from the one in which Krotoa appears. Hers is a full archive, brimming not only with "fact"—particularly concerning daily activities at the Cape—but also with observations and reflections in her own words. However, as with the illustration of the name "Louisa" , aspects of Anne's archive have not been taken up into narrations of her biography but nevertheless bear contemplation.

**Above and Right: A volume of Anne's memoir.**

Throughout her life, Anne kept personal diaries. In 1815, at the age of sixty-five, she decided to revise these and have them transcribed, and she produced six volumes of memoirs. These volumes have not been published. In addition to the memoirs, Anne produced three volumes detailing her time at the Cape, which are known as the "Cape Journals" and are divided into the "Sea Journal" (Volume 1), "Residence at the Cape of Good Hope" (Volume 2) and "Tour into the Interior of Africa" (Volume 3). Of her private diaries, only those for 1799 and 1800 remain (Lenta 2006: 14), as she destroyed most of the originals after their transcription. She also contributed to *Lives of the Lindsays; or, A Memoir of the Houses of Crawford and Balcarres*, published in 1849.

Anne's writing has been in circulation since the early twentieth century, with significant additions made available in the late 1990s. Volumes containing her letters can easily be accessed in the collections of South African university libraries, and in second-hand bookstores one frequently comes across tomes

by her principal biographers, Madeleine Masson and Dorothea Fairbridge. With so much material in existence, a fair amount of which is in publication, Anne is not considered an obscure figure of the past, and neither is there absence of self-representation. Nonetheless, there are limits to how her writing has been employed by (mainly) historians, particularly with regards to the scope (with attention being paid almost exclusively to her short stay at the Cape) and the valorising style with which she is described. One reason that Anne's writing about the Cape has been the focus of most of the publications about her life is that the writing is notable for its evocation of a specific period of interest to historians. Furthermore, the overwhelming majority of scholarly work about Anne has been produced in South Africa for a South African readership. Consequently, Anne's life outside of the Cape context has been largely ignored or relegated to contextual background for the main research into her representations of colonial life.

I wish to offer a contrasting reading of Anne's work in this chapter by clearly bringing into focus how deeply she was influenced by the Scottish Enlightenment and show that this intellectual environment affected her life and writing profoundly, as Anne was no idle bystander to the intellectual milieu of the eighteenth century. In addition, until now, very little attention has been paid to the *form* of her writing—that is, her poetics and the visual qualities of the journals that she created and curated. By contrast, I consider these elements to be highly significant. The shift in emphasis that is present in my reading arises from my own position as a visual artist. By providing such a reading, I wish to demonstrate what is yielded by a literary and visual approach to the archive, an approach that pays attention to the physical qualities of archival objects and the expressive qualities of their surfaces. I wish to consider how an apparent "fullness" of presence in the archives screens us from the absences within it. Due to the self-consciousness of self-presentation, Anne's archive cannot be understood as simple reportage on the past, and I aim to demonstrate that her texts also bear the imprint of absence. By analysing these elements, I show that absence manifests not only in relation to empty or sparsely populated archives that have failed to preserve the voices of the dispossessed, but with "full", self-authored archives as well.

## A Literary Life

Drawing on the biographical texts about Anne, the central tenets of her life can be summarised as follows: Anne Lindsay was born in 1750, the first daughter of James Lindsay, sixth Earl of Balcarres, and Anne Dalrymple. Aged fifty-eight at the time of the marriage, the Earl was far older than his twenty-two-year-old bride. Anne Dalrymple raised her eleven children strictly and meanly, as most of the family's aristocratic wealth had been depleted by James Lindsay's involvement in the Jacobite rebellion of 1746. Anne's privilege therefore only manifested as social standing, so that she found herself in the intellectual circles of her era, rather than great material wealth.

Throughout her life, Anne's eldest sister, Margaret, was her closest companion and confidant. It was also Margaret who, exasperated by their mother's excessive strictness, assembled a band of six of the Lindsay children intending to run away from home. Their flight was short-lived however, as the shepherd of the estate, one "Old Robin Gray", discovered them and sent them home. Anne later immortalised the shepherd by taking his name for her poem, "Auld Robin Gray". Though she used his name, the story was inspired

by Margaret's dilemma regarding her marriage prospects. Being widely admired as a beauty, Margaret was in demand by suitors and ultimately married Alexander Fordyce, a much older, wealthy banker. Their union was doomed, however, as Fordyce lost all his money and died soon after, leaving his widow without the wealth for which she had married him in the first place.

During the eighteenth century, Edinburgh was at the heart of the Scottish Enlightenment. Intellectuals and scholars such as David Hume, Adam Smith and Samuel Johnson were all based in the city that bore the nickname "the Athens of the North". The ideas that emerged from this productive period of intellectual endeavour were to have a profound effect on the fight for American independence (1783) and the French Revolution (1789).[2]

In the city of Edinburgh today, the spires and monuments that make up its characteristic skyline read like Anne's social calendar—Sir Walter Scott and Henry Dundas, the Viscount Melville (both friends of Anne), are particularly prominent. Although women writers in the main did not publish texts at this time,[3] there was a fashion among upper-class women for entertaining "gentlemen of letters" and hosting discussions in their "salons". The women who held these salons were known by the somewhat derogatory term "blue-stocking". Anne consistently denied being a "blue-stocking" but was nonetheless very much part of the entertaining society


Right: Statue of David Hume in Edinburgh.

and, as such, fostered friendships with Henry Dundas and others.[4]

In 1773, Anne moved to London to join her widowed sister. They lived together in Manchester Square and later in Berkeley Square. During this time, Anne and Margaret became known as "the Lindsay Sisters", partly due to their being inseparable but also because of their prominence in intellectual social circles. From around 1773 to 1783, Anne met and befriended the then Prince of Wales, who later became the Prince Regent and eventually King George IV. Anne suffered an unrequited infatuation with William Windham, whom Margaret nicknamed "Weathercock Windham" (Masson 1948: 62) due to his fickle nature and his inconstant attentions towards Anne. Anne's romantic interest also seems to have been aroused by Henry Dundas. General opinion held that an engagement would be imminent, but in this respect Anne was destined for disappointment once more, as Dundas quite unexpectedly became engaged to one Lady Jane Hope.

Although she largely resigned herself to remaining unmarried, Anne eventually consented to marry Andrew Barnard, son of the Bishop of Limerick, in 1793, after four years of refusing his proposals. Andrew struggled to find employment, and so Anne entreated Dundas to make a position available to him. Dundas offered Barnard the post of Colonial Secretary at the Cape of Good Hope, soon after the British took over its occupation from the

Dutch to keep it from the French, with whom they were at war. This offer did not initially please Anne, but she eventually accepted and the pair set off for the Cape in 1797, where they remained until 1802.[5]

During their early years at the Cape, Anne and Andrew stayed at the Castle of Good Hope. In the first couple of years of the British Cape Colony, the wife of Lord Macartney, the commander, did not accompany him, and therefore many of the societal responsibilities of the colonial government fell to Anne. Because of these duties, Anne is most often remembered for these social activities, with sites like "Lady Anne Barnard's Ballroom" at the Castle of Good Hope memorialising her time in Cape Town in this vein. In 1798, Anne undertook a journey to the interior of the Cape with her husband, her sister-in-law and a number of slaves. Anne also climbed Table Mountain, accompanied by John Barrow as well as, once again, an entourage of slaves. (Barrow was a statesman and travel writer famed for his accounts of what the English public in the late eighteenth century would have considered "exotic" locations. His volume *An Account of Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa, in the Years 1797 and 1798* (1802) comprises a collection of his observations of the Cape and the interior from that time). Anne returned to London before Andrew, who was sent back to the Cape in 1806 during the second British occupation of the Cape and died there. Anne spent her remaining life in London and died in 1825.

## A Familiar Narrative

All of the publications about Anne draw primarily on two sources.[6] The first of these, and the one that provided most of the material used in the early publications, is the collection of letters that Anne wrote to Henry Dundas, Viscount Melville and the British Secretary of War from 1794 to 1801. These letters were held at Melville Castle in Scotland and were subsequently placed on public auction, where they were bought by the South African Library in 1948 and are currently held in its collection (Lenta 2006: 11). The second source of letters and diaries is the Crawford papers, far broader in scope and housed in the National Library of Scotland with other family documents. The more prized works, notably the meticulously produced memoirs and Cape Journals, are kept at the private residence of the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres in Fifeshire, Scotland. These provide the bulk of material drawn upon by later publications.[7]

The earliest biography of Anne Barnard was published under the title *South Africa a Century Ago; Letters Written from the Cape of Good Hope 1797–1801 by the Lady Anne Barnard* (1901), edited by Henry Williams Wilkins (Wilkins's work was adapted by HJ Anderson in 1924). The title of this volume is telling: Wilkins suggests that his present time can learn from Anne's writing about her time. Indeed, Wilkins indicates this in his preface:

> These letters … are full of shrewd observations and wise suggestions as to the government of the Colony, especially with regard to the treatment of the natives and the conciliation of the Dutch. The student of history will note, too, that many of the same problems presented themselves for solution a century ago in South Africa as present themselves to-day; the same difficulties arose, and perhaps the same mistakes were committed on either side. (Wilkins 1901: ix)

He continues:

> They reveal, like everything else she wrote, the same sterling qualities—a keen perception, a liberal mind, a warm heart, and a magnetic gift of sympathy. (Wilkins 1901: ix-x)

While not entirely an apology for British colonial occupation in South Africa, the book nevertheless stages the colonial presence as embodied by Anne as benign and beneficial. Wilkins refers to his own contribution as a memoir, which, being

distinct from "biography" by its suggestion of intimacy to its subject, guides him to write in a lively style replete with animated characterisation. Wilkins provides a reasonably comprehensive biography of Anne at the start of the text, detailing her family background, childhood and residence in London. Following this are the letters Anne wrote to Henry Dundas from the Cape, which deliver a vivid account of Anne's time in the colony, including personal observations about social events and government affairs. If read critically, *South Africa a Century Ago* is ultimately concerned with establishing a record of the first British occupation of the Cape Colony through Anne's writing, one that provides legitimacy for Britain's continuous presence in the country. On the surface, however, the book presents a portrait of Anne that is lively and characterful and apparently comprehensive.

Dorothea Fairbridge, author of historical fiction and non-fiction, compiled the volume *Lady Anne Barnard at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797–1802* (1924). In her career, Fairbridge wrote various works about South African history and farm life, as well as novels in which the South African landscape features prominently.[8] Being thoroughly steeped in the context and ideals of the Union of South Africa, her writing is not at odds with the values of South Africa as a British dominion. Her attitude towards Anne is one of admiration, and consequently the text is honed to portray Anne in the best possible light—as in, broadly speaking, aligned with the ideology of the late colonial period.

In *Lady Anne Barnard at the Cape of Good Hope*, Fairbridge provides only a brief biographical sketch of Anne's life before her time at the Cape, which is followed by transcriptions in chronological order of various letters between Anne and the Earl Macartney. These letters are succinctly introduced and annotated by Fairbridge to render their context more fully. The text is sprinkled with black-and-white reproductions of Anne's sketches and watercolours, often attempting to match people or places mentioned in the letters. Nowhere in the text does Fairbridge explicitly describe the process she followed to decide which letters to include in the publication, but there is nevertheless a close relationship between the letters and the events that Fairbridge recounts in her own annotations to the text. It thus seems that letters were chosen as illustrations for the biography. Fairbridge's volume hardly refers to Anne's life after her stay at the Cape at all but does include a section on the death of Andrew Barnard.

Central to Fairbridge's book is her attempt to provide a coherent biography in which there is narrative flow and a persuasive sense of character. And what rich material Anne provides for her biographer! There is no apparent friction between Fairbridge's writing and Anne's letters (or her sketches and paintings); they seem to flow seamlessly into one another, contriving to bring into being a portrait of Anne as a grounded and clever woman, but also adventurous and humane: a model colonist.

Madeleine Masson authored *Lady Anne Barnard: The Court and Colonial Service under George III and the Regency* in 1948. Her text provides some background to Anne's childhood and youth but remains focused on her time at the Cape for a large portion of the narrative. Masson's volume is biography proper: lively and intimate, evidencing clear admiration for her subject. Because of her apparent sympathy for Anne, Masson does not concern herself with any polemics as regards Anne's character. Instead, she views her own biography as one that already runs counter to the fashionable trends of the mid-twentieth century:

> The enormous bulk of literature, recently become so popular, which highlights the life of the eighteenth century, deals almost exclusively with glamorised personages caught up in the social and political whirlpool of the time … On those who broke away from that circle, a quite different and

> sometimes inadequate lustre has been shed. The personages of the day attained their eminence largely in the social context, and to depart from it—to venture into the world at large—was but to court obscurity. Yet a few who had the courage to break away did indeed make their mark on the world at large. Such a one was Lady Anne Barnard. (Masson 1948: 7)

Masson casts Anne as a maverick, a trailblazer of sorts, succeeding against the odds and on her own terms, thereby endowing her biography with a sense of adventure and, again, with a coherent sense of Anne as a person.

In fact, Masson writes her memoir on Anne with the self-assurance befitting the author of a novel. She starts the book with a description of Anne's place of birth, followed by a chronological tale that reads like a work of fiction. When one reads a work of fiction, the reader may be inclined to accept the author's judgments of the protagonist's character (unless, of course, there is an ironic positioning of the narrative voice). Masson's book can be said to have established a conception of Anne's character, and in many senses her book still influences the way she is viewed in the present—particularly in portraying Anne as a sparkling socialite with high moral values, practical intelligence and singular sympathy. She attempts a full reconstruction not only of Anne's life events but of her very personality. However, writing as she is a hundred years removed from Anne's context, Masson's judgments on Anne's personality and character (a consistent theme in Masson's writing) must be considered tenuous. Masson reduces her portrayal to an idiosyncratic construction of the "character" Lady Anne Barnard, ignoring everything absent from her archive.

Sometime director of the South African Library AM Lewin Robinson has taken a special interest in the letters that Anne wrote to Dundas, which are housed in the library's collection. These letters were published under Robinson's editorship as *An Observant, Amusing & Highly-Personal Account of Domestic Life at the Cape: The Letters of Lady Anne Barnard, Written to Henry Dundas from the Cape of Good Hope 1793–1803* (1973). His book presents letters authored for the most part by Anne but also features a selection of letters written by Dundas, Earl Macartney and others.

Although the earliest letters are dated slightly before the Barnards' departure for the Cape, the scope of Robinson's collection remains fundamentally constrained by the period of their stay in Cape Town. Robinson inserts only the shortest editorial commentaries with which to orientate the reader in select passages of the text, which is otherwise dominated by the letters in their full length. His apparent intention in publishing the letters again (in light of their earlier publication) was to correct what he saw as liberties taken with their editing in Wilkins's edition. It seems clear, however, that this volume was also intended to increase public circulation of material under the care of the South African Library that was of significance to the writing and understanding of the country's history.

Currently, the most visible circulation of Anne's writing exists in the form of the three volumes published by the Van Riebeeck Society entitled *The Cape Diaries of Lady Anne Barnard*. The first volume (published in 1993), which is presently by far the hardest to find (both to purchase and in libraries), covers the letters written between 1797 and 1798, while the next two volumes (published in 1998) together contain letters from 1799 to 1800. In his foreword to the first volume, Frank Bradlow (in Robinson, Lenta & Driver 1993: viii–ix), then chairman of the Van Riebeeck Society, notes that this series of letters was made available in print through the work of various collaborators, not least of whom was the Earl of Crawford. This marks the first publication of these specific letters and diaries, as all previous publications had concerned themselves with the letters written to Dundas that were originally housed at Melville Castle in Scotland. The

first and second volumes are prefaced and contain introductions (by Margaret Lenta, Antony Lewin Robinson and Dorothy Driver in the first, and by Margaret Lenta and Basil le Cordeur in the second).

The framing of the first volume of the Van Riebeeck Society publications is quite distinct from that of the second two, as it contains something quite unique in the *oeuvre* of engagements with Anne's writing: a critical assessment. Dorothy Driver's introduction to this volume, entitled "A Literary Appraisal", offers a perspective on the letters and diaries that is informed by the academic discourses of Feminism and Postcolonialism (to employ the very broadest of terms), both of which had seldom been brought to bear on the material in earlier appraisals. As concerns the gendered analysis of Anne's writing, Driver contextualises it within her social status as upper-class eighteenth century British woman:

> In women of her class and time, intelligence, erudition and curiosity would typically be channelled into the art of conversation, but her own aspirations were broader. From the first days of her sea voyage to the Cape, she readily takes on the role of scientist, naturalist and proto-anthropologist, collecting data and making true-to-life sketches; she also focuses on what she calls the "domestic particulars" ignored by "Men of Science" and "Men of Letters". (Driver in Robinson et al. 1993: 3)

The second context of Anne's writing with which Driver is concerned is that of colonialism and how it shaped Anne's outlook. Driver's introduction is noteworthy for the fact that it does not attempt to absolve Anne of complicity in the issues surrounding colonialism. Driver remarks on the challenge that these diaries present to a contemporary reader, one embedded in the post-apartheid context of the present and possibly dismissive of Anne as colonial "agent":

> In response to this antagonism, and in response, too, to other South African readers who embrace "our Lady Anne" with affection and pride, it is worth stressing that reading necessitates a two-fold stance: sympathetic familiarity with the context in which the journal was written and in which its presuppositions were formed, along with a highly critical and distanced stance. (Driver in Robinson et al. 1993: 5)

Driver's contribution to the literature on Anne, though more limited in volume than those of the more canonical commentators, is both sensitive and crucial. Unlike Masson, Fairbridge and Lenta, for example, Driver draws attention to the shifting contexts in which texts are assessed and so does not attempt to consider Anne outside of her historical milieu: "A text cannot remain static through history: it takes its nature, in part, from the way it is read in history and from the way it relates to the present consequences of past historical action" (Driver in Robinson et al. 1993: 7).

Though following chronologically from the first volume, the later volumes return to the assertion that Anne's writing presents a wonderfully detailed window on the past and that its value is determined by this trait: "It is for the brilliant light they shed on many of the social aspects of Cape life at the end of the 18th century that Lady Anne's diaries have unique value" (Lenta and Le Cordeur 1998: xxvi).

Margaret Lenta's *Paradise, The Castle and the Vineyard* (2006) constitutes the most recently published collection of letters written by Anne. Lenta's contribution to the study of Anne's life and work is substantial, in that she transcribed the full diaries held by the Earl of Crawford from the original handwritten manuscripts. Dotted throughout the text are small, poorly reproduced black-and-white illustrations of some of Anne's drawings. Far more conscious as regards the implications of her selection, Lenta makes clear in her preface that she decided that the principal subjects of this "volume should be Lady Anne herself and her life at the Cape" (Lenta 2006: ix), noting that a letter from Mrs Fitzherbert

(secretly married to the Prince of Wales) had to be omitted. Apart from these remarks on how and why she selected her material, Lenta's text offers its reader little in the way of editorial comment or intervention, and the text emerges as a document of interest to the amateur reader of history who might simply like to know more about the period and about Anne. Lenta's focus being thus delineated, it appears that the purpose of this selection of letters was primarily to provide insight into life in the Cape Colony in the late eighteenth century, to sketch a biography of someone she considered to be a remarkable person and to do so with particular attention to the limits constituted by her gender within the society of the time.

Similarly to Masson's biography, Stephen Taylor's *Defiance* (2015) sketches Anne as an eccentric figure in Georgian society. Taylor's book is the first to draw on the six unpublished volumes of Anne's memoirs (Taylor 2015: 5), and he is thus able to provide more insight into the details of her life. Taylor attempts to narrate Anne's biography in the tone suggested by its title—of someone who, though embedded in upper-class life in eighteenth-century England, nevertheless defies expectations:

> For well over a decade, Anne Lindsay occupied a paradoxical place in fashionable London. On the one hand the world seemed to be at her feet. On the other it regarded her warily. She appeared at the centre of society. Yet she was never quite at the heart of it … If an insider could be an outsider, she contrived it. (Taylor 2015: 89)

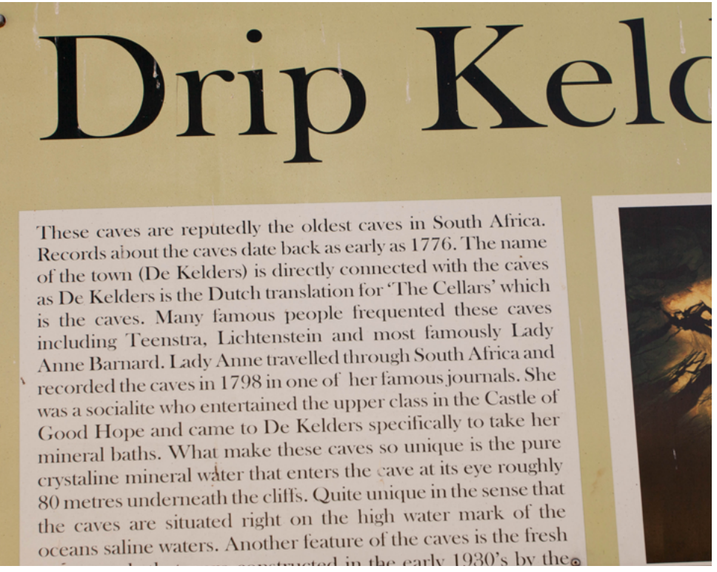
*Defiance* ultimately performs a similar function in our time as Masson's biography did in the mid-twentieth century, namely, to animate Anne's life in ways that speak to the concerns of their respective contemporary readerships. Taylor's portrait of Anne suggests that her ideals were more in line with our current political sensitivities about colonial and racial affairs than those of her own time. His text does, however, do the valuable work of narrating the whole arc of Anne's life more fully. Taylor's biography helps to situate Anne within the broader milieu of Georgian life and society and locates Anne's experience at the Cape as of a particular period contextualised by the rest of her life.

Given that the earliest texts about Anne were produced when South Africa was still a British dominion, and that some of the later works were published within an explicitly Eurocentric, apartheid environment, reading Anne's writing through these contexts results in a distorted image of her narrative and motivations. It is easy to assume that the biases and peculiarities with which Anne is portrayed in these texts are faithful to the person herself, as the authors do not acknowledge their own subjective position or the absences in her archive.

## Turbulence on the Flights of Fancy

The flattening out of Anne's writing has led to an abundance of curious contradictions and misidentifications about Anne's life in the popular imagination. In light of her biographers' persistent tendency to constrain their attention to her time at the Cape, it is perhaps not surprising that she is not memorialised in Scotland or England. In Cape Town and surrounds, by contrast, myths abound around the figure of Anne and her association with the places she lived in or wrote about. In these myths, she is often reductively characterised as a socialite and, again, artless reporter of quotidian colonial life.

Faltering mythic fantasies about Anne's life and habits have been attached to the Cape landscape, where they are simultaneously referenced and contradicted. At Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens in Cape Town, for instance, there is a brick-edged pond that is colloquially known as "Lady Anne Barnard's Bath". However, a small plaque nearby informs visitors to the garden that it is a misnomer and that the pond was constructed after Anne's departure. The




Above: The sign at the "Drip Kelder", which has subsequently been removed.

bath is officially known as "Colonel Bird's Bath". Nevertheless, in the William Fehr Collection at the Castle, a miniature painting of a naked woman bathing in a wooded area is claimed to be a depiction of Anne in the bath at Kirstenbosch. (Neither the name of the artist nor the source of this information is supplied, and photography of the painting is not allowed.)

Anne's bathing is a recurrent theme in the Cape landscape. At "De Kelders", a natural tidal pool in the southern Cape coastal area, which Anne visited on her journey to the interior in 1798, a signboard proclaims that Anne bathed here, not once, but numerous times—in fact, it is stated that she came here often "to take her mineral baths". There is no mention of her bathing here in her journal, only of visiting the site. And even if she had bathed here, it could only have happened during her single visit to the site; Anne could not have used the pool as some sort of eighteenth-century spa. Apocryphal at best, this anecdote calls forth the mental image of a woman who takes part more in twenty-first century conceptions of recreation than one who possessed the intellectual curiosity that was the stated motivation for her journey. Furthermore, the wording on the board carries no reminder of the immense effort exerted by everyone in the travelling company, not only that of Anne and Andrew, but also of their entire entourage and hired labour. Such a journey was hardly one that would be undertaken lightly, nor at the self-indulgent whim of a desire for a mineral bath.


Above: The plaque at "Paradise" in Newlands Forest, Cape Town.

Whereas the signboard at De Kelders overstates Anne's connection to the site, another underplays it. "Paradise" is a ruin situated around one hundred metres up the eastern slopes of Table Mountain. Similarly to the bath at Kirstenbosch, it is colloquially known as "Lady Anne Barnard's Cottage". The notice here, however, informs visitors that the structure was used primarily to house a Dutch garrison that patrolled the mountain for escaped slaves and bandits, adding that the popular appellation "Lady Anne Barnard's Cottage" is inappropriate in that the Barnards occupied the building for only nine months. This public tug-of-war over Anne's legacy and her place in the imaginative construction of the Cape landscape suggests an underlying desire to associate or disassociate Anne with the landscape of the Cape.

Anne's image in present-day Cape Town as a concocted sign of colonial frivolity was demonstrated with pitch-perfect vacuity by the Afrikaans lifestyle magazine television programme *Pasella* on 8 January 2013. An insert in this programme featured an actress in an elaborate and historically inaccurate hoop skirt, frolicking in the gardens of the Vineyard Hotel, an upmarket hotel and spa repurposed from the house that Anne commissioned in the suburb of Newlands.[9] The most powerful impression communicated by this representation of Anne was that she was a giggling socialite.

In contrast to Krotoa, Anne appears to have been banished to a kind of political purgatory when the complicated past of the country is seriously discussed. In her analysis of Anne in "Lady Anne Barnard's Cape Journals and the Concept of Self-Othering" (1995), for example, Dorothy Driver recounts a university lecture in which students were vociferous in their rejection of Anne. In politicised, intellectual spaces, Anne is often simplistically sketched as something of a vague nostalgic projection of a bygone era, a noblewoman who prefigures the indulgences of the Cape Town hospitality industry, not least because of how her image is used to promote the Vineyard Hotel. The decontextualised image of Anne as it is disseminated today, brought into being through the circularity of the source material, conjures an image of colonials gaily dancing, quaffing wine and quipping witticisms.

The inverse is true of the United Kingdom, where Anne is completely absent from public consciousness and memorialisation. Her house in Berkeley Square has been demolished, and, while plaques decorate buildings and inform visitors about many of the important people to have resided in the area, there is no mention of the "Lindsay Sisters". In Edinburgh, where Anne spent time as a young adult, one is everywhere confronted by the imposing, towering, phallic monuments dedicated to the men Anne knew and with whom she conversed (such as the monuments to Henry Dundas and Sir Walter Scott referred to earlier). While it is to some degree understandable that Anne should not be commemorated in Edinburgh and London, where she is perceived to have made less of a public contribution than the men memorialised there, it is striking to a South African visitor such as myself—who travelled to *her* spaces—to encounter such silence in the face of the plenitude of spaces marked as belonging to "Lady Anne Barnard" in the everyday parlance of Cape Town mythology.[10] The contrast is attributable to the value that has been conferred on Anne's work. Fundamentally, Anne has presence in contemporary South Africa, and specifically Cape Town, because she provided a valuable historical record of a moment in the colonial history of South Africa in a rather singular manner. Because of this perception of the value of Anne's work, she is inextricably tied to a colonial legacy that resonates in problematic ways with the present-day context. Anne's visibility in South African history may be much more pronounced than in the United Kingdom, but it acknowledges and credits Anne with little more than being an effective proponent of colonialism.

The contradictory ways in which Anne has been identified with certain spaces and within popular stories indicate that she, like Krotoa, has become the bearer of contemporary desires and that her archive, like Krotoa's, has been subjected to pressures to yield whatever the present requires of it. That which is "visible" through the texts about Anne's life is a series of constructions that parade as knowledge, which has in turn been spun into lore. Consequently, in apartheid-era literature Anne is unconsciously assumed to be aligned with colonial attitudes— which have rightfully been rejected in the post-apartheid era, with the result that Anne is dismissed along with the colonial attitudes.

Antjie Krog wrestles with some of the challenges attendant on understanding how Anne's archive should be viewed from the vantage point of post-apartheid South Africa. Krog published *Lady Anne* in 1989 and was awarded the prestigious Hertzog prize for this volume in 1990.[11] *Lady Anne* is typically praised for its postmodern slant, flaunting a pronounced self-referential approach, including reproductions of newspaper cuttings scattered across various pages in a seemingly haphazard manner, as inter-texts of sorts, that seek to make connections between colonialism and the charged climate of late apartheid South Africa.

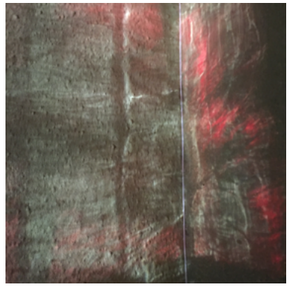
On one level, Krog's volume chronicles her private fascination with Anne, with the poems shifting perspective between Anne (by adapting Anne's diaries and journals) and the poet herself reflecting on this very fascination. Krog's text hones in on the intricate connections between colonial rule and the guilt borne by white South Africans. Her poems are awash with conflicting emotions: Krog's difficulty with her own complicity in the contemporary political landscape and her ambivalence towards Anne. This is especially apparent in the poem *jy word onthou vanweë jou partye* ("you are remembered for your parties", own translation):

> *dogter van die huis van Lindsay, "Scotland to Cape Town"*
> *heldin met die duisend gesigte*
> *hierdie vers is ons finale showdown*
>
> *vrou vir wie ek al soveel jare my mes slyp*
> *…*
> *nie teenoor mekaar maar saam in hierdie vers stap ligvoets*
> *sonder voorbehoud vat die water jou en jy smelt in*
> *sy skoot ek gryp jou agterna god ek is verknog aan jou*
> *…*
> *jou nek stylvol gedraai ietwat boheem*
> *in die blonde skaafsels van hare*
> *ontstem beween ek jou vriendin liefste*
>
> *jou totale stralende nuttelоosheid*
> (Krog 1989: 95-96)[12]

While Krog depicts Anne as a figure who symbolically embodies colonialism and as someone towards whom she harbours suspicion (apparent, for example, in the knife imagery in the quoted text), she also expresses surprise at the tenderness she feels towards Anne. Krog's poetry evidences the tension that attends Anne's image in contemporary South Africa, itself suggestive of the pressure on Anne's archive to speak into post-apartheid South Africa, to yield some new insight into the colony that will echo current sentiments.

## Finding a Space for Herself

As I indicated in the introduction, my first reflection on Anne's presence in the Cape came about not by reading books about her. Instead, I was reminded of her story while I was driving along (the then) De Waal Drive (now Philip Kgosana Drive), as it snaked around Devil's Peak towards Cape Town's southern suburbs. I looked up at the impressive rocky face of the mountain with awe (I was hiking almost incessantly in this landscape at the time in a quest to familiarise myself with my—then—new home). In the guidebooks that outlined routes and provided walking maps of the mountain, offering a cursory overview of Cape history seemed to be *de rigueur*. It was in these trail descriptions that numerous authors commented that the first (white) woman to climb the mountain was one Lady Anne Barnard.



I was reminded of this trivia as I regarded the mountain that day, tracing the outlines of the rocks and seeking possible routes to traverse the mountain. The conventional account of Anne's ascent of Table Mountain typically concludes with confirmation of her successful ascent. Anne's own narration of the ascent (Robinson et al. 1993: 217–24) provides more detail, such as that she wore her husband's trousers; was guided in the enterprise by John Barrow; that her sister-in-law (the *other* Anne Barnard) refused to go along; that her journey was made possible largely through the support of a host of slaves; and that the

party spent the night on top of the mountain. A detail that stands out for me, as it did that day as I gazed up at Devil's Peak, is that upon waking, Anne breakfasted and drank some Madeira wine. Fragments such as these are not simply valuable to a more detailed understanding of the events of her climb. These ordinary observations, about what was had for breakfast, for example, do more than *inform*. They bring a certain "life" or "presentness" to mind of Anne's body at that moment, in that space. It prompted me to imagine Anne and her entourage's physical endeavour.

While we have a first-hand account of Anne's climb of Table Mountain, an event that has lodged itself in countless South African imaginations for over 200 years, her motivation for the ascent is underexplored in the literature. Is it sufficient to speculate that her ascent of Table Mountain reveals a gamine character or a trail-blazing attitude?

Interpretations along these lines conform to the image conveyed in the literature about Anne. However, they are only possible if one views the event in isolation, without taking into account Anne's life before her stay at the Cape, especially of her childhood in Scotland, where she was active outdoors. As already noted, Anne

was not only exposed to the developments in Enlightenment thinking and science, but formed part of the social milieu in which these ideas were discussed and developed. One of the philosophers who influenced Anne's thinking was Jean-Jacques Rousseau (Taylor 2016: 47). Apart from his texts on political philosophy, Rousseau also wrote a book entitled *Les Rèveries du Promeneur Solitaire* (1782),[13] for which he practiced walking as a means by which to observe nature and cultivate his philosophy.

Rousseau's method posits an equivalence between thinking and walking, as he places great emphasis on walking as a means to coming into close contact with the natural world to gain knowledge of it. When one understands Rousseau's philosophy as a background to Anne's ascent of Table Mountain, a different interpretation of her actions emerges. Anne may have insisted on climbing Table Mountain against convention and advice, but it should not be regarded simply as a moment of endearing idiosyncratic ebullience or fanciful adventure. Anne was deeply curious about the natural world, especially the relatively unknown Cape. As Masson (1948: 180) relates, "A keen botanist, Lady Anne had slung a tin case for plants around her

neck". Masson (1948:181) continues, "Anne made her own explorations, finding caves which had sheltered runaway slaves." When considering her intellectual concerns, her drive for knowledge and understanding and a burgeoning sense of inquiry stimulated by Enlightenment thinkers who promoted the rights of individuals, and at the same time/simultaneously taking into account the complex varieties of roles Anne was expected to fulfil, the constraints she was obliged to observe while negotiating her desires, I am compelled to dismiss the popularly conjured mental image of a grand lady, at home throwing parties in the great ballroom at the Castle of Good Hope.

We must remain aware of the intellectual milieu within which Anne moved—not only when considering her actions, but also in any analysis of her writing. However, understanding the relationship between her writing and other texts of the time is not a straightforward affair. A refreshing intervention in the literature about Anne with reference to her intellectual milieu was made in David Johnson's *Imagining the Cape Colony: History, Literature, and the South African Nation* (2012). Johnson is concerned with reading the postcolonial South African environment in relation to ideas developed in the European Enlightenment of the eighteenth century. While he works through texts by a number of Enlightenment scholars, including Jean-Jacques Rousseau and John Adams, it is particularly the chapter on the Scottish Enlightenment that is of interest. Johnson positions Anne's diaries within the framework of eighteenth-century Scottish Enlightenment law-making, political governance and economy, focusing in particular on the work of Adam Smith and John Bruce. He argues that Anne's work is an example of "sentimental sympathy" (Johnson 2012: 82) towards the "native people" of the colony, and that her diaries are embedded in Enlightenment perspectives on freedom and human rights. For Johnson (2012: 83), Anne's sympathy to the Khoekhoe especially is rooted in her sense of a "common humanity of Khoisan and Briton". This perspective, he suggests, stems from the influence of the Scottish Enlightenment and a larger debate around slavery to which Anne was exposed before her time at the Cape. However, he notes the inherent contradictory nature of Anne's sympathies for the Khoekhoe and the San, in that, while she expresses concern for their plight in being oppressed by the Dutch (significantly, as Johnson notes, not the English), Anne regards them as fundamentally *primitive*. Thus, in her eyes, their plight manifests not only as practical subjugation but also as the loss of "innocence" through exposure to the vices of "civilisation": "The artist in Barnard thus

requires an exotic other for 'picturesque' aesthetic transcription, a requirement directly at odds with the British 'civilizing' project she otherwise uncritically approves" (Johnson 2012: 83).

Johnson's intervention is useful partly because it is the only text to make the argument that the Scottish Enlightenment had a profound influence on Anne's perspectives, and his critique of Anne's attitude is not founded solely on her present-day image. But Johnson's text is useful in another sense, too: he articulates Anne's relationship to the Enlightenment and some of the ideological ideals formulated within it as producing a *tension* within Anne's work. Thus, for Johnson (with whom I concur on this point), Anne's writing cannot be reduced to a simple exponent of Enlightenment ideas, nor be regarded as completely distinct from them. He suggests that

> [t]he tensions within Barnard's writings on the Khoisan and the slaves are symptomatic of tensions in late eighteenth-century sentimental discourse more broadly. With the masculine discourse of political economy requiring the "progressive" transformation of pre-capitalist societies, the feminized discourse of sentiment provided a means of registering those on the receiving end of such economic "progress". (Johnson 2012: 84)

In Johnson's argument, the tension in Anne's writing is partly effected along gendered lines. In Enlightenment-era society, the distinct roles ascribed to men and women would shape not only their lives, but also the kinds of writing they were expected to produce.[14]

A further tension within Anne's writing can be articulated in terms of the representation of public and private concerns. There can perhaps be no more significant indicator of what circulates within the public sphere at present than entries to the online encyclopedia *Wikipedia*. As part of my background research into Anne's public image, I consulted the website on topics related to Anne simply as a starting point from which to map the social and political landscape of the eighteenth century. One such topic was the life of George IV, who became friends with Anne while he was Prince of Wales. In stark contrast to his austere father, George III, the prince had a voracious appetite for all things pleasurable, not least of which was a penchant for romantic liaisons with a variety of women. He is somewhat infamous for this latter indulgence, having married a Catholic divorcée in secret, Mrs Fitzherbert, who was acquainted with Anne and travelled with her to Paris between 1791 and 1792.

Pages 150-151: The ruin of "Paradise" on the slopes of Table Mountain.
Page 152: The Melville Monument, Edinburgh.
Page 153: The Walter Scott Monument, Edinburgh.
Pages 154-155: A Pub called "The Cape of Good Hope", photographed in London, on a bus route towards Berkeley Square.

As of the time of writing, the Wikipedia entry for George IV suggested that Anne Lindsay was an adulterous lover of the Prince of Wales and bore him an illegitimate son (Wikipedia contributors 2019b). This entry cites as reference *The Prince of Pleasure* (1998) by Saul David. Apart from Margaret Lenta and, more recently, Stephen Taylor, military historian David is the only other author to make reference to an illegitimate child belonging to Andrew Barnard—Hervey, born before his marriage to Anne. Bizarrely, this child is the focus of David's speculation that Anne bore the illegitimate child of the Prince of Wales. David suggests that the child was under Anne's care at the time she married Andrew in 1793. He goes further and suggests that George orchestrated Anne's marriage to Andrew as a ploy to hide his own paternity of the child. According to David (1998: 78), Hervey and his descendants believed that they were the descendants of Mrs Fitzherbert, but David postulates that the mother was *not* in fact the wife of George IV but was Anne Lindsay. David's claim is baffling in that he presents his assertions completely devoid of any research into Anne and the various texts available about her and instead draws exclusively on material concerning George IV.

Hervey is explicitly mentioned by Anne herself, who describes him as "a little fellow of six or seven years of age who owed his being to Melford [Andrew]" (Barnard in Lenta et al. 1993: xii). Anne decries his disruptive behaviour on their journey to the Cape of Good Hope on the *Edmund Gray* (ibid.). Hervey so annoyed Anne and her fellow passengers that she sent him to accompany her brother to India when he stopped at the Cape in 1797. Lenta specifically mentions Hervey in her introduction to the Van Riebeeck Society's publication of Anne's Cape diaries. She was the first to explicitly identify him as Andrew's illegitimate son, as this research had at the time only recently come to light (Lenta 1993: xii).[15] In view of the extensive research into Anne's life conducted by Lenta and Taylor,

I am far more readily convinced by their assertions than David's. I have come across no evidence to suggest that Anne had any children, and it is generally accepted that she remained childless (Murray 2012b: 49).

The existence of and speculation about Hervey's parentage have not made their way into much of the South African literature about Anne, nor any of the more populist texts, presumably because it does not fit easily into the valorising and nostalgic tone with which Anne is treated in these texts. While Hervey's existence does not pose a radical challenge to the received knowledge about Anne and her time at the Cape, that he has been all but written out of Anne's biography nevertheless highlights the selectiveness with which she has been represented in scholarly and, especially, popular texts.

Hervey was not the only child fathered by Andrew Barnard. Buried in the conclusion to Margaret Lenta's book is perhaps the most under-represented and least-circulated information about the Barnards:

> [Anne] writes with typical generosity of a young woman living in her household, "A protégée of a darker complexion, aged sixteen, the accident of an unguarded moment, after I left my poor husband a lonely widower, to protect as I hoped, his political interests at home on the peace. Finding when I had the misfortune to lose him that such an infant existed, I desired that it might be sent home to me and it has been with me ever since and will benefit from my destinations …" This was Christina Douglas, Andrew's daughter by a slave woman, born in 1803, of whose existence Lady Anne had heard after his death. Christina became Lady Anne's companion and secretary until she married, most satisfactorily, an English country gentlemen. A second girl, the daughter of Andrew's illegitimate son Hervey (born before his marriage to Lady Anne), also lived with her. (Lenta 2006: 302)

By contrast, Stephen Taylor's *Defiance* is relatively open about this clandestine portion of Anne's history. His chapter devoted to Christina Douglas is titled "A 'Protégée of a Darker Complexion'" (Taylor 2016: 302–15), and he speculates that Christina's mother was most likely a Khoekhoe woman, but that the child had been living with a Mr and Mrs Necker. In this section of his book, he describes the important role Christina played in Anne's later life, when she had Christina brought from the Cape to live with her, together with her stepson's two daughters, Margaret and Anne Hervey. According to Taylor (2016: 305), Christina became Anne's amanuensis. Considering the importance that such a thesis places on the editing and refining of Anne's texts, the part that Andrew's African offspring played in the process is at least intriguing. It also indicates that Anne drew a boundary of some kind around certain details of her personal life, details to which a present-day reader has no access.

Among the Crawford papers at the National Library of Scotland can be found a folded letter from an unidentified person who attempted to blackmail Anne for the amount of 50 pounds. The scrawled handwriting of the letter makes it difficult to decipher in places, but the gist of it implies that Anne intentionally caused the unhappiness of an unnamed woman. A pencilled note made by a later reader speculates on who might have authored the threatening letter and to what he or she might have referred. According to this note, Anne was engaged in scandalous behaviour with Lord Wentworth. From Anne's own memoirs it is clear that she was friends with Wentworth, but I have not uncovered any evidence that Anne might have had an indecorous engagement with him.

In a fascinating twist, however, Anne is implicated in the Wentworth story in another way. Wentworth's niece (Anne Isabella Millbanke) married the celebrated and, in his day, infamous poet Lord Byron. The marriage ended in

disaster as rumours circulated of an incestuous relationship between Byron and his half-sister, Lady Caroline Lamb. Much speculation abounded, and Byron, both publicly and in his poetry, vilified his wife, accusing her of spreading these rumours. Though he denied the accusations, Byron left England in disgrace. Another sliver of Anne's unrecognised archive enters the narrative at this point. An American acquaintance of Lady Byron, the author Harriet Beecher Stowe, known for her novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), published *Lady Byron Vindicated* in 1870. In this text, Stowe draws heavily on the testimony of Anne as collected in that part of Anne's memoirs recorded in *The Lives of the Lindsays* (1849), a memoir of the houses of Crawford and Balcarres written by Lord Lindsay, Anne's brother. The entry in *Lady Byron Vindicated* concerns Anne's friendship with Lady Byron and her recollections of the statements and actions of Byron.

Stowe's text employs Anne's memoirs to convey information about confidences that passed between Anne and Lady Byron (Stowe 1870: 151).[16] Moreover, it demonstrates the social and cultural spheres in which Anne moved and her status within these. Importantly, however, Stowe draws on Anne's *writing* to substantiate her case for Lady Byron, showing that Anne participated in the literary (and letter-writing) culture of her time. Anne quite consciously represented herself and the people around her with her words. That Anne was relatively circumspect, or euphemistic, about Hervey and Christina is a deliberate choice that is indicative of her awareness of the readership through which she and her husband (and his descendants) are known—as opposed to the tone she might have adopted in a private or confessional diary and kept from any readership.

From my discussion of Anne's position in the milieu of the eighteenth century, I conclude that her life and work is caught *in between* various states: she was a woman who found herself in an intellectual sphere to which she could not contribute without her gender coming into play, and she was also a British subject who is at times lauded and other times shunned for her role in the colonial occupation of the Cape—a role, however, in which she is considered inconsequential in the official European accounts. Anne's archive is characterised by this constant dichotomy.

The circumspection in Anne's writing is in part a result of her gendered position in the intellectual and political milieu of the eighteenth century, as well as the public and private concerns of her memoirs. Moreover, the tensions are indicative of a person who, through her writing, had to skillfully navigate expectations from various groups in order to claim a space for herself. Understanding Anne's writing within the context of its production demands, at the least, a recognition of her position as an in-between figure; although she could not enter the intellectual life of the eighteenth century or hold an official position in the Cape Colony, it is clear that she exercised a degree of influence on the men in power, often *through* writing letters to powerful men. Anne's writing is the result of a negotiation of the highly gendered social, cultural and political spaces in which she lived. The process of this negotiation not only determined what is present in Anne's archive, but also what escaped it.

## The Letters of Louisa

Anne responded to the complexity of her position within the sociopolitical and intellectual milieu of eighteenth century England and the Cape Colony by marshalling various literary devices in her writing, but the conventional assesment of Anne's work does not acknowledge the extent to which literary

strategies shaped her writing. Lenta, for example, argues that the value of Anne's diaries lies in their relatively unguarded nature, in that this allows them to provide a less mediated picture of the Cape than those recorded in other accounts:

> Lady Anne's diaries, though in their nature they cannot have the organisation of information which gives one kind of value to Macartney's and Barrow's writings, derive their importance for historians from the fact that they are written *without any conscious motive which might function to exclude subject matter*. She is open to impressions and responds to new experiences, as an official could not allow himself to. Her accounts of slaves are an excellent example of this: at their best they are actual glimpses of that sub-society of the Cape which most people had agreed not to observe. (Lenta 1992: 62; emphasis added.)

Lenta's characterisation of Anne's diaries as "immediate" or without "conscious motive" relative to her male compatriots is one clear example of how Anne's writing has been flattened out to be understood as simply a relatively transparent record of their time, without sufficient attention being paid to the context in which the writing was intended to circulate or to the literary strategies that Anne employed.[17]

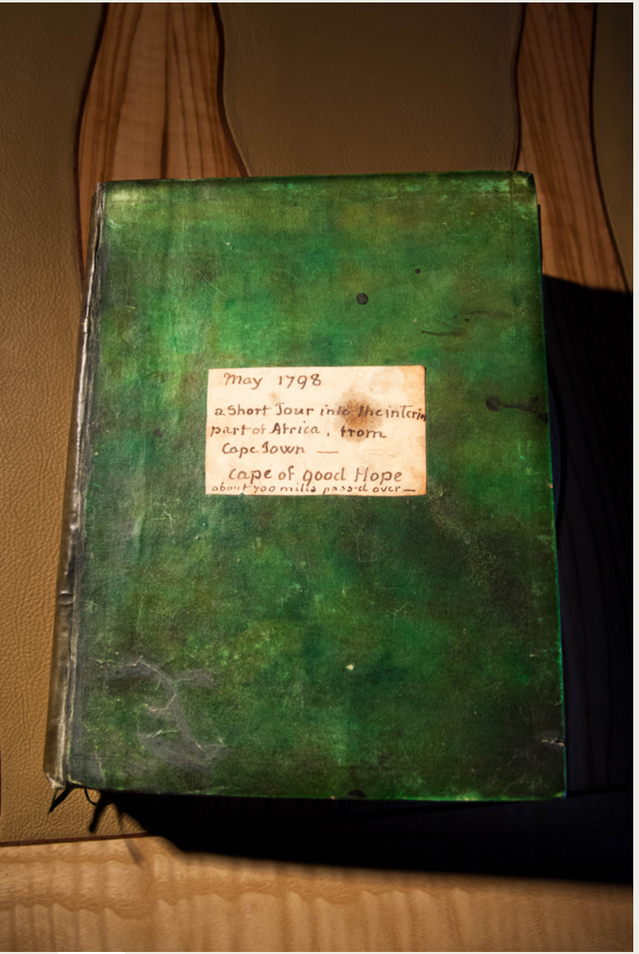
Driver's article "Lady Anne Barnard's *Cape Journals* and the Concept of Self-Othering" (1995) is one of the very few serious scholarly engagements with the literary qualities of Anne's writing.[18] Driver's text most expressly aims to read within the language employed by Anne her desire to fit into the various roles she perceived herself as occupying, with varying degrees of assurance:

> First, and most obviously, the text calls attention to the different discursive positions that make up the figure "Anne Barnard", who says to an interlocutor that "he was mistaken if he supposed I was *one* woman, that I was one, two or three different ones, and capable of being *more*, exactly as the Circumstances I was placed in required." (Driver 1995: 47)

In this respect, Driver's analysis shows how Anne's writing knowingly addressed her status as a woman in the late eighteenth century, negotiating roles usually occupied by men (scientist, travel writer and the like), as well as "a woman of the colonising class" (Driver 1995: 55).

Driver's perspectives are constructive in that they provide an opening for a further consideration of Anne's literary qualities:

> Similarly, Barnard does not merely show a consciousness of her various roles … but adopts




> in her writing one or other of the roles at her disposal, one or other of the generic voices appropriate to and productive of these different roles, thus enabling her to enunciate a set of different perspectives on herself and the world. (Driver 1995: 47–48)

Here, Driver alerts us to the fact that Anne, as a writer, is *conscious of* and *in control of* her own discourse and style, although she does not attempt to trace what literary examples might have influenced those styles.

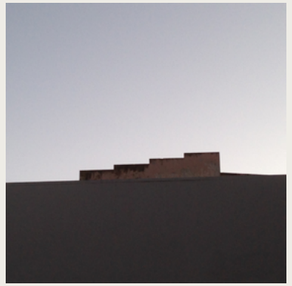
It is critical to examine more carefully those elements of Anne's archive that have not been co-opted into the "official" or "authorised" versions of her biography, particularly the material that does not pertain to her time at the Cape in conjunction with the visual and literary qualities of her archive. By doing so, we may approach an understanding of the figure of "Lady Anne Barnard" in a way that does not simply reify the received conception of a "colonial lady". More importantly, by focusing on those aspects of Anne's writing that are conventionally left out of her biographies, I wish to avoid rehearsing a "closed" or coherent narrative of her life and instead examine how the way in which she has presented herself in her writing alerts us to the play of presence and absence therein.

As an artist, I am puzzled by how little attention has been paid to the visual qualities of the journals produced by Anne. I intimated at the beginning of this chapter that I was deeply struck by this absence in the literature during my visit to Balcarres. While there, the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, a descendant of Anne's brother James Lindsay, led me into his expansive but subfusc lounge. He directed my attention to an impressive bookcase that occupied most of one wall in the room. Its dark wood was well worn. He informed me that the bookcase had once belonged to the artist Peter Paul Rubens and had also belonged to Anne. Impressive though this was, my attention was already fixated on the large brown-green volumes I had spied on the historic bookcase. Their spines are imprinted in gold letters with "The Cape Journals". The Earl carefully removed these three books for me and placed them on spongy supports he had laid out in anticipation of my visit. This moment profoundly affected my engagement with Anne's archive: here I was, facing the singular objects whose texts had not only been written by Anne but, more importantly, whose very appearance—the binding, the paper, the illustrations—are the product of her creative work.

The privileging of Anne's written text over her drawings and paintings has only relatively recently been to some degree addressed, in the large-format publication *Lady Anne Barnard's Watercolours and Sketches: Glimpses of the Cape of Good Hope*, edited by Nicholas Barker (2009). Even this book, however,

**Previous page: A pressed leaf in Anne's diary. Left: The diary that Anne kept on her "Tour to the interior" in 1797, held at Balcarres by the Earl of Crawford.**

considers her paintings and sketches to be of more import than the artistry of her language and book making. Barker's book, large and lush, takes advantage of the developments in technology unavailable to earlier editions, in which the reproductions of her drawings and paintings were small, of poor quality and in black and white. Nonetheless, this publication is marked by the same limitations as those that address her writing—namely, a focus on the Cape and a tendency to view the works as depictions that *inform* us about Cape life. Limitations in reproduction technologies may account for the relative lack of images created or commissioned by Anne in the publications preceding Barker's, but it is not the only reason: Anne is simply not credited for her writing as creative work. Even in those books that show some of her drawings, no attention is paid to the fullness with which she conceived her volumes as objects—a fullness strikingly evident in their presence. The visual qualities of the memoirs and the Cape Journals are proof of the deliberate construction Anne brought to her work in visual terms.



Anne was very calculated in the construction of another manifestation of her archive, namely by revising the diaries and then destroying the originals. Lenta (2006: 11–12) describes Anne's larger project of compiling her memoirs:

> She explains at the beginning of Volume I that in 1815, when she was already an elderly woman living in London and had been a widow for eight years, she decided to sell her carriage and horses and convert them, as she puts it, into "transcribers … portrait painters … bookbinders" whom she could employ in the task of revising her Diaries and other documents into formal Memoirs of her life.

In her article "The Archiving 'I': A Closer Look in the Archives of Writers" (2015), Jennifer Douglas writes that "[in] the literature on personal archives, little attention has been paid to the knowing and controlling role of the donor [the writer herself]" (Douglas 2015: 71). Douglas's text positions writers' archives as a special kind of personal archive and urges that "archivists begin to pay more attention to the work of the archiving 'I' and to its effect on the nature of the archived 'I'" (Douglas 2015: 68). She suggests that the image of the person one apprehends from a personal, self-constructed archive, what she calls "the secret 'I'" (Douglas 2015: 67), is the result of "acts of self-selection and -representation" (ibid.).

The striking visual qualities of Anne's journals signal that her "archiving I" was very much at work in the formation of her archive. Thus, when engaging with Anne's archive, especially as concerns her memoirs, it should be borne in mind that they are the products of a series of acts of editing and construction, through which Anne consciously chose what to include and what to omit from her archive—resulting in the silences that form part of that archive as we access it today.

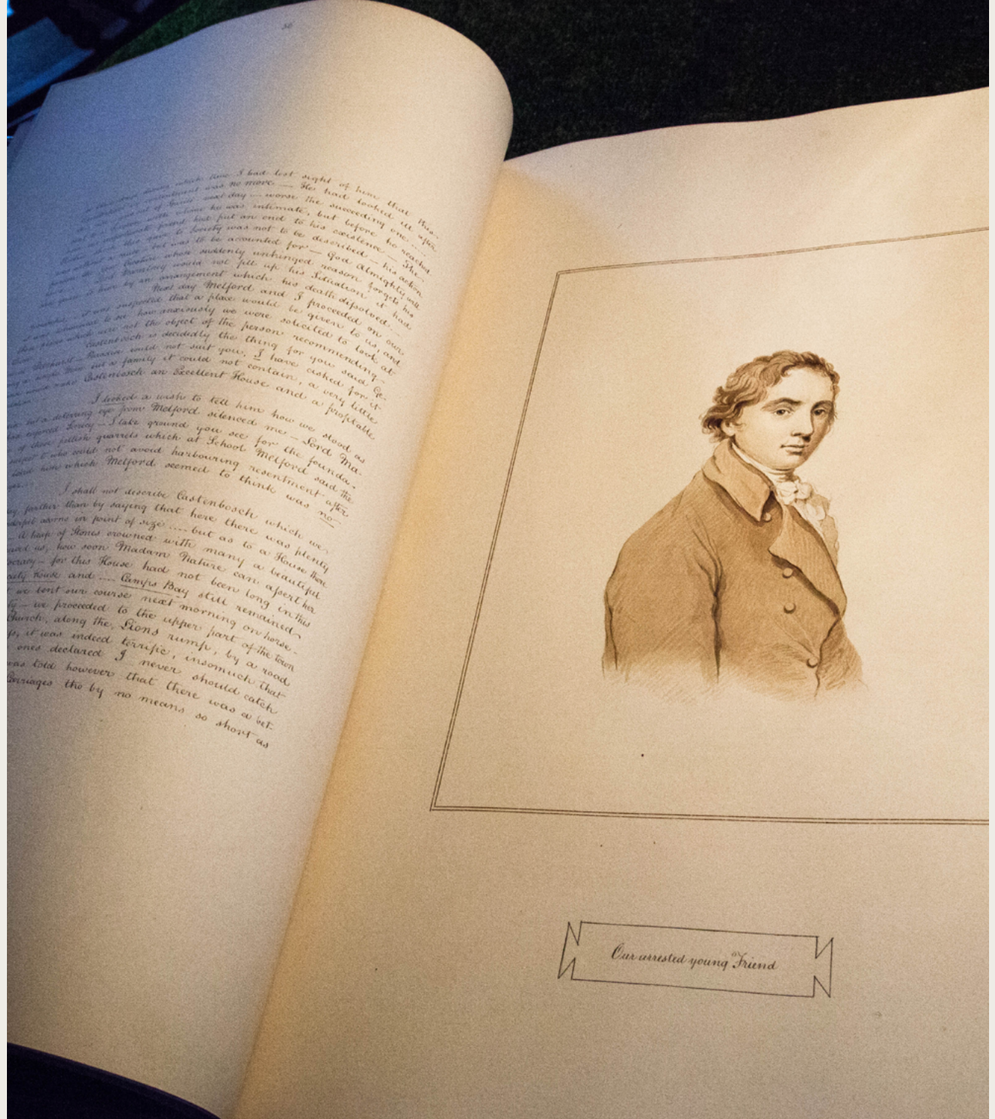
Another indication of Anne's self-conscious construction of her archive is that she employed a nom de plume in her memoirs and journals: Louisa Melford. This device was not intended to disguise Anne's identity. She composed journals throughout her life, and the intended readership would have been fully aware of who "Louisa" was. As Anne states in the preface to her memoirs:

> "Louisa Melford!" repeats my Readers, why do you give yourself this … Nom du Guerre, when writing on Subjects where there is no need for caution! … I do it to avoid confusion. I have already scribbled much under this title, have given feigned names to all the persons introduced into my little Narrative; were I to change my plan in my Sea and African Journals I should puzzle my unfortunate Reader … all the volumes Marked Louisa

(of which this is one) are equally part of the work I allude to. But I wish to keep those illustrated with Sketches in Bistar [a brown pigment], detached from prior, or subsequent writings. (Barnard in Robinson et al. 1993: 17)

It is telling that Anne authored the three volumes of her memoirs about her time at the Cape under the same name, marking them as part of the *oeuvre* of a single author. Her declaration that she does so not out of a fear of impropriety indicates a motivation beyond superficial social squeamishness. In gathering her writing under the name of Louisa-the-author, she also draws attention to the deliberate crafting of these texts; otherwise, reverting to her own name would seem the natural thing to do. In addition, her investment in the name Louisa is apparent in the illustration mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. I submit that this significance is due to her investment in literature as a form of self-expression, especially that of the epistolary novel.

Of course, it is impossible to establish with complete certainty a literary purpose to Anne's writing. Ultimately, she did *not* write




fiction as such, but these examples evidence a playfulness with literary convention and a self-consciousness about what it means to be writing. In employing the name "Louisa", Anne self-consciously constructs her text as a narrative and invokes the epistolary genre, inviting the reader to engage with the texts on these terms. It is my contention that the form of epistolary fiction had a decisive impact on exactly the kind of self-presentation that Driver identifies in Anne's language.

During the eighteenth century, the epistolary novel was a popular form of narrative fiction and is regarded as an important precursor of the novel proper when it emerged as a form in the nineteenth century. Samuel Richardson's two novels in the epistolary genre, *Pamela* (1740) and *Clarissa Harlowe* (1741), were immensely popular in the mid- and late eighteenth centuries. In addition, influential Enlightenment thinker Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Anne's friend Walter Scott also produced epistolary novels.[19] It is thus conceivable that Anne would have been exposed to the genre, even if indirectly.

**Left: A page from Anne's meticulously produced and illustrated journal.**

Indeed, in her article "The Shape of a Woman's Life: Lady Anne Barnard's Memoir" (1993), Lenta also argues that the form of the early novel exerted influence on Anne's writing. Lenta suggests that

> [t]he discoveries of Volume 4 [of the memoirs], that she cannot have social power, or, without a husband, retain popularity and influence into her middle age, function as a chastening recognition that the "female" novel, which, if comic, ends with the marriage of the heroine, and if tragic, with her death, contains a social truth for women. (Lenta 1993: 112)

Lenta argues that novels such as *Clarissa* and *Pamela* provided examples on which Anne unconsciously modelled her own writing in order to record her achievements for posterity. Her argument concerns mainly the narrative structure of what she calls the "female" novel (Lenta 1993: 104), but there are additional indicators of epistolary literature's influence on Anne's writing.

The genre of the epistolary novel was not simply a reproduction of letter-writing practices but also aided in the conception of private space, particularly as it pertained to women of the eighteenth century. As Thomas O. Beebee, in *Epistolary Fiction in Europe, 1500–1850*, suggests:

> My consideration of epistolary fiction begins not, as has so often been the case, from the standpoint of literature or the novel, but from that of the letter as a Protean form which crystallized social relationships in a variety of ways. (Beebee 1999: 3)

Beebee's text aids an understanding of the social and cultural conditions in which letter writing functioned as a written form of cultural expression and, importantly, shows that literary works drew on letter-writing for this reason. With reference to these conventions, one of the key insights offered by Beebee is that epistolary fiction relies on the introduction of a "third" party into the relationship between the apparent letter writer and addressee and thus carries within it an awareness of the fact that it will be read by people other than the original addressee:

> Epistolary fiction is a function rather than a thing; it arises when an outside, "real" reader takes up a position of the fictional addressee … Roger Duchêne has written of the letter that "at the moment where the letter is read by a third, anonymous reader, there occurs an inevitable, qualitative leap which raises the letter from a brute or native to a second-level epistolary, to a recognition of the first level by a foreign gaze which radically transforms it" … Inevitably this line of argument tends to blur the boundary between real correspondence and epistolary fiction. Epistolary fiction becomes a prime example of what Barbara Hernstein Smith has described as the reauthoring process of "natural" into fictive discourse—and *vice versa*. (Beebe 1999: 8–9)

The public circulation of apparently "intimate" correspondence in fiction (which parade as real letters) contributes to the setting of standards for acceptable forms of such correspondence in actual letters. In this respect, it is useful to bear in mind that two of the most influential epistolary novels of the eighteenth century (*Pamela* and *Clarissa*) were not published under the name of their author (Samuel Richardson) but were circulated *as authentic letters written by the eponymous women* and were received in this vein.

Ironically, Anne invokes a readership in her diaries by ostensibly prohibiting their publication (Lenta & Le Cordeur 1998: xxxii). However, she did, despite this injunction, have a readership of sorts in mind—at least a small circle of her family and friends or people who would be familiar with the subjects of her writing, and who would have an interest in the events related within

her texts. Jessica Murray, in her article "The Politics of the Preface: Lady Anne Barnard's Gendered Negotiations in a Liminal Textual Space" (2013), argues that Anne's apparent injunction against the publication of her work was in deference to expected feminine authorial positionality, in which establishing a personal, communal relationship with a reader was expected:

> [I]t becomes clear that Lady Anne intended for this journal to be read by people beyond her immediate social circle. Though these potential readers may be "unknown" strangers, she immediately draws them into a reading public by designating them "Friend". (Murray 2013: 54)

A striking example of Anne's awareness of her work being read by a "third party" appears in a note she left in her collected papers. On 22 March 1808, while cataloguing the last material that she received from Andrew Barnard, she writes:

> Should this envelope after my Death meet the eye of anyone capable of being awed and affected by a solemn person, let me refer them to the conclusion of his letter sheet 8—dated May 8 1807—beginning to read where I have put a star *—it contains a prayer <u>for</u> me, put up by a Heart so true, so pious, tender and attached, that to survive it seems almost a disgrace to my own!

Over and above such direct references to an anticipated reader, the careful attention that she paid to their transcription and binding in the final years of her life indicates that she wished them to be conserved for posterity and imagined that they *would* be read by a wider audience. One can thus argue that within her journals and at least certain of her letters, she incorporates a performative quality for the benefit of this unknown "third" reader.

Murray (2013: 51) argues that Anne's consciousness concerning her readership, though modulated in her language by her awareness of the expectations of her gender, is particularly evident in the preface to her memoirs. Moreover, for Murray (2013: 52), Anne's playful engagement with literary forms shines through in this preface: "Her reference to her own experience of prefaces in histories, essays and novels, also subtly hints at the fact that she is widely read." When positioning Anne's work as strongly guided by the stylistic expectations of feminine writing, as well as the intellectual milieu in which she moved, one has to acknowledge how mediated it is. There has been a *translation* of her life into words. As with any writing, Anne's words do not convey her thoughts or the events of her life directly. Instead, Anne reached for literary conventions to assist her in codifying her experiences and thoughts. The many ways in which

Anne shielded aspects of her life and herself from a readership she implicitly acknowledges have nevertheless left absences in her archive. However, it is harder to retain cognisance of that which is absent from this archive, because it appears so full. The fullness of her archive—authored with accomplished adherence to expectation—hides the absences from view.

To acknowledge Anne's self-conscious fashioning of her identity in her writing is to shift our reading of it. As Pamela Banting argues in her article "The Archive as a Literary Genre: Some Theoretical Speculations":

> In the archive the text spills over in excess of the author. The text is beyond control. It perpetuates itself as if it were the very life tissue of the author. But the author herself is not wanted—dead or alive. Absence is the mark of her presence … The identity of the body attached to the writing slips away, is erased, in the proliferation of textual marks. The author becomes a chimera of her own signature. (Banting 1986: 120)

Banting's article was borne out of her research into the archive of Canadian poet Dorothy Livesay and illuminates some of the paradoxes of archival research—namely the sense that the deeper and more feverishly one reads an archive, the further its subject recedes from one's grasp: "In this theater, on this stage, the absent author continually advances and retreats from behind a treasure chest of masks" (Banting 1986: 120). For Banting, the dynamic is especially pertinent when the archive is one in which a writer has compiled their own archive. One might initially assume that in literature there is invention but in archive there is fact. Banting (1986: 121) tells us that this is not so, however, and that the archive also takes on literary form:

> The deliberate "literariness" of the letters—their frequency, descriptive setting of scenes, inflation and dramatic excess, significant closures, the enclosure of letters to others which broadens the narrative context, a tone of philosophical musing—further amplifies the dramatic overtones. The family romance and the drama of writing become indistinguishable. Form and content blur into one. Life becomes art becomes life.

I am impressed by the similarities between Banting's description of Livesay's archive and my encounter with Anne's. Anne's memoirs

Previous page: View of a park in Edinburgh. Left: The gravestone of Andr ew Barnard, which I found at the Woltemade cemetery in Cape

are, as demonstrated, in many senses "literary". Moreover, while Anne did not produce fiction as such, the deliberateness with which she compiled her own archive—employing portrait artists and bookbinders and destroying earlier versions of the archive—indicates a staging of her own life for her archive.

Moreover, Anne's employment of the singular proper name (her nom de plume) "Louisa" is immediately reminiscent of the "Pamela", "Clarissa" and "Julie" style in which epistolary novels of the time were titled and already signals that Anne-the-person is screened from view. One could even argue that Anne flirted with a blurring of the boundary between fiction and non-fiction by allowing the poem she had written as a young woman in 1772, *Auld Robin Gray*, to circulate as though it were an old Scottish folk tale, only privately acknowledging her authorship to Walter Scott.

The fullness of Livesay's archive (in Banting's research) and Anne's (in mine) only exacerbates the "disappearance" of the author; it does not make it cease. This "disappearance" of the author suggests that in Anne's archive we can find but an *imprint* of her absence, an imprint that is produced by Anne's own labour, both literary and artistic. This is thus not the same impression we came away with after considering Krotoa's absent presence in Van Riebeeck's journal.

Being so full, the archive extends an invitation to the researcher to not only immerse oneself in her archive for the purpose of "knowing" Anne, but also to seek out, and find, ever more slivers of information, with which to build an increasingly full image. I accepted this invitation, and over more than a decade I kept coming across such slivers in branches of the Georgian world in which Anne made her impact. As Banting alerts us, the author may be absent from the archive, but the literary and artistic play across her archive sustains engagement with it rather than concludes it, as the literary text is forever open to new resonance and continued dialogue. Every archive is an incomplete record, as Harris's "sliver of a sliver" reminds us. In Anne's case, however, what is absent from the archive is not only the result of an anticipated incompleteness. It is also the result of a particular kind of self-presentation, born of her subjective experience of the tensions in her life, that both beguiles us and keeps us at arm's length.

I started this chapter with a description of the illustration that adorns the opening page of one of Anne's Cape journals. This image led me to explore the complexities of Anne's self-presentation and to engage with the absences in her archive. This exploration, in turn, informed my production of a photograph in the Castle, *Remnants and Ancestors VI*, that came to embody visually how the imprint of Anne's absence manifests in her archive. In this image, light streams through tall windows that comprise panes in a grid formation. The light falls on the floor, demarcated into neat blocks by the straight lines of the windowpanes. The light streaming in illuminates the room while blinding us to the world behind the window. Much like the light, there is brightness and volume in Anne's archive—her words are bountiful—but it blocks out that which is absent, namely the world outside the archive. We may be seduced into mistaking the light for presence, but in actuality it screens us from presentness. As the

light is shaped by the windowpanes, so have the literary conventions employed by Anne shaped the imprint of absence in her writing. The absences in Anne's archive may be harder to fathom, but they are nevertheless as vast as the world beyond the illuminated windows of the photograph. Figuring the absences in Anne's archive requires us in the first instance to recognise how extensive they are, even as they are difficult to discern because of the fullness of her archive. This, too, requires a shift in seeing, of not equating the relative fullness of an archive with a tantamount lack of absence. A form of figuration is needed in which the extent of absence, even in the face of fullness, can be staged.

Right: Zaayman, C. 2012. *Remnants and Ancestors VII.*

# Chapter Two Endnotes

1. Two portraits of Anne Barnard are in the William Fehr collection, both by Ann Mee. The miniature can be seen on the cover of Volume I of the Van Riebeeck Society's edition of her diaries.
2. For a discussion of how the Enlightenment might be understood to have had a bearing on these two events, see Michael Sonenscher's article "Enlightenment and Revolution" (1998).
3. Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797) being a notable exception, as was the emergence of female authors such as Fanny Burney (1752–1840), Jane Austen (1775–1817), Mary Shelley (1797–1851) and the Brönte sisters (Charlotte, 1816–1855; Emily, 1818–1848; and Anne, 1820–1849).
4. Dundas later became Secretary of War and was in charge of England's colonial interests. As concerns Anne's biography, however, his contribution was to secure the position of Colonial Secretary for Andrew, at her behest.
5. Andrew Barnard left the Cape in 1803 but returned, on his own, in 1806.
6. Historians draw on both Anne's letters and diaries—the letters can be found in the Crawford papers in the National Library of Scotland and in the archives of those to whom she wrote, while the diaries were transcribed and edited, and most of the originals have been destroyed. One should note, then, that both the letters and diaries were penned with an audience in mind.
7. Stephen Taylor's *Defiance* (2016), however, returns to the collection at Balcarres, and his focus is broader than that of prior publications. In his introduction, Taylor claims to tell her story in a manner not previously employed, by relying on the more extended journals kept at Balcarres.
8. See, for example, *That Which Hath Been* (1910).
9. The Vineyard Hotel is housed in a building in the suburb of Newlands that was originally commissioned by Anne; the Barnards lived there subsequent to their stay in Paradise. The hotel makes use of the original house and grounds and various structures that were added later.
10. It is interesting that a commemoration of Anne exists in the Cape but not of General Macartney, who is more famous in the United Kingdom, having led an expedition to the Ming emperor in China in 1792 and refused to "kowtow" to him.
11. An English language version was published in 2017.
12. daughter of the house of Lindsay, "Scotland to Cape Town"
    heroine of a thousand faces
    this verse is our final showdown

    woman for whom I've been sharpening my knife for so many years
    ...
    not opposed but together in this verse stepping lightly
    without reserve the water takes you and you melt into
    his lap I grab after you god I am fixated on you
    ...
    your neck stylishly turned somewhat bohemian
    in the blonde shavings of your hair
    shaken I mourn you friend most loved

    your total shining futility
    (Own translation.)
13. "Reveries of a Solitary Walker" (own translation).
14. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, for example, argued that women's "natural" place was within the realm of domesticity. See in this respect Mary Trouille's critique of Rousseau's gender politics in her article "The Failings of Rousseau's Ideals of Domesticity and Sensibility" (1991).
15. Lenta writes that Hervey was one of two sons born to Andrew by Maria Coghlan (Lenta in Lenta et al. 1993: xii).
16. While it is clear from certain documents in the Crawford papers that Anne held Lady Byron in affectionate regard, it seems peculiar that Anne's involvement in the Byron scandal has not been more widely commented on in the literature about Anne herself. It is, however, not entirely surprising, as this tenet has nothing to do with the historical reconstruction of the late eighteenth century colony at the Cape of Good Hope. Significantly, Anne's omission from the Byron scandal reinforces our understanding that her primary role and contribution to posterity is as a provider of information about the colony.
17. While Anne's work has mostly been treated as simply expressive of the situation in which she found herself, the value of her texts as historical document should not be dismissed. During the restoration of the Castle of Good Hope in 1990, for example, restorers referred to her drawings and writing and were able to determine the location of the demolished "dolphin pool". The bath was subsequently restored and is now a distinctive feature of the Castle's architecture.
18. This article is an extended version of Driver's introduction to the 1993 volume of Anne's letters published by the Van Riebeeck Society.
19. Rousseau's *Julie, ou la nouvelle Héloïse* was published in 1761. While Scott's *Redgauntlet* (1824) was published just a year before Anne's death, it shows that the genre was in wide circulation in the society in which she moved.

CHAPTER THREE

# Absolute Absence —the Anarchive

In the final scene of Djibril Diop Mambéty's film *Hyenas* (1992), a crowd converges on a man. They move closer and closer in on him, obscuring his body from the camera until he is lost to view. They mean to murder him, but they bear no arms. Instead, the crowd simply disappears their victim by encircling him with their bodies while chanting. Abruptly, their voices halt. They disperse. When they leave, there is no corpse. Only a dark patch remains visible on the ground where the man once was. What, in the wide shot, might first appear to be the blood of the dead man is revealed in a close-up to be the jacket he had been wearing. By showing us this jacket, Mambéty makes it clear that the body occupying it until seconds ago is now absent.

Mambéty's intricate allegorical invocation of colonial power and its devastating economic effects (in *Hyenas* and several of his other films) have been noted by a number of scholars.[1] And to be sure, once the crowd has abandoned the empty clothes of the man they seemingly *willed* out of existence, bulldozers appear, performing the role of harbingers of Western-style industrial "progress"—a persistent promise introduced in the narrative to both frighten and seduce the inhabitants of the economically depressed Colobane, the Senegalese town in which the action of the film is staged.

This enigmatic scene from *Hyenas* has haunted me ever since I first saw it. What happened to the man? He is absent, rather than simply dead. What

**Left: Zaayman, C. 2012. *Remnants and Ancestors III.***

is more, that his jacket remains only serves to deepen our awareness that his body does not.

In chapter one, I demonstrated that Krotoa's unarchivable life left an imprint in the archives that can be observed in the expressive qualities of the writing with which she is described in the VOC journals. In chapter two, I argued that while the fullness of Anne's archive initially screens the absences therein, the strategies she used to represent herself and her world resulted in imprints of her absence. Though archives in which Krotoa and Anne appear bear the imprint of their absences, they are unable to retain the substance of what is lost—these archives are like the jacket of Draman Drameh, from which the bodies have disappeared.

As much as the jacket left behind implies the missing corpse of Draman Drameh, so too do colonial archives carry the imprints of absence. Our present requires something from colonial archives that they cannot yield, yet scholarly work and public cultures continually exert a demand on colonial archives for them to speak, to restore lost knowledge to us of unrecorded realities. If reconstructions were sufficient for the purposes of the present, we would have been able to assuage this need, at least to some degree. However, we see in the proliferation of historical narrations in circulation that no reconstruction can sufficiently address the absences; the absences overwhelm the slivers of presence and continue to provoke new narratives, new historical representations. Nevertheless, archives would be stale and uninteresting if there were no imprints of absence, no seductive suggestions of the lives of the people of the past. I contend, however, that it is precisely because of these imprints that register absence that scholars, historians, artists and producers of fiction alike keep returning to archives.

Right: Stills from *Hyenas* (1992), directed by Djibril Diop Mambéty.

## Colonial Archives and the Problem of Reconstruction

In contemporary South African society, colonial archives are contested ground and are not absent from public consciousness. In fact, colonial archives still function as points of reference within social discourse through which to speak of inequalities within the present. For instance, during the hundred-and-third birthday celebrations of the ruling party (the ANC) on 7 January 2015, a praise singer is reported to have said, "I have to clear the spirit of Jan van Riebeeck from this place first" (Donaldson 2015). Later that week, at a fundraising event, sitting president Jacob Zuma declared, "All the trouble began in 1652 when Jan van Riebeeck landed in the Cape" (Ngwenya 2015). These statements prompted criticism and heated argument in the media and on social media platforms. The invocation of Van Riebeeck as a symbol of colonial oppression in this manner functions as an example of how the past is employed to explain the problems of the present.

In 2014, American pop culture and feminist e-zine *Jezebel* published an article by Clueci de Oliveira entitled "Saartjie Baartman: The Original Booty Queen" in response to photographs of reality television celebrity Kim Kardashian for the cover of *Paper* magazine, in which she posed so that her buttocks were emphasised. (Sara Baartman was a Khoekhoe woman born in the Eastern Cape around 1789, who was displayed to audiences in Europe in the early nineteenth century. Her story has been a flashpoint in South Africa in the years after apartheid.) In 2016, a rumour circulated that superstar Beyoncé Knowles would portray Sara in a film adaptation of Baartman's life (Gqirana 2016). The rumour was revealed to be untrue, but caused much outrage nonetheless. As *News24* (ibid.) reports:

> Sarah Baartman's story is not American megastar Beyoncé's to tell, said a local chief of the Ghonaqua First Peoples. "She lacks the basic human dignity to be worthy of writing Sarah's story, let alone playing the part," Chief Jean Burgess said in reaction to the news that US singer, songwriter and actress Beyoncé Knowles was working on a film to portray the life of the Khoekhoe woman Sarah Baartman, who was forced to perform in freak shows in London due to her large buttocks.

In the *Jezebel* article, de Oliveira (2014) cited Tamar Garb to argue that the women who perform the kind of self-display epitomised by Kardashian "are already asserting a complicated dignity". Danielle Bowler (2014) critiqued this article, however—particularly the comparison between Baartman and Kardashian, which she dismissed as "reckless":

> One also wonders how the author managed to manufacture such clear ideas about agency, when academic Pumla Gqola notes that "her paradoxical hypervisibility has meant that although volumes have been written about her, very little is recoverable from these records about her subjectivity". As a result, Gqola refers to Baartman as embodying an 'absent presence' which leads to an '(im)possibility of representing' her. One wonders how such profound agency can be afforded to Bartmann [sic] by the author in the face of little information about her subjectivity. As such she remains an object in the project of illuminating some fact about sexual and racial difference, and is not afforded any degree of complex humanity.

The issues raised by Bowler and Gqola are congruent with those posed in this thesis. Clearly, the problem of limited archival information applies to both Baartman and Krotoa, as does Gqola's conclusion that Baartman embodies an "absent presence". In view of the "absent presence" of figures such as Krotoa and Baartman, how should we respond to the pressure on the archive?

If ever evidence was needed of how great the pressure is on the archive to speak into the present, the film *Krotoa* (2017) provides it in abundance. Not only have responses to the film been numerous, but they are marked by a rare emotional intensity.[2] Several social media posts[3] and various articles[4] appeared after the film's release in South Africa, the tone of which was generally not that of reviewers positioning themselves as sober arbiters of the work's relative merits.[5] Instead, writers chiefly engaged with the question of whether the film narrated the past in a way that adequately satisfied the commentator's requirements of such representations. More precisely, responses focused on whether the film was sufficiently damning of colonialism to give voice to the anger felt towards this history within the contemporary milieu.


The extent of the collective emotional investment in the film's ideological position is remarkable in itself, testifying as it does to a burning need to redress how South Africa's past has been narrated. However, reading the commentaries left me querying the extent to which the film, or *any* narration of Krotoa's life, could adequately address this need.

By way of exploring this problem, I offer the following vignette: During a recent discussion in a class I was teaching, one student (who identifies as "coloured") vividly articulated her intense displeasure with the film. She observed that it continues the pattern instantiated by previous fictional works set in the colonial period (including those dealing with Krotoa), of telling the tale from the perspective of the colonisers as opposed to the colonised. Feeling that there have been enough such representations, she asked where the voices of the oppressed were to be found. Intrigued by her appeal, I extended the question and asked where those views might be found in light of our knowledge that the colonial archive is one from which those voices have been purposefully omitted—we have no record of what those voices would say, even if we could give them a space in which to speak. In answer, the student argued that the filmmakers could have told the story in a manner informed by the experiences of those who have been oppressed; because of South Africa's colonial and apartheid history, a rich collection of such perspectives exists. Effectively, the student was suggesting that contemporary inheritance and present experiences of oppression in this country would have made a more meaningful basis for the film's imaginative venture. She was essentially asking for the present to be used as a matrix on which to map the past.

If the sole function of fictional representations of the past were to provide an allegory for the present, such a solution might serve us well. And indeed,

Far left: Poster for *Krotoa* (IMDB n.d.)
Left: Stills from *Krotoa* (BSharp Entertainment n.d.).

historians and writers have remarked that how we construct history reflects the questions that circulate in the present more precisely than they portray the past. Nevertheless, the loss in the archive of Krotoa's voice, of Khoekhoe voices, of the innumerable people whose voices have slipped away in the torrent of time, haunts the present still. While the production of history, whether in fiction or scholarship, necessarily and sometimes valuably allegorises the present, there remains at the heart of this endeavour an emptiness, an undeniable not-knowing. No reconstruction can be adequately rich or multivalent to fill this vacuum.

At the heart of this thesis lies the recognition of this silence, the unrepresentability of the past. In many respects it takes a counter-approach to the film *Krotoa*. In my argument, I do not attempt a repopulation of the archive, nor do I fictionalise the lives of Krotoa or Anne. Similarly, I do not attempt to employ their stories as a means to address the issues of the present.[6] Instead, I hope to focus attention on what is not seen, what cannot be seen and what is lost, thereby building a theoretical framework through which we might consider how to give this absence shape *as absence*, especially in the form of creative and artistic responses to the very notion of past-ness.

The unrepresentable loss at the heart of (colonial) archives shadows any production from them, whether scholarly or creative, acknowledged or not. Our attachment to the past, and the way in which we give meaning to it in the present, depends on the bond of the experience of "presentness" between our forebears and ourselves. This bond is both served and frustrated by the archive. Collections of historical documents provide access to some aspects of the past, but they necessarily cannot contain all of the past, and, as a lived life becomes distilled into archival document, the archive is unable to preserve those qualities of a lived life that describe its fullness. Direct deliberation on notions of absence and silence within the archive is indispensable and should not be glossed over, as it pertains to the multitude of challenges the past presents to us, as well as to how we construct our presence in future archives.

The questions raised by *Krotoa* and its attendant commentary are meaningful entry points into an exploration of how the pressure on colonial archives affect historical narration, and how absences in archives manifest in these narrations. Kaye Anne Williams and Margaret Goldsmith wrote the script for *Krotoa*, which was directed by Roberta Durrant.[7] The film is shaped around its titular character and focuses primarily on the period of her life from around age eleven to shortly before her death in 1674. After the introductory credits, it is clearly stated that the film is "based on historical facts". Although the so-called third act of her life (the period subsequent to Van Meerhoff's death) takes up very little of the film's running time, it does bookend the film: in the opening scene, Krotoa, imprisoned and distressed and dressed in Khoekhoe clothing, is conveyed to Robben Island.[8] This scene is revisited at the conclusion, extended into a heartbreaking finale where, weeping and staggering around her cell, Krotoa cries out repeatedly "*My naam is Krotoa!*"[9]

The central body of the narrative follows Krotoa from when she is given[10] to Jan van Riebeeck by her uncle Autshumao,[11] to her life at the fort, her years as an interpreter, her marriage to Van Meerhoff and, finally, to her decline in standing within Dutch society after his death and a suggestion of deteriorating mental health. The scope of the plot takes in the conflict between the Dutch and the Khoekhoe, although it does not distinguish between the various groups that constituted the Khoekhoe inhabitants of the Cape Peninsula.

Above: Portrait of Jan van Riebeeck by an unknown artist, c. 1660 (Wikipedia 2019a).

In its very framing, the film almost precisely echoes Krotoa's appearance in the archives in the journals of the VOC commanders Jan van Riebeeck, Zacharias Wagenaer and their successors. This limited framing is one of the crucial points on which one might critique the film, as it thereby remains constrained by colonial perspectives. Additionally, inventions for the purpose of narrative coherence abound. To name but two, the film depicts a budding romance between an adolescent Krotoa and Doman (who, as I indicated in chapter one, was a leader and prominent advocate of the Goringhaiqua but not a member of the Goringhaicona)[12] and a scene in which Van Riebeeck rapes Krotoa. These and other "inaccuracies" have been pointed out by Patric Tariq Mellet (2017a), a heritage activist and writer about the early Cape Colony, in an extensive entry on Facebook:[13]

> There is no factual basis that Krotoa was raped by van Riebeeck or had an intimate relationship with him. This storyline is based on speculation about who all were culpable. I believe that Krotoa did suffer abuse and rape probably by a number of officials and one cannot rule out van Riebeeck being one of these but I refuse to accept that her life was shaped by an ambiguous speculative relationship with van Riebeeck in the manner portrayed by the movie. This does not do her justice.

Although it has received very little comment, another irksome anachronism was the use of the Afrikaans language as a proxy for Dutch.[14]

If one considers that the film presents itself as an integrated, coherent and artistically styled *story*, some inaccuracies are to be expected. Despite repeated references in commentary to the accuracy of the portrayals in the film, these inaccuracies themselves are not the grounds on which to dismiss it. It is more important to consider the attitudes embedded in the film and what is conveyed through the narrative as it is presented—in light of what those attitudes reveal about what a contemporary audience is imagined to want from a figure such as Krotoa.

Above: Detail of film still from *Krotoa*, showing the Jan van Riebeeck character (Mellet 2017).

The film is explicitly critical of colonialism. At more than one point in the narrative, various Khoekhoe remind the Dutch that they are on the Khoekhoe's land, a refrain that echoes powerfully with present-day sociopolitical discourse on land redistribution. The VOC's bookkeeper at the Cape, Roelof de Man, is portrayed as a particularly unsympathetic character, as is Wagenaer, both of whom ridicule Krotoa and plot against her. The Khoekhoe themselves are portrayed as peaceful, free-spirited people, though rather in the vein of primitivist fantasies—most notably in stark contrast to the Dutch (in general), who are covetous of land, riches and, ultimately, of Krotoa's body. Perhaps the most pointed critique of colonialism is embodied in the narrative arc of Krotoa as character, who develops from innocent ingénue to heroic figure but ultimately becomes a destitute captive. Her rise and fall under colonial power is powerfully and affectively conveyed. Although the film is not exclusively related through her eyes, she is the protagonist whose feelings viewers are invited to share. Her ultimate suffering is the central motif of the plot and the crux of the film's meaning.

However, a complication of the critical position towards colonialism emerges in arguably the most contentious relationship in the film, that between Krotoa and Van Riebeeck. Van Riebeeck is portrayed as a gentle man with a caring, if patronising, attitude towards Krotoa. The film intimates that as she matures, feelings beyond custodianship develop on both sides. In characteristic cinematic drama, Van Riebeeck's "feelings" overwhelm him, and he rapes Krotoa. Rather than explicitly situating this as an act of gender violence or as indicative of the power embodied by Van Riebeeck as man and colonial agent,[15] the film employs this moment as a plot-driven device with which to drive a wedge between Krotoa and Van Riebeeck, simultaneously freeing her so that her influence can spread in the colony as a go-between. The film handles the relationship between Krotoa and Van Riebeeck in a less than clear-cut manner. Later in the film, Van Riebeeck begs Krotoa for forgiveness, which she initially refuses but eventually grants to him.[16]

The romanticism with which Van Riebeeck is portrayed by casting him as young and attractive, fuelling the (very questionable) plausibility of an ambiguous relationship with Krotoa, has been negatively reviewed by many commentators. It would seem that by not representing Van Riebeeck as simply "bad", the filmmakers have invoked the ire of those who view him as an embodiment of the colonial project. Van Riebeeck's biography and person might need a more complicated discussion than the simple appellation that "bad" allows, but it is worth bearing in mind that the apartheid Nationalist government identified him with the establishment of the colony in a celebratory manner. In this way, Van Riebeeck has become the face of colonial occupation, and presenting him in an ambiguous manner is one of the clearest ways in which the filmmakers have frustrated the expectations of many viewers. As Williams stated in an interview:

> I think both the international and the local audiences will be fascinated by her life. However, the local audiences might find our take on her story—and, by consequence, Jan van Riebeeck's story—uncomfortable. What I'm ultimately hoping is that this film will stimulate dialogue and discourse. (Van Heerden and Williams 2017)

The critiques of *Krotoa* can thus be understood as a response to the extent to which the film is able to surface, or fail to give adequate voice to, the concerns of the present.

It is not my intention to provide an analysis of *Krotoa* as though it were my object of study, but rather to understand the ways in which the film attempts to present a fully-fleshed, embodied and persuasive depiction of the past, while at the same time not making the claim that it is factually complete or completely factual. What is produced by this self-conscious invention?

While a vocal contingent of opinions has been critical of the film, other commentators have been more forgiving. Some have praised the film for the work of embodiment it performs by adding flesh to the skeleton of the archive. In this instance, an apt example is Jonathan Jansen's (2017) piece "Don't Buy into the Multicultural Lie—We're in the Same Race" in the South African *Sunday Times*. He suggests that the film usefully demonstrates that the notion of "race" is itself a myth, especially in view of the children born by Krotoa of a Dutch father(s):

> You could start, however, by taking high school pupils to see the movie Krotoa which, though lacking in social and political context, is a beautiful portrayal of the complexities of intimacy and the enduring legacy of Eva

van den Kaap in many black and white families across South Africa today. (Jansen 2017)

Other commentators, as well as Williams (the scriptwriter), view the film as an opportunity to engage in debate:

> At the same time, EWN's Monique Mortlock says the film is an important tool to spark debate and curiosity about cultural heritage. Mortlock explains that the film has raised some important questions about representation, coloured ancestry and the colonial lens of history. (Qukula 2017)

Today, Krotoa might be one of the most written about women in the history of South Africa, but until the 1990s she remained a little-known figure outside the circles of those interested in the early colonial period of the Cape. By bringing the story into public consciousness, the filmmakers have populated the social imagination with a concrete account from the archives in which one Khoekhoe woman is shown to be oppressed yet, in her own way, powerful. The film thus makes an important contribution to the circulation of this story and sketches a picture of the early colony in which the detrimental effect of occupation on one individual is plainly described.

Bringing Krotoa's story into greater public awareness in the medium of film is a self-conscious decision that plays between fact and fiction. At a panel discussion conducted after a screening of the film at Kyknet's *Silwerskerm* movie festival,[17] Kaye Williams emphasised that she wanted the film to be a *story*, as she had already made a documentary film about Krotoa.[18] She also indicated that

> [t]he documentary was very much focused on the facts of her life (the few that were available to us), and on allowing the audience to form an opinion of her life based on the historical facts, the research materials and the opinions of the various historians we engaged with, whereas, with the film, we wanted to map out a possible journey of Krotoa's life, colouring in the historical facts with character, narrative and story. (Van Heerden and Williams 2017)

One of the ways in which the film succeeds in populating the archive is in the casting of the role of Krotoa. Crystal-Donna Roberts does a remarkable job

Right: Crystal-Donna Roberts as Krotoa, photograph by Uwe Jansch (Afrikaanse Films n.d.).

of giving Krotoa presence on-screen. Her performance is one of the clearest examples of how the VOC archives has been brought to life through the cinematic medium. I wrote in chapter one of the image that has been widely pressed into service as Krotoa's portrait, a stand-in for her face. Because of the immersive medium of cinema, Roberts's portrayal has unsettled the unconscious usage of the first image. In contrast to the passive naivety of the earlier image, Roberts portrays Krotoa with a wide variety of emotions and not only as a victim.

The power of *Krotoa* to elicit strong emotion can be argued to be founded in its animation of the archive in a way that produces (variable) affect in a contemporary audience. Its hold on the contemporary imagination is due to our investment not in the past alone, but specifically in a particular interpretation of the past and in how we desire it to function within the present. There are by necessity preferences and omissions, and the response is not whether the omissions are acceptable, but rather what kind of performances of the past they make possible and to what ends. The film contributes to public understanding of the early colonial period by focusing on the narrative of a Khoekhoe woman. Doing so through the popular medium of dramatic film, however, comes with its own demands (such as narrative cohesion) that require historical omissions and the skewing of factual information—itself already constrained by the limits of the colonial archive. Despite its intentions, *Krotoa* perpetuates the omissions in the colonial archive, even while it struggles against them.

In his volume *Silencing the Past* (1995), Michel-Rolph Trouillot demonstrates how the narration of history, in formal and informal ways, is shaped by power relations. While this proposition is widely accepted by scholars, his suggestion that the shaping occurs through silencing is particularly applicable:

> Silences enter the process of historical production at four crucial moments: the moment of fact creation (the making of *sources*); the moment of fact assembly (the making of *archives*); the moment of fact retrieval (the making of *narratives*); and the moment of retrospective significance (the making of *history* in the final instance). (Trouillot 1995: 26)

It is particularly at the point that *Krotoa* relies on "facts" from the archive, Trouillot's "fact retrieval", that the film silences Krotoa, as, of necessity, it omits certain aspects of her archive to weave a relatively autonomous narrative as a work of art. The film also largely limits itself to the colonial archive and thus further perpetuates the silencing.

Nevertheless, narrations are not just the purview of filmmakers or even scholars. For Trouillot, people are at the same time agents within and narrators of history, in the sense that both participate in the events of their time and circulate narrations of the past in their own present. The question then emerges as to what shapes the public circulation of history or how certain narrations gain currency at different times. Because what is circulated is not mere "fact", questions of "authenticity"—as distinct from "accuracy"—emerge. Whereas "accuracy" implies a faithfulness to the archival document for verifiable fact, for Trouillot, "authenticity" refers to the traction that historical narration finds in the time and place in which it is articulated:

> Authenticity implies a relation with what is known that duplicates the two sides of historicity: it engages us both as actors and narrators. Thus, authenticity cannot reside in attitudes towards a discrete past kept alive through narratives. Whether it invokes, claims or rejects The Past, authenticity obtains only in regard to current practices that engage us as witnesses, actors and commentators—including practices of historical narration. (Trouillot 1995: 150–51)

Consequently, an awareness of our double role in relation to the past and the production of history presents a moral demand for the very "practices of historical narration", as Trouillot (1995: 151) suggests:

> [N]one of us starts with a clean slate. But the historicity of the human condition also requires that practices of power and domination be renewed. It is that renewal that should concern us most, even if in the name of pasts. The so-called legacies of past horrors—slavery, colonialism, or the Holocaust—are possible only because of that renewal. And that renewal occurs only in the present. Thus, even in relation to The Past our authenticity resides in the struggle of our present. Only in that present can we be true or false to the past we choose to acknowledge.

In Trouillot's formulation, how we narrate the past in the present is critical, as it is founded on the renewal of power relations enacted in the past. Thus, the very way in which history is told continues disenfranchisement even after the "official" end of colonialism and apartheid, and is in this way a renewal of the oppression of the past. An "authentic" narration of history is, for Trouillot, not one that closely follows historical documentation, but one that is conscious of its responsibility within the present and mindful of the silencing it enacts. Accordingly, the criticisms of *Krotoa* are essentially not so much concerned with the fact that there has been a distortion of the archive as that the film does not *exceed* the archive, that it ultimately fails to give back to the archive that which is absent from it.

Historical narration entails the interpretation and, to a degree, translation of archival material into narrative. It is thus germane that translation is integral to Krotoa's life and the archive in which she appears, because it is her role as interpreter that afforded her a (limited) degree of power and control for a period of her life. However, we might consider another way in which translation is crucial to an understanding of Krotoa and argue that there has been a manner of translation of Krotoa as person *into* the archive.

As a commentary on Krotoa's role as translator, and following Walter Benjamin and Lawrence Venuti, Samuelson (2007: 17) remarks on "[a] lingering residue *that cannot be carried across* in the act of translation and to the original's dependence on translation for its presence in the present: while 'the transfer can never be total'" (emphasis in original). Whereas Samuelson employs these ideas to argue that because the "original" (in this instance, the actual past) is unstable (read inaccessible), it cannot be held as a foundation for claims of truth, I am drawn to the "lingering residue", to that which cannot be translated. In this thesis, I posit this as excess, as the "anarchive". Keep in mind the excesses that remained after Krotoa's translation into Van Riebeeck and Wagenaer's journals—her voice, her vitality, her presentness. As *Krotoa* concerns itself largely with that which has been translated/transcribed into archival documents, the excesses (that which could not be translated) are imaginatively reconstructed by drawing on filmic tropes. However, the film has not made visible the extent of these silences and cannot show that they are much vaster than the sliver of "fact" that has been retained. And thereby, the film resilences Krotoa.

Despite its self-conscious positioning as quasi-historical, *Krotoa*'s greatest omission is the lack of acknowledgement of the silences that mark the archive in which Krotoa appears, despite these silences determining how the film has been received. If we are, in Trouillot's terms, to reflect on the morality of our historical narration, is it not then equally imperative that we confront the

silences? However full a reimagining might be, it cannot replace the loss that is entailed in the translation of a life into archive.

While the repopulation and imaginative reconstruction of historical events aid us in engaging with our past and recreating understandings of it, they are not enough to address the silence that always returns. The silences are not temporary but persistent, not incidental but vast, and they will not disappear through our energetic efforts. In this thesis, I am concerned with how these absences can be brought into view, how our endeavours to engage the past can be shaped not by a desire to fill the silence but to listen to it and find ways of giving it form.

## Negotiations of Archival Absence

Scholars who have engaged critically with archives have long noted the absences within them and laboured in various ways to find the means of addressing them.

Jacques Derrida, a prominent contributor to this discourse, reflects on silences in the archive by arguing that an archive itself requires the preservation of some "facts" at the cost of forgetting—silencing—much else. His *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression* (1995) is a key text that is seldom omitted from discussions on "archive". The text of *Archive Fever* is the transcript of a lecture given by Derrida at the Freud Museum in London in 1994. Much of his argument unfolds in relation to the archive of Sigmund Freud, but Derrida employs the notion of "archive" more conceptually, even as a metaphor for the conscious and unconscious.

His text positions concepts of memory and forgetting in the very fabric of archive as constitutive of each other, and, in Derrida's articulation, the archive is as much a place of remembrance as it is of loss. In fact, the use of the words "archive fever" as translation for *mal d'archive* (the text's French title) has been contested by some, who suggest instead that Derrida's meaning can more precisely be understood as "archive sickness", a feeling comparable to sea sickness or an enduring, disorienting nostalgia for an origin—what he calls "a place of absolute commencement" (Derrida 1995: 57). This notion of the continuing deferment of origin is aligned with the notion of the anarchive as employed in this thesis. Derrida argues that archival accretion itself (always partial, always selective) is a desire for "a place of absolute commencement" and is doomed to remain unfulfilled, and that consequently the archive itself is also a site of forgetting.

Derrida (1995: 9) writes that the meaning of the word "archive" originates from the Greek *arkheion*: "initially a house, a domicile, an address, the residence of superior magistrates, the *archons*, those who commanded. The citizens who thus held and signified political power were considered to possess the right to make or to represent the law". Derrida then argues that this origin of the word signals not only a physical repository of documents or objects but also a regulatory function:

> This archontic function is not solely topo-nomological. It does not only require that the archive be deposited somewhere, on a stable substrate, and at the disposition of a legitimate hermeneutic authority. The archontic power, which also gathers the functions of unification, of identification, of classification, must be paired with what we will call the power of *consignation*. By consignation, we do not mean, in the ordinary sense of the word, the act of assigning residence or of entrusting so as to put into reserve (to consign, to deposit) in a place and on a substrate, but here the act of *con*signing through *gathering together of signs*. It is not only the traditional *consignatio,* that is, the written proof, but what all *consignation*

> begins by presupposing. *Consignation* aims to coordinate a single corpus, in a system of synchrony in which all elements articulate the unity of an ideal configuration. In an archive, there should not be any absolute dissociation, any heterogeneity or *secret* which could separate (*secernere*), or partition, in an absolute manner. The archontic principle of the archive is also a principle of consignation, that is, of gathering together. (Derrida 1995: 10)

Here Derrida argues that the notion of law-making is embedded in the term "archive", in that an archive is governed by a set of strictures about what material can and should be included within it, and how it is ordered. An archive, in Derrida's articulation, is as much a reference to a repository of material as it is to the generative or unifying modality governing that archive. If one follows the Derridean logic in this regard, not only must one relinquish any notion of an "impartial" archive, but one must also recognise that this homogenising function of archive entails the loss of aspects counter to that "law" or principle—it is a form of "forgetting". Derrida's formulation is useful for understanding how colonial archives resist and work against counter-colonial perspectives. What is more, it also points towards how archives establish their own unity, effecting a kind of "reality". Recognising the "forgetting" embedded within archive, in this thesis I explore precisely this counter-archival, namely that which lies outside the law of archive.

As I indicated, absences in colonial archives are especially troublesome and call for strategies whereby archives can be engaged that acknowledges these difficulties. As Nathan Sowry (2012: 6) asks, "How are archivists able to address the lacunae in the historical record?" He advocates for the method of "reading against the grain", in which unintentional inclusions in an archive, which are often contradictory to the intent or grain along which an archive was formed, take on primary significance. This method has produced rich readings of archival material, such as in Carlo Ginzburg's *The Cheese and the Worms* (1980). Sowry, however, views "reading against the grain" as an especially productive strategy in postcolonial scholarship, in that he suggests that it can enable the recovery of absent voices. In his article "Silence, Accessibility, and Reading Against the Grain: Examining Voices of the Marginalized in the India Office Records" Sowry (2012: 7) explains that

> [i]n the instance of the sepoy conspiracy of 1815, postcolonial scholarship allows the archivist or the researcher to present the agency of the Javanese and Bengalis neglected by their Western contemporaries by reading the record against the grain.

He is, however, cognisant of some of the problems that "reading against the grain" might entail. He dedicates some of his text to exploring the issues that arise from this method, including the inevitable biases and the polemics of attempting to speak on behalf of an "Other":

> First, it is important to note that many scholars contend that the voices of the marginalized simply cannot be recovered, that the subaltern cannot speak. … Rather, incorporating a method of reading against the grain into archival theory and practice merely enables us to uncover voices that have been silenced, and to present through a pluralistic approach the many varying perspectives contained within the archives. (Sowry 2012: 8–9)

Reading archives "against" the grain is an attempt to fill the gaps in an archive by employing peripheral, incidental and unintentional inclusions to voice a position that has been overwhelmingly neglected in the main body of that archive.

In *Along the Archival Grain* (2009), Ann Laura Stoler posits an alternative to the method of reading against the archival grain by providing analyses of

colonial archives (especially those of the VOC), in which she reads *along* the grain of the documents to reveal their inherent anxiety and discomfort:

> Colonial administrations were prolific producers of social categories. This book deals with these categories and their enumeration, but its focus is less on taxonomy than on the unsure and hesitant sorts of documentation and sensibilities that gathered around them. It starts from the observation that producing rules of classification was an unruly and piecemeal venture at best. Nor is there much that is hegemonic about how those taxonomies worked on the ground. Grids of intelligibility were fashioned from uncertain knowledge; disquiet and anxieties registered the uncommon sense of events and things; epistemic anxieties repeatedly unsettled the imperial conceit that all was in order. (Stoler 2009:1)

Stoler's method of reading along the grain pays careful attention to what is in the archives and why. Her analyses are valuable in that they focus attention on the ways in which colonial archives are themselves indicative of the disquiet of their very creators, and that reading against the grain of these archives is but one way in which to address their inherent discordance.

Stoler's methodology informs my own thesis to a degree, in that I also attend to what Stoler terms the "unwritten". However, my interest does not precisely coincide with Stoler's, who states that

> [i]n attending to that which is "not written", there is something of Lévi-Strauss's vision of anthropology in what follows. By this I do not mean that it plumbs for the "hidden message" or those subliminal texts that couch "the real" below the surface and between the written lines. Rather it seeks to identify the pliable coordinates of what constituted colonial common sense in a changing imperial order. (Stoler 2009: 3)

Stoler's contention is that the "unwritten" does not signal "real truths" so much as it describes the inexpressible parameters that shape a particular archive.

From the outset, however, even the very reliance on archival evidence is itself an especially loaded methodology when used in the writing of history. Colonial archives pose particular and demanding challenges to scholars working in the postcolonial arena, as well as to those wanting to access the pasts of people whose lives were recorded by colonial powers but were lived in resistance to those powers. In his texts about the Xhosa chief Hintsa kaKhawuta, Premesh Lalu (2009: 46) engages the polemics of relying on a colonial archive to tell the story of the past:

> That which colonial records described in terms of the treachery of the Xhosa was the sign of an incomprehensibility that would enable an alternative nationalist history of the event. The failure on the part of the colonial forces to anticipate Xhosa responses had far-reaching consequences for colonized subjects and the colonial expansionist project more generally. It also formed the basis on which colonial representations of the events leading up to the killing of chief Hintsa were built … In more recent historiographical accounts of the colonization of the Xhosa, the story of the killing of Hintsa is told with extraordinary brevity and with references that lead us back to the colonial archive or through circuitous citations to the palaces of power. Upholding a commitment to history from the perspective of the colonized, contemporary historians have sign-posted their invocation of colonial sources, alerting the reader to the dangers of an unfamiliar and a politically antagonistic descriptive vocabulary.

To escape the petrifying effects produced by altogether avoiding the colonial archive when constructing a narrative of the past, Lalu presents an examination

of what constitutes "evidence" in the writing of history (in the narrative of the killing of Hintsa specifically). He does so by closely reading the official dispatches and reports in the archive that contains communication between then Grahamstown (now Makhanda) and Cape Town. Lalu argues that Hintsa cannot be viewed as simply a dispossessed colonial subject, but rather that the language by which he is described in the archive reveals that colonial agents and missionaries saw Hintsa as a threat and feared him. His argument around absences in colonial archives delineates what can be garnered from them, which is not the actuality of events, but rather the intimations of colonial perspectives.

As the title of Clifton Crais and Pamela Scully's *Sara Baartman and the Hottentot Venus: A Ghost Story and a Biography* (2009) indicates, the authors tackle the various forms in which the story of Sara Baartman circulates in public imaginings, from her own time to the present day. They observe that the "image" of Sara Baartman has been subsumed by the many representations of the "Hottentot Venus" vying to be the authoritative image.

> Europeans created the Hottentot Venus as the missing link separating beast from man … Sara entered Europe's psyche, modernity's psyche, not as a woman, a living, breathing person with emotions and memories and longings, but as a metaphor, a figment, a person reduced to simulacrum. That figment subsumed the person. We will always know more about the phantom that haunts the Western imagination, a phantom so complete that it has nearly become a living, breathing person, than we do about the life of Sara Baartman, the human being who was ultimately destroyed by an illusion. (Crais & Scully 2009: 6)

Crais and Scully embark on a remarkable endeavour of research, which pieces together Baartman's life in a manner deeply apprised of the sociopolitical environments of the South Africa and Europe in which she lived, and they pursue these lines into the contemporary contestations of her legacy and family. At the heart of this reconstruction, however, they maintain that there remains the "ghost" of Sara Baartman, the "living, breathing human being" who is absent from the records.

With the scholarly work and methodologies that have explored archival absences in mind, my project centres on that which *cannot* be written—the absolute absences that haunt the archive. In many ways, such absences are unavoidable with any writing, especially the writing of history. Nevertheless, I posit that they are more powerful and significant than "accidental" or "apocryphal" and thus require consideration in their own right.

## Anarchive

My mother tongue, Afrikaans, is highly idiomatic. After an intense, disruptive or traumatic event, one is said to need time "*om tot verhaal te kom*", that is, "to come to a story". In its colloquial usage the expression simply means that one needs to calm down or recover, but its literal meaning—the need to produce a narrative from incoherent events—has long echoed in my thoughts when considering how we engage with the past. In the present moment, there is no coherent story for what is happening, and various forces are always at work and in competition to contain the "story" of the present.

It is an oft-repeated truism that history is written by the victors, but in practice it is not that simple: victors are themselves subject to revision. In post-apartheid South Africa, for instance, much work has been done to excavate previously unrecorded or ignored histories and bring them into prominence, as these stories are considered to have important bearing on our present moment. Embedded in many of these important endeavours lies the assumption that a coherent history exists, albeit only in principle: if enough information might

be uncovered or gathered, a sufficiently full picture of the past might emerge. In distinction, this thesis posits the past as unbounded, that any "present" comprises a host of experiences that is impossible to distil into archive.

In order to cohere my thoughts about an unbounded past, I developed the framework of the anarchive.[19] When I reflect on the anarchive, the scene from *Hyenas* described at the beginning of this chapter frequently comes to mind. The anarchive is like Draman Drameh: he was present, alive, but is now lost—irretrievably absent. That which *remains* (his jacket, which outlines the absence of his body, the imprint in the archive) reminds us of what is absent but can never embody the thing itself and cannot be used to stand in for what is absent. Instead, it reveals the presence of that absence.

That absences exist in the archive and profoundly affects historical narration is an argument developed by numerous scholars over a range of academic fields, some of which have already been discussed in this text. However, my particular approach in this thesis is to position absence in the form of the anarchive. The anarchive does not refer to that which has not been archived due to conditions of accretion, but to that which cannot, as such, be archived. What these absences entail cannot be defined; most aspects of the anarchive cannot even be conceived of, as they are excessive to language and structure, to "story". Yet we might approach the anarchive obliquely, by reflecting on the nature of the present as it exists before we can "*kom tot verhaal*". This moment, before we can "come to the story", or construct the narrative, is the condition of *being* in the present. The anarchive refers to the experience of moments in time before the stories that describe them, and in effect bind them, have come into existence. If we understand the present as unbounded in this way, it follows that the past at one time existed as a present in the same manner. The anarchive as a conceptual construction summons in the mind the very presentness of the unbounded past. In this way, absences within the archive (and beyond) are not limited to untold stories but include *untellable* stories—unborn potentialities that have not found form in the narratives or the archives. In "anarchive" I refer to that which is not contained by archive but, more pressingly, that which is by its very nature *without* archive, particularly those things that cannot be captured by documents or archival fragments. My intention in using the term "anarchive" is to reference the "presentness" of the past by creating a point of conceptual access to absences that are excluded by conventional notions of the archive.

The concept of the anarchive leads to the question of how one can portray the past in such a way that its unboundedness is conveyed, and, importantly, that it is constituted by the anarchive more than archives. Undoubtedly, we must employ a certain amount of narrative closure when speaking of the past, lest scholarship collapse. Nevertheless, methodologies that pursue a different means through which to represent the past, other than history-writing, may offer us the ability to invoke the anarchive. I also contend that in anarchival considerations of the past, where the unboundedness of the past fundamentally shapes inquiry, the engagement is not one of subject to object, investigator to location, scholar to subject matter. Instead, it positions us in a present that stretches "forwards" and "backwards" in time. This then sets up a relationship between the present and the past that is not finally determined by the "event horizon" of an archival document.

An anarchival approach also holds implications for the way in which we contend with absences in the archive, as anarchive is concerned not so much with

the content of the absences themselves (or how they might be reconstructed) but rather posits that absences are constitutive of archives. Dealing with the presence-of-absence thus does not establish a means to a fuller picture of the past. Rather, the notion of presence-of-absence, as described here, suggests an inevitability and vastness of absence. In this vein, it does not matter how abundantly or sparsely populated an archive may be—the anarchive and the absences it signifies haunt it always. Just as much as the past is unbounded, the anarchive is itself similarly endless. In an anarchival view, no "thing" can stand for the whole: a life and an archive cannot coincide.

I arrived at the term "anarchive" independently, but it has been employed loosely in two instances in scholarly writing on archives. Hal Foster, in his essay "An Archival Impulse", makes brief use of the term in a manner that refers to incomplete or opaque archival traces:

> In this regard archival art is as much preproduction as it is postproduction: concerned less with absolute origins than with obscure traces (perhaps "anarchival impulse" is the more appropriate phrase), these artists are often drawn to unfulfilled beginnings or incomplete projects—in art and in history alike—that might offer points of departure again. (Foster 2004: 5)

Although my own application of the term differs from Foster's and is expanded into a more comprehensive framework, the passage above confirms that artists are often drawn to the unresolved spaces in archives and employ these as generative sites.

Tom McDonough uses "The Anarchive" as a title for an article that addresses Okui Enwezor's curated exhibition *Archive Fever* (2008), which for the most part comprised photography-based works. In the article, which is mainly a review of the exhibition, McDonough does not explicitly define the term "anarchive", but he nevertheless emphasises that the artists whose works are on show are working at the border of archives, where memory, fact and documentation do not yield firmness and facticity.[20]

In this thesis, I employ the term "anarchive" not as an incidental indicator with which to shift memory and the permeable boundaries of archives. I mean to position anarchive here to describe a particular aspect of a present that cannot be archived, which is therefore absent from any archive—beyond archive—and the effect of this absence on ways in which the archive is used in representations of the past, whether in the disciplines of history or other, fictional and/or imaginative engagements with the past.

The anarchive makes its presence felt in the continual and contested historical narrations that draw on archives. It is sensed in the inevitable incompleteness of such narrations, as well as in the fact that their invented coherence brings about cognisance of their artificiality: in the cases of these invented stories, we become aware that they cannot coincide with the actuality of the past. Thus, more narration is prompted, and the cycle continues until we accept that, in fact, neither words nor testimony can resurrect the past. The anarchive lies at the heart of this cycle of narration, in that it manifests our awareness that no story, no reconstruction, can diminish the reality of absence. Moreover, confronting the anarchive is a traumatic exercise: it may inspire repeated, frenetic attempts to fill the spaces, populate the absences and appease the anxiety of loss, but the anarchive will not be satisfied with any such efforts.

## Figuring Anarchive: Ruin and Remnant

As I am addressing absence that defies story or closure, it is not by accident that I have used figurative terms to describe the anarchive—Drameh's jacket,

for example, and the term “imprint”—as it is only through analogy and approximation that we can bring the unsayable into a discursive space. Stoler’s earlier articulation of the term “archive” as a “strong metaphor” is constructive in this regard, because it positions discourse about the archive in the realm of the figurative. I wish to expand on this figurative approach to ultimately signal that which cannot be addressed directly: the anarchive. If the anarchive escapes the archive, how can we bring it into view? We only have recourse to figuration: words such as “ghost” and “haunting” abound in many of the texts that address the presence of absence, and these terms can be useful for stirring our imaginations to enter the realm of the anarchive. However, I wish to add to this vocabulary the terms “ruin” and “remnant” (the latter with reference to the writing of Agamben, in particular).

Absence, as it relates to the past, has been figured poetically in literature and art through the employment of the figure of the “ruin”. The ruin is familiar to us particularly through it usage in Romanticism—the work of Caspar David Friedrich, for example, depicts many ruins, and a consideration of its use in Romanticism can be found in Denis Diderot’s writings on the subject. As Anne Betty Weinshenker (1973: 315) remarks in her article “Diderot’s Use of the Ruin-Image”, “[t]he ruins, by calling to mind their former splendor and flourishing state, emphasize the passage of time between the past and present”. Earlier, she notes Diderot’s “enthusiasm for the transient figures and the driving wind in a painting of ruins, symbol of mutability“ (Weinshenker 1973: 314). As Weinshenker describes it, the ruin-as-image is a pictorial device whereby changeability, or the passage of time, is invoked. Moreover, the figure of the ruin, while by necessity referencing the past, is a structure with its own “wholeness”. This wholeness does not rely on the building it once was but is a unity that contains “mutability”,

to use Weinshenker term. The ruin is not a figure that simply evokes a building as it was before ruination; instead, its form is “complete” as it is in the present.

Being formed by the processes of erosion over time, ruins do not “depict” the past but embody the passage of time. Florence Hetzler’s definition of “ruin” foregrounds how the nature of time is inherently integrated with ruin, or what she terms “ruin time”:

> I believe that ruins may be considered works of art just as works of music, painting, etc., may be. A ruin, however, is a special work of art. It includes the human-made and the nature-made and has its own time, place, space, life and lives. Ruin time is immanent in a ruin and this time includes the time when it was first built, that is, the time when it was not a ruin; the time of its maturation as a ruin; the time of the birds, bees, bats and butterflies that may live in or on the ruin; the cosmological time of the land that supports it and is part of it and will take back to itself the man-made part eventually; as well as the sidereal time of the stars, sun and clouds that shine upon it, shadow it and are part of it. A ruin is the disjunctive product of the intrusion of nature upon the humanmade without loss of the unity that our species produced. (Hetzler 1988: 51)

Ruin-as-figure thus encapsulates both time and emptiness. My own interest in the figure of the ruin is not based on a proliferation of physical ruins related to Krotoa or Anne. Instead, I think about the archives in which they appear, metaphorically, as kinds of ruin: like ruins, archives are but the bare remains of a full presence. I understand the vastness of absence and loss in archives to be constituted by absence more than presence. Positioning archives as ruins foregrounds their incompleteness, because ruins are bereft of their constructed purpose and are not intact. Nevertheless, ruins possess a wholeness in their incompleteness, in that they are constituted by incompleteness. Archive-as-ruin

is a figure whereby absence can be centered in the archive, where the absence is part of the archive and constitutes its very nature.

Cornelia Vismann draws parallels between the ruin and the remnant in her article "The Love of Ruins" (2001), in which she traces the development of how ruins were perceived—as embodiments of the past in the sixteenth century, to the twentieth century, where the ruin was reconceived as a *remainder* of the past, a "remnant" of sorts, in the work of, for example, Giorgio Agamben: "He liberates ruins from their materialistic shell altogether and takes them consequently in their discursive form as that which is and which is in language" (Vismann 2001: 196). I note with interest the emergence of the remnant from the figure of the ruin, and I follow her in my own utilisation of "remnant", as informed by Agamben's discourse regarding history, historical subjects, witnesses and memory. However, in my framework, I distinguish between the figures of the ruin and the remnant.

In the writing of this thesis, Agamben's work on the remnant did not provide an *a priori* theoretical framework, but instead aided in my articulation of how to figure absences in archives, or the anarchive. Significantly, Agamben's *Remnants of Auschwitz* (1999) primarily intends to articulate notions of witness and memory in relation to the Holocaust and its survivors. Although the contexts of the archives I explore are radically different from the contexts with which he engaged, I believe that the figure of the remnant is nonetheless useful to the conceptualisation of a relationship between archival presence and absence.

In Agamben's writing, the figure of the "remnant" is distinct from the "fragment". Using the logic of the work of an archaeologist, for instance, a fragment is a part of an object or document that survives from its original context to the present day, and it assists us to reconstruct conditions or practices of the past—be they social, economic or cultural. According to Ernst Kantorowicz, fragments provide an imperative for the historian to piece together the narrative of a former completeness. Like the archaeologist who finds the broken pieces of a pot, must assume an original form she then attempts to reconstruct, so the historian who understands the past as a collection of fragments assumes a past unity that must be put back together again.

> "Is a hand-full of potsherds still a pot?" The housewife, rightly, says "No" and throws the pieces into the garbage. The archaeologist, rightly, says "Yes", gathers the pieces from the garbage, puts them into a glass case and visualizes the pot as an entity, although in reality it is not.
> (Kantorowicz 1965: 77)

A remnant, by contrast, cannot be used for the purpose of reconstruction. Instead, it is in and of itself simply something that has been left behind, something of the past that has survived into the present, and something that cannot be reduced to an emblem of the past. As one translator and commentator on Agamben, Leland de la Durantaye, writes:

> In this light, the remnant in no way designates something less than a whole but instead designates the whole (people, individual, language) seen in a new light and having taken on a different and new "consistency".
> (De la Durantaye 2009: 301)

Understood in this way, a remnant cannot be viewed as a fragment of a larger whole that gives it meaning, but should be seen as something that, though incomplete, is whole in itself. It is an untranslatable piece of the past that exists in the present. Drawing on Agamben's work, I offer a conception in which the imprints of absence

Right: The ruin of St Andrews Castle, St Andrews, not far from Balcarres, where Anne lived.

that figures such as Krotoa and Anne left on the archives can be positioned as remnants. Although we have lost the "present moments" that are responsible for the impressions of Krotoa and Anne that exist in the archives, the imprints themselves remain.

Reflecting on how Krotoa's life has been reconstructed and retold, it seems to me that the archival materials have largely been pressed into service as fragments of her life. But fragments allow and even invite reconstruction. If one instead conceives of her presence in the archives in terms of the *remnant*, the possibility of reconstruction disappears, and all we really have is the knowledge that something indefinable and irrecuperable relating to Krotoa's life survives, in the archives. As I argued in chapter two, this is the imprint of her absence. In a similar vein, the fullness of Anne's life cannot be said to have been translated into her memoirs, because the memoirs themselves are the imprints of the unarchivable aspects of the person "Anne", left by her self-conscious labour of representation. Her writing also cannot be considered to coincide precisely with "the actuality" of her life. As Agamben argues,

> The subject is a sort of remnant … It is something that is left over—it represents difference. It is the impossibility for a subject to completely coincide with itself; there always remains a remnant. (Agamben in De la Durantaye 2009: 20)

For Agamben, the subject-as-remnant positions the subject as that which remains when all identification in terms of "grouping" has been made. The subject-as-remnant refers to that which cannot be reduced to any larger whole:

> A remnant is what results from every dialectical attempt at exhaustive identification and classification, every attempt to create a community that would completely subsume the singularity of its members. (De la Durantaye 2009: 300)

The imprint left by Krotoa's absence on the VOC journal is a remnant with its own specificity of shape. Likewise, the individuality with which Anne engaged styles of writing renders her imprint, also a remnant, singular. Positioning the imprints of Krotoa's and Anne's absence in the archives as non-generic remnants enables them to resist being reduced to emblems of our constructions of the past, whether as a hero embodying suffering under colonialism or as an unsympathetic, complicit colonial agent.

The remnant, as a figure, is in some senses analogous to Jacques Derrida's usage of the term "trace", which implicates a past "event" whose spectre is present but unreadable:

> [I]f the trace refers to an absolute past, it is because it obliges us to think a past that can no longer be understood in the form of a modified presence, the present-past. Since past has always signified present-past, the absolute past that is retained in the trace no longer rigorously merits the name "past". Another name to erase. (Derrida 1976: 66)

Like the trace, the remnant speaks of the reality or even "presentness" of the past, the physical reality that produced it but is not accessible after the fact. The remnant has a tantalising dynamism that brings the past into the present in such a way that it does not reveal it or describe it but instead simply communicates its loss.

The argument around "remnant" in Agamben's writing is fundamentally informed by his reflection on the nature of testimony.[21] In a telling passage from his introduction to *Remnants of Auschwitz*, Agamben (1999: 12) remarks that "the aporia of Auschwitz is, indeed, the very aporia of historical knowledge: a non-coincidence between facts and truth, between verification and comprehension". The remnant, therefore, cannot be co-opted into historical narration, as it refers to the ineluctible difference between witnessing and testifying, the impossibility

of representation to *be* that which it represents. Agamben's remark is especially apposite to Anne's archive. Although we have an abundance of her words, it does not follow that we have a comprehension of her presence: "Some want to understand too much and too quickly; they have explanations for everything. Others refuse to understand; they offer only cheap mystifications" (Agamben 1999: 13).

While historians acknowledge that gaps exist in the archive, historical narration nevertheless remains constrained by the factual or evidentiary material within them. Narrations of the past perpetuate the silences in the archive because of this constraint but disguise the silences with narrative coherence. This narrative coherence grants historical narration a force of persuasiveness, of "truth", even, that render them intelligible and relevant to the present. In this way, narrative coherence responds to the pressure that is placed on archives to speak into the present. It is difficult, in the face of the force of this pressure, to keep absence in view.

In this chapter, I have attempted to identify the means whereby this centralisation can be made conceptually, by giving a name to absolute absence in the archive, that being the anarchive. Furthermore, I have posited the ruin and the remnant as figures that might help us to fix our gaze on absence, to allow us to acknowledge the extent to which absence constitutes the archive, as well as the impossibility of reconstructing what is lost—the singularity of the presentness. When absence is centralised, conventional narrative can no longer be employed to narrate history; we require different means to express our attachment to the past, and we need other poetics to instantiate the anarchive.

Right: Zaayman, C. 2012. *Remnants and Ancestors IV.*

# Chapter Three Endnotes

1. See, for example, Dayna L Oscherwitz's "Of Cowboys and Elephants: Africa, Globalization and the Nouveau Western in Djibril Diop Mambety's 'Hyenas'" (2008) and "Subverting the Status Quo in Sénégal: Djibril Diôp Mambety's 'Hyenas' and the Politics of Liberation" by Joya F Uraizee (2006).
2. Unlike productions from Bollywood and Nollywood, South African films generally receive little appreciation in their own country.
3. See, for example, posts by Sylvia Vollenhoven (2017) on Facebook: "Deeply traumatised by watching the #Krotoa movie, I've been unable to write a response. The rage and anger I feel must be expressed but the shock is too deep to find the right words. The abuse inflicted by this film entrenches the crime against humanity of apartheid." Patric Tariq Mellet (2017) also disparaged the film on his Facebook page: "This movie was a self-indulgent abuse in itself and misrepresentation of her memory in the present on the part of the director, producers and scripters following the same tired old distortions. Effectively it came across as the same framework of Disney's Pochontas". Winslow Schalkwyk (2017) posted, "I have never left a movie as upset as I did when I saw Krotoa film recently. Not only were the KhoiSan portrayed as subservient and weak but the characterisation was so off putting and disparaging." The discussions on Facebook continue in this vein.
4. See the instructive conversation between Vollenhoven and the film's scriptwriter, Kaye Anne Williams, "Does Krotoa Whitewash Khoi History?" in *City Press* (2017) and Garreth van Niekerk's '"Whitewashed': New Krotoa Movie Is 'Insult to Heritage of Khoisan People'" in *Huffington Post* (2017). A debate between Vollenhoven and the director Roberta Durrant was held on Radio 786 and can be accessed online (Radio 786: 2017).
5. While more conventional reviews have been written, such as those by Stephen Aspeling in Spling (2017) and Jared Beukes in The Back Row (2017), they also centrally position the ideological stance of the film.
6. Such endeavours can be—and have been—valuable but remain for the most part constrained by the contents of colonial archives.
7. It is unclear to what extent each writer contributed to the script, as they are credited equally. In the material cited earlier, it is mostly Williams who is addressed and who speaks.
8. Famous as the site where Nelson Mandela was incarcerated for much of his sentence under the apartheid government, the island was used as a prison from the seventeenth century.
9. "My name is Krotoa!" (Own translation.)
10. This "giving" of Krotoa to Van Riebeeck has been hotly contested; it is not known how or why Krotoa came to be in service at the fort.
11. He is referred to as Autshumato in the film. Both spellings have been used in historical writing—for the sake of consistency, I have followed Karl Schoeman's usage, "Autshumao".
12. Doman's people were referred to by the Dutch as "Kaapmans".
13. Only a very small portion of the post is provided here, but in its entirety it presents a useful exposition of Krotoa's life and the early Cape Colony.
14. Afrikaans was only officially acknowledged as an independent language in 1925, and although it is closely related to Dutch, has been profoundly influenced by a number of other languages, including various Khoekhoe ones. Using it as a proxy for Dutch thus seems a curious choice, eliding as it does, the tensions some Afrikaans speakers experience concerning the colonial history of the language.
15. Based on my reading of his journals, I am not sympathetic to Van Riebeeck as a historical figure, but I am wary of collapsing him into a simple embodiment of colonial aspirations.
16. Similarly to the issue of "giving" referred to earlier, forgiveness is a hotly contested aspect of the film and again speaks to how contemporary concerns are read into the film. The power dynamics at play make such a plea highly unikely, and little groundwork is laid in the film for Krotoa's forgiveness, leading some to view it as trite. Consequently, the film implies that the descendants of colonial occupiers might achieve similar forgiveness without due acknowledgement and reparation.
17. The screening took place on 24 August 2017 at the Theatre on the Bay, Cape Town; Kyknet is a South African subscription-based television channel and production company.
18. Penguin Films produced this documentary in 2013 as part of the Hidden Histories series.
19. I arrived at this term independently but discovered that it has been loosely employed in at least two prior instances; I distinguish my usage as a term that specifically references the unarchivable past.
20. For other instances of the term "anarchive" being used to denote scholarship or cultural expression engaged with archive and with an interest in inter-disciplinary production, performance and the intangible, see Montreal-based research group Senselab (senselab.ca) and the research project WalkingLab (walkinglab.org).
21. Again, it is important to note that the testimony in Agamben's writing refers to survivors of the Holocaust. Agamben's arguments are most striking in their particularity to the Holocaust, but one can endeavour to adapt the architecture of his discussion on that specific, and extreme, example of testimony to the kind of figurative treatise on presence, past and loss that is presented here.

CHAPTER FOUR

# Marking Absence

My creative work aims to instantiate the anarchive visually in order to establish the conditions whereby absolute absence might be engaged. The development of the creative methodology in this thesis has been guided by my intention to bring the anarchive into view in a manner that cannot be mistaken for reconstruction—that is, *as absence*. Whereas my scholarly research led me to formulate the anarchive in conceptual terms, through my creative methodology I have explored the ways in which the anarchive may be made present through representation. However, if the anarchive is thought of as the negative space of the archive, that for which there can be no archival presence, it poses a profound challenge to representation.

Exhibition of and working with archival material conventionally entails employing the slivers, the archival material, to evoke a more complete picture of the past. In the previous chapter, I maintained that work that seeks to '"fill in"' the silences in the archive to some degree continues that silencing. Accordingly, I have argued for the need to *mark* absence. Finding ways to call forth the anarchive *as absence* has been the guiding principle in my research, and while I have outlined the conceptual argument of the anarchive above, its instantiation is the conclusive statement of the thesis. Hence, I offer here the creative methodology that I developed as part of the process of this thesis, as a schematic whereby absence may be engaged, and present the creative work that resulted from this methodology as an instance of the outcome of this practice.

Right: Zaayman, C. 2012. *Remnants and Ancestors X.*

All artistic method incorporates intuition to some degree, whether in the course of conceptualisation or throughout the making of creative work. But for certain artists (including myself), intuition and exploration are central. Some methodologies, like that employed in the making of this thesis, sustain these qualities throughout all of its stages. Such methodologies are explorative, tentative and not predetermined. These intuitive methods of production do not start with an end in mind—they simply begin with an interest in "something", the nature of which cannot habitually nor precisely be articulated or even known by the artist. Only in the making is the "real" subject of the work brought into view, because an artist continuously responds to what she is making. Questions that artists routinely ask of their production, such as "Does this 'work'?", seem equivocal from the outside, but artists rely on such questions not only to evaluate the success of what they have achieved but also to better understand what it is they hope to achieve. The question of "Does this work?" is applicable throughout the process of making, and, accordingly, as the subject of inquiry becomes clearer it shifts and affects the method in return.

In his Norton lecture "Drawing Lesson One: In Praise of Shadows", William Kentridge offers a useful reflection on the intuitive process of making art as it is played out in the double role of the artist as both creator and observer:

> One has the blank sheet of paper awaiting its marks. It is not that a drawing superimposes itself on the shape, but there is an urge, an impulse to make the mark: possible marks or shapes projected onto the paper … A shape we will only know once we start to draw, a mixture of making and looking. Perhaps this is a good place to talk about the division between making and looking … And this is a very real division. Each glance or turn turns the maker into a looker, disappointed with what the maker has done. (Mahindra Humanities Centre 2012: 45'30)

Kentridge's observations on the dual positions he occupies while making his work resonate with my own methodology and foreground the integrated processes of making and reflecting on that making. This double role is especially pronounced when one is engaged in the production of a thesis that incorporates creative work, as a thesis is more commonly a text-only affair. In both its foundation and manifestation, this thesis is situated within the realm of Fine Art. I employ this positioning of my thesis within Fine Art for what it offers methodologically and, more specifically, for what it makes possible that a textual approach does not.

In this respect, the intuitive and explorative artistic methods have particularly influenced me, in that while I started with an interest in the figures of Krotoa and Anne, the precise hook of these figures in my consciousness was not clear to me. It was only through the process of making, outlined in this chapter, that I discovered that their absences were more important to me than what I took to be their presences, and that the point of my work was not to tell their stories but to mark these absences.

Simultaneous to the process of making, of course, I worked on the words of this thesis, which shaped my understanding of how the absences of the past manifest in historical narration. Consequently, the production of this thesis (visually and textually) has invoked a process in which the textual research (reading and writing) has informed the visual production, but, equally, the artistic methodology has led me to insights that were subsequently worked into the written component of the thesis and developed in a manner that seeks to satisfy the scholarly requirements of a PhD degree.

The research iterations of my texts and images embody the double role of artist as both creator and observer, in Kentridge's terms. In this sense, my process was reiterated in both ways throughout the making—the making was informed by the conceptual deductions of my textual research, but the making

Above: Still from the video of William Kentridge's lecture "Drawing Lesson One: In Praise of Shadows" (Mahindra Humanities Centre 2002).

also challenged me to position centrally those aspects of the archive that escape representation, even in words. In this chapter, I provide an overview of the various steps of my creative process, highlighting in each case the understanding that they brought to the thesis. In short, this chapter reveals how my method as an artist was developed in order to instantiate the anarchive and to mark it visually.

Because of the febrile, adaptive and changeable dynamics that characterise artistic practice, its position in the field of academic scholarship has been a subject of much debate, especially as it concerns the expectations that a PhD in Fine Art must satisfy. As artist Fritha Langerman (2013: 16) writes in her own PhD thesis:

> For me the problem with the PhD in Fine Art is not that practice is a form of inquiry or that the visual can be used to formulate an argument, but whether an argument made through the visual can ever be conclusive or verifiable. Art relies on a degree of incompletion.

Within the context of academic theses, incompletion is undesirable: there is an expectation of robustness and finish when it comes to scholarly work; these are the terms on which success is measured. However, when dealing with unrepresentable absence, one must accept that the very subject one is attempting to articulate will continue to elude one's grasp. A degree of incompleteness is inevitable.

Due to its developed modes of associative representation, artistic practice is well-positioned to explore and express absence. Consequently, in this thesis my artistic methodology is situated as a mode of explorative inquiry. As Langerman suggests, "practice can never be used as a measure of a hypothesis" (ibid.). Creative work may be used to conjure or bring into being ideas and objects for which conventional scholarship has no reliable language, and for which it has no desire to develop one. Creative practice tolerates a degree of unreliability, deliberately employing half-formed realisations in the hope that its audience can complete the understanding. Its intentions are different and its tolerance for incompletion is regarded as a virtue in ways that might not be the case in a conventional thesis. As my thesis deals directly with absence and the unrepresentable (in the form of the anarchive), creative methodology is thus more than just suitable—it is ineluctable.

I have already made mention, in the introduction, of the series of photographs that appear in this text without captions. These photographs, as they appear in the online/digital version of the thesis, constitute the argument in visual form. In this chapter, I reflect on the process whereby I arrived at these

particular photographs; the visual forms that influenced them; and how I understand them to instantiate the anarchive.

## First Steps

My own process, or artistic methodology, originated in my desire to understand what it means to be present at this time in this locale, particularly in Cape Town, South Africa and the African continent. I have already alluded to the complex sociopolitical context in which this study is positioned, but the thesis itself is born from a personal desire to understand my position within it, as predicated by the conditions that have determined my presence here and now. This led me to an investigation of the past, but not only in the macro-historical sense. More pointedly, I became interested in the subjective experiences and responses of people of the past—how could we engage the full extent of their presentness? This was, I believed, a means whereby to understand my own present but also, by means of an embodied engagement with the past, a way to respond to my recognition of absence.

Intuitively, I considered the space of the Cape landscape crucial to this connectedness of presents. Guided by my interest in walking, I consulted a variety of guidebooks, which invariably contained short notes on the history of the city and the landscape. It was these notes that first prompted my interest in Anne, as they conveyed the fact that she was the first (read "known" and "white") woman to climb the mountain. I formalised my exploration of this connection for the production of an artwork for which I donned boots and a long skirt and walked up Table Mountain, while someone followed behind with a video camera, filming only my walking feet. The action of that informal performance was conceived as a gestural recreation of Anne's ascent of Table Mountain.

I used the footage of the climb in a black-and-white video work in which I overlaid the moving image with a recording of my own voice whispering the words of love letters authored by Anne and other poets from the Romantic period.[1] The content of the voiceover was deliberately chosen to be emotionally laden, expressive of thought and feeling, while the whispering rendered the words difficult to discern and created a sense of intimacy. I deliberately excluded footage of the vistas one might expect while ascending the mountain; none of the famous views of the city appear. Instead, the focus remains resolutely on my walking feet to convey a sense of the internal and contracted, as opposed to the external and expansive. Reflecting on this choice today, my insistence on a focus on the internal space of the person walking was guided by an understanding that walking and thinking are intimately connected. By depicting walking in a manner that highlights the relationship between the activity and the thoughts of the person performing the activity, I had begun to identify ways in which the presentness of a person in the past might be conveyed.

I consider this work foundational to the thesis, because it showed me that my interest lay more in the internal thoughts of Krotoa and Anne than in finding ways to represent them from

the outside. Moreover, I was keenly aware of the impulse to walk in the footsteps of Anne, to embody her movements. Following on from this work, I made the conscious decision to travel and walk in the spaces where Krotoa and Anne had resided, notably in the Cape Town city centre (the site of the fort built by Van Riebeeck's Company and surrounds); the banks of the Liesbeeck River; Table Bay and the West Coast; Berkeley Square in London; Balcarres in Scotland; and most significantly, the Castle of Good Hope in Cape Town. In addition, Anne's journey to the interior of the Western Cape in May 1798 was the main reference for my exhibition *The Secret Adventures of Lady Anne Barnard*, which preceded the work created for this thesis.

These acts of travelling were not initially intended as performance art as such but were undertaken with the conscious aim of enacting a kind of embodied presence. They came to signal the methodology that I was to more consciously adopt. In these spaces, I wanted to undergo the sensorial experience of being present there, of being there *in the present* (my twenty-first century present). I used these *in situ* opportunities to consciously reflect on the women whose lives had become the substance of my research. I embarked on numerous of these ventures over the course of the thesis, with the intentionality of the act intensifying through this repetition and over time becoming more consciously performative.

The relationship between walking, embodied presence and the imagination is echoed in poet Edward Hirsch's (2011: 5) suggestion that thoughtfulness accompanies walking, an activity he closely associates with his calling as a poet: "The physical experience activates the imagination". Moreover, when outlining his four practices of walking, Ben Jacks (2004: 5) positions walking as a means of knowing: "Bodily experience creates the recurrent schemata necessary for organizing our concept-making ability and comprehension. Walking is, therefore, fundamental to human knowledge and understanding about self and the world." He remarks on the close relationship between walking and reading: "The traveler navigates the landscape using stories as a guide, and landscape helps the traveler to remember stories" (Jacks 2004: 7).

Apart from the thoughtfulness prompted by the act of walking, the travel itself was similarly germane to my artistic methodology. In her article "Travel as Performed Art" (1989), Judith Adler makes the case for considering certain kinds of travel as art:

> Travel undertaken and executed with a primary concern for the meanings discovered, created, and communicated as persons move through geographical space in stylistically specified ways can be distinguished from travel in which geographical movement is merely incidental to the accomplishment of other goals. Whether skilfully fulfilling the conventions of a canonized tradition without any deviation, deliberately challenging received norms, or being led through the motions of a "packaged" performance designed and sold by others, the traveler whose activity lends itself to conceptual treatment as art is one whose movement serves as a medium for bestowing meaning on the self and the social, natural, or metaphysical realities through which it moves. (Adler 1989: 1368)

Adler's framework resonates with what I have intuitively developed as my artistic method, and I position my travels to these spaces as part of my artistic practice: they were conceptually designed and stylistically guided, as can be noted in my deliberate identification of sites, my travelling to these sites, and my self-conscious performance of the act of walking, standing and thinking specific thoughts at and en route to these sites. Whereas Adler makes the case for broader tourism and travel to be considered as art, my own travels

Previous page: Stills from my video work "Ascent".

were conceived in terms of an artistic project and with the intention that they should be incorporated into the development of a creative methodology. That is, I set out on these travels with a consciousness to place myself in those spaces and to meditate imaginatively on Krotoa and Anne's prior presences and then established a collection of documentation of these travels. This documentation was later curated into exhibition format and, finally, is presented in this thesis.

Adler notes that the practice of stylistically designed travel (her condition for travel to be considered art)[2] has a long history that includes religious pilgrimage over the centuries. It is of further significance that the Enlightenment itself brought into being a significant style of travel as an activity that was both conceptualised and performed:

> The process of delimiting stylistic categories of travel is complex and involves a comparative grasp of some shared coherence that marks one body of travels off from previous, subsequent, and present practices. In some cases, such coherence may be shaped by travelers' conscious devotion to an explicitly formulated code of performance, as was the case for an international style of 17th-century philosophical travel, disciplined by travel treatises and "directions" that were widely translated and published by Europe's scientific academies. In other cases, such coherence may point to common emulation of the same exemplary models of travel performance. The travel writings of Laurence Sterne and of Rousseau, for example, inspired emulative "sentimental" journeys in the late 18th century. A body of travel performances may be comparable to a school of painting or to an artistic movement. After the late 18th century, many travelers overtly gave themselves and their journeys such labels as "romantic," "picturesque," "philosophical," "curious," and "sentimental". (Adler 1989: 1371–2)

Travel as stylised, artistic methodology is thus significant to our consideration of Anne, as she is herself noted for having taken pleasure in travel, evidenced in her climbing of Table Mountain, her journeying to the interior in May 1798 and her very existence in the Colony at all.[3] I am also conscious of the important role that walking played in the lives of the Khoekhoe nomadic pastoralists, although we do not know whether this functioned equally as a self-conscious or styled activity. JB Wright (1977: 22) situates the distance Khoekhoe had to walk as constitutive of the formation of their societies:

> As resources were progressively used up over a wider and wider area, so people had to walk further and further to find them, until the point was reached where the costs of living in a larger group were felt to outweigh the benefits. At this stage the group would begin to split into its constituent families and family-clusters, and the whole cycle would repeat itself.

Walking can thus be understood as an important activity in both Krotoa's and Anne's lives, and emulating this walking is a means to establishing a connection, through physicality, with their corporeal presence, while meditating on the possibilities of their thoughts on these journeys.[4] My travels function as a commemoration, but not in the sense of constructing a memorial. In the act of travel, thought itself is conceived of as a ritual of commemoration, as I emulate the modalities of Anne's journeys and the centrality of walking to Krotoa's life. The relationship between walking and thinking is constitutive of my artistic methodology—I have used travelling, which led to walking and thinking, as the basis from which my creative work has arisen, and the thoughts I had during these activities guided the insights outlined in the earlier chapters of this thesis.

As concerns commemoration in thought, my utilisation of self-conscious or styled walking bears some relation to Paul Ricoeur's description of the *flâneur*. Anna Borisenkova's (2015: 96) summation of Ricoeur's *flâneur* is most useful in this regard:

> [T]he *flâneur* observes and investigates the urban environment and also actively contributes to commemoration and mourning practices. Ricoeur notes that the *flâneur* not only interprets the city's history through construction, destruction, and reconstruction but also imagines the memory of the inhabitant and attempts to understand the city from the perspective of those who live in it. Besides, Ricoeur assigns an important role to the *flâneur*—to visit the places that are not frequently visited by tourists, such as cemeteries and graves. Ricoeur notes that these places commemorate those who are absent today … Thus, the *flâneur* reinterprets the memory of the past and reconfigures the memory of the inhabited space. Owing to this reflexive observer, the past, the present and the future become united in one image of the city.

In this formulation, it is in the mind of the wandering *flâneur* that, through conscious effort bent on thinking about absent people, the marking of absence occurs. In this sense, the past, present and future are connected in the mind.

Whereas the urban setting hosts the *flâneur* from Charles Baudelaire onwards, my own walking has taken place in both urban and rural landscapes. Moreover, the aim of my wandering has been less concerned with building an understanding of the locale in time and space and more concerned with the particular persons of Krotoa and Anne. While I do not consider myself a *flâneur*, I nevertheless identify with how *flâneurs* are said to hold absence in mind while traversing spaces and are motivated by the desire to be in the presence of absence.

## Developing an Oblique Record of the Past

Whereas travelling, walking and embodied reflection constitute the first aspect of my methodology, these led to the second: photographing the spaces to which I travelled. I used the opportunity of my presence in these various locales to take photographs of them, photographs that came to constitute the collection of images presented in an exhibition as well as in this thesis. In the spaces that I visited, I used photography as a means of note-taking. Instead of writing or noting my observations with language, I wanted to use my camera to capture some of what I saw. The traces of my performative acts are the photographs taken in these spaces, and they signal that travel has taken place but also, more particularly, that the marking of absence through the form of thought has occurred. I have collected these traces (the photographs) into an archive of my own. My archive, like all archives, is replete with absence, in that the photographs within it do not reproduce my physical presence in the spaces, nor do they convey my thoughts as I stood there. My presence in the spaces, though inaccessible through them, has produced an imprint on the images that is marked by the specificity of my position (from where the photograph was taken), the precise time as indicated by the quality of light, and the concert of other elements that were at play at that particular moment and place.

I took photographs partly because I have worked in lens-based media for most of my professional career. I was prompted by one of my supervisors to think about how one might photograph the past. Of course, it is impossible to do so directly; the past is not available to us to photograph. Instead, we can only

simulate photography of the past and in this sense the camera proved to be a particularly appropriate tool for my work. Counter to discourses that position the photograph as an image that captures and records a moment, I think of photography as primarily a three-dimensional form of art. The individual camera captures an image from a specific vantage point.[5] On a very basic level, photographs reflect a distinct perspective of a space, a particular point of view or a subjective position. The photographer is absent in the photographs but, by virtue of the existence of the image, is nevertheless suggested—the photographer is an absent presence in a specific place.

In the spaces to which I travelled, I considered the sensorial experiences that Anne and Krotoa would have had, or *could* have had, and focused on taking photographs that would allude to those experiences. In this way, I employed my own presence in these sites as an approximation for theirs, my presentness for theirs and my movement as an approximation for theirs. My performances and the resulting photographs were thus guided by a double intent: first, to use my own presence as a prompt for thoughtful reflection on absence and, secondly, to use the performance of walking as a means to generate an oblique representation of the past. I describe the representation as oblique, as my photographs do not (and could not) photograph the past as such, but they are connected to the stories of particular presences within the past, in that I capture the sites in which Krotoa and Anne once roamed as those sites appeared to me at the moment of photographing.

In "Performing on the Beaches of the Mind", Dening (2002: 3) writes about the loss of sensorial matter that characterises the present of the past:

> The past I visit—the two-hundred-year past that I visit—is on paper. Mostly. Sometimes it is in things with human creativity encapsulated in them—ships, ornaments, art, buildings, landscape. A two-hundred-year past is beyond experience and memory, though, and beyond the radar of our various electronic recording systems. There are no voices from two hundred years ago, no smells, touches, no movement.

He continues this meditation on those aspects of the past that escape historical narration, which in the context of this thesis I refer to as the anarchive, and the challenge it poses for the historian:

> There is a heavy obligation that I owe the past. If I claim to represent it—if I claim to re-present it—I owe it something, its own independence. I owe it a gift of itself, unique in time and space. The history I write will always be mine. It is the part that actually happened, independently of my knowing that or how it happened. My true stories are ruled by my belief that I always have something to learn. I write to give back to the past its own present moments. (Dening 2002: 4)

In my methodology, the performative acts of travelling are translated into imagery by taking and exhibiting photographs, which themselves can be thought of, in Dening's terms, as performance; the photographs I have taken are the result of a performative process. Their curation in this thesis is intended to be an oblique representation of the past in which I attempt to, if not quite "give back to the past its present moments", then at least bring into view an understanding that those present moments once existed in ways that the archive cannot accommodate.

As I indicated in my earlier chapters, that which is missing from the archives sustains a continued return to archival material. Absence, when figured, takes on an aspect of the longed-for, a mourning for the lost object. In my search for ways to represent my recognition of the pull of the anarchive in my

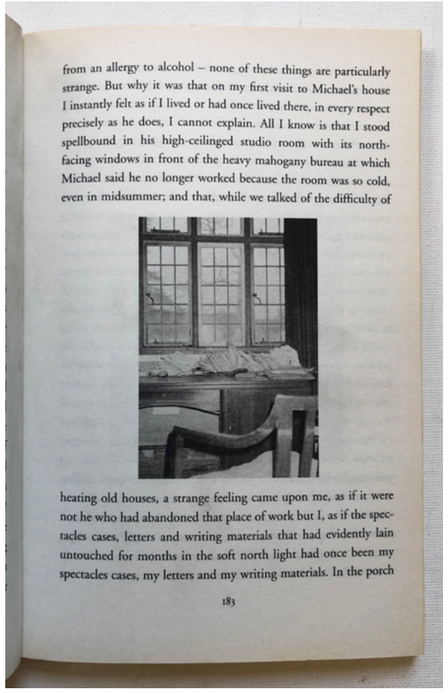
work, I was influenced by the novels of WG Sebald, especially as concerns his struggle with the unrepresentable and by the use of photography in his novels to gesture to the extra-textual.

Sebald's novels have been a subject of keen interest to scholars who wish to explore how loss and memory have been poetically figured, partly as a response to theoretical and textual discussion of these issues in poststructuralism, where direct, positivist description falters. For many commentators, Sebald's melancholia is most characteristic of his *oeuvre*.

As I intimated in my introduction, from Freud onwards, melancholia is understood to refer to the implacable longing for that which is lost, a longing that cannot be resolved but that keeps playing on the consciousness. Sebald's interest in melancholia is not limited to the thematic concerns of his narratives but also visually manifests in his novels. In her article "Sebald's *Punctum:* Awakening to Holocaust Trauma in *Austerlitz*" (2005), Frances L Restuccia attributes the persistent melancholia in Sebald's work to the sense of an empty core, a continually deferred desire to return to some originary point in the past to the affect deeply felt in the present (which many have argued is that of the unfigurable Holocaust). As she suggests,

> Sebald is as fascinated with the missing origin that memory pursues as he is with the ontology of the elusive object that art attempts to capture. These two quests are of course inevitably thwarted, and their near success … is always dizzying. (Restuccia 2005: 301)

Critically, Restuccia remarks that in his writing, Sebald associates the elusiveness of the "origin" of memory with the deferment embodied by a work of art: the artwork and its object do not coincide. Moreover, in Restuccia's terms, in their very artistic form, their governing poetics, Sebald's novels embody the dynamic of melancholic memory:



from an allergy to alcohol – none of these things are particularly strange. But why it was that on my first visit to Michael's house I instantly felt as if I lived or had once lived there, in every respect precisely as he does, I cannot explain. All I know is that I stood spellbound in his high-ceilinged studio room with its north-facing windows in front of the heavy mahogany bureau at which Michael said he no longer worked because the room was so cold, even in midsummer; and that, while we talked of the difficulty of

heating old houses, a strange feeling came upon me, as if it were not he who had abandoned that place of work but I, as if the spectacles cases, letters and writing materials that had evidently lain untouched for months in the soft north light had once been my spectacles cases, my letters and my writing materials. In the porch

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> Like Courbet in "*L'origine du monde*," Sebald's melancholics zero in on their beginning, that Void, which they repetitively encircle, just as the weaving of Sebald's own texts encircles that same orifice. The title *The Rings of Saturn*—a novel that links the author's relation to melancholia to the planet Saturn as well as to the German tradition of melancholia from Dürer to Walter Benjamin—makes this very point of encirclement. It is within *The Rings of Saturn* that Sebald refers to an "emptiness" that grips him (as it did Virginia Woolf) when he has completed a work, as though the novel operates like the rings, in keeping him distant from and, yet, in relation to the Void/Thing. (Restuccia 2005: 308)

Yet perhaps the most marked idiosyncrasy of Sebald's novels, to this visually oriented reader at least, is his inclusion in the text of small black-and-white photographs (although many scholars overlook these pivotal inclusions). The photographs are not reproduced on coated paper, nor on plates inserted into the text. They appear instead as rather fuzzy, seemingly incidental images with no caption or attribution, only loosely associated with the content of the text. Their appearance on the page is so strikingly different from more conventional high-end illustrations, where authors fully acknowledge copyright and provide extended captioning, that their peculiarity obliges

**Left: Page 183 of WG Sebald's *The Rings of Saturn* (2002), showing how images are used in Sebald's novels.**

investigation. In view of the "encirclement" suggested in Restuccia's reading, these images and how they are presented also contribute to the sense of a lack of origin or to the specificity of the origin not being at issue. These images do not purport to show the reader what something looked like or the actuality of a moment evoked in the text. Instead, like the words of the fictional narrative, the photographs are also inventions, proxies for actualities.

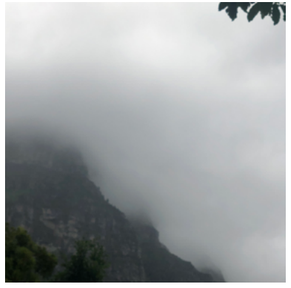
If the images in Sebald's novels evade the impulse to show actualities, they also serve to pause the narrative and interrupt the illusive quality of the novels. The effect of the emptiness of his photographs has been argued to convey affect or mourning. In his review of Sebald's writing, Erik Beyersdorf (2010: 91), for example, suggests that the author's way of working with the nationalist history of Germany through what he calls a "complex textual structure—which consists of a mixture of fictional, mnemonic, intertextual and theoretical sources", presents something different to a homogeneous account of the past. Instead, Beyersdorf (2010: 92) suggests that through employing literature as a means to access history, Sebald is able to "add further imaginative dimensions to an otherwise abstract past." For Beyersdorf, this "imaginative" engagement with a traumatic past allows for a nuanced commemoration that is then "communicated to the wider cultural imagination" (ibid.).

In his exploration of the various literary devices employed by Sebald, Beyersdorf makes a case for the power of imaginative and creative work that deals with the past to articulate especially affective aspects (in relation to Sebald, this is specifically trauma) that are lost in factually constrained representations. One such device is the evocation of empty space within Sebald's narrative in his novel *Austerlitz*. Beyersdorf (2010: 96) suggests that

> [t]he description of empty spaces, held up by walls and surrounded by rooms without doors, demonstrates that the unlocking of a traumatic past requires more than just an abstract, detached representation of traumatic memory. To challenge the "innermost secret of all sanctioned authority" evident in the alienating metaphor of institutionalised remembrance in the "Palace of Justice" in Brussels, it is important to recognise that memory is not localizable to any one conventional source and, as Sebald suggests,

these metaphorical empty spaces of institutionalised remembrance can in fact be supplemented utilising alternative methods of remembrance.

In fact, the depiction of empty space is for Beyersdorf a powerful means by which to denote the unrepresentability of the trauma of the Holocaust, especially in relation to now familiar, institutionalised commemorations of it in official archives, monuments and museums. Essentially, these open spaces ask us to imagine what is not there, what is absent and lost. Beyersdorf's argument that Sebald's writing evokes an alternative, non-institutional memory can thus be understood to encourage a space for empathic identification. Rather than having the specificities of actual events dictated to them, the reader's experience of reflecting on the ambivalences, emptiness and unfigured actualities requires an imaginative response, an investment that comes from the subjective and humane as opposed to the cerebral.



The appearance and intricacies of Sebald's photographic images are explored by Silke Horstkotte in "Visual Memory and Ekphrasis in WG Sebald's *The Rings of Saturn*". She argues that the photographs are an integral part of the narrative rather than an addendum, because they embody the perceptions of the narrator:

> The openly revealed unreliability of the narrator's acts of vision raises questions of visibility, chiefly concerning the doubtful reference of photography: do the photographs function as witnesses to the past, or are they representations of the narrator's subjective mental images? (Horstkotte 2006: 118).

She continues that "[c]onsequently, the images do not usually serve as documentary sources—Barthes' 'that-has-been'—but as materializations of the narrator's perception" (Horstkotte 2006: 119) and writes later that "the visual presence of photographs in Sebald's books marks both the visual nature of memory and the past, and its blindness and/or invisibility" (Horstkotte 2006: 128). Her observation that memory is visual in nature is crucial—that when we reach for a conception of the past, we do so with mental images, even if they are flushed with inaccuracy and vagueness. Imagery is thus aptly suited to representing the past. But what kind of imagery can convey the sense of unrootedness? Horstkotte suggests that the inclusion of indistinct, uncaptioned images in Sebald's novels serves to alert the reader to the lack of definition of the past itself. I posit that when used in this way, images that do not aim to "depict" can be used to prompt reflection on absence. The images in Sebald's novels are not about what they contain, nor are they intended to depict the narrative. Instead, the images convey a sense of straining to see something that cannot be captured by the camera. They prompt us into a kind of reverie, evoking a sensory experience, as Horstkotte phrases it, of the "narrator's subjective mental images". This, then, is a means whereby presentness can be evoked (not depicted)—but indirectly, obliquely, as though it were glimpsed rather than observed.

Beyersdorf (2010: 98–99) also positions the photographs in Sebald's texts as distinct from a positivist memorialisation of the past and accentuates the effect of the images on the reader:

> Emphasising the sometimes restrictive nature of cultural memory storage systems (archives) and official sites of commemoration (monuments) as all encompassing loci of memory recall, *Austerlitz*, as a memory text, by no means hides the ever-expanding alternatives available to contemporary memory work. The placement of other forms of *lieux de mémoire* throughout the text, such as un-captioned photographs (these are not related to the primary narrative), force the reader to independently analyse

Previous page: A view over the sea on the West Coast of the Western Cape Province.

the "phantom traces" and arrive at his or her own personal conclusion. In doing so, Sebald stimulates a bond between the "narrated, narrator, and reader," thus instigating "a much more complex and ethical dynamic of postmemory that resists a colonizing impulse".

Like the photographs in Sebald's novels, my images do not entail positivist commemoration or the erection of a fixed structure in reference to the past. My photographs are produced as traces of the *thinking* component of my performative acts, as opposed to historical narration/representation. In a similar vein to the images in Sebald's novels, my photographs are not about seeing what is present or what might have previously been present, but are in fact about presentness itself.

The emptying out of the photographic image apparent in my work also corresponds to Ulrich Baer's argument in *Spectral Evidence: The Photography of Trauma* (2002). His thesis rests on a rejection of "treating photographs as random snapshots from an imaginary continuous loop of time and life" (Baer 2002: 1), and he instead focuses on "images revealing experiences that have not been, and possibly cannot be, assimilated into such a continuous narrative" (ibid.). Baer argues that certain photographs can connect a contemporary viewer with people from the past without illustrating a historical narrative or relying on depiction:


> As roadblocks to an ideology that conceives of history as an unstoppable movement forward, the photographs compel viewers to think of lived experience, time, and history from a standpoint that is truly a stand*point*: a place to think about occurrences that may fail, violently, to be fully experienced and so integrated into larger patterns. (Ibid.)

Baer's text explores the work not of only artists, but also of scientists and amateur photographers, which in some way interrupts the sense of "history-as-narrative" (Baer 2002: 2). Baer's thesis is that photographs can exceed their historical context and thereby establish a relationship with the past-as-present:

> Yet to wrest photography from the deterministic grip of history and time in which most critics have embedded it, we need to include in our interpretation of any single moment *"the realization that the present contains the seeds of diverse and mutually exclusive possible futures." Because every photograph is radically exposed to a future unknown to its subjects,* I make use of a perspective that avoids the arrogance of hindsight and the certitude of predetermined outcomes.[6] (Baer 2002: 7; emphasis added)

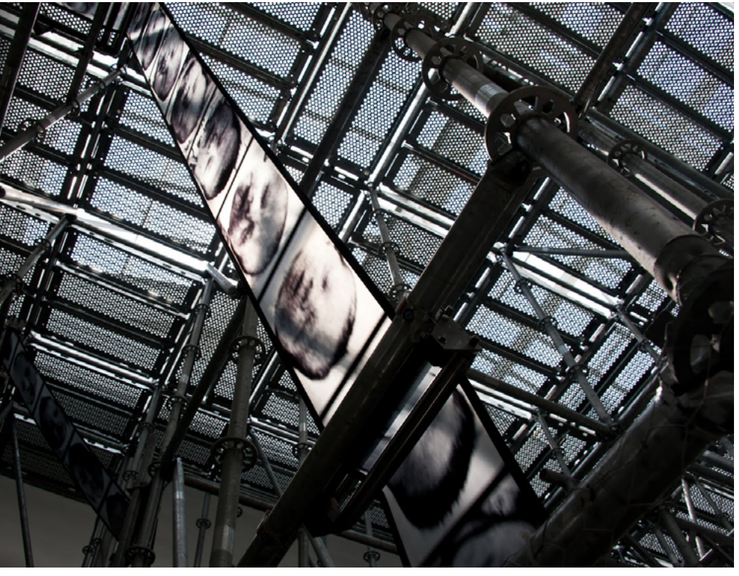
To make the argument for an interpretation of photography that cannot be reduced to historical narration, Baer distinguishes between the mechanistic function of the camera and the subjective experience that lies behind the photographed image:

> The camera only records what occurs, and only in bursts and explosions, whereas behind every photograph is the suggestion that the depicted scene was not merely an occurrence but an experience that someone lived through. (Baer 2002: 8)

It is this sense of experience, of being-present, when conveyed in a photograph that establishes a link between the past and the present: it connects the present encapsulated in the image (the moment of its making) to the present of someone viewing the image. However, Baer's argument also brings into discussion that which cannot be "recorded" or that which exceeds the physical record, namely the experience of being present in a moment *with a multitude of futures*.

Christian Boltanksi's work engages with the changeable future offered up by photographs. An instance of how he stages this changeability can be found in

his *Wheel of Fortune* (2011), installed as part of his exhibition *Chance* at the French pavilion at the Venice Biennale of 2011. In this work, thousands of photographs of new-born babies, sourced from Polish newspaper announcements of their births, are moved through an elaborate scaffolding structure reminiscent of the machinery of large-scale newspaper printers. It occupied most of the space in all three dimensions of the central area of the French pavilion. Every ten minutes, a bell would sound and the behemoth construction would pause. (A button also allowed viewers to pause the movement of the photographs.) During this pause, an LCD screen low on the wall would display, in three horizontal segments, the top, middle and bottom sections of the photographs positioned below cameras that were distributed throughout the scaffolding. The composite image displayed by this process was the result of a random combination of events and presented a jarring image, an awkward jumble that created an inconceivable face composed of sections of three arbitrarily chosen photographs. After this brief pause, the machine would start up again, until a new combination of faces was presented in a new composite.



While making overt reference to mass-produced communication technologies, the *Wheel of Fortune* also reminds us of the fleeting nature of time. The composite that is produced when the machine pauses exists only in that short interval, and every photograph is subject to being co-opted into an unexpected combination; each of their futures, like each subject (historical or contemporary), is uncertain.

Even if Boltanski's *Wheel of Fortune* prompts us to think about the disjunctive presents and variable futures of the photographs, it does so as an installation rather than through the images themselves. In this thesis, I have aimed to produce this same effect within the photographs. My photographs are positioned similarly to those images discussed by Baer in that they are intended to evoke that which cannot be "depicted" or "captured"—the experience of being present. Additionally, however, in their presentness these images are ignorant of the future in which they will be viewed, and they consequently lock within themselves something of the immediacy of the moment in which the image was made. This is not to say that this immediacy is accessible to the viewer, of course, as images are continuously reframed by successive contexts.

By collecting together the photographs taken on my performative travels, I established an archive, one which I curated into an exhibition format earlier in my creative process and have now curated into the form of this thesis. The role of curatorship may be understood as the drawing out of specific relationships between images and/or objects. Drawing out these relationships constitutes

**Left: Boltanski, C. 2011. *Wheel of Fortune* (Artist Info and Museum n.d.).**

an act of meaning-making on the part of the curator. Curatorial decisions concerning juxtapositions lift out that which is not apparent in the single image or object; in this way, curatorship is an all but invisible means of creation.

The photographs that I chose to lift out by way of their combination and juxtaposition as a collection include frequent portrayals of empty spaces. These empty spaces make reference to the archives in which Krotoa and Anne appear, because they are the products of my performative acts of walking in the spaces associated with these women. The photographs invite reflection on *Krotoa's and Anne's* absent presence, and their emptied-out nature is an attempt to make this absence the point of focus, the very subject of the images.

## Iterations of Reframing

My first curation of this archive of photographs took the form of an exhibition entitled *Remnants and Ancestors: Anarchives of Krotoa and Anne Barnard.* This exhibition constitutes the midpoint of the creative process of the thesis and was part of my earlier attempts at representing absence. As my photographs relied on the emptied-out image, I excluded any portraiture or other reconstructive imagery and selected those photographs that were most patently expressive of my presence in the spaces. Having printed out my selection of images for the exhibition, I returned to these photographs and rephotographed them. By rephotographing the photographs, I wanted to insert another layer of distance, a mode of deferral from what is already a "print" or a reproduction, to emphasise the inaccessibility of the "original" presence of the photographer (myself),[7] but also of Krotoa and Anne. In

preparation for the exhibition, I projected these "rephotographs" into the spaces at the Castle of Good Hope and in turn photographed these projections. Before installation, I also photographed the space in which the exhibition was to be staged and exhibited these photographs in the exhibition itself. These last photographs formed the basis of my exhibition at the Castle of Good Hope. This final layer of deferment co-opted into the images the very space in which they were exhibited, thus inserting into the exhibition echoes of those fleeting presences that the exhibition itself sought to commemorate.

Throughout this document are reproductions of some of the photographs taken within the Castle, captioned with the title *Remnants and Ancestors*. Through their spatial arrangement, these images speak to the argument offered in the textual component. In all of these images there is an abundance of open space, an emptiness that is intended to signal absence. In addition, the photographs were often shot through a doorway, suggestive of a deferred presence. I establish in the photographs a point of view, of seeing through a door or archway into another space, as opposed to photographing something in the primary space.

Alongside the photographs that were shot within the Castle, I exhibited various postcard-sized photographs from my archive and displayed antique illustrations of people from the Cape and selected objects that were contemporary to the lives of Krotoa and Anne that I had sourced from internet auction sites such as eBay, or that I had picked up on my pilgrimages. I produced a series of folded papers that were a reference to the documents I encountered in the National Library of Scotland. The pages were folded to suggest the form of files in an archive, but, more pertinently, they themselves bear witness to the reality of something that

cannot be accessed within the folds: they testify that presence exists, but they conceal it.

I also included physical materials, in particular ash and sand, in various containers throughout the exhibition space. I was particularly interested in these two substances, because they are both evidence of the passage of time—sand as rock and shell that have broken down over millennias of environmental friction, and ash as the remnant of fire and of something that burned. Both ash and sand are materials that indicate that something—a living tree, a rock—was once present and whole, but its original form, its wholeness, cannot now be deduced from its parts. Ash and sand are also always at our feet: they are the ever-present remnants of a past that shapes the world we traverse in the present.

I covered an entire table with a layer of ground buchu (a strong-smelling indigenous herb that was used by Khoekhoe people as medicine and is still sold as such today) sandwiched between two layers of clear Perspex. The buchu was intended to resonate with the material qualities of ash and sand. This layer was placed on top of prints from the pages of seventeenth and eighteenth century ethnographic journals that depicted "types" of "natives" from southern Africa, in particular Khoekhoe and San. The buchu layer in this way concealed what lay below it, again indicating a presence while hiding it from sight.

I purposefully mounted this exhibition in the Castle of Good Hope, intending to draw attention to the past of the place, and underscore its relevance to the two women whose lives were featured in the exhibition, as well as to the absences of their bodies in the space. The exhibition was deliberately curated to suggest a temporality, as well as the impermanence of its configuration, particularly through the use of trestle tables, an archaeological field tool on which fragments are sorted, connections are made and narratives begun. The tables signified "work spaces", places of construction—rather than the more traditional vitrines that display configurations of objects suggestive of a curated resolution.

The locale of the Castle of Good Hope was important to me, as it is a significant site in which the stories of Krotoa and Anne intersect in Cape

Previous page: Details of printed photographs from my archive that were re-photographed. This spread and the following page: Installation views of the *Remnants and Ancestors* exhibition.

Town. Krotoa was frequently imprisoned here after the death of her husband, whereas Anne and her husband occupied the commander's rooms for a time during their stay at the Cape. The Castle thus embodies the intersection of the two stories, separated by more than a century, and became a site where I spent much time reflecting on my own intersection with their stories.

The Castle is still present today, its structures solid and its shape easily distinguished from any elevated vantage point in the city. But the presences of Krotoa and Anne and innumerable others who roamed within the Castle are lost. Thus, the Castle is the object through which we can begin to apprehend this loss—it is the physical presence that can be used to guide us towards thinking about absence.

In my exhibition, I employed the Castle as a go-between in two ways. In the first instance, through the presence of the Castle's physical structure within my photographs—deferred through multiple steps of rephotography, I aimed to prompt viewers into considering the past realities of the space. In the second instance, with the exhibition being housed in four adjoining rooms in the same space as the rephotographs, I invited my viewers to physically perform their own traversal through those spaces of the Castle occupied by my exhibition. The various tables and exhibition elements encountered by viewers in this way were curated to take the viewers through multiple possibilities of presence and absence, mostly as evoked by the strategies employed within the photographs. In this way, viewers were invited to perform, by walking—much as I had done on my own travels—their own reflection on absence.

## The Page and Beyond

As mine is an iterative methodology, it should be clear that the exhibition at the Castle does not signal the culmination of the creative component of this thesis but functions here as a demonstration of part of my methodology. The exhibition as a platform allowed me to explore visual and material possibilities through which to evoke absence, but, in its own right, it does not instantiate the anarchive, which is why it is not included in the submission of this thesis as exhibition. As much as the exhibition was informed by the textual work conceived in the thesis, it cannot exist apart from the text, where the discursive arguments for the anarchive are staged. Exhibitions tend towards closure—an exhibition is itself an "object" of sorts, one that exists in a particular space and time, constituted by the number of hours for which it is viewable, after which that reality passes.[8] What has interested me throughout the production of this thesis, however, has been what remains after the "object" is destroyed—which in this instance is, in part, this thesis.

This last insight was made palpable to me in a particularly apposite, if painful, manner. Not long after the *Remnants and Ancestors* exhibition had concluded, my house was burgled, and almost all my documentation of the exhibition was stolen. While the loss of my material caused me no small measure of distress, it also provoked me to reflect on where the exhibition actually existed and how I might convey the exhibition in the thesis. Was the exhibition constituted by the collection of objects and prints themselves (which I

still possessed)? Or was it their arrangement in the exhibition space? I concluded that it was really neither of these things but was in fact in the encounter between the viewer and the objects arranged in space. If I followed my own argument, the "present moment" of the exhibition cannot be precisely documented. The experiences and thoughts that anyone had in that space are not accessible to all and are not visible in a photograph.[9] The way in which exhibition documentation comes to stand in for those exhibitions is in some senses analogous to the work of historical narrative, which attempts to establish a coherent sense of something now absent.

I also did not want the visual presentation of my thesis to be primarily a documentation of my exhibition. Rather, I wanted the creative work to be integral to the staging of my argument. A PhD in Fine Art exists partially as a report or documentation of research, but it must also employ Fine Art strategies in its methodology. In the exhibition, the photographs intersected with the other objects in the space, as well as with the Castle itself. In this thesis, the photographs intersect with the ideas that the reader has been encouraged to form and explore.

Inasmuch as the physical form of this thesis is produced by artistic methodology, it is nevertheless presented in the form of a (specially purposed) book. In this sense, it is instructive to reference Jonathan Ball's suggestion that the archive as form presents as yet mostly unrealised possibilities for the novel. (Here I draw parallels between the novel as artistic form and artworks.) In his article "The Archive and the Future of the Novel" (2009), Ball advances a pointed critique of the codex format that has become largely universal in the production of books. He argues that

> despite the pretensions of critics, post-structuralist and post-modernist literary theory has enjoyed only limited application in the literature of late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. I suggest this is due not just to conservative impulses in the literary world, but to the primacy of the codex as delivery technology within the publishing industry … the codex will be succeeded by the archive as the novel's technological form. (Ball 2009: 71)

In his text, Ball investigates how the technology or physical form of the codex[10] limits non-linear or truly writerly texts. Of course, I would argue that within language itself, various strategies have been employed by authors to challenge the perceived linearity of the codex as form. Nevertheless, it is useful to consider, as Ball has done, what the implications of the physicality, or the technology, as Ball refers to it, are on the kinds of creative and imaginative possibilities of a particular mode of practice. Moreover, it interests me that Ball has identified the archive as an alternative to the codex as a form that allows for alternative kinds of narrative construction.

In order to introduce a more open construction of story and text, Ball defines "archive" as "an unbound collection of disparate materials, gathered together under some conceptual rubric", adding that "even as archive technology stands as an alternative to codex technology, the archive challenges the conceptual unity of the book, and expands the possibilities of what a book is and what it might become" (Ball 2009: 71-72). He invokes Roland Barthes' seminal *S/Z* (1973) to articulate the characteristics of a writerly text, that is, self-consciously to invoke the reader as a producer of text, not as its consumer.

It is perhaps to be expected that, due to institutional requirements, a thesis cannot truly be a writerly text, that is, one in which the reader is substantially an agent in the making of meaning. After all, a PhD should unambiguously demonstrate a candidate's mastery over the craft of scholarly research, as well as stage the thesis argument convincingly. However, while looking over the archive

of images I had created in the course of my performative travels, combining them in different ways, I was prompted to create a space in which my reader could be invited into the archive and do the same. I have thus elected to produce a companion digital version of the thesis in which to present the images. As the reader pages through the printed copy, they will encounter blocks of grey tone that function as placeholders for images that are only viewable in the digital version. If the reader then scrolls through the digital version of the thesis, at each viewing of a page, images from the collection of photographs produced during my performative travels will be randomly drawn in from a database. Consequently, the images will change from viewing to viewing. Page forward and the configuration of the page just viewed is destroyed—if the reader pages back, they will be presented with a different image. The tenuousness with which images can invoke a specific reference, an actuality to which can be returned, is made manifest in this changeability.

My photographs have been reframed a number of times in the course of my methodology, but with their iteration in the digital version of the thesis they are continuously reframed by every simple act of turning a page. By means of this reframing, I hope to emulate the irrecuperable loss of presentness that haunts each historical narrative. In addition, the changeability will continue into the future of the thesis, as many more present moments in which the pages are read will generate fresh configurations and juxtapositions of images, offering opportunities for different interpretations and responses to the archive.

These square, uncaptioned, changing images are an attempt to push the thesis more in the direction of the writerly text. Even while attempting to satisfy the specifications of a PhD and submit a codex, my own "archive" of images is presented in a modality that invokes the anarchive.

The reader may have noticed already that throughout this thesis, the pages subtly change colour at various points in the text. I have employed this shift in tonality to underscore and amplify my argument. Where I am intent on positing my argument around anarchive, loss and absence, the pages are slightly blue—the colour of the sky sourced from a photograph taken of the Castle of Good Hope. At other points, the pages have been tinted grey. On these pages, I discuss the extant literature on Krotoa and Anne. The grey is intended to signify a certain morbidity and signal my remove from those texts. In chapter two, where I perform my own reading of Van Riebeeck's journals, I chose the faded red colour of the journal covers as the tint for the pages on which that reading appears. Similarly, where I provide a reading of Anne's writing, I chose a shade of brown-green from her journal covers, kept at Balcarres, to tint those pages. With these tints my intention is to defamiliarise the black-text-on-white-background default format. These shifts in tonality are intended to draw attention to the surface qualities of this thesis, to emphasise that the images and text, as well as the physical appearance of my work, have been curated into this form. As I have paid attention to the expressive qualities of the archives of Krotoa and Anne, I have endeavoured to carefully consider the form in which my own words appear.

## From Which Any Future Is Possible

As a collection of research about Krotoa and Anne, this thesis becomes indelibly connected with the archives it engages and now embarks on its own indeterminate future. As I incorporated a creative methodology into the production of this thesis, I am mindful of the continued interest in artworks of the past beyond the milieu in which they were created. This interest is apparent

when one considers the plethora of scholarly articles, museum exhibits, tours and television programmes that bring to light new perspectives on every conceivable work of art from the Upper Palaeolithic period to the present moment. Unlike scientific inquiry into the nature of the world, encounters with artworks do not follow a trajectory of an increasingly accurate interpretation of these works, nor one of discovering a deeper "truth". Instead, artworks are continuously re-encountered in the present by new viewers, and meaning is continually remade. In this sense, artworks are necessarily never superannuated: there will always be new responses, none of which can or will constitute a final interpretation.

When we stand before art from the past, we are as much in its presence, and it in our own, as any other (past) viewer. Importantly, however, even with their existence in the present, artworks retain an indelible link to the historical context of their making that is visible by their very materiality. Rock art, for example, speaks to us when we, as living beings, are present in the landscape with them, but it also brings to mind a time in which the painterly materials used in it had significance particular to its age. As another example, Impressionist painting involves our physical bodies in perceptual optical play but also shows us characteristic aspects of everyday life in the mid-nineteenth century. Every encounter with an artwork keeps the relationship between the past and the present dynamically alive.

James Elkins and WJT Mitchell have both explored the persistence of presentness that is evoked by artworks, albeit in service of different arguments. In the chapter "Weeping over Bluish Leaves" in *Pictures and Tears: A History of People Who Have Cried in Front of Paintings* (2001), Elkins traces his experiences in front of Giovanni Bellini's *Ecstasy of St Francis* (1480–1485) over a period of time. While Elkins' essay reflects mostly on the shifting and unstable nature of our memories of images, the essay dramatically demonstrates the desire to return to an artwork many times, to experience the painting afresh each time.

As the author moves through his life, his response to the painting shifts. His eyes are drawn to different aspects of the work, and his interpretations are influenced by insights gained elsewhere. Elkins demonstrates that the painting cannot be relegated to memory, but remains present in each encounter he has with it. An encounter with an artwork cannot be repeated, because that encounter is, once concluded, an instance in "the past". In our encounters with artworks, we are not only interested in how the object functioned at the time of its creation, but also in the intersection between its own present (the time in which it was made) and our own. The artwork has a life that extends beyond that of its creator, a life through which it changes, almost as though it were itself a "living organism".

Mitchell experimentally approaches images and objects as "living organisms" in his influential *What do Pictures Want?* (2006), and asks what happens "if we question pictures about their desires instead of looking at them as vehicles of meaning or instruments of power" (Mitchell 2006: 36). His is a radical and polemical method, but one that yields illuminating insights about how images are constituted to stand in relation to viewers and how they exercise affective power over them. Within Mitchell's interpretative framework, images are understood "both as 'go-betweens' and scapegoats in the social field of human visuality" (Mitchell 2006: 46). In this way, Mitchell suggests that images are both extensions of, and active participants in, the way in which visuality mediates social relations. Importantly, by positioning images (and, I would argue, artworks in general) as *in-between* objects, he also implies that the "meaning" of images can thus not be fixed as statically bound only to the context of its origin, but are made again and again with each encounter.

I have curated the images in this thesis with their changeable future in mind. My invitation to a reader/viewer of this thesis is to engage with the emptiness in the archive head-on and to resist reconstructive interpretations. The invitation is extended in the words that I have written, but also in the changeable images curated in this presentation, which are intended to evoke the fleetingness of moments and their inaccessibility once passed. These changeable images also self-consciously engage the reframing of the actualities of the past moments in which they have been created within multitude futures.

Due to the nature of academia, this thesis is destined to be consigned to archive, but I hope that it will also amend the archive. Acknowledgement of the anarchive should unsettle reconstruction. By centring absences and finding means to stage them visually, this thesis inserts a second consciousness into the archive, a consciousness in which absence is recognised as vast and constitutive of archive. My methodology offers a different way of engaging the past than through reconstruction—namely through the marking of absence.

## Chapter Four Endnotes

1. The texts included letters by Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Charlotte Bronte, Juliette Drouet and Lord Byron.
2. Following a more institutional definition of art, the stylised manner of travel would have to be further co-opted into the system that functions as the art world for it to be fully acknowledged as art.
3. One might argue that her embeddedness in Enlightenment thought and culture would have rendered her poised to employ, possibly unconsciously, these stylised forms of travel.
4. While we do have access to some of Anne's thoughts through her writing, I am most interested in her unrecorded thoughts. Krotoa's thoughts remain entirely unknown to us.
5. Photography that makes use of multi-camera set ups, for example those of German photographer Andreas Gursky, and more technologically advanced photographic image production complicate this statement. As Bence Nanay (2012: 92) writes, "Many of Gursky's photographs are digitally manipulated: the films are pieced together digitally and then often manipulated even further. The colors are also often adjusted digitally, most often by increasing their saturation. This is another important technical aspect of Gursky's photos." I have limited my comments to the traditional single camera, single shot technique.
6. Baer quotes from Michael André Bernstein's *Foregone Conclusions: Against Apocalyptic History* (1994).
7. This is another way in which my photographs echo the dynamics in Sebald's novels, particularly as concerns the absent "origin" of the image.
8. One might say that there is a difference between artworks that are open ended, part of a contiguous set produced by an artist over time, and the artificial, ostensibly hermetic "unit" of the exhibition.
9. And the exhibition itself still had to be distilled into the thesis argument: it could not do the work of the thesis.
10. "Codex" refers here to a book composed of covers, a spine and pages, as distinguished from the earlier scroll.

# CONCLUSION

The nature of archives, being but the traces of lives, dictates that they can never be complete: no archive contains enough material to allow for a full reconstruction of the past, and that which has been deposited in an archive is there only because the material was aligned with the purpose for which that archive was founded. When historical narration is based solely on archival material, what is missing from the archives is also absent from the narration. In order to produce a more complete narrative, one must either find what is missing somewhere else or invent it.

In the course of this thesis, I have argued for a different approach. I have maintained that no matter how much we look, we can never recover the past in its fullness, and that most of the actuality of the past is forever lost. The fullness of a present moment, awash with such intangibles as a person's thoughts and sensorial experiences: the uncertainties and possibilities in the future of that moment cannot be archived. Thus, absolute absences are left in the archive. Such absolute absences, or that which of necessity escapes the archive, nevertheless leave their imprint on the archive.

Rather than attempting to fill the absences, I have positioned absolute absence as central to my exploration of the archives in which Krotoa and Anne appear, and I have argued that archives are constituted by absence more than by presence. It is necessary to deal with the presence of absence precisely because the absence is so much vaster, and perhaps significant, than the slivers of presence, and because absence exerts an unconscious pull on our engagement with the past.

Right: Zaayman, C. 2012. *Remnants and Ancestors XI.*

This thesis opens with a passage written by Giorgio Agamben, in which he expresses his desire to "listen to what is unsaid" (Agamben 1999: 14), and I have been similarly concerned with finding ways in which to attend to the unsaid. Rather than labouring to fill the various silences that I encountered in the course of my research, my aim has been to bring into view the negative space of the archive, to see what is not there and centre absence in my engagement with archives. On the basis of my centralisation of absence, I have argued for the establishment of methods beyond historical narration to tell the stories of the past and have offered, by way of example, the artistic methodolgy through which I instantiated the anarchive in my work.

As Krotoa's appearance in the VOC archives is sparse, a reconstruction of her life is challenging, but there exists a wealth and variety of historical and creative non-fiction that engages with the lifetime and subject matter of Krotoa. They evidence a palpable desire in the contemporary South African milieu to imagine her life more fully than she is represented in the archival material, and these imaginative interpretations do more than just take historical material and work it into a plausible narrative. The contemporary pressure on the archives in which she appears demands that such imaginative reconstructions regard Krotoa as a figure emblematic of colonial oppression to a present-day audience. However, the impossibility of a full reconstruction haunts all these works, an impossibility largely unvoiced in these feverish reconstructions.

In addition, the loss of the unarchived life, the unarchivable life—the anarchive—is not limited to Krotoa. Although Krotoa has become a stand-in for those who are unrecorded, she herself was an individual, her life singular, and there is much we do not know about Krotoa as a person. For example, we do not know what she considered to be the contingencies of her actions or how she understood and navigated the choices available to her in her present. Krotoa's individual humanity is all but obscured in the archives where only her effect on the concerns of the colonial powers was noted. Any "telling" of her story can only be shadowed by these particular silences and absences, and one cannot claim that there is in fact an original, recoverable "truth" of her life.

I demonstrated that because of the incomplete and fragmentary nature of Krotoa's appearance in the archives, and the need for imaginative interpretation, the accounts of her life have been invested with much emotion and are often endowed with special significance for the authors' own contexts. These narrations reveal the pressure on the archive. A recurring issue with these reconstructions, however, is how the contexts from which they are produced shape the texts in specific ways, whether idolising Krotoa to stand in for a nation of dispossessed subjects or as a figure that symbolically embodies the hybridity of the contemporary South African population. As a result, these reconstructions are not able to address the core problem of what is lost from the archives in which Krotoa fleetingly appears.

What is more, the power that the reconstructions of Krotoa's narrative has had in the public imagination has resulted in these reconstructions becoming extensions of the archives—archival paratexts, perhaps—rendering impossible a neat distinction between archival material and the fictions in which Krotoa's life is staged. These narrations have themselves become archival traces of the changing social, political, public, aesthetic and academic meanings and

interpretations of Krotoa and her life. The processes of meaning-making in the present, produced in a variety of forms (historical narrative, fiction, artwork), makes it difficult to approach afresh the extant materials contemporary with her life. A definition of the archive associated with Krotoa cannot be located simply within the boundaries of the physical evidentiary material contemporaneous with her life, but must acknowledge the public circulation of her narrative and the purposes for which they were developed.

Efforts to locate what is present do not inform us about what is absent, yet it is necessary to consider what is absent in order to conceptually contextualise that which is present. This absence refers to more than just a narrative; it is the *life* in all its present moments.

How, then, can the archive in which Krotoa appears be engaged in a way that she does not become the bearer of someone else's history as well? We must focus not on attempts at a reconstruction from archival "fragments", but instead think about the impossibility of reconstruction as such, to confront what is completely absent from the archive, the anarchive. Bearing in mind the silences in the archives in which Krotoa appears, the challenge becomes how to convey the notion of an archive that speaks of a specific absence and loss, rather than as a container of information that should be mined and used to *reconstruct* a life into a coherent whole.

In chapter one I indicated, with reference to the VOC journals, some instances where the unarchivable aspects of Krotoa's life had left their imprint. I showed that these imprints are indicative of her anxiety and uncertainty, occasioned by how she needed to navigate a complex set of social and political relations without knowledge of the future. In part because they are suggestive, the imprints of Krotoa's absence are tantalising, even as a definitive account of her as human being cannot be reconstructed from them. Thus, scholars and writers are continuously drawn in by the absences, as they feel the pull of the anarchive. Their engagement with Krotoa's absence remains, by definition, unresolved. In response to the extant reconstructions of Krotoa's life, I posited that instead of attempting to fill the absences, we should recognise how they resonate in the archive, and listen to them.

In contrast to Krotoa's appearance in the archives, Anne's archive appears abundant and brimming not only with facts, but with the presence and personality of Anne. That Anne wrote her own diaries and journals and gathered together a personal archive of memoirs now left in the care of her family suggests that we will not have the same problem with her that we have with the archives in which Krotoa appears. However, we should not imagine that because of the apparent fullness of Anne's archive we will not have to contend with the anarchive.

To some degree, Anne's principal biographers have approached her archive as though her writing were transparent. The implication is that, because Anne self-authored her archive, it is for the most part factual. These scholars do not heed the *mode* of her writing or the creative and literary contexts that shaped it. As a woman exposed to and engaged with the literary and intellectual milieus of the eighteenth century, Anne had to negotiate the gender roles that constrained her life. Thus, a consideration of the primary contexts of her writing should not be constrained to the Cape, but must include an understanding of Anne's broader influences, such as epistolary literature and its gendered placement in the eighteenth century, as well as to the intellectual realm of the Scottish Enlightenment and its attendant interest in exploration and knowledge. The extent to which these influences shaped Anne's writing is very seldom commented upon, but there are markers to this effect throughout her *oeuvre*. I argued that we can see through her *writing* how Anne navigated the tensions

between her public and private life and her gendered position in eighteenth century society.

While Anne's writing forms part of a larger corpus of intellectual endeavour under the rubric of the Scottish Enlightenment, public commemoration of her life does not recognise this. While there is no public commemoration of Anne in the United Kingdom, where she spent all but five years of her life, her name is associated with numerous sites in South Africa (and in Cape Town especially). However, she is now positioned as a relic of the colonial past in these public commemorations, so any creative or intellectual contributions she may have made is lightly skipped over. There has thus been a kind of flattening-out of her appearance in the archives, similar to Krotoa's.

Yet, in my exploration of Anne's archive in chapter two, I found it replete with absences. The recognition of these absences is made possible by the insight that there was an "archiving I" (in Jennifer Douglas's terms) at work in collating the archive, and that by establishing her archive, Anne engaged in a process of fashioning her archive, already excluding various aspects of her life from the record. (It is interesting to note, as Jessica Murray (2012b: 46) points out, that Anne often expresses doubts over the accuracy of her own memories.) Andrew's illegitimate child, Christina, for example, only receives a small mention in her writing, but in fact acted as Anne's secretary during her later years and assisted in the compilation of the memoirs. We can conjecture that Christina's existence would have elicited at least some sort of emotion or reaction from Anne, but we do not know what she felt, because she does not explicitly tell us.

The absences in Anne's archive become especially apparent when considering the intriguing evidence of Anne's self-fashioning, her awareness of how she represents herself in both her writing and in the form of her books. Reading Anne's archive in terms of self-fashioning keeps the distinction between author and work in view and reminds us that Anne herself silenced aspects of her life as she produced her memoirs. I argue that the form of her work constitutes a performance that masks the fullness of a life to which we do not have access. A striking example of Anne's self-conscious fashioning of an authorial voice is her use of the nom de plume Louisa Melford, which signals her familiarity with the conventions of epistolary literature of her time.

Interestingly, it is perhaps due to the fullness of Anne's archive that far fewer attempts at reconstruction have been made than is the case for Krotoa. Because of the perceived fullness of her archive, it is taken that there is less room for the imagination to play upon gaps and mysteries, and thus the record of her life presents less fertile ground for projection. However, Anne's biography is also less fervently pursued for reconstruction because she has become shorthand for a privileged European colonialist, a thorny position within post-apartheid South Africa. Such a reductive reading can only result from a neglect of the creative and intellectual aspects of her writing.

If one relinquishes the fantasy of transparency in relation to Anne's writing, it follows that one must abandon the notion that one can *know* Anne through her archive. It is not the fully-formed articulation of a colonial "project" at work in her *oeuvre*, but rather a negotiation by one person, in their own present, of the various parameters of the worlds in which she found herself. It would be senseless to attempt to "fix" Anne's presence to a flat representation of colonial life. Her vitality escapes her archive as much as Krotoa's does hers. To read Anne's archive is to dance continuously with her self-representation. There

Previous page: View of the gates to the Castle of Good Hope, Cape Town.

is no “place” in the archive where the dance comes to an end. Instead, I am continuously drawn to the archive because of the play between her language and her (absent) presence, the anarchive.

Juxtaposed, Krotoa’s and Anne’s archives demonstrate that archival absences cannot simply be assigned to accident or expedience. The vital matter of lived lives, both recorded and unrecorded, is absent and irrecuperable. One finds in the archives in which they appear not so much fragments of their lives as imprints of their absence. While we might conceptually comprehend irrecuperable absence, bringing it into view is altogether more challenging. The first step in centring absence is to give a name to that which escapes the archive. In this thesis, I have called it the “anarchive”, and I elaborated on it as a conceptual framework in chapter three. The anarchive contextualises the archive; it is the “ground” on which archival slivers exist as “figures” and without which the archival slivers would be meaningless.

Archives generate histories not only from what they contain, but also by what they do not. Some archival presence, namely those objects and documents consigned to the archive (and the information they yield), is a necessary prerequisite for the past to leave a footprint within the present imagination, but it correspondingly holds us captive. Absence routinely gives rise to invention and reconstruction because of the pressure on archives from different present moments. Representations and fictions that disregard these absences and attempt consciously or unconsciously to fill the empty spaces remain constrained by the present in which they are constructed. This results in flattened-out representations of the past that serve largely as foils to their own present. By contrast, by re-presenting the past in a manner that is consciously attentive to absence, a connection may be found between the openness of the past and the openness of the present, in which an encounter with the archive is staged.

As a signifier of absolute absence, the anarchive cannot be figured directly. As I proceeded with this project from the disciplinary position of an artist, I was prompted to describe the anarchive through metaphorical language, that is, by means of figuration. To this end, I invoked the figures of the ruin—through the lineage of its use in Romanticism—and the remnant, following from the work of Agamben, to give form to absolute absence. I argued that the ruin as a figure has its own kind of “wholeness”, which encapsulates its incompleteness. If applied as a metaphor to archives, the ruin may be a productive vehicle through which to think about the absences in the archive as constituent of it. Following Agamben, I described the remnant to signal that which remains or is left over from the past, but does not describe the shape of that which is missing from it. The remnant is not in itself the anarchive, but is the imprint of the anarchive on the archive, the formless presence of absence as it is felt in the archive.

The function of the remnant is not to hide what is lost—it is itself a kind of mystery, a part of something, but is also, in its very being, apart from that something: the remnant holds within it a reminder of the lost whole. In this way, the remnant as a figure that invokes the anarchive is productive, in that it acknowledges loss. And without acknowledging absence, how can we confront loss?

In this thesis, absences within archives do not solely constitute a “lack” that prevents us from finding the “truth”, but instead advance the potential for imaginative engagement with archives that is not narrative. Work that engages

the archive without producing a narrative does not render the past as closed, nor as stringently tied to the constraints of archival formation. Indeed, work that centres archival absences stages the past in a manner that may encourage the establishment of a connection between the presentness of our lives and those from the past with whom we engage through archives. With such an understanding in mind, contemporary discussions around the colonial archive, which are frequently fraught, need not be finitely bounded by what is present and factual, but can incorporate considerations of what binds us to people of the past, present-to-present.

In the preceding chapter, I presented the methodology whereby I instantiated and marked the anarchive in my artistic practice and in this thesis. Through a set of activities, I have given form to absence or at least provided a space in which absence can be contemplated. These activities were an iterative series of performative, photographic and curatorial actions.

In my earlier works, which preceded this thesis, I was guided by a desire to show what was missing from the archives in which Krotoa and Anne appear by imagining their interior worlds. In a sense, I was trying to photograph the past. However, in the making of these works and exhibitions, I came to understand that my present and my subjectivity shaped my own inventions more than those of the subjects of my work. By articulating these inventions, the absences did not disappear or even lessen. Instead, they seemed to come more fully into my view: the more I tried to fill the absences, the more I realised that I could not do so; I was caught in the pull of the anarchive. Consequently, in the work produced for this thesis, I attempted to conceive of a means by which to figure absence *as absence* in my work and acknowledge this pull directly.

The methodology of this thesis, characterised by intimately intertwined artistic work and scholarly research that inform each other, has developed along the following lines: through embodied artistic endeavours preceding this thesis, I intuited that it is the absences in the archives that most haunted me—these were moments of recognition. For the thesis, I then laboured through scholarly research and writing to apprehend what these absences were and to distinguish between various forms of absence in the archive. Alongside the scholarly and conceptual work, I followed the artistic processes of seeing what is not there, as outlined in chapter four. I performed this process in three steps: in the first instance, I read the archives of Krotoa and Anne along their grains (following the work of Ann Laura Stoler). Secondly, I positioned myself physically in the spaces where these women had lived, and I recorded this experience photographically. Lastly, I curated these photographs into an exhibition and in this thesis to figure absence. Rather than producing a narrative, the strategies of curatorship *stage* the past. Through my curatorial staging, I invite readers to place themselves in a space in which they can acknowledge, and perhaps even experience, the absence of Krotoa and Anne.

Having worked through various attempts to figure absence, the visual presentation of this thesis constitutes the final stage of my methodology. I have convened my own archive, which is comprised of photographs of the various spaces that Krotoa and Anne inhabited, taken during my performative travels. These photographs are presented in this thesis only in its digital form, in the PDF version. In the digital version, the reader will see an image, or images, on a specific page, but when the page is turned and then turned back, the image will change; the reader will not see the same image in the same place more than once. In this way, the reader can only see an image in a singular moment that cannot be revisited. Thus, the reading of this thesis entails a loss: when one

of these images appears, it presents a unique reality, a particular "present moment" that will not be recreated. The printed version of the thesis cannot perform this function of changeability, and consequently I have inserted grey squares as placeholders for the changing photographs, markers of their absence. The digital version of the thesis, however, allows for the singular moments of encounter with the images from my archive. In this way, the thesis stages how the past becomes inaccessible, and with these changing images I invite the reader to contemplate this loss.

As indicated in my introduction, this thesis is focused on the generative function of archives, that is, how they are pressed into the service of the construction of historical narrative. However, I have consistently argued for the recognition of absence (and loss) *as absence*. Hence the question arises of how one can employ the generative function of archive to bring about such recognition, or how one can draw from the archive not only to construct imagined stories, but to draw attention to the fact that most stories cannot even be imagined, and view the absences *as absence*. This is a question of representation: to convey the presence of absence means giving it form, while still retaining the quality of absence. As an object produced by an artistic methodology, this thesis offers a scholarly and visual proposal of how the representation of absence in the archives may manifest.

At times, the anarchive feels bleak and haunted, echoing silence. The anarchive gives rise to trauma. Thus, the power in acknowledging loss, meditating upon it and placing it within view, lies in identifying that which escapes representation and gives rise to melancholia. Perhaps in this way connections, and possibly empathy, can be created between the present and the past: our present, this moment, will also be lost; our time is fleeting. The anarchive offers us no redemption, but it does offer us a conscience, an incentive to hold absence centrally in view when engaging with archives, and it will ask the same of our descendants when our own archives are read.

I have been moved to instantiate the anarchive rather than pursue reconstruction of the lives of Krotoa and Anne, because even as reconstruction fulfils important functions in the present, the absences in archives continue to haunt us. Incessant production of historical narrative and imaginative reconstruction indicate that no one story is enough. The urge to produce more narratives is driven by a desire to turn absence into presence, despite any production only serving to defer the absence once again... and so the cycle continues—the pull of the anarchive holds. I have tried to reign in this impulse and to seek instead an understanding of how historical narrative is complicit in silencing, even as it attempts to address absence. I have argued that absence should be recognised and marked *as absence*, because only then will we really confront it.

Melancholia, as described in the introduction, is a state of unresolved mourning. In a melancholic state, one does not recognise what one is mourning and thus cannot reconcile one's loss. The anarchive produces a form of melancholia, as it becomes impossible to mourn absolute absence—it cannot, in Margaret Iversen's terms (introduced at the beginning of this thesis), "achieve representation". Consequently, my instantiation of the anarchive is made by invocation rather than representation.

Alhough a general condition of archives, the melancholy and desire for representation become especially pronounced in times and spaces where there is a need, as it were, to resurrect the dead. When there is an urgent need to reclaim identity and belonging in a country of the multitudinous dispossessed, absences in the archive become intolerable. There is no robust archive to

counter the colonial ones. Counter-colonial identity can thus not be founded on an appeal to archives. However, by engaging in revisionist historical narration (sometimes founded on against-the-archival-grain readings), "alternative" versions of the biographies of oppressed people have been constructed. This is evident in the populist narratives of Krotoa's biography discussed in chapters one and three. Such narrations may assign a form of subjectivity to the narrative, such as Krotoa's victimhood, for example. However, in this there is a form of conceptual collapse, where identity (belonging to an oppressed group of people) and personhood (the individual human being) become conflated: if Krotoa's story is framed largely in terms of victimhood, as a representative of those left out of the archives, identities tied into her representation are similarly bound to victimhood. In this conflation, absences in the archive that are the result of the conditions of accretion become entangled with absolute absence, or that which cannot, by its very nature, be archived.

Here is the conundrum: in the face of absence caused by colonial oppression, the post-colony embarks on a series of endeavours to *post facto* populate the archive. As these activities are driven by a desire to articulate and manifest identity separate from (or in rebellion against) colonial structures, material that exceeds conventional archival holdings is sought. The presence of ancestors is called for, but the ancestors are long dead and their voices will forever be excluded from the archive. Recuperative actions cannot resurrect them and, in fact, renews their silencing.

In order to circumvent this conundrum, the methodology outlined in this text does not pursue reconstruction, but instead requires an embodied reflection on absence. Perhaps, if the various absences are more clearly conceptualised, one can navigate more sure-footedly the needs of the present. There is space for invention and imaginative reconstruction, which are both necessary, but these activities become more meaningful, more to-the-point, if they self-consciously acknowledge that they represent but one way in which the present attempts to converse with an ever-receding past, and that their meaning is vested in how they construct the present as opposed to how they reinstate the past.

I have focused on the lives of two women in this thesis, but my argument is concerned with the past more broadly and with how we might deal with the limits of the archive. In the face of the anarchive, archives are slight. Contemplation of the immensity of the anarchive allows us to understand how narrowly that which we think of as "the past that has shaped us" has been construed. The archived past is simply what has been canonised—why then should we be trapped by the small pieces of archive that we have and allow these small pieces to prescribe our conception of the past? The familiar truism that "we have to learn from the past" is in some ways a fallacy, because we thereby construct ourselves around a small part of the past that is completely overshadowed by what we cannot know, but which has been as much or even more instrumental in shaping us. The vastness of the anarchive, the immensity of what is absent, renders the archive almost trivial.


By positioning the anarchive centrally in any consideration of archives, we not only acknowledge what has been lost but are also compelled to acknowledge the inadequacy of archives as repositories of the past. Reconstruction founded on archives cannot achieve liberation from the archive, as it remains shackled to it. But by acknowledging how marginal the archive is, we can conceive of different ways in which to connect to pastness and presentness. The anarchive allows us to walk free from the shackles of the archive.

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