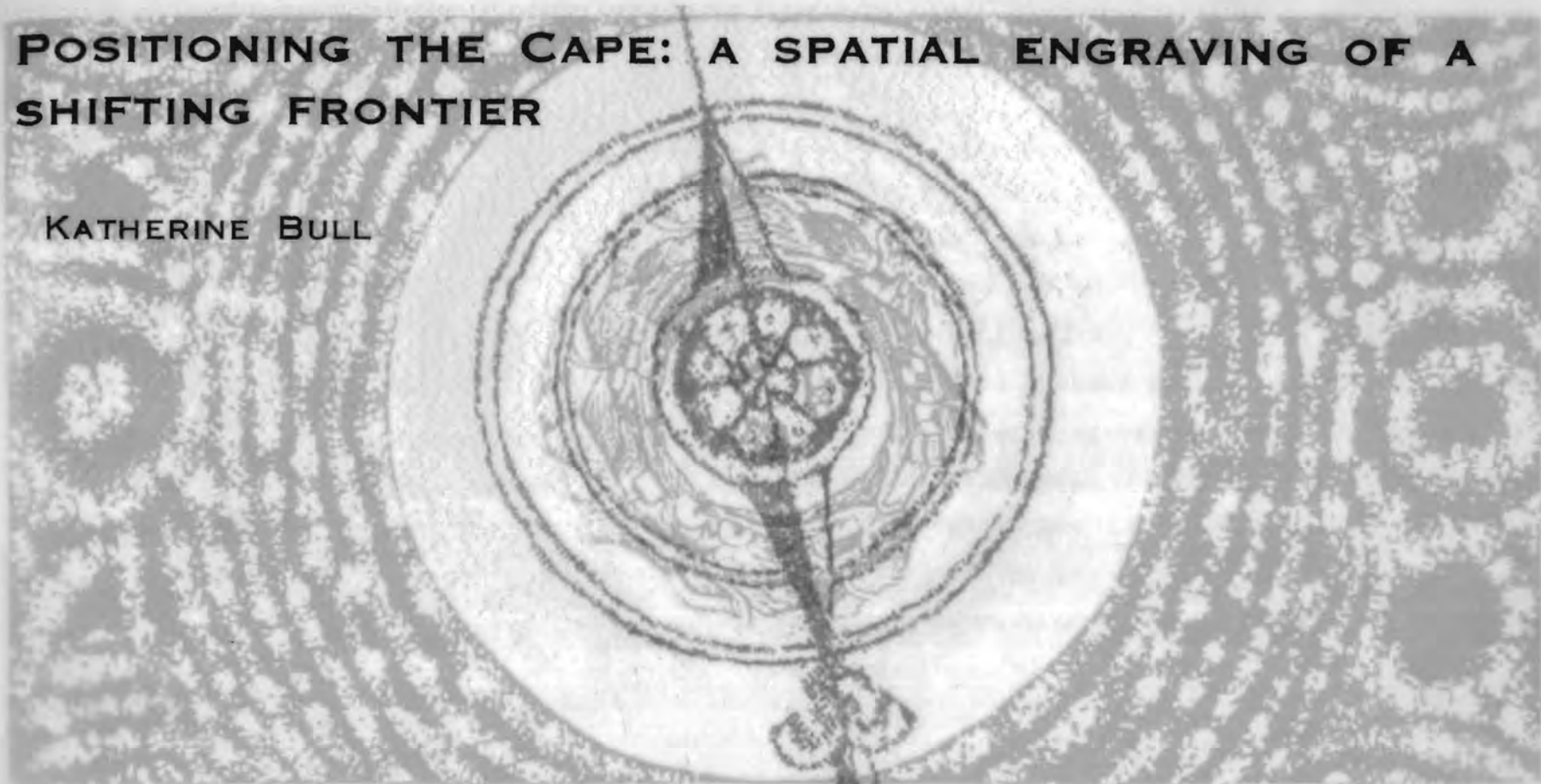


# POSITIONING THE CAPE: A SPATIAL ENGRAVING OF A SHIFTING FRONTIER

KATHERINE BULL

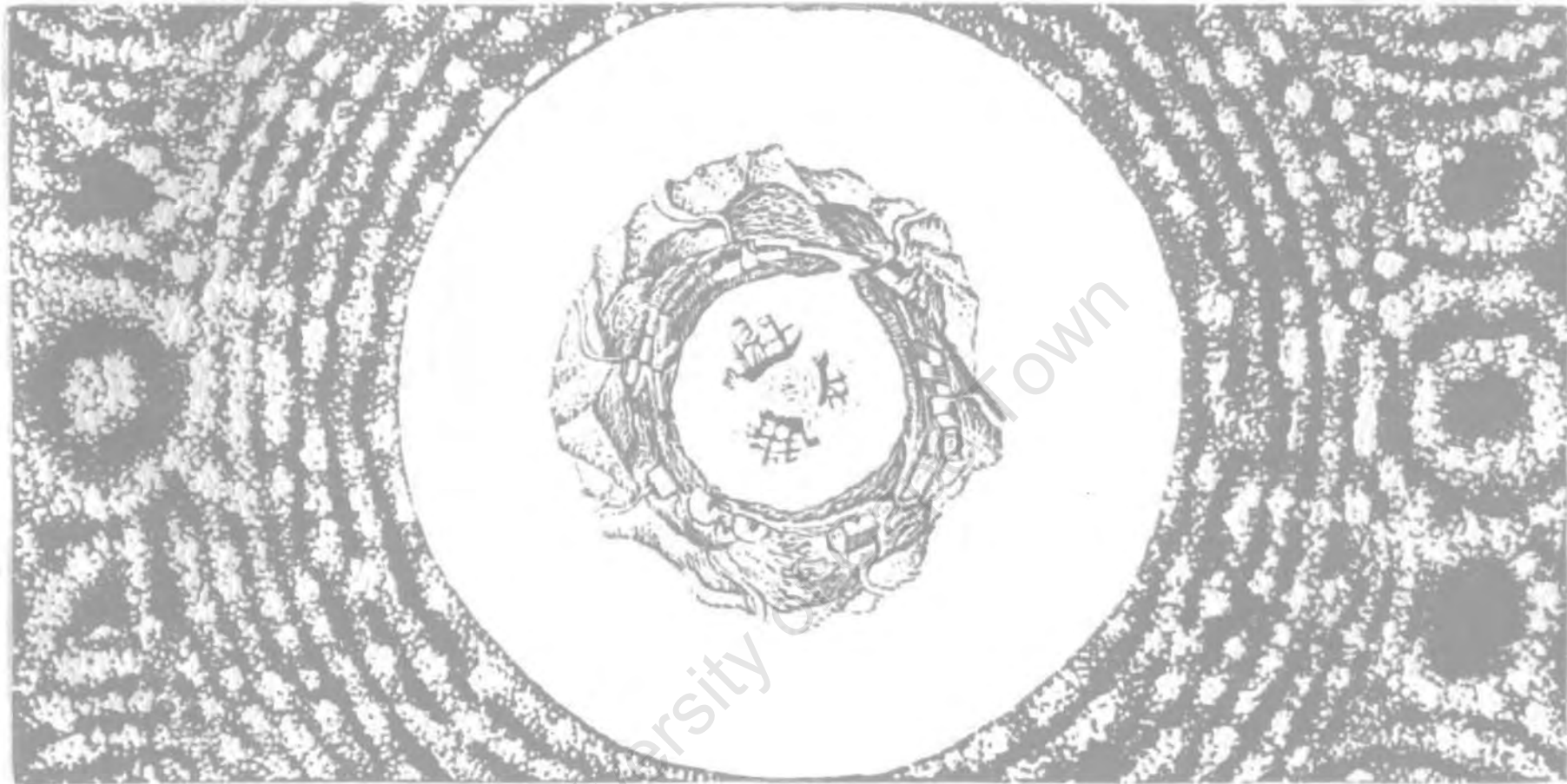


SUBMITTED TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF FINE ART AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN NOVEMBER 1998



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## PREFACE

In June this year I read an article entitled *Eve's footprints safe in museum* (*Cape Times* 24.6.98). The footprints had just been removed from the shore of the Langebaan lagoon. The footprints, imprinted in stone, have been dated to 117 000 years. The media use of the name *Eve* is an example of how theoretical possibility can become popular fact. The prints became exposed when the stone happened to crack and slide off along the strata that held the prints. Exposed to the elements and to a public who want to have their photograph taken standing where *Eve* once stood, the soft sandstone which held such a transient impression began to deteriorate rapidly. An article earlier in the year reported on the debate around the future of the prints. The geologist David Roberts, who discovered the prints, wanted them removed as soon as possible while Dr. Janette Deacon from the National Monuments Council was reported to have said, "We should rather see it preserved at the site as moving it would destroy a lot of its meaning. A museum display could never recreate the atmosphere of that scene" (*Cape Times* 14.1.98). Reading about the removal

of the prints made me contemplate my own memory of seeing the prints on Kraal Bay beach.

I had my first encounter with this fictitious embodiment of *Eve* last December. My father sailed me across the lagoon keeping the bow in line with Preekstoel (a large rock that stands in the water made top heavy from its erosion by the tides). I am fortunate enough to have grown up holidaying opposite the footprints, so I had made this journey many times before. This time, however, my expectations of the horizon were different. I was anticipating an encounter with a strange new past on a beach I knew so well. On the way I remembered years before the excitement of looking for clay pipes and other artifacts in the foundations of a seventeenth century Dutch outpost that lies at the other end of Kraal Bay. The footprints, however, that had been made in the sand so long ago, perhaps by some genetically related ancestor, evoked a human presence through the negative impression of a print.

This Robinson Crusoe expectation of the footprints did create some disappointment when I saw them as they were not easily recognizable. What did make the prints exciting was a combination of the knowledge of their discovery, touching the raised mound on the side of the one print that marks the displacement of sand from the weight of a body, and looking across the lagoon at the familiar scene from the perspective of an imagined past. This landscape that contained a sailing boat, a shoreline, an outpost and two footprints in stone sets a scene in which a landscape of history that contains vast distances in time merges with personal memories of childhood expectations and discoveries in the measurable physical landscape of the Langebaan lagoon.

Memory may reside in the mind as the sum of recollections of the past, but recollection depends critically on the material world – on the elusive qualities of objects outside language – and on the place of words and objects in the politics of power. (Hall 1998:199)

The footprints are now on show in the foyer of the South African Museum. They appear to be in transit, encased as they are in a

metal frame on wheels that brought them safely from Langebaan to the museum. Their intended destination will be to return to Langebaan when the National Parks Board have erected a suitable building to house them. Behind the trolley stand three hinged screens on which newspaper articles have been pasted that cover the documentation, dating and removal of the prints. A strange addition is a promotional photograph from the movie *Out of Africa* with a caption that refers to an Afrocentric hope that the human race, as we physically know it, is quite literally “out of Africa”.

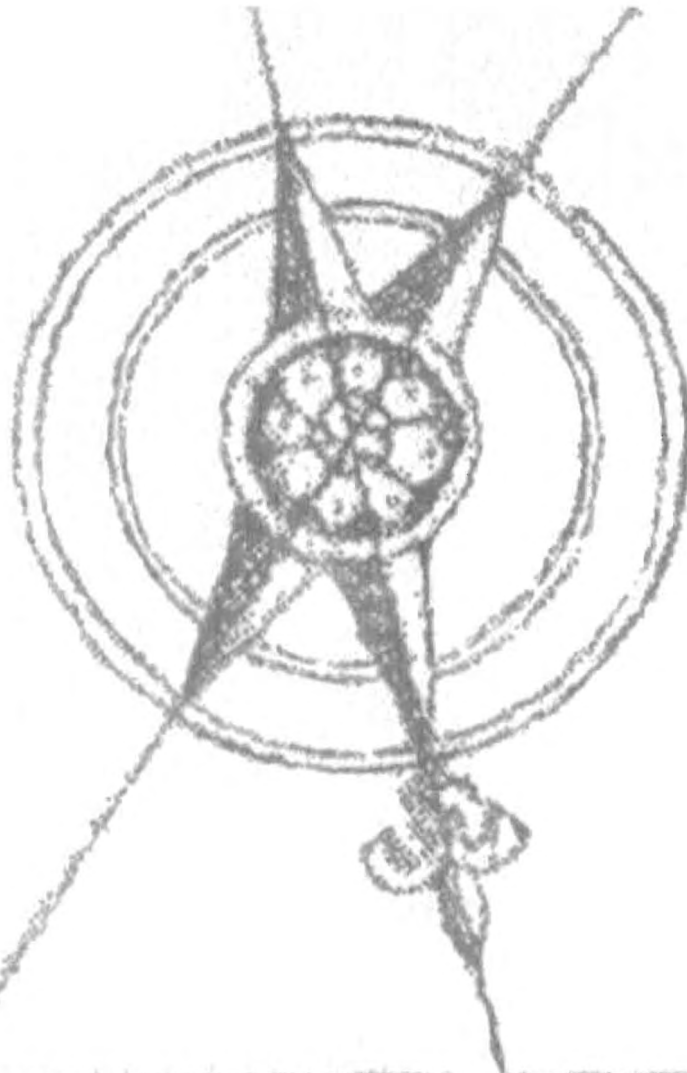
It is interesting how the process of the prints’ removal becomes part of this temporary exhibit. The exhibit foregrounds the act of the displacement of the artifact as the prints are not displayed in a simulation of their original position or placed within a category alongside the other rock exhibits. The temporary quality of the exhibit and the strange juxtaposition of Hollywood and laboratory dating techniques, fiction and facts creates a different landscape of orientation. My encounter with the prints in the museum was orientated around a temporal inquiry rather than a spatial and sensory experience of wonder. I began to question how they



arrived at that age of 117 000 years, as there it stood in black and white. As I examined the grains of sandstone through the layer of perspex they began to look too shiny to be real?

One of the suggestions that was proposed before the prints were removed was to put a replica caste of them on the original site while the original prints would be preserved for scrutiny and posterity in the museum. This inversion in the marrying of the copy and the original context and the original prints and the museum as a place of displaced, constructed and simulated displays, seemed an appropriate way to prelude my discussion of positioning the Cape in terms of the ambiguous relationship between the real and represented. My two experiences of the footprints emulate this strange inversion in my own mind. “It is, I think, a theoretical mistake and a practical blunder to collapse the distinction between representation and reality, but at the same time we cannot keep them isolated from one another. They are locked together in an uneasy marriage in a world without ecstatic union or divorce” (Greenblatt 1991b:7).

My two experiences of the footprints, constructed here as a personal narrative, give an impression of the complex relationship one has with the remains of the past – real and represented – in the present. It sets the scene for a mental and physical journey through the process of representation as a frontier where the strange and familiar merge and conflict.



## INTRODUCTION



## INTRODUCTION

I have chosen to look at the frontier as the perceived limit or site of engagement between the strange and the familiar. It is a concept constructed by a society, that helps to anticipate and process a physical encounter with a strange environment. It is the expectation and projection of the strange. An analogy can be found in the concept of the horizon. The horizon is a line drawn at the limit of our vision where sky and sea or land appear to meet. Like the concept of the frontier it is imposed on space to orientate, navigate and organise the viewers' experience of the environment.

The horizon is an important element in nautical reckoning of a ship's position and thus in precise navigation; without the concept of the horizon, the discovery of the New World would not have been possible. (This is true in a psychological sense as well: The 'variable constant' of the horizon enables sailors to take a 'piece of home' with them everywhere, so to speak. If what lies beyond the horizon is unknown and frightening, then by implication everything enclosed by it is familiar and not threatening. (Oettermann 1997:8)

The horizon symbolizes both the limit of vision and points towards the possibilities of what lies beyond it. The horizon, however, remains unreachable unless one recognizes that one is also standing on some stranger's horizon. The recognition of multiple viewpoints collapses the safe distance between the viewer and the horizon.

To be on the frontier is, in a sense, to be on the horizon. It is the space of first contact between "Native" and "Stranger", a site of real and symbolic acts of possession and dispossession, conflict and exchange. My concept of the frontier is borrowed from Greg Dening's *Mr Bligh's bad language: passion, power and theatre on the Bounty*. Dening locates the frontier of first contact between the strange and familiar on the beach.

I think history is more likely to be born on beaches, marginal spaces in between land and sea ... where everything is relativized a little, turned around, where tradition is as much invented as handed down, where otherness is both a new

discovery and a reflection of something old. (Denning  
1992:177)

To look back from beyond the frontier one is essentially dealing with the remains of the frontier. The remains of the process of possession and dispossession, of destruction and creation. David Chidester explains this process as the opening and closing of the frontier. "A frontier zone opens with the contact between two or more previously distinct societies and remains open as long as power relations are unstable and contested, with no one group or coalition able to establish dominance. A frontier zone closes when a single political authority succeeds in establishing its hegemony over the area" (Chidester 1996a:20).

In the main body of this essay I will look at the opening and closing frontiers of the Cape. The opening and closing of the frontier influences how, what and by whom the past is recorded. "I have no experience of the past that I represent other than that past transformed into words, symbolized. The past I experience is shaped by the genres of its expression and the ways of its preservation" (Denning 1992:5).

It is from the archive of assembled references and records that I have sourced the strange and familiar images of the Cape for my practical work. These images and records form the residue of the complex history of changing domination that emerged after the frontier of first contact between Europeans and the Cape. My use of the term archive extends beyond a reference to a physical space that contains material records and sources for my research. My use of the term includes a broader conceptual reference to the archive as a chaotic and unstable collection of cultural remains of the past that provides a powerful means both to fix and contest the politics of the frontier. The archive is spatially a closed frontier which reflects a controlled access to, and recording of information, but as a container of information it remains potentially open and unstable. A journey back to the frontiers of the past is impossible but I can use the concept of the frontier to journey into the sea of recorded information. Therefore I am not interested in creating a chronological history of the Cape frontier but rather I will attempt to engage with the remains of the frontier in order to explore a contemporary relevance for the process of negotiating what may

be seen as the “frontier of the archive”. This written document is not intended to be an exhaustive explication of the concept and space of the frontier and the archive. It is an exploration that brings into play various personal experiences, thoughts and interests that have contributed to the development of my own ideas of the frontier and archive – manifested in my spatial engraving.

In order to create a dialogue that reveals the process of negotiating a frontier, I have chosen to look at the ship, island, shoreline and castle and their relation to the frontier and horizon in colonial maps, landscapes and contemporary installations. Colonial landscapes and maps were part of the imperial process of mediating between the familiar and the strange through the manipulation of spatial perspectives and symbols. Through a discussion of these works I would like to continue the frontier-horizon analogy in order to create a dialogue between the spatial perspective of sea and land (looking in looking out) and the temporal perspectives of past and future (looking back looking forward).

The first chapter of sources titled *Positioning the Cape in the context of the frontier*, is divided into three sections. In the first section *Cape of Storms: changing horizons of the open frontier* I discuss the ship, island, shoreline and castle as part of the process of negotiating the frontier of first contact that took place on the Cape beaches at the turn of the fifteenth century. The records I discuss are early written accounts, maps and maritime landscape prints. The expectations of encounters with the frontier, prior to the journey around the Cape, were played out in the imaginative mapping of a chaotic southern hemisphere. For the early explorers the shoreline was the frontier of limit and necessity. Early images and accounts reveal symbols of possession and dispossession, recognition and exchange. The horizon was viewed from the safe distance of the ship or island.

In my second section, *Cape of Good Hope: fixed horizons of the closed frontier*, I discuss the ship, island, shoreline and castle around the turn of the eighteenth century, a time in which the Cape was in between the frontiers of the shoreline and the interior. The British takeover in 1795 marked the beginning of the organization

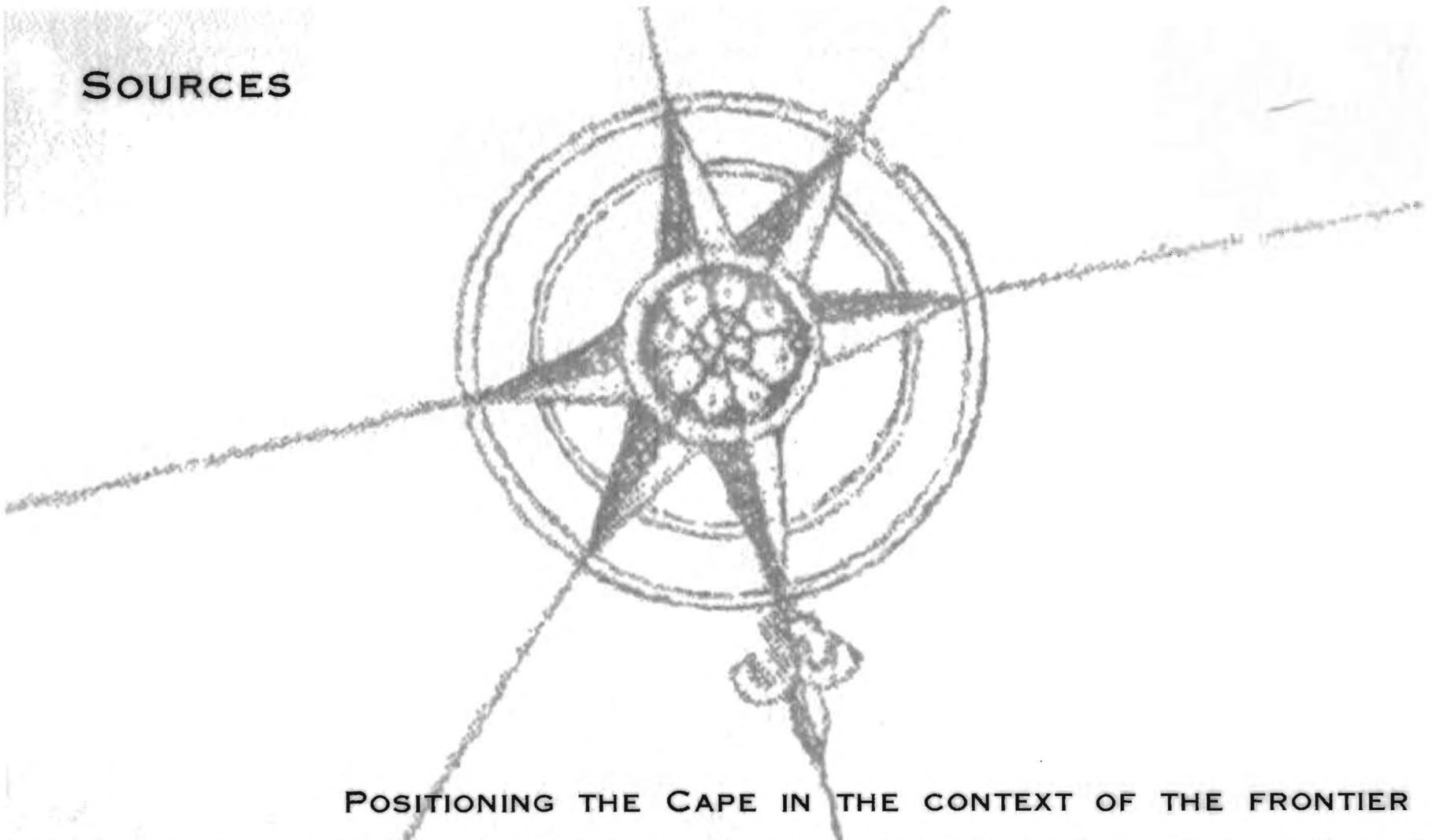
of the Cape as a governable colony with borders to be mapped and negotiated, and the end of its identity as a temporary refreshment station. The Cape became a growing urban centre. I look at how panorama paintings and sketches functioned in dictating the expectation of how a strange landscape was to be viewed through simulation. At this time the horizon was no longer reserved for the seaman and explorer. It was being discovered by the bourgeois traveller as a symbol of hope and power, strategically and intellectually. The elevated or distanced perspective of the horizon is an “enlightened” position, To be “on” the horizon was the perspective of the prisoner.

In the third section, *The Mother City: lost horizons and the end of the frontier*, I discuss the ship, island, shoreline and castle in the real and figurative landscape of contemporary Cape Town in order to explore how the politics of first contact can be used in the present processing of the transition from apartheid to post-apartheid society. In a discussion of recent installation works at the Castle I will look at the power of the artwork to involve the viewer in contesting the symbols of the inherited frontier of the archive.

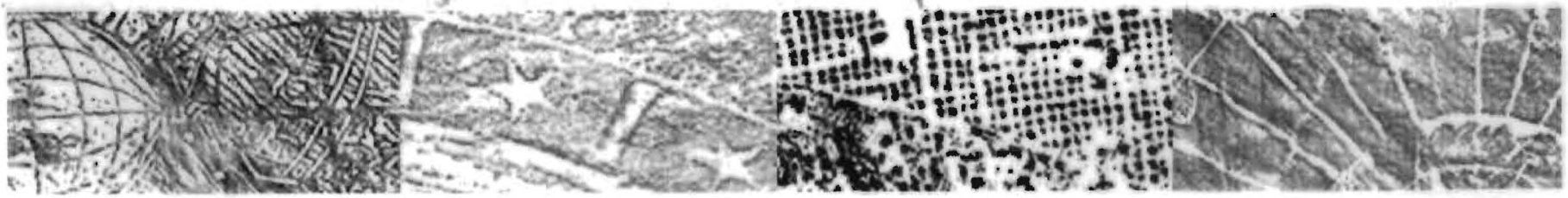
The perspective is one of a self-conscious engagement in the art of representing. The horizon is interrupted and the artwork becomes, in a sense, a frontier of engagement.

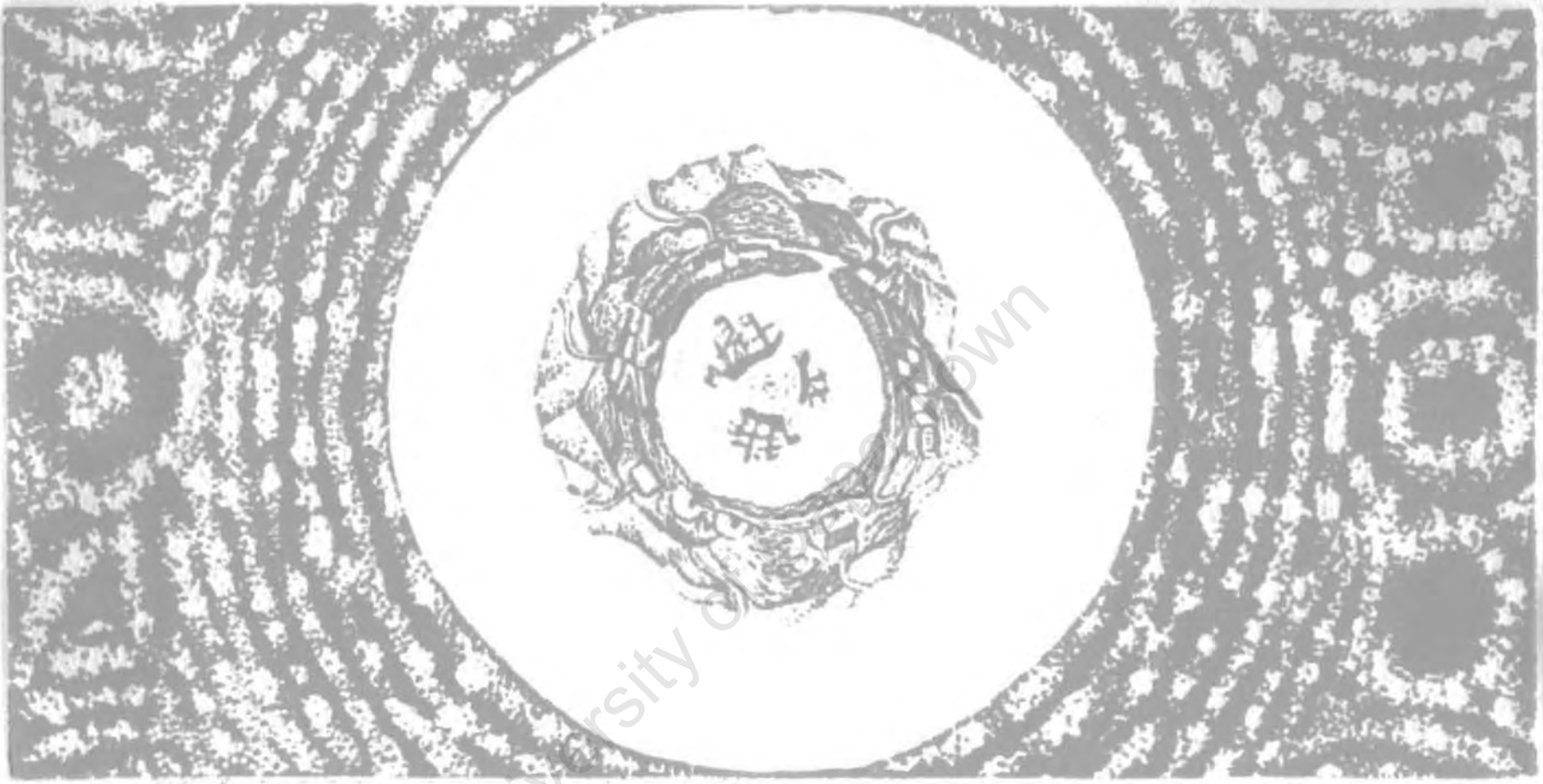
The second chapter of sources, entitled *Print, print technology and the archive in the development of my spatial engraving*, deals with my use of aspects of the historical role of the print and the printing process itself in the development of my practical work. I discuss my choice of source material and my initial practical search through experimentation to find a new method that would both reveal and challenge the process and history of printmaking. The result of my experimentation is a spatial engraving which I discuss in relation to other important elements of my work such as scale, perspective, layering and “printing” with light. The work is documented with additional references in the last chapter of the document.

SOURCES



POSITIONING THE CAPE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE FRONTIER





"After we again came to the island of the Cross, and when Bartholomeu Dias here left behind him the *padrão* he had set there, it was with much sorrow and grieving as if he was leaving there a son in perpetual exile .... Having left there, we sighted that great and famous Cape, unknown for so many centuries ... to which Bartholomeu Dias gave the name 'Tormentoso' because of the perils and storms endured in doubling it." (Raven-Hart 1967:2)

In 1510 Don Francisco d'Almeida, the first viceroy of Portuguese India, anchored in Table Bay. "A party was sent ashore to replenish the fresh water casks and barter for cattle. They accompanied some Hottentots to their kraal .... A fracas arose whereupon a punitive expedition was sent ashore. It was driven back with heavy losses, including d'Almeida himself, who was slain with many of his companions as they struggled in cumbrous armour through the heavy sand of Salt River beach towards their boats." (Shorton 1963:3)

## CAPE OF STORMS: CHANGING HORIZONS OF THE OPEN FRONTIER

By the time Bartholomeu Dias and Vasco da Gama rounded and named the Cape of Storms an established reserve of travel narratives existed to help the explorers to negotiate strange horizons. For example the narratives of Marco Polo (c.1254-1324) and *Mandeville's Travels* describe a real and imaginative journey in search of a terrestrial paradise in the East (Todorov 1996:287). Although the European medieval explorers of the East and of North Africa had come into contact and trade with many different cultures, the equator remained a frontier to the unknown southern hemisphere. The southern hemisphere became the terrestrial ground for the positioning of apocalyptic visions and utopias. This mixture of fear and desire in conceptualising the unknown, led to

the southern hemisphere being described as a place where, "things in the Antipodes were different from things in the northern hemisphere, monsters dwelt there, the normal laws of nature did not hold, in fact they were reversed" (Smith 1985:50); as well as a place believed to hold "a southern terrestrial paradise, somewhere on a mountain beyond the deserts of Africa – a situation actually depicted on several maps of the early fifteenth century" (Penn 1992:6). Through cartographic representation this north-south frontier was projected, engaged and traversed before it was physically explored (fig.1,2,3). A strange mixture of science and superstition pervaded the early sailors' expectations of the unknown. Penn writes, "Soon after Portuguese explorers began

returning to Europe with the news of the Cape of Good Hope, European writers began to identify the top of Table Mountain with paradise” (Penn 1992:6) and Todorov mentions that, “Vasco da Gama carried letters for Prestor John, a legendary character who, according to Mandeville’s narrative, lived in the Indies” (Todorov 1996:287).

The concept of the horizon was a necessary development in the technique of navigation, and on maps representations of the coastal horizon become symbols of recognition. For example, in a map of southern Africa (1595) a view of the Cape horizon from an approaching ship is placed at the top as if to signify the whole southern continent (fig.4). The representation of recognisable landmarks on maps was vital to early sailors due to the imprecise nature of navigating without longitude. “The map only gradually became flat and smooth, equally authoritative in every part: to begin with, it did not exist apart from the routes that scored it. It was not a collection of geographical objects imprisoned beneath the grid of latitude and longitude. It was closer to a picture or to the journal itself” (Carter 1987:71). Many of the early accounts of

voyages around the Cape through the sixteenth and seventeenth century describe a haphazard and hopeful approach to the Cape. For example, Francois Timoleon de Coisy writes in an account of his voyage to the Cape in 1685, “May 27 .... This morning we saw flights of small birds: the Daimiers [Cape Doves] are back .... Our Pilots differ in their reckoning: some think us a hundred leagues from the Cape, others fifty. We see lots of birds, but we see none of the floating weeds that are a sign of the nearness of the Cape [Trambas]” (Raven-Hart 1971:265).

The coastal horizon became familiar from the perspective of the ship but the first years of contact with the Khoikhoi on the shores of Table Bay tell a story of violent and ritual acts of possession and dispossession. The shoreline, until the building of the fort by van Riebeeck, was the frontier of engagement between the strange and familiar.

## THE SHIP

During the early voyages of exploration the social space of the ship

could be viewed as a microcosm of a familiar social hierarchy of the home nation. The strict following of the hierarchy and protocol of the ship could mean a stronger stand of the familiar against the strange. The Crossing the Line ceremony, reveals how expectations of the unknown southern hemisphere as a realm of chaos, were incorporated into the ceremony of the ship. Denning describes the ceremony. "Firstly, they played out a reversed world in which for a time the authority of the ship belonged to those who had already Crossed the Line, and not to any by warrants or appointments" (Denning 1992:77). Experience of the unknown is symbolically recognized while the possibility of the inversion of the hierarchy through contact with the strange is incorporated ritually and therefore, in a sense, negated.

On early maps larger-than-life ships surround the coast of Africa. They plot a course through space from west to east and through time by their presence in uncharted territory. The ship becomes a symbol of power as it implies all the journeys of exploration and possession. In this way it authenticates and naturalizes the cartographic system of representation and naming.

The ship as a perspective from which to view a strange landscape is a safe perspective. Early written records reveal how this was true in a physical sense, but visual representations of early contact include the temporal safe perspective of hindsight. For example the conflict between d'Almeida and the Khoikhoi on Salt River beach in 1510 is depicted in a copperplate engraving in 1707. The refreshment station and fort were already established, the nature of the frontier had shifted. The ship was becoming less of a fortress of the familiar and more a site of surveying the past, present and future in order to gain control over the frontier of engagement between the strange and familiar. In *D'Almeida and his men killed by Hottentots on the shores of Table Bay in 1510* the scene of conflict on the beach is represented from the safety of the ship's perspective (fig. 5). From the foreground of a contemporary Dutch ship, the past unfolds in the middleground and on the horizon the exotic "native village" is projected. The village remains as removed from the scene of action as the ships are, creating an interesting dialogue between perspective in time and perspective in space. By looking at this dialogue the naturalized landscape can be viewed as a cultural frontier in which the viewer is presented with both the

exotic ideal of the “other” as the Stranger and the savagery of conflict of dispossession that reveals the Khoikhoi past as “Native”.

## THE ISLAND

During the time of the open frontier of first contact, the islands off the Cape Coast became natural forts that could guarantee a safe return for the European sailors without being forced to be completely dependent on the Khoikhoi for refreshments. An account from Joris van Spilbergen’s voyage in 1601 explains how the island was used as a breeding ground and pantry: “we set sail in God’s name from the Table Bay, and arrived at noon at the aforesaid *Isla de Cornelia* .... Here we set up a Memorial-notice on a stake, containing the names of that island and of the other one lying five miles to the North .... We also set on the *Isla de Cornelia* [Robben Island] a couple of rabbits or Stone-Badgers brought from the *Isla de Elizabeth* [Dassen Island], to breed and multiply there. Also we killed there a quantity of Pinguins, and shot and took 7 or 8 sheep [put there by Lancaster]” (Raven-Hart

1967:28).

The story of the Khoikhoi Autshumato reveals another role the island played in the politics of first contact. In 1631 he was taken by an English ship to the east Indies. He returned as an interpreter for the English and in 1632 requested to be stationed on Robben Island. “The advantages of such a position were security from hostile Peninsular Khoikhoi and the copious resources of penguins and seals.” (Penn 1992:12). In 1658 Autshumato was banished to the island by van Riebeeck in the fear that he might disrupt trade with the Peninsular Khoikhoi but he escaped the following year (Penn 1992:15). This story reveals the duality of power and danger in the interpreter as a product of the frontier. The island reflects this duality in its role as a position of power, safety and banishment.

The island is both physically and symbolically in-between the worlds of the ship and the beach. As it was a controlled environment of breeding and communication in the early narratives of contact, in representation it can be viewed as a controlled

symbolic environment of engagement between Native and Stranger. Seventeenth century representations of Hottentot “types” often situate the figures on the other side of Table Bay. An example is *A man and a woman at the Cape of Good Hope* (1626) (fig. 6). The beach on which they stand becomes an island separate from the mountain which was a symbol of recognition of the Cape. If one compares a sketch by and a print after Wouter Schouter (1638-1704) as a dialogue between temporal and spatial perspectives, the distance between mainland and island implies the negotiation of the conceptual distance between Europe and the Cape (fig. 7 & 8). In the sketch (c. 1657) the Natives are occupying the foreground “island” of beach. From this perspective we view the ships in the bay and the fort in the distance, dwarfed by the exaggerated horizon of Table Mountain. The figures are spatially exiled from the frontier of early contact in which power relations are still unstable. The print (1676) made in Europe to illustrate a travel narrative, transforms the foreground into a symbolic site of first contact. The particularity evident in the sketch is fused with a broader social and political significance in the engraving. The uncertain future of an outpost colony can be viewed from the safer

distance of a controlled past.

## THE SHORELINE

While we were in this day of Sam Bras taking in water, we set up a cross and a *padrão* there: we made the cross out of a mizzenmast, and it was very high. Next day, when we were about to leave the said bay, we saw some ten or twelve blacks who threw down both the cross and the *padrão* before we sailed. (Raven-Hart 1967:7)

The beach at the Cape at the turn of the fifteenth century was an open frontier of possession and dispossession. The early written accounts form the remains of a European perspective and are full of prejudices and assumptions. They do, however, through the particularity of description, convey a duality of power of mutual interest, fear and misunderstanding. Ritual acts of possession and dispossession merge with attempts at communication and exchange, both violent and beneficial. The shoreline on early maps symbolizes this process as it morphs through successive maps from a projection into a representation. Hundreds of names crowd the

edges of the continent. They record the power of naming but also the dependence on the coast for survival. To the Europeans the interior of the continent remains the symbolic realm of expectation and fantasy (fig.9). In a map by Juan de la Cosa (1500) what looks like the enlargement of a coastline covers the interior of southern Africa (fig.10).

Visual representations from the perspective of the beach are fairly unusual before imperialism was well established in the nineteenth century. It is a difficult perspective as it denies the possibility of looking in or out from a distance at the frontier of the unknown. The viewer is positioned looking both in and out. Denning describes this perspective. "A beach from the sea, from a ship, from a camera lens is full of fiction. The beach itself, however, is a much more marginal space, where neither otherness nor familiarity holds sway, where there is much invention and blending of old and new" (Denning 1992:179).

In *De Brito marks d'Almeida's grave* (18<sup>th</sup> century) the language of the beach is depicted in the raising of a cross (fig.11). It could

be seen to symbolize both possession (its physical presence as commemoration) and dispossession (death). The *padrão* becomes a grave stone. The foreground of the picture remains unclaimed, while the native village and foreign ships are in opposition on the horizon of land and sea. The clear opposition between Native and Stranger that is negated by the activity in the middleground is re-established on the horizon. Past instability is balanced by the vision of a future stability.

#### THE CASTLE

The first fort at the Cape, built soon after Jan van Riebeeck and his garrison arrived in 1652, shifted the dynamics of the frontier. The fort was literally and figuratively intended to be an island moved inland. "In their instructions to Van Riebeeck, the directors were quite specific about the design of the Fort and the name it should be given. They were also insistent that the Peninsula should be separated from the interior by a canal, extending the line of the Liesbeeck River through to False Bay. Van Riebeeck knew that such a canal was hopelessly impracticable, but he was forced to

listen as his superior, Commissioner Rijckloff van Goens, revived the scheme in March 1657, abandoning the plan when Van Goens sailed for Batavia the following month” (Hall 1992:6). This reveals how the first Cape settlement was projected and planned from the distance of Holland but had to be adapted on the open frontier.

The fort became a real site of controlled exchange between the Dutch and the Khoikhoi. The fort and the accompanying gardens ensured a safer landing and refreshment for the ships on their way to the East. The Dutch were no longer Strange visitors but frontier settlers that had to negotiate this settlement with the Khoikhoi families of the Cape. They each had to adapt to the politics of the other. It was in the end the Khoikhoi social hierarchy that began to disintegrate as their leadership became integrated into the Dutch administration of the fort and Castle as the centre of conflict, trade, alliance, and arbitration of disputes. “As early as 1700, Western Cape Khoikhoi chiefs were appointed by the governor. A staff with a brass knob bearing the VOC’s emblem turned the Khoikhoi chiefs into “captains” (Dooling 1994:24).

The building of the Castle which began in 1666 could be viewed as a symbol of the frontier as it evolved from the mixture of Dutch imperial aspirations and local Cape conditions. In an article on the building of the Castle, Hall *et al.* (1990) discuss how the Dutch plans for an ideal fortification based on Dutch examples are modified over time by local physical and climatic conditions. The ideal site chosen from a map in the Netherlands becomes a disaster for collapsing foundations. The building of the Castle drags on and on due to the garrison rebellion against the arduous labour of construction. The moat as a planned sea of defence became a token stream that flooded in the winter and dried up in the summer. “It was through ordinary, day-to-day conflict such as these, rather than through the grand strategies of merchant lords in the Netherlands, that the character of the early colonial Cape was formed” (Hall *et al.* 1990:36). By the time the Castle was completed it was only a symbolic not an physical structure of defence.

The fort on maps after 1652 signified a particular national presence (fig. 12). The frontier was no longer the realm of the horizon. The

Castle was positioned between the threat of invasion from the sea and the interior. Hall *et al.* describe how the building of the castle, “accelerated under threat of hostilities, only to be temporarily abandoned as the threat receded” (1990:26). From a distance the Castle was a symbol of power and stability (its function as national presence). From within, the Castle was a symbol of vulnerability and instability (its function as an outpost of defence).

In many of the early representations of the Cape settlement, again, the safe distance of the ship is the position from which the fort and Castle are viewed. For example in C. Allard’s engraving of *Table Bay* (1690 after Dapper and Doesberg 1668) the ships lead the eye inwards towards the fort which is situated in the middleground beneath the imposing horizon of the mountain (fig. 13). The fort is a symbol of recognized possession but also the last outpost before an unknown interior. A path emerges from behind the fort, winds a way up the mountain and then disappears as if unfinished.

By looking at the ship, island, shoreline and castle as spaces, symbols and perspectives, these early representations are revealed

as having meaning that is not a reflection of the frontier. They rather form a manipulation of spatial and temporal distances in the relation between existing expectations and projections and the local conditions of the frontier. In this sense they record the re-appropriation of a familiar perspective of the strange.

I have politicised the spatial relations within these representations to imply the manipulation of the past, present and future, so as to create an awareness of how these representations are not fixed to a specific context. They are part of the process of symbolizing the frontier. This process is the process of representing a present position defined as the relation between what is known and what is unknown. Viewed this way, a certain perspective or spatial position implies the opposing perspective or position. The perspective of the frontier of first contact is implied through its absence. It can only be viewed from the distance of the narrative, map or landscape.

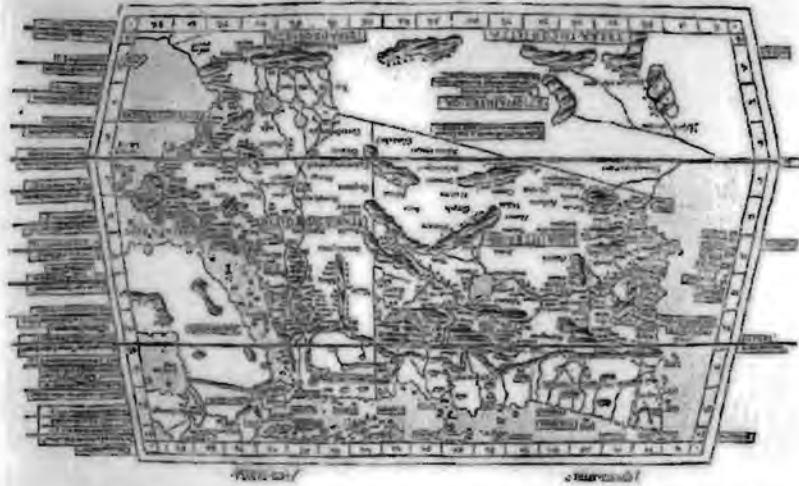


fig.1. *Ulm map* from Ptolemy's *Cosmographia*. 1482. From the press of Lienhart Holle of Ulm, Germany. Southern Africa is still terra incognita. (Norwich 1983:20).



fig.3. *Montalboddo Fracan map*. 1508. Collection of Henry C. Taylor. This is the earliest known separate map of Africa. (Norwich 1983: text:22, map:26).

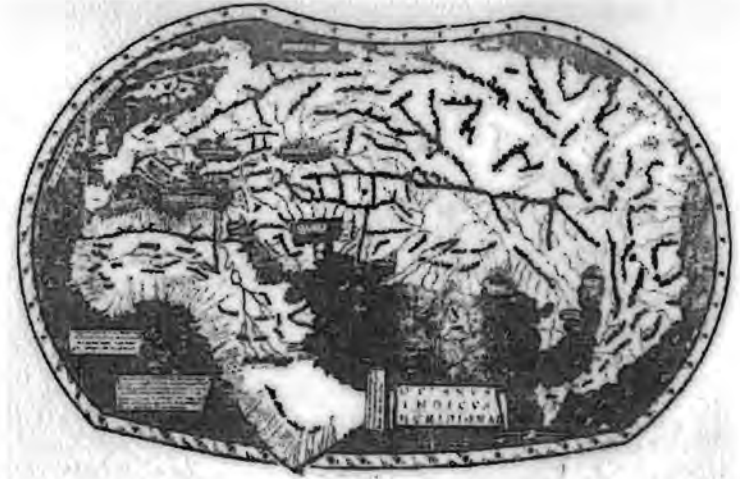


fig.2. *Martellus Map*. 1489. Original in British Library. The African coastline registers Portuguese discoveries up to 1489. This map is one of the first to incorporate information based on Bartholomeu Dias's rounding of the Cape of Good Hope – Cabo de Boa Esperanza, so called by King John II. (Norwich 1983:21)

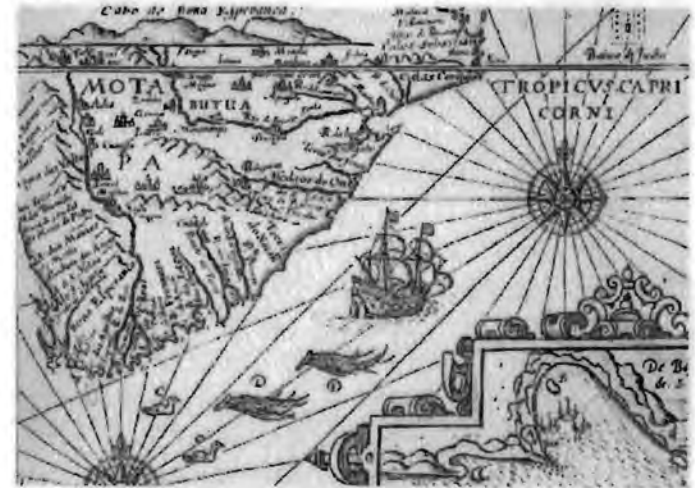


fig.4. *Map of southern Africa*. 1595. In Lodewijksz's account of Houtman's expedition. (Raven-Hart 1967:68).



fig.5. *D'Almeida and his men killed by Hottentots on the shore of Table Bay in 1510. Copperplate 1707. (Raven-Hart 1967:21)*



fig.7. *Schouter, W. c.1657. Cape Town, Table Bay. Original in William Fehr Collection, Castle. (South African Library: Special Collections )*



fig.6. *A man and woman at the Cape of good Hope. 1626. In Thomas Herbert's Some years travaile ... (South African Library: Special Collections)*



fig.8. *Cape Town, Table Bay. 1676. In Wouter Schouten's Ost-Ind. Voyagier. (South African Library: Special Collections)*



fig.9. *Waldseemüller map*. 1507. Original in Library of Wolfegg Castle, Germany. In spite of the strict secretive policy of the Portuguese regarding their early manuscript charts, some were smuggled abroad and at least one reached St. Die in Lorraine, where a group of geographers, led by Martin Waldseemüller, published two great world maps, one in 1507 and the other in 1516. (Norwich 1983:text:24, map:26)



fig.11. *De Brito marks D'Almeida's grave in 1512*. (Raven-Hart 1967:36)

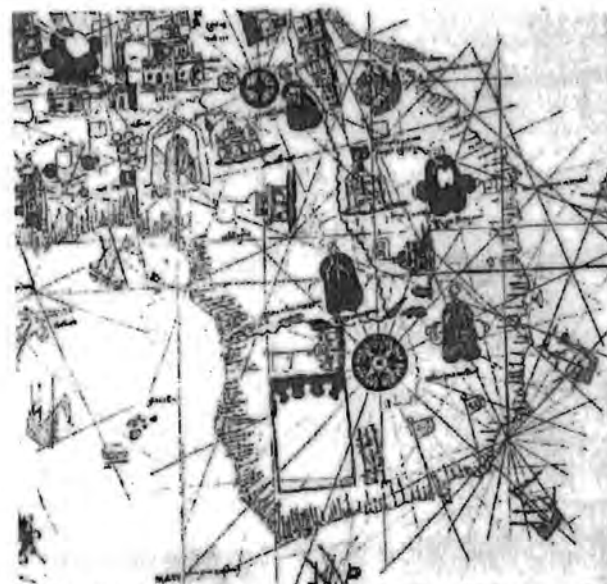


fig.10. *Juan de la Cosa map*. 1500. Original in Naval Museum, Madrid. (Norwich 1983:22)



fig.12. *Seller, J. (1669-1699) A draught of Cape Bona Esperanca*. 1750. (Norwich 1983:289). The Fort is illustrated on a hanging cloth. The VOC flag flies on the ramparts. Table Mountain looks as if it was copied from Dapper and Doesburgh 1668.



fig. 13. Allard, C. 1690. *Cape Town, Table Bay*. After Dapper and Doesburgh 1668. (South African Library: Special Collections)

... but King João, when we came to the Kingdom, gave it a more illustrious name, calling it 'The Cape of Good Hope', because it promised [the] discovery of India so longed-for and for so many years sought after .... (account of Vasco da Gama's voyage 1497-99 in Raven-Hart 1967:2)

C. F. W. de Lille was sent to Simonstown with a small force, but was soon recalled to Muizenburg. This meant that a strong British force could land unopposed at Simonstown. Early in August De Lille put up a half hearted defence of Muizenburg with 200 infantrymen from the garrison, 200 mounted burghers, 150 pandours and 120 gunners, against a superior force of 1,600 British. Shortly afterwards De Lille retreated to Wynberg. There were British sympathisers among the senior Company officials and officers, and badly organized withdrawals of the regular troops caused the burghers to lose confidence in their commanders .... Sluysken capitulated at Rustenburg on 16 September, 1795 .... In this way the rule of the Netherlands East India Company, which had lasted for nearly one-and-a-half centuries at the southern tip of Africa came to an end. (Müller 1969:81,2)

## CAPE OF GOOD HOPE: FIXED HORIZONS OF THE CLOSED FRONTIER

During the first British occupation of the Cape (1795-1803) the dynamics of the open frontier had moved inland as the San violently resisted the burgher farmers' expansion further north and eastwards (Chidester 1996b:53). The Dutch Company officials at the Castle struggled to control the growing independence of the burghers who were attempting to escape the Company's monopoly over trade and property. Graaff Reinet and Swellendam claimed their independence just before the British took over the Cape. Penn writes, "Indeed, one could argue that in imposing their authority on the Cape the British acted as a counter-revolutionary

force which prevented the colony from falling apart. The British did not simply conquer the Cape for Britain; they saved the colonial state itself" (Penn 1994:109).

The complexity of inter-cultural exchange, conflict and intermarriage that emerged from the frontier of contact needed to be clearly defined again into the oppositions of Native and Stranger if the British were to close the frontier. John Barrow (1764-1848) was employed to map and describe the state of the colony at the time and to act as a mediator in restoring stability to

the frontier (Penn 1994:117). Although the northern and eastern frontiers remained unstable, violent zones of contact, the representation of the frontier had changed. The political and strategic advantage of mapping and surveying the frontier from a distance in the colonies influenced the expectations of how the foreign landscape was to be viewed by the new Stranger on the scene, the bourgeois traveller and naturalist. The botanists also brought their own system of classification into which they could fit all the new plants that they discovered. Linnaeus's system involved the classification of plants according to their sexual features (Bitterli 1989:163). Linnaeus's system was also used to classify the Khoikhoi and reduce them to just another passive category of nature (Pratt 1992:45).

By the end of the eighteenth century narrative accounts of visits to the Cape were numerous and widely published. Like the engravings that illustrate them, their sources of reference are often pre-existing narratives. For example anecdotes of a near encounter with a lion, baboons stealing fruit from the gardens and trading tobacco for a sight of Khoikhoi genitalia are repeated in different

travel accounts (Raven-Hart 1971). The same anecdotes appear again and again as the Cape becomes represented by a strange mixture of second hand adventure and amateur naturalism. In one account Christopher Fryke describes how he narrowly escapes drowning after his ship was wrecked in a storm off the Cape coast. Other records account for the ship arriving safely in Table Bay in September 1681 (Raven-Hart 1971:229-231). These accounts reveal how the traveller is constantly aware of his/her role as interpreter of the foreign for an expectant public back home. "Circumnavigation and mapmaking, then, had already given rise to what one might call a European global or planetary subject. As Defoe's terms make clear, this world, historical subject is European, male, secular and lettered; his planetary consciousness is the product of his contact with print culture and infinitely more 'complete' than the lived experiences of sailors" (Pratt 1992:30).

Pratt (1992) discusses the shift in approach to the Cape and its interior frontiers in a comparison between the earlier travel narrative of Peter Kolbe (1719) and the narratives of Spaarman (1775) and Paterson (1789). Of the latter she writes, "landscape in

these books is no longer emblematic or composite, but highly specific and differentiated” (Pratt 1992:51). In contrast, the complexity of the social changes that occurred from the contact, conflict and merging of the different cultures at the Cape, especially the breakdown of the Khoikhoi society, is not given attention. “Whatever changes might have been taking place tend not to be expressed as changes, but are ‘naturalised’ as absences and lacks” (Pratt 1992:52). Chidester discusses how these absences and lacks shifted to a speculative presence according to the state of the frontier. On the open frontier the Khoikhoi were, for example, denied a religion by European observers and writers. When the frontier closed European intellectuals could speculate over the “primitive” religion of the Khoikhoi that froze them far back on the evolutionary scale (Chidester 1996a:23).

What emerged was a temporal taxonomy of the Cape. The strange landscape, people, animals and plants were expected, mapped and discovered as a hierarchy of degrees of familiarity by British travellers and officials. The Natives of the Cape were described from the lowest and most strange “Bushman”, through the

“Hottentot”, “Malay” and “Christian slave” to the lazy, simple “Boer”. This scientific approach to the foreign was mixed with the Romantic notion of the frontier that evolved from the accumulation of all the existing narratives and representations. “Distant artists in Europe occasionally depicted the Khoikhoi in the guise of Adam and Eve, pure in their nakedness, enjoying a life of idyllic pastoralism. The colonists of the Cape, however, suffered from no such illusions and the myth of the “noble savage” died an early death on the Cape frontier having to be re-imported into the colony by educated travellers influenced by Enlightenment ideas in the late eighteenth century” (Penn 1995:xvii).

After the invention of the chronometer by John Harrison in the mid-eighteenth century ships could fix their position in space according to co-ordinates of both latitude and longitude. The sea was now navigated by measurement against a fixed cognitive map of the entire globe. The horizon was no longer a variable constant of orientation and recognition for the explorer but a fixed internal reference line of knowledge to guide how the physical environment was to be experienced by the traveller. The horizon had become

the symbol of hope and possibility of ever extending progress into the future. Along with the mapping and scientific recording of the strange came the avid collecting of artifacts and specimens. This added another dimension to how the strange was conceived. The experience of the unknown had become, through its representation in Europe, a commodity. The colonial process of mapping the globe had freed the frontier from a specific time and place. For example the popularity of the Grand Tour in the eighteenth century simulated the dynamics of the colonial frontiers of first contact. Transgressing physical frontiers became the agent for overcoming mental frontiers. "What they [the bourgeoisie] sought was the edge, a tingle of excitement in situations that were easy to control. The experience of taking something to the limit was another reason for climbing the towers and mountain peaks and visiting their surrogate, the panorama" (Oettermann 1997:12). Therefore a simulation of the unknown became an equally informative experience to the real thing. It was also safer and less expensive.

The emergence of the panorama as a technical invention (patented by Robert Barker in 1787) reveals how representation became as

important in transporting the viewer as the steam engine.

"More than just the aesthetic counterpart of a natural phenomenon, the panorama was both a surrogate for nature and a simulator, an apparatus for teaching people how to see it" (Oettermann 1997:12). Military and geographical survey drawings of colonial landscapes were often used as source material for early panoramas. As their popularity grew, travelling artists could make a good profit from selling their panorama sketches.

The panorama, housed in large rotundas specially designed for the purpose, stimulated a mental journey to and beyond the horizon (fig. 14). In-between the real space of the viewer and the flat 360 degrees of painted canvas were receding degrees of false terrain from real foliage to cardboard cut-outs. As the travellers to the Cape differentiated between the strange and the familiar and then created a sense of continuity from the one to the other by creating degrees of familiarity in a hierarchy of temporal development from uncivilised to civilised, so the panorama simulated this process through the transition from the real to the represented. Later in the nineteenth century this hierarchy was also played out in terms of

the scale relationship between different exhibits in the *Regent Park Colosseum* (1829-75). The main panorama was a view of London from the top of Saint Paul's cathedral, surrounded by smaller conservatories which housed exhibits from other European countries and the colonies (Hyde 1988:83).

What began as a strategic and military surveillance in an attempt to fix frontier relations into a line or border ended up as a symbolic form of orientation for the European viewer to all that lay beyond the horizon. The panorama became a co-ordinate of orientation to the "new world" that was materializing through technological developments and the increased circulation of visual representations after the invention of lithography in 1798. The increased mobility of the individual through improved modes of transport made the horizon a desirable, real and imagined, destination. Added to this were the fears and desires for the future of industrialized urban living which meant that the strange representations and exhibits from the colonies provided co-ordinates of orientation between them and the other, the urban prison and rural ideal.

## THE SHIP

In the eighteenth century the ship was still a relatively safer place to be than, for example, exploring the interior of Africa in search of Monomatapa. The interior remained largely unexplored and continued to hold old utopian hopes of a land of great civilizations and gold. Monomatapa was mapped out as a shifting region throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. "Within the empire of Monomatapa, a great city like Great Zimbabwe (and later Khami in the 17th & 18th centuries), for example, flourished in present-day Zimbabwe during the 1400 and 1500s, but such cities were not as far south or as numerous as the travellers imagined" (Farlam 1995:57).

Conditions on the ship had improved by the end of the century and the perspective from the ship began to change due to the increasing presence of scientists, botanists and learned travellers onboard commercial voyages. For example William Hodges' 1772 representation of the Cape from Cook's *Resolution* shows the typical weather conditions of a Cape winter's day (fig. 15) (Smith

1985:58). The artist was employed on the voyage as part of the observational team. The role of the artist had shifted from merging familiar symbolism of expectation with written narrative accounts of events at the Cape to merging the expectations for curiosities and drama with the faithful observation of topographical and climatic conditions. Therefore, representations of the Cape from the sea at the end of the eighteenth century range from the emblematic to the atmospheric.

Maps of Africa in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries became less populated with visual symbols than names, numbers and borderlines that visualize a more differentiated and controlled approach to the strange through the familiar. Vignettes of the Cape and emblematic diagrams of figures, animals and plants still accompanied some maps but they were used to frame a map or a cartouche. For example, a view of Table Bay in a *Map of the southern Oceans* (1730) is framed by a collection of specimens from the Cape (fig. 16). These images of “bushmen”, “hottentot”, lion, leopard, wild dog, baboon and monkey refer both to the familiar anecdotes of earlier travellers to the Cape and to the

practise of collecting curiosities and specimens. The viewer is looking both in and out from the Cape, positioned neither as a Native nor Stranger in a space that naturalizes humans and animals into a landscape that is other yet not threatening.

The perspective of the horizon from the ship became popular to the traveller in search of sensory adventure and enlightenment. It was also a distanced place where the real and represented, the expected and unexpected merge into a constructed view. Lady Anne Barnard (1750-1825) describes her first impressions of Cape Town from the deck of the *Sir Edward Hughes* in 1797:

[I]ts Capital in view, by no means a collection of huts reared by peasants but a *respectable Town*, clean, correct, in its regularity & ill assorted only to the place it stood on, from its being too low to preserve the Character which Imagination had formed of Cape Town behind which the Table Mountain rears its head .... The course of the morning was only marked by my bad drawing, as I then thought it, of what I saw before me, *since*, I am better pleased with it, having seen none other so just, could I have put Edinburgh down at the bottom of my Mountains – what an improvement it

would have been (Barnard 1797:154).

The ship had become a laboratory for mercantile, scientific and aesthetic perspectives of strange horizons. Parts of real ships or constructed models were often used as a viewing platform for the panorama paintings and through this relationship with a fixed painted horizon, the perspective from the ship, “served both as an instrument for liberating human vision and for limiting and ‘imprisoning’ it anew” (Oettermann 1997:7) (fig.17). The deck of the ship was the position from which the urban European public could re-live a sea battle or view an exotic landscape, but it also physically enclosed them in the architecture of the rotunda. It was a microcosm of imaginative engagement between the strange and familiar that provided a temporary escape from some of the harsh realities of the industrial revolution and urban living. Therefore the simulated engagement in the negotiation of limits in the visual representation of colonial landscapes provided a springboard for self criticism and contemplation of the present as well as for the re-representation of the past and future visions.

## THE ISLAND

An interesting parallel to the ambiguous role of the panorama as both a prison and site of transport for the imagination can be found if one looks at the real and imaginative role of the island. Robben Island was still a place of imprisonment at the time that the British took over the Cape. It was occupied by a mixture of slaves, Khoikhoi, San, “Bastards”, East Indians, Madagascans and British soldiers. “The British managed to press-gang eight of these soldiers onto a Royal Navy vessel in 1781 and seem to have stripped the Island of likely crew men when they conquered the Cape in 1795” (Penn 1992:28). The island was a place to put all the people who made the social and physical frontiers of the colony unstable.

In Europe the island had caught the imagination of the public as a lost paradise, isolated in time and space from the mainland of civilized development. This view of the island emerged, in part, from the accounts of Captain Cook’s (1728-1779) voyages to the South Pacific in search of the unknown southern continent called

*terra australis*. *Terra australis* is another example of the persistence of projections of the unknown. This imagined continent has its origins in “Ptolemy’s *Cosmographica*, where the Indian ocean is portrayed as an inland sea with land on all sides” (Bitterli 1989:157). Until the nineteenth century geographers continued to presume, against all physical evidence, that there must be a symmetrical balance between the northern and southern hemispheres in the distribution of landmasses. The resulting encounters with the Pacific islands were interpreted by many Europeans as physical evidence of the Rousseauian Noble Savage, of a forgotten, pure and simple past. The story of the mutineers from Captain Bligh’s (1754-1817) *Bounty*, who attempted to start a new life with Tahitian wives on the island of Pitcairn, also inspired the idea of the isolated island as a site of new beginnings, of an ideal society for the future (Denning 1992:326-8).

The island in the colony was a prison and a necessary separation in order to facilitate the maintenance of the values and structures of the ruling power. The physical control over closed frontiers through the imprisonment of those who attempt to open it, allows

the concept of the frontier to shift into the realm of the ideal. The island of contact in the Pacific, which Europe had no intentions of colonizing, became an ideal and imaginative site through which to criticize the fears of an industrialized nation becoming a prison to the spirit.

The perspective of the inhabitants of the island is denied in representation as they inhabit a realm of future banishment or ideal past. The only island perspective one has access to is the island of familiarity that travels with the European observer and provides a point of entry into a strange landscape. The cartouches that accompany maps of Africa look like emblematic islands filled with “typical” peoples, animals, plants and activities all detached from the main continent that was being divided up by the European nations (fig. 18).

Bunn discusses the difficulty of representing the colonial landscape and the position of the observer in-between two worlds. “The settler landscape cannot afford the Romantic luxury of bathing in the past, in deep history, because the past is the domain of the

Other and history is the history of dispossession” (Bunn 1994:143). He uses an illustration from Le Vaillant’s *Travels into the interior parts of Africa* (1790) as an example of how the strange landscape is constructed through degrees of familiarity that includes both picturesque and ethnographic categories (fig. 19). “There is, however, a third grammar operating here, which helps to naturalize the presence of the figure in the foreign landscape, for on closer inspection it is clear that Le Vaillant imagines himself in a parkland environment, pursuing the leisured, aristocratic practice of hunting” (Bunn 1994:131). The foreground becomes a safe island of the familiar that makes the land accessible but allows the viewer to remain at a distance and in command of the narrative and its surveillance.

The complexity of the ambiguous relationship between the traveller and the Cape landscape has been further explored by Godby in an essay that discusses Thomas Bowler’s Cape landscapes. He discusses how Bowler’s approach to representing the Cape shifts over his 35 year stay from the picturesque to the sublime, from communicating facts to feelings as he begins to

identify the Cape as his home (Godby 1991).

## THE SHORELINE

The different images of the Cape that emerged from the traveller and the settler, from an insider to an outsider can be discussed from the perspective of the shoreline. Images that have remained from the Cape in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century are mainly printed reproductions of sketches or watercolours made by visitors to the Cape, temporary employees and military personnel. At the same time images of the Cape from the perspective of sea, as just an outpost with one fort from the previous century, were still being re-used as illustrations.

To view the Cape looking inland from the shoreline was to view the potential of a growing urban centre. The perspective of the shoreline was a gateway to the unknown continent. “The Cape of Good Hope was one of the few places in Africa where Northern Europeans had access to the continental interior .... It was a place where interior colonization broke into open conflict with sea-

orientated mercantilism, where competition among European nations was played out as warfare” (Pratt 1992:40). To look out from the shore to the open sea must have been a reminder to the traveller of a dangerous journey and a home far-away. To a settler, the sea must have presented the threat of invasion but also the dependence on ships for trade. Until a harbour was built in the nineteenth century, Table Bay remained a vulnerable place for ships to moor in.

A painting attributed to Leeuwenberg depicts the wreck of a Dutch ship in 1740 (fig.20). This dramatic scene is viewed from the beach as if it was already a painting or a dramatic theatre production. The fashionably dressed figures look like both props and recreational beach-goers. The wreck of de Jonge Thomas in Table Bay in 1773 has been reproduced many times due to the heroic story of Wolraad Woltemade. One example from the perspective of the shore shows drowned figures draped on the rocks and survivors holding their arms up high in praise, as Wolraad rides out from toppling ship (fig.21). A bolt of lightning reaches down from the dark sky and strikes directly at the town.

An anonymous watercolour depicts the beach covered in wreckage after a storm in 1822 (fig.22). The view out to sea was a view in which observed weather conditions and historical events could merge into heroic scenes and dramatic narrative.

In many of the views looking inwards there is less drama and more surveillance. Human presence or activities are theatrical but remain leisurely and distanced. *A view of Cape Town from the Parade Ground* (1762) is a work after the artist Johannes Rach who visited the Cape on his way to Batavia (fig.23). One’s eye is led into the town and along what came to be called the Gentleman’s Walk by strolling figures. Moving out of the picture to the left and out of town is an ox wagon which was the only transport link to the interior. Leisure and trade were the occupations of the shoreline.

Strategic visual information about the topography of the Cape would have been prized and protected by the ruling nation. An interesting 360 degree panorama drawing by Josephus Jones (1768-1811) from 1808, just after the British took over the Cape

for the second time, is drawn from the perspective of the roof of an official building on the shoreline (fig.24). Jones was serving in the artillery and was an experienced map-maker and draughtsman. The choice of a heightened perspective allows for a complete view of the horizon and a disengagement from human activities. The mountain on the horizon becomes more of a topographical feature to be circumnavigated than a threatening limit to the unknown. The interest is in recording the present lie of the land and not to play out past events which are as Bunn writes a “history of dispossession” (Bunn 1994:143).

## THE CASTLE

The Castle at the turn of the century was an administrative space where the British takeover was ceremoniously acted out after the Dutch capitulation. The Castle was the centre of an expanding colony that was meant to be protected by the forts that marked the boundary of the town. The fortification of the beaches against British attack had, in a way, been sabotaged by the Cape military officers; officers such as Colonel R. J. Gordon (1743-1795), who

believed that the British were landing in aid of restoring the Prince of Orange to the throne of Holland (Cullinan 1992:175-6). In three panoramas of Cape Town dated 1777 by Johannes Schumacher, who accompanied Gordon on some of his inland travels, the Castle is given a central position (fig.25-7). The Castle becomes a symbol of recognized authority around which the eye can orientate its viewing of an expanding urban centre. The exaggerated VOC flag indicates the nation of authority at the Cape. At this time the Castle was under threat from land and sea.

During the first British occupation the Castle lost its power as a symbol of defence and its Dutch identity became relegated to history. The moat which had never been much use as a defence became “a convenient dump” (Hall *et al.* 1990:33). A water-colour panorama by Lady Anne Barnard (1797) was taken from the perspective of the ramparts of the Castle. She and her husband, Andrew Barnard who was the appointed Colonial secretary, were offered the old Governor’s apartment in the Castle until they found their own accommodation (fig.28). In the picture a group of figures lounge in the sun while a pair of soldiers lean on the wall

viewing the Cape scene below. The ramparts are a site of leisurely surveillance. The gallows on the parade remain as a reminder of the Castle's function and history as the centre of violent punishment and control over the colonies' inhabitants. In her journal Barnard describes the gallows as a place where the Dutch laws of execution and torture are still carried out but only applying now to the "Natives" and "Slaves" (Barnard 1797:157). The Castle also still guarded the only road into the interior with a toll gate and therefore all goods going in and out were controlled.

The position and perspectives of the ship, island, shoreline and castle in representations at the turn of the eighteenth century imply a new gaze of surveillance that was linked to military and scientific interest in defining and therefore controlling unstable frontiers of the interior. They reveal the co-existence of romantic, dramatic and exotic expectations of the Cape and the need and desire for a distanced map that could facilitate a safe journey and control over the interior. The Cape was still a representation of fear and desire, a Cape of Storms and a Cape of Good Hope.

Representations of the Cape, as they found their way to Europe, were translated by engravers, lithographers and panorama painters to create a hierarchy of familiar to strange, differentiated by borders not frontiers of exchange. The concept of the frontier was entertained as the challenging of the individual's limits of vision through the simulation of the panorama or through physical travel, but it was a frontier of theatre that denied the perspective of those performing the drama. Through the representation and circulation of printed information, the distance between Europeans and the Cape became fixed as a horizon that could not look back: "only the first group enjoys the linked privileges of possession and circulation represented by the travel narrative. These mobile picturesque viewers are contrasted with a notion of the landscape as fixed, circumscribed and unable to grasp the larger entity which is the imperial project" (Farlam 1995:52). This self-reflexive observation of the world placed the educated European observer at its centre, even if it meant turning the world inside out. A quite literal example of this is James Wyld's (1812-87) *Great Globe* erected in London between 1851 and 1862 (fig.29) in which the viewer stands quite literally in the centre of a constructed globe

(Oettermann 1997:90).

The counteractive gaze from the perimeter/periphery that speaks of imprisonment not liberation is illustrated by Jeremy Bentham's (1748-1832) design for a new prison called the *panopticon* (fig.30). The panopticon took the democratic principles of the panorama as a public form of exhibition for large groups of people to view a painting from the correct perspective on a curved surface and applied them to a disciplinary project. The outer wall was designed to be made up of single cells with a central viewing tower. The cells were backlit to remain visible while the central tower was darkened. The occupants of the cells would always be visible from the centre but would not know if they were being watched or not. "The Panopticon is a marvellous machine which, whatever use one may wish to put it to, produces homogenous effects of power. A real subjection is born mechanically from a fictitious relation. So it is not necessary to use force to constrain the convict to good behaviour, the madman to calm, the worker to work, the schoolboy to application" (Foucault 1979:202). From the example of the panopticon and panorama one can see how

completely pervasive representation and the control over visibility from a distance becomes in the politics of power. The representational systems of controlling a colonial periphery pervades the very structure of society at the European centre.

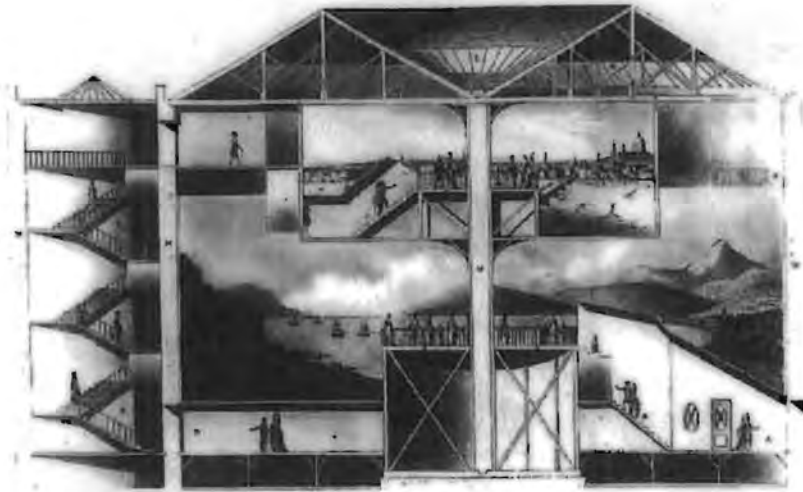


fig. 14. Cross section of Robert Barker's two-level panorama rotunda in Leicester Square, ca 1798. (Oettermann 1997:104)



fig. 15. Hodges, W. 1772. *View of the Cape of Good Hope, taken on the spot, from on board the Resolution*, oil on canvas, 96.5 x 125.7 cm. National Maritime Museum London. (Smith 1992:120)

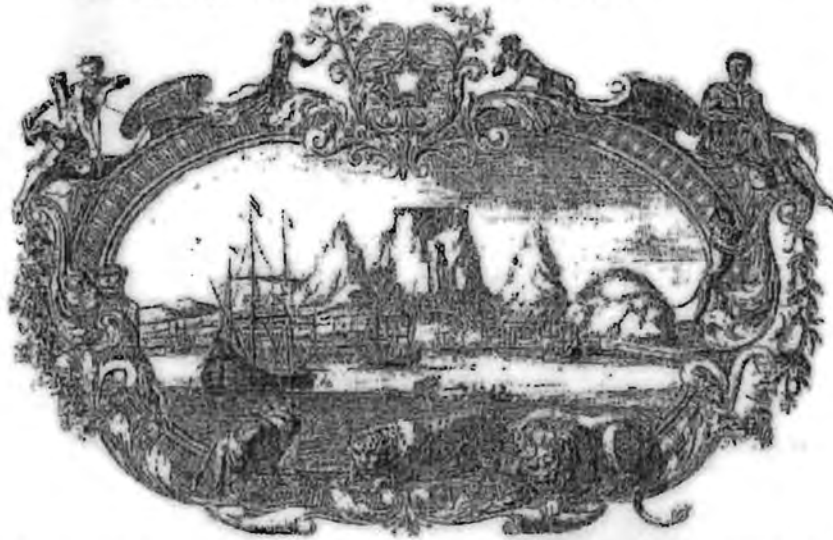


fig. 16. Leth, H. (1662-1731) and Hendrick (1692-1759) Cartouche inset of *Map of southern oceans*. 1730. Map 57x94cm. (Norwich 1993:62-3)

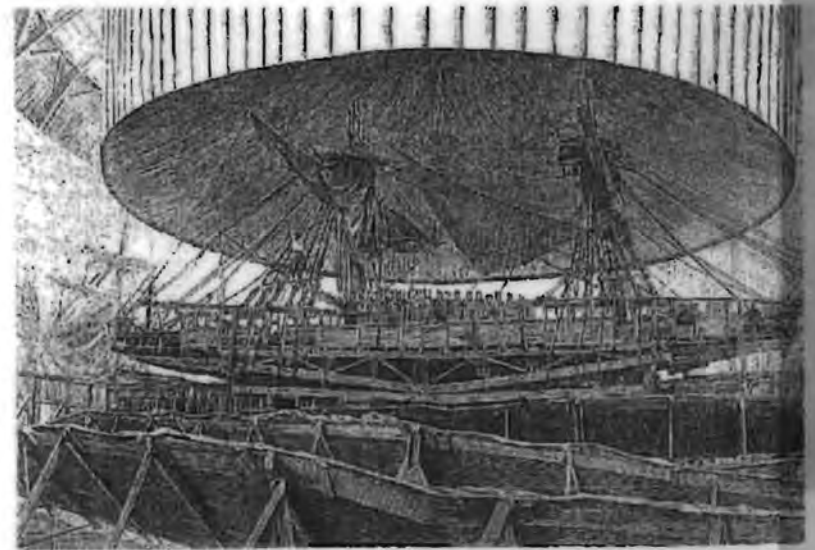


fig. 17. The platform of the panorama *Le Vengeur*. 1892. (Oettermann 1997:176)



fig.18. Price, C. (1680-1720). *Africa corrected from observations of Mess. of ye Royal Societies at London and Paris. 1721.* map, 56x95cm. (Norwich 1983:132)



fig.19. *Encampment in the great Namaqua country. 1790.* In Francois Le Vaillant's *Travels into the interior parts of Africa*, London, 1790. (Bunn 1994:130).



fig.20. Leeuwenberg, J. (attributed) *Wreck of the Dutch ship in Table Bay in 1740.* (Gordon-Brown 1975:134-5)



fig.21. Ozanne, N. 1800. *Wreck of De Jonge Thomas in 1773 and Wolraad Woltemade's Rescue.* (South African Library)



fig.22. Anonymous. *The Great Storm in Table Bay, 1822*. from a contemporary watercolour. (Gordon-Brown 1975:118-119)

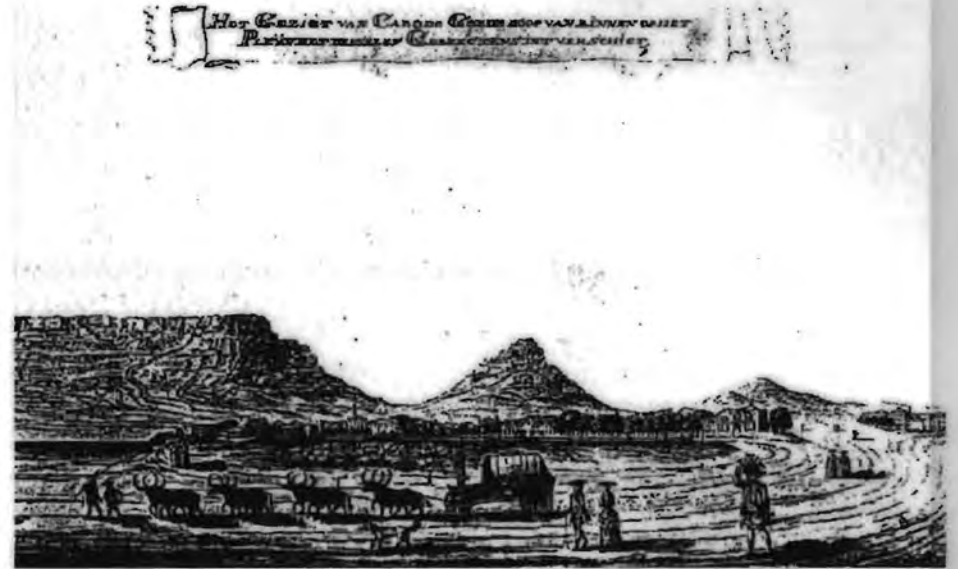


fig.23. *View of Cape Town from the Parade Ground in August 1762*. After Rach, J. (1720-1783). Collection of koninklijk Bataviaasch Genootschap.(South African Library: Special Collections )



fig.24. Jones, J. c. 1808. *Panorama of Cape Town*. Rembandt Art Foundation, Stellenbosch. (The Buildings of Central Cape Town, Cape Provincial Institute of Architects. 1978)

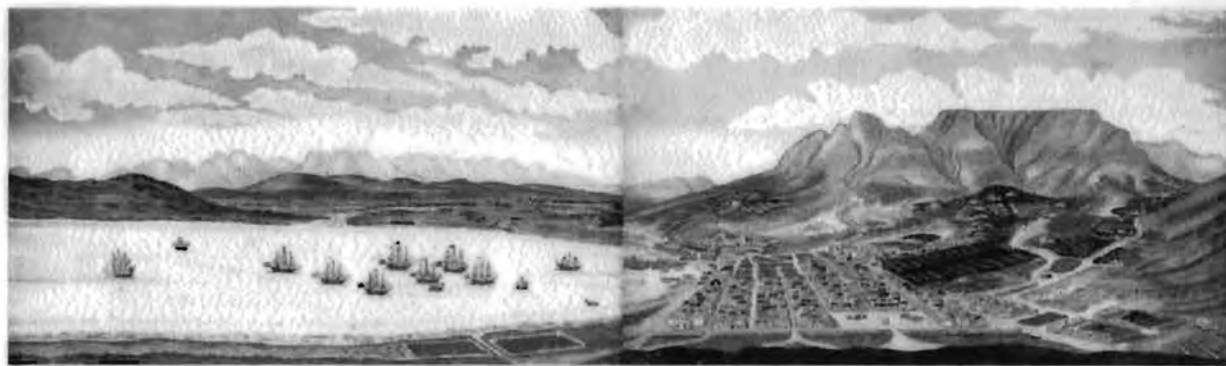


fig.25. Schumacher, J. *View of Cape Town from Signal Hill*. 1776-1777. watercolour. (Hallema 1951)

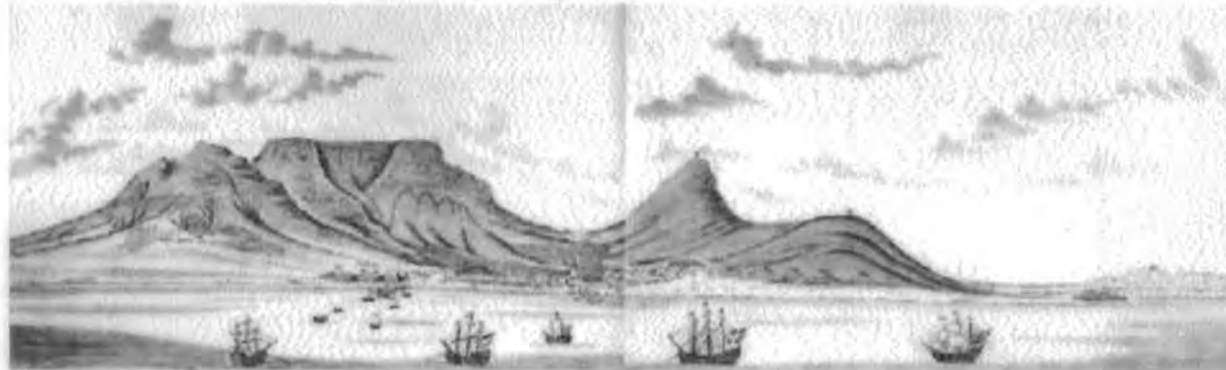


fig.26. Schumacher, J. *View of Cape Town and Table Mountain from the sea*. 1776-1777. watercolour. (Hallema 1951)

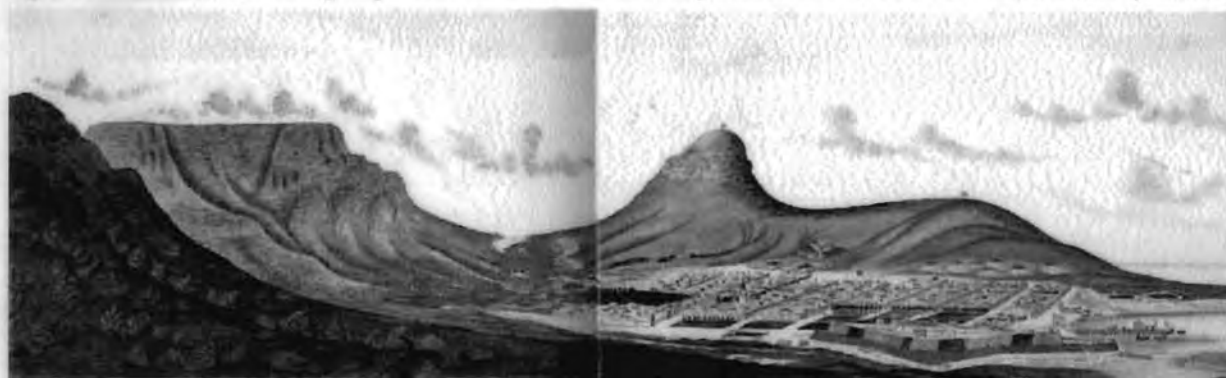


fig.27. Schumacher, J. *View of Cape Town from the east*. 1776-1777. watercolour. (Hallema 1951)



fig.28. Barnard, A. *Part of a watercolour panorama of Cape Town from the Castle.* (Gordon-Brown 1975:121)

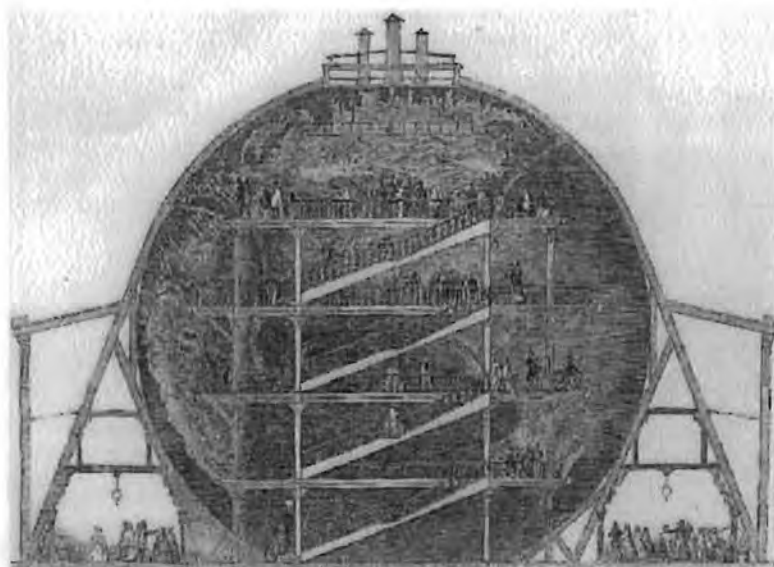


fig.29. *The great globe, cross section.* (Oettermann 1997:91)

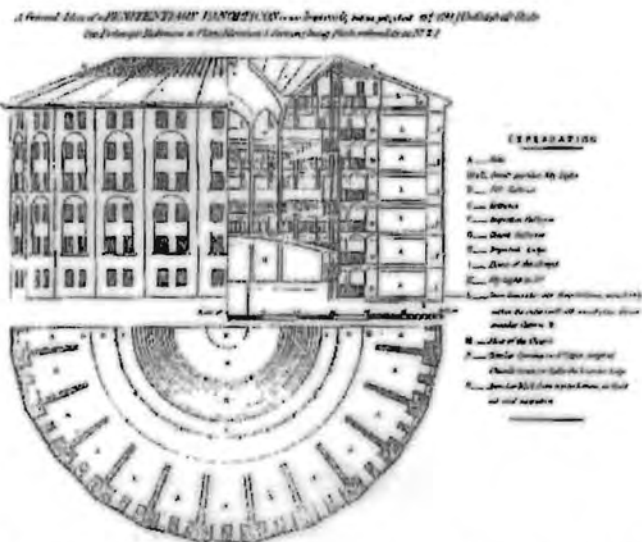


fig.30. *Sketch of ground plan and cross section of Bentham's Panopticon, 1791.* (Oettermann 1997:42)

In his speech, "I am an African," Mbeki wrote: "I owe my being to the Koi and the San whose desolate souls haunt the great expanses of the beautiful Cape – they who fell victim to the most merciless genocide our native land has ever seen. I am formed of the migrants who left Europe to find a new home on our native land. Whatever their own actions, they remain, still, part of me. In my veins course the blood of Malay slaves who came from the East. I am the grandchild of the warrior men and women that Hintsa and Sekhukhune led, the patriots that Cetshwayo and Mphaphu took to battle, the soldiers Moshoeshe and Ngungunyane taught never to dishonour the cause of freedom. I am the grandchild who lays fresh flowers on the Boer graves at St Helena and the Bahamas, who sees in the mind's eye and suffers the suffering of a simple peasant folk, death in concentration camps, destroyed homesteads, a dream in ruins." (Smith 1997:2)

*Brawl mars African show*

The drunken busker had an accomplice, a faux revolutionary who seemed to feel that he had a right to question the Africanness of Alvim. During Alvim's speech, translated from the softly-spoken Portuguese by Albie Sachs in a manner reminiscent of the testimony at the truth commission, there was more senseless jibing from the drunkards. Alvim's speech outlined the sufferings of Angolans during the war – one million dead, 200 000 amputees, 97% of people materially affected .... In another room, a primitive wheelchair with mighty wings outspread sits brooding over some lost paradise. It is a visual echo to the end of Alvim's speech, where he expresses the hope that the senseless violence of a meaningless war will never be repeated. Moments later, Alvim is rolling on the floor, exchanging blows with one of the buskers, who turns out to be the mildly notorious Cape artist Tyrone Appolis ... jibes and insults are exchanged. Appolis tells Alvim, mysteriously, to: "Go back to Europe." (Roper 1997:1)

## THE MOTHER CITY: LOST HORIZONS AND THE END OF THE FRONTIER

The political frontier of violent struggle against apartheid is closing. The role of heritage and representation in South Africa, however, remains contested. The above quotations reveal some of the complex problems involved in the negotiation of identities from the inherited remains of colonial and apartheid frontiers.

Mbeki's speech acknowledges a shared history as he identifies

himself with each cultural group. This shared history, however, is a construction of the present. "The only world we can change is that of the present of which we are a part. That world has been encompassed by Native and Stranger alike. That world encompassed, the ways in which Native and Stranger possessed and possess one another is the object of our mutual and our separate histories" (Denning 1992:178-9). The desire to create

symbolic narratives that will unite different cultures in the name of “Nation-building” is still haunted by the ghosts of apartheid nationalism and an imperial past that calls for remembrance, retribution and reclamation. Underlying Mbeki’s democratic approach to inheritance, the importance of inverting inherited symbols of oppression can be read. The Khoikhoi, San and Afrikaner are described as victims, the Europeans “whatever their own actions” still need forgiveness and Hintsa, Sekhukhune, Cetshwayo, Mphephu, Moshoeshe and Ngungunyane are named as individual warriors and freedom fighters. Native and Stranger are still distinguishable in the restructuring of power relations for the construction of a new history.

The report by Roper describes a fight between Cape artist Tyrone Appollis and Fernando Alvim at the opening of the *Memorias, Intimicus, Marcus* exhibition (1997) in the Castle. Three artists, Younge, Garaicoa and Alvim, brought their interpretation of the landscape and memory of the Angolan war into the Castle through a series of installation works. The work began with a visit by the artists to Cuito Cuanavale where Angolan, Cuban and South

African armies clashed in 1987. This incident between Alvim and Appollis reveals the xenophobia that results from an inheritance and experience of a history of violent dispossession. It is a history in which the pre-colonial opposition between Native and Stranger has been used to deny and affirm the violence of possession and dispossession on the frontier. Early colonial representations and records naturalized the Stranger’s presence in the Cape landscape by recalling a pre-contact opposition between Native and Stranger and by creating a chronology from primitive to civilized. During the struggle against apartheid the pre-colonial white Stranger from Europe was recalled to contest the right to power of a white minority government. This reveals the importance of repossessing temporal symbols as well as physical territory in the attempt to rectify past inequalities. Alvim warns against forgetting the violence of the past so that the violence will never be repeated. For Appollis the violence of the past is still very present and calls for a complete denial of a shared history. It is interesting how Appollis recognizes the Castle, a monument to the first presence of Europe in the Cape landscape, as a place worth defending from “foreigners”.

The above describes a tension at a moment of contraction, towards closure, of the political frontier of apartheid that calls for a unified cultural identity and the opening of the frontier of the archive which calls for each individual to confront and reconstruct their own past for the present. When I use the term archive I am referring to the material remains of the past that form a chaotic but self-contained collection of image, text and artifact. The archive in South Africa has shifted from a tool of power, possession and separation to an accessible source for contesting, inverting and transforming symbols from the past. This has brought Fine Art and Museum practices into a close dialogue in a critique of how museums represent the past in their displays. Patricia Davison writes, "Every preserved artefact is a tangible trace, a crystallized memory, of its manufacture and use, but at the same time attests to conceptual and spatial displacements resulting from acts of acquisition, classification and conservation .... Museums have often been described as places of collective memory, but selective memory may be a more accurate description" (1998:146).

Recognizing this selectivity places great emphasis on the question:

what should be preserved from the past and present and what should be shifted into the background? All museum displays bear the marks of apartheid and colonial ideologies and need to be re-worked. The drafting of the White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage in June 1996, made it official that state funds would be redistributed to include previously excluded local and traditional cultures. In this way the emphasis has shifted from mainstream institutions to the creation of living cultures in the present (Klopper 1996). There is however still an importance in remembering how the archive and museum functioned in the repression, dispossession and violence of the past.

What has emerged in the study of archival material and museum collections is a self-consciousness of process, of transparency in the making of history in the present. This approach is in keeping with Greenblatt's new historicism. "The idea is not to find outside the work of art some rock onto which interpretation can be securely chained but rather to situate the work in relation to other representational practices operative in the culture at a given moment in both its history and our own. And we can begin to

understand something of the dialectical nature of these relations” (Greenblatt 1991:43).

In Farlam’s dissertation (1995) she looks at the William Fehr Collection when it was first displayed in the Castle for the Jan van Riebeeck Tercentenary in 1952 and how meaning was constructed through particular definitions of space. She argues that, “one of the ways in which imperial narratives can be opened up or refigured is by moving away from a conception of space as an abstract and passive arena on which things happen” (Farlam 1995:48). By reactivating the space in and around the collection in its relation to power and identity she approaches the collection by looking at what has been left out of the individual representations and the collection as a whole.

The need to reconstruct a history from lost perspectives places representation, as the imaginative manipulation of existing material culture, in a powerful position. In a discussion of the Bleek and Lloyd interviews with the /Xam, Hall also affirms the inequalities and selectivity of historical narratives. He highlights lost

perspectives by creating imaginative encounters between //Kabbo (a San prisoner) and W. H. I. Bleek (a German linguist who was his student in the /Xam language) which reveal how objects and images resist containment within a dominant historical narratives due to their, “elusive quality – a polyvalency of meaning which allows them to carry different meanings for different people at the same time” (Hall 1998:182).

To continue my spatial analogy the horizon is no longer a fixed line of reference but rather a parallax which recognizes that the line of the horizon shifts according to the relative difference of the viewers’ position. Bhabha uses the term parallax to criticize the Western museums’ claim to creating parallel histories. “The globe shrinks for those who own it; for the displaced or the dispossessed, the migrant or refugee, no distance is more awesome than the few feet across borders or frontiers. The parallelism of the modern museum, in its internationalist mode, turns on an axis of ‘equal distance/equal difference,’ but the history of culture has been neither so equitable nor so ecumenical” (Bhabha 1992:321).

Identity has, perhaps, become the new frontier. Although the complexities of identity construction are beyond the scope of my study, I am interested in how the intersection of the archive and historical space in contemporary representation functions in placing identity on the frontier. For this discussion I will look mainly at how installations have manipulated the archive in the historically charged space of the Castle. The Castle is a historically charged space as it retains a residue of all that has taken place there unlike a neutral space built to function as a gallery. Therefore the space of the Castle have no fixed function or identity. In this context the artwork functions in destabilizing the once centralized control over the space of the Cape and its representation. The spatial and temporal co-ordinates of orientation around which identity can be constructed become fragmented through the manipulation of measurable and qualitative distances in the form of installation works. Fixed distances and safe perspectives can no longer be constructed between the ship, island, shoreline and castle. The nature of the installation as a real and simulated environment creates a space through which the viewer can move and become involved in the process of manipulating these

distances. The ship, island and shoreline as contested symbolic spaces of the past converge and conflict within the walls of the Castle as the artworks reclaim and reconstruct different co-ordinates of identity. Through the interaction between the artwork, the space and the viewer the Castle has become an unstable site of resistance against fixed identity. The real spaces of the ship, island and shoreline, however, have become museums and sites of cultural exchange with the rest of the world. Looking at the relationship between the real and symbolic spaces of the ship, island and shoreline as a way of creating a framework of distances from which to approach representations of the past collapses at a time when heritage is still a contested issue. This is further complicated by the fact that South African “heritage” has become a popular form of currency as South Africa returns to the global map and market.

#### THE SHIP, ISLAND AND SHORELINE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CASTLE

The function of the Castle in representations of the Cape, from

early engravings to the panoramic views of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, as both the ceremonial site of changing control and a symbol of military resistance, is evident in its present multiple function as military base, museum, tourist site and gallery for contemporary art exhibitions. Due to political and social inequalities of the past, national monuments are not symbols of a unified public space, rather they become spaces of exclusion. Since 1994 group exhibitions at the Castle have contributed to the idea that social space is produced and structured by conflict, separation and exclusion (Deutsche 1996:xiii).

The first installation work at the Castle that re-opened the frontier of the archive was curated by architect Hilton Judin, entitled *Setting apart* (17 April -16 June 1995). The exhibition confronted the language of space and power through the selection of archival documents that revealed the bureaucratic workings of urban segregation. The apparently arbitrary selection of documents was enclosed and hung within glass panels. “The main ‘talking back’ in the installation came from video sound where elderly black people spoke of the consequences of removal on individual and

community life, on social trust, on consequent activism” (de Kok 1998:67). The situation of the exhibition in the Castle, the first bureaucratic building of colonial manipulation of the space and lives of people at the Cape, gives a real spatial dimension to the act of exposing the language of segregation from within. The interconnectedness of space and language is emphasised. “The documents testified to the way the segregation of space determined not only the unequal distribution of land and resources, but the development of a hermetic set of narratives and a rigidly closed civic language in South Africa” (de Kok 1998:68). This language, which started with the first projection of colonial town planning on the landscape, has become so entrenched that it , “still determines the way we define ourselves now in space and time” (de Kok 1998:70).

The next group show opened in July 1995 and was entitled *Scurvy*. In association with the William Fehr Collection the self-styled group, the *Secret Seven* (Barker, Brand, de Wet, Putter, Gottgens, Brice & Murray) created site specific works that attacked this familiar archetypal symbol of colonial presence in the Cape

landscape from within its ramparts (Dubow 1995:1). Attack is an appropriate word for a space that fights back with echoes from walls that are layered with the residue of so much human activity. What makes the site-specific works at the Castle so interesting for me is precisely this engagement between the work and the place of the Castle that becomes part of this process of layering. Some works are drowned by the echo while others make their mark as another layer in the archive of residues. The space of the Castle places a greater significance on the viewer in the production of meaning as the historical space is far from neutral and means a completely different experience for different people. Judin's installation had set the stage for the Castle to become a site of deconstructing colonial and apartheid ideologies on both a political and personal level. This process of layering and reciprocal dialogue between the work, space and viewer results in a multitude of references and shifting perspectives and creates a constant cross-over of looking in and out, looking back and forwards.

In Brice's work for *Scurvy*, she takes the metaphor of the castle and extends it to every suburban home (fig.31). *Your home is your*

*castle* creates a domestic scene of vinyl, "embroidered cushions with flying squad telephone numbers, burglar bars that spell, depending on whether you are inside or out, "Relax" or "Voetsak" (Dubow 1995:1). The suburban angst in the need to protect one's private property in the context of the Castle raises interesting tensions between public and private spaces and the loss of centralised symbols of safety and security.

Brand's work entitled *Here XVII* for the *Scurvy* exhibition, refers to the centralized colonial administration of the Dutch East India Company (fig.32). Seventeen cast papier mâché figures of a boy with up-reaching arm, lie as if discarded on the stone floor of a cellar room. Due to their moulded appearance they looked as if they had been thrown away before they could be processed or transformed into something else. The replication of the figure emphasised for me how cultural symbols become fixed if they are destroyed or relegated to a closed archive. These figures seemed to anticipate an important archaeological find in the future. Robins writes, " It remains to be seen whether South Africa's contested past will be remembered in a form that does not privilege particular

historical experiences, collective memories, and nationalisms, and elide others. It is also unclear whether shattered bodies mutilated by colonialism and apartheid ... will be edited and erased in order to serve the needs of totalizing narratives of resistance, heroism and nationalism” (Robins 1998:139,40). In these two works the home becomes the monument as the monument becomes a cultural frontier where past and present converge and conflict.

In Brand’s other work for the *Scurvy* exhibition entitled *Vessel* (1995) the “ship” floats in the “sea” around the “island” of the Castle. The “ship”, however, is not a safe perspective from which to view the Cape, but a broken or wrecked container (fig.33). The work took the form of a giant jug constructed out of wire and covered with plastic bags that floated in the moat at a dangerous angle. The Cape could no longer be positioned as the Cape of Good Hope or the Cape of Storms. This work positioned the Cape in-between a sinking wreck and a salvaged vessel. The safe perspective of the Castle was also denied in this work as it refers to the use of the moat as a dumping ground by the British. The power of this site specific installation was at once explosive and

subtle. Its large scale, simple form and public placement invaded the viewer’s visual field and disrupted any familiar view of the Castle. The choice of site, however, adds all the complexity of the layers of historical residue and references through which the viewer could dig and sift the paradox of the familiar and the strange.

the boat is a floating piece of space, a place without a place, that exists by itself, that is closed in on itself and at the same time is given over to the infinity of the sea and that, from port to port, from tack to tack, from brothel to brothel, it goes as far as the colonies in search of the most precious treasures they conceal in their gardens, you will understand why the boat has not only been for our civilisation, from the sixteenth century until the present, the great instrument of economic development ... but has been simultaneously the greatest reserve of the imagination. (Foucault 1986:272)

The ship as a space of imaginative engagement between the strange and the familiar as it moves from the Cape to Europe is evident in the recent elevation of some South African art to a popular form of cultural currency. The lifting of sanctions on trade

with South Africa gives a contemporary relevance to the definition of the ship as the reserve of the imagination, as a container of expectations and representations of encounters with a strange new world. Cultural exchanges and interest in the Cape go hand-in-hand with economic exchange and tourism. A quite literal example of this can be found in the *Art across oceans* exhibition in Copenhagen (1996) (fig.34). Ninety-six commercial containers were stacked into levels and connected by interlinking walk-ways. Mandindi and Younge collaborated to represent the port of Cape Town entitled *Umkreli/House*. “While Mandindi annexed the space of dreams by painting four images of fantastical habitations, Younge chose, through the abrasive connotations of the word *umkreli*, to deal with ‘a tension in his status as landowner’. The difference in focus and intent between the works of the two artists is intrusive in its clarity. The dispossessed envisions the citadel-luxury and power incarnate. The landowner addresses a threat at the heart of power-theft and burglary” (Williamson & Jamal 1996:142).

Fear and desire still motivate visions of the unknown. The politics

of possession and dispossession, however, have now boarded ship. The unknown is both inside and outside the container. Younge and Mandindi share the space of the container as they share a history of Cape Town, but it is a history of difference. Each container intervenes in the construction of this cultural map of inter-continental exchange. Although the physical distance between the contents of the container and the Cape are the same, the mental distance between Europe and the Cape has a different qualitative significance to Younge and Mandindi. The proximity of this parallax disrupts the expectations of a unified South African identity.

The apparent tension between the need to acknowledge individual testimonies of the past and the need to assemble a collective memory was explored more overtly in the *Fault lines – inquiries into truth and reconciliation* exhibition at the Castle (1996). Thirteen artists took part in the exhibition curated by lecturer in English at UWC, Jane Taylor. Most of the works took the form of installations and created a diverse range of responses to the theme of exploring the relationship between history, memory and

representation (Dubow 1996:1). Again the Castle as a historical space adds resonance to the works. Brand's work entitled *Pieta* (1996) worked optically to dissolve the stone walls of Leerdam Bastian (fig.35.). He took Sam Nzima's photograph of Hector Peterson who was killed in the Soweto uprising in June 1976 and recreated it on a vast scale out of small pieces of black, grey and white duck tape. This pixelled approach echoed the quality of a newspaper reproduction that took this image all around the world and turned it into an icon in the struggle against apartheid. The nature of its construction also made it dependent on the distance between the wall and the viewer for cognition. From a distance the image denied the wall of the Castle as a bastion of defense. As one approached the image dissolved into the stones of the wall. Visually the wall appeared to shift and become penetrated by the image: the symbolic meaning of the Castle was in the process of changing.

The Castle as an island moved inland was quite literally played out in van den Berg's contribution to the *Fault lines* exhibition (fig.36). In *Men loving* (1996) van den Berg gives voice to a

silenced victim of persecution, the gay lover, by re-constructing an archival record of two prisoners on Robben Island who were sentenced to death for sodomy. The texts that accompany the title reads, "In 1735, two men were taken into the Bay off Cape Town when the ship was near Robben Island. They were made to 'walk the plank' while chained together. They had loved each other" A gap follows and then: "on Friday May 8 we adopted a constitution which forbids discrimination on the basis of sexual preference. Perhaps now loving will be easier." (Williamson & Jamal 1996:52)

The story of the doomed relationship between Rijkhaart Jacobsz and Claas Blank, both prisoners on Robben Island, was excavated and layed to an uncomfortable rest in a room in the Castle. The room was filled by a grass slope on which the heads of the two lovers, their grave marked out for the rest of their bodies as a bed burnt into the grass. A ship and a suitcase made out of paper and wood sat precariously on the slope. A pile of rocks appeared to have spilled from the case. Hanging in the doorway was a small engraving on perspex of two figures sinking to a watery grave.

The island of physical exile was brought to the constructed island of colonial and military power. This spatial inversion created a tension between apparently fixed or opposing perspectives. This movement of the island inland and indoors created a site where the private and public, the social and political, sexual and racial distances could merge and conflict.

In 1997 an exhibition on Robben Island confronted the tension between quantitative and qualitative distances. The exhibition was entitled *Thirty minutes* and was curated by the participating artists. Each created specific works for the cubicles in the prison visitors' room which is situated outside the main prison. The installations opened up the frontier of censored communication/isolation by exploring, challenging and inverting the apparently opposing perspectives of inside and outside, past and present, public and private.

With the exception of this exhibition, which interrupted the construction of unified cultural symbols, Robben Island has become a national symbol of hope and victory over adversity.

Deacon has made an interesting comparison between the asylum reforms on the island in the nineteenth century and the present transformation of the island into a museum commemorating the victory over apartheid. "These moments of redefinition both occurred at a time when a new government sought to emphasise its moral modernity, specifically to an international audience, and to construct a new source of national pride. The first moment was during the mid-nineteenth century when a rising Cape Town middle class wished to earn self-rule over Britain. The second was during the recent transition to democracy" (Deacon 1998:173). This is exemplified in the story of Nelson Mandela's journey, from prisoner to president. The importance of the island as a cultural symbol for the future is evident to anyone who joins the current tour of the island as a museum or watches the press for news of all the international dignitaries who make their pilgrimage there. While sitting in the exercise yard of the prison, the guide gives a condensed narrative history of the island dating back to its early inhabitants, the penguins. This history encompasses the concept of the island as both a safe haven and prison for all those who threatened, both socially and politically, the dominant power on

the mainland. The distance between the mainland and island produces a community that can be both creative and destructive in its isolation. The prison was a place of harsh repression, but now it has also become a symbol of learning and political consciousness as the cells became microcosmic universities through which knowledge was shared.

In some of the works in the *Fault lines* exhibitions there was no room for the luxury of hope at the expense of forgetting. The violent politics that took place on the shore of first contact between Native and Stranger, that formed the image of the savage Khoikoi, resurfaced for me when I was confronted with Langa's installation, *Untitled* (1996) for the *Fault lines* exhibition (fig.37). The hanging strips of brown paper dripping with syrup, condensed milk and antiseptic fluids, made it necessary to keep to cardboard walkways so as not to soil one's shoes. The sensory impact of this work, for me, was revulsion: a revulsion in an attempt to identify the cocktail of strange and familiar smells, of incomprehension at such crudeness. Later I was reminded of all the numerous early prints I had seen depicting Khoikhoi eating entrails on the beach.

The violence of the frontier is represented in its most visceral form as a confrontation with the strange.

The shoreline that was the violent site of first contact has shifted over time as frontiers opened and closed. In the 1950s and 60s this shift was most pronounced as the sea was reclaimed for the Foreshore development. The city expanded seawards as the city suburbs were reclaimed as a buffer zone between those in possession and those dispossessed. The beach in Cape Town is no longer a beach but two harbours, one for the shipping trade, the other for the tourist trade. The beaches around the peninsula are visited for their natural beauty not their history. They are promoted as commercial assets for the tourism industry not as sites of remembrance. Under the Nationalist government the beach became an open frontier briefly when the Reverend Alan Hendrickse, then a cabinet minister of the Tricameral Parliament, chose to take a protest swim at a "white's only" beach in Port Elizabeth in 1987. The recent history of separate beaches is now becoming part of an unpopular past.

Another work on the *Fault Lines* show which seems to violently repossess the politics of first contact on the beach is Hartzenberg's *Salt Theatre* (1996) (fig.38). The beach is repossessed as if the sea has dried up and left only salt. As you walked across the courtyard towards B-Block where the main exhibition was situated you passed a row of old wardrobes lurching with the weight of the huge bags of salt. Inside in the cellar more bags of salt formed a barricade. Behind this a glass door with a letter slot at the bottom hung in the centre from a pulley system attached to the ceiling with two leather suitcases on either side. More salt bags filled a corner while a monitor screened a video of the shoreline where sea and land meet. In an accompanying performance he broke bread on the back of his neck as he knelt before the door, chewed each piece and passed the crumbs through the slot. "The ritual mastication complete, the lumps are pummelled, scraped back and forth across a stone floor, wrapped and returned to the suitcase" (Williamson & Jamal 1996:156). The frontier of the beach provides an entry point to this work. The working of the sea against the shore is enacted as ritual chewing over of the bread. The beach is both a barrier and a threshold. The salt both irritates and preserves the

flesh of an open wound.

Sand moves. It blows in the wind, shifts with every wave and current, compacts or slides under foot. Sometimes it collapses, as when part of a sandy cliff gives way and cascades down toward the waves gnawing its base. Sand is unstable, even when wet and glistening and shaped into a castle, and its lack of permanence, of predictable behaviour, makes novice beachgoers uncomfortable, uneasy. (Stilgoe 1994:73)

As other exhibitions at the Castle have come and gone, the nature of these spaces in the Castle have begun to change for me as a regular visitor. For example when I was looking at the *Memorias*, *Intimicas*, *Marcas* exhibition (1997) each room I entered retained the presence of the previous installations from the *Fault lines* exhibition (1996). The presence of the past actively engaged with the present. It is not a wiping clean of the slate but rather a slow process of engagement between the residues as they are layered one on top of the other. In some cases a comfortable dialogue emerged, in other cases an uncomfortable tension surfaced as one work seemed to resist the presence of the next. For example one of

Alvim's works for the *Memorias* exhibition consisted of exposed bedsprings that contained a model of a heart. The bed stood upright half encased in a crate as if in transit. As I looked at this work I was reminded of Van den Berg's bed burnt into the grass on the island that had occupied the same room nearly a year earlier. An example of a less mutual dialogue was the encounter in my mind between Garaicoa's installation for the *Memorias* exhibition and Payne's installation for the *Fault lines* exhibition (fig.39). For Garaicoa's installation the floor was covered in salt. In the centre a headless equestrian statue stood on a pedestal while slides, depicting different angles of the statue, were projected into a corner of the room. The fragile classical statue was completely shattered by the memory-presence of a part of Payne's installation which had also taken a central position in the room. A stuffed cloth figure was tied to a metal framed chair which had been triggered to crash mechanically backwards and forwards at the end of an accompanying sound track. This was only part of a complex multi-media work interrogating how language functions and dis-functions in the construction of historical narrative and memory. Appropriately it is the violent banging of the chair and the

thrashing of the limp figure that echoed after the work was gone. It was a powerful reminder not to forget and interrupted my experience of Garaicoa's work.

The most recent group art exhibition at the Castle signals for me a changed relationship between the work and the space of the rooms. This relationship was more stable for a viewer who has become familiar with the transformation of the space from rooms of historical intervention to exhibition rooms. The exhibition was curated by artist Terry Kurgan and entitled *Bringing up baby* (15 August - 12 September 1998). The eighteen participants explored different aspects of the reproductive body and maternal/paternal subjectivity. The placement of an exhibition that explored such a fundamental theme in the Castle was quite different to the previous exhibitions I have discussed which were more focused on the political relationship between the public and the private in a specifically South African context. Although Kurgan refers to the abortion hearings in Parliament in October 1996 and the politics of women's rights in South Africa as contributing factor to the birth of the project, the theme resonates beyond the walls of the Castle

(Kurgan 1998:2). I found this exhibition emotionally draining. The subject matter of the exhibition was not mediated, as it had been previously, by its relationship to the walls that contained it. The Castle was no longer an active participant in the production of its meaning. After a personal journey through the spaces and symbols of the ship, island, shoreline and castle this latest show suggests a future for the Castle as a space for representation in which the frontier, as a contested, unstable site of conflict and exchange between the space of the Castle, the archive, the artwork and the viewer, is neither open or closed but ceases to exist as a relevant co-ordinate of reference.

In a historical space such as the Castle there are no clear beginnings, original contexts or fixed identities. This space can be seen as a frontier as long as the relationship between the space, artwork and the viewer remains unstable. Interpretation can only come from the engagement of each viewer as they orientate themselves around the work through a familiarity or strangeness of the context.



fig.31. Brice, L. 1995. *Make your home your Castle*. Installation for *Scurvy* exhibition at the Castle. (Williamson & Jamal 1996:94)



fig.32. Brand, K. 1995. *Here XVII*. Installation for *Scurvy* exhibition at the Castle. (Williamson & Jamal 1996:17)



fig.33. Brand, K. 1995. *Vessel*. Installation for *Scurvy* exhibition at the Castle. (Williamson & Jamal 1996:19)

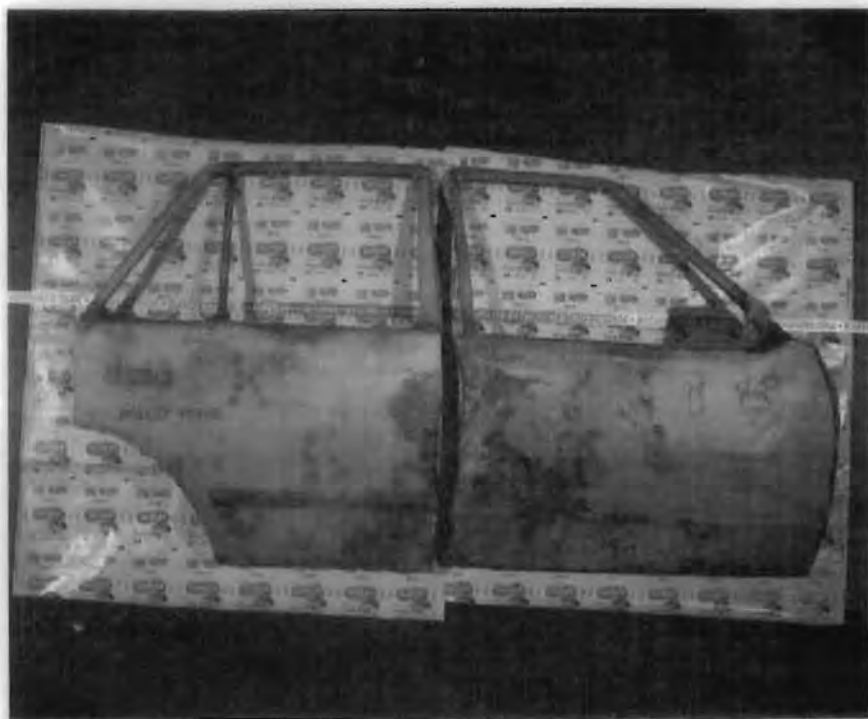


fig.34. Younge, G. and Mandindi, B. 1996. *Umkreli/House*. Installation in a container for the *Art across oceans* exhibition, Copenhagen, Denmark. (Williamson & Jamal 1996:142)



fig.35. Brand, K. 1996. *Pieta*. Installation for *Fault lines* exhibition at the Castle. (Williamson & Jamal 1996:19)



fig.36. van den Berg, C. *Men loving*. 1996. Installation for *Fault lines* exhibition at the Castle. (Williamson & Jamal 1996:53)



fig.37. Langa, M. 1996. *Untitled*. Installation for *Fault lines* exhibition at the Castle. (Williamson & Jamal 1996:91)

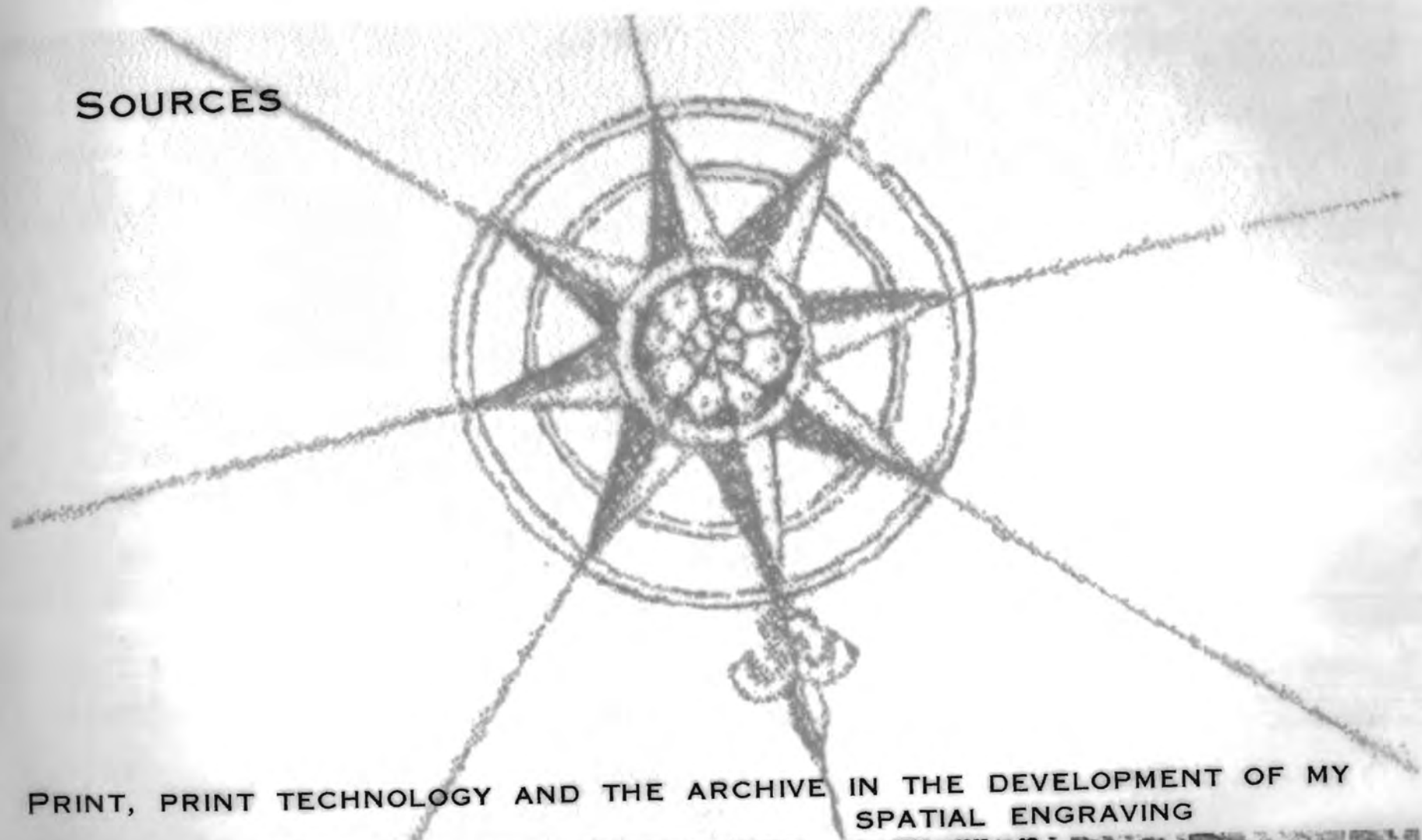


fig.39. Payne, M. 1996. *Title in progress*. Installation for *Fault lines* exhibition at the Castle. (Williamson & Jamal 1996:126)

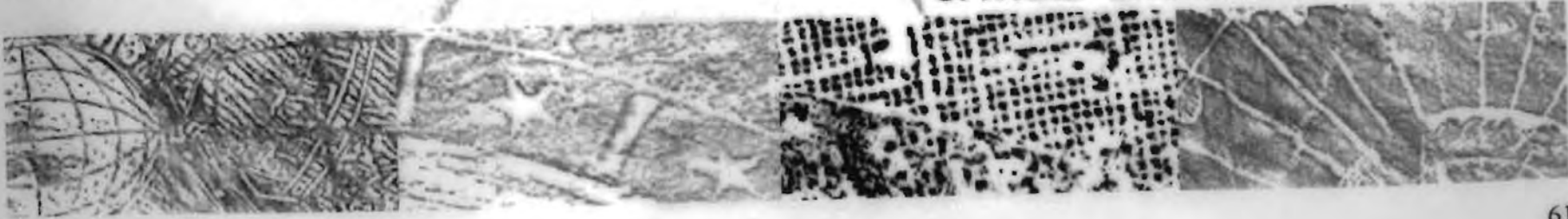


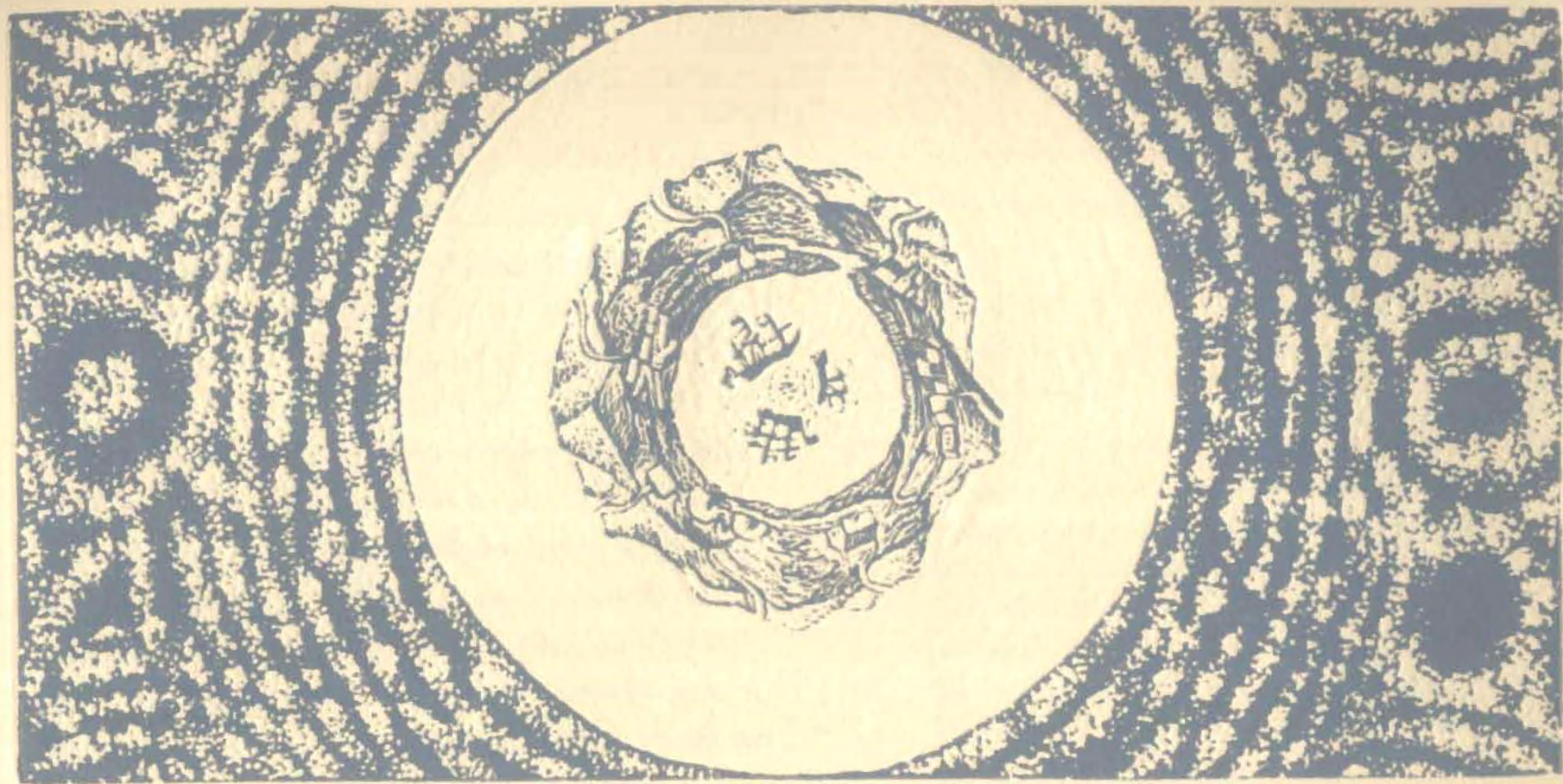
fig.38. Hartzberg, F. 1996. *Salt theatre*. Installation for *Fault lines* exhibition at the Castle. (Williamson & Jamal 1996:157)

# SOURCES



PRINT, PRINT TECHNOLOGY AND THE ARCHIVE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MY SPATIAL ENGRAVING





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## THE FRONTIER OF KNOWLEDGE/KNOWLEDGE OF THE FRONTIER: THE PRINT AS CURRENCY

The references that I have drawn on for my practical work extend beyond looking at representation in relation to frontiers of the Cape. My training as a printmaker roots my work conceptually and technically in the history and technique of printmaking in Europe. My work assimilates and manipulates historical aspects of the print and its function in the dissemination and circulation of knowledge. This facilitates a way of critiquing how the print functioned in representing the frontier of contact between Europe and the Cape and the function of these images in our present contested heritage of the archive. My practical work uses the archive as a material source of information but also repossesses the archive through its formal presence as an installation. The archive is a site where space and time hold an uneasy relationship as the archive contains both the centre and periphery in a powerful and yet unstable relation through its function as a collection of information that has circulated away from any one context. The archive of seemingly chaotic information needs an intervention or re-contextualization

to regain its value as currency.

Greenblatt explores two models for the exhibition of works of art. The one centres on the notion of “resonance”, the other on the experience of “wonder”.

*By resonance* I mean the power of the displayed object to reach out beyond its formal boundaries to a larger world, to evoke in the viewer the complex, dynamic cultural forces from which it has emerged and for which it may be taken by a viewer to stand. *By wonder* I mean the power of the displayed object to stop the viewer in his or her tracks, to convey an arresting sense of uniqueness, to evoke an exalted attention. (1991a:42)

Greenblatt discusses how museum exhibits resonate if the viewer is made aware of or questions how artifacts become displaced, manipulated, broken and set in relation to other objects that create a “sense of the cultural and historically contingent construction of

art objects” (Greenblatt 1991a:45). The experience of wonder is not dialectic but isolated and historically bound to the desire for possession but also, “continually reminds us that our grasp of the world is incomplete” (Greenblatt 1991b:24). He describes how contemporary museums create the desire for the possession of artifacts or works of art but deny it again due to the present view of the artwork as self-possessed. The, “collections of objects calculated to arouse wonder arose precisely in the spirit of personal acquisition and were subsequently displaced from it” (1991a:49).

Resonance calls for a dialogue between objects, words and image; between past and present. I am interested in how the early development of printed information in the fifteenth century functioned to detach knowledge from a given context and circulate this knowledge as a form of currency. In *Mandeville’s Travels* (1346) there is a description of the Great Khan of China’s control over the manufacture, value and distribution of printed paper money. When the money became old it was simply replaced with no loss of value unlike a worn silver or gold coin (Greenblatt

1991b:37). Greenblatt uses this concept of representation as currency as an underlying current in Mandeville’s narrative and its subsequent circulation all around Europe. “For *Mandeville’s Travels* is above all a hymn to mobility, a reverie of free movement in a world that is paradoxically at once materialized and disembodied (1991b:38).

Early prints increased the availability of knowledge as a private material possession. The prints contributed to the concept of the secular individual as they facilitated comparative studies of ideas, objects and different modes of representation distanced from any specific context. Prints were, however, still precious objects of wonder and were pasted on wooden altar panels as objects of devotion.

I am interested in how the opening of the frontier of information intersects with the open frontier of geographical exploration at the Cape. The print as a currency functioned in the negotiation of geographical and ideological distances and therefore provided a medium for the merging of quantitative and qualitative

representations of the unknown and strange.

In the fifteenth century recorded narratives were just as valuable as first hand experience in travel. There was no value distinction between the original and the reproduction. This was linked to a medieval concept of space and time. In medieval European aesthetics quantity (proportion) and quality (light and colour) had co-existed in an ambiguous but mutual relationship (Eco 1986a:46). Space was not fixed or homogenous. “In a symbolical universe, everything is in its proper place because everything answers to everything else. In such a harmonious system, the serpent is homogeneous with the virtue of prudence; and yet the same serpent can symbolize Satan. It was a kind of polyphony of signs and references” (Eco 1986a:56). Temporal change was not conceived as a past distinct from the present. If the past did have to be recognized as different it was displaced spatially as foreign or spiritually as supernatural (Hooper-Greenhill 1992:32).

The way that space and time were conceived and represented began to change as the circulation and volume of printed material

began to increase. As information became disseminated and possessed by a wider public the role of the print in displacing information from its source effected how the environment was experienced. “The process of reproduction has the effect of removing the image from its ‘original’ context, usually reducing its size, and providing it with unforeseen juxtapositions .... The place of discovery is taken up by a search for the anticipated” (Lambert 1987:16). The dissemination of the print created a distinction between past and present. The awareness that objects change over time contributed to a renewed interest in material objects from the past. “Princes, merchants, and scholars began to establish collections that would demonstrate their knowledge of the classical past and, equally, their new wealth” (Hooper-Greenhill 1992:33). The real and represented stood side by side in the early curiosity cabinets of wealthy princes and merchants of Europe.

Curiosity cabinets represented the world through a collection of real and represented objects as a symbolic picture linked to the wealth of a collector not to the scientific categorization of a taxonomy. Greenblatt explains how these early collections came to

symbolize possession, wealth and status not through display but through second hand reports of the wonders they contained (Greenblatt 1991a:50-1). The printed report circulated as a currency, a surrogate for a centrally controlled value. The increasing interest in collecting by the wealthy and the development of printing creates a simultaneous expansion and contraction in the currency of information. In this early period the print could function both as an object of wonderful possession and as a tool for the dissemination of the knowledge of the power of that possession. In spatial terms, this infers an oscillation between a center and its periphery, looking in looking out.

This oscillation is reflected in visual representation through the way that medieval symbolism merged with the development of Renaissance perspective in representing the strange New Worlds that were being explored. Apocalyptic symbolism co-existed with the archaeology of a classical past. The print could act in mediating between the qualitative and quantitative as it merged popular imagery with academic studies. For example Albrecht Dürer's *Apocalypse* series (1496-98). One image which I have used as a

visual reference in my work is *St. Michael fights the dragon* 1498 (fig.40). The picture plane in Dürer's woodcut is divided into the celestial battleground and a low horizon vista into a calm contemporary landscape. The landscape of the present becomes the context for the imaginative re-working of the existing apocalyptic narrative and symbols. The compact space of the battle limits the reading of the sky to a horizontal narrative, juxtaposed with the inward moving perspective of the landscape below. A temporal continuity of symbolic narrative is implied together with a measurable moment captured through the landscape vista.

In colonial prints quantitative and qualitative approaches to representing the strange became integrated into a scientific approach. Perspective, viewer and print acted as witnesses to the strange encounters the explorers and travellers brought back to Europe.

Everything in the European dream of possession rests on witnessing, a witnessing understood as a form of significant and representative seeing .... The discoverer sees only a fragment and then imagines the rest in the act of

appropriation. The supplement that imagination brings to vision expands the perceptual field, encompassing the distant hills and valleys or the whole of an island or an entire continent, and the bit that has actually been seen becomes by metonymy a representation of the whole. That representation is in turn conveyed, reported to an audience elsewhere, and seeing turns into witnessing. (Greenblatt 1991:122)

Distances in space were replaced by distances in time; a chronology from the primitive to civilized. The ever increasing circulation of maps, narratives and views of different parts of the world created a cognitive representation of the world as a fixed set of systems and co-ordinates outside space and time. The print as currency formed an integral part of the growth of imperial power and control. The geographical distance that separated the Cape from Europe resulted, in the early representations, in fantastical and emblematic representations of the Cape. As information returned to Europe from the logbooks and notes of early explorers it was translated, illustrated and circulated through the techniques of printmaking. Once the Cape and its inhabitants were recognized

as images, represented through familiar perspectives and ideologies, these images “became” the Cape to European audiences. The images were then used time and again as references for subsequent engravings. They become an archive of evidence that the printmaker or writer could draw on according to their needs, without a critical inquiry into the relationship between the image and the physical Cape landscape.

Although the dissemination of information empowered the European individual the value of information remained central as the real and the represented began to be distinguished from each other. The development of lithography by Aloys Senefelder in 1798 created another revolution in the circulation of printed information. Lithography has formed the basis of commercial printing ever since. Together with the invention of photography this meant that the older methods of printing such as wood and copper engraving continued only in their use by fine artists. The ever increasing production and circulation of prints inversely effected its value as currency. Like the Great Khan, whoever controlled the printing of the currency dictated its value. In terms

of European representations of Africa and the Cape there was no equal exchange of currency. “Western religions have often embraced the idea of a spreading of their representations while resisting the possibility of free movement of alternative symbolic systems within the already-established spheres of their influence” (Greenblatt 1991b:120-1). While printing opened the frontier of knowledge in Europe it acted to heighten the distance between Europe and the Cape. The Cape could be projected, represented and possessed from a distance by a European audience. The first printing press was only brought to the Cape in 1793. “The Council of Seventeen in Amsterdam did not relish the idea of printing being done at the far-away Cape, because they feared that presses might be used for political propaganda” (Alexander 1974:29). It was at this time that there was growing dissatisfaction amongst the Dutch farmers over the Council’s centralised control over government and trade. The use of printing could aid in the rallying of support and organizing resistance. The power of controlling the recording, printing and censoring of information as a form of suppression and as a powerful medium of resistance is evident in the archive of apartheid remains. The value of the currency of the colonial print is

still linked to the power of possession but its value is linked to its subject matter as a mediation between the strange and the familiar, the unexpected and the expected.

Once images get put into circulation, they move beyond the orbits in which their initial meaning had placed them .... Commodity capitalism accelerates these detachments, tearing images from their previous contexts and making them serve first one master, then another. Thus visual images are often re-used or re-worked simply because they are recognisable. (Landau 1996:140)

The tensions between desire and possession, accessibility and exclusion formed in the politics of control over the currency of printed information are still bound up in contemporary museum display and in the contested role of the inherited remains of colonialism and apartheid. Colonial representations have returned to the Cape and reside out of circulation in the archives of the state, museums and libraries. These colonial remains have a history of political manipulation in South Africa. For example Farlam discusses how the William Fehr collection was manipulated into an

Afrikaner National Heritage at the Jan van Riebeeck Tercentenary Festival at the Castle in 1952 (Farlam 1995:vii-ix). About ten years ago the Cape Archives made an ironic move from the old University of Good Hope building in Queen Victoria street to the site of the old Roeland street jail. A broader application of the archive that includes the historical narratives and ideologies that informed the selection and use of the physical recorded information has in a way made the metaphoric shift from a unproblematic source of learning to a site of unstable interrogation. In the exhibitions discussed in my previous chapter the archive has been re-opened to de-construct the colonial and apartheid historical narrative and disrupt the construction of a new one.

The print as a form of recording information has also reached a new crisis due to the development of computer and multi-media technology. The circulation of information in the material form of a document, print or object has been overtaken by the rapid circulation of digital information. Images do not merely accompany texts, they are texts, to be read and naturalized as

virtual experience. “Spatial and temporal co-ordinates end up collapsing: space is no longer defined by depth and volume, but rather by cinematic (temporal) repetition, while the sequence of time is frozen in an instant of (spatial) immobility” (Lovejoy 1989:85). It is now difficult to define what constitutes a print. As computers become household objects of devotion, digital information circulates as the latest form of currency and is “written” on compact disc. The images of light on the computer screen, like the early travel narratives of Mandeville, act as a virtual experience of the physical environment. The distinction between the original and the reproduction begins again to break down. Eco provides an interesting discussion on how many of the social crises that started in the Middle Ages continue into contemporary Western society. “Our own Middle Ages, it has been said, will be an age of ‘permanent transition’ for which new methods of adjustment will have to be employed. The problem will not so much be that of preserving the past scientifically as of developing hypotheses for the exploitation of disorder, entering into the logic of conflictuality .... The Middle Ages preserved in its way the heritage of the past but not through hibernation, rather

through a constant re-translation and re-use; it is an immense work of bricolage, balanced among nostalgia, hope and despair” (Eco 1986b:84).

As digital imagery breaks down the experience of the world as a visual experience of moving through space in time, so spatial metaphors of describing social reality seem to be increasing. It is no longer popular to measure societies in terms of temporal progress from primitive to civilised. They are now measured in terms of metaphorical distances from each other. “The present epoch will perhaps be above all the epoch of space. We are in the epoch of simultaneity: We are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed” (Foucault 1986:262). The archive has become an appropriate spatial metaphor for exploring the contingency of recorded information and, “the exploitation of disorder” (Eco 1986b:84). The archive as a space in which “material” records are kept and the book as a material “object” of knowledge occupying space are becoming outmoded by the rapid circulation of digital information and have become appropriated into the fine art discourse as

mediums of expression and exchange.

My work forms a re-possession of the archive through looking at the intersection of printed records and historical space. My use of the print as a medium and a subject brings an innovative dimension to the installation as an environment through which the viewer can move. The unfolding of the process of printmaking into a three-dimensional work emphasizes the archive as a temporal process that converges unnaturally in a physical space in the present. The spatial engraving that has emerged from my exploration into temporal and spatial frontiers opens the archive and the book out into space for contemplation and dialogue between the strange and the familiar, wonder and resonance.

## THE SPATIAL ENGRAVING: AN INTRODUCTION

This introduction will provide a description of my work and a discussion of some of the formal, technical and iconographic sources that have contributed to its making. As a visual medium and three-dimensional form, the work contains a multitude of references that extend beyond the process of its making. Therefore this discussion is not intended to be read as an interpretation or explanation of the work but rather as a companion to viewing the work.

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MEDIUM AND THE CHOICE OF MATERIALS

My early practical experiments involved the appropriation and manipulation of existing printed images through a series of three-dimensional cardboard and plastic constructions (fig.41-9). These early formal experiments explored my desire to create a physical presence for the early role of the print as a circulating form of recorded information that slowly becomes transformed as it moves

through space and time from one context to the next. These early experiments provide a visual reference to the tradition of artists' book-making as art objects. At the same time I was experimenting with different combinations of materials and methods in the printing process in a search for a form of print that would act as a palimpsest for the process of layering that I was exploring in three dimensions. I was interested in revealing how colour prints are created out of the printing of multiple plates in a delayed mechanical process (fig.51, 53, 54 & 59).

What finally emerged from these experiments with form and process was a method of engraving into transparent extruded acrylic and perspex sheets (fig.56 & 58). Engraving is one of the oldest forms of mark-making and recording of information that began with the incising of pictographic symbols into stone or clay. In medieval Europe the printing of engraved metal plates has been linked to the goldsmith's workshops where rubbings were taken to keep a record of engraved patterns. My interest in the historical

origins of engraving as a permanent and precious method of mark-making has been combined with a more contemporary choice of material matrix. Plastic is used in printmaking as a matrix for intaglio and relief printing. I, however, became interested in the qualities of the engraved plastic surface itself. I developed a method which involved engraving into the plastic sheet using a range of metal burrs driven by a high speed hanging motor drill or a hand-held “Dremel” (fig. 55). Using a high speed electric drill has allowed me to carve smoothly and deeply into the plastic and to create a range of marks that refer to different engraving and relief methods.

The choice to use transparent sheets of plastic forms part of my interest in the layering of images that creates a visible and yet a shifting image as the viewer moves around the work. The transparency also reveals the sculptural quality of the engraved mark. From the engraved side of the sheet the mark reads as a depression, from the other side it reads as a relief. The transparency also means that one can see the reverse of the image from the other side – an intentional consequence which refers to

early prints of the Cape which were translated again and again by printmakers who would copy an image from a print onto a plate and therefore reverse the image in the subsequent print (in intaglio and relief printing the print taken on the paper is a reverse of that on the matrix). In Europe it could not really have mattered if a Khoikhoi herdsman, drawn standing on Blaauwberg beach, actually had the appearance of being on Robben Island (fig. 52).

I have extended this visual dialogue between the transparent and opaque, positive and negative by playing with intaglio and relief aspects of printmaking. In some areas I have just engraved the positive line of the image. In other parts I have engraved the negative areas, leaving the image line raised. In both cases selected areas have been inked up using a roller and black ink or the engraved marks filled with a silver resin. This has allowed me to play with the two dimensional surface in representation as a literal window into an illusory depth and as a text to be read as a narrative across the picture plane. There is both a permanent and impermanent quality to the picture plane. The transparency of the medium makes the planning and viewing of the work self-

referential. All the parts of the work are visible at once which, from a fixed viewpoint, results in a collapsed sense of space. As one moves each piece changes continuously as it is layered against another part of the work as if a two dimensional work were unfolding out into space.

My choice to work with light as a medium forms part of my interest in revealing the process of making a print. As a formal means of exploring how information circulates as a precious possession, light is both a source of wonder and resonance as it projects through and beyond my work. Light acts as a material presence through its symbolic reference as a source of colour, magic, devotion, illumination and wonder. As a medium light acts as a traditional means of creating a three-dimensional image in representation as it falls on, reflects and projects through objects. In my work light forms the printing process and its projections a partial print (fig.57, 77, 79).

## DESCRIPTION OF THE WORK

The central part of my installation consists of large panels framed in steel and wood, hinged together and arranged into a pentagonal shape (pl.1). The shape of this structure is based on the geometry of a star. A shape that refers to the castle and a compass, an enclosure and a point of reference. The main iconographic references for these panels are the two eighteenth century engravings depicting D'Almeida's violent contact with the Khoikhoi and the raising of a cross in commemoration of the open frontier on the beach as a site of possession and dispossession (fig.5 & 11). Opposed to this landscape is an opaque section that extends across all of the panels and contains fragmented references from postal stones to early texts printed at the Cape and from maps of the world down to a plan of the company Gardens (pl.2) (fig.60-71).

Two of the panels have been cut and folded out to form part of the pentagonal shape. One is cut along the horizon line, the other is cut out in the silhouette of Dürer's *Nemesis* (1501-2) (fig.72). The

two dimensional panels are broken in other areas where circles have been cut out and returned to turn on an axis (pl.3). These acts of breaking through the plane and the transparency of the plastic, visually and physically negate the panels as impermeable fixed barriers. They form focal points and yet deny this as they are not fixed.

Two trapezium shaped panels extend into a closing corridor from the sides of one of the panels (which is itself smaller than the front panels) (pl.4-6). They both form and deny an entrance and visual focal point to the work. As a structure the two trapezium panels point towards but do not meet at a vanishing point. The viewer may enter the corridor but is barred from entering the enclosed area of the pentagon. The main iconographic references which extend across onto both of the trapezium panels are a panorama of Cape Town by Josephus Jones (1806) (fig.24) and a map, *Polus Antarcticus* (1637), which maps out the unknown continent *Terra Australis* (fig.75). These panels contain turning discs that turn on both vertical and horizontal axes.

On both panels a lens has been inserted through which one can view an engraved construction attached to the surface (fig.74). My use of lenses is linked to an interest in manipulating a range of scale relations of body-to-artwork, from a structure larger than the body to objects that can only be viewed through magnification. Again this forms an oscillation between accessibility and access denied, and foregrounds how representations function as cognitive and real co-ordinates of orientation. In the eighteenth and nineteenth century lenses were used to aid an imaginative entry into the virtual world of the Cosmorama (fig.78). “One entered a tastefully lit room, and through a series of windows (each in fact a convex lens) peeped at sensational scenes beyond. The subjects, brightly lit by gas or daylight, were panoramic – bird’s-eye views, monuments of antiquity, great waterfalls such as Niagara, and storms at sea” (Hyde 1988:125). The lens combined with light has been used in the microscope to see what is too small to see, in the telescope to see what is distant and in projection to create an enlarged image out of light.

In the centre of the main structure are two six sided internally lit

pyramids (pl.8). The top one is suspended pointing down towards the other positioned on the ground underneath but, like two broken halves of an hourglass, they do not meet. As the trapezium panels frustrate a spatial vanishing point the lights frustrate a temporal focal point. There is no present through which the sands of the hourglass can run as the “past and future light cones” remain separated (Hawking 1988:24) (fig.82). The shape of the lights also refer to the prism which refracts light into colour. The prism was used in the Camera Lucida, developed at the beginning of the nineteenth century, to cast an image onto a drawing surface (Lambert 1987:47).

On the top pyramid the image from the main panels has been re-engraved and numbered as a diagram (fig.9). Three of the sides of the bottom pyramid list the references that have been numbered on the top pyramid (pl.10). These references reflect a central position and a dialogue between image and word but also reveal the arbitrariness of words without a system of organization. The other three sides of the pyramid are engraved with anamorphic diagrams of three panorama sketches (1776-1777) of Cape Town by

Johannes Schumacher (fig.25, 26 & 27). In all three sketches the Castle takes up a central position. An anamorphic diagram is a form of perspective that represents a 360 degree view on a flat surface (fig.76). “Anamorphic drawing technique was developed in connection with the scientific study of perspective in the fifteenth century .... The use of a sphere with a reflective surface enabled artists to reproduce a complete circular view in two dimensions for the first time” (Oettermann 1997:60). Anamorphic diagrams were used in programme guides to early panoramas accompanied by a key of references or a descriptive text so that the viewers could orientate themselves in relation to the whole and take home a souvenir. The programme anticipates the painting and the painting anticipates a physical view of the world.

The light pyramids illuminate the engraved marks on the surrounding panels and therefore the image appears to distort as the viewer moves around the work. Where the light is not diffused by the engraved mark on the pyramid the light shines through and projects marks from the surrounding panels beyond the structure. For example, the diminutive engraved figures of *A man and a*

*woman at the Cape of Good Hope* (1626) become enlarged shadows as they are projected beyond the panel (fig.6) (pl. 8). The use of projected shadows has a history in theatre to represent an absent presence, a ghost (fig.81). The creation of images with light was popularised as entertainment in the eighteenth century. The Magic Lantern projected images painted on glass slides by placing an oil lamp behind and a lens in front of the slide (fig.83).

On the outside, facing three of the main panels, stand three triptychs (pl.11, 16 & 20). Wooden frames hold a double layer of plastic that extend out of the frames at the top as panoramas that have been cut out along the skyline (pl.13, 18 & 22). These three panoramas are separated into a foreground and background layer. The foregrounds consist of a collage of figures put together from old prints and drawing of Cape Town in the nineteenth century. The backgrounds are taken from three panoramic photographs I took looking out from three different sides of the Castle (pl.14, 19 & 23). I chose the angles to look out in the opposite direction to the Schumacher panoramas. There is an inversion of temporal and spatial perspectives, looking in from the outside and looking out

from the inside, looking back and forward in time. The wings of the triptychs are hinged so they can open and close. The gap between the two layers provides an added space to play with notions of layering, permeability and perspective. At the bottom the frame contains a fluorescent tube light that shines directly through the plastic illuminating the engraved marks in a cold light. Their form echoes the larger hinged panels on a smaller scale as if the central structure is reproduced and dispersed. They form possible perspectives from which to view the rest of the work. The panoramas at the top and references in the triptychs form a dialogue with the main panels. In this sense they act as lecterns that speak outwards to the rest of the work. As they contain their own light source and language of references they also form self-contained focal points of contemplation that refer to medieval portable altarpieces (fig.90).

The first triptych manipulates the perspective of maps as coordinates of projecting and approaching space from the universal to the particular (pl.11-15). Maps are both a record of the accumulative measuring of the physical world through travel and a

cognitive aid to a mental journey of scale, zooming in and out of space. The map is both a guide to and a product of the frontier. On the closed doors two hemispheres form a globe in which the Cape is caught between sky and fire, north and south, order and chaos (fig.86 & 94). Around the globe figures float in orbit. The silhouettes are taken from a woodcut depicting the universe as a *wheel of fortune* (1490) (fig.84). The silhouettes contain mapped information from the chaos of *terra incognita* to the Cape as a figure of hope as they circulate the world. The doors open to separate the world along the time line and the co-ordinates of reference become reversed. The central panel contains two moving discs that form a gimbal that articulates along two different axes (pl.15). It refers to the gimbals used on early voyages to keep instruments level and to early models of the universe as articulated orbit rings circling the earth (fig.87). The iconography also makes a compass of different reference points that juxtapose past and present, order and chaos, text and symbol. These compass points disrupt a fixed set of co-ordinates engraved around the moving discs. The co-ordinates are assembled from early written accounts in which the Cape was approached through a set of familiar signs

from the Trambas (kelp) to Table Mountain (fig.88, 89, 91, 92 & 93). In the centre of the gimbal two figures, cut out in layers of thin plastic, shift as the disc is moved. The figures are taken from the print after Wouter Schouter (1676) in which Europeans were added to create a symbolic meeting with Khoikhoi on the shores of Table Bay (fig.8). The triptych creates and disrupts its own set of references and co-ordinates. The voyage exists in a liminal space.

The second triptych manipulates the perspective of the landscape and surveillance as a safe and measurable perspective of distance and difference from the horizon (pl.16-19). On the closed doors are two silhouetted figures, taken from a newspaper photograph reporting on the Freedom day celebrations in which General Meiring holds Mandela's hand to help him descend the steps of the Cape Town Town Hall (fig.96). In my triptych they float above a postcard view of Cape Town taken from the air above Table Mountain but are also positioned on Robben Island depicted as the perspective of the landscape on the main panels of the triptych behind the closed doors (fig.99). With the doors open the figures contain an engraved enlargement of a print of the Gouden Buis

torn apart in a storm (1693) (fig.95). The small figures of a San and gangster stand next to the larger figures and confront each other when the doors are open and face away when the doors are closed (fig.98 & 100). The main panel shows a view of Cape Town taken from a photograph I took on Robben Island (fig.97). The foreground of the island, shore and shipwreck are engraved on the front layer of plastic. Cape Town and Table Mountain are engraved on the back layer. In-between the two layers an archaeology of horizons of Table Mountain traced from the earliest prints to the present, have been cut out of multiple layers of luciprint plastic. As the layers accumulate the panel changes from transparent to an opaque reflective surface. The island and shoreline merge and reflect each other.

The third triptych manipulates the perspective of architecture, emblem and the real and symbolic acts of possession and dispossession from the face to face contact of the frontier (pl.20-23). On the outside of the closed doors are a set of steps leading up to a doorway that holds a Cape Dutch gable. On either side of the doorway are two half figures that are represented as relief

sculptures. These figures were taken from a printed illustration found in Kolbe's account of his travels to the Cape (fig.105). The print depicts Europeans trading goods with the Khoikhoi. The European holds a coil of metal while the Khoikhoi holds an elephant tusk. Through the doorway one looks out and along St. George's Street taken from a nineteenth century photograph. On the other side of the doors the doorway is repeated but it holds the pediment that sits above the entrance to the Castle (fig.101). The steps contain elevated views of the city over the last two centuries. The doorway looks into colonnaded passageway (fig.110). Out from between the columns arms reach out into the passage, repeated smaller and smaller as they get further away (fig.106). On the one side two hands hold a chain, on the other a pair of arms reach out to the object of desire. On the main panel a face has been engraved (fig.102). Behind the face a cut out shape of the Castle forms a mirrored halo for the face (fig.104). Out of the Castle shape, thin strips of perspex radiate and are traversed by cross pieces. They refer to an architectural ground plan but also form crosses that stake their claim. Below the face is a face engraved as if it were a shadow cast on a plane oblique to the

surface of the plastic (fig.103). The two faces are reversed on the second panel. On the front panel at the bottom a disc is attached that turns on a central axis with a figure as a dial (fig.107). A collection of mouths have been engraved on the outer rim. On the other side, occupying the top half of the panel, another smaller disc can be turned around a figure-dial that has a rim full of engraved pairs of eyes (fig.108). These two turning circles cross over a small central circle that is made up of three layers. On each layer a part of an image has been engraved. Together they form a contemporary view looking down the beach towards Salt River where the violent encounter between D'Almeida's men and the Khoikhoi took place (fig.109).

My choice of materials and the development of the method and structure of the spatial engraving provided a medium through which I could critique and explore aspects of the print, perspective, scale and light.

In my spatial engraving the print is unfolded as a process of translating and circulating information through the presence of the

printing matrix and the use of light projection. The hand engraved plastic surface that occupies space as a hinged structure of panels, also refers to the print as a precious object of knowledge; the central bank of control over the value of currency. I have played on perspective in representation as a window of illusion, depth and a symbolic narrative to be read across the picture plane by juxtaposing the transparent and the opaque and by inverting two-dimensional and three-dimensional representations of space. Scale plays an important role in the orientation of the body to its environment. I have incorporated a range of scale relations of body-to-artwork in order to disrupt and therefore foreground how representation functions as a cognitive form of orientation that collapses the distinction between qualitative and quantitative distances as it allows for an imaginative journey in and out of space. The use of light in my work as a central object, a medium of lighting the engraved marks and as a process of projection creates a dialogue that explores the inter-dependence of the centre and periphery, inside and outside, those in possession and the dispossessed.

This conscious manipulation of spatial and temporal distances that points towards and denies a central focal point or perspective at every level of the work, creates a structure in space which constantly infers shifting, opposing and oscillating perspectives, as the viewer moves around the work. The physical and visual engagement of the viewer with my work makes this re-possessed archive a potential frontier of unstable relations between the strange and familiar.

On a personal level the development and production of my practical work is also not a project that can be concluded. My approach to the remains of the past as an unstable spatial frontier in my work forms part of a personal sense of uncertainty in the search for co-ordinates from which to explore my own liminal position as a Cape Town artist on the temporal frontier of the next millennium.



FIG. 40



FIG. 41



FIG. 42



FIG. 43



FIG. 44



FIG. 45



FIG. 46



FIG. 50



FIG. 47



FIG. 48



FIG. 49



FIG. 51



FIG. 52



FIG. 53



FIG. 54



FIG. 58



FIG. 55



FIG. 56

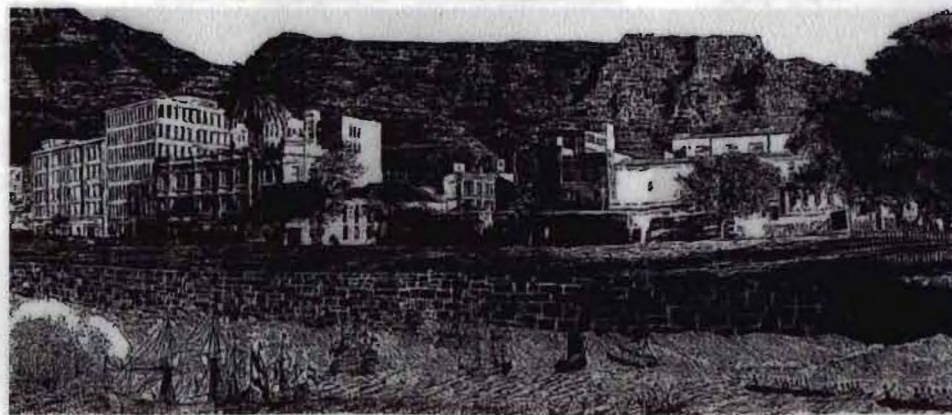
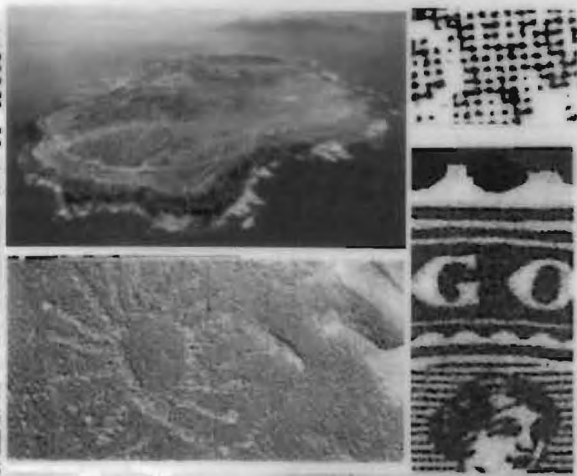
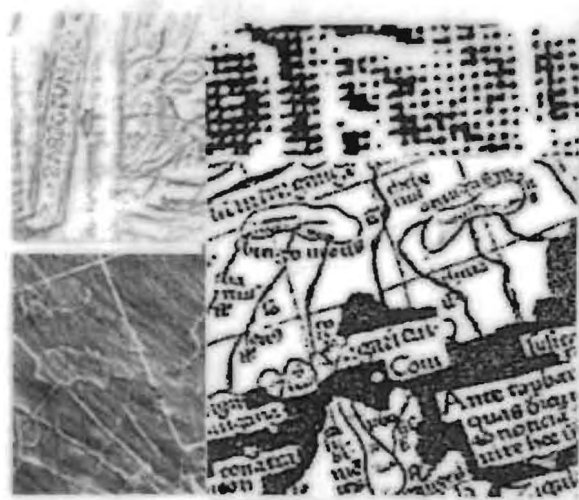


FIG. 59



FIG. 57



10. DAGEN,  
 16 ZONDAG 1600  
 17 MAAND 1600  
 18 DINGSD 1600  
 19 WOENSD 1600  
 20 DOND 1600  
 21 VRYD 1600  
 22 ZATURD 1600  
 23 ZONDAG 1600  
 24 MAAND 1600  
 25 DINGSD 1600  
 26 WOENSD 1600  
 27 DONDER 1600  
 28 VRYD 1600  
 29 ZATURD 1600  
 30 ZONDAG 1600  
 31 MAAND 1600  
 1. ZING-ONGANG 1600  
 2. ONDEGANG 1600



FIG. 60-71

FIG. 72

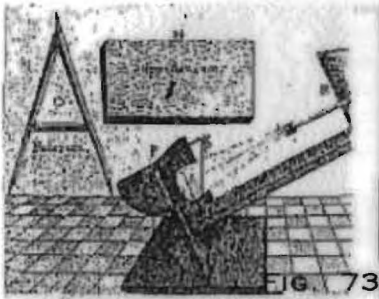


FIG. 73



FIG. 77

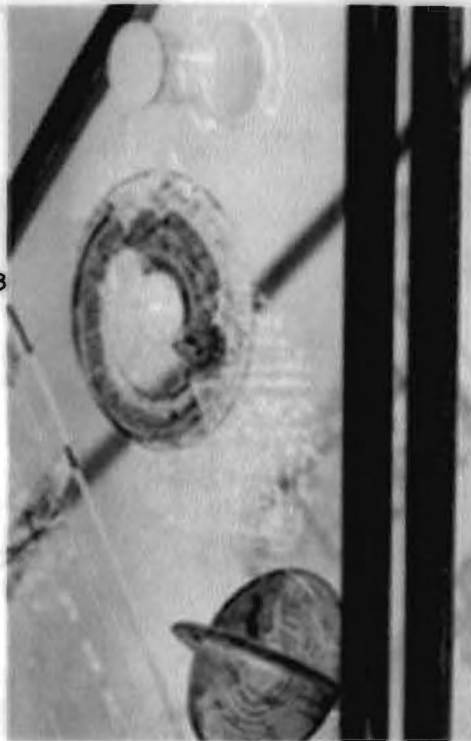


FIG. 74



FIG. 75

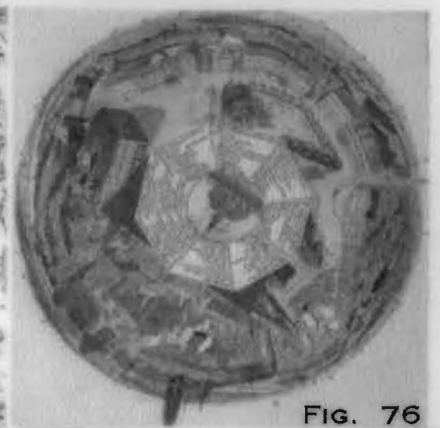


FIG. 76



FIG. 78

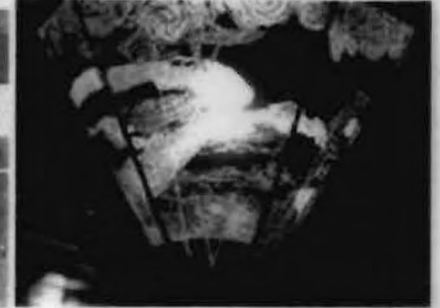


FIG. 79

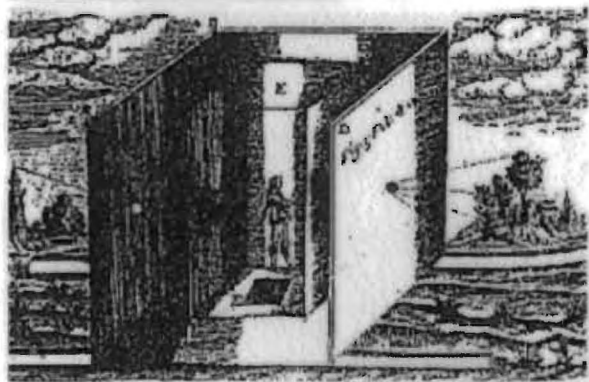


FIG. 80



FIG. 81

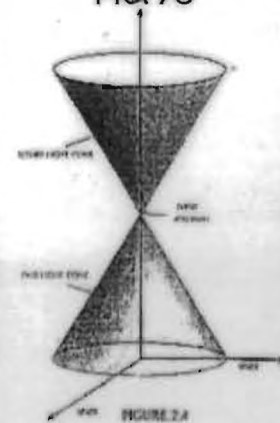


FIG. 82



FIG. 83



FIG. 84



FIG. 85

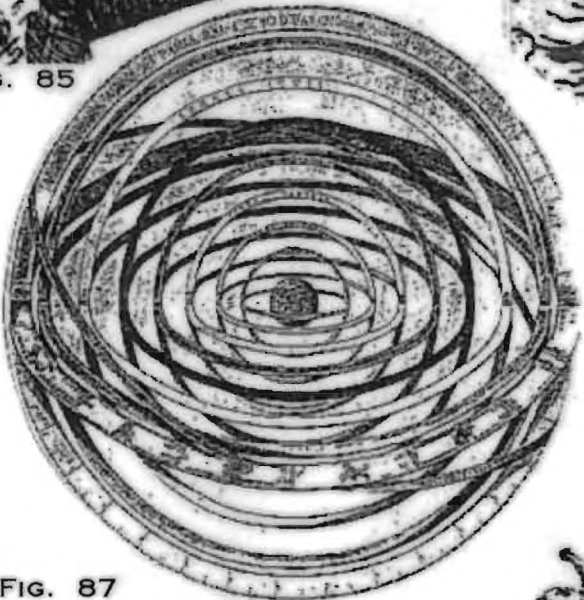


FIG. 87



FIG. 86



FIG. 90



FIG. 91

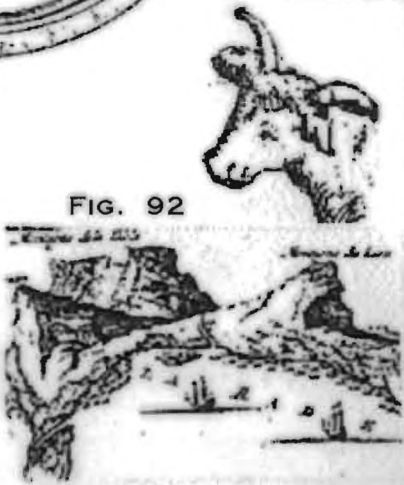


FIG. 92



FIG. 94



FIG. 88



*Trambas* FIG. 89

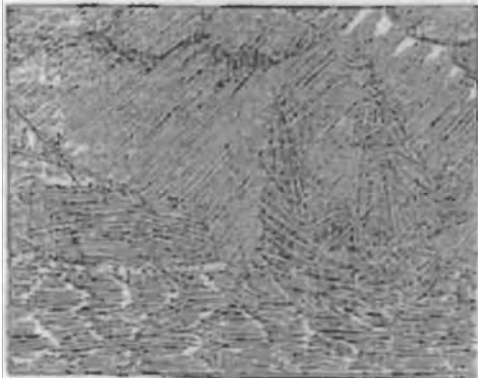


FIG. 95



FIG. 97

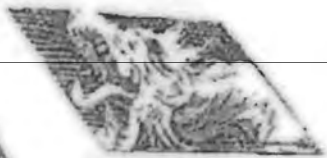
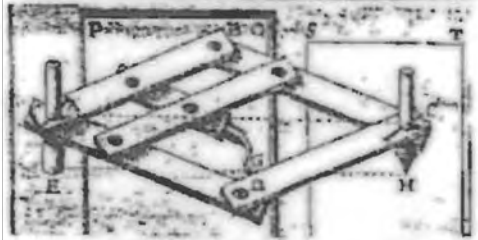


FIG. 96



FIG. 100



FIG. 98



FIG. 99



FIG. 101

FIG. 102

FIG. 103



FIG. 106



FIG. 105



FIG. 107



FIG. 104

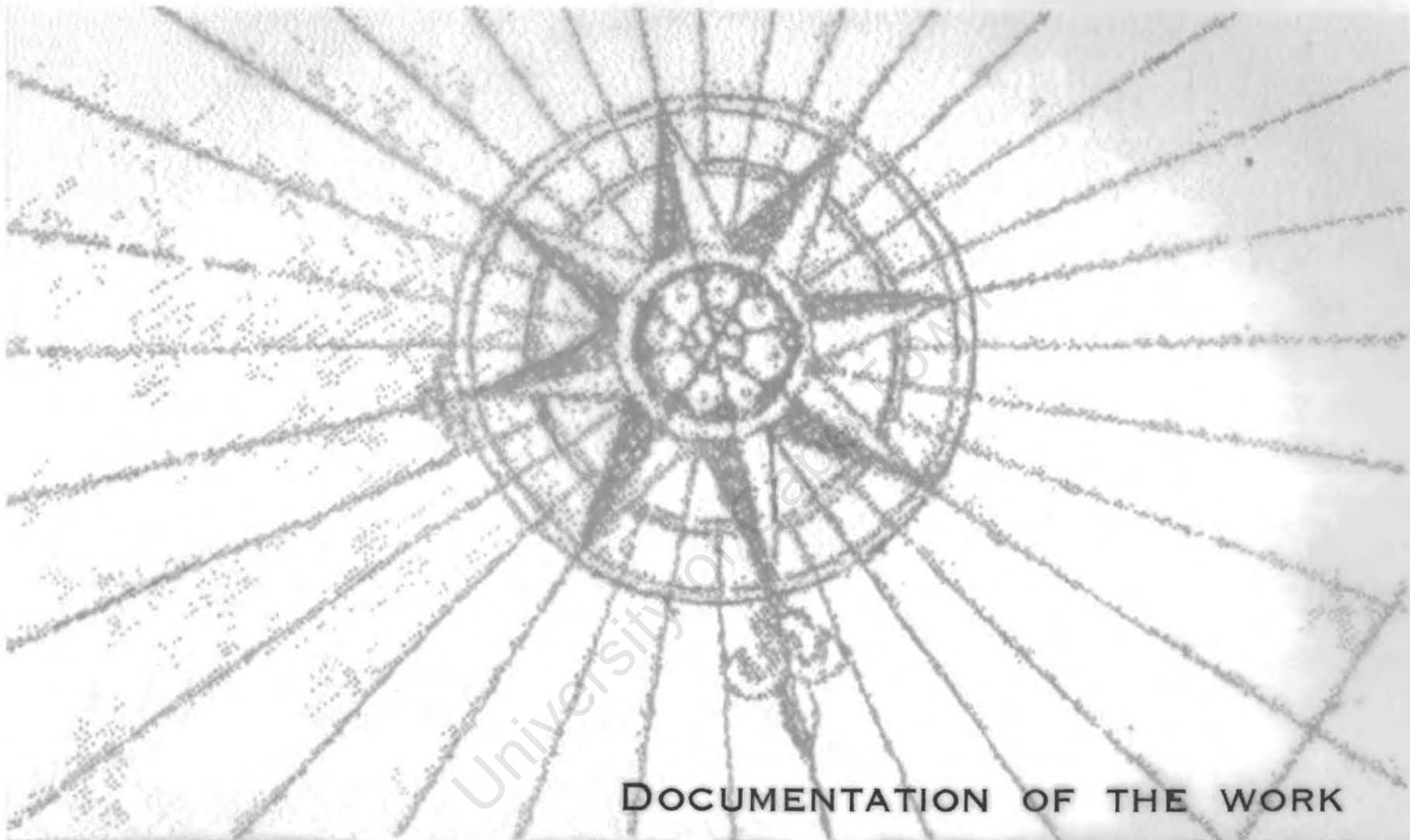


FIG. 108

FIG. 109

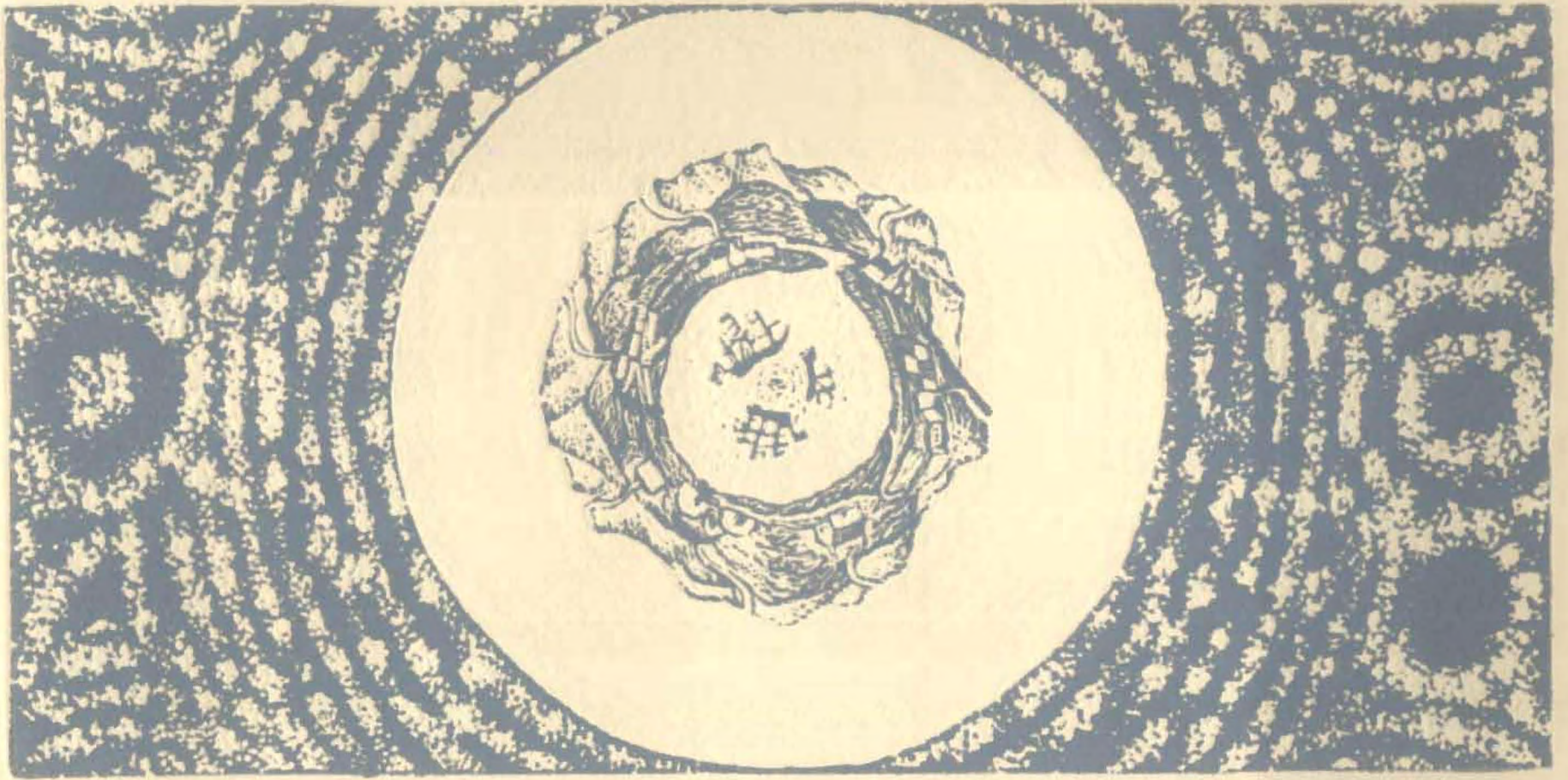


FIG. 110



## DOCUMENTATION OF THE WORK





THE  
LIBRARY  
OF THE  
MUSEUM OF  
ART AND HISTORY



plate1. view from central triptych  
2300x5000x4000mm  
engraved extruded acrylic, perspex and lucprint plastic sheet,  
lithographic ink, resin, steel, wood, tungsten and fluorescent light



plate 2. detail – central panel  
engraved acrylic sheet, black lithographic ink and resin



plate 3. detail of turning disc – central panel  
engraved acrylic sheet, black lithographic ink and metal pins

Khoikhoi on the beach. 1598. In Lodewycksz.  
Account of Houtman's expedition.

Rock painting of animals

*Nemesis*. 1501-2. Engraving by A. Dürer

Illustration recording the loss of four vessels from  
Pedro Cabral's fleet in a storm at the Cape in  
1500

View of Table Mountain from the Castle.  
1997. panoramic photograph

Map of Cape Town. c. 1885. (District 6)

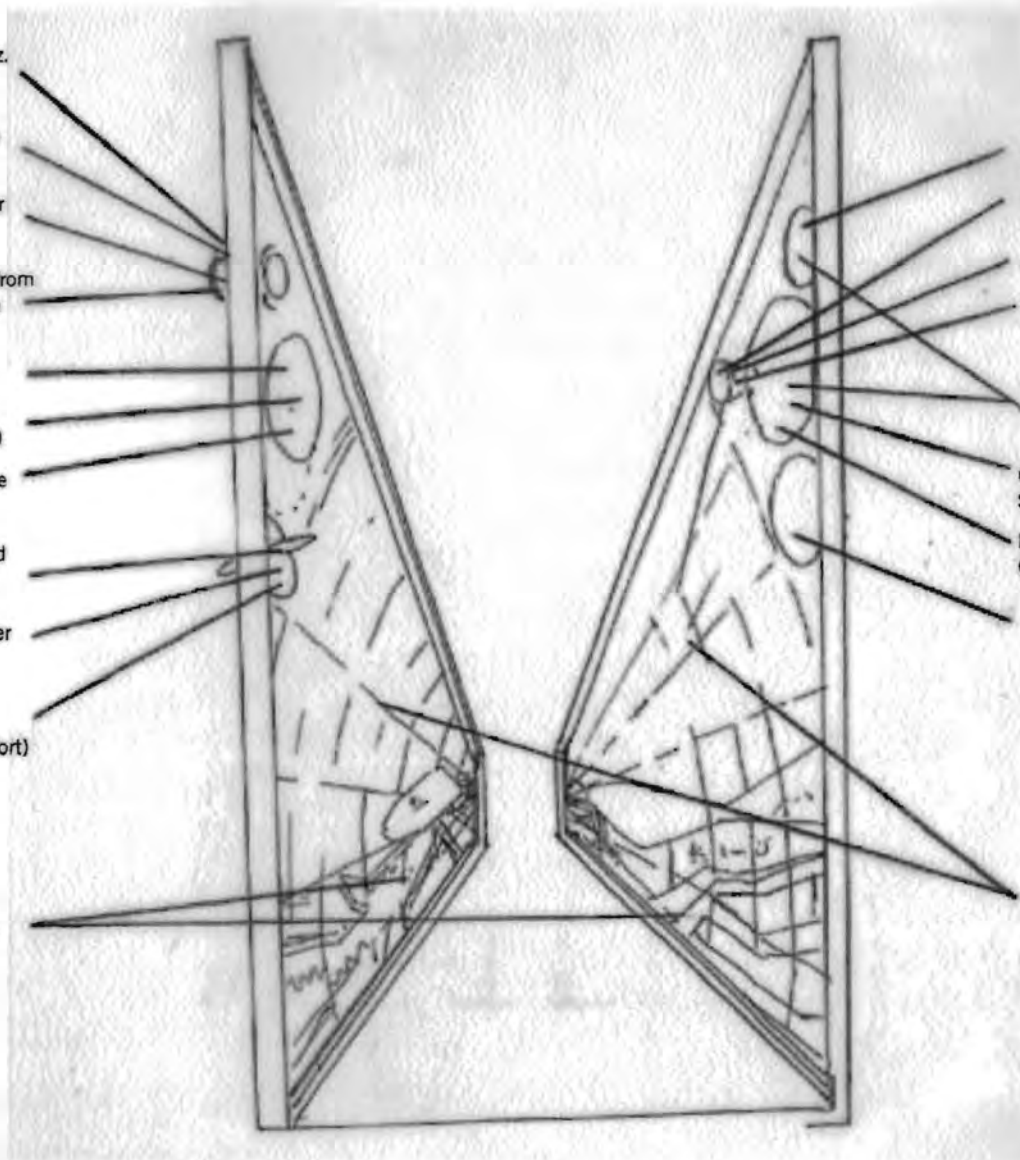
View of Cape Town looking out to sea from De  
Waal drive. 1997. panoramic photograph

Illustrations of how to draw in perspective and  
perspective aids such as the camera obscura

Illustration from a manual on 3-D computer  
animation  
Circuit diagram

*A draught of Cape bone esperanca*. 1750. (fort)

Panorama of Cape Town. c. 1808.  
watercolour by Josephus Jones



Drawing of property ownership at the  
Cape. c. 1804

Scholar penetrating through the sky into the  
next world. c. 1500. woodcut

*Comus I*. 1804-11. drawing by W. Blake

*Hottentots an de Caap bon esperance in  
Africa*. 1692. In J. Meister, *Der orientalischesch  
- indianische kunst*

Cape Town, Table Bay. 1676. In W.  
Schouter's *Ost-Ind. Voyagier*. (ship)

Cape Town, Table Bay. c. 1657. sketch by W.  
Schouter. (figures)

Hottentots fighting over entrails. 1670. In J.  
Ogilby, *Africa: being an accurate description*

Robben Island from the air. 1997. postcard

*Polus Antarcticus*. 1637. A map showing  
*terra australis incognita*



plate 4. detail – trapezium panels  
engraved perspex sheet, lucprint plastic sheet, lenses, wood and steel



plate 5 & 6. detail – trapezium panels  
engraved perspex sheet, lucprint plastic sheet, lenses, wood and steel

plate 7. detail – trapezium panel  
engraved acrylic sheet, black  
lithographic ink and acrylic rod



plate 8. detail – light pyramids  
engraved acrylic sheet, black  
lithographic ink, wood and  
tungsten light



plate 9. detail – top light pyramid  
engraved acrylic sheet, black  
lithographic ink, wood and  
tungsten light

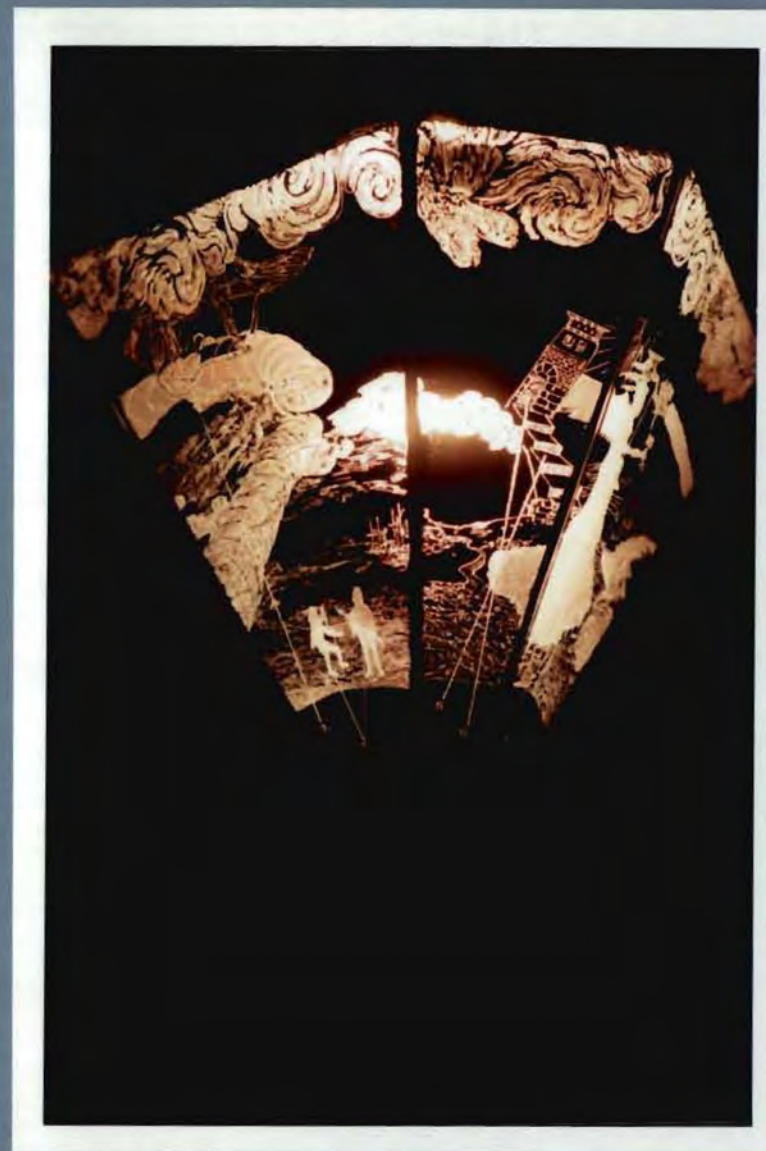


plate 10. detail – bottom light pyramid  
engraved acrylic sheet, black  
lithographic ink, lens, wood and  
tungsten light



plate 11. detail – triptych  
engraved acrylic sheet, lucprint plastic  
sheet, acrylic rod, lithographic ink, tinfoil,  
wood and flourescent light



Stormy sea from various maritime prints of the Cape

Text on gimbal from various maps

Cape Town, Table Bay. 1676. In W. Schouter's *Ost.-Ind. Voyagier*. (figures)

Portrait of the missionary. 1815. frontispiece from Rev. J. Campbell's *Travels in southern Africa*

Wheel of fortune. 1490. woodcut

*La baye du Cap de bonne esperance*. 1686. sea chart by G. Tachard

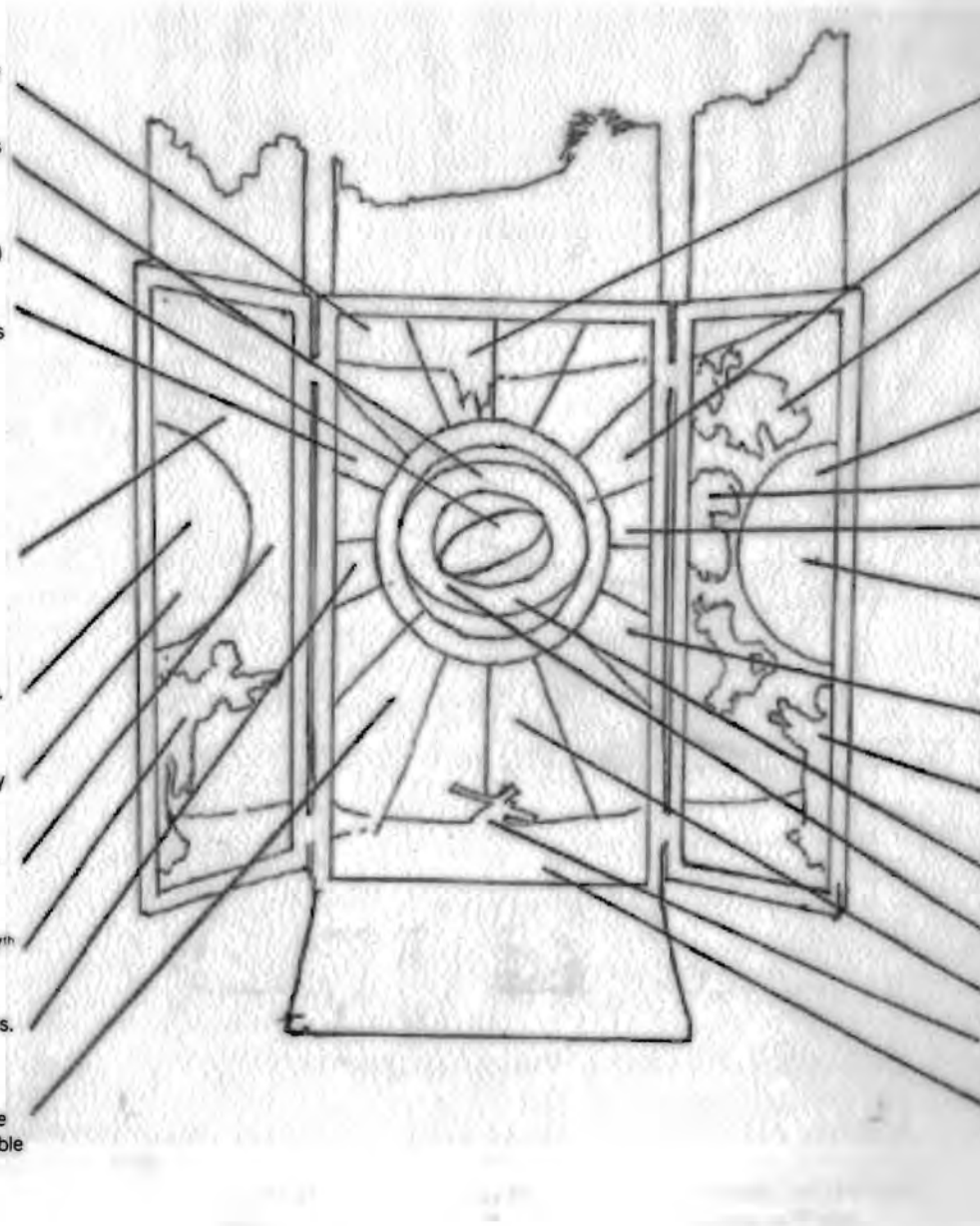
*Apocalypse series*. 1496-98. woodcuts by A. Dürer. (fire)

*Hope Idl.* 1893. postage stamp

A map of the Cape of Good Hope. 17<sup>th</sup> century. (cartouche & lion)

Cartouche from map of the southern oceans. 1730. (Khoikhoi)

*Carte Particuliere des costas du Cap de bone esperance*. 1691. (cartouche, Table Mountain)



A replica of Cook's *Endeavor*. 1997. newspaper photograph

Map of southern Africa. 1688. (trambas)

Waldseemüller world map. 1512.

View of Cape Town from Table Mountain. 1741. engraving by J.W. Heydt. (clouds)

Cape Town crest

Penguin. 1634. engraving. In Herbert's *Relation*

Map of southern Africa. 1598. (monster & figure)

Khoikhoi on the beach. 1598. In Lodewycksz. Account of Houtman's expedition. (cattle & hand holding entrails)

The astrologer. 16<sup>th</sup> century. woodcut

*The seven trumpets*. 1496-98. woodcut by A. Dürer. (eagle)

Anubis and Janus figures. 15<sup>th</sup> century. In S. Münster, *Cosmographia*

*A draught of Cape bone esperanca*. 1750. (fort)

Mars satellite

Marine micro-organisms



plate 12. detail – triptych – doors open  
engraved acrylic sheet, lucprint plastic sheet, acrylic rod,  
lithographic ink, tinfoil, wood and fluorescent light

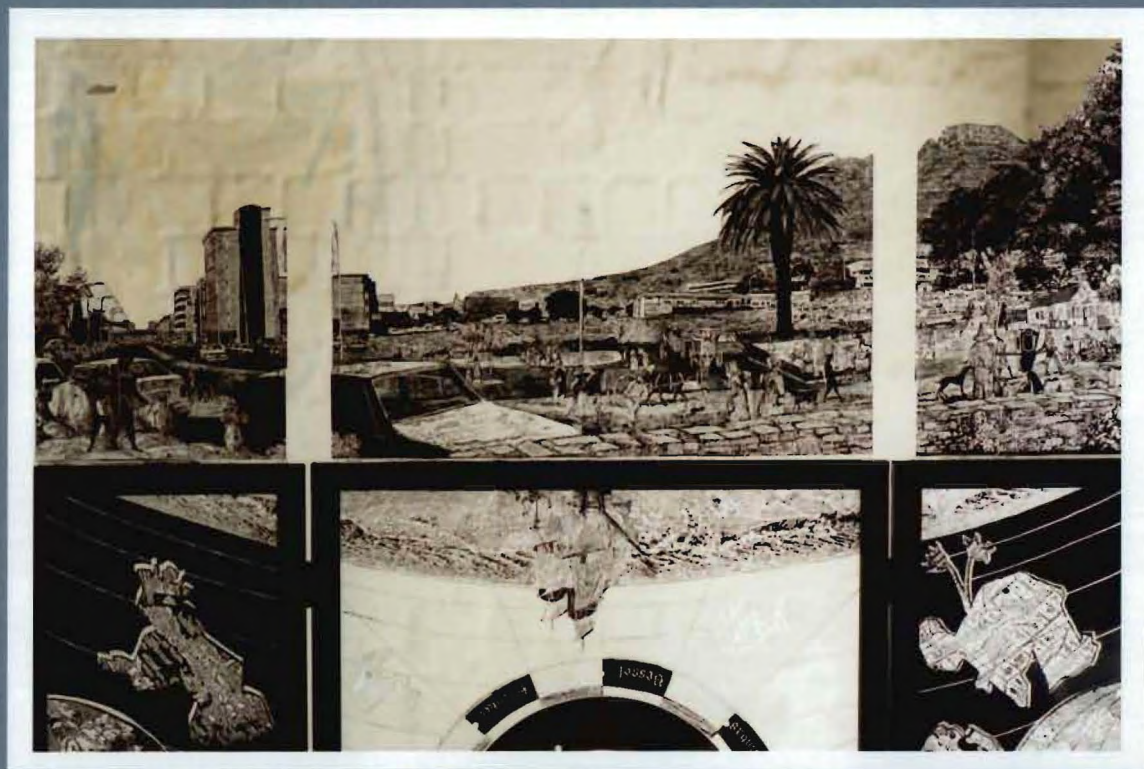


plate 13. detail – triptych – panorama  
engraved acrylic sheet, lithographic ink and wood

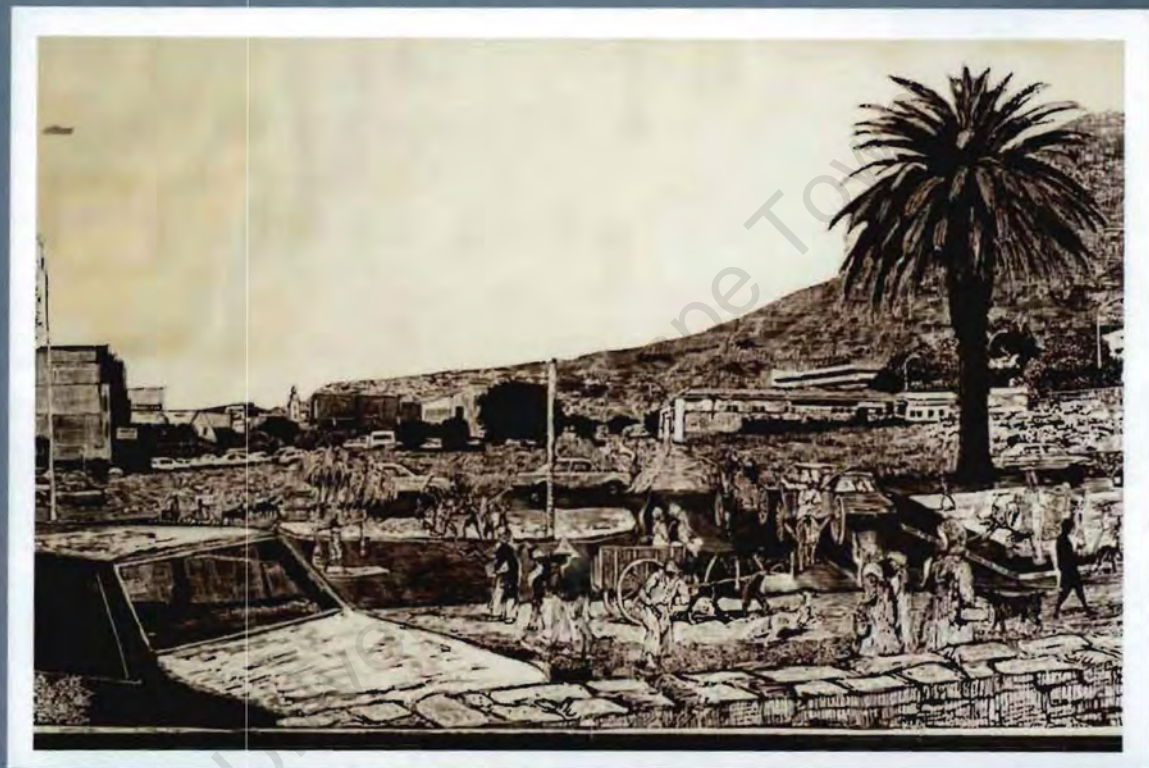


plate 14. detail – triptych – panorama central panel  
engraved acrylic sheet and lithographic ink

plate 15. detail – triptych – gimbal  
engraved acrylic sheet, lucprint  
plastic sheet, lithographic ink,  
acrylic rod and tinfoil



plate 16. detail – triptych  
engraved acrylic sheet, lucprint  
plastic sheet, lithographic ink, lenses,  
wood and flourescent light



Silhouettes of Table Mountain taken from various maritime prints of Cape Town from the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the present

Varley's graphic telescope

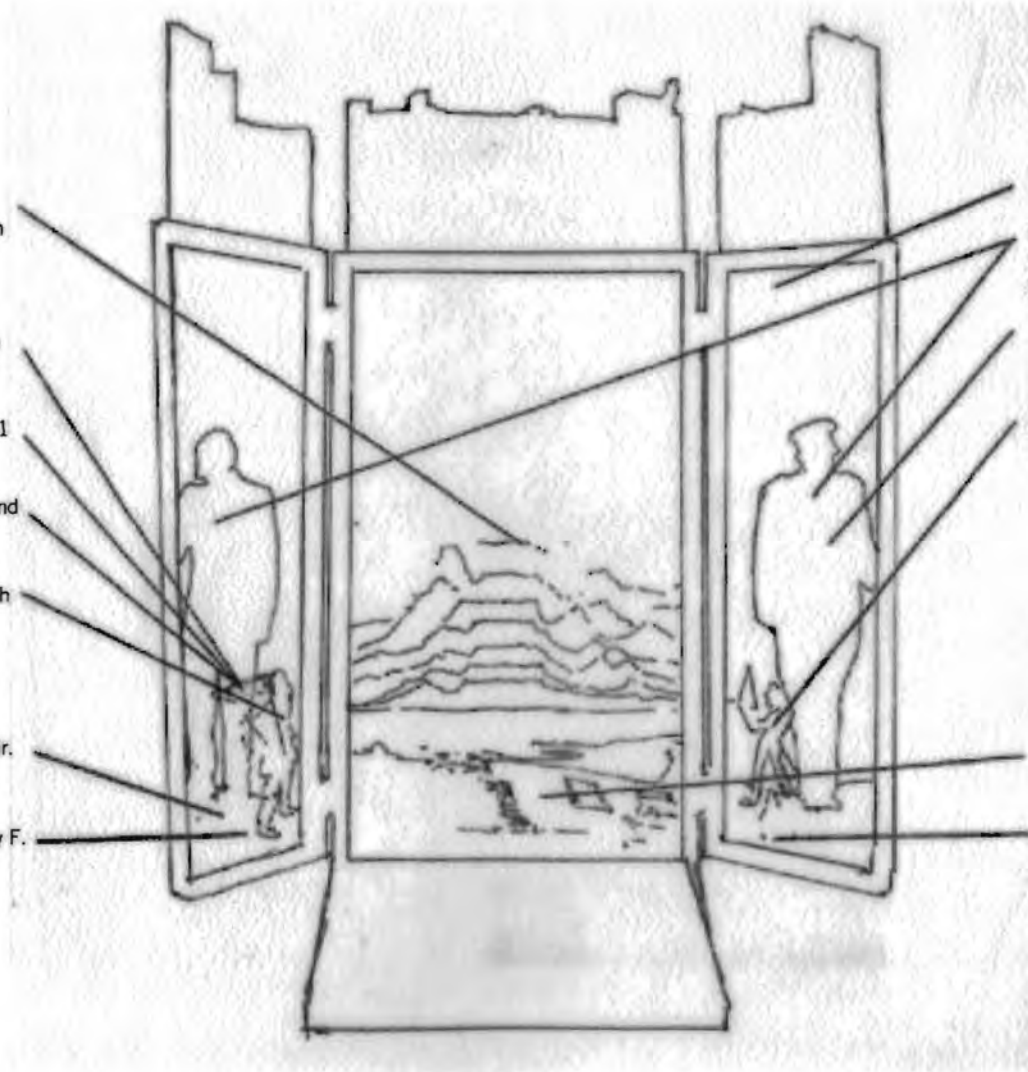
Pantograph. 1631

Map of Robben Island

Gangster. 1998. newspaper photograph

View of Cape Town from the air. 1998. postcard

*The Caabse vlek*. 1779. engraving by F. Riedel. (city)



Orbits of the planets. 1668. engraved by A. Cellarius

Nelson Mandela and General George Meiring. 1998. newspaper photograph reporting on the Freedom day celebrations

Wreck of the *Gouden Buis*. 1693. woodcut

*Drawing of a Bushman*. unpublished watercolour by G. F. Angas

View of Cape Town from Robben Island with a wreck in the foreground. 1998. photograph

Hottentots fighting over entrails. 1670. In J. Ogilby, *Africa: being an accurate description ...* (palm trees)



plate 17. detail – triptych – doors open  
engraved acrylic sheet, lucyprint plastic sheet, lithographic ink,  
lenses, wood and flourescent light



plate 18. detail – triptych – panorama  
engraved acrylic sheet, lucprint plastic sheet, lithographic ink,  
lenses and wood



plate 19. detail – triptych – panorama central panel  
engraved acrylic sheet and lithographic ink

plate 20. detail – triptych  
engraved acrylic sheet, mirrored plastic  
sheet, acrylic rod lithographic ink,  
wood and flourescent light



Cape Dutch gable

The lion gates. photograph

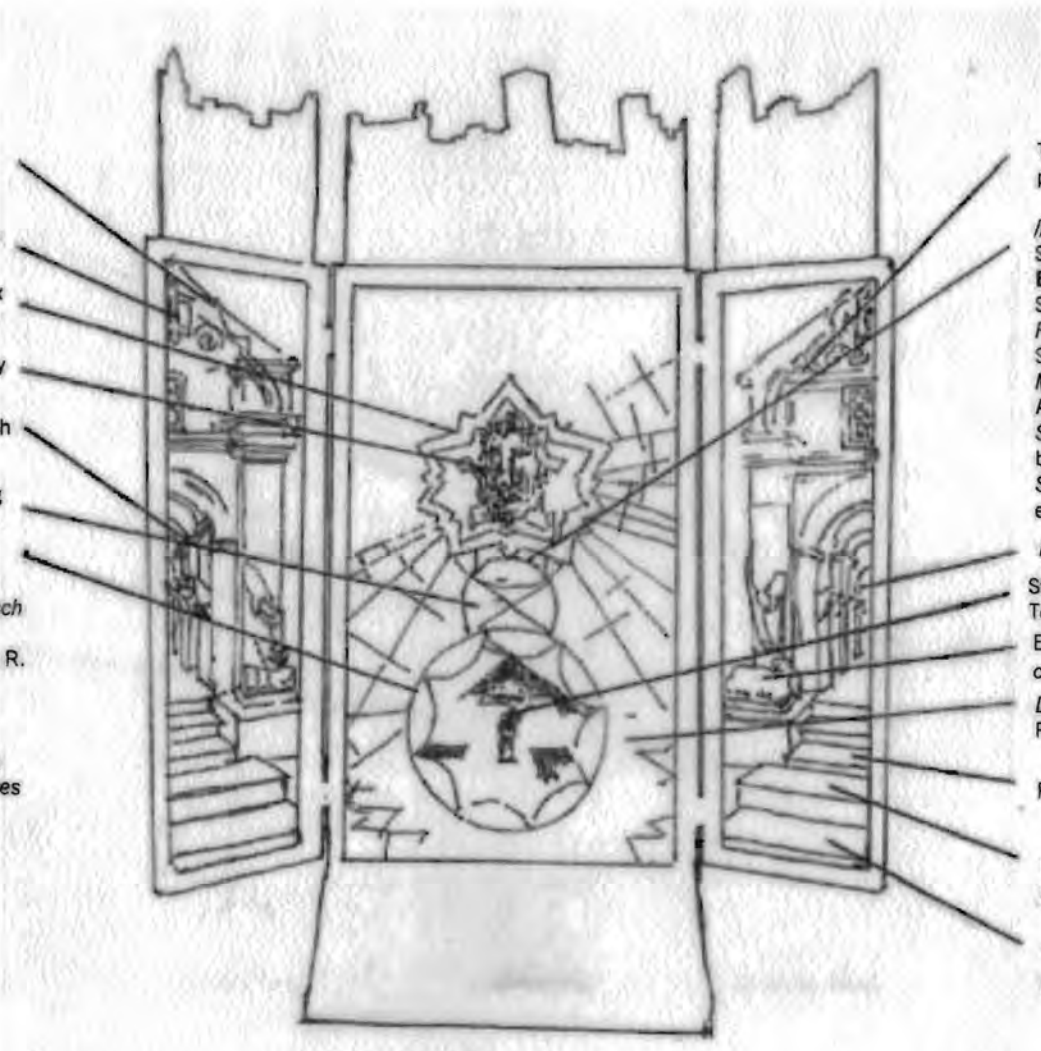
*Le fort du Cap de bonne esperance aux Hollandois.* 1705. engraving from map

Self-portrait. 1498. painting by Albrecht Dürer

St. Georges Street. c. 1905. photograph

The beach near Paardeneiland, looking towards Salt River. 1998. photograph.

**Mouths on turning disc:**  
*Hottentots an de Caap bon esperance in Africa.* 1692. In J. Meister *Der Orientalisch – Indianische Kunst ...*  
*Dode Hottentot.* c. 1779. watercolour by R. J. Gordon.  
*Kaffir letter carrier.* 1846. In Illustrated London News  
 Saartjie Baartman. 1824. In St. Hilaire & Cuvier's *Histoire naturelle des mammifères*  
 //Kabbo. 1870. photograph  
*Duendecitos* (little hobgoblins). 1799. etching by F. Goya  
 Diä!kwain. c. 1870. photograph  
 Head of a Housouana woman. 1780s. watercolour by Francois Le Vaillant



The Castle entrance gateway. photograph. 1978

//Kabbo. 1870-1. photograph by Lawrence and Selkirk

**Eyes on turning disc:**  
 Saartjie Baartman. 19<sup>th</sup> century. lithograph  
*Paradise Lost II.* 1807-11. by W. Blake  
 Study of the head of a tiger. 1796. etching  
*Martyrdom of St. John.* 1496-98. woodcut by A. Dürer  
*Sudarium held by two angels.* 1513. engraving by A. Dürer  
*Saint Michael fighting the dragon.* 1496-98. engraving by A. Dürer

*Epée technique.* 1628. (passageway)

Statue of Rhodes in the gardens, Cape Town. 1996. photograph

Europeans and Khoikhoi trading at the Cape. c. 1705-13. Engraving by Peter Kolb

*Dode Hottentot.* c. 1779. watercolour by R. J. Gordon. (face)

Postcard of Cape Town from the air. 1997

Cape Town from Signal Hill. c. 1884. from panoramic photograph by W. Pocock

Cape Town from Signal Hill. c. 1900. from panoramic photograph by G. Budricks



plate 21. detail – triptych doors open  
engraved acrylic sheet, mirrored plastic sheet, acrylic rod  
lithographic ink, wood and fluorescent light



plate 22. detail – triptych – panorama  
engraved acrylic sheet, lithographic  
ink and wood

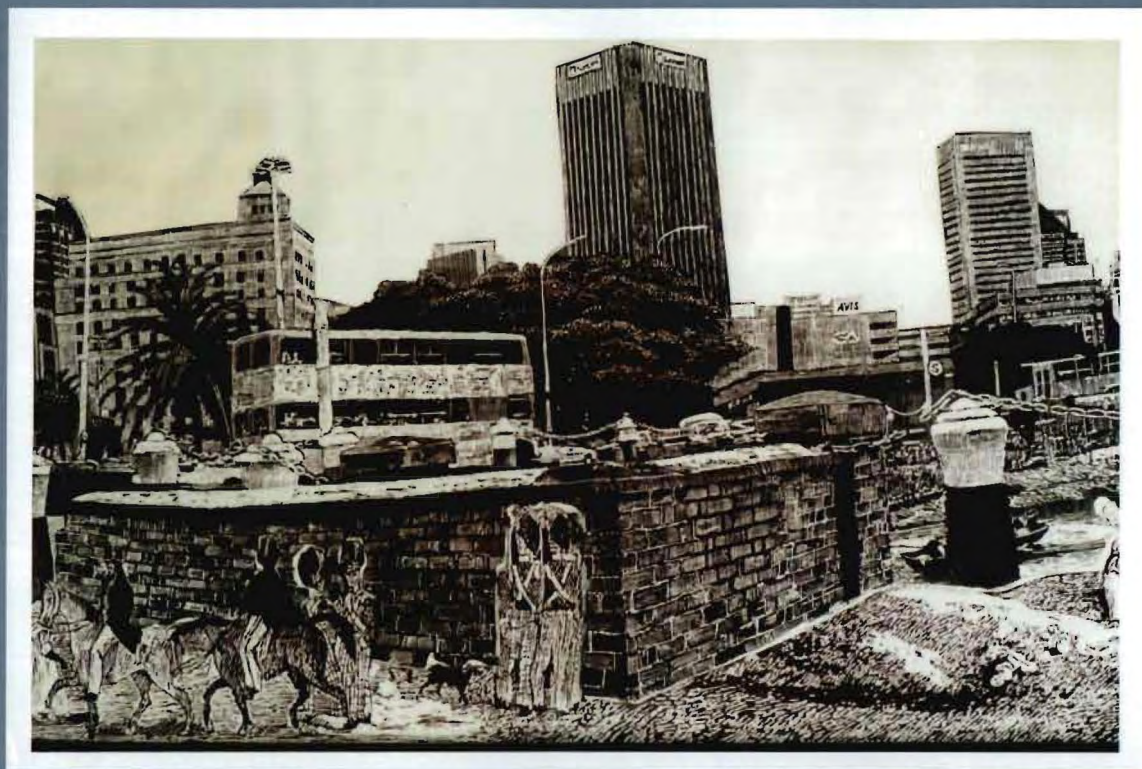


plate 23. detail – triptych – panorama central panel  
engraved acrylic sheet and lithographic ink

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