3 THEATRE/ARCHAEOLOGY

> It has so often been said that history does not exist, it is created by historians ... and then of course, decorated perhaps, if you are fortunate, even illuminated by poets, writers, painters, composers.
>
> (Greenaway 1993)

In a third phase, what we term 'theatre/archaeology', the two disciplines are no longer held discrete. They coexist within a **blurred genre** (Gregory 1993: 296; Tilley 1994: 1) or a science/ fiction, a mixture of narration and scientific practices, an integrated approach to recording, writing and illustrating the material past. Here archaeology and performance are jointly active in mobilising the past, in making creative use of its various fragments in forging cultural memory out of varied interests and remains, in developing cultural ecologies (relating different fields of social and personal experience in the context of varied and contradictory interests) and in their joint address to particular sites and themes, a significant resource in constructing and energising contemporary identities, personal, communal and regional. This necessitates a broader definition of possible objects of retrieval, new approaches to the characterisation of behaviour and action, different **ways of telling** and different types of recording and inscription, which can incorporate different orders of narrative. It suggests mutual experiments with modes of documentation which can integrate text and image, new approaches to museum practice and the creation of joint forms of presentation to address that which is, at root, ineffable.

In theatre/archaeology documents, ruins and traces are reconstituted as real-time event. In this chapter we attempt to show what this may involve. But we do not present theory, method and case study separately. Instead we have adopted a katachrestic format. There are three main interconnected sections set in several places or locales, real and typical, and dealing with various themes within the archaeological and performative. This is a combination of performed material, narratives and ruminations on the theory and practice of theatre/archaeology. At pivotal points we consider concepts of landscape, temporality, interpenetration, evocation as an oblique strategy of representation, site-specific theatre, story-telling, the guided visit, deep mapping, memory and identity - those practices which help constitute both city and country.

In this blurred genre there are convergences with other academic, artistic and cultural efforts. Here then is that symmetry, interpenetration, commingling of our practice and a particular focus of interest, a **heterotopia,** a ruined farm in West Wales, Esgair Fraith. A series of innovative approaches at site, off site and within the electronic media have interwoven the social history of the farms, the politics of afforestation, the architectural interpenetration of events and places, the

The spatial enclosure may enable the use of quieter tones of voice. However, if those outside are intended to hear what is going on, then the repercussions inside might be deafening!

And so in combining Tschumi, Goffman and Hall we begin to create a dizzying map of vocal potentials. Yet our constant premise must be: 'If the voice was used in this way then the effects might have been these.' In this way we do not monopolise the past but make a creative engagement with a given set of material circumstances. As our ancestors surely also did.

Walking in the past

As noted previously, Barrett (1994: 9f.) suggests that a prime feature of emerging sacred landscapes may have been procession, setting out from and arriving at henges, along avenues. Examination of the performative nature of procession might illuminate body practices of leaving, moving, entering; leading and following; observing and acting.

Procession is a release of energy, a concerted effort on a particular occasion. And whilst it may be purely a means of reaching site B from site A, it may indicate 'meaning through movement'. For, it manifests 'walking together', communal endeavour and vitality; it may denote renewal and invigoration. It has to begin and end somewhere. We can thus suppose that it has at least three phases: departure, journey and arrival. Prior to this may be preparation and organisation. And subsequently, change and dispersal. In each of these phases, different activities, different emotions and different modes of intercourse are evident.

Organisation takes place adjacent to the processional route. It requires space or area which may be especially designated. Its first period may be informal, including dressing, 'warming up', greeting fellow participants. This is followed by a semi-formal period of assembly in which an amorphous group begins to order itself. This may be the communication of the rules of engagement or a 'getting into line', the creation of the processional form without motion. Or it may involve the creation of another configuration from which the procession will emerge. This may resemble. a coil ready to unwind; or concentric rings of participants who will pass through some filtering aperture such as a porch. Departure is a setting out. It may involve a separation. And the revelation of participants and those left behind or abandoned. It may be accompanied by well-wishing, embraces, turning and waving, signs of regret and/or expectation. There may be explicit signals to begin, both aural, such as instrumental blasts or 'strike up the band', and visual, such as the hoisting of banners. For the participants the engagement may be instantaneous, experienced as a push from behind, or gradual, as the wave-like motion, which spreads from front to back, is experienced as 'following' or 'joining in'.

If there is to be a division of watchers and watched, then the moment of engagement is the moment at which distinction is drawn. It may be marked as the crossing of a threshold, an emergence from a private place of organisation into the public arena and the difference in formality and attitude this may engender for, or necessitate in, the participants. A narrow doorway may act as the filter through which an amorphous shape becomes a linear one. Even though they may make no direct appeal to the outside through the employment of spectacular techniques and improvisation in response to audience reaction there may be watchers and watched. If there are watchers and watched, then journey generates two basic and different experiences: moving and passing

and standing and being passed. Participants will rarely have an impression of the totality of the procession, experiencing it rather as a transitive 'being part of, as leading and/or following in two basic states: move and stop. Move may vary from slow to fast and may be subject to stylistic diversification. Stop may simply be 'marking time'. It may also include rest, the opportunity for stylistic change and energetic re-engagement. Those being passed, the watchers, will have a complex and individual impression of a three-dimensional organism with length but no face.

Journey may occur along a prescribed route and it may have an immutable sequence. Arrival may be experienced with a sense of satisfaction, accomplishment or relief. There may be an intensification of emotion towards climax and jubilation in conclusion. It may be accompanied by greetings, congratulations and the reintegration of watchers and watched.

When a procession encounters a resistance, when it 'hits the buffers' or comes to rest, it must change its nature in order to prevent its participants piling into each other! On some signal, it may simply halt and then fragment or disperse. It may, however, take up or adopt another shape or form. This may be suggested, and indeed channelled, by entry into another architecture, such as a church, or by the physical arrangement of those waiting. Or it may reorder itself in relation to a particular focus, such as a grave or fire. The procession thus becomes a filling, an encircling or an ordered dispersal. And as it comes apart, it may reveal, within its body, different orders of participants whose hierarchical status is suddenly reinforced by their elevation to raised areas or placement at the centre of circles. This may signal a change in activity and a new distinction between 'who the watchers' and 'who the watched'.

Our archaeological neolithic shades into Bronze Age. The landscape of southern Britain was inscribed in even more substantive ways by the construction of a range of ceremonial structures from the enigmatic banked enclosures of the cursuses to the great trilithon structures of Stonehenge. All required vast amounts of labour, using rudimentary tools such as deer horn picks and shoulderblade shovels. The fact that this may have been by the 'many' for the 'few' suggests hierarchies, literally the 'incrowd' and the 'outcrowd'. But this loses sight of the communality of labour, the recurrent, perhaps seasonal gathering, to work, to sweat, to talk, to build social realities. We see these sites as finished monuments, designed, built, preserved. But perhaps they were never completed, more like building sites or locations of changing practice.

Eventually the tombs were filled and blocked. The last acts included the reconstitution of individuals from scattered parts, the construction of 'virtual' individuals, the separation of piles from several individuals, the grouping of skull, mandible and one or two long bones, and the uniting of crania with different jaws (Shanks and Tilley 1982; Thomas 1999: 151). The latest tomb types have a long passage and a single chamber, with a mass of intermixed bones. In Brittany, at Les Pierres Plattes and at a date slightly earlier than in Britain, the passage turns through a right angle. Suddenly, you are bending, crawling, in total darkness. In torchlight, the walls are revealed to be covered in carvings - of ribs and torsos (Thomas and Tilley 1993): a passage like an internal organ. Your body is in a body, with bodies. Perhaps this 'theatre of death' was experienced alone as an extraordinary encounter with one's ancestors, a rite of passage, all one's senses alert. Or as a graded, deeper and deeper, access. Or perhaps it involved a guided reading, a performed interpretation for a small group, huddled in front of the images. At Gavrinis, the whole tomb interior is

its quality, its texture. And sometimes our journey is slow and laborious: using a dictionary, trying to decipher the scrawl, stopping to reflect. . .

> He'd seen the dog-shit first. Birdie said it was a flag. The Owner wrote, 'It was a flag'. But he knew dog-shit, had scraped it off his fingers, on his knees, dead drunk, in Bute Street. Nature displays nothing black here. And it was so black. Dog eat dog. Dog eat dog-shit. Dog eat man-shit. Man eat dog. Quote: They licked their cracked lips, unable to take their eyes off the delicate cutlets spread on the snow.' And his hand . . . pulsed.
>
> (Pearson/Brookes: *Dead Men's Shoes* 1997)

Georges Perec (1997: 13) suggests that This is how space begins, with signs traced on a blank page', as invention: space as the relationship between this word and that. So as I begin to write, to decide what is of significance to me, I begin a journey across the page. In later days I will come back to this map of my trip and try to remember why I made that mark, what it means, to reorientate myself in that field of ideas that is this chapter. Of course, the first question is how to begin: 'What pen shall I use? What shall I write and what not? What will be my strategy of notation . . . think/write, write/write . . . and how will it change?'

> And then there were paw marks, dozens of paw marks. And it dawned that they were second, that the Norskies, the dog-eaters, had beaten them. 'Many thoughts come to us and much discussion we have had', the Owner wrote.
>
> (Ibid.)

As a landscape, its whiteness is dazzling, matched only perhaps by the wastes of the Antarctic Plateau. Step onto it, and we can see a long way. Many miles before they reached the South Pole, Captain Scott and his team realised they would be second there.

> They'd found the tent easily enough, a little black job with a single bamboo pole. They wandered around a bit. Eight hundred miles to wander around, aimlessly. Bill sketched, as usual. Birdie took some photos eleven in all working the shutter with a piece of string. At first, they all changed places. Then he just sat down and let them move, around him. But what had they expected? A candy-striped barber's pole sticking out of the ice? Something, anything, different. And where was it exactly, this point from where everywhere else is north? 'Proceeding south' their telegram had said but the Norskies hadn't found it. And all they'd found was the Norskies.
>
> (Ibid.)

In his visionary work *Flat/and* of 1884, Edwin A. Abbott (1998) imagines a two-dimensional world - a vast sheet of paper - where the inhabitants are triangles, pentagons, hexagons and irregular figures. They move around freely on the surface but since all geographical shapes appear as straight lines when viewed edge on - and the edge is the only possible view in Flatland - then the inhabitants must feel around each other when they meet, to work out how many corners they've got, for proper recognition.

But we stand tall and this world is three-dimensional. Our senses are working overtime. Even

romance of the ruin and the phenomenology of decay. The elaboration of this **poetics** of the past is thus a process of cultural production which takes the remains of the past and makes something out of them in the present, involving various communities, various social and political constituencies. And such **critical romanticism** - an attitude suspicious of any final account of things - acknowledges the importance of the material past to communities, pays attention to the local and particular and to contested interpretations. It might help engender a **sense of place,** providing insights into regional and cultural planning.

Within the composite approaches of theatre/archaeology we might regard performance as. an experimental archaeology of the interpretive. And as information technology brings further challenges to the discrete nature of individual disciplines, archaeology and performance might be drawn into joint endeavours for which, as yet, we barely have names.

Landscape: walking

It begins with a sheet of whiteness, at once both page and landscape, a field for action. (And a niggling question: 'Whose sheet?')

> There is no seduction here. No half-hidden, half exposed. No objects of desire. No one to call you by name. No one to look you in the eye. No one to see you, from over there. No trees with the promise of shade. No verticals at all. Just an endless horizontal. The only possible cinematic 'shot' is the 'pan'. As easy to lose your mind as to lose your way.
>
> (Brith Gof: *Patagonia* 1992, text by Mike Pearson)

As a page, it awaits our mark. In George Orwell's novel *1984* (1990) Winston Smith's downfall in the totalitarian state begins when he finds a notebook in which he could write - criticism, biography, poetry - all potentially dangerous and subversive. Its whiteness then challenges us ... to begin. And as we write, a text forms and is frozen. Inevitably with nothing to guide us, it travels horizontally from left to right (though not perhaps if we are Japanese or Iranian or . . .), top to bottom, obliging the reader to follow our tracks in the same way we made them. First nothing, then a few signs which orientate us, and those who follow us, a rudimentary map. So writing plots a journey. But it is discontinuous, riddled with blanks, pauses, spaces over which we jump because we know the direction. And just occasionally we pause or we leap here and there, to the footnotes, to the index.

> It's worrying, being out in the desert, no frames for what's going on. A solitary figure on the horizon, too soon to know whether coming ... or going. But erect a vertical - a post for hitching, a doorway for standing, a wall for leaning - and desire begins. The desire for that position, that place.
>
> (Ibid.)

Our speeds and techniques of writing and reading vary according to the place, time, mood: we scribble notes, we scan-read, we compose our diary with care. And also according to the surface:

in this barren waste, we are aware of at least two phenomena: surface and climate. Beneath our feet the land may be rough or smooth, hot or cold, hard or soft. And the temperature, the climatic conditions - wind, rain, blizzard - may vary similarly. As yet this is a world mainly of horizontals for no verticals catch our eye, though at the horizon itself there may be a distinction between the land which stretches away from us and the vault of sky which covers us. And of course this vault is liable to spectacular variations, from towering clouds to the visual displays of the Aurora Borealis.

> Cold is when the snot freezes in your nostrils, is when the matter in your blisters turns to ice, is when your crystalline breath snaps like a fire-cracker and falls as icicles in your beard, is when you can cut off your thumb . . . and pass it round. Cold is when the nerves die and your teeth crumble, is when your body 'chatters' in paroxysms of vibration, is when your lips are so raw that even smiling is painful, is when the sweat freezes on your body and you jump up and down in a shower of splinters. And the daily hygiene ceremony? Cold is when you can shit in your pants . . . and shake out the frozen lumps.
>
> (Pearson/Brookes: *Dead Men's Shoes* 1997)

And perhaps too we suspect that there is depth to this plane, that we are not suspended in mid-air, but that there is something under us, layers, strata. The law of **super-position,** the basic principle of geology and archaeology, states simply that, layer upon layer, the deeper you go, the older it gets - to dig down is to dig into the past.

We look, we listen, we touch . . . we begin to inhabit and measure this world through our sensory experience of it. 'And in so far as my hand knows hardness and softness, and my gaze knows the moon's light, it is as a certain way of linking up with the phenomenon and communicating with it' (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 317).

> To be human is both to create this distance between the self and that which is beyond and to attempt to bridge this distance through a variety of means - through perception (seeing, hearing, touching), bodily actions and movements, and intentionality, emotion and awareness residing in systems of belief and decision-making, remembrance and evaluation.
>
> (Tilley 1993: 12)

A.7

B.7

S.7

The human body then is the fundamental mediation point between thought and the world (ibid.: 13; Barrett 1994: 14) and it is at the beginning of our understanding of space(s).

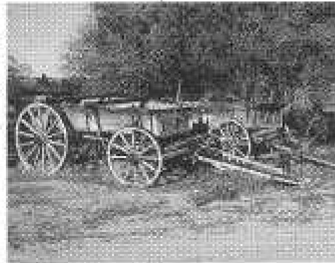
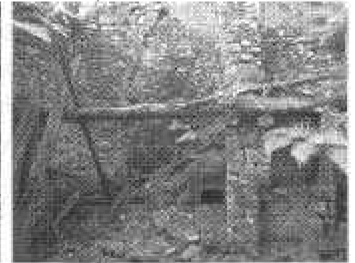
So as we stand and look out, we can begin to orient ourselves: to make distinctions between left/right, top/bottom, within reach/beyond reach, within sight/beyond sight, here-and-there polarities. We begin to make perceptual judgements about distance and direction, near or far, this way or that way. We begin to understand this place through its capacity to enable or restrict our bodily actions and movements. Of course, our emotional response and awareness springs from our previous experiences and from our beliefs and ethical stances. If this were a nuclear test site, we might not want to be standing here; if a sign had told us to 'keep off we might not feel able to anyway!'

> Cold is when your breath solders your balaclava to your face and your head is encased in a block of ice, to look up or down impossible without inclining the body. Is when your clothes turn to armour, hard as boards, sticking out in folds and angles, and dressing is a three-man process of bending and thumping to achieve body shape. Is when your sleeping bag becomes an icy coffin, prised open with care lest it shatters like glass. Real cold is when you adopt the pulling position immediately on rising so that your clothes can freeze, in the most useful position, as you stand.
>
> (Pearson/Brookes: *Dead Men's Shoes* 1997)

We begin to walk. We feel the ground beneath our feet, the wind in our face. And as we do, we leave traces. We are **involved** in the landscape (Kastner and Wallis 1998: 114ff.). We leave the prints of our body, the touch of flesh on metal and stone. We constantly wear things out, with our hands, our feet, our backs, our lips. And we leave the traces of singular actions: the unintentional, the random, the intimate, unplanned touch of history's passing: we break twigs, move pebbles crush ants ... all the signs that trackers learn to read. We leave footprints, as Neil Armstrong did on the Moon. It was when Robinson Crusoe found Man Friday's footprint that he realised he was not alone and colonialism was born: there was another being present, to subjugate (Phillips 1997).

And we discard things - we throw things away, we lose things - material which, in years to come, others will regard as artefacts, as the remains of past actions. In Antarctica, where nothing

E.7 O.7 M.7 R.7

vegetation: from grassland to jungle. Occasionally fires rage across the land, but as yet we have made no fundamental attempt to change it. And for many millennia of human history we lived on the land in this way.

Acting out the land

> **Walter Benjamin once said, "When someone goes on a trip he has something to tell about." He'd always told stories. On the march he built their teetering structures, castles in the air, line after line, twist upon twist, topping them off with just the right punch-line. They filled the time, kept his mind off food...and grievance. They held him in the present. Every event he could romanticise, mythologise -'the compulsive raconteur' - forever talking, joking never bloody shutting up. To defuse the tensions of the Owner's moodiness, irritability, depression. And now, they collapsed. And he ... withdrew, went quiet. He said ... nothing. He'd ... lost the thread. He ... couldn't even remember how to speak English.**
>
> (Pearson/Brookes: *Dead Men's Shoes* 1997)

Late in 1911, Captain Robert Falcon Scott attempted to walk to the South Pole accompanied by four others, three officers and a seaman. The fate of the officers is well enough known: they kept their diaries to the end. It was they who wrote the script. The final three died in their small tent just eleven miles from a depot of food and fuel. But the Welshman, the sailor Edgar Evans, remains enigmatic, always marginal, slightly out of focus, a preternatural story-teller, silent and silenced. The polar journey is the theme of *Dead Men's Shoes* (Pearson/Brookes 1997).

The solo narrative was performed against a forty-foot long white screen upon which seven computer-controlled projectors showed dozens of images of Scott's expeditions: original photographs - including those eleven taken from the camera found on Bower's body - the two most of us know but also the one in which they all moved from shivering; the one in which the shutter went off accidentally, casting the shadow of Bowers's bulky body across the group - blown-up, trimmed, enhanced, modified, changed; creating a parallel narrative - complementary, contradictory; casting doubts on the veracity of the Scott myth. And more poignantly than the text can ever hope to be because we know these men are dead, we know how it will end, we have the evidence: the bodies. All except two. Oates . . . who 'went outside'. And Evans . . . who lies somewhere out on the Beardmore Glacier.

At the Scott Polar Research Institute in Cambridge are the albums of photographs of the earlier 1902 *Discovery* expedition, the first occasion upon which Evans accompanied Scott to the Antarctic. In the middle of one volume are two extraordinary pictures, one of a group of men in *drag*, the other in *black-face . . .*

> On 25 June 1902 the shore-hut, renamed 'The Royal Terror Theatre', opened its doors. There was stage, footlights, and a backdrop showing the ship and the volcano, Mount Terror. Chairs for the officers, benches for the men. Part One of the programme was

rots, you can still find the remains - cans, harnesses, clothes - of Scott's expedition, Shackleton's expedition, Amundsen's expedition . . .

> They found the old 'Discovery' hut, the 'Royal Terror Theatre', full of ice. Shackleton, the bastard, had left the window open. But it was all still there, as if everyone had just stepped out. A sixpenny copy of 'The Story of Bessie Costrell', read and left open, the Contemporary Review, Girl's Own Paper and, encased in a block of ice, Stanley Weyman's 'My Lady Rotha' which was thawed out and read by everyone, the excitement increased by the fact that half the book was missing. Mind, he preferred Alexander Dumas or Dum-ass as he called him, something with 'a bit more plot', 'The Three Musketeers'. On the table, bread rolls with the impression of bites given them in 1909, sauces, pickles and a half-empty tin of gingerbread as crisp as the day it was opened. In the tent, five hymn-books, Bovril, Rowntree's cocoa and three-year-old cheese and biscuits, which they ate. In the drifts, the hoof marks of ponies long-dead. And the wrappings from Frank Cooper's rhubarb, Tate's granulated sugar, Heinz baked beans, Lyle's golden syrup, Colman's cornflower... It was eerie, ghost-like as if the people would walk back in at any moment.
>
> (Pearson/Brookes: *Dead Men's Shoes* 1997)

What of our sheet of paper? Perhaps because we have only one sheet, we have begun to try and fill all the space, writing smaller, writing down the margins and ultimately writing over our own writing. We begin to create a **palimpsest** - writing over writing over writing - in a kind of stratigraphy of text.

Perhaps we became frustrated and threw it away, a love letter that wouldn't compose itself. But as we retrieve it, we realise something unusual. Points which were once separated in time and space are now adjacent, in a new non-linear relationship. And perhaps this is how history really is: as our memories constantly fold into each other, when we meet people we haven't seen for years or visit childhood haunts. We try to straighten it out. But of course we can't. It has developed a kind of topography of creases, folds, bumps, rips, all of which will now influence how we might move across it.

> They all kept their diaries, writing for another audience, in another time, another place. What they didn't realise was that they were writing a tragedy.
>
> (Pearson/Brookes: *Dead Men's Shoes* 1997)

But these are not the only marks we might make. The artist Yves Klein dragged and rolled painted bodies across paper (see Goldberg 1988: 144-8) and Jackson Pollack dripped paint onto his in tracks which mimicked the trajectories of his actions (see Lewis 1999).

And our landscape? Twin forces are here too at work, changing its nature: environmental erosion, the steady run off from rain, the catastrophe of flash floods and the endlessly protracted processes of geology, gradually bending, tilting, folding, fracturing . . . So the land becomes seamed and detailed, with hills and valleys. High points appear which obstruct our walk but which also reveal new vistas and horizons for the first time. And gradually it becomes covered in

and similitude. Favourite places, places to avoid. Neighbours and their stories. Textures, smells. Also of play, imagination, experiment. Finding the best location for doing things. Creating worlds under our own control, fantasy landscapes. A place of exaggeration and irrelevance. Of making rules and breaking rules, of learning to distinguish between 'do' and 'don't do'. A place of improvised responses, rules of thumb - where, as Ned Thomas said (1991: 86), 'the child first learns everything which is of real importance, history and geography'. And of which D.J. Williams noted (1987: 12): 'when the many things I remember actually happened, I haven't much of an idea. But I can locate most of them with a degree of certainty - where such and such a thing happened and where I was standing when I heard what I heard.'

- *Y fro* (neighbourhood, home district, heimat), where, as Thomas again observes (1991: 85), 'everyone in the community is joined to everyone else by a mesh of stories and incidents if not by family relationships'.
- *Cynefin* (habitat), that area where we feel we belong, the immediate environment, the surroundings which impress themselves upon us in the formative years between 5 and 15.

Bedwyr Lewis Jones suggests (1985: 122) that land and language are two strands that tie the Welsh-speaker to his cynefin. There are other links, such as remembrance of things past . . . Cynefin is more than landscape and scenery. It is a piece of earth where a community has lived a community with whom we identify. In this bond, language has its essential place, and here again the local factor is to the fore. The language of each *bro* has a distinctive hue ... a storehouse of the transmitted legacies of experiences and imaginative constructions of those particular parts.

In these notions, landscape is not separate from the lives lived there. But they are cognitive devices - not precise territorial zones, rigorously defined, delineated and patrolled - and they vary (in importance) place to place, individual to individual. This is slippery ground, places without firm boundaries, places which perhaps only the poet can map. Such notions have long informed and animated the Welsh poetic imagination: the performance of poetry and narrative are simultaneously acts of memory and creation. As poet Waldo Williams writes 'This was my window, these harvestings and sheep shearings' ('Preseli' trans. Waldo Williams cited in Nicholas 1975: 8). T H. Parry-Williams (1974: 58-9) examines the ways in which the natural environment moulds human personality and the relationship between family and locality, body and land in his native Snowdon mountains: 'This is not a mere madman's fantasy-thinking. There are bits of me scattered all over that land.'

The notions circumscribe that area where we feel we belong, what Raymond Williams called 'an attachment to place, the landscape, in which we first lived and learned to see' (Williams 1973: 84), the immediate neighbourhood, the window through which we view the world, a personal construct of land, language, history. The site of familiarity and identification. Where scenery is not separate from the lives lived there. Where the minutiae of morphology and tradition are preserved in idiom, dialect, proverb, lore. Where history is experienced as contemporaneous and the past still operates on the present. A ground level experience, landscape not as scenery but as a social construct, a **palimpsest,** marked and named by the actions of ancestors. 'All present experience

'various singers'. But Part Two was 'Ticket to Leave', a screaming comedy in one act. He got 'dragged up' - in full make-up - and he gave 'em the works. The house was in uproar, no need of a plot. And a waste of time learning the lines with such a loud-mouthed prompter. And the notices from The Owner? 'Rarely been so gorgeously entertained. Great histrionic talent'. By 6 August, it was minus 40 Fahrenheit outside - 70 degrees of frost - just right for the first appearance of 'Massa Johnson and the Dishcloth Nigger Minstrel Troupe'. He made suits of vivid colours and grotesque forms from calico, shirt fronts and enormous collars from paper and wigs from rope dipped in red ink. 'Bones' and 'Skins' had movable top-knots worked by pulling strings . . . just like Birdie's camera. They presented jokes and conundrums in authentic 'nigger' language and sang 'Oh, dem Golden Slippers, oh dem golden slippers' and 'Way down upon de Swansea Ribber'.

(Ibid.)

Yet we tend not to roam endlessly: we stick to a patch; we become familiar with it; we grow attached to it; we begin to feel 'at home' there. Our human activities become inscribed within a landscape such that every cliff, large tree, stream becomes a familiar place. The landscape then becomes embedded with memory. 'Daily passages through the landscape become biographical encounters for individuals, recalling traces of past activities and previous events and reading of signs - a split log here, a marker stone there' (Tilley 1994: 27). We begin to give names to significant places - descriptive names, names which commemorate certain events. And certain places we visit recurrently, along paths that become well-worn. Our familiarity begins to informs an art, a right way of moving around in the landscape. So we might see landscape as 'a series of named locales, a set of relational places linked by paths, movements and narratives' (ibid.: 34).

Walking then is a spatial acting out, a kind of narrative, and the paths and places direct our choreography. This regular moving from one point to another is a kind of mapping, a kind of narrative understanding. Paths link familiar places and bring the possibility for repeated actions. Different paths enact different stories of action. Walking is like a story, a series of events, for which the land acts as a mnemonic. And we are aware that our ancestors have also walked these paths no more so than in Australia where features in the landscape - often invisible to the uninitiated eye - mark the sites of ancestral acts (Tilley 1994: 37f.). To travel across such a landscape is to remember it into being, it is sedimented with human significances. And the pathways are song-lines, long narrative excursions which remember places in song. To travel the land is to sing the world into being again (Thomas 1999: 35). And Aborigine maps - geometric patterns of lines and dots - represent not only places but creatures and events in the story of the locale.

Folded in the land

It is the matrix of particular folds and creases, the vernacular detail, which attaches us to a place. In Wales there are a number of spatial notions which describe the Welsh **sense of place.** These notions operate as a series of cognitive maps. *Y filltir sqwar* (the square mile), the intimate landscape of one's childhood, that patch of ground we know in a detail we will never know anywhere again. Site of discovery and putting names to things, people and places. Working with difference

contains ineradicable traces of the past which remain part of the constitution of the present' (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 1998: 174). To represent such places adequately we might need a **deep map:** such depth is cultural and historical. For as Ned Thomas again suggests (1991: 72):

> even the landscape takes on a different quality if you are one of those who remembers. The scenery is then never separate from the history of the place, from the feeling for the lives that have been lived there . . . always the outlines of the scenery are deep in the Welsh consciousness as if scored in thick paint on canvas.

And as Waldo Williams suggests, we are *'Keeping house in a cloud of witnesses'* ('Pa beth yw dyn? 'What is Man?' in Williams 1991: 64):

> Me? I nearly went back, once. Wilf died and the family house lay empty. But there was nothing there for me: "There's nuthin' 'ere for ya', duck". So we sold it quickly, cheaply, to avoid the pain of watching it decay. 'Limestone cottage. Needs modernising. Suitable project'. Project: more like a bloody attack! They hacked off the rendering outside, chipped off the plasterwork inside, pulled down the false ceilings. All the patinas of occupancy, they destroyed. Everything Wilf had dreamed of, had fantasised about, they found: oak beams, inglenook fireplace, priest's hole, paving made from old grave-stones. 1670 they reckoned, give or take. And then they dug up the floor. . . and the end fell off . . . finished up with a pile of oolite. Me Mam wasn't sorry!
>
> Our family house has fallen down. But it has yet to disappear. For we make the house . . . and the house makes us. We are of one body ... Of course, we are in the house: it is marked by our presence . . . and by our passing. With each new layer of wall-paper, each new lick of paint, each new change of surface, colour, texture, the family writes its story: each repair or decoration another paragraph in our history, a crucial moment of discussion, argument, decision and communal action . . . And every house bears the scars of our actions: scuffs on the skirting-board, spilled coffee on the carpet . . .
>
> It's in these traces - the result of accident and habit, event and ritual - that the family's biography is revealed. And now all this is lying on the village tip. Our family house has fallen down . . .
>
> But the house is also in us. The house in which we were raised is physically inscribed in us. 'The feel of the tiniest latch has remained in our hands' (Bachelard 1964: 15). Enter that house again and 'the most delicate gestures - the earliest gestures - suddenly come alive, are still faultless' (ibid.). We remember where and how to turn, to sit, to bend, to lean, to reach . . . when to stoop to avoid banging the head. Here is that network of contacts which our body remembers. For hands: knobs, handles, switches, taps, window latches, locks, banister. For bottom: toilet, chairs; ears, eyes, mouth, feet, heels, knees . . . 'We are a diagram of the functions of inhabiting that particular house, and all other houses are but variations on that theme' (ibid.).
>
> In a tin shack in Queensland, in a jerrybuilt castle in Ceredigion, in a buffalo-hide tent

in Canada, in a terrace in Cardiff, that house is there with us ... in a way of sitting, a way of slicing, a way of sleeping, in ways we barely discern. We may emigrate, integrate, colonise, go feral, go native, lose ourselves in a wilderness of tundra or jungle, in a barren desert of hatred, in the wastes of the city, in the vastness of a foreign language. But we can never leave them. We can never wipe the slate clean. For occasionally as we reach for an unfamiliar knob, we unlock the familiar cupboard of memory, of all those other times . . . The 'book' from which we learn our vision of the world is read with the body. And our family house has fallen down . . . (see Bourdieu 1977: 89ff.)

(Pearson/Brookes: *The Man Who Ate His Boots . . .* 1998)

Walking, looking, marking out

'A working country is hardly ever a landscape. The very idea of landscape implies separation and observation' (Williams 1973: 120). How easily the notion of 'land-scape' becomes a purely pictorial construct, a framing of artificial viewpoints and perspectives, the appreciation and consumption of artistic artifice. In Welsh, there are two words for landscape: *tirlun* and *tirwedd. Tirlun,* which includes the words *tir* (ground) and *Hun* (picture), implies a pictorial construct, something to be apprehended by looking, something available for the appreciation and consumption of the visitor, a commodity: viewpoint, perspective, vista, frame. *Tirwedd* has more geographical connotations. But both can be represented by maps, those colourful virtual documents where rivers are blue, roads yellow, forests green. And both concepts work with surface, with morphology.

Thomas Johnes must have hired some of the local silver miners from Cwmystwyth to do the job. You walk past the remains of the iron suspension bridge, along the edge of the deep river gorge. The path turns a corner and the note of the river changes - something ahead, as yet unseen. But instead of turning off, away, up and over the back of the rocks, a neat tunnel opens into the hillside. It is designed as a light trap, with a 90-degree turn halfway along. It funnels the noise of the torrent as you half stumble along to find the light at the end. Turn to the left and the tunnel exit, squared off neatly by the miners, frames the view, right into the midst of the waterfall.

Landscape has connotations of a pictorial perspective, from a fixed point of view, a piece of scenery, a visual phenomenon. And the contemplation of landscape has been a cultivated pursuit which involved a lot of screwing up the eyes, moving to and fro to get the view right. This is an active reconstruction of the land in the imagination into a composition. The best perspectives - where the scene is perceived to be arranged in lateral bands away from the viewer. And names were given to particular effects.

Edmund Burke (1998) suggested that the **sublime,** a mood prompted in the viewer by some overwhelming or awe-inspiring natural feature, should create an unsettling fear or astonishment. Sublime objects, such as the ocean, are vast and painful, objects of terror. On the other hand, the picturesque which emerged in the 1790s was based on variety, intricacy and partial concealments that excite active curiosity. It accepted real environmental change rather than an idealised view of nature, preferring foreground side-screens with middle and background of differing shades. Ruins and humble cottages and farm animals were regarded as more picturesque than monuments and mansions. And it inspired 'picturesque tourism', particularly in Wales.

It is perhaps not surprising that concepts of the picturesque were worked out on the Hafod estate near Aberystwyth in the late eighteenth century, and the wilderness made wilder, made more natural, by the strategic planting of trees and the building of waterfalls and gardens. Thomas Johnes worked to organise his property according to the principles of the picturesque aesthetic. The elements of roughness and wildness were essential. Johnes built paths which introduced the visitor to a sequence of contrasting scenes as perfect pictures, even if this meant building waterfalls. There were dynamic contrasts between sheltered paths in the riverside meadows and dark, gloomy depths of the overgrown torrents. 'All that is here done, has been to remove obstructions,. reduce the materials and conceal the art; and we are no where presented with attempts to force these untamed streams or indeed to invent anything' (Cumberland 1996: 6).

Simultaneously, other changes were occurring. The enclosures of the late eighteenth century were fundamental in completing the landscape of lowland Britain which we still see today. For centuries, much of the English landscape was of large, open fields surrounding relatively isolated villages and extensive sheep-walks. The characteristic sense of space was circular, around the village. Agricultural improvement swept all this away; above all it introduced linearity. It was about measuring and rationality. The large fields were ironed out, broken up and reallocated, hedges planted, roads straightened, ditches dug, the details of topography erased, the minute and intricate divisions of landscape abolished: all was utility and functionality. And the **sense of place** was threatened.

One of the casualties of this change was the poet John Clare, whose own village Helpston was enclosed in 1809; his own attachment to a particular lived experience of landscape was severed. It is the form of Clare's poetry itself which makes a stand against such imposed linearity in its description of place. So the landscape is presented a multiplicity of simultaneous experiences, with a tendency towards disorder. He attempts in his work to express a manifold, or continuum, of related impressions. In 'Emmonsails Heath in Winter' (Clare 1967: 74), John Barrell. (1972) identifies his use of hypotaxis to describe this experience, through the use of words such as 'while', 'beside'. Even in the following section which tends towards parataxis, he is *in* the landscape: he sees the woodcock, feels the bog beneath his feet and hears the fieldfare simultaneously.

Up flies the bouncing woodcock from the bridge
Where a black quagmire quakes beneath the tread
The fieldfare chatter in the whistling thorn

[Ibid]

Reading into the place

The attempts to enclose Ceredigion in West Wales were particularly fraught, for they challenged a set of relationships with a locale which were bound in a set of traditional and customary rights: the right to cut peat and turf for fuel, the right to pasture sheep and cattle, the right to squat and to build upon the common. People resisted, long and violently, loath to believe that any action by the gentry would benefit common people. Somehow the Commissioners finished their work but

then sold part of the land to a young Lincolnshire man called Augustus Brackenbury to defray their costs. When Brackenbury tried to prevent customary access to his land the trouble really began.

On Sunday 23 August 1998, Mike Pearson walked for five miles across Mynydd Bach, near the village of Trefenter, south of Aberystwyth: following footpaths, sheep trails, farm tracks and wind-farm access roads; winding along a line, as the crow flies, from Llyn Eiddwen to Pwllclai. He was wearing leather boots, leather gaiters, embroidered waistcoat, frock-coat, top hat, lilac gloves . . . radio microphone, battery unit, earpiece and receiver, and carrying a halogen lamp. Victorian gentleman meets hi-tech in the creative frictions of anachronism. He was accompanied by collaborator Mike Brookes, who carried a backpack radio transmitter and a torch. But they were not entirely alone: out on the mountain sat a BBC engineer in his relay car; in the Radio Ceredigion studio in Aberystwyth were other collaborators, all chattering excitedly, non-stop, in our headsets. Company members managed the traffic out on a tiny one-track road. And across the mountain were scattered groups of people, huddled in groups, sitting in their cars, doing something which they probably haven't done since the 1950s, listening communally to the radio. They were all engaged in, and with, *The First Five Miles . . . /Rhyfel y Sais Bach,* a performance work for radio broadcast and live performer. And all probably equally 'in the dark'.

The conceptual bases of the project were simple enough. At 9 p.m. a local radio station, Radio Ceredigion, began broadcasting a specially created bilingual drama/documentary on the abortive attempts of Augustus Brackenbury to enclose 850 acres of peat-bog and mountainside near Trefenter in the 1820s, sold to him by the Commissioners to defray their costs, and the concerted efforts of local people to prevent him. In what was to become known as 'The War of the Little Englishman', we see worked out all those fears and uncertainties which the enclosures, which the change in the nature of place, which the erasure of familiar topographies, brought to Britain. And the first use of those techniques of resistance - nocturnal meetings, threatening letters, maiming sheep, parading effigies, use of disguise (including men dressing as women) - which were later employed in the Rebecca Riots, against toll-gates, in Wales (see Rude 1981; Molloy 1983) and the Captain Swing riots, against the mechanisation of agriculture, in England (Rude 1981).

Simultaneously, we began walking.

> Whilst I was permitted to remain within the range of the light from the fire I saw that several of the persons assembled had covered their faces with handkerchiefs and disguised themselves. I believe that other of the men were dressed in women's clothes and that the two who detained me were armed with guns. I did not know any of the persons so assembled neither did I those who detained me. Nor can I describe their features for they held me in such a position that I was rendered incapable from restraint and fear to mark their features or dress.
>
> (Pearson/Brookes: *The First Five Miles . . .* 1998)

From time to time, my voice, as that of Brackenbury, was mixed live into the programme, travelling from my microphone to the backpack transmitter to the BBC vehicle to a satellite and thence to Aberystwyth. Or so we initially, naively thought. In fact, from the satellite it travelled to

Goonhilly Down in Cornwall (images of Raymond Baxter enthusing 'Yes, yes I can see a man's face' from Goonhilly, during the first transatlantic link, come to mind) and then by land-line to Wales. Well, perhaps . . . There is a chance that, to reach Aberystwyth, it was automatically switched to the next nearest tracking station, which is in Norway. Trefenter - Norway - Aberystwyth. And in all this, it was essential that I never heard my own voice, for it was being broadcast almost a second after I spoke. It was elsewhere, disembodied, travelling, boundless . . .

The broadcast itself was in stereo, with the Welsh texts panned towards the left and the English towards the right. Through this - and by attributing the two languages to voices of different. gender, tone and mode - we attempted a form of bilingualism which is not about direct translation. It is rather about the coexistence of two languages, simultaneously saying different things and in different ways in such a way that the individual ear can favour one or the other. For the English ear then, the Welsh perhaps becomes a *melissma,* a sonic environment equating to that milieu within which the historical events occurred. For the Welsh ear, the English text - particularly that of the original documents and legal depositions - has all the authority, pomposity and presupposition of the colonial experiment as it was worked out, internally, in Wales. And hence it becomes a kind of static or white noise - background noise, relentless, ever present, but never saying much.

The soundtrack - a music for violin, guitar, and drums - was at once provisional, improvised and on the verge of falling to pieces. Most of the texts were spoken by actors. We had hoped to include the voices of local people who had family stories about Brackenbury. We did record Beti Ty'n Draenen (House in the Thorns) singing a ballad about 'Y Sais Bach', in her kitchen, eating fairy cakes, then discussing what it is like to learn Welsh, to be without an accent, to be close but never quite close enough. But only during the broadcast, and immediately after, did the conversations begin, did opinions clash, did details of memory begin to emerge: anecdotal, fragmentary, speculative ... all those things which we might never regard as authentic history but which go to make. up the **deep map** of the locale.

Our greatest disappointment was that the police helicopter couldn't fly. It was to have tracked my walk with a circular pool of light, pointing at Pearson but at the same time moving on, never turning the landscape into a pictorial backdrop for the performance, never appropriating it, never illuminating it, never pretending that this story of colonialism is of the place. A point rather than a perspective, the landscape as a place to be *in* rather than to be *against.* But the weather was foul - strong winds, low cloud - and the pilot decided it was too dangerous to fly. Of course, we should have expected this. This is, after all, where they built the wind-farm.

I dressed at 'Tan y Castell', 'Below the Castle', down on the bog. In the next field one can see the moat which Brackenbury dug to protect his second house, a provocative fortress-like tower with slit windows. To little avail. The mob demolished and burned it as quickly as they had done the first. Every time he tried to build - fences, houses - huge mobs appeared, often accosting him, and for years. Down the road is ('Cofadail' 'Monument') his third house, where they finally left him in peace.

In our walking we eventually reached Brackenbury's mountain estate. Scattered across the plateau are the remains of maybe a dozen farms. By the 1890s, there was a community of

perhaps ninety people living here, prospering in that agricultural boom during which so many houses in West Wales were built, and so many traditional long-houses demolished as old-fashioned. By the depression of the 1930s, there were none. Dai Morris bought all the tenancies piecemeal but he never moved people back onto the land. He had made his money as a builder in the South Wales valleys and he knew where profit lay. Every farm he stripped: slate roofs, timber work, anything that moved. Used to go up with a hand-cart. Like Brackenbury he just wanted the shooting and the fishing. In years to come their cleanliness will present an archaeological conundrum!

But the land was exhausted. What looks like natural grass today, it has taken Dai Williams thirty years to grow. When he first came here it was nothing but moss, the result of overcropping and bad husbandry and of squatting the land. He professed to know little of history but it was he who showed me the banks and ditches built by Brackenbury, the sunken roads, the stone gateposts with holes bored right through them for the iron bolts; he who showed us two *tai-unnos.*

In the eighteenth century, squatters believed in the existence of a traditional law which stated if they could build a house overnight and get a roof on and a fire going by dawn, then they where entitled to the land. And they could lay claim to that within the compass of an axe, thrown from the door in all directions. They cropped it to exhaustion. One can identify the *tai-unnos* because they have three necessities nearby: a small quarry, running water and a peat bog. The geology helped, alternating layers of building stone and shale. Chip out the shale and you can break off stone of different thicknesses for everything, from flag-stones to gable-ends. Here we were on the Telychian deposits of the Llandovery series of the Silurian. (Interesting that the three earliest periods of geological history have Welsh names: Cambrian, Ordovician, Silurian . . . four, if you count the Pre-Cambrian - the 'Before Welsh' - before outline, before topography, before people, before language. The geologists were here too.) Most have the remains of a rectangular banked garden, the hedges now grown out into full trees; several have potato graves, pits for storing the precious crop. The current map shows a few open squares, the symbols for deserted building. That of 1906 shows Blaen-Camddwr, Garn-fach, Pant-yr-ala, Esgair-ddu, Lluest las, Blaen Wyre-isaf, Blaen Wyre-uchaf . . . The names go, with the people. As John Aubrey had it: *mors etiam saxis nominibusque venit:* death comes even to stones and names.

And in each is a ruined hearth, *yr aelwyd,* point of revolve, the focus of family life. Each to his or her own seat or place, holding together, creating, a world picture by talking, gossip, stories, incidents, anecdotes, genealogies, memories, opinions, biographies, thoughts for the day. The approvals and disapprovals of family lore and communal tradition, told *soto voce* in whispers; opinions expressed openly to an unforgiving world; incidents worked and reworked, endlessly. The site of eulogy and elegy. Also of daydreams, shadows, personal reflection (Peate 1972). 'For our house is our corner of the world. It is our first universe, a real cosmos in every sense of the word' (Bachelard 1964: 4). And around each - *y filltir sqwar* and *y fro,* a world of infinite detail without foreground and background, where anything is potentially significant, where anything can take the eye.

Long after the broadcast of *The First Five Miles . . .* had finished, Pearson and Brookes were still walking.

Site-specific performance - work which is specific to this place and no other place - addresses such depth. But of course, it might equally be in conflict with, or indifferent to, site. For these places are no essentialist Eden. Here too was incest, suicide, sexual abuse, misogyny, ruthless materialism and religious hypocrisy. And all that which comes from elsewhere, via trade, immigration, the media . . .

And we have doubts about the **appropriation** of place (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 1998: 19). Perhaps then it is only in landscapes such as Mynydd Bach, places of contest, where claims and counter-claims have long been made, where issues of land and language constantly rub against each other, where we can, and indeed must, create work which has none of the dogmatism of the theatrical performance, of architectronics and that distanced aesthetic - framed up, laid out for our pictorial inspection and approval. So that the very **inauthenticity** of the performance allows room for manoeuvre, allows stances, of ownership, identity and interpretation, to be confirmed, challenged, confounded at the same time.

The First Five Miles . . . was constituted in the non-place of the airwaves, blowing in the wind, the visual screen turned down, the theatrical experience including environmental apprehension without it ever becoming a backdrop, personal interpretation including immediate phenomenological involvement with the place, discontinuities of attention, simultaneity of sensual experience. We attempted to reconstitute the notion of audience as a spatially and temporally discrete entity. Such work makes no claims to authenticity, to speak 'on behalf of. And as immigrants, immigrants into a cultural minority, perhaps the best that can ever be done is to articulate the immigrant position, which is always at once critical and desirous of integration, through work which is fractured and provisional. For the immigrant can never be of this place, never have the knowledge, the words for people and places which come from having been raised in this place. There will always be tension between what you know, what you can find out and what you can never know.

And that tension we might now best represent technologically. In *The First Five Miles . . .* the fascinations are twofold. First, where was it being generated, in one place, or many places? Second, how was it being apprehended? How did the audience decide to constitute themselves: deciding to sit snugly at home or to be out on the mountain? Favouring English or Welsh? The work is a reading 'onto' and 'into' rather than a reading 'from'. And it complements, rather than subsumes, local knowledge and traditions of interpretation. Stirring up memories, thoughts of past times . . .

And it poses a series of questions: How can we read a landscape? How do memories attach to places? What is the relationship between landscape, experience and identity? How do we make sense of the multiplicity of meanings that resonate from landscapes and memories? What constitutes a sense of place? What is the relationship between personal and public memory? How does place act as a mnemonic for memory? How do we use the past to help create a sense of identity? How are notions of place operational upon us? Are they still relevant in an era of mobility and notions of shifting identity?

And how can we tell about them?

Cityscape: walking

Desire maps

Their story begins on ground level, with footsteps.

(DeCerteau 1988: 97)

In his book *A Seventh Man* (see Berger 1975), John Berger describes the experience of the migrant worker, elaborating the great pilgrimage of the twentieth century, the journey from the village to the city. Most of us now live in cities, it is the urban, the congregation of strangers, which defines our contemporary experience. We can never know more than a fraction of our fellow inhabitants and we can never know the whole geography in any kind of detail. We are destined to be one amongst a great many, 'so many lives, jostling, colliding, disrupting, adjusting, recognising, settling, moving again to new spaces' (Williams 1973: 164).

On 4 November 1999 Mike Pearson walked for eight hours in the city of Copenhagen with archaeologist Jonna Hansson in a project entitled *Footloose.* It was organised by the Interactive Urban Landscapes initiative. The strategy was to constitute 'walking in the city' as a kind of anthropological and archaeological enquiry. Having identified shoes as a potential area of non-contentious enquiry, they aimed to work from the particular - in examining those moments, places and encounters where foot and city meet - to the general - in proposing such an approach as the creation of a **desire map;** to begin by knowing what they want to look at, and proceeding without fixed itineraries, without maps; to work at ground level, eyes down, close to the surface; to reveal the city through purposeful activity, taking full responsibility for their own actions and intrusions.

- *Pursuing:* manifestations and traces of a particular theme or topic which constitute an object of desire: shoes.
- *Rambling:* guided by disciplinary interest and expertise (as archaeologists we look at the vernacular, in detail), by the directions and instructions of informants ('Where is the nearest shoe repairer?' 'Take the first left and it's on the right . . .') and by the need to avoid certain, potentially dangerous or confrontational encounters.
- *Seeking:* the sites where shoes have left their traces, either as accumulative marks (prints, scuffs) or as erosion (depressions on worn steps, chipped paint on door frames).
- *Identifying:* ephemeral or transitory marks (wet footprints, impressions in builder's sand) and those of varying degrees of permanence: erosion of paint on zebra crossings, worn linoleum, pavement subsidence. And those places where 'wear' has ceased, where the building is locked and grass now grows around the threshold.
- *Finding:* artefacts (discarded shoes, boot scrapers, doormats).
- *Encountering:* those intimately involved with shoes (sellers, repairers), those who wear

special footwear (policemen, meat packers, builders) and those who daily rely on their shoes, who work on their feet (shop assistants, hairdressers).

- *Enquiring:* of shoe menders: about the nature of wear, the relationship of individuals to their shoes and the fickle vagaries of fashion; of thrift-shop assistants: about lack of interest in buying second-hand shoes as opposed to clothes; of fashion retailers: about the identity of those who buy shoes as a style statement.
- *Discovering:* 'underground' shoe cultures - S&M footwear (with spikes inside); fetish fashion.
- *Observing:* moments of fleeting contact (a cyclist resting his foot on the pavement); places especially for shoes (foot rails in bars, bicycle pedals) and the sites where the density of marks or depth of erosion indicate traditions of social usage (the habit of kicking open doors).
- *Speculating:* that the city even smells different at shoe level.
- *Resembling:* those archetypal figures of the modern city: De Certeau's *walker* (1988: 91-110), Benjamin's *flaneur* (1999: 417-55; Buck-Morss 1991: 304-7) and Deleuze's *nomad* (Deleuze and Guattari 1988).

The walker

We may all *want* to go up the Eiffel Tower, to see the city from above, to be god-like, to gain optical knowledge, to achieve a total(ising) view. But in fact our elementary experience of the city is as 'walkers', 'whose bodies follow the thicks and thins of an urban "text" they write without being able to read it fully' (De Certeau 1988: 93). It is our intertwined paths which link places together; pedestrian movements form 'real systems whose existence in fact makes up a city' (ibid.: 97).

Such walking could be inscribed as routes on maps, but that would miss the practice of our meandering, stopping and starting, window-shopping, passing-by. There is always a tension then between the possibilities of the constructed order - 'I am only allowed to go there and not there' - and our own improvisation. De Certeau distinguishes tricks in the arts of doing (1988: xviii), the ways in which we subvert constraints. So whilst layout and street plan might prefigure our activity, we are always seeking the short-cut. This he regards as delinquency because it endorses the privileging of the route over the inventory. So 'walking affirms, suspects, tries out, transgresses, respects the trajectories it speaks' (ibid.: 99). Step by step we decide how we will do it, how we will read the text of the city: we gain our understanding through movement.

> The 'moving about' that the city multiples and concentrates makes the city itself an immense social experience of lacking a place - an experience that is, to be sure, broken up into countless tiny deportations (displacements and walks) compensated for by the relationships and intersections of these exoduses that intertwine and create an urban fabric, and placed under the sign of what ought to be, ultimately, the place but is only a name, the City.
>
> (De Certeau 1988: 103)

So the urban space is a frequented place, an intersection of moving bodies. It is the pedestrians who transform the street into a space. Yet this walking is often orientated. We are drawn back to significant places, familiar places, memorable places, weaving them together in improvised narratives. We both read and write. Through memory and imagination, we can claim a measure of control.

The *flaneur*

De Certeau suggests that walking is an act of appropriation which includes three aspects: walking looking and being looked at. And this contains echoes of our second figure: the *flaneur.* In origin the *flaneur* was a detached and self-contained poetic figure, distanced from the crowd by his superior aesthetic sensibilities. He aimlessly wandered the city streets to gain inspiration, at once part of, and isolated from, the urban crowd, whom he studied; at once a bohemian and producer of written commodities, 'at home in the ebb and flow, the bustle, the fleeting and the infinite' (Baudelaire, cited in Edensor 1998: 217). The *poet-flaneur* had the freedom to loiter, to witness and interpret passing scenes and incidents (Edensor 1998: 217). And the premodern street was a place of diverse activities, unpredictable juxtapositions, fleeting occurrences, multifarious sights and sounds. With the advent of the modern city, the concept of the *flaneur* has come to stand as a metaphor for the contemporary urban dweller, moving through the flux of the city, as a mode of being in the world, in relation to the dazzling consumer spectacles: in a modern shopping centre we are all *flaneur:* gazing, grazing, consuming . . .

The nomad

The nomad shifts across the smooth space of the urban desert using points and locations to define paths rather than places to be, making the most of circumstance (Cresswell 1997: 364). The enemy of the nomad is the state, which wants to take the space and enclose it and to create fixed and well-directed paths for movement. And the nomad, cut free of roots, bonds and identities, is the enemy of the state, resisting its discipline.

The rambler

Jane Rendell (1998) identifies a fourth figure, the *rambler,* who rethinks the city as a series of paces of flows of movement, in pursuit of pleasure: moving between sites of leisure, pleasure, consumption, exchange and display. And such rambling is a gendered activity. She suggests (1998:84):

> Urban design organises bodies socially and spatially, in terms of positioning, displaying and obscuring. Architecture controls and limits physical movement and sight-lines; it can stage and frame those who inhabit its spaces, by creating contrasting scales, screening and lighting. (Friedman 1992). Such devices are culturally determined, they prioritise certain activities and persons, and obscure others according to class, race and gender. Urban space is a medium in which functional visual requirements and imagery are constituted and represented as part of a patriarchal and capitalist ideology. The places of leisure

Talking at length to a shoe repairer. Asking him about whether he could see how people walked from the wear on their shoes. 'Of course', he said, 'though most walk, feet slightly splayed, on the outsides of the heels.' Asking him about what happens to shoes that people don't collect. 'I keep them', he said, 'in plastic bags in the cellar beneath our feet.' Asking him about the fickle vagaries of fashion. 'Well', he said, 'first they're pointy, then they're square, then they're pointy, then they're square.' And his thesis borne out by the display of medieval shoes in the Danish National Museum.

In the city we all create an itinerary of locations. The vernacular detail of the locale which we can now recurrently identify and which we can use to locate and orientate ourselves in an unfamiliar landscape without recourse to maps, diagrams, guides or needing to view the city as if from above. Such an interaction may then constitute a **desire map:** as 'strangers in a strange land' we pursue cultural phenomena - here shoes - which we knew from elsewhere and as we allow their manifestations to bring us into social encounters.

And, despite the walking, there is a suspicion that all around Copenhagen, approximately one metre from the ground, on walls, entrances, doors, window frames, there is a line, a datum, scored by the passage of millions of pairs of handlebars . . .

Landscape: standing still

A field of tensions

This notion of landscape, this cultural locale, as we have called it, of archaeology, is ridden with tensions. It is the implied separation and observation noted by Raymond Williams above, distant horizons and distanced vantage-points. It is that uneasiness we feel about the figures in many classic picturesque landscape paintings. The peasants dancing in the limpid evening light of a Claude, the locals 'going about their business'; the figures in the foreground as Turner captures the sublimity of a ruin against a sky (cf. Daniels 1993: 112). Or indeed for us it is the uneasiness invoked by the delicate constructions of land artist Andy Goldsworthy. Ephemeral ice sculptures, leaves woven together with thorns, photographed in morning light, beautifully reproduced in an art book (consider Kastner and Wallis 1998: 68-9). It is about an absence perhaps, this tension, in spite of the skills of artist, in spite of the aesthetic paradigm to which we all react. Nature turned to beauty in an aesthetic gesture of an artist like Goldsworthy, relationships turned into things to be painted, photographed, written about. We find ourselves asking, just what is going on there? John Berger famously connected the Gainsborough painting of Mr and Mrs Andrews, standing before their estate, to sentiments of property ownership (Berger 1972: 106-8), contrasting the commodification of their relationship with land to an implied authenticity of working relationships; though, and this is again the tension, he also failed to account for the attractions of such images (Fuller 1980).

Part of it is about such relations between foreground and background. It is also the relationship between here, the here of the viewer, and there, the there of the image or the worlds from which it borrows: for example, the Tuscan countryside of so many eighteenth-century pastoral idylls. In the idealised vision of many landscapes and landscape art there is a contrast between

Talking at length to a shoe repairer. Asking him about whether he could see how people walked from the wear on their shoes. 'Of course', he said, 'though most walk, feet slightly splayed, on the outsides of the heels.' Asking him about what happens to shoes that people don't collect. 'I keep them', he said, 'in plastic bags in the cellar beneath our feet.' Asking him about the fickle vagaries of fashion. 'Well', he said, 'first they're pointy, then they're square, then they're pointy, then they're square.' And his thesis borne out by the display of medieval shoes in the Danish National Museum.

In the city we all create an itinerary of locations. The vernacular detail of the locale which we can now recurrently identify and which we can use to locate and orientate ourselves in an unfamiliar landscape without recourse to maps, diagrams, guides or needing to view the city as if from above. Such an interaction may then constitute a **desire map:** as 'strangers in a strange land' we pursue cultural phenomena - here shoes - which we knew from elsewhere and as we allow their manifestations to bring us into social encounters.

And, despite the walking, there is a suspicion that all around Copenhagen, approximately one metre from the ground, on walls, entrances, doors, window frames, there is a line, a datum, scored by the passage of millions of pairs of handlebars . . .

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in the nineteenth century city represent and control the status of men and women as spectators and as objects of sight in public arenas.

Perhaps then walking is promiscuous, 'a mode of movement which celebrates the public spaces, streets and excitement of urban life from a male perspective' (ibid.) - looking at any woman with a consuming gaze, as an available object.

Urban time-spaces

Walking: affirming, suspecting, trying out, transgressing, respecting the trajectories it 'speaks'. The French anthropologist Marc Auge (1995: 56-74) uses three simple spatial forms to map anthropological space: line, the intersection of lines, and the point of intersection. In the city, they correspond respectively to paths which lead from one place to another; to crossroads and open spaces where people pass, meet and gather and which are sometimes large in order to satisfy the needs of economic exchange (as with markets); and thirdly to monumental centres, places of institutional complexity-the town hall, seat of government, palace, cathedral, etc. Routes, cross-roads and centres - though they may be found elsewhere, they are all found in the city. The notions of itinerary, intersection, centre and monument begin to describe the urban space. Thus individual itineraries in the city are constantly drawn towards centres where they intersect and mingle. Auge suggests that there is then the possibility for polyphony, the interlacing of destinies, actions, thoughts and reminiscences.

Cities are multitemporal. The remains of the past are all around us: architecture survives. Here a Georgian townhouse exists next to a modern designer home. Some buildings are thought worthy of preservation and restoration. And some fragments of buildings become integrated into others as if they are half-digested, stratifications of past occupations, repairs and constructions, the superimposition of different time-scales. Other buildings are repaired, their function changes: a. chapel becomes a disco. Their identity is unstable. Survival, juxtaposition, discontinuity. There is no linearity here.

In cities, history accumulates. Many exist on their rubbish, their debris endlessly accreting beneath the feet. Not only does waste gather but buildings are constantly knocked down and others erected on their site. In some parts of London, the Roman city is twenty feet below the surface. The history of the city is revealed as a horizontal layering and a vertical accumulation of surfaces. In places, erosion reveals underlying strata (tarmac over tarmac over cobblestones); in others, processes of reconstruction and refurbishment cut down to reveal a classic archaeological 'section' of superimposed layers. Here the contemporary overlays the past (yellow lines painted over a variety of surfaces); there past and present meet in discontinuities of material fabric (tarmac abutting cobblestones); there present cuts through to lie next to past (pipe trench).

In *Footloose* were performed a series of encounters, always occasioned by discussion of shoes, with others (from various ethnic backgrounds, ages and professions). Except for the project they might expect never to meet and indeed may even have avoided each other. It leads to a fuller appreciation of the multivocality of the locale and inevitably, through the stories and experiences of others, to a sense of history, with the city inseparably spatio-temporal.

the way we are, and the way we might be, or the worlds we might inhabit, in harmony with nature perhaps, in a cottage in the countryside, a cabin in the woods, or in a carefully designed environment. Hence from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries landscape as representation has been linked to various projects of achieving a correspondence between a pictorial ideal and the countryside itself. This manifested itself as landscape gardening and estate management, all the way through the garden cities of Britain, the lairds' villages of Scotland built to house the commoners and to supply picturesque backdrop to the management of aristocratic estates, suburbia to city planning and landscape architecture today. Of course it includes a tension, linked to industrialisation and processes of urbanisation, between city and countryside. Actuality of place and potentiality of improvement and design is also a temporal relationship between the quotidian and the timeless, the latter often associated with the beauties of place. Particularly now we are sensitive to those relationships between the general or the global, and the local. Here we feel uneasy about the myriad local landscapes made similar in their aesthetic treatment, in their assimilation to similar processes of understanding and representation.

In contemporary archaeology the tension is very apparent. Techniques of environmental analysis, tracing remains and evidences of geomorphology, plant and animal communities, climatic change, with powerful topographic mapping, and Geographic Information Systems to manage the data, enable increasingly detailed reconstructions of ancient environments. Spatial science reached a height over thirty years ago (Harvey 1969), as described in Chapter 1, and remains a formidable set of resources for controlling geometric space, as the 'backdrop' or medium of history and culture. But these advances have left far distanced the humanism of the landscape history of Hoskins, for example. Working in that paradigm of Aubrey and Stukeley he combined accurate observation with a facility for synthesis and narrative (in the classic *Making of the English Landscape,* 1955). We can think of no effective translation of these developments into even a descriptive mode of representation. The potential naturalism (as defined above) of these techniques has not been realised.

Meanwhile humanistic geography has developed a greater concern with the sociocultural and political processes which shape landscape, and with a focus on the ideological. Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels edited a seminal collection of essays on landscape as a way of seeing (1988), drawing in concepts of iconography and textuality, with landscape regarded as a field of signifiers, the interpretation of which reveals cultural attitudes and processes. The earlier work of David Lowenthal and Hugh Prince (1964; also Lowenthal 1985 and 1991a) investigating the impact of national taste and social class on landscape creation, is to be noted here, taken up later by Daniels (1993).

The broader context is the investment of geographical interest in, indeed the redefinition of cultural geography as the time-space structures of human society and culture (Cloke, Philo and Sadler 1991; Johnston, Gregory and Smith 1994; Cloke, Crang and Goodwin 1999). Two key concepts here are **locale** - the settings in which social relations are constituted, and sense of **place** - a local structure of feeling. As we mentioned above, here are intellectual roots in the focus on the cultural landscape, human relationships with the environment, represented by Carl Sauer and the Berkeley School, and many after. Hagerstrand and the Lund School represent a time

geography, investigating patterns of coming and going (references given above). Much recent work has paid attention to non-material and ideological aspects of culture in relationship with place, locale and landscape. Tapping more roots in social theory than biology and history, the effect of linguistic theory is significant, with the meanings of place contested, related to the discourses of particular human groups divided along axes of class, ethnicity, culture and gender. We consider important here that line of critique which goes to the heart of any geographical project - the question of the division of nature and culture. Anthropologists have been doubting the distinction and easiness of the relationship (Strang 1997) and considering the cross-cultural relevance of concepts like landscape.

Tied to these developments in cognate disciplines, archaeologists too have been considering the cultural constitution of space. John Fritz (1978) examined the symbolic landscape of prehistoric Chaco Canyon in the American south west in the 1970s, under a project of cognitive archaeology - the archaeology of mind. By the 1990s an archaeology often describing itself as phenomenological has come to celebrate cultural experience and **lifeworld** - the totality of a person's direct involvement with the places and environments experienced in everyday life. Studies have appeared, for example, of prehistoric landscapes (Tilley 1994; Bender 1998; Edmonds 1999), with archaeologists again walking the land, this time asserting the primacy of the constitutive imagination. For example, in Tilley's subjectivist critique of spatial science, meanings are given to external phenomena through intuitive experience and relationships with them, and captured in prose and photograph (1994). Visuality and movement are the two principal modes of engagement with the ruined monuments of ancient landscapes in Britain and northern Europe. 'Here people walked and understood the world in this way', is the recurrent motif. And past and present are brought together through walking and looking under a sensitisation to the way it may have been felt and thought in the past. This is achieved through the use of ethnographic analogies and particularly of cosmology, rather than through environmental reconstruction.

Hence Tilley begins his *Phenomenology of Landscape* (1994) with ethnographic cases of land as penetrated by cosmology, and is able to assert that 'writing about an economic base in relation to resource utilisation or landscape use seems quite irrelevant' (1994: 67). There is a problem though in thus giving primacy to a subjectivist aesthetic - walking the land with an eye to the experience can easily lapse into a 'past-as-wished-for'. In spite of its humanistic and critical commitment to an ethnographic sensitivity, the validity of Tilley's phenomenology is based upon the sophistication and subtlety of his projection back into the past from present landscapes. This conspicuously includes reliance, in all his illustrations of archaeological landscapes, upon that distinctive distanced aesthetic which we have been so concerned to denaturalise; the photographs and plans hold no surprises. And it is a pastoral aesthetic in this rejection of any involvement or engagement other than empathy informed by reading. For Tilley it sometimes seems we are to walk the ancient countryside in order to escape the constraints of social science.

We are reminded of that old distinction between Descartes's language of objectivity versus Vico's language of involvement. Here are polarisations between absolute position or point and relative or meaningful place, between the notion of a map as a geometric model of all possible routes, and the practical space of journeys. Our aim is not to separate and treat these as polar

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create reservoirs, through the sequestration of military ranges, through afforestation and through open-cast mining. Each episode of loss involved the removal of population and the destruction of communities. And each in turn inspired political response, campaigns of civil disobedience, the foundation of organisations of opposition: Plaid Cymru, the Welsh Language Society, the Free Wales Army, Meibion Glyndwr. For they function as **inciting incidents,** those irrevocable acts around which opinion clusters, reaction concentrates and through which a small nation marks its particular history.

This is never simply a matter of the loss of land and soil. It is always a matter of homeland and native soil. And more than that. What is lost here is not land but the lived experience of land - all that turns site into place and occupancy into identity - a continuity of experience which finds expression in a particular language and which is preserved in a particular oral and literary tradition. As the playwright, academic and activist Saunders Lewis said at his trial for arson in Caernarfon in 1936, 'The development of the bombing range in Lleyn into the inevitable arsenal it will become will destroy this essential home of Welsh culture, idiom and literature' (1983: 118). For him, land and culture are intimately intertwined. For him, place, language and identity are inextricably bound. Not surprising then that the poetic response should be as virulent as the political one. Of the afforestation around his ancestral home near Lampeter, Gwenallt, the poet who best captured the tensions between rural and industrial Wales, writes, in Welsh,

And by this time there's nothing there but trees
Impertinent roots suck dry the old soil:
Trees were neighbourhood was,
And a forest that once was farmland.
Where was verse-writing and scripture
is the South's bastardised English.
('Rhydcymerau', Jones 1986: 285-6)

Not only then do places disappear, they are also silenced. What is lost here, literally and symbolically, are those locales where Welsh discourse, where Welshness itself, is generated. We say symbolically because the Welsh sense of place is enshrined in that series of cognitive maps surrounding home and neighbourhood where particular discourses, discrete ways of telling, are engendered.

These 'sites of disappearance' continue to animate the political and poetic imagination in Wales: these ruins, traces, memories persist as places where meanings and identities, local, regional and national are indeed 'represented, contested and inverted'. They too resemble **heterotopias.** Their loss has been worked and reworked to illustrate Welsh cultural and linguistic decline. Even in their absence they become akin to Pierre Nora's **lieux de memoire** (Nora 1989), those sites where cultural memory is constructed and presented.

And then suddenly with the felling of timber, the years of recurrent drought, the demilitarisation of Europe, and with some irony, they return. Their return challenges us to revisit them, to re-address them, to re-enfold them, to remap.

opposites, but to realise the relationships between them and understand where they come from. It is not as if we want, or can, make the tensions we have described disappear, somehow. For us landscape is a field of process and relationship, a contradictory nexus, itself to be explored.

We are left indeed with a technical issue of writing and representing, with our project of documentation, the partial and oblique strategies required in opening up a site and documenting a heterotopia. Barbara Bender has referred to Berger's call for another way of telling (1998: Chapter 6; Berger and Mohr 1982) and we concur. But an historical consciousness of the tensions simply in walking the land prompt us to rethink this task. We need an involved aesthetic yes, but we also. need to consider political economy, the changing material conditions of living in the land; we need maps and geometries, as well as evocation. These tensions in landscape present us with a field of (political) potential linked to somatic memory and experience. For what is at stake is twofold modes of visiting and the character of ruin. We stress again the concept of the archaeological and the need for a theory of ruin. By this we mean an ecology of interpenetration between past and present, with the visit treated as a performative event which witnesses absence.

A ruin buried in a forest

"On a hillside outside Lampeter in West Wales, they are felling the pine plantation. And as the forty-year-old cash-crop is harvested, the ruins of perhaps twenty farmsteads re-emerge in the landscape. They were never quite totally lost. One could always spot the luminous green of their deciduous trees, beech and sycamore - the remains of gardens and grown-out hedges planted when the farms were created - against the monochrome canopy. Esgair Fraith ('Speckled Ridge') is one such substantial farmstead built as part of the enclosure of the parish in the 1830s. Sited on what was a piece of rough grass and wetland and often mistakenly described as a hamlet, its walls, paths and buildings seem too numerous for an upland agricultural concern. Indeed from the outset, they may have been more. For the first owner was a local weaver, an outworker in the important. Cardiganshire wool industry. He was 46 when he moved to Esgair Fraith with his family who seem to have followed him into his trade. He may have been supplementing his income by farming. But it seems likely that these buildings were always partly industrial, with weaving and cloth storage sheds near the house, dams in the river and the remains of a horse-whim, perhaps for fulling. By the late 1880s the family was much reduced and subsequently only one daughter was living there with her own illegitimate daughter, masquerading as her aunt. And so the first trajectory of energy runs its course. The next occupants, the Davies, took Esgair Fraith solely as a farming enterprise around 1890. A dated stone of 1904 in the garden marks their energetic engagement. Mrs Davies died in 1926 and the old man lived there alone until 1941, when the farm was abandoned. The roof was off by 1949. Local memory has Mr Davies doing smithing, tinkering and shoe-mending, and in one roofless shed there are still traces of his work, baths and pans, leather and nails. The history of Esgair Fraith is thus the narrative of two families, of two sets of biographies.

A thick blanket of moss and lichen now coats the ruined walls. Its reappearance presents archaeology with a quandary . . . and with an opportunity.

For these are not merely domestic relics. They are examples of the way in which over the past sixty years places in Wales have been removed from maps: through the flooding of valleys to

M.B

S.B

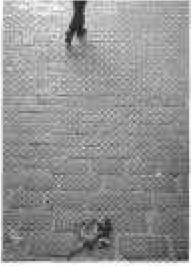
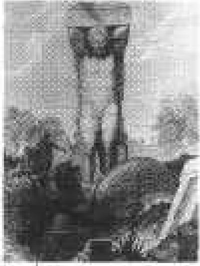
The quandary. How is archaeology to deal with these ruins, rising amongst the felled trees? We could excavate their dereliction, record their house-plans, document broken pots, hoping to reveal how these places once were. Such archaeology is rooted in a desire for plenitude, the fullness of times lost, reversal of the mouldering decay which accompanies burial and time passing. Under this impulse and as we have described above (page 43), archaeological reconstructions often aim at photographic verisimilitude: a moment arrested before the viewer, or a simulacrum to be photographed. Their desire is naturalism, an adherence to the appearance of things, a replication of external features, the way things once were.

But to what end? Places like Esgair Fraith are neither so exceptional nor so old that their inscription is of particular importance. They are fairly recent phenomena, not more than one or two hundred years old, the result of both squatting on the commons and legal enclosure, particularly in the mid-nineteenth century, in response to population rise and the need to supplement the fluctuating fortunes of semi-industrial workers such as weavers and miners by homesteading. And as this break-up was one of the great changes in the Welsh landscape since the Bronze Age perhaps we shouldn't be too sentimental about its own subsequent demise.

Equally and instead we might accept the loss, whilst attending to Adorno and Horkheimer's admonition (1979 [1941]: 148): 'what is needed is not the preservation of the past, but the redemption of past hopes.' Decay and morbidity are the condition of archaeological enquiry. It is not just that things happened in the past, but that they may be touched, somehow, and now. This quest for sensuous knowing and corporeal knowledge is often what draws people, archaeologists and others, to the material past. The tangibility of remains of times gone offers access to what was thought lost, drawing on the energies of loss and restitution.

The opportunity. These places are saturated with meaning: whilst little of physical worth is at risk here, everything of cultural value is at stake. They offer a series of challenges to those archaeologies which call themselves **interpretive** and **Romantic,** effectively to document and represent a locale that itself resembles a **heterotopia** and **palimpsest.** They require a 'rescue archaeology' not of physical remains but of cultural identity. For any approach to them must take into account the endless narratives, the political aspirations and disappointments, which have accumulated around them. It is not enough to confine them to the past, to say, 'this is how they were then'.

In the invitation to return and revisit, these places posit fundamental questions about methodology: What is to be recorded, how and why? How is the past to be written and on whose behalf?

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What are the politics of interpretation and representation? How might contested interpretations of the past be embraced and presented? They may therefore be susceptible to those practices which are aware of their plurality of motive, which pay attention to the local and particular and which are suspicious of any final account of things; to practices sensual and phenomenological, which are bound to be subjective, emotional and provocative, which are as unafraid of poetry as they are of politics. 'Through poems, perhaps more than through recollections, we touch the ultimate poetic depth of the space of the house' (Bachelard 1964: 6).

Intimate to this concept of the archaeological are personal identities (always socially and culturally mediated) and their location in the material of our bodies, things owned, found, lost, lived amongst. This will necessitate new and extended approaches to site including creative and technical innovation in the recording, writing and illustrating of the material past - an experimental archaeology rooted in creative reinterpretation of social fabric.

Such is the resonance of these sites that any re-encounter will be inevitably political: reawakening memories, stirring emotions, mobilising causes. For it recovers that which we thought was lost: the disputes over ownership, over the proprietorship of interpretation. And it is here that archaeology has a chance. It could hide behind its scientific objectivity but, as we maintain, it could equally reveal itself as a process of cultural production which takes the remains of the past to make something out of them in the present. By the creative use of the various fragments *of* the past archaeology can become a significant resource in nurturing cultural memory, in helping to develop rich and plural cultural ecologies based on alternative notions of heritage and ultimately in constructing and energising contemporary identities.

But what does this mean in practice?

Let us first remember that realistic representation is not only or necessarily naturalistic. Realism is a project, not a set of formal conventions. As James Clifford (1988: 100) puts it, 'realistic portraits, to the extent that they are "convincing" or "rich" are extended metaphors, patterns of associations that point to coherent (theoretical, aesthetic, or moral) additional meanings.' Realism involves allegory. The construction of narrative is but one aspect or possibility here. In looking at things found we make stories, relating our looking to our experiences, to connections we see and imagine.

How are we to make sense of these places? Meaning comes from making connections and exploring contexts. This is something constructed or brought to a place by the maker and

of elaborating the complexity of narratives which have accumulated and which are in contest here. We will need to be able to read between the lines. This will demand what we have termed **'incorporations':** juxtapositions and interpenetrations of the historical and the contemporary, the political and the poetic, the factual and the fictional, the discursive and the sensual. These are proactive documents: their parts do not necessarily cohere. They will require work but they leave space for the imagination of the reader. The interpretive instinct of the visitor is not denied: meaning is not monopolised. As such, they may function as an alternative kind of site-report.

Third, we might accompany visitors to site. And here the archaeological and the performative might make common cause, for the document, the equivocal, multivocal working of ruin and trace, could be constituted as real-time event. Performance itself can be a rearticulation of site: language can return a reading onto and into it. Performance occasions reinterpenetration (Phillips 1995: 51-2).

The solo narrative, some equivalent of the explorer's account, the traveller's tale of strange sights and smells, might be an effective means of rearticulation. It can exhibit a high order of intertextuality, of dialogue between texts: anecdotes, analects, autobiography, the description of people, places and pathologies, poetry, forensic data, quotations, lies, memories, jokes. Indeed, it must vacillate between the intimately familiar and the infinitely strange, if the visitor's attention is to be held. The teller is inevitably at the centre of events. The interpreter is foregrounded and interpretation becomes a performative practice. Here in the **grain** of the voice (Barthes 1977: 179f.) is where the story comes to life; and so too in all those techniques of the performer's art: physical re-enactments, impersonation, improvised asides, gestures, eye movements. 'After all, storytelling, in its sensory aspect, is by no means a job for the voice alone' (Benjamin 1992: 107). Here we might find employed all those modes and techniques, those social discourses, which inhabit and animate the cognitive maps of a Welsh sense of place: chatting, lecturing, reciting, orating, seducing in modulations and intensifications of speed, tone, volume, rhythm, emphasis.

What such work so often elicits is other stories, and stories about stories. It catalyses personal reflection and the desire on the part of the listener to reveal her own experiences. It works with memory: raking up old ones, stimulating new ones. These places continue not only to commemorate but also to animate. We work them so that their silencing is not forgetting and their disappearance is not amnesia. Memory preserved, over generations.

Site-specific performance

More complex site-specific work at such sites might use different varieties of narrative, factual and fictive, historical and contemporary, creative and analytical, in parallel and in sequence. It can overlay the documentary, the observational and the creative within a given location or architecture without laying any claim to accuracy or historical verisimilitude.

They arrived at dusk, taking nearly half an hour in the coaches to follow the forest tracks to the site, several miles from road and amenities. From the old quarry they picked their way over a rise, past the generators, towards the lighting rigs, into the conifers and the planked seating, set raked into the trees. Before them as picturesque a ruin as could be, but transected by two rigidly geometric cubes of steel tubing, two stories high, floored and lit, transparent architectures to accompany the stone walls and gable ends, some tables and chairs, a bed, a TV, buckets of

the viewer - what, after all, is a 'natural' context? It may involve considerable deviation - tempo
spatial and conceptual - away from naturalism. To understand Esgair Fraith, we may need to te
story of quite another time and place.

Visitation

For Forest Enterprise, a state agency and the owner of the hillside, these places are regarded
a leisure resource: it is eager to provide public access. Since they are to be revisited, we m
base the framework of a research project around the notion of the visit and its close relative
guided tour.

How might archaeology illuminate such visitation? First perhaps, by doing nothing. By lea
it as it is, providing access, saying nothing, letting the remains speak for themselves, letting
visitor address them in her own way. For these tumbled walls are equivocal, romantic, ser
as a backdrop or scenography for any narrative or fantasy which might be projected onto th
any knowledges and aspirations, any interpretation which might be brought to them. A visi
experience of the same place may invoke reactions and associations entirely different from
of the inhabitants: it is possible to be in a place without realising its significance for the group
people who have historically inhabited it. For some, the response will be aesthetic and indivi
the romance of the ruin. For others the very ruination is evocative of the cultural decline whi
symbolises, with the deciduous growth representing a kind of dogged resistance. A pile of
stones to walk your dog over or the defeated hopes of a nation? Take your pick. Imagination
is the implement of excavation. Whichever, the senses of the visitor are accosted by the smell
decay, the textures of moss and dead leaves, the image of collapsed walls, fallen lintels, the gl
of forest shade. Here, the very processes of the archaeological are apparent: mouldering, rott
disintegrating, decomposing, putrefying, falling to pieces. And that sense of the passage of t
-and of our own mortality perhaps - which the manicured sites of heritage culture are so kee
disguise. And the visitor is aware that each surviving doorway was once entered, each win
was once looked through. On this bleak hillside, where it will inevitably rain during your v
humanity survived.

Second, archaeology might provide some sort of orientation, something to inform the reac
directions, a map. In that these direct movement *around the* site, then they could demand
energetic engagement *with* the site; they may come to resemble choreographic scores
diagrams. Such a choreography of the visitor could be *of* the site, following paths, cros
thresholds, entering rooms. Equally, it could delineate unusual trajectories of movement - stra
lines, circles, arcs, traversing the site - revealing unexpected viewpoints, demanding alte
stances and body engagements, all serving to defamiliarise the visitor, inviting her to look af
at detail and at prospect and to sense the place. And it might suggest not only where to look
also how to look, in close-up, in long shot, with wide-angle. As, of course, people have always d
there. But still the visitor has little to go on. She begins to ask questions: What is this place? W
happened here? Who lived here? She wants to put a past onto the phenomenological experie
of being present: she needs quite simply a **deep map.** So if we map, it is not as some b
planning or recording of the ruined structures. Any guidebook will have to be adequate to the

of elaborating the complexity of narratives which have accumulated and which are in contest here. We will need to be able to read between the lines. This will demand what we have termed **'incorporations':** juxtapositions and Interpenetrations of the historical and the contemporary, the political and the poetic, the factual and the fictional, the discursive and the sensual. These are proactive documents: their parts do not necessarily cohere. They will require work but they leave space for the imagination of the reader. The interpretive instinct of the visitor is not denied: meaning is not monopolised. As such, they may function as an alternative kind of site-report.

Third, we might accompany visitors to site. And here the archaeological and the performative might make common cause, for the document, the equivocal, multivocal working of ruin and trace, could be constituted as real-time event. Performance itself can be a rearticulation of site: language can return a reading onto and into it. Performance occasions reinterpenetration (Phillips 1995: 51-2).

The solo narrative, some equivalent of the explorer's account, the traveller's tale of strange sights and smells, might be an effective means of rearticulation. It can exhibit a high order of intertextuality, of dialogue between texts: anecdotes, analects, autobiography, the description of people, places and pathologies, poetry, forensic data, quotations, lies, memories, jokes. Indeed, it must vacillate between the intimately familiar and the infinitely strange, if the visitor's attention is to be held. The teller is inevitably at the centre of events. The interpreter is foregrounded and interpretation becomes a performative practice. Here in the **grain** of the voice (Barthes 1977: 179f.) is where the story comes to life; and so too in all those techniques of the performer's art: physical re-enactments, impersonation, improvised asides, gestures, eye movements. 'After all, storytelling, in its sensory aspect, is by no means a job for the voice alone' (Benjamin 1992: 107). Here we might find employed all those modes and techniques, those social discourses, which inhabit and animate the cognitive maps of a Welsh sense of place: chatting, lecturing, reciting, orating, seducing in modulations and intensifications of speed, tone, volume, rhythm, emphasis.

What such work so often elicits is other stories, and stories about stories. It catalyses personal reflection and the desire on the part of the listener to reveal her own experiences. It works with memory: raking up old ones, stimulating new ones. These places continue not only to commemorate but also to animate. We work them so that their silencing is not forgetting and their disappearance is not amnesia. Memory preserved, over generations.

Site-specific performance

More complex site-specific work at such sites might use different varieties of narrative, factual and fictive, historical and contemporary, creative and analytical, in parallel and in sequence. It can overlay the documentary, the observational and the creative within a given location or architecture without laying any claim to accuracy or historical verisimilitude.

They arrived at dusk, taking nearly half an hour in the coaches to follow the forest tracks to the site, several miles from road and amenities. From the old quarry they picked their way over a rise, past the generators, towards the lighting rigs, into the conifers and the planked seating, set raked into the trees. Before them as picturesque a ruin as could be, but transected by two rigidly geometric cubes of steel tubing, two stories high, floored and lit, transparent architectures to accompany the stone walls and gable ends, some tables and chairs, a bed, a TV, buckets of

own story, of which we have so little, and which is so symbolic of the death of old Cardiff, needs to be remembered, not lost in the journalism, in police record.

> At first, it was as if everyone was trying out stories to see if they would stick, to other stories - editing, trimming, rewriting. But then it moved on and James Street became a stage-set upon which everyone was free to choreograph and direct the behaviours, actions and motives of the protagonists. To create the scenario. To write the dialogue. To give oneself a starring role. To use scenes and characters from other times, other places. Eye-witnesses did it. Defendants did it. Police did it. I do it too.
>
> [Brith Gof: *From Memory (Body of Evidence)* 1995; text by Mike Pearson)

The ruins of Esgair Fraith itself hosted a specially composed fiction portraying a matter of contemporary rural concern, but one which is rarely discussed - suicide. The small farms of West Wales are less able than ever to survive economically in a context of rationalisation and commodification of rural life. Young people look elsewhere for viable futures; communities face a need for difficult and radical change. The sheep in the north of Wales are still quarantined after the Chernobyl nuclear accident (light rain on a fateful day). Those that are deemed healthy reach but a few pounds per carcass at market, yet in one of the supermarket chainstores in the same town a lamb fillet sells for more. Cattle raising has been devastated after mad cow disease makes it more profitable to build an incinerator to burn suspect cattle than to keep them on the farm. Caught with hope gone and bleak futures, often never married and with few family left, older farmers, like the one who lived *over* the way from one of us in Tawelfan ('Peaceful Place'), shoot themselves. This narrative was performed by an old local couple. Cliff McLucas wanted Dai to slaughter a sheep. It wasn't that he couldn't, only it wasn't allowed - it can only happen now in a licensed abattoir. Particularly poignant was their slow recitation of the names of the farms they knew and are now lost across the hillside. 'But over and beyond our memories, the house we were born in is physically inscribed in us. It is a group of organic habits' (Bachelard 1964: 14).

The dramatic structure was of thirty-nine sections of two minutes' duration, punctuated by three re-enactments of death, one at the beginning, one in the middle and one at the end, giving three intertwining trajectories of dramatic development and decline. Each story had nine sections of textual material including first-person testimony, descriptions of location, character portraits, autopsy details, account of death. Poetry, data, documents, lies . . . There were also three monologues by the perpetrator, a male figure moving from one story to the next and playing respectively murderer, doctor and land-agent. The choreography of the non-verbal sections was constituted from the reconstruction, deconstruction, reassembly and repetition of physical details from the events of the narrative. An accompanying sound tape relayed the historical and archaeological details of Esgair Fraith and provided a soundscape for the voices of the performers, all of which were amplified. The lighting included neon strips and large light-bulbs suspended within the architecture, gantry-mounted spots and floodlights, flares carried by the perpetrator, all at once unexpected, incongruous and anachronistic in the forest.

Tri *Bywyd,* site-specific representation as evocation, suggests approaches which can embrace

fluid, and a dead sheep, stinking under a white cover. Thus it was in October 1995 at Esgair Fraith that Cliff McLucas directed a Brith Gof production - *Tri Bywyd* (Three Lives') - a site-specific performance (McLucas 2000).

Instead of simply re-enacting the place and its history, it was decided to build two new architectures at, and indeed through the site, and through each other! These scaffolding structures were inspired by the architectural designs of Bernard Tschumi (1994c) and based on a cube structure divided into twenty-four separate 'rooms' of eight feet in each dimension - formality in e forest; wood and steel; straight and curved - and truly 'ghost-like' in their presence. Each frame - represented a specific set of rooms - 7 James Street in Cardiff and Llethemeuadd in Pencader, Llandysul - as accurately as possible, in orientation and layout. All furniture - beds, chairs, tables were constructed from scaffolding tube to echo the fabric of the frames.

In these three coexisting architectures were located three separate stories. They were about three lives, and three deaths. And about the domestic, set into historical and conceptual landscapes of rural life, urban anomie, charged tensions of community and enquiring authority, appropriation and resistance. Taking 1860, approximately the date of the building of Esgair Fraith, as the datum, one story was of period but not site, a second of site but not period and a third of neither site nor period. The narratives unfolded simultaneously in parallel, in a convergence of congruence and incongruence - katachresis and hypotaxis, one always seen through or in juxtaposition to the others, whilst never acknowledging each others' existence.

The first story was that of Sarah Jacob, the fasting girl of Llandysul, a nearby village, who in February 1866 contracted scarlet fever and was bedridden for two weeks. She recovered but in February 1867 complained of stomach pains and was put to bed. After a fortnight she developed strong muscular fits. She became emaciated and all her hair fell out. On October 1 1867 she ceased to take any food at all and lived for the next two years, one month and one week with no visible sustenance whatever. Lying in bed, saint-like and dressed as a bride, she became a major tourist attraction, not least with the coming of railways. Guides even met visitors from London's Paddington station alighting at Pencader, in the next valley; trains formed a recurrent motif in the performance soundtrack. She was perhaps receiving food from her sister, passed from mouth to mouth, under the arm. In May 1869, the editor of the medical journal *The Lancet* questioned the authenticity of her case and implicated her family and the local community. There were vitriolic arguments in the press - a clash of Welsh mysticism, Methodism and the rational discourse of English science. Four nurses from Guys Hospital, London arrived and placed Sarah Jacob under surveillance: within ten days she had starved to death. She was 11 years old.

The second narrative was that of Lynette White of Cardiff, murdered in the early hours of Valentine's Day 1988. She had worked as a prostitute in the run-down docklands, scene of the city's economic heyday in the nineteenth century. She had been stabbed fifty-one times and her head was all but severed from her body. With a mish-mash of contradictory testimony, confession, witness reports and forensic evidence the police arrested and saw through to conviction four local men, immigrants, not so well educated. The case of the 'Cardiff four' was a gross miscarriage of justice picked up by the media (Williams 1995); the men were later freed. And Lynette White, her

the multitemporality of place and juxtapose different orders of material and alternative interpretations simultaneously, whilst revealing site continuously. Performance is certainly a medium within which meanings and identities are constantly represented, contested and inverted, the best medium perhaps within which to represent another heterotopia.

Deep mapping

Places which once were lost, now are found. And they are complex places. They challenge archaeology to experiment with its means of writing and representing the past not only to inscribe and embody the fine grain of lives lived there but also the myriad causes - of ownership, authority and interpretation - clustering around their appearance and disappearance. Reintegrations of place and language become essential to the energising of cultural distinctiveness. Archaeology becomes part of an integrated, social and political practice active in the creation of personal, communal, local and national identities, a practice unafraid to be sensual, interpretive, romantic.

Unfortunately, these are places which come and go: access can be denied. And we want to speak of them at other times, in other places. Equally evocative performance can still be created off site. Indeed, away from the romance of the ruin, the heady odours of decay and unencumbered. by the pleating of topography, narratives may be free to stand their ground, naked, revealed. A multimedia performed lecture entitled *Deep Maps* was developed and presented by us at several venues on different occasions. It too aimed to evoke rather than to describe Esgair Fraith. The spoken text, for two voices, included three short pieces interspersed with three performance fragments. It was accompanied by three types of projection: video (an oblique peregrination around Esgair Fraith), slide (images congruent with the performance text) and computer-generated (words and images in counterpoint to the themes of the spoken lectures). The lectures took as their themes 1798 and Wordsworth's visit to Tintern Abbey, 1835 and Edgar Allan Poe's story 'Berenice', and 1942 and David Davies's presence at Esgar Fraith. The performances were based upon memories of a grandmother and superstitions concerning death, the various occupants of Esgair Fraith and the autobiography of the Welsh rural story writer D. J. Williams (see Williams 1987).

What follows is an amended and edited version of this performed lecture, designed now to work with the rest of this chapter and the rest of the book. We take up the subject of the landscapes of west Wales where we left them above . . . with Edgar Evans in the Antarctic, Lincolnshireman Augustus Brackenbury at Trefenter, and in the streets of Copenhagen!

Esgair Fraith: a sedimentary map

1789 the Wye Valley

We begin again elsewhere.

In the Welsh Marches along the river Wye is Tintern Abbey, a ruin now in the care of the National Trust. William Gilpin used the Wye Valley in his definitions of the picturesque (1782, 1792). Girtin painted it in 1793, Turner in 1794. Tintern Abbey is an archetypal beauty spot,

a jewel of English heritage. William and Dorothy Wordsworth visited the Wye in 1793 and again in 1798.

The second visit became the reason for a poem whose subject is the interplay of memory and imagination. William Wordsworth had visited five years earlier; he examines his memories, his experience of place and what memory and time have done with them. The poem is *Lines composed a few miles above Tintern Abbey during a tour. July 13, 1798* (Wordsworth 1973). The date is the eve of Bastille Day. The title makes it clear that the poem is not about the abbey, but the Wordsworths were on a tour such as those commended by Gilpin. The poem may not be about the ruin, but it does reflect on the meaning of place, natural objects and sensation. I suggest that a great deal of archaeological interest can be gained from a reading of this careful exploration of relations between self and what was, between self and that which is other. Under a 'dark sycamore' (10), Wordsworth compares his memories with what he now sees.

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again

(58-61)

He writes of the mind's picture, but the poem is not simply concerned with pictures represented by words:

Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
That on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.

(4-8)

Here are fusions and translations which go beyond the pictorial: the cliffs impress *thoughts of more deep seclusion,* and the thoughts connect the landscape not to the sky, but to its *quietness.*

I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
the mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye.

(75-84)

Things are not fixed but shifting and flowing in a creative communion between self and otherness.

What has happened to his memories of standing by the river Wye? He has felt the forms of scene, the 'soft inland murmur' (4), 'plots of cottage ground' (11), 'hedge-rows, little lines of sportive wood run wild' (15-16). Forms felt and restored, renewed in 'purer mind' (29). These are not accurate images, simply pleasurable snapshot memories of the picturesque. They involve feelings of 'unremembered pleasure' (31). These are feelings and moods which cannot be put into words. And they bring to him an

> . . . *aspect more sublime; that blessed mood*
> *In which the burthen of the mystery,*
> *In which the heavy and the weary weight*
> *Of all this unintelligible world,*
> *Is lightened*
>
> (37-41)

The strangeness, otherness and **unintelligibility** of the object world become sensible:

> *We see into the life of things*
>
> (49)

We may consider Wordsworth's examination of these experiences as mystical and irrational. Unlike Wordsworth we may be content with picturesque sensation and spectacle, postcard tourism. We might ascribe them to a field separate from the archaeological. But is it not an impoverishment to hold that the only contribution an archaeologist may make to the understanding of a visit to a site such as Tintern Abbey is to supply a measured plan of foundations? Who are we to look to, if not to archaeologists, for guidance about the action of time upon material culture, about the place of the past in the present, what may be done with it and how it may be perceived?

Tintern Abbey holds that simple picturing or representation are inadequate models of memory or experience. There is more to reality, objects and experiences than what can be captured by reason's dissection of the empirical. This is revealed in Wordsworth's consideration of the temporal gap between his two visits to this place. Memory selects and elaborates, working on associations and evocations. This work has been part of the changes he has undergone since the first visit. So the experiential loss of the past, its ruin, is converted by the imagination and by reason or thought, contemplation, into poetic gain:

> *That time is past,*
> *And all its aching joys are now no more,*
> *And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this*
> *Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts*
> *Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,*
> *Abundant recompense.*
>
> (83-8)

The colours and forms of waterfall, rock, mountain and wood are the elements of a painting of the picturesque postcard. But here the waterfall haunts like a passion, and the forms and shapes of things are experienced not simply in themselves but as an appetite, a desire for nourishment. This is all beyond mere thought. Here feelings and things intermingle in evocations and associations of experience.

Such evocation and association involve the work of imagination upon experiences and relations with natural, objective things. The 'natural' world of objects is

> *the mighty world*
> *Of eye, and ear, - both what they half create,*
> *And what perceive; well pleased to recognise*
> *In nature and the language of the sense*
> *The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,*
> *The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul*
> *Of all my moral being.*
>
> (106-11)

Here is a creative union of person or self and object or nature. We half create as well as perceive nature because senses are not wholly passive but highly selective. Choice of what is perceived amounts to a kind of creation and it is guided by memory, searching for continuities in the linking of earlier and later experiences of things. But this creativity is also the natural and empirical anchor of 'purest thoughts'.

This is a unity then with the object world. Rooted in creativity and the imagination, it is more than a simple sharing of materiality or corporeality or objectivity. It is a principle of reciprocity between self and object world. So Wordsworth hears humanity in nature:

> *To look on nature, not as in the hour*
> *Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes*
> *The still, sad music of humanity,*
>
> (89-91)

And the unity is a disturbing one:

> *a sense sublime*
> *Of something far more deeply interfused,*
> *Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,*
> *And the round ocean and the living air,*
> *And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:*
> *A motion and a spirit, that impels*
> *All thinking things, all objects of all thought,*
> *And rolls through all things.*
>
> (95-102)

in a film-noir netherworld of shuttered rooms, coming out only at night to wander the city streets where he might meet such horrors as these murders in the rue Morgue, where he might exercise his fascination with the surreal connections necessary to solve the strangeness of some crimes.

Six years earlier was published Poe's strange (and ludicrous) story, Berenice, about another man's fascination with the world around him (1980 [1835]). 'This monomania, if I must so term it, consisted in a morbid irritability of those properties of the mind in metaphysical science termed the **attentive'** (1980: 20). The subject of the story attends obsessively to the thing-ness of things. His cousin Berenice is dying of a consumptive, wasting disease which erodes her beauty:

> The eyes were lifeless, and lustreless, and seemingly pupilless, and I shrank involuntarily from their glassy stare to the contemplation of the thin and shrunken lips. They parted; and in a smile of peculiar meaning, *the teeth* of the changed Berenice disclosed themselves slowly to my view. Would to God that I had never beheld them, or that, having done so, I had died!
>
> (1980: 23)

His cousin expires; his fascination continues. He is found to have disinterred her body, out of his senses, and extracted her teeth. She is found to have been buried alive.

It was in the 1840s that photography began to spread as medium of record of the ineffable texture of things.

1881 David Davies

David Davies died here at Esgair Fraith - 'Speckled Ridge' - in 1942. He was 95 years old. For the last sixteen years of his life he had lived alone. Towards the end, he had begun to smell a bit, as old men inevitably do - of pigs, sweat, leather, piss - even though he continued to order his life as she would have wanted. He washed in an enamel bowl on the table and shaved in a fragment of broken mirror on the window sill. And to the end, he worked - as a blacksmith and finally as a cobbler. There, where memory says the bellows once stood, where you can still find pieces of discarded shoe-leather, rusty hob-nails . . .

He had been, was, a 'pioneer'. He brought his family here in 1881. He was already 34. He came with all the energies and enthusiasms of a middle-aged man, fuelled by years of frustration and disappointment: 'If not now, then never.' 'To begin again, to wipe the slate clean.' 'A second chance, to get it right this time.' And his traces are all around us. It's he who built these walls, who roofed those sheds, who improved that land, who extended this house, who was proud enough to erect a date stone in the year of my grandma's birth- 1902.

In later years, idly scratching a pig's ear with a hazel twig, he remembered the shock of his first visit: how squalid the yard, a few chickens scratching in the dirt; how derelict the few buildings, their thatched roofs decaying and rotten. He remembered: how worn she had looked, aged beyond her years, although she was only 27; how defiantly she had

The gain is one of reconstructing the past, renovation; it lives on, *changed.*

Nature and its objects can haunt. Things, times and experiences evoke harmonies and associations other than what they are: things are in motion, just as the beauty of things harmonises in the scene before Wordsworth. Involved is the creative power of the mind and of intelligent perception, a reciprocity between the poet's self and Nature, the other which stimulates him to all this feeling and discovery. Wordsworth calls this the sublime: the otherness, the independence of the object world, its fundamental mystery which can never be captured (it is 'heavy' and 'unintelligible'), yet which at the same time is sensible, perceived and thought. Haunting; evocation; the ineffable remainder even after scrupulous description; mystery; independence: these are the life of things, and discovered in experiential loss or ruin. We have called this **heterogeneity.**

1841 Paris - the rue Morgue

> Examining the whole neighbourhood, as well as the house, with a minuteness of attention for which I could see no possible object... he then asked me, suddenly, if I had observed anything peculiar at the scene of the atrocity.
>
> (Edgar Allen Poe 1980 [1841]: 119)

It was in the 1830s and 1840s that Edgar Allen Poe perfected his gothic genre of horror and invented the detective story. Death abounds. Morbidity and a fascination with the particulars of things accompanies an acute sensitivity to the materiality of the human body, and to bodies of evidence.

The story *Murders in the rue Morgue* (1980 [1841]) introduces the detective C. Auguste Dupin. He is fascinated by an extraordinarily violent double murder, whose horror mystifies the police, which seems to have been committed without any apparent motive in an upper storey of a Paris apartment, and in a room whose door was found locked from the inside. Dupin collects evidence, visits the scene of crime and, through what Poe terms **'ratiocination',** determines the murderer to be an escaped orang-utang. Beyond simple ingenuity this reasoning is not, as is often believed, a process of deduction, but one of **speculative reasoning,** as Charles Pierce called it - **abduction** (Sebeok and Umiker-Sebeok 1983). It depends upon leaps of the imagination linking details with potentially relevant contexts, stringing together scenarios to be tested against the world. Dupin connects traces of hair with the locked door, with a severed - head, a body thrust up a chimney and bruises upon a throat, with voices heard by witnesses after the crime, with an animal he identifies in the pages of the natural historian Cuvier. He supposes that it could only have been an exotic ape; an advertisement in the newspaper announcing the finding of an orang-utang in the Bois de Boulogne brings its owner to Dupin's apartment, and with him confirmation that the crime has been solved.

Dupin is marginal, neither state police nor independent man of means. He is steeped in books and learning, yet his gaze is fixed upon the particulars of the world around. He operates

described herself as 'Rachel Jones, Head, Single, Farmer, 35 acres' on the title deeds; how awful had been the squint in the child's eyes, the turn in her lip.

He remembered the rumours: that they had disguised the birth, pretending the child was a god-daughter, then later a niece, feigning difficulty with the language to the census recorders; that this Rachel Anne was in fact daughter to Rachel, herself daughter to John Jones, first occupant of Esgair Fraith; that she was the result of 'courting in bed', the old Welsh custom which lingered in the backward uplands; that after custom she had placed the wood of nine different trees under her pillow to make him come; that John Jones,. Moelfryn had arrived with a ladder, crawled in through the bedroom window and lain with her; that she was 15 years old. And he remembered too hints of something more terrible, whispers of less than natural union. For truly she was a strange-looking child.

He had listened to the story of her father, already by this time half mythical: how he had dressed as a woman, had blackened his face, had gone with others to terrify incomers, to fire muskets in the night, to chant outside the Englishman's door, to smash the toll-gate outside Cwmann; how he had gone with others to build houses overnight, to get the roof on and a fire going by dawn, after custom, as proof of ownership; to squat the land, further down; how he had stood here on this bare hillside and looked at his hands and had seen the deep score-marks of the threads; how he had realised that the enclosure of this common would give him one last chance - official; how he would become John Jones, Esgair Fraith.

He had listened, from courtesy. But by now they were both wandering: she ever backwards, telling a life-story; he forwards, laying his plans. In fact, he remembered this John Jones, weaver, a 'big man' in God, who had heeded the word 'Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed'; who had dragged his family to the mountain-top, to this place beside Nant Clwedog-isaf; who had not realised that it was already too late - that the woollen industry had already fled to the burgeoning cities of Northern England, that the best places had already gone, the other Joneses already breaking the ground at Moelfryn, marking out their circle of fields; who had hacked and blasted stone from the quarry with dangerous abandon, who had built house, water mill, weaving sheds; who enclosed a few fields for livestock, though he was never a farmer. And Jacob said unto his brethren: 'Gather stones; and they gathered stones and made an heap: and they did eat there upon the heap.'

By now he was no longer listening though she rambled on: how they had all slaved at the looms, pulling threads, counting threads - five red, five black, five red; how the windows were always too small, a choice between wind and light; how the older children had escaped as soon as they could - to the coalfields of South Wales, to the opportunities of America; how her parents had died exhausted knitting socks; how the only things that had prospered were the trees - beech and sycamore, hazel and ash. These he would keep. And he would plant more. Of course, he got it cheap. And the Rachels disappeared, washed away, the only two ever to be born at Esgair Fraith.

It was to be his site of perfection though no plans or drawings ever guided him, only

the logic of practice. Here the yard . . . there the wagon sheds and stables . . . here the machinery for cutting chaff, threshing corn . . . there the whim - a horse-operated turntable device which drove the machinery an aged cob trudging endlessly in circles . . . and there the stands for hay-ricks. One orchard and vegetable garden. One cottage garden. More trees. And lots and lots of gateways. His layout is littered with thresholds, with entrances and exits, openings and closings, insides and outsides, comings and goings, arrivals and departures . . . each one signalling greetings and farewells, beginnings and endings, visitations and withdrawals. He even built a junction! And for thirty years, it was all movement - horses, livestock, vehicles. And children. For they too went - Eleanor, Anne, David - to marriage, to war or perhaps to early deaths in the great flu of 1915.

And the pig idly turned its rump to the twig. Once he could have slit its throat catching the spurting blood in a tin bucket as the frothing squeal died, would have blanched the skin with boiling water in an oak trough, would have scrubbed off the bristles, would have stretched the back legs with a bar and hoisted it nose down over a beam, would have opened it from groin to neck in one slash, would have watched the glistening entrails spill out, would have eaten the brains first. But by this time, he kept them as companions. And age requires so little food.

Sometimes on the path to the 'Halfway' pub he would stop beside the piles of stones which the ancient Cambrians had built, or so they said, and look down on the farms of the hillside - Plas-newydd, Ddeunant, Bryn-meiog, Bryn glas, Blaen-y-waun, Pant-teg-isaf, Pant-meinog, Pant-y-ffin, Pen-cnwc and Meolfryn - on the lights of his constellation.

How he died, I've got no idea. In former times, they might have drawn his body up through the chimney, after custom. Most likely he would have been laid out on the night before the funeral, his neighbours sitting round. In 'Yr Hen Dy Fferm' - 'The Old Farmhouse' - D. J. Williams describes the watchnight service and the 'strange silence everywhere, even among the animals on the fold.' (Williams 1987)

1902 Grandma Pearson

Grandma Pearson - Lillian Toyne as was - was a farm maid, her father was foreman. In a family photograph of 1909 she stands, aged 7, hands clasped confidently. If you look closely you'll see she's wearing enormous boots. They belonged to her sister who in a fit of temper at this show of parental favouritism, ripped herself and another sister from the image. Gone forever . . . my family, minus two. Her father wears the dark suit of the nineteenth-century, Sunday best - a suit for all occasions. On his knee sits baby Jackie who in later life developed a terrible wasting illness. If you pressed his flesh it stayed there, the hand print remained.

At the age of 17, she 'laid out' her mother, washing, combing, dressing the body, in preparation for the gaze of others. Then later her father: shaving the face, scrubbing the hands. Just ten years ago, it was the turn of that same aged sister. 'But she died wi' 'er mouth open duck, and I couldn't shut it. I pushed and pushed. But Harold Cox

Hands behind hands, growing paler and paler,
As in a mirror a candle-flame
Shows images of itself, each frailer
As it recedes
('Old Furniture', Hardy 1993: 115)

Her riches were in words, anecdotes, stories. Her daily practice was gossip. Through some extraordinary process involving the visitation of family and neighbours, glimpses of the street from behind her curtains, the daily perusal of the obituary column in the local newspaper and some almost mystical form of divination, she accumulated, processed and held together vast bodies of information. She knew who lived where, who was related to whom, what was happening over dozens of square miles, constantly up-dated and cross-referenced. A world picture, a world in which to live . . . and to die.

But as the end approached, her stories became fewer and fewer, until finally only one remained. And this she repeated over and over. She must have been about 5 years old, preparing the dinner for the harvesters returning from the fields. But the tap on the beer barrel was blocked. 'Well Lilian,' said her mother 'you'll just have to blow up it.'This she did, but it gushed back, giving her a mouthful of bitter ale. It was her first, and only, taste of alcohol.

In the area where she lived, these are the superstitions concerning death: the fastening of the doors of the room or the house hinders painfully the departure of the soul from the body; should a corpse lie in a village over Sunday night, there will be another death before the year is out; on no account should there be an odd number in the funeral party or soon the dead will call out for a companion; should anyone at a distance hail or try to attract your attention by waving a shovel, grab a handful of earth and immediately fling it in their direction or soon you too will be buried.

In the local nursing home in which she died, the village elders sit in a circle of armchairs. They rarely speak. After a lifetime together, there's nothing left to say. She came back from lunch one day, fell asleep and never woke up. She'd just had enough. And there's another gap in the circle.

A hundred years ago, she would have been carried to the grave by women, wearing long white dresses, white gloves and white calico veils. The coffin would have been borne underslung on white towels instead of 'the unsightly and dangerous practice of having them raised on men's shoulders'.

At the end, they just lifted the turf and popped her in on top of my grandfather, thirty-seven years separating them. Two skeletons and a few brass handles. For she, as with others of her generation, fearing the ignominy of the pauper's grave, had always saved just enough for her own funeral. But nothing more. Not even a headstone, no mark with our family name. No ostentation, please. We know our place, we Pearsons, even if it condemns us to eternal anonymity!

She left nothing because it was her philosophy to leave the world as naked as when she

managed it, so that's alright.' Harold Cox was her village undertaker. In the area where she lived, these are the omens of death: if a fire remains alight all through the night; if a dog howls at midnight; if two spoons are placed together in a cup; if you eat off a plate with another plate under it; if holly, used as decoration during Christmas-tide, is found to be shrunken and dried when taken down on Twelfth Night; if a white dove flies into a room; if a tallow candle, while alight, flickers and forms upon the side a mass called a 'winding sheet'. And if bees in a hive be not told of a death, another will follow in the same house shortly.

Her tiny house bore few possessions, a few favourite ornaments: plaster dogs, gifts from grandchildren. And photographs, ranked and revered like icons - husband, sons, grandsons. And a bed, a great mahogany bed, our family bed: site of birth and death, of sex and sickness. Of intimacy, nakedness, comfort, rest, dreams; of pillow-talk, adult matters, secrets, whispers, shared fears and of exhaustion, loneliness and 'listening to the night'. And my uncle sold it, secretly sold it, along with everything else. Not for me then the experiences Thomas Hardy conjures,

/ see the hands of the generations
That owned each shiny familiar thing
In play on its knobs and indentations,
And with its ancient fashioning
Still dallying.

Figure 15
The Toyne family, Grayingham, Lincolnshire, 1909

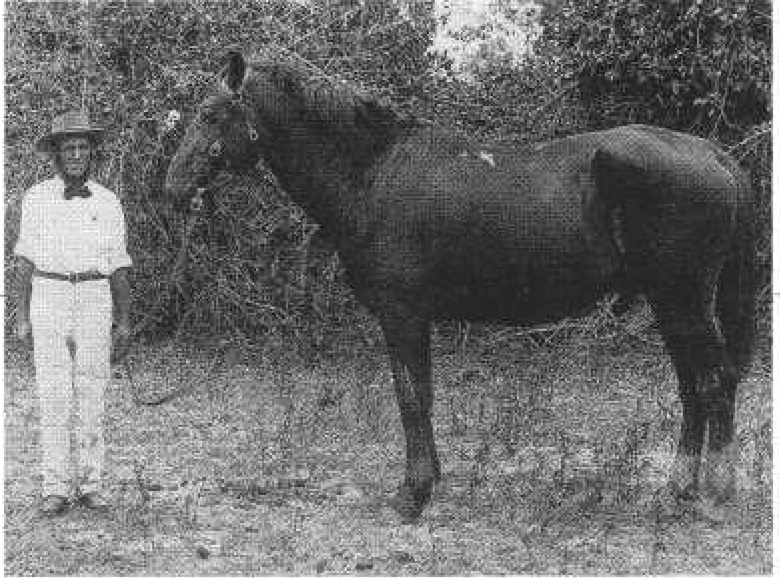

Figure 16
George Shaw,
Queensland,
Australia, 1902

. . . and which did the same to him. And he thought of One-arm Charlie Foster and Peg-leg Reeson.

But it gushed from the start, the femoral artery severed: staining his whites - which he wore as a badge of exoticism: 'He'd been places, knew different habits'- the grassy bank, the muddy water. And they just couldn't staunch it, neither with chewed bread nor cow-muck. Even the string below his knees - which stopped rats running up his trouser legs - proved useless as a tourniquet. And he looked, in disbelief . . . He was 54 and this, he knew, was it.

Mind he'd seen it coming, the previous night. After a heavy day's scything he'd complained of 'heving the scythe point in 'is back' or having 'the hug', a kind of stitch which grips the groin and under the shoulder blade. Susannah had put a heated flat-iron on it - hot as hell - and it did the trick. But then someone put two spoons in the same teacup . . . And that very morning just as the steam packet was passing, another banker over the river in Kelsey Carrs had tried to attract his attention, God preserve us, by waving a shovel... So that then was that.

They'd married in Brigg at Christmas, 1879. They'd attended the Amateur Dramatic Company, whose efforts were much improved with the inclusion of Miss Cecilia Rorke of London, though the amateurs still did not put enough 'life into their agony' and who acted 'in a particularly cool and uninteresting manner'. And they'd heard the first rumours . . . rumours of a great adventure. Though they had no work to go to, they got free passage: him, Suzannah who was already pregnant with George Edward, William Herbert and Annie Alberta. He was 26, she 25 and both could read and write. They set sail on 5 June 1886 aboard the British India Steamship Company's S.S. Dacca which though designed for seventy-five first-class passengers and thirty-two second-class could take three

entered it. And yet her traces are everywhere: in the way I hold my knife; in the childhood prayer she taught which comes instantly to mind, 'Gentle Jesus, meek and mild, look upon a little child', in the silences of my stubbornness, in the shape of my ears. And in the stories I tell about her. And she thought I was my father whom she'd forgotten she had already lost.

We die in public and in private, quietly and violently, on the street, in deserted places, in bed. We spend a lifetime forgetting. And then close to the end, we remember. Grandma spoke dialect: 'Na me duck. Bye she's slaape. Put sneck on't doar.'

1912 George Shaw

We walked out, walked away, walked off - Augustus, George, John and me. Only George went back and he didn't last long. Cutting early docks and thistles on the dyke-side he was, down near Gander . . .

On the ship's manifest his occupation is given as farm labourer and that's what he was - ag. lab. - him and his. He was good with horses: rode side-saddle to the 'ings' every morning, clutching the heavy straw-stuffed collar; knew how to make a lazy 'jibber' shift. Shove a hot potato up its arse! In the photo, he is dressed in white - shirt, trousers, straw hat - with black neck-tie and square-toed boots; beard beneath his chin. He faces us, awkwardly, arms pressed to his sides, whilst the stallion - and stallion it certainly is! - stands in profile, placidly. It is a pose made by Lincolnshire farm-workers in their thousands, they and their beasts, neither quite sure why. Only the sugar-cane in the background is a give-away.

He knew how to swing, to lift, to push; to plough, to sow, to reap, to mow. So when it happened he was surprised rather than hurt, shocked at his own stupidly, shocked that an action he had done a million times - and in distant places - the slow arc of the scythe, had gone wrong, had turned against him: 'Oh, bugger.' Only then, 'Ow, oh God.'

They were all accident prone, or perhaps just a bit forgetful, him and his. Even his father-in-law, a Primitive Methodist minister with a stuck-on beard - who still believed Bishop Usher's calculation that God created the world, complete, in 4004 BC and who 'gained the confidence of both ministers and members in Snitterby Carrs' - had 'pain and sorrow arising out of the loss of one of his arms'. But whatever his lot 'he gave evidence of trust in God'. His granddaughter Lily had her arm off at the shoulder after being bitten by a snake and her daughter Annie had her hair shaved off after an accident with an exploding carbide lamp! Mind it's dangerous, the country. I saw Lellie Wilkinson after he'd been run over by a trailor, the scar tissue wrapped like twisted vines around his crushed legs; saw John Blanchard's fingers laying in the playground after he had tipped the old classroom fire-guard over onto the concrete whilst still gripping the brass surround; saw Snowy Lawman after he'd jumped onto an upturned pitch-fork in a haystack. I remember limbs mangled in harvesters, men suffocating in mud beneath overturned tractors . . . And a labourer falling into a pea-viner, which usually stripped the peas from the haulm and pod

potato! When he died, the women found ten-shilling notes stuffed into every cranny in the caravan: under the mattress, behind the tiny wardrobe, up the chimney of the stove . . . None of it legal tender.

His brother Alfred Melton - quarryman, railway shunter, Royal Marine, taxi driver, grocer, fish fryer who called his daughter Sheila - was also born there. Somewhere along the line they had three others, though Mary Jane and Charles Henry were to die young in the flu epidemic of 1917.

But they never stuck. It was always too humid, too big; too many options, too many possibilities. He was born in 1858 at Waithe Top just above the coastal marshes, above the dykes and banks and shifting sands and racing tides. And now he missed the cramped villages, the damp cottages. He missed the conformity of the enclosed landscape: straight hedges, straight roads, straight drains. And he missed the plough jagging and the ran-tanning.

And as the blood drained away, he remembered how they'd once ran-tanned a bad-tempered schoolmaster in Holton-le-Clay who'd thrashed a kid and then tied his thumbs to the clothes line. 'We got kettles an' cans, an' a great piece of sheet iron from the black-smith's shop - two of us 'eld this 'ere, an' three or four more got sticks an' 'ammers an' let drive at this sheet of iron. The Straw Man went in front - a large man 'e 'ad ter be, an' all covered in straw, an' a long straw tail 'angin off 'im. We went an' ran-tanned the school-master for three nights on end - we allus ran-tanned for three nights like that because then there was "no law".Third night, at the end, when we'd sung songs an' made a big din out-side 'is house for a long time, we all went to the bit of a green there was outside the Public 'ouse, an' we burnt the Straw man - only the straw offen the man, you know, but we called it Burnin the Straw Man!'

He remembered dragging the plough from door-to-door. 'Many an' manys the time I'se been round wi' the plough jags. I can't remember the play as we used ter do, but straw man was the first speaker, I remember. Carry this 'ere Straw Man for miles, we did - carried 'im right way into a house, an' set 'im down, tail and all, an' a' soon as 'e was set down 'e made a long speech, after which the play began. We never took a plough with us, but allus took Straw Man.'

He remembered too the reasons for leaving: the grinding poverty, the diseases of the damp, the children standing in the rain scaring crows from dawn to dusk. He remembered 'The shocking death of the opium-eater in Kirton in 1882 . . . one of the most shocking cases of depravity which has been brought to light in North Lincolnshire for some time has been disclosed in connection with the sad death of Ellen Charles. Although the family consisted of the husband Charles Charles, wife, daughter, three illegitimate grandchildren and a lodger, it appears that they had neither bed, bedstead, mattress nor bed linen of any kind in the house, and scarcely a particle of furniture of any kind. The old woman was found dead on Thursday morning yet no coffin was provided until Monday. In the mean-time the husband exhibited the utmost indifference; when the undertaker arrived the

hundred emigrants in the between decks on the outward journey: London-Java-Brisbane. The Dacca eventually sank in 1890 in the Red Sea with two hundred and fifty single girls aboard, though all were saved, saved to be servants and wives at some bleached and God-forsaken place in the outback. They landed at Bowen on 3 August; according to the disembarkation documents they 'Left with friends'. But they never got very far, overcome by the enormity of what they had done, of where they were.

At first he hauled timber: 'This is my team' the inscription on the photo of the six-horse wagon reads. In another picture, several teams stand at a long veranda; only the palm-trees are a give-away. Perhaps this is Goorganga Station, Proserpine where he worked for A. J. Cotton. At some point, he tried gold prospecting in Normanby. Not of course Normanby near Scunthorpe where Lord Sheffield laid out his parklands and gave a prize to the best team of plough jags. And not Normanby near Rasen where the bridge was so badly haunted that three parsons were sent for. 'They axed the spirit what she wanted an' she said "Life she wanted, life she'd ave!". So they gave her a live stag, an' she took it an' tore it limb from limb an' devoured it, an' whiles she was doin' it they pops 'er under an iron pot an' imprisoned her inside of it.' But the dusty holes of Normanby, Queensland.

The sugar only came later. The photo shows a corrugated shed, in a clearing: Kelsey Creek he called it, out of nostalgia or desperation or irony. The natives had long since skidaddled, or so they were told. Freddie, who as a child caught polio and thereafter wore a metal caliper and special platform boot, was born there on 17 November 1897 and baptised on 22 May 1898 in the Diocese of North Queensland. His baptism certificate shows the name William Robert crossed out and Frederick David Warren added. In later life he became a master carpenter and also something of a hermit. He lived in a caravan that he built himself, at the bottom of the garden. Amongst his few possessions were a paraffin lamp with a red, glass bowl, an early Phillips portable radio the size of a shoe-box and a bicycle with a petrol engine in the rear wheel, the sole product of some crazed inventor. Only starting was difficult as Freddie pedalled painfully to turn the motor.

Freddie also kept pigs. His great sow would farrow regularly and Nan would spend the next few days trying to save the inevitably short life of the runt. Pigs can smell death. Screaming accompanied slaughtering day from dawn, and as the great wooden trough was taken down from the barn ready for scalding and scrubbing they heard it. Some say that the village women would get together and in a private ritual eat the brains of the freshly slaughtered pig. I never saw it. Nasty thing, a pig bite: takes a lump of flesh clean out! And as Dot says: 'Once they've started, they may as well carry on!'

Freddie's shirts were a miracle. He always wore collarless, cotton shirts. But after a certain age, he refused to buy any new ones. So Nan had to cut more and more off the tails to patch collar, cuff and elbow. The result was a curious, if short, mosaic. In archaeology, any object of obscure purpose or design is conventionally referred to as a ritual object. Freddie's shirts were ritual objects! He once threw a whole bucket of wet chips into the hot fat. The explosion almost killed him. Coated the whole of the inside of the chip shop in

corpse was found on the bare floor surrounded by filth, the only covering being an old cloth.'

But return they did, all except Annie Alberta. She was 'a pioneer' who would eventually marry three times to a string of scrawny bushmen Jack Davies, Ernest Harris and Archibald Burns McDonald with whom she lived 'in sin' for twenty years. In the wedding photos they sit nervously: under lemon trees with step-children - 'Lily has got her mouth screwed up which spoils her. Lizzie and Jack look grand'; or in front of backdrops, fingering trilby brims, in white gloves, necks swivelling in collars. Annie always looks like.
she could eat them all. Lizzie in her confirmation whites, in her wedding whites . . . Lizzie who doesn't yet realise that the snake is waiting in the sugar.

They came home to the wetlands of the Ancholme valley: to sugar beet and spuds and mangold wurzels; to Brandywharf, to North Carr ... to Hibaldstow Carr, where on a wet morning in April 1912 my great-grandfather, George Shaw, bled to death.

1937 cityscape

Major Green, arrested for murder, 15 January 1937. Arms resting, folded, on the desk, its c ontents visible below, out of focus. He looks out of shot distantly to the right, bareheaded and in a casual coat. A man in a pinstripe suit and hat looks at Green's hands . . . maybe. Two men in dark suits behind look out of shot to the right. A blurred face of a man, centred at the back, looks at the camera.

Wife of Major Green being escorted out of police station, 15 January 1937. Name not recorded, she is in a dark overcoat and hat, right arm extended, left over abdomen, she falls back against one of the two policemen, eyes half closed, she is shouting. The building angles back a little with her. The man behind in the pale hat and coat is carrying something . . . maybe he isn't a policeman.

Two photographs by Weegee (in Barth 1997: 92-3).

Weegee's on-camera flash captured it all starkly and in your face, and in a way which heightens the contrast between foreground and recedingly dark backgrounds and interiors. They are all so film-noir (Bergala 1997). His famous collection of photographs of New York, *Naked City* (1945) is an extraordinary and influential document of a city's life. In the collection of his photographs fragments seem to matter more than narrative connection, ambience more than story.

And in the photographs themselves there is an indeterminacy.

They look like random frames of a movie. The subjects include many backs of figures.
Many are too close a shot. Many make reference to what is out of the shot - they witness a lack or absence. The long shots are missing crucial details, the flash bleaching them out, throwing backgrounds even deeper into shadow. And they are 'in your face' - many are about the brutality, the unseemliness of sordid urban crime. Weegee was fascinated by the forensic body. He wasn't a police photographer, but he recorded scenes of crime, working freelance at the edges.

It was not until the 1930s that crime reportage (the document) came to be centred upon the body - the dead body of the victim and the mug shot of the murderer, though the face of

criminality had been the subject of much physiognomic and anthropological interest since the 1850s - those eyebrows joined in the middle. And the face of the criminal looks ordinary, suspiciously familiar; the criminal, the perpetrator, could be anyone. For crime is not written on our faces; it would seem the self has hidden interiors which leaves clues that need excavating. This modernist sensibility poses the question: Do we know even ourselves?

A chalk outline upon the ground. At the scene of a crime the body is a ghostly presence as it leaves traces and upon which traces are laid. Both victim and perpetrator. Here it is not an innocent repository of biological process. The mark on and of the body is always just that - an incidental detail as well as key to a past, a history, a memory. So in this indeterminacy and multiplicity of the trace - it could be anything - bodies go beyond the domain of signs, for at the heart is a nagging silence, a gap or lack. The latent criminality of modern urban space, its figures and artefacts, its scenography, is not about crime. It's about the way we look and see and understand aftermaths and traces, worlds of ruin and recollection.

Every answer and statement was filled with half-truths, half-lies and self-justifications . . . The truth about how she died is shrouded by the murky gloom of the world in which she lived. In a world of secrecy and deceit, questions from outside go unanswered. Sure, there were lies, contradictions, changes, additions. Is it ever any different? (Brith Gof: *From Memory I Body of Evidence]* 1995; text by Mike Pearson)

1942 the Royal Air Force

There is an archive of aerial photographs in Milton Keynes in England. They were taken by reconnaissance planes of the Royal Air Force during the Second World War of places all over Europe. The photographs were to survey, map and record, to prepare for military action. These photographs also record the end of traditional farming techniques and show many traces of ancient activity, signs in the earth of inhabitation now gone. For archaeologists this is an extraordinary resource - photographs of landscapes now so altered by half a century of agricultural activity, of a pace and intensity which has erased so much that may have taken thousands of years to shape. One helpful and efficient curator looks after the collection. But it is not enough; the photographs are in disrepair and we wonder how long they will last.

In 1942 an aircraft flew over Clywedog and photographed Esgair Fraith. There are, of course, no conifers in the photograph; and you cannot see David Davies. Perhaps he had already died, earlier that year. His triangular garden is there, and the sunlight catches on the roof of the biggest of his sheds.

1995 at ground level

The roof is no longer there, though there are some bits of corrugated iron. You walk up the track with a banked hedge to your left. A stream runs down most of the year; the whole place is sodden, in a gloom created by the grown-out sycamore hedges and the conifer plantation.

To the right the garden, still showing the signs of a lawn, and rhododendrons. And the sheds, or what were. You would think they had been abandoned centuries ago. Just by the entrance to the biggest, whose roof stands out in that aerial photo of 1942, are hundreds of rusting nails and