

From:

Benedikt Jäger, Steffi Hobuß (eds.)

**(Post)Colonial Histories –
Trauma, Memory and Reconciliation
in the Context of the Angolan Civil War**

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The documentary *My heart of Darkness* (Sweden 2011) tells the story of a South-African paratrooper returning to Angola: Facing former enemies, he tries to regain mental health and reconciliation.

The film marks the stepping-stone for this volume: The contributions examine different facets like the memory-discourse, genre aspects, the use of music, and authentication processes. Several texts discuss these topics in a more general way including other films. Furthermore, some articles are devoted to the historical context, i.e. the Angolan Civil War and the aftermath of this conflict in the cultural sphere.

Benedikt Jäger (Associate professor) teaches Nordic literature at the University of Stavanger (Norway).

Steffi Hobuß (Senior lecturer/associate professor) teaches Philosophy and Kulturwissenschaften at Leuphana University Lüneburg (Germany).

For further information:

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Black and White Dogs – Conceptual Encounters

BENEDIKT JAGER, STEFFI HOBUS



In 2016, the German illustrator and author Birgit Weyhe published a remarkable graphic novel entitled *Madgermanes*. The book focuses on the experiences of a particular group of people, namely migrant workers in the GDR. During the Cold War, communist countries ‘invited’ workers from socialist countries in the Third World. For example, over 20,000 workers from Mozambique came to East Germany to learn from the technologically more developed sister state. Their story has been one of disappointments. The assumed learning opportunity quickly developed into hard and underpaid work exploitation. Instead of the official socialist solidarity, these workers encountered blatant daily racism. The economic benefits were stolen by corrupt politicians in the home countries. They became

“Madgermanes”, the mad Germans who were ‘made in Germany’ and who neither fitted into the reunified Germany nor into Mozambique (Weyhe 2016).

Many of the questions discussed in Weyhe’s book are also crucial for the publication at hand. The film *My Heart of Darkness* also leads us back to the time of the Cold War. After the liberation of Angola from the Portuguese colonial power, a civil war emerged involving socialist and capitalist countries, such as Cuba or South Africa. Marius Van Niekerk came to Angola as a white South African paratrooper and was traumatized by his experiences and deeds in this war. He was driven into exile and moved to Sweden, but was haunted by the past even there.¹ Like the foreign workers in the GDR, he was stuck in an in-between that complicated and troubled his identity. As Birgit Weyhe puts it (as can be seen in the opening illustration), the question of memory and the strange ways of remembering are crucial for both works: The dog in heat is straying around and is following the traces but, as the illustration indicates, the traces are meshed up in a chaotic knot. Van Niekerk moved from the South to the North, but carried with him the memories and the scars from the war, a war that was fought in the spirit of Apartheid. Van Niekerk’s project, which is documented in the film, is to gain sanity and to overcome madness, not only for himself, but also for his family. Fighting his own ghosts from the war, he is consciously trying not to transfer his trauma onto the generation of his children. As Marianne Hirsch (1997) put it in coining the term “postmemory”, a remote conflict is inflicted upon this generation. The questions of memory and the transmission of memories are therefore central in *My Heart of Darkness* and in *Madgermanes*.

The straying dog behaves like the memories of the traumatic experiences. It appears unexpectedly at places, it is unreliable, and it cannot be controlled deliberately or by rational means. Thus, it shares one of the features of “travelling memory” (Erl 2011). Other aspects of this travelling memory in the case of *My Heart of Darkness* are the processes of remediation, since it is a documentary film that alludes not only to Joseph Conrad’s novel *Heart of Darkness* but also to Francis Ford Coppola’s *Apocalypse Now*, the transnational context of the Angolan Civil War, Van Niekerk’s life and, finally, the context of recent memory studies.

1 See also Marius Van Niekerk and Peter Tucker (2007).

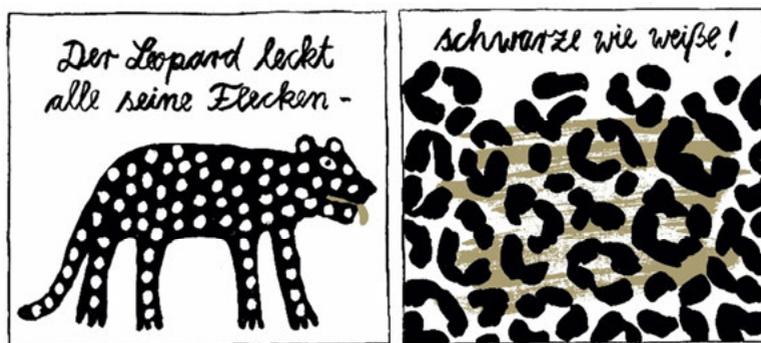
In this sense, there are striking parallels between the three projects, including our research. Both the graphic novel, the film and our research have their point of departure in a white perspective on Africa. Both Birgit Weyhe and Marius Van Niekerk are biographically connected to Africa. Weyhe spent her childhood in Uganda and Kenya and reflects on this in her book as motivating her sensibility for the questions of migration and in-between-ness, thus also explaining how she came upon the story of the foreign workers from Mozambique in the GDR in the first place, a part of history neglected in the German public after the unification in 1990. In research on modern autobiographical writing, the phenomenon of the “story of the story” has been developed over the last decades. For John Paul Eakin this phenomenon has been an important sign marking the turn of the autobiography away from the celebration of the autonomous (white, male) ingenious subject to an acknowledgment of the interweaving of our lives with those of others, towards relational autobiographies (Eakin 1999, 56). Following this idea, we would like to say a few words about the story of our story, how we got involved with the Angolan civil war as seen through the lens of a South African living in Sweden.

This publication is the result of an international collaborative research project. In December 2014, we held a workshop at the University of Stavanger. We were a group of researchers from Sweden (Karlstad), Germany (Lüneburg), Great Britain (London), and Norway (Stavanger). The group had been established as a research network in memory studies since 2011, led by Alexandre Dessingué (University of Stavanger) and funded by the Norwegian Research Council through the “Program for the Cultural Conditions Underlying Social Change” (SAMKUL). The main objective of this project was to discuss and analyse the new challenges in the uses of cultural memories and the (de-)construction of national myths in a global age.² The last workshop of this project organised at the University of Stavanger focused on uses of memory theories and methodologies in a comparative and interdisciplinary approach, and in light of a common case study, i.e. the documentary film *My Heart of Darkness*.

2 At the same time, many of the participants were members of the COST network In Search for Transcultural Memory in Europe (ISTME), funded by the EU COST program in 2013-2016.

For some of the researchers, it was their first visit to the Southwest of Norway and, being only two weeks before Christmas, they were not disappointed. The town of Stavanger and the landscape around was covered by a thick layer of snow. The campus of the University was bathing in pure whiteness and the image was completed by deer passing by outside the classroom, in which we were gathered. This Disney-like image is of course too good to be true. Our hospitable and generous host, namely the University of Stavanger that has supported this publication in many ways, is the result of blackness. Stavanger is the capital of the Norwegian Oil industry and has therefore become one of the most expensive towns in the world, especially bearing in mind that it has 125 000 inhabitants. The use of fossil fuels is the acknowledged reason for the increasing climate change and the domestic participants had a hard time shattering the image of Stavanger as a winter wonderland the visitors had acquired. Normally, the winter in Stavanger is grey, with lots of rain, no snow and three to four degrees above zero, and to be honest it was like that even before the climate changes. The children here are not born with skis on their feet.

Why this report about images of the North and the locatedness³ of a research project? The ‘Madgermanes’ from Mozambique experience several forms of xenophobia in the North and one character answers this challenge with an African proverb (Weyhe 2016, 62):



3 For the concept of locatedness as a response to the transnational and transcultural turn in the context of memory studies, see Radstone (2011).

This little strip in some way captures many of the guidelines for our research, as well as the challenges we had to meet. All the contributors of the papers in this volume are white academics dealing with Angola, a country that has not been in the center of public interest in the West. Thus the effort we try to put into these collected essays can be understood as part of the project of critical race studies, or *critical studies of whiteness*. However, since the last decade, *critical studies of whiteness* have been met with a considerable amount of critique. White academics who try to be aware of their whiteness when dealing with the topics discussed here still tend to reproduce white supremacy and colonial and racist power relations. There is no way out of this problem. We are confronted with a dilemma that is one of the fundamental problems of neocolonialism: Either we try to give a critical analysis of the constellation we find in *My Heart of Darkness*: White directors making a documentary about the Angolan civil war and the traumata of the war. However, we have to reproduce and repeat racist categories and relations by simply speaking as white academics about this constellation. There is no possibility of escaping the “reiterations” (Derrida 1988) of white supremacy and biased categories. Alternatively, trying to avoid such repetitions and references to universalism of mankind means risking color blindness (cf. Wollrad 2005): “Even though it has become commonplace to utter rote phrases such as ‘race is a construct’ or ‘race does not exist’, etc., race itself shows no evidence of disappearing or evaporating in relevance.” (Crooks 2000, 4) There is no escape from this dilemma and it can only be dealt with through an ongoing process of discussion. In this troubled situation, it is always necessary to speak against oneself, or to use language against its own notions and restrictions.

We understand our contributions as one step in this ongoing process and hope for further discussions and dialogue. In any case, our readings of the documentary in the context of memory politics, memory culture and the ethics of memory try to show the importance of going beyond simple binaries and being aware of ambivalences and contradictions. In the context of memory studies, simple binaries always seem to be dead ends, as Astrid Erll states when referring to the binary of history vs. memory (cf. Erll 2008, 7).

With this in mind, let us have a look at the leopard anew. The leopard in the first image has white stains that change into black stains when zooming in on the animal’s skin. The background is brushed with brown

strokes introducing a third color, transcending the dichotomy of black and white. It is our hope that the articles collected here can contest the oppositional thinking in exclusive categories.

For some of the researchers, these topics are not only of academic interest, but are also part of their everyday lives. Being migrant workers from France and Germany living with their families in a cross-cultural context in Norway actualizes many of the problems (and chances) that migration and exile raise. Of course, our experiences are much more 'pleasant' and less traumatizing than what *My Heart of Darkness* deals with. What we have in common is the awareness of the journey of memories from one context to another.

Another fundamental difficulty is the factor of gender: *My Heart of Darkness* is a male-dominated documentary. Some gender aspects that are important in the Angolan context are dealt with in this volume, e.g. the male-dominated agent and agency of the documentary in opposition to the objectification of women, Van Niekerk's relationship to his daughters, all the veteran's relationships to their (former) wives, the fact that until today the victims of landmines have been mostly women and children, and the role of gender and the female body in artists' practices. A systematic analysis of the gender constructions and gender relations in *My Heart of Darkness* is still a desideratum in research, especially since memory studies sometimes tend to marginalize women's memory work.

The image we chose for the book cover is used in the documentary (42'-45'), when a testimony of a horrible event is reported, namely the massacre of burning innocent women by the troupes of Savimbi. This is reminiscent of the many women and children who were victims of the civil war, but who are most often marginalized when it comes to collective memory practice.

Blackness and whiteness, men and women, neocolonialism and north-south relations, adults and children are all categories that are inseparably intertwined in the memories and narratives of the war. The *intersectionality* of these aspects, in terms of the notion Kimberlé W. Crenshaw coined to describe the overlapping or intersecting social identities and related systems of domination, oppression, or discrimination (Crenshaw 1989), can be seen to be at work in *My Heart of Darkness*. During the different scenes, different categories, such as race, gender, age, and others, become more or less important or dominant in relation to others.

In sum, our endeavor documented in this volume, as well as the documentary *My Heart of darkness* as a cultural artifact itself, can be considered as highly ambivalent concerning the negotiations of the Angolan Civil War, the traumatic experiences, and all the related topics, such as (post-) colonialism, racism, critical race studies, and gender. Each of the contributions deals in some way with some of these difficulties, ambivalences and contradictions.

The initial article by Ketil Fred **Hansen** opens our ensemble of papers by unfolding fundamental information about the Angolan civil war in order to make it easier to understand the references and dialogues in *My Heart of Darkness*. While focusing on the period from the Portuguese surrender up to the year the film was shot (2007), his chapter gives an overview and also includes a short description of central historical developments prior to 1975 when these are considered relevant to the civil war.

As Kaya **de Wolff** points out, the controversial memory discourse around *My Heart of Darkness* speaks both of Western domination of the reconciliation paradigm and an elite-driven top-down-memory politics, as well as of local narratives from below and a popular counter-memory. De Wolff focuses on the controversial discourses surrounding the screenings of the documentary in different contexts. In her paper, “‘They said we have to forgive each other’: Memory, ‘Transitional Justice’, and (post)colonialism in the context of the international screenings of the documentary *My Heart of Darkness*”, she points to the different interpretations that have been given to different contexts of the screening. Based upon the idea that the documentary film as a cultural text unfolds its meaning in interactions with an active audience, she unfolds three different readings of the documentary. According to the first reading, *My Heart of Darkness* is a universal film about veterans that portrays them as suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and seeking for forgiveness, social rehabilitation and recognition. The second reading understands the film as a model for national reconciliation in Angola and raises a critique of top-down memory politics. According to the third interpretation, the documentary gives a critique of the exploitation of the people who were pressured into the civil war in Angola and left on their own in its aftermath. In this interpretation, the official memory discourse of national reconciliation neglects and silences the vernacular memory of the Angolan people and, most of all, the Angolan veterans.

After this detailed case study and analysis of the reception and the discursive adaptation of the documentary in its different contexts, the following papers turn towards the interpretation of its contents and its aesthetics. In his contribution “From common to shared memory and from forgiving to forgetting”, Alexandre **Dessingué** deals with the ambivalences of the documentary itself. He asks to what extent it actually works as a process of forgiveness and reconciliation, as this intention is clearly introduced in the trailer. Starting from the observation that the documentary deals with individual acts of remembrance, as well as with collective acts of re-mediation and forgetting, Dessingué analyses the film’s dialogues in order to show that the intention is much more ambitious than explicitly introduced. He reads the documentary as a “construction of a shared experience”, referring to the philosophy and ethics of memory like Arendt’s notion of the “banality of evil”, and using Margalit’s concepts of “common memory” and “shared memory” (cf. Margalit 2004). While a common memory is an aggregate of individual acts and keeps a polyphonic nature, a shared memory, according to Margalit can be seen as a result of a shared and calibrated cultural representation. However, *My Heart of Darkness* remains a mere attempt to change an individual journey into a collective one, as is revealed by a closer look at the kind of forgiveness the documentary is about. Dessingué differentiates between forgiveness in the sense of a “covering-up model” and a “blotting-out model”, again according to Margalit. While the covering-up model integrates an acceptance by the victims of forgetting, no clear victim-perpetrator-relationship can be found in the documentary. Rather, it uses a blotting-out model of forgiving, because it mostly shows an authoritative initiative of the main character Marius Van Niekerk. Thus, the ethical-philosophical focus on different types of memory and different types of forgiveness highlights the ambivalences of the documentary.

In Dessingué’s interpretation, Van Niekerk tries to establish an “individual, active and voluntary” overview of past events – what has proved to be particularly problematic. Steffi **HobuB** deals with a similar question and looks at the contradictions that occur because the documentary uses examples of colonial imagery in order to change the meaning of the depicted journey from an individual into a collective one. Against the backdrop of an introduction to the idea of collective memory, understood in terms of present memory acts rather than as a representation of past events,

her article about “Memory, Contradictions and Resignifications of Colonial Imagery in *My Heart of Darkness*” examines contradictions as a central part of the film’s aesthetics and provides some examples of resignification and remediation of colonialist and racist imagery. Through the aesthetic means of the documentary, it shows more than the expressed individual intention of the main character, which can be understood as Van Niekerk’s wish for private ownership of his memories, a desire that is impossible to fulfill. The issues of colonialism and racism continuously present throughout the documentary, through the allusions to Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* and Coppola’s *Apocalypse Now*, seem to be swallowed up by the “universal” aims of forgiveness and reconciliation. Other aspects include the use of daylight, firelight and darkness, and the pictures of animals and nature are by chains of resignification connected with colonial imagery.

The understanding of memory as present acts, rather than depictions of the past developed as a theoretical framework by Hobuß also forms the subject of Ketil **Knudsen**’s contribution about “Performing History – *My Heart of Darkness* from a dramatist perspective”. Knudsen focuses upon *My Heart of Darkness* from a dramatist perspective. He uses the “pentad analysis” according to Kenneth Burke to elucidate the motivational forces that drive the film. This methodological framework allows seeing the film as performative, determined by meaning practices that relate the past to the present and the future. As in John L. Austin’s *Theory of speech acts*, from the perspective of pentad analysis, language is a mode of action rather than a mode of knowledge, or describing the world by reference. Moreover the film can also be analyzed as an act rather than a representation of something. Knudsen considers regaining dignity and purging the present by getting rid of the memories from the war as the act carried out during the narration. For Van Niekerk, the purpose of the act is to redefine his identity by purgatory and to become a father again. Knudsen views Van Niekerk and the other veterans as the main agents. Although all the main characters were at least perpetrators and victims during the war, as agents they are shown only as victims. While there are other persons present in the film, such as the Angolan villagers or family members, objectification rules them out as agents. By asking for the aspect dominating the film’s narration, it is clearly the agent who dominates. All other aspects are related to and subjected to the agent. Van Niekerk’s aim of healing himself requires constructing himself and the other veterans as victims and at the same time

using the others as a means for his individual project. On the whole, in the light of Knudsen's investigation, *My Heart of Darkness* is driven by this individual project rather than by an interest in the scene, i.e. the Angolan context. Although it is methodologically connected with approaches such as oral history, history from below and research on reconciliation, and explicitly deals with the question of how we can come to terms with history today, it reproduces domination to some extent.

In "The Role of Music in Memorial Production and Discourse in *My Heart of Darkness*", David **Wagner** and Jon **Skarpeid** focus on the interplay of the film's narration with the film's music. In a first step, they discuss the role of music in feature films and documentaries in general and link this discussion to the seldom-debated question of music and memory. In the everlasting dispute about music and reference, they argue that music in connection with other codes of the film contributes to and deepens the emotional and semantical impact of film. In accordance with Annabel J. Cohen's framework of internal and external semantics of music at different levels (congruence and association), Wagner and Skarpeid present the possibilities inherent in the choice of tone, dynamics, timbre, and rhythm and tempo.

In some way, the film *My Heart of Darkness* is an untypical documentary because it uses extradiegetic film music in an extensive way. Over half of the film is accompanied by music by the Swedish composer Jan Anderson and breaks with the journalistic rationalism and observational minimalism that almost has to be seen as a dogma in documentaries (the same applies to Annekathrin Hendel's *Vaterlandsverräter* that Jager uses in his reading as a contrasting counterpart to Van Niekerk's film.) The distribution of the parts with music and without music are also of great importance. On a semantic level, Wagner and Skarpeid observe a polyphonic issue in the discussion of the four former war veterans. This choir of voices is divided in relation to the film music: only the comments by the narrator Marius Van Niekerk are accompanied by music. This fact offers the audience a greater surface for identification with his project and accentuates his priority. In painstaking analyses, Wagner and Skarpeid show how the use of musical motives contributes to deepening the emotional impact of the film's narrative. Most interesting in this way is their reading of the "The Milgram Effect", the music accompanying the end credits. The music in this part reintroduces an ambivalence from the

margins of the film and problematizes the optimistic solution provided by the first-person-narrator in the cleansing ceremony. While this is a very subtle comment, it finds an equivalent in a very short scene when the reconciliation is reached, the goat is sacrificed, and the former enemies are friends. This peace is broken by Patrick and Samuel roleplaying (like children) their respective part in the battle of Cuito Cuanavale. This scene questions the equilibrium that the film has reached and implements a new polyphony, possibly according to the doubled authorship of the film.

The use of music can also be seen as a mode to strengthen the impact of the film, to increase its ethos. Benedikt **Jager** starts his article “‘I don’t trust in pictures’: Forms of Authentication in *My Heart of Darkness* and Annekatriin Hendel’s *Vaterlandsverräter*.” with a similar question. In Van Niekerk’s film, the reliability of documents is central and it is of great importance for Marius that his fellow travellers accept these as authentic. The article is interested in which strategies the film uses to create an aura of authenticity. The term “authenticity” is one of the key terms of the second half of the 20th century and is in part a symptom and also in part a solution of the crisis of modernity. As the theoretical discussion of the term has shown, it functions as a promise to overcome ‘the transcendental homelessness’ (Lukács 1971, 32+52), a promise that it ultimately cannot deliver. In this way, Jager’s approach does not focus on the question of whether the films are authentic, but rather on whether they create an aura of authenticity. The starting point is the observation that both films share some motives in telling their stories. On a macro level, the motive of the boat-travel and the campfire as a place for storytelling is used in both narrations. In *My Heart of Darkness* the setting is loaded with implications that signal that the sphere of corrupt culture will be transcended. Travelling up the river is a going back to nature, to archaic forms of life that function as a rebirth for the traumatized soldier. The peak of this development is the cleansing ceremony and the sacrifice of a goat. A closer look at this suggestive story shows that this the staging of authenticity is more a tangle of contradictions than a sole Ariadne’s thread. The discussions of the status of Van Niekerk’s war-pictures are central here, but so are questions of genre.

Annekatriin Hendel’s films often deal with the question of authenticity. As a former citizen of the GDR, she is fascinated by the role of the intelligence (Stasi) in society and the cultural sphere. By scrutinizing this

field, she ends up in indecisive twilight zones, that have consequences for the staging of her films. While *My Heart of Darkness* tries to persuade the audience that reconciliation and salvation is possible by going back to nature, *Vaterlandsverräter* shows the prevailing aporias and makes them visible by different strategies. The status of documents is discussed and remains disputable, and the importance of genre as a framing factor for our understanding is not suppressed but marked. In using (fictional) oil paintings as illustrations that are rooted in conventions and that allude to trivial genres she finds a strategy to show how these events are part of a construction, one that is at last arbitrary and not rooted in the authentic.

In the last part of the book, we present two contributions that examine the Angolan Civil War and its aftermath in relation to other art projects. Nadine **Siegert** deals with Fernando Alvim's project *Memorias – Intimas – Marcas* and Jo Ractliffe's photographic series *As terras no Fim do mundo*. Both these projects share, together with Van Niekerk's film, an interest in important places of the Angolan war: the battlefields of Cassinga and of Cuito Canavale. The latter gained almost mythological status as the African Stalingrad (cf. Sanney 2006). The Angolan Alvim and the South African Ractliffe also travel back to these two places where war atrocities took place in 1978 and 1987-1988. Siegert is most interested in discussing the different strategies by approaching the traumatic events and connects this to the possibility of representation of trauma. Using the works of Aleida Assmann, Dominick LaCapra and, most importantly, Jill Bennett, she traces different strategies of memorization in the artworks. The watershed of her argumentation can be found in the opposition of representability and un-representability of trauma. Her arguments question whether the different approaches to representability lead to different concepts of politics of memory and reconciliation. While Van Niekerk opts for a representation of traumatic events as something that can be left behind, Alvim and Ractliffe rely on other strategies. Against this background, Siegert discusses a question similar to Jager's. Authenticity and representation, if not twins, are at least close siblings. As opposed to Van Niekerk, Ractliffe and Alvim are preoccupied with the locations of the war, not in order to reconstruct a historical truth, but to engage actively with trauma in a communicative way. The communication is not governed by knowledge and truth, but by relations and negotiations between the participants of the projects. While the photographs in the shoebox are undisputable in Van Niekerk's

understanding, the other projects have silence, emptiness and a lack of outspoken signs as a starting point. Against the backdrop that these projects are performative, they open for a concept of participation and affectual experience. They address the process of working through a traumatic past, not the result, which leads Siegert to interesting observations about the relationship of personal memory to collective memory processes.

Nora **Simonhjell**'s "Miss Landmine in Angola. Negotiating the political aesthetics of the mutilated body" also deals with the relationship of the individual and the collective. Angola, alongside Cambodia and Afghanistan, is the country in the world that is still suffering the most from landmines placed during the civil war. The stories emerging from these weapons are different from the stories told by the war veterans in Van Niekerk's film since the victims of landmines are mostly women and children. Most narrations about the war are told by male soldiers and the gendered perspective is often neglected in the collective memory processes. An illuminating example from a German context is that the common writers of diaries are mostly women, while only a third of diary keepers are men, but this composition is reversed in wartime. The *Deutsches Tagebuch Archiv* in Emmendingen shows that the private narrations about the Second World War are clearly male-dominated. In Norway, we can observe the same phenomenon in relation to the resistance narrative: the stories of female members of the resistance are concealed. The Norwegian artist Morten Traavik worked with these issues by changing the focus of one of the most male perspective's on the female body: the beauty contest. In 2008, he arranged a beauty contest for Angolan women who had suffered severe injuries from landmines.

Simonhjell's perspective is twofold: She reads the project in the frame of the genre beauty pageant and relates these findings with insights from the field of disability studies. Through a short retrospective on the history of beauty pageants, research could show that the bodies of the female participants had to be understood as symbolic signs. The beauty queen had to be seen as an idealized ambassador for the community, a narcissistic reflection that suppressed all 'negativity'. This is the hub of Traavik's project. Simonhjell furthermore shows that he is not interested in incorporating these women in the logic of globalized capitalism, but in focusing on the mechanisms of displacement of the deviant. By showing the scars of the mutilated bodies, Traavik indirectly shows the history of

the Angolan Civil War and the still ongoing struggle in everyday life, and tries to empower the affected people. They are not victims that need our compassion, but rather living women with dreams and challenges. In a broader context, the project aims to address questions of otherness and normality. The disabled can be addressed as the unruly body that challenges our categorization of entity, harmony, or the dualism between ill and well. In this way Traavik's ironic inversion of the slogan of the *Miss World contest*, "Beauty with a purpose", into "Beauty with a difference" is striking.

The critical reader may ask whether a whole book about a film that has not gained international fame is perhaps giving it unwarranted attention. The editors and contributors hope that the articles compiled in this edition both have heuristic value with regard to the film and also discuss broader questions. This introduction started with the image of memory as a dog in heat. With some modifications, it is also suitable for the situation of the researcher – we like to see ourselves as sleuths in the humanities, in society. This project has in many ways been a knot, a crossing of traces that we tried to follow, to untangle and, finally, to tame. If one takes a close look at Weyhe's frame of the dog of memory, one can distinguish several layers. The white brushings are made by hand and fingerprints are recognizable. In the same way, this project on a remote land and a conflict almost forgotten in Norway and Germany became personal in an unexpected way. At a gathering at the Academy of Science in Oslo, the editors met a well-renowned scholar from Oxford. In the normal coffee-break-chat about ongoing research, we mentioned the Angola project and evoked a reaction other than the expected courtesy. In a novel of the 19th century, it would be called: "He turned pale!" And he told us: "That could be my story – that is, why I went from my homeland South Africa into exile to Great Britain!" The ways of the dog, of memory and research, are unpredictable. In this way, we shake the water from our fur, just like a dog on the shore, and deliver this ball of research to whom it may concern. Perhaps somebody else would like to throw the ball ahead to other stray dogs on the beach.

Stavanger and Lüneburg, April 2017

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