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KENYAN AND BRITISH SOCIAL IMAGINARIES ON JULIE WARD'S DEATH IN KENYA

Grace Ahingula Musila

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of doctor of philosophy.

Johannesburg, 2008.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at any other university.

Grace Ahingula Musila

-------- DAY OF ------- 2008

For Gladys C. E. Kipsongo, Willie, Mukasa, Yai, Andrew, Sambiri, and Benni.

And to the memory of E.M.M.

Abstract

The study explores the narratives on the 1988 death of 28 year old British tourist, Julie Ann Ward in Kenya's Maasai Mara Game Reserve. Julie Ward's death in Kenya attracted widespread attention in Kenya and Britain culminating in at least three true crime books, significant media coverage and rumours in Kenya. The study reflects on the narratives on Julie Ward's death, with particular interest in the discourses that gained expression through, or were inscribed, on Julie Ward's death and the quest for her killers. The study is also interested in the ways in which the Julie Ward case and the discourses it inspired offer a critique of rationality, and the accompanying unity of the subject, expressed through a logocentric impulse as key tenets of a Western modernity that continues to mediate metropolitan readings of postcolonial Africa.

The study reveals that Julie Ward's death traversed various discursive sites, which were laden with specific ideas on race, gender, the postcolonial African state, Western modernity, female sexuality and black male sexuality, among a host of other issues; all of which tinted British and Kenyan narratives on the circumstances surrounding the death. The study argues that the authors of the three books on the Ward tragedy rely on colonial archives on Africa, and actively mobilize notions such as the myth of the uncontrollable black male libido and its threat to the vulnerable white woman in understanding the Ward tragedy. While these writers cling to these notions of the black peril, the noble savages, Africa as the tourist's wildlife paradise, and the dysfunctional postcolonial state; Kenyan publics read the murder as another symptom of a criminal political elite's brutal deployment of violence to secure immunity for its criminal activities.

However, the two sets of ideas are largely disarticulated, and as the study reveals, the British stakeholders in the case are blinded by a rigid polarization of Kenya and Britain, which presumes a superior British moral and technological integrity. These assumptions blind the Ward family to British complicity in the cover up of the truth in Julie Ward's murder; while at the same time, rendering them illiterate in the local textualities which remain inaccessible to the instruments of Western modernity that are privileged in the quest for truth and justice in the Julie Ward murder.

Julie Ward’s presence in Kenya, her death and the subsequent quest for her killers is consistently haunted by neat dichotomies, derived from various masternarratives. The study traces these dichotomies, in a bid to outline their configurations and the outcomes of their deployment, while consistently keeping the grey areas of entanglements between these dichotomies in sight. It is in these grey areas that we see the contradictions, blindspots, critiques, complicities and forms of agency that were at play just under the radar of these neat polarities. From these grey terrains, we catch glimpses of the workings of these dichotomies as discursive masks which conceal the faultlines that rend the masternarratives.

The study finds that in many ways, Julie Ward's death in Kenya may be positioned in a transitional space between colonial whiteness and an emergent postcolonial whiteness, which betrays heavy imprints of the grammars of colonial whiteness, including the messianic white male authority, wildlife tourism and conservation. To this end, the study

suggests, one of the factors that hampers the quest for truth and justice in the Ward case is the failure to forge viable grammars of whiteness in the postcolonial context. Such viable grammars would be able to access local textualities and retain an awareness of the underlying complicities and faultlines that now rig colonial Manichean binaries, which are largely mediated by the interests of capital. The novel *The Constant Gardener* and the film *Ivory Hunters* (1989) - both of which make implicit allusions to the Julie Ward case – eloquently articulate these complicities and faultlines.

Acknowledgements

The problem with a PhD is that it takes years to write, which means you accumulate too many debts of gratitude. I am indebted to countless people who gave of themselves in many different ways; and while I may not mention them all here, I trust they all know the depth of my gratitude.

Financial support for this project came from the Postgraduate Merit Award, the University Council Postgraduate Scholarship, the Doris and Tothill Scholarship and the Andrew Mellon Mentorship Programme, all administered by the University of the Witwatersrand. Despite declaring this my own unaided work, I must say I owe my supervisor Prof. James Ogude a huge debt of gratitude for all his intellectual support and his generosity in mentoring me beyond the call of duty. I also had the pleasure of being part of the wonderful Department of African Literature, where Prof. Bhekizizwe Peterson, Prof. Isabel Hofmeyr and Dr. Dan Ojwang were a rich source of intellectual stimulation through seminars, colloquia and informal conversations. But anyone who has gone through the department would agree with me that to a large degree, we owe the familial ambience of the department to Mrs. Merle Govind, whose patience, support and genuine concern for students remains unmatched in my experience of Wits.

To generations of the African literature family who went before me: Colomba, Godwin, Tom, Agnes, Maina, George, Mompati, Tam-George, Sophie, Cathy, Nokuthula and Ezeliora, who all made it look possible, I am grateful. They often indulged me by listening to my ideas, reading my work, and always sounding wowed by it, even when we

both knew it was rather raw. Thanks for the faith guys. And of course, Okot, whose wicked sense of humour, and soft-spoken delivery of a fine joke is inimitable. Thanks too, to my generation of colleagues and friends: Litheko, Senayon, Thabisani, Westen, Lomagugu, Jacob, Jendele, Mekusi, Siphetla, Jaki, Jennifer, Leone, Caroline, Sean, Agatha, Khwezi and Khwezi, Fouad, Kemang, Terah, Chris, Nomusa, Mbogo, Kweya, Jacinta, Phyllis, Njuiri, J-P, Chitavi, Georgina, Lesley, Terence, Peace, Peter, Mutuku, Ngwana, Ephraim, Koko, Gerald, Olivier, Charles and Sister Maria. Their assurance of friendship, support, and the sense of a shared journey was indispensable.

I must also acknowledge my PiG friends, whose company, conversation and heated debates about important subjects such as soccer, Foucault, Uganda *waragi,* Marxism, Nollywood, Freud, beer, Harbermas and *Generations* was often an enlightening, yet relaxing pleasure at the end of a long day: Papi, Pascal, Syned, Catherine, Leslie, Aaron, Bena, Solomon, Job, Kihato, Luke; the Zambian contingency – George, Jeff, Martin and Brian; the East African gentlemen Paul, John, Kiangi, Ted, Tumaini, Edward, Solo; and, of course David, Winfred and Anthony among others. I am also grateful to my graduate school friends and colleagues, particularly Jaki, Vedaste, Aloycious, Mphumi, Lenore, Cathy and Mapule; and from the Postgraduate office, Miriam, Nadia and Maropeng who were all patient and supportive in my many encounters with the system.

I must also thank my other family: The Wits Writing Centre crew – with special thanks to Pam, Luke, Mbongisi, Kgaogelo, Thomas, Francis and Zwelakhe. It is a great honor to be part of this family, bound together by friendship and a shared passion for writing. I am

also grateful to Joyce and Alfred Nyairo, for believing in me, and for wonderful conversations in which they generously shared insights into aspects of my work, and often drew my attention to useful information and readings.

My girls Dina, Flo, Annie, Esther, Kapi, Wangari, Liz and Liz, Sharlene, Ret'sepile, Silindiwe and Shlaine, each in their own ways filled my stay at Wits with growth. I am certainly honored to have shared in their warmth, wisdom, laughter, brilliance and generosity both when celebrating our little victories and in navigating life's potholes. I also owe a debt of thanks to my fellow Zimbabweans, even though some of them continue to challenge my citizenship!: Percy, Morgan, George, Tatenda, Robert, Dumisani and Ngoni. I'm thankful for our friendship and, of course, our shared appreciation of a good cold beer. I'm particularly grateful to Robert, who often believed I could.

I am grateful to Collins, a dear friend, big brother, spiritual and academic mentor, whose faith, wisdom, and humility I continue to hope will rub off me. Thanks for holding my hand, listening and often reminding me of God's faithfulness. Chesang and Ngoveni [aka husband] are my other acquired brothers whose unconditional friendship I am hugely undeserving of. And of course, Maduna, whose perceptiveness and hilarious sense of humour I continue to cherish.

In accessing important archival material for this research, I am grateful to Kapi to whose tireless efforts I owe much of the archival print media material; and Pravin Bowry and his

staff, who generously shared important materials, archival texts and books. Grace, Collins and Chesang kindly agreed to read earlier drafts of this work and offered rich, honest feedback. Thanks guys. I am also grateful to Geoff, Jeff, Oduori, Justo, Chege, Loise, Injemela, Yvonne, Miriam, Wakasa, Bakari and Naomi for keeping our friendship alive when I went AWOL. I'm particularly indebted to Geoff's patience in remaining my friend even when this PhD. and life brought out the worst in me.

Once again, deepest gratitude to my mother and kuka whose prayers are always with me. To Judy, Chemutai, Kemboi, Chela, Chebichi and Chero – thanks girls, for everything. Yai, Sambiri, Willie, Tai, Andrew, Kibwale, Mukasa, Benni and Chepkirui: thanks, for keeping me grounded.

KK, Boro, Jackie Sipalla, John Midenga, Mrs. Munyasa, Abraham Mibei (Serengeti), Juni Muhota, Chege Ngugi, Rispah Kariuki and Cynthia Ombogo, I thank you.

* * *

Versions of Chapters two and three of the study appear in *Journal of Eastern African Studies* Vol.2 (3): 2008 and the *Journal for Commonwealth Literature* 43.1 (2008) respectively under the same titles. I am grateful to David Anderson, John Thieme, James Ogude and the two *Journal of Eastern African Studies* anonymous reviewers for their rich comments which I have gratefully drawn on in the study. Similarly, a version of Chapter four appears in *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* Vol. 44.1 (2008) under the title "Remapping Urban Modernities: Julie Ward's Death and the Kenyan Grapevine". I am

grateful to Ranka Primorac, Joyce Nyairo and the two anonymous reviewers for their rich insights on the article, some of which I have also gratefully drawn on in the study.

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1 CHAPTER ONE: Versions of Truth: De/legitimizing Fictions

> We cannot understand the African crisis without coming to terms with the problem of modern reason as it has been played out in the continent in both the colonial and postcolonial periods. We must first listen to the stories about the black subject's precarious location inside and outside modernity (Gikandi 2002: 136).

1.1 Introduction

Chinua Achebe's novel, *Arrow of God* has an intriguing ending. Ezeulu, the chief priest of the god, Ulu, loses his mind. The dignified old man is seen sweeping his yard dementedly. The cause of Ezeulu's madness is a subject of much debate both within the fictional community of Umuaro and among literary critics. The issue sparks a multiplicity of interpretations. For some, madness runs in Ezeulu's family and indeed the chief priest may have inherited this streak from his mother, while for others, his god, Ulu, had punished the priest for his obsession with power. At the same time, it is possible to read Ezeulu's dementia as a simple case of a nervous breakdown as a result of the extreme pressure he is under. Ezeulu's case illustrates the multiplicity of truth as a value whose legitimacy is determined by various factors including competing interests, publics and their preferred readings of historical reality. This multiplicity of truths in Ezeulu's tragedy provides an appropriate opening for this study given the centrality of competing versions of truth in our study, and the contestation for legitimacy between the various constituencies' speculations on the circumstances surrounding Julie Ward's death in Kenya.

Julie Ann Ward was a 28-year old British tourist and wildlife photographer who visited Kenya's Maasai Mara Game Reserve in September 1988, in order to photograph the annual wildebeest migration from Tanzania's Serengeti National Park into the Maasai

Mara. On 6th September 1988, Julie Ward was reported missing. Six days later, her partly burnt remains were found in the game reserve. Kenyan Police Pathologist Dr. Adel Shaker performed the first autopsy on the remains to determine the cause of death. In his report, Dr. Shaker noted that the remains had apparently been severed with a sharp implement, after which attempts were made to burn them (Ward 121). Subsequently, the Chief Government Pathologist Dr. Jason Kaviti allegedly altered Dr. Shaker's autopsy report[1]. Dr. Kaviti's alterations appeared to validate the Kenyan police's official position that Julie Ward had been attacked and killed by wild animals. With the manner of death thus contested, an inquest was held in Kenya. The inquest revealed that Julie Ward had been murdered. This revelation was followed by a protracted search for her murderers, leading to three arrests and two murder trials, both of which resulted in acquittals. At the time of writing this thesis, Julie Ward's killers are still at large.

Julie Ward's death is the subject of three true crime books by British and American writers, one of them her father. These include John Ward's *The Animals are Innocent*: *The Search for Julie's Killers* (1991), Michael Hiltzik's *A Death in Kenya: The Murder of Julie Ward* (1991) and Jeremy Gavron's *Darkness in Eden: The Murder of Julie Ward* (1994). In Kenya, the death captured the local imagination, resulting in several rumours, speculation and gossip regarding the possible culprits and the reasons behind her murder. The death also attracted significant media coverage, often coming up in both local and international print media. Apart from these sets of texts, a 1989 feature film *Ivory Hunters,* and a 2001 fictional novel, *The Constant Gardener* - both set in Kenya - show

[1] The autopsy report, showing the alterations, is reproduced in John Ward's *The Animals are Innocent* (1991:121).

striking resemblances to some versions of speculations about the circumstances surrounding Julie Ward's death. Indeed, the narratives in both texts closely approximate certain aspects of the Julie Ward case, in ways that prompt a close reading of these fictional texts alongside the other texts on the case.

Using these sets of texts on the Julie Ward death – the true crime books, media reports, court judgments, *Ivory Hunters*, *The Constant Gardener* and the various rumours and speculations in Kenya – the study examines the various discourses these narratives inscribe onto Julie Ward's life and death, and what these reveal about cultural productions of truth, knowledge and texts. In effect, both the *readings of* and *inscriptions on* Julie Ward's life and death become important windows into British and Kenyan imaginaries. This study attempts to answer questions such as: what were the discourses sparked by Julie Ward's death, and what was it about this particular death that rendered it a favoured arena for expressing these concerns? How were these ideas articulated in an otherwise straight-forward case of the death of an ordinary tourist? Broadly speaking, the study is interested in two key concerns. Firstly, how narrative works as a critical intervention in understanding social reality; one which not only mediates historical reality, but also attempts to influence its meanings and interpretations, while reaching out for closure. Second, and related, the study is interested in the ways in which the Julie Ward case and the discourses it inspired offer a critique of rationality, the unity of the subject and its related logocentricism as key tenets of a Western modernity that continues to mediate metropolitan readings of postcolonial Africa. The study suggests that the Julie Ward case illustrates how narrative works as a cognitive device, which sometimes

surfaces repressed knowledges in an interesting enactment of the return of the repressed. Further, the study suggests, underpinning Julie Ward's presence as a tourist in Kenya, her murder in Maasai Mara, the failure of the modern state institutions to get to the bottom of the case, and John Ward's bifurcated relationship with Kenyan and British state institutions, lay various co-ordinates of modernity mapped in a troubled relationship with Africa.

White writing on Kenya has received a fair amount of scholarly attention[2]. This however, does not compare favourably with the writing by black Kenyan writers. A good chunk of this scholarship examines key figures in settler writing on Kenya, with Karen Blixen, Robert Ruark, Elspeth Huxley and Beryl Markham enjoying almost all the attention to the exclusion of contemporary white writing on Kenya. In addition, much of this writing is largely 'separatist' in impulse. With the possible exception of Maughan-Brown's seminal *Land, Freedom and Fiction: History and Ideology in Kenya* (1985), most of these studies examine white writing in isolation from black Kenyan writing. While indeed, as Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's (1993) reading of Karen Blixen's *Out of Africa* persuasively argues, much white writing on Kenya has historically deployed a polarized lens that replicates certain templates of the colonial gaze – and the current texts on Julie Ward's death are no exception – this study argues for the need to push the debates beyond the 'them' and 'us' divide. For instance, little has been done in terms of exchanges and conversations between these white/settler texts on Kenya and local textualities. One fascinating aspect of the narratives on Julie Ward's death is the manner in which these narratives point towards the blurring of such polarities.

[2] See for instance Duder (1991); Maughan-Brown (1987); Lewis (2003); Whitlock (2000); Horton (1995).

In addition, little attention has been paid to the ways in which unbending commitment to these polarized lenses in reading Africa/ns sometimes works against Anglo-American interests, as the Julie Ward case would seem to suggest. It is against this background that I see Julie Ward's death as an important case which convened an interesting zone of negotiation of social truths and meaning between Anglo-American imaginaries and Kenyan imaginaries, inspiring narrative interventions from both the British and the local populace. Beyond speculating on the circumstances surrounding Julie Ward's death, these narratives debate issues relating to race relations in postcolonial Africa; wildlife tourism and conservation in Africa; the workings of state power and modern state institutions in Africa; transnational capital as a mediating factor in relationships between former colonies and their mother countries; and sexuality, among other issues. In the process, the narratives also engage with a number of assumptions, which are variously challenged, modified, discarded or reinforced. Against this backdrop, this study reads the narratives on the Julie Ward death as contemporary sites of knowledge production and contestation in contemporary Kenya.

1.2 A Personal Tragedy: The Pain of a Daughter and Sister

There is no such thing as a good death. This truism notwithstanding, Julie Ward's was a particularly brutal, terrible death. While the autopsy reports were unable to determine exactly how she died, the manner in which her body was disposed – literally dismembered and burnt in the wild savannah using a flammable liquid – graphically suggests a horrible death. Further, there was a six-day gap between the day she was last

seen alive and the time of her death as determined by Dr. Shaker's autopsy. To date, Julie Ward's whereabouts and experiences during these six days remain unknown. But if the manner of disposal of her body is anything to go by, the possibility of unimaginable horrors looms large.

These grisly circumstances surrounding Julie Ward's death make it an emotionally charged subject. For the Ward family, the desire for closure remains, both in getting to the bottom of how exactly she died, and getting justice. In his account of his investigations into his daughter's death, *The Animals are Innocent: The Search for Julie's Killers*, John Ward writes of the constant battle to retain objective distance from the personal tragedy, to literally shelve his emotional response, in the pursuit of truth and justice; even as he tells of the anguish that has rocked his family and its struggle to deal with the tragedy.

Julie Ward's mother, Jan Ward tells of a similar struggle. In her preface to *Gentle Nature* (1998), a coffee table collection of Julie Ward's letters to her family and her wildlife photographs published in her memory, Jan Ward writes:

> Ten years on, the sadness of her loss remains but the agonising pain has faded. I can remember so many happy times and funny moments, and enjoy talking about her with those who knew and care about her …I don't think there will ever be an end because there is always an empty space. I think in the early days the feeling is overwhelming. You have got to know why and how and who and where. And you think when you know all that, you will understand and accept it. But I will never in

> a million years understand how anybody could kill Julie. You do feel that somehow when you know everything you will be able to accept it but it's not true. It's just a stepping stone along the way (1998: n.p.).

These sentiments on the personal anguish of the Ward family underline the difficulty of an emotionally laden project such as the current one. While the focus of this study is on the range of discourses that gained expression either through her death or were inscribed on Julie Ward's life and death, we cannot overlook the tragedy; its horror, and the anger, frustration and desperation that continue to haunt the Ward family. Nick Buckley captures these sentiments in his introductory remarks to *Gentle Nature:*

> Nothing brings the continuing reality of their loss home more to the Wards, who have two grown-up sons, than basic questionnaires, censuses, or bank forms that call for the simplest details about where you live, and how many dependants you have. Jan said: 'I remember once I had to fill in this form for a dog club. Are you married? Where do you live? How many children have you got? And I put down three automatically because I have three children, and I thought "that's not right". And I crossed it out and put two. And I thought, "how can I deny Julie?" So I crossed out two and put three again. They must have thought I was mad. But it's silly things like that that catch you out' (n.p.).

It is difficult to overemphasize the terrible horror and brutality of Julie Ward's death. I would like to argue that the various individuals discussed in this study - including those who may have actively blocked the Ward family's quest for the truth - at some level

understood and empathized with the human tragedy that was Julie Ward's death. And while the nature and focus of this study necessitates a certain degree of emotional distance, which is reflected in our discussion here, it is by no means disregard for the magnitude of the tragedy. Indeed, the horror of the subject was often intellectually paralyzing and the creation of distance in reading the case as a textual project was a constant struggle throughout the process of putting together this study.

1.3 Dead Bodies Tell Tall Tales: Who was Julie Ward?

The one enduring question in all the narratives on Julie Ward studied here is who she was. This question arises at the literal level of her identity; but also, in a different sense, the more obvious aspects of her identity – as a young white British woman – became important concerns that activated different constellations of thought in various sections of Kenyan and British imaginaries. From the three books on the case, court transcripts and of the letters written by Julie Ward to her family on her trip to Africa and published in the coffee table book, *Gentle Nature*, a certain portrait of Julie Ward, her journey to Kenya, her death and the subsequent search for her killers emerges. Julie Ward was the first born in a family of three children. Her father, John Ward, is a successful businessman in the hotel industry and owns a chain of hotels. Ward's economic standing was to be an important saving grace in the search for truth and justice in his daughter's death, as, faced with reluctant Kenyan and British state institutions, he had to not only finance investigations, right from the moment his daughter disappeared, but also spend a lot of time personally carrying out and/or overseeing investigations. Indeed, it is the family's persistent pursuit of truth and justice and their investment of huge amounts of time,

money and effort that gave the case the public profile it came to acquire in Kenya and Britain.

Julie Ward was born on 20th April 1960. In his introductory remarks on *Gentle Nature* (1998) Nick Buckley describes her mother, Jan Ward as a "devoted animal lover" who nurtured a similar interest in her daughter. The two shared a strong love of animals and wildlife which later influenced Julie Ward's interest in wildlife photography. At the time of her death, Julie Ward had been working as a personal assistant to Ian Rowlands, the owner of Rowland Phototypesetting Ltd for close to nine years. In 1988, she decided to take a year off and travel to Kenya, on an overland trip organized by Ho-Bo Trans-Africa Expeditions, which was based in Halesworth, England. On 7th February 1988, the truckload of twenty-six travellers from all over Britain left for Africa. The group drove to Spain, then crossed into Morocco, Algeria, Mali, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Cameroun, Central African Republic, Zaire, Uganda, Tanzania, finally ending the trip in Nairobi on 27th June 1988. From Nairobi, the travellers dispersed, with most electing to briefly explore Kenya before catching their flights home. Julie Ward was one of these.

In Nairobi, the driver of the Ho-Bo truck, Dave Tree, introduced Julie Ward to Paul and Natasha Weld Dixon, whose home in Lang'ata stood on close to fifty acres of land. The Weld Dixons, who often rented out their grounds as a campsite for travellers took a liking to Julie Ward, who shared their love for dogs, and soon a warm friendship developed between the elderly couple and Ward. She camped on their grounds for much of July, and

later rented a cottage from their neighbour, a pilot named Doug Morey in August. This was Julie Ward's third trip to Kenya, and during this trip, she met two friends she had made on a previous trip, Beth Symonds and Murali Varatharagan. The two introduced her to fellow Australian, Glen Burns, a biologist, and together, they planned to drive to Maasai Mara Game Reserve, south of Nairobi to watch the annual wildebeest migration from neighbouring Tanzania's Serengeti National Park into the Mara. At the last minute Beth and Murali changed their plans but Ward and Burns decided to take the trip nonetheless.

On Friday 2nd September 1988, Julie Ward and Glen Burns drove to Maasai Mara in her second-hand Suzuki jeep which she had bought in Nairobi. Ward and Burns set up camp at the Sand River Camp ground [See appendix 1 for map of Maasai Mara]. On Saturday 3rd September, the two drove across the park, but the jeep broke down near Serena Lodge. A tour-truck, driven by a man they came to know as Stephen Watson, towed them to Serena Lodge. Watson lent them a spare tent which Ward and Burns shared. The two had planned to return to Nairobi on Sunday 4th September 1988, but the broken jeep could not be immediately fixed, as a mechanic advised that the problem was with the fuel pump, which had to be replaced. Glen Burns was forced to fly back to Nairobi leaving Julie Ward behind because he had to attend a conference at the Nairobi Museum. He took the faulty fuel pump with him and promised to liaise with Paul Weld Dixon in securing a new one. Weld Dixon bought a new fuel pump and sent it down to Maasai Mara on one of the charter flights on Monday 5th September 1988, but it arrived too late in the day for Julie Ward to drive back to Nairobi, so she elected to spend the night at the Mara Serena

Lodge. On this day, Ward met Stephen Watson again, and they spent some time together and got to know each other. Ward invited Watson to share her room at the Mara Serena Lodge. The following day, Tuesday 6th September, the jeep would still not start despite the new fuel pump. It was later found that the problem was a loose wire connected to the starter, which was immediately fixed. Meantime, Watson, a tour leader, had to take a group of tourists to Lake Naivasha. The two had taken a liking to each other and they had agreed that she would join him at Lake Naivasha on her way back to Nairobi, once her jeep was fixed. At about midday, Julie Ward left Serena Lodge for Sand River Camp ground to collect the two tents she and Glen Burns had left there three days earlier.

From this point, Julie Ward's whereabouts and movements are shrouded in controversy. According to the clerk at the Maasai Mara's Sand River gate, David Nchoko, Julie Ward arrived at the campsite a few minutes past 2 p.m. and dismantled the two tents. She then paid for the three extra nights during which the tents had stood on the camp, before driving off towards Keekorok Lodge on her way to Nairobi, at about 2.30p.m. Gerald Karori, a police constable attached to the Mara made similar claims, adding that he had helped Julie Ward dismantle her tents before she drove off towards Keekorok Lodge. The two, who appear to have been the last people to see Julie Ward alive, insisted that Julie Ward drove off alone. In the subsequent investigations, the question of whether Julie Ward left Keekorok Lodge alone was an important and largely unconfirmed issue. In 2004, an unnamed witness claimed that he saw Julie Ward drive off with an armed man in military fatigues on the day she was last seen, Tuesday 6th September 1988.[2]

[2] Nation Reporter, "Julie Ward's father has got 'fresh clues.'" *Daily Nation* 9 September 2004:.3.

Back in Nairobi, the Weld Dixons knew Julie Ward had been intending to return to England and she had booked a flight for Saturday 10th September. They had arranged to have her over for dinner on the Friday 9th September and had planned to drop her off at the airport to catch her flight home the next morning. When there was no sign of Julie Ward on Tuesday 6th and Wednesday 7th the Weld Dixons got anxious and started to phone hospitals and police stations along the Nairobi-Mara road asking about her, fearing that she had been involved in a road accident. On Saturday 10th September, John Ward called the Weld Dixons to find out what his daughter's plans were as she was expected home around then. This was when he learnt that she was missing. Ward took a flight to Kenya arriving on Monday 12th September. His daughter had been missing for six days. Once in Kenya, Ward organized a search party with the help of the Weld Dixons and other friends his daughter had made in Nairobi. On Tuesday 13th September mid-morning, Ward's jeep was found abandoned in a gully at a stream known as Makindu, in the Mara. A few hours later, her remains were found in a remote part of the reserve in an area known as Oseropia. It remains unclear how Ward's jeep got to be stuck in the gully, in the middle of the game reserve, far from all road tracks.

This is the widely accepted version of Julie Ward's life and the events of the last months of her life. However, Julie Ward's identity was a subject of much speculation in the Kenyan grapevines. In some of these speculations, there is the conviction that she was not the tourist she appeared to be, but rather, she was a British spy, who was in possession of sensitive intelligence on the activities of Kenyan political elites in the Maasai Mara, as discussed in Chapters two and four of this study. Interestingly, while Ward and the

Scotland Yard detectives dismissed these rumours as baseless, Ward was later to learn of the actual involvement of the British Secret Intelligence Service in allegedly covering up the truth behind his daughter's death.

Beyond these speculations about a double identity, who was Julie Ward, and how did her identities influence the framing of her death? Julie Ward was a young white British woman, and a tourist in Kenya. These identities placed her presence in Kenya in a grid marked by multiple intersections between race, gender, nationality, sex and Africa. In her death, these intersections were activated by both Kenyan and British imaginaries, each of which read the case from specific perspectives, firmly dependent on their respective popular archives. Thus, as we see in Chapter two, the idea of a young white woman murdered and burnt up in the wild savannah in Africa mobilized discourses of the black peril in British imaginaries, despite the absence of evidence to the effect of rape by black men. On the other hand, this same combination – young white woman murdered in Kenya - coupled with government attempts to frame the murder as a natural death, activated ideas of a British spy who posed the risk of exposure to a criminal political elite. In essence, Julie Ward's identities – obvious as they were – remained decisive in determining the kinds of ideas and interpretations her death would attract in the various social imaginaries as revealed in this study.

1.4 Exchanges in Contact Zones: Modernity, Africa and Narrative in the Julie Ward Case

Our reading of the discourses that were inscribed on the Julie Ward case is framed by a selection of ideas including the notion of contact zones, key tenets on modernity and Africa, and narrative as a medium of cognition. Julie Ward's death in Kenya scaled a range of topographies, both physical and discursive, all of which had an important bearing, not only on the unfolding quest for truth and justice by her family, but also on the kinds of ideas, anxieties, desires and prejudices that came to be articulated through the case. Against this background, Mary Louise Pratt's concept of "contact zones" provides a useful starting point in framing this study.

Pratt defines contact zones as "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination" (1992:4). While Pratt uses the concept in relation to transculturalism, the notion of sites of contact marked by both difference and unequal power relations is equally applicable to the Julie Ward case. Julie Ward's presence in Kenya, her death and the ensuing quest for truth and justice convened multiple zones of contact: between tourist and host; Kenya and Britain; the Ward family and Kenyan state institutions; official and unofficial terrains. Discursively, each of these intersections came laden with ideas, values, cultures and assumptions that "met, clashed and grappled" with each other. It is the shapes of interactions and the ideas mobilised at these points of contact that this study is interested in.

In view of our reading of the Julie Ward case as convening a site of negotiation of meaning between Kenyan and British imaginaries, Pratt's (1992:6) description of the contact zone as "the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality and intractable conflict" to a large degree describes the sets of interactions that unfolded in the various sites of contact in the Ward case. However, apart from coercion and conflict, which Pratt associates with power imbalances in contact zones, in the Julie Ward case, these zones were also marked by deceit and collusion, as our discussions in this study reveal.

In its exploration of these contact zones created by the Ward case, this study is further framed by a concern with the workings of assumptions of modernity about Africa. To this end, Simon Gikandi's (2002:136) reminder that "we cannot understand the African crisis without coming to terms with the problem of modern reason as it has been played out in the continent in both the colonial and postcolonial periods" is instructive. In his essay, "Reason, Modernity and the African Crisis" Gikandi further argues that

> In spite of our comfortable assumption that such distinctions as traditional and modern society, modern and postmodern polis, colonial and postcolonial cultures, do not tell us anything more than the self-reflexive desire by the West to master its others in order to understand itself, *the problem of modernity and the opposition it generates remains the most powerful explanatory mode in which the politics of culture in Africa can be apprehended* (2002:141; emphasis mine).

Gikandi's arguments here are particularly relevant to this study. Indeed, at the core of the Julie Ward case lay an overriding privileging of science and reason, which were explicitly associated with Britain and British institutions; and which were seen to be a failed project in Kenya, as the typical postcolonial African state. In the same vein, Gikandi might as well be referring to the Julie Ward case when he writes about the need to reflect on "the black subject's precarious position inside and outside modernity" (2002:136), as a similar ambivalent positioning of Kenyans emerges in the Ward case. Equally noteworthy here is the duplicity and complicity of both the Kenyan and British subjects in the Ward case, which challenges dichotomous epistemes about modernity and Africa in interesting ways.

In *African Modernities: Entangled Meanings in Current Debates* (2002), Deutsch *et al* evoke Jurgen Habermas' (1981) phrase, "the unfinished business of modernity" with reference to Africa's relationship with modernity. This relationship has sparked much debate, around issues such as assumptions about Europe as the womb of originary modernity; the value-laden tensions between modernity and tradition; Africa's alleged position outside history, and therefore modernity; and African "cannibalization" of modernity among other issues.[3]

Existing literature on modernity in Africa emphasises what Elisio Macamo describes as Africans' resistance to, and selective appropriation of modernity (2005:3). In recent decades, there has also emerged a body of literature on hybridity, which celebrates the creative ways in which Africans have domesticated modernity and "developed their own

[3] See for instance Larrain 1994; Comaroff and Comaroff 1993; Appadurai 1995.

culturally embedded definitions of what they consider to be modern" (Deutsch *et al* 2002:3). Despite this literature which celebrates African inventiveness, there still exists an enduring masternarrative of modernity which clings to an unyielding Africa – Europe binary. In this binary, Africa/ns are scripted playing catch-up to a normative European modernity; while African realities continue to be read through distinctly Eurocentric epistemological lenses, and invariably found wanting. Francis Nyamnjoh captures this state of affairs, in his observation that:

> Most accounts of African experiences have been a look from above, with the consequence being the devaluation or outright rejection of a lot of social experiences valued by African people (2001:363).

Valentine Mudimbe shares these sentiments when he notes that

> even in the most explicitly "Afrocentric" descriptions, models of analysis explicitly or implicitly refer to categories and conceptual systems which rely on a Western epistemological order […as if] African traditional systems of thought are unthinkable and cannot be made explicit within the framework of their own rationality (1988:x).

The interactions between Kenyans and the British in the Julie Ward case eloquently bear witness to this scenario. As our discussions here reveal, the quest for truth and justice in the Ward case was framed by assumptions about British institutions and their normative scientific knowledge, rationality, legal apparatuses and morality; to which Kenya was seen to be transparent. Not surprisingly, this privileging of Western epistemologies resulted in an epistemological disarticulation which became a stumbling block to the Ward family's desire for truth and justice.

This polarised aesthetic, which recurs over and over in the Ward case, is curious in the ways it seems to gesture at the assumptions of colonial-era modernity. But how do we explain the resurgence of colonial archives in the British imaginaries on the Julie Ward case? And how do we understand the failure of the modern state institutions, science and law – both Kenyan and British – to get to the bottom of the Julie Ward case? One way of understanding this is by re-examining the foundational tenets of modernity and their configurations in the various contact zones that emerged in the Julie Ward case. Of particular interest here are the workings and underlying assumptions of the key coordinates of modernity, including rationality/reason, the unity of the subject and its implicit logocentricism.

If we take Elisio Macamo's contention that colonialism was the historical form through which modernity became a real social project in Africa (2005:8), then we begin to see the ways in which what AbdulRazak JanMohammed (1983) has termed "Manichean structures", lay at the core of the enlightenment project, and by extension, modernity. The one figure that lucidly captures this is the 'noble savage', who scales the contours between what Hayden White describes as "civilisation and wildness", and the associated couplet of "humanity and animality" (1978:151). In the British imaginaries, as revealed by the narratives on the Julie Ward case, these tropes of wildness, noble savages, humanity, and animality form recurrent motifs in the construction of the Maasai and Maasai Mara as the 'noble savages' and the Edenic wilderness respectively, which provide a perfect escape to nature from the over-modernised Europe. On the other extreme are the callous savages,

the (black) killers, who are seen to have lost their humanity and degenerated to an inhuman status. A similarly troubled relationship with modernity emerges in the obsession with wildlife conservation and protection of wildlife against African violence, which is an important co-ordinate in the construction of postcolonial whiteness in Kenya as seen in Chapter six of this study. Underpinning this concern with wildlife conservation is cynical disillusionment with the project of modernity in Africa; indeed, a discourse of disengagement from African humanity whose violence and failed state institutions seem to gesture at the failure of the civilising mission. This disengagement is coupled with a compensatory recourse to protecting wildlife from African violence.

At the same time, from our discussion, the interactions in the various contact zones confirm Macamo's (2005) processes of selective appropriation and rejection of modernity. Indeed, the Ward case yields interesting insights into the ways black subjects negotiate the core paradox of colonial modernity which seems to have transposed itself into the current wave of globalisation: that it "dislocated the African subject by propagating its tenets as a universal model, while at the same time denying Africans, on political and social grounds, the possibility of its realization" (Gikandi 2002, cited in Deutsch *et al* 13). For Gikandi, to understand the collapse of modern state institutions in postcolonial Africa, it is important to revisit the question of modernity. As he writes:

> In order to think about the African present as a conceptual problem, we have to reflect on the origins and status of many of the theoretical problems inherited from modernity and its rationality; but because the African has historically been located inside and outside the normativity of the modern […] a reflection on

> African debates on rationality and what it means to be modern implies a rigorous questioning of the privileged position of modern reason (Gikandi 2002:142).

The rumours circulated in Kenya on the Julie Ward case would seem to take up Gikandi's challenge, by offering a critique of the workings of Western rationality, science and modern state institutions in Africa. But these rumours move beyond the popularised conclusion about the failure of modernity in Africa, by critiquing the paradoxes that lay at the core of colonial modernity, and which continue to be reproduced in postcolonial Africa. Indeed, one of the interesting insights from the Julie Ward case is the kind of trajectories that result from the paradox Gikandi (2002), Macamo (2005) and Mamdani (1996) have all identified, in the theoretical exclusion of the African from modernity, while simultaneously being politically forced into its institutional apparatuses. Nowhere is this more eloquently articulated than in the positioning of the Maasai at the intersection between the wildlife tourism, state power and a predominantly white tourist clientele, in the Julie Ward case. A second, equally fascinating insight is the ways in which the Ward case debunks the myth of the unity of the subject, by illustrating how the interests of capital often forge unlikely partnerships, which put paid to the notion of a shared moral superiority and commitment to truth, justice and human rights, as exemplified by the seeming complicity of the British High Commission in Nairobi, the Foreign Office and the Secret Intelligence Service in foiling John Ward's attempt to find the truth behind his daughter's death.

Given our interest in the workings of narrative as a medium for understanding historical reality and influencing its meanings and interpretations, an important area of interest for

this study becomes the fictive/*fictive*[4] processes that were enacted in the various narratives, and the ways in which narrative mediated the exchanges in the above discussed contact zones. To this end, Hayden White's (1987:1) observation that "narrative might well be considered a solution to a problem of general human concern, namely […] the problem of fashioning human experience into a form assimilable to structures of meaning that are generally human", succinctly frames this study's interest in the deployment of narrative as a tool for mediating truth(s) and knowledge in understanding Julie Ward's murder. On this basis, the study reads narrative as an intervention on historical reality; an intervention which must not be read in terms of how faithfully it represents a given historical reality but rather, what knowledges, truths and insights it yields into these realities.

As noted, this study is not so much interested in the actual circumstances surrounding Julie Ward's death, but in the representations of the death and the search for her killers through a range of narratives. In light of this, the study straddles the overlap between literature and history. Although the relationship between literature and history has always been fraught with contested claims to legitimacy regarding the use of the past and the kinds of truths contained in the respective disciplines[5], one important point of consensus is the role of narration in rendering past events and experiences visible and accessible in the present. Hayden White (1987) terms this "emplotment", in reference to the arrangement of raw, otherwise meaningless information into meaning-making units.

[4] The terms 'fictive' and 'fiction' are used both in the literary sense of fiction as narration, and in the pejorative sense of fabrication. Where the former applies, regular font is used, while I use italics to denote the pejorative sense of the two terms.
[5] See for instance White (1987) and Bennett (1990).

Stuart Hall too underlines the centrality of narrative in all forms of communication as a vehicle of transmitting and making meaning out of reality. In his view, a "raw historical event" cannot be transmitted in that form; it must "become a story before it can become a communicative event", a process he terms "encoding"(2002:302). For both Hall and White, narration is a search for and expression of meanings and truths. This process of encoding a raw historical fact into a "communicative text" - a narrative - is not a technical one. It involves the mediation of historical reality, a process informed by the ideological perspectives and interests of the 'narrators'. The idea of emplotment of historical reality into narrative provides an important conceptual tool for this study, in decoding the various narratives' discursive colours which tinted their rendering of the death of Julie Ward in Kenya.

Against this background, this study is interested in the meaning-making processes that went into the interpretations of Julie Ward's death in Kenya; processes which I see as simultaneously decoding the death and encoding new narratives around it, as the various narrators filtered through the available information to fashion out their own meanings and preferred truths on the matter. For Hall, this is also the process by which texts "contract relations with the universe of ideologies in a culture [and] domains of social life, the segmentations of culture, power and ideology are made to signify" (2002: 306).

1.5 Versions of Truths: De/legitimizing Fictions

In the use of narrative as a cognitive tool in decoding the available information about the Julie Ward case, various fictive/*fictive* interpretative processes were enacted in plotting

the facts into coherent and meaningful structures, which would bear particular truths, witnessing to the legitimacy of specific positions on the case. Cutting across the various interpretations of the case was a concern with logical cohesion and motive. To make sense of the bare known facts and evidence, the various narratives were carefully plotted around a concern with a logic supported by credible cause-effect patterns on the one hand; and accompanying motive(s) behind various possible actions taken; with evidence as the unifying factor between the two elements, that would lend further legitimacy to versions of events and truths, in a case where, with the paucity of information, all narratives dabbled in significant degrees of speculation. The various narratives suggest shifting terrains of power relations and interests which often overlapped, contradicted each other and sometimes created new gaps in the case, allowing rich glimpses into processes of negotiating knowledge production and the accompanying de/legitimatization of truth(s) in contemporary Kenya.

1.5.1 Fictions of the State

Perhaps apart from the dramatic and mysterious nature of Julie Ward's death in Kenya, the one feature that drew both local and international attention to the case was the Kenyan official /state response to the finding of Julie Ward's remains and subsequent search for her killers. These responses can be read as very much part of the *fictive* processes which sought to proffer specific versions of truth. In the official search for the truth behind Julie Ward's death, a medical understanding of death was privileged, with an autopsy as the first step in determining how she died. The first autopsy was done by Kenyan police pathologist Dr. Adel Shaker. In his report, Dr. Shaker noted that among other things the

remains had been cut using a sharp implement and there was a subsequent attempt to burn them. For him, this pointed towards a case of murder. The Kenyan Chief Government Pathologist Dr. Jason Kaviti however, allegedly altered Shaker's post-mortem report specifically replacing certain words, with the overall effect that the revised autopsy report seemed to gesture at wild animals tearing apart the remains[6]. A second post-mortem carried out in England by Prof. Gresham confirmed Dr. Shaker's findings. Apart from these body parts, the rest of the body appeared to have been reduced to ashes as suggested by the smell of burnt flesh and pieces of bone found in the black ashes (Ward 1991). According to the investigating police officer in charge of the case, Supt. Muchiri Wanjau, the ashes suggested the possibility that Julie Ward had been struck by lightning. Supt. Wanjau further speculated that Julie Ward may have been depressed and gone on to commit suicide.[7]

These sets of ideas put forth by state officials involved in the case suggest various truths regarding the case. In the first instance of the autopsy, the alterations by the state's chief pathologist suggested a specific re-coding of the remains, so as to make them gesture towards a verdict of wild animals tearing apart the body and not an implement being used by a human agent to dismember it. For the various publics – both Kenyan and British – Dr. Kaviti's alterations in a legal document written by a colleague - especially one who

[6] In Kenyan social imaginaries on suspicious deaths, Dr. Kaviti is one of the recurrent motifs, as he serves to legitimize the preferred state fictions through 'tailor-made' post-mortem findings. Three years after the Ward death, Dr. Kaviti was to arrive at the absurd verdict of suicide, in his autopsy of the remains of the then Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Robert Ouko. See Cohen and Odhiambo's *The Risks of Knowledge*: *Investigations into the Death of the Hon. Minister John Robert Ouko in Kenya, 1990* (2004) for a detailed discussion.

[7] *Sunday Nation*, 27 April 2004.

had informally expressed his belief that he was looking at a case of murder[8] - became suspect. When questioned about the alterations during the inquest into Julie Ward's death, held in Kenya a few months later, Dr. Kaviti faulted Dr.Shaker's English, arguing that the Egyptian's command of English was wanting and his motive in altering the report was for purposes of precision (Ward 1991). Yet Dr. Kaviti further admitted that out of hundreds of autopsy reports Dr. Shaker had written in the past, this was the first time Dr. Shaker's 'lack of precision in English' had necessitated editing his report.

The various sets of official truths lacked coherence, making them suspect, in a case where logic and credibility was of utmost significance in bestowing legitimacy. The autopsy report - whether one believed Dr. Shaker's version or Dr. Kaviti's revised one - ironically shed doubts on the investigating police officer's speculation. Given that the autopsy revealed attempts to burn the remains *after* decapitation, the suicide theory lost credibility, while the burning process complicated the suggested verdict of the cause of death as wild animals. At this stage, the possibility of Julie Ward having been struck by lightning was suggested, but this too lost credibility when forensic tests of the ashes revealed the use of a flammable liquid in the fire.

For our purposes then, these framings of Julie Ward's death gesture towards what I term state fictions, in reference to official attempts to frame the death in a specific light, to suggest certain 'truths'. These attempts to frame the death as an act of God - suicide, mauling by wild animals or lightning - suggest an interest in placing the case beyond

[8] Procedurally, Paul Dixon - Julie Ward's host while she was in Nairobi - was called upon to officially identify the remains before the post-mortem, as a family representative. Dr. Shaker verbally noted that the evidence on the body parts made it a 'case of murder' (Ward 1991; Gavron 1994).

human culpability, a fact that was variously read as suspicious, and suggestive of attempts to conceal the truths behind the case. In a sense, the state had its own preferred truth(s) about the case, which it sought to express through these fictive processes. These processes were later to draw significant attention and speculation, literally catalyzing the grapevine and other narratives.

An important factor in this suspicion of the state truths was the socio-political climate in Kenya at the time of Julie Ward's death. As this study illustrates in Chapter two and three, the Moi regime's repressive tactics, increasing personalization of power, the existence of an untouchable elite, the deployment of violence as a weapon of control through fear and a long roll call of suspicious assassinations which could be traced back to the workings of state power all worked to activate great suspicion of the state's preferred truths and suggest the possibility of state involvement in the local imaginaries.

With the demise of the Moi regime in Kenya in 2002, the official/state response to the Julie Ward case underwent a radical shift. In 2004, the new government through the minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs pledged to re-visit the case and bring the culprits to book. Hon. Kiraitu Murungi was quoted in British media as acknowledging attempts at cover ups and recognizing the possibility of involvement of highly placed officials of the previous establishment:

> Calling the murder "one of the great unsolved mysteries" of President Daniel arap Moi's regime, the Kenyan Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Kiraitu Murungi, acknowledged rumours in Africa

> that the son of the former president was involved in Miss Ward's murder. Mr Murungi said in a statement read out at the inquest: "Should any new evidence be unearthed, the government will take all the necessary steps to bring the culprits, irrespective of their status in society, to book."[9]

Murungi made this statement while on an official visit to the U.K, which coincided with the second inquest into Julie Ward's death being held in London. This change of attitude suggests attempts by the new regime to distance itself from what were seen as the sins of the old regime. In this, party politics feature as part of state fictions, as the new ruling party, National Rainbow Coalition's (NARC) rhetoric of change included a pledge to get to the bottom of the murder mysteries of the old regime, including the Julie Ward case. Significantly, this was the first instance of official acknowledgement of the speculation that senior political figures may have been involved in the murder, hence the attempts to cover up the truth behind the case.

For a while, John Ward was optimistic and upbeat about the NARC/Kibaki regime's alleged desire for accountability and its willingness to get to the bottom of the case. Four years later, now in possession of new witness statements and DNA evidence thanks to developments in DNA analysis that were unavailable in the 1980s, Ward approached the new government. After facing many walls of silence and a back and forth shifting of responsibility between various state dignitaries over who should receive the evidence and act on it, Ward has learnt what Kenyans knew all along: that Murungi's promises were a mere public relations exercise. Seemingly unknown to Ward, during its term in office

[9] Barham "Father Vindicated as Kenya Admits Obstructing Julie Ward Inquiry" The Guardian, 5 May 2004:1.

between 2002 - 2007, the Kibaki regime had warmed up to key figures of the Moi regime, including the former president himself, who had now become Kibaki's strong ally and mentor as his term in office drew to a close. If, as local publics believed, key political figures in the Moi regime were implicated in Julie Ward's murder; it was unwise to expect any co-operation from the new government.

1.5.2 Reading the Grapevine[10]

Hearsay and rumour become a reliable source of truth(s) in as far as they "can resolve some of the confusions that are contained in experience" (White 1998:34). These are fluid texts that must be read using interpretative tools that transcend conventional notions of veracity. In using rumour as a source of social truths, the study is interested in local constructions of meaning regarding Julie Ward's death and how the case became a repository of people's fears, anxieties, and social truths; while at the same time, enabling them to simultaneously subvert and even critique both a repressive local regime and Western modernity. As Luise White (1998:39) notes regarding hearsay, such texts "allow people to appropriate them and map out experience and negotiate realities". The rumours about the Julie Ward case are part of the way in which people were able to filter through the available information about the death, and weave their own interpretations, and analyses, which provided a forum to comment on various socio-political concerns in Kenya, and even imagine with a fair amount of detail, exactly what happened, who was involved and what the motivation for the murder was. Notably, the rumoured narratives are a lot more adventurous in their speculations on the truth behind the death and in a

[10] 'Grapevine' is used in this study in reference to the local rumour-[mongering] networks

sense appear to fill in the gaps in the three books, and the courtroom truths by arriving at conclusive truths. For Kenyans, the various rumours regarding the murder provided material with which to map out the circumstances surrounding this murder, which in turn could be used as a fairly reliable index of the levels of brutality and violence of the political regime, among other things. In effect, the insertion of these stories into social discourse provided openings into debates regarding issues ranging from the incumbent establishment to the place of race and gender in the Kenyan polity as seen in Chapters two and four of this study. For instance, during the inquest into Julie Ward's death held in Kenya in 1989, the state prosecution displayed a barely concealed attempt to cast her as a sexually permissive and morally bankrupt woman whose death may not have been such a big loss to society. This scripting of Julie Ward is suggestive of local views on gender and sexuality. In this instance, both the legal institutions and the popular imaginaries were drawing on specific cultural productions of female sexuality, and elevating them to legitimate principles on human nature and indeed the very concept of life, by suggesting that a life's worth lies in its owner's morality.

Ironically, while truth is conventionally taken to be logocentric and hinged on a provable veracity, rumour as a genre gains its legitimacy from precisely the suspect nature of officially produced truths. Within systems of institutionalized domination, such as Kenya was in the decades of the 1960s - 1990s, people learn to enact inscrutable forms of resistance. In his study, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (1990), James Scott observes that people who occupy subordinate positions in oppressive societies often have an extensive social existence outside the immediate control of the

dominant group. These “sequestered settings”, he notes, provide a healthy breeding ground for critiques of domination. Scott's argument here is in line with Raymond Williams (1958) assertion that no form of domination/oppression is ever so complete as to encompass all the possible forms of expression.

This study takes Scott's ideas here as an entry point in understanding the competing versions of truth in these narratives. It is framed within the interaction between what Scott calls “public transcripts”- that is open interactions between the dominant and the subordinate - and “hidden transcripts”, a term he defines as “discourse that takes place offstage, beyond the observation of the power holders, and which tend to confirm, inflect, qualify or contradict the public transcript” (1990:16). This framework informs the study’s reading of the various interpretations of Julie Ward’s death, with particular interest in the forms of subversion that emerge across the various narratives.

According to Scott, domination experienced systematically over a period of time by a group of people results in hidden transcripts which bear the marks of collective scripting, in so far as they express shared sentiments, and as such become collective cultural products which, though varied in expression nevertheless remain repositories of shared social truths (1990:12). It is this fluidity of hidden transcripts as highly valent and mobile texts that enables them to archive a whole range of interpretations of experiences (8-9). In our case, one can map out specific motifs in the various rumours regarding Julie Ward’s murder. One ubiquitous feature in all these rumours is the political elite's involvement in the murder. The other point of consensus is that influential political figures were

involved, implying that they had something to hide. At this point, the rumours take up various shades regarding what exactly they had to hide. Again, all the versions suggest activities that would destroy the establishment's political credibility, either or both with the local population and the international community. The existence of these motifs reflects the dominant socio-political concerns of the local population, while at the same time reinforcing the place of such marginalized discourses as rumour as important sites for negotiating social truths, meaning and popular knowledges.

For Scott, the dominant group also stages public transcripts as part of a legitimizing process which validates their credibility and reinforces the status quo. In the Julie Ward case, the various attempts by the Kenyans and the British to reveal and conceal the truth behind the death gestures at the two groups' hidden transcripts. A particularly interesting hidden transcript here is the seeming complicity of the British High Commission in Nairobi and the British Secret Intelligence Service in the cover-up of the truth behind the Julie Ward case, while they outwardly performed a public transcript of moral integrity and commitment to justice, through their posture of compassion, support and empathy with John Ward. In many ways, British complicity here emerged as a faultline which cracks the presented mask of supposedly uncompromising commitment to justice and moral integrity as suggested by our discussions in Chapter Six, and most interestingly, by John le Carre's portrait of British complicity and the underhanded workings of capital in *The Constant Gardener.*

However, in the Kenyan situation, both the local populace and the political machinery have found in rumour a useful tool for de/legitimizing power and various institutions. As such, while both Atieno Odhiambo (1987) and Scott see rumour as an integral vehicle of alternative discourses, rumour is not always the exclusive domain of the subordinate group. Rather, it occupies an ambivalent position and sometimes serves the purposes of the dominant group quite well. Angelique Haugerud (1995) sees such instances of a shared grammar as an indication of the porosity of hegemonic transcripts - and one may add - counter-hegemonic transcripts. For her, hegemonic transcripts are not marked by distinct boundaries; rather, there are several overlaps and ambiguities in the interactions between the state and the people (1995:8).

In a way, this further cautions against a view of both the oppressed and their hidden transcripts as necessarily progressive or even subversive. These hidden transcripts, while often having their birth in the need to counter hegemonic discourses, sometimes achieve this end precisely by embracing these discourses. Further, these apparently subversive discourses often concomitantly reinforce other oppressive discourses, in the course of subverting one form of oppression. This is illustrated by the rumours which offered a forum for registering discontent and criticism against the establishment's culture of repression and political intolerance, and to this end, provided what James Ogude (2007) has described as an "imaginative space through which we can debate issues of power and have a second handle onto the public spheres, often posited as being very much out of the reach of marginalized groups". These rumours however, simultaneously expressed fairly

patriarchal gender attitudes, where Julie Ward's sexual relations were lingered upon as justification for her death.

Ogude (2007) cites a similar example in his cautionary argument against the tendency to associate popular cultural productions with progressive and revolutionary politics. In his discussion of D.O.Misiani's engagement with the repressive political sphere in Kenya, Ogude notes that Misiani uses popular music to critique the post-colonial state in Kenya as an instrument for the perpetration of institutionalized plunder and patron-client distributive networks configured along ethnic lines. However, Misiani's politics is still trapped within the same ethnic discourse he critiques, evident in his lamentation of the deliberate exclusion of Luo interests throughout Kenyan political history. For Ogude, Misiani's inability to transcend the ethnic moral economy can be read as a pointer towards the paralyzing effect of hegemonic discourses, which sometimes institute dangerous ideological closures. Thus, while taking the point that oppositional discourses often find themselves defined by, and indeed trapped within the discourses they seek to subvert, caution must be exercised to avoid imbuing popular discourses with inordinate amounts of progressive agency.

1.5.3 Writing Julie Ward, Writing Kenya

The British community in Kenya is known for occupying a deceptively isolated position both geographically and politically[11], only visible as tourists, diplomats, expatriates and

[11] This isolation is more or less feigned, perhaps as a strategy to limit visibility in Kenya's shifty political terrain. Britain has various economic interests in Kenya, embodied by such multinational corporations as Lonrho and British American Tobacco. What is notable here is the white community's silent detachment

as part of the vast humanitarian industry. Similarly, as noted, apart from the colonial/ settler writing of Karen Blixen, Robert Ruark, Winston Churchill, and other such writers who popularized Kenya in Western imaginaries, contemporary white writing on Kenya has remained under-examined. This often gives the false impression of non-involvement or disinterest in the local polity on the part of the white community. This marks a focal point in this study, in so far as it surfaces strands of contemporary Anglo-American imaginaries on Kenya.

In reading the four novels and the ideological underpinnings that shape their narration of Julie Ward's death, an understanding of the settler literary tradition in Africa and specifically Kenya is important. Settler writing played an important role in the production of Kenya as what came to be known as 'white man's country'. This fiction provided an effective vehicle for the propagation of settler ideology, myths and stereotypes about Kenyans as part of the justification for continued British occupation of the country (Maughan-Brown 1985). In most of this fiction, David Maughan-Brown notes, there is little engagement with the concrete socio-economic forces of colonialism and their influence on the black population**.**

In his study on representations of the Moi regime Kenya in the British media, Apollo Amoko notes the continued (re)production of the black Kenyans as a savage, backward

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from the local political scene, with the possible exception of Dr. Richard Leakey and the Greek Basil Criticos, who have participated in local politics, with mixed results. Geographically, a large percentage of this community lives in the predominantly white suburbs of Karen and Lang'ata in Nairobi, and similar suburbs in the other towns. The other half continues to own large tracts of land in the Rift Valley for dairy farming, ranching and wildlife conservation, making periodic visits to Nairobi's Norfolk Hotel and Thorn Tree Café among other predominantly white haunts in the city.

people; victims at the hands of "the stock savage, Moi", for whom the white man - whether the white Kenyan politician or the West as a whole - is a messianic saviour, out to rescue them from retrogressive politics and oppression (1999:229). His observation that the colonial discourses and stereotypes of Kenya are still at play in contemporary British imaginings of the Kenyan political sphere is instructive. This is the other face of Kenya in the Western imagination, the antithesis of the tourist's haven, where we have the socio-political jungle. This face of Kenya mostly gains expression in the media and documentaries whose iconography includes emaciated women and children, and stories of poverty, disease and senseless violence[12]. These various representations of Africa are useful in understanding why constructions of Kenya and Africa at large, which though proven to be misconceptions time and again, nevertheless continue to hold sway in Anglo-American imaginaries, in a way illustrating the cognitive power of myth and stereotype and their embeddedness in the Western psyche.

It is important to set this context of popular perceptions of Kenya as a background against which one must read Julie Ward's murder in the Maasai Mara, the centrepiece of tourist Kenya. These perceptions preceded Julie Ward's visit to Kenya. Perhaps in recognition of Julie Ward's trip as unfolding in the footprints of earlier European visitors to Africa, the three books on the Julie Ward case signpost her journey across Africa with revering

[12] Photojournalist Kevin Carter's much-publicised picture of an emaciated Sudanese girl stalked by a vulture as she walks to a feeding centre is an illustration of this face of Africa, as the picture became the icon of Africa's crises. According to media reports, this picture drew tears all over the world and there was a momentary respite in compassion fatigue as aid poured into Southern Sudan. But the fate of the girl remains unknown as Carter is said to have broken down in tears after taking the picture and chasing off the vulture, as the girl journeyed on. The ethical and professional issues surrounding journalistic practice are beyond our scope, but for our purposes, this illustrates the symbiotic relationship between representations of an Africa ravaged by conflict, famine and disease and the humanitarian causes, whose interests sometimes go beyond the clichéd service to humanity. See Susan Moeller's *Compassion Fatigue: How the Media Sell Disease, Famine, War and Death* (1999) for a detailed discussion.

reference to the memory of figures such as Mungo Park, David Livingstone, Henry Stanley, Karen Blixen and Lord Delamere among others. This summoning of imperial memories not only confirms the continued availability and deployment of these archives in interpreting contemporary experiences, but further, it betrays an uncompromising and frozen backward gaze at colonial archives that may have negatively impacted on the quest for truth and justice in the case.

To a large extent, British narratives of the Julie Ward murder were distilled through a literary tradition that represents black Kenyans as a people given to impulsive violence and callousness; which ideas had been peddled in settler writing on Kenya during the colonial decades, and especially in the portrayal of the Mau Mau freedom fighters as brute terrorists, the 'wild savage' opposite of 'noble savages'. While the Julie Ward narratives are enacted in a Kenya marked by different socio-political realities, there are loud echoes of settler iconography of Kenya(ns) in these books.

The three texts - *The Animals are Innocent, Darkness in Eden,* and *The Murder of Julie Ward* - trace Julie Ward's last days in Kenya, with brief shifts back into her past. A larger part of each of these novels, however, concentrates on the search for her killers. On its part, John le Carre's *The Constant Gardener* is structured as a fictional detective story marked with frequent reference to real figures and places in Kenya. Although the novel never makes direct reference to the Julie Ward murder, there are several allusions, and events that correspond with incidents in the Julie Ward case, which suggest that Le Carre's narrative, though fictional, is structured around Julie Ward's murder.

1.6 Outline of the study

This study is divided into seven chapters. Chapter two examines the speculations on the circumstances surrounding Julie Ward's death in Kenya, with particular interest in how circulating discourses in Kenyan and British social imaginaries shaped these speculations. The chapter suggests that Julie Ward's death took place in a discursive landscape marked by deeply layered and intermeshed contours of British and Kenyan social memories, which have over time crystallized into popular wisdom regarding the multiple intersections between sex/uality, race, gender and state power in Kenyan and British social imaginaries. The chapter sketches out an outline of the range of ideas that seemed to be mobilized in speculations on the circumstances surrounding Julie Ward's death, particularly examining the idea of the black peril in British social imaginaries, the notion of the criminal state in Kenya, which is figured as male and violent, and the question of female sexual moralities, which cut across the Kenya-British divide. The chapter provides a backdrop for closer analysis of the texts in the subsequent chapters.

In Chapter three, I examine the rumours on the Julie Ward case in close detail. In view of the privileging of legal truths in the case, where the Ward family approached the case from the legalistic perspective of a quest for truth and justice through the formal, primarily legal institutions, the rumours on the case would seem to present an interesting critique of this approach and its viability in Kenya, by suggesting that the modern institutions of law and science, are in many ways porous to manipulation, and as such, unlikely to provide the desired kinds of legal truths. Drawing on reported rumours and allegations about Julie Ward's death, the chapter reflects on rumour as a medium that

contests the legitimacy of hegemonic 'truths' produced through modern institutions in Africa. In their critique of the amenability of modern state institutions to manipulation, the chapter argues, the rumours and allegations articulate a critique of Western modernity through the Ward case. The rumours suggest that the failure of the Kenyan state to deliver the promised benefits of postcolonial modernity mirrors the selective distribution of the privileges of colonial modernity.

Chapter four reflects on the narration of the Julie Ward case in the three true crime books. The primary thesis of this chapter is that both in life and death, Julie Ward was part of a certain cultural framework which came with certain received knowledge about Africa that mediated both her presence in Africa as a tourist and wildlife photographer, the subsequent search for her killer(s) and the narration of the case in the three books. Yet, some of the Kenyans involved – both the people and the institutional structures – subscribed to a different set of cultural practices, some of which were inscrutable to the British. The chapter explores the epistemological disarticulation that emerged in the interactions between the British and the Kenyan actors in the quest for Julie Ward's killers as a result of the British privileging of categories of knowledge drawn from Western modernity which are considered to be normative.

In Chapter five, I reflect on the polarisation of Kenya and Britain in the quest for Julie Ward's killers. In this polarisation, there seemed to be an unquestioned belief that Britain was sympathetic with, and committed to, John Ward's search for his daughter's killers. The chapter reveals that in reality; this assumption functioned as a discursive mask

behind which ran subterranean faultlines of shared interests and complicities between Kenya and Britain in the Julie Ward death which remained unknown to John Ward for a long time.

Chapter six examines the role of wildlife tourism and conservation in contemporary constructions of whiteness in postcolonial Kenya. Using the film *Ivory Hunters*, the Julie Ward case, and the case of Thomas Cholmondeley's killing of two Kenyans between 2005 and 2006 the chapter explores the constructions of whiteness in postcolonial Kenya/Africa. The chapter suggests that Julie Ward's death in Kenya in some ways lay along the transitional terrain between colonial and postcolonial whiteness, and revealed the continued deployment of colonial grammars of whiteness in a postcolonial context, along with a host of tensions and contradictions which made it difficult to construct new, viable grammars of whiteness in contemporary Kenya as they remain concerned with the assertion of white male authority in the postcolonial space. The last chapter is a brief conclusion which attempts to summarise key issues emerging from the study's discussions.

2 CHAPTER TWO: Inscribing Memories on Dead Bodies: Sex, Gender, and State Power in the Julie Ward Case

2.1 Introduction

In her study, *Intimate Empire: Reading Women's Autobiography*, Gillian Whitlock finds Raymond Williams' notion of residual elements of cultural processes (1977:122) instructive in understanding the continued valence of the white settler imaginary on Kenya. As she writes,

> Certain experiences, meanings and values which are no longer expressed or substantially verified in terms of the dominant culture are nevertheless lived and practiced on the basis of the residue – cultural as well as social – of some previous social and cultural formation (2000:117).

Whitlock's observation speaks to this chapter's interest in the influence of social memories in shaping speculations on the 1988 death of British tourist, Julie Ward in Kenya. Indeed, as she rightly points out, "values and meanings, tropes and allegories which were part of the hegemony of settler culture re-emerge … in interpreting [incidents like] the Ward affair" (2000:117).

This chapter reflects on how circulating discourses in Kenyan and British social imaginaries shaped the speculations on the circumstances surrounding Julie Ward's death in Kenya. Drawing on John Ward's speculations as laid out in his book *The Animals are Innocent: The Search for Julie's Killers*, Jeremy Gavron's speculations in *Darkness in Eden: The Murder of Julie Ward*, and the claims of alleged eye-witnesses in Kenya, the

chapter suggests that Julie Ward's death was interpreted through the lens of ideas constructed across Kenya's post/colonial history, which have over time crystallized into popular wisdom regarding the multiple intersections between sex/uality, race, gender and state power in Kenyan and British social imaginaries. By surfacing the subterranean discourses that underpinned the various speculations, the chapter suggests that Julie Ward's death took place in a discursive landscape marked by deeply layered and intermeshed contours of British and Kenyan social memories which tinted speculations on the circumstances surrounding the death.

Julie Ward's death in Kenya and the subsequent quest for her killers was a much publicized affair, which convened a range of publics, both through formal institutions such as the media and the courtrooms, and the more informal discursive spaces created by rumours and books about the death. If we take Michael Warner's argument that texts [and by extension, events] can only address publics – and thus create them - when "a previously existing discourse is supposed and a responding discourse [can be] postulated," (2002:90) then Julie Ward's death in Kenya was preceded by certain discourses in Kenyan and British social imaginaries, which provided important handles in understanding the death. Against this background, an understanding of social imaginaries and their accompanying social memories yields insights into the interpretative patterns that emerged in the Julie Ward mystery, and the prominence of sex/uality in these speculations, as mapped along overlapping tropes of interracial rape, female sexual moralities and criminal state power. It also becomes instructive in making sense of the

intertextual dialogues that unfolded in the relationship between Julie Ward's death and other deaths in Kenyan history.

2.2 Shadows of the Black Peril

Although a finding of murder in the inquest into Julie Ward's death was able to resolve the contested question of the manner of death, both science and law have so far been unable to determine the killer/s and the motive/s behind the murder. This gap inspired many speculations on the circumstances surrounding the death, by, among others, John Ward and Jeremy Gavron. In their respective books, *The Animals are Innocent: The Search for Julie's Killers* and *Darkness in Eden: The Murder of Julie Ward*, Ward and Gavron speculate that Julie Ward's death started out as rape by the game rangers in the Maasai Mara, who then proceeded to kill her, to cover up their crime. What is interesting in both Ward's and Gavron's speculation is the prominence of rape as the initial motive that led to Julie Ward's death. This is interesting for our purposes, not so much with regards to its credibility – as it is indeed a credible speculation – but in the absence of any preliminary evidence to suggest rape. Why would rape come to occupy such a central position in these speculations, despite the lack of evidence to suggest this?[13] One possible clue to understanding this lingering conviction about rape as the key motive lies in the colonial archive of ideas on the nexus between race, gender and sexuality.

[13] Only her left leg, skull, jaws and spinal column were recovered. The rest of her body appeared to have been burnt to ashes. This situation brings to mind the narrative in Lewis Nkosi's *Mating Birds* (1987[1983]), a first person narrative by Ndi Sibiya a prisoner facing a death sentence for accusations of raping a white woman, Veronica Slater. The novel remains unclear as to whether the two had consensual sex as Sibiya claims or if Sibiya raped Veronica as she claims, just as it remains unclear whether Julie Ward was raped before being killed and burnt. See Lucy Graham's incisive essay, ""Bathing Area – For Whites Only": Reading Prohibitive Signs and 'Black Peril' in Lewis Nkosi's *Mating Birds*" (2006).

In his book *White Hero*, *Black Beast: Racism, Sexism and the Mask of Masculinity*, Paul Hoch argues that Western civilization historically constructed many forms of sexuality as immoral, with the devil, dark villain or black beast being figured as the receptacle of all the sexual taboos and desires, thereby embodying all the forbidden possibilities of ultimate sexual fulfilment (1979:45). These ideas resulted in understandings of manhood along binaries such as human/animal, spiritual/carnal, higher/lower, white/black. For Hoch, interracial struggles in the 19th century were a test of virility in which the struggle between Europe and Africa represented an assertion of virility whose ultimate statement of control lay in the control of the other group's female (1979:47). Hoch's argument spotlights the junction between race, gender and nation, and in particular, women's bodies as embodiments of the nation and its attendant anxieties.

Many scholars have observed that the colonial experience was grounded in a sexualised discourse, not only in its grammar of rape, penetration, and the feminisation of the new frontiers,[14] but also in what David Atwell (2005:3) has described as its preoccupation with "policing intimacy", which, in apartheid South Africa became institutionalised through the Immorality Act that forbade sexual contact across the race lines. While the rest of the colonial administrations across Africa did not formalise this policing of cross-racial intimacy through laws, their control of native populations was nonetheless equally shot through with sexual anxieties which traced their roots back to an older archive of myths about Africa(ns). Among these were myths of black sexuality – male and female –

[14] See for instance Ashcroft *et al* (1998) and McClintock (1995).

which was believed to be aberrant and uncontrolled.[15] With colonial occupation, these myths bred a range of ambivalent anxieties about black sexuality. These anxieties took the shape of the black and yellow perils, concerned about the (perceived) threat of black men to white femininity, and the accompanying terror of miscegenation. For Gareth Cornel, what was at stake in these perils was "the integrity of the white female body, which had been mythologized by a frontier society as the last and most intimate frontier of all" (1996:441). Fears of the black and yellow perils were particularly intense in the colonial context where the white woman's body was a powerful embodiment of the nation-body. As Cecily Devereux persuasively argues, there was an analogy between the settler colony and the white woman as sites for racial renewal:

> Both white women and the settler colonies were represented in imperial rhetoric as at once innately pure and inherently purifying. Degenerating Anglo-Saxondom was to be rescued and restored equally in the womb of the imperial mother and in the bosom of 'daughter' nations (1999: 15-16).

This casting of the white woman as the regenerating 'mother-of-the-empire' was primarily articulated in tones of moral purity, where "the moral condition of the nation […] was believed to derive from the moral standards of women".[16]

The symbolic construction of the nation on women's bodies is far from being a British peculiarity, since in most societies, as Meg Samuelson reminds us, nations are often imagined through gendered tropes in which "women bear the symbolic weight of nationalism; their bodies are the contested sites on which national identities are erected

[15] Perhaps the most iconic figure with regard to this is the figure of the Khoi woman, Sarah Baartman, whose body was exhibited across Europe as epitomizing this aberrant African sexuality.
[16] Nead (1988:92) , cited in Devereux (1999:11).

and national unity is forged" (2007:2). What stands out in the British case though, is the intertwining of race, nation and morality in the female body, and the sexual panics that formed around the white woman's body. Haunted by the potential threat of political upheaval – both real and imagined - the racialised moral panics of the black and yellow perils seemed inevitable. In this way, these perils in the colonial imaginary represented a double metaphor, which not only expressed literal sexual anxieties rooted in an age-old demonization of sexuality and the accompanying ambivalent attitude towards a mythologized black sexuality, but, as Cornell reminds us, the perils were also rooted in real political concerns, as cross-racial relationships worked to dismantle the myth of white supremacy and its requisite exclusionary boundaries embodied by the white woman's body and exclusive white male access to it (1996:443-44). The existence of similar black peril fears in the Indian diaspora in Africa makes this view persuasive, as, given the Indian position in the colonial racial hierarchy just above Africans, and immediately after the whites, the fixation on the black peril would seem to be as much anchored in processes of Othering as in the need to protect and affirm hegemonic male authority and supremacy through exclusive access to the dominant group's women. I return to the question of white male authority in Chapter six of this study.

Although seemingly steeped in an outdated colonial context, these ideas on sex, gender and race would seem to have resurfaced as important points of reference for both Ward and Gavron, in imagining the circumstances surrounding Julie Ward's death. Indeed, as Whitlock observes, Julie Ward's death in Kenya caused "the long history of ideas and associations which are released by the association of lustful black men and defenseless

white women to be set loose once again" (2000:114). In their speculations, Ward and Gavron bear eloquent witness to the re-activation of Williams' residual elements as important fragments in shaping social imaginaries on contemporary experiences. In *The Animals are Innocent*, Ward speculates:

> I believe she [Julie Ward] spent the night at Makari Outpost. I think, also, she wasn't molested that first evening. But perhaps the rangers then became reluctant to let this smiling friendly girl out of their control. Three months posted to the Makari Outpost must be one of the most boring jobs the ranger service has to offer. Fed up with each other's company, the presence and conversation of a young woman must have made a welcome break from their dreary routine […]. Muff [Julie Ward] would have sensed the situation getting dangerous. Their banter would have become more personal, more sexually aggressive. The dry gulch behind the huts at Makari is littered with empty beer bottles. *A few drinks and these rangers would soon have lost their thin veneer of civilization. If Muff had been a tough, hard woman, she would probably have 'kept them in their place' and survived. But she was not.* […]. I am sure that, one terrible night, Muff was raped. I pray it was only once, but reluctantly, my mind cannot avoid the worst scenario. Once the act was committed, she was doomed. They could never set her free for fear she would identify them (1991: 381, Emphasis mine).

Ward's scripting of his speculation largely draws on the grammars of the black peril in the colonial archives on Africa. He identifies the rangers as the murderers, whose "thin veneer of civilisation" once dissolved by alcohol, unleashes an uncontrollable, aggressive lust. But if Ward couches his speculation with notions of isolation, boredom and alcohol,

in Gavron's rendition, these extenuating factors are stripped off by his conviction that Julie Ward's body represented the prototypical object of uncontrollable black lust, and that the rangers merely acted true to type. Gavron writes:

> Although her camera was missing and still not recovered, some money had been found in the fire in which her body had been burned. *To the men who killed her, Julie's body must have been her most attractive possession. It may be that Julie's killers had initially intended to rescue her, and that at some point temptation had simply grown stronger than common sense.* […] Julie's rescuers had turned into her assailants and raped her. … For several days, Julie must have been held and perhaps further abused (1994:183, Emphasis mine).

If we ignore for the moment the fact that the money Gavron refers to was a few Kenyan 10cent coins; and that the missing camera was of a fairly pricy Olympus make which could fetch a handsome amount anywhere; Gavron's thesis is that the killers' uncontrollable sexual urges overwhelm common sense, their initial mission of rescuing the stranded tourist, and any desire for her material possessions. Ward and Gavron draw on the afore-discussed colonial repertoire of ideas, in which Julie Ward epitomises the white woman's vulnerable femininity and purity pitted against the black man's purportedly inherent and uncontrollable sexual urges.

But if Ward and Gavron's speculations are scripted onto an absent body, the world of fiction seems to reconstruct the violated body in a novel set in Kenya, which features a white woman murdered in the Kenyan wilds, with her body showing medical evidence of sexual violation. Perhaps the best illustration of the continued validation of the black peril

discourses in British social imaginaries, John le Carre's *The Constant Gardener* is published thirteen years after Julie Ward's death. The novel tells the story of a young British woman, Tessa Quayle who travels to northern Kenya, where she is murdered and her mutilated body is discovered in a deserted spot by the shores of Lake Turkana.

In *The Constant Gardener*, scandalized suspicion haunts Tessa's friendship with Arnold Bluhm, a handsome African doctor working for the *Medicins dans L'univers*, a non-governmental humanitarian organisation providing healthcare in Kenya.[17] Before her death, the grapevine in the British expatriate community is abloom with rumours about Tessa Quayle and the possibility that she is unfaithful to her diplomat husband, Justin Quayle. When Tessa is murdered, the British High Commission in Nairobi frames Arnold Bluhm for the murder. This idea is lapped up by the media in Europe, as the novel narrates:

> A Belgian daily ran a front-page story accusing Tessa and Bluhm of a 'passionate liaison' […]. The British Sundays had a field day; overnight Bluhm had become a figure of loathing for Fleet Street to snipe at as it wished. […]. From now on, he was Bluhm the seducer, Bluhm the adulterer, Bluhm the maniac. A page-three feature about murderous doctors down the ages was accompanied by lookalike photographs of Bluhm and O.J. Simpson. […]. Bluhm, if you were that kind of reader, was your archetypal black killer. He had ensnared a white man's wife, cut her throat, decapitated the driver and run off into the bush to seek new prey or do whatever those salon blacks do when they revert to type (2001:65).

[17]Note here the similarity with the real *Medicins sans Frontiers* which operates in Kenya.

The novel's allusion to the real life O.J Simpson case is notable here, in the ways it gestures at a contemporary case which was equally framed by an old history of black peril discourses and the accompanying race, sexuality and gender tensions[18].

In the novel, the British find a convenient and convincing scapegoat in Arnold Bluhm, as the "archetypal black killer". But what remains most instructive in this narrative is that in the face of scandalized rumours in the British community about Arnold's close relationship with Tessa Quayle - which is assumed to be sexual - the narrative redeems Arnold by turning him gay. Implicitly, the narrative is equally keen to firmly clip the possibility of a cross-racial sexual relationship between the two. Put differently, Arnold's homosexuality assures Tessa's virtuous faithfulness to both her husband and the race.

It is significant that in both the novel – published in 2001 - and the film version of the same title released in 2005, the idea of inter-racial sexual relationship remains a source of significant anxiety. Like the narrative's struggle to contain Arnold – both metaphorically by making him gay, and literally, by getting rid of him soon after the black-peril statement is made – this anxiety about inter-racial sex underlines the continued policing of cross-racial intimacy in the postcolonial context, through the scripting of the white woman as vulnerable to black lust and violence.

Notably, like the Julie Ward case, rape looms large in *The Constant Gardener*. In fact, it is actualised, as the novel paints images of gang rape in a horrible instantiation of the black peril:

[18] See Morrison and Lacour's *Birth of a Nation'hood: Gaze, Script and Spectacle in the O.J. Simpson Case* (1997) for detailed discussion of the O.J Simpson case.

> Tessa had had recent intercourse… we suspect rape. It's only a vaginal swab they've taken at this stage and peeked through the microscope… but they still think it may be more than one person's sperm. Maybe a whole cocktail…. [The murder] was random. Unplanned. A blood feast, African style (2001: 91, 96).

This extract from *The Constant Gardener* could easily be a rephrasing of Ward's fears about his daughter's horrible ordeal, particularly his speculation: "I am sure that, one terrible night, Muff was raped. I pray it was only once, but reluctantly, my mind cannot avoid the worst scenario" (Ward 1991:381).

The three writers' seamless retrieval of these ideas suggests their embeddedness in British social imaginaries on Africa(ns), and their continued availability as useful grammars which are easily teleported across history in understanding contemporary experiences. Through these portable tropes of race and gender discourses, Ward, Gavron and le Carre illustrate the continued valence of what Maughan-Brown (1985) terms "psycho-sexual myth-making", which he traces in colonial settler fiction on Kenya. This fiction persistently rehashed myths of African brutal sexuality by drawing a link between sex, violence and blackness (Maughan-Brown 1985:124) and often lingering on the rape of white women by Mau Mau 'terrorists'.[19] If, as John Pape (1990:702) points out, the attribution of an ungovernable libido to black men harks back to the tenets of Social Darwinism, which was an important ideological ingredient that underpinned colonial

[19] As Duder (1991) persuasively argues, popular literature of the genre called the "Kenya novel" played a central role in constructing and circulating certain ideas about colonial Kenya for British readerships, including notions of interracial rape. Robert Ruark for instance was a prominent "Kenya writer" whose work set in Kenya was engrossed with the question of sexual violation of white women by black men. See for instance his novel, *Uhuru*, which vividly explores the fears of the threat of black men to white womenfolk during the emergency period in colonial Kenya.

conquest, then it is in this unquestioning retrieval of ideas associated with colonial archives that these writers illustrate Williams' notion of residual elements of cultural formations.

2.3 The Criminal State

For the local publics, however, the Julie Ward murder mystery animated different fragments of social memories contained in Kenyan social imaginaries, which yielded conclusions that differed significantly from Ward and Gavron's speculations. Where Ward and Gavron were convinced that the Maasai Mara game rangers were behind the murder, for local publics, the culprits were high-ranking political figures. Further, although rape still featured prominently in the local grapevine and the alleged 'eye-witness' accounts, the idea of rape took different trajectories, which seemed more preoccupied with what Achille Mbembe (1992) has in a different context described as "the phallus of power".[20] These narratives directed the idea of rape towards articulating critiques of the abuse and brutality of state power. Where Ward and Gavron saw an instantiation of the black peril, local imaginaries saw a political elite's deployment of violence – including sexual violence – as part of its grammar of power. Julie Ward's brutal death was one more episode in a long logbook of the political elite's trail of violence.

[20] I use the phrase here in Mbembe's sense, to refer to an economy of pleasure associated with political power in the African state, which includes sexual indulgence. But beyond this "taste for lecherous living", the sexual indulgence is also an important site for the performance of power, sometimes through sexual violence.

To understand the local suspicion of state involvement in the Julie Ward murder, and the speculation it inspired in local imaginaries, it is imperative that one places it within the Kenyan socio-political climate not only at the time of her death (September, 1988), but broadly speaking, the Moi regime as a whole. Julie Ward's death happened at a volatile political period in Kenya, characterised by a tense atmosphere of mutual paranoia between the state and the citizenry, in which the latter was to witness an even more drastic descent into repressive one-party rule.[21]

The postcolonial state in Africa has often been seen as what Larry Diamond refers to as a "swollen state" (1987:567), partly in allusion to its overdeveloped institutions and bureaucracies, which are systematically enlisted in entrenching brutal hegemonies. This was the state of affairs in Kenya during the 1980s and the 1990s; but state repression in Kenyan political history goes all the way back to the Kenyatta regime of the 1960s and the 1970s. Indeed, it is this regime which had inherited and refined what Atieno Odhiambo (1987:191) has termed the "ideology of order" from the colonial administration. The ideology of order posits political order as a key prerequisite for the effective functioning of the state, while implicitly masking a political hegemony that incorporates, excludes or dissolves discordant ideas. Thus, the coercive arm of the Moi regime manifested itself in a range of disciplinary measures devised to dissuade those who attempted to critically engage with the state; an act that was seen as necessarily

[21] See James Kariuki's "'Paramoia': Anatomy of a dictatorship in Kenya" for a detailed discussion of the repressive Moi regime. See also Haugerud (1995), on Kenyan political culture during the Moi regime.

insurgent. The oldest of these were detention without trial[22] and political assassination, both important heirlooms from the Kenyatta regime, while the former went as far back as the colonial regime.[23] These were powerful ways of performing power and constructing a dramatic grammar that acted as an iconic warning to the rest of the society.

Against this backdrop, it is possible to understand the centrality of assassination in the Kenyan social imaginary, where it provides what Atieno Odhiambo (1987) describes as a "clinically and surgically neat means of creating political order". Several lives are believed to have been sacrificed at the altar of the Moi state paranoia, including those of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Robert Ouko, Anglican Bishop, Alexander Muge and Father John Anthony Kaiser, a catholic priest, all of whom were seen as potential threats to political order in the country. Kenyatta's regime saw the deaths of political figures like Pio Gama Pinto, J.M. Kariuki and Tom Mboya. The list is much longer in the Kenyan grapevine.

The idea of state-commissioned murder has therefore come to occupy a prime position in Kenyan social imaginaries. In their coverage of suspicious deaths believed to bear the shadow of state involvement, the print media in Kenya tend to frame their reports within a genealogy of the morgue of other suspicious deaths in Kenyan history.[24] Outside the media, the idea of state assassination has been absorbed into popular culture as illustrated

[22] The dungeons have made a contribution to Kenyan literature in the form of a rich library of prison writing, including Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Devil on the Cross* and Wahome Mutahi's *Three Days on the Cross*. For a discussion of Mutahi's writing see Mutonya (2004).
[23] See David Anderson's *Histories of the Hanged: Britain's Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (2005) for a discussion of the use of detention without trial by the British administration in colonial Kenya.
[24] See for instance *The People*'s coverage of the Julie Ward death in the 1996 article "If Only Julie Ward were a Kenyan…". The article outlines a series of suspicious murders in post-independence Kenya down to the Julie Ward murder, pointing out recurrent tropes between these cases.

by the music of Benga musician D.O. Misiani,[25] and novels, such as Sam Okello's *The Night Bob Died* and Steven Omamo's *The Men do not Eat Wings*, all of which closely approximate dominant motifs of the idea of state-commissioned assassinations. Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Devil on the Cross* captures the dominance of the notion of assassination in Kenyan social imaginaries, through his characters' coinage of the phrase "taken to Ngong" which they use in reference to mysterious disappearance and murder. In the novel, this is an allusion not only to J.M Kariuki's murder, but also to predominant/prominent motifs in murders associated with the state.

In their study on the Robert Ouko murder mystery, *The Risks of Knowledge*, Cohen and Odhiambo argue that "a genealogy of assassinations and martyrdoms has been inscribed, perhaps indelibly, into the historical ledger of the Kenya nation, and this ledger enabled powerful and also varied associations for the corpse of Robert Ouko" (2004: 4-5). This claim is equally applicable to Julie Ward's death. Indeed, the notion of silencing inconvenient people has been such a recurrent phenomenon in Kenya that certain elements have come to calcify into recognizable tropes which the popular imaginaries have come to read as tell-tale signs of state involvement. Among these tropes is mysterious disappearance, sometimes announced on the state-owned KBC radio as was the case with Moi's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Robert Ouko in 1991, before his body was 'found' in the bushes. Julie Ward also went missing for six days before her remains were 'found', while the remains of Kenyatta's cabinet minister, J.M. Kariuki, were 'discovered' in the Ngong' hills. A second motif in these deaths is the mutilated and

[25] See Ogude's '"The Cat that Ended up Eating the Homestead Chicken': Murder, Memory and Misiani's Dissident Music" (2007) for a discussion of D.O. Misiani's music and its commentary on state-commissioned assassinations.

burnt body, which popular imaginaries have come to interpret as an attempt to destroy evidence. As well as Julie Ward, both J.M Kariuki and Robert Ouko's bodies were mutilated, while Julie Ward and Robert Ouko's bodies were burnt. In addition, both Julie Ward and J.M. Kariuki's mutilated remains were disposed in forests -- Maasai Mara and Ngong' respectively -- in a bid to validate the official state position that they had been killed by wild animals. The fourth trope is the suicide theory, usually put forward by the police and the chief state pathologist. Subsequently, the state sets up commissions of inquiry and parliamentary select committees to investigate the death. These are eventually disbanded and re-commissioned in an endless cycle, while their findings remain mysterious. Finally we have Scotland Yard, which is often called in to counter claims of partial self-investigation by the guilty state. The Scotland Yard has not been known to get to the bottom of any murder in Kenya and two Scotland Yard detectives sent to Kenya to investigate Julie Ward's death remained true to this tradition.

All these tropes have come to form a recognizable lexicon in the grammar of the state's murder mysteries, usually punctuated by the statement 'No stones will be left unturned in the search for the killers': in Kenyan imaginaries, this is understood to mean no stone will be left unturned in the fabrication of cover-ups.[26] Against this background then, for the Kenyan publics following the case, official attempts to frame Julie Ward's death as an act of God - suicide, mauling by wild animals or lightning - revealed state interest in placing the case beyond human culpability; a fact that was variously read as suspicious, and suggestive of attempts to conceal the truths behind the case.

[26] I am grateful to Florence Sipalla for drawing my attention to this fragment of Kenyan social imaginaries.

Although Julie Ward appeared to have been, until her death, an ordinary tourist in Kenya, lacking the political stature of the above-mentioned people, her death and the state responses to it mirrored earlier and subsequent deaths in Kenyan history, over which the shadow of a suspect state hovered. Parallels such as her disappearance, attempts to destroy the remains by burning, official insistence on wild animals, suicide, or lightening, and the doctored post-mortem report, all seemed to situate Ward's death, alongside other murders, at the doorstep of political elites.

It must be emphasised though, that the process of linking Julie Ward's death to other deaths in Kenyan history was far from mechanical. Beyond the tell-tale similarities between this death and previous deaths, other important factors included the lack of credibility of the various state institutions, which would have offered alternative truths – including the judiciary and the police. In this environment, where both law and science had failed to produce credible truths, the local social imaginaries fell back on social memories of similar incidents in Kenyan history [I discuss the failure of science and law in greater detail in Chapter four]. Convinced by these parallels with other suspicious deaths in Kenyan history and similar attempts by the state to cover up the truth, local imaginaries cast Julie Ward as a political threat to criminal elements in the state.

2.4 The Sex Question in the Julie Ward Case

So far, from our discussion above, Julie Ward appears to have been portrayed through two tropes, both of which emphasised her victimhood – as an innocent Madonna and as a martyr. In their speculation, Ward and Gavron portray Julie Ward in strokes of what

Diane Roberts has described as "the Victorian mantel of white womanhood – frail, delicate, sexually pure" (2005:33), which sustains the idea of the defenceless white woman at the mercy of lustful black men. In the Kenyan social imaginaries, Julie Ward is elevated to a status bordering on martyrdom, as yet another victim of a violent and criminal political elite, who dies collecting incriminating evidence of this elite's crimes.

There was however a third portrayal of Julie Ward, which framed her as a woman of loose sexual mores. This figure, interestingly, was produced across the Kenya – Britain divide. It is this figure that surfaces the continuities in the ideas held in British and Kenyan social imaginaries on race, gender and sexuality. In this third version of Julie Ward, we begin to see the cross-cultural dialogues and overlaps of the values held by the various popular archives.

In his 1992 judgment of the first Julie Ward murder trial against Peter Kipeen and Jonah Magiroi, Judge Abdullah Fidahussein wrote:

> There can be no doubt that Julie was charming and affectionate girl (sic). […]. She was probably too trusting and unconcerned about her personal safety. Although not of low moral character, her liberal attitude towards sex may not sit well with those of older generation. I do not wish to be too critical in not eliminating the possibility that *her easy ways may have contributed to her predicament, resulting in her murder and grisly disposal of her flesh*[27] (sic, emphasis added).

[27] Judge Abdullah Fidahussein Case no. 48 of 1991, The Republic of Kenya vs. John Magiroi and Peter Kipeen, 9.

In this extract, Judge Fidahussein draws links between Julie Ward's death and her sexual relations, which he describes as "liberal" and "easy ways". Despite his cautious note that Julie Ward was not of low moral character, Judge Fidahussein nonetheless considers her sexual im/morality to have been an influential factor which contributes to her murder; although his judgment stops short of explaining exactly how "her easy ways may have contributed to her predicament".

The notion that Julie Ward was a woman of loose morals probably had its roots in the friendships she formed with various men in the course of her trip. As noted from the itinerary of her trip to Kenya, Julie Ward met and interacted with a host of people on her trip from England to Maasai Mara. Among these were Dave Tree, the Ho-Bo Transafrica Safaris truck driver; Paul Weld Dixon, her host in Lang'ata; Doug Morey, her landlord, in Langa'ta whose cottage she rented; Glen Burns her companion on the trip to the Mara; David Weston a balloon pilot whose acquaintance she made in the Mara; and Steven Watson who towed her jeep when it got stuck in the Mara

It is probably in view of these interactions that Judge Fidahussein described Julie Ward as having “easy ways”. Similar sentiments had been expressed three years earlier at the inquest into Julie Ward’s death, held in August 1989. During the inquest, the state prosecutor Alex Etyang had described Julie Ward as “a twenty-eight-year- old, adventurous woman, with three men in her life at the Maasai Mara who were close friends”[28] Describing Etyang’s line of argument, Gavron reports:

[28] Gavron 1994:144-5.

> One of his [Etyang's] key defences was that Julie had died because she was a woman of little education and loose character. 'She left school at the age of seventeen years' Etyang said. 'This might be considered a relatively young age for a girl to leave school'. Julie's time in Kenya, Etyang suggested, was spent moving from one man to another. […]. Julie was taken to the Dixons by a man called David Tree…. She then met Glen Burns. … Later she met David Weston, the balloon pilot who 'fancied her, got her into conversation, bought her a beer or so, had cocktails with her … And finally there was Stephen Watson, 'the man who slept with Julie at the Maasai Mara' (1994:144).

In these two sets of sentiments – Judge Fidahussein's and Etyang's - Julie Ward is portrayed as a woman of loose morals, despite the fact that she only had actual sexual relations with Stephen Watson. The idea of Julie Ward as a sexually permissive woman was further echoed by the Kenyan police in the course of their investigations into Julie Ward's death. Although Etyang's argument above reveals the sentiments of the investigating officers charged with the case, this thinking was more candidly captured by Police pathologist Dr. Adel Shaker's testimony at the second inquest into Julie Ward's death, held in England:

> (Police Commissioner) Kilonzo was satisfied with the report from (Chief Government Pathologist) Kaviti and other police officers that the animals had mauled the body. Inside Kilonzo's offices, the officers made jokes and suggested

> that Ward was a prostitute, that she had been sleeping around with different men in the game reserve and that she had been depressed leading to suicide.[29]

These three sets of statements from official quarters in Kenya are interesting for the ways in which they signal a specific regime of ideas on female sexual morality which was at play in the Kenyan official approach to the investigations into Julie Ward's death. From these statements, there seemed to be an underlying criminalization of Julie Ward's sexuality, with undertones of blame for the fate that befell her, despite the lack of evidence of links between her death and any of her male friends, or her sexual practices.

To a certain degree, the official focus on Julie Ward's sexual behaviour as a contributing factor in her death spoke to similar cases in Kenyan history, most notably the 1980 murder of Monica Njeri, a commercial sex worker in Mombasa and the 1978 murder of army captain Judy Angaine in Nairobi. Njeri plied her trade in the tourist town of Mombasa, a hub of activity known in Kenyan lore for a vibrant sex economy involving local men and women, and tourists, often of Caucasian descent.[30] She was killed by an apprentice American Navy fireman Frank Sundstrom. Unsatisfied with Njeri's services, Sundstrom had allegedly tried to steal back the money he had paid her while she slept, but she caught him red-handed. In the ensuing struggle, he allegedly broke a beer bottle and repeatedly stabbed her until she died. After pleading guilty, the charge was reduced to manslaughter and Frank Sundstrom was set free on the condition that he signs a bond

[29] Nation team "Cover-up Alleged at Julie Ward Inquest." *Daily Nation*, 27 April 2007: 3
[30] See Omondi's paper "Gender and the Political Economy of Sex Tourism in Kenya's Coastal Resorts" (2003) and Kibicho's essay "Tourism and the Sex Trade: Role Male Sex Workers Play in Malindi, Kenya" (2003).

of Ksh. 500 to be of good behavior for a period of two years[31]. This bizarrely lenient sentence sparked much public uproar in Kenya and even came up for discussion in parliament. Tellingly though, it would appear that it was the racial overtones in the case that had provoked this response, as seen by calls for the removal of racist white judges in the Kenyan bar. The sentence had been passed by a white Judge Harris.

In the second case, Judy Angaine was found dead in a bathtub in her house. The chief suspect was her boyfriend, Major David Kisila, who was tried for the murder. During the trial, State Counsel William Mbaya argued that Mjr. Kisila had a motive of jealousy, to murder Judy Angaine, as Kisila "had reason to believe Capt. Angaine was seeing other men – including Mr Ngei, Mr Nyagah and Mr Lithimbi".[32] Countering this argument, Kisila's defense lawyer Byron Georgiadis argued that "though his client may have had a love-related motive to kill Capt Angaine, he was not the only one with a similar motive".[33] In view of Angaine's history of potentially multiple sexual partners, including Ministers Paul Ngei and Jeremiah Nyagah, and the father of her child, John Lithimbi, with whom she had exchanged valentine's cards only a month and a half earlier,[34] the defense argued, each of these three men had the shared motive of jealousy. Kisila was acquitted of the murder charge in the case which remains unsolved three decades later. The case was serialized in the prominent Kenyan daily, the *Daily Nation*. Public response to the judgment was unremarkable.

[31]Omondi, Ibid; 14. See also Nation Reporter "US Sailor Goes Free." *Daily Nation*, 1 October 1980:1-2.
[32] Ngotho, "Murder Mystery that Shook Kenya." *Daily Nation*: *Outlook Supplement* 22 March 2004: 3
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid. See also Kimondo, "Judy: Blood clues found" *Daily Nation*, 10 June 1978:1, 4.

In these two cases, Njeri and Angaine's sexual practices seemed to have lowered perceptions of their victimhood. The foregrounding of the two women's sexual relations echoes the outlined emphasis on Julie Ward's sexuality. This lingering on the murdered women's sexuality in the three cases suggests that the Kenyan legal apparatuses in these cases operated with great awareness of popular moral economies regarding female sexuality in Kenya. Far from being a stable, laid down set of rules though, this moral economy is a constantly negotiated code of conduct, constructed from popular wisdom that is gleaned from various social practices, institutions, and experiences. In Kenya, popular wisdom on morality is distilled from a range of institutions including religious doctrine and an array of customary practices, all of which are firmly conservative regarding sexuality in general, and female sexuality in particular. Against the background of these hegemonic assumptions regarding female sexual practices as normatively monogamous and grounded in exclusive fidelity to one partner, the three women's sexual practices would seem to have been important mitigating factors in their families' failure to find justice.

What is striking in these three cases is the subtle incrimination of the murdered women for the social crime of rendering themselves vulnerable to violent murder by contravening their men's/society's rules on female sexual etiquette. Read differently then, these verdicts seemed to legitimize, or at the very least 'understand' femicide as a matter-of-course punishment for contravention of this gendered sexual moral code.

Beyond a patriarchal judicial system which echoed similar responses to other women's murders though, the lingering on Julie Ward's sexual practices could be further traced to yet another set of social memories, ironically constructed from colonial practices in Kenya and postcolonial popular knowledge on tourist culture in Kenya. It is this fragment of social memories shared across Kenyan and British social imaginaries that underlined both the porous boundaries between the two and their dialogic engagements on race, gender and female sexuality.

An interesting entry point into this set of social memories is provided by David Barritt in his article on the Julie Ward murder, which was suggestively titled "Lion girl's last sex-crazed night" and which appeared in the British *Sunday Mirror*, on 7 November 1988. Describing the article, Gavron writes:

> It pictured Julie Ward as a buxom, scantily clad, sexually overdeveloped nymph who had slept her way through Africa. The implication was that Julie had played with the primitive sexual emotions of Africans and therefore contributed towards her bloody end (1994:103).

Although they remain anchored in the black peril discourses which assign Africans "primitive sexual emotions," Barritt's sentiments are nonetheless interesting in their allusion to the notion of the tourist in search of adventure, often captured in the popularized phrase 'sun, sand and sex'.

The persistent portrayal of Julie Ward as a sexually adventurous tourist, despite the lack of evidence to this effect can be understood through what Tony Bennett calls "reading

formations". Bennett defines reading formations as "intersecting discourses that productively activate a given body of texts and relations between them in a given way", resulting in new formations of meaning (1983:5). In attempts to piece together the circumstances surrounding Julie Ward's death, the above outlined movements and interactions between Julie Ward and her male acquaintances were "productively activated" by existing ideas in Kenyan and British social imaginaries on indulgence and adventure as definitive practices in tourist cultures.

In the Kenyan context, ideas of adventurous tourist cultures find further resonance with three sets of ideas: the historic construction of the country as an eroticized Edenic garden; a vibrant sex-tourism economy especially along the coast and the colonial reputation of the country as what a character in Le Carre's *The Constant Gardener* describes as "an adventure playground for derelict upper-class swingers" (2001:125). Within the context of the Julie Ward case, these three sets of ideas can be understood against the background of Rose Omondi's (2003:9) argument that the assurance of anonymity releases tourists from the restraint that polices behaviour in their home environment; creating fertile ground for adventure, pleasure-seeking and living out fantasies with little inhibition.

In Kenyan popular imaginaries, the area stretching from Nairobi to Maasai Mara is a distinctly tourist terrain, predominantly featuring the Maasai people – a tourist attraction in themselves – and private game ranches and lodges. The lingering focus on Julie Ward's sexuality in these instances was thus anchored in popular wisdom on white tourists' sexual practices in Kenya; wisdom that partly owes its roots to the Happy Valley

culture in colonial Kenya, which comprised of a hedonistic culture of safaris, hunter-playboys and heavy indulgence in sex, drugs and alcohol.[35] In an allusive manner therefore, the references to Julie Ward's alleged sexual escapades in Maasai Mara and her subsequent murder appeared to evoke the case of the unsolved murder of Happy Valley's Lord Errol; an accomplished ladies' man. Lord Errol's murder mystery was a glamorous cocktail of sexual adventures, alcohol, drugs and violence, as vividly explored in James Fox's *White Mischief* (1983). To a certain degree then, portrayals of Julie Ward as a woman of loose morals would seem to have been anchored in circulating discourses about tourist practices and their indulgence in adventure, including sexual adventures.

Despite this though, the Kenyan officialdom's keenness to portray Julie Ward as a 'loose tourist' further alerts us to a second dynamic that seemed to be at play in the case: attempts to manipulate local public opinion on the matter. To some degree, this mission was accomplished, as the local grapevines reveled in Julie Ward's alleged promiscuity. One of the more widespread strands of rumours was that Julie Ward had been having a relationship with an influential politician who had her killed for being unfaithful. A second variant of this rumour suggests that she was a British intelligence agent masquerading as a tourist, who used her sex-appeal to worm her way into important state secrets, held by the son of the influential politician by getting into a relationship with him; but he soon discovered her real identity and had her killed[36].

[35] See James Fox's *White Mischief* for an informative reconstruction of Happy Valley culture.
[36] Personal communication with various Kenyans who insisted on anonymity.

The idea of Julie Ward as a temptress who uses her body to manipulate information out of a powerful man echoes old mythology - both Christian and traditional African – that constructs women as tricksters and men as sexually vulnerable to women. The biblical equivalent of this is the story of Samson and Delilah. The Luo community in Western Kenya has a similar narrative about a beautiful woman from the Kipsigis community, who baited a famous Luo warrior Lwanda Magere with her sexual charm, and persuaded him to share the secret of his strength, leading to the defeat of the Luo in war.

Ironically, while imaginings of a sexually abused Julie Ward emphasize her vulnerability to sexual violation, it is this victimized woman who is sympathetically portrayed in both Kenyan and British imaginaries, suggesting an implicit affirmation of the notion of female vulnerability. The narratives that portray Julie Ward as a promiscuous and sexually manipulative woman, read from a less conservative moral episteme, grant her some degree of agency that momentarily places her in a position of power over her body and the men in question. However, given the conservative moral lenses that celebrate female sexual purity which British and Kenyan imaginaries appeared to embrace, these rumours portrayed Julie Ward as a scheming woman who had been punished for presuming to take advantage of a man’s natural vulnerability.

Beyond her sexuality however, Julie Ward's whiteness played an interesting role, further complicating local responses. While her death has since found its way into the list of unresolved mystery murders which - at least so goes popular wisdom - the state had a hand in; Julie Ward's death did not inspire as much emotional identification as other

murders, including Tom Mboya's before her, and Robert Ouko's after her. Several factors account for this. On the face of it, these two were both men and they commanded influential positions in the local political landscape, which were seen to have played a role in their death. Beyond this, however, Julie Ward as a white British woman in a patriarchal society with a politically invisible white minority failed to command significant local identification.[37]

In a country heavily mapped along ethnic lines, which in a very real sense determine the distribution networks for most (national) resources - including justice and sympathy - Julie Ward as a white non-Kenyan fell outside these distribution networks. In the public imaginaries, Julie Ward largely inspired local passions in so far as her death could be laid at the doorstep of the incumbent Moi regime, a position which served to progress the populist politics of the day more than the search for the truth behind her death.

The subsequent murder of the American priest Father John Kaiser in 2000 proves this point persuasively. Fr. Kaiser's murder is believed to have been sanctioned by certain elements in the country's political elite, allegedly because he was in possession of incriminating evidence regarding the so-called ethnic clashes in the Rift Valley province. In Fr. Kaiser's case too, a compassionate local identification was lacking, beyond political condemnation of the government. In contrast, other murder victims such as Robert Ouko, J.M. Kariuki, Bishop Alexander Muge and Tom Mboya have continued to receive

[37] Indeed, it cannot be overemphasized that the attention the case received both formally and informally in Kenya and internationally was mainly the result of her father's persistent effort, and willingness to spend time and money in the quest for his daughter's killers.

attention with frequent calls for new investigations to bring their killers to book. For instance, the Ouko and Mboya murders fed into an already existing Luo ethnic politic of a conspiracy to deny Luo's access to the national cake by eliminating prominent Luos. But as a woman and a member of a minority race in Kenya, Julie Ward's murder failed to inspire such sentiment. Thus, while the Ouko and Mboya murders are the subject of various scholarly studies, music, and fiction by Kenyans, as suggested by Odhiambo and Cohen's book length study of the Ouko murder, *The Risks of Knowldedge*, the music of D.O Misiani, Sam Okello's novel *The Night Bob Died*, and Stephen Omamo's *The Men do not Eat Wings*; both Julie Ward's and Fr. Kaiser's deaths have only managed the occasional anecdotal mention by Kenyan scholars; and to my knowledge, the only book length text on Fr. Kaiser is his own posthumously published, premonitory memoir-cum-report *If I Die*.

2.5 Conclusion

What stands out from our discussion on the patterns of speculations about Julie Ward's death is the lingering on her body and her sexuality across the various constituencies. Julie Ward was represented as scaling a triangular terrain of Madonna, whore and martyr. It is in this that we begin to see the interpenetration of social imaginaries which appeared to be anchored on circulating discourses about the female body. Julie Ward's body became a site for the articulation of a broad spectrum of ideas including critiques of the workings of officialdom in the Moi era, female sexual moralities, race relations and a voyeuristic gaze at the body of power.

The political climate and the prevalent anti-establishment ethos in the late 1980s and 1990s in Moi's Kenya gave certain theories greater purchase in local imaginaries. The credibility of these circulating theories about Julie Ward's death was rated not so much by the supporting evidence – though this too was relevant - but by the extent to which they were founded on and confirmed social truths about the incumbent establishment and the practice of power within the Moi regime. Through the rumours and these alleged 'eye-witness' accounts - which were circulated in the media and further circulated in everyday conversations in Kenya - people were able to filter through available information about the death, and weave their own interpretations which provided a forum to comment on state power. In this, the extant social memories provided important ingredients in weaving credible scenarios.

Far from displaying mechanical or linear processes of retrieval of social memories, the speculations on Julie Ward's death firmly emphasized the intertexual relationships that existed between Julie Ward's deaths and other deaths in Kenyan history; which in turn reveals the interpenetrating contours of social memories across otherwise distinct constituencies. Interestingly, where the British and Kenyan constituencies held sharply differing views on race, when it came to gender, there seemed to be a shared pool of patriarchal attitudes from which the various constituencies drew. Whether in voyeuristically reveling in Julie Ward's so-called sexual escapades, or in attempting to preserve her virtue by persistently desexualizing her, as John Ward and Jeremy Gavron did, the various constituencies all appeared to subscribe to the same conservative Madonna – whore moral dichotomy that prized female sexual purity.

3 CHAPTER THREE: Between Wildebeest, Noble Savages and Moi's Kenya: Deceit and Cultural Illiteracies in the Search for Julie Ward's Killers

> In Dangan, the European quarter and the African quarter are quite separate. But what goes on underneath those corrugated iron roofs is known down to the smallest detail inside the mud-walled huts. The eyes that live in the native location strip the whites naked. The whites on the other hand go about blind. (Oyono 1966:71).

3.1 Introduction

This chapter reflects on the interactions between British and Kenyan actors in the search for Julie Ward's killers, and how the case is narrated in the three texts. It suggests that Julie Ward's presence in Kenya as a tourist and wildlife photographer was mediated by a certain discursive archive on Africa. Upon her death, British investigations into her murder were tinted by this archive, at the core of which lay assumptions about noble savages on the one hand and the postcolonial African state on the other, both of which were taken to be transparent to instruments of Western modernity. Subsequently, the three books on the case – John Ward's *The Animals are Innocent*: *The Search for Julie's Killers*, Michael Hiltzik's *A Death in Kenya: The Murder of Julie Ward* and Jeremy Gavron's *Darkness in Eden: The Murder of Julie Ward* - also narrated the case through the prism of discourses drawn from this archive of ideas on Kenya and Africa. Yet the Kenyans – both the individual players involved in the case and the state institutions – subscribed to a different set of discursive practices, some of which were inscrutable to the British. So, I suggest, there was an epistemological disarticulation between the British and Kenyan approaches to the case, as the Kenyans were proficient in local epistemes and Western modernity's values/ institutions, while the British were hampered by their illiteracy in the local textualities which were illegible to orthodox instruments of Western

modernity. This epistemological disarticulation resulted in what I term 'cultural illiteracy', in reference to the British players' inability to access the local ideas and practices that were at play in Kenya. This chapter argues that this illiteracy had less to do with an insider/outsider positioning than with the continued reproduction and deployment of assumptions embedded in colonial modernity's archives on Africa(ns), which retain epistemes that proved disenabling in the quest for Julie Ward's killers.

Europe's construction of the Other as a negation of its normative self has over time become a well-known truism persuasively articulated by among others, Edward Said's seminal work, *Orientalism* (1978) and AbdulRazak JanMohamed's concept of the Manichean allegory.[38] The imperialist project in Anglophone Africa was founded on the objective of enlightening the natives. This objective, Edward Said (1978) notes, was conceptualized within a well-developed portrait of the orient - and by extension, Africa - legitimized by an assumed knowledge which inscribed the West as the Seeing Eye. This assumed knowledge, based on difference, resulted in highly polarized identities. Africa came to be defined as a negation of the West; it was everything Europe was not. Where Europe was mature, civilized and rational, Africa was seen as childlike, irrational and depraved. This definition by negation suggests a process of self-construction based on the definition of the 'other' as different, which underscores Europe's assumed superiority as one that is concretized by the denigration of other races. For Hayden White, this self-definition by negation is founded on uncertainty about the identity of the self, which makes it easier to define it by what it is not. As he argues,

[38] See also JanMohamed's *Manichean Aesthetics: The Politics of Literature in Colonial Africa* (1983).

> In the past, when men were uncertain as to the precise quality of their sensed humanity, they appealed to the concept of wildness to designate an area of subhumanity that was characterised by everything they hoped they were not (1978:152).

What remains interesting, though, is the manner in which Europe further appropriated the gaze and the ability to know the Other. Underpinning this was the assumption that the Other – in this case Africans – was incapable of returning the gaze. Dipesh Chakrabarty captures this in his observation that

> Virtually all branches of European knowledge and science have grown with the confident conviction that the world is knowable only through those categories of knowledge developed in Europe – indeed that the world may exist only in and through those categories of European modernity.[39]

Interestingly, the enlightenment project necessitated inducting natives into European cultural and knowledge systems. This lent the natives insights into the worlds of the colonizers, while the colonial structures read native cosmologies predominantly through Eurocentric lenses, which mostly dismissed them as inferior and irrational, without quite mastering the logics underpinning their world-views. Oyono's character, Toundi, alludes to this irony in the quote above, with reference to French colonial Cameroun, where, despite the strict African quarters – European quarters divide, the natives' domestic service in the French quarters allowed them intimate access to and knowledge of the Europeans' lives, while the Europeans remained blind to the natives' real lives, beneath

[39] Dipesh Chakrabarty cited in Priyadharshini, "The Rhetoric of Otherness in the Discourse of Economics" (1999:2).

the mask of servitude. This set up was to a certain degree replicated in the Julie Ward case.

3.2 In the Footsteps of Mr. Kurtz and Baroness Blixen

The three books on the Julie Ward case provide interesting insights into the meaning-making practices that the authors engage in as they narrate the Julie Ward case. Although they belong to the true crime genre – which carries with it claims to certain notions of 'truth' – the books are nonetheless engaged in a process of decoding and encoding available information on the death, and weaving this into a narrative. This process exemplifies Stuart Hall's earlier noted observation that a "raw historical event" cannot be transmitted in that form; it must "become a story before it can become a communicative event" (2002:302). For Hall though, this process is far from technical, as it involves a whole range of cultural and ideological positions which provide lenses through which historical reality is read and represented. These lenses are central to the connotational level of meaning-making, where texts "contract relations with the universe of ideologies in a culture [and] domains of social life, the segmentations of culture, power and ideology are made to signify" (Hall 2002:306).

While Julie Ward's death took place in a Kenya marked by different socio-political realities – close to three decades after the official demise of colonial rule – there are frequent echoes of settler iconography of Kenya(ns) in these novels. The three texts make numerous allusions to an older library of settler fiction on Kenya and Africa in ways that betray their situatedness in British colonial archives. It is in these echoes – and the

outright muting of other archives on Kenya/Africa – that one begins to see how, in Hall's words, the universe of ideologies and culture are made to signify (2002:302) and shape the interpretative lenses through which Julie Ward's death in Kenya is read and written by these authors. As Vron Ware rightly points out, Hiltzik's "evocation of Karen Blixen's *Out of Africa* in his own description of the landscape confirms that colonialism provides the lens through which the mystery of Julie Ward's murder is being viewed, almost thirty years after independence" (1992:130). A similar evocation of colonial history is evident in Gavron's *Darkness in Eden*, as he locates Julie Ward's trip to Kenya in the footsteps of a string of colonial figures:

> Julie Ward was by no means the first traveller to find "Shangri-la" in the grandeur and freedom of Kenya. Early descriptions by the explorers and pioneers of East Africa are peppered with references to paradise and God's own land …. "A veritable land of Goshen", recorded Joseph Thompson in *Through Maasailand*, published in 1885. "Everything", Karen Blixen said, "was made for greatness and freedom, and unequalled nobility". And Elspeth Huxley, who arrived in Kenya in 1913, had this to say of Lord Delamere's first view, in 1897, of what became known as the White Highlands: "Here indeed, he must have thought, was a promised land, the realization of a Rider Haggard dream" (1994: 56).

In his book, *A Death in Kenya: The Murder of Julie Ward*, Michael Hiltzik attempts to piece together Julie Ward's journey on the overland drive across the continent. What is noteworthy here is that in reconstructing the group's journey, Hiltzik superimposes his vision of what they may have seen as they drove across the continent; a vision which

unproblematically embraces the twin tropes of the savage, exotic jungle and its reverse, the socio-political jungle, as the prisms through which he narrates Julie Ward's trip to Kenya and her subsequent death. A blurb on the book's jacket signals these lenses: "This is the heart wrenching, compelling story of the dark secrets hiding under Kenya's haunting beauty … a remarkable journey into the dark side of the Dark Continent". A shadow of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* hovers over this blurb. Gavron's blurb, "a book that shows that in Kenya savagery and beauty can walk side by side", summarizes this bipolar lens.

Both Hiltzik and Gavron deploy a certain 'vacuating' gaze as they sweep across the continent tracing Julie Ward's journey to Maasai Mara. Throughout this trip, they empty the landscapes of both local people and local histories, only selectively seeing the occasional faceless masses and the power-mad politicians. The landscapes are described through the dual lens of their exotic, natural beauty and the accompanying white histories of the spaces on the one hand, and their postcolonial political histories on the other. This vacuation of the land evokes an earlier emptying of the continent, to legitimize its appropriation. Interestingly, in Hiltzik's and Gavron's books, these spaces are not just emptied of local people and their histories; they are also re-mapped with a distinct white colonial history. When the group of travellers crosses into Mali, Gavron picks out the two landmarks, Niger River and Timbuktu, about which he writes

> The truck crossed into Mali and eventually arrived in Timbuctu. *The legendary city of gold and ivory is now a dull, brown, dusty town*, *with little to recommend it apart from its name*. Several hundred years ago the Niger River changed its

> course and stranded the city a dozen miles from its banks. Mungo Park, the great explorer, paddled up the Niger in 1807 and passed Timbuctu without realizing the city lay just beyond a field of sand dunes. Park met his death upstream a few weeks later, in a hail of poisoned arrows. Timbuctu was not a particularly happy city for the Hobo group either and one of the girls had a bad case of sunstroke and had to be tended by Julie for a few days before the truck could carry on (1994: 49; emphasis added).

Despite the reference to its "legendary status", Timbuktu's claim to fame here appears to be that Mungo Park narrowly missed it, and went on to fall into the white man's grave under the locals' poisoned arrows. Over a century later, the tour group battles sunstroke, yet another African peril. It is however the silence on Timbuktu's other histories that is striking here, especially given Timbuktu's architecture and most importantly, its contributions to scholarship for which it lies at the centre of an important written tradition in Africa.

Hiltzik too lingers on the Niger River, reconstructing an incident when the group's truck got stuck halfway across the Niger River:

> The travellers eyed the water around them with deep apprehension, terrified to stay in the listing vehicle, but panicky at the thought of Bilharzia, the parasitic scourge of stagnant African waters. *Bilharzia afflicts people who bathe or drink the water of rivers and lakes throughout sub-Saharan Africa ... in fact hardly a watercourse in Africa is free of the parasite* … In the first hours some of the

> trekkers swore they would live on the truck until it was freed (1991: 28; emphasis added).

Liberally spreading Bilharzia to all the continent's waters in a haughty health panic, Hiltzik writes this incident through the trope of Africa as the white man's grave and the African jungle of disease. John Ward too nursed similar fears over his daughter's journey across what he seemed to consider a den of disease. As he writes in *The Animals are Innocent*,

> Now that Muff had safely reached Nairobi we didn't look for the postman quite so anxiously as before. During her journey through Africa, I think we all had some private fears for her. Mine was illness: typhoid, yellow fever, polio, malaria, hepatitis, cholera. You name it. Africa has it on the illness menu. So, when Muff reached Nairobi unscathed by these awful diseases which can ruin your health for life, I was relieved (Ward 1991:37).

So apprehensive was John Ward about the life-denying living conditions in Africa that when he eventually went to Nairobi, for the first time, Ward remained baffled at the white community's choice to live there:

> I find the life-style of the white population in Nairobi hard to appreciate. In fact, I cannot understand why they choose to live there at all. There are few cultural activities. And there is the constant risk of illness; everyone seems to have had malaria at some time or another and much worse ailments are ever-present (1991:155).

In the three writers' selective re-scripting of the landscape, only the dictators warrant individual mention, thanks to their place in history as familiar shorthand for the failures of the postcolonial African state. As the group drives into central Africa, Hiltzik dons his political commentator's cap and maps out a selective political geography of the various countries. In the Central African Republic, he gives a shrill sermon on President Bokassa's misdeeds, which he describes as "impossibly hideous brutalities in the imperial palace, a caricature of African monstrousness" (1991: 34). Hiltzik dedicates an entire chapter to a sketch of the political topography of Africa, giving a roll-call of countries by their presidents' misdeeds, crowning this with Zaire's Mobutu. Here he juxtaposes the impenetrably dense rain forest with the equally impenetrable political system and chaos of the country. His text selectively maintains a deafening silence regarding colonial violence and postcolonial manipulations in central Africa by hiding these behind the lush rainforests, rare gorillas, and the excesses of the Mobutus and Bokassas of the continent.

But perhaps the most articulate, yet subtle allusion to colonial epistemology with regard to Africa is the picture of Julie Ward hugging a young chimpanzee, which is reproduced on the covers of both Ward's and Hiltzik's books and which almost always graces media reports on the case. The picture was taken when Julie Ward's tour group visited an animal orphanage in Cameroon. Commenting on this aspect of her trip, Hiltzik informs his readers: "In the foothills of Cameroon, *chimps are hunted for their meat in the usual heedless fashion of Africans: the hunters took away the mothers and left their infants to die unnurtured in the bush*" (1991: 34; emphasis added). Julie Ward hugs one such orphan in the picture, as both Gavron and Hiltzik give detailed descriptions of her silent

anger at the hunters. By selecting this as the emblematic photo of Julie Ward after her death, we have a construction of her murderers as typically callous Africans. This is best captured in John Ward's book's title, *The Animals Are Innocent*. At play here are specific cultural epistemologies, especially in the subtle allusions to cannibalism. This allusion harks back to the Western classification of species in biology, coupled with Darwinian thinking on evolution which argues that human beings evolved from primates, and indeed the chimpanzee is a distant cousin. That this is the picture chosen to represent Julie Ward after her death is instructive. Implicit in this picture is the suggestion that, like the chimpanzee's mother, she too fell victim to the predatory violence of Africans.

In all three books, allusions to colonial archives of ideas, books, people and experiences function as what Jack Moore (1984:65) terms "signposts in the wilderness" for the target readership. In drawing on exclusively white, mainly British archives, the texts would seem to be using such familiar histories as an anchor, in the face of the discursive rupture that Julie Ward's murder represents. In this way, the authors overwrite the present instability – where Western modernity has failed to unravel the murder mystery – by summoning preferred histories which impart an illusion of mastery of the continent and her people.

The three books' dependence on a distinct European archive on Africa/ns which betrays echoes of colonial mentalities can further be interpreted as an instance of the return of the repressed in British imaginaries. Indeed it is possible to understand the continued

deployment of ideas drawn from such outdated archives as an indicator that they remain embedded in the European cultural psyche. As Hayden White writes,

> concepts which in an earlier time functioned as components of sustaining cultural myths and as parts of the game of civilization […] have one by one passed into the category of the fictitious; they are identified as manifestations of cultural neurosis and often relegated to the status of mere prejudices. [Yet] the unmasking of such myths as the Wild Man has not always been followed by the banishment of their component concepts, but rather by their interiorisation. For, the dissolution by scientific knowledge of the ignorance which led earlier men to locate their imagined wild men in specific times and places does not necessarily touch the levels of psychic anxiety where such images have their origins (1978:153).

In a Freudian sense then, the discursive rupture of Julie Ward's death, which seemed to collapse all existing assumptions about the sanctity of the tourist; and which remained elusive to the privileged modern institutions and rationality, precipitated deep anxieties, which necessitated not just a summoning of the familiar, but also, it unleashed the racist European cultural unconscious, letting loose hitherto repressed or carefully concealed views about Africa/ns.

Beyond the clichéd stereotyping in these narratives though, perhaps an equally fascinating concern is how these discursive templates tinted the search for the truth behind the mystery of Julie Ward's death. What approaches were embraced in the quest

for her killers and in what ways did these reflect the ideological and cultural configurations discussed in this chapter? With what results?

3.3 Savages Playing Tricks on Modernity: The Maasai Question in the Julie Ward Case

The figure of the 'noble savage' mediates the contours between what Hayden White describes as civilisation and wildness, and the associated couplet of humanity and animality (1978:151). Initially, the ‘wild man’ was associated with backwardness, wildness and failure to comply with the evolutionary march of civilisation, modernity and progress. With greater reckoning of the drawbacks of Western modernity, the 'wild man', now designated 'noble savage,' came to be the receptacle of nostalgic longings for an idealised past. He was transformed into “the ideal model of a free humanity, his presumed attributes made the essence of a lost humanity, and his idealised image used as justification for rebellion against civilisation itself” (White 1978:168). Commenting on this fetishization of the 'noble savage' in the New World, Hayden White notes that significantly, the "idolization of the natives of the New World [as noble savages] occurs only after the conflict between the Europeans and the natives had already been decided and when, therefore, it could no longer hamper the exploitation of the latter by the former" (1978:186). A similar impulse played itself out in Kenya in the case of the Maasai.

The Maasai have enjoyed a longstanding monopoly of the role of East Africa’s ‘noble savages’, which has with time earned them a spot at the centre of the Kenyan tourist

industry. In Kenyan parlance, they are sometimes seen as the sixth attraction after the Big Five – lion, leopard, elephant, buffalo and rhino - which with their inclusion is sometimes referred to as the 'Big Six of Kenya'[40]. The construction of the Maasai as tourist attractions in the region's cultural tourism traces its roots back to early colonial settlement in Kenya, when they were displaced from around the present-day Nairobi area and later the Mara plains were declared state reserves for animal conservation. In the process, the Maasai were pushed out of their ancestral lands and confined to Maasai reserves[41]. But the British were also struck by the Maasai's culture and elegant bodily build, leading to a gradual attempt to conserve them as a tourist attraction too. This process has been continued in post-independence Kenya, and indeed, the Maasai *moran* donning red-checked *shukas*, colourful beads and a long spear are part of the branding of Kenya as a tourist destination, alongside the wildlife and white sands. The emblematic 'noble savages', believed to have successfully resisted Western modernity have now become an iconic marker of Kenya, the tourist paradise.

These are the kinds of 'noble savages' the British had in mind in the course of their investigations into Ward's death. As John Ward describes them on his first trip to the Mara in search of his daughter, before her remains were found:

> In this part of Kenya [Narok region] the Maasai tribesmen are nomadic. They graze their few cattle on the dry grass of the plain, building themselves a temporary hut surrounded by a corral into which the cattle are herded at the end of

[40] I am grateful to Florence Sipalla for drawing my attention to this epithet in Kenyan parlance.
[41] See Parselelo Kantai's "In the Grip of the Vampire State: Maasai Land Struggles in Kenyan Politics" (2007) and Fr. John Anthony Kaiser's *If I Die* (2003) for detailed discussions of the displacement of the Maasai from present day Laikipia region.

> each day. [...] When an area is grazed out, the Maasai move on a few miles further, to where the grass is longer. The Maasai have been living this life since time began. *I found it unreal that only that morning I had stepped off one of the latest and most advanced jet aircraft in the world and here I was, that same afternoon, looking at a race of people for whom time had stood still* (1991:62, emphasis added).

Ward's observations here reproduce the 'noble savage' understanding of the Maasai while simultaneously partaking in a process started decades earlier by the British colonialists: the fossilisation of the Maasai as a people for whom "time had stood still"; people who had resisted modernity. Similar assumptions filter through in Gavron's and Hiltzik's narratives, where one notices a constant attempt to represent the Maasai as harmless 'noble savages', while blame is laid at the doorstep of state officials including the various police officers and the park employees. On this same trip, as Ward and Glen Burns search for Julie Ward, Ward writes:

> Whenever we saw a *manyatta* (corral) within sight of the road, we went to take a look. 'It's not really worth looking', said Glen. 'If the Maasai had found her she would be safe. They are a gentle people and would respect a woman and made sure she came to no harm'. Just the same I made sure we looked (1991:62).

A telling aspect here is the fact that in all the three books, it is only after Julie Ward's death that ordinary Africans are identified by name, primarily in connection to the case. In a sense, they gain visibility in her death.

The stereotyping of the Maasai in the three books is interesting, as the three Maasai Mara employees who faced trials for the murder of Julie Ward were Maasai. However, all the texts on the case mute their conventional Maasai identity as per the colonial archives, as 'noble savages', and choose to see them as civil servants, rather than *Maasai* civil servants. This is chiefly because the image of the postcolonial African state as inefficient, apathy-ridden and corrupt is the polar opposite of the image of the 'noble savages' who have successfully resisted the march of modernity. In some ways, this selective scripting betrays attempts to preserve the romantic image of the Maasai-as-noble-savages, by displacing any suspected misdeeds of individual Maasai on their other identities as players in a post-colonial state, implicitly gesturing at the corrupting impacts of modernity.

In the Ward case, this assumption represented one of the instances of cultural illiteracies of the British investigating team. As the investigations unfolded, the predominantly Maasai staff of the park observed what Vron Ware (1992:133) has described as a mafia-like code of silence, obstinately refusing to volunteer any information or to be witnesses. In the course of investigations, two junior wardens from the reserve, Peter Kipeen and John Magiroi were tried and acquitted for the murder in 1992. Seven years later, the chief warden of the reserve, Simon Makallah was fingered as a suspect, tried and acquitted. The three men were all from the Maasai ethnic group. Ward and his investigating team of Scotland Yard detectives seemed to be unschooled in the nuances of social capital and patronage relationships in Kenya as played out among the Maasai linked to the game reserve and the state at large. Ward inadvertently reveals this, in his

book, while commenting on the investigating police officer, Muchiri Wanjau, whom he considered inept:

> The Maasai Mara is a difficult place in which to operate. Much later it was described to me as a "private kingdom," and in many ways it is. The Maasai tribe, who almost exclusively make up the rangers of the Maasai Mara, are a close-knit community. … The Maasai family network is very strong. A family member, no matter how remote, is always known and supported. Indeed, there is a tribal obligation to do so. Wanjau is not a Maasai and is therefore treated with nearly as much suspicion as I am in the kingdom of the Mara (Ward 1991:94).

Although Ward picked up the fact that over ninety per cent of the staff at the Maasai Mara were Maasai, his interpretation of this reads it as a display of 'tribal' bonds, in keeping with the dictates of Maasai culture. While this was indeed the case, it went beyond tribal bonds: in this instance, it was a complex mixture of patronage politics and the accompanying social networks. What is interesting for us is that Ward failed to realize that under these circumstances, the modern legal processes that were privileged in the case were at odds with these patronage relations and its grip on the Maasai employees of the park, and the Maasai villagers, in terms of senses of loyalty and aligned interests and what this implied for the case. At play here was the same cynicism towards modern state institutions, as the cynicism displayed by the rumours about the involvement of highly placed political figures in Ward's death. In this environment, where the promises of modernity flowed along patronage networks, an instinct of self-preservation coupled with the lack of credibility of the state apparatuses meant that the Maasai employees of the

park had to choose between Ward and the police on one hand and their immediate workmates and colleagues on the other.

For Vron Ware, part of the problem here arose from the fact that the Maasai live outside of modernity and its rationale-based civilization. Ware is right about the difficulty of engaging with the Maasai along the dictates of a rationale-based modernity, through the formal legal processes. However, she too falls for the Maasai mask of 'relics of primordial history, who have successfully resisted modernity,' which, in many senses, is just that: a convenient mask that often comes in handy. In reality, quite apart from seemingly not subscribing to the kinds of legal rationalities that govern criminal law in Kenya, these particular Maasai were faced with a choice between co-operating with the 'law' in favour of 'the British' and protecting their tribal kin, who were part of their immediate social network and likely to do them a good turn, when they needed it.

While Maasai literacy levels remain one of the lowest of any ethnic community in Kenya; and indeed, while it is true that they seem to have resisted modernity (or been deliberately fossilized as having resisted modernity), the Maasai were not entirely ignorant of what was at stake in the case. To assume so, as Ware does, is (inadvertently or otherwise) to embrace the ubiquitous colonial assumptions about native intellectual capacities. In fact, the Maasai, despite their illiteracy, have been awake to the various nuances of their commoditisation as noble savages and the goldmine that cultural tourism has become in Kenya and they have cashed in on this in many ways, ranging from travelling to the West (and lately South Africa) as cultural ambassadors, charging tourists for taking their

photographs and concocting non-existent customs to gratify tourists' desire for the exotic,[42] all the way to extreme cases of marrying the more adventurous tourists (mainly white women) and performing rituals to install equally adventurous white men as 'elders' in the tribe. One Maasai 'traditional dancer' Johnson Pesi shares an inside view of this Maasai shrewdness:

> There is not much exchange between us [and tourists]. We don't tell the tourists about our culture, and they don't tell us about theirs. We don't sell them what we own: we make them something similar to what we own, especially to be sold. The songs we sing are not the real songs that we sing during our own ceremonies, so they don't affect our culture. It's just a fake thing for tourists. I am dressed as a *moran* (Maasai warrior). But I'm not yet a *moran*; I'm preparing to become one (Sayer 1998:63).

Pesi's contention about the creation of new artefacts, songs and dances for tourist consumption speaks to Mary Louise Pratt's idea of autoethnography. Pratt uses this term to refer to "instances in which colonized subjects undertake to represent themselves in ways that engage with the colonizer's own terms" (1992:7). As she writes, "if ethnographic texts are a means by which Europeans represent to themselves their (usually subjugated) others, autoethnographic texts are those the others construct in response to or in dialogue with those metropolitan representations" (1992:7).

In keeping with this trend, the Maasai Mara's employees were later to enact a variety of subtle, yet distinctive forms of passive resistance in their total refusal to in any way co-

[42] This has become a thriving profession, increasingly featuring fake Maasais spinning fantastic mélanges of Maasai cultural practices, in true Kenyan entrepreneurial spirit.

operate with or support investigations into the murder. Where earlier he would be accorded tourist-status with the requisite gratification of his every whim (Ward 1991: 125), John Ward was now treated as an unwanted enemy by the staff at Maasai Mara, and soon found himself facing layers of petty resistance, which included refusals to make transport and drivers available, and even to guide him to the spot where his daughter's remains had been found, as he went about his investigations. The investigating police officer in charge of the case, Muchiri Wanjau, finds himself in a similar position:

> 'It's almost impossible for me to work in the Masai Mara now […] The rangers will not help us and I have to take police vehicles from Nairobi because they will not let us use theirs' (Ward 1991:189).

In view of these instances of Maasai shrewdness we begin to realize that in some senses, the 'noble savages' may not have been as ignorant as popular assumptions led Ward and his team to believe. Indeed, the possibility that their identity as 'noble savages' provided a convenient mask behind which to enact their passive resistance and stem the imminent possibility of one of their own being punished for the crime looms large. In this, the Maasai would easily resist any attempts to secure their co-operation. So the scripting of the Maasai as a majestic tourist attraction of noble savages who have successfully resisted the destructive effects of modernity falls apart in the case of these particular Maasai who were masters of inscrutability and were clearly very rational actors in this game, despite their assumed illiteracy in the conventions of modern legal practice. In all this, John Ward's team's unfamiliarity with these subtle nuances of informal local textures, values

and socio-political imperatives created a hurdle that proved difficult to navigate in the quest for the killer(s).

3.4 Playing Hide and Seek with the Master's Truths: Double Realities and *Trompes des oeils*[43] in the Julie Ward Case

The West has always presented itself as the womb of originary modernity, a view sustained by the assumption that "as a construct of the enlightenment, modernity is a European project" (Zack-Williams 2004:20). This modernity is often taken to signal progress that is assumed to be worth aspiring to, for all societies. The investigations into Julie Ward's death in Kenya, framed around the instruments and values of Western modernity and filtered through circulating discourses about the typical postcolonial African state, were however faced with instances of inscrutability, coupled with subversive performances of these circulating discourses.

In conducting his investigations, John Ward was operating with idealistic assumptions about state institutions and their responsibilities to the citizenry; suppositions which were thwarted time and again in his dealings with them. Unfamiliar with state institutional practices in Kenya, he was proceeding from assumptions, which, though applicable on paper, were redundant in the actual practice of governance in most Kenyan state institutions. The first obstacle came at the point of the post-mortem process, which is a

[43] I am using this phrase in its original sense, to mean acts of window-dressing. See also Jean-François Bayart's, "Africa in the World: A History of Extraversion" (2000). Bayart identifies this as an important feature in the political lexicon of the African state, which has historically been used to 'perform compliance' with Western dictates, and thus preserve relations with the West. Although Bayart uses it in relation to donor-Africa relations, I find the phrase equally apt in understanding acts of 'window-dressing' that were performed by Kenyan institutions in the search for Julie's killers.

fairly reliable scientific tool for determining time and manner of death. Although the first autopsy conducted by the police pathologist Dr. Adel Shaker revealed that the remains had been severed with a sharp instrument, the report was allegedly altered by the Chief Government Pathologist Dr. Jason Kaviti.

For John Ward, this was a deplorable act, as it was unheard of for a doctor to alter a colleague's report (Ward 1991:119). In response, Ward, accompanied by an official from the British High Commission in Kenya, sought out Dr. Adel Shaker, expecting that Dr. Shaker would obviously stand by his earlier report. Again they lacked an understanding of the workings of state power in Kenya and the lengths to which certain individuals were willing to go to ensure that the preferred versions of truths were legitimized. Soon after, they found that Dr. Shaker was totally cowered and afraid to be seen talking to them. He was an Egyptian Coptic who had sought asylum in Kenya from religious persecution in Egypt. This refugee status provided the government with significant leverage in persuading him to reconsider his earlier post-mortem report and his co-operation with John Ward. For good measure, this was coupled with a framed accusation of corruption which the police department used as a trump card and a latent threat of criminal prosecution which could be activated at will (Ward 1991).

In the course of his investigations, John Ward constantly came up against walls of resistance from state institutions. After the remains were found, the Police Commissioner, Phillip Kilonzo was reluctant to open a murder case and insisted that they were not looking at a murder (Ward 1991:111). Later on, with the altered autopsy report, there was

an inquest to establish the cause of death, despite the fact that the first post-mortem report had returned with a verdict that suggested murder; a view that was later confirmed by a second pathologist, Professor Austin Gresham. The refusal to admit that this was a murder case and pushing for an inquest was a strategic delaying tactic. It further served to lengthen the process of searching for the truths behind Julie Ward's death. This was a classic example of what James Scott (1985) has termed "weapons of the weak", in this case in the shape of foot-dragging, which allowed Kenya to maintain amiable diplomatic relations with the British, while still playing for time and doing it their way.

As investigations unfolded, John Ward found himself succumbing to local ways of doing things, although, as luck would have it, he trapped himself in them. At one point, he needed to follow a possible lead across the border into neighbouring Tanzania. The person in question was on a four-day tour of Mt. Kilimanjaro and Ward wanted to meet him the same day. However, there was a slight complication with the international flight permit which his chartered pilot had to apply for from the Department of Aviation, a process that required seven day's notice, but could be 'hastened' for a fee, he was informed. To speed up the process, Ward successfully bribed the airport official to facilitate his flight clearance, imagining himself to have mastered how things worked in Kenya. Ward however, made the mistake of including this encounter in his book, *The Animals Are Innocent* (185-7), where he used it to illustrate his conviction about the rampant corruption, inefficiency and weak public service delivery practices in Kenya, forgetting that, by the dictates of the formal legal systems – to which he subscribed – this was a written admission of corruption. This incident was later to be used by Simon

Makallah's defence lawyers in court during the murder trial against Makallah in 1999, to question Ward's credibility as a witness, suggesting that his evidence was questionable, given this dishonesty[44].

Interestingly, both Ward and the British investigators oscillated between expectations about how state bureaucracy should run and assumptions about failures of the African state in the shape of inefficiency and petty corruption. However, their main weakness was in failing to manage this ambivalence creatively to push the case. In the end they unwittingly strengthened the Kenyan case in the legal arenas, as various parties were able to latch on to circulating discourses about Kenya and use these to free themselves from stickier charges. These circulating assumptions about Kenya and Africa provided convenient props which would seem to have worked to further mask certain truths, even though the British stakeholders mistakenly took these assumptions to be useful insights in making sense of various people's behaviour.

The first instance of this relates to the motive behind the state cover-up. Conventional wisdom about the centrality of the tourist industry to the Kenyan economy was later to provide a useful way of explaining the seemingly concerted efforts of Kenyan state institutions to cover up the facts of the case, or to favour the view that it was an accidental death rather than a murder. In working with these assumptions, both the British and John Ward were rationalizing these cover-ups in ways that sought to see a logic behind the state's actions that was persuasive within their scheme of thought. For the local populace and for anybody familiar with the Moi regime's ingenious imagination in

[44] Mulaa "I bribed government official, admits father" *Daily Nation,* 10 April 1999.

such matters, however, the theory of protecting the tourism industry had less purchase than the need to protect certain politically connected individuals who may have been implicated in the murder.

The second instance played on ideas of the corrupt African state. The centrality of corruption as a definitive feature of African state institutions in Western imaginaries and the practices of stakeholders in these institutions was strategically used to shield the various witnesses against more serious accusations. Two examples illustrate this. In the first case, the Chief Game Warden Simon Makallah, who was a witness and a prime suspect, lied in court about his ability to drive. Ward's legal team had created a profile of the chief suspect, as someone who was both totally familiar with the park and who had enough control over its staff to allow him access to all of its corners without too many questions being asked (Ward 1991:271). This profile fitted the Mara Chief Warden at the time, Simon Makallah. In the witness stand, Makallah had made a possibly incriminating observation that if Julie Ward's jeep had had a four-wheel drive, it would not have stuck in the gully where it was later found. This proved to be dangerous information, for, being a jeep of a make which ordinarily came with a four-wheel drive function, the prosecution argued, Makallah had to be more familiar with this particular jeep than he was letting on, to know that this particular jeep's four-wheel drive was not functioning, which suggested that he must have driven the vehicle at some point. However, to this accusation Makallah swore that he was unable to drive, claiming that he did not have a driver's licence. When several witnesses testified about his ability to drive – in fact he had driven John Ward on more than one occasion, to the site of the remains, as Ward conducted his investigations

in the Mara – Makallah eventually confessed that he had lied because the Narok County Council was strictly against park officials driving park vehicles without drivers' licences, and so he was lying to protect himself against any disciplinary action from the Council and not necessarily because he had driven Julie Ward's jeep at some point[45]. This argument did not exactly explain how he knew that this jeep's four-wheel drive was not functioning, but it certainly lightened the suspicion against him.

The second instance involved David Nchoko, the clerk on gate duty at the Mara's Sand River Gate on the day Julie Ward supposedly drove out of the reserve. Nchoko had entered Julie Ward's details in the gate register and signed against her name to make it appear that she had signed herself out of the game reserve (Ward 1991: 178; 204). However, close scrutiny revealed that Julie Ward's signature was forged. Initially, Nchoko remained adamant that Julie Ward had signed herself out and left the Mara, which also happened to be the official story. After handwriting experts confirmed that that was not Julie Ward's handwriting , Nchoko admitted that actually, he had made the entry and signed against Julie Ward's name afterwards, not because he wanted to create the impression that she had left the Mara when he knew she had not, but because he had forgotten to give her the register to sign when she was leaving and since she had already left, he was forced to sign on her behalf to save himself from possible disciplinary action for lacking vigilance in his work (Ward 1991: 249-51). This was yet another fabrication, which, though revealing Nchoko to be a dishonest gate-keeper, deflected the logic from the possibility that he may have faked Julie Ward's exit to give the impression that she

[45] See Judge DKS Aganyanya's judgement, Case no 55 of 1988 Republic of Kenya vs. Simon Basha ole Makalla, delivered on 17 September 1999 p.32-4.

had left the Mara, because he knew what had happened to her before it became public knowledge. Thus, to the end, he remained adamant that she had actually left. So, both Makallah and Nchoko were able to seize existing ideas about the inefficiency, corruption and dishonesty of the civil servants, and African state institutions as a whole and use these to shield themselves from the far worse accusations of complicity in murder. These defences seemed persuasive in the courtroom, based on this already circulating knowledge.

Through the court case, as it unfolded, certain strands of local realities, behaviours and what had come to be accepted as common informal cultural practices in contemporary Kenya were used in court and became admissible as legitimate arguments validated by codes of behaviour that have over time been accepted as cultural common-senses of the typical postcolonial African state. It is against this background that Nchoko could credibly explain away his overlooking several receipts in the Maasai Mara receipt books as a mere case of forgetting, or at worst petty fraud, a crime which pales into insignificance besides the accusations of murder or being an accomplice to murder.

3.5 Conclusion

Toundi's description of the transparency of the European quarters to the natives' gaze and the accompanying blindness of the Europeans to the going-ons in the lives of the natives captures the notion of cultural illiteracy in the Julie Ward case, and the ways in which the illusion of exclusive control of the gaze blinded Ward and his investigators, just as in *Houseboy*, the French colonial administrators presumed themselves to be in control of

native surveillance, while they remained opaque to the native gaze when the converse was the reality.

Julie Ward's presence in Kenya and the subsequent quest for her killers was framed within a circulating archive of ideas on Kenya and Africa. Primary among these ideas were notions of the pure wilderness, noble savages and, at the other extreme, the corrupt African state and its inefficient bureaucracies. The persistence of these ideas in the three writers' imaginations, as the lenses through which Africa is interpreted gestures towards a certain return of the repressed in the Anglo-American psyche, since, despite tremendous transformations in African societies, they continue to be interpreted through these lenses. In the Julie Ward case, predictably, these ideas lacked relevance in accessing local textualities and the dual universe of what Bayart (2000) calls "the visible and the invisible" that was at play in Kenya. Where mainstream understandings of African tourism and indeed the colonial archive cast Africans as the spectacle, the object of the gaze, ultimately transparent to the instruments of Western modernity, in reality, they are complex subjects, who have mastered both the gaze that constructs them and the accompanying premises of these constructions, and have been able to navigate their way around Western modernity, as master tricksters, playing hide and seek in the terrain of epistemological disarticulation that attended colonial modernity.

4 CHAPTER FOUR: Interrogating Modernity's Legacy in the Postcolonial State: Julie Ward's Death and the Kenyan Grapevine

> If the African crisis now seems to be mapped out as the failure of modern categories, ideas and institutions in the history of Africa (Mamdani 1996; Geschiere 1997), it is precisely because modernity and modernization were the cornerstones on which the promise of nationalism was built (Simon Gikandi 2002:142).

4.1 Introduction

Commenting on rumours and allegations which fingered a certain unnamed individual as having been involved in his daughter's death, Ward writes in *The Animals are Innocent*

> I have received more than a dozen unsigned messages and anonymous telephone calls naming the man who, the informants claim, is responsible for Julie's murder. During his short time in Nairobi, [Scotland Yard detective] Graham received a couple of these calls too. No one has presented a shred of hard evidence to support these allegations and, more meaningfully for Kenya, none of the informants has sought to claim the reward. Possibly the information comes from people with a political axe to grind. Like Graham, I must dismiss such accusations – until provided with some proof (1991: 386).

Ward goes on to concede that the involvement of such a figure would explain why the Kenyan authorities went to such trouble and expense to orchestrate the cover-up. As he ponders "would they really do all that just to save a couple of murdering park rangers who they would obviously be better rid of? This kind of protection is only afforded to someone with great influence" (1991: 386). Despite this line of thought, Ward seems to have stuck to his resolve to "dismiss such accusations until provided with some proof".

Although on the surface the rumours and allegations on Julie Ward's death appeared to be primarily interested in incriminating what was perceived to be criminal political elite, as discussed in Chapter Two, at another level, these rumours were also a commentary on the privileging of legal truths produced in the modern state institutions. This chapter reflects on this second dimension of the rumours. In this chapter, I suggest that while the Julie Ward case was formally prosecuted within the Kenyan and British legal systems, a parallel prosecution was unfolding among the various publics constituted by the case, which appropriated available information from various sources on the case, and reached their own verdicts[46]. These parallel courts had radically different senses of what constituted evidence, in which logic and credibility along with a range of social truths and assumptions became the central principles as opposed to the conventional understanding of evidence as corroborated facts in the formal legal systems.

The chapter suggests that the rumours on Julie Ward's death, and particularly their fascination with the involvement of political elites provided a remarkable, albeit cynical admonition against the privileging of so-called rational/legal truths in the case. To a certain degree, the chapter argues, the rumours were also a critique of the legacies of modernity in Africa. If one considers Frederick Cooper's (2002:156) argument that the post-independent African state was built on "a set of institutions – bureaucracies, militaries, post offices and (initially) legislatures – set up by colonial regimes", then in their critiques of the Kenyan state institutions as ill-suited to the Ward family's quest for

[46] I borrow this idea of the Ward case constituting publics which arrived at their own verdicts from Cohen and Odhiambo (1992), who in their discussion of the S.M Otieno burial saga in Kenya argue that the case constituted various publics who followed the case closely and had their own views on it. Our case however differs chiefly on the basis of the contestation of the legal investigation, and offering alternative readings.

truth and justice, the rumours were also critiques of postcolonial manifestations of colonial modernity's selective distribution of the privileges of modernity.

4.2 The Paradoxes of Modernity in Africa

Urban theorist Jennifer Robinson points out that "accounts of modernity have commonly described the modern era or modern people as having a sense of historical time and space, and as drawing on a rationalist understanding of events to inform inventiveness and progress" (2006:13). Yet, the experience of modernity and by extension, urbanization in Africa, is often understood to have been deeply marked by ambivalence, as signaled by the "resistance to [and] selective appropriation of, modernity" (Macamo 2005: 3). Following Jean and John Comaroff (1993) and Luise White (1995), Macamo sees this as one of the ways in which Africans continue to resist the conditions and terms of their integration into the wider world. He situates this ambivalence in the colonial experience. For him,

> Colonialism was the historical form through which modernity became a real social project on the African continent [yet] colonialism was premised on the denial of the same modernity to Africans [including] human dignity, emancipation and progress. [Thus] African social experience has been structured by the ambivalence of promise and denial that was constitutive of colonialism and, indeed, as we move into what some call a global era, of globalization (2005:8).

Simon Gikandi shares this view, in his argument that "colonial modernity dislocated the African subject by propagating its tenets as a universal model, while at the same time

denying Africans, on political and social grounds, the possibility of its realization" (cited in Deutsch *et al* 13).

Underpinning this promise-denial encounter is a distinct conceptual history which situates an originary modernity in the West, based on the belief that "as a construct of the enlightenment, modernity is a European project" (Zack-Williams 2004:20). Yet, as Deutsch *et al* write

> While agreeing that the conceptual differentiation between knowledge and experience, story and history, morality and law is the product of a specific historical process which became dominant in Europe sometime between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it is equally clear that this process has received its own shape and its own dynamics in other parts of the world (2002:3).

For Robinson, one effect of this association of Europe with an originary modernity is understandings of "the embrace of novelty as 'innovative' in Western contexts but 'imitative' in others" including Africa (2006:66). She questions Europe's claim to an originary modernity, as for her, "the very [cultural] promiscuity of Western modernity itself proposes a different, cosmopolitan cartography of modernity, one in which origins are dispersed, outcomes differentiated and multiple and the spatial logics those of circulation and interaction" (2006:19). Instead, she defines urban modernity as "the cultural experience of contemporary city life […] and celebration of innovation and novelty" (2006:4).

In addition to seeing 'modernity' through a hierarchical lens, modernization theories have often emphasized the tension between 'tradition' and 'modernity' within a conceptual framework that sees them as mutually exclusive. This view sustains rigid polarizations between the rural and urban, tradition and modernity, further cementing associations of tradition with notions of the 'primitive', 'backward' and 'irrational'. As Comaroff and Comaroff note:

> The self-sustaining antinomy between tradition and modernity underpins a long-standing European myth: a narrative that replaces the uneven, protean relations among "ourselves" and "others" in world history with a simple, epic story about the passage from savagery to civilization, from the mystical to the mundane (1993: xii).

Yet, as Robinson rightly argues, far from being mutually exclusive, there are in fact strong continuities between these sets of geo-discursive tropes, so that 'traditional' cultural elements are best seen as "dynamic processes at work within the urban social system rather than vestiges from a tribal past" (2006:38, citing Epstein 239).

In their encounter with the promise/denial dimension of colonial modernity, Africans developed resourceful strategies in negotiating this unstable terrain and its accompanying polarizations. In the Kenyan context, Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *The River Between* is an engaging portrait of such creative engagements among the colonial-era Gikuyu. In the novel, where two sections of the community are pitted against each other in a sharp binary between traditional practices and formal education and Christianity, Waiyaki and Muthoni's deaths can be seen to seed the spirit that was later to germinate into Gikuyu

independent churches and schools as forms of creative alternatives to the sterile tradition/modernity binary. Similar binary-defying engagements with colonial modernity were widespread across the continent, as suggested by encounters with literacy (Barber 2006), Christianity (Saute 2005), migrant labour (Macamo 2005) and modern masculinities (Hodgson 1999), through which people forged new and dynamic repertoires of African modernities. Through similar processes, for Francis Nyamnjoh, postcolonial-era Africans are daily "modernizing the indigenous and indigenizing the modern with novel outcomes" (2005:4).

It is this resourcefulness that Joyce Nyairo alludes to in her metaphor of the *Jua Kali*[47] artisan, whom she reads as signaling an ethos of change as the driving force of contemporary African societies through a constant "flux of revisions [which] signal traditions and identities that are always in the making" (2007:147). Although it is hard to detach the *Jua Kali* worker -- who works under harsh conditions in the 'hot sun' -- from urban poverty, such artisans nonetheless epitomize the resilience, creativity and dynamism that have emerged as responses to the paradoxes of the promise/denial dimension of modernity, which continue to play themselves out in postcolonial African states and, most visibly, African cities.

In view of this, rumour may be seen as an important genre of African modernity, which epitomizes *Jua Kali*-style innovative energies while at the same time critiquing the officially-proclaimed rationality of postcolonial state institutions and their reproduction

[47] *Jua Kali*, Swahili for "harsh sun," is a Kenyan idiom referring to the informal sector which mainly makes use of metal, wood and clothe; and whose workers often work under sheds, with limited resources and exposed to the elements.

of the colonial-era promise/denial tensions related to imported modernities. This chapter offers a reading of reported rumours about Julie Ward's death in Kenya. I suggest that, in creatively drawing on and adding to existing Kenyan social imaginaries, the rumours about the Julie Ward case challenge the assumptions of modernization theories which, as Macamo notes, not only emphasize the tensions between modernity and tradition, but further contend that "the challenge facing African societies consist[s] in overcoming tradition in order to gain access to the benefits of modernity" (2005:2). When the process of law failed to provide convincing answers to questions about Julie Ward's death, the parallel 'courtrooms' of the grapevine reached their own credible verdicts, which were able to fill in the gaps left by the failed legal processes in the state institutions. In a case which displayed uncompromising privileging of monolithic truths, the rumours on Julie Ward's death appeared to interrogate the viability of such a quest under the Kenyan socio-political climate of the time, where state institutions had lost all credibility.

4.3 Mapping the Julie Ward Grapevine

DiFonzo and Bordia's observation that rumours arise when information is not available or when information sources are not trusted (2007:30) holds true in the Julie Ward murder case. As earlier noted, official attempts to frame Julie Ward's death as an act of God -- suicide, attacks by wild animals or lightning -- were read as suspicious, suggesting a state with its own preferred truth(s), and grapevines across the country sought to make sense of the official interest in placing Ward's death beyond human culpability. As official investigations into Julie Ward's death were going on in Kenyan and British courtrooms, the case captured the popular imagination across Kenya, resulting in parallel

'trials' in informal discursive terrains. Through interpretations of media reports, hearsay, court verdicts and state officials' comments, available information and the accompanying silences were woven into verdicts which found their way into the yellow press and mainstream media, and back again to the spaces of allegation and speculation.

Traditionally associated with oral cultures, rumour is a highly ephemeral medium. However, rumours about Julie Ward's death have found their way into the printed page over the years, largely through newspaper reports -- both local and international -- and anonymous calls and notes addressed to her father, John Ward, who later wrote about them in *The Animals are Innocent: The Search for Julie's Killers* (1991). This chapter mainly relies on these written (i.e. rephrased and 'translated') records of the rumours on the case, contained in the Kenyan print media of the 1990s.

As outlined in Chapter two, the rumours on Julie Ward's death were very much embedded in, and indeed a response to, the socio-political climate of the time, during the repressive Moi regime in the 1980s and 1990s. In this socio-political climate, the relationship between the state and the citizenry was one of mutual paranoia. On the citizenry's part, this was accompanied by a general suspicion of both the state institutions and state-owned media as tools of propaganda, and independent media as (self-)censored. The process by which the Julie Ward death was absorbed into social discourse as an avenue for discussing a whole range of social, political concerns can be seen to illustrate what Cohen and Odhiambo have called the production of culture,[48] in a slightly different

[48] The two historians discuss this with reference to the saga of burying S.M. Otieno. In their text, they argue that the case resulted in a complex process of re-writing culture through the insertion, adaptation and even

context. Thus, the Julie Ward death provided a forum for engaging with issues of race, power and even sexuality through the rumours and allegations.

For Atieno Odhiambo (1987) rumour-mongering is one of the informal oppositional institutions in Kenya, which grant the ordinary *mwananchi* (citizen) a democratic space to express various forms of socio-political consciousness. Odhiambo historicizes these forms as alternative avenues that grow in the vacuum left by the criminalization of organized oppositional politics (what one might call an institutionally recognized public sphere) on the one hand, and the conscription of state institutions in the service of a select political agenda, on the other. In a sense, one sees in rumours an active process of interpreting, decoding and encoding socio-political discourses in Kenya. In such contexts, where formal media are either co-opted or censored, other informal spaces emerge as local variants of what Habermas calls the public sphere.

Within the Kenyan sociosphere, various institutions serve this purpose, ranging from the arts and the media institutions to the yellow press, to such alternative spaces such as football matches, bars and political rallies. Where Haugerud (1995) sees *barazas* (semi-official public deliberation fora) as a forum predominantly used in the performance of power, Odhiambo (1987) broadens this platform to include *matatus* (public minibuses), churches, soccer and rugby matches, *harambees* (fundraisers), funerals and bars as spaces which constitute the public sphere; spaces where parallel court trials were run to

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alteration of various Luo customs to suit the two contending side's cases – the Umira Kager clan and the widow, Wambui Otieno. In the larger Kenyan context, the case provoked debates all over the country, regarding issues such as death, the place of widows in the burial process and notions of home. See Cohen and Odhiambo *Burying S.M.Otieno: The Politics of Knowledge and the Sociology of Power in Africa* (1992).

deliberate on the Julie Ward case. In these spaces, rumour or what Stephen Ellis (1989) terms "pavement radio" occupies an authoritative position, to a certain degree substituting the compromised formal media as a legitimate source of information (Odhiambo 1987). Such alternative spaces are also sites of establishing interaction across the rural/urban, literacy, class and generational divides. In these interactive zones, rumours diffuse rapidly as people mirror the *Jua Kali* artisan's eclecticism in actively drawing on various information archives including formal media, personal opinion and social imaginaries, to further re-interpret, update, revise and reinforce variants of orally-transmitted narratives in a dynamic but chaotic web of circulation.

The 1980s - 1990s in Kenya was also a period when the Kenyan press was at the forefront of the struggle for democracy. However, it was still a fairly censored space. This censorship mainly came in form of self-censorship, as, even while increasing the media freedom, the Moi regime often silently threatened libel suits as a deterrent. In a case with scant legally-admissible evidence to legitimize speculation and rumours, it is possible that the media practiced extra caution in its reportage of the allegations, often signposting them as rumours. Despite this, the reported rumours remain relevant to our purposes not only because of their consistency and the recurrence of specific motifs, but also in the way such rumours tease out questions about the epistemological embeddedness of notions of truth and legitimacy of information. In this sense, while the possibility of fictionalization – for whatever range of reasons – attaches to the process of reporting the Julie Ward rumours, it may also serve to underscore rumour's elasticity as a constantly morphing medium, which remains elusive and multivalent even in the face of

the seeming power of writing to pin down meaning. It is arguable that the shapes taken on in the press by the reported 'grapevine narratives' yield insights into the ways in which rumour articulates a critique of state institutions and official rationality.

After Julie Ward's death, there were anonymous calls and notes addressed to Julie Ward's father. Describing these messages in *The Animals are Innocent,* Ward writes:

> Throughout the two-and-a-half year investigation, two other accusations have constantly surfaced, always anonymously. One concerns the son of a very highly placed government official. Rumours of his alleged previous record of rape continue to reach my ears, as do his frequent releases from custody, once the police realize who they have picked up. His association with Maasai Mara and Keekorok are constantly mentioned. I have received more than a dozen unsigned messages and anonymous telephone calls naming the man who, the informants claim, is responsible for Julie's murder […]. The other information frequently passed concerns drugs. Julie is reported to have stumbled across people engaged in a transfer of drugs, brought over the wide-open border between Tanzania and Kenya. The information comes from a variety of sources and over a long period of time (1991: 386).

A second set of allegations took the form of accounts by people who claimed to have witnessed the murder. Among these was Valentine Kodipo, a Kenyan exile in Denmark who claimed to be a renegade of "an elite gang which carried out political torture and

murder missions in the country" (Correspondent 1996: 4). According to Kodipo, Julie Ward :

> May have sealed her fate after stumbling across one of the secret training camps used by the death squads hidden in the Maasai Mara Game reserve. […] Everyone in the group was whipping her with hippo hide whips and shouting questions at her about her movements and what she knew about them. They thought she had been spying on them (Correspondent 1996: 4).

As part of his duties, Kodipo claims to have been sent on spy duty in Tanzania in 1983, after the failed 1982 coup. This facet of Kodipo's story was striking in its approximation of the arrest of the alleged coup masterminds. Indeed, the coup suspects had escaped to neighbouring Tanzania as political exiles. They are said to have been kidnapped at gunpoint by a joint Kenya-Tanzania paramilitary team and brought back to Kenya to hang (Citizens for Justice, 2003). This piece of evidence doubtless lent further validity to Kodipo's claims in the eyes of the public, despite the state's insistence that Kodipo was a fraud on the grounds that the state archives had no record of his military service.

The second 'eye-witness' is Big Muhammad a.k.a. Big Mo, a Kenyan exile in London, who also claimed to be a paramilitary renegade:

> I have either witnessed or been part of terrible evil things in Kenya. I was just doing what I was trained to do: KILL for the state. I was trained in Israel and

> Libya. […] I am a really dangerous man. A vicious killing machine[49] (Wa Njenga, 2).

Big Mo claims to have witnessed Julie Ward being gang-raped and killed by three unnamed politically powerful individuals from the Moi regime. According to him, the murder started out as a rape:

> After the rape, they discovered that in her possession she had sensitive information which suggested she was no ordinary tourist. They concluded that she was a British secret agent on a mission in Kenya and that assumption sealed her fate. Julie Ward was then forced to drive her jeep miles from where she was staying in an effort to make it appear that she had gotten lost. She was then blindfolded and dragged into a thicket where she was butchered. […] They wanted the murder to appear as if Ms Ward had been attacked by wild animals but they quickly realised that they had left hair, fabrics, semen and saliva on her body which could be used for DNA profiling. That was why they set the body on fire[50].

Both Kodipo's and Big Mo's narratives contain the ideas of a paramilitary arm which carried out the state's dirty work, of Julie Ward's murder starting out as a rape, and of Julie Ward being a spy. The three tropes point towards the notion of state power being wielded by a corrupt and violent political elite. Julie Ward's murder is thus scripted as the disposal of a woman who – either deliberately or inadvertently – knew too much or posed the risk of exposure for the powerful agents involved. A notable motif in all these

[49] Wa Njenga, "My Encounter with Sleuth–turned Villain." *East African Standard* 29 May 2004: 1
[50] Ibid; 1-2.

rumours, allegations and speculations, is the notion of the involvement of powerful politicians or what in Kenyan parlance is termed a 'Big Politician'.

The idea of the involvement of "a powerful politician" or "the son of a highly placed politician" in Julie Ward's murder remained a recurrent motif in local rumours, most of which seeped into both local and international dailies, with minor differences in the details. Such claims included:

> Sources indicate that evidence might be adduced to the effect that *the son of a powerful Rift Valley [Province] politician* had been booked at the Mara Lodge at the same time Julie was there. But his name mysteriously disappeared from the guest list immediately Julie was reported missing. Evidence might also be adduced that the powerful politician summoned one of the witnesses to his office twice to discuss the modalities of a cover-up in the Julie mystery[51] (emphasis added).

> Rumours have flourished, including persistent claims that *one of the sons of former president, Daniel arap Moi, was implicated in the murder* and dismemberment of Julie Ward before her body was burned in the savannah[52] (emphasis added).

> The Kenyan minister for justice and constitutional affairs, Kiraitu Murungi, *acknowledged rumours in Africa that the son of the former president was involved in Miss Ward's murder*[53] (emphasis added).

[51] Ngotho, "Julie Ward Inquest Could Unearth New Evidence." *East African Standard*, 19 April 2004: 4.
[52] Barkham, "Coroner's Verdict Adds to Optimism that Julie Case will be solved." *The Guardian* 5 May 2004: 1

The Big Politician is a common figure of political lore in Kenyan social imaginaries, and can be traced back to the repressive one-party state during the Moi regime and further back to the Kenyatta regime. Often deeply anchored in patronage relations, the Big Politician was believed to command so much power as to border on the untouchable, enjoying comprehensive immunity guaranteed by his uninhibited access to state institutions and resources. This figure – who was invariably male – gestures at the blatant personalisation of state power during the Moi regime and the culture of self/censorship bred by the regime's violent impunity. In Kenya, the Big Politician is a unique variant of Bayart's (1993) Big Man, as a signifier of economic and political power. This figure was invariably fingered in corruption scandals, political torture at the infamous Nyayo House basement torture chambers[54], the so-called ethnic clashes and in all suspicious murders in Kenyan history.

It is with such a profile, that the Big Politician remained nameless in the rumours and allegations about Julie Ward's death. His access to all these resources further explains why the Big Politician could credibly be said to have his name removed from the Mara Lodge guestbook, summon the witnesses to discuss the modalities of the cover-up and even assure the silence or elimination of any witnesses who dared to break the code of silence, as Big Mo alleged.

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[53] Barkham, "Father Vindicated as Kenya Admits Obstructing Julie Ward Inquiry." *The Guardian* 5 May 2004: 1

[54] See *We lived to tell: The Nyayo House Story* (2003) for survivors' accounts of their experiences in the Nyayo House torture chambers. The torture chambers' location in the basement of the Nyayo House building, located in the Nairobi Central Business District, at the intersection of the busy Uhuru Highway and Kenyatta Avenue, a stone's throw from the Parliament Building and with various government ministries in the same building, candidly captures the regime's self-assured impunity and anonymity in its atrocities.

In view of the status of the Big Politician as an almost legendary figure in Kenyan social imaginaries who enjoyed self-reinforcing anonymity and impunity, one begins to understand why Ward's dismissive attitude towards the rumours and anonymous allegations naming the man who killed his daughter on grounds of lack of evidence may have been ill-advised. In this response, Ward failed to appreciate the grip of the political elite on the formal institutions and channels which he privileged in his quest for truth and justice. In a different context – a discussion of the 1969 murder of politician Tom Mboya - Cohen and Odhiambo (2004) provide an interesting illustration of the grip of the Big Politician on the legal channels. Popular wisdom in Kenya remained firmly convinced that Mboya was assassinated by orders from the state. After the Mboya assassination, a suspect, Nahashon Njenga, was tried and convicted for the murder. In response to his conviction however, Njenga's oft-quoted statement, was "Why pick on me? Why not the big man?" (Cohen and Odhiambo 2004:175).[55] It is notable that even at this point – faced with execution and with nothing more to lose - Njenga could not dare identify the 'Big Man' by name. For us, the Njenga incident gestures at the futility of legal truths, as truths whose hegemony is contestable on the basis of their openness to manipulation, by among others, those in power[56]; and broadly, the question of the lack of independence of the judiciary in Kenya[57].

[55] See also *The People Weekly*, 12 -21 March 1996.
[56]Kenya was to witness a similar scenario in the murder of Dr. Crispin Odhiambo-Mbai, the then chairman of the Devolution committee of the constitution review Conference on 14 September 2003. In the case, three suspects confessed to the murder, insisting that they were hired by a top Kenyan politician to kill Dr. Mbai because he was 'bothering him'. See *Sunday Standard* 28th September 2003.
[57] See Mwangi's *The Black Bar: Corruption and Political Intrigue within Kenya's Legal Fraternity* (2001) for a fascinating account of the Kenyan judiciary and its historic lack of independence.

In situating Julie Ward's death at the doorstep of criminal political elite, the rumours speak to what Cohen and Odhiambo (2004) term "the risks of knowledge" in Kenya. In their book of the same title, which explores the Robert Ouko murder in Moi's Kenya, Cohen and Odhiambo refer to contestations around questions of knowing, or in their words, "the powers and dangers that attach to knowledge in the moving setting of official and public gestures: closures, openings, proofs, convictions, expiations, alibis, narratives and histories" (2004:39). The Julie Ward death and its interpretations – both official and unofficial – illustrate these contestations of truths and knowledge through accessing a wide range of archives, sources, texts, questions, events and information gaps. From this angle, we begin to understand the recurrent scripting of Julie Ward as a woman who knew what she should not have known, and her killers as subjects of knowledge that had to be kept secret at all costs, as the rumours and allegations decoded both the ambiguities in her death and the official keenness to validate certain preferred truths.

A striking aspect of the case is the manner in which both Ward's death and its subsequent interpretations collapsed orthodox polarizations between the urban and the rural, the 'modern' and the 'traditional'. Although she died in the wilderness of the Maasai Mara Game Reserve, Julie Ward's death and the search for the truth behind it traversed various topographies, dissolving conventional boundaries between the wild and the modern, the rural and the urban. In addition, although the debate on Julie Ward's death had its epicenter in Nairobi, primarily because the investigations into her death were being carried out in the city (which is also the country's media capital); rumours nonetheless enjoyed wide circulation throughout both Nairobi and the countryside, thus powerfully

underscoring their porous boundaries. They also seeped into the formal media, including prominent newspapers such as the *Sunday Nation* and the *East African Standard*, confirming Nyamnjoh's portrait of the African mediascape as a blend of influences, traditions and technologies, where modern communication technologies coexist in conviviality and interdependence with indigenous media (2005:4). In recent times, this permeability has been rendered all the more tangible by developments in, and access to, modern communication technologies such as the internet and cell phones, which now give speed and breadth to the waves of pavement radio in processes that further muddy any clear demarcations between tradition and modernity, the rural and the urban and (by extension), the rational and the irrational.

4.4 Modernity and the Grapevine

John Ward and the Scotland Yard's dismissal of the anonymous claims and rumours on the basis of lack of proof reflects the conventional disregard of rumours and allegations as lacking validity. This dismissive attitude is premised on conventional understandings of truth and veracity, which presume the existence of singular, objective truths, grounded in verifiable evidence. A similar view of truth is often embraced by judicial institutions, which, in the Julie Ward mystery, was the primary – indeed the solitary – site for the search for her killers. However, rumours are often founded on suspicion of such dominant epistemologies, and seek to contest hegemonic truths. Interrogating this monologic view of truth which precludes conspiracy theories and rumours as wanting in veracity, Anita Waters (1997) proposes what she terms "ethnosociologies", a term she uses in reference to "theories that ordinary people use to explain social phenomena" (1997:114). Taking its

cue from Waters and White, this chapter reflects on the kennels of what Luise White (2000:34) has termed "social truths" around which the rumours on the circumstances surrounding Julie Ward's death were scripted.

The allegations implicating key government officials in Julie Ward's death went officially unacknowledged. However, they took root in the popular imagination, and while this may not be an accurate record of how and why Julie Ward died, the knowledge production processes that these rumours entailed are of interest as social mechanisms for the interrogation of official modern state institutions and their preferred truths.

Pavement radio in Africa enacts a powerful contestation of truth claims associated with officially-promoted rationalities. Far from being specific to Kenya, this suspicion of formal sites of truth production is a widespread phenomenon in Africa,[58] where the 'truths' circulated in the rumour grapevine enjoy greater popular legitimacy than those produced in the more formal sites. While truth is conventionally legitimized by its provable veracity, pavement radio derives legitimacy from the suspect nature of official or hegemonic truths produced through modern institutions and processes, which are often assumed to be in some way compromised. As such, it operates on a different index of credibility, which, as Luise White notes, lays greater store on truths seen to be credible to the group in question, than on monolithic understandings of truth and evidence (2000:34). Yet, at the same time, the written word mobilizes precisely the 'official' kind of legitimacy, which grants written and published rumours further endorsement as 'truth'.

[58] See Ellis (1989), Nyamnjoh (2005) and White (2006) on rumour in Togo, Cameroon and the Congo respectively.

Such rumours may gain added 'truth value' when contested by the fingered suspects and institutions, thus catalyzing yet another cycle of oral/written circulation. Thus, for instance, the Kenyan Government's insistence that it had no records of Kodipo's service in the military commanded little credibility for Kenyans – even though John Ward seemed convinced - as it was obvious to them that the government could easily sanitize its archives of Kodipo. As a cover story in the *Nairobi Law Monthly* (1996) rightly observed:

> It is unlikely that even if Kodipo served in the force, those who trained him would venture information to the probe out of mortal fear of being victimised. The government's disclaimer of September 28, 1995 in reaction to the *Mail on Sunday* expose took great sanctuary in this line of defence. It said Kodipo was never employed in the GSU or any of the police wings, pointing out that his name is nowhere in the service records. Now that is easy because the government has the records to do with them as it pleases, alteration being one of them (Makali 1996:22).

As responses to formalised truths, the rumours and allegations about Julie Ward's death represented an important process of reconfiguring conventional regimes of truth and evidence privileged by modern state institutions. Kodipo's claims about Julie Ward stumbling upon death squads hidden in the Mara, for instance, commanded significant credibility in view of the popular belief in Kenya that certain political figures owned

private armies, some of which took part in the 1991 'ethnic clashes' in the Rift Valley Province, between the Kalenjin and Kikuyu ethnic communities.[59]

While the outlined rumours and allegations may seem largely speculative and lacking in concrete evidence, they simultaneously display interesting relationships with the procedures of modern law and science. All rumours are scripted around the core tenets of legal procedures that underpin murder cases: motive and suspects. Each rumour fingers specific suspects, their motives, and in some cases, the logic behind the choices made in the course of the murder. The rumours and allegations also drew on certain scientific epistemologies in explaining Julie Ward's murder: a case in point is Big Mo's claim that Ward's remains were incinerated to avoid the possibility of DNA profiling of the killers.

Yet, at the same time, the rumours also appeared to question the empirical reach of modern science and law. In highlighting the vulnerability of modern state institutions to manipulation by interested parties, the rumours simultaneously mock the celebrated potency of Western modernity. In this way, they show Western modernity as a project that, despite its claims to progress predicated on value-neutral rationality, remains open to manipulation. Ward's contested autopsy, for instance, questioned the assumed legitimacy of autopsies as scientific processes believed to be capable of rendering visible the

[59] See Ochola (1992), Mburu (1992) and Anderson (2002). The notion of 'private armies' features prominently in Kenyan politics; and includes the closeted trained killers alluded to in Big Muhammed and Kodipo's allegations and a range of vigilante and youth groups hired by politicians to disrupt political rallies or violently 'persuade' an opponent to withdraw from running for office.

silenced secrets of a body's manner of death, just as legal truths premised on evidence and witnesses were considered unattainable in circumstances where witnesses either disappeared or were cowered into silence, as illustrated by Big Mo's claim to be afraid of giving formal evidence in court. Gitau wa Njenga writes about Big Mo:

> As to whether he would be willing to take his story to the authorities, he [Big Mo] said: 'I'm more than willing to give evidence in a court of law but the implications and risks outweigh my willingness to do so' […]. Big Mo also alleged that witnesses to the crime have since been killed. 'Several of the game warders who worked in Maasai Mara on the fateful night have died mysteriously' he claimed[60].

Big Mo's observations above echo similar mysterious deaths of witnesses in the Robert Ouko murder mystery.[61] Indeed, the one trademark feature of all suspicious deaths in Kenyan history is that despite the seemingly 'labour-intensive' nature of all these killings – which suggest the involvement of more than one person - nobody ever breaks the code of silence, beyond rumours and unconfirmed 'eye-witness' allegations such as Kodipo's and Big Mo's. Under these circumstances, any insistence on 'evidence/proof', as Ward and Scotland Yard detective Graham were wont to, remains futile and unproductive. Indeed, in many ways, the rumours and allegations were also urgent pleas to Ward and his investigating team to lose their innocence and the naïve faith in the modern state institutions, the Kenyan government, and indeed, the British Government, as he was later to find.

[60] Wa Njenga, "I saw Julie raped", 2
[61] See Cohen and Odhiambo (2004).

To a large extent, the rumours and allegations' critique of Western modernity's impotence in the Julie Ward case extends to the contradictions embedded in those modern institutions which trace their roots back to colonial rule. As Frantz Fanon (1967) reminds us, the distribution of the promises of colonial modernity along Mamdani's (1996) citizen – subject axis produced a specific kind of native subject, who longed for the citizen's privileges:

> The look that the native turns on the settler's town is a look of lust, a look of envy; it expresses his dreams of possession – all manner of possession: to sit at the settler's table, to sleep in the settler's bed, with his wife if possible. The colonized man is an envious man (1967: 30).

At independence, this legacy of partial distribution of the promises of modernity carried on, as Gikandi (2002) and Macamo (2005) explain. At this level then, the distrust of modern state institutions and their official rationality goes beyond a mere critique of the postcolonial state's failures. It is also a critique of the legacy of colonial modernity, which continues to haunt the postcolonial state.

A related critique in these rumours is the implicit critique of the judiciary's lack of independence from state power. While our discussions in Chapter three explored British disappointment in the Kenyan state institutions as inept and inefficient, this state of affairs goes beyond a mere 'typical' postcolonial state's compromised institutions. In fact, the question of lack of independence of the judiciary can be traced back to the

exercise of colonial control in Kenya, where the judiciary was an important tool in the service of the state, as illustrated by both Mwangi (2002) and Anderson (2005). Again, the Ward case presented an illustration of the paradoxical legacies of colonial modernity, which the postcolonial state had found equally handy; and whose contradictions were in an unfortunate sense, coming home to roost in a case involving a British family's frustrated quest for justice.

In Kenya, however, rumour is not always the exclusive domain of the discontented publics. Rather, it remains a multivalent medium which sometimes serves the purposes of the political elite very well. The Moi regime often used rumour as an important weapon of control by first circulating and then acting on rumours. A case in point was the 1983 case of the then Minister of Constitutional Affairs Charles Njonjo, where the regime engineered the rumour that Njonjo was planning to overthrow the government, then went ahead to purge him from government[62]. In the course of investigations into Julie Ward's death, the state keenly supported rumours that Julie Ward was a woman of loose morals, whose promiscuity may have contributed to her murder. Rumour's potential as a vehicle for hegemonic discourses here is an instance of the state's appropriation of oppositional modes of discourse.

4.5 Conclusion

Given the privileging of legal truths in the Julie Ward case, our discussions in this chapter suggest that for the Kenyan publics, such prioritization of monolithic truths was a

[62] See Mwangi (2001:69-87) for a detailed discussion of the Njonjo case.

doomed approach, in a context where these truths had to be produced through the Kenyan state institutions, which commanded little credibility. At the same time, through these rumours, local publics appropriated Julie Ward's death as a discursive space through which they were able to articulate a critique of both colonial modernity and its manifestation in postcolonial Kenya.

Like the *Jua Kali* artisan, rumour engages the paradoxes of postcolonial manifestations of the promise/denial dynamic of modernity, by weaving together pieces of information from a range of archives, and allowing their multiple verdicts to circulate across the gaps left by the institutions of the postcolonial state. A striking irony in this case remained the ways in which the colonial legacy of the selective distribution of the benefits of modernity had come home to roost in a postcolonial case involving the quest for truth and justice for a British family. The irony here lay in the fact that having 'learnt from the best', the postcolonial elite had inherited the promise – denial dialectic of colonial modernity and perfected it by personalizing modern state institutions; further dismantling the myth of rational, indisputable Western modernity. Other layers of myths were later to be unmasked, as our discussion in the next chapter on the nature of British official involvement in the Julie Ward case reveals.

5 CHAPTER FIVE: Submerged Faultlines in the Official British Response to the Julie Ward Mystery

> I remain unconvinced that the sanctioned binaries – colonizer-colonized, self-other, dominance-resistance, metropolis-colony, colonial-postcolonial – are adequate to the task of accounting for, let alone strategically opposing the tenacious legacies of imperialism (McClintock 1995:15).

5.1 Introduction

The one dimension of the Julie Ward death and the subsequent quest for truth that has remained under-scrutinized by the media reports and the three books on the matter is the official British involvement in her family's search for the truth and justice. The Kenyan Police's attempts to frame the death as accidental overwhelmingly focused both media and public attention on the Kenyan state actors and their attempt to conceal the truth. By implication, Britain was assumed to naturally support the quest for the truth in the matter. Britain's quiet and non-sensational involvement in the case reinforced this assumption, allowing it to go unexamined.

In this chapter, I attempt to invert this focus on the Kenyan state institutions, by examining the nature of the official British involvement in the search for the truth behind Julie Ward's death. Using John Ward's *The Animals are Innocent*, John le Carre's *The Constant Gardener*, and news articles drawn from Kenyan and British print media, the chapter reflects on the configurations of the official British interventions in the case. In his investigations, as documented in *The Animals are Innocent*, John Ward approached the matter with rigid assumptions which constructed British institutions and officials as honest, professional and committed to justice, in sharp contrast with Kenyan officialdom's unprofessionalism and lack of integrity. In this chapter, I hope to illustrate

that these assumptions – which I term 'bipolar lenses' - though founded on his experiences with Kenyan and British officialdom in the course of his investigations, blinded Ward to the subterranean faultlines of competing interests in the official British involvement in the quest for his daughter's killers. By reading Ward's account of the quest for his daughter's killers alongside a fictional account of a similar quest in le Carre's novel *The Constant Gardener,* and the subsequent revelation of British complicity in the cover-up of the truth behind Julie Ward's death, I hope to illustrate that contrary to Ward's belief, and indeed, popular wisdom about British moral integrity and commitment to justice as opposed to the failings of the Kenyan officialdom, there were underlying faultlines which suggest continuities and complicities between Kenya and Britain in the cover-up. These faultlines surface the subterranean contradictions embedded in Ward's bipolar lenses. They also urge us to question the notion of the unity of the subject, in the unstated assumption that Britain was a monolithic entity bound by the same ethical codes, moralities and uncompromising desire for justice. Against this background, the chapter hopes to show that these bipolar lenses - often articulated through notions of Europe's commitment to justice and human-rights as contrasted with postcolonial African states' abuse of these – work to mask the intersections between the two, marked by complicities and continuities largely mediated by the interests of capital which fracture the myth of Europe's moral authority sanctioned by a value-neutral progress through modernity.

5.2 The Construction of Bipolar Lenses in John Ward's *The Animals are Innocent*

John Ward's personal account in *The Animals are Innocent: The Search for Julie's Killers* constructs a set of bipolar lenses, which sharply polarises Kenyan and British state institutions. Ward's account, in constructing this polarity, departs from certain assumptions which he propagates throughout the book.

In his preface to the book, John Ward says that many people have asked why he wrote it. In response, he explains that firstly, he "wanted the true story of Julie and her terrible murder to be recorded", because in the aftermath, the truth "has been enveloped in lies and corruption" (1991: xix). Ward's second reason for writing the book is the hope that "it will act as a warning". As he writes:

> Kenya is a dangerous place. I am continually contacted by distraught and angry relatives of tourists who have been murdered, attacked, robbed or have completely disappeared. […] 'Why didn't someone warn us it was dangerous? And why can't we get any information from the Kenyans about what happened?' […]. If something goes wrong – you're on your own. *The Kenyans complain, 'why pick on us? Tourists sometimes get murdered in New York or London.' This is true but the difference is that in those cities, the authorities will not try to sweep the murder under the carpet* (1991: xix-xx, emphasis mine).

Ward's resentment of Kenya is evident from his preface, which provides a fitting introductory frame to his polarization of the Kenyan cover-up against what he sees as British commitment to truth and justice. At the time of writing this, Ward was convinced

that the attempt to "sweep the murder under the carpet" was a Kenyan affair in its entirety. This polarity recurs throughout the book.

While the subject of the book – the grisly murder of the author's young daughter - would provoke strong anger and resentment in anyone, Ward tells us that his dislike for Kenya develops on his very first visit to the country, immediately after his daughter goes missing. Ward describes his first encounter of the continent thus:

> Africa, Africa, Africa. I believe that if I were to be blindfolded and deposited anywhere on this earth, I'd know instantly if I were in Africa. *The sounds, smells, the 'feel' of the continent that bombard the senses trigger in me a wary unease and, as always, I'd want to leave again as soon as possible. I don't like being in Africa. So much is beyond my understanding. I'm sure this sensation of foreboding is not induced entirely by my experiences* (1991: 45; emphasis added).

On his first visit to Kenya, Ward collapses the entire continent under a homogeneous blanket of smells, sounds and opaqueness all of which make him uneasy. In underlining that this "sensation of foreboding" was not induced by his experiences, Ward appears to ascribe an inherent perilous status to the continent, which, as a first-time visitor, he intuitively senses, and the subsequent discovery that his daughter has been brutally murdered merely confirms his intuition. In this, Ward draws on the semantic grammars of preconceived ideas about the strangeness of Africa and its opaqueness to the familiar, normative 'rational' tools of knowing/understanding a place available to a non-African.

The subsequent tragedy of his daughter's death and the discovery of her mutilated and mostly burnt remains inevitably hatch a bitter hatred and anger in John Ward. Beyond this, however, it is the official attempts to pass off the death as suicide or an attack by wild animals that seals Ward's hatred for the country (1991: 88). In the ensuing drama of alterations on the autopsy report and the Police Commissioner's reluctance to open a murder inquiry, Ward's mistrust for Kenyans and Kenyan state institutions deepens further. It is no wonder that on subsequent visits to Kenya, Ward always looks forward to his departure, and always "feels a sense of total relief when the [aircraft] door is closed and Kenya is shut outside" (1991: 93).

In his narrative, Ward constructs a bipolar lens, in which the British institutions are upright, professional and committed to truth, justice and integrity, while the Kenyan state institutions display duplicity, inefficiency, corruption and utter unprofessionalism. On his first visit to Kenya, when his daughter is missing, Ward contrasts the seeming Kenyan police disinterest with the typical British police's response:

> I was only used to an English environment. If a young woman was missing in Hyde Park, in the centre of London for just one night, two hundred policemen would be out searching the park and every other copper in the land would be keeping his eyes open. Yet here in Nairobi, I was being told that it was a real achievement to get any police officer to even take the matter seriously (1991: 52).

Such comparisons recur throughout the book, and increasingly, Ward's distrust for Kenyans – with the exception of white Kenyans and expatriates – leads him to always

seek professional opinions from Britain, white Kenyans and white expatriates in the course of his investigations.

In Kenya, John Ward interacted closely with the officials at the British High Commission, among these Jenny Jenkins and John Ferguson. The two were particularly helpful with logistics, contacts, processing paperwork and general support at various stages of the investigations. Jenkins and Ferguson were also actively involved in John Ward's investigations and Ferguson often accompanied Ward to meetings with Kenyan state actors, including the Police Commissioner and the government pathologists. In the process, Ward came to develop great trust and respect for the officials at the British High Commission in Nairobi, who provided an indispensable support base for him in Kenya, where he was a total stranger, grieving his daughter's brutal death and faced with official attempts to derail his quest for justice. It is in gratitude for this support that Ward writes approvingly of the British High Commission in Nairobi:

> So many times I have read newspaper reports where Britons abroad have complained of the service, or lack of it, that they received from our Embassy or High Commission. But I could not have wished for better assistance than that which I have received from the consular staff in Nairobi. I have had nothing but good advice and solid support (1991: 102).

Ward has similar sentiments about the Foreign Office:

> In 1988 the Kenya desk in the Consular section at the Foreign Office was run by a young man named Nigel Wicks. He was very sincere and endlessly helpful and while he ran the Kenya desk, I was always kept fully briefed of any

> developments. Like Jenny Jenkins in Nairobi [British High Commission], [he] always offered help (1991: 96).

Despite these glowing tributes to the two British institutions, there were slight hiccups in Ward's relationships with them. Two incidents stand out in this regard. For days after the finding of his daughter's remains, the Kenyan Commissioner of Police, Phillip Kilonzo refuses to acknowledge that they are looking at a case of murder. During this period, Kilonzo is often quoted in the media insinuating that Julie Ward's death is a case of misadventure, as opposed to murder. Suspicious of this misrepresentation of the case – coming soon after the altered autopsy report - Ward decides to hold a press conference in Nairobi, and set the record straight. Before the press conference, Ward writes:

> [Jenny Jenkins] informed us that while the British High Commission had considerable doubts [about the Kenyan police], the line they advocated for that morning was to support the Kenyan police. […] At about 10.55 a.m. John [Ferguson] rushed in. 'I've just had a phone conversation with Kilonzo, who now says that the whole matter of the press conference is unfortunate. He insists that no mention be made of the possibility of murder, foul play or a murder inquiry. Also, he doesn't want any details of the post-mortem report released to the press. … I must ask you to abide by his request for this morning (1991: 111).

It is puzzling that the High Commission asks John Ward to abide by the Kenya police's instructions, with full knowledge that the Kenyan police were hardly taking the case seriously, and that they seemed bent on presenting Julie Ward's death as misadventure.

However, Ward explains this away by observing that “whilst the Consular section were supportive, there were other sections more concerned with avoiding a diplomatic incident – people whose job it was to try to prevent anyone from "rocking the boat" (1991: 111). Persuasive as this rationalisation is, Ward’s failing here was in not subjecting these anxieties about “rocking the boat” to close scrutiny.

In the second instance, when the Kenyan police finally decide to set up an inquest into Julie Ward’s death – a seemingly unnecessary step given the overwhelming evidence of murder – a Foreign Office representative, David Muat phones Ward and delivers this news, further indicating that the family has two options:

> The matter could be left to the Kenyan police to give evidence, entirely at their discretion. The other alternative was for my family to be legally represented, produce the evidence we had gathered and support that evidence with witnesses. The recommendation of the Foreign Office was that the former course be adopted and the submission of evidence should be left to the Kenyan police…. I couldn’t believe my ears! Knowing the record of the Kenya police over the last seven months, here was Muat telling me that the official Foreign Office recommendation was we should leave it all to the police (1991: 229).

As Ward rightly points out, this was a bizarre recommendation, in light of the Foreign Office’s full knowledge of the Kenyan police’s unbending investment in a verdict of misadventure and the post-mortem report, which appeared to have been altered to validate this position. In this instance, Ward rejects the Foreign Office’s recommendation and to ensure that there is no confusion about his decision, he writes a letter to the

Foreign Office and confirms that his family would be legally represented. Despite this curious incident, Ward immediately goes to the Foreign Office's defence once again:

> All this must give the impression that my relations with the Foreign Office were at a low ebb. Generally this was not the case. While there was an attempt to influence events, to limit diplomatic damage, once such schemes were firmly rejected […] the majority at the FO extended such solid unwavering support, which was gratefully accepted. It would, indeed, have been a difficult battle in Nairobi, without the help of the British High Commission – and their instructions come from London (1991: 230).

For a long time, Ward remains convinced that his quest for his daughter's killers has the British High Commission and the Foreign Office's blessings. Whenever the two appear to err towards the Kenya police's preferred approaches to the matter, Ward excuses it as typical but harmless diplomatic caution.

Although increasingly frustrated by the Kenya Police's seeming disinterest in the case, Ward nonetheless continues to nurse the belief that the British High Commission was on his side on the matter. Thus convinced, he attempts to persuade the then British High Commissioner to Kenya to exert diplomatic pressure on whoever was behind the attempted cover-up:

> I suggested to Sir John [Johnson, Ambassador], that it could save a great deal of embarrassment all round if someone high up in Kenya's government could tell [Police Commissioner] Kilonzo to abandon the cover-up and arrest and charge the killers. I believed that as Kenya's chief of police and chief government pathologist

> were involved, the required instruction would have to come from someone much higher up. […] I considered it would need the president to get involved. I therefore asked Sir John if he would assist in this area. As British High Commissioner, he obviously had many contacts at high level in the Kenyan government. However, Sir John considered my 'private approach' was better as any official contact might cause the Kenyans to 'put up the shutters' (1991: 202).

Ward expects that official British pressure would force the Kenyans to stop the cover up. In this, Ward was working with the assumption that Britain as the mother country, retained significant control over Kenya. Most importantly, he was convinced about British commitment to justice.

It is against this background that Ward feels Police Commissioner Kilonzo is embarrassed when confronted about the attempted cover-up in the presence of John Ferguson, a diplomat. As he writes,

> Kilonzo was clearly furious at the cover-up being so obviously exposed. I knew though, that the main cause of his embarrassment was not Frank [Ribeiro, his friend] or me, but John Ferguson. *Because, with John present, the British Government 'knew'* (1991:206, emphasis added).

If we ignore for the moment the patronising undertones in Ward's portrait of Kilonzo like a child who had been 'caught out' as it were, by a representative of Her Majesty's government; here, for Ward, the cover-up is an entirely Kenyan affair and Britain is as scandalized as he was. This view was built on his conviction that the British diplomatic corps officially felt as strongly about his daughter's death, the attempted cover-up and his

quest for truth and justice. While indeed certain individuals – including Johnson, Wicks, Ferguson and Jenkins – may have shared his anger and passionate quest for justice, Ward's assumption that this was the official line may have been a tad too trusting. So too, it would appear, was his belief that the Kenyans were on their own in the cover-up and that they could be pressured into promoting the course of justice by the British.

On the whole, Ward's narrative illustrates his construction of a bipolar lens through which he read Kenyan and British state institutions. Ward's resentment and distrust of Kenya and Kenyan official institutions is balanced against his faith in the British officials and institutions. Thus, for instance, he dismisses the investigating officer in charge of the case, Inspector Wanjau, while retaining great respect for the two Scotland Yard detectives sent to Kenya to investigate the murder.

In this polarized attitude, Ward once again illustrated his positioning in a broader architecture of ideas, which associates Europe with modernity, efficient state institutions and strong senses of integrity, ethics and justice. These ideas echo what Anne McClintock terms the "metaphysical Manicheanism of the imperial enlightenment" (1995:15). It is from this national moral high ground for instance, that in a confrontation with Dr. Kaviti for altering the post-mortem report, Ward angrily informs him "In England you would be struck off the medical register for doing what you have done. Don't you know it is a serious offence to falsify an official document?" (1991: 119). This outburst captures Ward's conviction about the ethical and moral integrity of British state institutions; their incorruptible sense of justice and integrity.

5.3 Fictive Imaginaries: Unmasking British Interests in *The Constant Gardener*

In some ways, John le Carre's novel *The Constant Gardener,* published a decade after Ward's book, offers interesting insights into other possibilities which Ward may have overlooked in his interactions with the Kenyan and British official institutions, and which he was later to become aware of. Indeed, when read side by side with Ward's narrative, the novel qualifies three important issues in Ward's narrative: the essentialised polarity between Kenya and Britain; British diplomatic concerns about the case as purely routine, innocent caution; and broadly, the myth of British moral authority.

Le Carre's *The Constant Gardener* is a fictional narrative set in the 1990s during the Moi regime, which is marked by what a character in the novel describes as terminal government corruption, a breakdown in public infrastructure and police brutality (2001: 52). The novel, largely set in Kenya, tells the story of the murder of a young diplomat's wife, Tessa Quayle. After the murder and disposal of her body in a deserted spot by the shores of Lake Turkana in Northern Kenya, the British High Commission in Nairobi attempts to frame her close African friend Dr. Arnold Bluhm for the murder. However, her husband, Justin Quayle launches a private investigation, and in the process, retraces his wife's footsteps, discovering that his wife may have been killed because she had put together a report about the fatal use of poor Kenyan TB patients for trials of a new TB drug, Dypraxa, by a British multi-national corporation, the House of Three Bees. Tessa attempts to pressure the British High Commission and the Foreign Office into stopping the company from continuing these drug trials and doctoring inconvenient findings in the

interests of fast-tracking the trials in order to introduce the drug to the market soon. All along, the novel reveals, the British government is complicit in the drug trials, Tessa's murder and subsequently, Justin's murder.

Although this is a fictional narrative, within its fictional truths are a range of important insights which, when read beside the Julie Ward narrative, shed important light on the above outlined perception of the British official institutions' support for the Ward family's quest for the truth. In the novel, Tessa Quayle, wife of diplomat Justin Quayle prepares a detailed report in which she outlines details of the human rights abuses, corruption and the use of violence by the Moi government, and submits this to Sandy Woodrow, Head of Chancery at the British High Commission in Nairobi. When she asks why the High Commission does nothing about the report, Woodrow retorts:

> Because we are diplomats and not policemen, Tessa. The Moi government is terminally corrupt, you tell me. I never doubted it. … Ministers are diverting lorry-loads of food aid and medical supplies earmarked for starving refugees. Of course they are. [ ]. The police routinely mishandle anybody unwise enough to bring these matters to public attention. Also true. You have studied their methods. They use water torture, you say. They soak people, then beat them, which reduces visible marks. You are right. They do. [ ]. *The High Commission shares your disgust, but we still do not protest. Why not? Because we are here, mercifully, to represent our country, not theirs.* We have thirty-five thousand indigenous Britons in Kenya whose precarious livelihood depends on President Moi's whim (le Carre 2001: 52, emphasis added).

Woodrow's response here provides an interesting qualifier to both the notion of British power over Kenya and the myth of its commitment to human rights protection. For Woodrow, Britain's position in Kenya is a delicate one, in which they have to be careful not to upset the host nation, as this would be to put the welfare of the expatriate community at risk.

This fictional portrait of Britain's compromising position on Kenya is confirmed by Britain's involvement in Kenya's quest for democracy during the Moi regime. In an essay on the role of foreign donors in Kenya's democratic transition, Stephen Brown (2001:725) observes that despite the perception that donors were instrumental in facilitating the country's transition to democracy[63] by encouraging opposition parties and enforcing donor conditionality, they played a "second, less publicized role". After opposition parties were legalized, donors consistently:

> Discouraged any measures that could have led to more comprehensive democratization…. by knowingly endorsing unfair elections (including suppressing evidence of their illegitimacy) and subverting domestic efforts to secure far-reaching reforms. In the face of anti-regime popular mobilization, donors' primary concerns appeared to be the avoidance of any path that could lead to a breakdown of the political and economic order, even if this meant legitimizing and prolonging the regime's authoritarian rule (2001:726)[64].

[63] This idea, though true, often overshadows the contribution of local actors in Kenya's democratic transition, by over-emphasising donor-pressure, which, in any case, as our discussion here reveals, was both interested and qualified.

[64] Brown further discusses a more specific case of the donor representatives' caginess in the face of gross human rights abuses in his essay 'Quiet Diplomacy and Recurring "Ethnic clashes" in Kenya', where the international community was content to support the UNDP's intervention in the 1992 'ethnic clashes' in Kenya, thus avoiding direct involvement; while simultaneously turning a blind eye to overwhelming

Brown considers Kenya's strategic and economic importance to Western countries as the key reason behind their reluctance to compromise their relationship with the Moi government. As he points out, the United Kingdom for instance "values close ties with Kenya rooted in colonial history and strong financial and commercial relations" (2003:82). Further "donors use their generally friendly relationship with Kenya to further other foreign policy goals in the region" (2003:83). Le Carre's fictional character Sandy Woodrow sums up this position, in his response to Tessa's questioning of the British High Commission's unconcern about the Kenyan Government's corruption and human rights abuses: "The High Commission shares your disgust, but we still do not protest. Why not? Because we are here, mercifully, to represent *our* country, not *theirs*" (le Carre 2001: 53, emphasis in original).

Woodrow's response to a certain degree echoes Ward's justifications about the delicate position that the British diplomats in Kenya found themselves in. Ward writes: "I am aware of an element in the Foreign Office, whose only function is to ensure the status quo is maintained between the UK and other countries, including Kenya. Probably there are very sound political or commercial reasons for their activities" (1991: 211-12).

While both Woodrow and Ward's arguments here would justify an abstemious attitude towards local politics in the spirit of non-interference, they do not explain active

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evidence that the clashes were instigated by high ranking officials in the Moi government, with apparent state support, as suggested by the state security officers' refusal to intervene and even cases of state security officers disarming victims who attempted to defend themselves (Brown 2003: 78 - 79). For Brown, this reticence was a strategic decision, since donors and diplomatic missions in Kenya were reluctant to antagonize the government because this might have jeopardized their programmes as their activities predominantly required them to work with the government (Ibid. 78 -79).

involvement in such activities. In reality, the notion of quiet diplomacy would seem to be a useful discursive mask, behind which Britain hides its interests, and the contradictions underpinning the macro-discourses it progresses in the Third World, (chiefly democracy and human rights); and the reality of its compromising material and political pursuits in these countries.

In the novel, Tessa is murdered to end her interference with the activities of a huge multinational company, House of Three Bees, owned by a Nairobi-based British businessman, Sir Kenny Curtiss.

> 'Three Bees. Quite an amazing outfit. Finger in every African pie but British to the core. Hotels, travel agencies, newspapers, security companies, banks, extractors of gold, coal and copper, importers of cars, boats. Plus a fine range of drugs. […]. And they're hugger-mugger with Moi's Boys too' (le Carre 2001: 114).

Three Bees' economic interests here not only serve the interests of the British government, but also, these investments are sustained by a patronage relationship with the Kenyan government, which compromises Britain's ability to question the Kenyan government's misdeeds. Further, for Britain, Three Bees' new merger with a large Swedish pharmaceutical company Karel-Vita-Hudson (KVH), not only means bigger profits for Three Bees, but also, KVH has offered to build a pharmaceutical factory in an economically depressed region in Britain.

The novel's portrayal of a deeply intermeshed relationship between commercial interests, British diplomatic Foreign Service and the British Secret Intelligence Service provides a fascinating multi-dimensional view, to qualify Ward's one dimensional portrait of British moral integrity and commitment to justice. From the novel, we learn about a symbiotic relationship between the intelligence unit and business, in this case through Sir Curtiss and the Nairobi office of the Secret Service, housed in the High Commission. This relationship is deeply layered and complicit, as the Secret Service not only uses Curtiss to help do their dirty work, including supplying arms to war-torn Sierra Leone in exchange for political protection (le Carre 2001: 414) which in turn assures his business' success, and feeds British economic growth; but he also gives cash handouts to British political parties and classified intelligence to the Secret Service. As he reminds Tim Donohue of the Secret Service's Nairobi office:

> 'I'm *Sir* fucking *Kenneth* Curtiss! I have subscribed – last year alone – half a fucking *million* quid to party funds. I have provided *you* – British fucking Intelligence – with nuggets of pure gold. I have performed *voluntarily*, certain services for you of a very, very tricky sort' (le Carre 2001: 409, emphasis in original).

Although the novel insists on its fictiveness, the narrative nonetheless gives interesting insights into the symbiotic relationships between British politics, commercial interests and its foreign missions. What is important here is not so much whether this reflects the reality or not, but the possibility - even in fictional imaginaries – of the faultlines that fissure Britain's mythical mantle of virtue and uncompromising moral integrity.

These fictional portraits shed interesting light on the Ward quest for truth and the British officialdom's involvement in the process. An interesting coincidence is the novel's use of the notion of ensuring that nobody 'rocks the boat', which Ward uses in his book. Ward's comment about "people whose job it was to try to prevent anyone from "rocking the boat" (1991: 111), gains suggestive meanings when read beside similar sentiments expressed in le Carre's novel, by two Scotland Yard detectives – Rob and Lesley - who are sent out to Kenya to help investigate Tessa Quayle's murder. As they tell Justin Quayle, in confidence, soon after being pulled off the case for getting too close to the truth,

> The glorious House of Three Bees is never to be mentioned again and that's an order. Not their products, their operations or their staff. Nothing's allowed to rock the boat. Lots of boats…. Curtiss is untouchable. He's halfway to brokering a bumper British arms deal with the Somalis. The embargo's a nuisance but he's found ways of getting around it. He's a front-runner in the race to provide a state-of-the-art East African telecom system using British high-tech (le Carre 2001: 217).

Although Ward seems to take the notion of not 'rocking the boat' to be an innocent preservation of diplomatic relations between the two countries, le Carre's novel suggests that the concerns may be less innocent than Ward takes them to be.

The novel presents the Foreign Office, the British High Commission and Scotland Yard as all caught up in these complicities and power games, even though a few individual

members remain upright, and act with integrity. A case in point here is the British High Commissioner Sir Porter Coleridge. Soon after Tessa Quayle's death, the High Commissioner receives instructions from the Foreign Office in London to cover up her death:

> 'The shit [Foreign Office Director of Affairs for Africa] Pellegrin says, shove the whole thing under the carpet' Porter Coleridge announced, slamming down the telephone. 'Shove it far and fast. Biggest bloody carpet we can find. […]. Off the record and only if asked, we respected her crusades but considered them under-informed and screwball'. A pause while he wrestled with his self-disgust. 'And we are to put it out that she was crazy … The [Foreign] Office wants long-suffering. She was our cross but we bore her bravely. Can you do long-suffering? It makes me absolutely fucking *sick*' (le Carre 2001: 70-1; emphasis in original).

Here, the Foreign Office orders the British High Commissioner to completely cover-up Tessa Quayle's murder. Coleridge's failure to toe the official line is punished by a sudden removal from his post in Nairobi, when he is considered a threat to the web of political lies intended to discredit both Tessa and her cutting report on British complicity. The official story put out to the staff at the High Commission is that on the spur of the moment the High Commissioner has decided to take some home leave and find his retarded daughter Rosie a special school in Britain (le Carre 2001: 301).

A similar scenario plays out in the Scotland Yard, where soon after Tessa's death, two young detectives, Rob and Lesley, are sent to Kenya to investigate. The two piece together evidence of British involvement in Tessa's death and submit a detailed report to

the Scotland Yard, with recommendations about the involvement of key figures. In response, their Scotland Yard boss rejects their report, pulls them off the case and appoints two new detectives, under strict instructions on the bounds of their investigations. As they inform Justin – now their ally-:

> '[We] are off the case. Gridley has sent two new officers to Nairobi to help and advise the local police in the search for [Tessa's close friend Arnold] Bluhm. No looking under stones, no deviations. Period. […] And our replacements aren't allowed to talk to us in case they catch our disease' (le Carre 2001: 216).

Rob and Lesley are angered by the realisation that there is a high-level cover-up in the case, and that the very institutions they have worked for with loyalty and a strong sense of integrity, are morally bankrupt, driven by pure greed, endorsed by state apparatuses, including the High Commission, the Foreign Office, the Secret Intelligence Service, the national political parties and the Scotland Yard, all of which present a front of commitment to justice and integrity. Rob and Lesley find themselves unmasking the depths of lies and complicities, which Tessa had earlier unmasked, when she observed: "The mother of democracies is once more revealed as a lying hypocrite, preaching liberty and human rights for all, except where she hopes to make a quick buck" (le Carre 2001: 53).

Tessa's observation here – and indeed the entire novel's portrayal of the complex interests that underpin the Kenya-Britain relationship - suggests interesting insights for the Ward case. Even as a fictional text, the novel powerfully dismantles John Ward's assumptions, all of which are anchored on his bipolar lens and its conviction about an

inherent British commitment to justice, truth and moral integrity as contrasted with Kenya's lack of these values. Although the novel confirms Ward's experiences in so far as the existence of some upright wo/men of integrity like Nigel Wicks, John Ferguson and Jenny Jenkins are concerned, these people's commitment to justice, the novel suggests, remains constrained by the broader institutional structures under which they work, and which dictate the limits of their interventions, as illustrated by Justin Quayle, Rob, Lesley and Porter Coleridge in the novel, all of whose efforts to counter the system are clipped.

But perhaps the most interesting oversight in Ward's bipolar lenses, which the novel eloquently articulates is the power of capital and its interests. In the novel, it is capital that mediates the subterranean faultlines in the Kenya–Britain relationship. The novel suggests that faced with the interests of capital, the moral integrity and commitment to justice which Ward associates with British institutions melts down, and the artificial moral distinction between the colonies and the mother-country fizzles out, as the two work in partnership towards capital accumulation, and the mother country finds itself deploying the very strategies it publicly condemns in the post-colonial African state through its discursive mask of the promotion of justice and democracy.

5.4 Behind the Scenes: The Foreign Office, the Secret Intelligence Service and the British High Commission in Kenya

Although the author underlines the fictiveness of the entire narrative, le Carre's *The Constant Gardener* nonetheless displays two striking allusions to real events:

pharmaceutical scandals in Africa[65] and the death of Julie Ward in Kenya. Though fictional, and making no overt reference to Julie Ward or her death, the narrative in *The Constant Gardener* is grafted into a familiar Kenyan topography, with the Julie Ward case as the closest referent. Indeed, in the opening pages, the novel alludes to "the sensational case of a young English woman who had been hacked to pieces in the African bush ten yeas ago" (2001:11), an allusion that can be read as speaking to the Julie Ward case. The narrative in *The Constant Gardener,* gains instructive depth when read beside the subsequent revelations about the alleged British involvement in the cover up of the Julie Ward death.

Looking at the ever-helpful staff at the British High Commission in Nairobi, one would argue, as Ward was wont to, that he had official British support in his search for answers in the mystery of his daughter's death. To a certain degree though, Ward's trust grew into an unquestioning faith and even defence of the British High Commission's codes of diplomacy, in ways that may have blinded him to certain nuances of competing British interests in the matter. One particular incident which Ward narrates in his book stands out with this regard. Two weeks after the finding of his daughter's remains, Ward goes to the British High Commission in Nairobi, accompanied by his friend and business partner Frank Ribeiro:

> At the High Commission we told John Ferguson and Jenny Jenkins about the chance meeting with Shaker and as always, John made meticulous notes for the consular records. At one point, I was asked to go to another room, leaving Frank [Ribeiro] behind with Jenny. On the way, a request was made to which I agreed. I

[65] The film approximates pharmaceutical scandals in Africa, more recently in Nigeria and Uganda.

was to meet a man who had very good contacts at the highest level with the Kenyan police. I was to meet him on the understanding that his name was never disclosed for fear of jeopardizing his position… He told us that the latest suggestion being put about by the Kenyan police was that Julie had been struck by lightning.

> ‘They can’t be serious. Surely they don’t think I’m going to buy that, do they?’
>
> ‘A lightning strike can cause an injury with the appearance of a cut,’ he said. 'In my career, I’ve seen injuries like that and, of course, it would explain the burning.’

His attempt to justify this ludicrous theory immediately rang warning bells with me. He affected to be there to help us but I formed the impression that his real assignment was to deliver a message. He seemed to be trying to sound me out, to see if I’d accept any different theory other than murder. I wondered who this man really worked for… I satisfied myself that the Kenyans paid his salary. Whether anyone else did too, I never bothered to find out (Ward 1991: 133).

This curious incident should have merited closer scrutiny. But Ward completely brushes it aside.

The relevance of this incident dawns on Ward over a decade later at the second inquest into Julie Ward’s death, held at Ipswich, England, in April 2004. During the inquest, an agent attached to the British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) testifies that he had met and discussed the Julie Ward death with David Rowe, a former Kenyan Assistant Police

Commissioner who was his contact and a covert surveillance expert, days after the finding of Julie Ward's remains. Both Rowe and the SIS agent, [code-named Mr. A] had earlier denied having met and discussed the Julie Ward case, and only admit this after the Independent Police Complaints Commission discovers a record of Mr. A's meeting with David Rowe at the Secret Intelligence Services offices in London. In the record, Mr. A had logged that Rowe briefed him about the Julie Ward case. Later Mr. A admits that he paid the Commissioner of Police, Phillip Kilonzo, a courtesy call, soon after Julie Ward's death. Further, he admits that he was

> Asked by the High Commission to bring in Mr. Rowe, whom he knew well socially, and who was partly paid by the British government. He [Rowe] provided information about the Kenyan Police force…Four days after their meeting; Mr. Rowe tried to persuade Ward that his daughter was struck by lightning (Barkham 2004a).

These two incidents represent what I term the 'invisible' face of the official British interventions in the case. These were the behind-the-scenes activities of officials affiliated with the High Commission. A few issues stand out for us in this series of events: firstly, that the SIS agent in question holds a meeting with the Kenyan Commissioner of Police, Phillip Kilonzo, a few days after the Julie Ward's remains are found. Secondly, that soon after, SIS tasks Rowe with securing John Ward's buy-in to the theory of lightening, which closely approximates the Kenyan police's theories of accidental death. Third, and most importantly, this meeting is facilitated by the British High Commission, takes place in its offices, and comes just before a meeting with the

ambassador John Johnson and immediately after a meeting with John Ferguson and Jenny Jenkins.

On hindsight, we begin to see why the British High Commission appeared to be pushing the Kenyan police's preferences on John Ward. Most importantly, we understand why Britain completely abstained from exerting pressure on the Kenyans on the Ward matter, preferring to remain officially non-committal, when other governments were outspoken about the matter. From the above incidents, contrary to Ward's belief that the cover up was an exclusively Kenyan affair, the British Secret Intelligence Service would seem to have been complicit in the Kenyan police's preferred 'truths' on the case as suggested by Mr. A's involvement in the matter.

These two incidents provide interesting perspectives, especially when read beside the fictional portrait of the Foreign Office and the British High Commission in *The Constant Gardener.* The novel becomes an interesting reference point, when read from the perspective of the conventions of documentary realism. Sauerberg defines documentary realism as "a narrative mode which, while adhering in principle to the time-honoured narrative conventions of realistic narrative, draws on verifiable reality to various extents, but invariably in such a way as to call attention explicitly or implicitly to the difference between the fictional and the factual" (Sauerberg 1991:6). According to her, documentary realism includes isolated reference to a factual phenomenon, which works through the double-reference technique. This double-reference typically manifests itself "either as integration of more or less obviously factual material in the form of quotations or

references into the narrative's otherwise quite fictitious universe, or as the adaptation of a wholly factual series of events to a traditionally fictional narrative pattern, and sometimes as a combination of both" (Sauerberg 1991:7).

Arguably, *The Constant Gardener* deploys the double-reference technique, not only in its allusion to real places, institutions and individuals in Kenya, but also in the ways in which the narrative is grafted onto a familiar Kenyan topography with such identifiable features as police brutality, corruption in the Moi regime and broadly, a recognizable geo-political topography. Indeed the apparent complicity of the British Secret Intelligence Service in the Julie Ward cover up, the SIS agent Mr. A's secret rendezvous with the Commissioner of Police Phillip Kilonzo, and the attempts to persuade John Ward that his daughter was struck by lightening would seem to be a real-life precursor to the fictional narrative of Tessa Quayle's murder and the British High Commission in le Carre's novel. In the novel too, the High Commission attempts to persuade Justin Quayle that his wife was having an affair with the black doctor Arnold Bluhm and that he went berserk and killed her.

The possible involvement of influential people in Kenyan politics in Julie Ward's death was later to figure as a reason behind the British High Commission's reluctance to be outspoken about the case. At the second inquest into Julie Ward's death held in Suffolk, Jenny Jenkins acknowledged that rumours regarding the possible involvement of one of President Moi's sons in the matter meant that the High Commission in Nairobi had to handle the matter carefully, in the interests of the diplomatic relations between Kenya and

Britain. Years later, John Ward was to speculate that perhaps Britain chose not to pressure the Kenyan government out of fear of the 'volatile' president Moi:

> 'President Moi was a volatile man who could kick the British out of Kenya just by flicking his fingers and the boys who look at the big board have to take that into consideration' he said. They probably thought 'We cannot bring Julie back, so there is nothing to be gained by being kicked out of Kenya' (McVeigh 2004).

The parallels between this statement and the fictional Woodrow's (le Carre 2001: 52) claim "we have thirty-five thousand indigenous Britons in Kenya whose precarious livelihood depends on President Moi's whim" are striking. Beyond surfacing the faultlines that fracture Ward's polarization between Kenya and Britain's involvement in the quest for justice in his daughter's death, another issue of interest in this chapter is the masking of these faultlines. What discursive masks are produced to mask the contradictions that fracture hegemonic discourses?

The British involvement in the cover-up remained under wraps and unexplored in the media, the popular imaginary and the books on the case. In its place, the British narratives – both the media and the books on the case – produced the idea that Kenyan officials' cover-up of the truth behind the Julie Ward case was an attempt to protect the tourism industry. Commenting on this, Michael Hiltzik's A *Death in Kenya* (1991: 238) observes:

> This time however the context was not Kenya's valiant fight against wildlife poachers, but the country's inability to keep its famed tourist venues safe and secure. Legions of reporters came into the country to document the hazards of

> game safaris. (KILLERS PROWL PARADISE was one British headline). … Adding to the discomfiture of a tourism industry trying to mollify hundreds of thousands of skittish tourists, the inquest into Julie Ward's death in Kenya's most renowned game reserve was about to reconvene.

While the tourism industry is indeed a key contributor to the country's economy, this argument was not wholly persuasive. In fact, the attempted cover up drew greater negative publicity to both the industry and the country. Secondly, the interests in the Kenyan tourism industry are largely multinational, with investors from across the world, including Britain who would be as likely to be concerned about negative publicity around the industry as the Kenyan government, if not more.

In Kenya, as in many African countries, there exists a large body of multinational economic interests in the tourism industry which take the shape of travel agents, tour, hotel and transport investments, which, in John Lea's words "intervene between the world of tourists and the host population, and control a global mass tourism market through their transnational operations in both origin and destination countries" (1999:5). John Akama concurs, in his observation that

> The establishment and development of tourism in most Third World countries is usually externally oriented and controlled; and mainly responds to external market domains. In consequence … the management and long-term sustenance of the tourism establishment depends on external control and support (1999a: 7-8).

In this respect, the economic interests of protecting the tourism industry would conceivably be shared by other countries whose interests at the time lay in the Kenyan

tourism industry, in which they controlled the bulk of the industry's luxury resorts, lodges, and tour companies. In the Maasai Mara Game Reserve, for instance, the majority of the accommodation facilities are owned by multinational companies including Lonrho Hotels' Mara Safari Club, Heritage Group of Hotels' Governor's Camp, Conservation Corporation Africa's Kichwa Tembo Camp and Serena Hotels' Mara Serena Lodge among others.

These multinational investments in the tourism industry fracture the accepted wisdom that the Kenyan government attempted to cover up the case in a bid to protect its tourism industry. What further stands out is the silence on these international economic interests in the tourism industry – a significant chunk of which are British. To date, neither the novels on the case nor the British media have acknowledged Britain's economic interests in the Kenyan tourism industry and how these may have contributed to the official silence on the matter by Britain.

Certain insights emerge from a reading of these 'behind the scenes' actions alongside le Carre's novel. From these three sets of texts, we realize that Kenya had no monopoly over corruption and the derailment of the course of justice in the Julie Ward case. While it may be the case that British institutions and professionals had access to better facilities, which Ward opted to mobilise in his quest for the truth, this was evidently no insurance against manipulation of truth. The irony here lies in Ward's claim that while tourists get attacked, robbed or murdered in Europe too, "*the difference is that in those cities, the authorities will not try to sweep the murder under the carpet* (xix). Ward's belief in

British official commitment to truth and justice as contrasted with the Kenyan cover-up disintegrates in light of the British official complicity in the cover-up. These incidents underscore certain continuities across the British-Kenya divide, in terms of their political strategies, and their pursuit of their interests at whatever costs.

Read against the earlier mentioned implicit polarization of Kenya and Britain, these contradictions alert us to the submerged faultlines which often lie beneath the surface of accepted Manichean tenets of popular wisdom. In this sense, the concept of faultlines, drawn from geology, provides a useful metaphor for conceptualizing the contradictions and competing interests that lay beneath the visible face of British support for Ward's quest for justice. Faulting is a particularly apt metaphor for understanding the textured nature of hegemonic enterprises by penetrating the outer crust of a unified position, to catch glimpses of the cracks that lie beneath the seemingly solid surface.

In geology, a fault refers to a crack in the earth's crust. Fault formation is the result of fracturing of solid rocks due to pressure and the movement of rock planes in different directions. Although the earth surface often appears to be continuous, the earth's crust beneath is made up of layers of different rock compositions, which are constantly under pressure. These rock plates often push and pull sometimes towards each other or in different directions, resulting in cracks or faults. For the most part though, these faults do not rupture the earth surface. However, under extreme pressure, or significant movement of the rocks within the earth's crust, there may be substantial movement of the rocks,

which results in visible shifts on the earth surface leading to sinking or protrusion of sections of the earth surface.

I am alert to the complexities of transposing theories and conceptual tools across disciplines – especially ones as disparate as geology and social sciences. This is especially problematic, when, as in this in this case, one transposes mechanical dynamics into the more abstract world of discourse. However, I find these geological ideas on faulting processes to be very useful as a metaphoric handle on ways of understanding internal contradictions inherent in structures and discourses because these geological processes in many ways mirror the tensions and contradictions that underpin seemingly homogeneous discourses. Thus, in the Julie Ward case, discourses such as the Kenya – Britain moral polarity; British commitment to justice and human rights; British diplomatic caution in dealing with the 'volatile' President Moi; Kenyans' cover-up to protect the tourism industry; all worked to mask the underlying faultlines of British involvement in frustrating the Ward family's quest for truth and justice. By extension, this unmasks the popular discourse of Western/centre domination of the periphery.

These faultlines, if surfaced, would crumble Britain's discursive mask, and in this case, unmask the fact that its commitment to human rights and justice is contingent on its other interests in a given context. Despite the self-evident injustice and brutality of Ward's death and the implicit admission of a high-level cover-up by the state, Britain appeared to prioritize its other interests in the country; in much the same way that as Brown rightly points out above, the UK dissuaded radical reforms in Kenya's pursuit of democracy to

preserve other polit-economic interests in the region which Kenya was strategically well-placed to serve. Put differently, in the Julie Ward case, unstated interests seemingly made it inconvenient for Britain to 'walk the talk' of human rights and justice.

The apparent British complicity in the cover-up suggests a covert symbiotic relationship with Kenya which collapses the popular wisdom articulated by Ward's bipolar lens. It further raises interesting thoughts about the notion of complicity, especially in contexts of sharp, hierarchical polarizations such as the Kenya – Britain relationship. Here, one is interested in the shapes of relationships that unfold in what Mary Louise Pratt has termed contact zones. Although she uses the phrase specifically in reference to those zones of interaction between black and white people in colonial setups, where "black and white interests collided in a thousand different ways" (1992:7), I see the term as equally useful in describing those sites of convergence between overlapping spheres of control, in contexts marked by multiple epicenters of power, that defy linear hierarchies especially when they operate in concurrent orbits. The under-explored issue here becomes the shapes of relationships that ensue in contact zones where overlapping spheres of influence dispense with simple hierarchies.

Feminists often emphasize the 'simultaneity of oppression' of black and African women, where they are confronted with race, class, and gender subordination at the same time. [66] Implicit in this is what I term the simultaneity of domination, which can be seen to unfold at the juncture of these sets of identities or discursive structures, where, to use the case of African women, they find themselves confronted by three concurrent sets of dominant

[66] See for instance Nnaemeka (1997); Nnaemeka (1998) and Ogundipe-Leslie (1994).

discourses articulated through race, gender and class. The idea of simultaneity of domination was at play in Julie Ward's death in Kenya, which presented a complex contact zone between Britain and Kenya, with a range of overlapping spheres of control or epicenters of power that created interesting configurations of power relations. Geographically, Julie Ward died in the Maasai Mara Game Reserve, itself a space marked by several power centers, including the Narok Country Council and the surrounding Maasai community; the local and international investors in the tourism industry; and nationally, the Kenyan state institutions, including the police and the judiciary. At the same time, as a British citizen, Julie Ward's death further drew the interest of the British High Commission and by extension, Britain, both of which found themselves in a complex position, caught between the Ward family's anger and demand for justice, the Kenyan state actors' keenness to pass off the death as a natural accident and the pursuit of Britain's multiple interests in Kenya and the East African region which included diplomatic, economic and socio-political interests. In essence, Julie Ward's death was situated in this complex cartography of interlinked nodes of power centers, with multiple and conflicting interests. These layers of interests in the case alert us to the concentric nature of power, and the co-existence of sometimes coinciding circles of influence, which re-configure hierarchical patterns of power relations between the dominant group and the subordinate group. These concentric circles of control and interests gesture towards the highly nuanced textures of complicity that often lie beneath superficial constructions of polar binaries such as the centre – periphery moral scheme that Ward constructs in his book.

5.5 Conclusion

Contrary to popular assumptions about Britain's support for the quest for Julie Ward's killers, the British Secret Intelligence Service, working with the High Commission in Nairobi, was complicit in the Kenyan attempts to cover up the truth behind Julie Ward's death. At a certain level, the Kenyan interest in keeping the truth behind Julie Ward's death concealed resonated with certain British interests.

The layered nature of the relationship between Kenya and Britain over the Julie Ward case further yields insights into the inner workings of hegemonic structures and discourses. Our discussion reveals that beneath hegemonic structures and forces, which often present an image of coherence, often lurk submerged faultlines which contradict accepted wisdom. The British – Kenyan interactions in the Julie Ward matter highlight two key concerns. Firstly, that hegemonic groups' pursuit of the discourses they endorse is often constantly in flux, and contingent on a range of other interests, which determine the earnestness with which such discourses will be pursued. To a large degree, this approximates James Scott's idea of public transcripts of the dominant group, which co-exist with hidden transcripts that are at times in direct opposition to the public transcripts they perform and through which they earn legitimacy. The patterns of interactions between Kenya and Britain in the Julie Ward matter though, stretch Scott's work further by revealing that sometimes, the dominant group and the subordinate group's hidden transcripts overlap when their shared interests resonate, as was the case with the shared interest between Kenya and Britain in the Julie Ward matter.

Our discussion further suggests that apart from Ward's cultural illiteracy which prevented him form accessing local textualities, as discussed in the previous chapter, Ward's quest for his daughter's killers was further impeded by his assumptions about Kenya and Britain, in which he constructed a bipolar lens that placed the two countries in stark binaries. Ward's polarity placed British official institutions on an irreproachable pedestal of moral authority, integrity and commitment to justice. Yet unknown to Ward, these notions of moral authority and indeed, even the very polarization between Kenya and Britain was merely a discursive mask, which, alongside the idea of diplomatic caution, worked to mask Britain's involvement in the cover-up of the truth behind Julie Ward's death.

From another perspective, Ward and le Carre's narratives are instructive on the workings of narrative in relation to dominant discourses, and the ways in which the narrative space allows for the possibility of either the reproduction of dominant discourses as in the case of Ward's unquestioning replication of the bipolar lenses or the destabilization of such ideas as suggested by le Carre's narrative. Yet this is never a clear-cut process as, often, narratives challenge certain hegemonic discourses while simultaneously constructing others.

6 CHAPTER SIX: Of Farms in Africa: Wildlife Tourism, Conservation and Whiteness in Postcolonial Africa

6.1 Introduction

Within the colonial context, the myth of white supremacy legitimized imperial conquest, control and the accompanying privileges. This myth was materially and ideologically sustained by colonial state apparatuses - both repressive and ideological – including the law, the church, schools, and colonial administration; all of which policed the boundaries of Mamdani's (1996) citizen-subject axis. Through these apparatuses, the dividends of whiteness were assured, culminating in the accumulation of social, cultural and economic capital, and the entrenchment of white privilege. With the demise of colonial rule, these institutional and ideological infrastructures were largely dismantled. Yet, despite this, as Alfred Lopez (2005:20) notes, whiteness still successfully masquerades as an aesthetic ideal in the postcolonial world, while retaining much of the privilege and prestige it held at the height of colonialism.

This retention of white privilege in postcolonial contexts calls for the need to explore the discursive constructions of whiteness in postcolonial Africa. As Ruth Frankenberg reminds us, "the material and discursive dimensions of whiteness are always, in practice, interconnected. Discursive repertoires may reinforce, contradict, conceal, explain or "explain away" the materiality or the history of a given situation" (1993:2). It is this interaction between the discursive and the material dimensions of whiteness that this chapter seeks to explore, with particular focus on wildlife tourism and conservation.

Using the recent case of two Kenyans who were shot dead by pioneer settler Lord Delamere's grandson, Tom Cholmondeley; a 1989 feature film on poaching set in Kenya, *Ivory Hunters*; and the narration of the Julie Ward case in the three books, the chapter examines wildlife, tourism and wildlife conservation as important registers in the performance of certain strands of whiteness in postcolonial Kenya. Our key interest here lies in tracing these discursive tropes of postcolonial whiteness. In what ways do they mirror the tropes of colonial whiteness? To what extent was Julie Ward's presence in Kenya, her death and quest for her killers mapped onto these grids of contemporary constructions of postcolonial whiteness? What tensions and contradictions emerge from the continued deployment of wildlife tourism and conservation in the construction and performance of whiteness in postcolonial Africa?

On 19th April 2005 Thomas Cholmondeley, great-grandson of pioneer Kenya settlers, Lord and Lady Delamere, shot dead Kenya Wildlife Society (KWS) ranger, Samson ole Sisina on his Soysambu Ranch, which is part of the Delamere Estates in Kenya's Laikipia District. Faced with murder charges, Cholmondeley claimed that he thought ole Sisina was an armed robber. According to a report by the Law Society of Kenya[67], ole Sisina had gone to the ranch to investigate allegations of illegal trade in game meat on the ranch following a tip off. Ole Sisina was accompanied by fellow KWS rangers Lillian Ochieng Ajuoga and Kushnow Mamo, and they had procedurally logged their mission in the KWS offices. Posing as meat buyers from Nairobi, they were allowed into the ranch:

[67] See the Law Society of Kenya's Human Rights Report of 2005/2006 "Countering the Culture of Short Memory in Combating Human Rights Violation in Kenya", 17-19.

At the (Soysambu Ranch) slaughterhouse, Mamo talked to the manager Benson, who informed him that there was no game meat at Soysambu since wildlife cropping had been outlawed. … The KWS crew left the farm. A few metres from the gate, they met a Land-Rover pick-up with about ten occupants. They also saw a buffalo carried in a suspicious manner. Then one man carrying *"matumbo"* [tripe] alighted, who identified himself as a guard. He revealed that a white man had killed the buffalo. The KWS crew expressed an interest in the game meat. They were directed to follow the Land Rover that had sped off. … At the slaughterhouse, they found the buffalo being skinned and it is then that they identified themselves … and informed the group that they were under arrest. They rounded up the group and handcuffed those who were restless and who in their judgement, might have caused trouble. The manager wanted to inform his boss, Tom (Cholmondeley) about the incident but the KWS crew declined. …Mamo and Lillian stayed in the slaughterhouse with the suspects while ole Sisina kept watch outside. Meantime Lillian and the deceased were communicating despite being separated by a crush. … Lillian saw Tom who was holding a revolver rush towards the slaughterhouse. Tom saw Lillian. Tom is an honorary warden and knows Lillian personally because they had met on many work-related occasions. Lillian informed ole Sisina that Tom was coming and that he was armed. She then heard Tom say words to the effect that "What is KWS"? Immediately, Tom fired 4 rounds, in rapid succession at the crush where the deceased was. Lillian and Mamo waited in vain for the deceased to enter the slaughterhouse. … Lillian, who was the head of this KWS mission, had not given an order to fire to any of the

> crew members. Meantime, Mamo and Lillian, who were both lying flat on the floor, repeatedly shouted at the top of their voices the words "KWS! KWS!" … Tom then told Lillian and Mamo that he had shot dead one of them… Immediately, Lillian called her superiors from her mobile to report. Tom ordered that Lillian's phone be taken away. Tom began making calls on his phone saying that he had killed an 'armed robber'. He called three of his security guards who brutally beat up Lillian and Mamo.

I have quoted the report at length because the circumstances surrounding this particular killing are important to our discussion in this chapter. Further, although the case attracted a lot of media attention, the details of the circumstances were not public knowledge. According to the report, "Attorney General entered nolle prosequi in the murder charge against Cholmondeley on the basis that there was insufficient evidence to support a murder charge."[68]

On 10th May 2006 - little more than a year later - Cholmondeley shot and killed a second man, Robert Njoya Mbugua. According to the 2006/2007 Kenya Human Rights Commission Bi-Annual Report[69], Cholmondeley was taking an evening stroll in Soysambu Ranch with his friend Carl Tundo when they bumped into Njoya and two other men from a neighbouring village. The three men were carrying a dead impala, which they had caught on one of the snares they had laid on the ranch. Allegedly cognizant of Cholmondeley's legendary brutal wrath, the three men dropped their catch and fled. While his two colleagues escaped unscathed, Njoya and two dogs were stuck and killed

[68] Ibid, 73.
[69] Ibid., 72 -74.

by bullets from Cholmondeley's game hunting riffle. Facing his second murder charge, Cholmondeley claimed the men had set their dogs on him and he had shot at the dogs, but accidentally hit Njoya.

The Cholmondeley killings speak to the Julie Ward death in ways that illuminate questions of control and ownership of land and wildlife as important co-ordinates of whiteness in colonial and postcolonial Kenya. Read alongside the Julie Ward case, the two killings raise interesting issues on postcolonial constructions of whiteness in contemporary Kenya. This chapter argues that this register of whiteness reveals the accentuation of the fascination with wildlife and nature, which, though having its genesis in colonial Kenya has calcified into a distinct economy of ideas on white identity in postcolonial Kenya.

6.2 Land, Wildlife and Whiteness in Post/colonial Kenya

Ruth Frankenberg's (1993:6) definition of whiteness as "a set of locations that are historically, socially, politically and culturally produced and […] intrinsically linked to unfolding relations of domination" captures this chapter's interest in whiteness within the postcolonial context in Africa. Tracing its roots back to centuries of sustained construction of white supremacy, whiteness is primarily defined by its invisibility. For Richard Dyer (1997:1) white claims to a normative position against which all non-whites are measured and found wanting is founded precisely on their assumed "unraced" status, where, as Frankenberg notes, white people often view themselves as non-racial or racially neutral (1993:1). This claim to normativity in turn masks the social relations that ensue

from it and the privileges that accrue to it. As Frankenberg argues, whiteness has a set of linked dimensions:

> First, whiteness is a location of structural advantage, of race privilege. Second, it is a "standpoint", a place from which white people look at ourselves, at others and at society. Third, whiteness refers to a set of cultural practices that are usually unmarked and unnamed (1993:1).

Frankenberg here captures three definitive pillars of whiteness, namely racial privilege, the assumed control of the gaze over others, which simultaneously makes it invisible, and its sustenance through certain cultural practices.

One of the accepted truisms in whiteness studies is that whiteness manifests itself differently in different social, economic, political and cultural contexts. A second truism - which often teeters dangerously close to the now-cliché idea that race is a social construct - is that definitions of who is white have historically been unstable, constantly changing, as illustrated by the Irish, Jewish and Afrikaner experiences in Britain, Germany and South Africa respectively. Despite this though, the myth of white supremacy over other races – largely hinged on an axis of proximity to blackness – has been a historical constant, confirming Frankenberg's reminder that whiteness is "intrinsically linked to relations of domination" (1993: 6). It is possibly in recognition of this that, as Sarah Nuttal observes, "it is most often in terms of the "settler" that white identity in postcolonial African contexts has been given content and meaning" (2001:116).

Nuttal underlines the limited reach of "settler" understandings of whiteness in Africa, especially in contexts, such as post-apartheid South Africa, where white people are continually negotiating the shift from a "register of conquest to the register of negotiation" partly through a process of "mutual recognition that could lead to belonging" (2001: 118). Despite this though, in African imaginaries, whiteness largely remains intimately linked to slavery and colonial domination. Across the continent – South Africa included – what Michael Chege (1998) terms "white Africans" remains an aspirational identity, which is largely contested; and citizenship – i.e. being a Kenyan, Nigerian or South African citizen – and 'Africanness' are hardly synonymous.[70]

In her essay, "Letting the side down: Personal reflections on colonial and independent Kenya" (2001), Celia Nyamweru underlines the difference between settler colonies and colonies of administration. As she notes,

> Colonies of administration, of which Ghana and Nigeria are the most significant examples in Africa, were those in which White people never acquired rights to land beyond residential plots. […] Kenya, on the other hand, was a colony of settlement. From the late 1800s onwards, it was the avowed policy of the British government to facilitate White settlement in the cool highland areas (2001:171).

At the core of Nyamweru's distinction between the two colonial systems lie relationships with land.

[70] Admittedly, the notion of 'Africanness' is one that is largely vague and steeped in mythology, which often steers dangerously towards essentialism. Yet, at the same time, skin-deep racial differences and African 'reverse racism' aside, white citizenship in Africa is often largely mediated by very selective and strategic processes of laying claim to African identity, while retaining tenacious grip on various strands of 'Europeanness', including European citizenship.

In settler colonies, control and ownership of prime land was an important co-ordinate in the construction of white supremacy. This land was literally alienated from its owners; a process that was discursively mediated by the vacuation of the land as large expanses of empty space without owners; in inadvertent or pretended ignorance of local land use and ownership cultures, which gave the impression of 'unoccupied' land. In such contexts, Nuttal's description of settler whiteness holds true:

> The notion of the settler, which always also implies a native, carries with it in its originary sense a master-slave dialectic based on land - a dialectic, that is, in which the settler occupies a position of power based on the conquest and the ownership of the land through violent means, leading to the dispossession and subjugation of the native owners of that same land…. The settler, in this configuration, is marked as "coming from elsewhere" rather than being "of the place". The term *settler* shifts as the move is made from the politics of conquest and subjugation to the politics of negotiation and belonging (2001:118).

In Kenya, Nuttal's idea of the shift from the politics of conquest and subjugation to the politics of negotiation and belonging largely remains unmade by the white community, for two reasons. Firstly, the white community in Kenya continues to form what Kennedy (1987) terms "islands of white". With the possible exceptions of figures such as Basil Criticos and Richard Leakey, the white community continues to live in its white enclaves which are largely exclusive and fairly disinterested in venturing into black Kenyan society. Indeed, one may argue that the illusion of multiracial presence in spaces such as the previously white leafy suburbs, schools and country clubs dotting all Kenyan towns; while showing the semblance of multiculturalism, in reality embody what bell hooks, in a

different context, refers to as "integration" (1994) of a select few black Kenyans into the existing masternarrative of whiteness rather than a meaningful transformation. These spaces continue to uphold white cultural normativity, hardly displaying Nuttal's "politics of negotiation and belonging". Secondly, there has been little negotiation of land ownership and a good percentage of white society in Kenya continues to own huge tracts of land dubiously acquired at the height of white colonial settlement.

It is almost impossible to discuss whiteness in Kenya – both colonial and postcolonial – without making mention of the Delamere family. In itself, this is an indicator of the continuities between colonial and postcolonial whiteness in Kenya, and not entirely on the basis of the family's cross-generational longevity. In fact, the Delamere presence in Kenya illustrates the continued production of Nuttal's settler politics. As Elspeth Huxley's biographical portrait of the pioneer settler Lord Delamere aptly titled *White Man's Country* presents him, Delamere was one of the architects of Kenya as white man's country.

Land annexation was an important trajectory of British settlement in Kenya, which was undergirded by the colonial administrative apparatuses. Huge tracts of rich agricultural land were appropriated for settlement by white farmers in the so-called White Highlands, while the game-rich land in southern Kenya was converted into game parks and game reserves. One of the primary victims of this process was the Maasai community, whose land was rich in wildlife. Much of this land was turned into present day Tsavo, Amboseli and Maasai Mara Game Reserves, alongside a number of largely white-owned game

ranches, including the Delamere Estates. As Joshua Hammer writes in his article on the Cholmondeley killings, aptly titled "The Kenyan Cowboy",

> The Delameres are the most prominent members of an elite group of landowning families that profited from treaties forced on indigenous tribes by the British colonial government at the turn of the 20th century. Although many whites sold their land to black Kenyans decades ago, a few hundred big owners who remain continue to live in a bubble of wealth and privilege, even as the vast majority of Kenya's indigenous population is mired in poverty.

Parselelo Kantai captures this situation in his observation: "The Delamere family owns 50,000 acres in the Rift Valley, in a country where people fight for a quarter of an acre. Their lives are a 1920s fantasy."[71]

In his incisive essay, "In the Grip of the Vampire State: Maasai Land Struggles in Kenyan Politics" (2007), Parselelo Kantai offers an account of the loss of the Maasai tribal lands to the British colonial administration. The Maasai presented a challenge to British settlement, in part because their legendary reputation as ferocious and war-like had preceded them; raising anxieties about British settlement as "they controlled a vast territory in central and southern Kenya that stretched into northern Tanzania [and] they occupied the lands directly adjacent to those most favourable to European settlement: what would later become known as the White Highlands" (Kantai 2007:108). To solve the Maasai problem, the British persuaded Maasai elders to thumb-print two Anglo-Maasai treaties. In the first treaty of 1904,

[71] Cited in Hammer (2006: 4).

> The Maasai had, so the agreement states, willingly ceded their territory in the central Rift Valley to move to two reserves, one to the north of the newly-constructed Kenya-Uganda railway and the other to the south of it. The agreement, the Maasai were assured, would last 'as long as the Maasai existed as a race'. A second agreement made seven years later in 1911 reneged on the earlier assurance. The Maasai were forced to leave the Northern Reserve of Laikipia and settle in an expanded Southern Reserve (Kantai 2007:107).

According to the Maasai, the second agreement ceded the Laikipia lands to the British for 99 years. The lease expired on 15 August 2005, and on this date, the Maasai community organised demonstrations in Nairobi, demanding their land back. However, the Kenya government argued that the second agreement ceded the Laikipia lands for 999 years and not 99 years as the Maasai believed. Although the majority of the land in question is in white ownership, the successive national elites have since laid claim to some of this land too.

Against this background, the Delamere killings were inevitably yoked into the Maasai land struggles, in a discourse that questioned the validity of Cholmondeley's ownership of the Delamere estates, which remain one of the most visible chunks of the formerly Maasai-owned Laikipia lands. In view of this, three issues are of particular interest for us in this chapter: the tensions between hunting, farming and wildlife conservation in colonial Kenya; the alienation of Maasai land for wildlife conservation; and the postcolonial tourism and wildlife conservation industry. These three issues have their roots in arrangements put in place in colonial Kenya.

Colonial Kenya attracted a particular calibre of British settlers. In a study suggestively titled *Black Poachers, White Hunters: A Social History of Hunting in Colonial Kenya*, Edward Steinhart describes them as

> extremely wealthy, landed, and often titled aristocrats and gentlemen. In sharp contrast to other British African colonies such as Rhodesia, Kenya attracted settlers of high social and economic status in their countries of birth, especially Britain. ….One clear mark of this background was the prodigious number of active hunters who came to settle in Kenya because of the hunting opportunities provided, or who would come to develop a passion for hunting once the attractions of land ownership proved less than fully satisfactory. Indeed, hunting in particular, and sportsmanship in general would come to be the chief feature of self-identification of the Kenya settler elite (2006:92).

Steinhart's description here outlines the socio-economic texture of pioneer Kenyan settler society and the twin attractions of Kenya to the settler community: farming and hunting. The latter resulted in the popularisation of Kenya as the hunter's paradise, which in turn laid the foundation for the subsequent branding of the country as the tourist's paradise – a brand that remains to date.

An important figure in the Kenyan settler traditions was the white hunter. Largely a product of this settler aristocracy, the white hunter was part of a specific tradition, in which hunting according to the dictates of the English hunt exported to the colony, soon came to form a distinctive register of whiteness. As Steinhart further notes,

> it was necessary to distinguish the Kenyan white hunter from other professional hunters who hunted for the market, either in meat, skins or trophies. White-ness among these Kenyan professionals came to symbolize their virtues of honesty, probity and courage befitting sportsmen. […] *Whiteness would be worn as a badge of honour, distinguishing sporting gentlemen from the lesser breeds outside the law and custom of the hunt* (2006:132, emphasis added).

Steinhart gives a detailed exploration of this tension between hunting and farming leading up to the development of a wildlife conservation ethos in Kenya. For him though, an interesting contradiction in this twin pursuit lay in the need to clear tracts of land for cultivation, the need to protect crops and livestock from destruction by marauding herds of wildlife, and the need for wildlife conservation. Tracing the history of hunting and conservation discourse in Kenya, from colonial to post-colonial Kenya, and drawing on the auto/biographies of various pioneer settlers and hunters, Steinhart notes that "settler destruction of wildlife habitat through fencing, clearing and burning as well as intense predation, constituted white settlement as the single most important factor in the decline of game numbers during the first half of the twentieth century" (2006:98). In addition, settlers were also merchants and traders in game products (ibid). Yet poaching in Kenya has historically been framed as a black affair.

When it eventually took root, the ethos of wildlife conservation largely excluded the local communities living near these conservation areas, especially the Maasai, the Waata and the Kamba. In many ways, this may have been a spin-off result of the privileging of sport

hunting and the denigration of subsistence hunting in keeping with the dictates of the Kenyan white hunter tradition. Predictably, Steinhart notes, African conservation approaches and methods were totally ignored in the emergent game conservation enterprise. In a bizarre twist, Africans soon found themselves being treated as the prime suspects and poachers, while wildlife conservation remains whitened, an ethos captured in the title of Steinhart's book, "Black Poachers, White Hunters". This discourse laid the foundation for the appropriation of wildlife conservation as an important cultural practice of whiteness. Against this background, we begin to see the construction of the hunting safari and later wildlife photography, wildlife safari and conservation as white cultural practices in Kenya.

These discursive practices were continued in post-colonial Kenya; further deepened by the profiling of Kenya as a prime wildlife tourist destination for international markets. The fascination with wildlife watching and wildlife tourism in Africa has historically been constructed as a white preoccupation. At the core of wildlife tourism, lies what Steinhart describes as "the mystical oxymoron of safe-danger" (2006:132).

The tourism industry in Kenya is officially touted as one of the key drivers of the country's economy. In popular imaginaries, however, the figure of the tourist is associated with whiteness, wealth and privilege. Indeed, in Kenya, as in many parts of Africa, wildlife tourism lay at the core of colonial leisure, and despite the gradual emergence of the black wildlife tourist, it remains embedded in a white cultural

bedrock[72]. Despite the official promotion of the tourism industry in Kenya, there is bitter resentment towards tourists among the local populations living near key game reserves. This resentment is based on, among other things, perceptions of tourist arrogance; perceptions of preferential treatment of tourists; and feelings of exclusion from the economic gains of the tourism industry. As John Akama observes about the Maasai, for instance, they;

> Incur immediate and direct social and environmental costs from tourism development and wildlife conservation; they suffer damage by park wildlife and forgo the opportunity of using this protected land for agricultural production; but insignificant amounts of the country's tourism receipts trickle to the Maasai in areas adjacent to the attractions (1999b:716).

A Maasai elder Nkonina Songoi candidly captures this resentment of tourists and the tourism industry broadly:

> Tourists pass here constantly from one park to another. We have no relationship with them. They come and leave, knowing nothing of us. If someone is dying by the road, they don't stop. They knock down calves and goats and don't stop. These people must be human. It's our land they cross to get to the park. Surely they must stop and talk to us if they kill an animal. [In addition] wildlife coming off the parks, - particularly Amboseli – are all over our land now. They don't ask permission. But if we cross into the park, with our cattle, the Rangers chase us out with Land Rovers and helicopters (Sayer 1998:60).

[72] See for instance Njabulo Ndebele's "Game Lodges and Leisure Colonialists: Caught in the Process of Becoming" (1999) for a fascinating reflection on wildlife tourism and black tourists' encounters with it.

In many ways, the postcolonial tourism and wildlife conservation industry continues the master-slave dialectic described by Nuttal above, where Maasai participation is confined to the very bottom of the food chain, as curio vendors, traditional dancers and photographic subjects.

In view of this, the two Delamere killings, – both of which evoked the question of poaching and game conservation – the concern with poaching in Kenya in the film *Ivory Hunters*, and the framing of the Julie Ward death along discourses of wildlife tourism and conservation speak to each other in ways that surface the mobilisation of wildlife and conservation as an important vector in postcolonial whiteness. However, it is a vector which has been unable to, or disinterested in shedding the cloak of contradictions and tensions embedded in the formation of settler Kenya as "white man's country". This is the background against which we read wildlife tourism and conservation as white cultural practices in the film, *Ivory Hunters*, the Cholmondeley killings and the Julie Ward case.

6.3 Poachers and Murderers: *Ivory Hunters* (1989) and the Cholmondeley Killings

An important clue to understanding whiteness as a constructed cultural hegemon lies in the fact that empire "was an act, a theatrical performance staged before a captive audience of millions of colonized subjects" (Steinhart 2006:209 citing Cannadine 2001) or as Alfred Lopez puts it, understanding "the power of whiteness as contingent upon a performance of white power" (2005:13). This observation speaks to James Scott's idea of the importance of public transcripts in the maintenance of hegemonic power. As he

reminds us, “if subordination requires a credible performance of humility and deference, so domination seems to require a credible performance of haughtiness and mastery” (1990:11). One medium that has repeatedly lent itself to the construction and performance of whiteness across the world is film. The film *Ivory Hunters*, released a year after Julie Ward's death in Kenya continued this tried and tested tradition in the construction of whiteness in Africa.

Alongside its reputation as a wildlife tourism paradise, Kenya also enjoys a reputation as a preferred destination for wildlife conservation. Over the years, Kenya has produced dozens of conservationists and attracted an array of wildlife conservation projects and ranch-owning game farmers. Among the better known figures are Joy and George Adamson of the Born Free Foundation and Kuki Gallman of the Gallman Foundation. The three conservationists' work gained greater publicity through wildlife documentaries and feature films set in Kenya, the better known ones being Adamson's *Born Free* (1966) which tells the story of Elsa an orphaned cub that the Adamsons rescue from the wilds and nurse to adulthood. Kuki Gallman's feature film, *I Dreamed of Africa* (2000) is an autobiographical narrative about her life in Kenya and her involvement in wildlife conservation. The film *Ivory Hunters* is therefore a continuation of a distinct, well-developed film genre in Kenya, which, though set in the country, tells the narrative of white involvement in wildlife conservation. Over time, the white wildlife conservationist has grown into a stock figure in Kenyan white society; the white hunter reincarnate. Dr. Maria Edmonson in *Ivory Hunters* is moulded around such a figure, a fictional version of Kuki Gallman or Joy Adamson.

Ivory Hunters tells the story of Dr. Maria Edmonson, a zoologist based in a game reserve in Kenya. She is passionate about wildlife conservation, and particularly, protecting the elephant from imminent extinction through poaching. Liz Page, an American research assistant to an American novelist Robert Carter, travels to Kenya, and goes to the game reserve to do research for Carter's next novel about the poaching industry. Liz goes on a game drive and in the process she accidentally stumbles upon elephant poachers in the act and takes their photographs. The poachers notice and capture her. Liz disappears for a few days, as her host, Maria, and the writer, Rob Carter, search all over for her. Days later, her mutilated body is recovered. This murder is followed by a long search for her killers, and their eventual arrest, with the assistance of the novelist – now turned conservationist – and Maria.

Liz Page's murder in the film echoes aspects of the Julie Ward case. Liz's trip to the game reserve and her murder as she photographs elephants echoes Julie Ward's trip to Maasai Mara, her interest in wildlife photography. Further, the narrative in *Ivory Hunters* strongly echoes speculation about the circumstances surrounding the Julie Ward death and the possibility that she may have stumbled across poachers in the vast Maasai Mara Game Reserve. These close parallels and allusions to the circumstances surrounding Julie Ward's death make the film an interesting text for our study. Despite the vast differences in narrative and the fiction-fact divide between Julie Ward's and Liz Page's murder, it is an important text in making visible what Gillian Whitlock calls "a paradigmatic circuitry" (2000: 116) that may shed light on our understandings of postcolonial whiteness.

In *Ivory Hunters*, after Liz's disappearance, subsequent murder and the finding of the photographs of her murderers, Maria and the novelist, Carter, join hands with the local police in their hunt for the poachers. The Kenyan police, having failed to catch the poachers, who are decimating elephants at an alarming rate, decide to use captured ivory as bait, through Carter, who pretends to have turned from writing to implementing the narrative of his upcoming novel, by actually doing what his protagonist in the novel does: stealing captured ivory from a warehouse in Mombasa. He therefore persuades the poachers to team up with him and steal this ivory. The poachers buy into this idea and are eventually caught and stand trial for murder and poaching.

Although the idea of baiting the poachers with captured ivory is initially conceived by the Kenyan Commissioner of Police, the ultimate victory belongs to Carter, to whom the film grants agency, as the Kenyan police are portrayed as having been hitherto incapable of meaningful interventions in breaking the poaching ring. The film evokes the Christian missionary interventions of earlier times. Underpinning this messianic intervention is a scripting of a proactive whiteness which stands in contrast with African helplessness. In the film, Liz Page literally lays down her life in an attempt to protect the elephants; and later, Carter risks his life as he sets the trap to catch the poachers, since, if they catch on to his mission, they will kill him too.

The use of the trope of messianic intervention in African crises in the film speaks to what Lopez describes as "the self-sacrificing, self-destructing white (fe)male rebel as a trope

of the new postcolonial whiteness, a paradoxically self-serving figure who would allow whites to retain their central status as “emancipators” and thus their power and privilege" (Lopez 2005:22). Citing Richard Dyer, Lopez underscores the ways in which white subjects adopt a distancing mechanism that sustains a “collective willed blindness essential to both the maintenance of white cultural hegemony and the avoidance of accountability” (Lopez 2005:22-3). As he writes

> Such distancing also allows for what Dyer calls the “exquisite agony” (206) of white liberal guilt, which likewise seeks to appease and appeal to the other’s capacity for orderly dissent while surrendering little of its own entrenched privilege (2005:22-3).

Lopez and Dyer's ideas here underscore the mobilization of the messianic figure of the white wo/man in the construction of postcolonial whiteness, and its continued maintenance of the privileges that accrue from whiteness, at a time when colonial myths of white supremacy and black subordination are no longer viable. This figure of the white messiah is an interesting example of the new grammars of postcolonial whiteness, which re-invents the colonial missionary grammar, and to that end retains the notion of Africans’ lack of initiative, and their need for redemption.

This messianic figure in *Ivory Hunters* stands in contrast with the Cholmondeley killings. Wildlife feature prominently in the two Cholmondeley killings. The absurd paradox in the case over the protection of wildlife would seem to reduce it to a question of contested ownership of the wildlife in Soysambu Ranch. In the first incident, Cholmondeley shoots dead a KWS warden, in the process of arresting his employees on charges of illegal trade

in game meat, seemingly with Cholmondeley's full knowledge. In the second incident, he kills a man for poaching impala on his Ranch[73]. At the core of this conflict though, seemed to be the old question of ownership of wildlife. This is an issue that has haunted wildlife conservation in Kenya since colonial times (Steinhart 2006:212-214). For KWS spokesperson Connie Maina, "all the wildlife in the country belongs to the government and KWS is the custodian. You have to go with what is the law, but Tom Cholmondeley made his own rules."[74]

In both *Ivory Hunters* and the Cholmondeley killings, the masternarrative of wildlife conservation represents an important platform for the performance of whiteness in postcolonial Kenya. Like the white hunter described by Steinhart above, in postcolonial Kenya, the white conservationist too would seem to wear their whiteness as a badge of honor, now distinguishing animal conservationists from poachers. Thus, in *Ivory Hunters*, Maria with her doctoral degree and her sensitive passion for conservation, would seem to have inherited the mantle of whiteness from the white hunter, as she epitomizes animal conservation as an important marker of contemporary whiteness in which, as Whitlock writes in a different context, "humane feelings towards animals [are] associated with an enlightened view and a revolution in perceptions of relations between human and animal

[73] Joshua Hammer's "The Kenyan Cowboy" sheds some light on the Cholmondeley – KWS conflict. According to him,

> In November 2003, the KWS banned the practice of animal culling on the country's private ranches, claiming that the existing programme – in which ranchers were permitted to shoot a small amount of their wildlife each year to prevent overgrazing and other environmental damage – was poorly controlled and that many ranchers were cheating. Connie Maina, the KWS spokesperson, told me, "The system was being abused and ignored, and the numbers of zebra, gazelles and buffalo were dropping fast". Cholmondeley allegedly ignored the KWS prohibitions, claiming they were hurting the ranch's cattle. Cholmondeley had been appointed an honorary game warden by the KWS in the nineties, and he and fellow ranchers claimed that he had the right to shoot wild animals that he deemed a threat to his property, his cattle, or his staff (2006: 6).

[74] Quoted in Hammer (2006:6).

worlds" (2000:136). On the opposite extreme are the poachers, who, in both *Ivory Hunters* and the Cholmondeley killings, are associated with blackness; itself a reversal of roles, when read against settler history in Kenya and its involvement in the extermination of wildlife.

Ivory Hunters further speaks to the contradictions inherent in the modernity – savagery nexus that remains at the core of constructions of white subjectivities and their relationship with wildlife tourism in Africa. This is more so in view of Donna Harraway's reminder about "nature's discursive construction as "Other" in histories of colonialism, racism, sexism and class domination" (1992: 296). Harraway captures the tensions that lay at the core of wildlife tourism's fascination with 'safe danger', which in many ways replicates colonialism's ambivalent construction of Otherness as at once an object of desire and derision (Bhabha 1983:19). The contradiction in Julie Ward's death, as in *Ivory Hunters*, lies in the intersection between fascination with the wild and the simultaneous construction of Africans as both living outside modernity and defiled by an aborted modernity. This contradiction illustrates the tensions that beset constructions of postcolonial whiteness using discursive tools curved out of colonial whiteness. But how did Julie Ward's presence, death and the subsequent quest for her killers as narrated in the three books speak to these discourses?

6.4 Julie Ward and Postcolonial Whiteness in Kenya

Ivory Hunters' narrative reveals postcolonial whiteness to be preoccupied with the contradictions of modernity's claim to progress and civilization at the expense of the

moral duty of protecting nature for posterity. In some ways, the film enacts a certain battle of conscience, a performed atonement for the destructive effects of modernity, which has created networks of markets for ivory. Yet, notably, this performed battle of conscience while interrogating the destructive aspects of modernity, simultaneously clings to the privileges afforded white characters by modernity. In the film then, we see the deployment of Africa as a discursive terrain for dramatizing postcolonial whiteness and its challenges. Whitlock captures this discursive capacity of Africa, in this case Kenya as a useable terrain for articulating these concerns:

> The natural environment [in Kenya] is particularly responsive to very different kinds of intellectual and physical uses of Africa for the West: on the one hand, the plains and the highlands, the vegetation and the variety of wild animals available for romantic visions of the loss or discovery of an essential life in nature (2000: 113-14).

In her analysis of settler fiction in Kenya, Elsie Cloete describes the pervasive representation of Kenya as an idyllic land, often captured in the "sense of landscape, location and space untrammelled by Europe's urban congestion" (2002:9). Simon Gikandi (1984), too, notes that settler fiction celebrated the land as a dual icon of a wilderness to be tamed and conquered through modern agricultural technology and an eroticized landscape that appears like a work of art, which promises healing and rejuvenation.[75] These readings allowed African landscapes to be constructed as Edenic

[75] Anne McClintock makes a similar argument in her discussion of what she terms "porno-tropics". As she writes: "renaissance travellers found an eager and lascivious audience for their spicy tales, so that, long before the era of high Victorian imperialism, Africa and the Americas had become what can be called a

wildernesses endowed with a certain savage innocence and beauty that the fast modernizing West yearned for, as a rejuvenating breath of primordial purity and tranquillity.

A similar yearning persists in contemporary tourism in the case of Africa. As Tom Selwin points out,

> contemporary tourists locate the "Other" (frequently a pre-modern Other) […] in a world which is in some way more whole, structured and authentic than the world they inhabit cognitively most of the year […] The tourist goes on holiday in order cognitively to create or recreate structures which modernity is felt to have demolished (1996:2).

Contemplating the Maasai Mara landscape in *A Death in Kenya*, Michael Hiltzik laments the desecration of the once-authentic primordial jungle that was the Mara, by the trappings of modernity:

> For all its fame, Maasai Mara is not exactly the place to contemplate nature in an atmosphere of serenity. The songs of hundreds of species of birds are often drowned out by the engine drone of aircraft …. It might even be true that some of the romance of seeing the wild animals in their natural habitat has been drained away by the Mara animals' easy familiarity with humans and their green tour vehicles (1991:70).

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porno-tropics for the European imagination – a fantastic magic lantern of the mind onto which Europe projected its forbidden sexual desires and fears" (1995:22).

This fascination with notions of purity, pure savagery and wilderness unpolluted by modernity which lie at the core of African tourism can be traced back to the colonial era, where figures such as the white hunter and safari were an important part of the colonial leisure repertoire. This repertoire mediated colonial knowledge of the people, wildlife and landscape of Kenya, which the tourists were seen to be capable of negotiating, photographing and describing. Travel and settler fiction writers such as Karen Blixen, Robert Ruark and Elspeth Huxley played an important role in the construction of this archive and with time helped to define and construct Kenya as a tourist destination.[76]

While tropes of exoticism and the purity of nature owe their genesis to settler representations of Africa, they have continued to be produced in post-colonial Africa as part of the commodification of African countries as tourist destinations. Tourism, an industry which primarily thrives on the admiring foreign gaze, has been a core contributor to the economies of many African states for a long time. In Kenya, there has been sustained marketing of the country as a tourist destination, a process that has coded the beaches, wildlife, cultural artefacts and various ethnic groups into the recognizable brand of 'tourist Kenya'. Wildlife tourism represents another face of postcolonial whiteness in Kenya, which rubs shoulders with wildlife conservation. Indeed, the two feed off each other and are largely mutually sustaining. The archive of tourist discourses about Kenya and Africa framed Julie Ward's presence in the Maasai Mara.

[76] See particularly Karen Blixen's *Out of Africa* (1937), Robert Ruark's *Uhuru* (1962) and Elspeth Huxley's *The Flame Trees of Thika: Memoirs of an African Childhood* (1959).

When she left Britain for Kenya on her first trip to Africa, Julie Ward told her parents she was going to Africa "to photograph the Jumbos" (Ward 1991:23). On her third and last trip to the continent, Julie Ward was part of an overland trip from England, across the Sahara desert, down through central Africa, into Kenya. As a tourist, she was positioned within this web of ideas about tourist Africa; a positioning that Jeremy Gavron (1994) and Michael Hiltzik (1991) reproduce in their reconstruction of Julie Ward's trip to Africa. In the opening chapter of his book, Gavron describes Maasai Mara thus:

> The Maasai Mara National Reserve lies towards the south-west corner of Kenya, just one hundred and twenty miles, but a different world from the capital, Nairobi. Its high grass plains and shimmering hills, freckled with flat-topped acacia trees, have hardly changed, tourist lodges and prowling prides of Land Rovers and minibuses apart, for a thousand years. During the day, a multitude of creatures – wildebeest, zebra, giraffe, elephant, lion, cheetah – swelter beneath the high, equatorial sun and a vast blue sky that seems to stretch up for ever. On moonless nights, the darkness is so absolute that whole galaxies invisible in the European sky wink and glitter like dust caught in a distant shaft of light (1994:1).

In this opening paragraph of his novel, Gavron sets in place the lens of his Edenic Africa. This Africa retains a certain purity, undamaged by modernity which seems to have clogged European skies.

A similar template is evident in Hiltzik's description of the Maasai Mara as "this place of primordial natural savagery" (1991:4), a description that draws on a distinct lexicon in

the grammar of African tourism. Hiltzik goes on to describe the impact of Africa on Julie Ward upon return from her first two trips to the continent:

> [Julie] packed the camera gear …and went off to photograph animals in the best place on earth to see them: Kenya. When she came back to work a few weeks later, Rowland [Julie's boss] could not help noticing something different. There was a new glow in her eyes, as if she had discovered a new possibility in life. A year later, she took a second trip to Kenya, and this time she seemed entirely changed. "By the time she came back from that trip" Rowland said later "her heart was there. She had just fallen in love with it". (1991: 15).

From her experience, Kenya and Africa live up to the rejuvenating, healing power associated with it in colonial/settler literature and which remains an important attraction in postcolonial tourism. The landscape and wildlife seem to revitalize Julie Ward, putting a new glow in her eyes and opening up new horizons of possibilities in life. As her father observes, "Muff returned with a million magic memories of wild, remote places where at night huge stars hang low and bright in an unpolluted sky. A few of those stars stayed in her eyes" (Buckley 1998: n.p.).

Hiltzik describes Africa as having "a way of beckoning, unseen but deep in the spirit, to those given to wanderlust" (1991: 16), thereby lending the continent a spiritual mysticism, to which, he suggests, many have yielded. He gives us a roll-call, starting from Mungo Park, David Livingstone and Henry Stanley and coming down to the owner of Ho-Bo Trans Africa Expeditions, who organized the overland trip on which Julie Ward came to Africa, Jo Jordan. Jordan "heard the beckoning" after completing her solicitor's

training. Mystical Africa lived up to her legendary reputation and rescued Jordan from a monotonous career that "stretched towards infinity" (1991:16).

Imaginings of Africa as an exotic landscape with this revitalizing power sit side by side with another set of representations: Africa: the crisis-ridden continent. The two represent two sides of the same jungle: Africa the tourist's paradise, boasting a broad range of wildlife, spectacular landscapes and exotic cultural practices on the one hand, and Africa the crisis-ridden jungle teeming with disease, poverty, violence and corruption, epitomized by the failed postcolonial state on the other. The two imaginings of Africa are separated by a thin wall, which frames them as belonging to two different planes of experience; the Edenic paradise reserved for the pleasure of an elite, predominantly white tourist market, and the crisis-ridden jungle, the preserve of underprivileged locals.

In the light of this, Julie Ward's violent death in the Maasai Mara Game Reserve constituted a discursive rupture. Ward's death crumbled the discursive edifice which clearly distinguishes the tourist as the acting subject and sampler of exotic pleasures; a script which excludes the possibility of violent death in a game reserve. In the mysterious death, coupled with the various state institutions' poorly concealed attempts to sabotage the search for the killers, the two jungles – normally separated by a fairly rigid wall – were crudely conflated. The Garden of Eden had been defiled.

The title of Jeremy Gavron's *Darkness in Eden* succinctly captures this defilement of the innocence and beauty of tourist Kenya, by the callous murder of an innocent woman. By

covering this Eden with darkness, Gavron captures the sense of rupture that Julie Ward's death in this primordial site represented, as the garden sank into the Conradian heart of darkness. In this fall from grace, Africa relapses into the white wo/man's grave, ironically not from tropical diseases and the equatorial heat – which modernity has successfully conquered – but at the hands of callous locals[77] in a rogue postcolonial state.

Describing his stay at Keekorok Lodge in Maasai Mara on the night of the day his daughter's remains were found, Ward writes:

> I was in the farthest room from the lodge restaurant, across the large lawn. A native show was on that night and drums beat continually. Dancers with spears and painted faces stamped and pranced to the rhythm. Out beyond the lights, loud across the bush came the sound of animals as they snarled, roared and screamed through the darkness. To me, the sounds were like some primitive prehistoric hell on earth. How I loathed that place (Ward 1991: 85).

Ward's loathing for the wilderness that had hitherto been eroticized, and which had attracted his daughter to Kenya and the Maasai Mara in the first place is striking. The continuities between 'prancing' and 'stamping' natives, with the snarling, roaring and screaming wildlife just 'beyond the lights' in the bush is suggestive. But most interestingly, albeit inadvertently, Ward here captures the defilement of this Edenic tourist paradise. Yet at the same time, at the core of Ward's book – itself a monument to his daughter's memory - and all the other tributes to Julie Ward's memory, lay the idea of

[77] P.D. Curtin (1961) describes the "the white man's grave" as including the '"primitive tribes', burning heat, fever-laden swamps, swarming insects and miles of trackless jungle" associated with West and Central Africa. In our case, Julie Ward's killers were not profiled in the trope of primitive tribes *per se*, but in terms of a modern variant of the primitive tribes' violence.

wildlife conservation and protection, coupled with the idea of the vulnerability of wildlife and white women to black male violence as Whitlock (2000) notes.

In the discourse of wildlife conservation, twined with the vulnerability of the white woman, we begin to understand John Ward's framing of his text *The Animals are Innocent*, in ways that foreground Julie Ward's love for wild animals. This is captured in the iconic picture of the Julie Ward case, with Julie Ward hugging an orphaned baby chimpanzee at an animal orphanage in Cameroun. By selecting this as the emblematic photo of Julie Ward after her death, Ward underscores a shared vulnerability to black violence[78], which Gavron further underlines by juxtaposing "the innocence of the animals and the white woman, over and against the preparedness of black men to slaughter both" (Whitlock 2000:115) by drawing parallels between the 1988 burning of ivory that Gavron describes, with the burning of Julie Ward's remains in the wilderness. As Whitlock notes

> The burning of the tusks episode in *Darkness in Eden* further harkens back to Gavron's graphic reconstruction of the burning of Julie Ward's body in the Maasai Mara by her killers, and so develops a further association between the woman and the wildlife as victims (2000:115).

Incidentally, the burning of the ivory scene also emerges in *Ivory Hunters*, with similar echoes, as it reminds us of the cold blooded butchering of the elephants and the research assistant in a callous spray of bullets. Like Gavron, *Ivory Hunters*, presents the white woman and wildlife as equally susceptible to the same kind of (black male) violence.

[78] This coupling of both the white woman and wild animals as victims of the black man's violence can be traced further back to the writing of Robert Ruark on colonial Kenya. In *Uhuru* for instance, Ruark juxtaposes what he sees as African violence against animals - captured in the Mau Mau's oathing ceremonies, in which domestic animals are brutally killed - with their violence against white women, as seen in the decapitation of Katie Crane, an American tourist.

It is unsurprising that the memorials to Julie Ward's life all had the theme of wildlife conservation at their core. Among these was a coffee table book of pictures of wild animals that she had taken on her last trip to Kenya and her letters to her family, as she traveled across the continent towards Kenya. The book, suggestively titled *Gentle Nature,* is published by the Born Free Foundation and proceeds of the book went towards the creation of a lion sanctuary in Uganda as a memorial to Julie Ward. Her jeep was "converted into an open-top with her name on the side and donated to the Gallman Memorial Foundation […] which provides sanctuary for wildlife" (Buckley, n.p.) The book remains a powerful expression of the vacuating gaze discussed in Chapter four of the study, in a sense, a fitting sequel to John Ward's equally suggestive *The Animals are Innocent*. The privileging of wildlife in all the monuments to Julie Ward's memory was consistent with the selective gaze that mediates the practices of African tourism, which deploys a vacuating gaze that only picks up wildlife, wilderness, and 'noble savages', who have earned their place beside the wildlife.

6.5 Conclusion

If the enlightenment project and broadly Western modernity implied containment, discipline and boundary erection, then this was fissured in Africa's wilderness by the aggressive masculinity of the black man. For Anne McClintock, British imperial conquest entailed "the feminizing of terra incognita [which] was, from the outset, a strategy of violent containment" (1995:24). As she writes "land is named as female as a passive counterpart to the massive thrust of male technology (1995:26). These dynamics of white

male authority would appear to play themselves out in the Julie Ward case, *Ivory Hunters* and the Cholmondeley killings.

The figure of white male authority suggests the possibility of postcolonial whiteness in Kenya being preoccupied with the re-insertion of white male authority. It is notable that the three sets of narratives – Julie Ward's death, *Ivory Hunters* and the Cholmondeley killings – all seem to figure white men engaged in a struggle with black men over wildlife and white women. Apart from the fact that all the three books on the Julie Ward matter are written by white men, her father, John Ward stood at the forefront of the quest for truth and justice, and found himself taking on a predominantly black male Kenyan state infrastructure. Similarly, in *Ivory Hunters*, Robert Carter is the one to take on the black male poachers, while the Cholmondeley killings would seem to have been as much about wildlife as about the contestation for authority between the white male Cholmondeley and the black Kenyan poachers, and KWS. But it is the later institution that draws interesting links across the three sets of narratives, primarily in the figure of another white male Kenyan, Richard Leakey.

In a curious, yet telling coincidence, both Gavron and Hiltzik close their books on the Julie Ward case by lingering on the appointment of Richard Leakey as the head of the KWS. The two reveal strong optimism in Leakey's capacity to bring back stability in the chaos and rupture of the tourism industry illustrated by the mutual vulnerability of white women and wildlife to black male violence. Less than a decade later, the Moi government appointed Richard Leakey the head of civil service. Commenting on this, Apollo Amoko

(1999) notes the paternalist representation of Leakey as Kenya's messiah in British media.

On the whole, wildlife tourism and conservation emerges as an important platform for the performance of whiteness in postcolonial Kenya, yet this register has failed to break away from its colonial roots, which were mired in tensions and contradictions that were later to haunt the Julie Ward case. Further, as our discussion reveals, this postcolonial whiteness in Kenya remains a highly gendered one, at the heart of which lies a nostalgic struggle to affirm and restore a white male authority reminiscent of that of the settler colony.

7 CHAPTER SEVEN: Engaging Modernity

In the introductory chapter of this study, I alluded to Ezeulu's tragedy in Achebe's *Arrow of God* as one that speaks to this study's attempt to piece together the multiple truths that marked the tragedy of Julie Ward's death in Kenya. While acknowledging the importance of getting to the bottom of the Julie Ward death in the interests of truth, justice and closure, the study examined the social truths that were inscribed in the case, and the ways in which Julie Ward's death in Kenya and the subsequent quest for her killers convened a set of contact zones which provided an important canvas on which various concerns were debated in the course of the interactions between the various constituencies.

This study builds on existing scholarship on the postcolonial African state, which engages with the conceptual and empirical reach of binary categories of understanding the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized; and by extension, Africa and Europe. Where much of the existing literature dismisses such binaries as a thing of the past, and celebrates their demise with such 'inclusive' discourses as multiculturalism, hybridity and globalization, our study points to different conclusions. Firstly, far from being extinct, these binaries continue to be mobilized in understanding contemporary Africa/ns; perhaps not with the same crudeness, but certainly from the same impulse. Secondly, the study found, far from fixing Africa/ns immutably under an oppressive gaze, within the deployment of these binaries are interesting sites for subversion, resistance and critique. It is against this background that this study's exploration of the contact zones that were convened by the Julie Ward case revises our understandings of modernity,

especially in relation to its pillars of rationalism/reason, unity of the subject and their assumptions about Africa.

The study revealed that Julie Ward's death in Kenya took place in a complex discursive terrain marked by layer upon layer of interests, values and anxieties. These discursive terrains inevitably tinted interpretations of the Julie Ward case, and to a large degree, framed the concerns that were later to be inscribed on the death. Thus, while the Ward family and the three books approached the case from their vantage point within British colonial archives about Africa/ns, Kenyan publics positioned themselves at the third corner of the triangle between the Ward family, the Kenyan state and the local publics. It is from this position that they speculated on the circumstances surrounding Julie Ward's death.

In the contestations over the portrait of Julie Ward in Kenyan and British imaginaries, the one trope that cuts across the two constituencies is the Madonna – Whore dichotomy, where both sides appeared to celebrate a virginal, victimized Julie Ward, whose virtue was a hotly contested issue in their narratives; whether in the British fixation on the 'black peril' rape or in the Kenyan lingering on a criminal political elite's deployment of sexual violence, and the attendant figure of the sexually adventurous tourist. This was an interesting discursive continuity across the British–Kenyan divide, in which we see the interpenetration of the two social imaginaries' concern with policing female sexual and racial purity. Notably, in the British case, this policing of female sexuality goes beyond bland patriarchy, to gesture at a preoccupation with the re-insertion of white male

authority in Africa; indeed, a nostalgic struggle to affirm and restore a white male authority reminiscent of the settler colony's.

If as Mary Douglas notes, "margins are dangerous. Societies are most vulnerable at their edges, along the tattered fringes of the known world" (1966:63), then we can see why, in negotiating the contact zone between Kenya and Britain, Ward, Hiltzik and Gavron grasped at colonial memory, and drew on this archive in making sense of the Julie Ward death in Kenya. These archives in a way provided a familiar cartography for navigating both this moment of rupture and the unfamiliar postcolonial Kenyan terrain. In many ways, the resurgence of ideas drawn from an outdated colonial archive suggests their continued availability and easy re-activation in reading contemporary realities. Indeed, our study suggests that fragments of myths and prejudices about Africa/ns remain embedded in European society's cultural psyche. It is this cultural psyche that helps us to understand the persistent enactment of a certain 'return of the repressed' in British imaginaries, in the form of tropes such as the noble savage, which were deployed in understanding the contact zones between Britain and Kenya. These tropes, it would seem, have been successfully internalised, returning in moments of crisis, such as the Ward death, as part of a primordial, yet familiar grammar of making sense of Otherness, when more contemporary and 'rational' logics fail.

The deployment of these discursive tropes in British imaginaries were found to echo an older binary opposition between what Gikandi, in a different context, describes as "European modernity, epitomized by the rule of reason, and African primitivism

embodied in non-rational systems of cognition" (2002:140). Our discussion revealed the unproblematic transition from a discourse of pre-modern primitivism and savagery, to another variant of savagery, in the political jungle of the postcolonial African state. Thus we see the transition from a subhuman, uncorrupted ‘noble savage’ status, which is still closely aligned to nature, to an amoral, monstrous variant of savagery, embodied by the morally bankrupt Kenyan state institutions and its officials. Implicit here is the notion that Europe’s inherent morality can survive the corrupting potential of modernity – in part because it is also a successfully conceived modernity, rooted in science and the law. African moral faculty however, fails to survive beyond the child-like 'noble savage' stage, as, with the aborted project of modernity, the sense of integrity expected to be achieved concurrently with progress, through rationality, science and law, is also stillborn. Put differently, African morality can only be safeguarded by 'irrational' forms such as metaphysics and religion.

While this recourse to available social imaginaries and discursive tools largely drawn from colonial archives is arguably understandable as a 'summoning of the familiar', these epistemological templates were nonetheless ill-suited to the complex realities of the Julie Ward death in Kenya, which remained illegible to the logics of Western modernity privileged by Ward and the Scotland Yard investigators.

In part due to this reliance on inappropriate templates drawn from British social imaginaries, Julie Ward’s presence in Kenya, her death and the subsequent quest for her killers was consistently haunted by neat dichotomies, derived from various

masternarratives which the death of the young British woman seemed to evoke. One important concern for this study has been the empirical reach of these dichotomies. The study found that these binaries were both disrupted and disruptive. Firstly, the realities of the Ward case – both Kenyan and British - subverted the logics of the received knowledge about Africa/ns that underpin these dichotomies. Secondly, these masternarratives created blindspots which impeded the visibility of the underlying faultlines of deceit and complicity, across the British–Kenya divide. In fact, these polarities were revealed to work as discursive masks which conceal subterranean faultlines, complicities and shared interests. As seen from our discussions, John Ward's bipolar lenses of the Kenya-Britain dichotomy bred in him a naïve faith in the mirage of an uncompromising British sense of justice and moral integrity, which blinded him to possible British complicity in the cover-up; and, paradoxically, made him too trusting and open to manipulation by the British.

If we consider what Jorge Larrain calls the "civilising mission of capitalist expansion and colonialism throughout the world" (1994:21) as one of the products of European enlightenment, then the Ward case offers important commentary on the workings of capital, in the contradictions of British complicity in covering up the truth behind Julie Ward's death. This layered relationship between Kenya and Britain over the Julie Ward case yields further insights into the inner workings of hegemonic structures. Our discussion reveals that beneath hegemonic structures and forces, which often present an image of coherence, often lurk submerged faultlines which contradict the public transcripts they perform; suggesting that hegemonic groups' pursuit of the discourses

they endorse is often constantly in flux, and contingent on a multiplicity of often conflicting interests which shatter the myth of the unity of the subject.

Our discussion on the rumours and allegations regarding the Julie Ward case are particularly insightful in this regard. Perhaps what stands out here is the way in which an oft-neglected and largely discredited medium was able to offer a powerful critique of modern institutions in the postcolonial state, and colonial modernity's legacy. As responses to formalised truths, the rumours and allegations about Julie Ward's death represented an important process of reconfiguring conventional regimes of truth and evidence privileged by modern state institutions, by drawing on the dictates of science and law to formulate its truths, while simultaneously rejecting the two disciplines' hegemonic status in the Julie Ward case. To this end, the rumours critique the notion that "it is precisely in the breakdown of the process of rationalization that life in the postcolony becomes intelligible", which Gikandi (2002:144) situates in Achille Mbembe's work on the postcolony. In fact, the rumours worked within their own system of logics and rationalities, which were founded on a critical engagement with local realities, even though they rejected hegemonic notions of truth as based on legally admissible evidence. In the process, these rumours challenge what Gikandi describes as the re-inscription of the postcolony as a system of signs that differentiates between mind and sense, in an economy of discourse which "posit[s] a split between an autonomous, rational subject and its field of experiences" (2002:144), by illustrating the co-valence of both the rational subject and its experiences.

In an essay titled "The Triple Helix: Nation, Class and Ethnicity in the African State", Michael Schatzberg proposes a useful metaphor for understanding the shifting and often concentric identities people lay claim to in the postcolonial African state. Using the metaphor of a triple-stranded helix of state, class and ethnicity, Schatzberg argues that the three components interact with each other, with each strand variously occupying a dominant position depending on the context and the strategic benefits to be reaped from such foregrounding of a given identity. While Schatzberg uses this metaphor to understand the nature of the state in Africa and its accompanying social dynamics, his ideas are instructive in making sense of the unstable nature of popular sentiment on the Julie Ward death among Kenyan publics. Our discussions in this study suggest that the popular publics laid the blame for Julie Ward's death at the doorstep of a violent state; a state with dark secrets to hide; a state controlled by a powerful elite. Thus, at this level, Julie Ward's death became symptomatic of a predatory state. Yet at the same time, this incrimination of the state did not necessarily translate to sympathy with John Ward's investigations into the circumstances surrounding his daughter's death. Thus, local publics saw no contradictions between the incrimination of the political elite and reveling in a sensational portrait of Julie Ward as a woman of loose sexual mores.

This was an important differentiator between the local imaginaries on the case and the British imaginaries, as articulated in the three books on Julie Ward's death. While the British appeared to cling relentlessly to their neat dichotomies, the local imaginaries were more versatile and nursed a healthy suspicion of absolute truths produced through the

modern state institutions. In a different context, Ikem, a character in Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*, observes:

> In the vocabulary of certain radical theorists, contradictions are given the status of some deadly disease to which their opponents alone succumb. But contradictions are the very stuff of life. If there had been a little dash of contradiction among the Gadarene swine some of them might have been saved from drowning (1987:100).

Ikem's observation here could easily be applied to John Ward's investigations into his daughter's death. In many ways, Ward resolutely clung to received wisdom about Africa/ns and failed to nurse the cautionary skepticism needed in dealing with both the Kenyan and British individuals and institutions. Yet, one must hasten to add, although local imaginaries were resilient, and despite their strong critique of the state, this dash of contradiction was far from healthy in our case; further serving to underscore the often limited reach of popular discourses' oppositional impulses.

In the end, there were two important impediments in the Ward case. Firstly, a failure to imagine new grammars of whiteness, independent of the grammars of colonial whiteness. This went beyond the Wards particularly, and related more broadly to the hegemonic regimes of whiteness in Africa, which Julie Ward, John Ward and the Scotland Yard detectives merely partook of. This failure to cut loose from the logics of colonial whiteness and its aesthetics is seen in the continued deployment of the missionary impulse, with regards to modernity in Africa. Thus, acceding to a popularized discourse of the failure of modernity – and by extension the civilizing mission – in Africa, whiteness in postcolonial Africa continues to be produced through a messianic trope,

largely re-directed to the humanitarian and wildlife conservation industries in the continent. In both cases - well-meaning as they may be – there is an implicit indictment of the failures of the postcolonial African state and its violence; coupled with a white male benevolence, still scripted in grammars reminiscent of colonial messianism. The difference here though, is a new dialectic of cynicism towards the project of modernity in Africa, coupled with disengagement, best articulated through the resort to wildlife conservation, combined with forays to select pockets of the human world to distribute relief to victims of African violence and failed state institutions; victims whose vulnerability has earned them a place beside the wildlife as worthy of protection and rescue. In many ways, this is a shade of the same vacuating gaze that underpins wildlife tourism in Africa, and which goes back to colonial annexation of land that was presumed 'vacant'. What stands out here is the total refusal, failure or inability to engage with Africans outside the logic of white messianism or paternalism.

A second impediment lay in the unquestioning faith in modern legal apparatuses whose definitions of credible truths and admissible evidence were too narrow and stifling, and which were, furthermore, stained by the imprint of colonial modernity's selective distribution of its largesse; a convention the postcolonial African state was sure to inherit, perfect and even re-invest in its incestuous relationships with capital and the mother country. Perceived to be – for whatever reasons – potentially disruptive to this tripartite marriage, the Ward case was unlikely to be resolved in either the Kenyan or British legal institutions. Given the knack of the other tripartite marriage between capital, state power and modernity [and its institutions] for re-inventing itself, while keeping the mask of

modernity-as-progress in place, it is important to heed Gikandi's (2002) call to interrogate the privileged tenets of Western modernity, particularly rationality and the attendant logocentric impulse as they manifest themselves in Africa. The insights developed in this study are a contribution towards that project.

In sum, this study's key contributions lie in its reflections on reason/rationality and the unity of the subject as key tenets of Western modernity which mediated African colonial experience and which continues to mediate Europe's encounter with Africa. The study shatters the myth of a value-neutral modernity, by underlining the layered interests and paradoxes that underpinned colonial modernity and continue to mediate modernity in postcolonial Africa. A second important contribution of the study is in underscoring the continued deployment of neat, hierarchical dichotomies of the Europe-Africa relationship in British imaginaries. However, the study pushes this debate beyond a mere concern with the politics of representation in two important ways: firstly, in underlining the ways in which these dichotomies have been incapacitating to British interests as they simultaneously institute blindspots which make African realities inaccessible beyond superficial realities; and secondly, by surfacing the subterranean complicities that lie submerged under the now cliché notion of centre – periphery dichotomy, especially with regards to the Europe-Africa relationship.

A number of areas for future research suggest themselves from this study. One of this, in Kenya and indeed, Africa broadly, is the question of rumour as an important site of knowledge production, contestation, participation, and indeed, a significant deliberative

medium of the African public sphere. Much of the existing scholarship on rumour takes a largely anthropological slant, which, while incisive, in some ways limits our full appreciation of the medium, and the ways in which it mediates all spheres of social life in Africa. The knowledge production processes that rumours entail can yield interesting insights into popular discursive mechanisms for the interrogation of official modern state institutions, power and socio-political realities in Africa. It would also be interesting to explore discourses and narratives that got inscribed in the other 'suspicious' deaths and events in Kenyan history. So far, to the best of my knowledge, this is the second full-fledged study, after Cohen and Odhiambo's (2004) study on the Robert Ouko murder mystery. Such studies of the Kenyan morgue of suspicious deaths are likely to yield important insights into the project of understanding the African postcolony.

8 Appendix A

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