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Footprints on the winds (a multi-media, multi-lingual, Postdramatic music-theatre script for female voices)

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FOOTPRINTS ON THE WIND.

(a multi-media, multi-lingual, Postdramatic music-theatre script for female voices)

CONTENTS

a) Manuscript/ "libretto".

b) Reflexive essay and appendices for an imagined production.

Sarah Elizabeth Roberts

A creative writing manuscript and reflexive essay submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

Master of Arts (Creative Writing).

Johannesburg 2018.

DECLARATION

I declare that this study is my own original work. Where use is made of the work of others it is indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Arts at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university nor has the work been published or performed.



Johannesburg, February 2018.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dedication:

This work is dedicated to the memory of my grandmother, Natalie Acutt. She was born on board ship in Durban harbour on Christmas Day 1901, some fifty years after Ellen Macleod and the ill-fated *Minerva*.

My memories of her are inseparable from memories of Baleni Ndhlovu who knew her husband, my grandfather, long before she did, having fought alongside him as batman in the First World War. I have known no other grandfather than Baleni.

Thanks:

My thanks go to supervisors Professor Gerrit Olivier and Dr Donato Somma with whom conversations about story-telling, culture and opera have been challenging, inspirational and enjoyable. I acknowledge and am grateful for the maverick sensibilities and rich visual imagination of Stanley Hermans, friend and colleague in the Creative writing class.

ABSTRACT: ***Footprints on the Wind.***

This project synthesizes creative practice with reflections on the concepts and ideas informing the crafting of a script intended for staged performance. This manuscript takes the form of a postcolonial multi-media, multi-lingual "libretto" for female voices. I implement formal innovations within avant-garde performance modes in conjunction with the thematic treatment of issues emerging from postcolonial themes of power/knowledge, transformation and subjectivity. I experiment with an idiom that is polyphonic and multi-perspectival in integrating sung and spoken delivery that is inseparable from the visual world within which it is produced. I have pursued the potential for telling stories of "arrival and settling" in a manner that eschews the model of a unified linear plot (and the conventions of realism) in favour of narration that fuses the sound of the human voice situated within a landscape that is frankly declared as a stage and simultaneously something other than a public platform.

The "libretto" is structured around and developed from the disparate experiences and narratives of three women whose disparate cultural identities and life styles are embedded in how they occupy different terrains and fields of interaction at marked and significant points of history. I pursue the "ordinariness" of episodes in their lives in order to test the extent to which neglected subjects and subjectivities comprise a vital part of the record of colonization. Tropes of arrival and settlement, the challenges of adaptation and transformation play out through exploring the role of language and distinctions between the media of writing and orality, speaking and singing, as much as through tensions between sound and silence, isolation and communal interaction.

In addition to the manuscript and expository document, appendices chart multiple aspects of the project in order to relay the ways in which the disparate theatrical elements allow for this project to stage a meditation on movements through time and space.

This "libretto" tells the stories of three women whose life stories are part of the neglected history of South Africa. The text interweaves the documented accounts of the lives and experiences of Nomguqo Paulina Dhlamini (c 1858 – 1942) and Ellen Macleod (1813 – 1888) who lived in Zululand and the KZN midlands, with the beginnings of the story of a female slave who was the first person from Europe to be "settled" in Africa (having been delivered up to an uncertain fate off one of Diaz's 3 ships which left Lisbon in 1487). The "words" are largely taken from the letters of Ellen Macleod and the oral testimony of Nomguqo Paulina Dhlamini as "dictated to Rev Heinrich Filter".[1] Each character sings in her own language i.e. in isiZulu, English and Portuguese although in this submission the only translation currently completed is the isiZulu. The scripting of the remaining translation (which, along with the confirmation of text ascribed to all characters is necessarily subject to ratification by a composer and director) depends on a production being commissioned. Pragmatism urges experimenting by initiating a production comprising a single strand of the composite project. The Sibikwa Theatre, having collaborated with Themba Mkhize(composer) on *iLembe* (2014 – 2016), is ideally situated to test the isiZulu narrative in performance. Both Smal Ndaba and Phyllis Klotz would be entirely sympathetic to the presentation of heightened text and the stylistic aims and tone of a production in ways that managements and projects associated with larger opera houses are more constrained from doing. The project aims to challenge traditional operatic forms and conventions.

The images and stage action comprise a core feature of the style and tone of the production. The iconography and soundscape are integral to the texture of the whole. The action is set on a landscape that intermittently morphs into a video projection that magnifies and "shows" the written source material on which the stories of two key characters are based. Video projections should fill the entire stage, rather than being confined to screens or the cyclorama. The stage design should accommodate seamless transitions between the spaces established as "the beach" and "the interior" to allow for simultaneous staging. Layering and juxtaposition are part of what the audience is presented with and invited to respond to. Just as live performance is intercut with "recorded speech" during which "characters" listen and respond to their own voices and the words that express their situations, so too, inter-cutting within and between scenes is a means of resisting the linear unity of "realism".

The surtitles and time line fragment the whole into a series of episodes/scenes in addition to providing translations. The audience should see/hear the words and their translation: the act of deciphering past life experiences is a central theme of the project. The montage is organized around thematic correspondences or contrasts.

The roles of the 3 central characters are played by 4 women (2 women play Nomguqo/Paulina). A small chorus of 4 – 6 is required, three of whom would play the supporting characters of the mothers/grandmother as individual roles. Although male voices are required they are imagined as offstage voices. The only visible male figures are the two (silent) figures, one who plays the role of listener/scribe to Paulina and another who takes on multiple different characters in the lives of all three women.

CHARACTERS:

[1] Ellen's story takes place in three distinct periods (1851; 1879 and 1881-1888); Paulina's story takes place circa 1864 and 1925 – 1939/1942 and that of Nomguqo circa 1864 – 1879. The largely fabricated account of Eva's arrival is developed from a fragment in the historical record and her story is told over the period of a few days in 1488.

horizon roughly sketched across the diameter and the floor on both sides, raked to an apex across the middle) would allow for sequential staging and reveals. Alternatively, dividing the stage into three trapezium-shaped, raked planes would utilize the full depth of the stage to suggest a more expansive field of action without necessarily being pictorial or literal. The floor surface should be an uneven explosion of a cubist canvas, textured with layers or mounds of sand which can be dug or allow for objects to be partially buried or submerged. The use of light parchment-like sand/gravel may suggest the tone of rough parchment and will readily allow the projected script to read clearly when projected. Whitened stones and pebbles are scattered strategically across the floor as required.

A scrim placed upstage of the revolve would allow for positioning a raised platform – about 3.000 (or higher) off the deck, disassociated from the surface below – to be revealed as and when required. This level represents the deck of a ship and offers scope for the initial appearance of Eva's mother and grandmother as ethereal phantoms. This same level could be used for the interior of the rock and should accommodate at least three persons. Able to truck on and off stage, the platform should also allow speedy access and exit.

The title, location and time-period of the scenes appear "outside" of the stage landscape to establish the scene. These titles are indicated in bold italic font.

The sequence of projected images comprises an index of mood and atmosphere in terms of colour palette, texture and tone. The subject matter and treatment (changing the proportional relationship of a human figure to the object) is as important as the way in which the selected materials comment on, rather than illustrate, relevant scenes.

All stage directions are given from the viewpoint of the actor.

Changes of time and place are indicated throughout by the surtitles and through changes of light.

In reading the text it must be remembered that the action is wholly continuous and fluid: although there are clearly shifts in time and place there should be no interruption to the flow of the whole; the montage of fragments should emerge as a central feature of the production.

Table of Scene titles, locations and chronology.

Sc.	Year	Title	Location	Characters on stage
1	1487	**... under the Southern cross near the 39th parallel...**	The beach – East coast: the precise location cannot be verified. The site can only be defined approximately. Beach and ocean appear limitless.	Eva Offstage Joao del Infante Portuguese sailors – among them one solo voice Adamastor.
2	1850 1925 c 1870 1487	**"Home is where one starts from..."**	Northern hemisphere, on board ship – co-ordinates of latitude and longitude map the ocean-going voyage. Lemgo – Zululandand (simultanesouly) the Buthelezi umuzi Eva in her established world	Ellen Paulina and Filter Nomguqo Eva, offstage solo sailor.
3	1850	**...the end is where we start from...**	The Port of D'Urban - 29.8587° S 31.0218° E shipwreck	Ellen and chorus as beachcombers. Offstage: Moreland
4	1925 1872 1851	**...between two lives...**	Lemgo – the mission station the route to Cetswayo's kraal The Byrne settlement: 29.8167°S 30.1833°E, 105 kilometres from Durban.	Paulina and Filter. Nomguqo and 4 chorus girls – Zulu (2 might leave early for minor costume change) Eva Ellen, 2 chorus girls – Xhosa.
5	1487	**...in the uncertain time before the morning...**	The beach	Eva, Grandmother, Mother (silent)
6		**Domestic routines** **the dream of a garden**	Ondini – Cetewayo's umuzi 28.3214°S 31.4589°E, just outside Ulundi on the P700 road to Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. Now a cultural and birdlife conservation site. Byrne – the beginnings of a garden. Beach	Paulina and Filter, Nomguqo and girls. John Dunne Ellen Eva
7		**Snakes arrive at Ondini**	Lemgo Ondini Byrne Beachj	Paulina and Filter, Nomguqo and chorus. Ellen Eva
8	1879	**War**	Lemgo Ondini Byrne	Paulina, Filter Nomguqo, chorus Ellen
9	1884	**"..among these rocks.."**	Lemgo The cave interior – Ngwibe mountain, on the eastern side of the Ingwenya range.	Paulina and Filter Nomguqo, chorus, Nomlhlwathi Ellen, (offstage) Ted Macleod Eva, Grandmother, Mother
10		**Leaving Ngwibe**	Lemgo Outside the cave	Paulina, Revd. Filter Nomguqo and chorus girls (Zulu) Gert van Rooyen (silent)
11	1887	**Beginning again**	Lemgo Hlimbithwa – Van Rooyen's farm near Hermannsburg 23. 9431°S 32.778°E	Paulina, Filter Nomguqo, Van Rooyen Eva takes on role of the angel of visitation.
12	1887 1925 1887 1942	**Past and future gather here**	Byrne – the garden at night Lemgo – the mission station Byrne – George Macleod's graveside Lemgo – Paulina's grave	Ellen, offstage evensong choir Paulina and Filter Ellen (offstage) Filter, Paulina, Nomguqo, Chorus as mourners along with all offstage men.
13	1487	**"... in my end is my beginning..."**	The beach	Eva, Nomguqo, chorus as Khoi

SCENE 1: ***"1487..... under the Southern cross near the 39th parallel..."***

Early dawn. The aftermath of a storm.

A sandy beach, a tree trunk – piece of driftwood – and a figure sleeping close beside it. Water downstage – deep enough for a person to stand immersed to mid-calf.

Lights slowly come up on a restless huddled form lying close to the large piece of driftwood, almost indistinguishable in shape and partially merged with the beach sand. She stirs. The slow reveal of the entire expanse of the stage should relay the way in which consciousness slowly returns after a deep sleep in unfamiliar surroundings. The core image is of a single figure, a woman (dressed in restrictive Western dress – corset, long skirts, chemise – which are creased and crusted with salt after months of wear at sea) in an uninhabited landscape. The staging builds towards a tableau of her standing in water, fully dressed. The image may invoke an inadvertent ritual cleansing. Bare arms reveal recent bruises.

The scene is played by the woman in response to two sets of disembodied voices: the multiple voices of Portuguese mariners who have deserted her which she hears in her memory and the solo voice of Adamastor which she conjures in her imagination.

The woman: The world is still.
The air is clean.
The ground beneath my feet is firm and nothing sways beneath me or around me.

She reaches out re-orientating herself after sleep.

The woman: What place is this?
No sound disturbs me.
I have slept alone all night. No man - nor men - have roughly used me.

She sits. Brushes sand from skin, absently, then looks out to sea.

The woman: Such soft sweet sand.
And silence all around me.
All three ships gone. Dias and his men. I see only sea and sand.

She rises. Moving slowly and unsteadily on firm ground, she walks down towards the water edge and is in water to mid-calf. The chaotic sequence of recent events, the storm, sighting inhabitants, the eruption of violence should be suggested through agitated and disjointed rhythms. Through sheer force of will she struggles to contain the sense of disorientation and acute trauma. To the audience:

The woman: But was it yesterday they left me here?
Was it not the day before?
I have no way to know what day it is or where I am.

They are gone. I am alone.
I was out there. I was with them.
I was with them through that storm and what happened after -
After... after all these months of sailing south into the sun.

Those thirteen days and nights –
The power of wind and sea –
With sails half-mast we scarcely did survive waves rising high above us.

What happened after? Land was sighted.
A small herd of cattle... vanished inland.
Further on ... a bay...and people.....the people of this land!

They, of this land had only stones....
My 'masters' came with weapons much more powerful!

Dias picked up his crossbow.
One fell. I saw him fall!

And I was with them.
Bringing fear then death to those who lived here
On this land.

The voices of my 'masters' come back on the wind.
Come back to taunt me ... I hear again
My masters whose plan I could not know.

She stands transfixed. Offstage voices of her memories.

João (offstage): *In Nomine Patris et filis et Spiritus Sanctus,*
Go woman! Go!

Offstage male chorus: Go woman-whore*! (Individual voices, a babble rather than unison).*
Sailors: We sail on.
Sail to fame. On voyage, greater than man yet dared.
Go woman-whore!
We voyage on.
Chart seas and land. Seek routes unknown.

Unnamed sailor: Eva, take this! Eva.

Male chorus: Go woman-whore! Go seek your mate.
The monster of the Cape's dark night.
Go woman-whore! Our voyage continues.
Through wind and water to our glory. *(The voices fade.)*

She sees a small pouch in the sand. Picks it up. Looks out to sea.

The woman: They called me Adamastor's woman.

I do not know this Adamastor that they fear
That mighty voice – they say that guards this southern cape.

What is this place?
This land on which no other steps have trod?
This far shore where I am left alone?

And must I meet this Adamastor, the one the sailors fear?

Return to opening rhythms: I will listen
For the spirits
Of this land and the voices of its people who must surely be around me.

She stands as the world in which she is situated transforms.

Projections begin, initially barely focused biomorphic shapes what we see are microscopic granules of sand and rock intercut with water flowing over rock (enlarged). Dynamism/mobility in contrast with fixity: water and flow, rock and stasis. The image sequence continues throughout Adamastor's aria. A large shadow, perhaps a blot or the indistinct shadow of a human figure "grows" across the images being projected.

Adamastor/Offstage: They call me Adamastor – those pale seamen who so fear me.

I waged war against Gods
And lost, in love, the lovely Thetis of the waves

Just when I thought at last I held the lovely Thetis,
Gentle Thetis, goddess of these waters –
Though she despised me, to her I clung!
My vision cleared. I held
No goddess, no graceful form.
Instead, a rugged mountain fill'd my arms!

And I? Fix'd as rock before a rock I stood
My huge bones no more by blood and marrow warm'd
To horrid piles, and ribs of rock I was transform'd.

Slow dissolve through the image field to reveal the platform upstage which now represents the fragment of one of Dias' three ships with mast and prow: Portuguese pennant/flag.
Projections engulf the entire visual field, absorbing the silhouette of the woman on the log: swirling sea waters, crude maps, under moving water.
Captain João del Infante (the actor in static tableau) stands with a telescope to his eye. The Portuguese flag fluttering in the wind is the only real movement. Swirling water, clouds surround him.

And you, boldest of nations, fired
By pride, by lust for fame inspired,
Who through these, my waves, advance
Where never hero braved my rage before.

Against you, rough mariners, I say,
Eternal war my rocks and storms shall wage!
The next proud fleet shall perish on my coast
In me, the Spirit of the Cape behold.

I guard the pathless strand
And Afric's southern mound,
Unmoving and unmov'd I stand.
Though seamen and poets may one day sing of me.

I will not be mastered.

The projections and lighting cross fades to a clear mid-morning sky. We should have no idea of how much time has passed while "Eva" has been standing listening and looking at the way in which the land around her is not what she took it to be.

The woman: Who is this Prester John? This man that I must seek?
The great unknown king of Africa? And I must seek him?

She tests the weight of the pouch, then opens it as she thinks.

His store of gold and wealth
His riches. *(Takes the samples out of the pouch).*
His Gold. His Pearls.
His Spices I must seek. *(Lets each sample drop from her hands to the sand.)*
To him, I must announce the glory of your God and King
Bring blessings of the Western World
That world from which you claim to bring me. *(Replaces samples in pouch).*
You want his gold.
You will have his
Kingdom and his people!

She remains onstage throughout. Her subsequent interjections continue from within her world. The scene segues into ....

SCENE. 2. *"Home is where one starts from".*

Ellen on board ship, leaning against part of a rail of the ship on which a pad of paper rests. Multi-tasking, Ellen writes and cares for the baby at the same time. The baby is in a bassinet. They should be seen isolated in space well above stage level achieved, through lighting as though through a telescope. Fragments of clouds projected behind her.

Ellen (aged 37) Eighteen fifty, April, twenty-one....

I write from the deck of The Minerva ...

My dear Louisa, the voyage did not start well.
I take advantage of the calm
To begin these lines to send from Plymouth.
On board, we are two hundred and fifty.

Spoken voice over: From so many different parts
But each has crossed the threshold of J.C. Byrne and Co.,
Emigration and Colonization Office,
12 Pall Mall East, in London.

The baby's needs interrupt her. She stops writing. Bends to attend to the baby in the basinette or wicker basket. Returns to looking out to see and writing.

Sings: Three days later.
I was this morning like one risen from the dead.

A moment of silence punctuated by the cry of a seagull. Crossfade to the figures of Paulina and Nomguqo who is set slightly apart from her "other" self so that she can watch and comment on Paulina's actions.

Surtitles announce the scene below: ***Lemgo, Zululand... 1925***

Clear sky and clouds projected onto the cyclorama. Ellen remains visible.

An actor appears as Revd. Filter, a German Missionary (1925 – 1939). He carries several loose sheets of paper and greets Paulina with respect and affection. He does not "see" Nomguqo.

Paulina: v/o Baba Mhlahlela, ufisa ukuzwa ngendaba yempilo yami
uzokwazi ukuthi uyibhale.
(Baba Mhlahlela, you wish to hear my life's story so that you may reduce it to your writing.)

(sings) Indaba yami iyimpilo yami, ngiphila ilanga nelanga nabantu bami.
Ingabe yokho lokhu ofuna ukuqhondisisa uphinde ukubhale?
Akunazifundo kulomhlaba zokuthi ngiphile kanjani.
Akunamlando wabantu bami, kukhona impilo yami phakathi kwabo kuphela.
(My story is my life lived day by day among my people.
Is this what you would understand and write?
There are no lessons for the world in how I have lived.
No history of my people, only my life among them.)

Nomguqo: *to the audience.*

Amagama wami asemzimbeni wami, hayi ezandleni zakhe.
Ezimangazayo impawu azenzayo, Wazini vele?
Umoya owenza amagama wami aphile
Ubhalwe ngedlela engingayethembi.

(My words are in my body not his hand.
What strange marks he makes – what does he understand?
The breath that makes my words alive
Is fixed in ways I cannot trust.)

Lokhu engikukhulumayo, ngelinye ilanga kuyonyamalala, kodwa
Ezikabani izandla eziyothinta leliphepha?
Amehlo kabani ayozama ukungazi?
Angazi kuphela ngalamagama abekwe phansi?

(What I speak will one day disappear, but
Whose hands will one day touch this paper?
Whose eyes will try to know me?
Know me only through the words he sets down?)

Paulina: Ubaba wami wayixoxa indaba yami.
Wabukela abafazi – wezwa amaphimbo wabo.
Uma ngizalwa, indlela yami ibivaliwe- wafafaza amakhambi emalahleni.
Wenza intuthu eyavula indlela yempilo yami.
Ingane yokuqala enkosikazini yakhe ayikonze kakhulu
Okuyuphela kwayo indodakzi ka Nomhlwathi.
Futhi mina nginguye. Nginguye.

(My father told the story.
He watched the women, heard their voices.
At birth, my way was barred – scattered herbs on coals
Made the smoke that cleared my path into this world.
The first child of his favoured wife.
Thus, I was told, was born Nomlhlwathi's only daughter
And I am she.)

Paulina gestures to Filter to write down her words.

Projections: the page of Filter's (German) version of Paulina's Zulu speech fades into focus across the landscape.

Nomguqo has slowly moved to join them. She takes over the story, addressing the audience rather than Filter but simultaneously Paulina (silently) continues to Filter who writes throughout.

Nomguqo: Ngaqanjwa amagama amabili.
Umama wami wangetha ngo Khulumani- okhulumayo.
Elinzulu kakhulu igama engalethwa ubaba.
Nomguqo- oguqayo.
Njengendodakazi yakhe, ngafunda ukugoba amadolo ami.

(I was given two names.

My mother called me Khulumani – Speak Ye!
Much greater was the name my father gave me.
uNomguqo – he named me the Kneeling One!
As his daughter, I learnt to bend my knees.
As I would do before the mighty Zulu king, Cetshwayo.
And I am she.

Both: Umama wadlula emhlabeni ngisemncane.
Wayevela ebuthweni lasbesifane, *Ugudludonga,*
Wakhuliswa ngesikhathi sika Mpande.

(My mother died while I was young.
She came from the female regiment, Ugudludonga,
Raised in Mpande's time.)

Paulina: Umama wami wayeyibutho,
Wayefaka isicholo eNdondkusuka.
Angimazanga isikhathi eside.

(My mother was a warrior,
She wore isicholo at Ndondkusuka.
I did not know her long.)

Nomguqo: Emakhosikazini amane kababa
Owokuqala wazalelwa esigodini sakwa Thusi.
Umama wamadodana amathathu.

(Of my father's other four wives, the first
Was from the Thusi clan – a mother to three sons.)

Paulina: Olandelyo, uMtshali wase Bangisweni.
Wazala umfowethu, uMtiswazwe kanye namadodakazi amabili.

(The next, Mtshali from Bangisweni, bore uMtiswazwe and two girls.)

Nomguqo: Unkosikazi wesithathu, wazalwa engu Mazibuko,
wazala amadodakzi amabili, namadodana amabili
Owesine wayevela emndenini wakwaMyeni
Evela ezintabeni ezikude, uLubombo.

(The third wife, born Mazibuko, had two girls, two boys.
The fourth came from the Myeni family in the Lubombo mountains.)

Filter stops writing momentarily.

Together: Kubonke abantwana, abalishumi kanye noyedwa,
Mina, okuwuphela kwengane yenkosikazi wokuqala, bengiyinkosazana.
Ingane wesizotha nomusa.
Ingane wesizotha nomusa.

(As only child of principal wife it was I that was Inkosazana.
The child of grace and favour.)

Paulina gestures to Filter to resume writing. Gradually the stage floor, a tabular rasa, is filled with projected writing: the stiff pencilled lettering on foolscap which is Filter's hand.
Paulina takes out an orange from her bag or pocket, sniffs it, tests its firmness, then begins to peel it. She does this slowly, sharing segments with Filter. Both listen to the recording that follows: clearly the speaking voices are those of both performers accompanied by underscoring/drone.

Paulina: v/o Kufanele nginitshele kuqala ngobaba wami.

(But, I must tell you first about my father.)

Nomguqo: v/o UMaboya kaMbundulwane Buthelezi wayeyisicebi sezinkomo futhi wayemakhosikazi amaningi.
Wabambe ebugqilini ilunga lasebukhosini baseSwazini.
Umfana lo wabanjwa kweminye yemikhankaso ka Dingane
Maboya kaMbundulwane.

(Maboya Buthelezi was rich in cattle. He had many wives.
He held in bondage a member of the royal Swazi house.
On one of Dingaan's campaigns he captured a boy and the cattle he was herding!)

Paulina: v/o Ibanjwa, inkosana uSinkhunyane Dlamini Nkosi,
Indodana kaMjingwa, indodana kaSobhuza, inkosi waseSwazini,
Wagcina eyisigqila saMaboya! Lowo mfana wagcina eyisigqila.
Wakhulela esibayeni saMaboya.

(The Captive, Prince Sinkhunyane Dlamini Nkosi,
Son of Mjingwa, son of Sobhuza, king of the Swazi's,
Became Maboya's bondsman! That boy became a bondsman
He grew up at Maboya's kraal.)

Both: Kwakunguwe ubaba wami!

(He was my father!)

Nomguqo, to the audience, as Filter writes and Paulina watch.

Nomguqo: sings UMaboya Buthelezi omphunga
Wafika langa limbe kumakhaza, ubaba wami uSikhunyane wahleli nje.
Baxoxa ngoCetshwayo,
Kanye noMpande, inkosi ebesikhulile futhi ibuthaka.
Ngezwa nokuthi u Cetshwayo wasiphumelela kanjani isivivinyo samandla.
Waphakamisa ikhamba ngesikhathi abafowabo bengasakhoni.

Futhi manje, useyinkosana yamaZulu, kufanele akhulise umuzi wakhe.

UButhelezi wase uyahamba.
Ilanga laseliphumile, umuzi washanelwa.
Ngasengiqoqile nasendlini kababa.
Sengilande notshani obude, ngizobushisa, ngizokhanyisa ngabo.
Izinkomo besezisengiwe, izintombi besebesilungisele okuya ethunjini.
Uma engitshela ngekusasa lami.

Mina, njengendodakazi yakhe, ngezwa izinqumo ezathathwa.

Ngeke ngiphinde ngiguqe eziko likababa
Noma nginakelele umlilo wakhe. Kodwa ngozoguqa nsuku zonke phambi kwenkosi.

(The grey Maboya Buthelezi
Came one chilly day as my father Sikhunyane sat.
They talked of Cetshwayo
And Mpande, our king who now grows old and weary.
Cetshwayo won the test of strength
He raised the mighty khamba when his brothers could not do so.
And he, the crown prince must enlarge his household.
Buthelezi then departed.
The sun had risen, the umuzi was swept clean.
I had cleaned my father's hut.
Had fetched long grass stalks to set alight as candles.

The cows were milked, the women had prepared our morning meal.
When he told me of my future.
As I, a daughter, heard what had been decided.
No longer would I kneel at his hearth or tend his fire.
In Future, I should kneel before the king.)

Both: Ngaqanjwa amagama amabili.
Umama wami wangetha ngo Khulumani- okhulumayo.
Elinzulu kakhulu igama engalelthwa ubaba.
Nomguqo- oguqayo.
Njengendodakazi yakhe, ngafunda ukugoqa amadolo ami.

Ngathunyelwa, ngaphiwa
Enkosini enkulu yamaZulu, uCetshwayo.

(I was given two names.
My mother called me Khulumani – Speak Ye!
More important was the name my father gave me.
uNomguqo – the Kneeling One!
As his daughter I learnt to bend my knees. (kneeling)

I was sent, I was gifted
To the mighty Zulu king, Cetshwayo.)

The size of projected writing has been getting smaller so that the page no longer fills the entire floor.
At the end of the scene he hands the papers to the women. Filter leaves.
The writing cross fades into pen and ink English on flimsy sheets of letter paper.
Eva walks through this field of writing.

Eva: I see now why you have brought me with you:
To leave me on shores you dare not master.

Lighting returns to focus on Ellen, still above, on-board ship as her voyage continues. Projections on the cyclorama of sky and clouds have slowly been changing from grey northern hemisphere skies to clear cloudless blue sky.

Ellen: (v/o) I have had five days of sickness and nothing taken but tea and water.
We have not undressed for the last three days
But all laid in bed together.
The wind has been dead against us.
Little baby is very thin. I have him take arrowroot twice a day
And hope he will get fatter. Franky has not been sick at all.
Georgy and the girls are pale and weak.
Write me as passenger to Natal per the Minerva
I will receive it.

She folds the page of paper, kisses it and puts it in her apron pocket before picking up the baby from the bassinette. She begins a crooning improvised lullaby to help time pass. Rocking.

(sings) Hush my baby, see the sea birds.
Hush my little one, see the sky.
Hush now baby, mama's with you.
Hush now baby, sea birds fly.

Eva downstage on floor level. Ellen above.

Eva: I cannot weep
Weep alone in this strange silence.

Ellen begins a second letter.

Ellen (v/o) We are four hundred miles north of the line, but to the south of the Sun.
It is now May eighteen-fifty.

Lights cross fade to focus on Eva who looks out to "sea' in the direction the ship has sailed. A surge of defiance.

Eva: I will not seek another master
Not Prester John nor Adamastor.

Lights return to Ellen who uses her hanky to dab at perspiration on her neck and face.

Ellen: (v/o) We begin to find the heat oppressive.
Little baby is smaller than when we left home.
Write me as passenger to Natal per the Minerva
I will receive it...
It may take months ... I will receive it.

Dissolve light cross fade to Eva. Exit Ellen from above. Eva has been sitting throughout this first day. Mid-afternoon.

Eva: One – I do not know his name –
Called out to me, he called me Eva –

She breaks off, returns to where she was sleeping to look for something. She finds a small bundle. Sits and start to unwrap it. Listens to the wind. Hears a voice, in her mind.

Unnamed sailor: Eva, take this Eva!

The woman/Eva: I am not Eva! *(She opens the small bundle to discover food and a small knife.)*

Lights up on Nomguqo and Paulina who separately look at the pages of paper in their hands. The projection of the floor is static – it is clearly Filter's writing. Zulu and German. As he hands the sheets of paper to Paulina, one by one, unseen by either of them, Nomguqo takes one and moves away from them both.

Nomguqo: Futhi ingabe yiso isiqu samazwi ami?
Futhi nemsindo yelimi lami.

(And are these marks my words?
And sounds not of my tongue.)

Paulina: Manje ungibhala kulamakhasi.
Ubani, ngelinye ilanga ozofunda lamakhasi?

(So now you write me on these pages.
Who will one day read these pages?)

Nomguqo: Umoya wami, izwi lami lizimpawu ezinqabile.
Akusiyona indlela wokubonisa ngempilo yami.
Ngiwumzimba wami nabantu bami...

(My breath, my voice are now strange marks.
This is not the way to share my life.
I am my body with my people....)

Paulina: Indaba yami iselimini lakho kodwa ingabe ngelami na?
Mihlolo mini engena phakathi
Kwalagama engiwakhulumayo kanye nalokhu okubhalayo?

(My story in your tongue...is it yet mine?
What strangeness comes between
The words I speak and what you write?)

Nomguqo: Ingabe yiyona indlela ozongigcina ngawo manje?

(Is this how you would now possess me?)

Paulina: Ngiqiniswe uwena ephepheni. Eminyakeni ezayo
Ubani ozothinta indaba yempilo wami?

(I am fixed by you on paper. In years to come
Whose hands will touch the story of my life?)

Nomguqo: Bese becabanga ukuthi bazongazi

(And think that they can know me?)

Lights build on Eva who breaks a portion of the fish and starts to chew a small piece looking at the knife.

Nomguqo slowly tears a page of paper into pieces and scatters the pieces into the air. Paulina keeps holding the paper that she holds, uncertain what to do with it as the lighting changes.

Paulina: Baba Mhlahlela, uzozwa ngedaba yempilo
Ngiyabona seyimininginginyaka endlulile
Ngaphambi kwami manje, esibukweni senkumbulo yami.
Kunezinto engikhetha ukungakutsheli ngazo.
Futhi kunezinto ezindala angisazikhumbuli kahle.
Imininingwane ayisekho futhi angiyikhumbuli.
Ziyindlela engiyiphilile – futhi akusiyona indaba yami!

(Baba Mhlahlela, you hear the story of my life.
I see the many years gone by
Before me now, in the mirror of my memory.
It is a history of my place among my people.
Their voices are not all here to share the telling,
So the story cannot be complete.
I see the many years gone by

Before me now, in the mirror of my memory.
There are things I do not choose to tell you
And things so long past I cannot relive their freshness
The details gone and not remembered
Are what I have lived - and not my story!)

Transition to the beach. Sunset, early evening.
Dimly lit, Ellen remains on the level above as though on-board ship – she reads what she has written or else looks out at the nothingness of the horizon.
Eva sits on the driftwood looking at the knife. The end of her first full day on land. She has a stick that she has been whittling to a point with the knife. Stops whittling as she notices a bruise on her wrist. Then rubs further bruises up her arm as she turns from herself to look out to sea.

Eva: I watch the clouds
In freedom move across the sky.

She looks at the shape of the bruise on her arm. She is reminded of the ships and her journey.

They said they would return and find me.
I do not think so. *(Suddenly scornful).*

Rises. Walks along what might be the line that describes where the highest waves reach. Looks at the trail of footprints.
Projection: a single footprint in beach sand at the waves edge – fills with water, its shape blurs and changes.

They have their papers. What good are papers?
The ships will not return.
Wind and water will defy them.

Sea-birds find food amongst these rocks.
So too, must I.

Eva gets up and moves down to the water/rock area. Hitches skirt and wades into the water. She scratches for limpets/periwinkles/mussels off the rocks. Her stick is less than useful – she stabs in water once or twice and then uses the knife.
Return to the opening "prelude" of winds and water. Ellen's lullaby is intertwined with these sounds.

Ellen: (reprise) Hush my baby, see the sea birds.
Hush my little one, see the sky.
Hush now baby, mama's with you.
Hush now baby, sea birds fly.

Eva walks along the shoreline selecting three or four shells that might function as containers to collect water. Arranges them in a row. Sits. Sucks the raw flesh from the shells she has gathered. She picks up the "useless stick" and drives it into the ground as a marker.

Eva: This stick marks my first day on these sands....

Thunder, lightning, rain. Skies darken. Ellen comes down from the upper level as though descending to her cabin. Eva moves off in search of shelter, leaving the stage bare. The bare beach and a storm. Open transition/scene change – dark shadowy figures a sense of chaos as the location transforms. Intermittent flashes of lightning. During the storm the chorus and even stage crew, dressed as in 1850, cross the stage to generate a sense of chaos and people running to seek shelter. They set up the beach for the next scene in which it is littered with strewn debris. The baby grand piano – splintered legs - descends from above and settles in the sand. The last action will be for two of chorus to detach piano from cables so that it appears to have been swept up by water.

Projections: images of shipwrecks, magnified details of paintings cover the stage floor and fill the vertical plane as the segue begins to....

SCENE 3: *...the end is where we start from: The Port of D'Urban 1850.*

Early moody dawn. A single male figure (downstage facing up) re-reading a letter and surveying the mess. Eva sits still in the sand – a silent witness ignored by all those caught up in the chaos around her.

(Off) Moreland: Five July Eighteen fifty.
Sir,
It is my duty to inform you
The *Minerva* at mid-night was wrecked on the Bar.
A more complete wreck never happened.
The surf was high throughout the day.
In all directions scattered fragments of ship and cargo lie along the shore.
I must assure you, the racehorse, Thunderstruck, swam ashore – he is safe.
It took my men some hours to capture him.
He's the devil's own in horseflesh. But please reassure his breeder
The precious blood-line's safe.
Respectfully yours,
John Moreland.

Ellen enters the landscape scattered with wrecked belongings. She wanders in a daze amidst the tumble of things carrying her baby throughout. Chorus members take on the identity of other survivors from the wreck. Two or three men, squatting on the sand, are playing poker and drinking using the piano as a table. Three others are scavenging for anything of value.

Ellen: (v/o) Georgie and Bessie with their silver Christening mugs
Were first on the life-boat.
We found them hours later, sleeping in the dunes.

The beach is strewn with miscellaneous things
Boxes, carts, barrows, ploughs, pianos, chests-of-drawers.

She pauses alongside a woman who is looking at a splintered single drawer out of a chest of drawers and pulling out items that she may rescue or discard. Discovers the ink in her pocket.

(sings) A bottle of ink is in my pocket
I'm not sure when I put it there.

She stops next to another person who is trying on a wet man's jacket that is clearly the wrong size for her.
Ellen meanders further through the debris.

In the debris I found a pair of spectacles.
They're cracked. But I shall keep them.

A clean-up begins. Salvage is looted and removed. Ellen largely ignores the coming and going, the baby gets her attention. She stands in the centre of the figures scurrying out with items they have salvaged.

Hush my baby, no more sea birds.
Hush my little one, only sky.
Hush now baby, Mama's with you.
Hush now baby....

Forcing herself to change focus and deal with immediate matters.

(v/o) The salvage will be put to public auction
For reason of insurance claims. Meanwhile –
Meanwhile, we have nothing.
We are all housed in forty tents.
The wet season soon sets in.

She joins a woman scratching through a damp bundle. Finds a shawl. Too wet to wear. Keeps it.

Londoners abound and spend their time in idleness
They lounge about and smoke cigars.

She *pauses and looks at the men playing poker.*

(sings) These are my impressions on arrival...
We are delayed about a month awaiting transport
A two-wheel cart dawn by oxen.
I will walk if I must do so, inland all the way,
With my baby in my arms.

We head for Byrnetown. Laid out with streets and numbered plots -
I have no idea how far this walk will be.
Nor how long our journey may yet take.

The debris should be cleared, except for the piano which remains half buried in the sand.

SCENE. 4. *...between two lives...*

Mid-day, clear sky.

Paulina is with Revd. Filter who writes throughout. Eva now occupies their landscape – she watches with Paulina as Nomguqo plays out the scene surrounded by the female chorus and addresses the audience rather than Filter. Paulina fans herself with woven grass. Filter has a weathered water bottle. They take turns at drinking.

Nomguqo: Ngonyaka inkosi uMpande akhothama ngawo.
Ngangena endlini ka Cetshwayo.

(In the year the great Mpande died
I join Cetshwayo's household.)

... a journey to Cetshwayo's kraal. 1872...

The chorus girls have two or three bunches of dried herbs, two gourds containing fats and oils to beautify, fortify and pamper her. They bring on rolled mats and clay pots with food supplies.

Chorus x2: Izigcobo- amafutha kanye nephunga elimnandi lamakha, ligcotswa emizimbeni yethu, linuka nasesikhunjeni.

(Fresh ointments – fats and sweetsmelling herbs – anoint our bodies, scent our skins.)

Chorus x 2: Amafutha aphuma kwimvubu, avutshelwe, Agcotshiswa ebusweni bethu, sizokwazi ukuthola inhlanhla.

(Fat from hippopotamus is procured. Rubbed on our faces this gains us favour.)

Nomguqo: Ilanga lokuhamba kwethu lalisondela. Umthwalo wendlela,
Inyama, isinkwa sombila, kuhlanganisiwe.
Ekuseni ngovivi, lakungabonakali nephondo lenkomo
Esibhakabhakeni sasekuseni.
Lesikhathi esisibiza ngokuthi "kusempndo zankomo"...
Sizohamba.
Ngishiya ikhaya ebengilazi.

(The day of our departure nears. Provisions for the journey,
Meat and mealie-bread, are assembled.
At the crack of dawn, when one can just make out the horns of cattle
Against the early morning sky,
That time we call 'the horns of the morning'...
We depart.
I leave the home I have always known.)

Chorus x 2: Sindlula iNtabankulu, sivelele kwinqwaba yamatshe enhlanhla.
Silandele isiko, ngokugcwalisa esibalweni sawo.
Sizothola inhlanhla kanye nomusa ukuze samukelwke.

(We pass Ntabankulu and come upon a heap of wishing stones.
We follow custom, adding to their numbe.
For good luck and a kind reception.)

They each pick up a stone along the footpath, spit on it and make a small mound about the size of a small fist and positions it carefully. The rocks should set up the open-air fireplace for Ellen in the scene to follow.

Chorus x 2: Akunampunzi eyadlula phambi kwendlela yethu. Kuyajabulisa.
Kuletha amashwa phela lokho.

(No duiker crossed our path. We are glad.
That brings misfortune.)

Paulina: *As though in response to an unasked question from Filter.*
Esigodlweni intombazane yalahlekelwa inkululeko.
Kwakungekho ukubaleka.
Amakhosikazi ayehlala agadiwe.
Sasisebenzela inkosi.
Ebusku, emantombazaneni esasegodleni
Mina kwakufanele ngithule
Sengiwumzalwane manje, angisakwazi ukukhuluma ngalezinto.

(In the isigodlo a young girl lost her freedom.
There was no escape.
The isigodlo women were all times strictly guarded.
We served the king. Of the nightlife of the girls of the isigodlo
I must be silent
I am now a Christian and will not speak about such things.)

Nomguqo: Uma inkosana ihamba, wonke amakhozikazi ayayilandela

(When the crown prince moves about we women all go with him.)

Chorus x 2: Siphatha umphako wakhe, izinto zakhe zasendlini siphinde senze umsebenzi wakhe.

(We carry his provisions, household goods and attend to all chores.)

Chorus x 2: Imisebenzi wethu ukutshala nokuvuna.

(Our duties are to plant and harvest.)

Ensemble: Ukulanda izinkuni zomlilo namanzi. Senze nawo wonke umsebenzi wasendlini.

(To fetch firewood and water. Perform all household tasks.)

They have each either a bundle of firewood or a clay kumba on their heads and exit in a long line. Filter and Paulina remain on stage in attitude of deep prayer. Transition to Eva for one line...

Eva: Firewood and water. Firewood and water.

Transition to Ellen.

Surtitle: ***Byrne, October 21st, 1851...***

Ellen uses a slab of stone (that will serve as a gravestone in the final scene) as an outdoor table and/or hearth. She sets out a frugal meal with very few utensils (2 spoons and 4 plates) that will be shared by all. Incongruously the silver christening mugs are part of this odd assortment. She has been

stirring phutu in a pot. Her hands slightly flowery. She stops to wipe her hands on her (now) much dirtier apron. She surveys the area around her and beyond and compares what she sees with the small piece of paper taken from her pocket.
Projection: the small ink drawing of the plots at Byrne.

Ellen: (v/o) Byrnetown is not as my dear George was told
Laid out with streets and numbered plots.

It is a town of paper and one man's imagination. *(Squints up at the sun. Remembers)*

Eva enters to become part of the scene as the projection of the map fades. She is not visible to Ellen. She settles herself close to the baby.

Ellen: (sings) Of our journey, dear Louisa, I could not write you -
So much to do each day as we walked slowly inland.
In my head, so much to say, so much to tell you
Of this strange country, so new and unfamiliar every way.
By noon each day large clouds begin to gather
Each day, it seems, there is a storm at four o'clock. *(Change of tone).*
Young Georgy so enjoys it all. He made a game inventing names
For butterflies he tried to catch along the way.

We have been here two months now –
the first to settle here.
The hut progresses slowly.
The rainy season has set in.

Here there are four families besides ourselves
Two surveyors are boarding with us.
It means I have, besides, his four men to feed and cook for.

She looks at the sparse provision for the evening meal. The sum of her crockery and cutlery is four plates two spoons and a pot on the fire.

We eat in turns – we share our plates and cutlery.
We only have two spoons, one cracked and one with half a handle.
Our tools, equipment and our clothes I sometimes think on,
Sunken useless at the bottom of the sea.

Two chorus girls come in carrying a kowe and a bundle, no longer the girls of the isigodlo. They approach Ellen as though they have done this exchange before. They show her the kowe and empty a mound of amadumbe onto the stone. The reassurance of an immediate food supply is important to Ellen. Eva rises, watches the exchange then makes her way to her established spot on the beach.

Ellen: I traded that bright flamboyant shawl I found amid the wreckage
For amakowe and a mound of amadumbe.
The kowe is a mushroom – large as any dinner plate.
One will feed us all.
The other is an African potato – small and rather hairy...

We eat mostly porridge and potatoes
Have had no meat for nearly two months now.
Little Ellen and Little Georgy learn the Zulu language
They speak it better every day now.

Lights go down on Ellen as she picks up the baby to feed. A gradual cross fade to a night sky with the southern cross and moving clouds begins as a scene transition to ...

SCENE. 5 ... in the uncertain time before the morning ...

Midnight to early dawn. The beach. There are three sticks in a row - three days have passed. Eva is lying on the sand – restless. She wakes. Feels for the large shell that she has found, puts it to her ear. Listens. Cold, needing comfort, she invokes her mother and grandmother.

Eva: The night is still; the sky is clear.
I do not sleep.
I wait for dawn that does not come.

The spirits are revealed as still ghostly presences, watching her from above on the platform upstage.

Spirit of my mother come!
Spirit of my mother be with me!
Mother – hold and comfort
Soothe me in this silence.

The two women appear as "spirits" or phantoms of "Eva's" imagination. Perhaps she has invoked their presence before now.

Mother of my mother
In wisdom, you are always near.
Be with me – I have need.
Come to me – I am alone.
Do I dream you? Are you with me?

The sounds of wind and waves intensify as both women remain still but reach out towards Eva. The grandmother picks up a large sea shell and holds it to her ear.

Grandmother: *"And what the dead had no speech for, when living,*
They can tell you, being dead:

The communication

Of the dead is tongued with fire,
Beyond the language of the living."[2]

The sounds of wind and water engulf the stage. The transition to Nomguco's world in the Royal Kraal begins...

[2] Taken from T S Eliot: *Little Gidding* (1974:215).

SCENE 6. ***Fruit, thorns and domestic routines***

Midday, clear skies. Paulina and Revd Filter watch the entire scene, Filter writing intermittently. He sits on the stone plinth. Wears a sun hat/panama which he occasionally uses to fan himself. A second male actor represents John Dunne. A "happy" playful scene. The girls are thoroughly at home at Ondini. Bright cheerful tones. Laughter. They improvise a game of throwing small stones and jumping across them, like hop-scotch, on their way to the river.

Nomguqo: (v/o) Thina, amantobazane amancane, sasilanda amanzi emfuleni uMhlathuzane.
Indlela isidlulisa ngasesontweni
Uma umfundisa esibona wenza isiqiniseko
Sokuthi singangeni ezithelweni zakhe.

(We, the younger girls, fetch water from the Mhlthuzane River.
The pathway takes us past the mission station.
When the missionary sees us come he takes care
To see we do not enter in his orchard.)

Chorus (sings): Mlungu, akusiphe amapitshisi
Akusiphe into yokudla.
Mlungu, akusiphe amapitshisi

(White man give us peaches
Give us that which can be eaten.
White man give us peaches.)

Light comes up on Ellen in a different part of the same interior landscape – at a distance. She is wearing her brown Merino dress and over it an apron. She has a large spade. She has her sleeves rolled up – digging soil, preparation for planting.

Ellen: (sings) You ask me how I like my life. *(digging, pausing intermittently)*

Paulina: *(to Filter)* Impilo yaqhubeka kungenzeki lutho olutheni.
(Life went by without notable event.)

Paulina watches Nomguqo and chorus who begin chores of sweeping raking ashes from the hearth, wiping clay pots, grinding corn but make light work of their routine.

Ellen: (v/o) You ask me how I like my life.
I cannot say I like the way I am living
But I still like the country
And where we are
Is a beautiful place. *(Wipes sweat on her face and neck)*

Paulina: (sings) Impilo yaqhubeka kungenzeki lutho olutheni.
Umlungu, uJantoni, wasinika okuningi esingaxoxa ngakho.
Alethela inkosi izinto.
Ikhofi kanye noshukela. Obanana, insinkwa, ubuhlalo, nesizimpahla.

(Life went by without notable event.
The white man, Jantoni, gave us much to talk about.
Bringing goods for the king.
Coffee and sugar. Salt. Bananas, beads and cloth.)

Ellen: (v/o) We have bought a cow who will not give us milk.
I churn butter in a pint mug with a fork.
Our small supply of milk is from a neighbour.
The swarms of locust are of real concern.

Paulina: Zonke izinsuku zazinenjabulo nehlungu yazo encane.

(Every day brought some small joy or sorrow.)

Ellen: (v/o) Things do not grow as we expected to see them.
The soil is poor from burning grass.
The seeds come up but then stand still.
We've had but a saucer of peas

And the corn is just as bad.

I must not complain as we all keep in such good health.
The children grow so fast.
I have seen many curious lovely things
Like bird's nests that are most beautiful.
I would like so much to send you one.

Nomguqo: Ilanga liqala ngovivi ngembongi Ibiza
Izibongo zenkosi.

(Day begins at the break of dawn with the gatekeeper calling out
The praises of the king!)

Chorus: Siyavuka sizoqoqa izindlu futhi sishanele nebala
Entathakusa, inkosi yethu iyevela.
Uma ezilungiselela isidlo sakhe, uMuzi ememeza "ungathinti"-
Awuvenyelwe ngisho kwakukhohlela.

(We rise to tidy huts and sweep the yard.
At sunrise, our king emerges.
When he readies for his meal, Umuzi calls out "Ungathinti" –
No one is allowed to cough.)

Nomguqo: Ngaphambi kokuthi kudliwe, amantombazane aletha amanzi ukuthi inkosi igeze inzandla.
Siguqa ngamadolo uma sipha inkosi ukudla kwayo, ikhezo, nopini.
Ukudla kuyicansi elenziwe kahle.
Uma isidlile, inkosi iphindisela ukudla kulabo abakuphakile.
Lokudla okusele kumele kudliwe
Akumele kudluliselwe komunye umuntu
Ngaphandle kokuthi inkosi isho njalo

(*Before a meal, the girls who had prepared the food*
Take water to the king to wash his hands.
On our knees we present the king his food, a spoon, a fly whisk.
The food is on a finely woven mat.
Having eaten, the king hands food to those who had served.
This apportioned food must be eaten
Cannot be passed on to someone else
Without the king's express permission.)

Ellen: (sings) You ask me how I like my life.
I cannot say I like the way I am living
But I still like the country.
I should like to plant a flower garden.
And some fruit trees.

Throughout the voice over Ellen digs, rakes the soil, preparing the ground for planting. Intermittently she stops to listen and surveys her handiwork.

I feel the separation more and more each day.

During the voice over, underscoring, the sound of the Piet-my-vrou. While Ellen labours, the girls return to their game.

(v/o) I should like a nice warm house again.
We have had more cold than heat since we have been here.
I have worn my brown merino gown ever since the wreck.
Tell Mary Ann the little scarlet dress
Franky has worn since we have been here
It is the most decent thing we have.

Please thank mother for the sewing box.
If you could send me knitting cotton, I would be grateful.
I must make the children socks.
The grass cuts their feet so badly.
I made them each a pair of moccasins of sheep skin.

Shoes are so very dear. We can't afford them.
Bessie says to tell you she likes Natal much more than England
There are no schools here! It suits her rather well.

(sings) I should like to plant a flower garden. And some fruit trees.
At the new house when we move there.
There are some pretty flowers,
Still ... we want our English favourites.

She watches with increasing incredulity as the chorus and Nomguqo line up a row of pots in excited anticipation of trading with Dunne. Dunne's stock of goods is unpacked and examined.

Paulina: Impilo yaqhubeka kungenzeki lutho olutheni.
Umlungu, uJantoni, wasinika okuningi esingaxoxa ngakho.
Alethela inkosi izinto.
Ikhofi kanye noshukela. Obanana, insinkwa, ubuhlalo, nesizimpahla.
Inkosi uCetshwayo wanika uJohn Dunn amantombazane ukuthi abe
Amakhosikazi wakhe.

(Life went by without notable event.
The white man, Jantoni gave us much to talk about.
He came to bring goods for the king.
Coffee and sugar. Salt. Bananas, beads and cloth.
And Cetshwayo gave girls as wives to John Dunn.) *(Dunne exits)*

Nomguqo/ Ensemble: Smit, akusiphe ameva.
Ameva ezinwele zethu.
USiphe izingobo, weMele

(Smit, give us thorns
Thorns for our hair
Give us clothes to wear.)

Laughter.... Dunne returns with guns. Nomguqo explains to the audience that guns are not unfamiliar. The chorus joins in. Amidst much chaffing between them, the actor and chorus girls enact the shooting lesson, acknowledging Nomguqo as she sings. Ellen watches with slight alarm.

Nomguqo: Umlungu, uJantoni, wasinika okuningi esingaxoxa ngakho.
Sicabanga ngo Henry Francis Fynn, ebekade umama wethu esixoxela
Nguwena umlungu wokuqala ukulethela uShaka izibhamu.
Njengaye uJantoni, ulethela inkosi izinto.
Usilethela izibhamu. Usilethela izibhamu.

Inkosi uCetshwayo wanika uJohn Dunn amantombazane ukuthi abe
Amakhosikazi wakhe.
Impilo yaqhubeka kungenzeki lutho olutheni.
UJantoni ufundisa amanye amantombazane akhulile, asesigodlweni
ukudubula.
Ubafundisa nokufaka inhlavu futhi nokudubula.
Bazo ibutho lasekhaya lokuvikela inkosi.

(The white man, Jantoni, gives us much to talk about,
We think of Henry Francis Fynn, who, our mothers tell us,
First brought the white man's guns to Shaka.
Like him, Jantoni bring goods for the king
He brings guns. He brings guns.
And Cetshwayo gives girls as wives to John Dunn.

Life goes by without notable event.
Jantoni teaches the older girls of the isigodlo how to shoot.
He teaches them to load and fire.
They will be the home-guard of the king.)

John Dunne (off): Amantombazane aba ibutho lasekhaya lokuvikela inkosi.

(The girls became the home-guard of the king.)

Paulina: UCetshwayo wayethemba wona ukudla izinsizwa.

(Cetshwayo trusted them more than young men.)

Nomguqo: Futhi ke umlungu, uJantoni, unabafazi abaningi kakhulu....
Phakathi kabo, ababili bekungodade bodade wenkosi.
Unomhlaba osuka eShowe uyosho ezintabeni zaseNgoye.

(And the white man, Jantoni, he has many, many wives ....
Among them two of the King's own sisters.
He owns land from Eshowe to Ngoye mountains.)

John Dunne (off): ... futhi lamakhosikazi ka Jantoni amaningi amzalela izingane eziningi kakhulu.

(.... And the many wives of Jantoni bore him many, many children.)

The ensemble girls go off with John Dunne and the guns. Ellen continues to dig the ground. Crossfade to Eva on the beach. She is holding the small bag of samples that she was given: gold, spices, the pearls that we have seen.

Eva: I will not seek for Prester John.
Or Adamastor.

She looks out to sea.

They have their papers.
What good are papers?
The water and the wind...
They will destroy those papers.

I will meet with those that live here
And bring no danger.

Slowly, deliberately, she drops the pouch and its contents into the water. We see it drop as the lights close in a tight spot around her.

Filter and Paulina enter – the lights stay dim. Paulina holds a candle and candlestick. Filter will write by this light. At some distance from them, Nomguqo and the chorus inhabit the story being told – lights build on them. Throughout, Ellen is in light which intensifies when she sings; having been tilling the soil through the previous scene, she rakes the surface of the ground...

SCENE 7. Snakes arrive at Ondini...

Night. Projections are a montage taken from the consequences of Ellen's actions: the image of soil and fabric rippling or trailing/dragging across the ground – magnified/indistinct. The rake marks in the soil should suggest the two snakes that Paulina describes.

Paulina: Ngikhumbula kahle, ngelanga kufika izinyoka ezine.
Bekusebusika, imvuno ingakapheli.

(I remember well, the day four snakes arrived.
It was winter, the harvest not yet over.)

Nomguqo: Kwafika ezimbili kuqala.
Oyokuqala beyikade inkulu futhi iluhlaza, namabala amamnyana entanyeni
Bekuthiwa "Usefikile ohluphayo. Kusho ukuthi uShaka".
Enye yayinsudu futhi imabalabala.
Yayinkulu ukudlula inyoka kaShaka.
Ibululu eligcwele futhi amehlo angesanamandla

Leyo, kwathiwa kufanele ukuthi uDingane.
Ibululu eligcwele, kodwa yayinde kakhulu.

Ngelanga elilandelayo kafika izinyoka ezimbili futhi.
USenzangakhona wayemkhulu kunezinye. Emkhulu kakhulu.
Wayebukeka ngathi usekhulile, amehlo abuthaka.
UMpande wayemancane kakhulu futhi elingana noShaka.
Ibala lakhe lalinsudu ligqamile.

(Two came first.
The one was large and green, with a dark spot on its neck.
It was said: "A ravager has arrived. He must be Shaka".
The other dirty dark-brown one had many spots.
Much bigger than the Shaka-snake.
This, it was said, must be Dingaan.
Puff-adder thick, but so much longer,

The next day two more snakes arrive.
We name them Mpande and Senzangakhona.
Senzangakhona is bigger than the others.
He seems old and has weak eyes.
Mpande is young the size of Shaka
And light brown in his colours.)

Ellen has a small ball of lengths of string with which she is marking out potential vegetable patches. She lays one end on the ground and unravels another. As Nomguqo sings the projected image begins to show the furrows and lines of string – indistinct and blurred with the shadow of Ellen's body across the whole.

Chorus: Futhi bafika nezinyoka "ezyizinceku".
Futhi nesihla sezinyosi.
Zakha ikhaya emagatsheni omile.
Ngasesangweni lomuzi wenkosi

(And with them come many 'servant' snakes.
And a swarm of bees.
They make a home in the dry branches
At the gateway of the umuzi of our king.)

Ellen scatters seeds – mealie kernels – into the furrows.

Nomguqo: Senza imihlabelo.
Kubo laba abangamadlozi wethu.
Inkosi enkulu uShaka kanye no Dingane ebekade behlala entshonalanga.
Inkosi enkulu uSenzangakhona kanye no Mpande bese Mpumalanga.
Asikwazi ukusebenzisa lesango.

(We make sacrifices to these our ancestral spirits.
We revere them. We respect.
The mighty Shaka and Dingaan settle on the west side.
Sensangakhona and Mpande on the east.
We cannot use the gateway.)

Tableau near an imagined gate.

Ellen sits and wipes hands, in her world it is a clear day. She can observe Nomguqo's story although she is isolated in her own world at Byrne. The baby is nearby, lying on a small scrap of blanket on the ground. It is the first time that we see Ellen "relaxed". She wears a sunhat and begins to unpack a small crate – a parcel that has arrived from England. These include brown paper seed packets which she sets on one side, some lengths of bright coloured cloth, knitting needles and several balls of wool.

Ellen: *(unpacking seed packets)* There are a great many locusts – they fly in large swarms overhead
But have not touched our crops yet. Not yet.
Please thank Mama!

She puts the seed packets in her apron pocket. She unpacks a length of green patterned silk, unfolds it and throws it across the ground. 90 cm wide, the fabric should ripple through the air. She quickly takes out three more lengths of cloth which delight her and she creates a "tangle" of lengths of fabric on the ground close by her.

There are also many snakes.
Georgy trod on one – was lucky it did not bite him.
We killed a large one – in the chickenhouse – very venomous.
Another, its mate that was with it, got away.
Bright green and yellow, five-foot three inches long.
A beautiful creature. I am fearful. It is too close to our hut.

The lights come up on Nomguqo and the chorus who are grouped around what represents the entrance to the umuzi. Through the attitudes of all of them we follow the events that Nomguqo describes.

Nomguqo: Izinyoka ezimbili zalwa.
Zalwa kusukela ekuseni ngovivi kwaze kwayoshona ilanga.
Ziyahlehla bese zishaya, zihlagahlangene.
Zime ngemisila. UShaka wayemkhulu futhi enamandla.
Umzimba oluhlaza futhi unobubomvu begazi.

(Two snakes fight. They fight from dawn 'til after sunset.
They rear and strike, intertwined and angry
Standing on their tails. Shaka so much bigger, so much stronger.
His body green and tinged red with blood.)

Ellen: Mr. More had an ox that was bitten by a snake. He was obliged to kill it.

One by one she manipulates the cloth generating movement across the ground. The play of colour and movement transforms the surface of the soil.

This system of burning all the grass is horrible to me. But must be done.
It stops the growth of shrubs and trees. Is good for pasture.
May control the reptile population.

George and Franky stepped on a puffadder
A most venomous kind of snake.
Our little dog then seized it and began a fight.
It "stung" him just below the eye.
George shot the snake. Tried to squeeze the poison
Where the dog was wounded. It was no use.
The poor dog died that night.

She enjoys the patterns of cloth across and sits still contemplating them for a moment before resuming unpacking the crate. Lights intensify on Paulina and Nomguqo.

Paulina: Kwabuza izangoma.
Inyoka kaShaka wafikele ukuzobulala u Cetshwayo.
Inkosi yethu wayifuna uShaka abulewe futhi agcwatshiwe.

(Izangoma were consulted.
The Shaka snake had come to kill Cetshwayo.
Our king wanted Shaka dead and buried.)

Nomguqo: Izinceku zavimba.
Akakwazi ukubulala lenyoka, idlozi lakhe.
Izanusi zikhomba izinyoka ezimbili, ezifike ngokuthula.
USenzangakhona noMpande abalwi.

ULangazane, ugogo wenkosi, uthumela umnikelo
Umlayezo wakhe ukuthi kunikelwe ngawo emadlozini.
Kuhlinzwe izinkomo, nalena ebekade eyithumele. Eziningi. Eziningi.
Amakha anuka kammnandi ashiselwe endlini engcwele.

(Attendants intervene.
He must not kill the snake, his ancestral spirit.
Diviners point to the two snakes who came in peace.
Senzangakhona and Mpande do not fight.

Langazane, the king's grandmother, sends an offering.
And her instructions to make sacrifice to the spirits of the ancestors.
Oxen are slaughtered, with the one she sent. Many. Many.
Sweet smelling herbs are burnt in the sacred hut.)

Paulina: Sidumisa idlozi elisindise inkosi yethu ekufeni.
Siqoshamile sisho izibongo zasebukhosini.

(We praised the spirits that saved our king from death.
Crouching low while calling out the royal salutation.)

Nomguqo and chorus: Bayede! Bayede! Bayede![3]

As the lights come up on her, Ellen sets aside the knitting needles and several balls of pale blue wool which she has taken out of the crate during Paulina's words. Reaches across to pick up the baby.

Ellen: A little boy in Richmond – only six years old –
Tripped and fell down on a puffadder
Which stung him in the ankle. He died that night. *(Then, to the baby...)*
They say the death is not so painful
Sleep and then a long deep torpor till it's over.
We must burn this grass around us.

Nomguqo and chorus: Bayede! Bayede! Bayede!

Ellen uses the knitting needle to make cuts in the soil next to her.

Ellen: (v/o) A "native" on the farm of Mr Kearne our neighbor
Was bitten – has not died.
The "natives" have a cure: they make deep cuts around the wound
Rub in a powder made from the dry dust of a dead snake,
Make the person eat half the snake that has just poisoned them! Imagine that!

She "erases" the cuts in the soil with the palm of her hand. And, with determination, draws each length of cloth towards her, folding and packing each away.

(sings) Instead of this, their *muti,* we use Eau de Luce:
It is mastic, oil of lavender and amber
Mixed with strong ammonia.
It is, I fear, a remedy one cannot always rely on.
That small boy died.

(v/o) We must burn the veld around us and quite soon.

Paulina: Ngemuva kwesikhashana.... Izinyoka zanyamalala.

(After a while .... the snakes disappeared.)

Nomguqo: Inyongo yembuzi eyahlantshwa
Yashafashazwa lapho amakhaya abo eyakhona.

(The gall of goats that we had sacrificed
Is sprinkled where their home had been.)

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[3] I offer this spelling despite some discussion in the seminars that this should be corrected to "Bayete". Since the translation has explicitly redirected me towards my original use of "Bayede", I retain this spelling.

Paulina: Kudlula inyanga... saphinda salisebenzisa isango njengaphambilini.

(After a month ... we used that gateway as before.)

Ellen has packed up the crate contents. She replaces the lid of the crate and sits down on top of it, looking at the baby on its small blanket on the ground.

Ellen: (v/o) I am going to benefit this small colony, but not myself,
With one new small addition.
The first settler baby in our little village.

She gets up, picks up the baby and blanket. The spade and rake remain where she has left them on the ground.

(sings) I do not know how I will dress the little thing when it arrives.
This box – lined with buckskin – will make a perfect cradle.

The focus shifts. The beach. Late morning. Hot. Clear.

Next to the log where Eva planted her first stick there is now a row of three sticks marking the days that have passed since she has been left on the shore. Eva has a stick in her hand and is idly doodling in the sand at her feet.

Eva: I wait for what?
Will others find me?
In silence and stillness – must I stay here alone?
Adamastor?
Adamastor?
Has made no move to claim me – to enchain me.

Am I free now?
Truly free now?
Where will this freedom take me – what will it make me?

She throws the stick high in the air and allows it to land as if to point her in a significant direction. Recognizes the futility of the gesture. She decides to take charge of herself, begins to "undress", unlacing and removing the top layer of her clothing to reveal a loose well-worn cream shift or chemise. She uses the discarded clothing as a "comforter" with its scent being a whiff of the past.

I may be with child.
It is too soon to tell.

She improvises a bundle that loosely resembles a child which she cradles in her arms.

My child will be mine.
Will be mine and will be free.

She lets the cloth fall loosely before improvising a wrapped apron around her waist. As she finishes tying, her hands on her own body explore the flatness of her stomach beneath the shapeless shift that she is wearing.

May my child grow
May my child come
I will not be alone!

She looks up and faces out to sea, ie. directly out to the auditorium. A brief silence, then the cry of a seagull. She watches the invisible bird. Then, with growing determination and conviction addressing the ship and the sailors who have gone beyond the horizon.

And ... I ... will not let your way be our way.
Men of the sea, of salt, of stone and steel.

Facing the audience – the mere possibility of carrying child gives her enormous strength.

... We ... will not deal in fear and death with strangers.

The sounds of wind and water, even footprints walking in wet sand at the water's edge take over from any music generated by instruments. Eva picks up the stick that she was using at the start of the scene and slowly walks across the stage trailing a line behind her in the sand. As she leaves the mark in the sand the scene changes...

SCENE 8. 1879... War

Paulina gives her account of the Anglo-Zulu War to Filter while simultaneously Nomguqo and the chorus enter to the account being narrated and Nomguqo takes over as the primary story-teller for the audience. Nomguqo inhabits the action being described along with the chorus but none of them is central to the events that take place but rather their role as witness is what we see performed as they respond to the imagined presence of others. The action flows directly from the previous scene with the spoken voice over covering the change. A small wisp of smoke drifts across the stage.

Paulina: ***(v/o)*** Bengise Ondini uma amalungiselelo empi aqala.
Impi yaqala kwaSandlwana. Impi uCetshwayo ebekade engayifuni.
Bekungumshana wami, uMbilisi, impisi yendoda,
Indodana kaMswazi, owaqala wonke lento.
Bentshontsha imvu nenkomo yebhunu ngenhla komfula i*Buffalo.*
Lokuhlasela kwashisa utshani obomile.
UCetshwayo azange abone.
Likuhlasela kwakuzoqala impi.

(I was at Ondini when preparations for war started.
The war that began at Isandlwana. The war Cetshwayo did not want.
It was my nephew, Mbilisi, a hyena of a man,
Son of Mswazi, that began it all.
They stole sheep and cattle from the Boers across the Buffalo River.
Those raids set fire to dry grass.
Cetshwayo did not see it
Those raids would lead to war.)

She has a stick very similar to that of Eva in her hands and uses it to "draw" the scene that she describes in the sand – dots representing people she recalls and where they were positioned in relation to each other.

Paulina: (sings) Kwafika umbiko wokuthi impi isiqalile.
UCetshwayo wahlala enkatheni.
Umgoqongo womlingo, uphawu lesizwe sethu.

(*Word came that battle had begun*
Cetshwayo took his seat on the Inkatha –
The magic coil – the symbol of our nation.)

The lights have revealed Nomguqo and the chorus who have been interrupted in preparing a meal. They have a variety of bowls and gourds between them. Filter's stiff German handwriting now begins to be projected across horizontal and vertical surfaces of the stage so that the stage picture is one of written words projected across space and time. The scene should convey the sense of being a witness and that "the mothers" wield considerable authority over the king. The rhythm of selecting from the story creates a pattern of self-disruption and silence during which we hear sound effects of increasingly distressed cattle, wind and fire burning through a forest.

Sound: routine lowing of cattle in a kraal. Nomguqo is spatially isolated downstage centre with the chorus "girls" who, like her, observe the imagined figure of Cetswayo as though he is amongst them. Paulina is able to "see" and remember the same picture of the king surrounded by older women. The audience does not see these figures but is invited to imagine it.

Nomguqo: *(explaining to the chorus what is going on):*

Wenza isiqiniseko sokuthi siyaphumelela
Nokuthi amabutho wethu alwa ngokubumbana.
Ukuze bangahluleki.

(He does this to ensure our victory
That our warriors should fight with unity of purpose.
So that they should not waver.
Then victory will be ours.)

Chorus: *(to her, reacting to what they see):*

Umama wakhe umbhekile.
(His mothers watch him.[4])

The intensified sound of cattle intrudes, interrupting the women who stop to listen to their bellowing.

Nomguqo: *(with a sense of the king being subjected to conflicting interests and increased urgency) The wisps of smoke from afar intensify. They react to the unexpected action of the king – through their reaction we should understand what has happened and its significance.*

Umama wakhe umtshela ukuthi angaphakami
Enkatheni ukuthi ayobona iznkomo zakhe.
.....
Kodwa imibiko yemphumelelo,
Wasukuma enkatheni.

(His mothers urge him not rise
From the inkatha to go to see his cattle.
.....
But with reports of victory,
He rises up from the Inkatha.)

Cattle sounds intensify, then die down. Nomguqo and the girls are themselves torn between relief at the news of victory and alarm that the king has risen.

Chorus: Umama wakhe wamthethisa-izenso zakhe zisibeka engozini.

(His mothers scold him – his action places us in danger.)

The soundscape of cattle mingles with sounds of fire spreading. This soundscape reaches a climax, then quietens.
The lights dim. A second or two of complete silence and stillness punctures the way the scene is unfolding. Acoustic/ non-vocal climax, punctuated by gunshots.

In silhouette, Nomguqo and the girls against a sky in which the slight flickering of flames are suggested through the movement of light rather than pictorially. They are unsure of which direction

[4] An endnote explains the use of the plural form: "in a polygamous household, a child has as many 'mothers' as its father had wives. In everyday life, no distinction was made between the natural mother and the acquired mothers" (Bourquin 1986:117). The line thus refers to all the widows of Mpande who would have been considered Cetshwayo's "mothers".

to move in, they move tentatively in the direction the king has taken, only to return in slight panic to their places. They have been separated and regroup, disconcerted and unsure.
Very slowly, the lights come up and, against a landscape of Filter's writing we see the bodies of Nomguqo and the chorus, kneeling on the ground, hands covering faces, swaying in unison. They form a tableau. Paulina looks at the tableau, recalling how it was.

Paulina: Sizwile ngokuhlulwa
Kwebutho elikhulu lakwaZulu e *Rorke's Drift*
Lihlulwa ibutho elincane lama *British.*

(We heard of the defeat of
Our great Zulu force at Rorke's Drift
Conquered by a tiny British garrison.)

She uses the stick to "quote" the power of guns and bullet.

Chorus: Omama bathethisa inkosi kanzima
Bemgxekela ukuthi usukeleni enkatheni.

(The mothers reproached the king severely
They blamed him for leaving the inkatha.)

Nomguqo: Bengise Ondini ngesikhathi impi iya emaphethelweni.
Inkosi nomndeni wayo kwakumele babaleke.

(I was at Ondini when the war drew to an end.
The king and his whole household had to flee.)

For a moment Paulina holds up the stick as though it were a short stabling spear, then relaxes her body in a clear change of direction in what she is choosing to tell.

Paulina: Umsebenzi wami kwakungukunakelela inkosana uNdinizulu
Emzini womzala wakhe, UZwide Zulu.
Ubeneminyaka eyishuminanye uma ehlukana nekosi.

(My task was to care for Crown Prince Dinizulu
At the umuzi of his cousin Zwide Zulu.
He was eleven years when we parted with the king.)

Nomguqo to the chorus of girls – as the tableau momentarily "unfixes". Nomguqo is her mother's daughter and *her fighting spirit is resurrected. Their movement is halted by the news of the King's capture.*

Nomguqo: Sezwa ukuthi inkosi wethu ibanjiwe ehlathini laseNgome.

(We hear Our king is captured in the forest of Ngome.)

They stand in shocked silence and stillness as they assimilate the news.

Paulina: Ngizokutshela lokhu engatshelwa. Bengingekho.
Benginakekele inkosana uZwide Dinizulu.

Endaweni evikelekile.

(I tell you what was told to me. I was not there.
I was caring for the Crown Prince Dinizulu
In our place of safety.)

Nomguqo: *(to the audience, all possibility of resistance quashed).*
AmaBritish athatha inkosi wethu, bayifaka emkhunjini.
Waba isiboshwa sabo.

(The British take our King away on board a ship.
He is their prisoner.)

Nomguqo and the chorus adopt the attitude that we have seen Eva use earlier in the same scene, looking out to sea (over the audience) as though trying to follow the passage of the ship. Sound effect: the seagull cry. Wind. Silence. The chorus exits as Paulina continues.

Paulina: *(deciding to continue, guarding against an emotional outburst, trying to adhere to the facts rather than give any expression to her feelings.)*

Ngesikhathi uCetshwayo ebuya ekubanjweni
Wabuyela empini kaMandlakazi kanye namaqembu oSuthu.

(Cetshwayo returned from captivity
To war between the Mandlakazi and Usuthu factions.)

A wisp of low lying smoke crosses the stage, as though the ground is burning. It accelerates to consume the pages of Filter's writing.

Nomguqo: UZibhebhu noMandlakazi
Bashisa Ondini. Bayishisa kwasala ubala.

(Zibhebhu and the Mandlakhazi
Set fire to that royal umuzi of Ondini.)

Paulina, Nomguqo and Filter are now alone, inhabiting a stage landscape of projected writing which is slowly being consumed by flame.
The flame dies. Ash. Drops of water begin to break up the landscape of ash. Silence. A thin sound of cattle – a stray calf – cuts into this silence.

Paulina: (v/o) Baba, uma ngibuya ohanjweni lasebukhosini
Ngesikhathi uCetshwayo ebuya ekubanjweni,
Ngagula, nginezinhlungu esifubeni. Ngangasakhoni ukuqhubeka.
Ngasinda kanjalo kulokhu onkwavelela abantu bami Ondini.

(Baba, returning on my journey to the royal household
When Cetshwayo returned from his captivity,
I took ill with chest pains. I could go no further.
So I was spared all that befell my people at Ondini.)

Wisps of grey smoke rising from projections of ash and "mud.

Nomguqo: *(looking straight out to the audience. She has picked up a gourd or pot.)*

UCetshwayo wabaleka.
Njengoba amaqembu akaMandlakazi and noSuthu elwana.
UCetshwayo wabaleka.

(Cetshwayo flees.
As the Mandlakazi and Usuthu factions fight each other.
Cetshwayo flees.)

The sound of the Emerald Spotted Wood Dove.[5] *Nomguqo, watched by Paulina, exits. Her movement should convey the sense of a reluctant, long journey across the landscape.*
Ellen has entered unobtrusively, carrying writing materials and a spade. She carries several sheets of paper, her ink bottle and a pen and a photograph.

Paulina: *(with great dignity and undisguised sadness, but no tears)*

Wasondelwa insizwa encane.
Eyabese imhlaba ngomkhonto. Bamjikela.
Wayelimele kodwa wabekezela waze wayofika eNkandla.
ENkandla watholwa ilaba bembacinga.
Ubengasakhoni ukuqhubeka. Wafa yedwa futhi elahlekile.

(He was accosted by a young man
Who stabbed him with an assegai. He was betrayed.
He was wounded but struggled on towards Nkandla.
At Nkandla, he was found by those who went in search of him
He could go no further. He died lonely and deserted.)

Silence. The call of the Emerald Spotted Wood dove again.

The lights build in intensity around Ellen, who now occupies "Paulina's world". Her first action is to "plant" the spade in the ground so that its handle creates a crudely vertical line.

The visual field is now entirely grey – wet ash and wisps of smoke. Filter stops writing to take stock of what he has just heard. Paulina watches Ellen who has some sheets of paper resting on the top of the wooden crate, now used as an improvised writing block. On it she balances the ink bottle.

Ellen: January 19th, 1879: We had a quiet Christmas day.
We went to Church. In the afternoon there was a heavy thunderstorm.

I thank you for the Guardians that you sent us:
Those papers have so much information of what is going on
In the world around us.
The fighting really has begun in Zululand.
We have not heard much yet –

She looks around her, effectively surveying her own words" but "seeing" a battlefield.
I hope this war will be decisive.

[5] The "words" attributed to this birdcall are: "My mother is dead, my father is dead, all my relatives are dead, and my heart goes du-du-du-du-du-du-du."

I cannot help but be a little frightened.

She pauses. Her nib scratches across a page. She sets her writing block aside for a moment. Turns it to write at 90 degrees form how she has been writing. Video projection of the cross writing covers the stage floor and the cyclorama. Gets up. Stands. Carefully takes a small photograph from her pocket. The photograph is of Bessie, her daughter, the mother of Winchie, she kisses the image. Looks down at the page she has been writing. The stage floor and cyclorama begin to be engulfed by the projection of her cross writing.

I am crossing this as I have no thin paper left me
And am afraid a second sheet along with
Bessie's photo – she is a woman and a mother now –
Would make my letter over weighty.

The page of writing begins to burn in the same way that we have seen Filter's pencilled lettering burn and turn to ash.

Ellen (v/o): January 31st, 1879:
The terrible fighting has resulted in such losses.
We hear the General does not intend to attack the Zulus until he has more forces
From England and the Cape.

A brief pause. Ellen crosses to the spade.

In the meantime, he will protect the border –
We hear Cetewayo intends to invade Natal.[6]

She stands, leaning on the spade as a support, surveying the "burning" field of writing around her.

(sings) How it will end we cannot imagine and can only put our trust in God.

She looks straight out to the audience as though they are the recipients of her letter. Controlled compassion for her friend and concern for the community.
The projection morphs from ashes to soil particles – colours and texture suggest the layers of soil unearthed as a grave is dug. The soil particles begin to be enlarged and the palette changes through her words.

(v/o) Both Mrs Tarboton's sons were in the Carbineers.
One has come back but we fear the other has been killed –
There has been no further word. He was a fine young man.
His mother is in great distress.

(sings) We hear four young men have been taken prisoner.
That is far worse than being killed in fighting.

The call of the Emerald Spotted Wood-Dove as the projection morphs into images of enlarged rock particles which occupy the entire visual field.
Paulina moves silently towards Ellen. Briefly, it seems that the women will meet then Paulina turns abruptly towards upstage centre where Reverend Filter is seated, paper and pencil in hand...and lights on Ellen fade. As the scene changes we hear the echo of Adamastor's offstage voice.

[6] Spelt as in Ellen's letter.

Adamastor (off) Fix'd as rock before a rock I stood
My huge bones no more by blood and marrow warm'd
To horrid piles, and ribs of rock I was transform'd.

Briefly the sound of the sea, the sound of bees swarming and drilling into rock which subsides as Paulina takes up her story to Filter...

SCENE. 9. *"...Among these rocks" ... a cave in the mountain called Ngwibe, 1884..."*[7]

Revd. Filter is onstage throughout but positioned outside of the action. He writes when Paulina speaks. Paulina stands between the tableaux of figures and Revd Filter, not inside the cave nor completely removed from it. Both are isolated in separately lit areas.

Paulina: Kwakuyisikhathi sempi phakathi kwaMandlakazi noSuthu-
Uma uCetshwayo ebuya ngaphesheya kwolwande.
Ngalesosikhathi, ngangihlala emadwaleni nasemagqumeni.
Phakathi komgede wasezintabeni zakwa Ngibe.

(It was in the time of war between the Mandlakazi and Usuthu –
After Cetshwayo returned from the land across the sea –
In that time, I took refuge among the rocks and krantzes
In a cave in the mountain called Ngwibe.)

Nomguqo enters leading the chorus to centre stage where projections suggest the dark interior of a cave. As though in a dream, they look around them taking stock of the space in which they find themselves. The horizontal and vertical planes are filled with a static image: microscopic rock particles/rock strata which are enlarged. Through the different sequences this static image will merge with fragments of Rev Filter's writing, Ellen's letters and a magnified slow-motion image of bees/honeycomb/honey.

Nomguqo: Umgede wawumkhulu ngalendlela yokuthi nezinkomo zazihlala nathi ngaphakathi.

(A cave so big that our cattle could live inside among us.)

Paulina: Azange singene ngaphambi kokuthi imbuzi emhlophe ihlatshwe...

(We did not enter until a white goat had been sacrificed ...)

Nomguqo: Kuzokwazi ukuthi amadlozi wethu asivikele.

(So the spirits of our ancestors would protect us.)

Projection: A fragment of Filter's writing appears buried in the rocks as Paulina sings the next five lines, then disappears again.

Paulina: Lamadoda ambalwa ayenathi, angena kuqala.
Bengithukile.
Ngithuswa yilamadwala ukuthi angawa
asigxobe.

(The few men who were with us entered first.
I was afraid.
For the first time I knew fear.
I was afraid one of those rocks might tumble down
And crush us.)

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[7] The phrase is taken from T.S. Eliot – "Ash Wednesday Part VI": "Teach us to care and not to care/Teach us to sit still/Among these rocks..."

The chorus and Nomguqo "discover" fragments of belongings that have been left in the cave: a fragment of rotting grass mat, a few shards of a broken clay pot. One girl finds Ellen's rake and, after puzzling over it, hands it to Nomguqo. Nomguqo, although unfamiliar with the rake, recognizes its potential as a tool that might help her identify what is in the path ahead of her.

Paulina: Kukhona owathi ikhaya lenyoka enkulu.

(Someone said that this was the home of a great snake.)

The pool of water that has represented the sea for scenes with Eva is differently lit to become a dark interior pool beside which the women hover. A few thin wisps of smoke drift through the upstage gauze.

Nomguqo: Kwakumnyama, saqala umlilo...

(It is dark, so we light fires...)

Paulina: Sahlala khona kwaze kwaba isikhathi esicishe sibe unyaka. Unyaka wesomiso.

(We stayed there close on a year. A year of famine.)

Nomguqo and the girls begin to adjust to their circumstances, making use of the objects that they find.

Chorus: Sathola icansi elidala lokulala, kwakuthiwa bekungelabantu bakwaMzilikazi.
Futhi nokhamba oluphukile. Bekuyisiko,
Ukuphula ukhamba lanoma imuphi umfana ebehlala lapho.
Uma sekayindoda, kumele ashonele khona lapho.

(We find old sleeping mats – said to belong to Mzilikazi's people.
And clay pots that had been shattered. It was a custom
To break the claypot of any boy who was sheltering there
After his initiation into manhood – if he should die there.)

A light comes up to reveal Ellen, also "inside a cave", writing by the light of a single candle, alternately reading, writing or stares out towards the audience. She does not move throughout the remainder of the scene. V/o indicates spoken voice underscored by a drone.
Ellen listens, re-reading her letter as she does so. When she sings, she addresses the audience directly.

Ellen (v/o): Mrs Gordon's sister – quite elderly – has been lost out in the open bush.
She went out for a walk and did not return that evening.
Dear General Gordon called for help in a search and rescue
My George and Fred rode off to join them
But the 'Kaffirs' had been searching through the night and they had found her.
Brought her safely home.
Poor Mrs Gordon was so dreadfully worried.

(sings) She thought baboons – and there are large ones in the bush –
Would kill her.

But she had a good dog with her
and he protected her.

A slow choreographed sequence begins in which the chorus and Nomguqo begin a routine of preparing food as they describe what they are doing. Their repertoire of gestures should repeat something of the way in which Eva searched for food among the rocks earlier. They move in a restricted area throughout Ellen's account of her distance from military action.

Chorus: Sidla izimpande nemijikolo yesiganga.
Sipheke izimpande zenkomfe ngaphandle kosawoti. Asinawo usawoti.
Sigaya inhlokoshiyane ngathi imphuphu
Besidla izingongwe, amakhiwane esendle kanye nezikhwali.

(We eat roots and berries from the veld.
We cook inkomfe roots without salt. We have no salt.
We grind inhlokoshiyane berries like mealie grains.
We eat izingongwe tubers, wild figs and izikhwali.)

A ritualized "search for food" provides a backdrop to Ellen's description of the search for the missing child that Ellen describes. Ellen's "war" is a series of personal/intimate "disasters" and her anxieties at being situated two days ride away. The lines that she sings appear as letters merging with the rock particles.

Ellen: (v/o) September 1879:
We colonist have been accused in England,
Or, so I understand, from what the papers say.
We have been accused most unjustly of making a fortune
From this Zulu War!
I can assure you it is quite the other way.

Ellen: (sings) I did not tell you of young Winchie getting lost one night, last winter.
He's my Bessie's pride and joy – he is her oldest son.

(v/o) He went to get the sheep and his horse just ran away with him.
When it stopped it was so misty he could not tell where he was.
He unsaddled and slept that night in the grass, holding on
to his horse's bridle – but when he woke the horse was gone.
He put the saddle on his head and then walked home –
He had not been so very far, but you may guess the state that Bessie
Had been in through the night while all were searching for the lad.

Chorus: Sacishe sabulawa indlala.
Izinkomo azisengwa-
Kufanele sithule futhi nazo kumele sizivimbe nokuthi zikhalele amazinyane.
Kunempi ezayo- ezweni lethu
Ngaphandle komgede.

(We nearly die of hunger.
The cows are not milked –
We must be silent and they must be stopped from lowing for their calves
There are impi – our own and now our enemy
Outside the cave.)

Ellen: (sings) This is not a happy year.
Bessie and her little family are down at D'Urban now
And I must tell you why.
Dear little Winchie, the eldest boy,
Was killed down in their mill
On February the third.

(v/o) No one knows quite how it happened – he was alone and but eleven years old.
And quite dead when he was found.
We only hope he did not suffer much.
Little Winchie lies at peace
Beside the church at Byrne and stone's throw from his home.
His father talks of selling up and going off to Canada. I hope he will not.
I cannot think that in the unsettled state of this our Colony right now
that there is much chance of selling. They now own quite the best farm
Here in Byrne, I never saw such fruit trees – every kind of fruit, and
Oranges in abundance.

(sings) We are two day's journey from the border if the Zulu do invade.
We hear 3,000 troops have lately landed.
You will have read of the death of the Prince Imperial.
His body was to arrive in Pietermaritzburg just yesterday.
We sent a bunch of violets – purple and white –
To rest on that young man's coffin.

There is such traffic on the roads,
With all the Zulu cattle being brought into Natal – the lung-sickness
Is very bad throughout the colony.
All the Talbot's calves have died.
Frank is trekking. He lost nineteen oxen lately.
His wife and children remain behind without him.

Paulina, Nomguqo and the chorus ready themselves to sleep on mats. This action should be barely discernible, a silhouette.

Chorus: Sacishe sabulawa indlala.
Izinkomo azisengwa-
Kufanele sithule futhi nazo kumele sizivimbe ngokuthi zikhalele amazinyane.
Kunempi ezayo- ezweni lethu
Ngaphandle komgede.

(We nearly die of hunger.
The cows are not milked –
We must be silent and they must be stopped from lowing for their calves
There are impi – our own and now our enemy
Outside the cave.)

Eva is in one area of the stage sleeping restlessly. Nomguqo and chorus are also sleeping. A low droning sound begins again. Bees? Underground drilling? Indistinct as underscoring.
Ellen's voice over the sound. She speaks to the audience, Paulina watches her.

A drone: muffled sounds of cattle are overwhelmed by the sound of swarming bees and drilling into rock which intensifies. Nomguqo and the chorus remain asleep but restless. Nomlhlwathi, Paulina/Nomguqo's mother appears on a level inside the rockface. The three matriarchs are sibyls of the rock. Nomlhlwathi is dressed in full warrior regalia – she personifies courage and strength. Grandmother and Mother are equally magnificent as presences capable of resisting subjugation.

Nomlhlwathi: Khulumani! Khulumani! Khulumani!
Niyangizwa?
Khulumani! Khulumani! Khulumani!
Kufanele nilalele!
Khulumani! Khulumani! Khulumani!
Nginani.

(Khulumani! Khulumani! Khulumani!
Do you hear me?
Khulumani! Khulumani! Khulumani!
You must listen!
Khulumani! Khulumani! Khulumani!
I am with you.)

Nomguqo, half asleep, responds to the call – but does not get up. Eva rises and like a somnambulist – enters the cave searching for the source of the voice.

Paulina:*(repeating from sc. 3)* Umama wami wangibiza uKhulumani ...
My mother called me Khulumani....

They watch, as does Ellen, as her son, Ted enters. He is dressed as a young mining prospector) enters.

Nomlhlwathi: Ngizokutshela into ongeke uyazi.
Kunenkundla ekude kakhulu nalapho sikhona.
Ngaphakathi komhlaba kude ukudlula lapho izinyoni ezindiza khona -

(I tell you what you cannot know.
In a field so far from where we are here now –
Much deeper in the ground than birds fly up above us –
I see that men will break the rock in search of gold.)

Eva's mother and grandmother join her as indistinct figures. All three matriarchs inhabit the rock face with gravitas, dignity and strength.

Nomlhlwathi: Bazothola igolide.
Bazophula idwala elinegoilde.

(They will find gold.
They will break the rock to have that gold.)

Ellen looks up from reading a letter she has received.

Ellen: (v/o) From Ted in the Blyde River Canyon....

Ted has a pan and sieve with him, also a marker to identify his claim. He starts purposefully, if not knowledgeably, to work water through the sieve. He is distracted by the landscape and gets up to follow the bird call as he exits.

Ted Mcleod (offstage): A new rush formed on Thursday
I was in time to take out claims.
In Pilgrim's Rest
There are about sixty of us now
We will not find gold until we get beneath the pebbles.

The sound of a Whip-poor-Will/Bokmakierie Shrike/Piet-my-vrou. He hears it, exits in the direction of the sound.

Ted Mcleod (offstage): This is a pretty place – the hills are steep and high.
The bush is thick - the grass is good and green.
The river beautiful – as clear as crystal.

Projection: Images of bees clustering around a honeycomb are superimposed over the image of the rock particles.

Nomlhlwathi: Baningi abazolandela: amadoda amhlophe azofuna ukutshala idolobha.
Bazoliqamba ngalegolide abalifunayo.
Bazoletha isibhamu eziningi futhi, baphula umhlaba.
Ngiyabona ukuthi bazophula amadwala, bafunana negolide.

Ukuboniswa kwami kubamnyama.

(Many more will follow: pale men who will plant a city
They will name it for the gold they seek.
They will bring more guns....

My vision darkens....)

She raises her spear as though to clear the air in front of her. The projection of the bees disappears. Eva moves in a little closer towards her and as she does so the two other figures in the rock open their arms to embrace her.

Grandmother: I come from
The fire that destroyed Ceuta.
I tell you of that city,
The place from whence I came....
Serene and calm, fanned by desert air,

Paulina: UZibhebhu namadoda akhe bashisa Ondini.
Umuzi washa wangqongqa.
Kodwa ingane zasebukhosini zangingekho.

(Zibhebhu and his men set fire to Ondini.
The umuzi was destroyed in flame –
But the royal children were not there.)

Ellen: (sings) The old house burnt so quickly, all those years ago,
The morning after Frankie's lovely wedding.
A grass fire came upon us with a hard wind right behind.

Three young men were riding by –got out all our clothes
Our bedding and the furniture.
Had it not been for our neighbours we would have starved.
They sent us food, helped clear the mess
And set up a subscription. Our greatest loss was all the tools.

The boys' bibles were all burnt
And the nice one Georgie Tarver sent me.

The projection becomes a palimpsest as the rhythmic motion of waves breaking on the shore is superimposed over the constant image of the rock particles, so the women appear embedded in land and water.

Grandmother: My city woke one day – all unprepared –
To cries of confused alarm...
By nightfall that city – plundered bare –
I, saved only by this sacred charm.

She stretches out her arm to her amulet – cowrie shells bound onto a leather band around her wrist.

I was a child – unprotected and alone
They took me with them – away from all I'd known.
The Moorish city, like our masters and like me...
Enslaved by men from across the sea.

Within the projection the waves morph into a pixilated image of the Women's march of 1956, grainy out of focus barely decipherable.

Nomlhlwathi: Ngiyabona futhi, ngibona amabutho esifazane.
Bayahamba- Baninigi!
Balwa ngamaphepha-balwa ngezinkemba-
Hayi imikhonto.

(I see again, I see women warriors,
They are marching – they are many!
They fight with paper – fight with words –
And not with spears.)

Projection returns to the layered image of waves breaking over the rock particles.

Grandmother: Gold made Ceuta rich with plenty
Gold, brought by camel caravans,
From places no-one knew for certain.
It was said that women mined it
And traded gold for bags of salt
With no word ever being spoken.

Prince Henry took me with him – across the sea –
To Lisbon then to Sagres.

Mother: I tell you of a sailor's city
The place from which I came...
A city of men so bold and free
Where I learnt to live with shame.

Grandmother: Prince Henry's ships sailed ever off
Out in conquest, off to trade.
From the heart of this vast land
They brought brave men in chains to Sagres.

Projection: a third layer is introduced to the image – it is the graphic representation of the interior of a slave ship showing restrictions of space. The waves slowly disappear so the black lines of the drawing appear overlaid on the rock particles.

Both: Do not sing of Sagres and do not grieve for Ceuta (*a hypnotic lullaby)*
No peace no freedom there!
Do not sing of Ceuta and do not grieve for Sagres
Men's lives are bought and sold!

Projection: the image of the slave ship etching fades away leaving only rock particles.

Nomlhlwathi: Bengiyindodakazi yomhlaba-
Umhlaba, ikhaya lesizwe sethu
Abantu baSengakhona ka Jama-
Nokuziqhenya kwakhe.

(I was a daughter of this land – home of a nation
Senzangakhona ka Jama's people and his pride.)

Projection: the image of rock particles is overlaid with bees clustering around a honeycomb.

Grandmother (to Eva): You will not be alone much longer,
Soft spoken people of this land will find you....

Mother (to Eva): They will guide you south to safety.
They will share a life of always moving onwards.

Mother (to Eva): You will have a child, it grows within you,
Your child will grow and bring such joy...

Grandmother (to Eva): Your child's child will have a child....
She will be called Eva, by men whose tongue I do not know.

Projection: A fleeting interpolation of "a portrait of Eva Krotoa" followed, perhaps, by an image – a close-up taken from Charles Davidson Bell's 1852 painting of Van Riebeeck's landing bleeds through the dense rock particle projection and disappears.

Grandmother (to audience): And she will have the gift of tongues
... and one day will be remembered...

As the voices of the dead quieten, the projection returns to the rock particles and then Into a stream of honey being poured across the map of Byrne.
The "spirits" exits. The drone sound is very faint. Ellen "stirs" as though she has been day-dreaming.

Ellen: I am here because my home has been invaded – by a swarm of buzzing bees.
They have been so bad we could scarce go out
To enjoy the air on our verandah. They are so spiteful.
We cleared the room. Took up the floor.
There was honey, a good deal, but
So much spoilt in killing all the bees,
We poured kettles full of water over them
As best we could. Took up bucketsful of bodies.

They have not gone far enough to please me.
The old thatched roof is leaking badly.
When the building is all finished, it will be much improved
My garden looks most wretched.

Projection: the map of Byrne and the bees fades out to return to the world of the cave interior.

Chorus: Sacishe sabulawa indlala.
Izinkomo azisengwa-
Kufanele sithule futhi nazo kumele sizivimbe ngokuthi zikhalele amazinyane.
Kunempi ezayo- ezweni lethu
Ngaphandle komgede.

(We nearly die of hunger.
The cows are not milked –
We must be silent and they must be stopped from lowing for their calves
There are impi – our own and now our enemy
Outside the cave.)

Paulina: Kodwa bahamba bangazange bazama ukungena

(But they moved off without ever trying to enter.)

Silence. The visual field clears as the projection fades out and the world inside the rock disappears and returns to the familiar and recognizable landscape. Eva's sleeping form should blend in with the landscape so that it appears to be inhabited only by Nomguqo and the chorus girls with Filter and Paulina. The second actor enters dressed as a farmer carrying 2 sacks. Nomguqo and the chorus register his arrival...

***SCENE. 10. Another day prepares for heat and silence,* 1886.... Leaving Ngwibe.....**

Mid-afternoon – serene blue sky. The girls run to greet Gert van Rooyen, clustering around him and his goods. No wagon. He carries two full sacks. He empties mealies into the kumbas of the chorus girls as Nomguqo describes.

Nomguqo: Langa limbe sabona inqola endleleni eseduza nomgede.
Futhi lenqola yayigcwele, igcwele mfi, sabona uShede Foloyi.
Sagijima saya kuye samcela umbila.

Silambile kabi. Wagcwalisa izikhumba zethu.
Sabuza ukuthi singahamba naye.
Salanda ubaba nomama.
Sasiwulambele lombila.

Washintsha amasaka amashumi amathathu ombila ngezinkomo engamashumi amane.

Sahamba naye. Ubaba no mama bebenathi.
Uma sisahamba, sadlula ngasesontweni.
Sabona isidumbu sikaMfundisa Schrőder.
Wagwazwa waze wafa uMaphela indodana kaZungu.

Seyayisaba lendawo futhi sisaba uMaphela.
Umbulali obezama ungishela kudala.
Bengingamthandi wabulala umngani wami, uNomaqina.
Ngamala.

Sahamba izinsuku eziyisithupha siya emfuleni iBuffallo nangaphesheya.
UFaloyi wasibhalisa e Greytown
Safika ekhayeni likaHlimbithwa noFaloyi.
Kanye nabazali bami- wabakhela indlu emzini wakhe.
Futhi bahlala lapho.

(One day we see a wagon on the road close by the cave.
And on that wagon, fully loaded, we see Shede Foloyi.
We run to him and beg for mealies.

We are so hungry. He fills our kumbas.
We ask if we can travel with him.
We fetch my father and his wife.
We are so hungry for those mealies.

He barters thirty sacks of maize for fourty head of cattle.

We go with him. My father and his wife are with us.
On our way we pass the mission station.
We see the body of Reverend Schrőder
Stabbed to death by Maphela son of Zungu.
We are afraid now of this place and fear Maphela
A murderer who attempted long ago to court me.

I did not love him. He killed my friend, Nomaquina.
I rejected his advances.

His father Makhosana is an upright man. He served Cetshwayo well.

We travel six days to the Buffalo River and beyond.
Faloyi registers us in Greytown.
We come to Hlimbithwa and Faloyi's home.
My parents too – he built a hut for them just outside his yard,
And there they lived.)

Revd. Filter returns, watches the girls and van Rooyen as they exit. Revd Filter moves downstage to join Paulina who has been observing the scene from stage right. Nomguqo settles down to sleep where she can be observed by both Paulina and Filter who are isolated on stage for the account of her conversion.

SCENE 11: ***By the way of dispossession...1887.***

Daytime in Paulina's part of the stage. Night and candle light where Nomguqo is positioned should stage the contrast between their worlds.

Paulina v/o: Baba Mhlalela, Sengikuxoxele
Ngempilo yami yomuntu ongakholwa.
Bengishilo nokuthi okunye ngeke ngikhulume ngakho.
Njengomzalwane, akumele ngikhulume ngalezo zinto Baba Mhlahlela,

(I have related
my life as pagan woman.
As I told you, there are matters about which I must not speak – As a Christian, I should not speak about such things.)

Surtitle: The farm of Gert van Rooyen at Hlimbithwa, near Hermannsberg.

Paulina: (v/o) Iminyaka emithathu yonke ngihlala noShede Foloyi.
Kwayilapho lapho engathola ukushakashelwa-
Lokuvakashela ukwenza lengxoxo yami.
Bekuyisikhathi sokuthi ngikhulume ngokuthi ngaba umzalwane kanjani.
Ngangilele egumbini lokudlela likaFaloyi.
Ngobunye ubusuku, ngiphupha, kwafika umuntu kumina.

(For three years, I stayed with Shede Foloyi.
It was there I had a visitation
The visitation that led to my conversion –
It is time to tell how I became a Christian.
I slept each night in Faloyi's dining room.
One night, in a dream a person came to me.)

Eva rises and crosses to join Nomguqo. She "embodies" the angel. Van Rooyen joins them – he carries a large Bible and a single candle. They 'act out', albeit in a stylized dream "vision", all that Paulina describes.

(Sings) Umuntu owayemhlophe ecwebezela isithunywa
Ingelosi eyayigqoke ingube ende, imhlophe.
Wathi kimi: Paulina, vuka, uvume ibhayibheli.
Hamba uye lapho kuvela khona ilanga manje. Fundisa abantu bami!

Ngalalela futhi ngayithatha kuye lencwadi.
Kodwa omunye, omude omnyama wavela.
Wangixwayisa "ungayivumi lencwadi.
Uma uyivuma, ngiyakuqinisekisa ukuthi uzofa"

(A person shining white – a messenger,
An angel in long white shining robes.
He said to me: 'Paulina, arise, accept this Bible.
Go forth to where the sun now rises. Teach my people!'

I listened. And I took from him that Book.

But then another tall dark One appeared.
He warned me: 'Do not take that Book!
If you accept it, you will surely die!

(v/o): Ngavuka ngithukile. Ngabona amalngabi omlilo.
Ngavusa uShede Faloyi, owakhanyisa ilembe, walalela indaba wami.

(I woke in fright. I saw a flame of fire and then began to cry.
I woke Shede Foloyi who lit a lamp and listened to my story.)

The actor returns as Van Rooyen who has been woken from his sleep.

(Sings): KwakunguFaloyi owalanda incwadi. Uyena owangitshela
Ukuthi uJesu uziveze kumina kulephupho elimangazayo.
Angizange ngivume "Angiyena umzalwane mina"
Wathi "Inkosi izongitshela ukuthi kufanele ngenzeni."

(It was Foloyi who fetched a Bible. It was he who told me
That Jesus had revealed himself to me in that strange dream.
I protested: "I am not a Christian!"
He simply said: "The Lord will tell you what to do." Then he prayed.
I had not seen a Bible. I did not know what it was.
I did not understand its stories. But a second night
The same thing happened.
This time the angel told me I need not fear the other dark one.)

(v/o): UFoloyi wathi: "Hamba uye enkosini, iyakubiza"
Lokhu kwenzeka ngoMsobuluko.

(Foloyi said: "Go to the Lord, for He is calling you.
This happened on a Monday.)

(Sings): Futhi ngoLwesithathu, uFoloyi
Wagibela, ukuyoxoxa nabadala enkozweni yakhe.
Ngemuva keviki, babamba umhlangano wokubonga.
Bahlangana bonke ukuzobamba lohlelo lokubonga inkosi.

Ngemuva kwezinyanga ezintathu, bengikulungele ikubhabhadiswa.
Ngabhajadiswa umfundisi Haccius nabanye abane.
Ngathatha igama lengelosi eyangikhulumisa.
Kusukela ngalelo langa ngaba nokuthula.

Ngaba uPaulina.

(And on Wednesday, Foloyi
Rode to discuss this with elders of his church.
One week later, they held a meeting of thanksgiving.
They came together to hold a service to give thanks to the Lord.

In three months, I was ready to be baptised.
I was baptised by umfundisi Haccius with four others.

I took the name by which the angel had addressed me.
From this day on, peace of mind came over me.

I became Paulina.)

Nomguqo exits with the actor/van Rooyen. Eva returns to sleep. Only Paulina remains on stage, Filter in shadow near her.

As the lights go down on the scene, Paulina kneels facing the audience as though they are her congregation. The focus shifts to Ellen, in her garden in Byrne....

SCENE 12: *Past and future gather here.*

Sunset, in Ellen's garden, she enters with a small (unlit) paraffin lamp. As she enters, the voice over begins.

Ellen: (v/o) May 1881....
Byrne is no more a town than when we first came here.
I think of it as a village in the hills. It has only seven houses.
Richmond is some ten miles off. There is a wagon road from there.

Ellen: (sings) September 28th, 1881.
My dear husband died very suddenly
But not altogether unexpectedly.

(v/o) He made his contribution to the history of Natal.
The Almanack of weather reading and record of
The rainfall at latitude 29 degrees and longitude 30 east
He started that at Cooper's Hill, year by year he kept a record.

(sings) I stuck some lines above my mantelpiece,
Dear George thought that they fitted me:
"Here lies an old woman who was always tired
For she lived in a house where help wasn't hired
Her last words on earth were 'Dear friends I'm a-going
Where washing ain't done, nor churning, nor sewing
And everything there will be just to my wishes
For where you don't eat there's no washing of dishes
I'll be where loud anthems will always be ringing
But having no voice, I'll get rid of the singing...." *(She stops abruptly.)*

Ellen (v/o) Byrne is no more a town than when we first came here.
I think of it as a village in the hills. It has only seven houses.
Richmond is some ten miles off. There is a wagon road from there.

The sun has been setting during the course of the scene. An evensong chorus of offstage voices – a young schoolgirl choir – bridges the change in location from Byrne to Lemgo.... Filter, Paulina and Nomguqo return to the exact positions in which they started scene 2. The distant voice of the Byrne church 's small choir is heard. Ellen listens.

Chorus: (off) *"And there's another country, I've heard of long ago*
Most dear to them that love her, most brave to them that know.
We may not count her armies, we may not see her King;
Her fortress is a faithful heart, her pride is suffering;
And soul by soul and silently her shining bounds increase,
And her ways are ways of gentleness, and all her paths are peace."[8]

[8] The original first verse might work better since it was not set to music and is less immediately familiar but the gender suggestion of male voices is less appropriate:

"I heard my country calling, away across the sea,
Across the waste o' waters, she calls and calls to me.
Her sword is girded at her side, her helmet on her head,
And round her feet are lying the dying and the dead;

Paulina: (v/o) Ngaba "uNomguqo", njengokusho kukababa.
Ngahamba amazwe ayelapho kuphuma khona ilanga, ngasempumalanga.
Wase uqala lapho umsebenzi wami yokuthuthukisa lomilo owuyigama lika Nkulunkulu.
Baba umfundisi ingabe uyizwile indaba yempilo wami.

(I became the "Kneeling One" as my father had predicted.
I travelled to the lands which lay towards the sunrise, to the east.
And so began my work to spread the fire of the word of God.
Baba Mfundisi, you have heard the story of my life.)

Nomguqo: Kodwa impilo yami ayikho emagameni akho abhaliwe.
Ubhale lokhu engikhethe ukukutshela kona.
Lokhu bekungaphakathi kimi kanye nagempilo wami.
Kodwa ungeke wazi lomoya ebenginayo futhi engizohlala nginawo.

(But my life does not lie in words that you have written
You have written what I chose to tell you
Which was in and of my life
But you can never know the spirit that I was and will always be.)

Surtitle*: Byrne, 1887.*

The cemetery at the grave of George More McLeod, her husband (d. 28.09.1881). The headstone is old and the grave well-tended. Ellen has a small hand-picked posy (daisies, a rose or two) to bring to the grave which she tends throughout.

Ellen: So many gone. My children grown.
And here lies my dear George More McLeod. *(To the grave/ husband)*
I have been reading Rider Haggard's *She*,
What a strange and curious fiction!
Just think of it! A "she-who-must-be-obeyed"!
It really does amuse me. It all seems so unlikely.
All this adventure and romance.
But, this man, Haggard, has made a fortune with his books

Do you remember Rider Haggard -
That young man Shepstone nurtured?
He raised our flag ten years ago in 1877,
Annexing Kruger's small republic.
He's returned to England now; gave up farming near Dundee.

The children and our grandchildren
All thought *King Solomon's Mines* great fun
But most improbable in places.

A bell tolls. Revd. Filter enters, followed by a procession of the chorus, full cast members, including all the men who have been offstage voices. They are mourners in Paulina's funeral procession. There is a light drizzle of rain so they share umbrellas, or use shawls, to cover their heads. They make their

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I hear the noise of battle, the thunder of her guns;
I haste to thee, my mother, a son among thy sons."

way to a mound of earth.

Surtitle*: Lemgo, December 1942.*

Revd Filter. UPaulina wayehlonishwa kakhulu.
Abahedeni abaningi babeme phakathi kwabazilile
Ibhokisi nenqola yakhe
Yayidosa izinkabi azikhonze kakhulu.
Ezimbili ezimhlophe, eyodwa ngaphambili.
Ungcwatshelwe lapha, usethole ukuthula, emancwabeni aka Lemgo.
Phakathi kwalabo ebekade engumama wabo ngomoya.

(Paulina was well-respected:
Many heathens stood among the mourners.
The coffin and her sleigh
Were drawn by her favourite oxen -
Two white ones out in front.
She lies buried here, at peace now, in Lemgo's little graveyard
Midst those to whom she was a mother of the spirit.)

The mourners group to kneel around the grave. Nomguqo and Paulina watch as the ceremony proceeds.

Paulina: *(as she fingers the chiseled stone and reads the inscription)*
Amashumi amabili nanye. Ishumi nambili. Amashumi ayisishiyagalombili nesikhombisa.
Paulina Nomguqo Dhlamini.
Isikhathi esidlulile nesizayo zihlangene lapha.
"Kuyena okholelwa kimi, njengoba imibhalo isho, Imifula yamanzi aphilayo izogeleza ngaphakathi kuye." UJohn.

(Twenty-one. Twelve. Eighty-seven.
Paulina Nomguqo Dhlamini.
Past and future gather here.
"From whoever believes in me, as the scriptures say,
Streams of Living water shall flow out from within him."
John. Seven. Thirty-eight.)

The mourners rise slowly and move off. Paulina and Nomguqo remain.

Paulina: Ngidumisa inkosi eyangihola ngokuphepha
Empilweni yami. Owagcina engivumele
Ekugcineni ngiguqe phambi kwakhe.

Futhi nasehanjweni lakhe, uSaul wavela eDamascus
Futhi wanenkukhanya okungazelele.
Nokukhanya kasezulwini.

Wezwa umhlaba uzamazama
Wasebuza inkosi "Nkosi, ufuna ukuthi ngenzeni?"

Nami ngabuza "Nkosi, ufuna ukuthi ngenzeni?"
Ngakholela imisebenzi yokubhabhadisa eminingi.
UDlamini omdala wathi" njengomuntu ohlola izinkabi.

UNkulunkulu ubopha abantu bakhe.
Nami ngabamba elami ijokwe. Ukuze ngikwazi ukungena
Emzini kababa wethu esezulwini."

(I praise the Lord who has led me safely
Through my life. Who has allowed me,
At last, to kneel before him.
And as he journeyed, Saul came near Damascus
And suddenly there shined about him
A light from heaven.
He fell to the earth trembling
And asked 'Lord, what wilt thou have me do?'[9]
I also asked: 'Lord what wilt thou have me do?'
I led many to their baptismal moment.
Old Dhalmini said "as one inspans oxen,
So God harnesses his people.
Let me also bear my yoke. That I may enter
The umuzi of our Heavenly Father".

In response, as if in answer to the question that Paulina has asked, Nomguqo raises, ritually, then drops a clay pot scattering its contents. They look at each other in a silent challenge. Paulina turns away from Nomguqo and addresses the audience as she kneels ....

***Ellen**: (to the gravestone)*
Seven years ago, my dear, how time has passed.
My violets are splendid, so large and so very sweet,
The primroses right now begin to flower.
I have so much to be thankful for, many comforts,
My children and their little ones
And I can still keep house alone without assistance.

She rises. Moves a few steps, faces the audience. She shows the audience the book.

I have been reading Mr. Haggard.
I can't accept that line of his
"There are no petticoats in this history...".

A slight shake of her head, then to the audience, as though Louisa is somewhere in the auditorium.

And what a curious thing, my dear Louisa,
That all our first letters have been kept.
I should like to see them ....

The small funeral procession has left the stage, with the chorus girls leading and with Revd Filter bringing up the rear.

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[9] *The Bible,* King James translation: *Acts 9:3 – 5.*

Nomguco: Uyizwile indaba yempilo wami.
Kodwa impilo yami ayipheleli emagameni
Abhaliweyo
Lokhu okubhaliwe, ilokhu engikhetha ukutshela kona.
Lokhu bekungaphakathi kimi kanye nagempilo wami.
Kodwa ungeke wazi lomoya ebenginayo futhi engizohlala nginawo.

(You have heard the story of my life.
But my life does not lie in words that have been written
What was written was what I chose to tell
Which was in and of my life
But you can never know the spirit that I was and will always be.)

Their "stories" ended, Ellen and Paulina have settled into the sand/floor and become one with the landscape. The final scene transition begins. The setting is restored to the beach (as per sc 1) where Eva lies sleeping. The only difference is that Nomguco is now a figure within the landscape, watching what takes place.

Scene transition: *Three chorus members, dressed now as Khoi enter.*[10] *They each carry something which they will leave behind Eva. They are cautious in approaching her to avoid waking her. They get close enough to touch her should they choose but do not do so. Each leaves a gift beside her sleeping form: a gourd with water, a tortoise shell with a honeycomb, and a small leather pouch with a few berries or roots. They arrange this "meal" beside her so that as she wakes she will see it without inadvertently overturning any of what they have gathered together. They depart as quietly as they have arrived.*

[10] If the "funeral" costume is a shapeless dark coat worn with a traditional black shawl, this can be worn over the costume required for the final scene.

SCENE 13*: In my end is my beginning.*

The beach at sunrise. No projections. Eva wakes. Stretches.

Eva: As I slept ... I heard soft voices... I heard footsteps...
I saw the future... always wandering the surface of this land...

Her fingers make contact with the gourd containing water. Raising herself she looks at the small offering. Reaches out to pick up the gourd, looking around to see who might have left it for her. There is no indication of any other presence. She lifts the gourd to drink. Puts it down carefully. She picks up the unfamiliar natural bowl of the tortoise shell – dips a finger in the honey, licks the honey off her finger. Gets up slowly to look around her again for any sign of who has been watching her. She picks up the small leather bag and secures it to her waist. Picks up the gourd and the shell. She picks up each of the sticks planted in the soil to mark the time that she has been on this beach. The knife and cloth are all that remains of what the unnamed sailor pressed on her as she disembarked.
She wraps the cloth around the blade as she looks at the beach around her. She sees the sets of footprints and can work out in which direction this group have departed.

She looks out to sea/the audience, for a moment.
Projections slowly come into focus: sets of faint footprints across the sand – clear tracks to guide her.

As she sets off in the direction in which the three girls have departed at the end of the transition, the projections fade. She exits, carefully carrying the three objects left for her, the small bundle of sticks and the knife. She does not retrieve the small bag of samples that the Portuguese gave her. Nomguqo follows but stops beside the objects that represent colonial ambition and conquest.

Silence. Then the sound of waves breaking on the shore.

Lights fade on the figure of Nomguqo as she looks out to the audience.

Footprints on the Wind: Reflexive Essay

Contents:

1.Introduction: three women's stories of displacement and arrival.

2.What form might contemporary South African postcolonial music-theatre making adopt?

2.1. Tolstoy's account of *A Night at the Opera* in Moscow c 1811/1812.
2.2 A brief survey of recent initiatives in South African opera.

3.Aspects of Postdramatic theatre
3.1 The irruption of the real.
3.2 The reverberation of the voice in the landscape: image as text and context.

4. Speaking and writing.
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4.2 Paul Carter: land and language.

5.Towards a "scenic *écriture":* the stage as a landscape of writing, image and territory.
5.1 Foucault's meditation on "other spaces": the heterotopia.
5.2 Land, territory and landscape: mapping places as destinations, either permanent or temporary.

6. Imagining the project moving forwards into production.

7. Bibliography.

8. Appendices: schematics that may be central to the way a production could be realized.

1: The gravestones of Paulina Dlamini and George Macleod.
2: The photograph on the font cover of *Paulina Dlamini: Servant of Two kings.*
3. A page of Ellen's cross writing from *Dear Louisa.*
4: Two artworks suggesting relationships between bodies, landscape and maps.
5: A table of scenes and projected images with selected illustrations to draw from.
6: A chronology of historical events and the timeline of events in the narrative.
7: A table of significant objects (props) and how they mobilize action.
8: A table of recorded (natural) sound effects integral to the soundscape and recorded voice-overs of characters

Reflexive Essay

> Theatre does not attain its political, ethical reality by way of information, theses and messages; in short: by way of its content in the traditional sense. On the contrary: it is part of its constitution to hurt feelings, to produce shock and disorientation, which point the spectators to their own presence...
>
> Hans-Thies Lehmann: Postdramatic Theatre (2006: 187).

> The present epoch will perhaps be above all the epoch of space. We are in an epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed.
>
> Michel Foucault: "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias" (1967: 1).

> *Identity is the* passive by-product of history. It is conferred on the individual without effort. As it were, one is simply born into it, history supplies the rest. People's consciousness, on the other hand, is the product of human history-making. It develops the active side of men and women. Unlike identity, consciousness is not pre-given; it develops through interaction and experience. To put matters bluntly, the attempt to achieve status by finding one's 'roots' or through one's history is an evasion of the possibility of making history in the here and now. By accepting the sanction of the past, human beings give up their own power to make history. It does not matter whether this past is radical or conservative. In both cases it is the past that is *active* and men and women, the grateful recipients of identities, *are passive*."
>
> Frank Furedi: *Mythical Past, Elusive Future: History and Society in an Anxious Age* (1992: 258).

In the interests of advancing critically informed creative practice, in this expository document I contextualize the project by expanding on the intertwined issues around which my reading, thinking and work has been developed. This approach of setting out the intellectual landscape that has informed the crafting of the text seems an appropriate personal reflection on the process of creative writing and serves simultaneously as a meditation on theatre as a medium that celebrates ephemerality and encounter.[1]

1. Introduction: three women's stories of displacement and arrival.

In reflecting on Brecht's use of historical narratives as a means by which to interrogate the present and Jameson's analyses of his strategies, I return to T.S. Eliot's haunting lines regarding a "perpetual possibility":

> What might have been is an abstraction
> Remaining a perpetual possibility
> Only in the world of speculation ("Burnt Norton").[2]

Theatrical presentation is a medium that allows for staging such "abstractions" and "perpetual possibilities" since it might be deployed as a dialogic space that oscillates between the real and the imagined. The stage is a site in which plural (and even contradictory) narratives may play out in space and time, not only between characters but in the tension between word and image, sound and silence, movement and stasis, presentation and response. For these reasons I test how the manipulation of space and time in the theatre-making project allow for an expression of "what might have been and what has been" (T.S. Eliot, "Burnt Norton").

My professional practice for the last forty years has been within the field of theatre and performance pedagogy.[3] My design practice has straddled disparate forms of theatre, ranging from

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[1] The selection of issues (and exclusion of others) signals my current preoccupations and does not preclude a directorial interpretation that focuses on other aspects of the text, for example how to situate the production in relation to contemporary feminist issues.

[2] Eliot's *Four Quartets* has been a valuable reference for thinking about time, beginnings and endings as in the film *A Late Quartet* (Zilberman 2012). Eliot's poems are quoted in the Brechtian scene titles which act as interpolations that foreground the constructed-ness of the text.

emergent South African dance, drama and musical theatre to Western opera and operetta: theatrical expression, on stage and in everyday life, is a phenomenon that intrigues me. T.S. Eliot, in "Poetic Drama", more or less sums up Erving Goffman's later extended sociological notion of the "performance of self in everyday life" (in his text of that name) when he writes: "The really fine rhetoric of Shakespeare occurs in situations where a character in the play *sees himself* in a dramatic light" (1972:39, italics as in the original). The consciousness of theatricality within an everyday situation where the character is conscious of playing a role inserts a duality within the subject-space continuum that I am interested in pursuing.

In this project, I draw on perspectives culled from diverse experiences, particularly insights gleaned from designing new texts, to promote the narrative function of the visual dimension of theatre which together with its affective impact arguably remains under-explored.[4]

I propose that it is not only at the level of content but also in the formal manipulation of subject matter that there is scope for innovative theatre-writing. In crafting this "libretto", for want of a better term,[5] I draw on innovations within avant-garde performance modes in conjunction with issues emerging from postcolonial themes of power/knowledge, transformation and subjectivity. I experiment with an idiom that is polyphonic and multi-perspectival in integrating sung and spoken delivery that is inseparable from the visual world within which it is produced. I have pursued the potential for telling stories of "arrival and settling" in a manner that eschews the model of a unified linear plot (and the conventions of realism) in favour of narration that fuses the sound of the human voice situated within a landscape that is frankly declared as a stage and simultaneously something other than a public platform. The experience of place is articulated in words produced within a sequence of virtual landscapes in a form of scenic dramaturgy that literally depends on the overlay of writing on the surfaces of the stage as a central motif of the action.

The script in its current form can only serve as a departure point for a production and remains open to editorial adjustments attendant on further phases of developing a production.[6] The proposed production is designed to resist easy categorization and draws on aspects of both Western and African forms to transform perceptions of what these forms might become. "The transformational value of change," writes Homi Bhabha, "lies in the re-articulation, or translation, of elements that are neither the One nor the Other but something else besides, which contests the territories of both" (2004:41). This formulation of the hybrid as a generative principle suggests the need for a creative practice that dares to imagine beyond the constraints of pragmatic and logistical issues embedded in the resourcing and commissioning of new theatre projects and allows for imagining texts that are ambitious in both inter-disciplinary and inter-cultural aspirations.

The material worked into this writing has its origins in neglected documents of South African history. Two quiet female testimonies are part of the record of life in Kwa-Zulu Natal region in the 19th century. These individual accounts largely offer perspectives of events and experiences which lend

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[3] I have designed ten operas including *Daughter of Nebo (*composed for double bass and Venda drum by Victor Ntoni) and, more recently, *West Side Story* (KZN Playhouse) and *Koanga* (2015) for the Wexford Opera Festival in Ireland.

[4] Notable works by significant theatre-makers, for example William Kentridge and Brett Bailey, are exempt from this observation. They are distinctive in that they are the product of the auteur director/visual artist in which image rather than spoken or sung word predominates.

[5] "Music drama" might be more appropriate but is redolent with Wagnerian undertones. The style to which the work aspires has more in common with a live staging of a popular music video.

[6] While developing the project beyond an idea on paper is not part of this MA submission, I have identified a possible collaborator in Themba Mkhize as composer.

themselves to a staging that focuses on testimony rather than dramatization or re-enactment. A third, ultimately unknowable, female figure belongs to an even earlier period in South African history. An unnamed female slave aboard Diaz's 1487 expedition appears to have been the first person to have set sail from Europe to set foot on South African shores. The inherent theatricality of this (lost) mythic figure largely prompted my focus on uncelebrated female figures whose absence from extant accounts of pioneering continues to urge redress.

The identities and stories of Nomguqo/Paulina Dlamini (circa 1858 – 12.12.1942) and Ellen McLeod (May 1813 - 4.08.1888) provide ways of staging very different life experiences: that of an unmarried Zulu girl who subsequently became a missionary and that of an English mother in her mid-thirties who arrived to settle in Byrne. The relationship between memory and imagined possibilities plays out through these perspectives which are set in reciprocal contrast. Framing and interrupting this interplay by showing the solitary individual described in three paragraphs by Noel Mostert in *Frontiers* (1992),[7] allows for expanding the historical and political dimensions of the project.

In his description of the first European arrivals on South African territory, Mostert contextualizes Daiz' 1487 voyage under the commission of João II of Portugal as part of the ambitious initiatives of Prince Henry to chart the Atlantic and establish the sea route to the East by rounding Africa *en route* to the East. These paragraphs prompted imagining what confronted this woman and how she might have dealt with the immediate circumstances of solitude and freedom.[8] Mostert shifts in register when it comes to providing an account of the nameless woman who I have named Eva.[9] The final paragraph in the extract below abandons the historian's detachment in an abrupt break from the ordered and verifiable chronicle. He writes:

> The Portuguese had left Lisbon with four negresses, originally from West Africa, who were to be put ashore at various places on the African coast with instructions to go into the interior, there to sing the praises of the Portuguese king and the 'grandeur of his kingdom', to try to make contact with Prester John, and having been given samples of gold, silver and spices, to try to find out whether these were available locally.
> Two of the women were landed on the west coast, one died at sea and the third was put ashore further up the coast from Sao Bras on the beach of Algoa Bay, near the modern city of Port Elizabeth. She was marooned close to where some indigenes were seen collecting shellfish.
> Few figures in the African story strike me as being more dramatically sad than this pitiful wretch, taken from her world in West Africa, possibly as a slave, taught the Portuguese language and the mercy of Christ, embarked on that incredibly vile and arduous voyage into the unknown, and then summarily abandoned within the sight of natives of unknown disposition towards strangers. They would be back, the Portuguese assured her, to hear her

[7] Mostert asserts copyright from 1992 Jonathan Cape Publication. The Pimlico edition (to which I have referred) was published in 1993 as reflected in the bibliography.

[8] The potential melodrama of the landing itself is, it seems to me, less interesting than the sense of dealing with the extraordinary and daunting circumstance of abandonment which is simultaneously a threshold of liberation. Equally, the wreck of the Minerva which marked Ellen's arrival in D'Urban occurs as an offstage event which is recounted by a disembodied voice as she, too, copes with the aftermath and consequences of what has taken place. The staging focuses, in both instances, on the reaction and response to the event rather than depicting these spectacular events.

[9] More accurately, the equally unnamed sailor names the woman Eva. It is expedient to use this name to indicate word allocations to the character who should, from the audience' point of view, never have her true given name revealed.

> news. In this bizarre fashion, the story of European contact with Southern Africa began (1993:22).

This account of a "first arrival" directly challenges the core perception of pioneering efforts of colonialism as a narrative that has been gendered as masculine. Mostert's account implies that these women were puppets of the male quest: anonymous, forgotten and lacking agency. The historian's task prohibits conjecture beyond fragments of what has been chronicled. The story-teller, however, enjoys relative freedom from such constraints. I am interested in the possibility that this woman, Paulina/Nomguqo and Ellen all refute the status of victim of historical circumstance through asserting the right to recast the self as survivor.

Rather than positioning the subject identity of Eva at the centre of the project, as initially imagined, I have elected to perpetuate her presence as enigmatic, elusive and incomplete: the final scene (in contrast to the closure of the lives of Paulina and Ellen staged at gravesides) liberates Eva into a future that begins as the narratives of the other characters end. The details of her life, like the unmarked spot where her remains might lie, remain unknowable. The brevity of Mostert's account haunts me in terms of what I must actively imagine and may well be made more readily available to others through sharing the enigma rather than fabricating what transpires. In my view, the impact of such extraordinary isolation and uncertainty would be diminished by imagining a future beyond the short period of a few days and nights surviving on the beach. The outcome of this first "European" arrival is treated as a series of possibilities through dreams, prophecies, visions and intimations of pregnancy rather than emphatically asserted or staged. Through the circumstance of isolation and desertion, Eva becomes an embodied archetype of the conditions triggered by migration and resettlement in contrast to the lives of the two women which have been more thoroughly chronicled. The partial or fragmentary insight into the lives of Nomguqo/Paulina and Ellen is thus offset by that of Eva, which remains overtly enigmatic and elusive.

Repositioning marginalized narratives centre-stage is a strategy by which figures who are, at best, footnotes in the history, become a source of contra-dictions or counter-discourse which, themselves, are marked by internal inconsistencies. The subject of this project is, accordingly, the ambiguous status of women in the history of colonial settlement. I seek to stage the kinds of cultural knowledge that they bring to journeying and resettlement, their attitudes towards the presence (or absence) of boundaries or borders within their *unsung*, but nonetheless privately heroic, efforts to survive and nurture their communities and future generations.

In "Re-making the Warrior? The Role of Orality in the Liberation Struggle & and? in Post-Apartheid South Africa", Liz Gunner probes the role of "the poetry of remembering" (1999: 51) and its exclusion from "serious political discourse [along with] any real sense of nation and culture." Her departure points are the discrepant values ascribed to oral and written histories along with formulations around relationships between modernity, nationalism and literacy. Drawing on propositions articulated by Gellner in *Nations and Nationalism (1983),* she writes:

> Gellner argues further that the general emergence of modernity has hinged on the replacement of multiple, petty, binding, local organizations by mobile, anonymous, literate, identity-conferring cultures. It is, he states, this generalized condition which has made nationalism normative and pervasive. [...He] says nothing of the symbols from folk culture

> which are constantly used for convenience in nationalist discourse to confer a sense of corporate belonging..." (1999: 51)

She takes issue with another aspect of Gellner's writing: the apparent neglect of the status of women in the nation. The three women whose stories comprise the substance of my creative project embody Gunner's assertion regarding the ambivalent status of women within emerging nations: "they exist emblazoned as central emblems of the nation but are consigned to its margins in its actual operations" (1999: 51).

In relation to these ideas, Edward Said posits:

> (a) revised notion of how a post-imperial intellectual attitude might expand the overlapping community between metropolitan and formerly colonized societies. By looking at the different experiences contrapuntally, as making up *a set of intertwined and overlapping histories* [this model may...] formulate an alternative to the politics of blame and to the even more destructive politics of confrontation and hostility (1994:19, my italics).

Said's contrapuntal model, it seems, offers scope to pursue unlikely affinities across distance and difference.

In line with this proposition, I have worked towards crafting a dramaturgical form which might serve as a counter-discourse to the essentialized and reductive figure of 19th century stereotypes. The intertwined testimonies of Nomguqo Paulina Dlamini and Ellen Macleod aims to counter the stereotyping of both indigene and settler. The juxtaposition of singular experiences creates a discourse of dissonance that resists resolution: two personal histories articulate discrete cultural perspectives and experiences. But as much as they suggest radical disparity, I contemplate the scope for commonality: the circumstances of Ellen's arrival cast her as a figure who has been dispossessed in the process of being relocated on colonial margins. Nomguqo, despite all that binds her in terms of kinship ties and family origins in Swaziland, travels from an ambivalent position in the Buthulezi household to the centre of Zulu culture: the king's umuzi at Ondini in which her position in the isigodlo is rigorously circumscribed. She explicitly refuses to expand on this aspect of her life (so clearly an instance of patriarchal subjugation and even a form of servitude, if not slavery), which is embedded within traditional culture. Respecting her reticence to speak out on this subject, I similarly allude to these conditions, rather than stage them, trusting that this significant omission is both apparent and meaningful.

I have attempted to retain the integrity of the individual voices and perspectives of characters situated within the specific context of which they speak. In adopting the template of using personal narrative as the material for theatrical presentation, I attempt to work with that material in a fresh register in two ways: first, I intertwine the narratives of three women rather than sustaining the single perspective of a solo voice;[10] second, the mise-en-scène (the entire spatial field within which the speaking figure is placed) serves as a narrative tool that equals the significance of speaking subject as in what Bonnie Marranca (1984) has termed the "theatre of images".

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[10] My project is informed by, although it makes no attempt to reproduce, the oral idiom of ntsomi and izibongo and how they function as story-telling forms. It is beyond the scope of this paper to interrogate the way in which these expressive forms (and their mode of presentation) dovetail with, or even undergird, emergent Western experiments that aim to challenge the conventional drama.

The stories of Paulina and Ellen are relayed from contrasting perspectives: Paulina's retrospective account begins in 1925 and tells of events from circa 1870 on; Ellen's narrative plays out from 1850 to 1887 in a fragmented (but nonetheless linear) unfolding chronological sequence. In contrast, Eva's story plays out over only a few days and nights. The juxtaposition of heterochronic sequences requires a visual resolution that locates the simultaneous action within the respective locations or sites appropriate to the narrative. This approach implies a dense visual field – a layering of organic and virtual spaces – that operates through moments of stasis or tableaux that punctuate an otherwise choreographic interplay of bodies and space. The value given to the printed word and the sound produced by the human voice (among other sources) is only one aspect of the semiotic density of theatrical sign systems. The narrative capacity of image with its potential for ephemerality or fixity on the one hand, and its discursive origins on the other, is a crucial feature of the composition of *Footprints on the Wind.*

Extrapolating from the published source material has necessitated selection and condensation: overt contrast and, conversely, equivalences in circumstance have guided this process. The narrative of ostensibly un-remarkable female lives caught up in the 19th century colonial project stresses the significance of places of origin and kinship as markers of identity. Their lives are equally, if differently, marked by the motif of migration and resettlement, offering a woman's perspective on historical processes. Pursuing the texture of these life experiences has allowed me to focus on the largely neglected routine "ordinariness" of lives that are ultimately inseparable from the macro-scale historical processes.[11] Neither woman claims to be a notable figure and the quality of the commonplace (rather than the exceptional) makes a compelling contrast with more celebrated and contested iconic figures such as Sarah Baartman, the protagonist of Henrik Hofmeyr's 2010 opera. The same issues of belonging, displacement and separation, dispossession, individual agency and crafting survival mechanisms, along with the same complex notions of subjectivity and position, are embedded in the life stories of those individuals that remain uncelebrated individuals and those figures whose stories are circulated more broadly.

In a self-reflexive register, the text deliberates the formal interplay of word and image, immediate experience and its subsequent representation or mapping, and mobilizes the co-ordinates and codes that lives are lived by. Theatre, as a medium, particularly in the heightened register of sung performance in which voices blend in duet, trio or ensemble, seems uniquely suited to give expression to these ideas. The "libretto" pursues ways of testing the polysemic density of theatre and its formal capacities as much as focusing on human and social themes. As Stephen Sondheim has observed: "For most people *West Side Story* is about racial prejudice and urban violence, but what it's really about is theater: musical theater to be more precise" (2010:25). So too, the focus of this project is the kind of collaborative or multi-vocal authorship that undergirds contemporary theatre-making with its efforts to challenge the authority of the authorship being invested in the figure of the writer, through promoting the multi-lingual dimensions of live performance.

I pursue a template of presentation that is informed by notions of the postdramatic theatre as outlined by Hans-Thies Lehmann. These seem to be highly productive departure points for grappling with the poetics and politics of working with autobiographical material and testimony. The

[11] Njabulo Ndebele's propositions (a series of essays in the anthology *Rediscovery of the Ordinary* – 2006) regarding the value of "ordinary" as narrative subject and tone undergirds my determination to pursue identities and lives that are neither "spectacular" nor of overt socio-political significance.

presentation of self that arise from immediate encounters and interactions in which meanings or values are inscribed. Arguably, the expression of self is y lodged in the choice of medium within which a narrative is articulated as much as in the subtle process of monitoring how that personal subject identity is articulated and relayed. The narrating "I", anchored in the process of dictating a life story or writing a letter, is actively engaged, consciously or not, in a process of selection, of emphasizing details – or lack thereof – along with adopting a specific tone or register. This process, I must suggest, is itself, intrinsically theatrical. The retrospective quality of the telling of events that have already taken place may be integrated with that which is speculative or fabricated, or distorted for any number of reasons, but has the potential for the kind of static staging with which some postdramatic texts assert a relationship between aesthetics and meaning.

Processes of dislocation and repatriation introduce complex considerations of what "being" and "belonging" might mean.[12] The patterns of dislocation and resettlement, belonging and not-belonging was already deeply embedded in this creative project, so attending the four-day ADSA conference addressing 'Performing Belonging in the 21st Century" (Auckland 27 – 30th June 2017) was opportune.[13] Three aspects of papers and keynote presentations at this gathering are germane to my project. First, what appears to be the entrenched bilingualism in New Zealand, whether in academic discourse, creative practice or everyday exchange, reinforced my commitment to generating a multi-lingual South African text that foregrounds differences in vocabularies, textures, cadences and rhythms of linguistic diversity. Second, the model of verbatim theatre clearly enjoys considerable purchase within the ADSA community, as in South Africa, in both the applied and mainstream/avant-garde theatre-making initiatives. Third, Foucault's formulation of "heterotopic spaces" repeatedly emerged as an idiom for addressing new works in terms of their content and form. The value of these perspectives in pursuing the extent to which his essay might serve as a tool to reflect on creative choices in this project was clear and will be addressed more fully later in this paper.

The models of verbatim theatre are diverse, ranging from commitment to faithful mimetic reproduction of an original source on the one hand, to frankly declared fictionalization on the other. Both forms, however, look to contemporary subjects in specific communities to shape a theatre that is deemed authentic and relevant to its audience. Rather than reproducing this model of verbatim theatre with its multiple testimonies that are used for creating (or reproducing) characters whose lives dramatize pressing socio-political issues, I pursue a permutation which repositions voices from a distant past on a contemporary stage. Two propositions inform this approach. First, the verbatim model need not be defined as exclusively dedicated to contemporary experiences but can be tested in relation to historical narratives. Second, persuaded by Frank Furedi's views regarding the insidious effects produced by the encroachment of what he calls therapy culture in contemporary discourse, this strategy dislodges the conflation of personal narrative with narratives that are deemed to have a therapeutic function. I have reservations about the proliferation of contemporary personal narratives presented on stage, many of which unwittingly minimize notions of agency by representing the self as a victim requiring empathetic identification. In my view, such narratives bracket off the scope for advancing critical consciousness and contribute directly to the therapy discourse that Furedi problematizes so thoroughly in terms of socio-political consequence. This perspective underpins my probing the intersection between heritage issues and contemporary

[12] I adopt the chapter titles of Patrick Chabal's *Africa: the Politics of Suffering and Smiling* (2009).
[13] The acronym stands for Australasian Theatre, Drama and Performance Studies.

experience, with the aim of offering a fresh perspective on verbatim theatre that re-instates notions of identity, agency and accountability within the staging of personal narratives.

While the narrative material may be considered historical, the form in which it is presented aims towards contemporaneity. Postdramatic theatre, Lehmann suggests in relation to the work of Robert Wilson, confirms that "theatrical need is obviously not fixated on action alone" (2006:78). He explains that dramatic narration is "superseded by a kind of universal history that appears as a multicultural, ethnological, archaeological *kaleidoscope"* (2006:79)[14] which, apart from favouring the specific over the universal, elucidates the demands it may make on the viewer. Lehmann describes these challenges as follows:

> For someone who expects the representation of a human – in the sense of psychological – world of experience, it can manifest as a coldness that is hard to bear. It is especially alienating because in the theatre we are dealing not just with visual processes but with human bodies and their warmth, with which the perceiving imagination cannot avoid associating human experiences (2006:95).

I am interested in staging ways in which the voice is mediated and emerges as a series of fragmentary records that have been transcribed, translated or archived. In other words, I dispute the imperative of a contemporary voice speaking in the present as being the exclusive source of authenticity. Rather, I am interested in suggesting that authenticity and immediacy are temporally contingent. The narratives of Paulina and Ellen have "disappeared". It is this quality of impermanence and transience that *Footprints on the Wind* aims to explore. This quality, it seems to me, not only expresses the mini-narratives of these female figures, but invites questioning the potential ephemerality of contemporary voices and their testimonies. The socio-political and cultural obligations of contemporary creative practice in South Africa seems to call for contextualizing and situating narratives within the messy intertwined strands of the colonial experience and legacy, rather than perpetuating a historical vacuum. Antiphony and antithesis, fragmentation and erasure are embedded in the historical process and those pluralities are what I seek to stage.

The Foucauldian notion of heterotopic spaces is derived from his essay "Of Other Spaces" (1967). The concept provides a means to extend ways of thinking about land and landscape. Foucault's taxonomy of heterotopic spaces intersects in several ways with the way in which site or place has significance in my creative project. The boat is the most vivid example of what he defines as a heterotopic space, constituting "a floating piece of place" that is a counter-site unsettling the order of organized spaces in which we live. The stage itself is, as he observes, is another manifestation of the heterotopia in its capacity to represent multiple locations in one place, either simultaneously or within the course of a performance. In conjunction with its spatial counterpart, Foucault identifies heterochronies as the palimpsestic layering on which this project is dependent. Both concepts had been inscribed within my writing intuitively, and this reflexive essay provides scope for a brief interrogation of Foucault's formulations in conjunction with ideas of "spatial history" advanced by Paul Carter. Carter's nuanced and complex ideas fuse cultural and historical geography, enriching my thinking regarding language and landscape beyond what is triggered by reading Foucault. In *The Road to Botany Bay,* Carter writes: "Spatial history – history that discovers and explores the lacunae left by imperial history – begins and ends in language. [...] like the traveller whose gaze is organized

[14] Lehmann writes: "In Wilson's work the phenomenon has priority over the narrative, the effect of the image over the individual actor, and contemplation over interpretation" (2006: 80).

and limited, it makes no claim to authoritative completeness. It is, must be, like a journey, exploratory" (2010: xxiii).

Working through Carter's ideas has enabled me to reflect on spatial relationships: their constitution, treatment and significance, thus not only informs this creative writing project but profoundly expands my creative practice as designer in a post-colonial context. As much as the process of writing has extended the scope for experiment and reformulations of how the visual dimension of "embodied spaces" construct narratives, meanings and values, I remain fascinated by how space promotes or negates activities and social formations to function as a fundamental mechanism of inclusion or exclusion. Working through the body of Carter's writing has equally enabled me to reflect on the extent to which this text is a historical project, and, more specifically, if so, what kind of historical consciousness is embedded in the writing?

My work on this project is inseparable from what might be described as a personal exploration. The identities and stories of Paulina and Ellen are intertwined with memories of a place I used to call home. I can name my place of origin as the Midlands of Kwa-Zulu Natal and visualize Durban, Richmond and parts of Zululand as not simply geographical points with cartographic co-ordinates, but places in the landscape of my memory, my childhood. From a life that has been long distanced from the fabric of place, habitation and lifestyle, caught in cosmopolitan currents and the varied discourses of cultural production and academia, I look back at a past – partially my own – glimpsed via the partially hidden narratives of individuals who, in broad terms at least, inhabited that territory before me. The project is deeply personal in its rendition of flickers of connection with (and partial understandings of) childhood experiences that partially overlap with aspects of the Kwa-Zulu Natal narrative: the places referred to by Paulina and Ellen resonate with significance, as do the amakowe and amadumbe that become part of Ellen's diet.[15]

In *Footprints on the Wind,* landscape, map and stage fuse in a juxtaposition of fragments. The east coast of South Africa and the midlands of Kwa-Zulu Natal – contested territory as the hyphenated nominative resolution signals – as a landscape, as subject of cartographic representation, as a destined point of arrival and settlement binds the character identities of this creative montage. The writing is an experiment in what Lehmann calls "scenographic dramaturgy" in which a densely saturated mise-en-scène comprising a plurality of signs aims to give prominence to the significance of place over notions of the subjective autonomy of the individual.

As much as the theme of belonging, with its connotations of inclusivity and assimilation, have considerable purchase both locally in a postcolonial context and appear, similarly, to be lodged at the centre of global discourses, the antithesis of "not-belonging" seems a generative trope to pursue. *If* issues of belonging circulate with such urgency within "settled" communities, it seems significant that the urge to belong is linked to notions of home and material well-being which are, it would seem, inseparable from the life style associated with late capitalism and urbanization. The "nomadic alternative", to borrow from Bruce Chatwyn, constitutes a radical contrast with the hegemonic notion of all that settlement and material culture represents. Chatwyn's short essay on nomadic lifestyles is an attempt to account for the role of artefacts and artworks associated with the life of nomadic tribes. He details the social formation and life-style of nomads as antithetical to the assumptions and values of urban life and order, remarking that "Civilised men attributed animal

[15] The introduction of both vegetable and fungus is a personal interpolation that draws on childhood memories of these seasonal delicacies.

properties to the nomads" (1997:94),[16] before addressing the aesthetic differences in the art object produced by both:

> All works of art, even mechanical artifacts, reflect the aspirations of their makers, and are eye-witnesses to the past. The art of urban civilizations tends to be static, solid and symmetrical. It is disciplined by the representation of the human body and by the mathematical skills attendant upon monumental architecture. To a greater or lesser extent, nomadic art tends to be portable, asymmetric, *discordant, restless, incorporeal and intuitive.* [...] The similarities between hallucinatory experience and nomadic art cannot be explained away by pure chance" (1997: 98, my italics).

It seems crucial to disaggregate the notion of not belonging from the nomadic alternative and its connotations. It is inappropriate to invest belonging with notions of material stability and domesticity, as though fixity and ownership are definitive markers of a sense of belonging. In this taxonomy, binary thinking runs the risk of stigmatizing nomadic lives as the ultimate unthinkable Other. The final draft of this creative project stages the suggestion that Eva's future will be one of assimilation and belonging within a nomadic tribe, which sharpens the antithesis between her choices and those of the other two women whose journeys conclude in establishing forms of hearth and home, kith and kin.

To the extent that settlement and home-making actively promote the acquisition and accumulation of things – whether products of the materialist industrial economy or naturally crafted – the role of objects, whether literal (promoting a specific activity) or metaphorical (and thematic) has been a central preoccupation in imagining the stage action. Investing care in the selection and identity of objects on stage for how they function in their own right and what they might offer by way of promoting action, has been a central aspect of my theatre practice. To the extent that design focuses on a potential mise-en-scène, that stage world is built up through significant details. A minimalist mise-en-scène disrupts the taken-for-granted status of objects in the world in tracking ways in which things are acquired or lost, and how they are used in ritual and more secular, routine ways, is inseparable from what value is ascribed to them and how this value is manifested.[17]

In "The Morality of Things", Chatwyn observes that "things have a way of insinuating themselves into all human lives. Some people attract more things than others, but no people however mobile is *thingless.* A chimpanzee uses sticks and stones as tools, but he does not keep possessions. Man does" (1997:171).[18] The statement prefaces his views on collecting both artefacts and art objects as "a source of pleasure and power, the object of fetishistic adoration, which serves in a traumatised

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[16] In "Letter to Tom Maschler," in which he proposes and outlines a book on nomads but specifically excludes a history of nomads as beyond his ambit, he writes: "I have to try to see the nomads as they see themselves, looking outward at civilisation with envy or mistrust. By civilisation I mean 'life in cities', and by civilised those who live within the ambit of literate urban civilisation. All civilisations are based on regimentation and rational behaviour. Nomads are uncivilised and all the words traditionally used in connection with them are charged with civilised prejudices – vagrant, vagabond, shifty, barbarian, savage, etc. Wandering nomads are bound to be a disruptive influence but they have been blamed out of all proportion to the material damage that they cause. This blame is rationalized and justified by false piety. The nomads are excluded; they are radical outcasts. Cain 'wandered over the surface of the earth'" (1997: 75).

[17] See Appendix 7 – props list.

[18] He posits: "ideally man should own no possessions but those he can conveniently carry" (1997: 177).

individual as a substitute for skin-to-skin contact with the mother..." (1997: 174). While he acknowledges Freudian-based views that things serve as some form of "compensation against abandonment" (1997: 178), he suggests that "things" act as territorial markers and function within complex interactions of ritual exchange or trade. It is with these ideas in mind that scenes in *Footprints in the Wind* have been shaped: the few objects and props around which the action is structured are invested with narrative purpose that concludes with the final scene in which objects – natural containers – take on significant value.

2. What form might contemporary South African postcolonial theatre-making adopt?

The frankly presentational mode of story-telling and its integration of the rhythms of heightened speech and sung delivery are inextricable from emergent South African theatre of the mid-1980's onwards. The vocal dynamism and texture of this mode of expression with its active celebration of the capacity of the voice (as solo and choral instruments) excites me. Despite having been part of the team of a considerable number of home-grown musical theatre offerings – experiments in local story-telling that have variously drawn on, or appropriated, structures and conventions of Broadway idiom – I am unconvinced that the formal conventions of musical theatre address the kinds of formal and/or political questions that contemporary theatre might embrace.[19] But the formal ambivalence of both *West Side Story* and *Porgy and Bess* intrigues me: both texts resist simple categorization as either opera or musical in the same way as Brecht's *Threepenny Opera* or even *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* disrupts the boundaries between the dramatic and sung forms of narrative. The ratio of spoken to sung delivery in each of these instances, as much as the complexity of the musical sequences and their composition, would appear to be a definitive guide to classifying each text. I aim to experiment with a form in which the sung delivery predominates without choral or choreographic components as in opera, hence my cautious and provisional use of the term "libretto". I mobilize these two terms fully conscious of the connotations of both, and from the perspective of theatre-designer rather than musicologist.

Opera is arguably a contested form. The classical repertoire marks the form as predominantly European (specifically Italian, German and French rather than either English or Portuguese) and in South Africa the form remains inseparable from associations with a privileged elite and is emblematized in all that the State Theatre (Pretoria) set out to accomplish and assert. But, as this section of the reflexive essay briefly addresses, the "foreignness" of opera is increasingly asserted in contemporary initiatives. The constraints of this paper delimit my discussion of these initiatives. But I introduce this issue to interrogate the extent to which, despite being local in content, recent short works remain (in terms of dramaturgical treatment) quintessentially foreign in form rather than content. As a precursor to discussing these works, I draw on how Tolstoy critiques all that opera and opera-going means in *War and Peace* as a means of situating the problem of what opera might represent or even look like in South Africa today.

Tolstoy's treatment of the opera is complex: he satirizes the foreignness of form but goes beyond this issue to invite the reader to deliberate on the outmoded and formulaic artifice of theatrical presentation, as much as on what being a member of the audience signifies in terms of socio-cultural capital. The descriptions of the staging and performances are the antithesis of what any meaningful contemporary production aspires to, but the gap between intention and artefact is announced with incisive and salutary brevity. By analogy, these extracts articulate the complex position of what

[19] *Marikana – The Musical* (Sekhabi et al, 2014) is an example.

operatic performance might mean in contemporary South Africa. "Lessons" drawn from Tolstoy alert me to the kinds of questions posed by this creative project. These issues are more explicitly addressed via a brief survey of recent initiatives in South African opera (2010 – 2015), which testifies to investments and achievements in local theatre-making. There are two separate sets of concerns to take on board. The first pertains to the stories being told in response to the imperatives of local subject matter; the second, as Michael Blake argues, addresses the musical identities being advanced in these works and the questionable extent to which, musically, the works announce a local identity. My critique adopts a dramaturgical perspective to suggest that despite adhering to the imperative of local narrative content, these works seem to have been authored with little real concern for avant-garde theatre forms, narrative structure or style, but seem to replicate the kinds of dramatic idiom embedded in (classical) Western forms. It is precisely these qualities that *Footprints in the Wind* contests.

2.1 Tolstoy's Account of A Night at the Opera in Moscow c 1811/1812.

In *War and Peace* (1869), Tolstoy (illustrating the lifelessness of an imported performance) purposefully inscribes such a cliché-ridden stage presentation that it invites ready dismissal. He takes aim at 19th century (bourgeois) Western culture, the canon and classical realism along with all that is suggestive of high (rather than popular) cultural forms. Reading his epic through the lens of Orlando Figes *Natasha's Dance: a cultural history of Russia* suggests scope for interrogating the place of opera in culture and society with an alertness to issues of cultural imposition, appropriation and assimilation, as compared with popular cultural forms that are organically but, perhaps mythically, grounded in a folk tradition. Cultural historian Figes posits:

> Natasha's dance is one such opening [on to a nation's way of life]. At its heart is an encounter between two entirely different worlds: the European culture of the upper classes and the Russian culture of the peasantry. The war of 1812 was the first moment when the two moved together in a national formation. Stirred by the patriotic spirit of the serfs, the aristocracy of Natasha's generation began to break free from the foreign conventions of their society and search for a sense of nationhood based on 'Russian' principles. They switched from speaking French to their native tongue and they Russified their customs and their dress, their eating habits and their taste in interior design; they went out into the countryside to learn folklore, peasant dance and music... (2002: xxviii).

Tolstoy's handling of a night at the Moscow opera circa 1811/1812 draws attention to the significance of the audience present at that performance. The identity of this audience and how they behave develops one strand of his sustained socio-philosophical meditation – concerning, among other issues, the role of cultural practices and language use in an emergent national identity.

In (Volume II Part V), Tolstoy has Marya Dmitriyevna take a box at the opera as a treat for young Natasha Rostov. The urban scene is a cogent, penetrating commentary on the cultural phenomenon of theatre and theatre-going: the presence of the audience and interactions within that body of individuals is unquestionably Tolstoy's focus. The stage presentation is an overtly conventionalized, absurdly fictional romantic opera (in four acts) which plays out in accordance with a set of specific conventions and aesthetics. Tolstoy exposes both the attempt at illusion and its revelation as a material fabrication devoid of provocation. The performer's presence, in terms of appearance and manner is evident in the display of technique and virtuosity or, rather the lack thereof, and textures the scene as much as it provides the crucial mechanism for a critique of a particular kind of theatre. This performance is one which is so thoroughly bound by artifice and convention, so distanced from

the dynamics of the socio-cultural milieu as to be archaic and meaningless. At the opera, Natasha (as a distinctly distanced spectator) is never absorbed by the operatic presentation. She comes across as a very different individual from the one the reader encounters in her dance after the hunt in which she takes on an overtly active, if unanticipated, role as performer.[20]

The stage performance invoked by Tolstoy is as flat, lifeless and two dimensional as it is fantastical, as the tenor of his prose deliciously suggests:

> The stage consisted of flat boards down the middle with painted cardboard representing trees at both sides and cloth-covered board at the back. Several young girls in red tops and white skirts were sitting in the middle of the stage. One very fat girl in a white silk dress sat to one side on a low bench with green cardboard glued on the back of it. They were all singing something. When they had finished their song the woman in white came forward to the prompter's box, and a man with fat legs squeezed into silk tights, with a feather in his hat and a dagger in his belt, came up to her and burst into song with much waving of his arms.
> The man in tights sang alone, then she sang alone, then they both held back while the music played on and the man fingered the hand of the woman in white, obviously waiting for the right moment to start up again and sing a piece with her. They did sing together, after which the theatre erupted in applause and loud shouting, while the man and woman on the stage, representing the two lovers, beamed as they held out their arms and took bows.
> Just back from the country, and now in a serious frame of mind, Natasha saw all this as astonishingly grotesque. She couldn't follow the opera and couldn't hear any music; all she could see was painted cardboard and oddly dressed men and women, talking, singing and prancing about just as oddly under bright lights. She knew what it was supposed to represent, but it was all so grotesquely forced and unnatural that she found herself alternating between embarrassment and amusement at the actors' expense (2007:617).

The incongruity of the spectacle with its mechanistic reproduction of incongruous behaviour overtly declares the performance as meaningless. The performers have no character identity beyond gender and a physical appearance that further enforces the absurd lifelessness of their being and actions. The sequence of events is both formulaic and predictable, dramatizing the pretentiousness of formal accomplishments.

Tolstoy does not stop at the conclusion of the first act. He takes us through the entire evening and the pattern of unfolding action. Having introduced the stage presentation in terms of place and persons, the commentary on the second act shifts in focus to describe what would seem to be intensely melodramatic action and its musical accompaniment:

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[20] As Tolstoy asks: "Here was a young countess, educated by a French *émigrée* governess – where, when and how had she imbibed the spirit of that peasant dance along with the Russian air she breathed, and these movements which the *pas de châle* ought to have squeezed out of her long ago? But her movements and the spirit of them were truly Russian, inimitable, unteachable, just what 'Uncle' had been hoping for" (2007:561). Figes, in an anti-essentialist resistance to the proposition of cultural purity, explains: "There was no 'authentic' Russian peasant dance of the sort imagined by Tolstoy and, like the melody to which Natasha dances, most of Russia's 'folk songs' had in fact come from the towns. Other elements of the village culture Tolstoy depicted may have come to Russia from the Asiatic steppe – elements that had been imported by the Mogul horsemen [...] if there is no ancient Russian culture to be excavated form this village scene, if much of the culture is imported from abroad, then there is a sense in which Natasha's dance is an emblem of the view to be taken in this book: there is no *quintessential* national culture, only mythic images of it, like Natasha's version of the peasant dance" (2002:xxviii).

> In the second act a cemetery was depicted on the painted cardboard, there was a hole in the back-cloth to represent the moon, the footlights were shaded, horns and double-basses sounded forth, and a number of people emerged from right and left dressed in black cloaks. These people began waving their arms about, with things that looked like daggers in their hands. Then some more people ran on and began dragging away the girl who had been in white but was now wearing a pale-blue dress. Instead of dragging her off straightaway they spent a long time singing with her, but then they did drag her away, and behind the scenes someone banged three times on a piece of iron, whereupon they all fell to their knees and sang a prayer. This action was interrupted more than once by wild cries from the audience (2007:620).

Natasha's lack of identification with the heroine is conclusively pronounced in the continued namelessness of the character whose only significance lies in registering her change of costume.

The third act is structured around radical shifts in mood and tension which are largely, if unsubtly, dependent on musical composition and orchestration:

> The third act saw a palace depicted on stage with lots of burning candles and walls hung with pictures of knights with beards. Two people, presumably a king and queen, stood at the front. The king waved his right hand in the air and sang something very badly – it was obviously his nerves – before sitting down on a crimson throne. The girl who had been in white and then pale blue was now wearing a plain smock, and she had let her hair down. She was standing near the throne, singing something very doleful to the queen. But the king waved his hand harshly, and then some men with bare legs and women with bare legs came on from both sides and they all started dancing. The violins struck up with a light and happy tune, at which one of the actresses with thick bare legs and thin arms detached herself from the rest, walked off the set to straighten her bodice, came back out into the middle of the stage and began to leap in the air, tapping her feet together very quickly. The stalls erupted with applause and shouts of "bravo!" Then one man ran into the corner of the stage. Louder and louder came the cymbals and horns in the orchestra, and this one man with his bare legs started leaping right up in the air and making fancy movements with his feet. (This was Duport, who took home sixty thousand silver roubles for his artistry) ... suddenly a storm blew up, heralded by chromatic scales and diminished sevenths from the orchestra, and they all scurried away, dragging one of the company off stage, and the curtain fell. Once again the audience erupted with fearsome applause and they all stood there in blissful transports roaring out, "Duport! Duport! Duport!' It no longer seemed at all strange to Natasha (2007: 621).

The dismissive tone continues in Tolstoy's treatment of the final act which is as brief as it is indifferent:

> In the fourth act there was some sort of devil who sang and waved his arms about till the boards were taken away beneath him and he disappeared down below. That was all Natasha saw of the fourth act (2007:623).

The opera being performed within the scene appears to stand for all that is foreign or at least antithetical to Russian culture circa 1811 – 1812. The evening at the theatre is clearly established as part of the strange patterning of the lives of a privileged elite. The same argument might be made for the current preoccupation in South Africa, particularly in relation to current theatre-writing preoccupations. In our context today, the medium of opera might seem to appeal to a minority urban audience, catering to the taste for imported European cultural forms. It is my contention,

however, that the growing interest in active participation within operatic production on the part of an emergent generation of young (primarily) black artists makes developing new works with a local focus a viable undertaking. Having seen the *Cula Mzansi* season in Pretoria (July 2016),[21] however, I submit that merely identifying local subject matter and commissioning South African composers, without interrogating narrative structure and dramaturgical form, does little more than reproduce the kind of opera to which Tolstoy's Moscow audience was subjected.

2.2 A brief survey of recent initiatives in South African opera.

The recent injection of resources dedicated to developing South African opera rather than drawing solely on the repertoire of extant classics seems to correspond with the imperatives of emergent drama of decades past. The following table maps ways in which Cape Town Opera has commissioned new works and significantly provides guidelines regarding a proposed length.

Year	Season	Title	Composer	Librettist
2010	Five:20 (ie five works each of 20-minute duration)	*Words from a Broken String**	Peter Klatzow	Michael Williams
		*Tronkvoël**	Martin Watt	Alwyn Roux
		*Hani**	Bongani Ndodana-Breen	Ndodana-Breen
		Out of time	Peter Louis van Djik	Pieter Louis van Dijk
		Saartjie	Hendrik Hofmeyr	Hofmeyer and Fiona Zerbst
2013	Two: 30	*Between a Rock and a hard Place: A Dictionary of a mining accident. Sing the Body Electric*	Phillip Miller Carl Unander Scharin	Phillip Miller Unander Scharin (texts by Einstein/William Blake)
2015	Four:30	*The Application*	Robert Fokkens	Laurence Allan
		Blood Of Mine	Sibusizo Njeza	Janice Honeyman
		Bessie the Blue-Eyed Xhosa	Angelique Mouyis	Mkhululi Mabija
		Anti-Laius	Adrian More	Joan Hambidge

(* denotes that the work was revived in 2015 by Gauteng Opera as an initiative of impresario and director Marcus Desando. Williams, Stephenson, Campbell and Van Djik's *Mandela Trilogy* (2010) and Ndodana-Breen's *Winnie* (2011) with a libretto by Warren Wilensky, performed in English and Xhosa, add to this list of proliferating South African "operas").

What this table suggests is a steady proliferation of "short works"; it also announces the invariable association of the operatic text with composer rather than librettist. Associating the opera with the composer, rather than the librettist, is an un-contestable and definitive marker of the medium. To some extent recognizing this factor enforces an acknowledgment of the provisional status of any libretto.

In "South African opera: The singing of memory" (www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2015-08-12), J. Brooks Spector reviews the performances of three of these short South African operas presented at the Soweto Theatre and reflects briefly on the place of opera within the range of contemporary South African cultural practices. Having acknowledged the proliferation of young classically trained singers who are increasingly advancing their careers abroad, he addresses the issue of staging what he calls "the great warhorses of the operatic repertoire" and the need for "an accessible homegrown repertoire on South African themes that audiences can grow to love". Spector points to the rich multi-lingual texture characterizing this society. It is, however, unclear if any of these short works

[21] Three 20-minute works (developed for the Five:20) Cape Town season in 2010 were presented on the opera stage of the State Theatre, having played a brief season in the Jabulani Soweto Theatre. The rationale behind this repeat/transfer season is difficult to fathom in the light of the organisers having to present *Out of Time* as an alternative to Klatzow's *Words from a Broken String* for which the single set was originally designed.

integrate the complexities of this diversity; rather, it would seem each libretto promotes a particular language or is at best bi-lingual. Spector's acknowledgement of "South Africa's diverse linguistic heritage" is founded on the observation that the works presented, *Cula Mzansi* being a case in point, were sung in "English, Afrikaans, Xhosa and French" with accompanying surtitles. He suggests that the operatic convention of surtitles could be deployed more extensively in other forms of theatre. What he does not suggest is that a single work could adopt and deploy the multi-lingual heritage within a single work and that surtitles be promoted as a component of the diegetic world actively pronouncing linguistic diversity. The analytical and scholarly purchase of Spector's article is less significant than the questions and issues his writing prompts. Emergent South African "drama" or so-called protest/township/people's theatre (circa 1965 – 1986) was characterized by its commitment to advancing vernacular and polyphonic expression (whether conventionally authored or derived through the collaborative workshop method) and it seems to me that operatic writing might pursue this template.

There are two issues to take up regarding the CTO initiative and its subsequent seasons. The first relates to who is commissioned to develop new works and in what partnership, the second pertains to subject matter and treatment. CTO understandably nurtures and promotes Cape Town based artists. Michael Blake (2010), in "History Never Sounded So Good", highlights what he calls the "in-house" set of collaborations as a point of departure for his critique of the season. Clearly, the identity of the composers, their affiliations and expertise, is as central to his concern as the works produced. He cites Michael Williams, CTO managing director":

> 'We decided South Africa was complex and we would look at five uniquely South African stories'. Saartjie Baartman, Lucy Lloyd and the Bushmen, xenophobia, the assassination of Chris Hani and Breyten Breytenbach's prison experience (Blake artsouthafrica 2010: 42).

Blake acknowledges what he describes as "a concerted effort at political correctness in the libretti" (2010: 42) as a precursor to his critique of composition and staging which is predicated on what he defines as "a curious mismatch between subject and music" (2010: 42). Further, having stated that "the plots were original in terms of South Africa's operatic past, the music far less so" (2010: 44), Blake focuses on the issue of composition in the interests of addressing the distinction between "neoconservative postmodernism" and "poststructuralist postmodernism which questions both the originality of the artist and the authority of the tradition" (2010: 44). His critique triggers an equally important set of considerations pertaining to the libretti: is their political correctness announced and substantiated, by definition as it were, through the choice of local subject matter alone? This strategy begs the question of the extent to which the formal treatment and dramaturgical manipulation of the material is a crucial consideration of both political correctness *and* postcolonial/postmodern innovation. Consequently, the extent to which these works comprise aesthetic and formal innovations remains unclear. Dramaturgically, it would seem, the librettos of these short works use a 19th century late Romantic narrative template without formal experiment that draws on either African story-telling or innovations in the Western avant-garde and the points of convergence between them.

It is my contention that the issue of dramaturgy and narrative treatment – the libretti – merit an analysis and critique that offers the same incisive and detailed commentary as that to which the music composed for the new operas has been subjected. The interplay of narrative and

dramaturgical elements with the music being composed is unevenly critiqued by Blake; so too, by Bertha Spies (2010) in "Five New South African short operas: a report" offers little more on the subject. Spies, in her report on the Five:20 season, begins to address dramaturgical considerations largely through summarizing plot and structure along with aspects of staging. Her focus culminates in a question that points to her core concern: "Why all these dark themes? Are there no lighter moments in the lives of South Africans?" (2010:13). The question signals the abiding concern with content rather than formal manipulation of subject matter, at least in so far as dramaturgical innovations are concerned. She does, however, make tentative observations that circle around these issues when she observes:

> It must have been a daunting experience for composers and librettists to fit a convincing storyline into a 20-minute production and they must have had to make difficult choices with regard to content (2010:1).

And again, in relation to *Words from a Broken String,* when she writes:

> Word is not only the first word of the title of the opera, but the front page of the score acknowledges the equal import of the verbal text by calling the work 'an opera in one short act' by Peter Klatzow and Michael Williams (2010:10).[22]

Spies does not probe further into the kind of analysis provided by Nike Wagner (1998) in *The Wagners: The Dramas of a Musical Dynasty.* The latter consistently adopts a dramaturgical frame of reference and makes the assertion that "Wagner is not a symphonic poet [but] a musical dramatist" (1998:51). Alert to what she calls "the dramaturgy of antitheses and contrasts" that structures *Tännhauser* (1998:24), she is equally attuned to the nuances of Wagner's verbal craftsmanship, in which he advances the use of alliteration rather than end-rhyming in the interests of bringing "language into a new relationship with music" (1998:54).

> After *Lohengrin*, Wagner's journey from 'word poet' to 'tone poet' brought about a different approach to the language of the libretti. Wagner realized that, as a prerequisite to creating the sort of text he wanted, he needed to organize language according to its musical participles, its vowels and consonants, in order to make it truly fluid (1998:53).

The most penetrating and productive analysis pertains to dramatic structure and characterization in an uncompromising scrutiny in which both psychoanalytical frameworks and Hegelian dialectics are brought to bear. Citing Herbert Marcuse's interpretation of Hegel, she anchors her analyses of both the composer's work and her own father's staging of those works in a particular premise:

> Herbert Marcuse has stated that 'The concept of man is history, as it is understood by philosophy.' The individual, according to this view, develops in a complex way, caught between the conflicting demands of the 'spirit of the family' on one hand, and the 'general will' or 'common weal' on the other.

This premise undergirds what she identifies as interdependent dialectical principles – "the Ring principle" (concerned with "the transfer and exercise of power" (1998:3) and "the grail-principle", or that which "seeks to safeguard whatever is timeless, constant, mysterious" (1998:5) – which

[22] Alice Goodman's role as librettist for *Nixon in China* (John Adams) is similarly acknowledged.

operate metaphorically throughout Wagner's dramaturgy. Of *Lohengrin,* she writes:

> (It) is an aesthetic hybrid: a mixture of historical drama and fairy tale, of 'genuine' and 'invented', of 'real time' and timelessness. [...] The aesthetic conflict already inherent in this amalgam of historical drama and fairy tale is further intensified by Wagner's tragic ending: this may have been in keeping with the tradition of historical drama and of grand opera, but it was a jarring element within the conventions of fairy tale, which usually ends happily (1998:42).

It is this register of critique that appears lacking in response to the *Five:20* programme. But perhaps, at the level of formal dramaturgical experiment, at least, this growing corpus of new operatic works did not invite these deliberations. On a far simpler level, what the critiques of these initiatives does not even speculate on, is that one way to advance a growing corpus of local musical theatre and operatic writing might well be to anchor projects in provisional "tryouts" in which a shortened or partial version is showcased as a means of developing a larger extended project. Increasingly I favour this developmental and incremental model as a productive means for generating new work.

3.Key aspects of Postdramatic theatre.

I draw on Hans Thies Lehmann's publication to discuss aspects of contemporary Postdramatic theatre which manifests divergent tendencies. The two aspects that pertain to this project are "the interruption of the real" and "the reverberation of the voice in a landscape". The former addresses a way of understanding how documentary or archival material may be presented on stage in such a way that the audience is challenged to negotiate shifts between artifice and truth. The latter offers a means of discussing the affective impact of the voice and its placement within the landscape inhabited by the speaking subject. The operatic medium gives prominence to the singing voice but arguably, the traditional repertoire nonetheless depends on linear narrative and character, or action and plot in the Aristotelian sense and, thus, on conventional Western notions of drama rather than story-telling. Postdramatic theatre, in more extreme experiments, among those works by Robert Wilson, resists such formal imperatives through introducing a range of strategies to foreground a soundscape in which semantic coherence or narrative may be subsidiary to the interplay of sound, rhythm, dynamics and silence. To adopt such extreme measures would negate the rationale of this project of staging lost voices and hidden histories which have disappeared like footprints on sand at the water's edge. "The reverberation of the voice in the landscape" does, however, offer a way of accounting for my interest in suppressing the psychological dimension of character as a primary imperative of theatrical representation while retaining the authority of a singular speaking/singing subject testifying to the experience of life within a historical moment, or series of moments.

4.1 **"The irruption of the real".**[23]

A central feature of what has been termed postdramatic theatre is what Lehmann (2006) terms the "irruption of the real" which, as a concept and a creative strategy, is useful, nuanced and more complex than one might initially assume. The concept may seem at odds with the operatic mode but opens up a distinction between the use of archival material of recent history, as in the case of *Nixon*

[23] The concept, with its deliberations on the aesthetic dimension of presentation and affectivity, seems more productive than the templates of either verbatim or documentary theatre which, perhaps arguably, prioritize on content, themes or issues.

in China, which perpetuates conventional notions of narrative form in an integrated, coherent whole,[24] and what I am working towards: a rather different form which depends on the capacity of the viewer to negotiate the oscillation between fictional and real as part of the structural and thematic focus of the text and its presentation.

Lehmann positions "the irruption of the real" and the postdramatic in relation to the tradition of Western theatre. He is as concerned with the choice of subject matter, materials and their formal manipulation, as he is with their affectivity and potential impact. He writes:

> The traditional idea of theatre assumes a fictive cosmos, a 'diegetic universe' [...] a separated and 'framed' reality governed by its own laws and an internal coherence of its elements and which is marked off against its environment as a separate 'made up' reality" (2006: 99-100).

For Lehmann, this paradigm of the exteriority of the spectator/audience member is a central premise of the classical Aristotelian model of the dramatic form. He argues, less persuasively, that this phenomenon of the spectator's exteriority to the text also applies to the epic model advanced by Brecht. As Lehmann sees it, in Brechtian theatre the "artistic task" of integrating asides and direct address to the audience does not disturb the coherence of the diegetic world; rather, the conventional rupturing of the frame is integral to shoring up the sustained unified coherence of the narrative whole. In contrast, the postdramatic form implicates the viewer as an active participant within the presentation, in an encounter or event that goes beyond being a recipient of direct address.

Lehmann additionally argues that theatre will always remain vulnerable to unintentional violations of the aesthetic whole through what he calls inadvertent "goof ups", such as an extra-lengthy pause as a consequence of an actor forgetting lines rather than this being inscribed as central to the rhythm of a scene as a desirable marker of interactive dynamics. Staging strategies remain vulnerable to the fallibility of the performer. It is this point that serves to set up his proposition that theatre, as a medium, is perhaps more than any other dependent on incorporating the real within its operations. As he puts it:

> Theatre takes place as practice that is at once signifying and entirely real. All theatrical signs are at the same time physically real things: a tree is a cardboard tree, sometimes also a real tree on stage [...] Without the real there is no staging (2006:102).

In terms its material means, Lehmann posits, "Theatre is a practice, however, which like no other forces us to realize 'that there is no firm boundary between the aesthetic and the extra-aesthetic realm'" (2006: 101). For Braque or Picasso to introduce scraps of newspaper or fragments of a score into collages as material components of two dimensional artworks, or for Duchamp to advance the use of the *objet trouve,* is a way of understanding the "irruption of the real" in a different medium. The detritus of everyday life lodged firmly in the "extra-aesthetic realm" is introduced within a domain dedicated to "art".

[24] Premiere October 22, 1987. John Adams with libretto by Alice Goodman. Language: English.

For Lehman, in dramatic theatre an audience is addressed in a manner that contrives to integrate all elements of the fictive cosmos to allow the spectator to retain aesthetic distance, whether this be empathetic engagement with the psychological journey of the protagonist or maintaining a level of detachment. Theatre as a medium thus depends on what we might define as the real: it is reliant on real bodies or real materials occupying real spaces. In other words, the stage world, at one level, remains resolutely what Cassirer terms "organic space", while simultaneously it functions for the spectator as what he might term a "perceptual space" (1992) Arguably, from the perspective of the viewer organic space and perceptual space are fused. But, again to draw on Cassirer, they are compounded by constructing what he calls a "symbolic space", i.e. the abstraction (or conceptual map) accorded to those configurations.

Lehmann's use of the nuanced term "irruption" needs to be clearly understood in relation to the proliferating presentation of unfamiliar, taboo material which is harnessed to a call for active modes of reception and interpretation. Analogous to "eruption", the term denotes an invasion or sudden or otherwise violent breaking in. Rather than an outward plosive action, the term suggests a forceful impact that violates sensibilities and is thus a more extreme action than what Bert O. States (1987) has termed the steady encroachment upon the Western stage by the real in early 19th century naturalism. It is the "irruption of the real" that contributes significantly to how the spectator is integrated within the aesthetics of the presentation even in cases where the conventional spatial division of stage and auditorium is perpetuated. In this instance, the "unsettling blurring of boundaries (results in the theatre being) invaded by the qualities of a *situation"* (2006: 104). This emphasis on "situation" fuses the diegetic world with the world of the spectators.

In the drive towards effacing the representational status of theatre in the interests of authenticity, the "irruption of the real" depends on something in excess of "asserting the real as such" (2006: 101). Rather, as Lehmann puts it, the "main point" of inserting the real lies in its capacity for the "unsettling that occurs through the *indecidability* whether one is dealing with reality or fiction" (2006: 101). In other words, the postdramatic "real" disrupts precisely because that which is "authentic" or "true" is manipulated within a medium that so patently accommodates fabrication. This strategy presents the audience with avowedly and provocatively ambiguity at the level of truth claims. The spectator is asked to problematize that which is ostensibly authentic (such as an act of self-mutilation, the example referred to by Lehmann, following Scheckner) and negotiate the implications of placing "the authentic" within the aesthetic domain. As Lehmann puts it, the postdramatic impulse is "concerned with developing a perception that undergoes – at its own risk – the 'come and go' between the perception of structure and of the sensorial real" (2006: 103). The "irruption of the real" on stage confounds common-sense assumptions of spectatorship since what Lehmann rightly describes as the "security" (2006: 103) of the viewer is removed and the ethical role of reacting to the social and moral issues being presented is foregrounded. The political implications of this manoeuvre are self-evident, as is the potential for discomfort or even disenchantment with what is proffered:

> When the real asserts itself against the staged on stage, then this is mirrored in the auditorium. When the staging practice forces the spectators to wonder whether they should react to the events on stage as fiction (ie aesthetically) or as reality (for example, morally), theatre's treading of the borderline of the real unsettles this crucial predisposition

> of the spectators: the unreflected certainty and security which they experience being spectators as an unproblematic social behaviour (2006: 104).

The expressive modes of Ellen and Nomguqo/Paulina's testimonies are embedded in and reproduced by the medium in which they expressed themselves. Their vocal register, tone and vocabularies draw on letters and oral dictation respectively which not only inscribes the "pastness of events", but also preserves the circumstance in which they articulate their experiences. Both women arguably structure their stories according to the individual that they address: Paulina's retrospective account is clearly constrained by the consciousness of this story being recorded as part of the Mission archive, while Ellen's letters to her sister and confidant allow for frank personal expression.[25] The distinction between the way in which the two women "express themselves" consequently becomes a crucial feature that demands staging: Ellen's bottle of ink and pen – complete with cross writing and the implied intervals in time as letters are delivered by mail ship – is a physical rendering of her mode of communication which needs to contrast with Paulina's story being translated and "written" by the mediating body of Reverend Filter. The imperative of relaying the understanding that the texture and tone of the individual story – and what it reveals of the character producing that narrative – inserts staging challenges that foreground the activity of two different modes of self-expression as inseparable from content and tone.

"The irruption of the real" is only one aspect of the postdramatic paradigm within contemporary theatre around which to organize the prominence of storytelling in which the "pastness" of events is sutured to their enactment in an implied ongoing and unfolding present. It enables me to address notions of socially defined subject identities rather than characters in the conventional sense of fictional *dramatis personae*. These primarily psychological constructs are eschewed in favour of a preoccupation with more abstract considerations. The stage and auditorium configuration is yet another node around which I can articulate the aesthetics of the proposed production by focusing on the treatment of the mise-en-scène and how this is manipulated in the interests of "unsettling" the spectator, who must grapple with the oscillation between "reality and fiction" (2006: 101), and the "indecidability" promoted by the interplay of "the perception of structure and of the sensorial real" (2006: 103), as outlined above.

Footprints on the Wind stages the "real" experiences of two women whose (arguably unremarkable and ordinary) lives are demonstrably bound up in the 19th century projects of Imperial expansion and colonialism. But, as established, staging the real as an end in and of itself is little more than a gesture of naïve reification. It is moreover a strategy that avoids the challenge and obligation of grappling with the complexities of an aesthetic treatment that continually foregrounds a complex mode of reception on the part of the spectator, who is challenged to negotiate relations between real and aestheticized. It is this aspect of the "irruption of the real" that I pursue since it undergirds moral and ethical concerns bound up in the subject matter with which I work. I dispute the neat separation

[25] The extent to which Dhlamini "suppresses" aspects of her life experience are clearly announced on more than one occasion. One example is: "I have related how, moving on my knees and as a pagan woman, I served the king, day in and day out for a long period of time. About the king's nightlife with his *isigodlo* girls I must remain silent; because as a Christian, who has now learnt to kneel before the Kind of all Kings, the Lord Jesus Christ, I can no longer speak about such things" (1998:82). Revisiting these lines, I stress their simplicity and force along with the need to make this declaration clear in performance.

of form and content but endorse the position that acknowledges the thickness of the text as inseparable from its capacity for pleasure and to generate meaning.

The reference to Haggard's novels made in the final scene of the text is prompted by the evidence of Ellen Macleod being one of the Haggard's extensive base of readers and, significantly, the suggestion that her experience of "the real" explains the tolerant scepticism of her remarks since her life experience overtly confounds Haggard's fantastical landscape. The references to Haggard's own life – particularly his failure as an ostrich farmer near Dundee", and his role as Shepstone's functionary – although on record, are contrived interpolations attributed to Ellen. The interplay between "ordinary/real" and the overtly fictional expands on the comment made by Ellen. The allusion to Haggard's writing (and the discursive formation of which it is a part) asserts the incongruity and artifice of the Imperialist myth whilst staging the invisible and unrecorded aspects of its operations, including the distinctly ordinary detail of Haggard as farmer rather than adventurer.

In *The Victorians* (2003), A.N. Wilson asserts that "Empires are male phenomena" (2003:599)[26] and cites the way in which Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines (1885)*, the "classic quest story", is part of the British Imperial discourse and its valorization of the mythic roles of "big-game hunter and explorer in Africa" (2003:601). At the outset of the novel, Allan Quartermaine, as Wilson observes, "reassures" his reader with an unequivocal assertion: "I can safely say that there is not a *petticoat* in the whole history" (1991:9). Wilson then suggests that Haggard's *She (1886) is* "a mythopoetic masterpiece" and "a popular page-turner" (2003: 602) before expanding on how the subject is treated in this subsequent novel. As he puts it: "J.K Stephen links Haggard to the unofficial Laureate of Imperialism" – Rudyard Kipling, whose phrase "the White Man's Burden" epitomizes the British Imperialist value system and operations. In Wilson's view, *King Solomon's Mines* is "to a lesser extent, a work of myth making" (2003:602):

> It was published when Haggard, the son of a Suffolk squire, was twenty-nine years old. It was the first popular novel in English to treat of Africa. The Scramble for Africa was in full swing and the Jingoistic public were thrilled by Haggard's story of a group of intrepid English gentlemen confronting the mysterious cultures of contemporary Africa and of lost antiquity. But it is not simply a tale of derring do. [...] The novel nicely balances the heroism of the explorers, the avarice which prompted them to venture into the dark continent, and the piety they feel about the superiority of their own culture to that of the African (2003:602).

4.2 "The reverberation of the voice in space" and "the landscape".

Amongst Lehmann's case studies of postdramatic theatre are the works of three notable theatre-makers, each of whom offers the opportunity to tease out particular aspects of aesthetic strategies in contemporary theatre. They are Tadeusz Kantor, Klaus Michael Grüber and Robert Wilson. Lehmann's commentary on the formulations of the latter two has some pertinence to my creative efforts. He deliberates what he calls "the reverberation of the voice in space" and the creation of a

[26] As he goes on to suggest: "This was a world which was stiflingly, overwhelmingly male. The army and navy, the civil service, the Houses of Parliament were all male. The Imperial adventurers who pushed back the frontiers of, and the local commissioners and governors who pacified and administered, the Empire were all male. It is an obvious fact, but it can hardly be overstated" (2003:600).

"landscape" in relation to their work. These concepts have significance materially and thematically in *Footprints on the Wind* and offer a means of accounting for the handling of time and space within the project and enable me to discuss the tone and texture of the project. While I am familiar with Wilson's dramatic and operatic work, having had the opportunity to observe him in rehearsal in Hamburg (2000) and seen two works in performance (*The Knee Plays* and *The Black Rider),* Grüber's productions are unfamiliar to me and I am reliant on Lehmann's observations about them.

Lehmann approaches the characteristic features of Grüber's theatre under the productive sub-title "the reverberation of the voice in space", which would seem to offer much to anyone attempting to develop a contemporary operatic libretto. His description of the distinctive quality of Grüber's theatre projects has considerable purchase in two respects. Firstly, the register and tense of the speaking voice is closely bound up in what Lehmann designates *"de-dramatization". De-dramatization* refers to the shift in theatrical focus from conventional notions of plot and structure that are predicated on the notion of linear unfolding and plausible sequential action and implies a speaking subject in the modes of either indirect or direct address. Concomitantly, the speaking (or singing) subject, whose enunciations take place irrevocably within the present tense, is positioned as already having lived through the events being narrated or described. Both these aspects of the postdramatic theatre function to challenge conventional modes of understanding temporality and mimesis on the part of the spectator/audience member. Lehmann writes:

> If in the staged text the action is relegated to the background altogether, it is in the logic of theatre aesthetic that the peculiar *temporality* and *spatiality of the scenic process* itself comes to the fore. It becomes more the presentation of an *atmosphere* and *state of things*. A scenic *écriture* captures the attention, compared to which the dramatic plot becomes secondary (2006: 74).

Setting aside the valuable notion of a scenic *écriture,* to which I will return in conjunction with notions of landscape, it is important to probe and account for the interplay of past histories and personal testimonies in shifting that aesthetic paradigm. As Lehmann puts it:

> (Grüber) removes the moment of suspense from the plays in an extreme manner. This procedure of postdramatic *isotony,*[27] where peaks and climaxes are avoided, lets the stage appear as a tableau. The effect of this tableau increasingly intensifies by being 'charged' with the spoken word which thus unfolds primarily its mental-lyrical function of expression [...] There is nothing to debate any more. What is executed and spoken here has the character of a necessary, quasi-ceremonially performed, agreed upon rite (2006:75).

The prominence accorded to the tableau as the core building block of the mise-en-scène suggests that imagining the series of tableaux is as much a core feature of my project as drawing on extant documentary material to shape the libretto. Elsewhere Lehmann deliberates on the tone and impact

[27] Lehmann defines *isotony* in an endnote which reads: "From the Greek 'isotonos', equally stretched of equal tension or tone. In science, the term is used to describe liquids of the same osmotic pressure or concentration of molecules" (2006: 194). The implications of equitable value being accorded to all "components' or particles suggests the usefulness of the notion of *isotony* in application to this project in the relation between image and word as narrative tools "being stretched" in their expressive capacity, and in the way that scenes are intended to be self-contained or autonomous while also contributing to the larger whole through the tension created by their juxtaposition.

of the tableau, so readily deployed and construed as "spectacle" (laden with all the latent pejoratives implied in the term):

> Postdramatic theatre tries to withdraw from the reproduction of 'images' into which all spectacles ultimately solidify. It becomes 'calm' and 'static', offering images without reference and handing over the domain of the dramatic to the images of violence and conflict in the media... (2006: 184).

In this libretto, the relatively static images of figures in the landscape serve not only to position the female characters in relation to the events that they describe, but also – and as significantly – serves as a means of rebutting the obligation to stage any dramatic re-enactment of highly charged or contentious action. I adopt this approach in respect of Eva's arrival and again in relation to sections dealing with war in which the "past-ness" of action is what I aim to relay. There are two consequences to adopting this strategy: firstly, physical stillness has the effect of magnifying the value and significance of the voice as the animate element within the theatre frame; and secondly, what Lehmann calls "the imaginary space of this voice" (2006:76) acquires prominence. The strategy offers considerable scope for a staging that celebrates what a voice can achieve. As in the oratorio, celebrating the power of the voice is a central objective. Lehmann writes:

> Theatre in Grüber's work is defined as scene and situation. The spectator is there to witness the pain the actors speak of. In this way, he? traces a link back to that essential reality of the stage which means that here the *moment of speaking* is everything. Not the timeline of action; not the drama but the moment when the human voice is raised...In Grüber's *Iphigenie in Tauris* at the Berliner Schaubühne (1998) the heroine's report of the terror of the myth became a quiet scenic contemplation of the unbearable. The dramatic conflict receded behind this meditation, behind the precise articulation. The postdramatic theme here is a *theatre of the voice,* the voice being a reverberation of past events (2006:76).

The appeal of experimenting with this kind of strategy undergirds Paulina's account of the Anglo-Zulu war, Cetswayo's capture and the account of the civil war that follows. Intertwined with the staging imagined for this scene (which I envisage will depend on orchestral sections – or a relative absence of vocal interplay in favour of a recorded soundscape of found noises) are associated strategies that are characteristic of Robert Wilson's theatrical corpus in which landscape figures prominently. Lehmann introduces his treatment of landscape through an unanticipated set of ideas which merit summarizing since this manoeuvre has considerable importance in reinforcing his claim for the (visual) landscape that typifies Wilsons oeuvre and, moreover, focuses the reader's attention on just how central the notion of metamorphosis and transformation are to the medium of theatre.

"Theatre is transformation at all levels," he writes, "and it is worth taking to heart the insight of theatre anthropology that under the conventional scheme of action there is a more general structure of transformation" (2006: 77). Lehmann suggests that transformation is anchored in a dualist operation: the performer, whether literally or metaphorically masked, is offered an opportunity to "see things differently",[28] while the spectator is also engaged in what he describes quite simply as "a different kind of seeing". Importantly, the latter is central to "theatrical perception

[28] "The pleasure in dissimulating oneself under the mask is paired with another, no less uncanny pleasure: how the world changes under one's gaze looking out of the mask, how it suddenly becomes strange when seen from elsewhere" (2006: 77).

in which *seeing as recognition* is continually outdone by a play of surprises that can never be arrested by an order of perception" (2006: 77, my italics). Theatrical perception is acutely committed to the process of recognition, hence the centrality of the sense of sight to the term theatre which is derived from the Greek theatron, which denotes a place from which one sees.[29] The position exterior to the text, the position from which the scene can be taken in, assimilated and meaning produced, is what Samuel Weber (2004) problematizes so thoroughly. Weber suggests that the desire for a position of exteriority – with its implications of stability, authority and controlled access to meaning – undergirds the trajectory of classic Western drama. It is this safe position that the postdramatic theatre challenges through destabilizing the position of the spectator who is not offered a "seamless unified whole" laden with meanings and value. Rather, the spectator is nudged into a position – perhaps with varying degrees of force on the one side and outrage or reluctance on the other – in which they are implicated in the production of meaning. Thus, the performance text resists unity and closure and is not available for passive consumption. The postdramatic model promotes a mode of active spectatorship in which the spectator is as aware of their own pleasure in responding to the text as they are aware of the constructedness of the text itself.

A central strategy in triggering active spectatorship (and acknowledging the incompleteness of the text) is through transformations in material identities and appearances which resist ready deciphering by foregrounding the semiotic thickness and density of the performance text. These compounded factors become the reason that Lehmann approaches Wilson's autographic works through the trope of visual metamorphoses, suggesting, in doing so, that the stage becomes a series of carefully constructed landscapes.[30] In summing up the impact of Wilson's achievements, he writes:

> In Wilson's work the phenomenon has priority over the narrative, the effect of the image precedence over the individual actor, and contemplation over interpretation. Therefore his theatre creates a time of the gaze. [...] The human being is not separated from landscape, animal and stone. A rock may fall in slow motion, animals and plants are just as much agents of events as the human figures. [...] the space of action appears as a landscape continually changed by different states of light, appearing and disappearing objects and figures (2006: 80).

Lehmann claims that Wilson's work jolts the spectator out of complacent residual assumptions regarding the representational obligations of theatre. He identifies four ways in which Wilson's "theatre of metamorphoses" is produced, all of which serve to "(connect) heterogeneous realities" (2006: 78).[31] They include the use of "ambiguities and correspondences" which means eschewing plausible fabrication in favour of using real material "substitutes" which effectively allows for suggestive analogies, working on the cognitive sensibility of the audience through either metaphor or metonym (as in the example Lehmann provides in describing how "a column of smoke may be the image of a continent...Triangles mutate into sails, then tents or mountains"). Wilson mobilizes changes in proportional relations and the size of objects "as in Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*", crucially a landscape that Alice physically enters and becomes subject to its laws regarding

[29] I return to problematize this approach to mise-en-scène and theatre in relation to what Carter calls imperial history later in this document.

[30] Notions of land and "landscape" in the sense of arriving at a particular territory and taking up some form of occupation is the activity on which this entire project is based and will be addressed shortly.

[31] Connecting heterogeneous realities is self-evidently a central objective of my project.

perception and being: material identity is as indeterminate as the Cheshire cat and an individual's position in relation to things a continual factor in the interplay between things, objects and landscape. A third formal feature is Wilson's use of tableau, repetition and slow motion which together, as Lehmann suggests, "undermine the idea of action" in order to convey "the impression that the human actors on stage do not act of their own volition and agency" (2006: 78). The degree of resistance to realist representation is most clearly announced as being "the use of enigmatic patterns of movement processes and stories of light" (2006: 78) which have the effect of focusing the viewer's eye on the composition of the dynamic image as a clearly crafted exercise in visual expression. This degree of heightened presentation offers a means of challenging the overtly spectacular qualities associated with the genre of musical theatre while sustaining a frank commitment to abstraction and stylization.

Lehmann then provides ways of understanding Wilson's crafting of the mise-en-scène in terms of light and the geometry of the stage floor. He links Wilson's recognition of the material dynamism of light (as opposed to the corporeality of décor, props and the actor's body) and the affective capacity/fascination of nineteenth century panorama and diorama. He concludes:

> It is important to confirm that the theatrical need is obviously not fixated on action alone. The artificially illuminated landscape, the 'action' of daybreak and the change of lighting equally belong to it (2006: 78).

The traditional subject-object hierarchy, as semiotician Keir Elam (1991) implies, presupposes a pyramid with the protagonist at the apex of that hierarchy and inanimate matter (set, costume, prop and stage lighting) at the base tier. Wilson's theatre mobilizes the supposedly inanimate to make it the subject of aesthetic contemplation, thus granting the inanimate the status and agency of being the locus of the action. This manoeuvre conforms with what Elam proposes as a subject-object continuum, an alternative to perpetuating conventional hierarchical relations. Lehmann puts it in these terms:

> ... we find a *de-hierarchization* of theatrical means connected to the absence of dramatic action in his theatre. Mostly there are neither psychologically elaborated, nor even individuated figures within a scenic context, but instead figures who seem to be incomprehensible emblems (2006: 79).

This creative project tests the scope for achieving the first part of this proposition in which objects within the visual field gain prominence – the detritus washed ashore after the wreck, or the meagre possessions available for barter or trade, for instance – but not to the extent that the human figure is rendered entirely powerless, but rather faced with a choice, the significance of which, in the manner of Brecht, may be foregrounded. This notion of the status and agency of the performer within the visual and aural field that constitutes the spatio-temporal continuum is what I draw on in eschewing the need for conventional dramatic action and complex psychological portraits despite basing the project on real people and real lives.

Lehmann then briefly discusses Wilson's use of what he terms "discontinuous" stage space which is a central proposition around which I have already developed my writing. The distinctive marker of Wilson's work is worth detailing:

> The actors 'sharing' the stage often do not even enter into the context of interaction of any kind. And the space of this theatre is discontinuous: lights and colours, disparate signs and objects create a stage that no longer signifies a homogenous space: frequently Wilson's space is divided "into stripes" parallel to the apron of the stage, so that actions taking place in different depths of the stage can either be synthesized by the spectator or be read as 'parallelograms' so to speak. [...] Through the montage of juxtaposed or imbricated virtual spaces, which – this is the crucial point – remain independent from one another so that no synthesis is offered, a poetic sphere of *connotations* comes into being (2006: 79).

In the light of imagining, and then writing, the visual dimensions of this project, these observations with regard to the use of light and the horizontal floor plane of the stage floor take on considerable importance, informing, as they do, the structuring of the sequence of images and fragments of a narrative. Unlike the act of writing, the process of generative experimental theatre making tends to privilege the use of real space, time, actors' bodies, and technologies in instances where the production process allows for these. I draw on the experience of watching Wilson rehearse a visual concerto in Hamburg (2000)[32] in which the process was not only collaborative, depending on an extended team of lighting technicians and videographers, but entirely fluid. A sudden decision to introduce a single contemporary dancer was implemented and tested within a day and the performer's audition was effectively focused on how he acquitted himself in repeating the choreography that Wilson himself had just improvised. The working notes of this rehearsal process suggest that in this instance, at least, the storyboard of rough black and white line drawings was a most crucial departure point for future development and rehearsal of the presentation, functioning as what one might call a script. Herein lies my ambivalence regarding my project: what is the place of words in a project that is all about the ambiguities of spatial relations, figures in a landscape and the connotations these may trigger for an audience? But central to my undertaking is the position of the word (magnified and active as an element of the mise-en-scène) functioning as an integral component of a physical landscape inhabited by figures whose voices reiterate the words that the audience sees and translates.[33]

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[32] For three days, I watched early rehearsals for what I recall being provisionally titled the Barto project and subsequently presented as *Hot Water* (premiere at the Singapore Arts festival 2000). Andrew Clements in his review for *The Guardian* provides a cogent description of the outcome of the sessions that I observed: "Liszt's set of Transcendental studies is strange territory for a music-theatre piece, but this is the subject of *Hot Water*, in which the American pianist Szimon Barto plays the cycle of 12 pieces in a theatrical setting devised by Wilson.

"The piano is sited in the centre of the auditorium and caged in a box of gauzes, on to which a whole range of lighting effects and video imagery can be projected. The piano itself can move mysteriously around its enclosure, and a whole range of symbolic objects are flown in and out. There is a second performer too, the dancer Arco Renz, who counterpoints Barto's musical performance. [...] The effect is less that of music theatre than of an installation in which a one performer provides the background music; but an effective installation would be more capable of taking the audience into its own world. During the third study, Pyasage, a man walks steadily across the stage balancing a bottle on his head, a model tree in one hand, a little house in the other; for the sixth, Vision, Barto strips to the waist to play, while his gauze prison is transformed into a clapperboard house. The effect is baffling more than enlightening – just like the later appearance of an upside-down abseiling horse." (the guardian.com accessed Sept 2016 via Google: Robert Wilson+Singapore+2000).

[33] Magritte's painting *The Treachery of Images* with its famous declaration "Ceci n'est pas une pipe" and the neon lettering that characterizes the installations of Jenny Holzer inform my appreciation of how words and lettering can operate as elements within a visual composition.

Watching Wilson develop his project, I was ambivalent about two aspects of his method: his status as auteur director and what appeared to be his sole preoccupation with the formal aspects emerging in the work seemed of questionable value in relation to the politics and poetics of theatre making in contemporary South Africa. In 2000, I was forcibly struck by the extreme contrast between Western avant-garde theatre-making and initiatives promoting emergent voices in South Africa, chiefly instigated by Barney Simon at the Market Theatre. The two positions verged on setting up extreme antitheses: Wilson's demotion of the subject (in terms of dispensing with both character and the subject identity of the performer) seemed to me a profound violation of the actor-centred ensemble story-telling initiatives that underpinned and characterized a nascent South African theatre that was directly aligned with the political imperatives of celebrating a democratic polyphony. I found Wilson's access to resources and personnel beyond comprehension and difficult to justify from my position as working within the proudly independent and minimally-resourced alternative Market Theatre custom. The degree of abstraction and perhaps even self-absorption of Wilson's vision may well be valorized on the international avant-garde circuit but just how well-received his model might be in a local context is questionable.

4. **Speaking and writing.**

It is beyond the scope of this paper to address relations between orality and literacy along with the politico-cultural implications of both practices as narrative modalities. But the formal features of the source materials as much as the aim of integrating words within the mise-en-scène, require that I address the tensions arising from their juxtaposition. Ellen's letters, intended for private readership, are clearly a form of intimate self-expression articulated in the form of confidential direct address. Paulina, on the other hand, commits to the oral delivery of her life-story to Reverend Filter, a fellow missionary with whom she has a formal professional relationship albeit softened by the sense of trust and communitas.

4.1 The politics and poetics of orality and literacy.

I draw on Judith Lütge Coullie's propositions to expand on forms of biographical writing. She observes that, broadly speaking, there are two distinct forms of auto/biographical practice in South Africa: izibongo and Western autobiographical prose narrative. While the two source texts of this project are not explicitly accommodated within either of these clear-cut categories, some correspondences can be identified between the outwardly focused rhetoric of Paulina's narrative and Ellen's epistles as different forms of autobiography. Lütge Coullie addresses the "ongoing vital differences" (1999: 62) between the performative or collective oral expression and the literary mode. Both forms function to "communicate an interpretation of the self to others" (1999:62) in response to the socio-political needs and "ideologies which motivate and shape them" (1999: 63). Performances of izibongo depend on repetition and public reception and as such "the performance of the poem is the poem" (1999: 68).[34] The performance of izibongi, like Brechtian theatre, asserts a semiotic thickness of the performance text which defies notions of transparency or translation into another medium.[35]

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[34] The assertion has much in common with what Samuel Weber claims for theatre when he submits that "meaning is not separable from the way in which it is staged; indeed, it can be said to inhere in the staging of a certain type of performance" (1994:26).

[35] In conversation with director Robert Lepage, director Richard Eyre makes this observation:
"I think it's because the more I work in the theatre and the more theatre I see, the more I treasure and admire

The public presentation and reception of the izibongo suggest similarities with certain forms of popular theatre. Lütge Coullie writes that "the poems are always communal activities [with] auditors participating in the performance and interrupting at appropriate moments with expressions of encouragement (1999: 66). The public presentation and reception implies that the story-telling functions to "cement social bonds". This function is significant in gesturing away from privileging subjectivity and individual psychology (as in the legacy of 19th century Western realism) towards an emphasis of self-in-the community" (1999: 68). Formally, the izibongo is authored "collaboratively" as, in Lütge Coullie's evocative words, the text becomes a product of "smudged authorship" whereby the "poems are not commodified, nor are they fixed or owned or authorized by any one person" (1999: 71). These texts function to celebrate collective histories and commemorate a shared perception of significant events. Their "truthfulness", she writes, "is secured by the community not the subject." The terms that she uses to define the rhetorical style is that this is "allusive, metaphorical, compressed" (1999: 72). It seems possible that an element of rhetorical self-consciousness ascribed to the delivery of izibongi (congruent with the public delivery of her story) would inform and even influence Paulina's mode of address. By her own account, each morning at Ondini the day began with the imbongi delivering praises to the king (1998: 43).

At the outset of the slim volume *Paulina Dlamini: servant of Two Kings*, Reverend Filter records Paulina's words. The single sentence with which she launches into a personal narrative is remarkable in its gravitas and sense of rhetorical presence. These qualities do not obscure a pithy summation of relations between speaker and listener, oral expression and the word rendered on paper. "Baba Mhlahlela, you wish to hear my life's story so that you may reduce it to writing" (1998:11). Familiarity and formality, respect and reservation are all announced with a breath-taking economy of expression. The weight of the single word "reduced" speaks volumes. She implies that the status of the word in written mode is diminished in contrast with the living force of the spoken utterance produced by and carried on the breath of the speaker.[36]

Revd Heinrich Filter supplies a short introduction to his chronicle of Paulina's life. He pays tribute to her with the following statement:

> I was granted the privilege to work with her for six years at Lemgo and Esibongweni mission stations. I learnt much from her and often sought her advice and counsel. That which she told me about her life and which I recorded, I now wish to present in a comprehensive and readable form, as a testimony to her dedication and as an encouragement to others to further the missionwork among the Zulus (1998: 9).

The statement gives some indication of Filter's personal style of expression. Compiler, editor and translator S. Bourquin acknowledges that Filter's process of writing up Paulina's story was unsystematic. According to Borquin, Filter wrote

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the characteristics of theatre that can't be translated into any other medium. Robert Frost said that poetry is the bit that can't be translated and that's what I think about theatre" (Huxley, M et al. 1997: 237).

[36] In "The Image of the Book in Xhosa Poetry", Jeff Opland identifies the tropes which provide a parallel instance of the mistrust with which the print medium was held. He argues that the Xhosa oral poet (imbongi) operated in the service of a centripetal, rural ethnic group" (1999: 93). He describes how the book – symbolizing the constraints and controls of colonial subjugation – triggers resistance and mistrust of authors who collude in its production. He writes: "The rifle is an image of destruction, so too is the written word, the book or the letter", citing Shepherd's observation that the Xhosa word for book is incwadi, the name of a poisonous bulb (1999: 96).

> on loose sheets of paper without sequence or cohesion. Revd Filter then collected these notes under specific headings and rewrote them in the form of a coherent narrative, aiming at a chronologically correct sequence. It seems probable that some of these notes having been transcribed were not properly filed and were lost (1998: 3).

Bourquin stresses, however, that his reconstruction of Paulina's testimony attempts to redress expressive irregularities of Filter's German transcription:

> In the course of translation from German to English great care was taken to adhere as closely as practicable to the original Zulu idiom. This care was necessary because, while bound to follow Revd. Filter's narrative, it was important that the involvement of a third language did not result in any material deviation from Paulina's own Zulu modes of expression (1998: 5).[37]

The physical presence of Filter as silent scribe, as much as the relationship between Paulina and him, requires attention to the attitude adopted while listening and writing to suggest the possibility of mediation and even editorial interference.

In contrast to the overt performative and oral delivery of Paulina's story, Ellen Macleod's prose narrative has some affinity with the temporal linear chronology and spatial coherence of autobiography, which is characterized by what Lütge Coullie describes as its "leisurely aims towards fullness and transparency". As she puts it, the "language is expansive and direct. Readers are rarely invited to ponder resonance or meaning" (1999: 64). As she observes, the print form is "privately composed and privately consumed" (1999: 65) and conforms to the logic of Western capitalism in that it "reifies the individual as monad" (1999: 66). Ellen's letters (written over a period of 38 years) read as an entire collection, perform an autobiographical function but diverge significantly from this paradigm. Written in direct address to a primary reader, rather than being a public declaration, the register of Macleod's writing depends on that which can be presumed to be shared, known or familiar and that which is known only by Ellen who wishes to share the experience with her sister. Unlike a conventional Western autobiography, each letter is a mini-narrative: the part is at once entire in itself and simultaneously constitutes a fragment of a larger unit.[38] Moreover, the medium of inter-personal communication through writing (which was dependent on the lengthy intervals of delivery by mail ship) promotes the recognition of the missing account of the correspondent. Each of Ellen's letters anticipates a response as an affirmation of the account that has just been shared. The presence of the invisible Louisa, Ellen's sister, is consistently invoked and implied by the arrival of a series of small parcels of goods despatched from England. The portfolio of letters thus offers a hint

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[37] Bourquin supplies examples of how he adjusted Filter's inappropriate use of "Majestät" for "Ndabezitha", "Klausur" (cloister) for "isiGodlo and "Minister" for "inDuna". Both sets of papers, German and Zulu, are lodged at the Killie Campbell Africana Library in Durban.

[38] In this respect at least, Ellen's story reveal similarities with what Samuel Weber ascribes to the dramatic form of Peking opera. The observation pertains to the structure and relationship of part to whole that informs Brecht's dramaturgy. Citing a contemporary programme note from the Liyuan Theatre, Weber writes: "The plot structure of the Beijing Opera is often characterized as 'linking pearls with a thread." Here the 'thread' refers to the general plot of the play, while the 'pearls' are the specific scenes of the play. Each scene is an integral part of the play. On the other hand, it has its own sub-plot and can be staged separately. This suggests that the scenic 'pearls' can be separated from and are not entirely dependent on the 'thread'" (2004: 25). This understanding informs the way in which *Footprints on the Wind* is structured from a dramaturgical perspective.

of a dialogue suggests that the long temporal interval in delivery impacted on communication. The letters invite one to conjure up material to fill the "gap" of a two-way dialogue to which access is given by one voice only.

Letter writing is not obliged to comply with the obligations of prose publication in terms of expository fullness or coherence. The rationale for inter-personal communication and personal circumstance is all too evident in the sample of Ellen's letter with its cross-writing: economic imperatives demand judicious use of paper and careful consideration of postage costs.[39] Beyond such considerations, the question of considered expression makes Ellen's letters interesting. Whereas autobiography is committed to directness, transparency and ostensibly declares some degree of verifiable "truth", private inter-personal communication may be modified, again, to some degree, an empathetic consideration for the addressee. The content and register of expression of a letter to an individual with whom one shares an intimate bond is prompted by different impulses from the autobiography and lacks the deliberation of autobiographical intent. What is intriguing about the material is not so much the representation of self in the form of full disclosure but the insidious sense that there is always something being veiled or concealed; the notion that despite the apparent fulsomeness of the correspondence, the self remains ultimately unknowable and inexpressible.

The interplay between the different ways in which the word as a written, spoken and sung signifier is envisaged in the staged presentation merits brief commentary. Theatre as a medium can profitably *show* the interplay between seeing and hearing, while the operatic medium depends, in part, on the interplay between image and sound within the diegetic world and the translation of the libretto in the surtitles. The convention of reading the television strap line and film sub-titles makes the reading of the translated utterance a readily available convention of spectatorship. But in addition to the established or customary function of translation. I also propose to use the surtitles to announce, Brechtian style, scene titles naming places and marking a chronological record. The conventional use of the surtitles results in a quasi-naturalized integration of digitally reproduced words as an adjunct to the framing of the action in an extra-diegetic capacity. This project proposes to unsettle that custom in order to make visible the tension between the word as it is pronounced in one language and as it might be understood or transcribed in another. Thus, the surtitles become a vital element of multi-lingual expression. The stage floor and the vertical plane of the cyclorama also avail themselves as a tabula rasa on which words might appear and disappear, accompanying the activity of writing. Literally, the stage becomes a palimpsest on which the image of place is projected with an overlay of writing superimposed on or cross-fading from a place to provide verbal markers encoding the expression of the speaking figure who inhabits that landscape. This strategy implies that writing (as letters but also as signifier of different languages and cultural specificity) is "stamped" – through the highly mobile and flexible medium of video projection – onto the stage surface as a page. Projections of writing in the process of being produced becomes a mechanism for articulating character. Revd. Filter's stiff German hand (pencil on foolscap paper) transcribing Paulina's story in German as she speaks in Zulu is repeated as a motif, establishing her manner and mode of being in which social and communal interaction is a primary marker. Ellen's solitary position and the value she places on the cracked spectacles and the bottle of ink salvaged from the shipwreck, are fused with the suggestion that reading and writing disrupt or perhaps function as an escape from immediate domestic routines.

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[39] See Appendix 3 for a photocopy sample which is extraordinary challenging to decipher and enigmatic in its visual appeal.

I propose that the relationship between writing and other forms of encoded mapping – cartography, whether formal as in naval navigation charts, or rudimentary, as in the hand drawn map of what the Macleod's presume the Byrne settlement to be – be signified by animated projections comprising the visual field of the action. "Drawn space" parallels the verbal counterpart of speaking or writing about space. What Raymond Williams describes as "verbal action" is subject to the dynamism, mobility and transformability of the sign (as per Keir Elam's propositions) and becomes part of the image system of the performance text. The fabrication of the transforming stage world and language system is the subject of the performance spectacle.

4.2 Paul Carter: land and language.

Reflecting on the extent to which this project aims to produce an historical text, my thinking has gained nuance from drawing on the writing of Paul Carter (1987), who probes the way that discovery (rather than exploration), settlement and dispossession is inseparable from colonialization and territorial possession. Two main features of his account of colonizing Australia have generated a way of reflecting on the core images and ideas of the project: first, Carter proposes a notion of "spatial history" to counter the linear trajectory of imperialist historical project and what it obscures or effaces through mapping and naming; second, he mobilizes the trope of the stage as a platform on which events play out for the benefit of the (visible or invisible) spectator.[40] He regards both features as central strategies of a specific mode of historical discourse. In his view, the taken-for-granted status of a territory in terms of its availability for discovery and conquest (along with an emphasis on the consequences of first landings) operate to legitimize conquest through obscuring the significant underlying historical process. A corollary to these processes is that naming and map-making largely fix and declare an object and consequently its status as known, effectively negating the experiential dynamics of explorer and traveler.

For Carter, what "might be called Imperial history" (2010: xvi) is, in important ways, equivalent to conventional dramatic staging: "the spatial event is replaced by the historical stage" (2010: xiv) or, as he puts it:

> Australia was always simply a stage where history occurred. It is not the historian who stages events weaving them together to form a plot, but History itself. History is the playwright, coordinating facts into a coherent sequence: the historian narrating what happened is merely a copyist or amanuensis (2010: xiv).[41]

He uses a sample of writing by Australia's leading historian, Clark, to demonstrate the ostensible objectivity of the historian whose writing relies on description and "cause-and-effect explanation" (xv), establishing the historian in the role of *"répétiteur"* (2010: xv).

Despite the obvious disparities between the trajectory of settlement in Australia and South Africa, and notwithstanding the significance of language and naming in postcolonial theory and in the project of decolonization, Carter's propositions offer a fresh angle for thinking about language, place and names within my manuscript and also an appealing, if seemingly unlikely, alternative justification for non-linear, fragmented narrative.

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[40] I return to this aspect of Carter's writing by way of conclusion.

[41] Land, territory or space is treated as "'natural', passive, objectively there" (2010: xxi).

Carter asks: "BEFORE THE NAME: what was the place like before it was named?" His answer fuses landscape, space and time with language and two different notions of history which allow for posing tentative correlations between conventional dramatic and theatrical presentation, the post-dramatic model and a scenic *écriture.* Pursuing the trope of journeying by sea and by land as a narrative comprised of fragments, Carter's ideas introduce nuance to thinking about what historical fragments and juxtapositions might entail and generate. In other words, his ideas offer a way of accounting for the prominence of names of places and markers of time that are introduced as something other than a definitive pronouncement of history in the sense of mastery and knowing. They function, rather, as provisional co-ordinates of a dynamic journey which enable the speaker to consolidate bearings and establish distances between points in space and time. Carter's question also challenges my sense of places with which I have grown familiar: the multiple perspectives of place and history invoked by journeying through a territory is a theme that constantly invites pursuing.

Announcing the analogy with the theatrical encounter and the perspective of the spectator, Carter probes the ways in which meaning is produced through a distinctive form of historical record that overlooks perspective and production:

> History's drama unfolds; the historian is an impartial onlooker, simply repeating what happened. In [Australian historian Manning] Clarke's account [of the landing of the First Fleet] this illusion of the historian as *répétiteur* is reinforced by other literary means... Such history is a fabric woven of self-reinforcing illusions. But above all, one illusion sustains it. This is the illusion of the theatre, and, more exactly, the unquestioned convention of the all-seeing spectator. [...] This kind of history, which reduces space to a state, that pays attention to events unfolding in time alone, might be called imperial history. The governor erects a tent here rather than there; the soldier blazes a trail in that direction rather than this (2010: 375).

Carter stresses the practice naming places as a device which enables a journey to continue. He makes this claim for Cook's travels on *The Endeavour,* in which names operated within a system of "nomadic discourse" (2010:28)t: "the metaphorical character of his names was to leave the place uncharacterized" (2010: 28) while promoting what he describes as "the translation of experience into texts" (2010: 31).[42] This understanding corresponds with the fragments of the narrative arc of the core characters.

Carter launches *The Road to Botany Bay* with a chapter title that pays tribute to the provocative observation made by Boswell: "A page of my *Journal* is like a cake of portable soup. A little may be diffused into a considerable portion" (2010: xxiii). The reference to all that is implied by the reduced concentrate being available to reconstitution in excess of its apparent potential and volume suggests something of how journals, maps and letters home can only relay in part what has been experienced by the individual. The slim volume of Paulina's story and the far lengthier volume of Ellen's letters urges a recognition of the accuracy of this claim.

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[42] Carter claims that the names proposed by Cook retained a provisionality that can only be appreciated in the light of his continued journey rather than the objective of founding a settler colony in either New Zealand or Australia. He observes that the First Fleet landed in Australia some eighteen years after Cook's survey of the coast and, indeed after his death. This leads to the proposition that Cook's claim to be the founder of Australia serves as a template for "spatial history": he asserts that Cook's "travelling kept open (indeed opened up) other ways of possession" (2010: 33).

In a remarkably performative manoeuvre, Carter begins by situating the reader within the landscape, describing what is visible: the perspective offered to the reader is a view of the same landscape and bay that Captain Cook surveyed. By dramatizing the relations between events and their record, Carter teases out the implications of the historical project, its lacunae and significance in contemporary terms. He writes:

> A cloud of historical consciousness must affect our vision, attributing to doubtful contours a permanent significance. A more sensuous trace of aircraft and oil refineries stains the prospect but, with a selective eye the outlines of what Cook saw [...] material facts remain discernible. Botany Bay: if we believe the name, the place is still recognizable. Or is it? (2010: xiii).[43]

In conceiving and structuring this project, I aim towards making visible the extent to which local contemporary theatre-makers have seemingly succumbed to the pressures of immediacy and relevance, dispensing with "historical consciousness" and the ways in which it may introduce nuance to contemporary issues and competing claims.

For Carter, imperial history, with its emphasis on charting and naming, foundation and settlement, "reduces space to a stage" rather than offering a close reading of active spatial choices. Its objective of "legitimating" expansion and possession is obscured by the preoccupation with what he calls the "formal and static" (2010: xvi) at the expense of intentions and "the material uncertainties of lived time and space". He proposes an alternative to this Imperial history, which makes little attempt to understand or interpret, that focuses on intentions and "the material uncertainties of lived time and space" (2010: xvi). Consequently, he proposes that not only is the process one of "mythologizing", but that it creates a diorama in which events appear to be natural and inevitable. The alternative approach of "spatial history" stresses the processes involved in exploring and settling, namely "choosing directions, applying names, imagining goals and inhabiting environments". These processes texture Ellen's letters which, not unlike the explorer journal, offer qualities that counter the "Imperial pageant".

Carter's analysis of sea-faring expeditions mandated by the aim of expanding horizons from the European perspective of the "known" makes a distinction between "exploration" and "discovery". For him, James Cook's status as "founder" of Australia whose role in naming places proved so pivotal, is at odds with his "credentials as navigator" (20120:1). This professional occupation contrasts with the "scientific methods" and objectives of the botanist accompanying him so for Carter, these two individuals embody differences between claims toward mastery and possession.[44] Carter's propositions regarding Cook's commitment to travelling and its impact on the significance of

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[43] Carter's pronouncement of his own position and his challenge regarding what is visible when, cognizant of its name, we survey a familiar landscape is compelling. My eerie sense of past lives and experiences has frequently been triggered by journeying through parts of KwaZulu-Natal, trying to disaggregate markers of present and past ways of habitation.

[44] "[E]xploration, no less than botany, was an intellectual discipline with its own distinctive scientific method, its own rules of description and classification. [...] Exploration was a spatial discourse. It was attentive to the where and how of objects, and its strategic deployment of names was integral to its transformation of the natural world into an object of knowledge" (2010: 8)

place names provides me with a means of addressing the same motif in *Footprints on the Wind*. He writes:

> Cook's knowledge of the Australian coast was a product of his mobility and his active engagement with its waters, reefs and horizons; at the very least, his casual and special names represent the conditions under which he aimed to make history. They underlie the active nature of the explorer's space and time (2010:4).

As he puts it, Cook's names refer to "the specificity of his historical experience" (2010: 4) functioning as "a conceptual space in which to move" (2010: 7):

> [The place names] claimed no finality or universal validity. On the contrary they were deployed contextually, strategically [...] They alluded to the journey itself, as it unfolded horizontally (2010: 7).

Most crucially, for Carter, "Cook moved in a world of language" (2010: 7). The names he bestowed on the terrain that he encountered functioned as markers of spatial differentiation in his journal and on the maps that he was making, and in both texts each name occupied a unique position. For Carter, the significance of Cook's names has a direct relation to their purpose and function in the narrative ordering of his journey. Consequently, "instead of appearing arbitrary, the name emerges as an accurate expression of travelling" (2010: 14).[45] The archival material of both Paulina's testimony and Ellen's letters are characterized by pronouncing particularities of time and place as markers of experience and narrative ordering. Foregrounding the names of places (and the year) functions as a strategic and vital component of the theatrical presentation which is less compelled by documentary retrieval of historical incident than it is by the aim to stage the theme of the inseparability of experience and language: geographical space is staged as a field in which names pronounce a cultural history of possession and dispossession.

Accompanying Cook on the Endeavour were two botanists, Joseph Banks and Daniel Charles Solander, who were both implementing the Linnaean system of classification.[46] Carter compares Bank's approach, method and outcomes with Cook's objective of surveying "uncharted territory" to demonstrate what he means in drawing distinctions between Imperial and spatial history as two distinct modes of knowledge production. I draw on his nuanced distinctions with the intention of developing work that actively contests the perpetuation of all that is implied by Imperial history. Carter writes:

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[45] Carter offers an extended analysis for Botany Bay as a revision of earlier alternatives. He suggests that the rationale for its resolution is rhetorical and textual, arrived at in relation to the designation of Admiralty Bay which was effectively the culmination of the New Zealand survey rather than a nominatively descriptive gesture (2010: 16 – 17). The names have personal significance in the subjective sense of plotting points in Cook's journey and career.

[46] Carter explains that the Linnaean system did not call for a detailed examination of plant morphology which might reveal 'natural' affinities between distinct species. Rather, it was based on a superficial comparison of a limited number of characteristics to stress difference; this form of categorization might arguably be described as tending to 'fix' via reduction and essentializing. The Linnaean system is typical of its time.

> Banks was preoccupied with the typical; Cook was concerned with the singular. Where Banks tended to generalize, Cook tended to specify, [...] The pleasure of the plant collector, then, was a pleasure of naming uniquely and systematically (2010:18).

Carter suggests that Cook "finds blank spaces, gaps in his outline, as informative as the line itself" (2010: 22), which is to say, "the gaps are as significant as the discoveries" (2010: 22). This approach to the task of recording and mapping is provocative in its refusal to comply with the objectives of the Imperial project and the latter's all-embracing equation of comprehensive survey with knowledge and possession. In narrative terms, this approach translates to challenging linear ordering in favour of valuing ellipses: meaning is crafted through juxtaposition and contrast rather than through the more or less predictable causal unfolding of sequences. Whereas Banks in his botanical ordering and naming produced an "illusion of knowing under the guise of knowing" (2010: 29), for Carter, Cook's method resulted in "leav(ing) the 'places' as he found them, just as his maps did. For Cook, whether on a chart or discursive account, had a different objective: "his charts and journal", as Carter puts it, have the sole objective of documenting "*precisely* a direction travelled" (2010: 27, my italics). The names of places are of value only as a verification of subjective experience and function more as an aide memoire than a territorial pronouncement of possession.

5. Towards a scenic *écriture*: the stage as a landscape of writing, image and territory.

Since this project focuses on motifs of displacement, migration and resettling – journeys and arrivals – the centrality of place and its visual (re)presentation urges discussion. The material aspects of staging any production require that the sense of location and how that setting (or environment) impacts on the subjectivities and being of characters or identities cannot be dismissed. The project of theatre-making invariably has to address the significance of place through either its diachronic or synchronic representation. The convention of simultaneous staging in which the stage is designed or structured as constituting multiple specific locations and a neutral playing space or *platea* connecting these spaces,[47] has a long-established history of facilitating the cinematic fluidity between scenes in the interests of sustaining narrative rhythm.[48]

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[47] Richard Southern, in *The Seven Ages of the Theatre* (1964), documents a range of configurations for the relationship between *mansion* and *platea* – specific location and neutral terrain respectively – as conventional layouts of Medieval theatre, generated initially in the nave of the church and perpetuated in secular (exterior) public sites. The idea of the *platea* defines the stage as an open tabula rasa available for use by all participants who may be required to traverse this expanse *between* particular sites of occupation. It is thus a core spatial concept for conceptualizing the stage for this project I=both literally and thematically.

[48] I refer here to the work I have been doing on the South African production of *The Colour Purple*. The production script sets out the style of the production in authorial notes as a preface to the script: "This production derives its intense focus and power, in part, from a complete absence of scenery and transitions. [...] To [...] recreate the seamless power of this new version, we have removed the scene numbers, and have indicated only the location of the scenes. The dialogue will tell us where we are, and the swiftness of the storytelling will increase the audience's attention..." (Director's script/Norman, M.2016:2). Based on Alice Walker's 1982 novel, the (quasi-operatic) musical opens with Celie and Nettie playing a clapping game as they sing "down by the river" (2016:4) for some twelve lines before the church soloist announces that it is Sunday morning with the choir and congregation launching into "making a joyful noise" (2016:5). Similarly, Act 2 opens with Nettie writing a letter from a mission station somewhere in an African village (2016: 77) to her sister Celie who reads that letter "at home" in Mister's house. Celie is interrupted by Harpo arriving to tell her of Sofia's arrest (2016:84), which is then staged in less than ten lines prior to Sophia being jailed. The "African village" scene continues as Harpo persuades Celie to visit Sophia in the jail (2016:88). The rapidity of narrative development as much as the way in which action is intertwined corresponds with the presentation style

The presentation initiative of 19th century theatre in Europe anticipated dramaturgical experiment and innovation. Undergirded by the imperatives of enhanced veracity in reproducing both historical subjects and later, in accordance with Zola's championship of the contemporary and local, the technical production strove towards reproducing the real as an illusion contained by the proscenium arch with its implied, invisible fourth wall. The stylistic achievement is not only concomitant with the development of the camera's facility to produce images of vivid detail and 'accuracy' of the physical world, but also stage the primary naturalist proposition of environmental determinism. The representation of the domestic interior – the room as habitat and locus of intra- and inter-personal development, along with its dramatic interest – emerges, as Raymond Williams has observed, as a central convention of dramatic naturalism with its linear plot.

The decision to structure and locate the scenes of this project in the open and unbounded exterior world functions as a critical component of a formal challenge to realist dramaturgy as much as it also explicitly promotes the thematic focus of a narrative of re-settlement. Scene 9, the only scene set in an interior, establishes the cave in the Ngwibe mountain, albeit a temporary place of refuge, as the antithesis of the built environment. Paulina's account of her temporary troglodytic existence, like Ellen's (undocumented) experience of spending a month "on land beyond Cato's valley, (in one of the) forty tents lent by the Government" (Gordon 1970: 13), echoes the motif of "placeless-ness" for which Eva's journey by ship and her arrival is the most concentrated expression.

The significance of the place or site – along with the notion of the stage constituting a platform of embodied spaces in either representational or presentational mode of staging – suggests the primary need to address the literal, physical dimension of how this space is constituted and functions.[49] Beyond the rudimentary and, perhaps, technical considerations of how the geometry enables – or prohibits – placement and interaction, establishing "relations of propinquity" (Foucault 1967: 2), the psycho-social aspects of the spatial field that our bodies inhabit – whether journeying or home-making, temporary or permanent – is the issue of how space is subject to cognitive mapping. Codified, or encoded in words or images, named or pronounced in terms of territorial ownership, neither space nor place remain neutral entities. Markers of place and how it is inhabited or experienced are an integral component of *Footprints on the Wind,* whether these take the form of the diagram, map or image, or, alternatively, the name given to a destination, and are inseparable from what an audience is asked to deliberate. In contrast to Lemgo, Ondini, D'Urban, Byrne and even the cave, "Eva" occupies an unnamed stretch of beach near Port Elizabeth (33° 57' S 25° 36'E), located within what is now named the Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality. The value of retaining the anonymity of this location is that it serves to articulate both its specificity and ambiguity: it is a real space, capable of being occupied by a body but it is simultaneously an ambiguous, liminal space. And if this site is one that offers a sense of both the limitless, seemingly unbounded Indian Ocean, it equally offers a similarly seemingly sense of an interior land mass. The liminality of the locale inhabited by Eva corresponds with the treatment of her experience of being released from slavery. Her future – as an active choice, the action is intended to imply – will be with a nomadic tribe, the antithesis of settled and sedentary living.

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imagined for *Footprints in the Wind,* which had already been completed in revised draft prior to my being commissioned to design *The Colour Purple* for the non-replica South African production which opened 4/02/2018..

[49] Director Peter Brook, in *The Empty Space,* a text that many consider to be a seminal statement regarding modern Western theatre, asserts that "the set is the geometry of the play" as it structures or shapes potential encounters within that field of interaction.

My project experiments with the multiple ways in which space and place, site and location, are represented or encoded via multiple sign systems rather than purely phenomenologically. For these reasons, projections or virtual images and names accorded to specific places are superimposed on the material texture of the stage surface. This "double-encoding" is an attempt to expand on ways in which a non-semantic soundscape, natural sounds and music ,may augment the logos of words as meaning-laden signifiers.

To address the significance of "space", I draw on Foucault's 1967 essay as a precursor to discussing "place" via several propositions from an anthology of essays on post-colonial studies. The distinction between space and place merits brief expansion. Edward Casey, in "Retrieving the difference between Place and Space" (1992), insists that the distinction goes beyond words to concepts. He defines space as an "unbounded perceptual scene" which may nonetheless be framed perceptually by the aperture through which it is viewed. In contrast, place is positional, defined through the experience of the body being anchored at a specific location. As he puts it "places, built or unbuilt, call for bodies as their moving orientational centres and points of view" (1992:54).

5.1 Foucault's concept of the "Space of the Other": heterotopias.

Although the essay "Des Espaces Autres" (1967) (http://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/foucault1.pdf : 9 accessed 2/07/2017) is "not part of the official corpus of Foucault's work", the paper provides valuable ways of addressing the treatment of both space and time in my creative project. While the focus of the essay is to tease out diverse aspects of the heterotopia, the preface to these discussions serves as a condensed meditation of attitudes towards time and space in the 19th and 20th centuries respectively. Foucault proposes that the present epoch is one in which preoccupations with space and its occupation eclipse the temporally focused sensibilities of the 19th century. My subject, project contrives to integrate both the temporal and spatial experience.

Foucault sums up the medieval conception of space as being hierarchical and the subsequent shift form this ordering. Depending on binary oppositions (between sacred and profane, urban and rural, enclosed and open), along with what he calls "the intersection of places" (1967:1), this concept of space allowed for "the space of emplacement" (1967) which I understand to imply a clear sense of stable and fixed relations between individuals, the place that they occupy and what that signified. He posits that Galileo's propositions "dissolved" such certainties through redefining space as "infinite, and infinitely open" in which "a thing's place was no longer anything but a point in its movement, just as the stability of a thing was only its movement indefinitely slowed down (1967: 1)." The paradigm shift has the effect of eschewing "emplacement" or localization by replacing this notion with "extension" (1967:2) or, as we might understand today, increased potential to collapse distances between space effectively redefine space as shifting and dynamic. The facility to occupy multiple locations in quick succession and even virtually collapse distance between points in ways previously unimagined by those whose experiences were, and still are, fixed to a life experienced in a single location or site.

As Foucault explains: "The site is defined by relations of proximity between points or elements; formally, we can describe these relations as series, trees, or grids" (1967: 2). Territorial navigation, the process of Imperial expansion and colonial conquest depends on this ordering of space according to specific co-ordinates that optimize routes or journeys traversing distances as much as relations between a centre and its margins. As he puts it:

> [T]he problem of siting or placement arises for mankind in terms of demography. This problem [...] of the human site of living space is not simply that of knowing whether there will be enough space for men in the world [...] but also knowing what relations of propinquity, what type of storage, circulation, marking, and classification of human elements should be adopted in a given situation in order to achieve a given end" (1967: 2).

Foucault's emphasis lies with the impact of knowledge systems that enable mapping the world according to secular codes. He proposes, however, that "contemporary space is perhaps still not entirely desanctified" (1967:2). He submits that "the hidden presence of the sacred" lurks in the "inviolable" oppositions between spaces regarded as private/public, family/social, cultural/useful and leisure/work. What this, perhaps difficult and less than fully articulated proposition opens up is the potential for stressing (through staging) ways in which the use of familiar and thoroughly secular sites retains elements of ritual, collectively or individually expressed, in addition to relaying ways in which territorial expansion and the mapping of territories served Imperial expansion and operated according to evolving scientific methods.

The stories of the Dlamini and Macleod families enact aspects of this proposition: Paulina's account of her childhood in Maboya Buthelezi's stronghold launches narrative consequences of invasion, conquest and migration. As she recounts, her father, "Prince Sikhunyane Dlamini Nkosi, son of Mjingwa, son of Sobhuza, king of the Swazis, became Maboya's bondsman" (1998: 12).[50] Ellen's story of colonial immigration synthesizes what seems to be an unpreparedness for the hardships of pioneering farm life fraught with unanticipated disaster (the shipwreck) and reversal of expectations (the Byrne settlement). In this respect both stories allow the exploration of both "external space" and what Foucault terms "fantasmatic space [...] the space of our primary perception, the space of our dreams" (1967: 2). He insists that our experience of space is heterogeneous or, in his words: "we live inside a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another (1967: 3).

Foucault's primary interest is in "[sites] that have the curious property of being in relation with all the other sites but in such a way as to suspect, neutralize, or invent the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect" (1967: 3). This interest leads him to focus on utopias and heterotopias along with the "mirror" which, he suggests, is a curious amalgamation of both. His primary goal is to provide a taxonomy of heterotopias which are "something like counter-sites" or, in other words, the antithesis of utopias which are "fundamentally unreal spaces" (1967:3). He offers no clear definition of heterotopias (apart from the notion of a counter-site provisionally announced) other than that they are "simultaneously mythic and real contestations of the space in which we live" (1967:4) and that they function to "contest and invert" all that "real sites that can be found within the culture represent". Along with the suggestion that the heterotopia retains unacknowledged aspects of the significance accorded to sacred spaces, he accounts for different manifestations of heterotopias, how they are configured and used, with what effect, through six

[50] She expands on this: "On many a cold evening around the fire father would tell us about his earlier years. Mingled with the sadness of his capture and the loss of family and home was the joy and satisfaction of his present state and his service to such great Zulu kings as Dingane and Mpande." (1998: 12)

propositions or "principles", each of which offers a way of understanding a site and the activities it promotes.

Foucault defines two broad categories: "heterotopias of crisis" (reserved for individuals going through a rite of passage or taboo period) and "heterotopias of deviation" (places of various forms of incarceration for those whose behaviour deviates from the norm, such as psychiatric hospitals or rest homes). The "slave ship" – and the vessel on which Eva travels is the forerunner of this category – is a potent fusion of both. The second proposition is that heterotopias need not remain fixed in their identity and customary use but can be made to function in a different fashion which impacts on where they are positioned in the urban settlement. Foucault cites the example of the cemetery – the site of the penultimate scene of the project – as occupying a symbolic position for a community. He probes what its removal from the heart of the city to its outskirts signifies. As a site dedicated to commemoration, the cemetery attests to the lives of Paulina Dlamini and the Macleods, in contrast with the lack of a marker of Eva's ever having been.

Foucault also proposes that a heterotopia can "juxtapose in a single real space, several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible" (1976: 6). This has obvious purchase with the palimpsestic staging inscribed in *Footprints on the Wind* in two ways: his examples include not only the theatre and cinema but also the garden, particularly the Oriental garden which by design was a "sacred space [...] bringing together [...] four parts of the world" (1967: 6). Ellen's garden, developed over the years with its exotic imports, is less ambitious in design, depending rather on the gradual introduction of familiar flora to Byrne.

Simultaneity, palimpsestic layering, partial erasures are strategies for transposing these juxtapositions to the stage, which introduces the concomitant fourth proposition of "heterochronies" or spaces dedicated to commemorating time by either fixing residual traces of the past in an infinite accumulation of time, as in libraries, museums and archives; or by celebrating time for its flowing and transitory quality as in fairgrounds temporarily set up on the outskirts of a city (1967:7). A further property of heterotopias is that they presuppose a system of opening and closing; they are capable of enforcing isolation and to the extent that they are penetrable, they are only accessible by performing the required protocols of admission. These kinds of protocols are staged in a variety of different ways throughout *Footprints on the Wind,* which is structured around a sequence of arrivals to allow for the staging of reactions to both familiar and unfamiliar routines of entry and access.

Ultimately, for Foucault, heterotopias have "a function in relation to all the other space that remains". For him, they are capable of exposing what he calls "the space of illusion, which conceals ways in which human life is partitioned". By this, I understand him to suggest that heterotopias reveal mechanisms of sustained spatial separation and segregation, associated with the customary conversion of space to place through configuration and use. Recognition of the heterotopic space alerts us to the ways in which space is ordered and its use regulated: the "taken-for-granted" customs and status of a particular space becomes naturalized and this phenomenon is exposed, in contrast, with what heterotopias present us with. The kind of fixity and regulation of "spaces of illusion" corresponds with the ordering that Carter ascribes to Banks, in contrast with the

experiential provisionality that he discerns in Cook's place names, which would seem to have some correspondence with the notion of the heterotopia.

Foucault concludes the essay with positing that "the boat" is the

> heterotopia par excellence [...] given over to the infinity of the sea and that, from port to port, from tack to tack, from brothel to brothel, [..] goes as far as the colonies in search of the most precious treasures" (1967: 9).

Two markedly different sea-faring vessels and arrivals launch Eva and Ellen's stories, inscribing the motif of journeys by sea within the staging to imply routes that leave no permanent visible mark and also suggest arriving from a point of otherness. The slave ship, an image of which appears briefly in virtual form as the projection of a future embedded in Eva's story, might be considered the heterotopia *par excellence*.

5.2 Land, territory and landscape: mapping places as destinations, either permanent or temporary.

In *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe 900 – 1900*, (1986) Alfred W. Crosby writes:

> European immigrants and their descendants are all over the place, which requires explanation. [...] They compose a great majority in what I shall call the Neo-Europes, lands thousands of kilometres from Europe and from each other (2012:418).[51]

This model of centre and margins is inseparable from questions of spatial distances and the demands of traversing these distances, and functions as a core motif intertwining travel and communication across distances in *Footprints on the Wind.* Paulina and Ellen's journeys and respective destinations are intended to suggest distinctions between the momentum of centrifugal or centripetal "migrations". Two "centres" are embedded in the intertwined narratives: Ondini and London.

Invoking the metaphor of a swarm, Crosby links territorial expansion with the drive towards wealth and power with the imperatives of expanding food supplies: "Europeans, to borrow a term from apiculture, have swarmed again and again and have selected their new homes as if each swarm were physically repulsed by the others" (2012:418).[52] The metaphor chimes (conveniently) with the recorded details of Ellen's experiences with swarms of locusts and bees to insert the distinction between valuing individuals over the collective, in contrast to how that individual might disappear into the larger collective entity. Paulina's articulation of her position within the community, in the

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[51] Between 1820 and 1930, well over 50 million Europeans migrated to the Neo-European lands overseas. That number amounts to approximately one-fifth of the entire population of Europe at the beginning of that period (Crosby 2012: 419).

[52] Lewis Mumford (1961) similarly accounts for the expansion (and ultimately the collapse) of the Roman Empire in *The City in History (*1991:239 – 281): "Those who built up the power of Rome were driven to widen the frontiers of the Empire: their fears of invasion as well as their mounting commitments to protect their supply lines and their sources of food and raw materials encouraged a dream of a universal political order.[...] In Rome, a whole population, numbering hundreds of thousands, took on the parasitic role for a whole lifetime; and the spreading Empire was turned into an apparatus for ensuring their continued existence, supporting them 'in the state to which they were accustomed'" (1991: 264-5).

isigodlo as at Lemgo, is a striking assertion of valuing communal experience, while the trajectory of Ellen's narrative asserts singularity and isolation, even as a small community of settlers develops at Byrne as her story unfolds.

Territorial occupation is inseparable from seizing hold of natural resources such as mineral wealth and arable land: Eva's story serves as a mechanism to introduce the later "scramble" for gold. The scenes are structured thematically around a range of modes of exchange of goods, ranging from overt plundering to bartering, trade and gifting. The positions from which individuals operate within their respective economies, encapsulated in scene 6 (Fruit, thorns and domestic routines), explores the plenitude of Nomguqo's life in contrast with Ellen's alienation. Ellen's story strikingly demonstrates an instance of failing to launch successful agricultural ventures, suggesting how ill-equipped she and Ted were to do so, well beyond the loss of their implements with the wreck of the Minerva. Crosby's argues that the "Neo-Europes", although scattered diversely, nonetheless share significant latitudes which makes them potentially desirable locations:

> They are all completely or at least two-thirds in the temperate zones, north and south, which is to say that they have roughly similar climates. The plants on which Europeans historically have depended for food and fiber, and the animals on which they have depended for food, fiber, power, leather, bone, and manure, tend to prosper in warm-to-cool climates with annual precipitation of 50 to 150 centimetres. These conditions are characteristic of all the Neo-Europes, or at least of their fertile parts in which Europeans have settled densely. One would expect an Englishman, Spaniard, or German, to be attracted chiefly to places where wheat and cattle would do well (2012:420).[53]

Despite the ostensible similarities between the temperate zone and the familiar climate and the life-style it affords, it is the radical disparities between margins and centre that Ellen's story traces. As Crosby puts it: "European colonists sometimes found the Neo-European flora and fauna exasperatingly bizarre" (2012: 420). To some extent, Ellen's letters challenge the apparent ease of relocating agricultural practices as much as they assert a ready appreciation of unfamiliar flora and fauna: her evident pleasure in the unfamiliar landscape and environment surfaces in her layman's appreciation of the natural specimens that she encounters. But as her letters, one after the other, reveal, the Macleods' successive attempts at farming – with different crops and livestock – were largely unsuccessful so that her story contradicts the reductive gloss of the settler stereotype.

In contrast to the fruitless farming attempts, the development of the garden, established over the course of many years by the importation of her "English favourites" – among them violets and primroses – became a source of private pleasure, affirming a capacity for adaptation within a new environment. It is through Ellen's testimony that D'Urban, Pietermaritzburg and Byrne are established as significant places, as within the Imperial record of Kwa-Zulu Natal's history. The perspectives offered of these settlements are countered by references to places significant in the life of Nomguqo/Paulina: she navigates an adjacent or even overlapping region with a less extreme sense of personal 'displacement' – leaving 'home' for Ondini, then subsequently forging a new role

[53] "Taking all in all, the zones of the earth's surface richest in photosynthetic potential lie between the tropics and fifty degrees latitude north and south. There most of the food plants that do best in an eight-month growing season thrive. Within these zones lie the areas with rich soils, that receive the greatest abundance of sunlight and, as well, the amounts of water that our core staple crops require" (2012: 424).

and identity for herself in the aftermath of the Anglo-Zulu war. This sensibility anchors her narrative in history in vivid contrast to Ellen's struggle to shape her life according to more or less familiar patterns. Paulina's story attests to her readiness to embrace fundamental changes to a way of life. Those changes are predicated on her pathways through the territory that she inhabits: not unlike Capt. Cook, according to Carter's estimation, her narrative encapsulates the spatial history of the region.

6. Conclusion: Imagining the project moving forwards into production by stressing the provisional status of this text.

I return to Carter's two models of history in order to link the postdramatic approach to theatre making with the use of historical material and occupying the landscape in order to challenge any notion that this text is a form of "feminist historical pageant". Arguably, as Carter's own analysis seems to suggest, imperial and spatial history have the potential to coexist and intertwine in the personalities and pursuits of the persona around whom the record is constructed. Interrogating the use of historical material in terms of land and its occupation adds nuance to ways of thinking about the production precisely because of Carter's metaphor of the stage – specifically the diorama and the potential for the proscenium stage with an orchestra or band in the pit to function as a diorama – which directly contradicts the postdramatic aesthetic propositions of my project.

For Carter, the strategy of the Imperialist historian is analogous to the way in which Western theatre from the Italian Renaissance onwards aspired to create a mise-en-scène that generated an illusion which depended on "the unquestioned convention of the all-seeing spectator" (2010: xv). The descriptive emphasis on that which is visible obscures the dynamics of social interaction, with the result that "from the imaginary spectator's point of view, these processes fundamental to the act of settlement are stripped of their historical meaning" (2010: xv).[54] The emphasis on what is visible or observable eclipses the way in which language and power work as instruments of asserting power and control over place. It is for these reasons that I have aimed towards a staging that renders the act of writing visible as a major component of the "spatial poetry". The strategy is a tool for de-naturalizing the landscape, unsettling and destabilizing perceptions of the landscape as natural or pure in order to assert through the staging those processes by which the hidden histories of KwaZulu Natal begin and end in language.

The postdramatic resists the naturalized playing out of events in favour of testimony that emphasizes their "pastness" as one means of refuting the illusion sustained by dramatic effort. The strategy is further shored up by rejecting linear, causal plot, the use of tableaux, simultaneous staging and contesting the conventions that naturalise the theatrical encounter. Fragments of Ellen and Nomguco/Paulina's stories have been selected to tease out a discourse that counters the Imperial project with its assertion of "possession through dispossession" (Carter 2010: xxiv) in favour of "a kind of history where travelling is a process of *continually* beginning, continually ending, where

[54] "The primary logic which holds together Clark's description is its visibility. Nature's painted curtains are drawn aside to reveal heroic man at his epic labour on the stage of history. The processes of clearing, pitching tents, erecting swellings, are wholly ancillary to the main action. They are visible pointers to the swelling theme of foundation. What Clarke gives us, in fact, is a series of stage directions, conventional and unexamined" (2010: xv).

discovery and settlement belong to the same exploratory process" (2010: xxiv). These ideas are what initially attracted me to the (fragmented) stories of three women whose experiences curiously reiterate this pattern even as these experiences resist being fixed or re-enacted. Ultimately, all that is possible is that their stories may intertwine and invite an audience to meditate on how this tapestry of lives continues to be woven in contemporary South Africa.

Lehmann concludes his assessment of the postdramatic form by outlining a symbiotic relationship between what he terms "the politics of perception (and the) aesthetics of responsibility" (2006:184). He proposes that:

> (theatre) can move the *mutual implication of actors and spectators in the theatrical production of* images into the centre and thus make visible the broken thread between personal experience and perception. Such an experience would be not only aesthetic but therein at the same time ethico-political (2006: 186, italics per the original).

What intrigues and excites me is the potential for the theatrical image to dismantle the familiar landscape even as it exposes the way in which that landscape is bound up in language, consciousness and historical processes in an aesthetic statement. Risking the very notion that the spectacle of excess, as Ndebele argues, blunts perception and critical awareness, I contemplate the scope to mobilize layered images in order to offer the viewer clues to the processes by which language, landscape and territorial dispossession/occupation are linked. The writing is structured to bring together the co-ordinates of place, territory and words as visual elements within the mise-en-scène. Reception and interpretation in the polysemic medium of stage presentation can never confidently be presumed, but it is perhaps sufficient that Carter's ideas of history resonate in the production, planning and development, although the complex thinking behind those ideas may not necessarily be communicated or apparent to an audience.

As this two-year undertaking draws towards a conclusion, I have found myself revisiting the logistical and pragmatic aspects of the undertaking with some unanticipated outcomes. This reflexive essay has focused on conceptual considerations that undergird the realization of the text in performance by deliberating formal and aesthetic objectives. Simultaneously, pragmatic and practical issues alert me to a different set of considerations. The process of translation into Portuguese and isiZulu suggested the necessity of separating out the text so that the verbal components of each narrative could be appropriately distributed. This mechanical exercise has produced three alternative manuscripts, each dedicated to a single identity and linguistic medium.[55] As crucially, the exercise has enabled me to identify the "monologue" or testimony of each individual (in an operation that reverses Barney Simon's method of creative writing in which actors crafted a character monologue which was subsequently interwoven by his editorial hand, as with *Born in the RSA).* Unravelling the strands of the whole, as it were, has enabled me to make further minor adjustments, sharpening and condensing expression with complete disregard to didiscalia or intervening voices.

While my initial conception of the composite project retains its force and rationale, I recognize the viability of each of these three "fragments" in terms of commissioning, composition and performance. Shorter, experimental versions of the imagined whole make reduced and possibly

[55] The strategy has also helped in assessing the distribution and size of the roles in terms of imagining the demands made on a single performer and the distribution of focus across the four female roles.

more realistic demands in terms of execution. Subsequently each of these three strands might form a departure point for moving towards the interwoven whole being realized in production. This possibility of developing the work through a series of phases rather than in its entirety at the outset seems promising and in accord with the provisionality of the script as a point of departure rather than arrival.

26,928 words.

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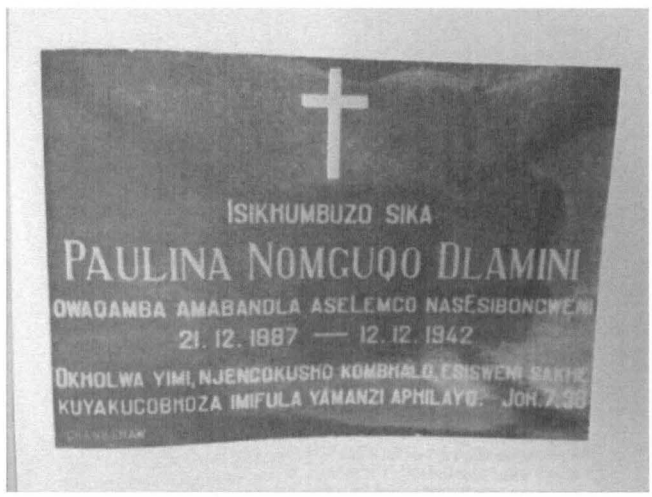
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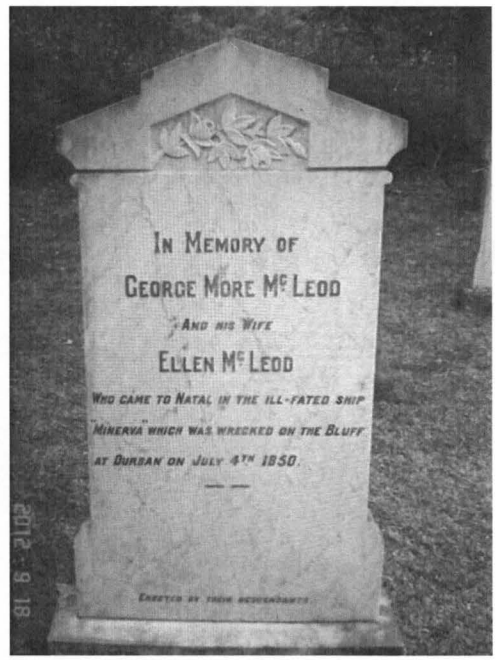
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APPENDIX 1:

The gravestone at Lemgo attests to Paulina/Nomguqo's life in a curiously deceptive manner: inscribed in stone are two dates, one presumably recording a birth and the other a death. It is reasonably clear, however, that the first of these two dates does not refer to a biological birth, but (presumably) marks the beginnings of a 'different/Christian' life. A photograph of the gravestone (reproduced below) clearly indicates 21.12.1887 as the start of Paulina's life. But the chronology of key historical events and incidental evidence suggest otherwise.

- Discussions with Revd Filter "appear to have commenced about the year 1925, when it seems, Paulina was about sixty-seven years old" (author? 1986:3).
- Paulina describes Shepstone proclaiming Cetshwayo as king (1986:31) and the footnote records this event as having occurred on 1 September 1873 (1986:117).
- Paulina describes the "beginning of the war" (1986:69) at Isandhlwana (22nd January 1879) and subsequently Cetshwayo's flight from Ondini at the end of the Anglo-Zulu war (1986:70).
- Paulina's account of the Zulu civil war follows and is described as being waged between "certain dissident factions led by Zibhebhu, and on the other, the royalists, loyal to the cause of Cetshwayo and his heirs" (1986:125).
- Cetshwayo's death (8/2/1884), is recounted by Paulina as reportage of events that had taken place within her lifetime. The collective evidence suggests that her birthdate is considerably earlier than the date inscribed on the stone.





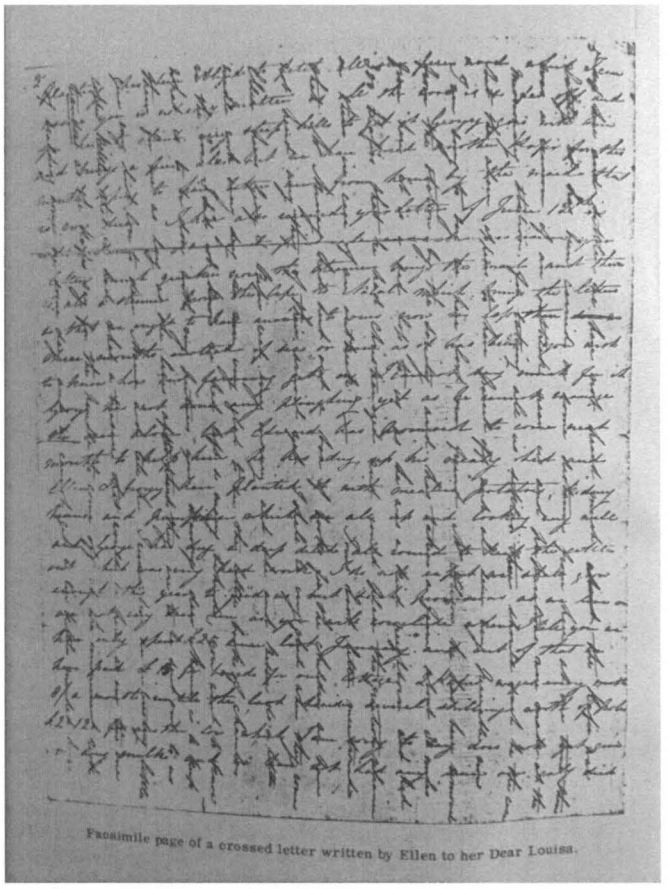
(Left) Paulina's gravestone. Paulina is acknowledged for having founded the congregations at Lemog and Esibongweni. The quotation from John7.38 is "From whoever believes in me, as the scriptures say, streams of living water shall flow out form within him." The line is reproduced in the libretto.

(right) George Macleod's headstone at the cemetery of St Mary Magdalene Church, Byrne valley (https://www.eggsa.org>library, accessed 7/07/2017).

Appendix 2: The image on the front cover of *Paulina Dlamini: Servant of Two Kings* (below) prompted the idea of two performers representing a single character in tandem.



Appendix 3: A page of Ellen's letter with cross writing.


Facsimile page of a crossed letter written by Ellen to her Dear Louisa.

Appendix 4: Images that suggest a departure point for the stage design.



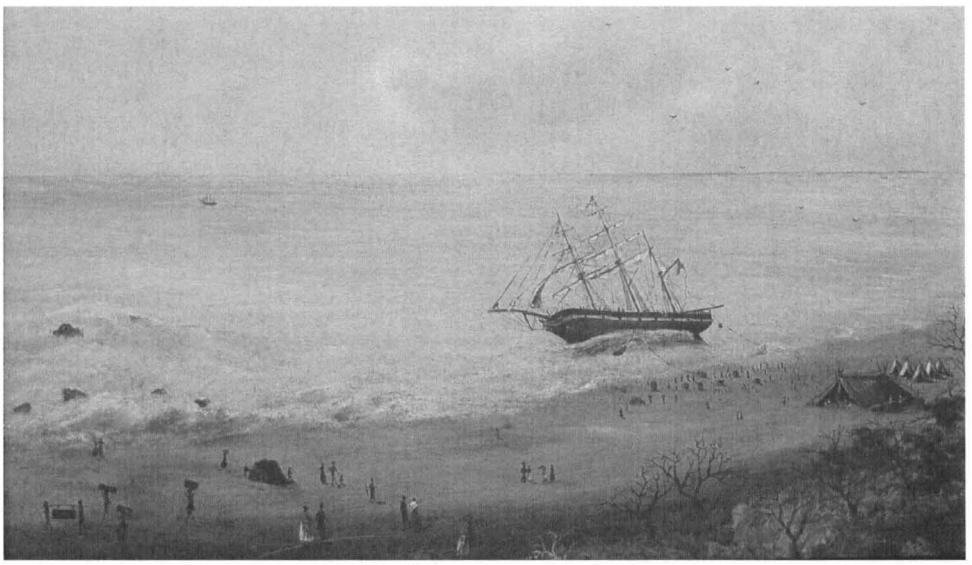
Above: Ana Mandieta, *Untitled (Tree of Life Series);* 1977, earth-bodywork with cloth, Oaxaca, Mexico*; Below: Joshua Neustein, Map Under Glass,* 1987.

(Rogoff, I: "The Discourse of Exile: Geographies and Representation of Identity".)
The first image has some purchase in suggesting ways in which the women become "part" of the landscape. The second is an indication in which mapping may be treated for projection.

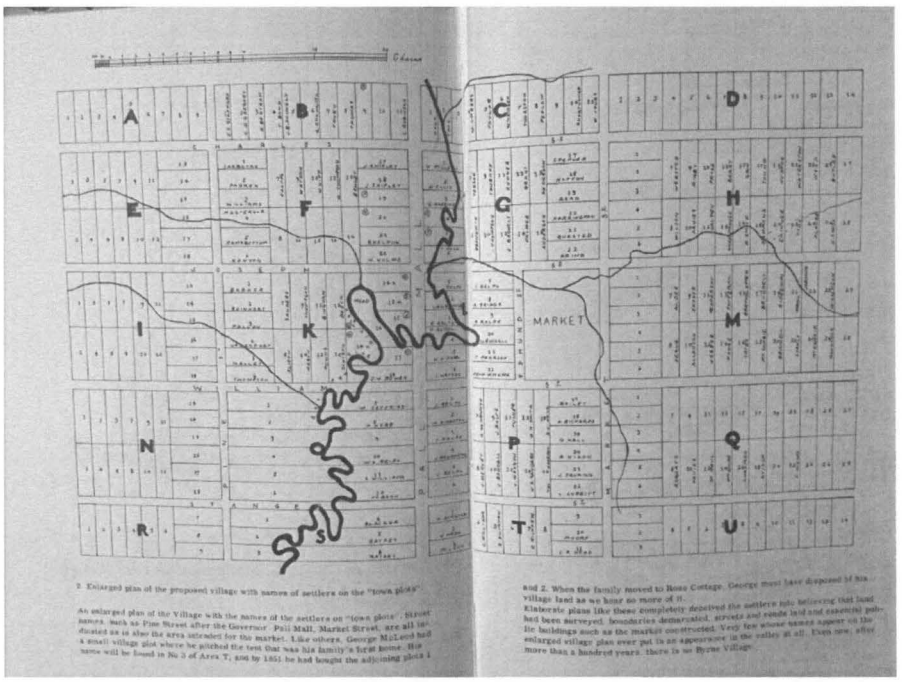
Appendix 5: A table of projected animated images and references to draw on for these projections. The projections amplify the intensity of the war scene but are most crucial and concentrated in the cave scene which fuses past and future. It may be necessary to introduce an echo of the writing in the first part of scene 12, sunset in Ellen's garden and Paulina's final words with Filter, so that the "virtual world does not conclude as abruptly as currently scripted. I anticipate interesting developments on two counts: 1) During the war, words and flames projected onto the static surfaces of the cyclorama and floor may take on disturbing labile qualities when the amount of smoke moving across these surfaces becomes a dynamic receptive surface that might well break up the coherence of the writing. 2) The creative input of a videographer or graphic animator should, to my mind, be licensed to supplement the suggestions made in the table below, although this table constitutes a script from which to work and the timecodes for each sequence will depend on how the text plays.

Sc	Lighting Image Since the projected image effectively becomes inseparable from the lighting plot I adopt a format that aims to convey this reciprocal interdependence. The technical logistics would require that lighting plot and video-script are determined in conjunction with one another.
1	**Dawn, the aftermath of a storm** **1.** *biomorphic shapes: microscopic granules of sand and rock intercut with water flowing over rock (enlarged). Dynamism/mobility in contrast with fixity: water and flow, rock and stasis. Dissolves into a large shadow, perhaps a blot or the indistinct shadow of a human figure that "grows" across the particles.* **2.** *swirling sea waters, crude maps, under moving water.* **Clear mid-morning sky: time has passed.**
2	**Northern hemisphere morning light** **3.** Clouds moving across the sky. **Southern hemisphere morning light** **4.** *the page of Filter's (German) version of Paulina's Zulu speech fades into focus across the landscape.* **5** *The writing cross fades into pen and ink English on flimsy sheets of letter paper.* **Late afternoon light at the beach.** **6.** *a single footprint in beach sand at the waves edge– fills with water, its shape blurs and changes.*
Sc ch	**Storm, thunder and lightning.** **7.** *images of shipwrecks, magnified details of paintings: waves crashing, masts breaking ending with "The Wreck of the Minerva"*
3	**Early dawn, moody sky.** ----------
4	**Mid-day, clear sky.** **8.** *the small ink drawing of the plots at Byrne.*
5	**Night sky with the Southern cross** ----------
6	**Midday – clear sky** ----------
7	**Night (Paulina) midday (Ellen)**
8	**Lemgo: morning light** **9.** *Filter's stiff German handwriting now begins to be projected across horizontal and vertical surfaces of the stage so that the stage picture is one of written words projected across space and time.* **10.** *a stage landscape of projected writing which is slowly being consumed by flame. The flame dies. Ash. Drops of water begin to break up the landscape of ash.* **11.** *Video projection of the cross writing covers the stage floor and the cyclorama* **12.** *The page of crossed writing begins to burn in the same way that we have seen Filter's pencilled lettering burn and turn to ash.* **13** *The projection morphs from ashes to soil particles – colours and texture suggest the layers of soil unearthed as a grave is dug.* **14.** This segues *into images of enlarged rock particles which occupy the entire visual field.*
9	**The cave interior-dim.** **15.** *The horizontal and vertical planes are filled with a static image: microscopic rock particles/rock strata which are enlarged. Through the different sequences this static image will merge with fragments of Rev Filter's writing, Ellen's letters and a magnified slow-motion image of bees/honeycomb/honey.* **16.** *The projection becomes a palimpsest h as the rhythmic motion of waves breaking on the shore is superimposed over the constant image of the rock particles, so the women appear embedded in land and water.* *Within the projection the waves morph into a pixilated image of the Women's march of 1956, grainy out of focus and is barely decipherable.* *Projection returns to the layered image of waves breaking over the rock particles.* *A third layer is introduced to the image – it is the graphic representation of the interior of a slave ship showing restrictions of space. The waves slowly disappear so the black lines of the drawing appear overlaid on the rock particles.* *The image of the slave ship etching fades away leaving only rock particles.*

	The image of rock particles is overlaid with bees clustering around a honeycomb *A fleeting interpolation of "a portrait of Eva Krotoa" followed, perhaps, by an image – a close-up taken from Charles Davidson Bell's 1852 painting of Van Riebeeck's landing bleeds through the dense rock particle projection and disappears* *The map of Byrne and bees fades out to return to the world of the cave interior. The use of this painting as the final projection for the project may require further emphasis.*
10	**Mid-afternoon – serene blue sky.** ----------
11	**Daytime at Lemgo; night at van Rooyen's farm.**
12	**Sunset: the garden at Byrne** **Lemgo: afternoon – clear light** ---------- **Byrne cemetery: afternoon** **Lemgo funeral – a light drizzle**
Sc ch	**Very early pre-dawn light during which the Khoi "girls" enter and exit.**
13	**Sunrise (Possible) Repeat projection of** *Charles Davidson Bell's 1852 painting of Van Riebeeck's landing as an ephemeral glimmer on the cyclorama inseparable from lighting.*



The wreck of the Minerva by J Forsyth Ingram. (https://molegenealogy.blogspot.co.za/2016/01/ accessed 9/07/2017).

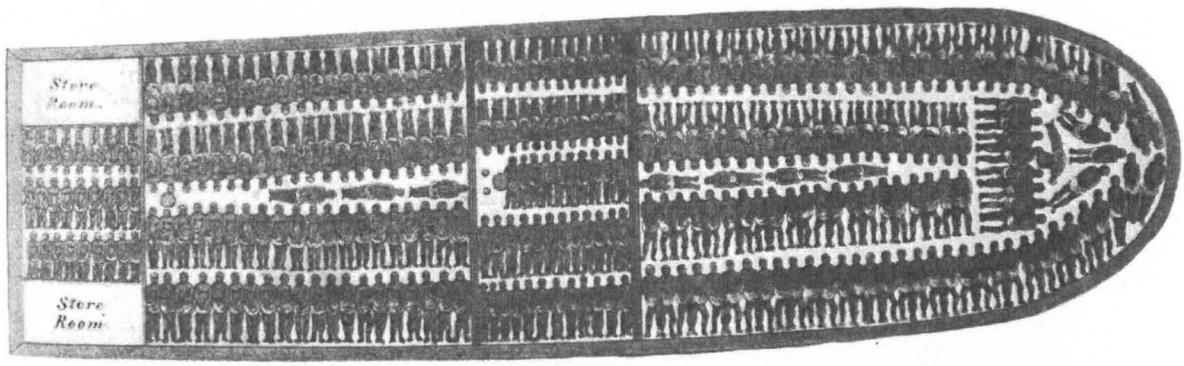


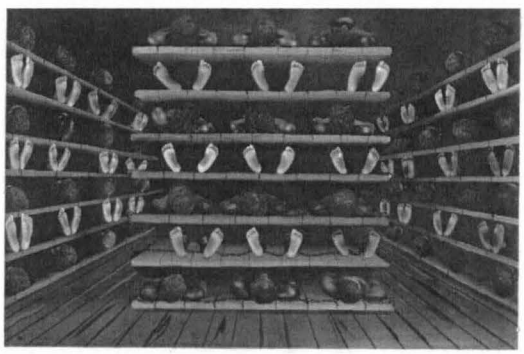
The map of the Byrne Settlement as "sold" to potential colonists: *Dear Louisa* (1976)





(left) Eva Kratoa Meerhoff https://www.wikitree.com/genealogy/Goringhaikona-Photos-1 and right, from the same set of references, costume reference for 4 chorus women in the final scene.





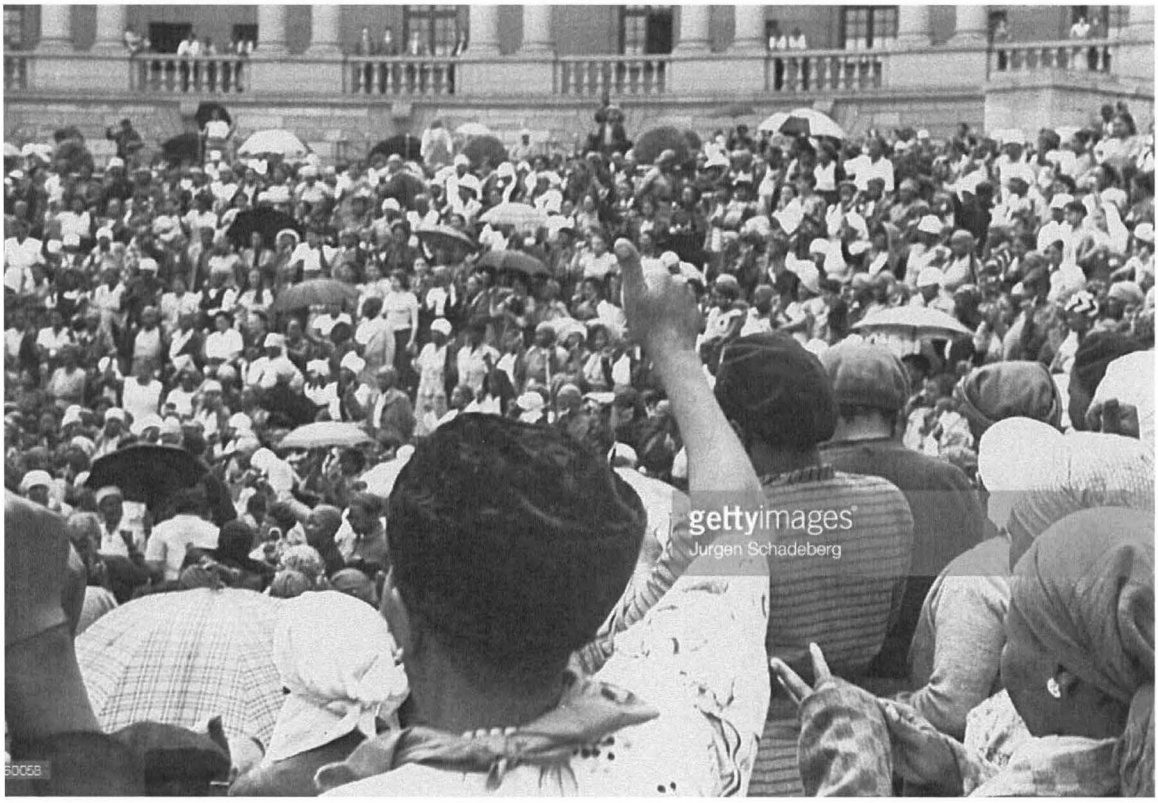


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5: Union Buildings Pretoria, The Womens' March.
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Appendix 6: Chronology/ Time-line of events: historical and personal incidents.

Year	
1415	Battle of Ceuta: Henry, his father, João and brothers conquer Ceuta for Portugal.
1394 -1460	Prince Henry "the Navigator" son of John 1: "founder" of the slave trade. .
1441	Antao Goncalves' expedition to West Africa to bring slaves to Europe.
1487	Dias depart Lisbon on 3 ships with the second commanded by Joao Infante and piloted by Alvaro Marrtins
1488 12 March	Dias company have left Algoa Bay and come to river mouth about 50km south-west of east London: "**Eva**" left on the shore.
1643	Eva Kratoa born – niece of Autshumao Khoi leader and trader. Learnt Dutch and Portuguese. An Interpreter.
1652	Jan van Riebeeck lands at the Cape
1674	Eva Kratoa dies.
1813 May	**Ellen Macleod** born
c 1826	Birth of Cetshwayo.
1850	The Minerva sails from London (departs in April) wrecked on the bar D'Urban (5th July 1850) Ellen arrives in Byrne in October 1850
C 1858	**Nomguqo Paulina Dlamini** born. Her mother dies while Nomguqo is still young, year unknown.
1856	Cetshwayo defeats his younger brother Mbuyazi to safeguard his claim to the throne.
1871	Ellen's home "Rose Cottage" burnt in a fire.
1872	October: Death of Mpande (grandson of Senzangakhona ka Jama).
1873	1st September – Cetshwayo "coronation", installed as King by Shepstone; Gold discovered on the farm Geelhoutboom near Sabie about 5km from Pilgrim's Rest.
1876	Winchie gets lost
1877	(12 April) Annexation of South African Republic – Shepstone – Rider Haggard in his company of 8 civil servants and 25 Natal Mounted Police.
1879	AngloZulu War: Isandhlwana, Rorkes Drift, Ulundi (4th July)sho? set fire to Ulundi. Cetshwayo deposed and exiled – first Cape Town then England. Winchie (Ellen's grandson) dies aged 11. Prince Imperial dies.
16.12.1880 – 23.3.1881	The First Anglo Boer War
1881	George Macleod dies.
1883	Cetshwayo returns to Zululand
1884	Cetshwayo dies aged 57/58. (June) Discovery of Gold – Witwatersrand seam April 28
1884 - 85	Nomguqo takes refuge in the cave during the civil war in Zululand.
1885	*King Solomon's Mines* published. Rider Haggard.
1886 Feb	Main reef gold seam discovered at Langlaagte. Paulina is converted.
1887	*She* published. Rider Haggard.
4.08.1988	**Ellen Macleod dies.**
Oct 1899	The South African War (Second Anglo Boer war) begins
1902	The South African war ends.
12.12.1942	**Paulina Dlamini dies**.

Appendix 7: Props list: significant objects and their function.

Sc	Object	Notes: Description and Use
1	A piece of driftwood	Part of a tree trunk, washed up by the waves and bleached by the sun. Ellen needs to be able to sit on it
	A small leather pouch (containing samples) Gold, Pearls, Spices	Ellen needs to be able to open the pouch and remove/replace the samples of what she has been asked to use to initiate trade.
	A Portuguese flag	Denotes the identity of the ship.
	A British flag	Denotes the shipping line.
	A writing pad, Ink bottle, Pen with nib	Ellen writes
	Wicker bassinet and baby wrapped in a cream crocheted blanket.	Ellen picks up the baby for the lullaby
	Filter's pencil and a sheaf of foolscap paper.	Filter writes Paulina's story – used by him throughout.
	An orange	Paulina peels it, eats it sharing a segment with Filter.
	Handkerchief – Ellen	Wipes perspiration – equator.
	Eva's small bundle – dried fish and a small knife.	Meagre provisions
	A small stick.	A tool for survival and, abacus-like, a counter.
3	Letter	Actor – Moreland – to read.
	The splintered objects strewn on the beach, among them a baby grand piano; a drawer from a chest of drawers with some items of clothing, a man's jacket	Objects for beach combers to sift through.
	The baby	
	A pack of cards, a bottle of spirits and 3 "mugs" or glasses	The poker game tableau.
	The bottle of ink, a pair of spectacles (one lens cracked), a flamboyant shawl	Ellen's finds amidst the wreck.
4	A grass fan	Paulina fans herself.
	A water bottle	They share water from the bottle.
	3 or 4 bunches of herbs, 2 gourds, several rolled grass mats, several large clay pots	Belongings packed for the journey: to be carried balanced on heads.
	The mound of wishing stones	A cairn discovered en route.
	Several loose stones.	
	2 bundles of firewood	
	Cooking/eating utensils: 2 spoons and 4 plates), 2 silver christening mugs, phutu in a pot, a ladle.	Ellen's camp meal.
	The map of Byrne on a small piece of paper	Items of exchange.
	Kowe, the bright shawl and an old piece of cloth containing amadumbe	
5	A large shell	Grandmother listens to voices form another place.
6	Filters writing implements	
	Small stones	Hopscotch game.
	Ellen – spade and handkerchief	Ellen digging in the heat.
	A row of large pots	Nomguqo and chorus line them up for trading
	A hessian bundle – containers of salt, coffee, bananas, bright cloth.	(Actor) John Dunne
	About 6 martini Henry rifles	(Actor) John Dunne and chorus.
7	Candlestick and candle	Paulina dictating by night.
	Rake	Ellen continues preparation for planting; the wooden crate parcel has arrived.
	A small ball of lengths of string, small wooden stakes.	She unpacks its contents, splaying "snakes" of colour on the ground.
	The baby on a scrap of blanket	
	A wooden parcel box	
	Brown paper packets with seeds	
	Some lengths of bright cloth	
	Some skeins of embroidery thread.	
	Balls of wool, Knitting needles.	
	3 sticks in the sand in Eva's world – a loose stick.	Ellen's days on the beach have been counted.
8	Paulina's stick	Paulina maps positions of people in the story in the sand.
	A variety of bowls and gourds, Nomguqo's contains water.	Nomguqo and the chorus are disturbed in preparing a meal – the pots and gourds are with them until they enter the cave.
	Ellen, ink bottle, pen and paper.	Ellen writes.
	Photograph of Bessie.	
	The spade	The spade should look like a crude grave-marker.

9	An old rotting sleeping mat, shards of a pot. The rake A candle and writing materials Ted Macleod's gold prospecting equipment – a pan and sieve. Nomlhlwathi's spear Amulet of cowrie shells	The remnants of previous inhabitants of the cave. An improvised weapon for Nomguqo. Ellen writes by candlelight. The implications of discovering gold.
10	Van Rooyen – 2 sacks of mealie kernels. Chorus - pots	Van Rooyen trades with the chorus.
11	Bible Candle and candlestick	Paulina's conversion.
12	Paraffin lamp – unlit Small posy of flowers, Rider Haggard's *She* Mourners – umbrellas, Clay pot – to shatter	Ellen surveys her garden at sunset. Tending George Macleod's grave Paulina's funeral.
13	a gourd with water, a tortoise shell with honeycomb a small leather pouch with berries or roots.	"Gifts" brought to "Eva".

Appendix 8: A table of recorded "natural" sound effects contributing to the soundscape.

			Recorded dialogue
1	***"1487..... under the Southern cross near the 39th parallel..."***	Waves onto the shingle. (repeats) Wind, water, waves crashing, thunder – the storm builds then subsides.	----------
2	***"Home is where one starts from"***	The cry of a seagull	Ellen, Paulina, Nomguqo
	Transition to the shipwreck.	Thunder, lightning, rain	----------
3	***...the end is where we start from... the Port of D'Urban 1850..."***	----------	Ellen
4	***"..between two lives..."***	----------	Ellen
5	***...in the uncertain time before the morning...***	Wind and waves.	----------
6		----------	Ellen
7	***Snakes arrive at Ondini...***	----------	----------
8	***1879... War***	Routine lowing of cattle in a kraal Intensified sound of cattle bellowing Soundscape of cattle mingles with sounds of fire spreading. This soundscape reaches a climax The seagull cry. A thin sound of cattle – a stray calf – The Emerald Spotted Wood Dove.[57]	Paulina, Ellen
9	***"among these rocks"... a cave in the mountain called Ngwibe, 1884...***	A drone. The drone – bees? Drilling? Whip-poor-Will/Bokmakierie Shrike/Piet-my-vrou. Bees around a honeycomb	Ellen
10	***" another day prepares for heat and silence" ... 1886....Leaving Ngwibe***	----------	
11	***By the way of dispossession...1887...***	----------	Paulina
12	***"Past and future gather here..."***	A church bell	Ellen, Paulina
13	***In my end is my beginning...***	Waves breaking on the shore as at the opening.	----------

[57] The "words" attributed to this birdcall are: "My mother is dead, my father is dead, all my relatives are dead, and my heart goes du-du-du-du-du-du-du."