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**DEAD EXPOSURES:**

**TROPHY BODIES AND VIOLENT VISIBILITIES OF THE  
NONHUMAN**

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*The abject or monstrous body of the killed or tortured nonhuman is evoked throughout Pugliese's State Violence and the Execution of Law and is critical to the series of carceral and genocidal caesurae that the book so incisively maps. This essay tracks a set of iconological/representational and geopolitical/ideological forces as they intersect the trophy body of the tortured or killed non-human. From Indonesia in 1965 to colonial Kenya and the civil war in Sri Lanka, the essay considers the violent ramifications of the trophy bodies of Abu Ghraib and their symbolic, ideological and affective refractions across other spaces, sites, temporalities and bodies, as well as the counter-visibilitys, re-mediations and cultural politics to which they give rise.*

In the opening sections of *State Violence and the Execution of Law* Joseph Pugliese powerfully tracks how 'the entire apparatus of the biopolitics of race—its colonial and imperial dimensions; its discriminatory, exclusionary and necropolitical effects—are all ... rendered culturally intelligible and biopolitically enabled by the category of the absolute non-human other: *the animal*' (Pugliese 2013, p. 33, emphasis in original). The 'complex enmeshment of racism and speciesism', Pugliese writes, is such that, 'at every turn in the documentary history of racism, the spectre of speciesism has always-already inscribed the categorical naming of the racialized other' (2013, p. 32, p. 41). Pugliese goes on to trace, to devastating effect, the 'history of permutations inscribed by combinatory possibilities that encompass all the other descriptors constitutive of epistemic and physical violence' (p. 42) through which the nonhuman animal is located. Within these permutations of 'biopolitical matrices, combinatory formations and interlacing descriptors' *the animal* and *the native* are transfixed under a series of disparate yet deeply

interconnected signs: the slaveable, the fungible, the feral, the undomesticable, the rogue, the monstrous, the carcass (pp. 42-46). This essay focuses on one among these typologies of the nonhuman: the trophy.

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In the manner of the careful staging of its very bareness, its exposed and impounded status, the trophy body of the nonhuman is the figure of a dense meshing of histories, relations, practices, aesthetics and technologies. A series of crossings and recrossings of speciation and racialization locate the nonhuman body as trophy artefact: a 'family' of expensively stuffed and mounted wildlife specimens assembled against a painted diorama, scraps of flora and fauna captured under glass in a curio cabinet, native bodies displayed at a colonial exhibition or travelling circus, snapshots of triumphant big game hunters posed over their prey, postcards of pastoral southern lynchings, decapitated and dismembered body parts reconstituted as interior décor and/or utilitarian household object, kill videos uploaded to YouTube from a smartphone, selfies of proud torturers with their victims. In the terms of Allen Feldman's important theorization of 'political speciation', the trophy artefact of the killed or tortured nonhuman brings into view the category of 'political animality', where 'the animal predicate circumscribes a time and space of subjugation, exposure, disappearance and abandonment' (2010, p. 117). I understand the killed or tortured trophy body, caught in various modalities of capture, as a type of what Feldman terms 'emblematica of the nonhuman' (2010, p. 127). Emblematica of the nonhuman are expressive of a 'formative, structuring social antagonism by which an order of bodies—human, animal, and monstrous—is materially crafted and/or registered as political flesh and affect' (2010, p. 126). Governed by 'disidentification' rather than 'relations of resemblance' to the human, these emblematica of the nonhuman are characterized as a form of 'signification by fetishistic devices such as the grotesque, the monstrous, the bestial, the racially abject' (2010, p. 127).

The abject or monstrous body of the killed or tortured nonhuman is evoked throughout Pugliese's *State Violence and the Execution of Law* and is critical to the series of carceral and genocidal caesurae that the book so incisively maps. Drawing on theorizations by Feldman, Pugliese and others, this essay tracks a set of iconological/representational and geopolitical/ideological forces as they intersect the trophy body of the tortured or killed non-human. Captured across a sequence of spatially and temporally discontinuous terror zones, trophy bodies of the nonhuman return as abject and grotesque emblematica of the nonhuman and artefacts of contemporary political terror. What connects these disparate terror zones are a set of 'relational geographies' and 'relational histories' (Paglen 2009, p. 246; Pugliese 2013, pp. 46-47) set in play by the trophy artefacts of Abu Ghraib. Through their intense transnational circulations and ramifications, I argue, these trophy bodies of Abu

Ghraib—and the artifacts, aesthetics and technologies of the war on terror that underpin them—give rise to new visibilities and understandings and reanimate practices of terror to be visited on the impounded body of the nonhuman. From Indonesia in 1965 to colonial Kenya and the civil war in Sri Lanka, the essay considers the violent ramifications of the trophy bodies of Abu Ghraib: their global circulation and mutation as emblematica of the nonhuman and their symbolic, ideological and affective refractions across other spaces, sites, temporalities and bodies, as well as the counter-visibilities, re-mediations and cultural politics to which they give rise.

### **'Political Flesh and Affect': The Impounded Body and Civic Violence**

In *Dark Trophies*, his study of military trophy-taking, Simon Harrison notes that 'at least among European and North American personnel', the practice of trophy-taking is 'a specifically racialised form of violence', occurring 'almost exclusively against enemies whom they have represented as belonging to races other than their own' (Harrison 2012, pp. 4-5). Harrison defines the taking of trophies as 'a symbolic practice in which the cognized boundaries between humans and animals, experienced in the activity of hunting, are shifted into the domain of human relations, and made to serve there as a model for social groups' (2012, pp. 4-5). These 'cognized boundaries' of human and animal, as noted above, are by no means distinct, and are thoroughly imbricated with racial categories and hierarchies. In the terms of Derrida's meditation on 'the crossing of borders between [hu]man and animal' (2002, pp. 372), the trophy body inhabits those realms 'beyond the edge of the human', where:

there is already a heterogeneous multiplicity of the living, or more precisely (since to say "the living" is already to say too much or not enough) a multiplicity of organizations of relations between living and dead, relations ... among realms that are more and more difficult to dissociate by means of the figures of the organic and inorganic, of life and/or death. These relations are at once close and abyssal, and they can never be totally objectified. (Derrida 2002, p. 399)

What distinguishes the trophy among this multiplicity of relations, organic and inorganic, living and dead, at the edge of the human, are its aesthetics of exposure, display and performance, its representation and re-production as artifact and performance of the bodies and properties of that which has been captured or killed. I characterize trophy bodies as *impounded* to suggest the modalities through which they are caught, captured, affixed, immobilized, corralled, within violent regimes of visibility and power. As they are crafted within an order of bodies 'as political flesh and affect', trophy bodies are the product of complex economies (visual, discursive, aesthetic, scientific) that locate them as a specific genre among emblematica of the nonhuman.

In his testimony on his experiences of incarceration and torture in the war on terror, Shafiq Rasul, a member of the 'Tipton Three', and one of the British citizens held in Afghanistan and later at Guantánamo Bay, reflects:

I believe they were constantly taking photographs of us. I can't imagine these photographs were for identification purposes because of the hoods we were wearing, or to provide evidence that they were maltreating us ... I think, in light of what I know now, that these photographs were trophies. (Rasul, Iqbal and Ahmed 2004, p. 10)

Rasul well understands that the function of the trophy exceeds the utilitarian purposes of identification or information. Rather, as a form of 'signification by fetishistic devices' it sets in play a particular relationship between the impounded body of the nonhuman and a direct or indirect viewer/consumer. As image, event, spectacle, artifact, commodity, the trophy serves literarily to objectify—to suspend in time, to re-compose within a chosen frame, to trade as commodity, to memorialize in triumph and to expose in warning—target bodies that inhabit the category of political animality.

A number of commentators have focused on lynching trophies in the southern United States and their role in extending lynching's terrorizing role as a form of popular theatre for instruction and pleasure. As a form of public performance, lynching operated as a powerful social practice, installed within economies of collective entertainment, everyday sociality and civic participation for those marked as white. For African-Americans, as well as for other racialized subjects, it operated to threaten and terrorize. Pugliese notes that the circulation of artefacts such as lynching photographs, souvenir postcards and gramophone recordings of the victims screaming in agony 'enabled the images of torture to enter domestic circuits of exchange and consumption' (2013, p. 75). An additional function of the domestication and normalization of lynching through the circulation of its trophy artefacts was its ability to unify and engage populations beyond its immediate vicinity in acts of collective citizen violence, as it also gave visual and material shape to the staging of white supremacy.

Through the representational, aesthetic and technological processes of its framing, mediation and circulation, the practice of trophy, then, invests the spectacles of power it re-presents with new meanings, new properties and new collective and civic functions of violence. Within a month of the massacre at Wounded Knee Creek, agents of the Northwestern Photographic Company had begun marketing boxed sets of prints depicting the dead and dying, particularly an infamous sequence of the death of Chief Spotted Elk (derogatorily known as Big Foot) as well as 'ghost shirts' and other trophies of the defeated (Gidley 2012, pp. 31-32). The boxed photographs were specially recommended as gifts for those on the distant East Coast of the U.S., to *bring home* to them the reality of the frontier and the magnitude of

the conquest at Wounded Knee. In the camera flash that fixes the hunter's triumph over the hunted, carcass is transformed into artifact, acquiring new symbolic, social and economic value; invested with a significance exceeding that of mere dead meat. Whether as live circus exhibit or collection of secretly exhumed body-parts, the body of the defeated Indigene becomes an object of scientific instruction and racio-moral gratification; uploaded to YouTube, a scene of torture in a remote prison is rendered communal, collective, carrying messages for viewers, for victor and vanquished, in other times and places. As object, image, event and performance, the impounded trophy body figures forth relations and meanings organized within a framing aesthetic, as it implicates and interpellates perpetrator and spectator anew in collective and civic relations of power and violence, domination and subjection.

### **Lines of Sight**

How is the inscription of terror upon trophy bodies as emblematica of the nonhuman made visible, intelligible? What are the ways of seeing that the trophy body as the site of political violence assumes and asserts in the context of the Abu Ghraib archive and the global landscape of the war on terror? What conjunctions enable the new global visibility of the trophy body as a site where practices of terror converge?

Writing in the immediate aftermath of the conflict in Northern Ireland, Feldman has explored the 'prosthetics and aesthetics' that frame the enemy body as target; the modalities of 'seeing and killing, being seen and being killed' that make 'the politically visible, that horizon of actors, objects, and events that constitute the worldview and circumscribed reality of the political emergency zone' (Feldman 1997, p. 29). The target body becomes perceptible, intelligible, in the political landscape through what Feldman terms an 'ecology of violence and vision', through an assemblage of 'software' and 'hardware': that is, the software of 'the human eye, subject to a high degree of spatial and temporal extension and electronic supplementation' by the 'hardware' of 'visual prosthetics' such as 'the surveillance camera, the helicopter overflight, the panoptic architecture of the interrogation room and prison, and the aimed gun' (Feldman 1997, p. 29; see also Pugliese 2013, pp. 185-220).

The increasing instrumentalization and weaponization of sight in the terror zone that Feldman remarks on is preceded by Paul Virilio's discussion of the historical function of vision:

alongside the "war machine" there has always existed an ocular (and later optical and electro-optical) "watching machine". ... From the original watch tower through ... reconnaissance aircraft and remote-sensing satellites, one and the same function has been indefinitely repeated, the eye's function being the function of a weapon. (Virilio 1989, p. 3)

This weaponization of vision, Virilio notes, is always already linked to a 'perceptual arsenal' of representational, discursive and aesthetic traditions, and to a range of 'cinema techniques', including practices such as cartography, photography and surveillance practices, as well as to pleasurable circuits of viewing: display, entertainment, performance, observation, spectatorship (Virilio 1989, p. 1, p. 9). This formation of pleasure and violence, aesthetics and prosthetics, perception and power, is summed up in the title of Virilio's volume of essays, *War and Cinema*. It is at this intersection of the trophy body with the cinematic and performative, terror and technology, aesthetics and ideology, that I introduce the first of a sequence of horizons of violence that I examine in detail, Joshua Oppenheimer's much acclaimed documentary, *The Act of Killing* (2012). The film is a profound reflection on the circulation of ideologies and iconologies of extreme political terror. At its heart is the animalized and racialized body of the conquered enemy, enshrined as national trophy.

Set in the present, *The Act of Killing* returns to the 1965 massacres that took place around Medan in northern Sumatra, Indonesia, in the name of suppressing the spread of communism across Southeast Asia. The majority of those murdered and tortured on flimsy charges that they were members of the *Partai Komunis Indonesia* (PKI) were ethnic Chinese. The killings and accompanying coup that overthrew the progressive and vocally anti-colonial government of General Sukarno received, at the least, moral and material encouragement from the U.S. and its allies. Vijay Prashad writes that, 'although the U.S. and Australian governments neither instigated nor conducted the massacre, they encouraged the purge, fattened the list of Communists for the army, funded the paracommandos, and supported the media efforts to blame the entire genocide on the Communists' (Prashad 2007, p. 155). *The Act of Killing*, however, is less concerned with the immediate material support provided by the U.S. and its allies for the massacres than with a cluster of more foundational relations—political, aesthetic, ideological—that undergirded that support.

The film works to reorient the seemingly remote time and place of the atrocities at its centre by disconcertingly folding them into other spaces, temporalities and media through an array of visual, performative and technological transpositions, through uncanny conjunctions and rifts in time and unlooked-for connectivities between bodies and places. The killers of 1965 are asked not only to recount, but also to restage for the camera, the murders they performed over half a century ago. In his notes on the film's website Oppenheimer recounts a critical experience of spatial and temporal dislocation on a day in 2004 when, after reenacting some of his murders, one of the Medan killers posed for snapshots with thumbs-up and V-signs. Two months later, images of U.S. soldiers adopting just such cheerful poses before their digital cameras, framed against the tortured and terrorized Iraqi bodies at Abu Ghraib prison, would circulate globally (Oppenheimer 2012).

The visual and performative echoes between these two sets of images, the staging of the interplay between the roles of torturer, killer, performer and spectator, is no simple matter of coincidence, nor of the operation of universal norms; rather they are the product of specific visual, representational, cultural and ideological practices, situated by shared modalities and materialities of enacting, viewing, consuming and responding to violence. For Oppenheimer, what makes the Indonesian killers' re-enactments of the 1965 massacres a 'nightmarish allegory' of Abu Ghraib, and of a whole prior history of violent representations of captured bodies, was that the former 'so admired American movies, American music, American clothing' (Oppenheimer 2012). As such, their acts of torture are suffused with, and in turn reproduce and refract, those imaginaries, aesthetics, styles and affects that also shape the trophy images and practices of Abu Ghraib.

*The Act of Killing* is a complex exploration of the relations between imagining, watching, acting and killing. Employing the device of a film, or films, within the film, *The Act of Killing* operates on several levels: scenes from a fantastical film being scripted and staged by the murderers as they engage in their reenactments are interspersed within the documentary being made by Oppenheimer with his co-directors (none of the Indonesian crew in *The Act of Killing* are named due to concerns for their safety). At the centre of the documentary are three of the 1965 killers, all now ostensibly respected and influential members of the Indonesian New Order installed by General Suharto following the bloody overthrow of Sukarno. Led by a dapper and self-possessed grandfather, Anwar Congo (a name that hints at its own unspoken histories of violence and dislocation), the three mass murderers endlessly recount and reenact their original killings for the documentary. Congo, who preens himself on his Sidney Poitier looks and Fred Astaire moves, elaborates on how the group's killing repertoire took shape through Hollywood genres and prototypes—John Wayne, Marlon Brando, James Dean and even Elvis Presley are cited as having inspiring specific styles of killing.

The killers' own film-within-the-film, a work-in-progress only parts of which appear in *The Act of Killing*, is their apologia, a message of explanation and self-vindication addressed to their descendants. The narrative modalities they adopt, however, are anything but direct, combining realistic restagings of their atrocities with fantastical allegorical episodes and a series of extravagantly kitsch musical numbers. Survivors of the 1965 massacres and their relatives are intimidated into participating in the re-enactments of the earlier violence perpetrated against them, while the killers participate as writers, directors and actors, playing both themselves and their victims and, in one prolonged sequence, engaging in extravagant cross-dressing. Yet other scenes show the killer/directors as spectators of both their own film and of the framing documentary. The piling of frame upon frame, mediation within mediation, killing upon killing, spectacle upon spectacle, the excess of cinematic intertexts and immersion in layers of violence, produce deeply unsettling, vertiginous

effects as they unfold a set of iconological and technological connectivities that also structure the 'shadow archive' of the Abu Ghraib trophy images (the latter are described by Pugliese in compelling detail [2013, pp. 59-88]).

Punctuating the frenzied proliferation of these scenes in *The Act of Killing* are silent images of animal bodies, stuffed and mounted, or displayed in captivity: severed heads and antlers hang on panelled walls; giant fish collide soundlessly against the glass walls of underground aquaria; in the central song and dance sequence, the massive shape of an iron leviathan forms a key prop, out of whose mouth issues an orientalised chorus line. Again and again, the camera pans across carefully composed dioramas of taxidermised animals, a silent imitation of some ideal game reserve or theme park. The slain bodies and artefacts of these animal trophies, interspersed with the frenzied scenes of the hunting, torture and killing of supposed communists, act as a silent commentary on the demonstrative and performative functions of the violence perpetrated by the film-within-the-film, its enabling visual software and hardware, and the ways of seeing that direct its enframing gaze and shape its techniques and styles of killing.

The role of these displays can be glossed by reference to Donna Haraway's commentary on the great dioramas filled with taxidermic trophies at New York's Natural History Museum. As Haraway dexterously demonstrates, the carefully crafted, multi-dimensional dioramas in the Hall of Africa enact a 'morality play on the stage of nature', telling stories of animal and human, white and black, African and American, man and woman, wilderness and civilization, freedom and captivity, colony and empire (Haraway 1989, p. 29). Artfully arranged against a painted backdrop simulating a Technicolor movie set, the bodies of killed animals are restored by the taxidermist's magical, even supernatural-seeming, powers, to be caught once more in the spectator's gaze, vouchsafing a 'spiritual vision only made possible by their death and literal re-presentation' (Haraway 1989, p. 30). The diorama stages a 'salvation history' in which 'the eye is the critical organ' (1989, pp. 29-30). In the space between the trophy's sightless, yet strikingly life-like, eyes and the spectator's anxious gaze, the central illusion of the diorama unfolds: the fantasy of a 'specular commerce' between slaughterer and slaughtered, victor and vanquished, past and future. In the moment of this illusory exchange, the availability of the trophy body to 'unimpeded vision' and, seemingly, lasting 'communion' promises to redeem the past, a retrospective assuaging and healing of the violence of killing and conquest into a present of modernity and freedom (Haraway 1989, p. 30).

The diorama presents a simple moral: 'it is in the craft of killing that life is constructed' (Haraway 1989, pp. 28-29). A simulacrum of organic and inorganic, living and dead, it stages a (natural) history purged of the blood and guts of an original killing or hunting scene,



enacting a 'politics of reproduction' that magically makes whole what was mutilated or blown apart (Haraway 1989, p. 30). Akin to a theme park or museum in miniature, the diorama is a landscape designed to contain, confine and conserve, as well as to exhibit; through its role of entertaining and informing it affirms visual relations of power and dominant ways of seeing. I read the dioramas and animal trophies in *The Act of Killing* as visual iterations of the killed communists/ethnic Chinese on whose bodies are staked the claims to freedom and prosperity in the present, figures of 'political animality', embalmed in the ritualized repetition of the narrative of their necessary slaughter.

### **Untenable Objects and Unfree Subjects**

Oppenheimer's film is less concerned with making visible the terror of 1965, than with how that terror is perceived and reproduced in the present. While its perpetrators are now public heroes, and contemporary Indonesia is predicated on affirming, not denying, the founding violence of its New Order, *The Act of Killing* is aimed as an intervention in that society's scopic regimes and 'politically correct modes of seeing' in the terms set out by Feldman on Northern Ireland:

By a scopic regime I mean the agendas and techniques of political visualization: the regimens that prescribe modes of seeing and objects of visibility and that proscribe or render untenable other modes and objects of perception. A scopic regime is an ensemble of practices and discourses that establish the truth claims, typicality, and credibility of visual acts and objects and politically correct modes of seeing. In Northern Ireland each sectarian assassination victim, each detainee interrogated and tortured, each prisoner incarcerated ... has been subjected to a ritualized gaze, an exposure that is an endowment of power to the aggressor. The violent imagination in Northern Ireland is a visual imagination that extends from the surveillance and imaging of bodies living and dead to the public imaging of projected yet nonexistent national entities such as a United Ireland or a British Ulster. (Feldman 1997, p. 30)

Within the scopic regime of the Indonesian state, a teleological vision determines the ways in which bodies of the Chinese/communists eliminated in 1965 appear as untenable objects against the horizon of Suharto's New Order. In contrast, the camera repeatedly shows how the killers are to be perceived: reflected in the gleaming surfaces of new shopping malls and grand office towers, they represent its founding fathers and, indeed, local spirits of place. Their crimes are redeemed and redefined in the eyes of grateful nation. 'War crimes are defined by the winners', a killer asserts. 'I'm a winner. So I can make my own definition'.

The name the killers choose for themselves is *Preman* ('free man'), glossed as 'gangster'. Referenced in this term is an ideological-cultural formation that links the Hollywood gangster as liberal-individualist hero to the histories and presents of both the U.S. and Indonesia. As Jonah Weiner observed in his review in *The New*

*Yorker*, the film emphasizes that 'the figure of the free man doesn't reflect an atavistic regression that unfolded, at a safe remove, in some far-off, deeply alien society: Congo modelled himself, from his outfits to his killing techniques, on Hollywood movies he watched in his youth'. By this logic, Weiner concludes, 'The free man, derived from foundational and still-potent American fantasies of unfettered outlaws, should be as recognizable to us as the McDonald's arches, boutique-studded shopping malls, and other symbols of Western influence sprinkled throughout Oppenheimer's film' (Weiner 2013). Yet, what complicates the recognisability of these representations for U.S. audiences is the refraction of their familiarity through a grotesque foreignness, as familiar and seemingly benign popular culture icons (Elvis Presley, Sidney Poitier, Fred Astaire) are claimed as their own by murderous, non-English speaking and orientalist, racial others.

Underscoring the intimate imbrication of the ideological, economic and psychic in his killings, Congo discloses that his hatred of the communists, and the subject position of *Preman* that he adopts in response, derived from his opposition to the Sukarno government's proposed ban on the importation of western movies. The ban threatened not only a major source of pleasure and emotional gratification, but also endangered Congo's income from scalping tickets and working as a small-time enforcer around the movie theatres of Medan. The cinema thug is a character I remember well from my teenage years in Colombo, Sri Lanka: groups of young men who sat in the cheapest seats in the front row gallery, smoking bedis, compulsively attending every late night session of a James Bond or Clint Eastwood movie. The 'cinema johnnies' were objects of disdain among anglicised middle-class subjects who viewed western cinema as our own exclusive preserve and were embarrassed by the former's poor English, cheap clothes and deep affective engagement with B grade westerns and action spectaculars. In 1972, however, the ban imposed by an incoming socialist government on films from outside the non-aligned block created a brief convergence between the two groups, based on shared uneven investments in the twin pillars of western culture and the free market.<sup>1</sup>

I return to these memories not out of nostalgia, but to evoke the structure of the everyday political, its lived unstable registers of identification and desire, anxiety and pleasure, and the forms of subjectivity called into play at this specific juncture of decolonization. In the decades after independence, conflicts over imported western films are one exemplar of what Vijay Prashad describes in his fine study, *The Darker Nations*, as the emergence of the Third World as 'political project'. The political project or agenda of the Third World drew on the energies of cultural and economic decolonization and anti-imperialist nationalism, while also generating new visions and institutions. Chief among these was the non-aligned movement, whose 1955 summit, held in Indonesia, at Bandung, produced a key manifesto of the Third World project. The resistance to cultural and economic imperialism articulated in the Bandung Declaration laid the foundations for policies such as the prohibition on western films

adopted by progressive governments throughout the darker nations in the 1960s and 1970s. The prohibition, experienced at multiple levels by Congo as an assault on his being as a 'free man', also encapsulates the forms of threat the Third World project posed for the consortium of states that claimed for itself the title of the free world, asserting through violence the sovereign right to the unimpeded circulation of its markets, ideas and bodies. In naming himself a gangster/free man and literally assuming the role of liberal-individualist Hollywood action hero, Congo aligns himself racially and ideologically in the global struggle between the darker nations and imperial metropolis. At stake in this struggle is nothing less than the political-ideological subject of freedom as it is constitutively defined by the limits of the human.

Although only indirectly referenced in *The Act of Killing*, the historical coordinates for its central events are the U.S. war against decolonizing forces in Southeast Asia (the war in Vietnam, later engulfing Laos and Cambodia) and a global campaign of coups and covert killings throughout the Third World. While the sequence of events that led to the killings and the overthrow of General Sukarno—no communist, but one of the key figures at Bandung—remains murky, there is little doubt that the U.S. 'contributed substantially to the seizure of power by the military ... and to the massacre that ensued' (Robinson 1995, quoted in Prasad, 2007, p. 155). Sukarno's removal in 1965 marks a stage in the quarter century or so that is bookended by the assassination of Patrice Lumumba in Congo in 1961 and the coup against the Salvador Allende government in Chile in 1973. Despite the relegation of the thwarted Third World project to a past now deemed irrelevant in the U.S., the war in Southeast Asia, of which the coup in Indonesia forms a shadowy and still unacknowledged part, is a precursor to the current war on terror. The nexus between the wars is what Mimi Thi Nguyen describes as the 'continuous history of liberal empire', a claim that stakes itself precisely in the name of securing freedom for the darker nations through its warring on twinned 'global evils': communism in the second half of the twentieth century, and Islamism in the early decades of the twenty-first (Nguyen 2012).

The 1965 killers' self-identification as *Premen* in *The Act of Killing* is illuminated further by the terms of Nguyen's strikingly insightful study, *The Gift of Freedom*, on the politico-cultural legacies of the war in Vietnam as they structure U.S. empire in the present. 'The historical emergence of the gift of freedom', Nguyen writes, is 'a story about the emergence of U.S. global hegemony' and the organization of 'contemporary structures of liberalism in an age of empire' (2012, p. xii). The gift of freedom is 'not simply a ruse for liberal war but its core proposition, and a particularly apt name for its operations of violence and power' (2012, p. xii). As the ultimate good that liberal empire promises, the gift of freedom is closely tied to 'a politics of life and a concept of the human' (2012, p. 22). It vindicates the sovereign prerogative of the colonizer to define and select deserving subjects, and to exclude or eliminate the others: 'to make alive, to make live, as

well as to make dead' (2012, p. 23). The gift of freedom was placed at the ideological and symbolic centre of the war on terror: *Operation Iraqi Freedom* and the more ambiguous *Operation Enduring Freedom* name the stages by which U.S. forces established themselves as the masters of Abu Ghraib prison. It is through the issue of such postdated warrants on 'the gift of freedom', as Nguyen observes, that 'liberal empire claims an exception to wage war, and to pardon its own crimes' (2012, p. 134).

### **The Subject of Freedom**

The name of the song chosen by Anwar Congo and his company of *Premen* as the anthem and emotional centerpiece for their film-within-the-film is none other than 'Born Free'. The song, whose flagrantly opulent production threads itself through [The Act of Killing](#), originally became a hit as the title track of the 1966 film, *Born Free*, set in a game park in Kenya. *Born Free* gives the Hollywood treatment to Joy Adamson's best-selling book of the same name, published in 1960, about her relationship with a lioness, Elsa, and Elsa's eventual release into a national park. As book, film, song, and later the name of a non-profit conservation foundation, *Born Free* has achieved phenomenal global currency. In *The Act of Killing*, the music from *Born Free* is transposed from the Kenyan plains to the Sumatran jungle; the original academy award-winning lyrics suavely rendered by the British singer, Matt Monroe ('the man with the golden voice') are replaced by karaoke-style sound-track accompanied by a dance performance that references both MTV and 1950s Hollywood musical.

The seemingly grotesque transposition of the theme music from a heart-warming family movie to an apologia for massacre achieves intelligibility within the ideological-political frame of empire and the racial structures that undergird it. As in Pugliese's discussion of the nexus that ties the U.S.'s Guantánamo Bay prison in Cuba to Frontierland in California's Disneyland, a set of violent hierarchical relations, representational and discursive histories and imagined geographies establishes lines of connection among sites that 'might appear to stand in absolutely dichotomous positions' (Pugliese 2013, pp. 89-92): here a Kenyan game reserve, a Hollywood movie, the massacres in Medan. Adopted as their credo by Anwar and his co-murderers, 'Born Free' carries the charge of their identification, across racial and cultural divides, with the imperial sovereign subject and its prerogative to kill or make live. As the music sutures together seemingly incommensurable histories, geographies and cultural sites—Kenya, Indonesia and Hollywood; game park/reserve, diorama/museum and killing field—these disjunctive spaces map onto one another through the nonhuman bodies at their centre. Under the sign of freedom, killing and conserving are revealed as twinned operations executed on bodies of political animality situated beyond the edge of the human.

The improbable yet utterly ideologically congruent signature music selected by Anwar Congo and his co-directors unfolds the story of their murders as yet another 'salvation history'. As in Adamson's *Born Free* and the visual narrative of a diorama, a prior act of violence is retrospectively redeemed, and recoded through the teleology of an entry into the state of modernity/freedom. In the Hall of Africa's reworking of imperial history, Haraway identifies the diorama as marking a transitional stage from 'gun to camera' in the history of the colonial game reserve, signifying empire's passage from 'darkest to lightest Africa' (Haraway 1989, p. 43). This transition from gun to camera was accompanied by a shift in the referent of the trophy-object: Wendy Webster observes that, whereas, previously, the term 'trophy' signified the carcass of the hunted, with 'the hunter ... shown above a dead animal prone on the ground, sometimes with a foot on its neck, sometimes sitting on it', in later decades of African colonialism, 'as emphasis on preservation of wildlife developed, the photograph not only provided pictorial evidence of the trophy, but became itself a trophy, with safaris mounted in order to "shoot" animals with cameras' (Webster 2007, p. 125).

The trajectory from darkest to lightest Africa, from gun to camera, from killing to preservation to conservation, from hunting ground to reserve to Hollywood, is also the passage of Elsa in *Born Free*, the days-old lion cub left orphaned along with two other cubs, after their mother was shot and killed by George Adamson, Joy Adamson's husband, a game warden in the Northern Frontier District of Kenya. The killing of their mother, although in 'self-defence', is redeemed by the Adamson's act of rearing the orphaned Elsa and her two brothers. While the two male lions are later exported to a zoo in California, the Adamsons determine that Elsa herself will receive the gift of freedom—leading, subsequently, to global stardom. As 'salvation history', this passage from 'darkest to lightest Africa', also narrates itself as a parable of colonization: the movement from a dangerous natural world deserving of masculine conquest and (just) violence to one of maternal nurture, restoration and reconciliation; from colonial tutelage to self-government; from savagery to pacification/civilization; from killing to protection, and captivity to freedom. 'Once domination is complete', as Haraway brilliantly remarks of the diorama, 'conservation is urgent' (1989, p. 34).

### **Wild Lives and Zoopolitics**

*Born Free* narrates the emergence of a configuration that is indissociable from a key strand of African decolonization: the rise of popular conservationism. The move was facilitated, as already suggested, by a shift in the cultural and commodity value of the trophy, as big game photography replaced hunting in the national parks and reserves. As part of the same process, the safari was repackaged from a marker of colonial privilege and exclusivity to a tourist activity and spectacle accessible to all. *Born Free* links to a cluster of related films, such as *Hatari* (1961) starring John Wayne,

where the action hinges on the capture of animals for export to a zoo abroad or the sumptuous *Out of Africa* (1985), a classic exemplar of 'lightest Africa', with its climactic scene of the white settler pleading for a homeland for her displaced 'squatters'. The success of these representations contributed to the remaking of neocolonial Africa as something between a global game reserve and frontier theme park, drawing on many of the same cultural forces of the spectacle that also inform Disneyland (Pugliese 2013, pp. 90-93).<sup>ii</sup>

The safari park, the zoo and the museum, as distinct from their human counterparts, the prison and the asylum, are sites where past violence, harmlessly preserved and pleasurably framed in terms of 'salvation history' and teleologies of freedom, establishes the horizon of political visibility and invisibility. Critical to this configuration of violence and spectacle, preservation and protection, is the ambiguous relation between 'wild (life)' and 'free'. What Derrida describes as the close yet abyssal connections among these lives 'beyond the edge of the human' determine the limits and forms of their relation to the gift of freedom. The imperative to protect the humanised lion, Elsa, whose natural state of freedom is restored by returning her to the 'wild', is accompanied by the violence perpetrated against colonized natives who, in their ontological unfreedom and savagery, inhabit a state of 'political animality'. As humanity and freedom are indissociably linked in the vision of liberal empire, the native, in its 'vestibular' (Pugliese 2013, pp. 44-46) relation to the human, necessarily remains locked in a 'time and space of subjugation, exposure, disappearance and abandonment' (Feldman 2010, p. 117).

What remains invisible in the political landscape of *Born Free*, both book and film, is that its narrative precisely coincides with the years of the Kikuyu rebellion in southern Kenya, a period characterized by a horrific regime of murder, torture, rape, castration, and mass incarceration of Mau Mau fighting for freedom from British rule. Both versions of Adamson's narrative are buttressed by a colonial-racial logic that, on the one hand, mobilizes all its energies to realize a state of freedom for the orphaned lion, Elsa, while, conversely, brutally punishing the demand for freedom by those rendered landless 'squatters' within the starkly unequal racial-political landscape of the settler-colony. This dialectic between political visibility and invisibility, life and death, freedom and unfreedom, achieves intelligibility within the space of the game park understood as a chronotope of colonial power. Close structural parallels between game wardens and police govern the biopolitical management of lives placed 'beyond the edge of the human', to be killed or protected, held captive or set free. At least one officer who later trained with Adamson is known to have been involved in the anti-Mau Mau campaign, an autobiographical detail that reinforces a broader set of violent discursive and material relations that frame the colony, the game reserve and penal camp. Decades after the success of *Born Free*, both Joy and George Adamson would die by the logic of the same relations of violence they functioned to reproduce: Joy Adamson, murdered by a laborer in her employ in 1980, and George Adamson shot dead in 1989 as he

attempted to defend a tourist from a poacher in Kora National Park. The employee convicted of killing Joy Adamson was a minor at the time; he testified that she was a cruel employer, who adopted the same sovereign prerogative towards her native workers as she did with the animals in her charge: 'She would shoot people who annoyed her and then pay for their treatment. After that, she would pay to hush up the matter' (Vasagar 2004). Outside the frame of the film's continuing romancing of conservation narratives, such histories testify to hidden relations of power and violence that still inscribe the (neo)colonial game park or 'wild life' reserve.

### **The Dialectics of Shame and Salvage**

Rendered imperceptible in the political landscape of *Born Free*, the brutal torture and mass incarceration inflicted on Mau Mau freedom fighters throughout the 1950s has been meticulously detailed by Caroline Elkins, whose history, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag*, brought to light many of the colonial state's secret archival documents of these atrocities. The documents were critical to the reparations suit Mau Mau survivors filed against the British government in 2009. It was not until June 2013 that the British government was finally compelled by its High Court to acknowledge these crimes, proffering an unprecedented apology to the surviving Mau Mau freedom fighters. Elkins points out that the brutal torture inflicted on Mau Mau fighters was not an aberration or breakdown of colonial rule, but its standard operating procedure:

First in Palestine, and then Malaya, Kenya, Cyprus, Aden, Northern Ireland and elsewhere, British coercive counter-insurgency tactics evolved, as did brutal interrogation techniques. The Mau Mau detention camps were but one site in a broader policy of end-of-empire incarceration, torture and cover-up. (Elkins 2013)

The exposure of these colonial documents of atrocity revealed in the course of the Mau Mau reparations trial (2009-13), coinciding as they do with the spate of revelations of torture and atrocity by British and U.S. forces in the war on terror, constitute yet another shadow archive of the Abu Ghraib tortures, and at the same time are reinflected and recontextualized by them.

Just as the trophy images of Abu Ghraib cast doubt on whether the 'end-of-empire' regime of atrocity has indeed ended, the Mau Mau revelations give rise to yet more questions for those subjects involved, both as benefactors and beneficiaries, in liberal empire's gift of freedom. Elkins reflects that 'the British validation of the Mau Mau claims—and its first form of an apology for modern empire—offers its citizens an opportunity to understand more fully the unholy relationship between liberalism and imperialism, and the impacts not only on the elderly Kikuyu, but on themselves' (Elkins 2013). A closer historical examination would reveal that the opportunity for the sovereign citizens of empire to 'understand more fully the unholy relationship between liberalism and imperialism', is not in fact new. It

does, however, continually re-present itself as such in the history of empire, through repeated discoveries of trophy objects and revelations of other artefacts of atrocity. The repeated avowals of empire's 'loss of innocence' and declarations of obliviousness to the crimes previously committed in its name, function, as a number of critics have pointed out in the context of Abu Ghraib, as key tropes of empire. The trophy body of the nonhuman as a figure of excessive violence plays a distinct role in this revelatory dynamic, as it graphically makes visible both empire's inhumanity (its capability for 'savage' violence) and its liberal humanity (its shocked repudiation of that savagery). In this sense, the continuing discoveries of trophy bodies of the non-human function as extensions of a salvation/salvage history that reaffirms the racio-political ontologies of empire even as it disowns them.

Rather than a moment of rupture with the imperial past, the revelation/admission of atrocity serves as a technology of liberal empire's self-renewal and continuing reproduction as it disavows its own atrocities and re-avows its commitment to freedom. Expressions of outrage, revulsion and shame, supplemented by formal mechanisms of apology and reparation, paradoxically produce the conditions for a continuation of empire on the basis of an admissible level of violence, after it has purged or distanced itself from the mistakes, oversights and excesses committed in its name ('a few bad apples'). What remains concealed in this cycle of dis-avowal and re-avowal are the indissociable linkages between freedom and violence in the liberal-imperial project, and the critical importance of shame and revulsion, staged in what Nguyen describes as the 'shudder' of the liberal conscience, for the latter's rationalization and perpetuation. In this circuit of dis-avowal and re-avowal, 'the price of the shudder in the order of liberal empire' becomes 'a reason for pursuing war, and the rationale for pardoning its crimes' committed in the name of freedom (Nguyen 2012, p. 87).

For the target bodies of empire's violence, the 'shudder' of empire, its repudiation of its own 'savagery' and 'excess', carries with it the offer of admission into the order of the human, a retrospective redrawing of the (still gradated and hierarchical) borders 'beyond the edge of the human'. The price of this retrospective entry into the human entails an act of reciprocal recognition and exchange: an acceptance of the proffered shame, regret and recompense, as determined by the processes and tribunals instituted by imperial order for its own regulation and reform. 'Restorative justice', as it refers to restitution for the targets and victims of atrocity, thus also carries the implication of a restoration and renewal of its own order, chastened, ameliorated, reformed. To refuse the terms of this exchange or restoration, the pact of 'reconciliation', is to refuse to move from darkness into light, to remain recalcitrant, monstrous, unregenerate on the further side of the divide: the wrong side of history. Thus the pressing 'invitation' issued by Anwar Congo and his fellow-victors to their victims and survivors, to return to the scenes of their own slaughter in order to re-stage its violence as the teleological forging of the new order, under the sign of



freedom. It is against the imperative of such 'salvage histories' I turn to yet another rendition of 'Born Free', one which repudiates the implicit pact of admission into the liberal-imperial order.

### In the face of liberal empire: Re-mediating the Trophy Image

A few years after Anwar Congo's cover of 'Born Free' for *The Act of Killing*, the hip hop artist M.I.A, who as a child was brought to the U.K. as a Tamil refugee from Sri Lanka, recorded a track also named 'Born Free'. It was accompanied by a short film directed by Romain Gavras. M.I.A.'s '[Born Free](#)' stands in stark contrast at every level—musical, visual, political—to the 'Born Free' of *The Act of Killing*. Yet these disjunctive tracks are yoked together by two key features: their referencing of the cluster of ideological-cultural meanings represented in the original *Born Free*, and Abu Ghraib's archive of trophy images. Whereas the musical production by Congo, as already discussed, reprises the 'unholy relationship between liberalism and imperialism', M.I.A.'s 'Born Free' is an emphatic rejection of the unstated ontological hierarchies and political teleologies on which that relation depends. It defiantly puts on show the violent relations of political animality that structure categories of past and future, free and unfree, living and dying, saving and killing:

Yeah I don't wanna live for tomorrow  
I push my life today  
I throw this in your face when I see you  
I got something to say  
I throw this shit in your face when I see you  
Cause I got something to say

I was born free (born free)  
I was born free (born free)  
I was born free (born free)

...

Songwriters: Maya Arulpragasam; Martin Reverby; Dave Taylor; Alan Vega. 'Born Free' (Arulpragasam/Rev/Bermowitz/Taylor/Hill)  
© 2009 Iagem Music/Warner Chappell North America Limited/EMI Music Publishing Limited. (Hutnyk 2012, p. 561)

Like Congo's musical production, the 'Born Free' of Gavras's film and M.I.A.'s accompanying track address a historical atrocity: the mass killings, rapes and other forms of violence perpetrated on thousands of Tamil women, men and children trapped in the final stages of the Sri Lankan war in 2009. Atrocities were committed against trapped civilians both by the losing forces, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), who mercilessly used defenceless people as human shields, and by the victorious forces of the Sri Lankan army (UTHR [J] 2009; Harrison 2012). In the weeks and months after the war ended, dozens of recordings captured on mobile phones and circulated via YouTube and email revealed an unprecedented accumulation of

contemporary war atrocities by the army, from torture and rape to summary executions, committed in this narrow war zone. In several of these videos, men in Lankan army uniform are heard gloating over their crimes, or commenting to an implied spectator. These trophy images became globally visible after their recirculation via two British Channel 4 documentaries, *Sri Lanka's Killing Fields* (2011) and *No Fire Zone* (2013). In these battlefield videos, as discussed in more detail elsewhere (Perera 2012, 2014), the Abu Ghraib images reappear, transposed into new contexts, reformatted, restaged, and marked by a bold and defiant performativity that is buttressed and licensed by the global visibility of the Abu Ghraib image-event. These videos of the war in Lanka are indicative of the mobility and communicability of Abu Ghraib's trophy bodies across other wars, racio-ethnic divides and geographies, and the new grammars, repertoires and technologies of terror unleashed in the wake of the war on terror.

As in the case of the killings in Indonesia in 1965, the war atrocities perpetrated against civilians and disarmed former combatants in Sri Lanka did not happen out of sight in an obscure corner of the globe. Rather, as has since been conclusively shown, they took place literally under the eyes of the international community and its agencies (Weiss 2011; Harrison 2012). The same visual technologies deployed to such destructive ends in the war zones of Afghanistan and Iraq were also used to monitor the beaches at Mullivaikkal in the North-East of Lanka where the government, after successfully appropriating both the tactics and the rhetoric of the war on terror (Kilcullen 2011), unleashed cluster bombs, white phosphorous and other lethal weaponry against helpless people entrapped in an area that came to be known among diplomats and reporters as 'The Cage' (Weiss 2011). The term underlines the state of political animality of those penned within this area, suggesting close parallels with the official and unofficial penological sites of the war on terror (Pugliese 2013, pp. 91-95).

Gavras's film as it accompanies M.I.A.'s 'Born Free', is an attempt to bring into the field of the politically visible the relations of invisibility, exposure and disposability that attended the deaths of tens of thousands of civilians trapped in the beachside cage on the banks of the Nanthikadal at Mullivaikkal. In order to bring into view the invisibilised and disposable bodies trapped at Mullivaikkal, the film stages a visual reversal that dis-places these killing fields from their naturalised location in the region of the darker nations, and relocates them in an imagined first world war zone. The film opens with pale-skinned, red-haired civilians becoming the arbitrary targets of an unknown army of commandos as a dawn raid unfolds in slow detail. The targets are herded on to a school bus and subsequently massacred to a discordant sound track of shouts, shrieks and explosions. The scene follows the familiar lines of scores of political thrillers or reenactments of third world wars, except that the bared bodies of its disposable targets are all white-skinned. What distinguishes them from their killers is the single feature of red hair.

M.I.A.'s 'Born Free' sparked an immediate outcry on its first, apparently leaked, appearance. Viewers and critics were particularly outraged by a scene showing a fragile-looking, freckle-faced, red-haired boy being shot dead at close range. Throughout the U.S., school children and parents outraged by the spectacle of the 'massacre of the gingers' began to call for 'Born Free' to be banned. In response, 'Born Free' was first removed from MTV and YouTube, and later placed on restricted view for adults only. M.I.A.'s comment—'It's just fake blood and ketchup and people are more offended by that than the execution videos' (Sawyer 2010)—lays bare the ontological innocence and invulnerability with which the imaginary red-headed victims were endowed, in contrast to the actual footage (simultaneously available on YouTube) of the summary executions of stark naked and blindfolded men in Lanka. Underscoring that the Sri Lankan case was only one instance of a wider phenomenon, Gavras questioned, 'How can you be shocked by the M.I.A. video and not shocked when Israel bombs Gaza for days and days ... Really crazy stuff where people actually die, real things?' (Cochrane 2010)

In his essay, 'Poetry after Guantánamo', John Hutnyk explores M.I.A.'s 'Born Free' as 'a video provocation' and 'staged controversy' that 'shows how violent reality is by showing a violent fiction, before which passivity is more violent yet' (2012, p. 565). The inversions Hutnyk marks between 'fiction' and 'reality', 'action' and 'passivity', however, are less than adequate to describe the imaginative and political space opened up by M.I.A./Gavras's 'Born Free' as a simulated trophy document that exposes the naturalised biopolitical and geopolitical hierarchies that organise relations of living and dying, saving and killing. As calls for international human rights tribunals and transitional justice mechanisms attempt, retrospectively, to account for the disposable lives held in The Cage and slaughtered on these beachside killing fields, M.I.A.'s 'Born Free' rejects the narratives of recognition and restitution by which, as discussed above, a geopolitical order based on the 'unholy relationship between liberalism and imperialism' reproduces itself through the belated recognition and disavowal of atrocity. Instead, 'Born Free' engages in a different politics of revelation and return, one in which the condition of 'political animality' breaches the racial-geopolitical limits of its cage, to call into question the immunization of the ontologically innocent white first world subject, and subject it to the forms of violent exposability and disposability that characterize the state of political animality.

### **Politico-Visual Regimes of Impunity**

In October 2013, the 'guerilla artist' Banksy who, like M.I.A., operates in the interstices between exploiting and circumventing the contradictions of late capitalist transnational cultural production, engaged in a month-long 'residency' on the streets of New York, titled 'Better out than in'. A sequence of his unauthorized installations and guerilla graffiti at various sites across the city were simultaneously unveiled on a dedicated website. Two works in this series return to

Banksy's continuing interest with the forms of life located 'beyond the edge of the human'. I end this essay by briefly citing one of these as it invokes a series of trophy figures across a series of relational histories and geographies.

The Banksy installation that came to be known as '[Crazy Horses on the Lower East Side](#)' consists of two mural-style works spray-painted onto the sides of two adjacent vehicles, a sedan and a truck, inside a parking lot. On the larger surface of the truck is a grim painting in black and white, representing three horses, their eyes covered with night goggles, as if for combat. The blinded horses recall a horrific trail of animals identified in Pugliese's text: 'pigs dressed in army uniforms' to test the effects of a nuclear blast, horses wandering, with empty sockets, after their eyes were burnt out (2013, p. 54). Banksy's mural shows the three horses with heels rearing up high, in agony or terror. Below them, a corresponding group of three human figures are frozen in various poses: one cowers, head in hands; another gazes upwards. A phone number stenciled on an oil barrel standing next to the vehicles directs spectators to an audio recording that serves as the soundtrack to this work. The recording, also heard on Banksy's website, turns out to be taken from the 'Collateral Murder' video tapes released to WikiLeaks by Private Chelsea Manning in 2010 ([www.CollateralMurder.com](http://www.CollateralMurder.com); Brooks 2013). The video footage from this leaked tape shows Iraqi civilians attempting to rescue wounded Iraqis, in the wake of an attack. As they do so, the adults and children are deliberately shot at and hit by U.S. soldiers in helicopters. At least 12 people were killed in the barrage, including two Reuters employees, and 2 children were wounded. On the soundtrack, the call signs adopted by the soldiers can be clearly heard: 'Crazy horse 1/8' and 'Crazy horse 1/9'.

Like the Apache helicopters used in the attacks, the soldiers' call signs reflect the symbolic as well as material and physical expropriations of the Native American that pervade contemporary U.S. culture, from the names of sports teams commemorating practices of scalping and bounty-hunting to the colloquialisms that map the theatre of its military operations as 'Injun Country' (Smith 2005, p. 177, Pugliese 2013, pp. 49-54, Perera 2007, pp. 135-40). The Indigenous warriors known as Crazy Horse and Geronimo, whose names were deployed as icons and talismanic trophies in the war on terror, were also made to serve as war trophies during their own lifetimes. The Ogala-Lakota warrior Tashunca-uitco, known as Crazy Horse, fought heroically at the Battle of Little Big Horn. After his surrender, held prisoner at Fort Robinson in Nebraska, he is recorded as having fiercely resisted being photographed or signing his name (we may guess that he understood well the trade in trophy artefacts such as the boxed set of photographs from Wounded Knee Creek). The Chiricahua Apache leader Geronimo (originally Goyahkla) whose name was adopted, as Pugliese discusses in detail, in the covert operation to kill Osama Bin Laden, has been described as the 'principal live trophy of one of America's last Indian wars' (Gelo 1999, p. 81). After his surrender, Geronimo's long existence as a 'human

landmark' and living trophy began: he was not only continually photographed by tourists at his prison at Fort Still, Oklahoma, but also became an attraction, by special permission of the army, with travelling Wild West circus shows. Later, he was installed in the 'human zoo' at the 1904 St Louis World Fair. At President Theodore Roosevelt's inauguration in 1905, Geronimo, in his chieftain's regalia, was paraded down Pennsylvania Avenue in the style of a captive in a Roman triumph (Wortman 2012). Roosevelt, the great white hunter, is also the presiding spirit and '*locus genii*', as Haraway discusses in detail, of the Museum of Natural History, and is represented at its entrance mounted regally on a horse, while subordinated African and Native American figures stand on either side (Haraway 1989, pp. 27-29).

The myriad forms through which Geronimo's impounded body was rendered visible as a trophy of the conquered Indigene—photographic object, circus performer, zoological attraction, item in a triumphal retinue—did not end with his death. After his burial, his grave was robbed, according to all accounts by members of the Skull and Bones Club, an exclusive secret society at Yale University. The party of 'Bonesmen' who desecrated the grave included Prescott Bush, the father and grandfather of the future presidents. Although Geronimo's remains have not been identified, a skull in a glass case displayed by the club's front door is supposedly referred to by the Bonesmen as 'Geronimo'. *Vanity Fair* reported that on February 17, 2009—100 years to the day after Geronimo's death—former U.S. attorney-general Ramsey Clark filed a lawsuit in federal district court in Washington, D.C., calling on 'the secretary of defense, the secretary of the army, President Barack Obama, Yale University, and the Order of Skull and Bones to free Geronimo, his remains, funerary objects and spirit, from one hundred years of imprisonment at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, the Yale University campus at New Haven, Connecticut and wherever else they may be found' (Wortman 2011). The charge that the state's highest institutions—political, educational, military—are complicit in the continued impounding of Geronimo's body and spirit indicates his ongoing significance as a trophy of colonial conquest—one that is also, as Pugliese shows, continually reinvoked and 'contemporized', as when it was metaphorically superimposed on the dead body of Bin Laden, and thus 're-situated at the symbolic heart' of the war on terror (2013, p. 52). From Roosevelt to Obama, Geronimo's impounded body returns as the source from which U.S. sovereign power repeatedly seeks to project itself.

Like M.I.A.'s 'Born Free', Banksy's 'Crazy Horses' combines sonic and visual media with documentary sources and historical and aesthetic intertexts, to bring into the horizon of the politically visible the hidden relations between bodies, war zones and atrocities that reproduce the ontological and symbolic hierarchies of 'political animality' beyond the edge of the human. Reminiscent of the dialogue between the soldiers in the Sri Lankan atrocity videos, the soldiers on the 'Collateral Murder' recordings can be heard exchanging jokes and banter as they engage in their casual killings. As a child is hit, one rationalizes: 'Well,

it's their fault for bringing kids into battle'. Another soldier laughingly observes, 'Think I just ran over a guy'. No less than the Abu Ghraib photographs and the Sri Lanka Killing Fields videos, the 'Collateral Murder' recordings are trophies of a wartime atrocity. Viewers of Banksy's installation are led by stages to the scene of this war crime, at the invisible centre of 'Crazy Horses'. Banksy's visual cues and prompts suggest that the lines of connection between the forms of violence he references—historical, geopolitical, biopolitical—are at once obscured and self-evident. Installed at the heart of the banal everyday of the metropolis—a messy parking lot on the Lower East Side, the seemingly insignificant prop of an empty oil barrel—'Crazy Horses' assembles the elements of the normalized violence that attend empire's ordering of bodies and places, human and nonhuman. As it brings home these bodies of violence, Banksy's work, like M.I.A.'s 'Born Free', is an attempt to *re-people* the landscape of the politically invisible, disrupting its biopolitical and scopic regimes, and re-visibilitying its hidden atrocities.

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What does it mean to live in, and be governed by, a regime whose power rests on the performance of mass murder and its boastful public recounting, even as it intimidates survivors into silence?

(Joshua Oppenheimer, Director's Statement, *The Act of Killing* website, viewed 11 July, 2014, <http://theactofkilling.com/statements/>)

In his Director's statement on *The Act of Killing*, Oppenheimer makes clear that his questions regarding the survival of a regime built on 'a logic of total impunity', where mass murder is both continually celebrated and disowned, does not apply to Sumatra, or even Indonesia, alone, but also refers to his own country, the U.S., and to the geopolitical order within which the two states are located. This is a global imperial order that reproduces and renews itself through forms of violence founded on ontologies of political animality, ontologies emblematised and figured in the trophy body of the nonhuman. The trophy images of Abu Ghraib, I have tried to show above, are critical to the contemporary reproduction of this violent order, refracting and ramifying through other times and spaces.

In *Cloning Terror*, his book on the trophy images of U.S. torture from Abu Ghraib prison, the visual theorist WJT Mitchell identifies the trophy photographs of Abu Ghraib as the 'central image-event of the epoch' in an era infected by the 'global plague of images' (2011, pp. 2, xv). Although Mitchell speculates about the global ramifications of Abu Ghraib and its iconologies—'What is the meaning of the Abu Ghraib archive? What are its boundaries? Is it complete or finished? What does it leave out, and what remains to be filled in?' (2011, 117)—the discussion in *Cloning Terror* is limited to its effects in the U.S. Here I have begun to take up some of Mitchell's questions about the as-yet uncharted spatial and temporal boundaries of the Abu Ghraib archive

and its collection of abjected and impounded trophy bodies of the nonhuman.

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### Notes

<sup>i</sup> Virilio notes that the sense of being cut off from the U.S., and in particular from its cinema, was one of the most 'unbearable' aspects of the Nazi Occupation in France (Virilio pp.10-11).

<sup>ii</sup> The global popularization of the SUV in the subsequent decades is subset of this ideological-economic-cinematic complex. In 2012 the title song from *Born Free* reappeared in TV commercials for Land Rover which, according to Wikipedia, is also the corporate sponsor of the Born Free Foundation, the vehicles 'having been mentioned prominently' in Adamson's book.

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