The (re)imagined self in Leora Farber's series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* (2004-2007)

M Goosen

orcid.org 0000-0002-9094-7905

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Promoters: Prof MC Swanepoel & Prof W Froneman

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Abstract

This research investigates how contemporary South African artist Leora Farber's manipulated photographic series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* (2004-2007) visually articulates a simulacral settler-colonial narrative. More specifically, this study contends that Farber – in the dual role of creator and body-protagonist of the series – uses postcolonial discourse questionably to create an imagined postcolonial self based on her settler-colonial double. This study theoretically employs postcolonialism and Baudrillard's conceptualisation of the simulacrum in order to illustrate and substantiate this contention. In the theoretical chapters of this thesis, I show, first, how Farber's use of key postcolonial terms like otherness, hybridity and liminality differs from their paradigmatic use in postcolonial theory and, second, how Baudrillard's theory of the simulacrum may be brought to bear on understanding the processes of signification at work in *Dis-Location/Re-Location.* This study does in no way aim to question the material "loss of the real" in Farber's series *Dis-Location/Re-Location*, but rather aims to investigate the nature of the simulated real as a means to contribute to the untapped, critical, interpretative possibilities of the series and its three sub-narratives *Aloerosa, Ties that Bind Her* and *A Room of Her Own*.

The imagined self in the series is fabricated out of three narratives of displacement as extrapolated from the experiences of three white Jewish women: Bertha Guttmann, Freda Kagan and Farber herself. Guttmann relocated from England to the then ZAR in 1885 for a (possibly) arranged marriage to Jewish entrepreneur, Sammy Marks. Farber's Jewish immigrant mother, Kagan, arrived in the then Union of South Africa in 1935 with her family, after they escaped the rising anti-Semitic persecution in Latvia. While Farber enacts Guttmann's life-world, in neo-Victorian fashion, throughout the series by recreating and counterfeiting a Victorian real, Kagan remains a shadowy presence serving mainly as Guttmann and Farber's go-between. This allows Farber to frame her own sense of displacement as a white woman in post-apartheid South Africa, and in the changing "African metropolis of Johannesburg" in particular, in terms of Guttmann's settler-colonial and Kagan's Jewish diasporic identity. Farber hereby seems to suggest – rather problematically – that her own sense of displacement in post-apartheid South Africa can be compared to that experienced by Guttmann and Kagan.

In the series, the central visual metaphor for displacement is the graft, which Farber deploys in both a botanical and medical-biological sense.

My analysis of the imagery in the series shows how the unfolding process of grafting, as depicted in the series, can be read in terms of the metamorphosis of Farber's (re)imagined self. I argue that this process can be understood in terms of Baudrillard's orders of signification (from the ambivalent self, to the mutable self and finally to the simulated death of self), but also that the metamorphosis is problematically embedded in colonial understandings of the relationship between self and other. The colonial subject, in Farber's depiction, confronts the other as "exotic", and this is visualised in the series by the violent implantation of so-called indigenous African signifiers such as aloe succulents or beads into the protagonist's white skin. The graft, however, does not seem viable as it subsumes the white body. My critical analysis suggests that the (re)imagined protagonist, represented in a colonial-settler landscape, indicates a simulacral reality. The photographic series – as a simulacrum – becomes an endless liminal state as the protagonist ceremonially continues the grafting in an attempt to belong in the foreign. In contrast to Bhabha's (1994) description of the liminal as an enunciating state, the liminal in *Dis-Location/Re-Location* becomes an oppressive, hyperreal space rooted in a continuous proclamation of (un)belonging. This simulacral reality, although informed by and articulated through postcolonial theory, perpetuates a colonial reality, rather than enabling a postcolonial narrative.

Key words: Leora Farber, *Dis-Location/Re-Location,* postcolonial theory, whiteness, simulacrum, hybridity, liminality, diaspora, otherness, art criticism

Opsomming

Hierdie navorsing ondersoek hoe kontemporêre Suid-Afrikaanse kunstenaar Leora Farber se gemanipuleerde fotoreeks *Dis-Location/Re-Location* (2004-2007) ŉ kolonialesetlaarnarratief as ŉ simulacrum uitbeeld. Die betoog van die studie is, spesifiek, dat Farber – as die kunstenaar en liggaamsprotagonis van die reeks – postkoloniale diskoers gebruik om ŉ postkoloniale self *deur* haar setlaaralterego te verbeel. Hierdie studie gebruik postkoloniale teorie en Baudrillard se konseptualisering van die simulacrum om hierdie argument te illustreer en te staaf. In die teoretiese hoofstukke van hierdie studie, toon ek eerstes aan hoe Farber se gebruik van postkoloniale terme soos andersheid, hibriditeit en liminaliteit van hulle paradigmatiese gebruik in postkoloniale teorie verskil. Tweedens wys ek hoe Baudrillard se teorie van die simulacrum gebruik kan word om die proses van betekenis in *Dis-Location/Re-Location* te belig. Hierdie ondersoek bevraagteken nie die materiële "verlies van die werklikheid" in Farber se reeks *Dis-Location/Re-Location* nie, maar vra eerder hoe die gesimuleerde werklikheid kan bydra tot die onontginde, interpretatiewe moontlikhede van die reeks en die drie sub-narratiewe *Aloerosa, Ties that Bind Her* en *A Room of Her Own*.

Die verbeelde self in die reeks is vervleg uit drie narratiewe van ontworteling wat geëkstrapoleer is uit die ervaringe van drie wit Joodse vroue: Bertha Guttmann, Freda Kagan en die kunstenaar self, Leora Farber. Guttmann het in 1885 van Engeland verhuis na wat toe bekend gestaan het as die ZAR, na ŉ moontlik voorafgereëlde huwelik met Joodse entrepreneur Sammy Marks. Kagan, Farber se Joodse-immigrant ma, het in 1935 saam met haar familie gearriveer nadat hulle die verskerpte anti-Semitiese vervolging in Litaue ontvlug het. Terwyl Farber regdeur die reeks, in neo-Viktoriaanse styl, Guttmann se lewenswêreld beliggaam deur ŉ Viktoriaanse werklikheid te herkonstrueer en na te boots, bly Kagan ŉ skimagtige teenwoordigheid, wat as Farber en Guttmann se tussenganger dien. Dit laat Farber toe om haar eie gevoel van ontworteling as ŉ wit vrou in post-apartheid Suid-Afrika in verband te bring met dié van Guttmann se koloniale-setlaar en Kagan se Joodse diasporiese identiteit, en dit toe te skryf aan die veranderende aard van die "Afrika-metropool van Johannesburg". Hierdeur blyk dit of Farber die problematiese voorstel maak dat haar eie ervaring van ontworteling in post-apartheid Suid-Afrika vergelykbaar is met dié van Guttmann en Kagan.

Oorplanting is die sentrale visuele metafoor vir ontworteling in die reeks en Farber benut die idee in sowel ŉ medies-biologiese as ŉ botaniese sin. Ek ondersoek en interpreteer die oorplantingsproses in die betrokke werke as die metamorfose van Farber se (her)verbeelde self. Ek argumenteer dat dié proses verstaan kan word aan die hand van Baudrillard se ordes van betekenis (van die onsekere self, die veranderende self en uiteindelik na die gesimuleerde dood van die self), maar ook dat hierdie metamorfose op ŉ problematiese wyse ingebed is in koloniale beskouinge rakende die verhouding tussen self en ander. Die koloniale subjek, in Farber se uitbeelding, konfronteer die ander as "eksoties" en word in die reeks gevisualiseer deur sogenaamde Afrika-inheemse betekenaars, soos aalwyne of krale, gewelddadig in haar vel in te plant. Dit lyk of die oorplanting onsukseksesvol is, omdat die oorplanting die wit liggaam oorneem. My kritiese ontleding suggereer dat die (her)verbeelde protagonis, wat in ŉ kolonialesetlaarlandskap verbeeld word, ŉ simulacrum verwesenlik. Die fotografiereeks – as ŉ simulacrum – word ŉ eindelose liminale ruimte soos wat die protagonis seremonieel met die oorplanting voortgaan in ŉ poging om in die vreemde te behoort. Die liminale, soos voorgestel in die reeks, in kontras met postkoloniale denker Bhabha (1994) se beskrywing as ŉ bevrydende toestand, word eerder ŉ hiperwerklike toestand van onderdrukking, wat gewortel is in ŉ voortdurende artikulasie van (nie-)behoort. Farber se simulacrum, hoewel begrond in en tot ŉ mate uitgedruk in terme van postkolonialisme, sit gevolglik eerder ŉ koloniale werklikheid voort.

Trefwoorde Leora Farber, *Dis-Location/Re-Location,* postkoloniale teorie, witheid, simulacrum, hibriditeit, liminaliteit, diaspora, andersheid, kunskritiek

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> Any resemblance to actual events or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental. The Dust Bowl and the Great Depression, however, were very real (Sedwick, 2013:231).

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

South Africans, willingly or unwillingly, successfully or unsuccessfully, are engaged in one of the profound collective psychological adjustments … they are selecting, editing and borrowing from the cultural resources available to them to reinterpret old selves in the light of new knowledge and possibilities … (Steyn, 2001:xxii)

1.1 Introduction

This research explores contemporary South African artist Leora Farber's photographic series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* (2004-2007) as presented in the publication *Dis-Location/Re-Location: Exploring Alienation and Identity in South Africa* (2008) alongside a collection of themed essays. This series forms part of a larger project – also entitled *Dis-Location/Re-Location* – which came together as a travelling exhibition and opened at the Johannesburg Art Gallery in February 2006. The larger project encompassed installation, video, performance, sculpture, sound and multimedia art in addition to the photographic series.

The photographic series in question consists of twenty-two coloured prints. They are arranged into three sub-themes, namely *Aloerosa, Ties that Bind Her* and *A Room of Her Own* (see figures i-xxii in the representational addendum[1]), and progress in a linear fashion. Each theme is characterised by the presence of the female body-protagonist, Farber, who embodies the historical figure Bertha Marks née Guttmann[2] (cf. figure 1). Throughout the series the body-protagonist wears Victorian-inspired outfits such as a Victorian corset (varying in colour) and a white skirt (cf. figures 2). In a manner reminiscent of Victorian portraiture, Farber is represented as motionless, static and rigid (cf. representational addendum) in what appears to be theatrical still-shots in spaces true to Guttmann's daily life. *Aloerosa* and *Ties that Bind Her* were

[1] For convenience and readability I have added a separate representational addendum (using the roman numerical system) containing the images of the three sub-narratives as presented in *Dis-Location/Re-Location: Exploring Alienation and Identity in South Africa* (2008).

[2] Bertha Guttmann arrived in the then ZAR at the age of 23 for an assumed arranged marriage with Lithuanian born entrepreneur, Sammy Marks. Marks was a prominent figure in the historical South African Jewish narrative. Arriving in southern Africa in 1868 as a mere *smous* (Jewish trader) from Sheffield, England, he would play a vital role in southern Africa's mineral and industrial revolution (1867-1922), where he made his fortune in the Highveld coalmining and steel industry after establishing the African and European Investment Company. He would also serve as a close advisor and friend to the then president of the *Zuid Afrikaansche Republic* (ZAR), Paul Kruger (1977-1881), where after he was known as "President Paul Kruger's Jew", or generally, as the "the uncrowned prince of the Transvaal" (Mendelsohn, 2008:27; Giliomee & Mbenga 2007:190).

created on location on the grounds of Zwartkoppies[3], today known as the Sammy Marks Museum[4], while *A Room of Her Own* was shot on a set inspired by the Zwartkoppies homestead.

Figure 1. Portrait of Bertha Guttmann. 1890. (Farber, 2013:15).

Figure 2. Leora Farber, *A Room of Her Own,* performance still. 2006. Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld.(Farber, 2013:106).

Farber – born in 1964 in Johannesburg three years after South Africa became a Republic in 1961 – is a white, middle-class, English speaking, second-generation South African woman of Jewish descent (Farber, 2012:2). Both her maternal and paternal grandparents, from Lithuania and Latvia respectively, arrived in the then Union of South Africa during the 1930s as refugees of the anti-Semitic and economic persecution that surged across Eastern Europe at the time (Klopper, 2008:11-12). Farber grew up in apartheid South Africa, and this would fundamentally influence her

[3] Zwartkoppies, originally part of the farm Christienen Hall, is the farmstead in the then Transvaal where Marks and Guttmann were situated. The farmhouse, which was commissioned in 1885 by Marks, after his assumed arranged marriage with Bertha Guttmann, would later be known as Zwartkoppies Hall (Mendelsohn, 1991:33).

[4] Located in Bronkhorstspruit Road, Savannah Country Estate, Tshwane, 0184.

artistic career, which formally started in 1993 during the country's democratic transition (cf. Smith, 2002).[5]

In the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location,* Farber uses her body to symbiotically explore the unstable, yet interweaved, identity positions of three white Jewish women who experienced both physical and psychological displacement (cf. Farber 2012:72). The first identity narrative is Farber's own as a second-generation South African, Jewish, white woman in post-apartheid South Africa. The second is that of her orthodox Jewish mother, Freidele Kagan (born 1921), who arrived with Farber's grandparents as immigrants in 1935. The third identity narrative is that of the Victorian, orthodox Jewish, upper-middle-class settler Bertha Guttmann (1859-1934) (cf. Farber, 2012:83; Klopper, 2008:11-13). The three personas are given visual shape by Farber's body, which becomes the pictorial focus of the series, whilst Guttmann can be seen as the main character of the narrative. Farber's mother, Kagan, is an absent figure – a shadow that can only be traced in the photographic series through Farber's presence.

In *Dis-Location/Re-Location* Farber draws parallels between her own experiences as a white woman from Jewish descent in contemporary South Africa and her version of the historical narrative of Guttmann – a Jewish, Victorian, settler-colonial. Farber forges a link between herself and Guttmann via the migrant narrative of her maternal family as embodied by her mother. The series investigates, as the title suggests, a productive tension between being uprooted and repositioned. Farber (2012:2) describes the series as a theatrical and genealogical interpretation of biographical narratives, diasporic displacements and colonial inheritances. For Farber these intertwined narratives represent her own struggle with the fluidity of her autobiographical identity narrative.

[5] South-Africa's democratic transition is predominantly marked by two phases of negotiations between the *African National Congress* (ANC) and the *National Party* (NP) known as *The Convention for a Democratic South Africa* (CODESA 1, December 1991 and CODESA 2, May 1992) (Arnold, 2005:781; Marschall, 2010:25). These negotiations would successfully frame and contextualise the necessary socio-political and constitutional changes that would lead to South Africa's first free, democratic election in 1994. The ANC was voted into power and a new constitution, based on a Bill of Rights, was adopted. The demise of apartheid was unmistakable, but the transition into a free, democratic South Africa was inlayed with inherited as well as newly problematic identity complexities of authority and belonging.

1.2 The genealogy of Dis-Location/Re-Location

Although she describes the larger *Dis-Location/Re-Location* project as a collaborative creative venture, Farber positions herself as the conceptualiser, curator and body-protagonist. In order to complete the monumental project she worked with several parties, which included NRF bursary students, digital editing professionals, production managers, makeup artists and the award-winning South African fine arts photographer Michael Meyersfeld[6], all of whom were paid for their contributions. Although Farber gives credit by means of acknowledgement to these parties (see Farber, 2012:34, 46 for an extensive acknowledgement list) she is documented as the auteur of the project. The reason for this being that the project realised Farber's own creative vision and concept. This is also the case in the photographic series where Meyersfeld is given photo-credit and listed as the photographer, while Farber claims sole authorship of the series.

Farber's choice to be known as the sole artist of the project can be understood within the context of *tableaux* photography. Murray (*in* Law-Viljoen, 2008:51) remarks that Farber's photographic approach in the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* through Meyersfeld's lens goes against the iconographic South African photographic tradition of realism. South African photographic realism[7], recognised by its documentary style, is characteristic by the omnipresence of a social awareness of the surrounding socio-contextual environment. Farber, instead, approaches the *Dis-Location/Re-Location* project with a staged, theatrical slant that is reminiscent of the work of British photographer Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-1879), and American photographers Cindy Sherman (born 1954) and Roger Ballen (born 1950, based in South Africa). Staged or directed photography, also known as *tableaux* photography, relies on the intention of the artist (often also the director of photography as is the case with Farber) and not that of the photographer, to set up, fabricate and ultimately construct a photographic reality. Warren (2006:320) explains that the main goal of *tableaux*

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[6] Contemporary South African photographer Michael Meyersfeld has been a professional photographer since 1970 and specifically a practicing fine arts photographer since 1998. He has won numerous national and international awards (including two golden lions at the Cannes Lions Advertising Festival) (Meyersfeld, 2018).

[7] This characteristically documentary-style approach was influenced by internationally recognised South-African photographers David Goldblatt (born 1930), Peter Magubane (born 1932) and Santo Mofokeng (born 1956) especially known for their critical documentation of apartheid (cf. Warren, 2006:23-24).

photography is “to express the artist’s subjective experiences, rather than producing objective photographic documents of the world”.

Another precedent for Farber’s claim to sole authorship can be found within the conceptual art movement[8], which is centred on the notion that the *idea* or concept of an art work takes precedence over its material aspects (such as its medium or technique). The artwork’s ontological basis is therefore situated in a concept and any products of this concept – be that photographs (as with *Dis-Location/Re-Location*) or performances – become reflective aesthetic documentations thereof (Wood, 2004:11; Osborne, 2002:11). Levin (1985:3) notes: “[c]onceptualism came out of the closet and art became documentation.” Ironically, the fact that conceptual art gives eminence to the idea as opposed to the artefact is deconstructed by the dematerialisation[9] of the artwork. In other words, although the concept becomes the work of art, the concept is still dependent on the material documentation thereof.

Within this framework *Dis-Location/Re-Location* is a reflective document of the actual artwork – the *concept* – accordingly positioning Farber as the artist and conceptualiser of the project. Simultaneously, the project is dependent on the materiality and subsequent documentation thereof. In this respect, Farber (2008, 2012, 2013) gives credit (not co-authorship) to South African design duo Strangelove[10] as they contributed to the material conceptualisation of the project.

Farber was inspired to work with Strangelove after seeing their 2002 *Wind* range[11] (see figure 3), which was launched at the 2002 South African Fashion Week in

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[8] *Conceptual art* or conceptualism is an ongoing and ever developing art movement, which developed systematically from the late 1960s to 1970s. The origin of conceptual art is often attributed to French Dadaist Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968) as American conceptual artist Joseph Kosuth (born 1945) states: "All art (after Duchamp) is conceptual (in nature) because art only exists conceptually" (1969) (cf. Hassan & Oguibe, 2001). Today, although the notion of conceptual art has developed especially with the onset of digital art and the cloud, conceptual art still poses the importance of the concept over the materiality of the art work.

[9] Dematerialisation (cf. Lippard & Chandler, [1968]2018) of the art work here refers to an ultra-conceptual approach to conceptual art and denotes the complete deconstruction of art as material commodity. This matter is further complicated through current art trends of new media and digital art forms.

[10] Fashion design team, Strangelove (founded in 2001), consists of fashion designers Ziemek Pater and Carlo Gibson, who have gained international recognition for their work at South African Fashion Week as well as their step-out clothing line that was designed for the South African Olympic team in 2004 (SAIC:2018).

[11] The *Wind* clothing range is described by Farber (*in* Law-Viljoen 2008:14) as a hybrid fusion between traditional Xhosa-inspired dress (seen by the A-line shaped skirt) and a Victorian-inspired style (corsets and the white petticoat-style skirts).

Sandton City, Johannesburg. *Wind* comments on the colonial gaze's stereotypical perception of African bodies and silhouettes by presenting a hybrid fusion between traditional Xhosa-inspired dress (seen in the A-line shaped skirt) and a Victorian-inspired style (which includes corsets and white petticoat-style skirts) (cf. Farber *in* Law-Viljoen 2008:14).

Figure 3 Strangelove *Wind* range. South African Fashion Week, 2002
Photograph by Anton Hammerl (Farber, 2013:13).

Farber and Strangelove began conceptualising the *Dis-Location/Re-Location* series in 2004, after the success of their collaborative participation in the group exhibition *Through the Looking Glass*[12]. According to Farber (*in* Law-Viljoen, 2008:14) they had engaging conversations centred on their own experiences as second generation white South Africans. Both Ziemek Pater and Carlo Gibson are second generation South Africans from Polish and Italian descent respectively, whilst Farber (as mentioned above) is a second generation South African from Lithuanian and Latvian origin. The product of this collaboration, which featured in the photographic works *Nemesis I* (2004) and *Nemesis II* (2005) (see figure 4), shows a direct resemblance to the Victorian-inspired garments from Strangelove's *Wind* range and would become the

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[12] *Through the Looking Glass* was a group exhibition accompanied by a book with the same title, conceptualised and curated by FADA based Research Professor Brenda Schmahmann. The travelling exhibition was launched in 2004 at the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown and was thematically framed by self-representations by predominantly South African female artists (UJ 2018).

conceptual and material inspiration for similar garments worn by Farber in *Dis-Location/Re-Location.*

The *Nemesis* series is important as it foreshadows Farber's interest in needlework and the body as a platform for commenting on female beautification. In the *Nemesis* series Farber is seen stitching together and embroidering scarred patterns into the skin. This bodily needlework, as in *Dis-Location/Re-Location*, is accomplished with extensive makeup effects (cf. Farber 2012:34) to become a literal reflection of the gendered agony of so-called feminine beauty. Throughout her artistic career, Farber has been absorbed by women's bodies "as a site of political intervention" (Farber 2013:6).

Figure 4 Leora Farber in collaboration with Strangelove. *Nemesis I*: *Nos I, II* and *III.* 2004.
Lambda print mounted on Novalite, 148x92 cm.
Photograph by Ruphin Coudyzer (*Art Africa*, 2015).

Figure 5 Leora Farber. *Skinless IV.* 1996. Wax, fabric, found objects and metal, 50x42x18 cm. Photograph by Charles Blackbeard (*Art Africa*, 2015).

Figure 6 Leora Farber. *Morgan.* 1997. Wax, fabric, found objects. Photograph by Leora Farber (*Art Africa,* 2015).

In the installation pieces *Skinless IV* (see figure 5) and *Morgan* (see figure 6), for example, Farber comments on the female body and on skin specifically as a commodity of patriarchal power. In different ways, both *Morgan* and *Skinless IV* are suggestive of clothing store mannequins. As society constructs artificial conventions of beauty, so Farber tailors, like a garment, the body's flesh and skin (cf. Allara, 2008:52, 53). Farber, taking a feminist stance, juxtaposes images resembling medical imagery with constructed artefacts representing historical markers of gender:

> These objects infer both bodily presence and absence. Skin itself becomes a site of control, an external 'fabric' crafted in ways that mimic the fabrication of 'femininity' according to the dictates of the heterosexual, white, male gaze. Sewing implements and beauty aids (historically associated with 'women's work') as well as medical instruments (a reference to the masculine role that medical science has played throughout history) function as primary tools of control. (Farber, 2013:8)

Throughout her artistic career (cf. *Skinless IV, Morgan*) Farber has also investigated the skin as "a site of control" with the material use of wax. This is also the case in *Dis*-

Location/Re-location. For Farber (2013:7-8), wax is a metaphor for flesh and the body. Through wax, she addresses complexities of the idealised gendered body, which is perpetuated by gender myths and stereotypes.

Figure 7 Leora Farber. *Corpa Delicata.* 2001. Wax, steel, paper.
Photograph by Steven Hobbs (Smith, 2002).

In the performance art installation *Corpa Delicata* (2002, see figure 7), Farber moulded a thousand detailed wax chocolates that resembled miniature body parts and flesh. These "chocolates" were displayed on a metal sheet in front of a video installation, playing footage of a surgical tummy-tuck on loop. The gallery audience, who on arrival was offered a real Belgian chocolate, then witnessed the melting of the thousand wax chocolates. The melting of the wax in *Corpa Delicata* directly anticipates the sub-theme *A Room of Her Own* (cf. representational addendum, figures xx-xxii), and both works address the vulgar search for the unattainable female body ideal in which the masochistic reconstruction of the body plays a large role. In *Corpa Delicata* the audience – as a metaphor for society – became active participants as they affirmed injustices towards the body through their (enforced) indifference. The above-mentioned works, as a prelude to the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* all focus on the perception of women's bodies through constructed societal norms, gender typecasting and conventions of beautification.

Farber's preoccupation with the construction of femininity is often visually and symbolically framed by excess, futility and decadence. Her artistic approach shows an undeniable resemblance to contemporary *Vanitas* still-life traditions[13], like that of art photographer Sharon Core (born 1965, see figures 8 & 9). Both Core and Farber (cf. figure 10) utilise contrasting objects of futility and transience, thereby juxtaposing life and death. Farber's photographic work, however, focuses on evoking a certain conflict between struggles of womanhood and death. In figure 10, *Detail of wallpaper post-performance*, this tension is visible through the use of overly "feminine" colours and floral patterns that are contrasted by the partially melted roses dripping off the wall.[14] As I will show, *Dis-Location/Re-Location* appropriates these themes further by referencing Vanitas and themes of "womanhood" in the recreation of Guttmann's life-world.

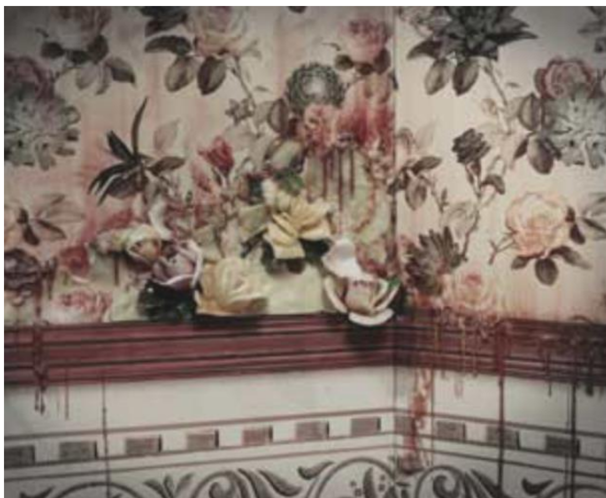

Figure 8 (Above left) Sharon Core. 1890. 2011. Photographic still-life (Widewalls, 2018).

Figure 9 (Above right) Sharon Core. Early American, Still Life with Steak. 2008. Photographic still-life (Widewalls, 2018).

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Figure 10 (Left) Leora Farber. A Room of Her Own (detail of wallpaper post-performance). 2006. Wax, steel, paper, wood. Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld (Farber, 2012:108).

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[13] *Vanitas* still-life arrangements (derived from the Latin noun *vanus,* meaning empty) generally emphasise mortality versus earthly futility. Art historically the Vanitas tradition, is associated with Dutch and Flemish 16th and 17h century realism, which flourished during what is classified as the Golden Era of Dutch Baroque (Esaak, 2017).

[14] This was achieved, similarly to the performance work *Corpa Delicata,* by heating a sheet of metal behind the wall (Farber, 2012:23).

1.3 *Dis-Location/Re-Location*: a proclaimed postcolonial disposition

In *Dis-Location/Re-Location* Farber's subjectivity is foregrounded as she is both the body-protagonist and the director of the series. Farber turns the attention to her own body as she grapples with her feelings of displacement as a white woman in post-apartheid South Africa (cf. Farber, 2012:1). In the introduction to her doctoral thesis[15] (2012:1-3), an *ex post facto* reflection on the series, she emphasises how she rationalised and approached her art-making position from a postcolonial[16] theoretical stance. She (2012:2-3) goes as far as declaring her subject position to be that of a "postcolonial second-generation Jewish woman" and that she is investigating "the politics of displacement[17], self-other relations, diaspora and processes of cultural exchange". She appears to inform this position further from a postcolonial understanding of liminality and hybridity.

Farber's construction of herself as a postcolonial subject is questionable, given that, within a traditional postcolonial framework at least, the term "postcolonial subject" conjures up images of the oppressed, disenfranchised, colonised other (Ghandi, 1998:31; Loomba, 2005:54; Jabri, 2012:80). In this context the privileged position of whiteness, which Farber occupies, cannot be ignored. *Whiteness,* in agreement with McKaiser (2011:5; cf. also López, 2005:196; Matthews, 2015:115-116), does not refer to "biological race" for as we now know humans cannot be neatly separated by physical markers such as skin colour.[18] Rather, *whiteness* refers to a performed socially constructed position one occupies in society which is associated with an inherited hegemonic system of privilege and power (cf. López, 2005:2, 5). *Being white* therefore denotes, as MacMullan (2009:54) explains, a predisposition that was constructed "through violence, legislation, and other practices of exclusion and privilege". In this regard Matthews (2015:116) emphasises that this does not imply that

[15] Her thesis is titled *Representations of displacement in the exhibition Dis-Location/Re-Location* (2012)
[16] The term "postcolonial" (as a single word) is denoted throughout this research to refer to theoretical discourse which addresses (across historical or empirical structures) forms of reading practices, representations and modes of perceptions which deal with the impacts of imperialism and colonialism. In turn, I use post-colonial (hyphenated) to refer to a certain historical period, as the prefix *post* suggests, occurring *after*. Accordingly post-colonial generally symbolises the epoch "after independence".
[17] The term "displacement", in agreement with the postcolonial, cultural theorist Homi Bhabha (1994), is a spatial identity disjunction where the marginal of the so called identity *norm* is experienced. The Latin prefix *dis-* meaning "apart from" or "detached from" further emphasising a distancing from a fixed identity position. Displacement from this context is accordingly viewed as a pivotal part in the transformation process of identity.
[18] See the American Anthropological Association statement on race (1998) in which they reject the notion that humans can be biologically divided by race.

separation by [the construct] race did not exist before colonial practices took place; but rather that whiteness was constituted as part of hegemonic, imperial conquests. Murray (*in* Law-Viljoen, 2008:51) remarks that,

> Farber's concept of the exhibition is marked by deliberate representational gaps; there are familiar preoccupations that the artist elects not to address directly. Race is one such, Holocaust is another; both could be considered as odd omissions.

A postcolonial understanding of the complexities between self and the other becomes central towards a critical interpretation of the way in which Farber addresses unequal power relations in *Dis-Location/Re-Location.* Within the context of the *Dis-Location/Re-Location* series, Farber – as a white English-speaking South African – can be regarded, due to her privileged position, as the self. Simultaneously Farber's position as a woman makes her the object of the patriarchal gaze, and therefore places her in the position of the Other. In the postcolonial context, therefore, the clear-cut binary between self and other becomes disturbed. This disturbance can be understood in terms of Jacques Lacan's (*in* Ragland-Sullivan 1986:31-37;94-95;140-154) notion of the *grande-autre* – the Other (emphasis on capital O). From a psychoanalytic perspective, Lacan (*in* Ragland-Sullivan 1986: 94-95; 31-37; 140-154), distinguishes between the Other/other by referring to a child that recognises her-/himself for the first time in a mirror. The child becomes aware of her/his own existence as an individual being apart from, but still connected to, that of her/his parents. In this case the child becomes the other as part of her or his parents as the Other. From this perspective the postcolonial hierarchal order of otherness is as follows: The colonising Western self objectifies and constructs an O/other based on the principle of difference. In other words, the hierarchal position of the Other or other is dependent on its relation to the self. Accordingly otherness is perceived as what Said (1985:90) and Spivak ([1988]1997:24) describe as the associative projection of the self's shadow. Farber can, accordingly, be viewed as the self and the Other.

But what are we to make of Farber's relationship between the historical figure of Bertha Guttmann and Farber's mother Freda Kagan? Farber poses as Guttmann, while she often references Freda Kagan whilst reflecting on the exhibition (see Farber 2012 and 2013). Farber (2012:6) emphasises that she approaches and negotiates otherness in the exhibition in line with American historian Dominique LaCapra's idea of (2001:87)

“empathetic unsettlement”. According to LaCapra, *empathic unsettlement* designates that otherness should be engaged with caution and understanding, whilst emphasising a recognition of difference.

Figure 11 Studio portrait of the Kagan family taken in Latvia. 1935.
Left (above) to right (below): Israel Leib Kagan, Sora Rivel Kagan,
Dov Behr Kagan and Freidele Kagan.
(Farber, 2012:82).

Both women, although their individual experiences were different – one being a privileged Victorian British settler arriving in 1885 and the other a migrant who arrived in 1935 (four years before the Second World War (1939-1945) with its Nazi policy of the eradication of the Jews) – can be regarded from a patriarchal position as the Other. Whilst Farber’s and Guttmann’s roles in the exhibition are obvious, that of Farber’s mother Freda Kagan is not. The only visual reference in the series is a family portrait

used during the travelling exhibition of the project (cf. figure 11). Murray (*in* Law-Viljoen 2008:50) remarks:

> Farber seemed to step over her relative, to overstep her recent, familial presence, and move into the more distant time-space and geography of a stranger: Bertha Marks. Marks enables Farber's exploration of "imaginative mothers" and imagined female affiliation, and Farber acknowledges that even after reading reams of Bertha's letters, it was the "paucity of material on Bertha" that afforded her "a creative space in which to explore her curiosity…

In other words, as Murray suggests, Farber seemed to construct a mythology based on the two woman, which in itself can be regarded as a form of othering. Farber (2012:6) emphasises that she does not attempt to speak for anyone but places herself specifically in Guttmann's position in order to investigate her own sense of displacement in post-apartheid South Africa. In this sense, she relies on her mother's and Guttmann's narratives to provide a theoretical (and political) context to the complexities of dislocation and relocation that is presented in a highly visually condensed fashion within the exhibition itself. Both Guttmann and (especially) Kagan experienced displacement and possibly trauma in their respective migrant, diasporic experiences. Susan Sontag, in *Regarding the Pain of Others* (2003) in which she considers war photography, illuminates the importance of contextualisation when photographing trauma. She poses that one should not assume that pictures speak for themselves, as the danger exists that images of trauma "reiterate. They simplify. They agitate. They create the illusion of consensus" (Sontag, 2003:3). Although Farber recreates a staged photographic series and is not directly photographing traumatised subjects (other than herself), her reliance on Guttmann's and her mother's narrative to speak to her own sense of displacement, creates an "illusion of consensus" between all three dislocated narratives.

The notion of displacement is in the series visually and synecdochically guided by the grafting of plants and objects into the body-protagonist's skin (see representational addendum). The grafting motif is carried throughout the three sub-themes (*Aloerosa, Ties that Bind Her* and *A Room of Her Own*, see representational addendum) of the photographic series as the protagonist implants the "foreign" into her pale white skin. Farber, as Venn (2010:327) notes, plays with "the sense of being overwhelmed by the strange/r, contrasted with the urge to mutate and adapt". As the series progresses,

however, it is visually suggested that the foreign takes over the white body, ultimately leading to her disappearance. Farber (2012:9) states that she specifically views and investigates grafting as a metaphor for “psychological/cultural-political spaces of liminality”, which in Farber’s view leads to hybridity. The product of these hybrid mutations in the series, however, seems to be inviable as but a trace of the body remains (see *Supplantation,* figure viii). The question arises whether Farber is suggesting that her own identity, which she simplistically compares in gender and whiteness to that of Guttmann and Kagan, is equally inviable in post-apartheid South Africa

The premise of this study is that Farber, in her own search for belonging, uses postcolonial discourse to justify the (re)imagining of a self, a settler clone in a fabricated simulacral reality, constructed out of the distinctive life-worlds of three woman – Farber, Guttmann and Kagan. This study does not attempt to question the legitimacy of *Dis-Location/Re-Location* as an artistic endeavour or challenge Farber’s artistic intentions[19], nor does it aim to contest the validity of Farber’s *personal* experiences of displacement in post-apartheid South Africa. This project rather investigates the possibilities of using Baudrillard’s conceptualisation of the simulacrum as a way to critically rethink art and representation that is theoretically informed by postcolonial discourse.

1.4 Introductory notes on Baudrillard’s simulacrum

The French poststructuralist[20] Jean Baudrillard’s (1929-2007) conceptualisation of the simulacrum (1981; 1983; 1976 and 1994) is concerned with complexities of the real.

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[19] I rather approach Farber as the creator of the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* from the perspective of what artist and art history scholar Sharlene Khan (2014), in accordance with postcolonial thinker Akin Adesokan (2011) describes as a “*commissioned agent”*. Adesokan (2011:4) outlines “*commissioned agents”* as artistic mediators who “engage representation through acts of commission”. Commission here metaphorically refers to societal and institutional factors (as well as the artist’s position of agency within these structures) surrounding the artist’s work and mode of production that cannot be ignored. Postcolonial artists as “commissioned agents”, according to Khan (2014:27) and Adesokan (2011), are “required to speak not only about their societies, but also for their societies”.

[20] The term “poststructuralism” was used to label a generation of French philosophers (such as Barthes, Derrida, Foucault, Kristeva and Baudrillard) who criticized structuralism. The most prominent aspects that bound these philosophers together as a hypothetical unit were, perhaps, their aversion of the label poststructuralism as well as their theoretical emphasis on language and literary texts. Poststructuralism does not chronologically follow structuralism, since poststructuralist judgements and comments were already made during the flourishing of structuralism (cf. Hambidge, 1992:400; Harrison, 2006:122-135). I use poststructuralism for readability.

Simulacral, *simulacra* or *simulacrum* is derived from the Latin verbs *simularei,* which can be translated as to counterfeit, to copy or to pretend (cf. Oxford dictionary of word origins, 2010). Baudrillard's theory of the simulacrum, however, denotes more than a one-dimensional counterfeit as it reflects a copy of a copy without origin. Baudrillard ([1981]1994:1) demonstrates this in the epitaph of *Simulacra and Simulations* (1981): "the simulacrum is never what hides the truth – it is truth that hides the fact that there is none. The simulacrum is true." Baudrillard claims this statement is derived from the Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes, which it clearly is not.

By fabricating the origin of this quote from "a book of truth" Baudrillard ([1981]1994:1-2) is pointing to a broader observation surrounding a heightened consumer culture: "the liquidation of all referential". A simulacral reality declares a new reflected reality that shows no resemblance with an "original" or a "true" objective real. According to Baudrillard ([1981]1994:3) there are only masquerades of originals.

The simulacrum becomes and simultaneously creates a new original. As such, the simulacrum keeps the "illusion" of an original intact but is in fact the only original: the unoriginal (cf. Baudrillard ([1981]1994:3). In other words, Baudrillard's interpretation of the *simulacrum* becomes a paradox which states that although the counterfeit represents an original, it isn't a counterfeit any longer but rather a new original. Accordingly, the bifurcation between copy and original disappears as the only resemblance between the copy (or the unreal) and the original (or the real) becomes their difference. As such, the simulacrum interrogates the construction and realisation of what we perceive to be real. According to Baudrillard (1993:72) all that remains is an allegory of a once real: a hyperreal[21].

Photography for Baudrillard (1999:139)[22] is no different as it brings us "to the heart of illusion" as the photograph constructs and represents an object which has already disappeared (cf. [1990]1993:151). Through photographic technology there is, according to Baudrillard ([1981]1994:100), "procession of reproduction over

[21] The hyperreal originates from the third order of the simulacrum and refers to the total emancipation of the sign from any reference other than itself. The hyperreal, as conceptualised by Italian semiotician Baudrillard (1983) and Umberto Eco (1986) respectively becomes more real than the real itself and can be interpreted as a precursor to virtual realities and cyber realities (cf. Gane *in* Smith, 2010, 95-97).
[22] I do realise that Baudrillard (1997b:30; 1993:62) makes a distinction between traditional photography and digital photography which to him is not photography at all. In order to enlighten his argument and for the purposes of this study I, however, do not make this distinction here.

production". We take photographs of moments that will never be able to be repeated in real-time, innately creating documentations of new unique moments. Photography reflects a disconnectedness from reality as a certain tension between appearance and disappearance comes into play. From a Baudrillardian perspective photographs seduce the real, becoming but a trace of that which once was: "in a sense, an invocation…to the Other[23], the object – to emerge…to exist in order to make me exist" (Baudrillard & Delahaye, 1999).

Using Baudrillard's "tautological self-referentiality", as Linker (1991:111-112) describes it, as a methodological theoretical approach can certainly be contested as it ultimately leads to the destruction of meaning and the devaluing of representation. Herein lies a problematic outcome for the traditional interpretation of art as a mere referent of a real outside of the frame. Camille (*in* Nelson & Shiff, 2003:43-44), however, offers a different understanding, which informs my interpretation of the series. He highlights that a simulacral reading of art itself offers a productive change from "*Art and Illusion*" (cf. Gombrich, [1960]2004)[24] to "*Art and Delusion*" in the perception and experience of art itself:

> Based upon the premise that images do not so much replicate the real or substitute for it but rather are encounters with another order of reality entirely… (Camille *in* Nelson & Shiff, 2003:44).

Camille, in accordance with Deleuze and Gauttari (1994:193), advocates that, from the perspective of Baudrillard's simulacrum, images should be valued not as artefacts or objects mirroring a real but rather by the "strategies of their simulation". From this perspective I approach the self in the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* not as a ("real") embodiment of Farber but rather as a *fabricated* simulacrum. Accordingly, Baudrillard's notion of simulacra is an appropriate theoretical framework for this study, as it provides an unconventional perspective on the construction of identity and leaves room for a critical interpretation of Farber's manipulated series.

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[23] Baudrillard has a controversial relationship with the concept of the Other which he often associates with "primitives" or "vanishing savages". Lane (2000:61) notes "Baudrillard is trying to oppose Western society with something drawn from its own conceptual and ideological framework". This is discussed in more detail in Chapter Three of this thesis.

[24] Gombrich's book *Art and Illusion* (Gombrich, [1960]2004) advocates the study of art history by technical mastery of mimeses.

These theoretical aspects, together with the contextual narratives that were introduced in the above framework, are all indicative of the theme of this research.

1.5 Problem statement, research questions and objectives of the study

In light of the exploration above, this research is concerned with the ways in which Farber's *Dis-Location/Re-Location (*re)imagines a self – consisting of an entanglement of three Jewish histories of displacement – by means of a simulacral settler-colonial narrative. Moreover the study explores the process through which the (re)imagined self in the selected series progresses from the ambivalent self, to the mutable self and finally to the simulated death of self. I question how this process is contingent upon the *(*re)imagined self's encounter with otherness and framed by the postcolonial spatial complexities of diaspora, hybridity and liminality as a reflection of (un)belonging.

The project is guided by the following research questions and subsequent objectives:

1.5.1 How can the identity complexities of the self and other, framed in terms of postcolonial understandings of diaspora, liminality and hybridity, feed into a critical appraisal of *Dis-Location/Relocation*? *This question requires a critical-theoretical understanding of postcolonial discourse by means of a literature study. Specific focus is placed on the postcolonial framing of identity complexities of the self and other in which the temporal and spatial complexities of diaspora, liminality and hybridity play a central role.*

1.5.2 What does Baudrillard's conceptualisation of simulacra entail and what methodological and theoretical possibilities come to the fore in Baudrillard's conceptualisation of simulacra in interpreting the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location*? *This question involves a theoretical-philosophical study of Baudrillard's simulacrum in order to formulate a methodological approach for interpreting the selected series. In order to answer this question a further investigation into poststructural notions of imagining a self is necessary.*

1.5.3 How does Farber draw imaginative links between three distinct Jewish women – Guttmann, Kagan and Farber – in order to *(*re)imagine a self in the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location*? *Answering this question entails an investigation of the three respective personas and the temporal South African Jewish account from a*

postcolonial position as well as Farber's perception. This is done through an interpretative literature study.

1.5.4 How does the (re)imagined self in *Dis-Location/Re-Location* undergo a process from the self as counterfeit, the mutable self and finally the simulated death of the self as a simulacrum? *This is done by a theoretically grounded interpretation of the photographic series Dis-Location/Re-Location, which is methodologically guided by Baudrillard's conceptualisation of the simulacrum and by the selected postcolonial identity issues.*

1.6 Central theoretical argument

Farber constructs a photographic simulacral reality by reproducing a settler landscape in *Dis-Location/Re-Location.* Moreover, Farber imagines a self – reflected in the body-protagonist of the series – which is counterfeited from two white women's sense of dislodgment, combined with Farber's own feelings of displacement in a post-apartheid South Africa. As such, Farber condenses and decontextualises these historical narratives in the photographic series and (re)imagines them with disembodied subjectivity in a fabricated simulacrum.

Farber (re)imagines the self through the historical identity narrative of Jewish settler woman Bertha Guttmann, her Jewish migrant mother Freda Kagan and her self-proclaimed uncertainties as a white Jewish woman in post-apartheid South Africa. Each of these narratives addresses complexities of movement and the displacement of identity as presented by Farber as the body-protagonist of the series. Farber used postcolonial discourse as a theoretical inclination to the series. More specifically, she focuses on complexities of otherness, hybridity, liminality and diaspora. This is mainly visually guided by the body-protagonist who is grafting the foreign into her skin. The need to transplant the foreign suggests the protagonist's need to belong as she is caught in a perpetual liminal space. As the grafting process develops through the three subnarratives *Aloerosa, Ties that Bind Her* and *A Room of Her Own* (see representational addendum) the foreign seems to subsume the white body.

This to me occurs in three stages: (i) the ambivalent self, associated with otherness, diaspora and liminality (ii) the mutable self, marked by hybridity and (iii) the death of the self. The latter is characterised by the self's inability to adapt in the foreign as she

"redeems" herself by her possible disappearance. Farber constructs this simulated metamorphosis of the (re)imagined self as part of a fabricated simulacrum as a space of self-encounter. Although Farber's conceptualisation of and reflections on *Dis-Location/Re-Location* are guided by postcolonial theory, the series visually and referentially represents a colonial romanticised imagining. *Dis-Location/Re-Location,* as such, is pragmatically presented under the banner of postcolonialism but in reality reaffirms a colonial mentality.

1.7 Methodological research approach

This study is framed by a theoretical and interpretative investigation of the photographic series *Dis-Location/Re-Location*. This research, although interdisciplinary, is grounded in a postcolonial and poststructural framework. The thesis is qualitative in nature and consists of two complimentary parts: (i) a literature review which includes a theoretical as well as a philosophical framework and ii) a critical interpretation of Farber's manipulated photographic series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* based on the key theoretical and philosophical terms.

1.7.1 Literature review

For the literature review I consulted relevant publications, anthologies and periodicals such as Baudrillard's conceptualisation of simulacra (1981, 1983, 1976) as well as contemporary commentators of Baudrillard's work, *inter alia* Kellner (1994), Bishop (2009) and Smith (2016).

Postcolonial critique was investigated with emphasis on the contributions of Fanon (1967), Bhabha (1994), Said (2006), Spivak (2006). Mbembe (2001), Pratt (1992), Young (1995) and Escobar (2007).

Primary sources on the collective South African Jewish historical narrative were focused around the research of Shain (1994), Shimoni (2003), Hellig (1994), Mendelsohn and Shain (2008:103). Mendelsohn's *Sammy Marks: "The uncrowned king of the Transvaal* (1991) and *The gilded cage: Bertha Marks at Zwartkoppies* (*in* Law-Viljoen 2008) was particularly helpful in researching Bertha Guttmann's history. In this regard, I turned to Farber's doctoral thesis *Representation of displacement in the exhibition Dis-Location/Re-Location* (2012) for information regarding her mother Freda Kagan as well as for information on her own displacement.

The sources concerning Leora Farber and the photographic series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* were abundant. Farber's doctoral thesis (2012) and a collection of engaging essays in *Dis-Location/Re-Location: Exploring alienation and identity in South Africa* (2008, edited by Bronwyn Law-Viljoen*)* was especially helpful. My exploration was further enlightened by a visit to the Sammy Marks Museum in 2016, where I purchased the two-volume museum booklets: *Zwartkoppies Hall: From wilderness to country estate* (2004a; 2004b) compiled by André Malan. I also attended the guided *Victorian house tour*, offered by the Sammy Marks Museum.

1.7.2 Interpretation of *Dis-Location/Re-Location*

The interpretation is informed by the selected postcolonial constructs *otherness* and the spatial complexities *hybridity*, *diaspora* and *liminality* as well as Baudrillard's conceptualisation of simulacra. My visual close-reading of *Dis-Location/Re-Location,* involves a critical engagement with the series' visual and textual representations. I structured the visual description and interpretation in Chapter Five, following the three subthemes *Aloerosa, Ties that Bind Her* and *A Room of Her Own* as presented in *Dis-Location/Re-Location: Exploring Alienation and Identity in South Africa* (2008).

This is followed by a Baudrillardian-inspired structure, focussing on the metamorphosis of the self in the series. My interpretation moves from the self as counterfeit, the mutable self and to death of the self, resonating with Baudrillard's three orders of the simulacrum: the order of imitation, the order of production and the order of simulation. Baudrillard envisioned these orders as a "history" of the simulacrum, each bound to a historical timeframe (as I discuss in Chapter Three). I, however, use the three orders to explore how the "postcolonial" self in the series reflects a simulacral reality.

1.8 Chapter outline

After having introduced this study by means of a contextual framework, problem statement, objectives and a central theoretical statement in this chapter, **Chapter 2** gives a critical overview of postcolonial theory focusing on the spatial identity complexities of importance for this study namely otherness*,* hybridity, liminality and diaspora.

Chapter 3 specifically contains a critical contextualisation and theoretical exploration of Baudrillard's conceptualisation of the simulacrum. This chapter also investigates notions of imagining a self. This is done in order to provide a theoretical framework for understanding the construction of the self as a layered intertextual identity narrative in the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* and, ultimately, as a simulacral fabrication.

Chapter 4 offers a postcolonial interpretative contextualisation of the three female Jewish voices – Guttmann, Farber, Kagan – Farber uses to fabricate and justify the self in the series. I critically approach these narratives from both a historical and allegorical perspective as well as from Farber's reflection of the persona.

Chapter 5 offers a critical interpretation of the three subthemes *Aloerosa, Ties that Bind Her* and *A Room of Her Own* of the selected photographic series *Dis-Location/Re-Location*. I focus on linking the developing imagery in these subthemes to the metamorphosis of the (re)imagined self. The interpretation is theoretically guided by both postcolonial and Baudrillardian rhetoric. The metamorphosis of the (re)imagined self is investigated through the ambivalent self, the mutable self and finally the simulated death of the self. I conclude by discussing *Dis-Location/Re-Location* as a fabricated simulacral reality which Farber constructs as a proclamation of (un)belonging.

By way of conclusion, **Chapter (6)** offers closing remarks about the (re)imagined self in Leora Farber's series *Dis-Location/Re-Location*. This chapter is concerned with a summary of the main arguments of each chapter and the key insights made in this thesis. The study concludes with suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

Towards a postcolonial critique of *Dis-Location/Re-Location*

> The borderline work of culture demands an encounter with 'newness' that is not part of the continuum of past and present. It creates a sense of the new as an insurgent act of cultural translation. Such art does not merely recall the past of social cause or aesthetic precedent; it renews the past, refiguring it as a contingent 'in-between' space, that innovates and interrupts the performance of the present (Bhabha, 1994:7).

2.1 Introduction

The photographic series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* visually revolves around a white body-protagonist enacted by Farber in what appears to be an imagined colonial landscape. In this regard, Farber (2012:5) states that she uses her own body as a metonym for herself and Victorian settler Bertha Marks neé Guttmann. Farber (2012:3) simultaneously, as mentioned in the previous chapter of this study, questionably declares herself a postcolonial subject. From this perspective, she investigates the "disjunctures of identity arising from temporal and physical dislocations and relocations in historical and post-apartheid South African contexts" (Farber, 2012:ii). In doing so, Farber – a white South African woman – compares experiences of displacement in post-apartheid South Africa with the possible displacement felt by a white settler woman in a Victorian colonial context. This becomes problematic as *Dis-Location/Re-Location* reaffirms a modality of whiteness that can be associated, as I will show, with what Mirzoeff ([1998]2002) calls "visual colonialism".[25]

This chapter offers a postcolonial investigation into complexities of displacement and identity. Specifically, this chapter examines the postcolonial identity dichotomy of self and O/other and the spatial complexities of displacement namely diaspora, liminality and hybridity. I explicitly focus on these postcolonial theoretical constructs, not only because Farber (2012) used them to theoretically inform *Dis-Location/Re-Location*,

[25] *Visual colonialism* is derived from the eponymous chapter of *The Visual Culture Reader* ([1998]2002) and is used by Mirzoeff ([1998]2002:473-474) to highlight the role visual culture played during colonialism. Mirzoeff ([1998]2002:474) argues that visual colonialism contributed to the "explaining, defining and justifying" of colonial hierarchies.

but more importantly as a theoretical framing towards a different interpretation of the series, which occurs in Chapter Five.

2.2 Postcolonialism today: an introduction

The term "postcolonial" was first employed in the 1970s in political theory as a critique of Western imperialism[26] which left previously colonised territories in complex political, economic and societal situations (Moore-Gilbert, 2000:9). By the mid-1990s postcolonial discourse, together with feminism and psychoanalysis, had gained momentum as an extension of poststructuralist thought and critical theory (Gandhi, 1998:viii). The postcolonial and cultural theorist Homi Bhabha's (1994:7) description of the reflective nature of cultural work – used as epitaph to this chapter – highlights the importance of a renegotiation with the past and the present. Postcolonial critique, as Bhabha (1994:7) emphasises, is (and ought to be) more than a mere reflection or remembrance of the past, but rather a simultaneous perception and re-conception of the past and the present. From this stance, postcolonial discourse focusses on the effects and consequences of the past on the present in order to reconceptualise and rethink the now. More specifically, postcolonial theory rethinks and offers a platform from which the injustices of once colonised countries and indigenous peoples by means of imperial processes can be reconsidered (cf. Bhabha, 1985; 1990; 1991; 1994, 1994a; Said, 1978; 1993; 1985; 2000 and Spivak, 1985, [1988]1997).

Fry (2009) emphasises that, as the relationship between the economic effects of globalisation and inequality become undeniable, postcolonialism today offers more than a critique of the relationship between the previously colonised and the empire. In this context, globalisation and the economic impact of global knowledge production can be read as part of the legacy of coloniality. From this perspective, postcolonial

[26] The term "imperialism" is described by Stone (1988:57) as the "establishment of an empire" from where a nation dictates and enforces their authority and overpowers other territories, which reside outside of their borders. Said (1993:8) defines imperialism as "the practice, theory and the attitudes of dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory. Colonialism on the other hand entails the establishing of settlements on a territory outside of the imperial nation. This administered a complex relationship, which was based on economic exchange, which subsequently established authority between the so-called imperial "motherland" and the colony (Loomba, 2005:9; McLeod, 2000:7-8, 67-69; Childs & Williams, 1997:2327; Alter, 1994:1).

discourse focusses on the ongoing struggle of inequality due to neo-colonial[27] practices and modern day economic imperialism.[28]

It is in this vein that Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano (1989, 1992, 2000) argues that coloniality is the dark side of modernity.[29] Modernity and coloniality, Quijano, (2000:549) contends, are inseparable temporal notions, which are historically consistent with processes of Eurocentrism, Western imperialism, capitalism and the development of nation states (cf. Escobar, 2007:181-183; Sathyamurthy, 1997:3120-3121; Tuma *et al.*, 2000:471). According to this logic, the peripheral or the so-called Third World becomes instrumental to modernity "both in the world the West constitutes for itself and in the West's apologetic concerns and exclusionary and brutal practices towards others" (Mbembe, 2001:2).

This poses a number of problems for anti-colonial and decolonial movements, as Columbian-American anthropologist Arturo Escobar (2007:183) has shown, since there are no real alternatives to Eurocentric modernity and global capitalism. The "Third World" has offered numerous theoretical possibilities and solutions such as decolonising[30], delinking (Amin, 1985), notions of transmodernity and exteriority (cf.

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[27] The economic globalisation of Western capitalism brought forth what Ghanaian independence leader Kwame Nkrumah (1965) described as neo-colonialism. The widely used term neo-colonialism, as an onset of imperialism, can be described in Marxist terms as the last stage of capitalism by which economic superpowers, as the new elite, internationally control economic markets, political and educational institutions. The Western globalisation process originating from a few economic dominant (imperialist) centres remains predominate (Quijano, 1989, 1992, 2000; also see Wallerstein, 1974b, 1979 on world system theory).

[28] One of the key problems with modernity (cf. Escobar, 2007; Minolo, 2007; Mbembe, 2001), as constituted by hierarchy, is that it cannot be removed from a linear, spatial, temporal approach. Accordingly, the defacing of modernity and inherently coloniality by for example postcolonial critique cannot escape the same institution of temporality. By investigating and reflecting on the differences that modernity/coloniality constructed, by the temporal processes of imperialism and capitalism, postcolonialism, however, offers a platform through which the ongoing consequences of modernity and coloniality may perhaps be confronted and moved towards the establishment of an entangled approach which serves alternative, local and regional particularities.

[29] Quijano is inspired by the South American dependency theory. Dependency theory, as a critique on modernity, was developed in 1949 by Hans Singer and Raul Prebisch (also known as the Prebisch-Singer hypothesis) distinctively and emphasises the exploited relationship between the West as the centre and so-called underdeveloped societies as the peripheral. The peripheral is used by the centre for cheap labour and raw materials in order to strengthen the centre economically, socially and politically which leads to the continuous global division of wealth and the maintaining of the constructed binary developed and under-developed nations (cf. Raffer, 2000).

[30] These complementary and conflicting arguments from different contextual perspectives and de-colonial moments and contact zones, broadly offer platforms through which the complexities of neo-colonialism can be confronted and diffused ranging from the decolonisation of knowledge (Dussel, 1976), the mind (Wa Thiongó, 1981) being (Dussel, 1976, Gikandi, 1992), power (Fanon, 1965, Said,

Dussel, 1976) or what Mignolo (2007:455) has more recently defined as border thinking[31]. The problem, however, remains that an indebtedness towards modernist thinking prevails, construction a certain attitude towards the "Third World". .

Veracini (2010:12) describes this as the settler-colonial position,[32] which he views as "associated with a particular state of mind and a specific narrative form". This mind-set is fuelled by decades of issues concerning access and agency "in such a way that it has 'subalternised' other local histories..." (Escobar, 2007:183). This especially stems, according to Veracini (2010:82) from the settler's gaze "tendency to depopulate the country of indigenous peoples in representations and especially in recollections". The mindset of disavowal for Dyer (1997:1) is framed by whiteness as he maintains that "racial imagery is still central to the organisation of the modern world". *Whiteness*, as mentioned in chapter one of this thesis, refers to a performed privileged position that points to an inherited hegemonic position (cf. MacMullan, 2009:54). This position was constructed over decades by imperial, colonial and neo-colonial acts of violence, domination and oppression.

Steyn (2001:xxvi), similarly to Dyer (1997:2-3) and Hooks (1992:167), argues that *whiteness* is linked to an attitude of privilege which is framed by being the centre – the standard, the norm – against which all others are measured. Herein lies a paradox, as *whiteness* is based on the mythology of sameness. Whites, regardless of sexuality, gender, class are still represented as "not raced". Accordingly, *being white* functions as a singular norm whilst constructs such as race are especially attributed to peoples who are *different* from white (i.e. "coloured"). In other words for Dyer (1997:3), whiteness is ambiguously invisible due to the fact that it is constantly seen but

1993; Ahmad, 1992) as well as modernity's linear perspective of time and space (Mignolo, 2007; Mbembe, 2001; Escobar, 2007).

[31] Mignolo's (2007) and Escobar's conceptualisation of border thinking, as theoretically built upon Egyptian sociologist Amin's (1985:44-84) definition of economic and political delinking and Dussel's (1976) liberation philosophy, suggests a multiple hegemony. With multiple hegemony, a claim is made to antagonise the epistemological notions of totality and universalism and emphasise multiplicity. As such, the peripheral (the so-called third-world) becomes a site of diversity where border thinking (as a simultaneous product of global Westernisation) can reconceptualise and reclaim local histories. In this regard, Mignolo (2000:310, 311) poses that "a rearticulating of colonial difference: 'diversity as a universal project', which means that people and communities have the right to be different precisely because 'we' are all equals'.

[32] Settler colonialism, according to Varacini's (2010:2) perspective, is distinct from colonialism, as it addresses a global situation that "historiographies fail to address". Settler colonialism, although it can be associated with temporal and geographic histories of colonialism, simultaneously refers to an inherited hegemonic disposition.

nevertheless ignored, since “whites are not of a certain race, they’re just the human race”. Although Dyer’s argument can be contested,[33] his argument becomes important (for this study at least) as it is still relevant today as López (2005:6) concedes:

> …there are white subjects, cultural groups, who think of themselves as postcolonial. The point is that there remains in the early twenty-first century a postcolonial whiteness struggling to come into being, or rather a number of post-empire, post-mastery whiteness attempting to examine themselves in relation to histories of oppression and hegemony of their others in order to learn the difficult, never mastered skill that Heidegger used to call *Mitsein*: Being with.

Lopez argues that a “post-mastery whiteness” is rarely observed in an emergent postcolonial world as whiteness struggles with the ambiguities of belonging. For Lopez (2005:6) a solution to “privileged whiteness” lies in the confrontation with the inequalities of the past: “a mutual recognition between postcolonial whiteness and its others”. Steyn (2001:xxviii) also emphasises that whiteness needs to be re-examined – as a product of colonial narratives – especially in relationship to the marginalised identities which were interrupted by whiteness’ centeredness.

Although Farber elides the issue of race in the photographic series, the absence of race cannot be ignored as it forms an integral part of the settler-colonial identity that Farber embodies through Guttmann’s life-world. Farber (2012:20) positions *Dis-Location/Re-Location* as an intersectional point where she and Guttmann’s respective understandings and experiences of selfhood and otherness are coupled. Farber (2012:22) vindicates her “postcolonial” position of otherness by stating that she approaches it in line with Kristeva’s (1991) notion of the other-as-stranger within. This is given visual shape in the series by the body-protagonist – a white body – which takes centre stage in all three respective subthemes *Aloerosa, Ties that Bind Her* and *A Room of her Own* (see representational addendum). Simultaneously, the white body suggests a mediation between Victorian England and Africa. “Africa”, however, is visible only in the landscape and specifically by means of aloe cultivars. An interrogation of a colonial understanding of race, therefore, seems to be absent as

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[33] Whiteness studies have been criticised for its perpetuation of centring the white subject and therefore maintaining the hegemonic status whiteness holds and simultaneously constructs what Mohanty (1991:315) describes as “the white man as spectacle”. I however believe, being white myself, that a confrontation of whiteness becomes necessary, in accordance with Bhabha (1994:7), in disrupting the “the performance of the present”.

Dis-Location/Re-Location only represents – as Murray (*in* Law-Viljoen 2008:52) articulates – "a reprise of a colonial mind set in which everything but the European is beyond the pale". This becomes problematic as the series perpetuates what Steyn (2001:3) describes as "master narratives of whiteness". In other words by centring the series on a white body and contrasting it to palpable "African" visual cues a certain identifiable structure of "white mastery" becomes apparent.

Keeping the above in mind, the following two subsections investigate the dichotomy of self and Other/other from both a postcolonial and feminist perspective.

2.3 The mirror dichotomy: the self versus the Other/other

2.3.1 A postcolonial understanding of otherness

Western attitudes, cultural values and behaviours were hegemonically and oppressively projected onto the so-called imagined object during imperial colonialism. Accordingly, a complex relationship came into being between the colonial subject (the imperial oppressor) and the object (the *native* or the oppressed). The colonial object was defined in terms of deviations from the Western norm, namely the white, male European self (cf. Said, 2006:78-91; Spivak, 2006:28-35). The dichotomy between the subject and object was therefore constructed on the basis of difference and extended to cultural spheres such as language, heritage and physical traits, to name a few. The colonial subject – being the white, European male or the self and the white European female, the Other – accordingly perceived anything different from the Western norm (the colonial object) as the other. According to this hegemonic construction, the other is an exotic, immoral, uneducated, voiceless and primitive lesser (Bhabha, 1985:155.; Ghandi, 1998:8-9; Prakash, 1994; 1995). Yancy (2008:2, 7) emphasises further that the colonial self's gaze at the colonised other is based on a negative perception, which is constructed by ideologies as products of cultural hegemony. Within the context of colonialism, this hegemonic attitude is also associated with whiteness, as Steyn (2001:8) emphasises, as it "brought the power to define both self and other".

Said (1995:93) states, as part of his ongoing critique on colonialism, that stereotypical, colonial assumptions caused the colonised object as the other to become a field of projection. Through the other the Western self stored aspects which they did not prescribe to themselves, such as cruelty, sensuality, decadence or laziness (Said,

2006:90-91; McLeod, 2000:45). These stereotypical perceptions towards the so-called reduced societal group – in line with a postcolonial critique – further frames the oppressed as a homogenous, collective and anonymous whole. Such a "majority worthy" perception simultaneously frames the other's acts as racially driven, rather than by free will. In this light, postcolonialism investigates the mythologies and stereotypes brought about by one-sided projections, by the Western self. As such, the dominated other's attitudes and behaviours are already determined beforehand and becomes a performance of identity. The construction of this identity performance as emphasised by the dichotomy between self and other is grounded in difference rather than uniqueness of identity.

Bhabha (1994:117) argues, as a critique of colonialism, that identities are always constructed in relation to the other from where colonial authority is expressed. The self perceives themselves as the so-called true identity and the other becomes the opposite. Accordingly, the other's identity is also determined by that which it is supposedly not as framed by a Manichean dichotomy[34] (cf. Janmohamed *in* Hsieh, 1997:19-24). Said (1985:90) and Spivak ([1988]1997:24) argue in this regard that the other becomes an associative projection of the self's shadow (see also Prakash, 1995:1, 210). As such, the colonial gaze not only places emphasis on, but also plays a part in the construction and performance of identity on the basis of difference. The Western, Eurocentric self, as Mbembe (2001:2) notes, becomes the signifier of difference. The Western self, in desire to assert difference, accordingly constructs an other apart from themself in order to maintain the safety of difference which implies power. The peripheral other – the non-European – becomes the very thing that constitutes the self. The Western identity is therefore dependent on the existence of the other, which is constructed and framed by the master narrative of fear (cf. Said, 1985:90). The self, in turn, constructs the other through the colonial gaze. I would here like to emphasise that the becoming of the other cannot be removed from the becoming of the self.

[34] Manecheanism is based on the Persian's prophet Mani's (216-276) thoughts on the age old conflict between light and darkness or from a social/political perspective between black and white. The reinterpretation of this term, within a postcolonial and feminist narrative addressess the hegemonic distinction between the West and in this case Africa or women and men (Janmohamed *in* Hsieh, 1997:18).

The Eurocentric self as the self-proclaimed cultivated, superior constantly justifies this hegemonic position towards the perceived barbaric, uneducated other by keeping hierarchal power relationship in place (cf. Said, 1978:3; Miles, 1989:16). This constructs an ongoing antagonistic relationship of power, which is by no means based on fact but as mentioned earlier, on the perception of difference. The self accordingly comes into being through the lesser other. Against this backdrop, one can argue that postcolonial critique tends to over-emphasise the difference between self and O/other as a binary. This Manichean distinction, as the postcolonial theorist Janmohamed (*in* Hsiesh, 1997:5) warns, may lead to an over-simplified identity construction. Ghandi (1998:31) and Harris (1981:86), however, argue that the sheer awareness of differences regarding race, culture, ethnicity, social class and status within colonial and colonised categories challenges the binary. Although the over-emphasis on the difference between the self and other can become problematic as the awareness of difference gives power to the binary, becoming aware of the distinction simultaneously creates a platform for the binary to be confronted and deconstructed.

It appears, in summary of the above postcolonial theorisation, that a symbiotic relationship of power exists between the self – being the dominating norm – and the O/other, it's dominated, less worthy opposite. During decolonisation and the transference of power, the binary was exposed, exchanging the gaze of the oppressor and oppressed. The binary between self and O/other, however, was not deconstructed but rather transferred by the gaze, which gives power to a new self (see Mirzoeff, [1998]2002). Accordingly, both positions are continuously removed from an independent identity as one part of the binary cannot exist without the other.

Another dimension of the dichotomy of self and otherness is what Mbembe (2001:13), in accordance with Fanon (1965; 1967), calls the economy of sexuality. The dichotomy between self and other as a form of domination was also based on the utilisation of subjectivities surrounding so-called femininity and masculinity. The sovereign self constructs a subjugated female O/other in order to validate himself. For the purposes of this study, a brief introduction of settler women's relationship to otherness is vital as Farber centres the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* on Guttmann's life-world.

2.3.2 [White] women and otherness

Feminist critique emphasises that women, in contrast to the oppressed colonised, do not have a memory of an identity *before* cultural and more specifically patriarchal attitudes and boundaries of oppression were set.[35] One strand of feminist thought argues that there is no memory, reflection or imagining of a narrative before the "master" came or before women were oppressed (cf. De Beauvoir, [1953]2005:387; Bartky, 2005:106). Bartky (2005:105) argues that subjugation through sexism can be compared to experiences of oppressed colonial subjects in terms of self-alienation. In other words, women who are oppressed by sexism become alienated from themselves. Bartky's argument in this regard is in agreement with Fanon's (1967:12) description of the psychological influence of the coloniser on the colonised.[36]

McClintock (2013:5) emphasises that "race, gender[37] and class are not distinct realms of experience" as they "come into existence *in and through* relation to each other". Women's experience of otherness is therefore determined by their interrelated social and racial position. Simultaneously, women and otherness cannot be removed from larger debates on gender and power and from what Stoler (*in* Cooper & Stoler, 1997:240) refers to as the "politics of exclusion". The experiences of settler-colonial women, for example, were significantly different from that of the oppressed.

[35] Both the Anglo-American and French feminist discourse asserts, in contrast with the colonised, that women do not have the same so-called original point of reference because their identity has been constructed by a patriarchal culture (Butler, 1993:149; Bartky, 2005:106).

[36] Fanon (1967:12) suggests, as influenced by the existentialist Sartre, that the colonised will never be able (regardless of acculturation) to achieve acceptance, which they have been conditioned to desire (Fanon, 2006:323,324). According to Fanon the constant need for cultural acceptance leads to black people wearing so-called white masks which inherently constructs another layer of psychological alienation of identity (cf. McLeod, 2000:18-19). Fanon frames this desire for cultural acceptance as a product of continuous racism and oppression as set by colonial sovereignty (cf. Bartky, 2005:105). For Bhabha (1985:153; also see 1994a), Fanon's distinction between black and white masks (*Black Skins, White Masks,* 1967) rather becomes a complex diminishing of boundaries. For Bhabha this image becomes one of colonial authority which declares resistance and therefore reflects past psychological alienation (cf. Loomba, 2005:149).

[37] Hambidge (2000:7) emphasises, in harmony with Butler (1993, 2002) that *gender* becomes a constructed product of societal culture which was framed long before the object of gender becomes. Hambidge argues, by referring to the American Barbie doll culture of the 1960s, that children from a very young age are conditioned and grouped within a specific culture by what she calls *gender codes.* Butler (2002:179), describes *gender* as being a performative act, which has been internalised and preceded by culture that is only "real to the extent that it is performed".

From a traditional postcolonial perspective, white women are positioned as the Other vis-à-vis black women who are gazed upon as the other[38]. White women, as Shohat (2006:41) remarks on colonial texts and film, "can be granted an ephemeral 'positional superiority'" as they become the "civilising centre" in the absence of the white European male. Shohat suggests that white women, although othered by men, simultaneously played an active role in the construction of colonial narratives as they took the place of the European self in the absence of men. Settler women became, as Sharpe (1993:8) notes, an "absent centre" of colonial discourse.

The arrival of European settler woman in the colonies changed the colonial encounter as settler society was redefined by what (Stoler, 1989:640) calls "embourgeoisment":

> European women supposedly required more metropolitan amenities than men and more spacious surroundings to allow it; their more delicate sensibilities required more servants and thus suitable quarters discrete and enclosed. In short, white women needed to be maintained at elevated standards of living, in insulated social spaces cushioned with the cultural artefacts of "being European."

Accordingly, the boundaries between public and private sectors of the colonial institution became blurred. Moreover, white women needed protection against the so-called exotic savage, which would tighten racial segregation through societal structures. According to Sharpe (1993:7), influenced by Spivak (1987:215-219), the presence of women in settler communities actively contributed to the change of emphasis in the colonies from "self-interest and moral superiority to self-sacrifice and racial superiority". Kipling's poem *White man's burden* (1899), which would become a metaphor for imperialism, comes to mind as colonialism was believed and promoted to be a noble act. Settler women became the beacons of a revived and heightened hegemonic attitude.

McClintock (2013:35) argues that women played a pivotal role in the construction of the colonial empire through the "cult of domesticity[39]", especially during settler

[38] McClintock (2013:44) emphasises that from the colonial gaze, black people were viewed as "gender deviants, the embodiments of prehistoric promiscuity and excess, their evolutionary belatedness evidenced by their "feminine" lack of history…" In this regard, a postcolonial and feminist critique offers a counter interpretation in order to bring colonial injustices to light by acknowledging black women's experiencing of three way othering: being black, being a woman and being a black woman.

[39] *Domesticity* for McClintock points both to a "space" and a "social relation to power". The cult of domesticity can be described as a cultural ideology promoting and upholding value systems for so-called true womanhood, ideal femininity and guidelines for being the "perfect" wife and mother. Ideas

colonialism of the 1800s. As McClintock (2013:36) points out that the verb *to domesticate* during settler colonialism also meant *to civilise.* In the colonies the institution of domesticity was used to uphold both racial and gender ideologies:

> Gender specific sanctions delineated hierarchies of power by refashioning middle-class conventions of respectability, which, in turn, prescribed the personal and public boundaries of race and class (Stoler 1989:635).

Stoler (1989:634) explains that gender sanctions (such as regulation of sexual relations) were "more limiting than those of metropolitan Europe at the time". Pels (1997:173), in agreement, points out that white women as agents of colonial domesticity had to "submit to far stricter rules" in order to uphold colonial authority. Pels goes on to emphasise that colonial sovereignty was in fact boosted by the delusion that settler women were not oppressed in the colonies. This misconception made the so-called liberation of settler women more difficult and the regulating of sexual and social boundaries by the colonial community harsher. Settler women were simultaneously blamed if sexual and social hierarchal rules between coloniser and colonised were transgressed due to their so-called provocative nature (Stoler, 1989:642). Accordingly, white settler women were expected to be both subordinates – othered by the colonial institution – and agents of colonial domesticity as they, in turn, othered the colonised (i.e. domestic workers).

In summary: As Said states, the O/othe*r* refers to complex relationships of power, authority, stereotyping and interests which are framed by a form of sovereignty. The dichotomy of self and O/other is associated with and simultaneously maintains various forms of oppression (cultural, political, economic and psychological) as well as alienation which is generated by a greater institutionalised system of privilege regarding race, class and/or gender. This system is kept intact by a hegemonic perception that the white European male is the worthy self and as such the centre. Anything different is gazed upon as the peripheral O/other. Both feminist and postcolonial discourse emphasise the becoming and existence of the O/other through

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of womanhood and domesticity was publicised in the 1800s through mediums of popular culture as "commodity spectacle" through, for example, women's magazines (see the magazine *The Godey's Lady's Book*, 1867) (McClintock, 2013:34; 125)

difference. This dependent relationship is based on and framed by hierarchal power structures which become institutionalised (and therefore internalised), the foundation of this idea being that the O/other is a mere imperfect, lesser version of the self. Consequently, a woman's identity, from a feminist perspective, is always placed lower than a man's. Her experience of otherness, however, is determined by her social and racial position. For example, white women are positioned as the Other against black women, who are gazed upon as the other. The following section addresses postcolonial complexities concerning movement and identity.

2.4 Movement and identity: diaspora, liminality and hybridity

As suggested by the title of the exhibition *Dis-Location/Re-Location* Farber visualises the search, relocation and transposition of identity by using what she (2012:ii) calls "disjunctures of identity arising from temporal and physical dislocations and relocations". As mentioned in Chapter One, Farber does this by investigating the so-called dislocation and relocation of identity in three collective, white, historical narratives which incorporate her own autobiographical identity in post-apartheid South Africa as the "postcolonial protagonist". Farber condenses all three narratives of displacement in the white body-protagonist. This becomes problematic, as the respective individual experiences of displacement are not taken into account. Guttmann's experience of displacement as a privileged Victorian settler cannot be compared to the diasporic experience of Farber's mother Kagan. In turn, the two historical personae's displacement is incomparable to the white displacement Farber experiences in post-apartheid South Africa. This section introduces a postcolonial understanding of the relationship between identity and movement[40] in order to situate the individual narratives of displacement presented in Chapter Four.

Rapport (2014:298) reiterates the importance of *construction* as part of anthropological theories of movement. Constructing as a means to produce, engage and imagine one's own experience during movement occurs from both an individual and collective perspective. As such, the migration of peoples, specifically within the historical context

[40] I specifically use the term "movement" as a complex system of fluidity that deconstructs notions of being bounded, separate, outside or apart from the fixed. Rapport (2014:298) defines movement from an anthropological framework as the "quintessence of how we – migrants and autochthones, tourists and locals, refugees and citizens, urbanites and ruralites – construct contemporary socio-cultural experience".

of colonialism, brought about new migrant settlements that disrupted straightforward, linear perspectives on identity formation. In traditional scholarship, migrant identities were constructed in relationship to a central, fixed point from where the movement of people took place. The notion of identity, the concept of home and the sense of self were positioned around this fixed point. "Movement" was described as the spaces between such points of fixity (Rapport & Overing, 2000:262-263). Of late, however, the need to reconceptualise the traditional relationship between identity and fixity emerged as a method to try and give language to the complexities of postcolonial identity formation:

> It becomes ever more urgent to develop a framework of thinking that makes the migrant central, not ancillary, to historical process. We need to disarm genealogical rhetoric of blood, property and frontiers and substitute for it a lateral account of social relations... An authentically migrant perspective would, perhaps, be based on an intuition that the opposition between here and there is itself a cultural construction, a consequence of thinking in terms of fixed entities and defining them oppositionally (Carter, 1992:7-8, 101).

Carter goes on to suggest that movement should be reconsidered not as an "awkward interval between fixed points of departure and arrival", but rather as a form of being. Being uprooted, relocated, dislocated or displaced as a tourist, migrant, refugee, native or settler becomes a symptom of a complex imagined fluid experience of identity. Dislocation is therefore a non-negotiable characteristic of modernity and the development thereof (cf. Nkosi, 1994:5; Berger, 1984:55). Displacement (being uprooted or relocated) should therefore not be seen as a space that refers to distance from a fixed centre, but rather as a call to rethink the nature of identity entanglements (cf. Mbembe, 2001:15).

Postcolonial authors sought to conceptualise the continuing influence of movement on identity as a result of the displacement and concurrent relocation of individuals that took place over 400 years of migration during colonialism and decolonisation. Through postcolonial perspectives on diaspora, hybridity and liminality postcolonial thinkers attempt to create awareness of the relationship between movement and identity.[41] These concepts, although postcolonial thought tends to focus on the peripheral in

[41] See especially in this regard Cohen, 1997; Carter, 1996; Rushdie, 1991; Bhabha, 1994; Young, 1995.

relation to a fixed structural centre, begin to give meaning to migrancy as a perpetual condition of possibilities and problems.

The following three subsections investigate the postcolonial understanding of diaspora, hybridity and liminality.

2.4.1 Diaspora

Farber (2012:13-16) motivates her choice of the theoretical construct *diaspora* in the series by linking it to the narratives of displacement of herself, the Jewish settler Guttmann, and her mother, the Jewish migrant Kagan. *Dis-Location/Re-Location* envisions diaspora by suggesting that the spaces wherein the body-protagonist is represented – the garden (see *Aloerosa*), Guttmann's boudoir (see *Ties that Bind Her*) and the reconstructed set based on Sammy Marks homestead (see *A Room of Her Own*) – are diasporic spaces.

Diaspora, derived from the Greek διασπορά, refers to the scattering, displacement and repositioning of individuals and consequently their identity. Today the term is most commonly associated with the 2 000-year long displacement of Jews – or in Hebrew תְּפוּצָה (tfutza, Jewish diaspora) – because of religious and socio-economic persecution (Stier, 2004:124; cf. Kagan & Morgan, 2009). Similarly, postcolonial theory uses *diaspora* to explore the search, displacement and general experience of alienation that occurred during the voluntary and involuntary scattering of colonist and colonised alike (cf. Kranson, 2012:77; Mirzoeff, [1998]2002; McLeod *in* Shackleton, 2008:3). From a postcolonial perspective, the term "diaspora" is related to the dispersal of people during the progress of Western imperialism and the effects of colonialism and decolonisation on both the settler and the colonised native. Procter (*in* McLeod, 2007:151) argues that a postcolonial understanding of diaspora denotes both a "*geographical* phenomenon – the traversal of physical terrain" and a "*theoretical* concept: a way of thinking, or of representing the world". *Diaspora* in this regard does not only refer to the geographical scattering of peoples but also considers the resulting psychological complexities that arise with terms such as outsider, stranger, immigrant, refugee, migrant or exiled (cf. Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:68; Clifford, 1997:11). For Clifford (1997:255) these terms, although bound by a "language of historical Diasporas" refer to the connection to an imagined concept of a home. McLeod (2010: 242), in similar

vein, highlights the concept of a home, which is invented and maintained in diaspora communities:

> The concept of "home" ... can act as a valuable means of orientation by giving us a sense of our place in the world. It tells us where we originated from and where we belong. As an *idea* it stands for sheltering, stability, security and comfort... To be "at home" is to occupy a location where we are welcome, where we can be with people very much like ourselves...

McLeod argues that for migrant identities who experience diaspora, *home* does not only refer to a place but also to a sense of belonging. As Rushdie (1991:10) notes, the construct *diaspora* develops as an “unstable and unpredictable” psychological zone because it is a disrupted sense of place. By this he means that a contradictory spatial awareness develops between the previous sense of belonging and the future. Bauman (2004:12) puts forward that the construct of belonging as a sphere of identity construction is emphasised when one’s sense of *belonging* is threatened. Autobiographical and collective identities are narrowly tied to belonging, which when threatened causes a feeling of alienation.

Correspondingly Cohen’s (1997:ix) description of diasporic communities emphasises that identity and a sense of belonging are situated geographically and psychologically in the previous country of origin. He (1997:26) distinguishes between two different conditions of diaspora. The first condition refers to the forceful removal that causes alienation of a group that share similar values, cultural or religious traditions or a similar sense of togetherness from their perception of *home.*

Cohen’s first distinction of diaspora as Hellig (1995:155) suggests, whilst referring to Jewish migration over 2000 years, is associated with extreme feelings and lasting consequences of trauma. Forceful dispersal is not only traumatic as one’s identity narrative (and sense of belonging) is disrupted, but also continues to disrupt the identity narratives of generations that follow. The second condition or criteria is an experience of diaspora which occurs as a result of the willing (and in some cases unwilling) expansion of a country’s borders and, by extension, that of its national identity. This condition is generally associated with the onset of colonialism and the founding of colonies outside of the imperial nation’s borders as with the expansion of the British Empire. Settlers had to relocate geographically as well as socially to a new

environment. From a colonial hegemonic perspective, this kind of diaspora is often associated with feelings of victimhood. By a feeling of victimhood, I am implying that colonial-settlers, as the self-perceived hegemonic gatekeeper of civilisation, saw their efforts in the colony as a sacrifice for the imperial nation. In accordance with a collective, homogeneous framework, this shared feeling simultaneously constructs a shared memory, which brings about a feeling of unity in "victimhood" (also compare Hutchinson, 2007:42-52; Leoussi & Grosby, 2007:8).

Fludernik (2003:xii) alternatively divides Cohen's second condition for diaspora into three different subdivisions: colonial diaspora; diaspora caused by slavery and perpetual dislocation by emigration; and lastly diaspora caused by self-exile, which is associated with temporary or semi-permanent mobility. Fludernik's (2003:xii) second subdivision concerning diaspora caused by slavery and perpetual dislocation is generally associated with unwilling and traumatic dispersal. The practice of slavery in the colonies[42] for example imposed unwilling, traumatic and permanent diaspora of slaves by perpetual ghettoisation. Slaves were unwillingly displaced to other territories, to a new *home* elsewhere. This in turn creates a literal and emotional displacement and consequent questioning of belonging. As such, migrants often experience a split between the *imagined* home which implies returning to what was known as home and an *experience* of not belonging in the new, which isn't home. This is especially evident in unwilling displacement and chronicles of diaspora as the migrant is further marginalised and othered in the new territory.

Diaspora fosters communal experiences of alienation and trauma. This in turn contributes to the construction of a collective memory (cf. Hutchinson, 2007:42-52). The effects of diaspora are therefore often felt long after traumatic events occurred.

McLeod (2000:207) highlights the complex relationships that exist between memory and the construction of identity for diasporic communities. He (2000:207) emphasises that children of migrant families (first-generation immigrants such as Kagan[43])

[42] For example an estimate of 63 000 slaves were imported from India, Indonesia and Sri Lanka (earlier known as Ceylon) as well as Guinea, Malaysia, Angola, Mauritius and Madagascar between 1658-1808 to southern Africa (cf. Thompson, 2006: 35; Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007:80)

[43] Kagan can be regarded as a first-generation immigrant, because she was three years old when moving to the then Union of South Africa. The term denotes someone who has immigrated to a new country and has acculturated to their new environment. The term "second-generation", accordingly suggests the future lineage (children) of first-generation immigrants (such as Leora Farber).

construct their identities simultaneously in “both spaces of origin”. Identity formation in this regard is therefore not only influenced spatially by their country of birth or the “new country” (where they resettle) but also by the memory and vicarious experience of their parent’s imagined sense of belonging. This in turn can be associated with Volkan's (*in* Fromm, 2012:173) description of intergenerational transmission of trauma. Volkan articulates it as follows:

> What cannot be contained, mourned, and worked through in one generation is transmitted, for the most part unconsciously, as affect, mission, and task to the next generation (Volkan *in* Fromm, 2012:173).

Volkan is of the opinion that trauma is conveyed from one generation to the next – generally subconsciously – through the construction of a collective “chosen trauma”. A so-called chosen trauma for Volkan entails a shared collective representation of trauma such as diaspora, which is reactivated by later generations when a “group identity” is threatened. Hence, certain memories and information remain hidden as a desirable narrative is constructed by for example historical remembrance.

In summary, diaspora and diasporic identities from a postcolonial perspective are characterised as a symptom of movement or dispersal of peoples which occurred over 400 years of colonialism. Global movements – which includes the willing or unwilling migration of peoples – are characterised by key issues regarding identity such as the questioning of constructs like *home* and *belonging,* which leads to experiences of displacement and trauma. Furthermore, the migration of peoples across imagined borders had a lasting impact on the identity formations of diasporic identities as well as descendants of diasporic movement. Descendants of diasporic migrant identities formed a new entangled identity and culture. The theorisation of the relationship between diasporic movement and identity has simultaneously led to the deconstruction of the idea that cultures are fixed.

Anthropologists such as Drummond (1980), Hannerz (1987) and Paine (1992) described the transformations that societies underwent as socio-cultural varieties or as “creolisation”.[44] This entangled culture and identity become what postcolonial

[44] Creolisation from this point of view can be described as a “concatenation of images and ideas” (Drummond, 1980:363) or as Hannerz (1993:68) describes “cultural flows in space”. Creolisation, in contrast to a prior structuralist perspective, emphasises the symbiotic, continuously connected and constant interacting of interrelations as characterised by a so-called global community. Herein,

theorists call a *hybrid* identity – a synthesis between variations of cultural entanglements which are brought forth by the continuing process of de/acculturation. Farber (2012:29) aligns her use of hybridity with a postcolonial understanding that relates to "cultural contacts and exchanges" and specifically with the work of Bhabha (1994). The visualisation of hybridity in the series, however, centres on the body-protagonist grafting indigenous southern African succulents (cf. *Aloerosa*) into her white flesh (see representational addendum). Farber therefore applies hybridity literally in the sense that she is investigating the merging of two different species which can rather be associated with a colonial botanical understanding. In what follows I investigate both Victorian notions of hybridity and a postcolonial understanding thereof.

2.4.2 Hybridity

Hybridity was originally used by Victorian botanists and zoologists to define new plant or animal species that originated as a "third" hybrid species when two existing species were merged together (cf. Young, 1995:8; Loomba, 2005:147; Ashcroft *et al.,* 1998: 118). The term would later gain a negative derogative connotation with the onset of colonialism and imperialism as the "mixing" of races and even classes were frowned upon. During the high tide of colonialism, and especially during the 1800s, humans were not classified as a singular species (*monogenic*) but rather classified as several varieties of species (*polygenic).* This is evident in the autobiographical documentations of for example the American general practitioner Nott (1804-1973), the Scottish anatomist Knox (1791-1862) as well as the German dictator Hitler (1889-1945), all of who opposed the so-called mixing of species and people from different origins. Hitler (1926:258) for example states in *Mein Kampf* that the segregation of different humans as species is a law of nature. According to this argument, so-called interspecies mixing would contaminate the pureness of a species and would be condemned by nature (cf. Knox, 1862:487).

This interpretation was directly opposed by evolution theorists from the natural sciences such as Darwin (1859:288), Broca (1824-1880) and Spencer (1820-1903), who claimed that humans were in fact a singular species, but consisted out of different

however, lies a warning as to not perceive the diminishing of structuralist thought on cultures and the advocating of cultural flow as a homogeneous reduction to sameness.

races (cf. Young, 1995:9-11). During this time the construct *hybridity*, which was in many instances used interchangeably with the term "mongrel"[45], was now used not to describe the amalgamation of so-called different species but rather between different races. The process of evolution as described distinctively by Darwin's (1859) process of natural selection and specifically Spencer's coining of the phrase (1864) "survival of the fittest", would later inspire a wave of cultural evolutionists that mainly stemmed from anthropological thought during the late 1800s.

Anthropologists such as Taylor (1874) and Morgan (1871), in accordance with the French Enlightenment thought of political philosopher Montesquieu (cf. *The Spirit of the Laws*, 1748), divided cultural groups in hierarchal stages of social evolution which was based on "social progression". This grouping entailed three stages of development: savagery, barbarism and civilisation. Morgan (1871:5-6) in turn divided each of these classifications into a lower, middle and upper stage. So-called social and cultural development from this perspective was then possible by means of evolution and possible for all. Taylor (2006:36) maintains that savage or barbaric assemblies, or anything perceived as lesser than "civilised", had "reached their position by learning and not by unlearning". The so-called civilised were therefore perceived, from a social evolutionist position, as the progressive, positioned at the top of the hierarchy of social evolution. This perspective suggests that colonisation could simultaneously be morally and socially justified from the settler's hegemonic gaze. Colonial settlers regarded themselves as the saviours of the barbaric savage as they were to civilise them. Concurrently the settlers, as product of the imperial colony, perceived themselves as both the guardians and the gatekeepers of the process of social evolution. This in turn fuelled the hegemonic attitude of sovereignty of race by settlers towards the lesser other.

The onset of Western imperialism and capitalism, and the resulting geographic scattering of colonialists and settler colonies, are characterised by a simultaneous entitlement (by the Eurocentric self) to unification and differentiation. As with the

[45] The term "mongrel" was originally used during the 1800s by what Young (1995:9) calls the extreme Victorian right, to distinguish between *monogenists* and *polygenists,* especially when the argument was raised that humans being of different species were opposed. A "mongrel" was used to describe racial mixing whilst hybridity was used to indicate interspecies mixing (cf. Huxly, 1863 *in* Dailey, 2000:226). The terms would later be used interchangeably with each other as well as further derogative animalistic terms such as *mule*.

dichotomy between self and O/other, it was necessary for settlers to keep the so-called civilised society in place by disrupting the so-called barbaric domestic culture and simultaneously encouraging fears about difference. The latter was based on difference of culture, class and race. As such, hybridity was condemned as it would disrupt "cultural stability" and justify segregation and cultural sovereignty (Young, 1995:4). Within a colonial framework *hybridity* was something to be feared as it would also jeopardise the hierarchy of power (which was based on race and class) (cf. Young, 1995:9:18). Various attempts, by law and social conditioning, were put into place by the colonies in an attempt to keep society segregated as different homogeneous wholes.

The scattering and migration of peoples during and after colonisation and decolonisation continue to influence identity construction today. The postcolonial construct *hybridity* can generally be associated with the construction of new inter- and transcultural identities which were brought into view by the onset and progression of coloniality and modernity (cf. Shohat, 1993:110; Bhabha, 1985:153). From this perspective, hybridity can be used to describe the lasting impacts of the dispersal, forced migration and general shifting of "cultural boundaries" that took place as a result of colonisation on identity. The postcolonial interpretation of hybridity frequently uses hybridity as a one-dimensional product of so-called transformative and assimilative impacts between "cultures", knowledge and geographic exchange. This becomes problematic when exchanges between the coloniser or settler and the colonised are regarded to be equal.

The term is also used to identify the identity complexities that arose and the consequential effects hybridity as a product of migrations had on so-called homogeneous cultures and communities (Young, 1995:4). Postcolonial authors such as Rushdie (1992) and Bhabha (1994) (themselves migrants) perceive hybridity as a way to debunk, demystify and "rewrite" the colonial narrative of migration. The migration of people during colonisation and decolonisation also activated new transformative cultural impacts or *transculturation.* The term "transculturation", coined by Cuban anthropologist Ortiz, was offered as a replacement to the terms "acculturation" and "deculturation", which described a traditional deductive, linear perspective of cultural exchange (cf. Pratt, 1992:228). Pratt (1992:4) emphasises that

transculturation is “a phenomenon of the contact zone”. The contact zone according to Pratt refers to a social space (such as the imperial metropolis, the colony or the post-colony) where the mutual influencing of modes of imaginings and representations framed by so-called cultural practices take place. Pratt questions the construction of these contact zones as European constructions and representations of themselves, their habitats as well as the imperial metropolis’ understanding of a subordinated other:

> While the imperial metropolis tends to understand itself as determining the periphery (in the emanating glow of the civilizing mission or the cash flow of development, for example), it habitually blinds itself to the ways in which the periphery determines the metropolis – beginning, perhaps, with the latter’s obsessive need to present and re-present its peripheries and its others continually to itself (Pratt, 1992:6).

This can in turn be linked to a postcolonial critique of the self/other dichotomy, which, as suggested earlier, becomes a symbiotic, fluid mimicry as one cannot become without the other. I maintain that the transcultural hybrid contact zone as a product of colonialism and or decolonisation is an imagined, representative space where the hegemonic power relations of identity (such as the dichotomy between self and O/oth*er*) plays out. Emphasis in this regard is placed on the hybrid zone as being in constant movement.

Hybrid identities remain in constant movement. Rather, they are border subjectivities. Hybridity from a postcolonial perspective therefore also draws on the hybridisation of knowledge. For Bhabha (1994:12) hybridity makes it possible to think beyond the boundaries, borders, binary perceptions or physical characteristics of so-called totalising identity notions brought about by colonial narratives. In this regard, Young (1995:163) objects to the indiscriminate use of the term “hybrid” as its historical usage within colonial discourse and inherently hegemonic racism is ignored.

Young (1996:9) argues that by evoking the Victorian vocabulary of hybridity in postcolonial thought we are simultaneously occupying and emphasising colonial notions of difference and sameness. Young (1995:163) warns that the re-interpretation of the term “hybridity” in postcolonial discourse is problematic. Even though it emphasises mutuality and the erasure of difference, the term’s hegemonic, racial history cannot be ignored. Young (1995:23), however, in agreement with Bhabha

(1994) also recognises that hybridity has the potential to undermine colonial structures by challenging the hegemonic notions of difference and separation.

From this optimistic postcolonial approach, hybridity, in accordance with Bhabha (1994:2), should be celebrated as a platform through which racial domination can be deconstructed. Emphasis in this regard is placed on cultural exchange as a valued necessity to disregard difference and not on biological conditioning such as race. As such, Eurocentric attitudes regarding hierarchy according to race are undermined (cf. Shohat, 1993:110; Bhabha, 1985:153). From a postcolonial perspective, hybridity reflects on the construction of new identities especially in the arenas of language, culture and social foundations. As such, hybridity functions as a critique of colonial hegemony (Loomba, 2005:145).

2.4.3 Liminality

Farber (2012:48-49), in her theoretical reflection on the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location,* uses liminality corresponding with that of cultural theorist Mieke Bal's (2011:14) understanding of the term.[46] Farber (2012:29) visualises Bal's understanding of the liminal[47] in the series similarly to hybridity with imagery of skin grafting and botanical hybridity (see representational addendum). For Farber (2012:48) the graft symbolises Guttmann's confrontation with the foreign (the outside), whilst for her personally it signifies embracing the stranger within (from the inside): "Crossing cultural or psychological thresholds enables the protagonist to enter a liminal space located in-between self and other". Whether the protagonist actually confronts "cultural or psychological thresholds" is debatable, as the graft in the series does not seem viable. It is as if the body-protagonist in the series is rather caught in what Bhabha (1994:9-11) describes as the "unhomely". Bhabha's notion of the unhomely deals with a transition – a liminal space – in which domestic and public worlds clash. Bhabha (1994:11) states: "The unhomely moment relates the traumatic ambivalences of a personal, psychic history to the wider disjunctions of political

[46] Bal, from a narratology point of view, denotes liminality as "…the boundary between inside and outside, not as a border, not a line, but a space where insiderness and outsiderness can be negotiated, transformed, and swapped".

[47] The construct *liminal* stems simultaneously from the Latin nouns *liminis* (or limen) meaning threshold and *transire* (*trans* emphasising the *beyond*) - to cross over to the other side (cf. Oxford dictionary of word origins, 2010).

existence”. This is especially relevant in a settler-colonial context when the coloniser feels that the so-called foreign outside threatens their concept of the familiar – home. Liminality was first used by anthropologists Van Gennep ([1909]2013) and Turner (1969, 1977, 1982) to describe the different stages (and the social roles ascribed to each stage) of the *rites of passage* during rituals. Van Gennep’s ([1909]2013) contribution especially lies in his description of ritual and the interrelated symbolic and physical meaning of each stage that altered an individual’s social status and role. He ([1908]1960:21) divided the ritual passage into three stages, namely the separation phase (the pre-liminal), the caesura (the liminal) and the reincorporation phase (the post-liminal). The caesura or the liminal period is a transitional moment where an active process of negating previously structured social orders and roles take place.

This notion was taken further by Victor Turner (1969, 1977 and 1982), who maintained that liminality is more than a mere *transitional moment* but rather an “interstructural position”. By this, he meant that liminality was associated with structural marginality as being “here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention and ceremonial” (1969:81). Turner’s emphasis on liminality’s ambiguous dependence on structure simultaneously posits liminality’s dualistic marginal interposition as the source of structure:

> Here I would like to repeat the ‘Orphic’ level of ritual, which transcends both structure and antistructure, the oppositions ... become irrelevant, a new arbitrariness appears in the relation between signifier and signified – things cease to signify other things, for everything is, the Saussurean significative dualism yields to a basal non-dualism where signifier and signified dissolve into indiscriminable existence (Turner, 1992:157).

As such, the liminal or the threshold is more than a transitional moment, but rather an anti-structural occurrence that challenges hierarchy and can unpredictably dismantle the order of power. The symbolic Turnerian redefinition of liminality as a realm of “pure possibility whence novel configurations of ideas and relations” ascends (Turner, 1967: 97) was highly influential on poststructural approaches towards culture such as Bhabha’s (1994) postcolonial use of the construct during his description of hybrid identities: “the slippage of signification that is celebrated in the articulation of difference” (Bhabha, 1994:235). Bhabha (1994:3-4) quotes American artist and art

historian Renee Green on her site specific art work *Sites of Geneology*[48] (1990) to illustrate his interpretation of the *liminal*. In *Sites of Geneology* Green uses architecture to investigate the in-between and ambivalent moments that are constructed by so-called structures of society:

> I used architecture literally as a reference, using the attic, the boiler room, and the stairwell to make associations between certain binary divisions such as higher and lower and heaven and hell. The stairwell became a liminal space, a pathway between the upper and lower areas, each of which was annotated with plaques referring to blackness and whiteness. (Renee Green *in* Bhabha, 1994:3-4).

Bhabha uses Green's stairwell, the in-between or the liminal, as a symbolic space between departing and arriving, lower and upper, black and white, the here and the now. Quasha (*in* Hill et al. 1998:58) similarly, in conversation with installation and video artist Gary Hill (born 1951), highlights the potential of "liminal objects" in art. Quasha denotes liminal artefacts as "objects on the threshold" that refer to more than themselves as objects but rather to being engaged with being in-between. Rumelili (2012:496) emphasises that liminals – be that spaces, artefacts or identity disjunctures – "undermine the categorical" divisions that society favours.

Accordingly, the liminal (as Turner and Bhabha maintain) has the potential to deconstruct, dismantle and dislocate previous hierarchal power structures (cf. Bhabha, 1994:1, 7). Here displaced identities renegotiate their newly found position (such as the new country of settlement after migration) by means of transculturation. Accordingly, the liminal becomes an "in-between" confrontational temporary position, acting as a "third space of enunciation" which in agreement with Turner's description denounces antagonistic binaries. Simultaneously, this third space is not bound by structured linearity, as poststructuralism advocates, such as past or present, a so-called inside and outside or conventional perceptions of identity.

From a postcolonial perspective, the liminal experience therefore suspends colonial dualisms between self/other, master/slave, or native/foreigner. Bhabha frames this assertion, in line with the postcolonial theorist Spivak (cf. *Can the Subaltern speak?*,

[48] Renee Green's site specific art work *Sites of Geneology* (1990) forms part of the exhibition *Out of Site* at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Long Island City, New York (cf. (Nagel Galerie Draxler 2015).

[1988]1997), on the basis that identity is an always-mutable *discursive*[49] product of culture. Accordingly, identity construction is an ongoing, fluid and changing process as external power positions shift. From this stance, Bhabha (1994:2, 34-35, 179) maintains that identity is constructed from individual and collective identity narratives as it is performed in the now, rather than from past inherited structures. This does not suggest that past structures of knowledge are dismissed, but rather converted. Thus, identity processes in the limen or the third space of enunciation can be renegotiated and re-inscribed by the performance of identity:

> Terms of cultural engagement, whether antagonistic or affiliative, are produced performatively. The representation of difference must not be hastily read as the reflection of *pre-given* ethnic or cultural traits set in fixed tablet of tradition. The social articulation of difference, from the minority perspective, is a complex, on-going negotiation... (Bhabha, 1994:2).

For Bhabha "the importance of social articulation of difference" becomes a reflective platform of agency by which the past can be restaged and the liminal subject can be empowered and recognised. Rumelili (2012:500-501) emphasises, in agreement, that a recognition of the liminal becomes significant as it is here where "the discursive order breaks down and inevitable instability of meaning is exposed". In other words, for Rumelili and Bhabha, liminality contains the agency to "deconstruct hegemonic discourses" as it breaks down binaries and offers a means to resist, refuse and challenge colonial authority. The colonised, as what Rumelili (2012:501) refers to as "liminal actor", becomes a "guerrilla" agent as they reproduce and reinterpret knowledge (originally from a colonial master narrative) and re-appropriate it within the liminal. Hegemonic discourse is accordingly deconstructed from the inside rather than from the outside as the encounter between coloniser and colonised is not equal (Kapoor, 2003:568).

Bhabha (1994:38) in this sense, suggests that the third space of enunciation offers the possibility to conceptualise a level playing field between the marginal and the centre, which is not based on the hegemonic emphasis of difference by "exoticism of multiculturalism" but rather on the voicing of hybridity. Bhabha has been criticised

[49] Both Spivak and Bhabha use and emphasise, from a poststructuralist approach, *discursive* as an unpredictable, complex identity process which generally refers to the construction of *self* as being a product of external (rather than internal) power structures (cf. McLeod, 2010:218).

alongside other postcolonial authors such as JanMohamed (1985) and Spivak for their overly deconstructive approach, which according to Parry (1987:27-58), silences the oppressed further. In other words, a poststructuralist, postcolonial approach has the tendency to overtheorise and overtextualise discourse, to the detriment of actualities. Furthermore, as Parry's (2004:69) extended critique attests, Bhabha, in his repudiation of binaries and structuralism, has the tendency to oversimplify the deconstruction of these structures in loose global or multicultural phenomena. This can possibly rather give agency to supressing hegemonic difference by sameness which is in itself problematic. Nevertheless, Bhabha's reconceptualisation of the liminal makes room for the voicing of the complexities that displaced, relocated, migrant or diaspora identities experience. By dismissing and disrupting the identity constructions inherited from the past, boundaries are shifted towards a state of becoming instead of a state of being. Concurrently, for Bhabha (1994:7, 37-38) the liminal becomes a pre-condition for change, a necessity for identity intervention by which re-evaluation can take place.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter presented a postcolonial inquiry into the complexities of displacement and identity as motivated by Farber's (2012) retroactive reflection on the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location*. This was done in order to provide a theoretical framing towards an alternative critical reading of the series in Chapter Five.

Specific focus was placed on the dichotomy of self and O/other as well as the spatial complexities of displacement namely diaspora, liminality and hybridity. It has been demonstrated in the preceding subsections that these identity complexities, from a postcolonial perspective, offer a critical platform through which the ongoing effects and consequence of colonialism on identity can be interrogated. Moreover, it provides a critical theoretical space where identity complexities can be renegotiated as it "interrupts the performance of the present", as Bhabha in the epitaph of this chapter suggests.

A postcolonial understanding of these selected identity issues are of importance as Farber's series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* strongly resonates with a neo-Victorian colonial landscape. Visually the series is centred on a white settler body – Guttmann, enacted by Farber. This becomes problematic as the white body, akin to colonial

discourse, is centred as the self. Farber, as a white woman, simultaneously plays the part of Other through the absent gaze of the white European male as she enacts the domestic settler-world of Guttmann. Moreover Farber utilises the complexities of identity and movement, diaspora, hybridity and liminality, to investigate the displacement experienced by the Other (Guttmann, Kagan and herself) by means of the visual metaphor of grafting. Farber accordingly seems to suggest that the body-protagonist, who represents three respective identity narratives, becomes a visual site of displacement.

As will be argued later in this thesis, the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* (which is informed by postcolonial discourse) represents a fabricated colonial simulacrum. The next chapter of this thesis therefore investigates Baudrillard's conceptualisation of the simulacrum.

CHAPTER THREE

Imaginings of the real: Baudrillard's conceptualisation of the simulacrum

> Thus everywhere the hyperrealism of simulation is translated by the hallucinatory resemblance of the real to itself (Baudrillard, [1981]1994:23).

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter of this thesis offered a critical postcolonial enquiry into complexities of displacement and identity focussing on otherness, hybridity, diaspora and liminality, paving the way for an alternative interpretation of the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location.* As suggested in the first two chapters of this study, the visually presented self in *Dis-Location/Re-Location* raises questions regarding the construction of an imagined postcolonial identity in a (re)imagined colonial setting. This chapter, as the second theoretical premise, considers Jean Baudrillard's exploration of the simulacrum as a theoretically and methodological platform through which Farber's visual, postcolonial (re)imagining of the self can critically be interpreted as a fabricated simulacral documentation of (un)belonging.

This chapter is structured around introducing Baudrillard's notion of the simulacrum and introducing Baudrillardian-inspired ideas concerning the imagining of the self. Introducing and situating Baudrillard's use of the term "simulacrum" calls for a philosophical contextualisation, referring to Plato's distinction of the *Idea* and material real, to classical Marxism and to semiotics. This is followed by a discussion of Baudrillard's orders of the simulacrum and imagining a self, which will form an imperative part of my interpretation of *Dis-Location/Re-Location*. Although Baudrillard did not specifically conceptualise his theory of the simulacrum with matters of identity or postcolonial complexities in mind, I argue that the key elements of the simulacrum can be applied and used to frame notions of imagining the postcolonial self in *Dis-Location/Re-Location*.

3.2 Baudrillard’s simulacrum: a contextualisation[50]

The French poststructuralist Jean Baudrillard’s (1976, 1981; 1983) philosophical-theoretical conceptualisation of the *simulacrum* (singular) or *simulacra* (plural) questions the metaphysical real as we perceive, imagine or experience it. The construct *simulacra* originated from the Latin verbs *simulare, simulo* or *simulavi*: to copy, to counterfeit or to fake (cf. Oxford dictionary of word origins, 2010). Baudrillard’s (1983:1) main argument regarding the simulacrum, however, is framed (as mentioned in Chapter One) by a central paradox: "The simulacrum is never that which conceals the truth – it is truth which conceals that there is none. The simulacrum is true".

This paradox firstly suggests that there is a division between the "truth" and the so-called represented truth, which from Baudrillard’s (1983:1) perspective suggests an original and a copy. Simultaneously this paradox declares that although the copy represents the original, it is no longer a copy but rather a new original. With this paradox Baudrillard wants the reader to assume that the copy only resembles the original from the assumption that the copy is different from the original. Yet, what it really comes down to for Baudrillard is that there is no longer a copy of an original or an original, but merely what he calls a *simulacrum.* So what is the difference between a counterfeit and a simulacrum? Let me start off by using the same detour through the history of philosophy that Baudrillard used.

The origins of the notion of “simulation” can be traced back to Plato’s (428 BC - 348 BC) theory of *mimēsis.* In Book X of *The Republic*, Plato divides reality into a high and a low order. Plato’s higher order refers to the unseen *Idea-reality;* whilst the lower order denotes the perceived material, *visual reality.* The perceived lower order is fluid and changeable in nature, whereas the *Idea-reality* is constant, original (primordial) and ideal. In the *Republic* ([508b-509c]2003) Plato illustrates his argument with the allegory of the cave. The allegory describes a group of individuals who are bounded to the back of a cave wall. Their only visible contact with the outside world are the shadows that are projected (from the reality outside the cave) on the opposite wall. These shadows become their only truth. According to Plato a philosopher, by escaping

[50] This section, especially the three orders of the simulacrum, was conceptualised in conjunction with an article *Reflective conversations: Baudrillard’s orders of the simulacrum* published in *The South African Journal of Art History* (see Goosen, 2014 96-111, Vol 29_4).

from the cave, becomes aware that these are mere shadows and comes to understand that they are only projections of the Idea-reality from outside the cave. The individuals in the cave will, however, never be able to comprehend the true, original forms of the shadows as they are bounded by the only reality they know – the cave. The visual reality (the cave) accordingly becomes a platform through which the shadows – the imperfect reproductions or *mimēsis* of the *Idea-reality* – is projected. The *Idea-reality* for Plato is an unseen world, which exists objectively and isn't bound by the boundaries of time and space. The *Idea-reality* provides the perfect prototypes for everything that we experience or perceive in the *visual reality*. Our connection as human beings to the *Idea-reality* only takes place on an intellectual level by means of philosophy. The subjective self finds her-/himself within the material, *visual reality* and can only completely embrace the perfect and the whole *Idea-reality* by ridding her-/himself of the restraint of the fleeting, mortal and perishable reality.

In contrast to Aristotle[51], Plato's theory of *mimēsis* offers a rather negative critique of the visual arts:

> The art of mimēsis is … a long way removed from truth, and it is able to reproduce everything because it has little grasp of anything, and that little is of a mere phenomenal appearance (Plato, [598b-598c]2003).

Plato (598b-598c) explains this critique by referring to the example of a painter who paints a representation of the *visual reality* such as a painting or sculpture of a shoe. The painting or sculpture of the shoe is a reproduction of the shoemaker's already copied shoe of the perfect (the constant, universal, permanent, and conceptual) *Idea* of a shoe. A reproduced image, such as a painting or sculpture, therefore becomes for Plato the *mimēsis* of *mimēsis.* This "unmasking" of representation as an unoriginal emphasises Plato's view that it requires no "respectable" skill - unlike craftsmanship (the making of the shoe) which requires knowledge (*epistēmē)* and ability. For Plato the unknowledgeable artist can therefore not have an opinion (*doxa)* on any of the subjects the artist paints (Plato, [602a]2003). For Plato the visual arts are a mere re-

[51] Plato's definition and negative critique of a *mimēsis* towards the visual arts is not the only argument from Classical aesthetic thought. Aristotle's (384b-322c) texts *De Anima* and *De Memoria* and more specifically the incomplete text *Poetica* offers a counter argument in which he perceives the arts as a so-called positive *mimēsis* (cf. Kearney, 2001:106). However, for the purposes of contextualising Baudrillard's conceptualisation of the simulacrum, only briefly offer an outline of Plato's perspective on the *mimēsis.*

representation of the already represented *lower order of reality* and a deceitful and immoral theatrical vehicle of pleasure, twice removed from the pure, perfect *Idea* (cf. Durham, 1998:7).

Baudrillard (1983), writing from a poststructuralist position, deconstructs[52] the Platonic distinction between a lower and higher reality as a point of critique through which he problematises the heightening of post-industrial consumer capitalism (which escalated especially after the Second World War, 1939-1945). According to Baudrillard (1983) post-industrial consumer capitalism no longer reflects any reference to a pure, original, true *idea* reality due to the continuous reproduction of mere simulacra as we have entered, what Baudrillard calls, the age of simulation.[53] Baudrillard here uses the simulacrum, as a theory of representation, to refer to copies without originals which inherently deconstruct the principle of authenticity as a point of reference. In other words: Plato's dualism, between an original *Idea* reality and a copied, lower reality ceases to exist, as there is no longer any *Idea* which signifies an original or an imitation thereof. Only simulations remain (cf. Baudrillard, 1983:4). In this regard Baudrillard (1983:4) highlights the crucial distinction between a simulation and a dissimulation.

Baudrillard's use of the term "dissimulation", partly with reference to Plato's mimēsis, refers to the pretence of a true reality which he calls a prototype. A dissimulation (or to dissimulate) highlights the *pretence* of a prior truth and does not declare, like Plato's dualism, the existence of a prior, original truth. As such a dissimulation becomes a veil or a masquerade which leaves the principle of reality intact, but not the reality as such. Therefore, as the verb "to masquerade" suggests, dissimulation exists on the basis of difference between the presence of a so-called original truth and an untrue, unoriginal truth. Dissimulation for Baudrillard, then, is to pretend by means of a copy that there is a true original. Here Baudrillard ([1981]1994:3) uses the example of an individual who pretends to have an illness. The individual masquerades the truth by faking symptoms and therefore appears to be sick to others. Simulation, on the other hand, refers to masquerading past the point of pretending to have something that one

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[52] Baudrillard's regular use of the term "utopia" (cf. further Baudrillard [1981]1994:6; 2006:1) can be compared with Plato's conceptualisation of an Idea reality as a dichotomy of the material real. Baudrillard, however, uses the term to emphasise the indistinguishable notion between what is perceived as real/ ideal/ original and the so-called copy/visual or unoriginal and therefore rather refers to the deconstruction of Plato's dichotomy.

[53] Baudrillard first explored the notion of simulations and simulcra in his key text *Symbolic exchange and death,* 1976 and further elaborated in *Simulacra and Simulation*, [1981]1994 and *Simulations,* 1983.

doesn't have (Baudrillard 1983:3). In other words, using the same example, an individual who simulates an illness starts producing the actual symptoms of the illness (which they did not have). Concurrently, simulations impend the boundaries between "true and false, the real and the imaginary", as the individual is showing actual symptoms which implies that she/he is actually sick. But the person cannot be sick as they never had the illness to begin with. Herein lies the central paradox of the simulacrum: the simulacrum, unlike a dissimulation, does not veil the truth but rather deconstructs any reference to a truth, thereby becoming the truth. For Baudrillard (1983:2-3) the simulacrum is not enclosed by the imaginary any longer and therefore does not function in a system of representation; rather, it is a self-produced system:

> ... the age of simulation thus begins with a liquidation of all referentials – worse: by their artificial resurrection in systems of signs, a more ductile material than meaning, in that it lends itself to all systems of equivalence... It is no longer a question of imitation, nor of reduplication, nor even of parody. It is rather a question of substituting signs of the real for the real itself... (Baudrillard, 1983:4).

Baudrillard (1983:2-4) goes on to note that the simulacrum in the age of simulation declares the death of the real as the real will never have to be produced again. In order to understand the so-called death of the real, an overview of the influence of classical Marxist thought and semiotics on Baudrillard's hypothesis of the simulacrum is required. This is necessary as Baudrillard's declaration of the age of simulation is closely tied to the rise of a post-industrial consumer capitalism.

In this regard Baudrillard ([1968]1996;[1970]1998) argues that the rise of consumerism after the Second World War brought about an escalated consumer-based society fuelled by mass production. Baudrillard ([1968]1996:3; [1970]1998:25) attests that the ever-increasing accumulation of products by consumers simultaneously results in the "luxuriant growth of objects" which would fundamentally change the value of these products. Here Baudrillard offers, as an extension of Marx's analysis of the commodity, a reconceptualisation of our relationship to objects as commodities within a consumer society.

Marx ([1867]1982:125-126) argued that in capitalist societies commodities consist of both a use and an exchange value. According to Marx, the exchange value of commodities affirms the inequality of power between the affluent bourgeoisie and the

working class. Capitalist modes of production brought about what Marx described as the estrangement of individuals (of especially the workers) (cf. Marx, [1844]1978:133; Stevenson & Haberman, 1998:130). This formed part of his theory of alienation. As a consequence of class and power inequalities, Marx ([1844]1978:134) differentiates between four different principles of alienation, namely; (i) the estrangement of labour from the product as commodity, (ii) estrangement from the production process by the worker and (iii) the alienation of the worker from their essence as human beings and (iv) the estrangement experienced between individuals. Marx proposes that the inhumane process of alienation brought about by capitalism can only be deconstructed by revolution and the subsequent rise of communism.

Baudrillard (1972:80-82) however, corresponding with Bataille (1991), expands on Marx's theory of alienation by suggesting that the estrangement experienced in a late-capitalist society lies in symbolic exchange value of products:

> …beneath the mute gaze of mesmerizing, obedient objects which endlessly repeat the same refrain: that of our dumbfounded power, our virtual affluence, our absence one from another… (Baudrillard, [1970]1998:25).

For Baudrillard, late-capitalist society has produced a consumer's world of excess, which no longer values products for use but rather for status and this causes alienation from so-called "true value". Over-reproduced consumer objects have in late-capitalist society been made accessible to the middle and working classes (something unforeseen by Marx). The symbolic exchange value, according to Baudrillard, encompasses much more than the mere use and exchange value of products, since they are accompanied by layers of pre-negotiated networks of "empty value" as determined by late-capitalist cultural conventions. These products no longer have any use value as objects; their power is symbolic. Symbolic power, in Baudrillard's terms, refers to the consumerist conviction that products, regardless of their functionality, hold a certain social status and that this status is predetermined by class (Baudrillard, 1976:423; 1983:194-196). As such, the symbolic power of products are embedded in a system of meaning which is articulated by social codes rather than the functionality of objects (cf. Kellner, 2006:3). This implies that individuals, as part of a consumer society, gain status, identity and a hierarchal position through the symbolic power of commodities. In this regard one can therefore argue that consumer commodities

become part of a differential system of status in which meaning and value is generated by their position in the system. The symbolic exchange value simultaneously leads to the alienation of meaning as value is no longer represented by function. Status, then, as reflected by the symbolic exchange value of commodities, becomes an ideology which is performed and determined by the affluent elite.

For Baudrillard, value is the primary illusion that drives consumer ideology, since it constructs and assigns meaning to objects which do not hold any significance. This for him leads to absolute reification.[54] A consumer ideology, in turn, promotes the illusion of value simultaneously deconstructing the notion of the real – that the real holds no value.[55] Here Baudrillard ([1981]1994:3) draws on semiotic and poststructuralist thought to expand on the symbolic exchange value of signs and representation.[56] He argues, from a semiotic perspective, that within the simulacrum signs no longer represent anything other than themselves. Baudrillard emphasises that in a system of symbolic exchange, signs merely create the illusion of representing a real.

To summarise: Baudrillard's conceptualisation of the simulacrum, as inspired by Plato's dichotomy, and a Marxian and poststructuralist conceptualisation of value, is centred on a paradox between a so-called true reality and a represented reality. Baudrillard argues that value in late capitalism, specifically in a post-1945 consumer society, embodies a system of symbolic exchange. Within a system of symbolic exchange, value does not represent anything other than itself. Baudrillard views this as the death of representation and the advent of the age of simulation. Accordingly,

[54] Baudrillard borrows this phrase from neo-Marxism and specifically *die Frankfurter Schule*, (cf. O'Connor, 2000:iii; Snyman, 1987:155; Delius *et al.,* 2005: 108). Reification is described by the Marxian sociologist Lukács (1971) as the process by which consumers are dominated by consumer products to such an extent that they become objectified (cf. Kellner, 2006:5). This leads to the dehumanisation of individuals. As the neo-Marxist Marcuse (1964:37) emphasises: "The reification of labour power, driven to perfection, would shatter the reified form by cutting the chain that ties the individual to the machinery. [Automation] would open the dimension of free time as the one in which man's private and societal existence would constitute itself".

[55] The notion of ambivalence towards value, from Baudrillard's perspective, is the only possible intervention that will unmask the illusion of value within consumer ideology.

[56] The construct representation, from a semiotic perspective is based on the principle of equivalence between a sign and the presented real. The Italian semiotic thinker Umberto Eco ([1976]1979:7) explains: "thus, semiotics is in principle the discipline studying everything which can be used in order to lie".

the simulacrum radically deconstructs the value of signs, since it is framed by what Baudrillard calls the equivalence principle:

> … the real and the non-real, birth and death. In the symbolic operation, the two terms lose their reality. The reality principle is never anything other than the imaginary of the other term. Each term of the disjunction excludes the other, which eventually becomes its imaginary (Baudrillard, 1976:134).

Baudrillard explains that the deconstruction of so-called true value by the symbolic value leads to the end of what is traditionally perceived as the real versus the imaginary. This occurs as the original reality (as we understood it) is deconstructed by its own binary – that which it is not (cf. Derrida, 1981:195), as such declaring the death of value and thereby the death of the real. Baudrillard, however, states that this demise of the real did not occur suddenly with the rise of a late-capitalism society but rather gradually with the temporal successions or orders of the simulacrum, which he refers to as the "precession of simulacra" (1983).

3.3 The orders of simulacra

Baudrillard (1981) arranged the systematic loss of the real and the rise of simulacra in an ironic, temporal simulated history of what he calls the orders of simulacra (1981).[57] Although he denied any such influence, Baudrillard's ideas may be viewed as an extension of Foucault's *The Order of Things* (1966). Foucault's *The Order of Things* suggests that all historical periods contain temporal epistemological assumptions or episteme which each reflects determined representations. Similarly Baudrillard's orders of the simulacrum frame a so-called temporal, historical and ironic point of origin for the simulacrum. By declaring a "historical" precession of simulacra, Baudrillard both ridicules and verifies his reconceptualisation of the simulacrum. The simulacrum declares the death of origin which inherently deconstructs the possibility of a temporal, historical origin. Simultaneously, within a system of symbolic exchange and the age of simulations, meaning is generated and understood according to Baudrillard (1981, 1983) only through simulacra.

[57] Baudrillard is especially indebted to Foucault's conceptualisation of the transition between the Renaissance order (which is based on equivalence) and the classical order (which is based on similarity) (see Butler *in* Smith, 2010:78-80).

Baudrillard (1981, 1983) divided the temporal “precession of simulacra” into three orders (similar to Foucault’s three episteme of representation), namely: The first order of imitation, the second order of production and the third order of simulation. Each of these orders is associated with a different historical period and sequential phase of the image. The first order of imitation – the counterfeit – coincides with the Renaissance and the Baroque (1400-1800). The second order – production – dominates the industrial age and culminates in the Industrial Revolution of the 1800s, and the third order – simulation – is most prevalent in late-capitalist consumerism, especially after the Second World War (1939-1945). As briefly introduced, the simulacrum (as part of the third order of simulation) reflects the complete loss of an original real as symbolic exchange overshadows the use value of commodities. For Baudrillard, symbolic value is the primary illusion behind consumerism and the death of the real. Baudrillard illustrates this metamorphosis of the sign by means of the orders of simulacra alongside the phases of the image. Baudrillard ([1981]1998:170) would theoretically expand on the third order of simulacra by developing four successive phases which he specifically attributes to the image to illustrate the gradual loss of the real. These phases, in contrast to the orders of simulacra, are not temporally bound to specific historical time frames but are nevertheless narrowly tied to each order’s characteristics.

For the purpose of elucidating Baudrillard’s conceptualisation of the (temporal) orders of simulacra, I concurrently refer to the phases of the image where necessary in the following section. Because I will relate Baudrillard’s orders of simulacra to Farber’s photographic art in Chapter Five, I use Baudrillard’s own photographic contributions[58] in the following three subsections to lay the foundation for an interpretation of *Dis-Location/Re-Location* as a photographic simulacrum. Baudrillard (1997:34; 1993:23), who took up photography on a trip to Japan, regards photography as the perfect medium of the imaginary or the irreal. For Baudrillard, according to Krauss (1984:59; 63), photography “deconstructs the possibility of differentiating between the original and the copy” [59] as it becomes a fabricated copy with no “essential connection to the model” [63]. Photographs, in this sense, counterfeit a specific moment in the so-

[58] These images form part of the twenty-piece photographic exhibition *Jean Baudrillard’s photography: Ultimate Paradox* (December 2015-February 2016), exhibited in the Los Angeles (California) based gallery, Château Shatto.

called real and concurrently disembody the moment as it will never occur again. This in turn produces a “new real” that can be endlessly reproduced by photography’s mechanical and digital possibilities.

3.3.1 The order of the counterfeit

The order of imitation or counterfeit is based on what Baudrillard (1983:84) describes as the "natural law of value"[59]. Baudrillard describes the order of the counterfeit by referring to the historical epoch of the Renaissance. Baudrillard (1983:85) here argues that signifiers in the order of imitation start referring to an "enchanted universe of the signified", which in turn represents a shared denominator of a so-called true, real "nature" across class margins. The counterfeit simultaneously heightens and accelerates class mobility by the transference of signs and value from one class to another. The fork, for example, initially only used by Byzantium nobility and later popularised by the French Court during Catherine de Medici’s (1510-1589) lifetime[60], systematically became a desired object in the Renaissance home across class. In other words, emancipated signs, are no longer fixed, but rather refer to an external, symbolic level of the real (the "enchanted universe" of the bourgeois). Signs in the order of the counterfeit can be compared on the basis of how well they imitate this external, “enchanted” real. Signs in the order of the counterfeit do not attempt to become real but rather strive to imitate the real. Concurrently one can argue that signs in the first order of the simulation are celebrated for being different from the real. The counterfeit becomes a placeholder for the so-called original.

Baudrillard (1983:87-96) specifically uses the material stucco (or render), as well as the automaton, associated with the Italian Renaissance (14th-17th centuries) and the

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[59] According to Baudrillard the Renaissance, in contrast, to a medieval feudal society (where social power was pre-determined by for example caste systems), signs started breaking away from a symbolically fixed position. Within a feudal society that, for example, signs were – for Baudrillard – exclusive, fixed within a predetermined social stratification. As such a basic reciprocal process based on what Baudrillard calls the symbolic order existed where signs had an obligation towards the different castes. Baudrillard (1983:84), in this regard, argues that with the rise of open competition (later known as an open market economic model) and class mobility during the Renaissance, signs became emancipated. Whilst signs broke away from obligatory limits between classes they simultaneously kept striving to, by imitating, bourgeois ideals.

[60] The fork, originally regarded as an Italian culinary utensil, is one of many objects to be believed to be introduced to France by Catherine de Medici. Young (*in* Hosking, 2006:442-443), points out that a culinary revolution cannot be solely attributed to De Medici but that it is highly possible that she brought forks, as part of her dowry, to France when marrying King Henry II (1519-1559) in 1533. Nevertheless, the use of the fork at dinner tables would only be deemed popular by nobility from the seventeenth century onwards.

Baroque (late 16th -18th centuries), to enlighten his argument of the temporal order of the counterfeit. Stucco is famous for its illusionistic characteristics by imitating the subject matter, whilst over-decoratively counterfeiting the so-called original. Moreover the aesthetic effect of stucco, as with the painting technique *trompe l'oeil*, is only successful in convincing the viewer that it is portraying an illusion. As such stucco, for Baudrillard (1983:87), becomes prestigious as it becomes an illustrative material that mirrors al other materials. The same principle applies to the Renaissance automaton. The automaton doesn't astonish the viewer for being equal to a living being but rather for highlighting the difference between itself and the original. Concurrently, by counterfeiting the original so well, it is acknowledged as an ideal parody:

> The automaton has no other destiny than to be ceaselessly compared to living man... A perfect double for him, right up to the suppleness of his movements, the functioning of his organs and intelligence – right up to touching upon the anguish there would be in becoming aware that there is no difference, that the soul is over with and now it is an ideally naturalized body which absorbs its energy. The difference is then always maintained, as in the case of that perfect automaton that the impersonator's jerky movements on stage imitate; so that at least, even if the roles were reversed, no confusion would be possible (Baudrillard, 1983:93-94).

Signs in the order of imitation "know" their limitations as they will always be pure copies of the original and never become an original. Accordingly, signs of the first order generate value by means of a common denominator, a "natural value" that functions as a kind of original, to which it is compared to as a counterfeit.

The difference between the counterfeit and original can be demonstrated in Baudrillard's photographic print *Rio* (see figure 12). *Rio* depicts what appears to be a rippled reproduction of a poster of an ostentatious, official-looking building. In front of the creased backdrop a red traffic light is facing a green plant. The juxtapositioning of these banal objects creates an unbalanced composition that represents a somewhat theatrical, staged atmosphere. This, for Baudrillard, possibly highlights the illusionistic quality of the everyday as images not only consume our daily existence but also what was once perceived to be our "natural" surroundings.

Figure 12. Jean Baudrillard. *Rio.* 1995. Giclée photographic print
on pure cotton paper.
50x75 cm (*Chateau Shatto*, 2016).

Rio (see figure 12), as interpreted from Baudrillard’s order of the counterfeit, is reliant on the viewer’s recognition of what is real and what appears to be reproduced. In other words, the illusionistic qualities of the background of the photograph are not there to deceive the viewer into thinking it is an actual building; rather, they specifically indicate that the building is represented as an imitation. The difference relies on the viewer’s perception of the authentic versus the non-authentic. The reproduced crinkled image in the background filling the screen – perceived as non-authentic – is contrasted for example with the plant – perceived as authentic. Simultaneously, the photographic image itself becomes a counterfeit as copy begets copy: *Rio* as a photograph – a medium associated with "realism" – encompasses another photograph, a copy of a copy.

The value of signs starts to change, according to Baudrillard’s (1983) temporal "history" of the simulacrum, with the industrial revolution (during the 1800s) and the order of production. According to Baudrillard (1983:96-102) proliferation frees the system of its ideal, its double – the counterfeit – as resemblance is discarded and replaced by (the order of) production and reproduction.

3.3.2 The order of production

The second order of simulacrum: the order of production is based on the "commercial law of value" and serves as a transit period between the first order of imitation and the third order of simulation (Baudrillard, 1983:83). Where signs in the first order of imitation are bound to the difference between the original or "natural" and the counterfeit, signs in the order of production become free from the original by the production of equivalence. From Baudrillard's (1983:97) perspective, signs in the order of production are no longer compared to an original but instead start to absorb the very concept of an original. As such, the distinction between the copy and the original become blurred by the value of producing equivalence.[61] All copies become equally original and simultaneously unoriginal, deconstructing the notion of the counterfeit completely as there is no longer anything to be counterfeited.

Baudrillard (1983:94-95) uses the robot, as developed during the onset of the industrial era, as an example to further his argument on the order of production. The robot, in contrast to the automaton (of the first order), is in no competition with the original – a human. Therefore the robot, as part of the order of production does not attempt to imitate signs of the real (or the original). The liberation of the sign during the order of production therefore condemns imitation, whilst pursuing to be more real than the real. In the context of a robot this can be motivated by the productivity and efficiency of machines. Where signs in the order of the counterfeit theatrically imitate on the basis of difference (like the automaton), signs in the order of production (like the robot) operate by proliferating the real (or the original) more efficiently in function and production than the real.

Baudrillard ([1981]1998:170) relates the order of production to the third phase of the image where depictions mask the absence of a reality. Here, Baudrillard (cf.1983:98) draws on the Benjamin's (1882-1941) cultural critique in his *The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction* (1935). Benjamin (1935) argues that duplication during mass production absorbs production which alters the produced object (or sign) as well

[61] The order of production, for Baudrillard (1983) is temporally associated with technological advancements of the Industrial age such as the use of the conveyer belt during mass production. The rationale behind the industrial conveyer belt was fundamentally to eliminate the difference between the original model (prototype) and the copy, which served commercialisation and capitalism. In other words the first product in the production line was an exact replica of the last.

as the subject (the consumer). Produced objects lose their so-called auras after a process of constant reproduction (cf. Benjamin, 1935:12). As such Benjamin (and later McLuhan, 1964) emphasises that value is no longer ascribed via production or the series of production but rather through the technique or medium of constant reproducibility. Where Benjamin specifically focussed on what Marx called non-essential capital (photography, media, information and communication-networks) Baudrillard (1983) concentrates on all aspects of consumer reproduction:

> For all the forms change once they are not so much mechanically reproduced but even conceived from the point of view of their very reproducibility, diffracted from a generating nucleus we call the model (Baudrillard, 1983:100).

Figure 13. Jean Baudrillard. *Saint Clément*
1987. Giclée photographic print
on pure cotton paper
50x75 cm (*Chateau Shatto*, 2016).

Baudrillard argues that the reproducibility of production is not the main issue concerning the loss of what Benjamin (1935) described as an "aura" (what Baudrillard refers to as value) but rather the systematic "diffraction" from a model – an original. An example of this systematic disembodiment from the original can be seen in Baudrillard's photograph *Saint Clément* (figure 13). *Saint Clément* depicts a close-up view of what appears to be a submerged car in a body of water. Baudrillard, who

according to Haladyn (2006:5) rarely gave context to his photographs, often stressed (as with his theoretical contributions) the isolation and decontextualisation of objects in his photographs:

> Through this reproductive or *cloning* process, viewers are conceptually forced to *fill in the blanks* if they are to give meaning to the photographs – a process that Baudrillard consciously makes as difficult as possible, challenging the viewer to make sense of his images (Haladyn, 2006:6).

The sunken car is decontextualised and becomes but a trace of what once was as the viewer is left to "fill in the blanks". Baudrillard's photographs seem to imagine the systematic disappearance of what we perceive to be real. In this regard one can argue that *Saint Clément* masks the absence of a once real. In other words, although there is no real "outside" to the photographic depiction of *Saint Clément*, the viewer nevertheless creates his/her own subjective version of events thereby obscuring the fact that this image has been decontextualised. The subject matter in Baudrillard's images becomes secondary as the subject is literally decontextualised from its original form and framed in a new context.

S*aint Clément* emphasises reflection as a decontextualising device through the purposeful curation of light as seen in the reflection of the water. As Haladyn (2006:5-6) suggests was not merely an aesthetic concern for Baudrillard, but rather points to his theoretical concern with the start of the disappearance of the real. The reflective theme in images such as *Saint Clément* can be interpreted from the order of production as the literal construction of a reflective layer. A reflection is depicted in *Brugges* (figure 14) too. *Brugges,* however, portrays a reflection of a car in a body of water (as opposed to a submerged car). This produces a layer between the subject matter of the photograph and the viewer, leading to the detachment between the subject matter and the viewer's perspective. This layer simultaneously announces, from Baudrillard's theoretical framework, a split in realities within the photographic image – the "there" (where the car is) and the "here" (a body of water reflecting a car). The awareness of this split is promoted by what looks like algae and waterlilies drifting on top of the water. Although the split between the here and there is only an artificial experience, it successfully creates the illusion of difference, masking the fact that there is in reality

not a here and there but only a photographic image – that can be reproduced countlessly.

Figure 14. Jean Baudrillard. *Brugges.*
1997. Giclée photographic print
on pure cotton paper
60x90 cm (*Chateau Shatto*, 2016).

The masking of an absence of reality marks the final shift in the value of the sign from the commercial law of value (during the second order) to the structural law of value (in the third). This entails, from Baudrillard’s perspective (1983:83), the complete deconstruction of distinctions between an original and a copy. At this point the sign enters Baudrillard’s third order of the simulacrum: the order of simulation. According to Baudrillard’s (1983) historical progression, the final order of simulation is associated with late-capitalist consumerism.

3.3.3 The order of simulation

Baudrillard (1993:56) states that the order of simulation is characterised by the complete deconstruction of the counterfeit (as prominent in the first order of the simulacrum) and a series of copies (as associated with the second order of the simulacrum). According to his theory (1983:101) only "models" of the once real remain, which exist on the basis of modulated differences. The only resemblance of this model is "the signifier of reference" which becomes a finality, the death of original or copy.

Accordingly one can argue that the order of imitation (the first) and the order of production (the second) is characterised by the systematic emancipation of the sign as it loses contact with an original and a copy. The order of simulation, by contrast, marks the complete freeing of the sign from the very concept of copy or original. The only trace of an original or a copy that remains is an imagined experience thereof. This experience is brought about according to Baudrillard (1983:115) by the "regulation of the model", by structural predetermined value. What he means by this is that value and outcome (in the order of simulation) are always, as typical of the digital era, encoded by a regulated model. Binary code for example becomes the make-up of modern day society and exists not n terms of an original or a copy of a so-called real but rather as a predetermined simulated real.

Kellner (2006:14) describes Baudrillard's conceptualisation of the simulacrum by comparing it to a digital carnival of mirrors. These mirrors, according to Kellner, reflect images from other mirrors which in turn project onto television and computer screens and back to the mirrors. Simultaneously images are projected onto what Kellner describes as the screen of consciousness which reflects images of the past. Although Baudrillard's argument goes further in arguing that there no longer is any referential and therefore no mirror, Kellner's comparison becomes helpful in understanding the complexity of the simulacrum. The simulated real only recycles an experience of a real that once existed. There is no real outside of the regulated model as the simulacrum only becomes an excuse for a real, a fortified real or what Baudrillard (1983:117) calls a "tactical hallucination". This marks the death of the referential and the birth of the referendum:

> Every sign, every message (object of "functional" use as well as any item of fashion or televised news, poll or electoral consultation) is presented to us as question/answer ... the answer is called forth by the question, it is designated in advance (Baudrillard, 1983:116-117).

The consumer as a product of the simulation is led to believe that s/he has a choice in determining the value but in fact has none as the regulated model (the simulacrum) has already determined the outcome. The illusion of choice, from my understanding, is only successful based on the notion of a once conceived original – that there once was a choice. In other words, although the simulacrum deconstructs any original and subsequent copy, it controls a structural model of illusion of origin. In reality signs in

the order of simulation only reference themselves. A photographer, for example, manipulates the shot (in every way) as well as the photograph in order to present the viewer with a predetermined outcome, be that an emotion, subject or agenda. As such the original and the copy cease to exist and are replaced by a regulated experience of a predetermined real. As suggested earlier the simulacrum only envisages the notion of difference between signs and value as to prevent the regulated model from collapsing. Accordingly only an *experience* of difference between signs and value is presented. This experience is only possible due to the simulacrum, but simultaneously, the simulacrum only becomes possible due to this illusion of difference. Baudrillard (1983:25-26) uses Disneyland to illustrate his conceptualisation of the third order of simulacra:

> The imaginary of Disneyland is neither true nor false, it is a deterrence machine set up in order to rejuvenate the fiction of the real in the opposite camp. Whence the debility of this imaginary, its infantile degeneration. This world wants to be childish in order to make us believe that the adults are elsewhere, in the "real" world, and to conceal the fact that true childishness is everywhere – that it is that of the adults themselves who come here to act the child in order to foster illusions as to their real childishness (Baudrillard, 1983:25-26).

Baudrillard (1983) argues that late-capitalist society produces and simultaneously constructs fictive representations such as Disneyland (today known as Disneyworld) in order to affirm that the real is elsewhere. The simulacrum is therefore kept intact by a circular process of *experiences* of a real which is based on the so-called illusion of binary difference. The loss of the real accordingly creates a longing for a real that promotes a need to affirm the real. Photography plays a particular role in this circular process. Sontag (1977:24) notes in this regard, confirming Baudrillard's contentions: "Needing to have reality confirmed and experience enhanced by photographs is an aesthetic consumerism to which everyone is now addicted."

At a certain point the model of the real, the simulacrum, becomes too close to a so-called "true" real and constructs a hyperreal in order to keep the simulacrum in place. The conventional usage of the term "hyperreal", especially within the context of a digital culture, is associated with the inability to distinguish between the material real

and the cyber real[62] (cf. Hegarty, 2004:204). Baudrillard however, as inspired by the semiotic theorists Boorstin, Borgmann and Eco, developed the term in order to describe the real becoming more real than the real in the third order of simulacra. Within a culture of the hyperreal, which is mediated by the binary code, the traditional real ceases to exist to the consumer as the hyperreal becomes more real than the real. The real as experienced and perceived by consumers, in other words, absorbs all references to a so-called original real which marks the end of any references. There is no longer any reference to anything outside of the simulacrum as signs in the order of simulation becomes inversed upon themselves. Accordingly Baudrillard (1983:36-37) argues that signs of the hyperreal in the order of simulation validate themselves by renunciation:

> It is always a question of proving the real by the imaginary, proving truth by scandal, proving the law by transgression ... etc., etc. to seek new blood in its own death, to renew the cycle by the mirror of crisis, negativity and anti-power (Baudrillard, 1983:36-37).

Baudrillard (1993:71) goes on, in accordance with Derrida (1981:192-193), to describe the real as an allegory of death which simultaneously flourishes in the destruction of itself as the represented real. Baudrillard (1983:1) uses Argentinian author Luis Borges's (1899-1986) one-paragraph short story *Del rigor en la Ciencia* (*On exactitude in science,* 1946) to illustrate his argument of the simulacrum. Borges's fable, in short, depicts an empire that records the territory of the kingdom and produces a map as large as the empire itself. When the empire is destroyed all that remains is the life-size map. Baudrillard (1983:1-2) compares Borges's map to the simulacrum in arguing that the map, the simulacra, precedes the territory which can be compared to the once real. In other words the map or the hyperreal only exists operationally as models of a real without origin: "The desert of the real itself."

The medium of photography offers the ideal platform through which a simulated real can be investigated as an image is perceptibly disconnected further from the material real. Baudrillard (2005:72) states: "At a given moment, I capture light, a colour is disconnected from the rest of the world." Baudrillard's photographic representation *Sainte Beuve* (see figure 15) can be used to elucidate his argument. Although no other

[62] Within this context I use the *cyber real* as a general reference to the so-called digital age which is characterised by technological driven digital media platforms resulting in a cyber-reality.

contextualisation is given other than the title of the photograph, one recognises in the image a chair draped in red cloth. This, however, according to a reading from Baudrillard's simulacrum, is not a chair but rather a trace of a chair, as it is in fact a photograph of a chair concealed by cloth. The photograph *Sainte Beuve* becomes an already reproduced copy of the subject – a chair – which in turn is most likely also a mass produced reproduced chair. Accordingly, there is no original chair, only a copy of an already copied chair. Through his simultaneous presence and absence this image captures the paradoxical nature of Baudrillard's theorisation of the simulacrum – that although the chair represents a chair it is no longer a "real" chair.

Figure 15. Jean Baudrillard. *Sainte Beuve.* 1987. Giclée photographic print on pure cotton paper
75x50 cm (*Chateau Shatto*, 2016).

To summarise: Baudrillard's three orders of the simulacrum pointedly conceptualises an ironic temporal succession for the simulacrum through which he illustrates the gradual loss of the representative real. The first order of simulacra – the order of the counterfeit – is associated with representations that copy or imitate the presented real (such as optical illusions). Signs in the order of the counterfeit, as associated with the Renaissance and Baroque in especially Western Europe, generate value by at once imitating the real accurately and being different from the real. Baudrillard's second order (the order of production) as heralded by the Industrial Age marks the beginning of the gradual loss of the difference between the so-called real and the copy. Mass production succeeded in blurring the boundaries between an original and the counterfeit by what Baudrillard describes as the commercial law of value. Signs in the order of production attempt to dissolve the difference between the original and the copy by means of a prototype which then becomes equally original and unoriginal. The copy is no longer competing with the original (or the presented real), in contrast to the counterfeited sign (in the first order), but rather emphasises its commercial efficiency. The final order of simulacra (the order of simulation), which takes place in a late-capitalist consumer society, marks the death of the signifier. There is no longer an original or a copy, only models of the real that exist within a structural law of value.

As such, the simulacrum "structures" simulated value in order to keep the simulacrum of a real in place: the hyperreal. As Baudrillard's quote at the start of this chapter, attests: "the hyperrealism of simulation is translated by the hallucinatory resemblance of the real to itself." (Baudrillard, [1981]1994:23). Meaning or value is therefore entirely produced by association to a model of a real (the simulacrum) and not by the self-determining difference to a real.

Baudrillard's orders of the simulacrum are important for this research as it critically informs the methodological and theoretical postcolonial interpretation of Farber's photographic series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* (occurring in Chapter Five). Baudrilliard's articulation of the simulacrum, as Butler (1999:23) attests, has been widely criticised and is seldom understood as Baudrillard initially conceptualised it. The Australian art historian Robert Hughes (1992:378-380), for example, describes Baudrillard's conceptualisation of the construct *simulacrum* as an illusion which emphasises the repositioning of the world by means of images. According to Hughes's

use of the term nothing is then ever experienced originally but rather as a second-hand experience or a copy of the original experience. The British deconstructionist, Christopher Norris (1992:14-15), in turn criticises the simulacrum in his argument against Baudrillard's position on the Gulf War[63] (1990-1991) as a philosophical idealism through which material reality is denied.

Baudrillard (1993:184), however, emphasises that the term "simulacrum" (in contrast to Hughes's and Norris's interpretations) does not only imply the loss of a once real, but simultaneously the possible existence of a real. Baudrillard (2005:18) however, emphasises that he is not speaking of the "physical" real, as such, but rather of a metaphysical real (to which the represented real can be compared to): "Reality continues to exist; it is its principle that is dead." From another perspective one can go further in arguing that the simulacrum actualises the real, not by the creation of illusion but rather as a reaction to an illusion – the illusion being the so-called real. As Baudrillard (1993) suggests:

> If you start from the idea that the world is a total illusion, then life, thought, become absolutely unbearable. So you have to make every effort to materialize the world, realize it, in order to escape from this total illusion. And the "realizing" of the world, through science and technology, is precisely what simulation is – the exorcism of the terror of illusion by the most sophisticated means of the "realization of the world" (Baudrillard, 1993:184).

Baudrillard (1993:184) argues that the simulacrum is not an observed, empirical phenomenon or a mere nostalgic longing for the past. The simulacrum cannot be measured or framed without simultaneously deconstructing the simulacrum. As such the reality to which the once real is compared can only occur within the model of the real – the simulacrum. As such, the simulacrum is theoretically only possible in the absence of the simulacrum as a hypothesis (cf. Baudrillard, 1990:227). As Baudrillard (1990:227) contemptuously remarks: "The misunderstanding here is the conversion of a theory like mine into a reference whereas there should never be any references"

[63] Baudrillard (1991:38) argues in *La Guerre du Golfe n'a pas eu lieu* (trans. Patton [1995] *The Gulf War did not take place*) that the outcome of the Gulf War was predetermined. The war itself became a non-happening, a symptom of the simulacrum, as the USA, Iraq, Kuwait and Iran fought over what he calls the "corpse of war". The American film *Wag the dog* (1997) can be used as an example to illustrate Baudrillard's notion of predetermination and the hyperreal.

(also compare Baudrillard, 1993:166).[64] The simulacrum, however, opens up a larger debate of representation and art and its complex relationship to a real. A traditional understanding of art, for Baudrillard (2005), is dead as it joins reality's fate of holding no value other than itself as a simulacrum:

> Now the banal reality has become aestheticized, all reality is trans-aestheticized, and that is the very problem. Art was a form, and then it became more and more no more a form but a value, an aesthetic value, and so we come from art to aesthetics… And as art becomes aesthetics it joins with reality, it joins with the banality of reality. Because all reality becomes aesthetical, too, then it's a total confusion between art and reality, and the result of this confusion is hyperreality. But, in this sense, there is no more radical difference between art and realism. And this is the very end of art (Baudrillard as quoted by Chateau Shatto, 2016).

Art becomes a subjective illusion and for Baudrillard (2004:40) a grand delusion of comfort. Baudrillard (2004:40) postulates that subjectivity and objectivity which are perceived as two supposed opposites become one and the same deception. Baudrillard, as influenced by Nietzsche (cf. [1876]2003), especially emphasises within the context of representation that subjectivity and objectivity become illusive platforms through which we distance ourselves from the fact that the "true" value of a real exists (cf. Baudrillard's theorising regarding Disneyworld, 1983:25-26). Representation for Baudrillard (2004:40) (such as through photography) becomes a tool through which we deny this total absence of a real: "representation, this superstition of an objective reality…is itself a part of the general illusion of the world, of which we are a part at the same time as we are its mirror" (Baudrillard, 2004:40).

From this theoretical point of view, the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* as a manipulated photographic series can be interpreted as a representational simulacrum. The series exhibits an imagined narrative that aesthetically captures Farber whilst enacting Guttmann's Victorian life-world. The depiction, however, remains Farber's version of Guttmann's historical world and is therefore constructed subjectively. Moreover, the series presents a fictional illusion – the protagonist seamlessly implanting objects into her skin – that is visually presented in a way that one would not

[64] From this perspective I do recognise the irony of using Baudrillard's reconceptualisation of the simulacrum as a methodology during the interpretation of Farber's series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* in Chapter 5. Baudrillard's theory of the simulacrum, however, offers possibilities as a theoretical framework as it questions the relationship between art and the real.

expect it to occur in reality. Photography, conversely, portrays a realistic rendering by nature, therefore still framing the narrative realistically. *Dis-Location/Re-Location* hereby becomes an autonomous world based on the interplay between a historical, yet fictional narrative (Guttmann's Victorian life-world) and a fabricated photographic illusion (the grafting objects into the skin). This rendering, in Baudrillardian terms, therefore presents a tension between fabricated and so-called real realities as encapsulated in the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location,* through the imagining of the protagonist – the self.

Keeping to Baudrillard's poststructural conceptualisation of the simulacrum the next section of the chapter addresses complexities regarding the imagining of a self. In what follows I focus on a combination of poststructural and narratological perspectives on imagining a self, which includes imagining a double.

3.4 Imagining a self

From a poststructural position and specifically that of Baudrillard, the so-called subjective I cannot be conceptualised as a singular entity or a metanarrative.[65] The construction of a self, from a postmodern perspective, can rather be characterised by the encoding of constantly changing intertextual layers. These layers of non-origin simultaneously cause an ontological tension between so-called facts and fiction as "realities" collide. As Slovenian Lacanian social critic Žižek (1993:43-44) emphasises regarding the paradoxical nature of reality:

> What we experience as "reality" is constituted by such a reversal ... "reality" is always framed by a fantasy, that is, for something real to be experienced as part of 'reality', it must fit the pre-ordained co-ordinates of our fantasy space (Žižek, 1993:43-44).

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[65] The poststructuralist aversion of a so-called true, singular origin (as embodied by Baudrillard's theory of the simulacrum) is a direct reaction towards the modernist, systematic, institutional and ideological approach to knowledge (cf. Foucault, 1966; 1977a, Lyotard, 1979; Baudrillard, 1981; 1983; 1976). Lyotard (1924-1998), as inspired by German philosopher Wittgenstein (1889-1951), for example asserts that language cannot be interpreted as a unified system but rather consists of "islets of language, each governed by a different order that is untranslatable into that of orders". Language, according to Lyotard, is relative in the sense that it is based on subjective interpretation and can therefore not be compared in meaning. From this perspective Lyotard (1979) would announce the end of what he famously called *grand récits* (metanarratives). In *La condition postmoderne: rapport sur le savoir* (The postmodern condition: a report on knowledge) he (1979:xxiv;41) argues that the "postmodern condition" is characterised in contrast to a modernist approach by *petits récits* (petit, various narratives).

Žižek, in similar vein to Baudrillard, argues that what we perceive as real is always framed by that which is simultaneously non-real. Constructing a self is no different. Imagining a self, according to Bruner (in Brockmeier & Carbaugh, 2001:27) on autobiography, involves a narrator in the present who constructs a namesake protagonist from the past. Crites (1986) articulates it as follows:

> What I own as my self is always present as the character in the story from whose perspective its episodes are recalled, claimed as its own self by this 'I' who recalls. By telling the story from the perspective of this self, as in a first person narrative, usually told in the past tense, I distance this self from the intersubjective matrix of experience in order to claim it as my own, as that personal past with which I claim identity. Still there is always some hiatus between 'I' who recollects and the self who appears as a character in a succession of episodes ... (Crites, 1986:159).

What Crites and Bruner both highlight is that, in the context of imagining a self, the construction of identity cannot be removed from the subjective construction alternative selves. The creator of a presented self (visual or written) therefore imagines itself through the self. Bruner (*in* Brockmeier & Carbaugh, 2001:35) describes this "phenomenon" as the construction of reality through which the assembled self continuously chooses a path of becoming. It is through the stories we tell that we construct a self as part of a fictive world. When we recall we create – rather than recycle – a new identity narrative. An "objective" or "authentic" self as such becomes impossible.

Through the process of constant interpretation[66] an individual conceptualises an ongoing narrative of self. The construction of a self includes various positions which are based on tensions between predetermined identity structures and changeability. Worthington (2001:5) asserts in this regard, as influenced by Derrida (1981:192-193), that our so-called true representation of selfhood is contaminated by language, and more specifically, writing. Writing (a mimesis of spoken language) the self, which in

[66] The hermeneutic phenomenologist Gadamer's (1976) theory regarding interpretation becomes helpful in enlightening this argument. According to Gadamer (1976:55) interpretation becomes the fundamental activity through which we become aware of ourselves as interpretative beings. In this regard Ricoeur (1974) emphasises:

> There is no direct apprehension of the self by the self, no internal apperception or appropriation of the self's desire to exist through the short-cut of consciousness, but only by taking the long road of interpretation of signs (Ricoeur, 1974:170).

As Ricoeur attests narratives of the self can only be understood through (subjective) interpretation, which inherently declares all narratives fictive.

this context can be compared to visual representations, is a construction of social conditioning. In other words writing, or the production of a visual representation, as Worthington (2001:5) emphasises, is imagined by a "language" that was constructed by others before the self. The self is determined by the conditioned pre-textual language: I speak myself, to myself, and to others, in the language of others" (Worthington, 2001:5). Thus far it seems as though the individual's experience and awareness of a self can only be interpreted as a type of retrospective re(imagining) which is constructed beforehand by preconditioned structures.

The imagining of a self includes an awareness of identity as the protagonist constructs a self which consists of various other selves, collective and subjective intertextual references as well as the redefinition and articulation of the subject itself. Cultural theorist Stuart Hall (2000:23) states, regarding identity construction as well as the representing of identity, that the self is always in process – a state of *being* as well as in a state of *becoming*. Identity is therefore never a fixed proposition but always in the making. From this perspective I argue that the so-called origin of identity is simultaneously fluid and always in the making.

The visual or written construction of a self, as interpreted from Baudrillard's (cf. 1993:56) perspective of simulations, can never be regarded as a so-called original self. Baudrillard (1983:101,105) attests that a simulacrum, as argued in the previous section, is professed during the order of simulation when a new "real", that shows no resemblance to an original real, is declared. Moreover the imagining of a so-called original self becomes impossible as the imagined self consists of preconditioned, pretextual interpretations. The contextualisation of a self does not occur in isolated moments, but is rather built out of various intertextual[67] experiences, imaginings or entanglements which can't be framed temporally. The telling of the self (as a narrative) is conditioned to be told temporally but also only highlights specific, yet curated moments. These constructions of identity can be interpreted as simulacra as they are

[67] *Intertextuality* emphasises that a text – in contrast to an isolated, traditional monologic approach – should rather be considered a "mosaic of quotations" and reflective doubles. These "doubles" are not bound to the text itself but simultaneously absorbs and transfers the system of signs (and inherently meaning) before and after the text begins and end. For Kristeva ([1969]1980:66) texts (and integrally representations as texts) become meditative platforms that, in accordance with Baudrillard (1981; 1983; 1976), holds no original as meaning is validated through a complex network of codes or reflective doubles (texts of texts).

based on narratives reflecting various contexts, references, pretexts, interpretations and experiences – all without singular origin.

Fraser (1990:84) states that "no-one is simply a woman; one is rather, for example, a white, Jewish, middle-class woman, philosopher, a lesbian, a socialist, and a mother". Fraser's description (from a feminist perspective) highlights how identity is perceived within existing pre-encoded societal "structures" of identity (for example "a white, Jewish, middle-class woman"). This position can be associated with the communitarian approach of the political philosophers Sullivan (1982), Sandel (1984), MacIntyre (1978) and Taylor (1985). The communitarian approach emphasises that personhood is embedded in and dependent on social structures and can accordingly not be removed from them (cf. Sullivan, 1982:158,173; Sandel, 1984:9). The self is simultaneously engendered by these societal structures. Raditlhalo (*in* Lebdai, 2015:13-14; also compare Singh and Chetty (2010), writing on South African autobiographies, states that the societal roles attributed to individuals during apartheid (such as race) simultaneously contributed to the self-conceptualisation of identity. This, for Raditlhalo (*in* Lebdai, 2015:15) has influenced how South Africans represent themselves in their autobiographical imaginings, as they could not imagine identity separate from the socio-political backdrop. In this positioning process of the self, fiction and fact are equally manufactured. This, however, does not mean that identity manufacturing should be discredited as Hall (1996) maintains:

> [Identities] arise from the narrativization of the self, but the necessarily fictional nature of this process in no way undermines its discursive, material or political effectivity, even if the belongingness, the "suturing into the story" through which identities arise is, partly, in the imaginary… Hall, (1996:4).

From a narratological, poststructural framework the imagining of the self in relation to the contextual surroundings concur with McHale's (1987:43-94) world-making and unmaking theory and specifically his conceptualisation of historical fantasies. World-making theory, in accordance with Eco (1984:246), regards a text as "a machine for producing possible worlds …"[68] McHale argues that historical fantasies come into being through world-making and the unmaking of another world.

[68] Also compare Eco's (1979:229) theorisation of transworld identities or characters. Eco ([1976]1979:229) describes transworld characters as the invasion of one world by another – an

Historical fantasies, for McHale (1987:94-99), refer to the transference of characters and happenings from the so-called real to a fictive reality, particularly within a historical context (such as *Dis-Location/Re-Location*). Accordingly the recollection of histories which are transposed by subjectivity into a fictive historical narrative occurs. "Other worlds" also become as British metaphysical philosopher Francis Bradley (1846-1924) noted "a world in itself, independent, complete, autonomous" (Bradley, 1909 *in* Winterson, 1994:1). McHale (1987:28; 30-31) however, by means of phenomenological literary theorist Roman Ingarden (1893-1970), contends that the constructed "fictive world" is *presented* as complete and autonomous (cf. Bradley) but is in “reality” incomplete. He argues that the so-called fictive world is presented to the viewer or reader as a completed world but is in fact an illusion as it is left unspecified in certain crucial ways (McHale, 1987, 28; 31). The so-called incompleteness simultaneously gives credibility to the "world" as the transposition of narratives into an incomplete fictional world often leads to a romanticised, idealised depiction. Postcolonial imaginings (of which *Dis-Location/Re-Location* might serve as an example) can also be understood as such romanticised and idealised depictions. A so-called traditional understanding of postcolonialism has gained critique for its overly-idealised portrayal of a world dismissing the undeniable, ongoing effects of colonialism (see McCarthy, 2005). Ashcroft (2012:2), however, in agreement with Sargent (*in* Gregory *et al.* 2000:8), argues that romanticised postcolonial undertakings have become a necessary “space of social dreaming”, armed with future-thinking and the “possibility of justice and equality”.

Postcolonial imaginings are not necessarily associated with "real places" but rather with metaphorically constructed simulations of "other worlds". Postcolonial dream-lands, especially through art and literature[69], are imagined as Ashcroft (2012:1; 5) attests, in order to negotiate both colonial and postcolonial ambiguities. In this regard the visualisation of postcolonial dreamlands may, regardless of whether they are based on "actual" historical events, lead to overly-idealistic representations of fictive

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ontological border crossing. More specifically these identities refer to the presence of characters from the so-called real world into a fictive one (cf. Eco, 1979:219).

[69] Ashcroft (2014) specifically refers to the postcolonial utopic work of Scottish-Aboriginal artist Lin Onus’s (1948-1996), painting *Twice Upon a Time* (1992). O’Reilly (2010:24) states that Onus’s work focusses on recollections of colonialism in Australia in order to disrupt the inherited past which is still evident in the present. In this regard the colonial past is often visualised (such as in *Dis-Location/Re-*Location) in order to deal with the present.

worlds without origin or in Baudrillard's terms a "hyper" or simulacral version of events. Baudrillard's (cf. 1993, 1981) argument regarding the de/construction of the "real" within the simulacrum can accordingly be compared to McHale's theorisation of a historical or fictive fantasy or Ashcroft's notion of a postcolonial romanticised representation as they both disregard "true" origin and to an extent reflect a heightened – hyperreal – version of events.

Dis-Location/Re-Location, from this perspective, presents what McHale calls a historical fantasy that is simultaneously influenced by what Ashcroft describes as a postcolonial romanticised representation – a historical simulacrum. This occurs as Farber, although enacting her role as Victorian settler woman Guttmann, plays her "part as the postcolonial protagonist" and investigates her own sense of displacement in post-apartheid South Africa (Farber, 2012:5). From this perspective Farber imagines a self in *Dis-Location/Re-Location* that, although inspired and constructed by a colonial historical persona (Guttmann) and framed by postcolonial discourse (cf. Chapter Two), visually and symbolically represents her own self. Farber, in this regard, creates what can be interpreted as a double. This double – the body-protagonist – visually exists separate from herself and also personifies her in the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location*.

Although Baudrillard did not explicitly focus on complexities of identity (separate from the larger simulacrum) or postcolonialism, he often speaks, as Gilloch (*in* Smith, 2010:54-57) attests, of alterity. As typical of Baudrillardian rhetoric, *alterity*, as Butler (*in* Smith, 2010:146) argues, differs depending on how Baudrillard uses the term. Baudrillard (1981; 1996c; 2003c) firstly uses the imagery of a reflective other[70], corresponding with Plato's mimesis, in order to shed light on his argument of the simulacrum and it's so called reversibility.[71] Baudrillard (1983:101, 105) argues that signs in the order of the simulation become signifiers of themselves by reversion. Identity is no different. The ambiguity of a double as framed by Baudrillard's conceptualisation of the simulacrum becomes a platform of duality where both identity

[70] I use the term "reflected other", here, as a collective term in order to enlighten Baudrillard's notion of doubleness which he uses through various terms such as the *doppelgänger*, the shadow ([2002]2003), mirror ([1995]1996) and the clone (1981).

[71] Reversibility, a key concept in understanding Baudrillardian, in this context refers to Baudrillard's ([1978]2007; 2005;1999) argument that "systems have within them a kind of built-in ability to undermine" themselves as Coulter (*in* Smith, 2010:182) explains. This occurs especially when they reach their apogee. Baudrillard (1988) uses the example of the development of new forms of antibiotics which concurrently lead to other new infectious viruses developing.

and non-identity is performed. In this regard Baudrillard ([1970]1998:188) refers to the 1926 film *The student of Prague.*[72]

> Naturally, the mirror is smashed and the double, become again the phantasm it once was, vanishes into thin air. But . . . it is *he* who is dying . . . In his death throes . . . he grasps at one of the fragments of the mirror scattered about the floor and realises that *he can see himself again* (Baudrillard, [1970]1998:188).

He ([1970]1998:188) emphasises that a detachment occurs between the so-called original and the representation thereof. Here Baudrillard, similar to postcolonial theory (cf. Chapter 2. regarding *otherness*), draws on psychoanalyst Lacan's theorisation of the mirror stage during the development of a child through which the child recognises a so-called other (apart from themselves) looking back at them. This reflection simultaneously affirms the "realness" and existence of the onlooker. Baudrillard (1975:19), within the context of a late-capitalist consumer society, states that this representation of an *other* constructs an imaginary objective world through which the consumer recognises themselves "objectively". Simultaneously, in line with Marx's critique of capitalism and production, Baudrillard ([1970]1998:190; 1975:19) argues that the reflective double or doppelgänger (in for example *The student of Prague*) becomes a mirror of production. In this symbolic mirror (the simulacrum) "the human species comes to consciousness in the imaginary" (Baudrillard, 1975:19). Although Baudrillard can here be criticised for his materialistic, detached approach to identity (which he compares to consumer objects) one can simultaneously argue that this is precisely what occurs in today's consumer society driven by social media.

Secondly, Baudrillard uses *alterity* as part of his social commentary on Western imperialism (from his European-speaking locus), for which he has been criticised for othering.[73] In this regard Baudrillard's (1993a:151) use of the derogatory "primitives" or "savages", especially provoked controversy. Hegarthy (2004:91), however,

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[72] The 1926 remake of the expressionist silent film *The Student of Prague,* 1913 (originally made in German *Der Student von Prag*) by Austrian filmmaker Henrik Galeen (1881-1949) is set in the year 1820. The plot is centred on the protagonist Balduin who makes a deal with a loan shark (the devil) for wealth. His new found happiness doesn't last long when his reflection is freed from a mirror and causes havoc in his name. Balduin later shoots and kills his own reflection and concurrently himself. One of the most recognisable shots from the 1926 film is of Balduin's grave which reads: “Here lies Balduin. He fought the devil and lost” (Galeen, 1929).

[73] In this regard compare the critical contribution of especially Almond (2007) in *The New Orientalists: Postmodern Representations of Islam from Foucault to Baudrillard.*

emphasises that Baudrillard's "poetics" and vocabulary, although problematic, is dependent on where the reader draws theoretical borders. By this he means that one would not interpret Baudrillard work as historical, analytical or political texts. Simultaneously Baudrillard should be read as Baudrillard – holistically and always paradoxically. Lane (2000:61) and Butler (*in* Smith, 2010:146), claims in this regard, that Baudrillard uses a postcolonial understanding of otherness in contradiction: to be critical towards it and at the same time argue against it. Butler makes this point by quoting Baudrillard (1987):

> [The envy and resentment of the West by non- Western countries] would lead me to detest the Southern – and the Islamic – peoples for their feeble-mindedness, their suicidal rhetorics, if I did not already detest even more the little hardline Whites, who are so sure they will always have the upper hand (Baudrillard, 1987:71).

Baudrillard's double negative once again comes down to reversibility. For Baudrillard (1993a: 121) contemporary society is overly devoted to the erasure of *otherness.* The so-called death of the other, however, as Baudrillard contends, is not possible as otherness will have its vengeance by the continuation of difference. The other for Baudrillard is, in contrast to postcolonial critique, empowered not by difference but rather by sameness (cf. Baudrillard, 1993a:122). In other words the other, for Baudrillard, only becomes the other when the self is threatened by sameness. The conceptualisation of otherness from Baudrillard's theorisation of reversibility and the simulacrum points to the perpetuation of the illusion of difference as an enforcement of hegemony. Coulter (*in* Smith, 2010:183) states that the double negative is used by Baudrillard (1988) to "argue that modernity is a mythology devoted to the irreversibility of time, production and history". Baudrillard seems to regard modernity and coloniality, similarly to postcolonial author Quijano (1989, 1992, 2000, cf. Chapter 2.2), as "inseparable temporal notions". From this perspective, as Coulter (*in* Smith, 2010:183) contends, Baudrillard "wonders if the subaltern's liberation [during decolonial periods] was not simply the best way the colonial masters could hand to them a bogus power and freedom". In other words Baudrillard, in line with neo-colonial critique (cf. Fry, 2009; Chapter 2.2), is critiquing Western modernity as imperial practices are carried over into a so-called post-colonial era. It is as if a false sense of freedom – a simulacrum – is postured under a cloak of emancipation but there is in reality no

escape from modern day imperialism as Western powers still hold economic domination.

In summary: The interpretation of Baudrillard's notion of alterity is dependent on the context he uses it in. Alterity for Baudrillard as part of the simulacrum becomes a symptom of reversibility. From this perspective he uses alterity in order to show how, within the simulacrum, a binary is produced in order to keep the simulacrum in place. A binary in the context of imagining a self simultaneously contributes to the awareness of a self. When it comes to Baudrillard's controversial use of otherness as a critique of the West he similarly appears to use it, in agreement with neo-colonial critique, in order to demonstrate that only an illusion of liberation in a post-colonial era exists. In other words Baudrillard poses that otherness will continue to exist as long as a longing for sameness occurs.

3.5 Closing remarks

This chapter set out to theoretically investigate Baudrillard's conceptualisation of the simulacrum and to consider notions of imagining a self. Baudrillard's theorisation of the simulacrum accompanies the systematic loss of the real. The loss of the real is arranged through the successive orders of the simulacrum and phases of the image. Baudrillard declares the complete loss of what we perceive to be real during the final order of the simulacrum through which reality is substituted with the hyperreal. The hyperreal becomes more real than the real itself as the real is substituted for the symbolic. It appears that what we perceive as reality is always constructed by a fantasy and negotiated in a constant state of production. Matters of identity construction and specifically imagining a self is no different.

Subjective identity narratives, within a late-capitalist society, as signs of the simulacrum are constantly compared and negotiated (as consumer products) against each other. As such the so-called originality of identity is challenged by the simulacrum as an ontological conflict develops between the self which is, at first, perceived as a fixed original and the constant changing fluid self. The imagined self can therefore not be regarded as a singular, fixed or constant entity but rather a fluid, complex and ever-changing construction. Imagining a self, which includes the constant subjective negotiation of identity, occurs, in accordance with Baudrillard, by pre-determined, already codified interpretations and intertextualities. The imagined self, from

Baudrillard's perspective, can be interpreted as a self without origin – a (re)imagined self. From Baudrillard's perspective, imagining a self always includes the imagining of another – a double. Difference for Baudrillard refers to the production of exchange through sameness in order to keep the simulacrum and the illusion of difference in place.

Introducing the above mentioned poststructuralist theoretical perspectives regarding imagining a self (whilst keeping to Baudrillard's conceptualisation of the simulacrum) is necessary for this research as the selected series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* presents the viewer with a visually (re)imagined "postcolonial" self within a constructed colonial narrative. The imagining of a self, as shown in this chapter, always includes the imagining of a double, other or "mirror" in Baudrillard's theorisation of the simulacrum as well as in postcolonial discourse.

The "value" of this other (as a sign) is simultaneously determined by layered, veiled narratives, each consisting of other intertextual reflections of other identity narratives. As mentioned in the first chapter of this study, Farber specifically imagines the self in the selected series around three white personas: her own autobiographical identity construction as a white, middle-class, English speaking, Jewish woman in post-apartheid South Africa, her Jewish mother Freda Kagan who immigrated to South Africa during the 1930s and the historical identity narrative of the white, Victorian, settler woman, Bertha Guttmann (who arrived in South Africa during the late 1800s). I regard Farber's construction of the self – as an identity narrative – in the series as a simulacrum. As such, the next chapter of this thesis sets out to investigate, from a postcolonial perspective, the narrative Farber creates of the three female, white, Jewish voices that shaped the photographic series *Dis-Location/Re-Location*.

CHAPTER FOUR

(Re)imagining history: the myth, the shadow and the white body

> Identities are about…using the resources of history, language and culture to represent not "who we are" or "where we come from", so much as what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves (Hall, 1996:2).

4.1 Introduction

In the previous two chapters of this study a theoretical exposition was offered regarding a postcolonial understanding (Chapter 2) of otherness and the spatial complexities of movement (diaspora, hybridity, liminality) as well as Baudrillard's simulacrum and imagining a self (Chapter 3). This was undertaken in order to provide a theoretical and interpretative framework for interpreting the selected series. Whereas the preceding chapters were mainly theoretical, this chapter asks how Farber constructs a simulacral narrative of displacement.

As I have shown, Farber – who plays a double role as the body-protagonist as well as the creator, conceptualiser and artist of the series – enacts an imagined self in the photographic series *Dis-Location/Re-Location*. Farber (2012:3) uses her body in order to investigate "three conditions of displacement" which are, according to Farber, bounded by "disjuncture arising from processes of dislocation, alienation, relocation and adaptation". These "three conditions of displacement" are adapted from the possible experiences of Jewish, Victorian migrant, Bertha Guttmann, Orthodox Jewish immigrant, Freda Farber (who arrived in South Africa during the 1930s), and Leora Farber's own experiences in post-apartheid South Africa. All three personas' narratives are framed by and bound to whiteness and Jewishness, which, as Shimoni (2003:xiii) argues, shares in the guilt and shame of South Africa's colonial past. Farber, in reflecting upon the series in her PhD thesis, presents each persona in a somewhat allegorical manner as she (re)imagines history by bringing the three women's quite unrelated experiences into a single narrative. She does this by imaginatively drawing links between the three personas' possible experiences of relocation and subsequent dislocation (as the series title suggests).

This chapter undertakes to analyse, from a postcolonial perspective, the narrative Farber creates of the three female white Jewish voices that shaped the photographic

series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* by placing each persona against a concomitant period of socio-political history in South Africa. This is preceded by a brief theoretical outline on mythmaking in historiography, and the role of photography in creating historical myths. My analysis takes, as point of departure, Hall's (1996:2) assertion quoted above, and argues that Farber utilises the narratives of Kagan and Guttmann to create a photographic simulacrum in order to explain, and possibly justify, her own sense of displacement in post-apartheid South Africa.

4.2 (Re)imagining history

Writing about the negotiation and construction of identities in post-apartheid South Africa, Melissa Steyn (2001:xxii) argues that the act of remembering the past gives meaning to our present and future positions. Steyn argues that as South Africans "exert their imaginations to create coherent accounts that will render their past and future roles consistent with a positive self-regard…they invent and recombine fantasy and fact ..." In this process, fantasy and fact are embroidered and entangled together in order to construct a perceived temporal "history". In similar vein, narrative psychologist Mark Freeman ([1993]2015:9) notes that recollecting and recounting experiences are complex processes inherently marked by "distortions and falsifications". He asks us to consider that the recollection and observation of past experiences are texts that consist of constellations of subjective meanings. He proceeds to describe the construction of these experiences as an interlacing of significances into a configuration, a narrative. Through narrative, we make sense of the past and construct a historical understanding (cf. Freeman, [1993]2015:9, 113). However, the interpretation of history incorporates "real presences" or so-called objective facts so that the stories of the past consists of imaginative links between our subjective positions in the present. Simultaneously, this history is embellished with subjective and societal allegories. Barthes ([1957]1993) calls these mythologies. Myths for Barthes (1993:112-113) become a metalanguage which is framed by the dominant norm's preferred history, values and attitudes. The dominant norm utilises myths, especially through the media, to neutralise the norm as "normal". In the context of history, then, accounts are conditioned, constructed and rendered through the hegemonic partialities of the ruling class. Barthes argues that mythology deconstructs history and replaces it with empty ideology, therefore portraying "historical truths" which are in fact false (Barthes, 1993:12-113).

Baudrillard (1987) makes a similar point when declaring modernity a mythology of irreversibility. Baudrillard (2002:44) argues that late-capitalist society is in a state of "revisionism" where history is purged of the boundaries of the temporal, in a desperate attempt to find an origin for collective experiences. Baudrillard (1994:43-44) advocates that history, akin to any other sign in the simulacrum, becomes a "lost referential". Like Borges's map of a destroyed empire (cf. 1994:1) all that remains of history, according to Baudrillard, is the once real – a nostalgic recollection of imaginings without origin. This is why Baudrillard (in an interview with Gane, 2002:95), pronounces the end or death of history:

> Postmodernity is neither optimistic nor pessimistic. It is a game with the vestiges of what has been destroyed. This is why we are 'post- ': history has stopped, one is in a kind of post- history which is without meaning….

In his autobiography *The facts* (1988:5) writer Philip Roth describes his own search for meaning. "I found no one moment of origin", he writes, "but a series of moments, a history of multiple origins…" As such, one could argue that history does not consist of "memories of fact but memories of your imaginings of the facts" (Roth, 1988:8). Roth and Baudrillard are here (maybe unwittingly) highlighting another point: that in recalling, fabricating or collecting histories there is always a narrator present. As readers, therefore, we always rely on a narrator to imagine the past from their present position. What McHale (1987:43-94; 166-175) theorises as a historical fantasy, (see Chapter 3.4) occurs through narrative world-making in which the past and present are intertwined. We position ourselves in the present through this fictive world we have mapped as the past.

Farber as the director, artist and narrator of the photographic series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* creates such a subjective historical map by recreating Bertha Guttmann's Victorian life-world. That Farber employs the medium of photography to create this historical map is significant due to photography's theatrical productive capabilities. Camille (*in* Nelson & Shiff, 2003:46) specifically accentuates photography's phantasmagorical capabilities to contribute to and shape the real. Photography, as Sontag (1977:120) argues, does not merely counterfeit a real, but simultaneously usurps the real. This occurs by becoming a heightened extension of the captured real, or what Baudrillard [1981]1994:23) describes as a hyperreal (cf. Chapter 3.3.3). For

Baudrillard (1998:91), photography has the ability to disembody and decontextualise the subject, since the "objective lens of the camera [that] reveals the unobjectivity of the world". Regardless of the genre, photographic representations – like historical narratives – are constructed:

> …photographs are powerless to *deal with* the reality that is yet totally comprehended-in-advance by ideology, and they are as diversionary as the word formations – which at least are closer to being located within the culture of drunkenness rather than being framed on it… (Rosler *in* Owens and Bryson 1994:178).

Rosler (*in* Owens and Bryson, 1994:178) debunks the myth that photographs hold any objectivity as they frame subjectivity and not reality. Sontag (1977:26-31), in similar vein, proposes that photographic images have the ability to replace the real by becoming a "relic of reality" – something that is based on a real but is not the real. Photography becomes but a mere trace of a real; a subjective curation of a "once-real". *Dis-Location/Re-Location* in this regard becomes such a relic of reality as it is a staged, constructed manipulated theatrical version of a historical life-world.

Griffin (1999:129) states that the enthralling realism of photography encapsulates "images that operate at the level of myth rather than description". Griffin's argument, although specifically on war photography and photo-journalism, emphasises the emblematic relationship of photography and the construction of mythologies.[74] As Sekula (1983:198-199) argues, the viewer of photography is thus provoked not by history, but by the "appearance of *history itself*" [198]; historical images become a double spectacle:

> But this pictorial spectacle is a kind of rerun, since it depends on prior spectacles for its supposedly "raw" material. The viewer of standard pictorial histories loses any ground in the present from which to make critical evaluations. In retrieving a loose succession of fragmentary glimpses of the past, the spectator is flung into a condition of imaginary and temporal geographical mobility. In this dislocated and disoriented state, the only coherence offered is that provided by the constantly shifting position of the camera…Hence the spectator comes to identify with the technical apparatus, with the authoritative institution of photography. In the face of this authority, all other forms

[74] In this regard, see Taylor (1991:165) who, resonating with Eco (1986:216), states that photography, as a realistic medium, has the potential to construct mythologies. Photographs perpetuate stereotypes, which in turn become a history as it is "actively produced, turned into fiction and presented…simulated in replicas, or in re-enactments".

> of telling and remembering begin to fade. But the machine establishes its truth, not by logical argument, but by providing an *experience*. This experience characteristically veers between nostalgia, horror, and an overriding sense of the exoticism of the past, its irretrievable otherness for the viewer in the present (1983, 199).

Sekula contends that the (re)imagining of history – which is to an extent what Farber's *Dis-Location/Re-Location* presents – is curated by the camera and not by history itself as a temporal schism is constructed. The schism between the here and then causes a dislocated imagining of a reinvented historical event – that possibly never occurred in the first place. As such, the camera (and by extension the creator of the images) becomes the "authoritative" agent in the recreation of photographic historical narratives. The photographic imagining of history leads to the othering and exoticising of the past as it becomes a spectacle through the camera's lens. For Sekula it is at this moment, as historical accounts are transformed into "aesthetic objects", that aesthetic experience replaces historical understanding.

From this perspective, *Dis-Location/Re-Location* can be viewed as a photographical spectacle, and, as I will show, a neo-Victorian one specifically. This occurs as the series visually appropriates and mythologises a displaced Victorian lifeworld (that of Guttmann), within which the story of a displaced immigrant (that of Kagan) is placed as a motivation and in a way, a justification for Farber's own perceived displaced narrative in post-apartheid South Africa. Fantasy and fact are entangled together as the series embellishes a fictive history without origin – a simulacral world constructed out of, as I will argue, the myth (Guttmann), the shadow (Kagan) and the white body (Farber).

The following three subsections accordingly analyse how Farber has constructed histories around the three personas referenced in *Dis-Location/Re-Location.*

4.3 The historical myth: Bertha Guttmann

Victorian settler Bertha Guttmann is the main persona in the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location,* as Farber visually appropriates her life-world. Farber, posing as Guttmann, is depicted throughout the three sub-narratives: *Aloerosa*, *Ties that Bind Her* as well as *A Room of Her Own* (see representational addendum). The three settings are, at face value, based on Guttmann's life at Zwartkoppies. *Dis-Location/Re-Location* in this regard can be read as a neo-Victorian visual representation.

Heilmann and Llewellyn (2010:4) describe neo-Victorianism as texts, images or films such as *Dis-Location/Re-Location,* which are "self-consciously engaged with the act of (re)interpretation, (re)discovery and (re)vision concerning the Victorians". In other words, for a text to be classified as neo-Victorian, compared to merely being post-Victorian, there has to be an active awareness of how the past is reconsidered and revised. Many genres and subgenres of neo-Victorianism (such as Victorian steampunk or Goth adaptations) exist. For the purposes of this study, however, what Heilmann and Llewellyn, (2010:28) refer to as "postcolonial neo-Victorianism" is of interest as Farber's *Dis-Location/Re-Location* seemingly falls into this category.

Postcolonial neo-Victorianism is concerned with evaluating and problematising Victorian attitudes of otherness and marginalisation (cf. Chapter 2.3.1) through the (re)interpretation of Victorian narratives from a postcolonial perspective. Farber does this by (re)presenting and (re)interpreting Guttmann's life-world – and specifically her former home at Zwartkoppies – from a position she proclaims to be postcolonial (cf. Farber, 2012:12). Farber, however, does not (cf. Chapter 1.3) address complexities that would be expected in a traditional postcolonial undertaking, most notably the issue of race (cf. Murray *in* Law-Viljoen, 2008:51). The selected series rather offers a romanticised, somewhat nostalgic, neo-Victorian depiction[75] of Bertha Guttmann's life-world as seen in the theatrical, staged presentation of the series (see representational addendum).

From this perspective, although Farber's project *Dis-Location/Re-Location* could be regarded as neo-Victorian, it can simultaneously be problematised from a postcolonial neo-Victorian conceptualisation. Neo-Victorian depictions, such as *Dis-Location/Re-Location,* have gained critique as a form of appropriation, since they replicate the very Victorian mentality which they oppose. Heilmann and Llewellyn (2010:67), in agreement with Said (1993:1-2), argue that Victorian novels[76] had a "central investment in sustaining the imperial project even as it marginalized the colonial worlds to which it dispatched its protagonists". In other words, Victorian texts marginalised

[75] Primorac (2018:55-56) remarks that neo-Victorianism since the 1990s has shown a strong presence of nostalgia through the continuous adaptation tone of "loss and longing" for a dead past. The nostalgia in neo-Victorian adaptations become heightened as it is romanticised in a "spectacle of the past" [56].
[76] Heilmann and Llewellyn (2010:67), in this regard, compare Brontë's *Jane Eyre* ([1847]2006), Gaskell's *Mary Barton* ([1848]2016) or Dickens's *Great Expectations* (1861), each depicting a marginal view of the "Empire and its peoples".

colonial territories and the peoples. Kohlke (2008:68) is of the opinion that this has not changed in neo-Victorian depictions as she warns that “the Victorian age that once imagined the Orient as seductive free zone of libidinous excess” has itself been othered by neo-Victorianism as “Western culture’s mysterious, eroticised, and exotic Other”. Primorac (2018), in similar vein, criticises postcolonial neo-Victorianism because these,

> …texts, which challenge the Victorian attitudes to the colonial space often perform a postcolonial critique of imperialism at the cost of female characters’ agency Primorac (2018:14).

Primorac explains that whilst postcolonial neo-Victorianism offers a platform for re-evaluating colonial hegemony, it often does not offer one for critically re-evaluating the role of settler women. This is especially true because the depiction of settler women in neo-Victorian postcolonialism has become overly stereotyped. Primorac (2018:15; 101) specifically turns to the “use and abuse of corsets” [15] which has become the “visual shorthand for the notion of the literally and metaphorically repressed Victorian woman” [101] in neo-Victorian adaptations. The point Primorac is making is not that corsets repressed Victorian women but rather that neo-Victorianism falls back on the stereotype of women as “caged birds”, without accurately taking historical contextualisation into account.[77]

I argue that Farber’s enactment and depiction of “Guttmann” becomes such a historical neo-Victorian fantasy – a myth. In Farber’s (2012:73-82) reflection on *Dis-Location/Re-Location* she presents Guttmann as an uprooted and alienated settler woman who simultaneously had to comply with the strict domestic gender codes of her time.

Victorian, colonial immigrant, Bertha Guttmann (1862-1934), arrived from Sheffield, England in the then *Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek* (ZAR, 1852-1902) in 1885, after

[77] Steele (1996:58), for example, points out that contemporary depictions of Victorians often show women in tight-laced corsets struggling to breathe: “Although most Victorian women wore corsets, they were not usually tight-lacers with 16-inch waists, any more than most women today wear fetish shoes with 7-inch heels”. She goes on in stating that during Queen Victoria’s reign tight-laced corsets were regarded as the attire of the lower class, courtesans or the “occasional scandal-inducing aristocrat”.

marrying[78] Jewish Rand entrepreneur Sammy Marks[79] (1844-1920). Guttmann was to become the chatelaine of Zwartkoppies, an isolated farm east from Pretoria that Marks purchased a year before they got married (Mendelsohn, 1991:33). Guttmann grew up as part of an affluent, upper-class, Orthodox Jewish family in Sheffield. Her experiences as a woman were never formally documented as Mendelsohn (*in* Law-Viljoen, 2008:27) states that she was "less celebrated" than to her husband. The shock experienced upon arrival in the Transvaal by a young, Anglo-Jewish woman accustomed to Victorian colonial privilege, can however be imagined. Both Mendelsohn (1991:34) and van Rensburg (*in* Law-Viljoen, 2008:43) speculate that Guttmann experienced alienation and feelings of displacement upon arrival. Van Rensburg (*in* Law-Viljoen, 2008:43) states that Guttmann's possible sense of alienation and displacement lies in the extreme contrasts between "Victorian England and the Boer Republic" as well geographically and spatially "between the metropolis of the Empire and far-flung colony, between town and country".

Farber (2012:74–76) likewise compares Guttmann's arrival in the Highveld to other settler woman who arrived in so-called barbaric Africa around the same time. She (cf. 2012:74–76) argues that these women, like Guttmann, experienced loneliness, estrangement and displacement in their new surroundings. This experience was heightened by the confrontation of reality of the unknown, which was according to

[78] Mendelsohn (1991:6) speculates that Guttmann and Marks's marriage was arranged, as there was no (documented) communication between them before their wedding. Furthermore, Guttmann was the daughter of a successful businessperson, Tobias Guttmann, which acted as Marks's mentor and provided his passage fare to Cape Town in 1868 and his first capital (a case of Guttmann's knives) sixteen years earlier. Accordingly, Marks was in debt to Bertha's father and a joining of the two families officially through a marriage would be to the economic advantage of both parties.

[79] Marks, originally from a small working-class *shtetl* in Lithuania, left the then Russian Empire for England before the age of eighteen in order to avoid compulsory enlistment in the Russian army (cf. Mendelsohn 1991:6). Marks became a *smous* (trader), soon met Bertha's father Tobias Guttmann who guided him in business and possibly also in acculturating to an Anglo-Jewish demeanour. Marks's acculturation with British Anglo-Jewry would prove to be very helpful in his growing business endeavours in the ZAR. By the late 1800s Marks had befriended both Paul Kruger (president of the ZAR during 1883-1900) and Cecil John Rhodes (prominent business man and Prime Minister of the Cape Colony during 1890-1896). Marks, who made his initial fortune with Kimberley's diamond rush by trading and investment, would go on to become a central figure in the political arena of the time (cf. Mendelsohn & Shain 2008:54–55). Marks not only acted as Paul Kruger's financial advisor but also as a diplomat between the Boer and English elite. This diplomatic role, which would become heightened during the South African War (specifically the Second Freedom War of 1899-1902), placing Marks in a very well established political position which concurrently promoted his business interests as his commerce ventures, were subject to government support (cf. Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007:190; Mendelsohn & Shain, 2008:54-55). Marks, the son of a poor Lithuanian tailor, would become one of the most prominent, wealthiest businessman of the ZAR for which he gained the nickname 'The uncrowned king of the Transvaal' (Mendelsohn, 1991).

Kirkwood (cited *in* Farber, 2012:74) imagined as an idealised wilderness. Settler women very often imagined their new lives in the colonies to be filled with beautiful open spaces and nature. After arrival, these very open spaces became the paradoxical source of their loneliness as settler women found themselves in remote isolation on farms. This isolation, which frequently turned into resentment – especially towards their husbands – can be seen, according to Dampier (2000:118), in the letters they wrote home as well as in entries in their dairies. Farber plays into this mythology by drawing a somewhat spurious link between Guttmann and other (much less well-off) settler women living on farms. She cites, for example, a British mother, Mrs Coe, who in referring to her daughter (a Victorian settler in Rhodesia during the same period as Guttmann) states that:

> [She] had never been accustomed to such hard living conditions. The African women were primitive, the nearest white woman was miles away, and her husband was busy all day… (cited in Farber, 2012:74).

As Mrs Coe writes, her daughter was geographically and socially isolated from the "civilisation". Settler women, although experiencing possible displacement in their new environments, simultaneously othered the indigenous landscape and peoples from a hegemonic colonial gaze: "The African women were primitive" and the landscape was perceived to be wild, exotic, dangerous (cf. chapter 2.3; Said, 1995:93; Bhabha, 1994:117; Spivak, [1988]1997:24). Settler families did not try and acculturate to their new environment but rather tried to change their environments by enforcing colonial practices and creating settings (such as extravagant colonial gardens and houses) that reminded them of the "civilised" world they had left behind. Sammy Marks and Bertha Guttmann were no different, as the second volume of the Sammy Marks Museum booklet *Zwartkoppies Hall: From wilderness to country estate* (Malan, 2004b:1) suggests: "[Marks] was keen on planting trees and seizing the land from the wilderness to tame it into a landscaped park." Mendelsohn (1991:103-104) describes how the property Zwartkoppies was domesticated according to Victorian standards:

> The Markses added a telephone, a swimming pool and a tennis court, the surface of which, Sammy said, was 'like the floor of the Kafir huts' [103]. Zwartkoppies was reclaimed 'greened', creating a civilised landscape in what Sammy's secretary described as a wilderness. Thousands of loads of rocks and stones were dynamited and removed and thousands of trees planted, mainly exotic varieties… [104] (Mendelsohn, 1991:103-104).

Guttmann and Marks, like most colonial settlers, domesticated their surroundings, viewing this as their duty to civilise and tame the "exotic" landscape that surrounded them. Farber, however, overemphasises in my view the existential nature of Guttmann and Marks's struggle with the African landscape and, with that, Guttmann's sense of isolation. Guttmann's isolation was more emotional than geographical, as the details of their busy social life indicate.

As members of the Victorian upper-class, it was essential to uphold one's material class status by recreating the upper-class standards of their British peers (cf. Malan, 2004a:2). In this regard Marks, as Mendelsohn (*in* Law-Viljoen 2008:30,31) indicates, was a "grandmaster of the art of lobbying" [30] and would often show off to his guests what he "had done to improve the property…" [31]. Guttmann, accustomed to this privileged lifestyle, led the typical frivolous lifestyle of the wife of a wealthy businessperson (Malan, 2004a:2). She was responsible for running the homestead, raising (by supervision) their eight children and managing the fourteen staff members at Zwartkoppies. Furthermore Guttmann was in charge of hosting the extravagant social events at Zwartkoppies, which often included Sunday luncheons for over 40 of Marks's business and political circles and their families (Mendelsohn, 1991:105;103). Guttmann, although detesting these social events (due to the amount of work involved), hosted with "colonial grace", applying the same values, etiquette and way of life she had learnt in Sheffield (Sammy Marks Museum Victorian house tour, 2016).

4.3.1 Settler wife and madam[80]

Farber (2012:76) states that the "opulent mansion" and the life-style of Zwartkoppies became for Guttmann a "place of entrapment and isolation" whilst Mendelsohn (1991:187) compares Guttmann's possible experience at Zwartkoppies to a "gilded cage". Guttmann, according to Mendelsohn (1991:187), seemed to loathe Zwartkoppies and not only repeatedly expressed her loneliness in letters to Marks, but also delayed her return when visiting elsewhere. Guttmann would frequently take the children to visit "home" (which throughout her life time remained England), Durban, or their holiday house in Muizenberg and would extend their journeys for as long as

[80] Certain parts of this section on Guttmann was inspired by an article I wrote with my supervisor Prof MC Swanepoel in 2012 *Vervreemding in Leora Farber se* The futility of writing 24-page letters (2009) published in *Literator* (see Goosen, 2014:96-111, Vol 29_4).

possible. Marks wrote to his daughter whilst they were away on one of these trips, "you'll sail within 8 days…that is to say if your mother does not change her mind, and postpone the voyage for another month" (Mendelsohn, 1991:187). Marks apparently detested her behaviour in this regard but simultaneously allowed it by ignoring it. Regarding her aversion to the parties Marks hosted at Zwartkoppies, she wrote:

> …I must say you kept well to your word as I don't consider my home there has ever been my home it has been a Hotel and I have been the Housekeeper which is a good billet for a Wife…I wonder if you read my letters because if you don't I need only write short letters in future (Mendelsohn 1991:187).

Guttmann never regarded Zwartkoppies as her home but rather as a duty. The obvious tone of victimhood and resentment when expressing her unhappiness at Zwartkoppies can further be associated with self-imposed alienation. According to Farber (2012:76), Guttmann's isolation was exacerbated by her position "as a Jewish outsider – and therefore other". Regarding their Jewishness[81] the Marks', however, seemingly did not experience any form of anti-Semitic subjugation. This is not to say they were not victims of homogenised stereotyping; Marks, for example, was often referred to as *Paul Kruger se Jood* [Paul Kruger's Jew] (Mendelsohn and Shain 2008:54–55). Hence, the Marks can simultaneously be regarded as part of the affluent Anglo-Jewish

[81] Both Guttmann and Marks were raised as Orthodox Jews, practiced as Mendelsohn (1991:197-198) states an "acculturated, secular form of orthodoxy" which was distinctive of upper class Jewry in Victorian England. In this regard the Marks' celebrated Christmas (in order to be socially befitting in the Transvaal) as well as follow Jewish custom (i.e. celebrating *bar mitzvahs,* Passover and all their male children were circumcised). Furthermore, Guttmann's kitchen did not follow kosher rules and Guttmann was especially fond of crayfish and lobster (forbidden by Jewish law). Marks, according to the *South African Jewish Report* (SAJR*,* 2018), contributed throughout his career "generously to Jewish communities "as he donated money for the construction of synagogues (he for example donated all the bricks for the construction of the Pretoria Synagogue in 1898). Accordingly, it seems as though the Marks' followed and was passionate about Judaism, although they were flexible in the practicing of religious Jewish custom.

community in the then ZAR at the time.[82] If Guttmann had any experiences of othering regarding her secular Judaism, it was not documented. She would, however, more likely experience othering as a settler wife and, in turn, othered those around her as the *madam* of Zwartkoppies.

One can only imagine that Marks, due to his background (cf. footnote 80) as well as the patriarchal context of the time, did not have an understanding (i) for a woman's "dramatics" and (ii) for a woman's feelings of displacement from such privileged circumstances (as he himself came from a disadvantaged upbringing). Their marriage, being typical of the Victorian-patriarchal era, was characterised by fixed gender roles. It was expected of women to be soft-spoken, gentle, dutiful and respectful towards their families and more importantly their husbands (cf. Lemmer, 2007:32). Furthermore, it was essential for women of so-called "class" to adhere to Victorian standards of beauty, femininity and etiquette (see Stoler, 1997:63). This idealised sense of female embodiment could be described as a constant performance (in this regard compare chapter 2.3.2). Any resistance to, or confrontation with the expectation of "true, proper" womanhood, and to the assigned role of "ladylikeness", was met with constraining criticism and othering.

Guttmann, however, seemed to challenge the Victorian perception of womanhood as reflected in letters to Marks[83] (cf. Mendelsohn, 1991), a point Farber (2012) also picks up on. In 1906, to give one example of what was perceived as 'unladylike behaviour', Guttmann responded to a letter from Marks (in which he confronted her about her exuberant spending habits) with transparent fury:

[82] Anglo-Jews (predominantly from England), in contrast to the Eastern European Jewish immigrants of the late 1800s also known as *Litvakes* (such as Kagan's uncles), immigrated to South Africa willingly (such as Marks). Anglo-Jewish immigrants' main reason for immigrating being for economic prosperity and not, in contrast to the Litvakian community, due to forced exile. Shain (1994:17) underlines that by the end of the 1800s a hegemonic stereotyped distinction was perceived between the Litvakes and the Anglo-Jewish communities, fuelled by class difference (and not race): *the gentleman* (Anglo Jews) and the *knave (*Litvakes*)*: "the gentleman – characterised by sobriety, enterprise and loyalty, and the knave – characterised by dishonesty and cunning". This hegemonic class distinction can further be attributed to the Anglo-Jewish communities' acculturation with southern African society since the British takeover in 1806. Accordingly, Anglo-Jewish immigrants who arrived from the mid-1800s, were immediately welcomed in a settler-colonial community modelled on Victorian British customs, a shared language (English) and a religious lifestyle (Judaism) (cf. Shain,1994:11-12). Marks, although born in a small working-class *shtetl* in Lithuania, acculturated with Anglo-British standards in England long before arriving in southern Africa and marrying Guttmann – an affluent Anglo-Jew (cf. Mendelsohn 1991:6).

[83] These extracts of letters written between Marks and Guttmann are published in Mendelsohn (1991) and can also be read in Farber (2012). The original letters are held at the Kaplan centre for Jewish studies, University of Cape Town.

> I regret very much that you … will not reply to my question re Money. How am I to pay my way and who is to pay all the bills … It is absurd that you ignore the subject as to whom shall I look to for it if not you … believe me I can prove that none of the money that you gave me when we came home last March has been spent on myself up until now … (Guttmann as quoted by Mendelsohn, 1991:182).

A direct confrontation from a woman, like the one above, directed at her husband was regarded in Victorian terms as extremely discourteous, and money matters were not the prerogative of a Victorian woman. Guttmann, however, as stated by (Mendelsohn 1991:183), was one of the very few [white] women at the time who had access to and control over her own bank account. Although this can probably be attributed to logistical reasons as Marks was often absent from home due to business, it also says a lot about Guttmann's strong-willed ability (in contrast to what was expected of a Victorian woman). Marks, regardless of Guttmann's "tantrums", reacted towards her strong-willed rebellious outbursts with firmness, as was expected of the virile keeper of the family and household. This firmness, often delivered with a patronising undertone, was typical of a patriarchal attitude. This is seen in his reaction to Guttmann (when he dismissed a nurse she had hired after he advised her not to):

> I should like you to bear in mind and mark carefully for future that when I tell you anything especially as to people's characters, you will allow me to be a better judge than you are… (Marks as quoted by Mendelsohn, 1991:182).

What interests me is that the Marks's household seemed to simultaneously enforce and break away from Victorian gender norms. In addition to Guttmann having a bank account, the traditional Victorian domestic gendered rules[84] seemed to be flexible at Zwartkoppies. The latter can be deduced from two rooms in the Sammy Marks Museum namely the billiard and the drawing room. According to Victorian middle and upper-class gender standards, women were restricted during social events from these rooms as they were allocated strictly for [male] socialising and business negotiations. The Sammy Marks Museum (2016), however, maintain that women at the many social

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[84] According to Victorian middle and upper-class gender standards women were bound to public and domestic rules economically, socially and sexually (cf. Malan, 2004a:12; Morgan, 2007:1). Women were kept in line, according to Morgan (2007:1), by "separate spheres", restricted to especially the "idealised private or domestic" whereas men could move freely between the private and the public realms. These boundaries would spill over into the domestic realm when men socialised for "business" whilst women were restricted from these spaces. Gendered spaces, such as smoking rooms (for men) and tea rooms (for women), were applied accordingly as a method of gender segregation.

events at Zwartkoppies were (i) allowed in the billiard room with their male partners, and (ii) were allowed to play a game of billiards with the men. According to the Museum (2016), Guttmann was in fact a very good player who would "show the men a thing or two". Regarding the drawing room, Malan (2004a:10) further states that "strangely there is no separation" between the dining room and the drawing-room" at the Zwartkoppies homestead. This is strange to Malan because "it was customary for the ladies to withdraw" from the dining room after dinner to the drawing-room in order to give the men privacy to discuss business while they drink. Guttmann's participation in what can be regarded "a man's domain" (especially in the ZAR at the time) clashes with the Victorian patriarchal perspective (cf. Morgan, 2007) that preferred women to be silent, ornamental bystanders.

Regardless of the Marks's household being flexible in terms of socialising, Mendelsohn (1991:181) describes Marks as "a Victorian paterfamilias, continually chiding, instructing and exhorting her [Guttmann]." Like his contemporaries, Marks was conditioned to believe that [white] women were of a lesser gender. He condescendingly wrote to Guttmann (regarding one of her letters): "There are certainly some amusing little things in it, but of course being a woman you must be excused!" (Marks cited by Mendelsohn 1991:182). According to a patriarchal ideology, then, Marks as a white man was placed at the top of the hierarchy while Guttmann, as a white settler woman, was perceived from a patriarchal gaze as the Other (cf. chapter 2.3. regarding the dichotomy of otherness). Marks and Guttmann's relationship, however, was as Mendelsohn (1991:181) emphasises "very much a marriage of its time". Guttmann, although othered by Marks for being a woman, is also part of the privileged, hegemonic white self who by means of domestic complicity in turn othered especially the black staff at Zwartkoppies:

> ... all has to be put in order for the next week and we cannot do with less than the following servants: A Cook and Kitchenmaid [sic], a Butler and someone to help him, 2 Housemaids and 1 Housemaid and not counting the necessary Kaffirs [sic] to do all the children's quarters ... (in Mendelsohn, 1991:184).

As reflected by the above extract from Guttmann's demanding letter to Marks, she refers to the white staff at Zwartkoppies according to occupation (re a cook, kitchen

maid or butler) but to the black staff as *kaffirs* [sic].[85] Black women, as mentioned in Chapter 2 (cf. 2.3.2) of this study, experienced three-way othering: (i) for being a woman, (ii) for being black and (iii) for being a black woman, especially from a colonial and patriarchal gaze (cf. Smith, 1989:168). Marks, as the white European male self, degrades Guttmann's position as a woman, whilst Guttmann as the Other (and Marks as the self), subjugates black people in her domestic sphere as the other (Swanepoel & Goosen, 2012:5). White settler women (cf. Chapter 2.3.2) played a fundamental part in the furthering of hegemonic colonial interests especially in the domestic sphere. Settler women's presence in the colonies in turn contributed to the establishing of societal and institutionalised structures of colonialism (cf. McClintock, 2013:35; Stoler, 1989:634; Sharpe, 1993:7).

Farber (2012:80–81) argues, however, that the "ironies of upholding and fostering the colonial position … seems to have been lost on Bertha Marks." Guttmann in other words, in accordance with Dampier (2000:166), possibly understood that the experience of being othered and subdued due to her gender (and possibly for her religion) was trumped by her privileged position as a white, settler woman in colonial Africa as she othered and dehumanised further. Guttmann's othering (like most settler women) of (especially) the black workers at Zwartkoppies, as (Farber 2012:81) contends, further points to the confining and policed class and racial borders during colonialism.

In conclusion, Bertha Guttmann becomes a historical myth as Farber replicates and appropriates her life-world in neo-Victorian fashion as seen in the three distinct sub-narratives of *Dis-Location/Re-Location* (cf. representational addendum). Simultaneously Farber represents Guttmann in her reflection on the series as a subdued wife and as the madam of Zwartkoppies. Murray (*in* Law-Viljoen 2008:50) observes that Farber admits that even after "reading reams of Bertha's letters" (via Mendelsohn) Guttmann gave her the "creative space" to investigate her own sense of displacement. In other words, Farber validates her own displacement by usurping Guttmann's personal experiences as deduced from the letters she wrote to Marks. This is visually

[85] The fact that Guttmann is referring to white staff members (opposed to black staff members) can be deduced from Marks's letter in reply. He (quoted by Mendelsohn *in* Law-Viljoen, 2008:34) writes: "As to servants…I think you must agree with me that is not necessary to keep an establishment of 12 white women".

reflected in *Dis-Location/Re-Location* as Farber – moulded as a Victorian settler – becomes Guttmann. Guttmann accordingly becomes a myth as this privileged, yet marginalised settler woman is "ornamentalised" as her narrative is (re)imagined.

4.4 Freidele (Freda) Kagan: The shadow

Farber, in contrast to how she treats Guttmann, approaches the role of Freda Kagan in *Dis-Location/Re-Location* theoretically and contextually rather than visually. Kagan becomes, as Murray (*in* Law-Viljoen 2008:50) remarks, "a shadowy protagonist":

> We would expect that Farber's approximation of her mother's experience will be easy…However, the mother is mostly absent from the visual material…Whatever the reasons, Freda Farber [Kagan] is a shadowy protagonist in the identity narratives Leora Farber creates… (Murray *in* Law-Viljoen 2008:50).

The only visual reference to Kagan in *Dis-Location/Re-Location* was in the travelling exhibition, where a portrait of the Kagan family was exhibited with the photographic series (see figure 11, Chapter 1.1). In Farber's doctorate (2012:83-90), however, she uses her mother's narrative merely as a contextual Jewish link between her own sense of displacement and that of Victorian settler Guttmann. In this respect, Kagan, from Farber's perspective, becomes one of the three displaced protagonists of the series. Farber (2012:83-90) presents her mother's narrative in two ways: (i) as a displaced immigrant and (ii) as a silent bystander of apartheid.

4.4.1 Displaced migrant

Freidele (Freda) Kagan emigrated to the then Union of South Africa[86] from Latvia with Farber's Orthodox Jewish grandparents in 1935 (Farber, 2012:3).[87] Freda was only

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[86] The Union of South Africa (1910-1961) came into being with the unification of the two Boer republics (*Oranje Vrystaat* and *Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek*) and the British dominated Cape Province as well as Natal under British constitutional monarchy in 1910 (Worden, 1994:32; Giliomee, 2003:171-175).

[87] The Union of South Africa was at this point part of a few countries who still admitted Jews. The Quota Act of 1930, instated by D.F. Malan (Minister of Domestic Affairs at the time), however, severely capped immigration. The Quota act, although not directly referencing Jews, placed a firm cap on immigration, specifically from 'non-scheduled' countries (Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Palestine). Malan explained, in the House of Assembly Debates (Vol. 14, 10 February, 1930), that one of the three main reasons for the selectivity of the Immigration Quota Bill was:

> South Africa's desire to maintain its own 'type' of civilisation, and the fact that the civilisation of Eastern or Southern Europe was, to a large extent, different from that of Western Europe (Malan quoted in Elazar and Medding, 1983: 156).

As Rubin (2005:131) states the Quota Act of 1930 was underlined with a racially motivated ideology. The Kagan family was accordingly fortunate to be allowed into the Union of South Africa as only 50 migrants per year from "non-scheduled countries" were permitted.

three at the time. The Kagan family's reasons for immigrating, according to Farber (2012:83), were two-fold: in order to escape anti-Semitism and religious persecution in Eastern Europe[88] and for educational opportunities in order to "better oneself in life". The then Union of South Africa was regarded as part of the so-called New World, offering the possibility for economic prosperity (Brustein & King, 2004:39). As Kagan (*in* Farber, 2006) attests "Jews worked very hard" in their host communities "as they came here with nothing". Moreover, the Kagans had existing family in the country who arrived earlier with the third wave of Eastern Jewish immigration during 1890-1910 (Farber, 2012:83). This presumably motivated their choice as it not only made entry into South Africa easier but also offered an established support system upon arrival:

> Freda Farber's [Kagan] parents forged close ties with family and the community of economically disadvantaged, Yiddish-speaking Orthodox and Zionist Eastern European Jews in Johannesburg (Farber, 2012:84).

Forging strong community ties were vital in order to succeed in what Shimoni (2003:3) describes as the "New World", as newly arrived Eastern European Jewish immigrants were confronted with language, cultural, ideological and religious novelties as reflected by the heterogeneous southern African society.[89] In this respect the *South African Zionist Federation* (1898) together with the *Jewish Board of Deputies* (SAJBD, 1912), became nationwide organisations, aimed at the wellbeing of South African Jews as a collective. More importantly, these organisations were focused on the impetus to assist Jewish diaspora with the transition.

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[88] The primary origin of a mythical perception of Jews and the main justification of anti-Semitism, as Schweitzer (*in* Ehrlich, 2009:96) attests, being the accusation that they are 'Christ-killers'- the antichrist who committed the arch-crime of humanity. This perception has led to the persecution (and expulsion) of Jewish communities, caused waves of Jewish diaspora globally and fuelled other negative stereotypes of Jewish peoples for 2 000 years. Jewish diaspora would intensify globally during the 19th and 20th centuries due to nationalism and economic reasons. This would lead to the forced migration of the Jewish communities in order to avoid anti-Semitic persecution. In this regard, the anti-Semitic laws during the 19th and 20th centuries of the Черта́ осе́длости,*chertá osédlosti* (Russian for The Pale of Settlement, later part of Imperial Russia) or the *Nürnberger Gesetze (*Nuremberg laws, also labelled as the Nuremberg race or anti-Semitic laws) instated by the German Nazi Party (NSDAP) in 1935 can be compared (cf. Ehrlich, 2009:102; 884; 951).

[89] Kagan (as cited by Farber, 2012:88), for example, describes her reaction of seeing a black person for the first time: "We arrived at my uncle's house in Randfontein … We went into the kitchen and there was a black woman there. Apparently I took one look at her, screamed, and ran out the kitchen."

South Africa's historical narrative, although never provoking Jewish diaspora[90] by for example obligatory exile or persecution, can be regarded as a space where diaspora was sequentially experienced. An experience of diaspora, as discussed in chapter two (cf. 2.4, regarding movement and identity), is associated with feelings of anxiety, displacement, loss, dislocation and trauma (cf. Bhabha, 1994; Young, 1995; Cohen, 1997). This leads to an experience of diaspora and liminality as dislocated individuals struggle with what Gluckman (1969:81) describes as being neither here nor there. Experiences of diaspora are heightened by migrants' challenges to belong (after often traumatic experiences of exile) and integrating into the new host community (cf. Hellig, 1995:155). Gilman (1999:2), within a Jewish framework, distinguishes between two different modes of Jewish displacement namely: (i) diaspora and or (ii) *galut* or *golah*[91]. From Gilman's distinction in a South African context, one can refer to Jewish immigrants from Latvia who arrived during the 1930s in order to avoid persecution in Eastern Europe as part of Gilman's classification of traditional diaspora. Gilman's second mode of Jewish exile *galuth* makes way for a more contemporary scattering of Jewry and is characterised by the *willing* uprooting of individuals to for example Israel (Gilman, 1999:2). Gilman's distinction (1999), although questionable from the perspective that uprooting (willingly or unwillingly) accompanies feelings of anxiety and trauma (although on different levels) as Stier (2004:124) remarks, lies in the power dichotomy of being empowered versus powerless. Subsequently having agency over leaving or staying brings forth different reactions and experiences of displacement. An individual, such as Kagan, can experience both diaspora and *galut* in the same lifetime (cf. Stier, 2004:124; Gilman, 1999:2). Kagan experienced unwilling uprooting through

[90] The South African Jewish experience of diaspora becomes an extension, as emphasised by Hellig (1994:109-110) in her contributions *The myth of Jewish power* (1994) as well as in *The Jewish community of South Africa* (1995), of the collective feeling of displacement that the Jewish community has experienced for over two thousand years of exile, expulsion and persecution. She emphasises the vulnerability of Jewish diasporic communities: "For almost two thousand years, from 70 [B] CE until the re-establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, Jews have lived as a relatively powerless minority in a variety of host countries. Their well-being, or lack of it, has been in direct proportion to the positive or negative attitudes of their host governments" (Hellig, 1995:155).

[91] *Galuth or golah* in Hebrew refers to exile, literally referring to being outside of the "Land of Israel".

her family's immigration during the 1930s and again willing displacement in 2013 at the age of eighty when she moved to Israel[92] (Farber, 2012:84).

A diasporic struggle of belonging is further underlined by autobiographical and collective memories as well as through constant identity negotiation (cf. McLeod, 2000:207). Migrant identities, whether willingly or unwillingly displaced, are often positioned between two spaces of belonging: their place of origin and their new foreign environment. In this respect, Kagan (*in* Farber, 2012:85) remembers her father's (Israel Leib Kagan) continuous longing for Latvia:

> My father never forgot *Der Heim*…everything was bigger and better in *Der Heim*…If we would be eating and we would have, for example, potatoes, he would say, *dis nie die zelbe zag as in Der Heim* (it is not the same as at home) (translated by Farber).

Israel Leib Kagan constructed an ideal past – a place – that was used to compare everything in his new life-world. This occurs, corresponding with Rushdie (1991:11) and McLeod (2010:242), as a reflection of a need for belonging, because a sense of place is disrupted. Farber (2012:85) interprets Israel Leib Kagan's (her grandfather) nostalgic longing for Latvia, as a utopian simulacrum "of a place that does not exist". Displaced migrants, as discussed in Chapter Two (see 2.4.1 regarding diaspora), construct an imagining of home that is embedded in a romanticised version of a past. This imagining of home, in accord with Baudrillard (cf. Chapter 4), develops into a kind of imagined romanticised place, which is in contrast to the experienced reality of the present. The past, in other words, functions as a simulacral real. Concurrently the dichotomy between the imagined idealised past and the alien present often leads to a heightened experience of diaspora. For Kagan, her father's yearning for "home", in accordance with Volkan's (*in* Fromm, 2012:173) description of intergenerational transmission of trauma (see Chapter 2.4.1), possibly influenced and strengthened her own sense of displacement as she was reminded that their new home would never be as good as the one they left.

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[92] Israel as perceived by Jewry, and more specifically by Zionists, is more than a geographical point of religious interest and origin but is undeniably psychologically linked to a sense of belonging and home. This is due to the constructed collective mythological sense of entitlement of Israel being the 'promised land' within a religious collective Jewish identity. The Torah repeatedly declares in Genesis (12:7, 13:15, 15:18, 17:8) that Abraham (being the original bloodline of Jewry according to the Torah) and his descendants was promised the land of Canaan (today known as Israel) by god.

Within the South African Jewish immigrant narrative, the uncertain political environment in which Jewish immigrants arrived and had to adapt to during the 1930s further accentuated this disruption of a sense of place. This period is characterised by the institution of Afrikaner nationalism[93] and grave economic difficulties due to the worldwide Great Depression of 1929[94] (Brustein & King, 2004:39). Additionally academia focusing on South African Jewish history (cf. Shain, 1994; Beinart, 1996; Miller, 1993; Heilig, 1995), associate the 1930s and 1940s with South Africa's anti-Semitic moment of "Judeophobia".[95] Although Jews were never persecuted in South Africa and were considered white, Judeophobia was evident in what Endelman (*in* Berger, 1986:104) refers to as the conversion from "private" to "public" anti-Semitism. Public anti-Semitism was fuelled by public demonstrations by minority militant anti-Semitic factions such as the *Gryshemde* (1933, Grey shirts), the *Ossewabrandwag* (1938, Ox Wagon Sentinel) and the *Stormjaers* (1938, the Storm troopers) [96] and later during 1940 by *Die Nuwe Orde* (The New Order) (cf. Thompson, 2006:179; Worden,

[93] The need for independence intensified with the founding of the Union of South Africa in 1910 and manifested especially in political nationalistic positions – initially under J.B.M. Hertzog's (1886-1942) *Nasionale Party* (NP, founded in 1915) and under D.F. Malan's (1874-1959) *Gesuiwerde Nasionale Party* (GNP, *Purified National Party,* 1934), reaching a peak under leadership of the architect of apartheid, Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd (1910-1966) (cf. Welsh, 2000:430; 448-449).

[94] The global financial meltdown of 1929 also heightening the grave socio-economic circumstances and the so-called *Armblanke-vraagstuk* (the poor white problem) according to the Carnegie Report (cf. Worden, 1994:75, 91-92; Thompson, 2006:157). According to the Carnegie Report (1929) poor whites were in the same economic situation as "poor African natives" and if these natives were to be given the opportunity they would surpass the poor whites. The underprivileged whites' cause, from this perspective, was specifically taken up by early nationalists, which simultaneously explains the white consensus to welcome Malan's Quota Act of 1930 (cf. Shimoni, 2003:12-13). Eastern Jewish immigrants arriving in South Africa during the 1930s were acutely aware that they were competing with South African citizens for low income job opportunities (cf. Brustein & King, 2004:39).

[95] Anti-Semitism in the then Union of South Africa (although by selected minorities) was especially evident under the leadership of the nationalists D.F. Malan (prime minister during 1948-1954) and later under Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd (prime minister from 1958-1966). In this regard, Shain's (1994) *The roots of antisemitism in South Africa* offers a re-examination of the South African Jewish narrative. He (1994:1-5) argues that the roots of anti-Semitism in South Africa, peaking during the 1930s, originated in the stereotyping of Jews at the end of the 19th century who arrived during the third wave of Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe. Sherman (2000:505) attests that Eastern European Jews were especially subject to stereotyping as they were willing to work in what was then known as eating houses of the Transvaal mining reefs. Here they served food to black mineworkers. These so-called eating houses were also condescendingly known by the Yiddish term 'kaffireatas'. Shimoni, (2003:6) stresses "No white racist contempt could be more acute than that reserved for low-class whites who served blacks." Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe during this time, although never religiously persecuted in South Africa, were therefore viewed from the colonial gaze as the lesser Other.

[96] In this regard the public contributions of Greyshirt member and late Boere general Manie Maritz's (1976-1940) in his autobiographical anti-Semitic spewing *My Lewe en Strewe* (1937, *My Life and Pursuit*) can also be compared. Maritz (1937:114), a firm supporter of Hitler, writes regarding Jews "We have the full right to hate them…if English or Afrikaners today want to associate with the Jew, then we have to exterminate them! (translated by the author Maritz, 1937:114). Jews were marketed by these factions, as an ideological danger for white South African Christians.

1994:92; Grobler, 2007:155; Bunting, 1989:111). Although anti-Semitism in the then Union of South Africa was short-lived,[97] Kagan (cited in Farber, 2012:90) recalls how other children would derisively call her and her siblings “bloody Jews”. Kagan states, “I don’t think they knew what they were saying … they must’ve got it from their parents.” Presumably Kagan experienced othering and displacement and marginalisation. This can be associated with what Shain (1994:7) describes as being part of an “alien ideology”. Accordingly, displaced individuals who are othered by the so-called normative self for being considered different, foreign or alien. Being placed on the margin, as discussed in chapter two, be it physical or psychological, simultaneously creates a shared feeling of alienation and concurrently exacerbates the experience of diaspora.

4.4.2 The indifferent bystander of apartheid

Farber (2012:90) states that her mother and her grandparents – as much as they were displaced immigrants, attempting to adopt to their new environment – became “part of the community of silent bystanders”. Farber here, in agreement with Heilig (1995:155) and Beinart (1986:75), is referring to the South African Jewish community’s silent approach towards the politics of the 1940s preceding and following the National Party’s rise to power in 1948. Their “non-involvement with the injustices of apartheid” as Farber states, became, as Shimoni (2003:xiii) emphasises, part of South African white community’s “indelible stain on mankind’s moral conscience”.

Stier (2004:123), Sherman (2000:505) and Hellig (1995:155) explain that the South African Jewish community’s tacit approach to South African politics from the late-1940s is framed by anxieties resulting from the dichotomy of being instantaneously empowered and powerless. South African Jewry is confronted with a double-edged historical narrative framed by their position as part of white hegemony and unequal power relations based upon race and skin colour versus experiences of forced exile, diaspora and anti-Semitism:

[97] A world-wide waning of anti-Semitism occurred after the Second World War (1939-1945) due to the international reckoning with Nazi Germany and the international demonising of anti-Semitism (cf. Shain, 1994:151). In the then Union of South Africa the SAJBD officially announced an active campaign against anti-Semitism in 1945 when they announced a “Nine point programme” against anti-Semitism (cf. Shimoni, 2003:17). Simultaneously in the Union of South Africa, after the National Party, under the leadership of Malan won the general elections in 1948, the ruling party would turn the attention to the implementation of its policy of racial segregation – apartheid (Welsch, 2000:427). Accordingly Jews, as originally perceived to be “foreigners” were repositioned as part of the South African white minority.

> Jews have been accepted as equals or subjected to various forms of discriminatory legislation. Deprived of significant political power, the primary behavioural mode of Jewish communities has been one of conciliation. In addition, anti-Semitism is a ubiquitous feature of Jewish experience. Thus, Jewish communities tend to respond to the world around them in a manner which seeks to minimise overt negative action against them (Hellig, 1995:155).

Heilig proposes that Jewry globally has been deprived of significant political power since the onset of Jewish diaspora and the subsequent geographic scattering of Jewish communities for more than 2000 years (especially before the re-establishment of the State of Israel in 1948). Jews, although diverse, tend to construct a strong collective in foreign host environments through a shared religious communal experience. In order to safeguard the communities, especially those that have formed after forced exile (as with the Kagans case), Jews strive not to upset the *status quo* of their host countries. In addition, South African Jews formed part of the privileged white minority and their wellbeing was “unmistakably dependent on conformity with the white consensus” as the political system offered “equal opportunities and rights for all whites but denied them to non-whites” as Shimoni (2003:73) states.

With Malan’s nationalist victory in the May 1948 elections, the systematic enforcement of segregation or apartheid was set into motion.[98] The ideology behind the racial systemisation of segregation, although never static, was a program of social and institutional reform (cf. Giliomee & Schlemmer, 1989:1). The system of apartheid was implemented by specific policies and legislations which on the one hand ensured white domination politically, socially and economically (as moulded by inherited colonial attitudes and legislation) and concurrently proposing “separate development” as a solution for the South African “race problem”. The latter justifying the NP’s racist

[98] In 1947 the Sauer Commission was appointed (as an austere response on the Fagan Commission of 1945). All “non-whites” were to be separated from whites by legislation into designated residential areas in order to ensure separate social and economic development. Some of the first legislations included the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act of 1949 (building on the Immorality Act of 1927) and the Population Registration Act of 1950. The latter being one of the main mobilising agents of practical apartheid as all South Africans had to be classified by race, which was marked in an identification document. Race was determined by various criteria including physical traits (skin, hair and facial features).The Group Areas Act (1950, altered several times by parliament until 1984) which was implemented over several years, followed. Urban apartheid caused traumatic displacement as black workers were uprooted into the designated living areas (such as Kliptown or Alexandra). Other segregation acts, supporting the Group Areas Act, followed such as the Natives Act of 1952 (commonly known as the Pass Laws Act, which entailed all blacks over the age of sixteen to carry passes) (cf. Welsh 2000:427-431; Shimoni *in* Mendelsohn & Shain, 2003:19-20; Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007:314-315; Worden, 1994:72).

rational and *baasskap* (white hegemony) to counter (in anticipation) the fear of black domination (cf. Dubow, 2006:258).[99]

According to Shimoni (2003:21), the South African Jewish community of the late-1940s were still confronted with anxieties caused by the minority factions of anti-Semitic groups during the 1930s. These anxieties especially remerged after the reckoning of anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany after the Second World War, as some Jewish members feared the then Union of South Africa was heading for the same fate under Afrikaner nationalist ideals. An example of this was Jewish Historian Arthur Keppel-Jones's dystopian novel *When Smuts Goes* (1948)[100] in which he predicted an anti-Semitic pogrom in the Union of South Africa by 1955. He (as quoted by Shimoni, 2003:21) warns in the futuristic novel that the South African Jewry was "too familiar with the recent history of Germany to be deceived…It was clear the worst was to come". Although Jones' fictional dystopian predictions never came true, they still highlight the fear of some Jewish citizens towards the rise of the National Party.

In reality, the Jewish community was no longer a threat to Afrikaner nationalism and the 1948 government was still uncertain of its political position. As such, the NP had to embrace the Jewish community in order to strengthen the white vote. In 1970 Cape senator and apartheid activist Leslie Rubin (1970:31) critically interpreted the NP's post-1948 attitude towards Jews as a twofold justification:

> …the march of Afrikaner nationalism must not be hampered by the opposition or hostility of a group like the Jews, and, in any event, all Whites must be encouraged to stand together.

In light of the rationalisation to protect the white vote Rubin notes that the NP made a lively effort during the 1950s and 1960s to cultivate a good relationship with the Jewish community. Goodwill towards the Jewish community was especially cultivated when Malan became the first South African prime minster to visit Israel in 1953 (Mendelsohn

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[99] In this regard especially compare Verwoerd's (1963:xxxvi) speeches on the *beginsel van heerskappy* (principle of reigning; 1963:xxxvi).

[100] *When Smuts Goes* was published on the same evening of Malan's Herenigde National Party's victory and as the title suggests depicts a future Union of South Africa after the demise of General Jan Christiaan Smuts's (1870-1950; leader of the South African Party and Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa, 1919-1924 and again 1939-1948) United Party. The "fall "of Smuts should be understood against the context of South African Jewry. Jews were firm supporters of Smuts as he continuously supported Zionism as part of his main political agenda was to unite the British and Afrikaans speaking whites in a polyglot South Africanism (cf. Giliomee, 2003:369-370; Worden, 1994:73).

& Shain, 2003:20). Both Hellig (1995:155, also compare Hellig, 1994:120-121) and Rubin (1970:31) contend that the anti-Semitism of the 1930s (that were made public by anti-Semitic minority groups) was soon forgotten by South African Jewry and non-Jewry alike. The majority of South African Jews[101] rather developed an inexcusable silent, non-involvement approach towards the proposed apartheid policies of the NP. Stier (2004:127) calls this the beginning of a "Jewish communal quiescence in the face of the growing institutionalisation of separate development".

This silent approach was further fuelled by the SAJBD's continuous statements during the 1950s and 1960s portraying their priority in protecting the interests of the Jewish community by encouraging Jewish citizens not to get involved in South African politics (cf. *Report of Executive Council* April 1985-1960:9). The SAJBD would only publically condemn the NP and apartheid in the mid-1980s, which according to Goldberg (1997:48): "… [The] condemnation of apartheid had already become so commonplace that it did not demand any particular courage of the Board…" The board's continuous public call for the non-involvement of Jews in politics throughout the 1940s-1980s received severe critique in South Africa post-1994. Chief Rabbi Harris (*in* Shimoni, 2003:272-273) asked for forgiveness on behalf of South African Jewry in his submission to the religious section of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (established in 1996) in 1997:

> The Jewish community did not initiate apartheid. Many in the Jewish community did not agree with apartheid ... But most members of the Jewish community benefited in one way or another from apartheid … Because of the evil of indifference which so many in the Jewish community professed, we confess that sin today before this Commission and we ask forgiveness for it.

[101] Regardless of the larger Jewish community being silent bystanders, a small radical tradition of Jewish individuals, who were publically against apartheid, came to the fore (together with other liberal Afrikaans and English speaking whites) during the *struggle*. During the period of 1956-1961, today known as *The Treason Trail*, the government arrested approximately 156 members (of the opposition) for suspected high treason. Of the documented arrests 23 of the detained were whites, as Beinart (1996:74-75) highlights, more than half including SACP leader Joe Slovo (1926-1995; later commander of the ANC's military wing *Umkhonto we Siswe,* see Welsh, 2000:458-459) being from Jewish descent. Later during the conciliation period previously exiled individuals from Jewish descent such as Albie Sachs (born 1935), Ronnie Kasrils (born 1938), Gill Marcus (born 1949) and Slovo played high-profile roles as part of the ANC's negotiation team. The so-called obstreperous or liberal Jews, however, as Shimoni (2003:77-78) emphasises chose to be associated by an awareness of "non-Jewish Jews" (coined by Isaac Deutscher). In other words the radical Jewish identity paradoxically associates with not being religious in addition to being conscious of a Jewish position (in society). It only became fashionable after the 1990s to be radical and be Jewish (Goldreich *in* Israel and Adams, 2000:153).

Harris's submission shows South African Jewry, regardless of how they felt about the ideology of segregation due to their "indifference", had to morally acknowledge and face their position of benefitting from the system of apartheid. Farber (2012:89) states that Freda Kagan – a displaced migrant – who experienced anti-Semitism both though her parents' memories of Latvia and as a child in the then Union of South Africa, was "well aware of the effects of racial discrimination and persecution". However, according to Farber, her mother "chose to turn a blind eye" in order "to secure her position of privileged whiteness".

Apart from Farber's (2012:88-90) judgement upon her mother she does not, in her reflection on the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* in her doctoral thesis, engage with Kagan's autobiographical or personal experiences of apartheid. Nor does she give information or comment on Kagan's decision, as part of the Jewish community in Johannesburg, to remain uninvolved in South African politics since the onset and throughout apartheid. Apartheid was possibly too difficult a topic to discuss. Whatever the reasons may be for the impersonal nature through which Farber approaches Kagan as a displaced migrant and as a silent bystander of apartheid, Kagan, in accordance with Murray (*in* Law-Viljoen 2008:50), becomes but a mere shadow of the series. This mainly occurs in two ways: first, because there are no visual references to Kagan *Dis-Location/Re-Location* and, second, because she becomes a marginal character in her own story, as her narrative is not constructed by herself but by Farber. In some sense, then, Farber uses her mother's narrative merely as a discursive referent to displacement (cf. Farber, 2012:13). This is not to say that Kagan can or cannot be positioned as a displaced migrant or a silent bystander of apartheid, but rather that her narrative remains relegated by the lack of agency regarding Kagan's recollections and memories. Accordingly, Kagan, who experienced otherness as a displaced migrant becomes, in a sense, othered once again in the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location.* It appears that Farber uses Kagan's narrative mainly as a mediator between herself and Guttmann. This allows Farber to justify and seemingly contextualise her own sense of displacement in post-apartheid South Africa. However, the implication of this othering is also that Farber fails to critique or address the fact that white identity in post-apartheid South Africa still relies to a large extent on remaining silent about the injustices of the past.

4.5 Leora Farber: the white body

Although *Dis-Location/Re-Location* uses Guttmann's life-world as setting, Farber herself is the main visual focus in the photographic series as she plays the part of the body-protagonist in the neo-Victorian world she reimagines. Farber is seen throughout the three sub-narratives *Aloerosa*, *Ties that Bind Her* and *A Room of Her Own* (see representational addendum) and the narrative unfolds around her white body. She simultaneously frames herself at the centre of the series' narrative, and envisions a modality of whiteness based on her own sense of white displacement through imagined links with the personas Kagan and Guttmann.

Farber (2012:1, 3) describes herself as a "second-generation Jewish woman" [3] interrelated to her position as a [1] White English-speaking South African ("WESSA"[102]). Farber, as mentioned in Chapter One (cf. 1.1), was born in 1964 in Johannesburg only four years after South Africa became a Republic (1961). Accordingly, she grew up in a segregated metropolitan context during apartheid[103] as part of a white privileged minority. Simultaneously, she is part of the collective Jewish white community who (as argued in the previous section) had a tacit, silent approach towards the injustices of apartheid. She described her personal experience of displacement as a white woman who experienced the transition from a pre- to post-apartheid as follows (2012:91):

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[102] The term "WESSA", can be problematic as it promotes a non-existent homogenous collective. Furthermore, it holds a colonial connotation as it originated during the reign of the British Empire. It can also be associated, although not in Farber's case due to her Jewishness, with the metonym WASP – White Anglo Saxon Protestant. Dubow (2006:11-12) comments the following on the white English-speaking South African tradition:

> … although the English-speaking establishment and its institutions were in reality often highly conservative during the apartheid era, these became indelibly associated with "liberalism" ... Indeed, English-speaking South Africans have long managed the trick of defining everyone else in the country as racially or ethnically "other" – while blithely assuming their own identity to be somehow "normal" and therefore not suitable for deep investigation. In a post-apartheid and post-colonial world this position is becoming less and less tenable (Dubow, 2006:11-12).

[103] Arnold (2005:332) divides apartheid in three different time periods namely (i) the establishment of "grand" apartheid between 1948-1961, (ii) growing isolation in the face of independence of African countries north of South Africa during 1961-1976 and (iii) the beginning of the end in an attempt by the NP to hold onto the ideology of apartheid, which is characterised according to Arnold since 1976 with the Soweto uprising until 1994 with the first democratic election. According to Arnold's three phases Farber would have witnessed the third and last phase of apartheid most "consciously" as she was twenty years old in 1984.

> Since 1994, as a result of conflicting social, economic and political forces, Johannesburg has evolved from a regulated, apartheid city, designed and built on principles of control, segregation and exclusion, to an African metropolis in which identities are polyglot, heterogeneous, complex and in ongoing states of flux.

For Farber (2012:90-93) her sense of displacement in post-apartheid South Africa lies in the changing landscape which for her "encompassed the often turbulent, entangled ambiguities of alienation and belonging" [90]. Farber (2012:93-96) questions her position of whiteness in post-apartheid South Africa in two ways: (i) historically against the backdrop of collective white displacement post 1994 and (ii) theoretically by anchoring her argument in whiteness studies, especially to the contributions of Steyn (2001) and Van der Watt (2003). She does not reflect in-depth on her own *personal* experiences of being white in post-apartheid or growing up during apartheid South Africa.

The following two sections contextualises Farber's reflection of white displacement by firstly framing white displacement contextually, thereafter a critical undertaking of Farber's reflection on whiteness occurs.

4.5.1 (White) displacement in post-apartheid South Africa

South Africa's negotiation period (1990-1994) was filled with political turmoil causing insecurities and anxieties, regarding the future of the country with black and white South Africans alike. The progress of the negotiations was often disrupted by and halted due to bloody, politically motivated upsurges of violence[104]. Fear and trepidation during this time were furthered by a struggling economy which was caused by uncertainties amongst investors with an unusually high capital outflow as well a renewed awareness of inequality between class lines and an alarmingly rise in the violent crime rate (cf. Chapman, 1998:85; Huntington, 2002:126). Notwithstanding the political, social and economic uncertainties all South Africans participated on 27 April 1994 in the first democratic elections in what Welsh (2000:517) describes as "an

[104] Violent surges especially originated in Natal and intensified throughout the country between members of the ANC and the IFP (Inkatha Freedom Party). Tension during this period was also fuelled by violent riffs between the ANC and the PAC (whom officially boycotted CODESA) as well as their military wing Azania's People's Liberations Army, APLA (famous for their violent rallying cry "One settler, one bullet"). Attempts, although not as impactful, to dismantle the negotiations were also made by the minority, splintered Afrikaner-right (cf. the *Afrikaner Weerstand Beweging* [AWB, Afrikaner Resistance Movement]) under leadership of Eugene Terre'Blanche and the Conservative Party), (cf. Arnold, 2005: 781; Marschall, 2010: 25; Worden, 1994:140-141).

impressive spectacle". South Africans of all races, although a significant political moment for the previously oppressed, were reassured by the possibilities that South Africa's second moment of decolonisation[105] held (Giliomee, 2004:610; Beinart, 1996:71-72; cf. Mendelsohn & Shain, 2008:192-193). The ANC[106], with the majority rule under leadership of anti-apartheid revolutionary Nelson Mandela (1918-2013; president during 1994-1999), marketed the "new" South Africa in archbishop Desmond Tutu's (born 1931) words as a "rainbow nation"[107] (with eleven official languages; Tutu, 1989; Mandela, 1994:541; Dubow, 2007:72; Bundy, 2007:80-82; Marschall, 2010:17). The euphoria that accompanied the allegorical "miracle" of 1994 and a mythological "rainbow nation", however, was short lived. The main reasons for this according to Beinart (1996:79), Shimoni (2003:234) and Arnold (2005:795-796) was the growing class gap between the rich and the poor, corruption and the dissipating of state funds, the lack of service delivery and the disturbing violent crime rate. Beinart (1996:79) states, two years after South Africa's democratic moment, a state of apprehension swept across especially the white suburbs:

> … which took hold from the mid-1980s state of emergency through the 1994 elections. And it has continued over the past two years, especially in Johannesburg, as crime has exploded into white areas, leading to a fear sometimes bordering on hysteria.

This led to an increased escapist tendency since the negotiation period, manifesting in a wave of emigration by particularly white South Africans (Welsh & Spence,

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[105] In this regard Alter (1994:3) identifies four general characteristics associated with decolonisation namely: (i) an awareness of the uniqueness of a group of people concerning their ethnic, linguistic and homogeneity preferences, (ii) an emphasis on a shared socio-cultural perception which is founded in historical memory, (iii) a shared mission, and (iv) a disrespect or disregard towards other groups which triggers feelings of racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism..

[106] The *South African National Native Congress,* later known as the *African National Congress* (ANC), was founded in 1912 under leadership of Dr. Pixley ka Izaka Seme in Bloemfontein. The main goal of the ANC was to represent the rights of black citizens (Worden, 1994:81).

[107] The active construction of a so-called African Renaissance followed, under leadership of Thabo Mbeki (born 1942, president from 1997-2007), where emphasis was placed on an African hegemony alongside a white hegemony (Bundy, 2007:82). This simple dualistic distinction between black and white, however, was short-lived with the ongoing outpouring of racism between black and white South Africans as well as violent xenophobia (with an upsurge during the 2000s) between black South-African citizens and black immigrants from neighbouring countries. These trends (cf. xenophobic attacks on foreign nationals, Cornish [EWN], 2018; Okoye [The Citizen], 2018), together with increased poverty, crime and corruption, would intensify under president Jacob Zuma (born 1942, president from 2009-2018)(see State Capture Report [2016], Lekabe [The Citizen], 2016). Zuma was forced into an early exit by the ANC after recently elected president Cyril Ramaphosa (president since February, 2018) took his place as party president in December 2017. Ramaphosa "faces an uphill battle to earn back public and investor support" (Davis EWN, 2018).

2007:294; Du Plessis, 2009:16). Arnold (2005:735, 795) in this regard refers to the *chicken run*. South African Jewry shared in these anxieties with 50 000 Jewish emigrants leaving during the negotiation period alone, mainly to English-speaking countries (such as Australia, Canada and Britain) and a small minority to Israel (Beinart, 1996:78). This trend slowly persisted, with the remaining South African Jewish community estimated in 2002 at no more than 80 000 people, less than 0.2 percent of the total population (cf. Stier, 2004: 123). Compared to the estimated 120 000 South African Jewish citizens during the 1970s (cf. American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, 2017) Horowitz and Kaplan (2001) go as far as calling the rising emigration of South African Jewry the second "Jewish Exodus". This "Jewish exit" out of South Africa, as Shimoni (2003:244-245) argues, was not only driven by the social and economic uncertainties of the transition period but simultaneously by the cultivated fear of the newly elected ANC's relationship with Arab nationalist and advocate of the *struggle* Yasser Arafat (1929-2004) and the their support of a Palestinian state.[108] South African Jewry, during the end of apartheid and the first 24 years of democracy, also experienced as other white minorities, what Matthews (2015:112) describes as a white "identity crisis" or what Van der Watt (2003:16) calls "a crisis in the heart of whiteness".

4.5.2 Farber's crisis of whiteness

Farber does not engage with her position as a Jewish woman in post-apartheid South Africa, nor does she discuss her personal experiences throughout South Africa's period of political transition or during apartheid. Farber (2012:14) rather reiterates her "psychological dislocation" in post-apartheid South Africa and "consequent experience of displacement" as framed by her "heightened awareness of the power and privileges" of her whiteness:

[108] The NP (initially under Malan) in contrast had built strong ties with Israel since 1948 when they gained state status, which left the South African Jewish community in a comfortable situation regarding religious freedom since the Second World War. Particularly during the negotiation period the fear existed under South African Jewry that the ruling party-to-be, the ANC's, somewhat animosity towards Israel, would affect their cultural and religious rights (cf. Shimoni, 2003:244-245). This fear, however, never materialised as Mandela on more than one occasion emphasised that the ANC followed a moderate approach recognising both Palestinian and Israeli rights to exist as separate states. Mandela (cf. Seanogcarey, 1990), whilst addressing a Jewish audience in the USA shortly after his release, after a murmur of apprehension ran through the audience on the subject of Palestine, reiterated "your enemies are not my enemies". Nevertheless in South Africa, with the exception of a small vocal minority of Orthodox Jews, Mandela was respected for the peaceful manner of reconciliation after 27 years in prison (cf. Shimoni, 2003:249).

> This awareness prompted in me a desire to re-evaluate my past in the present of postapartheid South Africa, coupled with a need to relocate myself within this environment. Such relocation entailed processes of self-scrutiny and self-criticism, necessitating assessment of those Anglo-Saxon legacies that constitute a form of deeply internalised colonialism, or what Melissa Steyn (2001:128) calls “tutelage into whiteness”.

Farber (2012:14) continues in stating that the changing social and physical fabric of Johannesburg, especially from 2000-2006, activated for her a paradoxical sense of dislocation and relocation. This feeling of uncertainty prompted her to search for ways to “renegotiate and reimagine” her place in post-apartheid South Africa. Although Farber does not specify the details of her “self-scrutiny and self-criticism” it comes down to a “crisis of whiteness” (see Steyn, 2001; Van der Watt, 2003; Matthews, 2015). This “crisis of whiteness” was brought about by the disruption and exposure of whiteness – as the privileged group – by the “largely invisible ways in which white identity continues to suggest normativity” as West and Schmidt (2010:10) propose (also see Steyn.2001:xxvi).[109] As such, whiteness paradoxically could not be seen, as it was unseen through 400 years of hegemonic oppression of that which is not white – the other. In post-apartheid South Africa whiteness had to be confronted as the injustices, guilt and shame of the apartheid past became well-known. From this perspective, the so-called white identity crisis in post-apartheid South Africa stems from an inescapability of confronting one’s own racial self. Frakenberg (1993:6) on whiteness states:

> (And it may be more difficult for white people to say "Whiteness has nothing to do with me – I'm not white" than to say "Race has nothing to do with me – I'm not racist.") To speak of whiteness is, I think, to assign *everyone* a place in the relations of racism. It is to emphasize that dealing with racism is not merely an option for white people – that, rather, racism shapes white people's lives and identities in a way that is inseparable from other facets of daily life.

Frakenberg’s concerns, although not specific to the South African post-apartheid context, emphasises that a confrontation of whiteness entails a recognition of a racial

[109] Whiteness, as discussed in Chapter Two (cf. section 2.2), has been the centre of colonial narratives and as McClintock (1995) describes a product of a “deep settler” society (cf. Hooks, 1992:167). Apartheid, from McClintock’s (1995), description can be associated with a “deep settler” society due to the ideology of racial segregation and the structuring of communities according to the hegemonic advancement of whites.

self. A recognition of whiteness as a product of racist domination (regardless of whether one is a racist) allows for the understanding of the position racisms has afforded one. This recognition of the racial self simultaneously, as brought forth by processes of reconciliation (such as the TRC), is framed by the need for reconciliation and owning of the position whiteness and its inherited legacy of asymmetrical power relations. Van der Watt (2003:61) emphasises that "the horrors" exposed by the TRC "made it clear that neither the past, nor the present offer any comfort or hold any truths". This confrontation of whiteness simultaneously heightened experiences of feeling displaced and ambivalent towards the newness post-apartheid brought and activated a "raw urgency" amongst white South Africans to belong. This need to belong is simultaneously underlined by a sense of loss. Farber (2012:90), for example, describes the "difficulties" she felt "in adapting to ways in which the 'perceived safety' of a once familiar landscape" had become foreign to her. Although Farber states that she does not have a nostalgic longing for the "apartheid city" her words betray an undeniable sense of loss for the past.

Steyn (2001:155–162), in this regard, divides post-apartheid whiteness into five "stories of crisis" namely loss of autonomy and control; loss of a sense of relevance; loss of guaranteed legitimacy; loss of honour; and loss of home. All inseparable narratives of loss are accompanied by feelings of guilt, insecurity and powerlessness and dispossession as the "white narrative" of identity was questioned and confronted by the changing political landscape post 1994. Farber (2012:91) writes:

> …the transmuting physical environment and social fabric of the city induced in me a sense of displacement that I imagined as similar to that of an immigrant attempting to find ways to adapt to new surrounds.

Comparing her experiences of a changing post-apartheid environment and society to that of an immigrant (especially taking into consideration the narratives of Kagan and Guttmann) is questionable. Farber possibly feeling overwhelmed "by the changing landscape" of Johannesburg – originally modelled on and ran as a Western cosmopolitan city[110] by the influx of peoples from all over Africa is one thing, but comparing that to an immigrant experience is another. This comes down to a matter

[110] In this regard see South African Jewish author Mark Gevisser's novel *Lost and Found in Johannesburg* (2014) as he documents and maps his experiences growing up in apartheid and living in Johannesburg today.

of agency. An immigrant who had to leave their home in exile (such as Kagan) or an immigrant moving to unknown territory due to a possible arranged marriage (such as Guttmann) does not have agency over the circumstantial displacement of their new home. Farber, in contrast, feels displaced by the changing environment. Although she does not have agency over the mutability of her surroundings she does, however, have agency over the inherited hegemonic position she holds. Farber seems to use opportunistic comparisons such as these in order to position herself theoretically as being caught up in a liminal space. The liminal, as discussed in Chapter Two (cf. 2.4.3), occurs in line with Bhabha's (1994) description of the third space of enunciation, when the known, fixed, linear identity narrative is disrupted and an in-between space becomes present. The transition, specifically regarding whiteness, from the familiar past (psychologically and socially) to the unfamiliar new – the then and the now – activates an ambiguous liminal space. Bhabha, however, emphasises that identity is simultaneously renegotiated and reinterpreted in this space. This is not, in my opinion, what Farber does in *Dis-Location/Re-Location.* Farber, instead perpetuates the liminal through grafting as a continuous marginality.

4.6 Conclusion

Farber's neo-Victorian *Dis-Location/Re-Location* embodies a simulacral photographic (re)imagining, consisting of three romanticised and fictionalised personas: the historical myth (Guttmann), the shadow (Kagan) and the white body (Farber).

Victorian settler woman Bertha Guttmann arrived in the ZAR for what appears to be an arranged marriage to Jewish rand entrepreneur Sammy Marks. Guttmann's life-world is framed by Farber as that of a dislocated settler wife who instantaneously (as the chatelaine of Zwartkoppies) othered the black staff. This is based on the actual letters written to Marks. Similarly, Farber presents the narrative of her mother, Freda Kagan, arriving in South Africa at the age of three during the 1930s, as twofold: a displaced immigrant who simultaneously expressed an indifferent attitude towards the injustices of apartheid. Farber approaches Kagan's experience clinically, in contrast to Guttmann, with little autobiographical information (but a few quotes, see 4.4).

Both Guttmann and Kagan are deprived of agency in the (re)imagining of their narratives as Farber seems to suggest that their unique experiences of uprooting and dislocation can be unjustly condensed and compared to her own. Farber, on the other

hand, positions herself as a second-generation Jewish woman and WESSA. Farber, similarly to the narrative of Kagan, does not engage with her direct experiences growing up in apartheid South Africa nor during the period of negotiation. She does, however, repeatedly refer to the “psychological dislocation” she experienced in the changing landscape of post-apartheid South Africa (although she never expands in detail what this entailed). Moreover, she acknowledges her privileged position as a white woman.

The series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* is, however, focussed on Farber’s white body as the white normative centre. This, to an extent, reinforces the same colonial mind-set whiteness studies is opposed to as it (re)encourages a modality of whiteness. In this regard, Farber (2012:91), in reflecting upon her own sense of white displacement, seems to use the discourse of whiteness studies pragmatically – and in conflict with whiteness studies’ revisionist agenda – to find a language to talk about her own white displacement. As such, Farber rather approaches whiteness studies theoretically by not verbalising or coming to terms with her personal displacement of whiteness:

> I am positioned by my inherited Eurocentric, particularly Anglo-Saxon, past and the deeply ingrained colonial legacies it carries. ‘Playing the part’ of Bertha Marks, and reflecting on Freda Farber’s narratives, were therefore for me ways of re-enacting my historical legacies in order to understand how they have shaped my place within the present moment in postapartheid South Africa (Farber, 2012:26).

Farber, although acknowledging her inherited Anglo-Saxon privilege, does not seem to confront her own racial self, but rather uses Guttmann and Kagan’s narratives to confront theirs.

Farber’s neo-Victorian recreation of Guttmann’s life-world and the imagined, shadowy link to Kagan presented through her body becomes a validation in order to authenticate her own sense of displacement. Farber constructs a photographic simulacrum in order to investigate and justify her own need to belong. The next chapter of this thesis specifically addresses the visual content of Farber’s manipulated photographic series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* and its three *Aloerosa*; *Ties that Bind Her* and *A Room of Her Own* as a fabricated simulacrum.

CHAPTER FIVE

The metamorphosis of the self in Leora Farber's series *Dis-Location/Re-Location*

> The DNA molecule, which contains all information relative to a body, is the prosthesis par excellence, the one that will allow for the *indefinite extension of this body by the body itself* – this body itself being nothing but the indefinite series of its prostheses.
> (Baudrillard, [1981]1994: 98)

5.1 Introduction

Dis-Location/Re-Location, as demonstrated in the previous chapter of this study, visually engenders a simulacral (re)imagining that is constructed out of three idealised and fictionalised personas: the historical myth (Guttmann), the shadow (Kagan) and the white body (Farber). All three personas are presented in the series through the body-protagonist (Farber) who plays the role of Guttmann. Farber, in this sense, constructs a doppelgänger that can be associated with what Baudrillard ([1981]1994:98) describes as a prosthesis. Baudrillard uses the relationship between the body and its prosthesis corrosponding with his theorisation of doubleness and reversibility (cf. Chapter 3.4), to demonstrate how the body is constructed as a simulacrum by preceding codes and signs (DNA). To rephrase his perspective: the prosthesis precedes the body and not *vice versa*.

By taking Baudrillard's ([1981]1994:98) conceptualisation of the body and the prosthesis as a point of departure, this chapter aims to interpret the self in the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* – a (re)imagined postcolonial self – as a simulacrum. This is done, in accordance with the problem statement of this thesis, by a visual close-reading of the series in terms of Baudrillard's orders of the simulacrum. I question how the (re)imagined self encounters and deals with otherness and experiences of diaspora, liminality and hybridity, as it progresses through the ambivalent self, the mutable self and finally the simulated death of the self. Therefore, focus is placed on the three consecutive sub-narratives and respective prints of the photographic series: *Aloerosa*; *Ties that Bind Her* and *A Room of Her Own* (see representational addendum). I argue that the (re)imagined self in the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* – as a simulated colonial landscape – reflects the protagonist's inability to belong, ultimately leading to a perpetual state of (un)belonging.

In order to interpret the (re)imagined self in the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* as a simulacrum I firstly untangle the counterfeited layers used to construct the series as depicted throughout the three sub-themes *Aloerosa, Ties that Bind Her* and *A Room of Her Own.* As I will show, all three sub-themes reference and is framed by intertextualities ranging from Victorian notions of "womanhood" (as possibly experienced by Farber's settler double Guttmann), medical and biological signifiers (such as the graft) as well as postcolonial framing devices and specifically otherness. Thereafter, the metamorphosis process of the (re)imagined self in the series is taken into consideration.

5.2 *Dis-Location/Re-Location* as a Victorian counterfeit

Farber as the creator, curator and artist of the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* imagines a representational postcolonial self, which is constructed, inspired and romanticised out of three personas – Farber (the body), Guttmann (the myth) and Kagan (the shadow). Kagan, as argued in the previous chapter (cf. Chapter 4), does not specifically play a visual role in the photographic series, but becomes a shadowy allegorical link between Farber's own sense of displacement and her depiction of Guttmann's possible displacement. In the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* Farber's body takes centre stage as she plays the part of Victorian settler Guttmann, occupying a neo-Victorian life-world based on Zwartkoppies.

Viewed from the perspective of Baudrillard's first order of imitation, the represented self in the series is a counterfeit. Baudrillard's order of imitation or the counterfeit (cf. Chapter 3.3.1), part of his conceptualisation of the simulacra, is based on a distinction between the original and the referent. In the order of imitation, the false comes into being alongside what is regarded as the "natural" real (Baudrillard, 1983:86). From this perspective, then, Farber's body becomes the referent of Guttmann, whereas Guttmann, as a historical persona and the main character on which the selected series is based, becomes the real or the original.[111] Put in different terms: Faber, whose body is depicted throughout the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* as the so-called body-protagonist, uses her own body as a medium to counterfeit Guttmann.

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[111] Farber, as the creator and artist of the series, could simultaneously be perceived as the original, whereas the photographed representation of the body enacting Guttmann, becomes the referent.

According to Baudrillard (1983:84), this distinction emphasises what he calls "the natural law of value". In other words, the value of the counterfeit lies in its interdependent relationship to the real. The referent engages in a theatrical play as the counterfeit. Accordingly, the counterfeit becomes the ultimate referent or mirror, always striving to imitate the original but never attempting to become the original. Thus, a masked reality is constructed that is framed by an original, which only subsists through the existence of its replica. Farber (2012) states:

> During the shoot I found myself observing myself (in the camera lens, in the mirror, through the eyes of others in the room, on the computer screen) while simultaneously 'seeing' Bertha Marks in my reflected image (Farber, 2012:66).

This is emphasised in *Dis-Location/Re-Location* as the two main (white) personas in the series are both present and simultaneously absent, which leads to the possibility of a double counterfeit. *Ties that Bind Her*, for example, represents an absent original (Guttmann) who is looking at Farber/Guttmann in the mirror. Farber in turn is also absent (whilst embodying Guttmann). This is particularly evident in the works *Preservation* (see figure x) and *Regeneration* (cf. figure xii) as well as their detailed counterparts as part of the subtheme *Ties that Bind Her*. Farber, in the work *Preservation,* is seated in front of Guttmann's dressing table, gazing attentively at herself through her reflection in the mirror. Also visible in the selected image is a framed photograph of Guttmann, placed at an angle on the dressing table as if "looking at Farber". This idea of Guttmann looking back at Farber is accentuated in the work *Regeneration* (cf. figure xii) where, although a different portrait of Guttmann is used, a similarly-positioned framed photograph is visible on the dressing table. As such, the counterfeit(s) and the original(s) are simultaneously present and absent. Farber (as the imitation of Guttmann and as the original protagonist) is present in the same frame as Guttmann, whose life-world and identity is being counterfeited. Farber's enactment of Guttmann is effective because of the apparent difference between the counterfeited self – Farber – and the original – Guttmann.

This mirrored play, not only between Farber and Guttmann, but also between photography and reality, lends the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* a theatrical edge. As Barthes (1981:32) emphasises: "photography is a kind of primitive theatre". In this respect, Farber's imagining of Guttmann in *Dis-Location/Re-Location* becomes a

counterfeited masked real. This masked real is kept intact by the difference between the real and the represented real – the photograph. Baudrillard (1993:23) goes as far as calling photography the “irreal”. The “irreal”, dichotomises and encompasses both that which is regarded as real and that which is not. A photographic representation such as *Dis-Location/Re-Location* is not competing with the real in the sense that it becomes decontextualised and disembodied from the real – thereby becoming its own autonomous irreal. It is here in the "*irreal"* (in Baudrillard's terms) where the imagined and constructed version of Farber’s postcolonial amalgamation is played out through what Baudrillard (1987:45-46) describes as a face-off with reality.

This postcolonial amalgamation of the self, according to Faber, embodies:

> …multiple, turbulent ambivalences and ambiguities arising from being the subject having been an ‘other place’ that is an unhomely new home…between positions of inclusion and exclusion; insider (inhabitant) and outsider (immigrant); alienation and belonging; placelessness and locatedness that the experience of uprooting and (trans)planting brings to the fore (Farber, 2012:72).

This identity disjuncture is physically personified in the series as the (re)imagined self seems to struggle with diasporic conditions and uncertainties concerning notions of belonging – themes that are extrapolated and counterfeited from the narratives of Guttmann, Kagan and Farber. Simultaneously the counterfeited self, as argued in Chapter 3 (cf. 3.4), is framed by other visual intertextual references, like Victorian perceptions of hysteria in *Redemption,* (see figure xxii) and stereotypical representations of “Africa” such as the trade beads in *Reparation* (see figure xviii), for example. Moreover, as argued throughout this thesis, Farber uses postcolonial theory in order to theoretically and visually inform the series.

The imagining of the self and subsequently the intertextual framing devices used to construct the self, disembody from their “origins” as they are (re)imagined in a fabricated simulacrum. This occurs, in accordance with Baudrillard (cf. 1983:83) through a state of production (cf. the second order of production, Chapter 3.3.2) as counterfeits are emancipated towards an autonomous simulacrum.

Before this can be investigated, however, it is first necessary to unravel what exactly is being counterfeited in the three-part photographic series *Dis-Location/Re-Location.* In what follows, the self as displayed in *Aloerosa*; *Ties that Bind Her* and *A Room of*

Her Own is intertextually and interpretatively untangled by focussing on a postcolonial understanding (cf. Chapter 2) of self and otherness and on Farber's (2012) intertextual references to female (Victorian) embodiment and notions of "beautification".

5.2.1 *Aloerosa*[112]

The *Aloerosa* series includes nine colour prints: (cf. figures i-ix) *Induction, Induction* (detail), *Propagation, Efflorescence, Veldscape, Maturation I, Maturation II, Supplantation* and Transplant. Each print portrays or references the protagonist (Farber) in an outdoor landscape resembling the Zwartkoppies estate. These include the spaces[113] originally allocated for the Victorian rose garden (see *Induction*, figures i-ii), the aloe grove (cf. *Propagation*, figure iii), and the surrounding indigenous veld (cf. *Veldscape*, figure v), all of which can still be viewed today on the grounds surrounding the Sammy Marks Museum.

The individual titles of the prints in *Aloerosa,* suggest a botanical process of metamorphosis from the moment the plant or cultivar is introduced into its new surroundings. In this regard I refer to *Induction* and *Induction* (detail), the proliferation of the cultivar (cf. *Propagation, Efflorescence*), the growth of the cultivar (cf. *Maturation I, Maturation II*) and finally the superseding (cf. *Supplantation*) of the autonomous plant over the once foreign. This process is reinforced by the two titles *Veldscape* and *Transplant* (cf. figures v & ix) which, as the designations suggest, offer a contextual framing of the surrounding vegetation (cf. *Veldscape*) as well as the graft (cf. *Transplant*).

The *Aloerosa* series visually presents the viewer with a timeframe which progresses linearly through a 12-hour day (cf. Farber 2012:34), starting in the morning (*Induction*, *Induction (detail*, figure ii), and proceeding to theafternoon (*Propagation,* figure iii) and late-afternoon (*Veldscape,* figure v). The linearity of the *Aloerosa* narrative is visually

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[112] Certain parts of this section on the *Aloerosa* sub-theme was written in conjunction with an article in 2015 *De/acculturation of identity: diaspora in selected photo installations by Searle and Farber* published in SAJAH (see Goosen & Swanepoel, 2015: 110-126, Vol 30_1).

[113] By *original* allocated spaces for the different groves and gardens I am not referring to the actual original plants, which were planted by Guttmann's staff in 1906. I am rather referring to the allocated space where these gardens remain today at the Sammy Marks Museum. A rose plant for example, according to Russ and Polomski (2017), depending on the variety can live up to approximately between 6 and 50 years. Whilst an Aloe plant lives, depending on the growing conditions, up to 20 years. Accordingly the vegetation at the then Sammy Marks homestead has by now been replaced by new plants or progenies through the years.

aided by the photographic lighting, which moves and shifts in the photographs as natural light would in the course of a day. The photographical light changes are further accompanied by metaphorical visual cues, as suggested by the protagonist's domestic engagements, to enhance the sense of passing daytime.

The photographic series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* is visually centred (see representational addendum) on a white, colonial self (cf. chapter 2.3.1). This is clear throughout the main narrative of the series, which is based on Bertha Guttmann's colonial life-world as enacted by Farber. The colonial identity of Farber's doppelgänger, Guttmann, is highlighted throughout the selected series by the use of the colour white, especially her white clothing. The colour white has long been associated with purity, perfection and cleanliness – so-called "virtues" of the privileged. In this regard Farber uses recognisable Western, colonial imagery to represent Guttmann's life-world. In, for example, the photographic print *Induction* (see figure I; cf. Goosen & Swanepoel, 2015:118-119) the protagonist is seen counterfeiting a typical Victorian teatime scene (silver tea set and confectionaries included) as possibly performed and experienced by Guttmann herself.

The tea-drinking ritual, originating from English court etiquette established by Catherine of Braganza (1638-1705) since approximately 1664, again gained popularity amongst middle-class women during the Victorian era. As Heath (2012:3) emphasises: "Tea was not women's chosen domain; rather, their adoption of the tea ritual was the result of male subordination." This was (amongst other reasons) because women were legally banned from coffee houses. Tea parties became a ritual associated with the middle- and upper-class women (as the working class could not afford such luxuries). The tea ritual was therefore simultaneously associated with domesticity and wealth (see Heath, 2012). Domesticity is symbolised, in *Induction* for example, through the colonial subject who is surrounded by a white English rose garden and dressed for her teatime occasion in Victorian-inspired attire. She is wearing a sun hat and white gloves, presumably – as per Victorian etiquette – to protect her delicate white skin from the "harsh South African sun".

This initial uncomplicated impression of a colonial subject is quickly disturbed, when one notices the protagonist "planting" a seedling aloe cultivar (apparently from the basket of aloes next to her) into her left arm. Taking the narrative further, the second

piece of the photographic series *Induction (detail*, see figure ii*)* offers a detailed view of the aloe being grafted into her arm by what appears to be a pair of golden embroidery scissors. This image, conversely, presents a viewpoint of the *right* arm resting on a doily. Given that they are titled *Induction* and *Induction (detail)*, the assumption can be made that these images mark the beginning of the metaphorical botanical process that is the subtheme of *Aloerosa.* Simultaneously, it marks the beginning of the battle between the settler-colonial self and the other.

The self and the other, as mentioned in chapter two of this study, addresses complexities regarding alterity. From a postcolonial perspective (cf. Chapter 2.3.1), this dynamic becomes one of hegemonic power relations brought about by the colonial gaze. The self (as the coloniser) and other (as the marginalised colonised) becomes a reflection in itself as the self projects onto the other that which it believes itself *not* to be (cf. Chapter 2.3.1). The other becomes an associative reflection of the self or as Spivak articulates "the shadow". Accordingly, an immediate centre and periphery are constructed pertaining to the dichotomy of self and other, or the sovereign subject and the oppressed object. Baudrillard describes the relationship between self and other as a form of regulated exchange as explained in Chapter 3.4.

The other, as interpreted from the order of the counterfeit, becomes a referent and is given value by means of the so-called original: the self. Identity for Baudrillard, similar to the dichotomy of original and counterfeit, cannot exists without that which it is not – the other. In this regard, the indigenous landscape and cultivar in the *Aloerosa* series can be interpreted as a referent of the exotic other, whilst the counterfeited settler-colonial self throughout the series becomes the proclaimed original.

The Victorian imagery in *Induction* progresses chronologically into the next two prints, *Propagation* and *Efflorescence* (see figures iii & iv). In both images the protagonist is still dressed in the Victorian-inspired brown corset and white skirt, but this time without a sun hat. In the second image, *Propagation,* she appears to have fallen asleep in the indigenous aloe grove with a book on her lap. She holds a Victorian parasol – its whiteness starkly contrasted against the darker surrounding aloes. The contrast between the white body and her surroundings accentuates the rupture between settlers and the so-called exotic. The aloe cultivar in her left arm has now, as the

subtitle *Propagation*[114] suggests, proliferated in size and has become part of the body: the cultivar's "roots" are visible under the skin and is clearly spreading through her arm. In the next image, *Efflorescence*, the aloe cultivar has propagated even further and its stems are fanning out or coming into maturity. The source of the cultivar, similar to the depiction in *Induction,* stems from the body's wrist, percolating from underneath the white gloves that are once again present. In this regard, the subtitle *Transplant* (see figure ix) offers a detailed view of the now efflorescent aloe, which has embodied the protagonist's left arm. The protagonist's bare arm against a white background is highlighted in this detailed view, the venation of the aloe's roots clearly visible underneath the skin.

In *Efflorescence* (figure iv) the protagonist, in similar attire, is staring into the distance while seated on a bed of rocks. There is, once again, a stark contrast between the indigenous landscape and the body (cf. *Induction* and *Propagation* cf. figures I & iii), emphasised by the fact that the protagonist is now also wearing earrings, a pearl necklace and a metal- coloured clutch handbag. This classical Victorian appearance, which is predominantly white in colour, looks foreign against the grey rocks.

Veldscape (figure v)*,* the succeeding photographic print in the series, portrays the similarly-clothed protagonist from behind, as she stands in an indigenous grass veld staring into the horizon. She is wearing the same sun hat as seen in *Induction*, but this time without gloves. The same efflorescent aloe, which has by now firmly propagated and matured, can be seen peeking over her left shoulder. *Veldscape* offers a photographic intermission that consolidates the narrative: the lighting exposure used in *Veldscape* suggests the end of day and signifies, according to Farber (2012:34), the protagonist walking into a sunset. This sense of chronological progression and of taking pause is further enhanced by the surroundings in which the protagonist now finds herself in, transplanted from a domestic rose garden (*Induction*) into an uncultivated indigenous veld (*Veldscape*). From the perspective of the white settler, this "uncultivated" open landscape, as argued in Chapter 4 (cf. 4.3), could possibly pose a threat – the untamed wild. *Veldscape* read alongside *Induction* (see figure i) reminds one of the Victorian impulses to domesticate the uncultivated wild (Chapter

[114] In botany vegetative propagation refers to the "growth of any parts of the plant other than the flower" (Bailey, 2002:238).

4.3). The *Induction* of the aloe succulent, that has firmly taken hold of the body (as seen in *Veldscape*), can be interpreted as a need to domesticate the wild by literally implanting it into the "civilised" self. Simultaneously, the self, understood from a postcolonial perspective, cannot function without its counterpart – the other. In this series, the other – represented by foreign objects, succulents and, in the end, the indigenous landscape itself (cf. *Veldscape*) – starts taking hold of the white body, virtually becoming an additional limb of the (re)imagined self.

The following two works in the *Aloerosa* series namely *Maturation I* and *Maturation II* (see figures vi; viii) utilise the same lighting effects as *Veldscape* in order to accentuate a late-afternoon scene. The moment of pause, however, is over and the metamorphosis turns more violent. At this point in the themed narrative the protagonist is depicted in both *Maturation I* and *Maturation II* as lying flat on her back in the veld, aloe-engrafted arm raised. Her right hand is compliantly holding another mature aloe plant, which seems to be sprouting from her side. Two other aloe cultivars can be seen budding from her chest. The protagonist submissively tilts her head to the side. This image of submission and regression in both *Maturation I* and *Maturation II* is framed by her corset, halfway unlaced, exposing her white abdominal skin. In both works her right knee is bent upwards, exposing her shin and, in *Maturation II*, her bare feet.

The *Maturation* pair denotes sensual expressive indications and simultaneously displays traces of (sexual) violence. Farber (2012:36), while quoting McClintock (1995:230), states regarding the *Maturation* duo:

> … her body becomes 'virgin territory' that like the 'unknown world' was mapped as feminised and open to the "violence" of male "penetration" in the form of imperial conquest.

In this regard, Farber (2012:36) compares the protagonist's body to the violence caused by imperial subjugation during colonialism, while playing on stereotypical Victorian perceptions of the "Dark Continent" (cf. Chapter 2). This violence, as both an act of control and a mechanism of power, not only included the hegemonic suppression of peoples but also the domestication of the landscape. Sammy Marks, as mentioned in Chapter 4 (cf. 4.3 regarding Bertha Guttmann), for example domesticated Zwartkoppies "from wilderness to country estate" as the by-line of the Sammy Museum booklets read (see Malan, 2004a; 2004b). In Farber's version, however, this colonial violence becomes reversed. The indigenous African aloe is

devouring the white (postcolonial) self: stripping her of her clothes, leaving her vulnerable and exposed. This to me suggests that the protagonist is not comfortable or “at home” in the landscape (as suggested in Chapter 2.4.3), since the graft eventually “consumes” her.

The themed narrative *Aloerosa* (figures i-ix)*,* consisting of nine subtitled photographic prints (*Induction*, *Propagation, Efflorescence, Veldscape, Maturation I, Maturation II, Supplantation*, *Transplant*), becomes a visual representation of the counterfeited protagonist’s (Farber/Guttmann) visual process of negotiating feelings of displacement and alienation. This process is very literally represented by the botanical grafting of an indigenous South African aloe plant into her body (cf. *Induction*), which then starts spreading and growing (cf. *Propagation, Efflorescence, Veldscape*), seasons (cf. *Maturation I, Maturation II*) and finally consumes her (cf. *Supplantation*). The indigenous aloe, together with the landscape in which the sub-narrative *Aloerosa* is situated, becomes a representation of the exotic, foreign host. The protagonist, from the Victorian imagination, remains the white, colonial self. The clear distinction between self and other is kept intact throughout the first part of the subtheme (cf. (*Induction*, *Propagation, Efflorescence, Veldscape*) but becomes blurred in *Maturation I, Maturation II* as the aloe starts devouring the body, finally consuming it completely in *Supplantation.*

The last image of the *Aloerosa* narrative, *Supplantation* (figure viii), shows the brown “vegetan leather corset” (Farber, 2012:35), now detached from the body, lying in the veld and surrounded by a few aloe plants. As the subtitle suggests, the body – which is absent from the image – has been superseded by the landscape. From the colonial self’s perspective one can interpret this as the visual manifestation of the Victorian settler fear and imagining of “exotic Africa” (cf. Chapter 4.3 with reference to a Mrs Coe). From the protagonist’s imagination, the other – the so-called barbaric, wild, landscape – revengefully consumes her. One can interpret this as symbolic of her ultimate fear – death of self – a premonition of the protagonist’s uncertain future in a new, foreign, desolate landscape. What remains interesting here is that, although this interpretation can be justified from the Victorian imagination of Guttmann, the same cannot be said of Farber’s counterfeited scenario: the violence of the colonial can

never be equated to the discomfort felt by a white postcolonial protagonist – not from a historical perspective, nor from a psychological or ethical one.[115]

5.2.2 Ties that Bind Her

The *Ties that Bind Her* (see figures x-xix) narrative continues the grafting theme from the first narrative, but makes use of jewellery instead of plants. The selected jewellery, which appears to be literally sewn into the skin throughout the narrative, include a cameo rose pendant necklace (based on a classical Victorian style) and white pearls as well as what Farber (2012:61; 64) calls "white African trade beads" and a necklace featuring an "Africanised butterfly" motif. This "grafting" process is meticulously represented in the four main works of *Ties that Bind Her,* namely *Preservation* (cf. figure x), *Debilitation,* (cf. figure xi), *Reparation* (*detail,* figure xviii) and *Regeneration* (cf. figure xii). Whilst the four main photographic works are supplemented by six co-images[116] offering a detailed view of the grafting process and different angles of the protagonist. Where the *Aloerosa* series intertextually references botanical processes, *Ties that Bind Her* references medical-biological processes, and plays extensively with images of Victorian "womanhood" and female beautification.

Mirroring this shift, *Ties that Bind Her* is set indoors in what appears to be the main bedroom of the Sammy Marks homestead:

> In the chronology of photographing … the move from the exterior context of the rose garden in *Aloerosa* to the main bedroom of the Sammy Marks Museum was strategic. As Beth Snyder-Rheingold (2003) notes, in Victorian architecture the bedroom signifies an innermost sanctum within an architectural hierarchy of privacy (Farber, 2012:61).

Farber goes on to state that the interior motif of this subtheme emphasises the inner contemplative process the protagonist is going through. Although the room is based on the main bedroom of the Sammy Marks homestead, the room's appearance and setting remind of a Victorian bower room. As seen on Zwartkoppies house's floorplan of 1890 (see Malan, 2004a:4) there is a dressing-room connecting the main bedroom

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[115] Farber's own sense of displacement in post-apartheid South Africa, as discussed in the previous chapter (cf. 4.5.2), is based on the changing post-apartheid landscape of Johannesburg and complexities of whiteness.

[116] *Preservation* (detail) [cf. figure x]; *Debilitation* [cf. figure xi]; *Debilitation* (detail I) [cf. figure xiii]; *Debilitation* (detail II) [cf. figure xv]; *Debilitation* (detail III) [cf. figure xiv] and *Regeneration* (detail) [cf. figure xix].

to the bathroom. This room was specifically reserved for Bertha Guttmann to dress in. The dressing-room, classically aligned with Victorian trend, gave women a private area to "titivate" or "beautify" themselves. In Guttmann's case this dressing-room also contained a bed. Women, in line with Jewish tradition, were viewed "unclean" when menstruating and had to sleep separately from their husbands until they were "clean" again. In the series a beige chaise longue decorated with organic plant patterns, a wooden dressing table, heavy drapes and dark coloured Persian carpets symbolically supports this.

The dressing table becomes a pivotal visual element in *Ties that Bind Her* (specifically see figures x, xii, xvii) as it visually frames and contextualises the underlying Victorian colonial life-world of the protagonist (Farber as Guttmann). Throughout the series, the dressing table exhibits visual cues of so-called femininity and beautification. These include a silver-backed hairbrush embossed with organic patterns, glass bottles (assumedly containing oils and perfumes), a framed photo portraying Bertha Guttmann, and scattered jewellery (white pearls and beads). These items are juxtaposed with gendered objects that visually enforce Victorian notions of femininity, but which one would not expect on a dressing table, such as needle and thread and a pair of silver scissors.

Elements of Victorian womanhood are further emphasised by the protagonist's attire. In *Ties that Bind Her* the protagonist is represented, once more, in a corset and skirt. In contrast to *Aloerosa*, where the protagonist is depicted in more earthy colours, she is wearing a predominantly white front-laced corset that noticeably shows more of her bare shoulder-line. In this regard, her chest, in contrast to *Aloerosa,* is visible and accentuates the white Victorian choker chain which connects to a pearl necklace. This is accompanied by matching pearl trinkets such as a pair of earrings, bracelet and ring, all of which contribute to the classical Victorian appearance of the protagonist.

One is reminded of the expression "to be born with a silver spoon in the mouth" as the counterfeited reflection of Guttmann's actual and inherited privilege. In this regard compare Farber's decadent visual placing of silver and what appears to be crystal containers on Guttmann's dressing table in the photographic works *Preservation* and *Regeneration* (see figures x; xii). Not only does the variety of beautification objects signify choice but simultaneously emphasises refinement as a privilege of Victorian

wealth. Another obvious observable token of prosperity is Farber's visual emphasis on jewellery and specifically pearls in the *Ties that Bind Her* subseries (see especially *Reparation*, figure xviii) Pearls were regarded in the Victorian era as reserved for royalty and the higher classes due to their costliness (cf. Biggs *in* Flower, 2002:v). In the individual photographic print *Debilitation (detail II* and *III*; see figures xv & xiv*)*, for example, a rose cameo strengthens the pearl imagery of affluence. Cameo pendants, like pearls, were regarded as status symbols, afforded and worn only by women (and men) of standing.

The simulated subject in the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location,* therefore represents the experiences of a privileged white Victorian woman. In addition to the visually presented self, Farber's own subject position – that of a privileged white English-speaking woman – cannot be ignored (cf. chapter 4.5). The notion of white privilege is strengthened by Farber's static visualisation of the protagonist (see especially *Debilitation,* figure xi), surrounded by symbols and objects of beautification and decadence. This rigid representation and composition of the protagonist can be associated, as Sassen (*in* Law-Viljoen, 2008:61) notes, with the "Jewish American Princess" (J.A.P.)[117] stereotype. Prell (1992) describes the J.A.P. as characterised and represented:

> ...through her body that is at once exceptionally passive and highly adorned ... [She] abundantly lavishes attention on her desire to beautify herself … her body is a surface to decorate, financed by the sweat of others (Prell, 1992:331).

Prell's argument is that the stereotype of the so-called Jewish princess offers a critique of whiteness and privilege, because beautification is often contingent on "the sweat of others". Whiteness, as argued in Chapter 2 (see 2.2), is associated with the arrogance of privilege that is brought about not only by capital advantage but also with the idea of whiteness as "centeredness" (cf. Steyn, 2001:xxvi; Dyer, 1997:2-3). The notion of whiteness as the centre is highlighted further in *Preservation* (see figure x).

[117] The *Jewish American Princess* (J.A.P.) and the stereotypical beliefs surrounding it, started circulating in the 1900s as an extension of American anti-Semitism. This stereotype also seems present in South Africa with the derogative nickname given to young, privileged Jewish women *Kugel* (derived from the German *kugel,* a decadent comfort food). The J.A.P. or Kugel is believed, according to the stereotypical perception, to be overly materialistic, spoilt, and superficial as she is obsessed with beautification. Today, the J.A.P. and Kugel stereotypes seem to stem from class stereotypes rather than anti-Semitic beliefs (see Gold, 2012:128; Prell, 1992).

Preservation and *Preservation (detail)* (cf. figure xvii) portray the protagonist seated upright in front of the dressing table wearing a pearl choker chain and necklace. *Preservation* depicts the protagonist from behind, her reflection clear in the mirror of the dressing table, whilst *Preservation (detail)* shows the viewer the perspective from the mirror. The protagonist, staring with deliberation at her reflection in the mirror, is busy inserting the rose cameo pendant into the skin above her breast with a "small bone-handled pocket knife" (cf. Farber, 2012:61). The pendant is already halfway inserted into the body, partially covered by skin. The skin appears to be bruised, and trickles of blood run down from the insertion. In *Preservation (detail)* the rose (which is made from what appears to be wax) is clearly visible – embossed on the cameo pendant – sticking out from the skin which acts as a pocket. *Preservation* and its detail, like the work *Induction* (see figure i), form the first part of the implantation process. From a biological perspective, to preserve means, as the title suggests, to conserve or safeguard from injury or to protect from decay (cf. Melloni *et al.*, 2001:2230). *Preservation* literally seems to visualise the need to preserve white "civilisation" from being spoiled. In light of my previous statements regarding whiteness being criticised for being the centre, and although Farber's depiction may to a certain extent critique white centrality, the white focal point perpetuates what Steyn (2001:3) designates as "master narratives of whiteness" (cf. Chapter 2.3).

The next part of the subtheme *Ties that Bind Her* plays out in a five-part photographic cluster namely *Debilitation, Debilitation (detail I), Debilitation (detail II), Debilitation (detail III), Debilitation (detail IV)* (see figures xi, xiii-xvi). This cluster, as suggested by the title, portrays the next phase of the grafting process, which from a medical-biological perspective refers to the enfeebling of organisms or patients (cf. Melloni *et al.* 2001: 561). The protagonist is lying on the chaise lounge, dressed in the same attire as in *Preservation,* staring endlessly into the distance. Her right arm is dangling off the side of the lounge and rests on the Persian carpet, lightly holding a white netted handkerchief. Her facial expression and exposed shoulder (as the corset shoulder strap is slipping off) implies fatigue (cf. *Debilitation,* figure xi). The protagonist's so-called restful state is further emphasised in *Debilitation (detail iv)*, which offers a perspective of the protagonist's lower body (see figure xvi), her feet covered in white stockings and her shoe visible on the ground as if she is about to take a nap.

The transplanted cameo rose pendant is still visible, but, in contrast to the first grafted object, the aloe of the *Aloerosa* narrative*,* the pendant seems to be struggling to proliferate into the skin. Although the skin has covered slightly more of the pendant, compared to the previous photographic narrative *Preservation,* the incision wound appears to have bled severely. The blood has clotted around the graft, dark in colour and dry (cf. *Debilitation detail I, II* and *III*).

The skin only fully covers the cameo pendant and the pearl necklace in the third part of the sub-narrative *Reparation (detail,* see figure xviii*),* where only a scar-like trace of the jewellery is visible on the protagonist's chest and neck. It is as if the necklace and pendant are still present beneath the skin. The protagonist now sits at the dressing table, photographed from the mirror's perspective. The frame, similar to that of *Preservation (detail*), emphasises the upper body of the protagonist, half of her face cut out of the photographic frame. She appears to be disrobing, in contrast to the neatly dressed body portrayed in *Preservation*, as her front-laced corset is unbuttoned and strapless, exposing parts of her breasts.

She appears to be sewing the white 'African trade beads' into buttons onto the skin over the cicatrix, left by the pearl-choker necklace. "Cicatrix" is a medial term that refers to the rubbery tissue formed after a scar has formed (cf. Melloni *et al,* (2001:2328). Farber (2012:63-64) states that the scars of the original pearl necklace remind of the scarification process commonly practised by tribes of especially West Africa and simultaneously reference the rings worn by Ndebele women of southern Africa. Reparation, from a medical interpretation, denotes the restoring of dead or damaged cells. The protagonist in the series, rather problematically, seems to suggests that her acculturation with "Africa" has left scars as she went through a process similar to what Van Gennep (2013[1909]) and Turner (1969, 1977, 1982) (cf. Chapter 2.4.3 regarding liminality) describe as *rites of passage.*

The biological chronology of *Ties that Bind Her* continues in the last two prints *Regeneration* and its detail *Regeneration (detail)* (see figures xii and xix). *Regeneration*, as the title suggests, refers to the growth or revival of, for example, cells after loss. *Regeneration* offers the same camera perspective as the first work in the sub-narrative *Preservation* – photographed from behind, showing the protagonist in front of the dressing table. The protagonist is represented, eyes closed, in front of the

mirror in the same attire. Her corset, in contrast to *Reparation (detail)* is still fully laced up (as in the *Preservation* series) with shoulder straps fixed onto her shoulders. *Regeneration* offers a similar perspective as *Preservation (detail)* and *Reparation (detail)* – photographed from the mirror's perspective, the protagonist is similarly disrobed, and "faceless". She is holding what appears to be a medical instrument, resembling a pair of tweezers, which is pointed towards the embedded cameo pendant's scar. From the scar a new proliferate has sprouted – the white beaded butterfly shaped "Africanised flower". It seems as though the protagonist is about to remove the "flower".

To summarise: The ten photographic works of the *Ties that Bind Her* narrative include: *Preservation, Debilitation, Regeneration, Debilitation (detail I), Debilitation (detail II), Debilitation (detail III), Debilitation (detail IV), Preservation (detail), Reparation (detail)* and *Regeneration (detail). Ties that Bind Her* (consistent with the *Aloerosa* narrative) visually displays a process of transformation which is literally played out in skin grafting. In contrast to the *Aloerosa* series, however, the grafting is framed by biological references juxtaposed to jewellery. The narrative progresses through the four main works of *Preservation, Debilitation, Reparation (detail)* and *Regeneration* visually displaying the incision and implantation of the cameo rose pendant (*Preservation)*, the damaging embodiment of the pendant into the skin (*Debilitation),* the restoration of the skin (*Reparation [detail])* and finally the revival of the skin marked by a new organism: the beaded butterfly pendant. Accordingly the *Ties that Bind Her,* series compared to its predecessor *Aloerosa,* visually focusses more on the skin.

By counterfeiting Guttmann's life-world throughout the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location,* Farber comments on the collective marginalisation that women have been subjected to. She does this by visually deconstructing idealised so-called feminine perfection. Farber achieves this deconstruction by creating a counterfeited space which Murray (*in* Law-Viljoen, 2008:49) accurately describes as "awfully pretty". What Murray describes as "awfully pretty" can be seen throughout the photographic series by the exaggerated use of overly and artificial "ladylike" objects such as the variety of beautification items on the dressing table in the works *Preservation* and *Regenaration* (cf. figures x; xii). Likewise, the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* continuously references implements attributed to female activities such as embroidery (cf. the works *Induction*, figure i). These references are strengthened throughout the series by the

use of so-called gender-specific spaces, for example through the sub-narrative *Ties that Bind Her* that resembles a Victorian bower room or boudoir (reserved for women). As per Victorian custom the privileged home was divided in gender-rooms and spaces. The Marks' homestead, for example, had a billiard and drawing room, assigned traditionally for men to retire to (Sammy Marks museum, 2016). These rooms at Zwartkoppies were, however, as mentioned in Chapter four (4.3.1), not strictly linked to gender access.

In *Ties that Bind Her* there is also an emphasis on pearl jewellery that is specifically associated with purity and so-called femininity. Furthermore, one can interpret the pearl necklace and pearl choker (see *Debilitation*, figure xi) as nooses. Equally, the corset, a theme throughout the entire *Dis-Location/Re-Location,* becomes a symbol of restriction and boundaries. In this regard, the protagonist's corset in the first part of the sub-narrative *Aloerosa* (specifically compare *Induction*, figure i) is tightly laced. Accordingly, Farber, from this literal interpretation, visually comments on the constraints of a patriarchal society, during Guttmann's era and more specifically to her own experiences as a woman.

Farber's feminist concerns are further explored in the final sub-narrative *A Room of Her Own* (cf. figures xx-xxii), a direct reference to modernist writer Virginia's Woolf's (1882-1941) eponymous essay of 1929 (Farber, 2012:31).

5.2.3 A Room of Her Own

Virginia Woolf's (1929) extended essay *A Room of One's Own* addresses issues of gender and specifically women's rights and access to amongst other things education. Woolf, who was regarded as an early feminist, advocated that women (who did not have close to equal opportunities and rights compared to men in 1929), did not have the freedom to write due to their lower standing in society: "a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction" (Woolf, 1929:4). Farber in an interview with Klopper (*in* Law-Viljoen, 2008:21) states that,

> …I have tried to suggest that Bertha took advantage of the suffocating patriarchal conventions of her time, but that she did so from within her confines of her private space or room (Farber in conversation with Klopper *in* Law-Viljoen, 2008:21).

Farber seems to literally recreate Woolf's representation of a room as an emancipating space in the sub-narrative *A Room of Her Own* (cf. figures xx-xxii). In contrast to Woolf, however, Farber's room seems to consume the protagonist with emptiness and deterioration. In this respect one can compare the wax roses dripping and melting off the walls in the photographic print *Generation* (see figure xx), whilst the protagonist sits alone gazing at the floor in the centre of the room. The representation of Farber as Guttmann in *A Room of Her Own*, creates an underlying sentiment of loneliness and vulnerability – as if she is a foreigner in her own room. Woolf notes that women in a patriarchal society are regarded, and simultaneously kept, as outsiders. Women are marginalised and subsequently othered due to their gender's lack of alleged traditional virility (cf. Bowldy, 1992:28; Wolf, 1990:177). Concurrently, gender conditioning and coding by societal standards contributes to women othering themselves.

This theme is present throughout the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* in the stark contrast between what is regarded as "overly feminine" and the literal cutting of the skin graft. The viewer possibly experiences a recoil when confronted with the skin engagements of the body-protagonist. In the first print *Induction* (see the sub-narrative *Aloerosa*) for example, Farber is busy grafting an indigenous aloe into her arm. As the narrative progresses through the subsequent works *Propagation* and *Maturation I* and *II* (see figures iii; vi-vii) this plant is embodied in the skin and body. Likewise, throughout the sub-narrative *Ties that Bind Her,* the viewer is confronted with the subject's bruised and bloody skin where the cameo brooch (see *Debilitation*, figure xi) has been implanted into her chest. The print *Reparation (detail)* (see figure xviii) visually suggests scarification and cicatrisation as the pearls have become embedded into the skin.

Body modification, as practised by so-called Western and African groups alike during the 1800s, according to Brain (1979:85) reflects the material status of women and simultaneously serves beautification interests. The material status of women was especially measured against their husbands, fathers or brothers. Women's bodies, then, become objectified and othered as commodities. Guttmann (the female subject), for example, was inseparably linked to Sammy Marks (the male subject) as his wife. When Guttmann's position as a woman is taken into account, the interpretation of the self becomes more intricate. One could argue from a Lacanian (cf. Chapter 1.3) postcolonial outlook that due to her gender during the Victorian era she could be

regarded as the Other (from the gaze of the white man as the self). Farber's body and skin, counterfeits of Guttmann's, become a canvas through which her position as the Other is physically played out. Within the context of the series, Farber is concurrently engrafting and modifying herself, which can be interpreted as masochistic and self-alienating. In this regard, Farber (2012:21) considers "the protagonist's alienation as being directly related to, and a consequence of, her *displacement*."

The final photographic sub-narrative *A Room of Her Own* of the series consists of only three prints: *Generation, Generation (detail)* and *Redemption* (see figures xx-xxii). *A Room of Her Own*, in contrast to the other two sub-narratives *Aloerosa* and *Ties that Bind Her*, was photographed from a built set (Farber, 2012:102). The set, as seen in the first photograph *Generation*, is a fairly empty room, presumably based on the interior of the Sammy Marks museum, containing only a Persian-inspired carpet (similar to that in *Ties that Bind Her*) and the seated protagonist surrounded by scattered wax roses. The set suggests a view of a typical Highveld landscape, which the viewer can see from the double door-sized windows, framed by curtains, in the background.

Like in *Aloerosa* and *Ties that Bind Her,* the protagonist is represented in a front busk corset and white skirt. In contrast to the other two narratives, however, she is not wearing any jewellery and the white corset appears to be more of an undergarment than an overlay. From the Victorian gaze, this appearance would suggest that she is "off-guard" and therefore in a private dressing moment. This is further emphasised by the protagonist's solitary and "lonely" presence throughout the photographic series *Dis-Location/Re-Location.*

The two decorated walls of the set (cf. *Generation*), divided by a wooden Victorian chair rail, become a focal point of the empty space. The lower third part of the wall (below the curtain rail) is painted in an earthly off-white colour and decorated with a stencilled organic pattern. The top part of the wall is covered in pastel-coloured flower-inspired wallpaper. The wallpaper has been covered in parts by three-dimensional wax roses that in a few selective places resemble aloe plants. This gives the impression that the original layer of wallpaper has been embossed with the three-dimensional wax articles, now "growing" from the walls. Farber (2012:107) attests that she "…chose to work with wax not only because of its propensity to mimic flesh but also because of its

inherent instability." In this regard, some of the wax roses just above the curtain rail have started to melt and can be seen dripping down the lower third of the wall (compare figure 10, chapter 1.2). Farber achieved this by placing an aluminium panel behind the wallpaper, which was then gradually heated causing the first layer of wax to melt (cf. Farber 2012:107). Although the wax roses in the selected series are pastel-coloured the dripping wax (as the first layer) is red.

Figure 16. Leora Farber. *A Room of Her Own*, stage-set detail. 2006-2007. Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld. (Farber, 2012:89).

Figure 17. Leora Farber. *A Room of Her Own*, stage-set detail. 2006-2007. Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld. (Farber, 2012:89).

The first of the three-part photographic sub-narrative *Generation* (see figure xx) portrays the protagonist seated, upright on a ground-level chair in the middle of the room. She is surrounded by wax roses on the wooden floor, which seems to have "fallen" from the walls. With her head tilted and gaze directed towards the floor, she is holding her white skirt in a way that reveals her lower leg. Her exposed leg, stocking rolled down to her ankle, seems to have "sprouted" thread, resembling "roots". This is visually emphasised in the second work *Generation (detail,* see figure xxi)*,* which offers a detailed view of the protagonist's leg. From beneath her skirt appears to be varicose veins, running down her lower leg. At each vein's end, a thread – coloured in

a shade of crimson – seems to have sprouted. These “roots” literally and metaphorically reflect both the biological and the botanical definition of venation.[118]

The “roots” appear to be stemming from a cultivated indigenous aloe, “growing” from her upper leg through an opening in her white skirt (cf. *Generation* and *Generation (detail)* and *Redemption)*. The aloe, similar to that in *Aloerosa* (cf. *Propagation*), has propagated into the skin. In comparison to the *Aloerosa* series, however, the aloe’s leaves are not “flowering out” but appears to be roughly sewn into the skin. Accompanying the grafted aloe motif is an “embroidered” pattern on her chest, appearing to already have been embodied by the skin, as well as another established succulent growing from her arm.

The foreign implantations in *A Room of Her Own* (see figures xx-xxii)*,* in contrast to the first two photographic sub-narratives, remains static throughout the subseries. In other words, the aloes and embroidery pattern throughout all three photographic prints *Generation, Generation (detail)* and *Redemption* remains unchanged. And, although the protagonist is holding a pair of embroidery scissors (especially visible in *Generation (detail))*, *A Room of Her Own* does not visually depict the grafting process as in the previous sub-narratives.

The last image of the sub-narrative *A Room of Her Own* namely: *Redemption* (see figure xxii) illustrates the protagonist lying flat on her back on the carpet, surrounded by wax roses. She wears the same outfit as in in *Generation* and its visual detail (*Generation (detail))* and the aloe and “roots” are still visible on her leg. Her body, face turned away from the camera, is positioned as if she has fainted or collapsed. Farber’s depiction, in neo-Victorian fashion, however, presents a somewhat romanticised fainting episode as the protagonist is “eloquently” and unrealistically positioned on the floor. Her hand is motionlessly clutching the same pair of embroidery scissors from the previous print. Lying next to her on the floor is what appears to be an embroidery or sewing kit and thread.

Farber (2012:104) states that she portrays the “protagonist’s attempts to ‘speak through the body’ by means of hysteria”. The term “hysteria” (originating from the Greek ὑστέρα denoting uterus), although losing its clinical status in 1980, has a

[118] Venation refers to the pattern produced by the vascular bundles (veins) of plants, especially seen in leaves (cf. Bailey 2002, 238).

discursive historical use (Wald, 2007:2; Devereau, 2014:19). Hysteria was used, from antiquity, to describe mimetic, somatic symptoms (mainly associated with women) of other medical ailments such as anxiety, shortness of breath or fainting. Libbrecht (1997:101) states that hysteria as a so-called illness became a "(social) metaphor or a (cultural) representation" as much as a medical one, as it progressed from the neurological studies of Charcot (1825-1893; cf. the case of Marie Wittmann) to that of Freud (1856-1939; cf. his case study of Dora). Hysteria in a sense became an allegorical disease of both medical, psychoanalytic and psychiatric studies. Feminist studies, such as those by Bernheimer and Kahan (1990); Ender (1995); Showalter (1985, 1997) or Devereau (2014) on hysteria has reclaimed hysteria as a way to not only scrutinise and revise cultural conditions but also claim "the right to be hysterical" (Mitchell, 1984:117). By suggesting that the protagonist is lying on the floor and showing symptoms – from the Victorian patriarchal imagination – of "hysteria", Farber, in agreement with Showalter (1997) and Du Preez (2005), gives her the right to speak. The representation of hysteria for Farber becomes a visual strategy to question the agency of women from the Victorian imagination. Du Preez (2005:47) argues:

> Hysteria is a 'disease' – or more aptly a dis-ease – that manifest exclusively through visual appearances and images and is reproduced in imitations and representations. Since its aetiology is fantasmatic, hysteria has no anatomical or corporeal basis.

During the Victorian era hysteria was diagnosed solely as a "sickness" of women when they showed observable "symptoms" of manipulability such as being overly emotional. Therefore, diagnosing hysteria became a way to silence, control and subjugate women.

To summarise, the three photographic prints *Generation, Generation (detail)* and *Redemption* (see figures xx-xxii), grouped together as the final sub-narrative *A Room of Her Own* of the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location*, presents a visual synthesis between the first and the second sub-narratives. This is aided by visually fusing *Alearosa*'s organic and botanical elements (the rose and aloe) taken from the exterior garden with the Victorian interior of *Ties that Bind Her.* The *Ties that Bind Her* series, in accordance with the first sub-narrative of the *Dis-Location/Re-Location,* visually depicts a process of transformation. In contrast to *Aloerosa* and *Ties that Bind Her,* conversely, this transformation is not guided by the implant. In other words, the aloes

in this sub-narrative are not (as in *Aloerosa*) shown transplanted or maturing into the skin, but remain unchanged throughout the three prints (*Generation, Generation (detail)* and *Redemption*). Instead, the transformation occurs through the protagonist's body. Her position changes from being seated upright in *Generation* and *Generation (detail)* to lying flat on the floor as if she has fainted in *Redemption.* This is visually emphasised, as seen specifically in *Generation,* by the wax roses melting from the walls. Symbolically, the subtheme *A Room of Her Own* strongly references and comments on a Victorian patriarchal society, and specifically to the protagonist's (Farber as Guttmann) possible experiences as a woman. This is clear in the references to, for example, hysteria and embroidery.

Dis-Location/Re-Location, as represented by all three respective themes *Aloerosa, Ties that Bind Her* and *A Room of Her Own* mirrors a colonial, Victorian recreation. The photographic series can be regarded in line with Heilmann and Llewellyn's (2010:4) description (see Chapter 4.3) as a neo-Victorian depiction. Al three sub-narratives as a linear chronological, photographic series declares pre-negotiated symbolic intertextual layers ranging from Victorian notions of botany and so-called womanhood. As each sub-narrative progresses through a process of metamorphosis, as initiated by the grafting of foreign objects into her skin, the protagonist is produced anew. In what follows I specifically investigate the transformation of the self as a simulacral reflection of a state of becoming.

5.3 The (re)imagined self as a simulacrum

Bishop (*in* Law-Viljoen, 2008) imaginatively compares Farber's representation of herself as Guttmann with the first cloned mammal – a sheep named Dolly (1996-2003)[119]: "Just as Dolly stands side-by-side with herself …so Farber and Bertha Marks sit across from one another in a room…", Bishop (*in* Law-Viljoen, 2008:113) notes. The imagined body (Farber/Guttmann) as double counterfeit in the neo-Victorian series *Dis-Location/Re-Location*, like Dolly the clone, was constructed, as the previous section showed, out of several originals. Without a singular origin, however, the clone or what Baudrillard (cf. Chapter 3.4) also describes as the "shadow" (2003c [2002]), the "doppelgänger" or the "prosthesis" becomes its own original – existing

[119] Dolly the sheep, the first cloned mammal, was "created" by somatic cell nuclear transfer and was innately created out of three originals (mothers) (Kolata, 1997).

independently in its own simulated postcolonial reality as a copy without origin. Baudrillard (1994) maintains that,

> [it] is no longer a question of imitation, nor duplication, nor even parody. It is a question of substituting the signs of the real for the real that is to say of an operation of deterring every real process via its operational double (Baudrillard, 1994: 2).

Baudrillard based the order of the simulation (1983:83), as the third and final order of the simulacrum, on what he describes as the "structural law of value" (cf. Chapter 3.3.3). From this theoretical point of departure *Dis-Location/Re-Location*, as I suggest, becomes a simulated reality. Camille (*in* Nelson & Shiff, 2003:46) specifically accentuates photography's phantasmagorical capabilities to contribute to and shape the real. Photography, in accord with Sontag (1977:120), therefore does not merely counterfeit a real, but simultaneously usurps the real. Krauss (1984:59), in similar vein, articulates that photography diminishes the prospect of a distinction between an original and a copy. The subject of photography, in this sense, is already determined by the models of a once real, previously given. Photography accordingly becomes a heightened extension of the captured real or what Baudrillard, [1981]1994:23) describes as a hyperreal (cf. Chapter 3.3.3).

The simulation is always predetermined by the structural value of the code as predetermined and decided referenda of meaning. In the selected series, the imagined body is inlayed and surrounded with counterfeited intertextual references of collective identity complexities regarding womanhood, beautification, whiteness and alienation as framed by Farber's (2012) proclaimed postcolonial position as the creator of the series. As these intertextual references are reproduced and presented anew in the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location,* they become further and further removed from their origins. In other words, by counterfeiting and assimilating these various points of reference, *Dis-Location/Re-Location* becomes an autonomous simulated reality through which a fictitious self is (re)imagined.

A central them within this simulated reality – a theme sustained throughout all three sub-narratives – is how the (re)imagined self negotiates identity complexities of belonging on behalf of Farber as Guttmann. This is done through a simulated process of identity metamorphosis: from the ambivalent self, the mutable self and finally, as I argue, to the death of self or what Baudrillard (1983:2) describes as the "desert of the

real*".* The grafting of indigenous succulents illustrates the metamorphosis process as seen in both the sub-narratives *Aloerosa* and *A Room of Her Own* and jewellery in the sub-narrative *Ties that Bind Her.*

The ambivalent self is characterised by the protagonist's – as the proclaimed self (Guttmann/Farber) – confrontation with the fluid other separate from herself. Other here, in line with the postcolonial dichotomy (cf. Chapter 2.3) and Baudrillard's (1993a: 121) dual negative of otherness, comes into being through difference (cf. Chapter 3.4). In the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* difference is represented by that which is regarded as foreign, alien or novel in relation to the protagonist as the colonial subject. This position of the other or foreign, however, becomes fluid and changeable throughout the three sub-narratives as the detail of the graft changes.

In the first subtheme *Aloerosa* (see figures i-ix) the foreign other is represented by indigenous aloes and the open landscape that finally seems to devour her completely in *Supplantation* (cf. figure viii). On representing the landscape, Farber (2012:7) states that she was "vexed" with not promoting "an essentialist or colonial stereotype of Africa" but rather attempted to use symbols that resonated with a "personal consciousness of a person born" in South Africa. Although she is not "foreign" to the indigenous landscape in the same sense, Farber associates herself with Guttmann's experience of displacement in southern Africa by counterfeiting Guttmann's life-world (cf. Chapter 4.3). As such, the visualisation of the landscape in the *Aloerosa* subtheme, abstracted to mainly aloes, becomes problematic as the postcolonial protagonist perpetuates settler-colonial stereotypes of "Africa" as the exotic other (cf. Chapter 2.3). This occurs because the aloe as a visual allegory for the "foreign, strange landscape" becomes a projected other from the protagonist's view as the white subject.

In the subseries *Ties that Bind Her* (see figures x-xix)*,* in contrast, the protagonist is implanting Victorian and "African" jewellery into her skin. In *Preservation* (see figure x) she appears to be attempting to preserve her British heritage by implanting a rose cameo pendant – distinctive of Victorian fashion – into her chest. The foreign object (in relation to her body) here, in contrast with the other two subthemes, is reflected by the very thing that from the Victorian imagination is regarded as home – preserving the known. As the narrative progresses through the works *Debilitation and*

Regeneration, however, the scar of the pendant sprouts the “Africanised beaded butterfly” (see *Regeneration* (detail), figure xix). One can interpret this state of metamorphosis as a successful preservation of her British heritage as the butterfly – which can be read as the “exotic other” – remains halfway submerged in the skin. This is emphasised in the work *Regeneration* (the last narrative of the subtheme), as suggested earlier in this chapter (see 5.2.2), where it appears the protagonist is about to remove the butterfly – the foreign.

In the last sub-narrative, *A Room of Her Own* (see figures xx-xxii), the two conflicting referents of foreignness merge. In the work *Generation* (cf. figure xx) aloes are seen emerging from her body together with the Victorian flower pattern embroidered onto her chest. Both seem to consume her, from the Victorian imagination, as she “hysterically” collapses to the floor not being able to *preserve* the known (Victorian embroidery) or conquer the foreign other (aloes). Simultaneously, as Farber notes, her moment of hysteria gives her the “right to speak” through her body – possibly voicing her discontent and unwillingness to adapt to the foreign. Within the series, then, the (re)imagined self is differentiated by a fluid simulated other that is problematically based on stereotypical “African” allegories. Although the simulated O/other changes, it exists as a reflection which in turn emphasises the ambivalence of the self’s sense of belonging.

It is as if the protagonist – as framed by Guttmann’s colonial life-world – in van Gennep’s (2013[1909]:18) words: “wavers between two worlds”, between what is regarded as the foreign, the host and that which is regarded as home. From this perspective *Dis-Location/Re-Location*, as a simulated reality, imagines the notion of a liminal space. The liminal, as discussed in Chapter 2 (cf. 2.4.3), from Bhabha’s (1994) point of view is characterised as an inception, a threshold or a betwixt state. A liminal state represents the emancipating space between departing and arriving, the interrelated position amongst both the past and the present). From this postcolonial understanding *Dis-Location/Re-Location*, in contrast however, as mentioned in Chapter 4 (cf. 4.5.2) represents a continuous marginal space. One can also regard Baudrillard’s notion of the simulation (cf. Chapter 3.2) in itself as a perpetual liminal realm. This occurs, as in the case with *Dis-Location/Re-Location* as a photographic series, where the difference between the so-called real (to which photography as medium leans itself to) and the imaginary (the constructed colonial life-world) is

threatened. The series contains remnants of a once real (Guttmann/Farber) that is embodied in a photographic representation of an imaginary non-real (*Dis-Location/Re-Location*).

In the series, as reflected through the title *Dis-Location/Re-Location*, this liminal state (cf. Chapter 2.4.3) is accentuated by the imagined protagonist's diasporic anxieties of displacement and uprooting. It is as if the ambivalent self has to choose between her colonial origin and the new exotic reality she is presented with. This is especially guided by the commencement of the contradictory grafting of objects as seen in *Induction* (cf. *Aloerosa*, figure i) and *Preservation* (cf. *Ties that Bind Her,* figure x). The graft appears to symbolise the protagonist's simultaneous desire and unwillingness to adapt as she is confronted with the unknown. In this regard, the ambivalent self becomes a performer within the liminal. Butler (1993:95) contends that *performance* cannot be understood outside the process of repetition. Performance, by way of repetition and counterfeiting, becomes an extension of power as it holds the ability to justify action. As such, continuous performance becomes a ritual, simultaneously keeping the boundaries between inclusion and exclusion in place. Venn (2010:327) in this regard argues that,

> In the exhibition, the tropes of stasis and movement, and the sense of being overwhelmed by the strange/r, contrasted with the urge to mutate and adapt, are played out in the scenes that depict the at times calm, methodical, purposive, indeed literal grafting or sewing of an alien botanical life form into incisions and cuts made into the body of the woman whose life-in-transit is presented.

In the selected series, ritualisation becomes evident as the grafting process becomes a ritual by repetition throughout all three the sub-narratives. The ambivalent self seems to be eternally imprisoned by the simulated liminal as *Dis-Location/Re-Location* becomes a never-ending transit zone. Liminal bodies, as Sey (2011:66) pointedly remarks, are continuously betwixt in a "curious almost-becoming, a state of absence". Sey highlights, in line with Baudrillard's thinking regarding the order of simulation, the contradictory importance of presence and absence during the liminal. It is through the absence of certain privileges that the liminal body becomes present. Through an absence of belonging the ambivalent self in *Dis-Location/Re-Location* becomes a liminal body as she is presented with the choice of belonging through grafting the distant and seemingly voiceless other into her skin. This marks the second stage of

the simulated process of identity transformation as the self moves from a state of ambiguity to volatility.

The mutable self in the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* is characterised by hybridity. The postcolonial understanding of hybridity, as discussed in Chapter Two (cf. 2.4.2), refers to the possible impact on identity that arises from exchanges between *difference*. In Guttmann's case, for example, this difference can be described as the stark contrast between her colonial-settler world and her new foreign environment: southern Africa. When these contradicting worlds meet, within what Pratt (1992:228; see 2.4.2) describes as a contact zone, *transculturation* occurs in which identities remain fluid through constant transformation. In other words, a reciprocal interchange takes place, as framed by the liminal, between different ends producing new hybrid possibilities. Hybridity, as with Baudrillard's (1983:83) second order of simulacra, becomes a state of production and mutability through which identity is produced anew. Farber seems to follow the medical and biological notion of the graft, as a metaphor for literal hybridity (as noted in Chapter 2.4.2), which *produces* new forms.

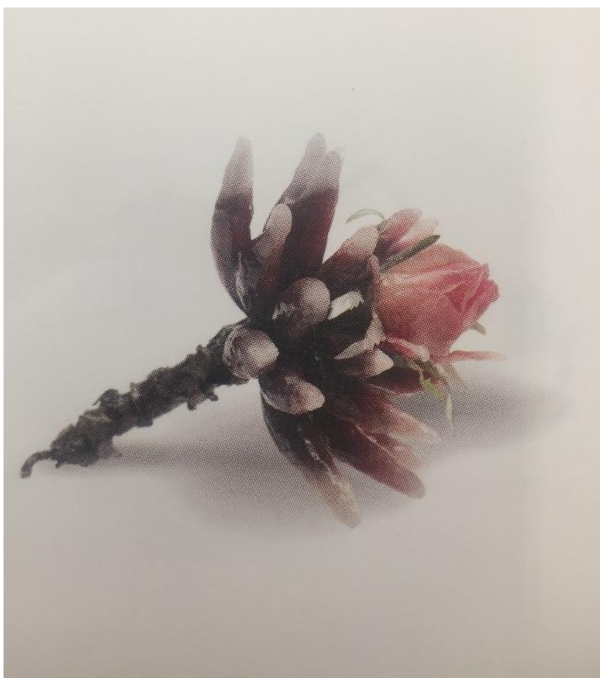

Figure 18. Leora Farber. *Cultivars, Genera III.* 2006-2007. Archival pigment print on Photo Cotton paper 28.3x34 cm (*in* Law-Viljoen, 2008:145).

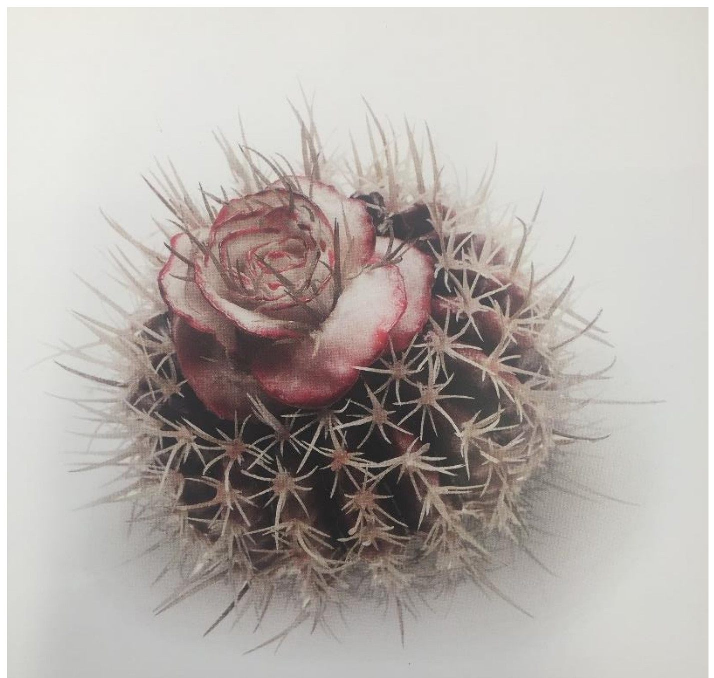

Figure 19. Leora Farber. *Cultivars, Perrusonii.* 2006-2007. Archival pigment print on Photo Cotton paper 28.3x34 cm (*in* Law-Viljoen, 2008:144).

The supplementary photographic series: *Cultivars* (2006-2007) can be used in order to illuminate *Dis-Location/Re-Location's* representation of hybridity and grafting as a state of production. The series *Cultivars* (see figures 18, 19) consists out of twelve sculptural botanical-like forms, accompanied by twelve photographic prints, each unique through their hybrid combinations. Not only were these plant sculptures materially constructed out of both natural materials (such as rose thorns, roots, branches and petals) and synthetic materials (fabric and plastic), but they were conceptually based on a combination of indigenous southern African succulents and English rose motifs (cf. Farber, 2012:49). These *Cultivars* (see *Genera III*, figure 18) simulates transculturation, as they symbolically suggest that they are a result of hybridity through grafting leading to a completely new "plant" species. One can compare this understanding to the Victorian use of the term (cf. Chapter 2.4.2).

In *Dis-Location/Re-Location* this process for Farber (2012:40, 53, following Richards, 1997:234) does not go without trauma and violence. Seen in this light, the graft denotes the coercive meeting of two living substances – be that construed in botanical or medical terms. In order to have a thriving graft firstly a painful incision has to be made in the host in order to transplant the foreign into it. From a postcolonial understanding (see Chapter 2.4.2), however, this becomes problematic as the protagonist's whiteness places her in the position of the self. By implanting an aloe succulent – which appears to resemble a so-called indigenous other – in the white protagonist's skin, the binary between the self and the other is disseminated further.

Dis-Location/Re-Location seems to suggest that the progression of the grafting process throughout all three sub-narratives leads to a new simulated hybrid form. Through hybridity, as framed by the simulacrum, the clear distinction between the once "original" identities (Farber/Guttmann) and the (re)imagined self as the once counterfeited start fading. This is especially clear in the works *Maturation II* (from the sub-narrative *Aloerosa*, figure vii), *Regeneration (detail)* (from the *Ties that Bind Her* series, figure xix) and *Generation (A Room of Her Own,* figure xx*)* in the manner through which the grafts have proliferated in the body. In *Maturation II* the now hybridised protagonist starts becoming part of the veld as new roots are sprouting between her bare feet. Similarly, in the work *Generation* (cf. figure xx) new root-like threads have sprouted from her leg as if she is becoming part of the Persian carpet. *Regeneration (detail)* on the other hand, as the title suggests, signifies a rebirth as her

bare, scarred upper-chest and neckline is now only decorated with indigenous beads. Accordingly, a new simulated self - a hybridised botanical body takes form.

This new hybridised version of the simulated self, however, disappears quickly as suggested in the two works *Supplantation* (*Aloerosa,* cf. figure viii) and *Redemption (A Room of Her Own,* cf. figure xxii). Both photographs imply that the graft has taken over the protagonist as the host. In *Supplantation,* for instance, the only remnants of the protagonist is the faux leather corset lying in the veld next to an aloe – as if the aloe has devoured the body completely. Meanwhile in *Redemption* the protagonist is lying on the floor – seemingly unconscious or possibly dead, whilst the aloe is alive and well, budding from her leg. This announces the third and final stage in the simulated process of identity metamorphosis in the series – the death of self.

Baudrillard (1997:28), on the subject of photography, posits that "everything pivots upon the art of disappearance". What he proposes, in line with the paradoxical nature of the simulacrum, is that in order for something to be present it needs to be contrasted against that which is absent. As such, the desolate aloe in *Supplantation* for example*,* as the subtitle suggests, supersedes the body and simultaneously becomes a symbolic representation of the body. Therefore, although the protagonist's body is absent she is present through the trace of her body. The so-called death of the protagonist in the series, although interpreted very literally here, emphasises a subtle nuance in the self's process of belonging: that in order for the simulated self to belong in the foreign, it needs to dissolve or (un)belong completely and become the foreign as suggested in the works *Supplantation* (figure viii) and *Redemption* (figure xxii). From Baudrillard's (1999) perspective, as the subtitle *Redemption* suggests, the self can only redeem itself by the disappearance of the subject – to an extent redeeming her from her own alienation. Van der Watt (2008) states, regarding the representation of alienation through imagined landscapes (such as *Dis-Location/Re-Location*):

> Alienation in these landscapes is expressed through an inability to situate oneself in the land, which in turn reflects an inability to reserve a space for a *specific modality* of whiteness. For some the only way out of what is perceived to be a paralysing dilemma has been to find a way to engage… (Van der Watt *in* Law-Viljoen, 2008:88).

Van der Watt poses that the representation or imagining of a landscape by white South Africans as platform for post-apartheid cultural engagement cannot be viewed as neutral. In *White Writing*: *On the culture of letters in South Africa* ([1988]2007) J. M.

Coetzee investigates how "South Africa has been thought by Europe; and specifically the land…" ([1988]2007:10). Goodrich and Strydom (2014:59) in accordance with Coetzee, state that white authors are "producing landscape representations in an attempt to develop a reciprocity with Africa that will confer belonging upon them." Coetzee ([1988]2007:7-8) argues that a language to depict the land by whites, regardless if one was born on African soil is yet to be found. Coetzee's argument, although here referring to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century white writers, is still relevant, as Van der Watt (*in* Law-Viljoen, 2008:89) accentuates, as this incapability to belong can be compared to the "crisis" experienced by whites in post-apartheid South Africa. This crisis of displacement as for example articulated by Farber's own sense of displacement in post-apartheid South Africa (cf. Chapter 4.5.2) can simultaneously be associated with the inability to imagine a place of belonging. This, as suggested in Chapter Two (2.2), is possibly also due to whiteness' incapacity to imagine a sense of belonging which is perceived from outside the centre. Farber is simulating a colonial landscape in order to investigate her own sense of (white) displacement in post-apartheid South Africa (cf. Chapter 4.5.2). From this perspective the self's need for *Redemption* hints towards the white protagonist's attempt to reclaim a sense of belonging while simultaneously declaring her inability to belonging.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter focussed on *Dis-Location/Re-Location* and the Victorian, settler-colonial protagonist as she progresses through a metamorphosis of the self.

Aleorosa is set outdoors as the sub-narrative commences in a Victorian-inspired tea party where the white protagonist is seen grafting an aloe succulent into her forearm. As the narrative progresses and the white body moves into a veld landscape, the aloe graft takes hold, matures, and finally usurps the body completely. The main theme of *Aloerosa* denotes the protagonist's confrontation with the foreign other as she tries to belong by means of grafting.

Ties that Bind Her, in contrast, is photographed indoors in the main bedroom of the Sammy Marks Museum. The grafting motif is put forth from the first sub-theme, but instead focusses on the embedding of jewellery into the protagonist's skin. Diverging from the first sub-theme, the graft, however, does not seem to take over the white body but rather becomes a referent signalling the preservation of her colonial heritage.

The series culminates in *A Room of Her Own* as the implanted protagonist, who is at first seated in a seemingly disintegrating room (*Generation*) "hysterically" collapses to the floor in the final work *Redemption.*

Accordingly, from a Baudrillardian-inspired interpretation, the self appears to undertake a metamorphosis process from the ambivalent self, the mutable self and ultimately the death of self. The ambivalent self is signified by the self's confrontation with a fluid simulated other – represented by foreign objects (aloe succulents or "African" inspired jewellery). The white protagonist is seen throughout *Dis-Location/Re-Location* grafting the fluid, simulated other into her skin – in a sense antagonizing the stranger (especially see *Induction,* figure i, and *Preservation,* figure x). This becomes an indication of the self's need to belong, which is simultaneously contrasted by a need to *preserve* a sense of home. The uncertainty of trying to belong in the foreign or preserving a sense of home in the series suggests a liminal space. The liminal, however, as framed by the series, in contrast to a postcolonial understanding, becomes an apparent oppressive state for the protagonist as the graft starts manifesting into her body.

As the skin graft takes hold and "grows" into the body (see *Maturation II,* figure vii; *Regeneration (detail),* figure xix and *Generation*, figure xx*)* the self progresses into a mutable hybrid state of production. Farber utilises the concept of hybridity throughout the series, in-line with a Victorian understanding of the concept, literally as she merges two different "organisms" (see *Cultivars* figures 18-19). This contention can mainly be deduced from the process of grafting. It appears that the skin graft – originally implanted as a way to negotiate a space of belonging – is not "sustainable". Although this may be read as a sign of sustainability and adaptability, I argue that the graft consumes the body. The unsustainability of the once hydridised body rather suggests a space of (un)belonging. This leads to the final stage of the transformation process: the death of self.

The death of the simulated self as visualised specifically in the two works *Supplantation* (figure viii) and *Redemption* (figure xxii), marks the demise of the (re)imagined self. The self's need to belong in the foreign landscape is overshadowed by an inability to belong as she *redeems* herself by (un)belonging. Concurrently the white self seemingly becomes the outsider as she is consumed by what was originally presented as the foreign.

The following and final chapter of this thesis offers concluding remarks of this undertaking. This is done by summarising and concluding the main issues – in line with the research questions as set out in Chapter one – addressed in each chapter of this thesis.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Dis-Location/Re-Location as a postcolonial simulacrum

> This is the crime: we attain a perfection in the sense of a total accomplishment, and that totalisation is an end. There is no longer any destination elsewhere, nor even any "elsewhere" (Baudrillard, 2003:63).

6.1 Introduction

This thesis offered a critical appraisal of Leora Farber's photographic series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* by focussing on how Farber constructs a simulacral reality by reproducing a (re)imagined self in a settler landscape. I argue that the series (re)imagines a self – consisting of an entanglement of three Jewish histories of displacement and intertextualities of Victorian "womanhood"– by means of a fabricated postcolonial simulacral documentation of belonging. The colonial subject undergoes a metamorphosis process from the ambivalent self, to the mutable self and finally to the simulated death of self as she seemingly cannot belong in "exotic Africa".

This study aims to unlock alternative postcolonial and simulacral interpretations of the photographic series, which appears unexplored up to date. This thesis, although its focus is on *Dis-Location/Re-Location,* hopes to contribute towards the larger imperative of evaluating complexities surrounding representation in post-apartheid South Africa in line with current debates around postcoloniality. Postcolonial aesthetics, as Khan (2014:28) advocates, ought to pursue "the understanding that cultural representation is a political terrain and weapon". Khan (2914:28) goes on, in highlighting the importance for a "deconstruction of its [cultural representation] values and aesthetics, and a decolonisation of cultural manifestations" (Khan, 2014:28). Specifically there is a need to consolidate critical debate, theory and representation that is grouped under the mantle of postcolonialism. Baudrillard's conceptualisation offers a platform through which postcoloniality as a justification for imagining colonial landscapes through art-making can be questioned.

This chapter offers a summary of the main issues addressed in the preceding chapters of this thesis as well as final conclusions. I close with proposed ways to further this research through the section (un)mapping the thesis.

6.2 Mapping the thesis

The study was introduced in **Chapter One** of this thesis, by offering a genealogy of the series as well as an introduction to the main issues it raises. This project took as point of departure the suggestion that Farber uses postcolonial discourse to justify the (re)imagining of a settler double, which in turn is assembled out of the life-worlds of three Jewish, white woman – Farber, Guttmann and Kagan. This (re)imagining leads to the interpretation of the series as a fabricated simulacral reality, which I argue progresses from the ambivalent self, the mutable self and finally to the simulated death of self as a declaration of belonging. Farber explains the metamorphosis of the self by appealing to notions of otherness and by making reference to the postcolonial spatial complexities diaspora, hybridity and liminality. Before evaluating and critiquing her deployment of postcolonial theory in the photographic series, a baseline understanding of these terms within postcolonial theory was in order.

In **Chapter Two***,* therefore, specific focus was placed on situating Farber's ideas on white postcolonial belonging within the dichotomy of selfhood and otherness, and in relation to the temporal and spatial displacements of diaspora, liminality and hybridity (as these terms are commonly understood in postcolonial theory). A postcolonial understanding of these key concepts provides a critical and theoretical platform through which the ongoing effects and consequences of colonialism (and neo-colonialism) on identity – and on art-making – can be interrogated.

The specific theoretical focus on postcolonialism was determined by the theoretical underpinnings suggested in Farber's (2012) retroactive reflection in her doctoral thesis as well as by the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* itself. Farber (2012) positions and articulates the series from a postcolonial theoretical conceptualisation. This is furthered by Farber's declaration that the body-protagonist in the series is "postcolonial". The protagonist of the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location*, although posited as being a "postcolonial" body, rather enacts the role of a Victorian settler-colonial woman in an imagined colonial landscape. Farber therefore enacts a Eurocentric self*.*

I argue that Farber, utilises postcolonial theory pragmatically in order to articulate her own sense of white displacement in post-apartheid South Africa. Farber especially situates her own sense of displacement within the discourse of whiteness studies in

post-apartheid South Africa. Farber, however, does not use her own sense of displacement to deal with her crisis of whiteness, but rather as a binding agent to imagine links between herself, Guttmann and Kagan. Similarly, Farber utilises postcolonial theory (specifically otherness, hybridity and liminality) to visually embody the white body-protagonist's metamorphosis of (un)becoming.

Farber's imagining of a white postcolonial self through a colonial double appears to rely on "disembodying" postcolonial theory from its political and revisionist agendas. From this perspective I argue that *Dis-Location/Re-Location* becomes a fabricated simulacral reality that Farber creates in order to investigate her own search of belonging.

Baudrillard's conceptualisation of the simulacrum, as elaborated in **Chapter Three**, entails the philosophical and theoretical exploration of the deconstruction of the real and simultaneous realisation of a so-called new real. Baudrillard arranges the loss of the metaphysical real through three temporal orders of simulacra (the order of the counterfeit, the order of production and the order of simulation). The final order of the systematic loss of the real highlights the so-called death of value, since signifiers – as simulacra – no longer refer to an "original" or copy. Rather, only models of a once real remain – a hyperreal appearing more real than the real itself. The imagining of a self, interpreted as a simulacrum, is no different. Identity construction, from a narratological, poststructural framework comes down to a dichotomy of alterity: constructing a self always also entails constructing another. The imagined self is concurrently contextualised within a larger imagining. The imagined self in the photographic series *Dis-Location/Re-Location,* from this perspective presents what McHale calls a historical fantasy. This in turn can be interpreted as a historical simulacrum.

Hence in **Chapter Four** focus was placed on how the (re)imagined self in the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* presents a simulacral historical by condensing three displaced experiences (Farber, Guttmann and Kagan) into a single embodied narrative. The retelling and counterfeiting of both Guttmann and Kagan's narratives in this regard occur without agency. In this sense, their narratives are removed from "origin", which in turn leads to a simulacral version of both Kagan and Guttmann's experiences.

Guttmann becomes the main character of the narrative, as Farber reproduces a mythical, neo-Victorian version of Guttmann's life-world. Farber seems to base her mythology of Guttmann on her as a displaced settler wife, simultaneously othered by the Victorian patriarchal gaze whilst othering others as the madam of Zwartkoppies. Farber does this through various "points of origin" such as letters Guttmann wrote to Sammy Marks as well as collective historical accounts by settler women and historians (such as Mendelsohn, 1991; Mendelsohn & Shain, 2008). Farber's mother – Freda Kagan – becomes an absent, marginal figure in the photographic works of *Dis-Location/Re-Location.* Farber, however, positions Kagan as a displaced Jewish immigrant who simultaneously acted as a silent bystander of apartheid (see Shimoni, 2003). Farber seemingly uses Kagan's narrative as an imaginative, shadowy link between Guttmann and herself. Farber, the "postcolonial" body-protagonist in and subsequent pictorial focus of the series, situates her own sense of displacement as a crisis of whiteness in the changing landscape of a post-apartheid South Africa:

> …I need to *re-locate* myself within this new environment in ways that permit personal integrity; I have consciously attempted to shape a new identity by either disregarding and/or re-evaluating ingrained behaviour, values and beliefs while at the same time retaining those which still seem relevant to my sense of self (Farber in conversation with Klopper *in* Law-Viljoen, 2008:17).

Farber, as shown in Chapter Four, debatably compares her experiences of a changing post-apartheid landscape with Guttmann's and Kagan's respective but possible experiences of relocation. She does this by using diaspora (Kagan) and liminality (Farber and Kagan) to contextualise and condense three unique and temporal narratives through a postcolonial understanding of displacement. From this perspective the body-protagonist in *Dis-Location/Re-Location* reflects a fabricated simulacrum, which although originating (according to Farber) from three narratives of displacement in fact has no singular origin. Farber, as I argue, rather uses her version of these narratives as a justification for her decision to reimagine a Victorian life-world based on her own sense of white displacement.

Chapter Five specifically analysed the (re)imagined self as a simulation throughout the three photographic narratives *Aloerosa*; *Ties that Bind Her* and *A Room of Her Own.* The self is intertextually and interpretatively positioned by female (Victorian) notions of "beautification". Each sub-narrative portrays the body-protagonist – visually

based on the colonial subject – going through a transformation which is guided by the grafting of a foreign object into the white skin. As each theme progresses, the self goes through a process of ambivalence (see *Induction,* figure i), mutability (see *Generation,* figure xx) and finally the death of self. This was done in line with the self's encounter with otherness, liminality and hybridity.

The death of self – marked by the hybridised protagonist being usurped by the foreign other in the respective works *Supplantation* (figure viii) and *Redemption* (figure xxii) – reflects the self's (un)belonging. This (un)belonging becomes a perpetual liminal state – a fabricated simulacrum – which in contrast to postcolonial thought does not liberate but rather supresses. The protagonist, therefore seems unable to adapt to the foreign landscape thereby mirroring settler-colonial attitudes towards their new environments.

Dis-Location/Re-Location, although becoming a platform that urges a reassessment of so-called female embodiment by scrutinising Victorian notions of beauty, "womanhood" and gender subjugation, simultaneously presents a (re)imagining of settler-colonial identity and landscape. Zukin (1991:17) writes on landscape painting and power in early modern Europe:

> to make a landscape was also to recreate natural topography in images and power…activities [such] as landscaping the grounds of a country estate and drawing maps of the world to distort, obliterate, and rearrange geography to serve the interest of the viewer…landscape both imposes and represents a visual order.

Dis-Location/Re-Location, in this sense, has been "landscaped" into an amplified imagining of a Victorian life-world that also involves control. In actuality, the photographic series shows little resemblance to Guttmann's (or Farber's and Kagan's) autobiography, but rather contributes and constructs (as the simulacrum supposes) a fabrication or a set of conflicting narratives of the postcolonial protagonist. The visuals, however, cues an association with a Victorian life-world, whilst Farber simultaneously explains the series from a postcolonial position. Accordingly *Dis-Location/Re-Location* seemingly becomes a neo-Victorian postcolonial depiction. Farber, as argued in Chapter Four (4.3), does not re-evaluate Victorian notions of coloniality critically as much as she reproduces them. *Dis-Location/Re-Location* regurgitates a colonial canvas by superimposing colonial codes to envision her belief in her own sense of displacement.

This is enforced, in my opinion, because she envisages an autobiography of Guttmann's life-world that was never based in reality to begin with. This in turn presents a new (Victorian) archive that preserves and enforces mythologies of settler-colonial narratives. The construction of a new archive is confirmed by Carmen's (*in* Law-Viljoen 2008:71) observation of the series title that "there is a simultaneous dislocation of an archival source…and a relocation in a new archive…". This contention is supported in the photographic series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* by the direct and indirect inclusion of existing museum spaces in the recreation of the Victorian life-world Farber is occupying. The spatiality in the *Ties that Bind Her* (see figures x-xix) sub-theme is based on Marks and Guttmann's actual bedroom at Zwartkoppies (cf. Sammy Marks Museum) and simultaneously on an imagined neo-Victorian version of a boudoir. This idea is furthered throughout the series by the continuous use of Victorian intertextual references – such as the clothing, objects and architectural markers (cf. representational addendum). The reconstruction of a hyperreal archival space does not only serve as a contextualising technique to reimagine Guttmann's world, but simultaneously acts as a strategy of the simulacrum thereby enforcing the illusion of actuality.

Dis-Location/Re-Location as a (re)imagined settler archive can accordingly be associated, as suggested in Chapter Three (see 3.4) with what McHale (1987) describes as a "historical fantasy". A historical fantasy, in alignment with the idea of the simulacrum, emphasises the impossibility of "true" origins, also in historically based imaginings. This historical fantasy plays out in the series through a continuous visual tension between romanticised colonial and postcolonial allegories. This can be seen, first of all, in the three idealised and ambiguous settings visualised throughout the three sub-narratives: outdoors (*Aloerosa*), the boudoir (*Ties that Bind Her*) and an empty, disintegrating room (*Ties that Bind Her* and *a Room of Her Own*) (cf. representational addendum). These sub-narratives romanticise the horrors of masochism as suggested by the literal cutting of the skin and the grafting of foreign objects into the body.

The individual print *Induction* (cf. figure i), for example, displays the perfectly poised protagonist surrounded by extravagant white roses in bloom, inserting an aloe into her forearm. Similarly, the works *Debilitation* (cf. figure xi) and *Generation* (cf. figure xx) present a somewhat idealistically, staged – reminiscent of a theatrical – still shot. This

is framed and emphasised through the stationary body and gaze of the protagonist – whose body had been invaded by foreign objects. The dream-like quality of the photographs, achieved by the diffused focus and lighting, desensitises the viewer from the masochistic horrors that are taking place and presents them as normal (see *Induction* and *Debilitation* in particular). Accordingly, the series relies on a romanticised neo-Victorian depiction that visualises the settler-colonial anxiety of foreign takeover in a quite literal way.

Dis-Location/Re-Location and the three respective sub-narratives can therefore be regarded as a romanticised historical fantasy presented through a hyperreal archive. The new historical narrative of the protagonist, although constructed out of distinct historical contexts, is ultimately a fabrication that is, in Baudrillard's terms "more real than the real itself". *Dis-Location/Re-Location* and the (re)imagined self as a fabricated simulacrum, in this regard, is based on and promotes a form of universalism and totality as framed by generalised narratives of colonialism, theories of postcolonialism and a stereotypical neo-Victorian rendering. This occurs by simulating a settler narrative based on stereotypical, universal concepts rather than the detail and issues of the "real". The protagonist in the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* is obscured by a postcolonial mantle that becomes what Baudrillard (2003:63) refers to as the "perfect crime". The "perfect crime", for Baudrillard entails a "reality-illusion", where the simulation of a hyperreal as an attempt to disenchant reality becomes an essential new real. In this (re)imagined colonial hyperreality the white body-protagonist becomes a victim of her own inability to belong.

In conclusion, all that remains in the series *Dis-Location/Re-Location* is a cloned, simulated representation of a white colonial body shaped by preceding "code". The white body, in Baudrillard's ([1981]1994:98) words, becomes "nothing but the indefinite series of its prostheses". The clone (Guttmann as Farber) is not a mirror image; the clone is a replica of its equivalent – a double that never existed in the first place. Accordingly the clone marks the death of the real, as the (re)imagined body will endlessly exist through the captured image – the photographic reproduction of *Dis-Location/Re-Location* that perpetuates a colonial narrative. The simulated self is forever trapped in her photographic frame. Through photography, she will continuously be reproduced as a copy of a copy without origin. This suggests the endless cycle of the (re)imagined self's process of (un)belonging – always in a state of flux – as she

ceremonially grafts the foreign into her skin (*Induction),* whilst it proliferates (*Debilitation*) and takes over the body (*Supplantation*).

6.3 (Un)mapping the thesis

At the confines of this dissertation, beyond its limited interpretation of a single photographic series, this research points to the absence of scholarly work on how to go about untangling the complexities of representation when rereading, utilising and affirming postcolonial discourse. It appears that some artists take recourse to postcolonial discourse and use it to inform their art-making, without reflecting critically on the implications of working with visual languages embedded in hegemonic practices. Beyond this thesis there is, consequently, room for further considerations of postcolonial representation. This is a crucial question if academia intends to take the decolonial imperative seriously.

Moreover, a more comprehensive analysis of the role of museums that commemorate colonial heritages in post-apartheid South Africa, such as the Sammy Marks Museum, Melrose House Museum (Tshwane) or the 1820 Settlers Museum (Grahamstown), would be of value. The need to question anew the function of such museums in the wake of decolonial movements such as #RhodesMustFall (2015) is evident.

Similarly, neo-Victorianism – a fairly new field of study – is yet to be investigated in a South African context. Neo-Victorianism can be traced in the work of contemporary South African artist Mary Sibande (born 1982), for example. Postcolonial neo-Victorianism, in this regard, can be used as an investigation into representation as a colonial critique and simultaneously as a neo-feminist declaration of agency.

A study of Baudrillard's conceptualisation of the simulacrum and the real can be significantly expanded on specifically with regards to imagined communities such as the annual AfrikaBurn festival in the Karoo (based on Burning Man in the USA). The carnivalesque nature of this festival includes a temporary community that only functions on a barter system and can ironically only be afforded by the privileged (those who can afford the ticket, owns or has access to a 4x4 vehicle and expensive camping equipment). It appears that *burners* (an Afrikaburn attendee) go to the *burn* to "feel realness" again. In this sense AfrikaBurn can be described – through a Baudrillardian allegory – as a desert of the real.

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REPRESENTATIONAL ADDENDUM

The photographic series *Dis-Location/Re-Location*

Aloerosa

Figure I *Aloerosa: Induction*. 2004-2007.
Archival pigment printing on soft textured fine art paper, edition 1/9, 65 x 65 cm.
Photograph by Hannelie Coetzee (Farber 2013:55).

Figure II *Aloerosa: Induction* (detail). 2004-2007.
Archival pigment printing on soft textured fine art paper,
edition 1/9, 25 x 35.83 cm.
Photograph by Hannelie Coetzee, (Farber 2013:56).

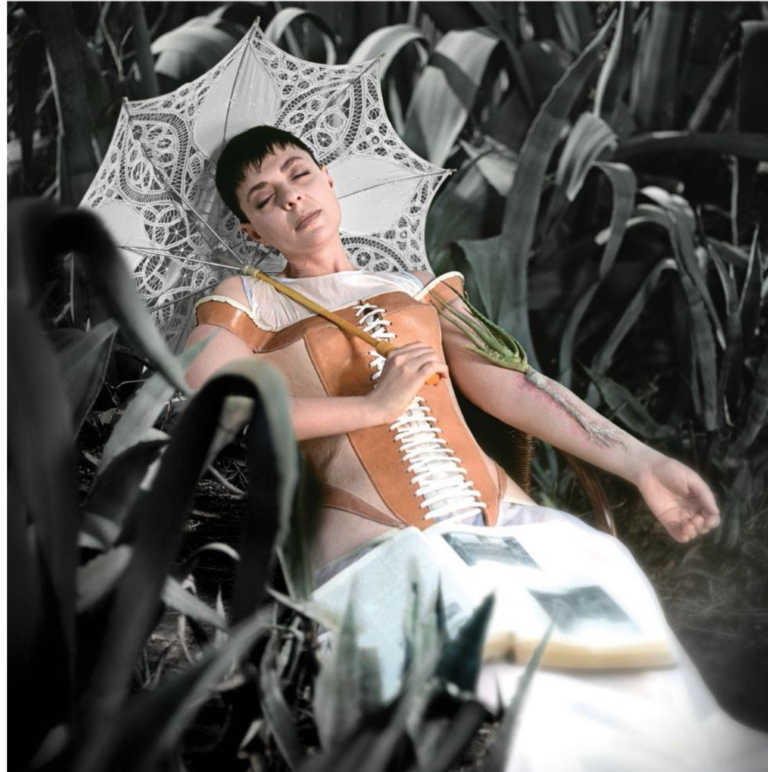

Figure III *Aloerosa: Propagation*. 2004-2007.
Archival pigment printing on soft textured fine art paper,
edition 1/9, 65 x 65 cm. Photograph by Hannelie Coetzee (Farber 2013:57).

Figure IV Aloerosa: Efflorescence. 2006-2007.
Archival pigment printing on soft textured fine art paper,
edition 1/9, 78 x 103.89 cm.
Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld (Farber 2013:58).

Figure V *Aloerosa: Veldscape*. 2005-2007.
Archival pigment printing on soft textured fine art paper,
edition 1/9, 86.65 x 120 cm.
Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld, (Farber 2013:59).

Figure VI *Aloerosa: Maturation I.* 2006-2007.
Archival pigment printing on soft textured fine art paper,
edition 1/9, 90 x 120 cm.
Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld, (Law-Viljoen, 2008:124).

Figure VII *Aloerosa: Maturation II.* 2006-2007.
Archival pigment printing on soft textured fine art paper,
edition 1/9, 90 x 120 cm.
Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld, (Law-Viljoen, 2008:125).

Figure VIII *Aloerosa: Supplantation*. 2006-2007.
Archival pigment printing on soft textured fine art paper,
edition 1/9, 52 x 70 cm.
Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld, (Farber 2013:62).

Figure IX *Aloerosa: Transplant*. 2006-2007.
Archival pigment printing on soft textured fine art paper,
edition 1/9, 135.8 x 102 cm.
Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld, (Farber 2013:3).

Ties that Bind Her

Figure X *Ties that Bind Her: Preservation*. 2006-2007.
Archival pigment printing on soft textured fine art paper,
edition 1/9, 100 x 133.2 cm.
Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld (Law-Viljoen, 2008:129).

Figure XI *Ties that Bind Her: Debilitation*. 2006-2007.
Archival pigment printing on soft textured fine art paper,
edition 1/9, 100 x 133.2 cm.
Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld, (Law-Viljoen, 2008:130).

Figure XII *Ties that Bind Her: Regeneration*. 2006-2007.
Archival pigment printing on soft textured fine art paper,
edition 1/9, 100 x 133.2 cm.
Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld, (Farber 2013:67).

Figure XIII *Ties that Bind Her: Debilitation* (detail I). 2006-2007.
Archival pigment printing on soft textured fine art paper,
edition 1/9, 35 x 47 cm.
Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld, (Law-Viljoen, 2008:132).

Figure XIV *Ties that Bind Her: Debilitation* (detail III). 2006-2007.
Archival pigment printing on soft textured fine art paper,
edition 1/9, 46.05 x 62 cm.
Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld, (Law-Viljoen, 2008:133).

Figure XV *Ties that Bind Her: Debilitation* (detail II). 2006-2007.
Archival pigment printing on soft textured fine art paper,
edition 1/9, 61 x 45.9 cm.
Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld, (Law-Viljoen, 2008:134).

Figure XVI *Ties that Bind Her: Debilitation* (detail IV). 2006-2007.
Archival pigment printing on soft textured fine art paper,
edition 1/9, 90 x 120 cm.
Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld, (Law-Viljoen, 2008:135).

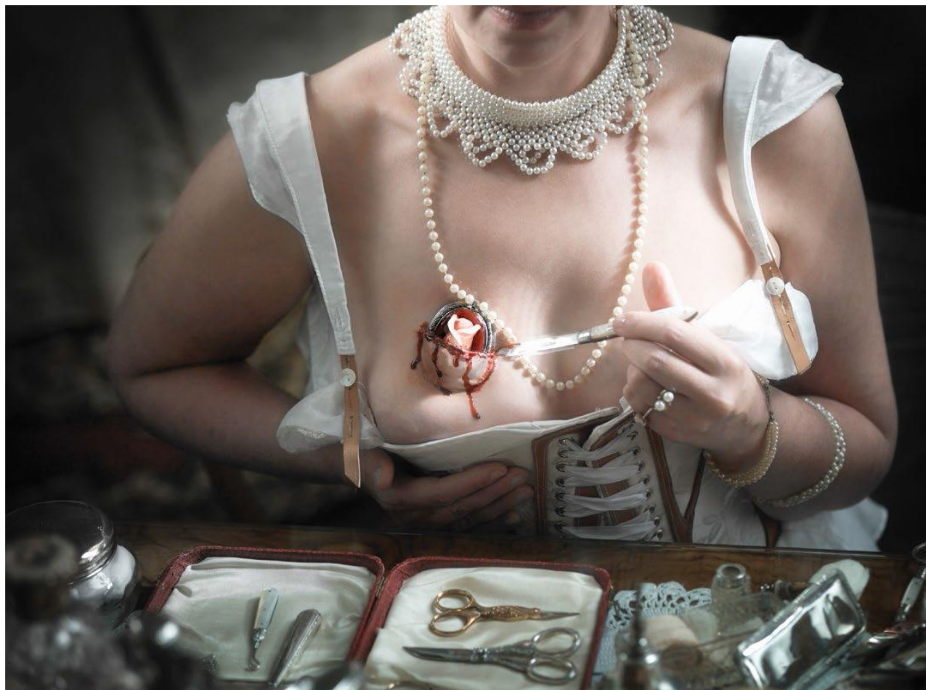

Figure XVII *Ties that Bind Her: Preservation* (detail). 2006-2007.
Archival pigment printing on soft textured fine art paper,
edition 1/9, 42 x 56 cm.
Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld, (Farber 2013:72).

Figure XVIII *Ties that Bind Her: Reparation* (detail). 2006-2007.
Archival pigment printing on soft textured fine art paper,
edition 1/9, 42 x 56 cm.
Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld, (Farber 2013:73).

Figure XIX *Ties that Bind Her: Regeneration* (detail). 2006-2007.
Archival pigment printing on soft textured fine art paper,
edition 1/9, 42 x 56 cm.
Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld, (Farber 2013:74).

A Room of Her Own

Figure XX *A Room of Her Own: Generation*. 2006-2007.
Archival pigment print on soft textured fine art paper,
edition 1/9, 100 x 133.2 cm.
Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld (Farber 2013:74).

Figure XXI *A Room of Her Own: Generation* (detail). 2006-2007.
Archival pigment print on soft textured fine art paper,
edition 1/9, 56 x 75 cm.
Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld (Farber 2013:74).

Figure XXII A Room of Her Own: Redemption. 2006-2007.
Archival pigment printing on soft textured fine art paper,
edition 1/9, 102 x 135.8 cm.
Photograph by Michael Meyersfeld (Law-Viljoen, 2008:142).