

Gombrich would have us believe that the mind, having no direct access to the world, can only guess at what is there. Every guess is in the nature of a hypothesis, to be tested against the evidence of the senses through an iterative process of error-correction. For Scoditti, this process is a mark of the human condition, and applies to Nowau people as to everyone else. It is a genuine universal. Yet Nowau carvers deny it, refusing to admit – at least in public – to any uncertainty whatever about the veracity of their design.

The result is a paradox. If it is a fact of all human thought that it proceeds by trial and error, how do the Nowau manage to uphold an ideology which asserts, to the contrary, that every novel design arises, complete, and perfectly formed, from nowhere? Scoditti's solution is that Nowau carvers do indeed test and correct yet do so behind the closed doors of the mind. From the start we are obliged to accept the premise at the heart of the Popper-Gombrich paradigm, by which everything attributable to the practising artist or artisan – including eye and hand, and a surface on which to work – has its interior homuncular counterpart. Operating within the space of the mind, equipped with virtual eye and hand, the homunculus works the surface of imagination. But then, in what mind is the final form revealed? Is there a second mind within the first? The paradigm, it seems, can only be sustained at the cost of an infinite regress.

From this major paradox, Scoditti spins out a host of minor ones. Reading *Kitawa*, it soon becomes abundantly clear that he loves such enigmas. But it is doubtful whether they exist anywhere but in his own imagination. It is he, and not the Nowau carver, who insists a priori on the complete and unassailable excision of the human mind from external nature. By assuming that all the work of design has been done in advance, in the mind, Scoditti contrives to reduce the act of making to mere transference, as though the design slid off the mind and onto the wood. All the work with hammer and chisel, by which the form is actually realized in the wooden prow-board, is eclipsed. Indeed, Scoditti is adamant that the truth of the prow-board lies in the mental image, and that the carving is little more than a material accessory that serves the purpose, in a non-literate culture, of communicating the image to others.

Of one master-carver, Towitara Buyoyu, Scoditti observes that he carves his figures into the virtual space of his mind, even as he carves them in wood. It is, he says, 'completely mental work' (p. 21). Like any craftsman, Buyoyu thinks as he works. But is this really the work of a mind,

as Scoditti would have it, in total solitude? Does it not spill out, by way of the arms, fingers, and the tool they hold, into the material? Buyoyu and his pupils were not much impressed by the sketches with which Scoditti filled his notebooks. Tentative and provisional, they lacked the authority of the final form. When Scoditti asked the carvers to draw their prow-board designs on paper with pencils and crayons – a medium with which they were unfamiliar – they did not sketch but drew as they would carve, with the assurance that comes from a mastery of design. Nevertheless, precisely because drawing strays over a surface rather than cutting into it, and is therefore correctable, for Nowau carvers the drawn design lacks the authority of its carved equivalent.

Kitawa is, in turns, beautiful, tantalizing, and peculiar. It is beautiful for the sumptuous, polychrome reproductions that comprise its greater part. They include drawings made by master-carvers, as well as drawings by Scoditti himself, and two series of interpretative drawings by his collaborators, architect Alverado Scoditti and artist Giulia Napoleone. It is tantalizing because we are given virtually no clues to help us make sense of these drawings. It is peculiar, above all, on account of the author's extraordinary style of writing. This is not so much careless as obsessive, as every sentence picks up, in its innumerable clauses and subclauses, all that has been said before, while advancing by only miniscule steps, if at all. Lengthy footnotes – more than a hundred for fifty pages of text – provide an equally repetitive refrain. There is no introduction or conclusion. This makes for a text that is all but unreadable. Anyone wanting to know what it is about could start with the summary blurb on the back cover. But perhaps it would be more advisable to approach the book as a work of art in itself, which draws us, its readers and viewers, into its own mystery.

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Migration and belonging

de HASQUE, JEAN-FRÉDÉRIC & CLARA LECADET (eds).

Après les camps: traces, mémoires et mutations des camps de réfugiés. 249 pp., illus., DVD, bibliogr. Louvain-la-Neuve: Academia-L'Harmattan, 2019. €26.00 (paper)

The French anthropologist Michel Agier has argued that despite the differences between types of camp, they share certain qualities in varying degrees. They are spaces 'off limits', frequently omitted from maps – though some have become

like permanent favelas; they are subjected to special rules that negate or suspend the principle of normal citizenship; and they house people who cannot be integrated in their surroundings. In 2014, when the collection of ethnographic studies *Un monde des camps* was published (co-edited with Clara Lecadet), he estimated that there were about 1,000 camps for displaced people worldwide, with at least 6 million occupants; some 450 such settlements were administered by international or national agencies.

Jean-Frédéric de Hasque and Clara Lecadet's edited *Après les camps* has the originality of combining, in ten case studies, this anthropological approach with attention to the concept of *lieux de mémoire* popularized by the historian Pierre Nora. Chapter 2, for instance, describes the Mémorial du Camp de Rivesaltes, in the Pyrénées-Orientales department of France, which was active between 1939 and 2007 – used successively to accommodate refugees fleeing Francoist Spain; Jews who were transferred in 1942 via Drancy to their deaths in Auschwitz; German and Italian prisoners of war between 1944 and 1948; Algerian separatists in 1962; *Harkis* after the Algerian war; Guinean and Vietnamese ex-soldiers after the end of the French colonial empire; and (post 1986) Spanish nationals detained after entering France illegally. Nicolas Lebourg and Abderahmen Moumen criticize the official history of the site for creating a hierarchy of memories whereby some of the trajectories of exile are forgotten and rendered invisible.

Chapter 3, by Glenda Santana de Andrade, analyses a particularly fragile case, the Shatila refugee camp in Lebanon. A small memorial in a former mosque in Shatila, recognizing the victims of the fratricidal 'war of the camps' (1985-7), can be entered only by special permission. Just outside the camp itself is one of the few tranquil spaces in this overcrowded neighbourhood, a garden cemetery commemorating victims of the Sabra and Shatila massacre in 1982 – the killing of hundreds of Palestinians by the Phalange militia in sight of Israeli soldiers. By contrast with the evocation of the past in Rivesaltes, 'here it is a question of a living memory, in the course of its construction, by the same people who suffered from the massacres and remain today detained in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon' (p. 17, my translation).

Other 'sites of memory' are conspicuous by their absence. Garth Benneyworth (chap. 1, written in English) has made use of archival and archaeological methods, under the auspices of

the McGregor Museum in Kimberley, to 'reconstruct' two Native Refugee Camps. These were established by the British military command during the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) to accommodate black African civilians, many of them displaced from rural settlements as a result of a scorched earth policy. The evidence suggests that these settlements served as racially segregated forced labour camps. Excavated objects such as corrugated iron and British regimental military buttons have been preserved, and it is planned that they will form part of an exhibition together with photographs taken at the time.

The Second World War resulted in massive forced migration and the setting up in Europe of innumerable camps for Displaced Persons. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which was founded in 1950, embarked at the end of that decade on a programme to close the last of these camps, seen as disfiguring the new post-war Europe. But camps of a similar kind then became established in former colonies. Chapter 6 is accompanied by a DVD of a documentary film by Jean-Frédéric de Hasque about a camp at Agamé, Benin, set up for Togolese refugees from post-electoral violence in 2005 and finally demolished in 2013. The film shows how a camp can become an anchorage, both personal and collective, for people otherwise destined to spend their lives adrift. 'As well as doubling their original exile, the end of the camp also meant for many without refugee status the loss of all hope of gaining it and so benefiting from programmes for relocation in a third country' (pp. 19-20, my translation).

Other chapters bring the discussion up to date with coverage of informal encampments occupied by asylum seekers in Paris and Calais, subject to sudden destruction and obliteration. This is an important collection which, with a more careful editorial introduction, would merit translation for an Anglophone readership, except that, tragically, it will need updating to record devastating effects of COVID-19 in Middle Eastern and other refugee camps.

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KILLIAS, OLIVIA. *Follow the maid: domestic worker migration in and from Indonesia*. x, 239 pp., maps, illus., bibliogr. Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2018. £19.99 (paper)

This is a detailed ethnographic study that describes the 'making' of Indonesian migrant